

NOTICE OF PREPARATION of an Environmental Impact Report for the Town of Los Gatos 2040 General Plan Update

Date: July 9, 2020

To: State Clearinghouse
Responsible Agencies
Trustee Agencies

NOP Comment Period: Written comments must be submitted to the Town’s Community Development Department no later than **August 10, 2020 by 5:00 p.m.**

Project Location: Town of Los Gatos Planning Area (Town-wide, sphere of influence) – see Figure 1 (attached)

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INTRODUCTION

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been issued to advise interested parties that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared for the Los Gatos 2040 General Plan update. The Town will serve as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and will prepare a programmatic Environmental Impact Report (Program EIR) to evaluate the potential environmental effects associated with the General Plan update.

This NOP and background documents associated with the General Plan update, known as the “project” under CEQA, are available for review on the Town’s 2040 General Plan webpage at: <http://losgatos2040.com/>. This NOP has been issued to provide an opportunity for the general public, responsible and trustee agencies, and other interested entities to submit comments on the scope of the EIR relative to the General Plan project description. For agencies, comments should focus on topics that relate to the agency’s statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project.

The Town has determined that the proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment; therefore, an EIR is being prepared. The EIR is intended to be a program-level document that will analyze the effects of the proposed 2040 General Plan. Program EIRs analyze broad environmental effects of a program, with the acknowledgment that site-specific environmental review may be required for future actions (14 CCR 15168(a)). The purpose of a Program EIR is to allow the lead agency to consider broad policy alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures early in the process when the

agency has greater flexibility to address environmental issues. Because no specific development projects are being proposed as part of the update to the General Plan, the analysis will not be parcel-specific. Rather, the analysis will focus on the reasonably foreseeable direct and indirect physical environmental effects that could result from the update to the General Plan, including proposed land use designation changes evaluated for the eight (8) Opportunity Areas described below. The analysis will compare the net change of impacts as a result of the 2040 General Plan compared to 2020 existing conditions.

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The objective of a General Plan is to provide the Town with a blueprint for the future. The Town's existing General Plan was completed in 2010 and has guided land use policy decisions in Los Gatos for the last 10 years. The 2040 General Plan update will provide the context to effectively plan and manage Los Gatos into the future based on an updated set of goals, policies, and implementation programs that reflect the current values and aspirations expressed by the community. Additionally, the update will provide the Los Gatos community with a policy framework to manage future projects and provide for capacity to accommodate the growth and development anticipated to occur in the Town for the next 20 years.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 2040 General Plan update addresses the current needs and preferences of the community. The General Plan Planning Area, which reflects the geographic area covered by the General Plan update, is shown on **Figure 1**. The Planning Area encompasses approximately 11.46 square miles of land within the current Town limits plus approximately 18.26 square miles of land south of the Town's corporate limits within the adopted Sphere of Influence.

The 2040 Los Gatos General Plan update will serve as a long-term framework for future growth and development. The 2040 General Plan represents the community's view of its future and contains the goals and policies upon which the Town Council and Planning Commission will base their land use and resource decisions in the future. To provide a contemporary plan that will guide the community to the year 2040, the General Plan update will reflect changes in the community, new issues and opportunities as identified from community input, changes in State law such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and new trends such as autonomous vehicles and the growth of online retail shopping. The Los Gatos 2040 General Plan update:

- Provides the public opportunities for meaningful participation in the planning and decision-making process;
- Provides a description of current conditions within the Town and trends influencing the future of the Town;
- Identifies planning issues, opportunities, and challenges that are being addressed in the 2040 General Plan;
- Establishes land use and policy alternatives;
- Provides guidance in the planning and evaluation of future development and resource decisions; and
- Provides a vision and framework for the future growth.

As part of the alternatives process for the General Plan update, there are eight (8) Opportunity Areas targeted for change in land use type and development intensity that may result in environmental impacts. These Opportunity Areas are as follows, and are depicted in **Figure 1**:

- Los Gatos Boulevard
- Lark Avenue
- North Santa Cruz Avenue
- Harwood Road
- Union Avenue
- Winchester Boulevard
- Pollard Road
- Downtown Los Gatos

The potential changes in land use and intensity or density would be the primary changes from the current General Plan that may result in environmental impacts.

PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND SCOPE OF THE EIR

The EIR for the proposed project will focus on the resource areas/issues applicable to this project. The EIR will evaluate the potentially significant environmental impacts of the General Plan update and will propose feasible mitigation measures that may lessen or avoid such impacts. As the proposed project does not include any specific construction or development, but rather the potential for land use changes or development to be constructed in the future, the impact analysis will be programmatic and cumulative in nature. The EIR will evaluate potentially significant environmental effects related to the following environmental issues:

- Aesthetics (Visual Resources)
- Agricultural and Forest Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Resources
- Energy
- Geology/Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards/Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Land Use/Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population/Housing
- Public Services/Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic
- Utilities/Service Systems
- Wildfire

The EIR will also identify and evaluate alternatives to the proposed project that have the potential to alleviate identified impacts.

