



WISCONSIN
STATE FAIR PARK

BIENNIAL REPORT 2023 - 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION/AGENCY OVERVIEW	3
MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES	4
PERFORMANCE MEASURES	5
FY23-24 FINANCIAL REPORT	6
FY24-25 FINANCIAL REPORT	7
FY23-24 WISCONSIN STATE FAIR REPORT (AUGUST 3-13, 2023)	8
FY24-25 WISCONSIN STATE FAIR REPORT (AUGUST 1-11, 2024)	10
FY23-24 NON-FAIR EVENT REPORT (INCLUDING HARVEST FAIR)	12
FY24-25 FINANCIAL SUMMARY AND FY25-27 PROJECTIONS	16
FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES	17

INTRODUCTION/AGENCY OVERVIEW

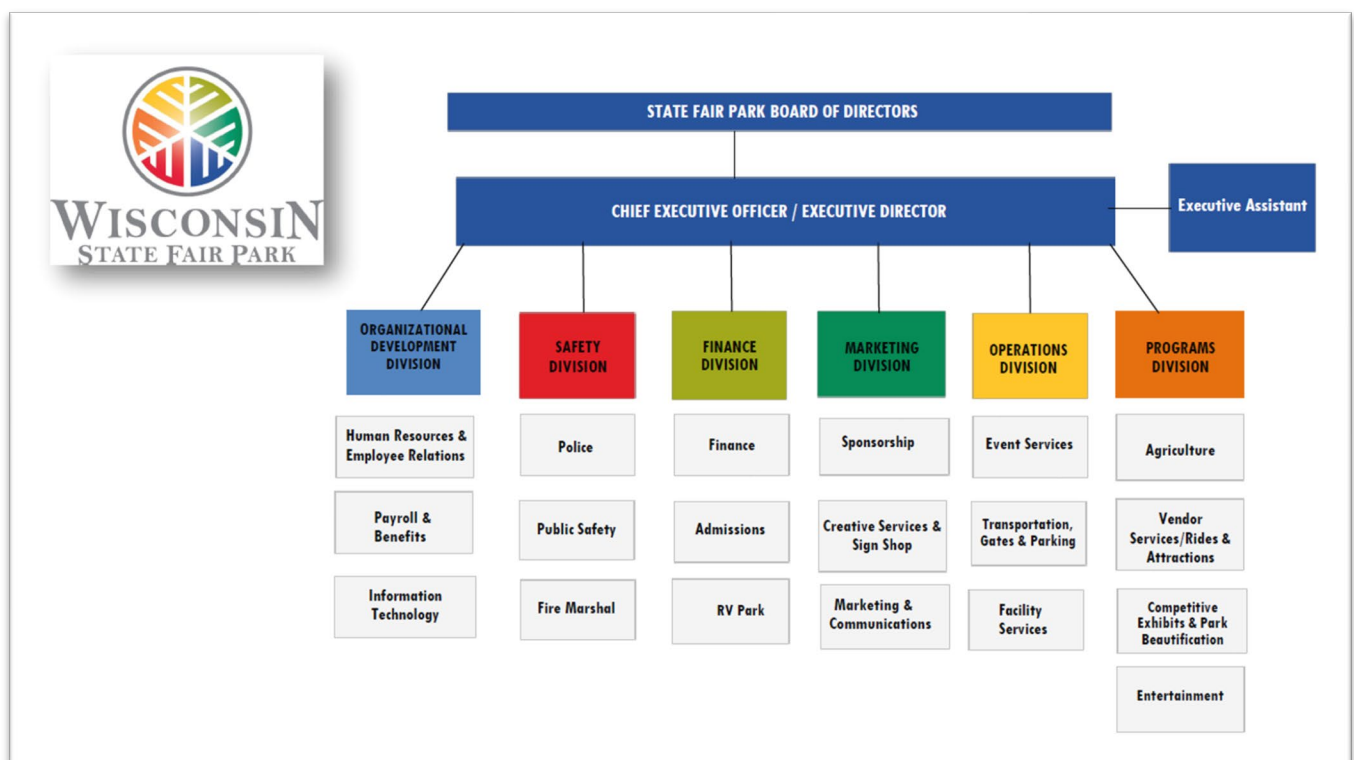
The Wisconsin State Fair Park Board of Directors includes seven members appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate. It also includes four state legislators, the Secretary of the Department of Tourism and the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. The Board is directed to oversee the Fair Park, set policy, and appoint a Chief Executive Officer to manage and supervise the 200 acres of property that hosts the annual 11-day State Fair, Harvest Fair, and multiple regional and local events on a year-round basis.



For more information about the State Fair Park Board of Directors please click [here](#). A current listing of Wisconsin State Fair Park management is available [here](#).

State Fair Park is a year-round entertainment venue that hosts activities, events, meetings, and more. Home to the Exposition Center, Tommy G. Thompson Youth Center, Milwaukee Mile Speedway, Wisconsin Products Pavilion, and many other facilities, hundreds of events are held at the Fair Park each year, including the annual Wisconsin State Fair, presented by UScellular. The Fair welcomes an average of one million Fairgoers each year, and other events held at the Fair Park bring in a one million visitors annually.

For more information about State Fair Park please click [here](#).



MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

Wisconsin State Fair Park

The mission of the board is to provide a leading year-round venue for agricultural, exhibition, sports, entertainment, cultural and educational uses to provide positive economic impact to the State of Wisconsin and social benefits to its residents and visitors, ultimately moving the state forward. The park will be supported by the highest quality event and facility management professionals who seek to deliver value-added services to the park's visitors and customers and who are dedicated to continuous improvement in operating performance.

