

Community Engagement Series #1

Summary: Vision for the Future

City of Atascadero 2045 General Plan Update – July 25, 2023

Introduction

The project team hosted a series of community engagement activities to solicit ideas on a vision for Atascadero's future and feedback on challenges and emerging opportunities that will help inform the next phase of the General Plan Update process: Alternatives. These in-person and interactive events provided community members the opportunity to:

- Learn about the importance of the General Plan
- Learn about the major findings from the existing conditions analysis
- Discuss a future vision for Atascadero
- Discuss what they like about Atascadero and what they would improve or change in the future
- Review and provide feedback on existing challenges and emerging opportunities
- Identify ways they can stay actively involved in the project

Community Engagement Series #1 activities included:

- Pop-Up events
- Community Open House with multiple targeted group discussions
- Existing Conditions Atlas survey

Pop-Up Events Overview

The project team hosted two Pop-Up events on August 20, 2022: one the Mid-State Cruisers Car Show at Atascadero Lake (10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.) and another at Dancin' in the Streets at City Hall (5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.). The purpose of the events was to: 1) inform the community about the project; 2) gather community input to inform project direction through an interactive, visual exercise; and 3) provide next steps and how the community can remain engaged. The Pop-Ups were designed to be interactive and provided various ways for participants to share input and learn more about the General Plan Update project.

Each Pop-Up included three posters. Two posters were informational, including an enlarged version of the Fact Sheet and a poster detailing the General Plan key topics of Land Use, Open Space, Conservation, Transportation, Housing, Safety, and Noise. The third poster was an interactive *Map Your Thoughts* sticker poster that asked participants to indicate on a city map what they love about Atascadero and what big ideas they have for improvements and opportunities in the city. A larger land use map was also displayed for participants to reference when sharing their ideas and concerns. If participant comments were not map-based, they were encouraged to write their comment on a comment card and the project team displayed it at the Pop-Up.

Community members who visited the Pop-Ups were provided with a copy of a fact sheet and promotional materials, including drink coasters and fortune cookies branded with the project website. Community members were encouraged to sign up to receive email updates related to the General Plan Update process and future opportunities to share input.

Overall, an estimated 40+ community members visited the Pop-Ups.



Open House Overview


During a two-day period on January 24 and January 25, 2023, several Open House sessions were hosted in the City Hall downstairs lobby. The Open Houses provided the community an opportunity to learn about the project and provide feedback on a vision, existing challenges, and future opportunities. The Open House had six stations organized by topic that matched the content of the Existing Conditions Atlas:

- Station 1: Community Character
- Station 2: Economic and Fiscal Health
- Station 3: Transportation and Mobility
- Station 4: Infrastructure
- Station 5: Safety and Resiliency
- Station 6: Recreation and Natural Spaces

Additionally, poster stations encouraged community members to share their vision for the future of Atascadero and to indicate on a map where they live, work, and play.

PROMOTION

The Open House sessions were scheduled at two-hour increments, and targeted outreach was conducted through emails and telephone calls by the project team for the various groups (see table below). Tailored invites were designed for each Open House session and were shared directly via email. Invites for the larger Community Open House session were promoted via City email lists and social media platforms.



Atascadero
OUR CITY. OUR PLAN

The future of Atascadero is about YOU!

Join City staff at an Open House to learn more about the General Plan update and to share your ideas.

WHEN: Wednesday, January 25, 2023
stop by anytime between 3-7 pm

WHERE: City Hall Lobby,
6500 Palma Avenue

For more information, visit www.atascadero2045.org

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In addition to community members who were informed of the Open House ahead of time, signage was placed in front of City Hall to encourage passers-by to join the Open House discussion. This included community members taking an afternoon or evening walk or visitors of the Wednesday Farmers' Market.

AUDIENCES

The Open House schedule and audiences are included in the table below.

Focus Audience	Date	Time	Key Contacts
CBOs and Community Groups	Tues. Jan. 24, 2023	12:00 PM to 2:00 PM	CBOs, Nonprofits, Churches
Downtown Merchants	Tues. Jan. 24, 2023	2:00 PM to 4:00 PM	Chamber of Commerce contacts
Youth Night	Tues. Jan. 24, 2023	4:00 to 6:00 PM	High School Teachers
Latino/a community	Tues. Jan. 24, 2023	6:00 PM to 8:00 PM	Spanish Speaking Contacts, Latino Business Owners

Focus Audience	Date	Time	Key Contacts
City Staff	Wed. Jan. 25, 2023	9:00 AM to 11:00 AM	Staff Email
Business Community	Wed. Jan. 25, 2023	11:00 AM to 1:00 PM	Chamber of Commerce contacts, City mailing list
Flexible Time	Wed. Jan. 25, 2023	1:00 PM to 3:00 PM	General Public
Open House	Wed. Jan. 25, 2023	3:00 PM to 7:00 PM	General Public

OPEN HOUSE STRUCTURE

Upon arrival, community members were welcomed to the Open House by members of the project team, provided an overview of the General Plan Update and flow of the Open House, and provided sticky notes and a Comment Card that they could use to write comments and feedback. Participants were encouraged to review the content of each station at their own pace and to ask the project team questions. Project team members were spread throughout the Open House to facilitate one-on-one discussions, answer questions, and welcome visitors to the Open House. During each of the sessions, participants were also encouraged to join a larger group discussion facilitated by a member of the project team. This provided an opportunity for participants to ask questions and hear from each other. The project team was diligent in documenting verbal comments from one-on-one discussions and large group discussions.

Across all Open House sessions, an estimated 80+ community members attended and shared their comments.



Existing Conditions Atlas Survey Overview

Following the Open House, the Existing Conditions Atlas was uploaded to an online commenting platform to provide community members the opportunity to share additional feedback and respond to the questions outlined in the Atlas, including:

1. Should new housing be focused on the sizes and price points that are affordable to our current and future workforce, even if that could mean higher densities?
2. Should new mixed-use and commercial development be focused at key “nodes” to create more walkable/bikeable areas and attract new employment generating businesses, even if that could mean greater building heights? If so, where should those nodes be located?
3. Given Atascadero’s jobs-housing imbalance, do you feel there should be a focus on adding more revenue- and employment-generating businesses?
4. Is nearby access, including walking and wheeling, to shopping important, or is it okay for housing to be separated from commercial uses?
5. Currently, what are your biggest challenges to moving around Atascadero efficiently and safely?
6. What specific improvements could be made to make it easier and more enjoyable to get around (e.g., intersection improvements, better transit connections, additional bicycle lanes, new sidewalk connections, etc.)?
7. What are Atascadero’s biggest infrastructure challenges?
8. What, if any, infrastructure improvements would you like to see in your neighborhood? (Please identify your neighborhood)
9. Which hazards or safety issues concern you the most?
10. What actions should the City prioritize when planning for community safety and resilience?
11. Where do you see opportunities to increase access to parks, open space areas, and trails?

The survey was live from February 9th to May 4th, 2023. The survey was promoted through the City’s social media channels and email contact lists. Nine (9) comments were received on the survey and are documented on pages 32-33 of this summary.

The instructions for the survey are included on the following page.

