# PALMDALE TRANSIT AREA SPECIFIC PLAN

Prepared by the City of Palmdale

August 2020

Amended November 2022

PALMDALE HIGH SPEED RAIL STATION AREA PLAN

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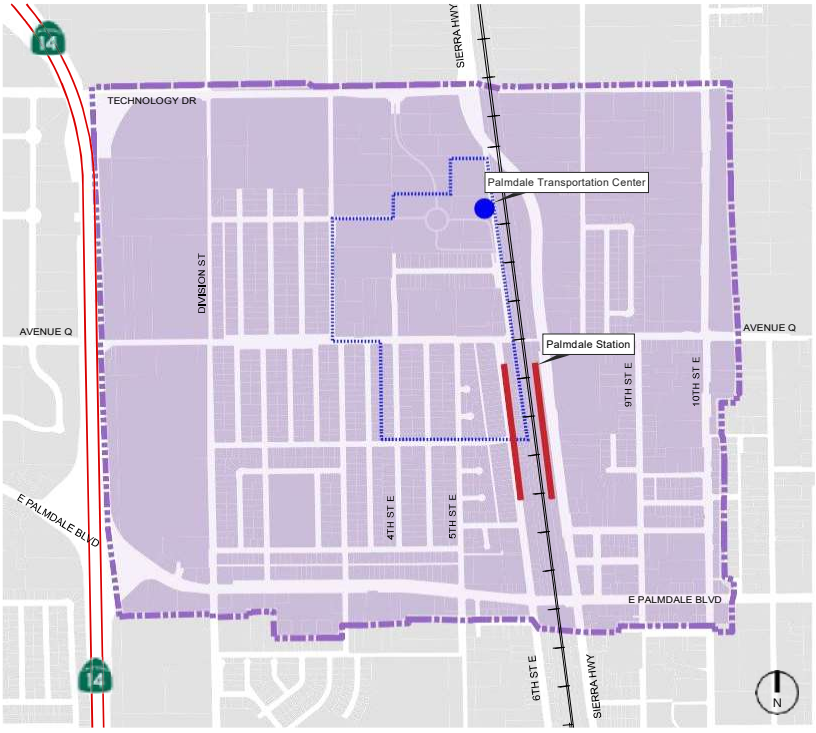
# Preface

A Specific Plan is a regulatory tool that local governments use to guide development in a localized area. While the General Plan is the City's overall guide for growth and development and the Zoning Code is the tool for regulating development in the entire City, a Specific Plan focuses on the unique characteristics of a special area by customizing the planning process, land use and zoning regulations for that area. The Palmdale Transit Area Specific Plan (PTASP) proposes a framework and development strategy for a pedestrian-oriented mixed-use district surrounding the Palmdale Transportation Center (PTC) with the future high-speed rail (HSR) station focusing on the area surrounded by Technology Drive to the north, SR-14 to the west, East Avenue Q-9 to the south and 10th Street to the east. The PTASP is intended to be a tool for developers, property owners, City staff and decision makers by providing strong and clear policies, a vision that guides land use decisions, form-based development and design standards, infrastructure improvements, and economic development strategies. The vision is supported by building upon the transit station synergy and maximizing development potential around the Palmdale Station by a mix of uses, well-established nearby neighborhoods, multi-modal access, neighborhood amenities, and community and public commitment.

In 2003, the City applied for and received funding for preparation of the Palmdale Transit Village Specific Plan (PTVSP) through a California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) grant administered by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The City adopted the PTVSP in 2007 after the opening of the PTC in 2005. The PTVSP proposed a transit village on 110 acres west of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPPR) and Metrolink tracks near the PTC to promote the development and redevelopment of the area with Transit-Oriented Developments (TOD). With plans for the California HSR system to have a station in Palmdale; the High Desert Corridor (HDC) proposed to extend east from Palmdale to Victorville; and Virgin Trains USA's (VTUSA) potential western extension to Palmdale, the City wanted to plan for and capitalize on these transportation projects. In 2012, the City considered expansion of the PTVSP planning area. The expanded planning area of 746 acres is largely in the City of Palmdale but includes two unincorporated Los Angeles County pockets covering 110 acres. This Palmdale Transit Area Specific Plan (PTASP) would replace the PTVSP adopted in 2007 in its entirety.




**Legend**

PTASP Boundary

**Study Areas**

Existing PTVSP Boundary

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# CHAPTER 1. | INTRODUCTION

Palmdale Transit Area Specific Plan (PTASP) proposes a framework and development strategy for a pedestrian-oriented mixed-use district surrounding the City of Palmdale's Transportation Center with the future high-speed rail (HSR) station. This PTASP replaces the original Palmdale Transit Village Specific Plan (PTVSP), adopted in 2007 in its entirety. The 2007 PTVSP suggested a TOD surrounding the City's Transportation Center, which is served by local buses and regional Metrolink rail. With the introduction of HSR and possibly Virgin Trains USA (VTUSA) in the region, Palmdale will experience a new era of growth thereby increasing interest and development around the new Palmdale Station hub. The resulting hub will serve as a multi-modal center serving Metrolink, Amtrak Thruway bus, and the Antelope Valley Transit Authority (AVTA) buses. The hub will be referred to as the Palmdale Station. The revitalization of this area presents an opportunity to transform downtown Palmdale into an active and cohesive mixed-use transit community. The PTASP expands on the PTVSP focusing on the area surrounded by Technology Drive to the north, SR-14 to the west, East Avenue Q-9 to the south and 10th Street to the east as shown in Figure 1.1.

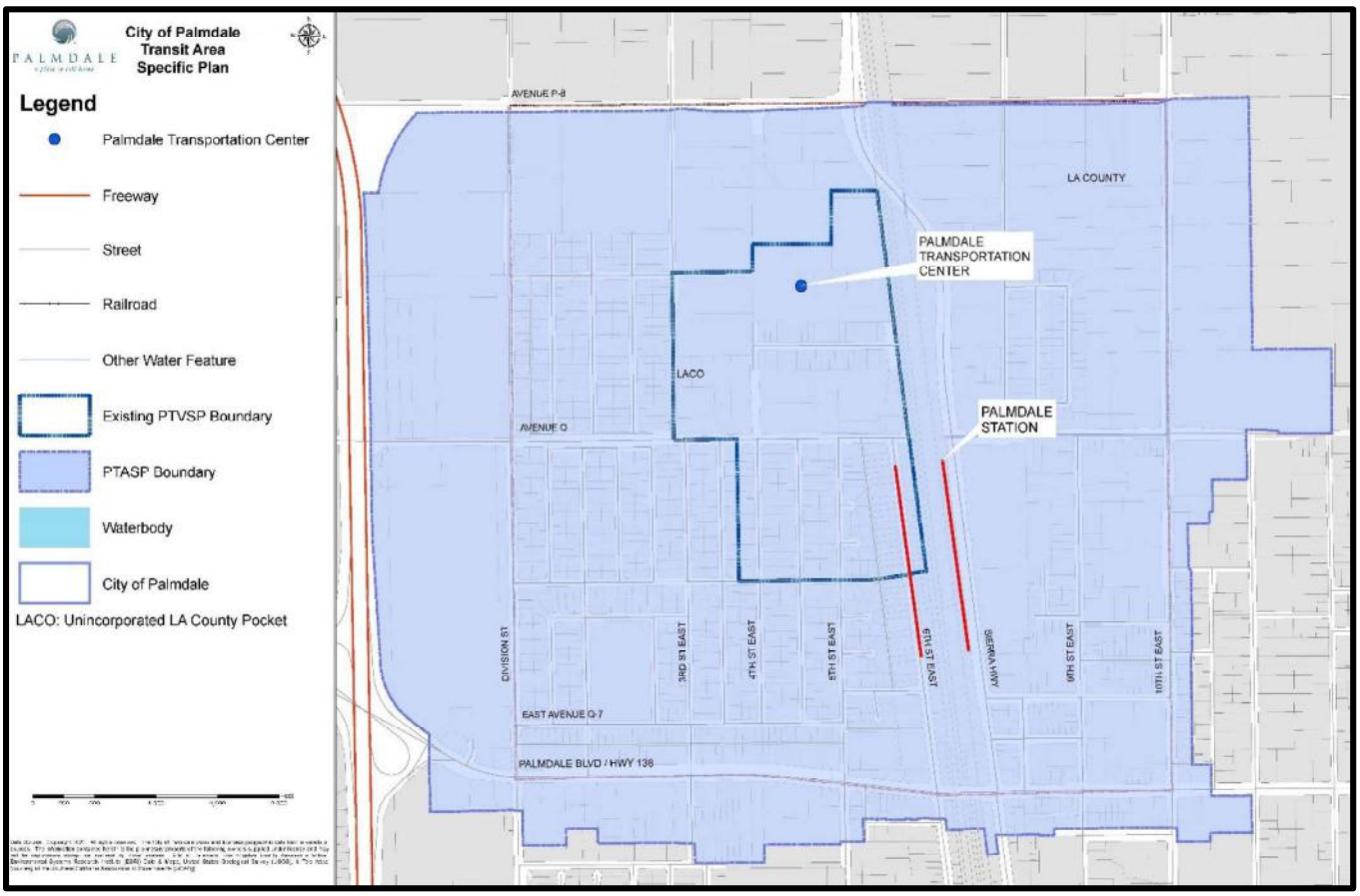



FIGURE 1.1. STUDY AREA

Primary objectives of this Specific Plan include the following:

- Expand the area of the PTVSP boundary to incorporate major thoroughfares and arterial streets. Since the new boundary will overlap the PTVSP, it will be repealed upon the adoption of this PTASP and the provisions of this PTASP will completely replace the regulations of the PTVSP.
- Clarify the land use zones, allowable land uses, development potential, and street pattern for the area within the new boundary.
- Plan for the anticipated arrival of the High-Speed Rail and replacement of the existing Palmdale Transportation Center.
- Organize future land uses into identifiable elements that will improve streetscapes, connectivity to open spaces, and landmarks.
- Update the development standards to successfully implement the PTASP.

## Inspiration

California's and America's investment in a modern public transportation system will be remembered as one of the most important initiatives in our nation's rebirth at the beginning of the 21st century. California's proposed HSR system represents a bold vision to develop a low or zero-emission, high speed, and convenient public transit system that will be a cornerstone in the state's reemergence as an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable society. The implementation of high-speed transportation, in conjunction with other new and existing transit systems in California is one of the most visible initiatives that has the potential to define a new vision for our future. The rail system will run from San Francisco to the Los Angeles basin in under three hours at speeds capable of over 200 miles per hour connecting several communities including Palmdale. The City of Palmdale will be connected in new ways that will increase productivity by reducing time spent on the road and simultaneously create access to cultural, academic, entertainment, retail and business opportunities to existing residents in Palmdale and new audiences beyond its current reach. The positive effects on the City of Palmdale will be multi-layered; at its core it will:

- Improve the quality of life by returning commute time to residents.
- Establish Palmdale as a destination in the region with a unique sense of place.
- Create economic opportunities for local and national businesses.
- Identify a new downtown with an iconic station attracting the best and the brightest.
- Be a gateway to the 21st century and a catalyst for a more dynamic and livable Palmdale.

## Planning Process

Embracing the connection between landuse and transportation has led to some of the most recognizable and successful developments throughout the country and has proven to be the key tool to deliver a more livable and sustainable future through integrated planning and development. For the City of Palmdale, the key inspiration for this project is the ability of the Palmdale Station to create a new focal point for the City's future development, in fact create a new downtown bringing together economic opportunity, sustainable development, better connectivity and community values, while guiding development that is of enduring quality, culturally authentic, and suitable for renewal and adaption by future generations.

The planning process explored the viability of housing at various densities, commercial office and retail, business and industrial areas by leveraging the integration of the future Palmdale Station hub into a more compact and complete, mixed-use pedestrian-friendly district. This plan also addresses the full range of circulation, and economic reviews. By capitalizing on the TOD potential, integrating new housing and employment growth around the multi-modal transportation hub, and improving connections throughout the area, the PTASP offers the opportunity to present a collaborative vision for this area as a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood. Additionally the city prepared a separate aspirational Vision Statement that embodies the goals and objectives of the community surrounding the future Palmdale Station, setting the foundation for PTASP.

## 1.1. Project Background

The City adopted the PTVSP in 2007 to facilitate the expected growth from the opening of the Palmdale Transportation Center (PTC) in 2005. The PTC is a multi-modal transportation center featuring a Metrolink rail station, a local bus depot and commuter bus. Metrolink was introduced to Palmdale in the 1990's as an alternate to the freeway. The PTVSP proposed a fitting approach of TOD to create a Transit Village near the center and link land use planning policies and programs. While some development has occurred, however, due to the economic decline that occurred shortly after the PTVSP was adopted, the Transit Village development didn't reach its full potential and was met with the consequent challenges. Currently, 10 years later, the City is embarking upon the PTASP seizing the opportunity to extend the accessibility, pedestrian-friendly environment and amenities of TOD to accommodate the proposed Palmdale Station that will be located near Avenue Q and Sierra Highway, just south of the PTC. The Palmdale Station could also serve the proposed private venture VTUSA high-speed rail service to Las Vegas via the future High Desert Corridor. Driven by these projected growths of different modes serving the area, the PTASP seeks to accommodate the new-era travel realities by meeting the projected demand and improving commuter experience. A new transportation hub will be proposed in place of the PTC as part of this effort. Therefore, this Specific Plan will replace the PTVSP in its entirety with the regulations and standards presented henceforth.

In particular, this Specific Plan calls for updating existing land uses around the Palmdale Station, replacement of the PTC with an updated transportation hub integrating all modes and establishing a safe and convenient circulation plan. The cumulative effect of all interventions will be to make the inter-modal connections simple, efficient, and pleasant and create a better overall passenger experience.

## 1.2. Purpose and Intent

It is the intent of the PTASP to assist with the systematic implementation of the General Plan by encouraging investment and development in the PTASP Area under the direction of clearly established public policies, a land use plan, design standards and guidelines, and implementation steps. The PTASP provides investors with a level of certainty regarding the future of the area and the quality of development that is expected.

A governing objective of the plan is to allow for a mix of uses resulting in a neighborhood which complements the existing character of Palmdale and accommodates the potential growth spouting from the introduction of HSR. In addition to the California HSR and VTUSA, the HDC is proposed to improve east-west traffic through the High Desert region potentially via a high-speed rail connection and bikeway. This Specific Plan will address the potential growth arising from the influx of transportation developments and set a framework of guidelines. The City commissioned a separate study to determine the demand projections as a result of the HSR area. The demand analysis looked into four different land uses in the area, namely Office, Residential, Retail and Hospitality. This projected demand, from the market demand analysis, for the anticipated 30-year phased build-out is in alignment with the development demand projections of the PTASP implementation plan. Land use regulations developed as part of this Specific Plan will ensure a mix of uses providing for residential, commercial, and employment needs of the community that are complementary with development of the transportation hub, and closely follow the principles of TOD. This will provide safe and attractive pedestrian routes along arterials and collectors leading to schools, along arterials or collectors that carry high traffic volumes, on all downtown streets, along major streets leading to the downtown, and on all streets to transit facilities.

