

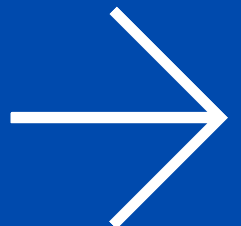


COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Fullerton

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

AUGUST 2026



Core Focus Areas

Economic development is a multifaceted endeavor that aims to enhance the economic well-being and quality of life within a community. The mission of this division focuses on three core strategic areas: Business Development, Workforce Development, and Real Estate. Each focus area plays a vital role in creating a robust and resilient economy that can adapt to changing conditions and support long-term growth and prosperity.

01

Real Estate

Promoting community development and facilitating real estate projects that attract investment, improve infrastructure, and create vibrant commercial and residential spaces.

03

Workforce Development

Provide residents with the skills and education needed to meet industry demands by implementing training and educational programs to prepare residents for the job market, ensuring they have the skills required by employers today and in the future.

02

Business Development

Attract new businesses, support the growth of existing businesses, and foster innovation and entrepreneurship by providing essential resources through strategic partnerships to ensure business success and economic growth.

7 SNAPSHOT FULLERTON

2025-2026

Snapshot Fullerton is a quick quarterly update of current projects and stats highlighting the Fullerton Economy.

ECONOMIC INDICATORS



4.4%

Unemployment Rate

Indicates a relatively healthy labor market with generally strong employment.



\$5.6m

Sales Tax Receipts

\$5.6M in adjusted Q1 sales tax receipts, down 3.2% year-over-year.



4.2%

Retail Vacancy Rate

7.8%

Industrial Vacancy Rate

4.2%

Office Vacancy Rate



5.2%

Market Cap Rate

5.2% cap rate reflects healthy investor demand and aligns with Orange County trends.

ECONOMIC DRIVERS

4,184

Building Permits



Total Valuation
Of Permits \$37.6M

- General Consumer Goods
- Restaurants/Hotels
- State & County Pools
- Business & Industry

Top Sales Tax Drivers



- Sales, Executives & Professional Services
- Education
- Food Prep/Services

Top Labor Force Drivers



325+

Net New Business Licenses



Major Real Estate Activity

Fullerton saw two notable Orange County transactions: Space Investment Partners, \$118.5 million acquisition of Fullerton Metrocenter, the largest outright retail sale in OC in 8 years and Houdini Inc's 229, 422sf lease, the County's largest new industrial lease of Q1 2026.

Small Business Outreach and Joint Events

We continue to successfully conduct multiple events to engage and support our local business community that foster collaboration among business owners and provide resources and support to our local and regional partners.

Growing Fullerton's Tech & Talent Ecosystem

Fullerton hosted the OC Semiconductor Leadership Group and is working with CSUF to strengthen workforce pipelines, connect students with industry needs, and develop future training and talent programs that support innovation, entrepreneurship, and emerging industries in Fullerton.

Progress & Initiatives

Since 2022, the Community and Economic Development Department has made meaningful changes to enhance customer service, attract high-quality developers, and elevate Fullerton's reputation as a prime investment destination. Our commitment to improving services and showcasing the city's unique economic opportunities has driven significant progress.

By harnessing the strengths of our entire team, we've fostered collaboration across divisions and built strong partnerships with external stakeholders. These efforts have resulted in key achievements, such as the implementation of the eReview system, which has made permitting faster and more efficient, positioning Fullerton ahead of the curve in facilitating development. We continue to foster an environment where businesses can thrive, new investments are welcomed, and economic vitality is sustained.

As a result, Fullerton's reputation is growing, and we're excited to build on this momentum, ensuring our city remains not just a great place to live, but a thriving center for business and innovation.



KPI's & Businesses Reached



510+



Cal State Fullerton

The city and partners at OCIE SBDC have supported Fullerton small businesses for the past four years, directly supporting businesses throughout the recovery.

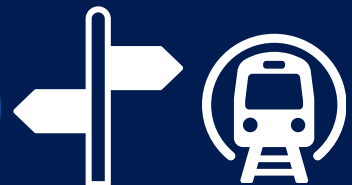
600+ Attendees

To various Small Business Events & Meetings (RIAOC, SIOR, Semi-Conductor Leadership, Small Business Certifications, Financial Literacy)



\$799K

Secured Funding for Branding & Transit Station Enhancements through CleanCA & Caltrans. Completed in 2025



12-Day Plan Check

Plan Check Review times have been streamlined to 12 business days for the first review, 10 for the second review, and 5 for the last review.



100% Digital Permits

All permits have been converted into digitally available submittals and review across various departments. Our efforts have positioned us ahead of other cities in the county.



