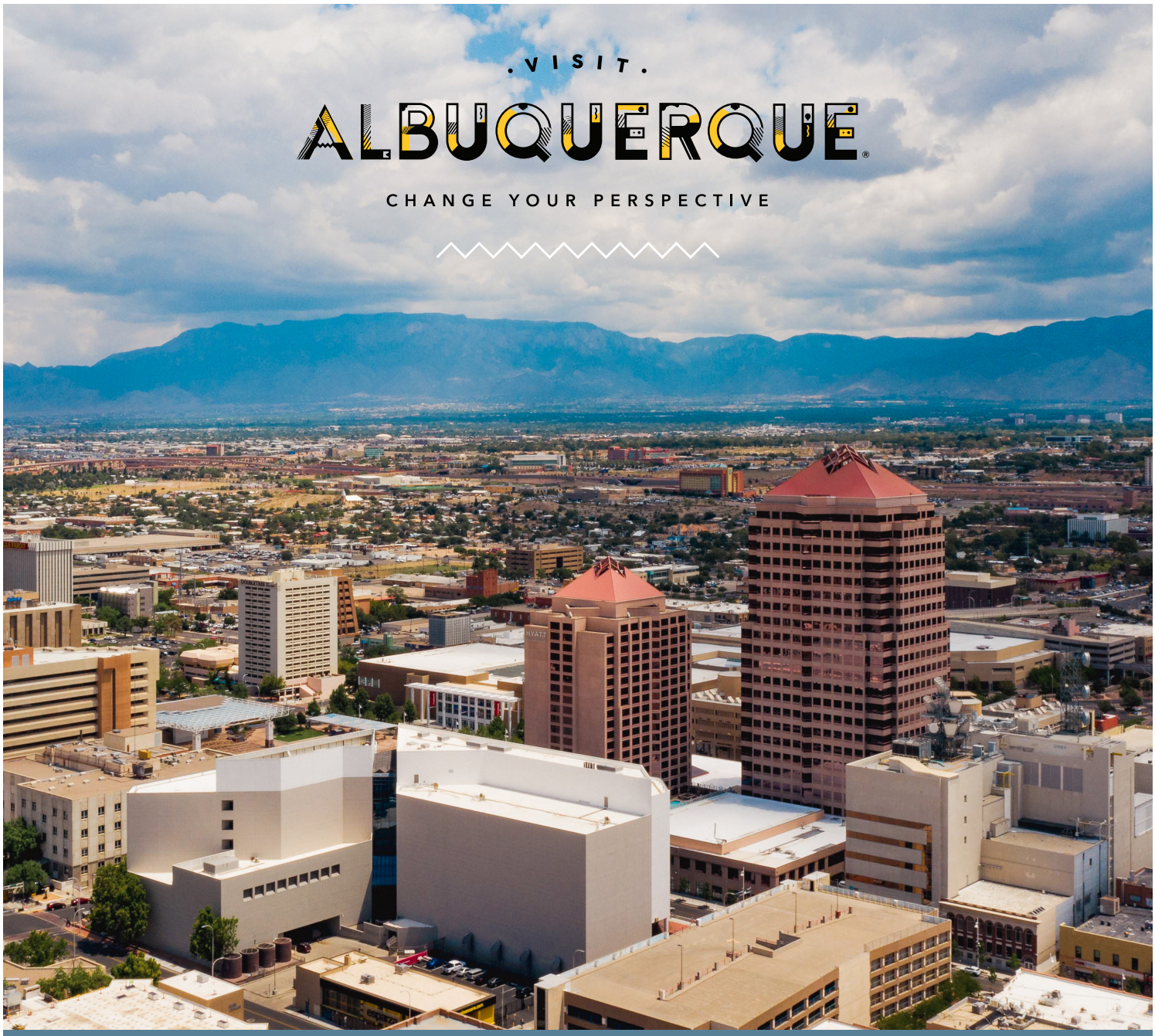
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DOWNTOWN ALBUQUERQUE
& VISITOR ECONOMY

CATALYTIC PROJECT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Project Overview and Frequently Asked Questions

What is the current status of the study?

Convention, Sports and Leisure International (CSL) has been selected to lead a feasibility study to identify projects that have the potential to make a transformative impact on Albuquerque's ability to attract meetings, conventions and leisure travelers. Consultants from CSL are assessing the qualities that define the city's character and culture and will identify areas of strength and opportunity.

During the summer of 2026, the CSL team met with Downtown development stakeholders, community and industry leaders, and other local subject-matter experts. These conversations are helping the team test early observations, understand local priorities and gather perspectives that will inform its analysis.

The completed feasibility study is expected to be delivered this fall.



Important Context
The study is exploratory. No catalytic project has been selected, and no funding or implementation decision has been made. CSL's role is to evaluate opportunities objectively and provide findings and recommendations for consideration.

Why is Visit Albuquerque undertaking this study?

As Albuquerque's official destination marketing and management organization, Visit Albuquerque works to strengthen the visitor economy by developing and promoting exceptional visitor experiences that also enhance residents' quality of life.

In late 2024, Visit Albuquerque completed a 10-year Destination Master Plan developed by JLL's Global Tourism and Destination Advisory Team. The plan was shaped by research and input from more than 2,300 participants, including City and County representatives, elected officials, economic development organizations, arts and culture leaders, sports organizers, venue managers, developers, tourism businesses and other community stakeholders.