Linking high-density residential developments, schools, employment centers, and shopping areas via the different modes will promote safety along with making it an attractive destination. The land use standards provide a level of flexibility that will allow incremental development of the Plan to

address the changing demands and needs of the real estate market. The development standards and design guidelines established in this PTASP cater to potential growth experienced by the City of Palmdale. These are consistent with TOD principles in that they maximize the efficiency of land surrounding the PTC while also promoting new development, open spaces and streets that are attractive, vibrant and safe for all users. These preliminary planning strategies that transform areas surrounding transit areas have been successfully implemented around the country like Denver Union Station and Victorville Desert Gateway.

- In Denver, a City-led effort to consolidate railyard space created highly desirable development parcels under single-owner control. Union Station is the gateway to downtown Denver, the redevelopment anchored on larger redevelopment efforts phased into three areas. The 127-acre Union Station district consists of three areas that are a mix of public and private ownership: Union Station Redevelopment (43-acre transit district that includes Union Station); the Commons (58-acre planned unit development); and Commons Park (26-acre open space amenity).
- Desert Gateway is a 10,203-acre area at the northern edge of the City of Victorville located at the interchange of the planned High Desert Corridor expressway and Interstate 15. The development of the area included distinct neighborhoods oriented toward mixed use village centers served by transit. The area provided for greater housing diversity, housing near employment centers, and economic development.


Future development in the PTASP Area, thoughtfully designed and executed, will build upon these planning strategies and will offer an opportunity to revitalize and achieve urban design excellence.

## 1.2.1. How to Use this Specific Plan

This document is organized to provide guidance to both property owners/developers and builders.

**Chapter 2: Existing Setting** presents the baseline information for the 746-acre planning area.

**Chapter 3: Vision, Goals and Objectives** set forth a long-term vision and overarching goals for the physical form and character of the Palmdale Station and the new downtown within the PTASP.

**Chapter 4: Urban Design Framework** presents the overall land use and urban design framework including development standards and design guidelines that will direct the type of transit- and pedestrian-oriented development that is most appropriate for this area.

**Chapter 5: Zoning and Development Regulations** establishes detailed regulations for development and new land uses within the PTASP area.

**Chapter 6: Circulation Plan** provides guidance on planning and design of the new street network, a bicycle access plan for the planning area, and guidelines for a safe and attractive pedestrian realm.

**Chapter 7: Public Service Infrastructure Plan** provides a conceptual plan for improvements to City services in order to accommodate the proposed development.

**Chapter 8: Implementation Plan** includes planning actions for phasing, environmental regulations, financing strategies for public improvements, and regulatory tools to support both the vision, and the anticipated phased development pattern.

The **Appendix** includes a glossary of terms used in the Specific Plan and project acknowledgments.

Words, phrases, and terms not specifically defined herein shall have the same definition as provided in the City of Palmdale Municipal Code (PMC). Definitions of words, phrases and terms as used in this Specific Plan are included in the Glossary of Terms.

## 1.3. Citywide Planning Efforts

The planning process for this Specific Plan has been coordinated with the City's General Plan, which is currently being updated. The City also recently invested in different planning documents that serve as informing documents to further assist with the planning effort of the area: Palmdale High Speed Rail Station Area Plan, Avenue Q Feasibility Land Use Framework Plan and Palmdale TOD Overlay Zone Land Use Framework Plan as shown in Figure 1.2. The studies and their brief descriptions are presented below.

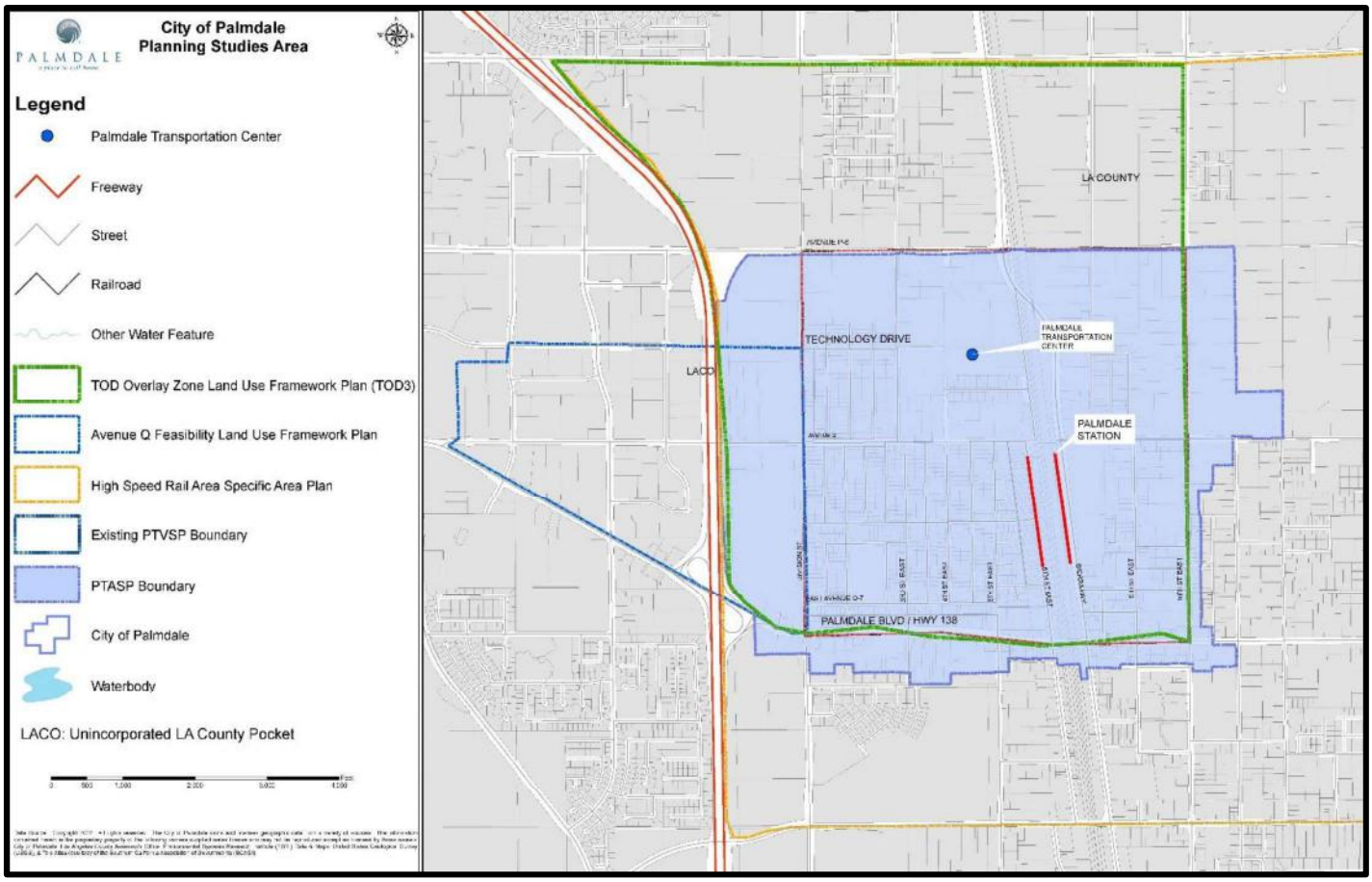



FIGURE 1.2. PLANNING STUDIES AREA

## 1.3.1. Palmdale High Speed Rail Station Area Plan

California High Speed Rail is a planned high-speed rail system that will connect Los Angeles and San Francisco, with potential future extensions to San Diego and Sacramento. The proposed alignment includes a station in Palmdale, in the heart of the PTASP Area. The Palmdale Station will provide connections to Metrolink,Greyhound, Amtrak Thruway, and AVTA buses, serving as the main transportation hub in Palmdale. In partnership with California High Speed Rail, the City of Palmdale is developing a Station Area Plan of approximately 4.7 square miles bound by State Route 14 to the west, Rancho Vista Boulevard to the north, 20th Street East to the east, and East Avenue R to the south. As part of the study, a Technical Working Group (TWG), made up of all the appropriated stakeholders, was established and met regularly to review progress, coordinate efforts and provide input. Together with the TWG and extensive community outreach, the Plan would embody a vision of vibrant mixed-use center surrounding the future Palmdale HSR Station. This planning effort will support the City to promote economic development and sustainability, encourage station area development, involve community input and enhance multi-modal access connections between the station and the City.

### Real Estate Demand Projections & Preliminary Real Estate Strategies

As part of the Palmdale HSR Study, HR&A's conducted a market demand analysis to determine demand projections as a result of the HSR area. The demand analysis looked into four different land uses in the area, namely Office, Residential, Retail and Hospitality. HR&A's market demand analysis as documented in the report assumes that the Study Area will absorb an average of the low and high market absorption projections for the "high-speed rail scenario" for all land uses (office, residential, retail, and hospitality) over the 30-year build out. The high end of HR&A's projected real estate absorption assumes that there are major strategic public realm and infrastructure investments in the area in addition to high-speed rail service.

## 1.3.2. Avenue Q Feasibility Land Use Framework Plan

The Avenue Q Feasibility Land Use Framework Plan recommends development patterns to support the future multi-modal station in a sustainable approach that creates a well-connected pedestrian and bicycle network around the plan area. The plan focuses on the corridor surrounding West Avenue Q, generally located between Auto Center Drive and Palmdale Boulevard and between the westerly terminus of Avenue Q and Division Street. The eastern boundary of the Study Area is located about a quarter mile from the PTC while the western boundary is approximately 1.5 miles from the PTC. The plan aims to create a link between employment areas, major destination points, and the future Palmdale Station, while fostering TOD around Avenue Q to increase development densities.

## 1.3.3 Palmdale TOD Overlay Zone Land Use Framework Plan (TOD3)

This plan serves as the background document to guide development of the study area; to create TOD, and supportive streets and public spaces along the Avenue Q corridor. The goal of this plan is to connect people with the PTC and the future high-speed rail station. The plan focuses on the area located between Rancho Vista Boulevard (Avenue P) and Palmdale Boulevard (SR-138) and between SR-14 and 10th Street East. The study's recommendations included high density housing, office, hotel and street-facing retail, which are standard TOD framework. A Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared in conformance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in 2017 for the TOD3 study. The purpose of the Program EIR is to review the existing conditions, analyze potential environmental impacts, and identify feasible mitigation

measures to avoid or lessen potentially significant effects of the Palmdale TOD Framework Plan. The TOD3 planning area encompasses the area established for this Specific Plan and therefore allows the Program EIR to serve as the environmental clearance for the Transit Area Specific Plan, as described further in Chapter 8: Implementation.

Although both the Ave Q and TOD3 plans lay out visions for future TOD in Palmdale, these documents are not regulatory in nature and will be used for information purposes only.

### 1.3.4. High Desert Corridor (HDC)

The HDC project includes construction of a new multi-modal link between the cities of Palmdale, Lancaster, Adelanto, Victorville and the Town of Apple Valley. The major goal of this project is to improve connections between major destinations in the area for people and goods. The high desert corridor represents an opportunity to expand the reach of high-speed rail service to Las Vegas, supporting Palmdale as the only major hub on California's HSR network. The High Desert Corridor is proposed to improve east-west traffic through the High Desert region potentially via a high-speed rail connection and bikeway. The project and studies are funded through a variety of sources including local Measure M, Measure R, and Measure I, along with state and federal funds. Measure M funding will reach $1.8 billion by 2063 with $270 million available for right-of-way (ROW) in the 1st decade.

### 1.3.5. Virgin Trains USA (VTUSA)

VTUSA High-Speed Rail is a private venture that proposes a high-speed passenger train connecting Victorville, California with Las Vegas, Nevada. An additional extension from Victorville to Palmdale is being considered in order to link VTUSA to California High Speed Rail and Metrolink service. The plan calls for a high-speed electric train system from Apple Valley in the California high desert to Las Vegas, almost entirely with private funding. The U.S. Department of Transportation gave its approval for the project to issue $1 billion in tax-free private bonds earlier in the year 2020. The bonds are technically known as "private activity bonds" that work like tax-free municipal bonds for infrastructure but are not issued or guaranteed by the government. This federal approval led California officials to take the next step, scheduling a state committee meeting for April 14, 2020 to approve VTUSA issuing another $2.4 billion in bonds under California's share of the federal program. Based on current schedule and expansion plans, the Victorville line will be opened in 2023, connecting to Palmdale in 2027/2028.

### 1.3.6. Palmdale Downtown Revitalization Plan

The Palmdale Downtown Revitalization Plan sought to develop a plan for the restoration of economic vitality to Downtown Palmdale and to create a heart for the City. This plan envisioned a network of interconnected pedestrian walkways, bikeways, pedestrian-oriented commercial districts, and a linear greenbelt with a bikeway connecting to a regional trail system. Its goals for a supporting mobility network that utilize various modes of transportation perfectly aligns with the goals of the PTASP.

## 1.3.7. Metrolink SCORE

Metrolink's Southern California Optimized Rail Expansion (SCORE) program is a $10 billion capital improvement program involving grade crossing, station and signal improvements as well as track additions and work that accelerates progress towards Metrolink's zero-emissions future and improve access to affordable housing and other opportunities. SCORE projects will be completed starting in 2023, with the program complete by 2028.

Some of the benefits of SCORE include:

- More safe, reliable service – System upgrades will allow 35.5 million new rail trips when rider demand and funding is available to increase service.
- More air quality improvements – 3.4 billion vehicle miles traveled removed, and decreasing greenhouse gases by 51.6 million metric tons.
- More safety – crossing and signal improvements for the entire system.
- More cars off the road – Metrolink removes the equivalent of at least 2 lanes of traffic on adjacent freeways.
- More jobs and economic development – 1.3 million jobs and $684 billion in gross regional product added to southern California's economy.
- More quite zone-ready corridors – Train horns can be reduced as crossings are upgraded.
- More dedicated freight tracks – Cargo delays reduced; speeds increased to support trade.
- More streamlined operations – adding track reduces train delays and idling due to capacity limitations.

Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) is the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that operates the Metrolink commuter rail system. The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to define a series of goals and plans for the growth of the Metrolink system. This plan sets the flexible framework for SCRRA to develop the funding, infrastructure, and governance necessary to provide reliable commuter rail service. The plan focuses on the capital funding and operating support necessary to respond to demand for expanded commuter rail services and to evolve into a more significant role in providing for regional transit travel. The plan indicates a general sense of resource requirements for the goals and sets forth the foundation for the implementation plan and the budget process.

### 1.3.8. California High Speed Rail Authority 2018 Business Plan

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) is responsible for planning, designing, building and operating the first high-speed rail system in the nation. California high-speed rail will connect the mega-regions of the state, contribute to economic development and a cleaner environment, create jobs, and preserve agricultural and protected lands. When the HSR is completed, it will run from San Francisco to the Los Angeles basin in under three hours at speeds capable of exceeding 200 miles per hour. The system will eventually extend to Sacramento and San Diego, totaling 800 miles with up to 24 stations. The 2018 Business Plan presents a vision for implementing the nation's first high-speed rail system. The plan provides a discussion about the challenges along with a strategy to confront and manage them to deliver the project.


The key objectives and principles are:

- Initiate high-speed rail service in California as soon as possible.
- Make strategic, concurrent investments that will be linked over time and provide mobility, economic and environmental benefits at the earliest possible time.
- To construct additional segments as funding becomes available.

