

A Snapshot of Poverty
Santa Barbara County
*Progress Report and Key Actions to Date –
May 12, 2015*



COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE
IN COORDINATION WITH
THE INTER-AGENCY POLICY COUNCIL
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INTRODUCTION

California Counties are on the front line of public safety, human assistance, mental health and public health service delivery and provide an essential link to state and federal policies regarding critical poverty reduction services. Understanding this critical role, on January 17, 2012, the Board of Supervisors directed Social Services staff to hire a knowledgeable consultant to partner with the department to conduct a countywide poverty assessment to analyze how well county resources and services are strategically aligned to areas and populations of greatest economic need and to make recommendations for improvement.

The poverty assessments primary objectives were to:

- Access the community needs and identify geographic pockets of poverty.
- Provide an in-depth look at the characteristics of those living in the areas of high poverty to get a better sense of service gaps, causes, and impacts of poverty.
- Complete a service inventory and determine gaps in services.
- Recommend targeted priorities on how the County, other government agencies, community based organizations and foundations can better partner to enhance critical social safety net infrastructure and reduce the effects of poverty.

The resulting *Snapshot of Poverty in Santa Barbara County* report included the following components:

- An overview of Santa Barbara County's population and geography.
- Data analysis and mapping of 44 indicators in the areas of: poverty, employment, income, education, public benefits, housing, transportation, childcare, and health.
- A survey distributed to 460 local public agencies, foundations, service providers, and public officials to understand how well services, resources, and program capacities align to meet the greatest needs; challenges faced by low-income residents and providers who serve them; and recommendations for helping more residents move out of poverty.
- Stakeholder interviews of 16 public and non-profit leaders to enrich and explain the data findings.
- Recommendations to improve service delivery, resource alignment, and ultimately outcomes for Santa Barbara County's most vulnerable residents.

Key findings and service gaps from the report included:

- High poverty areas: Santa Barbara County's high poverty areas (18 census tracts in which 20% or more residents are living below 100% of the Federal Poverty Thresholds) are located in clusters of census tracts in Santa Barbara, Santa Maria, Lompoc, and Isla Vista.
- High poverty areas have 24 percent of the County residents but 53 percent of all County residents are living in poverty.



- High poverty areas have 61 percent of all County children who are in poverty. The Santa Maria high poverty area has 33 percent of all County children living in poverty.
- Affordable housing, child care availability, education, family-sustaining wages, access to transportation and health care are major needs and barriers for those living in high poverty areas.
- Significant service gaps exist in Lompoc, Santa Maria, and Guadalupe.

Based on the assessment findings and national best practice research, seven focus areas were identified within the *Snapshot of Poverty Report*:

- Pursue holistic approaches.
- Establish poverty reduction goals and track progress using standardized data collection.
- Improve service delivery infrastructure and efficiency.
- Address unmet needs in North County and Lompoc.
- Improve allocation of existing resources.
- Expand targeted, impactful public programs.
- Address affordable housing, economic, and workforce development and public transportation.

On September 10, 2013 the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors received a presentation and filed the 2013 Poverty Report: *A Snapshot of Poverty in Santa Barbara County*. At that time, the Board directed the CEO to work in conjunction with appropriate departments to utilize data, assess findings and focus areas, and to incorporate information as appropriate in the program and budget development processes. In order to determine how to best follow this direction, the Inter-Agency Policy Council (IAPC), which is comprised of leadership from the Department of Social Services, Public Health, Alcohol Drug and Mental Health Services, Child Support Services, First 5, and Probation; met on multiple occasions to discuss a collaborative approach to identifying and implementing County specific aspects of the report.

This report references many of the initial actions taken within each of the seven focus areas identified within the *Snapshot of Poverty Report*. Serving the most vulnerable and providing a safety net of services for those in greatest need, inclusive of those experiencing poverty, is at the core of services provided by many County Departments especially those delivering public safety services, health and human services, and critical infrastructure and maintenance services to all. This report focuses on key opportunities seized as a result of the *Snapshot of Poverty Report* to improve core functions as well as to re-craft programs and services to address report findings.



FOCUS AREAS

1. PURSUE HOLISTIC APPROACHES

Families have complex and interrelated problems that need integrated, holistic approaches. The most successful local and national anti-poverty efforts address poverty on multiple fronts: education, jobs, housing, childcare, health, transportation, crime, etc.—in part by maximizing resources and targeting them in ways that are proven to work. In order to address barriers that arise from an individual life circumstances as well as neighborhood and regional environments, efforts must also be both **people-based and place-based**. Some successful initiatives also use multi-generational approaches, seeking to address the economic security of families over two generations by addressing the academic achievement of children.

Key efforts now underway within the County of Santa Barbara which focus on **holistic approaches** include but are not limited to the following:

ACTION: STABILIZING 211 HELPLINE SERVICES

DISCUSSION: Over the course of 2013 the County worked to stabilize the 211 Helpline services. In November 2014, the Community Action Commission officially assumed the oversight of the 211 program as the community host. By maximizing the efficacy and availability of the 211 helpline resource, those experiencing health and human services related issues on all levels, especially those experiencing poverty, have immediate access to a helpline to advise and direct individuals to an array of support services including references to health care, housing mental health services, and income assistance programs and services. The helpline has the ability to provide one-on-one consultation and service referrals to individuals on specific life circumstances and provide both people-based and place-based services for all age ranges in over 100 languages throughout the County of Santa Barbara 24/7.

