



UNIVERSITY
OF WYOMING

**West Stadium Upgrades
and
Corbett Natatorium**

Level I Planning Report

By

University of Wyoming Operations

May 10, 2019

WEST STADIUM UPGRADES

Identification of Need

War Memorial Stadium opened on September 16, 1950 with a 61-13 win over Montana State. While the facility has seen numerous upgrades since this date (e.g., east side improvements, installation of new turf, Wildcatter, etc.), the lower west side and press box are woefully outdated and do not meet the needs/requirements of a Division I football program.

The lower west side seating is dated and does not meet current code (e.g., ADA, risers/treads, etc.). All lower west side seating is “bleacher style” with limited seat width which negatively impacts our fans’ game day experience. The lower west side is void of wider, chair back seating opportunities which is the norm in the Division I football landscape. In addition, the west side is also void of other premium fan gathering/seating areas such as clubs, loge boxes, etc.

The bathroom and concessions areas under the lower west stands are some, if not the, worst in the Mountain West Conference. Not only are there not enough of either (bathrooms/concessions) but the areas are dated and do not meet current codes. The result is many fans walk to the renovated upper east concourse which then causes longer lines, etc. (which, again, has a negative impact on their game day experience and a financial impact on the Athletic Department due to potential lost revenue).

From an operational standpoint the lower west side does not currently have locker room (coaches/support staff and student-athletes) for the visiting team. Subsequently the visiting team uses space (women’s track and field locker room, sports medicine area and staff locker room) in the Indoor Fieldhouse thus displacing our student-athletes and coaches/staff which can disrupt their practice/training regimens.

The press box is the 2nd worst in the Mountain West Conference (only better than San Jose State). It needs to be completely reconfigured as current bathrooms, coaches’ boxes (home and away), replay booths, etc. all are too small. Furthermore, all systems (e.g., electrical, mechanical and technology) are dated and need to be upgraded to modern standards (and for future changes/growth). The press box is poorly insulated and needs all new windows and a new roof (the current roof leaks). Finally, the elevator to the press box needs to be replaced as it is extremely slow and consistently breaks down (the Athletic Department actually hires an elevator technician to be on site for every home football game). Ideally, a 2nd elevator would also be installed but this obviously has financial implications.

Facilities Improvements

The west side stands have untapped potential for spectator experience and overall campus engagement. Renovations will provide opportunities to generate additional revenue via various mediums including, but not limited to, loge boxes, upgraded seating, separate ticket areas (e.g., club area/party deck) and upgraded fan amenities (e.g., such as concession areas/points of sale). In addition, game-day operational spaces (e.g., media working areas, visiting team locker rooms and sports medicine areas, etc.) and upgraded bathroom facilities will be incorporated into the design.

The press box improvements will enable UW to better serve the national media, television and allow for more effective web streaming. This will include, but not be limited to, upgrades to all mechanical, electrical and technology systems. In addition, the current elevator will be replaced and the potential to install a second elevator will be researched.

The existing campus utility and central plant facilities will be utilized to support the facility. A silver equivalent LEED rating with alternative energy and systems approaches to sustainability will be a required with all

applicable analyses. The building design will incorporate the campus materials palette, design guidelines and require approval by the University of Wyoming Exterior Design Advisory Committee.

Programs to be Served

The primary user of this facility (practice and competition) is the football program. However, other campus groups (e.g., band, campus recreation, ROTC, etc.) also utilize the facility as do outside entities (such as UW hosting the state high school football championships).

Potential Partnerships

The University of Wyoming's goal is to raise the standard for the football program and better meet the needs of everyone who utilizes the facility from both a fan and operational (e.g., media, visiting team coaches/staff/student-athletes, etc.) perspective. An upgrade of the existing facilities will (1) create additional revenue generation opportunities, (2) provide a better game day experience for fans and (3) and better serve the needs of our national media and TV partners.

Site Ownership

There are no site ownership constraints associated with the proposed site.

Permitting

If funding were made available and construction authorized, the University would be required to obtain all applicable building permits. This includes obtaining all applicable Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality permits as they relate to water service, generators and hazardous materials testing.

Environmental Considerations and Constraints

In executing this project, the University would take all necessary precautions to assure the site is clear of hazardous materials. If renovation of War Memorial proceeds, the University would contract with an industrial hygienist to perform soils testing, asbestos and lead paint testing of the entire facility. Should hazardous materials be encountered, remediation would be performed prior to construction.

Legal Constraints

The University does not anticipate legal constraints associated with the project.

Project Budget

In April 2017, the University of Wyoming Athletic Department engaged Sink Combs Dethlefs explore development opportunities for the existing west stands and press box in War Memorial Stadium. The estimated total project cost was approximately \$40M.

CORBETT NATATORIUM

The University of Wyoming swimming and diving program aspires to be ranked nationally as a top 20 program. For the current 26 male and 38 female student athletes, the existing Corbett Pool facility is inadequate to accomplish this goal. With a competitive facility, the University expects to increase the program to include 30 males and 45 females and excel at recruiting and training the best student-athletes.

Identification of Need

The existing Corbett pool facility, which was built in the mid-1970's, lacks several facets important to the success of the University's student-athletes.

Throughout the Mountain West Conference and across the nation, 50-meter swimming and 5-meter diving capabilities are medians for competition aquatics facilities. The current facility does not meet the NCAA Division 1 requirements for competition facilities. The diving area is too shallow to accommodate anything more than a 3-meter springboard, yet Mountain West Conference and Western Athletic Conference teams must compete in 3, 5 and 10-meter diving categories. Additionally, the water body is contiguous, which makes it impossible for dual practice or hosting of simultaneous events.

