

Fairplex Pomona, California

A ULI Advisory Services Panel Report

July 7–12, 2019



ULI Urban Land
Institute
Advisory Services

Fairplex, Pomona, California

Reimagining Fairplex and the L.A. County Fair

A ULI Advisory Services Panel Report

July 7–12, 2019



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About the Urban Land Institute

THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE is a global, member-driven organization comprising more than 46,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the Institute's mission of providing leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

ULI's interdisciplinary membership represents all aspects of the industry, including developers, property owners, investors, architects, urban planners, public officials, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, and academics. Established in 1936, the Institute has a presence in the Americas, Europe, and the Asia Pacific region, with members in 81 countries.

ULI's extraordinary impact on land use decision-making is based on its members' sharing expertise on a variety of factors affecting the built environment, including urbanization, demographic and population changes, new economic drivers, technology advancements, and environmental concerns.

Peer-to-peer learning is achieved through the knowledge shared by members at thousands of convenings each year that reinforce ULI's position as a global authority on land use and real estate. In 2019 alone, more than 2,400 events were held in about 330 cities around the world. Drawing on the work of its members, the Institute recognizes and shares best practices in urban design and development for the benefit of communities around the globe.

More information is available at uli.org. Follow ULI on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

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About ULI Advisory Services

THE GOAL OF THE ULI ADVISORY SERVICES program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies.

Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 700 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfield redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's advisory services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and are screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI's interdisciplinary panel teams provide a holistic look at development problems. A respected ULI member who has previous panel experience chairs each panel.

The agenda for a five-day panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing day composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives, a day of hour-long interviews of typically 50 to 100 key community representatives, and two days of formulating recommendations. Long nights of discussion precede the panel's conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration, participants in ULI's five-day panel assignments are able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academics,

representatives of financial institutions, transportation planners, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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Acknowledgments

On behalf of the Urban Land Institute, the panel would like to thank Fairplex and its partners for sponsoring this important exercise evaluating and reviewing how the Fairplex site can become an engine for economic growth and a year-round destination. The panel extends a special thanks to Fairplex's staff, board, and association members; L.A. County Fair vendors; public officials of the cities of Pomona and La Verne; and other stakeholders, including ULI trustee Wayne Ratkovich.

In addition, thanks go to the many other organizations and individuals who shared their perspectives, experiences, and insights with the panel throughout the week.

This Hollywood sign, providing a backdrop for a portrait of ULI panel members, is part of the 2019 L.A. County Fair "Pop Culture" theme.

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Assignment and Summary of Key Recommendations

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT, THE NEARLY 100-YEAR-OLD FAIRPLEX is poised for a transformation to meet changing demographics and future market challenges. This 501(c)(5) nonprofit organization has a public/private partnership with Los Angeles County.

The site, which includes 487 acres mostly owned by Los Angeles County, is home to the L.A. County Fair, which hosts about 1.2 million fair-goers and holds more than 500 events annually that bring more than 3 million visitors to Fairplex.

Located within the cities of Pomona and La Verne, California, the expansive Fairplex site is among the largest fairgrounds nationally. It has significant on-site real estate assets and infrastructure, including Quonset hut–style buildings; museums; a Sheraton hotel and conference center; an on-site farm that serves the hotel’s farm-to-table restaurant and catering service; a forested area; a child development center; train exhibits; occupational training facilities for high school students; sports fields; and a grandstand and other entertainment venues; as well

as a variety of exhibition buildings and horse barns that could be repurposed.

The Assignment

The Urban Land Institute was invited to reimagine Fairplex’s potential as an economic engine and year-round destination and to identify the following opportunities:

- Create a plan for the future that honors the past
- Improve land use, sustainability, and use of existing assets
- Create economic impact
- Improve the flow of visitors from future mass transit resources and within the Fairplex complex



FAIRPLEX (2017)

Fairplex includes nearly 500 acres and is bounded by Arrow Highway to the north, Fairplex Drive to the west, West McKinley Avenue to the south, and North White Avenue to the east.

- Enhance programming and the visitor experience with new landscaping and experiential opportunities
- Generate additional revenue
- Create mutually beneficial partnerships with community businesses and organizations
- Connect with and engage the local community

Goals for the ULI panel included improving the site’s visual interest and connectivity with surrounding neighborhoods; creating a cultural hub and year-round destination that engages and improves the community; developing a strong, regional economic engine; and ensuring the highest and best use of land, existing assets, infrastructure, and resources.

Key Takeaways

The ULI panel spent five days touring the site and surrounding community and interviewing more than 80 Fairplex



PATRICIA KIRK/ULI

Built in the 1930s, Quonset hut–style buildings are used for exhibitions during the fair and host various events throughout the year. The expansive interiors make them suitable for a variety of uses, and the exceptional ceiling height offers an opportunity to create a second-story loft.

stakeholders, who included community members; public officials; representatives from community businesses and organizations; Fairplex’s staff, board of directors, and



GEORGIA GEMPLEY/ULI

The Learning Centers at Fairplex, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, operates the Fairplex Child Development Center, which serves 250 community children ages 12 weeks through kindergarten. It also operates the Career and Technical Education Center, which offers occupational training programs for high school students.

association members; members of the Learning Centers and Child Development Center boards; and vendors.

Stakeholder interviews revealed a variety of community and staff visions for Fairplex:

- Creating a live/work/play environment with greenways and open space
- Installing technology upgrades to attract younger generations
- Expanding farm and job training programs
- Expanding the Fairplex Child Development Center
- Creating a uniquely Southern California destination
- Developing attainable, multigenerational housing
- Reorienting the site to improve access to the Gold Line light rail, which is scheduled for completion in 2025

Comments from stakeholders on Fairplex’s operations were mostly positive, but they cited past struggles and criticisms, and recent efforts to rebuild trust and engage more people to improve community relationships and involve the community in planning efforts.

In 2022, Fairplex will celebrate its 100th anniversary. Historically, Fairplex has prioritized the recognition of the region’s agricultural roots. Although this identity is rooted in a universal sense of nostalgia for many, interviews with stakeholders found that some people in the community feel left out or excluded from Fairplex, and they believe the site should be a gathering place where everyone feels welcome year-round.

FAIRPLEX STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2018, Fairplex completed a strategic plan to update, revise, and refresh its vision and goals, including making Fairplex a model community partner, economic engine, and presenter of unique experiences. Guiding principles to attain the desired future include providing public benefit, improving the guest experience, developing partnerships, committing to both financial and environmental sustainability, and creating a uniquely Southern California destination that celebrates the community.

This plan—which aims to reinforce Fairplex’s original vision and put it into a contemporary context—addresses whom Fairplex serves, why change is needed, and what Fairplex wants to become. Fairplex enlisted the assistance of ULI to develop a detailed vision for Fairplex’s future and a road map to achieve it.

Source: Fairplex Board of Directors, “Fairplex Strategic Plan,” June 4, 2018, <https://fairplex.com/docs/default-source/publications/strategic-plan-2018.pdf?sfvrsn=2>.

Fairplex was founded not only to host the L.A. County Fair, but also to provide holistic support for the local community financially, through commerce and agriculture; socially, as a convener and community gathering place; and artistically, by offering members of the community space to share their creations and passions.

Fairplex has already demonstrated the desire to involve stakeholders through the strategic planning process and should continue to do so. The ULI panel, however, emphasizes the importance of engaging all community groups in formulating ideas going forward, as community support is critical to any project to ensure support and the project’s success. The panel’s key takeaways are summarized below.

Solidify identity. Interviews with stakeholders revealed ambiguity about Fairplex’s identity. The ULI panel believes Fairplex’s identity and core businesses need clearer articulation and suggests evaluating those businesses to identify opportunities for generating the best returns for Fairplex and its investment partners.

To remain relevant and representative of future land use changes, the panel also suggests spearheading a rebranding initiative to update the organization’s name. Involving the community and all stakeholders in this process will be critical to ensuring success of the rebranding effort. New brand



DEBORAH KERSON BILEK/ULI

Hosted by the Automobile Club of Southern California in November, the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Championship Drag Race is among the 500 events held at Fairplex annually. This facility, which seats 40,000 spectators, is one of the few drag strips in America operated directly by the NHRA.



DEBORAH KERSON BILEK/ULI

Fairplex has discontinued equine events. The ULI panel suggests repurposing horse barns for entrepreneurial uses and exhibition halls.

development can assist in better reflecting the true identity of the organization, while boosting marketing opportunities and igniting new revenue-producing activities.

Another concern of the panel is a seeming conflict or polarization between “what Fairplex has been” and “what it can be.” Some stakeholders indicated a resistance to change. In addition, many on-site functions have outlived their relevance, and there appears to be little appetite for innovative or significant change to reflect modern needs or changing demographics.

Fairplex has a window of opportunity to realign thinking about enhancing experiences and renewing the physical environment for the world of tomorrow. This effort could work hand in hand with a rebranding exercise to create renewed interest and civic ownership.

Embrace a paradigm shift: Fairplex as a year-round destination that also operates the L.A. County Fair. Fairplex can become more responsive to the shifting retail economy and community needs by leveraging its impressive land assets to become a year-round destination for the local community and others within the Inland Empire. By working to create a unified sense of place in all parts of the property and opening for continuous use, Fairplex can deepen its community connections and expand possibilities for revenue generation. Achieving this vision will require adopting a land use planning mind-set in addition to Fairplex’s event-planning expertise.

The panel also recommends that Fairplex continue to operate the L.A. County Fair. Fairplex is uniquely positioned to develop the L.A. County Fair into an experience that is enhanced by the proposed year-round land uses. The fair has moved away from

its origins as an opportunity for agricultural exchange, and it will need to evolve to remain relevant to today’s consumers and the “experience economy.” This vision for Fairplex and the fair aligns with Fairplex’s new strategic plan.

Pursue an imaginative and sustainable framework plan.

As part of the paradigm shift of Fairplex as a year-round destination, Fairplex should open up the campus to the community and make it more accessible. Panelists recommend creating a northern gateway to connect Fairplex to the city of La Verne’s proposed light-rail station, and connecting it to a pedestrian-oriented promenade, or “green artery,” that would serve as Fairplex’s main street and would traverse the entire property. The green artery would wind through internal Fairplex neighborhoods, creating a sense of internal connectivity, and would terminate at a new Fairplex village destination on the east side of the campus.

Incorporate the history of the fair experience into all aspects of design, use, and programming.

Part of solidifying identity involves addressing history. Fairplex should incorporate its story into future projects, including signage that educates visitors about Fairplex’s history and illustrative artwork that showcases Fairplex’s role in the community—from its origins as home to the L.A. County Fair to its use during World War II as an assembly center for Japanese internment camps. “The Fair” is also suggested as a new theme for the proposed Fairplex Children’s Museum.

Emphasize the role of the community. The community is critical to the success of Fairplex’s transformation to a year-round destination. Engaging the community must be included in any and all rebranding and planning processes to guarantee support for future projects.

