



# City of Los Altos

## Community Center Master Plan

Community Forum 1

March 8, 2008





# City Council Findings

## We Must Do Something

- Buildings are in Need of Repair
- Poor Site Access and Traffic Flow
- Inadequate Parking
- Inadequate Senior, Youth and Recreational Facilities
- New Space (City Hall and Police Station)
- 18 Acre Site is Very Under Utilized

Community Workshop (December 2007)



# City Council Initiative Appointed Task Force

- Develop Vision Statement
- Begin Public Engagement
  - discuss needs and site potential
  - seek community input
- Report Back to City Council

Community Workshop (December 2007)



## What the Task Force Has Been Doing

- Visited other Community Centers
- Defined What Could Be in New Community Center
- Completed a Vision Statement – Defined Site Potential
- Prepared a Plan for Public Outreach
- Issued Request for Proposals and Interviewed Architects to Develop a Community Center Master Plan
- Selected **Anderson Brulé Architects**

Community Workshop (December 2007)



# Anderson Brulé Architects

Brad Cox, AIA, LEED™ AP *Principal In Charge*



Pamela Anderson-Brulé, AIA *Principal of Design*



Monique Wood, AIA, LEED™ AP *Project Manager*





# AGENDA

- Agenda Review
- Master Plan Process Review
- Vision Statement Review
- Service Priorities
  - Service Exercise
- Character Definition
  - Character Exercise
- Feedback / Next Steps

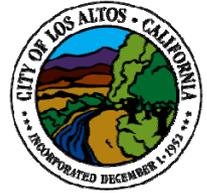




# AGENDA

## Context

ABA has been selected as the Architect for the Community Center Master Plan. Today's meeting is the first opportunity for the community to give input into the development of the Los Altos Community Center Master Plan.



# AGENDA

## Purpose

- Overview the Master Plan Process
- Review the Project Vision Statement
- Provide Input to the Determination of Service Priorities for the Community Center
- Provide Input to the Character Definition for the Project



