

Economic Impact Analysis of the Proposed New Agricultural Event Center Master Plan in Lauderdale County, Alabama

October 21, 2019



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Senator Tim Melson Chairman Lauderdale County Agricultural Center Authority 5061 County Road 41 Florence, Alabama 35633

Dear Senator Melson:

Conventions, Sports & Leisure International (CSL) has completed an economic impact analysis the planned new Agricultural Event Center Master Plan in Lauderdale County, Alabama. Previously, in April 2018, CSL completed a draft of a feasibility study for the Agricultural Events Center component only. The subject of this document is to outline the key findings of an economic impact analysis of the overall Agricultural Event Center Master Plan project, including the Event Center and all other anticipated mixed-use elements.

The analysis presented in this report is based on estimates, assumptions and other information developed from industry research, data provided by study stakeholders, surveys of potential facility users, discussions with industry participants and analysis of competitive/comparable facilities and communities. The sources of information, the methods employed, and the basis of significant estimates and assumptions are stated in this report. Some assumptions inevitably will not materialize and unanticipated events and circumstances may occur. Therefore, actual results achieved will vary from those described and the variations may be material. Primary market research conducted for the Agricultural Event Center component was completed under the feasibility study in early 2018. Assumptions related to Master Plan components other than the Agricultural Events Center were developed based on conversations with the Lauderdale County Agriculture Center Authority (LCACA), Project Team members and stakeholders, and industry experience with similar projects.

The findings presented herein are based on analyses of present and near-term conditions in Lauderdale County. As in all studies of this type, the recommendations and estimated results are based on competent and efficient management of the subject facilities and assume that no significant changes in the event markets or assumed immediate and local area market conditions will occur beyond those set forth in this report. Furthermore, all information provided to us by others was not audited or verified and was assumed to be correct.

The report has been structured to provide study stakeholders with a foundation of research to provide decision makers with the information necessary to evaluate issues related to potential future decisions concerning the proposed development of a new Agricultural Events Center Master Plan project and should not be used for any other purpose. This report, its findings or references to CSL may not be included or reproduced in any public offering statement or other financing document.

We sincerely appreciate the assistance and cooperation we have been provided in the compilation of this report and would be pleased to be of further assistance in the interpretation and application of our findings.

Very truly yours,

CSL International



ECONOMIC IMPACT: Introduction & Background

In late 2017, Conventions, Sports & Leisure International (CSL) was retained by the Lauderdale County Agricultural Center Authority (LCACA) to conduct a feasibility study associated with a proposed new Agricultural Event Center near Florence, Alabama. The proposed Agricultural Event Center may incorporate several types of event facilities/spaces for the purpose of hosting a variety of event types, including concerts and other live entertainment, exhibitions, tradeshows, agriculture/livestock/equestrian shows, festivals and fairs, conferences, meetings, community/civic events, and other such events and uses. A draft of the feasibility study was completed in 2018 and the study was finalized in 2019 as project characteristics and design elements were settled.

In 2017, the State of Alabama approved funding an Agriculture Authority to develop and oversee the operations of a Agricultural Event Center near Florence, Alabama. The Agricultural Event Center would be developed on approximately 170 acres of privately owned land behind the Florence Fire Station, south of Highway 72/Florence Boulevard. The intent of the multipurpose event facilities would be to accommodate agricultural, equestrian, livestock, exposition, meetings, amateur sports, concerts, entertainment and other such events. Additionally, Northwest Shoals Community College plans to develop a career and technical center on site to assist in workforce development. Funding for the project comes from an existing two-cent gas tax and Tennessee Valley Authority "In-Lieu-of-Tax" dollars. Additionally, under SB345, the Authority can enter into leases with third parties on its property and retain local sales and use tax revenue generated at the greater Agricultural Event Center site.

