



FINAL REPORT OF THE TOURISM AND EVENTS DEPARTMENT

September 29, 2026

PISMO BEACH, CALIFORNIA



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

2. DEPARTMENT-WIDE OPERATIONS..... 3

3. RECREATION DIVISION12

4. CONFERENCE AND VISITORS BUREAU (CVB) DIVISION15

5. STAFFING & OPERATIONS.....17

6. OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS33

7. FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS46

6. APPENDICES55

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City engaged Matrix Consulting Group to assess the Tourism & Events Department's organizational structure, staffing, management practices, workflows, and service delivery. Using recognized management best practices, the review integrates staff and stakeholder input with workload and performance data to identify opportunities to strengthen capacity, coordination, accountability, and long-term operational sustainability.

The Tourism & Events Department delivers a broad range of visible tourism, recreation, event, visitor, and facility services through a capable and experienced team. The assessment found several strong operational foundations, while also identifying opportunities to strengthen leadership, staffing resiliency, coordination, risk controls, and long-term service sustainability.

OPERATIONAL STRENGTHS

- **Strong service delivery and committed staff.** Both divisions provide a high level of service and demonstrate strong customer-service orientation, community relationships, and institutional knowledge.
- **Effective tourism performance management.** The CVB has a mature performance framework, including a current strategic marketing plan, tourism dashboards, lodging activity measures, and attributable TOT tracking.
- **Established recreation programming and community engagement.** Recreation manages more than 150 programs, over 2,600 registrations, more than 700 facility rentals, and nearly 30 community events annually.
- **Productive external and interdepartmental relationships.** Staff maintain strong working relationships with residents, lodging partners, community organizations, neighboring jurisdictions, and other City departments that support programs and events.
- **Sound financial and technology foundations.** Existing City financial controls, IT security, online recreation registration, visitor information systems, and tourism marketing platforms provide a solid operational base.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- **Department-wide leadership and integration.** Tourism and Recreation have historically operated with considerable independence. Clearer Department leadership, a shared mission, routine management coordination, and common planning practices would strengthen alignment without diminishing either division's distinct role.
- **Staffing capacity and continuity.** Administrative and event workload is concentrated in a small number of positions, while reliance on part-time and single-incumbent roles limits backup capacity. Priority

staffing actions include converting the Tourism Assistant and Recreation Services/Facility Coordinator to full-time roles and better distributing event support.

- **Written procedures and cross-training.** Many functions continue to rely on individual knowledge rather than formal SOPs, structured onboarding, and designated backup coverage, increasing continuity risk during absences and transitions.
- **Risk and contract controls.** Instructor agreements, event insurance review, and volunteer practices should be more consistently incorporated into City Clerk, Risk Management, and legal processes.
- **Event workload and permitting.** Event planning and delivery place recurring demands on core staff. A tiered permitting model, clearer event-support standards, more use of contractors and volunteers, and objective event-vetting criteria would better align resources with event complexity and community benefit.
- **Facilities and infrastructure.** Recreation facilities face significant deferred maintenance, while the Visitor Information Center Airstream has operational limitations. More systematic asset planning and a long-term visitor-center solution are warranted.
- **Technology and process efficiency.** Facility reservations, records, event administration, and financial processes remain partly manual and fragmented. Greater system integration and expanded self-service options would reduce repetitive staff processing.

2. DEPARTMENT-WIDE OPERATIONS

2.1 ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGY

The Department has several strong management foundations in place, including alignment with City priorities, clearly established leadership roles, recently updated job descriptions, and effective cross-departmental coordination through mechanisms such as the Special Events Committee. These practices provide a solid base for continued organizational development. The primary opportunity is to connect them more consistently across the Department so that existing strengths are reinforced through a more unified management framework.

Strategic planning is particularly well developed within the CVB through its three-year Strategic Marketing Plan. Building on that foundation, the Department would benefit from a broader mission and planning framework that also incorporates Recreation, events, and shared departmental priorities. Leadership roles and reporting relationships are already defined, and more balanced Director engagement across both divisions would further support department-wide communication, advocacy, and strategic alignment. More regular leadership and staff coordination would also create additional opportunities for joint planning, resource sharing, and awareness of emerging operational needs.

The recent classification study provides another useful foundation for aligning staffing with current service demands. As responsibilities continue to evolve, periodic review of actual duties and workload allocation would help ensure that position expectations remain current and that shared or overlapping responsibilities are clearly understood. Clarifying the Department's overall service scope and each division's role would further strengthen accountability and coordination.

The Department also benefits from experienced staff and substantial institutional knowledge, supported by shared files and established prior-year practices. Formalizing more of this knowledge would help preserve these strengths over time and make them easier to transfer as staffing changes occur.

Overall, the Department is effectively delivering its core tourism, recreation, and event services and has a strong foundation to build on.

2.2 SERVICE DELIVERY, PLANNING, AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The Department demonstrates strong service-delivery and performance-management practices. Tourism and Recreation staff actively collect operational and performance data, including tourism marketing metrics, lodging activity, and recreation registration and participation data. The CVB also maintains established destination-focused training and incorporates translation and accessibility features into visitor resources.

The primary opportunity is to better connect these practices across the Department. Tourism, Recreation, and event activities are generally planned within their respective functions, without a single annual work

plan linking priorities, staffing, investments, and performance expectations. Developing a coordinated Department work plan would provide a clearer basis for resource allocation, accountability, and alignment with City priorities.

Customer service is another area where existing strengths could be more consistently formalized. Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to serving residents and visitors, but common service standards and tracking practices have not been established across communication channels. Establishing shared expectations, supported by appropriate training and accessibility practices, would improve consistency while providing useful information for monitoring workload and service quality.

Building on the Department's existing data and performance-management foundation, consistent measures for Recreation programs and events would also provide a more complete view of Department performance and support ongoing resource and service-delivery decisions.

SERVICE, PLANNING, & PERFORMANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

SPP1: Develop a coordinated Department annual work plan that aligns tourism, recreation, and event activities, staffing, investments, and performance expectations with adopted City and departmental priorities.

SPP2: Establish common customer-service standards and tracking practices across the Department, supported by appropriate training and shared accessibility practices, to promote consistent service for residents and visitors.

SPP3: Expand existing performance-management practices by establishing consistent measures for Recreation programs and events alongside the tourism and marketing metrics already being collected.

2.3 FACILITIES & CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The Department relies on a diverse portfolio of public facilities and workspaces to deliver recreation programming, community events, facility rentals, tourism services, and visitor support. These assets are central to both resident quality of life and the visitor experience; however, several facilities face aging infrastructure, deferred maintenance, functional limitations, or workspace configurations that constrain optimal operations. A more coordinated approach to capital planning should therefore address not only major building improvements, but also preventive maintenance, departmental workspace needs, operational coordination, and the long-term delivery of visitor services.

These recommendations should be considered in coordination with the recently completed Facilities Assessment, which provides an important baseline for identifying existing conditions, deferred maintenance, and future capital needs. The assessment should serve as a guidepost for evaluating department-specific priorities and helping the City determine where targeted investments, improvements, or operational changes are most needed.

RECREATION FACILITIES AND CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The City's recreation facilities represent important community assets that support youth programming, public events, rentals, and other community activities. While Public Works generally maintains parks and playground infrastructure effectively, the City's broader facilities assessment has identified more than \$10 million in deferred maintenance across municipal community facilities, including assets heavily used by Recreation. This presents an increasing operational challenge because Recreation staff is responsible for programming and managing facilities whose condition, functionality, and customer experience are affected by aging infrastructure.

The two Veterans' Memorial Halls illustrate the City's broader facility needs. Both remain important community assets, but aging finishes, building systems, and other functional limitations affect their use and overall condition. A phased rehabilitation approach would allow the City to address near-term maintenance needs while planning longer-term improvements as funding becomes available.

The City's ten-year Capital Improvement Program already recognizes several recreation-related priorities, including improvements to both Veterans' Memorial Halls, Highland Park playground, Spyglass Park, and Palisades Sports Courts. These investments provide an important foundation but address only portions of the identified need and, in some cases, defer necessary improvements for multiple years. The central issue is therefore not simply Recreation's percentage of total CIP spending, but whether facilities are prioritized according to condition, utilization, safety, service impacts, customer experience, and the long-term cost of continued deferral.

The City should establish an interdepartmental capital planning committee to provide a consistent forum for evaluating Recreation facility needs and informing annual CIP priorities. Participation from Recreation, CVB, Public Works, Facilities, Engineering, and Finance would bring together operational, technical, and financial perspectives, helping the City evaluate projects based on facility condition, utilization, service impacts, and available funding. A supporting Recreation Facilities Capital and Asset Management Plan would provide the committee with a consistent set of information for prioritizing improvements over time.

Maintenance practices should similarly become more systematic. Community halls and other Recreation facilities should be incorporated into a formal preventive-maintenance and work-order framework with defined inspection cycles, maintenance schedules, departmental responsibilities, response expectations, and repair histories. Tracking recurring repairs would also help identify when continued maintenance is no longer cost-effective, and capital rehabilitation or replacement should be advanced. For parks, beautification, public art, benches, and similar improvements, Recreation and Public Works should establish preferred locations and technical requirements in advance so that available funding can be translated into projects more efficiently.

DEPARTMENT WORKSPACE AND OPERATIONAL INTEGRATION

Facility planning should also consider how the Department's internal workspace configuration affects operations. Recreation and CVB staff currently occupy separate areas of City Hall, reinforcing the distinct functions of each division but limiting routine interaction, shared planning, and flexible staff deployment. This physical separation is not, by itself, the source of coordination challenges, but it contributes to an operating model in which the divisions have historically functioned with relatively independent workflows, staff resources, and communication practices.

VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER

The CVB's public-facing workspace presents a different facilities challenge. The Visitor Information Center Airstream occupies a highly visible location near the Pismo Beach Pier and provides a distinctive visitor-facing presence at one of the City's most heavily traveled destinations. Its location and branding value are significant; however, the trailer has substantial operational limitations as a permanent workplace. These include inadequate climate control, constrained storage, unreliable utilities, restroom limitations, restricted staff workspace, and documented electrical concerns. Its small configuration also makes storing and moving visitor materials difficult and limits the ability to provide a consistently comfortable working and customer-service environment.

Staff parking and material transport further complicate operations. Since the former Administrative and Visitor Information building on Doliver Street transitioned to another City use, visitor-center personnel do not have dedicated nearby parking and may need to transport brochures and other materials significant distances through heavily used downtown areas. These conditions reinforce the need to evaluate the long-term location and operating model for visitor services.

The City should therefore consider transitioning toward a permanent, ADA-accessible, climate-controlled Visitor Information Center as financial resources and an appropriate downtown location become available. A permanent facility could provide secure storage, reliable utilities, improved accessibility, appropriate staff workspace, and a more consistent visitor experience while retaining a visible presence near the downtown and pier area. Until such a transition is feasible, interim improvements should address identified electrical and utility issues, storage, employee working conditions, and dedicated parking or loading access for on-duty visitor-center staff.

OVERALL FACILITIES STRATEGY

Together, these needs support a broader facilities strategy that connects asset condition, departmental operations, resident service delivery, and visitor experience. The objective is not to address all deferred maintenance or workspace needs simultaneously, but to establish a transparent process for prioritizing investment, protecting existing assets, addressing high-risk deficiencies, improving preventive maintenance, and making strategic operational changes as resources become available. Over time, this approach allows the City to improve its community facilities, better integrate Tourism and Recreation operations, and provide a more sustainable long-term environment for both staff and the public.

FACILITIES & CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

- FC1:** Implement and fund the 2026 Facilities Assessment Plan to address deferred facility maintenance and transition to formal preventive maintenance schedules.
- FC2:** Establish an interdepartmental capital-planning process that routinely incorporates Recreation, CVB, Public Works, Facilities, Engineering, and Finance into facility and CIP prioritization.
- FC3:** Transition Recreation facilities toward a formal preventive-maintenance model with documented inspections, maintenance schedules, work histories, and defined responsibility for corrective action.

- FC4:** When budget and space resources allow, reconfigure City Hall workspace to co-locate appropriate Recreation and CVB leadership and administrative staff and support a more integrated departmental operating model.
- FC5:** Plan for the long-term transition to a permanent, accessible, climate-controlled Visitor Information Center that provides appropriate customer service, staff, utility, and storage capacity.
- FC6:** Until a permanent Visitor Information Center is feasible, address priority Airstream operational needs and continue use of parking passes and other alternatives as needed for dedicated nearby parking or loading access for on-duty staff.

2.4 INTERNAL COORDINATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Department coordinates regularly with Public Works, Police, Fire, and other City departments to support programs, facilities, and special events, and Department leadership communicates on known operational issues as they arise. These relationships provide an important foundation for service delivery and event support; however, much of the coordination remains informal. Written protocols have not been established to consistently define interdepartmental roles, primary contacts, service expectations, resource commitments, approval authority, or escalation procedures, making it harder to elevate and address division-level needs and emerging issues.

The Department also uses tools such as SharePoint and ActiveNet to support file management and program administration, but shared coordination tools remain limited. In particular, the absence of a common calendar for facilities, events, and related operational needs can contribute to scheduling and on-the-ground communication gaps. Similarly, post-event and post-project reviews are not routinely conducted to document lessons learned, evaluate resource needs, or identify recurring coordination challenges, limiting opportunities to systematically improve future planning.

Risk and accessibility practices are partially established. Police and Fire participate in event security and emergency coordination, but Risk Management is not routinely incorporated into Special Events Committee planning, creating an opportunity to more fully integrate insurance, liability, safety, and risk considerations into event review. The City has also strengthened website accessibility and translation services and provides resources such as beach wheelchairs; however, department-wide procedures for ADA accessibility, reasonable modifications, event participation, communications, and ticketing have not yet been formalized.

Financial controls represent a comparative strength. The City maintains documented financial policies addressing reserves, contingencies, internal controls, and independent review, conducts regular TOT and LBID compliance audits, and has established service fees that are actively administered through Recreation programs, facility rentals, and ActiveNet. Accordingly, improvement efforts should primarily focus on strengthening coordination, risk-management integration, accessibility procedures, and continuous improvement practices rather than substantially restructuring existing financial controls.

INTERNAL COORDINATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- INT1:** Formalize interdepartmental coordination protocols defining roles, contacts, resource commitments, approvals, escalation procedures, and risk-management responsibilities for shared activities and events.
- INT2:** Implement shared planning and scheduling tools for facilities, events, and other activities requiring cross-departmental coordination.
- INT3:** Establish routine post-event and post-project reviews to document lessons learned, resource needs, risks, and opportunities for future improvement.
- INT4:** Formalize department-wide ADA and accessibility procedures for programs, events, communications, participation, and reasonable-modification requests.

2.5 RISK MANAGEMENT AND LIABILITY CONTROLS

The Department's programming, events, and public-facing services depend on a range of contracts, permits, volunteers, and facilities, each of which carries liability exposure that is not yet consistently managed through centralized risk controls. Several current practices place contract execution, insurance verification, and volunteer vetting outside the City's formal Risk Management and City Clerk processes, creating avoidable municipal exposure. Addressing these gaps would protect the City's resources, reduce liability, and provide clearer and more consistent oversight across both divisions.

INDEPENDENT INSTRUCTOR AGREEMENTS

The Recreation Division manages roughly 30 independent instructor contracts to deliver year-round classes, clinics, and educational programming. These agreements are currently created, executed, and stored locally within the Division rather than through the City Clerk and Risk Management, leaving the City without central custody or visibility. Because these agreements bypass formal review, there is no standardized control to verify that instructors carry current general liability and workers' compensation coverage before beginning work—a significant gap given that classes directly serve sensitive populations, including minors and seniors.

SPECIAL EVENTS PERMITTING AND PUBLIC EVENT SAFETY

The City processes dozens of special event permits annually, with the multi-departmental Special Events Committee meeting monthly to coordinate public safety and operational logistics for events. While the existing process provides an important forum for interdepartmental coordination, Risk Management is not routinely represented, creating an opportunity to strengthen review of higher-exposure activities involving large crowds, vehicle displays, pyrotechnics, and alcohol service. In addition, individual managers currently collect and review vendor insurance certificates and hold-harmless agreements manually. More standardized forms, review procedures, and potentially an automated submittal process would help ensure consistency in confirming that event sponsors and third-party vendors meet the City's indemnification and additional-insured requirements.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATION AND VETTING

The Recreation Division often relies on volunteers, which expands the City's capacity to support community recreation programs and special events. This volunteer support is an important operational resource and helps staff deliver a broad range of public-facing activities. The City does not currently appear to have a standardized citywide framework governing volunteer use, onboarding, screening, and training. While employees are subject to established pre-employment screening requirements appropriate to their positions, including background investigations and Live Scan fingerprinting for certain classifications, comparable requirements are not consistently applied across volunteer roles. Volunteer onboarding and screening practices instead vary by department, program, and assignment, creating an opportunity to establish clearer citywide minimum standards based on the nature and risk of the volunteer activity. Establishing a citywide volunteer policy with risk-based screening requirements, appropriate background checks, and basic safety training would help strengthen an already valuable volunteer program while improving consistency, safety, and organizational protection.

ESCALATING RISK COSTS AND FACILITY EXPOSURE

Current conditions present an opportunity to strengthen the City's overall risk-management framework as insurance costs continue to rise across the CJPIA pool. More consistent verification of instructor coverage, volunteer screening, event indemnification, and facility safety practices would help reduce preventable exposure and reinforce existing controls.

RISK MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- RSK1:** Establish standardized risk-management procedures for instructors, volunteers, and other program personnel, including centralized review and documentation of applicable agreements, insurance requirements, background screening, and safety training, with verification completed before service begins and appropriate renewal monitoring maintained thereafter.
- RSK2:** Include Risk Management or City Attorney representation in Special Events Committee meetings to evaluate liability and ensure consistent insurance and indemnification requirements for all events.

2.6 TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL SERVICE DELIVERY

The Department provides strong online access to visitor and event information through the Experience Pismo Beach and City websites, and residents can register for recreation programs online through ActiveNet. The City's centralized IT Division also provides an established foundation for system security, firewall protection, threat detection, PCI compliance, and vendor support.

Opportunities remain to improve integration and expand digital service delivery across core Department functions. Recreation registration is managed through ActiveNet, while facility reservations continue to rely on SharePoint and manual processes, with limited integration between operational systems and the City's financial software. Although online registration is available for classes, facility reservations are not currently offered online, in part due to staffing capacity and processing-fee considerations. This increases

manual administration and limits the ability to provide a consistent end-to-end digital experience for residents and staff.

The Recreation Division's use of ActiveNet results in different fee treatment depending on how customers register. Online customers pay the applicable transaction fee directly, while registrations completed by phone or in person are entered by staff without the same surcharge, leaving the City to absorb the cost. This creates an inconsistent fee structure for the same underlying service.

The current process also has a workload impact. More than half of registrations are completed with staff assistance, requiring employees to collect participant information, process payment, and manually enter information that customers can otherwise submit through the online portal. Assisted registration should remain available for customers who need it; however, applying a consistent fee structure across registration methods and encouraging greater use of self-service registration would reduce repetitive administrative work and allow staff to devote more capacity to programming, customer service, and other operational responsibilities.

TECHNOLOGY & DIGITAL SERVICE DELIVERY RECOMMENDATIONS

- TC1:** Evaluate opportunities to better integrate recreation, facility, event, and financial systems to reduce manual processes and duplicate data entry.
- TC2:** Expand online self-service options, including facility reservations, where staffing capacity, business processes, and processing costs support implementation.
- TC3:** Continue centralized IT security, PCI compliance, and vendor-management practices as Department technology platforms evolve.
- TC4:** Standardize ActiveNet transaction fees across all registration methods and encourage greater use of online self-service registration while maintaining staff-assisted options for customers who need them.

2.7 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP

In a tourism-oriented community, maintaining strong resident relationships is essential to sustaining a destination where both residents and visitors can thrive. Tourism and special events generate important economic and community benefits, but they also directly affect residents through traffic, parking, public-space use, neighborhood activity, facility demand, and overall quality of life. Accordingly, effective destination stewardship requires the Department to actively consider resident perspectives alongside visitor experience and economic-development objectives, with regular opportunities for communication, feedback, and participation in decisions that may affect the community.

The Department has a strong foundation for this approach through its relationships with residents, advisory commissions, neighboring jurisdictions, local hoteliers, independent instructors, and other community partners. These relationships support tourism promotion, recreation programming, event delivery, and broader community objectives. Resident and partner participation occurs in several areas; however, it is not yet consistently incorporated into a structured Department approach for planning,

evaluating community impacts, or addressing emerging concerns. More intentional engagement would help the Department identify issues earlier, communicate the benefits and impacts of major activities, and better balance destination-development priorities with resident expectations.

External partnerships, marketing, and destination-management practices are important Department strengths, supported by established relationships. Opportunities remain to formalize key partnerships, strengthen contract and volunteer management practices, and better align outside resources with Department workload needs.

