

Summary of Referendum

This referendum relates to Resolution No. 2022-047, a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Los Gatos Adopting the 2040 General Plan. The 2040 General Plan is a comprehensive update to the Town’s existing General Plan, known as the 2020 General Plan, and consists of nine required “elements” that cover various topics related to the future growth and development, services, and resource management of the Town.

This referendum suspends the Town Council’s adoption of two of those elements, the Land Use Element and the Community Design Element. These two elements address a broad range of topics related to the physical structure and appearance of the Town’s built environment and establish the image and character of the Town. These two elements serve as the primary policy guidance for ensuring that new land uses are logically organized and developed in a way that is sustainable and enhances Los Gatos’s unique identity.

More specifically, the Land Use Element includes two key components that provide a framework to guide and shape the future physical development of Los Gatos. First, the Land Use Element includes policies establishing land use designations that identify the intent of those designations and the type and density/intensity of uses permissible within each land use designation. Second, the Land Use Element includes goals, policies, and implementation programs to guide the Town’s future development. For example, the Land Use Element includes an implementation measure for the Town Council to review the General Plan after 1,000 housing units have been approved and/or five years have passed, whichever comes first.

Significant changes to the Land Use Element, as compared to the 2020 General Plan, include the addition of a new “Community Commercial” land use designation, as well as adoption of height maximums and increases in the maximum allowed residential densities and commercial intensities in five land use designations within the Town.

The following table compares the allowable density and height in the 2020 General Plan to the allowable density and height in the 2040 General Plan for all land use designations:

Land Use Designations	Density Range (du/ac)		Maximum Height	
	2020 General Plan	2040 General Plan	2020 General Plan	2040 General Plan
Hillside Residential	0 to 1	0 to 1	N/A	25
Low Density Residential	0 to 5	0 to 5	N/A	30
High Density Residential (called Medium Density Residential in 2020 General Plan)	5 to 12	14 to 22 outside the high fire hazard severity zone; 5 to 12 within the high fire hazard severity zone	N/A	35

Very High Density Residential (called High Density Residential in 2020 General Plan)	12 to 20	30 to 40	N/A	45
Mixed-Use	10 to 20	30 to 40	35	45
Neighborhood Commercial	10 to 20	10 to 20	35	35
Community Commercial	N/A	20 to 30	N/A	45
Central Business District	10 to 20	20 to 30	45	45
Office Professional	10 to 20	10 to 20	35	35
Service Commercial	N/A	None	35	35
Light Industrial	N/A	None	35	35
Public	N/A	None	N/A	35
Open Space	N/A	None	N/A	30
Agriculture	N/A	1 dwelling unit/20 acres	N/A	30
Albright Specific Plan	See Specific Plan	No Change	See Specific Plan	No Change
North Forty Specific Plan	See Specific Plan	No Change	See Specific Plan	No Change

The Community Design Element looks at the key components of the Town’s physical environment and describes the physical features that, together, create Los Gatos’ distinct community character. The Community Design Element provides a local context and anticipated urban design enhancements for the next 20 years relating to the urban form, architectural styles, landscape, lighting, and pedestrian-oriented environment. In addition, it highlights a series of Community Growth Districts --also identified in the Land Use Element --which have specific community design policies. Lastly, the Community Design Element discusses the preservation of historic buildings and districts and addresses hillside development and the preservation of hillsides.

The full text of the Land Use Element and Community Design Element that are the subject of this referendum can be found at: <http://losgatos2040.com/>.