COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: AUGUST 21, 2015
TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
FROM: LES WHITE, INTERIM TOWN MANAGER
SUBJECT: ACCEPT THE STAFF REPORT ON CUT THROUGH TRAFFIC

REMARKS:

Page 4 of the staff report identifies the streets provided to Waze for prioritization as:

- Massol Avenue from Highway 9 to Main Street
- Tait Avenue from Highway 9 to Main Street
- Main Street from University to Santa Cruz Avenue
- Main Street from Massol to Santa Cruz Avenue

Massol Avenue does not intersect Main Street. This line should read:

- Massol Avenue from Highway 9 to Bean Avenue

Attachment received with this Addendum:

1. Public Comment received through 11:00 a.m. Monday, August 31, 2015.
To whom this may concern:

My name is Ingeborg Jakobson. I live at 15155 Kennedy Road.

I have in the past written to complain about the overwhelming amount of traffic control signage that the Town officials love to decorate our streets with but are inconsequential to drivers because we have passed the California DMV examination. (May I suggest there be a plan to remove existing traffic signage before cramming in new ones.)

Now I am writing to request how much money the 2 dumb-ass electric signs on Los Gatos Boulevard, that feebly try to dissuade traffic from using a route through the Town to access south bound 17, cost to operate.

These 2 signs are jaw-dropping. Not only are they unenforceable but they actually confirm my image of Los Gatos as snobby, arrogant and dotty. Drivers pay taxes and we CAN drive on any open street and choose any route we desire to reach a destination. I have never in my entire life seen signage stupider than these! They laughable because there is no law to justify their contemptuous language. Even if you try to tell me the signs are 'suggesting' an alternative route, taxpayer dollars being wasted to operate these signs.

Of all the signs that clutter and visually pollute our streets there is not one that says 'Welcome to Los Gatos'.

Most sincerely,
Ingeborg Jakobson
From: Jo <joellaconover@aol.com>
Date: 08/17/2015 11:33 AM (GMT-08:00)
To: Marcia Jensen <MJensen@losgotosca.gov>
Subject: Blocking streets

You are making everyone mad with your hap hazarded regard to the traffic situation .. It doesn't work for the residents or the business people..
Put a sign on the freeway .. Tell them how long the blockage will be tell the hit the cats .. Widen the freeway ..
Nothing has been done to 17 since the 60s .. The council has their head in the ground .. For 55 years .. Forward thinking and planning is much better then a quick stupid fix ..
Joella Conover

From: Jo <joellaconover@aol.com>
Date: 08/17/2015 11:35 AM (GMT-08:00)
To: Marcia Jensen <MJensen@losgotosca.gov>
Subject: West 40

If you can't be brilliant enough to fix the parking then don't bring a ton more into town ..
Joella Conover
From: Los Gatos Homeowner [mailto:losgatos95030@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, August 15, 2015 8:21 PM
To: Town Manager
Subject: Tait Avenue on Saturday, Aug 15, 2015

Re: Beach Traffic

Well, it started out pretty good until cars started short-cutting through the Whole Pet Vet parking lot, the Shell Station and The Diner lot to get on Massol, Tait to W. Main.

They'd slow down when they saw LGPD and go back to N Santa Cruz. When PD left, it was back to backed up cars. It seemed to be more aggressive (speeding and driving on the wrong side of the road).

My best suggestion is to close the on ramp to SB Hwy 17 at S. Santa Cruz Ave, and have the short-cutters loop back to Hwy 17 from Hwy 9. Yes... Gridlock going in AND out if Town. Once word gets out, less short cutters. Who knows, maybe some will give up, park, eat & shop in LG.

Close... Can be a "car breakdown" or "accident"... ;) .... Not all day, just long enough for "Waze" to report the ramp is temporarily closed and drivers should stay on 17. Those who don't, get to waste their time looping back. May take less manpower to manage that particular area.

PD did a great job today, appreciate it.a Thank you,

Almond Grove +20 year homeowner
From: John Shepardson [mailto:shepardsonlaw@me.com]
Sent: Saturday, August 15, 2015 7:44 PM
To: Council
Subject: 8/18/15 TC Agenda Item re Cut Through Traffic (17 Traffic Southbound Sat 8/15/15 12:11 p.m.)
Closing access to Massol Ave. is one of the worst ideas I've ever seen. I went out to run a 15 min. errand and it took me 50 min.'s to get home. This closure is definitely not working. People are cutting around the barricades to cut through town anyway. I'm surprised no one has taken down barricades for you already.

