



# Bringing Ideas and Industries Together

Portland Expo Center  
FY 2015-16 Report

# Portland's vital hub

The Expo Center is well positioned to expand our role as a vital hub for commerce and culture in the greater Portland region. The Expo Center produces big benefits for the region with a small staff of 14 employees. In addition to generating tax revenue and economic activity, the Expo Center covers a \$1.2 million bond payment each year.

|                           |              |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Total spending</b>     | \$43,273,000 |
| <b>Total jobs</b>         | 470          |
| <b>Total earnings</b>     | \$17,145,000 |
| <b>Total tax revenues</b> | \$1,545,000  |



## FY 2015-16 highlights

|   |    |            |
|---|----|------------|
| <b>Consumer Public Events</b>                                 | »» | <b>52</b>  |
| <b>Miscellaneous (Concerts, Film Shoots, Trainings, etc.)</b> | »» | <b>31</b>  |
| <b>Meetings</b>   | »» | <b>25</b>  |
| <b>Tradeshows</b>   | »» | <b>11</b>  |
| <b>Conventions</b>  | »» | <b>2</b>   |
| <b>Total events</b>   | »» | <b>121</b> |

## Drive-in Movie Spectacular!

For two summer weekends in 2015, we paired two of America's great passions—the automobile and the silver screen—to create The PDX Drive-In Movie Spectacular! The all-ages events put a modern twist on the classic drive-in movie with a beer garden, games, food vendors and music in addition to fan-favorite films such as American Graffiti and Ghostbusters. With a grassy lawn seating area, the event was open to people on bikes and on foot in addition to people in cars, the Spectacular was a hit—and the start of a new Expo tradition.



# Honoring our history

Together with students and educators from Beaumont Middle School, the Portland Expo Center hosted a special community event in May to commemorate two tragic events in Portland's history. *Honoring our History: Reflections on the Vanport Flood and the Portland Assembly Center* honored survivors of the tragedies and educated attendees about local history. It showcased visual projects, a student-created documentary and historical artifacts and invited survivors to give oral histories to student historians.

The devastating Vanport Flood occurred in 1948, when the Columbia River washed away a city originally built to house shipyard workers supporting World War II efforts. The Portland Assembly Center was a detention camp on the Expo Center site where 3,676 people of Japanese ancestry were forcibly detained for over four months during World War II. This event, in association with others, invited the public to learn and experience the history of our region.

Pictured below from left to right: MERC Commissioner Elisa Dozono, Metro COO Martha Bennett, Expo Director Matthew Rotchford, 8th Grade Beaumont Middle Schoolers and 8th Grade Beaumont Middle School Teacher Kirsten Parrott.



# Classic cars galore at the first Mecum Portland Auction

Hundreds of muscle cars, hot rods and other classics rolled across the auction block at the inaugural Mecum Portland Auction, held at the Expo Center in June 2016 for this nationally-televised event. The event drew nearly 9,000 attendees for a chance to see, sell or bid on mint-condition collector cars like the 1970 Plymouth Hemi Cuda and the 1969 Ford Mustang Boss 429 Fastback.



“When we heard about the Beaumont students’ project, we were very impressed and wanted to give them an opportunity to showcase their work to a broader audience.”

**Matthew P. Rotchford,**  
Portland Expo  
Center Director



**8 New  
Recycling  
Bins**

Thanks to a generous grant from the Metro Sustainability Center—these customized bins are helping us meet our sustainability goals.

# From the Director

The Portland Expo Center continues to evolve as Portland's gathering place. With newly colorful lobby spaces, a continued commitment to customer service, and dedication to our facilities, the Portland Expo Center remains a positive place for all kinds of groups to gather, share and energize our economy. The Expo is proud to be the home and host for many varied, fun, and memorable events.

In FY15-16, we revamped our event calendar to attract new visitors, meet evolving client needs, and strengthen our community connections. These efforts resulted in new national consumer events and the highest annual revenue in our history. The Expo hosted 121 events, welcomed nearly 400,000 attendees and generated over \$43 million in economic impact for the region. These partnerships have allowed us to once again pay our own \$1.2 million annual bond obligation, a rare accomplishment among public facilities.

We are particularly proud to have invigorated our 53-acre campus, improving connections with our neighbors in North and Northeast Portland. We are also proud to host two meaningful community events: *The PDX Drive-in Movie Spectacular!* and *Honoring our History: Reflections on the Vanport Flood and the Portland Assembly Center.*

We are honored to host so many exceptional events and guests. We thank our partners, clients and attendees for another outstanding year.



Matthew P. Rotchford  
Portland Expo Center Director



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[expocenter.org](http://expocenter.org)



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