The 2017/2018 study process consisted of detailed research and analysis, including a comprehensive set of market-specific information derived from the following:

- 1. Experience garnered through more than 1,000 multipurpose event facility planning and benchmarking projects throughout the country.
- 2. Local market visits at the outset of the project, including community and facility tours, and discussions with study stakeholders.
- 3. In-person and telephone interviews, meetings and focus groups with approximately 100 local Lauderdale County area individuals including LCACA representatives; Lauderdale County, City of Florence, Shoals Chamber of Commerce, Florence/Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau, Shoals Economic Development Authority, local hoteliers and business leaders; and, other visitor industry and other community stakeholders.
- 4. Benchmarking research and analysis of facility data and interviews conducted with 32 competitive/regional and 17 comparable national multipurpose equestrian, livestock, agricultural and other event facilities.
- 5. Completed telephone interviews with 50 potential new users of a Lauderdale County Agricultural Event Center, including planners of ag/equestrian events, flat floor exhibition shows and events, national and regional touring show promoters, and amateur sporting events/tournaments/competitions.

In 2019, the LCACA re-engaged CSL to conduct this current effort to expand the analysis of economic impact to all the proposed components of the overall Agricultural Event Center Master Plan site. These components include the Event Center, along with assumptions related to other private sector-led development anticipated for the site, including hotel, restaurants, retail and other mixed-use elements.



ECONOMIC IMPACT: Feasibility Study Findings Recap

Based on the market interviews, surveys, research and analysis conducted for the 2017/2018 feasibility study of the Agricultural Event Center, CSL concluded that unmet demand exists in Lauderdale County for the proposed Agricultural Event Center project. The full market-indicated program is shown to the right as Option A.

The study indicated that the success of the project will be partially dependent on development of a compelling, mixed-use destination at the greater site to attract events, attendees and spending. Working with the LCACA and Project Team, the three preliminary development scenarios were identified for the feasibility study's cost/benefit analysis.

Based on feasibility study's findings, key annual and 20-year cumulative utilization and cost/benefit metric estimates for the proposed Agricultural Event Center under the three preliminary scenarios include those indicated to the lower right.

The quantified economic impact estimates represent spending that is estimated to be "new" to Lauderdale County as generated by the construction and operation of the Agricultural Event Center facility only. The new Lauderdale County spending is generated through the construction period and then from in-facility spending and out-of-facility spending by Agricultural Event Center attendee that are assumed to be non-local visitors to Lauderdale County.

• OPTION A: Market-Indicated Program

- Event Center Arena (4,000 fixed seats, up to 9,000 max capacity)
- Expo Center (40,000SF floor)
- Covered Arena (300 seats)
- Stall Barn (300 stalls)
- OPTION B: Arena-Only Program
 - Event Center Arena (2,500 fixed seats, up to 6,100 max capacity)
- OPTION C: Expo/Equine/Livestock Program
 - Expo Center (53,000SF floor)
 - Livestock/Equine Center (1,500 seats, 240 stalls)

Key Performance Estimates	OPTION A: Market	OPTION B: Arena	OPTION C: Expo/Equine
Events (annual)	133	71	116
Event Days (annual)	239	126	213
Utilization Days (annual)	297	159	265
Operating Revenue (annual)	\$1,980,940	\$1,152,063	\$1,329,655
Operating Expenses (annual)	\$2,322,581	\$1,582,157	\$1,728,565
Hotel Room Nights (annual)	18,561	7,976	14,835
Direct Spending by Non-Locals (20 year cumulative)	\$97,665,832	\$53,154,420	\$71,462,489
Total Economic Output (20 year cumulative)	\$145,300,848	\$78,560,908	\$104,111,745
Personal Earnings (20 year cumulative)	\$47,459,437	\$25,819,871	\$33,859,848
Full & Part-time Jobs (peak year over 20 years)	494	240	271
Tax Revenue (20 year cumulative)	\$6,084,410	\$3,443,455	\$4,725,784



ECONOMIC IMPACT: Master Plan Components



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Shown to the left, the most current iteration of the Master Plan is focused around a new Agricultural Event Center complex that will include a new Event Center Arena, Expo Hall, Livestock Arena, Stall Barn, and Outdoor Arena. The remainder of the Master Plan includes mostly private sector-led mixed-use elements, such as leasable and third-party owned retail, lodging, restaurants, and a Vo-Tech/Career Training Facility.

CSL's 2017/2018 feasibility study informs assumptions and projections associated with the Event Center element, while assumptions were developed for other Master Plan elements (including a ramp-up in retail and hotel occupancy and visitor counts over the initial years) in collaboration with the Master Plan team and project stakeholders.

