GREEN CITY GROWERS

Thursday, November 20, 2025

Dr Gaolach,

My name is Christopher Grallert and I am CEO of Green City Growers based in Somerville, Massachusetts. We are a major force in the industry sector referred to as Farming as a Service. Currently, GCG manages over 180 active farms and gardens in New England and beyond, including at public schools, at corporate office parks, at hospitals, senior centers, and residential complexes. We build the infrastructure as well as maintain and programmatically activate each location, teaching agricultural literacy and food systems capacity building. Green City Growers is an employee owned, certified Benefit Corporation.

The proposed project, Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities, has a breadth of support services that would help our organization in supporting the expansion of a localized, short supply chain food systems. If funded, we would actively participate in and benefit from.

- Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs) that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS) and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.
- Use a data archiving and sharing platform that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to a Urban Research Repository that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.
- Participate in professional development and training in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.
- Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities, including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER P. GRALLERT

Christopher P. Grallert
CEO

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION

1200 17th St NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20036

November 24, 2025

Dear Dr. Gaolach,

The Landscape Architecture Foundation (LAF) is a nonprofit organization based in Washington, DC and its mission is to support the preservation, improvement and enhancement of the environment. LAF does this by investing in research, scholarship, and leadership to increase the collective capacity of landscape architects and other designers of the built environment to achieve sustainability.

Our primary research focus is on landscape performance: the evaluation and documentation of quantified environmental, social, and economic benefits of sustainable landscape solutions. Our award-winning *Landscape Performance Series* is an online set of resources to help designers, agencies, and advocates evaluate performance, share best practices, and make the case for sustainable landscape solutions. The database of over 210 Case Study Briefs of built projects with quantified performance benefits, 215 Fast Facts from published research, and over 30 tools and calculators to estimate performance is visited by over one hundred thousand users per year. This includes research and data on a wide range of nature-based solutions as well as information pertaining to urban agriculture and food systems and green infrastructure.

This proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities,* has a breadth of support services that would help my organization in disseminating high quality research related to urban resiliency that would be of great value to our audience of landscape architects and others interested in the sustainability of the exterior built environment. If funded, LAF would participate in and benefit from:

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders like my organization across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS) and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.

- **Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities,** including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas

I look forward to the success of this application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

Megan Barnes
Sr. Program Manager
Landscape Architecture Foundation

SCHOLARS
STRATEGY NETWORK

Dear Dr. Brad Gaolach,

I am writing on behalf of the Scholars Strategy Network (SSN), a national membership organization made up of college- and university-based researchers interested in using research to improve public policy in the United States. Over the past 14 years, SSN has grown into a network of over 2,000 researchers in 47 states. SSN members organize themselves into state and regional chapters, working to advance the use of research wherever policy decisions are made. Our scholars regularly contribute their research to inform debates related to public health, food systems, and urban ecosystems.

Your proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities,* offers a breadth of support services that would help SSN members conduct high quality research related to urban resiliency and then share those findings with key practitioners and policymakers. If funded, SSN members would actively participate in the project in a number of ways, including:

- Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs) that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas outlined in the application
- Participating in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities, including working groups to address knowledge gaps between policy actors, practitioners, and scholars and workshops to facilitate acceleration of research to action on emerging ideas

In addition to the participation of SSN members with the project, the SSN national staff would offer public engagement training for participants. The training program emphasizes generalizable and repeatable skills that help participants communicate their research and its significance to policy, media, and practitioner audiences. The final training options will ultimately depend on the participants, but will include:

- Policy-focused sessions that help participants identify how to move from scholarly research to policy recommendations, how to identify relevant policymakers and build a relationship with them, and how to write persuasively for policy audiences
- Media-focused workshops that equip participants with the skills necessary to share their research with reporters through media interviews and how to disseminate their findings by successfully writing and pitching op-eds

By pairing the research support described in the project with policy and media professional development opportunities, the project as a whole promises to boost the capacity of researchers to build meaningful relationships with diverse stakeholders, conduct more relevant research, and share that research with a range of audiences so that it has an impact.

I look forward to the success of your application and working on this project together.

Sincerely,

Andrew Pope, PhD
Director of Policy, Scholars Strategy Network

NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES
A CENTURY OF STRENGTHENING CITIES

December 2, 2025

Dr. Brad Gaolach
Director, National Urban Research and Extension Center
Washington State University – Everett
915 N. Broadway
Everett, WA 98201

Dear Dr. Gaolach,

On behalf of the nation's 19,000 cities, towns and villages, the National League of Cities (NLC) supports local leaders to improve the quality of life for their current and future constituents.

The National Urban Research and Extension Center's proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities,* aligns with NLC's efforts in supporting cities to adapt to climate change and build community resilience through green infrastructure and other nature-based solutions (NbS).

If funded, NLC would participate in and benefit from the following activities:

- **Promote national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas, including urban agriculture and food systems, NbS and urban ecosystem services, to co-create research agendas and share best practices.
- **Pilot a data archiving and sharing platform** that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to an **Urban Research Repository** that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.
- **Participate in professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.
- **Support Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities,** including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas.

We look forward to the success of your application and to your ability to start participating in this project's activities. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to Christine Baker-Smith, PhD, Director of Research at baker-smith@nlc.org.

Sincerely,

Clarence E. Anthony
CEO and Executive Director

December 4, 2024

RE: Letter of Support for the *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities*

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability USA

1536 Wynkoop Street #901
Denver, Colorado 80202

Phone: (510) 844-0699
Email: icle-usai@iclei.org
Web: icleiusa.org

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is a global network of more than 1,750 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development.

