

Program Application: 82118214

Linked Pre-Application Form - DO NOT DELETE

Growing Our Urban Roots

Grant Amount Requested

\$75,000.00

Organization Name

Veggielution

Urban Grant Program Application Questions

Overview

Type of project (check all that apply)

Grant category (check all that apply)

Environmental Education

Project Location: Address / Neighborhood

What is the physical location of the project? If there is no physical location, please enter "N/A." If the project will be in multiple locations, please list all. Note: project location(s) must be within the Authority's jurisdiction.

All of the activities will take place at Veggielution, located at 647 South King Road, San Jose, CA 95116.

Project Location

Open Space Authority District of Project Location(s)(check all that apply)

Authority District 6

Who does the project serve? Please indicate which Open Space Authority Districts are served (where do the people served by the program live) (check all that apply)

Authority District 6

Project Abstract

Veggielution will implement Growing Our Urban Roots (the Project), a pilot initiative designed to build long-term climate resilience and civic leadership in East San José (ESJ). The Project begins with a three-month regenerative urban agriculture training where participants gain hands-on skills in soil health, water conservation, seed saving, and climate-adaptive planning. Upon completion, graduates are certified as environmental ambassadors and supported to lead community workshops, serve on city and county advisory boards, and promote locally driven resilience strategies throughout the remaining months of the project.

The Project not only bridges gaps in environmental equity but also creates pathways into the green workforce and strengthens community-led leadership through shared action. Ultimately, Growing Our Urban Roots envisions a future where East San José not only adapts to climate change but models a community-owned approach to sustainability that continues beyond the pilot year.

Project Planning

Describe the proposed project.

Since 2008, Veggielution has advanced environmental stewardship, equitable access to open space, and climate resilience in East San José—core priorities of the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority. The Growing Our Urban Roots project will activate Veggielution’s six-acre urban farm at Emma Prusch Park as a nature-based climate resilience and food sovereignty hub. Serving high-need zip codes (95116, 95122, 95127), the Project provides equitable access to green space, regenerative agriculture education, and leadership development for youth, immigrant, and BIPOC residents disproportionately impacted by pollution, food insecurity, and limited access to environmental learning.

Through workshops specific to the Authority’s mission, with a focus on soil health, water conservation, seed saving, and climate-adaptive land care, the project will directly support the Authority’s mission to conserve open space, natural areas, and working lands for future generations by fostering stewardship and connection to the land within an urban, underserved community. It aligns with the Santa Clara Valley Greenprint by advancing goals for healthy ecosystems, habitat enhancement, and community engagement through urban greening. It also fulfills multiple objectives of the Measure Q and Measure T Expenditure Plans by expanding equitable access to nature, strengthening community resilience to climate impacts, and promoting environmental education and social justice.

Program Design and Activities

Growing Our Urban Roots is a pilot initiative that begins with a three-month regenerative agriculture training designed to build hands-on skills in soil health, water conservation, seed saving, and climate-adaptive land care. Upon completion, graduates are certified as Environmental Ambassadors and supported to lead public workshops, serve on advisory boards, engage in climate-focused campaigns, and promote locally driven climate strategies. The program integrates experiential learning practices aligned with Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and Common Core through applied problem-solving, ecosystem analysis, and data interpretation.

Describe key project deliverables and estimated completion dates.

Key deliverables and completion dates include the following:

****Development of Curriculum:** Finalize 3-month regenerative urban agriculture training curriculum and educational materials (Months 1–3)

****Training Cohort Recruited and Launched:** Recruit and onboard 20 participants from East San José (youth, immigrant, BIPOC residents) to begin training at Veggielution urban farm site (Month 1)

****Hands-on Demonstrations Delivered:** Conduct thrice-monthly (nine 4-hour sessions) field-based demonstrations and workshops on soil restoration, water conservation, and climate-adaptive planting. Ambassadors will begin to develop ideas for campaigns that they will implement locally (Months 1–3).

****Ambassador Graduation:** Complete training and certify 15 participants as environmental ambassador roles to continue stewardship and outreach activities (By Month 3).

****Community Workshops & Dialogues Held:** Ambassadors deliver at least three community workshops/dialogues focused on edible native landscaping, climate-adaptive gardening, and open space stewardship (By Month 12).

****ESJ Campaigns:** The Ambassadors will develop and make progress toward implementing a climate-focused campaign locally (Month 4-12).

****Monthly meetings:** Ambassadors will receive guidance on their campaigns from Veggielution staff on a monthly basis (Month 4-12).

****Publicly Accessible Educational Materials - Curriculum materials, workshop guides, and resources made available for public use via Veggielution’s website and shared with local schools and partners (By Month 12).**

Does this project require permission, permits, or other approvals? If so, please describe the status of these.

Veggielution does not need permission, permits or other approvals to implement the project. Veggielution has a 25-year lease with the City of San Jose to steward and operate the 6 acres that are Veggielution.

What is the lifetime of this project? If applicable, describe plans for operating and maintaining the project in the future.

