

Community Needs Assessment



The City of Los Altos
Community Center Master Plan



ANDERSON BRULÉ
ARCHITECTS, INC.

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I. Introduction

Introduction

Why a Master Plan?

The City Council of the City of Los Altos determined that the Civic Center site is in need of redevelopment. The 18-acre property is underutilized and is one of the least developed community centers in the region, but the site has great potential to accommodate a community center that will be of high value to the citizenry. The initial assessment of the current condition of the site by the City was that the buildings are in need of repair, and there is poor site access and traffic flow paired with inadequate parking. Senior, Youth and Recreational facilities do not support the needs of the populace and there is a large need for additional space by the current uses on the site, especially City Hall and the Police department.

A Vision Statement was established as the Council's vision for city public facilities:

Vision Statement

The City Council vision for our public facilities is to rebuild the Los Altos Civic Center, the Garden House, Redwood Grove and the building at Grant Park to provide adequate space and useful modern facilities to serve the Los Altos public for the next 50 years.

As a first step to achieving this vision, the Council established a Task Force to initiate a planning effort, to propose a methodology and to collaborate towards achieving the rebuilding of the Los Altos Civic Center. It was determined that while this group would consider the holistic needs of the City, it would focus its efforts solely on the development of the Los Altos Civic Center at this time.

Civic Center Task Force

The charge to this Task Force was to plan for a new Civic Center to accommodate and house the Police, Recreation, Community Development, City Administration and Engineering services and other needs as identified in the process, while expanding the usable open space on the property. Examples of other uses that may be included were identified as a modern Youth Center, Senior Center and housing, a new Community Center complex that includes meeting rooms for public and nonprofit organization use, facilities versatile for children's activities, and generous indoor storage space to support both current needs and future growth.

The Task Force believed that a possible future swim facility, community theater or other facilities deemed appropriate by the community should be included in the Master Plan assessment. The Council envisioned elements that would help to retain the historic character of the site, including a small apricot orchard. The grounds were intended to be landscaped to create a park-like



I. Introduction

Introduction

setting with extensive recreational facilities. Underground parking was to be considered to preserve grade level space for parks and other recreational uses. The new Civic Center, to the extent possible, was to be configured to connect with the Los Altos downtown village, including pedestrian and automobile access, strong architectural elements and visual connection.

The Task Force visited other civic centers and developed a list of goals that could be included in a new civic center to serve Los Altos.

- Incorporation of the Library expansion into the Master Plan (the Library is operated by the County of Santa Clara County Library)
- Develop new, green facilities
- Expand recreational programs and provide new recreational uses
- Expand and improve community programs and specifically enhance programs for seniors and youth
- Promote Los Altos history through showcasing of the History House and the History Museum
- Create visual, pedestrian and parking connectivity to Los Altos downtown village

Two public meetings were held in December 2007 to introduce the community to the process intended for the Master Plan development and to gauge public interest. The end result of their work was to present to the Council a recommendation to move forward into a Master Planning effort.

The City in conjunction with the Task Force developed a Request for Proposals that outlined project scope to develop a Civic Center Master Plan that would evaluate the existing Civic Center facilities and their adequacy for future needs over the next 50 years. This plan will consider the Space Allocation Study completed in April of 2007 that assesses existing, current and future space needs for each City department located on the Civic Center property. The Task Force received responses to these proposals, interviewed the top candidates, and selected Anderson Brulé Architects, Inc. to develop the Master Plan for the new Civic Center in January of 2008.



I. Introduction

Vision | One of the last tasks of the Task Force was to establish a formal Vision for the future Community Center. The following is the Vision that was approved by City Council for the Master Plan Project:

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 facilities that are both adequate and useful to the community, with striking architecture that is low in profile, 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.





II. Community Input & Methodology

Advisory Committee Process

Overview

The Advisory Committee was formed to support the ongoing Master Planning effort. They held public monthly meetings which covered a variety of topics including updates of the master planning process, further community outreach meetings with service organizations, and review of the progress on the Library Needs Assessment Report. The Advisory Committee has the following roles:

- Provide Input to the Consultant Team
- Lead Outreach to Community
- Election Preparation Support
- Promote Attendance of Public Meetings
- Advocacy Building for the Project
- Advisory to City Council (Facilities, Finance, Design)

One of the first actions of the Advisory Committee was to change the formal name of the Civic Center Master Plan to **the City of Los Altos Community Center Master Plan**, as this was felt to more appropriately consider all aspects of the Master Plan on this site, including not only Civic program elements, but also those that serve the community in other ways.

The Outreach Committee, which is made up of a subset of the membership, was specifically given the task of supporting the success of the community's participation in the Needs Assessment, Plan of Service and the Master Plan. The Committee developed email distribution lists, public outreach news articles, phone trees, mailings and word of mouth to generate interest in the process, attendance at public meetings, and participation in focus groups or key informant interviews. A significant milestone to the research was the public's participation in the Community Center Needs Assessment Survey.

Key Elements

The Key Elements identified by the Advisory Committee at the beginning of the process, largely from the benchmarking of other community center sites and the direction of the City Council were:

- 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



II. Community Input & Methodology

Advisory Committee Process

*Key Elements,
continued*

- Aesthetic of the architecture is important
- Space for expanded program & staffing
- Meaningful incorporation of the Town of Los Altos Hills community in the Master Plan Process

Community Outreach Process

Overview

Extensive outreach to the community, analysis of current services, and previous experience of best practices created the basis for the identification of the future needs of the new Community Center. Multiple opportunities for participation included a community forum, focus groups, key informant interviews, Advisory Committee Meetings, and the opportunity to obtain information and provide comment through a community survey available online and in paper format.

Community Forum

The Community Forum drew a crowd of approximately 90 participants. The means by which people were informed of the forum were widespread throughout the community including notices in the Town Crier, an email campaign, post cards, phone calls, and invitations to community groups. There was a noticeable lack of youth, parents of young families and sports and recreational advocates. Successful efforts were made in future outreach events to reach these demographic groups.

The Community Forum interactively engaged the attendees and explored these topics in small group and large group discussion format:

- 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 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?
- Community Center Character Discussion – Images, Words, Phrases



II. Community Input & Methodology

Community Survey

A widespread Community Survey was conducted online and in paper format for a period of approximately two weeks for the purposes of gathering input from the community at large. All residents of the City of Los Altos and Town of Los Altos Hills, members of the Los Altos business community or anyone that uses Los Altos City services were eligible to participate in the survey. In total there were 630 surveys returned (558 online and 72 in paper format.) A broad demographic representation was reached by the survey, particularly Los Altos Residents, ages 35-54, families with children, and Seniors. A small but noticeable number of teens, those between the ages of 20 and 34, and non-resident users (Mountain View, Palo Alto and Sunnyvale) participated in the survey as well.

Survey questions established the frequency and level of use of current Community Center services, gathered information about what is currently working and what is not, and future Community Center service priorities.

Focus Groups

A cross section of the community was invited to participate in three Focus Group sessions. Approximately 33 participants representing a broad demographic attended. Many of the attendees were members and/or leaders of service organizations in the Community, and on an individual level were parents, grandparents, educators, both long-term and newer residents, seniors, business people, professionals, immigrants, and entrepreneurs. Each session explored the following topics with an emphasis on gathering Service Needs Priorities and Community Center priorities in an open dialogue setting:

- Participant Backgrounds
 - Who do you feel you represent in the community?
 - Do you use city and community services? If so, which ones, how often and for what purpose?
- Community Service Needs – Current and Future Needs
 - What do you appreciate about the services you receive? What is working well?
 - What community needs are not being met? Why do you believe they are not being met?
- Service Priorities
 - What do you believe will be the three most critical services for the City in the next 10 years? Why?
 - Of the List of Service Elements (current and future services) which are the most important for the City to deliver? Which need the most improvement?
- Community Center Site Priorities
 - What would you like to be able to do or have access to at the Community Center, but currently cannot?
 - What do you believe are the three most critical services



II. Community Input & Methodology

- to deliver on the Community Center site?
- What do you believe is the least critical service to be delivered from the Community Center site?

Insights gained from this outreach are outlined on page 34.

Teen Outreach

Due to less than anticipated youth representation at prior outreach efforts, ABA coordinated a meeting with the Los Altos Youth Commission on May 27, 2008. The meeting agenda matched that of the Focus Groups, and discussions covered the same questions and topics. Insights from this outreach effort are outlined on page 35.

