



Memo To: Town of Los Gatos Staff and Town Council

From: Jennifer Lin, Chief Executive Officer, LGCC
David Lambert, President LGCC Board of Directors

Subject: FY 2025-2026 Year-End Town Contract Report
Visit Los Gatos Visitor Services, Destination Marketing
& Economic Vitality Program

Date: May 29, 2026

Introduction

The Los Gatos Chamber of Commerce is an independent contractor that is paid a fee for service by the Town of Los Gatos. This memo details the ways in which the Chamber has fulfilled the scope of services outlined in the Town's Agreement with the Los Gatos Visitor and Information Center.

Our Mission

The Los Gatos Chamber serves the community first and foremost by being a catalyst for business growth and success; a convener of leaders and influencers to get things done; and a champion for a thriving community.

Our Vision

The Los Gatos Chamber of Commerce aims to be the strong, unified voice of the spirited Los Gatos business community and a catalyst for business support and advocacy. The Chamber acts as a convener of leaders and influencers for dialogue and problem-solving while serving as a champion for preserving the cherished quality of life in our Town by listening to the concerns of all segments of the community.

The Town has an agreement with the Chamber to manage the Town's Visitor and Information Center. This agreement has been in place off and on for 25 years.



Contract

The Town has maintained an agreement with the Los Gatos Chamber of Commerce to manage visitor information and destination marketing services for much of the past 25 years.

In 2001, the Town Council approved just over \$100,000 for services provided by the Chamber. Over time, that funding level declined significantly even as the Chamber's scope of services, destination marketing responsibilities, and operational costs continued to expand.

From 2019 through June 2023, the Chamber received approximately \$55,000 annually. Separately, the Chamber received one-time ARPA funding to support COVID-19 pandemic recovery and community vitality initiatives; these funds were outside the annual contract and were not intended as ongoing operational support. In FY 2023–2024, FY 2024–2025, and FY 2025–2026, the Town provided annual funding of \$88,000.

As part of the Visit Los Gatos program, the Chamber subsidizes and provides the Town's Visitor Information Center facilities, public restroom access, visitor services staffing, social media management, destination marketing support, and flexible meeting space regularly used for community and civic purposes.

For FY 2025–2026, the Chamber's actual Visit Los Gatos program delivery costs totaled approximately \$154,494. The Town's \$88,000 contract represented approximately 57% of those costs, with the Chamber absorbing the remaining balance in support of visitor services and destination marketing efforts that benefit the broader community and local economy.

For FY 2026–2027, the Chamber has requested a contract renewal at \$108,000, which would represent 70% cost recovery of current program delivery expenses, consistent with the proportional support level provided in FY 2025–2026. Despite continued upward pressure on occupancy, insurance, staffing, and operational costs, the Chamber remains committed to sustaining a strong visitor and destination marketing program that supports local businesses, regional visitation, and economic vitality.

Rather than approaching the Visit Los Gatos program as a fixed scope of services tied solely to the annual contract amount, the Chamber continually evaluates emerging opportunities, visitor trends, and community needs to develop initiatives that strengthen



economic vitality, support local businesses, increase regional visitation, and enhance Los Gatos' long-term destination appeal.

The Los Gatos Chamber of Commerce is pleased to present this year-end report detailing the ways in which the Chamber fulfilled and expanded upon the Scope of Services outlined in its agreement with the Town of Los Gatos.

Visitor Experience and Information Services

Visitor Information Center Operations

Strategically located in downtown Los Gatos, the Visitor Information Center provides year-round visitor services Tuesday through Friday from 10 AM to 4 PM, with additional coverage on most days.

The Chamber team provides personalized visitor guidance related to dining, shopping, accommodations, outdoor recreation, local events, and community resources.

The Chamber also maintains the only permanent public restroom facility in the downtown area, serving visitors and residents while supporting overall downtown accessibility and activity.

The Visitor Information Center also serves as an important connection point for Town departments, nonprofits, cultural organizations, and community groups by distributing informational materials and helping residents, visitors, prospective businesses, and relocating families access local resources and services.

In addition, the Chamber's conference room regularly provides meeting space for local nonprofits, business groups, civic discussions, Town-related meetings, mayoral initiatives, retreats, public forums, and community collaborations, helping address the ongoing shortage of public community meeting space within Los Gatos.

Digital Destination Marketing and Visitor Engagement

VisitLosGatosCA.com serves as the community's primary digital destination marketing and visitor planning platform, highlighting Los Gatos' dining, shopping, hospitality, arts, wellness, and recreational experiences. During FY 2025–2026, website enhancements focused on improving navigation, visual storytelling, itineraries, and visitor usability. These efforts helped maintain strong search visibility while increasing visitor engagement.



