

Live Presentation + Q&A

Discussion Summary

Virtual | February 4, 2021 | 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

On Thursday, February 4, 2021, the City of Palmdale hosted a live presentation + Q&A discussion to review the preferred land use alternative for Palmdale 2045, the General Plan Update. Members of the public were encouraged to view the preferred land use alternative briefing book and participate in an online survey that was available from January 13 – February 17, 2021. This virtual event serves as the third workshop in a series of four that will take place over the course of the Update. The live presentation was conducted via Zoom Webinar and attended by 88 people. Participants in the live event could listen to audio in English or Spanish and submit their questions and/or comments verbally or by sending a message in Zoom Webinar or via text message. The live presentation began with an overview of the Palmdale 2045 project and was followed by a discussion with community members about the preferred land use alternative. A recording of the live event is available on the Palmdale 2045 YouTube Channel.

Presentation

After a brief overview of meeting logistics by Celeste Milam of Arellano Associates, Carlene Saxton, Director of Economic and Community Development Department for the City of Palmdale, opened the meeting and welcomed participants. Simran Malhotra of Raimi + Associates, led the presentation which included four key components: project background; review of how we got here; review of the general plan land use designations; and overview of the preferred land use alternative. Throughout the presentation, the General Plan Team paused to answer questions and facilitate polls. Below are highlights of these presentation sections.

Project Background

Simran began the presentation with a brief overview of the General Plan and its significance to the community. The milestone schedule was provided, showing the current phase which includes preparation of the preferred land use alternative and policy development.

What is Land Use?

This section provided background and served as a precursor to the preferred land use alternative. Definitions and examples of the land use designations, maps of existing land use—what is currently on the ground today—as well as the existing 1993 General Plan land use were presented. The section also provided an overview of the land use framework, three land use alternatives previously discussed in the Summer 2020 engagement phase, and community feedback that directed the preferred land use alternative.

Palmdale 2045 Land Use Designations

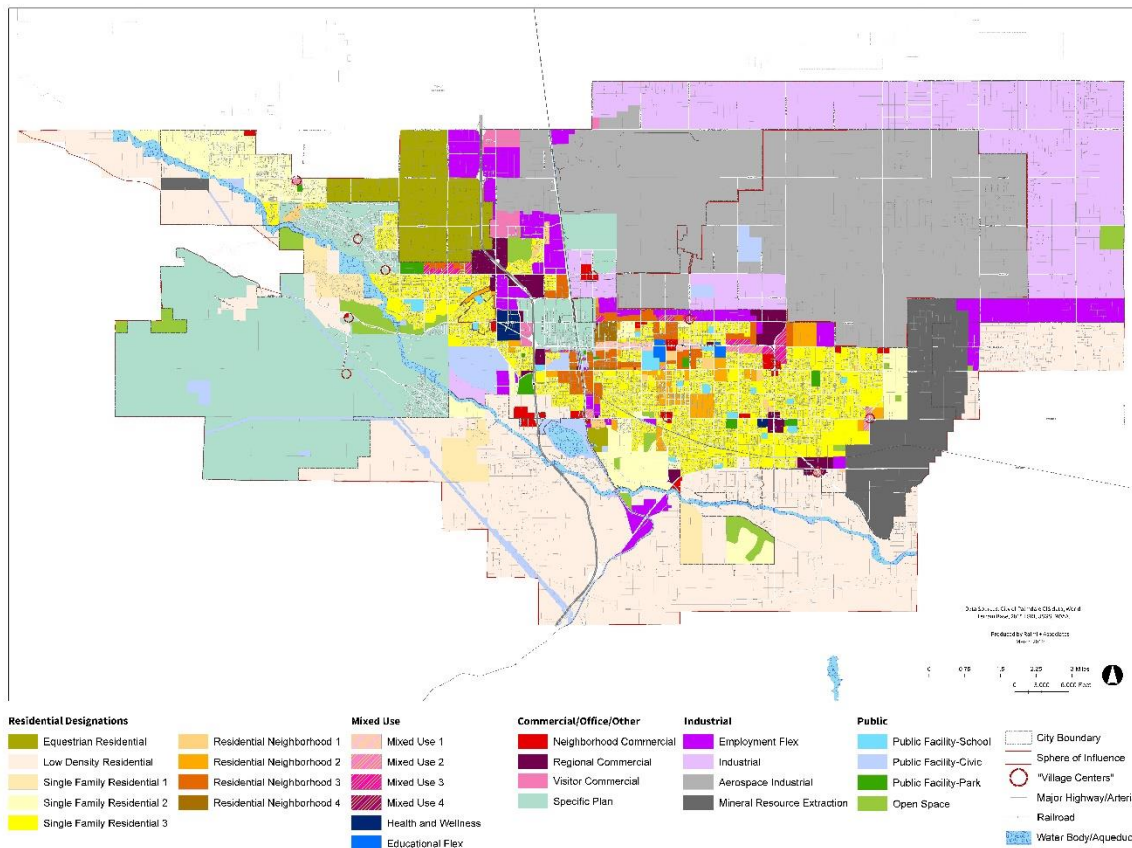
Simran then reviewed the proposed land use designations which were grouped into categories of residential, mixed-use, commercial, office, and industrial, and public uses. The designations included sample images and symbology that corresponds to the alternative map.

