



— VISIT LONG BEACH —

LONG BEACH TOURISM AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA

ANNUAL REPORT

2025-2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DISTRICT OVERVIEW2

LONG BEACH TBIA PROGRAM.....3

Program Area 1: Marketing & Communications.....3

 NEW: Attractions Pass.....3

 Social Media Content Marketing.....3-4

 Destination Website.....5

 Media Relations.....6

 Leisure Travel Advertising.....7

 Meetings Marketing.....8

PROGRAM AREA 2: CONVENTION & MEETING SALES.....8-9

PROGRAM AREA 3: SPECIAL PROJECTS.....9-10

PROGRAM AREA 4: CLIENT SERVICES.....11

PROGRAM AREA 5: MEMBERSHIP/COMMUNITY RELATIONS.....11

DISTRICT BOUNDARY12-13

DISTRICT EXECUTIVE PERSONNEL.....14

 District Advisory Board.....14

ASSESSMENT15

 Methodology.....15

 Proposed Changes.....15

 CPI Adjustments.....15

BUDGET15



VISIT LONG BEACH DISTRICT OVERVIEW

Visit Long Beach (VisitLB) is a 501 (c)(6) nonprofit organization with the mission of contributing to the economic development of the city by marketing and promoting Long Beach as a destination for leisure travel, concerts, music festivals, conventions and meetings.

Over the past five years, VisitLB has become a media giant among other destination management organizations (DMOs) by creating an in-house agency made up of professional writers, videographers, social media specialists, and media relations experts. In an age now dominated by social media, SEO (search engine optimization), and A.I., algorithms across digital spaces are programmed to place high value on original, expert, authentic content – making VisitLB’s in-house strategy a game-changing advantage across the digital sphere.

The success VisitLB has achieved in growing the visibility of the destination has benefited all corners of the organization. Capitalizing on its now immense online reach, VisitLB incorporates content marketing, media relations, and web opportunities into its membership tiers, helping to grow our membership to 400 small businesses and counting – resulting in increased revenues to reinvest into our efforts. Convention clients, too, benefit: VisitLB offers media relations assistance, social media content and collaborations, influencer opportunities, and customized microsites that drive traffic back to www.visitlongbeach.com.

Visit Long Beach was incorporated as the Long Beach Area Convention & Visitors Council, Inc. on August 2, 1982, as a tax-exempt nonprofit organization. The organization commenced operations on October 1, 1982, and was thereafter contracted by the City to provide tourism and

meetings marketing services. In March 21, 1995, the Council changed its name to the Long Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau (LBCVB).

In 2023, leaders in the Long Beach business community and executive leadership of LBCVB determined that in order to remain competitive in its efforts to book conventions and meetings within the City of Long Beach, it would be best to model those operations after competitor cities such as Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco. The sales arm of LBCVB – a team dedicated to booking events, conventions and meetings in Long Beach – became its own nonprofit entity, Meet Long Beach, with a two-year contract with the City.

Visit Long Beach’s board approved a contract with Meet Long Beach in December of 2023 to provide in-market sales and marketing services aimed at capturing conventions and meetings sales in key markets throughout the country. The two entities work closely to coordinate marketing with sales needs and efforts.

Tourism for leisure and convention travel is one of the largest revenue drivers for the City of Long Beach, generating \$1.9 billion in economic impact (per a 2023 study commissioned by VisitLB), and \$39.4 million in tax revenue (per City data from 2024). The tourism industry supports approximately 14,600 jobs in the City.

LONG BEACH TBIA PROGRAM

Program Area 1: Marketing & Communications

NEW: Attractions Pass

VisitLB is developing a digital passport program that will package the destination's top experiences and attractions at discounted rates. Marketed to both leisure and convention travelers, the Long Beach Attractions Pass will come in 1-day and 3-day versions, with early confirmed participants including: the Queen Mary, Aquarium of the Pacific, the Museum of Latin American Art, Rancho Los Cerritos, Rancho Los Alamitos, the Earl Burns Miller Japanese Garden, Catalina Express, and Long Beach Transit.

The platform is built by Bandwango, the top supplier of digital destination passes in the United States. Passes will be available at www.visitlongbeach.com by February 2026, and marketed to attendees of FIFA World Cup and the forthcoming LA28 Olympics.

