



May 7, 2020

To Elected Officials Representing Richmond, CA,

The California Main Street Alliance (CAMSA) is proud to support our Main Street programs, which are essential resource connectors and educators for small businesses during the current COVID-19 crisis. **Many local, regional, and state governments turn to Main Street as the economic development leaders,** “deal makers,” and visionaries for attracting new investment and supporting existing businesses. We believe the Main Street Approach, which articulates a focused path to revitalizing a downtown or commercial district’s economy, will be pivotal in helping our communities recover and move forward in the coming months.

The Covid-19 crisis requires that communities evaluate and reassess strengths, weaknesses and existing assets that are crucial to helping our commercial districts recover. The effects of the pandemic are already apparent. A recent survey of more than 5860 small businesses conducted by the National Main Street Center found that 60 percent of respondents have less than 5 months remaining of likely business survival. According to Small Business Majority, “Small Businesses employ 47% of private sector workers in the U.S. That’s nearly 60 million individuals who depend on small businesses for their livelihood and the livelihood of their families.” The \$350 billion stimulus package for small businesses may very well be too little too late. It is very clear that it will take a valiant effort and broad support for businesses to begin to recover and get people back to work.

CAMSA and its members are dedicated to the economic recovery and vitality of our small businesses and commercial districts. We join the Small Business Majority to request:

- Forbearance on **all** small business loans, including credit card payments for at least six months. The stimulus package provided loan forbearance for SBA loans, which is a great first step, but we must ensure that small businesses with other forms of debt are supported.
- Adjust repayment due dates on property taxes and commercial rent to give small businesses the flexibility they need to stay afloat.
- Pass legislation that would ensure business insurance companies cover COVID-19 revenue losses.
- Ensure small businesses that offer paid family medical and sick leave receive cash reimbursement, instead of quarterly tax credits.
- Ensure the delay of payroll tax payment and grant/loan assistance are not mutually exclusive.

- Pass a moratorium on increasing unemployment insurance (UI) rates so that small businesses do not have to pay higher premiums next year as a result of COVID-19.

Additionally, as nonprofits, Main Street organizations face specific challenges that threaten us as we weather this crisis. We join the California Legislature in requesting:

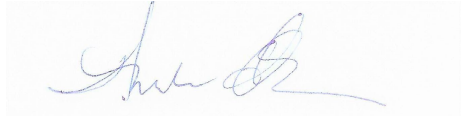
- All California government agencies should continue to pay on contracts and grants with nonprofits if they are underperforming due to temporary closures and suspension or reduction of services associated with COVID-19.
- An expedited or automatic approval process for budget modifications should be instituted to allow nonprofits to move budget line items associated with existing contracts to new COVID-19-related priorities.
- New and immediate emergency funds be made available to address increased COVID-19 related costs to nonprofits to support the uninterrupted delivery of essential services that affect public health, such as: increased sanitation efforts, take-out meals for the homeless, and pre-packaged food at food banks.
- Programs aimed at assisting employers, tenants, utility rate payers, etc. through the COVID-19 crisis should be equally available and beneficial to nonprofit and for-profit entities.
- State agencies should be allowed to waive certain certification procedures to let nonprofits provide COVID-19-related emergency and essential services as needed. Nonprofits affect the lives of all Californians every day.

In this time of crisis, we need the collaboration of the nonprofit community, the business community, and government. We respectfully request that you work with the leaders of CAMSA and the nonprofit community to address this need for collaboration and to assist our collective response efforts. We stand ready to help in this collaboration.

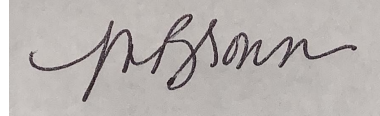
In partnership,

California Main Street Alliance:

Bellflower | Benicia | Brentwood | Cardiff-by-the-Sea | Carlsbad | Chico | Coachella | Coronado | East Oakland | Encinitas | Eureka | Fremont | Gilroy | Grass Valley | Hanford | Hollister | Leucadia | Livermore | Mariposa | Martinez | Ocean Beach | Oceanside | Paso Robles | Pleasanton | Redding | Richmond | San Luis Obispo



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Grass Valley Downtown Association



Melanie Bassett, Executive Director  
Downtown Chico Business Association



Nancy Martinez, Executive Director  
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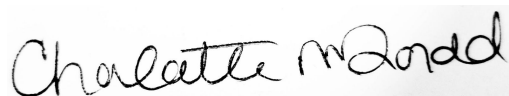
Tiffany Cadrette, Executive Director  
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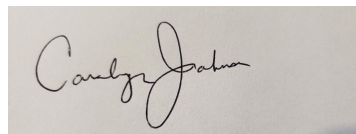
Christine Davis, Executive Director  
Carlsbad Village Association



Denny Knox, Executive Director  
Ocean Beach Main Street



Charlotte McDonald, Executive Director  
Eureka Main Street



Carolyn Johnson, Executive Director  
East Oakland Black Culture Zone