

New Mexico State Fairgrounds Master Plan

Public Meeting #3



Friday, March 13, 2026

Where we are today...

Community goals and Expo NM goals are defining the master plan vision and informing early development opportunities while supporting a broader vision for the Fairgrounds.



Master Planning Process

The Master Plan follows a three-stage process:

- Stage 1 - Data Collection & Analysis
- Stage 2 – Discussion Concepts Development
- Stage 3 - Final Master Plan Development



Multiple Stakeholders



Community Vision

Safe, walkable, affordable neighborhoods, that honor the historical character of the Fairgrounds and International District while centering families, sustainability, and economic prosperity.



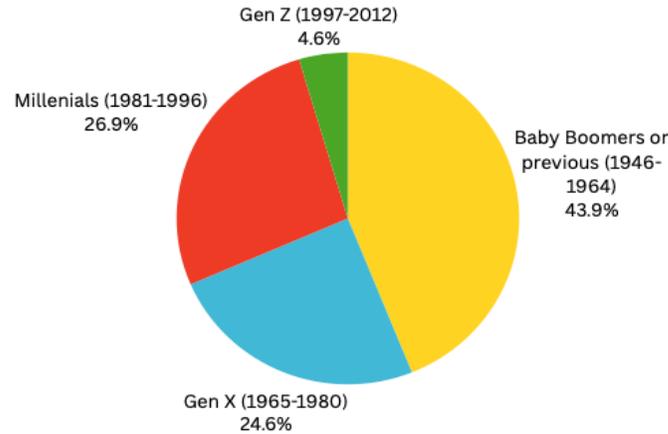
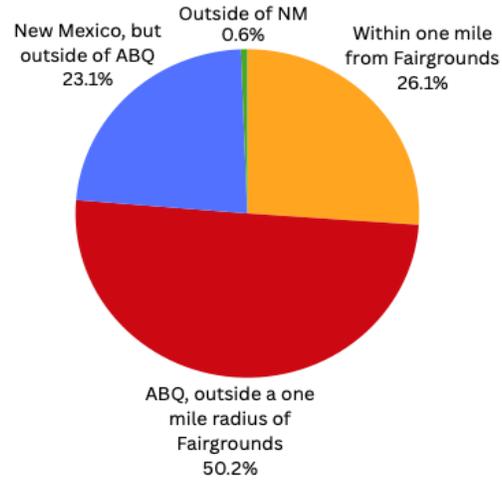
Future of The New Mexico State Fair

- Planning was "agnostic" of State Fair relocation
- Many want the Fair to remain at its current location
- Fewer feel the Fair should move and make room for other opportunities
- Many want the Fair to remain in ABQ
- Most want more information on where it would go, if we would miss a year, process and cost of move, etc.

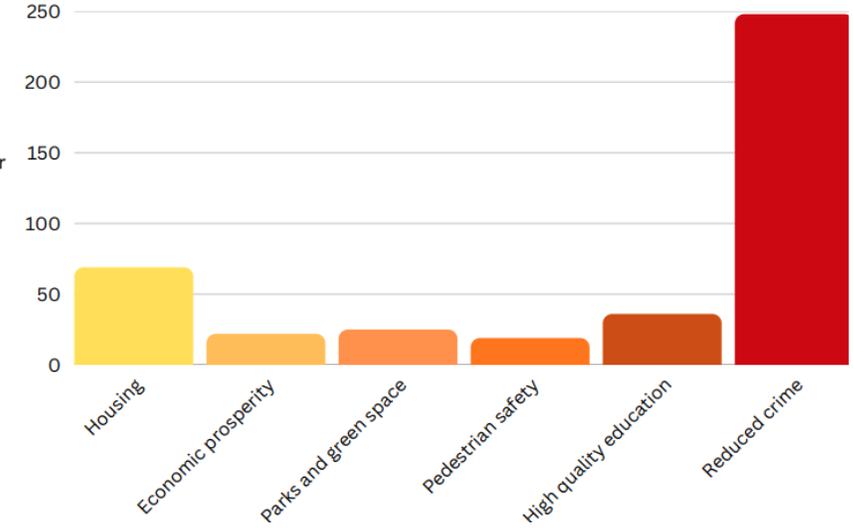


Highlights from Community Input

Who we heard from:



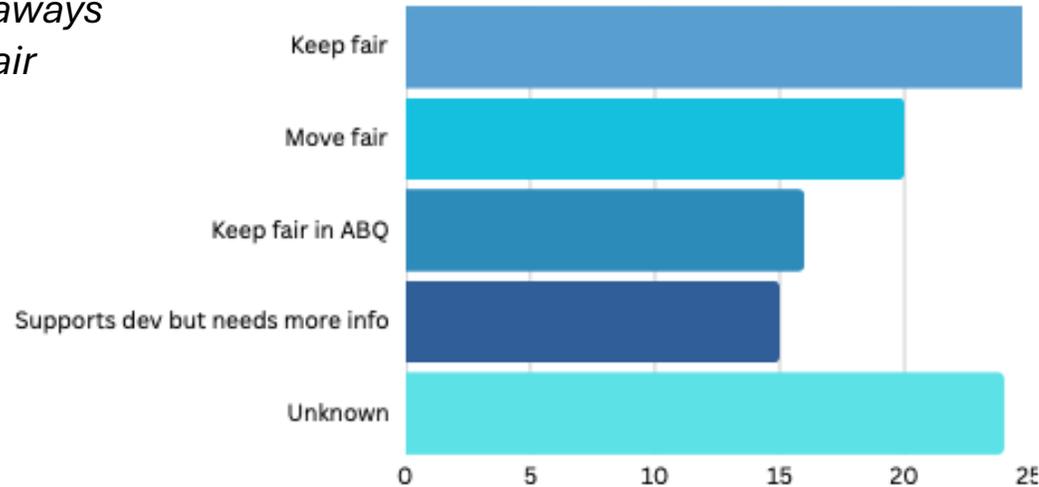
Survey 1
Community Priorities



Survey 2 – Concept Feedback

Major Takeaways

Re: State Fair



Concerns:

- Traffic
- Parking and ADA accessibility
- State water shortage
- Crime and homelessness

Community Goals

1. Safe, welcoming, walkable neighborhoods

There is almost no access to walkable commercial goods. I can walk to one gas station that does not feel like a safe place and a Blakes where someone was recently stabbed. Everything else is car dealerships. - In-Depth Interview



2. Economic prosperity for area businesses and residents, including pathways to home ownership

We need more housing options, more dwellings and structures for people and more stepping stones for housing and home ownership. - Survey Response

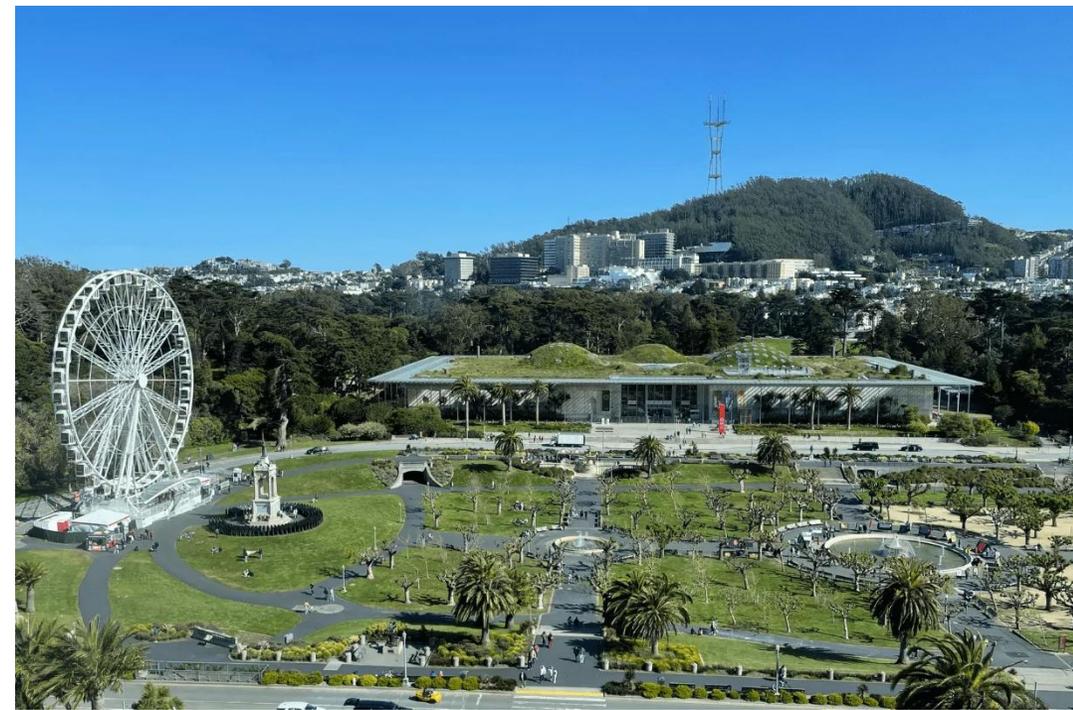


Community Goals

3. Parks, nature and green spaces

"This has the potential to be a jewel in our community. Think Golden Gate Park. Think Riverfront Park in Spokane. We need more places to BE TOGETHER in the community."

- Community Meeting Participant



4. Affordable, family-friendly amenities

"There are not any safe spaces to hangout. I wish we had safe places we could walk to see our friends, play basketball, and just hangout." - Wilson Middle School Student



Community Goals

5. Improved transportation and connectivity

"When we finally get focused and fix the issue of the unhoused. Then the bus system becomes a different issue, the fact is it is a free service and likely most passengers are unhoused so if we fixed the issue then the bus system could go back to what it once was and come alive." - In-Depth Interview

6. Environmental sustainability

*"I would love to see us do innovative things on the Fairgrounds to mitigate the climate challenge."
- Survey Response*