Overall, the Department is well positioned to build on its existing community relationships, tourism performance measures, and stewardship activities. A more intentional resident-engagement framework, combined with formalized partnerships, stronger contract oversight, and coordinated communications, would help preserve community quality of life while supporting a welcoming, sustainable, and successful visitor destination.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP RECOMMENDATIONS

- CE1:** Establish a resident-centered destination stewardship approach that routinely incorporates community input, quality-of-life impacts, and visitor experience into tourism, recreation, and event planning and evaluation.
- CE2:** Develop a coordinated Department communications and marketing framework that aligns resident outreach, recreation, events, and visitor marketing.
- CE3:** Incorporate sustainability, accessibility, inclusion, and community-benefit criteria into tourism and event planning and evaluation.

3. RECREATION DIVISION

3.1 DIVISION OVERVIEW AND BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The Recreation Division delivers the City's resident-facing programming, including youth and adult classes, sports clinics, community events, facility rentals, and beautification initiatives. The Division administers a substantial volume of activity each year—more than 150 programs, over 2,600 registrations, roughly 38 independent instructor agreements, over 700 facility rentals, and nearly 30 community events—through a small team of full-time professionals supported by part-time and seasonal staff. The companion Staffing and Organizational Assessment presents detailed staffing levels, workload quantification, and position-level analysis for the Division and does not repeat them here.

The Division demonstrates several established best practices. Program registration and participation are managed through ActiveNet, providing a consistent electronic record of demand and revenue; the Division maintains active communication with residents through the Activity Guide; and it sustains strong intergovernmental collaboration through the regional “Three Cities” joint activity guide. At the same time, several core functions rely on individual institutional knowledge and manual processing rather than documented procedures. The Division would benefit from formalized Standard Operating Procedures, structured onboarding, and cross-training to preserve continuity as the Department navigates leadership transition.

3.2 OPERATIONAL COMPONENTS

The Division's day-to-day operations comprise several distinct functional components:

- **Registration and Program Administration:** high-volume registration, payment, and records processing handled both manually by staff and through online submittals.
- **Advisory Body Support:** staff supports the Parks, Recreation & Beautification Commission (PRBC), a five-member resident advisory body appointed by the City Council to provide input on park planning, youth programming, public art, and beautification initiatives.
- **Facility Rentals:** administration of community-hall and park rentals (including the two Veterans' Memorial Halls), scheduling, facility walkthroughs, and customer service, currently concentrated in a limited-hours position with frequent support from the Division Manager.
- **Independent Instructor Program:** roughly 30 to 38 instructor agreements delivering year-round classes and clinics; contract execution and insurance verification are not currently centralized.
- **Community Events:** nearly 30 events per year requiring advance planning, setup and breakdown, and after-hours staffing that is absorbed by full-time staff and a small pool of part-time personnel.
- **Adopt-a-Bench Program:** staff administers the Adopt-a-Bench program, including applications, donor communication, fee collection, location records, and related documentation, while Public Works performs installation and long-term maintenance.

3.3 STRENGTHS AND VULNERABILITIES

The Division's principal strengths include established registration and performance data through ActiveNet, strong community relationships supported by a well-regarded Activity Guide, effective regional collaboration, and committed, experienced staff. Together, these strengths support a high level of service despite limited resources and provide a solid foundation for continued operational improvement.

The Recreation Manager serves as the primary staff liaison to the PRBC, coordinating agendas, preparing staff reports, and supporting community input and project development. Because Public Works is not routinely engaged in Commission meetings or early project discussions, some concepts may advance before technical, maintenance, or site constraints are fully identified. Recreation staff, in turn, often serve as an intermediary between applicants and Public Works despite having limited authority over installation activities or the technical expertise needed to determine site feasibility. More consistent Public Works participation, formal interdepartmental review procedures, standardized project mapping, and pre-approved installation locations would help identify feasibility issues earlier, reduce rework, and improve the Commission's ability to advance implementable projects.

Similar opportunities exist within the City's bench and beautification programs. Clearer program scope, defined service timelines, and more comprehensive asset tracking would improve the City's ability to manage new requests, monitor existing assets, and identify benches or installations requiring repair, replacement, or follow-up. Because Public Works is responsible for site feasibility, installation, and ongoing maintenance, transitioning operational administration of these programs to Public Works would better align program management with implementation responsibilities.

Formal written procedures are limited across the Division, with many recurring processes relying on historical files and individual institutional knowledge. Given the small number of full-time staff, documenting core workflows and backup expectations is important not only for onboarding and continuity, but also to ensure that essential functions can be carried forward consistently when responsibilities shift or experienced staff is unavailable.

The Division's primary vulnerabilities relate to workload concentration and continuity. Several core functions rely heavily on a small number of long-tenured employees and lack documented procedures or designated backup coverage, increasing succession and operational continuity concerns. Administrative and clerical responsibilities also draw professional staff away from programming and supervision, while instructor agreements are managed outside centralized risk review and deferred facility maintenance affects programmable spaces.

3.4 RECREATION DIVISION RECOMMENDATIONS

- REC1:** Develop and maintain written Standard Operating Procedures, structured onboarding materials, cross-training assignments, and a succession framework for core Recreation functions.
- REC2:** Stabilize the facility-rental function by reviewing the responsible position's classification, authorized hours, and backup coverage to improve continuity in reservations, walkthroughs, scheduling, and customer service.

- REC3:** Increase automation and standardization of high-volume registration, reservation, payment, and records-management processes to reduce manual transactions and repetitive staff processing.
- REC4:** Strengthen staff support for the Parks, Recreation & Beautification Commission, including consistent agenda preparation and coordination of beautification and public-art initiatives.
- REC5:** Establish a coordinated process between Recreation and Public Works for parks, beautification, public art, and similar public-space improvements that identifies preferred locations and technical requirements in advance of available funding.
- REC6:** Transition operational administration of the Adopt-a-Bench program to Public Works, supported by pre-approved installation locations, defined technical standards, and centralized asset and maintenance tracking, while maintaining appropriate Recreation and PRBC involvement in program policy and beautification priorities.

Staffing-level recommendations for the Division are presented in the Recreation Division staffing recommendations (RS1–RS8).

4. CONFERENCE AND VISITORS BUREAU (CVB) DIVISION

4.1 DIVISION OVERVIEW AND BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) Division promotes Pismo Beach as a visitor destination, provides visitor services, administers the City's destination-marketing program, and coordinates major tourism and community events. The Division has a comparatively well-developed performance-management framework, supported by its marketing contractor, TJA, and guided by a 2025–2028 Strategic Marketing Plan. Performance is tracked through online dashboards, hotel activity, and attributable Transient Occupancy Tax impacts, while visitor resources incorporate translation and accessibility features and staff receive destination-focused training.

4.2 OPERATIONAL COMPONENTS

The Division's operations comprise several distinct functional components:

- **Destination Marketing Program:** a substantial outsourced marketing program managed under contract, with the City retaining responsibility for policy direction, advisory-board administration, contract oversight, and performance evaluation. Formal contract-governance protocols and conflict-of-interest safeguards would strengthen accountability where a contractor supports board operations and policy planning.
- **Special Events Committee. (SEC) and Permitting:** administrative support to the SEC, which reviews approximately 75–100 special event permits annually. The process requires substantial manual follow-up with applicants and coordination across Police, Fire, and Public Works, creating an opportunity to streamline permit administration through standardized digital tools and more direct Risk Management participation.
- **Visitor Services:** operation of the Visitor Information Center, currently housed in the Pismo Beach Pier Airstream, which presents significant operational and safety limitations addressed.
- **CVB / LBID Advisory Board Support:** The Tourism Manager serves as the primary staff liaison to the CVB/LBID Advisory Board, preparing agendas and reports, reviewing contractor performance information, and coordinating communication with lodging representatives.
- **Chapman Estate and Signature Events:** administration of Chapman Estate agreements and signature community celebrations that generate concentrated, seasonal event workload.

4.3 STRENGTHS AND VULNERABILITIES

The Division's principal strengths include mature tourism performance measurement, strong lodging-industry and hotelier relationships, a high-return destination-marketing program, and established destination and customer-service training. These capabilities support a well-regarded visitor experience and measurable economic return.

Tourism staff currently devote a substantial share of their time to planning, coordinating, and supporting major events, an important component of the City's destination strategy but one that can limit capacity for other tourism-focused responsibilities. There is an opportunity to balance event support more intentionally with broader destination-management functions. As responsibilities are evaluated, the Division should also more closely align individual assignments with adopted job descriptions and the roles staff were originally hired to perform, helping ensure specialized positions are used at their highest value while maintaining appropriate support for major events.

Key Division vulnerabilities include the concentration of administrative, contract, and event workload in a small number of positions; manual management of contract execution and insurance verification for events governance exposure where a contractor influences board and policy activity; and the operational limitations of the current Visitor Center Facility. The companion Staffing and Organizational Assessment provides a detailed workload and staffing analysis.

4.4 CVB DIVISION RECOMMENDATIONS

- CVB1:** Establish formal contract-governance protocols that separate contractor execution from City responsibility for policy direction, board administration, oversight, and performance evaluation, with safeguards for actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
- CVB2:** Implement a tiered, hybrid special-event permitting process that allows low-risk applications to be approved administratively and reserves full interdepartmental review for complex, high-exposure events.
- CVB3:** Adopt an objective, multi-criteria event-vetting rubric to evaluate existing and newly proposed events against staff capacity, resident impact, and economic yield.
- CVB4:** Update the City's master fee schedule so that permitting and operational fees for non-City-endorsed events reflect full municipal cost recovery.
- CVB5:** Develop written CVB Standard Operating Procedures and a structured onboarding program for all Division roles to protect continuity and reduce reliance on individual institutional knowledge.
- CVB6:** Implement a more standardized digital special-event permitting process and formally incorporate Risk Management into SEC review to reduce manual follow-up, improve consistency, and strengthen risk oversight.
- CVB7:** Realign tourism staff responsibilities to better balance event support with broader destination-management priorities and ensure individual assignments are consistent with adopted job descriptions, intended roles, and organizational needs.

Staffing-level recommendations for the Division are presented in the CVB Division staffing recommendations (CS1–CS7).

5. STAFFING & OPERATIONS

This chapter presents a comprehensive assessment of the Tourism and Events Department (TED) staffing levels, organizational structure, and approach, grounded in an analysis of workload and operational data. By examining the volume and nature of work performed across Department functions, the study aligns personnel resources with actual operational demands, ensuring the organization is fully functional and appropriately resourced relative to the work it is tasked to deliver.

The study evaluates how effectively resources are deployed and what internal staffing is needed to support them. The document includes a workload analysis that quantifies demand across each functional division. From this foundation, the report develops staffing allocation recommendations, presents findings, and evaluates outsourcing and insourcing opportunities.

The methodology draws on multiple sources of information. These include interviews with Department staff and management, direct review of operational and financial records, analysis of workload and performance data supplied by the City, and comparison with relevant benchmarks and professional best practices. Together, these methods provide a data-driven foundation for the report's staffing decisions, resource-allocation recommendations, and organizational-improvement opportunities.

PRIMARY FINDINGS

The findings below summarize the analysis. The Tourism and Events Department delivers a high level of service through a small, capable team, but its staffing model relies heavily on part-time capacity and on the significant individual effort of a few full-time managers, creating continuity, succession, and workload-concentration risks as the Department enters a leadership transition.

- **Department structure and leadership.** The consolidated Tourism and Events Department is appropriately structured, with the Director overseeing the CVB/Tourism and Recreation divisions; no separation into different departments is warranted. The Director's role has almost exclusively emphasized external tourism and hotelier engagement, reducing internal leadership presence and cross-divisional coordination. The recommended change is to rebalance the position toward departmental leadership while preserving the invaluable tourism partnerships.
- **Reliance on part-time staffing.** The Department operates with 4 full-time and 18 part-time positions - about 12.6 FTE, of which roughly 68% is part-time. This model provides seasonal flexibility but places core operational continuity on positions with limited hours and higher turnover, a risk heightened by local cost-of-living and recruitment pressures. Recreation's recent part-time-to-full-time conversion is a constructive step, and a comparable, budget-neutral conversion is recommended in the CVB/Tourism Division.
- **Administrative capacity.** Division managers spend roughly 40% of their time on clerical work - invoice processing, accounts payable/receivable, scheduling, and Laserfiche records indexing - which has drawn senior staff away from supervision, programming, and planning. Dedicated administrative support is warranted.

- **Single-point-of-failure and succession risk.** Both divisions depend on a small number of long-tenured individuals, operate without written standard operating procedures, and lack formal succession plans. Documenting core workflows, cross-training backups, and building succession capacity are priorities.
- **CVB/Tourism staffing.** The division operates with one full-time Tourism Manager and nine part-time positions. The Manager alone administers approximately 85 special event permits annually, Chapman Estate agreements, the \$1.57 million marketing contract, and performs routine clerical work. Converting the part-time Tourism Assistant (30 hours) to a full-time (40-hour) position establishes a stable second full-time role and increases administrative support.
- **Recreation staffing.** Two full-time and nine part-time positions support 152 programs, more than 2,600 registrations, roughly 38 instructor contracts, over 700 rentals, and 29 events. Full-time staff absorb clerical work and after-hours event labor because part-time hour caps limit coverage when workload needs fluctuate. Dedicated administrative support is needed.
- **Event workload concentration.** CVB events consume roughly 2,574 staff hours (about 1.29 FTE), nearly 69% of which is carried by two core positions; Recreation events consume roughly 3,076 hours (about 1.53 FTE), roughly 64% of which is carried by three single positions. Event demand is concentrated during peak seasons but also creates workload throughout the year, from advance planning and coordination through event delivery and post-event follow-up. These demands are not governed by defined service standards or budgeted separately from routine operations, requiring existing staff to absorb event responsibilities alongside ongoing departmental functions.
- **Marketing contract and oversight.** The outsourced \$1.57 million marketing program returned between \$9.62 and \$10.71 in Transient Occupancy Tax for every dollar spent over the last three fiscal years. Outsourcing has not eliminated City workload, as it still requires contract administration, board support, and event logistics. While the contract demonstrates general success, formal contract-governance protocols and conflict-of-interest safeguards are recommended to meet best practices.
- **Interdepartmental and partner coordination.** Event execution depends on Public Works support that is currently optional and arranged ad hoc, and key partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce and lodging community operate on informal understandings. Interdepartmental service-level agreements with coordinated assistance from the City Manager level, and formal MOUs with community partners, would place these relationships on a defined, accountable footing.

5.1 DEPARTMENT STAFFING ASSESSMENT

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Tourism and Events Department is appropriately structured, with the Department Director overseeing two core operating divisions—the Recreation Division and the Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) Division. This organizational design provides a manageable span of control, with each division led by a dedicated mid-manager (the Recreation Manager and the Tourism Manager) who is directly responsible for day-to-day operations, personnel supervision, workload coordination, program implementation, and execution of division priorities. A review of the department's organizational framework, management responsibilities, and functional workflows indicates that the current consolidated configuration is well-aligned with the City's core public-facing functions. The assessment did not identify an operational or

structural need to separate or reassign either division to different departments. Instead, the existing structure, further unified by the recommendations in this report, offers a practical framework for coordinating public events, community outreach, tourism promotion, and resident-focused recreation services while preserving clear, independent operational oversight within each division.

Aligning the two divisions within a single department is operationally and strategically sound, as both deliver highly visible public services, support community and visitor events, and share responsibilities for outreach, stakeholder coordination, and communications that shape Pismo Beach's overall community image. While the Recreation Division is predominantly resident-focused and the CVB Division is visitor and tourism-focused, their workflows overlap in special event operations, facility use, community marketing, local sponsorships, civic engagement, and multi-departmental coordination with Public Works, Police, and Fire. Maintaining these complementary functions under common departmental leadership creates opportunities for joint strategic planning, coordinated public communications, shared administrative resources, and standardized, risk-compliant event management practices, all while preserving each division's specialized operational focus and expertise.

DEPARTMENT OVERSIGHT & EXECUTIVE REBALANCING

The Department's current management approach places significant responsibility on the Department Director to lead and sustain tourism's extensive external stakeholder engagement. While this role is important to maintaining strong relationships with local hoteliers and tourism partners, the emphasis on external engagement has reduced the Director's internal leadership presence. At times, this imbalance has left division managers operating in functional isolation, without consistent strategic direction, executive advocacy, and cross-divisional and departmental coordination.

Because the Department Director's authorized job description already encompasses both internal department administration and external stakeholder development, no structural changes to the position classification are recommended. Instead, the strategic opportunity lies in rebalancing how the position functions in practice. City Management should formally clarify that departmental leadership and internal management represent the position's primary obligations. In practice, this rebalanced executive focus must be institutionalized through:

- **Regular, Structured Engagement.** Establishing monthly formal check-ins and strategic briefings with both division managers to review program budgets, FMLA capacity gaps, and operational timelines.
- **Unified Communication of Priorities.** Translating Council goals and department-wide expectations into clear, written annual work plans shared co-equally across both divisions.
- **Active Interdepartmental Advocacy.** Leading high-level coordination with Public Works and Community Development to resolve deferred maintenance backlogs, coordinate committee-driven projects, and secure essential capital facility resources.
- **Consistent Administrative Reporting.** Serving as a reliable, direct conduit to the Assistant City Manager and City Manager regarding division staffing needs, operational risks, and service delivery constraints.

This administrative realignment does not require the Department Director to manage routine divisional operations. Both the Recreation Manager and the Tourism Manager possess institutional knowledge and are highly qualified to oversee day-to-day division operations. Rather, the Director should provide a consistent, visible leadership presence that connects the work of both divisions to broader City priorities, reinforces internal accountability, and actively champions the department's workforce.

The Director's time and responsibilities should be deliberately and systematically balanced. Where competing schedules or peak event campaigns make it difficult to perform both management and hotelier-liaison roles simultaneously, internal departmental management should take precedence. As needed, external outreach and out-of-market representation should be strategically delegated to the CVB Division or managed through the City's primary marketing contractor's team (TJA Advertising). This balanced approach preserves the City's lodging and Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) interests while ensuring both divisions receive the executive leadership and organizational support necessary for resilient, long-term operations.

As the Department Director's role is restructured to provide comprehensive leadership and oversight across both divisions, compensation should be aligned with the scope and expectations of the position. The City's 2025 Compensation Study, along with established salary ranges for other City department directors, provides a clear basis for this alignment and will better position the City to recruit and retain candidates with the executive-level qualifications necessary to effectively lead the Department.

ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY, COMPLIANCE, AND MANAGEMENT SUSTAINABILITY

In a municipal organization of Pismo Beach's scale, it is structurally common for division managers to retain direct responsibility for certain routine administrative and clerical functions rather than relying on dedicated administrative staff for every task. The core concern identified through this assessment is not the presence of administrative work itself, but rather the disproportionate amount of highly specialized management capacity it consumes and the lack of operational backup available during peak periods.

The Recreation Manager and Tourism Manager currently estimate spending approximately 40% of their available working hours on routine transactional and clerical tasks. These activities include manual invoice processing, accounts reconciliation, permit tracking, contract routing, scheduling, and basic customer correspondence. At this high level of administrative saturation, transactional demands materially degrade the hours available for essential, high-level management responsibilities, including:

- Direct personnel supervision and professional development
- Strategic service and long-term capital facility planning
- Business process optimization and standard operating procedure (SOP) development
- Division performance management and policy analysis

This administrative bottleneck delays routine financial processing and creates records-management and continuity risks when documents are not timely indexed, accessible, or available to staff beyond the individual handling them.

A similar capacity challenge is evident in the Department's delivery of major events. Division managers provide substantial hands-on support before, during, and after events, including coordinating logistics, vendors, volunteers, contractors, partner agencies, staffing, communications, setup, and real-time operational issues. Some level of direct manager involvement is appropriate and beneficial, particularly in a relatively small department where managers remain closely connected to service delivery. However, recurring dependence on managers to absorb significant additional event-related hours can exceed the sustainable bandwidth of these positions, particularly when routine administrative and supervisory responsibilities continue concurrently. Because the managers are salaried and not subject to defined hourly limits, these additional hours can mask underlying staffing and workload constraints while increasing the potential for fatigue, burnout, retention challenges, and loss of institutional knowledge.

The current model has successfully sustained a high level of service, but it depends heavily on a small number of individuals having sufficient availability to absorb administrative demands, event responsibilities, and unexpected workload pressures. Limited cross-training and backup capacity further increase the consequences of leave, turnover, or competing priorities. As resources allow, the City should incrementally realign appropriate clerical and administrative functions. These measures would preserve the hands-on management approach appropriate for a department of this size while providing Division managers greater capacity for leadership, supervision, planning, and long-term service improvement.

