



## NATIONAL CITY BUSINESS RESOURCE PACKET

Provided by:

Housing and Economic Development  
Department

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## Great City for Great Businesses!

Thank you for considering National City! Whether you are the owner of an existing National City business looking to expand, someone who is looking to open or relocate your business to our city, or thinking of holding an event here, we want to be a partner in your success. It is our goal to provide you with customer service of the highest quality.

Making a Great City for Great Businesses requires partnership – the City, residents, businesses, and organizations working together to identify solutions, champion needed changes, and being open to invest in our community. For this reason, National City is committed to promoting smart and, responsible growth within our city that respects our rich history of economic innovation, our cultural diversity, and the unique character of our community. We are truly here to help you in any way we can. Our team is always just a phone call, email, or text message away.

We have created this informational packet to provide quick, convenient access to the numerous a City resources you may need. From the permitting process to bidding on City project, from licensing to tax incentives, we are here to help you do business in National City. You may call me directly with any questions at 619-336-4216 or at [mgamwell@nationalcityca.gov](mailto:mgamwell@nationalcityca.gov).

Thank you again for considering National City. We look forward to working with you!

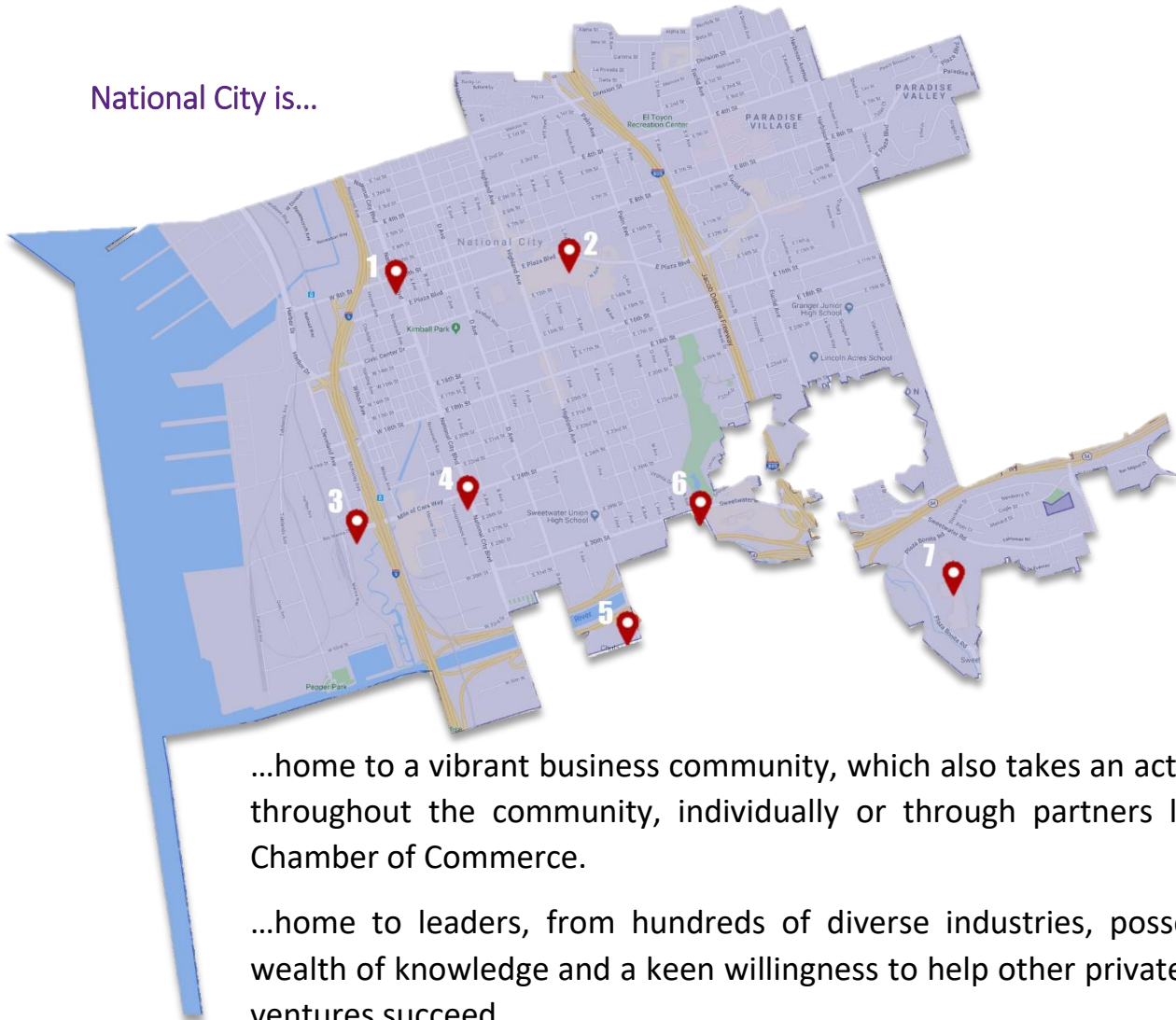
Sincerely

Megan Gamwell  
Economic Development Specialist

## Areas of Focus

1. Downtown National City
2. Plaza Boulevard
3. Bay Marina & Cleveland
4. Mile of Cars
5. Sweetwater
6. South Bay Marketplace
7. Westfield Plaza Bonita