Input Opportunity for this Meeting

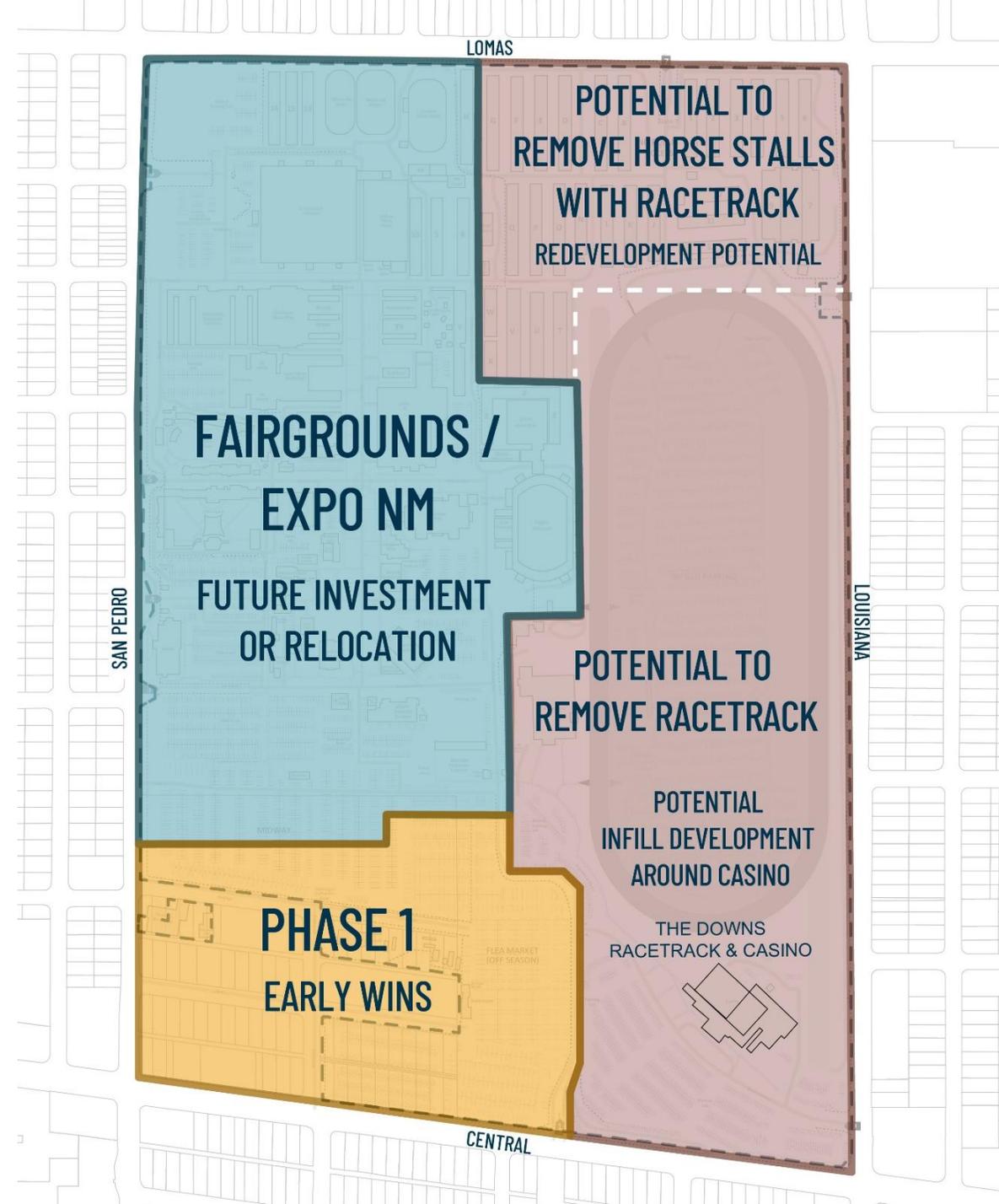
Inputs for final recommendations before presenting to the State Fairgrounds District Board include comments and Q&A following this presentation, plus a third electronic survey.



A Flexible & Adaptive Plan

Implementation of the master plan is structured around a phased, decision-based approach that minimizes disruption to State Fair operations and aligns investment with funding and policy realities.

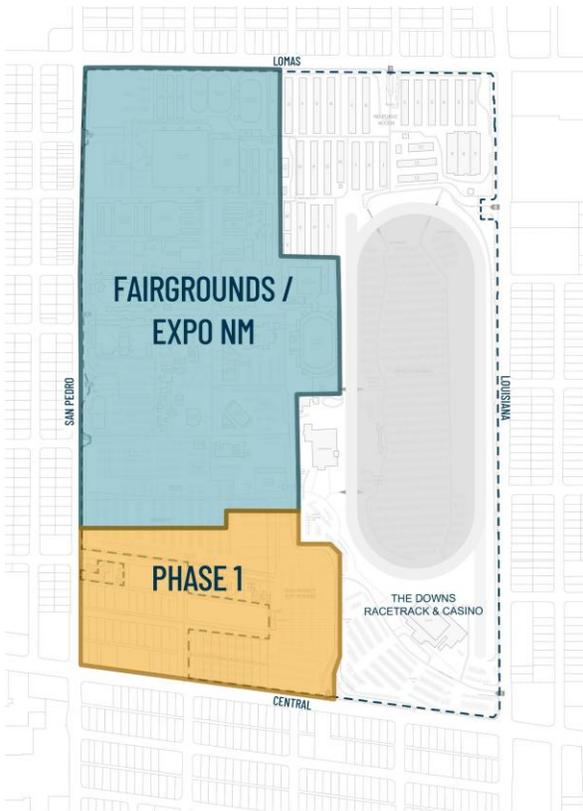
Future phases will also center community input with multiple opportunities to weigh in.



Future Phases

PREFERRED PATHWAY A OPTION – Relocate the Downs Racetrack

Phase 1 – Early Wins



A



Phase 2A - Expand Mixed-Use District



Phase 3A (Optional) - Relocation of Fair and Redevelopment

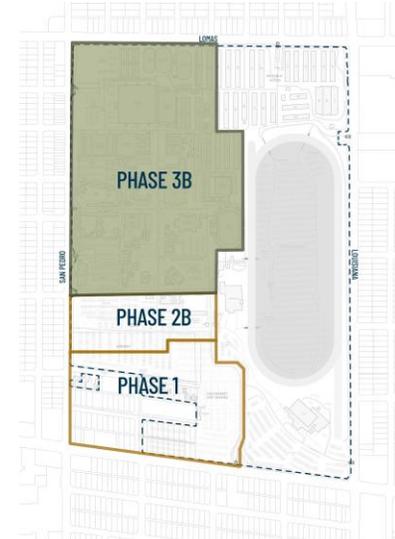
B



PATHWAY B OPTION – Relocate the Fair (Downs remains)



Phase 2B - Mixed-Use with Entertainment Focus



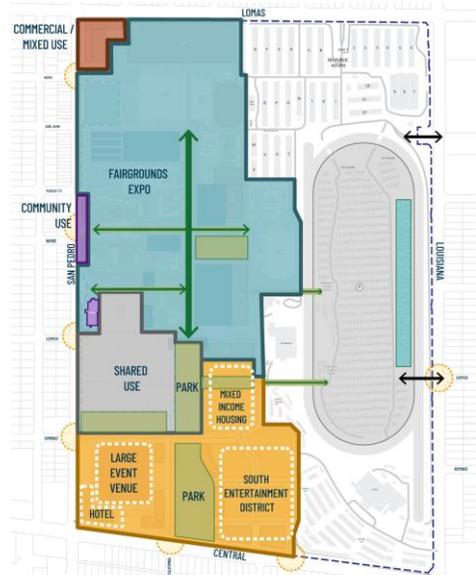
Phase 3B (Optional) - Relocation of Fair and Redevelopment