The Chamber expanded the reach of its @VisitLosGatos social media channels as a core destination marketing tool. Over the past year, @VisitLosGatos gained more than 1,250 followers, with Instagram surpassing 9,000 followers in January 2026. Standard posts now average approximately 5,000 views, with roughly 45% of reach coming from new audiences outside the existing follower base. Collaborative posts with businesses and creators generated even broader visibility, with several posts exceeding 20,000 views.

The Chamber partnered with @discover_california_, a leading California travel and culinary content creator, to produce destination-focused content highlighting Los Gatos' dining, shopping, hospitality, and lifestyle experiences ahead of major regional tourism opportunities associated with the 2026 Super Bowl and FIFA World Cup. The collaboration generated strong regional visibility, with three featured Instagram reels collectively generating more than 186,000 views and reaching more than 90,000 accounts, including one reel exceeding 111,000 views. The campaign also helped expand the audience and visibility of the @VisitLosGatos platform through additional follower growth and engagement.

To support destination-focused storytelling and trip planning, the Chamber recently contracted with local travel content creators Katy & Ryan Roam to assist with content development, photography, and itinerary creation. Forthcoming itineraries include themes such as "Sip, Stroll & Stay Awhile" and "Self-Care in Los Gatos," designed to encourage overnight stays and broader exploration of the community.

Throughout FY 2025–2026, the Chamber collaborated with regional hospitality, travel, and lifestyle partners to increase visibility of Los Gatos among dining, leisure, and event-focused audiences. Seasonal campaigns, particularly during the holiday season, generated strong regional engagement and helped reinforce Los Gatos' reputation as a family-friendly destination community.

Destination Marketing: Tools and Content Strategy

Los Gatos Destination Guide and Visitor Maps

During FY 2025–2026, the Chamber expanded and promoted the Los Gatos Destination Guide as the community's primary visitor and relocation resource. Professionally designed and editorially driven, the guide highlights Los Gatos' dining, boutique shopping, wine tasting, outdoor recreation, arts and culture, wellness experiences, and local history while helping present the town as a polished and distinctive destination community. The



guide has received consistently strong feedback from visitors, businesses, and community stakeholders for both its visual presentation and the strength of its content and visitor resources.

The Chamber distributed approximately 6,000 printed guides annually through San Jose International Airport, local hotels, businesses, regional visitor locations, and the Visitor Information Center. Nearly 400 printed guides are picked up monthly from San Jose International Airport and the Visitor Center combined, reflecting consistent visitor demand.

The mobile-friendly digital edition generated more than 166,000 impressions over the past year, significantly expanding regional visibility for Los Gatos businesses and visitor experiences.

To further strengthen regional awareness ahead of major tourism opportunities associated with the Super Bowl and FIFA World Cup, the Chamber secured prominent Visit Los Gatos placement in the inaugural Silicon Valley & South Bay Visitor Fun Map, distributed through six California Welcome Centers and multiple airports including San Jose International Airport and Oakland International Airport. Visit Los Gatos is also prominently featured in the Los Gatos Sounds of Summer Music & Entertainment Guide, with 6,000 copies distributed throughout the West Valley.

Additional Visitor Resources

The Chamber supported visitor discovery and wayfinding through resources including the LOST Gatos Historical Walking Tour, the illustrated Downtown Map, and a regularly updated online community-wide calendar featuring major local events and activities.

Economic Vitality and Business Promotion

During FY 2025–2026, the Chamber expanded digital tools and promotional initiatives designed to support local business visibility, visitor engagement, and community spending. These initiatives were developed as community-wide economic support tools intended to benefit the broader Los Gatos business community and local sales tax activity rather than serve as revenue generators for the Chamber. Participation is open to Chamber members and non-members alike at no cost.

The Chamber launched the **Los Gatos Perks Pass** at the end of October 2025 as a mobile-based visitor discovery platform encouraging residents and visitors to explore local restaurants, wineries, retailers, wellness businesses, and experiences. **More than 1,050 people have added the Perks Pass to their mobile devices.** The platform also



supports rotating promotions, destination discovery, and themed visitor experiences designed to encourage broader exploration of Los Gatos businesses and districts.

