

CEPEC Q&A

What is SEC and what would it be use it for?

SEC is an acronym for Sonoma Equestrian Complex which was the Horse Council's original name for the equestrian facility to be developed in Sonoma County. The name of the project was recently approved for change to California Equestrian Park and Event Center (CEPEC) to better convey the large area it will serve and the functions of the facility. The CEPEC would be used for recreation, education, and equestrian activities, events, and competitions.

What facilities would be there?

The center will provide facilities for a wide variety of horse events (shows, competitions, demonstrations, clinics) for many disciplines such as Dressage, Show Jumping, Eventing, Driving, Cutting, Reining, Barrel Racing, and Polo. The center will also be ideal for educational events such as classes, clinics, and certifications. We hope to house and preserve memorabilia that document Sonoma County's rich equine history. Additionally, the center will be used to provide advanced medical services such as surgeries, medical imaging and quarantine.

How big would it be?

The current plans are for a 1,400-acre facility. In working with the Open Space District for land acquisition, we are required to maintain 50% of acreage as open space. The CEPEC meets this requirement, conserving at least 700 acres; this open space would be used for trails. The remaining land would be used for the center and its support infrastructure.

Why can't use the Sonoma County Fairgrounds be used?

The Fairgrounds are not ideal for several reasons. The Fairgrounds does not offer space for large scale national or international events, or multi-discipline events such as Dressage and Cutting. The types of events that can be held at the Fairgrounds are limited due to issues such as arena footing. The Fairgrounds do not house the infrastructure or space for education and conference centers, or medical/surgical and imaging centers. The Fairgrounds is not interested in utilizing its facilities for training and conditioning of horses (including race horses). However, there is a huge need and market for a race training facility in the Wine Country. Finally, the central location of the Fairgrounds requires visitors to travel through Santa Rosa, which is often congested. The CEPEC would be outside the city center, and more accessible from areas in Sonoma, Marin, and Napa Counties.

How would the CEPEC benefit the average equestrian in Sonoma County?

CEPEC would offer average equestrians a place to ride year-round in open and covered arenas, a central location for clinics and viewing prestigious events, a nearby facility to obtain advanced level medical services, and a place to view Sonoma County's historical equine artifacts and memorabilia. The average equestrian would also benefit from the services and professionals such a high-quality facility will attract to our local community.

How much will the CEPEC cost and who is paying for it?

The entire center is currently estimated to cost \$200 million dollars. Plans are to build it in stages so that as money is obtained, facilities can be developed. Potential funding includes a variety of sources such as investors, grants, donations, fund raising events, taxes, and bonds.

What has been accomplished so far?

The project was initially conceived in March 2009. So far, the following activities have been accomplished:

- Market Research survey and interviews
- Creation of initial business plan
- Creation and submission of Open Space application
- Presentations to County Supervisors, Lynn Woolsey staff, and PMRD representative
- Discussions and negotiations with land owners
- Creation of a marketing campaign that has included presentations on local TV and radio shows, publications in the Sonoma-Marin Farm Journal and Sonoma County Horse Journal, announcements at public events, and creation of marketing materials such as brochures and a website (www.cepec.us)
- Formation of advisory team consisting of: geologists, hydrologist, civil engineers, infrastructure engineer, concept architect, horse park architecture design firm, representatives of various equine sport disciplines, financial advisors, and investors

What are the next steps?

The next steps will be to create a corporate structure and revise the business plan. After obtaining seed funding, the Horse Council will pursue discussions with land owners and finalize initial agreements. Land acquisition includes geologic assessments, and presentation to the Open Space District and negotiations with land owners. After land purchase, the Horse Council will initiate project design steps, and start the process of permit applications.