

## City of Palm Springs

### **General Background**

Palm Springs lies on the western edge of the Coachella Valley in central Riverside County approximately 107 miles east of Los Angeles. It is within the ecological area known as the Colorado Desert and is 487 feet above sea level. Rising behind the City's downtown business district is the impressive Mt. San Jacinto, elevation 10,831 feet. Palm Springs covers a geographical area of 96 square miles with well-established neighborhoods. Recently there has been a fascination with mid-century modern architecture – something Palm Springs is proud to have as part of its mix of eclectic design styles.

Because it is only a two-hour drive from Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego counties, there are a large number of second homes in Palm Springs. The permanent population is estimated around 46,281, with another 27,000 to 30,000 people living in the City in the winter, bringing the total population to almost 76,000 residents during the winter season.

Approximately 1 million tourists stay in hotels in Palm Springs annually while another 600,000 visitors stay in non-hotel accommodations. They are no doubt attracted by the weather, which includes some 350 days of sunshine.

For those fortunate enough to call Palm Springs home, the City offers a host of unparalleled recreational and cultural opportunities. More than 8,856 pools offer year-round swimming, and minutes from any location in town are bike paths, hiking and equestrian trails, parks, tennis courts and golf courses, including one of the best municipal golf courses in the country. Culturally, the City is home to several acclaimed museums including The Palm Springs Arts Museum, the most significant art museum between Los Angeles and Phoenix. The Palm Springs Art Museum is at the base of Mt. San Jacinto. Founded in 1938, the Palm Springs Art Museum is an educational institution that promotes a greater understanding of art and performing arts through collections, exhibitions and programs. The Museum's permanent art collection features 19th, 20th, and 21st century works focusing on contemporary California art, classic western American art, Native American art; Pre-Columbian art, Mexican art, and European modern art; glass studio art, American mid-twentieth century architecture, and American photography. In addition, the Museum's 400-seat Annenberg Theater keeps an eclectic calendar from ballet to modern dance, opera to jazz, and comedy to drama.

The Palm Springs International Airport (PSP) is served by twelve airlines that connect to hundreds of cities worldwide. Every year, PSP welcomes visitors from over 500 cities around the world. Palm Springs services many markets non-stop including routes to Los Angeles, Portland, San Francisco, and Chicago to name a few. The ten major airline hubs include Alaska Airlines, Allegiant,

American Airlines, Delta Air lines / Delta Connection, Sun Country Airlines, United Airlines / United Express, US Airways, Virgin America, and WestJet.

Located in a historic building at the north end of downtown, the Palm Canyon Theatre is a 206-seat live theatre venue which remains the only Actors Equity Theater in the desert. The theater runs a full season from late September to May, and has entered into a partnership with the Palm Springs International Film Festival. The Agency partnered with the Film Festival to fund renovation of the building. Improvements included building out the projection booth, painting, theater seating, lighting, electrical, marquee sign, bathrooms and other improvements.

The Camelot Theatre is a three-screen movie house and entertainment complex specializing in the finest first-run are film, foreign film, and independent film. Located on Baristo Road across from Palm Springs High School and completely renovated in 1999, it is one of a handful of theatres in the country with its level of technical sophistication and grandeur.

Located in the heart of downtown Palm Springs, the Village Green includes the Historical Society Museum, the Agua Caliente Museum and Ruddy's General Store Museum.

Memorable among the City's natural attractions are the Indian Canyons, one of the world's few remaining California fan palm oases. From the desert floor you can travel 8,500 up Mt. San Jacinto abroad the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, the world's largest single-span lift, transports riders to San Jacinto Wilderness State Park, where visitors can enjoy hiking and equestrian trails in the summer and cross-country skiing in the winter.

Every Thursday evening, Downtown Palm Springs transforms into the Palm Springs VillageFest, also known as the Palm Springs Street Fair. At the VillageFest, one can experience a diverse array of artists, artisans, entertainers, and purveyors of fresh fruits and vegetables, flowers, jewelry, snacks and sweets. Add all that to a dog friendly event with great shops, restaurants, clubs, and entertainment venues located along World Famous Palm Canyon Drive and the result is one of Southern California's most popular weekly events.