Wisconsin State Fair

Celebrate the rich history and promising future of the State of Wisconsin by promoting agriculture, the cornerstone of the fair industry, and other industries paramount to the state's success, through education, participation and competition. Provide a fun, family-friendly, affordable and safe event for visitors of all ages and ethnicities, creating memories and traditions to be carried on for generations.

Goal: Elevate the brand to improve the experience for all fairgoers and exhibitors.

Objective: Continue to provide programming and offerings at the annual State Fair that generate strong attendance, length of stay, and revenue.

Objective: Consistently grow and improve safety and security to ensure a safe and comfortable environment.

Goal: Attract and diversify event prospects at the State Fair Park throughout the year beyond the annual State Fair.

Objective: Provide a venue offering flexible spaces that can be used by many customers.

Objective: Increase exposure of the Milwaukee Mile to continue engagement in racing events.

Goal: Utilize the facilities study conducted in 2023 to effectively plan capital improvements at the State Fair Park.

Objective: Create a project timeline that is feasible and prioritized by need.

Objective: Ensure projects increase the ability to expand programming for the annual State Fair.

Objective: Allocate and realize funding requirements to support capital improvements.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

2023 - 2024 GOALS AND ACTUALS

Prog. No.	Performance Measure	Goal 2023	Actual 2023	Goal 2024	Actual 2024
1.	Generate revenues	\$31,600,000	\$31,261,375	\$33,175,000	\$36,343,239
1.	Manage expenditures	\$31,200,000	\$29,528,314	\$32,775,000	\$32,718,827
1.	Surplus/(Deficit)	\$400,000	\$2,003,061	\$400,000	\$3,624,412

Note: Based on fiscal year

2025, 2026, AND 2027 GOALS

Prog. No.	Performance Measure	Goal 2025	Goal 2026	Goal 2027
1.	Generate revenues	\$38,035,000	\$41,000,000	\$44,000,000
1.	Manage expenditures	\$36,560,000	\$39,000,000	\$42,000,000
1.	Surplus/(Deficit)	\$1,475,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000

Note: Based on fiscal year

FY23-24 FINANCIAL REPORT

Wisconsin State Fair Park - FY 2024 (Jul 1, 2023 - Jun 30, 2024)

	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Variance Over/(Under)	Var %
Revenues:				
By Event:	FY24 - June 2024 YTD			
State Fair	\$ 28,800,000	\$ 30,022,178	\$ 1,222,178	4%
Promoter Events/Expo/Track	3,950,000	4,426,809	476,809	12%
Harvest Fair/Special Events	500,000	847,954	347,954	70%
RV Park	1,150,000	1,310,144	160,144	14%
Total Revenues by Event	\$ 38,035,000	\$ 36,607,085	\$ 2,207,085	6%
<i>Increase from prior year</i>		<i>\$ 2,946,539</i>		
By Type:				
Admissions (Gate/Midway/Race)	\$ 16,000,000	\$ 16,930,254	\$ 930,254	6%
Building and Space Rentals	4,500,000	4,606,573	106,573	2%
Food & Beverage / Spin & Attractions	8,100,000	9,044,938	944,938	12%
Business Partnership (Incl Indy)	2,700,000	2,846,260	146,260	5%
Purchased Services	1,550,000	1,450,433	(99,567)	-6%
Parking	1,550,000	1,814,927	264,927	17%
Other	-	13,700	13,700	
Total Revenue by Type	\$ 34,400,000	\$ 36,707,085	\$ 2,307,085	7%
Expenditures:				
Admin/Admissions/Finance/IT/HR	\$ 6,780,000	\$ 7,008,068	\$ 228,068	3%
Police/Public Safety	3,300,000	3,501,282	201,282	6%
Entertainment/Stages/Hfair	3,708,000	3,840,656	132,656	4%
Marketing/Communications	2,643,000	2,447,710	(195,290)	-7%
Agriculture	2,247,000	2,261,519	14,519	1%
Facilities/Buildings	6,232,000	6,476,266	244,266	4%
Vendor/Exhibitor/Spin	5,575,000	5,603,675	28,675	1%
Event Services/Parking/RV	1,670,000	1,788,475	118,475	7%
Total Operating Expenditures	\$ 32,155,000	\$ 32,927,651	\$ 772,651	2%
<i>Increase from prior year</i>		<i>\$ (722,798)</i>		
Operating Surplus/(Shortfall)	\$ 5,880,000	\$ 3,679,434	\$ 1,434,434	24%

Capital Reserve FY24 ACTIVITY

Beginning Balance	\$ 7,276,356
Debt Service - Oct/Nov 2023 (FR)	\$ (260,245)
Debt Service - Apr 2024 (FR)	\$ (971,660)
Capital Funding (made) CPP, track, AE	\$ (1,438,733)
Operating Surplus	\$ 3,679,434
FY2024 Ending Balance	\$ 8,285,152

FY24-25 FINANCIAL REPORT

Wisconsin State Fair Park - FY 2025 (Jul 1, 2024 - Jun 30, 2025)

