

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

09 Open Your Doors For Business

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

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).

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.

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.

✓ City Business Checklist

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|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finalize your Business Plan. | <input type="checkbox"/> Does your business have employees?
<i>Obtain a CA Employer's ID Number.</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Apply for formal Zoning Approval with the City of Atascadero Community Development Department. | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you plan on doing any Tenant Improvements or construction?
<i>Discuss potential plans with the City. Submit a Building Permit Application. Contact the Community Development Department at (805) 461-5035.</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Determine if you need a Fictitious Business Name.
<i>If so, post a legal notice in a local publication. Call Atascadero News at (805) 466-2585.</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Identify your preferred business location.
<i>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.</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain a Seller's Permit, if applicable. | <input type="checkbox"/> One month prior to opening your business, apply for a City Business License. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Determine if you need a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) from the Federal Government.
<i>A free service.</i> | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other agency approvals may apply such as:
•County Public Health for restaurants
•Alcohol Beverage Control for drinking establishments | |