



*A. Introduction*

Residents of the Town of Los Gatos are vitally interested in conserving natural resources and reducing waste. This Element is designed to protect and enhance natural resources and the environment. The Environment and Sustainability Element promotes the sustainability of resources and the Town’s natural ecology for both current and future generations. The Town has identified its need for energy conservation in both existing and future developments and structures. Issues associated with natural resource conservation are often regional in scope and extend beyond the Town’s physical boundaries.

State law requires that a General Plan include a Conservation Element. In accordance with State law, this Element addresses the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, including biological resources, water resources, greenhouse gases (GHGs), and energy resources. This Element also addresses air quality since clean air is an important natural resource and a vital component of a healthy environment. Water service, wastewater, stormwater, and solid waste and recycling also affect the environment and are included in this Element.

This Element is divided into the following sections:

- ◆ Biological Resources
- ◆ Water Resources
- ◆ Water Service
- ◆ Wastewater
- ◆ Stormwater
- ◆ Solid Waste and Recycling
- ◆ Air Quality
- ◆ Greenhouse Gases
- ◆ Energy Resources

Each of these components is divided into the following sections:

- ◆ **Background Information:** Provides background information about the various resources within Los Gatos.

- ◆ **Goals, Policies, and Actions:** Provides guidance to the Town related to decisions affecting the resources addressed in this Element.

## *B. Biological Resources*

Los Gatos is proud of its status as a “Tree City USA.” Trees and other plant life can prevent soil erosion, landslides, and flooding while ensuring a scenic buffer from the effects of development and providing wildlife habitats. Wildlife populations must be preserved as having intrinsic value that contributes to the quality of Town life, while keeping in mind the safety and well being of Town residents.

### **1. Background Information**

#### a. Plant Resources

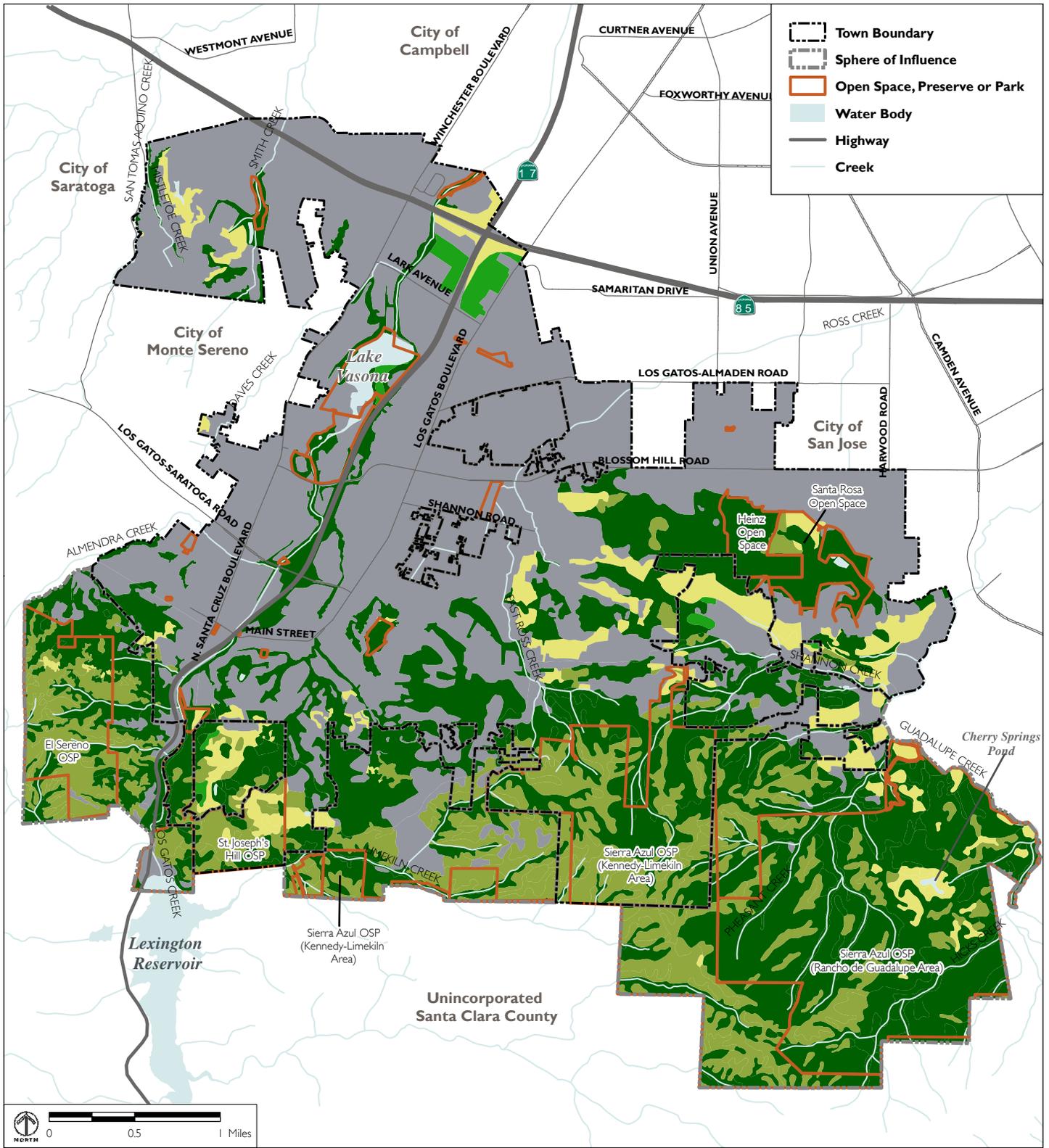
Plant resources, or vegetation types, in the Los Gatos are summarized in Table ENV-1. Figure ENV-1 identifies their locations. Most of the land in northern and central Los Gatos is identified as “developed.” The southern and southeastern portions of the Los Gatos area, including both the Town limits and Sphere of Influence (SOI), are primarily undeveloped and support most of the woodland/forest and shrubland habitats in the area.

#### *i. Developed*

Approximately 4,727 acres of the Los Gatos area are included in the developed cover type, including residential development, commercial and industrial developments, roads, schools, as well as developed parks with playgrounds, picnic areas, fields, and associated ornamental landscaping. Lexington Quarry and La Riconada County Club are both considered developed.

#### *ii. Grassland*

Grasslands account for approximately 610 acres in the Los Gatos area. This vegetation community is dominated by non-native annual grasses and includes native and non-native forbs (any herb that is not a grass). More disturbed grasslands and grasslands adjacent to developed habitats are more



Source: Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD), 2008; Town of Los Gatos, 2008; LSA Associates, 2008; Bay Area Open Space Council, 2007.  
 NOTE: MROSD vegetation data adapted by LSA Associates, 2008.

- Vegetation and Wildlife Habitat Types**
- Grassland
  - Open Water
  - Woodland/Forest
  - Shrubland
  - Agriculture
  - Developed

FIGURE ENV-1

VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE HABITAT TYPES

TABLE ENV-1 ACREAGES OF VEGETATION AND  
 WILDLIFE HABITAT TYPES

Vegetation and Wildlife Habitats Types	Acreage
Developed	4,727
Grassland	610
Shrubland	1,650
Woodland/Forest	4,329
Agriculture <sup>a</sup>	85
Open Water	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,476</b>

<sup>a</sup> The acreage of agriculture is slightly different from Table LU-1 of the Land Use Element. The Land Use acreage is based on Santa Clara County Assessors Parcel Data, conforming to legal parcel boundaries. The acreage in this analysis is based on interpretation of aerial photographs. Vegetation mapping and does not conform to legal parcel boundaries.

likely to support ruderal species (weeds). Less disturbed areas and serpentine grasslands, known to occur in the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's (MROSD) open space preserves and Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve (OSP), are more likely to support native grasses and forbs and special-status plants.

