



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING SERVICES

MEMORANDUM

January 26, 2011

To: Planning Commission

From: Craig A. Ewing, AICP, Director of Planning Services 

RE: Case No.: 5.1232 – College Park Specific Plan

**INTRODUCTION**

In 2008, the City Council initiated the College Park Specific Plan (as a General Plan Amendment and Change of Zone) as part of an area-wide planning effort to refine land uses in proximity to the future College of the Desert (COD) West Valley Campus (WVC).<sup>1</sup> The draft College Park Specific Plan has been prepared, and includes recommended changes to land use designations and zoning and an amendment to the General Plan Circulation Element to remove the segment of Sunrise Parkway (west of Indian Canyon Drive) from the adopted Circulation Plan.

In addition to new land use and zoning designations, the draft Specific Plan identifies specific development standards and guidelines, and offers recommendations for new development and redevelopment within the planning area. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has also been prepared in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

The purpose of this memo and the Commission's discussion on January 26, 2011 is to provide background information and orientation to the draft College Park Specific Plan and associated EIR. A public hearing on the draft Specific Plan and EIR is tentatively scheduled for the Commission meeting of February 23, 2011.

**Project Boundaries**

The CPSP overall planning area is located west of Indian Canyon Drive, east of Highway 111/North Palm Canyon Drive, south of the Chino Creek/Whitewater River Flood Control Channel and generally north of San Rafael Drive. A small portion of the planning area also includes lands south of San Rafael Drive and immediately west of Indian Canyon Drive.

The College Park Specific Plan divides the overall planning area into ten (10) individual Planning Areas (PAs) based on the relative uniqueness and individuality of each. They

<sup>1</sup> The College took possession of 119± acres in the northern portion of the CPSP planning area that was conveyed to it by the City and is currently preparing a campus master plan, including a 60±-acre GreenPark solar power array (Case No. 5.1257 CUP).

include individual residential neighborhoods, the industrial park area, the COD West Valley Campus site, and areas that are geographically separate or distinct from the surrounding neighborhood.

### **BACKGROUND AND SETTING**

In 2007, the City of Palm Springs organized a successful effort to bring the West Valley Campus (WVC) of the College of the Desert (COD) to the City. The City believed that West Valley Campus would add an important dimension to the social, cultural and economic makeup of the community. The City proceeded to acquire land in the northern portion of the City for the new campus from the US Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The City has since secured and conveyed the subject 119.37± acres to the College, and the College has developed a campus master plan for the site: The WVC Preliminary Development Plan. This campus master plan is included as part of Section X of the draft College Park Specific Plan.

The primary purpose of the College Park Specific Plan (CPSP) is to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the new campus development and extend the campus master planning process to the surrounding neighborhood. The City hopes that the social, cultural and economic effects of the campus can be optimized for the immediately surrounding residents, property owners and businesses. The CPSP has been developed as a vehicle to maximize the positive effects of the campus on surrounding lands, and to minimize potential adverse effects. The CPSP provides a specific regulatory structure for land use and development in the CPSP planning area.

The Specific Plan addresses existing development including the Desert Highland and Gateway Estates neighborhoods, a diversity of multi-family development, and commercial and industrial uses in the planning area. The CPSP describes the anticipated mix of land uses at the COD WVC site and how these future uses can complement and energize the cultural and economic fabric of the neighborhood, the City and the region. It assures adequate levels of public service and improvements to serve existing land uses, approved but not yet constructed development, and future planned development on vacant, unentitled lands in the planning area.

### **Existing Land Uses**

Current residential development within the proposed jurisdiction of the CPSP include Desert Highland, Gateway Estates and Mountain Gate neighborhoods. The Desert Highland neighborhood is comprised of 196 single-family residences and 97 vacant lots. Desert Highlands Estates, an extension of the Desert Highland neighborhood, is located westerly of Desert Highlands and includes 72 single-family homes and 2 vacant lots. The Mountain Gate development consists of 492 single-family residences and is largely built out. The Palm Springs Villas II condominium complex (13 buildings) is located farther south in the southwest portion of the Specific Plan area along San Rafael Road and Highway 111.