The Authority is currently finalizing its Draft 2020 Business Plan that will supersede the 2018 Business plan upon adoption focusing on the economic, mobility and environmental benefits of high-speed rail extending to the Central Valley Segment to 171miles connecting Merced, Fresno and Bakersfield.

## 1.4. Planning Context

### 1.4.1. Relationship to the Palmdale General Plan

Specific Plans must be compatible with the goals and objectives of the adopted General Plans of local jurisdictions (California Government Code Section 65454). In this case the City of Palmdale General Plan (adopted in 1993) is the governing document. The City of Palmdale is currently engaged in a General Plan update effort that will help further define the City's goals and objectives. The General Plan serves as a foundation in making land use decisions based on goals and objectives related to land use, transportation routes, population growth and distribution, development, open space, resource preservation and utilization, air and water quality, noise impacts, safety issues and other related physical, social and economic development factors for the entire City of Palmdale.

This sub-section summarizes only the applicable goals from the General Plan that are relevant to the policy framework for future development of PTASP. Applicable General Plan goals mentioned below are verbatim to the City's adopted 1993 Plan.

## Land Use Element

The Land Use Element of the General Plan provides a range of land uses to accommodate the living, working, shopping and recreational needs of the City's growing population with a diversity of uses that will promote economic growth. It addresses the growth and resulting development patterns that have occurred in Palmdale and establishes a framework for focusing future growth in a logical manner. The Land Use Element also identifies existing and potential opportunities and constraints.

- Goal L1: Create a vision for long-term growth and development in the City of Palmdale which provides for orderly, functional patterns of land uses within urban areas, a unified and coherent urban form, and a high quality of life for its residents.
- Goal L2: Adopt land use and development policies which encourage growth and diversification of the City's economic base.
- Goal L3: Provide a high quality of life for all existing and future residents, meeting the needs of a variety of lifestyles.
- Goal L4: Provide opportunities for a wide range of retail and service commercial uses, to serve neighborhood, community and regional needs and provide economic benefit to the City of Palmdale.
- Goal L6: Plan for and reserve land to accommodate uses needed for public benefit, including open space, recreation, public improvements, schools and community facilities.
- Goal L7: Provide proactive comprehensive planning within designated areas of the City where unique development opportunities or physical conditions warrant special planning efforts.

## Circulation Element

The Circulation Element provides for an attractive well-connected street system that accommodates the needs of all users including pedestrian, cyclists, and transit users, thereby reducing the number of vehicle miles driven in the planning area. It addresses the City's plans to upgrade and expand its pedestrian walkways, surface streets, arterial and regional highways, public transportation, rail service and air service.

- Goal C1: Establish, maintain and enhance a system of streets and highways which will provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the Planning Area, while minimizing adverse impacts on the community.
- Goal C2: Reduce the number of trips and vehicle miles traveled by individuals within the Planning Area, to meet regional transportation and air quality goals.
- Goal C3: Encourage use of non-vehicular transportation throughout the Planning Area.
- Goal C4: Promote opportunities for rail service to move goods, passengers and commuters into and out of the Planning Area.

## Environmental Resources

The Environmental Resources Element addresses the related issues of resource conservation and open space. The goal of this Element is to improve the long-term quality of life for Palmdale residents through the rational management of natural resources and open space lands.

- Goal ER5: Promote the attainment of state and federal air quality standards.
- Goal ER7: Protect historical and culturally significant resources which contribute to the community's sense of history.

## Public Services

The Public Services Element presents a plan for ensuring that public services and infrastructure are available to permit orderly growth and to promote public health, safety, and welfare.

- Goal PS1: Ensure that adequate public services and facilities are available to support development in an efficient and orderly manner.
- Goal PS2: Ensure that all development in Palmdale is served by adequate water distribution and sewage facilities.
- Goal PS3: Develop and maintain adequate storm drainage and flood control facilities.
- Goal PS5: Support the provision of adequate public and community services to meet the needs of residents.

## Community Design Element

The Community Design Element of the General Plan establishes guidelines for developers, staff, and decision makers to use in evaluating whether development projects meet design goals of the City for functional, efficient, and attractive development. It envisions new development to be attractive, safe, well-designed, and well-integrated with adjacent neighborhoods.

- Goal CD 1: Create and maintain a well-designed built environment for the City of Palmdale, which contributes to the community's economic vitality and enhances the quality of life for its residents.
- Goal CD 2: Enhance a "Sense of Place" within Palmdale by emphasizing the City's environmental setting, natural amenities, and human resources.
- Goal CD 5: Multiple family housing shall provide a safe and pleasant living environment for residents and shall be integrated with the surrounding neighborhoods so as to enhance the sense of community.
- Goal CD 6: Commercial development in the City of Palmdale should enhance the community's economic vitality by providing a high-quality environment for shopping and working.
- Goal CD 7: Establish design guidelines for mixed use projects in which commercial retail, office and residential uses coexist, to ensure that such developments are attractive and functional while minimizing conflicts between uses of different intensities.
- Goal CD 8: Use landscaping to reinforce community identity, to create a pleasant environment, to control erosion and promote natural percolation of storm water, to provide protection from wind and hot summer sun, and to integrate new development into the surrounding district.
- Goal CD 9: Incorporate a high quality of design into planning for public buildings, capital improvement projects, rights-of-way, drainage facilities, open spaces, and other land uses owned or initiated by the City of Palmdale, to contribute to a cohesive sense of place, enhance the overall quality of development in the City, and perpetuate the image which the City wishes to create.

- Goal CD 10: Facilitate creation and expansion of industrial use within the City to accommodate manufacturing, distribution, and complementary office and support uses in order to expand the City's employment and economic base and improve the jobs/housing balance, while ensuring that such areas are compatible with adjacent uses and minimizing adverse impacts on more restrictive use districts.

The City initiated a General Plan Update in 2018 that is ongoing. The last comprehensive update of the General Plan was in the 1990s. With the changes that have occurred in the area in the last three decades, and the impending arrival of High-Speed Rail and other transit investments in the area, the vision for the PTASP has also evolved.

In order to ensure consistency of the PTASP and the General Plan, the City has two options:

1. Modify the General Plan at the time of PTASP adoption to remove any inconsistencies, or
2. The City may choose to resolve any inconsistencies between the PTASP and the General Plan during the General Plan update process.

## 1.4.2. Relationship to the Palmdale Zoning Code

This Specific Plan augments the development regulations and standards of Chapter 17 (Palmdale Zoning Code) of the PMC. When an issue, condition or situation occurs which is not covered or provided for in the Specific Plan, the regulations of the Zoning Code that are most applicable to the issue, condition or situation shall apply. In the event that the provisions of the Specific Plan are in conflict with the Zoning Code, the provisions of the Specific Plan shall prevail.

## 1.4.3. Relationship to Other Specific Plans

The City of Palmdale adopted the Palmdale Trade and Commerce Center Specific Plan (PTCCSP) in 1990, and the Palmdale Transit Village Specific Plan (PTVSP) in 2007. The PTCCSP partially overlaps the PTASP area, while the PTVSP is fully encompassed within it. With the adoption and approval of the PTASP, the PTCCSP was amended to remove the area bounded by SR-14, Technology Drive, Division Street and Palmdale Boulevard and the PTVSP was replaced in its entirety with the regulations and standards in this Specific Plan.

## 1.4.4. Relationship to Unincorporated County of Los Angeles Land

Two areas within the PTASP area fall within unincorporated Los Angeles County. These include the parcels bounded by Avenue P-8, 10th Street E, Avenue Q and the rail right-of-way, and two parcels developed with a mobile home park on the north side of Avenue Q just west of 4th Street East, as shown in Figure 1.3. Pre-zoning for these parcels is provided in this Specific Plan. These zoning designations will provide guidance, if the City plans to annex these properties in the future. Currently there are no annexations planned for these parcels.

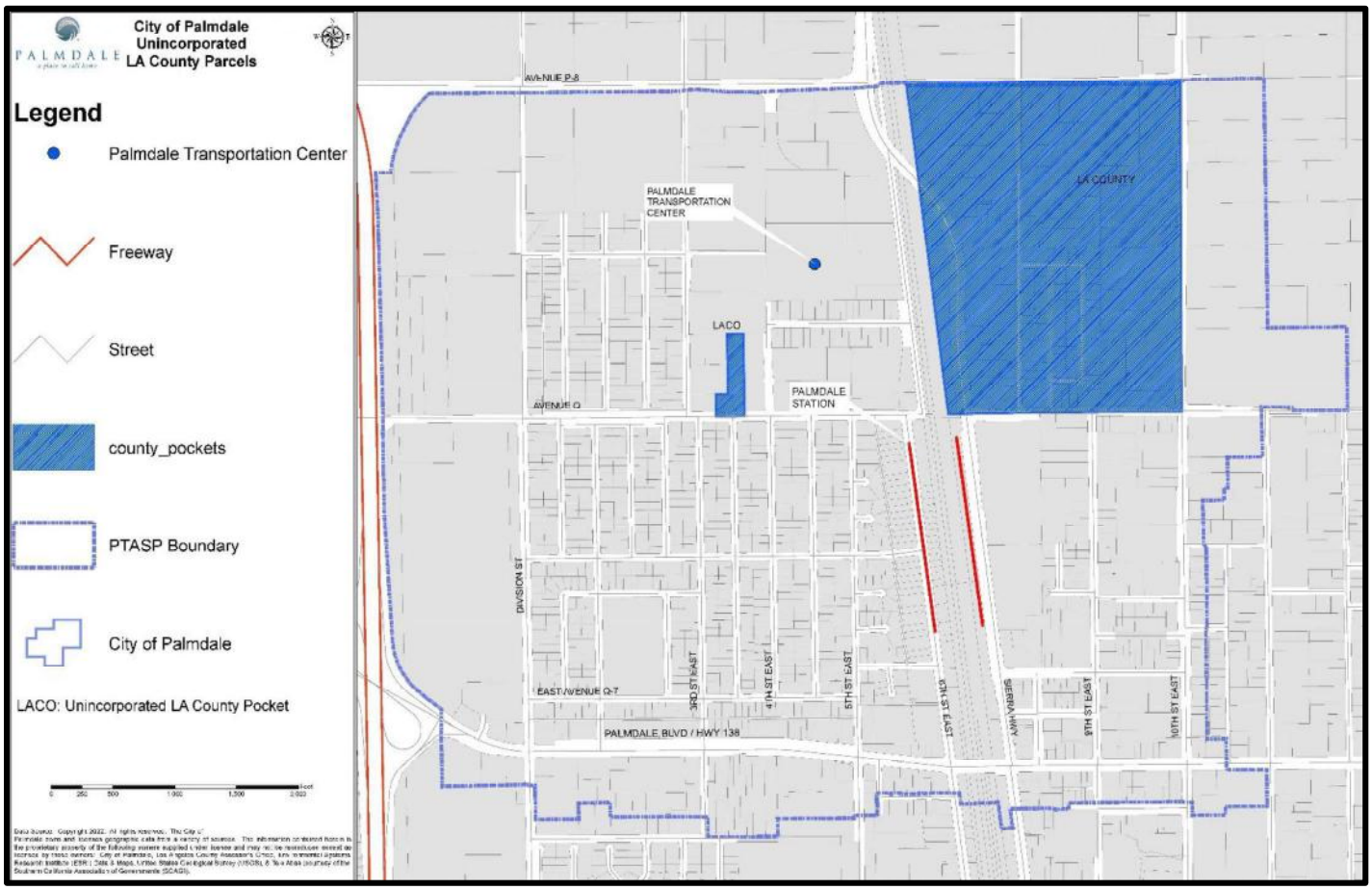



FIGURE 1.3. UNINCORPORATED LA COUNTY PARCELS

# 1.5. Specific Plan Administration

This document is organized to provide guidance to both property owners/developers and builders. It effectively establishes a link between implementing policies of the General Plan and the development proposals in the area specified in this Specific Plan.

## 1.5.1. Legal Process – Summary

The Palmdale Transit Area Specific Plan is prepared and established under the authority granted to the City of Palmdale in accordance with the requirements of the California Government Code, Title 7, Division 1, Chapter 3, Article 8, Section 65450 and 65457. The California Government Code authorizes cities to adopt Specific Plans by resolution or by ordinance. A public hearing is required, after which the Specific Plan must be adopted by the Palmdale City Council for final approval.

## 1.5.2. Interpretation

The Planning Manager, or his/her designee, shall have the responsibility to interpret the provisions of the Specific Plan, except that the Planning Manager may refer the matter to the Planning Commission. All such interpretations shall be in written form and permanently maintained. Any person aggrieved by such an interpretation may make a formal appeal request in writing to the Planning Manager by filing for a review of interpretation by the Planning Commission. Such appeal is subject to applicable fees and processing requirements.

## 1.5.3. Enforcement

The City shall enforce the provision of this Specific Plan and all the applicable codes of all governmental agencies and jurisdictions in such matters including, but not limited to, building, mechanical, fire and electrical codes pertaining to drainage, wastewater, public utilities, subdivisions and grading.

# CHAPTER 2. | EXISTING SETTING

The Palmdale transit area has many strengths, as well as some constraints that need to be addressed. Future planning of this area would build upon the area's existing assets, maximize promising opportunities, and work to counter challenges. This chapter describes the area's existing conditions, as well as development constraints.

Palmdale is a City in the center of northern Los Angeles County, south of Lancaster and north of the Angeles National Forest. The region is characterized as the California High Desert. The main highway connecting Palmdale to other parts of the region is the Antelope Valley Freeway, or State Highway 14 and State Route 138 (also known as the Pearblossom Highway), running north to south through the City. The City of Palmdale covers an area of approximately 104 square miles with a population of 158,905 residents as per the California Department of Finance estimates for 2018.

## 2.1. Site Area Description

The area covered by the PTASP includes a 746-acre site bound by Technology Boulevard to the north, SR-14 to the west, East Avenue Q-9 to the south and 10th Street East to the east, as shown in the Figure 2.1. The PTC is located in the north-eastern portion of the site. This regional multi-modal hub opened in 2005 and offers connections between AVTA local and commuter bus service, Metrolink commuter rail service, Santa Clarita Transit, Greyhound and Amtrak Thruway bus services. This regional hub with the Clock Tower Plaza that features an indoor/outdoor passenger waiting area with concession machines, public telephones, seating, restrooms and security service will continue to provide convenient connections between regional service providers and local bus routes until the arrival of the HSR.

The PTASP area contains a diverse mix of existing land uses, with the predominant land use being single-family residential located mostly in clusters east of Division Street, whereas multi-family housing is largely concentrated south and east of the PTC. Two schools are within the area, the Yucca Elementary School located on 2nd St East and the R. Rex Parris High School located at the northwest corner of Avenue Q and Clock Tower Plaza Drive. The City of Palmdale's public safety services are provided by the Los Angeles County Fire Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office. The sheriff's office is located within the area limits, east of the PTC at the corner of Avenue Q and Sierra Highway. Fire Station 37 is located just outside the southeast corner of the area. Open space in the area includes the Desert Sands Park located along the south side of Technology Drive, northwest of the PTC. There are churches scattered about the area, mostly to the east of 5th Street East. Along Palmdale Boulevard, there are commercial centers on both sides of the street from Division Street to 10th Street East.