Sent from my iPhone
I live where I can reach most Town businesses on foot. I am willing to do my bit to help solve the cut through problem. Moreover, what the Town wants is pedestrians who shop and spend. So, while I am willing to give it a try, I find the crosswalk closing to be going in the wrong direction. The problem is that sadly misinformed drivers believe they will save a few minutes by taking an ill-advised “short cut” through Town. I hope they can be convinced that Highway 17 is slow but sure and not as slow as crawling through Almond Grove.

Sincerely,
Bob Macartney
65 Broadway
I live right off Highway 9 and am wondering how I will get to places like Andales and my coffee shop, etc., this weekend. Usually I turn right off of Highway 9 on the street before the diner, which I believe is Tait, so I can avoid the mess on N. Santa Cruz and park in the handicap parking behind the shops I frequent (that is the only place in town with plenty of handicap parking). Will you be forcing the people that do frequent the local shops to go down N. Santa Cruz and then use E. Main Street to get to their destinations in town?

Please let me know. Thank you.

Thank you, A. Robin Streicker
Towns such as Los Gatos likely need to do something that makes cutting through town less attractive in transit time than staying on the highway; in a manner that isn't too onerous for the residents and actual visitors.

As an example,

1) Via targeted road closures and cul-de-sacs, set up traffic flow so folks going through town as a short cut must go through one or two choke-points, and configure very long cycle traffic lights at those points that will get recognized by GPS traffic applications such as Waze; which will then gently guide drive the through-traffic back to the highway.

2) Do this in a way that does not greatly inconvenience residents and visitors.

More specifically in the case of Los Gatos, as the beach traffic is going north-south:

a) Install moveable barriers on the north-south side streets (Tait, Massol, San Benito, ...) and have town staff deploy these to make the streets into cul-de-sacs on the summer weekends; and through streets during the rest of the year. Residents would have no complaint at needing to go north a few blocks to get south for their around town trips during the day on the weekend, in exchange for blissful relief from today's scenario of living on a crowded expressway. [Emergency vehicles can drive right through the moveable barriers as needed.]

b) Set the weekend timing of the traffic light at North Santa Cruz and HW 9, and the one at University and HW 9 to greatly favor traffic on HW 9, with just a short light for traffic crossing HW 9. Again residents will encounter these delays only once or twice a weekend; but the algorithms in GPSs will pick these up by seeing the slow down, and direct transiting folks back to the freeway.

We've heard of SEO (Search Engine Optimization); now we need GRR (GPS Routing Regularization) or some such.

Meeting with Waze execs is well and good; but there are dozens of GPS apps out there - we need to do something to increase the cost of the through-city trip to always be higher than the cost of staying on the highway. Perhaps Waze will pay for the moveable barriers experiment as a gesture of reconciliation?

Mac
Here is another article on the subject:

Has Waze ever made agreements with municipalities or neighborhoods to censor or override their user data?

On Thu, Aug 6, 2015 at 10:11 AM, Audrey Armstrong audreyandtony@verizon.net [95033talk] <95033talk@yahooogroups.com> wrote:

FYI

Begin forwarded message:

From: Zack Marks <chamber@losgatoschamber.com>
Date: August 6, 2015 9:36:50 AM PDT
To: audreyandtony@verizon.net
Subject: Continued Town Action on Cut Through Traffic
Reply-To: chamber@losgatoschamber.com
A Word from the Los Gatos Chamber of Commerce

Hello,

Please take a moment to read the Town’s Press Release about continued Town action on cut-through traffic.

Thanks!