The City features a number of annual special events, including the Annual Veteran's Day Parade, the Palm Springs International Film Festival, and the Festival of Lights Parade, all of which draw visitors from around the world. In addition, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians has established a casino within the City's downtown area.

## **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

To understand Palm Springs, one has to know a little about its history. Starting out as an Indian Village, the town became a health resort in the early 1900s. During the 1920s and 1930s, it was discovered by Hollywood and American captains of industry, catapulting it into a resort of worldwide reputation. By the 1980s, new developments to the east of Palm Springs were competing for much of its energy. By the mid-1990s, Palm Springs had been rediscovered and is currently experiencing a true economic boom. At the same time, this economic growth is posing new challenges to the community as many residents new and old have become concerned about their quality of life.

Specifically, the issues revolve around protecting this unique man-made environment, which include a distinctive architectural tradition ranging from the mission revival style to mid-century modern, restrained commercial signage, soft lighting and quiet neighborhoods. Because of its sleepiness during the last few decades, there is a general feeling of a time warp which, along with its architectural traditions, has been the subject of numerous national magazine articles in the last few years. This, in turn, has been attracting new tourists and residents alike.

Unlike the other desert resorts in the Coachella Valley, Palm Springs has a true walking downtown Village which has contributed greatly to its newfound popularity. It also has a wealth of newly restored, small historic inns and boutique hotels, as well as major national chain hotels and mid-size hotels.

## **THE CITY GOVERNMENT**

Palm Springs was incorporated as a general law City in 1938, with a council-manager form of government established in 1942. The City adopted a charter in 1994. The City Council consists of four residents who are elected at large to four-year staggered terms. The Mayor is directly elected to a four-year term and serves as the fifth member of the City Council.

The City Council appoints the City Manager and the City Attorney, enacts ordinances and resolutions, establishes policy direction for management staff, and reviews and approves the annual budget expenditures for the City. The Council also serves as the Successor Agency, Housing Authority, Financing Authority and Public Facilities Authority, and individual members of the Council represent the City on a number of area-wide intergovernmental agencies and committees.

The City operates and maintains a full range of municipal services, including a police department, a fire department, an international airport, a parks and recreation program, wastewater treatment plant and two public libraries – the

main library located on Baristo Road and the newly renovated Welwood Library located in the heart of downtown on Tahquitz Canyon Way and Palm Canyon Drive.

### **WORKING WITH YOUR CITY COUNCIL**

A variety of business comes before the City Council at its meetings. The City Council holds regular meetings on the first and third Wednesdays of the month beginning at 6 p.m. The City Council welcomes your participation at its meetings. The public may address the City Council on any item during the public comment period at the beginning of the meeting. Those wishing to address the Council are asked to first complete a speaker's card and give it to the City Clerk so the City has a formal record of individuals who speak. Speakers are called upon by the Mayor and those wishing to address an item on the agenda listed as a public hearing will be called when that item comes up. Public comment is limited to three minutes per person or five minutes if the item is a public hearing.

Televised coverage of all City Council meetings is presented live on local cable TV Channel 17. Coverage is also available on the internet and can be found by going to the City of Palm Springs website home page and clicking "Watch Palm Springs TV".