## National City is...



...home to a vibrant business community, which also takes an active role throughout the community, individually or through partners like the Chamber of Commerce.

...home to leaders, from hundreds of diverse industries, possesses a wealth of knowledge and a keen willingness to help other private sector ventures succeed.

...home to experts in manufacturing, design, and sport and entertainment call National City home, and we would be thrilled to have you join them.

Businesses are the lifeblood of all Great Cities! They are the destinations that keep us coming back again and again, bringing energy to sidewalks and storefronts. This packet is filled with resources to help you understand the community you serve or are looking to expand into and find resources across the city to better serve the community.

**Data:** On the next pages, you will find background information on the existing demographics and economic conditions of National City.



**Resources:** We have also compiled a list of organizations, incentives and programs to help you navigate owning, operating or expanding your business in National City.

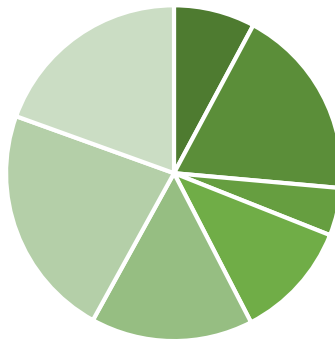


## Overview

The heart of National City offers a special blend of community-serving and local retail uses, and its downtown is just 10 minutes from downtown San Diego. A recent General Plan update anticipates significant growth in housing, retailing and community infrastructure along the Interstate 5 corridor on National City’s west side. According to the US Census, there are 62,760 people living in National City. The information below provides a summary breakdown of the demographics for National City.

### Business by Establishments

**62,760**  
Total Population



**16,769**  
Total Households

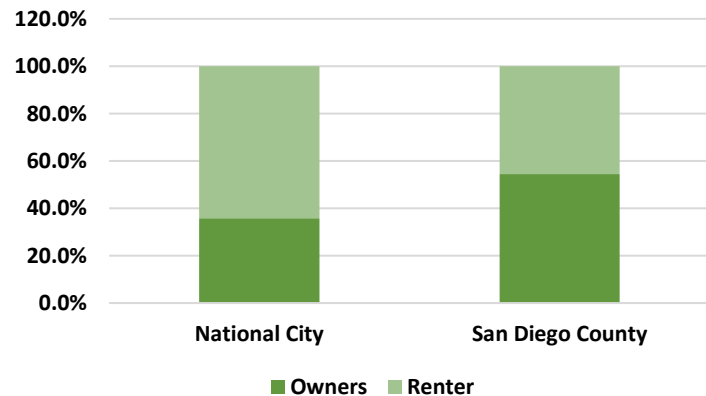
- Hospitality & Food Services
- Professional Services
- Recreation & Educational Services
- Construction, Manufacturing & Transportation
- Health Care & Social Assistance
- Retail & Wholesale
- Other Services

