



County of Santa Clara
Board of Supervisors
Supervisorial District Four
Supervisor Susan Ellenberg

110904

DATE: May 18, 2022

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Susan Ellenberg, Supervisor

SUBJECT: Budget Inventory Item 42 – Octavia's Kitchen

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approve Inventory Item No. 42 to provide a grant to Octavia’s Kitchen in the amount of \$10,000 relating to providing meals for the unhoused, and refer item for final consideration and approval on June 16, 2022. (Ellenberg)

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There is a one-time cost of \$10,000.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The grant in the amount of \$10,000 is initiated by Vice President Ellenberg to be used to provide healthy meals and snacks to the unhoused population in San Jose, CA. The feeding program also serves senior citizens, veterans, the LGBTQ community, children and their families, people with disabilities, and anyone experiencing food insecurities. The program occurs every Friday at St. James Park in Downtown San Jose. Octavia’s Kitchen has a team of volunteers who come from different walks of life. They recruit volunteers who have experienced homelessness, have a history of incarceration, and have substance abuse disorders. Volunteers also help prepare and distribute hygiene kits.

CHILD IMPACT

The recommended action will have a positive impact on children.

SENIOR IMPACT

The recommended action will have a positive impact on seniors.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The recommended action will have neutral sustainability implications.

BACKGROUND

Octavia's Kitchen is a nonprofit organization established in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Like many Americans, Octavia was experiencing food insecurity after a job loss. She was connected to Hunger at Home and Loaves & Fishes and realized she could eat nutritious meals regularly. She began sharing some of the food she was receiving with the unhoused community living in Downtown San Jose. Within a month, she started cooking meals and serving them to the unhoused community in St. James Park twice a week.

In 2021, Octavia's Kitchen 25,000 meals to the unhoused population in Santa Clara County. Octavia's Kitchen can be classified as a mobile soup kitchen because they deliver and serve meals in areas of Santa Clara County that need food the most. There are four aspects of the program including the food, essential supplies, clothing, and bedding.

The unhoused population in the U.S. faces a greater risk for malnutrition due to alcoholism, drug abuse, and mental and physical illness (Koh, Bharel & Henderson, 2016). Therefore, the nutrition of the unhoused population is a pressing public health issue (Koh, Bharel & Henderson, 2016). Homeless shelters and soup kitchens are the first-place unhoused individuals go for food (Koh, Bharel & Henderson, 2016). Soup kitchens are known to be social safety nets where the lives of underserved communities can improve. Although, soup kitchens can be a link to improving food access among people who experience food insecurity (Koh, Bharel & Henderson, 2016).

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

County staff will contact grantee to execute agreement and distribute funds.