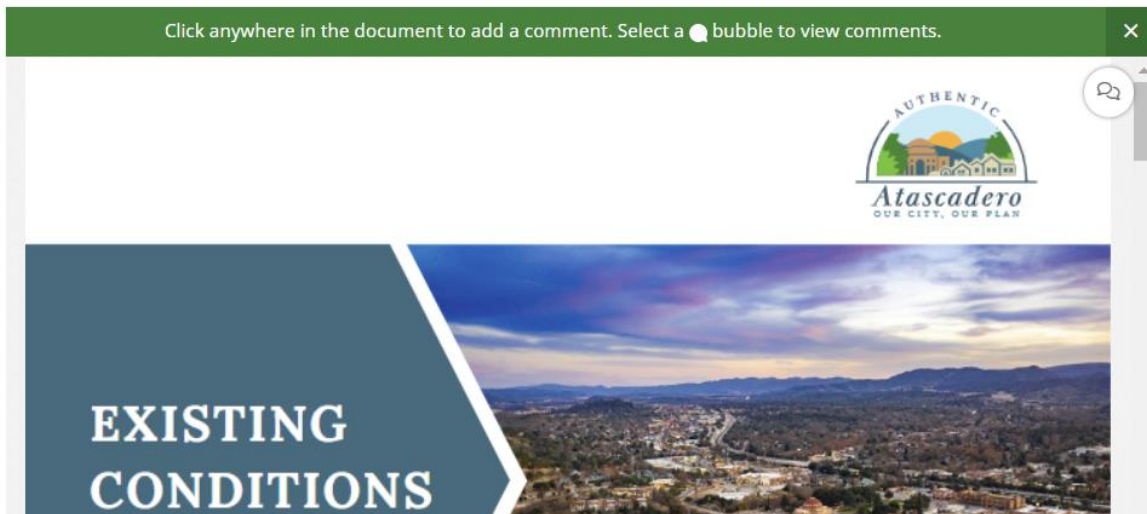
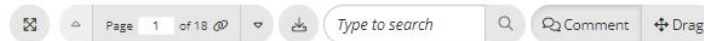
Existing Conditions Atlas (January 2023)

We want to hear your ideas! Please add your comments and feedback to the document below.



The City of Atascadero is starting a process to update its General Plan Update -- a document that guides how Atascadero will grow and change over the next 20+ years. This phase of the project focuses on identifying current challenges and emerging opportunities in the city. The document below, called an Existing Conditions Atlas, summarizes current conditions in Atascadero and outlines some initial opportunities. It was developed through a combination of background research and discussions with community members (including property owners, business leaders, community organizers, etc.), residents, appointed officials, and the City Council.

Using the comment tool, we want to hear your priorities, concerns, and questions regarding challenges and opportunities facing the city. You can place a comment anywhere on the document. There are also a series of questions (in blue boxes) to get you thinking about the different challenges/opportunities and potential tradeoffs.



Summary of Major Themes

Major themes addressed by community members in their comments made during outreach activities are summarized below by topic. Within each topic, themes are listed in the approximate order of the frequency mentioned.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- **Increase Amount and Variety of Affordable Housing.** Provide a greater mix of housing types including smaller lots/houses, apartments, developments, and allowance for more ADUs, with greater density/mixed use; for all income levels, geared toward Atascadero residents to improve jobs/housing balance, including more affordable housing and homes for first-time buyers.
 - **Family-Friendly Housing.** More housing appropriate to families, with sidewalks and/or located near neighborhood walking trails providing access to recreation (also see theme of preserving Atascadero's family-friendly character below).
 - **Senior-Friendly Housing and Amenities.** Prioritize affordable senior housing and land use discussion with seniors and senior center.
- **Increase/Improve Local Shopping, Food/Dining, and Entertainment Options.** Encourage more diverse retail, downtown and throughout the City, particularly local or chain businesses catering to general daily basic needs (currently requires traveling outside City) and grocery stores in areas of the city that lack them; redevelop unused retail locations; more and more diverse and affordable restaurants offering healthy options, outdoor dining; more dining/entertainment options that are family-friendly (i.e., don't revolve around alcohol sales).
- **Changes in Land Use and Development of Neighborhoods/Nodes.** Commenters provided a wide variety of suggestions for re-classification of land use and other strategies to revitalize and support the development and definition of neighborhood centers/nodes. These include but are not limited to: more mixed use and filling in gaps on El Camino Real (ECR) and downtown; creation of activity nodes with specific business/service types or with greater mixed use, green space and pedestrian accessibility ("La Plaza" cited as an example); creating connections through extending nodes; alternate or combine residential, commercial, and mixed uses; considering different height limits and setbacks to improve lighting; allowing smaller lots and/or lot splits and greater density, etc.
- **Consistent Design Standards and Community Identity.** Apply consistent and appropriate design standards in development and redevelopment (but balance to avoid limiting development); brand Atascadero to stand out from neighboring cities and preserve character by honoring traditional/community design identity; update existing businesses for a fresh look; create distinctive branding for different zones; make ECR more attractive by continuing the planted median beyond downtown; signage for wayfinding and to designate City locations; more public art.

- **Address Homelessness.** Commenters stated concerns about the increase in Atascadero’s homeless/unhoused population and the impact on safety, particularly downtown; suggestions for addressing include providing services and amenities throughout the City, financial assistance and employment opportunities, and more transitional or alternate housing options including formalizing mobile tiny homes/building tiny home parks with hookups.
- **Preserve Atascadero’s Authentic, Family-Friendly Character.** Prioritize childcare and early education with additional incentives; provide more opportunities for youth and for businesses that support the health of local youth; consider the importance of location of schools. Encourage resident and community diversity and increase inclusion (affordable housing will help support this).

ECONOMIC AND FISCAL HEALTH

- **Encourage Development, New Business and Revitalization.** Invest in providing opportunity zones, incentives, and/or lower impact fees to encourage development and redevelopment, new business, and revitalization. Specific areas specified to incentivize include both businesses along ECR and those challenged by not being located on ECR, downtown, Sunken Gardens, and along creeks and rivers. Provide supportive infrastructure and amenities (e.g., signage and wayfinding, electrical/water hookups for a farmers’ market).
- **Retail, Restaurants, Events and Marketing to Draw Visitors.** Encourage and incentivize businesses to attract visitors and keep residents in town, including those that appeal to specific age ranges such as youth. Invest in opportunities to provide more community events, draw visitors, and help promote local businesses through redevelopment of vacant or underutilized properties such as the Printery as community event/concert venues; create and market more events and festivals in these venues and parks; invest in/promote family entertainment options such as the Zoo, River Center, or a regional family entertainment center; consider creating a Visitors Bureau or Economic Development Task Force.
 - **Enhancement of open space/recreational opportunities** also presents an economic opportunity for tourism; see Recreation and Open Space for more detail.
- **Create Jobs and Services to Support Households.** Support residents in returning to/staying in the city by incentivizing and attracting employers offering “head-of-household” careers with competitive salaries, including technical/computer science jobs; make these jobs accessible by public transit or active transportation (walking/biking); provide sufficient childcare. Explore options for encouraging and supporting in-home childcare businesses that support employed residents and provide economic opportunities for childcare professionals.
- **Combining Housing and Commercial Development.** Various opinions were expressed as to whether and how to combine, alternate or separate residential, commercial, and/or mixed use, and where to locate commercial development, such as

at freeway exits, filling in gaps on El Camino, or along waterways. It is important to ensure accessibility through active transportation and/or public transit.