**\$56,177**  
Average Household Income

### Employment

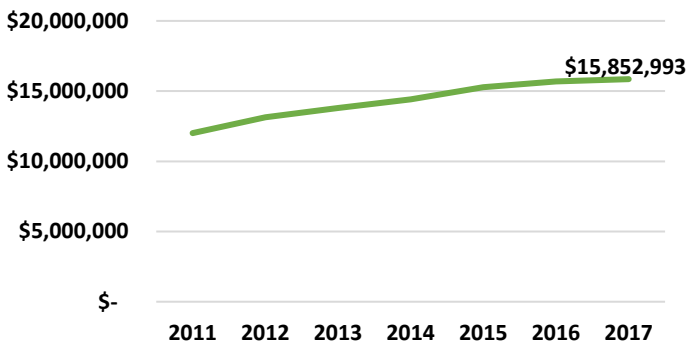


### Home Ownership

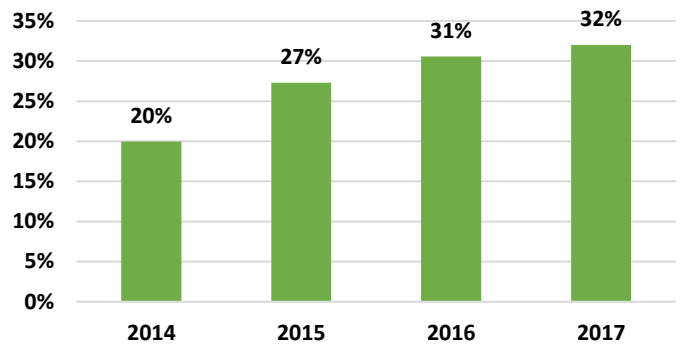


## Retailer Performance

**Sales Tax Growth Trend**



**Sales Tax Revenue Growth**



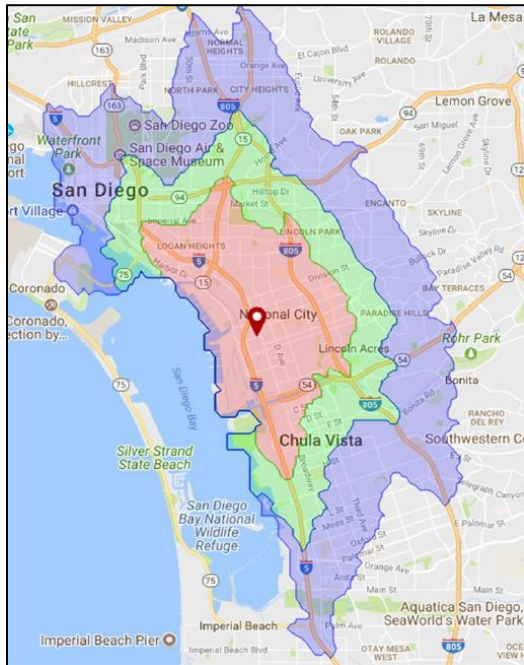
A sampling of national and regional restaurants doing business in National City was used to compare how their National City location performed in taxable sales volumes versus the statewide average for their respective companies.

The sales tax performance of 46 top retail and restaurant businesses in National City which consisted of national and regional companies was evaluated. Of the 46 firms, 38 businesses performed above the statewide average for their respective company while just eight have the National City location(s) performing below the statewide average. 43% of the firms have a location at the Westfield Plaza Bonita regional shopping mall where 80% of the businesses are performing above the statewide average. A sampling of some of the above average firms include (in alphabetical order) 99 Cents Only, Forever 21, In N Out Burgers, Ross/old's Discounts, and Walmart Supercenter.

### Key Conclusion

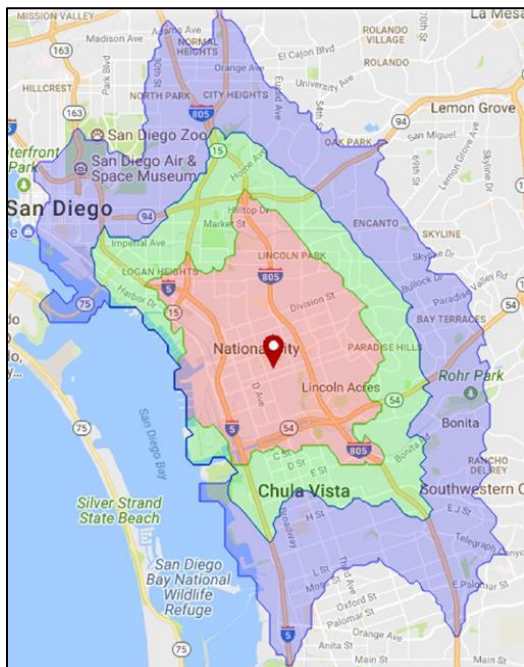
- Revenue increased by 32% representing \$3.8 million in increased revenue since 2011.
- 83% of the national and regional retailers performed above their respective statewide averages in generated sales tax revenue, a proxy for performance.
- National City benefits from non-resident spending from densely populated neighboring communities.

