

**City of Palmdale
Palmdale 2045
General Plan Update
(General Plan Amendment 20-003)
(Zoning Ordinance Amendment 21-007)**

**Notice of Preparation of a
Draft Environmental Impact Report**

The City of Palmdale will be the Lead Agency for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that will analyze the environmental impacts associated with a proposed update to the Palmdale General Plan (Palmdale 2045), referred to herein as the “proposed project” or “General Plan.” The actions that make up the proposed project are described below. More information on the proposed project is available on the project website at: <https://www.palmdale2045.org/>. The Planning Area for the proposed project includes the land within the City Limits, the Sphere of Influence (SOI), and several unincorporated Los Angeles County ‘islands.’ The proposed General Plan land use map showing the Planning Area is shown at the end of this Notice of Preparation (NOP).

Project Description

The proposed project is a three-plus-year comprehensive update to the City’s General Plan, the guiding document for the future of Palmdale over 25 years (2020-2045). The General Plan serves as the City’s primary guide for land use and development decisions and is a key tool for influencing and improving the quality of life for residents and businesses. As such, it serves as the “blueprint” for future development and conservation of a community. The General Plan will help the City plan for important community issues such as new growth, housing and infrastructure needs, and environmental protection. It also sets the stage for future social, physical, and economic development of the City. It addresses issues that impact the entire community, such as how land is used, where buildings are constructed, and the locations of infrastructure.

Under State law, the General Plan must serve as the foundation upon which all land use decisions are to be based, and must also be comprehensive, internally consistent, and have a long-term perspective. State law further mandates that the General Plan:

- Identify land use, circulation, environmental, economic, and social goals and policies for the City and its surrounding planning area as they relate to future growth and development;
- Provide a basis for local government decision-making, including decisions on development approvals and exactions;

- Provide citizens the opportunity to participate in the planning and decision-making process of their communities; and
- Inform citizens, developers, decision-makers, and other cities and counties of the ground rules that guide development within a particular community.

According to State law, General Plans are required to cover nine topics: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, air quality, safety, and environmental justice. Jurisdictions may include any other topic that is relevant to planning its future. The updated City of Palmdale General Plan will include the State required topics plus economic development, urban design, infrastructure, military readiness, community facilities, sustainability and resilience, and climate change.

The General Plan will focus on enhancing the community identity, building on planned infrastructure investments, improving multi-modal active transportation and connectivity, integrating health and equity, and capitalizing on the City's unique location in the region. Palmdale 2045's vision for the future includes the following vision themes.

- **Unified and welcoming community.** The Palmdale community values opportunity, diversity, and unity, and seeks to promote Palmdale's positive reputation while boosting community beautification
- **Active and vibrant downtown.** Palmdale residents desire a future downtown that fosters a sense of place, promotes local businesses, provides gathering spaces, and events, and improves the overall appearance of Palmdale
- **Diverse and high-quality job options.** Palmdale seeks to retain and expand its employment base through training for key industries, connecting residents to local jobs, and promoting telecommuting within the City
- **Diverse and resilient local economy.** The City of Palmdale values its existing aerospace presence and aims to leverage and diversify new economic opportunities from expanded transportation connections
- **Safe, healthy place to live and work.** Palmdale residents want to address crime and safety, increase access to parks and open space, and support marginalized communities like foster youth and those experiencing homelessness
- **High quality medical and mental healthcare.** As a medical provider shortage area, Palmdale seeks to improve access to quality medical and mental healthcare services and facilities by attracting physicians, maintaining the Palmdale Regional Medical Center, and expanding services
- **Housing options for residents at different stages of life and ability.** The residents of Palmdale desire to preserve and expand affordable housing and diversify housing types across the City that support residents of all abilities through different stages of life
- **High quality and accessible educational opportunities.** Citizens of Palmdale seek to promote and expand educational opportunities in the City including higher education, trade school, and formal and informal training programs
- **Beautiful natural setting.** The Palmdale community values its natural setting and seeks to improve connectivity to trails and open space, maintain mountain views, healthy air quality, and dark night sky

- **Forefront of transportation innovations.** On the cusp of major regional transportation improvements, Palmdale seeks to leverage planned investments and improve local transit opportunities
- **General Plan implementation.** Residents of Palmdale value the long-term vision of the General Plan Update and desire regular review and update of the Plan including metrics for tracking implementation

Palmdale 2045 identifies major strategies and physical improvements for the City over the next 25 years. These strategies include creating a vibrant downtown near the future multimodal transit station, establishing three health and wellness districts and two education districts, transforming Palmdale Boulevard into a mixed-use corridor, promoting a diversity of housing types in the City, forming village centers that offer a mix of residential choices and daily goods and services near existing neighborhoods, and building off existing industrial and aerospace business opportunities. These strategies will support existing and future employees, businesses, and residents by improving quality of life in Palmdale.

The following actions will also be taken by the City of Palmdale in connection with the General Plan Update and are also considered part of the proposed project to be analyzed in the forthcoming EIR:

- Adoption and implementation of the General Plan Update (Palmdale 2045 Plan)
- Adoption and implementation of the Climate Action Plan
- Adoption and implementation of the Zoning Ordinance Amendment

The Plan will also include an update of the City's Housing Element, in compliance with the requirements of State Housing Element law, which requires the City to adopt an updated Housing Element by October 2021. This Housing Element update will also be analyzed in the EIR.

Environmental Impact Report

The Draft EIR will be a program EIR. Per Section 15168 of the State *CEQA Guidelines*, a program EIR is an EIR that may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project. The purpose of a program EIR is to allow the lead agency to consider broad policy alternatives and program wide mitigation measures early in the process when the agency has greater flexibility to deal with basic problems or cumulative impacts.

The EIR will examine each of the issue areas on the City's environmental checklist. Issues to be discussed include the following:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology/Soils
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population/Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources

- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Land Use/Planning
- Utilities/Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

In addition to the CEQA-required “no project” alternative, the EIR will examine a range of land use scenarios that address one or more of the potential environmental effects of the proposed project.

The City of Palmdale would like to know your views or the views of your organization as to the scope and content of the environmental information that should be addressed in connection with the proposed project. Public agencies may need to use the EIR prepared by the City of Palmdale when considering permits or other approvals regarding certain aspects of the proposed actions. Due to time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

Please send your response to Megan Taggart, Planning Manager, at:

City of Palmdale
Department of Economic and Community Development
38250 Sierra Highway
Palmdale, California 93550

Megan Taggart can be reached at 661-267-5213, or by emailing mtaggart@cityofpalmdale.org. When responding to the NOP, please provide the name for a contact person in your agency.

The City of Palmdale will hold an EIR Scoping Meeting to provide an additional opportunity for input on the scope and content of the EIR. The Scoping Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 30, at 5:30 p.m. Please check the project website (<https://www.palmdale2045.org/>) to confirm this meeting time prior to the meeting. Due to ongoing restriction related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting will be conducted virtually.

To join this meeting, please register in advance by clicking on, or pasting into your web browser, the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwoceMvrTIsHtYjmm9iVRZyXjtO-TEK9Rg>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. Please note that this meeting will occur prior to a Joint General Plan Advisory Committee and Public Workshop (and will use the same meeting link).

Project Title: City of Palmdale 2045 General Plan Update (GPA 20-003 & ZOA 21-007)

Project Sponsor: City of Palmdale

Date 6/23/21

Signature 

Title Planning Manager

Telephone 661-267-5213

City of Palmdale Proposed General Plan Land Use Map

