



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 3/1/2022

ITEM NO: 10

DATE: February 24, 2022
TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Receive Report on Town Sustainability Efforts

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive Report on Town Sustainability Efforts.

BACKGROUND:

Through thoughtful planning over 135 years since incorporation in 1887, Los Gatos has managed to grow and evolve while maintaining respect for its beautiful natural setting and preserving its historic character and a distinct sense of place. Residents and leaders of Los Gatos have recognized that a healthy and prosperous community must weigh economic, environmental, and social goals when planning for the future. In 2010, the Town of Los Gatos adopted the 2020 General Plan that focused on promoting sustainability. In 2012, the Town Council adopted its first Sustainability Plan. Today, the Town is currently working on the Los Gatos 2040 General Plan which will promote sustainability efforts into the future. This staff report outlines highlights from the Town's current sustainability efforts.

DISCUSSION:

The Town of Los Gatos prides itself on retaining the charm and character of the community, conserving natural resources, and reducing waste. The following is an overview highlighting some of the Town's top sustainable efforts in each of five categories. These examples only touch on elements of the full effort. For a comprehensive list of Town sustainability efforts, please visit the [Environmental Initiatives](#) page of the Town's website.

PREPARED BY: Marina Chislett
Environmental Programs Specialist

Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Town Attorney, Finance Director, and Parks and Public Works Director

DISCUSSION (continued):

COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

General Plan Update: The General Plan update is a pivotal opportunity to shape the future of Los Gatos. Through this process, the Town and the community consider many pertinent sustainability topics to ensure Los Gatos is positioned to achieve its vision for the future. These areas include:

- Protect, conserve, and enhance natural and urban habitats and ecosystems in Los Gatos;
- Support local and regional efforts in the Town's response to climate change;
- Become a zero waste Town through encouraging sustainable procurement, extended producer responsibility, and innovative strategies; and
- Obtain clean, efficient energy supplies from cost-effective, renewable sources

Spring Into Green: The Town's annual sustainability celebration is back! On Sunday, April 24th, the Town of Los Gatos will be celebrating Earth Day at Town Plaza Park from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The festivities include environmentally focused exhibitor booths, a tree planting ceremony, the weekly Los Gatos Farmer's Market, family-friendly activities, live music, and more. For up-to-date information visit the [Spring Into Green](#) page.

Silicon Valley Clean Energy (SVCE): The Town of Los Gatos with 11 other cities in Santa Clara County formed SVCE, creating a community-owned utility agency. SVCE is redefining the local electricity market, providing residents, businesses, and Town facilities with new clean energy choices – renewable and carbon free electricity at competitive rates. Through careful sourcing of electricity, Los Gatos energy use in 2021 alone achieved the following:

- 96% reduction in electricity related emissions (26,556,000 million pounds greenhouse gas emissions avoided),
- \$35,600 in cash payments to customers generating surplus solar energy,
- \$369,000 in on-bill savings for Los Gatos customers (\$3,553,000 since launch in 2017), and
- 14,700 households and businesses receiving clean electricity from carbon-free sources

Sustainability Plan: The Town adopted its Sustainability Plan in 2012 and many of the ideas within that Plan have guided efforts over the last decade. Updating this Plan for the future is an implementation item in the draft 2040 General Plan.

GREEN STREETS, PARKS & TRAILS

Connect Los Gatos: Connect Los Gatos is a program of bicycle and pedestrian projects that promote connectivity and improve the multimodal network through the Town. Promoting alternative transportation, Connect Los Gatos aims at making it easier and safer for all to bike

DISCUSSION (continued):

and walk in Los Gatos. Branding of the program aids in community outreach and program recognition.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations: EV Charging Stations help provide a diversity of fuel options to residents while helping to greatly reduce CO₂ emissions. The Town currently has 20 Tesla Supercharger stations. In addition, the Town also has six Tesla operated Level II Ports available for free public use and 16 Town operated ChargePoint Stations located throughout Town.

Environmental Waste Stations: The Town of Los Gatos and the City of Campbell partnered together with the West Valley Clean Water Authority and was awarded the B7 Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Grant to execute ten environmental waste stations along the Los Gatos Creek Trail, with five locations in Los Gatos. These stations include a trash receptacle, a recycling receptacle, and a dog waste receptacle along with environmental messaging for litter prevention.

Recycling Expansion Programs: The Town provides residents with an easy option to recycle their waste by installing recycling receptacles throughout the Town of Los Gatos. The Town continues to expand containers throughout downtown and Town parks annually with the Beverage Container Recycling Grant provided by the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle).

West Valley Clean Water Authority (WVCWA): The West Valley Clean Water Authority serves as the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Authority for the Town of Los Gatos and the West Valley cities. The purpose of the WVCWA is to provide facilitation of collaborative stormwater management and pollution prevention efforts to assist the Town in compliance with the municipal stormwater permit and improve water quality.

SUSTAINABLE FACILITIES

Green Business Certification: Since 2007, all Town facilities have been certified as a Green Business by Santa Clara County. To be certified “green,” the Town must be in compliance with all regulations and meet program standards for conserving resources, preventing pollution, and minimizing waste. The key goals of the program are to promote resource conservation and pollution prevention.

