



# Santa Maria Valley ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT

May 2025 | Prepared for the Community of Santa Maria



## Introduction

The Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce is proud to present our Quarterly Economic Impact Report from May 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 three 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 has been involved in various programs, promotions and initiatives to foster growth in the region. The NextGen CEO Spring cohort of 2025 graduated from the program, fostering workforce development.

Our monthly mixer with Partners in Education and also Hispanic Business Alliance mixer promoted community growth and networking opportunities, particularly for students and a growing workforce. Additionally, high Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) rates have increased in 2025 compared to the previous year, demonstrating a potential for strategic tourism initiatives to drive positive results.

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.

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## 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
Doggy Daycare	Location/zoning/start up info etc...
Massage	Business start-up steps & info, & SM city license

## Business Retention & Assistance

The Chamber's Economic Development department provided business assistance services to 3 local businesses and residents.

Business	Support Provided
Plumbing	Email intro for him for support
Enevi- Recycling	Strategic planning / discussion
Battery Storage	Letter of support for PC meeting

## Requests for Information

### Governor's Office of Business & Economic Development (GO-Biz) RFI's

The Chamber's Economic Development department received 1 RFI through REACH.



## Providing Business Support

### Chamber Membership



**854**  
Members



**5**  
New Members



**91%**  
Retention Rate

### Networking Opportunities



**534**

#### Networking Event Participants

This includes the Chamber's weekly Build Your Business networking events, monthly mixer, ribbon cuttings, the Hispanic Business Alliance mixer, and Chamber committee meetings.



Joining the Santa Maria Chamber of Commerce was a natural decision for CADA. As we continue to expand our services in Santa Maria, we wanted to connect more deeply with the local community and be part of a network that prioritizes collaboration, support, and shared growth. The Chamber has already provided meaningful opportunities for us to engage with local leaders, raise awareness about our mission, and strengthen our presence in Santa Maria. We are grateful to be part of a community that values connection and is invested in the well-being of its residents, something that aligns closely with the work we do every day.

-Luna Shalabi,  
Development Manager, Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse

## Providing Business Support

### NextGen CEO

NextGen CEO is an eight-week business education course that teaches kids the basics of starting their own business, and what it takes to “be their own boss.” Run in partnership with the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Mid Central Coast, the program encourages students to find or expand on their passion and create a business. NextGen CEO provides students with a fun and engaging way to learn entrepreneurial skills. The Spring cohort of 2025 wrapped up the course and launched their businesses to the public, featuring products like pillows, bracelets, lip glosses, flowers and more. A graduation ceremony was then held for the students and their families to celebrate.



### Military Affairs Committee

We had 4 committee members and 2 guests present. Bob Hatch and Dave Cross joined us and shared about the history, purpose and future of the Freedom Monument. The Monument and annual celebration held on Veterans Day remembers the fallen soldiers of Santa Maria Valley.



### Business & Government Roundtable

Laurus College shared information about their history, college and programs.



### Ambassador Committee

We had 11 Ambassadors and 1 staff present at the Ambassador 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 Garrett Matsuura of Arclight Media.



## 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
Clothing Start-Up	Business planning support and referral to appropriate resources
Mobile Washing Business Idea	Support with mobile car wash startup guidance

### Additional Activities

- Cinco De Mayo Mixer (05/01/2025)- 250 attendees
- HBA Committee Meeting (05/22/2025)
- Corazon Del Pueblo Event

The following businesses were visited for Chamber outreach:

- Non-Profit
- Jewelry Store at Town Center Mall
- Restaurant



## Tourism

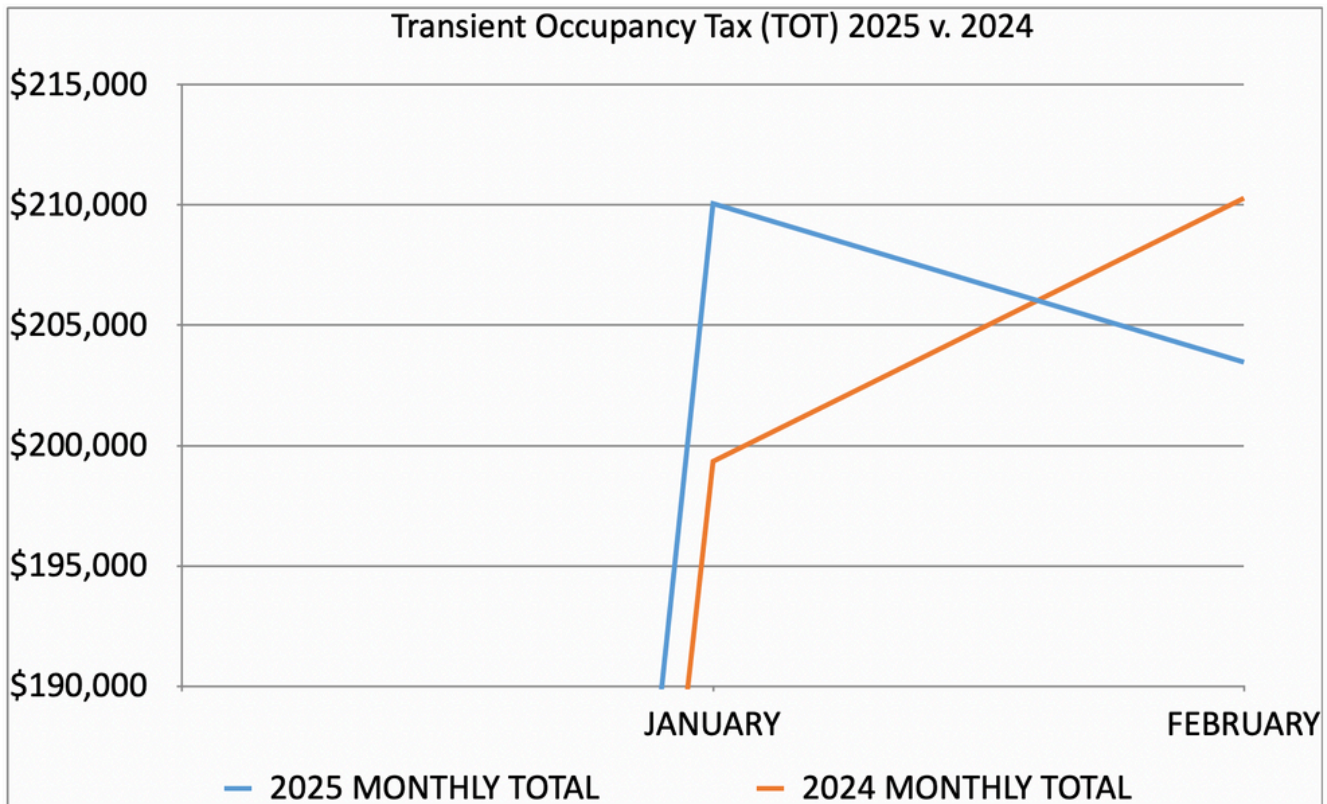
### Transient Occupancy Tax Data

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

### Community Support

The Visitor's Bureau partnered with the 82nd Santa Maria Elks Rodeo providing marketing and Santa Maria Valley swag and promotional materials.

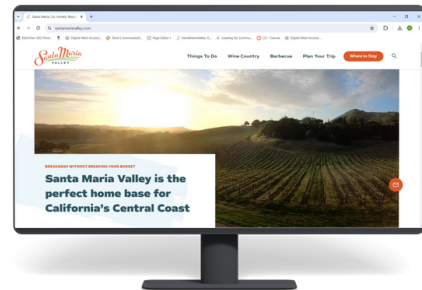


### Website Traffic

Our tourism website (santamariavalley.com) remains a strong driver for hotel referrals.

**45,096 Website Visits**

**1,174 Website Hotel Referrals**

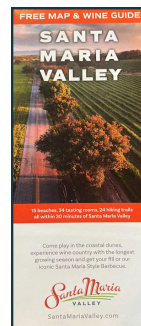


### Brochure & Visitor Guide Distribution



**177**

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



**157**

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



## Tourism

### Trade Shows & Industry Partner Events

2025 SLO Expo - Attended the SLO Expo to represent Santa Maria Valley on May 21.

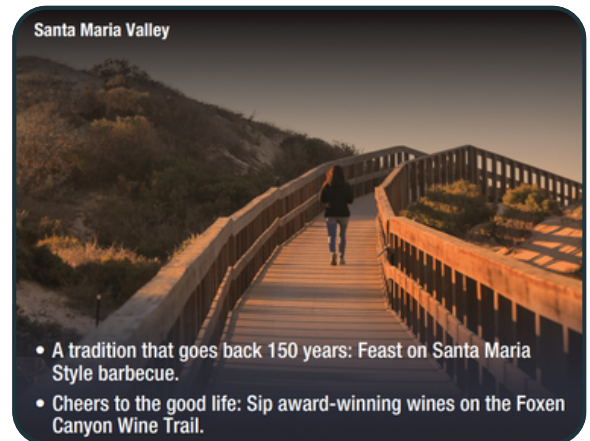
### Group Leads and Details

82nd Santa Maria Elks Rodeo - Tina Tonascia, Chief Operations Officer of Elks Recreation Inc., requested 100 pieces of our Santa Maria Valley swag, promotional items, and print materials to include in the Rodeo's VIP swag bags. Tonascia also asked for recommendations for wine and lunch spots for her VIP guest.