Continued Town Action On Cut Through Traffic

For more information, contact:

Les White, Interim Town Manager
Laurel Prevetti, Assistant Town Manager
Town of Los Gatos
408-354-6832
Manager@LosGatosCa.gov

Forward this email

This email was sent to audreyandtony@verizon.net by chamber@losgatoschamber.com | Update Profile/Email Address | Rapid removal with SafelyUnsubscribe™ | About our service provider.
Dear Sirs,

I read with great interest the bulletin posted on the Los Gatos website in regards to alleviating traffic congestion and although it doesn’t sound like any final decisions have been made, I am concerned about a sign I saw on Massol Ave. today notifying drivers that only local traffic will be allowed on that particular street. Am I going to be ticketed if I drive on Massol Ave. to get to work at Garden Inn because I am not a resident? Will I have to face the same possibility if I drive on Tait Ave.? I don’t normally use those streets but when 1590 KLIV reports that there is a traffic jam on Hwy 17 South from Hamilton Ave. to Bear Creek or beyond, I am forced to use Quito Rd. and either Massol or Tait to reach Main Street because Los Gatos Blvd will often be jam-packed as well.

I do hope you can find a way to redirect beach traffic but it seems to me that the only way to do so would be to close the entrance to Hwy 17 South at N. Santa Cruz Ave. If you take away that particular method of accessing Hwy 17, the beach traffic that now uses the surface streets of Los Gatos to access Hwy 17 will disappear.

Yours truly,

John Swikart
Los Gatos Garden Inn
46 E. Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95030
USA
Ph# 408-354-6446
Fax# 408-354-5911
Toll-free# 866-868-8383
I am a resident in the Santa Cruz Mtns in the Lexington Hills neighborhood of Los Gatos. Recently I have seen signs that "beach traffic" will get tickets. On the weekends I usually go to get my mail, grocery shop, run errands, farmer's market, etc in town. My concern is that us Los Gatos mountain residents might get citations for doing things in town, when we are just trying to get home-since using that on ramp near the post office is so convenient!

I would hope that you would consider the mountain residents in your decision. I would fight any ticket I might receive since I am doing business in town and am a resident.

Thank you,

Resident on Locust Drive, Los Gatos, CA
Hi. I read in the Merc your comment about blocked intersections and how our cops are good at writing tickets. We live by the Office Depot and my daughter works at Walgreens. I know how to get her there while avoiding the backups. However, in using Andrews Street to cross Santa Cruz, I keep coming upon cars getting "stuck" in the intersection, making it impossible to cross. Today I had one lady stick her tongue out at me when I honked.

Any chance of getting officers there? They will have a field day writing tickets.

Thanks.

Jan Olsen
Lester Lane
Dear Mayor Jensen,

In the article put out today on NBC Bay Area News (http://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/Los-Gatos-Waze-App-Snarls-Traffic-320305411.html), you are quoted as saying:

"...has advised that drivers stay on Highway 17 or use alternate routes such as Highways 85 or 101 to Highway 152 to travel to the coast."

Seriously? 152? It is two lanes, one east, one west. I do not know if you have travelled on 152 lately, but there many homes on that road, a very large theme park, a golf course, two county parks, and two major construction projects that control traffic on 152 with stoplights because the road narrows to one lane in both directions at those points. There are no spots for vehicles to pull off if there is emergency traffic (i.e.: fire, police, ambulance) and it a very highly travelled highway as it is. Whereas, Highway 17 goes from 8 lanes, to 6 lanes, to 4 lanes in both directions (two east, two west).

Sending traffic across 152 is not only laughable, it is not feasible. You are asking tourists and visitors from Silicon Valley to go more than an hour or more out of their way to reach Santa Cruz. It makes no sense to travel down 101 just to travel back up Highway 1.

You also state:

"...and that Los Gatos should be their first choice for a post-beach stop to enjoy dinner, music, or a stroll through Town on their way home."

And:

"Starting this weekend, Los Gatos police will direct traffic and extra signs will point drivers toward the freeway, away from the downtown area."

Essentially, what you are saying is that unless you live in Los Gatos, you don't belong there. That you would rather not have tourists or visitors come to your town to spend their hard earned money. Wait, you do want that, just not if it inconveniences your community.

This is an affront to every other community that handles traffic to the Central Coast. If you do not want revenue from 'outsiders,' say so. We will gladly take up your share of the pie.
Los Gatos is not a community of and by itself, it belongs to anyone who wants or cares to pass through the downtown, no matter what their business is. All roads are for free travel of the populace and not subject to a mayor's whim or fancy.

I feel have strongly discredited yourself and the office of the Mayor of Los Gatos by your words. You imply that foreign revenue, and by foreign I mean any revenue not generated by locals, is not wanted by the town of Los Gatos.

