



# CITY OF EL CENTRO

A HORIZON OF OPPORTUNITIES

# WELCOME TO EL CENTRO

The City of El Centro is "Shining with Opportunity" for business in search of a diverse, growing, and business friendly setting to locate! Serving as the retail, employment, and business capital of the Imperial Valley, El Centro is an attractive destination for a Southern California location with convenient access to the U.S./Mexican Border.

The key to El Centro's opportunity is its prime location. With a population of 78,000 living within a 15 minute drive, El Centro is in a dominate business location being the most populated city in Imperial County. Convenient access regional transportation corridors like Interstate 8, State Route 86, and State Route 111 provide convenient access to San Diego, Los Angeles, and Phoenix urban areas.

Opportunity from a growing and thriving community also serves as a benefit to business. Growth in El Centro will continue with an estimated growth in the area measuring 12.4% according to Insight Market Analytics. Over half of the population (52.3%) is younger than 35 years old, showing that El Centro will continue to be a dynamic business environment for years to come.

Being only a thirteen mile drive to Mexicali, Baja California, Mexico with over 988,000 residents, El Centro provides an opportunity for business to take advantage of an international location in Southern California. With over 14 million vehicle and pedestrian crossings each year, the location of the international border provides a market for businesses that should not be underestimated. **Approximately 60% to 70% of sales occurring at the Imperial Valley Mall located in El Centro come from workers and visitors from Mexico.**

Domestically, El Centro is the area's employment hub. Major employers located in the El Centro area include federal agencies such as the Department of Homeland Security and Bureau of Land Management, local government offices serving the County of Imperial, and large educational and healthcare institutions. Agriculture industries and supporting businesses in El Centro also contribute to the region's \$2 billion agriculture industry.

Compounding the local business investments, business have a selection of local financial incentives to choose from by locating in El Centro. Prime areas for development and growth qualify for tax credits, foreign trade zone incentives, and a business friendly environment.



# #WEAREELCENTRO

The City of El Centro is the County Seat and the largest city, within Imperial County, one of the most developed agricultural regions in the Country, with an annual crop production of over \$2 billion. Given that El Centro is the County Seat, it is the administrative center and employment hub for the area, and the home to the El Centro Naval Air Facility. El Centro's year-round great flying weather and the proximity of several instrumented bombing ranges, the El Centro Naval Air Facility is an integral part of Naval Aviation Training.

The city encompasses approximately 11 square miles in size and has a population of roughly 46,315 residents, however, during a weekday's, working hours, its population temporarily increases due to visitors conducting county

## POPULATION ESTIMATES\*

El Centro	46,315
Imperial County	190,266
Mexicali, Baja California	1,101,000
Palm Desert	53,625
San Diego	1,420,572
Los Angeles	4,040,079

*\*In order of proximity*

business or those working in the City of El Centro.

The City of El Centro is a charter city and provides a variety of services to serve its residents and businesses, located within the city or the sphere of influence. Services and facilities provided by the City of El Centro are as follows: Administrative, Drainage, Fire, Law Enforcement, Library, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, Wastewater Collection and Treatment and Water Distribution and Treatment.

## POPULATION AT A GLANCE

Hispanic	85.8%
Non-Hispanic White	9.6%
Non-Hispanic Asian	1.9%
Non-Hispanic Black	1.9%
Non-Hispanic American Indian	0.2%
Non-Hispanic All Other	.6%
Median Age	30.2





## MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

2000

**\$31,951**

2010

**\$38,481**

2018

**\$45,582**

## FEATURES

Number of Households	<b>13,113</b>
Number of Housing Units	<b>14,715</b>
Homeownership Rate	<b>46.6%</b>
Average Household Size	<b>3.5</b>
Median Household Income	<b>45,582</b>
Number of Jobs	<b>25,901</b>
Mean Travel Time to Work	<b>18 min.</b>

## GROWING & THRIVING COMMUNITY

Local characteristics of the El Centro economy are a fundamental factor to consider. El Centro being the shopping and service destination for the Imperial Valley has annual retail sales of \$786 million representing close to 50% of the entire county's retail sales for 2017. Large employers in the area such as the Customs and Border Protection, Bureau of Land Management, State of California, **El Centro Regional Medical Center, and the Imperial Irrigation District have great buying power and stimulate the local economy.** El Centro's advantage is providing affordable housing compared to other Southern Californian locations. While the Southern California median home price is \$561,000, the median home price in El Centro is \$216,500.