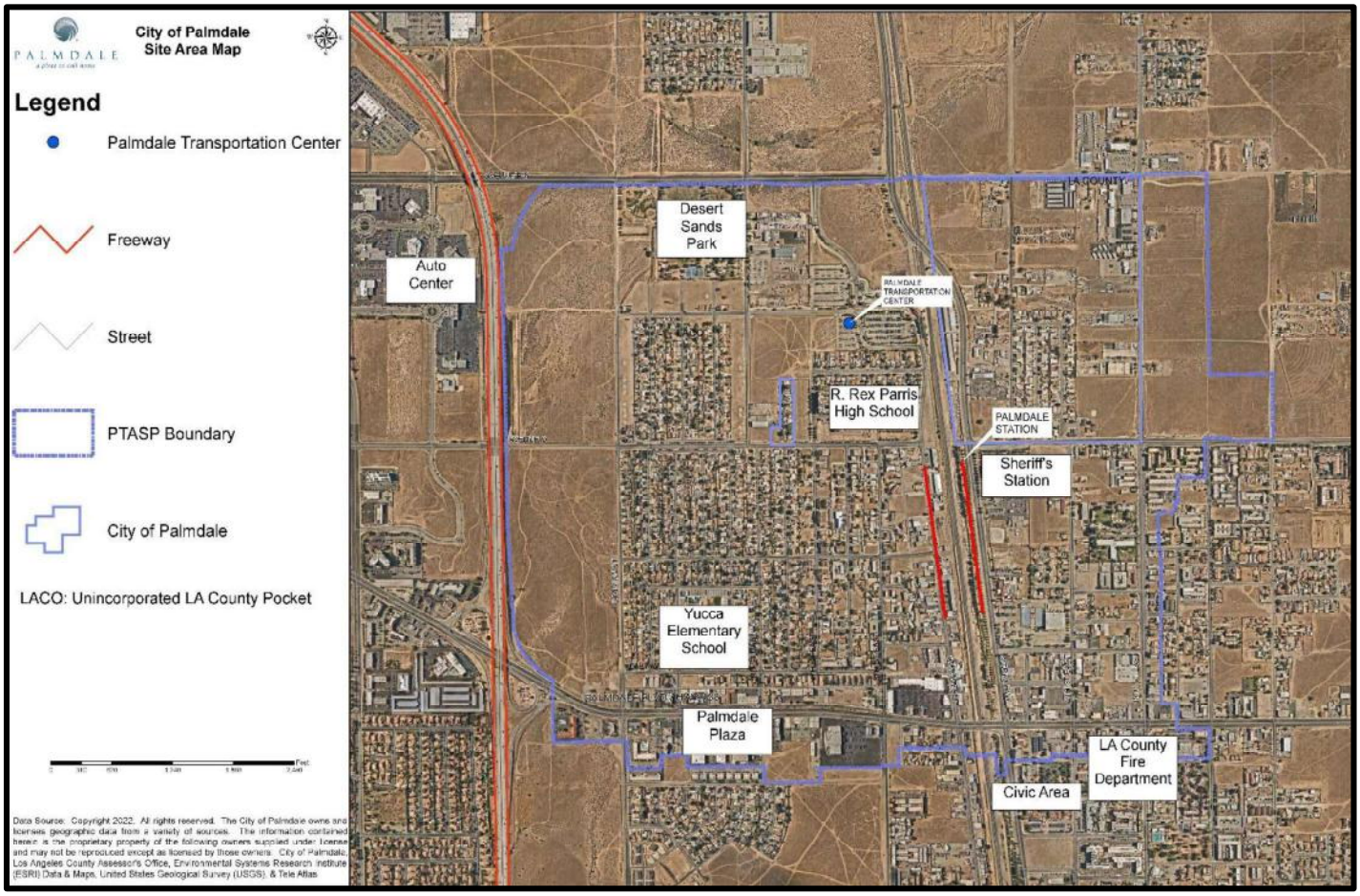



FIGURE 2.1. SITE AREA MAP

# 2.2. Existing Land Use and Zoning Designations

## 2.2.1. Existing Land Use Designations

According to parcel data supplied by the City of Palmdale and Los Angeles County, the PTASP area contains 1,600 parcels with a diverse number of land use designations as shown in Figure 2.2.The predominant land use designation in the PTASP area is single-family residential, with multi-family developments located immediately south of the PTC. Figure 2.3 illustrates the exiting land use designations by category in the project study area. The land use designations adopted by the General Plan, indicates concentrations of commercial land uses along arterial streets such as Palmdale Boulevard (SR-138) and 10th Street West; industrial land uses around the PTC, and residential lands occupying most of the two-mile wide corridor running between Avenue Q and Avenue S located east of SR-14. Most of the retail space is situated along 10th Street West where shopping centers are clustered in the vicinity of the Antelope Valley Mall, at Rancho Vista Boulevard / Avenue P.

| CURRENT LAND USE DESIGNATIONS | NUMBER OF PARCELS | TOTAL ACRES |
|---|---|---|
| City – Business Park (BP) | 239 | 44.43 |
| City – Community Commercial (CC) | 114 | 48.72 |
| City – Commercial Manufacturing (CM) | 74 | 21.22 |
| City – Downtown Commercial (DC) | 107 | 24.89 |
| City – High Density Residential (HDR) | 53 | 18.92 |
| City – Industrial (IND) | 59 | 141 |
| City – Multi-Family Residential (MFR) | 119 | 22.72 |
| City – Medium High Density Residential (MHDR) | 194 | 52.05 |
| City – Medium Residential (MR) | 35 | 6.58 |
| City – Office Commercial (OC) | 7 | 5.45 |
| City – Open Space (OS) | 2 | 24.12 |
| City – Public Facility (PF) | 29 | 34.65 |
| City – Public Facility- School (PF-S) | 1 | 8.92 |
| City – Single Family Residential (SFR-3) | 397 | 61.22 |
| City – Palmdale Trade and Commerce SP (SP-13) | 20 | 121.56 |
| County – Business Park (BP) | 101 | 17.46 |
| County – Industrial (IND) | 49 | 92.47 |
| **Total** | **1600** | **746** |

SOURCE: CITY OF PALMDALE, GIS DATA

**FIGURE 2.2. SPECIFIC PLAN EXISTING LAND USE TABLE**

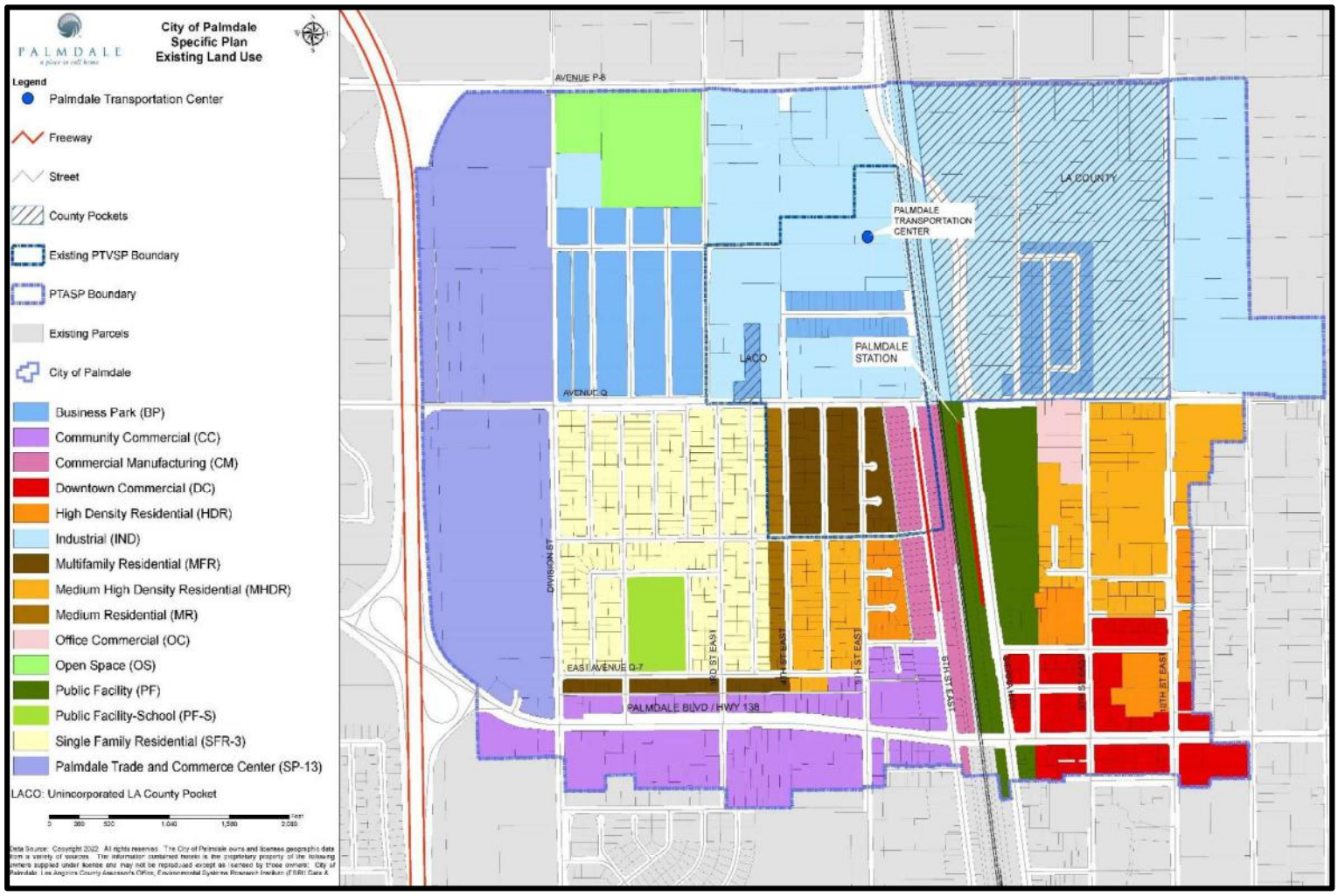



FIGURE 2.3 SPECIFIC PLAN EXISTING LAND USE MAP

## 2.2.2. Existing Zoning Designations

Chapter 17 of the Palmdale Zoning Code of the PMC allocates land for specific uses within the City boundaries. Figure 2.4 indicates the acreage by zone and by jurisdiction. Figure 2.5 illustrates zoning by category in the PTASP planning area. The PTASP planning area consists of multiple zoning types, the largest instances are Planned Industrial, Palmdale Trade and Commerce Specific Plan, High Density Residential, Light Industrial, and Planned Industrial. The following are brief overviews of the zoning regulations within the project area.

### Downtown Commercial Mixed-Used Overlay (C-D MX)

This designation is intended as a modifier to an underlying commercial zone, which would permit construction and operation of mixed residential/commercial projects within a common area. Intended to enliven the business district by providing residential opportunities.

The downtown commercial zone was established to implement the policies and design guidelines described in the Downtown Revitalization Plan. This area within downtown should create a lively shopping environment which is primarily pedestrian in nature, particularly within the ground floor of store front shops facing streets.

### Open Space and Recreation (OS, OR)

The open space and recreation zone preserves passive or active open space and recreational uses. The area is occupied, or will be occupied, by private, public or quasi-public open space or recreational facilities.

### Public Facilities (PF)

The public facilities zone is intended for future development of public and quasi-public uses including, but not limited to, schools, government administrative facilities, police and fire stations, libraries, park and recreational uses, community facilities and public open space areas.

### Commercial

The commercial zones establish an area in which business may be conducted, goods sold and distributed, and services rendered, along with other supportive activities.

- Office Commercial (C-2) – Substantially occupied by service establishments operating in offices.
- General Commercial (C-3) – Occupied by stores and businesses which provide retail sales and services for a wide range of consumer needs.
- Service Commercial (C-5) – Occupied by businesses which provide goods and services to the local or regional market, which may utilize processes, materials or operations which are not compatible with other commercial zones due to the intensity of use permitted.

### Residential

The intent of the residential zones is to offer a range of residential densities to serve all economic and demographic segments of the population.

- Single Family Residential (R-1) – Lot size and density within the R-1 zone is determined by the underlying General Plan designation with density between 0-6 dwelling units per acre.
- Medium Residential (R-2) – Intended to allow development of housing at a gross density of between 6.1 and 10 dwelling units per acre.

- Multiple Residential (R-3) – Intended to promote the development of grouped housing such as townhouses, condominium and apartments at a density of between 10.1-16 dwelling units per gross acre.
- High Density Residential (R-4-30) – Intended to allow development of housing with a density of between 30-50 dwelling units per acre.
- High Density Residential (R-4-50) – Intended to allow development of housing with a density of between 50-60 dwelling units per acre.

## Industrial

The intent of the industrial zones is to preserve land within the planning area for manufacturing, processing, assembly, fabrication, distribution, and similar activities related to production and transportation of goods.

- Light Industrial (M-1) – Occupied by limited manufacturing, wholesale, research and development, storage, transportation and similar or related activities. This area does not traverse residential neighborhoods or land uses designations.
- Planned Industrial (M-4) – Creates a zone for light industrial associated with operations having high standards of performance. These areas are occupied by master-planned industrial or business parks containing a variety of research and development, fabrication, assembly and supportive uses.