Shame, Mrs. Mayor, shame...

Sincerely,

Michael Gaither
A Resident of Gilroy Who Lives Off of Highway 152
From: Crystal Glasgow <crystal.glasgow@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 30, 2015 10:56 PM
To: Council; Police
Subject: Traffic Congestion Trapping Residents and Causing Safety Concerns

Dear Town Council and Chief of Police,

I started the conversation about Santa Cruz tourist traffic congestion on www.nextdoor.com. Many Los Gatos residents responded by contributing potential solutions, ideas, and opinions. I'm sending this along to you in hopes that these ideas may lead to the right solution. We, the town of Los Gatos, are sick and tired of being trapped in our homes on the weekends and worried that medical emergency services will not be able to make it to the people that need it.

We would like to know what you are doing to address this problem, and we can do to help.

If we don't see improvement, we would like to take action on this issue somehow (engaging with CalTrans or news channels), with or without your support.

Thank you,

Crystal Glasgow and Jeffrey Thomas, 25-year residents
39C Reservoir Road
408-348-8541

-----------Nextdoor.com posts are below-----------

**Santa Cruz traffic nightmare**

Crystal Glasgow from Los Gatos Main

I live on Reservoir and dread leaving the house to run errands on the weekends because I can't get back home. Does anyone else have this problem? Los Gatos Blvd, Main, University, and Santa Cruz avenue are grid locked most of the day. One time I had to park at Vasona and walk home, returning for my car at dusk. Are the police doing anything about this?

Shared with Los Gatos Main in Crime & Safety

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Chris Bevis from Los Gatos Main

I live on College and have been having this problem almost every weekend. It took me 30 minutes to get to fro the HS to the corner of College and Pageant yesterday. When he had to whole Ditto's Lane kerfuffle, the town staff assures us there was no traffic problem at College and Main.
Sandy Vaurs from Los Gatos Main 4d ago
I went to a meeting of the Parking and Transportation Commission about 2 weeks ago and spoke about this problem. Two members of the LGPD were there too. All agreed that this is a big problem and are supposed to be working on it. I stressed that it is a public safety issue as fire and medical help will be unattainable. I called the PD yesterday to complain about the street traffic and was told that "there is nothing that we can do." Judy Peterson wrote a hopeful article in the LGWT, but I am not so hopeful that our town representatives are doing all they can to solve this.

Andrew Joos from Los Gatos Main 4d ago
Same issue on Tait, Massol, and even Wilder. People trying to take short cuts to 17. Not only are they cutting through neighborhoods they are also rolling through stop signs and speeding down side streets.

Karen Kurtz from Los Gatos Main 4d ago
And, Broadway is terrible. I have to plan on staying home on the weekends as I can’t get back home. This needs some immediate attention for safety if nothing else!

Scott Hatten from Los Gatos Main 4d ago
I recently moved here from Santa Cruz and I can tell you that all these folks clogging up Los Gatos eventually make it to Santa Cruz to clog up the roads there. Basically, there are now more people living in the region than the roads can handle. I’ve been watching the growth for over 50 years and it simply boggles the mind.

Crystal Glasgow from Los Gatos Main 4d ago
Wow everyone thanks for your thoughts. I’m considering taking some sort of action but unsure what at the moment. You’ve given me some ideas.

Barbara Dalessis from Los Gatos Main 4d ago
I agree that traffic has become a major issue especially on the weekends when Hwy 17 south is crawling along. I think drivers are using apps like "Waze Social GPS Maps & Traffic" or Google maps to see how to get around the 17 backups.

Yesterday as I was coming into town to go home off of 17 northbound. I turned left on Main and noticed the traffic coming south down Massol and then turning right at Main to go up Broadway and over to 17 south to enter the freeway at the Wood Rd location. I’ve never seen traffic waiting to go up Broadway to avoid the southbound traffic on Santa Cruz Avenue.

I think it would help to close the southbound entrance to Hwy 17 near Wood Rd. Allow northbound traffic to exit at Wood Rd, but not southbound to enter the freeway there. Might keep the drivers from detouring through the Los Gatos residential streets to avoid the southbound 17 traffic.

I have to think about Hwy 17 traffic all the times I know 17 is usually backup . . . weekends and weekday evenings. Otherwise it can take me a long time to get around town. I try to walk as much as I can.

