



TEXAS IS THE FUTURE

Rick Perry, Governor of Texas, on what makes Austin the perfect home for the world's most advanced form of motor racing — and what Ferrari should name their next coupé...

“The Formula 1 race in Austin is part of the most dynamic cultural expansion in the United States. It started around 20 years ago, when someone put on a music festival, which morphed into a huge global film event and technology gathering.

“Since its beginnings, *South By Southwest* has drawn an international clientele, who liked what they saw, talked about Austin, and came back with their friends. That international exposure is the reason why F1 identified this as the place the sport needed to locate its track.

“Austin is a very accepting, vibrant, multicultural community — that’s the core of what the city is and why it is successful. Everyone, even residents of the United States, has a perception about what Texas is. But we don’t all live on ranches, have oil wells in the backyard and wear cowboy hats.

“Austin is cosmopolitan and culturally diverse as a result of the wealth created here over the last decade. The private sector has invested in the arts, with a new modern art museum and performing arts

center in Austin, and much more besides in other cities such as Dallas and Fort Worth.”

The right choice

“I give the people behind Formula 1, and particularly Bernie Ecclestone, great kudos for choosing Texas. They could have put their track anywhere, but they chose Texas because there’s an economic phenomenon going on here that’s not happening anywhere else in the United States, perhaps the world. ▶

**“THERE’S AN ECONOMIC
PHENOMENON HERE
LIKE NOWHERE ELSE”**



“I SAID: IT’S A GREAT CAR BUT YOU HAVE THE WRONG NAME ON IT!”

“Texas leads the way in creating jobs and the economy is flourishing – that’s why it was possible to build a \$400m race track. Last year, I went to Italy with Luca di Montezemolo, the president of Ferrari, and visited Monza, home of the Italian Grand Prix. Afterwards, we went to Ferrari’s private track at Maranello, and Luca took my wife for a spin in a coupé called the California.

“I said: ‘Luca, you have a great vehicle here that you want to market, but you have the wrong name on it. California is the past, Texas is the future!’ Now, I don’t know if they’ve changed the name or not, but I certainly got his attention.

“The Italian Grand Prix was unlike any other sporting event I had been to, and the excitement of the huge

crowd was palpable. But I have to say that I find the facilities at Circuit of The Americas more user-friendly, especially as all spectators get incredible views.”

Discovering Formula 1

“The bar was set very high in 2012, and I’m very confident that this year’s event will deliver again. People come to the Grand Prix for the race, but also for the pageantry and excitement – and the team at COTA have shown that they know how to entertain.

“As a country, the United States has not always understood Formula 1 and put its arms around the sport. That’s what makes what happened in 2012 so impactful. We had 265,500 people show up here over the three-day event, making it the second-highest attendance of the season for a Formula 1 Grand Prix.

“And as Americans become more knowledgeable and more supportive of F1, then this will really explode.

“We’ll pray for good weather and, after that, concentrate on the things we can physically control. Moving people safely and expeditiously into and out of the track is our biggest challenge.

“Last year, the County of Travis did a magnificent job in this regard, handling the traffic with ease, and will pass the test with flying colors again. We know that traffic flow is the biggest potential problem and have been working since last year on expanding the roads and developing other satellite facilities.”

The technology race

“Formula 1 is about technology and performance, and the University of Texas, located nearby in downtown Austin, works on many of the same advanced technologies that are linked to the sport, including braking systems and aerodynamics.

“Although the race weekend only lasts for three days, there is a year-round effort from this internationally-acclaimed institution to explore these technologies. And this aspect will continue to grow and flourish, due to the track’s location and the year-round calendar of events being hosted there.

“Similar to the cluster of businesses around Silverstone in the UK, there is room for growth at the site – whether that’s bringing in manufacturing, hotels or other industries – all based around the anchor tenant being the Circuit of The Americas.

“We’re recruiting a components manufacturer into the F1 area, and as it grows, businesses will expand or relocate to the site, attracted by the proximity to one of the world’s biggest sporting events, and by Texas’s business climate.” ●