*iii. Shrubland*

There are approximately 1,650 acres of shrubland in the Los Gatos area, occurring mostly in the MROSD preserves and in undeveloped parcels in the south. Some shrublands also occur in the vicinity of Heinz OSP and Santa Rosa OSP. Many of the shrublands are chaparral communities, which generally occur on hotter, drier south-facing slopes and ridges.

*iv. Woodland/Forest*

Woodland/forest communities account for approximately 4,329 acres in the Los Gatos area and include riparian woodlands, oak woodlands, broadleaved upland forest, and non-native ornamental trees. Riparian woodlands occur along Los Gatos Creek, Guadalupe Creek, Pheasant Creek, San Tomas Aquino Creek, and other creeks and drainages. The riparian woodlands support a dense, well developed canopy of riparian trees dominated by a mix of native species and include non-native trees. Oak woodlands are located primarily in the southern and eastern portions of the Los Gatos and are dominated by native trees, but some areas are dominated by ornamental trees.

*v. Agriculture*

This cover type consists of approximately 85 acres in the Los Gatos area and includes orchards and row crops. One of the largest agriculture areas is the North Forty area, which contains walnut and fruit trees.

*vi. Open Water*

Open water habitat consists of approximately 75 acres in the Los Gatos area and includes ponds and reservoirs. Vasona Reservoir and the northern tip of the Lexington Reservoir (in the Town's SOI) are the two main open water bodies. Cherry Springs Pond in Sierra Azul OSP is also open water habitat.

*vii. Creeks*

Creeks include perennial and ephemeral creek channels, and aboveground and underground reaches. Most of these creeks are considered part of the Guadalupe River watershed. Los Gatos Creek is one of the primary creeks in the area, flowing south to north into and out of the Vasona Reservoir.

*viii. Wetland*

Seasonal wetlands, marshes, and other wetland habitats generally occur throughout Los Gatos's grasslands, shrublands, and woodland/forest communities, as well as along creeks and the edges of some open water bodies.

b. Soil Resources

The Town of Los Gatos is characterized by hilly terrain located on the lower slope of the Santa Cruz Mountains. The Town utilizes landscape and grading plans to prevent soil erosion and slippage, helping to conserve soil resources.

c. Wildlife Resources

As previously mentioned, wildlife resources, or habitat types, are summarized in Table ENV-1. Figure ENV-1 identifies their locations.

*i. Grassland*

Grasslands provide habitat for a relatively small number of wildlife species due to the uniform structure of vegetation. However, the grasslands on the sites support populations of small rabbits and rodents, which provide an important potential prey base for avian and mammalian predators. Likewise, deer and coyotes utilize the grasslands as part of their foraging habitat.

*ii. Shrubland*

Wildlife species that are typical of shrubland communities in the region include western fence lizard, California quail, Anna's hummingbird, Bewick's wren, and black-tailed jackrabbit.

*iii. Woodland/Forest*

Woodlands and forests provide habitat for a large variety of wildlife species. They are particularly important as nesting habitat for migratory and resident birds. Dead snags also provide roosting places for various species of bats. When dead trees fall, the trunks provide many microhabitats for amphibians, reptiles, small mammals, and a diversity of insects and other invertebrates. Many of the wildlife species typical of woodland/forest and shrubland habitats generally utilize both habitats.

*iv. Agriculture*

Agricultural areas provide habitat for several species of birds, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals. Small mammals that occur in the agricultural areas and crop fields provide a prey base for raptors, snakes, and larger mammals.

*v. Open Water*

Bird species found at Vasona Reservoir and the northern tip of the Lexington Reservoir, in the Town's SOI, generally include: snowy egret, great egret, double-crested cormorant, duck, coot, Canada goose, and killdeer. Western pond turtles live in both reservoirs, as well as a variety of native and non-native fish species.

*vi. Creeks*

Some of the creeks and drainages within the Los Gatos area are known to support suitable habitat for steelhead, other freshwater fish, and amphibians. The creeks are also likely to provide a valuable source of water for local terrestrial wildlife.

*vii. Wetland*

Wetlands provide important breeding habitat for amphibians such as the western toad. Some species previously mentioned rely on these wetland habitats as a source of water and food. The wetlands may also be used as a water source, on a seasonal basis, for local wildlife.

*viii. Developed*

Landscaped and native trees within the developed areas of the Los Gatos area provide roosting, foraging, and/or nesting habitat for many wildlife species. The larger trees provide nesting habitat for raptors, owls, and other birds. Black-tailed deer use the trees within the developed areas for shelter and foraging habitat. Additionally, urban-adapted mammal species, such as raccoon and opossums, occur in the developed areas.

*ix. Wildlife Movement Corridors*

Large tracts of open space, such as the ones present in the MROSD OSP, provide substantial wildlife corridors for fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals. Undeveloped parcels, riparian creek corridors, and the riparian woodlands allow wildlife to migrate, forage, and/or disperse. The creek channels provide movement corridors for aquatic species such as fish, frogs, and invertebrates. Los Gatos Creek is one of the few urban creeks in the

Santa Clara Valley that is relatively undisturbed and intact and therefore is an important wildlife corridor in the Santa Clara Valley.

d. Special-Status Species

Four special-status plant species and five special-status wildlife species are known to occur in the Los Gatos area. Figure ENV-2 shows the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) occurrences of special-status plants and animals in the Los Gatos area. The CNDDDB is a database of the status and location of rare plants and is maintained by California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). The CNDDDB does not include any known records of federal or State listed plants in the Los Gatos SOI.

i. *Special-Status Plants*

Four special-status plant species are currently known to occur in the Los Gatos area. There are an additional 28 special-status plants with the potential to occur in the Los Gatos area based on the potential presence of suitable habitat. These special-status plant species potentially occur in grassland, shrubland, woodland/forest, open water, creek, and wetland habitats. The special-status plant species known to occur in the Los Gatos area include:

- ◆ Western leatherwood
- ◆ Robust monardella
- ◆ Loma Prieta hoita
- ◆ Most beautiful jewel-flower

