

1. Introduction

The GPAC served as a sounding board for the discussion of issues, opportunities, and the development of the plan to guide the community's future. The GPAC held more than 35 public meetings throughout the General Plan update process, listening to community input and contributing to the development of the Vision and Guiding Principles, Land Use Alternatives, and the content of the General Plan document.

Planning Commission and Town Council Meetings

The Town held various Planning Commission and Town Council Meetings throughout the update process to inform decision-makers and the public, discuss key milestones, and provide direction for the next steps.

1.3 General Plan Vision and Guiding Principles

After community discussions at the General Plan Update Advisory Committee and Planning Commission, the Los Gatos Town Council approved a Vision Statement and set of Guiding Principles for the Los Gatos 2040 General Plan on August 20, 2019. The Vision Statement is written in the present tense to describe the Town in the year 2040.

Vision

The Town of Los Gatos is a welcoming, family-oriented, and safe community nestled in the beautiful foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains. The Town is a sustainable community that takes pride in its small-town character and provides a range of housing opportunities, historic neighborhoods, local culture and arts, excellent schools, and a lively and accessible downtown. Los Gatos offers a choice of mobility options, superior public facilities and services, and an open and responsive local government that is fiscally sound. The Town includes a mix of businesses throughout Town that serve all residents, workers, and visitors. Los Gatos has a dynamic and thriving economy that includes a mix of businesses throughout Town that serves all residents, workers, and visitors.

Guiding Principles

- **Community Vitality**
Invigorate Los Gatos as a special place for community gathering, commerce, and other activities for residents and visitors. Foster the economic vitality of all Los Gatos business locations. Preserve and enhance the Town's historic resources and character while guiding the community into the future.
- **Connectivity**
Emphasize the importance of connecting all facets of the Town to build a strong sense of community through building design, walkability, and safe streets.
- **Diverse Neighborhoods**
Foster appropriate investments to maintain and enhance diverse neighborhoods, housing opportunities, and infrastructure to meet the needs of all current and future residents.
- **Fiscal Stability / Responsibility**
Provide high quality municipal services to the Los Gatos community while sustaining long term fiscal well-being.
- **Government Transparency**
Conduct governmental processes in an open manner and encourage public involvement in Town governance.

- **Inclusivity**
Value the importance of and promote ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic diversity and equity to enhance the quality of life in Los Gatos.
- **Mobility**
Provide a well-connected transportation system that enables safe access for all transportation modes, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.
- **Promote Public Safety**
Maintain and enhance Los Gatos as a safe community through preparation and planning, education, and community design that is responsive to the full range of potential natural and man-made hazards and safety issues.
- **Protect Natural Environment**
Protect and enhance the natural environment and biotic communities that define Los Gatos, including but not limited to open space preserves, recreational trails, surrounding hillsides, and natural waterways.
- **Sustainability**
Manage, conserve, and preserve Los Gatos' natural environment for present and future generations. Identify and provide opportunities to enhance the Town's sustainability policies and practices.

1.4 Analyses Informing the 2040 General Plan

As part of the Town of Los Gatos General Plan update process, the Town prepared the following General Plan supporting documents:

- **Issues, Opportunities, and Constraints Summary.** The Issues, Opportunities, and Constraints Summary summarized the key issues, opportunities, and constraints identified based on the findings in the Background Report, input from community workshops, GPAC, stakeholder interviews, and a Joint Town Council/Planning Commission study session.
- **Alternatives Report.** The Alternatives Report describes the development and evaluation of land use and policy alternatives. The report was designed to frame an active discussion among stakeholders, community members, and Town decision-makers, and led to a determination from the Town Council on a preferred land use alternative framework and direction on key policy issues, which formed the basis of the Draft General Plan.
- **Environmental Impact Report.** The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) responds to the requirements of the CEQA as set forth in Sections 15126, 15175, and 15176 of the CEQA Guidelines Act. The Planning Commission and Town Council will use the EIR during the General Plan update process to consider potential environmental implications associated with implementing the General Plan and to identify feasible mitigation measures for significant impacts. The General Plan EIR may also be used in the environmental evaluation of future projects. Future projects may be able to build (tier) their environmental review on the General Plan EIR if they are consistent with the General Plan.

1.5 The Los Gatos Community

Los Gatos is located at the base of the Santa Cruz Mountains at the southwest edge of Santa Clara County and approximately 50 miles south of San Francisco. The natural landscape includes picturesque hillsides, creeks, and valley flatlands. Los Gatos is in an area once occupied by Indigenous People, which extends from the point where the San Joaquin and Sacramento rivers flow into the San Francisco Bay to Point Sur, with the interior Coastal Ranges most likely constituting the inland boundary. The Indigenous People lived sustainably in the area