Development Status

Fullerton is seeing steady growth, particularly in the residential and industrial sectors. We're committed to supporting development through a collaborative environment that ensures that both community goals and project success are met. While commercial development isn't at its peak, it remains an important focus, with key projects like the Fox Block in progress.

For the latest updates on specific projects, scan the QR code to get real-time status updates.

Project
Status



SCAN CODE



Engagement Efforts

The City of Fullerton has continued to expand its business and industry engagement through workshops, events, speaking opportunities, and direct outreach. We have hosted and participated in events with organizations such as SIOR, RIAOC, ACRE, and the Fullerton Rotary Club, and have been invited to serve on panels highlighting Fullerton's development and investment opportunities. We remain open to partnering with other organizations as a way to share information, promote the City, and gain valuable market insight.

Our outreach also extends beyond Fullerton through participation in regional, national, and international opportunities, including ICSC, the World Korean Business Conference, FIFA-related activities, etc. While the City may not always be able to participate at the same level as larger jurisdictions, we look for meaningful opportunities to gain exposure, build relationships, and position Fullerton for future investment.



Our Economic Development Manager is also strengthening relationships with property owners, brokers, developers, and businesses throughout the City. This ongoing communication helps us understand upcoming vacancies, leasing activity, development opportunities, and market challenges earlier in the process. Property owners and brokers increasingly notify staff when projects are moving forward so the City can help coordinate permitting and provide a more responsive development experience.

These relationships are important because economic development deals take time. Through ongoing business recruitment efforts, we have established relationships with retailers and businesses interested in Fullerton, even when the right site is not immediately available. Our goal is to maintain those relationships, understand what they need, and ensure that when the right location and timing align, Fullerton is viewed as a responsive partner and a great place to invest and do business.



at Maison Fox



Innovation & Entrepreneurship



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

There are ongoing conversations with existing and new partners to drive innovation and entrepreneurship in Fullerton. Discussions are progressing with institutions like California State University, Fullerton (CSUF), the OC Inland Empire Small Business Development Center (OCIE SBDC), and Fullerton College to develop programs that enhance AI literacy and technical skills. We are also exploring the potential for launching accelerators and incubators, which are crucial for nurturing startups and fostering growth. These initiatives aim to position Fullerton as a leader in preparing a future-ready workforce.

INDUSTRY STRENGTHS

Fullerton has become a hub for technological advancement, attracting high-quality tech companies like Samsung Technologies and Mullen Electric Vehicles. The city's robust healthcare industry, anchored by institutions like St. Jude Medical Center, complements this growth by providing cutting-edge medical services and research opportunities. Existing industry leaders, such as NTS Labs (now Element Space and Defense), have laid a strong foundation for innovation, particularly in aerospace and defense. Our focus on developing accelerators and incubators and leveraging the airport's growth potential will further strengthen Fullerton's position in the tech and healthcare landscapes.

Houdini Inc., a Fullerton-based company, signed a 229,422-square-foot industrial lease which is the largest new industrial lease in Orange County for the quarter, demonstrating continued strength in Fullerton's industrial market.



2024-30 GOALS

1 Economic Development Strategic Plan

Develop a clear and actionable plan with defined objectives and priorities to guide Fullerton's economic development initiatives.

The development of a comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan will provide Fullerton with a unified direction for economic efforts, ensure efficient resource allocation, and foster a collaborative environment among stakeholders. This plan will enhance Fullerton's economic identity, attract businesses and tourists, support local industries, and ultimately lead to a more vibrant and resilient local economy. Key actions of the plan are identified below:



SWOT ANALYSIS
CITY-WIDE



IDENTIFY KEY
INDUSTRIES



MARKET
ANALYSIS



DEVELOP
POLICY TOOLS



STRATEGIC
INITIATIVES



PERFORMANCE
METRICS



FINANCIAL
INCENTIVES



STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT

2

Business Development

In 2023, the City completed a comprehensive Retail Market Study with Kosmont Companies to assess the health of Fullerton's commercial centers, identify opportunities to fill vacancies and reposition underperforming properties, and recommend strategies to strengthen long-term economic resiliency and tax revenues. The study identified 13 action items. Business development in downtown Fullerton aims to create a vibrant environment that supports local businesses and enhances community appeal. Supporting events and small businesses and improving city services are key to strengthening the local economy. While downtown is a focus, we recognize the need for better outreach to other commercial corridors and encourage their participation to ensure all areas are engaged for the city's economic health.