Due to the limited size of the pool, coaches currently train student-athletes for eight hours per day in shifts because it isn't large enough to accommodate all student-athletes at one time. This presents difficulties for student-athletes and coaches.

In terms of supporting core competition and training activities, the pool's deck space is minimal, the pool is supported by outdated and utilitarian locker spaces, and the lack of amenities and enhancements limit the student-athlete's experience. During competitions, spectators and student-athletes are removed from each other by a glass partition, separating the spectators from the action and isolating the student-athletes from the energy of the crowd.

The existing pool mechanical equipment is in the basement below the pool deck. While this is a reasonable use of space, periodic maintenance and equipment replacement is severely hindered by difficult access to this space.

Facility improvements are crucial if UW wishes to continue competing in swimming and diving at the Division I level. With the renovation and expansion of Corbett Pool the University of Wyoming will be poised to achieve current standards for competition facilities.

Facilities Improvements

A new competitive swimming and diving facility was placed in the top three athletic priorities that UW identified in 2011. In 2014, the University commissioned a design team to complete a Level II equivalent document that included conceptual design and cost estimating for two alternative schemes. The first scheme was very similar to the program identified in this report, while a second scheme envisioned the natatorium as a stand-alone facility.

The new natatorium will feature a ten-lane 50-meter pool with movable bulkheads, a dive tower, and diving well. Movable bulkheads will maximize flexibility of use allowing multiple activities to happen concurrently. Spectator seating will be located on an upper balcony level. As envisioned in the Athletic Facilities Master Plan, the new aquatics facilities will be located outside the footprint of the existing natatorium allowing the existing

facility to remain in use while new construction is accomplished. The remainder of the Corbett building would be left in its current configuration and use.

Most of the program support space is proposed to be located within the shell of the existing natatorium. The program support space includes the home team space, locker rooms, team room, sports medicine, and a video screening room. Mechanical space for the new pool will be located at grade within this footprint, eliminating the need for basement access. The basement would become free for program storage space. The remainder of the Corbett building would be left in its current configuration and use.

The program for an updated facility is centered around the new pool, anchored by an extensive deck which would be capable of hosting dry land training and ample staging space for meets. Satellite coach's offices, storage, and a wet classroom would be accessible from the pool deck. Spectators will be accommodated through a seating area with a minimum capacity of 500 people separating spectator circulation and access from that of the competitors. Interior clear heights within the natatorium should be a minimum of thirty feet above the main pool body and forty feet above the diving area. Pool mechanical spaces are a critical component of the program, requiring adequate size, access, and utility infrastructure to support a large body of water.

The existing campus utility and central plant facilities will be utilized to support the facility. A silver equivalent LEED rating with alternative energy and systems approaches to sustainability will be a required with all applicable analyses. The building design will incorporate the campus materials palette, design guidelines and require approval by the University of Wyoming Exterior Design Advisory Committee.

Programs to be Served

With a new state-of-the-art natatorium facility, Campus Recreation could provide greater aquatic opportunities for our Club Sport athletes, recreational swimmers, Intramural Sports participants, and Outdoor Program clinic participants when the pool is not in use by Athletics. This includes program activities such as competitive and recreational swimming, water polo, inner tube water polo, kayaking, water sports instruction, scuba and other specialized instructional or certificate programs.

The natatorium is one of several components of the Corbett complex. Academic users, intramurals, student recreation users, community users, and student-athletes all use portions of the building. The Athletics Master Plan focused solely on the natatorium components of the facility, with the recognition that any of the other facilities affected by the master plan proposal must, at a minimum, replace or restore those facilities to their current condition.

Potential Partnerships

The University of Wyoming's goal is to raise the standard for both the current and prospective swimming and diving student-athletes. An upgrade of the existing facilities will create opportunities for high-altitude training camps as well as camps run by the coaching staff. These types of additional uses could offer revenue-generation opportunities to help offset the costs of operating the pool.

While the University would market the new aquatic facility as a destination venue for other uses, catering to potential outside interests is not a priority.

Site Ownership

There are no site ownership constraints associated with the proposed site.

Permitting

If funding were made available and construction authorized, the University would be required to obtain all applicable building permits. This includes obtaining all applicable Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality permits as they relate to water service, generators and hazardous materials testing.

Environmental Considerations and Constraints

In executing this project, the University would take all necessary precautions to assure the site is clear of hazardous materials. If renovation of the existing Corbett facility, the University would contract with an industrial hygienist to perform soils testing, asbestos and lead paint testing of the entire facility. Should hazardous materials be encountered, remediation would be performed prior to construction.

Legal Constraints

The University does not anticipate legal constraints associated with the project.

Alternate Sources of Space to Purchase or Lease

During the previous Level II planning effort two sites were considered. The first being an addition to the south end of the existing facility as outlined in this report. A second scheme was considered in which the facility was stand-alone in the parking lot south of Corbett. The attached scheme was preferred as it allowed for much of the program space to be located within renovated portions of the existing building. If the facility is constructed as a stand-alone facility it would need to be larger to accommodate these support spaces. Proximity to the other athletic facilities such as the High-Altitude Performance Center and training facilities is important to best serve student athletes. There are no apparent alternate sources of space in the City of Laramie that can meet this set of criteria.

Project Budget

The Level II equivalent study, completed April of 2014, estimated the total project cost at \$25.5M. This estimate was prepared by the construction firm GE Johnson who consulted with local sub-contractors in developing the estimate. Including an 5% cost escalation factor per year over the past 5 years equates to a present-day total project budget of \$30.1M.