

DATE, XX, 2023

Sofia Goss
California Department of Food and Agriculture
1220 N St.
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for San Mateo County application for the CDFA Community Resilience Centers Program

Dear Ms. Goss,

The San Mateo County Exposition and Fair Association Board strongly supports San Mateo County's application for the CDFA Community Resilience Center Program. Samaritan House is one of San Mateo's leading nonprofits, the largest food distribution agency in the County, and is recognized as a role model in the community. Samaritan House offers free services and resources to more than 14,000 low-income and homeless San Mateo County residents in need, including families with children, seniors, individuals living with a disability, veterans, and homeless adults.

The San Mateo County Event Center and Fairgrounds is a unique asset in San Mateo County and regionwide is known as the predominate countywide resource site for all types of emergency services from emergency preparedness trainings, year-round food distribution for food insecure community members, Coronavirus response to sheltering people during emergencies. The County Event Center and Fairgrounds have provided the location for critical services to the entire County during many recent disasters, such as the CZU fire, the pandemic, and the recent California storm emergency. The San Mateo County Event Center and Fairgrounds is the designated evacuation site for San Mateo County Cordilleras Mental Health Center and can accommodate additional emergency response for the County.

The CDFA Community Resilience Centers Program application includes San Mateo County partnering with Samaritan House and the San Mateo Exposition and Fair Association to construct, operate, and maintain 6,700 sq. ft. of community kitchen space connecting to an existing 14,000-sq—ft, building at the Center. The project would also connect to a parking lot, allowing drive-up food service distribution year-round for our underserved community and meal service during times of needed emergency response. The site is situated near many public transportation routes, including two blocks from a Caltrain station and other public transportation, providing maximum accessibility. If awarded these grant funds, Samaritan house would be able to expand its operations, which are currently inadequate to address the volume of need in the community.

The community kitchen would be operated and maintained by Samaritan House, our predominant local nonprofit servicing our food and home-insecure community members. The project aligns with the purpose of the Community Resilience Centers (CRC) Program, which focuses on improving

community facilities to enhance the state's emergency preparedness capabilities, particularly in response to climate change.

As outlined in the San Mateo County Multijurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, climate change, drought, earthquakes, floods, landslides, severe weather, tsunamis, wildfires, and dam failures have exposed San Mateo County community members and businesses to the financial and emotional costs of recovering after natural disasters. The proposed project would expand the services the County and Samaritan House can provide and increase the critical infrastructure and resources needed to support our underserved community members year-round and the region in the event of climate disasters and emergencies.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]

[Signature]