Fairplex should also become a model of environmental sustainability—particularly during the fair. The panel offers three specific recommendations:

- Create on-site renewable energy production and storage facilities
- Form mutually beneficial partnerships with local energy companies and clean-tech businesses
- Implement best practices for water stewardship, including replacing parking lot surfaces with permeable material, retaining and recycling stormwater and graywater on site, creating bioswales, daylighting streams underneath the campus, and creating a stormwater retention lake that doubles as a water feature

Ensure connectivity of land uses and transportation. Parking lots comprise about 300 of Fairplex’s nearly 500 acres of land, because the majority of visitors now access the campus via personal vehicles. Over time, other modes of transportation—including light rail, ride sharing, and autonomous vehicles—are expected to reduce parking requirements, freeing up land for other uses. Ride sharing has already begun to alleviate the need for parking. The panel recommends investing in infrastructure that encourages using alternative transportation modes:

- Increased ride-sharing dropoff/pickup facilities
- Direct, safe, and convenient access from rail stations to Fairplex points of entry
- Tram service from the new La Verne Fairplex gateway to the carnival during the fair
- Temporary, dedicated bus lanes at the main gate during the fair to provide greater passenger convenience

Create functional, flexible phasing. It will take several decades or more to fully realize Fairplex’s future vision. The panel approached its recommendations as an exercise that is rooted in the best practices of urban planning and therefore recommends beginning by identifying short-, medium-, and longer-term priorities and opportunities. Start the transformation process with highly visible, impactful, and well-publicized projects that require minimal funding and can be completed within one to two years. All initiatives going forward should focus on building visibility, audience, and density of consumers and visitors to support existing Fairplex operations and to create demand for subsequent phases and initiatives.

Support implementation concepts that promote model partnerships and sustainability. Fairplex’s success in fulfilling its mission as a community benefit and achieving financial sustainability will depend on its relationships with outside organizations. The panel recommends that Fairplex management look for opportunities to form mutually beneficial partnerships with businesses, local government agencies, educational and health care institutions, and nonprofits that enhance Fairplex’s visibility and support in the community.

Evaluate internal and external governance. To respond to diverse community needs now and in the future, Fairplex should consider reorganizing its governance structure to align with the goals and objectives in the strategic plan, and should include experts capable of guiding redevelopment efforts. The shift in focus to include land use planning and development calls for a corresponding shift in governance. The panel recommends that Fairplex’s internal governance structure be evaluated and reconfigured to best meet these future needs, challenges, and opportunities related to the distinct businesses under the organization’s umbrella.

In addition, a strong partnership between Los Angeles County and Fairplex will be required to realize the full vision of a new framework plan with year-round use and applicability. The new vision for Fairplex will have countywide economic implications. Given that a significant number of Fairplex’s operations take place on county-owned land, and Fairplex’s lease with the county ends in 2043 with two renewal options, a strong partnership with Los Angeles County is critical. To ensure that connectivity of land uses and long-term development are possible and sustainable, Fairplex must leverage its partnership with Los Angeles County to achieve a unified vision.



DEBORAH KERSON BILEK/ULI

Connectivity of Land Uses and Transportation

EXTERNAL CONNECTIVITY IS A CRUCIAL CONCEPT, and challenge, for Fairplex’s vision. Physical barriers block pathways, reinforcing negative ideas of exclusion and inaccessibility. Physical connections and accessible pathways could reinforce positive ideas and relationships among Fairplex visitors, neighbors, partners, and members of the broader community.

Improving external connectivity may also increase resources for reinvestment in Fairplex facilities and programs and sharing with public partners. Specifically, better external connections, such as improved links to regional transit, support transforming parking lots—an underused capital asset—to productive land that consistently generates a high level of financial return for Fairplex and its stakeholders throughout the year.

Better external connectivity could also attract new visitors and economic activity to Fairplex year-round, generating additional revenue and reducing dependence on fair-related income as the primary source of funding for public programs, such as job training and the Child Development Center.

External connectivity involves various modes of transportation, including personal and shared vehicles, rail and bus transit, regional trail networks, and access across and along White Avenue.

Historically, personal vehicles have been the primary mode of transportation connecting visitors and partners to Fairplex. The surrounding network of roadways was engineered to support automobile traffic volumes during periods of peak demand, including the annual fair.

Currently, Fairplex’s parking lots can accommodate about 35,000 vehicles. Entrance gates and surface streets around Fairplex are designed to accommodate the arrival of vehicles



DEBORAH KERSON BULEK/ULI

The nearly 300 acres of parking lots are a significant source of income for Fairplex during the L.A. County Fair. Over time, other modes of transportation are expected to replace personal automobile access, allowing land now occupied by parking lots to be converted to residential and commercial uses that provide consistent revenue year-round.

from all directions, and internal barriers and external fences separate paid parking areas and paid event areas from dropoff/pickup zones. Fairplex has partnered with the Pomona Police Department to manage traffic flows and limit neighborhood impacts.

Continued total reliance on personal vehicles for access to Fairplex, however, limits the availability of land for uses that generate a consistently high level of revenue and provide greater community benefit than is now possible. It also perpetuates transportation practices inconsistent with the organization's commitment to sustainability.

The panel, therefore, recommends investing in additional modes of external access over time to increase management's flexibility to repurpose land assets for revenue generation and community benefit purposes.

Fairplex staff members report that travel to Fairplex by shared-ride vehicles, such as Lyft and Uber, is increasing, with a noticeable impact on parking revenue and availability. The increase in shared-vehicle access is correlated with declining vehicle ownership by young adults, increased use of ride-sharing apps by adults of various ages, and responsible behavior of young adults related to driving under the influence.

Investing in facilities that support access to Fairplex by shared vehicles is strategically beneficial in reducing the amount of surface parking required and in increasing land available for productive reuse.

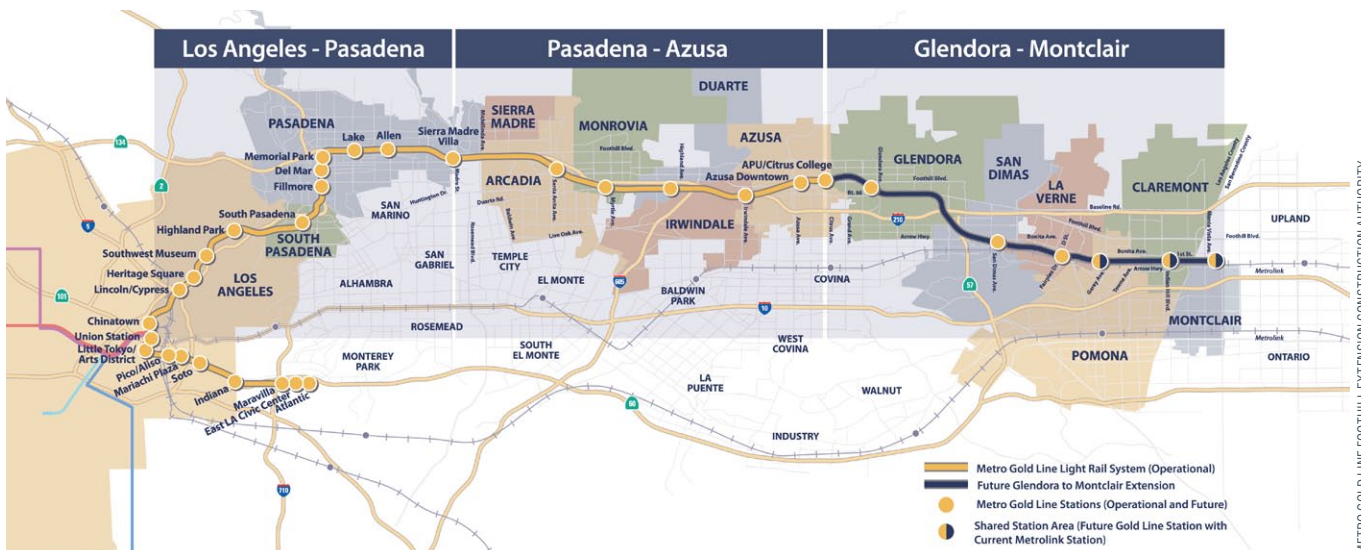
Rail Transit

Two major regional transportation investment programs will provide Fairplex with an opportunity to rebalance on-site land use by strengthening external orientation and connectivity. They are the planned Gold Line Foothill extension, which is scheduled for completion in 2025; and the separate Metrolink Lone Hill to White Double Track Project, which offers the prospect of additional transit access for Fairplex visitors. Gold Line light-rail



BLUE MCRIGHT

Artist conception of La Verne Gold Line Station.



METRO GOLD LINE FOOTHILL EXTENSION CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY

The La Verne Gold Line station will provide access to Fairplex for visitors located all along the Gold Line, which will create a new Fairplex gateway.



BRIAN ZIMMERMAN

Plans by the regional rail system MetroLink for the Lone Hill to White Double Track Project will improve visitor access to Fairplex.

service will provide riders direct access to Fairplex activities, and double-tracking the MetroLink commuter-rail corridor will provide riders more frequent seasonal access to Fairplex.

To take advantage of the new Gold Line and improved MetroLink service, Fairplex will need to provide direct, safe, and convenient access for passengers from rail stations to Fairplex points of entry. The access challenge for the future Gold Line is to connect the La Verne rail station across Arrow Highway to a new Fairplex gateway.

Options for connecting Fairplex to the rail station across Arrow Highway at grade include controlled, amenitized pedestrian crossings at E and F streets; or given large volumes of pedestrians at fair time, across the entire length of the block. Fairplex's proposed internal promenade, the green artery, could also be designed to connect with an

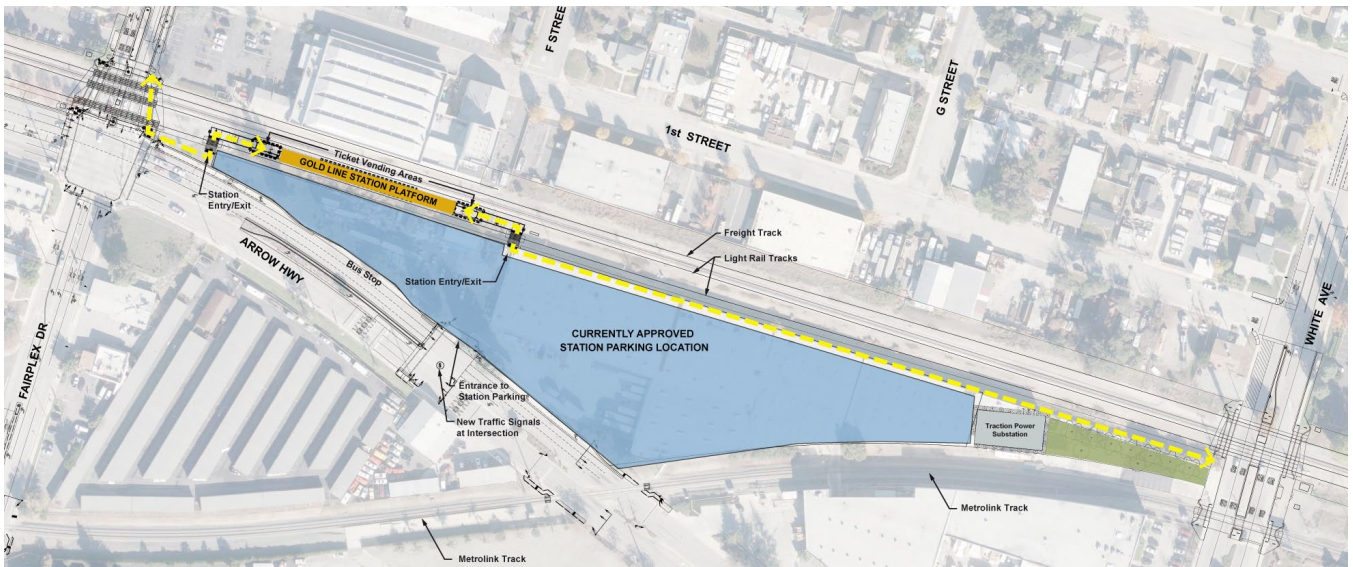


CITY OF LA VERNE

An illustration of development standards and guidelines on the northern parcel of Fairplex in the city of La Verne. These standards are laid out in the Old Town La Verne Specific Plan.

at-grade crossing on Arrow Highway at the intersection with White Avenue, which would connect with the shared-use path planned adjacent to the Gold Line tracks between the La Verne rail station and North White Avenue.