Dr Gaolach,

I am writing this letter of support on behalf of ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability USA (ICLEI USA). For over 34 years, ICLEI USA has been the largest and longest-established network of local governments committed to sustainability and climate action. With a national network including nearly 400 local governments and Tribal nations across 49 states, ICLEI USA supports local governments as they pursue their priorities across five sustainable development pathways: zero emissions, nature, equity, resilience, and circular economy. Since 1991, ICLEI USA has served as an affiliate office of the global ICLEI network, operating as an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit while being a part of a community of more than 2,500 local and regional governments in 125+ countries.

Local governments in the ICLEI USA network are leading efforts to implement nature-based solutions that contribute to their sustainable development and resilience goals. They need practical tools to help them understand the climate benefits they can deliver through green infrastructure, urban forestry, and urban agricultural initiatives - including carbon removal, risk reduction, food security, water and air quality improvements and more.

The proposed project, Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities, has a breadth of support services that would help our network of leading local governments implement solutions informed by high quality research related to urban resiliency. If funded, ICLEI USA would benefit from the ability to connect the local practitioners in our network with leading researchers and the research products developed through this grant, as follows:

- ICLEI USA would participate in the national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs) designed to connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS) and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.

- We would use the data archiving and sharing platform that includes an interactive “Urban Map Room” that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to the Urban Research Repository to share local use cases of how data is being deployed to support local urban resiliency initiatives.

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

Jess Grannis
Director of Programs
ICLEI- Local Governments for Sustainability - USA
Jess.Grannis@iclei.org

October 11, 2024

MEMORANDUM:

To: Whom it may concern

From: Katherine R. Williams, Chair, National Urban Extension Leaders,
NC State Extension, Wake County Extension Director

The National Urban Extension Leaders (NUEL) are excited to provide a letter of support for the National Research Support Project (NRSP) *Building Collaborative Research and Extension Networks to Advance the Research & Application of Science with Urban Communities*, administered by the National Urban Research & Extension Center (NUREC) and its director, Dr. Brad Gaolach.

NUEL provides Program Leadership nationally to advance the strategic importance and long-term value of Cooperative Extension in urban communities. Our reach is broad, includes all regions of the country and more than 1600 professionals through our Connect Extension Urban Network. NUEL hosts annual professional development conferences promoting scholarship at the National or Regional level. NUREC is an important strategic partner, working specifically to advance external partnerships and to leverage LGU expertise through integrated research initiatives.

As Extension leaders in urban communities, we understand and value the research capabilities that our land grant institutions offer to drive positive transformation across our 5 focus areas: Feeding our Future, Enriching Our Youth, Improving our Health, Protecting our Environment and Strengthening our Communities. As Extension professionals we work very closely with municipal, county and state leaders in our urban centers to deploy community-led, data-driven and research informed solutions. We often serve as convenors, who are trusted by grassroots leaders and community partners to drive policy change. We are charged with the mission of offering critical services and research-based educational programs that are relevant to the needs of our people and communities. We understand that urban

residents, organizations and policy makers are often overwhelmed with many voices and demands they encounter; making cross sector collaboration important, complex and difficult to sustain.

Urban Extension leaders are positioned with extensive networks in communities, with relationships to emerging grassroots leadership, established business & industry leaders as well as with allied organizations. Moreover, we are challenged, as an Extension system to evaluate programs and collect data establishing the impact of our efforts; resources that are inherently more accessible through research integrated initiatives. Our Land Grant Universities, leveraging an intentionally integrated Extension & Research capability, has an unparalleled opportunity to partner with local communities for enhanced impact.

NUEL is proud to support this proposal to help us build new pathways to connect with faculty and specialists in more meaningful and more intentional ways. We will provide a member of our Executive Leadership Team to serve as an Advisory Committee member for this project and are willing to work with NUREC leadership to host a dedicated track during or adjacent to our National Urban Extension Conference to highlight research, outcomes and integrated efforts underway for the 450+ professionals who attend.

We look forward to the opportunity to work together on a shared agenda that integrates both the research and extension capabilities in our Land Grant universities to enhance the future of all.

December 8, 2025

Dr. Gaolach,

I am a PhD Candidate in Environmental and Natural Resource Sciences at WSU Vancouver, a consulting arborist certified as an Urban Forest Professional by the International Society of Arboriculture, and a former Environmental Technician with the City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services. My transition from city employee to PhD student was in part fueled by a desire to better understand and help to address the knowledge gap I saw between applied green infrastructure work and most current research. I have observed directly the dilemma that cities have the interest, need, and potential funds to implement green infrastructure projects but lack the technical expertise to adapt projects to local conditions, or the mission orientation to monitor their projects, learn from them, and share their findings in a systematic way. Cities will sometimes turn to consultants to fill knowledge gaps, but consultants themselves are not always up to date on the most current science, nor does this solve the need for long-term monitoring and high quality, systematic research. There is a logical and much-needed role for Extension here to connect urban practitioners with researchers and researchers with real-life projects and useful contexts for their research. I especially see a need for 1) increased understanding of the conditions of urban soils in supporting plant life and microbial communities on which nature-based solutions (green infrastructure) fundamentally rely; and 2) coordinating monitoring and research agendas between small, more resource and expertise-limited municipalities at a state/regional scale.

The proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities,* offers a range of support services that would have helped me both in my former role as an urban green infrastructure technician and as an early-stage PhD student. Looking forward to my career following the completion of my degree, I am heartened that I might be able to contribute to such a network. My post-degree career is not yet set, so I can imagine multiple ways to stay involved. If funded, I would actively:

- **Co-create research agendas and share best practices in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** as a researcher, Extension professional, or urban stakeholder (municipal employee or consultant), especially in the key focus areas of nature-based solutions and urban ecosystem services.
- **Participate in or help to design and deliver professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.
- **Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities,** including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

LEA WILSON
PHD CANDIDATE
School of the Environment
Washington State University – Vancouver

ISA Certified Arborist, PN-8204AM
ISA Certified Urban Forestry Professional
ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualified

Phone: 971-319-2637
Email: lea.wilson@wsu.edu

November 25, 2025

Dear Dr. Gaolach,

I am writing to confirm my support and enthusiasm for the proposed NRSP project entitled "*Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities."* I serve as Associate Director of Healthy Living for the Institute for Advancing Health Through Agriculture (IHA) at Texas A&M AgriLife Research.

