

City of Palmdale TOD Overlay Zone Project Summary of Stakeholder Interviews



Prepared for City of



DYETT & BHATIA
Urban and Regional Planners

Nelson\Nygaard
Mia Lehrer + Associates
RBF Consulting

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I Introduction

Background

The City of Palmdale is currently engaged in two studies that may result in changes to the General Plan, specific plans, and zoning, in order to realize the City’s vision for transit-oriented development. As part of the process for both efforts, interviews were conducted with a range of “stakeholders” in the community, to better understand issues and priorities. This report focuses on information gained that will inform the Palmdale TOD Overlay Zone project. This project is briefly summarized below, followed by an explanation of the stakeholder interviews. Responses from participants are laid out in Chapter 2, organized by theme. Stakeholder comments on the Avenue Q Feasibility Study are provided in a separate report.

TOD OVERLAY ZONE PROJECT

The TOD Overlay project aims to help bring about transit-oriented development (TOD) around the Palmdale Transportation Center (PTC) by addressing regulatory constraints and updating the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Palmdale Transit Village Specific Plan (PTVSP). In addition, street and trail improvements will be identified to make it easier and more pleasant to get around without a car. Increasing development within walking and biking distance of transit, jobs and shopping can support affordable, healthy lifestyles. The project is undertaken in the context of major planned or proposed transportation investments including California High Speed Rail, which could place this district in a position of regional significance. The project will result in regulatory changes related to land use, circulation, and streetscape and urban design in support of TOD.

The TOD Overlay Study Area is located between Rancho Vista Boulevard (Avenue P) and Palmdale Boulevard (SR-138) and between SR-14 and 10th Street East. The Palmdale Regional Airport is located approximately one mile northeast of the PTC. Within the Study Area, a Focus Area is identified, to ensure that the greatest level of attention is paid to the core area generally between the PTC and the Civic Core.

Purpose and Format of the Stakeholder Interviews

As part of the community outreach effort for the TOD Overlay Zone project, the planning team interviewed 19 stakeholders on October 6, 2014. The interviews were done in groups of one to five. One hour was allotted for each interview session. Stakeholders included local business owners; property owners; real estate brokers; representatives of community organizations and advocacy groups; representatives from City agencies; and political representatives.

The interviewers had a set of questions to spur conversation, including:

- What do you think are the greatest challenges facing Palmdale today? What do you feel will be the key challenges the City will face in the next 10 to 20 years?
- What aspects of Palmdale do you like most? What do you like about living, working, or otherwise being involved here? What are the community assets that should be built on?
- What, if anything, would you like to see change about development patterns in Palmdale?
- The plans will also look to create a circulation system that supports travel by car as well as by bike, bus, and on foot. What do you think are the big-picture circulation issues in Palmdale?
- Are there any other issues or concerns I should have asked about?

Interviewers also sought to ask specifically about challenges, assets, land use, and circulation issues specific to each of the two study areas. The questions were used as a guide to help bring about substantive and relevant responses from community members. Themes heard from the stakeholders are summarized in Chapter 2. Appendix A contains a list of persons interviewed.

2 Stakeholder Comments

Key Themes

Several themes emerged that help to guide the planning efforts. Stakeholders supported the City's goals of bringing about new, higher-intensity and mixed-use development associated with a future High Speed Rail station, and they felt the larger community would also be supportive if the City reached out to inform and inspire. People spoke of the potential for upscale multifamily housing, entertainment uses, and neighborhood gathering places to find a foothold in Palmdale, and make the city a better place to live. The Palmdale TOD Study Area was seen as being a challenging environment for development, with a population in need of better sidewalks, parks, and public safety. Following is a list of major themes heard during the stakeholder interviews. A comprehensive list of the comments received, organized by topic, follows.

1. Transit-oriented development could make Palmdale attractive to young, well-employed residents, and stimulate economic development while improving quality of life in the community.
2. The Station Area itself could feature the highest scale of development, but the TOD Overlay Study Area presents a challenging existing physical and social environment.
3. Palmdale lacks a connected bicycle network; improving this network will benefit existing residents and will be important in attracting the type of residents who would live in a "TOD" area.
4. Future transit infrastructure and surrounding public spaces and facilities need to be designed in a way that provides safety, comfort, and 21st Century convenience.
5. Palmdale residents want to feel a stronger connection to their community, and residents in the TOD Study Area in particular would benefit from a greater sense of investment. Including residents in the process and presenting a positive vision of the future are important.
6. Realization of the potential that major transportation investments bring to Palmdale will require good planning, good timing, and patience.

