SUFA Meeting Minutes
October 12, 2026

In attendance: Kathy Meagher, Debbie Schmalz, Jenny Puroshotma, and John Patton

Treasurer's Report: Current balance: $404.32.

Orchard Heritage Park Study (DPW 17-05)
Street Tree Repopulation with an Equity Lens Update (Formerly DPW 22-04)
VTA Free Tree Program
Update on the Butcher's Corner Valley Oak
There were no updates on any of the above four studies/programs.

Artificial Turf Study: The study is considered complete. No new official policies regarding artificial turf were established so the process has not changed - decisions will be made on a park-by-park basis. Natural grass is the preferred option, but a decision tree will be used for each park as it comes up for updates. Considerations include environmental and public health, field playing capacity and reliability, lifecycle and cost-per-use, and impact on existing park operations. Ortega Park will be updated in 2032 and will require community meetings to debate natural grass vs. artificial turf at that time. Other proposals include establishing heat guidelines for artificial turf and new maintenance guidelines for natural grass.

Council Priority Project DPW 24-08: **Feasibility of Converting PG&E-Owned Lots Facing Ramona Avenue, Lois Avenue, and/or Dona Avenue into an Open Green Space**: The study is considered complete. PG&E is upgrading some equipment at the site and has not committed to a completion date. Whether that property will be available to use is unknown. This may be revisited at some point.

Sunnyvale Sister City Tree Plantings: Cherry tree donations and plantings will be paused within a few months. It was unclear, but there may be one more planting. Both the city of Iizuka and the city of Sunnyvale requested the pause and they will focus on other projects. Mary suggested that they consider other types of Japanese trees (Zelkova, pine, cedar, etc.) if they resume the tree plantings at some point.

Our City Forest (OCF) Gala Review: Jenny attended this event on behalf of SUFA and carpooled with Councilmember Linda Sell and former mayor Julia Miller. Jenny was seated at the table next to Ian MacLeod, manager of the OCF Nursery. Tribute was made to Rhonda Berry for her 30 plus years of work as head of OCF and funds were raised for the organization. Jenny was able to learn a lot about OCF as well as provide a presence for SUFA at the gathering.

Community Tree Plantings:

- October 17, 2026 at City Hall; 9am-12pm
- October 24, 2026 at Fair Oaks Park and Neighborhood; 9am-12pm

John and Kathy confirmed that they will be at the City Hall Planting. Mary, Jenny, and John will attend the Fair Oaks planting. Kathy will resend the original email tomorrow as a reminder. Both plantings are sold out on Eventbrite but an addendum will be added to the email indicating that walk-ins are welcome to attend.

Outreach to Neighborhood Associations: SUFA has been penciled in for a presentation at the February Neighborhood Association meeting. It was suggested that John mention:

- The SNAIL grant proposal involving trees as a template that other associations might wish to follow.
- The idea that other associations might wish to have a liaison to SUFA as SNAIL does with Jenny.

Fall Newsletter: Kathy will be out of town from October 27th until November 12th so the fall quarterly newsletter will go out a couple of weeks later than usual.
Suggested articles:

- OCF Gala
- City Hall/Fair Oaks Park tree plantings
- Upcoming Library series on local food systems and food co-ops

New Business:

- **Library Promotional Request**: There has been a request from Jack Niggli, Sustainability Librarian, that SUFA publicize an upcoming Library series on local food systems, its challenges, as well as community-led innovations in food and agriculture put on by the South Bay Food Justice Collaborative. The first presentation (on Zoom) will be Tuesday, October 27th at 6pm. Mary has added the info to the SUFA website but this first in a series of presentations will be before the Fall newsletter goes out.

- **SNAIL Neighborhood Tree Grant**: Jenny and SNAIL president, Valerie Suares, have written a 2027 grant proposal for the SNAIL Neighborhood Association asking for $500 for a tree event to be co-sponsored by SUFA. The grant calls for the obtaining some trees from the free tree program offered by Our City Forest (OCF) and the VTA, as well as the purchase of additional trees with the grant money. Priority will be given to elderly and disabled residents and a team of volunteers will do some yard work for them as well as planting the tree. It is also planned to have SUFA provide educational material for recipients and volunteers on how to care for the trees.

Next Meeting: Monday, November 9, 7pm.