	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Variance Over/(Under)	Var %
Revenues:				
By Event:	FY25 - June 2025 YTD			
State Fair	\$ 29,100,000	\$ 29,923,021	\$ 823,021	3%
Promoter Events/Expo/Track	4,000,000	4,020,603	20,603	1%
Track: Indy/Testing/Other	2,335,000	3,177,278	842,278	36%
RNC-Related + Rally(2)	700,000	1,909,135	1,209,135	173%
Harvest Fair/Special Events	650,000	922,200	272,200	42%
RV Park	1,250,000	1,376,342	126,342	10%
Total Revenues by Event	\$ 38,035,000	\$ 41,328,579	\$ 3,293,579	9%
Increase from prior year		\$ 4,721,494		
By Type:				
Admissions (Gate/Midway/Race)	\$ 18,035,000	\$ 18,660,989	\$ 625,989	3%
Building and Space Rentals	5,500,000	5,544,726	44,726	1%
Food & Beverage / Spin & Attractions	8,700,000	9,674,678	974,678	11%
Business Partnership (Incl Indy)	2,700,000	3,797,445	1,097,445	41%
Purchased Services	1,550,000	1,861,878	311,878	20%
Parking	1,550,000	1,788,863	238,863	15%
Total Revenue by Type	\$ 38,035,000	\$ 41,328,579	\$ 3,293,579	9%
Expenditures:				
Admin/Admissions/Finance/IT/HR	\$ 7,159,000	\$ 8,141,305	\$ 982,305	14%
Police/Public Safety	4,018,000	3,562,164	(455,836)	-11%
Entertainment/Stages/Hfair	4,128,000	4,222,847	94,847	2%
Marketing/Communications	2,959,000	2,595,217	(363,783)	-12%
Agriculture	2,458,000	2,485,629	27,629	1%
Facilities/Buildings	6,633,000	6,688,639	55,639	1%
Vendor/Exhibitor/Spin	6,259,000	5,981,147	(277,853)	-4%
Event Services/Parking/RV	2,946,000	4,611,248	1,665,248	57%
Total Operating Expenditures	\$ 36,560,000	\$ 38,288,196	\$ 1,728,196	5%
Increase from prior year		\$ 5,360,545		
Operating Surplus/(Shortfall)	\$ 1,475,000	\$ 3,040,383	\$ 1,565,383	106%

Capital Reserve FY25 ACTIVITY

Beginning Balance	\$ 8,285,152
Debt Service - Oct/Nov 2024 (FR)	\$ (278,802)
Debt Service - Apr 2025 (FR)	\$ (836,046)
Capital Funding (made) CPP, track, AE	\$ (6,375,091)
Operating Surplus	\$ 3,873,181
FY2025 Ending Balance	\$ 4,668,394

FY23-24 WISCONSIN STATE FAIR (AUGUST 3-13, 2023)



While strong attendance is certainly a statistic to be proud of, the 172nd Wisconsin State Fair proved to be successful in a multitude of ways. Fairgoer experience, including safety, is always a priority, and the 2023 State Fair delivered on all accounts.



The Wisconsin State Fair is a platform for showcasing the state's commodities and offerings both to residents and those beyond state lines. An impressive 21% of visitors traveled over 50 miles to attend the event, with 6% of Fairgoers visiting from Illinois and 4% from other states and countries. One day just wasn't enough with a two-day visit coming in at the average.

Food & Beverage continually reigns as a top reason Fairgoers attend annually. Visitors enjoyed *The Sporkies* food competition winner, the Beer Cheese Wisconsin Lava Cake from WürstBar. The food competition was also expanded for the first time to include *The Drinkies*, with The Ferris Mule from Old Fashioned Sipper Club named the inaugural winner.

The new *Cirque at the Fair* brought the big top to the Fair Park. A cast of aerial artists, acrobats and award-winning jugglers entertained crowds with their free show. Those wanting to experience the action up close were able to purchase VIP ringside tickets.

The Main Stage welcomed over 57,000 Fairgoers. Top selling acts included REO Speedwagon, Lindsey Sterling, Alabama, and comedian Jeff Dunham.





SOMETHING *For* EVERYONE

**WISCONSIN
STATE FAIR**
AUGUST 3-13, 2023
Presented By  uscellular

The advertising campaign for 2023 emphasized that the Wisconsin State Fair has *Something For Everyone*. Colorful, authentic images captured agriculture, entertainment, rides, attractions, food and beverage, and memory-making moments sure to recall heartfelt memories. Expanding the reach, email marketing saw an 18% increase in subscribers and over \$1 million in revenue was attributed to email campaigns.



Ride and game numbers were also strong in SpinCity leading to a profit growth of 9.9% over 2022.

In the end, 1,043,450 people enjoyed the 2023 Wisconsin State Fair, just shy of the previous 2019 record. This exceeded the annual goal by 4%.

FY24-25 WISCONSIN STATE FAIR REPORT (AUGUST 1-11, 2024)



A record-breaking 1,136,805 Fairgoers visited the 173rd annual Wisconsin State Fair, outperforming 2019, when 1,130,572 came through the entrances. These outstanding attendance and revenue numbers are a testament to the staff, the board, and valued partners who worked tirelessly to enhance the Wisconsin State Fair experience and bring added value to Fairgoer visits.

Focused efforts were placed in creating new programs and offerings. Eleven families were crowned the UScellular Fairgoers of the Day to the surprise and delight of Fairgoers who embodied the Fair spirit.

Cream Puffs were celebrated in delectable fashion for the 100th anniversary of the Fair's signature treat. In addition to the 352,000 Original Cream Puffs sold, 21,000 were enjoyed in specialty flavors such as Root Beer Float, Raspberry Cheesecake, and English Toffee. Also included was Chocolate Birthday Cake in conjunction with the Cream Puff Lovin' Celebration, presented by UW Credit Union, which highlighted every aspect of Cream Puff fun from eating contests to dance parties. The Kremer family and Wisconsin Bakers Association were also honored for bringing the Cream Puff to the Wisconsin State Fair.