The TOD Overlay project will result in regulatory changes related to land use, circulation, and streetscape and urban design. Input received from stakeholders covered a wide variety of topics and issues, all related to planning and livability, but not all related specifically to the charge of this project. All of the comments are included in this report because they are vital and reflect

stakeholders concerns; they are important for the City to consider for other efforts. However, it is important to note that not all of the issues identified by stakeholders are directly related to the limited purposes of the TOD Overlay project which is to update land use regulations and identify circulation and streetscape improvements in support of TOD.

Land Use and Development

CITYWIDE THEMES

Vision and Market Outlook for Transit-Oriented Development

Facilitating transit-oriented development (TOD) is the primary purpose of the two planning efforts. Many participants reflected on what they felt TOD could bring to Palmdale, and on its viability as a type of development that doesn't currently exist in the city. Several participants spoke very positively about a future with active, mixed-use areas where people could live, work and play. Multifamily housing attractive to upscale, young residents was a major theme, and a housing type that would become increasingly sought-after. Local retail and entertainment venues were also highlighted. Discussion of what TOD might look like in the specific contexts of the TOD Study Area and the Avenue Q corridor are discussed separately later in this report.

- The plans should serve to create a place that makes people want to come to Palmdale.
- Mixed-use development is an important component of a live-work-play growth model, which can attract the next generation to the city. Attracting and retaining the younger generation has been a challenge for the city in the past.
- Need to create urban environment that takes car out of the equation. Need critical mass of activity to make it work without driving.
- Envision getting off High Speed Rail, dropping off my stuff, getting my kids, walking over to Desert Sands Park to coach youth football
- Transit district should have integrated mix of housing types
- Lived in Spain for four years in a very large apartment complex that included all shopping, playgrounds, tiny stores that served all needs; then right outside was bus stop, taxi stands – it was great
- Mixed use with residential and retail – very compatible. In 20 years Palmdale will probably have some urban flavor that it doesn't have today.
- We're going to start seeing housing again in 2016, and will start to see not just single-family, but products aimed at younger people; density could grow as Palmdale matures
- Our challenge is the risk of thinking too small. This could be the biggest project the city has dealt with. Gives us a chance to reinvent an area that needs reinvention.

High-Density, High-Amenity Living

- One challenge in Palmdale is that there are no upscale apartments. Single-family homes are affordable, so it's questionable if the rent people can charge would be enough to support upscale development. Upscale development will have to provide amenities.
- Doctors that live in Los Angeles and work in Palmdale. They may be interested in upscale condominiums that they live in for a few days at a time. The City needs better quality multi-family housing.
- Housing in transit district should have all the amenities that current low-density development has. Don't want to recreate high-density, low-amenity living. The project we got [at Palmdale Transit Village] disappointed me because the recreation aspect dropped out
- They [Plant 42 employees] like upper market rate, amenities that don't exist here. Santa Clarita offers that. Light rail will be a key to bringing people in and out, making something like that possible here
- Many teachers are retiring in 2017. You will be replacing teachers with a younger crop of employees that need upscale rental apartments. These are the type of residents that will take advantage of the mixed-use development and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

Entertainment and Small Businesses

- I want to see restaurants, entertainment, so people don't go to Santa Clarita or Hollywood on the weekend
- 3rd Street Promenade, Universal Citywalk – would like to see components of those areas. Club-hopping, bar-hopping.

Improving Land Use Regulations to Support TOD

Some participants identified aspects of the City's land use regulations that may pose barriers to achieving mixed use development, or could be improved to facilitate the types of uses that contribute to TOD.

Zoning and Incentives for Mixed Use

- The City needs to create more flexible zones. Allow more uses and development by-right, without a Use Permit.
- Allow mixed-use development.
- The City should explore giving density bonuses for true mixed-use development.
- There are too many restrictions in the Transit Area Specific Plan. Also, when the plan was developed, the City was not open to development and investment.

