

I. ADMINISTRATION

PREFACE

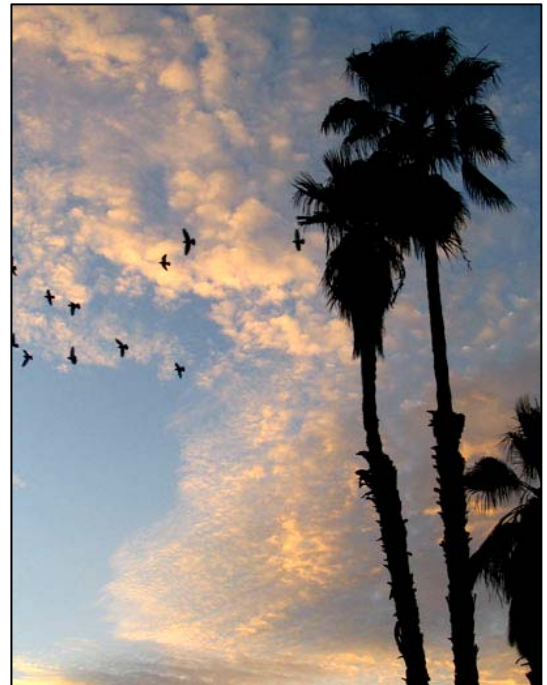
Our City is unlike any other—we have a reputation as a world class desert resort and we are one of the nation’s most recognized winter playgrounds. We are proud of the timeless character of our Downtown, our celebrated history with the Hollywood entertainment community, our relaxed desert lifestyle, our distinctive collection of architecture, and our idyllic location at the foothills of a picturesque mountain setting.

Palm Springs’ eclectic nature creates a desirable environment for a variety of lifestyles. Artists, retirees, professionals, singles, new families, and permanent and seasonal residents all call Palm Springs home. As part of this General Plan, we are embarking on many positive changes for the City’s future. Embracing the positive energy and active involvement of our citizens, the City will continue to take the necessary steps to improve our community and to achieve our vision.

As Riverside County’s population continues to grow, it will be imperative for Palm Springs to develop strategies to sustain the vitality and unique charm of the City while managing the imminent growth of our City’s population. We will:

- ◆ Achieve a quality of life and delicate balance of land uses that make Palm Springs a desirable place to live.
- ◆ Position the City to attract businesses that stimulate the City’s economy.
- ◆ Provide recreational and resort opportunities that will strengthen the City’s reputation as a premier desert retreat.

This chapter provides a broad overview of the General Plan—how it was created, what it is to achieve, and how it should be used. It also provides



background information such as the Vision, project setting, overview of public outreach efforts, and features of the General Plan—all of which are needed to understand our City’s history and to chart the course for our future. The thrust of this document is to create a mechanism that will preserve the quality of life, character, and image that are distinctively Palm Springs while developing a balance of land uses that encourages sustainability and vitality for our community. In doing so, we will create an enduring legacy of a City that will be enjoyed by generations to come.

PALM SPRINGS VISION

Our vision statement serves as the foundation for all of the goals and policies contained within this document. It is with this vision that our City can continue to achieve its maximum potential. The vision serves as the “common ground” from which all decisions are made, and it identifies priority areas where resources should be focused to ensure that our city continues to be a great place to live, work, and recreate.

The Palm Springs Vision

A world-renowned desert resort community where residents and visitors enjoy safe neighborhoods, an exciting social environment and a relaxing leisure experience.

We enhance our natural, cultural, and historical resources with sustainable economic growth and high style.

We provide responsive, friendly and efficient public services within a government that fosters unity among all our citizens.

SETTING THE STAGE

BACKGROUND

Of all the destination resorts in the Coachella Valley, Palm Springs is certainly the most famous. The physical beauty, spectacular climate, and unique charm of Palm Springs are known throughout the region, the country, and even the world. In a city as cherished and visible as Palm Springs, the vision for the future is multifaceted and complex, since the City must strive to preserve the delicate balance between its natural and built environments. The ultimate

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goal of the General Plan is to achieve land uses and development patterns that best meet the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.

Bounded by the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains on the south and west and the desert on the north and east, Palm Springs is a product of its relationship with its surrounding natural and geographic environments. The expansive desert terrain contributes to the City's coveted warm climate; the mountains provide a dramatic visual backdrop and shelter from the winds. The proximity to metropolitan Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego counties, combined with the City's superior physical setting, is a primary reason that Palm Springs has become a popular resort destination.

The area encompassing the present City of Palm Springs was discovered centuries ago by the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, who established their village around the natural hot mineral springs known for their medicinal and healing capabilities. Throughout the 19th century, many explorers, colonizers, and soldiers came through the desert, but it wasn't until 1853 that United States Topographical Engineers described the combination of palm trees and warm springs they encountered as "Palm Springs." The name became more commonly used several years later.

In 1877, the Southern Pacific Railroad completed its line through the desert to the Pacific Ocean. Early development in Palm Springs was associated with attempts to establish agricultural activity in the area and the southern portions of the Coachella Valley. In the 1920s, the region became a retreat for successful business and movie personalities, who took advantage of the warm weather, the remote location, and the hot water spas. The tourist and resort community of Palm Springs developed over the following decades and dramatically changed the character and economy of the Coachella Valley. In 1938, the City of Palm Springs was officially incorporated.

Today, Palm Springs not only prides itself on its resort amenities, but also on the village character it has been able to maintain. At the same time, Palm Springs has many major amenities typically found in cities with much larger populations, such as the Palm Springs International Airport, Convention Center, Palm Springs Art Museum, Aerial Tramway, Desert Regional Medical Center, a broad range of public services, and diverse residential neighborhoods. Open space and mountainous areas comprise almost half of the City's total area and provide treasured natural recreation opportunities and habitat areas.