Top 10 Needs	
1	Rental and Utility Payment Assistance
2	Crisis and Recovery Emergency Services (C.A.R.E.S.)
3	Food Stamps/CalFresh
4	Santa Barbara County Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program
5	Emergency Services
6	Domestic Violence Shelter
7	Food Pantry
8	Legal Aid Services
9	Low Income Housing
10	Adult Protective Services and In-Home Supportive Services

**ACTION: SANTA BARBARA COUNTY PARTNERSHIP FOR STRENGTHENING FAMILIES (VARIOUS AREAS)**

DISCUSSION: Poverty is one of the primary risk factors for child abuse and neglect because it can place families in situations of extreme stress that can interfere with a parent's ability to provide nurturing environments and supportive relationships for their children. Economic hardship is one of the adverse childhood experiences that can have long-term implications for health and well-being, especially if it is combined with other factors like domestic violence or substance abuse. In our county, economic hardship often includes food insecurity, inadequate medical, dental and mental health care, and crowded housing – all conditions that place children at-risk for abuse and neglect.

Santa Barbara's Partnership for Strengthening Families is an interagency collaboration that strengthens families, promotes optimal child development and reduces the incidence of child abuse and neglect by taking a universal approach to addressing the complex needs of children and families, especially those in high poverty areas. The collaboration includes the Child Abuse Prevention Council, the Child Care Planning Council and the Network of Family Resource Centers. Partner agencies within the councils include family resource centers, preschools and early care providers, public assistance providers, parents, and community-based organizations from Santa Maria, Guadalupe, Cuyama, Lompoc, Santa Ynez Valley, Isla Vista, Santa Barbara and Carpinteria. Alignment across systems is made possible by a set of unifying principles that guides workers to value and support parents and focus on the protective factors that all families need to thrive. It exemplifies recommendations in the poverty study for holistic approaches, improved service delivery and meeting unmet needs.

The Cuyama Valley has only one high-quality preschool and a lack of licensed early care. There are no mental health service providers and the Family Resource Center (FRC) is the only social service provider in the valley. Research for the 2013 Poverty Report showed Cuyama had the highest rates of child abuse in the county (1 in 41 as compared to 1 in 134 for county in 2010). Families usually come to the resource center because they need concrete support – things like food, health insurance, or financial assistance. Families with children 0-5 are invited to participate in monthly Family Gatherings that bring together parents, children 0-5, FRC staff and a mental health specialist from CALM. Through these gatherings, protective factors are strengthened and risks for child abuse and neglect are reduced.

Isla Vista Youth Projects is a member of all three networks. Their programs and services demonstrate the collaborative approach of the Partnership. The Isla Vista Children's Center provides early care and education, and partnering with parents to support children's social and emotional learning. A Family Advocate from the Isla Vista Family Resource Center is on site at the Children's Center 2x/week and is known to teachers and families as a trusted resource, linking families to concrete support, case management, parent education and social activities. A Marriage and Family Therapist from CALM is onsite 2x/week to provide



mental health consultation for families and reflective supervision for staff – this ensures that families and staff work together to support optimal development and reduce the impact of adversity. Other partners provide food, energy assistance, domestic violence services, assistance during pregnancy, and services for children with special needs. The Family Resource Center helps families navigate systems to access a variety of services.

2. ESTABLISH POVERTY REDUCTION GOALS AND TRACK PROGRESS USING STANDARDIZED DATA COLLECTION

Leaders in Santa Barbara County could use the data findings in this report to establish specified 10-year poverty reduction goals in areas of greatest need in the County. They could extract a subset of baseline indicators to track consistently over time and gauge the success of various local anti-poverty efforts using a clear set of measurable and standardized benchmarks. To support any future anti-poverty campaign, the County should also improve the coordination and standardization of data collection, including the development of a “Data Warehouse” that could be accessed by the County Departments and non-profit and community leaders for research, evaluation, fundraising, and community building efforts.

Key efforts now underway within the County of Santa Barbara which focus on **poverty reductions goals** include but are not limited to the following:

ACTION: FIRST 5 STRATEGIC PLANNING

DISCUSSION: First 5 used the poverty report in two significant ways. First, staff reviewed the report to test whether its own risk index for children 0-5 years of age was consistent with the results generated within the report. With the notable exception of Guadalupe, the results of the report showed the same pattern of risk impacted by poverty that the First 5 index showed.

In addition, the report was used as a data source in the Commission's strategic planning process. Specifically, a child 0-5 years of age lens was applied to the report to draw out those areas that were most relevant to the Commission and then these were presented back to the Commission.

ACTION: UPDATE 211 DATABASE

DISCUSSION: Presently a standardize data gathering and reporting system does not exist among the various partners providing poverty reduction programs throughout the County. This is inclusive of both services provided directly through the County and community based programs. However, as a result of the 211 Helpline Service stabilization efforts, data has been gathered from over 600 agencies regarding the services and programs offered as well location of services. This database clean was up made possible with an allocation of



\$30,000 in one time monies from the County Board of Supervisors in 2014. The database is the foundation for helpline referrals as well as the Web-based portal now under development by the Community Action Commission. It is anticipated that the Web-based portal will be launched in the summer of 2015.

Information gathering and data collection on the array of entities offering health and human services and related poverty reduction programs has benefitted from the 211 database cleanup project initiated in 2014. The Health and Human Services Departments have gathered to discuss overall opportunities for the maximization of poverty reduction strategies to fully utilize the 211 Helpline services and reporting tools available through the provider of the helpline and Interface, to both integrate and report on all health and human services based programming throughout the County. Further, the 211 database clean up provides insight into the number of providers and types of services currently active countywide. This information provides for an ongoing understanding of the need for or gap in services among the regions and high poverty areas. Ideally, this information will facilitate greater ability to assess and plan for services.