Figure 2.4 provides a tabulation of the number of parcels and acreage by zoning use designations.

| CURRENT ZONING DESIGNATION | NUMBER OF PARCELS | TOTAL ACRES |
|---|---|---|
| Zone C-2: Office Commercial | 7 | 5.45 |
| Zone C-3: General Commercial | 120 | 49.66 |
| Zone C-5: Service Commercial | 74 | 21.22 |
| Zone C-D MX: Downtown Commercial Mixed-Use Overlay | 106 | 24.89 |
| Zone M-1: Light Industrial | 47 | 105.02 |
| Zone M-1 PZ: Pre-Zone Light Industrial * | 49 | 136.48 |
| Zone M-4: Planned Industrial | 248 | 54.91 |
| Zone M-4 PZ: Pre-Zone Planned Industrial* | 101 | 17.46 |
| Zone OR: Open Space and Recreation | 2 | 24.12 |
| Zone PF: Public Facility | 29 | 43.58 |
| Zone R-1: Single Family Residential | 397 | 61.22 |
| Zone R-2: Medium Residential | 35 | 6.58 |
| Zone R-3: Multiple Residential | 133 | 21.81 |
| Zone R-4 (30): High Density Residential | 184 | 52.05 |
| Zone R-4 (50): High Density Residential | 49 | 18.92 |
| Specific Plan: Palmdale Trade and Commerce | 19 | 121.56 |
| **Total** | **1600** | **746** |

* COUNTY LAND PRE-ZONED BY THE CITY

SOURCE: CITY OF PALMDALE, GIS DATA

**FIGURE 2.4. SPECIFIC PLAN EXISTING ZONING TABLE**

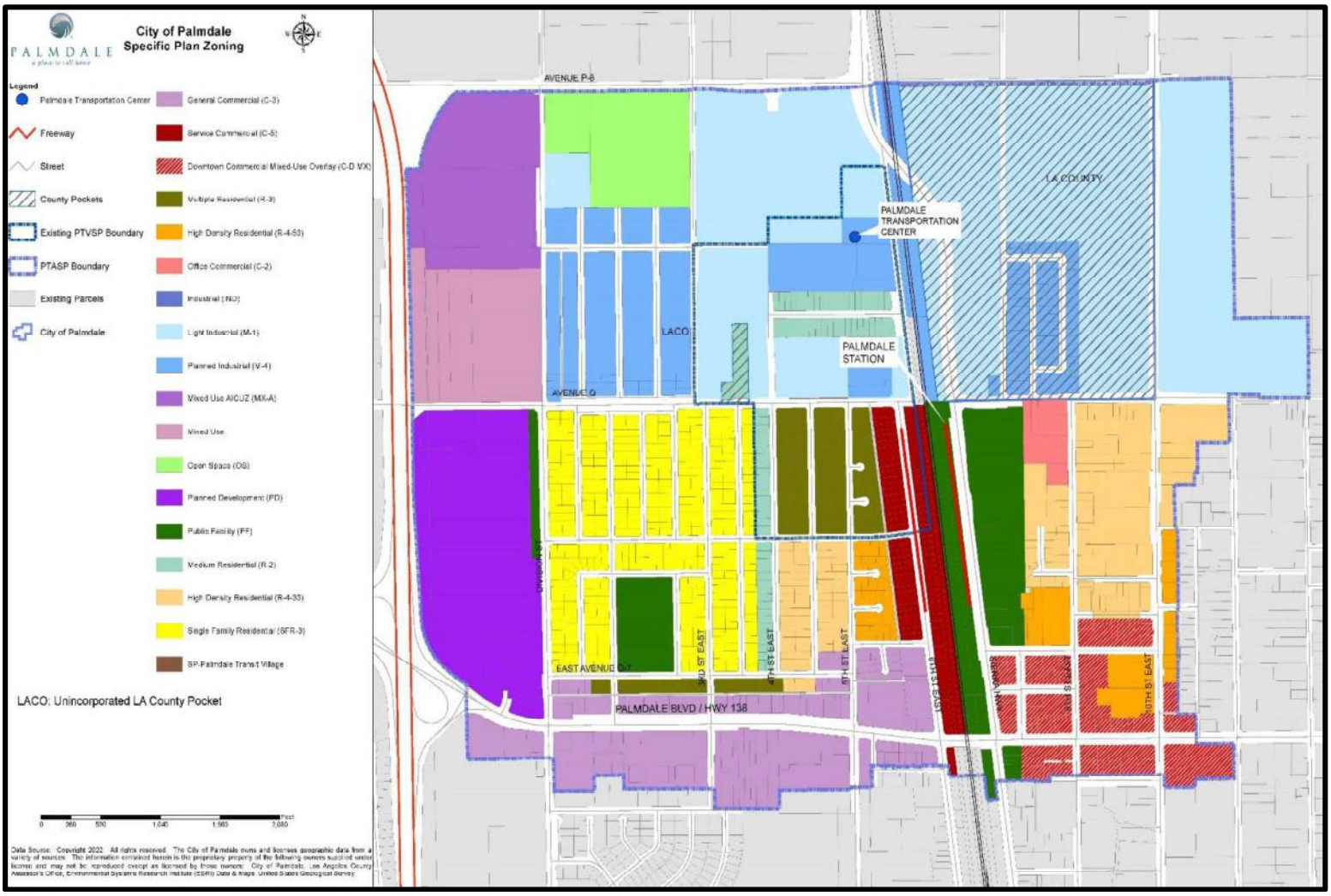


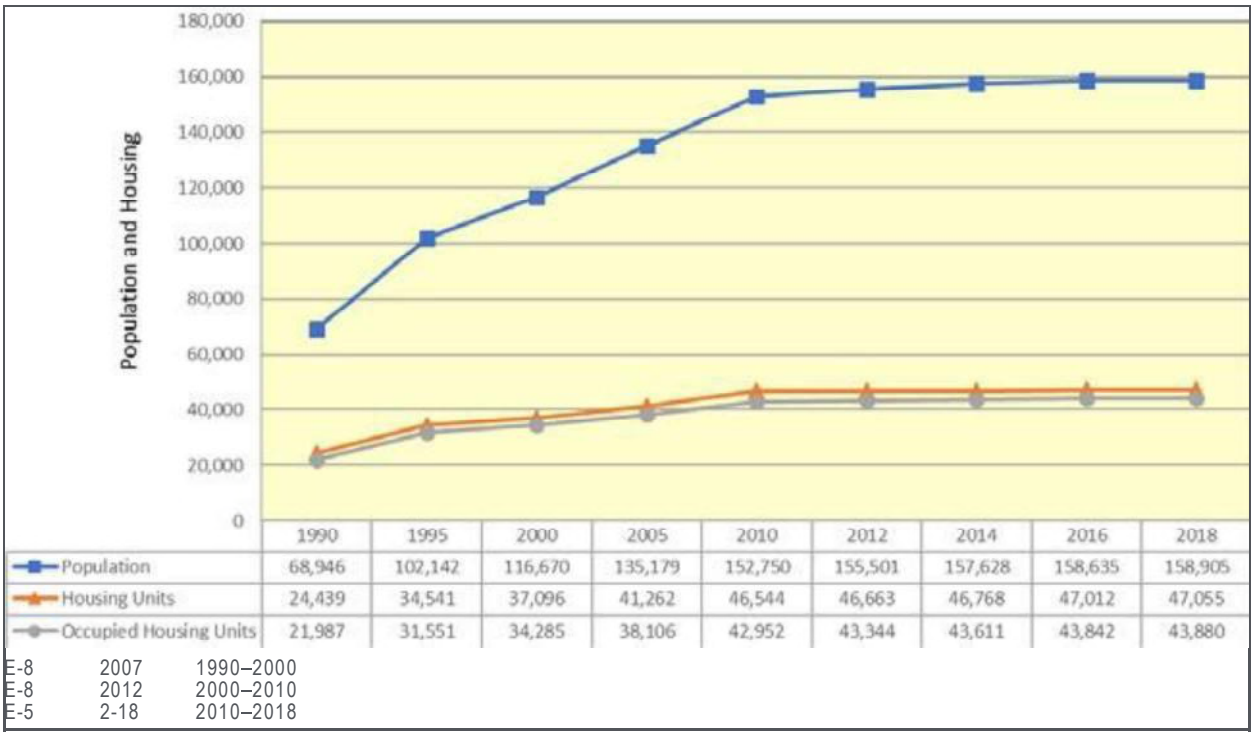

FIGURE 2.5. SPECIFIC PLAN EXISTING ZONING MAP

# 2.3. Demographic Information

Palmdale is located in northern Los Angeles County between the Tehachapi Mountains and San Gabriel Mountains. The region is part of the Antelope Valley or High Desert area, constituting the southwestern portion of the Mojave Desert. Palmdale is separated from the more urbanized areas of Los Angeles County by the aforementioned San Gabriel Mountain range, putting it a distance of approximately 35 to 40 miles north of downtown Los Angeles. Data presented in this section is based on the U.S. 2010 Census and the American Community Survey data. Approximately 44,000 households reside in Palmdale with 18.7% of the population living in poverty, per the American Community Survey data, 2013-2017. The owner-occupied housing rate was 63.4% in Palmdale and the median gross rent was $1,214 per month.

## 2.3.1. Population and Housing

Palmdale was incorporated in 1962 when it had a population of approximately 10,000 people. In the 1980s and 1990s, Palmdale was part of a region that became a bedroom community to the greater Los Angeles area. Major housing development took off beginning in 1983. During the 20 years between 1990 and 2010, the City was consistently been ranked in the top 25 fastest growing cities in the United States (based on percentage change). The 2018 population of Palmdale stands at 158,905 residents according to California Department of Finance estimates, making it the sixth largest City in Los Angeles County. Figure 2.6 charts the recent population and housing growth in Palmdale.




| | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | 2012 | 2014 | 2016 | 2018 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Population | 68,946 | 102,142 | 116,670 | 135,179 | 152,750 | 155,501 | 157,628 | 158,635 | 158,905 |
| Housing Units | 24,439 | 34,541 | 37,096 | 41,262 | 46,544 | 46,663 | 46,768 | 47,012 | 47,055 |
| Occupied Housing Units | 21,987 | 31,551 | 34,285 | 38,106 | 42,952 | 43,344 | 43,611 | 43,842 | 43,880 |

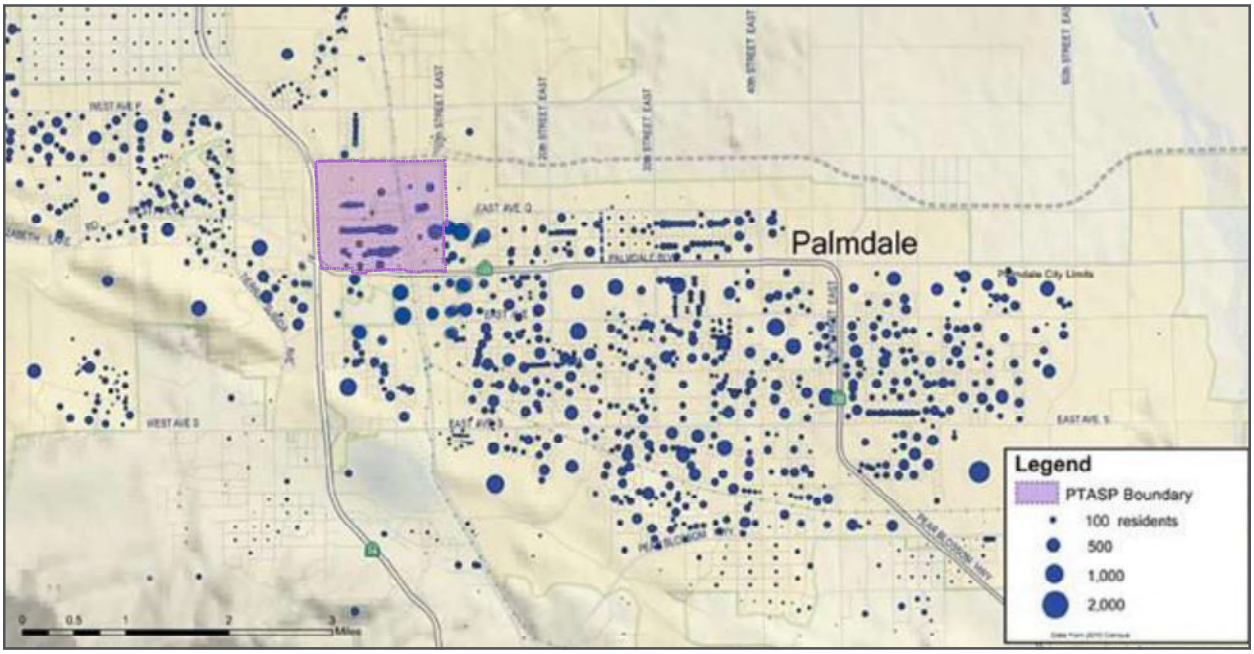
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| E-8 | 2007 | 1990–2000 |
| E-8 | 2012 | 2000–2010 |
| E-5 | 2-18 | 2010–2018 |

SOURCE: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

**FIGURE 2.6. POPULATION AND HOUSING IN PALMDALE**

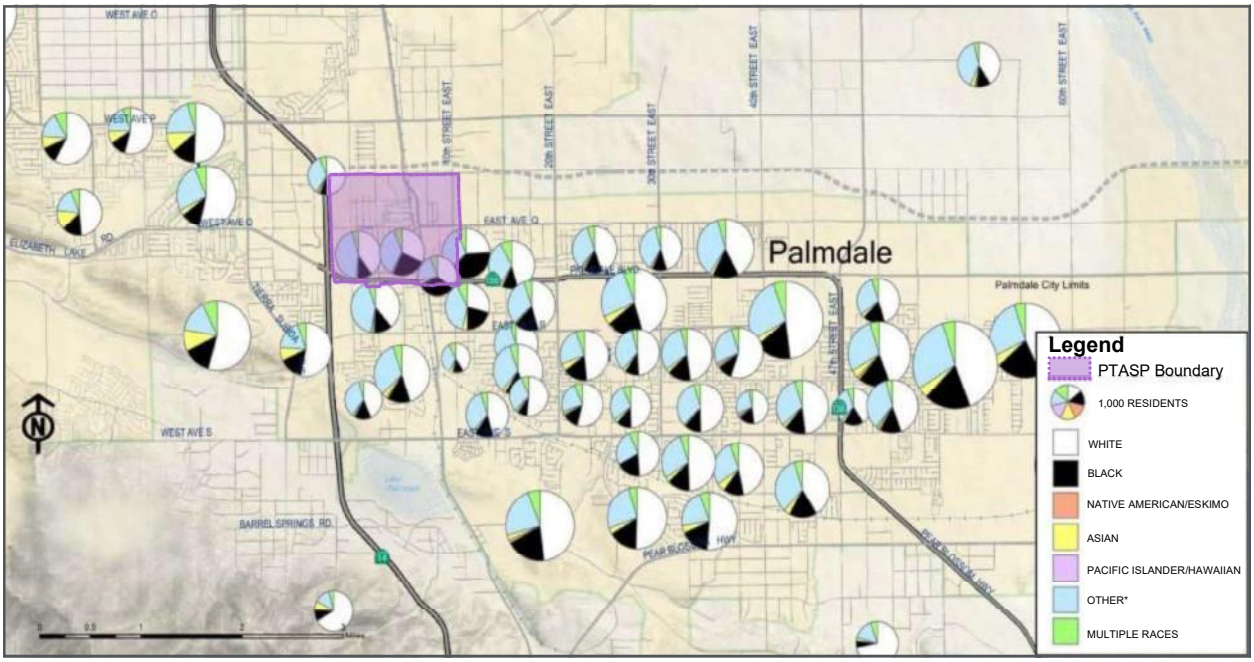
## 2.3.2. Population Distribution

Figure 2.7 illustrates the distribution of population based on year 2010 Census data reported at the block level. Figure 2.8 illustrates the ethnicity composition of this population, also based on 2010 census data, reported at the block group level.




SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

**FIGURE 2.7. YEAR 2010 DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY BLOCK (SEE APPENDIX FOR EXPANDED IMAGE)**




* INDIVIDUAL SELF-IDENTIFIED AS HISPANIC, LATINO OR SPANISH ORIGIN ARE COUNTED AS "WHITE" SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

**FIGURE 2.8. YEAR 2010 BLOCK GROUP POPULATION BY RACE (SEE APPENDIX FOR EXPANDED IMAGE)**

## 2.3.3. Employment

The most important industry for Palmdale is the aerospace industry. However, in recent times, other manufacturing companies have relocated to Palmdale seeking more affordable land, close proximity to USAF Plant 42 and special tax breaks.

Special tax breaks are granted for companies that relocate to the Antelope Valley Enterprise Zone and the Palmdale Federal Foreign Trade Zone. These are special zoning areas within the City that allow for various state and federal tax breaks and municipal grant incentives. These zones were put in effect to help Palmdale and Lancaster draw more jobs to the area so they would be less dependent on the Los Angeles Basin area for employment, thus reducing vehicle miles of travel, relieving pollution and traffic congestion, and stabilizing the local economy.

