



MEETING DATE: 03-20-06  
ITEM NO: 10

**COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

DATE: MARCH 15, 2006  
TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL  
FROM: DEBRA J. FIGONE, TOWN MANAGER   
SUBJECT: ACCEPT REPORT ON GENERAL SCOPE AND TIMELINE FOR  
ACTIONS FROM THE JANUARY 27<sup>TH</sup> AND 28<sup>TH</sup> TOWN COUNCIL  
RETREAT

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept report on general scope and timeline for actions from the January 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> Town Council Retreat

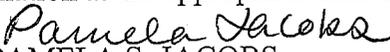
BACKGROUND:

The Town Council held a Council Retreat on Friday, January 27 and Saturday, January 28, 2006 to discuss their ideas about effective leadership and to share their visions for the future of Los Gatos and potential challenges to and strategies for achieving the vision. The purpose of this staff report is to share with Council the general scope and timeline for addressing the strategies discussed at the retreat.

DISCUSSION:

Attachment 1 provides the full summary notes from the Council Retreat. The Saturday, January 28<sup>th</sup> session focused on the Council members' vision for the future of the community and the possible challenges and obstacles to achieving the vision. Council and staff then discussed five possible solutions to the challenges, which are presented on page four of Attachment 1.

Although staff is not bringing forward specific work plans for these actions at this time, the following outline presents the general scope and timeline for addressing the actions. If Council concurs with this general direction of travel, staff will return to Council with more specific information at the appropriate time for review and approval of each action.

  
PREPARED BY: PAMELA S. JACOBS  
ASSISTANT TOWN MANAGER

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Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Assistant Town Manager OK Town Attorney  
\_\_\_\_\_ Clerk Administrator \_\_\_\_\_ Finance \_\_\_\_\_ Community Development

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**Economic Symposium**

This action envisions tapping local residents with business expertise to provide input regarding the Town's economic future. Staff recommends that this action be linked with other efforts that would provide a context for the input, rather than being a general open-ended session. The input could then be applied to a particular issue, challenge, and/or opportunity. The first opportunity for this could be in connection with the development of the North 40 Specific Plan. Other opportunities for input from local business experts would be identified as part of the Town's ongoing economic vitality efforts.

**Public-Private Partnerships**

This action reflects an existing ongoing practice undertaken by staff to identify opportunities for working with businesses, private sector organizations, non-profits, and other municipalities to deliver services. Due to budget challenges over the past four years, the Town has placed greater emphasis on this approach. As discussed recently in the mid-year budget report, staff will continue to explore other opportunities to deliver services more cost-effectively given the projected budget shortfalls beginning in FY 2010/11.

On a related issue, the Council Policy Committee is currently developing policy recommendations for Council regarding corporate sponsorships and donations. Once adopted by Council, this policy will provide guidance for staff as opportunities are identified.

**Updating the General Plan**

As noted at the Council retreat, work on the General Plan update will begin in 2007. Staff will bring forward a work plan for the update in Fall, 2006. The work plan will include opportunities for input from boards, commissions, specific stakeholders, and the community. At the commission retreats scheduled for April and May, 2006, the Council can advise the boards and commissions about the upcoming opportunities for input into the update. Input from local business experts as noted above could also be incorporated in the communication plan.

**Disaster Planning**

This action included a number of potential steps that could be taken to bolster the community's ability to manage during and after a disaster. A specific step staff recommends is to mount a campaign to educate the public about the need for being self-sufficient for a 72-hour period in the event of a disaster. Funds for a campaign will be recommended in the FY 2006/07 budget, and a scope for the campaign would be brought

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forward for Council's review and approval prior to initiation. It is anticipated that the campaign would be multi-pronged with general press releases and advertisements, outreach to service organizations and other partners, partnerships to fund and make available emergency kits, and an event highlighting emergency preparedness, among other activities. It is also anticipated that the campaign would be conducted in partnership with the CERT Program, the Police Foundation and other organizations. It is possible that a broader countywide campaign will be undertaken.

Other actions focusing on emergency preparedness include CERT training, through which residents in 21 districts throughout Town will be trained to support their neighborhoods in the event of an emergency.

In addition, the Town's emergency preparedness efforts will be greatly enhanced if the County Board of Supervisors approves the addition of a West Valley shared emergency services manager in the County Fire Department, as indicated by Fire Chief Ben Lopes. The recommendation is being considered by the County Board of Supervisors on March 28, 2006.