ACTION: DETERMINE BASELINE INDICATORS OF POVERTY IN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY AND TRACK PROGRESS OVER TIME

DISCUSSION: The Inter-Agency Policy Council (IAPC) recommends that the following key baseline poverty indicators be actively tracked and reported on an annual basis to gauge overall success on various County administered programs serving those in poverty. It is recommended that this information be gathered on a programmatic and geographic level (high poverty census tract, region and countywide) and demographic level where possible. These indicators were derived from key indicators of need referenced within *The Poverty Report* as well as an examination of the CSAC Poverty Committee work, Information from the Stanford Center for Poverty and Inequality, National Performance Indicators on Poverty and recommendations of IAPC Department heads were considered in the development of the list of baseline poverty indicators. Indicators include but may not be limited to the following:

- Children in Poverty
- Employment/Unemployment Rate
- Jobs created and saved
- Median household income
- Educational attainment
- Dropout rates
- Kindergarten readiness
- Cal Fresh usage
- Cal Works usage
- WIC Enrollment



- Access to mental health services
- Securing child support payments collected, distributed, % growth
- Free and reduced lunch program usage with in schools
- Affordable housing units created, preserved
- Housing placements
- New or expanded affordable transportation resources
- Access to health care services created or preserved
- Rate of health insurance coverage (adult/children)
- Annual Issuance of Disability Insurance and paid family Leave.
- Premature years of life lost (weighs death of younger people more heavily)
- Affordable child care spaces and after school programs created or preserved
- Educational and training placement opportunities created or preserved
- Felonies and Misdemeanors

In addition, a dashboard or an easy to read, graphical presentation of the current status (snapshot) and historical trends of progress pertaining to poverty reductions indicators is under development. This tool will provide the County with an “at a glance” representation of trends, grounded in the baseline information of the Poverty Report, and measures change pertaining to each of the indicators over time. Information for the reports will be gathered from county administered and partner programs as well as state and federal agencies. It is anticipated that information will be reported every two years.

Proposed Baseline Poverty Indicators													
Category	2013 Report				2015 Report EXAMPLE							% Δ	
	HPA	SBCO	CAL	NAT	HPA	%Δ	SBCO	%Δ	CAL	%	NAT	% Δ	
Threshold	Children in Poverty		17.00%										
	Adults in Poverty		14.90%										
	Families in Poverty		11.67%										
Employment & Income	Average Median Income	36,77	24.67 hr.	\$60,028									
	Cal Fresh Participation	32.5%	15.4%										
	General Relief Issuance	48,200	\$66,382										
	WIC Enrollment												
	Child Support & Payments Collected												
	SSI Recipient	6,300	9,700										
	Employment		93										
Housing	Unemployment Rates Civilian	11%	69										
	Affordable Housing Units		7,151										
	Owner Occupied	22%	50%										
Education	Housing Placements												
	Rates of Homelessness		1,466										
	Educational Attainment (GED/Less)	62%	38.00%										
	Drop Out Rates (Grades 9-12)		3.6%										
	Kindergarten Readiness												
Safety	Truancy Rates	39%	30%										
	Affordable Childcare spaces created or preserved												
	Education & Training placement opportunities												
Health	Crimes (felony, misdemeanors)												
	Child Welfare												
	Domestic Violence												
	Rates of uninsurance	21%	17%										
Health	Access to health care services created or preserved												
	Access to mental health services												
	Children's Health Insurance Coverage												
Age of Death	72	76											

SAMPLE DOCUMENT

▲ Positive Impact / ▼ Negative Impact
▲ % Up / ▼ % Down

HPA = High Poverty Area
SBCO = Santa Barbara County
CAL = State
NAT = National



3. IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY INFRASTRUCTURE AND EFFICIENCY

Strategically site and/or co-locate services in targeted, impoverished neighborhoods using a collective impact model.

Implementing more holistic, data-driven strategies requires greater service integration and/or co-location of services. Integrated approaches can increase the “collective impact” of local agencies and ultimately improve outcomes for low-income residents and communities. Strategically siting or co-locating agencies and services can also reduce costs (agencies can share back-office infrastructure and resources) and improve services for low-income populations (multiple needs can be addressed at the same place and transportation barriers reduced).

While some co-location of services and/or collective impact efforts are already underway in Santa Barbara County (e.g. THRIVE SBC, the Central Coast Collaborative on Homelessness, among others), public, philanthropic, and non-profit leaders should use the data findings in this report to expand targeted efforts.

The following strategic areas should be considered for more intensive efforts:

- Santa Maria (census tracts 21.01, 22.05, 22.06, 23.04, 24.02, 24.03, 24.04),
- Lompoc (census tracts 27.02, 27.03, 27.06), and
- City of Santa Barbara (census tracts 3.01, 8.01, 9, 12.06).

More investigation into high poverty tracts in Isla Vista (29.28, 29.22, 29.24, and 29.26) is needed to determine whether these areas also warrant specific attention, given its large college student population. Isla Vista is also home to a smaller non-student, low-income population. On the other hand, even though Guadalupe is not a “high poverty area” as defined in this report, it shows other signs of financial distress so it, too, may be a target for more integrated and intensive service. Finally, consideration of public transportation accessibility should be made when deciding where to site or co-locate services.

Philanthropic and public leaders can contribute to improved service delivery by not only funding the backbone infrastructure necessary for greater collective impact and service integration, but by also collaborating with each other on common goals, strategies, and administrative processes.

Streamline and improve access to services.

The Service Provider and Funder Survey and stakeholder interviewees uncovered the need for more streamlined and accessible services. Public and non-profit service providers should strive to:

- create “one entry door” for people to get all the services they need at once;



- ensure hours of services are accessible to working populations; and offer services in other languages, particularly Spanish (but other languages as well depending on the needs of target populations).

Effective use of technology can also increase efficiencies, reduce duplicative services, promote information sharing, and make programs more accessible throughout the County. Examples include using laptops to enroll eligible people in public benefits at schools, places of worship, and/or community centers.