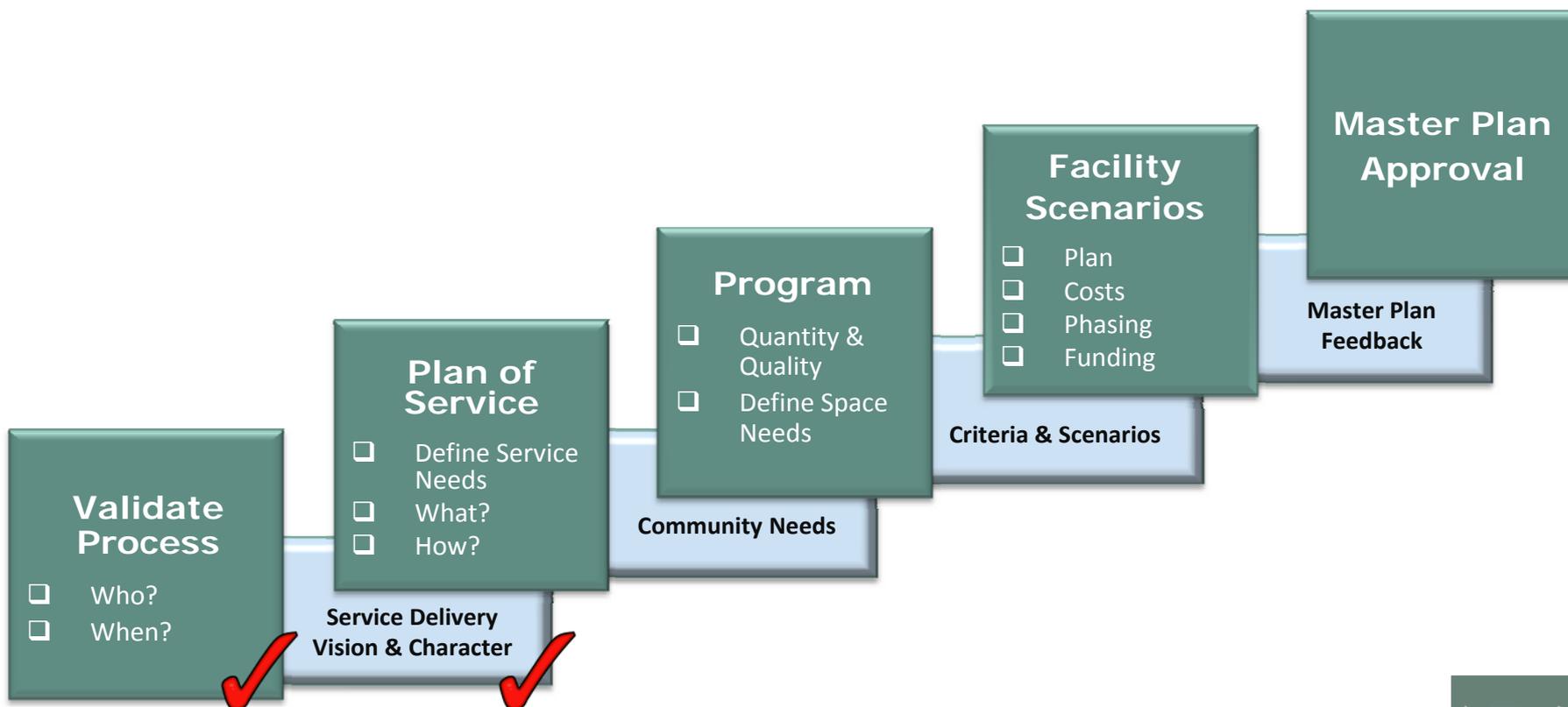
# AGENDA

## Intended Results

- Shared Understanding: Master Plan Process & Participants
- Gain Community Insight for Service Priorities for the Project
- Discuss Character Definition of the Community Center Architectural Style
- Shared Understanding of Future Opportunities for Community Input