Zoning Constraints on Entertainment Uses

- The process to secure an entertainment permit is onerous. The City is lacking entertainment type uses (concert venues, dance halls) and should encourage these types of uses. The permit process should support the types of uses you want to see.
- We have distance restrictions between alcohol-selling establishments – how do we deal with that? We create an exception – an area purposely devoted to entertainment.

Parking Requirements

Stakeholders did not tend to embrace changing parking requirements, but noted that businesses in transit-rich areas should only provide as much parking as they need, and that shared or public parking may be a good idea. Surface parking was seen by at least one stakeholder as something that should be avoided in a walkable, high-density area.

- Loosen requirements? I don't know.
- Can we remove parking requirements? No. But we can provide alternatives.
- I wouldn't reduce parking requirements. Look at Universal. Ended up being way underparked.
- Maybe shared parking at 10th Street West and Avenue Q, keeping parking out of Ave Q.
- Starbucks on the going-to-work side of Rancho Vista was one of highest-grossing in LA County. A transit-oriented Starbucks could work with less parking, made up for with transit customers. Need to understand the environment you're in.
- I don't think [Palmdale's parking standards too strict]. Health club normally requires 10 spaces per 10000 sf. But we were able to exclude swimming pool, racquetball courts, etc, and arrived at reasonable number of spaces, given different peak periods for different retail
- Parking has to be as attractive and condensed as possible. I think you're going to have to go up, with structured parking.

PALMDALE TOD OVERLAY STUDY AREA

Existing Development Patterns and Conditions

The TOD Overlay Study Area was described by several people as a challenging environment for new development because of its "fragmented" pattern of older subdivisions, multifamily housing, commercial activities such as liquor stores and auto service shops, and vacant land, and for its poor population. However, there was a sense that the area was improving, and that new investment around and including the Palmdale Transportation Center (PTC) was playing a positive role.

- The housing is a challenge. As that housing is eliminated, replacing it with housing that is well-designed and supports connectivity.

- Disenfranchised people and hodgepodge of housing types and vacant land
- Legal non-conforming uses in some areas
- The existing fragmented development pattern creates challenges for where new development should be.
- 5th Street is bad, but it's gotten better
- A lot of good going on with YouthBuild, Gabriel House, Neighborhood House
- Businesses on 6th Street don't serve the area – mechanics, etc. You can't eat there.
- There are desolate areas around the train station. How will the station be positioned to integrate with and respond to the community.
- There is a lack of “healthy” stores, chain stores, and stores that are “brand-connected” in the areas near the station. The City should be doing what it takes to move a Starbucks or Jamba Juice from Palmdale Blvd to the station area.
- Some buildings will have to be demolished, people will have to be relocated, and this will be hard for people
- The area east of Sierra Highway is difficult. Liquor stores; no places for families, no place to go outside and have a cup of coffee in the evening. Too “compacted.”
- Existing demographics there are not good for what you're trying to accomplish.
- For Wright Brothers Court to come up what we learned was that tax credit deals are not the best type because of the rush to fill the buildings, and then you have to go back and weed out bad tenants. That property will turn a corner and be what we want it to be.
- SM: It [Wright Brothers Court] is great. The problem is the mobile home park right next to it, and those really bad apartments
- Transit Center and development is very important for that neighborhood.
- Apartments filled up pretty fast. Townhouses are on hold. Plans look great to me.

Future TOD in the Station Area

Several participants noted that they expected the High Speed Rail station itself to require a large footprint, and envisioned uses such as a convention center, hotels, and corporate offices around the station. A mix of multifamily housing and retail was consistently noted as part of the character that would emerge around the future station.

- The area around the footprint of the future High Speed Rail station is where connected, transit-oriented development can occur.
- We know the footprint of High Speed Rail will be big, and could come with additional development like hotels.

- Establishing a transit hub in Palmdale is already in process around the transit center. This area will become even more so in the future.
- The transit center area can become a corporate office area once the rail and commercial air service is on-line.
- A mixed-use community would help change the culture of the community. If I don't need to drive my car and do all my business – there is a grocery store, gym, coffee shop, etc. within walking area – I would be very happy. Why not raise density, etc. if it looks nice? In La Brea, condos are being built and people are buying them up. Put 21st century housing products here and when the train is here, people will respond. The community can change. This can lay a foundation for the future of Palmdale.
- Opportunities for various densities of housing, including affordable and market-rate
- It's got to have retail, housing, recreation, be on both sides of Sierra Highway
- The east side, near Sierra Highway, is where you have your Civic Center, your LA Live; it would be cool to see the Hammack Center redeveloped/replaced with a new activity center for the community.
- Higher-scale development is definitely appropriate
- Why not put appropriate retail services in the area?
- We want this place to be the “center of the universe,” the icon of the city, a destination
- I see convention center, hotels, recreation, offices, restaurants, all of it, around the station.