Consider consolidating in specific areas.

Lompoc and Isla Vista—two localities with several high poverty census tracts—have relatively large numbers of service providers that serve small numbers of people (e.g. 16 survey respondents reported serving fewer than 50 people in Isla Vista and 11 reported serving fewer than 50 people in Lompoc). This survey finding suggests further research is needed to analyze whether there may be an opportunity to consolidate services in Isla Vista and Lompoc, in addition to expanding the overall number of people helped in these areas. (It may be that consolidation is warranted, but it may also be that different organizations in these two areas are serving the needs of different populations or neighborhoods.) More investigation into the non-profit service infrastructure in each locality would help determine whether consolidation of organizations is advisable.

Similarly, according to the Service Provider and Funder Survey, there is a relatively large number of organizations serving less than 50 people in Mid County: in Santa Ynez, 14 organizations listed that they serve fewer than 50 people; in Solvang, 13 organizations listed that they serve fewer than 50 people; and in Buellton, 11 organizations listed that they served less than 50 people. While these towns have smaller populations, further research is necessary to determine whether consolidation of services within Mid County localities is recommended.

Key efforts now underway within the County of Santa Barbara focus on ***improved service delivery*** include but are not limited to the following:

ACTION: ISLA VISTA ACTIONS

DISCUSSION: The revamping of the Isla Vista street lighting, by infilling missing light poles/lights, and by upgrading most of the lights to brighter LED bulbs is complete. The 1990 Isla Vista Redevelopment Plan, the Isla Vista Master Plan, and the '01-'02 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury, called for constructing sidewalks where they are missing in Isla Vista. Recently, sidewalks were completed on Del Playa Drive. Further, a multi-step plan is in place to finish sidewalk construction in the rest of Isla Vista, as funding is found.



With the dissolution of the Isla Vista Redevelopment Agency (RDA), the Isla Vista community was able to transfer ownership of the three RDA properties (the Solar Parking Lot, the “Church,” and the “Clinic Building”) to the County. The “Clinic” is currently undergoing remodel and will be completed soon. Tenants will include UCSB’s Campus Advocacy Resources and Education (CARE), UCSB’s Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS), UCSB’s Student Mental Health Coordination Services (SMHCS), the Isla Vista Youth Project, and the Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse (CADA). There is also a 1,347 sf common space that is currently being and will continue to be used for community meetings etc. There are plans in the works to refurbish the “Church” into a large community meeting space and/or community center.

In addition, County and community partners recently completed Pescadero Lofts, a three-story \$12 million project to provide housing for homeless individuals. It includes 26 studios, six one-bedrooms, and a two bedroom unit for the manager.

The social services programs the County provides to Isla Vista residents serve 124 (unduplicated) parents and 190 (unduplicated) children through First 5 (\$247k), 15 children through the Doorway to Health program, and 851 (duplicated) individuals through other Social Services programs (\$816k).

In order to continue to focus on public safety issues, IV SAFE was formed. This collaborative of key leaders and stakeholders is working in conjunction with community partners to employ strategies and messaging focused on the community, and wellbeing regarding the safety of students and permanent residents of Isla Vista. This includes targeted outreach efforts to ensure safety during Halloween and other historically problematic non-sanctioned community events.

ACTION: EXPANDED HOURS OF OPERATION

DISCUSSION: Beginning October 1, 2013, with the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, the Department of Social Services (DSS) was required to handle call transfers from Covered California during evening and weekend hours including working until 9 p.m. and on Sundays for key peaks during the annual Open Enrollment period. The non-Open Enrollment hours are until 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

DSS leveraged this mandatory change in hours for Covered California telephone coverage into other areas of operation. In partnership with the Public Health Department (PHD), DSS staff has been available for onsite and/or telephone consultative application assistance whenever PHD works on Saturdays or evenings for enrollment events/health fairs. Internally, DSS schedules telephone interviews for Medi-Cal and CalFresh applicants who are unable to easily conduct business during traditional business hours.



In addition, the Betteravia DSS office, lobby hours were expanded in August 2014 from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. in response to a client survey desiring such a change. Lompoc DSS also opens its lobby at 7:30 a.m. now, as well. All other DSS offices make special arrangements with clients who find it difficult to conduct business with us within a normal work day.

DSS outreach has also increased including 31 sites within the County. Many of these sites serve the mutual clients from specific agencies such as schools and hospitals, but several sites allow public access/walk-in traffic. DSS has that information posted on its public website.

In addition, the Public Health Clinics in Lompoc and Santa Maria clinics are now open on Saturdays from 9am to 1pm. The Santa Maria Adult Clinic is until 7 pm in the evenings Monday through Friday. WIC in Santa Maria is presently open until 6pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Finally the satellite Guadalupe WIC is open until 5:30pm the first and third Wednesday of the month.

4. ADDRESS UNMET NEEDS IN NORTH AND SOUTH COUNTY, AND LOMPOC

Consider shifting some South County resources to Santa Maria, Lompoc, and Guadalupe.

Quantitative and qualitative research findings from this study suggest the importance of realigning some programs and resources to meet the needs of low-income residents in certain parts of the County. Santa Maria is the most populated city in the County and also has the greatest number of people and proportion of people living below the Federal Poverty Thresholds—17,066 people in poverty in Santa Maria compared to 13,522 in the City of Santa Barbara, according to the most recent Census estimates. However, the City of Santa Barbara has more services and resources to serve people in poverty. According to the Service Provider and Funder Survey, twice as many funders support programs in the City of Santa Barbara compared to Santa Maria, therefore significantly greater service capacity exists in the City of Santa Barbara. Similarly, local funders tend to direct larger percentages of their grant making budgets to South County compared to North County. (Compared to North County, twice as many funders in the survey indicated that most or their entire grant making/contract budget is allocated in South County.)

