



# HOUSING

AUTHORITY OF THE  
CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

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May 11, 2012

The Honorable Chair Doreen Farr and  
Members of the Board of Supervisors  
County of Santa Barbara  
105 E. Anapamu St.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

**RE: May 15, 2012 BOS Meeting - Agenda item #6 –Homeless Support Systems Merger/Restructuring**

Dear Chair Farr and Members of the Board of Supervisors:

The Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara would like to express our strong support for the proposed merge of Bringing Our Community Home (The Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness), the Homeless Advisory Committees, and Common Ground Santa Barbara.

Last year, through the Vulnerability Index Survey administered throughout Santa Barbara County, 1,536 homeless individuals and families were encountered. Using the nationally recognized and practiced guide of multiplying the total homeless count by three, it is estimated that over 4,000 individuals and families in Santa Barbara County are presently homeless. Our communities continue to struggle to meet the needs of people living in shelters and on the streets, or cycling between hospitals, emergency rooms, jails, and other facilities at a great expense to the public systems and to tax payers. In the majority of cases, individuals have experienced long-term homelessness with the presence of other accompanying factors such as chronic illness, mental illness and/or substance abuse. This is both a moral and financial challenge that is affecting our County. While projects have been built and success stories can be shared, a change in how our community addresses the crisis of homelessness must occur if we are going to be successful in demonstrably reducing the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness. It is time for a new way of doing business.

This merger of countywide homeless advisory bodies stands to significantly streamline and improve cross-sector coordination of homeless services in Santa Barbara County. This new model will ultimately benefit not only those in our communities struggling with homelessness, but also our entire citizenry, as we work in a coordinated and collective fashion to maximize resources, and solve the crisis of homelessness in our County. One example of the recent cross-sector coordination that was formed as a result of the Vulnerability Index Survey is the Common Ground Housing Placement Working Group. This is a multi-agency/multi-disciplinary working group that meets bi-weekly that seeks to provide housing and related services to the most vulnerable living on the street. Since last May, this group has been able to make 53 housing placements providing homes to 90 people who would otherwise continue to live on the streets, shelters or find themselves in jail or our local hospital emergency rooms (See Attachment A – March 2012 Report Card). Under this new model, this group will continue its work and be able to provide even more housing placements in a more coordinated and supportive system.

The Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara has been, and continues to be, a leader in providing permanent supportive housing solutions for those individuals and families that are homeless. As part of the proposed re-organization we will be involved in this collaborative effort by participating in both the Housing/Shelter/Treatment group and the Coordinating Committee. We believe that the new structure establishes a clear avenue for members of the public and concerned advocates to provide direct input to policymakers at the Leadership Council meetings during public comment.

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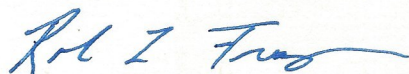
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I urge you to take the necessary steps to make changes to existing ordinances or create new ones to codify this new structure; and to find matching funds in the coming fiscal cycle for the County's share to establish the centralized infrastructure and dedicated staffing for this effort.

Sincerely,

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE  
CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rob I. Fredericks", with a long, sweeping underline.

ROB FREDERICKS  
Deputy Executive Director/CAO

cc: Robert G. Pearson, Executive Director



# Common Ground Santa Barbara Report Card

May 2011 to March 2012

- ☑ 53 total housing placements countywide from Vulnerability Index (VI)
  - ☑ 34 in South County, 14 in North County, 5 out of County
  
- ☑ INDIVIDUALS: 36 placements
  - ☑ 30 housed in South County (26 of these within City of Santa Barbara), 6 North County
  
- ☑ FAMILIES: 17 placements
  - ☑ 4 in South County, 8 in North County, 5 out of County
  
- ☑ Other information:
  - ☑ 2 housed individuals have passed away
  - ☑ 1 individual has been evicted
  
- ☑ Multi-Agency Housing Placement Work Group continues to meet bi-weekly
  
- ☑ Creation of Volunteer Corps

For more information please visit our website  
[www.commongroundsb.org](http://www.commongroundsb.org)  
Donations to the Common Ground campaign can  
be made to 2nd Story Associates – for additional  
information, visit [www.2nd-story.org](http://www.2nd-story.org) or contact  
Alice Villarreal Redit at 897-1036 or  
[alicev@hacsb.org](mailto:alicev@hacsb.org)