Nancy Freitas from Los Gatos Main 4d ago
I am beyond frustrated and so tired of this as well. I live on Kimble. I can’t run errands outside LG on weekends because I can’t get back home without waiting in MAJOR traffic. Even on weekdays I plan drive times from 10am – 2pm. This is crazy! I am about to get a sign made and post at the exits to LG that say "STOP!!! Going thru town will NOT save time!!!" They need to close the 17 on ramp at the Toll House! PLEASE email CalTrans since it seems they are the ones that have the most power based on the posting thread on July 3rd by Fabian Okonski. He was venting too. Here is the link:
http://www.dot.ca.gov/pioform.html
Angela Doerner from Los Gatos Main4d ago

@Barbara had it right. Within Town jurisdiction, close Santa Cruz Ave on-ramp but leave Hwy 17 off-ramp open. At least Sat/Sun. Communications to drivers would be the most difficult thing to do - which really isn't so difficult, is it? Using all medias (archaic and net), signs starting at 17/85 and definitive notices to Waze, etc. Let people get upset at Waze, et al if they don't update their apps.

Adam Herbel from Los Gatos Main4d ago

Tired of traffic posts. Everyone knows it's an issue. Go to a meeting. Town councils don't consider NextDoor posts.

Nancy Freitas from Los Gatos Main4d ago

Hi Adam, Town is NOT going to give US suggestions or options. We, as a community need to do that and demand action based on what everyone is saying. Hearing all the different opinions and suggestions that others have and are posting is a good start. Seeing all the frustration is an eye opener. If we only saw a few people posting about the traffic no one would think there was an issue. I for one will print all the postings about the traffic and then take THAT to a town meeting so they can see how frustrated a LOT of people are. ;)

Chris Bevis from Los Gatos Main4d ago

I guess I agree with both posts. Next Door posts will not do anything, but they can galvanize action.

Can I suggest we get an item on the council agenda to discuss traffic in the College and Main corridor as well as enforcement of traffic laws (speed on college, illegal truck parking, etc.)?

Angela Doerner from Los Gatos Main4d ago

Our Town Council sessions start again on Tuesday August 4th - 7:00in the Council Chambers at Civic Center. Every 1st and 3rd Tues of the month. At the beginning of each meeting there is a section for Verbal Communications where anyone can speak on anything for max 3mins. Also email is Council@LosGatosCA.gov.

Leesa Gidaro from Los Gatos Main4d ago

College and Main are not the only issues - this problem and traffic delays reach from downtown all the way down Winchester to 85 - and Netflix hasn't even opened its campus yet!

While the majority of Los Gatans (who voiced opinions in letters to the editor and by ballot votes as well) are pro growth - we now get the opportunity to experience the repercussions of our decisions, and it will only get worse as new families move into completed developments and more development continues. At this point all we can do is propose solutions for our entire community before the next agenda item becomes changing our name from The Town of Los Gatos to the City of Los Gatos :-)

Alan Kessler from Los Gatos Main4d ago

How about restarting the railroad which use to run from LG to Santa Cruz? I believe at least some of the tunnels still exist. Seems at first blush that would be a better long term solution. The ability of the police to alter traffic congestion seems limited. Less people in cars would certainly help. Plus, what fun it would be to sit back and ride the railroad back and forth to the beach. Any takers to this idea?

Suzanne Cochran from Los Gatos Main4d ago

Great ideas and agree with issues! The comments need to be emailed to all of town council, along with verbal input at meetings. One of the town engineers is looking into the issue of Hwy 17 traffic cutting through as mentioned in recent LG Weekly paper. I agree with traffic and the impact on quality of life. The more feedback to town decision makers the better.
Is it possible to get some kind of very visible sticker that says you live in town and have full access to all the streets on the weekends, but if you don't have the sticker, you don't? Sort of like a parking permit? I don't know how visitors would get in, with a temporary pass? Shopping passes? Is this too complicated? Parking works this way in many cities.

Scott Brown from Los Gatos Main3 days ago

I'm pretty sure the issue isn't people who want to park and spend time and money in downtown, it's people trying to do an end run around SC traffic on 17. Trying to enforce a "no driving through" zone with permits would be unworkable, and turning downtown into a gated community wouldn't be good for the businesses there.