Circulation and Public Spaces

CITYWIDE THEMES

High-Quality Urban Environment

Some participants emphasized that streets, transit, and public spaces and not just high-density development, were an important foundation for TOD.

- There needs to be not just density—which we have zoning for now—but principles in place to ensure high-quality environment
- We need to be comprehensive, create high-value, high-safety environment, and tenants with same principles
- Transit system needs amenities appropriate to weather and population here, with shade, lockers

Connected Bike Network

Multiple people noted the current lack of a bike network connecting Palmdale and the larger region. The need for facilities appropriate for commuters, families, and recreational cyclists were noted, and a system of bike paths was seen as an important lifestyle feature for the type of people who might choose to live in a “TOD” area in the future.

- Palmdale needs bike facilities of all three classes. They need to be on the arterials, and need to connect beyond this area to the County and Lancaster.
- Bike routes need to be connected to supermarkets, neighborhoods, high schools.
- When people ride to work they use the arterials; when families ride they use the bike paths (like along Sierra Highway). There is a lot of ridership.
- We don’t need large green striped lanes, which create opposition, just simple striped bike lanes.
- Connectivity is a big issue. Sierra bike path goes for a mile or two but doesn’t connect to anything.
- Need bike sensors placed correctly so that cyclists can be confident they’ll be recognized.
- They [Plant 42 employees] like the idea of small businesses, eclectic mix, but also bike trails, connected to the hills.
- Need a connected bike system that goes where people want to go
- Vision for high-amenity housing includes bike on the deck, ability to hop on the trails

Wildlife Corridors

- A letter was presented from the Antelope Valley Conservancy. The Conservancy is concerned about animal crossings, for animals trying to get water.

PALMDALE TOD OVERLAY STUDY AREA

Design of the Rail Station and Surrounding Environment

The design of the future High Speed Rail Station and the public facilities around it—parking, streets, sidewalks, public spaces—were discussed by several participants. Safety; features that match contemporary lifestyles; and connection to the local community were all considered.

- Station should be designed with elements that respond to the individual community
- Ease of commuting into station is an important consideration. Safety is important. There needs to be adequate lighting and safe access and it needs to be designed to prevent vandalism. This is particularly important in the parking facility structure access and design.

- People will want to know that the bicycles are safe while they park their bicycle all day.
- Security is important for those who are going to use the train. Need to feel safe and secure in parking your car and leaving it.
- The station will have a significant presence. There may still be community disconnect. How do you bridge the gap? Provide family gathering areas, pedestrian amenities such as benches and lighting, and other features so that it feels safe and makes people want to stop and spend time. Provide wifi and plug-ins for people to charge their electronics. It's more than just a bus bench. That would also start rethinking the culture of the community. Ease of business and life is what should be included in the model.
- Multilevel, with pedestrians and cars on different levels.
- Provide community gathering area with amenities that give it a real-time, 21st century look and feel.
- I see a large footprint for a station. Sierra Highway right-of-way may be critical for future station.
- I don't know any examples of the kind of multimodal station we're talking about; models may be in Europe or Far East

Pedestrian Amenities and Infrastructure in the Neighborhood

The TOD Overlay Study Area was identified as an area with a lot of pedestrian activity, with its neighborhood school and the low-income population's relatively lower rate of car ownership. However, the neighborhood's pedestrians are poorly served by pedestrian amenities and infrastructure, and also encounter safety concerns and barriers to movement across the railroad tracks.

- A lot of kids ride skateboards, and the streets don't accommodate skateboards in a connected way.
- Very pedestrian-heavy area but poorly served by pedestrian amenities.
- People take shopping carts to Vallarta and back to the house; it doesn't look good but it's practical
- The "audience" for transit-oriented living is there—people who walk, bike, are without cars—but there is a lack of infrastructure to support bicycling and walking.
- Yucca Elementary is a walking school; kids who go to school there are all from within walking distance.
- Paths, places to sit, and other ways to become familiar with your surroundings would create a positive environment and introduce people to this part of Palmdale.