Key Informant Interviews

Six key informant one-on-one interviews were conducted. The interviewees were individuals selected for their strong level of involvement in the community at many levels. They were asked the following questions in interviews:

- Who do you feel you represent in the community?
- What do you believe to be the five most critical issues for Los Altos today and in the future?
- How do you see individuals accessing services in the future – and what issues do you believe might arise?
- Community Center Services – Current and Future Needs
 - Do you use City services? If so, which ones, how often and for what purpose?
 - What do you appreciate about the services you receive? What is working 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 Community Center in 10 years. What is the experience? What are you doing?

Insights gained from this outreach are outlined on page 36.



II. Community Input & Methodology

Partnering Organization Information

List of City-wide Service Organizations

Over the course of the Community Outreach effort information was gathered from the following service organizations :

- American Legion Post 558
- American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO)
- Bus Barn Stage Company
- Children's Corner Preschool
- Community Health Awareness Council
- Los Altos Environmental Committee
- Friends of the Los Altos Libraries
- Los Altos Hills Parks and Recreation
- Los Altos School District
- League of Women Voters
- Los Altos Citizens Financial Advisory Committee
- Los Altos Chamber of Commerce
- Los Altos Community Foundation
- Los Altos Community Pool Foundation
- Los Altos Department Heads
- Los Altos Historical Commission
- Los Altos History House
- Los Altos United Methodist Church
- Los Altos Financial Commission
- Los Altos Democratic Club
- Hidden Villa
- Montclair Education Foundation
- 100 Women Charitable
- Los Altos Kiwanis Club
- Los Altos Library
- Los Altos Library Commission
- Los Altos Little League
- Los Altos Neighborhood Network
- Los Altos Planning Commission
- Los Altos Parks and Recreation Commission
- Los Altos Rotary Club
- Los Altos Senior Center
- Los Altos Town Crier
- Los Altos Traffic Commission
- Los Altos Village Association
- Los Altos Youth Commission
- David and Lucille Packard Foundation
- Los Altos Education Foundation
- Los Altos School District, PTA
- FHA Foundation Board
- Girl Scouts
- Boy Scouts
- Cub Scouts
- Covington Swim Team
- Los Altos Sister Cities
- LAMP, Friends of Grant
- Community Services Agency
- Festival of Lights Parade
- Hillview Neighborhood
- Mountain View Life Scholars



II. Community Input & Methodology

Partnering Organization Information

- Foundation
 - Mountain View Los Altos Adult Education
 - Just Read
 - Train Club
 - Los Altos Legacies
 - Cupertino Union School District
 - Foothill DeAnza Foundation



III. Research & Data Gathering

Existing Reports

Overview

Documents available to date of the City of Los Altos' effort to determine current and projected needs for the citizenry were reviewed. This information was analyzed in conjunction with the outreach information gathered to assess current and future community service needs.

- Los Altos Library Needs Assessment Report
- Enrollment Forecast Update for Los Altos School District
- Benchmarking notes from task force previous site tours
- Civic Center Orchard Management Plan
- Community Center site property deeds
- Space Allocation Study
- Current Community Partnering Organization list
- Community Swim Center, EIR and Pool Needs Assessment

Existing Facilities Assessment

Existing Facilities Review

The existing facilities on the site were reviewed by Anderson Brulé Architects, In. and its Consultant Team for general condition and potential for reuse. Both review of existing structure documentation and a visual tour of the facilities to review specific issues and gain general insights to the facilities' condition occurred. Detailed findings for specific site and facility analysis are included in the Existing Conditions Assessment in Section III.

Current Services

Overview

This section provides information about the current services and programs offered on the Los Altos Community Center site or available within the community through partnering which will be used for a basis for discussion later in this document regarding the future service needs of the community. The current services provided by the Community Center can be broken down into three main areas: those offered by the City of Los Altos, by the County of Santa Clara, and by external organizations both non-profit and otherwise. The community outreach effort revealed a number of services offered by neighboring communities that are also valued and used by members of the Los Altos community.

Future services may be provided by many means of service delivery:

- City provided services (as primary provider)
- City as primary provider, with secondary providers or partner organization involvement
- Outsourced service delivery, with City as secondary provider, which may include outsourced providers in City facilities or City acting as a liaison to outsource groups
- Services provided by others, with no City involvement and



III. Research & Data Gathering

Current Services

*City Services
Groups*

no City facility use; City may act as a referral service to the community for these services.

The Services currently provided by the City of Los Altos are as follows:

- Police
- City Administration (City Clerk, Finance, Human Resources, and City Manger)
- Community Development (Planning, Building, Engineering)
- Public Works
- Parks and Recreational Services
 - Senior Center
 - Youth Theater
 - Teen Programs (The Underground, LAYC Dances, Youth Commission)
- City Council, Boards and Commissions
 - Environmental Committee
 - Citizens Financial Advisory Committee
 - Historical Commission
 - Library Commission
 - Parks, Arts & Recreation Commission
 - Planning Commission
 - Board of Adjustments
 - Architecture and Site Review Committee
 - Traffic Commission
 - Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
 - Youth Commission

*County Services
Available*

Public Libraries

The Los Altos Library, located in the Los Altos Civic Center, and the Woodland Branch Library, located in the southern part of Los Altos, serve the residents of Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, and the surrounding unincorporated area. The Santa Clara County Library runs and maintains both of these libraries with support from Los Altos Library Commission, the Friends of the Library, volunteers, the Los Altos Library Endowment, and the North County Library Authority. The North County Library Authority is the special parcel tax established in 1985 & 1990 between Los Altos and Los Altos Hills to fund additional hours, materials, and services for Los Altos Libraries and to fund the remodel and expansion of the Main Library in 1992. Both library buildings are owned by the City of Los Altos.

Fire Department

Los Altos contracts with the Santa Clara County Fire District for Fire and Emergency Medical Services.



III. Research & Data Gathering

Current Services

Service Through Partnering

The following is a summary list of organizations that the City currently partners with or are potential partners for providing services to the community in the future:

- Bus Barn Stage Company
- History House and Museum
- Los Altos Library

Non-City Service Organizations:

Community Meeting/Gathering Spaces:

- Community House
- Neutra House
- Downtown Bank Conference Rooms
- Town Crier Conference Room
- Los Altos High School Auditorium

Senior Services:

Currently access is provided by the Senior Center:

- Community Services Agency of Mt. View Los Altos-Senior Case Management
- Project Match-Shared Housing
- Outreach – door to door rides in accessible vans and taxis
- Senior New Ways (SNW) – health chats held at the Los Altos Library and TV program on KMVT

Others available:

- Avenidas
- Mountain View Senior Daycare Center
- Sunnyvale Senior Center
- Stanford Geriatric Education Center
- Home Instead Senior Care
- Say Hi Support Group-for San Antonio Hills Area

Teen/Youth:

- Youth Service Clubs – Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4H
- E3 Youth Philanthropy – sponsored by Los Altos Community Foundation
- Community Health Awareness Council (CHAC) – Mt. View
- Music for Minors

Culture/Arts:

- Bus Barn Stage Company
- Foothill College
- Community School of Music and Arts (CSMA)
- Los Altos Sister Cities
- Ye Olde Town Band
- Los Altos Art Club
- Los Altos Art Docents



III. Research & Data Gathering

Current Services

- Los Altos Cultural Association
- Los Altos History Museum
- Main Street Singers

Education:

- History House and Museum and surrounding orchard
- Mt. View Los Altos Adult Education
- Hidden Villa – 1600 acre educational farm
- Parent Teacher Association
- Cupertino School District
- Mountain View Los Altos High School District
- Fremont Union High School District
- Palo Alto Unified School District
- Los Altos School District
- Cupertino Union School District
- Just Read
- Mountain View Life Scholars
- Braille Institute
- Preschool Education

Recreation:

- Tiny Tots Recreation Programming
- Los Altos Hills Parks and Recreation
- Los Altos Community Pool Foundation
- Los Altos Masters Swim Club
- Covington Swim Team
- Los Altos and Los Altos Hills Little Leagues
- American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO)
- YMCA of the Mid-Peninsula
- Los Altos / Menlo Park – Friends of Grant
- Train Club
- Aurora Volleyball Club
- California Airedale Terrier Club
- Deep Peninsula Dog Training Club
- Los Altos Camera Club
- Los Altos Tennis Club
- Mountain View – Los Altos Soccer Club
- Mountain View – Los Altos Pony Baseball
- Starlights Dance Group
- Tramparnas Handweavers

Adult Service Organizations:

- American Legion Post 558
- Los Altos Community Foundation
- David and Lucille Packard Foundation
- League of Women Voters