The deliciousness and thrills didn't stop at Cream Puffs. Foods, new and beloved, did not disappoint, leading to a 3% increase in Food & Beverage revenue. SpinCity, the Fair's Independent Ride and Game Area, also saw a revenue increase of 8%.

Although many were disappointed by the cancellation of top-selling Main Stage show – Garbriel “Fluffy” Iglesias – due to weather, fans enjoyed shows like Lauren Daigle, Foreigner, and Wisconsin-based comedian Charlie Berens.

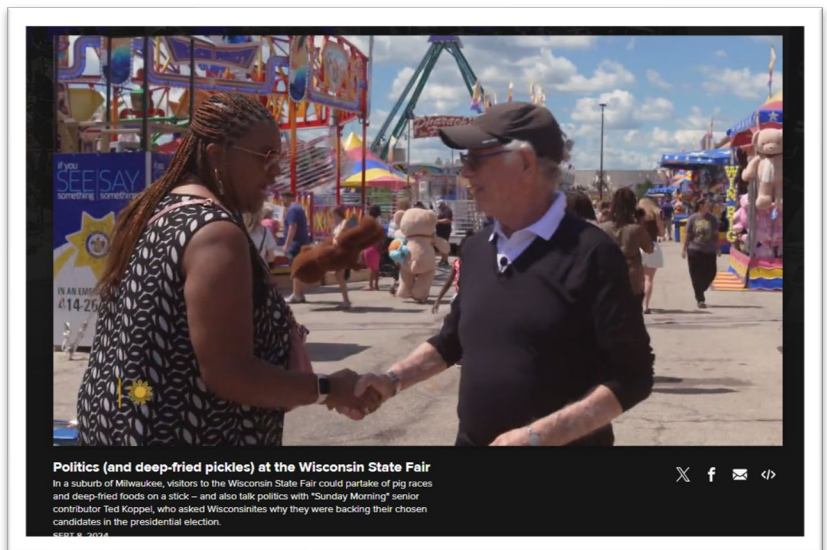
Sponsorship continues to grow, supporting the mission and programming at Wisconsin State Fair. A 6.6% increase helped not only in financial support, but in valuable experiences and activations provided by our partners.





Marketing for the 2024 Wisconsin State Fair had everyone *Feeling Good*. A 1970s vibe proved reminiscent and vivacious. The figure portrayed in the commercial and imagery was so recognizable, he was approached by Fairgoer fans during a visit to the Fair. An influencer program also expanded marketing reach meeting audiences where they are. Additionally, email subscribers increased by 18% and social media followers by 4%.

One of the biggest Marketing highlights included national and international coverage of the 2024 Wisconsin State Fair. While Fox Business interviewed Fairgoers about price increases in their daily lives and CBS News asked voters what concerns them most about our economy and what they want to see in a President, beautiful views of the Fair were shown and those interviewed spoke of their favorite Fair elements.



Sunday Morning - CBS News - September 8, 2025

Taking it internationally, *Roadtrip Amerika*, a German production that showcases American food as a group camps across North America, stopped by to take in the sights, sounds, and most-of-all, the tastes. They tried Fair favorites like funnel cakes, deep-fried Oreos, and even alligator. Viewers were treated to clips of bustling streets and delectable foods.



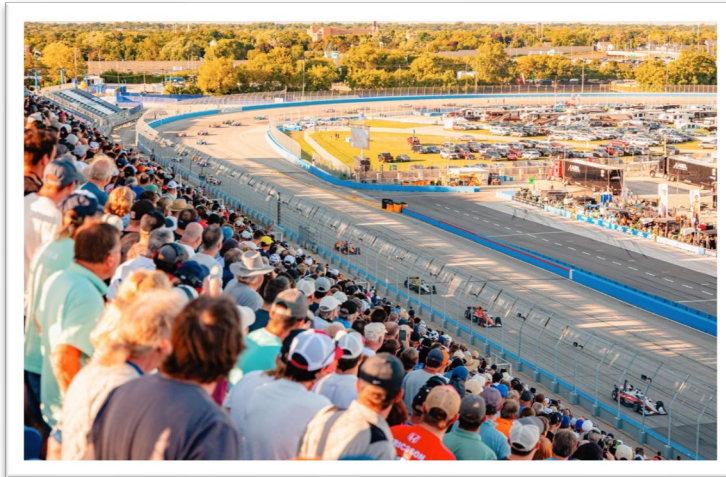
In closing, the 2024 Wisconsin State Fair was highly successful, in part due to great weather, but also because of continued engaging, memorable programming and experiences provided at Wisconsin State Fair Park.

FY23-25 NON-FAIR EVENT REPORT (INCLUDING HARVEST FAIR)

2023 and 2024 brought strong financials in the area of non-fair programming. In addition to the annual Harvest Fair, an election year offered opportunities for increased revenue with facility usage during the Republican National Convention (RNC) operations and campaign events. The return of INDYCAR racing also highlighted the legendary Milwaukee Mile.

The 2023 Harvest Fair marked 30 years of the annual event. Attendance recorded an increase of 30% over 2022, with revenue up 38% at over \$860,000.

The 2024 Harvest Fair brought a 10% increase in attendance. This was the first year paid admission was implemented for adults with free admission for youth 12 and under. New attractions included animal races and pony cycle rides, and the event achieved record media coverage.