The Project spans 12 months, including training, outreach, and community workshops. During the first three months, Veggielution will train the Ambassadors. In month 4, they will graduate and start outreach to conduct workshops that reach 100 of their neighbors. During months 4-12, they will also develop climate-focused campaigns, aligned with Growing our Urban Roots objectives and Open Space Authority goals. However, its impact extends beyond the year through the establishment of the ambassadors, who will continue to serve their neighborhood on climate and environment focused issues. Veggielution will also integrate this program into its existing environmental education and community engagement, which is supported through a diversified mix of small grants, community donation, agency partnerships, and program revenue. Beyond the grant period, Veggielution will activate its fundraising and grant writing strategy, which braids funding from a variety of revenue streams, to sustain the program.

Describe the project's readiness for implementation.

Veggielution is ready to launch Growing Our Urban Roots immediately, with curriculum, farm infrastructure, and recruitment pathways seamlessly in place. Veggielution has a proven track record delivering similar programs, including the DORA program (Eastside Development of Outdoor Recreation Advocates), which empowers parents, caregivers, and childcare providers in East San José to become environmental leaders. Through hands-on training, participants learn about organic gardening, environmental stewardship, and how to design and lead outdoor learning experiences for their communities. DORA fosters community connection, promotes food security and healthy living, and develops local leaders who can inspire and educate others.

Veggielution also implements the Climate Resilience Leadership Academy (CRLA) in partnership with the County of Santa Clara Public Health to develop community leaders focused on climate resilience and environmental justice in East San José. CRLA provides training to community members on climate science and mitigation strategies, particularly focusing on the equitable integration of urban greening and nature-based solutions to address community needs in East San José.

What makes this next phase unique is that it moves beyond education into community ownership, peer leadership, and long-term stewardship of open space. The Project establishes a formal peer-led ambassador training program that certifies participants not just to apply skills but to teach others, host workshops, and represent community priorities in public planning spaces such as city and county advisory boards.

Project Budget

Budget Summary - Grant Request & Budget Summary - Matching Funds

Grant request: Personnel

\$52,082.00

Grant request: Contracted Services

\$2,016.00

Grant request: Supplies / Materials

\$5,902.00

Grant request: Other Direct Costs

\$0.00

Grant request: Indirect Costs

\$15,000.00

Total Matching Funds

\$0.00

Total Budget

\$75,000.00

Please upload a detailed version of your budget by accessing the link below:

UGP_Project_Budget_Template 2025.xlsx

Materials and Budget Template (item #9) found here: <https://www.openspaceauthority.org/programs/grant.html#Materials>

Provide a brief budget narrative to explain the expenses listed in each of the budget categories (e.g. Personnel).

**The Farm Director will oversee program design.

**The Environmental Education Program Coordinator will lead the 36-hour ambassador training curriculum and support participants in developing leadership and outreach skills. This position will also meet with Ambassadors monthly as needed after graduation to support their climate / environmental focused campaigns.

**The Farm Program Coordinator will provide hands-on training instruction in regenerative practices, guiding participants through field demonstrations and skill-building activities.

(The majority of the project budget is allocated to personnel, as the success of the Project relies on staff-led training and community engagement.)

**Childcare: to address access barriers for those with children, Veggielution provides childcare services as part of every training session.

**Supplies and Materials: this includes handouts, workshop materials, shirts for participation.

**Indirect Costs: Veggielution will take the allowed 20% in indirect costs to cover overhead items, such as insurance, occupancy costs, other shared program costs.

Award Amount: The Board reserves the right to award partial funding on projects. If your project were to receive partial funding, what would this mean for your project?

If partial funding is awarded, Veggielution would adjust the project scope by either reducing the number of participants in the ambassador training cohort or scaling back one of the three project goals. We would prioritize core training activities to ensure meaningful impact, even with a reduced budget.

Project Goals

Describe the specific problems, issues, or unserved needs the project will address.

Veggielution is located within City of San Jose's Emma Prusch Park, a vital green space in an East San Jose community disproportionately impacted by environmental and socioeconomic challenges. Surrounded by highways, congested streets, and limited green infrastructure, this area faces severe pollution burdens, ranking in the top 25% statewide per CalEnviroScreen 4.0. Residents, particularly in zip codes 95116, 95122, and 95127, endure high levels of diesel particulate matter (95%), traffic pollution (95%), and lead exposure in housing (79%). The need for environmental ambassadors is critically important for the underserved community of ESJ because they address both the root causes of environmental injustice and help build local capacity to respond to climate change.

The ambassadors are critical as they will address the following:

****Environmental Inequities:** Underserved communities like ESJ face disproportionate exposure to pollution, lack of access to green spaces, and limited investment in environmental infrastructure. Environmental ambassadors from the community bring visibility to the environmental burdens ESJ residents face and help restore local ecosystems through civic engagement and education.

****Build Local Climate Resilience:** ESJ is already experiencing disproportionate effects of climate change—extreme heat, droughts, and poor air quality. Community-based environmental ambassadors will educate residents about how to prepare for and adapt to these changes and solicit solutions like tree planting, community gardens, and water-saving practices. These climate resilience strategies will reflect local needs and cultural values.

****Empower Community-Led Change:** Environmental ambassadors act as trusted educators who can bridge the gap between policy, science, and everyday life. Their leadership encourages civic engagement and environmental advocacy, while fostering a sense of ownership and pride in improving their neighborhoods.

****Create Career and Leadership Pathways:** For many in ESJ, there are few accessible paths into the environmental sector. Environmental ambassador programs provide job readiness training and leadership development, expose participants to careers in sustainability, conservation, and urban planning, and help dismantle barriers to entering green jobs, especially for BIPOC and immigrant youth.

