National City
Marina District

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This report represents original student work and recommendations prepared by students in San Diego State University’s Sage Project for the City of National City. Text and images contained in this report may not be used without permission from the San Diego State University.
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Special thanks are also due to those interviewed, who contributed to the overall content of the class project:

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- Moe Sadighian, General Manager of Goodies Bar & Grill
- Richard A. Kabbany and Noel Kabbany, Managers of Ethnic Deli & Cafe
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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; Mechanical Engineering; Political Science; Public Administration; Public Health; Real Estate and Finance; 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.
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Executive Summary

SDSU students conducted a Sustainability Gap (SGAP) Assessment report to identify improvement strategies for the "assessed" establishments in the City of National City. The assessed establishments where the Best Western Plus Marina Gateway Hotel, Goodies Bar & Grill, The Pier 32 Marina, and Ethnic Deli and Café. The overall goal of this Sustainability Assessment assignment is long-term, mainly focusing on a strategy and best practices for the development of a possible "Green Tourism Corridor" in National City, which might also be of branding interest to National City’s Tourism Marketing District (TMD).

Students followed the ABCD Method to applying the Natural Step Framework that consists of four steps which are repeated as an organization progresses toward sustainability. The four steps are as follows: Awareness and Visioning, Baseline Mapping, Creative Solutions, and Deciding on Priorities (The Natural Step, 2011). The following student-recommended solutions were designed to meet criteria for the Sustainable Tourism Eco-certification Program (STEP).

Recommendations made for the Best Western Plus Marina Gateway Hotel and Goodies Bar & Grill include creating a written energy reduction plan and providing the means for clients to contribute to local or international conservation-based initiatives. Both businesses demonstrate a good understanding of sustainability and its implications. Goodies Bar & Grill also expressed interest in creating an on-site vegetable garden but lacked a written plan. Students responded by providing specific instruction for building a raised bed for a vegetable garden.

In addition, The Waterfront Grill at Pier 32 and Ethnic Deli and Café have to work on creating a business plan that provides the means for employees and management to encompass a common vision for their businesses. The plan needs to follow the SMART principles (sustainable, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based), which are key to reaching a successful management target. Along with the business plan, the establishment of a green team that will carry out the vision of sustainability and execute the “green” policies is essential. These and other recommendations bring the assessed businesses closer to the STEP Eco-certification Program.
Introduction

The National City Chamber of Commerce and the National City Tourism Marketing District (TMD) partnered with the San Diego State University (SDSU) L. Robert Payne School of Hospitality and Tourism Management to conduct a Sustainability Assessment of one service-industry cluster of tourism establishments within the Marina district. This project was conducted in partnership with the City of National City and SDSU course Recreation and Tourism Management (RTM) 470, titled, "Global Sustainable Tourism Management," under the instruction of Dr. Vinod Sasidharan. Pre-assigned student groups in RTM 470 were responsible for assessing each of the tourism establishments in the Marina District service-industry cluster of National City, California, during the fall of 2014.

The partnership with SDSU provided National City with the baseline assessment necessary to identify future opportunities in sustainable tourism development, such as planning and marketing for tourism, corporate social responsibility, ecotourism, cultural tourism, and "green" tourism.

Sustainable Tourism Eco-Certification Program (STEP)

The Sustainable Tourism Eco-Certification Program, or STEP, is a guide that sets sustainable standards that are applicable to all businesses. Each tourism business sector is then provided an additional set of criteria most applicable to its scope of operations. Enrollment in the program forces businesses to measure their impacts, identify their priorities, and invest in real and tangible change. According to the Sustainable Travel International company’s website, “throughout the program, businesses will develop policies and action plans in areas relevant to their industry, staff, and guests” (Sustainable Travel International).

Figure 1 STEP
Best Western Plus Marina Gateway Hotel

![Best Western Plus Marina Gateway Hotel](image)

**Figure 2** Best Western Plus Marina Gateway Hotel

**Background**

According to their website “The Best Western Plus Marina Gateway Hotel is a brand new hotel, with 149 rooms and 24 suites all nicely decorated and equipped with the latest technology that a savvy business - leisure traveler expects. The Hotel’s rooms are accessed through interior corridors, some rooms with private balcony. The hotel has a restaurant and sports bar on site for guests to unwind. Some of the amenities the hotel has to offer include a meeting room that can accommodate up to 250 people, outdoor pool and spa, fitness center and guest laundry facility. Free ample parking is available for hotel guests. Hotel shuttle service is available to and from the red trolley station for easy access to downtown San Diego and other local attractions.” (Best Western California)

**Awareness and Visioning**

At the time of the assessment, October through December 2014, the hotel was heading in the direction of more sustainable practices. As a franchised hotel, however, their vision of sustainability was limited mostly to regulations that translated into economic gains. In addition, the organization must comply with the owners’ vision for the hotel, which may be compromised by drastic change. The organization has to consider input from several different parties when making a decision and ultimately must be approved by the management company, CHM Hotels. Department leaders were trained to follow the company’s vision of sustainability, and it was found that the housekeeping department had the greatest responsibility because they handle day-to-day demands on energy and water consumption.
Baseline

Current status of Best Western Plus Marina Gateway Hotel regarding STEP criteria

1. Energy Reduction Plan
   a. The hotel documents the annual electricity and fuel used for its operations
   b. No documented Energy Reduction Policy
   c. Light Bulbs were changed to LED bulbs from the brand U.S. Green Lighting
   d. Used the money from the SDG&E grant, to replace the thermostats to a centralized digital system that is able to monitor the electricity in the rooms
   e. Time set on the Jacuzzi
   f. Swimming pool is covered at night so no heating is wasted
   g. Long-term goal of Best Western Brand to switch to solar panels

2. Supply Chain Management – Paper
   a. No paper reduction pledge
   b. No records of non-recycled paper purchases and quantity purchased
   c. No sample of purchased recycled/post-consumer paper

3. Recycling/Reuse
   a. No documented Waste and Recycling Policy with company procedures
   b. No report of the total cubic volume (or weight) of the various recyclable and compostable materials being reused or recycled
   c. In the office, paper is separated from other waste for recycling.
   d. Utilizes Fresh Blanket and Pillow Wraps from the brand True North made from 100% recycled materials
   e. Towels are from the brand True North and are produced from a regenerated cotton with a return program available if necessary.
   f. Outdoor benches and bed legs are made from 100% recycle materials

4. Philanthropy – Environment
   a. No conservation-based pledge; clients are not aware of possible donations to local or international conservation initiatives
5. Water Consumption and Management
   a. No documented Water Conservation Policy to conserve water and identify areas where water can be conserved
   b. In process of replacing toilets and shower heads to low stream throughout the facility to reduce water consumption
   c. Plants for decoration are low-watering and live in water-saving containers
   d. Signs have been placed at strategic locations to educate guests on water-saving practices for changing sheets and towels.