In May 2026, the Chamber also launched the **Los Gatos Gift Card**, a community-wide digital gift card program designed to encourage local spending while providing a flexible gifting option for residents, employers, visitors, and organizations. Participating businesses are also connected through the broader “Buy the Bay Card” initiative, a regional gift card collaboration involving approximately 30 cities and more than 1,500 merchants throughout the Bay Area. The initiative is being explored in connection with the 2026 FIFA World Cup as a potential tool to help encourage visitor spending at participating Los Gatos businesses during the event period.

Destination Marketing: Signature Events and Economic Activation

The Chamber’s signature events and community activations continue serving as important economic drivers for Los Gatos, attracting substantial regional visitation while supporting restaurants, retailers, wineries, hotels, and small businesses throughout the year.

Attendance data from major Chamber events, including the Los Gatos Wine Walk and Taste of Los Gatos, indicate that **approximately 87% to 91% of attendees are non-residents**. Visitors regularly travel from throughout Silicon Valley and the broader Bay Area, with San Jose consistently representing the largest attendee market, followed by Mountain View, San Francisco, Oakland, and a broad range of additional Bay Area communities. Additional attendees also travel from well beyond the region, ranging from Napa and Truckee to Salinas, along with organized out-of-town visitor groups, reinforcing Los Gatos’ growing visibility and regional draw. Attendance patterns and business feedback also indicate that visitors attending Chamber-produced events frequently return to Los Gatos throughout the year to dine, shop, and explore the community.

In addition to large-scale signature events, the Chamber expanded smaller events designed to increase foot traffic and support year-round economic activity. These included the Valentine’s themed Sweetheart Stroll, GOLD Thursdays (First Thursdays vitality initiative), the Window Wonderland holiday decorating contest, Halloween Kid & Pet PAWlooza, and support for business-driven campaigns including Pink Friday and International Women’s Day.

Taste of Los Gatos Street Festival



Taste of Los Gatos 2025 drew an estimated 3,750 attendees and further established the event as a Bay Area culinary and wine festival with strong family participation. Compared to the inaugural year, the event attracted more multi-generational families and fewer heavy-drinking attendees, supporting the Chamber's goal of positioning the festival as a balanced food and wine experience reflective of Los Gatos' character and community identity.

The festival demonstrated strong regional draw, attracting visitors from throughout Silicon Valley, the broader Bay Area, Oregon, and other regional markets. As with other Chamber-produced events, the majority of attendees were non-residents, generating meaningful visibility and spending for restaurants, retailers, wineries, and hospitality businesses.

A major enhancement in 2025 was the introduction of the "Bites & Libations" tasting experience, which added wine tasting to the culinary program. Other additions included the new Golden Spoon Distinction honoring local culinary excellence, improved live music programming with a mainstage, improved wayfinding, a family games area, and new sponsor activations.

Feedback from merchants, wineries, and restaurants was overwhelmingly positive, with businesses reporting stronger customer engagement, increased shopping and dining activity, and more visitors exploring downtown throughout the day.

Magical Memories Holiday

Year two of the Magical Memories Holiday Program exceeded expectations, welcoming approximately 900 families and 1,400 children over five event days. The free community program featured trolley rides, Santa visits in Old Town, Gourmet Hot Chocolate Sips, and a Sweet Surprises activation that helped increase downtown foot traffic during the critical holiday shopping season.

The program generated strong community participation and social media engagement, helping reinforce Los Gatos' reputation as a holiday destination for regional families. The Chamber also incorporated a charitable component benefiting a local charity.

GOLD Thursdays

For 2026, the Chamber expanded GOLD Thursdays as Los Gatos' monthly First Thursdays vitality initiative running from May through October. Designed to encourage strolling, shopping, dining, and community connection, GOLD Thursdays combines business promotions, live entertainment, and family-friendly programming to build on already



energetic Thursday evenings, helping drive local commerce and offset softer weekend downtown activity patterns associated with seasonal beach cut-through traffic.

The 2026 season launched May 7 with the inaugural activation of the Town's new **Downtown Entertainment Zone** ordinance. During GOLD Thursdays, adults 21 and over may purchase alcoholic beverages from participating businesses and responsibly enjoy them within the designated downtown boundaries. GOLD Thursdays served as the Town's first operational test case for the ordinance, demonstrating how managed outdoor social activity can support economic vitality and encourage visitors to explore multiple downtown businesses.

Eleven restaurants participated in the May season launch alongside nine additional businesses offering promotions and activations. Live music was featured in seven locations throughout downtown, and participating businesses reported strong foot traffic and sales activity. One retailer reported a notably strong sales lift, with approximately \$16,000 in sales during the May GOLD Thursday activation.