Concept 1 Feedback

“Much of the vibe of what we have now seems to be enhanced (in Concept 01) without sacrificing the historic experience we’ve come to find reliable and comforting.” **–Fairgrounds Neighbor**

“We need more housing and parks in that area. The quality of events hosted at Expo NM do not put it to good use, definitely not enough to warrant a renovation.” **–NM Resident**

“Why are you leaving the white elephant - the racetrack - untouched. This is used only a few weeks a year and is vacant the remainder of the year. I understand their is a contract and a casino, but you should relocate it to a place outside town, perhaps combined with other racing venue.” **–ABQ Resident**

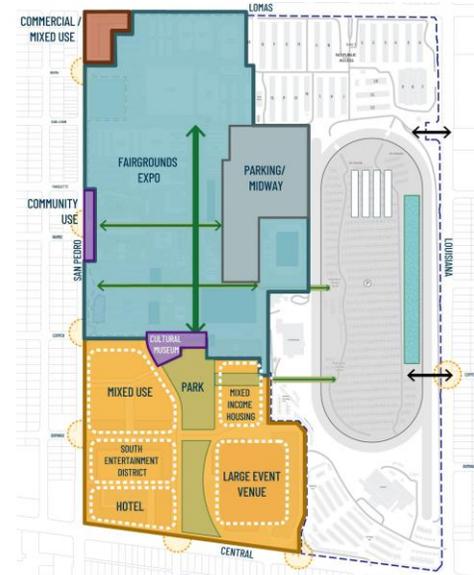


Concept 2 Feedback

“Makes San Pedro & Lomas an engaging outward-facing corner; keeps the Fair in place (basically); adds more housing than option 1 and mixes it with retail, commercial, and park space to form a walkable live-work *neighborhood*; proposed housing is convenient to local businesses along San Pedro, even if still secluded from Central.” **–ABQ Resident**

“I love the live-work-play neighborhood concept and that it has a large entertainment complex and a proper entertainment district. Also that it has a public park! This is my preferred concept plan.” **–ABQ Resident**

“Similar to Concept 1, I don’t think this goes far enough. I think Albuquerque (and New Mexico) have the opportunity to create a really vibrant economic hub in an area of town that needs it the most...” **–ABQ Resident**

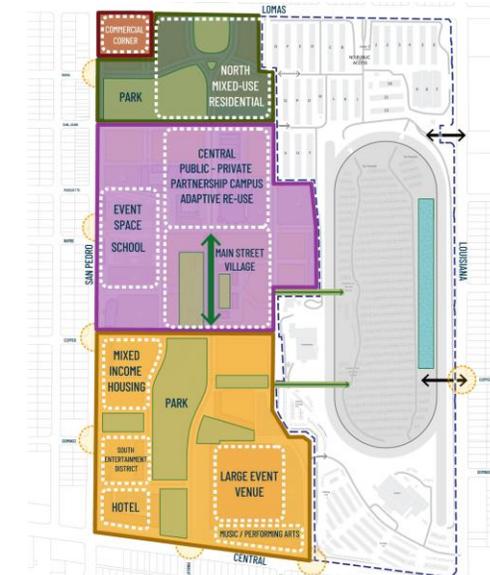


Concept 3 Feedback

“This is much better than the first two - and may have the ability to lead to improvement on central, lomas and buffer neighborhoods to the west. I see the critical issue is that the “fairgrounds” still presents a huge barrier between neighborhoods east and west, and doesn’t fully engage central.” **–Fairgrounds Neighbor**

“This concept completely changes an area that I feel is isolated from the city with how it’s walled off currently. This plan can make it feel more inviting for people living nearby and passing by.” **–ABQ Resident**

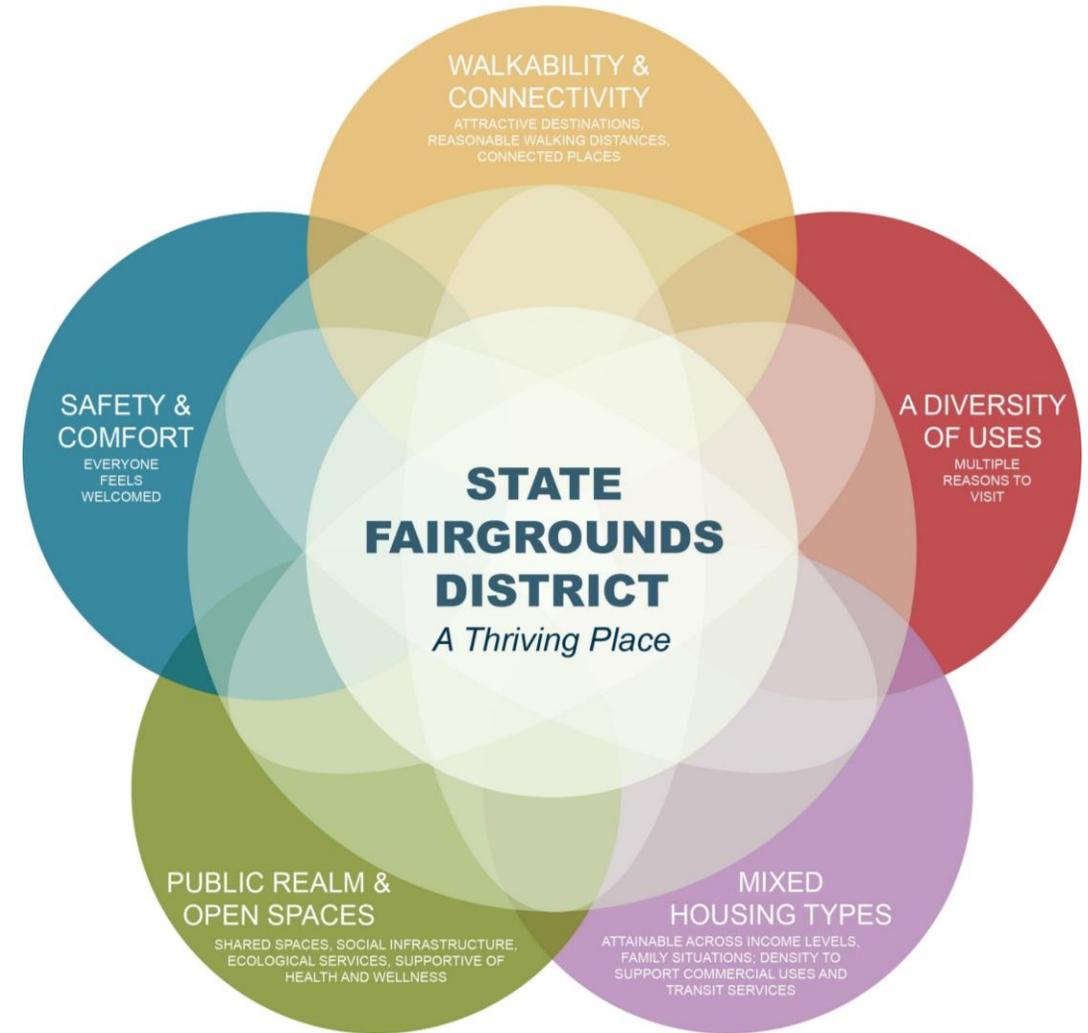
“This is my favorite plan. We NEED more housing and especially walkable housing in this city. I’m also not clear that the fair is served best by being in town. I am concerned about a loss of revenue to Albuquerque by moving the fair.” **–Fairgrounds Neighbor**



