



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 12/10/2025

ITEM NO: 6

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DATE: December 5, 2025

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Joel Paulson, Community Development Director

SUBJECT: Consider a Request for Approval for a Zone Change from C-2:LHP (Central Business District with a Landmark and Historic Preservation Overlay) to R-1D:LHP (Single-Family Residential Downtown with a Landmark and Historic Preservation Overlay) and a General Plan Amendment to Change the Land Use Designation from Central Business District to Medium Density Residential, for Property **Located at 4 Tait Avenue**. APN: 510-44-054. Categorically Exempt pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15061 (b)(3). Zone Change Application Z-25-002 and General Plan Amendment Application GP-25-002. Property Owner/Applicant: Town of Los Gatos. Project Planner: Sean Mullin.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Consider a request for approval for a zone change from C-2:LHP (Central Business District with a Landmark and Historic Preservation Overlay) to R-1D:LHP (Single-Family Residential Downtown with a Landmark and Historic Preservation Overlay) and a General Plan Amendment to change the Land Use Designation from Central Business District to Medium Density Residential, for property located at 4 Tait Avenue.

**PROJECT DATA:**

General Plan Designation:	Central Business District
Zoning Designation:	C-2:LHP (Central Business District with a Landmark and Historic Preservation Overlay)
Applicable Plans & Standards:	General Plan, Town Code
Parcel Size:	0.27 Acres

**PREPARED BY:** Sean Mullin, AICP  
Planning Manager

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Reviewed by: Community Development Director and Town Attorney

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Surrounding Area			
	Existing Land Use	General Plan	Zoning
<b>North</b>	Residential	Medium Density Residential	R-1D
<b>East</b>	Commercial	Medium Density Residential and Central Business District	R-1D and C-2
<b>South</b>	Residential	Medium Density Residential	R-1D:LHP
<b>West</b>	Residential	Medium Density Residential	R-1D

CEQA:

The project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15061 (b)(3), in that it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposed amendments to the Town Code and General Plan will have a significant effect on the environment, because the project does not include any modification that would affect the historic significance of the building.

FINDINGS:

- As required, pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, there is no possibility that this project will have a significant impact on the environment; therefore, the project is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15061 (b)(3).
- As required by the General Plan, the proposed zone change is consistent with the General Plan and its Elements in that the proposed zoning is consistent with the proposed General Plan designation.
- As required by the General Plan, the General Plan amendment is internally consistent with the existing goals and policies of the General Plan and its corresponding elements.

ACTION:

The Planning Commission will provide a recommendation to the Town Council who will render the final decision on the proposal.

BACKGROUND:

The subject parcel is owned by the Town and located at the northeast corner of Tait Avenue and West Main Street in the Broadway Historic District (Exhibit 1). The property is developed with an approximately 2,525-square foot primary building and an ancillary outbuilding originally constructed as a fire station and later used as a museum. The museum use was discontinued several years ago. The primary building and outbuilding are currently unoccupied.

On August 4, 2020, the Town Council authorized the Town Manager to execute a long-term lease agreement with Tait Firehouse LLC for the subject property. The agreement allowed the property to remain in Town control, maintained the historic value of the property, required no monetary resources from the Town, and provided a potential annual revenue stream to the Town.

On April 20, 2021, the Town Council introduced an ordinance to rezone the property from R-1D:LHP (Single-Family Residential Downtown with a Landmark and Historic Preservation Overlay) to C-2:LHP (Central Business District with a Landmark and Historic Preservation Overlay) and adopted a resolution approving a General Plan amendment to change the land use designation from Medium Density Residential to Central Business District (Exhibits 2 and 3). These changes were requested by the applicant at the time to allow the tenants of the building to lease the existing building for commercial uses. To date, a viable commercial tenant for the space has not been secured and the property remains unoccupied.

On January 21, 2025, the Council adopted a resolution declaring the property to be exempt surplus land pursuant to the Surplus Land Act [Government Code Section 54221(f)(1)(B)] and authorizing the Town Manager to pursue disposal of the property (Exhibit 4).

On October, 7, 2025, the Council approved an agreement for brokerage services for the disposition of the property.

Given the challenges experienced in trying to secure a viable commercial tenant for the property, the Town now seeks to return to the residential designation of the property by changing the zoning from C-2:LHP to R-1D:LHP, and a General Plan amendment to change the Land Use designation from Central Business District to Medium Density Residential.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

##### A. Location and Surrounding Neighborhood

The subject parcel is located at the northeast corner of Tait Avenue and West Main Street in the Broadway Historic District (Exhibit 1). The property is developed with an approximately 2,525-square foot primary building, constructed in 1927, originally built as a fire station and later used as a museum. An accessory building is located in the northeast corner of the property. The museum use was discontinued several years ago. The primary building and accessory building are currently unoccupied.

The subject parcel is surrounded by parcels with a Medium Density Residential General Plan Land Use designation and R-1D:LHP zoning designation to the north, south, and west (Exhibit 1). The parcel to the east has a Central Business District Land Use designation and C-2 zoning designation.

B. Project Summary

The Town seeks to return to the residential designation of the property by changing the zoning from C-2:LHP to R-1D:LHP and a General Plan amendment to change the Land Use designation from Central Business District to Medium Density Residential.

