By Amber Hanneken Staff Writer

HUGO — With the homecoming and rodeo season upon the county, the city of Hugo received news this week of an approved \$200,000 USDA loan for renovation of the Todd Whatley-Lige Hammock Rodeo Arena, according to Choctaw County Economic Development Director David Hinkle.

"It's my job to get as much bang for the buck with the \$200,000," City Manager David Rawls said Wednesday in a meeting with the PRCA committee.

The USDA loan was written with help from Little Dixie Community Action Agency, Choctaw Electric is sponsoring the loan, which will be paid through the Hugo Municipal Authority. The first \$100,000 will be used in replacing the arena fence and animal pens. Hinkle said the current railing is about 50 years old. The city plans to make the arena more flexible, so the space can be reconfigured for various events including Choctaw Electric's Annual Meeting. Car shows, dog shows and motocross were a few of the events Hinkle mentioned could be hosted in the new arena.

"Rodeo and cowboys are a big part of Choctaw County and these improvements will be integral to all of us," Rawls said.

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