

Los Gatos Community Center

Community Needs Interim Report to CHSSC

Los Gatos Thrives Foundation

August 22, 2024

The creation of a new intergenerational Community Center for Los Gatos is a goal of the Los Gatos Thrives Foundation. The purpose of this interim report by the Foundation to the Community Health and Senior Services Commission (CHSSC) is to seek input on our study of what Los Gatos community members have said they need in a community center. We especially seek CHSSC input because the CHSSC engages with the older adult community and provides a venue for assessing the needs of this important demographic as future users of a community center.

The Foundation's study of Los Gatos community needs is being carried out in partnership with community leaders and representatives from the Town Council, the CHSSC and other leaders providing services for the community. The origins of our nonprofit foundation and its objective of creating a Community Center for all ages grows out of an earlier study by the Town's Senior Services Committee. The Senior Services Committee provided a Senior Services Roadmap which was unanimously endorsed by the Town Council in February 2023 (<https://www.losgatosca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/32737/Attachment-1---Senior-Services-Roadmap-Report>). The first of the seven goals in the Roadmap is the creation of a Los Gatos Community Center for all ages. Subsequently the Los Gatos Thrives Foundation was formed as a 501(c)(3) to support older adult programs in Los Gatos with a major goal of creating a new intergenerational Community Center.

The Foundation believes it is essential that new developments in our small town of Los Gatos maintain a key historic asset—that of Los Gatos being a charming community where all ages thrive. Thus, it is essential in planning for a community center that the first step be to understand and document the needs and wishes of our local community members and stakeholders, i.e., to learn what will best serve Los Gatos.

To understand community needs our team has taken a three-pronged approach. First, we visited six new or recently refurbished community centers in nearby cities to: a) learn what capabilities they have included, b) what are their most valuable community spaces, and c) to learn from their experience in operating their centers.

Second, we conducted a detailed survey from over 600 respondents to learn what Los Gatos community members would like to see in a center. Third, we held a community workshop with ~100 attendees to discuss in a focus-session format what we learned from other centers and our community survey, and to gain first-hand perspectives on what they viewed as:

- “must haves”,
- “nice to have” and
- “not needed”

in a community center for Los Gatos.

The objective of this Los Gatos Thrives presentation is to inform the CHSSC of the preliminary results of our study and to receive your suggestions for additions and improvements. As additional background in advance of our presentation an analysis of our Community Center Needs Survey and a Community Center Priorities analysis is attached.