STAFFING STRUCTURE AND CAPACITY

The Department operates with 4 full-time positions supplemented by 18 part-time positions, representing a combined staffing capacity of approximately 12.6 FTEs when part-time positions are converted based on their maximum scheduled weekly hours. This staffing model aligns with the Department's operational needs, including a mix of year-round administrative and management responsibilities, as well as recreation programming, events, visitor services, and other activities that can be supported through part-time staffing.

Although the total FTE equivalent is considerably higher than the 4 full-time positions alone would suggest, workforce composition remains an important consideration. Currently, 8.6 of the Department's 12.6 FTEs are provided through part-time positions, meaning that 68.3% of available staffing capacity is part-time. This provides the City with flexibility to align staffing with programming schedules, events, seasonal demands, and customer service needs; however, part-time capacity is not necessarily interchangeable with stable full-time professional and administrative capacity.

DIVISIONAL CAPACITY & FTE BREAKDOWN

Organizational Segment	Full-Time FTEs	Part-Time FTEs	Total FTEs
Department Administration	1.00	0.00	1.00
CVB/Tourism Division	1.00	4.55	5.55
Recreation Division	2.00	4.05	6.05
TOTAL	4.00	8.60	12.60

Core responsibilities remain concentrated among a relatively small number of full-time employees, with some part-time staff also supporting these functions. While this arrangement provides flexibility and additional capacity, it also distributes ongoing administrative responsibilities across employees with more limited and variable schedules, reducing consistent exposure to systems, processes, and decision-making. This increases the amount of coordination and ongoing training needed to maintain continuity and consistent coverage.

Consequently, the Department's organizational resiliency should be evaluated not only by its 12.6 total FTE equivalent, but also by the extent to which critical functions rely on a small number of full-time employees and division managers. This is particularly important because division managers work extensive hours to meet their responsibilities.

The Department relies on part-time employees not only to supplement full-time staffing, but also to provide backup coverage for several core administrative and operational functions. This structure creates important flexibility; however, it also places part of the Department's operational continuity on positions with higher turnover and more limited weekly exposure to systems, procedures, and institutional knowledge.

Heavy reliance on part-time employees creates a recurring continuity risk because these positions generally have more limited hours, less day-to-day exposure to departmental operations, and greater turnover potential than full-time roles. This risk is heightened by local cost-of-living pressures and concerns expressed regarding the City's ability to recruit and retain employees in lower-hour positions. When experienced part-time employees leave, the Department loses both immediate backup capacity and accumulated institutional knowledge, requiring full-time staff and managers to absorb responsibilities while replacements are recruited, trained, and brought to proficiency. This cycle is particularly disruptive where part-time employees support specialized systems, administrative processes, event functions, or other responsibilities with limited staffing depth.

The recent conversion of a Recreation part-time position to full-time status represents a positive step toward improving staffing continuity, cross-training, and operational coverage. A similar approach is recommended for the CVB Division. Through normal attrition, the City can reduce selected part-time positions and redirect existing salary dollars to convert the Tourism Assistant position to full-time status, maintaining budget neutrality in salary expenditures. This approach strengthens backup capacity and reduces reliance on a heavily part-time staffing model, while preserving part-time resources for seasonal, event, and peak workload demands.

DEDICATED DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

The most significant staffing gap identified through the assessment is the absence of a dedicated administrative position to support the Tourism and Events Department. While part-time capacity has been added for visitor services, recreation programming, and event operations, routine administrative work remains distributed among the Department Director, Division Managers, and other professional staff.

This directly affects management capacity. Division Managers devote a substantial share of their available time to recurring clerical and administrative functions, reducing the time available for supervision, planning, program oversight, and service delivery. The Department Director similarly operates

without dedicated administrative support, limiting capacity for internal coordination, follow-up, and sustained departmental leadership.

A full-time Department Administrative Assistant serving the Director and both divisions would address this gap by providing shared administrative capacity across the Department. The position would improve workflow consistency and continuity, strengthen backup and continuity, and allow management and professional staff to focus more fully on their primary responsibilities.

ADMIN PROFILE: RECOMMENDATIONS

- AD1.** Rebalance the Department Director's role to prioritize internal departmental leadership, strategic direction, and interdepartmental coordination while maintaining appropriate external stakeholder engagement.
- AD2.** Realign the Department Director's compensation consistent with the City's 2025 Compensation Study and established salary ranges for other department director positions to support effective recruitment and retention.
- AD3.** Strengthen departmental resiliency by formalizing cross-training and backup responsibilities for critical functions and shifting routine administrative activities from division managers to appropriate support staff as capacity allows.
- AD4.** Establish a consistent approach for managing substantial recurring evening and weekend obligations of salaried managers, including workload monitoring, schedule flexibility, or other mechanisms consistent with City policy.
- AD5.** Expand Department-wide event staffing practices through coordinated use of seasonal, temporary, part-time, and cross-trained personnel to better distribute planning, event-day, and after-hours workload.
- AD6.** Add one full-time Department administrative support position to provide centralized administrative, records, scheduling, financial-processing, and operational support to the Department Director and both divisions.

5.2 CONFERENCE AND VISITORS BUREAU (CVB) DIVISION STAFFING

The Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB)/Tourism Division's core mission is to strengthen Pismo Beach as a visitor destination through strategic marketing, visitor services, destination stewardship, and partnerships that support the visitor economy and local community. National destination-management best practices emphasize coordinated planning, strong community and visitor engagement, effective marketing and service delivery, and measurable long-term destination outcomes.

STAFFING CAPACITY, CORE FUNCTIONS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The CVB/Tourism Division operates under a staffing model consisting of one dedicated full-time position (the Tourism Manager) and nine part-time positions (one Tourism Assistant and eight Hosts). The division's total budgeted capacity is 5.55 FTEs, with 69.5% of that capacity filled by part-time staff. While

the Department Director appropriately maintains an active role in tourism, the position is also designed to provide department-wide leadership and administration. Reallocating selected tourism-specific responsibilities to the CVB Division would create more capacity for broader management, coordination, and strategic oversight; however, it would require either additional CVB staffing capacity or a reduction in the time existing staff devote to other functions.

The Tourism Manager has a significant workload as the sole dedicated full-time employee. This position administers 75 to 100 annual special event permits (representing over 82 active calendar event days), serves as secretary for the Special Events Committee, manages Chapman Estate agreements, and coordinates efforts of the primary marketing agency. This position also performs clerical responsibilities, including invoice processing, accounts payable/receivable, and Laserfiche archiving. To support these operations, the part-time Tourism Assistant (budgeted up to 30 hours per week) provides general support through scheduling, records, committee, payment, and event assistance. This shared approach provides necessary coverage but also draws management capacity into routine administrative and logistical tasks.

Complementing this office support, the eight part-time Tourism and Events Hosts (strictly capped at 19 hours per week) serve as frontline ambassadors for Pismo Beach. Stationed year-round at the mobile Airstream Visitor Information Center on the pier plaza, they greet guests, resolve inquiries, and distribute official visitor guides. Beyond visitor services, hosts maintain current destination knowledge and provide event-related outreach, logistics, and on-site support for major tourism activities.

The CVB Division manages a meaningful volume of visitor-service and event activity. Visitor Information Center activity increased from 13,877 visitors in 2024 to 14,720 in 2025, with 13,182 visitors recorded during the first six months of 2026. This significant increase likely resulted from a restaurant being moved off the pier at the end of last year, which made the Visitor Center (Airstream) standalone and clarified the function and services for visitors. Prior to this change, there was confusion about whether the Airstream was part of the restaurant. Given the Visitor Information Center's strong utilization, Host positions should remain primarily focused on visitor-facing hospitality and customer service.

Host positions are limited to 19 hours per week. While their participation at events can add value as community ambassadors, routine setup and breakdown responsibilities are less aligned with the positions' primary service role and physical expectations. Where feasible, these functions should be supported through contracted services, volunteers, or coordinated Public Works assistance, while avoiding overreliance on Public Works given its own capacity constraints. This approach would preserve Host availability for visitor-facing services while better distributing event-related workload.

EVENT-RELATED STAFFING DEMAND

The Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) Division devotes considerable staff capacity to planning, permitting, and delivering tourism-related events. Staff directly coordinate major City-sponsored events including the 4th of July Fireworks and Celebration, Clam Festival, and Marching Band Review, while also administering City requirements for externally produced events like the Classic Car Show. The division also manages the City's Special Event Application Process, with the Tourism Manager reviewing permits, insurance, and other compliance documentation. During major events, part-time Tourism Assistants and Hosts shift from visitor-service duties to support vendor coordination, guest assistance, and event setup

and breakdown. The CVB also coordinates event promotion with the City’s marketing contractor, TJA Advertising.

The following chart summarizes the operational impact of major annual events. These numbers are staff estimates and don’t include time spent on Special Events review or on coordinating and managing contracts for other events not directly provided through the CVB.

Event	Month	Event Hrs	Pre/Post Event Hrs	Total Hrs
4th of July Fireworks & Celebration	Jul	94 . 0	660	754
Marching Band Review	Nov	80 . 0	216	296
Pismo Beach Clam Festival	Oct	112	650	762
One-Time Events (i.e. 75 th Anniversary or Pier Centennial)	Varies	56	325	381
Totals		342	1,851	2,193

The CVB dedicates approximately 2,193 staff hours annually to CVB event-related activities, equivalent to about 1.1 FTE based on a 2,010-hour annual FTE standard or 20% of total staff hours. Although total event hours appear relatively evenly distributed across the three position groups, the workload becomes much more concentrated when staffing levels are considered.

EVENT STAFF ALLOCATED HOURS

Position	Annual Event Hours	Share of Hours	Annual Hours Per Position
Tourism Manager	743	33 . 9%	743
Tourism Assistant (part-time)	741	33 . 8%	741
Tourism & Events Host (part-time)	709	32 . 3%	88 . 6

Together, the Tourism Manager and Assistant account for 1,484 hours, or nearly 68% of all event-related hours, despite representing only two of the ten positions contributing to event support. This concentration impacts individual workload and organizational resiliency.

VOLUNTEER AND CROSS-DIVISIONAL CAPACITY

The CVB faces a more limited volunteer pool, as externally focused tourism events have historically generated less sustained local volunteer interest than resident-oriented recreation programs. Recreation, by contrast, has demonstrated stronger success in recruiting and coordinating volunteers for community events, creating an opportunity to share practices, networks, and event-support strategies across the Department. Because these coordination mechanisms are not yet formalized, both divisions have an opportunity to expand mutual support during seasonal workload peaks through a structured volunteer

program with defined roles and recruitment and retention practices. This approach would broaden available event capacity and help reduce the workload concentration.

SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE (SEC)

The Special Events Committee (SEC) experiences its highest permitting workload during the first half of the year, coinciding with Spring Break and the peak summer tourism season. To accommodate this seasonal influx, the division systematically increases staffing levels at the Visitor Information Center to manage rising guest inquiries. Event operations demand a continuous cycle of planning, setup, breakdown, and cleanup. During the summer tourism season, this administrative workload runs concurrently with the major logistical planning for both the Clam Festival and the regional Marching Band Review. Staff hour allocations vary depending on the specific scale and scope of each event. While smaller-scale activations require less time, major milestone events—such as the 75th Anniversary or the Pier Centennial—require use of department-wide staffing for setup, coordination, and cleanup, with an impact comparable to the Clam Festival. Tourism Division staff also support the annual Classic Car Show, dedicating 87 hours of staff time to coordinate back-end elements of this flagship event.

CONTRACTORS AND OTHER EXTERNAL RESOURCES

The CVB Division uses a contracted marketing model centered on a five-year, \$1.57 million annual agreement covering media, public relations, website, social media, and digital campaigns. This approach gives the City access to specialized expertise without maintaining those technical functions in-house, but it still requires ongoing staff capacity for contract oversight, invoice processing, board support, and agency-related event coordination. Specialized services should remain contracted, providing access to tools, resources, and expertise that aren't feasible to provide internally from a cost or labor standpoint. The City should establish dedicated funding and a readily available pool of qualified event-support contractors that can be deployed as needed for setup, breakdown, and other labor-intensive logistics. This approach would provide flexible surge capacity during peak periods, help fill short-term staffing gaps, and allow core City staff to remain focused on functions that require municipal knowledge.

STAFFING ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The CVB/Tourism Division has maintained a strong level of service, but its staffing model leaves limited capacity during peak tourism periods, major events, and holiday seasons. With only one full-time employee, the Tourism Manager carries a broad mix of strategic, administrative, permitting, and event-related responsibilities, while the Department Director also provides hands-on support. This structure concentrates institutional knowledge and operational responsibility in a small number of positions and reduces flexibility when workloads increase or key staff are unavailable.

The Tourism Manager's workload is affected by the time devoted to routine administrative and transactional functions, which reduces capacity for direct leadership of tourism engagement. While these support activities are necessary, the Division would benefit from greater management attention to tourism-specific priorities such as industry engagement, destination strategy, market performance, partnership development, and further involvement with the City's contracted marketing program. Increasing direct involvement in these functions would strengthen the City's ability to shape tourism

activity proactively, evaluate return on investment, respond to market conditions, and ensure that contracted efforts remain closely aligned with local economic and community goals.

The most direct staffing improvement is to convert the existing 30-hour Tourism Assistant position to a full-time role. Adding 10 hours per week would establish a second full-time position within the division and provide more consistent capacity for administrative processing, board support, financial coordination, and operational backup. Assigning recurring administrative functions to this position would also allow the Tourism Manager to focus more consistently on strategic tourism and economic-development responsibilities.

Staffing changes should be accompanied by a broader realignment of event responsibilities. CVB staff should remain actively involved in event planning, coordination, and oversight, but routine physical setup, breakdown, and other labor-intensive logistics should increasingly be supported through other appropriate resources.

The City should streamline the Special Events Committee (SEC) review process by matching the level of review to each event's complexity and risk. A tiered model would allow routine, lower-impact events to move through a simplified administrative pathway, while larger or more complex events would continue through full interdepartmental review. Long Beach, CA uses a similar tiered structure, with requirements increasing based on event characteristics and operational impacts. For Pismo Beach, this approach—supported by standardized digital applications, clear insurance requirements, applicant checklists, and defined timelines—would improve consistency, reduce repetitive staff follow-up, and focus departmental review on events with the greatest safety, service, and community impacts.

The department should also periodically evaluate event fees and approval criteria to ensure municipal resources align with community benefit, staffing capacity, and service impacts. New and recurring events should be considered in the context of available staff resources and existing event commitments before adding more workload. Together, these changes would strengthen continuity, improve use of professional staff capacity, and allow the Division to maintain its event and visitor-service responsibilities while placing greater focus on destination management and tourism strategy.

CVB STAFFING ASSESSMENT: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- CS1.** Realign the job descriptions of the Tourism Manager and Tourism Assistant to prioritize strategic tourism advocacy, out-of-market promotion, and direct lodging-industry relationships over local event logistics.
- CS2.** Formalize the use of private event-service providers, including establishing a prequalified pool or on-call retainer of contractors, to provide physical setup, breakdown, and other labor-intensive support for major community events as needed, reducing reliance on municipal staff for these functions.
- CS3.** Implement a tiered, hybrid permitting process that allows low-risk applications to be approved administratively, reserving the full interdepartmental committee review strictly for complex, high-exposure events.

- CS4.** Update the City's master fee schedule to ensure that special event permitting and operational fees for all non-city-endorsed events reflect full municipal cost-recovery.
- CS5.** Convert the part-time Tourism Assistant to a permanent full-time (40-hour) position and permanently assign accounts payable/receivable, account reconciliation, and board agenda preparation.
- CS6.** Establish a formal volunteer coordination program. Address defined roles, recruitment pipelines, and retention practices.

5.3 RECREATION DIVISION STAFFING

STAFFING CAPACITY, CORE FUNCTIONS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Recreation Division's mission is to provide accessible, high-quality programs, services, facilities, and community experiences that support residents' quality of life. Recreation is also one of the most customer-focused areas of municipal government, consistent with NRPA best practices emphasizing responsive service, community relationships, public accountability, and continuous improvement.

The Division operates with two full-time positions, the Recreation Manager and Recreation Coordinator, and nine part-time positions. This provides a total budgeted capacity of approximately 6.05 FTE, with 67% of that capacity provided through part-time staff. In practice, the Division has operated with a high degree of day-to-day autonomy, while the full-time employees manage a broad range of operational and administrative responsibilities. Division efforts include more than 2,600 annual registrations, 38 contracted instructors, 820 class sessions, summer camps serving more than 200 children per week, over 700 facility rentals, 40 athletic field bookings, and staff support for the Parks, Recreation, & Beautification Commission. Part-time staff provides important support across facility rentals, class programming, camps, customer service, publications, and event operations.

The Division also supports event-related operations. While the CVB/Tourism Division administers the Citywide Special Event Application process, Recreation manages facility-related responsibilities for 45% of the annual special events. Recreation also oversees scheduling for the City's beach volleyball courts and three baseball fields.

STAFF TIME AND WORKLOAD ALLOCATION

The Recreation Manager and Recreation Coordinator absorb a substantial amount of routine administrative work in addition to their management and program responsibilities. These positions handle accounts payable and receivable processing, Laserfiche records management, customer registration assistance, contract administration, and related documentation, which comprise about 40% of their available time. While these functions are essential, they reduce the time available for supervision, program planning, staff development, service improvement, and other management responsibilities.

Administrative demands also include a broad year-round operational portfolio. Recreation manages a high volume of programs and class sessions throughout the year. During peak programming and event periods, part-time hour limits reduce the Division's ability to shift additional work to hourly staff,

particularly for evening, weekend, setup, and breakdown needs. The Recreation Manager often absorbs these responsibilities in addition to regular supervisory, planning, and administrative duties. Over time, this sustained combination of operational and management demands can contribute to staff fatigue and burnout while reducing capacity for program development, staff oversight, and other functions necessary to maintain service quality.

DIVISION CAPACITY & WORKFORCE RESILIENCY

The Division's staffing model provides broad program and service coverage, but available capacity is concentrated among a relatively small number of full-time and specialized part-time employees. Several core functions depend heavily on individual staff knowledge and availability, which limits flexibility when workload increases, employees are absent, or vacancies occur. This is particularly relevant for the Recreation Manager position, where responsibilities span programming, staffing, events, community relationships, and Commission support.

The Division's most immediate capacity challenge is ensuring the day-to-day administrative and operational work needed to support recreation programs is completed consistently, without drawing disproportionate time from core management functions. These recurring responsibilities support program delivery, facility use, customer service, scheduling, and event support, making reliable coverage essential to overall Division performance. Strengthening backup assignments, written procedures, and cross-training would help distribute this workload more consistently and reduce disruption when staff is absent, positions are vacant, or responsibilities shift.

EVENT-RELATED STAFFING DEMAND

The Recreation Division carries significant year-round responsibility for planning, coordinating, and delivering community events and programs. Event demand is concentrated during peak periods but generates workload year-round, from advance planning and coordination through event execution and post-event follow-up. These responsibilities occur in addition to routine programming, facility, registration, and administrative functions.

RECREATION EVENT SUPPORT AND STAFFING HOURS

Event	Month(s)	Event Hrs	Overtime/Comp Time
Pumpkins in the Park	Oct	495	10
Holiday Harmony	Dec	260	20
Egg-Stravaganza	Mar–Apr	400	10
Pacific Breeze Concerts	May–Jul	297	–
Father-Daughter Dance	Feb	355	12
Stride with The Tide 5K Run	Jul–Aug	150	4
Neighborhood Event (5)	May–Oct	225	–
Movies in the Park	Sept	135	–

Event	Month(s)	Event Hrs	Overtime/Comp Time
Senior Dance (12)	Jan–Dec	529	–
Volleyball Tournaments (5)	May–Aug	230	–
Totals		3,076	56

The event and program categories reviewed above account for approximately 3,076 annual staff hours, equivalent to approximately 1.53 FTE. This workload is concentrated among a relatively small number of core employees. The Recreation Manager and Recreation Coordinator individually devote approximately 730 and 755 hours annually to events, representing approximately 36% and 38% of a full-time annual workload, respectively. Together with the part-time Lead Recreation Coordinator, these three single-incumbent positions account for approximately 64% of the event workload reviewed.

EVENT STAFF ALLOCATED HOURS

Position	Annual Event Hours	Share of Hours	Annual Hours Per Position
Recreation Manager (full-time)	730	23.7%	730
Recreation Coordinator (full-time)	755	24.5%	755
Recreation Assistant (4 part-time)	864	28.1%	216
Lead Recreation Coordinator (part-time)	490	15.9%	490
Volleyball Coordinator (part-time)	120	3.9%	120
Recreation Services Coordinator (part-time)	117	3.8%	117
Facility Attendant (2 part-time)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Recreation’s event workload is concentrated among a small number of core positions. Although Recreation Assistants account for the largest aggregate share, their hours are distributed among four employees at approximately 216 hours per person. By comparison, the Recreation Coordinator and Recreation Manager individually devote 755 and 730 hours, or approximately 38% and 36% of a full-time annual workload, to events alone. Event demands are sustained throughout the year, with the Senior Dance series, Pumpkins in the Park, Egg-Stravaganza, and Father-Daughter Dance accounting for approximately 58% of total event hours. Several occur as recurring series, creating an ongoing draw on core staff.