There is limited commercial development in the planning area; it is comprised primarily of retail uses located along the eastern portion of the planning area along Indian Canyon Drive between San Rafael Road and Rosa Parks Road. Commercial development in this area includes a convenience store, fuel service station and a tile and stone retail store.

The Specific Plan area extends 120± feet south of San Rafael Road to a distance approximately 0.18 mile west of Indian Canyon Drive; this area is vacant.

The southeastern portion of the area, south of Rosa Parks Road to San Rafael Road, is comprised primarily of a wide mix of smaller commercial-industrial uses and limited single family and multi-family residential. Development in this area is also interspersed with vacant parcels. There are over 45 businesses within this area, including automotive repair and maintenance, automotive towing and storage, equipment repair shops, a metal plating shop, and a metal recycling center.

The northernmost portion of the Specific Plan area, most of which is proposed for use as the COD West Valley Campus (see Project Description, below), is comprised of 119.37± acres of vacant lands now owned by COD. Of these lands, 1.21± acres are easements in perpetuity granted to Desert Water Agency (DWA) for two well sites, which are located along the eastern portion of the property, fronting Indian Canyon Drive.

Near the center of the almost 120-acre campus site, the 17.55±-acre James O. Jessie Desert Highland Unity Center site (JOJ) including Desert Highland Park, is located along the north side of Tramview Road. Immediately west of the COD WVC lands and south of the flood control levee is a 10-acre strip comprised of two vacant parcels, which are designated for drainage/flood control.

### **Surrounding Land Uses**

Surrounding lands include developed and undeveloped parcels:

- North: The Chino Creek / Whitewater River flood control levee and the associated flood plain; vacant lands owned by the Bureau of Land Management and the Coachella Valley Water District.
- East: The partially constructed Avalon golf-oriented residential community on the north and the Palermo multi-family residential development farther south and extending to San Rafael Drive. Portions of the latter are still under construction.
- South: Single and multi-family residential neighborhoods, vacant lots, and retail commercial development.
- West: The alluvial fans, foothills and slopes of the San Jacinto Mountains, and the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway access and visitor's center, all across State Highway 111.

### **Summary of Proposed Land Uses**

The College Park Specific Plan has been prepared to establish long-term development goals, standards and guidelines for the 510± acre planning area to maximize land use synergies and compatibility. To implement the Specific Plan, the City is processing a General Plan Amendment and Change of Zone, with an accompanying Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Overall, land uses proposed in the Specific Plan are generally consistent with the current General Plan and Zoning Map; however, the Specific Plan provides greater detail and introduces the theme of sustainable development as ways to stimulate further development and redevelopment in the CPSP planning area.

Land uses proposed through the Specific Plan include additional multi-family housing, a focus on energy-related businesses within the industrial park area<sup>2</sup>, and the establishment of the West Valley Campus of COD (see below). Additional commercial development is also planned, including both convenience and neighborhood-serving development along Indian Canyon Drive. Opportunities for the development of second units on existing single-family residential lots is also provided for in the Specific Plan.

**COD West Valley Campus**

The West Valley Campus of COD is a catalyst for the development and revitalization effort embodied in the Specific Plan. As noted above, the COD WVC site was owned by the US Bureau of Land Management, purchased by the City and gifted to the College. Primary land uses envisioned for the WVC site include classrooms, lecture halls, laboratories and studios, workshops, administrative offices, student union and associated services, and central plant facilities. The campus will also include a renewable energy park and technology training and testing facility, as well as a business incubator center to bridge academics and technology training with the local business environment and economy. The aforementioned GreenPark solar project is also a part of the campus plan. See Table 1 below and on the next few pages for a summary of preliminary land uses.