An above-grade connection across Arrow Highway is also possible by developing a gradually rising, elevated plaza from the train station to connect directly to Fairplex. Panelists suggest that it may be possible to redirect funding allocated for construction of a Gold Line parking garage to the plaza connection across Arrow Highway in exchange for surface parking at Fairplex. This trade would allow automobile access to the Gold Line, while providing priority access for pedestrians and greatly increasing Fairplex's external connectivity to Gold Line passengers, La Verne residents, and bus riders who also traverse Arrow Highway.



METRO GOLD LINE FOOTHILL EXTENSION CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY

February 2020 diagram of the proposed location of a parking structure. Funding for the parking structure could possibly be used to construct an above-grade walkway from the rail station to Fairplex in exchange for parking at Fairplex.

A preliminary plan for a transit-oriented development (TOD) on a northern Fairplex parcel that is within the city of La Verne emphasizes vehicle access to Arrow Highway. Although it recognizes the need for pedestrian pathways within the TOD and toward the Gold Line rail station, the plan does not provide detailed concepts for safe, convenient, direct pedestrian connections from the Fairplex site to the Gold Line rail platform across Arrow Highway.

Understanding the implications of a high-quality external connection to rail transit requires an assessment of the number of Fairplex parking spaces that could potentially be freed up by visitors' taking mass transit, which could be estimated by assessing the number of visitors arriving from areas served by rail transit. An assessment would look at the total travel time by car from origin to Fairplex, including time for traffic congestion, parking access, and access to events, compared with rail-transit travel time, including time spent waiting for trains.

Alternatively, maps of transit travel times using General Transit Feed Specification tools and the number of Fairplex visitors within the transit geographic area could be quantified. Data available from vendors such as streetlight data can provide extremely granular detail on vehicle-trip origins to Fairplex, including to different Fairplex parking lots by time of day, day of week, and route taken.

Fairplex staff members may need to engage with transit agencies to eliminate route delays, costs, or discomforts that could discourage Fairplex visitors from using rail transit in place of personal vehicles. Collaboration on the design of the La Verne rail station, service, schedules, travel costs, and so forth could help make transit a competitive option relative to personal vehicles, freeing up land that is now used for parking for higher uses and improving sustainability.

Bus Transit

Improving external orientation to bus transit could also improve Fairplex visitation and reduce access by personal vehicle and parking requirements for the fair and other large events. Direct bus service to Fairplex is provided by Foothill Transit routes 492 and 197.

With the introduction of east–west Gold Line service to North Pomona in 2025, the Foothill Transit Authority may shift some of its east–west bus service to north–south service. One possible new route would connect La Verne and Pomona along White or Garey Avenue. This route would provide bus service to Fairplex from the Pomona MetroLink Station and locations accessed through the Pomona Transit Center.

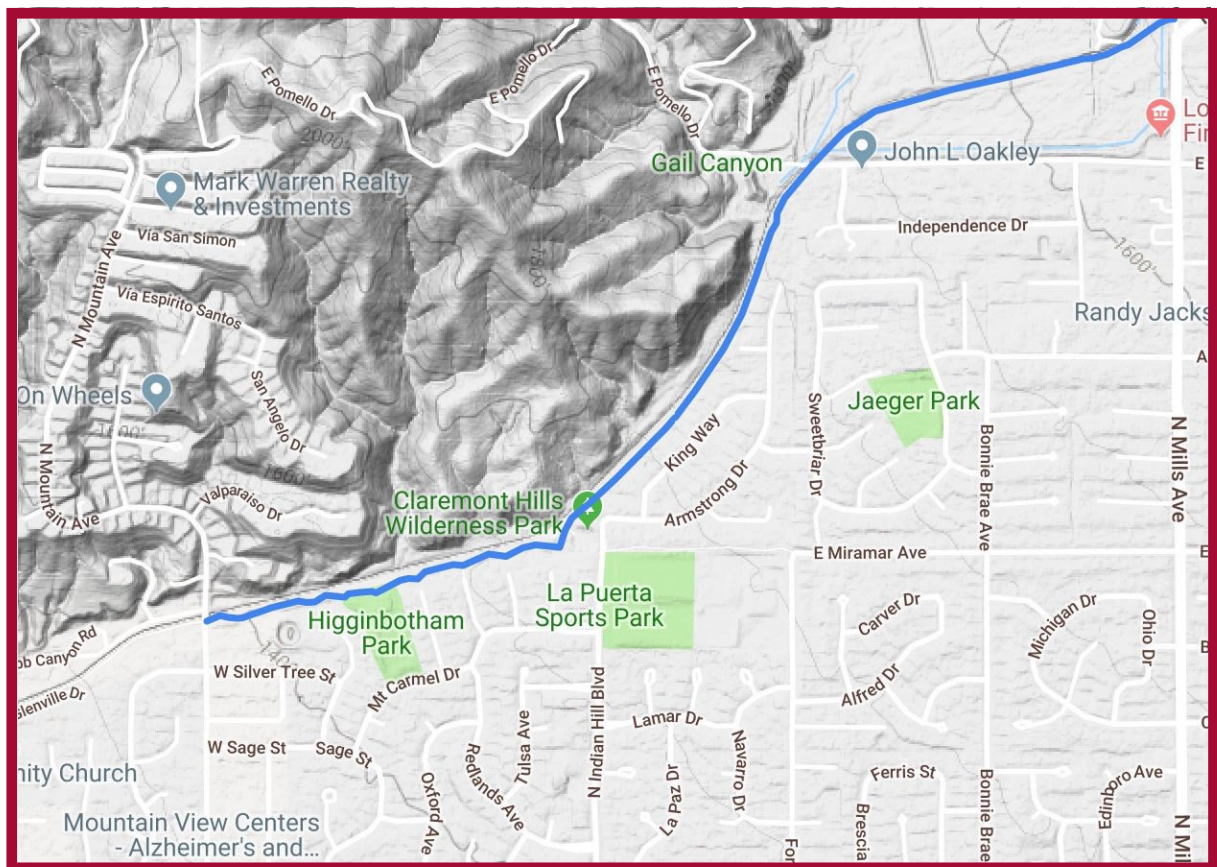


White Avenue, which borders Fairplex to the east, is currently a main Pomona thoroughfare with a narrow sidewalk and speed limit of 45 miles per hour. To activate the eastern Fairplex campus and connect it to the community, White Avenue will need to be transformed to a more sedate, pedestrian-friendly street.

Bus service provides passengers with advantages over personal vehicles—offering an inexpensive alternative to the \$15 parking fee and dropoff directly at the main gate, rather than having to walk across a large parking lot. Buses could be given priority access to Fairplex by providing temporary dedicated bus lanes during the fair to make bus transportation more attractive to fair-goers than personal automobile access.

Collaboration with the Foothill Transit Authority to increase frequency of bus service during the fair, particularly on weekends, could reduce peak parking demand and potentially increase fair attendance.

Beyond temporary bus lanes and bus-focused traffic operational support, increasing orientation to bus service may also entail investing in and collaborating with other agencies. Such arrangements could provide improved bus pullouts and shelters; marked and controlled road crossings, sidewalks, and pathways that safely and directly connect to transit stops; wayfinding and bus arrival displays; off-board fare payment for faster boarding times; flexible fare media; and system maps and route planning.



The Thompson Creek Trail is part of the San Gabriel Valley Regional Greenway Network, a world-class bicycle superhighway that transforms local waterways into a network of viable, community greenways.

Regional Trail System

In addition, the Thompson Creek Regional Trail allows members of the broader Pomona-area community—including students at the Claremont Colleges or Cal Poly Pomona—to walk, bike, or ride a scooter to Fairplex. To encourage visitors to access Fairplex via this trail system throughout the year and during the fair, Fairplex should invest in internal infrastructure that provides direct, protected connections throughout Fairplex’s grounds; bike and scooter storage; a bike-oriented wayfinding system; and bike rentals and maintenance services. The wayfinding system should provide direction along trails up to 10 miles from Fairplex, as well as internally.

The northeast border of Fairplex is inhospitable to cyclists, pedestrians, and bus transit users. Vehicles drive faster than the marked 45-miles-per-hour speed limit; sidewalks are narrow; separation from traffic is negligible; trees constrain path width; and there is a high risk for stumbling or falling and no activities or visual sights to entertain the mind.

Over time, decreased reliance on personal vehicles to access Fairplex will free up land north of White Avenue that is currently used for parking. Activation of the northeast boundary of Fairplex will make the southwest edge of White Avenue a more active and visually interesting border.

When that change occurs, White Avenue’s function should be altered from a relatively high-speed, auto-focused superblock to a lower-speed, pedestrian-friendly street, designed to facilitate access to Fairplex activities. This transformation will require wider sidewalks, narrower lanes, controlled crosswalks, and slower vehicle speeds.

The new design should provide access not only from the southeast and northwest corners of the Fairplex site, but also from the northeast edge of the fairgrounds and residential communities along White Avenue that, over time, will increasingly be oriented toward and connected to Fairplex.



Framework Plan

CURRENTLY, FAIRPLEX FEELS LIKE AN ISLAND; it is bounded with chain-link fencing and surrounded on all four sides by surface streets. The panel developed a framework plan for connecting the campus to the community that also provides visitors an experiential journey for navigating through Fairplex's various neighborhoods. This plan suggests repurposing obsolete facilities to increase Fairplex's revenue streams while providing community services, and developing new facilities both to improve community outreach and benefits and to enhance the transformation of the campus to a year-round destination. These changes have the potential to make Fairplex a countywide destination and revenue generator. A year-round destination with a strong sense of place will enhance the experience of annual Fairplex events like the L.A. County Fair.

Overview

Every aspect of the Fairplex visitor experience should be imbued with the essence of Fairplex's mission of respecting local heritage, art, and culture in a sustainable environment that celebrates Southern California.

From the moment they arrive, Fairplex visitors should be welcomed with the promise of a sense of wonder and discovery. The panel recommends creating a carefully planned and flexible wayfinding system that uses signage and natural cues to seamlessly direct guests to the various Fairplex offerings

and events. Landscaped greenways should complement major circulation routes, punctuated by nodes that define zones and present a sense of discovery.