## IMPERIAL COUNTY WORKFORCE OCCUPATIONS



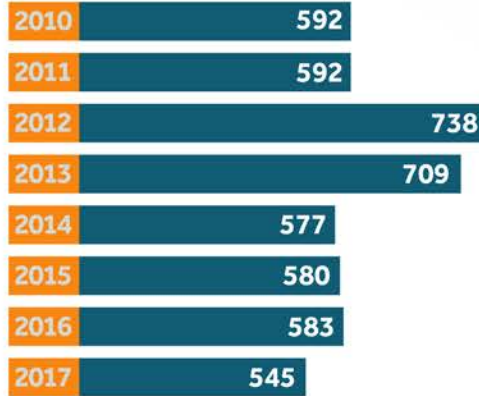


## EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES

El Centro is home to new business opportunities. Research from Insight Market Analytics has identified the following retail growth sectors:

- Furniture Stores
- Clothing Stores
- Specialty Food Stores
- Electronic and Appliance stores

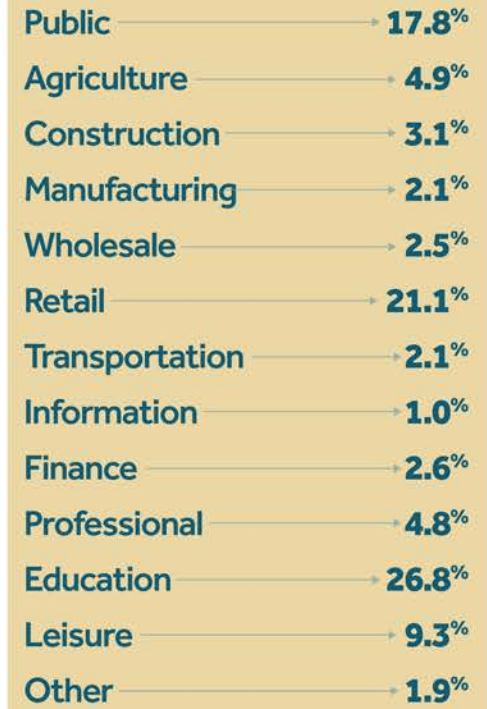
### JOBS IN MANUFACTURING



Local attractions result in a significant influx of visitors to El Centro. Destinations like the Imperial Sand Dunes attract over 100,000 visitors at once. These visitors contribute to the local economy through purchases of fuel, groceries, restaurants, and off-road vehicle sales and repair.

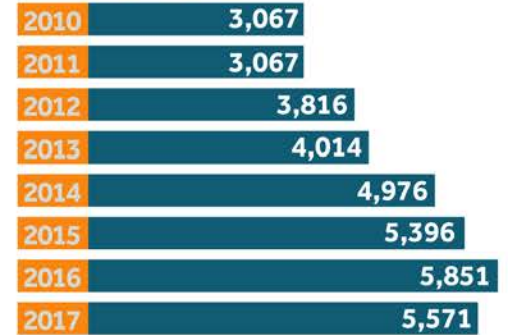
The City of El Centro has streamlined its entitlement process and is eager to assist new businesses.