The volleyball tournament series provides a useful alternative staffing model, with a dedicated part-time coordinator assuming a substantial share of the workload and reducing reliance on the Recreation Manager and Recreation Coordinator. Applying a similar program-lead approach to other high-workload events, supported by Facility Attendants and other appropriate personnel, could better distribute recurring responsibilities. The Division should pair this approach with a consistent method for managing evening and weekend obligations of salaried staff, including workload monitoring, schedule adjustments, administrative leave, or other City-approved mechanisms that support long-term sustainability.

The current approach creates a continuous draw on the same core staff. If the City intends events to remain a major service priority, that allocation of capacity may be appropriate; however, it should be recognized as a deliberate tradeoff. Time devoted to event planning and delivery directly competes with the staff capacity available to sustain, evaluate, and improve year-round recreation programs, making it important to align event commitments with broader Recreation service priorities.

CONTRACTED RESOURCES AND STAFFING CAPACITY

The Recreation Division uses 38 independent contract instructors to deliver much of its year-round programming. Through a revenue-sharing model, the City collects registration fees in ACTIVE and pays instructors a percentage of program revenue. This approach gives the Division access to specialized expertise while avoiding the cost of maintaining those instructional functions as permanent City positions.

The model is effective, but it still creates a substantial administrative workload for City staff. The Recreation Manager and Recreation Coordinator handle contract administration, instructor onboarding, registration support, schedule management, and payment processing. Because these functions lack dedicated administrative support, professional staff devote a meaningful share of their time to recurring transactional work rather than program management and supervision.

The Division also handles contract administration largely on its own. Instructor agreements and related insurance documentation are maintained manually, limiting centralized visibility and placing responsibility for monitoring compliance on Recreation staff. Ensuring these agreements have a more formal Citywide contract and risk-management process, including providing these to Risk Management, would improve consistency, access to records, and accountability.

Overall, the contractor model is appropriate for program delivery, with proposed modifications to staffing and process design. Dedicated support, clearer contract controls, and more centralized tracking would allow Recreation staff to manage the instructor network more efficiently while preserving capacity for core programs and customer service.

STAFFING ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Recreation Division's staffing model is delivering a broad range of programs and services, but current workload patterns indicate a need to better align staffing capacity with day-to-day operational demands. The two full-time positions continue to absorb a considerable amount of routine administrative work, while part-time hour limitations can shift event and operational responsibilities back to salaried staff during peak periods. This reduces the time available for supervision, program development, planning, and service improvement.

The Recreation Services Coordinator/Facility Coordinator is well positioned to transition into a full-time administrative and operational support role. Although historically authorized as a part-time position, the workload has already required expanded hours to manage the Division's customer service demands. Converting the position to 1.0 FTE would provide consistent coverage for facility reservations, front-office inquiries, payment and registration processing, records management, and coordination with Public Works, while also creating capacity to absorb routine administrative tasks currently handled by the Recreation

Manager and Recreation Coordinator. This change would strengthen continuity and establish a stable in-house support position, allowing management staff to focus more fully on supervision, programming, planning, and service improvement.

The recommendations below focus on strengthening capacity in several complementary ways. These changes would create a more balanced staffing model and improve continuity.

RECREATION DIVISION RECOMMENDATIONS

- RS1.** Convert the Recreation Services Coordinator/Facility Coordinator position to full-time status and expand its responsibilities to provide consistent facility, customer-service, and administrative support across the Recreation Division.
- RS2.** Centralize recreation instructor agreements and establish a consistent City process for reviewing contracts, verifying insurance, tracking renewals and waivers, and maintaining required documentation.
- RS3.** Stabilize the facility-rental function by reviewing the classification, authorized hours, compensation, and backup coverage to improve continuity in reservations, facility walkthroughs, scheduling, and customer service.
- RS4.** Develop a more sustainable event staffing model that expands the use of Facility Attendants, designated event or program leads, part-time personnel, and other appropriate support resources to reduce recurring reliance on the Recreation Manager and Recreation Coordinator.
- RS5.** Increase automation and standardization of high-volume registration, reservation, payment, and records-management processes, including greater use of existing technology capabilities where feasible, to reduce manual transactions and repetitive staff processing.
- RS6.** Evaluate opportunities to strengthen supervisory and program coordination capacity over time, particularly for year-round functions that rely heavily on single-full-time or limited-hour positions.

6. ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

6.1 ORGANIZATIONAL ALIGNMENT

DEPARTMENT NAME

The current Tourism and Events Department name does not fully reflect the department's organizational structure or the breadth of its responsibilities, as Recreation is a distinct division and a significant component of departmental operations missing from this title. Renaming the department the Recreation and Tourism Department would better reflect its full scope of services and provide a clearer organizational identity for staff, City leadership, community partners, and the public.

From an organizational standpoint, aligning the department name with its functional structure provides notable benefits. It formally recognizes Recreation as a core municipal service rather than a secondary function of tourism or events, creates greater parity and visibility among the department's primary service areas, and more clearly communicates responsibility for recreation programs, facilities, community events, and related services. The change would also support clearer internal accountability, budgeting, strategic planning, performance reporting, and cross-departmental coordination by ensuring the department's organizational identity aligns with the functions it manages.

Importantly, this change is more than a naming convention. It reinforces an integrated department with three complementary service areas—Tourism, Recreation, and Events—united by a common purpose of serving the community in different but equally public-facing ways. More clearly recognizing each function can strengthen internal identity and collaboration while also improving public understanding of the Department's full role in supporting residents, visitors, community experiences, and overall quality of life.

DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

The Department should establish a mission statement that clearly encompasses both tourism and recreation and defines their shared role in strengthening the community experience for residents and visitors. A unified mission would help move the organizational culture from two separate functions housed within one department toward two complementary divisions working toward common outcomes. The mission should be supported by a limited set of shared annual priorities addressing areas such as community engagement, event quality, destination visibility, customer experience, partnerships, and efficient use of City resources.

LOCATION AND OPERATIONS

The physical separation of the Recreation and CVB divisions within City Hall reinforces operational silos. With Recreation located on the second floor and CVB on the first, opportunities for informal communication, cross-training, and day-to-day support are limited. During peak workload periods, this separation can make it more difficult to share capacity across the Department and respond collectively to changing operational needs. Over the longer term, the City should also evaluate collocating CVB and Recreation staff within a common departmental workspace. Physical separation can reinforce organizational silos by limiting informal communication and awareness of day-to-day activities occurring

elsewhere in the Department. A shared workspace would support more frequent interaction, improve coordination of events and marketing activities, and make it easier to address staffing, scheduling, and administrative needs in real time. Colocation should complement, rather than replace, the shared goals, leadership expectations, meetings, planning tools, and coordination practices necessary to establish a more unified Department.

DEPARTMENT INTEGRATION AND EVENT COLLABORATION

The Department should strengthen integration between the CVB and Recreation divisions around a common departmental purpose while preserving each function's distinct audiences and responsibilities. Recreation primarily serves residents and supports community quality of life, while the CVB focuses on visitors, destination promotion, and tourism-related economic activity. Despite these differences, both divisions market the community, produce major events, coordinate with businesses and community partners, manage vendors and volunteers, and rely on support from other City departments. These overlapping responsibilities create significant opportunities for shared planning, coordinated resources, and stronger departmental alignment. Reduction of organizational silos does not require combining the divisions operationally, but rather establishing clear expectations, shared goals, routine communication, and intentional collaboration.

Leadership should reinforce integration by managing the Department as a cohesive organization while preserving each division's distinct responsibilities. This does not mean that all work should be shared or jointly performed; rather, collaboration should occur where functions overlap, workloads converge, or coordinated support adds value. The Department Director should remain accessible and engaged across both functions, advocate for both sides, and consistently communicate shared priorities. Regular leadership meetings, supplemented by periodic all-staff coordination, can build familiarity across teams, reduce barriers to requesting assistance, and make it easier to coordinate resources when needs arise. Department-wide objectives should also be incorporated into annual work plans, so collaboration becomes a normal management practice where appropriate, rather than depending solely on informal relationships.

COORDINATION THROUGH SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events present one of the strongest opportunities for practical coordination between the CVB and Recreation divisions. Both rely on similar planning, staffing, promotional, and interdepartmental support, making a shared annual event calendar an effective way to identify workload peaks, facility conflicts, and opportunities to coordinate with other City departments.

Where responsibilities overlap, the Department should also standardize selected event-planning practices and share resources when doing so adds value. This could include common planning tools, coordinated promotion, volunteer and sponsorship support, and post-event reviews. The intent is not to combine event functions, but to create a consistent framework that allows each division to benefit from shared expertise, reduce duplication, and apply lessons learned across the Department.

ORGANIZATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- ORG1.** Rename the Tourism and Events Department as the Recreation and Tourism Department to more accurately reflect its organizational structure, core service areas, and full scope of responsibilities.
- ORG2.** Develop and adopt a unified Department mission statement, supported by shared annual priorities, that reflects the complementary roles of Tourism and Recreation and establishes common objectives for service delivery, partnerships, events, and use of City resources.
- ORG3.** Clarify expectations for the Department Director to provide visible, balanced leadership, communication, advocacy, and strategic direction across both Tourism and Recreation functions.
- ORG4.** Establish recurring leadership and periodic all-staff meetings to improve communication, coordinate priorities and workload, address staffing and operational needs, and strengthen cross-divisional awareness.
- ORG5.** Formalize appropriate cross-training, backup assignments, and opportunities for CVB and Recreation staff to share expertise and resources where overlapping functions create operational value.
- ORG6.** Implement a shared annual Department calendar identifying major events, campaigns, staffing demands, facility impacts, and key planning milestones to improve workload visibility and coordination.
- ORG7.** Establish common event-planning practices, including shared tools, defined opportunities for coordinated marketing and resource support, and standardized post-event reviews to reduce duplication and strengthen future event delivery.
- ORG8.** As future facility and budget opportunities allow, evaluate collocating CVB and Recreation staff within a common departmental workspace to support greater day-to-day coordination and organizational integration.

6.2 MARKETING MODEL AND INTERNAL CAPACITY

The Tourism and Events Department plays an important role in Pismo Beach’s fiscal and community vitality, with tourism-related activity contributing substantially to City revenues. The CVB Division uses an outsourced destination-marketing model, with TJA Advertising managing approximately \$1.57 million annually in contracted marketing services. This structure gives the City access to specialized expertise and has produced strong support from the lodging industry. The primary opportunity is not to bring these services in-house, but to strengthen the City’s capacity to oversee the contract, manage the associated workload, and independently assess the return on this public investment.

CONTRACT WITH TJA ADVERTISING

Under the current agreement, the primary services and responsibilities assigned to TJA Advertising are managed under a single integrated contract to function as the in-house marketing department for the Pismo Beach Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) and Lodging Business Improvement District (LBID). Their full scope of services covers the following core functions:

- **Media Planning & Buying:** Managing and placing data-driven advertising campaigns across digital, paid social, print, and broadcast networks to reach target traveler markets.
- **Public Relations:** Handling press narrative development, media outreach, and securing earned editorial placements (such as national coverage in major travel publications).
- **Website Design & Maintenance:** Building, updating, and securing *experiencepismo beach.com*, which serves as the destination's primary trip-planning and lodging referral gateway.
- **Social Media Management:** Executing daily strategy and content creation across Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube, and LinkedIn.
- **Direct Consumer Outreach:** Authoring weekly blogs and designing segmented email newsletters to engage a database of past and prospective visitors.
- **Reporting & Analytics:** Providing monthly performance reports to the CVB Director and Board of Directors to track campaign metrics and visitor trends.
- **Event Creation & Management:** Planning, launching, and physically staffing signature destination events on the ground, such as the *Sand Art Festival*, community cleanups, and the *Corgi Vacation Getaway*.
- **Civic & Crisis Communication:** Assisting with municipal-side communication needs, including public-awareness, infrastructure campaigns, and emergency messaging.
- **Stewardship & Education Program:** Leading local conservation campaigns, including Monarch Butterfly Grove programming, community beach cleanups, and youth curriculum resources for local schools.

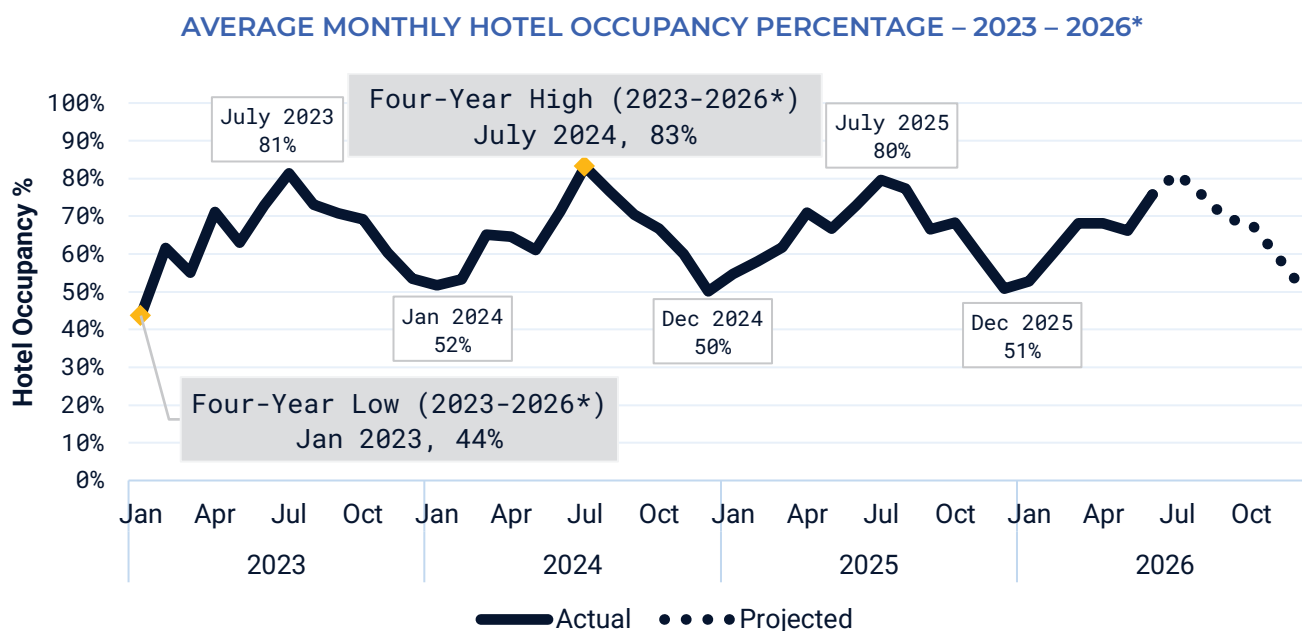
MARKETING AND PERFORMANCE DATA

The marketing and performance data inform an assessment of the Primary Marketing Contractor's effectiveness in advancing the Tourism and Events Department's core revenue objective of increasing overnight visitation and TOT collections. The project team evaluates three categories of performance data: hotel occupancy, visitor profile, and tourism revenue. Together, these data points allow the project team to assess whether visitation and revenue outcomes for the CVB are consistent with the contractor's marketing model.

HOTEL OCCUPANCY

Under TJA’s one-roof model, economic effects are assessed through lodging occupancy and TOT collections. The hotel occupancy analysis uses monthly data from Smith Travel Research (STR). Hotel Occupancy Percentage (HOP) indicates the average proportion of hotel rooms occupied in Pismo Beach over a given period, which drives TOT revenue. HOP is an essential metric for evaluating the TOT collections. Note that HOP includes only hotel occupancy and does not account for other short-term rental accommodations such as Airbnb or VRBO.

The figure below displays the average monthly HOP from 2023 to 2026. Data for July to December 2026 is estimated using the average of the same months from 2023 to 2025, since actual data for these months is not yet available at the time of this report.

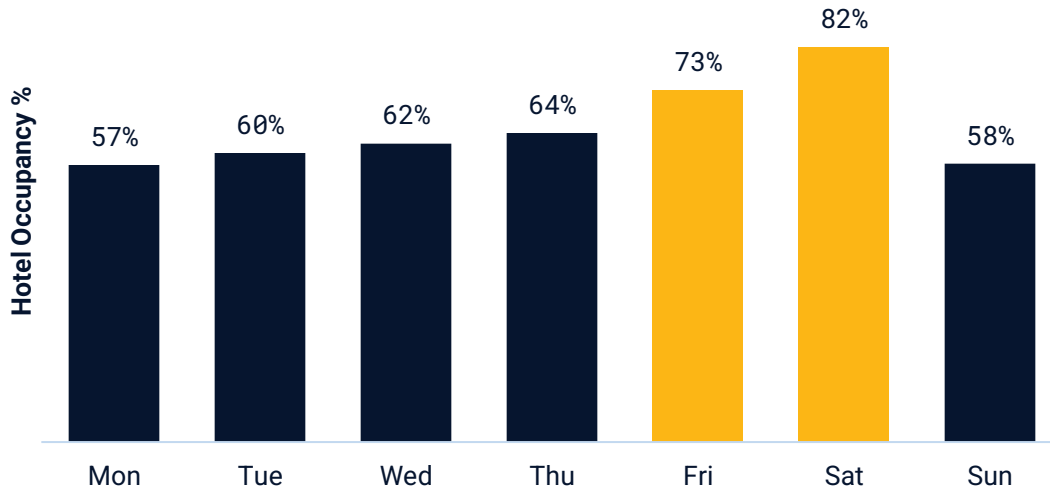


* 2026 includes estimated hotel occupancy percentages for July – December 2026, calculated as the average of the same months from 2023 to 2025.

HOP exhibits a strong seasonal cycle, peaking in July and troughing in January or December. This pattern remains consistent from 2023 through 2026. During the peak month in July, over 80% of hotel rooms are typically occupied, reaching a high of 83% in July 2024. Conversely, occupancy drops to about 50% during the low months, hitting a low of 44% in January 2023. Based on the consistent historical trend, July 2026 is projected to peak at 81%, while December 2026 is expected to reach 51% occupancy. The pronounced seasonal variation of HOP underscores the importance of promoting overnight tourism during the shoulder periods to boost overall TOT collections.

The figure below shows the average HOP on weekdays compared with weekends from 2023 to 2026. Note that data from 2026 only include data from January – June 2026, as data for July – December 2026 is not available at the time of this report.

AVERAGE HOTEL OCCUPANCY PERCENTAGE OF WEEKDAY VS WEEKEND – 2023-2026*

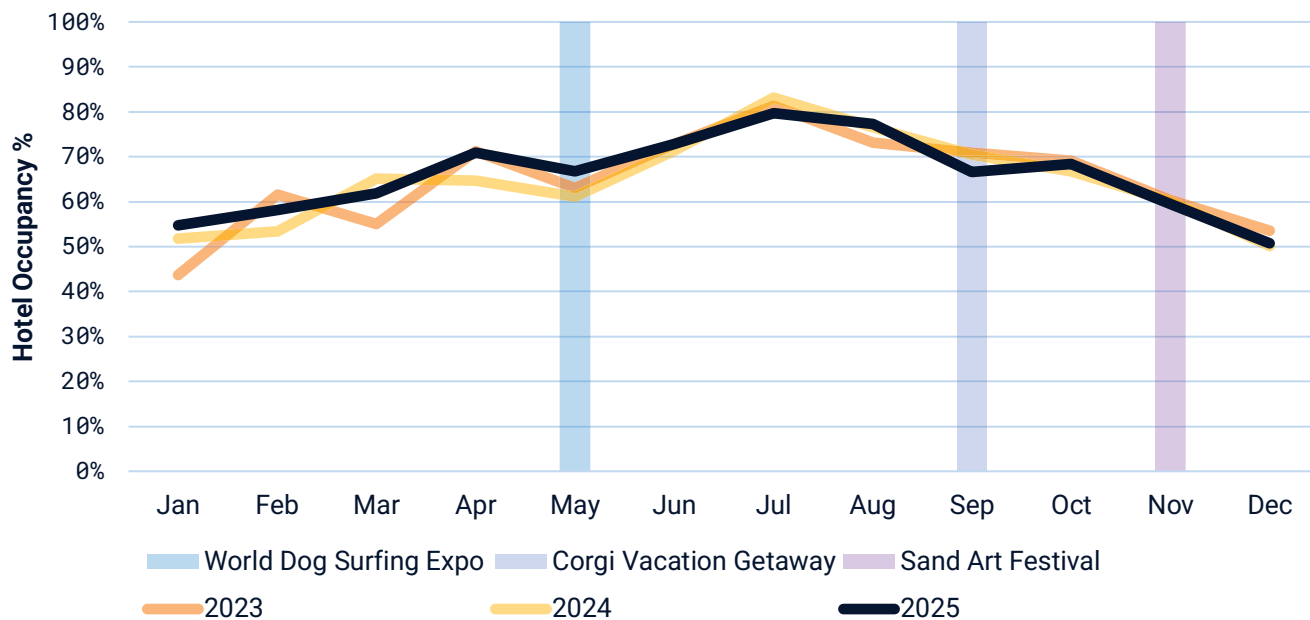


* 2026 includes data from January – June 2026.

