



General Public Comment Received

Name of Sender	Distributed prior to hearing	Distributed after the hearing
Lucas Budgett	X	
Aron Ashland	X	
Chris Silverstein	X	
Carolyn Adams	X	
Dylan Mancuso	X	
Diane Watson	X	
Ben Doak	X	
Patrick Davis	X	

From: [Lucas B](#)
To: [Santa Barbara City Council](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Keep State Street Pedestrian
Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 4:28:43 PM

You don't often get email from lucas.budgett@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Mayor and Members of the Santa Barbara City Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for maintaining State Street as a pedestrian- and bike-oriented corridor in perpetuity. Over the past 3 decades I have witnessed this street evolve -- from my youth exploring downtown with friends, to my years as a working professional who still finds inspiration and community along its blocks -- and I say with confidence that the pedestrian version of State Street is the most vibrant, inclusive, and forward-looking it has ever been.

When I was younger, State Street was a place you passed through by car. Today, it is a place you arrive at and linger in. **Families stroll safely, cyclists glide through with ease, and local businesses benefit from the steady rhythm of foot traffic.** The energy of the Promenade has transformed downtown into a shared civic space where art, music, dining, and community life converge. This is the Santa Barbara that residents and visitors alike cherish -- the **one that values people over cars.**

Returning State Street to vehicle traffic would not revive the downtown economy -- it would reverse the progress we've made toward a **sustainable, people-centered city.** Pedestrian-oriented streets consistently show stronger retail performance, higher property values, and better environmental outcomes. They also reflect our coastal city's **commitment to health, climate resilience, and the kind of human-scale urbanism that has always made Santa Barbara special.**

I encourage the Council to make this vision permanent: keep State Street closed to cars and continue investing in its pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. A pedestrian State Street embodies who we are and the kind of city we want to pass on to the next generation.

Thank you for your leadership and your continued commitment to a livable, sustainable downtown.

Warm regards,

--

Lucas Budgett
(805) 637-1349

From: [Aron Ashland](#)
To: [Santa Barbara City Council](#); jmolina@noozhawk.com; [Bob Stout](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#); Info@strongtownssb.org; [Holly Perea](#); [SSAC Secretary](#); info@independent.com; [Kelly R. McAdoo](#); [Anthony E Valdez](#)
Subject: DSBI Petition to Open State
Date: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 8:49:23 AM

Good morning Mayor, Councilmembers, and City Administrator,

I'm deeply concerned DSBI's petition is being presented under false pretenses. The landlords are promoting a plan filled with promises — bollards, lane dividers, new amenities — but they don't have the authority or the funding to make any of it happen. When I asked their representative who would pay for all these improvements, his answer was simple: the City.

So while the City is facing a multi-million-dollar deficit, the landlords are proposing that taxpayers fund their vision, one that goes directly against what around 80 percent of residents have said they want: a car-free, people-focused promenade.

For years, we've been told that in the short term, bollards or safety features weren't possible because of utilities under the street or cost. If that's true, how can the landlords now say they're part of their plan? Were those signatures gathered under false claims? And if so, shouldn't they be rejected?

And if these things actually are possible, then why haven't we done the simple, obvious things that could make a real difference right now? Bollards cost about twelve thousand dollars each. Two or three would be enough to allow a trolley to pass while keeping the street safe for pedestrians. That would bring back a full-sized trolley connecting the blocks, give more visibility to businesses in the upper and theater districts, slow down bikes, and help move people through downtown more efficiently — all for a tiny fraction of what these landlords are promising. Mike, Oscar, Kristen- can someone bring this up to be discussed since apparently it's not out of the question?

Reopening State Street would also mean tearing out the new pedlets, wasting hundreds of thousands of dollars, and undoing years of progress. We'd go back to a time when only a handful of restaurants had outdoor dining, and almost none on the west side. That would be terrible, because everyone who actually visits State Street knows how much people love sitting outside, enjoying our weather, and experiencing our beautiful city.

This petition isn't really about safety or access. It's about rent and property value. The same landlords pushing to reopen the street are keeping spaces empty because they refuse to lower rents. Those vacancies hurt every business around them and drain the life out of downtown.

Foot traffic, not car traffic, is what makes downtown work. And for about a year, when the promenade was truly pedestrian-centric, it worked. It was busy, local, and safe.

I've heard some councilmembers are getting tired of the back and forth about the promenade. But the truth is, public opinion hasn't changed. Seventy-five to eighty percent of your constituents still want a car-free State Street. We need your continued support now more than ever. Please don't fall for the bait and switch but to understand everything that's going on, please keep reading.

There are some additional things that I think you should be aware of.

1. I remember when Robin shared data a couple of years ago that showed *more* people were visiting State Street than before, based on Visa spending. Now we're suddenly being told those same years were down? We all saw how vibrant downtown was that first year. The numbers then supported a car-free State — and now that her new bosses don't, neither do her numbers. What changed?