The IHA is the world's first academic institute to bring together precision nutrition, responsive agriculture, and social and behavioral healthy living research. Uniquely, the Healthy Living arm of IHA encompasses expertise in community engagement, Extension and outreach, and clinical-community partnerships in research. This project is well-matched to our focus areas as it relates to urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS), and urban ecosystem services. If funded, I would actively participate in activities related to urban resiliency. In particular, I would be involved in:

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS), and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.
- **Using a data archiving and sharing platform** that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and using and contributing to an Urban Research Repository that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.
- **Supporting professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.

I look forward to the opportunity to participate in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

Rebecca A. Seguin-Fowler, PhD, RDN, LD, CSCS

***Rebecca A. Seguin-Fowler**, PhD, RDN, LD, CSCS, Associate Director, Institute for Advancing Health Through Agriculture (IHA)*
Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Norman E. Borlaug Building, 498 Olsen Blvd, College Station, TX 77843

November 18, 2025

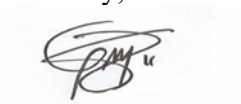
Dear Dr. Gaolach:

I am pleased to write this support letter for the proposed NRSP project entitled "*Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities."* This project is a good match to ongoing efforts at the Human Behavior Lab in collaboration with colleagues in the School of Public Health and the Institute for Advancing Health through Agriculture. If funded, I would actively participate in activities related to human behavior. More specifically, I would be involved in:

- **National Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS) and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.
- **Professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,



Dr. Marco A. Palma
Professor, Department of Agricultural Economics
Director, Human Behavior Laboratory
Presidential Impact Fellow
IHA Associate Director
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843-2124
Office (979) 845-5284
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E-mail: mapalma@tamu.edu
http://hbl.tamu.edu

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences
Center for Urban Agriculture

Monday December 15, 2025

Dr. Brad Gaolach
Director, National Urban Research & Extension Center
WSU Everett
915 N. Broadway
Everett, WA 98201

Dr. Gaolach,

On behalf of the University of Georgia Center for Urban Agriculture, I am pleased to provide strong support for the proposed National Research Support Project: "Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities". The Center for Urban Agriculture works across Georgia and the Southeast to support urban agriculture and food systems, green industry professionals, and communities implementing ecological solutions and green infrastructure with particular emphasis on urban soils, water conservation, and sustainable landscape management.

This project's focus on building integrated research networks, shared data infrastructure, and professional development for urban-focused scientists and Extension professionals aligns closely with our mission and current programming. The breadth of support services envisioned in this proposal would significantly strengthen our ability and that of our partners to conduct high-quality, collaborative research that addresses urban resiliency and municipal decision-making needs.

If funded, the Center for Urban Agriculture would actively participate in and benefit from the following activities: Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs) that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across topic areas such as urban agriculture and food systems, ecological-based solutions, and urban ecosystem services including our ongoing work in urban soils, turf and ornamentals, and green infrastructure.

Using and contributing to the proposed data including archiving and sharing platforms such as the interactive "Urban Map Room" and the Urban Research Repository would assist to support development of new projects and to disseminate our applied research, tools, and educational resources related to urban resilience.

Engaging in professional development and training in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches would directly benefit our faculty, Extension agents, and partners working in diverse urban communities. Joining in research synthesis and acceleration activities including synthesis working groups and proposal development workshops will help address knowledge gaps and accelerate collaborative multi-city initiatives that inform policy and practice.

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences
Center for Urban Agriculture

The Center for Urban Agriculture views this project as a timely and critical step in further expanding the land-grant research and Extension reach to better serve urban communities nationwide. We look forward to the success of your application and the opportunity to participate in and contribute to the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

Bethany Harris

Bethany Harris, PhD
Director of Center for Urban Agriculture
The University of Georgia

UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, URBAN SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Office of the Dean

January 9, 2026

Dr. Brad Gaolach
Director, National Urban Research & Extension Center
Washington State University
Email: gaolach@wsu.edu

Re: Letter of Support for USDA Hatch Multi-State NRSP Proposal

Dear Dr. Gaolach:

I am writing to express our strong support for the proposed National Research Support Project (NRSP) titled *"Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities."* As Dean of the College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences (CAUSES) at the University of the District of Columbia (UDC), I recognize the critical importance of this initiative to the future of land-grant university research and Extension.

The demographic reality you have outlined—that over 80% of Americans now live in metropolitan areas—represents both a challenge and an opportunity for our land-grant system. While our institutions were founded to serve a predominantly rural nation, we must now evolve to address the complex needs of urban communities. This NRSP proposal provides essential infrastructure to facilitate that evolution.

Value and Impact
This project addresses a significant gap in our national research infrastructure. The proposed activities—creating Integrated Research Networks, developing shared data resources, and providing professional development—will enable researchers and Extension professionals across the country to work more effectively in urban contexts. The collaborative, systems-based approach is particularly valuable, as urban challenges rarely respect disciplinary boundaries.

Benefits to UMass Researchers and Extension
Our faculty and Extension professionals at UDC would directly benefit from participation in this NRSP through:

- **Enhanced collaboration** with researchers at other institutions working on similar urban challenges in food systems, urban agriculture, and ecosystem services
- **Access to shared data infrastructure,** including the Urban Map Room and Urban Research Repository, which would amplify the impact of our research and reduce duplication of effort

- **Professional development opportunities** that would strengthen our capacity to engage meaningfully with urban communities and municipal decision-makers
- **Alignment of research outputs** with real-world urban needs, increasing the relevance and application of our scholarship

Commitment

Should this proposal be funded, I am confident that our faculty and Extension professionals would actively participate in the Integrated Research Networks and contribute to the shared resources and collaborative research agendas. We are committed to advancing science that serves all communities, urban and rural alike.