6. Chemical Management System
   a. Hotel documents all chemicals/cleaning supplies on site and determines which ones are toxic and which are non-toxic
   b. Use of eco-labeled detergents to prevent pollution
   c. O-Zone washing system to clean carpets, and steam
   d. Eco-Lab is used for laundry and cleaning
   e. Complimentary soap is eco-friendly

7. Philanthropy - Social/Cultural
   a. Hotel sponsors local high school volleyball teams and the La Mesa Golf Tournament
   b. Part of the National City Chamber of Commerce
   c. Hotel donates to mesothelioma foundations, as they work closely with the Pipe and Plumbers Union, many of whose members have contracted the disease though asbestos in buildings
   d. They pledge every year to donate to the Mariachi Festival and offer part of their parking lot for its visitors

8. Business Plan
   a. No written mission statement or code of conduct pledge for on-site management or off-site tourism activities
   b. No evidence that the pledge is being communicated to employees

9. Sustainability Policy, Benchmarks, and Transparency
   a. No written sustainability policy that serves as a vision, goals, or framework for sustainability initiatives
10. Protecting the Area
   a. No written pledge regarding how the business communicates to guests a "do not harm" code of conduct which relates to the surrounding areas, cultural sites, and/or protected areas.

11. Client Education Regarding Sustainability
   a. No evidence of how the hotel promotes the principles of sustainable tourism through its marketing materials and web site

12. Use of Feedback
   a. Hotel collects customer feedback and has a system for documenting the feedback
   b. Has a Yelp and TripAdvisor review page

13. Environmental, Health, and Safety Regulation
   a. Hotel maintains up-to-date environmental, health and safety, operational permits/licenses, and approvals as required by state and city law.

14. Fair Labor Practices
   a. Business has a Fair Labor Policy, conforms to local labor laws and meets or exceeds minimum wages for all salaried employees.

15. Green Team
   a. No employee assigned to oversee the company’s sustainability initiatives and health- and safety-related policies

16. Regulatory Compliance
   a. Business is not directly or indirectly involved in a dispute regarding environmental, socio-cultural, or economic regulation
   b. 100% smoke-free hotel

17. Supply Chain Management - Policies
   a. Business does not have written guidelines regarding its supply chain purchases that include increasing the amount of locally-source, recycled, fair trade, and/or eco-friendly products purchased annually

18. GHG Emissions and Offsets
   a. Business does not document its total net annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions using a nationally or internationally accepted GHG calculator or protocol
19. Pollution Prevention - Vehicles
   a. No written pledge to reduce motorized vehicle usage
   b. Shuttle service to and from the red trolley station

20. Economic Development
   a. No written local community and economic development pledge

   a. Company does not jeopardize access to basic provisions for those within
      the immediate and neighboring communities
   b. No written basic provision pledge
Recommendation 1

Energy Reduction Plan

The hotel had no documented energy reduction plan; however, several sustainable actions were taking place at the time of the assessment. The greatest environmental and financial benefits from sustainability policies are achieved by monitoring utility bills and effectively training and providing incentives for staff to use energy efficiently. Moreover, technological advances make it possible to reduce energy usage. Students presented several up-to-date devices that require minimal electrical consumption to operate and can work for the benefit of the hotel as tools to achieve the targets of the energy reduction plan. The following are practical and convenient devices for the hotel staff to consider:

- To reduce energy costs from rooms:
  - A key card system that turns off electricity in guest rooms reduces energy waste. According to the findings by students, the Smart Card hotel energy savings device ESS30 from Alibaba (See figure: Key Card) saves up to 30% of energy consumption in guest rooms and has a cost range from $10-$25 per device. The device operates by turning on the lights and other electrical functions by inserting the room card and deactivating everything once the card is removed.

![Key Card](image)

Figure 3 Key Card
• To reduce energy cost from parking lot:
  • Another alternative is the installation of motion-sensor lighting. This type of lighting will greatly reduce the amount of energy wasted from guests who leave the lights on when they leave the room. The device is triggered by sensing an object in movement up to 40 feet away. We recommend the Silver Solar 100 LED Outdoor Security Flood Light from Lampsplus.com. It is easily installed, and includes a 6-volt, 4-Ah sealed rechargeable battery, solar panel, 15-feet of cord, and does not require wire.

![Flood Light](image)

**Figure 4** Flood Light

• To reduce energy costs from the lobby:
  • During the day, the lights in the lobby area can be turned off without negatively affecting the appearance of the lobby. There is plenty of natural light coming in through the windows.

• To reduce energy costs from heating the swimming pool:
  • We suggest the implementation of a solar pool heating system from SolarTech’s solar swimming pool heaters. Their system allows the pool to be used 8-10 months out of the year, depending on the weather. The system has a warranty of 12 years and a payback time of less than one year. A free solar consultation through San Diego Solar Energy can be made at 619.743.9193 or at www.solartechonline.com/solar-pool-heating.
Recommendation 2

Supply Chain Management – Paper

Implementation of iPads at the front desk for registration would reduce paper waste from printing registration cards. Students concluded that the average occupancy rate was 75%, equivalent to 130 rooms occupied, on average, in one day. Given that the hotel features 172 rooms, the hotel prints out about 47,450 pages each year on registration cards. This amounts to a paper cost of $2,965.63 each year given that one sheet of paper is roughly $0.003 and the cost of ink per page is around $.0595. The hotel could save up to $2,965.63 a year on costs for registration cards. The current cost of an iPad is around $500 dollars; however, there are inexpensive alternatives on the market.