Friday and Saturday HOP average 73% and 82%, respectively, about 15 and 24 percentage points above the Monday–Thursday average. Sunday HOP aligns more closely with the weekday occupancy rate at 58%. The sharp drop from Saturday to Sunday indicates that demand is driven primarily by short one- to two-night leisure stays rather than extended multi-night weekend trips.

The figure below compares the average monthly HOP from 2023-2024 against 2025, in relation to TJA's flagship events. In 2025, TJA created three events to drive overnight hotel stays during the shoulder/off-peak season: World Dog Surfing Expo, Corgi Vacation Getaway, and Sand Art Festival. These events occur in May, September, and November, respectively, which fall within the shoulder season rather than the deepest off-peak months of December through February.

AVERAGE MONTHLY HOTEL OCCUPANCY PERCENTAGE AND TJA FLAGSHIP EVENTS



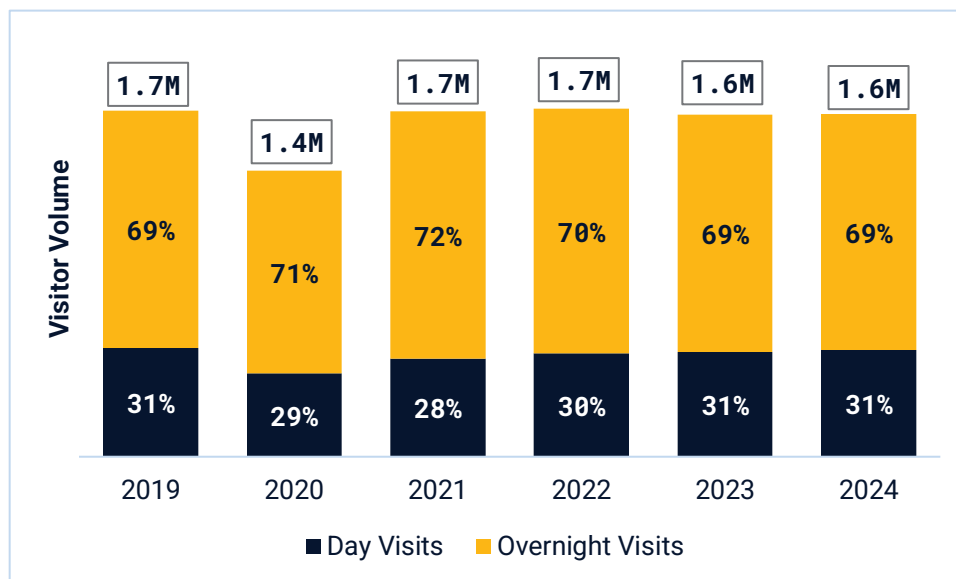
The World Dog Surfing Expo may have contributed to the slightly increased HOP in May 2025 compared to May 2023 and 2024. In September 2025, the HOP was marginally lower than the average for the same month in 2023 and 2024, despite the Corgi Vacation Getaway, suggesting it may not have significantly impacted hotel demand at that time. Similarly, the Sand Art Festival in November shows that the average HOP in November 2025 is at or just below the levels seen in 2023 and 2024 for that period. These patterns could imply that certain events influence higher overnight stays during the shoulder season. However, due to data limitations, we cannot confirm a direct causal relationship between these events and HOP. Still, the year-to-year changes suggest a noteworthy correlation.

VISITOR PROFILE

The visitor profile data provides the demand-side context needed to understand the HOP and revenue trends. TOT is levied on lodging room charges paid by overnight visitors. Understanding who these visitors are, and how their share of total visitation has changed, helps determine whether shifts in occupancy and TOT reflect marketing performance or broader changes in visitation.

The figure below shows total visitor volume from 2019 to 2024 and the share of day and overnight visitors.

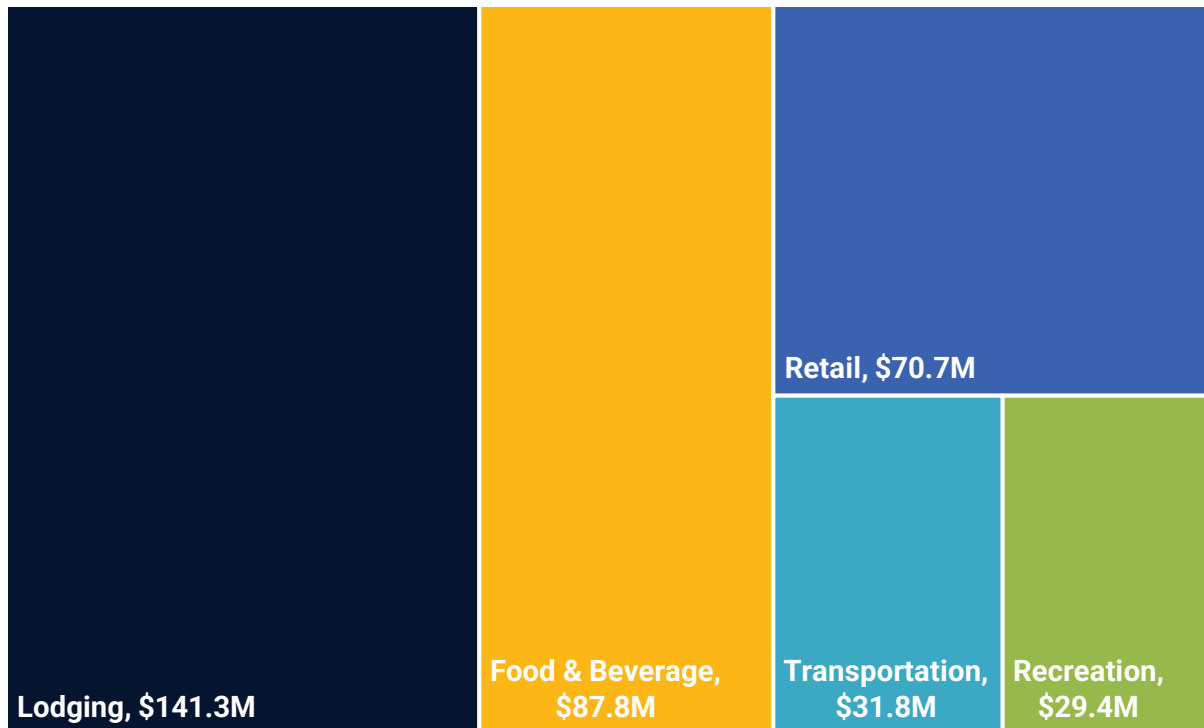
TOTAL VISITOR VOLUME



Overnight visitors have held a steady share of roughly 69% of total visitors each year from 2019 to 2024, with day visitors accounting for the remainder. The split has stayed consistent through the pandemic-era dip and subsequent recovery, rather than shifting toward more day-trip traffic as overall visitor volume changed. The consistent trend suggests that recovery in total visitation was not driven by a disproportionate increase in day visitors, whose spending contributes little to TOT. Instead, the segment most relevant to lodging revenue grew and shrank roughly in line with the market overall. This consistency indicates that the destination's overnight-visitor base is stable, which may suggest that the current marketing strategy is effective at maintaining the level of overnight visitors.

The figure below visualizes the visitors' expenditure. In 2024, 1.6 million visitors spent a combined total of \$361 million, which is broken down into lodging, food and beverage, retail, transportation, and recreation.

2024 VISITOR SPENDING BY CATEGORY



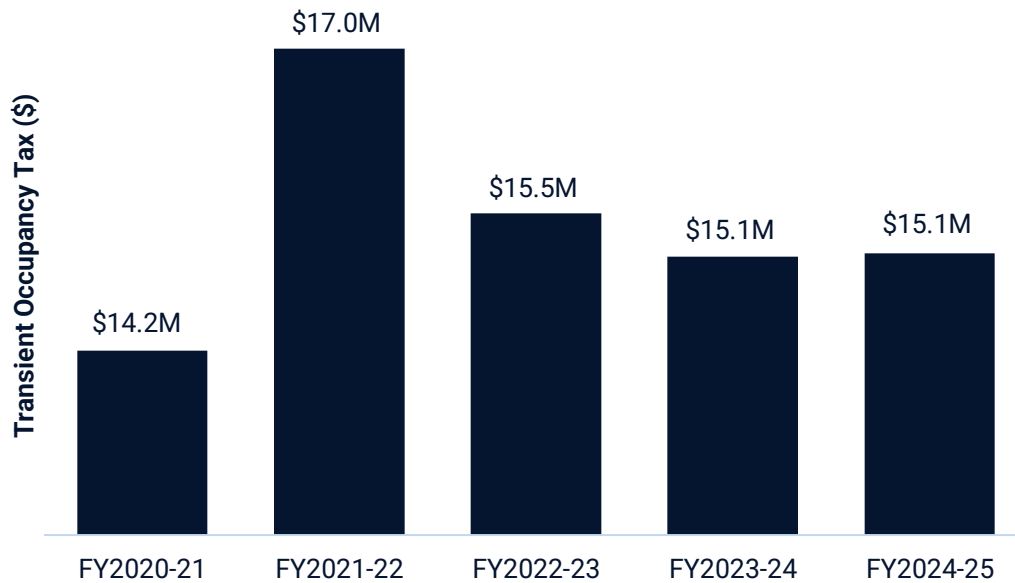
Lodging is the largest single component of total visitor spending at \$141.3 million, or approximately 39% of the total, followed by food and beverage at 24%, retail at 20%, transportation at 9%, and recreation at 8%. Category shares are rounded and may not sum to 100%. Lodging accounts for a substantially larger share of visitor spending than any other category, which underscores that TOT is a significant revenue source for the City.

TOURISM REVENUE

Tourism revenue reflects the direct public benefit of the City's marketing efforts, as TOT collections are the mechanism by which visitor spending becomes a municipal resource. The project team examines two metrics: total TOT collected each fiscal year, and TOT collected per dollar of marketing expenditure. Together, these metrics distinguish between the growth of the revenue base and the efficiency of marketing dollars in generating that growth.

The figure below summarizes the TOT collected by fiscal year.

TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY TAX (TOT) COLLECTED BY FISCAL YEAR



TOT revenue reached \$17 million in FY2021-22 as travel rebounded from the pandemic, then normalized to \$15.5 million in FY2022-23 as that rebound effect faded. Since then, TOT has held essentially flat at \$15.1 million in both FY2023-24 and FY2024-25.

RETURN ON MARKETING INVESTMENT

Metrics	FY2022-2023	FY2023-2024	FY2024-2025
TOT Revenue per \$1 of Marketing Budget	\$10.71	\$10.01	\$9.62
Year-over-Year Percentage Change	N/A	-7%	-4%

The return on marketing investment table shows that every dollar of marketing budget generated \$10.71 in TOT revenue in FY2022-23, \$10.01 in FY2023-24, and \$9.62 in FY2024-25, reflecting year-over-year changes of -7% and -4%, respectively. The absolute return remains strong at approximately tenfold the investment. The declining ratio across the two most recent fiscal years may reflect rising media and production costs, a marketing budget that has grown faster than TOT collections, or both.

Collectively, the marketing and performance data indicate that the Primary Marketing Contractor's marketing strategy aligns well with the City's overall goal of increasing TOT collections and may contribute positively to that effort. Most of the metrics most closely tied to TOT have held firm across the review period. Overnight visitors have maintained a consistent share over the years, indicating that the destination has retained the high-value segment that generates lodging revenue rather than drifting toward lower-yield day-trip traffic. Lodging spending accounts for approximately 39% of overall visitor spending, which reaffirms that visitor demand remains concentrated in the category that generates the most significant revenue for the City. Hotel occupancy has preserved its seasonal structure without erosion across the four-year period. Overall, the marketing investment returned between \$9.62 and \$10.71 in TOT for every dollar spent across the three fiscal years reviewed. Two findings temper this assessment:

TOT collections have been flat since FY2023-24, and the return per marketing dollar has declined in each of the two most recent fiscal years. Neither result indicates a program in decline, but both warrant continued monitoring as the City considers future marketing appropriations.

These findings should be understood as a preliminary, correlational analysis rather than a causal evaluation. The available data and methodology establish that occupancy, overnight visitation, visitor spending, and TOT collections have moved in a pattern consistent with the contractor's stated strategy. However, they do not isolate the marketing program's contribution from concurrent influences such as regional travel demand, macroeconomic conditions, competitor destination activity, lodging supply and pricing changes, and weather.

STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS OF AGREEMENT

The outsourced marketing model provides the City with valuable, specialized expertise, while also requiring clear municipal ownership of governance and oversight. City staff should retain responsibility for board administration, policy direction, contract oversight, financial review, and independent performance evaluation, particularly because recommendations advanced through the City Council and LBID Advisory Board can shape future contractor scope and services. At the same time, the model continues to generate City-side workload through contract administration, records management, board support, and event coordination. Strengthening internal administrative and operational capacity would preserve the benefits of outsourcing while improving accountability, continuity, and the Tourism Manager's ability to focus on strategic tourism leadership and partnerships.

A positive feature of the TJA agreement is the inclusion of discretionary marketing funding that gives the City flexibility to influence campaign direction and respond to emerging priorities. However, the review identified some differences between the budget categories and allocations reflected in TJA's working budget materials and those contained in the executed contract documents. While these variances do not necessarily indicate a performance issue, they can make it more difficult to trace spending, confirm authorized uses, and maintain a consistent record of the City's approved marketing plan. Going forward, the contractor's budget schedules should be reconciled to the executed agreement and updated formally when changes are approved so that contract terms, working budgets, and reporting remain aligned.

MARKETING AND CONTRACT RECOMMENDATIONS

- MAR1.** Maintain the outsourced delivery of specialized destination marketing services while clearly separating contractor execution from City responsibility for policy direction, advisory board administration, contract oversight, and performance evaluation.
- MAR2.** Establish formal contract governance protocols defining City and contractor roles, including City control of board agendas and policy recommendations, independent review of contractor performance, and safeguards for actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
- MAR3.** Formally recognize contract administration, fiscal oversight, board support, and contractor coordination as core staffing requirements and, as resources allow, provide administrative support to shift routine transactional responsibilities from the Tourism Manager.

- MAR4.** Evaluate additional or flexible event-support capacity to address the permitting, logistics, vendor coordination, setup, and operational workload generated by contractor-developed tourism initiatives.
- MAR5.** Require TJA and City staff to maintain a single reconciled annual marketing budget that aligns with the executed contract and formally documents any approved reallocations or use of discretionary funds.

6.3 FORMALIZATION OF STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS

The Department maintains important operational partnerships with the Pismo Beach Chamber of Commerce and local lodging organizations that support and co-promote several community and visitor events. These partnerships include City funding of up to \$10,000 per event, although many of the relationships have historically operated without formal written agreements defining roles, responsibilities, funding expectations, or performance requirements.

Formalizing these partnerships through appropriate agreements or Memorandums of Understanding would provide clearer accountability for use of City resources, establish expectations for event coordination and risk management, and improve continuity as leadership and partner representatives change. Agreements should address responsibilities, financial and in-kind contributions, insurance and indemnification requirements, resource sharing, and appropriate performance or reporting expectations.

PUBLIC WORKS & PARKS FACILITIES DIVISION COORDINATION

Delivery of major community events and routine park operations requires ongoing coordination with Public Works for event setup, restroom servicing, waste management, facility maintenance, and other logistical support. Current working relationships and support practices differ between the CVB and Recreation divisions, creating an opportunity to more clearly define how Public Works assistance is requested, prioritized, scheduled, and funded across event types and operational needs.

The City should consider establishing interdepartmental service-level agreements (SLAs) or similar written service protocols between the Department and Public Works. These agreements would not need to prescribe every operational detail, but should establish baseline expectations for roles, lead times, staffing responsibilities, service levels, cost allocation, and coordination. Formalizing these expectations would provide greater consistency, improve advance resource planning, and help ensure that recurring event and facility-support needs are incorporated into departmental staffing and budget decisions.

STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS RECOMMENDATIONS

- ST1:** Formalize key partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce and lodging community through MOUs or similar agreements that define roles, City and partner contributions, insurance and indemnification requirements, resource-sharing expectations, and appropriate performance reporting.

- ST2:** Establish written service protocols between the Department and Public Works that define how recurring event and facility-support requests are submitted, prioritized, scheduled, staffed, and funded.
- ST3:** Incorporate anticipated Public Works support and associated costs into annual event and departmental planning so recurring service demands are identified in advance and reflected in staffing and budget decisions.

7. FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

This section consolidates the findings and recommendations that are presented throughout the preceding chapters.

The Department delivers a high level of tourism, recreation, and event service through a small, capable team, but its current operating model relies heavily on informal practices, individual institutional knowledge, and the sustained effort of a few managers. The recommendations focus on aligning organizational structure and leadership with service demands, formalizing core business practices, strengthening risk and coordination controls, and building a more resilient and sustainable foundation across both divisions.

7.1 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following provides a consolidated summary of the document's key findings and recommendations, together with recommended implementation timelines to guide prioritization, sequencing, and organizational follow-through.

SERVICE, PLANNING, & PERFORMANCE		Timeline
SPP1	Develop a coordinated Department annual work plan that aligns tourism, recreation, and event activities, staffing, investments, and performance expectations with adopted City and departmental priorities.	Jun 2027
SPP2	Establish common customer-service standards and tracking practices across the Department, supported by appropriate training and shared accessibility practices, to promote consistent service for residents and visitors.	Mar 2027
SPP3	Expand existing performance-management practices by establishing consistent measures for Recreation programs and events alongside the tourism and marketing metrics already being collected.	Jun 2027
FACILITIES & CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE		Timeline
FC1	Implement and fund the 2026 Facilities Assessment Plan to address deferred facility maintenance and transition to formal preventive maintenance schedules.	Jul 2027
FC2	Establish an interdepartmental capital-planning process that routinely incorporates Recreation, CVB, Public Works, Facilities, Engineering, and Finance into facility and CIP prioritization.	Jul 2027

FC3	Transition Recreation facilities toward a formal preventive-maintenance model with maintenance schedules, work histories, and defined responsibility for corrective action.	Jan 2028
FC4	When budget and space resources allow, reconfigure City Hall workspace to co-locate appropriate Recreation and CVB leadership and administrative staff and support a more integrated departmental operating model.	As funding allows
FC5	Plan for the long-term transition to a permanent, accessible, climate-controlled Visitor Information Center that provides appropriate customer service, staff, utility, and storage capacity.	Mar 2027; ongoing
FC6	Until a permanent Visitor Information Center is feasible, address priority Airstream operational needs and continue use of parking passes and other alternatives as needed for dedicated nearby parking or loading access for on-duty staff.	Mar 2027
INTERNAL COORDINATION		Timeline
INT1	Formalize interdepartmental coordination protocols defining roles, contacts, resource commitments, approvals, escalation procedures, and risk-management responsibilities for shared activities and events.	Jul 2027
INT2	Implement shared planning and scheduling tools for facilities, events, and other activities requiring cross-departmental coordination.	Jul 2027
INT3	Establish routine post-event and post-project reviews to document lessons learned, resource needs, risks, and opportunities for future improvement.	Jan 2027
INT4	Formalize department-wide ADA and accessibility procedures for programs, events, communications, participation, and reasonable-modification requests.	Jul 2027
RISK MANAGEMENT		Timeline
RSK1	Establish standardized risk-management procedures for instructors, volunteers, and other program personnel, including centralized review and documentation of applicable agreements, insurance requirements, background screening, and safety training, with verification completed before service begins and appropriate renewal monitoring maintained thereafter.	Mar 2027

RSK2	Include Risk Management or City Attorney representation in Special Events Committee meetings to evaluate liability and ensure consistent insurance and indemnification requirements for all events.	Jan 2027
-------------	---	----------

TECHNOLOGY & DIGITAL SERVICE DELIVERY		Timeline
TC1	Evaluate opportunities to better integrate recreation, facility, event, and financial systems to reduce manual processes and duplicate data entry.	Ongoing
TC2	Expand online self-service options, including facility reservations, where staffing capacity, business processes, and processing costs support implementation.	Oct 2027
TC3	Continue centralized IT security, PCI compliance, and vendor-management practices as Department technology platforms evolve.	Ongoing
TC4	Standardize ActiveNet transaction fees across all registration methods and encourage greater use of online self-service registration while maintaining staff-assisted options for customers who need them.	Nov 2026