## Downtown National City



With SANDAG and Caltrans as funding partners, National City has invested \$20 million in public improvements to encourage private investments that will result in improved quality of life, economic stability, mobility options, housing choices and job creation in National City. National City is looking to partner with land owners, developers, existing businesses and residents as well as coordination with the U.S. Navy, colleges and other area stakeholders to create a more vibrant downtown.

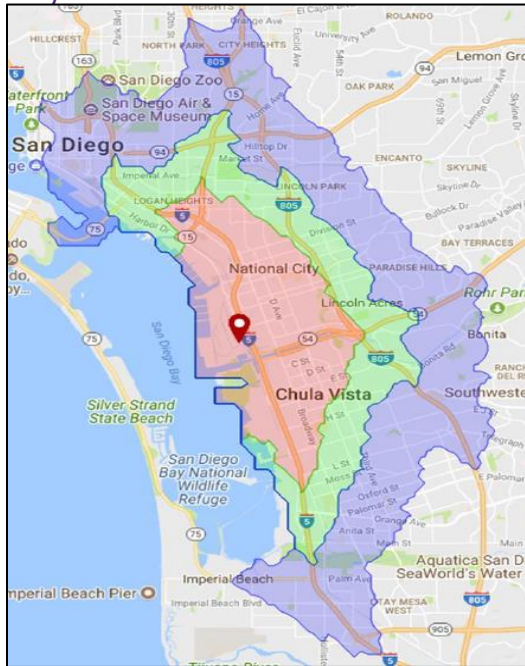
## Plaza Boulevard



Just east of downtown National City along Plaza Boulevard at Highland Avenue there is more than 265,000 square feet of commercial development space between the Bay Plaza and South Bay Plaza shopping centers. These two centers are home to major national retailers including, Seafood City, Big Lots, Jo-Ann, Ihop, Chuck E. Cheese, Hometown Buffet, Wells Fargo and Chase Bank; in addition to the Walmart Supercenter located on the southwest corner of East Plaza Boulevard and Highland Avenue.

