



NEW MEXICO TRUE

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EXPO New Mexico Unveils Newly Renovated Tower on Historic Route 66 *Project Funded by state Tourism Department's Route 66 Centennial Grant Program*

ALBUQUERQUE, NM — EXPO New Mexico is proud to announce the completion of a major rehabilitation and modernization project at the landmark tower that marks the entrance to the New Mexico State Fairgrounds on historic Central Avenue—better known as Route 66. The upgraded signage and structural enhancements serve as a dynamic welcome to visitors while honoring the property's long-standing place in New Mexico history.

The **New Mexico Tourism Department** awarded EXPO New Mexico \$250,000 in competitive grant funding to support the project through the Route 66 Centennial Grant Program. Their support underscores a shared commitment to enhancing tourism infrastructure in anticipation of the **Route 66 Centennial in 2026**.

The tower, one of the original structures built when the State Fairgrounds were established at their current location in 1938, now features vibrant new neon-style signage and a digital marquee designed to reflect the vintage charm of Route 66 while supporting contemporary communication needs. The design complements the area's historic designation as a "Neon City" and aligns with ongoing community efforts to restore neon lighting along Central Avenue.

"This project is a celebration of our history and our future," said Dan Mourning, General Manager of EXPO New Mexico. "Restoring the tower and adding neon signage not only elevates the visitor experience, but also celebrates our connection to the spirit of Route 66 and the generations of New Mexicans who have passed through these gates."

"We were proud that we understood the importance for us to deploy a holistic approach to preparation for the Route 66 Centennial that focused on infrastructure development in addition to

marketing and special events,” said **Acting Tourism Secretary Lancing Adams**. “Being able to witness the completion of a project like this is an exciting validation of the value of this grant.”

The renovated tower is a welcome addition for the 2025 New Mexico State Fair which takes place **September 4–14**.