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP		Timeline
CE1	Establish a resident-centered destination stewardship approach that routinely incorporates community input, quality-of-life impacts, and visitor experience into tourism, recreation, and event planning and evaluation.	Ongoing
CE2	Develop a coordinated Department communications and marketing framework that aligns resident outreach, recreation, events, and visitor marketing.	Jul 2028
CE3	Incorporate sustainability, accessibility, inclusion, and community-benefit criteria into tourism and event planning and evaluation.	Ongoing

RECREATION DIVISION		Timeline
REC1	Develop and maintain written Standard Operating Procedures, structured onboarding materials, cross-training assignments, and a succession framework for core Recreation functions to strengthen continuity and reduce reliance on individual institutional knowledge.	Jan 2028

REC2	Stabilize the facility-rental function by reviewing the responsible position's classification, authorized hours, and backup coverage to improve continuity in reservations, walkthroughs, scheduling, and customer service.	Mar 2027
REC3	Increase automation and standardization of high-volume registration, reservation, payment, and records-management processes to reduce manual transactions and repetitive staff processing.	Ongoing
REC4	Strengthen staff support for the Parks, Recreation & Beautification Commission, including consistent agenda preparation and coordination of beautification and public-art initiatives.	Ongoing
REC5	Establish a coordinated process between Recreation and Public Works for parks, beautification, public art, and similar public-space improvements that identifies preferred locations and technical requirements in advance of available funding.	Jan 2027
REC6	Transition operational administration of the Adopt-a-Bench program to Public Works, supported by pre-approved installation locations, defined technical standards, and centralized asset and maintenance tracking, while maintaining appropriate Recreation and PRBC involvement in program policy and beautification priorities.	Jun 2027

CVB DIVISION		Timeline
CVB1	Establish formal contract-governance protocols that separate contractor execution from City responsibility for policy direction, board administration, oversight, and performance evaluation, with safeguards for actual or perceived conflicts of interest.	Ongoing
CVB2	Implement a tiered, hybrid special-event permitting process that allows low-risk applications to be approved administratively and reserves full interdepartmental review for complex, high-exposure events.	Jan 2028
CVB3	Adopt an objective, multi-criteria event-vetting rubric to evaluate existing and newly proposed events against staff capacity, resident impact, and economic yield.	Jan 2028
CVB4	Update the City's master fee schedule so that permitting and operational fees for non-City-endorsed events reflect full municipal cost recovery.	Jul 2027

CVB5	Develop written CVB Standard Operating Procedures and a structured onboarding program for all Division roles to protect continuity and reduce reliance on individual institutional knowledge.	Jan 2028
CVB6	Implement a more standardized digital special-event permitting process and formally incorporate Risk Management into SEC review to reduce manual follow-up, improve consistency, and strengthen risk oversight.	Jan 2027
CVB7	Realign tourism staff responsibilities to better balance event support with broader destination-management priorities and ensure individual assignments are consistent with adopted job descriptions, intended roles, and organizational needs.	Nov 2026

ADMINISTRATION & DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP		Timeline
AD1	Rebalance the Department Director's role to prioritize internal departmental leadership, strategic direction, and interdepartmental coordination while maintaining appropriate external stakeholder engagement.	Nov 2026
AD2	Realign the Department Director's compensation consistent with the City's 2025 Compensation Study and established salary ranges for other department director positions to support effective recruitment and retention.	Nov 2026
AD3	Strengthen departmental resiliency by formalizing cross-training and backup responsibilities for critical functions and shifting routine administrative activities from division managers to appropriate support staff as capacity allows.	Nov 2026; ongoing
AD4	Establish a consistent approach for managing substantial recurring evening and weekend obligations of salaried managers, including workload monitoring, schedule flexibility, or other mechanisms consistent with City policy.	Jan 2027
AD5	Expand Department-wide event staffing practices through coordinated use of seasonal, temporary, part-time, and cross-trained personnel to better distribute planning, event-day, and after-hours workload.	Jul 2027
AD6	Add one full-time Department administrative support position to provide centralized administrative, records, scheduling, financial-processing, and operational support to the Department Director and both divisions.	As funding allows

CVB DIVISION STAFFING		Timeline
CS1	Realign the job descriptions of the Tourism Manager and Tourism Assistant to prioritize strategic tourism advocacy, out-of-market promotion, and direct lodging-industry relationships over local event logistics.	Oct 2027
CS2	Formalize the use of private event-service providers, including establishing a prequalified pool or on-call retainer of contractors, to provide physical setup, breakdown, and other labor-intensive support for major community events as needed, reducing reliance on municipal staff for these functions.	Jul 2027
CS3	Implement a tiered, hybrid permitting process that allows low-risk applications to be approved administratively, reserving the full interdepartmental committee review strictly for complex, high-exposure events.	Jul 2027
CS4	Update the City's master fee schedule to ensure that special event permitting and operational fees for all non-city-endorsed events reflect full municipal cost-recovery.	Jan 2028
CS5	Convert the part-time Tourism Assistant to a permanent full-time (40-hour) position and permanently assign accounts payable/receivable, account reconciliation, and board agenda preparation.	As funding allows
CS6	Establish a formal volunteer coordination program. Address defined roles, recruitment pipelines, and retention practices.	Jul 2027
RECREATION DIVISION STAFFING		Timeline
RS1	Convert the Recreation Services Coordinator/Facility Coordinator position to full-time status and expand its responsibilities to provide consistent facility, customer-service, and administrative support across the Recreation Division.	As funding allows
RS2	Centralize recreation instructor agreements and establish a consistent City process for reviewing contracts, verifying insurance, tracking renewals and waivers, and maintaining required documentation.	Mar 2027
RS3	Stabilize the facility-rental function by reviewing the classification, authorized hours, compensation, and backup coverage to improve continuity in reservations, facility walkthroughs, scheduling, and customer service.	Ongoing

RS4	Develop a more sustainable event staffing model that expands the use of Facility Attendants, designated event or program leads, part-time personnel, and other appropriate support resources to reduce recurring reliance on the Recreation Manager and Recreation Coordinator.	Ongoing
RS5	Increase automation and standardization of high-volume registration, reservation, payment, and records-management processes, including greater use of existing technology capabilities where feasible, to reduce manual transactions and repetitive staff processing.	Oct 2027
RS6	Evaluate opportunities to strengthen supervisory and program coordination capacity over time, particularly for year-round functions that rely heavily on single-full-time or limited-hour positions.	Ongoing

ORGANIZATIONAL ALIGNMENT**Timeline**

ORG1	Rename the Tourism and Events Department as the Recreation and Tourism Department to more accurately reflect its organizational structure, core service areas, and full scope of responsibilities.	Jan 2027
ORG2	Develop and adopt a unified Department mission statement, supported by shared annual priorities, that reflects the complementary roles of Tourism and Recreation and establishes common objectives for service delivery, partnerships, events, and use of City resources.	Feb 2027
ORG3	Clarify expectations for the Department Director to provide visible, balanced leadership, communication, advocacy, and strategic direction across both Tourism and Recreation functions.	Nov 2027
ORG4	Establish recurring leadership and periodic all-staff meetings to improve communication, coordinate priorities and workload, address staffing and operational needs, and strengthen cross-divisional awareness.	Jan 2027
ORG5	Formalize appropriate cross-training, backup assignments, and opportunities for CVB and Recreation staff to share expertise and resources where overlapping functions create operational value.	Ongoing
ORG6	Implement a shared annual Department calendar identifying major events, campaigns, staffing demands, facility impacts, and key planning milestones to improve workload visibility and coordination.	Mar 2027

ORG7	Establish common event-planning practices, including shared tools, defined opportunities for coordinated marketing and resource support, and standardized post-event reviews to reduce duplication and strengthen future event delivery.	Jan 2028
ORG8	As future facility and budget opportunities allow, evaluate collocating CVB and Recreation staff within a common departmental workspace to support greater day-to-day coordination and organizational integration.	As funding allows
MARKETING & CONTRACT OVERSIGHT		Timeline
MAR1	Maintain the outsourced delivery of specialized destination marketing services while clearly separating contractor execution from City responsibility for policy direction, advisory board administration, contract oversight, and performance evaluation.	Ongoing
MAR2	Establish formal contract governance protocols defining City and contractor roles, including City control of board agendas and policy recommendations, independent review of contractor performance, and safeguards for actual or perceived conflicts of interest.	Mar 2028
MAR3	Formally recognize contract administration, fiscal oversight, board support, and contractor coordination as core staffing requirements and, as resources allow, provide administrative support to shift routine transactional responsibilities from the Tourism Manager.	Jan 2028
MAR4	Evaluate additional or flexible event-support capacity to address the permitting, logistics, vendor coordination, setup, and operational workload generated by contractor-developed tourism initiatives.	Ongoing
MAR5	Require TJA and City staff to maintain a single reconciled annual marketing budget that aligns with the executed contract and formally documents any approved reallocations or use of discretionary funds.	Jul 2027
STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS		Timeline
ST1	Formalize key partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce and lodging community through MOUs or similar agreements that define roles, City and partner contributions, insurance and indemnification requirements, resource-sharing expectations, and appropriate performance reporting.	Jul 2027
ST2	Establish written service protocols between the Department and Public Works that define how recurring event and facility-support requests are submitted, prioritized, scheduled, staffed, and funded.	Jul 2027

ST3.

Incorporate anticipated Public Works support and associated costs into annual event and departmental planning so recurring service demands are identified in advance and reflected in staffing and budget decisions.

Ongoing

8. APPENDICES

This report is supported by the following appendices and companion materials, which provide the detailed analysis, data, and methodology underlying the findings and recommendations presented above.

Appendix A – Current State Assessment: An assessment of the current staffing model, organizational structure, workload, and key operational practices.

Appendix B– Best Management Practices: An assessment of relevant best management practices and a comparison of those practices to current operations.

APPENDIX A: CURRENT STATE ASSESSMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

This current state assessment provides a comprehensive analysis of the City of Pismo Beach Tourism and Events Department's existing organization, staffing, and processes across its Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) and Recreation Divisions. The assessment includes the following key components:

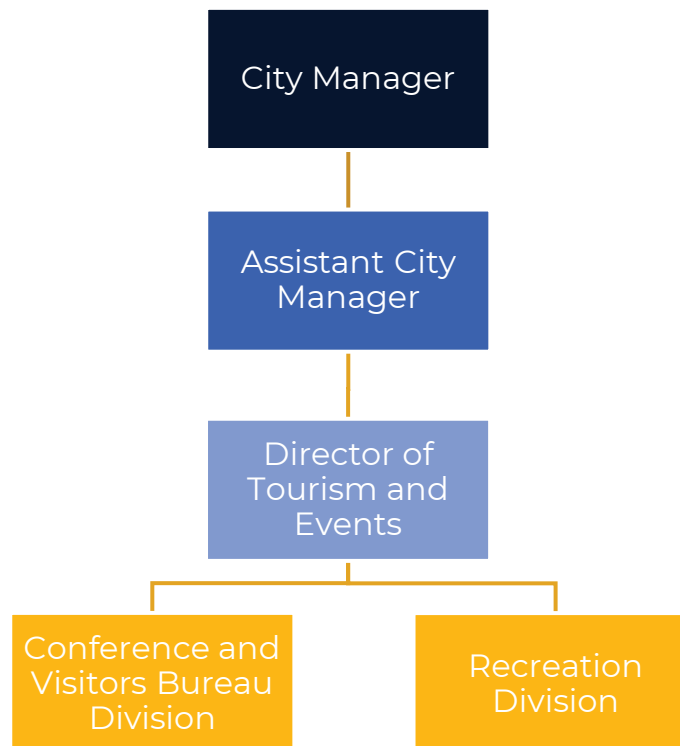
- **Organization and Staffing.** A summary of the current organizational structure, staffing levels, reporting relationships, and positions assigned within or supporting the Tourism and Events Department.
- **External Resources.** Review of advisory board, contracted, partner, and volunteer services currently used to support tourism marketing, visitor services, recreation programming, arts, beautification, and events.
- **Workload.** Collection and review of baseline workload indicators, service inputs, and activity levels (e.g., visitor volume, events, and the magnitude of each function, program registrations, and facility usage) that help define current service demands.
- **Technology.** Overview of technology platforms, software systems, and digital tools used to support departmental operations, marketing, registration, communication, and service delivery.

This deliverable provides a baseline for analysis and for developing recommendations in subsequent reports to demonstrate the impact of the proposed changes.

2. ORGANIZATION & STAFFING

The Tourism and Events Department provides residents and visitors with events, recreational programming, activities, classes, and local information. These services are provided through two divisions, the Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) and Recreation. These functions include some coordination with City Management, the City Clerk, Human Resources, Public Works, and Police.

DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



The Tourism and Events Department is led by a Department Director who supervises Division leadership and is directly responsible for coordinating with hoteliers and the tourism industry. This is the sole position designated to serve the Department as a whole, with the following table summarizing its primary duties. This is not intended to be a comprehensive job description.

TOURISM AND EVENTS DEPARTMENT — AUTHORIZED POSITIONS AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Position title	Authorized positions	Designation	Key roles and responsibilities
Tourism and Events Department Director	1	Full-time	• Directs the daily operations of the CVB and maintains collaborative relationships with local hoteliers and tourism partners. • Develops and oversees marketing, advertising, media relations, and promotional initiatives designed to increase visitation and tourism-related revenue. • Serves as the primary staff liaison to the CVB Board of Directors. • Coordinates local business participation in trade shows and promotional activities, negotiates service contracts and agreements, and oversees the work of consultants and technical service providers.

TOTAL**1****2.2 CONFERENCE AND VISITORS BUREAU (CVB) DIVISION**

The Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) Division promotes Pismo Beach as a visitor destination to increase overnight stays, visitor spending, and related Transient Occupancy Tax and Sales Tax revenues. The CVB manages advertising, media relations, visitor publications, and tourism marketing partnerships, while coordinating lead response through the Visitor Information Center. Currently, the City of Pismo Beach utilizes a retrofitted Airstream trailer as its Visitor Information Center. The Airstream is located on the Pismo Beach Pier and operates seven days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. year-round. It is staffed by part-time Tourism and Events Hosts who greet guests, distribute brochures, and answer questions.

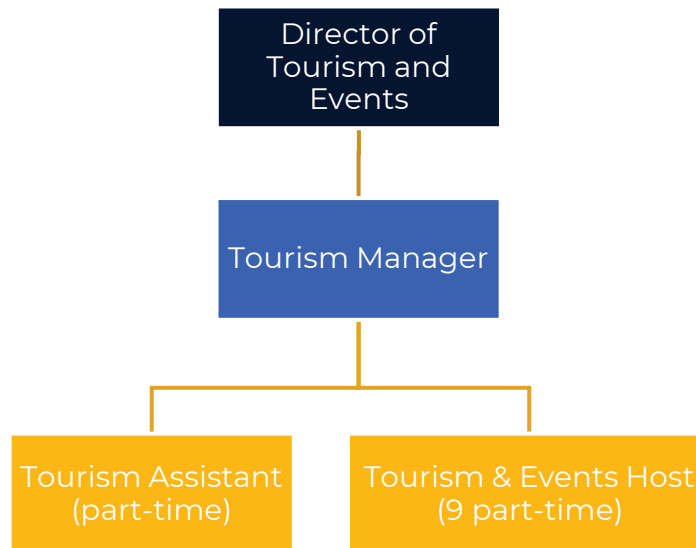
The CVB commits most of its time to organizing and supporting events. These events are designed to attract visitors and encourage participation, annually including the Classic Car Show, 4th of July Fireworks and Celebration, Pismo Beach Clam Festival, and Marching Band Review. The Division also administers the City's Special Event Application Process and supports the Special Events Committee. The Special Events Committee processes approximately 85 special event permit applications annually.

The Division also staffs and supports the Conference and Visitors Bureau/Lodging Business Improvement District Advisory Board. The Tourism and Events Director is the primary staff

liaison to the CVB Board of Directors and attends their monthly meetings to connect with local hoteliers and advise the board. The Tourism Manager supports the board by preparing agendas and meeting materials and recording minutes, while the part-time Tourism Assistant provides clerical and logistical support, including printing packets, updating calendars, and preparing meeting rooms.

The Division is budgeted for 2 full-time staff members and 9 part-time staff members, with no current vacancies. An organizational chart for this function is provided below.

CONFERENCE AND VISITORS BUREAU DIVISION STAFF



The following table details staff within this function, listing each position by title and summarizing its primary duties. These are not intended to be comprehensive job descriptions.

TOURISM DIVISION — AUTHORIZED POSITIONS AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Position title	Authorized positions	Designation	Key roles and responsibilities
Tourism Manager	1	Full-time	• Manages all Division operations, supervises and provides staff schedules for the Tourism Assistant and Tourism and Events Hosts. • Oversees Visitor Information Center operations. • Plans and coordinates major City events, including the Fourth of July celebration, Clam Festival, and Marching Band Review, including leading event setup and breakdown. • Administers all special event permit applications, including assisting applicants, and verifying insurance and licensing requirements. • Manages Chapman Estate agreements, rentals, access, and coordination with City departments and the Chapman Estate Foundation. • Provides division-wide administrative support, including invoice processing, accounts payable and receivable, travel documentation, and Laserfiche records management. • Attends conferences, trainings, and meetings including tradeshow, Pismo Beach Chamber of Commerce board meetings, South County Chamber of Commerce Rise and Shine, Pismo Beach Hospitality Association meetings, CISCOM, Safety Committee and other various meetings when the TED Director is unavailable. • Coordinates closely with the contracting marketing firm on monthly reporting, seasonal and event campaigns, website updates, social media posts, and in coordinating specific events.

Position title	Authorized positions	Designation	Key roles and responsibilities
Tourism Assistant	1	Part-time (up to 30 hrs per wk)	- Provides administrative support for the Division, including answering phones, and ordering supplies. - Creates and processes travel forms, invoices, and receipts, and coordinates the monthly schedule for CVB staff. - Supports City events by processing vendor paperwork, verifying licensing and insurance, and assisting with event setup and breakdown. - Performs broad data entry for monthly visitor logs and business licenses and organizes files for vendors and event submissions. - Supports visitor and tourism activities by managing site tours or rental inquiries, handling payments, and preparing agenda packets and minutes for committee meetings.
Tourism and Events Host	8	Part-time (up to 19 hrs per wk)	- Serves as a City ambassador by welcoming guests, responding to visitor inquiries, and providing customer service at the Visitor Information Center (retrofitted Airstream trailer on beach). - Supports City events through pre-event coordination, community outreach, on-site setup and breakdown, and active visitor and vendor assistance during events. - Maintains up-to-date knowledge of local activities, events, and businesses. - Operates the Visitor Information Center by opening the facility, stocking brochures, checking inventory, and monitoring displays. - Assembles information packets for individual visitors and assists with industry tour and group information requests.
TOTAL	10		

2.3 RECREATION

The Recreation Division provides residents and visitors with diverse recreation programs, classes, activities, and events for people of all ages and abilities. The Division manages year-round recreational programming and registration, independent instructor contracts, and park and hall rentals, in coordination with Public Works, which manages and maintains the rented parks and facilities.

The Recreation Division commits a large portion of its time to organizing and supporting major community and neighborhood events including Pumpkins in the Park, Holiday Harmony, the Father-Daughter Dance, Egg-Stravaganza, the Pacific Breeze Concert Series, Stride with the Tide, and Movies in the Park. In addition, the Division manages public art opportunities, community beautification projects, and designs the tri-annual community Activity Guide.

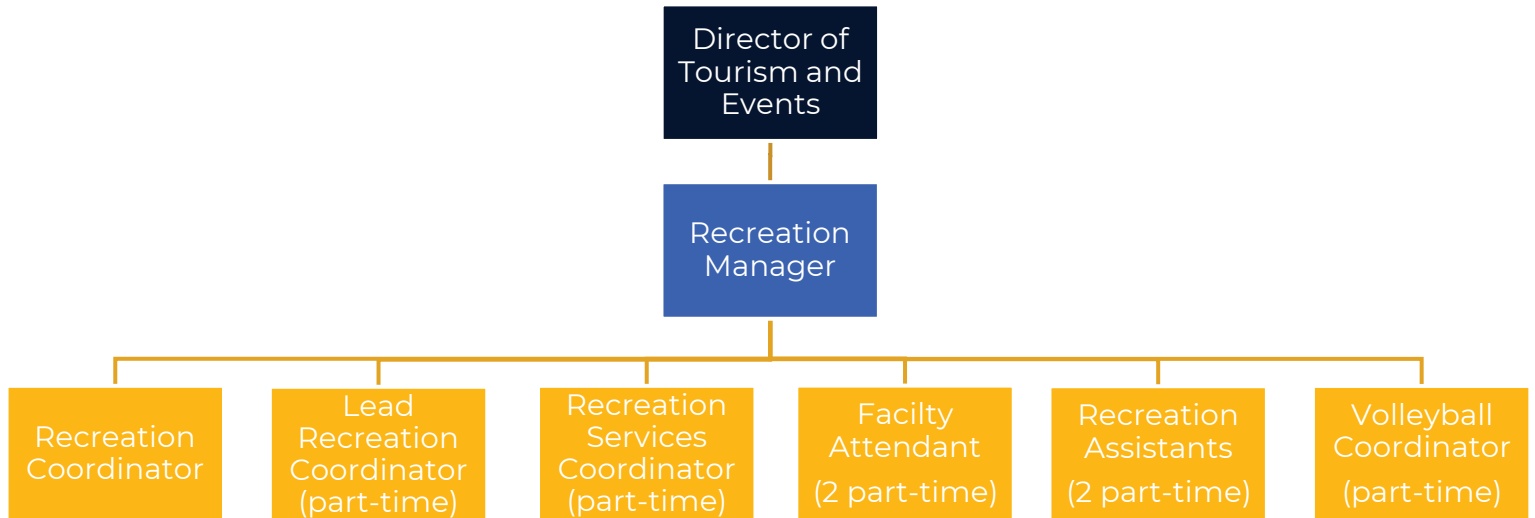
The Recreation Division staffs and supports the Parks, Recreation & Beautification Commission (PRBC). The Recreation Manager is the primary staff liaison to the PRBC and attends their bi-monthly meetings to advise the commission and provide recommendations on recreation programming, park facilities, and city beautification efforts. The Recreation Coordinator supports the commission by participating in and clerking the meetings, while the part-time

Recreation staff provides administrative and logistical support, including preparing reports, updating correspondence, and organizing focus groups to accomplish the commission's goals. Public Works frequently serves as a supporting reviewer of PRBC projects. However, consistent and ongoing coordination with Public Works is not formally integrated into current processes.