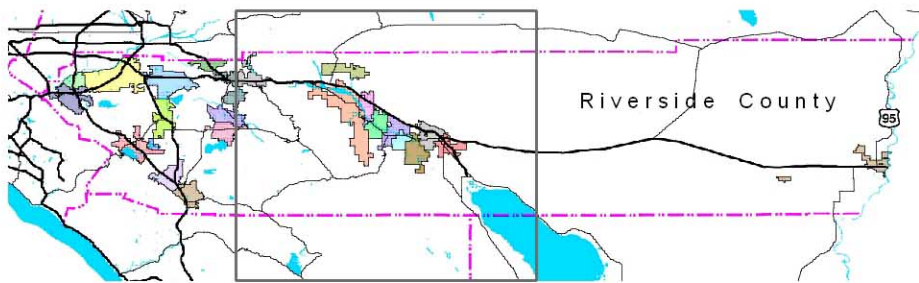
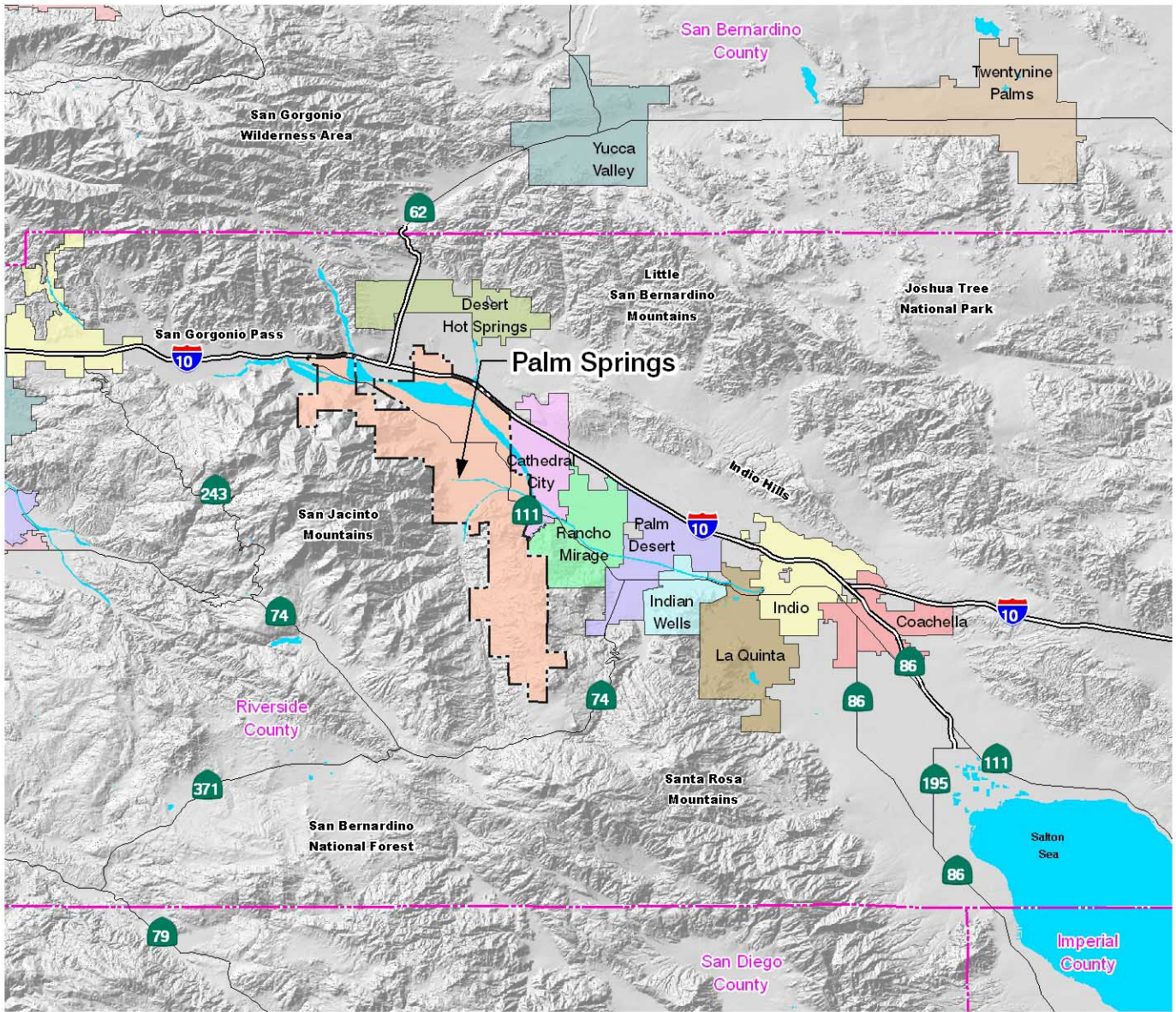


The Palm Springs City seal reflects the City's most well-known attributes: warm weather, dramatic mountain backdrop, and signature palm trees.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

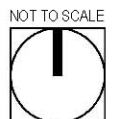
Sphere of Influence: Established by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), a sphere of influence is intended to reflect “the probable physical boundaries and service area” of a city. The Sphere encompasses incorporated and unincorporated territory. LAFCO is directed by State law to establish and periodically review the spheres of influence for each agency within its jurisdiction.

The City is nestled at the base of the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains, approximately 60 miles east of Riverside. Serving as the “gateway city” for the Coachella Valley, the City of Palm Springs comprises an incorporated area that encompasses 60,440 acres, or nearly 95 square miles; the City’s *sphere of influence* comprises another 27,160 acres, or approximately 42 square miles. Primary access to the City is provided by Interstate 10 and Highway 111; north–south access to the City is provided via Indian Canyon Drive and Gene Autry Trail (Figure 1-1).



Area Detailed Above

Regional Location



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WHAT IS A GENERAL PLAN?

State law requires every city and county within California to adopt a comprehensive General Plan. The General Plan represents the community's view of its future; it becomes a blueprint for a city's or county's growth and development. City councils, boards of supervisors, planning commissions, and city staff use the goals and policies of the General Plan as a basis on which to make decisions.

The General Plan is considered "comprehensive" since it applies to the territory within the boundaries of the adopting jurisdiction, any areas outside of its boundaries that are within its sphere of influence, and any land outside the City's boundaries in which the City has determined bears relation to its planning efforts. Since regional planning issues are not necessarily confined to political boundaries, State law allows jurisdictions to conduct planning efforts outside the jurisdiction's territory. The need to address important issues that transcend local boundaries can facilitate inter-agency planning coordination and result in collaborative planning strategies between neighboring cities or regional agencies such as the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).