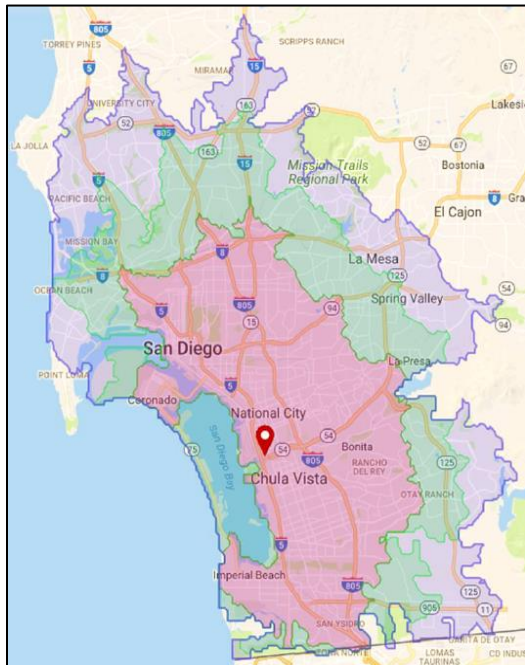


### Bay Marina & Cleveland



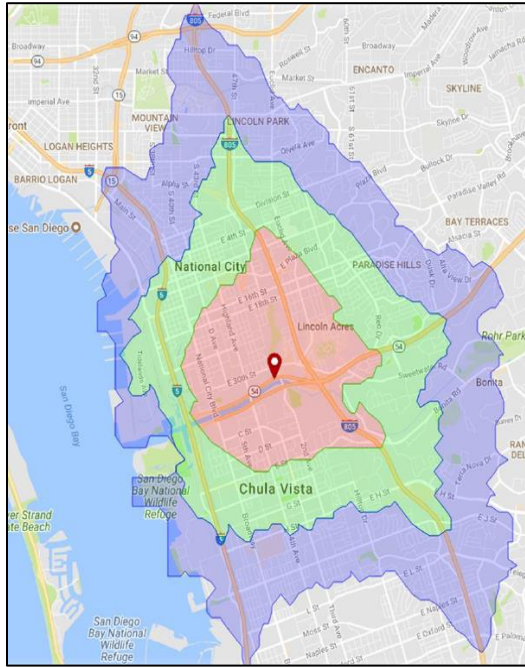
The National City Bayfront is made up of 273 acres of waterfront land and 167 acres of water and includes the National City Marine Terminal, Pepper Park, Pier 32 Marina, the new National City Aquatic Center and many pieces of valuable public art. The Port of San Diego has been working closely with the City of National City to rebalance land use and is just west of National City’s Mile of Cars with near by commercial including Best Western Plus, In-N-Out, Denny’s, Starbucks as well as major educational and institutional uses.

### Mile of Cars



National City Mile of Cars has been serving San Diego for more than 60 years and is located along National City Boulevard between West 33<sup>rd</sup> Street and East 18<sup>th</sup> Street. The Mile is one of the oldest and most successful Automotive Associations in the Nation and is still growing and currently has 20 major brands and over 5,000 new and pre-owned vehicles.

## Sweetwater



The retail sites along the Sweetwater corridor are within a trade area that is considered within one of South San Diego County’s largest and most successful regional shopping intersections. Strong co-tenancy in all the shopping centers with CVS, LA Fitness, dd’s Discounts, El Super, Food 4 Less Target, Best Buy, Walmart, Old Navy, and many more regional and national retailers. In addition to retail space available, there are redevelopment opportunities available within the trade area including the former Toys R Us.

## South Bay Marketplace



Ideally located at the intersection of Highway 54 and Highland Avenue, the 155,000 square foot center is a premier power center serving San Diego’s South Bay communities of National City and Chula Vista. The site is well suited for tenants interested in being positioned in a high-profile location, drawing from both the highly dense Chula Vista and National City communities. The power center is anchored by Old Navy, Ross, Walmart and Grocery Outlet with additional ancillary regional and national tenants.

## Westfield Plaza Bonita



Westfield Plaza Bonita is located in South Bay region of San Diego County, just 15 minutes south of downtown San Diego and 10 minutes north of the Mexican border at the intersection of I-805 and Highway 54. Benefiting from heavy cross-border visits from Mexican nationals, the over 1 million square feet mall has flourished since a successful revitalization introduced the AMC Theaters, Nordstrom Rack, Target, Macy’s, Peer’s Coffee, Hollister, MAC Cosmetics, Victoria’s Secret, and the first PANDORA in the San Diego.

## Economic Development Incentives



The **Signage and Façade Improvement Program (SFIP)** was created to assist businesses in signage compliance and improve the appearance of existing businesses. The SFIP mission is to stimulate revitalization and private sector capital investment by proactively addressing deteriorating property conditions and encouraging improvements which increase our City’s overall economic vitality.



The **Activate the Public Right of Way Program (A.R.O.W.)** was created to beautify, activate and promote the City by working with the business community to enhance portions of the public right-of-way (PROW). The Program creates spaces that cultivate community and culture, increase property values for residents and spur economic growth for local merchants by encouraging pedestrian traffic.



The **Neighborhood Beautification Program (Adopt-A-Place)** encourages individuals and organization in National City to take an active role that will help contribute to the beautification of parks, streets, gateways and public spaces. The program mission is to increase awareness and recognize volunteer contributions and build community pride.

