



TOWN OF LOS GATOS
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REPORT

MEETING DATE: 7/30/2020
ITEM: 1
ADDENDUM

DATE: July 29, 2020
TO: General Plan Update Advisory Committee
FROM: Joel Paulson, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Review and Discussion of Pandemic Response, Environmental Justice, and Racial and Social Justice in the General Plan.

REMARKS:

Attachment 5 contains written comments provided by a Committee Member.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment previously received with July 30, 2020 Staff Report:

1. General Plan Vision and Guiding Principles
2. Summary Document Prepared by Mintier Harnish
3. Letter from the Santa Clara County Department of Public Health
4. Engaging Local Government Leaders (ELGL) Article, "What a Southerner Learned about Housing Discrimination in the San Francisco Bay Area"

Attachment received with this Addendum Report:

5. Committee Member Comments

PREPARED BY: JENNIFER ARMER, AICP
Senior Planner

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GENERAL:

- Why combine Safety with Noise? They don't seem to go together
 - General Plans are, obviously, “general” and forward-looking. While guarding against/being prepared for a future pandemic could potentially be embedded into Goals and Policies addressing public health, I would strongly caution against “reactionary” planning keyed to current events.

- Suggested new Element: *Environmental, Racial and Social Justice*

SPECIFIC:

Attachment 2:

Pandemic Response – Health Emergency

Page 1:

Bullet Points:

1. The Town is already “required” to not only support and collaborate with County Health, but to follow and enforce Orders issued. No separate admonition is required.
2. Town Officials already participate in County-wide emergency planning – which includes health
3. Modification should be limited to “public health” joining a list that includes, fire, earthquake, flood, etc.
4. Need explanation of what this is intended to be
5. CDC standards: The Town already has policies in place for “trusted spokespersons,” e.g. Mayor speaks for the Town (see Mayor’s Messages on Coronavirus); Town website has a dedicated Coronavirus webpage....my comment is: this is superfluous.

Page 2:

Virtually all of the suggested “policies” here have already been implemented, and the information and action directives can be found on the Town website. In keeping with my observation that this is a *General* Plan, not an exercise in reacting to a current issue, I have trouble understanding why these points should be included.

Page 3:

CDC bullets: these are already covered through the Town's CERT training. As CERT may change to some different emergency preparedness entity at some point, I wouldn't object to some more nuanced description of goals and policies than are suggested here.

Page 4:

(Suggested) Environmental, Racial and Social Justice

General: All of the bullet points listed are things that can easily be incorporated into existing Elements. That said, an independent element could be structured as follows:

- Two introductory paragraphs: 1st acknowledging the history of racial and social injustice as outlined on Page 3, Paragraph C, of the Staff Report; and 2nd: acknowledging need for change and outlining broad plan to increase diversity and work for inclusivity
- Specific Goals and Policies across and referencing other Elements, e.g., specific goals for affordable and inclusive housing; educational and government commitments through programs, etc., to inclusivity, etc.
- Inclusion of new goals and policies as appropriate – that said, my comments on the bullet points provided...
 - We would need to seriously consider the expense of translation and look to Voter Pamphlets as a guide. A better set of policies may address *appropriate outreach and access* – e.g., can meetings be more accessible to those who cannot now participate due to work, childcare, language obstacles, etc.,
 - Equitable public services/environmental protection: in theory, we are legally obligated to provide services and protection equitably already – not sure why a policy is needed
 - Healthy foods. The General Plan should state goals and policies for the *Town* – “encouraging” the public health department to work with *other* entities to provide something is way too obtuse and convoluted
 - Childcare and Development Centers are going to be dependent on land use policies, and new goals should be incorporated there
 - Mental Health: I do not support this policy as written. It makes sense to include mental health in the Safety Element which deals with Public Health
 - EBT payments seems too specific for a General Plan: “Promote and implement programs which provide opportunities to obtain fresh food, such as” makes more sense
 - Asking for volunteers does not seem like a Policy-level goal

Page 5:

(Suggested) Combine Racial and Social Justice with Environment with structure suggested above

I agree with the topic areas suggested for inclusion in the bullets on Page 5, and think they can be incorporated into the new Element I am suggesting, *except* as to the following

1. Limit residential development: I believe this is already covered by state law
2. New incompatible land use: This is WAY too broad. Anything can be argued to be incompatible. Including such a policy in Los Gatos would provide an avenue to halt any new development, which would in turn halt affordable housing – which is one of the things this Element seeks to promote.

Page 6:

I agree generally with the topic areas suggested, but have comments on the following bullets:

1. Minimum Wage, etc. is normally a political, rather than a policy/planning topic
2. Financial Literacy and workforce development and training: areas of educational focus are generally left to the schools. The Town can certainly advocate for such programs – or implement training as to its own workforce – but I'm not sure these are appropriate subjects for a General Plan
3. Limit residential development: I believe this is already covered by state law
4. New incompatible land use: This is WAY too broad. Anything can be argued to be incompatible. Including such a policy in Los Gatos would provide an avenue to halt any new development, which would in turn halt affordable housing – which is one of the things this Element seeks to promote.

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