DISCUSSION:

A. Zoning

The Town is proposing a zone change from C-2:LHP (Central Business District with a Landmark and Historic Preservation Overlay) to R-1D:LHP (Single-Family Residential Downtown with a Landmark and Historic Preservation Overlay). The proposed zoning would be consistent with the General Plan Land Use designation if the proposed General Plan amendment is approved. Permitted uses in the R-1D or multiple-family residential downtown zone include single- and two-family dwellings provided that there is not more than one principal residential structure on a lot, family daycare homes, and small-family residential care facilities. The subject parcel is bound by parcels with a R-1D zoning designation to the north and west (Exhibit 1). The parcel south has a R-1D:LHP zoning designation and the parcel to the east has a C-2 zoning designation

The proposed zone change would not affect the existing Landmark and Historic Preservation Overlay (LHP).

B. General Plan Land Use Designations

The Town is proposing a General Plan amendment to change the Land Use designation from Central Business District to Medium Density Residential. The Medium Density Residential designation (5 -12 dwelling units per acre) would be consistent with the proposed R-1D zoning and provides for multiple-family residential, duplex, and/or small single-family homes.

The subject parcel is bound by parcels with a Medium Density Residential designation to the north, south, and west. The parcel to the east has a Central Business District General Plan Land Use designation.

C. General Plan Goals/Policies/Strategies

Applicable General Plan goals and policies that should be used to evaluate the proposed General Plan amendment and zone change applications for this site include, but are not limited to:

### **Land Use Goals**

- LU-1 To preserve, promote, and protect the existing small-town character and quality of life within Los Gatos.
- LU-6 To preserve and enhance the existing character and sense of place in residential neighborhoods.

### **Land Use Policies**

- LU-1.4 Infill projects shall be designed in context with the neighborhood and surrounding zoning with respect to the existing scale and character of surrounding structures, and should blend rather than compete with the established character of the area.
- LU-6.1 Protect existing residential areas from the impacts of nonresidential development.
- LU-6.3 Protect existing residential areas from adjacent nonresidential uses by assuring that buffers are developed and maintained.
- LU-6.4 Prohibit uses that may lead to the deterioration of residential neighborhoods, or adversely impact the public safety or the residential character of a residential neighborhood.
- LU-6.5 The type, density, and intensity of new land use shall be consistent with that of the immediate neighborhood.

### **Community Design Goals**

- CD-6 To promote and protect the physical and other distinctive qualities of residential neighborhoods.
- CD-10 To maintain the historic character of the Downtown.
- CD-12 To preserve significant historic and architectural features within the Town.
- CD-13 To support and encourage thoughtful rehabilitation or reuse of historic structures.

### **Community Design Policies**

- CD-6.1 Reduce the visual impact of new construction and/or remodels on the Town and its neighborhoods.
- CD-10.1 Encourage the preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, reuse, and maintenance of existing buildings Downtown.
- CD-12.1 Avoid demolishing historic buildings, unless the Planning Commission finds, based on substantial evidence, that there is no feasible means to ensure the preservation of the structure.
- CD-12.2 Encourage the preservation, maintenance, and adaptive reuse of existing residential, commercial, or public buildings.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

A project identification sign was installed on site consistent with Town policy and written notice was sent to property owners and occupants within 300 feet of the property. At the time of this report's preparation, the Town has not received any public comment.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15061 (b)(3), in that it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposed amendments to the Town Code and General Plan will have a significant effect on the environment, because the project does not include any modification that would affect the historical significance of the building.

CONCLUSION:

A. Summary

The Town seeks to return to the residential designation of the property by changing the zoning from C-2:LHP to R-1D:LHP and a General Plan Amendment to change the Land Use designation from Central Business District to Medium Density Residential. The proposed zone change and General Plan amendment would be consistent with the existing pattern of zones and land uses adjacent to downtown (Exhibit 1). Additionally, reuse of the existing historic structure is supported by the General Plan goals and policies.

B. Recommendation

Based on the analysis above, staff recommends that the Planning Commission consider the existing and proposed zoning and General Plan Land Use designation and forward a recommendation for approval of the amendments to the Town Council. If the Planning Commission finds merit with the proposed amendments, it should:

1. Make the required finding that there is no possibility that this project will have a significant impact on the environment; therefore, the project is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15061 (b)(3) (Exhibit 2);
2. Make the required finding that the proposed zone change is consistent with the General Plan and its Elements in that the proposed zoning is consistent with the proposed General Plan Land Use designation (Exhibit 2);
3. Make the required finding that the General Plan amendment is internally consistent with the existing goals and policies of the General Plan and its Elements (Exhibit 2); and
4. Forward a recommendation of approval of Zone Change Application Z-25-002 General Plan Amendment Application GP-25-002 and to the Town Council.

C. Alternatives

Alternatively, the Planning Commission can:

1. Continue the matter to a date certain with specific direction;
2. Provide a recommendation for approval with modifications to the Town Council; or
3. Provide a recommendation for denial to the Town Council providing findings for denial.

EXHIBITS:

1. Location Maps (showing existing and proposed General Plan Land Use designations and Zoning)
2. Ordinance 2317
3. Resolution 2021-009
4. Resolution 2025-002
5. Draft Required Findings
6. Draft Ordinance for the Zone Change, with Exhibit A
7. Draft Resolution for the General Plan Amendment, with Exhibit A
8. Property Plans

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