Palmdale High Speed Rail
Station Area Plan

Economic Development Plan
Case Studies

Prepared for
City of Palmdale

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

High speed rail (“HSR”) service is expected to connect the City of Palmdale (“Palmdale”) to Los Angeles and San Francisco by 2029, opening a major opportunity to spur transformative change in Palmdale’s development pattern. Palmdale, as well as the entire Antelope Valley, are expected to experience robust population and job growth due to a growing local economy and its location on the expanding urban fringe of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Palmdale has grown by over 41,000 people between 2000 and 2015, and has added over 11,000 jobs between 2002 and 2014. HSR service represents an opportunity to focus future growth and create a unique, vibrant, and pedestrian friendly station area. However, the Study Area has not historically seen the same level of development as that taking place within Palmdale’s periphery. While it includes the Civic Center, the Study Area lacks a focused activity center. Palmdale Boulevard is a struggling commercial corridor, and the area is characterized by pockets of single family and small multi-family residential developments, interspersed with vast quantities of undeveloped land. The City can better capitalize on the future HSR station by laying the groundwork for an urban, pedestrian-friendly destination near the future HSR station.

Before the advent of HSR service, it is evident that the City of Palmdale should engage in a set of interventions in the Study Area that can help differentiate it from other competing growth centers in the Valley and incentivize residents, employers, and retailers to locate in the area over time. The key objective of these interventions is to create an identifiable ‘place’ within the Study Area, that can help attract new residents, rail and transit users. The “placemaking” effort can eventually foster a more intensely developed mixed-use neighborhood with a pedestrian scale environment, improving its attractiveness to business and development, in advance of HSR and will provide a focused activity center that the HSR station can build from when HSR service begins. It should be noted that placemaking efforts can benefit the Study Area’s competitiveness irrespective of HSR service.

What is Placemaking?

Placemaking can include a wide variety of public actions, regulations, and strategies that promote the creation of places that are oriented towards a friendly pedestrian experience, emphasize walking and bicycling over driving, and offer pleasant public spaces that foster vitality and excitement.

In the context of this study, placemaking can be defined as a series of public infrastructure and policy interventions that promote:

- A mix of uses to foster activity throughout the day and evening;
- An emphasis on public space over private space;
- Wide sidewalks;
- Pedestrian amenities such as shade trees and park benches;
- Buildings that are built out to the street and oriented to the public realm;
- Development that is dense enough to support local retail and other amenities; and
- Crosswalks at all intersections to allow pedestrian permeability.
While the Study Area has a few key advantages in terms of its general location central to the City—access to the freeway and commuter rail network as well as a significant agglomeration of publicly owned land—a ‘placemaking’ strategy needs to be aligned with market conditions, funding availability, and supported by a sound land use policy framework to be successful. Further, the relationship of HSR service to its station area surroundings needs to be carefully thought through to adequately leverage HSR’s presence in the future. HR&A carefully selected a number of international and national case studies to better understand the above issues.

Given that there are no true HSR systems in the US, four international case studies were analyzed to better understand the implications of HSR. The HSR case study cities, however, generally had larger existing urban cores when HSR service began, and thus direct comparisons with Palmdale in its current state are difficult. However, the public policy interventions and actions that these cities took to leverage the significant investment of HSR can still provide guidance for potential actions Palmdale can take to fully benefit from future HSR connectivity.

Due to the necessity of creating an urban mixed-use place before HSR service, four US case studies are examined to better understand the creation of vibrant mixed-use ‘places’ and station area development in the US context, especially in more suburban locations, without precedent of significant urban density. The lessons learned from these case studies can help inform the City of Palmdale on the potential actions that can be taken regardless of when HSR service begins to create and maintain a vibrant urban neighborhood and enhance the Study Area and livability of Palmdale.

**HSR Case Study Selection**

To better understand opportunities for Palmdale, a review of existing research on the spatial effects of HSR systems was completed. It should be noted that due to the high number of other variables involved in urban development – from the status of the national economy to differences among cities involved – definitive predictions on the effects of a new high-speed rail system are difficult to ascertain. No two regions are identical, and as such general predictions do not always prove true, as many factors determine outcomes. Additionally, the governance and fiscal structures are different in other countries, which adds a layer of complexity to international comparisons. As previously discussed, Palmdale currently lacks an urban core that is comparable in size to these case study cities. Despite these constraints, a framework has been developed for case study analysis that recognizes the limitations in drawing direct comparisons, yet still reveals insight applicable to Palmdale.

The spatial effects surrounding HSR are in principle similar to those around other fixed guideway mass transit (e.g. rail), but the size of the economic catchment area that high-speed rail draws activity from is wider and the effects of the HSR system are very dependent on the host city’s position in the urban
hierarchy, i.e. a city’s position relative to other cities in its region.\textsuperscript{1,2,3} The system’s high capacity, limited stops, reliability, and wide economic catchment area create the potential for much more intense development than is typically associated with a single transit stop, and economic activity attracted to station areas is often regional-serving in nature.\textsuperscript{4}

The spatial effects of high-speed rail are generally related to a city’s position in the urban hierarchy, therefore, stations were characterized, and the corresponding effects the host-cities may experience, into five major categories shown and illustrated on the next page:

\textit{Figure 1.1. HSR Station Categories}

1. Stations in the center of a major urban agglomeration (Ex: Los Angeles Union Station)
2. Stations in a sub-center of a major urban agglomeration (Ex: Burbank)
3. Stations in a city just outside a major urban agglomeration (Ex: Palmdale)
4. Stations in a city not near a major urban agglomeration (Ex: Bakersfield, Fresno)
5. Stations outside a city (Ex: Kings-Tulare)

Cities were selected that have HSR connectivity and have a similar size, position in the urban hierarchy, travel time to a major metropolitan area, and other economic characteristics that provide some comparability with Palmdale. While no case study is perfectly comparable with Palmdale, these cases can be used to benchmark possible effects that might occur in Palmdale. They also provide insight on actions undertaken to leverage their HSR stations successfully.

Table 1 illustrates similarities across key characteristics of the selected case study cities to Palmdale. Montabaur was chosen to understand HSR’s potential effects in a situation without other significant changes happening at the same time, as well as to highlight building new urban places around a HSR station. Lille and Le Mans were chosen to highlight the success of their station area development and governance structure. Both of these cities have managed to attract new employment centers in the vicinity of their stations by leveraging HSR, and offer important lessons in that regard. Ciudad Real was chosen to understand potential HSR impacts on residential development and commuting, as well as undesirable outcomes that may occur absent supportive urban interventions.

**Key Lessons Learned and Best Practices for Palmdale**

A number of common themes and takeaways emerged for successfully leveraging HSR investments across all the case study cities. The case studies illustrate that proactive policies and actions are typically focused around three major themes: connectivity, station area planning, and governance.

**Connectivity** ensures development potential around the HSR station can be fully realized. Stations outside of city centers generally see lower intensity of development and are less desirable than those located within or near downtown areas. The Palmdale station location is near central Palmdale, but because most of the City’s growth occurred after the automobile era, Palmdale lacks an urban core on the same scale as these case study cities. To achieve similar benefits as other case study cities, such as Lille and Le Mans, Palmdale may need to first create an urban center or place that acts as a center of activity that the HSR station can build on. In addition to locating a station near the urban core of a city, providing local transit, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between the HSR station and the surrounding neighborhoods and city districts helps to amplify the impact of a HSR station, and spur development along connections to the HSR station.

**Palmdale should work to ensure seamless connections between the future HSR station and a station layout which allows for denser development directly next to the HSR station itself.** While consideration must be given for automobile access to and from the future HSR station, efforts to make automobile access easier should not be at the expense of pedestrian, bicycling, or transit access. The current rail right of way acts as a major barrier to east-west movement in the station area, with many car and pedestrian access points restricted to only a few connections. For instance, it would be beneficial from an economic
perspective to connect Avenue Q across the current and proposed rail right of way. Development on both sides of the train right-of-way would benefit from east-west connections proximate to the future high-speed rail station on Avenue Q. Palmdale should explore ways to mitigate that barrier as part of the HSR construction project, using the construction of HSR as an opportunity to better reconnect parts of the station area and the city.

Connectivity policies include multimodal connections such as a light-rail, streetcar, buses or shuttles that can take people from the HSR station to other intra-city and intercity areas, as well as major investments in the public realm. Lille and Le Mans both invested in fixed-rail transit to serve their HSR station and provide seamless connections to the remainder of the urban core and other outlying districts. Every effort should be made to ensure the station area is first and foremost friendly and well connected for pedestrians and bicyclists, secondly ensuring seamless multi-modal connections, and finally ensuring access for automobiles that does not hinder the first two modes. Such policies include providing wide and shaded sidewalks, removing barriers to pedestrian movement such as grade separated roadways, missing crosswalks, and roads that are too wide. The station area should have the highest standards for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to encourage non-automobile transportation and attract investment.

**STATION AREA PLANNING,** such as zoning and land use controls near station areas that are supportive of transit-oriented development, can dramatically boost the impact a new HSR station will have on Palmdale. Appropriate planning and zoning regulations can ensure the station area’s long term vitality, and also prevent it from becoming a single use district such as a “nine to five” employment center. While office development often takes the land nearest the HSR stations, residential development can also be focused in the station areas. A mix of uses is vital to healthy station areas, allowing a variety of activities to take place at all hours, and every effort should be made to ensure that the surrounding zoning supports the creation of multiple uses surrounding the station. All international case study cities prepared a focused station area plan and updated land use regulations around their new HSR stations.

