



PALMDALE TOD OVERLAY ZONE

URBAN DESIGN, STREET, AND STREETScape RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

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Prepared for the
City of Palmdale by

MIA LEHRER+ASSOCIATES
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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I Introduction

I.1 Purpose of this Report

This report presents recommendations for guidelines and design guidelines for streetscape and open space development. Streets form the underlying network for connectivity in the Palmdale TOD Study Area (shown in Figure 1-1), and this community can be given form and charm through streetscape design.

The Urban Design, Street, and Streetscape Recommendations Report for the Palmdale TOD Overlay Zone project is a companion document to the Palmdale TOD Overlay Zone Land Use Framework Plan, which serves as the land use regulatory document to guide development in the Study Area, and the Palmdale TOD Overlay Zone Transportation Report, which provides a connectivity framework.

REPORT OBJECTIVES

Objectives support the Land Use Framework Plan and accomplish the following:

- Create transit-oriented development with beautiful streetscapes and public spaces.
- Create new neighborhood parks, linear parks, community-serving active-use park and recreation facilities, and school sites.

- Increase development within walking and biking distance of transit, jobs and shopping to support affordable, healthy, and sustainable lifestyles.
- Encourage the use of local hardscape and softscape materials.
- Design with a family of related elements for continuity and community identity.
- Incorporate sustainable strategies.
- Encourage Palmdale to develop a clear and easy design approval process.

I.2 Guiding Policies and their Relationship to other Plans & Implementation

Refer to the Palmdale TOD Overlay Zone Land Use Framework Plan and specifically to the Palmdale TOD Overlay Zone Transportation Report for background for this report. Thoroughfare policies, networks and types and transit facilities and access as presented in the Transportation Report form the framework for the landscape hard- and softscape improvements identified in this report.

1.3 Summary of Recommendations & Phasing

The following policies guide Urban Design, Streetscape and Open Space development:

- **UDSOS-G-1** Connect Existing Assets and Destinations; Use Unified Design Guidelines

Palmdale is cut by State Route 14 and the existing rail lines. The Land Use Framework Plan neutralizes these physical barriers, and a family of streetscape design elements can strengthen connections. Connectivity can also be expressed through the design of a network of parks and greenbelts or open space corridors. An Open Space strategy improves the park network using pedestrian and street connections to bring amenities to all residents within a reasonable walking and biking distance.

- **UDSOS-G-2** Create Great Streets

Comfortable, tree-shaded, pedestrian-friendly streets are enjoyable for people to live along, can contribute to neighborly interaction, and lead to higher levels of walking and bicycling. They are safe and easy to navigate. As connectors they can provide a unifying structure for neighborhoods and weave communities together into one integrated fabric.

- **UDSOS-G-3** Create Great Spaces

Successful public spaces are accessible, people engage in activities there, the space is comfortable and visually attractive, and it is a place where people socialize. They are welcoming and friendly. Great spaces have shade, they are destinations, and they are oriented to adjacent land use and support the context around them. They are kept clean and safe 24 hours a day and 365 days a year.

- **UDSOS-G-4** Parks and Community Gathering Spaces.

Incorporate parks and community gathering spaces to improve the area's appearance and create recreational, social, and educational opportunities.

- **UDSOS-G-5** New Parks and Recreation Facilities.

Create new neighborhood parks, linear parks, community-serving active-use park and recreation facilities, and school sites.

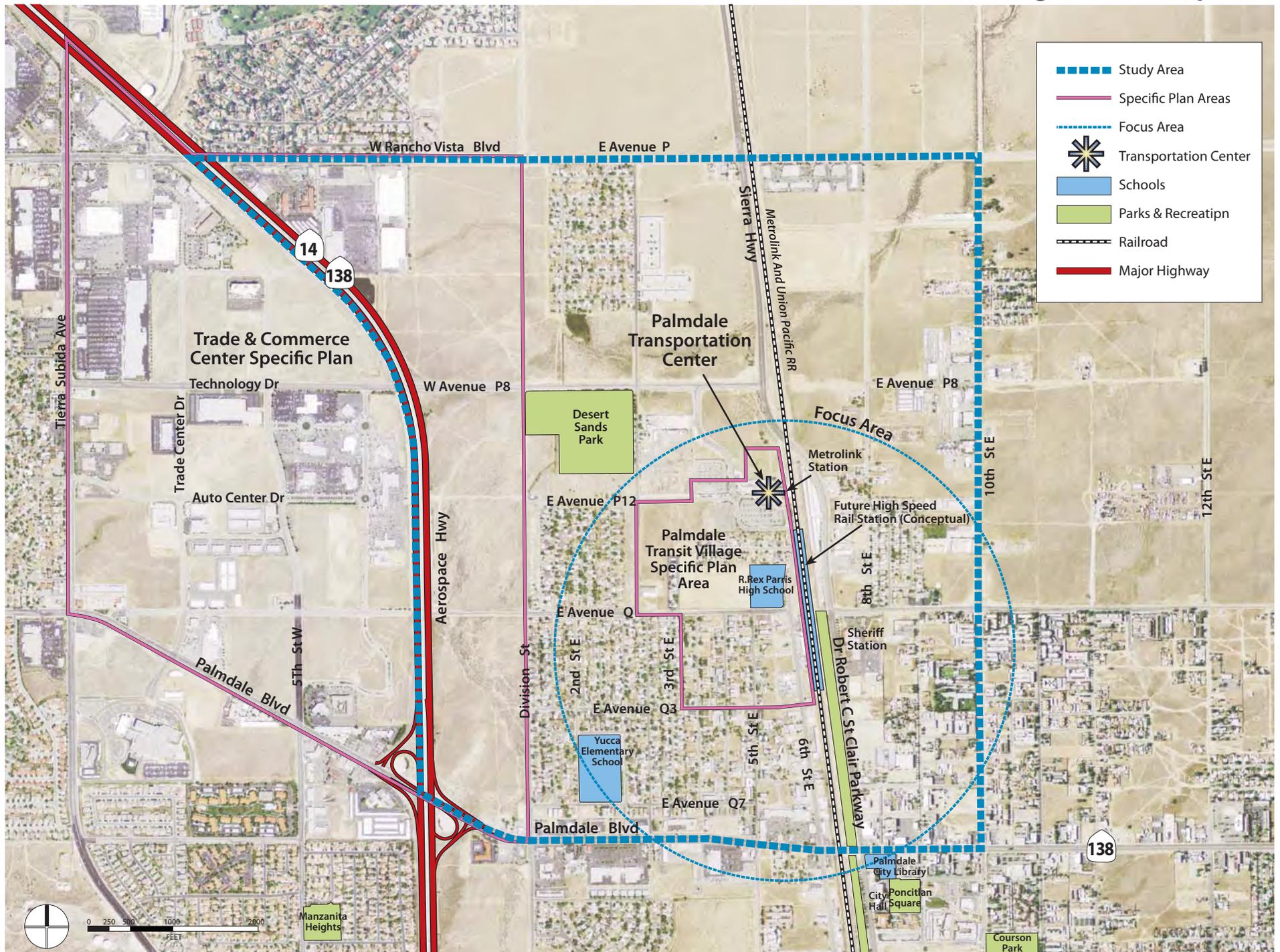
- **UDSOS-G-6** Open Space System. Set aside a connected corridor of preserved open space that serves to buffer future freeway and High Speed Rail infrastructure, keep drainage areas free of development, and provide for a trail system.