Thank you for your leadership on this important initiative. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any additional information to support this proposal.

Sincerely,

Dwane Jones, Ph.D.
Dean of CAUSES
University of the District of Columbia
Dwane.jones@udc.edu

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Agriculture
Department of Horticulture,
and Natural Resources

December 12, 2025

Dr. Brad Gaolach
Director, National Urban Research & Extension Center
Washington State University
gaolach@wsu.edu

Dear Dr. Gaolach,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed National Research Support Project, **Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities**. As a faculty member at Kansas State University and Director of the Urban Food Systems Initiative, my research, teaching, and outreach efforts focus on **urban agriculture and food systems**, postharvest management, and community-engaged approaches that advance resilient and equitable urban food environments. This project's goals are strongly aligned with the needs and opportunities we encounter in our work across the Kansas City metropolitan region and in national collaborations.

The proposed NRSP offers an opportunity to support and elevate high-quality scholarship that responds to the complexity of urban systems. If funded, my team and I would actively participate in and benefit from the project's activities, including:

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders to co-develop research agendas in priority areas such as urban agriculture, food systems resilience, nature-based solutions, and urban ecosystem services.
- **Utilizing and contributing to the national data infrastructure**, including the interactive *Urban Map Room* and the *Urban Research Repository*, to support new research, share methods, and enhance comparative studies across cities.
- **Engaging in professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research—all essential capacities for researchers working in complex urban environments.
- **Participating in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities**, including synthesis working groups, collaborative proposal development, and forums aimed at addressing knowledge gaps and accelerating multi-institutional research partnerships.

The goals of this NRSP align closely with ongoing efforts at Kansas State University to build a **Center of Excellence in Urban Food Systems**. I see a strong synergy between the proposed Integrated Research Networks and our transdisciplinary collaborations across multiple institutions and community partners. The NRSP would directly enhance our capacity to conduct

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Agriculture
Department of Horticulture,
and Natural Resources

high-impact, community-engaged scholarship while contributing to a national framework for supporting urban-serving research across the land-grant system.

I fully support this proposal and look forward to the opportunity to participate in its activities should it be funded.

Sincerely,

Eleni D. Pliakoni, Ph.D.
Professor of Urban Food Production and Postharvest Handling
Director of the Urban Food Systems Initiative
Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources
K-State Olathe
22201 W. Innovation Dr.
Olathe, KS 66061
Phone: (913) 307-7370
epliakoni@ksu.edu

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Cooperative Extension

Office of the Associate Vice President & Director

1140 E. South Campus Dr., Tucson, AZ 85721 • Phone: (520) 621-7205 • Fax: (520) 621-1314 • extension.arizona.edu

November 21, 2025

Dear Dr. Gaolach,

My name is Dr. Edward Martin, Associate Vice President and Director of the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension. Although Extension addresses many issues, one of our key topics is urban agriculture. In fact, this year, UA Cooperative Extension established a new Center for Urban Smart Agriculture at the Maricopa County Cooperative Extension Office. Serving the fourth-largest populated county in the United States, the new center focuses on issues related to the establishment and success of small and beginning urban food systems, including business plans and production practices in urban-center populations.

The proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities,* has a breadth of support services that would help me/my lab/my organization in conducting high quality research related to urban resiliency. If funded, I/we would actively participate in and benefit from.

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS) and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.
- **Use a data archiving and sharing platform** that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to a **Urban Research Repository** that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.
- **Participate in professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.
- **Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities,** including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

Edward C. Martin, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President and Director
UArizona Cooperative Extension
Division of Agriculture, Life, & Veterinary Sciences, and Cooperative Extension

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Cooperative Extension
Maricopa County

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
Center for Urban
Smart Agriculture

Office of the Director

4341 E. Broadway Road - Phoenix AZ 85040-8807 - Phone: 602-827-8200 - Fax: 602-827-8292
http://extension.arizona.edu/maricopa - https://extension.arizona.edu/center-urban-smart-agriculture

November 29, 2025

TO: Dr. Brad Gaolach

FROM: Dr. Ayman Mostafa

SUBJECT Letter/Memo of Collaboration as Co-Principal Investigator

Dear Dr. Gaolach,

As Director of **Maricopa County Cooperative Extension (MCCE)** and **the University of Arizona Center for Urban Smart Agriculture (UA-CUSA)**, I lead these two Departments with a vision to advocate for and support the development, adoption, and implementation of science-based solutions to the unique challenges facing agriculture and food production in urban areas of Arizona and beyond. The UA-CUSA and MCCE facilitate a process to identify environmental, socioeconomic, and political challenges and opportunities that shape the development of urban smart agriculture in Arizona. We engage stakeholders by providing opportunities for applied research and education in urban smart agriculture tailored to their needs and challenges, facilitating collaborations, and increasing the adoption of sustainable, nature-based practices and solutions in the Sonoran Desert. We are collaborating with the University of Arizona faculty and institutions to find science-based solutions to client-identified issues. The two departments are reaching out to thousands of urban agriculture, small-scale, and beginning farmer communities, relevant academic and professional collaborators, government and industry representatives, and graduate and undergraduate students interested in this area.