# Project & Community Process

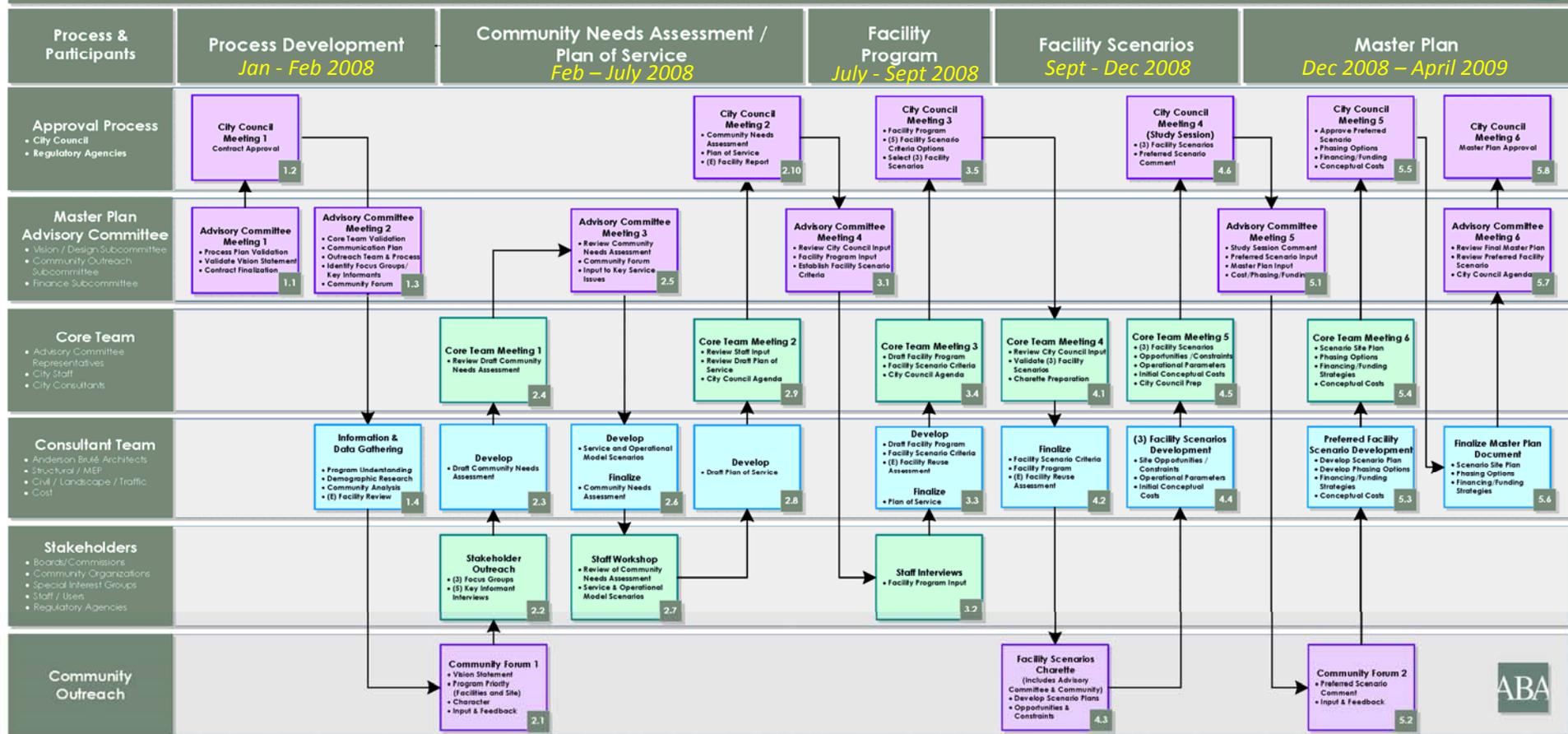


# CITY OF LOS ALTOS - CIVIC CENTER MASTER PLAN DRAFT PROPOSED PROCESS DIAGRAM

12/19/2007

**COLOR LEGEND**

- Public Meetings ■
- Project Meetings ■
- Consultant Team Scope ■



SERVICE + ENVIRONMENT = EXPERIENCE

# Vision Statement



# Vision Statement Summary

## SERVICE

Services will be safe, convenient and comprehensive.

## ENVIRONMENT

Environments will support play, learning and gathering and will be configured to connect with the downtown village.

Modern, sustainably designed facilities that are both adequate and useful to the community and of striking architecture, will be located in a beautiful park-like setting.

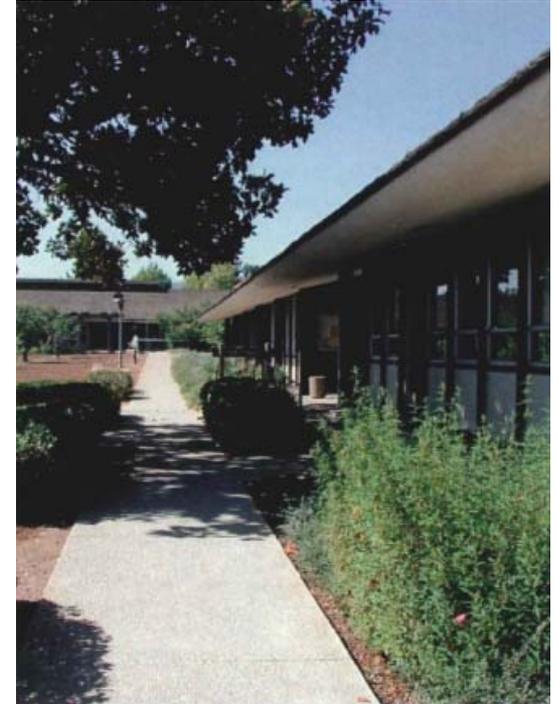
## EXPERIENCE

The Los Altos Community Center will provide a community experience that will serve your public for the next 50 years.