#### **Auto Dealerships**

Staff has proceeded to address the issues related to the continued viability of automobile dealership uses in the Town. This is occurring through conversations with all the dealers, research about trends in the auto industry and input from auto industry experts. This issue is discussed in detail in the staff report for the study session scheduled for the March 20<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

The five action areas discussed above represent Council's suggestions for possible solutions to the challenges facing the Town as it plans for the community's future. If Council concurs with the general direction of efforts in each of these areas, staff will proceed to develop work plans where needed and/or to implement ongoing actions as appropriate. If additional direction or further Council discussion is desired, staff should be advised accordingly.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:**

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

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FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with acceptance of this report. Individual actions will have fiscal impacts that will be discussed at the time they are brought forward for Council review and approval.

Attachments:

1. 2006 Town Council Retreat Summary Notes

# LOS GATOS COUNCIL RETREAT SUMMARY NOTES

January 27-28, 2006

Shawn Spano, Facilitator and Scribe

## Friday Session

### Leadership Conversation

Council engaged in a wide-ranging conversation about leadership with Barry Posner, Dean of the School of Business at Santa Clara University and co-author of the Book *The Leadership Challenge*. Many insights surfaced during the exchange, including these:

- Leadership, while as important today as it was in the past, is more complex and difficult. This is due, in part, to the rise in communications technologies that enable easy access to a wide range of different information sources.
- Leadership development is, in part, about the development of the self and the commitment that leaders make to their own professional and personal growth.
- An interesting point of inconsistency between Posner and Council was the relative distinctiveness between different spheres of leadership. Posner's position was that all types of leadership—public, private, etc.—have more commonalities than differences. Council's view was that leadership within the context of "elected officials" has unique characteristics that do not easily apply to other types of leadership.

### Community Leadership Activity

Each Council member generated a list of the three most important characteristics of effective leadership that they believe Los Gatos residents expect from Council members. Each list was displayed on flip chart paper, and each Council member described their list and gave reasons why they selected the particular items. These leadership characteristics were selected:

- Ethical, fair and honest
- Proactive; anticipates needs
- Demonstrates competence and knowledge
- Concern for Town
- Nice, personable
- Getting all the facts; being analytical
- Resolving difficulties and problems
- Contemplative listening
- Courage
- Self respect

In an open discussion format Council commented on the items, noting the strong agreement among Council members that being ethical, fair, and honest is a major expectation of the community. Council also noted the overall degree of consistency and similarity among the different lists.

### **Working Together as a Council**

Council addressed issues relating to the implicit norms and expectations surrounding discussion at public meetings. Drawing on informal agreements made at the 2003 retreat, Council agreed that effective public discussion is characterized by these qualities:

- There is an openness to differing points of view
- Members are able to disagree with one another
- Differences are managed constructively
- Members listen and respond to each other with respect

Council agreed to continue this discussion at a later time, focusing specifically on two issues: (1) implicit norms and policies from the Code of Conduct concerning the permissible interactions between Council and Commission/Boards, and (2) the question of appropriateness of Council advocacy on particular issues.

### **Saturday Session**

#### **Envisioning the Future of Los Gatos**

Each Council member articulated their vision for the future of the community, answering the question, "What do you want Los Gatos to look like and be in the year 2020"? From the collective responses two prominent themes and several other themes emerged.

#### **Two Major Themes**

1. Maintaining and enhancing the quality of life ("do no harm") as it is currently reflected in:
  - The natural beauty; hillsides
  - Public safety
  - The business and residential mix
  - The schools
  - The arts
  - Family oriented/family friendly
  - The full range of services and businesses locally available
2. Creating a strong economic base; fiscal stability.

#### **Other Parts of the Vision**

- Greater partnerships between public and private sectors to deliver services.
- Improved public facilities (e.g. library, senior center, community center, sports fields, theater, etc.).
- Protecting historic and eclectic mix of homes.
- Having a range of affordable housing and different styles of living.
- Greater public awareness about how Town Government works.
- Los Gatos as a model of outstanding municipal government.

### **Challenges and Obstacles**

The following challenges, articulated as possible obstacles to achieving the 2020 vision, were generated by Council and staff through an open discussion format.