The proposed project, ***Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities***, includes a wide range of support services to assist the teams at UA-CUSA and MCCE in conducting high-quality research on urban resiliency. If funded, I/we would actively participate in and benefit from:

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key areas—including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS), and urban ecosystem services—with a focus on urban soils and green infrastructure to develop research agendas and share best practices.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Cooperative Extension
Maricopa County

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
Center for Urban
Smart Agriculture

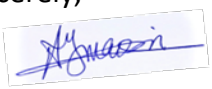
Office of the Director

4341 E. Broadway Road - Phoenix AZ 85040-8807 - Phone: 602-827-8200 - Fax: 602-827-8292
http://extension.arizona.edu/maricopa - https://extension.arizona.edu/center-urban-smart-agriculture

- **Use a data archiving and sharing platform** that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to an **Urban Research Repository** that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency. UA-CUSA has built a substantial needs-assessment database over the past four years, highlighting issues of significant concern to the relevant community in Arizona. These needs assessment surveys could help identify research topics and connect them with appropriate researchers.
- **Participate in professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.
- **Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities,** including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs, and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to begin participating in this project's activities.

Sincerely,



Ayman M. Mostafa, Ph.D.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Arizona Institute for Resilience

ARIZONA INSTITUTE FOR RESILIENCE
Environment & Natural Resources 2
1064 E. Lowell Street
PO Box 210137
Tucson, AZ 85721-0137
Ofc: 520-626-4345
air.arizona.edu

December 5, 2025

Dr. Brad Gaolach
Director, Metropolitan Center for Applied Research & Extension
Washington State University
Everett, WA 98201

Dr Gaolach,

As Director of the Arizona Institute for Resilience at the University of Arizona, I support inter- and transdisciplinary research focused on societal and environmental resilience to environmental change. Several of our Institute's researchers engage with city and county partners to develop solutions for green stormwater infrastructure, biodiversity conservation, and restoration of degraded landscapes.

The proposed project, Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities, has a breadth of support services that would help our Institute in conducting high quality research related to urban resiliency. If funded, our researchers would be enthusiastic about participating in and benefitting from this research network in the following ways:

- Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs) that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS) and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.

- Use a data archiving and sharing platform that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to an Urban Research Repository that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.

- Participate in professional development and training in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.

- Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities, including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

Sharon K. Collinge
Director, Arizona Institute for Resilience
University of Arizona

Department of Horticulture
Oregon State University
4017 Agricultural and
Life Sciences Building
Corvallis, Oregon, 97331

P 541-737-5175 | **F** 541-737-3479
gail.langellotto@oregonstate.edu

11/25/2025

Dr Gaolach,

My Gail Langellotto, and I am a Professor of Horticulture at Oregon State University, where I also Direct the BioResource Research (BRR) Program and serve as Principal Investigator for the Garden Ecology Lab.

BRR is a unique undergraduate major, where students complete 600-800 hours of research, write an undergraduate thesis, and present and defend their research to a faculty committee. Because of the hands-on, highly mentored nature of our program, our students go on to great success upon graduation, including enrollment in highly selective M.D./Ph.D. programs and selection for highly competitive graduate fellowships (e.g. NSF, NIH). Unlike other undergraduate research programs at OSU, BRR is open and accessible to all: we do not require a minimum GPA or payment of additional fees in order to participate.

The Garden Ecology Lab studies garden habitats as a socio-ecological system, with relevance to nature-based solutions, urban ecosystem services, and urban agriculture and food systems. We have several studies of urban soils, microbes, plants, and invertebrates published or in process, with a focus on how garden-level biodiversity translates to ecosystem services and urban resiliency.

Your proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities,* has a breadth of support services that would help me in conducting high quality research related to urban resiliency. If funded, I/we would actively participate in and benefit from:

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS) and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.
- **Use a data archiving and sharing platform** that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to a **Urban Research Repository** that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.
- **Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities,** including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

Gail A. Langellotto, Ph.D.
Professor of Horticulture

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

January 6, 2026

Dear Dr. Gaolach,

On behalf of the Michigan State University - Detroit Partnership for Food, Learning, and Innovation (DPFLI), I express support for the proposed project *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities*. The project offers broad and important services that would help my team, and network, conduct high quality research related to urban resiliency. As director of the DPFLI, I direct an urban agriculture center in Detroit.

The 3.3-acre facility conducts research and programs to improve the quality of life for Michigan residents and urban farmers. If funded, my team would participate in and benefit from:

- National Integrated Research Networks (IRNs) that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across the project's key topic areas, namely, urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS), and urban ecosystem services, to co-create research agendas and share best practices
- A data archiving and sharing platform with an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects, and an Urban Research Repository that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency
- Professional development and training in systems thinking, resilience planning, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts
- Research synthesis and acceleration activities, including synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs, and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas.

I look forward to the success of your application and the opportunity to work with you.

Cordially,

Naim Edwards
Director, Detroit Partnership for Food, Learning and Innovation
Michigan State University Extension

edwar649@msu.edu

Extension

Michigan State University - Detroit Partnership for Food, Learning, and Innovation

Naim Edwards
MSU-Detroit Center
3408 Woodward Ave
Detroit, MI 48201

Office: 313-578-9724
Cell: 717-364-2378
Edwar649@msu.edu

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences
Ohio State University Extension

Office of the Associate Dean and Director
David Civittolo, *interim*

3 Agricultural Administration Building
2120 Fyffe Road
Columbus, Ohio 43210-1084

http://extension.osu.edu

November 25, 2025

Brad Gaolach
Director, National Urban Research and Extension Center
gaolach@wsu.edu

Dear Dr. Gaolach,

As interim Director of Ohio State University Extension, I fully support the Urban Agriculture team that is engaged in applied research programs which address critical needs for urban agricultural producers. Examples of nature-based projects include edible forests for urban communities that enhance ecosystem services; compost enhancement using black soldier flies; creating soil blends from urban waste stream materials that reduce child lead exposure; and a decision support tool for urban agricultural enterprises to evaluate available land.

The proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities,* has a breadth of support services that would help The Ohio State University in conducting high quality research related to urban resiliency. If funded, we would actively participate in and benefit from collaborative work with colleagues in the region and across the nation to enhance the capacity of urban agricultural producers to healthy food production for their communities.