**Table I-1  
 Preliminary Land Use Table  
 College Park Specific Plan**

Existing Development	Dev. AC	Vacant AC	Total AC	Existing Units	Unbuilt Units <sup>1</sup>	Total Units
<b>Residential</b>						
Single-Family Residential (PA 4, PA 8, PA 9) <sup>2</sup>			224.5	763	137	900
Multi-Family Residential (PA 4, PA 7) <sup>2</sup>			53.1	608	0	608
<b>Residential Subtotal</b>			<b>277.5</b>	<b>1,371</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>1,508</b>
<b>Commercial, Industrial and Business Park</b>				<b>Existing SF</b>	<b>Unbuilt SF</b>	<b>Total SF</b>
Commercial (PA 3, PA 5) <sup>3</sup>	2.4	8.1	10.5	9,000	0	9,000
Industrial (PA 5) <sup>4</sup>	42.0	15.9	57.9	951,803	185,060	1,136,864
Business Park (PA 5) <sup>5</sup>	3.2	3.8	7.0	72,031	0	72,031
<b>Commercial, Industrial and Business Park Subtotal</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>27.7</b>	<b>75.4</b>	<b>1,032,834</b>	<b>185,060</b>	<b>1,217,895</b>
<b>Parks &amp; Open Space</b>						
JOJ Center (PA 2) <sup>6</sup>	17.6	0.0	17.6	14,810	0	14,810
<b>Parks &amp; Open Space Subtotal</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>14,810</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14,810</b>
<b>Other Uses</b>						
DWA Well Sites (PA 1)	1.2	0.0	1.2			
Institutional (PA 1)	0.0	118.2	118.2			
Drainage/Open Space	6.0	13.8	19.8			
<b>Existing Other Uses Subtotal</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>132.0</b>	<b>139.2</b>			
<b>Existing Development Total</b>			<b>510</b>			

<sup>2</sup> These are envisioned to include solar and other alternatives sources of energy, energy and water management technologies, building systems and weatherization, and the like.

**Table I-1  
 Preliminary Land Use Table  
 College Park Specific Plan**

<b>Approved Development</b>						
	<b>Dev. AC</b>	<b>Vacant AC</b>	<b>Total AC</b>	<b>Existing Units</b>	<b>Approved Units</b>	<b>Total Units</b>
Multi-Family Residential <sup>8</sup> (6.1 - 15 du/ac) (PA 5)	0.0	4.5	4.5	0	59	59
				<b>Existing SF</b>	<b>Approved SF</b>	<b>Total SF</b>
Commercial (PA 3) <sup>9</sup>	0.0	3.0	3.0	0	38,000	38,000
Industrial (PA 5) <sup>10</sup>	0.0	6.5	6.5	0	101,544	101,544
<b>Commercial/Industrial Subtotal</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>139,544</b>	<b>139,544</b>
<b>Approved Development Total</b>			<b>14.0</b>			
<b>Proposed Development</b>						
	<b>Dev. AC</b>	<b>Vacant AC</b>	<b>Total AC</b>	<b>Existing Units</b>	<b>Proposed Units</b>	<b>Total Units</b>
Multi-Family Residential (6.1-15 du/ac) (PA 4, PA 6, PA 7) <sup>11</sup>	0.0	12.4	12.4	0	235	235
<b>Residential Subtotal</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>235</b>
				<b>Existing SF</b>	<b>Proposed SF</b>	<b>Total SF</b>
COD WVC <sup>12</sup> /Alternative Energy <sup>13</sup> (PA 1)	0.0	118.2	118.2	0	650,000	650,000
<b>Commercial/Business Park</b>						
Commercial (PA 3) <sup>14</sup>	0.0	3.9	3.9	0	44,170	44,170
Business Park (PA 5) <sup>15</sup>	0.0	3.8	3.8	0	44,928	44,928
<b>Commercial/Business Park Subtotal</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>89,098</b>	<b>89,098</b>
<b>Proposed Development Total</b>			<b>138.3</b>			
<b>PROJECT TOTAL</b>			<b>510</b>			

<sup>1</sup>For existing residential development, "unbuilt" units are subdivided but vacant lots. The potential for future development of these lots by individual property owners is provided for in the Specific Plan, based on development standards and design guidelines set forth in the Specific Plan.

<sup>2</sup>Existing single-family residential development includes Desert Highland, Gateway Estates and Mountain Gate neighborhoods, and 32 @ Agave, currently (2009) under construction. Existing multi-family residential includes Palm Springs View Apartments, Palm Springs Villas II Condominiums, and approximately 12 unnamed multi-family units in and near the Desert Highland neighborhood.