Los Gatos Wine Walk

The 2026 Los Gatos Wine Walk demonstrated strong regional appeal and economic impact for Los Gatos, attracting visitors from throughout Silicon Valley, the Bay Area, and beyond. The event also attracted visitor groups traveling from Phoenix, Seattle, and Los Angeles, further reinforcing Los Gatos' growing visibility as a regional destination experience.

The event was highly rated by attendees, wineries, and downtown merchants, who consistently reported strong business activity and meaningful exposure to new customers. Businesses noted that the event not only generated immediate sales, but also introduced many first-time visitors to Los Gatos and encouraged additional exploration of downtown shops, restaurants, and hospitality businesses.

Expanding Regional Visibility and Economic Impact

The Chamber continues advancing a multi-phase destination marketing strategy designed to position Los Gatos not only as a desirable day-trip destination, but increasingly as a destination for culinary experiences, shopping, wellness, celebrations, and overnight stays.



Phase I: Awareness and Destination Identity

The foundational awareness phase is now well established through the Los Gatos Destination Guide, regional advertising placements, expanded digital content, and broader regional distribution efforts. Together, these initiatives have significantly expanded visibility for Los Gatos throughout Silicon Valley and the broader Bay Area while strengthening awareness of the town's dining, shopping, hospitality, and cultural experiences.

Phase II: Visitor Engagement and Discovery

During FY 2025–2026, the Chamber expanded visitor engagement efforts through itineraries, influencer collaborations, destination-focused social media, and interactive visitor tools designed to encourage exploration of local businesses and experiences.

Building on the prior year's identification of Bandwango as a robust visitor engagement platform, the Chamber successfully launched the Los Gatos Perks Pass, designed to encourage discovery of local restaurants, retailers, wineries, wellness businesses, and experiences throughout the community. The Chamber is underwriting the platform and related program costs as part of its broader investment in community-wide destination marketing and local business visibility.

The Chamber is also developing a collection of **new, free self-guided itineraries** on the platform designed to encourage visitors and residents to explore Los Gatos through themed experiences and discovery routes. In May 2026, the Chamber launched an "Outdoor Art of Los Gatos" itinerary highlighting murals, sculpture, and other public outdoor art throughout town. Additional forthcoming itineraries include "Sports Lovers," "Teen Favorites," and "Pet-Friendly Los Gatos" experiences, with local Los Gatos High School interns playing an instrumental role in itinerary research and content creation.

Phase III: Conversion and Long-Term Economic Impact

The Chamber is advancing efforts focused on increasing repeat visitation and encouraging visitors to spend more time exploring Los Gatos' restaurants, retailers, wineries, hotels, and community experiences. Signature events are increasingly functioning as regional destination drivers that encourage repeat visitation throughout the year.

To support longer stays and higher-value visitation, the Chamber also strengthened Los Gatos' positioning as a destination for celebrations, hospitality, and lifestyle experiences. This included collaborating with and helping promote Los Gatos' premier event venues, including Nestldown and the new Lexington Hills Estate & Winery, while working with



venue marketing firm Distinct Locations to increase Los Gatos' visibility for celebrations and experiences that support hotel, dining, and retail activity.

Additional efforts included collaboration with Lavish: An Experience Company, which develops customized lifestyle and hospitality experiences centered around dining, shopping, wellness, and celebration-oriented activities. Originally launched in Los Gatos, the company's thoughtfully designed itineraries and experiences help elevate our town's profile as a sophisticated and hospitality-oriented destination community. The Chamber also supported outreach to regional travel, lifestyle, and food journalists to help increase broader awareness of Los Gatos among regional visitor audiences.

In Conclusion

The Chamber is proud to have fulfilled and expanded upon the terms of its FY 2025–2026 agreement while continuing to expand Los Gatos' regional visibility, visitor engagement, and economic activity through destination marketing, visitor services, and community activation initiatives.

From attracting high levels of nonresident visitation through signature events, to expanding digital reach, supporting local businesses, piloting the Town's new Entertainment Zone, and strengthening Los Gatos' positioning as a regional destination, the Chamber has continued working to maximize the impact of the Town's investment while supporting long-term economic vitality.

As the scope and impact of the Visit Los Gatos program continue to grow, the Chamber remains committed to sustaining these services and partnerships in a fiscally responsible manner that supports local businesses, regional visitation, and community vitality.

The Chamber remains committed to leveraging the Town's investment through community-wide initiatives that support local commerce, regional visitation, civic engagement, and long-term economic vitality.

We are grateful for the Town's continued partnership and the opportunity to help strengthen Los Gatos as a thriving place to visit, shop, dine, stay, and gather.