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS) and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.

- **Use a data archiving and sharing platform** that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to a **Urban Research Repository** that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.

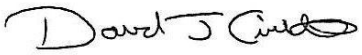
- **Participate in professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.

- **Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities,** including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,



David Civittolo
Interim Associate Dean and Director, Ohio State University Extension
Chair, Department of Extension

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

School of Environment and Natural Resources

210 Kottman Hall
2021 Coffey Rd.
Columbus, OH 43210-1085

614-292-4328 Phone

December 1, 2025

Brad Gaolach
Director, National Urban Research and Extension Center
gaolach@wsu.edu

Dear Dr. Gaolach,

As Ohio State University Extension state specialist and co-Leader of the Urban Agriculture Team, I am engaged in applied research programs which address critical needs for urban agricultural producers. Specific nature-based projects include are creating soil blends from urban waste stream materials that reduce child lead exposure; developing a decision support tool for urban agricultural enterprises to evaluate available land; and improving soil health for urban soils.

The proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities,* has a breadth of support services that would help me engage in conducting high quality research related to urban resiliency. If funded, I would actively participate in and benefit from collaborative work with colleagues in the region and across the nation to enhance the capacity of urban agricultural producers to healthy food production for their communities.

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS) and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.

- **Use a data archiving and sharing platform** that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to a **Urban Research Repository** that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.

- **Participate in professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.

- **Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities,** including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and

research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

Jeff Hattey
Professor of Soil Science
OSU Extension State Specialist, Soil Management
OSU Extension, co-Leader Urban Agricultural Team

UC Research & Extension Centers
University of California
Agriculture & Natural Resources

December 4th, 2025

Dr Gaolach,

UC Agriculture and Natural Resources, specifically the Research and Extension Center (REC) component of the organization, provides UC campus and local county advisors academics with outdoor living laboratories to conduct applied research and facilities to deliver the results of this research to end users through various types of extension activities. Two of the ten RECs serving academics in the UC system are in or near large metropolitan centers in Southern California. South Coast REC and the newly purchased Hansen REC currently conduct or will be conducting applied research and extension in the areas of urban agriculture, integrated pest management in urban environments focusing on nature-based solutions, and the testing and demonstration of technologies to build healthy soils, manage pollutants in urban stormwater, and create healthier built-environments.

The proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities,* has a breadth of support services that would help UC ANR's Research and Extension Center System and its associated researchers in conducting high quality research related to urban resiliency. If funded, we would actively participate in and benefit from the following project activities and products:

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS) and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.

- **Use of a data archiving and sharing platform** that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to an **Urban Research Repository** that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.

- **Participating in professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.

- **Participating in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities,** including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

Darren L Haver, PhD
Executive Director of REC System
UC Agriculture & Natural Resources

VILLANOVA
UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT *of* CIVIL *and* ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING

December 15, 2025

Dear Dr. Gaolach,

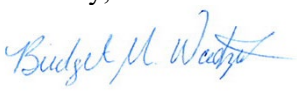
I am Bridget Wadzuk, the Director of the Villanova Center for Resilient Water Systems. My research center focuses on urban nature-based solutions and green infrastructure for flooding mitigation and stormwater management, which is closely related to the priority issues addressed in your proposed project.

Your project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities*, has broad and important support services that would help my team conduct high-quality research related to urban resiliency. If funded, my team would actively participate in, contribute to, and benefit from:

- National Integrated Research Networks (IRNs) that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across the project's key topic areas, namely, Urban Agriculture and Food Systems, Nature-based Solutions (NbS), and Urban Ecosystem Services, to co-create research agendas and share best practices.
- A data archiving and sharing platform with an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects, and an Urban Research Repository that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.
- Professional development and training in systems thinking, resilience planning, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.
- Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities, including synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs, and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas.

I look forward to the success of your application and the opportunity to work with you.

Sincerely,



Bridget M. Wadzuk
Professor, Edward A. Daylor Chair of Civil and Environmental Engineering
Director of Villanova Center for Resilient Water Systems
Director of Sustainable Engineering
Villanova University
800 Lancaster Ave
Villanova, PA 19085
610-519-5365

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
PULLMAN

Department of Crop and Soil Sciences
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, HUMAN, AND NATURAL RESOURCE SCIENCES

November 19, 2025

Dr Gaolach,

My name is Holly Henning and I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences at Washington State University. Prior to my time at WSU, I worked two presidential commissions focused on public-private partnerships to advance sustainability. I currently teach undergraduate students in Agriculture and Food Systems about systems thinking while connecting them to the research and Extension resources of our Land Grant University to develop more resilient and sustainable food systems.

The proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities,* has a breadth of support services that would help me and my organization in conducting high quality research related to urban resiliency. If funded, I would actively participate in and benefit from:

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS) and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.
- **Use a data archiving and sharing platform** that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to a **Urban Research Repository** that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.
- **Contribute to and participate in professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.
- **Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities,** including year-long synthesis working groups to address

PO Box 646420, 379 Clark Hall, Pullman, WA 99164-6420
509-335-3475 http://css.wsu.edu

knowledge gaps and research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

Holly Henning
Associate Professor, Crop and Soil Sciences
Swantz Distinguished Professor of Teaching and Learning
College of Agriculture, Human and Natural Resource Sciences
Washington State University

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of
Sociology
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

December 3, 2025

Washington State University
Department of Sociology Wilson-Short Hall Room 204
Pullman, WA 99164-4020

Dr Gaolach,

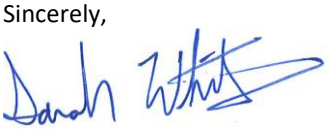
My name is Sarah Whitley and I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at Washington State University. My qualitative research focuses on urban agriculture, food systems, and food insecurity.

The proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities,* has a breadth of support services that would help me in conducting high quality research related to urban resiliency. If funded, I would actively participate in and benefit from:

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems–to co-create research agendas and share best practices.
- **Using a data archiving and sharing platform** that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to a **Urban Research Repository** that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.
- **Participate in professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.
- **Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities,** including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas.

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,



Sarah Whitley, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Department of Sociology
Washington State University

Dawn H. Gouge Ph.D.
Professor – Medical Entomologist & IPM Specialist
Extension Interim Associate Director of Agriculture & Natural Resources
University of Arizona, Department of Entomology
MAC Experiment Station, 37860 West Smith-Enke Road, Maricopa, AZ 85138
Office Tel. (520) 374-6223; Fax. (520) 374-6394; Mobil (602) 418-5202
dhgouge@arizona.edu

November 21, 2025

Re. Letter of Support for National Research Support Project Grant - Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities

Dear Dr. Gaolach,

Please accept this letter of support for the National Urban Research & Extension Center National Research Support Project grant application. I am an entomologist with over 25 years of experience both conducting research in urban communities and evaluating science-based operational solutions to real-time challenges in cities. I see great value in activities that support urban research. There is a critical need for an Integrated Research Network and platform support for urban research initiatives.

Hired in 2000 as an Urban Entomologist for the University of Arizona I am based at an Experiment Station site between our two largest metropolitan areas (Phoenix and Tucson). I have been acutely aware of the many unique issues generated by urban living, with zoonotic and vector-borne disease issues central to my own field of research.

The University of Arizona has a number of entomologists, plant scientists and engineers working in urban agriculture, horticulture, and nature-based solutions addressing climate adaptation needs.

Formation of Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities would provide an exceedingly valuable array of

support services that would benefit my own research ability and those I collaborate with across the nation, allowing the expansion of quality research related to urban resiliency. A warming desert climate brings both agricultural opportunities for year-round, urban production and food access improvements, but comes with extreme heat and water scarcity challenges. Research opportunities abound, but collaboration and support systems are needed.

If funded, I would actively participate in and benefit from:

- Participating in national Integrated Research Networks that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key fields of science including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on soil health and green infrastructure) to co-create research agendas.
- Using a data archiving and sharing platform that includes an interactive “Urban Map Room” that hosts spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to a Urban Research Repository that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.
- Participating in professional development and training in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.
- Participating in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities, including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps, research needs, and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging needs and novel science initiatives.

I look forward to participating in these activities, all of which are urgently needed. Please contact me if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

Dawn H. Gouge
Medical Entomology Professor & Integrated Pest Management Specialist
Department of Entomology,
University of Arizona

Oregon State University

Department of Horticulture
Oregon State University
4017 Agricultural and
Life Sciences Building
Corvallis, Oregon, 97331

November 17, 2025

Dear Dr Gaolach,

I am an Associate Professor of Pollinator Health Extension in the Department of Horticulture at Oregon State University. I was the first Pollinator Health Extension Specialist in the United States. While there have traditionally been Apiculture Extension programs that primarily serve a rural agricultural clientele (e.g., beekeepers and growers of crops that rent bees for pollination), my position came out of pesticide poisonings in a primarily urban context. Since being hired in 2016, there has been an explosion of interest and need in creating habitat for managed and wild bees in urban landscapes. There has been a commensurate growth in the literature around creating habitat, but much of it is disconnected and difficult to interpret across contexts.

The proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities*, would fill a gap among researchers working on bee conservation in cities, providing a much needed structure to synergize research and put it into practice on the ground. If funded, my lab would actively participate in and benefit from

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS) and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.
- **Use a data archiving and sharing platform** that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to a **Urban Research Repository** that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.
- **Participate in professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.
- **Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities,** including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

Andony Melathopoulos
Associate Professor
Andony.Melathopoulos@oregonstate.edu
541 452 3038

HORTICULTURE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Agricultural Sciences
Horticulture and Landscape Architecture
Fort Collins, Colorado 80523-1173
agsci.colostate.edu

December 1, 2025

Dr Gaolach,

My name is Jennifer Bousselot, an Associate Professor of Horticulture at Colorado State University (CSU). I lead the Green Roof and Urban Agriculture research team at the Metropolitan Agricultural Research Center at the CSU Spur campus in Denver, Colorado. We study green roof plant-pollinator interactions, green roof system stormwater capture, rooftop agriculture, and the integration of solar panels on green roofs, also known as rooftop agrivoltaics.

The proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities*, has a breadth of support services that would help my team in conducting high quality research related to urban resiliency. If funded, we would actively participate in and benefit from the following four network/activities:

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS) and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.
- **Use a data archiving and sharing platform** that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to an **Urban Research Repository** that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.
- **Participate in professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.
- **Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities**, including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

Best- Jen

Jennifer Bousselot, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture,
College of Agricultural Sciences, Colorado State University
Jennifer.Bousselot@colostate.edu

University of Nevada, Reno
College of Agriculture,
Biotechnology & Natural Resources

Date: December 02, 2025

Dr. Brad Gaolach
National Urban Research & Extension Center

Re: Letter of Support – *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities* (NRSP)

Dear Dr. Brad,
I am writing to express my strong support for the National Research Support Project, Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science in Urban Communities, which is being led by the National Urban Research & Extension Center and Dr. Brad Gaolach. The land-grant university (LGU) system was established when most Americans lived in rural regions. Today, however, I recognize the pressing need for the land-grant system to effectively serve urban neighborhoods, which now account for more than 80% of all Americans, and I consider this project as a key step in modernizing research and Extension to meet those needs. If funded, I will actively participate in project activities, including:

- Joining Integrated Research Networks (IRNs) for urban and indoor agriculture, food systems, nature-based solutions, and urban ecosystem services.
- Contribute data and results to the Urban Map Room and Urban Research Repository for comparative and decision-relevant research on urban resilience.
- Providing professional development and training in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research.
- Actively participating in research synthesis working groups and proposal preparation to promote collaborative, cross-city research.

