

Start Up Guide

Brought to you by the
Economic Prosperity Council

01 Put Your Passion Into Action

Congratulations! You have a brilliant business idea and have decided to do business in Atascadero.

01

02 Develop A Plan

- ▶ **Business Plan**
Create a plan to determine your concept's viability (see sample business plan and/or talk to the Chamber, SCORE, or MCSC).
- ▶ **Community Demographics and Data**
Study the Chamber's economic data web page and understand how this information might affect your business.
- ▶ **Consult and Seek an Accountant**
regarding business viability and your entity type - (LLC, S-Corp, B-Corp, Sole Proprietor).
- ▶ **Secure Financing**
(see SCORE, MCSC, SBA)
- ▶ **Analyze and Prepare** a Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis.

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03 Tackle The Basics

- ▶ **Bank Account**
Open a separate business bank account (a business license and tax ID will be needed).
- ▶ **Establish the Following**
 - ♦ Business email
 - ♦ Internet domain name

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04 Find A Location

- ▶ **Consult with a Commercial**
Real Estate Broker for potential locations for your business.
- ▶ **Utilize the Business Directory** in this publication. It will help you find a qualified broker.
- ▶ **Visit www.atascaderochamber.org/economic-development/** for an interactive property locator tool.
- ▶ **Very Important!** Before you sign a lease, call the Community Development Department to find out if the zoning for the property allows for your planned use or if it requires a Use Permit.

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05 Complete The City Start-Up Check List

- ▶ Make sure you have the necessary licenses and permits in place.
- ▶ Use the City Business Checklist located below.

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☑ City Business Checklist

- Finalize your Business Plan.**
- Determine if you need a Fictitious Business Name.**
If so, post a legal notice in a local publication. Call Atascadero News at (805) 466-2585.
- Determine if you need a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) from the Federal Government.**
A free service.
- Does your business have employees?**
Obtain a CA Employer's ID Number.
- Identify your preferred business location.**
Before signing your lease, confirm if your business is allowed in the property's zoning district. Contact the Community Development Department at (805) 461-5035.

07 Create A Website & Marketing Plan

- ▶ **Website Presence** is critical for business. Google is looking for you and social media presence is not enough.
- ▶ **Brand Recognition** and messaging is essential for business. Create a marketing plan that gets results.
- ▶ **Contact the Atascadero Chamber of Commerce** who can refer credible experts to assist with your website and marketing needs.

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06 Get Insured

Secure an **Insurance Agent/ Broker** to obtain appropriate business insurance such as worker's compensation, unemployment, and disability insurance (if you plan to have employees and if applicable).

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08 Join The Chamber

- ▶ **Business Plan**
Opening a new business can be exciting and overwhelming.
- ▶ **Join the Atascadero Chamber of Commerce** to meet a network of local business professionals who have gone through the startup process and can offer support.
- ▶ **The Chamber** offers networking, exposure, advocacy, and credibility. Call the Chamber at (805) 466-2044 or visit www.atascaderochamber.org to learn more about the valuable benefits of membership.

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09 Open Your Doors For Business

- ▶ **It's Time to Celebrate!**
- ▶ **Open Your Doors.**
Customers are waiting.

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10 Get Involved

Once you have settled in, get involved by participating on one of the Chamber's councils or committees.

They have:

- ♦ Board of Directors
- ♦ Diversity Council
- ♦ Ambassador Council
- ♦ Economic Prosperity Council
- ♦ Legislative Affairs Council
- ♦ Wine Festival Committee

Visit www.atascaderochamber.org to learn more.

Apply for formal Zoning Approval with the City of Atascadero Community Development Department.

Obtain a Seller's Permit, if applicable.

Other agency approvals may apply such as:

- ♦ County Public Health for restaurants
- ♦ Alcohol Beverage Control for drinking establishments

Do you plan on doing any Tenant Improvements or construction?

Discuss potential plans with the City. Submit a Building Permit Application. Contact the Community Development Department at (805) 461-5035.

One month prior to opening your business, apply for a City Business License.