Although Lompoc has far fewer residents in poverty, it has one of the highest percentages of people living below the Federal Poverty Thresholds in the County (more than one in five residents). Lompoc, however, ranks fifth in the number of clients served monthly, and very few funders direct significant resources to Lompoc, according to the results of the Service Provider and Funder Survey. Lompoc was also cited by several stakeholder interviewees as an area of unmet needs. Given limited resources, local leaders should consider realigning some current resources to help struggling residents in both Santa Maria and Lompoc. Finally, while Guadalupe does not meet the 20 percent poverty threshold to be classified as a high poverty area in this report, 16.4 percent of persons (or 1,124 people) in Guadalupe



are living below the Federal Poverty Thresholds, yet Guadalupe has much lower comparative service usage numbers. It, too, deserves special consideration.

Key efforts now underway with in the County of Santa Barbara which focus on ***unmet needs in Santa Maria, Lompoc and Guadalupe as well as other areas of concern*** include but are not limited to the following:

ACTION: KIOSK AND FACILITY IMPLEMENTATION

DISCUSSION: In order to provide for greater accessibility to services in the largest district office located in the Betteravia Government Center in Santa Maria, the Department of Social Services initially installed kiosks in the lobby expecting clients to do self-service applications. As a result of The Poverty Report's educational and population demographics findings, it became evident that clients are challenged in their ability and willingness to adapt to and embrace the Kiosk and other automated technologies. Many clients still prefer face-to-face meetings. As a result, there was a need to add an additional staffing attendant to assist clients in the self-service area. Therefore, the attendant is available to help clients scan documents, drop off pay stubs and other verifications needed to determine or maintain their eligibility, answer questions and provide Kiosk assistance.

The Department of Social Services placed additional kiosks at Casa Esperanza in Santa Barbara to serve the surrounding high poverty area and at the Public Health Center in Santa Maria to provide an additional access point when uninsured clients are seeking medical attention.

Finally, the new Carmen Lane facility (opened in 2014) in Santa Maria, is located in a high poverty area, noted in the Poverty Study. This facility provides North County Adult Protective Services (APS), In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), In-Home Care Network (IHCN) and Foster Care Eligibility services. Reception staff is available to assist clients in gaining access to and information on other programs administered by the department such as Medi-Cal, CalFresh, CalWORKs and General Relief.



5. IMPROVE ALLOCATION OF EXISTING RESOURCES

Adopt best practices in philanthropy.

Santa Barbara County has more non-profit organizations per capita than any other Southern California county and one-quarter of one percent of the nation's total non-profits. This is a tremendous asset. To increase the impact of philanthropic resources many foundations across the country (e.g. the Ford Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and the Atlantic Philanthropies, among others) are adopting new practices whereby they fund fewer organizations with larger grants over multiple years. Some foundations also require external evaluations for all grants over a certain dollar threshold (e.g. the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Atlantic Philanthropies). These philanthropic leaders have found that focusing investments on a smaller number of well-documented, high performing organizations increases impact. Large philanthropic investors in Santa Barbara County should consider adopting this national best practice. If local funders were to adopt a strategy of investing in fewer organizations, it would be even more important to institute strong oversight and evaluation mechanisms to hold those entities accountable. Similarly, philanthropic leaders can also improve how resources are allocated by funding evaluations and sharing findings on lessons learned and best practices with local leaders.

Adopt best practices in public funding.

Fostering public/non-profit partnerships that capitalize on each sector's relative strengths is another best practice in the field. Government's strengths often lie in oversight, quality control, accounting standards, resource allocation, and technical assistance; whereas, the non-profit sector's strengths tend to lie in identifying community needs, building trust with community leaders and low-income populations, and providing flexible services to accommodate local needs. Non-profit organizations also have lower overhead costs and can often leverage public support with private funding. There were several promising examples of local partnerships cited by interviewees that catered to these relative strengths (although interviewees hoped for even more shared decision-making and genuine collaboration). Santa Barbara leaders should consider building upon and expanding successful collaborative models.

Just like more foundations nationally are investing in fewer numbers of organizations over multiple years, the public sector should consider bundling and consolidating its investments in high-capacity, proven organizations. Small contracts spread over many non-profit agencies are often less effective than larger, more targeted investments. In particular, interviewees raised a concern that Community Development Block Grants were so small and administratively cumbersome that some agencies simply stopped applying for those funds.

Finally, streamlining public contracting, reporting and administrative processes would enable local agencies to dedicate more resources to helping people in poverty and less time on contract administration. Especially for agencies that are funded annually with



consistently high performance, the County should consider requiring less intensive due diligence processes.

Key efforts now underway within the County of Santa Barbara to **improve allocation of existing resources** include but are not limited to the following:

ACTION: ADOPTED BEST PRACTICES IN PUBLIC FUNDING – HUMAN SERVICES

DISCUSSION: The Board of Supervisors funds Human Services Commission (HSC) grants annually with County General Funds. The amount of HSC grant funds budgeted for fiscal years 2015-2016 is \$1,200,000, which includes administration fees used to support the County's administration of these grants. Grants have historically been awarded on three-year cycles. The Board of Supervisors reviewed and approved a New Cycle Funding concept at their November 4, 2014 departmental meeting. This was based on the Human Services Commission's extensive analysis of the Human Services Program's past cycle including review of current data and needs for the next three-year cycle. The grants are intended to provide for the delivery of vital human services through non-profit organizations Countywide. During the past cycle (FY 2011 – 2014) the Board recommended that the Commission consider implementing a more strategic approach to funding that would result in a greater impact. This meant recommending fewer grants with higher grant amounts which is consistent with best practices of public funding noted within *The Poverty Report*.