A primary mission of Fairplex is to provide public benefit. This mission should be underscored and enhanced through future development and property improvements. Since Fairplex is a public amenity, the local community should have a clear voice in planning new development—which includes a seasonal fair as well as other complementary year-round uses. If community members are actively engaged in the planning process, they are more likely to fully embrace and support the resulting product.

Community engagement should begin before formally presenting entitlement plans to allow consideration of input and ideas from community members. Such engagement could be accomplished through various activities, from surveys and visioning sessions to naming contests.

Fairplex has the ability to enhance current public benefits, such as the Child Development Center and the career and technical education programs of the Learning Centers, with new initiatives that increase public engagement and benefits. Creation of a vibrant live/work/play environment and cultural destination for the community will depend on furthering partnerships with local businesses, colleges, and other organizations that complement Fairplex’s mission and can assist in developing a revenue-generating enterprise.

Concept Vision

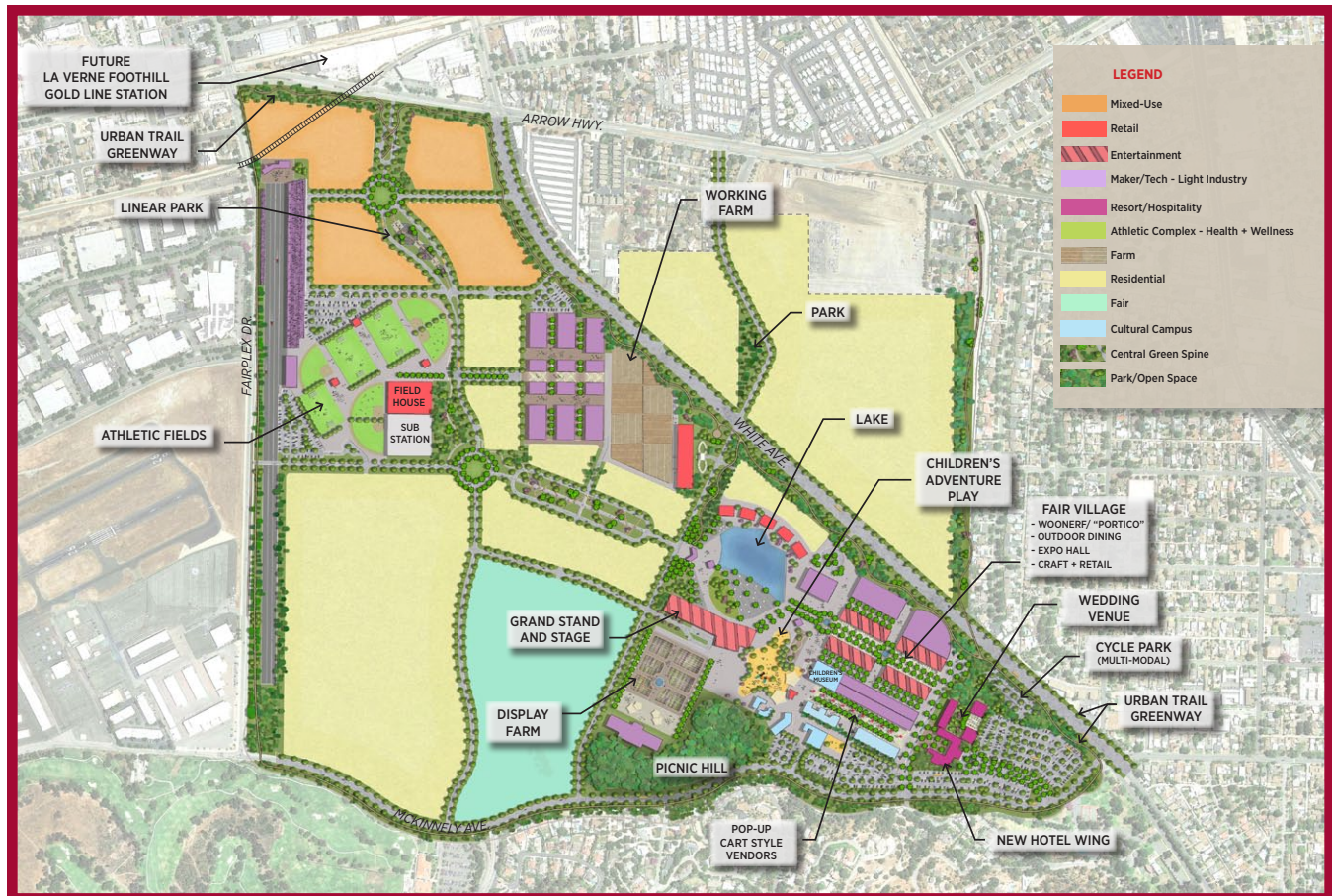
Panelists developed a suggested framework plan with key design characteristics that aim to address the potential for Fairplex’s future growth as a site that serves as a year-round destination, inclusive of its historic seasonal fair along with

additional uses and functions that are identified and developed over time. The fundamental underpinning of this concept is a “year-round carnival”—with varying activities and offerings that are rooted in creating different kinds of gathering spots that serve the community. These attributes are highlighted below.

Green Artery

Because well-defined, internal circulation is important for the proper functioning of Fairplex, the panel recommends creating a major central promenade that connects the Gold Line station on the northeast side of the campus to the cultural village on the southwest corner of the site.

This pedestrian-oriented promenade—or green artery—should be lined with a mix of visitor uses that create a soft edge, and would serve as Fairplex’s main street and connect the various neighborhoods. The green artery would also involve a series of secondary boulevards and pedestrian walkways that connect proposed campus land uses, creating an internal grid that enhances internal circulation. The panel suggests creating roundabouts where the primary artery intersects with



Framework plan. The green artery would traverse the Fairplex campus, breaking up visitors’ journeys to Fairplex venues and events with visual interest and experiences along the way. The artery, which connects to secondary avenues and pathways, would also lead visitors to Fairplex’s downtown village.

secondary boulevards that can be used as event exhibition space or for programming purposes.

Celebrating the abundant sunshine of Southern California, the green artery should traverse the property and lead visitors easily throughout Fairplex while underscoring respect for land that has historically supported local agriculture and enjoyment of the outdoors and nature. With campus connections to local bicycle trails and jogging paths, this green artery will promote visitation, healthy mobility, and connection to the community.

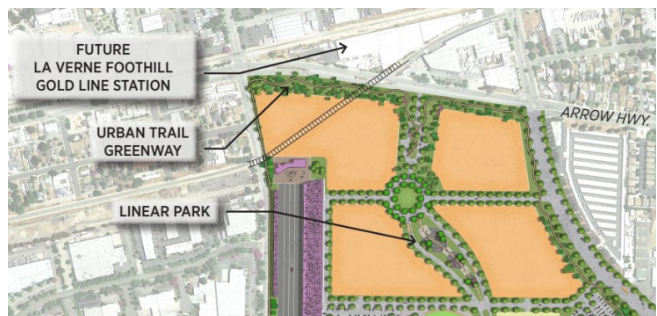
The green artery’s visual interest should be enhanced with public art that tells the story of Fairplex’s heritage and provides visitors a unique Southern California experience. The panel recommends launching a design competition for local artists to identify the artwork that supports this concept.

Anchor Neighborhoods

Like a string of pearls, a series of nodes along the green artery—which connect to secondary pathways and, ultimately, different “neighborhoods”—would offer visitors an opportunity to relax and engage. These nodes break up an otherwise long circulation route and offer a sense of discovery that is unique to each neighborhood. Panelists recommended ideas for some neighborhoods that anchor different uses within the Fairplex campus. Panelists acknowledged that the identification of these neighborhoods could evolve and develop differently over time, depending on a variety of factors, including community engagement and future land use needs.

TOD Gateway

With the extension of Metro Gold Line light rail to La Verne, Fairplex has a tremendous opportunity to develop a residential, mixed-use TOD project on an 11.7-acre parcel located on the northern portion of the campus. Fairplex owns this parcel, which is within the city of La Verne.



A transit-oriented development near the future Gold Line station can increase housing stock and welcome visitors.



Seattle’s northbound Link light-rail train entering Othello Station, which is adjacent to a transit-oriented development.

The panel emphasizes that TOD should focus on the four Ds:

- Density to encourage walkability and mix of uses
- Design that is pedestrian-friendly and human-scaled
- Diversity of land uses to include housing and retail
- Distance from train station within one-quarter to one-half mile

The TOD should be developed in the early to midphase of construction of the Gold Line extension, with the project’s completion coinciding with opening of the La Verne rail station in 2025. This project will serve as the catalyst for future redevelopment of the Fairplex campus and will generate revenue to assist in funding future projects.

The panel recommends that Fairplex staff create a partnership with a mixed-use developer in the future to move ahead with development of this project. The panel further recommends reserving a significant percentage of residential units as attainable housing for senior citizens and artists to promote and expand Fairplex’s “arts, entertainment, and culture” themes.

A residential TOD project places a concentration of people near Fairplex’s programming, providing the potential to bolster attendance at events such as the L.A. County Fair.

Fair Village

The area around the exhibition halls should be redeveloped into a downtown-like Fairplex district that is curated with anchor tenants that support the events that occur in this neighborhood. Like the shops at Disney Springs Orlando, Fair Village could offer a mix of retail amenities where visitors can dine, drink, shop, and relax without leaving the campus. The village should



Redevelopment of the exhibition hall area into Fair Village can activate Fairplex as a year-round destination.



Athletic fields can serve as flexible space and as a gathering place for the community.



The year-round family entertainment and educational component should include the miniature train display already located in this area, as well as the full-size train currently located adjacent to the railroad museum.

include flexible, year-round displays, retail and hospitality amenities, and entertainment zones that provide a destination for multimodal visitors via the green artery and bicycle paths.

Fair Village should provide a year-round family entertainment destination that reflects the fun and educational aspects of the fair, with a new Adventure Play area associated with the proposed Children's Museum, along with the miniature and full-size train displays.

Gateways and plazas should form public spaces within cultural and destination nodes of the new Fairplex village. These spaces should be activated to offer high energy every day and to provide microclimates and shade for outdoor dining, Instagram moments, and other fun or educational diversions.

Picnic Hill

Picnic Hill is envisioned as a forested region that could be enhanced with hardscaping and landscaping to serve as a public park. The panel also recommends creating a second farm

site for educational purposes—which focuses on flowers and native plants and on attracting related wildlife like butterflies and hummingbirds—adjacent to the Flower Building.

Sports and Wellness

Sports and wellness are essential to a healthy, sustainable Fairplex community. Additional athletic fields could provide a gathering place for local sports leagues and could also serve as flexible space for seasonal uses, such as the fair. The panel recommends the development of a field house to offer rock climbing, e-sports, basketball, and other indoor sporting activities and events. This flexible facility could also be repurposed for seasonal uses, such as fair-time activities.

Grandstand Town Center

The Fairplex grandstand should be retained as an event venue. The ULI panel recommends adding a new outdoor stage and water feature, which will also provide stormwater retention. As development progresses, the grandstand could be replaced with a more modern, comfortable 12,000-seat amphitheater to host concerts and other performances throughout the year.



The grandstand may be replaced in the future with a more modern amphitheater. In the meantime, it can continue to host entertainment with the addition of a new outdoor stage.