MOBILITY

- **Increase Connectivity for Pedestrians/Bicyclists.** Increase connectivity through bike lanes and walking/biking paths and sidewalks, throughout the city, particularly around commercial nodes, schools, and waterways (e.g., over- and under-passes across Highway 101, bike path all along the Salinas River, pedestrian-only promenade as Entrada to downtown). Also provide amenities to encourage active modes (e.g., bike rentals available downtown, charging stations for e-bikes). Add accessibility features such as sidewalks where there are none and make existing sidewalks more accessible.
- **Improve Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety, Crossings, and Circulation.** Improving bike/pedestrian safety, road crossings, and circulation is crucial, particularly downtown, across ECR, and around schools (congestion/idling cars an issue at drop-off and pick-off times); add sidewalks where there are none and improve safety and accessibility of existing sidewalks.
- **Traffic Safety Improvements.** Suggestions include improved lighting and signals, (e.g., freeway on- and off-ramps); traffic calming (especially on ECR); mirrors on blind corners; divider strips with plantings all along ECR; and improving road and freeway mobility by eliminating pinch points at freeway entrances (which would also help address fire safety by increasing ability for timely evacuation). See detailed comments for a variety of specified locations.
- **Road Improvement and Maintenance.** Many roads were built to low standards and/or require repair and better maintenance (see detailed comments for a variety of specified locations), which will also help improve business and support economic health; suggestions include developing road districts for timely repair and soliciting community comment on the draft SLOCOG Regional Transportation Plan.
 - **Issues With Non-City Maintained Roads.** These include: the need to clarify which roads are city-maintained and which are not; notifying homebuyers of the maintenance status of their street; and considering options for revisiting maintenance of these roads (e.g., consider use of F14 or other funds to incorporate, repave).
- **Increase Parking.** Make more parking available, especially downtown and near businesses; enforce parking laws, particularly disabled parking and time limits. This will also support improved economic and fiscal health.
- **Provide More Public Transit Options.** Provide Atascadero-centered public transit making connections throughout the city; suggestions include electric/self-driving trolleys on ECR and bus routes serving outlying areas.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Water Supply:** Recommendations for capturing, managing, and finding opportunities for using stormwater and rainwater; suggestions that groundwater/aquifers be fed and improved by various methods. There were also several comments regarding the need to repair, maintain and improve infrastructure to prevent flooding (e.g., storm drains, curbs) (also addressed under Safety and Resiliency).
- **Wastewater:** Identify efficient and cost-effective ways to prioritize sewer connections within the Urban Service Line (USL) and treat wastewater at reclaimed water standards.
- **High Speed Internet/Technological Infrastructure:** Improvement of tech infrastructure/municipal network and plan including broadband/wi-fi access, multiple providers.
- **Improvements to Power Supply:** Various improvements to City power supply proposed; most common was provision of solar power for City facilities through a solar farm with battery storage; also undergrounding of electric power, providing an alternate source of electricity beyond PG&E, and allowance for off-grid units.
- **Infrastructure Improvements and Maintenance:** Various improvements to and increased maintenance of infrastructure, including removing old structures and reconstructing/improving (e.g., Atascadero Creek, Atascadero Lake); better maintain current infrastructure; require developers to install street trees.

SAFETY AND RESILIENCY

- **Improve Infrastructure to Avoid Flooding:** Concerns about flooding at low points in road; fixing and maintain infrastructure to help deal with/prevent flooding (e.g., unclogging drainage/gutters, litter cleanup after storms, including curbs on streets, requiring creek setbacks)
- **Public Safety Planning, Staffing, and Facilities:** Expedite new public safety facility/training center, possibly sited at Printery building; while waiting for new center improve conditions at current facilities (i.e., fire station); increase public safety staffing, possibly with volunteers; need for strategic planning in fire department, with improvements including increase in fire stations using data/studies for accurate siting, and decreasing fire response times to cover disproportionate increase in service calls.
- **Improvements in Fire Safety:** Issues including challenges in getting or retaining fire insurance; need to increase options for timely evacuation (improving road connections and egress – also addressed under Mobility); and suggestions to require permits for or ban backyard fires, especially in Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas.
- **Climate Change/Environmental Issues:** Address safety issues due to climate change or environmental conditions (e.g., discourage building in former wetlands due to seismic danger – also addressed under Recreation and Open Space)

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACES

- **Increase Walking/Biking Trails.** Recommendations to create more walking and biking lanes and trails and make connections between existing trails, parks, and open spaces and throughout the city. A variety of specific locations were cited; most frequently mentioned was the need for a paved one-way road or loop trail around Atascadero Lake, with a need to consider ADA accessibility.
- **Increase or Improve and Maintain Parks and Open Space.** Acquire and create more parks and open space, including multi-use parks. Extend or incorporate into open space and/or revitalize locations such as Atascadero Lake, Eagle Lake, Three Bridge Oak Preserve, Paloma Creek, among others. Improve existing parks with better lighting, structures, amenities (e.g., restrooms).
- **Value Rivers as a Community Asset.** Create more community amenities, open space, access points and paths all along creeks and rivers (particularly the Salinas River throughout town) with amenities (tables/benches, places to recreate) to make them safer and more enjoyable. Maintain regular stream/creek cleanups. Create a river center for research (Cal Poly/Cuesta students/professors) and education.
 - **Parks and Open Space as Economic Opportunity.** As also addressed under Economic and Fiscal Health, creating more attractions, open spaces, increasing and improving parks, river-related features and recreational options and events promoting their use will help create jobs, draw visitors interested in nature and ecotourism.
- **Protect and Preserve Native Flora, Fauna and Habitat.** Plant more trees in the city (also addressed under Infrastructure); regenerate/protect native wildlife, habitat, and plants, specifically beavers and native oaks (e.g., extending Three Bridges Oak Preserve)
- **Provide More Outdoor Recreational Facilities and Activities.** The need for one or more new community swimming pools was most frequently specified, but commenters also called for roller- or ice-skating rinks, a bowling alley, multi-purpose sports fields or courts with organized leagues, additional water features, laser tag, Go Karts, putt-putt golf, zip-lining, and an RV campsite.
 - **Provide Family-Inclusive and Age-Specific Activities.** Provide activities that are inclusive of all ages – youth, adults, and seniors in proximity to each other and in locations throughout the city. This includes after-school and summer activities/opportunities for youth (with some specific programs recommended to provide programming); as well as caring for playgrounds and connecting, them to trails providing easy hikes and nature walks with educational signage.
 - **Seasonal Events.** Provide more seasonal/summer events such as festivals, movies, or cookoff competitions in the parks, particularly near downtown (Sunken Gardens, Stadium Park). Also addressed as a need to develop event venues under the topic of Economic and Fiscal Health.

- **Improve the Charles Paddock Zoo.** Invest in developing, modernizing, and rebranding/promoting the Zoo as a regional attraction, providing both a family recreation option and an economic/fiscal opportunity.

Pop-Up Events Comments

Pop-Up events comments that were shared with sticky notes or during verbal discussions with project team members are organized below by poster type and topic. The following is a transcription of all participants' comments and ideas, organized by major topic.

OBSERVATIONS FROM PROJECT TEAM

- There is a divide among residents wanting to see Atascadero grow and develop using Paso Robles or San Luis Obispo as a model, versus residents wanting to preserve Atascadero's small-town community feel. Many residents expressed wanting a mix of both.
 - "Atascadero is a gem waiting to be discovered"
 - Sentiment that Atascadero is always 5-10 years behind Paso Robles
- Atascadero's small retail businesses have grown. The team spoke with the owner of Gatherings Thrift on El Camino Real who shared when she first opened her business she was one of the only retailers in the area. Now there are enough retail shops for people to consider shopping in Atascadero. "You didn't used to come to Atascadero on purpose, but now we're starting to have reasons for visitors to choose our City as a destination."
- Atascadero is a retirement destination for people across the state. The team spoke with many residents who moved to Atascadero to retire or have plans to move to Atascadero to retire.
- Visitors to the car show shared that they love visiting Atascadero.
- The team spoke with several residents who moved to Atascadero within the past 1-20 years. Reasons they shared for wanting to move included:
 - Small community – people feel integrated in the community
 - Acreage and housing affordability
 - Less populated, slower paced – no long lines, minimal traffic, no paid parking
 - Safety – there is community trust, people don't feel the need to lock the backdoor at night, reassurance that their children are safe
 - A good place to raise a family
 - If you want to visit bigger cities, you're only about three hours from the Bay Area and Los Angeles

"MAP YOUR THOUGHTS" AND "KEY TOPICS" POSTER COMMENTS

Numbers in parentheses below correspond to stickers on a map of the city.

