



March 13, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

Subject: **Claremont Tourism Business Improvement District
Annual Activity Report – 2024**

Background

The Claremont Tourism Business Improvement District (District) was established by Council resolution on Nov. 10, 2009, pursuant to the California Property and Business Improvement District Law of 1994 to promote tourism in Claremont. The District enabled the City to levy assessments on certain lodging businesses to conduct specified activities and services.

The City of Claremont signed a formal agreement for the Claremont Chamber of Commerce to administer the District on Jan. 1, 2010. The agreement requires filing an annual activity report at the end of every fiscal year.

Following is a summary of activities performed through Claremont Tourism Business Improvement District funding in 2024.



Claremont Tourism Business Improvement District Activity Report 2024

The Claremont Tourism Business Improvement District (CTBID) promotes Claremont as a tourist, event, and meeting destination through a comprehensive, strategic marketing and public relations campaign. Per the terms of the charter with the City, the use of CTBID funds is solely directed by a seven-member board comprised of representatives from Claremont’s hotel properties, a representative from the City, and a representative from the Claremont Chamber of Commerce.

The CTBID checking balance on Jan. 1, 2025, was \$48,161.05. The CTBID Reserve Fund was \$146,886.67. The total TOT income paid to the CTBID from the City during the calendar year 2024 totaled \$324,116.65

The initial marketing budget approved for 2024 was \$357,677. Additional expenditures were approved in subsequent TBID meetings. Expenditures paid in 2024 totaled \$376,805.14.

Through its dedicated marketing and public relations consultant, R. Antonette Communications, the CTBID continued regional and online campaigns promoting overnight visits to the City under the Discover Claremont brand. Discover Claremont connects the city’s tourism outreach efforts to Visit California, Discover Los Angeles, and other regional partners.

Working closely with the Chamber of Commerce, the CTBID provided additional funding to the Visitor Center to support its work promoting Claremont lodging and businesses that attract regional tourists, producing logoed items for purchase and promotional opportunities, and funding the Visit Widget visitor app and Visitor Center kiosk that promotes tourism-related small businesses. The Chamber and CTBID also produced the city’s business and visitor guide, and a one-sheet visitor and resident map. The Chamber continued as a community partner of Ontario Airport and Discover Claremont as a premier advertising partner of ONT.

The Discover Claremont visitor website provides information about local stays, dining and shopping, and attractions and events. The search/PPC campaign to drive additional site traffic continued with display and video ad elements. The CTBID funds also supplemented each hotel’s marketing initiatives.

The Discover Claremont media strategy is to create story opportunities with accredited, regional journalists and vloggers for in-town visits, rather than paying influencers to create content. Long-term media relations efforts have resulted in Claremont's inclusion in numerous travel roundups online.

Discover Claremont actively engaged users on several social media channels. The team again increased its content production in 2024, spending more resources to create stories and reels for owned (website) and shared (social media, etc.) media. Posts and reels highlight dozens of tourism-related businesses. Video reels were also featured on Localhood, a platform created for Visit California destinations and indexed through Google Search.

Following are summaries of the Claremont Tourism Business Improvement District's activities during 2024.

I. Marketing and Promotions

The CTBID contracts with R. Antonette Communications to manage and provide the following services for the CTBID:

- Strategic planning and communication counsel
- Campaign management of search and advertising buys and related campaigns
- Oversight of creative
- Press material development and copywriting
- Social media management of online channels including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter
- DiscoverClaremont.com website and Visit Widget management, including the posting of updates, calendar edits, and content changes
- Media & influencer relations: Proactive outreach to key travel journalists and local (L.A. region) travel media influencers (non-sponsored); monitoring newswires for content opportunities
- Liaison with Visit California for media and other opportunities
- Organizing and managing quarterly CTBID meetings
- Budget and vendor management (including financials with Claremont Chamber)
- Annual reports for CTBID
- Ongoing communications and reporting, as needed

General marketing and promotion work implemented by the R. Antonette Communications team included the following highlights and ongoing activities:

- New brand imagery and style guide. The team and Chamber worked together (with IE Design) to update the visual look and overall theme of future promotional content from Discover Claremont. After initial reviews with the CTBID board, an overall "fully unexpected" theme was developed. The brand's style guide was updated to reflect a more contemporary look and color palette for future imagery and messaging. The first output from these efforts, a print ad headlined "Delight-

fully unexpected,” will be featured in the 2025 State Visitors Guide and on Ontario Airport visuals.