The iPad or tablet can also be used to swipe cards, capture signatures, encode the key so guests can go directly into their rooms, and provide a digital receipt instead of using paper.

Recommendation 3

Recycling/Reuse

The property would benefit economically and environmentally from a Waste and Recycling Policy. This policy would include the procedures employees follow to decrease solid waste, including garbage, paper products, amenity bottles, and food service items. The hotel could also join the EPA Waste Wise Program as a partner or endorser. Potential benefits to joining are: reduced purchasing and waste disposal costs, public recognition in Waste Wise publications, and opportunity to receive Waste Wise Awards. During the assessment, the location lacked recycling bins in guest rooms and around the property. Adding recycling bins around the hotel is a simple way to boost the hotel’s reputation as an environmentally-conscious business. The recycling bins could be placed at strategic locations to encourage guests to recycle waste.
Recommendation 4

Philanthropy – Environment

The hotel’s official webpage is a powerful influence on customer behavior and loyalty. As more consumers become interested in caring for the environment, they will look towards businesses and products that reflect green values that reflect their own. Updating the hotel website to reflect sustainable values would appeal to the growing body of environmentally-conscious consumers. An updated website could display current sustainability goals (those attained and in progress) and green certificates attained throughout the years and allow interested guests to donate to local or international conservation-based initiatives.

Figure 5 Award

Recommendation 5

Sustainability Policy, Benchmarks, and Transparency

During assessment, some employees were confused about the incorporation of sustainable practices. Establishing a more directed guide for approaching sustainability would address this issue. This project recommends a 12-month goal plan outlining the hotel’s goals and approaches with sub-policies to address “practices“ within the STEP Standards. The hotel’s sustainability goals and approaches could also be displayed in the lobby, departmental rooms, or the website to raise awareness of the hotel’s green values and clarify procedures for employees. Attached in the appendix is a sample layout for the hotel to use.

Recommendation 6

Supply Chain Management - Policies

To establish a green and local purchasing policy to improve the value of the supply chain, the hotel must establish clear guidelines regarding hotel supply chain purchases which include increasing the amount of locally-sourced, recycled, fair trade, and/or eco-friendly products purchased annually.
Goodies Bar & Grill

Background
Moe Sadighian, the owner of Goodies Bar and Grill has long-term goals and a clear understanding of sustainability. Sadighian oversees four independent restaurants in San Diego under one parent company. Goodies Bar & Grill has demonstrated a willingness to prioritize sustainability, even when this conflicts with cost-reducing practices.

Awareness and Visioning
The restaurant is very proud of its commitment to fostering sustainability. This facility has practices in place aimed at reducing its negative impact on the environment, both ecological and social. In an effort to pursue this goal, the restaurant, at times, may compromise its desire to reduce costs in order to prioritize sustainability. This is evidenced by the restaurant’s policies, technologies, and procedures as well as its interaction with children of the community to influence their health education. In addition, the restaurant is very aware of the positive impact it can have on employees and offers them benefits that uplift their welfare.
Baseline

Current status of Goodies Bar & Grill regarding STEP criteria

1. Energy Reduction Plan
   
a. No documented Energy Reduction Policy

b. Owner can set temperature and turn off lights through application that alerts him via iPhone

c. Plan to install solar panels within the next 6-10 years.

2. Philanthropy - Social/Cultural
   
a. Every 2 months, owner holds cooking classes at local schools to teach students the importance of healthy food choices, reading labels, calories and drinking water

b. Maintains workforce happiness by employing more than half of employees full-time; family type of environment

c. Employees can get loans through management/restaurant

d. National City School Board occasionally allows children to visit the restaurant so that they can learn how to cook healthy meals

e. Business also has a goal to grow its own vegetable garden

3. Business Plan
   
a. No written mission statement or code of conduct pledge for on-site management or off-site tourism activities

b. No evidence that the pledge is being communicated to employees

4. Philanthropy – Environment
   
a. No conservation-based pledge

b. Clients are aware of local donations for conservation-based initiatives

5. Sustainability Policy, Benchmarks, and Transparency
   
a. No written sustainability policy that serves as a vision, goals or framework for sustainability initiatives

b. Food ingredients with trans-fat have been eliminated
6. Protecting the Area
   a. No written pledge regarding how the restaurant communicates to guests a "do not harm" code of conduct which relates to the surrounding areas, cultural sites, and/or protected areas

7. Client Education Regarding Sustainability
   a. No evidence of how the restaurant promotes the principles of sustainable tourism through its marketing materials and web site

8. Use of Feedback
   a. No evidence of how the restaurant collects customer feedback or has a system for documenting feedback

9. Environmental, Health, and Safety Regulation
   a. The restaurant maintains up-to-date environmental, health and safety, operational permits/licenses and approvals as required by state and city law

10. Fair Labor Practices
    a. The business has a Fair Labor Policy, conforms to local labor laws and meets or exceeds minimum wages for all salaried employees
    b. Equal opportunity employer; looking to hire potential employees for long-term, rather than seasonal positions
    c. Employees are paid overtime of 1.5 times the employee’s regular rate for all hours worked in excess of eight in a workday or in excess of 40 in a workweek
    d. Owner oversees over 150 employees for all his properties and has a very small turnover rate, averaging 2.5%

11. Green Team
    a. No employee assigned to oversee the company’s sustainability initiatives and health- and safety-related policies

12. Regulatory Compliance
    a. The restaurant is not directly or indirectly involved in a dispute regarding environmental, socio-cultural, or economic regulation.
13. Recycling/Reuse
   a. No report of the total cubic volume (or weight) of the various recyclable and compostable materials being reused or recycled
   b. Employees follow a strict 2-day policy for all food and everything gets dated
   c. Cans, bottles, paper and coffee cups are recycled
   d. Oil gets picked up by a local biofuel company
   e. Food is composted when possible