****Strengthen Community Connections:** Environmental ambassadors bring people together through shared goals: growing food, restoring land, and protecting the future. They also create intergenerational and cross-cultural spaces of learning and growth, strengthening social bonds, which are key to resilience in times of crisis.

The Project will serve the community through three measurable goals:

- 1) Strengthen neighborhood climate resilience by training 20 residents through nine 4-hour training sessions in regenerative practices such as soil restoration, water conservation, heat adaptation strategies, and climate focused campaigns.
- 2) Cultivate a cohort of at least 15 certified environmental ambassadors who will each lead a minimum of three workshops or community dialogues, reaching an estimated 100 additional residents.
- 3) Build a community network rooted in sustainability and equity, measured by increased civic engagement, ambassador-led outreach activities, and community participation in site-based demonstrations.

How does this project serve the community?

Number of people served

120

Number of youth served

18

Number of programs provided

1

Other Grantee Goal #1 (optional)

As stated above, the Project will strengthen neighborhood climate resilience by training 20 residents through nine 4-hour training sessions in regenerative practices such as soil restoration, water conservation, heat adaptation strategies, and climate focused campaigns.

Other Grantee Goal #2 (optional)

As stated above, the Project will cultivate a cohort of at least 15 certified environmental ambassadors who will each lead a minimum of three workshops or community dialogues, reaching an estimated 100 additional residents.

Impact

Describe the lasting impact of the project. Please include whether the program is open to the public and whether any materials developed will be available to the public.

Growing Our Urban Roots will create long-term environmental and social impact by building a continuous pipeline of trained community ambassadors who can educate, mobilize, and lead climate resilience efforts in East San José. Rather than a one-time program, it establishes a self-sustaining model where local residents become trusted leaders who continue to host workshops, organize greening projects, and advocate for environmental justice. This can develop, in the longer term, an initiative where environmental justice ambassadors engage a cross section of systems (municipal, corporate, public safety, health, wellness, etc.), serve as community leaders, seek out tables where environmental justice decisions are made at the city and county level, and foster a movement that prioritizes climate and environmental justice.

To achieve this goal, the Project is designed to be inclusive, encouraging participants from the public, particularly underserved communities to become change agents and problem solvers for their neighborhoods. Additionally, any and all educational materials developed during the project will be made available to the public, promoting ongoing learning and engagement in sustainable practices beyond the project's duration.

Climate Resilience

How does this project enhance and/or raise awareness about climate resilience? Please include any metrics that can be used to help quantify or understand the climate benefits of the project.

This Project directly enhances climate resilience in East San José by training residents in regenerative practices that reduce environmental stressors and build neighborhood-level adaptation capacity. Through hands-on education in soil restoration, water conservation, seed saving, urban greening, and heat adaptation strategies, trained residents become environmental ambassadors, who will educate others on local climate challenges and solutions, fostering a culture of sustainability and advocacy within East San José.

Metrics for assessing the impact of the project include the number of trained ambassadors, community workshops conducted, and the increase in climate-adaptive activities such as native plant installations, composting, and soil carbon retention demonstrations.

Trained residents further strengthen their community connections, encouraging collective action towards environmental stewardship to create a network of informed leaders who can effectively respond to climate change, ensuring that East San José not only adapts but thrives in the face of environmental challenges.

Community Engagement / Stakeholder Support / Community Building

Describe the community support and/or community engagement process. Please upload any community support letters in the Documents Upload section below.

Veggelution has been a trusted anchor in East San José for over 15 years, building strong relationships with residents, neighborhood leaders, and community organizations through consistent presence and programming at its urban farm. The project is backed by community partners including SOMOS Mayfair, Acterra Action for a Healthy Planet, Grail Family Services, the School of Arts and Culture at the Mexican Heritage Plaza, as well as City of San José Council member Peter Ortiz (District 5), Board members, and our community members committed to environmental justice and public health. Formal letters of support from these partners and community leaders will be included to demonstrate alignment and commitment.

Community engagement is embedded in the program model. Residents are not passive participants but co-leaders who will help shape program delivery, lead workshops, and guide ambassador activities. This shared leadership approach ensures the project responds directly to community priorities and strengthens local ownership of climate resilience efforts.

Underserved Communities

Describe how the project addresses open space needs for sensitive populations such as residents of park-poor neighborhoods, under-served, or disadvantaged communities, youth, seniors, persons with disabilities, or is located within an under-resourced community.

The Project will directly serve East San José, a CalEnviroScreen 4.0-designated disadvantaged community where zip codes 95116, 95122, and 95127 rank in the top 25% statewide for pollution burden, including 95% diesel particulate exposure and 79% lead risk in housing. In Census Tract 5036.02, 66% of residents are Latinx, 45.5% are foreign-born, 53% speak Spanish at home, and 34.5% did not complete high school (U.S. Census, 2021). Median household income in this tract is \$82,824, significantly below the San José median of \$125,075, reflecting the Authority's definition of an under-resourced community. East San José residents have for generations generated wealth for Silicon Valley but have long been subjected to systemic racism, economic inequities, and violent suppression, and suffer academic and economic achievement gaps, and environmental disparities. ESJ is also a dynamic, diverse, low-income community with a legacy of activism, climate resilience, and community organizing.