In December 2025, VisitLB soft-launched its pass program with a variety of seasonal promotions, including a Holiday Savings Pass featuring small business members, and a gamified challenge encouraging visitors to explore holiday lights in the downtown area.

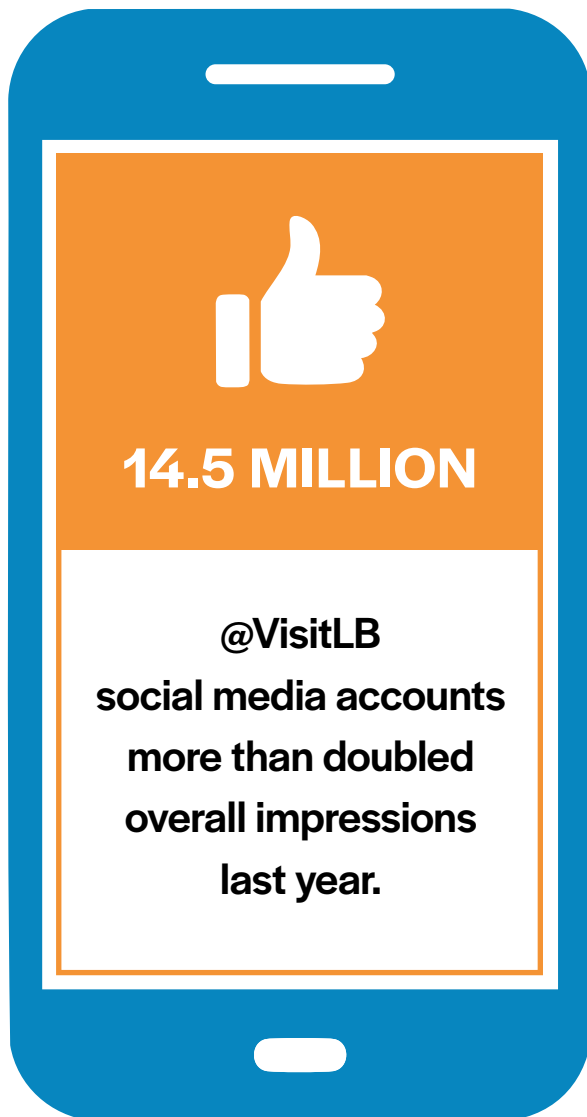


Social Media Content Marketing

VisitLB's wide-reaching social media program aims to capture maximum audience and engagement to drive customers to local businesses, hotels, and events. With five in-house contributors and a growing roster of influencers and content creators expanding VisitLB's reach, social media is a primary factor in enhancing Long Beach's reputation and appeal.



VisitLB's video of local Filipino bakeshop, Gemmae, went viral with more than 2 million views across Instagram and TikTok.



In FY 24-25, VisitLB's social accounts achieved 14.5 million impressions across all platforms. Instagram, which maintains the broadest demographic reach, is the top platform of focus, achieving 8.4 million impressions.

The primary driver of this growth – more than double the impressions over the prior fiscal year – is VisitLB's emphasis on original, authentic video content produced by its Social Media Content Creator and Director of Visual Content. VisitLB posts between four to eight videos per week. Looking ahead, funds have been budgeted to hire an additional team member to specialize in content for TikTok, the fastest growing social media video platform.

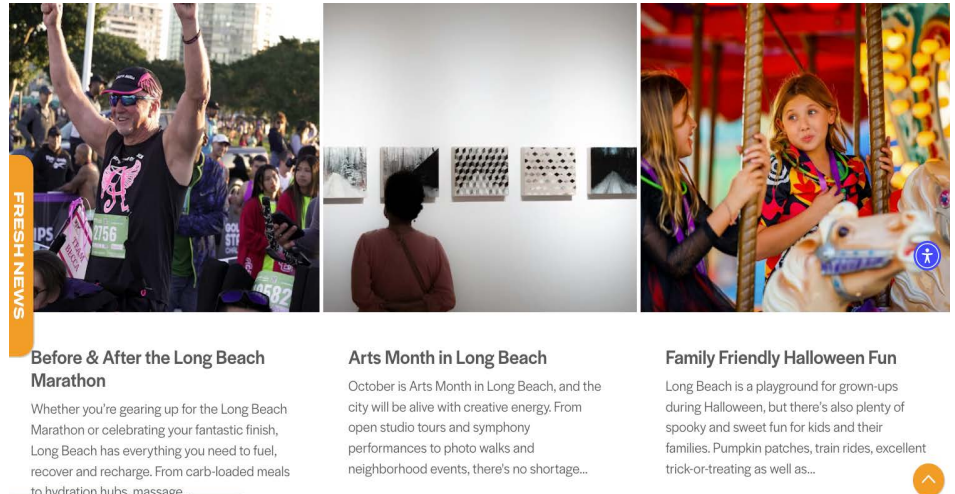
VisitLB will also continue to partner with social media influencers, selecting those who have created successful campaigns for VisitLB in the past as well as new creators who will broaden the company's reach even further. In FY 24-25, VisitLB worked with 16 social media influencers to create content that reached a combined audience of over 3.7 million users. Influencer content had a total of **3 million impressions**.