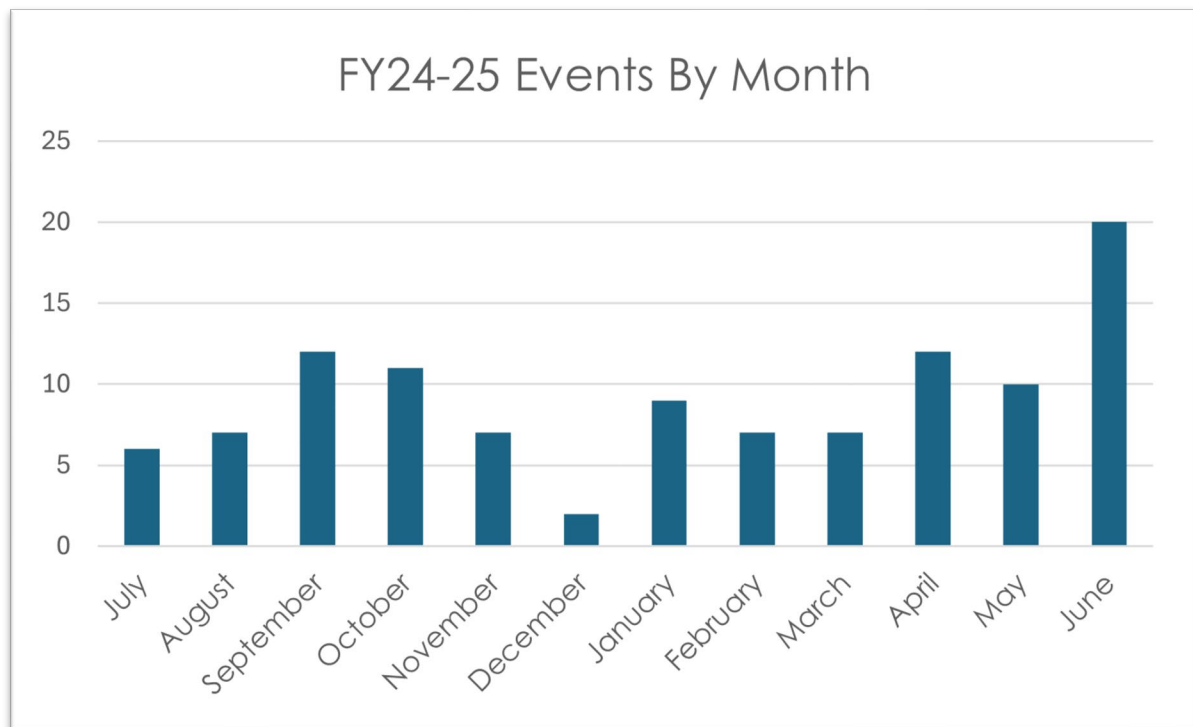
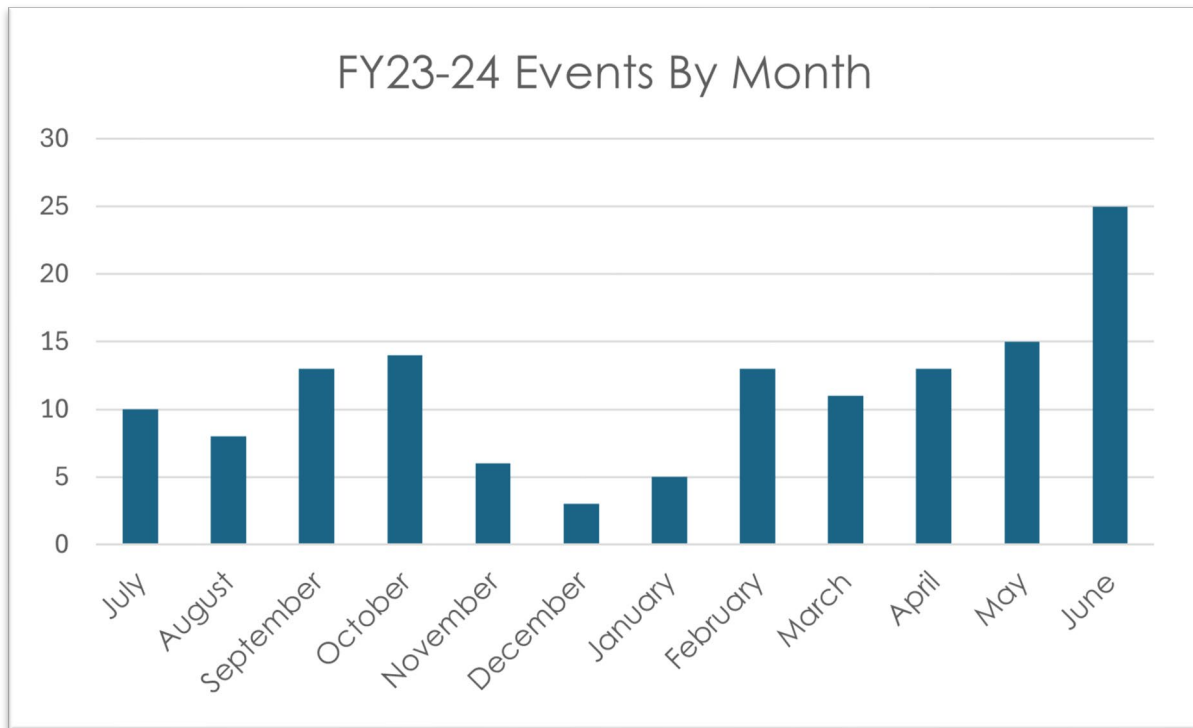
The *Milwaukee Mile 250s* brought a doubleheader racing weekend to the historic oval. Not only did the weekend feature two NTT INDYCAR races and one INDY NXT race, but the footprint and experience were expanded beyond the grandstands to include a Free Fan Zone. This allowed both race fans and those without race tickets to gather and enjoy the event. Wisconsin State Fair Park staff and INDYCAR staff partnered to program the weekend, including national musical acts, vendors, and family-friendly activities.