These neighborhoods suffer from conditions that affect many immigrant and working-class populations, including higher rates of obesity and diabetes, significant education and earning gaps, lack of access to safe, well-maintained outdoor spaces, and limited options for fresh, healthy food. Lower income neighborhoods typically have higher levels of air pollution than wealthier areas because of the proximity to highways and industrial areas (Bay Area Air Quality Management District). Dense concentrations of pavement, buildings, and other surfaces absorb and retain heat. Summer heat and lack of shade as well as heated pavements and poor air quality often prevent residents from walking or playing outdoors. Indeed, the walkability index for East San José is substantially worse than California's (El Camino Hospital Needs Assessment, 2022). In addition, according to Save the Bay (Community Recommendations for Urban Greening in San José, 2022), "San José communities are already feeling the effects of climate change, with historically under-invested neighborhoods like East San José facing the first and worst impacts."

Offering free, hands-on training and public workshops on a six-acre urban farm located within this community, the Project transforms existing open space into a climate resilience hub, providing accessible green infrastructure, environmental education, and peer-led nature connection for residents historically excluded from environmental programming and green job pipelines.

Organizational Capacity

Briefly describe the organization and its ability to successfully implement this project. This might include successful past projects, key staff qualifications, financial resources, etc.

Veggielution has operated in East San José since 2008, stewarding a six-acre urban farm at Emma Prusch Park that engages thousands of residents annually through environmental education, food access, and community leadership programs. Veggielution has successfully delivered climate engagement initiatives such as DORA and the Climate Resilience Leadership Academy (CRLA), demonstrating its ability to recruit residents from under-resourced neighborhoods, deliver high-quality training, and transition participants into ongoing leadership roles.

The Project will be implemented by an experienced team, including Farm Director Claudia Damiani, a former Greenhouse Manager at Valley Verde and educator with UC Cooperative Extension; Farm Program Coordinator Alejandro Acosta, who brings production farming expertise and deep roots in San José; and Environmental Education Coordinator Rosa Maria Garfunkel, who specializes in community-based climate education. The team is supported by a Program Director with experience in curriculum development and urban land stewardship.

Veggielution maintains sound financial management systems, diversified funding streams, and governance oversight from an active Board of Directors, ensuring strong administrative and fiscal capacity to deliver and sustain this project.

References include:

- 1) Lucia García / La Mesa Verde / luciag@sacredheartcs.org / 408-239-7392;
- 2) Lidia Jimenez / Ashes to Beauty / lidia@a-to-b.org / 408-706-3428;
- 3) Trinity Tomsic / Garden to Table / team@garden2tablesv.org / 301-312-7601.

Leadership & Innovation

Describe how this project employs innovative approaches or encourages collaboration and partnerships.

This Project introduces an innovative peer-led ambassador model, which shifts environmental education from staff-directed instruction to community-owned leadership. Rather than relying solely on a top-down approach with external experts providing information to communities, Growing our Urban Roots trains residents to become instructors, workshop facilitators, and climate resilience advocates, building long-term capacity within the community itself.

Veggielution will also leverage strong partnerships with East San Jose and beyond. For example, it leads environmental initiatives within the Si Se Puede Collective, an East San Jose- Mayfair neighborhood centered coalition of like-minded sister nonprofit agencies, which includes SOMOS Mayfair, Grail Family Services, School of Arts and Culture at MHP, and Grail Family Services. These partnerships deepen outreach and community trust. Collaboration will also continue through the Urban Growers Network and its Community Advisory Council, which Veggielution convenes to guide community priorities in land use and food resilience.

Veggielution's ongoing partnership with the City of San José, supported by a letter from Council member Ortiz, also positions this project to inform city-level advocacy around parks, open space, and equitable access to nature-based climate solutions. Partnerships with Acterra: Action for a Healthy Planet further connect this work to regional climate action networks. (Please see additional attached support letters from Si Se Puede Collective members, Acterra, and a Veggielution Board Member and served community member.)

Documents Section

Document Uploads (please combine into one file if possible)

Letters of Support_Veggielution.pdf

Additional files (if needed)

Veggielution Open Space Project Map.pdf

Additional files (if needed)

Submitted Date - Internal

Summary Field:

Name: Average Score (no bonus)

Form: Staff Review

Summary Type: average

Field: Base Score Total

Decimal: 2

Currency: No

Description/Help Text: NONE

Short Name: NONE

Field Purpose: NONE

Filter:

- ALL:

- isComplete | is | true

Summary Field:

Name: Total Count of Submitted Reviews

Form: Staff Review

Summary Type: count

Field: NONE

Decimal: NONE

Currency: No

Description/Help Text: NONE

Short Name: NONE

Field Purpose: NONE

Filter:

- ALL:
 - isComplete | is | true
 - Folder | is | Submitted

Program Application: File Attachments

Please upload a detailed version of your budget by accessing the link below:

UGP_Project_Budget_Template 2025.xlsx

Document Uploads (please combine into one file if possible)

Letters of Support_Veggielution.pdf

Additional files (if needed)

Veggielution Open Space Project Map.pdf

Instructions

Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority | 2025 Urban Grant Program

INSTRUCTIONS

Please provide a detailed project budget. More information, including a detailed list of direct and indirect costs, is available in the Urban Grant Program Guidelines (<http://www.openspaceauthority.org/urban>). A sample budget is included in a separate tab.

