BACKGROUND
The SMTID Management District Plan (MDP) designates the Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau as the “owners association” for the SMTMD. Acting in this capacity, the Chamber provides marketing services to all hotels/motels located within the City of Santa Maria.

In its regular course of business, the Chamber/VCB provides additional marketing, advocacy, and business services to those businesses within the community who hold membership in the organization.

In order to avoid potential conflicts or confusion between these two business models, it has been recommended that the SMTMD allocate marketing funds to ensure that all hotels covered by the TMD are also members of the Chamber/VCB.

CURRENT STATUS
The SMTMD includes thirty (30) hotels and motels located within the City of Santa Maria. Currently, thirteen (13) of these businesses also hold membership in the Chamber/VCB.

Chamber membership fees are assessed based on a scale based on full-time employee counts. The hotels currently holding membership paid rates for FY16 ranging from $270 per year to $690, based on the size of their operation. The average rate paid currently is $367 per business. For FY17, the average rate would be $380.

If all 30 businesses were to pay the average rate, the FY17 total membership fees would be $11,400.

RECOMMENDATION
The Chamber/VCB recommends that the SMTMD allocate $9,150 to subscribe all thirty SMTMD hotels as full members of the Chamber/VCB. This discounted rate (current rate of $305 for businesses of less than 10 FTE employees) will entitle all local hotels/motels to the full rights and services available to members of the Chamber/VCB for the current year.