

Love Lodi

August 18, 2025

Subject: Non-Profit Fund Policy Proposal Letter

Councilwoman Lisa Craig-Hensley
221 W. Pine Street
Lodi, CA 95240

Dear Councilwoman Craig-Hensley,

We want to extend our sincere appreciation to you and the City of Lodi for your continued support of Love Lodi. Over the past decade, more than 8,500 volunteers have served across hundreds of projects within the city limits—representing an investment of over one million dollars back into our community¹.

Because non-profits are the heart of our city, we are especially grateful for the Council's recent decision to implement the Non-Profit Fund Policy on July 2, 2025. Please accept the following information as our formal application in accordance with Resolution 2025-120.

Contact name, phone, and email

Timothy & Tara Stewart
Timothy: (916) 715-3272 Tara: (916) 544-2215
Timothy: timothy@lovelodi.org Tara: tara@lovelodi.org

Full legal name of organization

Lodi Community Church

Complete address of the organization

444 W. Turner Road
Lodi, CA 95240

Description of the Organization

Love Lodi began in 2014 as a city-wide volunteer day, modeled after Love Modesto and Love Our Cities. In 2022, under the leadership of Timothy and Tara Stewart, Love Lodi expanded beyond a single day of service to year-round initiatives that position the organization as a city-wide convener.

¹ <https://independentsector.org/research/value-of-volunteer-time/>

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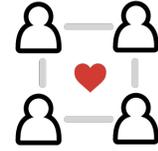
CITY-WIDE VOLUNTEER DAY

the catalytic event



CITY-WIDE INITIATIVES

year-round impact



CITY-WIDE CONVENER

the relationships

Each spring, thousands of volunteers continue serving across the city, while fall initiatives focus on meeting critical needs in local schools. In partnership with National Night Out and Lodi Unified, Love Lodi has distributed more than 3,100 backpacks to students in need, refreshed school courtyards, and provided house shirts to foster school spirit – functioning as a de facto “Parent Club” to local schools with no or a struggling Parent Club.

As we mark 10 years in 2025, Love Lodi is preparing for the next decade of impact: addressing unmet needs, deepening collaboration with schools, businesses, non-profits, churches, and residents, and expanding initiatives that strengthen the fabric of our community. The requested grant funding is essential to launch this next phase, ensuring greater capacity, sustainability, and measurable impact across the City of Lodi.

Mission Statement

Love Lodi is more than a city-wide volunteer day. We are a city-wide movement championing volunteerism and doing good in our city.

Federal Tax Status: 501(c)(3) or other

Tax ID# 94-1698618

List of current Board members and officers, if any

- Timothy Stewart
- Tara Stewart
- Glen Barnes
- Kelly Benov
- Marvin Bryant

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Brief description of the project/program and how it relates to the City Council's Strategic Vision and one or more of Council's Goal

Love Lodi wants to fund a part-time Program Director to expand the following program:

LOVE OUR SCHOOLS PROGRAM

The Love Our Schools Program is designed to meet critical needs at Title I schools in the Lodi Unified School District (LUSD) by building strong, sustainable partnerships between the community and schools. Through intentional collaboration with district leadership, principals, and school staff, Love Lodi will assess needs and mobilize resources to provide long-term impact.

Program Components

A. Needs Assessment

- Conduct ongoing dialogue with LUSD staff, principals, and teachers to identify the most pressing needs of Title I and in-need schools.
- Establish clear communication channels for continuous feedback and accountability.

B. School Adoption Model

Love Lodi will partner with the Lodi Chamber of Commerce, service organizations, local businesses, and the faith community to **A.D.O.P.T. every LUSD school in Lodi**. Adoption partners will provide:

1. **Awareness of Needs**
 - Host a *State of the School* event to share each school's unique challenges and opportunities.
2. **Donor Engagement**
 - Develop donor relationships to fund specific school needs (e.g., backpacks, school supplies, lice kits, hygiene resources).
 - Create an annual fundraising pipeline to ensure sustainability.
3. **Opportunities to Volunteer**
 - Offer pathways for individuals, families, and organizations to serve schools through hands-on involvement.
4. **Project-Based Support**
 - Organize *Love Lodi Day* projects on campuses each spring.
 - Mobilize year-round projects to meet urgent or ongoing needs.
5. **Teacher Appreciation**
 - Provide regular encouragement and tangible support for teachers and staff, fostering morale and retention.

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C. Partnership Broker Role

Love Lodi will act as the **convener and broker** between adoption partners and schools, ensuring that relationships are strategic, needs-driven, and aligned with LUSD goals. This structure avoids duplication of efforts, creates accountability, and maximizes impact.

The Love Our Schools Program directly supports the City of Lodi's Stretch Goal to be a recognized leader in generating a happy, healthy, high quality of life for all. By mobilizing volunteers and resources to meet critical needs at Title I schools, the program advances the City's goals of partnering with public and private entities to engage diverse communities, fostering youth education and mentorship, and enhancing cultural and community connections. Initiatives such as distributing backpacks, refreshing school campuses, and providing ongoing teacher appreciation create tangible improvements in student well-being, educational access, and school culture. By strengthening partnerships among schools, businesses, non-profits, and civic groups, the program helps ensure that Lodi's next generation has the support, resources, and mentorship needed to thrive—fulfilling the City's vision for a stronger, more connected, and higher quality of life for all residents.