The Budget Form in a separate tab in this document. The budget categories are listed below with a description of each field.

PROJECT

Project Name: The name of the project

Organization: The name of the organization requesting funding

PERSONNEL

Estimate employee and volunteer time directly related to the project. Hourly rates for employees can include salary plus fringe benefits, payroll tax, etc, but can not include indirect costs. Note: please list position titles only.

Position title: Title of each employee working directly on this project. Note: please list position title only.

Description of Budget Item: The amount of time (e.g. hours) and the hourly rate for each employee. Hourly rates can include salary plus fringe benefits, payroll taxes, etc, but can NOT include indirect costs. Please provide adequate detail to show how totals were calculated.

Grant Request: The amount requested from this Grant (if applicable).

Matching Funds: The amount funded through matching funds (if applicable).

Total: This column will be automatically calculated.

CONTRACTED SERVICES

Labor, supplies, and materials to be provided by consultants/contractors for project implementation.

Item: The item listed

Description of Budget Item: Please provide a description of the item with adequate detail to show how totals were calculated.

Instructions

Grant Request:	The amount requested from this Grant (if applicable).
Matching Funds:	The amount funded through matching funds (if applicable).
Total:	This column will be automatically calculated.
SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS	
Supplies and materials that are <u>directly related</u> to the project.	
Item:	The item listed
Description of Budget Item:	Please provide a description of the item with adequate detail to show how totals were calculated.
Grant Request:	The amount requested from this Grant (if applicable).
Matching Funds:	The amount funded through matching funds (if applicable).
Total:	This column will be automatically calculated.
OTHER DIRECT COSTS	
Other direct costs that are <u>directly related</u> to the project. This might include travel, service fees for fiscal sponsorship, or newly-acquired equipment.	
Item:	The item listed
Description of Budget Item:	Please provide a description of the item with adequate detail to show how totals were calculated.
Grant Request:	The amount requested from this Grant (if applicable).
Matching Funds:	The amount funded through matching funds (if applicable).
Total:	This column will be automatically calculated.
INDIRECT COSTS	
Indirect costs are eligible for grant funding only for 501(c)(3) Nonprofits and are <u>limited to 20%</u> of grant funding. Indirect costs cannot be counted as matching funds.	
Item:	20% Administrative overhead for Nonprofits
Description of Budget Item:	Any additional description
Grant Request:	The amount requested from this Grant (if applicable).
	The percent of grant funding
Total:	This column will be automatically calculated.

Instructions

GRAND TOTAL	
Grant Request:	This column will be automatically calculated.
Matching Funds:	This column will be automatically calculated.
Total:	This column will be automatically calculated.
COST SHARE	
A minimum of 25% of grant request in matching funds is required. A project budget with less than 25% of the grant request in matching funds does NOT meet the grant requirements and will not be considered for funding.	
Matching Funds:	This column will be automatically calculated.
MATCHING FUNDS	
Please describe the source of matching funds listed above. This might include cash match (e.g. grantee's own funds, donations, grants, etc) or in-kind match (non-cash contribution such as volunteer time).	
Source:	The source of funding (e.g. In-kind contributions, Organization's contributions, Donations, Grant, etc.).
Description:	Any additional description.
kind)	Indicate whether the funding is cash or in-kind match.
Pending)	Indicate whether the matching funds are secured or pending.
Matching Funds:	The amount funded through matching funds.

Budget Form

TOTAL PERSONNEL		\$ 52,082.00	\$ -	\$ 52,082.00
CONTRACTED SERVICES				
Labor, supplies, and materials to be provided by consultants/contractors for project implementation.				
Item	Description of Budget Item	Grant Request (\$)	Matching Funds (\$)	Total
Childcare	providers	\$ 2,016.00		\$ 2,016.00
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
TOTAL CONTRACTED SERVICES		\$ 2,016.00	\$ -	\$ 2,016.00
SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS				
Supplies and materials that are <u>directly related</u> to the project.				
Item	Description of Budget Item	Grant Request (\$)	Matching Funds (\$)	Total
Educational and Workshop Supplies	education	\$ 3,402.00		\$ 3,402.00
Community Engagement Materials	hats	\$ 2,500.00		\$ 2,500.00
				\$ -
				\$ -

Budget Form

				\$ -
TOTAL OTHER DIRECT COSTS		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
INDIRECT COSTS				
Indirect costs are eligible for grant funding only for 501(c)(3) Nonprofits and are <u>limited to 20%</u> of grant funding. Indirect costs cannot be counted as matching funds.				
Item	Description of Budget Item	Grant Request (\$)	Matching Funds (\$)	Total
Overhead/indirect administration	Insurance, occupancy, office & program implementation costs	\$ 15,000.00	n/a	\$ 15,000.00
TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS		\$ 15,000.00	n/a	\$ 15,000.00
PERCENT OF GRANT REQUEST		20.0%	n/a	n/a
GRAND TOTAL				
		Grant Request (\$)	Matching Funds (\$)	Total
TOTALS		\$ 75,000.00	\$ -	\$ 75,000.00
COST SHARE				
				(%)
A minimum of 25% of grant request in matching funds may be required. This field is automatically calculated.				0.0%
MATCHING FUNDS				
Please describe the source of matching funds listed above. The total matching funds listed here should match the total matching funds listed under Grand Total above. This might include cash match (e.g. grantee's own funds, donations, grants, etc) or in-kind match (non-cash contribution such as volunteer time).				
Source	Description	(cash or in-kind)	Pending)	(\$)

