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LUBBOCK AVALANCHE-JOURNAL

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LUBBOCK EXPO CENTER



The site of the Lubbock County Expo Center, 2680 N University Ave., as seen on May 1, 2025 in Lubbock, Texas. The renderings on the sign do not match the final rendering from the LCEC board, but are concept art renderings. MATEO ROSILES/ AVALANCHE-JOURNAL

Advisory members voice concerns about finances

Mateo Rosiles
Lubbock Avalanche-Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Lubbock County appointed advisory board approved a resolution supporting an Expo Center Project to county leaders, but not without some objections.

On Wednesday afternoon, the Lubbock County Expo Center Local Government Corporation Board of Directors — also known as the LGC — met in downtown Lubbock to discuss the future of the Expo Center project.

However, during that meeting, several key findings came to light by one of the board members — former Texas State representative and accountant, Carl Isett, concerning the Lubbock County Expo Center Board (LCEC).

“They failed at it, and now they want this last-gasp effort to try to stay in the game,” Isett said. “We have already spent \$7.7 million before we ever put a shovel in the ground. And we’re allowing the same people who have failed for seven years to continue on.”

Here’s a quick dive into the background of the project, where it’s at today, the new findings and what’s happening next.

What is the Lubbock County Expo Center?

The Lubbock County Expo Center stems from a 2018 county election that approved a \$40 million bond for a multi-purpose center funded through the use of the county’s Hotel Occupancy Tax. Over 60% of Lubbock County voters approved it.

This also initiated a public-private partnership between the Lubbock County Expo Center (LCEC) non-profit board and the county government,

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LGC Board of Directors

where the board would fundraise the other portion needed to build the expo center.

Original reporting from the A-J put the initial price tag at \$50 million for a venue featuring a main arena, a warm-up arena, an equestrian pavilion and a livestock pavilion totaling 500,000 square feet. As of April 30, 2025, Randy Jordan, chairman of the LCEC non-profit board, told the A-J that the price has gone up to \$92 million. However, the price changed again.

Shortly after the election, county and LCEC leaders announced land near North University Avenue and North Loop 289 as the planned location for the project. Temporary signage was installed, but there has been no other work at the site in the years since, as the private side of fundraising efforts has not raised enough to break ground on it.

Lubbock County Judge Curtis Parrish told the A-J in May 2025 that the county has already invested \$6.5 million of the \$40 million in the project to

help pay for design and planning, with an additional \$180,000 to support fundraising efforts. That price has gone up, too.

In November 2025, LCEC Chairman Jordan stood before community members and local media, saying “we have a plan” and that it was ready to be sent to the advisory board and county leadership for approval.

What’s the current status of the Lubbock County Expo Center?

During Wednesday’s meeting, the expo center’s advisory board heard from Jordan, who said that over the past 90 days, the LCEC board has been working to formalize a plan but needs \$375,000 to contract with Parkhill construction to redo its designs based on the Taylor County Telecom Arena design.

The reason for this: LCEC needs new designs created to match the new \$67 million budget — a \$30 million cut from what Jordan told the A-J about in March 2025.

Advisory board member Gary Boren said that is just the upfront cost to get Parkhill through the schematic design of the center.

“I just want it (clear) that everyone here understands that this is not a \$375,000 project,” Boren said. “This is, once again, going to be right up to \$3 million, if not more.”

For context, that \$3 million in addition to the \$375,000 would be if the advisory board and county approve to have Parkhill create more in-depth architecture plans to build the Expo Center.

Also, the land designated where the facility would be built has remained

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Council to decide fate of data center

Mateo Rosiles
Lubbock Avalanche-Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The fate of a 936-acre “major hyper-scale data center” in Lubbock rests in the hands of the city council, which will soon decide whether to approve or deny it — after it faced opposition from the city’s zoning commission.

At its regular scheduled meeting on Jan. 8, the City of Lubbock’s Planning and Zoning Commission — comprised of appointed citizens and receives no compensation for their time — hosted a public hearing on Zone Case 3548.

The case, according to the agenda, was brought forward by Hugo Reed and Associates, Inc. for Texas Solarworks, LLC, requesting a change several zone changes to 936 acres of unplatted southeast of East Municipal Drive and northeast of Northeast Loop 289 to General Industrial District (GI) Specific Use for Power Generation, Transmission, and Distribution.

“The reason we’re asking for a general industrial is this project is a proposed data center,” said Terry Holman of Hugo, Reed and Associates. “It’s the cloud. It’s processing large amounts of internet data, which requires large amounts of power and so forth.”

Here’s a breakdown of the hour-and-a-half discussion over this zone case and what led the commission to give an unfavorable recommendation to the city council for its consideration.

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Note to readers

Due to the upcoming Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday, there will be no mail delivery on Monday, Jan. 19. Instead of receiving your Jan. 19 paper on Monday, you’ll receive it in the mail on Tuesday, Jan. 20.

Subscriber-only eNewspaper

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