



January 19, 2016

Board of Supervisors  
County of Santa Barbara  
105 East Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

**Re: Additional Resources to Address Homelessness**

Honorable Supervisors:

As a representative of the downtown Santa Barbara business community, I urge you to take immediate action to allocate funds that will provide additional resources for individuals experiencing homelessness, and help alleviate the impacts of homelessness in the areas most urgently needed.

As you may be aware, under leadership of the Central Coast Collaborative on Homelessness (C3H), Common Ground Santa Barbara County, and other local social service organizations, Downtown Santa Barbara (DSB) Board members, Safety Committee members, business owners, and staff are engaged in a collaborative effort to support individuals experiencing homelessness in the downtown area as they pursue housing and supportive services, and to address the impacts of homelessness on the community. In addition to regular participation in weekly meetings, DSB has contributed funding to Common Ground in support of this effort, engaged in advocacy to advance Common Ground's work, and contributed in-kind resources for clients (*e.g.*, providing gift cards for clothing and other donations) on an as-needed basis.

As a representative of the downtown business community, I am keenly aware of the severe and problematic impacts of homelessness, and its chilling effect on State Street businesses. Engaging in the work to address homelessness on State Street through the C3H initiative has enhanced my understanding of the complex issues faced by individuals experiencing homelessness, including the fact that many of them are highly vulnerable, and are at an elevated risk of premature death as a result of both physical and mental health disabilities, and the circumstances attendant to living on the street. The risks faced by these individuals are heightened during cold and inclement weather.

Representing the collective downtown business community and property owners, DSB has a vested interest in ensuring that all available resources are brought to bear in addressing homelessness. DSB appreciates the Board of Supervisors' leadership and thoughtful consideration in addressing emergency needs in a timely manner, in addition prioritizing the long-term solutions – permanent housing and comprehensive supportive services – that improve the quality of life for those experiencing homelessness, and well as those who are impacted by it in downtown Santa Barbara and throughout the County.

Sincerely,

Maggie Campbell  
Executive Director, Downtown Santa Barbara