VisitLB's approach to influencer content earned statewide recognition in 2024, when the company received its second consecutive Poppy Award at Visit California's annual ceremony recognizing the best tourism marketing programs in the state. VisitLB was awarded for Best Influencer Campaign for their video series with journalist and restaurants expert Brian Addison.

Destination Website

Thanks to VisitLB's team of in-house writers, photographers, and web experts, www.visitlongbeach.com remains a dynamic source of high-quality information about everything to see, do, and experience in Long Beach.

In fiscal year 24-25, the team published 195 listicles – blogs crafted in list form that are highly search engine optimized. This pace of publishing not only builds VisitLB's reputation as the top source for information about the destination, but also ensures top ranking in search results and higher visibility as users turn to A.I. for searching the web and making travel plans. Web content is then amplified on VisitLB's social media pages, including Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, X, and LinkedIn.



A sampling of listicles on www.visitlongbeach.com

In 2026, VisitLB is launching a new website that will integrate A.I. search tools, as well as back-end modifications that will make the site more appealing to A.I. algorithms that scrape the internet for recommendations.

VisitLB offers microsites (custom mini-versions of its own website) to all conventions coming to the city, further boosting web traffic and ensuring conventioners have access to expert, local recommendations.



As a result of these efforts, web traffic has grown steadily over the past five years, and in 24-25 reached

2.4 million views

web traffic increased 9%, with www.visitlongbeach.com outperforming all other media in the city.

Media Relations

Throughout FY 24-25, the VisitLB communications team has continued to refine and expand its media relations efforts, raising awareness of Long Beach as a destination and building relationships with journalists and media outlets around the world.

The team distributed more than a dozen press releases and media alerts in FY 24-25, and hosted individual press trips for travel journalists from across California and from Canada, England, Australia, and France.



Visit Long Beach's media relations team connects with influencers at the IMM conference in New York

Media relations staff also facilitated live broadcasts and tapings for LA's news stations, promoting local restaurant openings, cultural events, and celebrations, like the kickoff to the Long Beach Walls mural festival and Fourth of July festivities in Long Beach. VisitLB helped KCBS reporter Alex Biston taste noodles in Cambodia Town, created a Westways Weekender feature for KCBS/KCAL hosted by AAA's Westways editor Jim Benning, and got KTLA's Orange County correspondent Jacqueline Sarkissian on a pink duffy boat at Nigel's. Other earned media spotlights included broadcast coverage of the Belmont Shore Car Show, Black History LB's event on the Queen Mary, and Downtown's first entertainment zone event.



SFGATE

Once known as 'Iowa by the Sea,' this Calif. city is suddenly cool again

It's being rediscovered thanks to a hotel, bar and restaurant boom

A July story in SF Gate coordinated by VisitLB

Key achievements included coordinating two story placements with SFGATE, and a comprehensive online feature with Travel+Leisure. Additionally, VisitLB secured an international feature in Ouest France, the oldest and largest newspaper in France. In total, earned media coverage of Long Beach reached an audience of



344 Million people; \$7.2 million earned media value.

In the 25-26 fiscal year, VisitLB will continue to further expand and deepen its media relations program. These initiatives are seeded at TravMedia's annual IMM show in New York City in January. VisitLB sends two delegates to attend, conducting one-on-one meetings with more than four dozen journalists and content creators to cultivate story ideas and build interest in Long Beach for the coming year.

I've Lived in California for 10 Years—and This Is the Best Secret Beach Town in the Golden State

Long overshadowed by its flashy neighbors, Long Beach is coming into its own.

