

State of New Mexico
Star Axis Feasibility Study
Appendix

AEA Consulting × NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

June 16, 2026

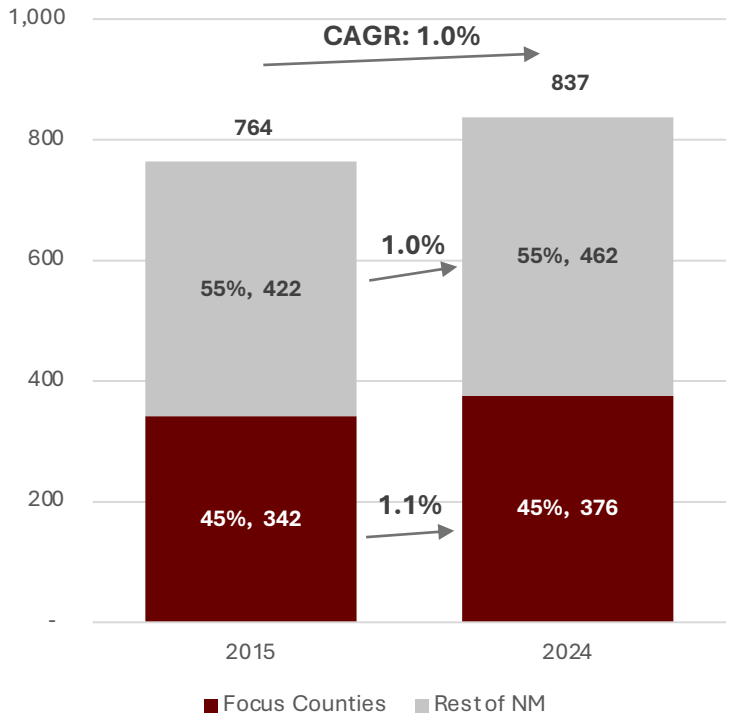
Confidential

AEA Consulting

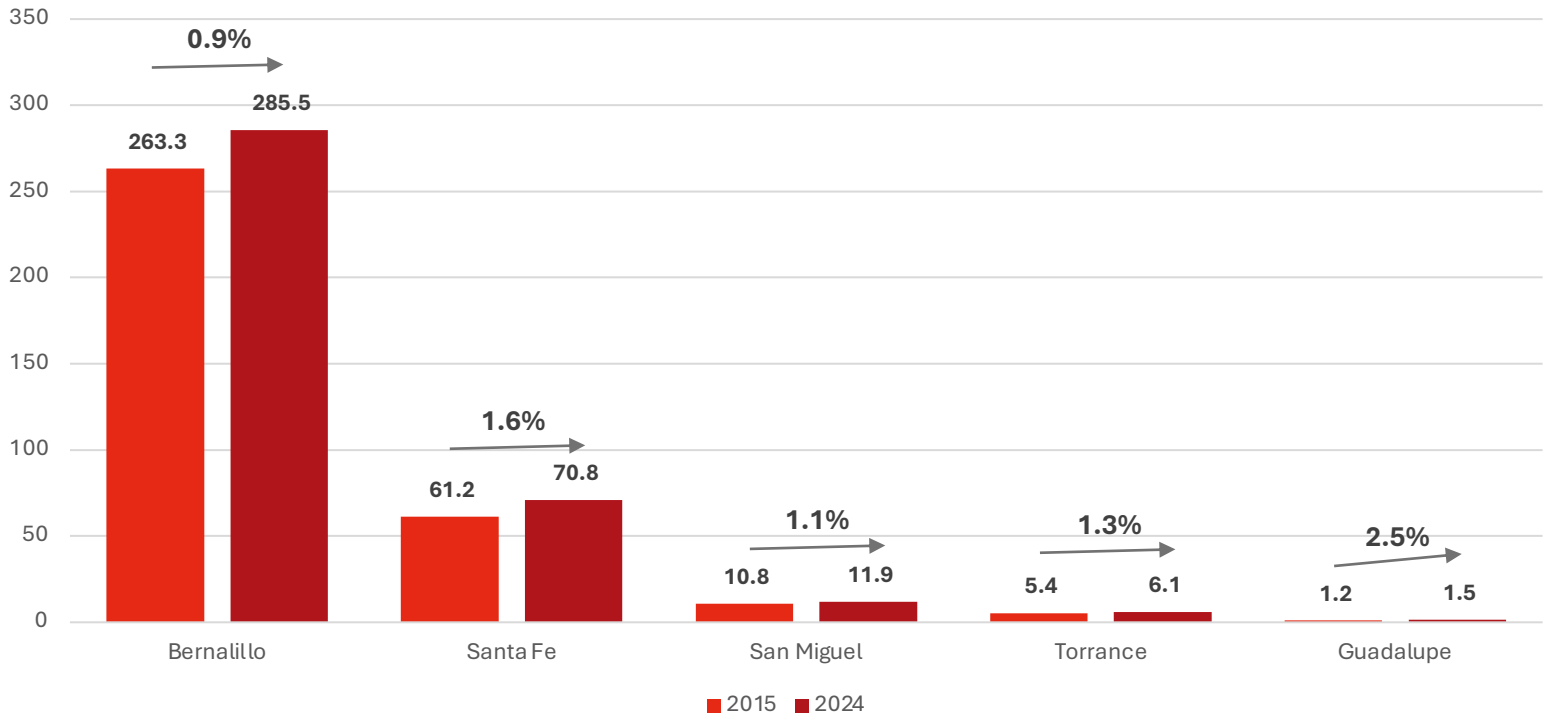
Market Assessment

Household growth outpaced population growth, as average household size decreased across New Mexico

New Mexico Households (Thousands)



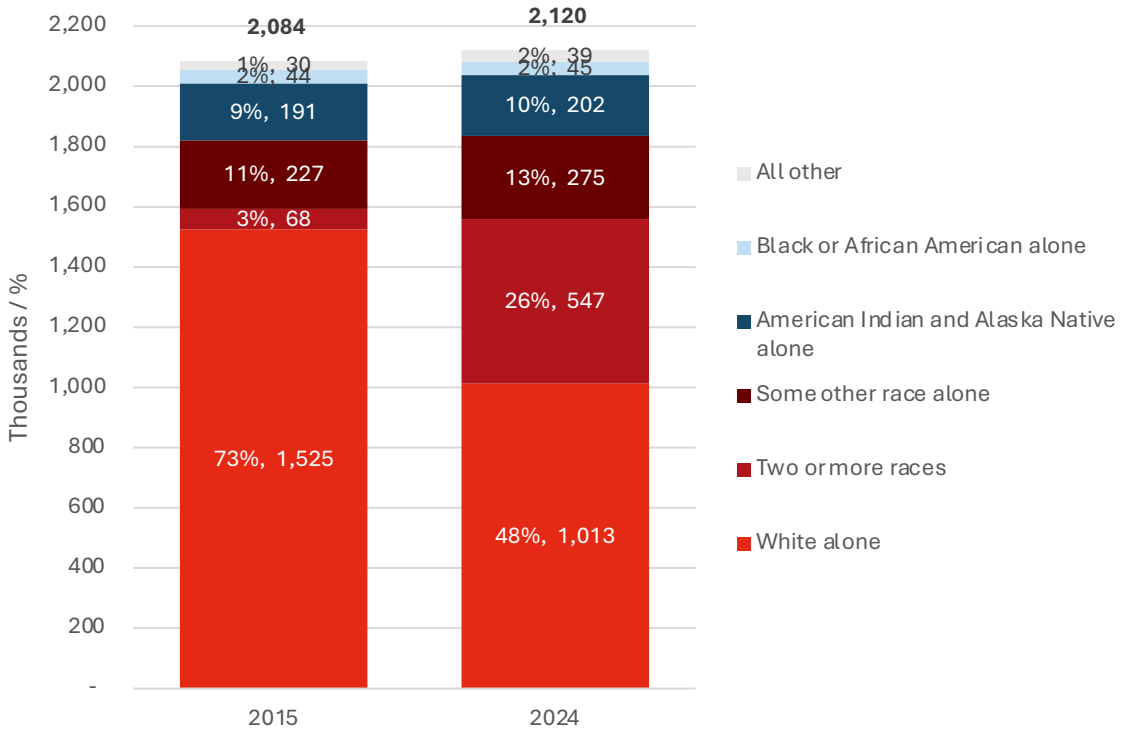
Focus County Households (Thousands)



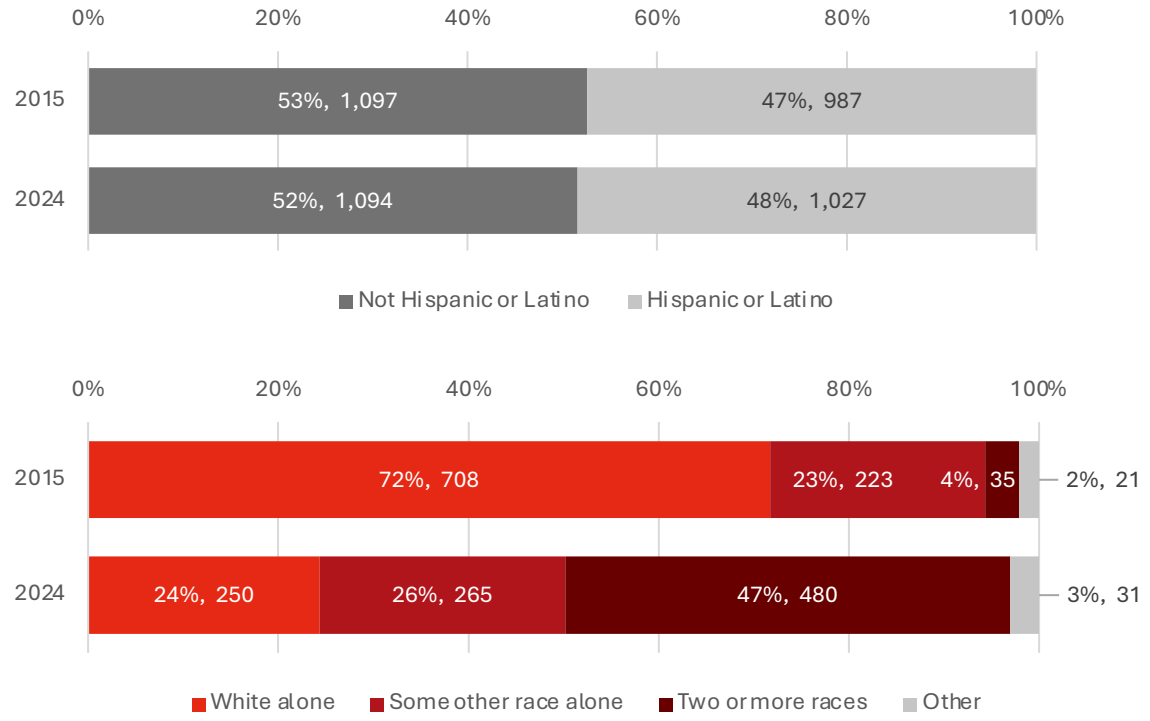
Source: US Census Bureau

New Mexico's population has become more diverse, with growing populations of people identifying as two or more races, Native American, or some other race