### Paid Advertising

The Visitor's Bureau was featured in Sunset CCTC Coop.



### Familiarization (FAM) Tours & Media



We hosted 1 FAM tours in May:

- Matthew Kaner
  - Journalist for an online publication focused on wine, dining, and travel called "Will Travel For Wine."

## Workforce Development

### Partners in Education

The Chamber donated 10 laptops to Partners in Education’s Computers for Families program. We also attended Partners in Education Board Meeting & Strategic Planning Session. We also went to Visalia with our SBCEO education partners to be a guest at the Tulare-Kings Healthcare Partnership meeting to better understand their model of connecting industry and education so we could create something similar in the Santa Maria Valley Community.



### NextGen CEO

18 students completed the NextGen CEO program and graduated after launching their businesses to the public.



### Leadership Santa Maria Valley

In May, Leadership Santa Maria Valley (LSMV) focused on Arts & Recreation. There were 22 people attending this month. We toured PCPA and the Fine Arts Center at Allen Hancock College. Our leadership speaker was Dr. Monique Diaz speaking on being a “recovering perfectionist”. We heard from Angela Oslund and Dennis Smitherman about the City’s recreation department and their community art projects. The day ended with a trip to the Hagerman Sports Complex to learn and play pickleball. LSMV also hosted an Alumni Event, an Annual Alumni Meeting and Reunion at Naughty Oak Brewery.



### Workforce Development Board

We held an information session on the WDB’s “Paid Work Experience” program in partnership with the Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber. Focused on programming that connects justice-involved individuals to work opportunities. Had 15 businesses attend. We continue to promote the “Build Your Workforce” program to connect businesses with opportunities to provide paid work experience, hire and upskill local talent.



COUNTY of SANTA BARBARA  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

# 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

- State of Education
- US Chamber Business Leads Fellowship Program speaker series:  
The k-12 Honesty Gap & What to do About it
- Elks Rec Community Partnership Meeting
- Tulare-Kings Healthcare Partnership meeting
- WDB Paid Work Experience Information Session in Santa Barbara
- WACE Emerging Leaders Council Meeting
- Partners in Education Board Retreat
- YMCA Board Meeting Presentation

### Business Support

- Veterans Stand Down Transportation Meeting
- Veterans Stand Down General Meeting
- LSMV Board Meeting
- Chamber Executive Committee Meeting
- Chamber Board Meeting
- New Member Orientation
- United Way Executive Committee Meeting
- United Way Board Meeting
- WACE Board Meeting
- WACE Marketing & Communications Committee Meeting
- WACE Membership Committee Meeting
- Lafco
- Bess Storage Facility – prep for PC meeting 6/4
- Internal Social Media Meeting / Start up business classes launch
- Internal – trailing spouse meeting
- Downtown Project meeting with Vernon's
- Meeting with City Planner
- Cen Cal Business Finance Group
- RRM Design meeting
- SMX meeting

### Community Events

- Hispanic Business Alliance Cinco de Mayo Mixer
- May Mixer with Partners in Education at the CTE Center
- Rotary Barn Party
- "Mapping Ourselves" Leadership Presentation - Rajiv Mehta
- Veggie Rescue Fundraiser
- AHC Advisory Board
- WDB Meeting in SB partner with SBSCC
- Police Memorial Ceremony
- Era Polly RE anniversary party
- SMVRR Fundraiser
- Next Gen CEO launch
- AHC Scholarship awards
- West Coast Kustoms Car Cruise
- West Coast Kustoms Car show judging
- Elks Rodeo



## Chamber Media Mentions

Topic	Publication
Cinco de Mayo Mixer	<a href="#">Santa Maria Times</a> <a href="#">Noozhawk</a>
State of Education	<a href="#">Santa Ynez Valley News</a>
Strawberry Industry Recognition Dinner	<a href="#">The Sentinel</a>
Partners in Education Mixer	<a href="#">Noozhawk</a>
Chamber Editorials	<a href="#">Santa Maria Times</a> <a href="#">Santa Maria Times</a>
Businesses of the Quarter	<a href="#">Noozhawk</a>
NextGen CEO	<a href="#">Noozhawk</a>
Gala Nominations	<a href="#">Noozhawk</a>

## Tourism Media Mentions

Topic	Publication
Wine	<a href="#">VinePair</a> <a href="#">Yahoo Life</a> <a href="#">Wine Spectator</a> <a href="#">KXTV</a> <a href="#">Santa Barbara Independent</a> <a href="#">MSN</a>
Santa Maria Style Barbecue	<a href="#">Eater LA</a> <a href="#">Travelbinger</a> <a href="#">Associated Press</a>
General Travel	<a href="#">KTLA</a> <a href="#">Aol</a>



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