By **Cu Fleshman** Published on October 18, 2025

In This Article

- Best Hotels & Resorts
- Best Things to Do
- Best Shopping
- Best Restaurants
- Best Time to Visit
- How to Get There
- Neighborhoods to Visit
- How to Get Around



*An October article in Travel & Leisure
coordinated by VisitLB.*

Leisure Travel Advertising

VisitLB strategically invests advertising dollars where matching funds and impressions can be leveraged, in addition to making placements with trending platforms for travelers and convention planners.

VisitLB has partnered with Visit California (the state's tourism marketing agency) in a cooperative advertising campaign for several years. Visit California leverages their size and collective buying power to advertise with national travel companies like TripAdvisor, Cadent, and Adara as well as placing commercials with streaming platforms like Amazon Prime.

This past fiscal year, VisitLB's advertising campaign promoting summer travel to Long Beach achieved **31.1 million impressions**. In FY 25-26, VisitLB is boosting this investment to begin the campaign in the Spring, advertising a new planned Attractions pass program.

VisitLB is also targeting advertising opportunities in the Southern California region, including quarterly campaigns with proven digital outlet Locale Magazine, whose first campaign for VisitLB had more than **4 million impressions** in July 2025. Additional local and regional advertising opportunities will be built in throughout the year.

To better support the growing advertising program, VisitLB promoted both Communications Managers on the team to Communications & Marketing Managers starting in FY 25-26, formally adding digital advertising and asset management and delivery to their duties.



*A digital advertisement featured
on localemagazine.com*

Meetings Marketing

VisitLB allocates funding for marketing related to groups and meetings, planning to spend \$380,000 on this segment in FY 25-26.

Outlets producing the best results in this space currently include PCMA and its magazine Convene, which published a white paper on the unique design of the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center and MeetLB's outstanding service in June 2025. This publication reached 36,000 readers and earned 300,000 impressions.

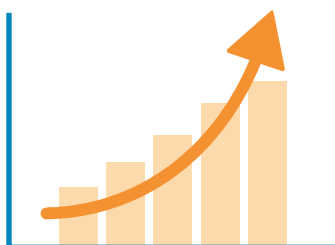
Other outlets VisitLB will partner with include CVENT, Conference Direct, and HPN. With wedding planning services joining VisitLB's portfolio in 25-26, additional advertising to outlets like The Knot, Brides, and other publishers in this space will be added.

Program Area 2: Convention & Meeting Sales

Visit Long Beach contracts with Meet Long Beach, a 501 (c)(6) dedicated to bringing convention business to Long Beach, for in-area meetings marketing services in top meeting hubs across the United States.

While MeetLB's home base is in Long Beach, the team is made up of 11 national sales directors located in key markets across the country, providing an on-the-ground connection with meeting planners in their area and the concierge-style service MeetLB is known for. Results for the 24-25 fiscal year were impressive, achieving 101% of its sales goal for room nights (202,327). 2025 has been one of Long Beach's strongest years on record.

MeetLB also earned its ninth consecutive win for "Best in the West" in the Stella Awards Gold category presented by Northstar, the meetings industry's leading publisher. Long Beach is the only destination to have ever had so many consecutive wins. The Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center also received Bronze for "Best in the West" in the convention center category, its eighth consecutive win.



Long Beach only Western U.S. city to increase hotel revenue

Long Beach's hotel revenue increased 4.7% while competitors' like San Diego and Los Angeles declined or flattened.

MeetLB's personalized and highly engaged approach to client cultivation is a major factor in its success. The team focuses on cultivating strong relationships with clients through in-person gatherings that lead to more bookings. Salon-style, curated gatherings of meeting planners in markets where top associations and groups are based is a key strategy for sales directors, with 44 planned in FY 25-26. Each sales director will also host two luncheon briefings, for a total of 22 opportunities to engage with high-value clients.



MeetLB clients mingle with the sales team and local officials like Mayor Rex Richardson.

In 25-26, MeetLB will host at least three major FAM events in Long Beach, including at the Acura Grand Prix of Long Beach, VisitLB's annual Tree Lighting event kicking off the holiday season, and at one of the major top-tier music festivals held in Long Beach each year. In FY 24-25, the Grand Prix FAM resulted in 137,000 tentative room nights.