- California Visitor Guide. Discover Claremont funded a ¼-page ad in the 2024 California Visitor Guide. The ad provided placement on the pullout visitor map, an additional Claremont destination listing, and incoming visitor leads for future outreach. The CTBID mailed the 2024 Claremont Visitor’s Guide to fulfill over 190 incoming requests generated from this during 2024.
- Ontario Airport. The CTBID continued running 15-second spots on ONT’s digital display boards in the baggage claim areas at terminals 2 and 4. The campaign aims to attract Inland Empire visitors traveling through Ontario Airport to return to visit and stay in Claremont. Claremont’s Kris Petersen (KPE Media) created a new series of digital spots for use in 2025. During December, an additional 10 ads created by Petersen were featured on the international terminal’s exit LED display as a bonus run.
- *LAist Weekender*. As part of its support for the summertime Claremont Shakespeare Festival, a promotion that drives room nights during the slower season, the CTBID funded a newsletter advertorial campaign reaching LAist and KPCC members/subscribers promoting summer overnights in Claremont.
- 2024-25 Visitor’s Guide and Chamber Directory. The CTBID supports its funding through hotel ads placed in the guide. Additional content about visiting Claremont was edited and updated.
- City visitor map tearsheet. A one-page map for city and hotel use was created and distributed to the partners.
- Discover Claremont editorial content. The district continued to create more editorial and visual content for the website and social media. Travel writer Chanin Victor authored monthly story content for the website and the online platform Localhood, which Visit California supports. Stories posted through Localhood are indexed through Google Search, reaching potential visitors.
- Crowdriff. The CTBID continued to fund a subscription to the social media aggregator platform Crowdriff to facilitate curating images and content of Claremont to share on Localhood and on Discover Claremont’s social platforms. About 60 local tourism-related businesses (i.e., museums and galleries, shops, and restaurants, and hotels) have provided blanket permission for Discover Claremont to reshare images from the businesses’ social channels.
- Visit Widget. The visitor app, connected website widget, and kiosk in the Chamber lobby provide comprehensive information to tourists about Claremont’s restaurants, shops, and attractions. The Visit Widget app and website overlay offer details of local dining and shopping options. In contrast, the Discover Claremont app for Android and iPhones further allows visitors to plan itineraries

that include these attractions. Content for restaurants and attractions is automatically synchronized between the app and the DiscoverClaremont.com visitor website, with shopping content manually updated using Chambermaster content. Locally, the app is promoted through sidewalk stickers with a QR code that redirects visitors to the download site. In 2023, the mobile app had 601 new downloads and 2,234 users, and the website widget had 2,377 users. The electronic kiosk in the Chamber lobby, connected through the visitor app, runs the same Visit Widget content as the website. This kiosk enables walk-in visitors to find information about local restaurants, shops, and attractions and then return the content to their phones.

- Retail merchandise. The Visitor Center offers merchandise with the Discover Claremont logo, including hoodies, shopping bags, dopp kits, mugs, and other items produced, many through Claremont vendor Image Concepts. New Discover Claremont stickers were created and made available for walk-ins and events, including for Village Venture.
- Google/Bing/Yahoo search. The CTBID continued its search engine, cost-per-click campaign on Google, Yahoo, and Bing, focused on people searching for rooms and activities in nearby communities (Ontario, Pomona, et al.). This campaign supplements those implemented by the hotels/chains themselves to drive visitors to the Discover Claremont website for information and then refer them to the hotel sites for booking and to Claremont business sites for additional information. The campaign includes display and :15 video ads.
- Facebook sponsored posts. The CTBID funded sponsored posts on Facebook and Instagram to engage with users and promote various hotel specials and local events.
- Sponsorships. The CTBID joined Pomona College in supporting the Midsummer Shakespeare Festival as a summertime opportunity to generate additional room nights. Media relations efforts, social media outreach and posts helped to promote this year's festival.
- California Travel Association membership. The CTBID renewed its gold membership in Cal Travel, an influential and unified voice of advocacy for California's travel and tourism industry. Claremont Chamber CEO Randy Lopez was appointed to the CalTravel board of directors, representing Discover Claremont in 2024.
- Metrolink partnership. Discover Claremont continued its official designation partner with Metrolink, and is among the featured destinations on its So Cal Explorer travel site.

II. Hotel Marketing & Visitor Center Allocation

The hotels allocated \$7,500 per property for each GM to supplement each property’s marketing efforts. The hotels used these funds on various marketing projects to drive room nights in Claremont, including online advertising, photography, updating website and marketing materials, and similar projects.

Additionally, \$20,000 was allocated by the CTBID board to support the Visitor Center, which is co-located and operated by the Claremont Chamber.

