



Santa Maria Valley **ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT**

April 2025 | Prepared for the Community of Santa Maria



Introduction

The Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce is proud to present the Monthly Economic Impact Report for April 2025, showcasing our ongoing efforts to support economic growth and development in the region. Throughout the month, the Chamber provided direct assistance to two potential new businesses and five local enterprises, offering guidance on financial resources, community engagement and process navigation. These efforts reflect our commitment to fostering a thriving business environment in the Santa Maria Valley.

The Chamber hosted two major annual events this month, including the State of Education to provide updates on the progress and future of education in Santa Barbara County. The annual Strawberry Industry Recognition Dinner recognized outstanding contributions and continued support for the region’s leading agricultural sector.

An overall upward trend of Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) sets a positive tone for continued tourism growth in 2025, supported by our ongoing tourism efforts of drawing visitors to the area.

Workforce development has been a priority through a partnership in Career Coaching with Partners in Education, a teacher tour and Leadership Santa Maria Valley hosting its Sustainability & Natural Resources day.

The Chamber remains deeply engaged with local government and the community through collaborative events and meetings. This report underscores the Chamber’s vital role in driving economic success and supporting a healthy business community.

Table of Contents

Economic Development.....	1
Business Attraction.....	2
Business Retention & Assistance.....	2
Providing Business Support.....	3-5
Tourism.....	6-8
Workforce Development.....	9
Community Involvement.....	10
Media Mentions.....	11

Economic Development



Business Attraction

The Chamber's Economic Development department provided direct support to 2 businesses thinking of starting a business or moving their business to Santa Maria.

Business Type/Idea	Support Provided
Janitorial business start up	Start up info and steps
Beauty product self care manufacturing and sales	Referral with someone who has done this type of business, start up info and steps

Business Retention & Assistance

The Chamber's Economic Development department provided business assistance services to 5 local businesses and residents.

Business	Support Provided
Insurance Business	Fire Chief contact info - fire zones
Printing Marketing business	Introductions to some contacts
City of SM	Property search for ICSC prep
Hotel	Advice and help with business ideas
Large Auction company	Looking for land/ connections made
Fire Dept	Letter of support needed
Media/News company	Information requested



Providing Business Support

Chamber Membership



854
Members



8
New Members



92%
Retention Rate

Networking Opportunities



1,183

Networking Event Participants

This includes the Chamber's weekly Build Your Business networking events, monthly mixer, ribbon cuttings, new member orientation, Hispanic Business Alliance event, annual State of Education event and annual Strawberry Industry Recognition Dinner.

Strawberry Industry Recognition Dinner

In partnership with the Santa Maria Fairpark, the Chamber proudly celebrated the 33rd Strawberry Industry Recognition Dinner, bringing together 178 attendees to honor excellence in the local strawberry industry. This year's award recipients included Providence Farms as Grower of the Year and Driscoll's as Partner of the Year. The evening recognized outstanding contributions and continued support for the region's leading agricultural sector.



State of Education

The State of Education event featured local educational leaders providing insightful updates on the progress and future of education in Santa Barbara County. It served as an opportunity to hear about innovative initiatives shaping the success of our students, workforce, and community partnerships.



Providing Business Support

Military Affairs Committee

The group discussed the needs of the military personnel and their spouses that had been presented at the last meeting. Items that were presented to the Chamber Board for potential action included:

- Create a newcomers swag bag to be distributed at the VSFB orientation.
- Develop organized tours of the Santa Maria area for singles and families.
- Ask to attend the 1st Sergeants' meetings once or twice a year.
- Attend and/or promote the Military Families Readiness Center's job fair.
- Have a booth at the Base's Neighborhood Block Party.

Business & Government Roundtable

SpaceX's Blake Bradley came and spoke sharing some of the challenges they face with hiring and keeping employees. They have found that their employees are generally younger in their mid 20's-30's and they find that there aren't enough venues and experiential things to do on the Central Coast for late night entertainment. Housing is also an issue, finding rentals and purchase isn't attainable.



Ambassador Committee

We had 13 Ambassadors and 1 staff at the Ambassador Committee meeting. No board report was given since the board meeting was scheduled after this meeting. Announcement was made of our upcoming meetings and events as well as Ambassador assignments for these events. A report was given on new member outreaches. Our Ambassador profile for the month was presented by Alma Reyes of Central West Produce.



Providing Business Support

Hispanic Business Support

The Chamber's Economic Development department helps support Hispanic business outreach efforts through the Hispanic Business Group, which organizes educational and networking events.



Business Outreach & Assistance was provided to the following Hispanic businesses:

Business Type/Name	Support Provided
Cleaning Business	Assistance with forms of licenses
Detailing Business Start-Up	General business support
Clothing Business Start-Up	General business support

Outreach Efforts

The following businesses were visited for HBA outreach.