### JOBS BY SECTOR



Source: SCAG Local Profiles Report 2019

### JOBS IN RETAIL



### MAJOR EMPLOYERS IN EL CENTRO & IMPERIAL COUNTY

Employer	Range
Calipatria State Prison	1,000-4,999
Centinela State Prison	1,000-4,999
Central Union High School	250-499
El Centro Naval Air Facility	500-999
El Centro Reg. Medical Center	500-999
Imperial County	1,000-4,999
Imperial County Office of Education	500-999
Imperial Valley College	500-999
Imperial Irrigation District	1,000-4,999
United States Border Patrol	500-999
Walmart Supercenter	500-999

Source: California Employment Development Department

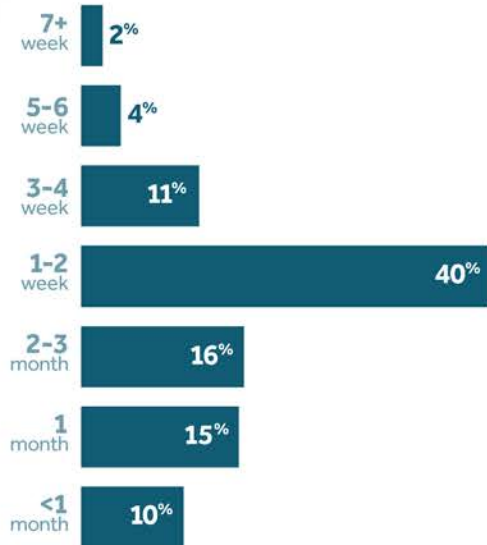


# BINATIONAL RELATIONS

Businesses considering locating in El Centro will gain from its strategic location thirty minutes from the U.S./Mexico Border. Two modern port of entry provide convenient and close access to Mexicali, the capital of the Mexican state of Baja California with 988,000 inhabitants.

An average of 50,000 persons travel into Imperial County from Mexicali on a daily basis for work, shopping and visiting.

## SHOPPING/BORDER CROSSER FREQUENCY



**Economically, regular border crossers spend \$380 million on retail and grocery items in Imperial County annually.**

Freight traffic flowing between Mexico and California utilize the Calexico East port of entry. In 2018, 440,340 trucks crossed the port of entry, providing freight transport to Los Angeles, Phoenix, and San Diego metropolitan areas.

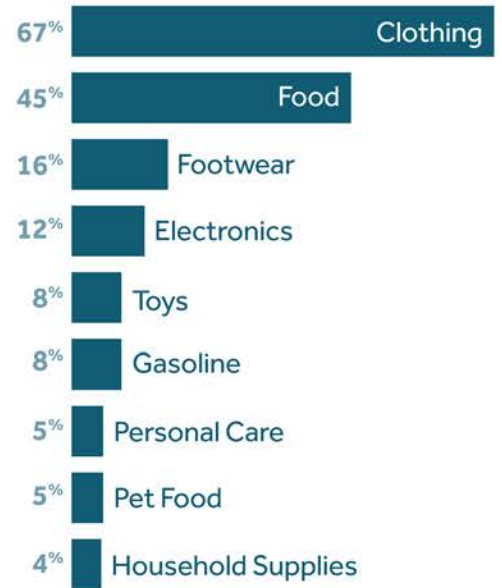
In addition to freight, El Centro benefits from its close proximity to the Imperial County Airport (Boley Field), which is located approximately 3 miles north of El Centro's business district. The Imperial County Airport provides two direct flights to Los Angeles, California daily.

Transportation routes like the Union Pacific Railroad, Interstate 8, State Route 86, and State Route 111 that facilitate international transport are located in El Centro.