- *Maintaining the current economic base, and increasing the revenue stream beyond current levels.* This item emerged as both a major challenge and a complex one. Factors impacting economic health and vitality include:
  - Reliance on Netflix and auto dealerships for significant part of sales tax revenue; need for more diversification.
  - Business, legislative, and economic influences beyond the Town's control (e.g. sales tax legislation, health care costs, economic health of the region and state, retail trends, etc.).
  - Balancing the tension between need for revenue generation and current land use decisions.
- The need for a sense of urgency, commitment, and perseverance in addressing problems, developing solutions, and following through on implementation. Includes developing a deep understanding of the challenges, clarity in determining priorities, and openness and creativity in devising solutions.
- Residents who have economic and business expertise are not being utilized to provide the Town with guidance, advice, and long-term planning.
- There is little or no space for new public facilities; no funding source.
- Public participation and input: Gathering an accurate and representative assessment of what the public wants, and developing effective ways to educate and create public awareness about Town budget and constraints as it relates to service delivery. The need to engage the public in new and different ways.
- Competition with other communities in the region for retail, shoppers, visitors and resources
- The impact on public safety by influences outside the control of local officials (e.g. methamphetamine drug use).
- Fragility and level of preparedness of the community in response to natural or human-made disasters.
- The need to take calculated risks; avoid being excessively risk adverse.
- The need to anticipate and prepare for demographic changes in the community, including potential increasing diversity.
- The need to influence the region and state to fix economic structural problems
- Recruiting and attracting "top talent" and a skilled workforce; being a "competitive" employer in relation to other public and private organizations.
- The need to be mindful of the emotions of stakeholders, and the impact that emotions have on public participation and community change efforts.

## **Solutions and Actions**

Council and staff identified and discussed five possible solutions to the challenges. The solutions are listed below with a general description and suggested actions. Staff will take responsibility for preparing scopes and work plans for each of the solutions, bringing these forward to Council for review and approval.

### **1. *Economic Symposium***

Enlist local residents who have business expertise and economic experience (e.g. business executives, brokers, former Council members, etc.) to provide the Town with advice and guidance for long-term planning of the Town's economic future. The format for enlisting local resource people could be a symposium-type event or focus groups. Important considerations include establishing clear direction on purpose and scope of the session, how advice is elicited and clear expectations for how Council and staff will respond to input and suggestions.

### **2. *Public – Private Partnerships***

Continue to explore how the Town can leverage current partnerships and create new partnerships with businesses and other private sector organizations to deliver services, including exploring new service delivery opportunities and methods. Examples include but are not limited to sponsorships for Town events (e.g. Screen on the Green), steam cleaning downtown, residential tree trimming, and an adopt a park program.

### **3. *Updating the General Plan (2010)***

Work on the update will begin in 2007, with some preliminary steps and actions taken in the current year (e.g. staff can initiate GP discussions with Commissions and Boards). There was consensus among Council that the 2010 GP address non-land use issues and challenges, such as economic vitality and public facilities, which have not been traditionally covered, and that the workplan includes varied opportunities for community input.

### **4. *Disaster Planning***

There was consensus that the current disaster plans need to be reviewed and updated, including a focus on long-range planning beyond what will happen in the "first-response" phase. Suggestions include educating the public about the need for 72-hour emergency packages and how these can be obtained, exploring a greater role for the CERT Program, and exploring how a public-private partnerships can assist in delivering disaster planning and response services.

### **5. *Auto Dealerships***

The overall idea is for staff to engage in conversations with auto dealership and auto industry experts to explore opportunities for how the Town can maintain and enhance its current supply of local auto dealerships. Suggestions include determining the status and future plans of the auto dealerships currently in Town, working to ensure that the land now used for auto dealerships remain as auto dealerships, exploring the appropriate "auto niche" for Los Gatos, and ensuring that

the Town communicate to the media and public a consistent message and single position on issues related to auto dealerships.

### **Code of Conduct Review**

In response to the Friday session about "Working Together as a Council," the Council discussed the implicit norms and reviewed policies from the Code of Conduct concerning the permissible interactions between Council and Commission/Boards, and the question of appropriateness of Council advocacy on particular issues.

- Council affirmed the relevance and usefulness of the Code of Conduct as it relates to interactions with Commission/Boards. Specifically:
  - It is permissible for Council members to attend Commission/Board meetings, as long as they notify the Chair in advance, do not speak, and use their discretion about how their presence at the meeting might be perceived as potentially influencing the deliberations.
  - The predominant view was to avoid attending commission meetings when an issue is before the commission that has the potential to come before Council and/or when a Council member has a strong interest or involvement in the issue.
- Council clarified the distinction between maintaining neutrality and impartiality on a particular issue or decision under consideration and advocating for that issue or decision.
  - Advocacy is present whenever a Council member expresses an opinion or judgment for or against a pending issue or decision prior to the Council meeting or *before* the public hearing is closed.
  - Advocacy is present whenever a Council member initiates a call to a constituent, resident, or stakeholder asking them to attend a public meeting or to recruit others to attend a public meeting.
  - Advocacy is not present (i.e. neutrality and impartiality is maintained) when a Council member responds to a constituent, resident or stakeholder by explaining how they or others can participate in a public meeting.