Evidence-based best practices have clearly articulated models that ensure the best outcomes for children, youth, families and special needs populations such as homeless, elderly, disabled, persons with HIV/AIDS and others. Programs are focused on one area of expertise serving target populations with specific results. Outcomes are tied to measurable factors using data, assessments, expert knowledge and public opinion. Agencies will be asked to conduct inquiries, evaluate services and implement proven programs known to be effective. Using a best practices model, adverse consequences can be avoided or reduced and outcomes are likely to be realized sooner and remain stable. Programs are generally more cost effective and efficient.

The New Funding Cycle Concept consists of three tiers of funding opportunity. Capacity building grants are intended to assist an organization in moving toward evidence-based programs. Basic Services grants are intended to provide safety net services and the Best Practices grants require evidence-based results tied to industry standards and measurable outcomes. The three tiered funding grants are summarized in the chart below:

Term	Amount	Description
1 year Mini Grant	\$5,000 - \$7,000	Capacity building
1-3 year Basic Services	\$20,000 - \$50,000	Basic Services, Safety net programs
3 year Best Practices	\$50,000 - \$100,000	Evidence-based Practices



The inaugural process for the new funding cycle applying best practices resulted in 116 applications submitted for \$1,049,000 in available funding. The chart below depicts applications received, funds requested and funds made available for each of the three tiers in the New Funding Cycle Concept.

Grant	No. of Applications	Requested amount	Funds made Available
Mini Grants	29	\$194,760	\$59,000
Basic Services	61	\$2,452,172	\$540,000
Best Practices	26	\$2,181,189	\$450,000
Total*	116	\$4,828,121	\$1,049,000

6. EXPAND TARGETED IMPACTFUL PUBLIC

Increase outreach and enrollment of CalFresh benefits.

Data provided by the County of Santa Barbara Department of Social Services suggest the need to do significantly more outreach to enroll eligible residents for CalFresh, particularly for residents in the City of Santa Barbara. Given some of the high poverty rates in Lompoc, additional outreach may be warranted there as well. Eligibility rules hamper student CalFresh eligibility, thus resulting in very low CalFresh participation rates in Isla Vista. However, more outreach may be warranted to ensure other eligible Isla Vista residents are accessing CalFresh benefits.

California Food Policy Advocates recently released its annual Program Access Index (PAI) report, a county-level analysis estimating the utilization of CalFresh (formerly Food Stamps) among eligible, low income individuals. With a Program Access Index of .0439, California Food Policy Advocates' 2013 report ranks **Santa Barbara CalFresh usage 51st out of California's 58 counties.** (The county ranked number one has the highest CalFresh utilization rate.) According to California Food Policy Advocates recent findings:

"If CalFresh reached all of these [eligible] low-income individuals in Santa Barbara County, an estimated \$52.2 million in additional federally funded nutrition benefits would be received by local residents each year. Those benefits would result in \$93.4 million in additional economic activity [author's emphasis]."

Key efforts currently underway to **expand targeted impactful programs** include but are not limited to:

ACTION: INCREASE OUTREACH AND ENROLLMENT OF CALFRESH BENEFITS

DISCUSSION: The Poverty Report highlighted that Santa Barbara County ranks as one of the counties with the lowest CalFresh utilization rates in the State, a problem that persists today despite increasing enrollment year over year. In 2014, Santa Barbara ranked 56 out of 58 counties (2012 data). In response to the persistent low utilization rate, a team was



assembled in 2014 to take a comprehensive look at the Department's CalFresh program including outreach and business processes. Nine major strategies were identified for both immediate implementation and more long-term implementation in 2015. The nine specific strategies are:

- 1) Reinforce Horizontal Integration: streamline the application and on-going case management processes across CalWORKs, CalFresh and Medi-Cal programs.
- 2) Examine Denials & Discontinuances: evaluate application denials and ongoing discontinuances trends to determine adherence to policies and client compliancy barriers and implement measures to reduce denials and churn.
- 3) Identify Underserved Populations: engage staff across the department to educate underserved clients about potential eligibility (seniors, IHSS providers/IHSS recipients, homeless population via SSI advocacy efforts).
- 4) Examine Case Review Process: Horizontal Integration is being added to quality assurance case reviews to reinforce adherence.
- 5) No Wrong Door for Customer Service: review system barriers and implement technologies and efforts that allow staff to serve clients across programs at the clients point of entry.
- 6) Review Level of CalFresh Outstation Activities: use the data from the poverty report to determine if current CalFresh usage has improved or worsened in the high poverty areas and assess offsite and out-stationing locations needs. A centralized online calendar/database application has been developed to record offsite events, outcomes and provide customizable reports for use by the department and CBO's and to determine if events are in the right places and determine gaps/overlaps with partners.
- 7) Examine Restoration Process: evaluate whether staff is correctly restoring benefits under the Restoration Waiver versus having clients start over in the application process.
- 8) Formalize Procedures for Off-site Events like Health Fairs: staff needs to have procedures that promote Horizontal Integration and reinforce client confidentiality at public events.
- 9) Re-examine Certification Periods for Special Populations: implemented longer certification periods for our vulnerable senior and homeless populations, as permitted by law.

Since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, with Horizontal Integration and increased outstation activity, the number of people served in the CalFresh program has increased by 21% when comparing October 2013 with February 2015, and now serves 38,560 people in Santa Barbara County. With these additional strategies, Santa Barbara County expects participation to grow by 15% in the next year.

Create local credit tax credit programs.

Well-timed and targeted tax credits—including modest expansions of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit, as well as a Making Work Pay tax credit that offset



payroll taxes—helped keep more than three million Americans, mostly those in families with children, out of poverty in 2010 alone.⁹⁵ These tax credits, particularly the Making Work Pay credit, also reached middle class families, providing help to those families and buttressing effects of a recessionary economy. San Francisco County and other counties have developed effective local working poor tax credit models from which Santa Barbara County could borrow to bolster current local efforts already underway by United Way of Santa Barbara County.