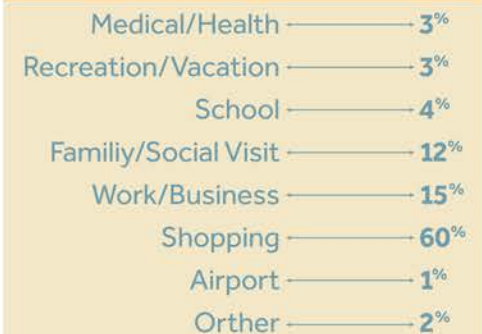


*The recent expansion of the Calexico West Port of Entry has reduced border wait times, thereby, improving commerce opportunities in the United States.*

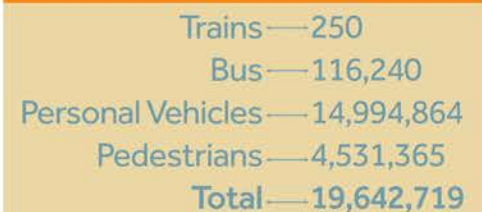
## BORDER CROSSER RETAIL PREFERENCE



## PURPOSE OF VISIT



## BORDER CROSSER (2017)



Source: Imperial Valley Border Economic Impact Study

# EXPANDING INVESTMENTS

The U.S. Investing in Opportunities Act, passed last year as part of the new federal tax bill, created tax incentives for investment in designated census tracts called Opportunity Zones (OZ). The statute was designed to spur growth in low-income communities by encouraging reinvestment of capital gains into certified Opportunity Funds.

Similarly, the New Market Tax Credits (NMTC) Program, passed by Congress in 2000, encourages investments in low-income

communities by providing a tax incentive for community development lenders and the capital markets to invest in communities. Eligible project types include community facilities, charter schools, healthcare facilities, manufacturing facilities, operating businesses, and commercial real estate developments located within low-income neighborhoods.