- **UDSOS-G-7** Enhance Existing Parks and Streetscapes. Provide additional amenities in an expanded Desert Sands Park.

- **UDSOS-G-8** Design with Local Materials

Materials - hardscape and plant material - used for streetscape and placemaking should reflect the character and ecology of the area and celebrate Palmdale's past, present and future.

Figure I-1: Study Area



Palmdale TOD Overlay Zone
Urban Design, Street, and Streetscape Recommendations Report

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- **UDSOS-G-9** Design with a Family of Elements

Develop a family of design elements that establishes unity and continuity within the Study Area and that can adjust or respond to the immediate context but that also retains its essence. These forms, shapes, patterns, colors, and textures form the design basis for site identity and image and can be part of what defines open space in Palmdale.

- **UDSOS-G-10** Incorporate Sustainable Strategies

Live with the land, not against it. Incorporate Best Management Practices and methods and strategies to collect and distribute stormwater or runoff, acknowledging that we must work as stewards of our natural resources if we want to live well today and plan for future generations.



Palmdale desertscapes.

PHASING

All UDSOS-G policies are dependent upon the implementation of the Land Use Framework Plan and Transportation Report recommendations and would be coordinated with development within the TOD framework. The Land Use Framework Plan and this report should also be thought of as living documents, which will need to be regularly updated and refined. Over the coming years, long-range planning efforts will continue. Plans and schedule for implementation of the California High-Speed Rail, the Xpress West High-Speed Rail, and other major infrastructure can be expected to change and evolve: the Land Use Framework Plan and this report will then likely need to be amended so that it reflects the most current status.



Palmdale TOD Overlay Zone
Urban Design, Street, and Streetscape Recommendations Report



Ecologically-appropriate planting and hardscape for the climate zone.

2 Existing Conditions Analysis

2.1 Parks and Open Space

PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITY AMENITIES

The Study Area has 28 acres of public space that includes two parks: Desert Sands Park and the Robert C. St. Clair Parkway.

Desert Sands Park is on a 20-acre site at the southwest corner of Avenue P-8 and 3rd Street East. The park was built in 1992 and is an active recreation park that contains an activity building, concession stand, sports fields, picnic area and tennis courts. There is a future expansion planned of 11 additional acres that will include additional lit sports fields, parking, restrooms and conversion of the existing soccer field into a football stadium.

The Robert C. St. Clair Parkway is an 8-acre linear park that contains passive open space. Amenities include a bike trail, pedestrian trails, benches, tables and lighting. The Parkway is located on the west side of Sierra Highway between Avenue Q and Avenue R. The Parkway was completed in 2002.

SCHOOLS

As new development takes place within Palmdale and the population increases, it will be important to increase park and open space to ensure a high quality of life. School yards are a underutilized open space that are often located in residential neighborhoods. A joint use agreement with the Palmdale School

District would allow for making school yards accessible during evenings and weekends when the schools are not in session.

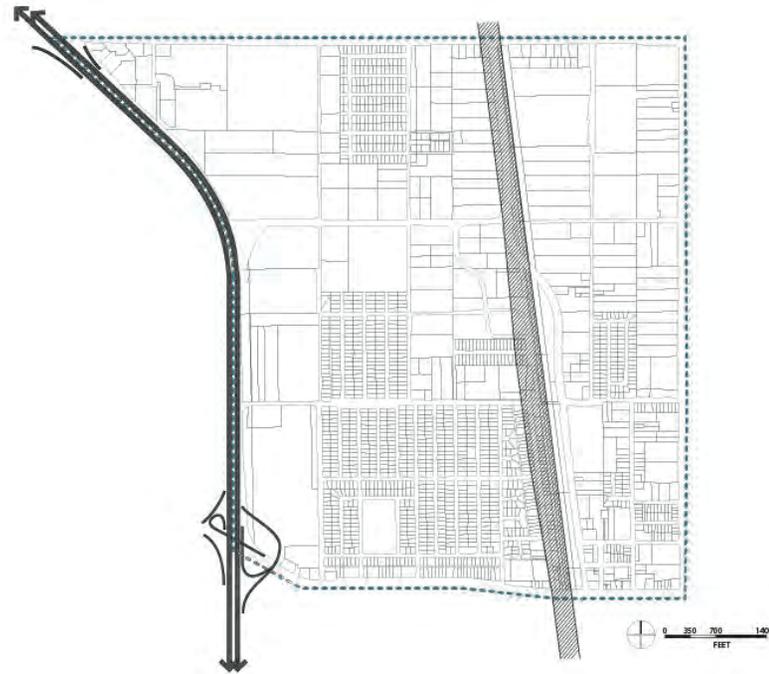
At present the Study Area contains two schools; Yucca Elementary School and Rex Parris High School; however, planning should include the potential for new schools and relocation of existing schools. Providing access to these recreational spaces would benefit the broader populace and help foster a sense of community.

2.2 Connectivity

The existing roadway network does not provide a clear hierarchy of street types. Many streets in the Study Area are major transit corridors resulting in high traffic speeds with little or no attention to pedestrians, cyclists or other potential modes of transportation. California State Route 14 and the Union Pacific and Metrolink rail lines slice through the Study Area, creating dividers in the community that physically and perceptually disconnect and isolate portions of the City.