STEPHANIE PANKIEWICZ/ULI

Expanding the farm facilities and providing light-industrial maker space can allow for increased community partnerships.

The Farm at Fairplex

The Farm’s exhibition and production facilities should be expanded to enhance community educational programs. The farm building and surrounding pathways should be retained, with a new entry point on White Avenue that proudly announces the heritage and mission of the L.A. County Fair as an agricultural institution.

Respecting the L.A. County Fair’s traditional mission of celebrating the community’s latest industrial innovations, the ULI panel recommends repositioning an existing building to a new technology, light-industrial maker space. This facility would provide entrepreneurial incubator space and educational programs that promote advancements in technology and manufacturing. The L.A. County Fair can then highlight the educational, innovational, and technological achievements of Fairplex and the region during its seasonal run.



GENSLER

Architectural rendering of a new facility, launched by a \$1 million donation from a local philanthropist, that will repurpose an adjacent exhibition building to provide community educational and entrepreneurial opportunities. It will include a commercial kitchen to offer healthy cooking classes and occupational training in the culinary arts, as well as space for entrepreneurs to create new culinary products to sell.

Carnival Site

The concept plan maintains a spot for the Fairplex carnival so that the seasonal fair continues to be an asset that serves the community. Over the course of this four-week event, temporary uses can be set up similar to those of today and interim parking made available in the adjacent lot, with controlled access from McKinley Avenue. Over time, as parking needs decline, this surface lot could be repurposed for different uses, such as residences.

Flexibility

Flexibility is essential to Fairplex’s optimal functioning and its ability to accommodate hundreds of events, ranging from venues that attract small groups to the L.A. County Fair with 1.5 million visitors. The variety of events will add a highly dynamic and ever-changing backdrop to Fairplex’s live/work/play community.

Careful planning of natural and built elements can allow the creation of “ticketed” zones with minimal, temporary fencing. In addition, using multipurpose elements—such as the field house and soccer fields for exhibition space or fairgrounds as needed—would maximize the facilities’ value and increase overall Fairplex functionality.

Housing

A new TOD on the north side of the Fairplex campus will provide residents the convenience of mass transit and add the population density at Fairplex required to support year-round retail and entertainment amenities.

As development advances over the long term, the number of visitors accessing Fairplex by train, ride sharing, and autonomous vehicles is expected to increase and to reduce the parking requirements for personal vehicles. This change will open up Fairplex acreage for additional housing development, which could include attainable, senior and market-rate apartments, as well as for-sale townhouses and single-family dwellings.

Innovation and Technology

Though Fairplex honors agriculture, many acknowledge that current and future community needs will center on innovation and technology. The concept plan envisions opportunities for the future development of mixed-use or other educational facilities that are predicated on meeting innovation and technological needs.



Environmental and Financial Sustainability

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES ARE KEY TO THE TRANSFORMATION of Fairplex's campus into a countywide and regional destination and to its future redevelopment. Panelists believe that Fairplex has the potential to become a model of sustainability for the entire Inland Empire.

Environmental Sustainability

Nearly two-thirds of the Fairplex campus is covered by asphalt parking lots. Although parking is essential to attendance at the fair and other Fairplex events, this hardscape generates an intense heat-island effect and significant stormwater runoff, which is the leading cause of stream impairment in urban areas.

Environmental sustainability should include production of a significant amount of the energy used by Fairplex and energy conservation, as well as creation of on-site strategies to retain and recycle stormwater runoff. Panelists recommended incorporating the following environmental sustainability practices.

Stormwater

Much of the Fairplex site is a former wetland and stream convergence area. Stormwater runoff and detention are a major concern, in part because of their expense, and because they create operational problems. Furthermore, any new development will need to address or retrofit stormwater impacts to newer standards that did not exist when most of the campus was originally built.

Stormwater runoff, detention, and other requirements can add minimal cost and be designed and implemented in a way to create major amenities that enhance the user experience and value of development. Detention ponds and wetland percolation



USEPA

Atlanta's Historic Fourth Ward Park contains a water feature that connects pedestrians and bicyclists to the Eastside Trail; it also collects water runoff from the neighborhood.



CORD RODRIGUEZ

Tanner Springs Park in Portland, Oregon's Pearl District is another example of a water-retention facility that doubles as a public amenity.



ERIC FISCHER

Bioswale in a Chicago neighborhood.



DEBORAH KERSON BILEK/ULI

The Fairplex Farm already provides healthy farm-to-table produce to the Sheraton Hotel restaurant and catering service.

have been successfully applied as attractive centerpieces in development and redevelopment projects. These techniques could be applied to the Fairplex campus to enhance the site's aesthetics and guest experience, as well as to reconnect the site with its natural heritage and provide an experience-based education opportunity.

Green Parking Lots

To reduce the heat-island effect and water runoff, the ULI panel recommends incorporating landscaping islands in parking lots to limit stormwater runoff and replacing asphalt with permeable pavers made of natural materials. Bioswales, which can be incorporated throughout the campus, should be designed as a regional stormwater detention system that collects runoff in an attractive lake or water feature. The parking lot lighting should also be transitioned to LED to become more energy efficient.

Commitment to LEED Certification

All newly constructed buildings should meet at a minimum the U.S. Green Building Council's standards for LEED Silver certification, with an overall goal of achieving LEED for Neighborhood Development for the entire Fairplex campus.

Commitment to Farm-to-Table Movement

Redevelopment of the campus should be based on the concept of a farm-to-table movement, where only locally grown vegetables are used in Fairplex hotels, conference centers, educational facilities, and restaurants. Panelists acknowledge that the produce and herbs currently harvested from the Farm contribute to the farm-to-table movement. This winning model of direct sales from farms to restaurants has the capacity to scale, and to encourage production by farmers in the Inland Empire region.

Native Landscaping

Fairplex should use native trees and all native, drought-tolerant plants for landscaping.

Renewable Energy

The ULI Advisory Services panel recommends making Fairplex a regional showcase of sustainability and using the L.A. County Fair to display the campus's sustainability and innovative energy production and storage features. All campus development or redevelopment activities should incorporate rooftop solar panels, geothermal power, and wind power to produce renewable energy for on-site use.

Fairplex currently has a partnership with Tesla, and should consider building additional partnerships with utilities and corporations for demonstration projects that showcase emerging energy resources and technology or programs that provide energy education and outreach.

Financial Sustainability

Financial sustainability is vital to Fairplex's future. Fairplex's revenue stream is largely dependent on its annual fair. In addition to the fair, much of Fairplex's revenue comes from events, and it fluctuates from year to year, while its only source of consistent income is through the Sheraton Fairplex Hotel and Conference Center, as well as fair parking.

Both the hotel and conference center are currently losing revenue. Further, exhibition halls globally are challenged to maximize value from events by reducing vacancies, increasing visitation and revenue, gaining recognition, entering new markets, and lodging and feeding exhibitors and visitors. These challenges render it extremely difficult for the Fairplex conference center to thrive. Panelists also acknowledge that revenue generated through fair parking will not be sustainable over the long term. The ULI panel therefore recommends identifying all sources of potential income that could provide Fairplex with an ongoing, stable financial base.

Considering the diversity of events that Fairplex hosts annually, the ULI panel recommends establishing permanent retail services that may have relevance to events, but that generate revenue year-round. Businesses that cater to pets—such as a dog training clinic, dog accessories shop, and a doggie hotel, for example—go hand in hand with dog shows hosted by Fairplex, but provide year-round revenue.

Fairplex must continue to demonstrate clear and strong financial stewardship and articulate a future vision and a willingness and ability to implement initiatives to support that vision to gain community support and thrive. To do so means adapting to changing economics and demographics to remain sustainable, creating stable revenue streams, and nurturing and building relationships with outside organizations—governments, corporations, foundations, educational and health care institutions, and local businesses and community partners—not only for capital and operational support, but also for assistance with planning, programming, and developing events and ideas.



Shopping at Disney Springs Orlando.

THEME PARK TOURIST/FLICKR



Palisades Village in Pacific Palisades, California, is an example of a village center designed to honor the past.

CARPUSO

Partnerships

Fairplex's board and management recognize that partnering with a variety of agencies, organizations, and high-net-worth individuals is crucial to Fairplex's mission, success, and sustainable operation of the campus. Although Fairplex has a successful record of managing its operations, future success in funding and sponsoring or operating new uses on the Fairplex campus will depend on relationships with outside partners.

Fairplex's staff should anticipate and plan for disruption because of changing preferences, like declining interest in drag racing, and the emergence of new sporting activities, like e-sports. The rapid decline in horse racing, for example, was a surprise that resulted in a significant decrease in revenue but created an incredible opportunity for repurposing real estate.

Government Relations

Real estate is a stable source of revenue that could finance Fairplex for the next 100 years. Fairplex has a ground lease with Los Angeles County that expires in 2043, with options to renew for two consecutive five-year terms. In order for real estate redevelopment projects to be viable, the panel recommends



SEERGE MELKI/FLICKR

Navy Pier on Chicago's waterfront is a popular destination that attracts visitors year-round.

renegotiating this lease for a longer period—preferably 99 years—to allow for a long-term development plan that effectuates the vision for Fairplex's future. The panel therefore recommends exploring a stronger partnership with Los Angeles County. If Fairplex adopts a master development plan that clearly demonstrates an achievable, well-thought-out vision, supported by a track record of successful implementation in early-phase initiatives, Los Angeles County will be able to recognize the benefits of a long-term partnership with Fairplex.

The master plan should define land uses that contribute to Fairplex's role as a *regional destination* and should phase implementation of projects in response to the following:

- Funding cycles and availability of capital funds and debt
- Access to grants, sponsorships, and funding from partners
- Market demand and market cycles
- Political and community goodwill
- Strategic design and programming

Los Angeles County is also a potential partner for funding through enhanced infrastructure financing districts, economic development grants, and support through education, parks and recreation, economic development, and law enforcement funding programs.

Fairplex should also strengthen its relationship with local jurisdictions because the cities of Pomona and La Verne have power over zoning, land use, and economic development as well as influence over funding sources, and they are crucial to community relations.

Corporate Alliances

Fairplex's corporate alliances will involve both operational and development partnerships. Corporate partners are important; these organizations could underwrite or provide capital for existing programs and operating costs, as well as fund new ones.

Partnerships in Operations

Operational relationships may involve providing a retail brand exclusivity for a location or a product (e.g., ice cream or hamburgers) or marketing and communications activities, such as creating events that attract customers (e.g., concerts, fireworks, dog shows, or outdoor movies).

Partnerships in Development and Investment

County fairs, which are part of America's DNA, provide experiences and opportunities for brands to attract customers. Some brands or retailers will want to locate a store, flagship, or showroom at Fairplex if the promise of place is strong. Implementation of a retail plan can start with short-term events and lead to longer-term lease agreements.

Fairplex's goals and vision will align with foundations in many areas, which could lead to partnerships that provide coordination and funding for educational programs, especially around health, energy, and sustainability.



Implementation

FAIRPLEX IS LOCATED IN A REAL ESTATE MARKET that lags behind that of the rest of the Los Angeles metropolitan area, so its buildout may take 50 years or more, even under the most aggressive growth scenarios. Over this expansive time frame, technology, economics, demographics, and environmental and cultural shifts will drive large-scale changes in existing land uses and consumer demand. As a result, Fairplex can expect sudden changes to operations, such as a rapid decline in demand for parking as visitor mobility shifts to mass transit or autonomous cars.

