

Under our Communications work plan item, Chair Yamate suggested that the Commission meet in three ad hoc committees to discuss potential talking points that could be used in outreach and engagement efforts. The results of the smaller group discussions would be brought back for discussion by the whole Commission at its June 13 meeting. The small groups are responsible for organizing their own Zoom or other gathering.

Specifically, the three groups are:

- Vice Chair Fisher, and Commissioners Khanal and Phillips (the original Communications ad hoc).
- Chair Yamate, and Commissioners Lo, Kane, and Balasingam.
- Commissioners Idemoto, Isaacs, Broadhead, and Memarzia.

Each group should send their suggested talking points to Holly by June 6 (one week before the June meeting) that address:

- **Clarifying the Commission's mission and values.** (The DEI Commission Enabling Resolution has language that might be useful: To serve in an advisory capacity to the Town Council regarding matters pertaining to creating equitable opportunities and a sense of belonging within Town. The DEIC is committed to Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion across all sectors within the Town of Los Gatos and the purpose of DEIC is to work to create more equitable opportunities and increase a sense of belonging for all Los Gatos community members and visitors through community engagement and collaborative activities.) In fulfilling its advisory function to the Town Council, the DEIC will engage the community, particularly underrepresented members of the community, and identify and advise on matters affecting the Town and the Town Council utilizing a lens of justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion. The DEIC seeks to create lasting change through educating the Town about its existing diversity, advising on ways to create a more equitable community, and promoting the benefits and enrichment that can be enjoyed by an inclusive Town.
- **Explaining why the Commission was established.** Like many towns across the United States, Los Gatos has a history of systemic inequities, the effects and existence of which we continue to see today. We continue to grapple with the historic origins of the Town's racial segregation, and how certain laws, policies, and behaviors have shaped the composition and nature of the Town. Los Gatos is identified as among the ten most racially segregated communities in the Bay Area. In recent years, the Town has seen more overt instances of discrimination, including racial and homophobic attacks directed at a former mayor of the Town, anti-Semitic graffiti painted on religious buildings, and racist and homophobic incidents in the local schools. After an independent study commissioned by the Town identified the need, the Town created the Commission to address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Town Council and many of the Town's residents believe in the benefits and importance of creating a more diverse and welcoming community. We are focused on engaging with community members, and understanding what the Town must do to overcome such problems and to prepare the Town for a more diversified future. We believe that a more welcoming and inclusive environment lifts up the entire community, benefits all of its members and makes the Town of Los Gatos better.
- **Linking the Commission's purpose to its work plan.**

The Commission also discussed the potential of creating a FAQ based on key questions. The groups and/or individual Commissioners are welcome to begin to think of answers to potential questions, such as:

- Why does Los Gatos need affordable housing? [Creating a more diverse, equitable and inclusive community does not happen overnight or on its own. It takes intentional action by the Town and community leaders. When one looks to the vast amount of research that has been conducted to overcome racially segregated communities, university educators, public policy analysts, urban planners, historians and other scholars all conclude that meaningful change cannot occur without creating affordable housing opportunities. Communities can be enriched when essential workers in the community, especially those involved in supporting a community's infrastructure in schools, public services, law enforcement and other emergency services, first responders, healthcare services, restaurants and grocery stores, also live where they work.](#)

• [Why are there restrictive covenants?](#)

- [What are restrictive covenants involving real estate transactions, how did they come about and what impact have they had on the makeup of the Town?](#) Restrictive covenants are limitations put in title deeds that restrict the use or sale of property by owners of the property. For example, in some areas of the Town of Los Gatos, homes can only be single story buildings. Historically, some landowners wanted to “preserve” the character of the neighborhood by inserting discriminatory covenants that prohibited selling the property to non-white buyers. These covenants are illegal under state and federal fair housing laws and are unenforceable, but they are reminders of the Town's racist past. Property owners can have these covenants redacted from their title documents under procedures provided by state law.

[Why do we need to talk about uncomfortable events in the Town's history that we are not proud of?](#) By understanding the historic origins of the Town's segregated status, the Town can move forward in a more thoughtful and positive manner to both ensure that explicit and implicit barriers and restrictions to a more diverse community are identified and removed, and that appropriate steps are taken to promote and facilitate more diversity in the Town's residents and business community. The independent study did not identify the historic origins of the Town's segregated status, and the challenge for the Commission will be how to uncover that history. Some general explanation can be found in the Town's housing element regarding the origin of housing and other discrimination statewide. While the Town Library maintains a “collection of historically valuable documents that help tell the story of the Town of Los Gatos,” the library acknowledges the lack of historical information of BIPOC members of the community. To help develop a more complete history of Los Gatos, the library has initiated the Represent Los Gatos Oral History Project, and has posted online a handful of digital recordings of interviews with former and current members of the Los Gatos community. The DEI Commission should become more familiar with the program and could find ways to assist the Town Library in these efforts.

- [How can we make sure covenants and other exclusionary items don't happen again?](#)
- [How can the Town celebrate its diversity?](#) In addition to the DEIC's role as a watchdog for anti-DEI conduct, the DEIC seeks to explore ways to educate, promote and celebrate the diversity of the Town of Los Gatos. To celebrate its diversity, it would be helpful to have the specific demographic information on which the HCD Draft Revised 2023-2031 Housing Element Figures 10-6 through 10-10 are based and be able to identify increases in the diversity of not only Town residents but also people working in the Town and visitors to the Town. Are there creative ways in obtaining this data outside of census data?

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- Questions to Pose When We Speak with Local Groups and Underrepresented Members of our Community

- Do you have concerns about the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Town of Los Gatos? What are you most hopeful for relative to these concerns?
- Do you see opportunities for the Town to do more to promote and ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion?
- What type of support could the Town and the DEI Commission provide to create a more inclusive community?

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