The economic impact analysis considers the assumed Master Plan elements shown below. For purposes of this analysis, it has been assumed that a full build-out of these elements will have occurred by the commencement of the operating period.

- 1. Agricultural Event Center
 - 1. Event Center Arena (9,000 capacity, 174,000GSF)
 - 2. Expo Hall (40,000SF floor, 60,000GSF)
 - 3. Livestock Arena (71,400GSF)
 - 4. Stall Barn (39.200GSF)
 - 5. Outdoor Arena
- 2. Lodging
 - 1. 200 total keys, national brands, 2 properties (limited, extended stay, or select service) or 1 dual-branded property (limited service + extended stay)
- 3. Retail/Restaurants/Office
 - 1. Leased anchor retail/restaurants (100,000SF)
 - 2. Owned retail/restaurants/office (100,000SF)
- 4. Education
 - 1. Vo-Tech Center (\$25M construction)



ECONOMIC IMPACT: Concepts and Methodology

The investment in the project will be expected to provide substantial quantifiable benefits. These quantifiable benefits often serve as the "return on investment" of public dollars that are contributed to develop these destination and constituent facilities. Quantifiable measurements of the effects that the development of the Master Plan site and its facilities could have on the local economy are characterized in terms of economic impacts and fiscal impacts. Direct spending represents the primary spending that would occur as a result of the construction and operations of the Agricultural Event Center Master Plan facilities. Direct spending occurs in three ways:







A primary intent of this analysis is to estimate the direct spending that could occur directly within the Master Plan site itself, in order to approximate the potential associated sales tax revenues generated from such spending. As the geographic focus of this analysis is the Maser Plan site (referred to "District"), the majority of direct spending relates to Construction and In-Facility Spending. Additionally, net new impacts will be generated throughout Lauderdale County, primarily relating to Out-of-Facility Spending (i.e., spending occurring off the Master Plan site by visitors on items such as hotels, restaurants, retail, transportation, etc.).



From a broad perspective, gross direct spending would flow to various economic entities, including the Ag Center District, Lauderdale County, restaurants, hotel operators, retail businesses and other such entities. However, some of the spending that occurs in connection with the ongoing operations of the project would not fully impact the local area. As such, reductions must be made to gross direct spending to reflect the amount of direct spending associated with the Ag Center Master Plan that is considered net new to Lauderdale County. These adjustments include:

LEAKAGE represents the portion of gross spending estimated to occur outside the larger geographic area considered for this analysis (Lauderdale County). Immediate leakage occurs when initial direct expenditures occur outside the area, such as an out-of-town Ag Center District visitor that patronizes a hotel or restaurant located outside the Master Plan site. Leakage also occurs when initial local spending is used immediately to pay for I goods, services, etc. outside of Lauderdale County. Examples of this type of secondary leakage include concessionaire profits retained by companies based outside of Lauderdale County.

DISPLACEMENT refers to spending that would have likely occurred anyway in Lauderdale County without the presence of the new Ag Center Master Plan. Examples of displaced spending would include spending by County residents in connection with their visit to the new Ag Center Master Plan site (tickets, food and beverage, merchandise, etc.) that would have been spent within Lauderdale County anyway on other items (e.g., movies, restaurants, shopping, etc.) if they did not visit the Ag Center Master Plan site. Another example of displaced spending would include out-of-facility spending by non-local individuals visiting from outside of the County whose primary purpose for visiting Lauderdale County was something other than visiting the new Ag Center Master Plan project itself, and who would have spent their money in some other form in the County. The concept of displacement is oftentimes referred to as the substitution effect.

As illustrated in the graphic to the right, the flow of gross direct spending is adjusted to reflect only the spending that is considered net new to the local economy. The resulting spending after all adjustments is referred to throughout the remainder of this analysis as net new direct spending.





Economic impacts are further increased through re-spending of the direct spending. The total impact is estimated by applying an economic multiplier to initial direct spending to account for the total economic impact. The total output multiplier is used to estimate the aggregate total spending that takes place beginning with direct spending and continuing through each successive round of re-spending. Successive rounds of re-spending are generally discussed in terms of their indirect and induced effects on the area economy. Each is discussed in more detail as follows:

INDIRECT EFFECTS consist of the re-spending of the initial or direct expenditures. These indirect impacts extend further as the dollars constituting the direct expenditures continue to change hands. This process, in principle, could continue indefinitely. However, recipients of these expenditures may spend all or part of it on goods and services outside the market area, put part of these earnings into savings, or pay taxes. This spending halts the process of subsequent expenditure flows and does not generate additional spending or impact within the community after a period of time. This progression is termed leakage and reduces the overall economic impact.