The panel therefore recommends identifying short-, medium-, long-, and very long-term priorities and opportunities.

Short-Term Priorities

Short-term initiatives can be implemented from months to two years and may include projects that are already underway; that require minimal funding, approvals, or operational planning; or that can be funded within existing budgets and capital planning cycles.

Short-term projects should be highly visible, impactful, and well publicized to demonstrate to the community that Fairplex is responsive and effective and is committed to delivering on its promises.

These initiatives should focus on building visibility, audience, and density of consumers and visitors to support existing Fairplex operations, as well as on creating demand for subsequent phases and initiatives.

Planning should also begin for mid- and long-term projects that bolster a long-term vision for the campus.

Medium-Term Priorities

Medium-term initiatives can be implemented in two to six years and should include projects that have already been introduced and discussed, but that will require further planning, design, approvals, or funding. These priorities will build on or add to

other initiatives or will enhance short-term initiatives without competing with existing operations. Or they can be linked to existing operations or other initiatives, improvements, and investments to create synergies.

Long-Term Priorities

Long-term initiatives take six to 15 years to implement. The specifics of these initiatives, including design and market potential, will be defined as Fairplex evolves.

In some cases, the timing and success of long-term initiatives will be linked to or dependent on actions, commitments, or funding partners outside the control of Fairplex or local jurisdictions, such as mass transit projects.

Long-term projects, such as a residential development, can be viewed as placeholders within a larger planning framework that drives investment and infrastructure. Phasing guidelines for long-term projects include using existing assets—buildings, landscaping, attractions, or parking—as a basis for growth and development.

Fairplex should begin with initiatives that build on its strengths and should proceed incrementally, one project at a time. A few early, highly visible wins will be needed to gain community confidence and support.

Development will require a plan for minimizing disruption to other Fairplex operations. Projects that change land use should not infringe on or replace existing uses until market demand or consensus drives and justifies changes in use.

Initiatives should build critical mass or audience for future phases by strengthening the activity and visibility of existing phases.

Fairplex should take a plug-and-play approach to development by creating placeholders in the development framework defined by broad spatial and use concepts and should refine concepts as market, needs, and design circumstances crystalize.

Fairplex must understand that some uses—particularly in emerging development phases—will serve as amenities that drive activity, establish a sense of place, and provide customer experience, rather than driving revenue. For example, revenue from mixed-use projects may be minimal during the first few years of operation, because developers often provide discounted rent for ground-floor retail space, which subsidizes

DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

Though final buildout of the Fairplex site will take many years, panelists conducted a development summary to ascertain the number and kinds of land uses the site could ultimately support. According to the panelists, at full buildout, the campus could support the following:

- 350,000-plus square feet of refreshed and enhanced uses for existing Fairplex buildings
- 50-plus acres of new parks
 - 25 to 30 acres of new athletic fields, plus a 60,000-square-foot field house
 - Five to seven acres of Adventure Playground
 - 10 to 12 acres of a signature lake and waterfront promenade
 - Seven to 10 acres of green artery core
 - Seven miles of new linear paths
- 40,000-plus square feet of new specialty retail and restaurants
- 90,000-plus square feet of innovation space in repurposed barns
- Restored barn and Farm, with 10 acres of crop production
- 10 acres of demonstration gardens
- Enhanced village retail, cultural, and experiential area
- 30-plus acres of new mixed use in the TOD village
 - Up to 1,000 new residential units, which could include townhouses and multifamily, market-rate, workforce, attainable, student, and senior housing
 - Up to 150,000 square feet of local-serving grocery, retail, and restaurants*
- 220-plus acres of paved parking and carnival space, to be adapted into new commercial and residential development in future development phases as needed
 - Up to 7,000 new residential units
 - Up to 1 million square feet of commercial space

*Assuming 80 percent residential/20 percent commercial; 30 units per acre residential/24,000 square feet commercial per acre.

projects until lease-up of the residential component. Once a building is stabilized, retail rents revert to market rate, increasing income to landlords.

Fairplex and its development partners, therefore, should be prepared—particularly in early phases of development—to subsidize some operations or amenities as “loss leaders” that will eventually support more integral and revenue-generating uses.

Governance

All change must begin with leadership. Committed and strong leadership that will shepherd future change and redevelopment through implementation will require time, patience, and skill.

Fairplex leadership must understand the importance of seeking best practices, studying lessons learned, and developing a method to measure outcomes. Leadership must also listen to all members of the public, and support creative collaborations. Leadership must have the will to make difficult decisions at the right time.

To embark on the recommendations set forth in this report, the panel proposes that the Fairplex governance structure be evaluated and reconfigured to best meet these future needs, challenges, and opportunities related to the distinct businesses under the umbrella of the organization.

Immediately, it will be important to create a separate Development Committee made up of the right players from the region with the needed skills to provide guidance and expertise related to the market, construction, and the demands of economic and political forces, as well as to help identify possible resources to move the various aspects of any redevelopment or new development forward.

The panel emphasizes that effectuating change will require long-term commitment and ownership, along with the ability to constantly evolve with the times and community needs. The governance and organizational structure of Fairplex must be prepared for these realities.



Branding and Core Business

THE FAIRPLEX CAMPUS INCLUDES EXPANSIVE LAND and considerable real estate assets and infrastructure resources, which together provide a variety of opportunities to create new, consistent revenue streams. The challenge for Fairplex, however, is to develop and implement a core business strategy and brand that provide financial sustainability to fund operations and community programs—which include the annual fair, as well as year-round programming—while also generating capital to begin its transformation to a live/work/play environment and year-round community destination. The panel therefore recommends the following considerations for Fairplex as it works to define—and refine—its core business.

Know thyself. It is important for Fairplex to identify its core business. Panelists understand that the Fairplex site is home to much more than the L.A. County Fair. Its exhibition business offers an opportunity to solidify the Fairplex identity and generate sustainable revenue. These one-of-a-kind events enable Fairplex to captivate public interest and create an innovative flagship in California. Outstanding historical monuments, elegant venues, and a wide range of events at Fairplex bring together business and leisure travelers to discover and learn about the latest trends and to make new friends.

The panel recommends that the fair continue to be a part of the Fairplex brand and identity. At the same time, Fairplex must also focus on being an aggregator, a curator, and a content producer

of selective events that provide cohesion around what Fairplex wants to be. Fairplex should continue working toward a better understanding of its customers, including potential customers who do not currently attend the fair, but who may visit Fairplex's other experiential activities.

Know your customer. Knowing the customer and understanding market segmentation are fundamental to strategic marketing, which is how businesses differentiate themselves from competitors. An audit of its assets and benchmarking will help Fairplex consistently provide better value to customers. Benchmarking—which involves comparing business processes and performance metrics to industry best

standards and practices—should reach beyond California to leading exhibition halls, trade shows, and fairs worldwide.

The panel recommends developing an action plan to begin building a strong identity. The identity should contain a strong promise in a few words and be unique to Fairplex.

Programming

Programming is about showcasing a place's identity, theme, purpose, and promise to let the world know it is alive and in action. Key to generating engagement, authenticity, and a sense of place is developing the right theme and key programming for a location. The panelists suggest looking at San Francisco's Ferry Building and Orlando's Disney Springs as examples of places that possess a strong, long-lasting theme. In particular, both locations continue to improve their offering and remain relevant with evolving trends by welcoming new tenants and short-term operators, such as kiosks and food trucks.

Creating a comfortable community gathering place will enable brands and retailers to integrate with future Fairplex projects and programs. Programming and careful selection of retail

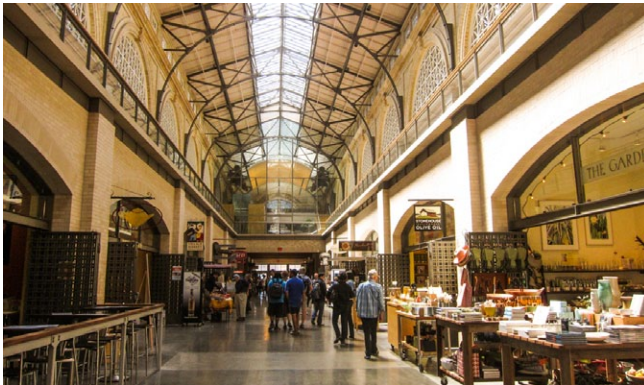
amenities can create a destination with an infinite number of experiences to attract visitors. Fairplex needs to get on the map, in the minds of potential customers, and create a sense of urgency.

Retail

Retail is the heart of economic relationships, but no easy singular solution guarantees success. Only well-defined projects attract retailer interest. In addition, retail requires density and critical mass to be successful.

Strategic marketing, or market segmentation, is a simple tool that allows businesses to target specific customers. Museums, for example, have permanent exhibits, but their rotating, temporary exhibits attract millions of additional visitors annually.

To build critical mass, Fairplex should act as a curator and continue to benchmark, seek diversity, and adjust offerings according to market segmentation to attract the region's 90,000 college students, local workers, families, and neighbors to visit and keep Fairplex lively day and night.



The Ferry Building in San Francisco is a popular community food hall with a lively atmosphere and mix of permanent and temporary vendors.



A permanent farmers market in downtown Ithaca, New York.

Food Is Life

Food is key to creating a vivid environment at Fairplex. Food is about health and culture. Food brings people together and has the ability to attract people from afar.

Food is a strong magnet and therefore should be a central priority in developing Fairplex into a regional destination. Restaurants have the capacity to deliver experiences from morning to night and can rapidly adapt to various clientele.

Fairplex could include chain and independent restaurants, farmers markets, a food hall, and community cooking activities, including entrepreneurial ventures where community members can create products from family recipes to sell on weekends.

To be successful in the 21st century, food enterprise must be curated to fit place and consumer demographics: think sustainable, affordable, healthy, new ways to eat and have fun and family atmosphere. A destination with a creative mix of food establishments provides a compelling reason to visit and encourages repeat business. The panel recommends establishing a permanent food destination, with five to 10 concepts that can be drawn from the following mix:

- A nationally recognized coffee shop, such as Starbucks or the Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf

- An independently owned, locally operated Italian or French bakery
- Two family restaurants that serve healthy, comfort food
- An independently owned, farm-to-table restaurant
- A casual, fast-food restaurant
- A food truck festival
- A weekend family-cooking market
- A food hall (optional, as it may not have an immediate market)
- A farmers market, which might be financed and co-operated by a supermarket chain—such as Whole Foods, Trader Joe’s, or a local organic market—and could include an adjacent small food store that offers specialty items (e.g., family-produced jams, chili peppers, honey, or local wines and brewery products)

Small, specialty food operations, such as ice cream vendors and candy stores, could be inserted between large restaurants to provide snacking options.

Location

The panel recommends that Fairplex fully audit campus assets to choose the best location for a food destination. The best restaurant locations have sun-exposed orientations; water features, such as a lake or fountain; large, partially covered terraces with greenery; and garden areas. To provide a quality, healthy, and safe food destination, the location should be far from cars and traffic, so people feel safe to freely walk about.