The business community feedback has centered around support services for homelessness, security, and cleanliness, as well as more inviting spaces. They call for effective small business policies, a mix of uses to foster an 18-hour economy, and the attraction of reputable tenants through strong relationships with property owners. The downtown business community has been really glad to see events back in downtown and want to partner with the city for more. Resources provided to date, including but not limited to:

- One-Stop Shop Events, Coffee Collab Series, New & Existing Business Meet + Greet
- Small Business Guides, Retail Business Resource Guides, Downtown Event(s)
- Technical Training Seminars and Certification Programs



3 Shop. Play. Dine. Stay

As part of our ongoing efforts to bolster local businesses, the City of Fullerton is excited to announce the Yiftee gift card program and our efforts to date with a soft rollout. Industries frequently allocate significant budgets toward employee and consumer benefit programs. With this Yiftee initiative, we aim to capture and retain some of those dollars within our city, further driving local economic growth and fostering stronger community ties. We have 14 participating businesses and have sold \$24,000 in sales, which includes a match from the City to incentivize the program.

The city has comprehensive marketing guides to ensure a seamless transition for businesses to opt in for free and utilize the Yiftee program. These guides provide clear instructions and best practices, making it easy for businesses to participate and take full advantage of this program's opportunities.



**COMMUNITY &
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

Business 101 10-Step Guide

City Permits & Licensing



Scan for our
quick guide

**CITY OF
FULLERTON**

est. 1887

**COMMUNITY
BUSINESS
PROFILE**

SCAN ME



4 Strategic Land Redevelopment & Neighborhood Planning



We are advancing redevelopment efforts through ongoing engagement with developers and investors around both privately and City-owned sites. These relationships help us understand market realities, gauge interest, and demonstrate that the City is a partner in helping viable projects navigate the development process. That feedback helped shape our pursuit of REAP 2.0 funding, which will now allow us to evaluate development opportunities within a half-mile of the Transportation Center. This fiscal year, we will begin community outreach and develop RFPs for selected City-owned sites to help turn that planning into investment and development opportunities.

Key Actions:

- **Surplus Land:** Align Requests for Proposals (RFPs) with the city's strategic objectives and community needs to ensure impactful projects. By incorporating transparency early in the process with developers, we establish clear expectations, fostering viable partnerships from the outset.
 - Anticipated Timeline: 2026-2027
- **Incentives and Support:** Explore and provide financial and policy incentives
- **Community Integration:** Actively involve the community in planning processes to ensure developments reflect local needs and priorities.
- **Neighborhood Planning:** Implement neighborhood-specific and master plans to guide private development that aligns with Fullerton's long-term goals.



Neighborhood Planning

Long-range planning is a critical component of economic development in Fullerton. By establishing clear, specific goals and making the needs of our community transparent to the development community, we ensure that our city's growth is both strategic and inclusive.

Specific plans and other planning tools are particularly valuable because they provide a framework for future development. They offer clear guidelines that help streamline the approval process while allowing space for innovative and flexible proposals. These tools clarify the city's vision and ensure that growth aligns with the community's needs and priorities.

These efforts contribute to a more cohesive and appealing urban landscape, making Fullerton a desirable destination for residents, visitors, and investors alike.



FOCUS AREA D: Harbor Gateway Corridor



FOCUS AREA K: Southeast Industrial



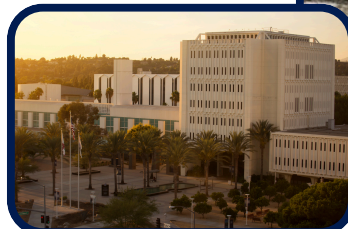
FOCUS AREA G: North Harbor Corridor



Union Pacific Plan Area



FOCUS AREA A: Airport Industrial Zone



Focus Area J: Education Corridor

5 Streamline Permitting & Pursue Regulatory Reform



COLLABORATIVE. DIGITAL. EFFICIENT.

MEASURABLE RESULTS



90%

Plan checks completed on time by June 2025



100%

Digital submissions (All Departments)



< 9.7 DAYS

Average total plan check turnaround



\$85M+

Construction valuation submitted FY to date (July 1, 2024 – Nov 26, 2025)

ENHANCED SERVICES & INNOVATIVE TOOLS



EXPRESS PERMITS

Streamlined permits for simple projects



DRONE INSPECTIONS

FAA Certified UAS pilots for roofs, structural assessments, and complex developments



AI & TECHNOLOGY

Evaluating AI tools like Archistar to improve completeness and efficiency



PARTNERSHIP FOCUSED

Cross-department coordination for predictable, timely permit review

KEY ACTIONS



Optimize systems (EnerGov, Bluebeam, EasyDev) through training and process improvements



Strengthen cross-department coordination to support timely permit review



Pursue regulatory reform to reduce barriers while preserving safety and quality



Continue evaluating new technologies to improve turnaround times and customer service



EASYDEV
Fast. Efficient. Online Permitting.