The General Plan is also considered comprehensive because it addresses a wide range of issues that affect the City such as the physical development of the jurisdiction or social concerns that can affect the overall quality of life.

The General Plan is considered a "long-term" plan since it looks 20 years or more into the future. Each jurisdiction can establish a time horizon that best fits its individual needs.

It is not unusual for new information to become available during the life of a General Plan. Alternatively, the vision for the community may change over time, and as a result, General Plans are periodically reviewed and updated to reflect the community's changing needs.

The City of Palm Springs is a *charter city* and is therefore able to exercise broader powers to enact land use regulations than do general law cities. For example, as a charter city, Palm Springs is not currently required to meet the state law requirement for consistency between the General Plan and the zoning ordinance. The City's charter city status provides it with greater control over its future development and administration.

Charter City Classification

Under the California constitution, cities are either general law cities or charter cities. General-law cities must follow procedures set by state law and may only exercise powers granted to them by the State. Charter cities have full authority over their own municipal affairs (such as financing public improvements or enacting local ordinances), although they remain subject to state law on matters of statewide importance (such as regulation of traffic and vehicles or exercising powers of eminent domain).

HOW THE GENERAL PLAN SERVES OUR COMMUNITY

Cities that are thriving and healthy provide their citizens with a quality environment for living, working and recreating. The General Plan is the single most important tool used to help successful communities achieve their vision.

The City adopted its first General Plan in 1966. It was rewritten in the 1970s and the last General Plan was adopted in 1993.

The General Plan:

- ◆ Sets the course for decision making
- ◆ Helps to balance the competing interests of residents with the needs of visitors and property owners
- ◆ Helps to inform and educate the citizenry
- ◆ Serves as an effective management tool for City staff
- ◆ Provides guidance for economic decisions
- ◆ Ensure the protection of the natural environment



This update process is not intended to craft the General Plan from scratch; instead it streamlines and further refines the existing direction already established by the City in the 1993 General Plan. The General Plan contains state-mandated elements, including Land Use, Housing, Circulation, Safety, Noise, and Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Conservation.

Since opportunities for redevelopment and reinvestment into the community are a prominent issue for the City, economic development and improved community quality are a considerable focus of the General Plan and its policies. As a result, two elements were included in the General Plan to provide

additional direction for the City's future: the Community Design Element and Air Quality Element.

Proposals for development, either developer- or City-initiated, must be analyzed and tested for consistency with the goals, policies, and programs in every applicable element of the General Plan. This test of compliance is also a required criterion for determining significant impacts under the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

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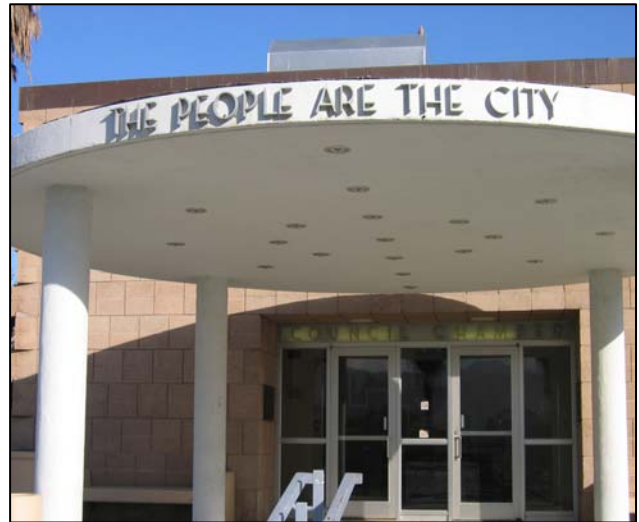
An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared as a companion document to the General Plan. The EIR assesses the potential impacts that are generated by the goals, policies, and programs of the General Plan, and identifies mitigation measures to address those impacts. The technical studies prepared for safety, cultural resources, and traffic provided the technical detail used to determine the level of impacts that could be created by the General Plan.

SHAPING THE PLAN

General Plan preparation is a comprehensive process involving City leaders and staff, residents, community groups, and consultants. “The People are the City”—these words are memorialized above the entrance to the City Council Chambers and encapsulate the vital role of public participation in key decisions affecting the City’s future.

Preparing a General Plan, or in this case, an update to the existing General Plan, requires a jurisdiction to conduct a candid assessment of the city—its existing conditions and trends, opportunities and constraints, and vision for the future. The input generated by residents and stakeholders informs the General Plan so that it reflects real-world issues experienced by those who live and work in the community.

Before the General Plan can be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council for action, various community members, stakeholders, and members of the business community must become involved and volunteer their expertise and insights to help shape the General Plan.



The statement over the entrance to the City Council Chambers clearly captures the collaborative spirit embodied by the Palm Springs community and City leaders.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

General Plan Steering Committee

The Steering Committee was established by the City Council to provide input to the General Plan process. The Steering Committee reviewed the City’s existing General Plan elements and provided feedback on goals and policies that were pertinent to the update and should be retained, those that should be retained but modified, and those that should be removed from the General Plan document altogether because they are complete or no longer relevant.

The Steering Committee served as a vehicle to attain representative opinions and attitudes of residents, landowners, interest groups, and other community members interested in providing input that would ultimately shape the outcome of the General Plan. Steering Committee representatives also served as communications liaisons to the public and assisted the planning effort by providing recommendations to staff prior to the presentation of the General Plan document to the Planning Commission and City Council.

Downtown Advisory Group

Although Palm Springs is well known as a destination resort, steps must be taken to energize the community to maintain its vitality and to ensure that development opportunities are captured within Palm Springs rather than other cities in the Coachella Valley.

In response to increasing development pressures Downtown, and to increase revitalization efforts in the heart of Palm Springs, the Downtown Advisory Group was created. The Downtown Advisory Group was comprised of 15 members representing City Council, Planning Commission, the design community, the Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood, the Palm Springs Economic Development Corporation, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, the Downtown Merchants Association, the Uptown area of the City, the Historic Site Preservation Board, and the Palm Springs Art Museum.