In the Palmdale TOD Study Area, there is a need to create a roadway network with a variety of street types that adhere to design standards including curbs, gutters, parkways, sidewalks, landscape, lighting, and signage.

Figure 2-1: Slices – California State Rt. 14 and the North - South Rail Lines



2.3 Landscape

Existing edges along California State Route 14 are open ground with natural landscape, unplanted, with no buffer from the freeway. Commercial development related to sales and service of vehicles as well as the commercial corridor along Palmdale Blvd. have brought medians and streetscape enhancements that are healthy and maintained. In other areas there are no medians, street trees or elements that provide shade or mediate the

environment that have been installed and are maintained by the City in the public right of way.



Residential Streetscapes: Lack of consistency in edge conditions – limited sidewalks for walking to school.

Palmdale’s current plant palette contains plants that are not suited to Palmdale’s environmental conditions, that have high water needs or require shade, maintenance and extra care, an investment on the part of the City. Without attention, plant material that is not native or native adaptive has a difficult time thriving for these reasons, the majority of medians and public plantings within the Study Area are failing. A different design choice, one that selects landscaping and hardscape materials, from the local area, can look beautiful and require much less intervention and resources.

Figure 2-2: Existing Street Trees and Trees in Medians



Existing medians and parkways. One of the few blocks with trees in the parkway, the space between the sidewalk and street.. Different hardscape and plant choices would mean less maintenance and better appearance.



Existing appropriate sidewalk landscape.

Existing Streetscape



Existing median landscape: Palmdale Blvd. at SR 14.



Existing median landscape.



Existing medians. Hardscape under trees contributes to heat island effect and provides less than optimum growing conditions.



Existing trees in medians: Avenue Q at 3rd.

Model Streetscapes



Harbor Blvd., Costa Mesa, median landscape.



San Dimas Blvd., San Dimas, drought tolerant median.



Desert streetscape in Palm Springs.



Simple but effective street/sidewalk desert plantings.

3 Urban Design, Streetscape & Open Space Recommendations

3.1 The Vision: Guiding Policies

Unified urban design – placemaking – uses structure and landscape to define and energize pedestrian-oriented spaces such as streets and sidewalks, parks, plazas and squares, as well as the connections that link them. In this way, we build a pattern of organized, interconnected places that may be very diverse but that together create a variety of places that accommodate a range of urban activities. Under the guidelines and recommendations in this report, the Study Area would be transformed with a clear orientation to a new multimodal Palmdale Station along the Avenue Q corridor. The vision for streetscape design is based on the following six guiding principles:

- **UDSOS-G-1** Connect Existing Assets and Destinations; Use Unified Design Guidelines
- **UDSOS-G-2** Create Great Streets
- **UDSOS-G-3** Create Great Spaces
- **UDSOS-G-4** Design with Local Materials
- **DSOS-G-5** Design with a Family of Elements
- **DSOS-G-6** Incorporate Sustainable Strategies

UDSOS-G-1 Connect Existing Assets and Destinations; Use Unified Design Guidelines

SR 14 and the rail lines slice through the Study Area, creating dividers in the community that physically and perceptually disconnect and isolate portions of the city. The Land Use Framework Plan neutralizes these physical barriers, and a family of streetscape design elements can strengthen connections. Improved connectivity within the Study Area and to the surrounding neighborhoods and Civic Center will enhance the area’s accessibility and role as a citywide destination and are most effective if they support a larger vision for the shape and character of the district. Refer to the Transportation Report and Land Use Framework Plan for the proposed street layout of the Study Area.

Connectivity can also be expressed through the design of a network of parks and greenbelts or open space corridors. Develop open space corridors along the highway and rail lines to buffer these activities from life in the community and live/work/play spaces. Open space corridors can also be developed as trail/bicycle/walking routes with park or activity nodes and as a visual delight that enriches the image of and life in the community.

An Open Space System includes the creation of a park – the only park in the Avenue Q Study Area apart from a recreational area around a proposed school site - and bringing amenities to all residents within a reasonable walking and biking distance. New development should require a strong relationship with the new park, plazas and streets. The focus should be on maximizing visibility and safety and open space development, and providing varied types of spaces that meet a wide range of needs for the community.

All networks should be designed with unified design standards for sidewalks, parkways, curbs, street appropriate trees and amenities.

UDSOS-G-2 Create Great Streets

Living rooms are commonly defined as places for general and informal everyday use, for common social activities of the occupants. In a larger, more abstract sense, well-designed streets can serve this function in a community. Tree-shaded, pedestrian-friendly streets are enjoyable for people to live along, can contribute to neighborly interaction, and lead to higher levels of walking and bicycling. They are safe and easy to navigate. As connectors they can weave communities together into one integrated fabric.

Streets with comfortable sidewalks and planted parkways and medians can provide a unifying structure for neighborhoods. Street trees provide shade canopy, define the street public ROW edges, can introduce seasonal change and color, and contribute to wayfinding. Enhanced street crossings for both bicyclists and pedestrians along with dedicated bike lanes where feasible should be of the highest priority. Shade trees that are climate appropriate will improve the pedestrian experience, increase property values and reduce heat island effects.

Great streets are Complete Streets, safe and attractive for all modes of movement with strong links to local destinations as well as adjacent districts. They are essential for enhancing livability and encouraging investment for and the success of a transit-oriented plan for Palmdale.

Streetscape improvements define corridors linking destinations within and adjacent to the Station. The expansion of the existing adjacent grids of small-grain residential blocks through the creation of a network of local connector streets improves connections among existing and proposed assets and destinations. This circulation system accommodates the full range of vehicular access – cars, busses, taxis – but also promotes all modes of

movement, including walking, bicycling, and those of the impaired, particularly connecting non-vehicular modes of travel to the station.



A double allee of desert trees along sidewalks offers relief from the sun and makes walking enjoyable.

UDSOS-G-3 Create Great Spaces

Successful public spaces typically have four key qualities: they are accessible, people engage in activities there, the space is comfortable and visually attractive, and it is a place where people socialize.

Great public spaces, including existing or proposed parks, community gathering spaces and recreation facilities, are welcoming and friendly. Everyone, including visitors and Non-English speakers, can orient themselves and navigate through the space easily. There is a variety of seating that gives choice to the visitor, and amenities for transit users and visitors.

Great spaces have shade – trees or structures – and pedestrian-scale lighting. Shade trees improve the pedestrian environment, increase property values, and reduce urban heat island effects. There is some selected retail, including sidewalk vending, with clear access. Often public art and streetscape elements (plantings, pavement designs, public art, historical markers, wayfinding

signage, etc.) reflect the character and ecology of the area and celebrate a city’s past, present and future.



Connect buildings with streetscape and sidewalks through interesting articulation and plazas.

Great spaces are destinations. They generate daily and seasonal activities, flexibility for spatial and temporal diversity of program. There may be street interventions such as festival streets, cultural markers, and gateway elements that make the space and adjacent area a place to visit and linger. Utilize seasonal strategies to attract people throughout the year.

Great spaces are also oriented to adjacent land use and support the context around them. Edges of through-ways are buffered. Spaces are designed for identity and image.



Articulation of buildings and wide sidewalk plazas activate streets.

UDSOS-G-4 Design with Local Materials

Materials - hardscape and plant material - used for streetscape and placemaking should reflect the character and ecology of the area and celebrate Palmdale’s past, present and future.

UDSOS-G-5 Design with a Family of Elements

Develop a family of design elements that can adjust or respond to the immediate context but that also retains its essence and establishes unity and continuity within the Study Area. This toolkit includes paving materials, colors, textures and patterns; shapes and forms repeated in site furniture, design of spatial layout, planting beds and paths; a color palette used in hard- and softscape. These forms, shapes, patterns, colors, and textures form the design basis for site identity and image and can be part of what defines open space in Palmdale.



Found spaces. Even small spaces between buildings can be beautiful

UDSOS-G-6 Incorporate Sustainable Strategies

Living with the land, not against it, means acknowledging that water is a limited, shared resource and that we must work as stewards of our natural resources if we want to live well today and plan for future generations. Incorporate Best Management Practices and methods and strategies to collect, clean and distribute runoff, condensate, and stormwater.



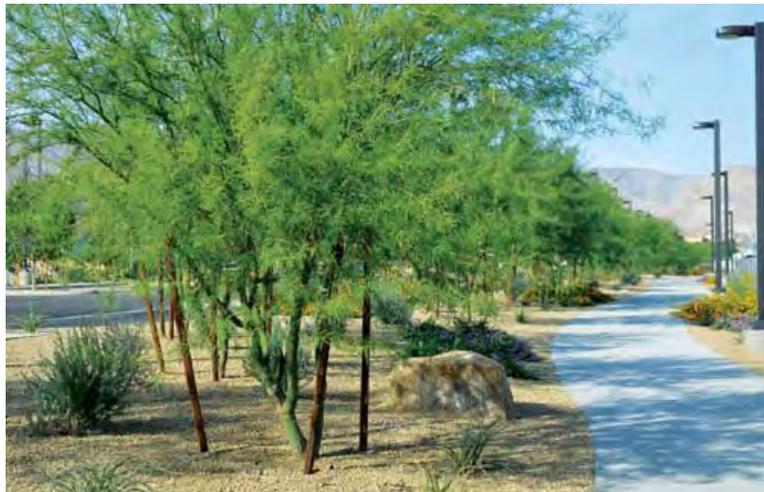
Plazas can be interesting with hardscape and limited local plant material.

3.2 Implementation

MAXIMIZE CONNECTIVITY

UDSOS-I-1 Connect Existing Assets and Destinations; Use Unified Design Guidelines

Create a roadway network of streets with unified design standards for sidewalks, parkways, curbs, street trees and amenities. See *Land Use Framework Plan and Transportation Report for street layout. Thoroughfare types and TR-I-5 reference for Design Standards.*



Appropriate street median landscaping for Palmdale's ecology.

GREAT STREETS: GREEN, COOL,* COMPLETE

UDSOS-I-2 Develop a Street Tree Master Plan

Develop a Street Tree Master Plan to provide orientation, recognition, and wayfinding; establish character; and provide

environmental benefits. Identify key streets and gateway nodes as well as neighborhoods or zones for a consistent appearance in wayfinding, site furnishings and public art that reflects the culture of the city.

*Cool: The use of solar reflective materials to mitigate heat islands so that pavement stays cooler in the sun than conventional paving.

UDSOS-I-3 Design for Green Streets

Design all streets to be green, cool, Complete Streets that support all transportation modes: automobiles, buses, pedestrians, bicycles, taxis, and mobility of the impaired, the young and the elderly.

Green Streets Goals:

- Control the sources of runoff, condensate and stormwater to limit pollutants and capture and clean water
- Limit transport of runoff
- Environmentally enhance roads

Green Streets Design Objectives (required):

- Plant climate-appropriate trees and vegetation on both sides of the street where feasible
- Use mulch to limit weed growth and reduce evaporation of moisture
- Install bioswales to retain and treat stormwater and runoff
- Use curb cuts to direct water into planting areas
- Install permeable pavement that infiltrates water where it falls

Figure 2-3: Major and Minor Greenway Corridors – Special Treatments



UDSOS-I-4 Design for ‘Cool’ Streets

‘Cool’ Streets Goals:

- Reduce heat island effect through use of solar reflective material

‘Cool’ Streets Design Objectives (required):

- Plant climate-appropriate trees and vegetation where feasible

Figure 2-4: Major and Minor Green Corridors – Fine Grain Residential



- Install cool pavement to reduce surface temperature (reflective slurry seal, chip seal, resin, white-topping, permeable, vegetative, etc., - pavement that reflects)

UDSOS-I-5 Design for Complete Streets

Complete Streets Goals:

- Enable safe access for all users: No one mode of transportation dominates
- Provide a positive experience for all users
- Provide safe routes to schools and parks

- Design for all streets, both phased-in retrofit and new
- Manage for success: cite and fine for abuse or misuse, and educate for good practice

Complete Streets Design Objectives (required):

- Design convenient and accessible paths of travel
- Ensure visibility
- Design well-marked, visible street crossings
- Keep vehicle stop lines back from pedestrian crossings
- Provide furnishings through clearly identified zones: each zone may have its own character but within a family of design elements that unifies across zones
- Provide bike parking/racks/corrals
- Provide transit accommodations: bus shelters, benches, posted schedules and fares on streets with transit service
- Provide attractive edge uses: human-scaled with interaction between indoors and out
- Select and install climate-appropriate street trees
- Install pedestrian scale lighting:
 - Install at a maximum 14’ above adjacent pavement
 - Select closely-spaced fixtures with lower light levels over fixtures spaced further apart that need higher light levels
 - Shield lighting and direct downward
 - Avoid light trespass: spillover into adjacent areas
 - Use more intimate lighting in residential neighborhoods than lighting in public spaces

- Coordinate light poles with other streetscape elements
- Coordinate with other utilities (above/below ground)
- Select white light for safety and general visibility
- Specify energy-efficient fixtures
- Create a schedule so that pedestrian lights can be dimmed or turned off if they supplement street lighting when pedestrian activity decreases at night
- Ensure that lighting is uniform throughout a block

Complete Streets Design Objectives (recommended):

- Install medians and islands where feasible and landscape with climate-appropriate material
- Install bicycle lanes
- Design continuous, comfortable, safe, accessible, wide and maintained sidewalks
- Provide pedestrian lighting to reduce the number and severity of traffic accidents
- Install audible signals
- Use pedestrian count-down timers
- Provide decorative pavement
- Incorporate textured pavers for areas with high volumes of pedestrian traffic
- Design sidewalks with areas to be used for purposes other than circulation: outdoor eating, temporary art installations, food or product carts, farmers markets, hubs for community events, public displays, etc.

- Expand street furnishings (trash cans, news racks, additional street furniture)

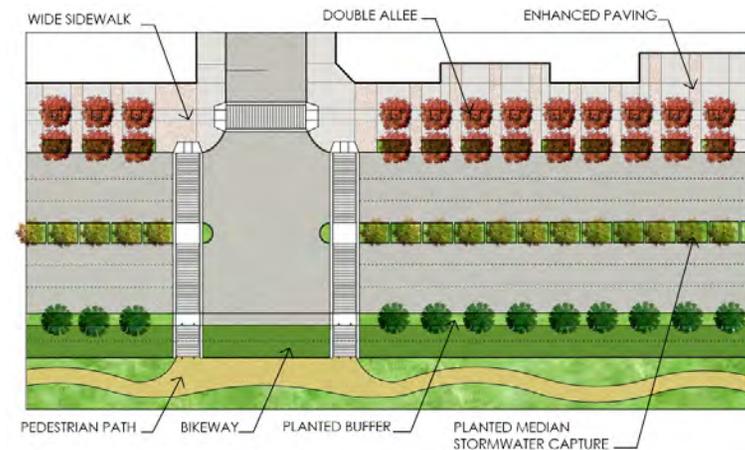
CREATE GREAT STREETS IN PALMDALE

UDSOS-I-6 Create a Hierarchy of Corridors

See Figures 2-3 and 2-4. Also refer to the Transportation Report and the Land Use Framework Plan.

Major Greenway Corridor (Transit Corridor, Downtown Thoroughfare): Avenue Q

- Install double allee of climate-appropriate trees where feasible
- Design wide sidewalks
- Design in zones that respond to the immediate context but have design elements that are unified with the balance of the City: decorative paving, seating, site path layout, wayfinding, historical markers, etc.
- Create and design spaces, including courtyards and corridors, visible to the street
- Incorporate corner plazas, courtyards, forecourts, and other street-level open spaces to identify and establish special locations in the area
- Create a block-by-block open space network by contributing to street-level interconnectedness
- Establish transition zones between corridor zones
- Design day and nighttime use and include lighting
- Provide site furnishings: seating, trash receptacles, bike corrals/racks



Conceptual Complete Street Design: Major Greenway Corridor. See Transit Report for Palmdale thoroughfare types and street layout

Minor Greenway Corridors (Neighborhood Main Street, Commercial Shared Street)

- Install 5-8' sidewalks with parkway
- Install pedestrian and vehicular lighting
- Create transition zones between public/private
- Install single line of climate-appropriate street trees in parkway, both sides of street
- Install amenities: trash receptacles, seating, bike racks
- Enhance paving

Network of Neighborhood Streets

- Install curbs, curb cuts, ramps
- Install 5-6' sidewalks, with optional parkway (evaluated on block-by-block or neighborhood basis)
- Install single line of climate-appropriate trees in parkway

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 Urban Design, Street, and Streetscape Recommendations Report



Conceptual Complete Street Design: Neighborhood Corridor. See Transportation Report for Palmdale



Street with street trees and median.



Residential neighborhood in Tucson with drought-tolerant street trees.



Conceptual Complete Street Design: Minor Greenway Corridor. See Transportation Report for Palmdale thoroughfare types and street layout.



A single row of drought-tolerant street trees



Desert streetscapes.



Civano, Arizona, public landscape



Palm Springs landscape.



Desert landscape.

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Urban Design, Street, and Streetscape Recommendations Report



Residential Streetscape - Existing



Residential Streetscape – Recommended improvements within reach



Medians: Existing and potential. Local planting, shade

UDSOS-I-7 Create a Great Public Space

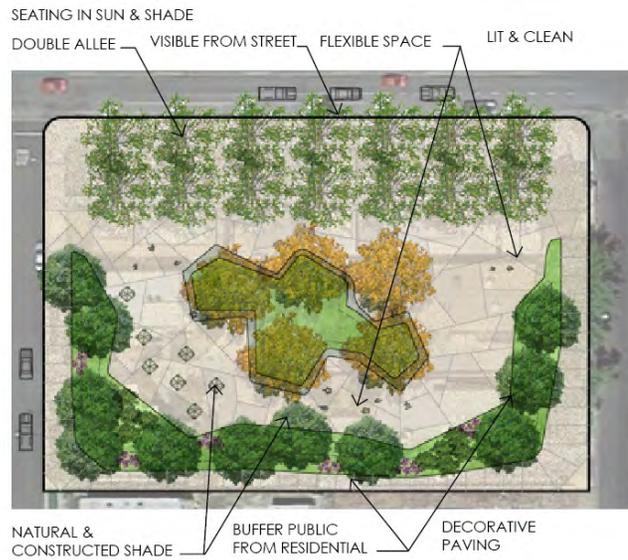
Refer to the Land Use Plan for identification of existing and potential areas for civic plazas, POPOs (Commercial/Business Mix), recreation and open space and shared use spaces.

- Design with a double allee or groves of trees.
- Provide both shaded and sunlit areas during different times of the day. Shade can be provided by trees, shading structures, awnings, canopies or umbrellas.
- Create wide sidewalks.
- Create and design spaces, including courtyards and corridors, visible to the street, visible up close, and visible at a distance. Create gateways for orientation and visibility.
- Incorporate corner plazas, courtyards, forecourts, and other street-level open spaces to identify and establish special locations in the area.
- Provide a variety of open spaces that accommodate different activities and needs. Small, intimate spaces can offer respite from daily activities, while larger, active open spaces can offer a place for meeting people or for events. Select the type of open space that fits best with the scale and use of the surrounding buildings.
- Establish active and flexible open spaces along portions of building frontages for landscaping, outdoor gathering and dining, enhanced sidewalk width, bicycle storage and other amenities that enhance the use of the pedestrian realm. Utilize landscaped perimeter open space at property boundaries to demarcate and screen commercial uses from adjoining residential land uses.
- Include an element of surprise such as change of surface, forms or elements to reflect the character of the space. Special features, choice of materials and color or a unique design or shape can contribute to the distinct character of an open space, ranging from playful to stark or minimalistic.
- Establish transition zones between the back of the sidewalk and street level entries.
- Design open spaces for day and nighttime use and include lighting. Lighting should act as an integral part of the open space design.
- Blend uses and modes: ground floor uses and retail activities spill out into the sidewalks to blur the distinction between public and private space.
- Plan for diverse user groups.
- Provide well-designed seating of different varieties, including seat walls, planter ledges, free-standing elements, benches, moveable seating, fixed seating and seating steps. Seating can also be incorporated in free-flowing, sculptural forms that are part of the landscape design. Seating should be comfortable and designed to human proportions.
- Include landscaped areas and trees in all open spaces. Upper-level and rooftop open spaces should be landscaped and can be opportunities to experience the outdoors and enhance the quality of indoor space.

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Station Plaza: Accessible, comfortable, engaging, flexible, social.



Station Plaza enlargement



Rancho Mirage City Hall: a desert public space



A desert garden.

POPOS: COMMERCIAL COURTYARDS & PLAZAS

While ‘Privately Owned Public Open Space’ (POPOS) refers specifically to private property required to be usable by the public under zoning or similar regulatory arrangements, the phrase in its broadest sense can refer to places like shopping malls and hotel lobbies, that are privately owned and open to the public, even if they are not legally required to be open to the public.

POPOs may look and on the whole feel like public spaces but studies report that there is a set of invisible codes that shape our behavior in public spaces – how to hold yourself, where you think you can sit, who you can talk to – and no one is quite sure what is allowed in POPOs, who is in charge, and what the codes of behavior should be. The tolerances of POPOs are usually tested by pushing the envelope, although San Francisco and New York City have attempted to codify some rules for social aspects of these spaces through city ordinances that include design principles for area and frontage, accessibility, kiosks and cafes, certification, signage, seating, landscaping (tree amount, size, placement), maintenance and compliance.

Commercial courtyards and plazas are usually places where the public and employees gather, lunch, stroll during restricted hours – business hours – but should conform to City design standards and be subject to compliance.

UDSOS-I-8 Codify Design Criteria for Privately Owned Public Open Space (POPOs)

Codify rules for social aspects of these spaces through City ordinances that include the following:

- Area dimensions
- Hours of operation

- Locational restrictions
- Access and circulation/ADA compliance
- Sidewalk frontage
- Public transit accommodation
- Permitted obstructions (driveway entrances, parking spaces, mechanical equipment)
- Kiosks and open air cafes
- Certification/City licensing/permitting
- Process
- Seating
- Planting/Trees
- Signage
- Maintenance
- Compliance reporting/failure to comply



Privately-owned Public Spaces: Interesting, used, managed.

RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

UDSOS-I-9 Expand/Enhance Existing Parks

Desert Sands Park and the St. Clair Linear Parkway are important resources. Facilities and functions of these spaces must continue to meet community needs. Evaluate these amenities every 5 years.

- Desert Sands Park: Expand to the south to E Ave. P12 to include space for community gardens.
- Robert C. St. Clair Parkway: Continue development to the N from E. Ave Q to 6th St. E where Sierra Highway crosses the railroad tracks where it can connect with the existing improvements on the west side of Sierra Highway.

Figure 2-5: Existing Parks and Greenways

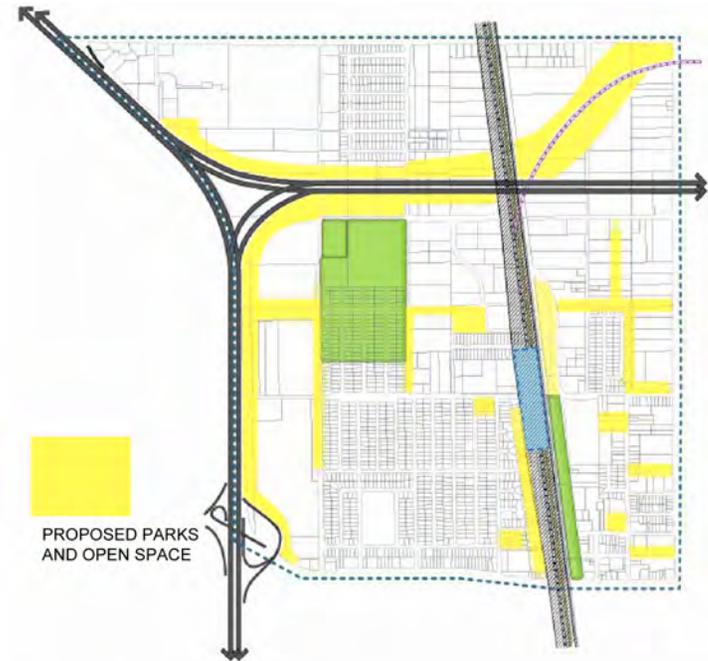


UDSOS-I-10 Create a Network of Community-Serving Parks and Open Space Corridors

Develop new parks, including linear parks, buffer zones, and preservation of natural areas that are opportunistically sited. There are identifiable elements that can transform public spaces into vibrant community parks and open spaces:

- Identify talents and assets within the community and build community ownership.
- Create a place, a design that is comfortable and has a strong sense of community.
- Find partners that can support program and activities: institutions, museums, schools, organizations.
- Observe what works in the community, and what doesn't.
- Have a vision about program and activities in the space in order to make a place where people want to be. Develop a diversity of program as well as attractions and destinations that meet the needs of the communities that are adjacent, through the day, the seasons, the year. Program for all ages and abilities.
- Try short-term strategies and use the ones that work.
- Develop site activities and furnishings to bring people together (triangulation) and encourage higher levels of activity and engagement.
- Have form support function.
- Understand that good parks and open spaces respond to needs and ongoing changes in the community, so be open to change.