Palmdale refers to itself as the "aerospace capital of the United States" and has been the site of research, development, final assembly, flight testing, servicing and modifications of the Space Shuttle, X-15, B-2 Spirit, F-117 Nighthawk, F-35 Lightning II, SR-71 Blackbird, Lockheed L-1011 Tristar, and many other aircraft which have been used in the United States Air Force, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and air forces and airlines around the world. U.S. Air Force Plant 42, where the aforementioned aerospace projects occurred, is home to major operations of the following aerospace companies: Boeing, Lockheed Martin and its famed Skunk Works, and Northrop Grumman. The Los Angeles World Airports owns the former Boeing hangar (formerly North American Rockwell) at Plant 42 near the former Palmdale Regional Airport terminal, which is one of the largest buildings in the world. NASA's Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy program is planning to relocate its operation to this hangar at Site 9 from Edwards Air Force Base. In 2016, total jobs in Palmdale, including its sphere of influence, numbered 49,500.

| EMPLOYER | NO. OF EMPLOYEES |
|---|---|
| Northrop Grumman* | 4,200 |
| Lockheed Martin | 3,700 |
| County of Los Angeles | 2,000 |
| Antelope Valley Mall | 1,800 |
| Palmdale School District | 1,792 |
| NASA Armstrong Flight Research Center | 1,370 |
| A.V. Union High School District | 1,200 |
| Wal-Mart | ~1,150 |
| Palmdale Regional Medical Center | 1,103 |
| City of Palmdale | 582 |
| High Desert Health Systems* | 500–999 |
| Granite Construction | 400 |
| Albertson's | ~375 |
| Vallarta | ~325 |
| Kaiser Permanente | ~300 |
| Home Depot | ~275 |
| Kinkisharyo International, L.L.C. | 258 |
| Lowe's | ~230 |
| Target | ~230 |
| Sam's Club | 190 |
| Waste Management | 100–249 |
| Delta Scientific | 100—249 |
| BAE | 145 |

* THE FIRM IS RAPIDLY EXPANDING THEIR WORKFORCE IN PALMDALE.

SOURCE: OUR INDUSTRIES—GREATER ANTELOPE VALLEY ECONOMIC ALLIANCE—GAVEA, https://socalleadingedge.org/industries/

**FIGURE 2.9. PALMDALE MAJOR EMPLOYERS**

A number of world-class corporations and manufacturing firms have made Palmdale home, diversifying the local economy. Delta Scientific Corporation, a world leader in high strength vehicle barrier systems, and U.S. Pole Company, Inc., a major manufacturer of street lighting poles, are major anchor tenants in the Fairway Business Park. The Palmdale Trade and Commerce Center is home to many other major manufacturing and industrial corporate offices. It will also be home to a number of medical and related support offices that are coming on-line to meet the needs of the new Palmdale Regional Medical Center. The Antelope Valley Mall is the preeminent retail shopping destination in the region, with a wide variety of dining choices in its Restaurant Row. Figure 2.9 indicates Palmdale's largest employers in the year 2017.

# 2.4. Transportation

The PTASP area is easily accessed by regional highways and major arterials and is also served by a public transportation system, commuter rail and several bus lines.

## 2.4.1. Transit

The PTC is a multi-modal facility which serves as a Metrolink train station and a hub for connections between the AVTA and commuter bus service, Santa Clarita Transit bus service, Greyhound bus service and Amtrak Thruway bus service. Metrolink was introduced to Palmdale in the 1990s as an alternate to the freeways connecting Los Angeles following the 1994 Northridge earthquake. The earthquake caused the collapse of the freeway connector of State Route 14 (the Antelope Valley Freeway) onto Interstate 5. The station in Palmdale is part of the Metrolink Antelope Valley Line that provides weekday and weekend commuter service to and from Downtown Los Angeles. Metrolink runs 20 trains on a weekday with an average daily ridership of 7,000 passengers, and 12 trains on Saturday and Sunday. Seventy-six percent of weekday riders use Metrolink to get to work. The Metrolink station has basic amenities, such as restrooms, waiting room, food/beverage vending machine, and public phones. The facility has 750 parking spaces and connects with the Antelope Valley Transit Lines, Amtrak Thruway Bus and Greyhound.


SOURCE: ANTELOPE VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY (WWW.AVTA.COM)

**FIGURE 2.10. AVTA PALMDALE AREA SYSTEM MAP**

AVTA has 45 local transit buses, of which Routes 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 51, 97, and 98 serve the PTC, as of Summer 2020. The fleet includes 60-foot articulated buses moving towards sustainable, and clean public transportation. As the circulation plan illustrating station access routes and connections is developed, access to aerospace industry cluster of employment (including Edwards Air Force Base) and future Palmdale Regional Airport (PMD) commercial air service will be integrated in alignment with AVTA's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Figure 2.10 shows a portion of the AVTA service within the City of Palmdale. For more information on fare and routes visit, https://www.avta.com.

Metrolink's SCORE program is a $10 billion capital improvement program involving grade crossing, station and signal improvements as well as track additions and work that accelerates progress towards Metrolink's zero-emissions future and improve access to affordable housing and other opportunities. California State Transportation Agency recently announced the 2020 grants distributed as part of the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP), one of which were $107 million for improvements to Metrolink's Antelope Valley Line. The proposed Metrolink Antelope Valley Line Capital and Service Improvements Project will add targeted capacity-increasing infrastructure on the Antelope Valley Line, increase service in step with new capacity, and assess the feasibility of rail multiple unit and zero-emission propulsion service.

Palmdale will also host the HSR in the future, bringing more passenger rail users to the area. The HSR Phase 1 System that includes the sections from Bakersfield to Anaheim, including the Palmdale Station has assumed a completion schedule of 2033. The expansion plans will include coordination with all the transit/rail agencies for facilities locations, ingress/egress, inter-modal connectivity, etc. As part of the expansion, existing services may be relocated and interim transit centers may be needed. The Palmdale Station could also serve the proposed private venture Virgin Trains USA (VTUSA) high-speed rail service to Las Vegas via the future High Desert Corridor. VTUSA has successfully been allocated a tax exempt bond by the State of California. It has used similar private activity bonds to finance expansion of its existing rail system in Florida. The City of Palmdale was part of the coalition of backers in support of high-speed train between Las Vegas and Victorville and eventually Palmdale.

## 2.4.2. Air Transportation

The Palmdale Regional Airport terminal is located at 41000 North 20th Street, a 70-acre site on United States Air Force Plant 42 and is currently closed. The 9,000 square-foot terminal was capable of handling up to 300,000 passengers annually. The City of Palmdale is currently working to relocate the terminal functions to a City-owned location east of Sierra Highway along East Avenue M. Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) owns approximately 17,750 acres of land adjacent to Plant 42, most of which is available for development. The airport is located northeast of the PTASP area and currently does not have any scheduled passenger airline service.

## 2.4.3. Road Network

The regional road network within the area includes two state routes: SR-14 and SR-138. The major arterial street layout in Palmdale, illustrated in Figure 2.11, is based on a one-mile primary grid. Arterials are typically paved to 88 feet within a 104-foot right of way. The grid is further divided into a half-mile secondary arterial (typically paved to 68 feet within an 84-foot right of way), and further into a quarter-mile grid as required. The quarter-mile grid is then subdivided based on the needs of the site and the local road network is generally less geometric. Regional transportation infrastructure such as Sierra Highway, the Union Pacific Railway and SR-14 (the Antelope Valley Freeway) do not generally follow the rigid north-south grid alignment and thus interrupt the grid geometry.

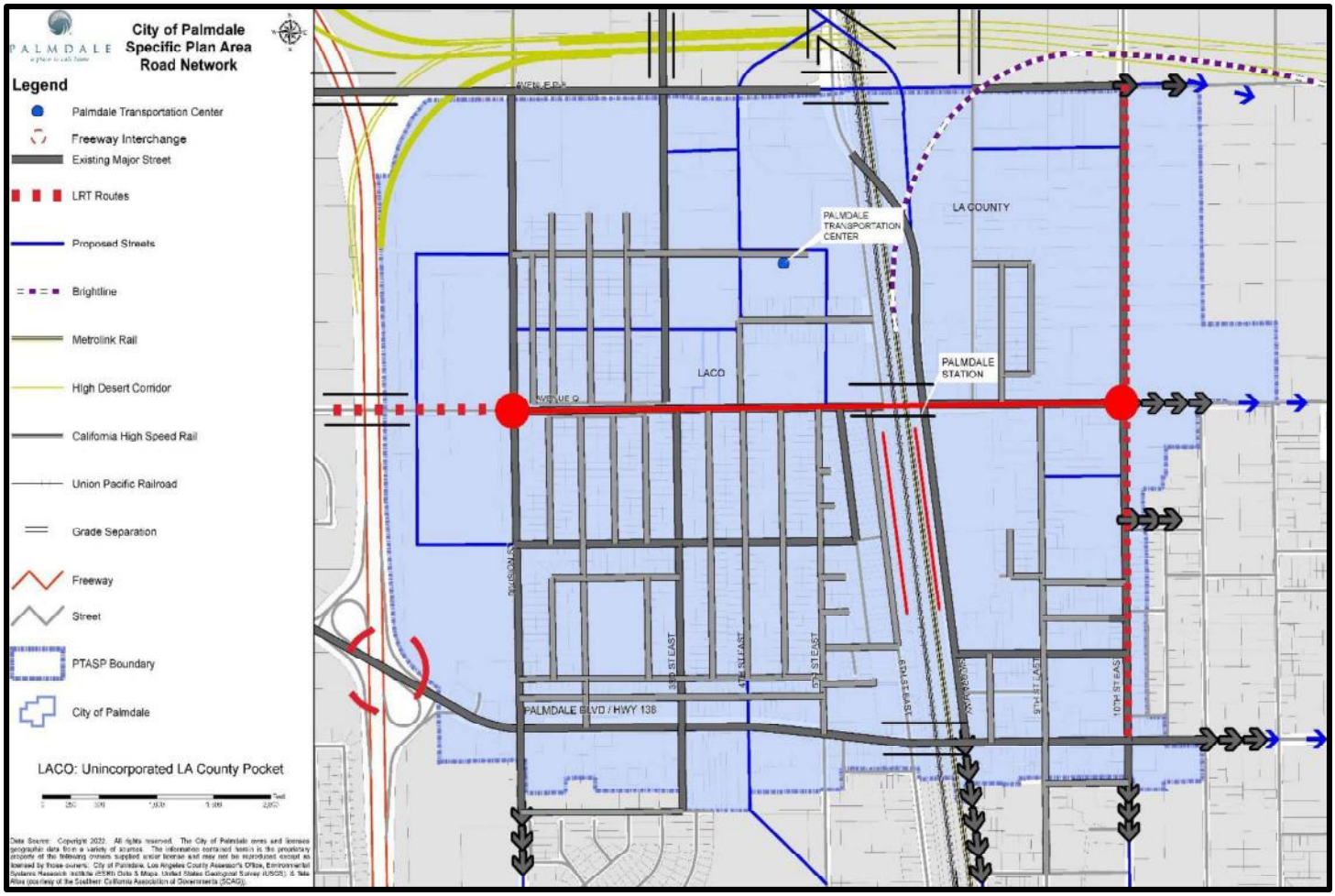



FIGURE 2.11. SPECIFIC PLAN AREA ROAD NETWORK

Figure 2.12 summarizes existing levels of service for selected roadways in the PTASP area. To gauge traffic operational performance, level of service (LOS) is a qualitative measure used to describe the driver's experience within a traffic stream, generally in terms of service measures such as speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions and delay, and comfort and convenience. Six levels of service are defined by the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM). Letters designate each level—from LOS A (indicating traffic flows with little or no delay) to LOS F (indicating over-saturated conditions where traffic flow exceeds roadway capacity, generally resulting in long queues and delays).

| ROADWAY SEGMENTS | LANES | TYPE OF ARTERIAL | VOLUME | DATE* | CAP | V/C | LOS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Avenue Q** | | | | | | | |
| Division Street to 6th Street E | 2 | Major arterial | 3,815 | 09/11 | 18,000 | 0.21 | A |
| Sierra Highway to 10th Street E | 2 | Major arterial | 9,447 | 12/18 | 18,000 | 0.52 | A |
| **Palmdale Boulevard** | | | | | | | |
| Division Street to 5th Street E | 6 | Major arterial | 34,080 | 02/19 | 54,000 | 0.63 | B |
| 5th Street to 10th Street E | 4 | Major arterial | 25,257 | 06/10 | 36,000 | 0.70 | B |
| **Sierra Highway** | | | | | | | |
| E Avenue P to E Avenue Q | 4 | Major arterial | 14,366 | 05/12 | 36,000 | 0.40 | A |
| E Avenue Q to Palmdale Boulevard | 4 | Major arterial | 15,176 | 12/18 | 36,000 | 0.42 | A |
| Palmdale Boulevard to E Avenue R | 4 | Major arterial | 9,993 | 05/14 | 36,000 | 0.28 | A |
| **10th Street E** | | | | | | | |
| E Avenue P to E Avenue Q | 2 | Major arterial | 2,357 | 03/13 | 18,000 | 0.13 | A |
| E Avenue Q to E Palmdale Boulevard | 4 | Major arterial | 5,732 | 03/13 | 36,000 | 0.16 | A |
| E Avenue Q to E Palmdale Boulevard | 4 | Major arterial | 5,756 | 05/13 | 18,000 | 0.32 | A |

SOURCE: EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT, PALMDALE HIGH SPEED RAIL STATION AREA PLAN

**FIGURE 2.12. LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) TABLE**

As the Figure 2.12 indicates, roadways adjacent to the project area are currently operating at LOS A or B, which is within the City's LOS C standard for roadway operations.

There are 12 to 15-foot-wide sidewalks directly serving the Palmdale Transportation Center along Clock Tower Plaza Drive. The north-south and east-west roadways serving the area include 6 to 8-foot-wide sidewalks along streets adjacent to residential and commercial areas. But there are no sidewalks along streets with primarily vacant parcels, such as 3rd Street East and Division Street. Avenue Q, which is designated as a major and secondary arterial street located just south of the PTC, is discontinuous. Even though pedestrian and bicycle access to/from the PTC and the proposed Palmdale Station site is generally good, it lacks connectivity to its surroundings. The largest barrier to east-west pedestrian/bicycle accessibility is the railroad tracks running north-south, parallel to Sierra Highway. Sierra Highway and the railroad tracks on the southeast end create a significant barrier between the PTC and downtown Palmdale. The railroad crossing also poses a safety issue.

### 2.4.4. Parking Facilities

The parking lot at the Palmdale Transportation Center contains approximately 750 parking spaces that have high usage and occupancy during typical weekdays.

## 2.5. Site Infrastructure

The existing infrastructure consists of traditional systems, including paved streets, domestic water, sewer lines, gas, telephone, cable television, and electrical lines. These systems appear to provide the current and necessary services required by the local community. The future development needs will however require additional services such as separate fire water loops, new water lines, cable television, telephone, electrical, gas, and sewer lines.