I love Atascadero because...

- (28) Old look to downtown – pulls tourism

- (1) I like downtown, I like more stores, more restaurants, shops variety
- (2) Widen and paved San Ramon Rd
- (8) Del Rio overpass everything, safety and widening
- (14) Love the newly improved downtown hub → keep that style throughout the city
- Atascadero is a hidden gem, not like Paso or SLO

Land Use

- Transition uses around Sunken Gardens to encourage activation
 - (14) Children's park in downtown, local shops/businesses not offices
 - (65) Food, retail, "Boardwalk", add public restrooms
- (7) Mixed use development on vacant parcels
 - Near El Camino Real, South of El Camino Real Specific Plan
- (16) Light industrial and commercial infill opportunities
- (10) Relocate junior high school – add businesses, retail, residential, etc.
- (3) Job center/new light industry park at junk yard
 - Northeast of downtown area

Economic Development

- Follow Paso Robles example to attract upscale restaurants
- (verbal comments) Desire for a department store in Atascadero, right now residents must go to Paso Robles or SLO to shop
- (verbal comments) Desire for more consistent activation downtown - shops that are affordable for residents, not boutiques, and a greater variety of restaurants

Circulation and Infrastructure

- (18) Repave San Marcos
- (2) Speed bumps on Portola St along Lake Park
- (33) Fix traffic at In-n-Out
- (54) Work on that trail connecting Atascadero → Templeton
- (4) Wayfinding for downtown and arch sign over El Camino Real
- (6) Sidewalks from Atascadero Ave on Curbaril to HWY 101
- (17) Clean up welcome areas/main corridor/underpasses
- Traffic calming on East/West streets (sunset and visibility issues)

Housing

- (56) Well thought out design for residential at Morro/Atascadero Ave
 - Multi-family housing design requirements that prevent secluded, easily accessible spaces that can encourage loitering and undesired activities
- Jobs/housing out whack – impossible for young people
- More mixed use with housing on El Camino (like La Plaza)

- (verbal comment) Concerns that developed multi-family housing (condos, apartments) are being purchased as investment properties and are not available to first-time home buyers

Open Space

- Botanical garden and enlarge Paloma Park to Dove Creek
- (19) Open space connection to Paloma → El Camino Real
- (26) Vista point at San Marcos lookout
- (20) Develop River Parkway with walking bridge across and trails on both sides

Conservation

- (1) Keep our water!
- (32) Litter clean-up under new bridge/creek areas

Safety

- (21) Fire mitigation strategies: defensible spaces, evacuation zoning, water infrastructure, water tanks stainless steel
- Defensible space 100ft mandatory for fire
- “Defensible space” achieved by building codes to prevent combustion from windblown embers
- (verbal comment) Need for an additional fire station as the population grows

Other Comments

- (5) Better promotion for zoo and other activities

“MY BIG IDEA FOR ATASCADERO” COMMENT CARDS

Land Use

- No 60’ structures
- Consolidated commercial, no strip malls
- Keep and promote Lewis’ vision
- Continue Revitalization
- Revitalize Carlton
- Revitalization of closed businesses
- Less dentists in downtown on Sunken Gardens
- No dentists in downtown

Economic Development/Community Events

- More entertainment in downtown – playground, food, shops
- More sit-down restaurants!
- More restaurant variety (2)
- Good restaurants – variety – spread out

- More shopping
- More restaurants with music – casual
- Indian restaurant
- Bowling alley and other attractions
- Costco at the north end of town
- Gas station at El Camino Real and Santa Barbara
- Full service general store
- A Bass Pro or Cabellas!
- Need more nice downtown events, Beer Festivals, Tamale Festival

Circulation and Infrastructure

- Funding to fix poor residential and outlying roads
- Better paved roads
- Fix streetlight by Sylvester's
- Keep parking meters out of Atascadero
- Side roads need work
- Turn the armory into a parking structure
- E-bike company! (let's beat SLO)
- More downtown parking
- Pave Dolores
- Bike paths on Curbaril at HWY 101 and Atascadero Ave
- Downtown traffic is OK – manageable

Housing

- More affordable housing, educate on HUD! (it's not just for poor)
- Affordable housing
- Less VRBOs
- New approaches to addressing homelessness

Open Space

- Having a cleaning group for trash on the highways
- To have it be very clean. I wish we could have cleaning crews
- Vista point at San Marcos above Los Altos

Conservation

- Corn or compostable cups at events
- Secure water versus “false” vineyards coming in from outside in order to secure our (aquifers) water

Safety

- No motorcycles on the De Anza trail!

Other

- Keep downtown family events
- More wellness or free health talks from Naturopath doctors (not pharma, not govt)

- Open the printery for events and performing arts
- More historic tours of City Hall
- Need higher wage jobs for youth of today

“I LOVE ATASCADERO BECAUSE” COMMENT CARDS

- We have a caring community with talented and passionate people
- Murals, small businesses, Lewis’ ideas re: “city beautiful” and self-sufficiency
- It’s safe. It has a lot of great free events. It has a farmers’ market. It has two organic stores.
- Everyone comes together!
- The trees and the weather
- Improving downtown
- New restaurants
- It has a nice library
- Juiceboss!!
- Knowing you can put your chairs along El Camino Real for an event and they’ll be there in the evening
- It’s a small town and there are a lot of kind people
- All of the people are so nice
- The Teen Center, Car Show, the people, the Police and Fire departments
- We take care of each other
- Our downtown is really coming together!
- Of the wonderful zoo and the beautiful lake. Let’s keep the ducks!!
- [picture of Volkswagen bus]
- Tamale Festival
- Small Community, New
- Small community events
- The events and festivals
- Of its authenticity and focus on local residents and businesses
- Of the renewed excitement and energy happening downtown
- The number of businesses who are engaged with the community
- Community!

Open House Comments

Open House comments that were shared with sticky notes, in comment cards, or during verbal discussions with Project Team members are organized below by element type.

VISION FOR ATASCADERO

My vision for Atascadero is...

