

PREFERRED LAND USE ALTERNATIVE MEMO

April 16, 2021

PURPOSE

This memo provides background and rationale for the Preferred Land Use Alternative map as a part of the City of Thousand Oaks 2045 General Plan Update. Included in this memo is background information on the General Plan update process, a summary of key themes from community engagement regarding land use and development over the last two years, and a description of how the City developed the Preferred Land Use Alternative based on community feedback, particularly responses to an online survey on the land use alternatives (which was open between February 2 and March 15, 2021 and solicited over 2,100 responses and 6,000 individual comments).

Attached to this memo is the Preferred Land Use Alternative map, description of land use designations, and a table summarizing the proposed General Plan land use designations.

The preferred alternative is accompanied by an online survey, which seeks feedback on the map. The survey will be open from April 16 to May 12, 2021. The preferred alternative will be presented to the Planning Commission on April 26, 2021 and then to the City Council on May 18, 2021 and May 25, 2021. Approval of the final Land Use Alternative map will take place at the May 25 City Council meeting.

To learn more about the project and past community engagement activities, please visit the General Plan Website, TOaks2045.org. Background information on the land use alternatives can be found in the Alternatives Briefing Book, and information on the survey results can be found on the General Plan website. This information is helpful to explain the development of the Preferred Land Use Alternative.

PROCESS

BACKGROUND

In 2019, the City Council initiated a process to update the Thousand Oaks General Plan, the first comprehensive update since the City prepared its original General Plan in 1970. A General Plan serves as the “blueprint” for the City and directs all decisions related to land use and the physical form of the City. Thus, the updated General Plan, will play a critical role in shaping the future of Thousand Oaks for the next 25 years and beyond.

Since kicking-off in early 2019, the General Plan Team has engaged with thousands of Thousand Oaks residents, business-owners, students, employees, and visitors to learn

about their ideas, key issues, opportunities, and vision for the future. The work to date has included three public workshops, 14 General Plan Advisory Committee meetings, a dozen “pop-up” workshops, focus groups, meetings with community organizations, a website and social media presence and more. This engagement resulted in insight about the community’s values and ideas for growth and conservation in the City. More specifically, the following themes were identified:

- Preserve parks and open space.
- Maintain and expand job capacity.
- Focus development in limited areas.
- Preserve the character of existing single-family neighborhoods.
- Develop a downtown.
- Develop walkable village centers throughout the city.
- Allow for a variety of housing types at all levels of affordability.
- Add mixed-use development in strategic locations.
- Ensure that new development is consistent with the community character.
- Maintain Citywide residential capacity as required by Measure E.

As part of the engagement process, the City General Plan Team led a series of interactive activities to better understand where new development should occur and areas that should experience limited to no change. This information helped the Team develop three land use alternatives to explore how the values and concepts presented above could be actualized through land use policy. Community feedback on the three land use alternatives, in concert with previous community feedback, has resulted in this revised Preferred Land Use Alternative map. Thus, the preferred land use alternative is the result of almost two years of conversations with the Thousand Oaks community.

On February 2, 2021, the General Plan Team held a virtual community meeting to present the three land use alternatives. An online survey about the alternatives was open from February 2 until March 15, 2021. During this time, the General Plan Team held four virtual “office hours” and met with more than twenty organizations and dozens of individuals to discuss the alternatives. As a result, there were 2,147 individual surveys submitted and over 6,000 individual comments. In addition, dozens of individuals, organizations, and companies submitted letters or comments to City staff. The survey results and other comments received provided direction for staff to develop the preferred land use alternative.

THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The Preferred Land Use Alternative Map is attached to this memo. The direction in the preferred alternative builds upon eighteen months of outreach by incorporating direction from the survey results and additional comments submitted by community members and property owners. The General Plan Team used Alternative 1 as a starting point because it received the most support in the survey. Using responses to specific questions in the survey, Alternative 1 was modified to reflect the community's vision for specific areas of the City and made to ensure that the Citywide residential capacity remains unchanged as required by Measure E. One of the most notable differences between the three draft land use alternatives and the preferred land use alternative is the elimination of the Neighborhood High and Mixed-Use High designations in response to community feedback. These two designations would have allowed up to 45 dwelling units per acre and 55 feet and 65 dwelling units per acre and 68 feet, respectively.

The Preferred Land Use Alternative has the following characteristics:

- Maintains character of existing residential areas.
- Preserves all open spaces, parks and public uses, which account for almost 50% of the City's total land area.
- Incorporates mixed-use development in several key locations throughout the City to focus future development in a limited number of areas as follows:
 - In the Rancho Conejo area, both North and South of Highway 101.
 - At The Oaks Mall and Janss Marketplace.
 - At and around the former K-Mart site and the intersection of Thousand Oaks Boulevard and Westlake Boulevard.
- Maintains the Mixed-Use Low designation along Thousand Oaks Boulevard consistent with the Thousand Oaks Boulevard Specific Plan and introduces nodes of Mixed-Use Medium development at key locations.
- Maintains a strong jobs focus by including the Industrial Flex designation (for office and research and development uses up to 2.0 FAR) in Rancho Conejo and along Thousand Oaks Boulevard (south of Westlake High School), and maintains industrial uses in the Townsgate employment area.
- Maintains a variety of commercial uses for retail, office, and hotels along Highway 101 and Moorpark Road.

CONNECTION BETWEEN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS AND THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The following table illustrates how community feedback informed the development of the preferred land use alternative.

