

SanDiego[®]

MAGAZINE

A
downtown
for
North
County
AND
25 MORE
big ideas

AGRIHOODS

AERIAL
GONDOLAS

AN ARTS DISTRICT

BIOETHICS

SMART ROADS

CROSS-BORDER
EVENTS

DESIGN
EXHIBIT SPACE

A REGIONAL
CUISINE





San Diego stands on the brink of becoming a leader in genomics, bioethics, public transit, criminal justice, and so much more, improving our daily lives and pushing the boundaries of possibility. For our second annual feature on game-changing ideas, the most innovative thinkers tell us how they would make America's Finest City a whole lot finer.

BY ERIN MEANLEY GLENNY WITH ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY ARCHANA RAM

ILLUSTRATION BY ANDREW WAGNER



Gary Levitt, Developer, Urban Villages

Let's build a downtown for North County.

THE PLANNERS ARE CALLING IT NORTH CITY and likening it to a college town. South of Highway 78 and north of Cal State San Marcos lies space for a 204-acre mixed-use development, with a pedestrian bridge linking to the college. This city will have housing, retail, restaurants, offices, entertainment, and a hotel designed by architects Taal Safdie and Ricardo Rabines (the brains behind Harbor Drive Pedestrian Bridge and Scripps Seaside Forum). The Quad, a student housing building, has already opened and won a 2015 Orchid Award for Architecture. Next up? A mixed-use building with 197 market-rate units above retail and restaurant spaces that will open to an outdoor plaza. "Central to this concept is the need to achieve land use intensities that support smart growth and utilize available mass transit," Levitt says. The community is highly walkable and also strings together two stations on the Sprinter light rail line. To put the size of North City's 204 acres in perspective, Carmel Valley's polarizing One Paseo is 23 acres—a mere shopping plaza by comparison. And the idea of having two downtowns is nothing new—L.A. has a downtown by USC and high-rises in Westwood near UCLA. Hey, if North City provides housing and improves our commute, our only question is: When can we move in?

Let's make San Diego a breeding ground for billion-dollar companies.



Greg McKee, CEO, Connect

MCKEE SAYS SAN DIEGO'S VERTICAL INDUSTRIES like agricultural tech, microbiome, genomics, and digital health are popping up quickly, and we should capitalize.

"We need to get real and step up our game around how we innovate. We need to be faster and a lot more global," urges McKee, whose company connects entrepreneurs and CEOs with great talent, capital, and technology. His startup accelerator, Connect, is developing a platform that will track emerging technologies and match teams with capital providers. This past summer the company opened its new Innovation Clubhouse, in University City, where people can meet about ideas as well as sit and work for free. "We don't ask people to pay. We ask them to pay it forward if they're successful." San Diego's billion-dollar success stories already include Illumina, Ballast Point, and Qualcomm. McKee would like to see the city build ten more billion-dollar companies in the next decade. "Enterprises of this magnitude bring economic vitality, jobs, tax revenues, international recognition and sophistication, and—perhaps most importantly—critical mass. Naturally, highly successful entrepreneurs want to be around other successful entrepreneurs, so the more successful companies we can create, the stronger the gravitational pull to San Diego becomes."



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