III. Research & Data Gathering

Current Services

- Friends of the Library
- Los Altos Kiwanis
- Los Altos Rotary Club
- Los Altos Environmental Committee
- Los Alto Chamber of Commerce
- Los Altos Neighborhood Network
- Los Altos Village Association
- Los Altos Town Crier
- Los Altos Education Foundation
- Community Service Agencies
- Hillview Neighborhood Association
- Los Altos Democratic Club
- Montclair Education Foundation
- 100 Women’s Group
- Los Altos Legacies
- Foothill DeAnza Foundation
- Association of American University Women
- FAIR – Families Adopting in Response
- Los Altos Citizens Corps Council
- National Charity League
- Optimists

Adult Organizations:

- Alcoholics Anonymous
- California Native Plant Society
- California Retired Teachers Association, Mid Peninsula Division
- Fuchsia Society
- Garden House Association
- Los Altos Amateur Radio Emergency Service
- Lapidary Clubs at Garden House
- Mid Peninsula Open Space District
- Mid Peninsula Widow an Widower Association
- Neighborhood Watch Groups
- Peninsula Democratic Coalition
- Rhododendron Society
- SIR – Sons in Retirement
- Western Horticultural Association
- Western Iris Society
- Woodland Acres Neighborhood Association
- Los Altos Community Foundation

Community Events:

- Annual History House/Museum Crab Feed (February)
- Los Altos Festival of Lights Parade (November)
- LAYC Dances (monthly during the school year)



III. Research & Data Gathering

Current Services

- Farmers' Market (weekly, May-October)
- Los Altos Art and Wine Festival (July)
- Los Altos Fall Festival (October)
- Easter Egg Hunt (Spring)

Educational Institutions

Pre-School/Daycare:

- Los Altos/Mountain View Children's Corner, Los Altos (Preschool)
- Children's Creative Learning Centers, Los Altos (Pre-K)
- Primary Plus Infant-Preschool
- Los Altos Parent Preschool
- St. Timothy's Preschool
- Montecito Preschool
- KinderCare Learning Centers
- Los Altos Christian Preschool
- Joan Bourriague's Preschool
- Little Acorn School
- Los Altos Christian School

Public Elementary Schools (K-8):

- Almond*
- Bullis-Purissima*
- Covington*
- Loyola*
- Oak*
- Santa Rita*
- Springer*
- Montclair Elementary School**
- Lucille Nixon Elementary School***
- Egan-Jr. High*
- Blach-Jr. High*
- Cupertino Jr. High**
- Terman Middle School***

* Los Altos School District

** Cupertino Union School District

*** Palo Alto Unified School District

Public High Schools:

- Alta Vista High School*
- Los Altos High School*
- Mountain View High School*
- Homestead High School**
- Gunn High School ***

* Mountain View Los Altos High School District

** Fremont Union High School District

*** Palo Alto Unified School District



III. Research & Data Gathering

Current Services

Private Schools:

- Canterbury Christian School, Los Altos (K-6)
- FasTrackKids , Los Altos
- Kehillah Jewish High School, Palo Alto
- Los Altos Christian School, Los Altos (K-6)
- Miramonte School of Los Altos, Los Altos (K-8)
- Pinewood School, Los Altos and Los Altos Hills Campuses (K-12)
- St. Francis High School, Mountain View
- St. Joseph Catholic School, Mountain View (K-8)
- St. Nicholas Catholic School, Los Altos Hills (K-8)
- St. Simon's Catholic School, Los Altos (K-8)
- Waldorf School of the Peninsula, Los Altos (K-8)

Nearby Community Colleges:

- Foothill College, Los Altos Hills
- De-Anza College, Cupertino





IV. Los Altos Community Characteristics

History and Culture of the City

Overview

The City of Los Altos' history has evolved from the Ohlone Indians roaming the hills and the Mexican land grants of large parcel ranches but one thing has always been true – people throughout its history have been drawn to the pastoral beauty of the Los Altos area. The town itself developed around a need for a convenient railroad stop between Palo Alto and Los Gatos. Its location, equidistant from the county seats of San Jose and San Francisco, made it a prime spot. From this, the downtown village area grew and surrounding areas were orchard land dotted with a few homes. After World War II through the early to mid 1950's, in much the same fashion as most of American suburban landscape, there was a boom in residential development and new schools were built. People with high ideals moved in and became interested in building a strong community in which to raise their children and in 1952 moved to incorporate the City of Los Altos to stave off annexation from neighboring cities, have better control over the quality of education in their school system and control zoning and development. Los Altos Hills followed suit in 1956 to better preserve the open and rural residential atmosphere of the surrounding hills.

Much to the credit of the forethought of these early community leaders, the City of Los Altos maintains its small town, village-like atmosphere today with residential neighborhoods typified by slow growth, low crime rate and home values that rank in the top percentiles in the nation.

History of the Community Center Site

The site of the City of Los Altos Community Center is located on the property that was once the J. Gilbert Ranch. The 1905 shingled house that is still situated behind the Los Altos Library and its 10 acre surrounding apricot orchard were purchased by the City of Los Altos in 1954. Since that time the house has been declared a California State Point of Historical Interest. The house and surrounding orchard serve as the City's History Museum and depict the simpler, agricultural life of earlier times.

Community Profile

Overview

Understanding the Community's needs involves understanding the environment and the makeup of the population being served. The service population for the Master Plan is made up of the residents of the City of Los Altos and the Town of Los Altos Hills. This differs from the service population used in the Los Altos Library Needs Assessment in that the library serves Santa Clara County residents in the jurisdiction of Los Altos and as such includes members of the community beyond municipal borders.



IV. Los Altos Community Characteristics

The demographics of Los Altos and Los Altos Hills residents shows the majority of the population to be highly educated, slightly older, married couples in their peak earning years with or without children living at home. At the time of the last U.S. Census in 2000 the total population was approximately 35,595 with a slow projected growth of 4% in Los Altos and 13% in Los Altos Hills by the year 2030 (ABAG, 2005).

The median age was 44.6 and is projected to increase 7.2% by the year 2012 (U.S. Census 2000 and ESRI, 2007). At the time this report was written, long term age breakdown projections were not available, but five year population projections by age group only reflect small changes within 2%. As Los Altos' population is one of slow growth, this would indicate that the community is aging slightly as a whole. The largest portion, 45% of the population, is made up of working families, and ages 35 and 64. A higher concentration of which are ages 45-54 and in their peak earning years.

The next largest group, 26.9% of the population, is made up of school age children, under the age of nineteen. Seniors, age 65 and older, represent approximately 16% of the population. Of this group, nearly half are over the age of 75. The remaining 8-9% of the population is 20-34 years of age. Generally speaking this group is more transient, made up of recent graduates, those in their early working careers and often single with no children (U.S. Census 2000 and ESRI, 2007).

Many of the aging baby boomers that set down roots in the Los Altos area over 30 years ago are now entering their golden years. They are well educated, cultured, philanthropic, active, and civic minded. Their grown children are in many cases now second generation Los Altos residents with families of their own. Commonly known as "the sandwich generation" they are supporting dependent children and also involved with the lives and care of their aging parents. Brought up in Los Altos they are now taking on the roles their parents exemplified, investing time and resources in their community: schools, sports leagues, clubs and organizations. In the Community Outreach effort many of those most active in the community felt that a large majority of residents are participating at many levels and in many different capacities in service organizations.

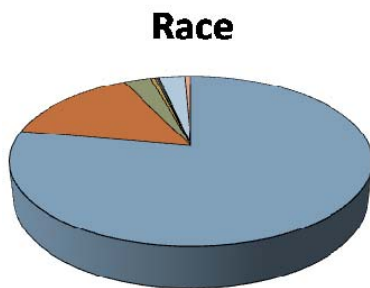
Despite the fact that many of today's families were born and bred in Los Altos, population and housing statistics show that there is healthy turnover in the community as aging seniors move to care facilities or in with their children; the high cost of homes has pushed others to sell off and move, and new homes are developed in the area. At the time of the last U.S. Census in 2000, 45.3% of the population had moved into the area within the last 10 years. According to a Los Altos



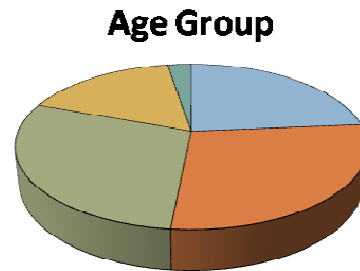
IV. Los Altos Community Characteristics

School District Demographic Report, the District enrollment has grown considerably with net migration into the District's schools double the historical levels between 2001 and 2006. This is largely attributed to the availability of test score information and healthy turnover rates of long-held homes in Los Altos with families attracted to the high quality of the schools moving into the District. Enrollment projections available through 2017 show an expected increase over the next three years of approximately 200 students in both non-charter and charter schools. This slight increase represents growth will be at a slower, historically more normal level. After that time, projections show a gradual decrease of approximately 140 students by 2017, returning the district closer to the enrollment figures at the time of this report.

