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## **ECONOMIC ANALYSIS: REIMAGINED SAN DIEGO CIVIC CENTER PLAN WILL BRING \$14.4 BILLION TO THE REGION**

*City Hall Relocation Could Save Taxpayers \$325 Million*

**SAN DIEGO – Jan. 27, 2026** – Revitalizing the San Diego Civic Center could give the region a one-time \$14 billion boost, followed by an annual economic impact of nearly half a billion dollars, while saving the City budget more than \$300 million.

That's according to a new economic impact analysis released today by **Downtown San Diego Partnership** and the **Prebys Foundation**. The report, "*San Diego Civic Center Revitalization: Quantifying Transformative Economic Impact*," was requested by the San Diego City Council and produced by **U3 Advisors** to analyze the benefits of transforming the six-block, city-owned site into a newly vibrant, mixed-use urban neighborhood. Beyond direct site benefits, the report indicates that the project could catalyze 6.9 million square feet of additional development within a quarter-mile radius.

"For far too long, San Diego's Civic Center has not lived up to its potential as a dynamic public space," said **Betsy Brennan**, President and CEO of the Downtown San Diego Partnership. "It should be a place San Diegans are proud of, a vibrant hub that showcases why we are America's best outdoor Downtown. This report brings into focus what we have long believed, which is that every investment we make into this crucial district strengthens Downtown today and benefits the entire region for years to come."

According to the report, the vision plan's economic impact is largely realized through the creation of 1,000 new permanent positions and approximately 80,000 temporary jobs including construction and ancillary development. The vision also introduces nearly 2,300 housing units, attracting 4,500 new residents to a new Downtown neighborhood with an emphasis on education, arts & culture, housing, and design. The revitalized Civic Center is projected to

increase the City of San Diego's annual budget revenues by more than \$7.2 million through property taxes, sales taxes, and transient occupancy taxes.

The plan also calls for the relocation of San Diego's Central Administration Building (CAB) to existing nearby Downtown vacant office space, a move that could yield at least \$325 million in facilities savings. Relocating the city services that are currently housed in CAB and other subpar city facilities could alleviate taxpayers' \$106 million deferred maintenance burden and reduce significant municipal liabilities.

In May 2025, U3 Advisors announced the new vision for the Civic Center at the Prebys Foundation's **WAVES Festival**. The vision was developed with strong community input and seeks to replace an underutilized concrete fortress-like space with a 24-7, dynamic "civic heart" featuring: thousands of housing units of varying price points; new world-class arts and educational amenities; a recently renovated Civic Theatre; and the creation of an opened up street grid with an iconic public plaza.

"This analysis makes clear that reimagining the Civic Center is not just a design or development opportunity—it's a public good," said **Grant Oliphant**, CEO and President of the Prebys Foundation. "When we invest in education, arts and culture, and welcoming public spaces, we strengthen civic life, unlock economic value, and create places where San Diegans can truly gather and belong. This is about building a Civic Center that works for people, today and for generations to come."

**Mayor Todd Gloria's** Civic Center Revitalization Task Force, informed by extensive public input and feedback, formally kicked off the effort four years ago, and it has continued over the past two years with the Downtown San Diego Partnership and the public workshops, stakeholder engagement, and input from hundreds of San Diegans orchestrated by the Prebys Foundation.

In October 2025, local leaders celebrated the launch of **Plaza Central**, in Civic Center Plaza each week, with an immediate activation project that transformed the plaza into a vibrant destination for weekly pop-ups with food and music. In 2026, San Diegans will see an expanded schedule of cultural activities drawing people from across the San Diego region.

"The potential of this site is vast and limited only by the imagination of San Diegans," said **Omar Blaik**, CEO of U3 Advisors. "The popularity of activations like Plaza Central show how people are very excited to rediscover this area, and as they do, more opportunities for greater economic development emerge."

U3 Advisors is currently working with the Downtown Partnership, the Prebys Foundation, and the City of San Diego on an implementation plan and road map, slated for release in the first quarter of 2026, which will outline specific phasing options and governance structures for the project.

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*The **Downtown San Diego Partnership** is a nonprofit organization that serves as the principal voice and driving force behind the economic and cultural prosperity of Downtown San Diego through membership, advocacy, enhanced services, and community investment. It also serves as the managing organization for several special districts including the Property and Business Improvement District, otherwise known as the Clean & Safe program, which provides enhanced services to more than 285 blocks of Downtown. For more information, visit [downtownsandiego.org](http://downtownsandiego.org).*

*The **Prebys Foundation** is the largest independent private foundation in San Diego County. The Foundation invests in arts and culture, youth success, health and well-being, and medical research to build an inclusive, equitable, and dynamic future for all. Learn more at [prebysfdn.org](http://prebysfdn.org). Learn more at [prebysfdn.org](http://prebysfdn.org).*

***U3 Advisors** is a nationally recognized consulting firm that provides real estate and economic development solutions to communities and anchor institutions—colleges and universities, medical centers, foundations, and nonprofit and civic organizations. With more than 20 years in business, U3 Advisors' core practice is serving nonprofit institutions during the planning and pre-development phases of complex real estate projects. For more information, visit [U3Advisors.com](http://U3Advisors.com).*