Sample Budget

				\$ -
				\$ -
TOTAL PERSONNEL		\$ 15,000.00	\$ 5,692.00	\$ 20,692.00
CONTRACTED SERVICES				
Labor, supplies, and materials to be provided by consultants/contractors for project implementation.				
Item	Description of Budget Item	Grant Request (\$)	(\$)	Total
Evaluation Consultant	evaluation.	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
TOTAL CONTRACTED SERVICES		\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS				
Supplies and materials that are <u>directly related</u> to the project.				
Item	Description of Budget Item	Grant Request (\$)	(\$)	Total
Training materials	volunteers @ \$10 per person	\$ 500.00		\$ 500.00
Brochures	.55 ea	\$ 1,100.00		\$ 1,100.00

Sample Budget

				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
TOTAL OTHER DIRECT COSTS		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
INDIRECT COSTS				
Indirect costs are eligible for grant funding only for 501(c)(3) Nonprofits and are <u>limited to 20%</u> of grant funding. Indirect costs cannot be counted as matching funds.				
Item	Description of Budget Item	Grant Request (\$)	(\$)	Total
10% Administrative overhead for Nonprofits		\$ 880.00	n/a	\$ 880.00
TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS		\$ 880.00	n/a	\$ 880.00
PERCENT OF GRANT REQUEST		4.8%	n/a	n/a
GRAND TOTAL				
		Grant Request (\$)	(\$)	Total
TOTALS		\$ 18,480.00	\$ 6,692.00	\$ 25,172.00
COST SHARE				
				(cash or in-kind)
A minimum of 25% of grant request in matching funds may be required.				36.21%
MATCHING FUNDS				
Please describe the source of matching funds listed above. The total matching funds listed here should match the total matching funds listed under Grand Total above. This might include cash match (e.g. grantee's own funds, donations, grants, etc) or in-kind match (non-cash contribution such as volunteer time).				
Source	Description	(cash or in-kind)	Pending	(\$)

Sample Budget

Volunteer support for XYZ Nonprofit		in-kind	pending	\$ 5,692.00
Grant from XYZ Foundation	Grant to fund evaluation consultant	cash	secured	\$ 1,000.00
TOTAL MATCHING FUNDS				\$ 6,692.00



Acterra

Lauren Weston
Palo Alto, CA
October 7, 2025

To the Grant Selection Committee,

On behalf of **Acterra**, I am writing to express our strong support for **Veggielution's** grant proposal for their pilot project, "*Growing Our Urban Roots: Cultivating Climate Resilience & Civic Leadership in East San José.*"

At Acterra, we are committed to advancing environmental equity, resilience, and community-led solutions to climate challenges across the region. Our mission—bringing people together to create local solutions for a healthy planet. Our solutions prioritize equity for all communities, align with science-based findings, and are defined for the benefit of all—aligns deeply with the goals of this project, and we are proud to support Veggielution as a trusted and visionary partner in this work.

Veggielution is more than a community farm—it is a living hub of connection, empowerment, and innovation. Located at Emma Prusch Park, one of the few green spaces in East San José, Veggielution has transformed public land into a thriving space for food justice, civic engagement, and environmental education. Their track record of inclusive, equity-centered programming makes them uniquely positioned to lead this initiative.

The *Growing Our Urban Roots* project represents an essential next step in building climate resilience in East San José. By equipping local residents with training in regenerative agriculture, climate adaptation, and community organizing, Veggielution is cultivating a new generation of climate leaders who reflect the strengths, cultures, and lived experiences of the community. These ambassadors will be catalysts for change—bridging the gap between grassroots knowledge and systems-level solutions.

At Acterra, we believe in the power of community-led leadership. This project directly invests in residents who have historically been excluded from environmental decision-making but who are among the most impacted by climate change. We see this as a model for how to build local capacity and center justice in climate action.

We enthusiastically support this proposal and urge you to fund this important and timely work. With your support, Veggielution will continue to uplift East San José as a beacon of sustainability, equity, and community resilience.

Sincerely,



Lauren Weston, Executive Director



October 8, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of **Grail Family Services (GFS) in San José**, I am pleased to share our enthusiastic support for Veggielution's grant proposal for the pilot project "*Growing Our Urban Roots: Cultivating Climate Resilience & Civic Leadership in East San José.*"

Grail Family Services has worked side by side with Veggielution for many years to support immigrant and working-class families in East San José. Our partnership has been rooted in a shared vision: ensuring that families and childcare providers have access not only to healthy, fresh food, but also to the resources and opportunities that help them thrive. Veggielution has been instrumental in delivering fresh, locally grown produce to GFS families and early learning providers, strengthening food security while deepening community connections.

For us, Veggielution has never been "just a farm." It is a hub of community life, where food, culture, and leadership intersect. Their location at Emma Prusch Park, a cherished green space in our city, has allowed countless families to experience firsthand the power of community-driven stewardship of public land.

