



TOWN OF LOS GATOS
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REPORT

MEETING DATE: 12/03/2020
ITEM: 1
ADDENDUM

DATE: December 2, 2020

TO: General Plan Update Advisory Committee

FROM: Joel Paulson, Community Development Director

SUBJECT: Review and Discussion of the Initial Draft of the Racial, Social, and Environmental Justice Element.

REMARKS:

Attachment 2 contains comments from Committee Members.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachments previously received with December 3, 2020 Staff Report:

1. Initial Draft of Racial, Social, and Environmental Justice Element

Attachments received with this Addendum:

2. Committee Member Comments

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Memo

To: Chairperson Hanssen and Members of the Committee
From: Steve Piasecki
Date: December 1, 2020
Re: Comments regarding the Public Review Draft of the Racial, Social, and Environmental Justice Element

2.1 Racial, Social, and Environmental Justice Element

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Goal RSE J-1 Should this goal be qualified to reference those areas where the Town has control or authority? To ensure equity, inclusion, and access to opportunities for all residents unrelated to Town activities or in areas covered or preempted by the Federal or State Government would be impractical.

Policy RSEJ-2.2 I would strike the word “new” since we should be reviewing existing policies and programs to ensure they improve the lives of community members...

Policy RSEJ-2.3

This is going to be difficult since the Town is 88% white. How would we measure success of implementing this policy? Is 12% diversity okay?

We should add the words “and Town staff” because hiring is one area that the Town has control over.

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Goal RSE J-3 I don’t think the town can ensure that land use decisions benefit all Los Gatos residents so why suggest that we can?

The words “or another characteristic” is another use of a catch-all phrase that is so broad that it is meaningless.

Policy RSEJ-3.2

How do project related conditions control roadway-generated air and noise pollution?

Goal RSE J-4 This goal can be worded better. Perhaps we should use the wording used in the introduction statement “promoting better access to public facilities, healthy food, and safe and sanitary homes. Also, again we have a catch-all generality “and other amenities.” What other amenities?

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Policy RSEJ-4.2

I am concerned about the generalization that there is a line between healthy food stores and unhealthy food stores. Some fast food outlets sell “healthy choices” and some healthy food outlets sell unhealthy foods. Perhaps there is another way to make the distinction.

Policy RSEJ-4.5

Add health care?

Policy Overview

The RSEJ element should address the issue of policing programs. It seems that we should have a goal of evaluating our local policing program to ensure the officers are trained in crises intervention and de-escalation techniques and that the department has access to mental health intervention professionals, when needed.

Racial, Social, and Environmental Justice Element Comments — Marcia Jensen

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Introduction

1st paragraph:

“...conversations to share their experiences and to provide suggestions for increasing diversity and inclusivity in Town.”

3rd paragraph:

“...to improve local awareness of racial, social, and environmental injustice.”

“...it can create a framework through which residents are empowered to make progress towards equality.”

Dialogue Box on Demographics

1. I'd name it “2018 Town Demographics”
2. “...Educational attainment is similarly high. 64.7% of residents over age 25 have at least a Bachelor's Degree, and of those, nearly 45% also had earned a graduate or professional degree. Racial diversity however, is lacking. 82.8% of Los Gatos residents were white...”
3. Why a new paragraph for Asians? And is it necessary?
4. “...tend to have higher incomes and levels of educational attainment” – than who?
5. “the minority population has been growing” – which minority community? Asians? The way this is presented, the reader assumes the entire paragraph is about Asians.
6. Why present language proficiency? Does it matter? The more interesting demographic is that of (presumably – given the phrase “Most residents”) ALL Los Gatos residents (if we mean something else, we need to say so) – speak a language other than English.

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Introduction, continued:

“The themes discussed in this Element lay the foundation for creating a more equitable and inclusive environment for all Town residents, businesses, visitors, and organizations.”

“In addition to those contained in this Element, equity-oriented goals and policies can also be found throughout [] this Plan, particularly in the Housing, Mobility, and Land Use Elements.”

Key Terms

Disadvantaged Community:

“An area identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) pursuant to Section 39711 of the California Health and Safety Code, or [] a predominantly lower income area that is ...”