Restaurants should provide a different experience in the evening than in the daytime to appeal to different crowds. Restaurants should have moderate rents, but high pressure to present highly themed, decorated atmospheres.

Restaurants are a great source of revenue and create a sense of place. Operators, however, should be chosen carefully, using a methodology that considers the following criteria:

- Proven ability to run a business, especially in a challenging environment
- Format, quick service versus full service
- Match with customer needs
- Available time
- Experience level
- Size of operator
- Pricing



CARUSO

This shopping destination in Marina del Rey, California, provides an atmosphere where the community gathers, with a mix of specialty shops and eateries.



GEORGIA GEMPLER/ULI

This Fairplex gazebo and tree-filled area provide visitors shade from midday heat during summer months. The ULI panel recommends creating such areas in the Fairplex village where visitors can relax and socialize.

Shopping

The panel believes small shops can be a successful component of the Fairplex village in conjunction with a strong food destination. As the curator, Fairplex should focus on attracting retail concepts that contribute to creating a destination, avoiding such retailers as cellphone stores, banks, and insurance companies. Panelists recommend testing concepts and learning from experience and starting small and growing over time, while leveraging existing successes.

Initially, the community will be key to launching new retail venues—such as a community-operated bookstore, art gallery, or arts-and-crafts store—that begin to define a highly visible destination where people want to gather.

Experience Economy

The experience economy represents a major shift in business, especially for retailers. Success in the experience economy is finding the best way to reach an existing or potential customer

and delivering the best experience to showcase the benefits of a product or service.

Fairplex already has a core value and thousands of people who arrive for events with smiles on their faces and the desire to spend quality time with friends and relatives. The experience delivered empowers the customer, who spontaneously shares that experience on social media and generates interest in the location. Fairplex is already beginning to capitalize on this trend and should continue to do so.

The L.A. County Fair is a major opportunity to further capitalize on the experience economy. By focusing on providing new and unique experiences, the fair can remain relevant and continue to provide a significant source of revenue for Fairplex.

The Future

The many years to come will be extremely intense, with coactivity among operations, real estate, and land development

creating new roles and responsibilities for Fairplex management and staff.

Diversification is vital to Fairplex's future success. Mixing current activities with new ones will allow different business trends to compensate each other. The panel recommends attracting new trade shows to Fairplex's exhibit halls to decrease vacancy and increase short-term revenue from operations. It also suggests creating short- and long-term opportunities that put real estate to work to provide stable, recurring revenue. This approach would involve active representation of Fairplex to operators, investors, and developers to raise awareness and interest in the unique features and location of Fairplex's real estate assets. It will also help Fairplex build business relationships to implement new ideas and secure financing to bring those ideas to life.



BOBAK HATERY/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

The Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica is a popular community destination that provides continuous experiential stimulation with constant entertainment provided by downtown Santa Monica and local independent street performers.



Conclusion

“ALL GREAT CHANGE IS PRECEDED BY CHAOS. EMBRACE IT.”—Deepak Chopra

Fairplex is poised for transition to become a community center and gathering place that is a year-round destination for the surrounding neighborhood, the Inland Empire, and the Southern California region. The campus’s 487 acres provide plenty of room to grow, and existing infrastructure, real estate assets, and year-round programming provide the resources needed to create financial stability and to foster innovation, economic growth, education, entrepreneurial enterprise, and other community benefits.

The ULI panel offers Fairplex a variety of recommendations aimed at incorporating best practices in land use planning. The panel’s recommendations are intended to position Fairplex as the soul of the community. Among those recommendations are to establish a green artery that connects the campus to surrounding neighborhoods, to reposition existing real estate assets for new uses, to redevelop the campus over time to a live/work/play environment and community destination with a cohesive sense of place, and to incorporate the seasonal fair, as well as new and relevant uses that will serve the region over time.

These recommendations can help Fairplex meet the dynamic challenges of today and tomorrow, while contributing to the social and economic vitality of the county and the region, meeting local community needs, and convening entertainment opportunities that create memories, enjoyment, and community engagement year-round.

This vision will require a long-term commitment and ownership, an examination of governance—both internally and externally—and the ability to remain nimble and evolve with

changing times and community needs, while also incorporating best practices in environmental and financial sustainability.

Fairplex has already demonstrated the desire to involve stakeholders through its strategic planning and community engagement processes and should continue to do so as changes are made in the future. Panelists commend Fairplex's initiative thus far and remain optimistic for the growth potential of the site, and the impact it will have on the surrounding community.

Summary of Recommendations

The following is a summary of the panel’s recommendations for Fairplex and a suggested sequence for completion.

SUGGESTED TIMELINE	RECOMMENDATIONS
SOLIDIFY IDENTITY	
Phase 1	Clearly articulate Fairplex’s identity and core businesses. Identify opportunities for generating the best returns for Fairplex and its investment partners.
Phase 1	Conduct an audit of Fairplex’s assets and benchmarking to develop metrics on its customers and potential customers.
Phase 1	Rebrand Fairplex. Update the organization’s name and involve the community and all stakeholders in this process.
Phase 1	Develop Fairplex’s mythogenesis—compelling story of self. Incorporate a theme or themes and focus on becoming a <i>place</i> for experiences to happen. Capitalize on the experience economy.
PRIORITIZE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
Going forward	Engage the community in formulating ideas going forward to ensure community buy-in. Prioritize community engagement and involvement to make Fairplex a gathering place where all feel welcome year-round.
Going forward	Strengthen and develop new partnerships with community partners, enhancing community engagement and building potential revenue.
CELEBRATE THE HISTORY OF THE FAIR	
Going forward	Celebrate local heritage, art, and culture within every aspect of Fairplex in a sustainable environment that is uniquely Southern California.
Going forward	Continue to recognize the importance of agriculture by partnering with local farms, retailers, and farmers markets, in addition to strengthening the Fairplex Farm.
Going forward	Use the fair as an opportunity to showcase and receive feedback on the current and future development of Fairplex.
PURSUE AN IMAGINATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE FRAMEWORK PLAN	
Phase 1	Finalize a list for short-, medium-, and long-term phases. Begin with initiatives that build on Fairplex’s strengths. Plan for a few early wins.
Going forward	Use a framework plan to create a cohesive physical vision for the property that is aligned with the organization’s mission and vision. Create an experiential journey, making Fairplex a year-round destination.
Going forward	Use natural and built elements to create “ticketed” zones with minimal, temporary fencing. Make every space flexible for year-round use.
Phase 1	Redevelop the exhibition hall area into a village district with flexible, year-round displays, retail and hospitality amenities, and entertainment zones.
Phase 1	Until redeveloped, screen parking lots with landscaping to elevate the experience of adjacent uses.
Phase 1	Seek out and foster relationships with new trade shows to decrease exhibit hall vacancy and increase short-term revenue from operations.
Phases 1–2	Develop a new Adventure Play area and Children’s Museum in the village district, adjacent to the train displays.

SUGGESTED TIMELINE

RECOMMENDATIONS

PURSUE AN IMAGINATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE FRAMEWORK PLAN

Phases 1–2	Create a green artery connecting the northeast side and southwest corners of the site, with nodes of activity and secondary boulevards through new internal neighborhoods. Install local public art along the artery.
Phase 2	Hardscape and landscape Picnic Hill to create a public park.
Phase 2	Create a second farm site for educational purposes that focuses on flowers and native plants adjacent to the Flower Building in the village district.
Phase 2	Establish a permanent food destination within the complex to attract year-round revenue. Pursuing long-term ground leases with vendors is recommended.
Phase 2	Develop small, local retail shops with strong community ties, leveraging existing Fairplex assets.
Phase 2	Keep and maintain the KOA RV site, but lay the foundation to transition the second RV site to meet different housing needs.
Phases 2–3	Make fencing along McKinley and White avenues more attractive with landscaping. Make White Avenue a public face for Fairplex.
Phases 2–3	Normalize internal boundaries through land swaps and similar agreements that improve access and develop opportunities.
Phases 2–3	Expand the Farm’s exhibition and production facilities, with a new entry point on White Avenue.
Phases 2–3	Repurpose an existing building for a new technology, light-industrial, maker space.
Phases 2–3	Develop a new outdoor stage and water feature, for stormwater retention. The grandstand can eventually be replaced by a new amphitheater.
Phase 3	Develop new athletic fields and a flexible field house for year-round use.

IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY OF LAND USES AND TRANSPORTATION

Phase 1	Invest in facilities that support access to Fairplex by shared vehicles.
Phases 1–2	Assess the number of visitors arriving from areas served by rail transit using General Transit Feed Specification tools and vehicle data.
Phases 1–2	Create a residential, mixed-use transit-oriented development on the north 11.7-acre parcel owned by Fairplex. Partner with a mixed-use developer. Reserve units as attainable housing.
Phases 2–3 Phase 1— Engineering study	<p>Connect Fairplex to the Gold Line station and MetroLink</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>At grade</i>: controlled pedestrian crossings of Arrow Highway at E and F streets, or at intersection with White Avenue, also connected to the entrance to the green artery. • <i>Above grade</i>: gradually rising elevated plaza above Arrow Highway from the train station connecting directly to Fairplex.
Phases 2–3	Transform parking lots to productive land that consistently generates a high level of financial returns throughout the year.
Phases 2–3	Invest in internal infrastructure that provides direct, protected connections throughout the Fairplex grounds; bike and scooter infrastructure; and a wayfinding system that also provides direction along trails outside Fairplex.

SUGGESTED TIMELINE

RECOMMENDATIONS

IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY OF LAND USES AND TRANSPORTATION (cont.)

Phase 3 Work with community partners to transform White Avenue to a pedestrian-friendly street, designed to facilitate access between Fairplex and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Going forward Collaborate with community transit partners, such as the Foothill Transit Authority, to increase Fairplex orientation to rail and bus transit; coordinate on the development of new transit facilities (stations, bus shelters); and modify schedules to increase transit options during the L.A. County Fair and other large events.

PROMOTE MODEL PARTNERSHIPS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Phases 1–2 Add landscaped islands and bioswales in parking lots to limit stormwater runoff. Use native plants in landscaping. Replace asphalt with permeable pavers made of natural materials. Switch parking lot lighting to LED.

Phases 1–2 Incorporate bioswales throughout the campus as a regional stormwater detention system that collects runoff in a water feature. Pursue 100 percent recycling and reuse of stormwater on site or percolation into the ground.

Going forward Add detention ponds and wetland percolation areas as centerpieces to new developments.

Going forward Ensure that all newly constructed buildings meet at a minimum the U.S. Green Building Council's standards for LEED Silver certification, with an overall goal of achieving LEED for Neighborhood Development.

Going forward Ensure that redevelopment of the campus relies on the farm-to-table model to develop relationships with the Inland Empire agricultural community.

Going forward Make Fairplex a regional showcase of sustainability and display the campus's sustainability and innovative energy production and storage features. Partner with utilities and corporations for demonstration projects.

Phase 1 Identify all sources of potential income that could provide Fairplex with an ongoing, stable financial base.

Phase 1 Strengthen Fairplex's relationship with the cities of Pomona and La Verne.

Phases 1–2 Within the village district, offer a mix of year-round retail amenities to encourage visitors to stay on campus and provide another point of interest.