Indirect impacts occur in a number of areas including the following:

- wholesale industry as purchases of food and merchandise products are made;
- transportation industry as the products are shipped from purchaser to buyer;
- manufacturing industry as products used to service Ag Center Master Plan facilities, vendors and others are produced;
- utility industry as the power to produce goods and services is consumed; and,
- other such industries.

INDUCED EFFECTS consist of the positive changes in spending, employment, earnings and tax collections generated by personal income associated with the operations of the Ag Event Center and other Master Plan site facilities. Specifically, as the economic impact process continues, wages and salaries are earned, increased employment and population are generated, and spending occurs in virtually all business, household and governmental sectors. This represents the induced spending impacts generated by direct expenditures.

Indirect and induced effects are calculated by applying the appropriate multipliers to the net new direct spending estimates. The appropriate multipliers to be used are dependent upon certain regional characteristics and also the nature of the expenditure. Generally, an area which is capable of producing a wide range of goods and services within its borders will have high multipliers, a positive correlation existing between the self-sufficiency of an area's economy and the higher probability of re-spending occurring within the region. If a high proportion of the expenditures must be imported from another geographical region, lower multipliers will result.

The multiplier estimates used in this analysis are based on the IMPLAN system. IMPLAN, which stands for Impact Analyses and Planning, is a computer software package that consists of procedures for estimating local input-output models and associated databases. Input-output models are a technique for quantifying interactions between firms, industries and social institutions within a local economy.



IMPLAN was originally developed by the U.S. Forest Service in cooperation with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management to assist in land and resource management planning. Since 1993, the IMPLAN system has been developed under exclusive rights by the Minnesota Implan Group, Inc., which licenses and distributes the software to users. Currently, there are thousands of licensed users in the United States including universities, government agencies, and private companies.

The economic data for IMPLAN comes from the system of national accounts for the United States based on data collected by the U. S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and other federal and state government agencies. Data are collected for 440 distinct producing industry sectors of the national economy corresponding to the Standard Industrial Categories (SICs).

Industry sectors are classified on the basis of the primary commodity or service produced. Corresponding data sets are also produced for each county and zip code in the United States, allowing analyses at both the city and county level and for geographic aggregations such as clusters of contiguous cities, counties, individual states, or groups of states.

Data provided for each industry sector include outputs and inputs from other sectors; value added, employment, wages and business taxes paid; imports and exports; final demand by households and government; capital investment; business inventories; marketing margins and inflation factors (deflators). These data are provided both for the 440 producing sectors at the national level and for the corresponding sectors at the local level. Data on the technological mix of inputs and levels of transactions between producing sectors are taken from detailed input-output tables of the national economy. National and local level data are the basis for IMPLAN calculations of input-output tables and multipliers for geographic areas. The IMPLAN software package allows the estimation of the multiplier effects of changes in final demand for one industry on all other industries within a local economic area. The multiplier effects estimated in this analysis include:

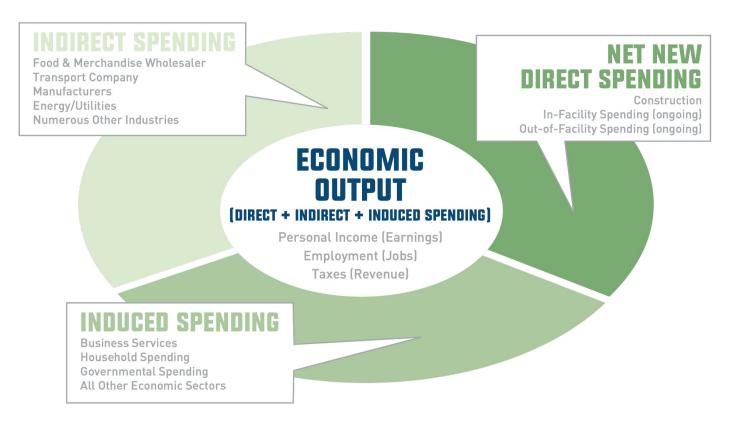
- TOTAL OUTPUT represents the total direct, indirect, and induced spending effects generated by the new Ag Event Center and the other assumed Master Plan facilities. Total output is calculated by multiplying the appropriate total output multiplier by the estimated direct spending within each industry.
- PERSONAL INCOME (EARNINGS) represent the wages and salaries earned by employees of businesses impacted by the new Ag Event Center and the other assumed Master Plan facilities. Personal earnings are calculated by multiplying the appropriate personal earnings multiplier by the estimated direct spending within each industry.
- EMPLOYMENT is expressed in terms of total jobs and includes both full and part-time jobs. Employment is calculated by dividing the appropriate employment multiplier by one million, and then multiplying by the estimated direct spending within each industry.



