



## **PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE**

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**From:** [Harry Guy](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC COMMENT AGENDA ITEM #1 - Study Session - 2/14/2023  
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Thank you to Council for conducting this study session on the vision for downtown and thank you to City staff for their work to help our downtown businesses survive the impacts of the pandemic, which occurred on top of the already-changing nature of what residents are seeking in the way of downtown businesses and services. Although the Vision Plan could not have predicted the pandemic and its deep impact on residents and businesses, if it was well-conceived and articulated, it should remain as a complete and valid vision for our downtown. I believe the Downtown Vision Plan adopted by Council in 2018 does that, although the selections and phasing of strategies and tactics to achieve the downtown vision will need to be influenced by the impacts we have experienced.

I think it is worth noting that the list of key Council and Staff contributors to the 2018 Downtown Vision Plan have almost entirely left their positions, see page III of the plan. Notably, I believe 100% of the City Manager's Office members listed have changed, as well as most of the Planning Staff. I think the current key Staff members who need to lead the development of next steps in implementing the plan need to spend more time with the consultants who developed the plan and a small but diverse set of stakeholders (residents, businesses) who provided input to the vision development. I think the staff report, as written, shows a lack of clear understanding of the vision content and the priorities residents want to see emphasized in the next steps. For example, the staff report states that "The goal of the Los Altos Downtown Vision Plan is to provide a safe, clean, and attractive downtown for residents, businesses, and visitors." In fact, page 2 of the Downtown Vision Plan states "The purpose of the Vision Plan is to provide the Los Altos community with a vision for the future of the Downtown triangle to guide growth and development over the next 20 years. This Vision Plan acts as the guiding document for future development of the Downtown, maintaining the community's history, values, and desired intensity of development, while also allowing for incremental change intended to facilitate a unique, vibrant village that exemplifies the exceptional character and qualities of Los Altos." Words are important; Staff has used the term "goal" and the Downtown Vision Plan used the term "purpose." Do these have different meanings? Is that important? I think it is.

With the above observations in mind, and my personal desire for Council and Staff to place a much higher priority directed at facilitating multi-modal transportation and improving safety downtown for all modes, I offer the following recommendations for Council and Staff consideration:

- Prioritize development of specific strategies, tactics and a timetable aimed at this element of the Community Vision on page 16: "**Enhancing safety and connectivity** to the adjacent Civic Center, Lincoln Park, and surrounding neighborhoods through targeted multi-modal transportation forms for pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles;" this should include moving up the priority and timetable for the pedestrian connections (from Hillview and across Foothill Expressway) and the envisioned roundabout at San Antonio-Main-Edith; this should include conducting a downtown transportation study and actively supporting the County's efforts to study and improve the Foothill Expressway corridor, especially intersections from Edith to I-280

- Establish a modest-sized group of stakeholders (consultant, businesses, resident representatives) who were closely involved in the development of the 2018 Downtown Vision Plan to meet with a few key Staff members and a Council subcommittee tasked with ensuring a clear Staff understanding of the Downtown Vision Plan and making two specific assessments/recommendations to the full Council: (1) Is the Downtown Vision Plan still valid or does it need to be revised? (2) What are the prioritized strategies, tactics and timetable recommended for the next 10 years? The “residents” selected for this group perhaps could be the chairs of the commissions (just one option); the group should be given three months to complete their work and report back to Council

Respectfully,

Harry Guy - Los Altos Resident