



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
PLANNING COMMISSION
REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 02/26/2020

ITEM NO: 2

DATE: February 21, 2020
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Joel Paulson, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Recommend a Preferred Land Use Alternative Framework for the General Plan Update to the Town Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend a preferred land use alternative framework for the General Plan update to the Town Council.

BACKGROUND:

The Town of Los Gatos is in the process of updating its long range, comprehensive General Plan that looks forward to the year 2040. The Town Council appointed a General Plan Update Advisory Committee (GPAC) consisting of two Council Members, three Planning Commissioners, members of the General Plan Committee, and other residents. The GPAC is advisory to the Planning Commission and Town Council. All GPAC staff reports are available online: www.losgatosca.gov/13/Agendas-Minutes

Key milestones are brought to the Planning Commission for its recommendation(s) to the Town Council. The purpose of this agenda item is for the Planning Commission to consider forwarding the GPAC's recommendation on a preferred land use alternative to the Town Council. This report focuses on the development of the preferred land use alternative through the work of the GPAC.

DISCUSSION:

The identification of a preferred land use alternative is an important step in the General Plan update. The preferred alternative becomes the framework for the preparation of the 2040 General Plan Land Use Element and informs the other required Elements, including Open Space, Sustainability, and Mobility. The alternative provides high level guidance regarding the

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Reviewed by: Planning Manager and Community Development Director

DISCUSSION (continued):

type and location of land uses, in combination with the Town Vision and Guiding Principles (approved by Town Council on August 20, 2019) to guide the development of General Plan goals, policies, and action items through the conclusion of the update process.

On June 20, 2019, July 18, 2019, and August 15, 2019, the GPAC met to discuss and provide direction for draft land use alternatives. As part of the materials provided for these discussions, the GPAC received an excerpt of the 2020 General Plan land use designations (Exhibit 1), an excerpt of the Background Report, Section 3.3: Existing General Plan Land Use Designations (Exhibit 2), a summary of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) objectives and factors (Exhibit 3), information about Missing Middle Housing (Exhibit 4), and a booklet of housing type examples (Exhibit 5).

In addition, the Town Council approved the Vision and Guiding Principles in August 2019 (Exhibit 6) which also informed the development of the preferred land use alternative.

The GPAC discussed the importance of maintaining the Town's diverse economy, its commercial and industrial businesses, and potential for new enterprises. As such, most of the GPAC discussions and direction focused on how the Town could meet its expected State mandates to plan for significant amounts of new housing in a way that would implement the Town Vision and Guiding Principles for the Town's General Plan 2040. The specific goal, as determined by the GPAC, was to provide 2,000 new residential units.

On December 12, 2019, the GPAC met to discuss the proposed land use alternatives and provide guidance on an upcoming Community Workshop. The consultants put forward four land use alternative concepts (A, B, C, and D) designed to accommodate future housing growth. The description and analysis of the alternatives was provided to the GPAC in a Land Use Alternatives Report (available online: www.losgatos2040.com/documents.html).

The four alternatives vary based on certain assumptions, including height, density, and the redevelopment rate for each of the land use designations included in the analysis. In addition, the consultant identified seven opportunity areas where there is capacity to accommodate additional residential density due to the proximity of commercial services and/or employment centers to support additional development. The allowed density and redevelopment rates are set at a higher level for properties within the opportunity areas.

As described in the Land Use Alternatives Report, the preferred land use alternative could be one of the four alternatives described in the report (Alternatives A, B, C, or D), or could be a combination of features from several alternatives.

On January 16, 2020, the Town hosted the second Community Workshop for the General Plan update process. The Community Workshop was held to inform the community about the

DISCUSSION (continued):

General Plan update process and obtain feedback regarding the land use alternatives. A summary of the Community Workshop and online feedback collected over the following two weeks is included as Exhibit 10.

On January 30, 2020, the GPAC met to develop a preferred land use alternative recommendation. The Committee received a comparison table of the four land use alternatives (Exhibits 7, 8, and 9) to assist with its deliberations.

The GPAC had a robust discussion regarding the alternatives and the implications for development within Los Gatos. The Committee eliminated Alternatives A and D from consideration because A did not achieve the housing target and D was too aggressive. Major features of the discussion included:

- The need to meet the housing target by providing opportunities for a variety of housing strategies;
- The density range for the Low Density Residential land use designation;
- Compatible interface of development on major corridors with adjacent neighborhoods;
- Whether an entire opportunity area had redevelopment potential;
- Historic preservation;
- The additional regulatory controls in the Town's Zoning Code that would work in concert with implementation of the General Plan to maintain the Town's urban form in existing residential neighborhoods; and
- Opportunities for mixed use in downtown.

