



# City of Palmdale General Plan Update

## General Plan Advisory Committee

Meeting #10: January 13, 2021 | 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm  
*Virtual Meeting via Zoom livestreamed to YouTube*

### Meeting Minutes (Adopted February 24, 2021)

## Meeting Objectives

- Review the preferred land use alternative.

## Attendees

### GPAC Members

#### Present:

Tony Avila, Juan Blanco, Colby Estes, Laura Gordon, Theresa Hambro, Matthew Harris, Aurora Hernandez, Pat Hunt, Deborah Rutkowski-Hines, Teresa Lamping, and Jason Zink

**Absent:** Lourdes T. Everett, and Sheri Kaneshiro

### City Staff

Department of Economic and Community Development: Carlene Saxton, Director; Taggart, Planning Manager; Ben Fiss, Senior Planner

### Consultant Team

Raimi + Associates: Simran Malhotra and Melissa Stark

### Public

This was a virtual meeting; hence no public sign-in is available.

## Meeting Summary

### 1. Call to Order & Meeting Procedures

The virtual meeting began with roll call, introductions of City staff, the consultant team and GPAC members, and recital of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members of the public were encouraged to follow along and provide feedback through the Palmdale 2045 YouTube Channel and online comment forum.

Juan Blanco motioned to approve GPAC #9 meeting minutes (October 28, 2020) and Deborah Rutkowski-Hines seconded the motion. None opposed so the motion passed.

## 2. Presentation & Feedback

Simran Malhotra led the evening's presentation on the preferred land use alternative which was split into three main components: background and Palmdale 2045 land use designations, overview of the preferred land use alternative, and detailed look at village centers, health and wellness districts, and education districts.

During the presentation, the group stopped for questions, comments, and to answer interactive polls. Please note that not all GPAC members participated in all polls. Members of the public had access to an online forum with the same questions as those presented to GPAC members.

In advance of the meeting, GPAC members were sent a preliminary copy of the Preferred Land Use Alternative Briefing Book and given an opportunity to provide comments. The General Plan Team received seven comments from two GPAC members on the Briefing Book (which are included as an attachment)

### Background & 2045 Land Use Designations

The background component of the presentation began with a reminder of the overall land use framework, which establishes the vision of the land use map. Next, Simran reviewed the three land use alternatives which were presented to the community in Summer 2020, noting the community's and decision makers' overall preference for Alternative 3. Simran described the 2045 land use designations – many of which are being carried-over from the 1993 Palmdale General Plan – and their intent to create complete neighborhoods, a downtown, employment, education, and medical districts throughout Palmdale. Following this section, the group paused for questions and discussion. A summary of this discussion is below.

#### **GPAC Questions & Feedback:**

- Do we consider School Districts' plans for new school facilities as part of the General Plan Update? Do School Districts have General Plans?
  - *The General Plan Team responded that School districts have their own facilities plans, but typically base their facilities planning on the projected population growth that is laid out in the General Plan Update. As we continue in the General Plan Update process, we will be working with the school districts to anticipate where new growth will be located in Palmdale.*
    - One GPAC member added that school districts typically do not know where growth is going to occur and do not like to advertise in advance of purchasing new land.
  - *The Team also noted that all school districts with facilities in Palmdale have been included in stakeholder discussions and will continue to be part of future discussions regarding growth and school facility needs.*

### Preferred Land Use Alternative

Following the background component, the group reviewed the Preferred Land Use Alternative which began with an overview of the major features and intended changes to the land use map. Key features of the preferred land use alternative include: a vibrant downtown district, two health and wellness districts, two education districts, expanded commercial uses around Antelope Valley Mall, expanded employment uses around Plant 42, Palmdale Boulevard transformed into a mixed-use corridor with mixed residential on either side, and new village centers throughout existing

neighborhoods. Simran highlighted a breakdown of land uses and metrics comparing the Preferred Land Use Alternative to the 1993 General Plan. Following this section, the group paused for questions and to respond to several polls. A summary of this feedback is below.

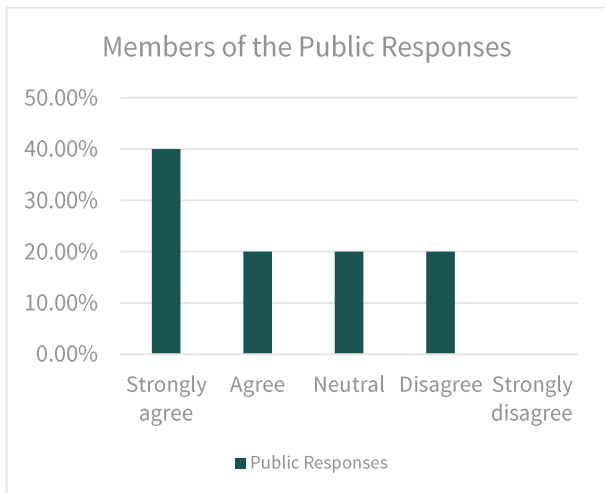
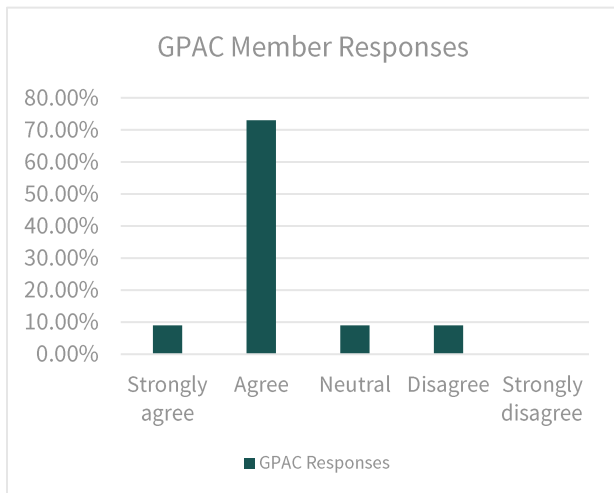
**GPAC Questions & Feedback:**

- Are all circles on the map village centers?
  - *The General Plan Team responded that all red circles on the map represent village centers which are neighborhood commercial centers that can also include mixed use residential. The goal of these centers is to create small hubs of goods and services that are more accessible to existing neighborhoods.*
- What kinds of resources are within the mineral resource extraction area as noted on the Preferred Land Use Alternative map?
  - A GPAC member responded that the mineral resource area includes building materials like sand, gravel, and ready-mix concrete or mortar.
  - *The General Plan Team responded that there are currently eight operators within the mineral resources area. The Preferred Land Use Alternative reduces the area designated for mineral resource extraction. The area with the large County island owned by Los Angeles World Airport (LAWA) is now designated for other uses. It was further noted that the City is unaware of any ongoing mineral resource extraction operations currently happening on the LAWA property.*

**Public feedback from Mentimeter:**

- Is there a development timeline for each of the land uses?
  - *The General Plan Team responded that Palmdale 2045 is a long-term planning document that is required by law to designate a land use on every property within the planning area. The timing of when a property develops is dependent on each individual property owner, and not dictated by the General Plan. The General Plan considers overall anticipated growth over the next 25-year horizon, which is not site specific.*

**Poll #1. Overall, do you generally agree with the preferred land use alternative?**



*GPAC Comments on the first poll:*

- There should be more village centers, specifically across from Dry Town Water Park.
- The Map shows the Specific Plan designation as one color. This should be shown differently to illustrate what the underlying land uses are in each of the Specific Plan areas across Palmdale.
- There should be a medical center or district on Palmdale Boulevard near 40<sup>th</sup> or 47<sup>th</sup> Streets to better serve all of Palmdale.

### **Village Centers, Health & Wellness Districts, and Education Districts**

Following the review of the Preferred Land Use Alternative, Simran introduced detailed descriptions, images and sample site plans for a village center, a health and wellness district, and an education district. The group reviewed the materials and held a robust discussion. A summary of the feedback and responses to poll questions are below.

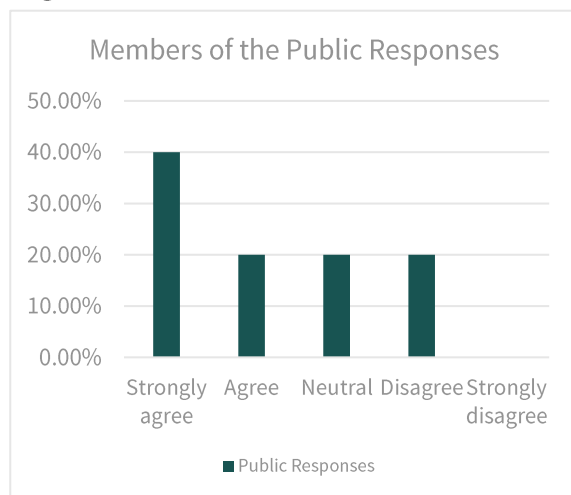
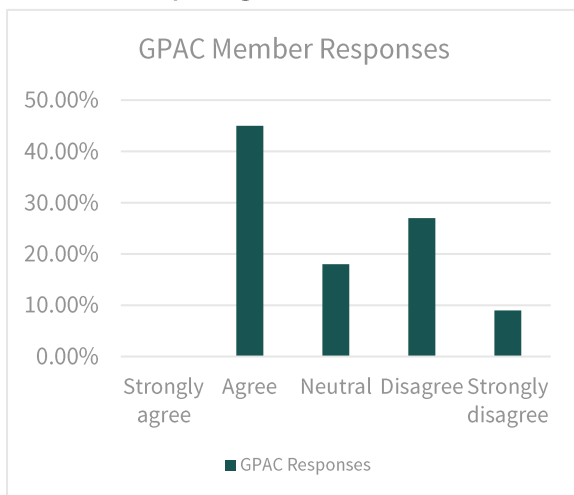
#### ***Village Centers - GPAC Questions & Feedback:***

- Is the area where the sample village center shown at the intersection of Rancho Vista Boulevard and Town Center Drive currently zoned for commercial uses? Can the City provide an update to what the plans are for this area?
  - *The General Plan Team responded that the intersection is currently zoned for Commercial uses, but a Specific Plan Amendment may be pending to allow for a residential overlay on the southeast side.*
- Previous attempts to build apartments in the same area as the sample village center was met with a negative response from some community members.
  - *The General Plan Team responded that this example is meant to show what a village center could look like in Palmdale. Some village centers may not include housing. For the village centers that do include housing, the goal is to provide flexibility and opportunity for a mix of housing types, especially those that are lacking in Palmdale like rowhouses, townhouses, and courtyard apartments.*
- A suggestion was made to include a hotel at the Rancho Vista village center.
- One of the GPAC members suggested that village centers should also include storage units.

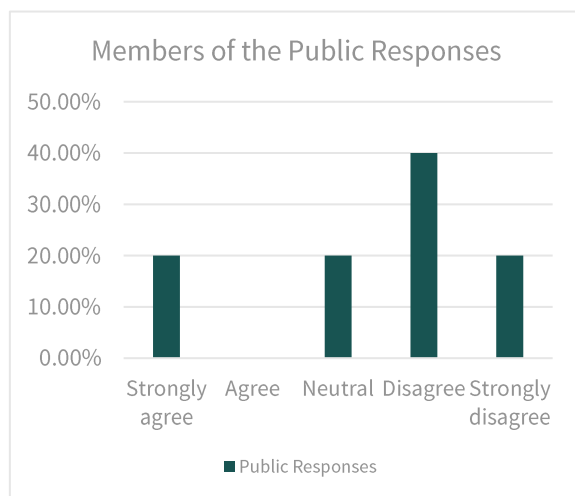
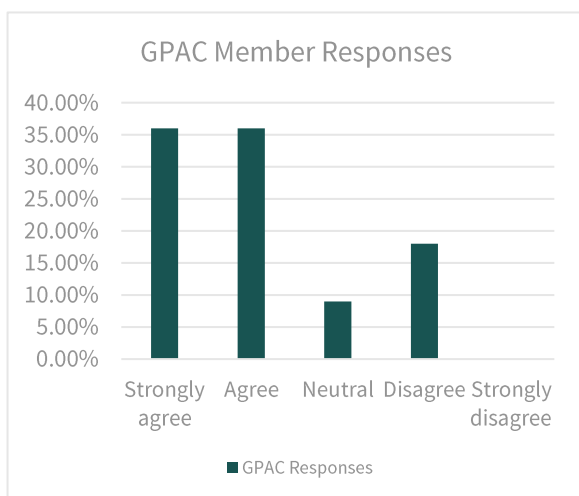
#### ***Village Centers – Public Feedback from Mentimeter:***

- Are there any labor standards associated with this Plan with it comes to construction of these developments such as local hire and prevailing wages?
  - *The General Plan Team responded that most construction in the City today is privately funded. Those developers or builders are held to the local and state minimum wage requirements. City projects already require prevailing wages. Local decision makers would need to provide direction on the ability to have General Plan policies related to union labor standards.*
- Are there bike paths or parks planned and does that include desert landscaping with environmental concerns?
  - *The General Plan Team responded that at a future GPAC meeting we will present a map illustrating bike lanes and trails across Palmdale.*

**Poll #2. Do you agree with the location of the village centers?**



**Poll #3. Do you agree with the types of uses proposed for the village centers?**



*GPAC Comments on the second and third poll:*

- There should be more village center developments on the East side of Palmdale, specifically between 25<sup>th</sup> Street East, 35<sup>th</sup> Street East, 40<sup>th</sup> Street East, and Avenue P and Avenue S.
  - *The General Plan Team responded that City Council wanted to make sure that the General Plan village centers consider all of Palmdale, not just east or west. This example is of the Westside, but village centers are proposed across all of Palmdale. They tend to pop-out on the westside of the map due to the underlying colors.*
- Village centers need to be thoughtfully located throughout Palmdale, not just located in areas just because they are vacant.
  - *The General Plan Team responded that village centers have been thoughtfully determined and the goal is to provide walkable daily goods and services to existing neighborhoods, creating a complete neighborhood. There are multiple locations on both the east and west sides of Palmdale. On the Eastside, Palmdale Boulevard already provides many of these types of goods and services in close*

*proximity to existing neighborhoods, so there isn't the same need for a village center.*

- We are trying to build an equitable city, there is a need for more development—like those proposed in village centers--on the east side near Avenue P and Avenue S.
- There should be a village center across the street from Dry Town incorporating a jogging trail near the flood control channel, mixed use, and daily goods and services. A village center is also needed at the intersection of 47<sup>th</sup> and Pear Blossom Highway.
- Are we suggesting changes to a Specific Plan Area that has already been built out, like encouraging mixed use?
  - *The General Plan Team responded that in instances where the goal is to provide walkable goods and services for a neighborhood, we are suggesting changes to a Specific Plan Area, to incorporate mixed use development.*

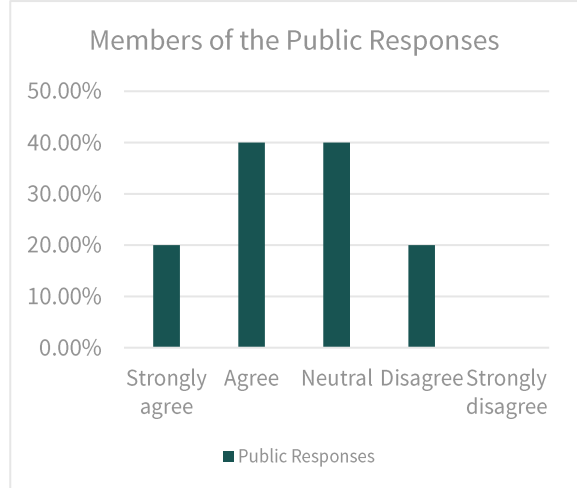
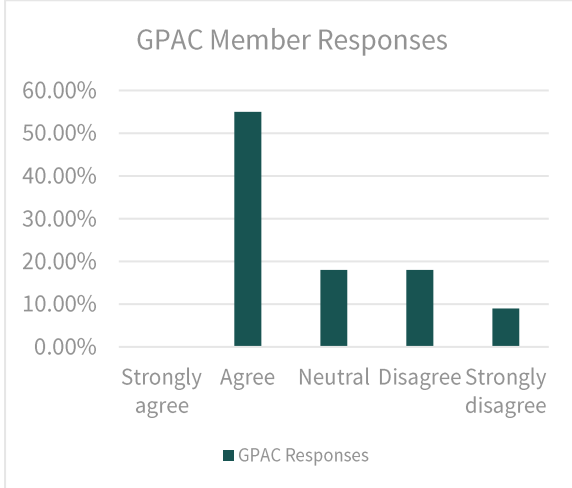
### **Health & Wellness District - GPAC Questions & Feedback:**

- How many acres is the health and wellness district on Avenue S and 47<sup>th</sup> Street?
  - *The General Plan team responded that the Avenue S and 47<sup>th</sup> Street health and wellness district is about 20 acres. This district is adjacent to a large regional commercial center that allows similar type uses.*
- AV hospital has a south campus, why isn't it included as part of the health and wellness district?
  - *The General Plan Team responded that when we were considering various alternatives, the areas that rose to the top were those around Palmdale Regional Medical Center and Kaiser Permanente. There are other medical uses scattered along Palmdale Boulevard, but many of those specific locations do not appear to have enough vacant land to accommodate a future district as it has been envisioned.*
- The Westside health and wellness district is 100 acres, while the Eastside district is 20 acres. With the largest population on the Eastside, there should be a health and wellness district there to serve them. Including a vision for Palmdale with the largest health and wellness district on the Westside does not address the health disparities in Palmdale. Health and wellness should also consider senior assisted living facilities and similar care uses. There should be a health and wellness district between 40<sup>th</sup> and 47<sup>th</sup> on Palmdale Boulevard. Kaiser should not have been located on Avenue S, as it is not centrally located and accessible. Palmdale also provides services to surrounding areas like Littlerock.
  - A GPAC member responded that Kaiser was located on Ave S at the request of medical providers. Easy access to the hospital was a key concern for physicians.
  - *The General Plan Team responded that the Kaiser facility is built, and there is opportunity to expand to the vacant land surrounding it in an efficient manner, which was part of the rationale for locating the health and wellness district in that area. Medical and supportive uses can be co-located in the same area to build synergy. The Team responded that they would revisit the Eastside health and wellness district, to see if there are opportunities for expansion, per consensus from the GPAC.*
  - *The General Plan Team also responded that the Westside health and wellness district expands on an existing large medical facility that is an asset to the*

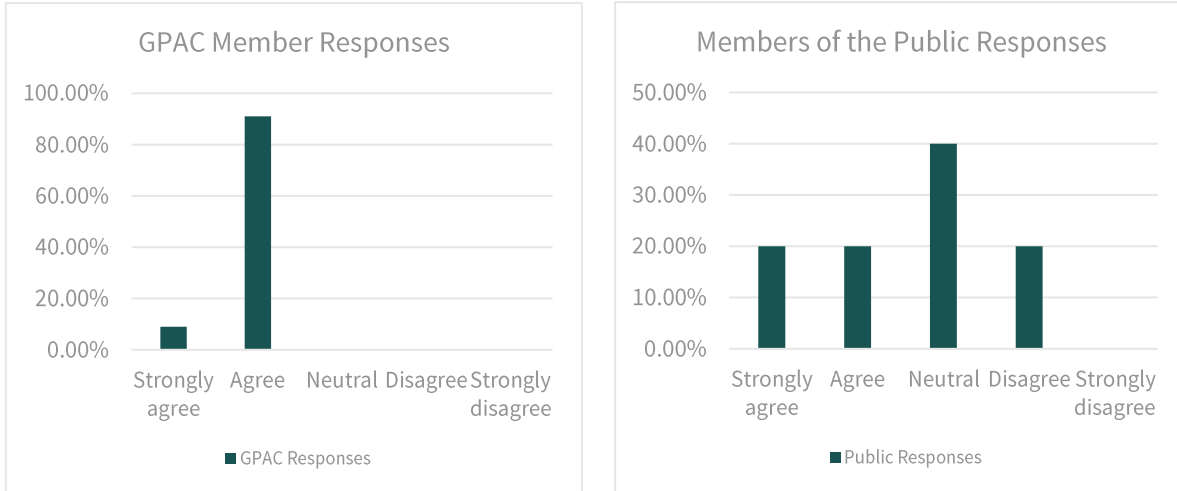
community. It also has the available acreage and existing synergy. Another regional health facility of the same size locating on the Eastside is not as likely. This is a citywide plan, the East 14 of the FWY is identified as a primary medical provider shortage. The Team noted they will reevaluate the size and location of the health and wellness district on the Eastside. Further mentioning, that the city as a whole is the priority, we want to make sure we have the facilities that can attract the providers our community needs.

- The site plan example shows larger research facilities, can those fit on the district off Avenue S? It seems unlikely.
  - A GPAC member responded that there is sufficient vacant land further South to potentially accommodate a facility like the site plan suggests.
- Kaiser typically has their own medical campus and does not share land with other providers or competitors. Would that make our proposed district expanding off the Kaiser facility infeasible? Want to make sure we also provide facilities that are accessible to non-Kaiser members. Do not feel the medical issues for the community are solved in these two districts.
  - The General Plan Team responded that Kaiser is known to co-locate on other facilities, perhaps not built at the same time. Other medical offices or uses could be built in close proximity, on the vacant land surrounding Kaiser. Additionally, medical uses are allowed elsewhere in the city, not just these two areas.

**Poll #4. Do you agree with the location of the health and wellness districts?**



**Poll #5. Do you agree with the types of uses proposed for the health and wellness districts?**



*GPAC Comments on the second and third poll:*

- The General Plan team asked GPAC members if the health and wellness districts should specifically mention senior living facilities as an allowed use within those districts?
  - One GPAC member confirmed that senior living facilities should be called out as a specified use within health and wellness districts, and none opposed.

**Education District - GPAC Questions & Feedback:**

- The education district should be located near a freeway for easy access similar to the medical district.
  - *The General Plan Team responded that the purpose of locating the district in this location is to build on the existing educational uses and create a sense of synergy, and for ease of access from existing neighborhoods and existing public transit. The point of easy access from the freeway is well taken, but if all districts are oriented around the freeway, those districts are not accessible for to the neighborhoods and the rest of the community.*
- There is a large population on the Westside of Palmdale which is over a 30-minute drive from this education district on Palmdale Boulevard and 25<sup>th</sup> street east. The education districts are too far away to serve the Westside of Palmdale.
  - *The General Plan Team noted that in a previous GPAC meeting, the group agreed that residents of the far westside of Palmdale are likely to utilize the Antelope Valley College campus in Lancaster. Also, the health and wellness district at Palmdale Regional Medical Center offers opportunities for education facilities and vocational training that are tied to medical uses.*
  - A GPAC member noted that the original vision was for northwest Palmdale to be served by Antelope Valley College campus in Lancaster, and another campus was to be built the southeast side of the Antelope Valley to serve other residents of the Valley.

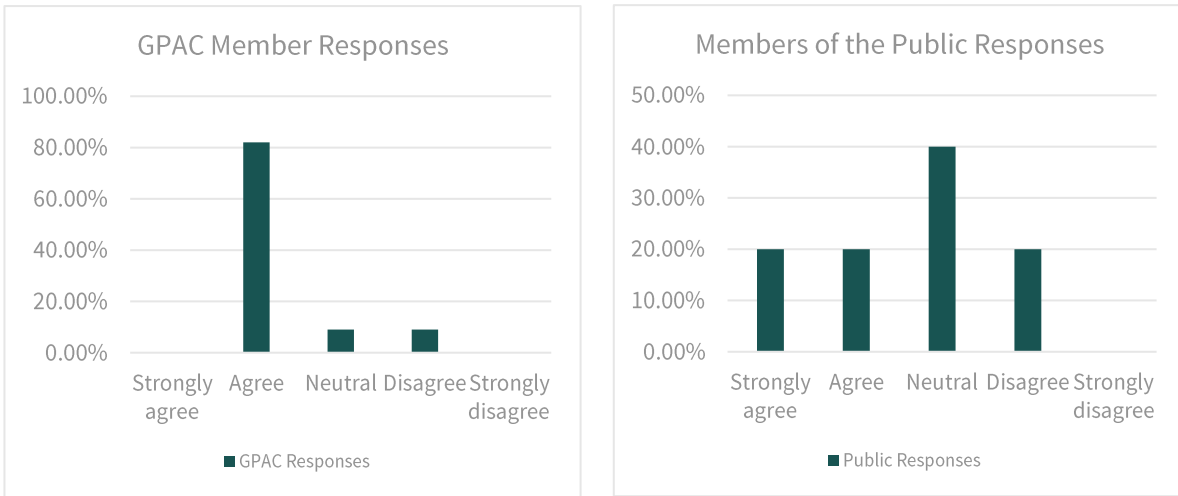


- The college campus is not large enough to serve the Antelope Valley. This should be 80-100 acres to serve the Eastside of the Antelope Valley. The educational resources in Palmdale have been short-sided and do not reflect the taxes paid by Palmdale residents.
- *The General Plan Team asked GPAC members if the districts should be located in other areas given existing resources in and available land?*
  - One GPAC member responded that expanding the district would meet the needs, unsure if there is available land on Palmdale Boulevard.
- Why does the education district have to be attached to an existing area that is built?
  - *The General Plan Team responded that there are many benefits to co-locating the education district with other existing educational facilities including existing infrastructure to support development, existing uses that can attract additional development or services and the synergy they create together, and accessibility to the area by existing transit. Starting over further east on undeveloped property would add the burden of needing new infrastructure and forcing all visitors to drive longer distances. The Team noted they will incorporate feedback from City Council, Planning Commission, and the rest of the community to determine if the location and size of this district needs to be reassessed.*
- How does the plan entice people to live nearby the education district? Why do we want mixed use around this area?
  - *The General Plan Team responded that mixed-use is proposed on Palmdale Boulevard, the district, would build off of the high school campuses which allow for joint use agreements, and shared facilities. A brand-new facility is a great aspiration, but the existing location would leverage existing resources to create a similar feeling environment.*

**Poll #6. Do you agree with the location of the education districts?**



**Poll #7. Do you agree with the types of uses proposed for the education districts?**



**3. Public Comment**

The YouTube livestream had over 20 unique viewers during the meeting. Several responded to the poll questions and submitted comments or questions on the presentation, as noted in the summaries in previous sections. Two public comments were submitted, which are listed below.

- Homeowners in Palmdale need to be informed about future development, as property taxes support this type of city growth.
- Are there bike paths and parks planned with desert landscape required for environmental concerns?

**4. Wrap Up and Adjourn**

Simran closed the evening’s meeting with an overview of next steps. A community survey on the preferred land use alternative is open until February 15<sup>th</sup> and a virtual workshop is scheduled for February 4<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm, all members of the community are encouraged to join. The GPAC will meet again on February 24<sup>th</sup> to discuss transportation.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

*A recording of this meeting is available on the [Palmdale 2045 YouTube Channel](#)*

*Note: this virtual meeting did not have a sign in sheet for GPAC members or the public*