

For Immediate Release

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**World Business Academy Hosts Meeting March 21 on Ways to Create and Keep a
Vibrant Retail Scene in Santa Barbara**

(Santa Barbara, California) The World Business Academy is hosting a discussion on March 21 exploring ways that our community leaders can join businesses and stakeholders in creating a long-term, vibrant retail business scene in Santa Barbara. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend.

The event, titled, "Reviving Retail in Santa Barbara: Community Solutions to the Retail Apocalypse," will bring local business and community leaders together for a lively panel discussion featuring Kate Schwab of the Santa Barbara Downtown organization as well as Ken Oplinger, president and CEO of the Chamber of the Santa Barbara Region; business leader and former mayoral candidate Angel Martinez; and former Santa Barbara mayor and councilmember Hal Conklin, now president of USA Green Communities.

Santa Barbara retailers currently face a perfect storm due to recent local natural disasters that have added to the impact of e-commerce, national trends, neighborhood vacancies, Byzantine local regulations, and the high cost of doing business in Santa Barbara. Panelists will discuss how the community can come together to nurture locally owned retailers, make Downtown Santa Barbara a desirable destination for all, boost pedestrian traffic, and improve the local economy by revitalizing the local retail sector.

The discussion will be held from 5:30 p.m.-7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 21 in the Riviera Ballroom at the Belmond El Encanto Resort in Santa Barbara, 800 Alvarado Place. There will be a cash bar available and light appetizers will be passed between 5:30 and 6:00 p.m.

Those interested in attending are asked to RSVP by emailing the World Business Academy at lisa@worldbusiness.org or calling (805) 892-4600.

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