- A shining piece of the Central Coast with simple yet innovative lifestyle
- Regenerating oaks and habitat, non-drivers have full access to community, resident options to match needs of all income levels
- Tiny home park(s) – legalize tiny homes on wheels
- Economic development, “head-of-household” jobs
- More local business
- More diverse shopping, i.e., Kohls, more affordable for working families (one “agree”)
- Grocery store in south Atascadero
- Food
- More restaurants and shops downtown rather than companies/doctor offices
- A vibrant downtown (one “agree”)
- Vibrant downtown, develop “nodes,” maintain green space
- Municipal wireless network
- Solar farm with battery backup
- Public transportation that’s Atascadero-centered and spread out
- Public parking structure with restrooms
- Crosswalks better downtown
- Make/keep it safer to walk/bike/hang out near schools and parks
- Make Atascadero more attractive – continue median from downtown to Dove Creek
- Vision of a bicycle/hike path, urban center/corridor. Incorporate Atascadero Creek into open space.
- Biking path through town
- Bike path along Salinas River
- More walking paths
- A trail that extends to adjoining cities
- Maintain and save more open space. Protect our oak woodlands and native habitat. (Two “agrees”)
- More “open” space
- Salinas River Center where people can come and learn about our river, watershed health, groundwater recharge, Monterey Bay Marine Sanctuary, beavers, etc. A place Cal Poly and Cuesta students and professors could use , also. A tourist attraction, too!
 - The Zoo could be this and much more with marketing/investing
- Public pool
- Re-open lake wading pool
- City swimming pool

- Bowling alley (one “agree”)
- Priorities: childcare and early education
- A family-focused community that embraces family activities like zoo, putt putt, new arcade, etc. – include active seniors
- More public youth activities
- More youth centered events/service events (one “yes”)
- Lazer tag, festivals, ice skating (notes: “ we want,” “[heart symbol] we like”)
- Summer festival/activities
- Roller skating rink (x2)
- Inclusive and diverse land intentionally attracting diversity to Atascadero
- More mixed use and ADUs
- Affordable housing for everyone! (note: “+ 100”)

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Question 1: Should new housing be focused on the sizes and price points that are affordable to our current and future workforce, even if that could mean higher densities?

Question 2: Should new mixed-use and commercial development be focused at key “nodes” to create more walkable/bikeable areas and attract new employment-generating businesses, even if that could mean greater building heights? If so, where should those nodes be located?

- Totally agree!
- Yes (unspecified) x 2
- Increase in homeless/unhoused population since Prop 47/Prop 57
- Housing for homeless
- I think providing spaces for our unhoused community will help residents feel safer
- Safety of employees and client interacting with homeless
- Homeless issues limit livability
- Disperse services and amenities to address homeless concentration downtown
- Get rid of the street people!
- Address homelessness. Look at tiny homes on city-managed property.
- Legalize tiny homes on wheels. Build parks with hookups to rent space for them
- Financial assistance programs for homeless folks
- Create opportunities to employ homeless
- Adequate services for people experiencing homelessness
- HMLSS taking up a lot of A.F.D.
- Consider transitional housing and more housing options
- Encouraging resident/community diversity
- Yes to both questions. We need affordable housing here; people that live here are invested in improvements, etc. Definitely anything to make the core more user-friendly – walkable, bikeable, etc.

- Multi-generational, resident-centric community, not a tourist show (= authenticity)
- Need to house the next generation – more fun, smaller places, not so costly – in order to attract businesses & jobs
- Yes, a mix of housing is required. Starter homes to mansions. Apartments, smaller lots, we need to stop excluding younger families and people from housing.
- Housing for young people
- Housing with sidewalk for kids, neighborhood walking trails.
- Increase density for people – high-rise and small lots
- Want to see re-development of older properties replaced with higher density
- Housing and jobs geared toward Atascadero residents – help jobs/housing balance
- Housing affordability key
- Smaller lots = more affordability
- More affordable housing
- More affordable housing. High density/mixed use all along El Camino.
- Yes is the short answer but ALL types of housing should be encouraged. Higher density across all zones does that.
- Apartments (not luxury or studio)
- More smaller living units
- A development similar to River Oaks in Paso would be ideal. You have homes for first time buyers, family homes and a senior housing component.
- Prioritize land use discussions with seniors/senior center
- Prioritize discussions with seniors/senior center
- Need affordable senior housing!
- Fastest growing group of people in the USA is the senior adult population – addressing space/housing for this population group is essential to a growing city (3 people noted “agree”)
- Senior housing opportunities – ADUs
- Affordable senior housing, want to age in place – “Full Life City”
- Additional incentives for child care programs to support children and families
- More opportunities for youth – businesses with fun youth opportunities
- Move middle school.
- Location of schools – central to life in Atascadero.
- Move or rid of Fine Arts Academy
- Keep us authentic and family friendly.
- Keep Atascadero authentic
- Draw people to nodes throughout the city
- Like how downtown has evolved over the years.
- Need a local newspaper!
- Honor the history and continue Mediterranean architecture.
- Lot sizes are way too big. The hub and spoke design is outdated. If the roads can handle the traffic, increase the density of the land. IAC mix lot size needs to be changed.
- Every lot that has sewer should be a 1/4 – 1/2 acre max.

- Nodes should be located in the downtown area
- Downtown should be the only node. Retail development is too dispersed. Greater building heights are good.
- Yes and those “nodes” should have HIGH density multi-family housing around those “nodes.” That will result in higher traffic counts and higher population rings around those nodes which makes commercial more viable/desirable. Greater building heights is very important and I fully support it around these nodes 5-6 stories 35-60 units/AC. Curbaril/ECR, 41/ECR, Traffic Way/ECR, San Anselmo/ECR, Del Rio/ECR
- Branding the Zones/districts during alt. phase would be helpful.
- Design standards for each zone. Define character
- Like multi-family housing above and business on first floor like La Plaza.
- La Plaza can serve as an example for what El Camino could be.
- Piazzas in underutilized space between commercial buildings
- City needs more mixed use and medium/high density residential to address housing affordability crisis.
- The “nodes” idea is VERY good!
- Identifying nodes could help define neighborhoods
- Chapters for each node’s vision
- Timing/phasing of zoning changes
- Opportunity zone overlap
- Mix of uses on opportunity sites
- La Plaza is a good example of mixed-use
- Activity “nodes” along ECR, Morro Road/41
- Create areas of energy
- Incentivize and make ADU’s easier to build. (Maybe tax breaks)
- Community center/resources at corner of Sunken Gardens at El Camino
- Increased height can lead to shadows – consider different height limits and setbacks
- Height of buildings along Hwy 101 actually improves walkability of downtown A-town La Plaza has blocked out noise of freeway successfully
- Allow lot splits in west Atascadero area!
- Maintain vacant lots at Del Rio – fire hazards *(not clear if this was intended as one comment or two separate comments)*
- Revitalize/re-use along El Camino
- Mixed use needed – El Camino/Hwy 41
- Higher density ok downtown but parking is critical
- Form a downtown core/block pattern – move school?
- Civic activities
- Height could cause more shadows
- Create “neighborhood centers/nodes” – mixed uses, walkable, shade, gathering spaces, fewer cars ... less impact and wear on streets
- Re-classify parts of ECR as housing/other uses than just commercial (to support “nodes”)
- How do we stand out from neighboring cities?