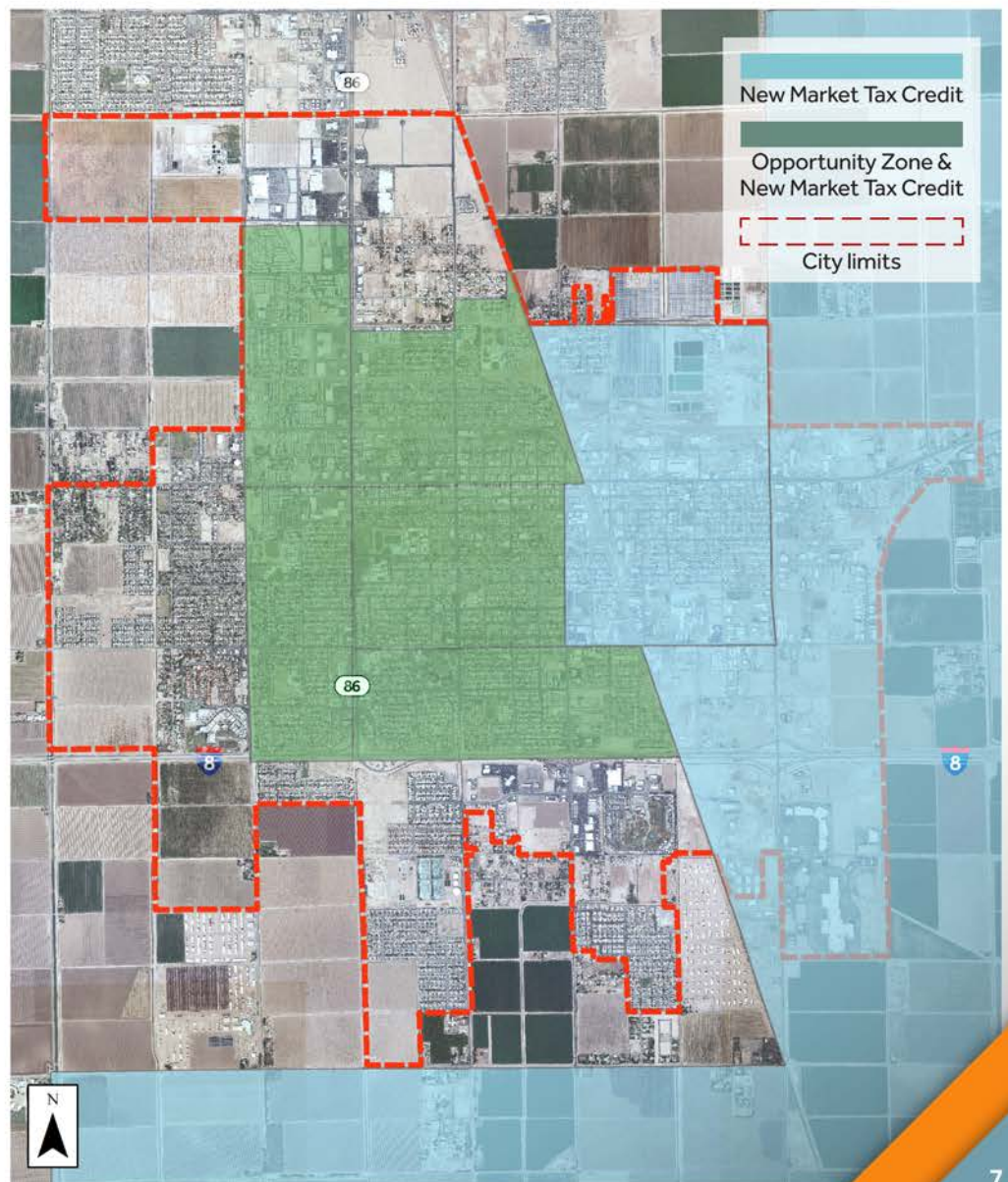
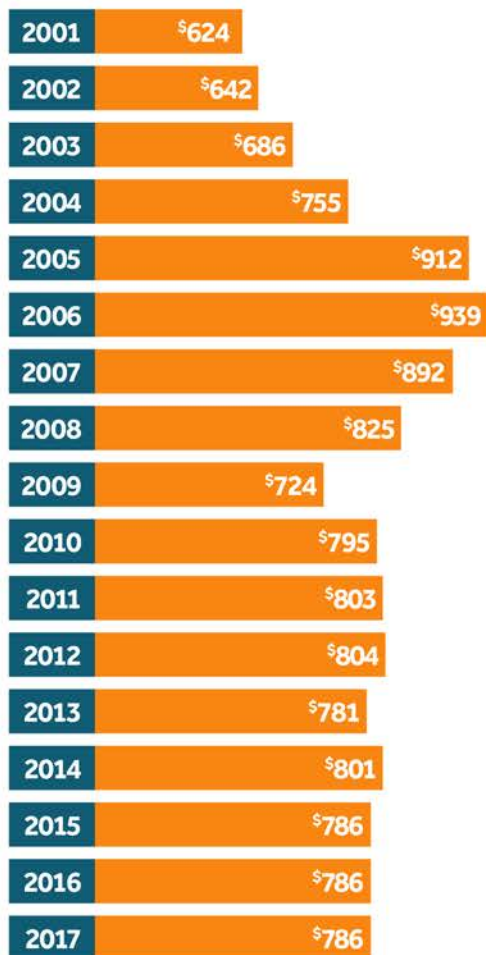
This provides flexibility - as well as the need - to craft local and state strategies that will focus these investments to ensure they deliver living wage jobs, increase affordable housing, prevent unwanted