Socially Disadvantaged Individuals and Groups:

“... or some other bias [] because of their perceived identity as a member of a particular group without regard to their individuality and/or merit.”

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2.1 Racial and Social Justice

“This Section identifies goals and policies which seek to advance Town efforts toward diversity and inclusivity. Implementation of the action items presented will allow the Town to monitor its progress in achieving racial, social, and environmental justice.”

RSEJ-1.1: “Direct? Town services...” This is an extraordinarily ambitious goal – do we mean, e.g., affordable housing?

RSEJ-1.3: There are too many “ands” here. And do we want to include specifics, e.g. hiring goals?

RSEJ-1.4: “Develop and invest in arts, education, and other community programming which celebrates diversity.”

RSEJ-2:

“Respect, protect, and promote (we can’t “fulfill” – that’s unrealistic) the civil and human rights of all members of the community.” (delete the entire “including, but not limited to” phrase – we’re either promoting it for “all” or we’re not. “All” should not include a clarification)

RSEJ-2.1: “Develop and implement town-wide strategies, practices, and services that are culturally informed (?) and both acknowledge and reflect diversity.”

RSEJ-2.2: “Develop and implement policies, services, and programs designed to address the needs of socially disadvantaged and vulnerable community members.”

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RSEJ-2.5: A laudable goal, but how is the Town supposed to collaborate on educational programs? I can see perhaps elementary, middle, and high school – but once you get to universities – it’s tough.

RSEJ-2.6: “Develop and implement diversity training protocols, to include programs addressing Implicit Bias, for all Town employees and support similar training efforts undertaken by the business community.”

2.2 Environmental Justice:

“Los Gatos is committed to improving the well-being of all town residents and those affected by Town actions in neighboring communities. The objectives contained in this Section strive to reduce health risks....” (why start out saying “we don’t have a problem,” then include an entire Section addressing the problem??)

RSEJ-3:

“Ensure that land use decisions benefit all Los Gatos residents and do not result in adverse impacts to socially disadvantaged individuals and groups.” (something to consider – elsewhere throughout the Plan, policies are included that insulate existing

neighborhoods from “adverse impacts” – e.g. no traffic, no tall buildings, no density, no noise – how is this consistent???? Maybe those other policies need to be reconsidered...)

RSEJ-3.1: “...meaningful involvement of all **stakeholders** ...”

RSEJ-3.2: “...through the **development and implementation** of [] project specific **migitation measures**...”

RSEJ-3.3.: How do we contemplate “coordinating” (or “requiring?”) “changes to existing facilities?’ AND I would delete “aesthetic” – this Element is addressing environmental *justice*, not whether something looks nice or not.

RSEJ-4: Laudable, but how does the town “ensure” everyone gets healthy food, good schools, and decent health care? Maybe “**actively advocate to ensure...?**”

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RSEJ-4.2:

“**Adopt and implement land use policies, regulations, and Ordinances which allow for and promote increased access to healthy food options (groceries, farmers markets, community gardens).**” (I don’t know about putting in here that we don’t want fast food outlets that could impact vulnerable populations)

RSEJ-4.3:

“**Identify and address gaps in access to residential, commercial, recreation, education, and health resources such that these community assets are available to all.**”

RSEJ-4.4:

OK – what do we mean by this? For example, the Town spent \$14M repaving the Almond Grove in concrete – clearly not “equitable.” Does this imply that capital improvements need to be prorated to particular geographic areas??

RSEJ-5:

“**Develop, implement, and enforce policies to ensure access to healthy and safe housing throughout the community.**”

RSEJ-5.1:

“**Develop and adopt policies, regulations, and Ordinances which reflect up-to-date construction and safety measures for all residential structures, while continuing to take enforcement actions for violation of any municipal or state building and safety codes.**”

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RSEJ-6:

“...and facilitate [] **public** involvement in....”

RSEJ-6.2: I would delete the entire “including but not limited to...” phrase – we just want to promote “engagement in town processes.”

RSEJ-6.3:

“**Brainstorm new and innovative approaches to facilitate communication between members of the community and town elected officials and staff members.**”

RSEJ-6.6:

“**Schedule Town events on different days and times to encourage and facilitate participation among community members with work, school, and other obligations that conflict with more traditionally scheduling.**”

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