## Your Key Issues

- Incorporate Library Expansion
- Expansion of Programs
  - Provide New Recreational Uses
  - Expand Community Programs
  - Improve Senior & Youth Programs
- Promote Los Altos History
- Develop New Green Facilities
- Invigorate the Downtown Village through Visual, Pedestrian & Parking Links
- Aesthetic of the Architecture is Important
- Space for Expanded Program & Staffing
- Meaningful Incorporation of Los Altos Hills in the Master Plan Process



# Service Priorities Definition



# Service Priorities Discussion

- ❑ Benchmarking & Data Gathering
- ❑ Outreach Information & Feedback
  - Public Meetings
    - City Council Meetings
    - Advisory Committee Meetings
    - Community Forums
  - Selected Representatives
    - Focus Group Interviews
    - Key Informant Interviews
  - Community Survey





## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Interview Your Neighbor – *10 minutes*
  - Overview of Program Elements
  - What do you appreciate about the services you receive? What works well?
  - What would you like to be able to do or have access to at the Community Center, but currently cannot?
  - Do you have any concerns associated with the planning of the Community Center? Do you feel other community needs are not being met?
  - Describe your ideal visit to the Los Altos Community Center in 10 years. What is the experience? What are you doing?
  - From the City's perspective, what do you see as the top priorities for the services for the Community in the future?
- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Expanded Storage Space for use of the Community Center – it is packed right now
  - Reasonably sized forum gathering space – i.e. book sale, performance, etc. – an auditorium that could be used for multiple things and is more comfortable than current spaces
  - Youth activities center (like the Underground) for unstructured youth programs
  - Easier access to the Senior Center – not very accessible
  - Better and more underground parking
  - Easy access between the community center buildings
  - More outside seating areas, following downtown theme



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Community Meeting rooms
  - Better Senior Services
  - Community pool
  - Adult Programs within the Library
  - Tennis Program
  - Expanding or rebuilding the Bus Barn theater
  - Affordable community meeting space



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Where will we be population-wise in 50 years? There is a fixed amount of space in the community
  - Current services are fine – if we aren't going to grow, why are we expanding services? Concern with building facilities that won't get used.
  - Bus barn theater is really liked, but perhaps it should be downtown rather than on the Community Center site – this could enliven the downtown



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Outdoor stage area – outdoor performances
  - Senior Center is very important, need a better facility
  - Nice outdoor setting – current needs improvement
  - More pedestrian access – lessen the dependence on cars, doesn't foster inclusivity of the community
  - Need to increase civic engagement



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Senior Housing on the site
  - Youth sports programs – need meeting and training space, multi-sport, multi-purpose space
  - More recreational opportunities, swim center
  - Multi-purpose building for Bus Barn, Youth Theater, movies, etc.
  - Connection to downtown – have pedestrian overpass over San Antonio
  - Seniors and teens are not being served as well as they should be



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Younger children – these spaces work very well, recreation space and library
  - Need connectivity at entrances, simpler parking and parking closer to activities
  - Central meeting space – both formal and informal, potentially outdoor space



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Enjoy having City Council meetings on TV, written communication to the community is great
  - City staff is very accessible, rental of facilities works smoothly
  - Rehearsal hall (this room) works well for Youth Theater, although it is shared with other groups, and this is challenging. Being on campus works really well for the Youth Theater



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Experience of using the Civic Center – it doesn't feel like a corporation or a university – it feels like a village; there is some inefficiency of use on the space, and this is a draw – lower density
    - It is a place you like to be
    - Concern that in making it bigger and more efficient will lose this feeling



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Appreciate the range and depth of facilities that are housed here, and the relative affordability
    - Make sure to build an infrastructure that maintains this
  - Park-like atmosphere draws you in
  - Love the Orchard – brings serenity to the site, beautiful view
  - Understand the need for parking, but don't want to lose the natural setting



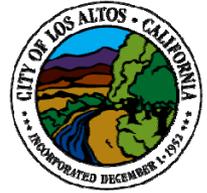
## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Potentially use the Hillview Community Center site for denser facilities, but maintain the orchard spirit on the site, because it works well
  - Really appreciate having the library on site with all that it provides for the community, both here and online