<sup>3</sup>Existing commercial development includes a Valero Gas Station, Julian's Market, and Roman Marble and Tile. Square footage based on Terra Nova staff estimates from Riverside County GIS mapping and review of high resolution aerial photographs.

<sup>4</sup>Existing industrial development includes all existing non-residential development in PA 5 except the Valero Gas Station, Julian's Market and Roman Marble and Tile (as of September 2009), and existing business park uses (see also Note 5, below). It includes all service industrial uses. Any approved development, whether fully or partially constructed, is included under the "Approved Development" portion of this table. Existing SF based on review of Riverside County GIS and APN mapping along with high resolution aerial photographs to obtain an average lot coverage for existing development. Average FAR 0.52. "Unbuilt SF" based on approx. 8.17 acres of vacant lots that will build out at an average FAR 0.52.

<sup>5</sup>Existing business park development includes the Radio Road Business Park on 3.2 acres at the southwest corner of Radio Road and McCarthy Road in PA 5. Any proposed development is included under the "Proposed Development" portion of this table.

<sup>6</sup>James O. Jessie Desert Highland Unity Center square footage includes 13,242 sf JOJ Center and approximately 1,568 sf Even Start Center (separate modular unit).

**Table I-1  
Preliminary Land Use Table  
College Park Specific Plan**

<sup>7</sup> COD WVC acreage based on total site acreage of 119.37 acres, less 1.21 acres dedicated to DWA well-sites. Total acreage includes 3.26 acres of future Sunrise Parkway right-of-way dedication.
<sup>8</sup> Approved residential development includes the Rosa Gardens (59 units) affordable housing project at the northwest corner of McCarthy Road and Radio Road (PA 5).
<sup>9</sup> Approved commercial development includes Palm Springs Gardens (approximately 38,000 square feet) at the northwest corner of Indian Canyon Drive and Rosa Parks Road (PA3).
<sup>10</sup> Approved industrial development includes Desert Oasis Industrial Lofts (approximately 101,544 square feet) between San Rafael Road and Radio Road, east of McCarthy Road (PA5).
<sup>11</sup> Specific Plan-proposed residential development includes McCarthy Place (5.1 ac @ 15 du/ac, 77 units) at the northwest corner of McCarthy Road and San Rafael Road (PA 7); San Rafael Gardens (7.3 ac @ 8 du/ac, 58 units) at the southwest corner of San Rafael Road and Indian Canyon Drive; and Desert Estates Studio units (approximately 100 2nd story-over-garage units) within the Desert Highland neighborhood.
<sup>12</sup> For detail of proposed College Uses, please see Table I-2, below. College site includes 101.2 acres purchased by City from BLM and gifted to COD, along with 13.64 acres of City parklands gifted to COD. Approximately 3.26 acres of future Sunrise Parkway right-of-way dedication included in total COD acreage.
<sup>13</sup> Photovoltaic installations.
<sup>14</sup> Specific Plan proposed commercial development includes Plaza del Mundo retail development (approximately 44,170 square feet on 3.9 ac; 41,962 square feet of GLA) at the southwest corner of Indian Canyon Drive and Tramview Road (PA 3). Commercial retail square footage based on FAR 0.26. Assumes 95% of building area as GLA. May include multi-story buildings. Max FAR 0.35.
<sup>15</sup> Specific Plan-proposed business park development includes Agave East Business Park (2.12 acres, approximately 24,934 square feet) south of Rosa Parks Road at Granada Avenue, and Agave West Business Park (1.7 acres, approximately 19,994 square feet) south of Rosa Parks Road at El Dorado Boulevard. Business park development square footage based on FAR 0.27. May include multi-story buildings. Max FAR 0.35.
Source: Preliminary Land Use Plan, Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc., May, 2010.

**Table I-2  
Preliminary Land Use Table  
College Park Specific Plan - COD West Valley Campus**

Planned Development	Vacant AC	Developed AC	Total AC	Existing SF	Unbuilt SF	Total SF
<b>COD West Valley Campus<sup>1</sup></b>						
Core COD Campus/Alternative Energy				0	420,000	420,000
Business Incubator				0	230,000	230,000
<b>COD West Valley Campus Total</b>			<b>118.2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>650,000</b>	<b>650,000</b>

<sup>1</sup>Campus acreage includes 3.26 acres of right-of-way for future Sunrise Parkway, and parking and roadways. It excludes 1.21 acres used by DWA well sites.