Closing the downtown ramp into 17 southbound would do something. It would probably intensify the problem north of highway 9 though; a lot of the people cutting through downtown would still try to skirt 17 traffic from Hamilton or Camden to 9.

If the traffic apps accurately report the speeds, they'll drive offloaded traffic on the surface streets as long as they're moving at least as fast as the highway. Not sure how many people they're driving, and how many just think it will be faster then get stuck with no better option than to forge through.

Close both the highway 9 and downtown ramps at peak times and, in addition to probably running into major state level issues (there might be good reasons the state doesn't want localities manipulating access to state highways for their local "benefit", even if it's really to remove a serious detriment) you just concentrate the issues above them.

All that said, I do think it's worth looking at closing the downtown access.

sharyn Melnick from Los Gatos Main3 days ago

Hi the town said to contact the Hwy patrol. They should closed the on ramp to 17 by the post office on weekends. It is a tremendous problem.

Barnaby James from Los Gatos Main3 days ago

In the short term, maybe the town could more aggressively ticket motorists for clogging intersections, running stop signs and speeding through side streets to make it a less attractive option? I feel like the time frame (weekend mornings with nice weather) and the problem locations are pretty well known - and I suspect town residents would be happy to help the police by letting them know when they see problems.

Lois Morrison-Keffer from Los Gatos Main3 days ago

Closing the downtown ramp would intensity the problem north of route 9. You can't get anywhere on those surface streets already.

Andrew Chessin from Los Gatos Main3 days ago

I'm a runner so I spent some time Saturday running around Los Gatos (since driving wasn't an option). Here's what I observed: Impatient drivers from all over the Bay Area are getting off 17 at Camden and taking Los Gatos Blvd to E. Main St. trying to reenter 17. They're also getting off at Lark and taking N. Santa Cruz and University. Route 9 from Quito Road to N. Santa Cruz is also a problem. This is is shutting down our Town and frustrating our merchants. We live off College Avenue and have essentially been trapped on the weekend for the last 2+ months. Not only is this inconvenient but it's a safety issue should there be a fire, etc. They need to close the Los Gatos N. Santa Cruz 17 exit during weekends (and maybe Route 9 too). This doesn't completely solve the problem because they'll just reenter 17 at Route 9 but at least our downtown will be accessible. This is a serious problem, and the Town of Los Gatos must act quickly to solve it.

Dan Snyder from Los Gatos Main3 days ago
Essentially, we just need to close 17. Or demand the state expend $800 million to widen it.

At least permanently closing the 17 on ramp will stop 1/2 the traffic mess.

Lois Morrison-Keffer from Los Gatos Main 3d ago

Not really. Most people run errands north of rt. 9, and have to get back home somehow.

Sue Ann Loriq from Los Gatos Main 3d ago

Public transportation -- rail or bus -- would help.

Scott Hatten from Los Gatos Main 3d ago

Other towns have had to deal with traffic congestion and remedies have been implemented to varying degrees of success.
See: http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm33.htm

Description
Vehicle Restrictions include various regulatory strategies to limit automobile travel at a particular time and place.

- Some cities discourage or prohibit automobile traffic on certain roads at certain times to create pedestrian-oriented commercial area (Car-Free Planning).

- Some cities have Auto-Restricted Zones that limit automobile access, for example, to residents and commercial vehicles. These often have features of Car-Free Planning, Pedestrian Improvements, Traffic Calming and Location Efficient Development.

- Some cities are divided into traffic cells that have direct walking, cycling and transit connections, but require a longer trip to travel between by private automobile.

- Some cities have cordon Road Pricing, where motorists must pay to drive in a certain area as a traffic congestion reduction strategy.

- Road Space Reallocation can increase the portion of road rights-of-way devoted to walking, cycling, HOV, transit and freight transport, giving them Priority over general automobile traffic.

Scott Brown from Los Gatos Main 3d ago

Scott H., one challenge with those kinds of solutions would be the lack of periphery parking for a pedestrian zone and alternative routes for diverting traffic.

Chris Bevis from Los Gatos Main 3d ago

My comment about getting an item on the council agenda was based on the observation ( from far too many council meetings ) that the general verbal communications segment at the beginning of the meeting has no effect on the council discussion and basically is a one-way communication. Getting something on the agenda will also allow verbal communication, but then requires a discussion by council and staff.

