

## Orozco, Norma

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**From:** Libro Mobile <libromobile@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 02, 2021 3:34 PM  
**To:** eComment  
**Subject:** Public Comment: Adopt Resolution of Intent to Levy 2022 Assessment for Downtown Santa Ana Business Improvement District

Dear Mayor Sarmiento, Mayor Pro Tem Penaloza and Council Members,

LibroMobile (business representatives Sarah Garcia and Marilyn Montano) has been attending Santa Ana Business Council meetings consistently since July 2021 and Marilyn has attended in the years prior outside of representing LibroMobile.

What drove us to attend consistently as a downtown business are the recent events being hosted in downtown, like Patches & Pins that brought over 5K people to downtown during the pandemic in February 2021 and OC Vegan Fest, which used the parking lot on 3rd and Bush to host events and ultimately brought down our sales extensively and deterred patrons from visiting our bookstore due to lack of public parking and cost increase in parking garages.

Since then, I have learned that the SABC and Downtown Inc. fail to make meeting information, agendas and minutes accessible in Spanish. Our downtown businesses demographics demand such a consideration. Additionally, I have been told in a SABC meeting not to raise my concerns during a live meeting then told by email that they do not have the capacity to provide information via email. It was also pointed out in a meeting that I am one of two businesses that attends these meetings, which adds to my concerns on how inaccessible these meetings have been over the years. For example, we do not have access to September's minutes and meeting recordings since June, they are not posted on the SABC website nor have any been available in Spanish: <http://www.callecuatromarketplace.com/meetings.html>

Please note, over 75% of the 100K SABC BID funding goes to two consultants. In total, SABC and DTI are proposing to use \$124,600 out of \$200K to pay three consultants. What I am requesting is transparency through financial accountability for both entities and accessibility for the majority of our downtown businesses and community organizations.

I am also requesting a full list of grants received by SABC and DTI with amounts and budgets. A SABC consultant had offered this information for Boca de Oro's California Arts Council 2019 grant that funded activities in 2020 in July's meeting but never transpired the information into a report. Along with details on who attends training listed as a line item in budgets.

Profit & Loss reports and Balance Sheets could be easily provided as public records by the accountant paid by SABC funds given that 10% of BID funds are used for this line item in comparison to DTI who pays \$3,600. Such reports would give the details of funds coming in and how they are used to benefit the local businesses. Providing pie charts on websites would also offer transparency.

Why the need for two entities to do the same type of event planning and promotion? One compromise would be to have the two entities unite and not double up on line items and consultants, add terms for consultants and expectations to rotate board members to be more inclusive of local businesses on a broader scale. Designate \$100K of the funding to solely support collaborations between local businesses and LOCAL artists. This alone will help boost the local economy and reinvest in the folks who already create collaborative events like

LibroMobile who pays local artists all year round, Alta Baja Market who also contracts local artists and offers free pop-up opportunities for vendors, State Farm Insurance who hosts a Tamalada and the annual Dia de Los Muertos events that are also founded and funded by local organizations.

Another option is to not fund either entity and open it up for multiple organizations to apply for smaller portions of the \$200K (such as four locally-based and led entities at \$50K) - since plenty already are placemakers, offer newsletter and social media that cross market various local businesses, artists, and events.

I do hope the city council reconsiders this process. As a business owner, I am requesting more equitable practices for our community. Accountability and transparency is where these two entities should start, a thorough audit should be requested and made public instead of paying the same people year after year to do the same type of work for only a few of the businesses downtown.

Sincerely,  
Sarah Garcia

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¡Muchas Gracias!  
LibroMobile Arts Co-op

**Upcoming Events: All times are PST, unless stated otherwise**  
**All our events are hybrid - in-person & on IG live!**

*On-going – Artifying the Alley with Local Artist*

*5pm PST/7pm CST Thursday, Nov. 4th Poetry Reading: Memorias from the Beltway by Mauricio Novoa - IG Live*

*12-10pm PST Saturday, Nov. 6th Special Art Activity in collaboration with Viva La Vida at Crear Studio*

**Save the Dates:**

*6-7pm PST Thursday, Dec. 16th From Drama to Sci-Fi: Meet Playwright Diana Burbano @ Alta Baja Market Parklet*

*4-8pm Thursdays & Fridays, 12-4pm Saturdays, December 2021 - Makers' Month at Crear Studio - Support Local BIPOC Artists, buy your gifts from them!*

*1pm PST/4pm EST Saturday, Jan. 8th Storytime: What Every Child Should Know by Lark Sontag - IG Live*

**Location: 220 E. 4th Street, Ste. 107, Santa Ana, CA 92701**

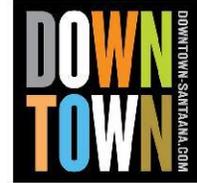
**Hours: 12-6pm Tuesday-Saturday & Special Events**

(back alley of building #220 off 4th & Spurgeon, next to the public parking lot on 3rd Street between Bush & Spurgeon)

**Currently open in-person & virtually via our [website](#) & [IG](#)!**

*LibroMobile: [Cultivating Diversity in Santa Ana through Literature](#)*

FB/Twitter/IG/Venmo: [@libromobile](#)



Downtown Inc  
201 E 4th St.  
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Nov 2, 2021

City Council, Mayor and City Staff  
City of Santa Ana  
20 Civic Center Plaza  
Santa Ana, CA 92701

**RE: SUPPORT ANNOUNCEMENT FOR DOWNTOWN LEVY (ITEM # 18 )**

Dear City Council, Mayor and City Staff

I am excited to write on behalf of all of our Downtown Inc boardmembers, a dozen stakeholders who make up a diverse representation of those to be levied, in support to move forward with the processes to renew the business improvement district.

The Downtown Santa Ana business improvement district has been around for nearly 40 years and it proved itself once again during the toughest year downtown has probably ever seen.

Our board, services, teams and programming continued and adapted all through the pandemic: we worked with the city to establish outdoor dining and created safe protocols for downtown activation. Our communications and outreach network proved critical as we all dealt with unknowns and varying levels of being able to open and welcome visitors to downtown.

We continue to work well with our partners, the Santa Ana Business Council and the City of Santa Ana's Community Development Agency and we hope for downtown to recover stronger than before. However, this will require us being able to raise support from mechanisms like the business assessment, solutions for the dip in parking revenue that has crushed our Downtown Merchant Fund, and we need to continue to find additional grants, improve operational budgets, make visionary plans, maintain partnerships and collaboratively secure new investments that help downtown build back better.

In closing, I think a great testament to the spirit of downtown and the belief in our business district and this self-assessed levy is that most businesses have paid their business license and BID fees even during the darkest year we've faced together. I look forward to our continued work together!

Sincerely,

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Ryan Chase  
President  
Downtown Inc.