<sup>2</sup>Based on core campus facilities of approximately 65 sf per student and a buildout full-time equivalent (FTE) student population of 10,000.

Source: Preliminary project description prepared by PPV, September 11, 2009.

### **Approved Development**

In addition to existing uses described above, there are several currently-approved development plans within the planning area. These include multi-family residential, commercial and industrial uses. Approved projects are shown on the following exhibit I-4 of the Specific Plan).

Approved residential development is comprised of the Rosa Gardens affordable housing project developed by the Coachella Valley Housing Coalition. This approved project provides for 59 multi-family dwelling units in PA 5 near the southeast corner of Rosa Parks Road and Eastgate Road.

Approximately 38,000 square feet of commercial development has been approved for development of the Palm Springs Gardens retail commercial project in PA 3, north of Rosa Parks Road to Corozon Avenue along Indian Canyon Drive. The approved Desert Oasis Industrial Lofts project provides for approximately 101,554 square feet of industrial development in PA 5, west of North Anza Road between San Rafael Road and Radio Road.

### **Proposed Development**

The CPSP planning area has been planned to provide for residential, institutional, commercial and industrial/business park development as interrelated neighborhoods. The COD West Valley Campus is envisioned as an integral element of neighborhood revitalization, as well as a catalyst for the social, cultural and economic development of the planning area and the region. The Specific Plan also provides for the preservation and enhancement of existing public and private community facilities, such as the JOJ Center and neighborhood churches.

#### Residential

Proposed new development includes up to approximately 231 multi-family units, of which 77 units will be located in PA 8 at the northwest corner of San Rafael Road and McCarthy Drive, and 54 units will be located in PA 6 along the southside of San Rafael Road west of Indian Canyon Drive. Up to 100 units are envisioned in the Desert Highland neighborhood in PA 3, as second-story garage studio units associated with single-family residential units throughout the neighborhood.

It should be noted that vacant lots within existing residential neighborhoods, including Desert Highlands, Gateway Estates and Mountain Gate, are considered an existing use that is accounted for in Table I-1, above, under Existing Development, Unbuilt Units. The Specific Plan assumes that these 137 currently vacant single-family lots located in PAs 4, 8 and 9 will develop as single-family homes based on the applicable land use designation.

#### Commercial and Business Park

Proposed non-residential development includes additional commercial and business park development. Approximately 44,170 square feet of commercial development is proposed along Indian Canyon Drive north of Corozon Avenue and south of Tramview Road. This development is envisioned for primarily retail uses, and the concept is further described in Section II of the Specific Plan.

A new land use designation, Business Park, has been provided in the Specific Plan area to recognize an existing business park and to facilitate development of two new business parks between Radio Road and Rosa Parks Road. These are tentatively referred to as the Agave East and Agave West business parks, which will lie east and west of the 32@Agave (Vista San Jacinto) residential development currently under construction. The two proposed business park developments may provide 19,994 square feet and 24,934 square feet of development, respectively. A portion of this new commercial and business park space is expected to be associated with the development of sustainable technology and business incubator facilities that will complement and support the COD WVC curricula and initiatives in these areas.

#### Institutional: COD West Valley Campus

As shown in Table I-2, above, there are two primary components to the proposed COD West Valley Campus. The first is the core campus that will include academic facilities, including classrooms and laboratories, administrative and support buildings, and renewable energy installations, which are envisioned as solar arrays. The core campus is expected to include approximately 420,000 square feet of building space and approximately 60± acres of alternative energy facilities.

The second major component is a campus-related business incubator comprised of approximately 230,000 square feet of offices, shops and labs, and sustainable demonstration and exhibition space. The incubator is currently envisioned to incorporate a green park with research and development and training facilities for renewable energy and other sustainable technologies; support retail facilities; and other partnership uses to support COD's curricula, including those associated with allied health, the hospitality industry and film/media/communications. The COD WVC preliminary development plan and campus program is described in greater detail in Section X of the CPSP document.