**HSR service can catalyze development that creates a “sense of place.”** The HSR station in Montabaur was built on previously vacant agricultural land with little existing urban structure in place. Montabaur was able to implement a station area development strategy that resulted in well-connected and pedestrian permeable urban environments. Palmdale can similarly use HSR service as the spark that begins to build a unique urban center for the community.

**Minimum density controls may also be necessary** to ensure that the immediate station area is not developed too quickly at low densities, as was the case in Ciudad Real. Both zoning and density controls must acknowledge a long-term development timeframe that spans multiple decades (e.g. over 30 years in the case of Le Mans) to ensure decisions made in the station area now do not impede future opportunities in the years to come. The current TOD Land Use Overlay for the area provides an aspirational framework for the long-term evolution of the Study Area after HSR, but there is a need to
phase and concentrate initial catalytic development, and provide zoning for these initial areas that is in line with currently feasible development. Minimum density controls need not mean that every part of the Study Area is planned for high density development. Such controls can include requirements on lower-density development as well including requiring small-lot zoning or townhomes as opposed to large-lot single family homes, to create a diversity of uses around the station area, that can grow over time.

**Governance** strategies that are bespoke to the development and disposition of land around the station area are tantamount to ensure it is developed in a way that maximizes its proximity to the HSR station. The case study cities, aside from Ciudad Real, created public development corporations that could acquire, dispose or develop surrounding land under public-private partnerships. These public development corporations generally included local, regional, and national government as well as private stakeholders and the rail authority. They ensured the station area was developed with an eye towards the long term, as development around HSR stations takes place over decades, while also ensuring that the public’s vision for the station area is implemented.

Control of strategic land is a key aspect of station area development. Montabaur partnered with its local state government to acquire land in the station area for development purposes, and could ensure that development followed the desires of the municipality. Palmdale has significant land under its control in the Study Area. Some of this land is owned by the Successor Agency to the City’s Redevelopment Agency and must be disposed per the City’s Long Range Property Management Plan approved by the State Department of Finance. The land use framework for the Study Area could help to leverage this land to catalyze a mixed-use center of activity that can later be leveraged by station area development once HSR service begins. While governance mechanisms in the United States and California are different from those in Germany, some financial tools such as EIFDs may have an application.

**Leveraging the Benefits of HSR**

The impact of HSR on Palmdale has the potential to be unprecedented. While HSR’s effect on total population and employment are difficult to predict, case studies indicate that HSR can aid in the revitalization of a city’s economy and provide a catalyst for population and employment growth with the right public interventions. Given Palmdale’s strategic location just outside an increasingly expensive and geographically constrained metropolitan area, the ability for Palmdale to capture a larger share of regional growth is heightened.

One of the most documented effects of HSR is the increased station area concentration and density of development that coincide with HSR service. The large economic catchment areas, reliable travel times, and extremely high carrying capacity can bring large-scale development to the station area in Palmdale. Palmdale has historically grown outward into surrounding desert land, but HSR presents an opportunity for Palmdale to concentrate some of its future growth inward and lessen the negative impacts of suburban sprawl such as congestion, air pollution, and higher infrastructure costs.
HSR service can enhance Palmdale’s brand, in the region, the state and beyond. Development around the HSR station gives Palmdale the opportunity to create new quality urban places for residents and visitors alike. HSR puts Palmdale within easy reach of millions of Californians, building potential for more people to come and experience the city’s local attractions and lifestyle. Connectivity with the rest of the state, and potentially Las Vegas via the proposed XpressWest train, is also attractive to employers. Some existing firms in and outside of Palmdale may relocate to the station area to take advantage of this major asset. Partially coupled with business growth in the station area, business travelers will find Palmdale in easy reach of major corporate hubs in San Francisco and Los Angeles. Cities such as Le Mans, France, experienced robust increases in business travelers after HSR service began, and Lille saw increases in convention activity as well.

While HSR service brings great opportunities to Palmdale, these opportunities can be best realized if Palmdale invests in the creation of a mixed-use urban place before HSR service begins and commits to a compelling vision for the station area to be held over the long term. HSR should be seen as a catalyst for growth, but not a sole source. Only through a comprehensive set of policy interventions and placemaking investments can Palmdale make the most of its future HSR station.

Placemaking Case Studies

In light of Palmdale’s efforts to create a unique center for the community, which will continue until the arrival of HSR and beyond, HR&A also conducted four case studies focused on the creation of place and station area development strategy, focusing on examples in the US context.

HR&A selected Reston Town Center and Bay Meadows to understand placemaking in suburban areas as well as phasing and implementation strategies. Reston Town Center was a greenfield site with one developer that created an urban neighborhood from scratch, while Bay Meadows was a redevelopment of a former horse-racing track with a strong emphasis on mixed-use development and pedestrian-friendly design.\(^5\) These case studies help inform actions, strategies, and design guidelines that Palmdale could

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\(^5\) Greenfield sites are sites which have never previously been developed and are typically located near the fringe of a metropolitan area.
use in the creation of an urban place before HSR service begins. Denver Union Station was selected as a case study to learn how multi-modal station investments can be effectively leveraged to catalyze a vibrant mixed-use district in its vicinity, with a focus on financial strategies and governance structure in the US context. Denver Union Station presents a framework for preliminary strategies to develop the immediate station when HSR service arrives in Palmdale. HR&A selected the City of Pasadena, a metropolitan center located approximately ten miles from Downtown Los Angeles, to learn about ways that the City managed to increase the competitiveness of its historic downtown area (Old Pasadena) relative to other regional shopping centers, particularly through financing public realm improvements. Pasadena offers insight to both maintaining and enhancing the future public realm and competitiveness of the station area once development in the area comes to fruition.

Reston Town Center and Bay Meadows emphasize the creation of successful urban places by prioritizing the pedestrian experience and allowing density that is significant enough to sustain local retail for residents and workers to patron and enjoy. Both case studies emphasize the need for zoning flexibility and phasing that allows development to meet changing and evolving market demands while also ensuring dense and focused development conducive to creating urban vitality. The creation of a strong urban grid was necessary in both cases to provide a pleasant and well-connected pedestrian environment capable of supporting higher densities, and strategies to share parking among various land uses to lower total development costs.

Reston Town Center illustrates that real estate premiums, and thus enhanced tax revenue, are possible through the creation of unique and desirable urban neighborhoods. Palmdale should recognize that good urban design can also be a financial strategy for the City, allowing focused growth in central areas that can negate some future public infrastructure outlays for new outward suburban growth while providing higher long-term revenues to the City than the current pattern of development in Palmdale.

In Denver, a city-led effort to consolidate railyard space created highly desirable development parcels under single-owner control. While this is a challenge in the absence of a Redevelopment Agency, Palmdale’s Successor Agency currently has control of some vacant land within the Study Area, and should consider creative mechanisms to incentivize the kind of development it wants to see in the surrounding station area using these land assets. In Denver, land assembly was one methodology, but ultimately the process was driven through a partnership between the public and private sectors.

Key interventions for Pasadena included the creation of a dedicated funding source for maintenance, safety, and improvement of the area. This funding source in both cases stemmed from local businesses, and was construed as an investment in their bottom line as opposed to a series of expensive projects. Strong cooperation of local businesses allowed them to form assessments on themselves, as improvements to the districts at large improved their foot traffic. Thus, local businesses had a strong incentive to pay for public improvements to the area, and could prioritize improvements that would make the largest difference to their patrons. Pasadena also created public infrastructure such as parking and used creative zoning regulations that unbundled on-site parking for retail. In the absence of redevelopment TIF, other value capture mechanisms may need to be explored to replicate such ideas in
Palmdale. Once the station area becomes sufficiently developed, Palmdale should consider the creation of a Business Improvement District to coalesce resources and political capital around furthering a long-term vision for the HSR station area.
CHAPTER 1. CASE STUDIES

1.1 Lille, France

HSR Overview

Lille is located in the northeastern area of France at a major railway junction between Paris, London, and Brussels. Service to the Euralille Station in Lille began in 1993 with a TGV HSR connection to Paris and a Eurostar connection to London and Brussels in 1994. The Station was later served by Thayls trains to Brussels in 1997.

The City of Lille aimed to develop an international business center to leverage their new centrally-located HSR station. To execute this development, the City created a government-based development management organization (Euralille Metropole) to carry out the development. The original plans called for a HSR station outside of the city. However, not wanting to be bypassed, the City launched a lobbying effort to bring HSR to a more central location in order to develop an international business center, going so far as to pay 500 million francs (equivalent to $120 million in 2016 dollars) toward the extra cost of rerouting the TGV to the center of Lille.

| Year Built | 1993 |
| Key Travel Times | Brussels: 36 min Paris: 62 min London: 81 min |
| Station Location | Adjacent to Historic Core |

Context

The Lille metropolitan area was inhabited by just over one million people in 2009, more populous than the Antelope Valley. The city proper is home to approximately 230,000 people, larger than that of Palmdale. Lille is an intermediate city between major metropolitan areas, and the travel time to Paris (62 minutes) is greater than that of the proposed travel time between Palmdale and Los Angeles Union Station on HSR.