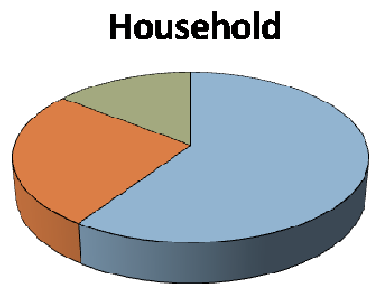
With this influx of new people the area has experienced an increase in racial diversity and number of people that speak another language other than English at home. U.S. Census 2000 data showed the Diversity Index that takes into account the mix of all races of a population at a level of 38.1. Projections show a marked increase to 50.5% by 2012. The Asian or Pacific Islander population is projected to increase by 7.2%, followed by 1.9% of those with Hispanic Origin and 1.8% those of more than one race.



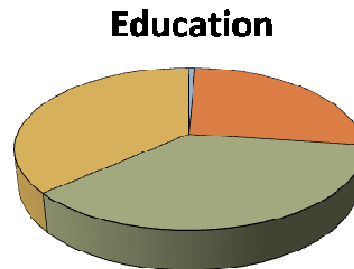
- White
- Asian
- Hispanic/Latino
- Black/ African American
- North American Native
- Pacific Islander
- Two or more
- Other



- under 18
- 18-44
- 45-64
- 65-84
- 85+



- Family (no children under 18 yrs)
- Family (w/ children under 18 yrs)
- Single



- 0-8 years of school
- H.S. Graduate or higher
- Bachelor's degree or higher
- Graduate or Prof. degree



IV. Los Altos Community Characteristics

Demographics and Projections Analysis for the City of Los Altos and the Town of Los Altos Hills, CA

Demographic data allows a greater understanding of the composition of the community. The following demographic information cited is the most recent information available. The main sources used were the U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000 Population and Housing Tables, Projections 2005 published by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), and ESRI. ESRI is a data development company that uses traditional statistical methodology of cluster analysis combined with data mining techniques to provide updated and projected demographics, segmentation of U.S. neighborhoods by characteristics into distinct markets, and the diversity index, that are now industry benchmarks.

Total Population Projections

Population projections show a stable growth of 4% in Los Altos and a higher level of growth at 13% in Los Altos Hills by the year 2030.

| | 2000 | 2010 | 2020 | 2030 | % Change |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------|
| City of Los Altos | 30,254 | 30,400 | 31,400 | 31,500 | 4% |
| Town of Los Altos Hills | 9,455 | 10,100 | 10,500 | 10,700 | 13% |

Source: Projections 2005, Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)

Household Data and Median Age Projections

Household and median age five year projections show the community to be aging slightly as a whole. While number of households is projected to be stable, household income is projected to increase substantially since the 2000 U.S. Census.

| | 2000 | 2007 | 2012 | % Change |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| Median Age | 44.6 | 46.2 | 47.8 | +7.2% |
| Median Household Income | 136,298 | 179,884 | 217,411 | +59.5% |
| Number of Households | 13,202 | 13,377 | 13,563 | +2.7% |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing. ESRI forecasts for 2007 and 2012

Percentage Older Population by Age Projections

Percentage age breakdowns over the next five years show that within the age brackets of most working families (ages 35-64) a larger concentration are in their peak earning years (ages 45-54). Seniors over the age of 65 represent approximately 16% of the population of which nearly half are over the age of 75.

| | Age 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65-74 | 75-84 |
|------|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 2007 | 12.4% | 17.1% | 15.5% | 8.5% | 7.8% |
| 2012 | 10.4% | 18.2% | 15.4% | 10.4% | 6.4% |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing. ESRI forecasts for 2007 and 2012



IV. Los Altos Community Characteristics

Demographics and Projections Analysis for the City of Los Altos and the Town of Los Altos Hills, CA

Percentage of Younger Population by Age Projections

Percentage age breakdowns over the next five years show that populations of school age children (ages 0-19) and those between the ages of 20-34 are relatively stable.

| | Age 0-19 | 20-34 |
|------|-----------------|--------------|
| 2007 | 26.9% | 8.4% |
| 2012 | 25.0% | 9.8% |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing. ESRI forecasts for 2007 and 2012

Percentage Population by Race/Ethnicity Projections

Percentage of Race/Ethnicity breakdowns over the next five years show an increase in diversity.

| | 2007 | 2012 |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| White Alone | 74% | 69.8% |
| Asian or Pacific Islander Alone | 20.7% | 24% |
| Two or More Races | 3.8% | 4.6% |
| Hispanic Origin | 3.9% | 4.7% |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing. ESRI forecasts for 2007 and 2012

2000 Households by Year Householder Moved In

Population and Housing statistics from the U.S. Census in 2000 showed steady turnover of households moving in to City of Los Altos and Town of Los Altos Hills. 45.3 % moved in from 1990-2000. 19.7% moved in from 1980-1990 and the remainder 34.9% of the households had moved in more than twenty years earlier.

| Years Moved In | % of Population |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1999 - March 2000 | 10.5%* |
| 1995 - 1998 | 20.3% |
| 1990 - 1994 | 14.5% |
| 1980 - 1989 | 19.7% |
| 1970 - 1979 | 16.0% |
| 1969 or Earlier | 18.9% |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing

*Santa Clara County Multiple Listing Service



IV. Los Altos Community Characteristics

Demographics and Projections Analysis for the City of Los Altos and the Town of Los Altos Hills, CA

Real Estate Sales Statistics 4/2000-Present

Real estate statistics shows there has been substantial turnover with 30.25% of the population moving in since the last census information was available. Of those the majority of homes purchased were in the price range of \$1M-\$2M.

| Years Moved In | % of Population |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| April 2000-present | 30.2%* |

| Price Range | Total Sales | % of Sales |
|------------------|-------------|------------|
| Over \$5M | 53 | 1.3% |
| \$2M-\$4,999,999 | 822 | 20.3% |
| \$1M-\$1,999,999 | 2283 | 56.4% |
| Under \$1M | 890 | 22.0% |

*Source: Santa Clara County Multiple Listing Service

2000 Population 25+ by Educational Attainment

The community is highly educated with 72.8% of the population college educated and more than half of those holding post-graduate degrees.

| Level of Education | % of Population |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Less than 9th Grade | 0.9% |
| 9th-12th Grade, No Diploma | 1.9% |
| High School Graduate | 6.7% |
| Some College, No Degree | 13.2% |
| Associate Degree | 4.4% |
| Bachelor's Degree | 35.8% |
| Master's/Prof/Doctorate Degree | 37.0% |

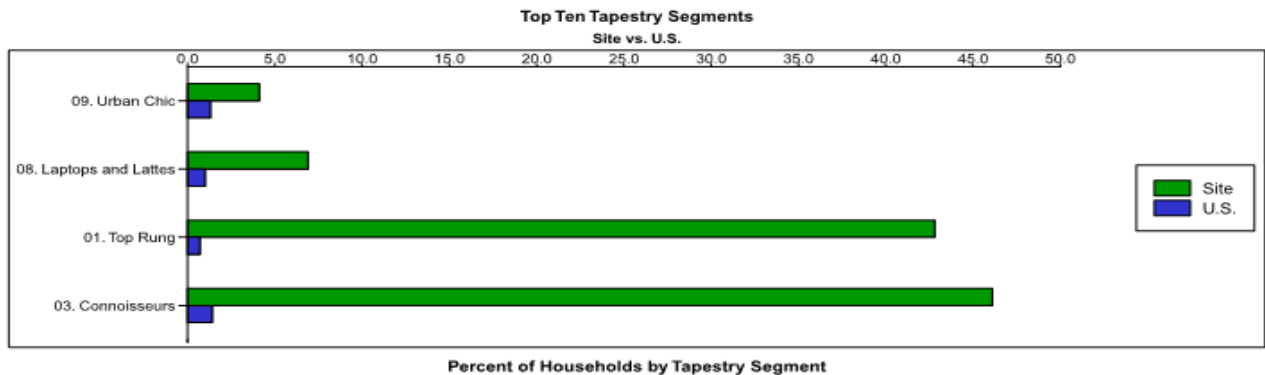
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing



IV. Los Altos Community Characteristics

Community Market segmentation based on demographic projections and key determinants of consumer behavior

This study categorizes the population into different groups based on demographics and lifestyle. The makeup of the community based on these categories gives insight into needs and trends related to lifestyle. The high proportion of "01-Top Rung" and "03-Connoisseurs" indicate a high community interest in leisure, entertainment, and cultural activities.