The Adopt-a-Bench program is a community beautification initiative for City parks managed by the Recreation Division. Specifically overseen by the Recreation Coordinator, the program facilitates the installation of these benches, which sometimes incorporate public art components. This program is facilitated through ongoing coordination with Public Works.

The Recreation Division is budgeted for 2 full-time staff members (the Recreation Manager and Recreation Coordinator) and currently employs 9 part-time staff members. Although the Division's core part-time positions are currently filled, it continues to experience challenges recruiting and retaining part-time employees. An organizational chart for this function is provided below.

RECREATION DIVISION ORGANIZATIONAL COMPONENTS



The following table details staff within this function, listing each position by title and summarizing its primary duties. These are not intended to be comprehensive job descriptions.

RECREATION DIVISION — AUTHORIZED POSITIONS AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Position title	Authorized positions	Designation	Key roles and responsibilities
Recreation Manager	1	Full-time	- Plans, manages, and oversees daily functions, programs, projects, and activities of the Recreation Division, including supervision of all Division staff. - Manages and oversees the planning and coordination of community events, including Pumpkins in the Park, Holiday Harmony, and the Father-Daughter Dance, including leading event setup and breakdown. - Supervises the customer service and facilities rental program, including preparing user contracts, liability insurance documents, and assessing and processing fees and deposits. - Administers the annual Recreation Division budget. - Participates in the selection, training, and evaluation of assigned personnel. - Chairs the Parks, Recreation, and Beautification Commission (PRBC) and serves as its primary staff liaison, overseeing agenda and report preparation, meeting coordination, ad hoc committees, interdepartmental coordination, and external stakeholder communications. Coordinates PRBC-related projects, including public art, capital improvements, playground renovations, and beautification projects for parks, recreation facilities, and halls from planning through completion. Provides recommendations and takes appropriate action to assist the City Council in achieving established goals related to parks, public recreation, open space access, and community beautification in accordance with City policies, budgets, and approval processes. - Serves on the Special Event Committee and Risk Management Committee.

Position title	Authorized positions	Designation	Key roles and responsibilities
Recreation Coordinator	1	Full-time	- Coordinates the planning and organization of community events, including securing sponsorships and volunteers for larger events, collecting required insurance documentation and vendor contracts, and managing event budgets and related administrative requirements. - Supports the Recreation Division's daily front office operations, including facility rentals, customer service, administrative support, recreation programming, program registration, and invoicing. - Serves as Clerk to the PRBC by preparing agenda packets, minutes, and supporting documentation. Assists with special projects, including contracts, invoicing, and budget documentation related to public art projects. - Oversees and manages the Adopt-a-Bench Program.

Position title	Authorized positions	Designation	Key roles and responsibilities
Lead Recreation Coordinator	1	Part-time (up to 27 hrs per wk)	- Provides coordination of recreation programs and facilitates programming. - Participates in the development, implementation, and maintenance of program offerings, oversees and maintains schedules aligning program offerings with facility availability. - Advertises and recruits contract instructors and teachers to assist in designing youth and adult classes and programs. - Coordinates program billing, payments, and contracts. Ensures compliance with applicants, appropriate permitting, insurance, rental agreements and fees are properly addressed. - Oversees, monitors, manages, and leads program events and activities when required. Supports participant registration and maintains rosters and logs. Prepares and maintains reports, correspondence, and staff manuals. - Provides division-wide administrative support for recreation and facility programming, contributing to overall program operations and daily administrative needs. - Works closely with the Recreation Coordinator and Recreation Manager to support all division events. Serves as the Recreation Lead by assisting with event planning, logistics, advertising and marketing, invoicing, volunteer coordination, day-of-event operations, and post-event follow-up. - Serves as the primary contact for contracted instructors, supporting contracts, instructor manuals, advertising, and development of Activity Guide offerings. Manages adult and youth program calendars, communicates with instructors regarding enrollment, maintains registration records, processes instructor invoices and payments, oversees registration through the recreation software, and compiles daily cash receipts while ensuring accurate payment records.

Position title	Authorized positions	Designation	Key roles and responsibilities
Recreation Services Coordinator	1	Part-time (15-17 hrs per wk)	- Serves as the primary point of contact for parks and facility inquiries. Manages rental contracts, calendars, insurance requirements, fees, invoices, and customer communications while providing front office support for facility rentals. - Assists with pre- and post-event setup and cleanup and provides day-of-event support for recreation programs and events as needed. - Assists the Recreation Manager and Recreation Coordinator with division-wide administrative and operational functions.
Recreation Assistant	4	Part-time (15-17 hrs per wk)	- Assists with the planning, organization, and coordination of recreation programs; facilitates program administration and provides insight, direction, and information to participants and staff. - Assists with the creation and update of the Activity Guide, other Recreation materials, and marketing. - Provides general customer service and establishes/maintains relationships with user groups. - Assists with day-of-event operations, including loading, unloading equipment, and providing event support. - Provides Recreation Division front office administrative support as needed.

Position title	Authorized positions	Designation	Key roles and responsibilities
Facility Attendant	2	Part-time (15-17 hrs per wk, varies based on facilities rentals)	• Conducts regular building inspections for the purpose of documenting attendance, facility maintenance and safety reports, and organizes the inventory of custodial supplies and equipment. • Identifies building maintenance needs and reports these to the Recreation Manager, who coordinates repairs with Public Works. • Serves as the primary point of contact for facility users during events, providing excellent customer service and ensuring rental requirements are met. Monitors facility uses throughout the rental period and serves as a point of contact for security during events. • Performs pre- and post-event walkthroughs with renters, monitors facilities during events to ensure they remain clean, safe, and in good condition, performs routine janitorial duties, and addresses facility needs throughout events. • Communicates with the Recreation Manager or Recreation Services Coordinator regarding facility conditions and event outcomes and provides information necessary to determine compliance with rental requirements and eligibility for deposit refunds.

Position title	Authorized positions	Designation	Key roles and responsibilities
Volleyball Coordinator	1	Part-time (13-15 hrs per wk)	- Oversees weekly and seasonal court maintenance in coordination with the Recreation Manager and Public Works. Assists with rental scheduling, signage, inspections, and maintenance needs to ensure courts are safe and ready for use. - Supports youth and adult volleyball programs by ensuring courts and equipment are properly prepared and available. - Coordinates and oversees six annual beach volleyball tournaments from May through August in partnership with the California Beach Volleyball Association. - Assists with scheduling beach volleyball rentals, court signage, inspections, and communication of maintenance needs. - Coordinates adult volleyball programming seasonally.

TOTAL 11

2.4 INTERDEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION

The Tourism and Events Department relies heavily on cross-departmental collaboration to successfully support its operations. Specifically, this operational support includes:

- **Public Works.** Provides facility maintenance, park operations, waste management, and event assistance. The CVB submits maintenance requests through PublicStuff (soon to be converted to CityWide) and receives Public Works support for major events, including setup, cleanup, and coordination of portable restrooms. Recreation generally manages its own event logistics and submits requests to Public Works by email or by submitting a service request form for assistance with tables, equipment, and electrical access. Onsite support is less consistently available for shorter Recreation events because these assignments are voluntary and typically provide fewer overtime hours than the longer shifts associated with CVB events.
- **Police and Fire.** Provide event security, traffic control, and public safety support for each event as coordinated and available.
- **Finance (Administrative Services).** Coordinates with each division for payments, invoicing, deposits, and records processing. The CVB processes invoices and travel forms through Laserfiche and relies on Finance for Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) and Lodging Business Improvement District (LBID) reviews and information. Recreation coordinates with Finance on

program fees and rental deposits, tracks facility reservations using SharePoint, and utilizes the ActiveNet software platform for program and class registrations. Recreation staff process invoices and travel forms through Laserfiche as well as utilizing the Outlook calendar to schedule parks, halls, and athletic facility reservations.

- **Human Resources.** Supports ongoing operations by managing department recruitment, conducting classification and compensation studies, and overseeing staff evaluations and training to ensure the department's workforce needs are met.
- **Risk Management.** Provides information and is engaged on an as-needed basis. Liability and safety are primarily addressed through baseline event insurance requirements rather than hands-on risk oversight, and Risk Management staff have not routinely been included in the Special Events Committee meetings.

3. EXTERNAL RESOURCES

3.1 ADVISORY BOARDS

PARKS, RECREATION & BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION (PRBC)

The Parks, Recreation & Beautification Commission (PRBC) serves as a five-member advisory body to the City Council regarding community recreation and public spaces. The Commission's core outlined functions include:

- **Advising on Recreation and Events.** Providing recommendations and review for the City's recreational programming, community events, and leisure activities to ensure they meet the needs of residents.
- **Guiding Capital Improvements.** Advising on park acquisition, facility development, and maintenance, including some hands-on involvement such as selecting designs for major infrastructure upgrades at Chumash and Palisades parks.
- **Promoting City Beautification.** Directing and coordinating city-wide beautification efforts and public art programs, like utility box painting, updated park signage, and memorial installations.
- **Facilitating Project Implementation.** Utilizing smaller ad-hoc subcommittees to actively advance specific facility, playground, and beautification projects outside of their formal bi-monthly meetings.

The Recreation Manager serves as the primary staff liaison, and Recreation staff attend Commission meetings. The Public Works Department has some involvement outside of regular meetings and reviews project proposals at varying stages of the process.

CBV/LODGING BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (LBID) ADVISORY BOARD

The CVB/Lodging Business Improvement District (LBID) Advisory Board serves as the strategic guiding body for the City's tourism efforts. Its core functions include:

- **Directing Tourism Strategy.** Advising the Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) on marketing, public relations, and large-scale event strategies to promote Pismo Beach as a tourist destination and drive overnight hotel stays.
- **Overseeing Revenue Allocation.** Managing the funds generated by the LBID assessment on short-term lodging to fund destination marketing, administration, and travel industry promotion.

- **Funding Capital Improvements.** Guiding the allocation of the additional 1% LBID assessment dedicated specifically to visitor-serving capital projects, infrastructure, and community enhancements.
- **Guiding Economic Investments.** Collaborating with City leadership to shape economic strategies and event portfolios that balance the financial needs of the local hospitality industry with localized community benefits.

The Tourism and Events Director is the primary staff liaison, and Conference and Visitors Bureau staff attend Board meetings. The City's marketing firm, TJA Advertising, has significant involvement in project discussions and attends Board meetings to guide public relations and website strategies.

3.2 ECONOMIC FACTORS

Pismo Beach's visitor economy remains a driver of regional economic vitality, welcoming approximately 1.64 million visitors in 2024 who generated \$361.0 million in direct spending, with lodging capturing the largest share at 39% (\$141.3 million). This consistent volume is anchored by iconic local infrastructure, with the Pismo Pier recording 1,227,186 foot-traffic counts during the Fiscal Year 2025–2026 cycle.

California's San Joaquin Valley is the destination's primary drive market, historically accounting for 14% to 22% of seasonal arrivals and capturing up to 35% of day trips and 24% of overnight stays during peak summer windows. Stays across Pismo Beach are administratively modeled at an average of two nights, while real-world campaign-specific tracking indicates a real-time length of stay ranging between 1.74 and 2.19 nights. Furthermore, booking campaigns reveal an average of 1.2 to 1.5 travelers per booking party who generate an average daily spend of \$75.00 per traveler, with average overall trip spends estimated at \$800.00 to \$1,216.00 per traveler per booking. LBID assessment revenues are outlined below, with relatively stable revenue generation during the past four years, with a substantial increase in Fiscal Year 2022 and relatively consistent revenue during the past three years.

TOURISM-RELATED REVENUES FY 2021–FY 2025

	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
LBID Assessment Revenue	\$2,703,948	\$3,090,688	\$2,813,544	\$2,740,782	\$2,745,059
City Sales Tax Revenue	\$4,998,485	\$6,127,110	\$6,074,484	\$5,857,109	\$6,580,812
Transient Occupancy Collections	\$14,209,579	\$17,010,748	\$15,481,136	\$15,083,303	\$15,112,396
TOTAL	\$21,912,012	\$26,228,546	\$24,369,164	\$23,681,194	\$24,438,267

This data captures annual lodging performance metrics sourced from STR (Smith Travel Research), tracking two core indicators across a five-year period from 2021 through 2025.

MARKETING, VISITOR, AND REVENUE DATA

Data Element	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
LODGING PERFORMANCE (STR)					
Occupancy (Annual Average)	65.8%	64.6%	60.8%	60.0%	60.8%
Room Revenue	\$150,116,391	\$141,652,860	\$131,752,332	\$128,936,937	\$135,344,697

The first component, annual average occupancy, measures the percentage of available rooms sold and shows a general downward trend from a 2021 peak of 65.8% to roughly 60.8% in 2025, indicating softening demand relative to available inventory. The second component, room revenue, captures total dollars generated from room sales and follows a similar decline from \$150.1 million in 2021 to a low of \$128.9 million in 2024, before partially recovering to \$135.3 million in 2025.

CONTRACTED SERVICES

The LBID budget includes \$1,235,227 annually for contract services. In 2025, the City renewed its contract with TJA Advertising for a five-year term to implement a marketing plan encompassing public relations, social media, and management of the Experience Pismo Beach website. TJA has managed the City’s marketing portfolios for nearly 20 years and employs geolocation-based digital marketing to direct referrals to local lodging properties and supports the planning and promotion of major City-produced events. This contract is managed by CVB staff with engagement from the LBID Advisory Board. By contrast, recreation staff internally manage marketing for community programs, drawing only minimally on TJA's assistance.

CONTRACTED MEDIA BUDGETARY COMPONENTS

	FY 2026	FY2027
CVB MEDIA EXPENSE BUDGET		
Event Promotion	\$70,000	\$70,000
Graphic Production	\$10,000	\$10,000
Public Relations	\$18,000	\$18,000
Social Media	\$20,000	\$20,000
Stay Vacation Campaign	\$50,000	\$50,000
Stewardship and Education	\$40,000	\$40,000

	FY 2026	FY2027
Web Maintenance and Development	\$15,000	\$15,000
Total CVB Marketing	\$223,000	\$223,000
LBID MEDIA EXPENSE BUDGET		
Advertising and Media, Digital, Print, Broadcast, Streaming	\$521,482	\$521,482
Branding Graphic Design	\$38,588	\$38,588
Contingency Advertising	\$44,100	\$44,100
Cooperative Media	\$44,100	\$44,100
Event Marketing and Development	\$110,250	\$110,250
Influencer/Content Development	\$55,125	\$55,125
New Market Development Sacramento, San Diego, and Portland	\$143,325	\$143,325
Public Relations	\$77,175	\$77,175
Social Media	\$88,200	\$88,200
Video Production for Social Media and Events Website	\$55,125	\$55,125
Website Design and Maintenance	\$92,610	\$92,610
YouTube, Facebook, Instagram Advertising	\$77,175	\$77,175
Total LBID Marketing	\$1,347,255	\$1,347,255
Total Contracted Marketing	\$1,570,255	\$1,570,255

The contracted marketing budget totals \$1,570,255 annually across Fiscal Year 2026 and Fiscal Year 2027, held flat between the two years. It combines two funding sources: the CVB media budget (\$223,000, roughly 14%) covering event promotion, public relations, social media, and related destination-marketing activities, and the larger LBID media budget (\$1,347,255, roughly 86%) weighted toward paid advertising and media, new market development, and event marketing.

	2024	2025
MARKETING & PERFORMANCE DATA		
Email List Size, Year-end	111,111	190,000
Email Open Rate	25%	53.1%
Visitor Guide Requests	7,137	4,312
Lodging Referral Clicks	94,475	98,839
Newsletter Sign-ups – Page Views	1,138	870

This data tracks five digital and visitor-engagement marketing metrics comparing 2024 to 2025. The email program showed strong gains, with the year-end email list growing from roughly 111,000 to 190,000 subscribers and the open rate more than doubling from 25% to 53.1%. Lodging referral clicks also rose modestly from 94,475 to 98,839. Two metrics declined, however: visitor guide requests fell from 7,137 to 4,312, and newsletter sign-up page views dropped from 1,138 to 870, suggesting a shift in how visitors are engaging. This is largely attributed to a new digital download option for Visitor Guide information online.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

The Tourism and Events Department relies heavily on a diverse network of external partner organizations to successfully execute its extensive portfolio of community programs, large-scale events, and destination marketing campaigns. Because the department operates with a lean core staff, these collaborative relationships are essential to expanding its operational bandwidth and maximizing City resources. The table below provides an overview of the core partnerships that are relied upon.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Organization	Key Roles and Responsibilities
Pismo Beach Chamber of Commerce	Partners with the Tourism and Events Department to host and promote community-centric events that draw both residents and visitors. Key collaborative events include the Clam Festival Wine Walk and the downtown "Christmas by the Sea" celebration.
Pismo Beach Hospitality Association	Acts as a collaborative partner alongside the LBID and the City Council to sustain the local tourism economy. Ensures that the needs and concerns of local businesses are represented in city-wide planning and economic vitality efforts.
Educational and Stewardship Partners (Cal Poly)	Partners with the CVB (managed by TJA in partnership with Cal Poly's Ruttenberg Marine Biology Lab, California State Parks, and Land Conservancy, etc.) to spearhead local clam conservation, research, and environmental education. Coordinates educational outreach such as school assemblies, distribution of stewardship activity books, and interactive wildlife booths during the Clam Festival to teach visitors how to ethically rebury clams. The Kids Clam Rescue also takes place in the Stewardship area at Clam Festival as a CVB part of the event much like the Clam Chowder Cook-Off is part of the CVB activities.
Volunteers and Volunteer Groups	Assist the Recreation Division with the logistics, setup, and operation of major community events.

Organization	Key Roles and Responsibilities
California Beach Volleyball Association (CBVA)	Partners directly with the Recreation Division to host volleyball tournaments throughout the summer. Their role is to strengthen collaborative, active, and community-focused recreation on the beach.
Neighboring Cities (Grover Beach and Arroyo Grande)	Collaborates closely with the Recreation Division to pool resources and provide more opportunities for residents. Specifically, Pismo Beach works with Grover Beach and Arroyo Grande to design and create three combined activity guides per year, which are distributed to 23,000 homes.
Event Sponsors	Recreation actively recruits and partners with a base of local sponsors. The role of these sponsors is to provide financial contributions or prize donations (such as for the Stride with the Tide event) to help support event costs and enhance the experience for participants.
Independent Instructors (Includes approximately 30 independent contractors)	Partner with Recreation to facilitate year-round recreational classes and camps (such as yoga, watercolor, tennis, and surf camps). These instructors design the classes and provide their own equipment and insurance, while the City provides the facilities and handles the ActiveNet participant registrations and billing.

4. WORKLOAD

This chapter includes workload data relevant to tourism and recreation operations, such as visitor volume, event attendance, program registrations, and facility usage. This data was primarily generated from City staff.

4.1 SERVICE SCOPE AND WORKLOAD DRIVERS

The Tourism and Events Department includes the Conference and Visitors Bureau and Recreation Division, which support tourism, economic activity, community programming, and quality of life. The CVB manages destination marketing, public relations, tourism strategy, Lodging Business Improvement District funds, and the Visitor Information Center. Recreation oversees classes, youth camps, sports programs, facility rentals, community events, and beautification initiatives.