The GPAC passed a motion (7-2 with Quintana and Rosenberg opposed, and Burch and Jarvis absent) to recommend Alternative C as a framework for the General Plan update with the addition of downtown as an eighth opportunity area. The General Plan update consultants have created a description of the recommended GPAC land use alternative framework (Exhibit 11).

The GPAC recommendation is a logical outcome of the Committee's discussions and consideration of the approved Vision and Guiding Principles. The overarching framework provides Los Gatos with more housing opportunities and a menu of housing strategies. In this way, particular housing types would be available to and appropriate in certain geographic locations. For example, a duplex could be accommodated within the "shell" of an existing single-family home in a predominately single-family neighborhood, while vertical mixed use development might be more fitting for commercial corridors, such as Los Gatos Boulevard.

This approach maintains the unique character of Los Gatos, its historic neighborhoods, and business areas while creating opportunities to adapt to State requirements, create housing

DISCUSSION (continued):

choices for seniors, millennials, and others to live in Town, and better integrate land use and transportation.

The preferred alternative is a framework. As the GPAC works on the Land Use Element and other content of the General Plan update, the GPAC may refine the specific application of height and density increases within and outside the identified Opportunity Areas.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the recommendation of the GPAC, staff recommends that the Planning Commission review the GPAC recommended preferred land use alternative framework included as Exhibit 11 and forward a recommendation to the Town Council for approval.

ALTERNATIVES:

Alternatively, the Commission can:

1. Forward a recommendation to the Town Council for approval of the GPAC recommended preferred land use alternative framework with modifications; or
2. Forward a recommendation to the Town Council for a different land use alternative; or
3. Continue the matter to a date certain with specific direction.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No written public comments have been received.

PUBLIC OUTREACH:

The Los Gatos General Plan update process has so far included the following outreach activities and other opportunities for community participation:

- All-hands kick-off meeting (August 23, 2018)
- Launch of the General Plan update website: losgatos2040.com (early September 2018)
- EngagementHQ (Topics and surveys opened October 1, 2018)
- Newsletter #1 General Plan Overview (October 1, 2018)
- Community Workshop #1: Assets, Issues, Opportunities, and Vision (October 17, 2018)
- GPAC Meeting #1 (October 30, 2018)
- GPAC Meeting #2 (December 11, 2018)
- Democracy Tent Presentation (March 14, 2019)
- Background Report (March 15, 2019)

PUBLIC OUTREACH (continued):

- Newsletter #2: Background Report Summary (March 20, 2019)
- Spring into Green Booth (April 14, 2019)
- GPAC Meeting #3 (April 23, 2019)
- GPAC Meeting #4 (April 30, 2019)
- GPAC Meeting #5 (May 23, 2019)
- GPAC Meeting #6 (June 20, 2019)
- Planning Commission Meeting on Vision Statement and Guiding Principles (July 10, 2019)
- GPAC Meeting #7 (June 18, 2019)
- GPAC Meeting #8 (August 15, 2019)
- Town Council Meeting on Vision Statement and Guiding Principles (August 20, 2019)
- Land Use Alternatives Report (December 2019)
- GPAC Meeting #9 (December 12, 2019)
- Community Workshop #2: Land Use Alternatives (January 16, 2019)
- GPAC Meeting #10 (January 30, 2020)

Additional outreach activities have included informational booths at the Farmers Market, the Library, and Music in the Park during Summer 2019.

CEQA:

The Planning Commission's recommendation to the Town Council has no effect on the environment and is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A final decision on the preferred land use alternative will be considered as part of the approval of the 2040 General Plan. An Environmental Impact Report will be prepared as part of the General Plan update process.

EXHIBITS:

1. 2020 General Plan Land Use Designations
2. Background Report Section 3.3: Existing General Plan Land Use Designations
3. RHNA Objectives and Factors
4. Missing Middle Housing Information
5. Booklet of Housing Type Examples
6. Council Approved Vision and Guiding Principles
7. Master Land Use Alternatives Comparison Table
8. Opportunity Area Dwelling Units by Alternatives Comparison Table
9. Assumptions, Development Standards, and Net New Dwelling Unit Comparison Table
10. Community Workshop #2 Summary
11. GPAC Recommended Preferred Land Use Alternative Summary