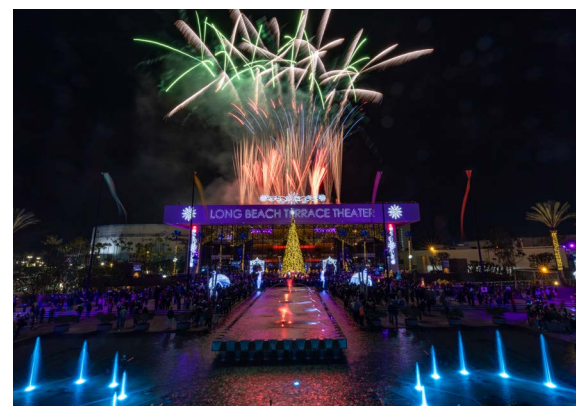
MeetLB also maintains a solid presence at the industry's top trade shows, which have proven to be fruitful grounds for booking business.

Last year, 85,000 tentative room nights were generated at IMEX, alone—the largest such event. Trade show participation generated 300,000 tentative room nights overall. In FY 25-26, MeetLB will participate in 24 trade shows, including IMEX, ASAE, PCMA, ConferenceDirect, and HelmsBriscoe.

In the coming year, MeetLB will add new positions to focus on capturing in-house, hotel-only business. These Small Meetings Directors will help recoup business lost due to the six-month closure at the convention center incurred by the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games and also serve athletic teams and other groups flocking to Long Beach for these major global events as well as the FIFA World Cup and U.S. Conference of Mayors in 2026.

Program Area 3: Special Projects

VisitLB is highly engaged with the local community, demonstrated in part by its involvement in major community-wide events. The organization sponsors a kickoff event for the Long Beach Walls mural festival and Long Beach Pride every summer, and is the title sponsor of free preview of the Grand Prix called Thunder Thursday. Additionally, VisitLB sponsors many major local festivals and events, from the Daisy Lane Christmas Parade to the Long Beach Juneteenth Celebration.



Fireworks light the night at the 2026 Annual Holiday Tree Lighting

VisitLB's premiere Special Project is the annual Holiday Tree Lighting. The event, which began 11 years ago, has grown from attendance of 350 to 7,000. Residents from all over the city and adjoining neighborhoods flood the Terrace Theater Plaza to witness a spectacular show with live musical performances, a preview of Long Beach Ballet's production of "The Nutcracker," fireworks, photos with Santa, train rides, and falling snow. The event generates outstanding positive publicity for the City, with VisitLB securing about \$200,000 to \$250,000 in earned media coverage by broadcast outlets each year.



A family enjoys falling snow at the 2026 Holiday Tree Lighting event

VisitLB also coordinates media coverage of Fourth of July festivities on the waterfront; in 24-25 these efforts resulted in stories reaching an audience of about 5.1 million people, with a media value of \$2 million.

In FY 24-25, VisitLB partnered closely with Black History LB, a nonprofit dedicated to inspiring positive change and unity through hosting events and exhibits celebrate the history and contributions of Long Beach's Black community. VisitLB facilitated the organization's Black History Month events and provided media relations support for its Gospel Brunch on the Queen Mary in the fall, which was covered in advance by three local news stations.



Long Beach's pride Court celebrates at the annual Kickoff to Pride event

Program Area 4: Client Services

VisitLB's team of Client Relations specialists maintain and strengthen relationships with our clients as they visit our city for site inspections, conferences, and events. The Client Relations team serves as a liaison between clients and city agencies, hotels, venues, restaurants and other services to support meeting planners as they coordinate their events in Long Beach.

The staff serves as clients' primary point of contact at the destination, supplying information and resources, coordinating with local businesses and agencies, and providing award-winning customer service.

In FY 24-25, services to clients included coordinating a multi-day film shoot to promote the destination to attendees of USITT, assisting multiple clients with marketing and media relations, and providing welcome letters from city officials. These efforts and more will continue in 25-26.

Program Area 5: Membership/Community Relations

VisitLB's membership and community relations programs deepen our relationship with the local business community and support the local economy, which integrates with efforts to promote tourism and day trips to the destination. In FY 24-25, small business and attractions membership with VisitLB has grown by 65 new members for a total of 424 businesses.