Source: ESRI (based on but not all inclusive: U.S. Census 2000, ESRI demographic updates, InfoBase consumer database from Acxiom Corporation, the Doublebase 2005 consumer survey database from Mediamark Research Inc.)

See Appendix for Tapestry segment descriptions. More in depth information about Tapestry segmentation nationwide can be found at:

<http://www.esri.com/library/whitepapers/pdfs/community-tapestry.pdf>

U.S. Census 2000 Information

| | City of Los Altos, CA | | City of Los Altos Hills, CA | | Santa Clara County | | State of California | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|--------------------|------|---------------------|------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS | | | | | | | | |
| Total population | 27,693 | | 7,902 | | 1,682,585 | | 33,871,648 | (X) |
| Male | 13,352 | 48.2 | 3,898 | 49.3 | 852,974 | 50.7 | 16,874,892 | 49.8 |
| Female | 14,341 | 51.8 | 4,004 | 50.7 | 829,611 | 49.3 | 16,996,756 | 50.2 |
| Median age (years) | 44.2 | (X) | 46.7 | (X) | 34 | (X) | 33.3 | (X) |
| Under 5 years | 1,629 | 5.9 | 355 | 4.5 | 119,418 | 7.1 | 2,486,981 | 7.3 |
| 18 years and over | 21,132 | 76.3 | 6,041 | 76.4 | 1,266,183 | 75.3 | 24,621,819 | 72.7 |
| 65 years and over | 5,346 | 19.3 | 1,342 | 17 | 160,527 | 9.5 | 3,595,658 | 10.6 |



IV. Los Altos Community Characteristics

| | City of Los Altos, CA | | City of Los Altos Hills, CA | | Santa Clara County | | State of California | |
|--|-----------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|--------------------|------|---------------------|------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| RACE | | | | | | | | |
| One race | 26,927 | 97.2 | 7,686 | 97.3 | 1,604,148 | 95.3 | 32,264,002 | 95.3 |
| White | 22,250 | 80.3 | 5,922 | 74.9 | 905,660 | 53.8 | 20,170,059 | 59.5 |
| Black or African American | 130 | 0.5 | 47 | 0.6 | 47,182 | 2.8 | 2,263,882 | 6.7 |
| American Indian and Alaska Native | 48 | 0.2 | 7 | 0.1 | 11,350 | 0.7 | 333,346 | 1 |
| Asian | 4,271 | 15.4 | 1,667 | 21.1 | 430,095 | 25.6 | 3,697,513 | 10.9 |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander | 45 | 0.2 | 7 | 0.1 | 5,773 | 0.3 | 116,961 | 0.3 |
| Some other race | 183 | 0.7 | 36 | 0.5 | 204,088 | 12.1 | 5,682,241 | 16.8 |
| Two or more races | 766 | 2.8 | 216 | 2.7 | 78,437 | 4.7 | 1,607,646 | 4.7 |
| Hispanic or Latino (of any race) | 822 | 3 | 170 | 2.2 | 403,401 | 24 | 10,966,556 | 32.4 |

| | City of Los Altos, CA | | City of Los Altos Hills, CA | | Santa Clara County | | State of California | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|--------------------|------|---------------------|------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE | | | | | | | | |
| Household population | 27,274 | 98.5 | 7,837 | 99.2 | 1,652,871 | 98.2 | 33,051,894 | 97.6 |
| Group quarters population | 419 | 1.5 | 65 | 0.8 | 29,714 | 1.8 | 819,754 | 2.4 |
| Average household size | 2.61 | (X) | 2.86 | (X) | 2.92 | (X) | 2.87 | (X) |
| Avg. family size | 2.98 | (X) | 3.02 | (X) | 3.41 | (X) | 3.43 | (X) |

| | City of Los Altos, CA | | City of Los Altos Hills, CA | | Santa Clara County | | State of California | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|--------------------|------|---------------------|------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| HOUSING OCCUPANCY | | | | | | | | |
| Total housing units | 10,727 | (X) | 2,816 | (X) | 579,329 | (X) | 12,214,549 | (X) |
| Occupied housing units | 10,462 | 97.5 | 2,740 | 97.3 | 565,863 | 97.7 | 11,502,870 | 94.2 |
| Owner-occupied housing units | 8,954 | 85.6 | 2,572 | 93.9 | 338,661 | 59.8 | 6,546,334 | 56.9 |
| Renter-occupied housing units | 1,508 | 14.4 | 168 | 6.1 | 227,202 | 40.2 | 4,956,536 | 43.1 |
| Vacant housing units | 265 | 2.5 | 76 | 2.7 | 13,466 | 2.3 | 711,679 | 5.8 |



IV. Los Altos Community Characteristics

| | City of Los Altos, CA | | City of Los Altos Hills, CA | | Santa Clara County | | State of California | |
|---|-----------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|--------------------|------|---------------------|------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS | | | | | | | | |
| Population 25 years and over | 20,128 | (X) | 5,729 | | 1,113,058 | (X) | 21,298,900 | (X) |
| High school graduate or higher | 19,574 | 97.2 | 5,554 | 96.9 | 928,258 | 83.4 | 16,356,157 | 76.8 |
| Bachelor's degree / higher | 14,351 | 71.3 | 4,477 | 78.1 | 450,539 | 40.5 | 5,669,966 | 26.6 |
| Civilian veterans (civilian popln. 18 years & over) | 2,854 | 13.5 | 685 | 11.2 | 105,834 | 8.4 | 2,569,340 | 10.5 |
| Disability status (population 5 years and over) | 2,966 | 11.6 | 743 | 9.7 | 254,729 | 16.4 | 5,923,361 | 19.2 |
| Foreign born | 4,857 | 17.6 | 1,882 | 23.5 | 573,130 | 34.1 | 8,864,255 | 26.2 |
| Male, separated (population 15 years and over) | 7,555 | 72.4 | 2,359 | 74.5 | 368,979 | 55 | 6,949,183 | 54.1 |
| Female, except separated (population 15 years and over) | 7,757 | 66.9 | 2,287 | 68.8 | 360,007 | 54.6 | 6,708,018 | 50.7 |
| Speak a language other than English at home (population 5 years & over) | 5,263 | 20.2 | 2,292 | 30 | 709,731 | 45.4 | 12,401,756 | 39.5 |

| | City of Los Altos, CA | | City of Los Altos Hills, CA | | Santa Clara County | | State of California | |
|---|-----------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|--------------------|------|---------------------|------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS | | | | | | | | |
| In labor force (population 16 years and over) | 12,941 | 59.7 | 3,711 | 58.1 | 878,932 | 67.2 | 15,977,879 | 62.4 |
| Mean travel time to work in minutes (workers 16 years and over) | 22.1 | (X) | 24.7 | (X) | 26.1 | (X) | 27.7 | (X) |
| Median household income in 1999 (dollars) | 126,740 | (X) | 173,570 | (X) | 74,335 | (X) | 47,493 | (X) |
| Median family income in 1999 (dollars) | 148,201 | (X) | 181,865 | (X) | 81,717 | (X) | 53,025 | (X) |
| Per capita income in 1999 (dollars) | 66,776 | (X) | 92,840 | (X) | 32,795 | (X) | 22,711 | (X) |
| Families below poverty level | 91 | 1.1 | 52 | 2.2 | 19,624 | 4.9 | 845,991 | 10.6 |
| Individuals below poverty level | 647 | 2.4 | 311 | 3.9 | 124,470 | 7.5 | 4,706,130 | 14.2 |



IV. Los Altos Community Characteristics

| | City of Los Altos, CA | | City of Los Altos Hills, CA | | Santa Clara County | | State of California | |
|--|-----------------------|-----|-----------------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|---------------------|-----|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS | | | | | | | | |
| Single-family owner-occupied homes | 8,405 | | 2,465 | | 291,771 | | 5,527,618 | |
| Median value (dollars) | 983,000 | (X) | 1,000,001 | (X) | 446,400 | (X) | 211,500 | (X) |
| Median of selected monthly owner costs | (X) | (X) | (X) | (X) | (X) | (X) | (X) | (X) |
| With a mortgage (dollars) | 3,371 | (X) | 4,001 | (X) | 2,060 | (X) | 1,478 | (X) |
| Not mortgaged (dollars) | 456 | (X) | 786 | (X) | 350 | (X) | 305 | (X) |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF 1) and Summary File 3 (SF 3)



V. Los Altos Community Service Needs

Service Population Projections

Overview

Review of all available demographic information and the community profile shows there to be an expected small, stable growth in population and no major shifts in age distribution of the population. There is a projected increase in the ethnic diversity of the population and with that an increase in the future number of households that will speak another language other than English in the home. The community as a whole is projected to continue to be highly educated, with high household income and a strong level of community volunteerism and philanthropy.