NOTE: The United Way Earned Income Tax Credit Program is continuing countywide. Expanding the service or and developing additional tax credit programs have not been considered at this time.

7. ADDRESS AFFORDABLE HOUSING, ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Convene affordable housing experts in the public, non-profit, and private sectors.

As demonstrated by the housing data in this report, affordable rental and homeownership opportunities are an enormous challenge throughout the County, but particularly in South County. Amending zoning ordinances to allow for well-designed, high density development and investing in, or expanding, workforce homebuyer programs are two suggestions made by interviewees among a host of potential options to address this housing crisis. Convening community leaders and experts in the public, non-profit, and private sectors to craft and implement creative cross-sector affordable housing programs and policies would be a first step. Given the large number of people struggling to pay for housing and the significant homeless population, it is critically important to develop the buy-in, political will, and financial capital to expand affordable housing options in the County—an assessment confirmed in the stakeholder interviews.

Convene experts in education and workforce and economic development and community leaders to develop a shared vision of economic development.

Attracting large numbers of jobs with family-sustaining wages, mobility, and decent benefits, along with workforce pipelines to train local residents in these kinds of jobs, would help lift many Santa Barbara residents out of poverty. Best practices in the field⁹⁷ and local leaders suggest that one critical step is to identify and align workforce development systems to meet the needs of growing industry “clusters of opportunities,” identified locally as Health Care, Energy and the Environment, Building and Design, Technology and Innovation, Business Support Services, and Agriculture/ Tourism/Wineries.⁹⁸ Intricately related, the disparity in educational achievement among residents in high poverty areas draws attention to the importance of technical training, GED, and other educational opportunities for adults, coupled with efforts to narrow achievement gaps among children. (Notably, very few funders—at least among those who participated in the survey at—focused on workforce development).



Like affordable housing, however, assessing the best strategies to narrow educational achievement gaps and increase workforce and economic development opportunities merits a study of its own. Most immediately, convening experts in education, workforce and economic development and engaging community leaders in an open dialogue about the most appropriate economic development vision would be a first step to implement a broad, inclusive plan for the County's economic future. County leaders, however, will need to mitigate competing interests and/or perceptions among environmentalists, the business community, urban agriculturalists, "smart" versus "anti-growth" advocates, and "NIMBYism" to move the conversation forward.

Convene transportation experts and community leaders.

Finally, Santa Barbara County's geography poses significant transportation barriers, especially for those low-income residents without a car. Only four percent of workers in the County use public transit to get to work; likely reflecting the limited public transit options. Stakeholders interviewed and survey respondents commonly cited transportation challenges that prevented many residents from accessing needed services and employment opportunities. Convening a work group with transportation experts and community leaders to more deeply understand transportation barriers and craft solution is also warranted.

Key efforts currently underway to address affordable housing, workforce development and economic issues include but are not limited to:

ACTION: WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) IMPLEMENTATION

DISCUSSION: The national public/private workforce system that Santa Barbara County participates in with the private sector-majority Workforce Investment Board is undergoing major changes with the passage in July 2014 of the National Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

The WIOA, or "Opportunity Act" as it's being called, requires a major re-alignment of the workforce system in order to maximize participation of key, growth industry sectors within the local jurisdiction. In Santa Barbara County the high growth sectors that have been identified by the WIB are: healthcare, energy & environment, building & design, technology & innovation, business support services, and finally, agriculture/tourism/wineries. Moreover, as the current WIB evolves into the new WIOA-required Workforce Development Board (WDB) leaders from these growth sectors will be targeted for recruitment to serve. The WIB Staff are currently engaged in outreach and recruitment activities via "town hall" type meetings across the county explaining the new Federal Legislation.

In addition, national and state-mandated realignment of the workforce system requires that workforce and economic vitality activities and local community colleges (who deliver much of the "training" of the local workforce) plan, design, and implement their activities in



tandem. There will be local performance metrics that include support by the workforce system of the business community. Moreover, there is a regional community college consortium that WIB Staff work in tandem with to foster collaboration between these two systems; and the community college Presidents are being encouraged by the Chancellor's Office in Sacramento to become more engaged with their local workforce boards.

Changes underway as part of WIOA implementation are designed to address regional labor market needs and target assistance to youth facing severe barriers to employment and education and as noted provide additional training to job seekers as well as provide integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. In addition the new WIOA approach encourages integrating of adult education and occupational training, use of career pathways, industry sector partnerships and an increased focus on the attainment of industry recognized certificates and credentials linked to high demand occupations.

ACTION: CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES INITIATED STARTER ORDERS TO NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS NOT RECEIVING SUPPORT

DISCUSSION: For parents with no history of providing for their children, it is important to establish habits of regular support. For this reason, Child Support has intensified its efforts to get parents to meet with its attorneys outside of court to talk about what each parent can contribute and what they can expect from each other. In these and other special cases, the result has been smaller “starter orders” that can create a dependable source of family income sooner. The paying parent is supplied with referrals through the 2-1-1 line for services that can help him or her achieve more success in life—which results in a greater ability to support their children. Child Support Services has also worked with the Employment Development Department (EDD) and trained its staff in the services that EDD provides. Child Support has developed comprehensive job search packets to share with unemployed parents, including information about organizations that will hire people with criminal records.