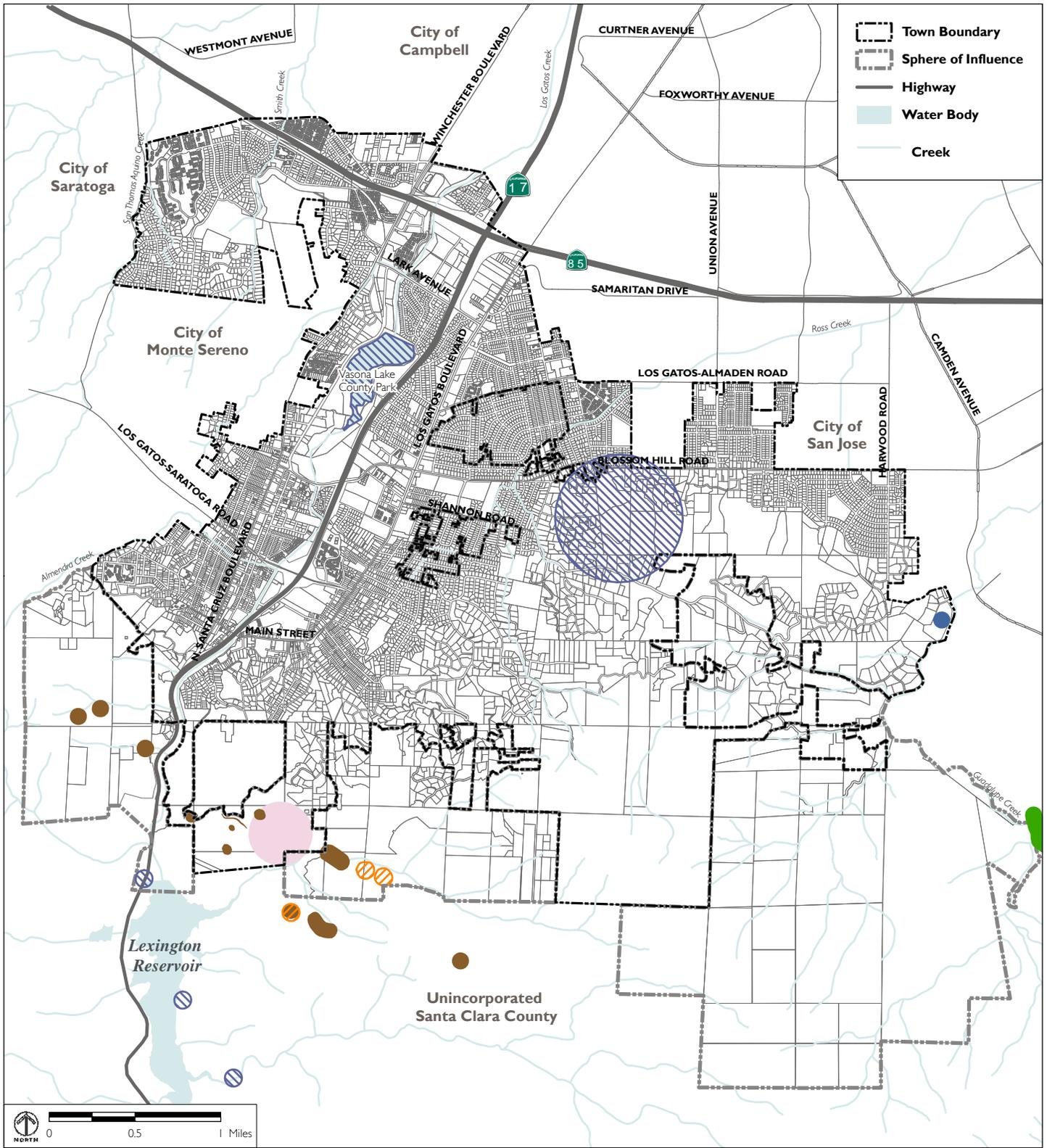
ii. *Special-Status Wildlife*

Five special-status wildlife species are known to occur in the Los Gatos area, and 27 other special-status wildlife species may potentially occur based on the possible presence of suitable habitat of the species. The special-status wildlife species known to occur in the Los Gatos area include:

- ◆ Steelhead
- ◆ Western pond turtle
- ◆ California red-legged frog
- ◆ Pallid bat
- ◆ Foothill yellow-legged frog

e. Urban Biodiversity

Los Gatos Creek and San Tomas Aquino Creek provide habitat for a diverse array of plants and wildlife species within the urban areas. The Town



Source: California Natural Diversity DataBase (CNDDDB), 2009.  
 Note: The Western leatherwood (plant), Steelhead (wildlife) and California red-legged frog (wildlife) are not shown on this map as they are not CNDDDB records. These species are known to occur in the Los Gatos area based on the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD), Sierra Azul and Bear Creek Master Plan, 2008.

- | CNDDB Special-Status Plant Species | CNDDB Special-Status Wildlife Species |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Loma Prieta Hoita                  | Foothill Yellow-legged Frog           |
| Most Beautiful Jewel-Flower        | Pallid Bat                            |
| Robust Monardella                  | Western Pond Turtle                   |

FIGURE ENV-2

SPECIAL-STATUS PLANT AND WILDLIFE SPECIES

contains an abundance of native and ornamental landscaped trees within the riparian corridors, urban parks, commercial areas, and residential neighborhoods. Birds, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals reside in these areas and have adapted to living in an urban environment. The diversity of plant and wildlife species within the Los Gatos area provides an opportunity for the public to become educated about natural resources, plants, and animals.

## 2. Goals, Policies, and Actions

### a. Plant Resources

**Goal ENV-1 To preserve and protect native plants and plant communities in the Town, and promote the appropriate use of local, native plants in habitat restoration and landscaping.**

#### Policies

- Policy ENV-1.1 Preserve trees that are protected under the Town's Tree Protection Ordinance, as well as other native heritage, heritage and specimen trees.
- Policy ENV-1.2 Public and private projects shall protect special-status native plant species.
- Policy ENV-1.3 Prohibit development that significantly depletes, damages or alters existing special-status plants.
- Policy ENV-1.4 Prohibit bicycles in native plant habitats unless on designated trails.
- Policy ENV-1.5 Prohibit the use of invasive plant species listed by the California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) for all new construction.
- Policy ENV-1.6 Use native plants that are indigenous to the Los Gatos area on Town-owned and controlled property.

Policy ENV-1.7 Require new development to use native plants or other appropriate non-invasive plants to reduce maintenance and irrigation costs and the disturbance of adjacent natural habitat.

**Actions**

Action ENV-1.1 Review the Town Tree Protection Ordinance periodically for necessary updating.

Action ENV-1.2 Amend the grading ordinance to establish standards to maintain and preserve existing native plant species.

Action ENV-1.3 Create and make available a list of native, non-invasive plants for the local area.

b. Soil Resources

<b>Goal ENV-2 To conserve the soil resources of the Town.</b>
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**Policies**

Policy ENV-2.1 All new developments in areas subject to soil erosion and slippage shall furnish effective erosion control plans to minimize soil erosion. The erosion control plans shall be implemented prior to construction operations and maintained throughout the construction process.

Policy ENV-2.2 Construction plans shall be reviewed to determine the adequacy of erosion control plans during and after construction.

Policy ENV-2.3 Require grading permits to ensure that the grading of slopes and sites proposed for development will be minimized.

c. Wetland and Riparian Resources

<b>Goal ENV-3 To protect wetlands and riparian corridors, including intermittent and ephemeral streams.</b>
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**Policies**

Policy ENV-3.1 Preserve riparian corridors and riparian habitats and avoid disturbances to these areas.

Policy ENV-3.2 Ensure that development prevents damage to native plants in the hillsides, riparian areas, watersheds, and other sensitive natural habitats.

Policy ENV-3.3 Retain creek beds, riparian corridors, water courses, and associated vegetation in their natural state to assist groundwater percolation and prevent erosion and downstream sedimentation.

Policy ENV-3.4 Require setbacks or other protective measures as appropriate to protect riparian corridors.

Policy ENV-3.5 Promote the planting of local native trees and shrubs where development occurs on land surrounding reservoirs and streams, especially adjacent to areas where banks or channels have been modified for flood protection.

**Actions**

Action ENV-3.1 Collaborate with private and public property owners along creeks to prepare development plans for Los Gatos and Guadalupe Creeks which include:

- a. The use of flood-prone areas and riparian habitats as open space;

- b. Redevelopment, including recontouring and landscaping where the natural environment has been altered by channelization; and
- c. Paths for bicyclists and/or hikers.

Action ENV-3.2 Adopt a Riparian Policy to protect riparian corridors.

d. Wildlife Resources

<b>Goal ENV-4 To conserve wildlife populations.</b>
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**Policies**

- Policy ENV-4.1 Public and private projects shall not significantly deplete, damage or alter existing wildlife habitat or populations.
- Policy ENV-4.2 Coordinate with the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other appropriate agencies to protect wildlife species and habitats.
- Policy ENV-4.3 Maintain open space and native plant communities that provide habitat and migration corridors for native wildlife species.
- Policy ENV-4.4 Identify and protect areas with significant habitat diversity or importance for wildlife, such as riparian corridors, wildlife movement corridors and large tracts of undeveloped land.
- Policy ENV-4.5 Limit public access in areas that support rare wildlife populations and sensitive nesting and breeding sites.
- Policy ENV-4.6 Preserve the habitats of native plants, especially rare species or species that have significant local value to the Town.