- Currently, it's a tough area near the transit center. Many people don't feel safe walking around. Even residents can feel unsafe walking around the area.
- The new Transit Village is patrolled a lot more so it feels safer. If the other areas around had more patrol, that would help with the feeling of safety in the area.
- Just look at what people have done to the wrought-iron fence along the St. Clair Parkway: people are breaking through, indicating demand for east-west cross-movement across the tracks
- It's difficult to cross the rail tracks. It is not an easy flow of traffic.
- I believe we need to open Avenue Q across tracks, for all modes.
- Just getting from point A to point B is not simple because of transportation issues.
- The school does bus the children who live across Sierra Highway. It is unsafe and difficult cross Sierra Highway.

Need for More and Better Recreational Facilities

The TOD Overlay Study Area was also identified for its relative lack of recreational facilities. Kids are reported to use the school grounds heavily, even though they are intended to be closed after school hours. There was agreement that the Hammack activity center was in poor shape, and Desert Sands Park lacked the kind of amenities that families with children want to use.

- Desert Sands Park has very limited amenities and there's no reason to go there. There's no splash pad, nothing for the kids, no parenting amenities, classes. Rec Center is very small.
- Kids are using the school as a de facto park. The school does not currently have any joint use agreements. Kids jump the fence to skateboard on school grounds. There should be a pathway to a park, or the City should build a skate park.
- There is a lack of soccer fields in Palmdale, or not so much lack of fields but there is a lack of maintenance. Better maintained and better located soccer fields could attract people for tournaments.
- There are not enough recreational facilities in the area.
- Kids are skating and bicycling on the roofs of schools.
- Need more skate parks and basketball courts for kids to have a legitimate place to play.
- Park and recreation facilities could help draw people into that area. Not so much because of the transportation center but because it's a good place to live.
- Would like to see something where the Hammack Center is, that would provide a community gathering place they don't have in their own neighborhood.

- Hammack Center looks terrible, but people wouldn't go to Lancaster if they knew they had something good here

Need for Improved Bus Service

- There never seem to be enough buses. Students come from all over, and the students do take the bus to school. There's enough connectivity of bus lines, but the frequency and distance are issues
- There are things that need to be worked out with AVTA to make it more affordable to ride buses for students. There are no discounts.

Other Issues

JOBS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Several people emphasized that Palmdale today is in many ways a place with ample housing but not a large number of jobs. The TOD planning efforts were seen as opportunities to bring more jobs to Palmdale, for economic development and to allow more people to live and work locally.

- This project has potential to create opportunity, economic development.
- There need to be jobs, and this is an opportunity.
- A lot of families are stay-at-home moms, dads working in south Orange County, downtown LA, Long Beach
- Get more jobs to come to Palmdale. They all want to be near transit.
- Employ individuals to support the community.
- Housing is not something we lack. Job creation is our biggest challenge.
- We're hoping it can help attract more employees. Overall we think it's a really beneficial project for the company [Northrup Grumman].
- I can't imagine the commute for people who have to go "down below". Want to see more jobs created in Palmdale, and the PTC contributes to that

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The absence of a strong community orientation in Palmdale was described by several of the interviewees. Participants felt that people in Palmdale want to feel a greater connection to the community. A more vital central gathering place may be provided as part of "transit-oriented development." More immediately, planning for TOD should involve outreach and engagement. This was felt to be especially true in the TOD Study Area. There in particular, many people have relocated from elsewhere; may feel they do not have a voice; and need a reason to feel invested in the community.

