



MEETING DATE: 2-21-06  
ITEM NO. 4

## COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: FEBRUARY 16, 2006

TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL

FROM: DEBRA J. FIGONE, TOWN MANAGER

SUBJECT: 2006 TOWN COUNCIL RETREAT  
APPROVE MEETING MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 27 AND 28, 2006  
TOWN COUNCIL RETREAT

### RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the meeting minutes from the Town Council Retreat held January 28 and 29, 2005.

### 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 future of Los Gatos and potential challenges to and strategies for achieving the vision.

### DISCUSSION:

Attachment 1 provides the summary of the Council Retreat, including the meeting minutes and the summary notes (Exhibit A). Staff is seeking Council approval of the meeting minutes, including the summary notes.

The summary notes include potential solutions and actions discussed by Council and staff at the retreat in response to challenges to achieving the vision for Los Gatos. Council consensus at the retreat was for staff to take the responsibility for preparing scopes and work plans for each of the solutions and that these would be brought forward to Council for review and approval. Staff will need to develop these work plans in the context of available resources and the current year's work plan.

*Pamela S Jacobs*

PREPARED BY: PAMELA S. JACOBS  
ASSISTANT TOWN MANAGER

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Assistant Town Manager OK Town Attorney \_\_\_\_\_ Clerk Administrator  
\_\_\_\_\_ Finance \_\_\_\_\_ Community Development Revised: 2/16/06 12:19 pm

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MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL  
SUBJECT: TOWN COUNCIL RETREAT  
FEBRUARY 16, 2006

If Council determines interests or priorities other than those identified in the summary notes, Council comment and direction is needed.

CONCLUSION:

Staff appreciates the opportunity to engage in dialogue with Council at the Council Retreat about the vision for Los Gatos and the challenges to and possible strategies for achieving that vision. We believe that the Council Retreat was productive and successful.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

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

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with approving the minutes and summary notes; however, individual solutions and actions will have fiscal impacts that will be discussed at the time they are brought forward for Council review approval.

Attachments:

1. Town of Los Gatos, Town Council Retreat, January 27 and 28, 2006 Meeting Minutes and Exhibit A, 2006 Town Council Retreat Summary Notes

**DRAFT**

**TOWN OF LOS GATOS  
TOWN COUNCIL RETREAT  
January 27 and January 28, 2006  
Meeting Minutes**

**TOWN COUNCIL RETREAT**

The Town Council of the Town of Los Gatos met at the Toll House Hotel, 140 South Santa Cruz Avenue, Friday, January 27, 2006 at 3:30 p.m. in a Council Retreat.

**COUNCIL ATTENDANCE**

Present:

Diane McNutt, Mayor  
Joe Pirzynski, Vice Mayor  
Steve Glickman, Council Member  
Barbara Spector, Council Member  
Mike Wasserman, Council Member

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2006 SESSION**

**VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS**

No-one from the audience spoke during verbal communications.

**Purpose of Retreat**

**Mayor McNutt** opened the meeting with her vision for the Retreat.

**Shawn Spano**, consultant to the Town, presented the purpose of the Retreat as an opportunity for the Town Council to discuss their views of effective leadership and to share their visions for the future of Los Gatos, along with the potential challenges and solutions to achieving the vision.

**Meeting Discussion**

Council engaged in a 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.

Following this discussion, Council shared their views about effective leadership.

Exhibit A, attached to these minutes provides summary notes from the Friday session

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor McNutt adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m. to Saturday, January 28, 2005 at 9:00 a.m. at the Toll House Hotel, 140 South Santa Cruz Avenue.

Town Council Retreat  
January 27 and January 28, 2006 (continued)

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 2006 SESSION**

**VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

No-one from the audience spoke during verbal communications.

**Purpose of Retreat**

Shawn Spano presented the purpose, agenda and format of the Saturday session of the Council Retreat.

**Meeting Discussion**

Council and staff engaged in a dialogue about the vision for the future of Los Gatos, challenges and obstacles to achieving that vision, and solutions and actions to address the challenges. Exhibit A, attached to these minutes provides summary notes from the Saturday session.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor McNutt adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

**Attest**

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Marlyn J. Rasmussen  
Clerk Administrator

**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.

**EXHIBIT A**

### **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.