Preferred Land Use Alternative

The purpose of the preferred land use alternative is to adjust and confirm the draft General Plan Land Use Map with the community prior to its endorsement by decision makers.

In this section, the land use framework and key features of the preferred land use alternative were presented. The preferred land use alternative contains two health and wellness districts which build off existing medical centers in Palmdale, two education districts on Palmdale Boulevard, expanded employment uses surrounding Plant 42, mixed residential uses on both sides of Palmdale Boulevard, village centers that provide daily goods and services within walking distance to existing neighborhoods, and regional commercial uses around the Antelope Valley Mall.

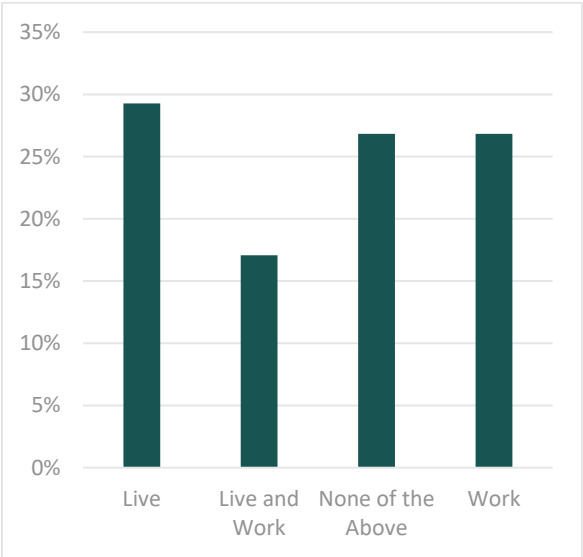
Metrics and a breakdown of land uses comparing the existing 1993 General Plan to the preferred land use alternative were also reviewed. Simran shared the intent, location, proposed uses, and an illustrative example for the various village centers. In the subsequent sections, Simran reviewed the health and wellness districts, and education districts - also providing intent, location, and illustrative examples for context.



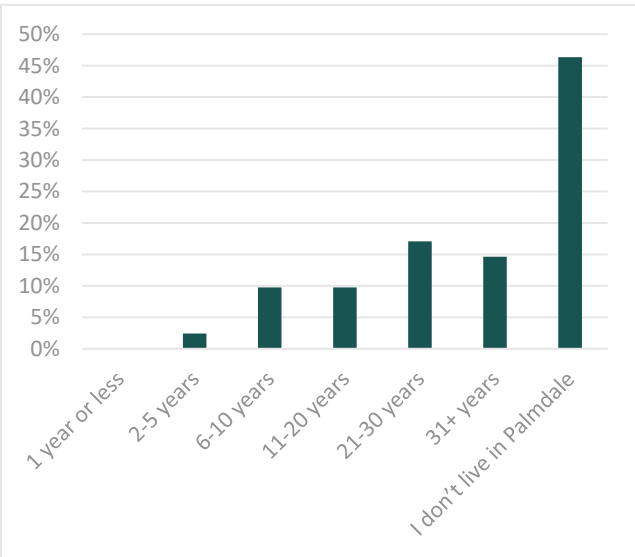
Polling

Throughout the presentation, the General Plan Team used polls to engage attendees. Below are the poll questions and corresponding results. Please note that not all participants completed one or all of the polls, and the participants who connected by phone only did not have access to the virtual poll.

