

THOUSAND OAKS GENERAL PLAN 2045

WORKSHOP #1 SUMMARY

September 12, 2019 | 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm | Los Robles Greens Golf Course Sunset Ballroom

On Thursday, September 12, 2019, the City of Thousand Oaks hosted the first workshop to engage the community in identifying the vision and key priorities for the Thousand Oaks General Plan 2045 update project. The workshop took place at Los Robles Greens Golf Course Sunset Ballroom from 6:00 to 8:30 pm and had approximately 126 attendees, excluding the consultant team, elected officials, and city staff. This workshop was the first in a series of four that will take place over the course of the General Plan update.

Upon arrival, participants were encouraged to visit six open house style activity stations. Participants perused the stations and gave feedback for the first hour, then the workshop formally began with an introduction by City Manager, Andrew Powers. Next, Matt Raimi, project consultant with Raimi + Associates, provided an overview presentation of the Thousand Oaks General Plan 2045 objectives, schedule, engagement program, and key existing conditions. Matt then introduced the small group discussions, and invited participants to begin.



The following summary highlights key themes and ideas from small group discussions and activity stations. This summary does not represent every comment made during the workshop. For detailed responses, see Appendix A.

ACTIVITY STATIONS

The activity stations consisted of the following topics:

- ***What is a General Plan?*** – Station 1 provided a brief overview of what a General Plan consists of, why it is important for the City, and the role it plays in future growth and development.
- ***Thousand Oaks at a Glance*** – Station 2 provided demographics of the City and statistics regarding housing, economics, education and transportation.
- ***Demographic Information*** – Station 3 provided an interactive opportunity for participants to answer questions about their background. Participants placed stickers on an exhibit to share information about themselves, such as: age, ethnic background, if they live and/or work in Thousand Oaks and how long they have lived in the City.
- ***Where Do You Live, Work, Shop, Play, and Learn in Thousand Oaks?*** – Station 4 allowed participants to identify on a map where they live, work, shop, play and learn throughout the City with colored stickers.
- ***What is Your Vision for Thousand Oaks 2045?*** – Participants were given a worksheet to draw or write their vision for Thousand Oaks. All worksheets were put on display during the workshop, so participants could view their neighbors' responses.
- ***Comments***– At the comment station, participants were encouraged to submit written comments and input on the project.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Participants formed 16 roundtable groups of 6–8 participants, each with a facilitator from the project team. At the start of the discussion, facilitators and participants were given worksheets and encouraged to take detailed notes, which were collected by the project team at the end of the workshop. Each table was encouraged to spend approximately 15 minutes per question and the table's designated reporter provided a summary of the group's input at the end of the discussion.

Participants were asked the following questions:

1. What makes Thousand Oaks unique and special?
2. What are the issues and challenges that the City is facing today and in the future? What concerns do you have about the future?
3. What is your vision for Thousand Oaks in 2045?

Below is a summary of the major themes that were captured for each of the questions through the roundtable discussions.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- **Preserve Assets.** Many participants noted the open space, parks, access to nature, suburban character, family-friendly community and small town feel as key assets in the community that should be preserved.
- **Issues and Challenges.** Participants expressed fear of losing the current character and quality of life in the city, concern over the cost of housing, vacant commercial buildings, taking care of an aging population, traffic congestion, ensuring stable water supply, entertainment for youth and adults, and homelessness, among others.
- **Opportunities.** Participants named multiple opportunities including; revitalize Thousand Oaks Boulevard, adding a diversity of housing options including housing for employees who work in the city, creating a “downtown,” investing in local and small businesses, the retrofit or repurpose vacant properties, and more opportunities for cultural and entertainment events and venues.
- **Vision for the Future.** Participants envisioned creating more gathering spaces, maintaining parks and open space, expanding the age diversity of the population, growing in a sustainable way, creating a downtown with a mix of uses, improving the infrastructure in the city, expanding partnerships with local businesses and educational facilities, and preserving residential neighborhoods.



DETAILED RESPONSES PER QUESTION:

What makes Thousand Oaks unique and special?

- Fresh air and environment
- Safe and clean city
- Access to open space and nature
- Strong arts emphasis
- Citizen engagement in government (committees, etc.)
- Not crowded
- Open space, trails, and oak tress
- Schools and quality of education
- Small town community feel
- Family friendly city
- Openness
- Well maintained neighborhoods
- Civic Arts Plaza and performing arts
- Ease of getting around – wide roads and free parking
- Employer base
- Single family neighborhoods
- Ring of open space
- Biotech hub
- Equestrian properties and stables
- Parks, dog parks, hiking trails
- Historic preservation
- Accessibility of health care

What issues and challenges are the city facing today and in the future? What concerns do you have about the future?

