

May 4, 2020

Megan Dreger, Grants Administrator
Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
33 Las Colinas Ln
San Jose, CA 95119

Dear Open Space Authority Citizen Advisory Committee

I passionately support Bay Area Older Adults' (BAO's) Measure Q Urban Open Space Grant application that gives visually impaired older adults (VIPs) access to our open spaces.

I am a certified California Naturalist, an Activities Coordinator who created the new outreach program at Henry Coe State Park, a Field Technician for the Coyote Valley bobcat and Henry Coe mountain lion research teams, and a volunteer docent and interpreter for Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority. I have been working with BAO for the past two years as a guest hike leader for some of their sighted senior hikes. Last year, I was the lead naturalist for their pilot VIP educational walking program. Dr. Anne Ferguson and I worked together to develop the educational part of the program with a focus on four senses so that the VIPs can fully experience the nature in the parks.

It has been an amazing experience working with this group of older adults who are so grateful to be walking outdoors, learning about the parks and sharing these experiences with their fellow VIPs. They enjoy the program's focus on the sounds of birds and our waterways as well as the smells and textures of plant life. They feel comfortable walking in new parks because of the support they have from the guides, and they trust we have chosen trails that are safe for them. I am excited to continue working with BAO and the VIPs, so I hope you support this program.

Sincerely



Michael Hundt
Certified California Naturalist
Henry Coe State Park Activities Coordinator
BAO Volunteer VIP Hike Guide & Member of the Board of Advisors