- Policy ENV-4.7 Nesting sites shall be preserved in new development and within existing development unless a mitigation plan is approved.
- Policy ENV-4.8 Minimize and, where feasible, eliminate the use of herbicides and slow-to-biodegrade pesticides on Town property to minimize potential damage to native plants, birds and other wildlife.
- Policy ENV-4.9 Adjacent to creeks and other water bodies, use appropriate herbicides and pesticides that are approved for use in aquatic habitats.
- Policy ENV-4.10 The Town shall require open space dedications as a means to protect wildlife.
- Policy ENV-4.11 Town staff shall review site plans to ensure that existing significant wildlife habitats and migration corridors are not adversely affected by either individual or cumulative development impacts.

**Action**

- Action ENV-4.1 Develop a Migration Corridor Plan for hillside areas in Los Gatos.

**C. Water Resources**

The mission of the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) is to provide a healthy, safe, and enhanced quality of living in Santa Clara County through watershed stewardship and comprehensive management of water resources in a practical, cost effective, and environmentally sensitive manner. The Town of Los Gatos works closely with the SCVWD to ensure a clean, safe, and quality water supply for its residents. Additionally, given the Town's semi-

arid climate, the Town endeavors to promote water conservation measures to the greatest extent possible.

### 1. Background Information

The SCVWD was created by the California State Legislature, which identified the SCVWD's purpose and authority. The SCVWD is mandated to:

- ◆ To protect Santa Clara County from flood and stormwater.
- ◆ To provide comprehensive conservation and management of flood, storm, and recycled waters for all beneficial uses.
- ◆ To increase and prevent the waste of the water supply in the SCVWD.
- ◆ To enhance, protect, and restore streams, riparian corridors, and natural resources in connection with water supply and flood protection efforts.

#### a. Regional Water Quality

The 1972 Federal Clean Water Act requires that states develop a list of water bodies that do not meet water quality standards, establish priority rankings for waters on the list, and develop action plans, called Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL), to improve water quality. The list of impaired water bodies is typically revised every two years. The only listing for water bodies in the Town is Los Gatos Creek, which is currently being addressed as part of a federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) -approved TMDL.

#### b. Regional Groundwater

The Town is located within the Santa Clara Valley Groundwater sub-basin (groundwater sub-basin), which is a structural trough that is parallel to the northwest trending Coast Ranges. The groundwater sub-basin is approximately 22 miles long and 15 miles wide, with a surface area of 225 square miles. Annual precipitation for the Santa Clara sub-basin ranges from less than 16 inches in the valley to more than 28 inches in the mountains.

##### *i. Groundwater Management*

The groundwater sub-basin is managed by the SCVWD, whose primary objectives are to recharge the groundwater basin, conserve water, increase water

supply, and prevent waste or diminution of the District's water supply. The SCVWD endeavors to maintain the basin at equilibrium by augmenting natural percolation of rainfall and local stream runoff with imported water. As stated in the SCVWD Groundwater Management Report, the groundwater basin throughout the County appears to be in good condition.

*ii. Groundwater Quality*

Natural interactions between water, the atmosphere, rock minerals, and surface water control groundwater quality within the groundwater sub-basin. However, man-made compounds such as nitrogen-based fertilizer, solvents, and fuel products can also affect groundwater quality. Groundwater quality in the Santa Clara Valley sub-basin is generally high. Drinking water standards are met at public water supply wells without the use of treatment methods.

In a normal year, less than half of Santa Clara County's water is drawn from local groundwater aquifers or rainwater captured in the reservoirs operated by the SCVWD. More than half of the supply is brought into the County of Santa Clara through the State Water Project, the federal Central Valley Project, and San Francisco's Hetch Hetchy system. Local rainfall, or runoff, flows into the ten SCVWD reservoirs for storage and blending with the imported water before groundwater recharge or treatment.

**2. Goals, Policies, and Actions**

<b>Goal ENV-5 To protect and preserve watersheds and water quality.</b>
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**Policies**

- Policy ENV-5.1 Applicants shall demonstrate that new development will not contaminate surface water and/or groundwater.
- Policy ENV-5.2 Apply land use regulations, scenic easements, or other appropriate measures to keep the maximum amount of land

immediately contiguous to reservoirs and stream channels undeveloped and undisturbed.

- Policy ENV-5.3 Cooperate with the Santa Clara Valley Water District and other agencies to protect watersheds and riparian habitats from degradation.
- Policy ENV-5.4 Preserve existing creeks and avoid disturbances to these areas.
- Policy ENV-5.5 When a development project is adjacent to a designated creek, the approval shall include a condition that the creek be dedicated to the Town in fee with a maintenance easement granted to the Santa Clara Valley Water District.
- Policy ENV-5.6 Encourage alternative materials and designs to limit driveways, parking areas and parking lots in all zones except the C-2 zone. Examples include, but are not limited to, pervious paving material, and “ribbon strip” driveways, which have pavement in tire areas and grass or gravel in the middle.
- Policy ENV-5.7 Parking lots should be designed to drain into landscaped areas.
- Policy ENV-5.8 Open Space and recreation shall be the priority land use designation for lands immediately adjacent to reservoirs, creeks, and streams.

**Actions**

- Action ENV-5.1 Revise the Town Code to limit the impervious surfaces allowed in most zones.

#### *D. Water Service*

The San Jose Water Company has been the Town's water service provider since 1870. The San Jose Water Company's service area encompasses approximately 138 square miles including most of the City of San Jose; the City of Cupertino; the entire Cities of Campbell, Monte Sereno, and Saratoga; the Town of Los Gatos, and parts of unincorporated Santa Clara County.

##### **1. Background Information**

###### **a. Water Supply**

San Jose Water Company provides water from three major sources within its service area: groundwater, imported surface water, and local raw mountain surface water.

###### *i. Groundwater*

Groundwater is pumped from over 100 wells that draw water from the Santa Clara groundwater basin, which accounts for 40 percent of the supply. The San Jose Water Company has rights to pump water from the aquifers in the service area when it is in compliance with the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) permitting requirements.

###### *ii. Imported Surface Water*

Imported surface water is purchased from the SCVWD, which is the wholesale supplier to the San Jose Water Company. Surface water is imported from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and accounts for approximately 50 percent of the water supply. A smaller portion is impounded in local reservoirs in Santa Clara County.

###### *iii. Local Mountain Raw Surface Water*

Local mountain surface water is also collected from the watershed in the Santa Cruz Mountains. San Jose Water Company has "pre-1914 surface water rights" to raw water in Los Gatos Creek and local watersheds in the Santa Cruz Mountains. This amount accounts for approximately 10 percent of the water supply in normal rainfall years.

b. Water Transmission, Distribution and Storage

San Jose Water Company provides water treatment and distribution for the Town of Los Gatos.

*i. Water Treatment Plant*

The Rinconada Treatment Plant in the Town of Los Gatos supplies drinking water to both residential and commercial users in the west Santa Clara Valley including the Cities of Santa Clara, Campbell, Sunnyvale, Cupertino, Mountain View, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, and Los Gatos. The water treatment plant can treat and deliver up to 80 million gallons of water per day.

*ii. Water Distribution Pipelines*

San Jose Water Company has approximately 29 “stations” within the Town of Los Gatos. These stations include tanks, pump stations and regulators that regulate the water pressure. Hillside planning in the Town poses unique challenges in regard to water supply systems as it is difficult to provide water at higher elevations within the Town.

*iii. Water Storage*

Los Gatos is located within the Guadalupe Watershed within the boundaries of the SCVWD. Reservoirs located within the watershed provide water storage and are maintained by the SCVWD, including the Lexington Reservoir and James J. Lenihan Dam, Vasona Dam and Reservoir, Guadalupe Dam and Reservoir, Almaden Dam and Reservoir, and Calero Dam and Reservoir.

c. Water Reuse and Conservation

*i. Water Reuse*

San Jose Water Company is the wholesale retailer for the South Bay Water Recycling Program, which takes treated wastewater that would normally be discharged into the San Francisco Bay and pipes it back into the basin to be used for landscape irrigation.