Table 1: Characteristics of the preferred land use alternative

| SURVEY DIRECTION | IMPLEMENTATION IN THE PREFERRED LAND USE ALTERNATIVE MAP |
|---|---|
| <i>Citywide</i> | |
| Maintain existing character of residential neighborhoods | This is accomplished in the preferred land use alternative by changing the existing residential land use designations to match the density of the existing development and reallocating unbuilt capacity to the Areas of Change. |
| Support for residential densities up to 45 units per acre within the same general building form and character | This is accomplished by applying the Mixed-Use Medium designation in targeted locations, with the goal of creating walkable neighborhoods near the employment areas in Rancho Conejo, along Thousand Oaks Boulevard near Moorpark Road, and in Downtown near the Civic Arts Plaza. |
| Lack of support for taller mixed-use and residential buildings | The Mixed-Use High designation which would have allowed for mixed-use buildings up to 68 feet and 60 dwelling units per acre and the Neighborhood High designation which would allow for up to 55 feet and 45 dwelling units per acre were eliminated. |
| <i>Rancho Conejo Area</i> | |
| Maintain jobs presence with a balance of industrial uses | The preferred alternative maintains the Rancho Conejo area as an employment center with a balance of Industrial Low and Industrial Flex designations. |
| Mixed-use development in the Rancho Conejo Area | The preferred alternative allows for mixed-use development at different densities both north and south of Highway 101 freeway near existing job centers, commercial centers, and neighborhoods. |
| Varied direction on the land use designation for the vacant property near Borchard Drive | Public comments and the survey results indicate support for designating the vacant 37-acre property, south of Highway 101 and west of Borchard Drive, to allow mixed-use development, and also support for retaining the existing single-family residential designation. The preferred alternative includes a hybrid approach that designates a portion of the property as Mixed-Use Low and a portion as Neighborhood Low-Medium to serve as a transition to the existing neighborhoods. |

| SURVEY DIRECTION | IMPLEMENTATION IN THE PREFERRED LAND USE ALTERNATIVE MAP |
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| <i>Moorpark Road and West Thousand Oaks Boulevard Area</i> | |
| Maintain commercial uses along Moorpark Road | The preferred alternative maintains commercial land use designations along Moorpark Road between Thousand Oaks Boulevard and Wilbur Road, except for the Janss Marketplace (see next comment below). |
| Mixed-Use in The Oaks Mall and Janss Marketplace | The preferred alternative introduces Mixed-Use Low at both the Janss Marketplace and The Oaks Mall. Both malls have the opportunity to introduce a residential component to the existing commercial activities, which provides flexibility for the future due to the changing nature in retail. They also provide opportunities to add a diversity of housing types including townhomes, small multi-family buildings, mixed-use development, and retail in a walkable, main street format. |
| Mixed-Use node on West Thousand Oaks Boulevard at Hodencamp Road | The preferred alternative includes the Mixed-Use Medium designation for this area to capitalize on the emerging mixed-use node that includes a mixed-use project under construction and a growing mix of eating and drinking establishments. |
| Mixed-Use Low on the remainder of Thousand Oaks Boulevard West of Highway 23 | The preferred alternative maintains a Mixed-Use Low designation between Hodencamp Road and Highway 23, consistent with the existing Thousand Oaks Boulevard Specific Plan. |
| <i>Downtown and Thousand Oaks Boulevard Area</i> | |
| Support for densities higher than 30 du/ac | The preferred alternative introduces the Mixed-Use Medium designation in the Downtown area between Los Feliz Drive and Conejo School Road. |
| Support for mixed-use development along Thousand Oaks Boulevard | The preferred alternative includes the Mixed-Use Low designation along many portions of Thousand Oaks Boulevard, consistent with the existing Thousand Oaks Boulevard Specific Plan. |
| <i>Westlake and East End Area</i> | |
| Maintain and expand employment focus near Hampshire Road and Townsgate Road | The preferred alternative includes the Industrial Low designation along Hampshire Road and Townsgate Road, except for the former K-Mart site and neighboring properties (see next comment below). While there was some support for allowing Industrial Flex along Highway 101, the Industrial Low designation was applied to maintain the existing character of the area. |

| SURVEY DIRECTION | IMPLEMENTATION IN THE PREFERRED LAND USE ALTERNATIVE MAP |
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| Support for mixed-use development on and around the former K-Mart site | The preferred alternative includes a Mixed-Use Low designation on the former K-Mart site and neighboring properties on Hampshire Road. |
| Maintain commercial focus at the Westlake Plaza and Center | In the preferred alternative, the Westlake Plaza and Center maintains a commercial land use designation. Over 70 percent of respondents supported this concept. |
| Introduce Mixed-Use at some or all corners at intersection of Westlake and Thousand Oaks Boulevard | The preferred alternative includes Mixed-Use Low on the south side of Thousand Oaks Boulevard at the Promenade and Westlake Village and Northgate Plaza centers. Areas on the north side of Thousand Oaks Boulevard retain a commercial designation. |
| Maintain employment focus south of Westlake High School | Although a residential project is pending for this area, a majority of community feedback did not support housing in this area. Therefore, the preferred alternative includes the Industrial Flex designation to provide opportunities to expand additional employment along Thousand Oaks Boulevard, south of Westlake High School. |
| <i>Village Centers</i> | |
| Lack of support for mixed-use development in village centers | The preferred alternative maintains the existing commercial designation at all village centers, as opposed to introducing mixed-use development. Although initial community feedback supported a mixed-use component at these centers, most respondents in the survey preferred maintaining a commercial designation. |

NEXT STEPS

The following are the next steps in the process:

- GPAC Meeting/Community Workshop – April 21, 2021
- Preferred Alternative Survey – April 16 – May 12, 2021
- Planning Commission Meeting – April 26, 2021
- City Council Meetings – May 18 and May 25, 2021.

Please check the project website at toaks2045.org to complete the online survey and obtain additional information about the General Plan update.