

Gautho, Julia

From: Tricia Wiltshire <tricia@countyparkfriends.org>
Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 9:19 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Letter for City Council Meeting Mar 27 Re: Treasure Cove

March 22, 2024

Dear Members of the Capitola City Council,

Eleven years ago, I took my children, Lauren, Evelyn, and Oliver, to Tatum's Garden in Salinas, a universally designed playground. For the first time ever, we were able to play together like any other family. Oliver uses a wheelchair and at typical, ADA-compliant playgrounds still gets left out because his chair can't go over wood chips and he can't climb the stairs on a main play structure. Watching their joy that day in swinging through the air, sliding down slides, and chasing each other over every square inch of that playground together made me realize we needed playgrounds like this in our home community of Santa Cruz County. And so that very day I made them a promise that we would figure out a way.

And figure out a way we did. LEO's Haven at Chanticleer Park opened in 2020 due to the efforts of my family, many other community members and service groups, and the county government and parks department. Together, we created a unique public-private partnership to design, fundraise, and build that playground. Its success and extreme popularity was what inspired your city council to decide to do the same.

From the very beginning, it was clear that your vision for Treasure Cove was not just about building another playground—it was about building a space where all children, regardless of their abilities, could come together and engage in joyful, meaningful play. As campaign manager for County Park Friends, it was a joy to work with your team. The thoughtfulness you have shown in crafting an inclusive play environment speaks volumes about your values as a council and the care you hold for every member of this community. You have created a space that will not only serve as a resource for today's children but will set an example for other cities to follow in embracing inclusivity and community well-being.

I was also humbled to work with the many community members who also showed their significant financial support to match the city's contributions to the playground. As a parent, it is so incredibly reassuring to know that our children, no matter their individual challenges, have a community dedicated to creating an inclusive place where they can play, explore, and grow together.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support of this endeavor and for your commitment to making Capitola a community where everyone feels seen, heard, and included. I look forward to Treasure Cove's opening day and seeing our children out playing with their friends, families, and neighbors.

With warmest regards,



Tricia Wiltshire MAEd, PMP (she/her)
Treasure Cove Campaign Project Manager