The Downtown Advisory Group was instrumental in the development of a vision for Downtown and the *Downtown Urban Design Plan*, an interim plan guiding:

- ◆ the preferred intensity, heights, and locations of uses
- ◆ the integration of mixed uses
- ◆ landscape treatments
- ◆ structured and on-street parking
- ◆ the introduction of plazas and midblock walkthroughs
- ◆ adaptive reuse of historic buildings

Downtown Palm Springs is the heart of the community. The vitality of the City's core has the potential to dramatically influence the future of the City economically; therefore, it was critical to develop a strategy to manage its functionality and aesthetic appeal to locals and visitors alike.

As development pressures within the City continue to increase, it will also become increasingly important to reposition the Downtown to serve as a major activity center for not only the City, but also the Coachella Valley. The principles and objectives identified in the *Downtown Urban Design Plan* were created as a precursor the General Plan and is a proactive and conscientious

strategy to protect and enhance the quality of development in the heart of Palm Springs. The Plan addresses and responds to the changing physical, economic, and social environments of Downtown. It was created through the valuable input of the community and a specially developed task force that was charged with reviewing the content and setting direction established in the document.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

During the preparation of this General Plan, public involvement was solicited at various points of the General Plan process. Outreach efforts ranged from large-scale community festivals to more issue-oriented discussions conducted in smaller workshops held within the community.

Community Festivals

A series of community outreach festivals were hosted by the City at two strategic points in the General Plan Update effort. In May 2005, over 130 people participated in the *Plan! Palm Springs Community Workshop*, the first outreach effort designed to obtain preliminary feedback from the community relating to land use, circulation, neighborhoods, open space, parks, and conservation. Participants were asked to vote on the issues that were most important to them. This prioritization of issues helped to focus and direct the goals and policies that were identified in each of the elements.

The second phase of public outreach was held in January 2007 to prepare the public for a “preview” of the Draft General Plan. The General Plan Preview workshop provided an overview of the General Plan process, how the comments received over the course of the planning effort were incorporated into the plan, and additional ways that the public could comment on the contents of the General Plan prior to its review and action by the Planning Commission and City Council.

Downtown Ideas and Directions Workshop

Open to the general public, this outreach effort held in February 2005 was designed to create a forum for stakeholders to express their visions for Downtown Palm Springs and their opinions on current obstacles and opportunities in the Downtown area. Workshop participants were asked to think about the best way to encourage and manage future development Downtown. This workshop provided a valuable forum to create a consensus about the most important issues to be addressed Downtown, and developed potential strategies to address those issues. These strategies ultimately resulted in the development of the *Downtown Urban Design Plan* (Appendix A), adopted by the City



Council on July 20, 2005, the guidelines complement the policies in the Community Design Element.



Vision-to-Reality Workshops

To receive input from the community on the Land Use Plan, approximately 10 smaller-scale outreach meetings were conducted in various areas of the City. Facilitated by members of City Staff and the General Plan Steering Committee, these workshops provided valuable community feedback to the Steering Committee on the proposed Land Use Plan. Input received from each of the community workshops was reviewed, evaluated, and prioritized by the Steering Committee; refinements were then made to the Land Use Plan prior to its presentation to the Planning Commission and City Council.

GENERAL PLAN PRIORITIES

General Plans provide policy guidance related to the seven mandatory elements required by state law. It is common that recurring issues and themes surface during public outreach efforts and evaluation of the plan that require more focused attention and future direction above and beyond that mandated by the state. Focused issues become features of the Plan, and can be used to prioritize use of staff resources and allocation of budget. The following values were identified as the highest priority for Palm Springs, and must be addressed in the General Plan to allow the City to achieve its maximum potential aesthetically, economically, and socially.

Support Palm Springs as one of the world's premier desert resorts. Strengthen and promote those things that make Palm Springs a one-of-a kind resort destination, including its natural resources, eco-tourism, its pedestrian-oriented shopping and entertainment districts including Downtown, its unique architecture, the convenience of its airport and convention center, and its wide array of lodging and recreational facilities.

Establish the City as a leader in efficient use of resources: land, water, and energy. Promote energy efficiency and the efficient use of natural resources. Promote the development of alternative energy industries and use of alternative energy sources such as wind and solar in new and existing construction to minimize resource depletion and conserve resources for future generations.

Diversify the City's economic foundations and promote Palm Springs as the "first choice" for businesses. Create employment opportunities that will maintain a stable and diverse economy, including opportunities for workers to

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live in the communities in which they work. Through land use and other policies, promote Palm Springs as the first choice for businesses such as tourism, entertainment, retail, office, medical, educational, professional, financial, technical, industrial, and other economic and employment generators.

Develop a full range of retail opportunities for local, regional, and tourist markets. Encourage diverse and appealing shopping opportunities for residents, tourists, and the regional market that will generate sales tax revenues, attract customers from neighboring communities, and enrich the quality of the life for those living in and visiting Palm Springs.

Provide for a broad range of housing opportunities. Encourage development of housing units for varying life stages and styles and all economic levels.

Create unique places that strengthen community identity, offer visual interest, and support lively activity. Concentrate and promote areas of rich community activity served by efficient multimodal transportation and parking.

Encourage the creative mixing of land uses to promote vibrant neighborhoods and reduce the need for vehicle use. Combine residential, retail, office, and other land uses within the Downtown and other key locations, to create active, full-service neighborhoods that are less dependent on the automobile.

Preserve and uphold the high quality of architecture and the unique visual and aesthetic form in buildings and neighborhoods that distinguish Palm Springs from other cities. Promote the identification of unique neighborhoods while encouraging new and characteristically different neighborhood types to develop. Recognize the importance of adaptive reuse for architecturally and historically significant resources.

Provide a circulation system that accommodates the smooth flow of vehicular traffic, encourages safe bicycle and pedestrian movement, and presents attractively landscaped corridors. As the City develops, street and roadway improvements will be necessary to ensure a safe and functioning network of circulation corridors and intersections. The streets will be attractively developed and maintained to encourage bicycles, pedestrians, and alternative forms of transportation. Trails, bikeways, and other forms of circulation linkages through the city and into surrounding areas must also be developed and maintained.

