

Letter of Support - Murrieta Santa Stops

Kimberly Soria [REDACTED]

Tue 6/4/2024 4:12 PM

To: City Clerk <CityClerk@MurrietaCA.gov>

Cc: [REDACTED]

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To Whom It May Concern:

It is my understanding that the agenda for tonight's City Council Meeting includes a discussion about the continuation of Santa Stops. As a resident of Murrieta, please allow me to voice my support and share my experience with this wonderful program.

We moved to the city three years ago during the program's hiatus, so this past December was our first year experiencing the excitement and joy that are the Santa Stops. Many neighbors had shared that Santa Stop was a must-do seasonal tradition for their families, even as their kids grew older. I didn't know what to expect when I walked down to the Santa Star with my husband, 2 year old son, and bag of food goods to donate, but we were definitely excited to finally see firsthand the event that so many residents had described since we first moved here. We arrived early and waited in a small line of excited families. While we waited, I was surprised to see the line kept growing and growing. We chatted with neighbors and members of our community that we otherwise may not have met had we not been brought together in anticipation of Santa's arrival to our star. The police car came first with a loudspeaker announcing, "Santa's coming!" While the concept of Santa is still new and a bit unfamiliar to my son, this caught his attention, and he jumped to his feet clapping and pointing. When the trolley pulled up, Christmas music playing, his face positively lit up. As a new mom, my heart filled with so much appreciation to the city for bringing this moment directly into our neighborhood. Walking home, my son couldn't stop smiling and telling us all about his interactions with Santa and the elf volunteers. And honestly, my husband and I couldn't stop smiling either.

As a family, we made several sacrifices so that we could specifically move here, to Murrieta, because of what a great community it is for families. As I told my husband that night, this is one of the best Christmas events I've ever seen a city put on for their residents. It's so personal, charming, and heartfelt in every way. I left that night already looking forward to watching my son grow up with the excitement of running down the street to the Santa Star in time for Santa's arrival each year.

Murrieta is a beautiful city, but a big part of that beauty is in its ability to keep the magic of a small town alive even as it grows. I truly believe events like the Santa Stops are what embody that "hometown magic" that is so vital to pride in a resident's city. I appreciate your time today reading my words, and I hope it will help shine a light into how much this beloved tradition adds to the city of Murrieta. Respectfully, I hope you will vote and act in favor of keeping the Santa Stop program alive indefinitely.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Soria