Figure 2-6: Expand, Enhance, and Coordinate Existing Parks



- Use a family of design elements that creates a shared identity and builds a community image.
- Design for safety and accessibility (day and night).
- Design for long-term maintenance: keep spaces safe and clean.
- Design for layout flexibility. Design both the 'inner park' and the 'outer park'

UDSOS-I-II Enhance the Urban Forest

An urban forest is a large population of trees within a city. Urban forestry is the planned, careful management of trees in urban settings to improve the urban environment. An urban forest can be manicured or wild, but still managed for health and aesthetic appeal.

Top five benefits of trees:

- Trees clean the air and provide oxygen. They absorb carbon dioxide, removing and storing the carbon while releasing oxygen back into the air. They absorb odors and pollutant gasses and filter particulates out of the air.
- Trees help clean water and prevent water pollution. They catch rainfall and allow it to flow down the trunk and back into the earth, minimizing the pollutants that are carried by storm water.
- Trees help prevent soil erosion on hillsides or stream slopes.
- Trees mediate the climate, reduce the heat island effect, provide shade canopy and habitat for wildlife.
- Trees can give neighborhoods identity and encourage civic pride.

Enhance Palmdale’s urban forest by:

- Creating climate-appropriate freeway forests and linear parks
- Installing street and parking lot trees to provide shade and reduce heat island effect.



Palmdale’s Freeway Forest and linear parks: *Buffer, engage, manage.*



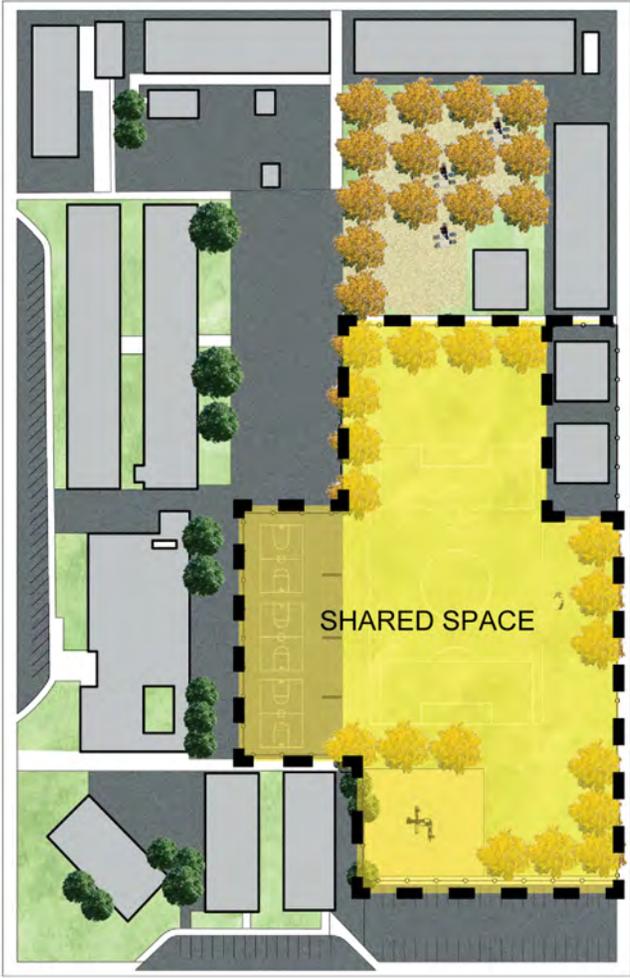
Palmdale's Freeway Forest buffers freeway traffic from residential and commercial areas.

UDSOS-I-12 Create Shared Use: Public & Institutional Facilities

Open school playgrounds and fields to the community. Joint-use is key to making schools the centers of their neighborhoods. New school design and smart retrofit of existing school can accommodate direct community access to spaces like libraries, gyms, auditoriums, health clinics, athletic and recreational fields and performing arts spaces. Athletic fields and facilities used by schools during the day would be available to the community after school hours and on weekends. Reroute existing fencing or plan more comprehensive solutions. Introduce sustainable practices into school sites.



Vista Hermosa Park: The Los Angeles Unified School District shares space with the community, a park designed and built by the private sector on school property under an agreement that benefits both the school and the community.



Shared Spaces: Yucca Elementary School with managed community access in selected areas.

DESIGN WITH LOCAL MATERIALS

UDSOS-I-13 Encourage the Use of Local Materials

Reflect the character and ecology of the area and celebrate Palmdale's past, present, and future through local materials - hardscape and plant material - for streetscape and placemaking.



Boulders quarried near Lancaster, appropriate landscape in a desert environment.



Celebrate local materials.

Palmdale TOD Overlay Zone
Urban Design, Street, and Streetscape Recommendations Report



Ecologically-appropriate plant material looks great. Harvest roof runoff and air conditioning condensate, create bioswales. Design with nature, not against it.

DESIGN WITH A FAMILY OF ELEMENTS

UDSOS-I-14 Develop a Family of Design Elements

Develop a family of design elements that can morph or adjust to respond to the immediate context but that also retains its essence and establishes unity and continuity: same but different.

This tool kit includes paving colors, textures and patterns; shapes and forms repeated in site furniture, design of spatial layout, planting beds and paths; a color palette used in hard- and softscape. These forms/shapes/patterns/colors/textures form the design basis for site identity and image and can be part of what defines open space in Palmdale: elements that apply to streetscape, plazas and courtyards, open space greenbelts, and parks.



Shaded sidewalks with local plant material.

INCORPORATE SUSTAINABLE STRATEGIES

UDSOS-I-15 Harvest Water for Groundwater Recharge

Incorporate the following methods and strategies throughout the project area:

- Harvest street runoff
 - Use parkways to collect and treat street runoff.
 - Direct water into vegetated swales, depressions with plant material that detain, infiltrate and clean water to reduce runoff, and recharge groundwater.
 - Use permeable paving when feasible.



Capture sidewalk runoff.

- Harvest building roof runoff. Drain into rain gardens, planting areas that detain runoff from roofs and parking lots.
- Harvest condensate

- In a dry climate, a home air conditioner can generate 0.25 gallons of condensate a day, and a large commercial air conditioner can generate 500 gallons per day. Condensate is distilled water that does not contain salt although it may contain material leached from the air conditioner’s construction materials.
- Harvest reclaimed water, greywater
 - Reclaimed/recycled water, former water treated and used for irrigation or recharging groundwater aquifers.



Capture street runoff, harvest roof runoff. Bioswales can have different looks.

- Design public areas to maximize pervious pavement and drain to landscaped areas, which allows water to infiltrate into the ground between or through pavers, through subsurface gravel bed. Provide low points on sites to facilitate groundwater recharge.

- Introduce signage that describes the local watershed and rain cycle. Coordinate this with educational efforts in schools.
- Use drought tolerant plant material that grows naturally in the Palmdale area and minimizes need for irrigation and creates habitat for local wildlife.



Use permeable paving and recycled water.

RECOMMENDED ZONING REVISIONS

UDSOS-I-16 Plazas, Parks and Open Spaces

Require land dedication and the collection of facilities financing fees to create a network of neighborhood parks, linear parks, community-service active use park and recreation facilities and school sites, generally following the pattern shown on the TOD Land Use Plan in the Land Use Framework Plan and the policies provided in this report. In particular:

- Provide a primary community gathering space directly adjacent to the future Palmdale Multimodal Station (a station plaza);
- Expand Desert Sands Park, with new amenities and features;

- Create a series of urban parks and plazas, linked to each other and to the Civic Center park with a landscaped character along 9th Street East;
- Create linear parkways in new transit-oriented residential neighborhoods north of Avenue Q; and
- Create a connective system of open spaces including buffer areas, natural drainage areas, and trails.

TOD Overlay Zone Standards

The following policies are suggested for the TOD Overlay Zone, a new zoning overlay proposed in the Land Use Framework Plan. The TOD Overlay Zone will be a primary tool in creating a walkable, transit-oriented character and a relationship to the future Palmdale Multimodal Station. The TOD Overlay Zone location is shown in the Land Use Framework Plan and is generally bounded by 10 Street East on the east; Palmdale Boulevard on the south; portions of East Avenue P-12, East Avenue P-8/Technology Drive, and other streets on the north; and SR 14 and the western edge of the Avenue Q Study Area on the west.

UDSOS-I-17 Improvement of Street-Facing Setbacks.

Where a front or street-facing side setback is provided, it must be landscaped and/or hard surfaced for use by pedestrians. If hard surfaced, the setback area on each lot must contain at least two pedestrian amenities, such as benches, drinking fountains, and/or other design elements (public art, planters, and kiosks). Residential buildings are exempt from this requirement.

UDSOS-I-18 On-Site Public Plazas

In all mixed-use zones, outdoor plazas shall be provided within any site with a total of 50,000 square feet or more of floor area

devoted to active commercial uses including retail, restaurants, or personal services.

- **Minimum Area.** Public space shall be provided at a rate of five square feet per 1,000 square feet of floor area.
- **Location.** Such public space shall be visible from a public street, or from on-site areas normally frequented by customers, and shall be accessible during business hours.
- **Amenities.** On-site public plaza space shall include benches or other seating, and the ground surface shall be landscaped or surfaced with high-quality paving materials. Amenities shall be included that enhance the comfort, aesthetics, or usability of the space, including but not limited to trees and other landscaping, shade structures, drinking fountains, water features, public art, or performance areas. The placement of shade-bearing elements and seating shall maximize shading for summer mid-day and afternoon hours.

UDSOS-I-19 Required Open Space Buffers

New development of residential uses or community uses such as recreational parks and schools must be adequately buffered from industrial uses and freeways. A 100-foot buffer must be created between any new residential or community use and any area designated for Industrial use. A 500-foot buffer must be created between any new residential or community use and an existing or planned freeway. Open space buffers must be generously landscaped with climate-appropriate vegetation.

UDSOS-I-20 Sidewalk and Streetscape Improvements

New development in existing neighborhoods must also provide accompanying sidewalk and streetscape improvements.

UDSOS-I-21 Public Plaza

Create a public plaza immediately adjacent to the High Speed Rail station, and design the plaza to become a community gathering spot, with lots of seating options and public art.

UDSOS-I-22 Required Open Space Set-Aside

As part of any new development in areas designated Industrial or Business Mix on the TOD Land Use Plan, require that open space be set aside in a way that corresponds with existing drainage areas, proposed freeway and rail corridors, and creates continuity with other set-aside open space. This open space set-aside can generally be undertaken without a loss of allowed intensity, because the areas to which it applies are subject to the intensity limits of the Air Installations Compatibility Use Zone.

3.3 City Requirements & Process

GUIDELINES

Develop guidelines that include topics that are meaningful and relate to the development of Palmdale:

Private Yard Guidelines – Neighborhood Housing

Many residential streets lack sidewalks and public parkway (between street and sidewalk). Continuity on the street edge is important for safe routes to schools and walkability. New development should include design standards for curbs, sidewalks, parkways and any landscaping.

Courtyards & Patios, Multi-Family Housing

Multi-family housing should contain landscaped shared open space with shade trees. The City can address setback requirements, landscape coverage requirements, and landscape design preferences.

Parking Lot Landscaping Guidelines

The City can set requirements for parking lots, including buffers, landscape coverage, canopy coverage and design considerations.



Heat relief in parking lots with appropriate tree species.

Plant Palette

Reevaluate the City’s approved plant list in light of current water management issues and reissue, focusing on low water needs and drought tolerant plant material that reflects the beauty of the region.



Vibrant color, shaded walkways, local plants.

It is also recommended that the City prepare a Street Tree Master Plan, identifying appropriate species for major and minor greenway corridors, gateway planting, and species to contribute to neighborhood or district identity.



Plant in hydrozones.

Irrigation

Match irrigation requirements to plant palette water needs.



Interesting shaded plaza layouts can be compelling without turf or lush plantings.

Palmdale TOD Overlay Zone
Urban Design, Street, and Streetscape Recommendations Report



Drought-tolerant perennials in the parkway.



A high desert landscape.