*ii. Water Conservation*

The SCVWD has called for a voluntary 10 percent reduction in water use over the past several years for all water users within the District. However,

the voluntary water use reduction program only achieved an approximately 3 to 4 percent reduction. Therefore, the SCVWD is currently developing a mandatory conservation program to be implemented by the San Jose Water Company, if necessary.

San Jose Water Company provides a full range of water conservation measures to both residential and commercial customers, including the water audit program, where water inspectors conduct a thorough investigation of the customer's home or business by inspecting the property for leaks and measuring the flow of all showers, faucets, and toilets. The goal of this program is to identify the source of the customer's water consumption and recommend methods for more efficient water use.

San Jose Water Company also participates in the SCVWD's clothes washer rebate program and augments its water audit program by providing customers with free low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators, purchased by the SCVWD. San Jose Water Company constantly performs a system-wide audit by maintaining extensive records on each customer's water use.

San Jose Water Company has personnel that evaluate underground leaks so that they may be repaired as soon as possible. San Jose Water Company also has a regular schedule of meter calibration and replacement for all meter types in the distribution system. San Jose Water Company provides and participates in numerous education programs, including community outreach and the distribution of written materials to encourage water conservation.

## 2. Goals, Policies, and Actions

<b>Goal ENV-6</b>	<b>To conserve the water resources of the Town and promote the efficient use of water to ensure an adequate water supply for the Town's plant and wildlife populations as well as human populations.</b>
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**Policies**

- Policy ENV-6.1 Require that landscaping and hardscaping meet water conservation requirements in the Water Efficiency Landscaping Ordinance.
- Policy ENV-6.2 Require new construction to incorporate water-efficient landscaping following the Town’s Water Efficiency Landscaping Ordinance.
- Policy ENV-6.3 Encourage the use of Bay-Friendly Landscaping Guidelines in addition to the landscaping standards in the GreenPoint Rated Building Guidelines for new home construction and remodeled homes.
- Policy ENV-6.4 Continue to review all landscape plans as specified by the Town Code section on Water Efficient Landscaping.
- Policy ENV-6.5 Require the use of water-saving devices in new developments and plumbing-related remodels, and develop incentives to encourage their installation in existing development.
- Policy ENV-6.6 Promote the installation of water-efficient irrigation management systems and devices, such as evapotranspiration or soil moisture-based irrigation controls.

**Actions**

- Action ENV-6.1 Review and update the Town’s Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance with improved large landscape conservation programs and agency incentives for non-residential customers.
- Action ENV-6.2 In collaboration with efforts by local water purveyors, promote water audit programs that offer free water audits to single-family, multi-family, large landscape accounts,

and commercial customers. Collaborate with purveyors to enact conservation programs for commercial, industrial, and institutional (CII) accounts and create programs to install ultra-low-flush toilets in facilities.

Action ENV-6.3 Determine the appropriate use of artificial turf.

<b>Goal ENV-7 To encourage the use of recycled and reclaimed water.</b>
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**Policies**

Policy ENV-7.1 Encourage the use of recycled water when available.

Policy ENV-7.2 Cooperate with the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) and other appropriate agencies to explore options for bringing reclaimed water to Los Gatos, and provide incentives to encourage its use for public and private landscaping and decorative lakes, ponds, and fountains.

Policy ENV-7.3 Use recycled water or graywater for Town landscaping, including parks and medians, where appropriate.

Policy ENV-7.4 Encourage dual plumbing in large, new commercial and/or residential developments to enable future use of recycled water.

**Actions**

Action ENV-7.1 Develop incentives for dual plumbing in new development.

## *E. Wastewater*

The West Valley Sanitation District (WVSD) provides wastewater collection and disposal services for the Cities of Campbell, Monte Sereno, Los Gatos, much of Saratoga, and some unincorporated areas of the county within the district boundary. WVSD serves the entire population of Los Gatos.

### **1. Background Information**

#### **a. Collection System**

The WVSD's wastewater collection system consists of main and trunk sewers as well as sewer laterals, which are maintained and operated by the WVSD. The WVSD's system within the Town of Los Gatos consists primarily of gravity mains with the collection system flowing north, exiting the Town limits through multiple trunk sewers. These systems continue through the City of San Jose trunk sewers and ultimately to the San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant for wastewater treatment and disposal.

#### **b. Wastewater Treatment**

The San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant treats and cleans the wastewater of all the people that live and work in the Cities of San Jose, Santa Clara, Milpitas, Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Saratoga and Monte Sereno. The plant processes wastewater utilizing an advanced, tertiary wastewater system.

### **2. Goals, Policies, and Actions**

<b>Goal ENV-8</b> Meet all wastewater treatment demands and federal and State regulations.
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#### **Policies**

Policy ENV-8.1 Support the West Valley Sanitation District to maintain wastewater conveyance, treatment and disposal infrastructure in good working condition in order to supply mu-

municipal sewer service to the Town's residents and businesses.

Policy ENV-8.2 For individual home site development where public water and sanitary sewer systems are not available, development shall be discouraged. Development may be allowed with private water systems and septic tank systems when such systems are shown to be adequate, with the condition that the property owner enters into an agreement to connect to the public water system and sanitary sewer system when they become available.

Policy ENV-8.3 Any suspect septic tank systems shall be inspected in order to prevent surface flow of septic tank seepage.

Policy ENV-8.4 Prior to installation, any new septic systems shall be reviewed and approved by the Santa Clara County, Department of Environmental Health.

#### *F. Stormwater*

The Town is served by an extensive man-made storm drainage system including pipe networks, ditches, and culverts. These systems discharge into the natural creeks that traverse the Town.

##### **1. Background Information**

###### **a. Natural Drainage Systems**

The Town of Los Gatos is located south of the San Francisco Bay within the South Bay Drainage Unit. The South Bay Drainage Unit lies within the Coastal Range geomorphic province and is characterized by a broad alluvial valley sloping northward to the San Francisco Bay. Within the Town limits of Los Gatos there are several major open channel facilities, including Los Gatos Creek, Ross Creek, San Tomas Aquinas Creek, and Smith Creek.

Other unnamed natural water courses are also located within the Town limits.

b. Man-Made Drainage Systems

The Town of Los Gatos is served by an extensive man-made storm drainage system including pipe networks, ditches and culverts. These systems discharge into the natural creeks that cross the Town. The Town's drainage system map is based on a review of approximately 250 improvement plan sets on proposed and existing storm drains.

2. Goals, Policies, and Actions

<b>Goal ENV-9</b> To minimize the amount of stormwater runoff, as well as to protect and improve the water quality of runoff.
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**Policies**

Policy ENV-9.1 As part of CEQA review for development projects, require analysis of the single and cumulative impacts on water drainage (runoff) and contamination (water quality) in all areas but particularly in or adjacent to hillsides, riparian corridors, and important undeveloped watersheds.

Policy ENV-9.2 Promote non-point source pollution control programs to reduce and control the discharge of pollutants into the storm drain system.

Action ENV-9.1 Development projects on riparian lands or undeveloped watershed areas that require environmental reviews shall include detailed evaluations of the individual and cumulative impacts on water drainage and contamination.

**Action**

Action ENV-9.2 Develop a list of priorities for improvements to the storm drain system based upon the Storm Drain Master Plan.

### *G. Solid Waste and Recycling*

Garbage disposal and recycling are important for all residents of Los Gatos. The resources used to produce the items which end up in landfills are dwindling, and landfill space is limited. Los Gatos endeavors to work with West Valley Collection and Recycling (WVCR) to proactively address issues of solid waste and recycling. Los Gatos currently has a contract with WVCR that expires on February 28, 2014.

