



**The Classic Center Arena, Public Engagement Session #1
Summary of Questions and Answers from Community
April 5, 2021**

- 1. What will the effect be on the number of room nights in the market on a seasonal basis? What is the anticipated ADR?**

We have a committee looking at demand. We are trying to fill the valleys. Hotels are now at 62.4% occupancy. It needs to get up to where it needs to be. Rates are soft right now. We think that more events will drive more business and improve rates.

- 2. Does the plan include box seating for VIP guests?**

Yes. We are including a wide variety of seating options as well as different suite configurations. Some are more expensive than others, which raises more revenue. Suite income helps keep other seat prices reasonable. Due to the size of the venue, all seats are close to the event, so suites are up high in the bowl.

- 3. Is the ice permanent?**

No, but it does stay in place during the hockey season. The below slab infrastructure is permanent and can be turned on/off to freeze or thaw the ice. The ice is about 1" thick. Other events use panelized floors that are installed in sections over the ice.

- 4. Will we be incorporating solar panels into the project? How are we identifying a partner for the installation?**

We are soliciting a solar energy procurement agreement. The vendor will install the panels and sell energy to The Classic Center under the planned arrangement.

- 5. Was there a specific reason why the hotel was removed from the planned projects?**

Initially we went out for bid and found a developer that was ready to develop a hotel. The hotel owners group asked if we could look at an additional 1 cent hotel/motel tax directed to support The Classic Center in lieu of that approach. We agreed, but the required legislation did not pass through the state legislature.

- 6. What style of architecture is planned for the development? What materials are contemplated? (Classic design would be preferred.)**

The team has an open mind on that.



7. Would we consider using local materials, especially Elberton granite, for the exterior of the project?

Yes, we are looking at sourcing materials locally.

8. Are there particular styles suitable for arenas?

There are lots of styles appropriate for an arena. Our firms don't have a house style. Athens is the Classic City, so we are keeping that in mind. The warehouse district and train lines are a potential influence. There is some precedent for white, classical buildings for important public structures. We plan to produce multiple options.

9. Perpetuating the Classic City theme would be nice.

Noted.

10. What is the proposed delivery date for the project?

We are looking to start construction at the end of the year and be wrapping up by the end of 2023.

11. What are some of the issues we are considering in planning the construction of the project, particularly using local businesses and labor?

Yes, the facility is being paid for by Athens-Clarke County so it's appropriate to look to local contractors, including MBE/DBE, to do the work. We are pursuing this with the building contractor.

12. Hospitality jobs are staying open in the current environment. Are we considering partnering with local schools to fill positions and create interning opportunities?

The Classic Center has partnered with Athens Technical College on a two-year program for hospitality management. The Classic Center has also cooperated with Piedmont College on a four-year hospitality business program. Students will work on the CCA campus for credit in the program. We are also working with local high schools on work-study programs. We are working with the Riggers Union to train riggers for the trade show and movie industry.

13. Has there been interest in purchasing the naming rights for the arena?



Yes. We can't speak directly to naming rights, but there are multiple sponsorship opportunities. We are bringing in a marketing firm to assist with sponsorship deals as well as booking events.

- 14. The best venues utilize their environments to integrate with the local environment. We should make use of the east view to the river to create an indoor/outdoor space.**

We agree. The height of the building will allow for great views of the river. We are looking at glass on the east side of the building to take advantage of the view. We are also looking at using our entry plaza from Foundry Street to improve the pedestrian link to the river. The plaza will be an outdoor function venue as well.

- 15. Is there a way to make the facility an attraction on its own when we are not staging an event?**

We are looking at integrating the collection of the former Georgia Music Hall of Fame into the concourse areas. We are also looking at "experiences" with special displays. We are looking at opportunities on the exterior as well.

- 16. What are the long-term issues to manage with the under-ice piping/cooling system?**

There are a few qualified contractors who are expert in these installations. We will not give the job to someone who hasn't done it before. The consultant team has a great deal of experience in this type of installation, including the construction sequence.

- 17. Will the floor plan allow for an indoor livestock or motocross event?**

We will be able to bring in dirt for motocross and equestrian events. Livestock requires more staging area such as outdoor pens so a fairground-type event will not be appropriate.

- 18. How are we planning for impact on surrounding neighborhoods...traffic, noise, lights, etc.? What about the economic impact on the community?**

It's an indoor arena, so when the doors are closed you will not hear the show. The lights are very bright but will also be shielded so they don't get outside the building. A downtown site is great for traffic because there are multiple streets available to come and leave. Traffic disperses better than a facility at a highway interchange. The downtown venue also spreads out the traffic because people eat/drink at local venues



before or after the event. CSL looked at economic impact and estimated a \$30 million annual gain to the local economy from the facility.

19. What are the proposed materials for the interior?

Lots of concrete for the floors. The seats will all be upholstered. There will be sound absorbing elements in the roof. All lighting will be on LED fixtures that are highly adjustable.

20. How are we dealing with life-safety, accessibility issues?

There will be a smoke control system in place which activates automatically in event of a fire. Accessibility is very important, and the entire building will be accessible. All counters will be at accessible height. Seating will be adaptable in appropriate areas, and wheelchair areas will be properly distributed, with available power.

21. Will the arena incorporate exterior digital displays to promote events?

We will have digital signage throughout the inside. The exterior approach has not been decided yet.

22. What provisions will we make for Wi-Fi and other technology in the arena?

DAS will be incorporated throughout the building and a Wi-Fi network installed to provide sufficient reception and bandwidth for the size of the crowd and configuration of the facility.

23. Is the public funding capped at \$34 million? What provisions are we making for cost overruns?

Yes, the SPLOST money is fixed. The management strategy to manage cost is to establish appropriate contingencies throughout the project. These start at a more conservative level early in the design process and are gradually reduced through the design/construction process as things become more certain. Alternates are also used to establish items which may be incorporated if funds allow.

24. How are we planning for additional private partners on the surrounding development parcels?

We are looking at other development partners with Athens-Clarke County. We want to remain true to the A-CC master plan. Additional property will be transferred to The



Classic Center Authority and made available for appropriate private development, which will raise additional funds for the project.

25. Is there a proposed pathway for local high school students to participate in the learning lab?

Yes, there is a program in place to allow HS students to intern and get credit in sports management, hotel management, event management, and music.