

CITY OF PALMDALE

NEWS RELEASE

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City of Palmdale Begins Work on Grant Funded Transit Oriented Project and Avenue Q Feasibility Study

PALMDALE — The City of Palmdale, which last year was awarded grants by the Metro Board and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), has begun work on projects that will help determine the City's future transportation, housing and livability options.

Metro awarded a \$400,000 grant for the City's Transportation Oriented Development project, called TOD3, which will update the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance to reflect its current vision for TOD within the vicinity of the Palmdale Transportation Center (PTC) and future California High Speed Rail Station.

The \$100,000 grant from SCAG for the Avenue Q Feasibility Study will provide the City with an analysis that will determine the feasibility of developing the Avenue Q Corridor that will apply fundamental TOD/mixed use design and ultimately serve as an extension of the PTC and California High Speed Rail Station Planning Area. It also helps the City take another step towards implementing the approved SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy with the intention of establishing a more livable and prosperous Southern California.

"We are very excited to begin work on projects that will help pave the way for Palmdale to become an innovative leader for TOD within the Antelope Valley, Los Angeles County and Southern California," said Palmdale Mayor Jim Ledford. "These studies will help us make the decisions that will assist us in the development of our intermodal transportation hub, which will consist of two high speed rail systems,

Metrolink, two freeways, an airport, Amtrak, and AVTA bus service, as well as housing and amenities that will be part of the surrounding areas.”

Both projects will span over three years and be completed by 2016.

“One of the big issues facing the City of Palmdale and the Antelope Valley is the lack of easily accessible public transit and active neighborhoods with a mix of uses,” Ledford said. “Nearly 71,000 workers from the Antelope Valley travel to Greater Los Angeles for work. Approximately 63,000 workers from the Palmdale and Lancaster areas spend at least an hour each day on the road; and of those, approximately 38,000 spend two or more hours commuting. Not only does this impact the air quality and economic prosperity of Palmdale and the Antelope Valley but daily commuters are negatively impacted by social, health and economic issues as a direct result of long commute times. This project will start an ongoing process to provide residents of Palmdale and the Antelope Valley the option to live in neighborhoods with more housing choices, entertainment venues for all ages, transportation and vital standards of living.”

“TOD is typically defined as more compact development within easy walking distance of public transit which contains a mix of uses such as housing, jobs, recreation, shops, restaurants and entertainment,” explained Assistant Planner II Carlos Contreras. “TOD is about creating walkable, pedestrian/bicycle/public transit friendly communities for people of all ages and incomes. The vision is to provide neighborhoods with more transportation and housing choices where residents can live work and play and maintain lifestyle that are convenient, affordable and active.”

Both projects are currently in the site assessment and public outreach phase of planning process. Various stakeholders within the study area were recently interviewed and students from Advancing Communities Together (ACT) took part in a livability audit that includes mapping exercises at City Hall and a field survey of the focus area.

“City staff and the project consultant interviewed several people who live and work within the project area so that City staff and the consultant can gain insights from their experience, thoughts and suggestions as they relate to both projects,” said Assistant Planner II Juan Carrillo. “A strong collaborative effort between stakeholders, community members, and decision-makers is essential to this planning process.”

For more information regarding TOD3, please visit the TOD3 website: www.cityofpalmdale.org/TOD. You may also call or e-mail Carlos Contreras directly at 661/267-5200 or ccontreras@cityofpalmdale.org.

For more information regarding the Avenue Q Feasibility Study, please call or e-mail Juan Carrillo at 661/267-5200 or jcarrillo@cityofpalmdale.org. A project website for this project will be available the public soon.