14. Chemical Management System
   a. The restaurant documents all chemicals/cleaning supplies on site and determines which ones are toxic and which are non-toxic
   b. Utilize biodegradable cleaning products; only exception is bleach.
   c. Use non-harmful chemicals to wash their patio
   d. Pour bleach on wasted food to prevent illness and theft
   e. Grease traps have been implement which clean about 1,000 gallons every month to prevent grease entering the plumbing system

15. Water Consumption and Management
   a. The restaurant provides an employee handbook that includes a policy to conserve water
   b. Pledge to reduce water use
   c. Toilets save 30% more water than standard toilets
   d. Urinals are water-free
   e. Serve drinkable water only when asked by client
   f. Dishwasher uses 40% less water
   g. Restaurant has a triple-filtration water system that cost an extra $60,000 to build, reduces maintenance by as much as 40%, reduces formation of lime scale, and removes 99% of corrosive chlorine from the incoming water supply
16. Supply Chain Management - Policies
   a. Business does not have written guidelines regarding its supply chain purchases which include increasing the amount of locally-source, recycled, fair trade, and/or eco-friendly products purchased annually
   b. Restaurant purchases are made within a 5-mile radius at only two locations, contributing to local purchases and reducing carbon emissions and

17. Supply Chain Management – Paper
   a. No paper reduction plan
   b. Utilize recycled paper for some menu items, advertising collateral, to-go bags and coffee cups and, drink carriers
   c. Employee schedules are sent through email or text; plan to go paperless with pay checks

18. GHG Emissions and Offsets
   a. Business does not documented its total net annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions using a nationally or internationally accepted GHG calculator or protocol

19. Pollution Prevention - Vehicles
   a. No written pledge to reduce motorized vehicle usage
   b. Encourages employees to take public transportation to work
   c. No delivery service; except to the hotel right across the street which they get to by walking

20. Economic Development
   a. No written local community and economic development pledge

   a. The company does not jeopardize access to basic provisions for those within the immediate and neighboring communities
   b. No written basic provisions pledge
Recommendation 1

Energy Reduction Plan

Sadighian expressed the desire to install solar panels within the next 6 to 10 years. We believe he can cut the timeline and implement them by 2020. Solar panels provide a quick return on investment, especially in a city where there is sunshine nearly year-round. There are several regional contractors that provide these services:

1. FigTree Commercial is a San Diego-based clean energy finance company that provides money for energy efficiency, renewable energy and water conservation upgrades within reach of owners of a wide range of property types. The company provides a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program that allows owners to finance improvements and pay for them over a defined period of time through an assessment line item on their property tax bill. The program is designed as a full-service, flexible and free-market program enabling the best service at the lowest cost to a property owner. FigTree oversees the entire process from application, qualification, financial analysis, and lender consent to funding.

2. An even better alternative is the Center for Sustainable Energy, which provides a program of financial incentives for installing clean, efficient, on-site, distributed generation. The Self Generation Incentive Program (SGIP) provides financial incentives for the installation of new qualifying technologies that are installed to meet all or a portion of the electric energy needs of a facility.

3. Sullivan Solar Power offers an option for commercial solar power financing. Their options to finance the system are through conventional loans, monthly lease payments and/or a power purchase agreement. The options reduce the upfront capital requirement and improve the return on investment. Most commercial solar systems can take advantage of the 30% Federal Tax Credit, bonus depreciation, and state/local utility incentives.

4. Other recommended companies are:

   a. SUNUP Energy
   b. SOLAR Service of San Diego Inc.
   c. Everyday Communications Corp.
   d. DGB Plumbing Inc.
Recommendation 2

Philanthropy - Social/Cultural

Most restaurants are hesitant to donate unused food due to liability concerns. State and federal laws have been in place for more than a decade to protect businesses and individuals from criminal and civil liability should recipients become ill from food donations. The Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act, signed into law in 1996, protects all donations made in good faith, with exceptions only for gross negligence or intentional misconduct (Food Donation Connection). A plaintiff would have to prove that a company or individual intentionally tried to harm another person by making a donation of food they knew to be unsafe. Putting bleach on food waste can actually be considered gross negligence or intentional misconduct. To reduce food waste and the use of bleach on leftovers, we recommend donating leftover food to various charity programs. Some of these organizations provide free service to pick up the food. The following are some recommended organizations:

1. Feeding America San Diego (FASD), maintains the highest standard of food donations. They have refrigerated trucks to pick up donations, which are tax deductible up to twice the cost of the donated food on the federal and/or state tax return. FASD’s food donors are eligible for a number of tax benefits as defined by the IRS. FASD is located at 9455 Waples Street, Suite 135, San Diego, CA 92121. Phone: 858.452.3663. Fax: 858.768.7438. Email: info@feedingamericasd.org.

2. Food Waste Alliance (FARC), FARC is a 3-year initiative focused on reducing food waste. FARC is located at 1350 Eye (I) Street NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20005. Email: fwra@gmaonline.org.

3. Miramar Greenery turns food scraps into compost-rich products used as soil texture. The food waste recycling program involves several steps, including meeting with city staff and meeting with kitchen personnel. Miramar Greenery is located at 5180 Convoy St. San Diego, CA 92111. Phone: 858.694.7000.

4. Other organizations are:
   a. San Diego Food Bank
   b. San Diego Rescue Mission
   c. Feeding America
Recommendation 3

Business Plan

A business plan can incorporate sustainable policies, including social, cultural and environmental philanthropy. Though the restaurant implements many sustainable practices, there is no policy in writing that reflects these efforts. When the business plan incorporates sustainable practices, the plan provides concrete evidence and guidance for associates on the daily operation of the business. We recommend incorporation of the restaurant’s sustainability efforts and goals, in writing, into the business plan. These goals can also include the vision for a future on-site vegetable garden.

