



**LEGAL AID  
FOUNDATION**  
of  
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

301 E. Canon Perdido St.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
Phone: 805.963.6754  
Fax: 805.963.6756

301 S. Miller St., Ste. 121  
Santa Maria, CA 93454  
Phone: 805.922.9909  
Fax: 805.347.4494

604 E. Ocean Ave., Ste. B  
Lompoc, CA 93436  
Phone: 805.736.6582  
Fax: 805.740.2773

EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL

May 8, 2015

The Honorable Mayor Helene Schneider  
Members of the City Council  
Santa Barbara City Hall  
735 Anacapa St,  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Dear Mayor Schneider and Members of the Santa Barbara City Council,

This letter is a request for the Santa Barbara City Council to consider supplemental funding for Common Ground Santa Barbara County, a special project of the Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County.

Attached is a budget for Common Ground Santa Barbara County. We are requesting \$25,000 in Santa Barbara City funding. We are also requesting \$40,000 in County funding and have \$8,000 in Federal funding for this project. This year we have received significant private donations and foundation support, and for the first time, commitments of support from the business community. However, we depend on our local government also supporting these efforts.

Common Ground Santa Barbara County works to obtain housing, benefits and referrals to supportive services for individuals living on the streets and in shelters. This project relies on four, part time employees and more than 600 volunteers. Common Ground Santa Barbara County coordinates six teams, including the successful Milpas Street outreach/case management team. The teams go out into the community to directly work with individuals experiencing homelessness.

Since 2014 there has been an emphasis on working with the business community around the issue of homelessness. In 2014 the Central Coast Collaborative on Homelessness, the Milpas Community Association, several local non-profit partners, and Common Ground Santa Barbara County joined together to create the Milpas Pilot Project. Within the first year this project achieved an 80% success rate. Individuals were connected with housing, employment, supportive services (including mental and medical healthcare) and, when appropriate, they were reunified with family. At the end of the first year, based on the positive impact noticed in the neighborhood, the team decided to continue the Milpas Project. In 2015 we began hosting weekly meetings to create a similar project, the Downtown Homeless Outreach Project to help the vulnerable people living on the street downtown and address negative impacts of homelessness on State Street. Our 2015-2016 request will allow us to further develop and expand these important efforts.

We appreciate your consideration of our requests. We believe that the funding will provide important benefits to Santa Barbara City residents.

Sincerely,

Molra Vadnais  
Managing Director, Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County

Cc: Paul Casey, City Administrator



## **2015-2016 Common Ground Santa Barbara City Outside Budget Request: Housing Focused Outreach and Housing Support Emphasis on Developing Partnerships with the Business Community**

### **Common Ground Santa Barbara County**

Recruits, trains and educates volunteers so they can effectively house the most vulnerable individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Santa Barbara County. We are a collaborative effort of community members from the non-profit, governmental, business and faith communities of Santa Barbara County striving to end homelessness in our communities.

Common Ground recruits volunteers to conduct the bi-annual Point in Time Count and Vulnerability Survey, offers Medi-Cal Enrollment, supervises volunteer outreach teams (both street outreach and housing support), outreaches to Veterans in advance of the annual Stand Down event, and assists Restorative Court defendants in obtaining housing and supportive services.

### **MILPAS**

In 2014 with the Central Coast Collaborative on Homelessness, the Milpas Community Association, Social Venture Partners, Restorative Police, County partners and others we launched the “Milpas Pilot Project.” The project focused outreach efforts on ten individuals who the business community identified as causing negative impacts on the community<sup>1</sup>. The Milpas Project was a resounding success. Of the original ten, eight are housed or were reunified with family. All of the individuals were connected to supportive services. The participants in the Milpas project decided the first year was such a success that they wanted to continue the project. Other people who have significant impacts on the community and who are very vulnerable have now been added to the project.

### **STATE STREET**

Based on the success of the Milpas Project we have begun working with the Central Coast Collaborative on Homelessness and the Downtown Organization on a “Downtown Homeless Outreach Project.” Once again people were selected who were vulnerable and had a negative impact on the community. On State Street many of these vulnerable individuals suffer from significant mental health conditions. We are working closely with project partners including Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services to connect these individuals with housing, employment, and supportive services.

### **TRAINING AND EDUCATION OF STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND PEER NAVIGATORS**

Our outreach is based on best practices, with training on safety, healthy boundaries, and self-care. During each countywide Point In Time Count and Vulnerability Survey (2011, 2013 and 2015) more than 500 volunteers participated. We provide ongoing ways for those volunteers to stay engaged. We provide monthly trainings for all volunteers that are free and open to the public. We also collaborate with the Mental Wellness Center to train staff and volunteers in Mental Health First Aid.

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<sup>1</sup> Negative impacts on the community include calls for law enforcement response and emergency medical services.

**Common Ground Santa Barbara County  
Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County  
FY 15-16 Budget**

**Income Requested**

McCune Foundation (pending)	25,000	
Fund For Santa Barbara	10,000 (3 <sup>rd</sup> year of a multi-year grant)	
Private Donations and Fdns. (raised or pledged)	64,000	
Government (pending)	73,000	
Business Organizations	8,000	
Total Income:	<b><u>\$180,000</u></b>	

**Expenses**

Supervisor	51,840	.8 FTE
Volunteer Coordinator	34,560	.8 FTE
Team Leader	34,560	.8 FTE
Peer Navigator	18,432	.5 FTE
Paid Interns	2,000	
Operating Expenses	33,650	
Occupancy Expenses	4,800	
Total Expenses:	<b><u>\$179,842</u></b>	