Promote development that enhances scenic views and provides both visual and physical access to the City's surrounding mountains, washes, open space, and other scenic and natural resources. Unparalleled natural resources can be found in and near Palm Springs. These resources add value to the City's

quality of life and are an important contributor to the City's image as a destination resort.

HOW TO READ THE GENERAL PLAN

GOALS

Each element contains at least one goal statement and related policy statements and implementing programs. A *goal* in the General Plan is the broadest statement of community values. It is a generalized ideal which provides a sense of direction for action. For example:

Example

GOAL I:

Create a safe, aesthetically pleasing, and unified community appearance within the context of distinct districts and neighborhoods.

POLICIES

The essence of the General Plan is contained within its policy statements. Policies further refine the goal statements, and guide the course of action the City must take to achieve the goals in the plan. It is important to note that policies are guides for decision makers, not decisions themselves. For example:

Example

Policy

1.1 Use public landscaping and signage along streets, sidewalks, and property frontages and in public spaces to strengthen the existing City identity.

ACTIONS

Details for implementing policies in the General Plan are contained in the form of action items. An action item describes the specific steps necessary to achieve a policy, and defines the level of commitment to be executed. The key questions that eventually need to be addressed for actions in the General Plan are:

- ◆ Who is responsible for implementing the action item?
- ◆ When is it to be carried out?
- ◆ How much will it cost?
- ◆ How will it be funded?

Actions provide the basis for establishing priorities, scheduling, and assigning staff and other resources to specific actions needed to implement the policies of the Plan. For example:

Action

- 1.2 Create a master streetscape plan addressing landscaping, signage, lighting, and special design features along Gene Autry Trail.

} *Example*

POLICY INTERPRETATION

For a policy to be useful, it must be clear. However, not all policies are the same; they differ in terms of expected results, commitment of resources, and indication of importance or urgency. Therefore, it is important to simplify the language used in the General Plan and understand the distinctions between the different levels of policy. The following definitions of terms provide guidance in interpreting the policy language of the General Plan; where other action terms are used that are not specified here, they are to be equated to the closest applicable term described below.

Shall: Policies containing the word “shall” indicate that an action must be taken in all cases. This represents absolute commitment to the policy, and the expectation is that the policy will always be carried out.

Should: Policies containing the word “should” indicate that an action will be taken in most cases, but exceptions are acceptable for good reasons.

Encourage: Policies containing the word “encourage” indicate that these actions are highly recommended or desired and should be pursued when feasible.

Allow: Policies containing the word “allow” indicate that a proposed action will be supported within certain parameters and following certain guidelines.

Coordinate: Policies containing the word “coordinate” indicate that an action will occur with another entity, and the City will carry its share of the burden or responsibility.

Explore: Policies containing the word “explore” indicate that an action will be taken to investigate the subject at hand to discover whether or not some further commitment is in order.

Consider: Policies containing the word “consider” indicate that an action may or may not be taken, depending upon the results of analysis that remains to be completed.

Limit: Policies containing the word “limit” indicate that an action will be taken to keep the subject within certain limits, or will at least make undesired change more difficult.

Restrict: Policies containing the word “restrict” indicate that an action will be taken to keep the undesired action to a minimum.

AMENDING THE GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan is not static, but rather is a dynamic and multi-faceted document that defines and addresses the changing needs of the City. It is based on an on-going assessment and understanding of existing and projected community needs. To assure that the General Plan is kept current, short-term programs and policies may be reviewed periodically to reflect compatibility with budgetary priorities and related program status. Long-term programs and implementation measures must also be given consideration to assure timely funding and development of critical infrastructure and public services and facilities.

TIMING

Mandatory elements of the General Plan may be amended up to four times in each calendar year. The City Council or any citizen may initiate a General Plan Amendment. It is left to the discretion of the local jurisdiction to establish an amendment schedule to be published one year in advance. State law further requires that the Housing Element be reviewed and updated at least once every five years.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Applications for the amendment of the General Plan and the appropriate fees are filed with the Department of Planning Services. An amendment to the General Plan constitutes a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and, therefore, is evaluated for its environmental effects and consistency with other elements of the General Plan. Final approval of General Plan amendments is the responsibility of the City Council subject to satisfying the environmental requirements imposed by CEQA.

EXEMPTIONS

The State Legislature has recognized that occasions arise which require the local jurisdiction to have some flexibility in amending the General Plan. As set forth in the California Government Code, the following are exempt from the General Plan amendment schedule:

- ◆ Amendments to optional elements.
- ◆ Amendments requested and necessary for affordable housing (Section 65358(c)).
- ◆ Any amendment necessary to comply with a court decision in a case involving the legal adequacy of the general plan (Section 65358(d)(1)).
- ◆ Amendments to bring a general plan into compliance with an airport land use plan (Section 65302.3).

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS AND PROGRAMS

Although the General Plan serves as the primary means to help the City implement its vision, several other management and implementation tools are needed to ensure that the goals and policies identified here are fully realized.

MUNICIPAL CODE AND ZONING ORDINANCE

The City's Municipal Code and Zoning Ordinance are the primary tools used to implement the goals and policies of the General Plan. The Zoning Ordinance provides more detailed direction related to development standards; permitted, conditionally permitted, and prohibited uses; and other regulations such as parking standards and sign regulations. The land uses specified in the Zoning Ordinance are based upon and should be consistent with the land use policies set forth in this element. Changes to the Zoning Ordinance may be necessary due to the adoption of provisions in this General Plan and could require changes to the zoning maps and development standards.

SPECIFIC PLANS

While the General Plan provides overall guidance for the physical development of the City, specific plans are used to provide more detailed regulatory guidance for special areas or large developments within the City. Specific plans are generally comprised of a land use plan, circulation plan,

development standards, design guidelines, phasing plan, infrastructure plan (water, sewer, or drainage), and implementation plan pursuant to California Governmental Code Sections 65450 through 65457. They are typically implemented as customized zoning for a particular area of the City, and are generally used for large-scale projects that require a comprehensive approach to planning and infrastructure issues.

