



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
PARKS AND SUSTAINABILITY
COMMISSION REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 10/06/2025

ITEM NO: 4

DATE: October 2, 2025
TO: Parks and Sustainability Commission
FROM: Nicolle Burnham, Parks and Public Works Director
SUBJECT: Receive a Report on the Town's Adopt-A-Bench Program and Provide Feedback

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive a report on the Town's Adopt-A-Bench Program and provide feedback.

BACKGROUND:

This item was part of the 2025 Commission Work Plan adopted by the Town Council, developed by staff to align with park needs, planning documents, and Council priorities. The Town of Los Gatos has run an Adopt-A-Bench program for many years; however, there does not appear to be a policy or guidance document for this program. As such, the program was creating certain operational challenges for Parks and Public Works. For example, with no clear guidance on where donor benches should be placed, donors repeatedly requested benches at certain locations like Town Plaza and Bachman Park, leading to an excessive number of benches in these spaces. Meanwhile other parks such as Live Oak Manor, were rarely the recipient of donations.

The lack of written guidance has also made it unclear what the life of the donation would be or how to manage benches where the bench now needs replacement.

In 2024 Parks and Public and Public Works put the entire Adopt-A-Bench program on hold so that an evaluation could be completed and a recommendation made for written guidance.

DISCUSSION:

Staff has now geo-located all benches within the Town owned parks, open spaces and streets. These have been added to the Town's asset management system, and a layer has been created in the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS) to make the information accessible to the public. The Town GIS information can be viewed here:

<https://tlggis.losgatosca.gov/Geocortex/Essentials/REST/sites/Public/viewers/PublicViewer/visualdirectory/Resources/Config/Default>

PREPARED BY: Nicolle Burnham
Director, Parks and Public Works

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DATE: October 3, 2025

In developing written documentation for the Adopt-A-Bench program, staff will recommend a life of adoption setting a timeframe for donor recognition, outlining Town maintenance responsibilities during that period, and providing opportunities for renewal or new adoption once the period ends.. For example, an adopted bench might be guaranteed to be maintained for a specified number of years. If the bench is damaged during that time the Town would fix or replace the bench. If the bench is damaged or requires replacement after the specified period then the Town would provide the replacement but would not be required to maintain the donation. The original donor could re-adopt the bench, or the bench could be adopted by a new donor.

Staff has reviewed past records of adopted benches on file in the Parks and Public Works Department and compared these to the plaques and inscriptions observed on the benches during map development. Records of adopted benches from 2015 to present are generally clear and available. For adoptions prior to 2025 partial records exist, but they are limited in details. While the plaques or inscriptions may exist on the benches, staff has no way to contact the adopter and in many cases does not know who the adopter was. Based on this, staff is recommending that benches adopted 10 or more years ago be placed up for re-adoption. Staff is looking for feedback on this proposal. That feedback will be used to inform the development of the program document.

Staff will return to the Commission in December 2025 with a proposed Adopt-A-Bench program outline. After feedback from the Commission, the item will be discussed with Town Council.