#### Planning Area Access

The CPSP planning area is approximately 2.5 miles south of U.S. I-10 and its interchange with Indian Canyon Drive. Regional travelers to Palm Springs from the west of the valley will primarily exit U.S. I-10 south at the Palm Springs/Highway 111 exit and secondarily use the Indian Canyon Drive exit. Local access will continue to be from surrounding arterial roadways, including the aforementioned Indian Canyon Drive and Highway 111, as well as existing San Rafael Drive, Vista Chino and Sunrise Way. Future access could also be provided with the planned Sunrise Parkway that will connect Sunrise Way to the east with Indian Canyon Drive.

The functional value of Sunrise Parkway west of Indian Canyon Drive has been assessed in the Specific Plan and EIR, and its construction does not appear to be valuable or cost-effective. As noted, the Specific Plan and General Plan Amendment recommend that this segment of Sunrise Parkway (from Indian Canyon Drive to Highway 111) be deleted from the General Plan Circulation Element. The COD campus site will also rely on its own internal system of drives and lanes scaled to serve internal land uses, provide safe and efficient movement within the campus, and provide for a variety of non-motorized travel opportunities. The location and design of points of ingress and egress for the campus and all future development are also important considerations.



There are several points of access to the existing neighborhoods and commercial and industrial development in the College Park Specific Plan area. The Mountain Gate neighborhood is accessible via West Gateway Drive that extends easterly off of Highway 111. Mountain Gate also has a major entrance at the intersection of North Eastgate Road and Tramview Road. Access to the Desert Highland neighborhood is primarily taken from Rosa Parks Road, which extends to the west from Indian Canyon Drive; access to this portion of the planning area is also available from Tramview Road at Indian Canyon Drive.

Existing commercial and residential development south of Rosa Parks Road is accessed by Rosa Parks Road via Indian Canyon Drive. Access to commercial and industrial development is also taken from San Rafael Road at Indian Canyon Drive. Internal circulation in the industrial park area is provided by Radio Road, McCarthy Road, Oasis Road, Anza Road and San Rafael Place.

Regional access to the CPSP planning area is via Indian Canyon Drive on the east, and connecting the area with the urban areas of the cities of Palm Springs and Cathedral City to the south and southeast, and the Desert Hot Springs area on the north. Regional access via Indian Canyon Drive will also be supported by US Interstate-10 and its interchange upgrade at Indian Canyon Drive. Highway 111 to the west will provide additional regional access.

#### **REVIEWING THE SPECIFIC PLAN**

Local jurisdictions are authorized to adopt Specific Plans as a tool in the implementation of their General Plan through California Government Code Section 65450 through 65457. Minimum requirements for the contents of a Specific Plan are set forth in California Government Code, which allows local jurisdictions to adopt Specific Plans either by resolution or ordinance. The City of Palm Springs Municipal Code provides for adoption by ordinance. A revised Zoning Ordinance has also been prepared as part of this Specific Plan (see Section II of the CPSP), which amends portions of the City's Zoning Ordinance (Ordinance 1294). Therefore, the Specific Plan must be adopted by ordinance (City Municipal Code, Chapter 94.07.01).

#### *General Plan Land Use & Circulation*

The College Park Specific Plan provides a detailed analysis of land use and General Plan Land Use designations assigned by the 2007 City General Plan update. The CPSP breaks down areas designated as Mixed Use / Multi-Use and assigns more use-specific designations that better recognize existing conditions and allow for better land use control and compatibility. However, the CPSP does not represent a radical departure from the current land use designations.

With the adoption of the General Plan Amendment, the Specific Plan will be incorporated into the General Plan and be consistent with its goals and policies. The CPSP and GPA also amend the General Plan Circulation Element, deleting that segment of the Sunrise Parkway between Indian Canyon Drive and Highway. An analysis of consistency with the General Plan was addressed in the Specific Plan. The CPSP Environmental Impact Report also sets forth relevant General Plan goals and policies, which were addressed in their respective sections.

