



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 10/11/2023

ITEM NO: 17

DATE: October 11, 2023
TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Accept the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plan and Identify First Year Priorities for the DEI Commission

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plan and Identify First Year Priorities for the DEI Commission.

BACKGROUND:

In 2021, Town staff began to identify Town processes, policies, and other Town work that would enhance equity and inclusion in Los Gatos. In addition, the adopted 2040 General Plan contains a new Racial, Social, and Environmental Justice Element. On August 17, 2021, the Town Council approved engaging ALF Insights (ALFI), the consulting arm of American Leadership Forum Silicon Valley, to complete a phase of discovery, engaging community partners to ascertain their understanding of the Town's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) work to date as well as gather input on equity and inclusion efforts in the Town. ALFI summarized the themes and ideas gathered in those meetings and provided a set of recommendations in a Discovery Report accepted by the Town Council on September 6, 2022.

Also on September 6th, the Town Council directed the Town Manager to continue work with ALFI to assist in strategizing and identifying Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Implementation Actions to include clear goals and action items. ALFI engaged a Community Working Group to assist in the development of its recommendations for the Town.

On September 19, 2023, the Town Council received ALFI's Implementation Actions and voted to establish a DEI Commission. On October 3, the Council considered and approved a revised enabling resolution for the new Commission.

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

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DISCUSSION:

In addition to ALFI's efforts with the Community Working Group, staff sought a larger engagement of the community in preparation of a comprehensive DEI Plan. Staff met with almost every Town Board, Commission, and Committee to discuss the recommendations in the 2022 Discovery Report, consider DEI in the work of each body, identify potential additional DEI action items, and obtain related input.

The Town also held a community workshop over Zoom with smaller break out discussion groups to discuss similar topics as the Commissions. Finally, an internal employee Equity Team met to consider these topics and an anonymous survey was sent to all Town staff to garner input.

Many different voices were heard during these various meetings. Some people questioned why the Town was doing this work at this time; asked what specific problem a DEI Plan was intended to solve; expressed that the Town is welcoming to all people currently; shared stories of personal experiences that indicated that not everyone is welcome in Los Gatos; recognized the long term work associated with DEI; indicated that the Town government cannot do DEI work alone; and made other suggestions and comments.

Staff has compiled a comprehensive DEI Plan that brings together the ALFI Implementation Actions, the General Plan 2040 Racial, Social, and Environmental Justice Element Implementation Programs, internal Town efforts that have been underway since 2021 (e.g., Police reforms), and the broader community, Town Commissions/Boards/Committees, and staff input into a single document.

As directed by the Town Council, the Plan identifies short, medium, and long term action items. The Plan also contains action items that are ongoing and do not have a specific conclusion. All action items are organized by the same goals found in the ALFI Implementation Actions document plus a goal pertaining to internal Town operations:

- Oversight: Create a process for oversight of the Town's DEI Plan;
- Safety: Create a robust and safe process for equity-focused, community-based programming;
- Collaboration: Leverage community resources to ensure equity efforts are collaborative and inclusive;
- Communication: Develop a communications campaign that highlights the Town's equity work;
- Housing: Educate the community about affordable housing to ensure that the Town meets its Housing Element Goals; and
- Increase equity in internal Town operations, service delivery, and customer interactions.

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CONCLUSION:

The DEI Plan acknowledges the ongoing work that the Town is doing to become a more diverse and inclusive community. This agenda item provides the Town Council an opportunity to discuss the Plan, modify the timeframe(s) for specific action items, and identify a couple of first year priorities for the DEI Commission and staff.

COORDINATION:

The DEI Plan was reviewed by all Town Department Directors, Town Attorney, Town Clerk, and Assistant Town Manager.

The preparation of the Plan included input from the Arts and Culture Commission, Community Health and Senior Services Commission, Complete Streets and Transportation Commission, Finance Commission, Library Board, Parks Commission, Personnel Board, Planning Commission, and Youth Commission. Resident members of the Historic Preservation Committee and Housing Element Advisory Committee (which includes the General Plan Committee) were invited to the Planning Commission's discussion.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The acceptance of the Plan and identifying first year priorities has no fiscal impact.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.

Attachment:

1. Draft DEI Plan