- I hate going home to my neighborhood at night because everyone just does the “double-click:” go into their garage, close their garage. The commute is so difficult they just want to be home
- Want an area where people can go and engage with each other
- People really want to be connected, they don’t want to be transient, but they need to be given a reason.
- There is a large Hispanic population in the City. The City should reach out to Hispanic developers.
- High Speed Rail is a big project that is going to greatly affect the City. What the community will want to know is, how is this project going to create any jobs? What is the contribution going to be back to the community with the train coming in? How will it bring life into Palmdale?
- A large portion of the residents in the community come through the congregation. Their objection is not the rail or the station but they want to know how these projects are going to meet their needs. How are you going to improve my child’s education? The core of the challenge is that no one is talking to the community about how these projects respond to their needs. How does the social fabric get integrated into the vision? Community ownership will come if the project responds to their needs. At minimum, the community needs to feel their concerns are heard and their needs are recognized.
- How can we engage Northrop Grumman employees in the process? We have gone and met with them and got good feedback after they loosened up. Lockheed’s got similar employee organizations we can reach out to. We ought to go to the hospital too.
- I saw a lot of families walking to TNOTS [Thursday Night in the Square] in the evening. What TNOTS showed us was that when you have an activity that draws people from outside the Civic Center area but doesn’t engage the immediate community.

Sense of Ownership and Belonging in the TOD Study Area

- Community engagement needs to take place. No ownership in the community. Whatever you put there, people don’t feel like they have a say in it.
- Seeing improvement in the types of people in the neighborhood. We struggle with “the LA mindset” coming in, but good families in both these neighborhoods.
- People don’t just commute to work, they commute for recreation: they go back to LA for the weekend because that’s where they’re connected. We have to make it so they stop doing that.
- If people don’t believe in the elementary school they won’t stay

- The turnover at Yucca Elementary School creates a huge challenge. We had meetings there recently and there wasn't the level of engagement you'd expect, especially around an elementary school.
- Multifamily housing in the area tends to be a very transient. Some of the single-family houses have a lot of owner occupancy and longer-term residents. You'd be surprised, this [Focus] neighborhood has more ownership than some.
- Right now they feel like "why invest my time and energy in a bad neighborhood?"
- People like to see the YouthBuild students out in the neighborhood
- I have families that say I have hit rock bottom. It doesn't get any lower than this.
- There are people in the City who want to see it as Mayberry and don't want to engage this community. We need to think about "what's the culture of our downtown area?"
- It's a very low income area near the Yucca Elementary School.
- The TOD3 area is a very transient area. There is about a 50% turnover rate in the school children. This is changing somewhat since the development of the transit center. There is low parent involvement in the school.

PROMOTING A VISION AND CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

Some participants emphasized the value of providing a compelling vision of the future in Palmdale, to build excitement in the community as well as attract developer interest. Some participants related that there are negative images of Palmdale that need to be counteracted.

- The City should publicize what is planned [with regard to high speed rail, the station, and surrounding development] and let the community know what is going on. The City needs to educate the public and create a positive public opinion. Talk to the community, educate them, excite them, and get them involved.
- Everything the community needs to be successful exists today: affordable housing, good schools, access to healthcare, shopping, jobs, good weather. Promote this and let the community know about all the good elements.
- People's, including investors', perception of Palmdale is a barrier. They are not aware of all the things Palmdale has to offer.
- There is a public relations component that the City needs to undertake.
- The City should spend the money and time to develop models, pictures, schematics, and other tools to tell the story of the ultimate vision for the area.
- The only certainty in marketing is that you can't do it once. The City needs to tell their story to investors and developers a number of times and then one day they'll remember.

- Get the plan in place. Then publicize what is here and what is possible. The City will be doing a lot of work and won't be seeing a lot of immediate results. Then, when the rail and commercial air come on-line, the City will see the vision realized.
- Hold a design competition to garner interest and publicity.
- Division Street divides East Palmdale and West Palmdale. Maybe it should be called something other than "Division."
- Help folks feel good and invest in their own neighborhood
- Change in perception needed to make the convenience factors come into focus. Look at downtown LA: it used to be you'd be crazy to want to live there. Now it's seen as convenient, lively, etc.
- Public safety, demographics, haves and have-nots: these were the main concerns when we met with young employees [at Northrup Grumman].

OPENNESS TO CHANGE

Some participants were asked how they felt the community's attitude would be toward change in the Study Areas that might bring about a higher scale of buildings and mix of uses. While some people noted that there may be initial resistance, they felt it could be overcome through outreach, and that there was a general agreement that the city and the area should be enhanced.