Concept Development

Create an ecosystem of activity and diverse uses to support local resident's quality of life while providing a lively destination for the people of Albuquerque and beyond.

- Create a platform for economic prosperity and social connection
- Start with a small nucleus of diverse uses (housing, park space, community uses, retail, entertainment)
- Create connections to surrounding neighborhoods



Initial Strategy - Four Major Steps

1. Re-organize and consolidate State Fair facilities to make room for future development
2. Activate the site with a walkable, mixed-use core
3. Phased redevelopment and key decision points
4. Establish a strong anchor with a modern stadium or arena

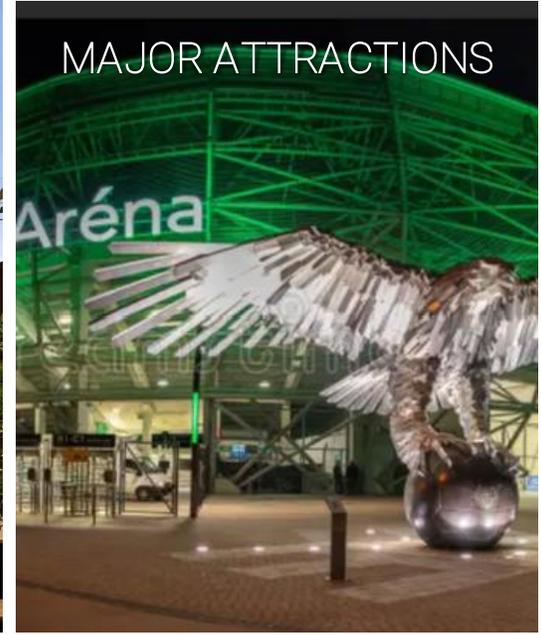


Major Anchor as Catalyst

1. Sports stadium as year-round economic generator
2. Catalyst for housing, restaurants, retail, public space – emphasis on neighborhood rather than stand-alone sports facility
3. Cities using stadiums to reactivate underused land
4. Civic infrastructure first, entertainment venue second

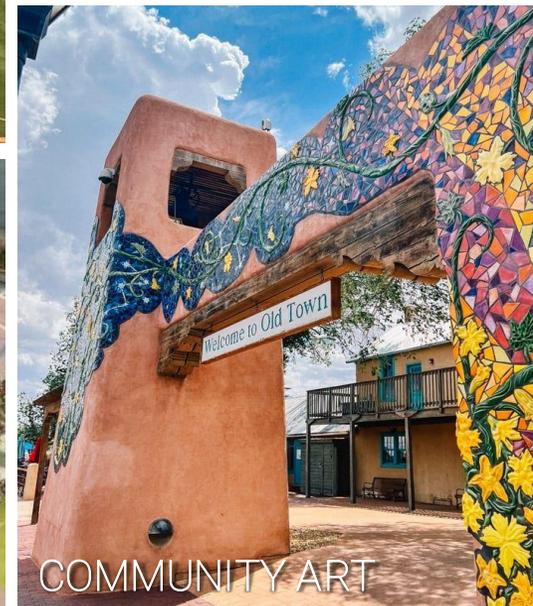


Creating a Nucleus – Catalytic Anchors



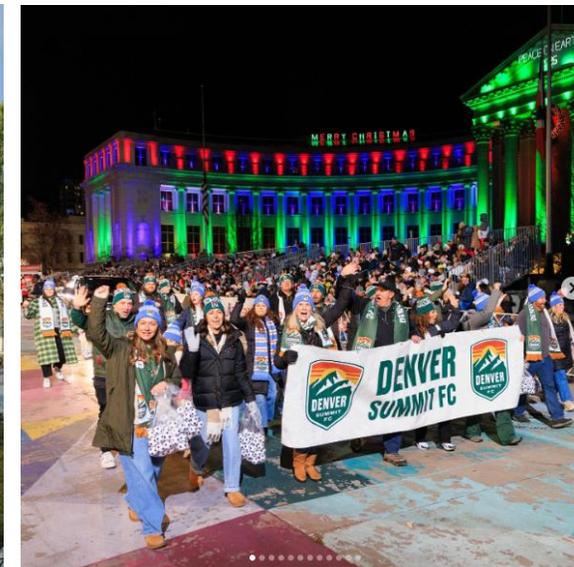
Sports Stadiums that Fit the Neighborhood