#### **1. Background Information**

WVCR is the exclusive recycling, green waste, and garbage hauler for Los Gatos, the Cities of Campbell, Monte Sereno, and Saratoga, and unincorporated Santa Clara County. All recycling, yard trimmings and garbage are picked up by WVCR and transported directly to the Guadalupe Landfill. The Guadalupe Landfill is located at 15999 Guadalupe Mines Road in the City of San Jose. The Guadalupe Landfill is a Class III solid waste landfill. It is projected that the landfill will reach its capacity in 2031.

##### **a. Recycling**

WVCR provides single stream recycling to single-family and multi-family residents as well as commercial customers. Single stream recycling means all recyclables are placed in a single bin and do not need to be sorted based on the material type. All recyclable materials are sorted at WVCR's Materials Recovery Facility in the City of San Jose.

WVCR accepts a wide variety of recyclable materials from both residential and commercial customers, including paper and cartons, glass, plastics and polystyrene, metals, and textiles. Additionally, WVCR will pick up used motor oil and filters as well as used household alkaline batteries from residential curbsides.

##### **b. Household Hazardous Waste**

The Santa Clara County Household Hazardous Waste Program provides household hazardous waste collection services for Santa Clara County, including Los Gatos. The Santa Clara County Household Hazardous Waste

Program accepts household hazardous waste by appointment. The nearest drop-off locations to Los Gatos are located in the City of San Jose. The program accepts hazardous wastes including: flammables (paints, petroleum products, polishes), corrosives (acids, bases, batteries, drain clog remover), toxics (poisons, pesticides, gardening chemicals, ammonia, solvents), oxidizers (pool chemicals, hydrogen peroxide, iodine), biohazards (medicine, syringes, needles), and various miscellaneous items, such as propane, helium, small oxygen tanks, and smoke detectors.

## 2. Goals, Policies, and Actions

**Goal ENV-10 To promote recycling and reuse as well as reduction in demand.**

### Policies

- Policy ENV-10.1 Encourage residential and commercial recycling of reusable materials.
- Policy ENV-10.2 Encourage recycling and reuse of building materials from remodeled and demolished buildings.
- Policy ENV-10.3 Collaborate with West Valley Collection and Recycling or any subsequent waste collection provider to develop waste reduction education programs.

**Goal ENV-11 To conserve landfill space.**

### Policies

- Policy ENV-11.1 Cooperate with nearby jurisdictions and regional jurisdictions to design and implement coordinated recycling plans.
- Policy ENV-11.2 Continue and expand recycling programs through the local waste hauler.

Policy ENV-11.3 Continue to work with other West Valley Cities through the West Valley Cities Solid Waste Joint Powers Authority to design and implement expanded recycling programs.

Policy ENV-11.4 Continue to work with the Santa Clara County Solid Waste Commission.

### *H. Air Quality*

The air we breathe is a shared resource. Air pollution affects all Californians, regardless of where they live or their environmental lifestyles. In addition to the human impact, polluted air also damages our agricultural industry and our natural environment. The air pollution potential of the Santa Clara Valley is high. The Valley has a large population and the largest complex of mobile air pollution sources in the Bay Area.

#### **1. Background Information**

Air quality in the San Francisco Bay Air Basin is overseen by the Environmental Protection Agency Region IX office at the federal level, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) at the State level and by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) at the regional level. The Town works with these agencies in order to do its part to devise methods of air resource conservation that address both local and regional air quality issues.

##### **a. Regional Climate and Meteorological Conditions**

The Town of Los Gatos is located in the Santa Clara Valley subregion of the Basin. Temperatures in this region are warmer in the summer with mostly clear skies and cooler nights. Winter temperatures range from mild to very cool. Wind patterns in the Santa Clara Valley are influenced greatly by terrain, with the greatest wind speeds in the spring and summer, particularly in the afternoon and evenings.

b. Air Pollutants

i. *Carbon Monoxide*

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless toxic gas that is emitted by mobile and stationary sources as a result of incomplete combustion of hydrocarbons or other carbon-based fuels. In cities, automobile exhaust can cause as much as 95 percent of all CO emissions.

ii. *Ozone*

Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) occurs in two layers of the atmosphere, the troposphere and stratosphere. The stratospheric (the “good” O<sub>3</sub> layer) extends upward from about 10 to 30 miles and protects life on earth from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays. The troposphere extends from the earth's surface to approximately 10 miles above ground level, where it meets the stratosphere. Within the troposphere, O<sub>3</sub> is a photochemical pollutant produced from the reaction between volatile organic compounds (VOCs), Nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), and sunlight. VOCs and NO<sub>x</sub> are considered key O<sub>3</sub> precursors. To reduce O<sub>3</sub> concentrations, it is necessary to control the emissions of these precursors. High O<sub>3</sub> concentrations can form over large regions from motor vehicles and stationary sources emissions and can be carried hundreds of miles from their origins.

iii. *Nitrogen Dioxide*

Nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) are highly reactive gases that are a primary O<sub>3</sub> precursor and react in the atmosphere to form acid rain. Nitrogen dioxides (NO<sub>2</sub>) occur in areas that have a high concentration of combustion sources such as motor vehicle engines, power plants, refineries, and other industrial operations.

iv. *Suspended Particulate Matter*

Suspended Particulate Matter (PM) arises from sources such as road dust, diesel soot, combustion products, construction operations, and dust storms. There are two forms of PM, Course Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) and Fine Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). PM scatters light and significantly reduces visibility.

In addition, these particulates penetrate into lungs and can potentially damage the respiratory tract.

c. Toxic Air Contaminants

A Toxic Air Contaminant (TAC) is “an air pollutant that may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious illness, or which may pose a present or potential hazard to human health.” The 189 substances that have been listed as federal hazardous air pollutants are TACs under the State’s air toxics program.

d. Significant Sources of Air Pollution or Odors

Major sources of air pollution within Santa Clara County and the Town of Los Gatos include stationary, area-wide, and mobile sources. These sources include:

- ◆ Stationary Sources
  - Fuel Combustion
  - Waste Disposal
  - Cleaning and Surface Coating
  - Petroleum Production and Marketing
  - Industrial Processes
- ◆ Area-Wide Sources
  - Solvent Evaporation
  - Miscellaneous processes
- ◆ Mobile Sources
  - On-Road Mobile Sources
  - Other Mobile Sources

According to Santa Clara County’s emissions inventory, mobile sources are the largest contributor of pollutants.

e. Sensitive Land Uses

Sensitive populations (sensitive receptors) are more susceptible to the effects of air pollution than the general population and typically include children

under 14, seniors over 65, athletes and people with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases. Depending on the population groups or activity, some land use locations are considered more sensitive with respect to changes in air quality. Locations that may contain a high concentration of these sensitive population groups include residential areas, hospitals, day-care facilities, senior facilities, libraries, places of worship, schools, and parks.

## 2. Goals, Policies, and Actions

<b>Goal ENV-12 To conserve the air resources of the Town and maintain and improve acceptable air quality in Los Gatos.</b>
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### Policies

- Policy ENV-12.1 Local land use decisions shall consider air quality goals as part of the environmental review process.
- Policy ENV-12.2 Require consideration of alternatives to individual auto use whenever the environmental review document concludes that the traffic generated by a development project would result in adverse impacts from air and noise pollution.
- Policy ENV-12.3 Require design criteria for site plans to reduce the effects of high air pollution concentrations associated with roadways by appropriate placement of structures, use of landscaping, and parking arrangements.
- Policy ENV-12.4 Support Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), State, and federal planning efforts and programs aimed at reducing air pollution within the airshed.
- Policy ENV-12.5 Site plans shall be reviewed to include an assessment of the potential adverse impact from air pollution and recommend alternatives to reduce such impacts.

Policy ENV-12.6 Support MTC recommendations for reduction of auto pollutants.

Policy ENV-12.7 During construction, ensure all applicable best management practices are used in accordance with Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) standards to reduce emissions of criteria pollutants.

Policy ENV-12.8 Best Available Control Measures including compliance with California vehicle emissions standards shall be incorporated to reduce construction emissions.