- Lack of diverse and affordable housing
- Aging population
- Lack of low-income housing
- Need job opportunities for young people
- Need better housing balance
- Dated development standards
- Demand for amenities and capital infrastructure
- Underutilized commercial space
- Not pedestrian friendly
- Need greater environmental protection
- Homelessness
- Pollution – air, noise, traffic worsening
- Cell towers (5G) near residential neighborhoods
- Dying retail
- Lack of public places or sense of place
- Wildfires and changing climate risk
- Unstable water supply and drought risk
- Limited risk taking in local government
- Stagnancy in development and planning
- Must meet complex needs of increasingly older population
- Need greater job diversity to support living and working in Thousand Oaks
- Underestimating threats and crime
- Lack of racial diversity
- Lack of innovative mobility options
- Climate change affecting our open space and oak trees
- Need to strengthen our disaster preparedness for fires, earthquakes, etc.
- Lack of entertainment and activities for young people
- Need higher paying local jobs
- High cost to build housing or operate a business in the city
- Extreme housing shortage
- High cost of local utilities
- Over building of apartments near single family homes
- Don't want to become the San Fernando Valley
- Lack of public transportation (within the city and out of the city)
- Need to maintain quality services with rising population
- Health concerns – changes in wireless technology, addiction, mental health
- Displacement of middle class
- Restrictions on cannabis
- Incomplete bike network
- Lack of railroad connection
- Need for affordable senior housing

What is your vision for Thousand Oaks in 2045?

- Preserved quality of life
- Preserved open space, nature, and oak trees
- Sense of community
- Safe
- Low profile buildings
- Clean air
- Protection from changes in climate
- Sustainable and carbon neutral
- Light rail to Los Angeles and Ventura (carbon neutral)
- Retain safety and open space
- Take risks in developing forward thinking housing styles and transportation systems
- Intergenerational living and communities that support all ages
- Thousand Oaks Boulevard as a hip gathering place with great shops, arts and culture, and restaurants
- Expand Ventura County wildlife corridor zoning
- Pedestrian oriented community
- Mixed use development
- Relevant for younger generations
- Less parking
- New employment opportunities – ventures
- More inclusive
- Economically and racially diverse
- Socially balanced
- Economic sustainability
- Technologically advanced – smart city
- More accessible
- Entertainment district with nightlife
- Thousand Oaks Boulevard streetcar
- Easy to live and work in Thousand Oaks
- Collaboration between the school district and local government
- Repurpose vacant and underutilized buildings
- Increased density along thousand oaks boulevard
- Maintain safety
- Environmentally friendly
- Livable for young people
- Return of children who grew up in Thousand Oaks
- Preservation of neighborhoods
- Zero waste community

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The following results indicate who participated in the demographic information activity station. Note that not all participants completed the demographics survey.

- **Live + Work in Thousand Oaks.** Majority of participants live or live and work in Thousand Oaks.
- **Tenure in Thousand Oaks.** Majority of participants who attended the workshop have lived in Thousand Oaks for more than 31 years. A high number of participants also lived in Thousand Oaks between 11-20 years and 21-30 years.
- **Age.** The highest number of participants fell into the 45-64 age category, while a high number also participants also fell into the 35-44 and 65 and older category.
- **Background.** Majority of participants at the first workshop identified as White (not Hispanic).



WHERE DO YOU LIVE, WORK, SHOP, PLAY & LEARN?

The following results indicate where workshop participants live, work, play, shop, and learn in Thousand Oaks. Note that not all participants completed the mapping activity.