The *Growing Our Urban Roots* project represents an important and timely expansion of this work. By preparing a new generation of environmental ambassadors who reflect the lived experiences of East San José families, Veggielution is tackling urgent challenges like climate change and food insecurity while cultivating leaders who can advocate for systemic change. These ambassadors will not only build practical skills in sustainability but also serve as role models for the families and children who see them leading with pride and purpose.

At GFS, we know that real change begins with community leadership. Too often, the voices of the families we serve are left out of environmental and civic decision-making. This project invests in those very voices—parents, caregivers, and community members who understand the realities of East San José and are best equipped to lead solutions.

We are proud to call Veggielution a close partner and stand in strong support of this proposal. Together, we can continue to uplift families, build resilience, and create a healthier and more equitable East San José.

With respect and partnership,

Veronica Goei
Executive Director
Grail Family Services

Susan Chen
Board Member
Veggielution
susan.chen@sjsu.edu
(540) 641-4171

October 8th, 2025

To the Selection Committee,

As a proud member of the Board of Directors at Veggielution and an Assistant Professor of Nutrition and Dietetics at San José State University, I am writing to offer my enthusiastic support for the *Growing Our Urban Roots: Cultivating Climate Resilience & Civic Leadership in East San José* pilot project.

Veggielution has been a trusted and deeply embedded institution in East San José since 2008. Our 6-acre urban farm, located within Emma Prusch Park, has long served as a vibrant community hub for environmental learning, food access, and grassroots leadership. *Growing Our Urban Roots* builds directly upon this foundation, offering an urgently needed, community-driven response to the growing climate and environmental justice challenges facing our neighborhoods.

This initiative will provide residents--particularly those from historically underserved areas such as 95116, 95122, and 95127--with the training, tools, and confidence to become environmental ambassadors in their own communities. By teaching regenerative agriculture, promoting civic leadership, and building climate resilience, this project tackles multiple layers of inequity and invests directly in local leadership. This is not charity work--it is systems change, and it is rooted in the lived expertise of the people most impacted by environmental injustice.

As a Board Member, I am especially excited about the way this program bridges personal empowerment with structural change. Participants will not only learn to adapt to climate threats—they will become advocates, educators, and change-makers within their neighborhoods. This creates a ripple effect that strengthens community connection, environmental literacy, and long-term sustainability.

I fully support this application and believe *Growing Our Urban Roots* represents a powerful step forward—not just for Veggielution, but for the entire East San José community. Thank you for considering this transformative investment in grassroots leadership and climate resilience.

Sincerely,



Susan Chen
Board Member, Veggielution

October 7, 2025

Subject: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority Urban Grant Program

Dear Open Space Authority Board of Directors and Grant Review Committee,

As the San José City Councilmember representing District 5—which includes many of the neighborhoods Veggielution serves—I am proud to offer my strong support for their grant proposal for "**Growing Our Urban Roots: Cultivating Climate Resilience & Civic Leadership in East San José.**"

East San José faces long-standing environmental inequities, from high pollution levels to limited access to public green space. These are not just statistics—they are daily realities for the families I represent. As reported in *San José Spotlight*, I have made it a priority to address these inequities by championing improvements to our parks and expanding access to green infrastructure in historically underserved neighborhoods.

Veggielution's project directly aligns with these goals. Located in Emma Prusch Park, their 6-acre urban farm has become a vital community anchor in East San José, transforming public land into a hub for sustainability, education, and empowerment. The *Growing Our Urban Roots* pilot builds on this success by equipping local residents to become environmental ambassadors—leaders who can educate their communities, promote climate resilience, and steward our shared public spaces.

This project offers a critical opportunity to invest in grassroots leadership and community-based solutions. By centering the voices of residents most impacted by pollution and climate change, Veggielution is helping to bridge the gap between environmental policy and the lived experiences of East San José families.

As I've said in public forums and highlighted in *San José Spotlight*, East San José deserves the same level of investment in parks and environmental health as any other part of the city. Supporting projects like *Growing Our Urban Roots* is how we begin to close that gap—not just with infrastructure, but by building local capacity and community power.

I fully endorse this proposal and encourage you to support it. Veggielution is not only growing food—they are growing leaders, restoring land, and helping us build a more just and climate-resilient future for East San José.

Sincerely,



The Honorable Peter Ortiz
San José City Councilmember | District 5



October 8, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of **SOMOS Mayfair**, I am proud to express our strong support for Veggielution's grant proposal for the pilot project "*Growing Our Urban Roots: Cultivating Climate Resilience & Civic Leadership in East San José.*"

SOMOS Mayfair has long been dedicated to building collective power and advancing equity in our neighborhood. In recent years, we have deepened our work around environmental justice, recognizing that the same systemic inequities that affect our families—housing instability, economic exclusion, and educational gaps—are also reflected in environmental harms and disinvestment. This is why our partnership with Veggielution is so timely and important.

Together, SOMOS Mayfair and Veggielution are beginning new efforts to address the environmental challenges facing our community. By combining our base-building and organizing experience with Veggielution's expertise in food systems, climate resilience, and community stewardship, we are creating pathways for residents in the Mayfair to take action on environmental issues that directly affect their lives.

The *Growing Our Urban Roots* project complements this work by training community members as environmental ambassadors—leaders who understand that environmental justice is inseparable from social justice. These ambassadors will help ensure that families in Mayfair and across East San José are not only included in climate and sustainability conversations, but are shaping them.

