

Item 3.5 - Supervisor Sylvia Arenas Lake Cunningham Letter of Support

Lam01, Victoria <victoria.lam01@BOS.SCCGOV.ORG>

Fri 3/10/2023 4:54 PM

To: Taber, Toni <toni.taber@sanjoseca.gov>; Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: Arenas, Sylvia <sylvia.arenas@BOS.SCCGOV.ORG>; McGarrity, Patrick <patrick.mcgarrity@BOS.SCCGOV.ORG>; Le, Nancy (BOS) <nancy.l.le@bos.sccgov.org>

You don't often get email from victoria.lam01@bos.sccgov.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

[External Email]

Hi Toni & Agenda Desk,

Please see & post the attached letter of support from Supervisor Sylvia Arenas for Lake Cunningham under Item 3.5 for the upcoming City Council meeting. Thank you!

Best,

Victoria Lam (she/her)

Policy Aide

County of Santa Clara | Office of Supervisor Sylvia Arenas, District 1

70 West Hedding Street, East Wing, 10th Floor San Jose, CA 95110

O: (408) 299-5014 | E: victoria.lam01@bos.sccgov.org

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.



Sylvia Arenas
Santa Clara County Supervisor
District 1

Dear Mayor Matt Mahan, Vice Mayor Rosemary Kamei, and Honorable City Councilmembers,

As the former District 8 City of San José Councilmember and current District 1 Santa Clara County Supervisor, I write today to thank the administration and San José City Council for their diligent efforts to balance the competing needs in allocating Measure T funds. For the new Councilmembers who have taken office, I want to share some of the history of how we arrived in this predicament.

Council District 8 and Supervisorial District 1 is home to Lake Cunningham Regional Park. After years of deteriorating water quality at this lake, the lake was closed down – taking away 50-acres of open space, swimming, kayaking, boating, and more for children and families in East San José. In 2010, a comprehensive study requested by then Councilmember Dave Cortese, was completed that deeply researched the conditions of the lake and brought forward a comprehensive menu of potential solutions, as well as specific recommended actions. Unfortunately, funding had never been identified, so no substantial action was taken.

Looking at all the projects citywide that have been funded with Measure T funding, District 8 remains one of the Council Districts that has the lowest Measure T investments – which is why I have worked closely with the Office of the City Attorney and the Department of Public Works to ensure that Lake Cunningham is 100% eligible for Measure T funding from the Environmental and Flood Protection Project's category, and has been shared with the Council in each previous Measure T update.

In June 2020, the City Council voted unanimously to use any savings from Measure T's Environmental and Flood Protection Projects category to fund a local water quality project, particularly Lake Cunningham. Additionally – in June 2021, the City Council voted unanimously on my memo with Councilmembers Carrasco and Cohen to save the remaining \$3.2 million towards Lake Cunningham.

I take very seriously the need to find funding for Measure T's Public Safety Projects & we should not pit these very important needs against each other – which is why in June 2022, the City Council, once again, voted unanimously on my memo with Councilmembers Carrasco and Cohen to save the remaining \$3.2 million towards Lake Cunningham, while also ensuring that all four remaining fire stations are fully funded, whether through allocations of Measure T funding or through exploring alternate funding sources.

Taking immediate action to meet that commitment, Councilmember Carrasco and I authored a memo, adopted in the June budget, that led to the City Manager establishing and funding a \$3.8 million Fire Station and FF&E Reserve. Council has many additional tools at their disposal to continue to close the gap for Measure T public safety projects.

Every level of government must come together to save Lake Cunningham. As we dig deep into state and federal funding sources for East San José, the City also has an opportunity to address this inequity that exists in our most underserved neighborhoods. While the City of San José searches for grants, the \$3.2 million will be vital as a local match which can be leveraged against to find the remaining needed funds. I intend to remain a firm partner in this fight to revitalize Lake Cunningham.

I urge the Mayor and San José City Council to embrace systemic change and environmental justice by finally allocating the \$3.2 million in Measure T funding towards Lake Cunningham for our most underserved communities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office at District1@bos.sccgov.org or (408) 299-5010.

Sincerely,

Sylvia Arenas
Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, District 1