While not contractual, these costs are considered recurring annual expenses by the CTBID board for budgeting purposes.

III. Website

The DiscoverClaremont.com website serves as a landing page for CTBID’s marketing efforts, to refer traffic directly to hotel sites for bookings. Google Analytics tracked more than 163,000 unique visitors to the site in 2024 and directed 2,141 visitors to the hotel’s booking sites (with another 12,350 directed to a linked Claremont business or event).

Discover Claremont measured website traffic	2022	2023*	2024*
Website visits	130,465	137,035	193,037
Website unique visitors	110,358	106,437	163,892
Website pageviews	184,634	214,000	291,624

* Google tracking changed to Google Analytics 4 in Sept. 2023

In 2024, the percentage of visitors who entered the website from organic search or typing DiscoverClaremont.com into their browsers was 42 percent. Paid search targeting potential visitors, including those searching for rooms in surrounding communities, totaled 38 percent of site traffic, with paid social bringing another 15 percent. 19 percent of site visitors were referred to the site from social media links.

New site content that followed Visit California’s promotional editorial calendar was authored by travel writer Chanin Victor and posted monthly, and the existing specialty itineraries were updated. Localhood stories produced for the Visit California video search partnership with Google were also incorporated into the site. The dining guide and calendar features were updated throughout the year.

Annual recurring expenses related to the website include hosting, a site maintenance contract, and an allocation for limited design updates.

After reviewing potential vendors, a commission-free booking engine for the hotels will be incorporated into the Stay page in 2025 to enhance online search for Claremont hotels further.

IV. Media Relations

The CTBID continues to opt against hosting influencers (either paid or comped), focusing on connecting with credentialed travel journalists and vloggers. While the Discover Claremont team does address influencer requests, incoming inquiries during 2024 that requested payment for participation were declined.

Stay highlights include:

- Associated Press travel writer Sage Scott was hosted for a series of articles she is producing in 2025 about Route 66 in anticipation of its 100th anniversary in 2026.
- Local travel writer Mary Farah was hosted for a series of parenting stories. Her coverage includes:
 - Along Comes Mary - A Summertime Stay in Claremont, <https://www.alongcomesmaryblog.com/a-summertime-stay-in-claremont/>. I've been visiting Claremont since I was young but I rediscovered its charm taking my own daughter for a summer stay!
 - Ventura County Mom Collective- Claremont: A Mom and Daughter Staycation, <https://venturacounty.momcollective.com/travel/claremont-a-mom-and-daughter-staycation/>. Just under 100 miles from Ventura County, Claremont is a charming city that offers a fun and more local getaway for families.

Coverage promoting weekend stays tied to the Midsummer Shakespeare Festival includes:

- Discover Los Angeles – calendar listings
- Inland Empire Magazine -calendar listing
- Daily Bulletin/LA Newspaper Group - Ophelia's Jump presents Midsummer Shakespeare Festival in Claremont, <https://www.dailybulletin.com/2024/07/12/ophelias-jump-presents-midsummer-shakespeare-festival-in-claremont/>
- Daily Bulletin/LA Newspaper Group - Outdoor Shakespeare festival celebrates summer at Pomona College - <https://www.dailybulletin.com/2024/07/15/outdoor-shakespeare-festival-celebrates-summer-at-pomona-college/>
- LAist.com - <https://laist.com/events/midsummer-shakespeare-festival-in-claremont>

V. Social Media

The District followed the lead of other state DMOs and spent more resources on social media in 2024 than in previous years — both advertising spend and production time. As a result, the number of impressions generated through Discover Claremont’s channels increased by over 150% versus 2023.

The total organic and paid social media reach for Discover Claremont in 2024 was 2.9 million impressions: 1.8 million on Facebook, 688,850 on Instagram, and 336,450 on Pinterest.

Discover Claremont	Jan 1, 2023	Jan 1, 2024	Jan 1, 2025
Facebook likes	16,450	17,100	17,330
Instagram followers	7,950	8,100	10,630
Twitter/X followers	1,328	1,303	1,280
Pinterest followers	683	687	693
YouTube subscribers	158	181	223

The Meta universe, Facebook and Instagram, are the primary channels for views and engagement, considering our target audience of women 35-54. As those engagements are driven by video content (Reels), the team increased its time spent producing two or more weekly reels. Content topics align with Visit California’s monthly editorial calendar to increase potential engagement.