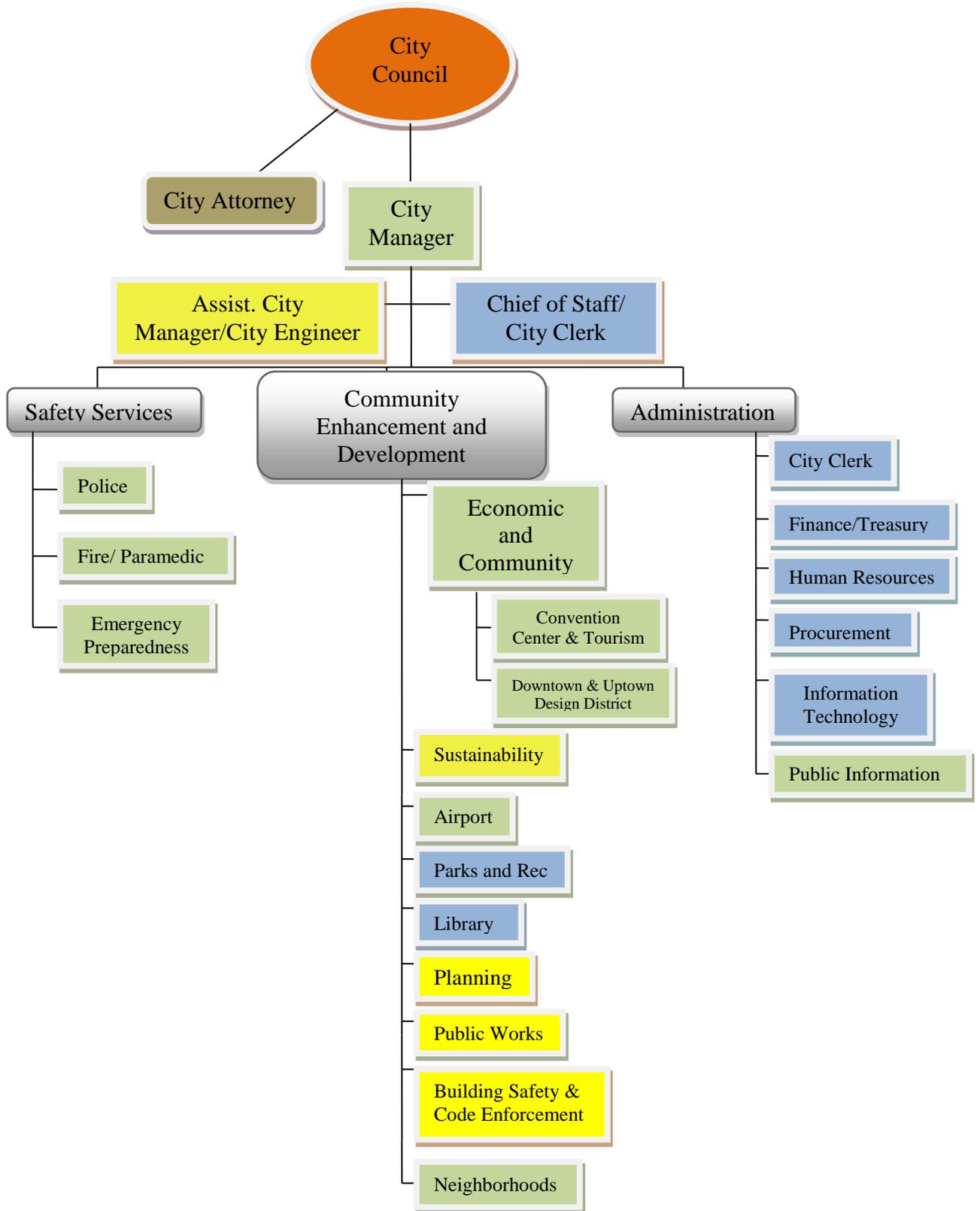
### **OUR CITY MANAGER**

The City Manager serves as Chief Executive Officer of the City and the Executive Director of the Successors Agency. He serves as an advisor to the City Council on policy items impacting the community and the City organization. The City Manager appoints the City's department heads and is responsible for ensuring that city services are performed to the highest standard in accordance with Council policies. The City Manager is responsible for the submission of the City's budget and implementation in support of City Council goals.

*PALM SPRINGS  
Like no place else!*



# City of Palm Springs Organizational Chart



## VISION STATEMENT

Palm Springs aspires to be a unique world class desert community, where residents and visitors enjoy our high quality of life and a relaxing experience.

We desire to balance our cultural and historical resources with responsible, sustainable economic growth and to enhance our natural desert beauty.

We are committed to providing responsive, friendly and efficient customer service in an environment that fosters unity among all our citizens.

