



Study Session on Revision to the Story Pole Policy

Los Gatos Town Council
September 4, 2012

Background

Town Council Discussion June 2012

- **June 2012 Town Council Discussion:**
 - *Visual aide/early notice of project*
 - *Alternatives may be warranted in certain situations*
 - *Exceptions should not be a Staff only decision*
 - *Technology should be part of the solution*
- **Goals:**
 - *Inform public and provide accurate representation*
- **Direction:**
 - *Evaluate alternatives to story poles and develop new exception procedures*



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Survey of Story Pole Practices

- **Surveyed 22 jurisdictions**
 - *11 require story poles or approved alternatives*
 - *7 require some type of graphic representation of the proposed development*
 - *Communities with story pole policies*
 - Smaller, with lower building heights
 - High design standards
- **6 of the 11 allow exceptions to story poles**



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Survey of Story Pole Practices cont.

- **Most common alternative methods:**
 - *photo simulations*
 - *computer models*
 - *perspective renderings*
 - *3D Fly around*
- **No jurisdictions use balloons**
- **Most require signs posted on the property**



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Exceptions to the Policy Recommendations

- **Allow alternatives only:**
 - *Conflicts with existing property use*
 - *Public safety consideration*
- **Requests must be in writing and provide:**
 - *Justification for the exception*
 - *Proposed alternatives for increased public noticing and project visualization*
- **Town Manager approval upon notice to the full Council**



Alternatives to Story Pole Installation

- **Photo simulations based on Town's specifications**
- **Establish specifications that include:**
 - *Adding a vertical height scale*
 - *Requiring the photo simulation capture adjacent buildings or other landmarks to help provide a height perspective*
 - *Using a common scale, angle of shot, etc.*
- **Town contract with a qualified consultant to prepare the photo simulations**



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Posting Public Information Signs on Project Sites Recommendations

- **Develop specifications for property public notification signs, including:**
 - *size,*
 - *height from the ground,*
 - *location/placement,*
 - *required information,*
 - *color,*
 - *timelines for sign installation and removal*
 - *maintenance provisions*
- *Web page that contains the list of pending projects, descriptions, photo simulations, and hearing dates.*



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