



STRATEGIC PLAN

2026 - 2030

Vision

We lead a regional organization that grows jobs, expands housing opportunities, and enhances the South Coast experience for residents, employers, and visitors.

Mission

The Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to the economic health and vitality of communities from Goleta to Carpinteria on the South Coast of Santa Barbara County.

About

The Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of Commerce, from Goleta to Carpinteria, is a regional business organization with the mission to help South Coast businesses, residents, and visitors thrive. Through leadership and collaboration, the Chamber is the principal economic development entity advocating for the business community. We engage with businesses, elected officials, and regional partners in proactive business initiatives that foster the South Coast's unique business environment and create opportunities for our communities. The Chamber is proud to represent local business members who create 75,000 jobs on the South Coast!



“This strategic plan reflects our belief that a strong business community is the foundation for a thriving South Coast. Over the next five years, we will bring people together, advocate with purpose, and invest boldly in solutions that grow opportunity, support housing solutions, and strengthen our regional economy for everyone who lives, works, and visits here.”

Kristen Miller
President & CEO

Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of Commerce

Strategy 1: Serve as a Central Convener and Trusted Hub for Regional Economic Growth

Elevate the Chamber's role in advancing housing, workforce, and entrepreneurial solutions through collaboration, funding pathways, and data-driven decisions, while complementing existing service providers.

Key initiatives:

1. Develop the Economic Development Foundation

Form a 501(c)(3) entity to serve as the Chamber's economic development arm, clearly defining its purpose, objectives, and goals. Position the division to build upon current TechTopia initiative, attract grants, philanthropic investment, and public-private partnerships supporting regional growth.

2. Build a Sustainable Workforce Development Program

Coordinate a workforce pipeline initiative connecting students and jobseekers to local employers through mentorships, internships, career fairs, and convening events. Focus on developing pathways into stable, local careers.

3. Formalize Public-Private Partnerships for Economic Development

Pursue contractual partnerships with each city and the County to deliver programs in workforce, housing, and data-driven policy development, each with a pro forma that generates revenue and a standard operating framework for consistency.

4. Advance Housing Solutions through the Road Home Initiative

Continue identifying and supporting workforce housing projects that align with employer and community needs, advocating for policies that expand attainable housing supply.

5. Strengthen the Visitor Economy through Visitor Services

Utilizing the existing Hospitality Strategic Plan as a launch point, create a 5-year vision for increasing economic impact of visitors on local business.



Strategy 2: Promote the South Coast Business Community's Image and Reputation through Storytelling and Partnerships

Connect the community, amplify impact, and highlight business as essential to the South Coast's exceptional quality of life—from jobs and housing to philanthropy, innovation, and the visitor experience.

Key initiatives:

1. Define, Communicate and Promote the Business Community "Why"

Craft and consistently share a clear narrative that connects business vitality to community prosperity. This messaging—integrated into events, media outreach, and digital platforms—will strengthen understanding that "business is community," reinforcing the Chamber's essential role in regional quality of life.

2. Create a Chamber Storytelling Series

Develop and promote a storytelling campaign that celebrates local businesses. Feature short videos, profiles, and testimonials illustrating how Chamber programs, events, and partnerships have directly supported member growth, innovation, and community well-being.

3. Launch a CEO-Led Visibility and Influence Campaign

Position the Chamber's CEO as a leading voice for the South Coast business community through consistent social media storytelling, video messages, and thought leadership posts. Use these channels to highlight regional successes, amplify advocacy wins, and strengthen the Chamber's brand visibility across audiences.



Strategy 3: Advocate for and Cultivate Business-Oriented Government Leadership that Values Economic Vitality and Community Wellbeing

Focus on influencing City and County decisions by cultivating strong relationships with city and county officials, promoting leadership that values economic vitality, and positioning the Chamber as a go-to resource on local policy.

Key initiatives:

1. Strengthen Relationship and Influence

Continue inviting elected and city officials to Chamber events and amplify the visibility and impact of in-person government affairs meetings.

2. Modernize Political Engagement

Elevate the Chamber's PAC through stronger branding and integration into advocacy communications. Develop a clear, accessible Voters Guide outlining pro-business policy priorities and candidate alignment.

3. Cultivate Future Leaders and Informed Advocates

Educates members on local government, advocacy, and civic engagement, building a pipeline of future business-minded candidates and advisors.

4. Bridge Business and Government Communication

Host business-government roundtables to foster open dialogue on shared challenges and strengthen mutual understanding between local officials and business leaders.



Strategy 4: Ensure a Financially Sustainable, Resilient, and Nimble Chamber

Invest in people, systems, and structures to ensure a modern, sustainable Chamber that adapts to emerging trends and delivers on evolving member and market needs.

Key initiatives:

1. Develop a 5-Year Financial Growth Plan

Create a comprehensive financial strategy with diversified revenue goals, a clear policy on reserves, and measurable benchmarks to strengthen long-term fiscal stability.

2. Expand and Retain Membership

Segment the current membership base to identify gaps and target new industries, while developing a plan for member retention and engagement across all tiers.

3. Strengthen Member Experience and Value

Create a more intentional and personalized member journey—from onboarding to long-term engagement—that clearly connects participation to impact and community outcomes. Build systems that deepen relationships, demonstrate return on investment, and celebrate the Chamber's role in member success.

4. Leverage Data and Technology for Growth

Use data and emerging technology to guide smarter decision-making, enhance communication, and expand reach. Establish a culture of insight where data informs strategy, personalizes engagement, and reveals new opportunities for growth and innovation.

5. Build Development and Fundraising Capacity

Expand the Chamber's capacity to cultivate investors and partners who share its vision for regional prosperity. Strengthen the structure, storytelling, and systems that support sustained private-sector investment and long-term financial resilience.

6. Invest in Staff Growth and Leadership Continuity

Develop a succession plan for Chamber staff and create professional development plans to build internal capacity, strengthen leadership, and enhance retention.

Strategy 5: Advocate for Smart, Consistent Public Policies that Support Business and Community Success

Lead a coordinated regional effort to advocate for streamlined permitting, process modernization, and the adoption of effective practices from high-performing communities.

Key initiatives:

1. Focus Advocacy Around Major Community Issues

Continue to align Chamber advocacy with priority issues like permitting reform and housing and set specific goals leveraging business and government partnerships to drive measurable results.

2. Advance Permitting Reform through Data and Partnership

Utilize the most recent reports and City and County studies that define the need for permitting reform and inform targeted solutions. Collaborate with city permitting offices to develop clear onboarding guides, process timelines, and referral pathways for new businesses. Ground these efforts in lessons learned from benchmark high-performing communities.

3. Build a Data-Driven Case for Change

Collect and analyze business and member data on the economic impact of regulatory delays, including project timelines, added costs, and business losses. Use this evidence to make a compelling, solutions-oriented case to local and regional policymakers.

4. Convene Collaborative Problem-Solving Forums

Facilitate sector-based working groups and panels focused on identifying, prioritizing, and addressing key permitting and regulatory barriers.





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FROM GOLETA TO CARPINTERIA

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