Neighborhood Before HSR

Before HSR, the Station area was home to military barracks adjacent to the existing old train station in Lille. According to one survey of HSR professionals and academics, the Station area was “derelict,” or suffering from neglect and disinvestment. Similarly the Study Area has not shared as robustly in the growth experienced in its city as a whole.

Real Estate and Economic Impacts

In the 1980s, Lille’s economy was slowing from deindustrialization due to competition abroad and the decline of the textile, manufacturing, and mining industries. The city was suffering from low levels of education in its workforce. City employment was consistently declining, and according to the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE), the city lost 5,000 jobs between 1982 and 1990.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Master plan commissioned for Euralille 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Formation of the development zone and public enterprise to lead development of Euralille 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>HSR service begins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Creation of development zone for Euralille 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Delivery of first offices and housing for Euralille 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Expected construction start for Euralille 3.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the introduction of HSR, Euralille grew to be the third most powerful financial, commercial, and industrial center in France with over 3.2 million square feet of commercial floor space in 2014. Employment in Lille eventually stabilized, gaining 700 jobs by 1999 and nearly 13,000 additional jobs by 2006. The composition of employment also changed greatly, from a larger proportion of lower-skilled industry and construction workers to more mid-level managers, professionals, and other service sector workers.

The conference center, built shortly after HSR, was quickly booked full and required expansion, as Lille could capture more meetings and conventions due to its central location to other major metropolitan areas. Lille’s large historic core and cultural assets such as the Place du General-de-Gaulle no doubt aided in helping Lille become a successful conference destination, but the increase in convention activity alludes to HSR access being an important factor, opening opportunities for cities to attract more conference activity than currently exists.

Euralille 1 was the first phase of development around Euralille Station, led by Euralille Metropole. Construction of Euralille 1 began in conjunction with HSR in Lille with the hopes of becoming an

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international business center. Today, Euralille 1, also called Euralille Center, consists of five mixed-use neighborhoods with approximately 1,700 residents. The development contains retail and an entertainment complex, a business center with two office towers over 20 stories, a 17-acre park, and lodging, including a Suite Hotel. This development around the Euralille Station has been credited with raising the profile of the city and helping to increase economic activity overall.

Real estate development in and around the Station area has continued. In 2000, Euralille 2 began development by the Eurolille Metropole, and includes approximately 560,000 square feet of residential, 750,000 square feet of office, 58,000 square feet of trading space, and 140,000 square feet of hotel space. While the original project had a higher proportion of residential development, the continuation of office development around the Station suggests that employment uses near the HSR station have been very successful.

Additional development is planned, with Euralille 3, located adjacent to Euralille 1 and 2, proposed to contain 1.4 million square feet of office space, thousands of housing units, shops, bars and restaurants, as well as 54,000 square feet of sports, culture, and leisure space.

Supportive Public Policies

A widely cited key to the Lille station area’s success was regional cooperation and the reaching of unanimous agreements among different levels of government to ensure the area’s success. The mayor of Lille managed to forge political agreement among municipal government, regional government, railway authorities, local public-private partnerships, national government, and private citizens. Similarly, strong political leadership was combined with a consistent strategy over a long term period.

Consistency over long timeframes and a strong vision are tantamount given the timescales of development involved with HSR, as illustrated by the expected completion date of Euralille 3, nearly four decades after HSR service began. Lille proceeded with phased implementation plans and a strategy that valued the long-term vision for the area over short term market gains.

A metropolitan-wide program for the adaptive reuse of facilities resulted in major reorganization of land uses and activity locations surrounding the station, some of which helped to build on the momentum near the HSR station. Additionally, due to the development being part of a large master-

12 Aubry, M. (2015, April 24). In Lille, the municipality wants to "finish" Euralille third business area of France. Nord Pas de Calais.
planned community, Lille ensured a mix of uses beyond just office near the HSR station, increasing the area’s urban vitality.

In addition to the public sector’s active and consistent role in development, Lille focused additional transit investments around the new HSR station and the old train station, including rerouting an existing tram. The City ensured relatively seamless transportation connections between its metro system, tramway, and bus network. Ensuring surrounding areas are tied to the station area through available transportation options is key to incentivizing economic agglomerations. Focusing activity around HSR stations and providing easy connections to concentrations of service-sector activity were also vital to catalyzing area redevelopment.

Finally, Lille also made significant public realm investments to improve the city districts surrounding the station areas, to ensure their integration into the surrounding urban structure. Such improvements included the addition of bike lanes, ensuring easy pedestrian connections between the two train stations and the neighborhoods, the addition of a footbridge directly connecting the two stations to minimize walking distances, ensuring adequate crosswalks at all intersections, and minimizing roadway grade separations where possible.

**Economic Development Lessons Learned**

Lille was at the HSR interchange between three major world cities, while Palmdale is connected to only two. European cities generally have seen less of their historic cores destroyed over time than many of their American counterparts, as European cities predominately maintained or invested in more mass transportation systems post-1960 and prevented large-scale freeway construction into urban cores. Palmdale, due to most of its growth happening after the automobile era, never developed an urban core on the scale of Lille. Despite these differences, Palmdale can learn from the supportive public policies that were used in Lille to successfully leverage HSR, even if the results of similar policies applied to Palmdale may not be identical. However, unlike Lille, Palmdale lies on the metropolitan fringe of Los Angeles, and is already experiencing a spillover of regional growth from its location that is likely to increase with HSR service. Palmdale can harness this growth to develop its station area and create a unique destination around its station.

Palmdale could assist in catalyzing development through the creation of better multi-modal connections between the proposed HSR station and other activity or transportation nodes such as the Civic Center, the Palmdale Regional Airport, Lancaster, inhabited areas of unincorporated Los Angeles County, and the existing or new Metrolink station. Cooperation between local and regional government, local transportation agencies such as Metro, the Antelope Valley Transit Authority, as well as state agencies such as Caltrans and the CHSRA will be crucial to implementing a consistent and long term vision for these future transportation networks. Much as the original Euralille project sought to alleviate the barrier effect of a major motorway, Palmdale can work with agencies such as Caltrans to ensure maximum
pedestrian permeability between the future HSR station and the rest of the surrounding urban fabric, reconnecting Avenue Q and lessening the barrier effect of the rail right of way and Sierra Highway. **Palmdale should consider other transit options such as light rail, streetcars, or bus-rapid transit to spread the HSR development potential to a larger area.**

**Successful station areas thrive from a dense mixed-use environment.** Palmdale could ensure its zoning code and parking requirements are flexible enough that mixed-use development is financially feasible, and implement land use controls that prevent any single land use from completely dominating the station area.

**Palmdale should acknowledge the multi-decade timelines of station area development when planning for the station area and when implementing development plans.** Because of the long term and dynamic nature of developing an HSR station area, Palmdale should use caution when deciding what types and scale of development to allow in the immediate station area. If Palmdale allows development to occur at too low of a density level in the near term (e.g. large lot single family homes), valuable vacant or underutilized land in the immediate station area may be quickly exhausted, hindering future denser development as market demand evolves over time. Therefore, Palmdale should adopt a long-term phasing strategy and development guidelines for the station area. The phasing strategy should encourage focused lower-density urban format development in earlier phases further from the station and higher density mixed-use development in the immediate station area when HSR service begins in 2029.
1.2 Montabaur, Germany

HSR Overview

Montabaur is located in the western area of Germany on an Intercity-Express (“ICE”) HSR line halfway between Frankfurt and Cologne. Service to the Montabaur Station, a newly built station a half mile to the northwest of the existing historic city center, began in 2002.

The City of Montabaur sits in a leading region of wine production and has local industries in the manufacturing of ammunitions, traffic safety system engineering, plastic film production, and is the headquarters of United Internet, a major internet service provider. Montabaur had no urban rail transit at the time HSR began operations, but was served by regional trains at an old station one quarter mile south of the new HSR station. The HSR station is served by regional buses, acting as the Montabaur’s central bus terminal.

Context

As of 2014, the population of Montabaur was 12,600, substantially smaller than the City of Palmdale, while the surrounding region is home to approximately 200,000, larger than the City of Palmdale. Montabaur’s HSR travel time to Frankfurt is approximately 40 minutes, comparable to that of the proposed HSR travel time between Palmdale and Los Angeles Union Station. Montabaur is widely cited in academic literature as showing the impact of HSR service absent other substantial changes in the City over the same time period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Built</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Key Travel Times | Frankfurt: 40 minutes  
Cologne: 33 minutes |
| Station Location | Outside Edge of Historic Core |
Neighborhood Before HSR

Before HSR, the station area was at the very edge of the city, with development having since closed the gap. The areas directly upon which the station is built were previously agricultural land. Part of the area that has been redeveloped south of the current HSR station were once the right of way for the old railway infrastructure that served Montabaur before it was dismantled after the new HSR station opened.

Real Estate and Economic Impacts

HSR service invigorated Montabaur’s economy, with GDP growth in Montabaur rising by 2.7 percent above the local region along the new route that did not get a HSR station. Originally projected to serve 300 riders per day, the station was attracting nearly 3,000 passengers each day in 2007, with 60 percent of daily commuters heading to jobs in Frankfurt. The unemployment rate in Montabaur fell to less than five percent by 2007, the lowest in its region.