Policy ENV-12.9 For significant projects, require project proponents to prepare and implement a Construction Management Plan, which will include Best Available Control Measures, among other measures. Appropriate control measures will be determined on a project-by-project basis, and should be specific to the pollutant for which the daily threshold is exceeded. Such control measures may include, but not be limited to:

- a. Minimizing simultaneous operation of multiple construction equipment units.
- b. Watering the construction area to minimize fugitive dust.
- c. Requiring off-road diesel powered vehicles used for construction to comply with California vehicle emissions standards.
- d. Minimizing idling time by construction vehicles.

**Actions**

Action ENV-12.1 Study a ban on gardening equipment that may adversely affect air quality.

## *I. Greenhouse Gases*

Through the implementation of this General Plan it is possible to reduce the Town's local GHG emissions. The Los Gatos Town Council has already passed a resolution adopting the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign (CCP) led by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) Local Governments for Sustainability. The CCP helps local governments and communities to reduce GHG emissions and their associated environmental impacts. To achieve its goal of reducing GHG emissions and improving air quality, the Town will establish a GHG reduction target, develop and implement an action plan, and monitor and report progress.

### **1. Background Information**

The earth's atmosphere contains a group of naturally occurring gases that are responsible for maintaining a habitable climate. These gases allow sunlight to enter the earth's atmosphere freely and then prevent a portion of the resulting heat from exiting into the atmosphere. Because of their ability to contain heat, these gases are known as greenhouse gases, or GHGs. Natural levels of GHGs exist in balanced proportion, resulting in steady maintenance of the temperature within earth's atmosphere. Emissions from human activities, such as energy production and motor vehicle use, elevate the concentrations of GHGs, upsetting their natural balance. When GHG concentrations exceed natural concentrations in the atmosphere, the "greenhouse effect" of trapped heat is enhanced, and the phenomenon known as global warming occurs.

#### **a. State Mandates**

In June 2005, Governor Schwarzenegger established California's GHG emissions reduction targets in Executive Order S-3-05. The Executive Order established goals to reduce statewide GHG emissions to the following levels:

- ◆ Reduce emissions to 2000 levels by 2010;
- ◆ Reduce emissions to 1990 levels by 2020; and
- ◆ Reduce emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

*i. Assembly Bill 32*

In 2006, Assembly Bill (AB) 32, known as the California Global Warming Solutions Act, was adopted to further the goals of Executive Order S-3-05. AB 32 represents the first enforceable statewide program to limit GHG emissions from all major industries, with penalties for noncompliance. This legislation sets a cap on statewide GHG emissions and establishes the regulatory framework to achieve corresponding reductions in statewide emissions levels. AB 32 charges the California Air Resources Board (CARB) with implementation of the act. CARB's responsibilities include monitoring compliance and enforcing any rule, regulation, order, emission limitation, emission reduction measure, or market-based compliance mechanism adopted.

*ii. Senate Bill 375*

In 2008, Senate Bill (SB) 375 was adopted to further reduce GHG emissions from automobiles and light trucks by requiring CARB to provide GHG emission reduction targets from the automobile and light truck sector. SB 375 directs CARB to calculate statewide emissions reduction targets and to assign regional emissions reduction targets to each metropolitan planning organization (MPO) in the State. The MPO for Los Gatos is the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). SB 375 requires that certain regional transportation planning and programming activities be consistent with the sustainable communities strategies, and provides incentives for local governments that adopt policies and programs consistent with the sustainable communities strategy.

**b. Greenhouse Gases**

The most common GHG that results from human activity is carbon dioxide, followed by methane and nitrous oxide. Many other trace gases have greater ability to absorb and re-radiate long wave radiation; however, these gases are not as plentiful. California State law defines GHGs to include the following: carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride. Uses and characteristics of these gases include:

- ◆ **Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)** is primarily generated by fossil fuel combustion in stationary and mobile sources. The vast majority of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions come

from the combustion of fossil fuels such as petroleum, coal and natural gas.

- ◆ **Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>)** is the primary component of natural gas, which is used for space and water heating, steam production and power generation. Modern landfills, agricultural operations, coal mines, oil and natural gas operations are the primary sources of methane emissions.
- ◆ **Nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O)** is produced by both natural and human related sources. Natural sources of nitrous oxide are bacteria in the soil and oceans. The majority of nitrous oxide produced by human activity is a result of agriculture, including nitrogen fertilizers and animal waste, which promote nitrous oxide production from naturally-occurring bacteria. Industrial processes and internal combustion engines also produce nitrous oxide.
- ◆ **Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)** are typically used as foam-blown insulation and as refrigerants for both stationary refrigeration and mobile air conditioning.
- ◆ **Perfluorocarbons (PFCs)** are primarily created as byproducts of aluminum production and semi conductor manufacturing.
- ◆ **Sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>)** is most commonly used as an electrical insulator in high voltage equipment that transmits and distributes electricity.
- ◆ **Other Compounds** have the potential to contribute to the greenhouse effect. These compounds include ozone, 1,1,1-trichloroethane, hydrochlorofluorocarbons, and chlorofluorocarbons.

c. Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and other GHGs are emitted as the result of certain natural and technological processes. Many human activities rely on those processes. Therefore, emissions levels can be minimized by reducing those activities.

*i. Direct Sources of Greenhouse Gases*

There are two types of sources that directly emit GHGs: stationary sources (buildings, factories, power plants, etc.) and mobile sources (cars, trucks, airplanes, etc.). There are also two types of stationary sources: point sources, which are individual facilities such as oil refineries and area sources. Area sources are an agglomeration of individual facilities that emit GHGs through daily activities, which would be a combination of sources such as residential heating, painting and varnishing, or dry cleaning.

*ii. Indirect Sources of Greenhouse Gases*

The two main indirect sources of GHG emissions are electricity consumption and water treatment. The facilities in California and the western United States that provide water and power to homes and businesses in Los Gatos emit GHGs. These GHGs are emitted at the power plant or water conveyance facility, not in Los Gatos, but they originate from homes and businesses in Los Gatos.

*d. Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions*

According to the BAAQMD, of the nine Bay Area counties, Santa Clara County has the second highest annual direct emissions of GHG emissions. Santa Clara County is also the most populous County in the Bay Area. Of the emissions attributed to Santa Clara County, approximately 53 percent of emissions come from motor vehicles, 20 percent from point sources, and 27 percent from area sources.

**2. Goals, Policies, and Actions**

<p><b>Goal ENV-13 To promote a sustainable community that protects environmental resources and the climate to prevent negative impacts to future generations.</b></p>
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**Policies**

Policy ENV-13.1 Encourage development to address “heat island” effects by including cool roofs, cool pavements, and strategically placed shade trees.

Policy ENV-13.2 Attract and retain businesses that incorporate sustainable practices into their operations and that produce goods or services that contribute to sustainability.

**Actions**

Action ENV-13.1 Develop a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan and/or Climate Action Plan to control and reduce GHG emissions. Development of this plan shall include the following steps:

- a. Conduct a baseline analysis (GHG emissions inventory) for 1990, or most appropriate baseline year;
- b. Adopt an emissions reduction target;
- c. Develop strategies and actions for reducing emissions;
- d. Develop strategies and actions within a climate change preparedness analysis for adaptation to climate change;
- e. Implement strategies and actions; and
- f. Monitor emissions and verify results.

Require Town operations and actions, as well as land use approvals, to be consistent with this plan(s). This plan shall be in place prior to adoption of any specific plan. Adopt the Climate Action Plan within 24 months of adoption of the Updated General Plan.

Action ENV-13.2 Develop applicable Planning and Building design review standards to evaluate a project’s contribution to GHG emissions.

Action ENV-13.3 Develop a “heat island” mitigation plan that includes guidelines for cool roofs, cool pavements, and strategically placed shade trees. Amend the applicable Design Guidelines to integrate the guidelines.