### 2.5.1. Streets and Streetlights

The Los Angeles County Public Works Department (LACDWP) designed and built most of the local roads in the 1950s. The streetlights were designed by Los Angeles County Street Lighting Division and installed by Southern California Edison (SCE). The City owns and maintains the streetlights. The Street Maintenance section is responsible for the maintenance of streets and sidewalks Citywide, which includes alley maintenance, concrete maintenance and repair, drainage maintenance and repair, storm damage maintenance and repair. Any issues can be reported directly on the City's webpage and/or via an app with a smartphone.

## 2.5.2. Water

### POTABLE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Palmdale Water District (PWD) provides water supply to the PTASP area. According to PWD's 2015 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), sources of water supply are primarily from groundwater extraction and imported water from the State Water Project (SWP). GIS data and shapefiles of existing water system pipeline alignments, sizes, and the locations of various appurtenances within the area were provided by the City of Palmdale. Existing water conveyance facilities within the PTASP area are shown in Figure 2.13.

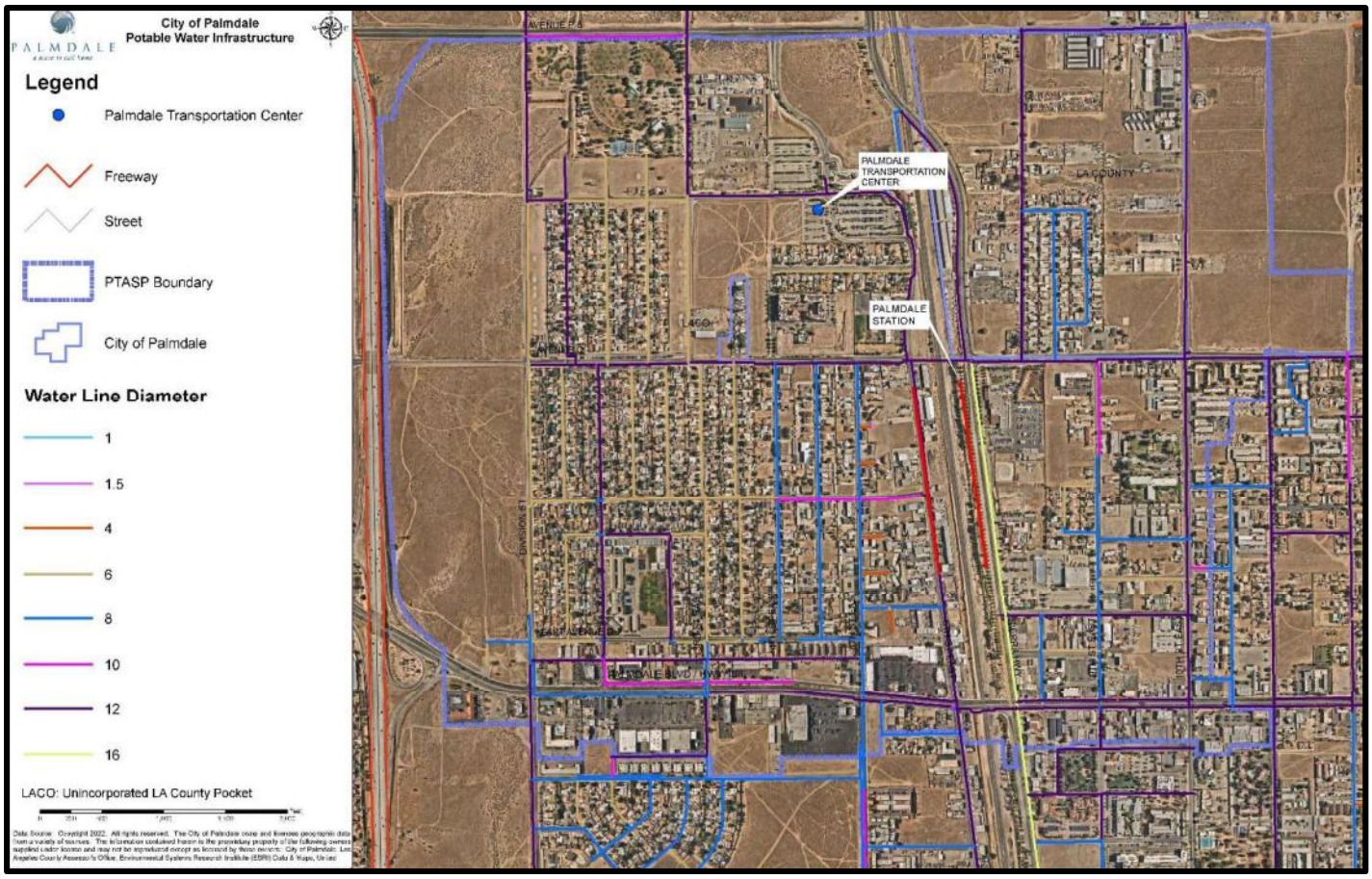



FIGURE 2.13. POTABLE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE MAP (SEE APPENDIX FOR EXPANDED IMAGE)

### RECYCLED WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

PWD and the City of Palmdale jointly created the Palmdale Recycled Water Authority (PRWA) in September 2012. PRWA acts as a separate agency from PWD and the City and it manages local recycled water resources. Recycled water supplies are available from the Palmdale Water Reclamation Plant (PWRP), which is located in the City of Palmdale and is owned and operated

by Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (LACSD). Currently, the PWRP has a treatment capacity of 12 million gallons per day (MGD). Recycled water supplies are expected to grow over time with gradually increasing influent sewerage flows. Prior to the creation of PRWA, PWD prepared its own Recycled Water Facilities Plan in February 2010 detailing the existing and potential infrastructure to develop, convey, and store recycled water in the area. Proposed facilities are shown in Figure 2.14.

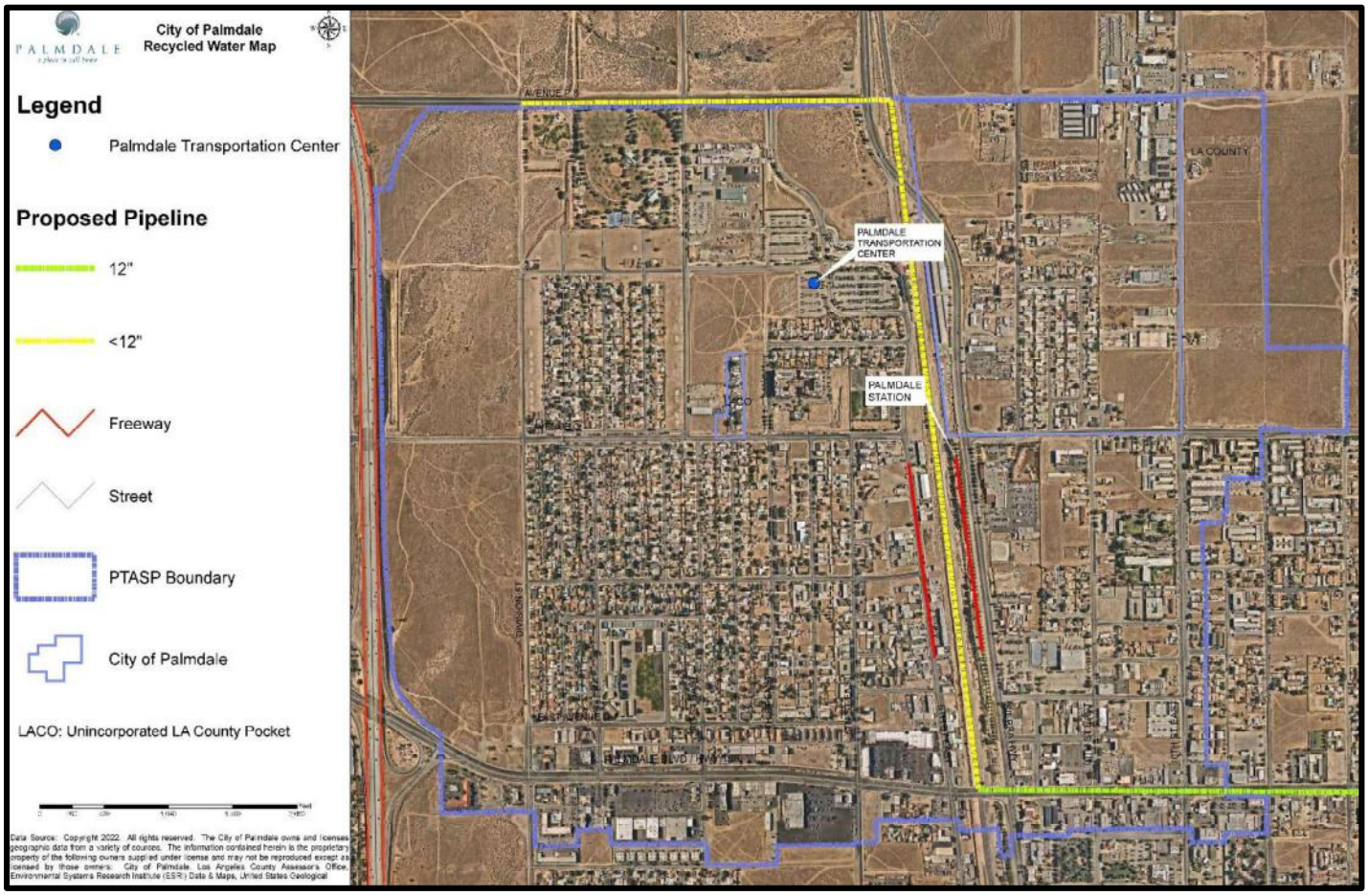



FIGURE 2.14. RECYCLED WATER MAP (SEE APPENDIX FOR EXPANDED IMAGE)

As shown in Figure 2.14, existing infrastructure does not provide recycled water service in the PTASP area. However, the potential for use within the area exists based upon recommendations within the Recycled Water Facilities Plan. The Recycled Water Facilities Plan recommends the future installation of a smaller diameter (less than 12-inch) recycled water pipeline at Sierra Highway from north of Avenue R to Technology Drive, and west along Technology Drive to Desert Sands Park, where the potential exists for future installation of a service connection to serve a portion of water demands.

## 2.5.3. Wastewater

Wastewater infrastructure consists of sewer gravity mains that route flows to LACSD trunk sewers. The PTASP area is mostly within County Sanitation District No. 20 of Los Angeles County (LACSD-20), and sewage flows are routed to the PWRP through the LACSD trunk sewers. LACSD owns and maintains the trunk sewers, and the City owns and maintains the smaller diameter sewer pipelines. Existing facilities within the Study Area are shown in Figure 2.15.

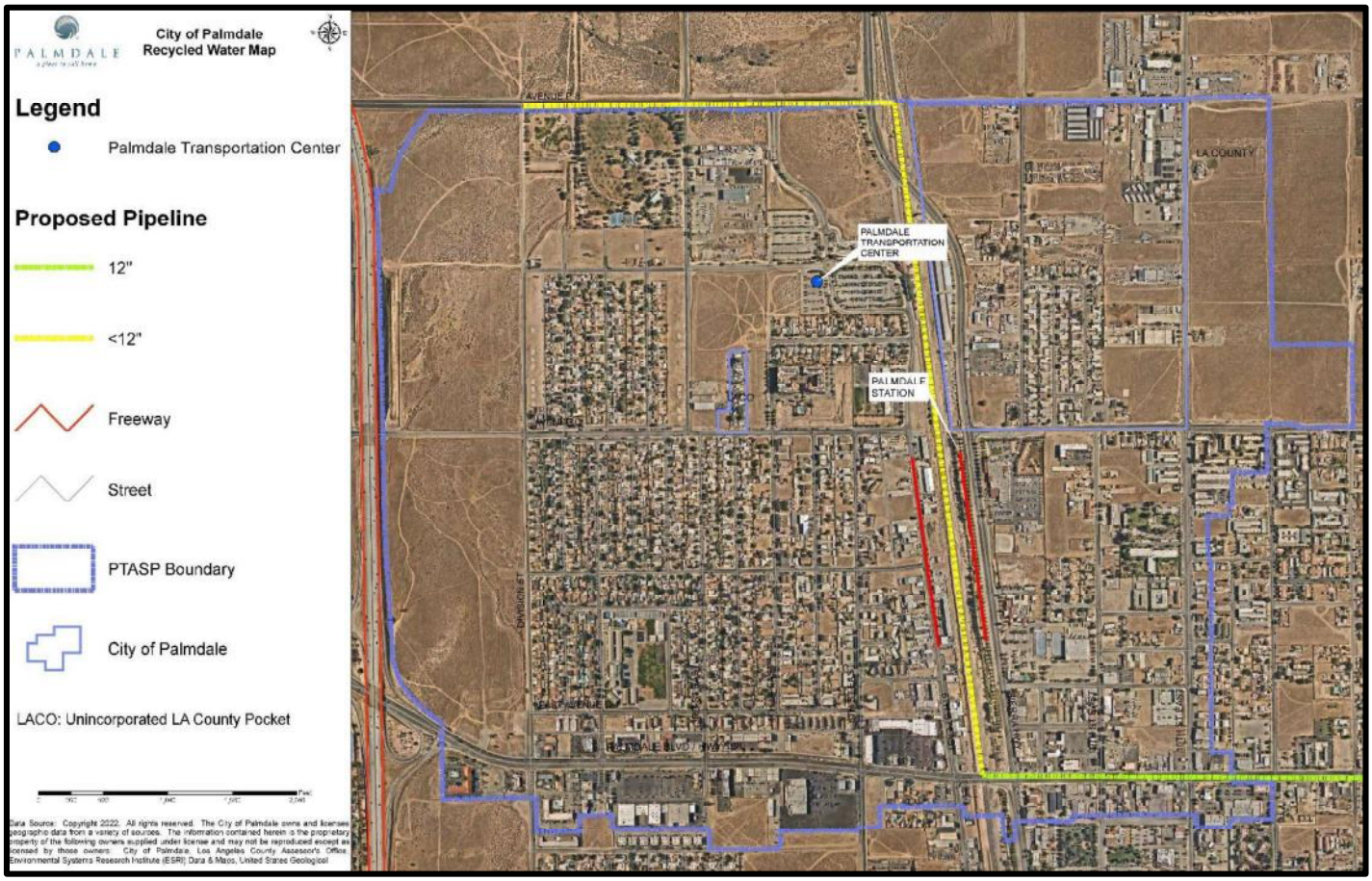



FIGURE 2.15. WASTEWATER MAP (SEE APPENDIX FOR EXPANDED IMAGE)

As shown in Figure 2.15, sewer pipelines within the Study Area range from 8-inch to 42-inch in diameter. All sewers 12-inch and greater in diameter are LACSD trunk sewers, which collect the flows from the City's network of 8-inch sewers in the area. Depending on the existing sewage flows and pipeline depth to diameter (d/D) ratios, upgrades to existing infrastructure may be required to accommodate development. This includes, but is not limited to, the construction of new City sewer mains and laterals, construction of new connections to the LACSD trunk sewers, and upsizing of portions of the LACSD and/or City sewers.

Wastewater flow generated by the PTC is treated at the Palmdale Water Reclamation Plant which has a design capacity of 12 mgd and currently processes an average flow of 9.4 mgd. However, the City should review future development projects within the PTASP in order to determine whether or not sufficient trunk sewer capacity exists to serve these projects.