We believe this project will strengthen the momentum we are building together: centering resident voices, uplifting grassroots leadership, and demanding investment in communities that have too often been left out of environmental planning.

SOMOS Mayfair is proud to stand with Veggielution in this vision. We urge your support of this proposal so that, together, we can advance environmental justice and build a healthier, more equitable future for East San José.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Saul Ramos".

Saul Ramos

Co-Executive Director

SOMOS Mayfair

Dear Selection Committee,

My name is Veronica Perez, and I live in East San José. I am part of the community that participates at Veggielution. I am writing this letter to support the project "**Growing Our Urban Roots.**"

For me, Veggielution is a very special place. It's where I learned how to take care of the land, how to grow healthy food, and how to help my community. I have seen how this place changes lives. Many families like mine come here not only to learn, but also to feel like part of something beautiful and important.

This new program will help more people like me learn about climate change and how we can protect our community. Here in East San José, there is a lot of pollution, a lot of heat, and not many green spaces. It's very hard, especially for our children and elders.

With this project, we will have leaders from our own community who speak our language and understand our needs. They will teach others how to care for the earth, save water, and plant trees. They can also help us find jobs in the future in good things like agriculture, the environment, and leadership.

I support this project because I know it will help our community a lot. Veggielution listens to our voices and works with heart.

Thank you for considering this support. This project can change many lives.

With respect and hope,

Veronica Perez G.

Dear Selection Committee,

My name is Yesenia Orozco, and I live in East San José. I am part of the community that participates at Veggielution. I am writing this letter to support the project **"Growing Our Urban Roots."**

For me, Veggielution is a very special place. It's where I learned how to take care of the land, how to grow healthy food, and how to help my community. I have seen how this place changes lives. Many families like mine come here not only to learn, but also to feel like part of something beautiful and important.

This new program will help more people like me learn about climate change and how we can protect our community. Here in East San José, there is a lot of pollution, a lot of heat, and not many green spaces. It's very hard, especially for our children and elders.

With this project, we will have leaders from our own community who speak our language and understand our needs. They will teach others how to care for the earth, save water, and plant trees. They can also help us find jobs in the future in good things like agriculture, the environment, and leadership.

I support this project because I know it will help our community a lot. Veggielution listens to our voices and works with heart.

Thank you for considering this support. This project can change many lives.

With respect and hope,

Yesenia Orozco V.

Dear Selection Committee,

My name is Cristina Chong, and I live in East San José. I am part of the community that participates at Veggielution. I am writing this letter to support the project "**Growing Our Urban Roots.**"

For me, Veggielution is a very special place. It's where I learned how to take care of the land, how to grow healthy food, and how to help my community. I have seen how this place changes lives. Many families like mine come here not only to learn, but also to feel like part of something beautiful and important.

This new program will help more people like me learn about climate change and how we can protect our community. Here in East San José, there is a lot of pollution, a lot of heat, and not many green spaces. It's very hard, especially for our children and elders.

With this project, we will have leaders from our own community who speak our language and understand our needs. They will teach others how to care for the earth, save water, and plant trees. They can also help us find jobs in the future in good things like agriculture, the environment, and leadership.

I support this project because I know it will help our community a lot. Veggielution listens to our voices and works with heart.

Thank you for considering this support. This project can change many lives.

With respect and hope,

Cristina Chong

October 10, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the School of Arts and Culture at the Mexican Heritage Plaza (SOAC), I am pleased to offer our full support for Veggielution's grant proposal for "*Growing Our Urban Roots: Cultivating Climate Resilience & Civic Leadership in East San José.*"

SOAC and Veggielution share a deep and long-standing partnership grounded in our collective commitment to advancing equity, belonging, and self-determination for East San José's immigrant and working-class families. Together through the **Sí Se Puede Collective**, our organizations have built systems of mutual support that strengthen community health, leadership, and environmental stewardship—centering the people who call Mayfair and East San José home.

Veggielution's presence at Emma Prusch Park is one of the most tangible examples of community-rooted innovation in our region. Their ability to transform public land into a thriving hub for food justice, youth leadership, and climate education has inspired similar place-based strategies across the Mayfair corridor, including our work at La Placita and the La Avenida Cultural District. Their proposed initiative builds on this momentum by cultivating new environmental leaders who reflect our community's lived experience and resilience—leaders who will be equipped to tackle climate challenges while advocating for local solutions that honor culture and community.

At SOAC, we know that climate and cultural resilience are deeply interconnected. The same families who gather at Veggielution to grow food and learn about sustainability also come to our Plaza to celebrate traditions, organize, and envision a better future. This shared ecosystem of care is what makes East San José strong—and what makes Veggielution's work so vital.

We enthusiastically support Veggielution's *Growing Our Urban Roots* project and urge your consideration of this proposal. Investing in their vision means investing in the collective strength of East San José—a community that continues to lead with creativity, culture, and courage in the face of change.

With gratitude and partnership,



Jessica Paz-Cedillos
Chief Executive Officer
School of Arts and Culture at the Mexican Heritage Plaza

Legend

Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority Jurisdiction

Type Of Boundary

- Authority Jurisdiction
- Gilroy (Outside of Authority Jurisdiction)

Board District

- Authority Jurisdiction

Urban Areas within Jurisdiction

-

Deep Engagement Communities

-

Eligible Grants Area

-