New Mexico Race / Ethnicity



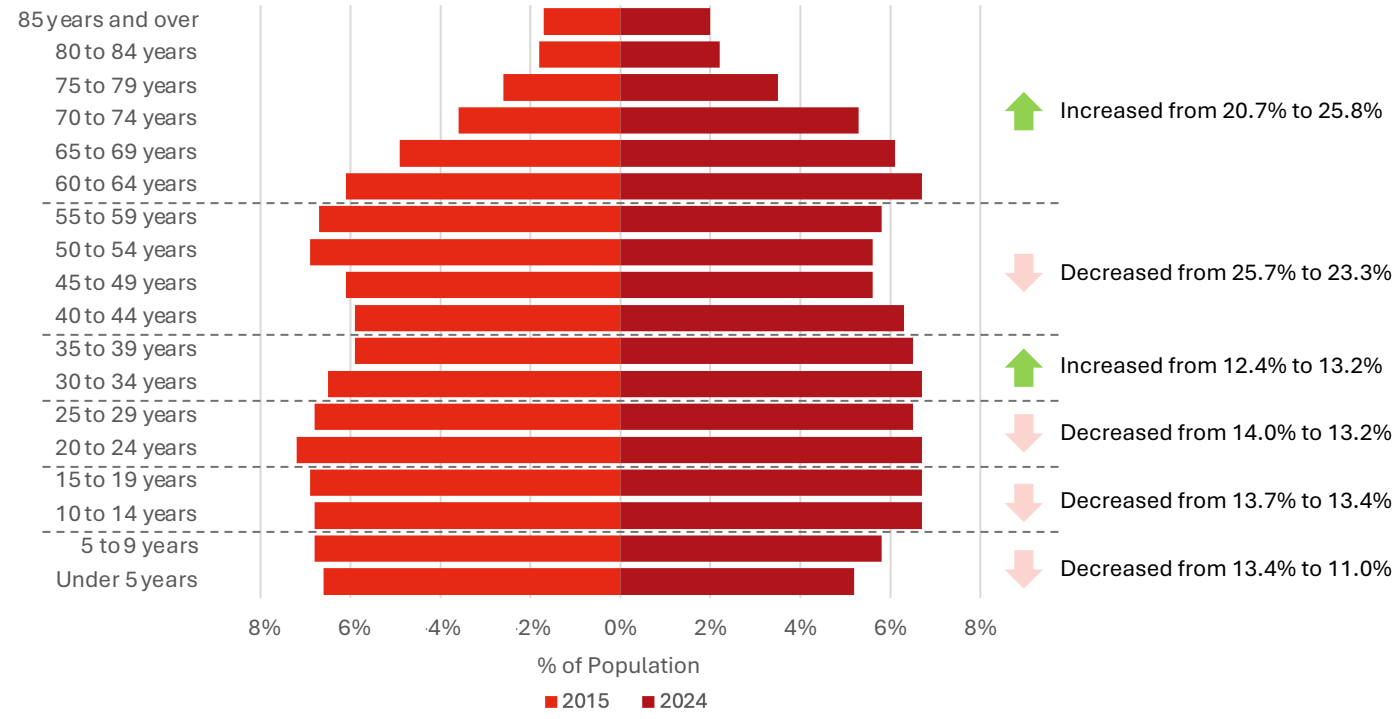
New Mexico Hispanic or Latino



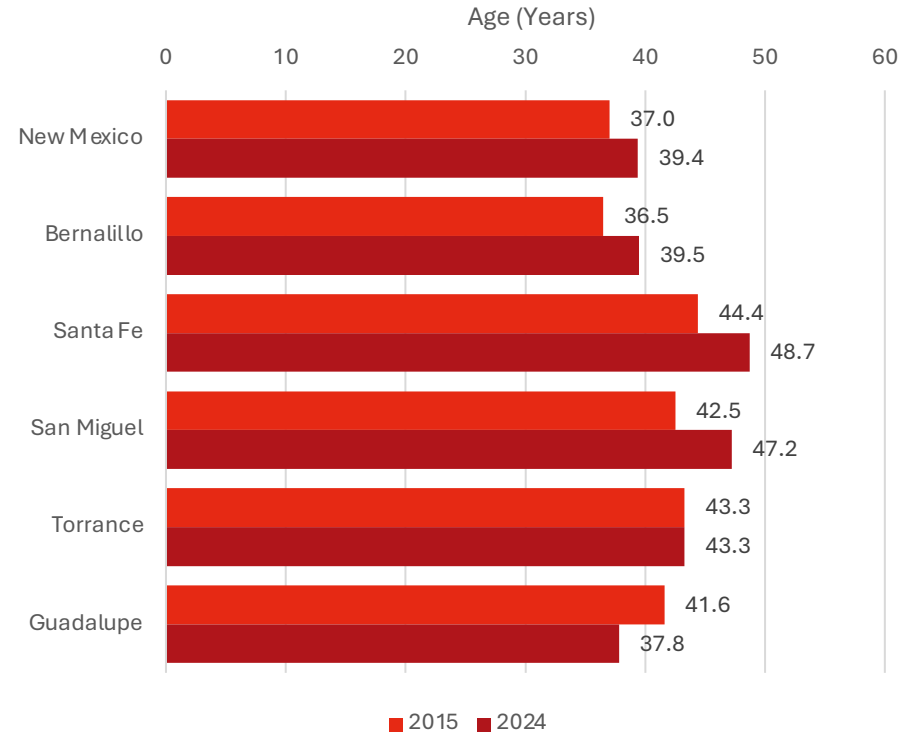
Source: US Census Bureau

New Mexico's age has shifted older since 2015: median ages rose in most focus counties and the share of people over the age of 60 grew by than 4 percentage points

New Mexico Age Distribution (2015-24)



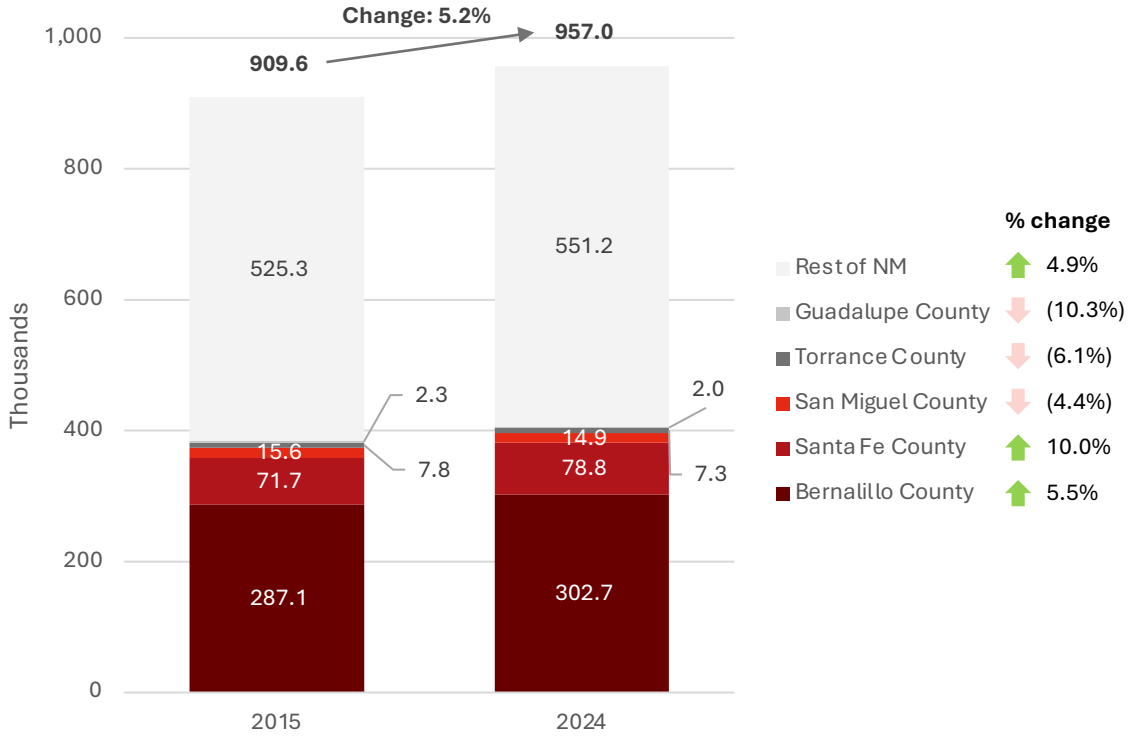
Median Age by County (2015-24)



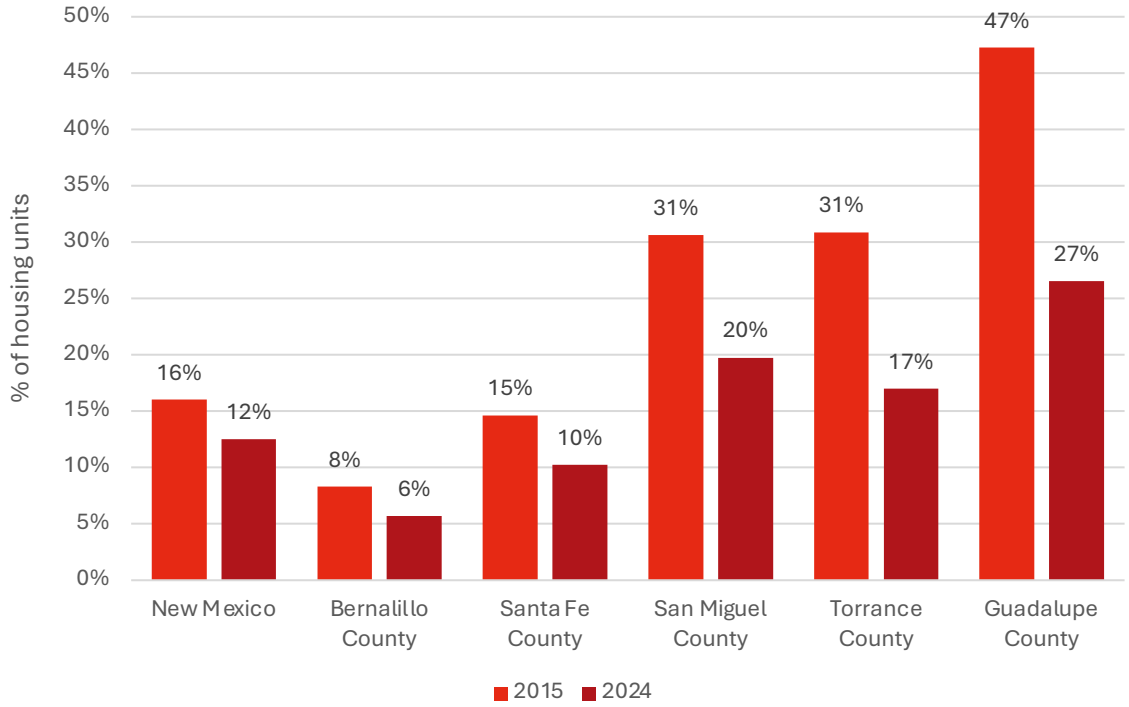
Source: US Census Bureau

Housing stock increased in Bernalillo, Santa Fe, and the rest of New Mexico as vacancy rates dropped across the state and focus counties