4.2 CVB AND TOURISM WORKLOAD DATA

CVB workload is driven by major City events, including the Fourth of July celebration, Clam Festival, Classic Car Show, and Band Review, as well as vendor coordination, contracts, licensing, and public safety planning. The division also processes approximately 75 to 100 special event permits annually, manages tourism marketing contracts and digital communications, and operates the Visitor Information Center seven days a week. These numbers do not consider many recurring events, including Art in the Park, Pismo Summer Market, GameDay Xtreme Baseball Tournaments, and BSR Sunday Concert Series.

The following table represents key convention, tourism, and visitor metrics tracked by the City over the most recent three fiscal years.

CVB DIVISION METRICS 2024 – 2026

	2024	2025	Jan–June 2026
Visitor Information Center visitors	13,877	14,720	13,182*
Visitor guides/maps distributed	Approx. 13,500	Approx. 13,500	Approx. 6,750
Major City-sponsored visitor events produced	4	4	4
Estimated attendance at City-sponsored events	132,500	132,500	132,500
Special event permits administered	43	56	22
Vendors, exhibitors, and food vendors coordinated	88	90	36**

	2024	2025	Jan–June 2026
Event staff shifts coordinated (City and temporary staff)	6-8 P/T Staff and 0.75 FTE	6-8 P/T Staff and 0.75 FTE	6-8 P/T Staff and 0.75 FTE

* The annual estimate for this is 26,000 for the year. This nearly doubled annual amount likely resulted from moving the Airstream restaurant off the pier at the end of last year, which clarified for visitors the Airstream's function and services.

**This does not consider the annual Clam Festival, which is anticipated to increase this number by 61 to a total of 97 for the year.

4.3 RECREATION WORKLOAD DATA

Recreation processes more than 6,000 annual registrations, coordinates 38 contracted instructors, manages more than 700 facility and park rentals and 40 athletic field rentals, and supports 21 community events. Seven of these events attract approximately 1,500 to 5,000 attendees and require substantial planning, sponsorship coordination, setup, and onsite management.

The following table represents key recreation program and facility metrics tracked by the City over the most recent three fiscal years.

Metric	Annual
Recreation programs offered	152
Program participants	3,800
Special events produced	29
Event attendance	Approx. 25,000
Facility reservations processed	334
Volunteers	Approx. 350 volunteers for larger events
Registrations processed	2,600
Sponsorships managed	Approx. \$9,000 annually, not including in-kind donations
Contracted instructors	38

The Recreation Division's workload extends beyond the annual activity totals reflected in the accompanying chart. Programming includes youth camps and adult classes, some of which are

offered multiple times each week. The Division's 152 recreation programs reflect year-round youth camp and program offerings, including 75 youth camps during the summer season. Adult programming comprises approximately 14 distinct class types offered each month, held year-round and predominantly in the evenings. Together, these recurring schedules yield approximately 820 individual adult class sessions annually, delivered by 38 contracted instructors.

Registrations are divided evenly between online and telephone transactions, with staff maintaining both self-service and direct customer-support processes. Special events range from 12 senior dances and 6 neighborhood gatherings to 8 large community celebrations, outdoor entertainment, and 6 volleyball tournaments. Facility rentals also generate additional administrative workload because individual events may require multiple reservations, coordination points, and facility bookings. Larger events depend heavily on volunteer participation and require approximately 45 hours of staff supervision annually.

For sponsorships, Recreation staff spend 30 to 40 hours securing sponsors, which total approximately \$8,000–\$10,000 annually, not including in-kind donations. For larger events, staff create sponsorship packets and distribute them to local businesses. Sponsors typically receive a booth at the event and are included on marketing materials.

5. TECHNOLOGY

The Tourism and Events Department utilizes a range of technology platforms to support marketing, registration, communication, and record-keeping. The summary below captures the technology currently used across the tourism and recreation functions.

Name	Use
ACTIVE (ActiveNet)	Registration software used by the Recreation Division to manage over 6,000 participant registrations annually, maintain up-to-date class listings, generate rosters, process independent instructor payments, and collect mandatory online waivers
SharePoint	Recreation staff rely on SharePoint as a shared digital drive to store, look up, and manage facility rental documents and applications
Laserfiche	Used as the City's primary document and records management system, this is heavily utilized by Tourism and Events staff to process invoices, track travel paperwork, and manage accounts payable and receivable.
Experience Pismo Beach	The Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) uses this website to evaluate marketing success, utilizing geolocation tracking to monitor visitor trends, tracking landing page metrics for major events (like the Clam Festival and 4th of July), and funneling referrals directly to local lodging properties.
Social Media (Facebook & Instagram)	The CVB actively utilizes these platforms (with over 100,000 followers on Instagram) to drive public relations, promote local events and activities, and build destination brand awareness.
Public Stuff (CityWide Implementation Soon)	Used to track maintenance requests sent to the Public Works Department. Because Public Works is directly responsible for the janitorial services and maintenance of the parks and buildings (such as Pismo Beach Veterans Hall and Shell Beach Veterans Hall), the Recreation Division relies on this system to ensure the facilities they rent out to the public are kept clean and in good repair.
Excel	Used by Recreation to compile, organize, and maintain an accurate inventory of honorary benches, including location, dedication information, installation details, and ongoing maintenance needs.

APPENDIX A: CURRENT STATE ASSESSMENT

2. INTRODUCTION

This document contains a Best Practices Assessment that compares best management practices with current operations within the Tourism and Events Department. This relates specifically to current practices assessed against established best management practices in local government. The analysis is a key component of the broader study designed to identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities for improvement across the City's Tourism, Recreation, and Events functions.

The findings outlined herein will directly inform the development of targeted recommendations to enhance efficiency, consistency, and service delivery, aligning with recognized public sector standards. Conducting this type of evaluation provides significant value by offering an objective baseline of current operations, promoting transparency, and ensuring City services remain responsive to community needs.

Furthermore, aligning with best practices supports continuous improvement, informed decision-making, and accountability, ultimately contributing to more effective governance and public trust.

2. BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

2.1 DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT

The assessment of best practices is divided into the major subsections of:

- Governance and Strategy.
- Performance Management.
- Internal Coordination and Communication.
- Community Partnerships and External Coordination.
- Marketing, Communications, and Destination Stewardship.
- Risk Management, Accessibility, and Funding.
- Technology.

It represents an important step in the project by reporting on initial key findings and opportunities related to the City's tourism, events, and recreation functions.

To assess operational strengths and improvement opportunities, the project team utilized a set of industry best management practices outlining effective operational practices against which to evaluate the various operations and components of the City's overall organizational and operational processes and functions. Collectively, the best practices consist of:

- Statements of "best practices," "recommended practices," or performance targets derived from national professional organizations, including the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Destinations International, and International Festivals & Events Association (IFEA).
- Statements of "best or prevailing practices" based on the study team's experience in evaluating high-performing operational reviews.
- Identification of whether the City meets these performance targets.

The diagnostic assessment is one of several tools used to identify opportunities for reform. It will be used, along with information obtained from stakeholder surveys and focus groups, feedback from City staff, and data analysis by the project team, to develop a final set of recommendations.

A '✓' indicates that the best practice is met. An 'X' in the "Meets Target" column indicates that the practice does not meet the described operational target. A '~' indicates progress toward (or partially meets) the operational target.

PRACTICE STATEMENT DESCRIPTION	MEETS	COMMENT
GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGY		
1. There are an established mission statement and strategic plan that address tourism, events, and recreation goals aligned with city priorities.	~	The City has an overarching Vision Statement and the City Council Goals (such as prioritizing “Quality of Life”). The Tourism and Events Department lacks its own unified mission statement. Furthermore, while the Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) utilize a 3-year Strategic Marketing Plan (2025-2028) developed by TJA Advertising, there is no long-range plan that guides the Recreation Division or integrates the department’s event portfolio and operations.
2. There are clearly defined leadership roles and responsibilities, supported by an established chain of command that delineates reporting relationships, accountability, and decision-making authority.	~	An official chain of command and leadership roles are clearly defined in writing. However, the City’s approach has historically included department director’s oversight focused heavily toward CVB functions, with very limited interaction/involvement with the Recreation Division’s programs and community events.
3. Structured communication and coordination occur with city management and other city departments through meetings, reporting processes, and ongoing collaboration.	~	There is some cross-departmental coordination through the Special Events Committee, but there is a lack of broader systematic communication. The two divisions operate in silos, are physically separated, and lack ongoing internal meetings and collaboration.
4. The scope and level of ongoing department programs and services are defined in writing.	X	While individual job descriptions and CVB marketing plans outline specific division duties there is no comprehensive, written definition of the department’s overall scope of programs and services, resulting in the lack of a cohesive, department-wide vision.
5. Staff operate within defined roles with current job descriptions and documented performance-review cycles.	~	Human Resources recently completed a comprehensive classification study that updated all department job descriptions. However, staff roles and daily operations don’t always align with outlined duties.
6. The department uses documented SOPs to standardize end-to-end workflows, define responsibilities and controls, and support consistent, accountable service delivery.	X	The department lacks formal SOPs for core functions and relies on shared files and prior-year records, resulting in inconsistent practices.
7. The department maintains a written workforce-development plan that covers onboarding, cross-training, credentialing, and backup coverage for essential functions.	X	The department lacks a written workforce-development plan. Structured onboarding and training are not occurring and there is a need for formal cross-training and supervisory development to ensure consistent backup coverage and staff support and growth.
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT		

PRACTICE STATEMENT DESCRIPTION	MEETS	COMMENT
8. The department delivers a coordinated portfolio of tourism, event, and recreation programs that addresses visitor attraction, community engagement, economic development, and resident quality-of-life objectives.	X	Division efforts remain siloed, with separate workspaces, limited collaboration, and no coordinated portfolio aligning tourism, event, and recreation programs with shared departmental objectives.
9. The department has an annual work plan that ties staffing, projects, and event investments to adopted goals.	~	The City Council adopted budget document provides specific departmental work plan items tied to City goals. The department lacks its own internal annual work plan.
10. The department routinely collects visitor, event, recreation, financial, and operational performance data to guide decision-making.	✓	The department actively tracks data, utilizing an online dashboard for tourism marketing metrics and the ActiveNet software system for recreation registration.
11. Event and tourism return-on-investment are measured with standardized methods that capture spending, taxes, employment, and broad local value.	✓	Digital marketing efforts are successfully tracked for hotel conversions and Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) generation.
12. Service standards exist for visitor and resident inquiries (questions, compliments, and complaints) across phone, email, social, web, and in-person channels.	~	The department demonstrates a strong commitment to customer service but lacks clearly defined standards for responding consistently to visitor and resident inquiries, compliments, and complaints across communication channels.
13. Tourism staff are trained with destination knowledge, customer-service skills, and multilingual or accommodation support where needed.	✓	CVB staff receive destination training and the tourism website features core community (visitor) information as well as translation/ADA upgrades.
INTERNAL COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION		
14. The department participates in regular cross-functional planning to align priorities, assess resource needs, resolve conflicts, and coordinate programs, events, and projects.	~	There is some ongoing coordination between department directors about known issues. However, gaps in communication can create challenges for needs at the division level to be seen and addressed.

PRACTICE STATEMENT DESCRIPTION	MEETS	COMMENT
15. Written policies and procedures define departmental roles, decision-making authority, primary points of contact, service expectations, resource commitments, approval processes, and escalation protocols for activities requiring support from multiple City departments.	X	While the department coordinates extensively with Public Works and other departments, these interactions remain informal and lack written procedures defining roles, points of contact, service expectations, resource commitments, approval authority, and escalation protocols.
16. The department uses shared communication and coordination tools to provide stakeholders with timely, consistent information on schedules, responsibilities, approvals, operational changes, impacts, and follow-up actions.	~	Individual tools like SharePoint and ActiveNet and are used to manage files and class registrations internally. There is, however, no shared calendar across city departments to track facility bookings, which leads to on-the-ground communication gaps.
17. The department periodically evaluates the effectiveness of its internal coordination through performance measures, staff and partner feedback, post-event or post-project reviews, and documented lessons learned, with findings used to update procedures, clarify responsibilities, and improve future service delivery.	X	The department does not conduct post-event debriefs, document lessons learned, consider future coordination gaps and needs, or use performance reviews to update its procedures.
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND EXTERNAL COORDINATION		
18. The department actively partners with internal and external entities, including other city departments, local tourism organizations, community stakeholders, and residents.	✓	The department actively collaborates with neighboring cities, local hoteliers, independent instructors, and resident advisory commissions.
19. Written coordination protocols define roles of the department in coordinating with and supporting the chamber, local tourism organizations, recreation entities, and other community stakeholders as appropriate.	~	While there are some written documentation and agreements that define working relationships with supporting entities, some coordinated relationships are undocumented.
20. The department provides structured opportunities for partners to participate in planning, co-marketing, training, and destination problem-solving.	~	This is occurring in some instances but is not programmatically built into the department's approach.

PRACTICE STATEMENT DESCRIPTION	MEETS	COMMENT
21. Destination-development and event decisions consider resident priorities, quality-of-life effects, and shared community values.	✓	Quality of life for residents is a general consideration in both tourism and recreational efforts.
22. The department utilizes contracted services and volunteers when project workload exceeds staffing capacity.	~	The department uses contractors and volunteers to supplement service delivery. However, these resources do not consistently provide meaningful workload relief for staff.
23. Contracts for temporary labor, security, production, marketing, and professional services clearly assign performance expectations, reporting duties, insurance, safety obligations, and data responsibilities.	~	While the department maintains baseline event insurance requirements and a multi-year marketing contract, key contractual controls remain inconsistent. Recreation instructor agreements are stored within the division without formal Risk Management review or City Clerk custody, and important partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce and local lodging properties remain informal and undocumented.
MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS, AND DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP		
24. The department maintains a documented communications and marketing strategy with distinct internal and external market audiences.	~	The department uses several established communication and marketing tools, including the CVB's 2025–2028 Strategic Marketing Plan and Recreation's Activity Guide. However, these efforts are not yet integrated into a comprehensive department-wide strategy that clearly addresses both community audiences and external visitor markets.
25. Marketing performance is measured by event demand, tax impacts, or other attributable outcomes.	✓	The CVB actively tracks digital marketing performance, website traffic, and hotel conversions to measure attributable outcomes like Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) generation (e.g., tracking a 45% referral conversion rate generating \$1.5M in TOT).
26. Event and tourism portfolios incorporate sustainability, diversity and inclusion, accessibility, and community-benefit criteria.	~	The department successfully incorporates environmental sustainability and community stewardship into its portfolio (e.g., beach cleanups, educational programs, and pollinator month), but formal integration of diversity, inclusion, and broad accessibility criteria into event portfolios is less documented.
RISK MANAGEMENT, ACCESSIBILITY, AND FUNDING		
27. The department maintains a crisis-communications plan with special events planned through with consideration of security measures, incident-command roles, and emergency coordination.	~	Police and Fire assist with event security. However, internal assessments indicate Risk Management is not included in Special Events Committee planning.

PRACTICE STATEMENT DESCRIPTION	MEETS	COMMENT
28. The department has ADA compliance processes for facilities, communications, reasonable modifications, ticketing or participation access, and website or mobile accessibility.	~	The City has recently enhanced website accessibility and translation services and provides beach wheelchairs; however, department-wide procedures have not yet been formalized to ensure consistent ADA compliance across event ticketing, communications, and reasonable modification requests.
29. Financial policies address internal controls, independent audit or review, fees, insurance, capital replacement, reserve levels, and fund-balance or contingency expectations for tourism and event operations.	✓	The City maintains comprehensive, documented financial policies that establish reserve levels, contingencies, and internal controls, and conducts regular independent audits of lodging properties for TOT and LBID compliance. Additionally, the City has clearly established a comprehensive set of service fees, which the Recreation Division actively administers by setting instructor rates, processing facility rental fees, and managing program registrations and payments through its ActiveNet software.
TECHNOLOGY		
30. Online and mobile-friendly access is available for event information, visitor content, applications, and service requests.	✓	Visitors and residents have online and mobile access to event and visitor content via the Experience Pismo Beach and City of Pismo Beach websites.
31. Integrated software platforms are used for core functions including recreation and event management, reservations, permitting, and financial transactions.	X	Core functions are fragmented across different platforms; while ActiveNet handles class registrations, facility reservations rely on SharePoint and manual processes, and these systems do not fully integrate with the City's financial software.
32. Digital tools enable residents and visitors to access information, register for programs, reserve facilities, purchase tickets, and interact with services online.	~	Residents can access information and register for classes online via ActiveNet, while online facility reservations are not currently implemented due to staffing limitations and processing fee challenges.
33. The department maintains appropriate technology controls, system security, and vendor support.	✓	The City's centralized IT Division actively maintains system security, firewall defenses, managed threat detection, PCI compliance, and vendor support across all departments.

3.2 KEY STRENGTHS

Although the diagnostic assessment is designed to identify opportunities for improvement, it also highlights existing strengths of the current development review process. Some of the key strengths of the City's processes include:

- **Performance Measurement and Data Use.** The department actively tracks tourism, marketing, recreation, and financial activity through digital dashboards and ActiveNet, including hotel conversions and attributable TOT revenue.
- **Strong Customer-Service Orientation.** Staff demonstrates a clear commitment to serving residents and visitors, supported by destination training, community information, translation services, and recent website accessibility enhancements.
- **Established Community Partnerships.** The department maintains productive relationships with neighboring communities, lodging properties, independent instructors, advisory commissions, and other local stakeholders.
- **Resident Quality-of-Life Focus.** Tourism, recreation, and event activities generally consider resident priorities and community benefits, including environmental stewardship, educational programming, and beach-cleanup initiatives.
- **Sound Financial Management.** The City maintains comprehensive financial controls, reserve requirements, established service fees, and regular audits of lodging properties for TOT and LBID compliance.
- **Accessible Digital Services.** Residents and visitors can access tourism and event information, register for recreation programs, and obtain community information through mobile-friendly City and destination websites.
- **Defined Organizational Foundations.** The department benefits from an established chain of command, recently updated job descriptions, centralized IT support, and strong citywide technology controls.

These are just a few examples of the strengths of the current operations and where the City is currently meeting best practices.

3.3 KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

The comparison of the City's current approaches to best management practices also identified some improvement opportunities. Notable challenges and opportunities include:

- **Unified Strategic Vision.** The department would benefit from a cohesive mission statement and long-range strategic plan that integrates tourism, recreation, events, and community quality-of-life priorities.
- **Integrated Leadership and Division Coordination.** More consistent leadership involvement, department-wide meetings, and shared planning processes would help reduce operational silos and strengthen collaboration between the CVB and Recreation divisions.
- **Standardized Procedures and Workforce Development.** Documented SOPs, structured onboarding, cross-training, supervisory development, and backup-coverage plans are needed to promote consistency, continuity, and employee growth.
- **Clear Performance and Service Expectations.** An internal annual work plan and consistent standards for responding to resident and visitor inquiries would strengthen accountability and align staffing and resources with adopted priorities.

- **Formalized Interdepartmental Coordination.** Written protocols, shared calendars, standardized support requests, and post-event reviews would clarify responsibilities and improve coordination with Public Works, Police, Fire, Finance, and other departments.
- **Stronger Partnership and Contract Controls.** Key external relationships and instructor agreements should be consistently documented, centrally maintained, and reviewed for performance, insurance, risk, and accountability requirements. Contractor and volunteer models should also be structured to provide meaningful staff workload relief.
- **Integrated Communications, Accessibility, and Technology.** A department-wide communications strategy, formal ADA procedures, and more integrated reservation, permitting, and financial systems would improve consistency and expand convenient public access to services.

4. CONCLUSION

The City of Pismo Beach is focused on assessing and improving the operations, staffing, and strategic alignment of the Tourism and Events Department. This has resulted in a comprehensive review of the department's core functions, encompassing the Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) and the Recreation Division, as well as an evaluation of its community partnerships and management of large-scale city events. Overall, staff and stakeholders demonstrated a strong dedication to enhancing the quality of life for residents while maintaining Pismo Beach as a premier coastal destination.

As the department continues to manage high volumes of community programming and major events, it must further advance its internal capabilities by developing formal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), integrating its fragmented technology platforms, and establishing stronger parameters around contract and risk oversight. Lastly, the department must remember that despite its successful reliance on external marketing firms and volunteers, establishing strong internal leadership and structured workforce development programs will be critical to its long-term stability and success.

Following this deliverable, the project team will be moving into its final analysis of the department's staffing and operations. This will result in the following:

- A detailed staffing and organizational assessment that utilizes workload information to develop an appropriate staffing allocation.
- A comprehensive review of volunteer and contract services, the staff needed to manage these support mechanisms, and an evaluation of opportunities to outsource or insource work functions.
- A more detailed examination of the best practices assessment and operational analysis, resulting in a report narrative with specific recommendations for process improvements.

The project team will continue to assess the results of the tasks completed so far and will build a final report and implementation plan for the City's consideration. This implementation plan will include a detailed list of recommendations, outlining the priority, timeframe, and cost impact for each, which will ultimately be presented to the City Council.