The area around the HSR station has grown into Montabaur’s major business hub, and a majority of new development has occurred near the HSR station. In the 1990s Montabaur began planning for development around the future HSR station, finalizing plans for 4,000 residents and up to 2,000 employees on the 126-acre site in 1994. Development of a portion of this area, later named “ICE Park Montabaur,” began in 2002 in conjunction with the start of rail service. The first developments in ICE Park Montabaur were a cinema and commercial office buildings. Growth in office space has been consistent over time, and today

16 Melibaeva, S. (2010). Development Impacts of High-Speed Rail: Megalopolis Formation and Implications for Portugal’s Lisbon-Porto High-Speed Rail Link. Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology. p. 149
ICE Park Montabaur holds over 263,000 square feet of office space with 26,000 square feet currently under construction.\textsuperscript{21}

**Figure 1.8. Total Office Space in ICE Park Montabaur**

![chart showing total office space from 2002 to 2016](chart.png)

Source: Montabaur.de

Development around the Montabaur HSR station brought substantial employment and company growth to Montabaur. By 2011, ICE Park Montabaur was home to 1,000 jobs and 30 companies. This business park has continued to grow, and today it holds about 1,800 jobs and 80 companies.\textsuperscript{22} Major companies occupying the office space include the manufacturing firm SKET, the engineering firm Ruffert and Partners, a major German Internet company 1&1, as well as offices for the local chamber of commerce and departments of transportation. Given the relatively small size of Montabaur, this scale of real estate development would likely not have been possible without the HSR connection to larger nearby cities.

\textsuperscript{21} Stadt Montabaur. (2016, June 23).

\textsuperscript{22} Stadt Montabaur. (2016, June 23).
The Montabaur HSR station also became a major anchor for retail development. After being delayed by a series of lawsuits, the Fashion Outlet Montabaur began construction in 2013 and opened in the summer of 2015.\textsuperscript{23,24} This outlet center contains approximately 108,000 square feet of retail space with 350 jobs and 45 shops. A majority of the shops, 80 percent, are selling clothing and footwear. The center sees approximately two million visitors a year and has an estimated revenue of $66 million annually, and an investment of approximately $81 million.\textsuperscript{25}

Montabaur used land previously occupied by the original rail right of way to create a new live-work neighborhood. About 20 private buildings have been completed in this area so far, most of them four story structures. This residential area has been built up around the original train station, which has been converted to office and residential uses, and is connected to the rest of the ICE Park Montabaur by a bridge over the local river. The new units in this area are expected to achieve double the rental rates and selling prices of residential units in other parts of Montabaur, given the high demand to live near the ICE station.\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{24} Stadt Montabaur. (2016, June 23).
Supportive Public Policies

The City of Montabaur, in partnership with the local state, acquired land for the new residential neighborhood and performed environmental remediation. With ownership and control over station area land, Montabaur could ensure that the new residential neighborhood was built to the standards set by the community. The remediation was done for approximately $2.1 million, with the state covering 70 percent of the costs.27

The City combined HSR with strategic land use planning to grow its brand.28 Montabaur intended to relinquish its image as an old and historic city, and HSR was part of its plan to boost its new image as modern, innovative, and open minded places for tourists or other enterprises. Through adopted city plans in the 1990s, Montabaur ensured prime station-adjacent land was reserved for office and commercial uses that would be attractive to cultivating and attracting new businesses. The City also used the planning process to bridge the gap between the HSR station and the existing historic center of town, and balanced robust station area development with preserving the rural charm of other districts of Montabaur.

The City consolidated other local transportation around the HSR station, bolstering its role as a major transportation hub. The City, State, and national government worked together to fund a new bus station at the HSR station. The bus station is placed directly at the main entrance to the HSR station, helping to prioritize mass transportation access over those who park at the station in private automobiles. The endeavor came at a total cost of $4.5 million, and today over 230 buses access the station each day.29

27 Rhein-Beitung. (2012, August 8).
Parking, at least on the south side of the HSR station, was strategically placed away from the station entrance. The major surface parking lot to the southeast of the HSR station was placed in a location that funnels pedestrians through the Fashion Outlet Montabaur on their way to the HSR station itself. A pedestrian bridge over the local roadway reinforces this effect, and encourages HSR users to stop and linger in the area before getting into their vehicles as well as providing a consistent flow of people to invigorate the area. The north side of the station, however, is occupied by a massive surface parking lot, and it is unlikely HSR patrons parking on this side of the station stay in the station area for very long before or after their HSR trip. This large parking lot represents a major redevelopment opportunity in the future if demand warrants.

Economic Development Lessons Learned

**HSR service can catalyze development that creates a “sense of place” from scratch.** The HSR station in Montabaur was built on previously vacant agricultural land with little existing urban structure in place. Montabaur was able to implement a station area development strategy that resulted in well-connected and pedestrian permeable urban environments. Palmdale can similarly use HSR service as the spark that begins to build a unique urban center for the community.

**Palmdale should work to ensure seamless connections between the future HSR station and a station layout which allows dense development directly next to the HSR station itself.** While consideration must be given for automobile access to and from the future HSR station, efforts to make automobile access easier should not be at the expense of pedestrian, bicycle, or transit access. The current rail right of way acts as a major barrier to east-west movement in the station area, with many car and pedestrian access points restricted to only a few connections. Palmdale should explore ways to mitigate that barrier as part of the HSR construction project, using the construction of HSR as an opportunity to better reconnect parts of the station area.

**New HSR service can boost the Palmdale brand.** Palmdale can use the HSR service and development as an opportunity to redefine its image to both its residents and the remainder of the State of California. Attracting a mix of uses to the station area in a unique and pedestrian-friendly urban design can help redefine Palmdale’s image as a unique and dynamic place to live, work, or visit. HSR service represents an opportunity to build a true mixed-use urban neighborhood and a more pedestrian friendly Downtown area, and help build a unique city identity. Palmdale can help bolster such an area by focusing planned major public investments, such as a convention center, near the station area.

**Palmdale can engage in strategic land acquisition to ensure it keeps some control of station area development.** While projects developed on private land will undoubtedly be a major factor in development around the HSR station, Palmdale can acquire strategic parcels and use these acquisitions
to guide future development at key nodes. These key interventions can act as the spark that guides further private sector investment into the station area. In Montabaur, land prices grew 82 percent between 1996 and 2006, while the price of land throughout the entire state only grew 36 percent. This ensures the station area is not underutilized for quick developer gains, and development is implemented with an eye for the long term. Additionally, public land acquisition can guard against rampant land speculation due to HSR service.

1.3 Le Mans, France

**HSR Overview**

Le Mans is located in the Pays de la Loire region of France along a TGV HSR line to Paris. Service to the Le Mans Station began in 1990 with a TGV HSR connection to Paris. Construction is currently underway to continue this line to Rennes, France, slated to open in late 2016.

Initially, the French National Railway Company, Societe nationale des Chemins de fer francais (SNCF) intended to build a peripheral station on a new HSR line, bypassing Le Mans to reach Nantes and Rennes more quickly. Strong mobilization by local authorities against that plan led to the creation of a station within Le Mans urban core. The HSR station in Le Mans was constructed upon the same site as the existing conventional train station, preserving part of the original building. The City of Le Mans had no existing intra-city rail transit system at the time HSR was implemented, but later built tramways, similar to modern streetcars, in 2007.\(^{31}\) Users of the HSR line between Paris and Le Mans include a large contingent of business travelers, as well as commuters who travel to Paris one or more days a week.\(^{32,33}\)

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31 Palmdale is, however, a stop on the Antelope Valley Metrolink line.
Context

Le Mans is a mid-sized city with a HSR travel time to a major city, Paris, of approximately an hour, longer than that of the proposed travel time between Palmdale and Los Angeles Union Station on HSR. The Le Mans metropolitan area population was 345,000 in 2012, smaller than the Antelope Valley, while the city proper is home to approximately 144,000 people, similar to Palmdale.

Neighborhood Before HSR

The area to the northeast of the station area is part of the historic core of Le Mans. As a result, little physical development has occurred in this area since the introduction of HSR. The area to the southwest contained many low-rise industrial buildings, parking lots, and other vacant or underutilized railways sites and abandoned industrial brownfields. Economic activities in the area included small-scale industrial production—distribution and repair, food processing, and small craft enterprises— but many of these industrial uses were slowly disappearing from the deindustrialization occurring in Le Mans. Much of the new business activity was taking place in business parks away from the old city center. This area to the south of the station would later be developed as the Novaxis business center.

Real Estate and Economic Impacts

The introduction of HSR to Le Mans did not completely turn around declines in population and employment citywide, but did succeed in stabilizing the city’s economy and redirecting development to the station area. Like many other cities in France, Le Mans was deindustrializing in the 1980s. According to France’s National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE), the population of Le Mans peaked in 1975 at 152,000. Between 1975 and 1990, the city’s population declined by nearly 7,000 people, or 4.5 percent. Le Mans saw its first population increase in 1999, the first census after HSR service was implemented, growing by just over 500 people. However, the population has since declined by nearly 2,000 people.36

The city experienced growth in business and convention visitors and an increase in hotel stays. However, this was coupled with decreases in the average length of hotel stays as business travelers generally stayed for shorter periods than leisure travelers.37 While the industrial sector in the City continued to decline, this was partially offset by growth in the service sector.38 Much of this growth in service sector business activity took place in the Station Area, due to the construction of the Novaxis Business Center.