Kay Maurer from Los Gatos Main 3d ago

LOCAL TRAFFIC ONLY ON WEEKENDS signs or closing the on ramp to 17 near the post office would head off some of the problem perhaps....but we would need the police to enforce these two things to make them work. Especially for the first couple of weeks. Imagine the frustration of a person taking the short cut and then finding they have to go back and
get on 17 another way... it may increase traffic short term, but work long term. There has to be a way to contact apps to let them know in town roads are closed to thru traffic on weekends as that is when it seems to be the worst.

Kathleen Anderson from Los Gatos Main 3d ago

What would prevent anyone from using other streets - LG Blvd. Winchester, LG Saratoga Hwy 9, University Ave. - to get to the clover leaf exit to Santa Cruz off of LG Saratoga?
We would be diverting the same traffic and causing the same problem.
Wait until the Albright apts. are built and then add on the North 40 businesses and apartments. The Town Council needs to find a solution since this traffic nightmare is not nor will be just a summertime problem. The traffic is horrendous almost any time during the day everyday of the week. It is worst on weekends but unbearable daylight hours 7 days a week.

Kay Maurer from Los Gatos Main 2d ago

complaining does not help, how about coming up with solutions to present to the town?

Kathleen Anderson from Los Gatos Main 2d ago

One solution might be No exits from Santa Cruz Ave. to south bound 17 and the clover leaf exit to Santa Cruz from LG - Saratoga Rd. One could still use the 17 exit into town but would not be able to exit to go to Santa Cruz. Maybe the drivers going to Santa Cruz (etc.) would stay on 17 since there wouldn't be any way to re-enter onto 17 from our town.
Those from the town wanting to go to Santa Cruz would use the Lark Ave. exit. No easy solutions just too many cars.

Dina Grendening from Los Gatos Main 2d ago

Kathleen, I think your solution is the best one yet. That in combination with contacting Waze and other such apps and asking them to stop redirecting people through town. At a minimum, they could at least accurately reflect streets that are already blocked off, like San Benito. People cut from Santa Cruz Ave down San Benito and get pissed it's blocked and race through the stop signs. One dude ran clear through the chain in a jacked up truck. Twice!

I find it ironic that technology is both enabling our economy to boom And causing massive problems/overcrowding. It's proof that technology bites back if you ask me.

sharyn Melnick from Los Gatos Main 1d ago

I Agree

Kay Maurer from Los Gatos Main 1d ago

good idea Kathleen...now how do we get town to try it out?

Kathy Straha from Los Gatos Main 1d ago

I appreciate all of the open discussion of ideas and solutions to this problem. Agreed that it's a significant issue that needs addressing. I'd be in favor of solutions that ease traffic congestion for all, rather than shift the problem from one area to another. Closing 17 southbound at LG Saratoga would create a new headache for those of us who live near LG Saratoga and would appreciate the chance to go to Santa Cruz without backtracking 1 1/2 miles north to get on 17 south at Lark (and sit in an additional 1 1/2 miles of stopped traffic). The population has grown faster than the roads. I'd be in favor of creating alternatives to getting over the hill (such as mass transit options, as have been suggested) as a long term solution. In the near term...maybe some kind of shuttle service?

Lois Morrison-Kefler from Los Gatos Main 1d ago

While it may be a hassle for those of us in town to backtrack to Lark to go to Santa Cruz, the worse problem is how the whole town is badly impacted all weekend if we keep the entrance at LG/Saratoga Rd. open. That impacts everyone.

Brad Clawsie from Los Gatos Main 1d ago
Before residents reach further conclusions regarding the potential for ramp closures, interested parties should contact Caltrans. My guess is they have no intention of even discussing the issue.

Kathleen Anderson from Los Gatos Main 1 day ago

Would it make any impact on Caltrans if the Town Council cited reasons for closing the ramps as health and safety issues - excessive amounts of car exhaust fumes, etc. and safety issues emergency vehicles delayed by excessive traffic etc. I am sure someone with some expertise in these fields could add to the list of reasons why the ramp closures are imperative. I know these may seem silly but we do at least need to try to find a solution or solutions that will help. We will never get everyone on board with any solution but if we could at least help diminish the problem. I think both ramps need to be closed or else we will just be diverting the same traffic to other streets. I know it would be an inconvenience to use Lark Ave. but that would probably impact fewer people. I think the solution has to be one that keeps drivers to Santa Cruz on Hwy. 17.