Enrollment forecasts for the Mountain View/Los Altos school district suggests that migration levels have peaked and are returning to historically normal levels. While there is public perception that the school age children demographic will increase significantly, both census information and school enrollment projections speculate that this number will remain fairly consistent in the foreseeable future.

Current Service Needs Limitations

The long, narrow layout of the City of Los Altos presents a challenge to providing services to the whole community of Los Altos from the Master Plan site. There is a valid concern that South Los Altos residents will not seek out the offerings at the Community Center site as they have access to services closer to home. Residents in the southern portion of the City already have access to Woodland Branch Library on Grant Road. Compounding the separation between the North and South parts of Los Altos is the fact that they are in a different school district.

In addition, residents of Los Altos Hills may not choose to access the Community Center for similar lack of convenience to their homes. Los Altos Hills has its own Town Hall, Parks and Recreation Center, sports fields and leagues, jogging/walking pathway system, and community barn. They have convenient access to the Woodland Branch Library as well. Methods of counteracting this scenario could include increased outreach to the community and increased effort to gain participation by residents of Los Altos Hills in Los Altos volunteer and partnering opportunities.



V. Los Altos Community Service Needs

Community Outreach Insights

Community Forum

The Community Forum kicked off the community outreach process for the project. Responses were found to be very consistent even among the range of participants. The following is a listing of the overarching comments noted during the discussions and through review of the response cards filled out by attendees:

Key Service and Community Center Needs

Library:

- View to the orchard is appreciated
- More adult programs were requested
- Connectivity of the Library to other community services is desired

Youth Services:

- Multi-purpose space for meetings, sports, and unstructured activities
- Work opportunities to enhance civic engagement

Senior Services:

- Need better facilities and better services in general
- Senior Housing proximity to site and downtown is desired

Recreational facilities:

- Support multiple sports (baseball, soccer, tennis, etc.)
- Community Pool - strong support was heard

Community Assembly Spaces (indoor and outdoor):

- Flexible and varied sizes, with more spaces than currently available
- Affordable rental for community groups

Theater:

- Potentially should have a downtown location
- Theater leadership concerned with moving off-site
- Multi-purpose facility/rehearsal hall needs to be adjacent

Children's Programs:

- Current programs are good and Children's Corner is appreciated
- Increase in young families in the community - need to support growth

City Offices:

- Enjoy the small-town village feeling
- Like accessibility to staff
- Better facilities for City Staff and Employees

Exterior:

- Emphasis on natural beauty
- Indoor/outdoor connection
- Civic engagement is important
- Flexible community gathering spaces
- Visibility of Community Center from San Antonio - having a presence



V. Los Altos Community Service Needs

Community Outreach Insights

- Connection to downtown - physical, visual and services
- Orchard-considered as a Los Altos Historical asset

Access and Parking:

- Strong preference for underground parking
- More accessible traffic flow and parking facilities
- Less visual emphasis on car traffic on site
- Use of public transit and possible city shuttles

Physical Consistent Preferences:

- Open, light filled spaces
- Natural materials (wood and stone as an accent), familiar and casual yet traditional
- Human scaled buildings and detailing
- Consistent palette, but buildings specific to use

Site Aesthetic preferences:

- Desire for park-like, open space
- Views of the orchard, ability to use the space
- Outdoor community gathering areas and indoor/outdoor connection

Architectural Style preferences:

- Early Californian, Craftsman and Ranch Style references
- Use of porticoes and shading devices
- Not modern, urban or institutional
- Contextual with Los Altos

Community Survey Insights

Overall, there were many positive comments about the Community Center's involvement and community spirit, small town atmosphere, historical tradition, educational opportunities and the Library.

Negative comments centered on the buildings being old and the poor condition of the orchard. The Center as a whole was seen as having little civic presence. It was expressed that community services and programs offered need to be expanded, particularly to working adults in the community. Respondents were satisfied with the quality of Parks and Recreation programs, but saw the need for more fields as well as more classes and the addition of indoor exercise areas.

Those facilities that received the vote for the highest priority for improvement were the Hillview Center, Parks and Recreation, Library and then the Senior Center. After further analysis of the frequency of use it is apparent that those services either not as familiar or frequently used, such as City Service facilities, did not rank as high. Respondents saw City Services as essential and were very satisfied with the high service but dissatisfied with the facilities' condition and function.



V. Los Altos Community Service Needs

Community Outreach Insights

Key insights about service and Community Center priorities that developed out of the Community Survey were as follows:

Key Service Priorities

When ranking the highest priority service for the City of Los Altos and the community, the responses identified the following priorities:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Library | 58.6% |
| City Services | 53.2% |
| Parks and Recreation | 47.2% |
| Senior Center & Senior Services | 40.6% |
| History Museum | 40.0% |
| Theater | 36.5% |
| Youth Services | 34.6% |
| Community Pool | 30.7% |

Key Community Center Priorities

When identifying the most important aspects of the Community Center site, the following priorities were identified:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Safe Buildings and Infrastructure | 64.0% |
| Support Youth and Development | 62.6% |
| Parks and Open Space | 62.0% |
| Recreation Opportunities | 59.3% |
| Promotes a Sense of community | 55.0% |

Focus Group Insights

The Focus Group input reinforced information gathered at the Community Forum. Participants also gave additional insight and clarity to service priorities which are outlined below. Up to this point in the outreach process there had been little information gathered about basic city services. Focus Group participants discussed that these services are seen as essential and assumed as a given need in the Community. Overall, Police, Fire, and City Administration are appreciated for their high quality service and the Focus Groups consistently felt that these facilities should be upgraded to retain quality employees and support them in their work.

Key insights about service priorities that were discovered during the Focus Groups were as follows:

- City Services and Police
- Easy access to City business needs
- Two groups saw it as a given on the site
- One group felt it could be moved off-site if space available
- Community Meeting Spaces
- Essential to community volunteerism
- Delivery of partner services through this space
- Library
- Key to lifelong learning but goes beyond the library



V. Los Altos Community Service Needs

Community Outreach Insights

- Senior Center
- Health and Well-being
- Leisure, learning and social gathering
- Multi-generational facilities-not isolating the senior population
- Youth Programs
- Structured and non-structured
- Civic engagement
- Safe, social setting
- Recreational Pool and Fields
- Exercise and leisure
- Alternative/supplemental to School programs
- Theater
- Cultural/Arts opportunities

Teen Outreach Insights

In general, insights gained from this outreach were mainly consistent with other outreach efforts; priorities for service were noted as:

- Library access
- Access to large multi-purpose spaces for LAYC dances and other group events for community youth
- Rooms for classes and meetings for commissions / groups
- Swim Facility
- Play Fields, which could either be located on this site or on other City owned sites
- Orchard as a historical reference for the community, but not necessarily required in the existing location or existing size
- Inclusion of a skate park in the recreation program

It was discussed that youth would be less likely to use spaces requiring reservation and scheduling of after school time, rather than spaces which are open and usable at all times. The group did discuss that while the majority of spaces used by community youth could be shared in multi-generational facilities, there were certain activities which should have separate youth facilities:

- Computer areas for youth use to allow for more active "noisy" computer use
- A youth-specific gathering space that could contain access to school resources, tutoring opportunities and counseling resources
- Game room facilities that again allow for more active, noisy activities

The Community Center site was discussed as being very appropriate for locating Teen Center and youth-specific functions due to its proximity to downtown, public transportation access, and even the police offices.



V. Los Altos Community Service Needs

Community Outreach Insights

Key Informant Interview Insights

In general, the responses of the key informants were in keeping with the prior outreach efforts. It was specifically noted that the Community Center site should be a community gathering location, both by the nature of the facilities on the site, and also the site itself and the indoor and outdoor gathering spaces that will be planned. This group noted very strongly the fact that the existing facilities are in poor condition and do not serve the community well. The opportunities for enlivening the connection to downtown were noted to be very important.