Housing Units in New Mexico and Focus Counties



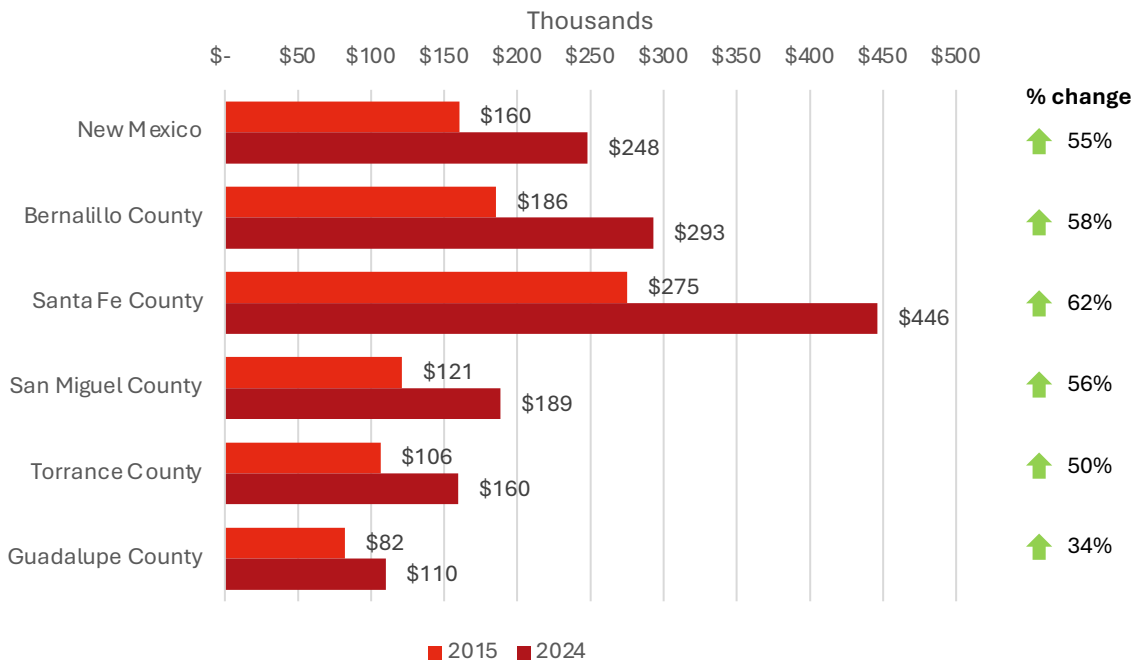
Vacant Housing Units in New Mexico and Focus Counties



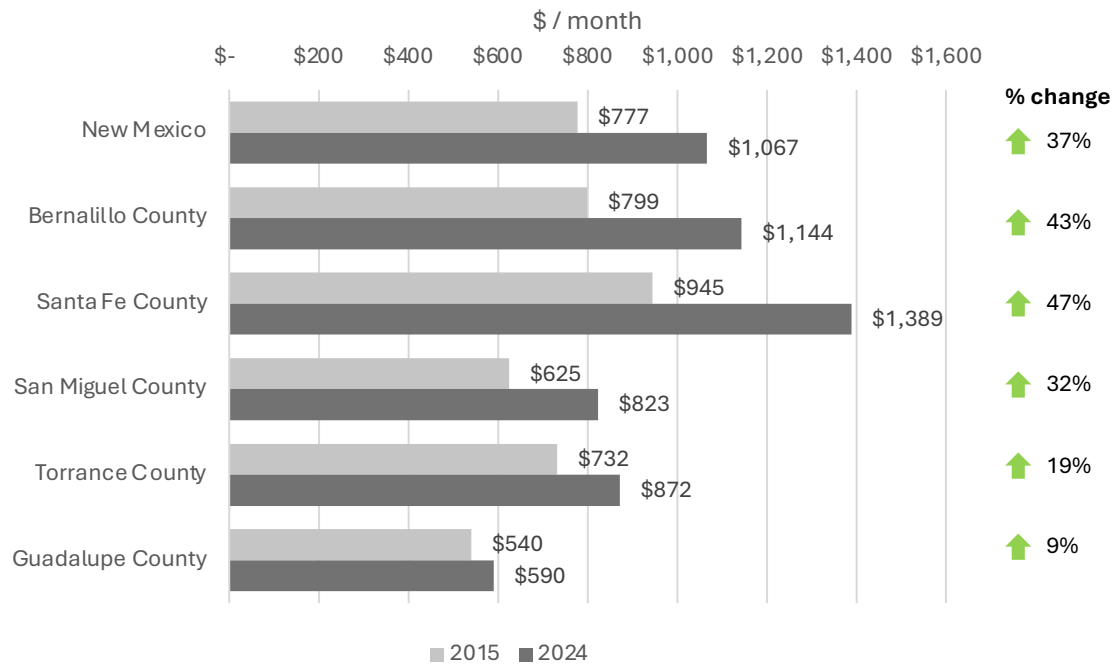
Source: US Census Bureau

Median household values of owner-occupied units and median gross rent has increased across New Mexico

Median Household Value of Owner-Occupied Units



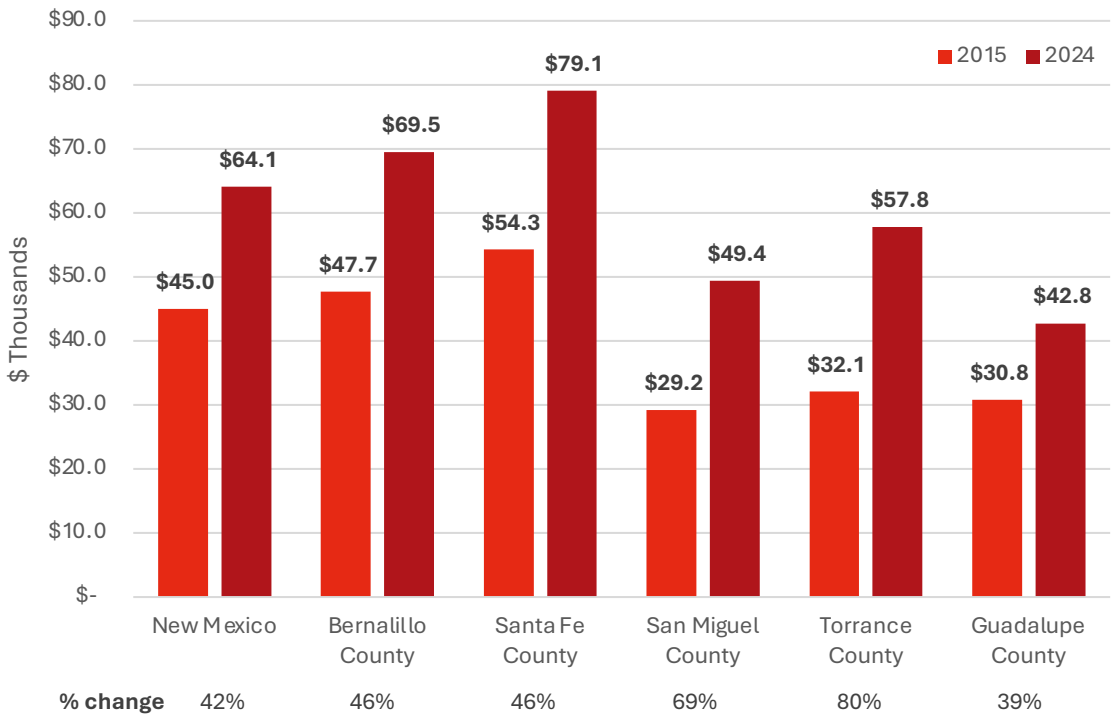
Median Gross Rent



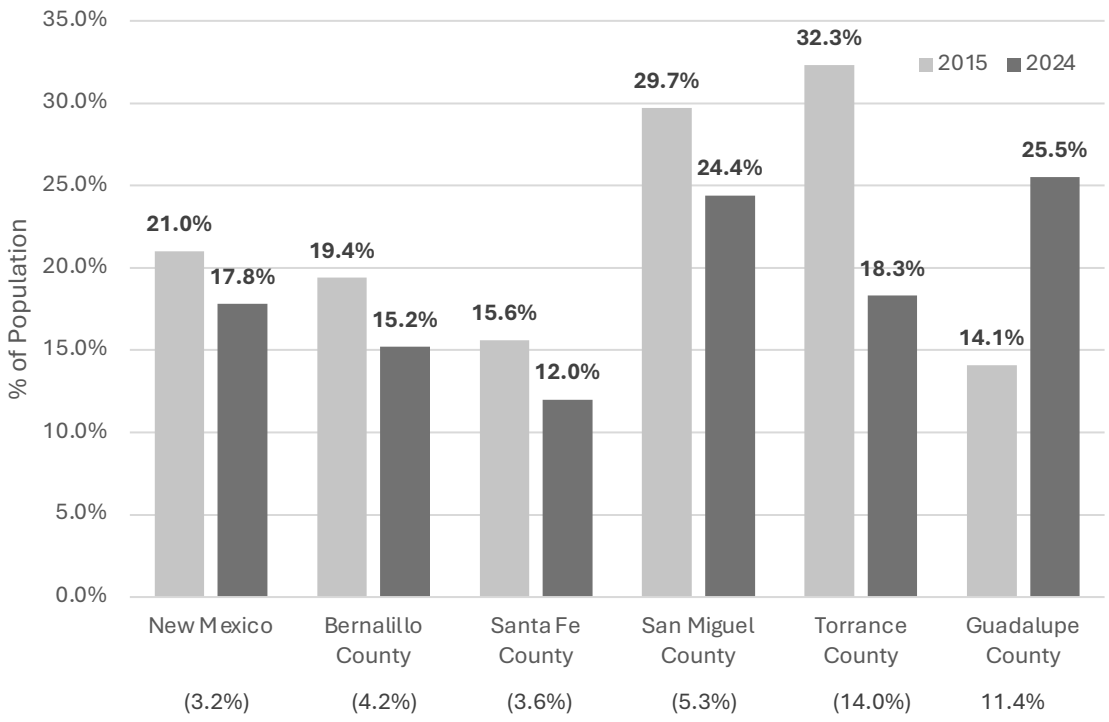
Source: US Census Bureau

Median incomes have increased across New Mexico and the share of population with income below poverty levels has declined, except for in Guadalupe County

Median Income in New Mexico and Focus Counties



Percentage of Population with Income Below Poverty Level



Source: US Census Bureau

While most students and school systems are in Bernalillo and Santa Fe counties, there are schools in San Miguel and Guadalupe county that can interact with Star Axis

Private and Public School Statistics (2024-25 school year)

County Name	Students	Teachers	Schools	Districts / Systems
Bernalillo County	93,440	7,705	248	30
Santa Fe County	20,604	1,548	70	15
San Miguel County	3,389	267	20	3
Torrance County	3,125	248	14	3
Guadalupe County	642	72	7	2
Total	**121,200**	**9,843**	**359**	**53**

Largest Districts by County

Bernalillo	Santa Fe	San Miguel	Torrance	Guadalupe
Albuquerque Public Schools	Santa Fe Public Schools	West Las School District	Moriarity-Edgewood School District	Santa Rosa Consolidated Schools

Number of Students by Type (2024-25 school year)

County Name	Regular local	State	Charter	Private
Bernalillo County	74,792	132	10,586	7,930
Santa Fe County	12,805	170	6,327	1,302
San Miguel County	3,167	-	-	222
Torrance County	3,125	-	-	-
Guadalupe County	642	-	-	-
Total	**94,531**	**302**	**16,913**	**9,454**

Number of Schools by Type (2024-25 school year)

County Name	Regular local	State	Charter	Private
Bernalillo County	1	3	26	43
Santa Fe County	2	2	11	14
San Miguel County	3	-	-	1
Torrance County	3	-	-	-
Guadalupe County	2	-	-	-
Total	**11**	**5**	**37**	**58**

Source: IES National Center for Education Statistics – Public and Private School Search

Note: Private Schools are not included in the "Districts / Systems" count – they are accounted for in the "Schools" column

Star Axis' astronomical and mathematical foundation intersects with the State of New Mexico's public science curriculum at multiple points during K–12 education

New Mexico STEM Ready! Curricula that intersect with Star Axis Subject Matter

New Mexico's Public Education Department utilizes the Next Generation Science Standards to shape its suggested science curriculum for K-12 schools

First Grade / Space Systems: Patterns and Cycles

Module ESS1.A: The Universe and its Stars: Patterns of the motion of the sun, moon, and stars in the sky can be observed, described, and predicted.