- Brand Atascadero as their own
- Brand zones – downtown, medical cluster, etc.
- Balance eclectic vs. traditional design
- Focus on community architectural/design themes – less contemporary focus
- Create community identity – as draw, to maintain character, to define areas
- New construction should have consistent design themes/elements
- Creating community identity downtown that complements historic buildings – design standards for each node
- Balance in design standards – don't want to limit development
- Update current businesses with same theme as new “La Plaza” – redo business fronts for updating a fresh look
- When there is new business structures on North Atascadero please make it consistent – Grocery Outlet Center has a uniform Mission theme – nice – then the corner with the new Taco Bell is ugly matching the Home 2 Hotel – please don't make the new El Camino/Del Rio businesses ugly structures
- Encourage more public art.
- Sign when you leave Santa Maria South (King City) - signage
- Shop health play
- Encourage restaurants with outdoor eating
- Encourage restaurants with outdoor eating arrangements
- More outdoor restaurant/dining/seating
- More diverse restaurant options
- Bring back A&W restaurant
- Love places having evening hours, but would be great to expand to places that are not wine/beer focused, so youth can see fun isn't all about alcohol.
- More family-friendly and affordable restaurants
- Restaurants that offer healthy options/fresh fast food. i.e., Wahoos vs. Taco Bell. Urbane café. Family friendly, midpoint – not hamburgers.
- There are enough great restaurants to keep people in town for dinner
- More trendy/hip restaurants
- More family-friendly events/businesses. More community activities that don't revolve around alcohol sales.
- More shops downtown, more retail
- Get a zone that attracts “TM City” at Kmart
- Redevelop Kmart block
- Kmart land is not for sale
- Need chain store to cover basic needs so we don't have to spend all our money in Pas at Target/Wal or on Amazon
- Bring in businesses that sell basic necessities like socks, toiletries, everyday clothes, pet food ... Walmart, Target
- Need more options for shopping like Tractor Supply, Costco, somewhere that isn't drug store, specialty, or boutique
- Travel approximately 20-minute range outside city limit for goods/services

- Enforcement of concerns about number of allowed hooved animals changing with update.
- Stop kowtowing to San Luis County Planning

ECONOMIC AND FISCAL HEALTH

Question 3: Given Atascadero's jobs-housing imbalance, do you feel there should be a focus on adding more revenue- and employment-generating businesses?

Question 4: Is nearby access, including walking and wheeling, to shopping important, or is it okay for housing to be separated from commercial uses?

- Economic strategy vs. population growth as growth focus
- Provide data to help inform the market
- Incentives for youth-oriented businesses, such as The Pad climbing gym or other businesses that support the health of our youth
- Walking and wheeling is important
- Defined neighborhood commerce areas and neighborhoods
- Yes
- Marketing to attract people to authentic Atascadero
- Encourage businesses that attract people
- Good reason to stay in Atascadero for date night!
- Looking at Atascadero's identity – why should people stop here? - Revenue
- Commercial/retail
- Business support for signage/promotion
- Wayfinding for businesses/directory
- Economic incentives for business relocation to enable vision (Prop 13 challenge)
- Relocation incentives
- Great incentive to buy out/relocate at City ASH medical offices downtown
- Location-specific incentives for time-specific/length regulations/financial incentive
- Lower impact fees based on square footage
- Businesses along creek/rivers with walking paths (enhance natural assets)
- Filling in gaps on El Camino – wanting to know where development is possible
- Challenge for businesses not located right on El Camino
- Economic incentives for redevelopment of downtown and nodes
- Downtown redevelopment incentives
- Financial community/investing is hesitant to invest in City
- Challenge of getting anchor tenants to commit
- Electrical/water hook-ups for farmers market
- Regional economy linked to Morro, Paso wineries
- Better connect Sunken Gardens' events to downtown
- Program to incentivize offices around Sunken Gardens to relocate to bring other types of businesses to downtown
- Incentive needed to redevelop downtown/area around Sunken Gardens
- Surround Sunken Gardens with rock attractions

- Exhibit space in Sunken Garden – activate/use space differently
- Salaries to compete with housing market
- Jobs are important. It is very hard to attract high paying employers to the area.
- Tech head of household jobs
- Jobs vs. careers – creating head of household jobs – top priority
- Tech/computer science jobs
- Want kids to be able to return/settle in Atascadero – tech jobs
- Mixed use commercial would be ideal on the north end of El Camino where Walmart was going to go.
- East-west connectional nodes should extend beyond single intersection.
- Concentrate commercial at freeway exits with mixed use in between.
- Residential between commercial nodes.
- Residential development off main streets – keep main arterials for commercial
- Use judgement, some areas should be combined, some will never be combined
- If you allow housing in commercial areas, require commercial development
- Housing and commercial should ideally always be accessible by public transit or by walking. “Houses are where jobs go to sleep at night”
- It is okay. Almost all housing is walkable to commercial and biking for sure.
- It is okay to separate housing from commercial
- I believe there will be commercial areas separate from residential. The elderly and young families with many children can’t easily walk or bike to shopping
- Child care is essential for economic vitality
- Events help promote businesses – Art in the Park, Pub Crawl
- Performing arts attendees spend more than \$28 in the City – opportunities to bring business
- Stadium Park into concert hall/music festival
- Kmart into multipurpose venue – concerts, shows – like “The Grad” in SLO
- Renovate Printery into historical building or destroy for new opportunities
- Preservation and adaptive reuse of the Printery
- Rehabilitate the Printery for community events, activities for kids and seniors, and performing arts
- Preservation and adaptive reuse of the Printery
- Get a regional family entertainment center, i.e., “Great Wolf Lodge” type
- Invest in ways to increase TOT. Possible Visitors Bureau or Economic Development Task Force
- Get RV parks that are nice for TOT
- Attracting people to stop and spend \$\$ who are passing through
- More land zoned multifamily and industrial
- There is an imbalance when compared to SLO or Paso. We need to focus on our strengths, focus on what economists tell us we should focus on, focus on providing housing that the market is demanding. We solve any “imbalance” by adding housing, it’s that simple. Do this by adding massive amounts of all kinds of housing. Increase heights and allow residential in all zones. Allow housing on ground floor if it will support commercial in frontage, corners, and high traffic roads.
- Walking/wheeling are very important. Bike lanes and trails all over. Send cars to 101.

MOBILITY

Question 5: Currently, what are your biggest challenges to moving around Atascadero efficiently and safely?

Question 6: What specific improvements could be made to make it easier and more enjoyable to get around (e.g., intersection improvements, better transit connections, additional bicycle lanes, new sidewalk connections, etc.)?

- Encourage/support a range of travel modes
- Make e-bike friendly
- Encourage e-bikes and install charging along routes
- Safe bike lanes and shade trees are essential in our climate
- More bike lanes
- Bike lanes, curbs or walking paths are needed, especially on the west side
- Bike paths
- More bike paths
- Protected bike lanes
- Class I and II bike lanes
- Use Class IV where appropriate
- More walkable areas, sidewalks and bike lanes
- Sidewalks on one side of a street like Atascadero Ave, Portola, Curbaril would make walking more enjoyable
- Bike/Ped improvements
- Need walkable/bikeable clusters around commercial nodes and schools
- Link south end of town with north via bike path along Salinas River from Paloma Creek to Del Rio
- Bike path along Salinas River
- Connecting downtown to lake park area
- Walking path down Santa Rosa to lake
- Trail connecting Santa Margarita – Templeton
- Now that plans for the Templeton-Atascadero non-motorized connection have hit a snag with UP, we should negotiate a route that returns to the original planned alignment east of the UP tracks.
- One lane road around Atascadero Lake – cater to pedestrians/bikes
- The existing sidewalks need to be accessible.
- Improving wheelchair accessibility, need for sidewalks
- Enforce handicap parking violations
- Enforce parking regulations on Entrada
- Parking critical for downtown. Enforce two-hour limits.
- Unpaid parking in the core El Camino/Sunken Gardens area
- Let's build a parking structure with public bathrooms near Sunken Garden
- Parking enforcement
- Need to enforce parking time limits to help business

