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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA AWARDED \$716K FOR URBAN GREENING PROJECT IN NEW CUYAMA

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) –The County of Santa Barbara’s Community Services Department (CSD) will receive \$716,000 from the state’s California Natural Resources Agency to enhance existing park space in the Cuyama Valley. The New Cuyama Greenway Project proposal was one of twenty projects selected for funding to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and provide other environmental and community benefits.

"The Cuyama Valley is a unique and critical location to receive funding from the Natural Resources Agency. It is a rural and isolated place where the effects of climate change make themselves apparent every day," said Supervisor Das Williams, who represents the Cuyama Valley. "This is an incredible opportunity for the families to experience shade and cleaner air without putting their already depleted water table at further risk."

The project includes two adjacent parks—Richardson Park, owned by the County of Santa Barbara, and the Cuyama Valley Recreation Complex, owned by the Cuyama Valley Recreation District. The project includes installation of a pedestrian pathway that will connect the community to key resources, such as the Family Resource Center, and encourages walking rather than driving. The project will also plant drought-tolerant trees throughout the project site and along the planned pedestrian pathway to sequester carbon and reduce GHG emissions. As an added benefit, the shade provided by the trees will keep the park usable for a greater part of the year and allow residents more opportunities for physical activity, socialization and community gatherings.

The project was led by CSD’s Sustainability Division in collaboration with the Parks Division; the Cuyama Valley Recreation District; and local non-profits who support the proposed project. Projects must be completed by May 2021.

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Project funding is made possible by Cap-and-Trade revenues, also known as the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. Ninety-eight percent of the funding was awarded to projects located within and benefitting priority populations such as disadvantaged and low-income communities as defined by AB 1550 of 2016. The three population centers served by the project, Ventucopa, Cuyama and New Cuyama, are all designated as low-income communities.