SCAN ME

Learn more about permitting and how we can help your project succeed.

6 Branding & Wayfinding

The City completed the nearly \$800,000 Clean California Transit Enhancement Project at the Fullerton Transportation Center, improving safety, mobility, wayfinding, and placemaking at one of Orange County's busiest transit hubs.

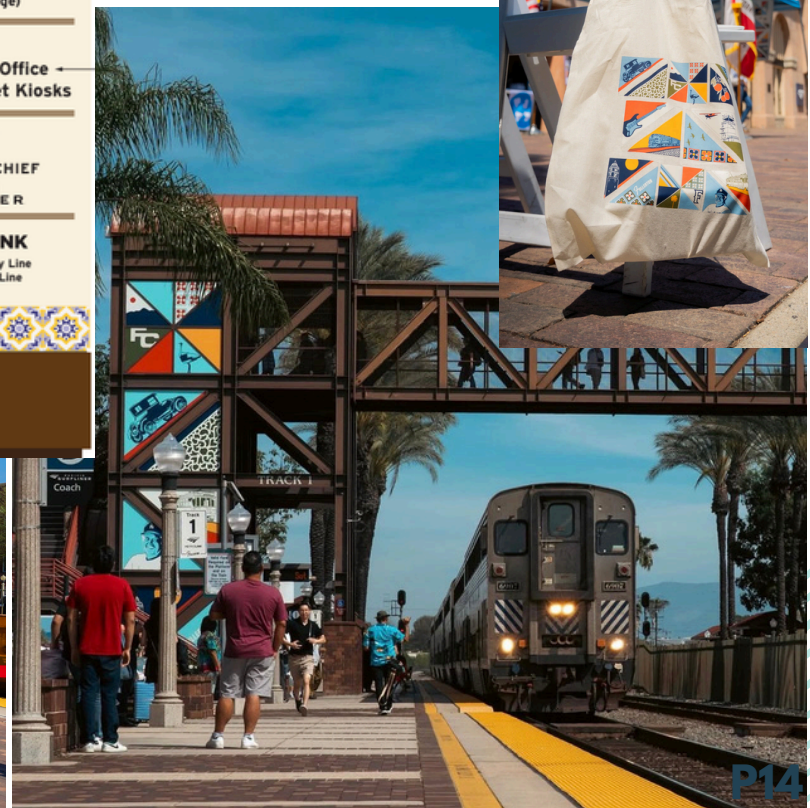
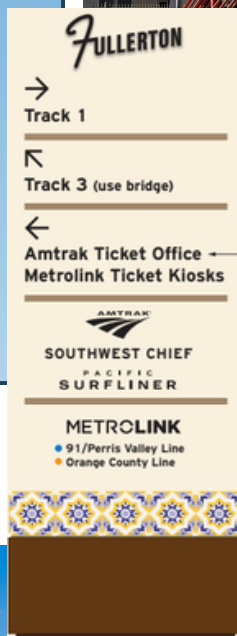
Key Accomplishments:

- Restored and enhanced the historic depot and pedestrian areas.
- Added new wayfinding, real-time transit signage, public art, bike racks, and restriped bike lanes.
- Partnered with Caltrans, Metrolink, OCTA, and Amtrak.
- Created a foundation for consistent City branding and wayfinding.



**Selbert
Perkins
Design.**

METROLINK



MATRIX OF ACTION ITEMS & STATUS

Project	Description	Status/Anticipated Timeline
Retail Study Completion	<i>We conducted a comprehensive retail market study to identify strengths and opportunities in Fullerton.</i>	<i>Project Completed in May of 2023</i>
Wayfinding & Branding Effort	<i>Secured a \$799k grant to initiate wayfinding and branding projects for Fullerton Transportation Center and Downtown.</i>	<i>Completed June 2025</i>
Shop Local Programs	<i>Enhance shop local programs with an upcoming initiative with Yiftee gift cards to boost local commerce.</i>	<i>Launched in October 2025 14 businesses currently participating with over \$24k in card sales</i>
Economic Development Strategic Plan 2025	<i>Initiate the development of the Economic Development Strategic Plan for 2026-2027.</i>	<i>Pending Staff & Financial Resources (approx. 100-150K); FY 2025-26</i>
Micro-Transit Pilot Program	<i>Microtransit pilot program to improve local transportation options with recommendation on a feasible long-term solution for both funding and operations.</i>	<i>Project transferred to Public Works</i>
Lease Management	<i>Implement better lease management practices and software for city properties.</i>	<i>Ongoing - Software Lease Query Implemented in 2023</i>
Tourism Promotion	<i>Enhance Fullerton as tourist destination leveraging the city's unique assets and events. Broaden City marketing efforts.</i>	<i>Pending</i>
Financing Incentives for Development	<i>Explore Financing Options for Development Infrastructure; P3s, Development Impact Fees, Special Districts, EIFD, etc.</i>	<i>Pending</i>