<p><b>Goal ENV-14 To reduce overall greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.</b></p>
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**Policies**

Policy ENV-14.1 Support employer incentive programs for carpooling and use of other forms of alternative transportation.

Policy ENV-14.2 Promote local employment opportunities to reduce consumption of fuel used for commuting.

Policy ENV-14.3 Work with local school districts to encourage carpooling, walking, and bicycling to schools.

Policy ENV-14.4 The Town shall support the use of non-polluting fuels by encouraging the inclusion of facilities for alternative fuels in new public and private developments and by offering incentives to encourage retrofits.

**Actions**

Action ENV-14.1 Provide incentives, such as giving priority in plan review, processing, and field inspection services, for new and existing commercial and residential projects that provide parking spaces reserved for electric vehicles (EVs) and have a charging connection.

Action ENV-14.2 Identify opportunities to increase and/or change the Town’s vehicle fleet to maximize the use of alternative fuels.

**Goal ENV-15 To encourage sustainable procurement, extended producer responsibility and innovative strategies to become a zero-waste Town.**

**Policies**

- Policy ENV-15.1 Continue to pursue energy-efficiency in Town operations.
- Policy ENV-15.2 Encourage the use of bags and packaging that can be re-used or recycled.
- Policy ENV-15.3 Encourage the use of recycled-content construction materials in new construction.
- Policy ENV-15.4 Reuse and rehabilitate existing buildings when appropriate and feasible in order to reduce waste, conserve resources and energy, and reduce construction costs.
- Policy ENV-15.5 Incorporate a “life-cycle costing” approach into Town purchasing considerations that takes into account long-term cost savings from energy efficient products.
- Policy ENV-15.6 Require all new and existing multi-family developments that are redeveloping or remodeling to provide recycling areas for their residents.
- Policy ENV-15.7 Strive to become a zero waste community.

**Actions**

- Action ENV-15.1 Establish and maintain a “sustainability information center” at Town Hall to inform the public and distribute available brochures, and provide information on sustainability on the Town’s website.
- Action ENV-15.2 Revise existing construction and demolition ordinance to require at least 50 percent diversion (i.e. reuse or recycling) of non-hazardous construction waste from disposal.

Action ENV-15.3 Expand educational programs to inform residents about reuse, recycling, composting, waste to energy, and zero waste programs.

### *J. Energy Resources*

Energy production, conservation, and patterns of energy consumption are of growing importance to individuals, agencies and jurisdictions. Energy resources, while varied, are not limitless. Traditional energy resources (gas, electricity) are non-renewable, and conservation of these resources for future generations is imperative.

#### **1. Background Information**

Typically, the most important factors influencing residential energy consumption are the size of the house, the type of house (detached single-family or multi-family structure), the number of major appliances, and the construction and siting of the structure. Residential energy needs are often fulfilled by electricity or a combination of gas and electricity. Space heating and cooling is the most energy-consuming activity in residential structures.

The State of California requires local governments to address energy conservation and efficiency in new construction. The State Building Standard Code, including Title 24, applies to any new structure, additions to an existing structure, changes to the footprint of a structure, remodeling of a structure, or changes to water and heating systems. Title 24 of the State Administrative Code has recently been amended to mandate more stringent conservation and efficiency requirements for new residential and non-residential construction.

The Town of Los Gatos has several opportunities to promote energy conservation and reduce energy consumption, mainly through enforcing construction standards and through its own operations.

## 2. Goals, Policies, and Actions

**Goal ENV-16 To foster development that reduces the use of non-renewable energy resources and expands the use of renewable resources and alternative fuels.**

### Policies

- Policy ENV-16.1 Encourage the use of energy conservation techniques and technology in existing and proposed developments to improve energy conservation.
- Policy ENV-16.2 Protect existing development from loss of solar access.
- Policy ENV-16.3 Encourage the use of renewable energy sources and alternative fuels.
- Policy ENV-16.4 Promote, incentivize, and recognize energy efficiency efforts of local non-residential uses.
- Policy ENV-16.5 Require new subdivisions to examine the feasibility of incorporating site layouts that allow for passive solar heating and cooling.
- Policy ENV-16.6 Encourage new development to incorporate measures that reduce energy use through solar orientation by taking advantage of shade, prevailing winds, landscaping, and sun screens.

### Actions

- Action ENV-16.1 Continue to adopt the following energy saving steps for Town facilities and operations:
- a. Conduct, with assistance from PG&E, a thorough energy audit of all Town facilities to identify cost-effective opportunities for conservation and use of solar energy systems.

- b. Establish realistic yearly goals for reductions in Town energy costs and keep Town personnel aware of program status.
- c. Establish a fuel conservation program for the Town vehicle fleet and require Gas Cap driver training for all employees who use fleet vehicles.

Action ENV-16.2 Study possible measures to improve energy and water efficiency in existing buildings as part of the development of a Climate Action Plan.

<p><b>Goal ENV-17 To promote green buildings that minimize consumption of energy and natural resources.</b></p>
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**Policies**

Policy ENV-17.1 Require new construction and remodels to use energy- and resource-efficient and ecologically sound designs, technologies, and building materials, as well as recycled materials to promote sustainability.

Policy ENV-17.2 Require higher levels of energy efficiency as house size increases.

Policy ENV-17.3 Encourage reductions in the use of nonrenewable resources in building construction, maintenance, and operations.

Policy ENV-17.4 Encourage new multi-family construction to include green roofs and common space for community gardens.

Policy ENV-17.5 Require all new homes to follow the Town's adopted GreenPoint Rated Building Guidelines.

- Policy ENV-17.6 Provide incentives, such as giving priority in plan review, processing and field inspection services, for projects that achieve a LEED-Silver or higher rating or comparable GreenPoint rating.
- Policy ENV-17.7 Encourage LEED certification or comparable certification for new non-residential buildings over 5,000 square feet.
- Policy ENV-17.8 Provide expedited permit processing for new construction or substantial remodels that exceed Title 24 requirements by at least 20 percent.
- Policy ENV-17.9 New Town-owned facilities shall serve as examples of sustainable development by utilizing recycled and renewable resources, water conserving fixtures and landscaping, and energy efficient systems and appliances.
- Policy ENV-17.10 Continue to promote the weatherization of all homes through publicizing available utility energy audit and financing programs and investigate the possibility of contracting with PG&E to identify participants.
- Policy ENV-17.11 Provide public education and publicity about energy efficiency and emissions reduction programs and incentives.
- Policy ENV-17.12 Provide green building information, marketing, training and technical assistance to property owners, development professionals, schools and special districts.
- Policy ENV-17.13 Coordinate with other local governments, special districts, nonprofits and other public organizations to share resources, achieve economies of scale and develop green building policies and programs that are optimized on a regional scale.

Policy ENV-17.14 Provide permitting-related and other incentives for energy efficient building projects, for example by giving energy-efficient projects priority in plan review, processing and field inspection services.

**Actions**

Action ENV-17.1 Develop policies, incentives, and design guidelines that encourage the public and private purchase and use of durable and nondurable items, including building materials, made from recycled materials or renewable resources.

Action ENV-17.2 Amend the Town Code to establish regulations, in addition to Title 24 requirements, that promote and require the conservation of energy and the use of renewable energy sources.

Action ENV-17.3 Establish outdoor lighting standards in the Town Code to address energy efficiency.

Action ENV-17.4 Consider adopting the Santa Clara County Cities Association recommendations or regional standards/recommendations for green building requirements.

Action ENV-17.5 Train all plan review and building inspection staff in green building and energy efficiency materials, techniques and practices.

Action ENV-17.6 Identify and remove regulatory or procedural barriers to implementing green building practices in the Town, by updating codes, guidelines, and zoning, and identifying incentives for LEED certification.

Action ENV-17.7 Study the feasibility of requiring LEED certification for all or certain new projects.