An [economic impact study](#), conducted in partnership with University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, showed a \$41 million impact attributed to the weekend.

Overall, financials reflect both increases in revenue and expenditures due to operational needs related to additional large-scale events. Improvements were made to the track and the Fair Park, allowing for long-term, safe, and effective usage of venues.

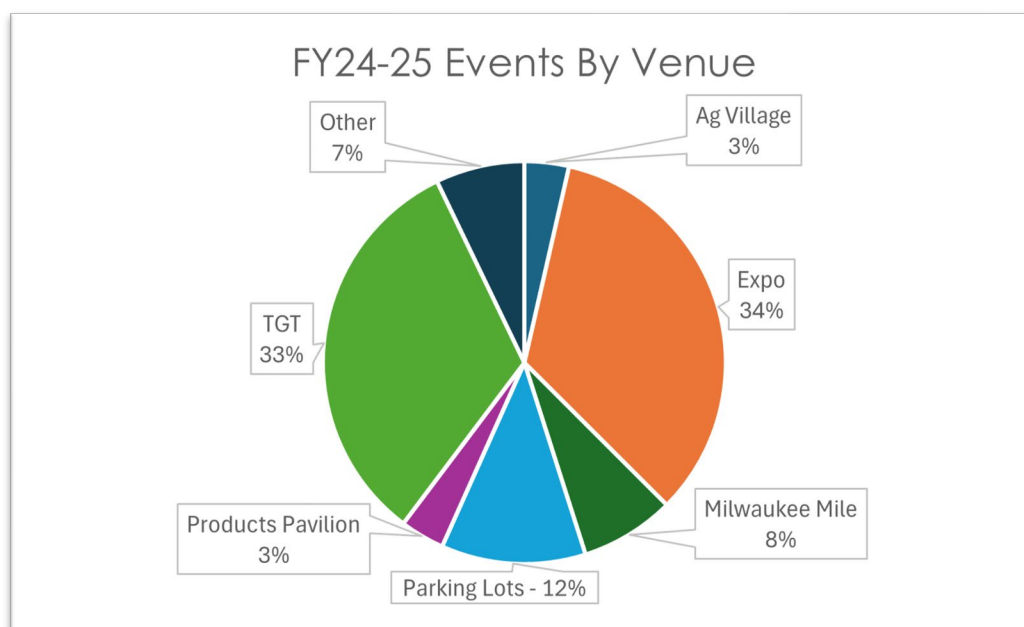
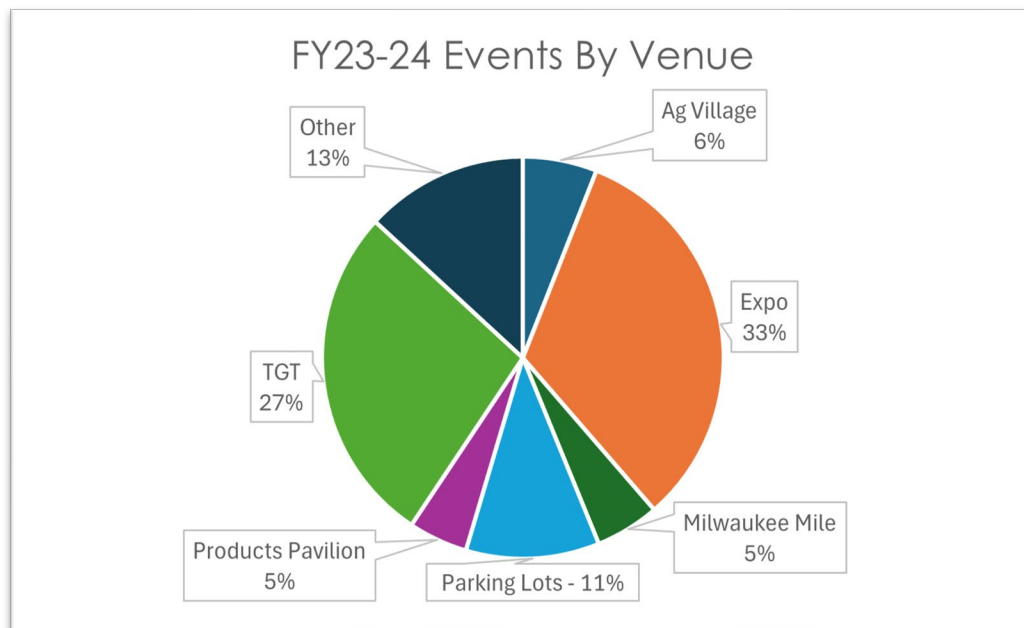
In FY23-24, the number of non-fair event rentals was 136, while in FY24-25 the number decreased to 110. While it may seem like decrease in events would negatively impact revenue, that is not the case. Facility usage related to the election year positively impacted revenue with longer term and more expansive space rentals.

The charts below illustrate the number of non-Fair events by month. These numbers trend fairly steadily year-over-year, with January, February and March tending to be the highest revenue months outside of the Fair due to larger-scale events.