A limited number of specific plans have been approved within the City of Palm Springs for the following projects: Canyon Park, Canyon South (an amendment to the Canyon Park Specific Plan), and Section 14, which are shown on the Land Use Plan (Figures 2-2 and 2-3).

PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS

Planned development districts are mechanisms to provide flexibility in the application of development standards that would yield a more desirable and attractive project than would otherwise be possible with strict application of the underlying zoning regulations. Planned development districts enable property owners to apply modified development standards (e.g., an increase in buildable area or building height or adjustments to setbacks) that are different than those identified in the Zoning Code, if the project can mitigate any impacts that would be generated by the modifications. All Planned Development Districts shall be consistent with the General Plan.

To implement the land use policies identified in this element, planned development districts are intended to:

- a. Provide a mechanism to allow the permitted building area, floor area ratios, and building heights to exceed provisions specified by land use policy.
- b. Provide a mechanism for allowing both on- and off-site density transfers.
- c. Provide a mechanism for the consolidation of adjoining commercially and residentially designated parcels into a single site, if they are designed as part of a unified development project.
- d. Provide a mechanism for determining the appropriate type, character, density/intensity, and standards of development for the reuse of sites currently used for public or private institutions.
- e. Provide a mechanism for creative, high quality projects that are evaluated as a whole, rather than against individual standards.

DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS

State law provides for development agreements between a project proponent and the City. The purpose of a development agreement is to provide developers with additional assurances that the policies, rules and regulations, and conditions of approval in effect at the time a project was approved will not be nullified by a future local policy or regulation change. In exchange, the developer may be required to meet certain conditions or performance criteria, which become part of the agreement.

Development agreements can be a useful means of meeting General Plan goals and policies while removing some of the risks faced by developers. Agreements can remain in effect for a few or several years, the term typically being set forth in the agreement. It is important to emphasize that, as set forth in the Government Code, the City is not prohibited from applying new rules, regulations, and policies to the property unless specifically stated in the development agreement, nor is the City prevented from denying or conditionally approving any subsequent development project application on the basis of such existing or new rules, regulations, or policies.

REDEVELOPMENT PLANS

Community Redevelopment Law authorizes a city to undertake redevelopment projects to turn blighted, deteriorating areas into revitalized community assets. Redevelopment strategies can include the use of tax increment financing (i.e., the amount of additional tax revenue generated by increased property valuations as a result of new development on the property), property acquisition, consolidation of small parcels, joint public-private partnerships, clearance of land and resale to developers, and relocation of tenants. Redevelopment projects can be implemented only for areas where there is a documented presence of physical, economic, and/or social blight. The City's redevelopment areas were originally comprised of 10 redevelopment project areas established between 1973 and 1991, but were ultimately merged into two project areas in 2000, as shown on Figure 1-2, *Redevelopment Areas*.

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

Land use planning for the Palm Springs does not stop at the City boundaries. Unincorporated lands adjacent to the City's borders are identified by the Riverside County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) as areas likely to be serviced or annexed by the City in the future. These lands are known as the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI).

Tribal Land Use and Ownership

In the late 1800s, the United States government established the Reservation for the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (Tribe). The Reservation covers even-numbered sections within the Palm Springs area. Although all Reservation land began as Tribal Trust Land, some has become Allotted Trust Land, and some Allotted Trust Land has been sold to become Fee Land.

Tribal Trust Lands: The United States holds title to these lands in trust for the Tribe as a whole, rather than for any individual. The Tribe retains sovereign authority over the use and regulation of these lands.

Allotted Trust Lands: These lands are former Tribal Trust Lands, the title of which is now held by the United States for one or more individual members of the Tribe (allottees), rather than for the Tribe as a whole. The Tribe retains sovereign authority over their uses and regulation, but the Lands may be subject to the same development standards and requirements as land owned by non-Indians (per land use agreements between the Tribe and local governments). With the consent of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior, an allottee can sell or lease such lands. If sold, a parcel of Allotted Trust Land becomes a parcel of Fee Land.

Fee Lands: These lands are former Allotted Trust Lands that have been sold to a buyer, who then holds fee title to the land. Although the Fee Lands remain within the historical boundaries of the Reservation, they can be owned by anyone.

The City does not have regulatory control over these lands, but does have authority and responsibility to designate its preference for land use planning in the County land. The City’s SOI is shown on the Land Use Plan (Figures 2-2 and 2-3). In addition, the Land Use Plan identifies an area north of I-10 that the City is considering for potential future sphere of influence expansion area; however, no land uses have been proposed for the area; any future applications to amend the City’s existing SOI to incorporate this area will require appropriate CEQA review and a General Plan Amendment to update the Land Use Plan.