- Retail Store at Santa Maria Town Center
- Retail Store at Santa Maria Town Center
- Retail Store at Santa Maria Town Center
- Jewelry Store at Santa Maria Town Center
- Jewelry Store at Santa Maria Town Center
- Jewelry Store at Santa Maria Town Center
- Restaurant Santa Maria Town Center
- Restaurant Santa Maria Town Center
- Restaurant Santa Maria Town Center
- Restaurant Santa Maria Town Center

Additional Activities

- HBA Interest Meeting- April 1st
- HBA Grow Your Business: Immigration Enforcement- April 3 (21 attended)
- Restaurant Pop Up/ Food Truck Meeting with City- April 7th
- HBA Committee Meeting- April 17 (6 attended)

Tourism

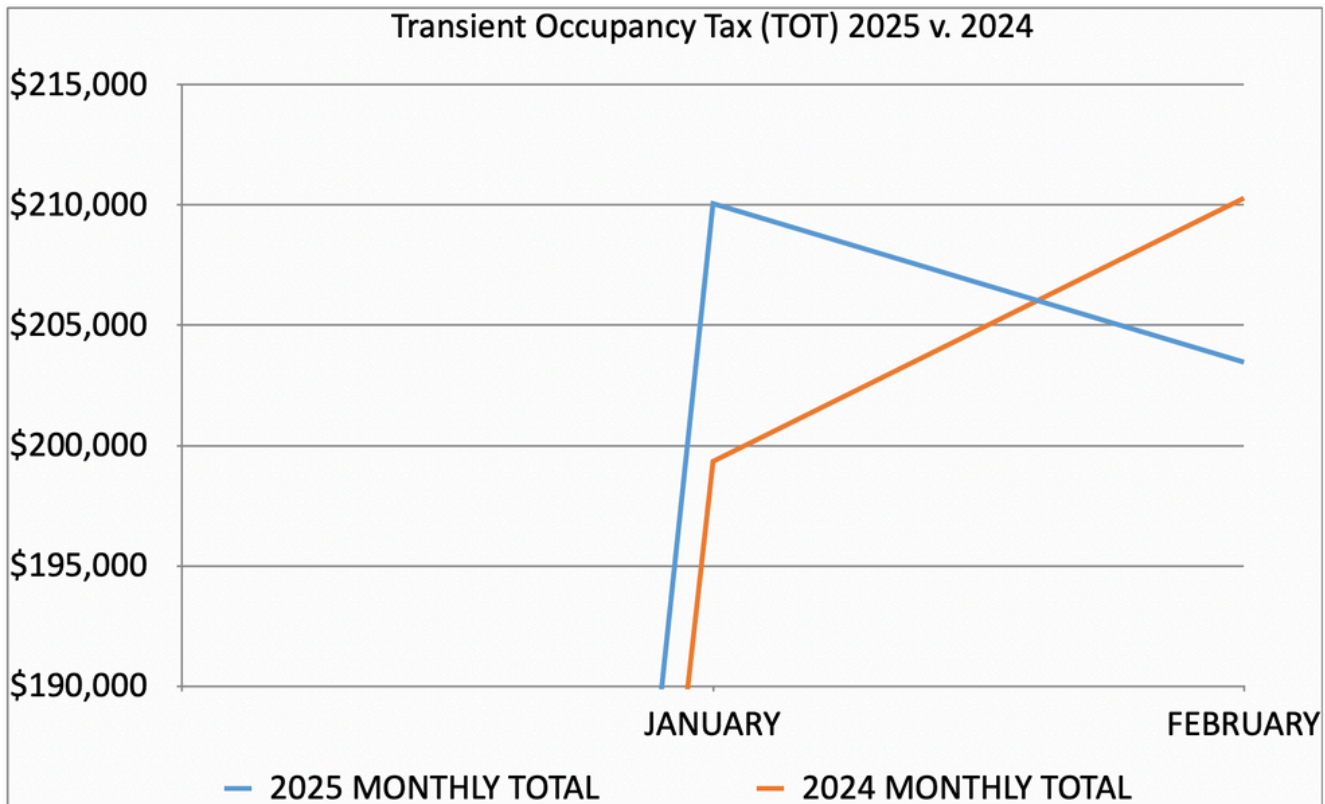
Transient Occupancy Tax Data

Through February 2025, the Santa Maria Valley’s Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) collections total \$413,528.77 year-to-date (YTD), showing a modest year-over-year (YOY) increase of 0.95% compared to \$409,631.85 collected by February 2024.

In January 2025, TOT revenue reached \$210,060.22, up 5.37% from January 2024’s \$199,345.75. However, February saw a slight month-over-month (MOM) decline of 3.24%, generating \$203,468.55 in 2025 compared to \$210,286.10 the previous year. Despite the monthly dip, the overall upward YTD trend highlights continued demand and resilience in local lodging activity.

The data reflects stable tourism-related revenue early in the year, setting a positive tone for continued growth in 2025.

Month	2025 Monthly Totals	2024 Monthly Totals	Monthly Percentage Change
January	\$210,060.22	\$199,345.75	+5.37%
February	\$203,468.55	\$210,286.10	-3.24%



Tourism

Website Traffic

Our tourism website (santamariavalley.com) remains a strong driver for hotel referrals. This month we saw....