In addition to the economic impacts that could be generated by the new Ag Event Center and the other assumed Master Plan facilities, fiscal revenues could be generated to the Ag Center District, Lauderdale County, and various other municipal/governmental entities from a variety of sources. In preparing estimates of fiscal impacts, revenues generated to the Ag Center District and Lauderdale County from direct, indirect and induced spending were examined. As a focus of this analysis relates to the economic and tax impact within the Master Plan District itself, the primary fiscal revenues estimated herein are sales taxes that are estimated to be generated within the boundaries of the Agricultural Event Center Master Plan site at a 10% tax load factor (4.0% County Sales plus 6.0% Authority Net). Additionally, net new sales tax impacts have been estimated for Lauderdale County, which considers reductions for assumed displaced spending within the County, as well as spending that is assumed to occur outside of Lauderdale County.

Although there may be other tax revenues generated as a result of the construction and operations of the new Ag Event Center and the other assumed Master Plan facilities, gross District and <u>net new</u> County sales taxes represent the most relevant sources relating to this analysis.

The following graphic illustrates key measurements of economic and tax impacts utilized in this analysis. Commencing with the estimation of net new direct spending associated with the project, successive rounds of re-spending generate indirect and induced effects. The sum of all this net new spending in a particular geographic area's economy represents total Economic Output. This new economic output, in turn, likewise generates added earnings (personal income), jobs (employment), and tax revenues.





ECONOMIC IMPACT: Construction Impacts (One-Time)

The impact of the construction phase is determined by the volume and nature of the construction expenditures as well as the geographic region in which they take place.

The exhibit to the right summarizes the <u>gross</u> direct spending that is estimated to occur with within the Ag Event Center Master Plan site (referred to as "District") and the <u>net new</u> impacts estimated to occur within Lauderdale County during the construction period. These impacts represent one-time impacts from construction in 2019 dollars. The figures estimated for the District represent gross spending generated within the District only. The figures estimated for Lauderdale County represent net new economic and fiscal impacts generated throughout Lauderdale County, which considers reductions for assumed displaced spending within the County, as well as spending that is assumed to occur outside of Lauderdale County.

Based on the assumed programming, and on preliminary estimates developed by the Master Plan Team, the sum of the construction projects associated with the Agricultural Event Center Master Plan site is assumed to total approximately \$120.1 million, generating approximately \$89.2 million in total economic output (direct, indirect and induced spending) in Lauderdale County, supporting 544 full and part-time jobs in a peak year during the construction period within Lauderdale County.

Tax Revenue for the construction period is presented in terms of net new sales taxes generated within Lauderdale County (4.0% County Sales Tax).

	Construction Period (cumulative)
GROSS IMPACTS IN AG CENTER DISTRICT	
Direct Spending	\$120,100,000
NET NEW TO LAUDERDALE COUNTY	
Direct Spending	\$52,123,400
Indirect/Induced Spending	\$37,071,919
Economic Output	\$89,195,319
Personal Income (Earnings)	\$27,094,063
Employment (full & part-time jobs, peak year)	544
Sales Tax Revenue	\$2,529,799

Assumptions/notes:

- 1 Assumed gross construction spending = \$120.1 million for all public & private Master Plan elements.
- 2 All dollar figures shown in current year (2019) dollars
- 3 Cumulative construction-only impacts (over two-year construction period)
- 4 Preliminary order-of-magnitude, based on assumptions provided by Master Plan team
- 5 Net New to Lauderdale County includes reductions to account for displaced spending.
- 6 Within Ag Center District, tax tevenue includes 10% tax load factor (4.0% County Sales plus 6.0% Authority).
- 7 Within Lauderdale County, tax tevenue includes 4.0% County Sales Tax.