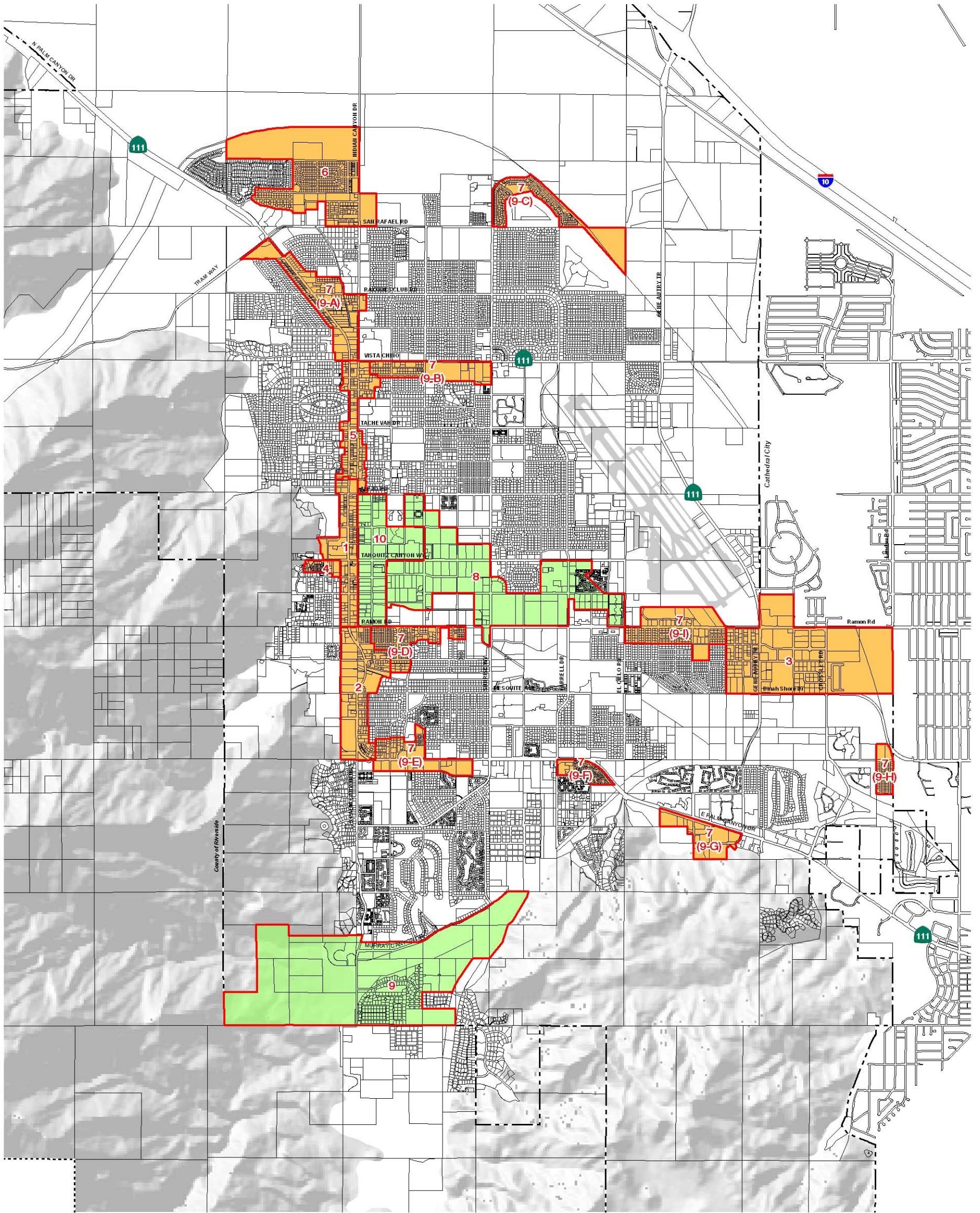
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE AGUA CALIENTE BAND OF CAHUILLA INDIANS

The form and quality of land development in Palm Springs has been shaped by many factors that are uniquely its own. For example, the climate, regional location, and topography have all influenced the development pattern of the City. In addition, the City is also subject to a unique pattern of land ownership that affects the timing and location of development.

The City of Palm Springs is divided into Indian and non-Indian property holdings, based upon a grid pattern of square-mile sections of alternating ownerships. Indian land—which has been subdivided into sections, half-sections, and sometimes even smaller areas—is controlled by the Tribal Council or by individual allottees of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (the Tribe). Over time, this checkerboard land-ownership pattern has led to an inconsistent pattern of development, since the majority of development has occurred on non-Indian-owned lands. Several strategically located Indian-owned lands, such as Section 14 just east of Downtown, contain vacant parcels, and will play a significant role in the future development patterns for the City. Figure 1-3, *Tribal Lands*, shows the Indian ownership pattern within the City.

In the 1970s, the City and the Tribe came to an agreement that recognizes the Tribe’s authority to regulate Indian Trust lands. In addition, the agreement specified that the City would act as the Tribe’s agent to impose City land use regulations and consult with the Tribe with regard to any action that may affect Indian Trust Lands. The agreement established an appeal process designating the Tribal Council as the final authority over land use matters on Indian lands.

The City maintains a positive relationship with the Tribe and continues to collaborate with Tribal representatives to develop and apply land use strategies that support the City’s comprehensive land use vision, while concurrently achieving objectives identified by the Tribal Council. The viability of development on Indian land increased significantly when long-term land leases were first implemented in 1959.



0' 4,000'

- Merged Area No. 1
- 1. Central Business District
 - 2. South Palm Canyon
 - 3. Ramon-Bogie
 - 4. Oasis
 - 5. North Palm Canyon
 - 6. Highland-Gateway
 - 7. Project Area #9