Fifth Grade / Space Systems: Stars and the Solar System

Module ESS1.A: The Universe and its Stars: The sun is a star that appears larger and brighter than other stars because it is closer. Stars range greatly in their distance from Earth.

Module ESS1.B: Earth and the Solar System: The orbits of Earth around the sun and of the moon around Earth, together with the rotation of Earth about an axis between its North and South poles, cause observable patterns. These include day and night; daily changes in the length and direction of shadows; and different positions of the sun, moon, and stars at different times of the day, month, and year

Sixth Grade / The Earth's Place in the Universe

Module ESS1.A: The Universe and Its Stars: Patterns of the apparent motion of the sun, the moon, and stars in the sky can be observed, described, predicted, and explained with models.

High School

Module ESS1.B: Earth and the Solar System: Kepler's laws describe common features of the motions of orbiting objects, including their elliptical paths around the sun. Orbits may change due to the gravitational effects from, or collisions with, other objects in the solar system.

Source: New Mexico Public Education Department; Next Generation Science Standards

Four-year institutions with high STEM or arts focuses within a 2-hour drive-time radius to Star Axis may be potential educational partners

Universities from highest to lowest alignment with Star Axis

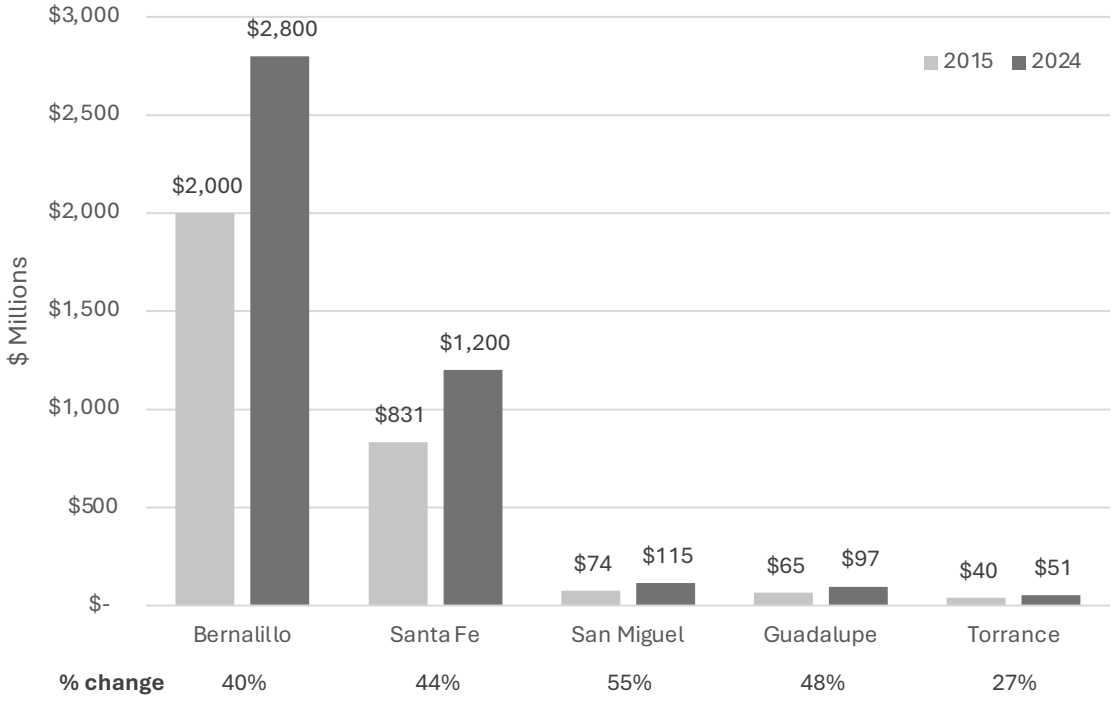
Institution	Location	STEM focus	Arts focus	Approx. drive to Anton Chico	Approx. enrollment
St. John's College	Santa Fe	History of science and math via Great Books, but not lab-STEM focused	Humanities, philosophy, classics; arts integrated in liberal-arts model	~1.5 hrs	~350
University of New Mexico (UNM)	Albuquerque & branches	Engineering, physics & astronomy, health sciences, computer science	Fine arts college, film, theatre, creative writing	~2 hrs	~27,000
Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA)	Santa Fe	Some environmental and digital tech components	Contemporary Native arts, creative writing, film, museum studies	~1.5 hrs	~650
New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology	Socorro	Engineering, physical sciences, computer science, astrophysics; near Magdalena Ridge	Humanities/communication, some arts	~3 hrs	~1,600
New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU)	Las Vegas	Environmental science, geology, some STEM-education	Fine arts and media arts programs	~30 minutes	~2,800
New Mexico State University (NMSU)	Las Cruces	Engineering, agriculture, computer science, astronomy	Arts, music, creative media institute	~4.5 hrs	~23,800
Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU)	Portales & Roswell, Ruidoso	Biology, geology, some applied sciences	Music, theatre, visual arts programs	~2.5 hrs	~5,800
Northern New Mexico College	Española	Engineering tech, solar/renewable energy, STEM-teacher prep	Arts and humanities offerings	~2 hrs	~1,400
Western New Mexico University (WNMU)	Silver City	Nursing, natural sciences, some technical fields	Visual arts, applied arts	~6 hrs	~3,500
University of the Southwest	Hobbs	Education, some science and business programs	Some arts/humanities	~4 hrs	~1,500

Star Axis alignment	Color
Very high	
High	
Moderate	
Low	

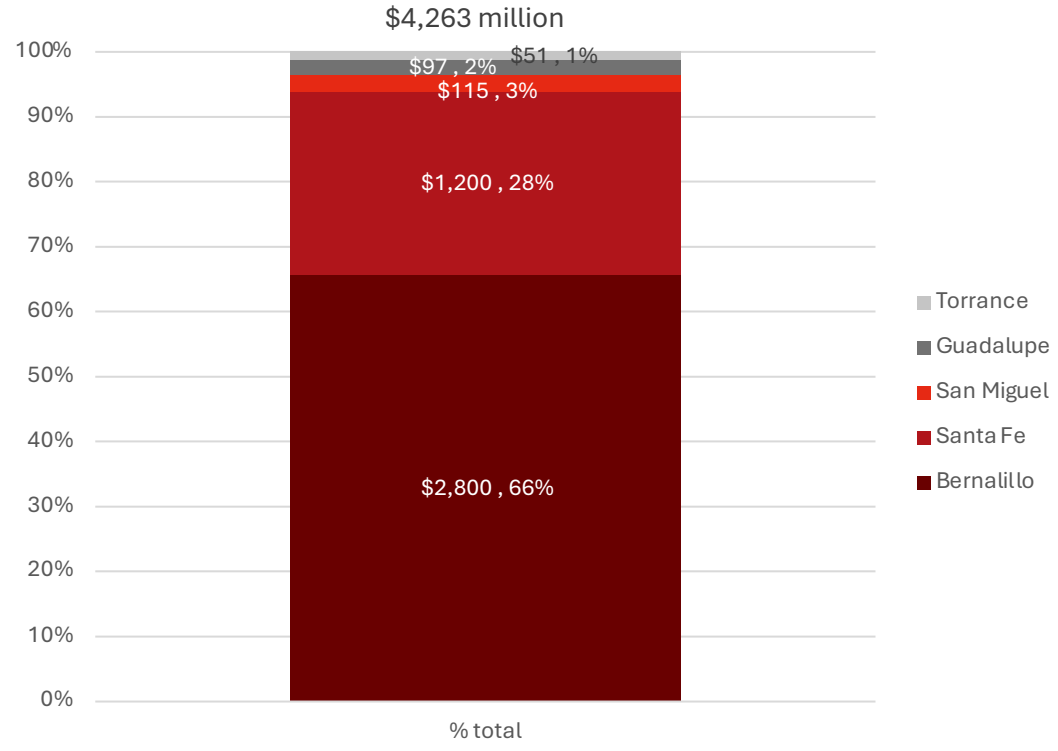
Source: Perplexity, Wikipedia, College Express, New Mexico Higher Education Department

Most direct visitor spending in focus counties occurs in Bernalillo and Santa Fe, representing 94% of direct visitor spending across these 5 counties

2024 Direct Visitor Spending in Focus Counties



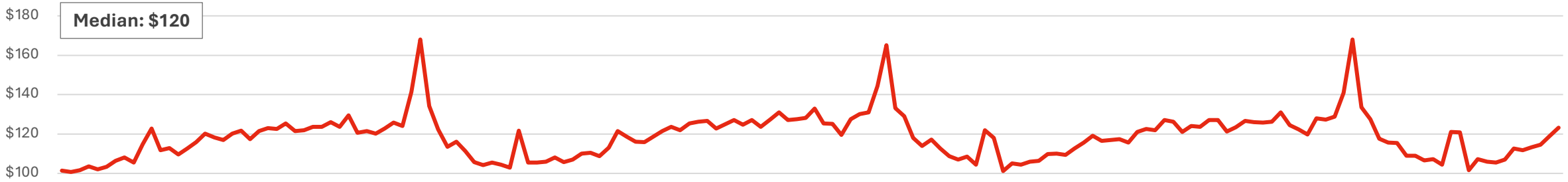
2024 Focus County Direct Visitor Spending Composition