Stickers indicated the following:

- Yellow = where you live
- Black = where you work
- Green = where you play
- Red = where you shop
- Blue = where you learn



Results were clustered around the following areas:

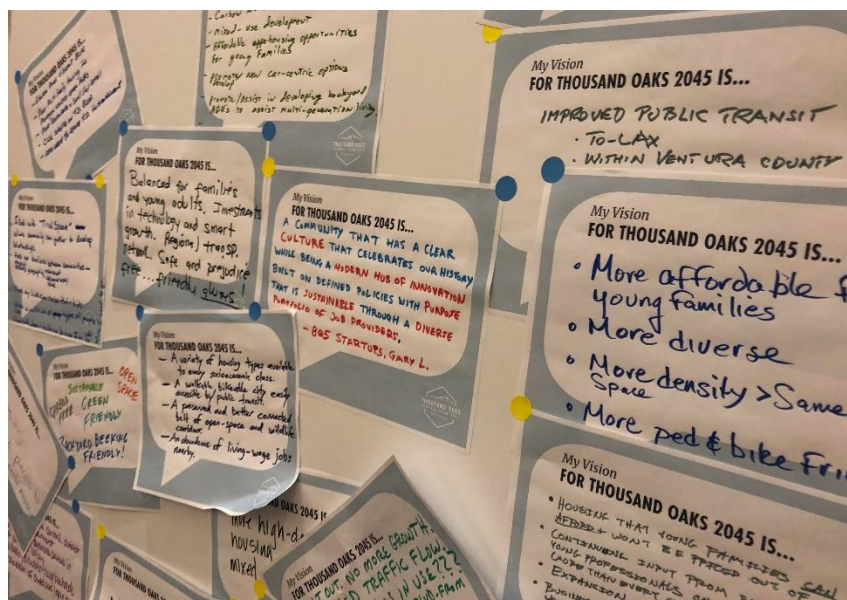
- **Live**
 - Dos Vientos
 - Newbury Park
 - Westlake
 - Wildwood
 - Sunset Hills
 - Central Thousand Oaks (both sides of 23 Freeway)
- **Work**
 - California Lutheran University
 - Los Robles Hospital
 - Elementary, Middle and High Schools
 - Rancho Conejo Business/Industrial Center
 - Townsgate Road Business Park
 - Thousand Oaks Boulevard
- **Play**
 - Parks, open space & trail heads
 - Grant R. Brimhall Library
 - The Oaks Mall and Janss Marketplace
- **Shop**
 - Arboles and Moorpark Shopping Center
 - The Oaks Mall and Janss Marketplace and surrounding areas
 - Westlake Boulevard and Thousand Oaks Boulevard shopping centers
 - Westlake Boulevard and Hampshire Road shopping Center
 - Lindero Canyon Road
- **Learn**
 - California Lutheran University
 - Library and Senior Center
 - Thousand Oaks Boulevard
 - Hub 101
 - The Oaks and Janss Marketplace

MY VISION

The following summarizes highlights from the My Vision activity station. Individual responses to this exercise are included at the end of this summary in Appendix A. Note that not all participants completed the My Vision exercise.

Participants envision the following for Thousand Oaks 2045:

- High quality of life and welcoming place to live
- No barriers between communities
- Focused on future generations
- Diverse, balanced, safe, friendly, happy and prejudice free
- Sustainable, green, and carbon free
- Clean air and water
- Trees, nature, wildlife, and preserved open space
- Less car-centric, and more walkable, bikeable, and expanded trails
- Preservation of neighborhoods and dark skies
- No additional growth or development
- No 5G small cell sites
- Reduced noise and traffic
- Preservation of Western culture
- Prepared for emergencies
- Diverse job opportunities, job providers, and abundance of living-wage jobs
- Vibrant Thousand Oaks Boulevard
- Filled with “third places” like a Downtown, central district or old town (*note: the term “third place” refers to places you spend your time outside of work and home*)
- Diverse housing options including multi-generational, elderly, special needs, homeless, and low-income housing
- More entertainment options, restaurants and local businesses
- Investments in technology and innovation
- Smart growth, greater density, and mixed-use development
- Regional transportation, light rail or trolley, controlled traffic
- Most outstanding community in southern California
- Youth in local leadership



OPEN COMMENT

At the end of the roundtable discussion report-outs, the floor was available for an open comment session and a selection of the comments that were made are listed below.

- Concern about potential change to Thousand Oaks; many like the community as it is now.
- Preserve the small-town feel, while incorporating progressive ideas of inclusivity to make the City more diverse.
- Develop in a smart and innovative way.
- Support public transit advancement.
- Concern over new technology that harms health (5G).
- Offer more programs to prevent homelessness including programs for veterans of war.
- Expand on recreation and entertainment opportunities in the City, so people do not have to travel to Los Angeles or neighboring cities.
- Maintain the family-oriented atmosphere in the community and balance needs of young people and older adults.
- Desire to allow beekeeping in Thousand Oaks.
- Desire for hubs of community around town connected by light rail.

