



# City of Palmdale General Plan Update

## General Plan Advisory Committee

Meeting #11: February 24, 2021 | 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm  
*Virtual Meeting via Zoom livestreamed to YouTube*

### Meeting Minutes (Adopted June 17, 2021)

## Meeting Objectives

- Present and review transportation and mobility recommendations for the General Plan Update.

## Attendees

### GPAC Members

#### Present:

Tony Avila, Juan Blanco, Lourdes T. Everett, Laura Gordon, Theresa Hambro, Matthew Harris, Aurora Hernandez, Pat Hunt, Sheri Kaneshiro, Teresa Lamping, and Jason Zink

**Absent:** Colby Estes and Deborah Rutkowski-Hines

### City Staff

Mike Behen, Deputy City Manager; Carlene Saxton, Director of Economic and Community Development; Megan Taggart, Planning Manager; Ben Fiss, Senior Planner

### Consultant Team

Raimi + Associates: Simran Malhotra and Melissa Stark  
Nelson\Nygaard: Meghan Weir and Zach Zabel

### 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.

Teresa Lamping motioned to approve GPAC #10 meeting minutes (January 13, 2021) and Pat Hunt seconded the motion. None opposed so the motion passed.

## 2. Presentation & Feedback

Simran Malhotra provided GPAC members with an update on the Preferred Land Use Alternative, including the community engagement completed to date, and highlights of the feedback received thus far.

Then, Meghan Weir and Zach Zabel led the evening’s presentation on transportation which was split into several sections: mobility today, rethinking mobility, roadway hierarchy, mobility and land use context, and supporting mobility in different contexts.

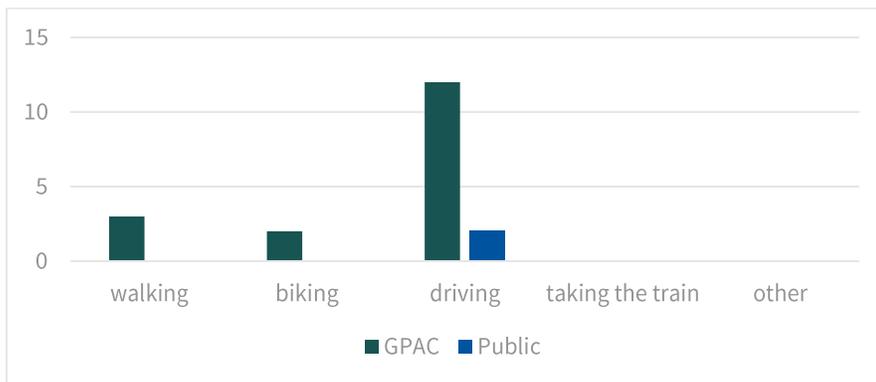
During the presentation, the group stopped for questions, comments, and to answer interactive polls. Please note that not all GPAC members participated in all polls. Members of the public had access to an online forum with the same questions as those presented to GPAC members.

In advance of the meeting, GPAC members were sent a copy of the transportation existing conditions report to review as context for the meeting.

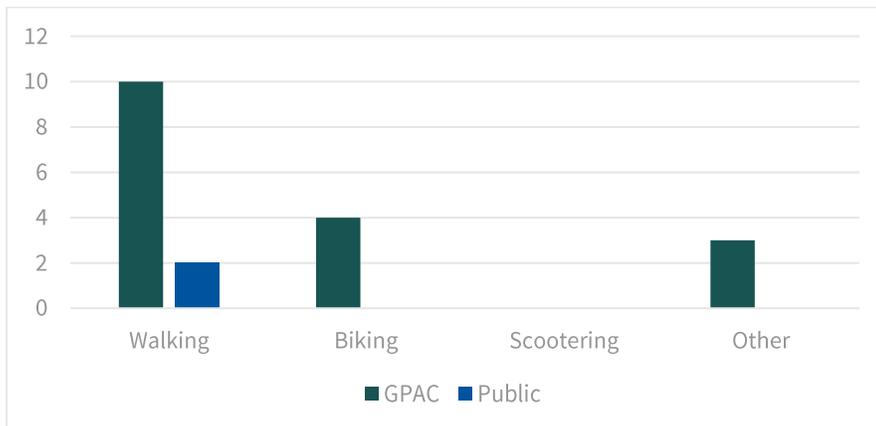
### Mobility Today

The background component of the presentation began with an overview of mobility, how it is defined, and an overview of current routes for bus, car, and bike travel in Palmdale.

#### Poll #1: How do you get around Palmdale?



#### Poll #2: Which of the following modes of travel do you currently use for recreation or exercise?



**GPAC Questions:**

What is the difference between Class I, Class II and Class III bike lanes?

- *Class I is categorized as a separated, or off-street path, Class II is categorized as a painted bike lane on the street – sometimes including a buffer, and Class III is a shared facility for bicycles and cars.*

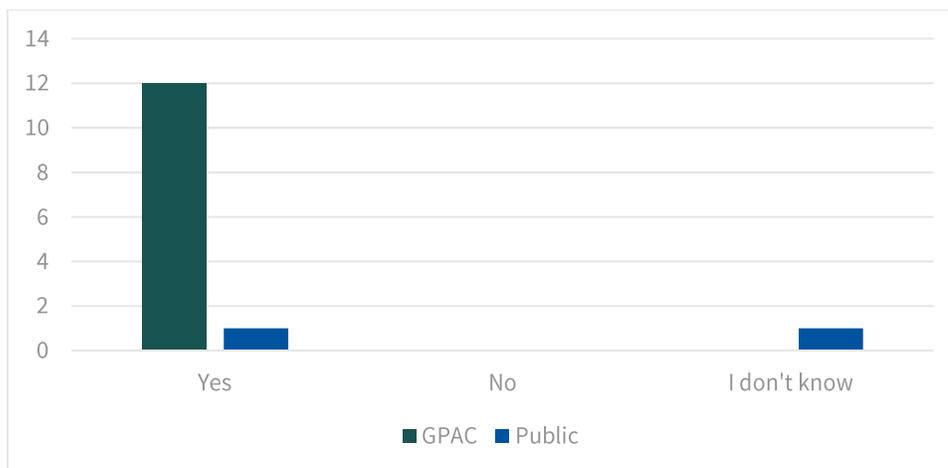
**Rethinking Mobility**

This section of the presentation highlighted existing issues, opportunities, and future needs in the Palmdale circulation network. The team reviewed collision data and roadway segment level of service, which generally indicated capacity on key segments to accommodate a multi-modal network.

**Roadway Hierarchy**

As a precursor to the proposed roadway hierarchy, Meghan introduced ways in which the hierarchy can be established by either functional classification or by modal priority. This also introduced the idea of multimodal streets and opportunities to accommodate different users. The proposed roadway hierarchy was presented with proposed categories of connector, multimodal, regional, and neighborhood streets.

**Poll #3: Is the proposed street hierarchy map helpful for Palmdale’s changing context?**



**Mobility and Land Use Context**

The street hierarchy was overlaid on the land use framework for context and further explanation. The proposed street hierarchy was also highlighted on Palmdale Boulevard and at a neighborhood scale.

**GPAC Questions:**

Does this project look at signal cycle length? It affects if we can have people successfully bike in Palmdale.

- *There is an opportunity to look at that traffic signal cycle length, but today we are looking at the function and design of roadways physical infrastructure. The signal cycle length is an important feature and is an appropriate topic to work into the plan.*

We have learned that truck traffic destroys local roads. The maps are missing the future P-8 freeway that will replace Palmdale Boulevard, which we can divert truck traffic onto in the future. There are a few areas that need to be categorized as a level higher including Technology Drive between 10<sup>th</sup> Street West and Division Street, and 50<sup>th</sup> Street East and East Avenue R.

- *Thank you for the information, these maps are a work in progress, and we rely on the keen eye from GPAC members and the public to help us refine them.*

With Caltrans Highway 138 being on Palmdale Boulevard and being designated as a truck route we should focus less on promoting bicycles here. Does this plan consider the Antelope Valley climate? Lancaster included more bicycle lanes, but they have not seen higher usage. I do not think bicycles will be utilized here, so we should not plan for them. Also, slowing cars down could mean more pollution.

- *There are options for accommodating different modes without being mixed into the vehicle right-of-way. This will ensure the vehicle and truck volume that needs to be accommodated can proceed, while also accommodating other modes. On Palmdale Boulevard, the collision data is showing existing activity despite the current roadway design. So, there is an opportunity to serve those users. Palmdale Boulevard is a mixed corridor that provides unique challenges. Regarding the climate, we have examples all over the world of harsh climates where people choose to walk and bike if the setting is inviting, if the facilities and design are there, it gives folks the option to choose other modes when the weather permits.*

Difference between multimodal and regional. Is one safer for pedestrians or bicycles? 10<sup>th</sup> Street West is listed as multimodal, but I think it would be safer to be regional and take the bicycle lane off the road.

- *The classification does not dictate the cross-section. A street that is multimodal does not necessarily mean bike lane on the road. Multimodal streets present an opportunity to accommodate different modes, but it depends what the priority is on that street. We are looking for opportunities to distinguish the priority for the corridor.*

Within the collision data, is there a category that identifies if homeless people are involved in collisions?

- *There is not a category that identifies if people are unhoused. It is a frequent topic related to pedestrian safety in communities. There are many layers to think about, often the activity of unhoused people is pushed to the fringes of town where the streets are larger, and speeds are higher. Regarding pedestrian safety, streets can be designed so people who are driving and those who are walking have better visibility and safer streets. In general, there is a lot of improvements that can be made to better serve a wide variety of diverse users.*

Can we look at the collision data and time of day? Perhaps the lighting on roads is an issue?

- *The collision data is related to police reports, so there may be that information available to us. That is a great line of thinking, and lighting is something we should investigate.*

Is jaywalking considered in the collision data? I see a lot of people jaywalking on Palmdale Boulevard.

- People cross without the safety and comfort of a crosswalk when there are not enough crosswalks or safe and inviting opportunity to cross a street.
- Want to remind the group of the larger vision for the General Plan is provide flexibility and options that are not currently available in Palmdale.
- Also, a reminder that you yourself may not be interested in walking or biking in Palmdale, but others have expressed that desire, which is supported by the data we have. If 10-15% of the traffic on Palmdale Boulevard was reallocated as people walking and biking traffic would flow much smoother. This would also help traffic signal times.

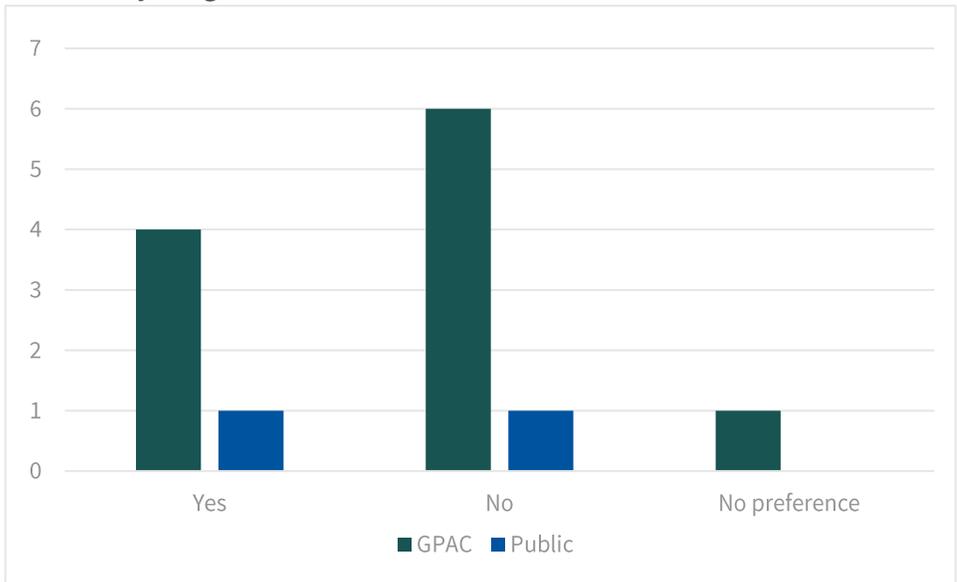
Some of the wide streets in Palmdale do not have street a median or island for pedestrians who cross at a designated crosswalk. One example where one is needed is on Avenue R and 47<sup>th</sup> Street East.

- Pedestrian islands on wide streets are a critical element for pedestrian safety. Those kinds of items will be in the General Plan to explore further and prioritize safety.

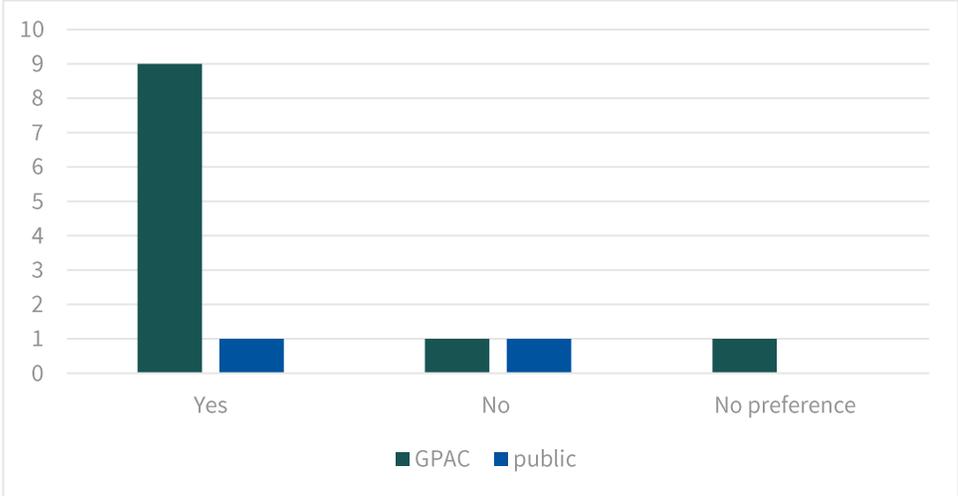
Other GPAC Comments:

- There are difficulties in the current network like vast amounts of area with no sidewalk.
- People will continue jaywalking even with a crosswalk – they do not care.
- Jaywalking and lack of lighting are issues on Palmdale Boulevard.
- If patrons cannot get to a store easily in Palmdale, they will shop online, which does not benefit the city from a sales tax perspective.

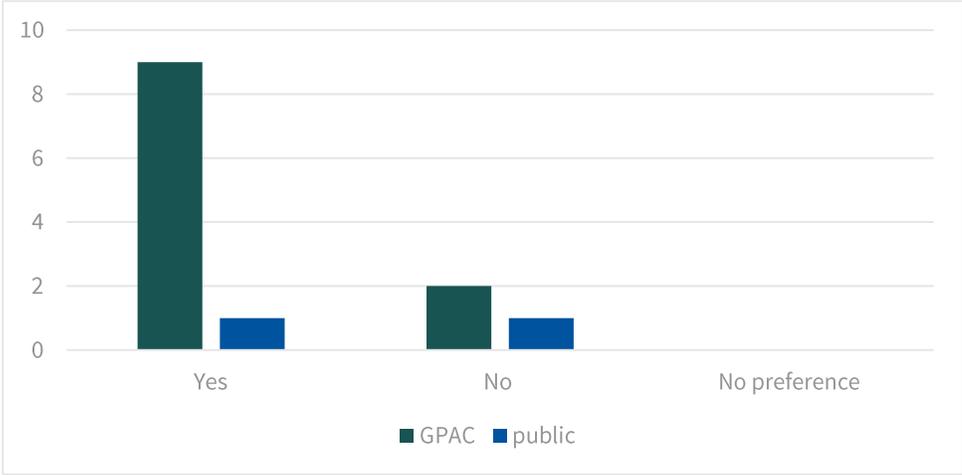
**Poll #4: Do you agree that Palmdale Boulevard should become a multi-modal roadway?**



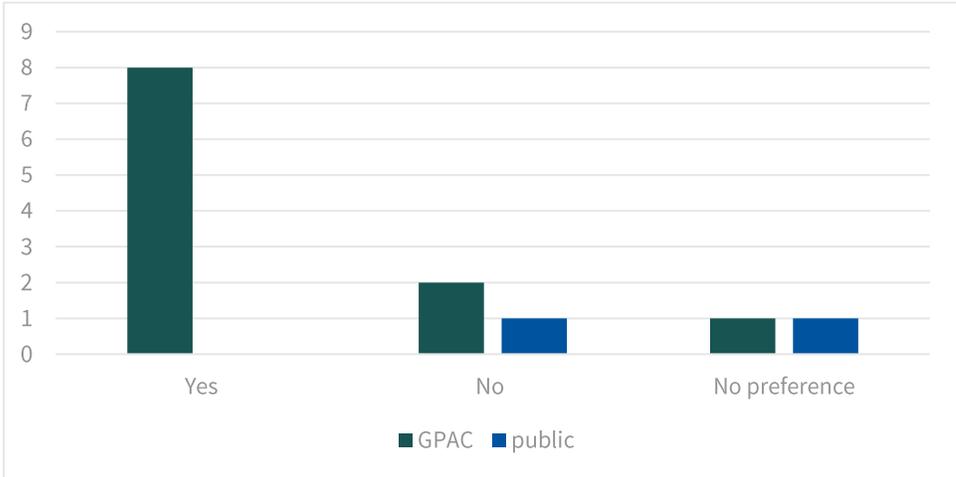
**Poll #5: Do you agree with the approach for village centers?**



**Poll #6: Do you agree with the approach for residential neighborhoods?**



**Poll #7: Do you agree with the approach for rural arterials?**



## Supporting Different Mobility in Contexts

Zach introduced a toolkit of context sensitive solutions that provide a framework for incorporating design improvements on different roadway types across Palmdale. The toolkit will build on the work completed in the City's Draft Complete Streets Plan. Examples of design improvements were presented for village centers, suburban communities, and rural arterials.

### GPAC Questions and Comments:

The previous AVTA maps that were shared seem to lack north-south connections across Palmdale.

- *Transit is run by AVTA, but these comments are helpful for us to report back to the transit authority. The General Plan is one tool to help inform how transit agencies make decisions and identify priorities in the future, but we are not able to make changes to the existing transit service.*
- *AVTA just completed their Regional Plan and will include some changes to the network like the addition of micro service.*

We should introduce roadway diets like what was done in Lancaster where they reduced roadway and introduced bike lanes on both sides. An ideal location for this road diet is 20<sup>th</sup> Street East between Avenue R and Avenue S. I think there is a desire, but people do not ride bikes in Palmdale because it is too dangerous.

- *Road diets are included in the toolkit of solutions for design improvements and are a great way to improve safety and flexibility for other users. The traffic modeling that has been done to date shows excess vehicle capacity into the future on current roadways in their current design. This would suggest there is room to reallocate roadway to other uses like sidewalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian islands, without major disruptions to traffic flow. Excess vehicle capacity does not work for any other user unless you rearrange the way the street is designed.*
- *A lot of the changes we have discussed will not happen overnight. They will take time to implement, and in some cases be temporary demonstration to see if a solution works.*

Is it possible introduce a new transit line that carry passengers from one side of Palmdale to the other?

- *There have been some discussions with the City and AVTA about introducing a rubber tire trolley – that uses the street right-of-way to travel, though this was a longer-term idea. The goals of the plan is to offer options for those who want alternatives to using a car, while still maintaining the ability to travel throughout Palmdale by vehicle.*
- *The General Plan is not a tool to reconfigure regional transit service, but it can identify priorities and ambitions to ensure consistency with future transportation planning efforts.*

Palmdale is unique in that it has a freight line dividing major corridors from Avenue M to Barrel Springs Road and 5<sup>th</sup> Street East to Sierra Highway. How does the plan address this?

- *The City is looking into grade separation – either above or below - of rail and vehicle traffic at major corridors.*

Why wasn't the P-8 Freeway included on the transportation maps?

- *The High Desert Corridor (P-8 Freeway) is not within the time horizon of the General Plan. The General Plan horizon is 2045 and the High Desert Corridor horizon is 2065. As of right*

*now, funding is not available for the project through LA Metro's Measure M funding program. The highway portion of the corridor was involved in a lawsuit that has resulted in the construction being put on pause.*

Additional GPAC Comments:

- I do not think bike lanes and roundabouts are the answer, they can cause more accidents.
- As GPAC Members, we must take into consideration the various perspectives and interests of our diverse community. Pedestrian safety is not just a matter of looking both ways - to make such generalizations would be a disservice to residents who are subject to different circumstances. I spoke to a resident who is in a wheelchair who cannot leave their house because the sidewalk is nonexistent. The roads are too harsh for their wheelchair and they have already suffered injuries from previous attempts. Another thing to consider, many bike lanes and pedestrian zones only extend for short distances. Vehicle drivers are often moving too fast to identify and respond to pedestrians and cyclists. Blind spots for drivers can be death-traps for other road users.

### 3. Public Comment

The YouTube livestream had several unique viewers during the meeting. Two responded to the poll questions, as noted in the previous sections. One public comment was submitted, which is listed below.

- How far in the future is the funding and civil design phase for these street improvements? Is there a plan for a dedicated bus lane in any of these street sections? Not sure if the demand is there in the first place.
  - *Funding for improvements is further down the road, the General Plan sets the priorities and recommendations for the street network and will be followed by more detailed design work along with an implementation plan. The bus lane would be in coordination with AVTA and a longer-term discussion that would not be implemented by the General Plan.*

### 4. Wrap Up and Adjourn

Simran shared next steps and closed the evening's meeting. The Preferred Alternative and community feedback will be presented to Planning Commission on March 11, 2021 and City Council on March 16, 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 pm.

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

*Note: GPAC members were invited to provide written comments on the roadway hierarchy map and return to the General Plan Team, however, none were received.*