



San Jose Parks Foundation

September 8, 2023

Board of Trustees

Steven H. Nakano
Attorney at Law
President

Cayce Hill
Veggielution
Treasurer

Ernest Azevedo
City of Salinas

Avi Yotam (Ex-Officio)
City of San Jose / PRNS

Ed Solis (Ex-Officio)
City of San Jose / PRNS

Rebecca Salner
Journalist/Editor (Ret)

Leticia Espino (Ex-Officio)
City of San Jose / PRNS

Trustee Emeritus

Ray Turner
Retired

Helen Chapman
City of San Jose

Matt Cano
City of San Jose

Partners & Projects

Abronzino Field House
Almaden Winery Park
Buena Vista Park
Butcher Dog Park
Community Mural Pocket Park
Downtown Enrichment
Erickson Park
Farmworker Caravan
Feed the Frontline SCCounty
Five Wounds Trail
Guadalupe Oak Grove Park
Hamann Park Mural
Japanese Friendship Garden
Keep Coyote Creek Beautiful
La Colina Park
Lake Cunningham Park
Martin-Fontana Parks Assoc.
Miner Park
Pueblo Play Playground
Roosevelt Park Roller Hockey Rink
San Jose Family Camp
San Jose Parks Advocates
Santa Teresa Bernal NA
Save Our Trails
Seven Trees - Project Kultoora
Sherman Oaks Playground
Sons Of San Jose Memorial
South Bay Clean Creeks Coalition
St. James Park
Theodore Lenzen Park
Thousand Oaks Park
United Veterans Council of SCC
Viva CalleSJ

James P. Reber
Founding Executive Director

Diana Dunckelmann
Finance

Dear Mayor Mahan:

Word is out that the Council will be deciding on some significant budget cuts and that the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) is a prime target of these cuts. It is also rumored that within PRNS, the **Viva Parks Program** and the **Viva CalleSJ** program are both being considered for significant cuts.

Cutting these programs would be a major mistake, but also a betrayal of the public trust. These two are among the most exemplary programs of community connectivity that the City of San Jose has. There is no program to equal Viva CalleSJ in terms of equity and inclusion, two principles that the City embraced and espoused in 2020 following the national outcry prompted by the death of George Floyd.

Viva Parks is also a strategic attempt by the City to level the playing field without cutting any populations out. There must be areas of the budget that do not hurt the gains that these programs have made in the diversity of populations participating in them.

Look harder and look elsewhere, but do not cut the legs out from under the two programs that have brought the community together in such a unique and fulfilling way. Thousands of people enjoy the free and open streets that **Viva CalleSJ** events bring.

Dozens of neighborhoods enjoy **Viva Parks**, a unique program of inclusion and equity that highlights the City's community connectedness.

Do not go backwards on core community values just to cut the budget. This would be the worst thing you could do.

Thank you.

James P. Reber
Executive Director

PS: PRNS sustained a 40% cut in budget in 2009-2010 when the economy dropped. Those cuts have never been fully restored. PRNS has improved service and gained community volunteer support. Slashing the PRNS budget again is truly unfair.