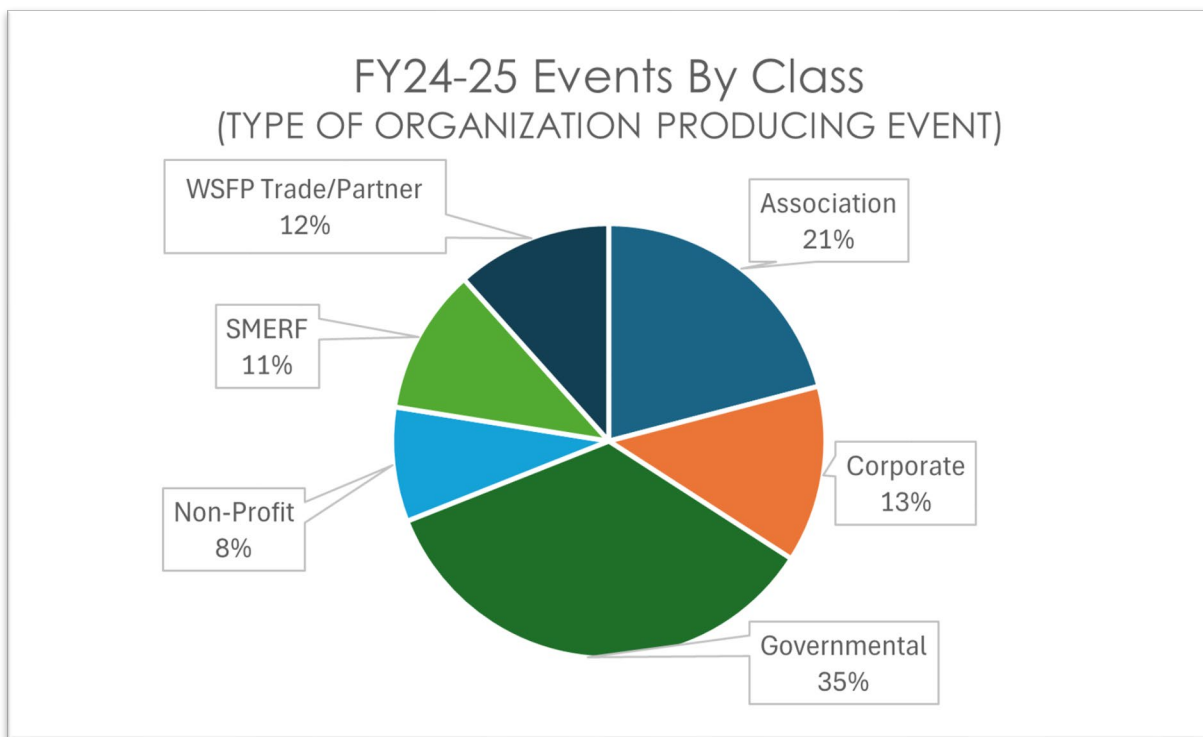
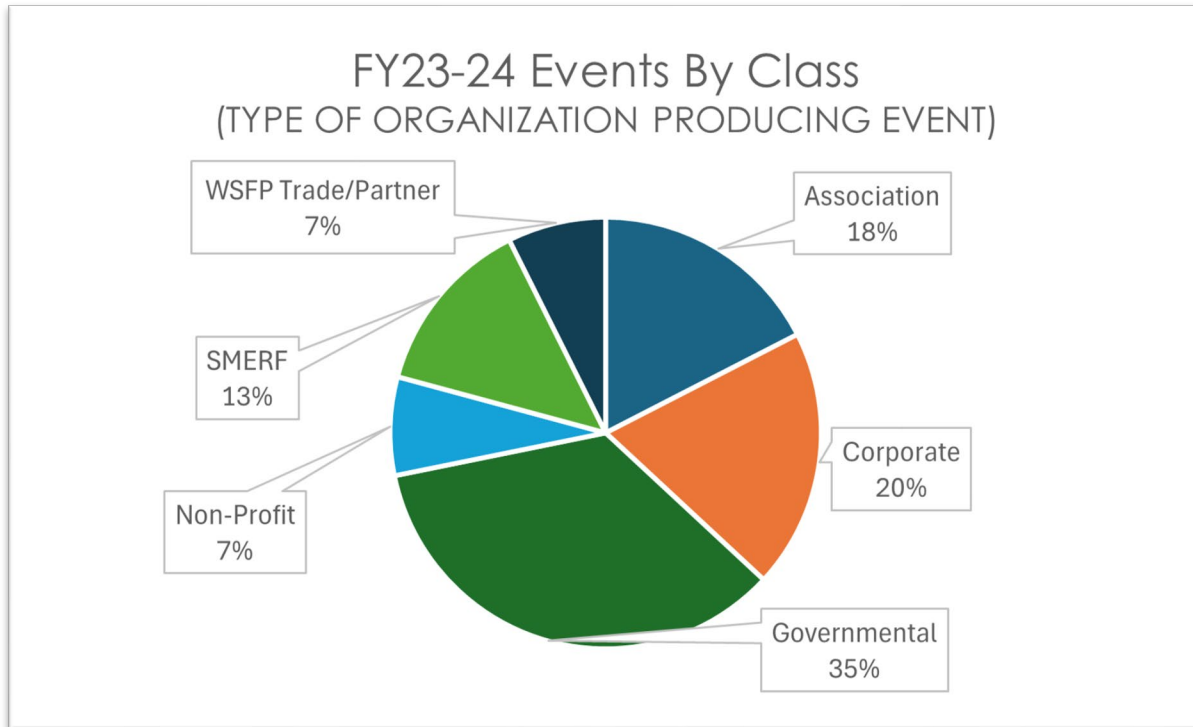


The mission of State Fair Park is to “Provide a leading year-round venue for agricultural, exhibition, sports, entertainment, cultural, and educational uses to provide positive economic impact to the state of Wisconsin and social benefits to its residents and visitors, ultimately moving the state FORWARD.”