1. Minor league and women's major league sports have exploded – baseball, basketball, soccer
2. Advantages – smaller seating capacity, lower cost, better fit with walkable neighborhoods
3. Result – affordable family entertainment, shared civic experience, local pride
4. Blurred line between city and venue - opportunity to reinforce district identity.
5. Stadium as community space



Reconnecting Neighborhoods – Denver Summit NWSL

1. Stitching together neighborhoods disconnected for decades
2. Catalyzing an urban site next to transit and parks/trails
3. Creating a live, work, play neighborhood



Redevelopment and reinvestment at Fairgrounds could dramatically expand that footprint by:

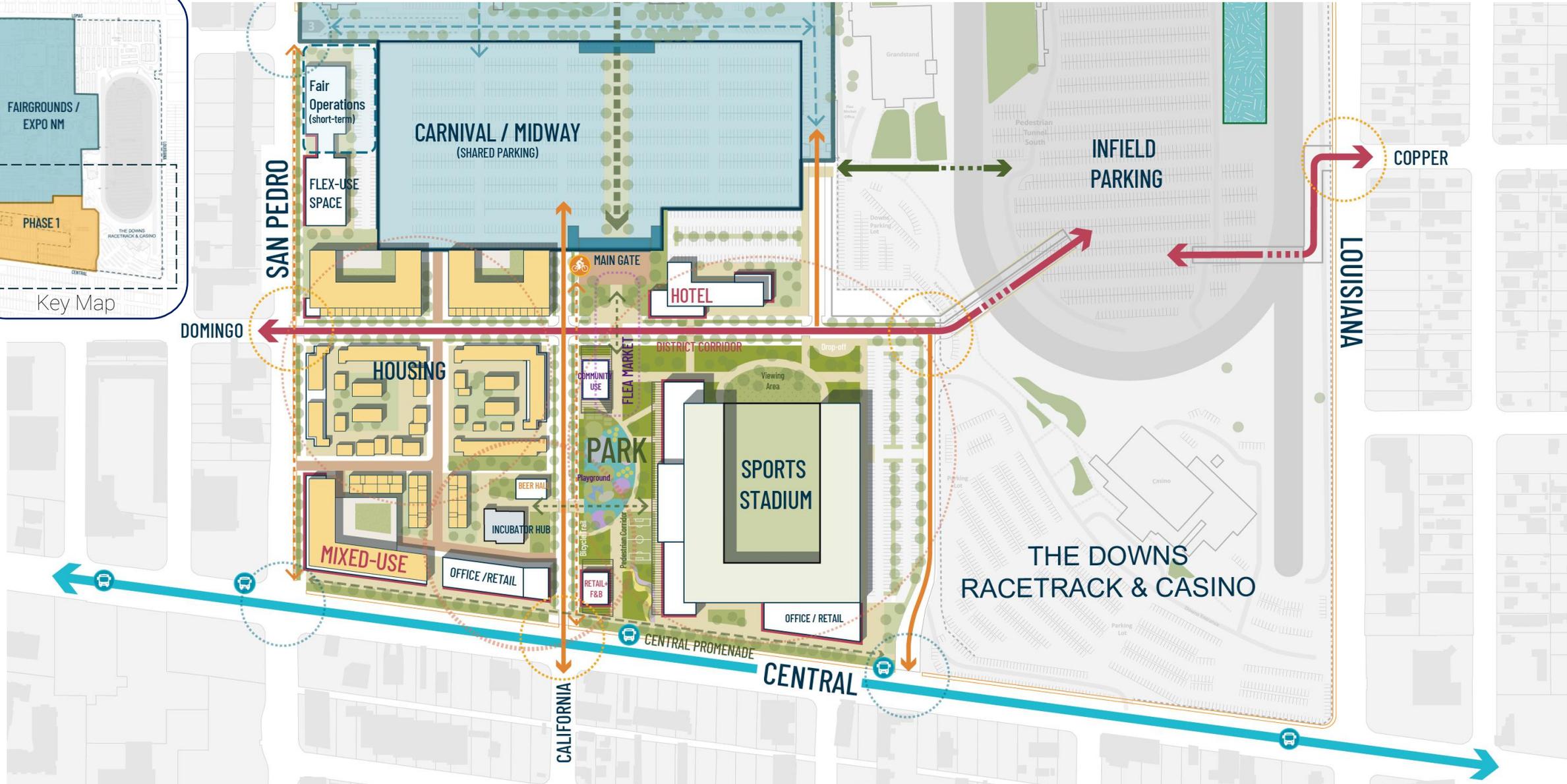
- Increasing visitation year-round through new event formats and attractions.
- Capturing visitor spending on-site via hotels, restaurants, and retail.
- Leveraging public-private partnerships to fund new facilities and infrastructure.
- Stimulating adjacent neighborhood revitalization through improved access and design.

Every dollar reinvested in modernization multiplies through the economy by creating new jobs, growing tourism tax revenue, and supporting small business participation statewide.