Downtown revitalization emerged as a key priority. Downtown plays an important role in Albuquerque's visitor economy. It is home to the Albuquerque Convention Center, hotels, restaurants, cultural assets and entertainment venues, and it serves as a key gathering place for visitors attending meetings, conventions and events. A more active and vibrant Downtown can strengthen the visitor experience while also creating more amenities, activity and economic opportunity for residents and local businesses. The Destination Master Plan recommended a feasibility study to identify catalytic tourism-related projects with the potential to move Downtown and the visitor economy forward.

Why is this work happening now?

Albuquerque competes for event and leisure travelers with destinations that continue to invest in their downtowns, attractions, venues, public spaces and visitor infrastructure. At the same time, Albuquerque has an opportunity to build on existing Downtown assets and identify investments that could generate greater activity and strengthen connections among the Convention Center, hotels, restaurants, entertainment, culture and other visitor experiences.

The study will provide a data-driven framework for identifying the opportunity or combination of opportunities that could make the greatest impact based on market demand, financial viability and community benefit.

How was CSL selected?

Visit Albuquerque issued a public Request for Proposals on Feb. 3, 2026. The opportunity was promoted through Visit Albuquerque's website, the Albuquerque Journal and industry channels, including Destinations International.

Between March 6 and May 21, a committee of internal and external stakeholders, including local subject-matter experts, reviewed the proposals. Using a scoring rubric, the committee evaluated each proposal based on:

Understanding of the project	Timeline
Relevant experience and proposed team	Cost
Methodology and approach	Overall proposal quality

Finalists were invited to present their approaches to the selection committee. Following this competitive process, CSL was selected to manage and conduct the study.

Why was CSL selected?

CSL demonstrated a strong understanding of Albuquerque's goals and offered specific ideas about the types of opportunities the study could evaluate, including Albuquerque Convention Center improvements, Downtown placemaking and the potential need for a flagship event venue.

The firm also brings a substantial portfolio of relevant experience, including work related to San Antonio's downtown sports and entertainment district and Salt Lake City's convention center strategic investment feasibility study.

What types of projects could the study identify?

The study is not designed to validate a predetermined project. CSL will assess multiple tourism-related concepts and determine which opportunities show the strongest combination of market demand, financial viability, community benefit and alignment with Albuquerque's goals.

Potential concepts may include, but are not limited to:

New or enhanced visitor-facing infrastructure	Arts, culture, sports and entertainment experiences
Improvements to existing convention/ meeting assets	Placemaking and public-space improvements
Attractions, venues and public gathering spaces	Mixed-use development or complementary uses that increase Downtown activity

The study may recommend one primary catalytic project or a combination of complementary initiatives. Recommendations will consider market realities, the priorities of the Destination Master Plan, Downtown's unique character and assets, and the potential to serve both visitors and residents.

How will stakeholder input be used?

Stakeholder perspectives are an important part of the research process. CSL's meetings will help the team understand current conditions, past efforts, community priorities, potential opportunities and practical considerations that may not be apparent from market data alone.

Stakeholder feedback will be considered alongside market research, industry trends, competitive analysis and financial and operational factors. Participation in the process does not imply endorsement of any particular concept.

How might a recommended project be funded?

Several potential approaches to funding tourism infrastructure emerged during development of the Destination Master Plan, and CSL will explore relevant options as part of the feasibility study. Any future funding strategy would depend on the project recommended and would require additional review.

What happens after the study is completed?

CSL will deliver findings and recommendations based on its research and stakeholder engagement. The study is expected to outline opportunities with the greatest potential and identify considerations such as market support, financial feasibility, community benefits, possible funding approaches and an indicative path toward implementation.

The completed study will be an important decision-making resource, not authorization to begin a project. Any recommendation would require further discussion, evaluation, planning and approvals before moving forward.

What is the timeline for a potential project?

The feasibility study will help establish an anticipated timeline for any recommended project or initiatives. The schedule will depend on factors such as project scope, ownership, funding, partnerships, design, approvals and construction. Those details cannot be determined until the study is complete and next steps are considered.

Why does this matter to Albuquerque's visitor economy?

Visitors are a vital part of Albuquerque's economy. More than 6 million travelers visit the city each year, generating more than $2 billion in direct spending at hotels, restaurants, attractions, retail businesses and other local establishments.

Strategic tourism development can strengthen Albuquerque's ability to compete for visitors, meetings and events; encourage longer stays and greater spending; support local businesses and jobs; and create amenities and experiences that also benefit residents.

The Goal
Identify strategic opportunities that can strengthen downtown Albuquerque, enhance the city's competitive position, improve the visitor and resident experience, and generate lasting economic and community value.

STAY INFORMED
Use this QR code to find the latest news and updates about the feasibility study.

About Visit Albuquerque's Destination Master Plan

Recognizing the power of tourism to drive economic growth and enhance our quality of life, Visit Albuquerque created a 10-year Destination Master Plan (DMP) that outlines strategies for creating compelling visitor experiences and elevating Albuquerque as a must-visit destination.

This plan, fueled by insights from over 2,300 stakeholders and rigorous research by industry specialist JLL, is guiding our efforts to make Albuquerque a premier destination in the Southwest.

Learn more about the DMP and find out how you can play a role in making Albuquerque shine for visitors, residents and local businesses.

VisitABQ.org/DMP