With this mission in mind, State Fair Park is proud to offer a number of venue options for meetings, events, and gatherings. As displayed in the charts below, the Exposition Center hosts the most events annually. It is important to note that the Cream Puff Pavilion, included in the “other” category, was under renovation for the majority of the FY24-25 term. A number of events normally occurring in the Cream Puff Pavilion were relocated to other locations. In addition, an increase in Milwaukee Mile events can be seen in response to track improvement projects and the return of INDYCAR.



The flexibility of State Fair Park's venues also allows for usage by a number of groups and organizations. Governmental entities, associations, and corporations continue to be the most frequent users.



Heading into the next biennium, we will continue to work to grow revenue associated with non-Fair event rentals with a focus on the new Dairy Building (formerly known as the Cream Puff Pavilion) and growth of the INDYCAR weekend.

FY23-25 FINANCIAL SUMMARY AND FY26-27 PROJECTIONS

State Fair Park saw steady revenue growth of 6% in FY23-24, followed by a further 9% increase for FY24-25. The addition of major events such as the RNC and INDYCAR have significantly boosted economic activity, with expenditures increasing inline with revenue to support expanded operations and maintain a healthy bottom-line.

REVENUES

- Overall program revenue of the agency grew to \$36.6 million in FY23-24 and to \$41.3 million in FY24-25.
- The 2023 and 2024 Wisconsin State Fairs recorded the third-highest and highest attendances on record, respectively. Despite periods of extreme weather during the 2024 Fair, attendance exceeded one million, contributing to the Wisconsin State Fair Park surpassing budget projections across all areas.
- Promoter, Exposition, and Racetrack event revenues increased significantly in FY24-25, primarily due to \$5 million in additional revenue from the RNC, various campaign events, and a jointly promoted INDYCAR Series races.
- Harvest Fair has continued to grow as a signature event for State Fair Park, supported by increased investments in safety and entertainment. The introduction of paid admission for the 2024 Harvest Fair generated an additional \$500,000 in revenue above budget projections for the 2023-25 period.
- The RV Park has continued to perform strongly, consistently operating at high occupancy levels. This sustained demand is driven in part by racing events held both onsite and throughout the Milwaukee area.

EXPENDITURES

- Expenses exceeded budget by 2% in FY23-24 and 5% in FY24-25; however, these increases were aligned with higher-than-anticipated revenue. The additional revenue resulted in some pass-through expenses but also provided the capacity for State Fair Park to address deferred maintenance and invest in capital improvement projects across the grounds.

OPERATING SURPLUS

- Operating Surplus of \$3.6M was achieved for FY23-24. This surplus remained strong at \$3.0M for FY24-25. These two highly successful years created an ending Capital Reserve balance of \$4.7M and funded in part the renovation of the Dairy Building.

PROJECTIONS

Severe weather forced the closure for the final Saturday evening and Sunday of the 2025 Wisconsin State Fair, negatively impacting current-year revenue projections. However, a well-attended Harvest Fair, a robust exposition event season, and continued cost-control efforts are expected to help offset these losses as State Fair Park works to rebuild its operating reserves in the upcoming fiscal year.

FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES

Wisconsin State Fair Park (SFP) recognizes the benefit of maximizing the employment options available to employees while still providing efficient services to our customers and maintaining operational needs. It is the policy of State Fair Park to provide employees with the flexibility to request remote work at an alternative worksite and/or approve flexible and alternative work schedules when operationally feasible. We understand that a traditional full-time work pattern does not always meet the needs of our employees or our operation for various reasons.

Remote work is a voluntary program initiated by the employee and is not an employee right or benefit. The CEO/Executive Director ensures that requests from employees for remote work are approved in accordance with the provisions of this policy, ER 42.01 (Wisc. Admin Code) and s. 230.215, Stats., and HR Handbook Chapter 746.

Remote work refers to a work flexibility arrangement under which an employee performs the duties and responsibilities of their position, and other authorized activities as determined by the supervisor, from an approved alternate worksite other than the employee's primary office, one or more days per week on a standard and recurring basis. Remote work does not impede SFP's ability to develop and/or maintain alternative work patterns, flexible scheduling for employees or ad hoc telecommuting options. Approval of the telecommuting plan may allow employees to work hours outside of their normal or standard work schedule, on occasion.

New employees are eligible to work remotely after an initial 30-day probationary period has been completed and must meet certain requirements. These include, but are not limited to, the ability to accomplish their work, having an appropriate workspace at the alternate location, demonstration of effective work habits, productivity, and the ability to work independently, and sustained performance expectations.

Employees are required to complete a Remote Worker agreement with the State of Wisconsin HRIS system, STAR, and submit it to their supervisor for approval. Each division is responsible for administration of this policy.

Because the annual Wisconsin State Fair event generates the majority of State Fair Park's revenue, and the fact that an event of its magnitude requires extensive in-person collaboration and physical/manual labor, it is imperative that the majority of our staff be in the office during the summer months, therefore our policy allows for more remote work in the winter months and less in the summer months, though the policy is flexible enough to be adjusted based on other extenuating circumstances as well as the specific needs of each position.

Offering this flexibility has proven to be extremely positive for our agency in terms of recruitment and retention.