### *Zoning & Development Standards*

The development standards and zoning ordinance for the College Park Specific Plan are based on the City of Palm Springs Zoning Code. The Specific Plan amends zoning assignments and to a limited extent revises permitted uses and applicable development standards. The purpose of these changes is to better recognize the existing conditions and development constraints and opportunities in the CPSP planning area. The changes also address existing and possible future land use compatibility issues, and facilitate development that meets the objectives of the Specific Plan.

Upon its adoption, this Specific Plan establishes development standards and guidelines and provides the revised zoning ordinance for the Specific Plan area. Where development standards differ between the City Zoning Code, the Specific Plan so notes and the provisions in this Specific Plan shall apply. Where the Specific Plan does not provide a standard, the standards of the City Zoning Code shall apply.

### *Architectural Guidelines*

The CPSP Architectural Design Guidelines are set forth in Section VIII of the Specific Plan and provide a flexible set of concepts and principles that will assure a quality working and living environment that is attainable by a broad socio-economic cross-section. The implementation of the design guidelines will enhance the quality and character of the community and guide its buildout.

The Architectural Design Guidelines are intended to encourage creativity and excellence in all aspects of architectural design and development. The desired result will be a community that is attractive, cohesive and in harmony with the natural setting and surrounding lands and neighborhoods. As noted above, these guidelines have been developed to complement the West Valley Campus of the College of the Desert, which will be an integral part of this community.

It is also the intent of these guidelines to help clarify current patterns of development and identify the challenges, resources, and opportunities for enhanced community design. Their implementation will enhance the appearance, solidity and function of all development and yield more successful residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial uses, streets, public facilities, and parks and open spaces. The guidelines are also designed to promote a more sustainable and healthy community.

### *Landscape Guidelines*

The CPSP landscape design guidelines apply to new development, infill and redevelopment sites, and public lands and rights-of way. The guidelines address site planning, building and landscape design based on sustainability principles. They also provide direction on the design of areas requiring special attention, such as multi-family housing and industrial and business park design, treatment of major and minor entries, and area roadways and community open space areas.

The landscape guidelines are meant to preserve the planning area's tremendous scenic vistas, provide interest and focus that complements the surrounding viewsheds, and

reduce the visual clutter associated with overhead power lines, unsightly structures and conflicting land uses. The CPSP master landscape guidelines are also designed to enhance and improve the quality of life and sense of well being for the community's residents, employees, students and visitors. The guidelines should help the City and developers create living and working environments, as well as outdoor places to relax, walk, jog, play and participate in other recreational activities.

#### *Special Study Areas*

The College Park Specific Plan addresses portions of the planning areas (PAs) within the CPSP project boundary that warrant special consideration and treatment. These Special Treatment Areas (STAs) include the interface areas between the COD West Valley Campus and the adjoining neighborhoods, specific planning and design recommendations for remaining development sites, and modified roadway designs. Planning area and design/development issues have been identified, and design concepts and development guidelines that can serve as possible solutions are presented. In a few instances, guidelines are proscriptive and are therefore closer akin to standards rather than guidelines. Where applicable, responsible parties and a suggested schedule are identified.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

The College Park Specific Plan and associated General Plan Amendment and Change of Zone are considered a "project" under the definitions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The City has evaluated the project under CEQA Guidelines and an Environmental Impact Report has been prepared and circulated for public comment; the 45-day comment period ends on January 28, 2011. To date, no comments have been received that would necessitate recirculation of the environmental analysis.

