

Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
Urban Grant Program Committee
33 Las Colinas Ln, San Jose, CA 95119

June 23, 2020

Dear OSA Grant Committee Members:

As a Program Manager for the Environmental Services Department for the City of San Jose, I write to support CommUniverCity SJSU's Urban Grant Program proposal for Growing Sustainably, submitted by the San Jose State University Research Foundation. Environmental Services has a five-year history of collaborating with SJSU students and faculty, working with them successfully on six projects that engaged well over 700 community members on illegal dumping and littering issues. Both our organizations share a common desire to educate and engage with youth and adults on environmental issues affecting our community.

As a member of CommUniverCity's Steering Committee I have observed first-hand the innovative practices they employed to promote community health, a local college going culture, and improved neighborhood infrastructure in Central San Jose's underserved neighborhoods. Their approach is effective at bringing to bear the resources of the City, the University, and resident leaders on high priority community issues. Two things that the community cares deeply about are having a quality education for their children and litter—both of which are addressed by Growing Sustainably.

The Growing Sustainably program inspires our youngest residents to lower their carbon footprint by learning to grow their own food. The Growing Sustainably Pollution Solutions lesson teaches students about the negative impacts of land litter on our creeks and streams and illustrates steps that can be taken to reduce trash entering our waterways. This content connects the proposed project's work directly to Environmental Service's goal of providing utility services that improve San Jose residents' health, environment, and economy. Our staff are happy to provide additional technical expertise on lesson content related to waste management as we have for previous CommUniverCity projects.

Sincerely,

Shikha Gupta, Sr. *Env Program Manager*
Integrated Waste Management Division
City of San José | Environmental Services Department