"Robin Elander, executive director of Downtown Santa Barbara, rattled off statistics about how large retail chains are closing all over the country in an attempt to show that retail is struggling as a nationwide trend.

She said Placer.Ai data show 200,000 more visits to the promenade area in 2022 compared with 2019.

"Despite the significant challenges, downtown Santa Barbara is doing quite well in responding to our collective efforts," Elander said."

<https://www.noozhawk.com/santa-barbaras-state-street-promenade-to-remain-closed-to-vehicles-through-at-least-2026>

Hmmmm. So do we believe her now or when she didn't have a boss with an agenda different from our community?

2. I just read the email that Robin (and the PR firm) sent to everyone but it makes so many assumptions and leaps in logic that it's difficult to read. Correlation doesn't prove causation but I'm sure you all know that and are smart enough to read between the lines. These following numbers are from the document they emailed everyone but they presented them very differently.

Downtown from the low point in 2020- downtown has **rebound by 65%**. (4 million to now 6.6 mil)

Coast Village 2020 (the low) until 2024 has **rebounded 26.9%** (2.6 mil to 3.3 mil)

San Andreas 2020 (the low) **has rebounded 69%** (591k to 1 mil)

Milpas 2020 (the low) **has rebounded 62%** (2.7 mil to 4.4 mil)

Upper State 2020 (the low) **has rebounded 56%** (3.2 mil to 5 mil)

You can see for yourself that you can often take numbers out of context to lend credibility to your argument but I did the math for you and showed my work.

3. You should also be aware the landlords/board of DSBA voted to compel you to reopen State but they got a PR firm that instead told them to try it in small steps. This being the first step towards their ultimate goal of reopening State in both directions. It would be nice if they were honest about it but lucky for us, their comments are public so you can see them here:

"The Downtown Santa Barbara Improvement Association recommends that State Street be reopened to vehicles while the State Street Master Plan is developed and approved. Furthermore, the State Street Master Plan should include a State Street open to vehicles" <https://ctycms.com/ca-santa-barbara/docs/dsbia-board-meeting-agenda-packet-4->

[24-25.pdf](#)

"A resolution was passed authorizing Robin to interview public relations firms to support the organization's messaging, particularly regarding housing and the reopening of State Street" <https://ctycms.com/ca-santa-barbara/docs/dsbia-board-meeting-agenda-8-28-25-merged-1.pdf>

"enhanced public relations efforts to support DSBIA's advocacy on key downtown issues, particularly surrounding the State Street reopening" <https://ctycms.com/ca-santa-barbara/docs/land-use-agenda-for-8-14-25-merged.pdf>

"A PR firm has been hired to educate the public about who the DSBIA organization is and the main reasoning behind a flexible State Street." <https://ctycms.com/ca-santa-barbara/docs/dsbia-board-meeting-agenda-9-25-25-merged.pdf>

So what does all this mean and what matters? Your constituents have wanted, and still want, a safe vibrant promenade that is car free. Push back on wealthy landlords trying to pad their pockets at expense of our downtown. If they want to make a real positive changes, ask them to lower their rents and fill the storefronts. They need to look in the mirror instead of blaming a lack of cars.

Thank you for your time and continued support of a better downtown for everyone, not just landlords.

Aron Ashland

(720) 341-5859

Owner- The Cruisery, Wine Therapy + Unbearable Skee Lodge

TheCruisery.com

From: [Chris Silverstein](#)
To: [Santa Barbara City Council](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Support for Car free State street
Date: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 3:23:35 PM

You don't often get email from chris.silverstein@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

No, State street isn't the strong vibrant place it should be but that is not due to restricting cars there. Landlords needs to reduce rents on vacant spaces and we should invest in transforming State street to a public promenade.

From: [Carolyn Adams](#)
To: [Santa Barbara City Council](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: State Street Closure
Date: Thursday, October 23, 2025 5:07:40 PM

[You don't often get email from carolyn.adams1@icloud.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Hello,

I strongly believe that State Street should be reopened to cars. The sidewalks are plenty wide as they are, allowing for ample pedestrian flow in both directions, regardless of the closure to traffic. Bicycles, skateboards and bikes overpower and endanger the few pedestrians who use the street for walking. Lanes could easily be provided for bikes. It's often difficult to access businesses on State Street. Perhaps State Street could be closed to cars on the weekends only, which would allow locals to access area businesses more easily.

What an unfortunate choice to have permanently closed State Street.