Recommendation 4

Philanthropy - Social/Cultural

To strengthen the restaurant’s connection with the community and provide an outlet for local and international philanthropic organizations, we recommend creating a poster wall in the restaurant and/or a social media element on the restaurant’s website where guests and employees can post items relevant to community events or sustainability, connect to charitable organizations, and share sustainability quotes and tips. An example of a poster wall can be seen in Figure: Poster. These social outlets could feature current and intended sustainability practices of the restaurant, including the idea of a local garden. This local garden could also be featured in the National City Chamber of Commerce Newsletter.

Figure 7 Poster
Recommendation 5

Philanthropy – Environment

The owner expressed a desire to create a vegetable garden for the restaurant to grow its own produce. The proposed project is expected to be completed within the next 3 to 5 years, receive FDA approval, and provide food for all of the chain’s restaurants. We recommend a raised bed garden as a cheap and quick alternative to achieve the restaurant’s goal of growing its own vegetables. Below are specific instructions to build a raised-bed vegetable garden for approximately $172.

Figure 8 Raised-bed

1. Materials

   a. One 6ft long by 4in. wood ($15)
   b. Six 8ft long by 6in. wood ($75)
   c. One 10ft long by 1in. PVC pipe ($3)
   d. Two 10ft long 1/2in. PVC pipes ($6)
   e. Thirty-two 3 1/2 in. #14 wood screws and sixteen 1/2in. #8 wood screws ($29)
   f. One 4x10ft roll of ¼in. mesh hardware cloth ($15)
   g. Eight 1in. galvanized tube scraps (semicircular brackets) ($3.60)
   h. 32 cubic ft. (1 cu. yd.) soil mix (look for combination of topsoil, compost, and potting soil) ($100)
2. Assembly

   a. With a power saw, cut the 4x4 into four 16-inch tall corner posts. Cut two of the 2x6 in half. Cut the 1-inch PVC pipe into four 12in. long pieces and the ½ in. PVC pipes into 6ft long pieces. Assemble pieces on a hard, flat surface.

   b. Build bed upside-down. Set a 4 foot 2x6 on its edge on pavement and place a 16-inch post at one end. Secure with two 3 1/2-inch screws. Repeat at other end of board and other short board. Join short sides with an 8-foot board; and secure with two screws. Add other long side, Add second layer of 2x6.

   c. Flip the bed right-side-up. Move it into position on the yard, marking with a trowel each corner post's location. Move the bed aside; dig a 5- to 6-inch-deep hole for each post. Put the bed back into place, with posts in holes; fill around with soil.

3. Install Lining

   a. Rake the existing soil at the bottom of the bed to level it, and then tamp it smooth. Line the bed with hardware cloth to keep out gophers and moles; trim the cloth with shears to fit around corner posts.

4. Attach Pipe

   a. To hold hoops for bird netting or row covers, attach four 12in. pieces of 1in. PVC pipe inside the bed: On the long side, space pipes 4 feet apart, 2ft. from each end; screw on two tube straps to secure each pipe.

   b. Fill the bed with a planting mix of topsoil, compost, and potting soil; rake it smooth, and moisten it with a gentle spray from the hose.

5. Insert the hoops

   a. To cover newly planted seedlings with bird netting or season-extending row covers, simply bend two 6ft. pieces of ½ in. PVC pipe to form semi-circles, and split their ends into the 1in. pipes inside the bed. Then drape the bird netting or row covers over them.
Pier 32 Marina and Waterfront Grill

Background
Pier 32 Marina is the finest marina in San Diego. Tenants enjoy first-class amenities and state-of-the-art waterfront facilities (Pier 32 Marina). Some of these services are: a 312-square-foot fitness center, a 345-square-foot boater’s lounge, a 2,970-square-foot putting green, 4 different BBQ areas each with 837 square feet, free bikes, basketball, a 710-square-foot one bedroom apartment (Captains Quarter), a pool and Jacuzzi, storage facilities, parking, and, of course, boat slips. The marina is located on San Diego Bay at the mouth of Sweetwater Channel in National City. There is total deep water access to the entrance of the marina.

The Pier 32 Marina is also home to the Waterfront Grill, a restaurant where clients can enjoy an excellent dining experience with a magnificent marina view. The restaurant emphasizes the quality of food by delivering fresh ingredients prepared from scratch. The restaurant building structure has terraced waterfront seating and a grill counter (Pier 32 Marina). Recommendations in this section include suggestions for the Waterfront Grill and the surrounding marina.

Awareness and Visioning
Pier 32 Marina’s statement reflects their intention to be a sustainable business. Port of San Diego’s Green Port Program influences the marina’s sustainability measures. The Green Port Program includes initiatives that help the port and its tenants conserve water and energy, decrease their waste, and reduce emissions around San Diego Bay. Their policy showcases “the ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs” (Unified Port of San Diego). Pier 32 Marina requires all boat owners to sign a Clean Marina Program Agreement to increase guest awareness of behavior appropriate to the surrounding area and facilities. The program is inspected every 5 years by the Clean Marina board, and Pier 32 Marina has its own staff specifically to regulate the marina on a yearly basis.
Baseline

Current status of Pier 32 Marina and the Waterfront Grill regarding STEP criteria

1. Business Plan
   a. No written mission statement or code of conduct pledge for on-site management or off-site tourism activities
   b. No evidence that the pledge is being communicated to employees

2. Sustainability Policy, Benchmarking and Transparency
   a. No written sustainability policy that serves as a vision, goals, or framework for sustainability initiatives

3. Protecting the Area
   a. No written pledge of how the restaurant communicates to guests a “do not harm” code of conduct which relate to the surrounding areas, cultural sites, and/or protected areas

4. Client Education Regarding Sustainability
   a. No evidence of how the restaurant promotes the principles of sustainable tourism through its marketing materials and web site

5. Use of Feedback
   a. No evidence of how the restaurant collects customer feedback or has a system for documenting feedback

6. Environmental, Health, and Safety Regulation
   a. The restaurant maintains up-to-date environmental, health and safety, operational permits/licenses and approvals as required by state and city law