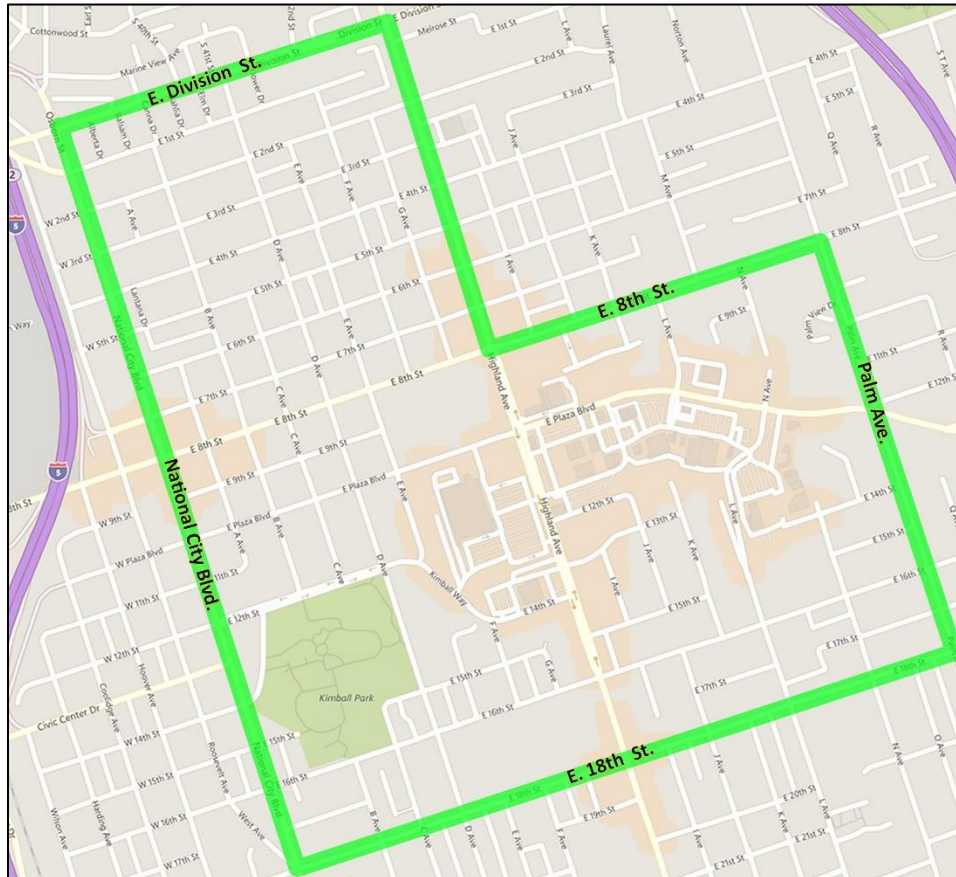


The **BrightSide Produce** and the **Live Well Community Market Program** was created to increase access to healthy foods, such as fresh produce, for National City residents. BrightSide Produce is a small-scale produce distributor that meets the needs of small, independent markets by delivering fresh, affordable produce and providing services to help market owners profitably stock fresh produce. The Live Well Community Market

Program assists markets with interior and exterior improvements to promote healthy foods, improve the market’s design, successfully sell fresh and healthy foods, and increase the bottom line.

### Opportunity Zones

Opportunity Zones are a part of a community development program established by Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 to encourage long-term investments in lower-income urban and rural communities nationwide. The Opportunity Zones program provides a tax incentive for investors to re-invest their unrealized capital gains into Opportunity Funds that are dedicated to investing into Opportunity Zones designated by the chief executives of every U.S. state and territory.



Opportunity Zones are designed to spur economic development by providing tax benefits to investors. Investors can defer tax on any prior gains until investment is sold or exchanged up until December 31, 2026, so long as the gain is reinvested in a Qualified Opportunity Fund. If the investor holds the investment in the Opportunity Fund for at least ten years, the investor would be eligible for an increase in basis equal to the fair market value of the investment on the date that the investment is sold or exchanged. A Qualified Opportunity Fund is an investment vehicle that is set up as either a partnership or corporation for investing in eligible property that is located in an Opportunity Zone and that utilizes the investor’s gains from a prior investment for the Opportunity Fund.

## Development Process Overview

**Preliminary Phase** – Research and preliminary action are key elements to a successful development. During the preliminary phase remember to:

- Check the property deed/title to ensure proper ownership rights and title name.
- Evaluate the general plan, zoning code, demographics, adjacent developments and other relevant data sets.
- Schedule pre-application meetings with Planning, which may include Engineering, Public Works and Economic Development.
- Confer with potential lenders & other financial representatives
- Set up preliminary meetings with the public agencies and any additional stakeholders

**Development Phase** – Develop a plan of action that is project specific, aimed at guiding your project through the entire development process & designed to help you reach you overall goals

- Review the Development Code & Design Guidelines
- Create a schematic design & site plan
- Formally meet with a City Planner to evaluate: uses, standards & level of environmental review
- Develop a working timeline for the project which may include a schedule of fees
- Submit formal application and development plan to the city
- Begin an initial search for reputable licenses contractors

**Approval Phase** – approval phases can vary greatly depending on the project. It is important to work closely with city departments to receive approval from:

- Director of Community Development, Planning Commission or City Council (if necessary).
- Submit construction drawings to plan check once applications are approved
- Submit additional plans to various departments (building & safety, public works, fire etc)
- Obtain permits to begin construction

**Construction Phase** – construction and approval are typically done in tandem. Remember to work closely with you contractor, plan checker and inspector during the final phase of your development.