- More sidewalks along busy roads (like Curbaril and other yellow-lined roads). Even a minimal sidewalk – mulched instead of paved.
- More east-west accessibility
- Circular nodes that go north/south and east/west with residential in between
- Bike/ped safety downtown
- Better pedestrian circulation downtown
- Creating pods of walkability to promote window shopping.
- More city sidewalks
- More sidewalks and crosswalks
- More crosswalks – increased lighting
- Controlled crosswalks are key – stoplights – only during school exit hours
- Comprehensive ped & bike plan with attention to school needs
- Need additional under- and overpasses, pedestrian and bike infrastructure
- East/west pedestrian access under Hwy 101
- More east/west mobility access (across Hwy 101)
- Redirect traffic from El Camino to encourage slower traffic, pedestrian shopping
- More quiet sidewalks. We need ways to move around city without walking down El Camino
- Integrating pedestrian crossings along El Camino
- Bike lane along El Camino
- Bikeway that goes safely on all of El Camino north to Home Depot, able to do trikes for adults
- Downtown bike rentals!
- Entrada as promenade/pedestrian walkway
- Shady trees along El Camino
- Trolley that runs non-stop up and down El Camino
- Self-driving electric trolley along ECR – hop-on, hop-off – to connect city
- Add bus routes to less populated areas
- Mirrors on blind corners on west hills roads
- ECR is too wide; traffic calming
- ECR too wide
- ECR is wider than the 101 and scary.
- Traffic calming, wider shoulders
- Slow down traffic on Portola
- School drop-off and pick-up times are the most challenging on ECR
- Idling cars in front of middle school – improve vehicular/pedestrian circulation
- Traffic issues when school lets out – designated zones, improved traffic control
- Improve corridor between High School and Middle School/pedestrian safety
- Better/safer bike and ped – ECR, connect with schools
- Better bike safety/lanes around schools and sidewalks
- Bigger/better bike paths and trails like Bod Jones. More walkable and bikeable.
- Sidewalk needed on Monterey Road from San Anselmo to Monterey Road School

- Reduce speed on Monterey Road (extend 25 mph) from school to San Anselmo. It is too short as it ends at Ramona.
- Sense of lacking safety – no bike lanes, especially downtown
- Jay walking across El Camino
- Timing of lights at the ends of Santa Rosa bridge over 101
- Pinch-points at freeway entrances for evacuation
- Easier one and off ramp for freeway. Light to turn off traffic way.
- El Camino divider strips with minimal care planting (i.e., native plants)
- Get serious downtown – slow traffic, put in planted dividers
- Develop road districts similar to landscape and lighting districts. That way the roads can be fixed in a timely manner
- Roads built to low standards
- If more density, need better roads
- Roads – Santa Lucia, El Monte
- Many roads are in bad condition – pooling of water, uneven deterioration of roadways along sides
- Road maintenance – new business and revenue sources
- Possible to incorporate streets? Old roads are public safety concern
- Improving neighborhood roads
- Fix Del Rio bridge road!
- How do we make sure we can maintain improvements to re-invest in more nice neighborhoods without City-maintained roads
- Unmaintained roads
- Pave non-City maintained roads once and good for another 20 years
- Need a solution for the non-City-maintained roads.
- Utilize F14 funds to incorporate un-incorporated roads within the city limits. These property owners also pay taxes
- Revisit which roads are city-maintained – the population has more than doubled since this was done in 1975
- Please clarify when you describe 145 miles of roadway whether these are public or private roads or both
- City – non-maintained roads – notify on deeds of homebuyers
- We need to start with an inventory that includes not only households with no or one car, but also households in which the car or cars are unreliable and unaffordable to replace – a growing demographic!
- None, circulation is ideal
- SLOCOG Draft RTP for public review and comment

INFRASTRUCTURE

Question 7: What are Atascadero's biggest infrastructure challenges?

Question 8: What, if any, infrastructure improvements would you like to see in your neighborhood? (please identify your neighborhood)

- Allow our creeks and rivers to spread across the floodplains. Allow large flows to be held in ponds, allowed to slowly infiltrate into groundwater basins.
- Beavers can benefit the Mutual Water Company wells by increasing the width and duration of active percolation that feeds the Salinas River underflow and underlying aquifer
- Rainwater runoff management
- Capture rain runoff
- Ways to capture stormwater
- Opportunities to use reclaimed water for City landscape
- Expand sewer
- Sewer expansion
- Sewer lines to serve Portola Road
- Keeping the waste up to capacity and treating at reclaimed water standards
- Air quality/grid
- Underground electric power
- Underground power to lower fire risk; allow off-grid units
- Alternate electrical source beyond PG&E
- Solar at all City facilities
- Build solar farm in the battery storage
- Solar panel farm to power Atascadero
- Build solar farms with battery backup (two people added “agree” to post-it)
- Health concerns related to 56 and rising “electronic smog” must be investigated, not ignored to protect the health of humans and existence of pollinators
 - High speed internet and Wi-Fi (public and private) with multiple providers
 - Tech infrastructure
 - Broadband plan
- At Lake remove old unsightly structures and cement – re-do Atascadero Creek water inlet – get rid of chain link fence
- Prioritize connection to sewer within USL
- Diagram showing “Fiber” at crossroads of Hwy 41 and ECR
- Funding
- maintain current infrastructure – roads, culverts, drainage
- Require developers and City projects to install street trees
- Remove old structures/tables, seating, at Atascadero Lake – it just looks old and bad
- Getting homeless into a real camp. Homeless camp at National Guard Armory and outlawed in creek beds and freeway

- The notion that residential is fiscally negative. If we allowed more housing, charged impact fees for that housing, get frontage improvements from that housing, then we would grow quicker. Fewer connection fees, CFDs that go straight to general fund and more!
- Bridges! Roads! Continue with bond measures for those
- You guys are doing your best. More bike/walk paths, bridges, and annexations would be nice

SAFETY AND RESILIENCY

Question 9: Which hazards or safety issues concern you the most?

Question 10: What actions should the City prioritize when planning for community safety and resilience?

- Volunteer cops
- Increase public safety staffing
- Public safety training center
- Public safety center at Printery
- Improve living conditions at fire station/while the city waits an unknown time for a public safety center
- Liability (*with two arrows pointing downward; was this indicating something on the board or map?*)
- Address climate change and how this affects safety
- Building in former wetlands should be discouraged due to seismic danger (increased shaking of saturated alluvium) and to allow valuable habitat to recover
- Clogged storm drains
- No curbs on streets cause flooding issues on private properties – improve stormwater issues
- Citizens cleaning gutters during floods
- After storms – litter pick-ups
- Flooding at dips in road
- The recent floods show the need for capacious creek setbacks not only for aesthetics but for public safety and property protection
- Fire zones, insurance is hard to get for fire
- Many homeowners are at risk of losing their homeowners insurance
- Fire exits. There are a lot of one way in and one way out roads
- I worry about FIRE and being able to evacuate in a timely manner
- Ensure backyard fires require a permit – particularly in WUI areas – or ban completely
- Require permits for backyard burning
- Fire Department Strategic Plan
- Appreciate idea of 101//Del Rio fire station
- Utilize scientific data and studies for the accurate locations for future fire stations

- Decrease fire department response times
- Fire call volume up 30% with population increased only 4.9% from 2010 – 2021
- 4.9% growth in population, 30% increase in service calls in last 10 years
- Volunteer fire fighters
- Fuel reduction, drainage fixes
- Homeless in fire prone areas lie ATAs, creek. Homeless campground with Fire, Police, and job placement/counseling
- Storm water regulations. The City harasses every construction site relentlessly. Yet on their own projects they allow insane dirt runoff to drains and allow their subcontractors to break all of the stormwater and BMPs. Example, Traffic Way and Ardilla Ave, massive dirt runoff and they just did that road improvement where they should've addressed those runoff problems. The subs has hazardous material on the ground and equipment leaking.

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACES

Question 11: Where do you see opportunities to increase access to parks, open space areas, and trails?