- The community is open to change in these areas and would like to see some life breathed into the area.
- Community may be resistant to change in this area, but only because of lack of knowledge about what's going on. Need to reach out. People will be looking for how it will affect them. If people can see their situation would be improved they would support – they need to see that the future opportunities would be better than the current housing and services
- Resistance to change and higher density is a minority. The area is in transition; declined after introduction of lots of multifamily housing.
- Don't think anyone would be resistant to change. Anything that moves the City forward would be good. Anything that is family oriented or that establishes a destination would be embraced by the community.

IMPORTANCE OF MAJOR TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENTS, AND THE NEED FOR A LONG-TERM VIEW

Several participants stated that High Speed Rail and other major transportation investments could have important and positive impacts in Palmdale. Participants also believed that the high-density and mixed-use development will also be feasible in Palmdale in the coming years. The challenge,

they felt, would be in realizing the potential brought by the transportation investments and the changing real estate market, to create positive change in Palmdale over the long term.

- The impact of High Speed Rail will be huge – and can be very positive.
- The ability to pull together with the different modes of transportation is going to make or break the area.
- If transit is there, there are no zoning related barriers to development. If transit is not there, there are barriers and development is a challenge.
- Having commercial air service will have a significant impact on the possibilities and potential in Palmdale, particularly in the transit station area. The airport needs commercial flights that serve cities east.
- Two High Speed Rail lines are a game changer.
- The biggest challenge facing TOD development in Palmdale is timing. In order to get the “biggest bang for your buck” and really realize the development potential, the transportation improvements need to happen at the same time development is going in.
- No one is going to invest and build anything of note until the transportation services are there. It won’t make economic sense until those improvements are in place.
- The residential market is recovering. Single family and multi-family development may start to happen soon. Retail development demand is based on a “traffic and trips” calculation. Significant office development will take longer to occur and will likely be tied to the presence of rail.
- Implementation will take time and the City will need to be patient. The first five years after the development of the plan will see some change. At year 10, if you squint your eyes, you will start to see it come together. Sometime between years 20 and 30 is when you’ll really see things happening.
- We should set 20-year timeline and be realistic, set expectations correctly and get buy-in

Conclusions

As discussed in the Key Themes section, several themes emerged that help to guide the planning efforts. Stakeholders supported the City’s goals of bringing about new, higher-intensity and mixed-use development associated with a future High Speed Rail station, and they felt the larger community would also be supportive if the City reached out to inform and inspire. People spoke of the potential for upscale multifamily housing, entertainment uses, and neighborhood gathering places to find a foothold in Palmdale, and make the city a better place to live. The Palmdale TOD Study Area was seen as being a challenging environment for development, with a population in need of better sidewalks, parks, and public safety.

The TOD Overlay project will result in regulatory changes related to land use, circulation, and streetscape and urban design. Input received from stakeholders covered a wide variety of topics and issues, all related to planning and livability, but not all related specifically to the charge of this project. All of the comments are included in this report because they are vital and reflect stakeholders concerns; they are important for the City to consider for other efforts. However, it is important to note that not all of the issues identified by stakeholders are directly related to the limited purposes of the TOD Overlay project which is to update land use regulations and identify circulation and streetscape improvements in support of TOD.

These comments will be considered as the project moves forward.

Appendix A

List of Participants

<i>Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Joe Ahn	Northrup Grumman
Marsha Furman	Neighborhood Resident
Troy Gabbard	Northrup Grumman
Steve Hofbauer	City Council, City of Palmdale
Rossie Johnson	President/CEO, Advancing Communities Together Inc.
George Jung	Northrup Grumman
Jim Ledford	Mayor, City of Palmdale
Elaine MacDonald	AV Trails, Recreation, and Environmental Committee
Susan McDougal	President, R. Rex Parris High School
Mark McGaughey	CB Richard Ellis
Mike Miller	Director of Neighborhood Services, City of Palmdale
Bill Penn	Rally Auto Group
Craig Peters	CB Richard Ellis
Rich Poston	Palmdale African-American Chamber of Commerce
Richard Ramirez	CB Richard Ellis
Al Tsai	Facilities Manager, Palmdale School District
Andrew Turner	Pastor, New Covenant Tabernacle
Ira Yasnogorodsky	Palmdale International Shopping Mall
Lev Yasnogorodsky	Palmdale International Shopping Mall

DYETT & BHATIA
Urban and Regional Planners

755 Sansome Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, California 94111
☎ 415 956 4300 📠 415 956 7315