ACTION: ECONOMIC VITALITY TEAM (EVT)

DISCUSSION: The Economic Vitality Team (EVT) was established to act as a central point of contact for businesses working to locating in Santa Barbara County. A key goal is to assist local businesses working to expand in surrounding communities and facilitate a process whereby local jurisdictions work together to retain businesses in order to spearhead job growth regionally and countywide. Further the EVT provides information for start-up companies and serves as the link between such agencies as the Senior Core of Retired Executives (SCORE), Santa Barbara Development Corporation (SBDC), Workforce Investment Board (WIB), Goleta Entrepreneurial Magnet (GEM), Alan Hancock Community College, Santa Barbara City College (SBCC), University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB); and every



other organization, program or educational organization helping to grow businesses in the County of Santa Barbara.

ACTION: C3H COLLABORATION

DISCUSSION: The Central Coast Collaborative on Homelessness (C3H) is a county-wide, collective impact collaborative that works in partnership with a broad group of service providers and stakeholders, including government agencies, non-profit organizations, business leaders, foundations, faith communities, and volunteers, to harness all resources available to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness, as well as minimize the impacts of homelessness in Santa Barbara County. The County of Santa Barbara is a primary funder and active participant in the effort. In order to effectively provide services to impacted areas with unique needs, regional coordination groups were devised to link service provider representatives with direct client contact and knowledge of the local landscape. They meet monthly in smaller groups in several regions throughout Santa Barbara County to problem-solve, discuss the application of best practices within their communities and organizations, and in some instances, engage in case management discussions.

A specific project currently underway impacting and identified high poverty area includes the Milpas Project. The pilot project based in the City of Santa Barbara grew out of the regional coordination concept in the Milpas Corridor. The objective was to house ten of the area's chronically homeless individuals, and to provide coordination of the needed wraparound supportive services for those individuals. The ten individuals identified for the pilot, who collectively had experienced 166 years on the street, were all frequent users of emergency services and were subjects of regular calls to law enforcement; thirteen months later, all ten individuals are stable, with a roof over their heads. Clear benefits have accrued to the clients who have been housed and are actively case managed, in addition to area merchants whose business interests align with the reduction in homelessness. The success of this effort provides strong support for an individualized, client centered approach to ending homelessness that involves a diverse group of invested stakeholders.

In partnership with the Downtown Organization, C3H is in the process of expanding the Milpas Project model to downtown State Street. Outreach to some of the most chronically homeless in that area is already taking place under this new partnership.

C3H continues to work to further leverage relationships within each region to serve those experiencing homelessness, as well as those impacted by it. There are preliminary plans to engage in a similar project in Santa Maria, which will include families living in shelters.

In addition, a "support the expansion of housing for the homeless" key C3H initiative, involves the leadership of Social Venture Partners (SVP), a philanthropic organization of



donors, many of whom have experience in business and the social sectors. The program works to provide for accessible, affordable permanent housing which is essential to solving homelessness. As noted in *The Poverty Report*, Santa Barbara County has extremely low rental vacancy rates, which means that people experiencing homelessness face an additional barrier to becoming housed.

Therefore, in partnership with SVP, C3H has convened a working group focused on expanding access to affordable housing for people transitioning out of homelessness. With the input of local landlords, including representatives from the Santa Barbara Rental Property Association, this working group is leading the development of an adapted version of the Landlord Liaison Program (“Program”), which originated in Seattle, and has proven very successful. The Program creates incentives for local landlords who own private units, to rent to individuals and families transitioning out of homelessness, and will include an initial focus on Veterans. C3H and partners anticipate that it will be rolled out in mid-2015. Agencies with the capacity to provide supportive services to individuals and families placed through the Program will be invited to refer clients into it. As proposed, the LLP will include:

- A dedicated housing specialist to identify potential units for the placement of individuals and families likely to achieve self-sufficiency within two years.
- Supportive services for a minimum of one year, and up to two years, in addition to ongoing tenant training.
- A 24/7 hotline to provide solutions-oriented support to landlords in the event an issue arises with a tenant placed through the program, in addition to landlord access to mediation/eviction services, if needed.
- A risk reduction fund available to landlords in the event that a tenant placed through the program causes property damage to a unit.
- Move-in money and other financial assistance available to the tenant.

SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

The *Snapshot of Poverty Report* provided new insights in the landscape of poverty within Santa Barbara County. In addition it provided key focus areas to address over time to affect the rate of poverty and improve lives. Further, the timing to the County of Santa Barbara’s *A Snapshot of Poverty Report* coincides with statewide efforts to focus on strategies to assist counties on the front line of service delivery.

At the State level, California’s poverty rate continues to rank among the highest in the nation. Recognizing that poverty undermines the success of the health and human services programs administered by all counties, The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) has formed a Poverty Working Group aimed at exploring policies and key strategies to reduce poverty in all communities. The CSAC Executive Committee directed CSAC staff to convene a Poverty Working Group (PWG) to examine ways in which counties can have an impact on poverty in communities.



During the initial March 26, 2015 convening of the PWG, CSAC staff presented a draft poverty plank for discussion and proposed to add it to the CSAC legislative platform. Every two years, the CSAC Board of Directors adopts a CSAC Platform. Presently, Daniel Nielson Director of the Department of Social Services attends the Poverty Work Group. At the completion of the CSAC review and adoption process, the County of Santa Barbara may also wish consider pursuing a legislative plank related to poverty reduction as a component of the 2016 Legislative Platform development process.

Next Steps regarding follow-up to the *Snapshot of Poverty Report* include, but not limited to the following:

- Continue ongoing communications with external partners on the data and resources provided in *A Snapshot of Poverty*.
- Continue to gather data on key countywide initiatives, programs and services initiated as a result of the information provided and focus areas identified within the *Snapshot of Poverty*.
- Establish sound data gathering systems overtime to track indicators and measure change.
- Complete the Dashboard of Poverty Baseline Indicators and Trends and report back to the Board of Supervisors in spring of 2016.
- Consider development of a Legislative Platform on poverty consistent with CSAC efforts.

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