



Santa Maria Valley **ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT**

**September 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 September 2024, showcasing our ongoing efforts to support economic growth and development in the region. Throughout the month, the Chamber provided direct assistance to six potential new businesses and eight 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’s targeted efforts provided business support in the Hispanic business community through various efforts, including hosting a mixer in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month featuring nearly 40 businesses and 300 attendees.

Workforce development has been a priority through a partnership with Partners in Education and the first teacher tour of the academic year. Leadership Santa Maria also hosted its first topic day at Vandenberg Space Force Base.

The Chamber has also been engaged in advocacy efforts, co-hosting Candidate Forums for Santa Maria districts 1 & 2 with the League of Women Voters of Northern Santa Barbara County.

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 6 businesses thinking of starting a business or moving their business to Santa Maria.

Business Type/Idea	Support Provided
Light manufacturing	Finding a company to assist and partner with them
Consulting company	Start-up questions and direction given
Electric Bus Company	Information on locating to the area, tour, and Q & A
Small business startup	Information and guidance
Restaurant start up	Help finding location to make their food
Business startup	Tax/seller's permit/food related questions

Business Retention & Assistance

The Chamber's Economic Development department provided business assistance services to 8 local businesses and residents.

Business	Support Provided
Housing group	Phone call - info on what they do and how to assist, where they can get involved
SMX	Businesses travel needs
Strawberry Commission	Growers' minimum wage discussion
REACH	Assistance with location for Roundtable
Non-Profit	Information and how we can assist
UPC	Support needed for project
Non-Profit	Intro to Hardy Diagnostics
Developer	Local Hotel connections for development

Community Improvement Activities

- Outreach for the Downtown Project/set up 2 community outreach meetings
- Facilitated information for Downtown Project for support at City Council
- Provided documentation regarding the Downtown Project to a concerned business/citizen
- Strawberry Dinner & Fairpark meeting
- 2 Strawberry Commission meetings
- Visit to SLO Chamber Visitor Center
- 2 Rotary meetings & 1 Rotary mixer
- PBID Meeting with City Leadership

Providing Business Support

Chamber Membership



Networking Opportunities



203

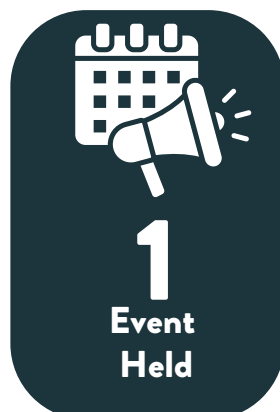
Networking Event Participants

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

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.



Providing Business Support

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

Business Type/Name	Support Provided
Corn Vendor	Provided with food permit info
Mobile Detailing	Business License Guidance
Prospective Food Vendor	Food permit info

Business Visits

The following businesses were visited for Chamber outreach:

- Servicios de immigration
- Novedades y Decoraciones Santos
- Angelita's Fashion
- Paqueteria Los Mixtecos Express
- Santa Maria Bridal
- Furniture Depot
- Power of Nature
- Deli Delicious
- Mikado Sushi
- Superstars Cuts
- Cigarette King
- Fix 805
- The UPS Store
- La Verna Pizza
- El Tizon
- Big 5
- X-travagant hair salon
- Woodys Bobas
- Rangel Music

Additional Activities

- Hispanic Heritage Mixer
 - Was held at the Santa Maria Town Center Mall and brought together over 40 businesses and close to 300 attendees that celebrated Hispanic businesses in the area
- Dia De La Familia
 - Hosted a booth at the Dia De La Familia Event on September 22
- Meetings with local banks
- Hispanic Chamber Meeting with CA Hispanic Chamber
- Meetings with Open Streets Stakeholders
- Hispanic Business Group Meeting
- Committee meeting