	PREFERRED PATHWAY A OPTION			PREFERRED PATHWAY B OPTION	
	PHASE 1	PHASE 2A Expand Mixed-Use District	PHASE 3A (Optional) Relocation of Fair & Redevelopment	PHASE 2B Arena & Fair remains	PHASE 3B (Optional) Relocation of Fair & Redevelopment
	Fair Remains	Fair Remains	Relocation of Fair	Fair Remains	Relocation of Fair
Estimated Cost	\$240 Million	\$832 Million	\$1.1 Billion + \$870 Million for New Relocated Fairgrounds	\$695 Million	\$652 Million + \$870 Million for New Relocated Fairgrounds
Economic Impact <small>Albuquerque region and state-wide (30-year average annual revenue)</small>	\$ 127 Million	\$ 277 Million	\$ 360 Million	\$ 193 Million	\$ 220 Million
Economic Impact <small>Albuquerque region and state-wide (30-year total)</small>	\$ 3.8 billion	\$ 8.3 Billion	\$ 10.8 Billion	\$ 5.8 Billion	\$ 6.6 Billion
Fiscal Impact <small>GRT Revenues for State Fair District (30-year total)</small>	\$ 165 Million	\$ 363 Million	\$ 470 Million	\$ 257 Million	\$ 288 Million
Fiscal Impact <small>GRT Revenues for State Fair District (30-year average annual revenue)</small>	\$ 5.5 Million	\$ 12 Million	\$ 16 Million	\$ 8.6 Million	\$ 9.6 Million
Employment Impact <small>Fairgrounds/EXPO & New Development (Average annual jobs over 30 years)</small>	940 Jobs	1,700 Jobs	2,620 Jobs	1,240 Jobs	1,820 Jobs
Employment Impact <small>Fairgrounds/EXPO & New Development (Average New Earnings/Payroll over 30 years)</small>	\$ 63 Million	\$ 104 Million	\$ 178 Million	\$ 79 Million	\$ 136 Million

Phase 1 – Early Wins Concept

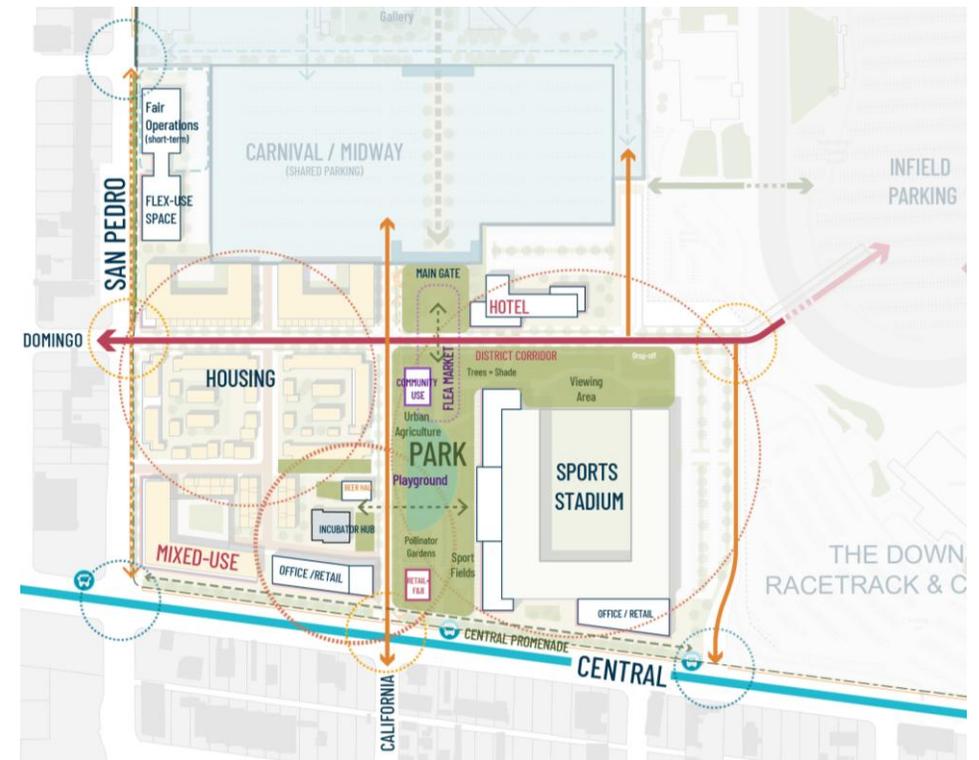
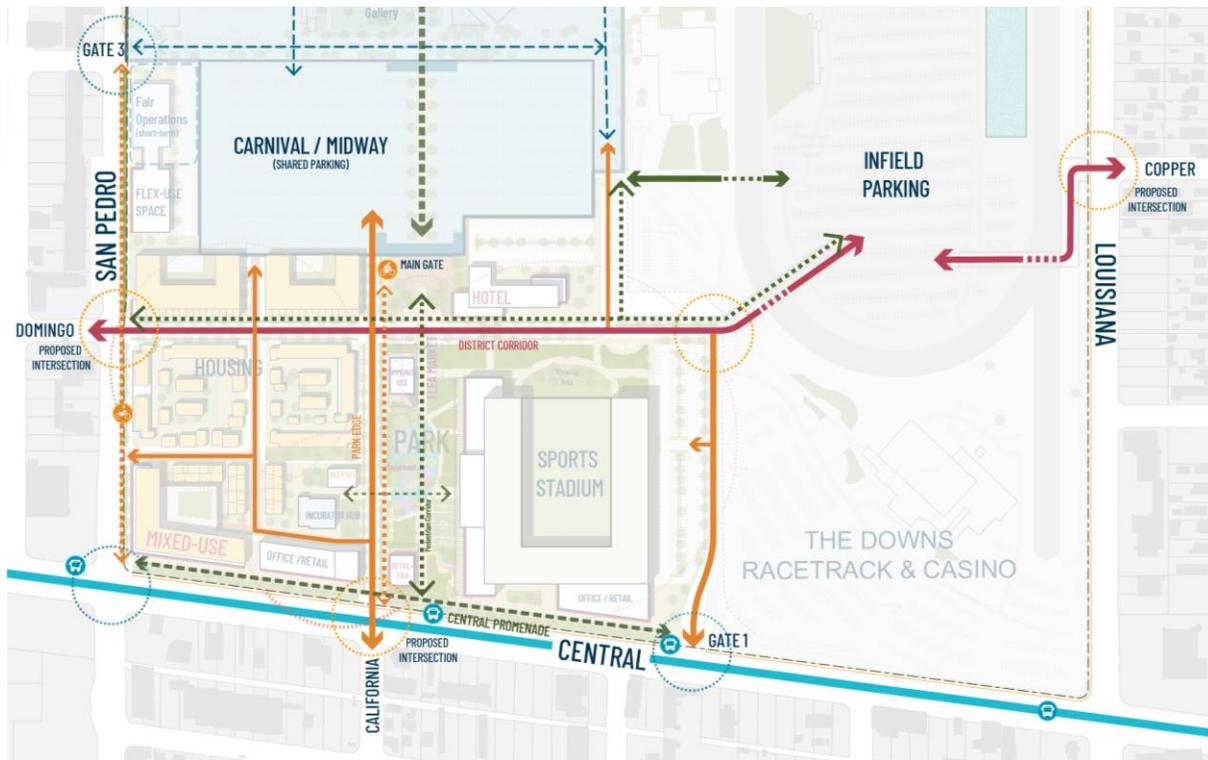
A Space for Gathering & Community