HSR had a positive impact on real estate in the city. The number of transactions of raw land and building sites doubled in three years. One study found that the general price of developable land in Le Mans doubled in the four years after HSR service, increasing from $82 to $164, 200 percent, per square foot.39 Furthermore, annual apartment rents rose from $10 to $18 per square foot, 180 percent, in three years after HSR service began.40

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Master planning for Novaxis Business Center begins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>HSR service to Le Mans commences, first buildings in Novaxis open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Planning for Novaxud begins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Expected completion of the Novaxud development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

38 Sometimes referred to as the tertiary sector, includes sectors such as government, professional services, banking, healthcare, real estate, and education.
40 Sands, B. D. (1993). p. 27
Planning for the Novaxis Business Center was launched in 1986, offering affordable office space to local and Parisian firms that could leverage the new direct HSR connection. The project was developed by the City of Le Mans and implemented by a partnership of local government authorities, and consisted of two phases. This partnership could acquire land, and through control by various stakeholders, ensure the development on the land balanced both the community’s vision as well as economic viability. The first phase, which opened in conjunction with HSR service, focused on space for local companies to expand their operations, while the second phase focused on attracting tertiary firms from Paris. Just one year after HSR service began, the 108,000 square feet of office space was already 96 percent occupied, and an additional 237,000 square feet of office space was planned. As of 2009, the business center was home to 80 companies and employed over 3,000 people. Tenants occupying the Novaxis campus early on included telecommunications, patent consulting, IT, educational, accounting, and architecture firms and organizations.

Starting in 2006, Novaxud, a continuation of the Novaxis Business Center, was launched. It contains over 750,000 square feet of office space leased to companies such as XLRE, ST Ericsson, and BSN Medical Care. Despite relatively flat historical population growth in Le Mans, real estate development continues in Novaxud, with over 500 residential units planned as part of a third phase expected to finish in 2019.

In the last five years, there has also been some minimal development on the northeastern side of the station integrated with the historic core, including two mid-rise office buildings and a senior apartment building. These began soon after the local tramway system was implemented in 2007. Current companies occupying the Novaxis and Novaxud Business Centers include architecture firms, offices of major medical equipment and electronics manufacturers, insurance companies, digital incubators, and software companies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Companies</th>
<th>Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

42 Sands, B.D. (1993). p. 27
Supportive Public Policies

A partnership of Le Mans municipal and metropolitan governments, and the local department\textsuperscript{46} government drove the Novaxis Business Center’s success by adapting development strategies for Le Mans’ local economy, marketing the first office space at local businesses and then marketing space in the established business hub at Parisian firms. Additionally, the development created Class A office space that was accessible both along HSR, and, through public realm investments by the City, to the surrounding neighborhood as well.\textsuperscript{47} Part of this accessibility improvement was to create pedestrian underpasses that limited the barrier of the railway, connecting the Business Center with the historic core on the other side of the tracks. Strong cooperation of various City departments to ensure connectivity and access, as well as cooperation from the SNCF, was key to the success of the Novaxis Business Center.

The City of Le Mans made significant multimodal connectivity investments in order to fully leverage the HSR station, which has increased development in the station area, added to its desirability and reconnected marginalized districts in other parts of the City. The City improved the station area in 2006 by adding a large public plaza to connect the station with the historic city center and adding a tramway for travelers to make connections to the rest of the city. The City continues to expand the tramway today, spurring mid-rise office and residential development on the north side of the station area. Le Mans also upgraded nearby streets to improve connectivity and installed bicycle racks on both sides of the station. The City moved its main bus terminal, which is served by five bus lines, to the station site to strengthen its function as an intermodal hub.

While HSR appeared to slow Le Man’s decline and stabilize its economy, it alone did not lead to robust economic growth for the City. Other simultaneous investments, such as the local tramway system and public realm improvements, were needed to support development in the station area. As such, HSR in Le Mans was a catalyst for improving the station area and diversifying the city’s economy, but was not the sole catalyst for these changes.\textsuperscript{48}

Economic Development Lessons Learned

Le Mans had a large existing urban core to expand from at the start of HSR service, while Palmdale does not. Therefore, Palmdale should work to create a mixed-use urban place between now and the start of HSR service to add to the attractiveness of the station area when HSR service commences. While station-adjacent land should be saved for the beginning of HSR service, when development potential is highest,
nearby land can be developed into a unique destination that can be leveraged by future station-adjacent development.

While attracting regional firms to Palmdale’s HSR station should be a long-term goal, the experience in Le Mans demonstrates the use of local firms to foster an initial business hub. **Palmdale can work with developers to market commercial space near the HSR station to local Antelope Valley firms to cultivate a thriving business hub that will be attractive to larger and more regional-serving firms when HSR service begins.**

Unlike Le Mans, Palmdale is experiencing robust growth in its population and employment, and has the potential to redirect a portion of this future growth to the Study Area before HSR begins. Le Mans was able to develop a major concentration of business and economic activity around its HSR station despite declines in employment and population. Le Mans was also able to slow down the decentralization taking place within its city limits, and increase the population within 2.5 miles of the station area after nearly three decade of decline.\(^{49}\)

While HSR can help to catalyze change, Palmdale will require investments in the public realm and improvements to ensure connectivity with the station. Le Mans did not experience robust citywide employment growth after HSR service began, but it did intervene to develop the station area to improve its attractiveness. Similarly, Palmdale cannot expect HSR to be the sole source of development, and should view HSR as one of many tools in economic development to be used as part of a long term comprehensive strategy. Leveraging the HSR station, however, will require investments in strong mobility connections between the future station and the remainder of Palmdale.

**Effective development of the station area in Palmdale may require a partnership to ensure the station area vision is followed.** A partnership between local and regional government, as well as the CHSRA, may ensure development in the station area follows the long-term vision for the area and is developed to a sufficient density to fully leverage the state and federal HSR investment. As one of the primary stakeholders in such a partnership, Palmdale can ensure that its vision for the station area development is followed.

\(^{49}\) Stanke, B. (2009). p. 42
1.4 Ciudad Real, Spain

HSR Overview

Ciudad Real is located in the south central area of Spain on an AVE HSR line to Madrid that continues to Seville. Service to the Ciudad Real Station, a newly built station just to the northeast of the historic city center, began in 1992 with an AVE HSR connection to Madrid. A HSR branch to Malaga, Spain, was completed in late 2007.

The City of Ciudad Real has no existing local rail transit system. Ciudad Real does operate a network of six urban bus lines. The City itself is very compact, and is, geographically, similar in size to the Study Area in Palmdale.

Context

The Ciudad Real metropolitan area, which includes the neighboring City of Miguelturra, is smaller than the City of Palmdale in terms of population. The metropolitan area contained only 90,000 people, while the city proper was home to approximately 75,000 people in 2014. Ciudad Real has a HSR travel time to a major city, Madrid, of approximately an hour, longer than that of the proposed travel time between Palmdale and Los Angeles Union Station on HSR.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Built</th>
<th>1992</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key Travel Times</td>
<td>Madrid: 52 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station Location</td>
<td>Slightly Outside Historic Core</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Neighborhood Before HSR
Before HSR, the station area was at the very edge of the city. Many of the areas immediately surrounding the station area were vacant, but were slowly building up over time. HSR accelerated this growth, and filled in the remaining gaps between the historic city core and the HSR station. The area to the northeast, also relatively empty aside from a few older industrial buildings, later became the AVE Gate Business Park, development for which continues to this day.

Real Estate and Economic Impacts
According to local scholars, before HSR, Ciudad Real was having economic issues due to limited accessibility. Ciudad Real had been bypassed by rail lines and highways connecting Madrid to other cities to the south. In the first years of HSR service, the impact on Ciudad Real’s population was minimal, and both Ciudad Real and Spain as a whole grew very slowly during that time (0.02 percent and 0.37 percent respectively). The country was in a deep recession in the mid-1990s, and growth did not return until the very end of the decade. Post-2000, Ciudad Real’s population outpaced Spain as a whole, growing 2.8 percent from 2000 to 2005, while Spain’s population only rose by 1.5 percent. During this time nearby Madrid reached full employment, and Ciudad Real swelled with commuters, known as “Avelinos” who used HSR to work in Madrid.
Ciudad Real saw major residential development in the decades after HSR service began, but the City did not promote dense development in the station area. While the station area did see, and continues to see, the existing vacant land and gaps filled in with residential development, much of the city’s expansion has been in new districts on the outskirts of town. However, owing to careful planning on the part of Ciudad Real, most of this new residential and mixed-use development is not suburban in nature, but instead takes the form of relatively dense, mid-rise buildings on a pedestrian-friendly street grid. Many of the new apartments and homes built in the immediate station area are dense townhomes, however some 5-7 story mixed-use apartment buildings have also been constructed.