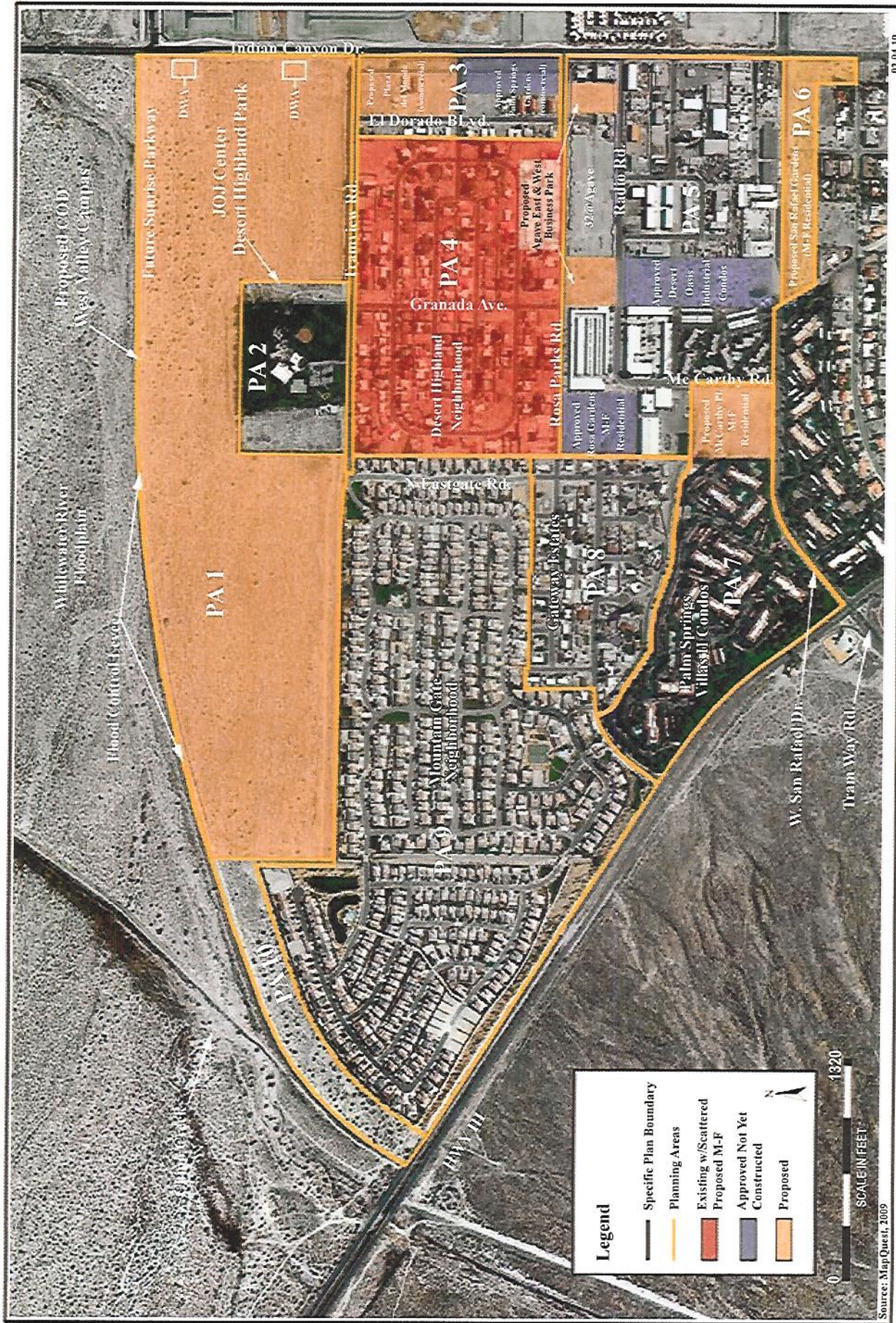
Staff believes the EIR is a complete description of the project and an adequate analysis of the project's potential adverse impacts on the environment. Recommended Mitigation Measures have been incorporated into the EIR that will reduce potentially significant impacts to less than significant levels. One exception is the project's potential to generate air pollutants, including Greenhouse Gasses (GHGs), which may exceed established thresholds. Consequently, a Statement of Overriding Considerations has been prepared for this issue.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The proposed College Park Specific Plan, and associated General Plan Amendment and Change of Zone, as mitigated in the project EIR, have been prepared as a response to the unique opportunity offered by the development of the West Valley Campus of the College of the Desert. Staff believes that the proposed Specific Plan is consistent with the General Plan and Zoning Code. The Commission is encouraged to provide questions and comments in preparation for a public hearing on February 23, 2011.

#### **Attachments:**

1. Exhibit I-4 – Existing, Approved and Proposed Development (excerpt)
2. College Park Specific Plan and Draft EIR (previously distributed)



**TERRA NOVA**  
 Planning & Research, Inc.



**College Park Specific Plan  
 Existing, Approved and Proposed Development  
 Palm Springs, California**

Exhibit

I-4