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Concerns – public input will not adequately weight the views of the community demographics
  - Architecture – would like to maintain the orchard and park-like feel of the space, but also want to maintain the ranch aesthetic – feel this is a large part of the sense of place of Los Altos
    - Lots of agreement with this comment



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Concern – process does not adequately factor in the analysis of the financial impact of budget and fees – need to make sure that we are planning for all facilities with all aspects of the master plan in mind
  - Vision statement – need to add 'economical' to the descriptors of the services to be provided.
    - Increase of fees for services should also be considered



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Concern – using ‘comprehensive’ with services
    - Traffic is a big concern - how will this project affect traffic around and into the site
    - Coordination with other smaller projects that are already planned and prioritized within the city
  - Other recreational sites – these have been languishing – how can we bring all of these into 'the plan' for community services provision – need to look at all play fields



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Parking and access – potentially having shuttle service for teens and seniors to bring the community to the center
  - Share facts with the community to alleviate community – what are the demographics?
  - Concern with economics as well, changing tide of property values as well



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Having everything in one area is not the way to go – having a separate library in the southern part of the community is good
  - Improvement of facilities throughout the community
  - 'Comprehensive' – do fewer things better rather than try to do everything
  - Concern with noise and traffic impacts onto the neighboring residences – timing of event and facility use



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Young families – parks are very crowded and the neighborhoods are busy – there are a lot of younger families moving into the community
  - Would like to see more services for gathering together



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Ideal visit to the community center
  - Just left the facility – it supported the event, comfortable chairs, effective infrastructure, clean room, access to coffee, supportive of the business environment, flexibility of the space
  - Envision walking to the community center and also easily walk into downtown – reduce the separation
  - Swimming pool use after biking to the center, will now walk downtown and support local merchants



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Community parking, accessible, pleasant facilities to gather and enjoy each other
  - Bike down, park in a bike rack, take a yoga class, watch children play ball and watch teens having fun, and then see a great senior center and a nice bus barn facility, go downtown for dinner
  - Bring grandchildren here, walk onto the facility and not see a car, all underground parking, center looks like a park, and the buildings have small footprints that allow for open space, want to have a gathering point for the community to allow for mutual discovery, common meeting area to work together for the community



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Nice shuttle bus from Loyola Corners to this center, where seniors, gen-x, gen-y and children can come together, exercise center to allow the entire community to gather in one place
  - Campus setting vs. multi-purpose buildings – prefer the campus setting – forces walking and allows for educational facilities
  - We are a geographically flat community – wants to imagine a high space to view the community from up above



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Want a center that we will be proud to walk people through that shows the concern for sustainability and the environment
  - Want better facilities for the city staff and employees
  - Want hidden parking, and close parking for those with limited ability
  - Want an outdoor feeling and consider everything that uses this space, including people, animals, and plants



## Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*
  - Coming out of college, and mentor the youth that are now using the space better



# Service Priorities Exercise

- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *40 minutes*



# Service Elements

## Existing Services

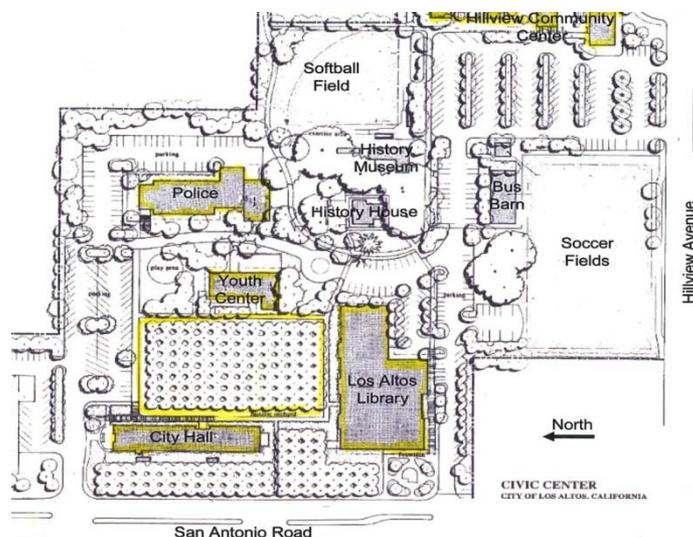
- Police Department
- Recreation
- Community Development
- City Administration
- City Engineering
- Adequate Storage

