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Planners OK plan to help transit center development

By JULIE DRAKE Valley Press Staff Writer

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PALMDALE — The Planning Commission unanimously adopted the Palmdale Transit Area Specific Plan that includes a framework for the development of a pedestrian-oriented mixed-use area surrounding the existing Palmdale Transportation Center and future multi-modal California High Speed Rail station.

“The specific plan document is a tool to be used by developers, property owners, city staff and decision makers, and it provides policies and a vision for form-based development and design standards, suggested infrastructure improvements and economic development strategies,” Acting Planning Manager Megan Taggart said during a presentation at the commission’s Oct. 8 meeting. It’s intended to maximize development potential around the future station.”

The specific plan covers about 746 acres bounded by Technology Drive to the north, the Antelope Valley Freeway to the west, Avenue Q-9 to the south, and 10th Street East to the east.

The proposed specific plan was created in collaboration with the California High Speed Rail, stakeholders, and community members.

Some of the key comments received include concern for increases in property values, avoidance of gentrification and displacement, and the need to ensure safety in the area.

The specific plan creates a ringed pattern with the highest intensity of uses located closest to the core of the plan surrounding the future rail station. In addition, the traditional neighborhood designation is intended to preserve existing single-family neighborhoods.

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The commission also approved an associated general plan amendment and zone change.

“This has been a long time coming,” Chairwoman Stacia Nemeth said.

Nemeth attended some of the community meeting for the proposed plan.

“I want to say the amount of outreach that’s gone on this is pretty significant. It’s nice to see a lot of the ideas that the community had being implemented in this,” Nemeth said, adding it is a thorough, well-thought out plan.

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