



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS  
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 11/05/2019

ITEM NO: 12

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DATE: October 31, 2019  
TO: Mayor and Town Council  
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager  
SUBJECT: General Plan Amendment Application GP-19-001. Project Location: **Town Wide**. Applicant: Town of Los Gatos.  
Approve proposed General Plan Amendments by Resolution to Language Specific to Highway 17 in Goal TRA-4 and Supporting Policies

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve proposed General Plan amendments by Resolution to language specific to Highway 17 in Goal TRA-4 and supporting policies.

**BACKGROUND:**

Changing dynamics in job and population growth in the greater Bay Area have led to increased pressure on local streets and roads as freeways exceed capacity. This is especially evident in Los Gatos during commute hours and with summer weekend beach traffic. The configuration of Highway 17 approaching Los Gatos from the north and through the Town may exacerbate the impacts on the Town as drivers search for alternate routes that lead them to local streets.

In 2016, Measure B was passed by voters to allow for transportation improvements throughout the County funded through a sales tax increase. This measure included broad language specific to Los Gatos and Highway 17. The specific Measure B language reads:

*Highway 17 Corridor Congestion Relief: Upgrade Highway 17/9 interchange to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, mobility, and roadway operations; deploy advanced transportation technology to reduce freeway cut thru traffic in Los Gatos, including traffic signal control system upgrades in Los Gatos, Traveler Information System, advanced ramp metering systems; support Multi-Modal Congestion Relief Solutions, including enhanced Highway 17*

**PREPARED BY:** Matt Morley  
Parks and Public Works Director

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Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Town Attorney, and Finance Director

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BACKGROUND (continued):

*Express Bus service, implementing local bus system improvements that reduce auto trips to schools, work, and commercial areas in Los Gatos; and develop park and ride lots to serve as transit hubs for express bus, shuttles, local bus system connections.*

Through preliminary discussions with the Valley Transportation Agency (VTA), and Caltrans an opportunity exists to extend the scope of the Highway 9 interchange project to include efficiencies from Highway 85 through the Highway 9 onramp to southbound Highway 17.

In the interest of ensuring the potential for funding for the maximum scope of the project, on March 19, 2019 the Town Council, on a 3-2 vote, supported the design for a project at Highway 9 and Highway 17, including design options for efficiencies on Highway 17 and for additional travel lanes on Highway 17, and directed staff to process a 2020 General Plan amendment to facilitate the project.

The early work associated with the project includes identifying the scope of work and preliminary design associated with the project, which may include stacking lanes, merge lanes, auxiliary lanes, exit lanes, and improved traffic flow through lane realignment and roadway widening. The Town will be engaged through a public outreach process and provide Town Council reports throughout the design and construction. Town staff has been working with VTA on preliminary stages of this effort, with a Request for Proposals to study early design options due for release by VTA during the week of October 28, 2019.

DISCUSSION:

The Town Council directed staff to process amendments to the existing 2020 General Plan in alignment with the potential project. Attachment 1 provides the text of 2020 General Plan Goal TRA-4 and supporting policies and Attachment 2 provides the recommended amendments. Staff recommends retaining the full language of the existing Goal TRA-4 in the interest of continuing to emphasize the importance of Highway 17 to the community. Modifications to the supporting policies would facilitate the project design.

Town procedure requires the General Plan Committee (GPC) to make a recommendation on all proposed General Plan amendments. Because the entire GPC sits on the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) and it is important for the entire GPAC to be involved with any changes to the existing General Plan to inform its work on the update, this item was presented to the GPAC on September 19, 2019.

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DISCUSSION (continued):

During the GPAC discussion on this item, three recommendations were provided. The recommendations from the GPAC refer to the text in Attachment 2 and the recommendation for added text is reflected as *underlined and italicized*. The final recommended version can be found as Exhibit A to Attachment 3.

1. Modify the recommended changes to Policy TRA-4.1 to read: Improvements to Highway 17 should consider *and if appropriate support* efficiency improvements prior to adding capacity through increased travel lanes.
2. With respect to Policy TRA-4.3, the GPAC recommended removal of this policy in its entirety and renumbering subsequent policies to reflect the removal.
3. With respect to Policy TRA-4.5, the GPAC recommended not making the staff recommendation that would change the word “do” to “does,” while accepting the removal of the words “lanes or.”

Subsequently, this item was presented to the Planning Commission for a public hearing at its October 9, 2019 meeting. The Planning Commission unanimously supported the recommendations of the GPAC.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends that the Town Council approve by Resolution the recommended amendments to the General Plan.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Town Council could further modify the General Plan Policy and/or goals or choose not to amend the General Plan.

COORDINATION:

This report has been coordinated with the Community Development Department.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact as a result of the recommended action.

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

The project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for Implementation of California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15061(b)(3).

Attachments:

1. Current General Plan TRA-4 Goal and Policies
2. Proposed General Plan Amendments to Goal TRA-4 and Supporting Policies
3. Resolution to Adopt the Amendments