



# *Santa Maria Valley* **ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT**

**August 2024 | 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 August 2024, 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 four 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.

In the tourism sector, the Chamber’s targeted marketing campaigns and event sponsorships helped stabilize the local economy through transient occupancy tax (TOT) driving tourism to the area. The Chamber’s support of key community events, including the Santa Barbara County Farm Day and Central Coast Airfest, further contributed to promoting the region.

Workforce development has been a priority with the launch of the “Build Your Workforce” program in partnership with the Workforce Development Board. This initiative connects local businesses with resources to hire, upskill, and provide work experience opportunities, addressing critical workforce needs. Additionally, the Chamber’s involvement in the Leadership Santa Maria Valley program continues to cultivate future leaders in the community.

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 vibrant 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
Daycare business	Finance support and resources
Furniture business	Support navigating through processes

## Business Retention & Assistance

The Chamber's Economic Development department provided business assistance services to 4 local businesses and residents.

Business	Support Provided
Coaching business	Ways for community engagement
Mixed use project	Community support
SM Philharmonic	Sponsors for family day concert
SMX air service	Meetings for consultant to attend

## Providing Business Support

### Chamber Membership



**846**  
Members



**11**  
New Members



**86%**  
Retention Rate

### Networking Opportunities



**124**

### Networking Event Participants

This includes the Chamber's weekly Build Your Business networking events, a ribbon cutting and Grow Your Business event.

## 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
Party supplies store	Help with business resources (redirected to marketing company)
Hair salon	Directed to workforce program
New business startup	Needed help obtaining a loan, connected them with the SBA

The following Hispanic businesses were visited:

- El Oxxo
- La Bellezza
- Fashion Max
- Taqueria Robles
- A&J Jewelry
- Jade & Co
- Kevin's Jewelers
- Daniel's Jewelers
- Don Roberto's Jewelry
- The Dream Collection
- Cotton: On Kids
- Cotton: On
- Leisure Time Games
- Luxury Perfumes
- Hibbett Sports
- Wicked Moon
- Cellax Phone Repair
- Asian Relaxation
- Cloud 9 Salon
- Eyebrow Art
- Honey Tree
- Royal Barbershop
- World 1-1 Gameplay



## Providing Business Support

### Additional Activities

#### Grow Your Business Event

This Grow Your Business event featured Marisol Cruz, Senior Vice President and Loan Administrator from Community Bank of Santa Maria. Marisol discussed the importance of financial literacy and provided valuable insights on accessing capital. She covered essential steps for new and young businesses to qualify for and utilize funding sources effectively.

Additionally, Joaquin Vargas from America's Job Center of California explained how his organization can assist businesses with employee needs and training.



Activity	Description
California Hispanic Chamber Convention Bakersfield (August 21-24)	Represented the Santa Maria Valley on this event that brought together various Hispanic chambers and industries in California.
Radio Outreach (Aug 28)	Promoted the Hispanic Business Group and the services provided by the Chamber during a radio interview on Spanish radio station Radio Ranchito.
Meetings with Local Bank (Aug 29)	Met with a local bank as they are trying to better serve the Hispanic community in the city and gave them resources to connect with this community and support them.
Meeting with Law Firm (Aug 16)	Met with a law firm that is looking to establish a presence in Santa Maria and serve the Hispanic community; able to help them with options for office locations.



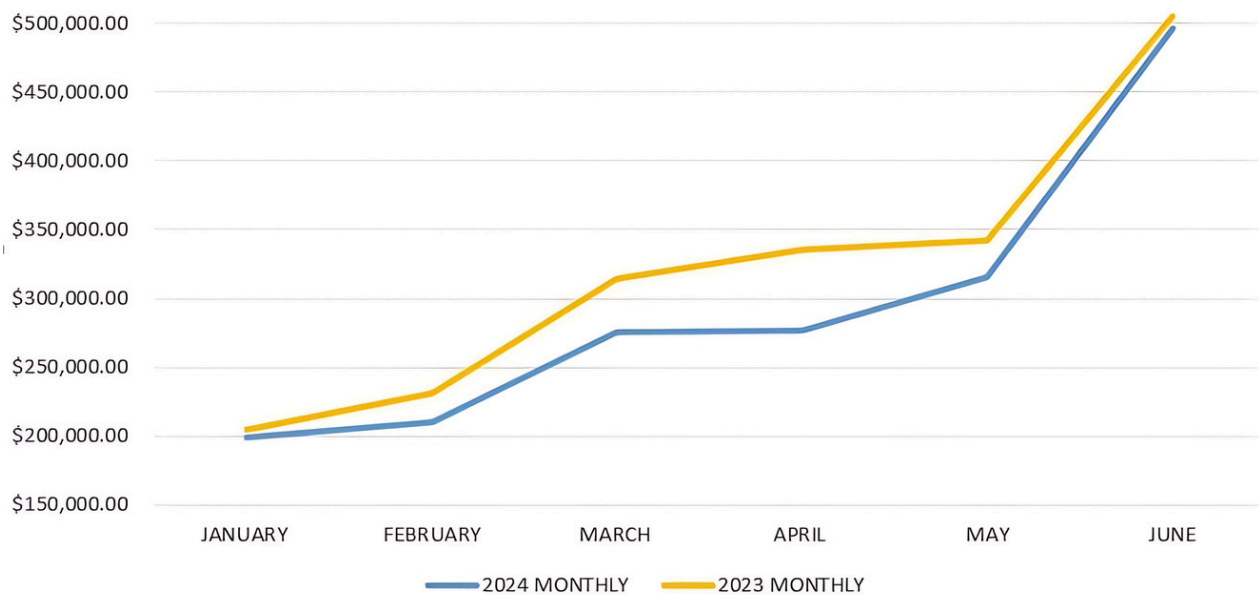
# Tourism

## Transient Occupancy Tax Data

The Santa Maria Valley Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) is a tax levied on visitors staying in hotels, motels and other lodging facilities within the area. This tax is a significant source of revenue for the local government, funding various community services and projects. A recent year-over-year decrease in TOT revenue has been attributed to adverse weather conditions and a decline in construction demand. Inclement weather has discouraged tourism, leading to fewer overnight stays. Additionally, reduced construction activity has resulted in fewer visiting workers requiring temporary lodging. Together, these factors have contributed to the overall drop in TOT collections, however have steadily increased on a monthly basis.