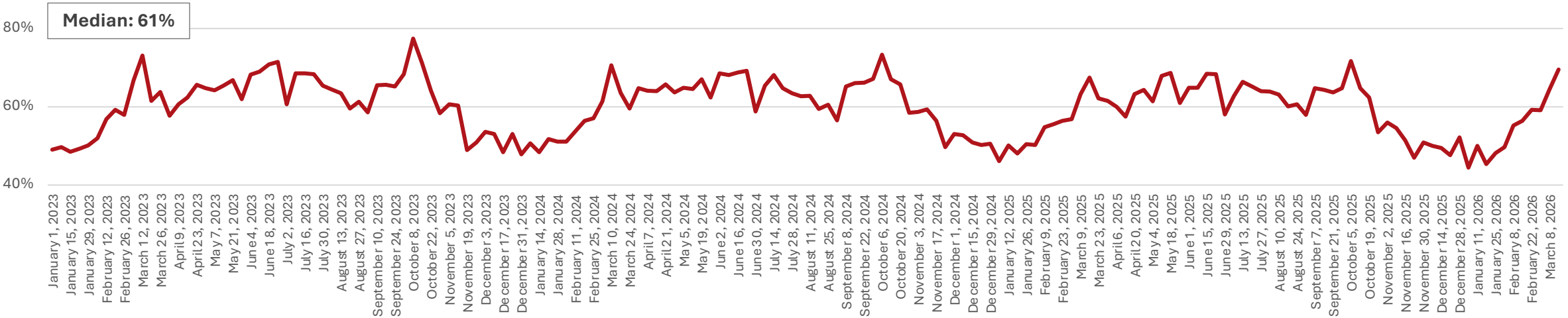
Source: New Mexico Tourism Department

New Mexico's weekly lodging occupancy fluctuates between 44% and 77% with clear seasonal cyclicality: peaks in March and October and lows in December and January

New Mexico Lodging Average Daily Rate (January 2023 – March 2025)



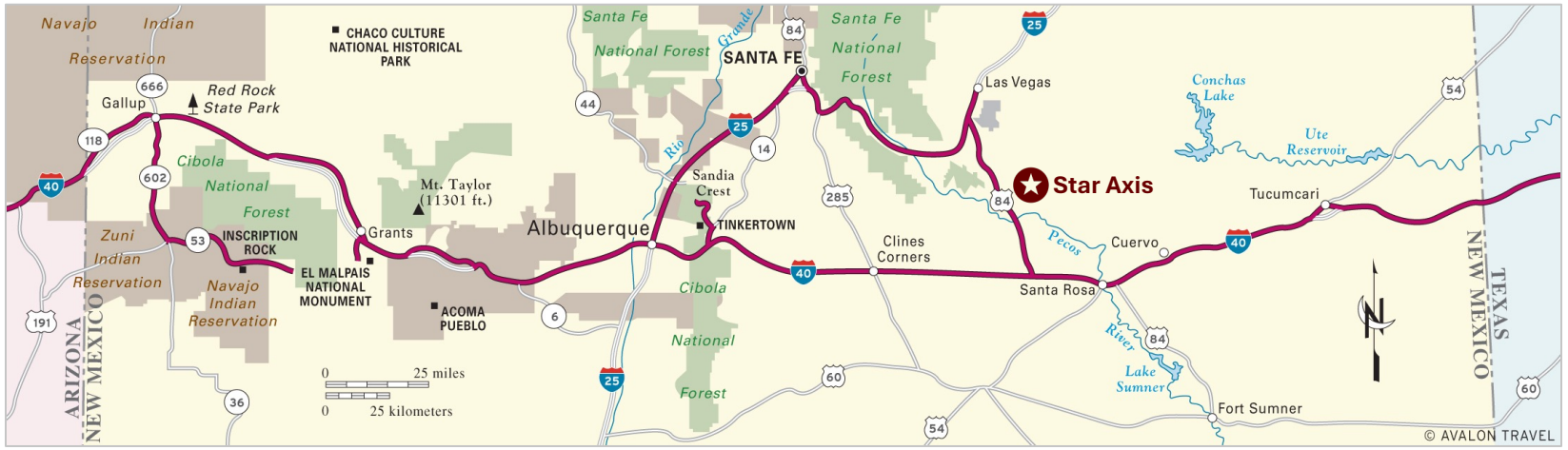
New Mexico Lodging Occupancy Rate (January 2023 – March 2025)



Source: New Mexico Tourism Department, STR

Route 66 splits into two in central New Mexico: the historic pre–1937 route passes by Star Axis and goes through Las Vegas and Santa Fe before merging in Albuquerque

Route 66 through New Mexico



Route 66 through New Mexico initially went north from Santa Rosa, through Las Vegas, and then through Santa Fe, and then went south through Albuquerque. By 1937, Route 66 was officially realigned to bypass this North-South path, instead routing from Santa Rosa directly through Moriarty and Albuquerque, cutting the journey by about 100 miles.

In 1989, the New Mexico Route 66 Association was formed to educate, preserve, and promote the road. In 1994, it was designated a National Scenic Byway. The National Park Service Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program has supported 25 cost-share grant projects in New Mexico including neon sign restorations, El Rancho Hotel in Gallup, and the Blue Swallow Motel in Tucumcari.

Route 66 Economic Impact

- Route 66 is an economic driver – in 2024, the New Mexico Tourism Department awarded $1.5 million in grant funding to nine New Mexico communities along Route 66 to prepare and promote for its centennial in 2026
- Route 66 travellers support the creative, cultural, and hospitality industries of the towns along the route

During the Consultation process, interviewees highlighted an opportunity to create an arts and culture route or map that connects different cultural assets/destinations across the State, with Star Axis being one of the destinations on the route.

Source: National Park Service, New Mexico True
Image: RoadTripUSA.com / Avalon Travel

Focus Museums, Cultural Centers, and Land Art (1 of 2)

Museums, Cultural Centers, and Land Art (1 of 2)

Organization / Institution	Location	Partner Type	Description and Star Axis Synergies
Lightning Field (Dia Foundation)	Western New Mexico	Visitor Journey; Joint Programs	• Lightning Field is the **most similar land art / sculpture in New Mexico**, whose operating model most resembles the Charles Ross' intent for how Lightning Field should be experienced • Potential for joint **interpretation and story-telling around New Mexico's history with land art**
IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts (MoCNA)	Santa Fe	Visitor Journey; Joint Programs; Education and Research	• MoCNA is a **leading contemporary Native arts institution** and shares Star Axis's position at the intersection of land, culture, and contemporary practice • Potential for **joint programming on land-based art, Native American History, and Indigenous cosmology** • Potential for student programs from the university and researcher interaction with Star Axis from its research center • Visitors to Santa Fe interested in art-as-landscape may be attracted to both institutions
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center (IPCC)	Albuquerque	Visitor Journey; Joint Programs	• IPCC is owned and operated by the 19 Pueblos of New Mexico • Its Albuquerque location positions it as a **gateway for visitors beginning a northern NM cultural itinerary** that includes Star Axis • Potential for **joint programming on Pueblo cosmology and land-based practice** • Established donor relationships and scale make it a strong potential visitor and program partner
Museum of Indian Arts & Culture	Santa Fe	Visitor Journey; Joint Programs	• The Museum of Indian Arts & Culture holds expertise in Indigenous cosmology, land-based practice, and the intersection of culture and sky • **Potential for joint programming on Pueblo astronomy, celestial observation**
SITE Santa Fe	Santa Fe	Visitor Journey; Joint Programs	• SITE Santa Fe is a **contemporary art institution with an established audience for ambitious, intellectual work** • Exhibition **partnerships, artist talks, and catalogue collaborations** are all viable partnership options • SITE's donor relationships could translate to sponsorship or co-fundraising
New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science	Albuquerque	Visitor Journey; Joint Programs	• Currently closed for renovation (expected reopening March 2026) • Once open, could be a **strong visitor journey partner given its large audiences for science and natural history** • Joint school programs could link **New Mexico's history, geology, and Star Axis's solar timekeeping**

Source: Organization Websites

Focus Museums, Cultural Centers, and Land Art (2 of 2)

Museums, Cultural Centers, and Land Art (2 of 2)

Organization / Institution	Location	Partner Type	Description and Star Axis Synergies
New Mexico Museum of Space History	Alamogordo	Visitor Journey; Joint Programs	• Both the Museum and Star Axis celebrate **New Mexico's relationship to space and sky** • A visitor journey partnership could **convert museum-goers into potential Star Axis visitors**
Ghost Ranch (Georgia O'Keeffe's House)	Abiquiu	Visitor Journey; Joint Programs	• Ghost Ranch has a strong identity around landscape, creative practice, and spiritual experience • Its existing retreat and workshop infrastructure makes it a **potential retreat co-programmer** • **Similar audiences** – visitors already making the journey to Ghost Ranch are likely similar to the audience Star Axis wants to attract
Bradbury Science Museum	Los Alamos	Visitor Journey; Joint Programs	• The Bradbury Science Museum (at Los Alamos National Laboratory) **draws science audiences with interest in physics, energy, and New Mexico's scientific legacy** • A visitor journey pairing and **joint educational programming with Star Axis** that could connect physics and cosmological time
Dwan Light Sanctuary	Las Vegas	Visitor Journey; Joint Programs; Education and Research	• The Dwan Light Sanctuary, designed by Charles Ross, is located on the UWC USA Campus in Las Vegas • **A Star Axis visitor site located in Las Vegas could provide accessible interpretation around Star Axis and serve as a pre-Star Axis stop** • Joint programming, shared interpretation, and a 'Charles Ross trail' linking the two works would be unique and marketable • The Light Sanctuary could connect into education programming with UWC USA

Source: Organization Websites

Focus Parks and Monuments and Research Institutions

Parks and Monuments

Organization / Institution	Location	Partner Type	Description and Star Axis Synergies
Chaco Culture National Historical Park	Northwest New Mexico	Visitor Journey; Joint Programs	• Chaco Culture is an important pre-Columbian indigenous ruins site in North America • Visitors interested in the **history of sky-watching in New Mexico and night sky experiences** may visit both Chaco and Star Axis • Potential for joint programming and interpretive materials linking Indigenous and contemporary astronomical art
Bandelier National Monument	Near Los Alamos	Visitor Journey	• Bandelier draws large NPS audiences and sits within the northern New Mexico cultural landscape which Star Axis inhabits • **As an NPS site with established infrastructure, it is a credible partner for co-promotion** • The Friends of Bandelier nonprofit presents a potential sponsorship or co-grant pathway
El Morro National Monument	Cibola County	Visitor Journey	• El Morro is an International Dark Sky Park • **Visitors interested in dark sky experiences and learning about Pueblo astronomy may visit both sites**

Research Institutions

Organization / Institution	Location	Partner Type	Description and Star Axis Synergies
Santa Fe Institute	Santa Fe	Joint Programs; Education and Research	• The Santa Fe Institute's work maps onto the intellectual framework of Star Axis: time, cosmology, and patterns in nature • SFI hosts lectures, residencies, and public programs • **Partnership could include artist talks, researcher engagement, and co-branded programming** • SFI's donor network may have an appetite for boundary-crossing scientific and cultural projects
NRAO Very Large Array	Magdalena	Visitor Journey; Join Programs	• The NRAO VLA is a similarly remote and compelling science tourism destination that attracts astronomy-oriented visitors • **Potential for joint programming that links radio astronomy with naked-eye observation**

Source: Organization Websites

Support Materials for Cultural Asset Mapping: modes of partnership or synergy between Star Axis and other New Mexico arts and culture organizations

Some organizations might fit under multiple categories, and most may be part of a visitor's journey through New Mexico given Star Axis' broad thematic relevance through art, STEM, outdoor recreation, and dark skies

Visitor Journey or Tourism

A site or organization which visitors may combine with Star Axis on the same trip or journey, given thematic or geographic affinity