Though the largest effects of HSR in Ciudad Real were on residential development, HSR also opened new business opportunities and increased the competitiveness of its local educational institutions. Indra, an information technology company, moved a software factory to Ciudad Real in the late 1990s, citing AVE as one of the key aspects of their decision. Additionally, according to a university department head, the AVE HSR service is credited with helping recruit students and attract high-caliber faculty to the Ciudad Real campus of the University of Castille-La Mancha.

After HSR service began, Ciudad Real approved the AVE Gate Business Park on the northeast side of the station, hoping to attract businesses and industries to the station area. The results here have been more modest, possibly owing to the industrial land use and to the separation of this area from the rest of the city. Much of this area still remains vacant, and the buildings that have been constructed are generally low-rise warehouses and industrial buildings.

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Supportive Public Policies

Ciudad Real, despite benefiting from the influx of residential demand from Madrid commuters, did not incentivize station area development. Substantial residential construction occurred in Ciudad Real, but the City failed to focus a significant portion of this residential development into the station area. With no large public intervention in place, much of the development of residential in the station area was very low-density in scale, as opposed to residential developments being built in other parts of the city. While townhomes near the HSR station were better than vacant land, tighter regulation of land uses and higher density zoning may have brought a more successful station area to Ciudad Real. More recent residential buildings have included higher density buildings, but there are few opportunity sites left to the southwest of the HSR station. Additionally, many of the areas closest to the HSR station do not have a mix of uses, preventing what could have been a natural expansion of the City’s historic core to the HSR station. It is unclear why Ciudad Real allowed the Station Area to develop so quickly at such a low density, but this illustrates the necessity for having a long-term vision for the area that can wait for the market to catch up.

The AVE Gate Business Park illustrates the need to carefully consider the land uses chosen for the station area. While the AVE Gate Business Park has been successful in attracting companies, the business park is low-density and likely a missed opportunity for a denser station area. However, the business park still contains large amounts of vacant land, so it is still possible Ciudad Real could still support and incentivize higher density, mixed-use development in this area. Palmdale should carefully consider what types of densities of development it wants to see in the station area and prohibit low-density employment uses that do not further the transit-oriented development goals for the station area.

One major constraint for developing the area may have simply been that the area is disconnected by the AVE tracks from the rest of the city, and was largely built in a vacant area. Ciudad Real did ensure some connectivity; the roadway and pedestrian connections pass easily under the elevated tracks. It is possible the nearly one-mile distance from the activity centers in the historic city core limited the effects of these good connections.

Economic Development Lessons Learned

Palmdale can leverage HSR access to larger and more expensive metropolitan areas to promote commercial and residential growth in the station area. Many HSR commuters to Los Angeles may choose Palmdale as a place to live upon initiation of service due to its lower cost of living and increased housing options. Similarly, office users may find larger office spaces in Palmdale more competitive with expensive options in the urban core and opt to move some of their operations near Palmdale’s HSR station. While industrial users do not appear significantly drawn to HSR stations, service sector users, particularly those with substantial business travel, find HSR stations as very attractive office locations. Palmdale should ensure that the space needs of service sector firms can be met in close proximity to the HSR station area,
and can work with the CHSRA to ensure discounted commuter fares or passes to encourage commuters to live in Palmdale.

**Palmdale should limit low-density uses surrounding the HSR station.** The industrial park on the north side of Ciudad Real’s station, while modestly successful in attracting companies, is also not the best use of valuable station-proximate land. To the south of the station, much of the land was quickly filled with townhomes and relatively low-density residential development, while the few remaining open parcels are now being developed with higher density buildings. Dense and mixed-use development is necessary for creating a station area that is attractive to firms and residents, while sustaining local retail in an urban format requires a critical mass of residents and employees that Ciudad Real did not achieve near its HSR station. Palmdale should develop density controls and phasing strategies to ensure that station area land is not developed too quickly or at too low a density to create a more vibrant activity hub. A long term vision for the station area that can be implemented in a phased manner, is required to ensure the station area is not built out too quickly.

**Connectivity should be ensured between the HSR station and surrounding neighborhoods, as well as within the station area itself.** Palmdale should ensure that the new HSR infrastructure does not become an added barrier, and should consider rail grade separations in lieu of street closures so as to not harm the pedestrian connectivity of the area.
1.5 Reston Town Center

Overview

Reston Town Center is a major development in the Washington, D.C. suburb of Reston, Virginia, approximately 20 miles from the center of the District of Columbia. This development is credited with being an early attempt to create an urban place in an otherwise car-oriented suburban area, and did so successfully without any access to mass transportation.\(^55\) In 1961, the National Capital Planning Commission ("NCPC") passed the Year 2000 plan, which emphasized focusing development along nodes leading out of Washington, DC to preserve rural and low density land uses in other outlying areas.\(^56\) In 1962, landowner and real estate entrepreneur Robert E. Simon conceived a master plan for the new community of Reston based on the principles of the NCPC guidelines, with Reston being founded two years later in 1964.\(^57\) Reston Town Center was planned as a node to focus future growth and to provide local residents an escape from the “monotony of suburbia,” as well as emphasizing pedestrian movements and public space over automobile traffic.\(^58\)

By 2010, the City of Reston had grown to over 58,000 people, and today Reston Town Center has developed into the centerpiece for the community with a mix of residential, retail, office, hospitality, and public space uses. Public spaces at Reston Town Center include an approximately 1-acre park, a public plaza, and a band shell for concerts that doubles as an ice skating rink in winter months.

\(^{55}\) The Reston Town Center station on the Washington Metro Silver Line is expected to open in 2020.
\(^{58}\) Simon Enterprises; Whittlesey & Conklin. (1962). p. 3
Today, Reston Town Center contains approximately 2.8 million square feet of office space, 50 shops, 30 restaurants, 530 hotel rooms, and 1,584 residential units. Rapid expansion is underway, with 508 residential units and 25,000 square feet of retail planned for the last surface parking of the Reston Town Center, and a 276,000 square foot office tower has been approved adjoining that development. Fairfax County is currently planning to redevelop the 50-acre plot to the north of the existing development into approximately 500 residential units, 340,000 square feet of office space, and retail space.

Supportive Public Policies

Flexible zoning was key to being able to implement the Reston Town Center project. Robert Simon aimed to create a “downtown” in the suburbs, but found that implementing his vision was not possible under the existing zoning and regulatory ordinances in Fairfax County. County leaders, persuaded by the boldness of the project, eventually created a new flexible “Residential Planned Community-Town Center Zone,” today known as “PRC” districts, to encourage the proposed development. This zoning district allowed for a variety of uses in close proximity, with the use of individual parcels determined by the developer and market.

Fairfax County allowed dense development at strategic locations by giving the master developer flexibility in where density could go. The provisions allowed a single master developer to move unused density at one parcel to any parcels of their choosing, as long as the total developable area under their control remained under a specific cap (13 persons per acre in this particular case). This gave the developer an ability to focus dense development within their master-planned area, allowing Reston Town Center to be built at a higher level of density that would have been possible through conventional zoning.

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60 CoStar
64 Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning. (2006). Planned Residential Community (PRC) Districts (Reston, Burke Center, and Cardinal Forest). Reston: Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning. p. 1
This focused density was necessary to support ground floor retail within the Reston Town Center and to add a critical mass of people to an area to create vitality.

Reston Town Center was planned as a place for pedestrians, with an interconnected grid and public realm improvements that encourage walking over driving. Such public realm improvements included local small-scale urban parks, trees, wide sidewalks, bike racks, and narrow streets that slowed automobile traffic. All of these contribute to a pleasant pedestrian experience and encourages visitors and local residents to choose walking or bicycling over driving.

Reston Town Center includes programming of public spaces that adds urban vitality. Reston Town Center was built with a band shell that provides numerous concerts and performances during the summer months, and becomes an ice-skating rink during winter months. These activities provide added attractions that draw visitors to the area and residents out into public spaces, while fostering a local sense of community that can be lacking in suburban format development that is dominated by private space.

Economic Development Lessons Learned

Dense, mixed-use, and pedestrian-oriented environments are not only attractive places for people to enjoy, but also carry substantial real estate premiums. A recent HR&A study found office rents in space at Reston Town Center to be nearly 25 percent higher than in the surrounding County as a whole. The space has attracted major corporate office tenants such as Google and Rolls Royce, and top of the line retail tenants like Apple. Thus, premiums for mixed-use environments can make development that would otherwise not be possible in Palmdale at current rents achievable, and such development premiums have the potential to generate additional revenues to the City above those generated by auto-oriented suburban development.

Like development around HSR stations, building new urban places from scratch requires strong and consistent vision and very long timeframes. While Reston Town Center was conceived in the early 1960s, the first phase of the project, which contained 530,000 square feet of office, 200,000 square feet or retail, and an 11-screen movie theater, did not open until 1990.

Reston Town Center was built without any nearby mass transportation, thus substantial amounts of parking were required to provide for employees, residents, and visitors coming to the area. Reston Town Center was able to lower some of its parking costs by sharing parking structures among its different uses, but even with shared parking the land use still makes up a large portion of the entire development.

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Palmdale can help spur development around its existing Metrolink Station by providing some flexibility in parking requirements near to the existing station. Palmdale can also investigate ways to lower parking costs through shared structured parking in planned developments. If surface parking is the only feasible alternative in the short term, efforts should be made to ensure that the lots can be redeveloped in the future, as is currently happening now in Reston Town Center.

