

Los Gatos Town Council Pre-Retreat Interview Summary

Context- In preparing for the Council Retreat, facilitators Shawn Spano and Debra Figone offered confidential one-on-one interviews to each Councilmember. A structured agenda and interview questions were provided. The purpose of the interviews was to tap into each participating Councilmember's interests, ideas, and aspirations for what they want in their relationships with each other, with the Town Manager, and with Town staff. The following is a summary of key interests and considerations that will be used to "jump start" the Council's retreat conversation; it is presented as a starting point. During the retreat, Council will build upon these individual thoughts to develop a set shared norms and principles by which they want to operate as a governing body.

Working Relationships (as a Council Body and with the Town Manager and her staff)

Strengths- What does the Council have now in its working relationships as a body?

Examples include:

- **Respectful and Professional-** Council behavior towards each other is generally respectful and professional
- **Diverse Perspectives-** Each brings their diverse views and perspectives to Council discussions
- **Commitment-** All do their homework and come prepared
- **Responsive-** The Town has been responsive in meeting the business Community's needs due to the impacts of the pandemic
- **Appreciative-** The Town Manager has done a great job on boarding a new Council; Staff have made tremendous sacrifices during the pandemic

Visions for Success - What does the Council want to maintain or want more of?

Examples include:

- **Be Respectful and Professional**
 - Council sets a respectful tone for community and staff
 - Respect staff and their expertise
 - Expect and practice civility and decorum
- **Trust Each Other**
 - Trust each other and staff
 - Give each other the benefit of the doubt
- **Work as a Team**
 - Maintain current strength of commitment and hard work as a Council (e.g., do our homework and come prepared)
 - Treat each other with respect and as members of the same team, even if opinions differ
 - Work at building relationships as colleagues on an on-going basis, especially given the isolation caused by the pandemic

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- **Appreciate Diverse Perspectives**
 - Appreciate the diverse points of view and perspectives of all “players”/ stay open to other points of view before deciding/locking into positions
- **Bridge Differences**
 - Work at building consensus and compromise; bridge differences; hold no grudges; do not become polarized
- **Remain Open, Flexible and Adaptable**
 - Remain flexible and adaptable as the environment is always changing
- **Manage Governing Processes Effectively and Efficiently**
 - Know when there is enough information and move on; draw the line on excessive information and data requests
- **Follow Council Policy**
 - Follow Council policy frameworks or work together to change them

Desired Outcomes for a Successful Retreat and/or Retreat Follow Up

- Get to know one another - seek to understand one another; have a good laugh together!
- Develop trust (Council to Council; Council to Town Manager/staff)
- Establish Council values that will be the foundation for norms and behaviors
- Understand each other’s preferred work styles
- Develop norms for how to treat one another
- Bring full self to the retreat; participate and engage fully and authentically
- Better appreciate the Council/Manager form of government and the realities of the roles within this system of governance
- Set expectations and define those expectations (Council to Council, Council with Town Manager)
- Develop tangible action items and establish a process for follow up/checking in to assess progress (e.g., six-month follow up session)