Value to Star Axis

Drive awareness and visitation to Star Axis by becoming an established stop for locals and tourists

Joint Programs

An institution that co-develops or co-delivers public programming with or at Star Axis, or integrates Star Axis into its own offering

Value to Star Axis

Build content depth, audience breadth, and institutional credibility

Education and Research

An academic or scientific institution engaged through curriculum, field research, or student programming rather than public-facing programs

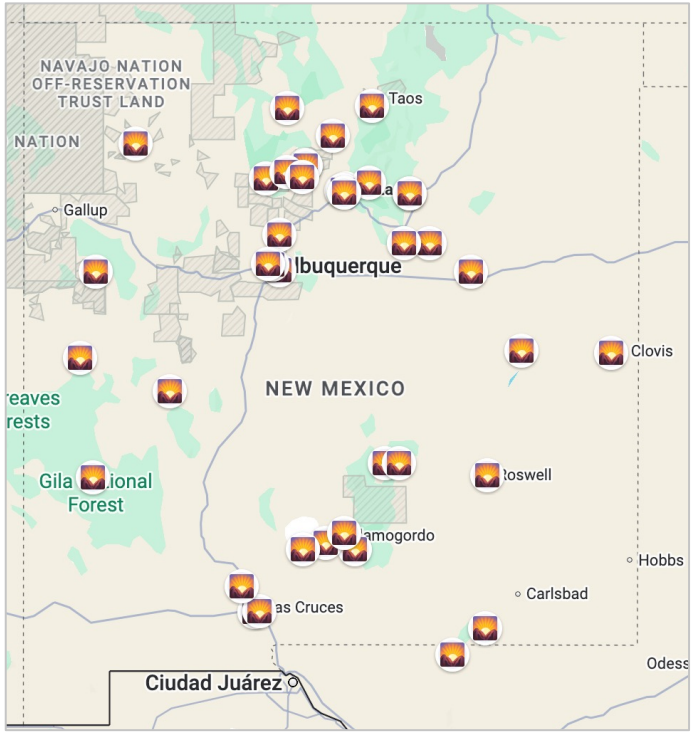
Value to Star Axis

Build long-term infrastructure and talent around the Star Axis site

Source: AEA Analysis

Support Material for Cultural Asset Mapping: prioritization criteria

33 cultural assets mapped across New Mexico...



... evaluated against 4 criteria...

- **Thematic Alignment**
- **Audience Overlap**
- **Geographic Relevance**
- **Institutional Capacity**

... for 15 prioritized potential partners and synergies

- Lightning Field
- IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts
- Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
- Museum of Indian Arts & Culture
- SITE Santa Fe
- Santa Fe Institute
- New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science
- New Mexico Museum of Space History
- Ghost Ranch (Georgia O'Keeffe's House)
- Chaco Culture National Historical Park
- Bandelier National Monument
- Bradbury Science Museum
- Dwan Light Sanctuary
- NRAO Very Large Array
- El Morro National Monument

Source: Google Maps, AEA Analysis

Prioritization Matrix: organizations that scored cumulatively above 10 across four criteria were further evaluated for synergy with Star Axis

Organization / Institution	Thematic Alignment	Audience Overlap	Geographic Relevance	Institutional Capacity	Overall Score
Lightning Field	4	4	3	3	14
IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts (MoCNA)	4	4	3	3	14
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center	4	4	2	4	14
Museum of Indian Arts & Culture	4	4	3	3	14
SITE Santa Fe	3	4	3	4	14
Santa Fe Institute	4	3	3	4	14
New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science	3	4	3	3	13
New Mexico Museum of Space History	4	4	2	3	13
Ghost Ranch (Georgia O'Keeffe's House)	3	4	3	3	13
Chaco Culture National Historical Park	4	4	2	3	13
Bandelier National Monument	3	4	3	3	13
Bradbury Science Museum	3	3	3	3	12
Dwan Light Sanctuary	4	3	3	2	12
NRAO Very Large Array	4	3	2	3	12
El Morro National Monument	4	3	2	2	11

Source: Organization Websites

Prioritization Matrix: organizations that scored below 10 across four criteria were not assessed further

Organization / Institution	Thematic Alignment	Audience Overlap	Geographic Relevance	Institutional Capacity	Overall Score
Los Alamos Nature Center, operated by PEEC	2	3	3	2	10
Valles Caldera National Preserve	2	3	2	3	10
Los Alamos History Museum	2	2	3	2	9
White Sands National Park	2	3	1	3	9
Carlsbad Caverns National Park	2	3	1	3	9
Jemez Historic Site	2	2	2	2	8
Los Luceros Historic Site	1	2	2	2	7
Coronado Historic Site	1	2	2	2	7
Guadalupe Mountains National Park	1	2	1	3	7
Pecos Canyon State Park	1	2	3	1	7
Gila National Forest	2	2	1	2	7
Lincoln Historic Site	1	2	1	2	6
Fort Stanton	1	1	2	2	6
Fort Selden Historic Site	1	1	2	2	6
Bosque Redondo Memorial at Fort Sumner Historic Site	1	2	1	2	6
Villanueva State Park	1	2	2	1	6
Taylor-Mesilla Historic Site	1	2	1	2	6
Santa Rosa Lake State Park	1	1	1	1	4

Source: Organization Websites

AEA Consulting

Benchmark Profiles

Across benchmarks, state engagement levels vary; conservation concerns, hybrid governance, and institutional support for financial sustainability are common themes

Strategic Considerations from Benchmark Profiles

State Engagement Spectrum

Across benchmarks, government has engaged in a variety of ways:

- Easements to protect land, as with Lightning Field and Ghost Ranch
- Own and operate through a federal agency, such as Chaco and NPS
- Provide property licenses to non-profit operators, as with Stonehenge and English Heritage
- Through state-funded / public universities research programs

In New Mexico, state government has used conservation easements to protect sites and their landscapes

Hybrid Governance is Common

Hybrid governance structure limits owner financial exposure while preserving their long-term stake

Among benchmarks:

- Stonehenge separates state ownership from charitable operation
- Ghost Ranch separates church ownership from a nonprofit lease
- The University of Austin established a Board of Visitors in an advisory and philanthropic capacity for the McDonald Observatory

Site-specific Conservation

Conservation concerns and mechanisms are highly site-specific:

- Conservation easements issued by the State at Lightning Field and Ghost Ranch preserve their landscapes
- At Chaco Culture NHP conservation is archaeologically focused and is mandated federally
- Stonehenge deals with conservation issues due to crowding and high activity, which is managed by a multi-party coordination unit, given the breadth of the World Heritage Site
- The McDonald Observatory is concerned with dark-sky preservation, managed through regional policy and a multi-state reserve partnership

Financial Sustainability

No remote or access-controlled site achieves financial self-sufficiency through earned income alone:

- Lightning Field's admission revenue covers only a fraction of costs
- McDonald Observatory relies on philanthropic and institutional support
- Chaco depends on federal appropriation

A dedicated endowment, institutional anchor, or recurring government subsidy will be required for Star Axis

Source: AEA Analysis

The Lightning Field by Walter De Maria, Western New Mexico, United States

Owner & Operator	Dia Art Foundation (non-profit)	**Founded / Opened**	1977

Description

A work of land art located in a remote area of western New Mexico comprised of 400 steel poles installed in a grid that measures one mile by one kilometer. The sculpture is meant to be walked in and experienced over an extended period. Visitors are especially encouraged to spend time in the field during sunset and sunrise.

Visitor Experience

Booking

- Dia offers overnight visits from May through October
- Seasonal booking begins in February and is conducted via email
- Reservations are offered on a first-come, first-serve basis and are limited to one night per group: the maximum group size is 6
- Children under 5 are not allowed

Visit and Amenities

- Visitors arrive in nearby Quemado at Dia's local office and are transported to the site by a Dia staff driver
- Transportation from Quemado to site takes 45 minutes
- Visitors stay in a cabin adjacent to the field that provides shelter and simple meals
- The cabin has three bedrooms with two beds each, showers, kitchen, and a common room, and is connected to all utilities
- Meals are provided with all reservations

Revenue Drivers

- The Dia website states that annual demand for reservations far exceeds supply
- If *The Lightning Field* were to host at its maximum capacity – 6 guests per night over 183 days between May 1st and October 31st – it would receive just under 1,098 visitors annually
- Pricing is $300 per person per night and $100 for students and children under 18 per night
- The registration page notes that additional contributions towards the operating expenses of the site are greatly appreciated

Costs

- The site is managed by Dia Art Foundation and specific financial information is not published
- Dia claims that the cost of maintaining The Lightning Field and accommodating visits greatly exceeds visitor fees

Local Impact

- Brings visitor to rural western New Mexico and the town of Quemado and is part of New Mexico's Land Art ecosystem

Access and preservation

- This site prioritizes preservation over access
- The private owner of the ranch land received $500,000 from the State Government for a conservation easement that prevents development of the land and protects the negative space surrounding the sculpture to preserve the visitor experience
- The easement, called the Quemado Basin Conservation Easement, is held in the collection of the New Mexico Museum of Art

Sources: Dia Art Foundation Website, KRQE Lightning Field YouTube Video published April 19, 2012

Dia Art Foundation Overview and Simple Lighting Field Revenue Model

Description

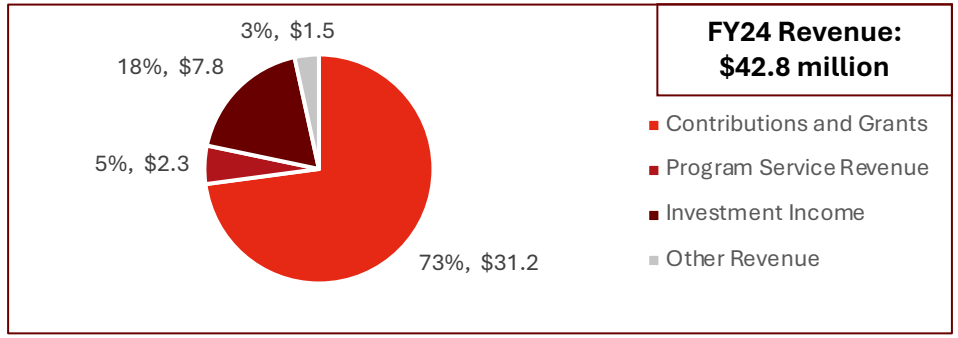
- Dia maintains 12 permanent sites and locations
- Dia's three locations for presenting changing exhibitions are Dia Beacon in Beacon, NY; Dia Bridgehampton, in Bridgehampton, NY; and Dia Chelsea in New York, NY
- Dia's long-term, site-specific projects are located across the United States and include: Walter De Maria's The Lightning Field (1977) located in New Mexico, Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty (1970) located in the Great Salt Lake in Utah, Nancy Holt's Sun Tunnels (1973-76) located in the Great Basin Desert in Utah, and Cameron Rowland's Depreciation (2018)

Simple *Lightning Field* Revenue Model

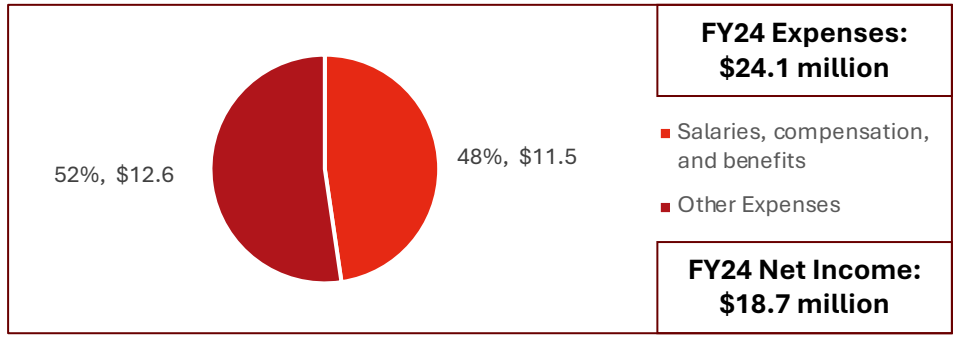
Fee per visitor per night	Avg. Party Size	Total Days	Annual Visitors	Admission Revenue
$300	3	183	549	$164,700
$300	4	183	732	$219,600
$300	5	183	915	$274,500
$300	6	183	1,098	$329,400

The table shows ranges of admission revenue for *The Lightning Field* with varying average party sizes at fixed fee per visitor per night and fixed total visitor days. In practice, fee per visitor per night might be lower if students and children under 18 are included and total days might be lower if there are cancellations for weather.