Some of the growth is attributable to a partnership with the City's Department of Economic Development & Opportunity, which implements its Level Up program to provide grants and professional development opportunities for local small businesses. Over the past two years, VisitLB has partnered on this effort by providing membership and its accompanying benefits for over 50 Level Up businesses as well as a series of workshops and seminars on marketing and branding. This collaboration fosters economic growth in Long Beach, which has a high concentration of small independent businesses. Cooperative initiatives with the City to support local businesses will continue in 25-26.

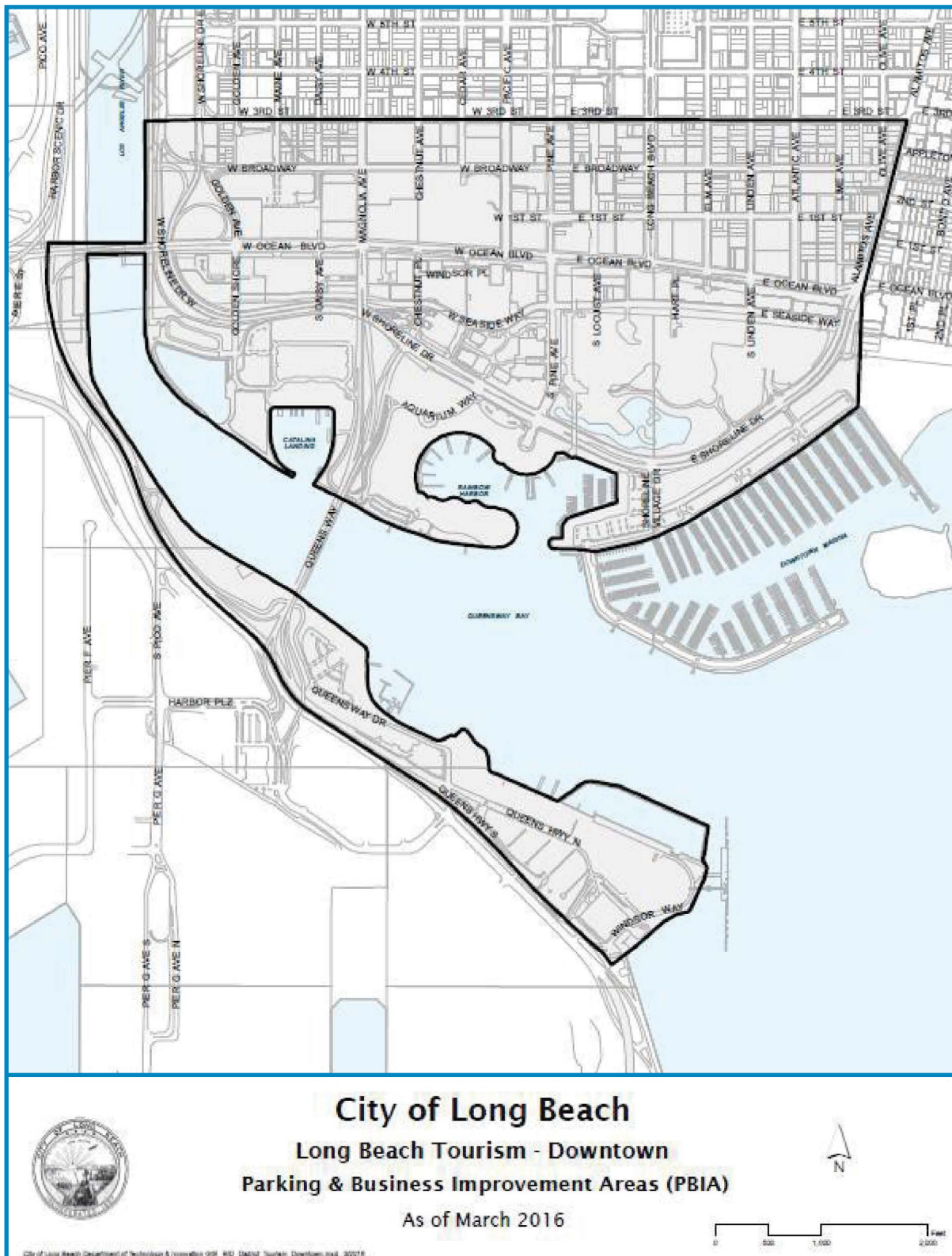
In FY 24-25, the team added a membership manager to expand on services to member businesses and embark on new initiatives, including a program to promote Long Beach as a destination for corporate special events and weddings. VisitLB expects demand for event spaces and coordination to ramp up with the arrival of FIFA World Cup, Olympics, and U.S. Conference of Mayors, and projects this sector to grow into another reliable source of revenue.



