



MAYOR SAVITA VAIDHYANATHAN

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November 15, 2017

Supervisors Simitian, Chavez, Cortese, Yeager, and Wasserman
Board of Supervisors, County of Santa Clara
70 West Hedding Street, 10th Floor
San Jose, CA 95110

Subject: City of Cupertino Support for All-Inclusive Playgrounds in Santa Clara County

Dear County Supervisors,

The City of Cupertino applauds you for your establishment of the All-Inclusive Playground Grant Program (AIPG) this year. Cupertino is very interested in pursuing an all-inclusive playground in our community. We are also very interested in the opportunity to seek AIPG funding and your support.

We are working actively toward creating a very strong project proposal. However, we did not submit a grant application by this year's deadline of October 18. We are developing an excellent proposal and will be ready to submit for a funding cycle next year. We wish you to be advised of our high interest in grant funding and our active efforts.

You may recall that four Cupertino officials attended your Board of Supervisors meeting on Feb. 28. Each spoke to you in strong support of this program: Vice Mayor Darcy Paul, City Manager David Brandt, Director of Recreation & Community Services Jeff Milkes, and Commission Vice Chair Geoff Paulsen. This amount of representation from a local city was unique.

Cupertino is now in the process of preparing a citywide Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Extensive community input is part of the process. One of the clear messages from our residents is their desire to have inclusive play in our community. The Master Plan is addressing this desire and need. We will be ready to submit a project proposal next year when the Master Plan is finalized.

Meanwhile, we have concurrently funded and initiated an Inclusive Playground Feasibility Study. The study is focusing on the elements and siting needed for a successful all-inclusive playground project in our city. Its results will be folded into the Master Plan and will enable Cupertino to submit a strong project proposal to the AIP Grant program next year.

Our Parks and Recreation Commissioners held a special meeting to tour both Rotary PlayGarden in San Jose and the Magical Bridge playground in Palo Alto in September 2016. As the then Vice Mayor, I went along on this tour and was very impressed with both the playgrounds and their appeal to children and parents alike. We all strongly support an all-inclusive play area in our city. I had a detailed conversation with County Supervisor Joe Simitian and conveyed that we would be very happy to see an all-inclusive playground built in Cupertino. Our city's entire recreation staff toured Magical Bridge in October 2017. Director Milkes and our Park Improvement Manager had previously toured both play areas. Our recreation staff has been in communication with Magical Bridge Foundation since 2016 and have toured potential local sites together.

We are proud that the Organization of Special Needs Families was founded and is headquartered in Cupertino. We are also well aware that in our local elementary and middle school district, Cupertino Union School District, there are 1,432 students receiving special education this year. Each has a personal 'Individual Education Program' consistent with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. In our local Fremont Union High School District, we have 979 students receiving special education. Clearly there is great need here in Cupertino for all-inclusive facilities.

In summary, the City of Cupertino is highly interested in creating an exceptional All-Inclusive Playground. We hope that the Board of Supervisors and County staff will remain cognizant of our community's desire to participate in the AIPG program and create our community's first all-inclusive play area. Assuming that AIPG funding remains after grant awards occur this year, we look forward to applying to the program into 2018. We thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Savita Vaidhyathan". The script is cursive and fluid.

Savita Vaidhyathan
Mayor, City of Cupertino

cc: City Manager, City Clerk, Director of Recreation & Community Services, file
Robb Courtney, Director, County of Santa Clara, Dept. of Parks and Recreation