## New Services

- Modern Youth Center
- Multi-Purpose Community House
- Senior Center
- Meeting Rooms
- Non-Profit Organization Space
- Future Fire Department
- Future Swim Facility
- Future Library Expansion
- Future Community Theater
- Additional Storage

## Site Features

- Apricot Orchard
- Underground Parking
- Athletic Play Fields (Baseball & Soccer)
- Small Park & Tot Lot
- Additional Parking



# Character Definition



## Character Definition Exercise

- ❑ Break & Image Dot Exercise – *10 minutes*
  - Forms
  - Materials
  - Interior Spaces
  - Landscape Elements
  - Architectural Style
- ❑ Key Word Definition and Image Discussion – *30 minutes*
  - Why does this image represent the Los Altos Community Center?
- ❑ Large Group Discussion – *30 minutes*



## Large Group Discussion: Character Definition

### ☐ Blue team –

- Talked a lot about having a lot of light
- Open, natural, clean, informal, uncluttered
- Wood and glass was liked overall, some stone was appreciated
- Formal courtyard was liked, but maybe not appropriate for this region
- Gable roof form was liked
- Strong sense of form follows function – needs to remain eclectic – buildings feel like what they are, not a single architectural expression across the campus
- Lower and intimate scale of the buildings, but important to have a variety of heights



# Large Group Discussion: Character Definition

## ☐ Blue team –

- Should build a palette of materials that are more consistent throughout
- Want green buildings, but concern about maintenance
- Gentle curves were liked
- Layering uses so that most publicly used spaces would be on the lower levels, but have a community room up top to capture the view
- Central area should be for people, not parking, picked up on outdoor images that showed people
- Loved the idea of the city shuttle and having bike racks and pedestrian access



## Large Group Discussion: Character Definition

### ☐ Blue team –

- Front door presence and image on San Antonio – not formal, not grandiose
- Should open space feel protected to the inside, or to San Antonio? To the inside, because San Antonio is too loud and busy
- Trees – preserving the existing trees
- Orchard discussion: as a theme is fine, but currently feels doesn't let people into it – could be located adjacent to the History House and museum
  - Maintenance of an orchard is expensive and difficult – maybe as a memorial space?
- Leave open space for the future
- Public art should be a part of the overall facility





# Large Group Discussion: Character Definition

## □ Red team –

- Materials – liked the warmth of the wood
- Familiar, cozy, casual, yet also traditional
- Buildings will be used in the future – need to think about use of natural resources, so maybe incorporate metal into the project for environmental conscience
- Orchard – liked the birds, inviting, peaceful, but now is just looked at, not used, although the viewing of it is getting use out of it
- Interior/exterior connection
- General consensus for light-filled spaces
- Liked porticoes and shading devices to allow for more comfort within the spaces
- Attention to noise attenuation between spaces



# Large Group Discussion: Character Definition

## Red team –

- Exterior views – most voted for residential aesthetic, but liked the verticality of the tower element image, also incorporating glass



# Large Group Discussion: Character Definition

## ☐ Yellow team –

- Light-filled and warm, sun light makes people happy
- Traditional, but contemporary at the same time
- Use of natural materials
- Orchard represents Los Altos' past – educating future generations
- Courtyard – clean, organized, gathering space
- Open space – shown in agrarian image
- Evening usability of outdoor space for gathering
- Farmer's market – dynamic community space
- Want to see community in the center
- Architecture – not Spanish, early Californian would be okay