Tourism

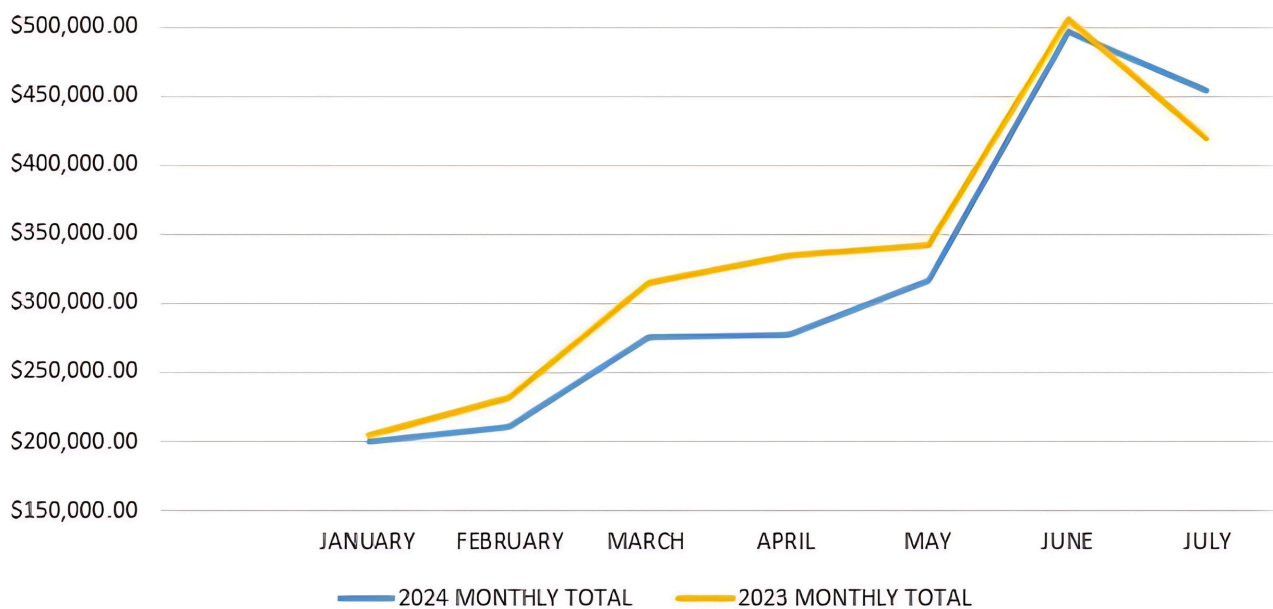
Transient Occupancy Tax Data

An analysis of the Santa Maria Valley Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) shows a year-to-date decrease of -5.25% in 2024 compared to 2023. The monthly totals for 2024 show a mix of declines and gains when compared to 2023. January through May saw continued decreases, with March experiencing the largest drop of -12.30%. However, in July 2024, the trend reversed, showing a monthly increase of 8.37%, indicating a recovery in occupancy rates.

Data suggests that while 2024 has generally seen lower occupancy tax revenues than 2023, July shows an upward trend, possibly signaling a rebound in tourism activity. This has been consistent with overall industry trends.

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
July	\$418,849.93	\$453,920.91

Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) Comparison 2023 vs. 2024



Tourism

Community Support

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

- Cops 'n' Cars (October 19)
 - SMVCC Contributed \$1,000



Website Traffic

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

39,172 Website Visits

745 Website Hotel Referrals



Brochure & Visitor Guide Distribution



150

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



150

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

Industry Partner Events

- Sports Events & Tourism Association (SportsETA)
 - Facilitates Requests For Information between sports associations and destinations. Interest in joining membership to bring sporting events into the area.
- Central Coast Tourism Council board meeting

Workforce Development

Partners in Education

Partners in Education Received the Golden Bell Award from the California School Board Association for their Career Readiness & Internship Program. The Golden Bell Award promotes excellence in education and school board governance by recognizing outstanding programs and governance practices of school boards in school districts and county offices of education throughout California. The Chamber is actively involved in Partners in Education's programming, with staff serving as a Board Member, Career Coach and having hosted an intern through their program.



Teacher Tours

The Chamber and SBCEO held its first teacher tour of the school year. The theme for this tour was "Mind to Market" and a group of 14 high school and college teachers and administrators visited All American Screen Printing, VTC, and PCPA. And, they heard from a panel of marketing experts from Vere Marketing and Concentric360. The Teacher Tours program connects business and education, so teachers can have business relationships with local businesses and bring back best practices and insight to their classrooms to better prepare students for local jobs.



Leadership Santa Maria Valley

The first topic day for LSMV was out to Vandenberg Space Force Base. There were 25 participants who had a mission briefing from Col. Shoemaker and Tom Stevens, and another from the ICBM testing squad. LSMV also toured SLC-6 and the Base Museum.



Advocacy

- City Council Candidate Forum: The Chamber co-hosted a Candidate Forum for City Council districts 1 & 2 with the League of Women Voters of Northern Santa Barbara County. Over 80 community members came out to hear from the candidates and ask questions during the 2 hour program. The Mayors Candidate Forum will take place October 4th.
- The Chamber provided a letter of support for Allan Hancock College to provide agriculture training, tours, paid internships, and experiences for students pursuing degrees and certificates in Agriculture Robotics and Mechanized Agriculture. View letter [here](#).
- The Chamber submitted a letter and resolution to the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors opposing the proposed \$26 per hour minimum wage for agricultural workers. View letter [here](#).

Addressing Housing Needs

Housing Project	Support Provided
Downtown Project	City Council prep and support
Cook St Apts	Introduction to other developers
Bellecrest Cottages	Info on project, and support letters
Blosser Ranch	Support and conversations
Richards Ranch	Following progress of Annexation request
Solomon Hills	Following process of application

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

- Hancock Honors event
- REACH Appreciation event
- AT Still Graduation Ceremony
- Airfest VIP dinner
- Weekend at the Airfest
- Attended Planning Commission Meeting
- Attended City Council meeting
- Attended Chamber Mixer
- Meeting at SpaceX
- Meeting at VSFB
- Meeting with United Way
- City Council Candidate Forum

Economic & Community Development

- AT Still Breakfast with the Dean
- REACH Practitioner Network
- Meeting with Laurus College
- Bus Manufacturer meeting, tour, lunch, Q & A
- Diablo Power Plant Tour with EDC
- Lunch with City Staff
- Meeting with Atlas Copco
- Partners in Education Board Meeting
- Partners in Education Golden Bell Award review
- Western Association of Chamber Executives Emerging Leaders Council - Monthly Meeting
- Western Association of Chamber Executives Emerging Leaders Council - Exec Committee Meeting
- United Way Board Meeting
- Partners in Education Career Coach training

Business Support

- Hispanic Business Group Hispanic Heritage Month Mixer
- CALM Ribbon Cutting & Open House
- Meeting with Santa Maria Valley Railroad

Community Events

- Mayors Gala Planning meeting
- Hancock Honors
- Chamber Mixer at United Staffing Associates
- Chamber Ambassador Committee Meeting



Media Mentions

Topic	Publication
Hispanic Business Group Mixer	Noozhawk
Local Business Spotlight	Santa Maria Times
Build Your Workforce Program	Santa Maria Times KEYT Noozhawk
Candidate Forums	Santa Maria Times KSBY KEYT Noozhawk
Awards Gala	Santa Maria Times Noozhawk
Editorials	Santa Maria Times Santa Maria Times
Lunch & Learn	Noozhawk



(805) 925-2403 | santamaria.com | santamariavalley.com