ECONOMIC IMPACT: Ongoing Impacts (Annual)

The operations of the new Ag Event Center and the other Master Plan facilities will represent significant levels of annually recurring impacts within the Master Plan district and Lauderdale County overall.

The exhibit to the right summarizes the annual gross direct spending and sales tax revenue that is estimated to occur within the Ag Event Center District itself, as well as the <u>net new</u> impacts estimated to occur within Lauderdale County as a result of annual operations. Figures are presented both in terms of the assumed first full year of operation, as well as during an assumed stabilized year of operation (assumed to be the fifth full year of operations). The figures estimated for the District represent gross spending and direct sales tax revenue generated within the District only. The figures estimated for Lauderdale County represent net new economic and fiscal impacts generated throughout Lauderdale County, which considers reductions for assumed displaced spending within the County, as well as spending that is assumed to occur outside of Lauderdale County. Tax Revenue for the District is presented in terms of sales taxes generated within the boundaries of the Agricultural Event Center Master Plan site at a 10% tax load factor (4.0% County Sales plus 6.0% Authority Net).

Upon stabilization of operations (assumed fifth full year), the new Ag Event Center and the other assumed Master Plan facilities are estimated to generate approximately \$31.1 million in annual direct spending within the District, generating approximately \$3.1 million in annual direct sales tax revenue within the District.

Within Lauderdale County, annual operations of the project are estimated to generate approximate \$15.2 million in net new annual economic output, supporting 185 full and part-time jobs that generate \$4.6 million in annual net new personal income (earnings) within Lauderdale County. Net new sales tax revenues generated within Lauderdale County are estimated to total \$430,000 annually.

	Annual (First Operating Yr)	Annual (Stabilized Year)
GROSS IMPACTS IN AG CENTER DISTRICT		
Direct Spending	\$15,856,100	\$31,105,500
Sales Tax Revenue	\$1,585,610	\$3,110,550
NET NEW TO LAUDERDALE COUNTY		
Direct Spending	\$8,855,425	\$12,908,783
Indirect/Induced Spending	\$6,298,277	\$9,181,161
Economic Output	\$15,153,701	\$22,089,944
Personal Income (Earnings)	\$4,603,104	\$6,710,064
Employment (full & part-time jobs)	185	269
Sales Tax Revenue	\$429,796	\$626,525

Assumptions/notes:

- 1 All dollar figures shown in current year (2019) dollars
- 2 Represents estimated annual in-facility + out-of-facility impacts (excludes construction impacts)
- 3 Stabilized Year represents fifth full year of operations.
- 4 Preliminary order-of-magnitude estimates, based on assumptions generated for all anticipated Master Plan elements.
- 5 Net New to Lauderdale County includes reductions to account for displaced spending.
- 6 Within Aq Center District, tax tevenue includes 10% tax load factor (4.0% County Sales plus 6.0% Authority).
- 7 Within Lauderdale County, tax tevenue includes 4.0% County Sales Tax.



ECONOMIC IMPACT: Non-Quantifiable Impacts

In addition to the more quantifiable benefits, some benefits related to the construction and operations of the Master Plan elements of the new Ag Event Center and the other assumed Master Plan facilities cannot be quantitatively measured. In addition to economic activity and jobs indirectly provided, these types of non-quantifiable impacts of a project of this nature and scope can serve to elevate Lauderdale County's profile and brand as a visitor destination and as a quality place to live and work. Potential non-quantifiable benefits could include:

- Enhanced economic growth and ancillary private sector development surrounding the new Ag Event Center Master Plan site and throughout Lauderdale County spurred by the operation of the multiple components of the new Master Plan project;
- Increased synergy with the other local entertainment facilities leading to increased tourism activity to Lauderdale County;
- Offering of new diversified, affordable entertainment and leisure alternatives for families in the Lauderdale County area;
- Enhanced community pride, self-image, exposure and reputation;
- Enhanced local, regional and national exposure; and
- Other such benefits.