- Create construction and/or updated project timetable
- Bid project to contractors and/or subcontractors
- Hire a licensed contractor
- Field inspections by city inspectors (building & safety and planning)
- Obtain final occupancy permit...now you're amount the Great Businesses in National City!

## Business Development Resources

The perks of doing business in a Great City – the following are a variety of resources available to you as a business owner or a business looking to expand into National City. Some of them are available citywide, and we want to make sure you know about them.

In addition to the business-focused programs below, the Economic Development office can provide additional targeted services pointing you in the right direction to get your new endeavor up and running.

<p><b>SDSU Small Business Development Consulting</b>          The Aztec Consulting Program connects students with the San Diego business community through its business consulting program. The program’s aim is to pair undergraduate students with small businesses to create actionable solutions based on solid market research.</p> <p>5500 Campanile Drive          San Diego CA 92182          (619) 594-6668</p>	<p><b>San Diego Gas &amp; Electric</b>          The Energy Innovation Center offers training, education and innovation around energy efficiency technologies and green building practices. Attend one of 250 free training classes that showcase some of the most futuristic and innovative technologies in one place.</p> <p>4760 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard          San Diego CA 92117          (800) 644-6133</p>
<p><b>Planning Department – National City</b>          Planning division staff will assist the public with questions relating to the land use code, zoning verification, business licenses, permitting, and application processes for zoning changes.</p> <p>1243 National City Boulevard          National City, CA. 91950-4301          (619) 336-4310</p>	<p><b>Building Division – National City</b>          Building division staff provide applicants with comprehensive direction building modifications. The division performs periodic inspections of all building projects in accordance with approved plans and applicable codes and standards.</p> <p>1234 National City Boulevard          National City, CA 91950          (619) 336-4210</p>
<p><b>Economic Development – National City</b>          The housing and economic development department works to process grants, improve housing conditions and economic prosperity for the city’s residents.</p> <p>140 E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street          National City, CA 91950          (619) 477-3747</p>	<p><b>San Diego County Regional EDC</b>          The EDC assist with expansion plans, programs to help retain business and advocating for policies that enhance the region’s economic competitiveness.</p> <p>530 B. Street          San Diego, CA 92101          (619) 234-8484</p>

<p><b>Southwestern College National City Campus</b>          The Southwest College Higher Education Center at National City was established in 1998 with an enrollment of more than 1,700 students per semester having access to more than 120 courses for those wishing to complete an Associates Degree, take general education classes in preparation to transfer to a 4-year degree program, as well as professional development courses.</p> <p>880 National City Blvd.          National City, CA 91950          (619) 421-6700</p>	<p><b>Small Business Development Center</b>          The SBDC Network is focused on supporting and empowering small businesses. Through a team of professionals, the SBDC promotes economic growth by helping entrepreneurs develop and expand operations. This partnership fosters job creation and retention, capital investments and dynamic innovation that supports a higher quality of life for our community.</p> <p>880 National City Blvd.          National City, CA 91950          (619) 482-6391</p>
<p><b>National City Chamber of Commerce</b>          The Chamber leads public policy discussions and delivers value-added tools aimed at providing a healthy business climate to continue to grow and nurture the small business climate that is the foundation of the City.</p> <p>901 National City Boulevard          National City, CA. 91950-4301          (619) 477-9339</p>	<p><b>South County Economic Development Council</b>          The South County Economic Development Council is a non-profit organization made up of business and community leaders that are promoting education and encouraging economic development in South San Diego County.</p> <p>1111 Bay Blvd. Ste E          Chula Vista, CA 91911          (619) 424-5143</p>

If you have any questions about National City, please feel free to call Megan Gamwell at (619) 336-4216.