## OUR MISSION

**Our purpose in the City of Palm Springs, a municipal corporation, is to enhance the quality of life.**

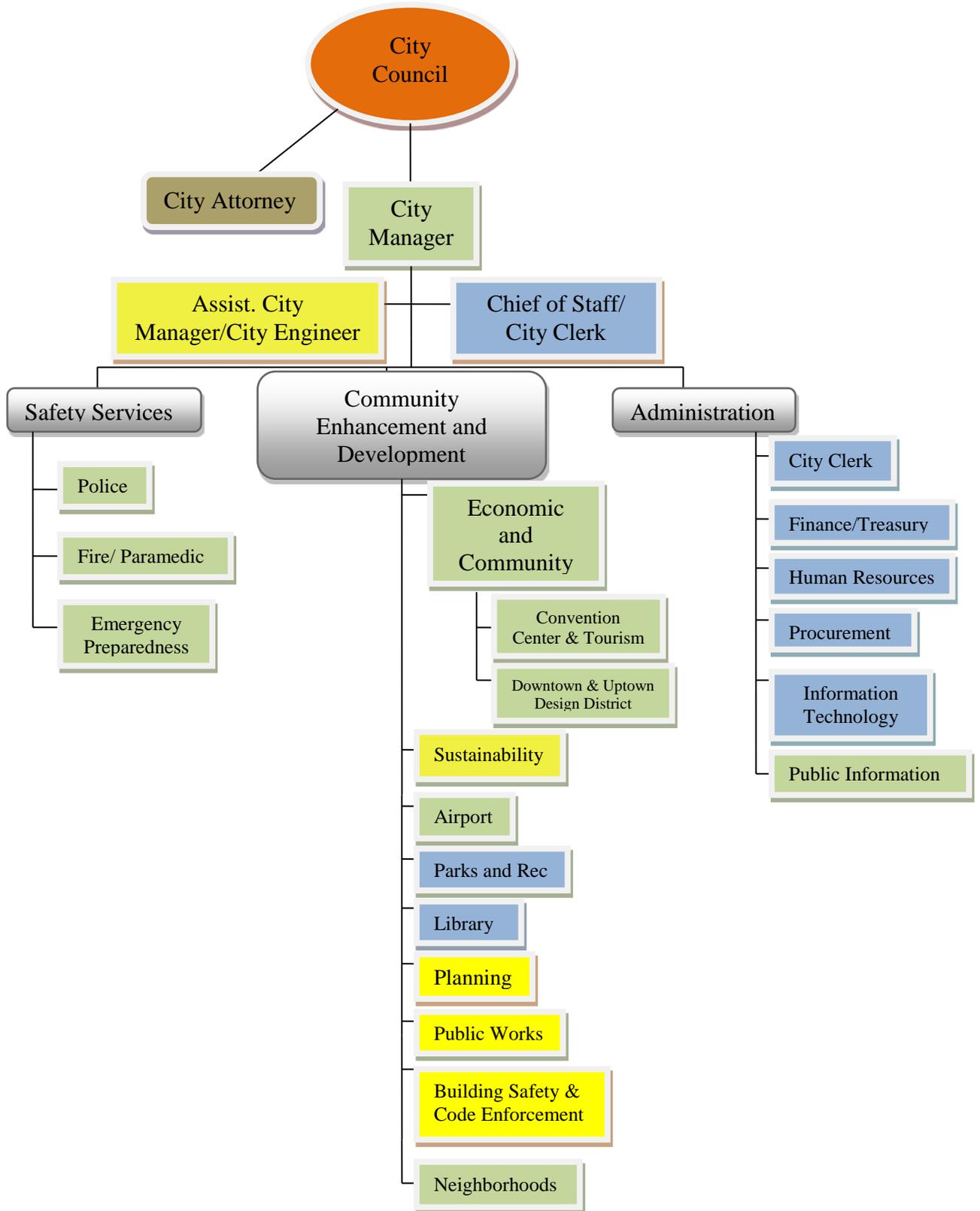
We work in harmony with the community to plan and provide services at a level of excellence that fosters an improving environment for all constituents, including residents, visitors and property owners.

Our primary objective is to be the best in our job of providing municipal services, at the same time retaining Palm Springs' position as America's foremost desert resort and retaining an ideal environment for living. Our rewards for achieving these objectives are social harmony, respect from the public, satisfied constituents, pleasing environment and a healthy local economy.

We provide responsible fiscal management and skilled and motivated employees whose personal growth is encouraged by a creative work environment. We respect the uniqueness of individuals and provide opportunities for them to express and fulfill their needs. Services provided by the municipality are consistent with these needs but are also reliant on the availability of resources.

The city functions as the governmental unit closest to the people. It is the cornerstone of local government and the foundation of our free and democratic society.

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