NOP Comment Period: In accordance with the time limits identified in state law, responses to this NOP must be submitted to the Town by **5:00 p.m. on August 10, 2020** (30 days following the date this notice

was first posted). Please submit written comments to the Los Gatos Community Development Department to:

Jennifer Armer, AICP
Senior Planner
Town of Los Gatos
110 E. Main Street,
Los Gatos, CA 95030
Email: JArmer@losgatosca.gov

Scoping Meeting: A scoping meeting will be conducted on July 23, 2020 at 7:00 PM. This meeting is being conducted utilizing teleconferencing and electronic means consistent with State of California Executive Order N-29-20 dated March 17, 2020, regarding the COVID-19 pandemic; and in accordance with Executive Order N-29-20, the public may only participate in the meeting online and not in the Council Chambers. If you are interested in providing oral comments real-time during the meeting, you must join the Zoom webinar at:

<https://losgatosca-gov.zoom.us/j/99277164241?pwd=ZHNSajdDRDJqeThpQ1kvUC9TaVI4UT09>

Meeting ID: 992 7716 4241

Password: 259800

Or by telephone:

Dial: 213 270 2124

US Toll Free: 888 273 3658

Conference Code: 898841

This NOP, Preferred Land Use Alternatives Framework, and background documents are available for review on the Town's **General Plan Update** webpage at: <http://losgatos2040.com/>

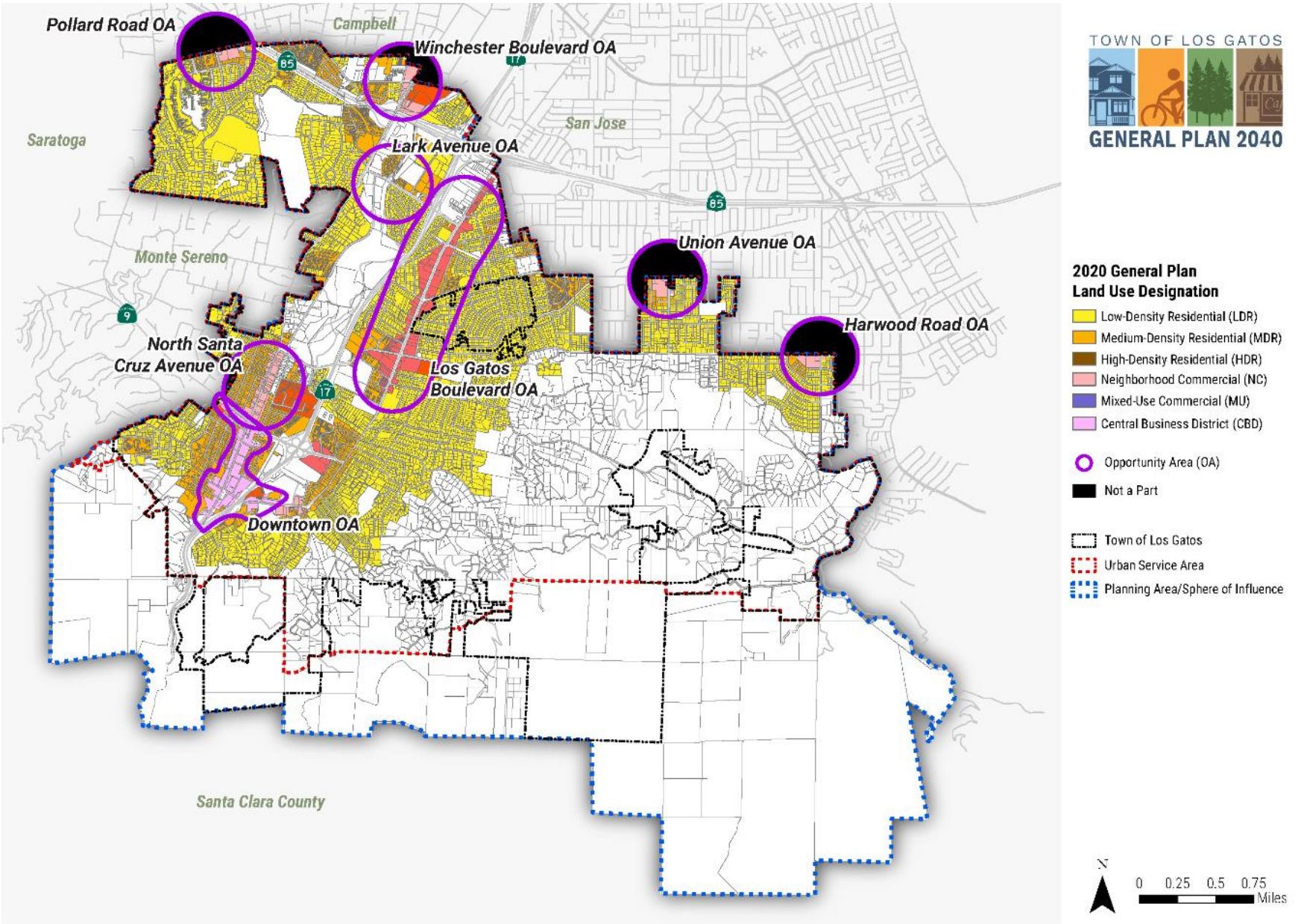


Figure 1 – Project Location Map