Thank you, Carolyn Adams

From: [Dylan Mancuso](#)
To: [Barbara Andersen](#); [SSAC Secretary](#)
Subject: Cuso's Creamery and Cuso's Bikes
Date: Saturday, October 25, 2025 11:48:34 AM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from dylan@cusosbikes.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

I am reaching out on behalf of both of my businesses, Cuso's Bikes and Cuso's Creamery, as we have an issue with an unpermitted homeless art vendor on the 600 block of State Street named Shawn. We had requested the vendor to move away from our space at 609 State Street, Cuso's Bikes. In the wake of this, we have now run into an issue with him making inappropriate comments to our 16-year-old female staff members and they are becoming uncomfortable with coming in to work, and feel unsafe with him around. He continuously plays inappropriate music with horrible language in what is meant to be a family area, and has been in several shouting matches with others walking down state street. He also continues to flip off any employee of my bike shop when they are working.

Dylan Mancuso
Cuso's Bikes of Santa Barbara
(585) 690-2898

From: [Diane Watson](#)
To: [Santa Barbara City Council](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Keep cars off of State St
Date: Sunday, October 26, 2025 5:17:13 PM

You don't often get email from dianewatsonsb@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

City Council- I remember cars on State St. it was horrible. Breathing toxic exhaust fumes while you are dining. Cars revving engines. Loud motorcycle groups riding gang like down the street. Low rider cars bouncing up and down State with their music blaring. Do you all forget that?

Please keep cars off of State. This is a once in a lifetime chance to create something cool and unique to Santa Barbara. Please listen to the largest amount of community polling. Please keep cars off of State St.

All the best,

Diane Watson
805-883-8185
Let's brighten the world together!

Website
www.katbleudesign.com

Instagram
[@dianewatsonart](#)



"Sweet Disposition", 2025

From: [Ben Doak](#)
To: [Santa Barbara City Council](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Support for Keeping State Street Promenade Car-Free
Date: Monday, October 27, 2025 8:44:24 AM

You don't often get email from doakbc@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Santa Barbara City Council,

I am writing in strong support of keeping the State Street Promenade closed to motor vehicle traffic.

As a new resident of Santa Barbara, I am deeply inspired by the community and lifestyle this city fosters. Having lived in the Midwest for the past decade, I've witnessed firsthand how overreliance on cars can erode community life. This isn't simply a matter of personal preference—it's an observable truth. When cities prioritize vehicles over people, they lose spaces that connect neighbors, support local businesses, and nurture civic pride.

When I first visited Santa Barbara two years ago to see my best friend, I immediately fell in love with this city. It was more than admiration—it was a genuine sense of belonging. Santa Barbara is not just another coastal destination; it is a living, breathing community defined by its people, its creativity, and its shared appreciation for natural beauty and culture.

Since moving here three months ago, I've already experienced an abundance of opportunities and joy. The State Street Promenade is at the heart of that experience. It brings people together in a safe, vibrant, and welcoming space where residents and visitors alike can connect. These communal spaces are vital to the health and identity of Santa Barbara.

Cars, by contrast, isolate us. Think about it—when was the last time you had a meaningful social interaction behind the wheel? Vehicles are designed for efficiency, not connection. They separate us physically and emotionally, replacing spontaneous human moments with hurried solitude.

Reopening State Street to cars would not enrich our community—it would merely serve convenience at the expense of what makes Santa Barbara special. Our city is small and walkable; the benefits of maintaining a pedestrian and bike-friendly promenade far outweigh any perceived inconvenience to drivers. The safety, beauty, and charm of a car-free State Street strengthens our economy, supports local businesses, and enhances our quality of life.

We should be looking to expand spaces like this, not reverse them. Cities that have prioritized cars—such as many in the Midwest—have seen the long-term consequences: diminished downtown vitality, struggling small businesses, and fading community engagement. Santa Barbara has a rare opportunity to preserve and build upon something extraordinary.

Please keep the State Street Promenade free from motor vehicles and continue to invest in spaces that bring our community together.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to the future of our city.

Warm regards,

Ben Doak

From: [Patrick Davis](#)
To: [Santa Barbara City Council](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: State Street Master Planner
Date: Monday, October 27, 2025 8:44:49 AM

[You don't often get email from artstaco2@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Mayor and City Council:

I strongly support the vision of a civic promenade through the heart of Santa Barbara's historic Arts District. The DSBBIA needs to focus on its mission: promoting downtown. City staff are correct in doing the studies and hiring a master planner with a contemporary understanding and broad experience in designing urban spaces that accommodate multiple functions and that are not stuck in the 1950s car culture that gave us shopping centers and traffic jams.

As we inevitably dense up Santa Barbara's urban center, housing and public space and celebrating the arts are the future. We have what it takes.

Congratulations! You are on the right path(finally).

Encourage the new DSBBIA to collaborate with non profit arts groups(Museum of Art, Lobero Theatre, SB Museum of Contemporary Art, SB Trust, and soon the SB Film Festival and Music Academy and others) to program and MARKET downtown as the historic Arts District it is. It is important to use De la Guerra Plaza and the new Library Plaza as focal points to program and market the downtown.

Thank you for your thoughtful actions.

Respectfully

Patrick Davis