# Large Group Discussion: Character Definition

## ☐ Yellow team –

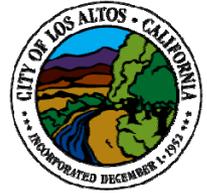
- 2-story without feeling massive
- Feels appropriate for a natural setting
- Didn't like massive buildings
- Higher volume rooms for public meeting rooms is appropriate
- Idea of 2nd floor patio / gathering space
- Wood and stone felt heavy and imposing, not light and clean
- Inviting, big windows, more social
- Showing multiple levels without being blocky
- Liked clean lines of the more modern images – like the Neutra House



# Large Group Discussion: Character Definition

## □ Green team –

- Expressing the orchard
- Emphasizing the color within the blossoms
- Efficient material use
- Contextual, the old Los Altos
- Climate compatibility and show in architecture
- Strong indoor outdoor relationship
- Remember business
- Wood, not so much slate and glass
- Two story ok, but setback
- Not austentatious, elegant and understated



# Large Group Discussion: Character Definition

## □ Green team –

- Residential scale, human scale
- Traditional styling
- Use natural materials
- Orchard – represents history, preserve for future, but also a gathering space
- Farmers market idea
- Agrarian – positive for open space and history
- Reminiscent of barn
- Architecture should relate to human scale, not one large mass
- Missing images: ranch look, and ranch as multi story
- Materials, wood stone, natural
- Early californian, but not mission, not right for Los Altos
  
- Contemporary version of tradition
- Traditional but not imposing, more light



## Large Group Discussion: Character Definition

### ❑ Black team –

- Orchard – beyond history – keep them authentic, even with the burdens of maintenance
- More opportunity for other uses, gathering space, integrate other plants and trees and landscaping – year-round aesthetic
- Overall feeling – open, light, serenity, warm and inviting, strong indoor/outdoor connection, human scale, welcoming, places to gather as small groups as well as large community events
- Natural materials, wood and glass (without feeling cold, but allowing light in), light and cheerful materials (away from dark, heavy materials)



## Large Group Discussion: Character Definition

### ❑ Black team –

- Contextual feeling, but variety in height, materials and style, but all belonging together
- None of the forms seemed quite like a Los Altos form, but rather liked the landscape and interior spaces
- Looking for soft buildings, not hard edges, mission style building was liked for these reasons
- NOT urban, downtown, institutional, corporate
- History house – new, but blended with the character; Foothill campus
- Idea of a beacon, landmarks and places to meet that are recognizable
- Integrating nature throughout the campus

# Feedback and Next Steps



## Feedback on the Forum

- What worked well?
- What could be improved in the future?





## Feedback

- Congratulations on how you pulled this together
- Open to listening, and enjoyed getting up and moving around
- How did people know to get here – need to understand
- Senior center – need to think of it as a community center that answers the needs of the entire community, not just for seniors
- Great location, but south Los Altos needs to be reached out to as well – perhaps sessions in future could be here
- Visuals are great – allowing them to pick among choices rather than think from scratch



## Feedback

- ❑ Ability to meet in a small group was great – but don't see younger people
  - Need to target high school and junior high level to get their feedback
- ❑ Graphic exercises – next round should bring more contextual images for review
- ❑ How does this work relate to other community services throughout the town – need to look comprehensively at all facilities throughout
- ❑ What's most broken? This hasn't been discussed fully today



## Feedback

### How did people get here?

- Town Crier - 25
- Email Campaign -half
- Postcards -10
- Phone calls –  $\frac{3}{4}$
- Community Organizations – 8 (Pool, Library, Rotary, etc.)
- Other
- Tell others!



## Next Steps

### Other Opportunities for Input

- Friday, March 21<sup>st</sup>: Advisory Committee Meeting (7:30 am, Council Chambers)
- Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>: City Council Meeting (7:00 pm, Council Chambers)

### Community Survey

- Available Online Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup> by Noon
- Master Plan Website Address: [www.losaltoscommunitycenter.org](http://www.losaltoscommunitycenter.org)
- City Website Address: <http://www.ci.los-altos.ca.us/>

**Thank you!**