Dina Glendening from Los Gatos Main 1 day ago

The attitude that driving to Lark is an 'inconvenience' is the same attitude that gets people taking short cuts on side streets. I agree about closing both 9 and downtown on-ramps on weekends, Friday afternoon included.

Dina Glendening from Los Gatos Main 1 day ago

What about metering lights of some kind? Just a thought. Maybe it would deter detours to side streets if traffic was slowed getting on 17.

Kathleen Anderson from Los Gatos Main 22 hours ago

I think the traffic is horrendous not only on the weekends but also during the week when commuters are trying to get home. Winchester, Santa Cruz Ave. University Ave. Hwy. 9 and LG Blvd. are clogged with commuters during the week and beach traffic on the weekends. I think many people agree on the closure of the two ramps on the weekends but I would like to see them closed permanently. Perhaps during the week closure during the commute hours if that is even possible. I think this would help to eliminate daily commuters from using Los Gatos as a cut through to bypass Hwy 17 backup. I know this is probably (pie in the sky.) thinking but just maybe.........

Not sure on metering lights. Don't really know about traffic calming but it would slow them down. Would it create more of a backup on the streets?

I hope we can all put our heads together to find a solution to this traffic problem. It is our town, and it is being negatively impacted by traffic. Our quality of life and safety are at stake.

We need to have possible solutions and work with the Town. They in turn, I assume would work with Caltrans.
Dear Les and Laurel,

Thank you for sharing the press release regarding cut-through traffic with us on Nextdoor. I’m glad to see that the town has stepped up efforts to *immediately* deal with this problem. The silence from town officials was very troubling.

I hope that Fridays are included in any weekend measures as Friday afternoon/evenings are among the worst times for this traffic.

I have some video of traffic cutting through on Tait Ave on July 3 should that be of use. The video was when I was trying to get to a 2:30 pm (not rush hour!) hair appointment with a local business. I could not get to my appointment in time due to the traffic and — after parking and walking to the salon— had to reschedule! The business owner literally lost money due to the traffic.

I applaud the town’s actions in this area and encourage you to keep working to find permanent solution—signs, traffic calming measures such as traffic islands, speed bumps, walking malls. Though I’m sure there are many complexities and trade-offs, I personally think that the I-17 entrance downtown should be managed to be open only to local traffic. In other words, there should be no direct way to get to that entrance via Santa Cruz Ave. by using one way streets.

Best Regards,
Jessica Richter
101 Hilow Ct.
From: Kathy Kroesche <kathy.kroesche111@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 30, 2015 3:35 PM
To: Council
Subject: beach traffic

Dear Town Council,

Thank you for taking measures to alleviate Los Gatos streets from cut through beach traffic. I saw your press release posted on Nextdoor Neighbor. I was reminded of a Nextdoor conversation on this same subject starting July 2014 (https://kennedynorth.nextdoor.com/news_feed/?post=5831609).

Here is what I wrote on 8/6/14 and still believe would benefit Los Gatos.

I am so thankful for this flow of positive ideas for alleviating cut through traffic. We just returned from two months in Europe so we missed the congestion, but I want to share some ideas from our experience. Similar to Don's idea about a timed fee, Bellagio on Lake Como electronically charges about $90 to non-residents or those without a pass to drive through town between 11am and 4pm (or something like that). Having a system like this for the heaviest beach traffic times might help Los Gatos. There could be multiple meter locations so that those who stop over in Los Gatos for more than 2 hours don't pay the fee (to benefit those who shop or visit friends in LG). All LG employees and residents would have an annual pass or registered license plate.

The other idea that I've shared before is to improve bike routes and encourage cycling. I cycle to work in Saratoga and around LG for errands and outings whenever I can. It's refreshing and relaxing to be outdoors, get exercise, and help the environment. I know this isn’t possible for everyone and some days are just too hot or wet, but if places like rainy Portland and all the towns and cities I visited in Europe this summer can have a strong biking culture, it must be possible in sunny, beautiful Los Gatos.

Take care,

Kathy Kroesche

Call 408-436-2103
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