7. Fair Labor Practices
   a. The restaurant has a Fair Labor Policy, conforms to local labor laws and meets or exceeds minimum wages for all salaried employees
   b. Hires locally

8. Green Team
   a. No employee assigned to oversee the company’s sustainability initiatives and health- and safety-related policies
9. Regulatory Compliance
   a. The restaurant is not directly or indirectly involved in a dispute regarding environmental, socio-cultural, or economic regulation

10. Recycling/Reuse
   a. No report of the total cubic volume (or weight) of the various recyclable and compostable materials being reused or recycled
   b. Establishment has recycle bins for paper, plastic, glass, aluminum, and excess oil to which they deliver to the local recycling center

11. Chemical Management System
   a. Earned Clean Marina Certification in 2008, a rigorous program protecting the Marina’s water resources from pollution
   b. Restaurant documents all chemicals/cleaning supplies on site and determines which ones are toxic and which are non-toxic
   c. Utilizes UltraMax cleaning supplies, which are certified Eco Firm by the Northeast Clean Water Conservancy and are EPA Quality Material certified

12. Water Consumption and Management
   a. The restaurant does not track their annual volume of potable water used or have a water conservation policy to conserve water and identify areas where water can be conserved
   b. Water plants were selected for sustainable water usage purposes; staff monitor water usage regularly
   c. The Marina requires each tenant to sign a Clean Marina Agreement when entering into the marina with their boat
   d. The restaurant utilizes a scorecard and checklist that address the appropriate measures used to protect the Marina’s water when going through inspections

13. Supply Chain Management - Policies
   a. Business does not have written guidelines regarding its supply chain purchases which include increasing the amount of locally-source, recycled, fair trade, and/or eco-friendly products purchased annually
   b. Attempts to buy local and organic food whenever possible
   c. Meat and seafood are purchased locally
14. Supply Chain Management – Paper
   a. No paper reduction plan

15. Energy Reduction Plan
   a. No policy to conserve energy

16. GHG Emissions and Offsets
   a. The business does not documented its total net annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions using a nationally or internationally accepted GHG calculator or protocol

17. Pollution Prevention - Vehicles
   a. No written pledge to reduce motorized vehicle usage
   b. No shuttle service
   c. Provides and promotes bicycle usage as an alternative to driving; bikes are offered as rentals and bike racks are located around the marina

18. Philanthropy – Environment
   a. No conservation-based pledge
   b. Clients are not aware of local donations for conservation-based initiatives
   c. Earned the Clean Marina Certification in 2008; but did not listed whether they were recertified (certification is for 5 years only)

19. Philanthropy - Social/Cultural
   a. No social responsibility pledge

20. Economic Development
   a. No written local community and economic development pledge

   a. The company does not jeopardize access to basic provisions for those within the immediate and neighboring communities
   b. No written basic provision pledge
Recommendation 1

Business Plan

A business plan must be set to provide uniform language on what sustainability means for the business and what efforts both employees and potential investors need to take to achieve it. The business plan should include guides regarding prevention of water pollution, a mission statement, a code of conduct pledge, and evidence that the pledge is being communicated to the employees. Each part of the plan needs to be seen as a goal that is specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time based (SMART). These SMART targets are an established management principle that measures business performance. In addition, Pier 32 Marina should strive to continue the Green Port Program and provide a consolidated document for employees and clients to read on the achieved goals/measures the restaurant has done so far.

![SMART](image)

Figure 9 SMART

Recommendation 2

Chemical Management System

To prevent further contamination of water, Pier 32 Marina should focus on decreasing its negative impact through proper storage of boards, boats, and yachts. Because the marina owns roughly 200 acres of land, dry boat storage would be a very productive and innovative way to maximize the use of their unused land. The storage should be expanded onto dry land; having boats stored out of the water will reduce pollution of copper into the Sweetwater Channel. Economically, dry boat storage benefits both the marina and its tenants because it reduces maintenance costs by limiting the boat’s exposure to the corroding effects of salt water. This idea can also translate to increased revenue by making more slips available for renters. Lastly, this creates more opportunities for cleaning and fixing the boats while they are stored on dry land, reducing the need for underwater maintenance, which therefore reduces the cost.
Recommendation 3

Pollution Prevention - Vehicles

The marina could create trails and bike paths so that guests can enjoy nature without leaving a large carbon footprint. Kayaks and paddleboard rentals are other more expensive but rewarding alternatives. Interpretive trails and rentals appeal to social and environmental sustainability by giving visitors the opportunity to enjoy nature first-hand. The rentals can be used for recreational activities, such as after school programs, camps and team sports that can help support the community. Kayaking and paddle boarding are popular sports that will allow more visitors to enjoy time on the water in the Sweetwater Channel. These recreational opportunities provide an up-close experience with the local wildlife and help participants to make a positive connection with nature. The new YMCA being built next to Pepper Park and the Pier 32 Marina would be a good investment partner for this new venture. Together, Pier 32 and the YMCA have the ability to create recreational youth programs, recreational adult programs, kayak and paddleboard lessons, physical fitness programs, and on-the-water tour programs. Opening up the waterways in the Sweetwater Channel and using the canal systems next to the D Street Landfill Mitigation Site will, in turn, help provide more and better access for future visitors.

Recommendation 4

Green Team

To engage employees with sustainable practices, we recommend assigning an employee or a group of employees to oversee the Waterfront Grill sustainable initiatives and health and safety-related policies. In addition to assigning an employee to this position and responsibility, there must be a pledge to identify “green team” employee(s) as well as document roles and responsibilities of employee(s).
Recommendation 5

Energy Reduction Plan
To reduce energy costs, we recommended installation of sensor lighting and solar energy. In addition, LED motion-sensor controlled lighting is an inexpensive and reliable way to reduce lighting costs up to 60%. For more energy reduction alternatives refer to “Best Western Plus Marina Gateway Hotel, Recommendation 1: Energy Reduction Plan.”