42,414 Website Visits

1,111 Website Hotel Referrals



Brochure & Visitor Guide Distribution



800

Visitor guides distributed to local hotels, businesses and through Certified Folder Display placements

Trade Shows & Industry Partner Events Attended

2025 California Central Tourism Council Annual Retreat & Planning Session - April 21 - 23, 2025

Group Leads and Details

- Jay E. McCord: Jay McCord, the Car Show Chairman of the Santa Maria Model A Ford Club, requested 100 welcome bags for attendees of the 23rd Annual Santa Maria All Ford Car Show and Swap Meet. He will pick them up on Tuesday, August 19, 2025.
- Bonnie Abramson: Bonnie Abramson, Co-General Chairman of the California Council of Square Dancers, requested 30 goodie bags for her planning meeting at the Best Western. She also asked for informational brochures to display at her booth while promoting the 64th California State Square Dance Convention in various cities.



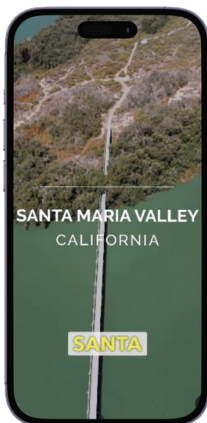
Tourism

Paid Advertising

The Visitor's Bureau was featured on CA Travel Guide's website.



Familiarization (FAM) Tours & Media



We hosted 3 FAM tours in April:

- Pam & Gary Baker
 - Freelance food, wine, and travel writers who contribute articles for LuxeBeat Magazine
- Alec Sills-Trausch
 - Outdoor photographer with an active blog, Explore with Alec
- Jordan Reid
 - Social Media Influencer

Community Support

The Visitor's Bureau provided support to the following community events:

- West Coast Kustoms Cruisin' Nationals
- 23rd Annual Santa Maria All Ford Car Show and Swap Meet
- 64th California State Square Dance Convention



Workforce Development

Teacher Tours

11 High School CTE Teachers toured the Santa Maria Airport, Mob Armor, and Diani Companies.



Leadership Santa Maria Valley

Topic Day: 4/4/25 - Sustainability & Natural Resources: There were 20 people attending. We toured the Santa Maria Landfill, learned about Pacific AgriTec and how they are transforming CO2 in algal biomass, toured the salamander habitat on the property of the Santa Maria Airport and went to Cambria Winery and learned about their sustainability in growing grapes and producing wine.



Workforce Development Board

Workforce Development Board Adult Special & Special Projects Committee meeting - heard from a number of WDB program operators about the work they do and how they performed on meeting state requirements, changing being made to better meet requirements and serve more individuals this coming fiscal year. The Chamber serves on this committee to provide insight, connections and support around the Adult Programs operated by the Workforce Development Board.



COUNTY of SANTA BARBARA
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

NextGen CEO

NextGen CEO kicked off their Spring Session partnering with the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Mid-Central Coast at Evans Park & Railroad club sites, featuring 20+ student participants.



Community Involvement

Local Meetings & Events

The Chamber's Economic Development department stays actively involved in the community to build relationships and understand the needs of local businesses and the community.

Economic & Community Development

- Workforce Development Board Adult Special & Special Projects Committee meeting
- State of Education
- U.S. Chamber Business Leads Fellowship Program Orientation
- Western Association of Chamber Executives (W.A.C.E.) Marketing Committee Meeting
- W.A.C.E. Emerging Leaders Council

Business Support

- New Member Orientation
- Ribbon Cuttings
- Chamber Executive Committee Meeting
- Chamber Board Meeting
- LSMV Board Meeting
- US Chamber of Commerce Meeting
- Business Government Roundtable
- Allan Hancock Meeting
- REACH Roundtable
- Airline Headquarter meeting
- Meeting with Community Development Director
- Restaurant Pop up & Food Truck meeting

Community Events

- BYB (Build Your Business) weekly networking breakfast (4)
- Chamber Mixer with Northern Santa Barbara County United Way
- Family Service Agency State of Youth Mental Health
- Strawberry Industry Recognition Dinner
- Hispanic Business Alliance Grow Your Business Event: Preparing
- Your Workplace for Immigration Enforcement Challenges
- Marian OB/GYN Residency program announcement
- ACPD Ribbon Cutting
- State of Education
- City Council
- Planning Commission
- Planning Commission Study Session
- Federal Issue's Roundtable
- Calm Fundraiser
- Richards Ranch informational



Media Mentions

Chamber

Topic	Publication
Housing Summit	Santa Maria Times
Cocktail Contest	Noozhawk Santa Maria Times
State of Education	Noozhawk Santa Maria Times Santa Ynez Valley News
Local Business Spotlight	Santa Maria Times
Ribbon Cutting	Noozhawk
Editorials	Santa Maria Times
Barbecue/Tourism Month	PR Newswire FOX 8
Strawberry Dinner	Lompoc Record Santa Maria Times

Tourism

Topic	Publication
Santa Maria Style Barbecue	Islands The Takeout Yahoo Finance StreetInsider
Wine	Forbes
General Tourism	Visit California Visit California Explore with Alec





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