Key insights about service and Community Center priorities that were discovered during the Informant Interviews are as follows:

Key Service Priorities

- Library as a key component for the community
- Senior Center and Senior services as key service
- Youth programs require more support and better facilities
- Recreational fields need improvement and more are needed
- Include orchard as reference to Los Altos' agricultural history
- Support for young families/children's activity on site
- Performing Arts facilities for the community

Key Community Center Priorities

- Cross-utilization of services on the site
- Space for multi-functional community gathering and activity
- Park-like atmosphere, open space, underground parking
- Clear community value for investment to benefits



V. Los Altos Community Service Needs

Future Service Trends

Overview

Understanding the citizenry's future service needs involves understanding trends that will affect how they live and work. In direct response to documented needs as expressed by the community through outreach efforts and through research and analysis of community issues emerged as potential impacts to future service needs for the Los Altos Community Center:

- Community gathering places for all ages
- Affordable housing and in-home services for seniors
- Privatization of culture/arts
- Privatization of recreation away from schools
- Community work and social programs for youth
- Partnering with organizations to supplement and enrich programs and services

Community Places

The Community outreach effort revealed a high service need for Community gathering places for all ages. There is a strong community culture with traditional social and fundraising events that take place throughout the year. The high volunteerism and vibrancy of the non-profit organizations within the community create a need for a community place for people to get together, meet, hold events, and get business done. Overall, the community was very vocal about the social needs of seniors and youth, particularly teens. Many of the seniors in the community have spent the better part of their adult lives as active members of the community, volunteering in service organizations and raising their children in Los Altos. As they age they will continue to need places in the community where they can come together with others to be social, learn, and participate in activities and meals. Teens need safe places to interact, get away from electronics, and interact socially with others their own age outside of school.

But these are not the only groups that have a social need in the community. The demographics show the mean commute time is 22 minutes a day but telework, saving on commute time and resources, is on the rise. People who telework are in contact virtually with clients and co-workers in much more sophisticated ways, but are more isolated physically. They come in contact with only a small circle of people on the average day: their family, their local grocery store clerk, schoolteachers and librarians. The result is a new breed of "Urban Villager" that needs ways to socially connect with others. As their homes become isolated work environments people are "home-ing," or seeking out places in the community where they can work, study, and have human contact. Neighborhood coffee shops have evolved to meet this need, set up with wireless internet and living room style seating as a place for people to work and connect. Information is readily available through technology but



V. Los Altos Community Service Needs

Future Service Trends

Affordable Housing and In-home Services

face to face interaction will always remain a basic human need. Libraries have evolved beyond places for reading and research but have become places for people to go for quiet, private time without aloneness, active teamwork, and collaborative learning. As technology isolates individuals there is a high service need for places for people to work, study and go to be with others.

It is a fact that upper middle class Americans live longer and stay in better health. The reasons behind this include that they are in the position to learn of new information early, modify their behavior, take advantage of the latest treatments and have the costs covered.

Social networks and support play a role too. It stands to reason that the seniors of Los Altos will want to remain in their own homes as long as possible. However, they will need affordable, downtown housing options with access to in-home care services that they can move to when they are ready to downsize or perhaps transition into assisted living type arrangements.

The General Plan for Los Altos calls for higher density housing in clusters close to the center of the city; however, there is some question whether this will be adequate to meet the population's needs.

Affordable housing options are not just an issue for Seniors. With the median home price at approximately \$1,000,000 (per 2000 Census data), most City workers, shop owners, teachers and other middle income earners cannot afford to live in the City in which they work. Lastly, many young adults cannot afford to remain in or move to Los Altos.

Privatization of Culture/Arts

The Los Altos Educational Foundation is a parent-run fundraising organization that has provided many enrichment programs (e.g. in science and the arts as well as supplementing teacher salaries) successfully for the past twenty five years. At a time when State budgets for public schools are being cut, the schools and the fundraising organizations are having to work harder to keep up with the high quality standards and changing nature of services the community needs. There is an increased demand for private schools in the area. The schools and community need to continue to take advantage of partnering opportunities to bridge the gap in what each can provide. There is a high service need for arts and other extra-curricular enrichment activities to be offered for youth outside of the schools.



V. Los Altos Community Service Needs

Future Service Trends

Privatization of Sports and Recreation away from Schools

The information gathered through community outreach revealed a need for an increase in public art and public art programs for adults as well. Currently, programs at the Bus Barn Theater and through nearby Foothill College are available but limited in capacity and variety. Members of the community expressed the desire for services that encompass a large diversity of cultural events and activities from movies, lectures, to music, etc.

Community sport leagues offer both a supplement and an alternative to school programs. Playing on High School sports teams is highly competitive. Those students that have played sports in their younger years and received training and experience at the community league level have an advantage in getting on their school teams. Those that do not make or do not choose to participate in these competitive school teams can still participate through community sport leagues. In addition, for those adults that have the desire to participate in team sports, community leagues are their primary option.

In addition to team sport leagues, there is a high service need in the community for other recreational and leisure outlets for children, parents and grandparents alike. Since the last census in 2000 and the explosive growth of the Internet, Los Altos, like many other Silicon Valley cities, has been on the cutting edge of the digital transformation of our society. With the profound use of cell phones, email and laptops, a work ethic phenomenon of being accessible to clients and work anytime/anywhere has become part of everyday life. A large percentage of people in the working years of their life are paying a heavy price squeezing more work hours into their private time. Market consumer research is showing that Los Altos residents' spending reflects a high priority on recreation and leisure and this is expected to be a continued need in the future.

Community Work Programs for Youth

Many of the community's most successful programs are solely run by volunteers. The community is looking for ways to pass on their civic values to the current generation of youth in Los Altos in order to preserve that positive element in their community in the future years. Known as Generation Y, youth in their mid 20's and younger have grown up in more educated, affluent households and have been privy to high quality activities and education. Born into an age heavily focused on technology, they are heavy media users and are entertainment driven, but they are masters at information seeking and technology oriented social networking. As a result they are both high-performance and high-maintenance. Having grown up in prosperous times they tend to spend money freely. Some parents are looking for a service to engage the youth, provide



V. Los Altos Community Service Needs

Future Service Trends

Partnering with Organizations for Programs and Services

activities to do philanthropic work, to work in the community and learn fiscal responsibility through employment.

For all of the above service trends there is a limit as to what the City and the Community Center can provide. There is and will continue to be an approach that relies on partnering with private organizations to offer a wider variety of programs and services to fit the needs of the community.

Trends toward strategic joint-use, partnering and outsourcing of services have allowed the community to meet their service needs when it might otherwise not be fiscally possible. Trends towards public bond measures and community supported fund drives have opened up more direct ways for communities to invest directly into their own futures.



V. Los Altos Community Service Needs

Community Wide Service Priorities

Overview

The Community outreach process and research on current and future service data revealed the following service needs and order of priorities for the community:

1. City Services (Police and Government Services)
2. Library Services
3. Senior Services
 - Health and Wellness
 - Social Clubs
 - Education
 - Senior Daycare
 - Therapeutics
4. Youth Services
 - Drop-in Center
 - Employment Opportunities/Financial Responsibility
 - Volunteerism/Philanthropy
 - Social Events
5. Recreational Services
 - Field Sports
 - Pool
 - Indoor Exercise
6. Large Public Gathering Places
7. Service Organization Support Services
 - Flexible-ized meeting rooms
 - Storage
8. Arts and Culture
 - Lectures
 - Special Events
 - Movies
 - Theater
9. History Museum
10. Community Gathering Space
11. Community Housing for Seniors

The following is a summary discussion of the issues about each that the Community feels are a priority.

Police

Police and public safety were the community's highest priority. The service was considered essential; however there was some discussion as to whether it should be located on the Community Center site. This is discussed in more detail later in the report.