Phases 1–2 Develop strong partnerships with local businesses and retail sponsors to generate revenue from every event. Pursue corporate alliances and operations partners. Retail partners should align with Fairplex's newly defined identity and theme.

Phases 1–2 Continue to pursue partnerships with educational institutions, nonprofits, and economic institutions.

Phases 2–3 Use the strategic development of real estate to fund future projects (i.e., attainable and senior housing can fund the green artery).

Phase 3 Renegotiate the lease with Los Angeles County for a longer period (99 years) by presenting a long-term vision and actionable steps for the property, emphasizing Fairplex as a regional destination.

EVALUATE ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE

Phase 1 Finalize the list for short-, medium-, and long-term phases. Begin with initiatives that build on Fairplex strengths. Plan for a few early wins.

Phase 1 Evaluate board and governance structure according to the future vision for the property and organization, and newly defined identity.

About the Panel

Glenda Hood

Panel Chair

Orlando, Florida

Hood is president of Hood Partners LLC, a strategic consulting firm focused on civic innovation serving the business, government, and independent sectors. She served as mayor/CEO of the city of Orlando from 1992 to 2003 and as Florida's secretary of state from 2003 to 2005, before being elected Orlando's first woman mayor. Hood was a member of the Orlando City Council for 10 years while also serving as president of her own public relations firm.

As mayor, Hood was a strong advocate of growth management and smart-growth principles to build safe, livable neighborhoods, a revitalized downtown, and a strong local economy. Under her leadership, the city's land area grew by 50 percent; older and historic in-town neighborhoods were revitalized; compatible new mixed-use infill was constructed; the city's largest parks initiative developed new parks and refurbished existing ones; unprecedented partnerships in education were established; transportation alternatives were championed; Orlando became a high-tech center and competitive world market; and the arts became a civic priority.

Hood spearheaded the redevelopment plan for the Orlando Naval Training Center, the most ambitious economic development project in the city's history, which is recognized as one of the country's best examples of reuse of former government properties and a model for incorporating all elements of smart growth and civic engagement. She has also been a key adviser on domestic security and disaster preparedness for the state of Florida and U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

The Orlando Sentinel has referred to Hood as a "tireless visionary" with "marketing savvy" and "tenacity and experience."

As secretary of state, Hood was responsible for the department's Divisions of Administrative Services, Corporations, Cultural Affairs, Elections, Historical Resources, and Library and Information Services and was instrumental in

crafting the state's Strategic Plan for Economic Development and leading numerous international business initiatives.

Hood has served as president of the National League of Cities and the Florida League of Cities and as chair of the Florida Chamber of Commerce. She is a trustee of the Urban Land Institute, an active participant on ULI's Advisory Services panels and the Daniel Rose Center for Public Leadership, a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration, and longstanding board member and past chair of Partners for Livable Communities. She serves as a corporate board member of Delta Apparel and Baskerville-Donovan Inc. and chairs the boards of both Santa Fe HealthCare Inc. and Axiom Bank, N.A. She is also a board member of the Florida Gubernatorial Fellows Program, the Junior Achievement Academy, and the Kentucky Art Center and Festival.

Hood received her BA in Spanish from Rollins College after studying in Costa Rica and Spain. She attended the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government executive program and participated in the Mayors' Urban Design Institute at the University of Virginia and the Society of International Business Fellows.

Parag Agrawal

Milton, Georgia

Agrawal has more than 15 years of leadership experience in development and implementation of planning projects that promote sustainable growth practices, foster economic development, and encourage smart transportation choices.

He currently serves as the director of Community Development for the city of Milton, Georgia, which is located 24 miles from downtown Atlanta and is recognized nationally for its high quality of life. In his current position, Agrawal works with various stakeholders to facilitate development of the city's new downtown, which has more than \$600 million in combined investments; to administer development of the city's Uniform Development Code; and to draft the city's new Trail Master Plan.

Before moving to Atlanta, Agrawal held leadership positions in the New England region. He served as the associate director of the Rhode Island State Department of Administration and as planning director of the city of Bridgeport, Connecticut. In Rhode Island, he served as the state's planning director responsible for managing the State Guide Plan and State Water Resources Board, and for administering the state's single, statewide, federally designated metropolitan planning organization.

Under Agrawal's direction, Rhode Island drafted a Long-Range Transportation Plan and the first statewide Trail Master Plan, and developed the statewide transportation improvement program for federal fiscal years 2017–2025 that programmed more than \$5.2 billion in federal transportation funds. In Bridgeport, he managed the development of the Barnum Station Transit-Oriented Development Master Plan, worked with the Connecticut Department of Transportation on designing Barnum Train Station, and drafted the city's waterfront revitalization master plan.

Nat Bottigheimer

Princeton, New Jersey

Bottigheimer is director of New Jersey State Programs and the New Jersey Regional Plan Association. He is responsible for engaging stakeholders and building support for RPA programs to expand economic opportunity, improve infrastructure, and adapt to climate change across the region; and leads state research, planning, and advocacy activities. Bottigheimer is an expert in transit-oriented development and coordinated land use and transportation planning. He has extensive experience building collaborative relationships to advance policies, plans, programs, and projects that strengthen communities and simultaneously meet transportation performance tests.

Bottigheimer has lived in Princeton since 2012 and has biked the length of the Delaware River, from Port Jervis to Trenton; fished the shore from the Hackensack River to Corson's Inlet; and served on the New Jersey team of President Obama's Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force.

Before joining RPA, he led the opening of transportation planning firm Fehr & Peers's first East Coast office in Washington, D.C.; served as an assistant general manager for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority in charge of planning, real estate, parking, and sustainability programs; and

worked in the Secretary's Office of the Maryland Department of Transportation.

Bottigheimer has a master's in public policy from the University of California at Berkeley and a bachelor's in government from Harvard.

Ari Erlichman

Paris, France

Erlichman has 13 years of real estate institutional investment experience. He currently works for a startup focused on customer experience in real estate operations, where he conceives useful projects for communities. Erlichman's role includes developing proposals for public projects, such as redeveloping neighborhoods, and developing mixed-use projects.

He began his career with French real estate investment trusts, where he served as a real estate asset manager and director of acquisitions, buying and repositioning large European malls valued at €2 billion. Erlichman went on to create a company that introduces ultra-high-net-worth investors to institutional investors, working from resort development in Brazil to structure deals in France. He later joined Disneyland Paris as head of Resort Development and Special Projects, working on maintaining DLP as the premier tourist destination in Europe by building hotels, a lifestyle center, an arena, a train station, and more.

Erlichman joined ULI in 2006 and relaunched ULI Young Leaders (YL) France, served as chair for several years, and helped create ULI NEXT France in 2018. During his time with ULI, Erlichman has joined several councils, such as Europe Hotels and Young Leaders Europe. His main ULI achievements are the recruitment of dozens of YL members and the organization of many events, including a YL summer school in Disneyland Paris and in Brussels.

Jonathan Gelber

Atlanta, Georgia

Gelber is a real estate, planning, and market analysis consultant with the Bleakly Advisory Group in Atlanta. Since 2008, he has specialized in consulting for public and private clients in areas where real estate, public policy, and public finance overlap.

Most recently, Gelber has worked on several major urban revitalization undertakings, including Atlanta's iconic Beltline initiative, the long-term redevelopment of several aging regional malls, the reactivation of suburban town centers, and transit-oriented development projects. He is also a development adviser, helping cities and counties work with private-sector developers to execute complex mixed-use redevelopment projects with complicated public/private partnership structures.

Before joining Bleakly, Gelber was a senior planner for the city of Atlanta's Department of Planning and Community Development, where he was responsible for managing long-range planning studies, economic development, and special projects. He also previously served as an urban planner and consultant in Atlanta and Portland and a transportation and transit planner with the city of New York and the state of North Carolina.

Gelber has a master's degree in real estate from Georgia State University (GSU), a master's in urban planning from Columbia University, and a bachelor's in art history from Reed College. He also teaches Applied Real Estate Market Analysis at GSU's graduate business school. He is an active member of the American Institute of Certified Planners, the American Planning Association, the Georgia Planning Association, and the Urban Land Institute. In 2018, Gelber served on ULI's Technical Assistance policy team that recommended the demolition and redevelopment of a 1960s-era brutalist civic center at the edge of the historic district in Savannah, Georgia.

Born in Paris and raised in Los Angeles, Gelber has lived in Atlanta since 2001.

Michael Maurer

Chicago, Illinois

A principal with Perkins Eastman's Chicago office, Maurer brings more than 25 years of experience as a design principal, project architect/designer, and team leader for developer-driven hospitality, multifamily and large-scale, mixed-use developments. With a depth of expertise in experiential design and strategic planning, his design visions have been realized in myriad upscale and luxury hotel, resort, and casino properties throughout the United States and the Middle East.

With a focus on creating fully successful developments, Maurer's practice addresses the many practical aspects of architecture, including due diligence, constructability, operational functionality, sustainability, and guest experience,

as well as aesthetics. He has applied this focus on successful properties of all types, from small-scale renovations to new luxury, high-rise projects.

Perkins Eastman is a global architecture firm that includes 1,000 employees, working out of 17 interdisciplinary offices globally. From education and health care to mixed-use and transit-oriented developments, the firm designs projects for a sustainable and resilient future and to enhance the human experience through the built environment. The practice is founded on the idea that design can have a direct and positive impact on people's lives.

Stephanie Pankiewicz

Alexandria, Virginia

Pankiewicz joined LandDesign in 2006 as director of planning, urban design, and landscape architecture in the Asheville, North Carolina, office and is currently a partner in the Washington, D.C., office. As a professional landscape architect and dedicated community advocate for greenways, complete streets, and green infrastructure, Pankiewicz focuses on integrating economically viable and environmentally sustainable community and site design through all her projects. She believes strongly that social well-being is created by implementing proper planning, design, and construction into the built environment at all scales, whether that involves integrating local greenways and trail linkages into high-density urban areas or designing an active public realm streetscape near a major metro station.

Her current work includes several large-scale mixed-use urban design/landscape architectural projects in the Tysons and D.C. metropolitan area. Another key design project in her portfolio is Camp Lake James, a private recreation center completed for Crescent Resources in North Carolina. This project evokes the rich historical character of a rural mountain retreat with distinctive details handcrafted by local artisans and creative contractors and water conservation methods. Camp Lake James received several awards for its sustainable landscape, irrigation, and hardscape design.

Pankiewicz has also led many public planning projects through a community participation process. Among them was an extensive community involvement process for the city of Asheville's signature River Arts District multimodal transportation project. This project consists of complex

National Environmental Policy Act, state, and federal agency submittal and review requirements, balanced with other design factors, such as public arts, local character, economic development, environmental sustainability, recreational opportunities, and resource preservation.

Before joining LandDesign, Pankiewicz worked as a landscape architect in Southern California on several award-winning, master-planned communities. Her 19 years of experience include park planning and design, community master plans, site planning, design guidelines, and streetscapes, with an emphasis on using green techniques, such as best practices for stormwater harvesting and urban tree-planting details. She earned a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture from the University of Georgia with honors and is a registered landscape architect in California, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Pankiewicz is a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects and the Urban Land Institute.



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