## 2.5.4. Stormwater

There are a number of existing local and regional flood control facilities in the City, including channels and storm drains. Existing facilities within the PTASP area are shown in Figure 2.16. GIS data and shapefiles of the existing storm drain system and catch basins locations were provided by the City of Palmdale. The natural tributaries within and adjacent to the area include Amargosa and Anaverde Creeks. Flow originating in the developed portions of the City is generally within the existing street. Typically, storm drains are designed to accommodate 10-year and/or 25-year storm flows within the right-of-way. Where storm drains are absent or are deficient, storm water runoff flows to the existing streets and infrastructure. Within the PTASP area there is a limited storm drain network, with limited catch basin inlets and storm drain lines. Existing facilities based on available information are shown in Figure 2.16.

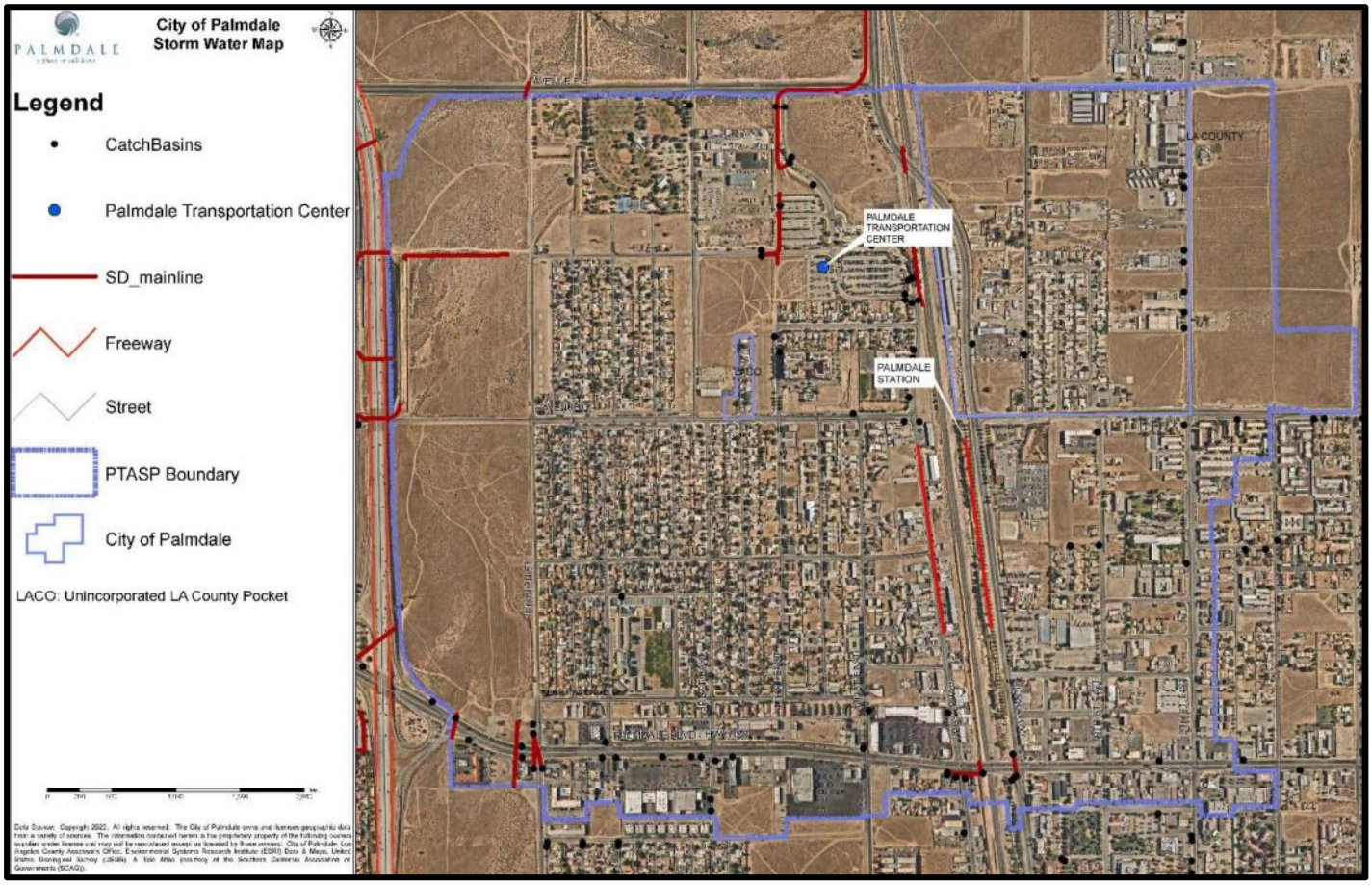



FIGURE 2.16. STORMWATER MAP (SEE APPENDIX FOR EXPANDED IMAGE)

The PMC states that regional and local drainage facilities are required in order to mitigate the flooding problems caused by existing developments and to prevent future developments from creating additional flooding problems. The City requires every party who develops land to mitigate the impacts of that development on the City's drainage facilities. The City will, therefore, require developers to construct drainage facilities in accordance with the City of Palmdale Master Drainage Plan and/or pay drainage fees that will be used to construct drainage facilities pursuant to the Master Drainage Plan. The amount of the drainage fees collected is limited to the cost of drainage facilities attributable to new development.

## 2.5.5. FEMA Floodplain

The City of Palmdale is a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Communities participating in the NFIP must adopt and enforce minimum floodplain management standards, including identification of flood hazards and flooding risks. The Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for the PTASP are included in Community Panel No. 06037C0657F, 06037C0659F and 06037C0700F, effective September 26, 2008, obtained from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Figure 2.17 shows portions of the area are located in Zone AO, D (X-shaded), and 500-year floodplain (0.2 percent).

- Zone AO – 100-year shallow flooding where depths average between 1 and 3 feet.
- 500-year (0.2 percent annual chance flood hazard) – Areas outside the 1-percent-annual chance floodplain.

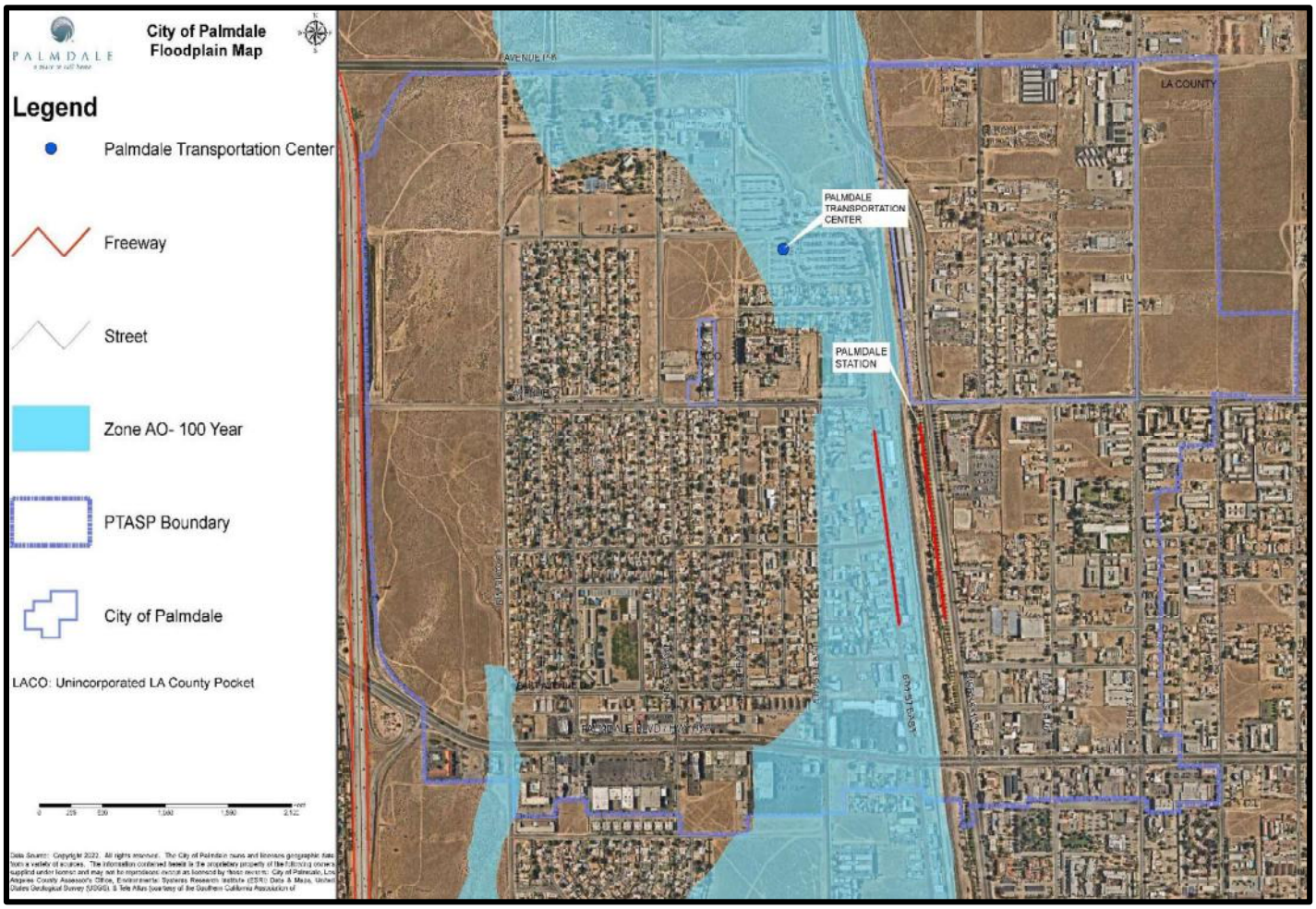



FIGURE 2.17. FLOODPLAIN MAP (SEE APPENDIX FOR EXPANDED IMAGE)

Any development within a defined FEMA flood zone requires a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) prior to FEMA preparing a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR). A CLOMR is FEMA's comment on a proposed project that would, upon construction, affect the hydrologic or hydraulic characteristics of a flooding source and result in the modification of the existing floodway, the effective Base Flood Elevations (BFEs), or the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). The CLOMR letter does not revise an effective NFIP map; it indicates whether the project, if built as proposed, would be recognized by FEMA. Once a project has been completed, the community must request a revision to the FIRM to reflect the project.

### 2.5.6. Electricity and Gas

Southern California Edison (SCE) maintains the electrical distribution lines and supplies power in the region that includes Palmdale. The electricity distributed by SCE is generated both by SCE owned power facilities as well as through contracts with other energy suppliers in the region. Palmdale is served by SCE from its Vincent Substation, mainly across above-ground utility poles. SCE's improvement plans to meet increased demand in Palmdale include upgrading substations and conductors, extending power lines, and replacing poles. A new substation was built at Ritter Ranch on the west side of Palmdale in 2008-09.

The Southern California Gas Company (SCGC) provides natural gas to most of the region, including the Antelope Valley. The City of Palmdale is within the boundaries of the Foothill Distribution Division and the North Basin Transmission Division. Gas is delivered through lines laid in City streets, including in the Study Area. Natural gas is used to provide heating, air conditioning, and a power source for cooking appliances. Any new development in the PTASP area may require the concurrent laying of additional gas lines.

## 2.6. Market Conditions

The City of Palmdale, as well as the Antelope Valley, has historically experienced strong population and employment growth. Many commuters from southern areas of Los Angeles County are drawn to the area's affordability and quality of life. Palmdale and the Antelope Valley have experienced robust employment increases in the aerospace and healthcare sectors, and with local companies continuing to win large federal aerospace contracts, that growth is likely to continue. This rapid local employment growth, coupled with increasing prices in Los Angeles County, will likely continue to be strong fundamental drivers for population growth in the Antelope Valley. The new HSR system will likely only increase Palmdale's relative position in attracting additional residents and employment, bringing additional demand to major real estate categories.

### 2.6.1. Housing

The major market for new housing in Palmdale is in households moving there from the Los Angeles metropolitan area. Palmdale is well-situated to absorb a much larger share of these households than it has in the past. Demand for detached single-family homes throughout the Los Angeles area grew significantly during the 20 years prior to 2008 that this housing product is now priced beyond the reach of many would-be first-time home-buyers looking for for-sale housing in proximity to local job centers. Given the amount of land available and the potential to create a true mixed-use town center with significant transit infrastructure, Palmdale is well situated to capture a larger share of this potential demand for housing. It is also an ideal location for higher density attached housing within a mixed-use setting. Palmdale is composed predominantly of single-family residential housing and has therefore not historically been a strong market for condominiums. There is a lack of new, market-rate rental multi-family product (apartments). Very low vacancy rates for newer product suggest demand for new multi-family rental units. New investments in transportation and infrastructure may unlock a new residential market in the study area.

### 2.6.2. Employment

Palmdale, including its sphere of influence, had 49,500 jobs in 2016 based on City/SCAG/Plant 42 numbers making up a significant share of the Antelope Valley's employment. Healthcare, retail, and education are the largest employment sectors in the Antelope Valley, while manufacturing is the largest sector in Palmdale. The manufacturing sector in Palmdale, much of it driven by aerospace, has been strong, adding more than 6,500 jobs since 2015. Though job growth in Palmdale has been substantial, population growth has outpaced job growth as commuters from more expensive areas of LA County move to the area.

### 2.6.3. Retail

The Palmdale retail market's performance has been mixed. Shopping center rents have not been able to revert to pre-recession levels; however, vacancy rates have begun to decrease. As of 2016, there is 6.2 million square feet of retail space in Palmdale; nearly 80 percent of this retail space is located within a shopping center. Most of the retail space in the PTASP area is non-shopping center retail. Non-shopping center rents have been decreasing drastically in the last decade. There is significantly less demand for standalone, non-shopping center retail space than for shopping center retail in the City. The development pipeline has many retail projects proposed and approved for development in the City. Although an expanding population base has resulted in strong demand for additional retail space in the Palmdale area, existing and proposed retail projects are likely to meet current demand, as well as additional demand in the foreseeable future.

### 2.6.4. Office

In Palmdale, medical office is the largest component of the local office market, making up more than 43 percent of office space. There is very little Class A space in Palmdale, and the Antelope Valley region is not currently a core Los Angeles office market. Class A spaces are well located, have good access, and are professionally managed as they attract the highest quality tenants and command the highest rents. Office space varies from 50,000 - 250,000 square feet depending on location. The region's office market has not yet recovered from the effects of the recession, though the health care sector has been particularly strong with more than 170,000 square feet of positive net absorption in 2014.

### 2.6.5. Hospitality

In recent years, Palmdale has seen a boost in the hotel market. There are approximately 27 hotels in the Antelope Valley. Fifty-six percent are upscale or upper midscale hotels, such as Residence Inn, Hilton Garden Inn, and the Hampton Inn with occupancy rates of almost 70 percent. Visitors are characterized as 75 percent business, likely in the aerospace industry, and 25 percent family, primarily on the weekends. There is no luxury hotel in the area. With strong performance, four to five additional hotels are expected on the market, Embassy Suites and Element Hotel has already been opened.

## 2.7. Site Constraints

From maximizing land use to strengthening pedestrian connections, the Palmdale Transit Area Specific Plan faces a number of challenges and potential opportunities. Identifying and addressing these issues will ensure an implementable plan document and a successful enhancement effort.