

Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority

33 Las Colinas Lane
San Jose, CA 95119

Attention: Megan Dreger, Grants Administrator

June 30, 2020

Dear Ms. Dreger,

We, members of the La Mesa Verde Advisory Committee, are writing in strong support of Sacred Heart Community Service's proposal for the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority's Urban Grant. The grant would benefit our existing and ever growing community of over 100 San Jose urban gardeners.

The La Mesa Verde Advisory Committee is composed of members that have been active in this program since 2009 to 2017. We commit our time as volunteers in this committee to ensure that LMV advances our power to build an alternative food system and to change our local food system through developing and facilitating core La Mesa Verde membership activities, such as gardening and political education workshops and the new member orientation.

As participants of this program, we know first hand the impact of growing food and the power our community of gardeners can have in influencing change. LMV is shaped around building leadership and fostering confidence in our members, not only as gardeners but as civically engaged members of our community. We have seen members become more confident in sharing their experiences and knowledge within our workshop settings as well as at City Hall. In 2017, over 30 LMV members came to share their personal testimonies during the Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone Ordinance vote. Our community showed up again in 2018-2019 to advocate for more growing spaces and affordable housing.

We fully support Sacred Heart's application to fund the La Mesa Verde program. We believe that Sacred Heart will help Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority achieve its goal of enhancing access to healthy food, through urban farms and gardens, and connecting a diverse community to green space. As one committee member put it, "When we learn to cultivate our own food we learn to value the environment even more. We need healthy environments where people can walk, play & move. If there is not a balance of park space this can impact people emotionally, spiritually & physically. Everything is connected."

Sincerely,



Sandi Taylor, LMV 2015



Ana Luna, LMV 2009

On behalf of the La Mesa Verde Advisory Committee