Figure 1.16. Parking at Reston Town Center

Planning for development in the Study Area should recognize changing parking and transportation conditions over time. While initial development in any suburban location mean substantial portions of residents, employees, and visitors will be arriving via personal automobile, over the long term these patterns may change. Palmdale can adopt strategies to ensure that parking structures built within the Study Area can be transitioned to other uses if parking needs change, and allow developers the flexibility to choose the amount of parking they need for the financial feasibility of their projects. Such strategies could include requiring flat floorplates in new parking garages and parking level heights compatible with other uses.

Sustaining retail in an urban format requires a critical mass of population. Palmdale can ensure a critical mass of population by approving mixed-use development with residential and office uses above retail uses. When mixed-use development first comes to a suburban area, filling the first ground floor retail spaces often becomes a major challenge. The creation of flexible first floor space that can transition between residential, retail, or office uses can help alleviate this challenge. If there is not sufficient demand for all ground floor retail to be filled immediately, remaining portions can be used for other uses the will support local retail until the market matures.

Fostering programming in public spaces can add to urban vitality by marketing the area and attracting visitors. As development in the Study Area begins, Palmdale can work with local businesses to fund events in the new public spaces that are built in the station area. Such events add interest and vitality to urban spaces, and can attract even more interest and development in the area over the long term.
1.6 Bay Meadows

Overview

Bay Meadows is an ongoing transit-oriented redevelopment of a former horse-racing facility in the City of San Mateo near an existing Caltrain commuter rail station in the San Francisco Bay Area. The development represents success in using a wide range of densities and uses with a central focus on a pleasant pedestrian experience. The 158-acre redevelopment is located approximately 20 miles south of Downtown San Francisco along the Caltrain commuter rail corridor, which connects the City of San Mateo to San Francisco and other major suburban employment centers in Silicon Valley. The first phase of the specific plan was adopted in 1997, and development of this phase was substantially completed in 2002.

The first phase, now complete, was approved for approximately 900,000 square feet of commercial and office space, 734 residential units, and 300,000 square feet of retail uses. The second phase was approved in 2005 and the construction of the project is still ongoing.

The purpose of the redevelopment project, aside from environmental and sustainability goals, was to create enough density around the existing Hillsdale Caltrain station to warrant making the station a stop for the Caltrain “baby bullet” express trains. Not only was having another express train stop an advantage for the City of San Mateo, but it would also act as a draw and advantage for commercial and residential development around the commuter rail station.
Phase II of the development is approved for 1,250 residential units, 1.25 million square feet of office and commercial space focused near the Caltrain station, 150,000 square feet of retail space, as well as 15 acres of park and recreational space. Construction of this phase is still ongoing, with completion expected in 2020.

Supportive Public Policies

The Bay Meadows specific plan required a variety of building types to ensure a smooth transition between higher density uses near the commuter rail station and the preexisting surrounding low density residential neighborhoods. The specific plan included building templates for three different intensity levels of commercial buildings and six intensity levels for residential structures ranging from larger mixed-use buildings to small-lot single family homes.69 This allowed for the creation of a neighborhood with a varied offering of product types that could appeal to the broadest spectrum of consumers.70

Build-to-lines were used to strengthen the urban character of the development.71 These requirements were used in strategic locations to create a sense of place and prevent buildings being built without a connection to the street and public realm. The creation of a sense of place and a pleasant pedestrian realm incentivizes people to walk to local neighborhood retail as opposed to driving to other shopping centers, and thus local retail can better leverage the existing proximate residential population.72

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Emphasis was put on the pedestrian experience of Bay Meadows over that of driving. Design standards ensured that walkways would be generously wide, well-lit, continuous, and protected by a canopy of trees. The goal was not only to make walking an alternative to driving, but a pleasurable activity in and of itself.\textsuperscript{73}

The City allowed the developer to swap commercial space for residential space (at a ratio of 1,000 square feet of commercial space per dwelling unit) for a portion of the required commercial development. This flexibility allows the development to respond to changing market conditions and strengthens the financial viability of the development plan.

\textbf{Economic Development Lessons Learned}

Palmdale should ensure that the station area plan leaves room for future growth and change beyond the initial study period. While the Bay Meadows development has so far been a success, the current phase will represent the full buildout of the entire available redevelopment area. Once this phase is finished, there will be little room for growth or change for a long period of time after. Palmdale should be mindful of unintentionally filling available land in the Study Area too quickly, as it may miss out on an opportunity for higher density development as the Study Area and local economy evolve. \textbf{Focusing dense growth in strategic locations of the Study Area will protect other developable land for later phases.}

Building a mixed-use community can start small, and work its way up to higher densities over time. The phasing and development at Bay Meadows began with the development of small-lot housing and smaller residential buildings such as townhomes, building up a critical mass of population before implementing mixed-use and commercial development. Even if major mixed-use development is not immediately financially feasible in Palmdale, placemaking can be successfully implemented even with the smaller scale of development currently occurring in the Antelope Valley.

\textsuperscript{73} City of San Mateo. (2005). p. I-8
1.7 Denver Union Station

Overview

Union Station is the gateway to downtown Denver. Redevelopment of the Station was a large scale transit investment for Denver that has anchored larger redevelopment efforts. 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).

Under the Downtown Area Plan in the 1980s, the City and County of Denver consolidated the railyard land under single-owner control, creating a highly desirable development parcel and facilitating 30 years of transformative development. This project was driven by the public sector’s focus on the need for regional public transportation, with funding and political support for transit investment coming from the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus. Union Station initially just contained regional Amtrak rail lines; redevelopment and station improvements have added light rail, commuter rail, and bus connections, creating a large multimodal hub in Denver. The robust development around the station has been a major success for the region, and Denver has created an entirely new urban neighborhood on once underutilized property.
The development around the station commands significant office premiums. According to CoStar, office rents within a half mile of Denver Union Station are 18 percent higher than in the Denver Central Business District CoStar submarket, and approximately 32 percent higher than the City of Denver as a whole.

Supportive Public Policies

Denver Union Station is a public-private partnership with a jointly funded Intergovernmental Agreement among the Regional Transportation District (RTD), the City and County of Denver, the Colorado Department of Transportation and the Denver Regional Council of Governments. RTD acquired the station facility and adjoining 20 acres and rezoned it for mixed-use development. RTD then joined with several other entities from local, regional, and state levels to form the Denver Union Station Project Authority (DUSPA) to oversee project execution.74 DUSPA selected Union Station Neighborhood Company (USNC), a joint venture, as the master developer.75 USNC in turn assembled a design-build team to facilitate decision-making and ensure project delivery. Completed and future development includes 3,000 residential units, 4.6 million square feet of office, 550 hotel rooms, and 15 acres of parks and plazas.

Figure 1.20. Denver Union Station Development Governance Structure

Figure 1.21. Denver Union Station Financing Sources

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74 Local entity is Denver Union Station Metro District, Regional entity is the Denver Regional Council of Governments, State entity is Colorado Department of Transportation.

75 Union Station Neighborhood Company (USNC) included private developers, East West Partners LLC and Continuum Partners LLC.
A combination of federal grants, loans, and value capture strategies paid for the Union station and surrounding area infrastructure projects. Funding included State, regional, and local contributions including those from RTD, grants from the FHWA and FTA, as well as proceeds from land sales. Denver Union Station was the first transportation project to combine the two major federal loan programs, the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) and the Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing (RRIF) because of its unique ability to “promote transportation mobility and strong communities” on such a large scale.\(^7\) In 2004, Denver metropolitan area voters approved a 0.4 percent sales tax increase for FasTracks. The FasTracks sales tax, TIF revenue, RTD contributions, and the lodgers tax covered the debt service for the TIFIA and RRIF loans.

The Commons development is a private redevelopment with public contributions. After extensive public negotiation, Burlington Northern sold 185 acres to Trillium Corporation including the railyard adjacent to Union Station. Trillium then sold 26 acres to the City of Denver for the Commons Park and entitled the Riverfront Park site for high-density mixed-use development through a planned-unit development process.

Outside of the immediate Denver Union Station area, the City also prioritized investment in connectivity, the public realm, and open space to establish links with the surrounding neighborhoods. Commons Park was paid for by the City of Denver, and organized through the Greenway Foundation, a non-profit mobilized private foundation money to revitalize South Platte River. Costs for the Millennium, Highlands and Union Gateway pedestrian bridges were shared between the City of Denver, East West Partners, a private developer, and the Central Platte Valley Metropolitan District (CPVMD), a taxable entity that levies property tax for site-specific improvements and infrastructure.

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### Table 8. Transit Investment Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Amtrak provides limited intercity passenger rail service to Union Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>City of Denver extends free 16th Street Mall shuttle service to Union Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>RTD C-Line light rail enters service, with a terminus at Union Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>RTD E-Line light rail enters service, with a terminus at Union Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>RTD W-Line light rail enters service, with a terminus at Union Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Downtown Bus circulator is implemented connecting Union Station to Civic Center area along 17th and 18th St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Regional bus terminal opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Union Station reopens with the Crawford Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>RTD East Line commuter rail is scheduled to open, with direct service to Denver International Airport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>RTD Gold Line commuter rail scheduled to open with a terminus at Union Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>RTD North-Metro commuter rail scheduled to open with a terminus at Union Station</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Economic Development Lessons Learned

Denver leveraged its transit investment for larger development planning in the surrounding area. Palmdale can utilize the investment that will take place with high-speed rail as a catalyst to pursue its development vision and goals for its downtown.