Funding amount requested and how it relates to overall project/program financial plan

Love Lodi is requesting **\$20,000** to fund the part-time Program Director position for one year. This role is essential to the success and sustainability of the Love Our Schools Program. While Love Lodi has historically relied heavily on volunteer leadership, the scope and complexity of coordinating year-round initiatives, managing partnerships with schools and community organizations, mobilizing volunteers, and stewarding donor relationships requires dedicated professional oversight.

The Program Director will provide the consistent leadership and organizational capacity needed to:

- Conduct school needs assessments in collaboration with LUSD staff.
- Recruit, equip, and coordinate adoption partners for every Lodi school.
- Oversee project planning and implementation for both Love Lodi Day and year-round initiatives.
- Develop and sustain donor and volunteer engagement strategies.
- Ensure accountability and measurable outcomes for funders, schools, and the City of Lodi.

This investment will leverage thousands of volunteer hours and significant in-kind contributions, multiplying the City's support into measurable community impact. Funding this position is not simply administrative—it is the critical infrastructure that enables Love Lodi to move from a once-a-year event to a sustained, city-wide movement meeting real needs in schools and neighborhoods.

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Objectives for the requested funding

The requested funding will directly support measurable objectives that advance both the mission of Love Lodi and the City of Lodi's strategic vision for community well-being. With dedicated leadership provided through the Program Director role, Love Lodi will:

- **Pair Every School with an Adoption Partner:** Ensure that each LUSD school in Lodi is matched with at least one business, service organization, faith community, or civic group, creating sustainable pipelines of support.
- **Increase Student and Family Resources:** Expand access to critical resources for Title I students and families—such as backpacks, school supplies, hygiene kits, and other essentials—reducing barriers to learning and well-being.
- **Mobilize Volunteers Year-Round:** Engage hundreds of community members annually through Love Lodi Day and ongoing school-based service projects, multiplying the City's investment with thousands of volunteer hours.
- **Strengthen Community-School Relationships:** Foster meaningful, long-term partnerships between schools and community stakeholders, resulting in improved environments for students and increased encouragement and appreciation for teachers and staff.

These objectives will be tracked through volunteer participation metrics, partner engagement records, resource distribution data, and feedback from school administrators—ensuring clear accountability and demonstrable outcomes for the City's investment.

Performance indicators/Measurement of success

Success for the **Love Our Schools Program** will be measured through clear, trackable outcomes that demonstrate both growth in partnerships and tangible community impact. For the first year, the Program Director will focus on strengthening existing relationships and expanding adoption partnerships. Specific performance indicators include:

- **Adoption Partnerships Formalized:** Formalize 5–10 adoption partnerships between schools and community organizations (businesses, non-profits, service clubs, and faith communities).
- **Needs Identified and Met:** Document and meet specific school needs (e.g., backpacks, supplies, courtyard improvements, teacher appreciation efforts) in collaboration with LUSD staff.
- **Volunteer Engagement:** Track the number of volunteers mobilized and total hours served in school-based projects, both on Love Lodi Day and year-round.
- **Community Investment:** Record the dollar value of donations (cash and in-kind) directed toward school needs through adoption partners and community supporters.
- **School and Partner Feedback:** Collect feedback from principals, teachers, and adoption partners to evaluate satisfaction, perceived impact, and areas for improvement.

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These indicators will not only provide quantitative data (partnerships, hours, dollars) but also qualitative insights (school culture, teacher morale, community engagement). Together, they ensure accountability to funders and position Love Lodi to scale the program in future years.

Communities that will benefit from use of the requested funds

The primary beneficiaries of the Love Our Schools Program are the Title I schools within Lodi Unified School District and the economically challenged students and families they serve. Many of these school communities are below the poverty line and lack the parent clubs or fundraising capacity that other schools enjoy. As a result, they often struggle to provide the resources, experiences, and support systems that contribute to student success.

Through the requested funding, Love Lodi will continue to close this gap by providing equitable access to resources and opportunities. Recent examples of impact include:

- *Health and Hygiene:* In partnership with Adventist Health, over 500 lice kits were distributed to families at Lawrence Elementary, providing immediate relief to families in crisis.
- *Student Preparedness:* More than 3,100 backpacks filled with essential supplies were distributed to students in 2024 and 2025, ensuring that children arrived ready to learn on the first day of school.
- *School Spirit and Belonging:* Love Lodi purchased house shirts for students at Lodi Middle and Lawrence Elementary, building a stronger sense of community and school pride.

By supporting these schools, the program not only addresses material needs but also enhances morale, strengthens school culture, and provides students with a quality of school experience comparable to their peers across Lodi. In doing so, Love Lodi advances equity, fairness, and long-term student performance—ultimately benefiting the broader Lodi community as these students grow into thriving, engaged citizens.

Any additional information relevant to the request

With your partnership, we can ensure every school in Lodi is adopted, every teacher encouraged, and every student equipped to thrive. Together, we can make the next decade of Love Lodi the most impactful yet.

With gratitude,

Timothy & Tara Stewart

Love Lodi Chairpersons