Recommendation 6

Water Consumption and Management
To reduce water waste, the restaurant can upgrade to water-efficient toilets, shower heads, and washing machines. We suggest a dual flush valve as a way to reduce water usage. This water saving mechanism retrofits to most existing valves and reduces water volume by up to 30% when activated for half flush. The valve operates as a mechanism on a toilet that allows for a half flush or a full flush with the same valve. Students recommend the dual flush valves from the brand Fluidmaster, who claim that their Duo Flush replacement has the potential to save up to 45% of their water usage (Fluidmaster, Inc.).

Installing low-flow showerheads, faucet aerators and high-efficient washing machines can help to reduce water consumption. High-efficiency washing machines utilize technological advances to deliver excellent wash performance while saving both water and energy. Resource efficient models use 35%-50% less water and approximately 50% less energy. The water efficiency of washing machines is rated using the term "water factor" to describe and compare its water use. Water factor is measured by the quantity of water (in gallons) used to wash each cubic foot of laundry. A lower water factor represents greater water and energy efficiency.
Ethnic Deli and Cafe

Figure 10 Ethnic Deli Entrance

Figure 11 Ethnic Deli interior

Background
The Ethnic Deli and Cafe is a family-owned business managed by Richard A. Kabbany. Kabbany works as a renewable energy consultant for Sun-Tricity Solar Power and is knowledgeable about the importance of sustainability. At the time of the assessment, October through December 2014, Ethnic Deli and Cafe was in transition to a new location in National City’s Downtown area. Data was collected from the old location. The family is committed to improving sustainable practices at the new location.

Awareness and Visioning
Richard Kabbany had a clear vision of how the new location would strive to be more sustainable. As a small business, the owners have more flexibility to modify and improve physical and procedural aspects of their business. When considering the opening of the new location, the owners were aware that investing in recycled products could reduce both short and long-term costs to the business.
Baseline

Current status of Best Western Plus Marina Gateway Hotel regarding STEP criteria

1. Business Plan
   a. No written mission statement or code of conduct pledge
   b. No evidence that the pledge is being communicated to employees

2. Client Education Regarding Sustainability
   a. No evidence of how the business is promoting the principles of sustainable tourism through websites, marketing materials, etc
   b. The restaurant had an official website page in which customers could order online, view menus, view hours of operation, linking to their Facebook, Google+, Urbanspoon and Yelp accounts; sustainable certificates were posted on the website

3. Supply Chain Management - Paper
   a. No paper-reduction pledge, but owners are committed to reduce paper use by purchasing recycled paper products and reducing non-recycled paper use
   b. 100% recycled paper bags are used as to-go supplies; made in the from 40% post-consumer material

4. Water Consumption and Management
   a. No water conservation policy in effect, but owners expressed that the new location has water-efficient toilets and sink

5. Recycling/Reuse
   a. Manager practices composting and he uses leftover food to feed his chicken
   b. Restaurant has recycling bins and gives recyclable bottles to the homeless
   c. Business is transitioning from foam cups to recycled paper cups
   d. To minimize their environmental footprint, the new location will have tables and counters that are made from used cable wires and recycled wood
   e. Restaurant already utilizes 100% recycled to-go supplies, made in the US from 40% post-consumer material
   f. Used oil is collected to be picked up by New Leaf Biofuel, a San Diego company that transforms oil into biodiesel
6. Sustainability Policy, Benchmarks and Transparency
   a. No written sustainability policy that serves as a vision, goals or framework for sustainability initiatives

7. Protecting the Area
   a. No written pledge regarding how the business communicates to guests a "do not harm" code of conduct which relate to the surrounding areas, cultural sites, and/or protected areas

8. Use of Feedback
   a. New location will implement surveys and Yelp reviews to gather data for improving service and recipes

9. Environmental, Health, and Safety Regulations
   a. The business maintains up-to-date environmental, health and safety, operational permits/licenses and approvals as required by state and city law

10. Fair Labor Practices
    a. The business has a Fair Labor Policy, and adheres to federal discrimination laws

11. Green Team
    a. No employee assigned to oversee the company’s sustainability initiatives and health- and safety- related policies

12. Regulatory Compliance
    a. The business is not directly or indirectly involved in a dispute regarding environmental, socio-cultural, or economic regulation
    b. New location is based on the California Building Codes and Title 24

13. Chemical Management System
    a. No documentation of chemical/cleaning supplies on site indicating which ones are toxic and which are non-toxic
    b. Uses biodegradable cleaning products

14. Supply Chain Management - Policies
    a. Business does not have written guidelines regarding its supply chain purchases
    b. Owners give preference to environmentally and socially superior products, buying organic food, like coffee, from the local farmer’s market that is less than 2 miles away
15. Energy Reduction Plan
   a. No policy to conserve energy
   b. Current establishment lacked solar panels and utilized out-of-date counters and fridges that use more energy
   c. New location will utilize LED light bulbs and owners have plans to implement solar panels in about two years
   d. New location will have a metal signboard
   e. New electric equipment will be Energy Star certified

16. GHG Emissions and Offsets
   a. Business does not documented its total net annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions using a nationally or internationally accepted GHG calculator or protocol

17. Pollution Prevention - Vehicles
   a. No pledge to reduce motorized vehicle usage
   b. Employees are local and can walk to work; one employee who lives further takes the trolley
   c. Manager drives a smart car

18. Philanthropy - Environment
   a. No conservation-based pledge; clients are not aware of possible donations to local or international conservation initiatives

19. Philanthropy - Social/Cultural
   a. No social responsibility pledge, yet, clients are aware of social, cultural, or community-based philanthropic opportunities
   b. Inside the restaurant there are several charity collection boxes
   c. Owners also expressed that they save cans and plastic bottles to give them to the homeless so that they can exchange them for money
   d. Sometimes the owners give free food to people who offer to clean the windows
20. Economic Development
   a. Business uses customer’s recommendations to marketing the art of small businesses
   b. No local community and economic development pledge
   c. The business’s clients are encouraged to buy locally produced products and services and/or visit locally owned businesses

   a. The company does not jeopardize access to basic provisions for those within the immediate and neighboring communities
   b. No basic provision pledge
Recommendation 1