V. Los Altos Community Service Needs

Community Wide Service Priorities

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| <i>Government Services</i> | The community prioritizes Government Services as an important service. On the whole most of the residents access these services on only an occasional basis, but when they do they place a high priority on being able to access City Staff and information easily. On the whole the community values the current small town atmosphere it provides. |
| <i>Library</i> | Throughout the community outreach effort it was revealed that the Library is highly valued. It is seen as the key to lifelong learning, a community place for people to go to be with others while learning or doing individual study. The connectivity of the Library to other community services is desirable. |
| <i>Senior Services</i> | With longer life expectancy and strong ties to the community, seniors will undoubtedly need more services to meet their needs for continued education, social engagement, cultural activities, and health and wellness, including in-home and senior day care services. On the whole the senior community is more affluent and needs better, more upscale facilities with high quality programs. In addition, multi-generational facilities are desired to avoid isolation from the younger community. |
| <i>Youth Services</i> | While we did not hear from a large percentage of the community's youth through initial community outreach, there was an overriding concern for youth services by the community. Although there is not a gang problem, community members perceived a teen drug problem. Many vocalized a high priority on providing safe environments for teens to gather for both structured social events and unstructured drop-in activities. They desire work programs to engage the youth in their communities and teach them financial responsibility as well as opportunities for them to give back to their communities and take on volunteer roles. Later outreach efforts revealed a teen priority on library and recreations services. |
| <i>Recreational Services</i> | At all age levels there is strong community support for a community pool, and a need for more and better outdoor playing fields for a multitude of sport activities including baseball, soccer, tennis and basketball. Additionally, there is a need for areas to do indoor exercise and other physical activities. |
| <i>Large Public Gathering Places</i> | The traditional community event calendar for the Los Altos area is long and time-honored. Large outdoor and indoor gathering spaces for assembly and a variety of social events are a high priority in the community. |



V. Los Altos Community Service Needs

Community Wide Service Priorities

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| <i>Service Organization Support Services</i> | This community thrives on its volunteerism and the multitude of organizations that provide services to the community need both flexible-sized meeting rooms at affordable rates, and ample storage space. |
| <i>Arts & Culture</i> | The need for places to have cultural events and performances was evident throughout the community outreach process. To varying degrees people use the Bus Barn Theater, but the facility is inadequate and in poor condition. Los Altos High School auditorium and Foothill College are sometimes available, but those are limited resources. Neighboring cities, such as Mountain View, have exemplary spaces for these types of needs and it was clear that the Los Altos community would like to have places for multiple performance types, cultural events, and the arts. |
| <i>History</i> | The community of Los Altos places a high value on the presence of the History House and Museum in its midst and its high quality exhibits. The surrounding orchards are considered an asset and reference to the City's agricultural history. In the community outreach process, a strong tie to these traditional elements and preserving them was clearly evident. However, the community overall was not tied to the orchard being a working orchard and was not opposed to relocating it in the future Master Plan of the site. |
| <i>Community Gathering Spaces</i> | There is a desire within the community to have community gardens, places of natural beauty that serve as flexible outdoor spaces for people to gather. Visual and physical connections between the outdoors and indoors, smaller intimate settings, walkable orchards, open plazas are all desired to create a better community place. |
| <i>Community Housing for Seniors</i> | As seniors age their living needs change. They may need to downsize, have difficulty living on their own, or have transportation limitations. Community housing for Seniors in close proximity to downtown was expressed as a priority. Although a priority, it was not an expectation that this would be a city service, but that the City would promote and stimulate the possibility of Senior Housing on or near the Community Center site. Others thought that the development of senior housing could be a financial strategy to afford redevelopment of the Community Center. |



V. Los Altos Community Service Needs

Community Center Service Priorities

As a culmination of all the preceding information gathering and analysis, the following is the list of services to be prioritized for ***inclusion*** (but not in priority order) on the Community Center site.

1. History House and Museum-to remain in current location
2. Orchard - location , size and variety to be determined
3. City Services
4. Library
5. Senior Programs
6. Youth Programs
7. Community Gathering Spaces
 - Informal small
 - Large group spaces
8. Recreational Facilities
 - Indoor exercise
 - Fields
9. Community outdoor space/open spaces
10. Arts, Culture and Theater
11. Pool



VI. Los Altos Community Center Priorities

Community Center Service Concepts

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| <i>Overview</i> | <p>Several clear service concepts that describe what the Community Center emerged from the process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Government Center ▪ Lifelong Learning Center ▪ Multi-generational Facility ▪ Arts and Culture Center ▪ Positive Environment for Teens ▪ Multi-use Indoor and Outdoor Community Gathering Place ▪ Place to Promote and Support Volunteerism and Service Organizations ▪ Recreation and Leisure Center for All Ages (provide and partner with others to provide) |
| <i>Government Center</i> | <p>Los Altos citizens feel that their Government Center should be a place of civic pride, should promote an efficient and healthy working environment and should facilitate open government and citizen interactions. The Government Center should be easily identified and be obvious from San Antonio Road.</p> |
| <i>Lifelong Learning Center</i> | <p>The Library currently provides a substantial service and facility towards the goal of a Lifelong Learning Center, but the Community felt that this concept should reach beyond the Library. The City of Los Altos conducted a separate Library Needs Assessment at the time of this study. (Please refer to this report for further information on the library specifically.) Existing programs through the History House and Museum, Library and the Bus Barn Theater are highly appreciated. Los Altos residents would like to have a place for lecture series in an auditorium size hall as an alternative to partnering with the high schools in the area. They would like space for more classes for both small and large groups. Space for staff training and development to support continuous improvement is also a stated need.</p> |
| <i>Multi-Generational Facilities</i> | <p>While it is understood that there are certain functional reasons to separate age groups and activities, many believe that the new Community Center should not create age “silos” and should find ways to create space and places for multi-generational interaction. Wherever appropriate opportunities for these types of interactions should be created to maximize multi-generational interaction and space utilization efficiencies.</p> |
| <i>Arts and Cultural Center</i> | <p>The community of Los Altos seeks art and cultural events as an extension to their need for lifelong learning. They feel strongly that the current venues fall short and want a multi-function center for arts and culture for which they can be proud in addition to a place they can bring family and guests and a draw for the downtown.</p> |



VI. Los Altos Community Center Priorities

Community Center Service Concepts

Positive Environment for Teens

As the Community Center is developed, special consideration should be given to create places for programs, activities and future employment opportunities for youth. The community is interested in expanding space for non-programmed youth activities, where teens feel comfortable “hanging out.” At the same time, there is a desire to have them engage in community-wide activities that would support their interest. These activities could be in volunteering with local organizations that are housed within the Community Center, interning with the City or working for various programs that would be located at the site.

Community Gathering- Indoor

There is a clear need for the community of Los Altos to come together in spaces that allows for social gathering, casual interactions and city-wide events of all sizes. Community members repeatedly used the phrase “community living rooms” as a way to describe the types of spaces that they wished to create. These indoor areas are highly functional yet adaptable to the changing needs of a variety of uses. The spaces should allow for a variety of furniture types to be stored, so that rooms can be conveniently and quickly reconfigured. However spaces should not become so multi-functional that they no longer serve their specific intent. Space should be designed to meet each of the functional space needs.

Community Volunteerism/ Service Organization

The City of Los Altos has the benefit of a highly engaged community that seeks to improve its condition by volunteering and supporting its needs through formal community based organizations. These groups are largely served by the space that is currently provided at Hillview Community Center. There was a clear message that the amount of space to support these services should not be reduced and potentially increased to further promote this valuable community asset. At the same time, more effective use of shared space, appropriate space for different functions and adequate storage would make the facilities more efficient.



VI. Los Altos Community Center Priorities

Community Center Service Concepts

Recreation and Leisure Programs

The citizens of Los Altos appreciate the recreation and leisure opportunities that are provided through the Community Center and would like to expand its programs. There is a specific demand to increase programs for all ages including Seniors. The concept of therapeutic exercise was also discussed in conjunction with a warm water pool and specific indoor space for this use. Dedicated rooms for exercise, dance and other indoor athletics would provide the appropriate conditions for these types of programs that are not well served in multi-use areas. Teens expressed a need for a gym for after school activities and as a good location for dances. Exterior programmed space for Little League and AYSO are also greatly appreciated by the community and there is a strong desire to keep these activities on the Community Center site.

Community Gathering- Outdoor

As important as the indoor spaces in the Community Center are, there is a strong desire to create a variety of spaces for community gathering outside. Residents enjoy the fields as open space, but do not feel that it serves the need for exterior gathering space. There is a strong desire to create a large public plaza and garden that can be used for social events as well as small informal spaces for resting, meeting a friend or taking a break from work. It is important that the site remain "green" and that the mature trees be maintained and incorporated into the future Community Center wherever possible.

The Community feels strongly that an orchard should remain as a symbol of the City's heritage, but there is a wide range of opinions on how this might be achieved. A majority feel that it would be appropriate and valuable to create an orchard near the History House and Museum. Many felt that an educational component could be part of the orchard and that it could be functioning and fruit bearing if the trees could be maintained by a professional. Many commented that it would be an improvement to be able to walk in the orchard and have it be accessible to the public to enjoy during all seasons. Another option is a decorative orchard with easier maintenance and none of the challenges associated with a fruit bearing orchard.

Needs Assessment Conclusion

The above service concepts and discussion are the key issues that will inform the subsequent phases of the Master Plan study moving forward into the Plan of Service, Programming and Facility Scenario portions of the Master Plan.



