

NSCRCD Pre-Application to the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority's Urban Grant Program for a proposed new backyard conservation program.

Project Title: *GreenBackyards: Grow Wild. Grow Food. Build Climate Resilience.*

Project Abstract: GreenBackyards is a multilingual, community-driven natural resource conservation and urban agriculture education and technical assistance initiative designed to empower urban residents to transform their yards, patios, balconies, and shared spaces into climate-resilient, food-producing, and biodiversity-supporting landscapes. The program will provide hands-on workshops, site-specific consultations, and culturally appropriate educational toolkits to residents within the urban areas of northern Santa Clara County that also fall within the Santa Clara Valley Open Space District boundaries, and will include targeted outreach to underserved neighborhoods. Through branded visibility and a digital map showcasing completed projects, GreenBackyards will promote long-term individual environmental stewardship, neighborhood-scale engagement, and community networking. All proposed activities are non-capital in nature and will reinforce SCVOSA's goals for equity, climate adaptation, and environmental education.

Climate Resilience Strategy: The program directly supports climate resilience by reducing urban heat through increased native plant and canopy cover; encouraging composting and drought-tolerant practices to improve soil health and water efficiency; and fostering food self-sufficiency in neighborhoods vulnerable to climate and food system shocks. The "Grow Wild. Grow Food. Build Climate Resilience." campaign will further build awareness of climate-adaptive practices through local storytelling and participation.

Underserved Community Strategy: Priority outreach and services will be provided to park-poor, food-insecure, and linguistically isolated communities, using screening tools such as CalEnviroScreen, the Healthy Places Index, and Title I Schools data. Workshops and consultations will be delivered in multiple languages, including Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, and Vietnamese. Transportation support will be offered to increase accessibility for residents to attend workshops and trainings.

Project Impact:

- **Climate resilience:** Additional native cover and pollinator habitat to mitigate urban heat and support ecosystem health.
- **Water conservation:** Increased usage of efficient irrigation systems, rain gardens, composting, and drought-tolerant planting to reduce irrigation use.
- **Community engagement:** Enhanced environmental stewardship and food security at individual and neighborhood levels, especially in underserved areas.
- **Multilingual programming:** Improved access to program elements by offering services and publications in multiple languages, including Mandarin, Cantonese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Project Readiness: All activities are programmatic and will be ready to launch by Spring 2026, upon execution of the grant agreement. NSCRCD has experience implementing similar outreach and education initiatives, and possesses the staff capacity and technical expertise to deliver the proposed activities. Additionally, partnerships with local community-based organizations and local Tribal governments will be developed in order to collaborate on workshops, outreach, and translation.

Budget: Our estimated budget will be \$75,000 for this project.