Hybrid Vehicles: Today, the Town has 13 hybrid vehicles, one electric motorcycle, and two Mitsubishi i-MiEVs that makeup the Town Fleet. Electric and hybrid vehicles reduce fuel consumption resulting in fewer greenhouse gas emission. Town staff consider electric vehicle options with all vehicle purchases.

DISCUSSION (continued):

Solar Panels: The Town currently utilizes solar at the Los Gatos Library, the Parks and Public Works Department, and the Police Operations Building. All Town facilities generate approximately 210kwh of solar energy, which helps to reduce the Town's greenhouse gas emissions generated by 47MT of CO2 emissions from Town operations.

LEED Gold Standards: The Library facility was constructed at the high LEED Gold standard. LEED is an internationally recognized green building certification system that measures features such as energy savings, water efficiency, CO2 emissions, indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources.

Library Battery Storage: Staff is currently pursuing the installation of battery storage at the Library to provide energy resiliency and to allow for the use of off-peak electricity during high energy consumption periods.

GREEN ORDINANCES

All-Electric Reach Codes: The Town of Los Gatos adopted an all-electric reach code for new construction on December 17, 2019. Los Gatos' code requires electrification for all single family and low-rise multifamily buildings

Organics Waste Disposal Reduction Ordinance (SB 1383): On November 16, 2021, Town Council adopted the Organic Waste Disposal Reduction Ordinance in compliance with SB 1383. Effective January 1, 2022, residents and businesses are required to divert organics from the landfill.

Single-Use Carry Out Bag Ordinance: The Single-Use Carry-Out Bag Ordinance was approved by the Town Council after considering an Environmental Impact Report in which Los Gatos joined 23 other cities to study the effects of single-use plastic bags on the environment. The intent of the ordinance is to reduce the environmental impacts and pollution from plastic bags, reduce waste, and promote a shift towards reusable bags as a Zero Waste measure. The Ordinance also helps the town meet requirements to reduce plastic bags found in waterways under the Municipal Stormwater Permit issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Plastics Ban: The Youth Commission often helps lead the way in environmental stewardship. This year, the Commission is working on legislation that would greatly reduce the output of harmful plastic waste pollution throughout the community.

Urgency Drought Ordinance: On August 3, 2021, the Town of Los Gatos passed an Urgency Drought Ordinance declaring the existence of a condition of water shortage and providing mandatory reductions in and specified prohibitions of water use. The Town launched the [#DroughtReadyLG](#) campaign on drought awareness education and continues to work with

DISCUSSION (continued):

Valley Water as part of the Drought Response Plan Task Force. In response to Valley Water's call for a 15% water usage reduction, the Town of Los Gatos did the following:

- Reduced Park Irrigation
- Reduced Median Irrigation
- Reduced Fountain Hours
- Adopt-A-Planter Water Efficiency

GROWING GREENER TOGETHER

Growing Greener Campaign: The Los Gatos: Growing Greener Together Campaign provides Town employees and community members with a seasonal newsletter featuring green tips and best practices for home and at work. As part of the Town's Green Business Certification, this campaign promotes resource conservation and pollution prevention.

Hazardous Waste Program: The Town partners with the Santa Clara County Household Hazardous Waste Program to ensure that Los Gatos residents correctly dispose of their household hazardous wastes. Improper storage and disposal of household hazardous waste, such as paint, solvents, and insecticides, is associated with accidental poisonings, collection worker safety risks, and environmental contamination of surface water and groundwater

Home Energy Saving Toolkits: As of 2018, the Los Gatos Library has partnered with Silicon Valley Energy Watch (SVEW) to offer Home Energy Saving Toolkits to residents. Each toolkit contains a variety of energy measurement tools along with free conservation items such as LED light bulbs and door and window sealing foam.

Keep Los Gatos Beautiful Month: Each April, the Town sponsors a series of events and programs to celebrate National Earth Day, National Arbor Day, and National Volunteer Recognition Week, with the goal of raising awareness about the environment and making a positive change on individual behavior.

MED-Project Program: The Police Department is participating in the County of Santa Clara MED-Project Program (Medication, Education, and Disposal), designed to encourage disposal of prescription medications. This is a free service fully funded by the MED-Project. Government facilities and private businesses (drug stores) within the County received secure disposal bins for kiosk disposal of qualified medications. The Town's MED-Project Disposal Bin is located at the Police Operations Building lobby located at 15900 Los Gatos Boulevard.

PAGE 6 OF 6

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CONCLUSION:

The Town of Los Gatos works closely with sustainability working groups, partners, and task forces to continue to identify opportunities that will further enhance the community, conserve natural resources, and reduce waste.

COORDINATION:

This report was coordinated with the Police Department and Community Development Department.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Fiscal impacts for the Town's sustainability efforts vary by item and are incorporated in the Town's Adopted Operating Budget, demonstrating a commitment to these investments. There is no impact as a result of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.