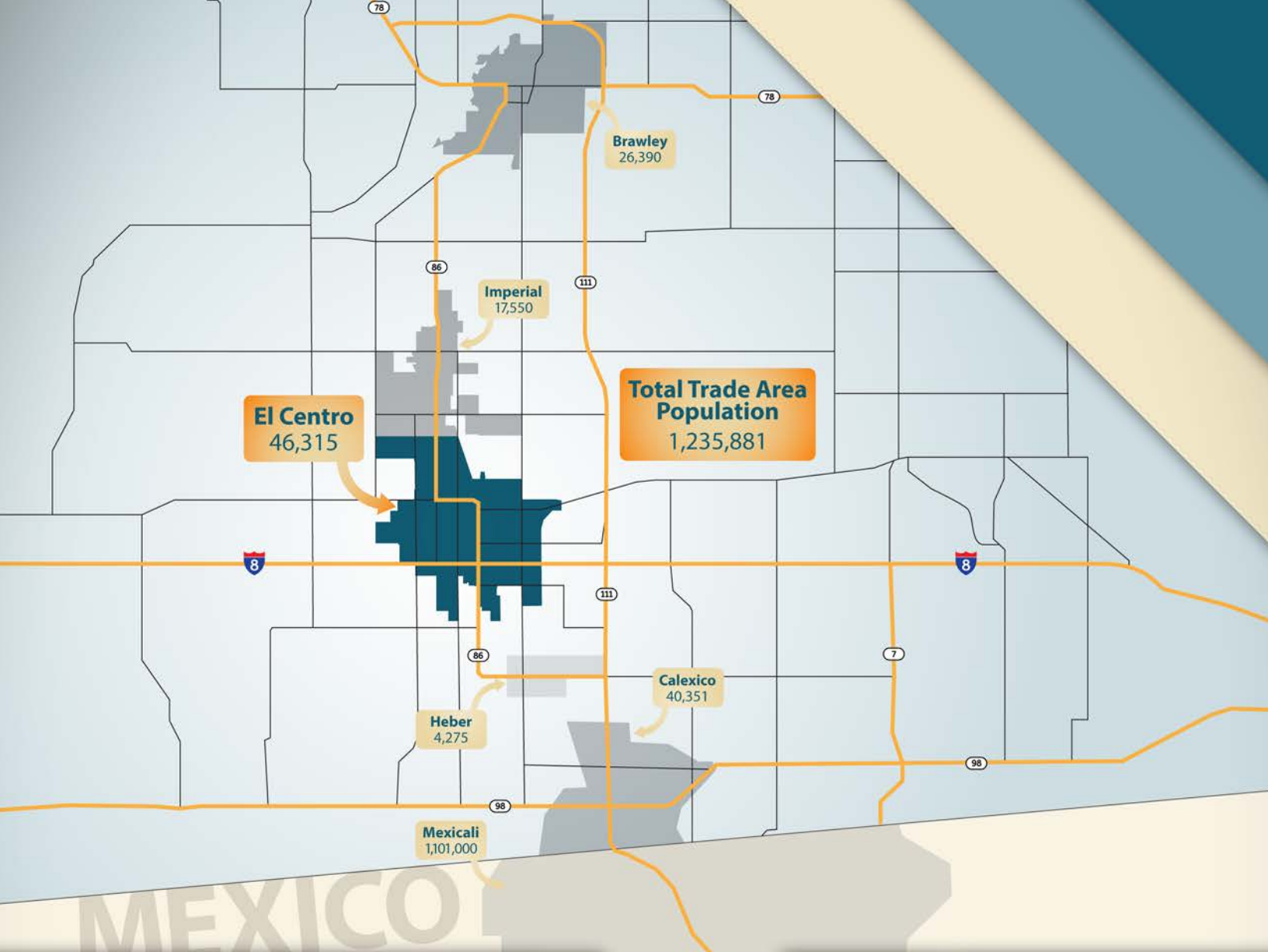


gentrification and build resilient communities. This work is just beginning and there is time for communities to consider the benefits of the OZ and NMTC as tools for development.

## CITY OF EL CENTRO OPPORTUNITY ZONE

### REAL RETAIL SALES (in millions)





## CITY OF EL CENTRO

1275 West Main Street  
 El Centro, CA 92243  
 (760) 337-4540

Sources: Imperial Valley Border Economic Impact Study  
*Imperial County Community and Development Department*  
 City of El Centro Sales Tax Update  
 Imperial County Economic Report  
*Southern California Association of Governments*  
 Local Profiles Report 2019  
*Southern California Association of Governments*

**#WEAREELCENTRO**