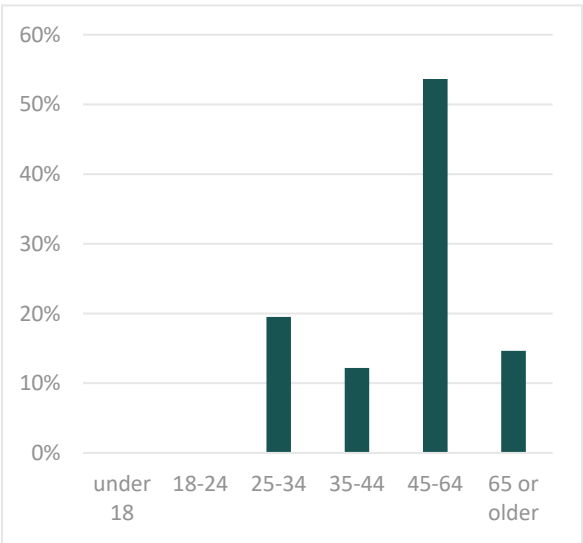
Do you live and/or work in Palmdale? (41 Responses)



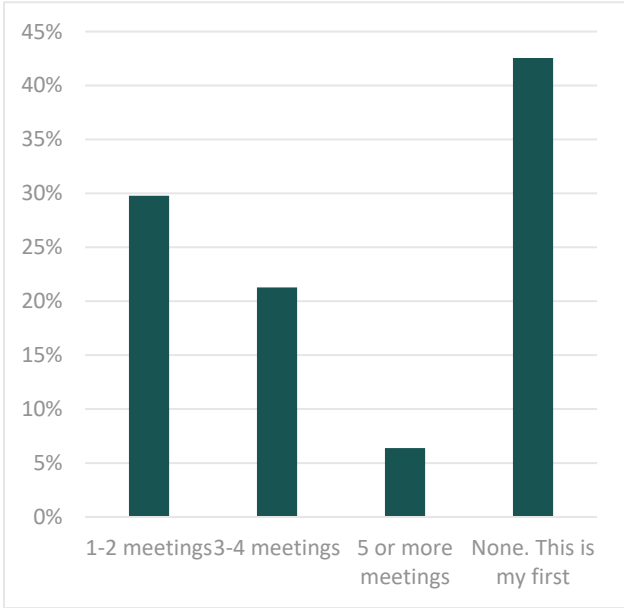
If you live in Palmdale, how long have you lived here? (41 Responses)



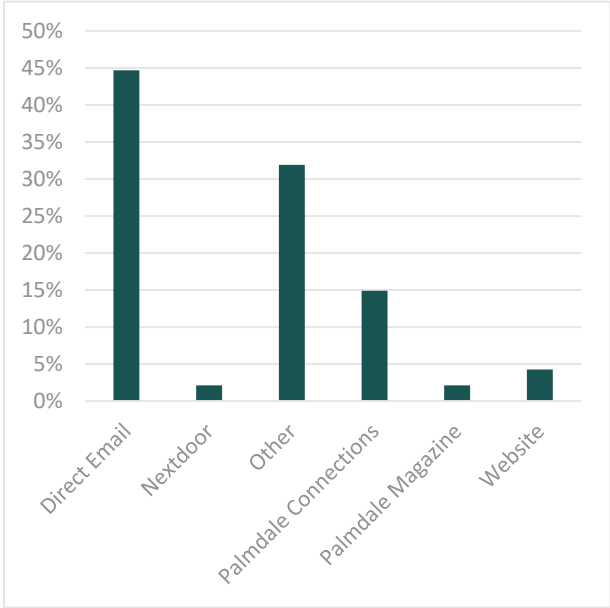
What is your age range? (41 Responses)