CIRCULATION DIAGRAM



COMMUNITY AMENITIES



Phase 1 – Early Wins Concept



Phase 1 – Early Wins Concept



Funding for District Development will borrow against future GRT revenue

Ongoing GRT revenue:

- Services, retail sales (not groceries), restaurants, event tickets

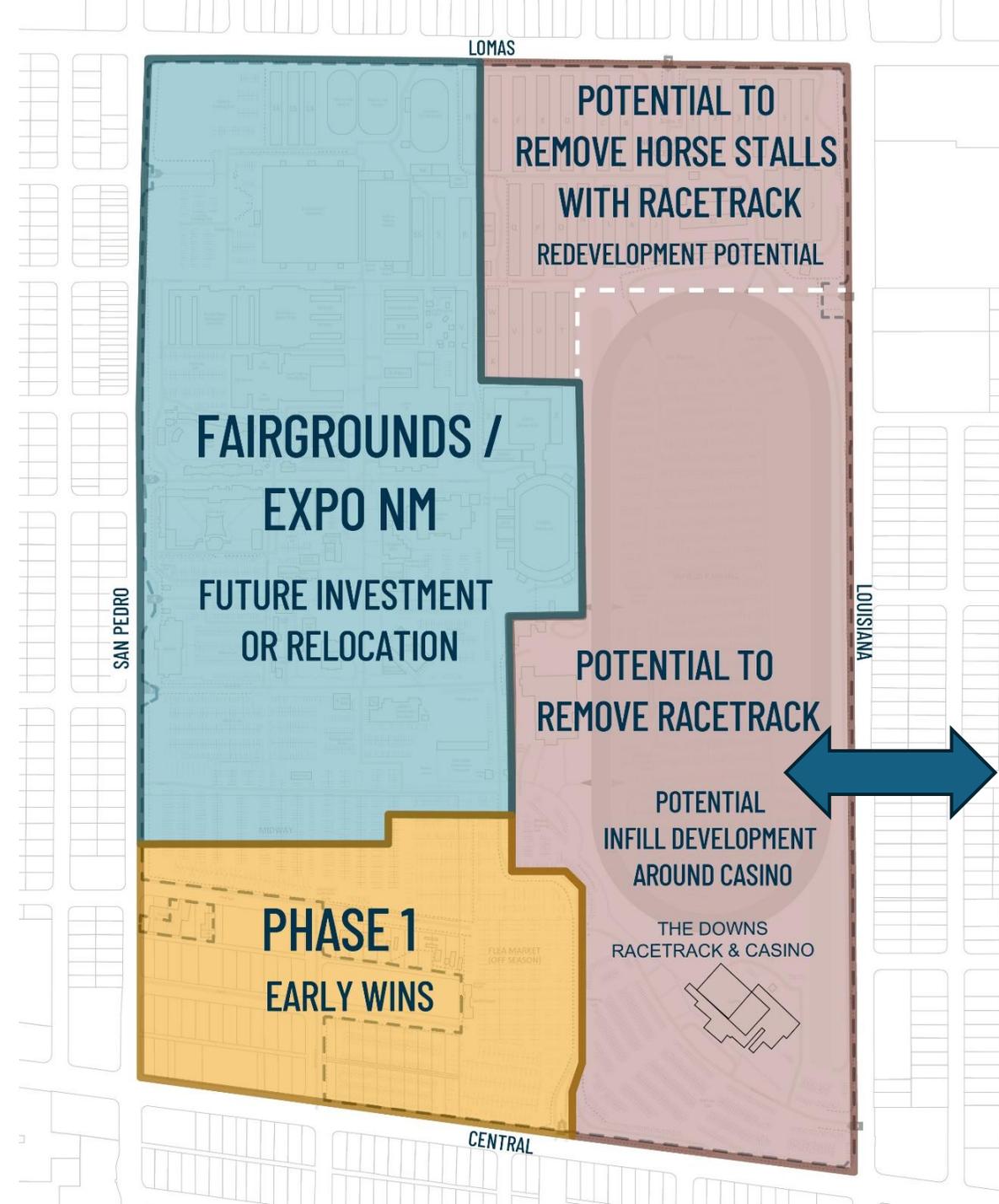
One-time GRT revenue:

- Construction, housing and commercial (one-time, but substantial)



Major Takeaways – Major Wins

- Near-term positive change
- No immediate plans to move the State Fair
- Over 2x more jobs created – 940
- \$5.5 M GRT v. \$2.7 M Current
- Beyond Phase 1: a roadmap for the future – possibility for racetrack to move, better connectivity between neighborhoods, more community amenities
- Community engagement continues to shape the kind of city New Mexicans want to live in



**Questions?
Comments?**

Share your feedback:

