Strategic Plan Development with National City, California

Fall 2015 • Public Administration • PA 642

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About the Sage Project

The Sage Project is a partnership between San Diego State University (SDSU) and a city or government entity in the San Diego region. The mission of the program is to engage students from across the University in assisting a local government with projects that address their smart growth, quality of life, and sustainability goals. As part of the Sage Project, students have the opportunity to engage in meaningful real-world projects and make positive contributions to a community in SDSU’s service area. Specifically, the program’s vision is to connect SDSU students and faculty with high-priority, high-need community projects, thereby generating interest and fresh ideas that create momentum and provide a real service to the community. The Sage Project embodies the University’s commitment to serving local students, engaging alumni, and contributing to the public good by focusing thousands of hours of course-based student involvement with high-impact activities. The program is based on the highly successful and award-winning Sustainable City Year Program (SCYP) at the University of Oregon and is a part of the SCYP network. National City, California, is the Sage Project’s partner city for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 academic years. Participating courses come from the following disciplines: Anthropology; Audiology; Child and Family Development; City Planning; Civil Engineering; Communication; Exercise and Nutrition Science; Geography; Graphic Design; Homeland Security; International Security and Conflict Resolution; Marketing; Political Science; Public Administration; Public Health; Recreation and Tourism Management; and Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences.

About National City

National City is a highly urban community of about 60,000 residents in south San Diego County. It is the second oldest city in the county and boasts a rich history, a diverse community, and is known as one of the most walkable cities in San Diego County. Located just south of downtown San Diego and just north of the US-Mexico border, the city is flanked by freeways and is home to large-scale industries. National City is a mid-size city that faces big city challenges, and, like many municipalities, the city is challenged to meet community needs and new demands of sustainability. By providing new ideas and human capacity, this partnership with the Sage Project will help National City implement sustainability concepts and practices into projects that will improve livability.
Executive Summary

Public sector organizations create strategic plans as a public management tool to outline long-term goals and missions for the organization. Most often, strategic plans are created and adopted in conjunction with the city’s annual budget process to ensure that long-term goals correspond with the organization’s financial environment.

National City has experienced economic ups and downs for the past decade, which has impacted the level of service they are able to provide to residents. For example, in 2005 and 2006, the city faced structural budget deficits that led to a reduction in service and service hours offered to residents in addition to the challenges presented by the national recession that occurred in 2009 and the State of California’s dissolution of redevelopment agencies in February 2012 (Comprehensive Annual Financial Report; CAFR, 2014). City management commented that “National City’s Redevelopment Agency was a critical partner in planning and implementing improvements to the city’s infrastructure, as well as in meeting the housing needs for low and moderate income residents, and the loss of it resulted in the loss of millions of dollars in revenue needed to address these priorities” (CAFR, 2014, pg. viii).

To help overcome this economic uncertainty, in 2007, the City Manager’s Office worked with other city departments to create a strategic plan that was adopted in conjunction with the annual budget process to produce a financially feasible long-term strategy for the city. More specifically, the strategic plan states its goals are to:

• Establish a long-range vision and direction for the City;
• Ensure all participants are working toward the same goals and objectives;
• Assess/Adjust the direction of the organization given the current (and changing) environment;
• Communicate goals and initiatives of the organization; and
• Provide a basis for developing a work plan to ensure the goals and initiatives of the Strategic Plan are carried out (CAFR, 2014, pg. viii).

After the first strategic plan was adopted in 2007, the Council has approved an updated plan every two years.

In preparation for the 2015 strategic plan update, National City management collaborated with San Diego State University’s Public Administration graduate students who were enrolled in the upper-division Administrative Theory course. This report outlines the process that took place between the students and city staff as well as the objectives created by the students for each assigned department. These objectives were presented to the City Council for further discussion.
In preparation for the assignment, an organization chart of National City was presented to the students. The organization chart showed that the city manager and city attorney’s offices are central to National City operations. These two offices oversee four categories that, in turn, provide oversight of smaller city departments. The four categories are: Development, Public Safety, Community and Operations. Examples of departments included within the four categories include: the library, human resources and police.

After students were assigned a city department or category, the next step was to review the city staff’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) document. The SWOT was developed by management-level staff within each department and outlines their office’s capabilities and limitations. Students reviewed the documents and provided recommendations for which items could be further developed into objectives that would ultimately be included in the strategic plan.

Once objectives were established, students analyzed the items further by providing an estimated dollar amount needed to implement the objective as well as alternative sources of funding to be considered. Performance and social indicators were also developed so that progress for each objective could be tracked once adopted. This report will outline these objectives and supplemental information that the students created for each department. The objectives were then presented to the City Council for further discussion.
Introduction

This report represents original ideas and research conducted by graduate students of the Master’s of Public Administration Program at San Diego State University. Their ideas were discussed with their assigned National City departments.

The economic outlook for National City has been less than optimal for the past decade. As discussed in the executive summary of this report, state and national events have impacted the city’s ability to provide optimal service levels for its residents. In the wake of these continued budget constraints, city staff decided to utilize the creativity of SDSU’s Public Administration graduate students to explore innovative and cost effective ways to deliver city services and to include these ideas into the 2015 strategic plan update.

This report is organized in the following way: first, information on the State of the City is discussed, which outlines National City’s geographic and current economic situation. The next section of the report includes student analysis of objectives, separated into department information and category information. In the department section, objectives along with financial information and performance trends that were developed by the students will be outlined according to each department.

State of the City

National City is located 5 miles south of downtown San Diego, on San Diego Bay in southern San Diego County, and 10 miles north of Baja California, Mexico. It is bordered by San Diego to the north and east, Chula Vista to the south, the unincorporated areas of Lincoln Acres and Bonita to the south and southeast, and San Diego Bay to the west. National City’s land area is 7.29 square miles, which includes a waterfront (National City, City Overview, 2010).

In 2013, the U.S. Census Bureau recorded the city’s population at 59,834, an increase of 2.1% from 2010. Hispanic or Latino individuals constitute a majority of the population at 63%, Asian and Pacific Islanders at 18.3%, and Whites at 10% (State and County Quick Facts for National City, CA, 2015).

There is a prominent military population in National City with 7,683 service members employed in the city. Industries that have over 500 employees in National City include the Naval Station San Diego, Paradise Valley Hospital, Inc., and the National School District. There are over 3,000 business firms, 40% of which are Hispanic-owned and 20% of which are Asian–owned. It is also home to the Mile of Cars, which sells and services all makes and models of cars, trucks, vans and SUVs (National City, City Overview, 2010).
National City is home to the National City Marine Terminal, which is owned by the San Diego Unified Port District. This busy terminal serves as the primary port of entry for one out of every eight cars imported to the United States (Overview: National City Marine Terminal, 2015). Public transportation includes the Metropolitan Transit System (bus service through the city and adjacent areas) as well as the San Diego Trolley.

National City has a rich historic past as the second oldest city in San Diego Country. It was incorporated in 1887 and many of the historical buildings and architecture from that period still exist today, including the Granger Music Hall, Brick Row on Heritage Square, and the Santa Fe Rail Depot (Historic Sites, 2015).

City operations are delivered through a council-manager form of government. There are five council members who are elected at large for a term of five years. Some of their duties include establishing municipal policies, holding public hearings and reviewing the city’s General Plan. They are also charged with appointing the city manager (Mayor and City Council, 2015).

A summary of National City’s history of implementing strategic plans is provided to provide context for the strategic plan project discussed in this report. The city’s first strategic plan was adopted in 2007 and is updated every two years in conjunction with the budget adoption cycle. During the fiscal year 2014 budget process, city management reviewed and updated the five-year strategic plan. The purpose of the strategic plan is to:

- Establish a long-range vision and direction for the City;
- Ensure all participants are working toward the same goals and objectives;
- Assess/adjust the direction of the organization given the current (and changing) environment;
- Communicate goals and initiatives of the organization; and
- Provide a basis for developing a work plan to ensure the goals and initiatives of the Strategic Plan are carried out (CAFR, 2014, pg. viii).

The five goals of the Fiscal Year 2014-2018 strategic plan are to:

1. Provide quality services
2. Achieve fiscal sustainability
3. Improve quality of life
4. Enhance housing and community assets
5. Promote a Healthy Community (CAFR, 2014, pg. viii)
Strategic plans are useful in providing a roadmap for a city’s future. National City should be commended for consistently creating and updating its strategic plan. This provides transparency for its residents and brings together the municipal workforce. Accomplishing the goals set out in its strategic plan should be considered important for cultivating a thriving future for National City.

**Recommended Objectives and Alternative Sources of Funding for Divisions**

National City’s current Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2014-2018 has five objectives: “to Provide Quality Services, Achieve Fiscal Sustainability, Improve Quality of Life, Enhance Housing and Community Assets and Promote a Healthy Community” (CAFR, 2015, pg. viii). Each division, with the assistance of PA 642 students, determined objectives that would help achieve these citywide goals. While multiple objectives were created for each division, one was chosen and expanded upon for the purposes of this report.

The objectives listed below are separated according to category; however, it is important to note that all divisions work together and therefore, in reality, may cut across category lines. A brief summary of the divisions and work that each performs is introduced below.

Each objective includes a summary of the item, financial information for implementation (if available), alternative funding sources that may be considered, and social and/or performance indicators that could be utilized to help track successful implementation of an objective.

**Development Category - Shannon Callahan**

The Development Category has five divisions: Building & Safety, Planning, Engineering & public works and Housing, Grants, & Assets. Most of the objectives created for these divisions focus on the city’s physical structures and ways in which maintenance and oversight can be improved to achieve monetary savings and efficiency.

**Building and Safety Division - Brittany Bermingham**

Objective: Increase education on the permitting process and improve customer service

Summary: A goal of the building division staff is to provide a streamlined permitting process that provides residents with the best customer service possible while also allowing staff to work efficiently. Better educating residents on the permitting process can help to achieve this objective. The division may choose to mail an educational pamphlet on the permitting process to each resident and business address outlining the permitting process and other frequently asked questions. This informational pamphlet has already been designed by city staff and would therefore only need funding to be mailed.
The division may also choose to provide an outlet for residents to communicate permitting concerns directly with building division staff. For example, we suggest advertising weekly “drop in” times (e.g. 8-11am on Tuesdays) where staff would be available to address in person any customer questions or concerns. Additionally, a link could be placed on the Building Division website linking residents directly to an email interface that would allow them to communicate directly with a member of the staff.

Lastly, we recommend collaborating with National City’s Neighborhood Councils. Building Division staff can attend council meetings and address citizen concerns as well as educate neighborhood council members on the permit process.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: Estimated additional cost for mailing informational pamphlets would be $10,024 (this figure was calculated by taking the total number of housing units and businesses from the latest U.S. Census information and multiplying that number by .49, the current cost of a stamp). Printing costs would be minimal if done in–house.

Possible Social and/or Performance Indicators:

- Amount of time for customer complaints to be addressed
- Number of customer complaints on an annual basis
- Amount of City Council staff time spent addressing residents’ permit and code compliance complaints

Planning Division - Angelica Truong

Objective for Current Planning: Reduce partnering with cities on technological services

Summary: Currently, the city is outsourcing a portion of its technological services to nearby municipalities. Outsourcing is a very common solution to budgeting restrictions in government at all levels. It helps governments cut down on time and money, two main threats the Planning Department is currently facing in both current and advance branches. The City of Chula Vista, for example, is tasked with National City’s permitting and Geographic Information System (GIS) jobs. This GIS application provides staff with a historical collection of zoning compliance maps and the ability to identify a wide range of information on specific parcel numbers. GIS is often a very expensive but necessary application and varies in capabilities. Outsourcing these application products to neighboring Chula Vista has proven to be cost–efficient, but can often be troublesome as the time it takes to make corrections and changes is substantially higher than if the city were to have full control of its own software.

GIS is a tool staff must utilize daily to make informed decisions on development proposals and long-term projects. Outsourcing technology faces a number of risks due to the technology’s critical role in storing and communicating sensitive data and information. Having this dependency on other local governments makes the City vulnerable.
Also, if the City of Chula Vista’s budget falls short or any other applicable external factor makes them unable to provide the technological tools needed by National City, the Planning Department will be at risk of not readily having these services available to the public and its staff.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: The overall objective here is to take back the tasks that are being allocated to neighboring governments and allow for National City to have its own ArcGIS licensing to better perform daily tasks. ArcGIS packages have flexible licensing options that will allow the city to choose what is best for its technology support systems. Licenses range from $5,000 for basic servers to $40,000 for work groups (ArcGIS, 2015). This program is applicable to almost every department dealing with neighborhood services and development. Each department can allocate a part of its budget to ArcGIS and have one shared server per department to cut down on cost.

There are hundreds of businesses developing planning software with flexible price ranges accessible to National City. Each program can be customized to suit the size and needs of the city it is servicing. The department is in need of a cloud–based system where all applications are stored in a library and can be easily accessed for related projects. Municity is one of the most popular applications, and it encompasses a range of vital tools cities need to perform daily tasks and store past projects.

National City’s department heads are given iPads to assist with scheduling, meeting notes, project updates, and communication between consultants, staff, and council members. These tasks can be further organized through the use of a single application to diffuse confusion and manage time efficiently.

Municity can function as both a server and a mobile application to better help staff and managers attain information and record community reports. The functions of this application include, but are not limited to, creating initial reports, generating permits and letters, and tracking all forms and applications being processed throughout all departments. Utilizing Municity or a similar application is a long–range objective for planning department but applies to both current and advance planning as well as other development services departments.

Possible Social and/or Performance Indicators:

- Amount of time it takes to complete planning tasks

Planning Division - Roxanne Reyes

Objective for Advance Planning: Improve quality of life and build better communities

Summary: Embrace cultural diversity in National City and use that to draw more people to the area. Big metropolitan cities such as Los Angeles and New York have Chinatowns with a concentration of Asian businesses and restaurants frequented by locals and tourists alike. National City could create a similar neighborhood for its large Hispanic and Asian population. For example, we recommend creating a “mini Mexico City” or “mini
Manila* where restaurants, grocery stores, antique shops, and cultural centers follow the same theme and give locals a chance to embrace their culture. It could also be a tourist destination that attracts people into the city.

Successful implementation of this concept relies on highlighting the cultures these neighborhoods represent. Organized cultural events, such as the Filipino Independence Day parade/celebration proposed by the housing and community services department, draw attention to these cultures. This proposed celebration could also feature food stands hosted by local restaurants and open up exhibits in the library that showcase artwork by local Filipino artists or projects by students in local schools. They could also screen Filipino movies in a local cinema. A similar event could be organized to celebrate Mexican Independence Day.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: $0, as events could be held using existing city resources.

Possible Social and/or Performance Indicators:

- Percentage of population who report a sense of pride for their community

**Engineering Division/Public Works - Jose Mendoza**

**Objective:** Reduce maintenance costs through division collaboration

**Summary:** Increase coordination between the Public Works Division and Engineering Division to help reduce future maintenance costs. Saving on maintenance costs could be tackled at the design stage of future projects and infrastructure. A procedure or policy could be established to highlight the steps and action items necessary for designing future projects. In this procedure there would be a checklist of topics that need to be discussed to ensure maintenance costs are kept at a minimum. The collaboration for these discussions would be among the Engineering and Public Works Divisions of the department. To be more specific, engineers designing the projects would work with the various maintenance staff in the Public Works Division. The staff that they work with would depend on the type of project that is being designed. For instance, when designing streets, curb ramps and sidewalks, an employee who maintains the right of way or street maintenance employee should be consulted.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: No initial cost, but departments could see significant cost savings

Possible Social and/or Performance Indicators:

- Amount of money saved through collaboration
- Amount of time it takes to complete public works projects
- Resident satisfaction with public work projects
Housing, Grants and Assets, Housing/Section 8 - Sarah Koop

Objective: Introduce specific Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) practices to promote efficiency and sustainability within renovations as well as within new developments; seek out grants that are specific to sustainable efforts.

Summary and estimated cost: $350,000. This price was estimated by assuming that each of the 1044 families served last year would be provided with a new Energy Star refrigerator. The cost of refrigerators was based on prices on the Home Depot website (Home Depot Shop by Department, 2015), which includes the $50.00 rebate offered through Energy Star (Energy Star, 2015).

Alternative funding source: According to Energy Star, a certified refrigerator can save between $35-$300 dollars each year in energy costs. If each of the 1044 families served last year were provided with a new Energy Star refrigerator, the City of National City could save between $36,500-$313,200 each year in energy costs (Energy Star, 2015). Additional energy saving strategies can be found through implementing U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Energy Strategy plan (Implementing HUD’s Energy Strategy, 2015). Additionally, grant funds may be available in 2016 through the Affordable Green Neighborhoods Grant Program. This grant would provide educational resources for development projects and affordable housing developments that utilize LEED certifications (Affordable Green Neighborhood Grants Program, 2015).

Possible Social and/or Performance Indicators:

• Program participants’ financial stability in regards to their ability to pay utility bills
• Energy use of each program participant
• City’s power usage

Community Category - Elisa Villarreal

With a broad set of missions, the divisions within the Community category are focused on delivering high quality customer service to the residents of National City. There are many ways the needs and objectives of these divisions overlap. Acknowledging these overlaps could allow the city staff to work more efficiently and, in turn, strengthen their work. Within this category, we can strive to increase community involvement, develop programs that enhance community safety, and explore relationships that enrich the lives of community residents.

Library-Deanna Wolf

Objective: Encourage the use of the library as a community gathering space

Summary and estimated costs: The Volunteer Appreciation Event has helped achieve this objective. This event was held in April to thank all library volunteers for their service and dedication.
It was located at the library and approximately seventy people attended. The Library Secretary and Literacy Services technician coordinated the event.

Cost for food was between $600-$700, with supplies totaling $150 and $100 for entertainment. Therefore, holding an event such as this again would cost the library between $850 and $950 dollars.

Also, we suggest that the library report maintenance issues to Public Works and other departments, conduct daily walk-throughs, and track maintenance requests through to completion. These tasks have been added to the work plan of the library secretary; therefore, there is no additional cost to the National City Public Library other than staff hours included in the secretary’s salary.

Furthermore, we recommend promoting the library as a community gathering space by increasing library safety and security. The library staff has decided the most effective means of doing so is to hire a part-time security guard. The average wage for a guard in the San Diego is $14.00 per hour. If a security guard were hired 15 hours per week, the cost would amount to $210 per week, or approximately $10,920 per year.

Finally, the library could raise user awareness of rules and regulations among library patrons. This goal cannot be quantified in terms of cost, as the goal is interpreted as a job responsibility for all library staff.

Alternative Funding Source: Grants are the most likely source of additional funding for the library. The American Library Association is a great resource when looking for funding. One such grant that might be of interest to the Literacy Services team is the Pitch an Idea Grant, in which the library presents a project idea along with the outline for a budget. The Literacy Services division has several great project ideas in the works, including a Professional Development and Computer Skills program for library users looking to apply for work. The Pitch an Idea Grant could also apply to Literacy Services’ project to distribute laptops, Kindles, and iPads to tutors and participants to improve learning.

Possible Social and/or Performance Indicators:

- Residents' attendance at community events
- Number of residents seeking out city-implemented programs

Neighborhood Services - Helen Gao

Objective: Reduce code violations through activities that build community pride/ ownership

Summary: Some cities have organized community cleanups/beautification efforts as a way to improve the appearance of dilapidated neighborhoods. Cleanups bring together neighbors to remove trash and eradicate blight. These activities encourage residents to take charge and take pride in the appearance of their neighborhood.
To further reduce neighborhood code violations, such as land use, property appearance, parking, graffiti and homelessness, the city could establish a program to recognize homeowners/businesses owners who make significant efforts to improve the appearance of their property.

Additionally, home improvement stores, such as Lowe’s and Home Depot, could be recruited to provide small gift cards as rewards.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: $0; to be done through existing resources

Possible Social and/or Performance Indicators:

- Number of permits issued by the city for home improvement projects
- Decrease in graffiti in public spaces

Community Services - Minerva Abikhalil

Objective: Enhance and expand community service through an improved citywide volunteer program that recognizes commitment

Summary: Collaborate with Human Resources Department to streamline the on-boarding process for recruiting volunteers. Raise awareness, start a dialogue, and eventually incorporate these ideas into the budget. Some suggestions include:

- Expand youth volunteer program by partnering with Sweetwater High School
- Develop a volunteer recognition program, which includes a Volunteer Appreciation Day
- Collaborate with the Navy for volunteer services

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: Volunteer fingerprinting currently costs the city $35 per person, but a volunteer’s time and commitment is worth much more than that. Purchasing t-shirts to help distinguish individual volunteers would present an additional cost, estimated at around $10 a person. A part-time (3/4) staff member will be needed to manage all the volunteers and develop their training with an estimated annual salary of $21,000. A Volunteer Appreciation Day can easily be budgeted under $2,000, with the help of sponsorships and grants. American Express offers a grant, titled Encouraging Community Service Where Our Employees and Customers Live and Work, that could help finance this objective.

Possible Social and/or Performance Indicators:

- Percentage of residents who express pride in their city
- Increased community presence at library, parks, and community centers
Housing, Grants and Assets, Nutrition Center - Shelby Gomez

Objective: Improve the Nutrition Center and food procurement by analyzing food procurement processes for efficiency and cost, improving and upgrading the Nutrition Center facility, and pursuing green initiatives for a more sustainable city.

Summary: Increase food system efficiency and sustainability and seek opportunities to decrease food costs. Engage the San Diego Food Systems Alliance, the San Diego Hunger Coalition, or a similar organization to help the Nutrition Center ensure greater efficiency and sustainability in its food procurement practices and reduce food costs. Identify opportunities for local food procurement to support local businesses, such as procuring foods from Olivewood Gardens or supporting community gardens.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: Resource needs would be in the areas of staff time and, potentially, consultant time, depending on the types of projects pursued. An investment of approximately $100,000 or less would likely return a useful analysis/plan and facilitate initial connections. Alternative sources of funding may include the following:

- USDA Agricultural Marketing Service provides funding through the Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP). Information at http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/FMPP.
   The goals of FMPP grants are to increase domestic consumption of, and access to, locally and regionally produced agricultural products and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets. This is achieved by developing, improving, expanding, and providing outreach, training, and technical assistance to, or assisting in the development, improvement, and expansion of domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. The maximum amount awarded for any one proposal cannot exceed $100,000; the minimum award is $15,000.

   The Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program (CFP) awards grants to eligible nonprofits, tribal organizations, and food program service providers to promote self-sufficiency and food security, address specific needs, and provide comprehensive, community-based solutions in low-income communities. Projects vary in scope, ranging from community gardens with market stands to marketing and consumer cooperatives, but must involve low-income participants. The maximum award is $250,000.

- Assistance with community gardening is available through the San Diego Community Garden Network. Information at http://www.sdcgn.org/resources/startyourgarden/.
Possible Social and/or Performance Indicators:

- Amount of public funding spent on food costs overall and per meal served
- Proportion of Nutrition Center food served from local farms
- Maintenance and growth of local agricultural industry
- Amount and location of spaces for free and low-cost community gardening
- Food travel distances
- Rates of combined food procurement across National City programming
- Food manufacturing waste produced
- Rates of water usage
- Rates of energy usage
- Senior satisfaction with and enjoyment of the Nutrition Center facility

Police (Community) - Rene Velazquez

Objective: Enhance housing and community assets in the National City Police Department (NCPD) and provide a crime free multi-housing program.

Summary: Implementation of a crime free multi-housing program to create new avenues for partnership with the rental property community and prevent crime on the micro-neighborhood level.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: The cost for this component is estimated at $2800 to create around 100 signs for the crime free program that would last the NCPD at least a couple of years.

Possible Social and/or Performance Indicators:

- Number of crimes reported in an area where the new methods of policing have been implemented.

Police (Community) - Moretza Duque

Objective: Establish and develop new partnerships with community organizations for the efficient and cost-effective delivery of services.

Summary: The NCPD could host a Citizen's Academy, which could target community organizations that aid the department’s future projects. These programs are intended to open the lines of communication between the community and the police department and produce informed residents. Citizen’s Academies are normally held across several weeks.
Cost and Alternative Funding Source: The cost to the department includes materials for each day of the academy. These required materials would be food, handouts, and supplies for presentation materials. The total cost is estimated at about $1,500. However, hosting a Citizen’s Academy would also be an investment in potential donors. The academy will target community organizations that could become donors to the NCPD. As such, the academy is a way for the department to obtain outside funds that could be used to fund other projects.

Possible Social Indicators:

- Amount of donors that the department is able to gain after the implementation of a Citizen’s Academy
- Improvement in residents’ attitudes towards police

Public Safety Category - Ben House

The work of the divisions within the Public Safety category, Police, Fire and Neighborhood Services, hinges on providing the best possible customer service to the community. For Police and Fire, a negative public perception would hinder their ability to carry out their service to the city. Thus, in order to maintain and foster a positive public image, these divisions are utilizing a new take on community relations through education programs, community and homeless outreach, updated codes, and tools leading to higher customer satisfaction.

Police (Safety) - Erin Jones

Objective: Craft an employee development plan to ensure an effective team through resources and support

Summary: Create a Crime Prevention Specialist position. This individual would be the primary coordinator for the community programming that the Command staff desires as well as for the proposals outlined in the proposed strategic plan.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: Based on the salary for a twotier Crime Prevention Specialist position at the City of La Mesa, the new position would range between $37,000-$54,000. An additional $3,000 in training and $3,000 in supplies would be needed to support the position. However, the initial training costs would be higher for an entry-level position. If an experienced Specialist could be hired, this cost would be less. Besides the costs for printing handouts and publications on information and programming, giveaways take up a majority of the supplies budget. Giveaways, such as NCPD-branded pens, stickers, and other novelty items are already a part of the department’s budget. Financing for this position could be obtained through a grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance.
Currently, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) has a Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program grant available for application. This grant seeks to provide up to $175,000 to underserved communities that need assistance implementing programs that reduce or prevent crime. Given the desire for staffing across city departments, this grant could finance the Crime Prevention Specialist position to implement the recommendations concerning prevention in the strategic plan and facilitate the grant, leaving city funds to other Departments.

Possible Social Indicators:

- Individual sense of personal empowerment a resident has after the Specialist helps address a problem in the community

  - For example, when a residence is being used for drug sales, residents may be hesitant to call the police in fear of retribution. However, the Crime Prevention Specialist can hold safety meetings with the affected residents and instruct them on how to anonymously call the NCPD to report crimes in progress or provide tips to investigators. The more information a neighborhood is given about how they can help themselves combat issues of crime in their neighborhood, the more they are likely to feel confident enough to stand up for their community and take action. The position serves as a liaison for the community with the Department to promote partnerships with residents. From taking civil action to simply calling the police, informed residents become empowered residents.

**Fire Department- Eric Roark**

**Objective:** Fill overhead positions

**Summary:** The National City Fire Department currently runs on a minimum staffing formula of three firefighter paramedics per engine and four firefighter paramedics per Truck Company. The city has two fire pumper engines and one quintuple combination pumper or “quint.” This means, at any given time, due to the minimum staffing formula, the department needs to have 10 active fire fighters on duty and one battalion chief as supervisor. This equals eleven people per shift for three shifts, which totals 33. The current makeup of the NCFD includes only the fire chief and four battalion chiefs. Comparing these numbers to the makeup of the National City Police Department (NCPD), the other public safety portion of the city, the difference is notable. The police department has four lieutenants, which are equivalent to the battalion chiefs and two captains. Police department captains are senior level management positions and insulate the police chief from some of the ancillary duties of his department. In contrast, the fire chief does not have any of these options available to him. Additionally, not only does the fire chief run the fire department, but he is also responsible for the building department. Although not the building official for the city, he is officially the department head for all building matters in the City of National City. Because of the extensive responsibilities placed on the fire chief, we recommend hiring a Fire Department Division Chief.
Cost and Alternative Funding Source: The average salary for this position across various cities in the county is $63 dollars an hour. Taking into consideration California Public Employees Retirement (CalPERS) costs and fringe benefits, this position is estimated to cost approximately $216,376. Because this would be a general fund employee, there are not many ways to secure alternative funding sources for this position. This position would be pure overhead for the department.

Possible Social and/or Performance Indicators:

- How safe do the residents feel with a well-trained fire department

Neighborhood Services (Code Compliance)- Helen Gao

Objective: Expand code enforcement staffing (add one full-time position) to address homelessness and enforce business tax

Summary: While Neighborhood Services plays a key role in addressing public health and safety issues as well as community complaints related to homelessness, the division currently does not have any staffing allocated for that purpose.

For the FY 2015-2016, Neighborhood Services is requesting funding for a full-time code conformance officer to coordinate encampment cleanups, such as posting cleanup notices and inventorying items that are gathered during the cleanups. Under a city policy in effect since 2011, notices are posted 72 hours in advance of cleanups. During cleanups, items deemed to be worth $20 or less are discarded. Items that exceed the $20 threshold are inventoried and stored for up to 90 days to give owners the opportunity to reclaim them.

In addition to being in charge of homeless encampment cleanups, this person would assist the Finance Department with enforcing the city’s business license regulations and business taxes. Currently, the Finance Department does not have field personnel to follow up on delinquent notices. This position could be funded partially with the money recovered from delinquent accounts.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: $47,437.00 (Salary) + $31,238.15 (Benefits) = $78,675.15

Social and/or Performance Indicators:

- Number of individuals who identify themselves as homeless
- Number of resident complaints regarding homeless population
- Amount of business license delinquent notices
- Amount of business tax revenue collected annually
Operations Category - June Cabatu

The divisions within the Operations category often do not provide direct services to the public, but instead perform internal services for city divisions. The divisions within this category include: the City Clerk, Finance, Human Resources and Information Technology (IT). Many of the objectives provided are based on the assumption that city employees are committed to improving the quality of and amount of government services to the public and that making these improvements would require work beyond the normal 40-hour work week as well as additional employee job responsibilities.

City Clerk - Alec Morgan

Objective: Strengthen records management system

Summary: First, integrate imaging methods throughout the city divisions so each division is responsible for digitizing their own documents and storing them in the centralized database. Second, better assist the public with public records requests and provide a database search tool for public use on the city website. Finally, hire interns to assist in digitizing historic documents, which have piled up over time, to allow the clerk to focus on necessary process improvements.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: There are possible grant opportunities to assist in municipal archival projects. The U. S National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), provides grant funding for records management in partnership with State Historical Records Advisory Boards. In California, the funds go through the California Historical Records Advisory Board, which determines the grant proposals that will receive funding.

Possible Social Indicators:

- Amount of time needed to provide public records to the public

City Clerk - Heather Reynolds

Objective: Expand existing technological platforms to increase efficiency

Summary: This would include utilizing the already established National City website. The City Clerk’s Office can collaborate with the IT department to best incorporate an updated search engine and records management addition to the National City website. The community already uses this website tool to connect with its local government and this office should take advantage of it. This could be the main avenue for accessing information, which would greatly lessen in-person requests and make the process more efficient. The person seeking a document can instantly access the records, and the records manager will not have to stop his current projects to locate the information. The website could also be used as a tool to include the community in city council meetings. We suggest the live streaming of city council meetings.
Cost and Alternative Funding: Since we are using an already established resource, the costs are minimal to none.

Social and Performance Indicators:

- Increase in website traffic

**Finance - Sara Krietor**

Objective: Incorporate service and long-term solvency ratios into the department’s monthly reports; and publishing these ratios

Summary: This information would add a needed social element to financial reporting and inform residents of the Finance Department’s role in providing services. Like service solvency, indicators of long-term solvency are critical to the wellbeing of residents and the provision of their future services. Incorporating long-term solvency into biannual or even monthly financial reports (besides the CAFR) could help residents better understand the role long-term fiscal sustainability plays in providing necessary services.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: Utilization of current resources with minimal cost to city.

Possible Social Indicators:

- Citizen understanding of the financial state of their city
- Citizen satisfaction with information provided about the financial state of city

**Finance - Sarah March**

Objective: Acquire collection agency services

Summary: Many businesses in National City are not renewing their business licenses; Hiring a collection agency to enforce those licenses and obtain the required fees (and possibly late charges) could potentially bring in money.

A regular business license for a business located and doing business in National City costs $100, and it must be renewed annually. Once issued a license, many businesses are choosing not to renew them even though they are still conducting business because there is no enforcement occurring. The general assumption is that a business may have shut down if their license is not renewed, but this is not always the case. Although identifying business that are operation on an expired license would require investigation, the resultant encouragement to renew business licenses would bring in funds as businesses paid their renewal fees. Adding a collection agency to this formula would bring in additional funds in the form of late fees.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: Currently, the number of businesses operating without a license has not been identified; thus, there is not yet enough data to estimate potential costs or revenue.
Possible Social Indicators:
- Satisfaction of residents with Finance Department services
- Residents' perception of transparency in money collection and spending.

**Human Resources - Jessica Matias**

Objective: Create an internal succession plan

Summary: The benefit of an internal succession planning program is that employees are being trained to fill positions as they come available, shaping an employee to be the “right fit” for a specific position, as well as motivating employees and keeping morale high because employees are receiving desirable training that can help in furthering their future careers.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: Internal Succession planning essentially has no true monetary cost. However, the biggest cost for the department may be the time investment in the creation of programs and implementing those programs for internal succession planning. The creation of a mentor program calls on upper management and supervisors to take on a mentor role and commit part of their time to helping their mentee develop professionally to be able to fill positions with more responsibility as employees are promoted. Allocating time from work to a mentee can be challenging when staffing is limited and employees have heavy workloads.

Possible Social Indicators: The director explained that it would be better to determine social indicators, not with the department, but with the client departments that human resources works with. Because human resources assists other departments with their goals and objectives, such as developing training programs and improving workflow processes, we should look at the objectives of those departments as well. If those departments are reaching their goals, and their social indicators are showing improvement, then the objectives for human resources are being achieved.

**Human Resources - Sarah Gould**

Objective: Conduct an analysis of the Human Resources staff workflow procedures

Summary: We recommend that the Human Resources Department begin to analyze how staff workloads are completed on a day–to–day basis. A survey could be administered to employees to determine how different tasks are being tackled and prioritized. This information could help management begin discussing with staff how to reprioritize and approach work in a more efficient manner. With today’s technology, surveys could easily be created online and administered in a convenient, timely matter.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: This is a time commitment rather than a direct investment of funds. Therefore, the cost is heavily weighted on the time obligation of the management to develop these surveys and for employees to complete them. Once the
surveys are complete, additional time must then be spent analyzing the information and implementing the necessary changes.

Possible Social Indicators:

- Measuring the amount of staff time saved completing common human resource job tasks, including posting job openings, conducting initial interviews and providing orientation for newly hired employees

Information Technology (IT) - Alan Gonzales

Objective: Expand public access to city services and information, including a legislative platform consistent with City Council policy

Summary: IT has many tools available that present a major opportunity for this division to further the city. Taking advantage of increasing access to the internet, simple forms could be incorporated into the National City website that allow access to city services, providing much more rapid access to a broader range of information through the website. After providing online access to these services, we also suggest that the city take steps to generate awareness of the availability of this information. If the system is easy to use and initial awareness is established, we expect word of mouth to disseminate this information across National City’s population.

Cost and Alternative Funding Source: Minimal. Use of existing city resources

Possible Social Indicator

- Website traffic
- Resident attendance and participation at city council meetings

Conclusion

National City management and staff are moving toward a more economically sound environment by developing a strategic plan every two years and reviewing it annually. This has allowed city staff in all divisions to work in an efficient and effective manner towards common goals, which includes understanding budget and staffing limitations.

To supplement the strategic plan, this report provided unique objectives that divisions could adopt to improve operations in National City. By developing a partnership between San Diego State University graduate students and city staff, feasible objectives were discussed and created. It is innovative partnerships such as this that will allow National City to continue an upward financial trajectory and provide the best possible services to its current and future residents.