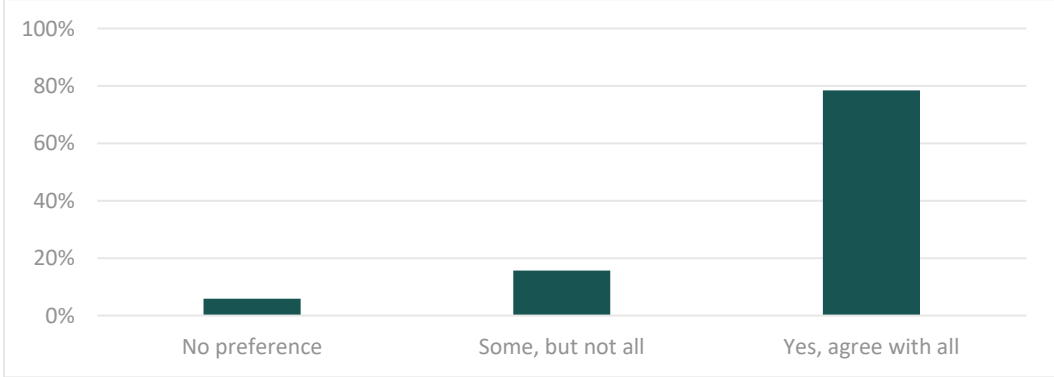
How many General Plan-related meetings have you attended? (47 Responses)



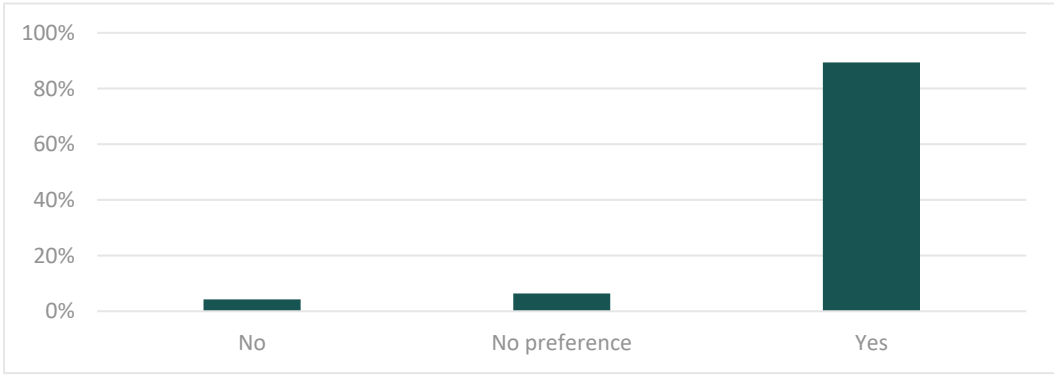
How did you hear about this meeting? (47 Responses)



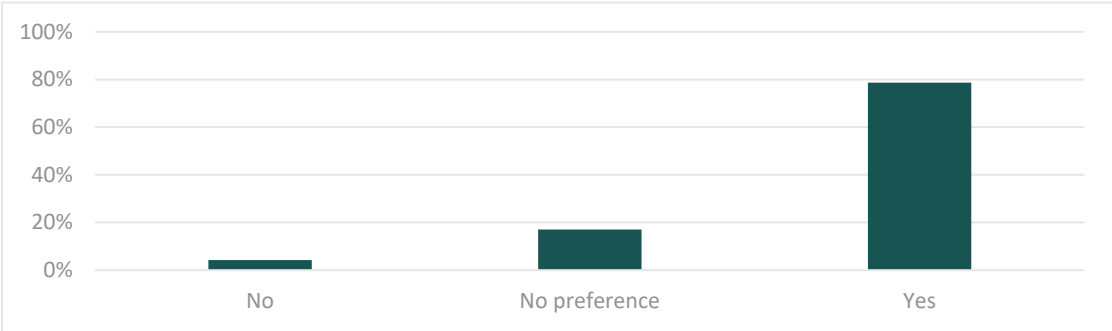
Do you agree with the addition of new land use designations that allow for different types of housing, mixed use development, health and wellness, and education flex uses? (51 Responses)



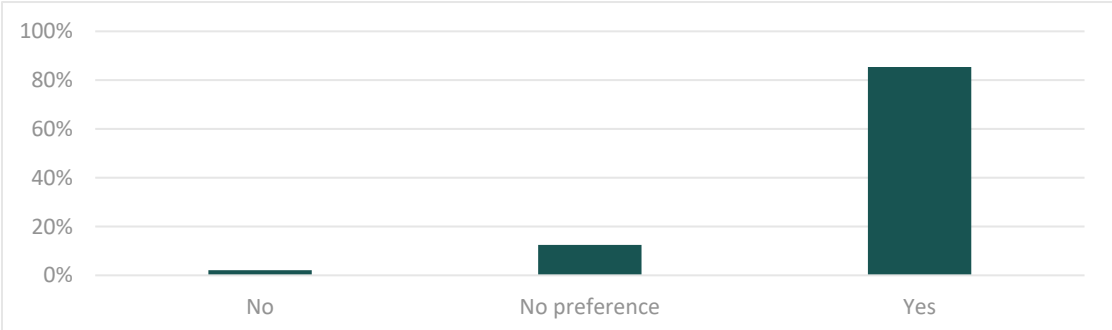
Do you agree with the vision for the village centers throughout Palmdale? Would these types of uses be acceptable in a village center in your neighborhood? (51 Responses)



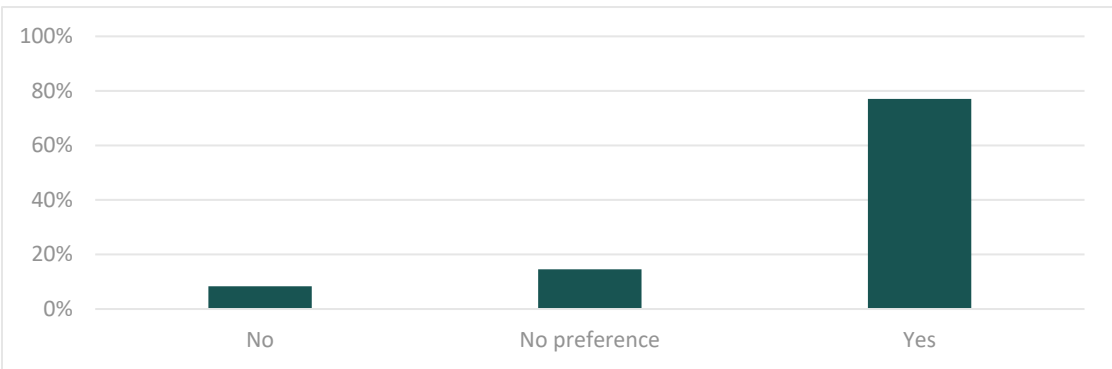
Do you agree with the identified locations for village centers throughout Palmdale? (47 Responses)



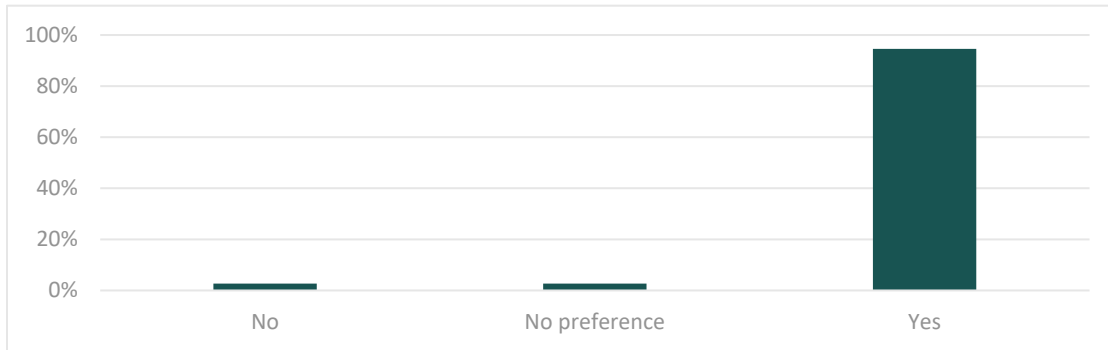
Do you agree with the vision for the health and wellness districts? (48 Responses)



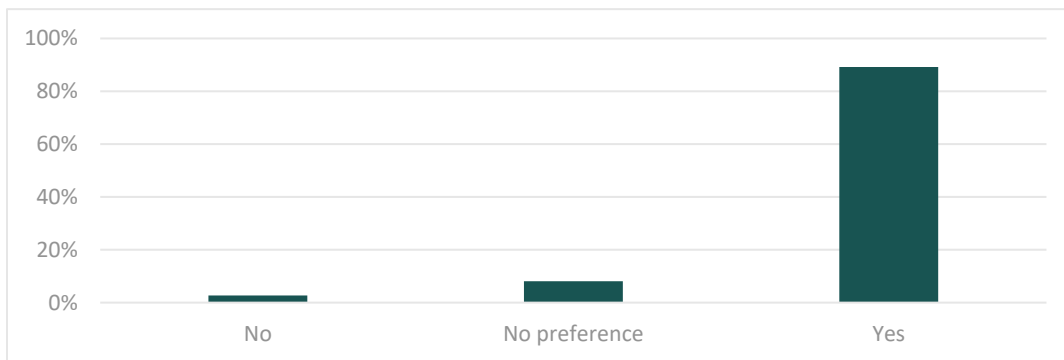
Do you agree with the location for the health and wellness districts? (48 Responses)



Do you agree with the vision for the education districts? (37 Responses)



Do you agree with the identified locations for the education districts? (37 Responses)



Have you taken the online survey for the preferred land use alternative? (33 Responses)



Questions and Comments

Throughout the presentation, the General Plan Team paused for questions to allow for robust discussion and stakeholder input. The General Plan Team answered various questions from the public asked verbally and submitted through the Q&A feature in Zoom Webinar. Questions and comments from the public are listed below (bolded) along with the General Plan Team responses (italics).

Some of us built according to the old General Plan land use designations. Will there be provisions in the Plan so we can continue with our previous land use?

Your developed properties can continue as they are – it would become a “legal non-conforming use.”

What kind of land use can accommodate storing trucks?

The General Plan designations are broad. Following the adoption of the General Plan, the City will be updating the Zoning Code and Zoning Map. At that time the exact permitted uses will be detailed. Generally, storing trucks would fall under the industrial land use designation. City staff reached out with additional information to this property owner.

Is there going to be a hospital built?

The General Plan identifies areas where certain uses can go – such as medical uses or a hospital - but the plan does not build anything.

Can you find a new site for the Palmdale dump and rezone the existing site? It's very close to a residential site.

The landfill is an existing use and service provided to the Palmdale community, so moving that use would have to be at the direction of City Council or the property owner. The City has an existing hauling agreement with Waste Management that is tied to that location. In the next year or so the City will be revisiting that agreement to ensure compliance with the Conditions of Approval agreement is a benefit to the community.

Why is the High Desert Corridor not showing on any of the maps?

The freeway portion of the corridor is a future transportation facility, the exact alignment has not been finalized. As we work through the transportation recommendations, we will revisit the planned future improvements such as the High Desert Corridor.

Parts of the City are within the Air Force AICUZ (Air Installation Compatible Use Zone). Have you taken these AICUZ zones into consideration?

Yes, the team has taken the AICUZ areas into consideration when preparing the land use alternatives. As we continue to get input on the preferred land use alternative and make adjustments, we will revisit the AICUZ areas in greater detail prior to taking the map to Planning Commission and City Council.

Will there be more jobs in the downtown area that allow for greater walkability and bikeability? Including living closer to where you work?

New jobs are planned for several areas around Palmdale including downtown, areas north of downtown, along Avenue Q, surrounding Plant 42, within the multi-use nodes and village centers. All areas of the City will hopefully provoke new job creation - any new projects constructed will create jobs as well as all commercial facilities.

Is there a plan to create more green space (parks and open space) in the densely populated areas of Palmdale?

The intent is to have additional parks space that meet the City's park space goals. We can only indicate parks or open space on City-owned property. We will be recommending general areas that need additional parks space for when land is available for purchase. Also, new multi-family development is required to provide common open space for their residents in addition to the park space that is provided by the City.

With so much growth, how will we meet the needs of our citizens with healthcare when we only have one hospital? Will Kaiser grow here or do we need to bring in another provider? Palmdale Regional Medical Center is at it's peak. What will we do?

The General Plan and City acknowledges the need for additional medical facilities and healthcare providers in Palmdale. This is why the General Plan land use map offers dedicated spaces for expanded health and wellness type uses. The City is continuing to work with existing providers to learn about their expansion plans, to see what they can do to support existing medical facilities, and attract new ones.

Will there be any new school built as part of the Plan or will existing schools be renovated? Palmdale has a lot of old schools.

Throughout the General Plan Update, we have coordinated with all school districts with facilities in Palmdale. Based on the projected growth in the General Plan, the school districts will update or expand their facilities to meet the needs of the community.

Please consider incentivizing applicable new businesses within the educational district to offer internships to students. This can also be applicable to internships within our village centers.

Internships are a great opportunity for young residents to gain experience and learn about the workforce. We will look for ways to create job training and internship programs through policies in the General Plan. The City has an existing community programs division that specifically works on those types of requests, we can make their contact information available.

What is Palmdale doing to increase and accelerate economic growth and improve infrastructure?

The City is currently working to obtain federal grants to support existing local businesses and attract future businesses to Palmdale. The City is also working with Los Angeles County on an application for Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFD) to put infrastructure in place in Palmdale and pay the costs associated with that new infrastructure over time. This will help Palmdale get much needed infrastructure improvements without burdening any single particular development. The General Plan will also have an Economic Development Element that details strategies and policies to continue the existing work the City is doing, and identify new actions the City can take to accelerate improvements.

Are there any plans to close all the liquor stores on Palmdale Boulevard and create more appropriate spaces?

The City currently has separation requirements for liquor stores, limiting their location and providing distance requirements near sensitive uses like schools, parks and religious institutions. Those policies will be carried over into the General Plan Update.

Are there any plans for existing low-density residential to allow for multiple residential units?

The State recently passed legislation to allow every single-family homeowner to build one accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and one junior accessory dwelling (JADU) unit on the same lot as a single-family home.

Are you allowing first preference for existing Palmdale businesses to occupy new mixed-use buildings?

The City is not building new buildings; new development will be built by private developers on private property. The General Plan indicates what uses are permitted in each area of the city.

Following up on the Palmdale Landfill question and response, are there any plans or vision to relocate the landfill to a more remote location within the City? The current location is near residential uses.

The Palmdale Landfill was originally located in a desolate area, that was later developed with residential uses. As the current preferred land use shows, we are not planning to relocate the landfill at this time. In addition, there have not been any proposals to relocate the landfill at this time. There are distance separation requirements in place now, so any future expansion or development of residential uses would have to allow for a buffer.

What kind of oversight is there on the development of the general plan? In the previous alternative, the zoning for the eastside wellness district was much bigger than it is now. The change seemed to only happen after public input pointed out the current zoning realities in the city. There are similar changes made to the east side education district. Does the public or city council go through the plan, block by block before the general plan is adopted? Is the general plan just a formalized pipe dream?

In this stage, we are looking for public input on the preferred land use alternative. City staff and members of the GPAC have been reviewing and considering the proposed uses and preferred alternative map. We will compile all feedback and present to City Council and Planning Commission for consideration. If you have specific concerns or feedback, this is a good time to share with the team by email and/or by responding to the survey.

Why is the aqueduct access behind highland high school fenced off? It is a prime hiking area for residents near the school.

Joshua Ranch is a proposed development in that area. This development proposal would include trails, trailheads, and parking areas. Part of that area is private property and while there will be interruptions to access through that area, the long-term plan is to have formalized access to that area.

Additional Questions and Comments:

- *When does this renovations start?*
- *We kindly ask when presenting graphs comparing the old plan to the new plan that the actual figures are shown to substantiate the bar graphs. We have no idea what scale we are using when looking at the graphs. Just a friendly suggestion.*
- *Is there any flexibility on the land use from agricultural to multi unit residential?*
- *Kaiser Permanente is the only hospital Organization that requires their in-house carpenters, superintendents, foremen to go through a rigorous 24 hour ICRA class infection control risk assessment classes.*

Several folks at the meeting submitted written comments related to requiring local hire and skilled and training workforce in Palmdale. The City supports employment growth in Palmdale and supports local hire. City Council will consider policies in the General Plan about requiring prevailing wage or contracting with union labor for future projects. Additionally, the General Plan is a plan for the future to help build the community of Palmdale with the goal of allowing people to live and work in the City.

Next Steps

After the survey closed on February 17, 2021, the General Plan Team analyzed input received for presentation of the results to the Planning Commission on March 11, 2021 and City Council on March 16, 2021. City Council and Planning Commission will provide the General Plan Team with direction for the final land use plan.