Revenue ($ million)



Costs ($ million)



Exhibitions and Long-Term Projects

- *The Lightning Field* sits under Dia's Exhibitions and Long-Term Projects program service, which includes the maintenance of all 12 of the foundation's permanent sites and locations
- This program service recorded $13.4 million in expenses and $2.7 million in revenue: the remaining 80% gap is funded by contributions

Sources: Dia Art Foundation Website, Dia Art Foundation

City by Michael Heizer, Central Eastern Nevada, United States

Owner & Operator	Triple Aught Foundation (non-profit)	**Founded / Opened**	1970 / 2022*	**Description**	Monumental sculpture that is one mile and a half long and a half mile wide located in an isolated valley within the high desert of the Great Basin in Central Eastern Nevada

Governance	• **Owned and operated by the Triple Aught Foundation** • *City* is located on private property on BLS-protected land • In 2015, *City* and the area surrounding it were proclaimed the the Basin and Range National Monument by the Bureau of Land Management to protect the landscape and environment
Visitor Experience	• *City* is located on **rural terrain with no habitable structures** • **Visitation is by reservation only on a first-come-first-serve basis** – a waitlist if available in case previously sold-out dates become available • Day-trips are only possible for a **maximum of 6 visitors per day**, 16 years and over, and only in favorable weather • **Visitors have 3 hours to tour the sculpture on foot** • Visitation season begins on May 5th and ends on November 19th – visitation days are limited to Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday
Local Impact	• Limited economic impact due to limited visitation • As part of the Basin and Range National Monument, it contributes to conservation of the natural landscape • While the Foundation provides a land acknowledgement, there is controversy over use of ancestral indigenous territories

Sources: Triple Aught Foundation Website

Note: *Construction began in 1970 and opened in 2022

Triple Aught Foundation Overview

Employment

- 12 directors that receive no compensation, according to Form 990
- 2 full-time employees thar receive salaries to manage the site

Revenue Drivers

- **Philanthropy (85% of total revenue):** Receives organizational and financial support from organizations across the country, including other art museums (e.g., LACMA), foundations (e.g., Lannan Foundation), and private individuals
- **Visitor fees (4% of total revenue):** The price of a visit is $150 per adult, $100 per student, and is free for residents of Lincoln, Nye, and White Pine, Nevada, counties; Nevada students and educators, active military and veterans, and indigenous peoples
- **Publications (not yet active):** A book about *City* is in preparation in collaboration with Gagosian gallery

Costs

- Foundation salaries and wages (61% of total expenses)
- Artwork maintenance (17% of total)
- Depreciation, amortization, and insurance (9% of total)

Revenue	FY2024 ($)
Philanthropy from foundations, museums, and private individuals	$1,190,722
Admission income	$55,985
Investment income	$158,082
Total	**$1,404,789**

Expense	FY2024 ($)
Salaries, benefits, and payroll taxes	$814,177
Artwork maintenance	$221,128
Depreciation, depletion, and amortization	$68,614
Insurance	$49,045
All other expenses	$186,216
Total	**$1,339,180**

Net Income (5% of revenue)	**$65,609**

Sources: Triple Aught Foundation Website; Form 990

Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, New Mexico (1 of 2)

Owner / Operator	Presbyterian Church / National Ghost Ranch Foundation (NGRF, non-profit)	**Founded / Opened**	1955*

Description

- 21,000-acre education and retreat center located 14 miles from the village of Abiquiu in a high-desert canyon landscape
- Georgia O'Keeffe summered at Ghost Ranch from 1934 and owned a house and seven acres on the property until her death in 1986
- Hosts over 300 workshops, classes, outdoor activities, and spiritual retreats annually
- Draws visitors from across the United States and internationally
- Mission: to foster well-being and spiritual health through this historic, inspiring Southwest landscape

Amenities and Visitor Services

Built spaces

- Visitor and welcome center
- Overnight lodging: cabins, dormitories, and retreat accommodation
- Dining facility
- Two museums: the Florence Hawley Ellis Museum of Anthropology and the Ruth Hall Museum of Paleontology
- Conference and retreat facilities for groups and organizations
- Artist residency spaces
- Retail shop
- On-site housing for key staff including the CEO

Outdoor spaces and services

- Hiking and biking trails
- Equestrian program and trail rides contracted to Santa Fe Hay

Governance Structure

- Hybrid governance structure
- The Presbyterian Church Foundation owns the land, received as a charitable donation from Arthur and Phoebe Pack in 1955
- NGRF leases and manages the ranch's facilities and holds operational responsibility for the visitor experience, education programs, museums, lodging, activities, and staff
- NGRF is governed by a 21-member Board of Directors and the CEO, David Evans, resides on the ranch given its remote location

Local Impact

- Ghost Ranch draws visitors to northern New Mexico through O'Keeffe-associated tourism alongside nearby Abiquiu and the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe
- The "O'Keeffe Country" brand drives tourism but has also contributed to rising property values and displacement for Hispanic and Indigenous families
- In December 2025, NGRF and the Presbyterian Church Foundation announced the Ghost Ranch Conservation Plan: a partnership with the New Mexico Land Conservancy and the State of New Mexico to place conservation easements on 6,000 acres of the ranch's land
- The first phase is funded by $921,450 from the state's Natural Heritage Conservation Act Program and is on track to close by end of 2026. A second phase covering approximately 1,500 acres surrounding O'Keeffe's former home is expected to follow.
- The easements prohibit commercial development in perpetuity, including vacation homes, hotels, and cell towers, while preserving existing uses: educational programs, trail access, commercial filming, and seasonal cattle grazing

Source: National Ghost Ranch Foundation Form 990; ghostranch.org; Wikipedia (Ghost Ranch); NPR; Santa Fe New Mexican; Albuquerque Journal; KSFR; ghostranchconservation.org; Presbyterian Foundation; Georgia O'Keeffe Museum

Notes: *Donated to Presbyterian Church 1955; National Ghost Ranch Foundation formed 1972; current lease arrangement since 2018

Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, New Mexico (2 of 2)

Impact on Indigenous Lands and People

- Ghost Ranch sits on the ancestral homelands of Tewa-speaking Pueblo peoples: the ranch's published land acknowledgement names eight Pueblo communities as well as the Jicarilla Apache, Navajo Nation, Southern Ute, and Genízaro peoples
- The cultural narrative around the site is shifting: the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum's 2026 exhibition recentering Tewa perspectives on the landscape doubled local and Native visitor attendance, and Ghost Ranch's leadership no longer uses the "O'Keeffe Country" framing
- The New Mexico Land Conservancy works with local tribes and pueblos to identify and protect cultural resources within the conserved area

Revenue Drivers

- Program service accounts for approximately 60% of total revenue, reflecting the ranch's earned-income-first operating model
- Contributions and grants represent approximately 25%

Costs

- Employment represents approximately 54% of total expenditure
- Program service expenses were $5.37 million (66% of total expenses) in FY2024
- Management and general expenses were $2.21 million (27% of total)
- Fundraising expenses were $534,855

Revenue Stream	FY2024 ($)	Notes
Program service revenue	4,614,258	Lodging, tuition, visitor experience
Contributions and grants	1,956,152	Includes $135,000 in government grants; rest is private
Other revenue	974,699	Includes rental income ($590,414), net inventory sales ($366,506)
Investment income	144,139	Interest, dividends, and similar
Total revenue	**7,689,248**	

Expense Category	FY2024 ($)	Notes
Salaries and compensation	4,349,931	Includes wages, benefits, payroll taxes; 112 employees
Contract services	950,837	Accounting ($546,300), trail ride services ($375,555), property restoration ($208,152), AC services ($106,636)
Occupancy	698,276	Site maintenance, utilities, leasehold costs
Information technology	384,777	
Insurance	307,379	
Advertising and promotion	202,109	
Depreciation	202,702	
All Other	1,027,294	
Total expenses	**8,123,305**	
Net Income (-6% of revenue)	**($434,057)**	

Source: National Ghost Ranch Foundation Form 990; ghostranch.org; Wikipedia (Ghost Ranch); NPR; Santa Fe New Mexican; Albuquerque Journal; KSFR; ghostranchconservation.org; Presbyterian Foundation; Georgia O'Keeffe Museum

Stonehenge, Wiltshire, England (1 of 2)

Operator	English Heritage (a registered charity) via Property Licence from Government	**Founded / Opened**	2500 BC / 1918*

Description

- A prehistoric monument of a concentric arrangement of massive standing stones weighing up to 25 tons two miles west of Amesbury
- Designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1986
- The most visited paid heritage attraction in Southwest England

Governance Structure

- Stonehenge is governed through a hybrid model that includes a charitable operator, state-held assets, and multi-party governance
- The monument is managed by English Heritage under a Property Licence from Historic England (a government agency), renewed in 2024 for an initial 10-year term extendable to 20 years
- English Heritage is responsible for visitor management, conservation, interpretation, and commercial activity
- The monument sits on land help under the guardianship of the Secretary for Culture, Media, and Sport, with freehold retained by Historic England
- The broader UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS), which includes nearby Avebury, is managed by the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site Coordination Unit, which is jointly funded by Wiltshire Council, Historic England, and English Heritage
- The land distributed across the broader WHS is owned or operated by a number of entities, including English Heritage, the National Trust, the Ministry of Defence, the RSPB, Wiltshire Council, and private landowners and farmers

Visitor Experience

- Visitors access the site via timed tickets purchased online or onsite
- The site operates a modern visitor center 1.5 miles from the monument, hosting a permanent exhibition, a café, retail shop, reconstructed Neolithic houses, and accessible facilities
- A free shuttle bus connects the visitor center to the stone circle
- Multilingual audio guides are included with all tickets
- A new learning center with a neolithic classroom is under construction and expected to open in 2026

