

The Board of Directors of the Upper Rio Grande Events & Recreation Complex is excited to announce another milestone in the development of the Mineral County Fairgrounds project, the completion of an initial design phase that gives a vision to the architecture of the buildings planned for the Fairgrounds site. This package contains the images presented by our architects 51% Studios in July 2010, and the concepts behind their development. The Board is excited by a proposal for the project that beautifully reflects the spirit of Creede.

In the spring, 51% Studios was asked to revamp the website, and it gave an excellent opportunity for the team to reflect on the many accomplishments over the project's history. 51% Studios became involved with the project in 2003 and made their first trip to Creede in 2004 to begin developing a Masterplan for the overall organization of the many uses planned for the site. With the recent remediation of the site completed, funded by grants from the EPA and the Colorado Department for Health and Environment, it is timely to focus on building.

One of the pivotal moments in the life of the project was a 'Retreat' held in April 2007. The event was kindly hosted by Broadacres Ranch over two and a half days, and it gave a privileged opportunity for the project's Board of Directors and the architects to resolve key determinates of the project, as well as concepts and strategies critical to the recent design process.

The original inhabitants of Creede, the miners who created the enduring spirit of town, showed inventiveness and ingenuity when building their structures. The aspiration for the recreation complex is to create an architecture which could be described as 'mountain vernacular brought current' that uses local materials in frank and improvisory ways, has an intimate human scale and is environmentally responsive.

First schematic study of architecture for Upper Rio Grande Events & Recreation Complex, incorporating the Mineral County Fairgrounds Vision statement by architects **51% studios**, July 2010

The site has a unique location – it is the first thing you see approaching Creede from either direction, whether you are visiting or just passing by. It is also the last thing you see as you leave Creede. The Upper Rio Grande Events & recreation Complex has the potential to become the visual signature of the town, its architecture and landscape a fitting jewel in the emerald necklace of valleys connected by the Silver Thread Scenic Byway which stretch along the Upper Rio Grande.

The site has good connections to town and surrounding areas, such as the Bachelor Loop Byway taking in historic silver mines and Deep Creek Trail up to Snowshoe Mountain. In partnership with Willow Creek Reclamation Committee, a Voluntary Cleanup plan and EPA/Brownfields grants, the site that was contaminated by years of mining activity is now 90% remediated to residential standards.

New facilities will include a multi-purpose all-season indoor arena, a recreation building with basketball court, swimming pool and activity rooms, a 4H barn and a market garden with composting and greenhouse facilities. Already on site are an outdoor arena and 12 pens, to which will be added two training corrals and trailer parking for overnight eventers.

The buildings act as a filter between the more exposed upper bench and airport road and the wilder natural beauty of the site towards Willow Creek. All buildings are located on the middle bench, earth-

linked and protected from the wind.

The site masterplan has been carefully laid out to be sensitive to environment, scale and both local and regional users. This parti is designed to avoid conflict between different user groups, with animal facilities to the south, indoor arena located centrally and the recreation building closest to town.

Building orientation is primarily dictated by the site topography, with minimal incursion on the lower bench to allow the banks of willow creek to remain undisturbed. Being close to the water table, the building location on the middle bench is ideal for geo-thermal heating loops, which when augmented with solar-thermal go a long way towards providing a net zero heat source. The south facing walls of the swimming pool and arena have trombe walls to warm these spaces during the winter, and cool in the summer. A pv array on the indoor arena roof may allow electricity to be sold back to the grid and their full potential will be pursued in the next phase.

The size and appearance of the roofs is a primary concern when viewed from town and surroundings. The large roofs covering the basketball court and swimming pool are therefore proposed as green roofs, tying the architecture into the surrounding slopes as if the land had just been lifted up. Green roofs are environmentally friendly and control rainwater runoff and lower running costs with their increased thermal mass. Sod roofs are common throughout Southern Colorado with a number of contemporary precedents now achieving LEEDS status.

The recreation building is the new home for Mineral / Creede Arts and Rec with a basketball court, a training/exercise room and swimming pool. These various programs will be linked by a tried and tested cruciform arrangement to allow multiple access points from different parts of the site, which can also be overseen from a single central reception area.

A boulevard connects to the arena, the entrance from the parking drop off on the upper bench, and the walking path up to town to the North. Where the internal space of the boulevard widens to the north it becomes an interior public space with opportunities also for meetings and exhibitions. The lofty space has striking views to the Pillars of Hercules and is naturally top lit.

The swimming pool will have a 4-6 lane lap pool, with a warmer shallower kiddy area and slide, and a therapy pool alongside. The pool has stunning natural views over Willow Creek and is served by change rooms efficiently grouped with other services below the entrance.

The entrance is sheltered and sunny with an inside / outside drop off and pick up area. Long windows afford views into the pool and basketball court and across the boulevard to the wild natural beauty of the site.

Using a bit of the old Creede miner ingenuity, the roof is hung on cables, the sort of wire rope used for mining activities. This uses a fraction of the material a bending member or beam would to support the considerable snow loads and additional load created by the green roof. It is also more easily buildable. The timber laid across the cables creates a warm wooden ceiling. Wherever possible regional materials are used for an authentic architecture which could be easily built by local contractors.

The board of directors is pleased to put forward this vision for the structures that will make up the recreation complex. We think that the architecture will embody the integrity and ingenuity that has been a part of the mining spirit in Creede since the late 1800's.