Using Crowdriff, the team curates Claremont social photo and digital content from over 50 local businesses to produce highly engaging Reels about hotels, dining, shopping, culture, and outdoor activities. Reels are also posted for the Visit California Localhood platform, which is connected to the state’s tourism website and optimized for Google Search. Content was also repurposed as YouTube Shorts to encourage new visitors to the Discover Claremont channel.

The team continues to repost content on and monitor the X social media platform, but not as a primary means of promoting tourism.

VI. Measurement

Below are the occupancy rates for the past five years, as reported by the properties.

Occupancy Rates	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Claremont Lodge	53.9	79.3	<i>not reported</i>	65.1	<i>not reported</i>
DoubleTree by Hilton	45.1	73.4	81.3	84.3	83.6
Hotel Casa 425	40.5	68.4	78.4	77.2	77.4
Motel 6	84.1	92.0	73.3	<i>not reported</i>	<i>not reported</i>

VII. Participation

The marketing contractor, R. Antonette Communications, continues to engage with contacts at the four open Claremont properties, each participating in one or more opportunities.

New Campaign Theme

The graphic is set against a red background. On the left, a woman with long blonde hair, wearing a colorful striped top, is smiling and holding a glass of orange juice with a watermelon slice. In front of her is a plate of food. A QR code is in the top left corner. The text 'Delightfully unexpected' is written in a white and yellow script font. Below it, the text 'MORE THAN A COLLEGE TOWN' is in a small, bold, white font. Underneath that is a paragraph of text: 'Escape the city and get away for a long weekend in Claremont. Just 30 miles from downtown L.A., Claremont is a cultural hub where the arts, international dining, boutique shopping, and outdoor adventures await. Walk the California Botanic Garden, explore a museum or contemporary gallery, sip local ales and spirits, and sample gourmet bakeries and epicurean shops.' Below the paragraph is the sentence 'Claremont. Experience the unexpected.' At the bottom left, there is a logo for 'DISCOVER CLAREMONT' with a stylized 'C' logo. To the right of the logo is the text 'PLAN YOUR STAY ON OUR APP OR VISIT discoverclaremont.com'. At the bottom right, the text 'LOGOS HERE' is written in a large, pink, sans-serif font.

Jan 01 - Dec 31



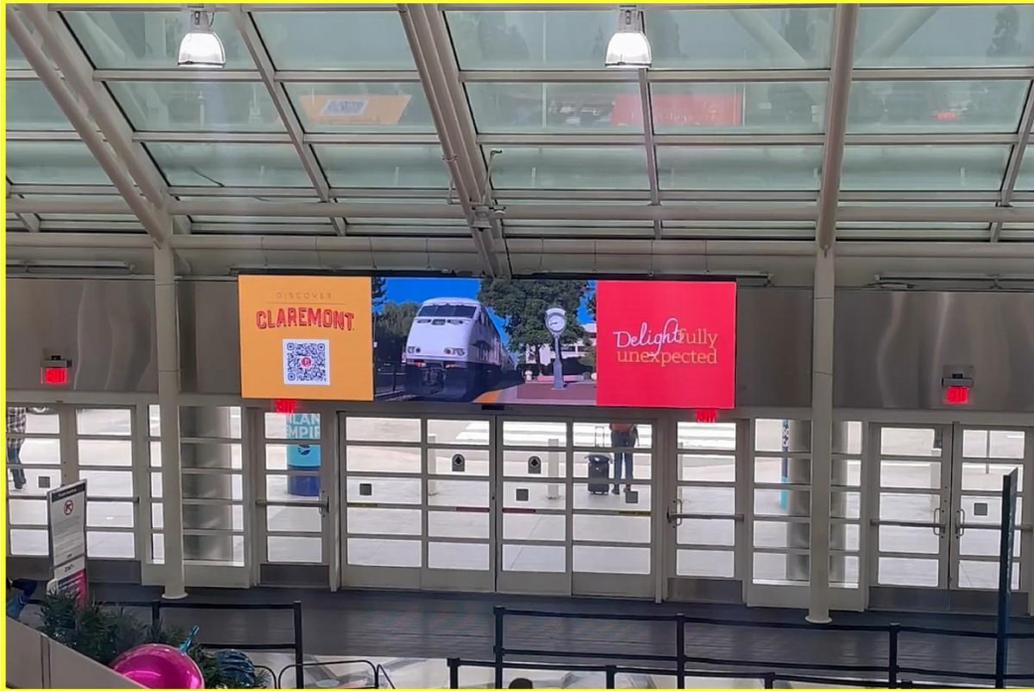
New State Visitor Guide Ad



Jan 01 - Dec 31



Ontario Airport – New Content



Jan 01 - Dec 31