Business Plan

As a small business, the owners do not feel the need to have a formal business plan. Employees are expected to follow implicit rules expressed verbally by Richard Kabbany. However, a business plan ensures longevity of the business, and guides employees in daily operations, ensuring sustainable practices are used. We recommend the drafting of a business plan for this establishment that contains a mission statement, a code of conduct pledge, policies, and practices. The business plan can help establish a vision and direction for employees as well as serve as a framework for sustainable initiatives. When considering drafting the policy, the business should consider the Best Practices outlined in the STEP guide. The STEP guidelines can build internal support and excitement and can be used as a marketing tool for the business. The new business plan must be communicated to employees; this could be accomplished by giving employees a copy of the business plan in a simplified handbook.
Recommendation 2

Client Education Regarding Sustainability

Ethnic Deli and Cafe needs a presence in social media not only to promote their business, but to promote the art of the small business as well. At the new location, the restaurant should make good use of ICT tools (Information and Communication Technologies) to promote their principles of sustainable practices. The owners should update the restaurant’s official website to include a page describing their sustainability goals, achievements, and eco-certifications.

Social media can be an effective marketing tool and replace costly and wasteful paper advertisements. We recommend hiring or training an employee that specializes in social media implementation or allowing a current employee to dedicate a few hours each week to work on it. Current technology allows easy and quick creation of a new account and linking between accounts so that sharing of information across multiple domains can be done using only one of the social media sites. Currently trending social sites include: Yelp, Tripadvisor, Hootsuite, Facebook, Google+, Pinterest, Twitter and Instagram.

The assigned employee should follow a calendar that has each of the pictures or promotions to post during the week. On Hootsuite, it is possible to schedule tweets for the future, and on Facebook, scheduling is also available. To increase the number of followers, you can follow others, use common hashtags, comment on other posts, and retweet local posts. In addition, the owners should consider partnering with San Diego Roots Sustainable Food Project to open networking opportunities. This non-profit organization maintains a network of citizens, farmers, chefs, gardeners, teachers, and students that are working to encourage the growth and consumption of regional food.
Recommendation 3

Supply Chain Management - Paper

The restaurant already makes use of recycled paper for to-go supplies, but not for their menus. Investing in a large poster menu behind the counter is a great way to reduce paper expenses. If the new location is not suitable for a poster menu, using iPads attached to the counter would serve as a suitable alternative. For simplicity and to prevent confusion, the online menus should be displayed permanently on the iPad screens. Investing in an online menu would propel the restaurant into a more modern state of business-customer interaction. Recycle all unused paper menus.

Figure 13 Poster menu

Figure 14 Recycled bag sample
Recommendation 4

Water Consumption and Management

To help manage water consumption, a documented water conservation plan is recommended. The document will aim to improve decision making and identify areas with potential for improvement, such as the bathroom and kitchen. The document should address the following:

a. Educate the entire staff on how to use water more efficiently during such tasks as washing dishes and washing hands by installing signs over water sources.

b. Collection of annual, or month-to-month, water consumption data and anticipated percentage reduction.

c. Frequency of mopping the floors and sweeping exterior grounds

d. Usage of greywater and collection of rainwater, if any.

To prevent water waste by employees or customers, the new location would benefit from installing low-water toilets, sinks with automatic on-and-off systems, and Energy Star certified dishwashers if employees are not going to wash the dishes manually.

Recommendation 5:

Recycle/Reuse Policy

A recycling policy is encouraged to decrease solid waste, including garbage, paper products, amenities, bottles, and food service items. The restaurant can use the LeanPath Zap software to monitor and reduce food waste. This software can be used on a tablet to track how much food is being wasted and why it is being wasted. The software provides weekly summaries that can be used to identify which items are most wasted and help to prevent future waste. It provides training resources and videos to educate employees on sustainability. Pricing for this software ranges from $69 to $749 a month.
Conclusion

Businesses located in the Marina District of National City are striving to become more environmentally friendly, but they still lack in many areas. The STEP certificate provides instructions which can serve as a guide for the assessed businesses to help them make improvements to areas lacking in sustainability. These instructions can be broad, but the student recommendations provided in this report can be implemented to fill in some of the sustainability gaps identified during their initial assessment.

This report provides individualized suggestions that can be used by these and other businesses seeking to have a positive impact on the environment. Obtaining the STEP certification not only brings recognition to these business, but to the Marina District and National City as a leader in ecological sustainability. The following are highlights of the most compelling recommendations included in this report:

**Best Western Plus Marina Gateway Hotel**

To offset the disproportionate burden placed on the housekeeping department to reduce waste and utilize environmentally friendly materials, students proposed reducing the environmental impact of other hotel departments. To reduce energy costs from guest rooms, students suggested the installation of smart key card devices in each room. This device turns off electricity once the key card is removed. In addition, to save energy costs from heating the swimming pool, students recommended the implementation of a solar pool heating system.

**Goodies Bar & Grill**

Recommendations for this restaurant considered the owner’s initial aspirations for a sustainable vegetable garden. Specific instructions are given on how to build a raised bed for a vegetable garden as well as contact information for companies that offer affordable options for installing solar panels.
The Waterfront Grill at Pier 32 Marina

As the business which shares the largest land and water area in the Marina District, the Waterfront Grill has a heavy responsibility to ensure the wellbeing of its own employees and clientele as well as its sensitive surroundings. To clarify for employees and guests the restaurant and marina’s sustainable policies and practices, students advised the creation of a business plan in conjunction with a group of employees acting as a “green team” that can enforce policies and keep the business on track toward desired goals.

Ethnic Deli and Cafe

As a small business, the owners have the advantage of adapting to change faster than the other assessed businesses. The new location will reflect this flexibility and owner’s desire to become more sustainable. Students suggested taking advantage of social media as a marketing tool. Utilizing this ICT tool will not only create a broader range of customers, but also solidify the restaurant’s status as an environmentally friendly restaurant.
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