**Public-Private investment was critical for creating destination grade amenities.** Public and private investments in open space and pedestrian walkways can establish links to the surrounding neighborhoods and set the stage for further value. Payment for these public realm investments can be shared by the public and private sectors, depending upon land ownership, value capture opportunities, and market conditions.

**Supportive planning and zoning policies aided in this redevelopment,** intentionally having the station area development as a continuation of the rest of the LoDo neighborhood of Denver. Palmdale should consider how zoning and planning efforts can connect the station area with existing Palmdale assets such as the Civic Center. Incentivizing a mix of uses and allowing for density will create activity and vibrancy in this area, in a manner that is not only aligned with the City’s urban vision, but also attractive to private developers and investors. Furthermore, station area development that complements and is connected to other parts of downtown will support the creation of a more cohesive district.
In Denver, a city-led effort to consolidate railyard space created highly desirable development parcels under single-owner control. Palmdale should consider how, with the termination of redevelopment, it can and will incentivize the kind of development it wants to see in the surrounding station area. Land assembly is one methodology, but ultimately the process in Denver was driven through a partnership between the public and private sectors.
1.8 Pasadena, California

**Overview**

Pasadena is located in central Los Angeles County, approximately ten miles northeast of Downtown Los Angeles along the Metro Gold Line. The City of Pasadena successfully revitalized its downtown area with new retail and substantial residential growth. This revitalization occurred without any supportive fixed-rail transit, as the Metro Gold Line opened to Pasadena in 2003, years after the rejuvenation of Old Pasadena was well underway.

After World War II, the construction of the I-210 freeway through the area resulted in the demolition of many historic buildings, and Old Pasadena, like many other historic city centers across the United States, began to suffer from residents and businesses moving further into new suburban areas.\(^7\) In the 1950s, local businesses formed the Pasadena Central Improvement Association (PCIA) to help solve parking problems and revitalize the central area.\(^8\) PCIA, and Pasadena’s historical preservation society, Pasadena Heritage, saved Old Pasadena from redevelopment in the mid-1970s.\(^9\)

**The City of Pasadena created a revitalization plan that focused on rehabilitating and preserving existing buildings, putting parking into structures with quality urban design, and eventually redirecting growth into the downtown area through zoning.** Today, Old Pasadena is a vibrant and successful retail center, and the area’s residential population continues to grow. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the city was inhabited by nearly 141,000 in 2014, 19 percent of whom live downtown.

Within central Pasadena, retail is located in several clusters as opposed to scattered around the entire area. These major retail clusters include Old Pasadena, Civic Center, and Lake Avenue. The cluster with the highest rents, Old Pasadena, makes up only a small part of central Pasadena. Pasadena has successfully created several distinct complementary and connected retail districts, each serving a different need and 

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77 [http://www.oldpasadena.org/history1940s.asp](http://www.oldpasadena.org/history1940s.asp)
purpose. Old Pasadena contains a multitude of smaller retail establishments under 15,000 square feet, while Civic Center and Lake Avenue are home to larger format retail establishments. These retail clusters are highlighted in the map on the right.

**Supportive Public Policies**

Early policies towards Old Pasadena were focused on competing with new suburban shopping centers, trying to make the area easier for automobiles to quickly arrive and disembark like in new suburban shopping centers. **These policies largely failed because they applied a new suburban model to an urban area, becoming a larger detriment to local walkability instead of aiding a rejuvenation.**

After numerous proposals to demolish large parts of Old Pasadena, the City formed an Urban Conservation District and placed the area on the National Register of Historic Places. The City passed the *Plan for Old Pasadena* in 1978. **The key elements of this plan were prohibiting the demolition of historic buildings and adopting design standards for rehabilitating buildings in Old Pasadena.** Federal tax incentives, as well as appreciating property values from the improvements, provided property owners and developers the economic incentives to steadily remake the district.\(^{80}\) In the 1980s, the PCIA worked with its members to raise $50,000 for a parking study by the City. This led to the Pasadena Redevelopment Plan being adopted by the City in 1983, with the primary purpose of the plan being to use tax-increment financing to develop public parking garages for the area.\(^{81}\) **These garages were built with high standards in urban design and contained ground floor retail to avoid creating dead-zones in any part of Old Pasadena.**

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\(^{80}\) City of Pasadena. (2005). p. 31

\(^{81}\) City of Pasadena. (2005). p. 32
Old Pasadena required a steady source of funds to continue to improve the district and keep it clean, so in 1989 the PCIA transformed from a voluntary dues paying organization to a merchant-based assessment district, becoming the Old Pasadena Business and Professional Association (“OPBPA”). Using a sales tax sharing agreement, the association developed marketing and promotional programs. The OPBPA also agreed to parking meters in Old Pasadena, revenue from which was used to improve the district’s streetscapes. Beyond the revenue benefits, parking meters also incentivized more parking turnover on the street. Those parking for the full day would now use parking garages, while on-street parking was used for shorter trips.

The City zoned for higher levels of residential surrounding Old Pasadena, ensuring a steady influx of visitors to the shopping area at all hours of the day, and worked with Metro to assure the new Metro Gold Line did not interrupt the area’s street grid when it was built in the early 2000s.

Finally, much effort was invested to make Old Pasadena pedestrian friendly. Old Pasadena provides a well-connected and pleasant pedestrian experience, with easy crossings of busy arterials made at all intersections. Additionally, Old Town includes pedestrian scramble intersections, which allow all pedestrian movements, including diagonal ones, at key intersections.

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82 City of Pasadena. (2005). p. 32
83 City of Pasadena. (2005). p. 33
Economic Development Lessons Learned

Palmdale does not yet have a substantial mixed-use urban neighborhood like Old Pasadena, however, many of the strategies Pasadena implemented will be relevant for future development in Palmdale. Financing capital improvements and maintenance of the public realm in mixed-use environments can be paid for by local businesses, allowing such improvements to be made incrementally over time as the Study Area evolves.

**Creative parking incentives can support walkability in future Palmdale developments.** As the Study Area builds out, encouraging long-term visitors to park in garages (which offer some hours of free parking, but are at a cost beyond that time), as opposed to street parking, may help to encourage walking as opposed to driving between each Study Area destination. At the same time, metered parking could help ensure that Palmdale’s station area street parking is not occupied by employees or HSR riders during the day, making it more convenient for retail patrons to find on street parking as local retail options grow. Palmdale should ensure parking revenues collected in the Study Area are spent on improving the public realm, lighting, safety, and making the area more enjoyable to visit and walk through.

**Once a mixed-use center comes to fruition in Palmdale, a Business Improvement District (“BID”) could improve the ability of Palmdale to acquire resources to invest in itself and political capital to further the long-term vision for the station area.** Although Palmdale lacks the large historic core that Pasadena has, a BID in future development areas could still encourage local stakeholders to invest in place to attract more businesses and visitors, further attracting new resources for new investment. This cycle of investment and attraction could strengthen development in the Study Area.

**Palmdale should improve the walkability of the station area, ensuring a pleasant pedestrian environment and no impediments to easy pedestrian movement.** To do so, Palmdale can ensure that there are signalized intersections with automatic walk signals on all busy throughways in the Study Area and stop signs at every intersection on smaller streets, ensuring all pedestrian movement is easily made throughout the area. Palmdale should require new development in the Study Area to build or reinstate a well-connected human-scaled street grid with small blocks, and buildings built to the sidewalk like those in Old Pasadena. These policies also calm traffic, supplementing a pleasant pedestrian experience with greater pedestrian permeability. Traffic congestion should not be approached as a problem that needs to be solved through roadway expansion, but as a sign of a successfully leveraged HSR station area. **Accommodations should be made for both drivers as well as bicyclists and pedestrians in the station area, but when there is a conflict between the two modes the experience of walking and bicycling should be prioritized over the experience of driving.**
Palmdale can attract investment into its station area before HSR service begins by aiding in the formation of coalitions among local property owners. If formalized into one or more business improvement districts in the long term, these coalitions can raise money for improvements, maintenance, and security in the station area, as well as provide a unified local voice. An ongoing dedicated assessment district can bring much-needed revenue to augment public investments and maintain local improvements in the area, helping to generate more local foot traffic, which in turn generates more revenue for businesses. The oversight of local property owners ensures that funds are directed to actions that will make the largest difference in making the station area more attractive.

Short of local dedicated funding from a business improvement district, Palmdale should incorporate capital improvements to station area streets as they come up for maintenance and reconstruction, and require high quality design on all new streets. These capital improvements could include wider sidewalks, bulb-outs at intersections, and pedestrian amenities such as shade trees and street furniture. Given the large geographic area encompassed by Study Area, investments will need to be prioritized into areas with most potential for catalytic impacts.

Palmdale can use surveys of existing residents and property owners to understand retail gaps in Palmdale that could be addressed by local businesses. Making the results of these surveys publicly available can help existing or future business owners tailor establishments towards the needs and desires of the area.