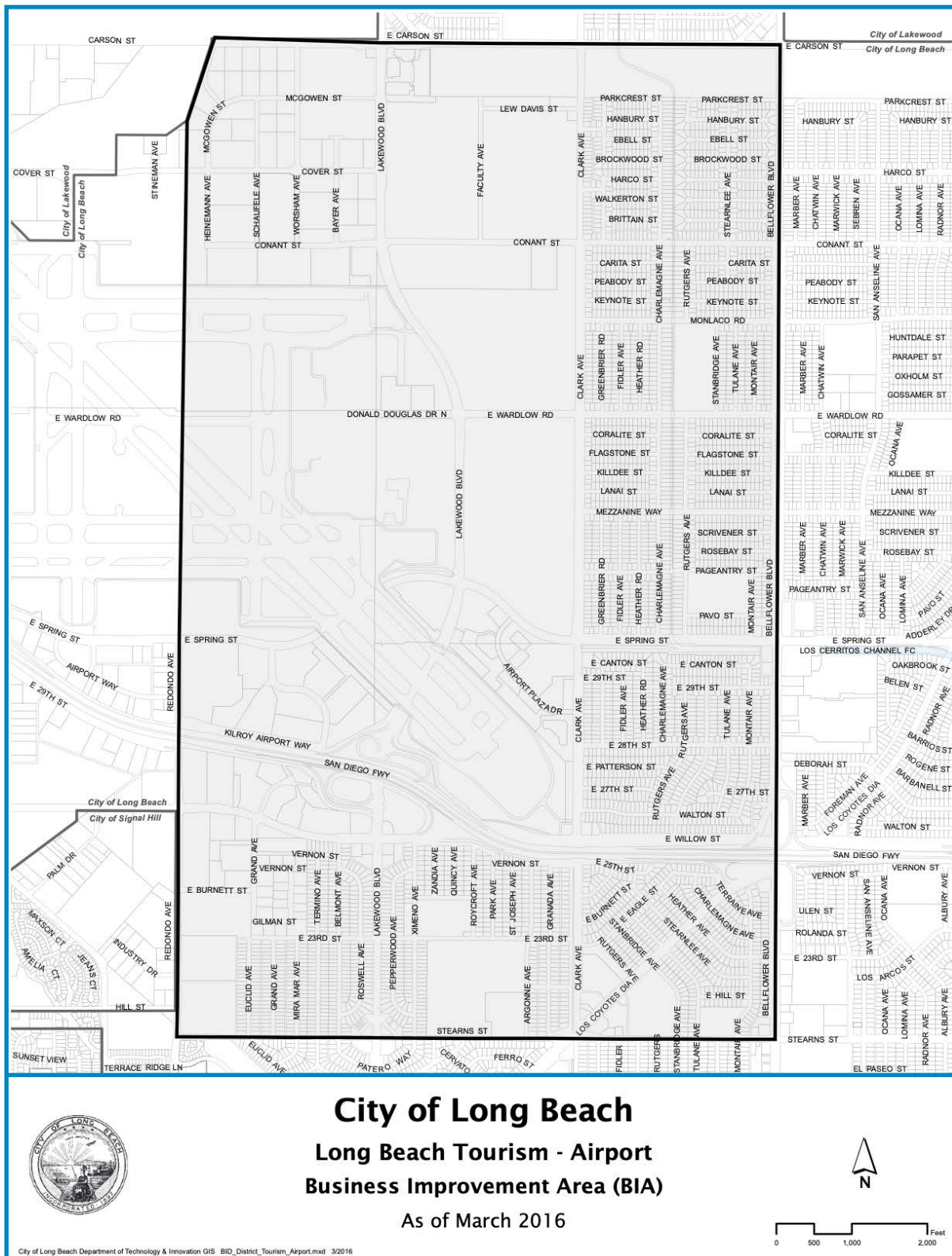
Business owners and managers attend a Content Marketing workshop by VisitLB.