Project	Description	Status/Anticipated Timeline
Permitting Efficiencies	Streamline permitting processes to improve efficiency and reduce turnaround times for businesses.	Applications Online - Complete e- Review - Complete Policy Updates - Pending Planning staff Workflow Efficiencies - Ongoing
City Owned Parcel Disposition & Management	Leverage surplus land in downtown for economic development projects. The following for potential development: • 799 Rolling Hills Avenue • 114 E. Wilshire Avenue • 150 Santa Fe Avenue • Transportation Center Parcels • Amerige Court - Downtown Parcels	Marketing sites currently Via REAP 2.0 grant; Pending economic development staff and planning to help facilitate the process for. • Community Feedback • Draft RFP • Potential Re-Zoning Anticipated Timeline: 2027-2030 127 W. Chapman Acquisition - Complete
Downtown Parking Management Improvements or BID	Utilize downtown parking management funds to implement small business improvement initiatives or help create a Downtown BID, including revenue generation for security and cleanliness.	Repaved downtown streets. Implemented Yiftee Shop Local program and Help two FIFA watch parties ~12-24+ months, Consultant assistance needed, \$50K-150K.
Façade Improvement Programs	Implement programs to help existing businesses improve their storefronts and utilize space effectively.	Exploring Parking Revenue Funds & supplemental grant(s). ~\$100-\$500K+ program fund. Anticipated Timeline - pending staff
Explore City owned Billboard Revenue Potential	Opportunity for potential revenue generation to support General Fund.	Approval of 2 Development Agreement(s) with increased fees pending
Outreach and Events	Community Engagement, Small Business Events, highlight opportunities, attract investment, etc. Partner with Parks and Rec for business oriented public events.	Ongoing Efforts

Project	Description	Status, Anticipated Timeline, Funding
Business Expansion, Attraction, and Retention (BEAR) Program	Support and grow local business by providing resources, guidance, and assistance.	Staff training and resources for program implementation. Partnering with CSUF to conduct economic analysis on business retention and assist with strategy development. Programming joint partnerships for business owners through SCORE and OCIE SBDC centers.
Technical Assistance Programs	Provide expert guidance and resources to help start, grow, and manage business.	~\$25-100K+/yr depending on partner/program. In Progress – Agency Partners as primary lead.
Property Based Improvement District (PBID)	Explore the creation of a PBID to support downtown cleaning, security, marketing, and physical improvements.	To Be Determined – Pending Business Interest & Council Direction on Special Assessment District Concept(s).
Physical Improvements & Placemaking Efforts	Assess & Invest in pedestrian-oriented improvements, such as plazas, outdoor spaces, water features, and transit services. Downtown Improvements; Walk on Wilshire Status & Enhancements	Ongoing Effort Pending Council direction and funding FY 2024-2025
Social Media and Marketing Channels	Grow social media engagement channels to promote local businesses and events.	Ongoing Effort Small Business Highlights & Showcasing Resource Partners
City Owned Property Evaluation/Sale	Redeveloping City Owned Surplus properties	Ongoing solicitation of informal developer feedback to inform a potential project. REAP 2.0 analysis will conclude Aug. 2026. Next Steps for SLA Process, Community Process, RFP, etc. pending Council direction.
Downtown Wayfinding Upgrades	Need funding sources to complete the wayfinding program completed by SPD.	Timeline pending funding, full scope will be \$100- ~1M+, exploring grants.

Project	Description	Status, Anticipated Timeline, Funding
Short Term Rental Policy Review	<i>Review and update the City's short-term rental policy to improve compliance, address illegal operators, strengthen enforcement, and ensure collection of applicable Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT), while creating a clearer and more effective regulatory framework.</i>	<i>Optimizing the payment portal, pursuing direct agreements with Airbnb and other platforms to improve TOT collection, and revising the City's STR regulations. The updated policy is anticipated to return to Council in October 2026.</i>
Transient Occupancy Tax & Citywide Hotel Feasibility Assessment	<i>Contacting consultants to review the city for hotel feasibility study. Staff has hotel Development Impact Fee incentive program created and ready for council approval.</i>	<i>Soliciting proposals, underway.</i>