Month	2023 Monthly Totals	2024 Monthly Totals
January	\$ 205,130.05	\$ 199,345.75
February	\$ 231,414.69	\$ 210,286.10
March	\$ 314,518.19	\$ 275,837.25
April	\$ 335,291.13	\$ 277,268.38
May	\$ 342,224.96	\$ 315,838.18
June	\$505,111.83	\$496,629.02

Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) Comparison  
2023 vs. 2024



## Tourism

### Community Support

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

- Santa Barbara County Farm Day 2024 (8/24)
  - SMVCC Contributed \$1,000
- Central Coast Airfest (9/21-22)
  - SMVCC contributed \$7,500 and \$5,500 worth of in-kind marketing
- Santa Maria Open Streets 2024 (10/6)
  - SMVCC contributed \$1,000
- Dana Adobe Holiday Gala
  - SMVCC contributed \$1,250



### Familiarization (FAM) Tours & Media

Hosted one FAM tour in August.

- Carole Meyers - Freelance contributor

### Website Traffic

Our tourism website (santamariavalley.com) remains a strong driver for hotel referrals. In the month of August we saw....

**36,936** Website Visits

**848** Website Hotel Referrals



### Brochure & Visitor Guide Distribution



**440**  
Visitor guides distributed to local hotels, businesses and through Certified Folder Display placements



**600**  
Wine guides and maps distributed to local hotels, businesses and through Certified Folder Display placements

### Industry Partner Events

- Meeting with VP of Sales for Travel & Adventure
- Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center Board Meeting

### Group Leads

- Quilt Guild
  - Group of 20+ visiting for the Old Town Orcutt Quilt Show
  - Connected with local hotels

## Workforce Development

### Partners in Education

The Chamber is assisting with recruiting career coaches and intern site hosts for Partners in Education.

Chamber staff will once again be participating as a career coach for local high school students during the 2024-2025 school year.



### Leadership Santa Maria Valley

The Chamber hosted a welcome reception for the LSMV Class of 2025. There are 23 class members in this class.

Mid-month, the class and a few alumni facilitators held their kick-off retreat at Rancho Alegre. The monthly topic days will begin in September.



“ My experience at the Leadership Santa Maria Valley Retreat was nothing short of invigorating. Not only did it allow me the opportunity to disconnect from day to day routine, but it allowed me the opportunity to flourish individually while creating new relationships with my classmates on a deeper level. However, the biggest takeaway for me was the ability to dig deep and re-acknowledge who I am as a person!

-Arnold Vasquez  
Leadership Santa Maria Valley, Class of 2025



## Workforce Development

The Chamber has launched their “Build Your Workforce” program in partnership with the Workforce Development Board and has begun business outreach to connect businesses to resources and funding available to upskill, hire and provide work experience for employees. Additional information is available at [www.santamaria.com/workforce/](http://www.santamaria.com/workforce/).

The Chamber is also partnering with the Workforce Development Board and the Lompoc Chamber on connecting businesses to a paid work experience program for justice-involved individuals. Informational sessions on this opportunity have been scheduled in Lompoc and Santa Maria as well as via Zoom over the next few months. Additional information is available at [www.santamaria.com/workforce/paid-work-experience-programs/](http://www.santamaria.com/workforce/paid-work-experience-programs/).



## Addressing Housing Needs

Housing Project	Support Provided
Downtown Housing Project	Council meeting prep
Blosser Ranch	Municipal / School District assistance

## 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.

#### Government Relations

- State of the County
- Bob Nelson Los Alamos Town Hall
- City Council Meeting
- Planning Commission Meeting
- Planning Commission Study Session
- Breakfast with Bob Nelson
- August 20th Council Meeting
- Laurus College - Workforce Development
- State of the City Preparation Meeting

#### Economic & Community Development

- Partners in Education - Programs Committee Meeting
- Chamber Board Meeting
- W.A.C.E. Emerging Leaders Council Monthly Meeting
- W.A.C.E. Academy
- REACH meeting with Executive Team
- REACH – Practitioners network
- Grow Your Business
- SMX Board of Director Meetings (2)
- Strawberry Commission Meeting

#### Business Support

- Build Your Business weekly networking breakfast (5)
- Ribbon Cutting - Old Orcutt Yarnery

#### Community Events

- LSMV Welcome Reception
- LSMV Retreat
- SEEAG Farm Day VIP Tour
- Pacific Coast Business Times Spirit of Small Business Awards
- Santa Barbara State of the County
- Oasis Senior Center Fundraiser
- Cal Poly Strawberry Commission event
- EconAlliance Golf Tournament
- Rotary (3)
- Concerts in the Park (2)
- Farm Bureau Celebration of Harvest
- Boys & Girls Club Luncheon Honoring Brooks Wise
- Santa Maria Evening Rotary
- Vandenberg Space Force Base Tour
- 2nd Quarter Awards 2024 Space Force Vandenberg





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