

Stakeholder Focus Group Meetings Summary

In July 2020, Raimi + Associates and Arellano Associates conducted nine stakeholder group meetings with Palmdale industry leaders, educational entities, faith-based organizations, and community-based organizations to receive their input on the Palmdale General Plan Update land use alternatives. The comments received at these meetings have been categorized into the major categories in the City Land Use Framework – education district, medical district, employment district, village center, housing, transportation, parks and open space comments and other comments.

Consolidated Feedback

Varied feedback was received at the stakeholder focus groups. In general, Alternative 3 was preferred by the attendees. The main reasons given for this choice included the potential for the highest number of jobs, the location of educational and medical facilities on both the East and West side of the City, and the type of Village Centers. Some also expressed the desire to see the highest densities (Alternative 1) although many preferred the lower range of densities in Alternative 2. Some noted the auto-dependence of Alternative 2 and preferred the other alternatives where the land use patterns lead to increased walkability and bicycle use. A common theme heard from many of the stakeholders was about the desire to protect the natural environment, providing space for Joshua Trees to be preserved and for the creation of trails and open space paths.

The following sections detail the range of comments received during the focus groups.

Alternatives

- All alternatives are well-balanced, but Alternative 3 is preferred because of the employment options
- Alternative 3 is preferred because of:
 - The number of jobs generated in combination with bicycle facilities;
 - equitable outcomes; and
 - it affords the highest increase in jobs
- Alternative 1 – highest number of housing options preferred so people can live near their workplace, also want more jobs and bicycle facilities
- Prefer Alternative 2 for the housing and jobs, want to see people living and working in the same city, and reducing commutes
- Consider Alternative with greatest public benefits, including people with mental health issues

Education District

- Prefer additional educational district near highly populated areas like Palmdale Regional Medical Center, Plant 42, and AV College
- Equity and accessibility of education district(s) are important
- Educational opportunities are needed on Eastside of Palmdale
- An education district should be centrally located near existing High School campuses
- Prefer Alternatives 2 and 3 for education districts
- Prefer Alternative 3 because there are two education centers
- Develop more education options, such as trade schools and a four-year university
- More education opportunities for the youth

Medical District

- Agree with future medical district location, feel it is equitable for East and West sides of the City
- Medical locations are good, currently lack medical services on the East side
- Prefer the medical district location in Alternative 3
- Desire for better job placements for clinics and services on the East side
- Need more medical resources to provide high level of care
- Prefer Alternative 3 because of healthcare access on East side of Palmdale
- Need to have plenty of healthcare options near future multi-family development

Employment District

- Prefer Alternative 3 employment because it brings the most jobs to Palmdale which could reduce long commutes
- Support district locations and types in Alternative 3
- Interested in more general industrial designations that are flexible
- Would like to see coordination with County of Los Angeles and LAWA for the areas around Plant 42
- Consider changing amount of office space due to COVID-19; many people are working remotely
- Industrial areas should be close enough to access but should be farther from the city center and from housing because of pollution concerns
- Likes the idea of keeping jobs in Palmdale; more jobs will ensure best quality of life and will attract more people to live in Palmdale
- Allowing for too much commercial space will bring in more jobs that the community can support

Village Centers

- Like higher-density village style centers that encourage more walking and proximity to neighborhoods
- Desire to see non-profit office space in village centers
- Village centers are a great way to incentivize younger population to live and work in Palmdale

Housing

- Need access to quality housing for Palmdale employees, families, and education faculty
- Desire to entice aerospace commuters to move to Palmdale by offering the right housing options

- Need for transitional housing for unhoused populations
- Reevaluate housing options to ensure they are equitable
- Need housing options to attract young workers in the industry
- Housing affordability is an issue as prices are rising
- Need for affordable, multi-use housing options
- Incentivize developers to build apartments and other housing options in Palmdale
- Address overcrowding
- Keep industry separated from housing to reduce pollutants near homes
- Provide more housing options near medical districts; attract students and interns for Palmdale Regional Medical Center

Transportation

- Need improved access and transportation connectivity for economic opportunities
- Antelope Valley needs sustainable air travel
- Need supportive infrastructure
- Local road infrastructure around Plant 42 should be improved
- Improve roads and landscaping to make the community more attractive
- A more developed transportation system will help alleviate traffic
- Alternative 2 promotes too much driving
- Desire for more bicycle lanes and paths
- Renovate Avenue Q and add connections to City Buildings
- Find ways to alleviate traffic
- Encourage walking and biking in Palmdale
- Work with AVTA to address issues, especially for people who solely rely on public transportation

Parks and Open Space

- Keep natural beauty of the high desert
- Interested in future recreation and open space areas
- Incorporate more walking trails and bike paths
- Preserve open spaces
- Create more parks in the community
- Important to have open space between retail and commercial spaces
- AV Audubon would like to develop a conservation recovery program in the Antelope Valley
- Consider a community garden area; can be used for activities for parents and children

Other Comments

- Attract young workers and families in Palmdale
- Need more after-school recreation programs for students
- Need a rehabilitation plan for deteriorated areas
- More activities and recreational areas for youth
- Plan for earthquakes
- Concerned about amount of retail and commercial space built
- Do not want the City to be overdeveloped

- Desire to focusing on the East side and making things more accessible
- Consider ways to accommodate an influx of homeless population
- Focus on ways to improve access and equity on the East side of Palmdale
- More recreational, family-friendly activities
- Multi-family/ commercial industrial need correct amount of water and resources for safety

Feedback by Group

Education Representatives

- **Antelope Valley Union High School District**
- **The Palmdale Aerospace Academy**
- **Palmdale School District**

Education District

- Consider additional location of educational district
- Equity and accessibility of education district(s) are important, many families do not know AV College exists
- High School students need accessible higher education, an education district should be centrally located near existing High School campuses
 - Prefer Alternatives 2 and 3 for education districts
- Consider education districts in all three areas – near the hospital, aerospace, and AV College

Medical District

- Appreciated medical district location
- Location is equitable for East and West sides of the City
- Need additional coverage of medical services on the East side, some students must be transported to Lancaster for emergency services

Employment District

- Possible opportunities for high-school students to participate in apprenticeship/partnership programs with aerospace and other developing industries

Village Center

- N/A

Housing

- Important to have access to quality housing for those who work in Palmdale
- Desire to entice aerospace commuters to move to Palmdale by offering the right housing options
- Access to quality housing for families and education faculty is needed

Transportation

- Need a connection at Palmdale Regional Airport for aerospace workers
- Access and transportation connectivity are key for economic opportunities
- Potential Palmdale Regional Airport and opportunities

Parks and Open Space

- Keep natural beauty of the high desert
- Interested in future recreation and open space areas

Other Comments

- Alternatives 2 and 3 are preferred
- Attract young workers and families in Palmdale
- Need more after-school recreation programs for students

Service Organizations

- **First 5 LA**
- **Palmdale Woman's Club**
- **P.A.W.S Forward**
- **Antelope Valley Boys and Girls Club**
- **Legacy Commons for Active Seniors**

Education District

- N/A

Medical District

- N/A

Employment District

- N/A

Village Centers

- Add non-profit office space in village centers to help homeless population

Housing

- There is a need for transitional housing, homeless population is increasing

Transportation

- Need better connectivity to amenities and resources

Parks and Open Space

- N/A

Other Comments

- Alternative 3 is preferred because of equitable outcomes
- Add an itemized list of how the alternatives meet the goals
- Address needs for all, even people with mental health issues
- Need more engagement from the broader community

Faith-Based Organizations

- **St. Stephen's Lutheran Church**
- **Desert Winds Community Church**
- **American Islamic Institute of Antelope Valley**
- **Palmdale United Methodist Church**

Education District

- N/A

Medical District

- N/A

Employment District

- Supports employment district location
- Spiritual and emotional well-being of the community is a concern, Alternative 3 offers the most employment which could reduce the several hours long commute people do from Palmdale
- Supports job opportunities in Alternative 3
- Consider low-density/industrial uses near the San Andreas Fault

Village Centers

- N/A

Housing

- Reevaluate housing options to ensure it is equitable for all
- Residential zoning provisions should be flexible

Transportation

- Antelope Valley needs sustainable air travel
- There needs to be enough infrastructure to support transportation
- The future airport is important moving forward

Parks and Open Space

- N/A

Other Comments

- We should include “business friendly” and “a place to call home” in the vision themes
- We need future land uses regulations and zoning that are flexible to accommodate the economic market

Aerospace and Industrial

- **NASA**
- **Lockheed Martin**
- **Northrup Grumman**
- **Air Force Plant 42**
- **Allen Company**

Education District

- Likes apprenticeship/partnership programs with local schools

Medical District

- N/A

Employment District

- Interested in more general industrial designations that are flexible
- Coordination with County of Los Angeles and LAWA for the areas around Plant 42 are important

Village Centers

- N/A

Housing

- Need housing options to attract young workers in the industry
- Housing affordability is an issue as prices are rising

Transportation

- Interested in development plans for passenger air service
- Local road infrastructure around Plant 42 should be improved
- Include plans to mitigate traffic flow off Rancho Vista Blvd. due to increased work at Plant 42
- Avenue M and Sierra Hwy. should be considered as a military designated road

Parks and Open Space

- N/A

Other Comments

- Alternative 2 or 3 preferred
- City has been a great partner to aerospace and industrial industries
- General industrial does not fit well with other industrial uses

Hospitality/Real Estate/Business Development

- **Antelope Valley Mall**
- **Greater Antelope Valley Economic Alliance**
- **Camacho Auto Sales**
- **LAMAR Advertising**
- **Courtyard Marriott**
- **Embassy Suites**
- **Antelope Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**
- **LY Developers and Management**

Education District

- Approves of education district location
- Prefer the education district location in Alternative 3

Medical District

- Approves of district location

Employment District

- Approves of district location
- Consider changing amount of office space due to COVID-19; many people are working remotely

Village Center

- Great way to incentivize younger population to live and work in Palmdale

Housing

- More affordable, multi-use housing options
- Housing options will attract younger population
- Incentivize developers to build apartments and other housing options in Palmdale

Transportation

- Develop relationship with Caltrans

- Improve roads and landscaping to make the community more attractive

Parks and Open Space

- Incorporate more walking trails and bike paths

Other Comments

- Alternatives are well-balanced, but Alternative 3 is preferred because of the employment options

Hispanic/Underserved Community (Spanish)

- Palmdale Vineyard Church
- Café con Leche
- Child 360

Education District

- Prefer Alternative 3 because there are two education centers
- Develop more education options, such as trade schools and a four-year university

Medical District

- Prefers the medical district location in Alternative 3

Employment District

- Industrial areas should be close enough to access but should be farther from the city center and from housing because of pollution concerns
- Likes the idea of keeping jobs in Palmdale

Village Centers

- N/A

Housing

- More affordable, multi-use housing options
- Address overcrowding
- Housing options will attract younger population
- Keep industry separated from housing to reduce pollutants near homes

Transportation

- Improve transportation and access
- Road improvements should be considered
- A more developed transportation system will help alleviate traffic
- Alternative 2 requires too much driving, do not like that

- Desire for more bicycle lanes and paths
- Renovate Avenue Q and add connections to the City Building

Parks and Open Space

- N/A

Other Comments

- Alternative 3 - employment options preferred, want to see more jobs generated in combination with bicycle facilities
- Alternative 1 – highest number of housing options preferred so people can live near their workplace, also want more jobs and bicycle facilities
- Need a rehabilitation plan for deteriorated areas
- More activities and recreational areas for youth
- Plan for earthquakes

County Pocket Stakeholders

- **Antelope Valley Audubon Society**
- **Palmdale residents**

Education District

- Approves of district location
- More education opportunities for the youth
- The education centers should be located in highly populated areas
- AV Audubon has developed educational courses to teach about wildlife and land preservation
- Has approval from City and Board of Education to take program into schools

Medical District

- Approves of district location
- Equitable for the East side of Palmdale

Employment District

- N/A

Village Centers

- Great way to incentivize younger population to live and work in Palmdale
- Likes the idea of village centers, encourages more walking and proximity to neighborhoods

Housing

- More affordable, multi-use housing options
- Housing options will attract younger population

Transportation

- Improve transportation and access
- Find ways to alleviate traffic
- Wants to encourage walking and biking in Palmdale

Parks and Open Space

- Preserve open spaces
- Create more parks in the community
- Important to have open space between retail and commercial spaces
- AV Audubon would like to develop a conservation recovery program in the Antelope Valley

Other Comments

- Concerned about amount of retail and commercial space built
- Does not want the City to be overdeveloped

Medical Services

- **Penny Lane Centers**
- **Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health**
- **Tarzana Treatment Center**
- **Palmdale Regional Medical Center**
- **Lancaster Chamber of Commerce**

Education District

- Approves of district location
- More education opportunities for the youth
- Equitable opportunities for the East side of Palmdale

Medical District

- Approves of district location
- Equitable for the East side of Palmdale
- Better job with placement of clinics and services on the East side
- Palmdale Regional is exploring the possibility of a behavioral health hospital
- Need more resources to provide level of care required in Palmdale
- Palmdale Regional Hospital would like to work collaboratively with other healthcare providers/mental health program to provide high quality care

Employment District

- Allowing for commercial space will bring in more jobs that the community can support
- Approves of job opportunities in Alternative 3
- More jobs will ensure best quality of life and will attract more people to live in Palmdale

Village Centers

- Great way to incentivize younger population to live and work in Palmdale
- Likes idea of a higher-density village style

Housing

- More affordable, multi-use housing options
- Important to have low-income housing options
- Incentivize developers to build housing options in Palmdale

Transportation

- Improve transportation and access
- Work with AVTA to address issues, especially for people who solely rely on public transportation

Parks and Open Space

- Preserve open spaces
- Create more parks in the community
- Consider a community garden area; can be used for activities for parents and children

Other Comments

- Alternative 3 is preferred because it affords the highest increase in jobs
- Agree with a focus on the East side and making things more accessible
- Consider ways to accommodate an influx of homeless population
- Focus on ways to improve access and equity on the East side of Palmdale
- More recreational, family-friendly activities

First Responders/Service Organizations

- **Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department**
- **Los Angeles County Fire Department**
- **Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health**
- **Antelope Valley WIC**
- **County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning**

Education District

- Approves of district location
- More education opportunities for the youth
- Equitable opportunities for the East side of Palmdale

Medical District

- Approves of district location
- Prefer Alternative 3 because of improved healthcare access on East side of Palmdale

- Necessary to have plenty of healthcare options near multi-family development

Employment District

- Approves of job opportunities in Alternative 3
- More jobs will ensure best quality of life and will attract more people to live in Palmdale

Village Center

- Great way to incentivize younger population to live and work in Palmdale

Housing

- More affordable, multi-use housing options
- Provide more housing options near medical districts; attract students and interns for Palmdale Regional

Transportation

- N/A

Parks and Open Space

- Preserve open spaces

Other Comments

- Alternative 3 is preferred
- Multi-family/ commercial industrial need correct amount of water and resources for safety
- Final alternative outcome will likely be a combination of the three alternatives