



PALMDALE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

Land Use + Urban Form

SPRING 2020 | FINAL REPORT



Envision
PALMDALE 2045
a complete community

Chapter 3: Land Use + Urban Form

This chapter provides an overview of the existing land use pattern in the City of Palmdale, including zoning, General Plan designations, and other current uses. It summarizes key plans and policy documents that will impact and inform the 2045 General Plan Update. The chapter reviews the major urban form (defined as the area's physical and spatial characteristics) and design elements of the built environment, describes existing 'place types,' and offers a discussion of the issues and challenges faced by the City.

Regional Context and Location

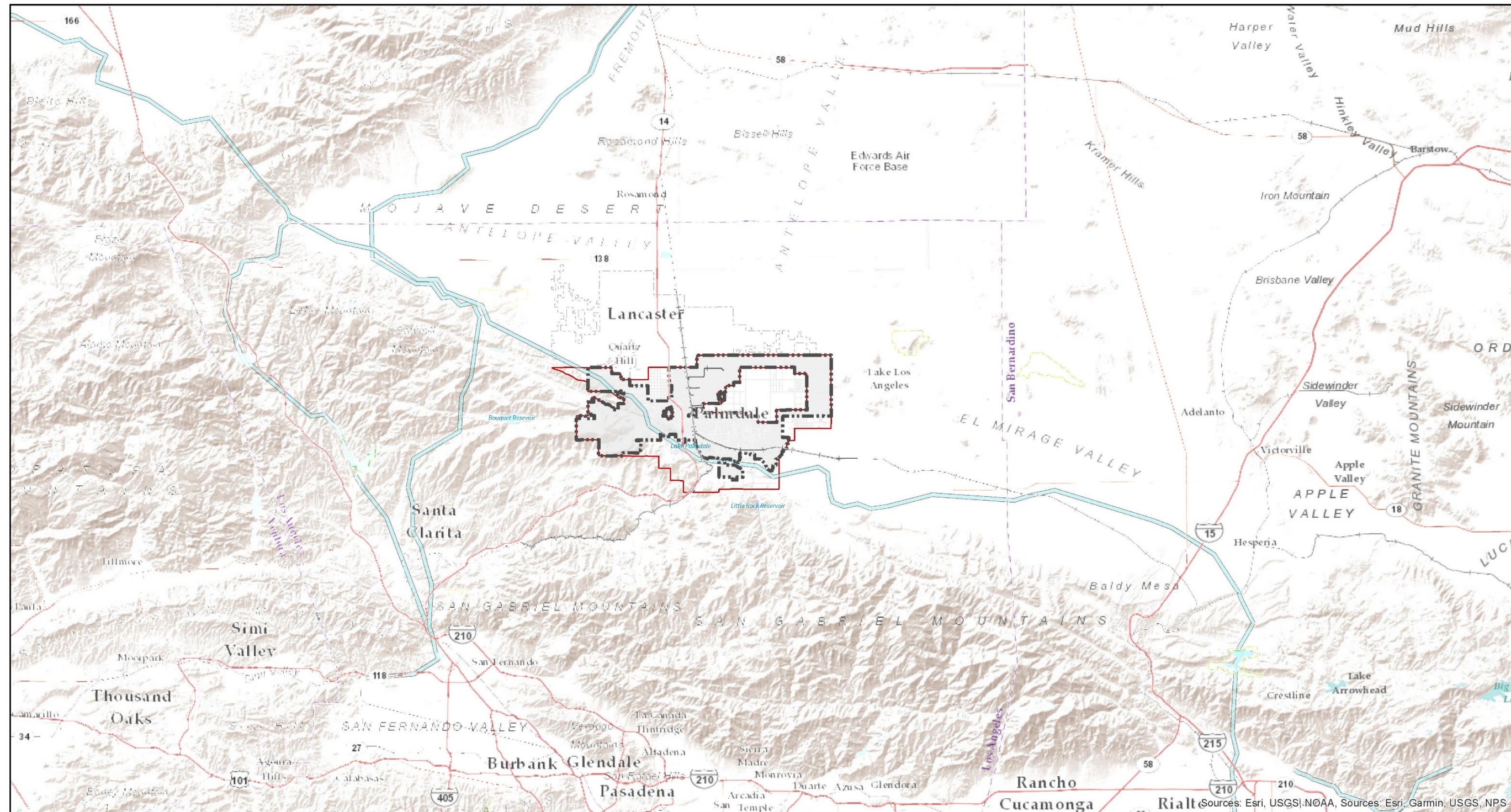
The City of Palmdale is situated in northern Los Angeles County, in the Antelope Valley region of Southern California, nestled against the San Gabriel Mountains. It is roughly 60 miles (or just over one hour) driving distance from downtown Los Angeles. This proximity has attracted many families looking for affordable ownership housing within commute distance of major employment centers in Los Angeles. As of 2017, the American Community Survey (ACS) estimates a population of 157,358 for the City of Palmdale. Collectively, the population of Antelope Valley (including the City of Lancaster and surrounding unincorporated communities) exceeds half a million residents.

History

Thousands of years ago, the Antelope Valley was a major trade route for Native Americans traveling from Arizona and New Mexico to California's coast. Modern settlement of Palmdale began in the mid-1800s, fueled by the gold rush, cattle ranching, arrival of stagecoaches, and completion of the Southern Pacific Railroad line in 1876. Serious population growth did not occur until the California aqueduct was completed in 1913, which attracted a substantial number of farmers. Palmdale became the first community in the Antelope Valley to incorporate, in 1962. Today, Palmdale retains elements of its agricultural past but its economic base is now substantially supported by aerospace and defense industries.

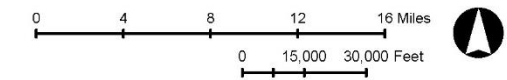
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Figure 3.1 Regional Location



Regional Context

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- California Aqueduct
- Major Highway/Arterial
- Railroad
- Water Body



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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Urban Form-Givers

Form-givers are those elements which define and bound the physical environment of the City, including the physical topography of the landscape, roadway and transportation patterns, built form patterns, and the distribution of land uses.

Several key features, both manmade and natural, distinguish the City of Palmdale:

- **San Gabriel Mountains.** The San Gabriel Mountains separate Palmdale from the City of Los Angeles to the south, forming a natural barrier that can only be crossed in select locations. To a certain degree the mountains also constrain the City's southern expansion/growth, as they rise to over 4,500 feet in elevation.
- **Antelope Valley.** The Antelope Valley is the plain upon which the majority of Palmdale's developed area sits. It is a 3,000-square-mile high desert closed basin that straddles northern Los Angeles County and southern Kern County. It has been populated by different cultures for an estimated 11,000 years.
- **Leona Valley.** The Leona Valley is a long narrow valley separated from the Antelope Valley by the San Andreas fault ridge, known as Ritter Ridge. Elizabeth Lake Road passes along the valley floor. The San Andreas fault passes directly through Leona Valley, traversing from West North West to East South East. Indeed, a portion of the fault is easily examined at a roadcut along State Route 14 (near exit 33).
- **Unincorporated County lands.** Palmdale is almost entirely surrounded by unincorporated Los Angeles County land, some of which includes small rural communities of Quartz Hill, Leona Valley, Sun Village, Little Rock, and Antelope Center. These areas are developed with a distinct rural character. While many lack amenities and services, these communities have been vocal in their desire to protect and maintain this development pattern and way of life.
- **Aqueduct.** The east branch of the California Aqueduct passes through Leona Valley and along the southern edge of Palmdale, terminating at Lake Perris. It occupies roughly 580 acres of land in the City and presents a real barrier to mobility and connectivity.
- **SR-14 Freeway.** In 1921, Mint Canyon/Lancaster Road or Sierra Highway, the first major link between Palmdale and Los Angeles was completed. Completion of this road caused the local agricultural industry to flourish and was the first major step towards defining the city that exists today. Indeed, it provided a major inducement for commuters to relocate from the San Fernando Valley and Los Angeles Basin to Palmdale and the larger Antelope Valley region. Presently this road is known as SR-14 or the Antelope Valley Freeway, and it neatly bisects Palmdale, running more or less north to south.
- **Railroad.** The Southern Pacific railroad was completed in the late 1800s and provides an important freight connection through and to Palmdale. Proposals for widening the right-of-way to accommodate future high-speed rail service are under discussion. The downtown station area has

been envisioned as a mixed-use destination. Plans for the High Desert Corridor also include a High-Speed Rail connection to Las Vegas via Victorville.

- **Little Rock Creek Wash.** Draining an area of about 65 square miles, the wash is a result of the damming of Little Rock Creek in the 1920s, that supported improved and regular irrigation for farmers in the Antelope Valley. It is a key physical feature that separates the eastern developed edge of Palmdale from the western boundaries of three small unincorporated towns (Antelope Center, Littlerock, and Sun Village). It is also a major location for mineral extraction and surface mining activities.
- **Lake Palmdale.** In 1924, Lake Palmdale (a reservoir) was constructed to assist the agricultural industry by providing sufficient water to serve the growing communities. Today the lake serves as the primary water source for the Palmdale Water District, the City's public water utility. It is used to generate electricity, and also offers recreational amenities to the residents of Palmdale; fishing, boating, and camping are all allowed.

Planning Boundaries

The Planning Area for this 2045 General Plan Update includes the land within the City Limits, the Sphere of Influence (SOI), and several unincorporated LA County 'islands.' Originally a modest City concentrated around the confluence of Sierra Highway, Palmdale Boulevard, and the railroad, the City has expanded dramatically through multiple annexations, presently stretching over 21 miles from east to west and 10 miles from north to south. Today the Planning Area measures 106,634 acres total (166.6 square miles).

The Palmdale City limits cover 63,906 acres (or roughly 100 square miles), which ranks seventh overall in terms of California cities, ahead of more populous cities such as Sacramento, Riverside, Fremont, and Oakland. It is in the top 100 largest cities in the United States in terms of land area.

Not including land within the City limits, the Palmdale SOI encompasses an additional 44,224 acres (or 69.1 square miles), which alone would rank as the fifteenth largest city in the State, larger than Oakland.

County Islands

The City of Palmdale has three distinct unincorporated County islands within its Planning Area, accounting for a total of 16,690 acres (26.1 square miles):

Future Airport - This massive County island measures a total of 16,381 acres (1,157 parcels and 16,336 parcel acres). Located east of Plant 42, the land is owned by Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA), originally intended as a major airport expansion project. The City of Los Angeles Department of Airports bought the land in 1970 (originally 17,750 acres but certain portions have been annexed over time) when it planned to build a full-service, intercontinental passenger airport, but this new facility was never built. Instead, under a joint use agreement with the US Air Force, LAWA built a small 9,000 square foot terminal in 1971, creating present day Palmdale Regional Airport (PMD). PMD currently does not have any

scheduled passenger airline service, but there has been recent strong interest in restarting service. Uses in this island are primarily agriculture and vacant land.

Desert View Highlands – This county island contains 768 parcels, 225 parcel acres, and 273 total acres. It is a recognized census-designated place, with an estimated population of 2,514 as of 2017. It is entirely developed with residential uses, along with two elementary schools.

Area bounded by E Avenue Q/Sierra Highway/10th Street East/E Avenue P-8 – This small island contains 148 parcels, 107.6 parcel acres, and 118 total acres. It contains a mix of duplex residential, light industrial uses, and vacant parcels.

In 2012, the State adopted new law pertaining to unincorporated county lands, in particular regarding ‘disadvantaged communities.’ Cities and counties are now required to analyze and assess the infrastructure needs of unincorporated disadvantaged communities in city and county general plans, with the intent of improving the quality of services provided in these areas.

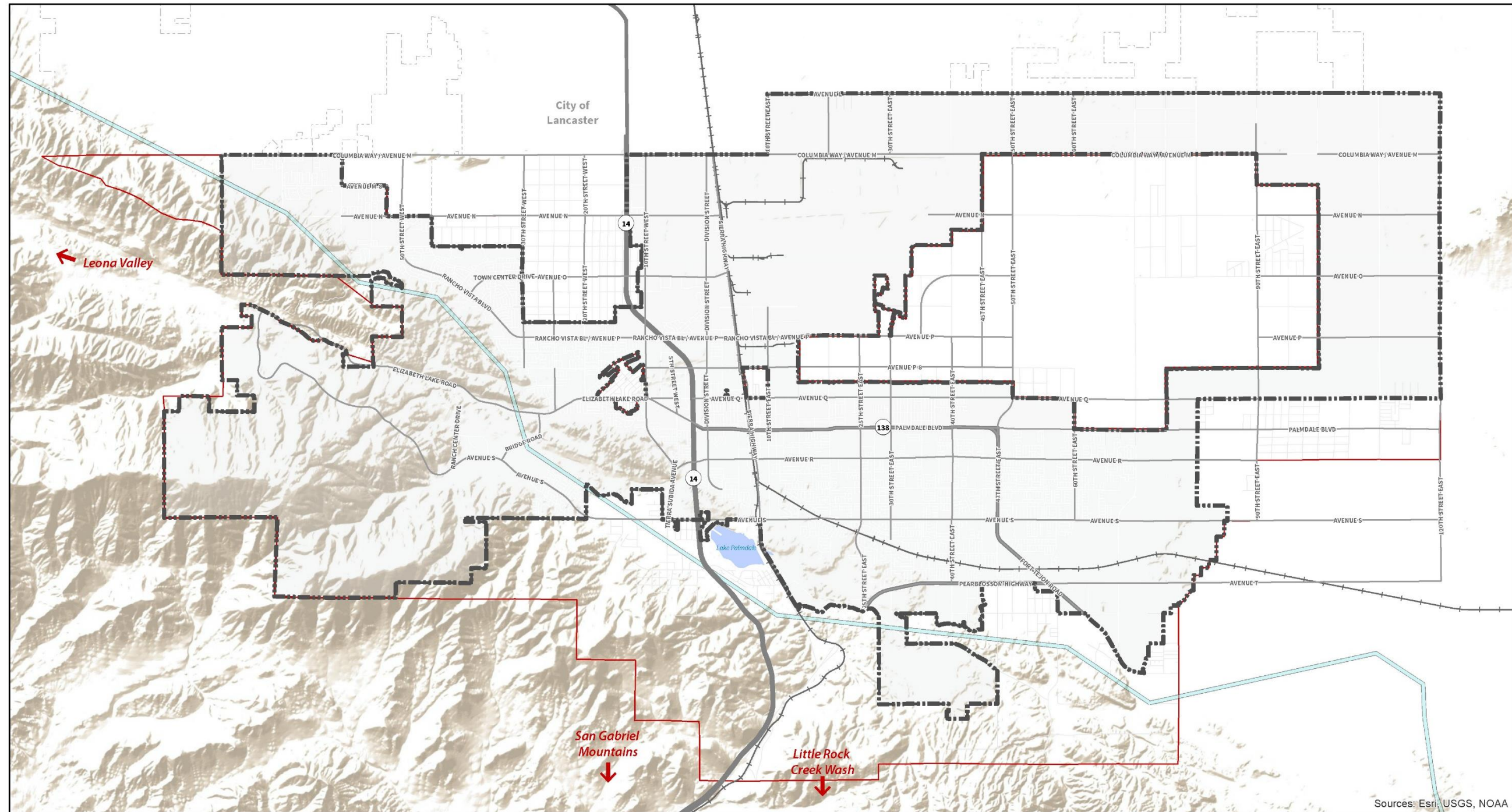
SB 244: “County Islands”

SB 244 creates requirements related to unincorporated disadvantaged communities. A ‘disadvantaged community’ is defined as a place that meets the following criteria: 1) contains 10 or more dwelling units in close proximity to one another; 2) is either within a city SOI, is an island within a city boundary, or is geographically isolated and has existed for more than 50 years; and 3) has a median household income that is 80 percent or less than the statewide median household income. The General Plan land use element is required to:

- 1) identify unincorporated disadvantaged communities;**
 - 2) analyze the water, wastewater, stormwater, and fire protection infrastructure needs; and**
 - 3) identify funding alternatives for extension of these services.**
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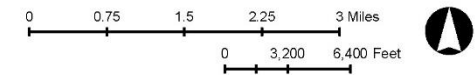
Figure 3.2 Form-Givers and Boundaries



Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA

Form Givers

-  City Boundary
-  Sphere of Influence
-  California Aqueduct
-  Major Highway/Arterial
-  Railroad
-  Water Body



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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Existing Land Use

Overall Pattern of Use

The broad pattern of land uses in the City can be described as follows:

- A main commercial corridor of Palmdale Boulevard that runs east to west through the City's core, lined by strip retail development consisting mainly of food retail, services/shops, auto retail, office, medical office, and other general commercial uses. There is essentially no mixed-use development (less than a dozen total parcels), and the urban character of the corridor varies between pedestrian-friendly and auto-friendly.
- Large, distinct pockets of regional commercial shopping centers, located at the intersections of Avenue R/47th Street East, Avenue S/47th Street East, Avenue S/25th Street East, W Avenue O-8/10th Street West, and Rancho Vista Boulevard/10th Street West/15th Street West.
- Between an area bounded by Avenue Q and Avenue R (half a mile in either direction from Palmdale Boulevard, between Highway 14 and 40th Street East), a variety of residential development, ranging from typical suburban to small lot residential to duplex/triplex to mobile home to 2- and 3-story multifamily apartments. The majority of the City's multifamily development is located in this historic core.
- Urban development is interspersed with large expanses of vacant land, as development has often leapfrogged outwards towards cheaper land on the City's edges. Abundant vacant/undeveloped land is also located along most of the periphery of the City, especially on the eastern side.
- Agricultural and mineral extraction uses located along and adjacent to the Little Rock Creek Wash.
- A partially developed commercial and employment district is nestled in between Highway 14, 10th Street West, and Palmdale Boulevard.
- Suburban residential subdivisions stretching outward and upward towards the western edge of the City, including the planned community of Rancho Vista. These master planned areas are almost wholly characterized by medium lot single-family residential development with curvilinear street patterns, with occasional commercial uses embedded within.
- A hodge-podge of planned residential communities (mostly medium-lot single-family residential with occasional small-lot residential) reaches eastward and southward from the historic core, up to Pearblossom Highway.
- Several aggregations of unincorporated County land on the northwest, south, and southeast edges of the City (within the Sphere of Influence). These County lands are developed exclusively with large lot single-family residential or mobile homes, laid out in grid patterns, often with dirt or gravel roads.
- Plant 42, an expansive U.S. Air Force facility includes several million square feet of aerospace and industrial space sprawls across the northern area of the City, east of Highway 14. This area contains runways, large

warehouses, and related outbuildings that comprise this US Air Force facility.

- Assorted light industrial uses, comprised of smaller tilt-up concrete warehouses and office buildings, mostly concentrated in the area bounded by Highway 14 on the west and Avenue Q on the south (as well as the area directly south of the future HSR station).
- New suburban development including Anaverde reaches across the southwestern corner of the City, encroaching into the Ritter Ridge foothills.

Land Use Summary

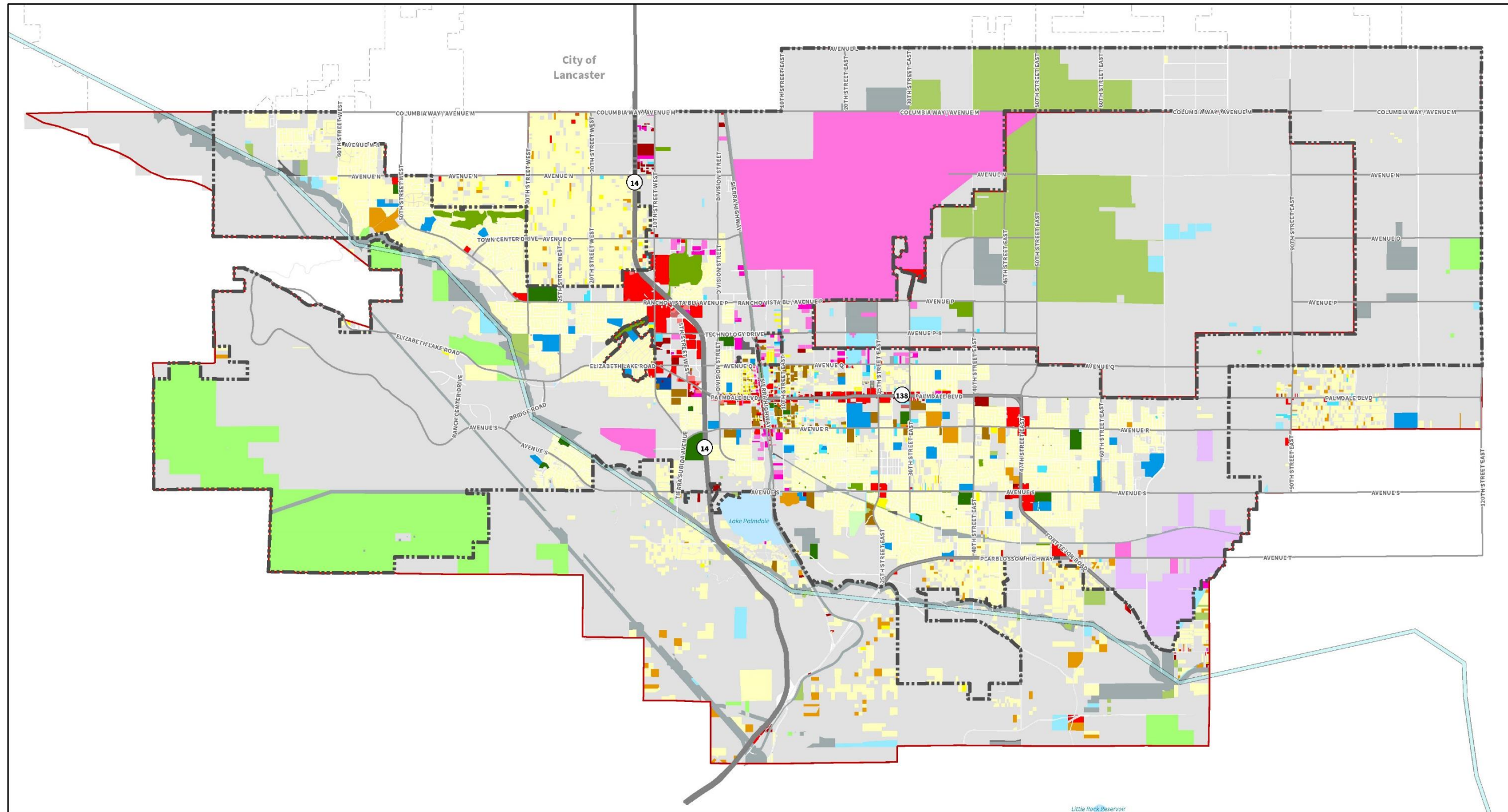
The City of Palmdale stretches across more than fifty-five thousand parcels. The existing land use within the Planning Area can be organized within two categories: the area contained within the City limits themselves, and the other land that is within either the Sphere of Influence or LA County ‘islands.’

Table 3.1 Existing Land Uses – Planning Area

Use Type	Parcel Count	Acres	Area %
Residential			
Single Family Attached	535	201	0.2%
Single Family Detached	41188	13133	12.3%
Mobile Home	148	649	0.6%
Multifamily	180	332	0.3%
Commercial			
Commercial Recreation	6	14	0.0%
Accommodation	19	36	0.0%
Retail/Commercial	553	1130	1.1%
Mixed Use	10	14	0.0%
Office	210	543	0.5%
Industrial/Agriculture/Extraction			
Extraction	23	1234	1.2%
Agriculture	274	4898	4.6%
Wholesale/Warehousing	98	183	0.2%
Industrial	95	6043	5.7%
Public/Institutional			
Hospitals	1	26	0.0%
Civic Facilities	150	739	0.7%
Private Institutions	92	182	0.2%
Public Education	48	628	0.6%
Parks & Open Space			
Cemeteries	6	52	0.0%
Natural/Conservation	25	5156	4.8%
Flood Drainage/Golf Course	55	440	0.4%
Parks and Recreation	70	369	0.3%
Infrastructure			
Transportation	32	70	0.1%
Utilities/Communications	356	3596	3.4%
Other			
Unknown	119	362	0.3%
Vacant	10550	66225	62.1%
Water	8	381	0.4%
Total	54,851	106,636	100%
<i>Source: City of Palmdale GIS Data, L.A. County Assessor's Data 2019</i>			

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Figure 3.3 Existing Land Use

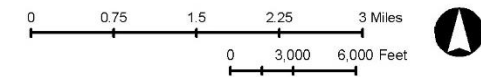


Existing Land Use

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- California Aqueduct
- Major Highway/Arterial

Railroad

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Retail/Commercial | Extraction Uses | Office | Single Family Detached | Cemeteries |
| Commercial Recreation | Hospitals | Mixed Use | Parks and Recreation | Transportation |
| Accommodation | Public Education | Mobile Home | Flood Drainage/Golf Course | Utilities/Communications |
| Industrial | Private Institutions | Multifamily | Natural/Conservation | Vacant |
| Wholesale/Warehousing | Civic Facilities | Single Family Attached | Agriculture | Water |



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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The Planning Area of the City of Palmdale is defined by an overall lack of active land use - approximately two-thirds of the land is either vacant (61.8%) or natural/conservation land (4.8%).

Residential uses occupy just under 1/7th of the Planning Area (13.4%, or 14,315 acres), with the vast majority of this category being the single-family detached housing type, which represents 98% of the total number of residential parcels.

Commercial, office, and other retail uses account for a very limited amount of the land in the City at approximately 1.6% percent of land area. Commercial uses are generally concentrated along Palmdale Boulevard, Rancho Vista Boulevard, and in other isolated clusters.

Intensive job-producing uses such as industrial, extraction, and manufacturing account for 11.6% of the total area, due largely in part to Plant 42 which covers nearly 5,000 acres by itself.

Civic uses, public facilities such as schools and libraries, and private institutions such as churches and private clubs account for about 1.5% of the Planning Area, with almost 300 total parcels.

Parks and recreational facilities account for approximately less than 1 percent of the land area in the City. The City of Palmdale has 19 community parks totaling around 360 acres, far fewer than the City's target parks ratio of 5 acres per 1,000 residents (see *Chapter 7: Public Facilities and Open Space for a discussion of parks*).

City Limits

Within City limits, there are 47,257 parcels, with the following use breakdown:

Table 3.4 Existing Use – City Limits

Use Type	Parcel Count	Acres	Area %
Residential			
Single Family Attached	398	112	0.2%
Single Family Detached	38007	8135	12.7%
Mobile Home	42	286	0.4%
Multifamily	173	319	0.5%
Commercial			
Commercial Recreation	6	14	0.0%
Accommodation	17	35	0.1%
Retail/Commercial	529	1048	1.6%
Mixed Use	7	8	0.0%
Office	194	506	0.8%
Industrial			
Extraction	23	1234	1.9%
Agriculture	48	1539	2.4%
Wholesale/Warehousing	91	165	0.3%
Industrial	83	5925	9.3%
Public/Institutional			
Hospitals	1	26	0.0%
Civic Facilities	96	190	0.3%
Private Institutions	71	144	0.2%
Public Education	41	540	0.8%
Parks & Open Space			
Cemeteries	5	52	0.1%
Natural/Conservation	17	4687	7.3%
Flood Drainage/Golf Course	51	357	0.6%
Parks and Recreation	70	369	0.3%
Infrastructure			
Transportation	30	63	2.1%
Utilities/Communications	171	1693	2.7%
Other			
Unknown	74	156	0.2%
Vacant	7005	36253	56.8%
Water	7	3	0.0%
Total	47257	63859	100.0%

Source: City of Palmdale GIS Data, L.A. County Assessor's Data 2019

Outside City Limits

Within the SOI and County Islands, there are 7,595 parcels, with the following use breakdown:

Table 3.5 Existing Use – SOI + County

Type	Parcel Count	Acres	Area %
Residential			
Single Family Attached	137	89	0.2%
Single Family Detached	3181	4998	11.7%
Mobile Home	106	363	0.8%
Multifamily	7	13	0.0%
Commercial			
Commercial Recreation	-	-	-
Accommodation	2	1	0.0%
Retail/Commercial	25	81	0.2%
Mixed Use	3	6	0.0%
Office	16	37	0.1%
Industrial/Agriculture/Extraction			
Extraction	-	-	-
Agriculture	226	3359	7.9%
Wholesale/Warehousing	7	19	0.0%
Industrial	12	117	0.3%
Public/Institutional			
Hospitals	-	-	-
Civic Facilities	54	548	1.3%
Private Institutions	21	37	0.1%
Public Education	7	88	0.2%
Parks & Open Space			
Cemeteries	1	0	0.0%
Natural/Conservation	8	469	1.1%
Drainage/Golf Courses	4	83	0.2%
Parks and Recreation	0	0	0.0%
Infrastructure			
Transportation	2	6	0.0%
Utilities/Communications	185	1903	4.4%
Other			
unknown	45	206	0.5%
Vacant	3545	29972	70.1%
Water	1	378	0.9%
Total	7595	42773	100.0%

Source: City of Palmdale GIS Data, L.A. County Assessor's Data 2019

Residential Uses

Residential uses are mostly clustered in a wide band traversing the City from upper northwest down to the central core and then eastward and southward. Housing is focused within the City itself; 93% of the residential units in the Planning Area are within City limits.

Historically, residential land uses were concentrated in the core area bounded by Avenue Q, Avenue S, 47th Street East, and Highway 14 (Antelope Valley Fwy). Even today, this area contains the widest diversity of residential development, including apartments, townhomes, mobile home parks, and medium-lot single family detached homes.

Since the 1980s, residential development blossomed outward from the core, migrating eastward, southward, and northwestward, spurred in part by a 1992 General Plan Amendment opening the area out towards 75th Street East. Residential development presently extends westward to 75th Street West, eastward to 70th Street East, and southward to Pearblossom Highway. Most of this recent development is exclusively medium-lot single-family detached in character. The most common zoning is R-1-7,000 which results in residential parcels that measure 7,000 square feet or larger, and the street patterns are generally curvilinear with many cul-de-sacs. The average density for this residential use type is 3 to 5 dwelling units per acre, and medium-lot single-family detached housing occupies over half of the total residential land area.

Small-lot residential developments, with lots averaging 4,000 to 5,000 sf in size, are common throughout the core, present in scattered pockets in the southward expansion area (SEC of Avenue S and 30th Street East is one example), and comprise the entirety of the Desert View Highlands County island. This type is not present in the northwestern expansion area. Around 6,000 units fall under this category, averaging 6 to 8 dwelling units per acre, and typically it has a more grid-like or warped parallel street pattern.

Single-family attached residential types (duplex, triplex, and fourplex) are relatively rare, accounting for just under 1,000 units and 1% of residential land area. They are most common in Palmdale's downtown core, with some also present in the unincorporated County areas (such as the neighborhood at East Avenue Q and 8th Street East). Generally, this residential use averages 14 dwelling units per acre.

Residential land use within the SOI areas can best be classified as rural, as parcels are generally one or more acres in size, resulting in an overall density of less than 1 dwelling unit per acre. Mobility in these rural areas is generally via a gridded street pattern composed of unimproved and/or unpaved local streets that lack right-of-way improvements such as curbs, gutter and streetlights.

There are currently approximately ten mobile home parks within the Planning Area, occupying 649 acres and accounting for an estimated 1,340 units (resulting in an average density of 5 dwelling units per acre). Most of these are located along the eastern extent of Avenue R, in addition to one large mobile home park located

at Avenue N-8 and Rancho Vista Boulevard. Most were developed under County zoning and regulations prior to being annexed by the City.

Multifamily dwellings account for just 3% of the area (332 acres), but over 11% of the total units in the City (5,230 units). Multifamily development is concentrated in the area bounded by Division Street, Avenue R, Avenue Q, and 15th Street East, with a few apartment complexes also present directly across the railroad tracks, along the south side of Avenue R, and on the south side of Avenue S. These newer apartment projects took advantage of large vacant parcels in between single-family housing. The majority of multifamily units were constructed in the 1980s and early 1990s. Overall, multifamily uses average 16 du/ac (ranging between 13 and 18 du/ac).

Table 3.6 Existing Residential Uses – Planning Area

Residential Type	Parcel Count	Unit Count	Acres	Area %
Rural Residential	3037	3292	5646	39.5%
Single Family Detached	32503	32196	6879	48.1%
Small Lot SF Residential	5580	5983	955	6.7%
Duplex	337	711	141	1.0%
Triplex/Fourplex	376	916	62	0.4%
Convalescent Home	6	126	11	0.1%
Mobile Home	32	1340	278	1.9%
Multifamily	180	5230	332	2.3%
TOTAL	42051	49794	14304	100.0%

Source: City of Palmdale GIS Data, L.A. County Assessor's Data 2019

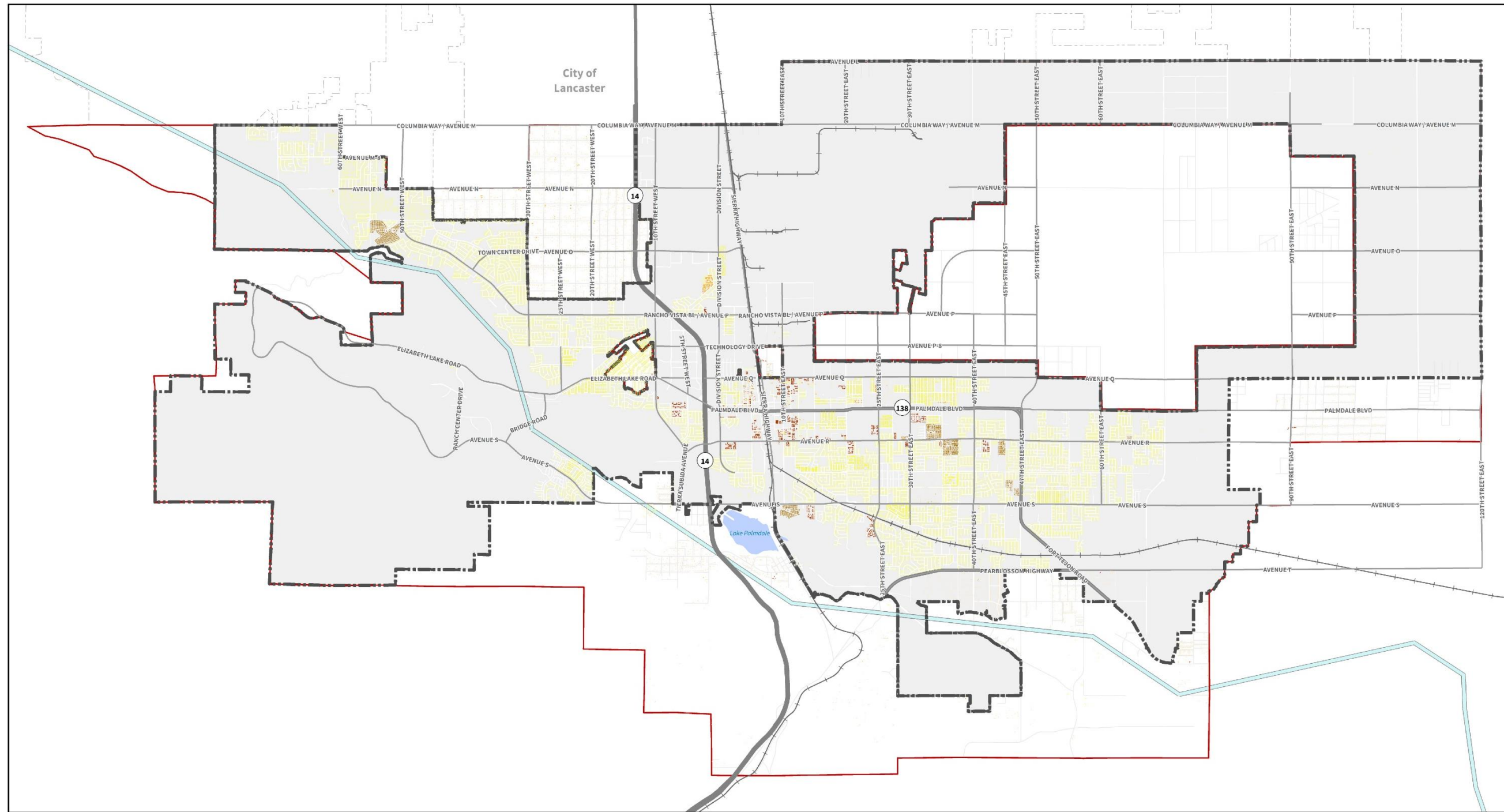
Table 3.7 Existing Residential Uses – City Limits

Residential Type	Parcel Count	Unit Count	Acres	% total
Rural Residential	563	694	681	7.7%
Single Family Detached	32250	31945	6624	74.9%
Small Lot SF Residential	5036	5439	839	9.5%
Duplex	233	464	52	0.6%
Triplex/Fourplex	371	909	60	0.7%
Convalescent Home	4	123	6	0.1%
Mobile Home	28	1308	261	3.0%
Multifamily	173	5205	319	3.6%
TOTAL	38658	46087	8842	100.0%

Source: City of Palmdale GIS Data, L.A. County Assessor's Data 2019

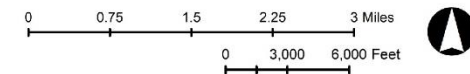
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Figure 3.4 Existing Residential Uses



Residential Uses

- | | | | |
|------------------------|------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| City Boundary | Railroad | Rural Residential | Duplex/Triplex/Fourplex |
| Sphere of Influence | Water Body | Single Family Detached | Mobile Home |
| California Aqueduct | | Small Lot SF Residential | Multifamily |
| Major Highway/Arterial | | | |



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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Commercial/Retail Uses

By raw count, most commercial uses in the Planning Area are retail and services, office, and auto retail. Measured by land area, most commercial uses in the Planning Area are retail and services, medical office, and other commercial, in that order. As mentioned elsewhere, the vast majority of commercial activity occurs within the City limits – only 5% of total commercial parcels and land area is found outside the City.

The oldest commercial activity was mostly developed in a linear fashion along Palmdale Boulevard and Sierra Highway. This pattern is defined by more community and local-serving businesses (as opposed to the regional commercial focus typified by more recent retail development). Today, these two corridors are established as the City's Downtown and offer a wide variety of general retail and service destinations, such as auto repair, medical and dental clinics, furniture and clothing stores, restaurants, and lodging. Commercial activity along Palmdale Boulevard generally occurs in moderately deep parcels, ranging from 100 to 300 feet on either side, generally between 5th Street East and 30th Street West. Buildings display a variety of architectural styles that reflect six decades of City growth. Older buildings generally front the sidewalk with minimal setbacks, but newer strip commercial development was designed for maximum automobile access, turning away from the streetscape.

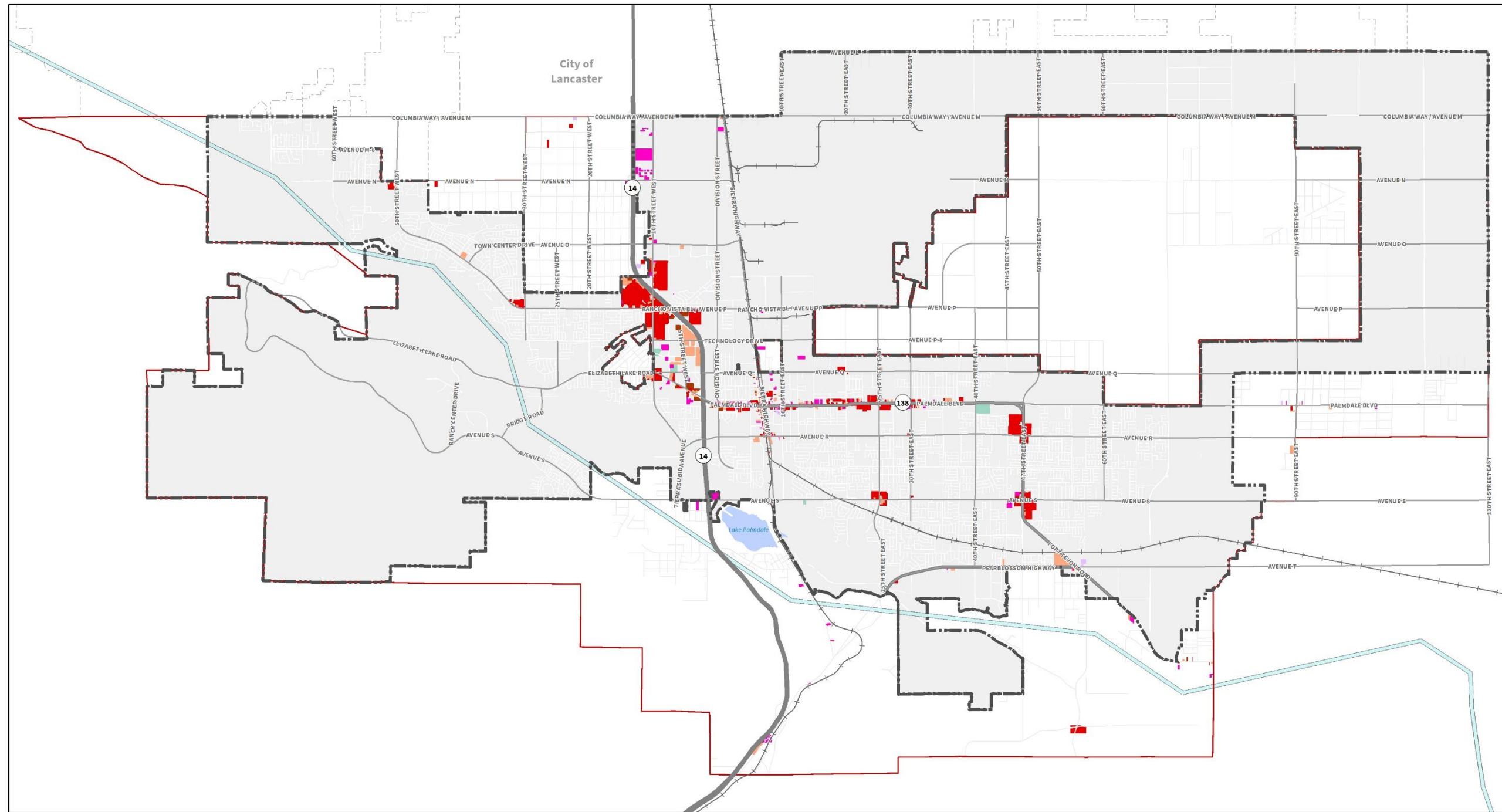
Rapid residential growth generated a need for more commercial areas, which led to the establishment of shopping centers at 47th Street East and Avenue S, 25th Street East and Avenue S, 5th Street West and Palmdale Boulevard, 47th Street East and Avenue R, and others. Most of these centers are ten to twenty acres in size, characterized by large surface parking lots and large retail structures. The most significant single commercial area is the 127-acre Antelope Valley (AV) Mall, located at 10th Street West and Avenue P. The AV Mall contains over 1.5 million square feet of enclosed commercial mall space, plus additional outbuildings. Nine dealerships have taken up residence within the Antelope Valley Auto Center, with space for more. The adjacent Palmdale Trade & Commerce Center Specific Plan area contains a handful of medical office districts, extended stay hotels, business parks, and other miscellaneous light industrial and office buildings.

Overall commercial uses are clustered within a relatively small portion of the Planning Area, requiring residents in newer subdivisions to travel long distances to shop, dine, and access other daily services. This leads to excess vehicle miles traveled and retail sales leakage to Lancaster and other areas. Additionally, mixed use is exceedingly rare, accounting for just ten parcels, most of which are simple combinations of a store and a single unit.

Table 3.8 Existing Commercial Uses in Planning Area

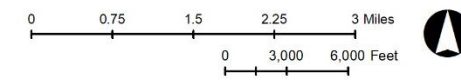
Commercial Type	Parcel Count	Parcel %	Acres	Area %
Accommodation	19	2.4%	36	2.1%
Auto Retail	95	11.9%	128	7.4%
Commercial Other	48	6.0%	255	14.7%
Commercial Recreation	6	0.8%	14	0.8%
Food Retail	66	8.3%	69	4.0%
Medical Office	67	8.4%	375	21.6%
Mixed Use	10	1.3%	14	0.8%
Office	143	17.9%	168	9.7%
Retail Services	296	37.1%	620	35.7%
Parking	48	6.0%	58	3.3%
TOTAL	798	100%	1737	100.0%
<i>Source: City of Palmdale GIS Data, L.A. County Assessor's Data 2019</i>				

Figure 3.5 Existing Commercial Uses



Commercial Uses

- | | | | |
|------------------------|------------|-----------------|----------------|
| City Boundary | Railroad | Retail Services | Mixed Use |
| Sphere of Influence | Water Body | Auto Retail | Office |
| California Aqueduct | | Accommodation | Medical Office |
| Major Highway/Arterial | | | |



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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Industrial/Agriculture Uses

Palmdale's largest industries in terms of both land and jobs are manufacturing, defense, and aerospace. Industrial, extraction, and agriculture uses occupy over 12,000 acres within the Planning Area, around one-tenth of this area. The two uses that command the most acreage are agriculture and military industrial (Plant 42).

Plant 42 is a United States Air Force facility. It is the Antelope Valley's second-largest employer, spreading across nearly 5,000 acres, and operates as a component of Edwards Air Force Base, 23 miles northeast of the airport. Most of the facilities are operated by private contractors and serve as a manufacturing plant for aircraft used by the United States. Aerospace contractors at Air Force Plant 42 share a common runway complex, and either lease building space from the Air Force (an arrangement commonly referred to as a "GOCO," or Government Owned Contractor Operated) or own their own land and buildings outright (such as Lockheed Martin). Plant 42 alone accounts for 3.2 million square feet of industrial space.

Another major use in the City is mineral extraction, with half a dozen sand and gravel mining operations present along the Little Rock Wash. There are also concrete and asphalt batching operations in this area.

Agricultural uses are present to the east of Plant 42, sprawling across the County Island owned by Los Angeles World Airports, covering just under 5,000 acres.

Other large-format employment uses are found west and south of Plant 42, while smaller warehouse, wholesale, manufacturing, and industrial business parks are located along 6th Street East, along Avenue O, or within the area bounded by Avenue P/Avenue Q/Division Street/30th Street East.

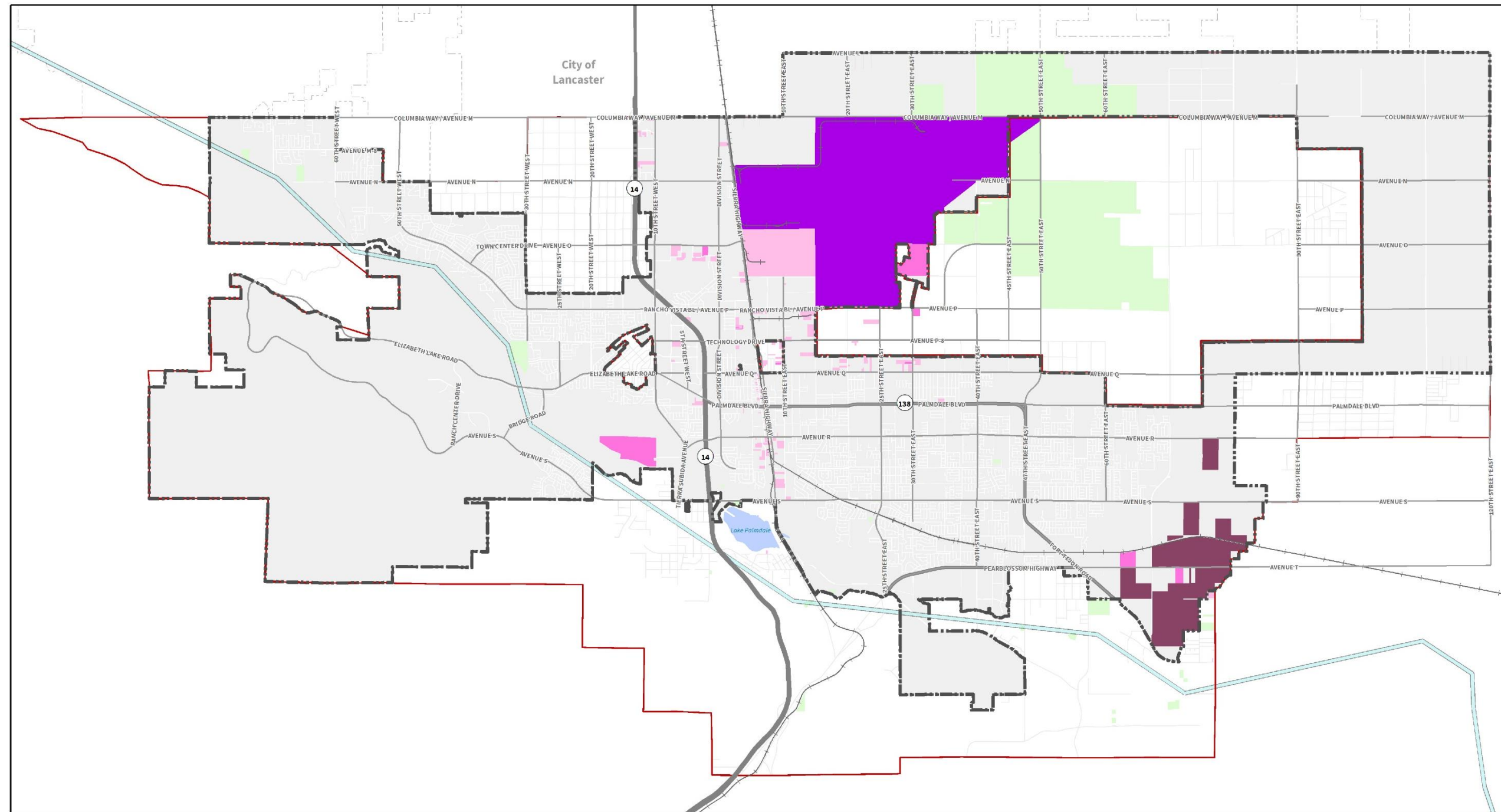
Table 3.9 Existing Industrial/Agriculture/Extraction Uses in Planning Area

Type	Parcel Count	Parcel %	Acres	Area %
Extraction	23	4.7%	1234	10.0%
Agriculture	274	56.4%	4898	39.7%
Wholesale/Warehousing	94	19.3%	171	1.4%
Light Industrial	70	14.4%	685	5.5%
Heavy Industrial	12	2.5%	392	3.2%
Military Industrial	13	2.7%	4966	40.2%
TOTAL	486	100%	12346	100%

Source: City of Palmdale GIS Data, L.A. County Assessor's Data 2019

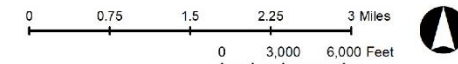
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Figure 3.6 Existing Industrial and Resource Uses



Industrial Uses

- | | | | |
|------------------------|------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| City Boundary | Railroad | Military Industrial | Agriculture |
| Sphere of Influence | Water Body | Heavy Industrial | Extraction |
| California Aqueduct | | Light Industrial/Warehousing | |
| Major Highway/Arterial | | | |



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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Public/Institutional Uses

Public-serving and institutional uses are distributed fairly evenly throughout the residential footprint of Palmdale, with over 50 churches, one hospital, over 40 public schools, a dozen private schools, and more than a hundred governmental facilities (such as libraries, maintenance yards, city departmental offices, fire/police stations, flood control facilities, landfill, and other similar uses).

Table 3.10 Existing Public/Institutional Uses

Type	Parcel Count	Parcel %	Acres	Area %
Church	57	20.6%	106	6.7%
Civic Facilities	142	51.3%	739	47.0%
Hospital	1	0.4%	26	1.7%
Private Education	12	4.3%	47	3.0%
Public Education	48	17.3%	628	39.9%
Special Use	17	6.1%	28	1.8%
TOTAL	277	100.0%	1,575	100.0%

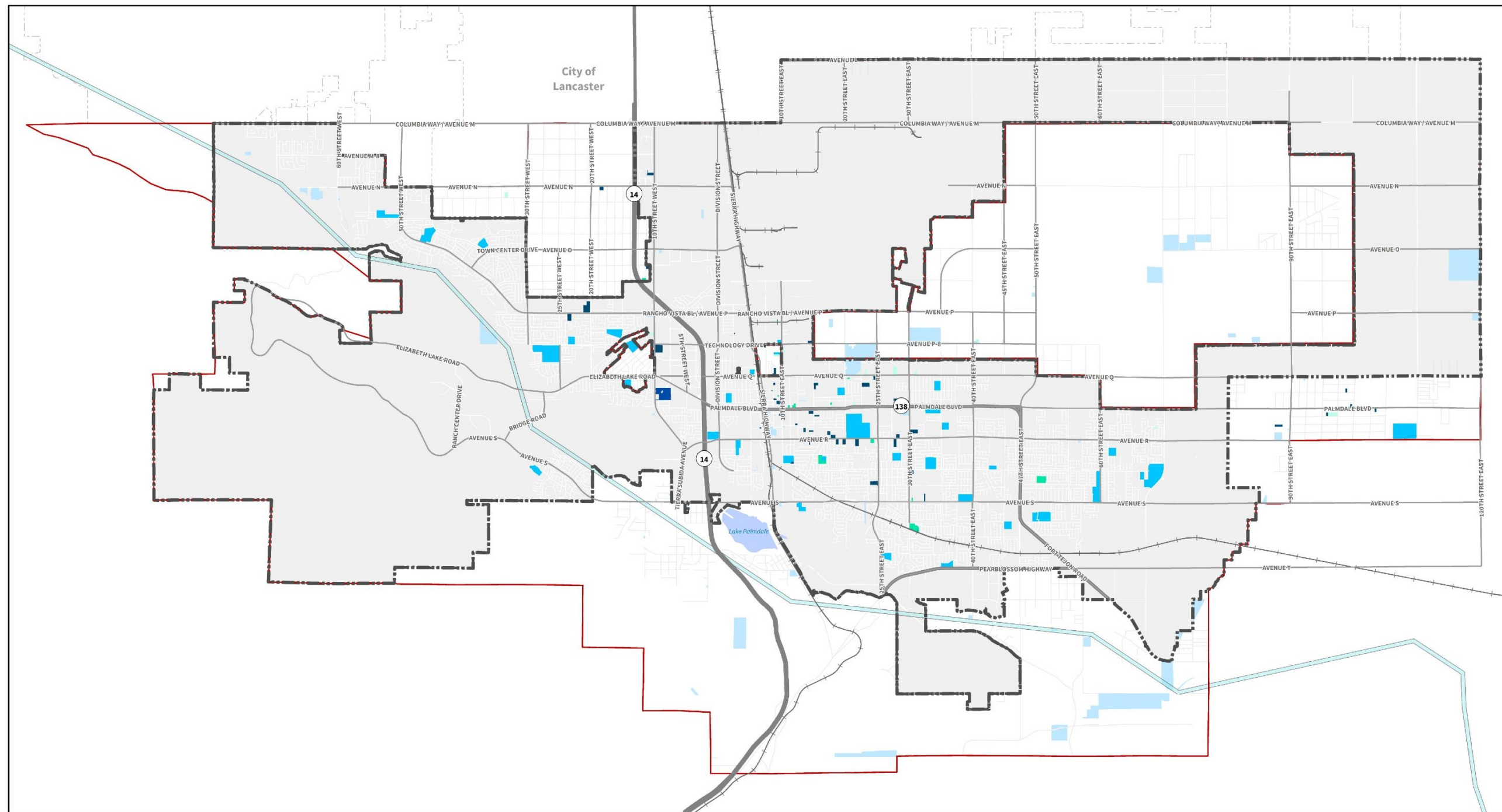
Source: City of Palmdale GIS Data, L.A. County Assessor's Data 2019

Vacant

Vacant land is present all throughout the Planning Area, even within the historic core. Over 66,000 acres are classified as vacant (or unknown), representing nearly two-thirds of the Planning Area. Over 10,500 parcels are categorized as vacant. Most of these vacant parcels lack appropriate infrastructure for any development.

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Figure 3.7 Existing Public Uses



Institutional Uses

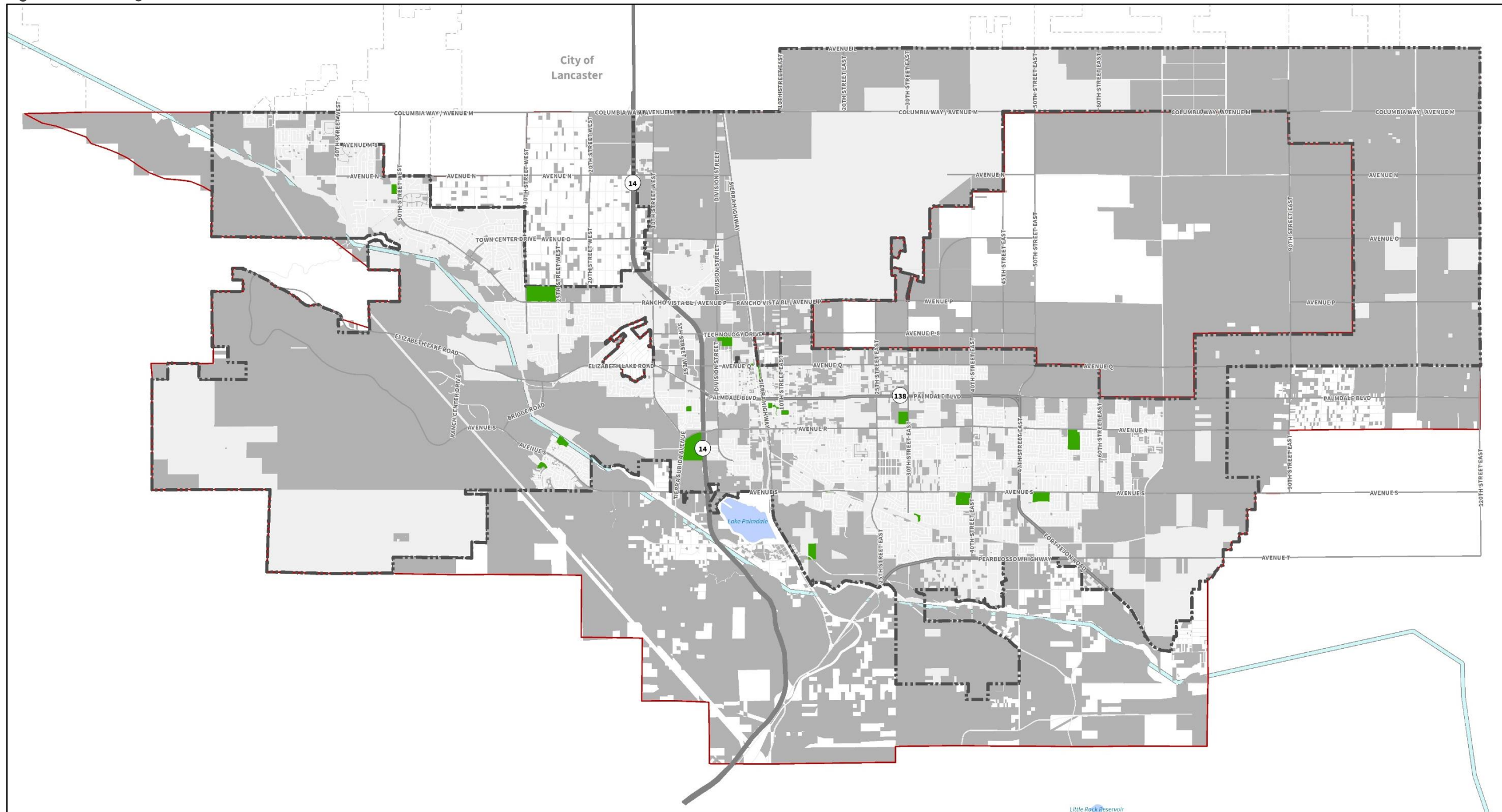
- | | | | |
|------------------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|
| City Boundary | Railroad | Church | Private Education |
| Sphere of Influence | Water Body | Civic Facilities | Public Education |
| California Aqueduct | | Hospitals | Special Use |
| Major Highway/Arterial | | | |











Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

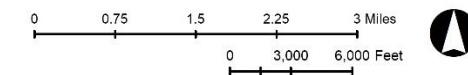
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Figure 3.8 Existing Vacant Land



Vacant Parcels (Citywide)

-  City Boundary
-  Sphere of Influence
-  California Aqueduct
-  Major Highway/Arterial
-  Railroad
-  Water Body
-  Park
-  Vacant



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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Existing Land Use Regulations

Key regulations discussed include the General Plan, the Palmdale Municipal Code (PMC), various Specific Plans, and other adopted Plan documents.

General Plan

The 1993 General Plan Land Use Element and the PMC are the primary planning documents currently in place to guide and regulate land use, development, and community character in the City. Adopted by Council in 1993, the General Plan has been amended multiple times (1994, 1996, 1997, 1998, 2009, 2012), however the 1993 Plan update is the last comprehensive update. Many of the visions and key strategies from the 1993 General Plan are still relevant to the City today, while others need to be refined or changed to better reflect current community needs.

Table 3.11 1993 General Plan Elements

Summary of 1993 General Plan Content	
General Plan Element	Issues/Topics Addressed
Land Use Element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Use Designations and Definitions • Distribution and Character of Existing Uses • Development Patterns and Growth Trends • Land Use Issues and Concerns
Circulation Element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street and Highway System • Traffic Model and Roadway Analysis • Public Transit and Alternative Travel Modes • Circulation Considerations
Environmental Resources Element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Space and Conservation • Scenic Highways • Constraints on Environmental Preservation
Public Services Element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure Services (water, sewer, storm, police, fire, electric, gas, waste, telephone, cable, library, schools, hospitals) • Development Considerations • Retrofitting Infrastructure into Developed Areas
Safety Element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Hazards (seismic, geologic, flood, fire) • Human Activity Hazards (hazardous materials, aircraft, crime) • Hazards Response
Noise Element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise and Land Use Planning • Existing and Future Noise Environment
Housing Element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance of Previous Element • Existing Housing Needs • Special Needs Housing • Projected Housing Needs • Site Inventory and Analysis • Government Constraints

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-governmental Constraints • Housing Programs • Funding Sources
Parks, Recreation, and Trails Element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks Plan, Trails Plan, Bikeway Plan, Open Space Plan • Park Standards • Prioritization Criteria • Park Opportunities and Constraints
Community Design Element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-Wide Design Issues and Principles • Design Considerations for Specific Land Use Types

Source: 1993 General Plan

Key Themes and Vision from Land Use and Design Elements

Land Use Element (last updated in 1993).

- **Vision/Themes:** Setting the City up for orderly long-term growth and development to provide a high quality of life among residents by encouraging infill development to remove gaps in developed areas, consider development where infrastructure exists to preserve community cohesiveness, and setting up groundwork for potential annexations to preserve city character and development momentum.
- **Implementation:** Development has occurred but more on the periphery than in the core, which retains a significant amount of vacant land. This Plan was developed when there were large projections for population and employment growth. Some specific plans remain marginally developed (City Ranch, Ritter Ranch) or completely undeveloped (Antelope Valley Business Park, Foothill Ranch)

Community Design (last updated in 1994).

- **Vision/Themes.** This optional element sets standards and guidelines for shaping the City's built environment form and appearance after disjointed development resulted from boom-and-bust housing market cycles. This development pressure led to fortified neighborhoods disconnected from the rest of the city with minimal infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, schools, parks, etc.).
- **Implementation.** The City has a long way to go. Compared to what was built before 1993, more recent subdivisions have better connectivity and aesthetic quality, but many still lack any diversity of land use, disconnected cul-de-sacs are still common, and most are walled off. Older communities also need retrofitting and rehabilitation.

Key Issues

- **Land Use and Growth:** The sheer physical expanse of land within the City and its potential for growth are a challenge and an opportunity.
- **Circulation:** Due to a pattern of isolated suburban communities and topographic constraints, there is a discontinuous street pattern in many areas.
- **Housing:** Single-family development is abundant, but other housing types are lacking. Older housing stock needs rehabilitation.
- **Infrastructure:** Provision of adequate infrastructure to serve far flung residential development will be difficult. Water demand may outpace supply. Sewer coverage is inconsistent. Lack of a storm drainage system causes intermittent flooding.
- **Quality of Life:** Significant open space areas and parkland must be preserved from premature development and urbanization.
- **Safety:** Significant hazards include the San Andreas Fault, flooding in natural drainage areas, aircraft crash zones, hazardous materials.
- **Noise:** USAF Plant 42 is a major source of noise impacts.
- **Growth:** In order to ensure that new development is an asset, growth must be balanced with adequate infrastructure and public services, development standards, economic stability, and the preservation of scenic qualities and open space.
- **Economic Development:** Increased development has led to a dramatic increase in retail sales and jobs (as well as those related to hotels/lodging), but service and industrial sector jobs have not been as readily created.

Predicted Development Trends from the 1993 General Plan

1. New housing for first time buyers will be constructed on the east side of Palmdale (east of 47th Street). This is one of the remaining areas of flat, developable land in the City where land prices will support construction of entry level housing.
2. Residential development will continue to expand south into the Barrel Springs and Vincent Hills areas. The principal constraint to growth in these areas is lack of backbone infrastructure planning and construction. If development interests combine their resources to plan for locations and alignments of major facilities, this area will open up for development.
3. Similarly, the southwest portion of the City between Verde Ridge and the southern sphere line, west of Hwy 14 to City Ranch will be a target for urban development if infrastructure is provided. Major improvements to Avenue S, including a freeway interchange upgrade, as well as regional sewage and drainage facility planning, will need to occur prior to opening this area up for development. However, with the approval of City Ranch, development pressures in this area are increasing and should be met with proactive planning of urban infrastructure.
4. City Ranch and Ritter Ranch will begin construction on initial phases adjacent to Elizabeth Lake Road. Adoption of Assessment District 90-1 and the associated improvements to Amargosa Creek will also permit

development of commercial and industrial areas downstream, west of the Antelope Valley Freeway.

5. The City will complete annexation of many of the County island areas within the core areas.
6. The City will encourage infill of vacant land and reuse of existing buildings in urbanized areas, in order to strengthen the core areas of the community.

The City has had varying degrees of success with the predicted development patterns as stated in the 1993 General Plan:

1. Considerable numbers of entry-level single-family housing units were built east of 47th Street during the past two decades. However, many vacant parcels remain, and most of these new subdivisions were not built with a coherent or connected pattern, resulting in walled-off neighborhoods at great distance from retail and services.
2. The Barrel Springs area was mostly developed with single-family subdivisions, though the area south of Pearblossom Hwy remains rural residential. Five hundred acres were entitled under the Foothill Ranch Specific Plan but remains untouched at present. The Vincent Hills area has seen no major development of any kind.
3. After a delay of many years, the Avenue S extension/bridge has been completed. Infrastructure provision by private developers in this area has been inconsistent.
4. Approximately 415 acres and 1,000 units have been developed under the City Ranch Specific Plan, in addition to an elementary school and two parks. Another 1,400 acres is entitled but unbuilt.
5. The City has annexed small portions of unincorporated LA County land, primarily as a result of the City Ranch and Foothill Ranch Specific Plans, and a small area around Avenue P-8 and 10th Street East. Yet 0.6 square miles of unincorporated County islands remain (in addition to 25.6 square miles of LAWA owned property).
6. Infill has been a challenge, as the vast majority of new development has ‘leap-frogged’ outwards.

Land Use Designations

The existing General Plan includes nine residential designations and 13 non-residential designations. Residential designations are focused on low density development types, with two higher-density designations (MHDR 30 and HDR 50) being added in 2012. There is no explicit “Mixed-Use” designation, though it is allowed in Downtown Commercial.

Table 3.12 Existing Designations

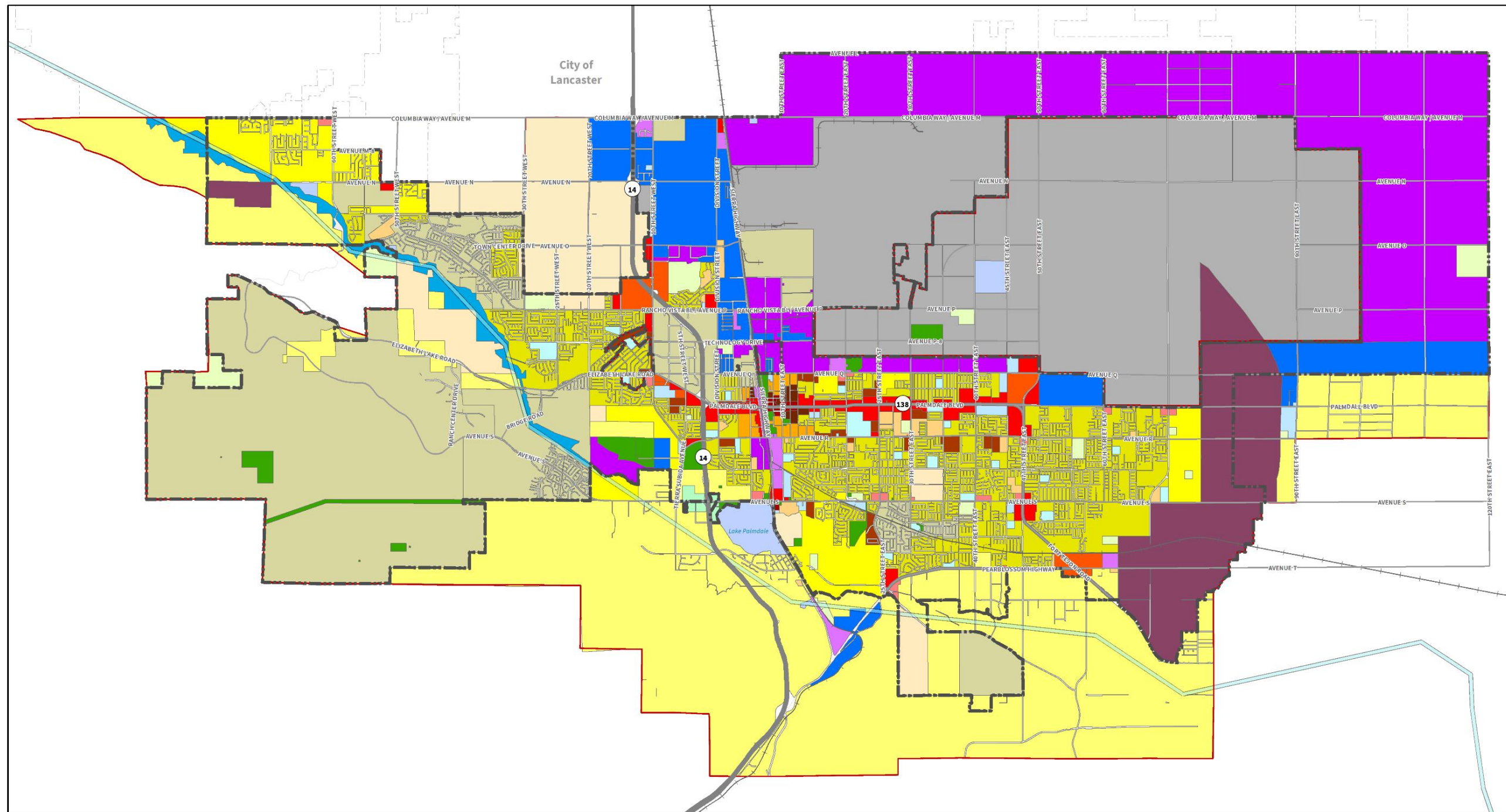
Summary of 1993 General Plan Land Use Designations - Residential		
Land Use Designation	Uses Allowed	Maximum Density
Equestrian Residential	Rural single-family dwellings. Parcel sizes are 2.5 acres or larger. Animal keeping activities permitted.	Up to 0.4 units per acre
Low Density Residential (LDR)	Detached single-family dwellings. Appropriate to hillside areas and as a transition between rural and suburban areas.	Up to 1 unit per acre
Single Family Residential 1 (SFR-1)	Detached single-family dwellings in a semi-rural environment with horse/animal keeping possible.	Up to 2 dwelling units per acre
Single Family Residential 2 (SFR-2)	Single-family dwellings, appropriate in those areas between the valley floor and steeper hillside areas (having less than ten percent slope).	Up to 3 dwelling units per acre
Single Family Residential 3 (SFR-3)	Detached single-family subdivisions containing the City's standard 7,000 square foot minimum lot size will typically be located within this designation.	3 to 6 dwelling units per acre
Medium Residential (MR)	Housing types may include single family detached, single family attached, townhouses, condominiums, duplexes, triplexes, or apartments.	6 to 10 dwelling units per acre
Multi-family Residential (MFR)	Housing types may include a variety of attached and detached dwelling unit types.	10 to 16 dwelling units per acre
Medium-High Density Residential (MHDR 30)	Housing types may include a variety of attached dwelling types, including townhouses, condominiums or apartments.	30 to 50 dwelling units per acre
High Density Residential (HDR 50)	Housing types may include a variety of attached dwelling types, including townhouses, condominiums or apartments.	50 to 60 dwelling units per acre

Source: City of Palmdale 1993 General Plan

Summary of 1993 General Plan Land Use Designations – Non-Residential		
Office Commercial (OC)	Designed to accommodate a variety of professional office uses. Limited retail and eating establishments permitted.	Up to 1.0 FAR
Neighborhood Commercial (NC)	Convenience-type retail and service activities designed to serve the daily needs of the immediate neighborhood.	Up to 0.5 FAR
Community Commercial (CC)	Businesses providing retail and service uses which primarily serve the local market.	Up to 1.0 FAR
Regional Commercial (RC)	Accommodates retail and service uses attracting consumers from a regional market area.	Up to 1.0 FAR
Downtown Commercial (DC)	Intended for the City’s traditional retail/service core. Mixed-use development encouraged.	Subject to Downtown Plan
Commercial Manufacturing (CM)	Permits mixed use development of lighter industrial uses and the more intensive service, retail, and wholesale commercial uses.	Up to 0.5 FAR
Business Park (BP)	Permits a variety of office, research and development, light assembly and fabrication, and supportive commercial uses within master-planned complexes.	Up to 0.5 FAR
Industrial (IND)	Permits a variety of industrial uses, including manufacturing and assembly of products and goods, warehousing, distribution, and similar uses.	Up to 0.5 FAR
Airfield and Related Use (A&R)	Permits public and private airfields and support facilities, aerospace-related industries, transportation-related industries, and commercial support facilities.	Up to 0.5 FAR
Mineral Resource Extraction (MRE)	Permits extraction and processing of mineral resources, including sand, gravel and granite.	Up to 0.25 FAR
Open Space (OS)	Reserved land for both natural and active open space uses, including City parks.	n/a
Public Facilities (PF)	Land utilized for various types of public facilities, including but not limited to schools, parks, libraries, hospitals, public safety and governmental facilities, sewer and water treatment plants, and landfills.	Up to 1.0 FAR
Special Development (SD)	Appropriate for areas for which focused planning efforts are ongoing.	Up to 2 dwelling units per acre
Public and quasi-public uses may also be located within other land use designations as established by the underlying zoning.		

Source: City of Palmdale 1993 General Plan

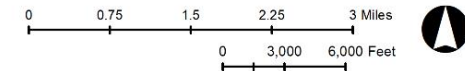
Figure 3.9 Existing General Plan Designations



General Plan

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- California Aqueduct
- Major Highway/Arterial
- Railroad

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Equestrian Residential (ER) | Medium Residential (MR) | Neighborhood Commercial (NC) | Business Park (BP) | Open Space (OS) |
| Single Family Residential 1 (SFR-1) | Medium High Density Residential (MHDR) | Community Commercial (CC) | Office Commercial (OC) | Park/Public Facility (PF) |
| Single Family Residential 2 (SFR-2) | Multifamily Residential (MFR) | Regional Commercial (RC) | Mineral Resource Extraction (MRE) | Public Facility-School (PF-S) |
| Single Family Residential 3 (SFR-3) | High Density Residential (HDR) | Downtown Commercial (DC) | Industrial (IND) | Public Facility-Treatment Plant (PF-TP) |
| Low Density Residential (LDR) | Special Development (SD) | Specific Plan Area | Commercial Manufacturing (CM) | California Aqueduct |
| | | | Airport and Related Uses (AR) | |



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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March 2019

Table 3.13 Existing General Plan Land Use Designations

Type	Entire Planning Area		City Limits		SOI + County Islands	
	Acres	Area %	Acres	Area %	Acres	Area %
<i>RESIDENTIAL</i>						
Equestrian Residential (ER)	3,169	3.0%	112	0.2%	3,057	7.1%
Low Density Residential (LDR)	23,358	22.0%	3,184	5.0%	20,174	47.1%
Single Family Residential 1 (SFR-1)	1,491	1.4%	1,491	2.4%	0	0.0%
Single Family Residential 2 (SFR-2)	3,305	3.1%	3,035	4.8%	270	0.6%
Single Family Residential 3 (SFR-3)	7,682	7.2%	7,531	11.9%	151	0.4%
Medium Residential (MR)	404	0.4%	399	0.6%	5	0.0%
Medium High Density Residential (MHDR)	219	0.2%	219	0.3%	0	0.0%
Multifamily Residential (MFR)	381	0.4%	336	0.5%	44	0.1%
High Density Residential (HDR)	81	0.1%	81	0.1%	0	0.0%
<i>COMMERCIAL</i>						
Community Commercial (CC)	999	0.9%	999	1.6%	0	0.0%
Downtown Commercial (DC)	50	0.0%	50	0.1%	0	0.0%
Office Commercial (OC)	329	0.3%	261	0.4%	68	0.2%
Neighborhood Commercial (NC)	163	0.2%	161	0.3%	3	0.0%
Regional Commercial (RC)	511	0.5%	511	0.8%	0	0.0%
Business Park (BP)	4,224	4.0%	3,510	5.6%	714	1.7%
<i>INDUSTRIAL</i>						
Airport and Related Uses (AR)	20,891	19.7%	5,288	8.4%	15,603	36.5%
Mineral Resource Extraction (MRE)	4,756	4.5%	3,450	5.5%	1,307	3.1%
Commercial Manufacturing (CM)	342	0.3%	265	0.4%	77	0.2%
Industrial (IND)	13,678	12.9%	13,585	21.5%	92	0.2%
<i>SPECIAL</i>						
Specific Plan (SP)	16,102	15.2%	16,102	25.5%	0	0.0%
Special Development (SD)	103	0.1%	62	0.1%	41	0.1%
<i>PUBLIC</i>						
California Aqueduct	886	0.8%	695	1.1%	191	0.4%
Public Facility (PF)	1,897	1.8%	1,200	1.9%	697	1.6%
Open Space (OS)	1,002	0.9%	707	1.1%	295	0.7%
Total	106,023		63,233		42,970	

Source: City of Palmdale GIS Data, L.A. County Assessor's Data 2019

The difference between the distribution of designations in the City compared to the SOI/County Islands is clear – while the City has a wide array of designations (the largest being Specific Plan at 25%), only three designations account for 90% of the area outside of the City limits (Low Density Residential 47%, Airport and Related Uses 37%, and Equestrian Residential 7%).

Zoning

A current map of existing zoning designations is shown below, with a distribution of zones roughly similar to the General Plan land use designations. The largest zones within the City limits are Planned Industrial (20%), Ritter Ranch Specific Plan (17%), and R-1-7,000 (12%), together accounting for half of the area. Roughly 1/3 of the City (34%) is zoned for residential - either as existing residential zones, prezoned residential land, or residentially focused Specific Plan.

Table 3.14 Existing Zoning – Planning Area

Type	Acres	Area %
<i>RESIDENTIAL</i>		13.3%
Large-Lot Single Family Residential	2953	2.8%
Single Family Residential	10085	9.5%
Medium Residential	731	0.7%
Multifamily Residential	299	0.3%
<i>COMMERCIAL</i>		2.2%
Commercial	2225	2.1%
Mixed Use	96	0.1%
<i>INDUSTRIAL</i>		14.4%
Industrial	4299	4.1%
Mineral	3450	3.3%
Airport	5288	5.0%
Agriculture	2237	2.1%
<i>PREZONE/PLANNED</i>		52.4%
Prezone Residential	7886	7.4%
Prezone Non-Residential	46638	44.0%
Prezone Open Space/Public	980	0.9%
<i>OTHER</i>		15.2%
Specific Plan - Residential	14617	13.8%
Specific Plan - Non-Residential	1485	1.4%
<i>PUBLIC</i>		2.6%
Parks	509	0.5%
Public Facility	1550	1.5%
Aqueduct	695	0.7%
<i>Total</i>	42,970	
Source: City of Palmdale GIS Data, L.A. County Assessor’s Data 2019		

Table 3.15 Zoning – SOI + County Islands

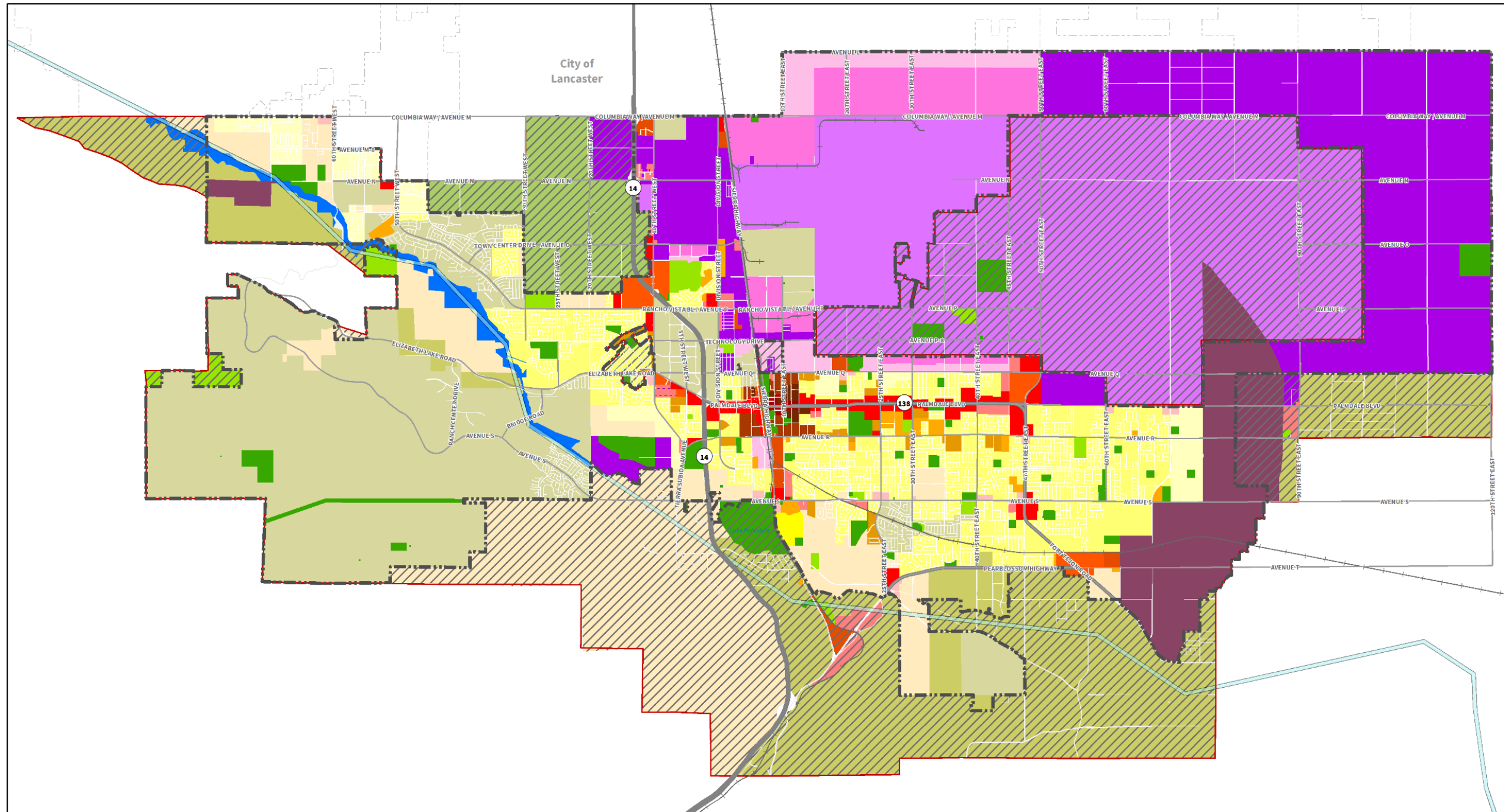
Type	Acres	Area %
<i>RESIDENTIAL</i>		
Prezone Single Family Residential (R-1-1 PZ)	7,416	17.3%
Prezone Single Family Residential (R-1-15,000 PZ)	186	0.4%
Prezone Single Family Residential (R-1-20,000 PZ)	84	0.2%
Prezone Single Family Residential (R-1-7,000 PZ)	151	0.4%
Prezone Medium Residential (R-2 PZ)	5	0.0%
Prezone Multiple Residential (R-3 PZ)	44	0.1%
<i>COMMERCIAL</i>		
Prezone Service Commercial (C-5 PZ)	77	0.2%
Prezone Light Commercial (C-1 PZ)	3	0.0%
Prezone Office Commercial (C-2 PZ)	287	0.7%
<i>INDUSTRIAL</i>		
Prezone Light Industrial (M-1 PZ)	92	0.2%
Prezone Planned Industrial (M-4 PZ)	495	1.2%
Prezone Airport Industrial (M-3 PZ)	15,601	36.5%
Prezone Light Agriculture (A-1 PZ)	15,871	37.1%
Prezone Quarry and Reclamation (QR PZ)	1,307	3.1%
<i>PUBLIC</i>		
Prezone California Aqueduct	191	0.4%
Prezone Public Facility (PF PZ)	684	1.6%
Prezone Open Space and Recreation (OR PZ)	295	0.7%
<i>Total</i>	42,790	
Source: City of Palmdale GIS Data, L.A. County Assessor’s Data 2019		

Specific Plans

16,102 acres within the Planning Area are covered by an adopted Specific Plan, several of which have been essentially completed, some which are in preliminary stages, and others that have seen virtually no development. About one-quarter of the land within the City limits has been designated “Specific Plan” by the General Plan, and 15% of the land within the Planning Area overall. The following table describes the timing, size, development program, and status of each of the City’s Specific Plans.

Of all the entitled Specific Plan growth, roughly 7,600 units and 2.5 million square feet have been constructed. Yet, the majority of the entitled growth from Specific Plans has *not* been constructed, as over 13,000 units and 9 million square feet of non-residential remain unbuilt. See Table 3.20 for full details on growth in Specific Plan areas.

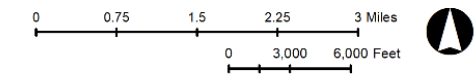
Figure 3.10 Existing Zoning



Zoning

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- California Aqueduct
- Major Highway/Arterial
- Railroad

R-1-1	R-1-7,000	C-1	C-5	M-1	Pre Zone
R-1-20,000	R-1-2.5	C-2	C-D MX	M-2	
R-1-15,000	R-2	C-2 MX	OR	M-3	
R-1-13,000	R-3	C-3	PF	M-4	
R-1-12,000	R-4 (30)	C-3 MX	Specific Plan	QR	
R-1-10,000	R-4 (50)	C-4	CA Aqueduct	A-1	

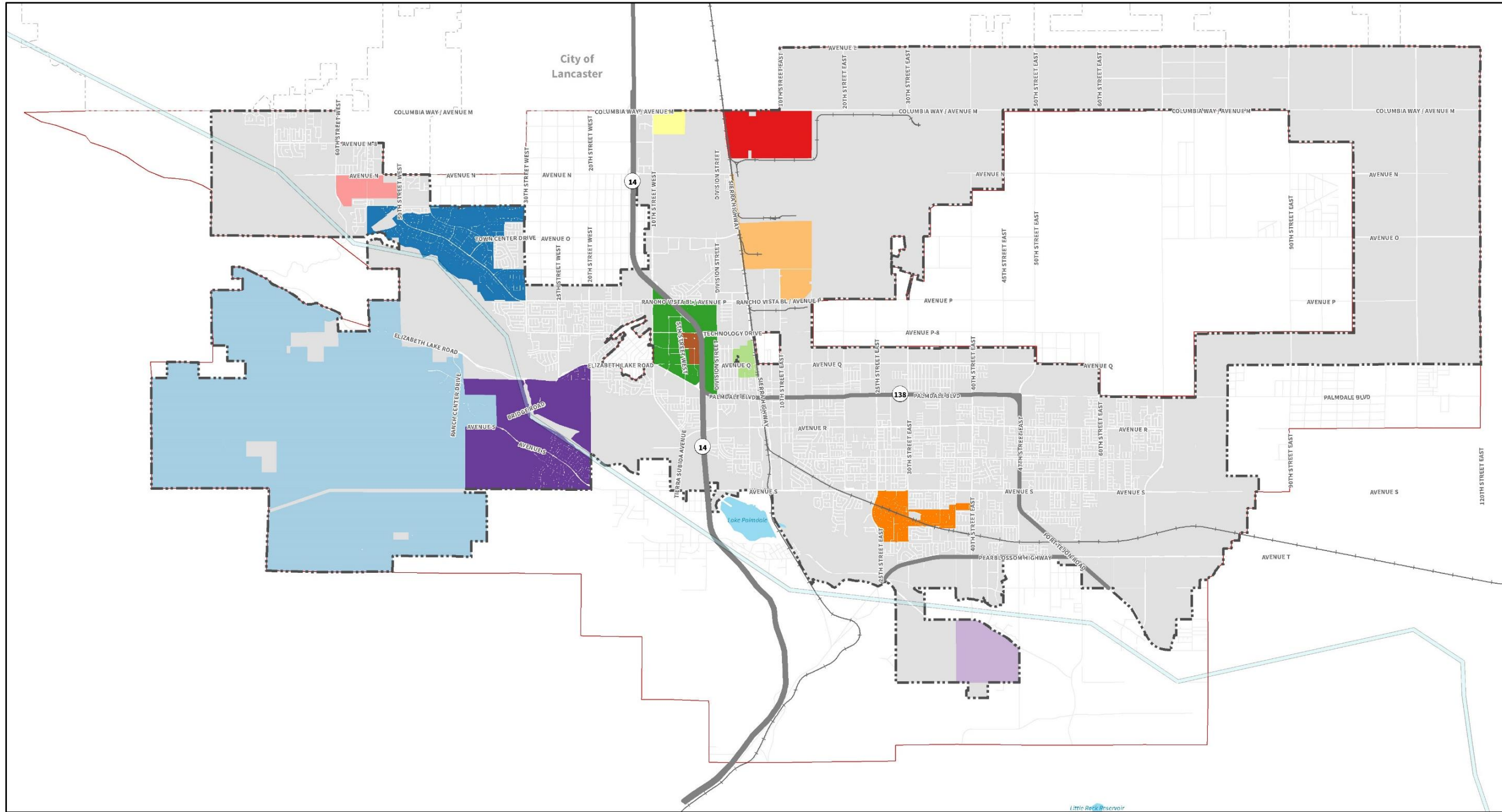


Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.
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Table 3.15 Specific Plans Description and Summary

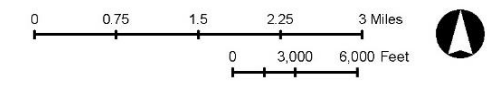
Overview				
Specific Plan	Date	Size	Description	Implementation / Status
Antelope Valley Business Park	1991 (updated 1992)	120 acres Industrial, business park, and commercial uses.	Develop a mixed-use area to bring jobs and capital to Palmdale.	The project site has not been developed and remains in a natural state.
Antelope Valley Auto Center	1989 (updated 2005)	78 acres Automotive sales and leasing centers.	Develop a regional commercial auto shopping center in city to bring jobs and capital.	Around 50 acres (9 dealerships) have been developed along with improved streets and signage (2/3 of total plan area).
City Ranch (Anaverde)	1992	1,985 acres Mixture of residential (5,200 units), commercial (42 acres), golf course, recreational, open space and community facility uses.	Create a neighborhood with land use balance and accessibility, integrate and conserve natural environment, and accessible and safe infrastructure.	415 acres of the plan area have been developed with single-family residential, two parks, and a K-8 school. Approximately 1,000 units built. Recent request to change 1,400 acres from City Ranch SP to Anaverde Nuevo SP was not approved. Past issues with original developer providing required infrastructure and amenities.
Foothill Ranch (College Park)	2009	540 acres Mixed-use development of residential (380 large-lot SF units), commercial, and park (150 acres).	Create a neighborhood with land use balance and accessibility, diverse housing to meet market demands, cohesive design, and accessible and safe infrastructure.	The project site has not been developed and remains in a natural state.
Hillside Residential	1986 (updated 1995)	223 acres Subdivision of 407 single-family units and a 10-acre park.	Three separate gated private residential communities.	Area is mostly built out with residential as planned, but with the addition of commercial at the NEC of Ave N and 50th St West). Approx. 20 acres in that same corner remain undeveloped.
Joshua Hills	1993	435 acres Continued development of a mixed-use community in Joshua Hills with single and multifamily homes.	City had previously approved 1,036 units (836 single-family, 200 multifamily). Specific Plan requested 1,425 additional units (889 single-family, 536 multifamily). Half of all homes were built with 7,000 sf minimum sized lots.	Community was fully developed with single and multifamily residences, 17 acres of commercial, Joshua Hills Park, and Joshua Hills Elementary School.
Lockheed Plant 10	1992 (updated 1994)	674 Acres with approximately 2,180,000 square feet of industrial, manufacturing, warehouse, and office uses	Allows approximately 900,000 more square feet of manufacturing, office, warehouse and special support uses	Approximately two thirds of the entitled buildings have been constructed.
Palmdale Trade and Commerce Center	1990 (updated 2014 and 2017)	756 acres New commercial, industrial, and public uses.	Provide opportunity for development of commercial and industrial uses to diversify and grow local employment base. Market demand projected for 163 acres retail, 28 acres hotel, 146 acres office, 310 acres industrial. <i>(Note: Portions of this Specific Plan will be superseded by the Transit Area Specific Plan that is in progress)</i>	The plan area still has several vacant parcels. There has been some planned development on the northeastern side adjacent to SR14, and some interspersed on the western side of SR14. Application to amend the SP to add multi-family residential uses and modify the design guidelines and parking in the area.
Palmdale Transit Village	2007	110 acres 640 - 1027 dwelling units (426 - 725 multifamily), 450k office, 50k commercial.	Mix of single and multifamily residential, neighborhood commercial, office, and 4 acres of park to provide a more integrated pedestrian-oriented community. <i>(Note: This Specific Plan will be superseded by the Transit Area Specific Plan that is in progress)</i>	Minimal development. Rex Parris High School completed. Additional park and ride lots built adjacent to station. One recent multifamily project (200 units) completed. Still many vacant parcels (approx. 30 acres).
Rancho Vista	1986 (updated 2016)	1379 acres 5,268 units, mostly at 3 du/a and 5 du/a. 626 multifamily, 4642 single-family units.	Planned community of ten neighborhoods, golf course, commercial (58 acres), park (41 acres), and other facilities.	Most residential development is built out, but still about 30 vacant parcels remaining in residential, commercial and natural areas. Only 20% of planned commercial built.
Ritter Ranch	1992	10,625 acres 7,200 units (842 multifamily), 73 acres commercial, 120 acres school, 95 acres parks.	Mixed use (residential, open space, public facility, recreational, school and commercial land uses)	Time extension requests for 579 single-family units submitted. Project revived after bankruptcy. New first phase is planned for 1,100 homes where infrastructure has already been installed.
Palmdale Business Park Center	1996	632 acres Industrial, commercial, and recreational uses.	Develop a large commercial (87 acres), industrial (166 acres), airport (88 acres), and golf park area (226 acres) to bring jobs and capital to Palmdale.	Area has not been developed and remains vacant.

Figure 3.11 Adopted Specific Plans



Specific Plans

- | | | | | |
|------------------------|------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| City Boundary | Railroad | Antelope Valley Auto Center | Hillside Residential | Palmdale Trade and Commerce |
| Sphere of Influence | Water Body | Antelope Valley Business Park | Joshua Hills | Palmdale Transit Village |
| California Aqueduct | | City Ranch | Lockheed | Rancho Vista |
| Major Highway/Arterial | | Foothill Ranch | Palmdale Business Park Center | Ritter Ranch |



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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Other Planning Documents

Avenue Q Feasibility Study

Objective: Develop Avenue Q as a mixed-use corridor to provide a walkable neighborhood with housing, jobs, and entertainment, as a natural extension to planned TOD around the future multimodal station.

Implementation: Four parcels have been developed since the 2016 study, but the area remains underutilized.

Avenue S Corridor Plan

Objectives: Develop 1,170 acres along Avenue S as a main thoroughfare with mixed uses, safe infrastructure, landscaping and design, and historical acknowledgement. Annex adjacent unincorporated county land.

1. New development should be compatible with the City's General Plan policies and with existing development.
2. Evaluate potential for commercial development near the intersection of the Antelope Valley Freeway and Avenue S.
3. Through sound traffic and circulation planning, create a community where people know with ease where they are and how to get where they are going.
4. Networks of infrastructure facilities and community services should support urban development, including water and sewer systems, storm water drainage and flood control facilities, dry utilities, and public safety functions.
5. New development should be constructed in accordance with natural landforms.

Implementation: The corridor has had some development since 1998 but still has around ~1,800 undeveloped parcels. Construction of new units within City Ranch Specific Plan adds more impetus to improving corridor character.

Antelope Valley Area Plan

Objectives: This area plan covers nearly all of the unincorporated lands in L.A. county, north of the City of Los Angeles itself. It is a vision for developing the Antelope Valley, specifying countywide goals to the region, and aligning the planning process. Preserving rural character, reducing GHGs, managing growth, developing multimodal circulation networks, conservation of open spaces and other ecological resources, developing away from natural hazards, enhancing public services.

Implementation: Two major efforts identified in the plan, the High Desert Corridor and Northwest 138 Corridor, both have Final EIS/EIRS but no development has begun yet. Future planning activities along these corridors may involve the preparation of a Community Plan or Specific Plan. Additionally, the County is in the process of updating existing CSDs in communities that have requested it (or establishing new CSDs as needed), including in Acton, Antelope Acres, Fairmont, Green Valley, Lake Los Angeles, Leona Valley, Littlerock, Quartz Hill, Roosevelt, Sun Village, Three Points, Neenach, and Pearblossom.

Palmdale Transit Area Plan & Overlay

Objectives: Setting standards to guide development in the Palmdale TOD Overlay Zone, to prepare for a fully realized High-Speed Rail (HSR) Station area. Create a walkable/bikeable area with supportive streets, public spaces, transit, jobs, and shopping. Connect people to the Palmdale Transportation Center and future HSR station. Remove regulatory constraints for TOD.

Implementation: A large portion of vacant parcels noted in plan still exist. The EIR for the Plan was approved in 2018. The Palmdale Transit Area Specific Plan is nearing completion.

Downtown Revitalization Plan

The previous General Plan called for establishing a Downtown Overlay District with corresponding development standards unique to the downtown area to facilitate ongoing occupancy, re-use of existing structures, and new development consistent with existing development patterns. The intent and vision of this urban district was incorporated into the PMC as a zone with uniquely tailored standards.

Other relevant plans include:

- Public Art Master Plan (2019)
- Energy Action Plan (2011)
- Lighting Standards (2018)
- Homeless Plan (2018)
- Sign Design Standards (2016)
- High Desert Corridor EIR (2014)

Growth and Development

Existing Growth Projections

Between 2020 and 2040, the SCAG RTP/SCS projections predict an additional 35,000 residents, 11,700 households, and 8,100 jobs in Palmdale. This represents 21% population growth, 25% household growth, and 25% employment growth (expanding the City by a full quarter).

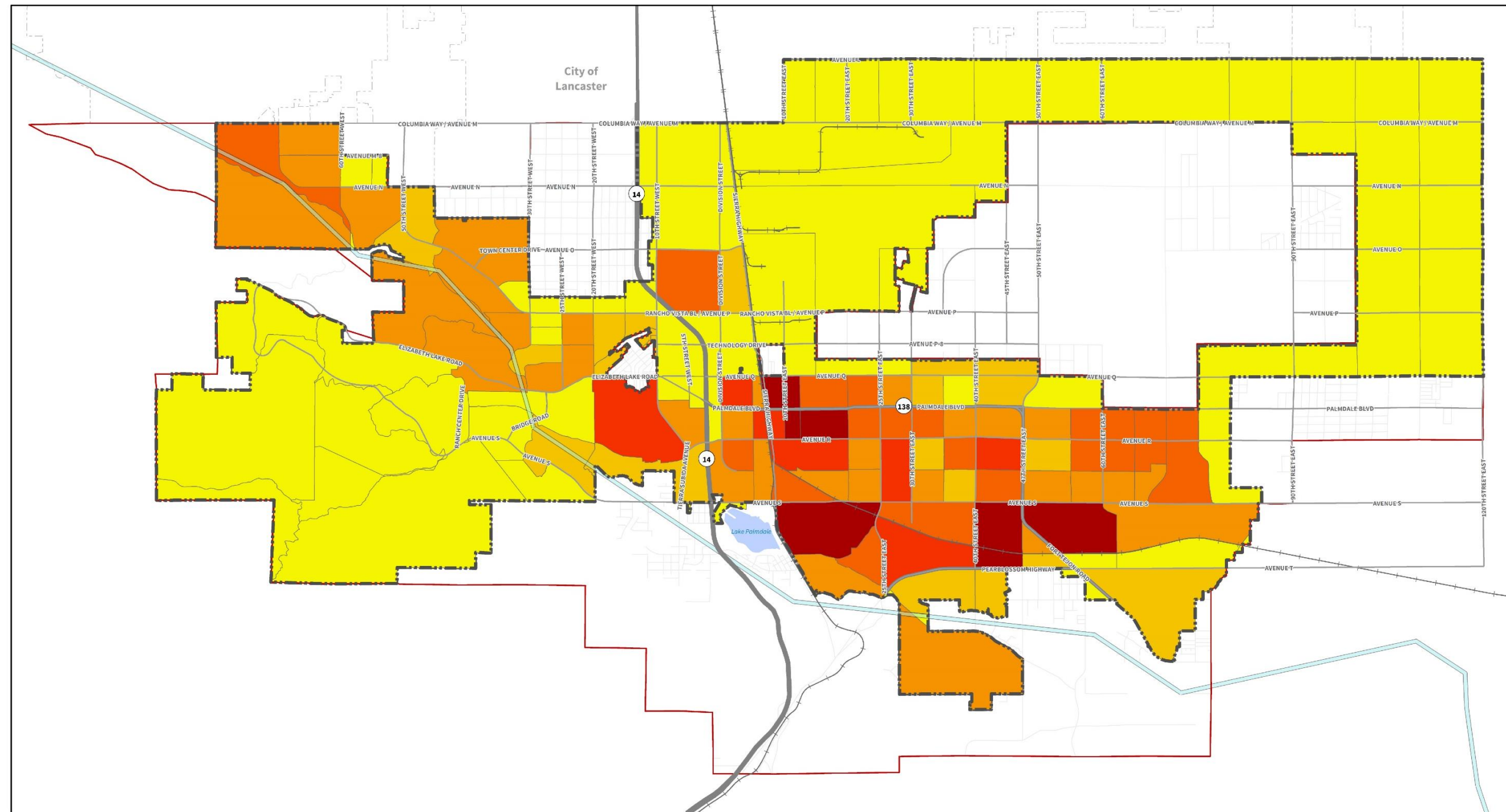
Between 2020 and 2045, these projections anticipate an additional 41,696 residents, 15,188 households, and 10,561 jobs in Palmdale (2045 projections are extrapolated from projected rate of change between 2020 and 2040).

Table 3.16 SCAG Growth Projections

SCAG	2017 ACS Est.	2020	2035	2040	2045 (Ext.)
Population	157,358	166,500	183,100	201,500	208,196
Households	47,965	47,600	56,000	59,300	62,788
Employment	--	32,200	38,100	40,300	42,761

Source: SCAG 2040 RTP/SCS Growth Forecast

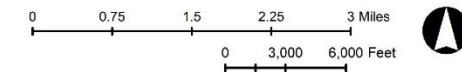
Figure 3.12 SCAG Growth Projections (by Transportation Analysis Zone)



SCAG Projections (Households)

-  City Boundary
-  Sphere of Influence
-  California Aqueduct
-  Major Highway/Arterial
-  Railroad
-  Water Body

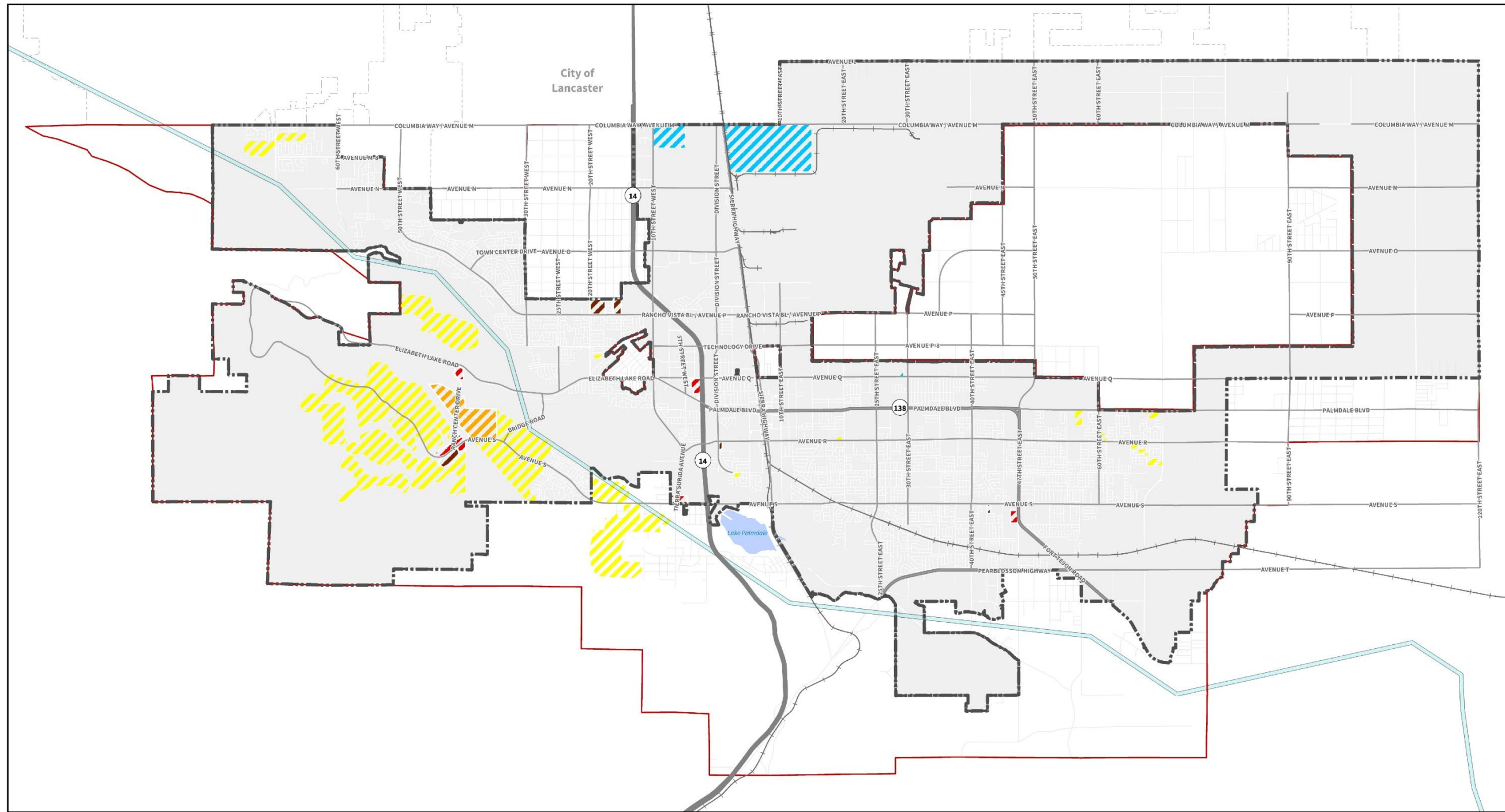
	0 - 35		201 - 350
	36 - 100		351 - 500
	101 - 200		501 - 1025














Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

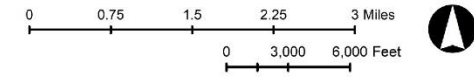
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Figure 3.13 Major Projects



Major Projects

-  City Boundary
-  Sphere of Influence
-  California Aqueduct
-  Major Highway/Arterial
-  Railroad
-  Water Body
-  Planned TND Residential
-  Planned Regional Commercial
-  Planned Mixed Residential
-  Planned Employment
-  Planned Suburban Residential



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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Major Approved Projects

In addition to the above Specific Plans, the following major projects are under consideration for approval by City Planning Staff. A total of ~3,300 units and ~600,000 square feet of non-residential are considered ‘current projects.’

Table 3.17 Major Project Development Status

Location or Name	Single Family Units	Multi-Family Units	Commercial square feet	Industrial square feet
SEC of Avenue M and 70th Street West	97			
South side of Palmdale Boulevard and 650 feet west of 55th Street East	75			
Falcon Glen (North side of Ave S, east of 20th Street West)	400			
NWC and NEC of Tierra Subida and Avenue S		100		
SWC of Avenue Q and SR 14			125,000	
NEC of Avenue R and 60th Street East	28			
308 E. Avenue R-8	15			
38821 30th Street East				80,000
South of E. Avenue Q-4 between 9th and 10th Streets East		150		
Between 70th and 75th Streets West on Avenue M-8	155			
SEC/NEC of 20th Street West and Rancho Vista Boulevard	48	336		
North side of Rancho Vista Boulevard, west of 15th Street W		344		
NWC of 15th Street West and Rancho Vista Boulevard			43,000	
Quail Valley (South of Avenue S; 1.2 miles west of SR-14)	791			
SEC of Avenue S and 42nd Street East		18		
5th Street East and Avenue Q-12		80		
20th St West, Amargosa Channel	28			
SEC of Avenue R and Division St		101		
South of Avenue S, west side of 47th Street E			240,000	
West of 9th Street East between Avenues Q-11 and Q-12		120		
SEC of Avenue R and 65th Street East	162			
SWC of Palmdale Blvd and 70th Street East	41			
Ritter Ranch	579			
West side of La Quinta Lane, south of Avenue O				30,000
<i>Total</i>	<i>2,439</i>	<i>789</i>	<i>525,000</i>	<i>110,000</i>
Source: City of Palmdale GIS Data 2019				

Growth in Specific Plan Areas

During the late 80s, early 90s, and late 2000s, the City approved a dozen Specific Plans. Seven of the City’s Specific Plans were adopted between 1990 and 1996. Roughly 7,600 units and 2.5 million square feet have been constructed. Yet, the majority of the entitled growth from Specific Plans has *not* been constructed, as over 13,000 units and 9 million square feet of non-residential remains unbuilt.

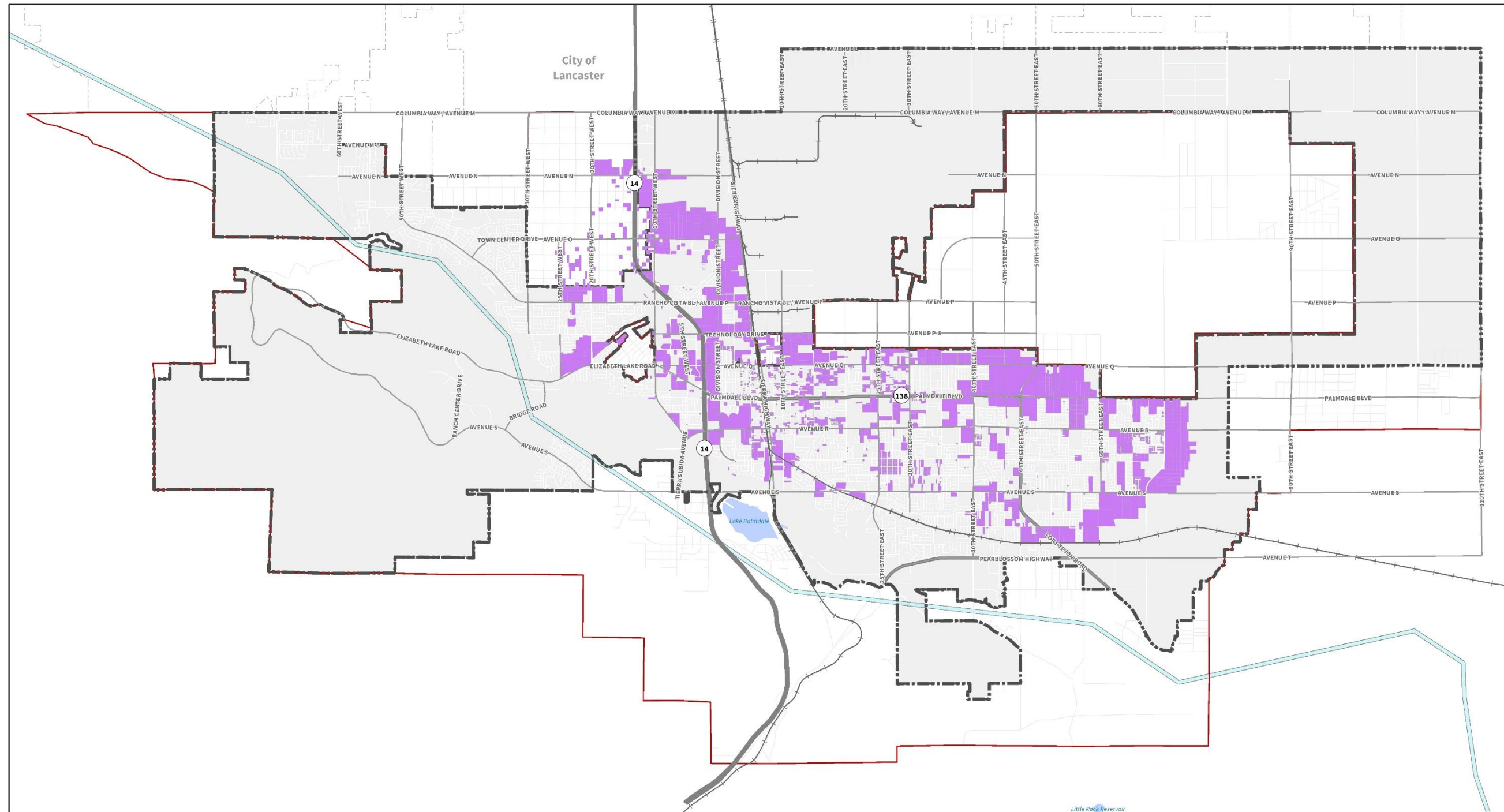
Table 3.18 Specific Plan Development Status

Name	Entitled Units	Built Units	Entitled Non-Residential	Built Non-Residential
Antelope Valley Business Park	0	0	1,800,000	0
Antelope Valley Auto Center	0	0	680,000	400,000
City Ranch (Anaverde)	5,200	1000	350,000	0
Foothill Ranch (College Park)	380	0	100,000	0
Hillside Residential	407	350	0	100,000
Joshua Hills	1,425	1425	120,000	100,000
Lockheed Plant 10	0	0	3,100,000	2,180,000
Palmdale Trade and Commerce Center	0	0	3,500,000	1,700,000
Palmdale Transit Village	1,027	227	500,000	75,000
Rancho Vista	5,268	4600	500,000	120,000
Ritter Ranch	7,200	0	450,000	0
Palmdale Business Park Center	0	0	2,500,000	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>20,907</i>	<i>7,602</i>	<i>11,820,000</i>	<i>2,535,000</i>
Source: City of Palmdale GIS Data 2019				

Available Vacant Land

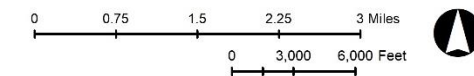
Within the City’s current development footprint (shown below on Figure 3.14 in purple), there is over 5,030 acres of vacant land available for new growth, accounting for more than 30% of all land within the existing ‘development footprint.’ This land should be prioritized for infill projects.

Figure 3.14 Core Vacant Parcels



Core Vacant Parcels

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- California Aqueduct
- Major Highway/Arterial
- Railroad
- Water Body
- Park
- Vacant Parcels (Core Area)



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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Citywide Urban Form and Character

Introduction

An analysis of community design and urban form, while not required by statute, is one of the central components of the General Plan because understanding characteristics of the built environment – the location and design of our homes, stores, parks, offices and other spaces and the way that we move between these various places – is vital to strengthening quality of life. This section provides an overview of the various sub-areas and place types in the City, delineating the character and uses within each.

Growth History

In August 1962, the township of Palmdale officially became the City of Palmdale with the incorporation of 1,300 acres of land around the present-day civic center. By 1965 the new city had annexed 20 new square miles of land and industry was thriving. Many investors purchased large quantities of land, including the 17,750 acres purchased by the Los Angeles Airports Division. The 1980s and 1990s were the decades that really started to define Palmdale's transformation. Newly constructed affordable, single-family housing caused a dramatic spike in the population. The city, like its northern neighbor Lancaster, became a bedroom community for those employed in Los Angeles. In 1980, Palmdale's population was 12,227. By 1990, it had grown to 68,842. In 1991, the Palmdale Auto Center and the Antelope Valley Mall opened. In the 1990s, the city of Palmdale annexed the Ritter Ranch and City Ranch areas, but in 1997 the Ritter Ranch developer filed for a Chapter 11 Bankruptcy.

As of the 2010 census, the population was 152,750, the sixth most populous in Los Angeles County. Palmdale is one of the largest cities in the United States that is not currently served by either an Interstate Freeway or a U.S. Highway. A lot of families moved up from L.A. in the 1990s, and this growth had consequences as crime worsened notably. In response, the multifamily zoning code explicitly discouraged middle density housing (to discourage lower-income residents), in lieu of large single-family dwellings. Now many of these big homes with 4 to 6-bedrooms are shared group homes.

The recession in the late 2000's caused the housing bubble to burst and several of these fast-moving, residentially focused Specific Plan projects were abandoned. Currently, some of these entitled projects are picking up steam again. Today, abundant undeveloped land and relatively inexpensive housing have made the Antelope Valley one of the fastest-growing areas in Southern California.

In the past decades, a voter-approved tax has funded major park and recreation expansions, including the Palmdale Amphitheater, two new pools, other recreation buildings, satellite library and Dry Town Water Park. Downtown revitalization efforts included hundreds of new senior housing units, a new senior center, and expanded open space. A third high school was established in 2003, Knight High School. A Los Angeles County sheriff station opened in July

2006, the largest in Los Angeles County. Two additional fire stations have been built, one on the east side of town and one on the west side of town.

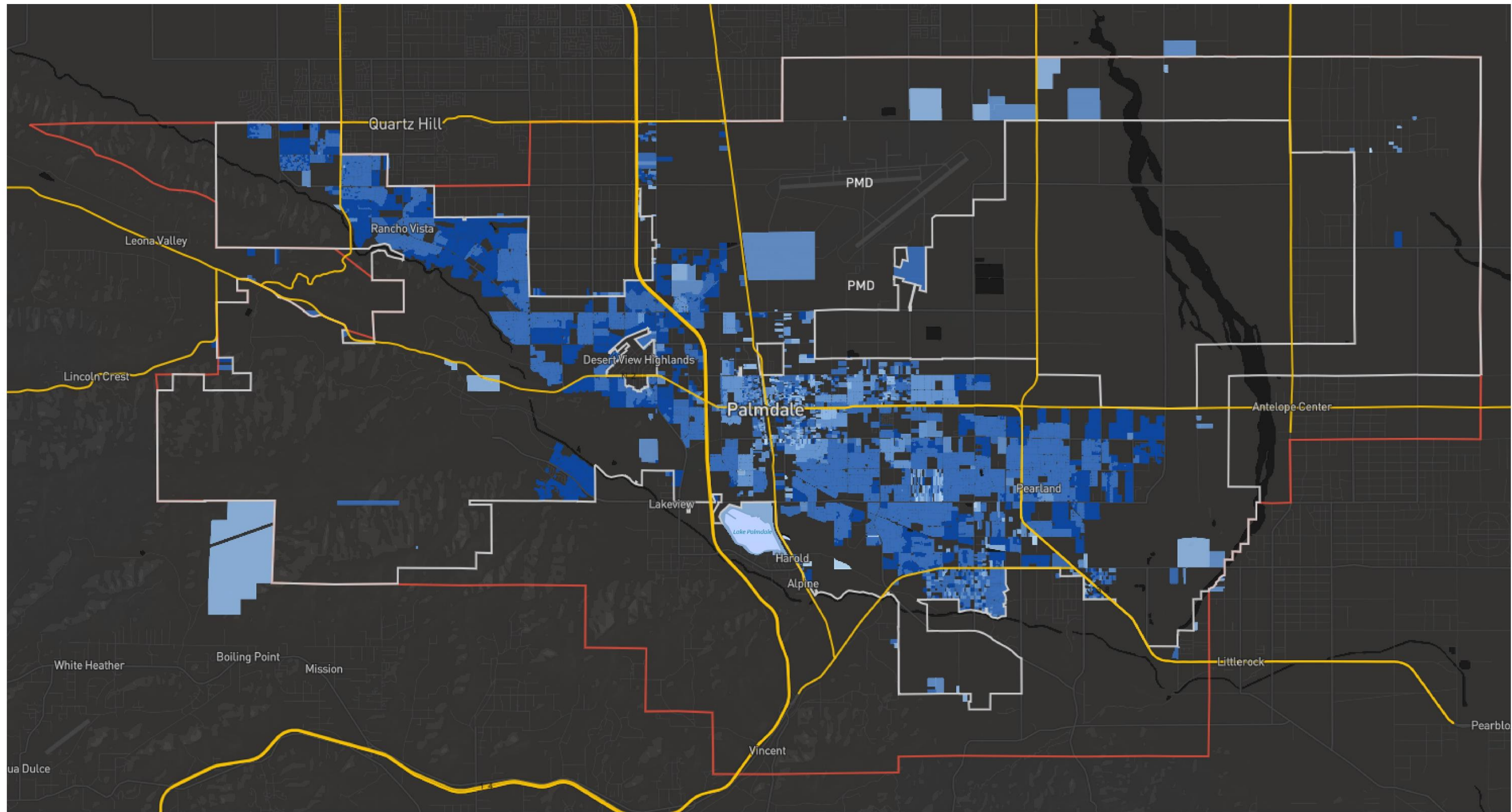
Year Built

More than eight out of ten buildings in the Planning Area were built in the 80s, 90s, or 2000s, emphasizing the massive housing boom that occurred during that time. Almost half of the building stock dates back to the 1980s alone. Figure 3.15 below illustrates the successive waves of residential expansion that occurred, radiating outward towards the northwest, south, and southeast.

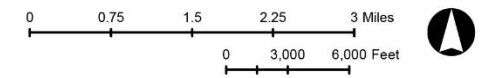
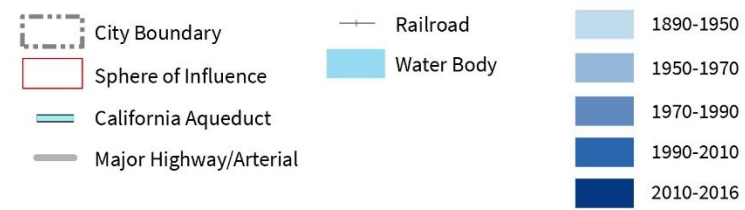
Table 3.19 Year Built

Years	Number	Percent
Before 1950	249	1%
1951-1960	4,694	12%
1961-1970	817	2%
1971-1980	973	2%
1981-1990	16,351	42%
1991-2000	7,991	20%
2001-2010	8,356	21%
After 2010	509	1%
<i>Total</i>	39,123	
Source: L.A. County Assessor's Data 2019		

Figure 3.15 Year Built



Year Built



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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Development Pattern

Footprints

Building footprints show the amount of land devoted to buildings, compared to landscaping, streets, and parking lots. It provides a snapshot at how dense and urban a community is and whether there is a regular or irregular building pattern. The pattern of building footprints in Palmdale illustrates:

- Development pattern is sparse and spread-out in the rural/SOI areas, compared to the more typical suburban/urban patterns of development within the City itself.
- The checkerboard pattern of development in the center, southeast, and northwestern parts of the City underscores the unplanned nature of the City’s housing boom-and-bust cycles.
- The bipolar distribution of footprint size, as the vast proportion of buildings are house-scaled or enormous big box retail or warehouse/aerospace hangars, with very few block-scale buildings in between.
- The vast amounts of natural, undeveloped land that surround the developed core of the City.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

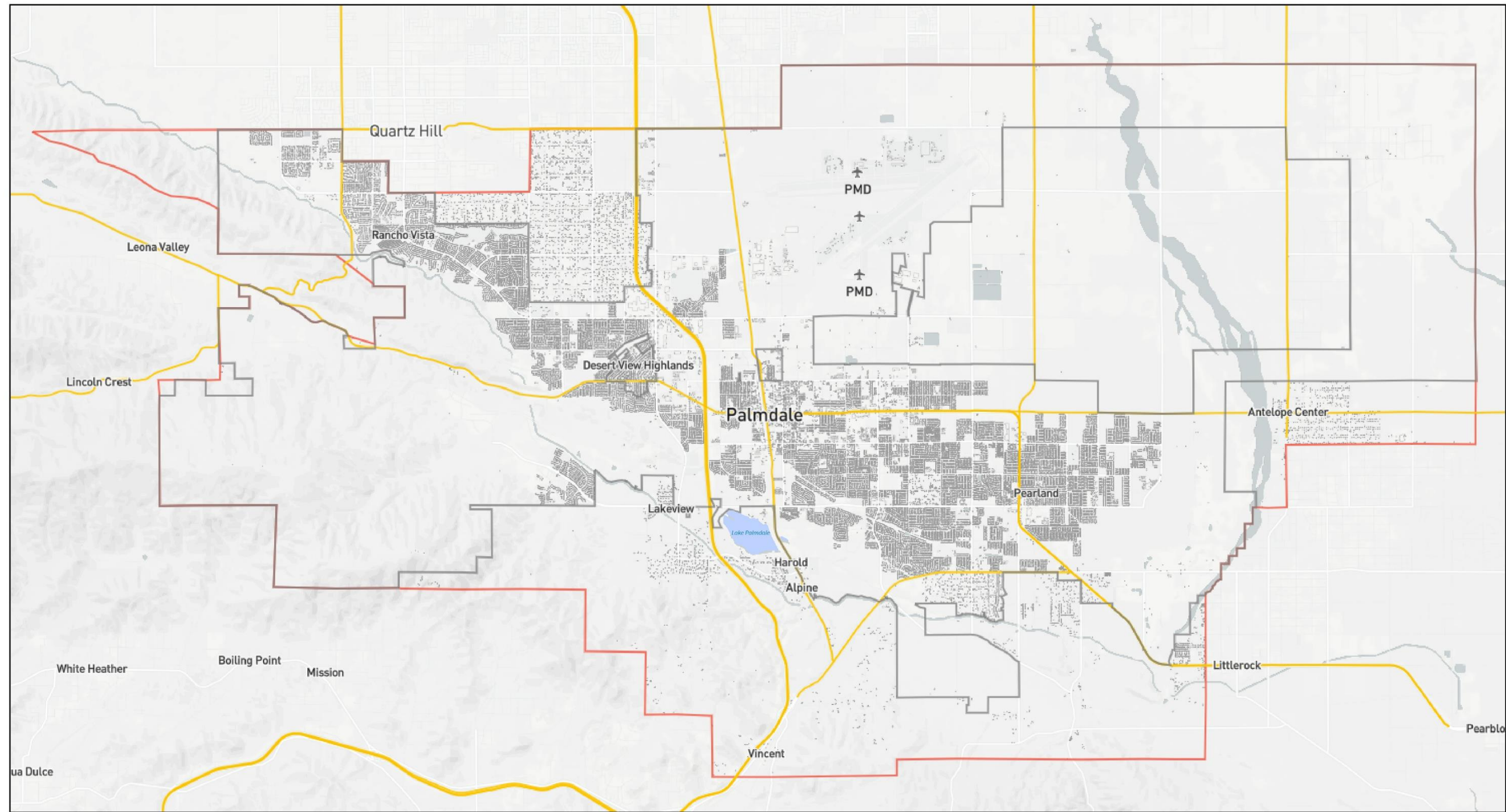
The development intensity of non-residential land uses can be measured through floor area ratio (FAR) which divides gross building area by lot area.

Table 3.20 Floor Area Ratio








FAR	Number of Parcels	Percent
Less than 0.1	246	23%
0.1 to 0.25	291	28%
0.26 to 0.50	349	33%
0.51 to 1.0	145	14%
Greater than 1.0	19	2%
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,050</i>	
Source: L.A. County Assessor’s Data 2019		

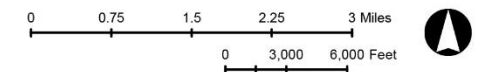
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Figure 3.16 Footprint Pattern



Footprint Pattern

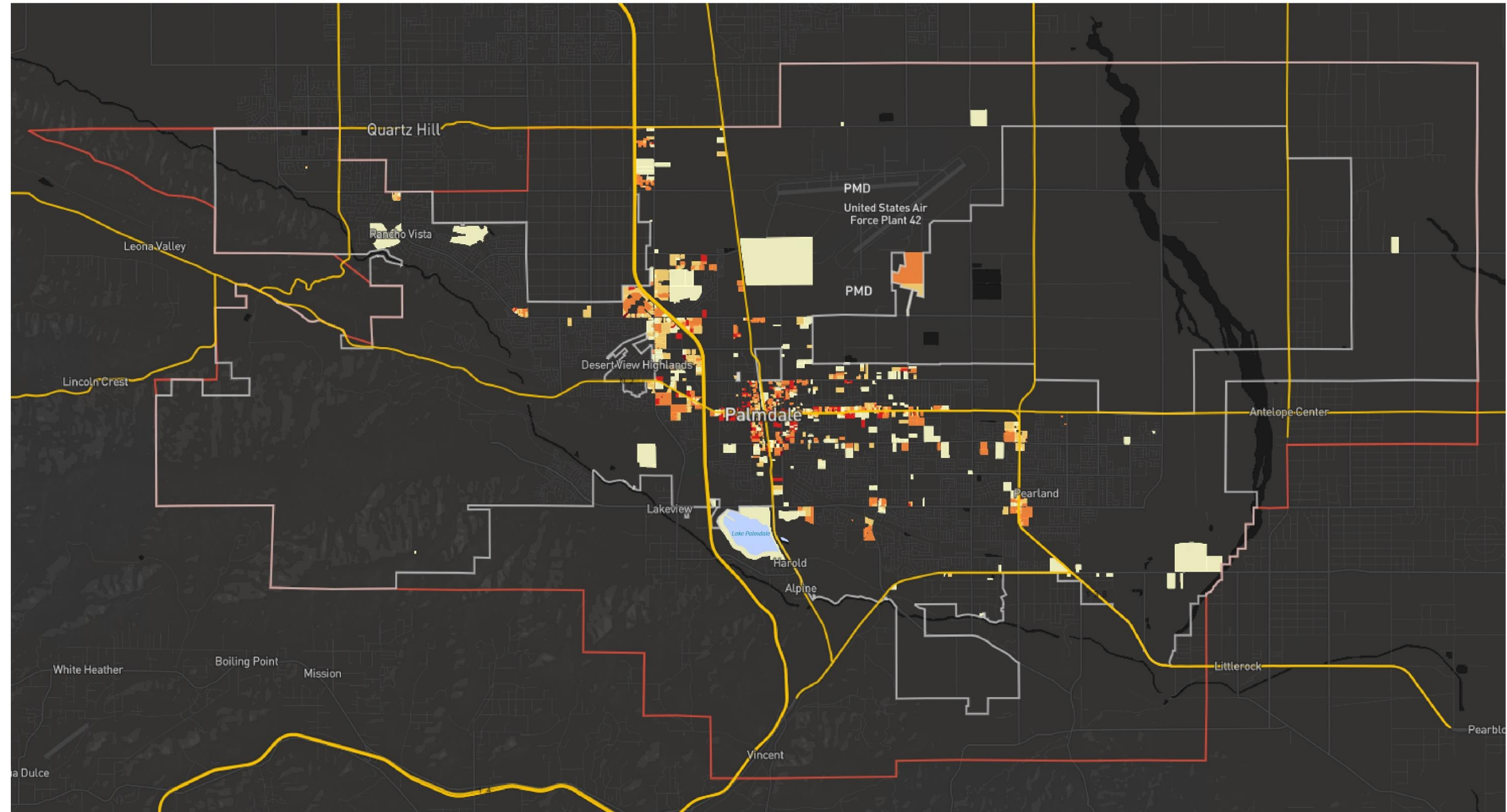
-  City Boundary
-  Sphere of Influence
-  California Aqueduct
-  Major Highway/Arterial
-  Railroad
-  Water Body
-  Development Footprint



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

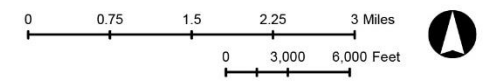
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Figure 3.17 Floor Area Ratio (FAR)



Floor Area Ratio

- | | | | |
|------------------------|------------|--------------------------|-------|
| City Boundary | Railroad | 0-0.1 | 0.5-1 |
| Sphere of Influence | Water Body | 0.1-0.25 | 1-5.5 |
| California Aqueduct | 0.25-0.5 | No Commercial Floor Area | |
| Major Highway/Arterial | | | |



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.
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Density

The diagram shows the relative density of residential development in the City. Virtually all development in the Sphere of Influence (SOI) is less than 1 dwelling unit per acre (du/acre), the least intense development type. Density around the historic core is mixed, ranging from 3 to 18 du/acre; the occasional apartment complex is illustrated as dark blue dots in Figure 3.18. Suburban residential developments mostly average 3 to 5 du/acre, due to the relatively generous parcel sizes and wide streets.

Block Size

Block size is an important factor in determining how walkable an area is as larger blocks tend to be less walkable and more automobile oriented than smaller blocks. An examination of the block sizes in Palmdale demonstrates:

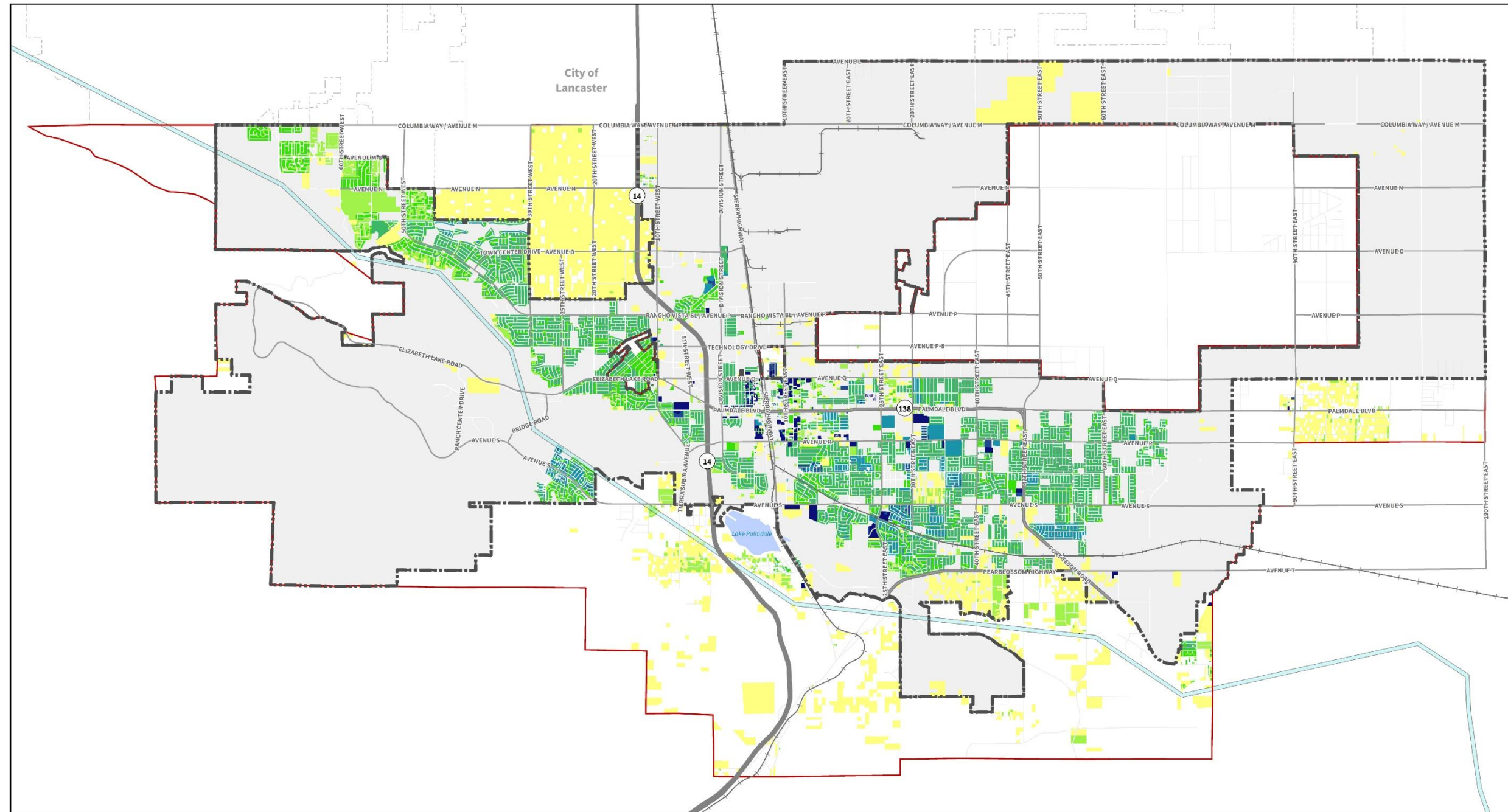
- Small, walkable blocks less than 2 acres in size are rare, representing less than 7% of all blocks. A handful of these pedestrian-scaled blocks are found in nearly each subdivision.
- Moderately walkable blocks measuring between 2 and 8 acres are the backbone of most residential subdivisions, counting as half of all blocks.
- Large lots of 8 to 50 acres are either vacant parcels or regional commercial developments and represent 13% of blocks.
- There are over 160 blocks larger than 50 acres. These mega blocks are found within the undeveloped areas of the City.

Table 3.21 Block Size

Size	Number	%
0 to 2 acres	81	7%
2.1 to 4 acres	242	21%
4.1 to 8 acres	344	29%
8.1 to 20 acres	245	21%
20.1 to 50 acres	91	8%
50.1 to 100 acres	61	5%
100.1 to 500 acres	65	6%
Greater than 500 acres	38	3%
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,167</i>	
Source: Raimi + Associates 2019		








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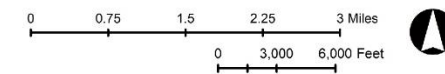
Figure 3.18 Residential Density



Residential Density

-  City Boundary
-  Sphere of Influence
-  California Aqueduct
-  Major Highway/Arterial
-  Railroad
-  Water Body

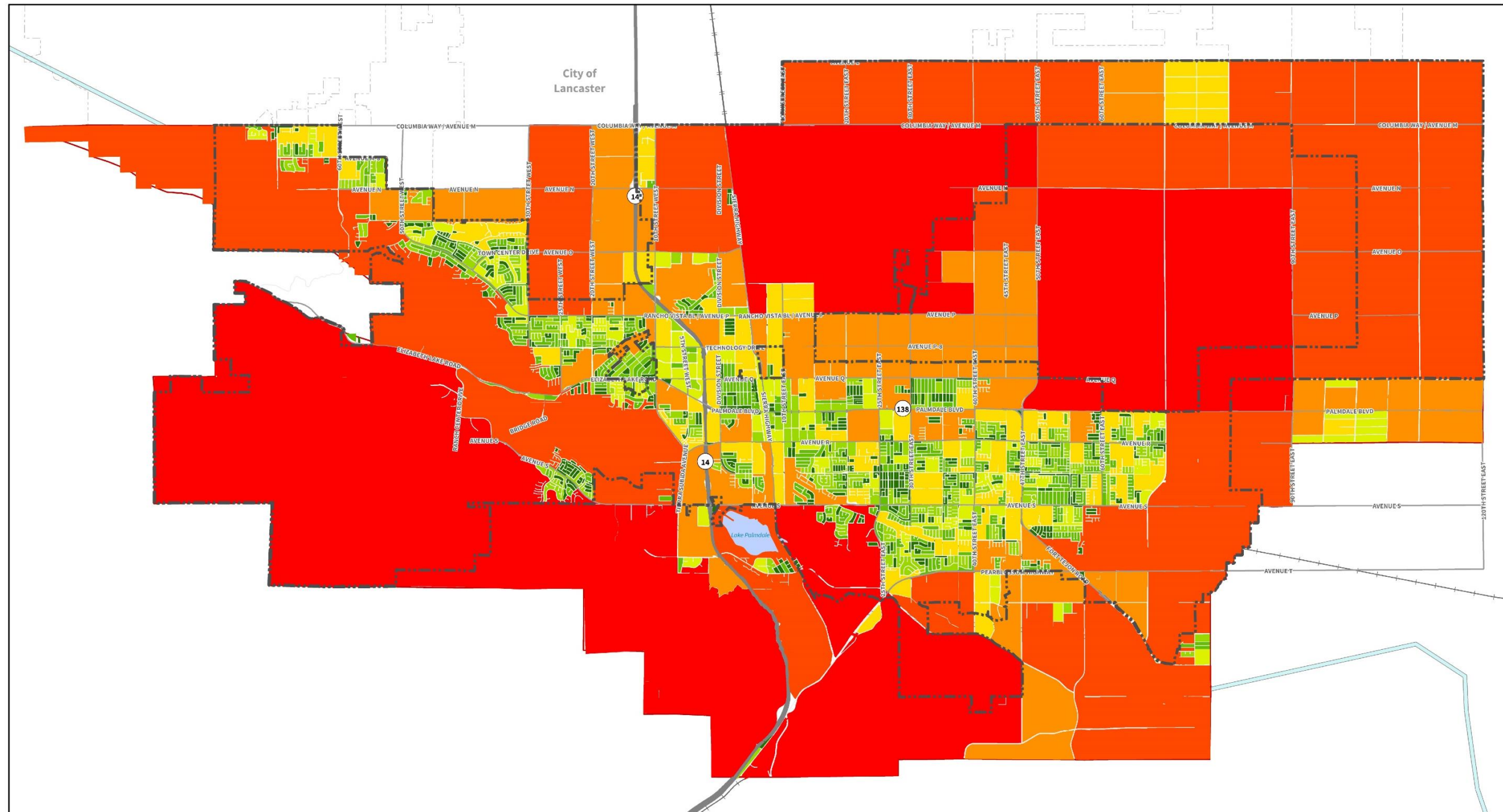
Units / NewAcre	
	0 - 1
	2 - 3
	4 - 5
	6 - 7
	8 - 10
	10 - 20
	20 - 200



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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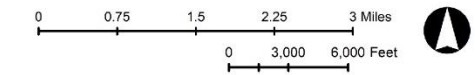
Figure 3.19 Block Size (Acres)



Block Size

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- California Aqueduct
- Major Highway/Arterial
- Railroad
- Water Body

	0 - 5		41 - 100
	6 - 10		101 - 500
	11 - 20		501 - 4000
	21 - 40		4001 - 18538

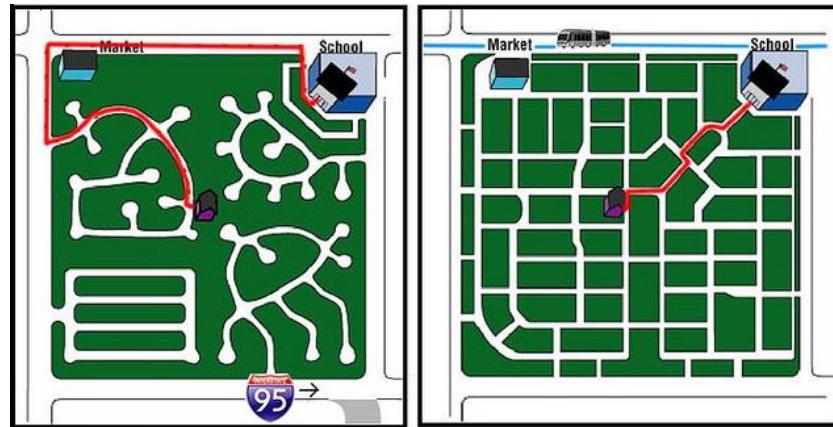


Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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March 2019

Intersection Density

Intersection density is a proxy for block size, and by extension, the general connectivity and character of an area. In Figure 3.20, the areas with the highest intersection density are shown in dark purple and are generally located in subdivisions that followed traditional neighborhood design (TND) or small-lot single-family patterns. Areas in bright pink have noticeably lower intersection densities, mostly characterized by standard subdivision patterns and larger parcel sizes. Areas in light pink and beige have the lowest densities, and are mostly regional commercial, industrial, and rural residential. Overall, intersection density in Palmdale is relatively low compared to more urban contexts.



Driving-only transportation pattern

Walkable connected transportation network

View Corridors

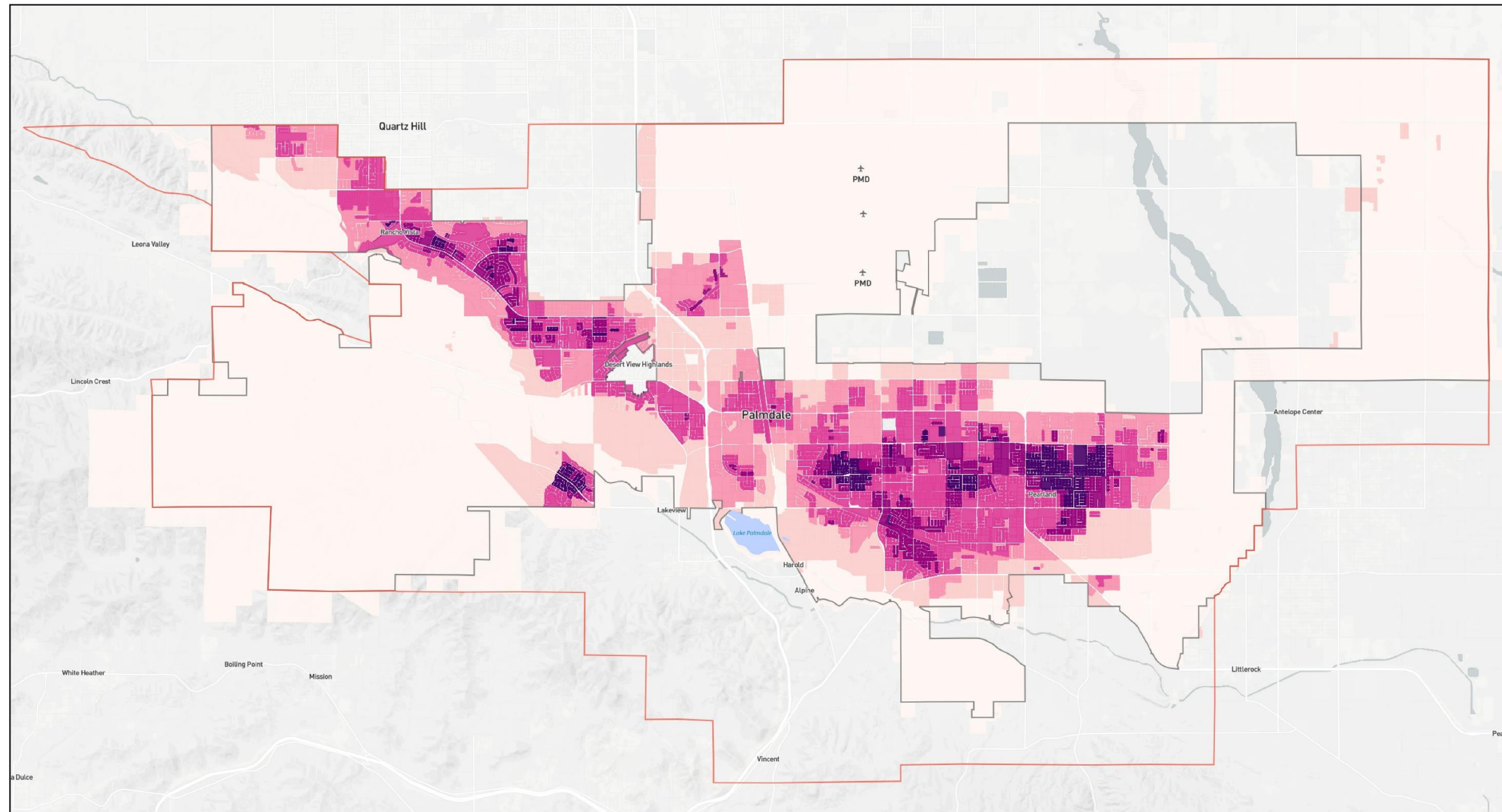
The geography of the mountain ranges and the orientations of the streets within the City produces most of the more notable viewsheds. Namely, Ritter Ridge and the San Gabriel Mountains provide sweeping views from their heights down into the rest of the Antelope Valley. Similarly, the hills behind Foothill Ranch offer scenic vistas. Finally, most of the principal north-south avenues (especially 30th St West, 20th St West, Division St, 10th Street East, 25th Street East, 30th Street East, 40th Street East, and 47th Street East) provide stellar views southward of the mountains themselves. New development can potentially frame and accentuate some of these views.

Topography

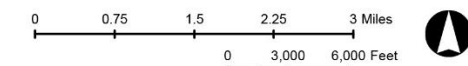
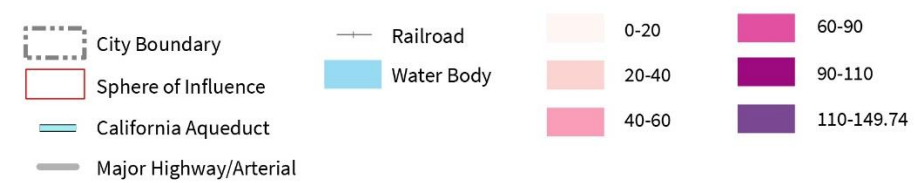
The contours lines clearly tell the story of Palmdale's topography, and to an extent explain the historic patterns of development. The City rests against the San Gabriel Mountains to the south, some of which reach upwards over 5,000 feet. Most development has occurred along the relatively flat Antelope Valley floor, which slopes gently downward to the north towards Lancaster. Development in the Leona Valley has been limited up until recently, adequate infrastructure has been constructed. In general, sloped areas have seen less growth than flatland areas. Little Creek Rock Wash also exhibits distinct topography, marking it as a major depression.

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Figure 3.20 Intersection Density



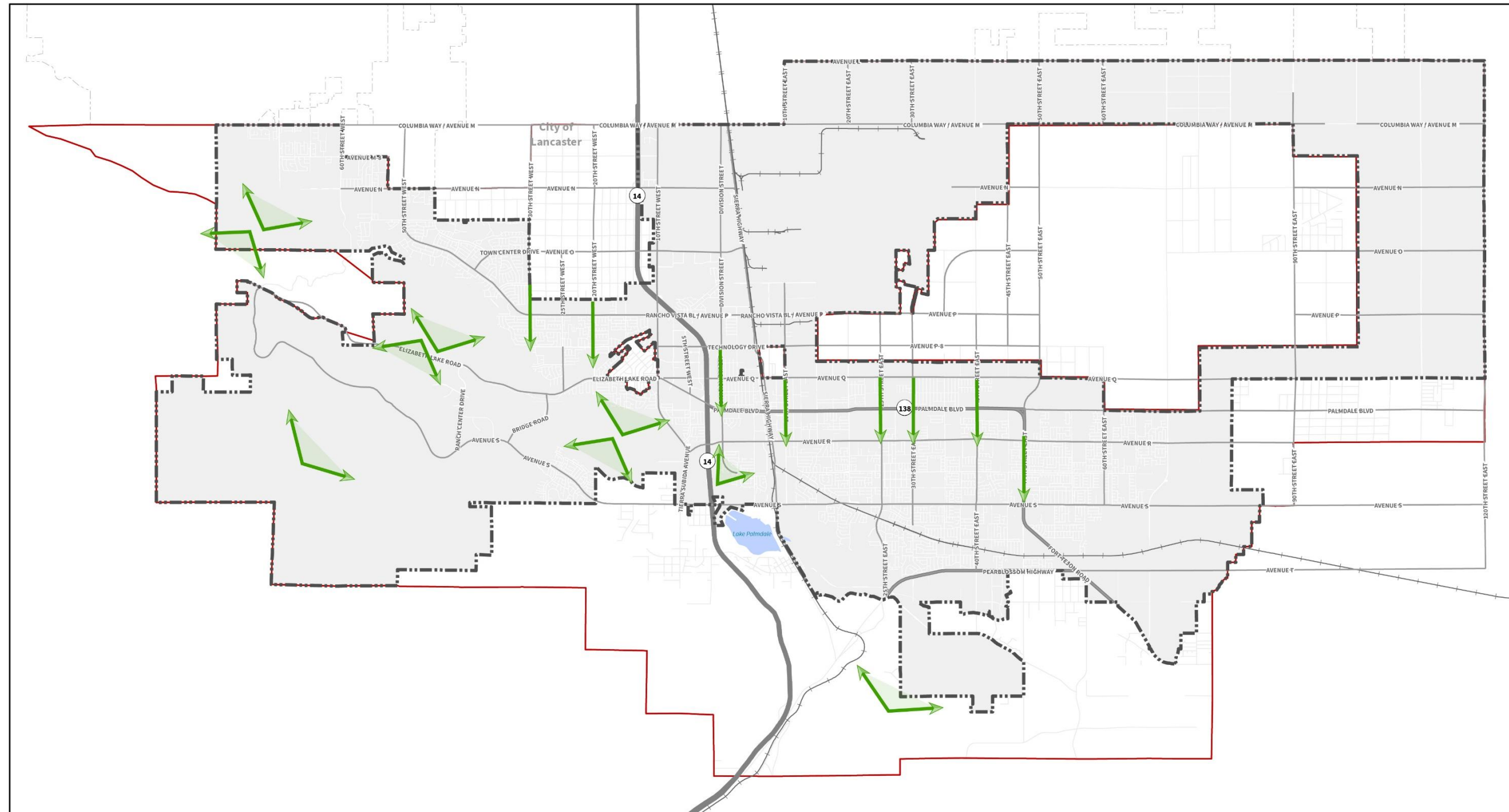
Intersection Density










Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

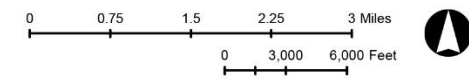
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Figure 3.21 View Corridors



View Corridors

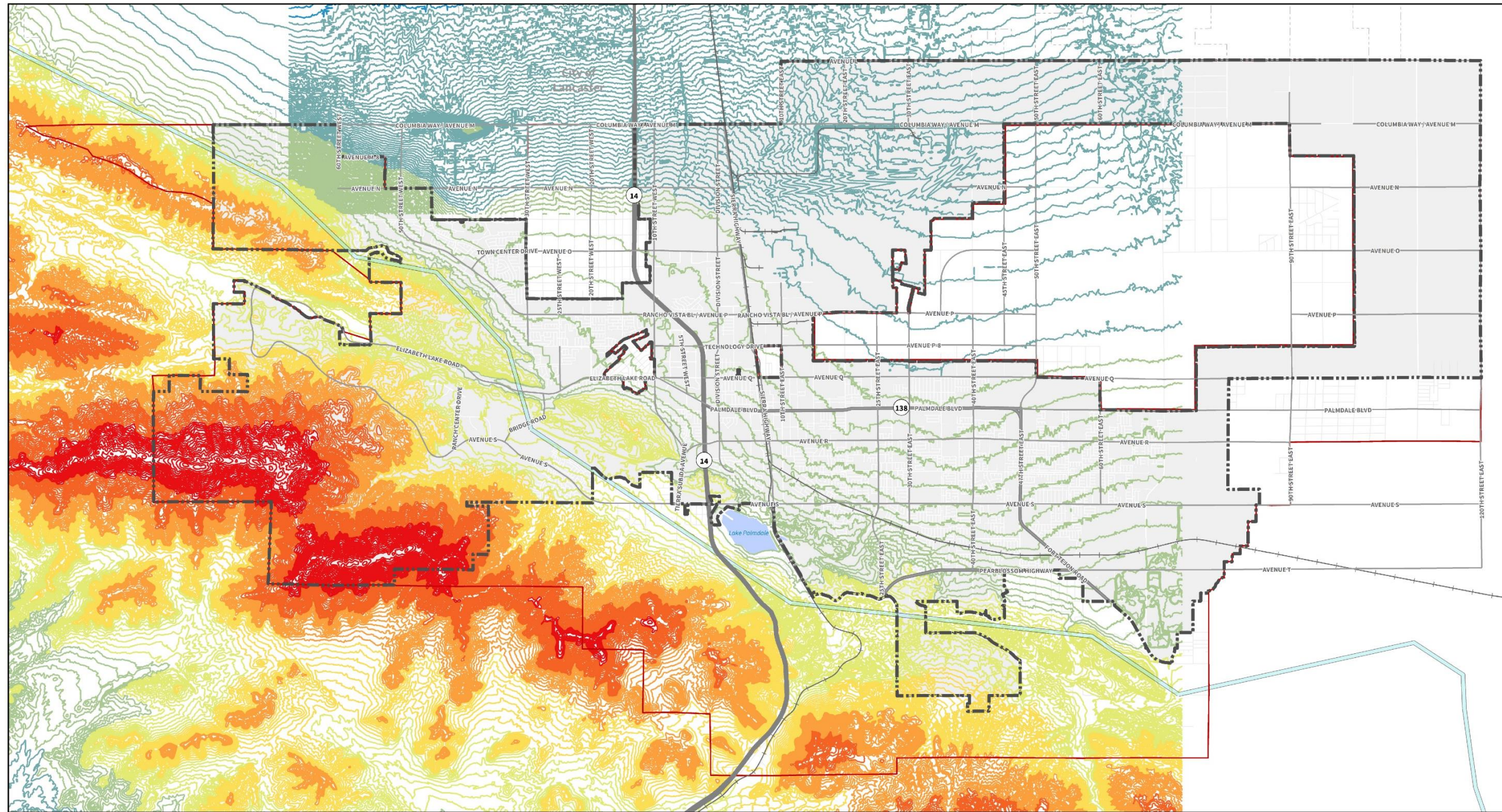
-  City Boundary
-  Sphere of Influence
-  California Aqueduct
-  Major Highway/Arterial
-  Railroad
-  Water Body
-  Approximate Location and Orientation of Major Viewshed



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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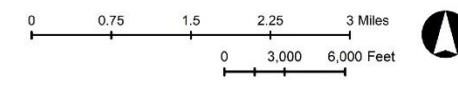
Figure 3.22 Topographic Contours (Feet)



Topographic Contours

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- California Aqueduct
- Major Highway/Arterial
- Railroad
- Water Body

	1720 - 2390		3186 - 3500
	2391 - 2590		3501 - 3900
	2591 - 2870		3901 - 4400
	2871 - 3185		4401 - 5240



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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City Structure and Activity Centers

Neighborhoods, districts, and corridors are the fundamental components of all cities. Mapping these components of a city help to provide an understanding of how people live, shop, work, play, and get around in their communities.

Neighborhoods are the basic building block of great cities. At their core, neighborhoods are the places where we live and are typically mostly residential. Complete neighborhoods are developed areas with a balanced mix of human activity with uses including dwellings, workplaces, shops, civic buildings, and parks. A neighborhood should mix a variety of residential types within a walkable network of green streets and parks, well-connected to parks, schools and neighborhood centers to serve daily shopping needs.

Districts are areas of the city that are functionally specialized with supportive uses without being rigorously regulated to a single use, such as a shopping center. One of the best examples of a district are downtowns in which a retail specialization once occurred, but in concert with supporting residential, office, and institutional uses. Districts play an important role in a city since they are typically the primary retail and entertainment areas and provide jobs and economic development opportunities.

Corridors are both the separators of neighborhoods and districts and the viaducts by which people move throughout town. Corridors take many shapes and forms and, as a primary component of the public realm, also serve different transportation and placemaking purposes. In some cases, such as Palmdale Boulevard, corridors have more permeable edges and are readily accessed from the adjacent neighborhoods and districts. In cases where corridors have very high connectivity to surrounding areas, corridors function as “to” places in which people gather and congregate, such as the case with the prototypical Main Street. In other cases, such as along the edges of the newer master planned communities or with conventional arterials, corridors have very limited connectivity to the adjacent areas and serve primarily to move cars. In these limited-access cases, corridors serve primarily as “through” places and a great emphasis is put on efficient automobile operations.

These components of cities can be further defined to convey the type of place or use as is shown in Figure 3.23, City Structure. The existing pattern of land use in the City includes residential, mixed-use, commercial, and open space largely oriented around the north-south regional transportation facilities that bisect the City. The design of districts, neighborhoods, and corridors can actively shape the creation of a town with great accessibility and connectivity. The City Structure map below includes the City’s downtown core and the existing network of commercial, residential, and employment centers.

The City of Palmdale is organized around a downtown with a vision for future transit-oriented development, a series of major and minor commercial nodes, one dominant employment district, and several supporting employment centers. As illustrated on Figure 3.23, these major activity centers include:

- The rail (future high-speed rail) station will be the focus of new mixed-use, transit-oriented development.
- A civic center containing City Hall, the police station, central library, and several other supporting institutional buildings located around 10th Street East and Palmdale Boulevard.
- Walkable, downtown-style retail along Palmdale Boulevard, generally between 5th Street East and 30th Street West.
- The regional-serving 127-acre Antelope Valley Mall, occupying the large blocks around 10th Street West and Avenue P.
- Major commercial centers at 47th Street East and Avenue S, 25th Street East and Avenue S, 5th Street West and Palmdale Boulevard, 47th Street East and Avenue R, and Avenue P & 30th Street
- Minor commercial centers distributed along the western portion of Avenue S, following outward residential sprawl.
- Air Force Plant 42, the largest employment district in the City, occupying almost 5,000 acres north of downtown Palmdale.
- Four smaller employment-focused activity centers – three of which are positioned along the edges of downtown (on Avenue Q and Sierra Highway), and the last of which is found north of Antelope Valley Mall.

Sub-Areas

The Neighborhoods, Districts and Corridors concept sub-divides the City into unique and distinct sub-areas since strategies for change and growth will be a result of area-specific planning efforts. Figure 3.24 illustrates how the City is divided into neighborhoods, districts and corridors.

The Planning Area has seven neighborhood areas:

- Old Town/Pearland
- Quartz Hill/West County
- Country Club
- Rancho Vista/Desert View
- Antelope Valley/Sun Village
- Little Rock
- South County
- Planned Ranch (*Future Neighborhood*)

The Planning Area has two corridors:

- Palmdale Boulevard Corridor
- High Desert Corridor (*Future Corridor*)

The Planning Area has four districts:

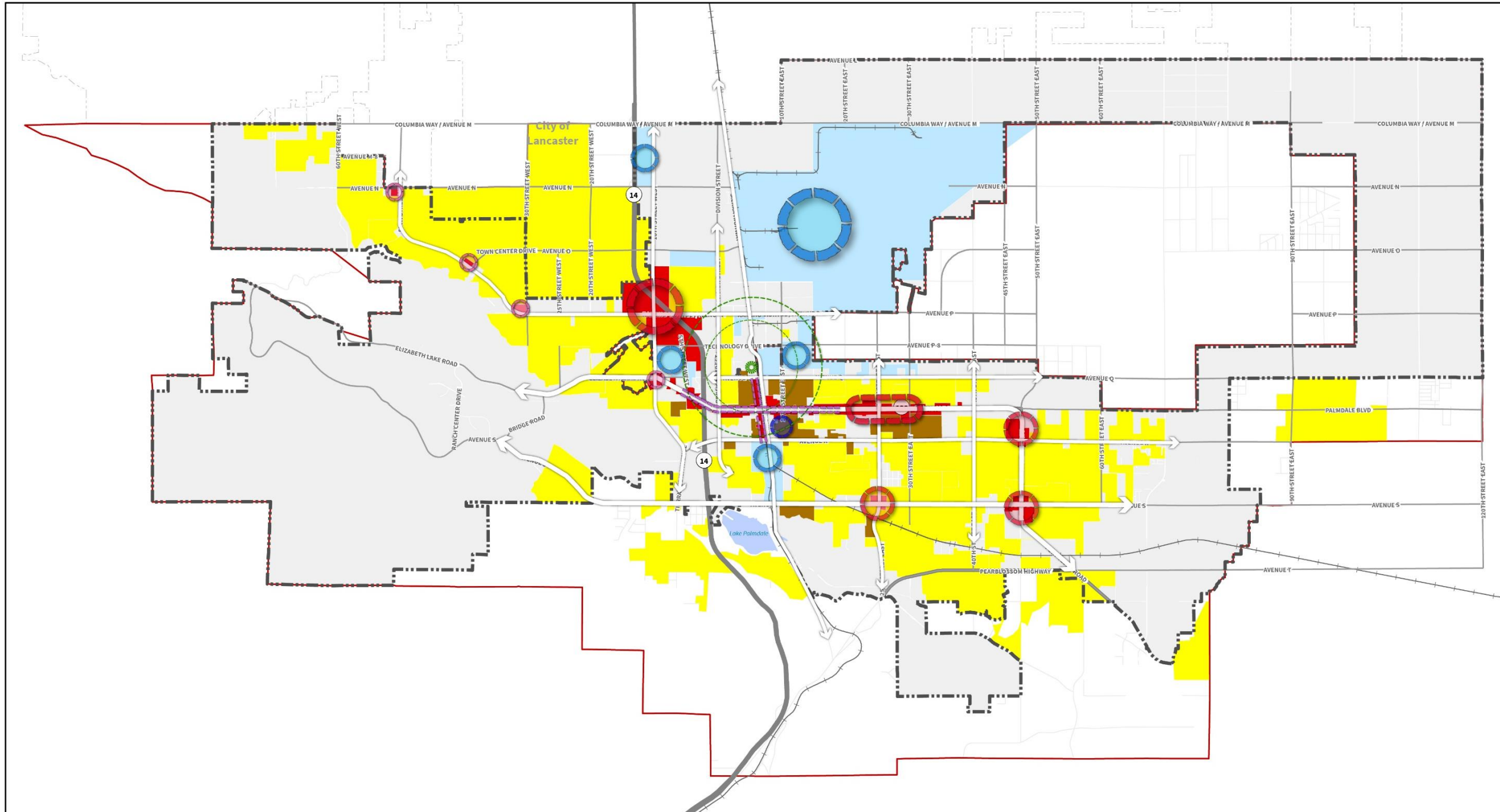
- Commerce Commercial District
- Plant 42 Employment District
- Mineral Extraction/Employment District
- Transit Area Mixed District (*Future District*)

The Planning Area has four lightly developed greenfield/rural areas (mostly natural lands combined with rural residential):

- Leona Valley
- Preserved Ranch
- Foothills
- Airport/East County

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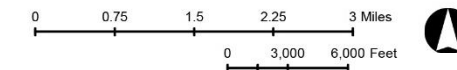
Figure 3.23 City Structure



City Structure

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- California Aqueduct
- Major Highway/Arterial
- Railroad
- Water Body

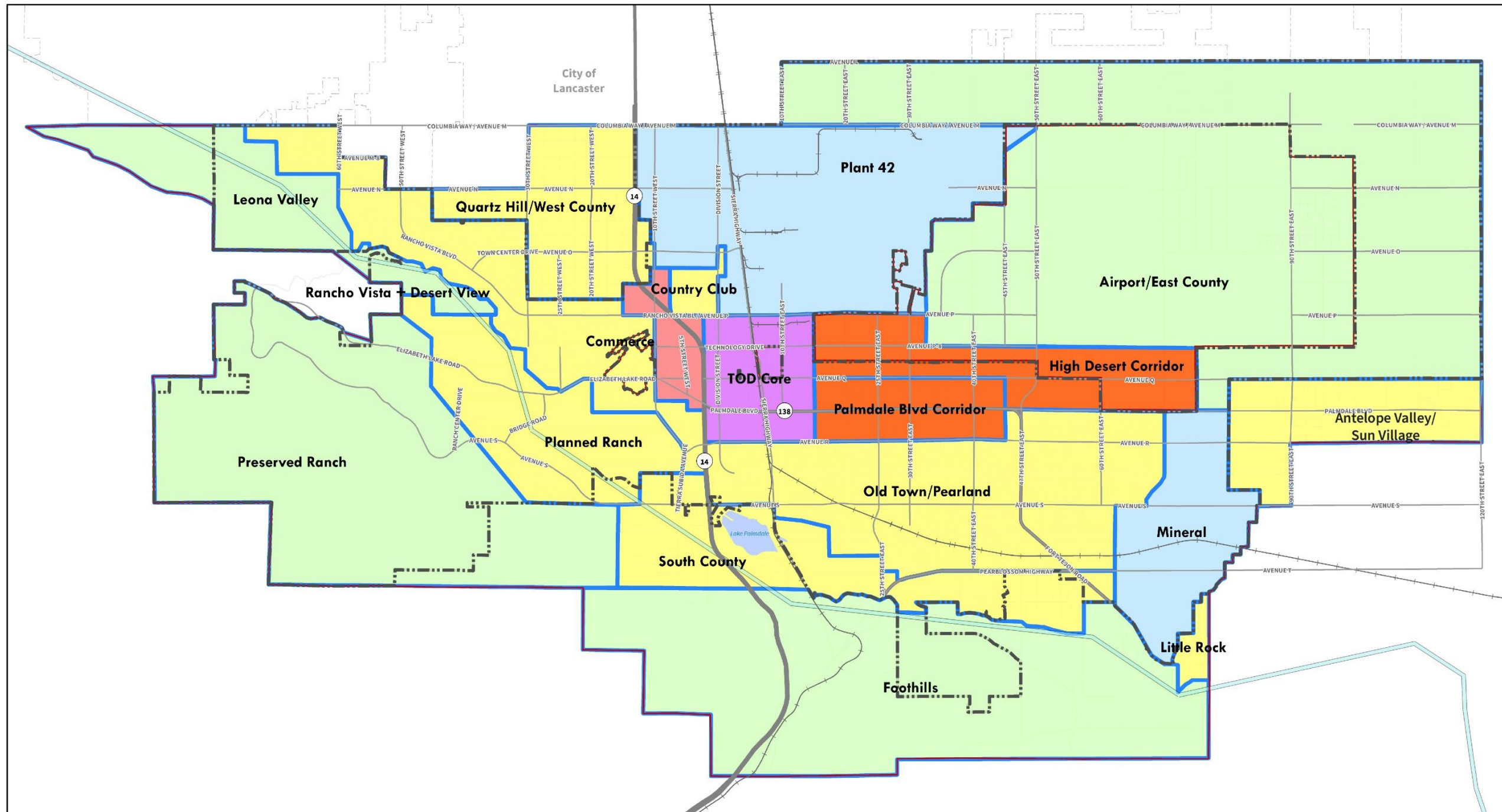
- Regional Commercial Center
- Neighborhood Commercial Center
- Employment Center
- Public/Civic Center
- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Employment
- 1/2 and 1-mile Distance from Station



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

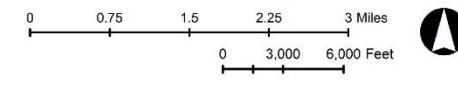
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Figure 3.24 Sub-Areas



Sub-Areas

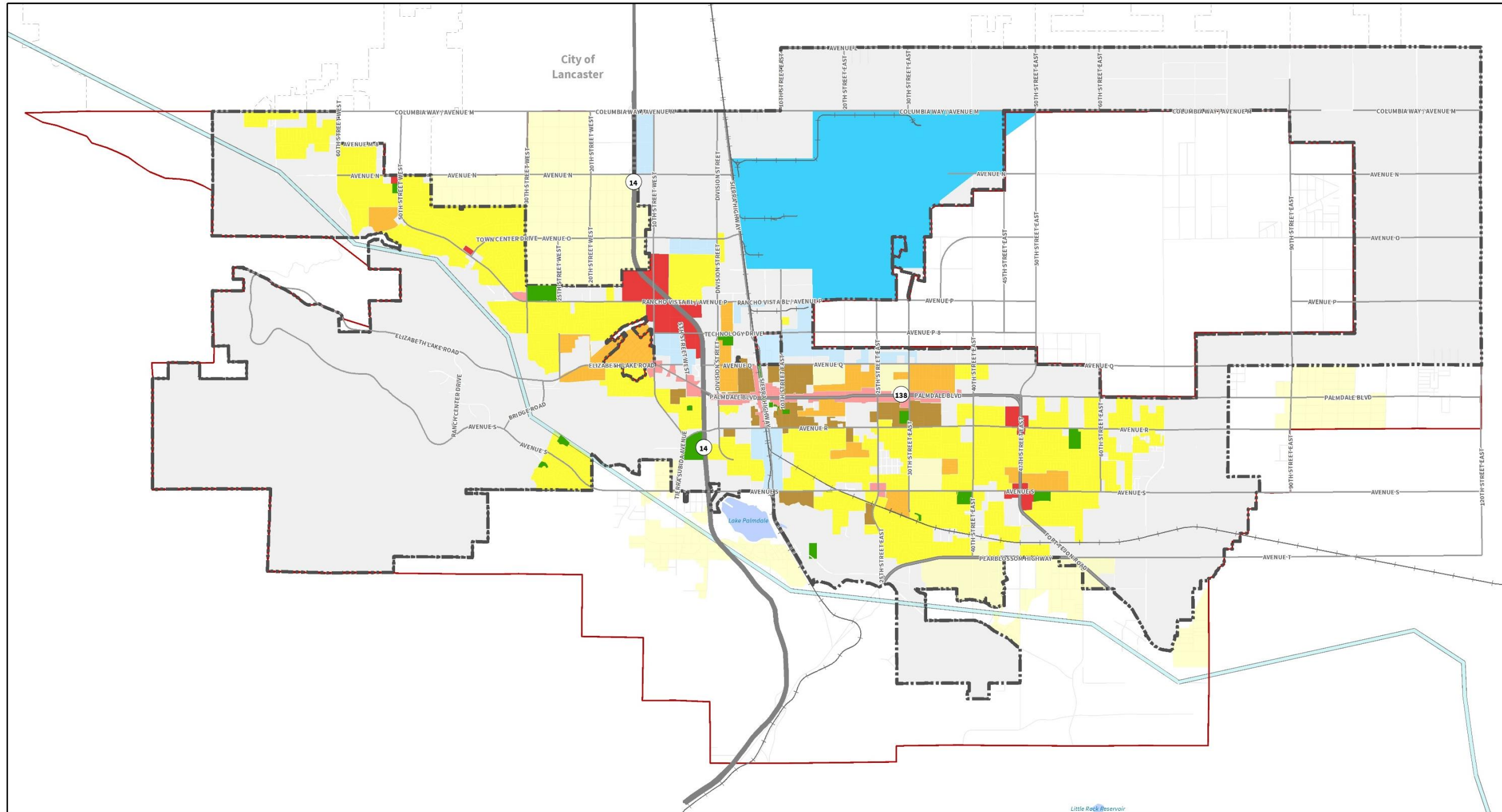
- | | | | |
|------------------------|------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| City Boundary | Railroad | Commercial Corridor | Lightly Developed Greenfield |
| Sphere of Influence | Water Body | Commercial District | Mixed District |
| California Aqueduct | | Employment District | Residential Neighborhood |
| Major Highway/Arterial | | | |



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

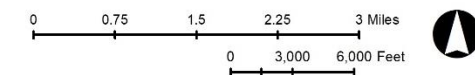
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Figure 3.25 Place Types



Place Types

- | | | | | |
|------------------------|------------|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| City Boundary | Railroad | Rural Residential | Corridor Commercial | Parks and Recreation |
| Sphere of Influence | Water Body | Suburban Residential | Regional Commercial | |
| California Aqueduct | | TND Residential | Small Format Employment | |
| Major Highway/Arterial | | Mixed Residential | Large Format Employment | |



Data Sources: City of Palmdale GIS data; World Terrain Base, 2015 ESRI, USGS, NOAA.

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Place Types

Place types are another method of analyzing the feel and look of buildings. Unlike sub-areas, which are categorized geographically, place types organize the community into the design characteristics of each place using the urban form and pattern of buildings, streets and open spaces to characterize Palmdale. This information can be used to update land use designations based on the desired physical form of the community. The place types are divided into two categories – residential place types and non-residential place types. Each is described below.

Residential Place Types:

- Rural Residential
- Suburban Residential
- TND Residential
- Mixed Residential

Non-Residential Place Types:

- Community Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Small-Format Employment
- Large-Format Employment

Rural Residential



Use: Single-family detached residential

Building/street form: Large lots of at least one acre. One and two-story homes set back at a large distance from the street. Unimproved dirt and gravel roads laid out in grid patterns.

Description: Very-low density development mostly found in the Sphere of Influence. Usually annexed by the City in the recent past. Desire to retain rural character.

Intensity/Density: 0.5 du/ac on average

Suburban Residential



Use: Single-family detached residential

Building/street form: Lots range generally between 7,000 and 15,000 square feet. Garages dominate the front facades of most homes. Front setbacks are generally 20-30 and side setbacks are 10-15 feet. One and two stories.

Description: Low density development common in the subdivision expansion areas. Street pattern is generally curvilinear with common cul-de-sacs or occasional disconnected/unfinished streets.

Intensity/Density: 3-4 du/ac on average

TND Residential (Traditional Neighborhood Design)



Use: Single-family detached and attached residential (duplex, triplex, fourplex), condos

Building/street form: Lots range generally between 4,000 and 7,000 square feet. Front setbacks are generally 15-25 and side setbacks are 5-10 feet, sometimes referred to as 'zero-lot-line.' One and two stories.

Description: Medium-low density development found in certain isolated neighborhoods. Street pattern is generally more rectilinear with fewer dead ends.

Intensity/Density: 5-8 du/ac on average

Mixed Residential



Use: Single-family detached and attached residential, condos, multifamily residential

Building/street form: Neighborhoods that contain a mixture of residential dwelling types. Usually in the form of townhomes mixed with small apartments, or gated apartment complexes, or newer large block-form apartment buildings. Two- and three-story buildings (rarely four stories). Circulation is often gated, reserved for residents only. Setbacks vary.

Description: Medium and medium-high intensity development, usually on large lots that are relatively ‘closed’ to the public. Surface-parked or tuck under parking.

Intensity/Density: 12-18 du/ac on average

Community Commercial



Use: Neighborhood and local-serving commercial (retail, service, office, etc)

Building/street form: Mostly one-story shops and offices. Moderate to no setbacks, buildings provide a reasonable degree of pedestrian orientation.

Description: Local-serving retail stores found in the center of the City. Parking lots are to the sides, or sometimes to the rear of buildings (sometimes one row of parking in the front)

Intensity/Density: 0.25 to 0.50 FAR on average

Regional Commercial



Use: Regional and neighborhood-serving retail (food, auto, shopping, services)

Building/street form: Large one-story, warehouse-sized structures, plus retail outbuildings at shopping center entrances. Large setbacks, buildings face surface parking lots.

Description: Typical suburban shopping centers, ranging from single block to multiblock to enclosed malls. Set back from streets, sidewalks, and residential places.

Intensity/Density: 0.2 to 0.35 FAR on average

Small-Format Employment



Use: Mixed office, services, light industrial, makerspace

Building/street form: One-story, moderately sized tilt-up structures. Moderate setbacks, buildings oriented around side or front parking lots. Landscaping minimal.

Description: Often arranged in small business parks, these small clusters of employment buildings are physically distinct from other uses. They contain a wide mixture of small-scale employment-related land uses.

Intensity/Density: 0.3 to 0.60 FAR on average

Large-Format Employment



Use: Light and heavy industrial, manufacturing, R&D, offices, support uses, etc.

Building/street form: Massive structures that are located miles from any public entrance. An isolated sea of hangar-sized buildings.

Description: Warehouses, manufacturing facilities, and aerospace/defense-related buildings comprise the area known as Plant 42. These areas are generally gated and off limits to the public, acting as a large physical barrier.

Intensity/Density: 0.1 to 0.2 FAR on average

Conclusion: Issues and Opportunities

- **Sprawling growth.** The scattered pattern of development creates difficulties for the City in terms of efficient provision of municipal services, parks, and capital facilities. This dispersed pattern makes it more challenging to create a sense of community cohesion, and the viability of commercial retail uses is harmed by the presence of large vacant tracts of land and a lack of focused, intense residential centers. It should be part of the conversation for this update whether the City should establish clear and logical limits to new development (a growth boundary).
- **Poor connectivity and endless walls.** In many subdivisions, streets start and stop in a disjointed fashion, blocking through-access between neighborhoods. Houses are cut off from adjacent homes, adjacent subdivisions, schools and parks by block walls. Streets may be lined with block walls for miles, creating streetscapes dominated by concrete and masonry, unrelieved by shade trees or views of open spaces. Public safety vehicles patrolling neighborhoods have limited visibility of residential streets.
- **Disconnected, single-use communities.** Many earlier subdivisions were built with less attention to community design. Subdivision design guidelines were adopted in 1992 to promote cohesive, functional neighborhoods, and create a sense of community, but new development still needs to improve interaction within and between neighborhoods and provide additional links between community facilities and the neighborhoods they serve. To accomplish this goal, planning and design must extend beyond the boundaries of each individual subdivision.
- **Infrastructure coverage.** Due to the rapid pace of development and many annexations of County land, certain areas of the City lack adequate infrastructure, or adequate capacity in existing infrastructure. This issue has been dealt with in some areas through formation of assessment districts to finance street and other public improvements. Residents in rural neighborhoods have expressed strong desires to retain their current character, but State law requires an analysis of extending new infrastructure to these County islands.
- **New transportation investments.** Two major new investments are approaching the City – the new California high-speed rail corridor and the High Desert Corridor, which contains a High-Speed rail connection to Las Vegas via Victorville. These long-term projects are opportunities for focusing and planning land use appropriately around new connections and destinations.
- **Property conditions.** Maintaining older multifamily properties (built in the 60s and 70s) in a safe, attractive condition has become a challenge. Many of these units have become rental properties, with some entire

blocks purchased by out-of-town investors. Property maintenance conditions have become a major concern in some areas.

- **Auto-oriented non-residential districts.** A major design issue for commercial and industrial development in Palmdale is the need to consider multiple modes of transportation in site planning for these areas. Many of the existing commercial/industrial sites within the City give automobile-related features primary emphasis, while offering little in the way of pedestrian pathways, shaded walkways and seating areas, or bicycle access and parking areas. Most have large expanses of parking lots located adjacent to the street. In addition, public transit stops have not been provided with turnouts, benches or shade in many locations, and convenient pedestrian access from bus stops to building entrances have rarely been provided.
- **Significant amount of single family residential:** Over 80 percent of existing residential units in the City are medium-lot or small-lot single family residential, and many neighborhoods do not have an identifiable center with retail or commercial services. Furthermore, the zoning code explicitly discourages middle density housing, as the code does not allow development between 16 and 30 du/a. The 1993 General Plan identified a need to balance existing land use in the City, and there continues to be an opportunity to provide a greater diversity and balance of uses in the City.
- **Lack of neighborhood-serving commercial:** There is a general lack of local-serving retail to provide for day-to-day goods and services, as the overwhelming majority of commercial uses are located in isolated large-format shopping centers. There may be an opportunity to increase retail and service opportunities along Avenue S and Avenue Q, or to introduce it in new, targeted infill locations on the abundant vacant land to provide better access for residential neighborhoods.
- **Outdated planning documents.** The City has twelve Specific Plans (ten of which date back the 80s and 90s). The status or progress of some of these Specific Plans is unknown (Ritter Ranch, City Ranch, and Foothills). There may be opportunities to tweak the site design and development programs. Though the City never conducted an explicit planning process for Palmdale Boulevard, the PMC incorporated key elements of the General Plan’s vision for the area into the Downtown Mixed-Use Zone.
- **Options for general plan organization:** The existing 1993 General Plan contained the seven state-required elements and two optional elements (Parks and Community Design). State law requires the updated General Plan to include an Air Quality Element, an Environmental Justice (EJ) Element, and a Climate Hazard Vulnerability Assessment. The City intends to address social equity as well as develop a separate Military Readiness Element.