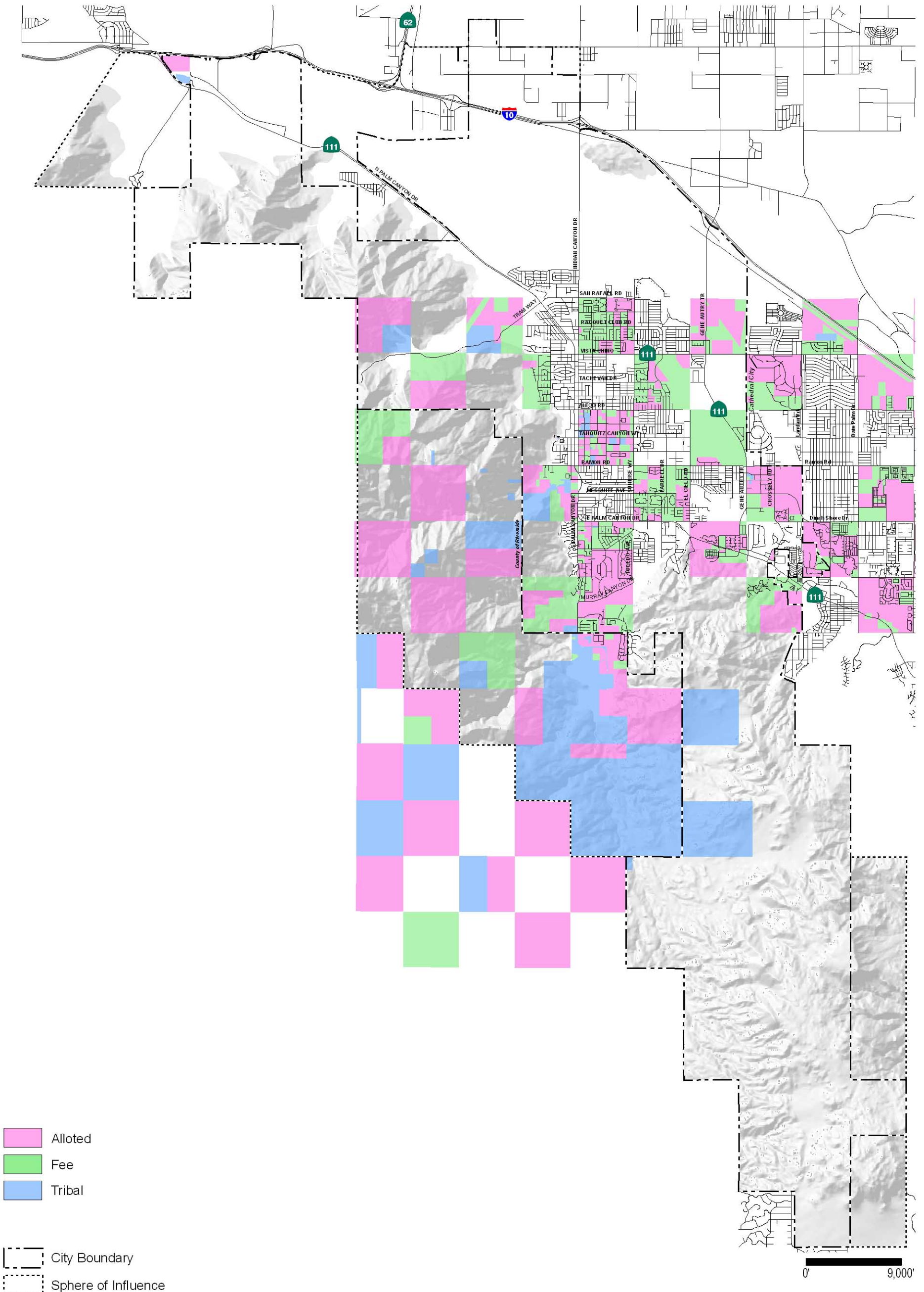
- Merged Area No. 2
- 8. Baristo-Farrell
 - 9. Canyon
 - 10. Tahquitz-Andreas
- City Boundary
 Sphere of Influence

Redevelopment Areas

Land Use Element

Figure 2-1

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Tribal Lands

Land Use Element

Figure 2-2

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GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Since the General Plan is a blueprint for the future of Palm Springs, it serves as the basis for City staff and the City Council to make strategic policy decisions. The General Plan must be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that its content is reflective of the community's changing goals and desires.

ADMINISTRATION

The effective implementation of the General Plan relies on the development and maintenance of City regulatory documents, including the Zoning Ordinance, specific plan requirements, and City rules for the implementation of CEQA. The General Plan itself is a living document with mandates for frequent review and refinement. Amendments to the Plan should be given careful consideration and not be granted casually. The goal, policies, and programs in this introductory chapter will help assure the effective administration and implementation of all elements of the Palm Springs General Plan.

GOAL AD1:

Maintain a contemporary General Plan that serves as a valid foundation for decision making into the future.

Policies

- AD1.1 Encourage relevant commissions and boards to meet regularly to evaluate how their respective groups are working to implement the City's General Plan.
- AD1.2 Periodically review and update the General Plan to reflect the changing needs of the community. Focus on reviews and updates during economic "down cycles" that anticipate and set direction for anticipated "boom cycles."
- AD1.3 Adequately budget for processing amendments to, and conducting comprehensive updates of, the General Plan.
- AD1.4 Ensure that proposals for new development be analyzed and tested for consistency with the goals, policies, and action items identified in the General Plan. Proposed new land uses that are not consistent with the General Plan shall not be approved.

AD1.5 Provide the opportunity for adequate public review and comment for development projects that have the potential to impact the community.

Actions

AD1.1 Conduct a new commissioners' orientation program to acquaint all new members of advisory groups with City issues and the proper application of the General Plan.

AD1.2 Participate in programs through the Palm Springs Board of Realtors to educate real estate professionals of the goals, policies and action items in the General Plan.

AD1.3 Conduct a periodic review and prioritization of capital improvement projects based on long-range strategic plans for adequate provision of municipal services.

AD1.4 Review the development application process and outline possible streamlining opportunities.

AD1.5 Study the Planned Development Process and establish a matrix of benefits and variances that would establish proportionality between variances granted and benefits required to be returned to the City.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

The General Plan is a tool that should be used by the County, the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG), and City boards and commissions to gain a better understanding of City priorities and how those priorities should be addressed in the context of larger planning efforts. As Riverside County and the Coachella Valley continue to experience a high level of growth, it will also be imperative that the City continue to play an active role in regional decision-making efforts. Maintaining strong working relationships with the County of Riverside and CVAG will help to ensure that the City is properly positioning itself to manage future growth in a cooperative manner.

GOAL AD2:

Encourage ongoing land use planning coordination efforts between City, the Tribe, and regional, state, and federal agencies.

Policies

- AD2.1 Participate in all relevant local and regional planning efforts.
- AD2.2 Establish regular lines of communication with local, regional, state, and federal agencies whose planning programs may affect the City of Palm Springs.

Actions

- AD2.1 Meet regularly with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians to facilitate discussions related to future land use, tourism, and economic development plans on Indian-owned land.
- AD2.2 Establish working relationships with the Bureau of Land Management and the Conservation Agencies to manage the City's valuable open space and biological resources.
- AD2.3 Establish a liaison with the County of Riverside to ensure projects considered within the City's sphere of influence conform to the provisions of the Palm Springs General Plan.
- AD2.4 Ensure that Palm Springs residents, property owners, and businesses have the opportunity to provide input on regional issues or projects having the potential to impact the community.
- AD2.5 Evaluate opportunities to annex land in the City's Sphere of Influence.
- AD2.6 Evaluate opportunities to amend the City's Sphere of Influence boundaries.
- AD2.7 Ensure that the regional conservation plans are considered during future land use reviews for new applications or land use changes.

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