DISTRICT BOUNDARY

Downtown Long Beach



DISTRICT BOUNDARY Long Beach Airport



DISTRICT EXECUTIVE PERSONNEL

Steve Goodling, President & CEO

Samantha Mehlinger, Vice President of Communications & Marketing

Courtney Russell, Vice President of Client Services & Strategic Relationships

Cindy Robbins, Controller

District Advisory Board

The Visit Long Beach Board of Directors includes individuals representing hotels, hospitality and leisure businesses, attractions, marketing experts, and community groups. The 2025-2026 Fiscal Year Board of Directors includes:

- **BOARD CHAIR:** William Rouse, President & CEO, Long Beach Yellow Cab
- **VICE CHAIR:** Lisa Arias, General Manager, Hyatt Regency Long Beach
- **CFO:** Larry Jackson, Long Beach Memorial
- **SECRETARY:** Marcelle Epley, President & CEO, Long Beach Community Foundation
- Rob Adams, General Manager, Hilton Long Beach
- Imran Ahmed, General Manager, Marriott Long Beach
- Terry Antonelli, CEO, L'Opera Ristorante
- Greg Bombard, President & CEO, Catalina Express
- Andre Brose, Fairmont Breakers Long Beach
- Steve Caloca, General Manager, The Queen Mary
- Bill Collier, Owner, Golden Shore RV Park
- Laverne Duncan, Black History Long Beach
- Greg Guthrie, General Manager, Hotel Maya
- Scott Hamilton, Owner, Doma Properties
- Mark Hammerbeck, Residence Inn Long Beach Downtown
- Kishen Heera, Owner, Best Western
- Julia Huang, Founder & CEO, Intertrend Communications
- Chen Lau, Owner, Silver Sands Hotel
- Nicky Loizides Clair, Owner, George's Greek Cafe
- Jack Liu, General Manager, Staybridge Suites
- Silvano Merlo, General Manager, Courtyard by Marriott Long Beach Downtown
- Jim Michaelian, President & CEO, Grand Prix Association of Long Beach
- Ron Nelson, Executive Director, Long Beach Museum of Art
- Dennis Patel, Travelodge Convention Center
- Hitu Patel, Owner, Rodeway Inn/Best Western
- Dan Salas, Founder & CEO, Harbor Breeze Cruises
- Gregory Sanders, Pastor, The Rock Christian Fellowship
- John Thomas, Owner, Art Deco Dimensions
- John Thompson, General Manager, Westin Long Beach
- Rahul Vir, General Manager, Marriott Long Beach Downtown
- (Vacant) Hyatt Centric The Pike Long Beach
- (Vacant) Holiday Inn Long Beach Airport

ASSESSMENT

Methodology

2025 – 2026 The Long Beach Tourism assessment shall be levied on all hotel businesses, existing and future, with greater than thirty (30) rooms, within the area based upon three percent (3%) of the gross short term room rental revenue. The assessment will be collected monthly, based on three percent (3%) of the gross short term room rental revenues for the previous month. New hotel businesses within the boundaries will not be exempt from the levy assessment pursuant to Section 36531 (of the California Streets and Highways Code).

Proposed Changes

There are no proposed changes to the method and basis of levying the assessment.

CPI Adjustments

A Consumer Price Index Adjustment is not being requested at this time.

BUDGET 2025/2026

Revenue	25/26 Budget	24/25 Estimate*	Variance from Prior
Memberships	250,000	258,009	(8,009)
Airport Marketing	131,000	-	131,000
Digital Wall Advertising	35,000	-	-
PBIA	7,054,314	7,453,784	(399,470)
Total Revenues	7,470,314	7,711,793	(241,479)
Expences			
Personnel	1,543,772	1,414,124	129,648
Press/Influencers	30,000	9,010	20,990
Trade Shows	10,000	7,417	2,583
Marketing & Advertising	1,712,842	1,696,951	15,891
Gifts	50,000	36,802	13,198
Special Projects	500,000	299,738	200,262
Travel & Entertainment Out of Town	20,000	9,973	10,027
Travel & Entertainment In Town	300,000	364,235	(64,235)
Support Marketing	30,000	69,947	(39,947)
Administrative Expenses	610,900	1,633,666	(1,022,766)
Meet Long Beach Services	2,662,800	2,496,800	166,000
Total Expenses	7,470,314	8,038,663	(568,349)
Net Change to Assets	0	-326,870	326,870



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