- Connections between rec and tourism – national/regional attraction
- Atascadero Creek has amazing potential.
- Atascadero Creek and the Salinas! There should be a trail system to access all of this!
- Unconscious value of rivers/creeks. Asset: Salinas River
- Rivers are a huge asset! Make more rivers?
- Stream/creek clean ups!!!
- Location-specific: **Salinas River:** Open space all along the river, allowing people to walk the entire length within the city limits.
- Make access points to the creeks and rivers so we have sites feel safe, more enjoyable and environmentally healthy
- All creeks and rivers should have visible access points, maybe tables/benches, places to recreate along our waterways
- More emphasis on the importance of the river and creeks and watershed health. A river center, to allow Cal Poly and Cuesta students space to research our watershed and allow for tourist activities, educational tours and a place for visitors to visit.
- How to draw people? Lake area? Develop.
- Community events that promote use of open spaces
- More MTB trails
- Class I path system connecting downtown to Three Bridges
- Connect Jim Green + Atascadero Lake + Three Bridges.
- Revitalize Atascadero Creek and add walking and bike paths.
- Finish Atascadero Creek Trail to Salinas River
- Playgrounds that are connected to areas that have trails – easy hikes, nature walks with educational signs about plants

- Take better care of Joy Playground
- Connection to Santa Margarita through Eagle Ranch
- Trails in Eagle Ranch area
- TRU trail Salinas River to Cerro Alto
- Connect Paloma and Heilmann Trail
- Build community/infrastructure along river
- Work with County, Paso, to build River trail.
- River Center
- Community amenities around River
- Paths – rec
- Connect Three Bridges with downtown/ECR (trails)
- More hiking trails (especially northwest area of city)
- We need more trails
- One way multi-modal road around Atascadero Lake
- 1 mile loop road around Lake Park – make one-way to prioritize walk/bike over cars
- A “surfaced” walkway around our lake
- One-way road around Atascadero Lake
- Better accessibility around Atascadero Lake
- ADA accessibility at/around Atascadero Lake – particularly between parking and concert venue
- Work to make a majority at Eagle Ranch an open space/park.
- North side needs park spaces
- Three Bridges Oak Preserve extends
- Acquire Paloma Creek land across from Park and create nature zone.
- State property near Paloma? (put to use)
- City: 75 ar; ALPS: 5 ar (missing). Supportalps.org
- Curbaril/Atascadero Avenue/Hwy 41: underutilized corridor/triangle – no storage units – keep/preserve as open space @PF east of Hwy 41
- Partner with Cal Poly for wildlife opportunities
- Plant oaks to replace the aging generation.
- Plant white/valley oaks and native plants
- Plant more trees in City
- More trees planted in city
- More trees
- More lighting at parks
- At least one Honey Hut per park. Sunken Gardens, Apple Valley, other side of Atascadero Lake.
- I think Atascadero is doing pretty well in this area!
- Multi-use park for different activities
- Inclusive options at ALL city parks – inclusive of all ages and abilities
- RV Camping at Lake park – high end
- Open Space has potential of creating jobs – ecotourism
- Fun for kids and adults in same proximity.

- Summer activities for youth.
- Lighthouse Afterschool can provide facilities for youth. SLO Beaver Brigade can provide programming
- More places for youth after school – centers and libraries.
- Things for young people to do
- Lighthouse program is great for youth!
- Liked ice skating rink that used to be here.
- Ice skating rink!
- Teen activities – ice skating, roller skating, Go Karts.
- Roller skating rink
- Outdoor skate park
- Roller rink, Lazer tag
- More multi-purpose sports fields
- More sport fields (multi-use)
- Adult softball leagues
- Public basketball hoops/courts (pickleball uses too)
- More outdoor recreation
- Zipline by golf course.
- Jim Green trail
- Rebrand Heilmann, love water feature, love Frisbee course. Hate alien theme and view of ASH. So much opportunity there.
- Bigger fountain/water play
- Add more city pools
- New community swimming pool
- Swimming pool!
- Community pool
- Swimming pool – public for community
- Public community pool
- Swim pool community
- Municipal swimming pool
- Pool
- Need 2 public pools
- Standard community pool with rec teams
- Bowling alley
- Axe throwing and other activities
- Events in Stadium Park
- Like movies in the park and summer events.
- Outdoor water fountain/spring park for kids. Saw this a lot on east coast. Near shopping/food for adults.
- BBQ or chili cookoff competition in Sunken Gardens
- The zoo is a REGIONAL attraction!
- Invest in developing/modernizing the Zoo

- You already have one of only 240 accredited zoos in North America – why not promote it? just think how many people go to Monterey Aquarium
- Strategic promotion of zoo through Visit Atascadero. Highway billboards, rebranding as “Central Coast Zoo”, encouraging visitors to stop at zoo rather than in SLO, encourage business at restaurants, etc. People/residents don't know where Charles Paddock is.
- Focus on developing the Zoo so it provides more opportunities for families

OTHER COMMENTS

- Thank you, nice job!
- Want to identify 3-5 year goals to present to developers (General Plan chapters)
- Short/mid/long-range goals/policies/incentives
- Interactive online General Plan
- City staff are supportive and accessible – unlike other cities

Existing Conditions Atlas Survey Comments

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- As you explore ways to increase housing, consider developments consider the kids! Make sure development include parks (or land donations for a park), or access to existing parks with sidewalks. Parks should be designed for all age-stages.
- How does "General Commercial" zoning differ from "Commercial Retail?" A property immediately adjacent ours has been reclassified to that designation and I'm curious how that affects us, and if those changes were communicated to the neighbors.
- RE: new housing - ADU's can be a useful tool to add housing. However, please do not destroy the character of property areas designated SF. Will you be able to enforce code violations? My experience is that there is not enough staff to follow through on code violations. How can you regulate ADU's? There are people living in trailers, RV's, and mobile homes without consequence in an area of single family homes. There is no follow through when a violation has occurred. Please consider cleaning up existing problems before you add more.

ECONOMIC AND FISCAL HEALTH

- I would hope that when the city approves a plan and or business, that it would not be able to change without going through the same process as the original proposal, for example the drive through mini mart was approved for just that, now look what has happened it's a eye sore and not designed as a restaurant and a liquor store with living quarters, just hope it doesn't happen again
- Encouraging Family Child Care homes (in-home child care business) are a way to use current housing and increasing businesses in Atascadero. Bonus- Economic vitality!
- From the 2021 Economic Impact of Child Care in San Luis Obispo County study: "Meeting 100% of referral estimated demand for child care would increase Gross Regional Product (GRP) in SLO County by more than \$108 million annually, roughly the equivalent of New Car Dealers and Petroleum Refineries in the county. The new entrants to the workforce would also result in the creation and support of 425 new indirect and induced jobs through the increased purchasing power of the new direct and indirect workers." What can the City of Atascadero do to get some of this potential income and support its families and employees?
- There definitely needs to be an increase focus on getting in industry into Atascadero that can not just provide jobs but careers.

MOBILITY

- Safe mobility for pedestrians and bicyclists especially in the neighborhood areas and going to and from schools are very poor. A parking garage needs to be built near

downtown while options still exist. When fun events are happening in the Sunken Gardens or on Entrada, parking is really hard to find. The new parking lot by city hall is often not available. If you want people to patronize downtown, make parking easier to find and do not limit parking time. A movie can be 2-3 hours. Where are people supposed to park? Their parking lot is unacceptably small.

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACES

- Increasing parks (even small pocket parks or neighborhood parks) as well as providing sidewalks to parks, encourages the creation of child care homes to open locally. This increases park use and also helps address the childcare crisis in the county.