This NRSP project will fill a significant gap in the present LGU and urban research environment. This NRSP will accelerate progress on pressing issues like urban resilience, resource-efficient indoor vertical farming, climate adaptation, equitable food systems, and nature-based solutions by establishing structures for long-term, coordinated, and comparative urban research. I highly support this project and look forward to the success of your application; if it is funded, I pledge to support and participate in its activities.
Sincerely,

Most Tahera Naznin

Most Tahera Naznin, PhD
Associate Professor of Urban & Indoor Agriculture
Department of Agriculture, Veterinary and Rangeland Sciences, University of Nevada, Reno
Office: UNR Extension, 2280 N McDaniel St, N. Las Vegas, NV 89030
Email: mnaznin@unr.edu; work-phone: +1-702-948-5917

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
Puyallup Research and Extension Center

11/29/2025

Dr. Gaolach,

I am Joan Wu, a professor at Washington State University (WSU) Puyallup Research and Extension Center. My team conducts hydrological and environmental research, which is closely related to the priority issues addressed in your proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities*.

Your project has broad and important support services that would help my team in conducting high-quality research related to urban resiliency. If funded, my team would actively participate in, contribute to, and benefit from:

- National Integrated Research Networks (IRNs) that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across the project's key topic areas, namely, Urban Agriculture and Food Systems, Nature-based Solutions (NbS), and Urban Ecosystem Services, to co-create research agendas and share best practices. My team has developed simple, portable computing tools to evaluate and maximize the impact of Green Stormwater Infrastructure, an NbS, in stormwater management. We have also carried out studies assessing soil qualities on small farms in peri-urban areas of South Puget Sound. Currently, we are examining how growth and development have adversely affected streamwater quality and aquatic habitat in an urbanizing watershed in the Puyallup River Basin.
- A data archiving and sharing platform with an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects, and an Urban Research Repository that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency. Collaboration and data sharing promote transparency, reproducibility, and faster research discovery while improving efficiency, which is widely recognized and our firsthand experience.
- Professional development and training in systems thinking, resilience planning, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts. These activities will be invaluable not only to students and junior researchers, but even to senior faculty as we carry out research in an intricate, fast-changing urban environment.
- Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities, including synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs, and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas. These integrative efforts will help generate more comprehensive, deeper understanding of what we have learned and what needs to be done, sharpening and broadening our vision.

I look forward to the success of your application and the opportunity to work with you.

Sincerely,

Joan Wu, Professor, PhD, PE
WSU Puyallup Research & Extension Center

2606 W. Pioneer, Puyallup, WA 98371-4998
253-445-4526 • Fax: 253-445-4571

Dr. Gaolach, 12/16/2025

I am a Professor and Green Stormwater Infrastructure Specialist at Washington State University. Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) is a form of urban stormwater management. My program is fundamentally an Extension program that leans heavily on research to develop education and outreach materials for a broad audience. We collaborate with cities, counties, regulatory agencies, and corporations to develop more efficient and resilient stormwater management systems. Managing stormwater isn't just about controlling where the water goes; its fate and transport are intrinsically linked to the ecosystems and communities surrounding stormwater's path from ridge to ocean.

The proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities,* offers a range of support services that would help my program conduct high-quality research on urban resilience. If funded, I would actively participate in and benefit from this work.

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS), and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.
- **Use a data archiving and sharing platform** that includes an interactive "Urban Map Room" that hosts a breadth of urban spatial data to support developing research projects and would use and contribute to an **Urban Research Repository** that assembles, stores, and disseminates research outputs, methods, and resources related to urban resiliency.
- **Participate in professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.
- **Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities,** including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs, and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas.

I look forward to the success of your application and to my ability to start participating in this project's activities.

Sincerely,

Anand Jayakaran, PhD PE – Professor
Green Stormwater Infrastructure Extension Specialist
Washington State University, Puyallup Research and Extension Center
2606 W Pioneer Ave, Puyallup, WA 98371, USA
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November 21, 2025

Dear Dr. Gaolach,

As associate professor in the Dept. of Horticultural Science at the University of Minnesota, my responsibilities include teaching, research, and Extension. In my education role, I serve as the Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems program teach both the introductory course and capstone course for this program. This program emphasizes community engagement and experiential learning and supports green infrastructure in the Twin Cities metropolitan area via collective action. In my research role, I am currently exploring the effect of invasive swede midge insects on brassica crops in urban agriculture, a new pest that is constraining local production of high-quality vegetables here. My Extension program is focused on urban agriculture, specifically working with community partners to practice sustainable integrated pest management. These practices are largely preventative and take a holistic approach, including weed management and maintaining soil health and fertility.

The proposed project, *Building Integrated Research Networks to Advance the Conduct and Application of Science with Urban Communities,* has a breadth of support services that would contribute to my team's ability to conduct high quality research related to urban resiliency. If funded, I would actively participate in and benefit from these activities:

- **Participating in national Integrated Research Networks (IRNs)** that connect researchers, Extension professionals, and urban stakeholders across key topic areas – including urban agriculture and food systems, nature-based solutions (NbS) and urban ecosystem services (with an emphasis on urban soils and green infrastructure) – to co-create research agendas and share best practices.
- **Participate in professional development and training** in systems thinking, resilience planning, team science, and community-driven research approaches tailored to urban contexts.
- **Participate in Research Synthesis and Acceleration Activities,** including year-long synthesis working groups to address knowledge gaps and research needs and proposal development workshops to facilitate acceleration of emerging ideas

I look forward to the success of your application and the ability to start participating in the activities of this project.

Sincerely,

Mary Rogers, Ph.D.

Associate Professor
Sustainable & Organic Horticultural Food Production Systems
612-624-8871