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I am writing in support of the Santa Clara Valley Urban Forestry Alliance.

As a University of California Cooperative Extension Advisor specializing in urban forestry, I work on a diverse array of technical and policy issues affecting urban trees across Santa Clara County. I provide technical assistance to tree and landscape managers (city and county agencies, community-benefit groups, and individuals), and am thoroughly familiar with the benefits that urban trees provide – their important ecological functions (e.g., wildlife habitat), their valuable environmental services (e.g., shading, cooling, stormwater interception), their benefits to the economic vibrancy and even their positive impact on human health, both physical and psychological.

But urban trees are not “a given” - they require active planning, planting, and management to thrive. Similarly, the organizations and entities involved in their management (municipal agencies, park districts, community-benefit organizations, and others) greatly benefit from coordination, resource-sharing, and an increased profile that would come with County-level focus on urban forestry. These are just some of the functions that will be provided by the Santa Clara Valley Urban Forestry Alliance, to the benefit of all residents of the County.

I thus support the stated purpose and function of the Santa Clara Valley Urban Forestry Alliance and associated outreach. As I am able to, I will participate in the Alliance and associated outreach, and I know that there is significant value in organizing stakeholders to maximize resources and in increasing public awareness.

Additionally, I strongly support the County of Santa Clara’s grant request, as the requested funding would provide the opportunity to create an organization with permanent positive impacts on urban forestry in Santa Clara Valley and would lead to the increased public support for urban forestry, increased understanding of the benefits of urban trees and their management needs, and would directly contribute to increasing the sustainability and resilience of the County.

Please contact me if you have any questions, or wish to discuss this further.

Your sincerely,
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