Revenue Drivers

- Stonehenge attracted approximately 1.3 million visitors in 2023
- Visitors can either purchase a GA Ticket, a *Stone Circle Experience* (SCE) ticket, or a *Stonehenge Explorer Tour* (SET)
- Stonehenge Adult GA starts at £31.80, and an Adult *Stone Circle Experience* ticket start at £72.70
- SCE tickets grant access outside of normal visiting, lasts roughly an hour, and is subject to limited availability
- SET tickets are available only on weekends and take place in groups no larger than five
- Discounts are provided for children, families, seniors, essential companions, and students
- The site also programs events and accommodates school and group visits to drive visitation
- English Heritage derives earned revenue from Stonehenge via retail shop that sells souvenirs, clothing, books and gifts; food and beverage sales at the visitor center
- English Heritage sells a popular £6.00 guidebook to Stonehenge

Source: English Heritage Annual Report 2024/25; English Heritage website; Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site Partnership; Historic England; Wikipedia (Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites)
Note: * Stonehenge was likely built around 2500 BC and was donated to the federal government in 1918 by a private landowner

Stonehenge, Wiltshire, England (2 of 2)



Costs

- While Stonehenge costs are not separately reported, English Heritage reports three relevant cost categories: *Conserving our Properties, Membership and Admissions, and Running our Properties*
- *Conserving our Properties* includes maintenance, curatorial work, and conservation
- Membership and Admissions includes staffing, marketing, events, and on-site visitor services
- *Running our Properties* includes retail, catering and hospitality

Ownership Transfer

- Stonehenge was donated to the federal government in 1918 by a private landowner in 1918

Local Impact

- Wiltshire's tourism industry is worth around £1.5bn annually – 9% of Wiltshire's GDP – and supports 28,000 jobs
- English Heritage provides free admission to residents of Amesbury and several surrounding communities year-round
- The British Museum's 2022 Stonehenge Report notes strong emotional engagement and high satisfaction, despite crowding
- The Heritage Fund claims that participants in a Stonehenge-related creative exploration project reported positive effects on mental health and wellbeing
- However, there are discussed negative effects around traffic, road expansion, and pressure on the infrastructure of the nearby communities and landscape

Access and preservation

- The monument is viewed from a perimeter path rather than entered, except on the premium Stone Circle Experience and for the Summer Solstice
- The visitor center is deliberately sited approximately 1.5 miles from the stones to reduce pressure on the immediate setting.
- The A303, the primary road to Stonehenge, is visible and audible from the site and has been a persistent and contested planning issue
- A proposed tunnel (the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down scheme, valued at approximately £1.9 billion) has been the subject of dispute, with Wiltshire Council, Historic England, UNESCO, and campaign groups holding diverging positions on its merits
- The site's timed ticketing system was introduced to manage visitor flow and reduce congestion
- Parking is managed on-site with charges applied to non-members

Local Ecosystem

- Nearby English Heritage sites are suggested companion destinations, including Woodhenge (3.2 miles), Old Sarum (6.8 miles), and Bratton Camp and White Horse (13.5 miles)
- The WHS Management Plan aims to encourage Stonehenge visitors to stay longer and explore the wider site, including Avebury, Woodhenge, Durrington Walls, and the West Kennet Long Barrow
- Stonehenge sits in a dense cluster of other heritage destinations including Salisbury Cathedral, the Salisbury Museum (which holds a Neolithic and Bronze Age collection, including objects from the WHS); the Wiltshire Museum in Devizes; Old Sarum; and the Roman city of Bath (approximately 30 miles west)

Source: English Heritage Annual Report 2024/25; English Heritage website; Historic England; Wikipedia; Heritage Fund, Friends of the Earth, British Museum; BBC *Tourism gets boost from industry body accreditation,* Published May 2025

English Heritage Overview

Description

- English Heritage is an independent charity maintains and operates the National Heritage Collection, which is a portfolio of over 400 historic monuments, buildings, and places across England
- Its charitable objectives are to conserve the collection, open it to public access through exhibitions, interpretation, events, and education, and to advance public appreciation
- English Heritage was established as an independent charity on 1 April 2015, when it separated from Historic England (government heritage agency) and operates under a Property Licence and Operating Agreement with Historic England

Governance

Board of Trustees

- Between seven and fifteen members: the majority are independent Trustees proposed by English Heritage and appointed by Historic England
- Four-year terms, renewable once
- The Board meets formally each quarter and delegates day-to-day management to the Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team

Commercial subsidiary

- Retail, catering, sponsorship, filming, licensing is conducted through a wholly owned subsidiary, English Heritage Trading Limited, which gift-aids its distributable profits annually to the charity

Operating Model

- Transitioned away from annual government grant funding at the end of 2022/23 when it fully drew the £80 million New Model Grant
- It funds its operations primarily through earned income (admissions, membership, retail, catering, and commercial activities) and is supplemented by philanthropy, restricted grants, and investment income

Revenue Stream (FY2024/25)	£ million	Notes
Membership income	55.7	Approx. 1.19 million members; annual fee from £42
Admissions income	43.6	Pay-to-enter sites; pricing-led growth
Running our Properties	35.4	Retail, F&B (£31.4m), hospitality, filming, weddings, and more
Donations and Legacies	12.7	Includes restricted grant income
Conserving our Properties	4.1	Rental and service charges; exhibition tax relief
Investment income	1.6	Interest on deposits and investment portfolio
Historic England / Other	0.7	Shared services and New Model subsidy
Total	**155.2**	

Cost Category (FY2024/25)	£ million	Notes
Membership and Admissions	59.6	Marketing, events, on-site visitor services, staffing
Conserving our Properties	50.3	Maintenance (£14.8m), curatorial work, conservation
Running our Properties	48.9	Retail, catering, hospitality, commercial operations
Employment (embedded in above categories)	76.1	Wages, salaries, pension, agency staff; includes £6.9m restructuring
Depreciation and amortisation	7.4	Intangible and tangible assets
Fundraising and other	4.1	Fundraising, licensing, sponsorship costs
Total	**162.8**	Includes £6.9m one-time restructuring costs

Net Income (-5% of revenue)	**(£7.6 million)**

Source: English Heritage Annual Report 2024/25; English Heritage website; Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site Partnership; Historic England; Wikipedia (Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites)

Chaco Culture National Historical Park, San Juan Basin, New Mexico

Owner & Operator	National Park Service (Federal Government)	**Founded / Opened**	850 CE/ 1907*

Description	• Preserves the most significant concentration of pre-Columbian ruins north of Mexico between Albuquerque and Farmington • Functioned as the cultural, ceremonial, and trading hub of the Ancestral Puebloan world between approximately 850 and 1150 CE • Notable for evidence of sophisticated archeoastronomy which are now closed to the public due to erosion damage from foot traffic • Designated a Gold-tier International Dark Sky Park by the International Dark-Sky Association in 2013 • Approximately 41,594 visits were recorded in 2022, low due to the park's remoteness and the condition of access roads
Governance Structure	• Chaco Culture National Historical Park is owned by the federal government and managed by the National Park Service (NPS) • Tribal consultation is formally embedded in park governance: the Chaco American Indian Consultation Committee, established in 1991, gives tribal representatives a structured voice in park oversight • Land surrounding the park is a patchwork of federal lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Navajo Nation lands, lands allotted to individual Navajo families, state lands, and private holdings • The Chaco Culture Archaeological Protection Site program was developed to safeguard Chacoan sites on BLM and Navajo Nation lands adjacent to the park
Visitor Experience	• Visitor center with an information desk, theatre, bookstore, gift shop, and observatory • Chaco Night Sky Program, attracing14,000 people annually, allows visitors to access park telescopes and astronomy programming • The Gallo Campground accommodates tents, trailers, and RVs • Ranger-guided tours of the great house complexes are offered • Hiking and biking trails • No café, foodservice, lodging, or museum
Local Impact and Partners	• Given modest visitation, the park has limited economic contribution to the towns in the area • Archaeological collections are held at the University of New Mexico's Hibben Center in Albuquerque, which can only be accessed with an appointment, given staff availability • An on-site museum was proposed but has been put on hold
Revenue Drivers	• The park charges entrance fees: $25 per private vehicle, $20 per motorcycle, $15 per person on foot or bicycle • The park's primary funding source is the federal appropriations process through the Department of the Interior
Costs	• Staffing: rangers, archaeologists, administration • Visitor services: visitor center operation, astronomy program delivery, campground operation • Site maintenance and preservation

Source: National Park Service; Wikipedia (Chaco Culture National Historical Park); UNESCO World Heritage List (No. 353); National Parks Conservation Association; New Mexico Magazine; NPR; Source New Mexico; Cibola Citizen; The Wilderness Society
Notes: *National Monument 1907; National Historical Park 1980; UNESCO World Heritage Site 1987

McDonald Observatory, Fort Davis, Texas

Owner / Operator	University of Austin (Public University / State Ownership)	**Founded / Opened**	1932 / 2002*

Description

- McDonald Observatory is a research and public outreach facility of the University of Texas at Austin, located on Mount Locke in the Davis Mountains in West Texas
- The observatory operates multiple research telescopes, active research programs, and visitor services

Amenities and Visitor Services

- The Frank N. Bash Visitor Center serves as the public gateway to the facility and offers exhibits on astronomy history and science alongside guided tours, solar viewing programs, and Star Parties
- The Visitor Center attracts more than 75,000 annual visitors and is currently undergoing a $5.5 million renovation to create new interactive exhibits, upgrade its facilities, renovate galleries at the telescopes, and expand the self-guided tour experience with new audio tours, films, and interpretive outdoor exhibits
- The Visitor Center is open Tuesday through Saturday from 12–5 pm: reservations are strongly recommended
- Programs frequently sell out during holidays and Spring Break, with Star Parties routinely drawing up to 300 attendees per evening
- No on-site accommodation: the nearest lodging is in Fort Davis, which is 18 miles away
- Admission and programs are ticketed: GA tickets are $3, Solar Theater Viewings are $5, and Adult Guided Tour Tickets are $10

Governance Structure and Support

- Sits within the University of Texas at Austin's College of Natural Sciences and Department of Astronomy
- Established through the charitable estate of William J. McDonald
- Board of Visitors: advisory and fundraising body with no fiduciary authority - operating similarly to a Friends group – in which members are organized into giving tiers
- Earned revenue sources include program admissions, gift shop sales, and group and school reservations
- Admission revenue covers a fraction of total operating costs
- The observatory relies heavily on philanthropic and institutional support

Local Impact

- 75,000 annual visitors are a driver of tourism and economic activity for Fort Davis, which has a population of approximately 1,200
- The observatory is an anchor for regional dark-sky tourism ecosystem, which extends into Big Bend National Park, Big Bend Ranch State Park, Marfa, and Alpine.
- McDonald Observatory is a founding partner of the Greater Big Bend International Dark Sky Reserve, which was established in 2022 and covers over 15,000 square miles
- The Dark Skies Initiative, coordinated from the observatory, works with municipalities, businesses, and landowners across the region to adopt compliant lighting practice
- An annual Dark Skies Festival draws visitors from across Texas
- Teacher professional development and K–12 field trips extend educational reach to regional and state schools

Source: McDonald Observatory website; UT Austin About Page; UT Austin News, July 2, 2024; Lonely Planet; Big Bend Sentinel, April 2025

Notes: Founded 1932; first telescope operational 1939; Frank N. Bash Visitors Center opened 2002

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