

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING SERVICES

MEMORANDUM

Date:

November 28, 2012

To:

Planning Commission

From:

Craig A. Ewing, AICP

Subject:

Downtown Palm Springs Project:

TPM 36446 / Tentative Parcel Map.

5.1290 PD 361 / Planned Development Permit, and

MAJ 3.3605, 3.3606, 3.3607 / Major Architectural Approvals

Introduction:

At the meeting of Wednesday, November 14, 2012, the Planning Commission received a staff report on Downtown Palm Springs Project, with specific attention given to the project's conformance with the development standards of the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan. The Commission opened the public hearing on the project, following notification as required by law, and continued the hearing to November 28. The Commission also identified the following additional information that it wished to receive about the project and staff forwarded the list to the applicant that evening (see attached e-mail):

- a. Modeling of the project within the larger downtown area (update the last sheet of today's handout with more accurate building volumes),
- b. Photo-simulations of the proposed project from the east side of N. Palm Canyon Drive,
- c. The agreement regarding the interim use of Block D for a public event venue,
- d. Design options for the 'billboard' space on the hotel's elevation tower (east elevation),
- e. Sightline studies for views, comparing the existing condition with proposed project,
- f. The structural configuration of the underground parking,
- g. Sun / shadow studies for the open space areas (Blocks B and C),
- h. Anticipate vehicular traffic movement patterns (see Public Works for assistance).

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At the time this memo was prepared, items "f" and "h" have been received and will be presented at the meeting. Other items may also be presented to the Commission.

As previously noted, the Planning Commission has been requested by the City Council to complete your review of the project so that the Council might begin its deliberations on December 19, 2012. To help achieve this, staff has prepared a report for this meeting to focus on the project's conformance with the design guidelines of the Specific Plan. The Commission now has the basic information it needs to take action on the requests. Staff will be prepared to offer draft resolutions for Commission consideration and action at your meeting of Wednesday, December 5, 2012, and set the stage for the Council's review.

This memorandum provides a discussion of the project in light of the design policies of the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan, which governs the development of the property. These policies are for use by the AAC, Planning Commission and City Council to evaluate the proposal and more fully inform the Architectural Review findings of the Zoning Code (Section 94.04.D, attached).

Project Description:

As more fully described in your prior staff reports, the proposal is made up of five entitlements: A Tentative Parcel Map to reconfigure the site for development and financing purposes, three Major Architectural Approvals for the proposed buildings, and a Planned Development District for a hotel exceeding 60 feet in height.

Tentative Parcel Map No. 36446

The proposed tentative parcel map (TPM 36446) would create thirteen (13) parcels for future development and four (4) lots for public street right-of-way. The map is required to reconfigure the site for development and financing purposes. On November 19, 2012, the applicant submitted a revised tentative map and site plan which re-aligns "New Main" (see attached exhibit). These changes alter the proposed areas of Block B and C / C-1 and may also modify the setbacks and stepbacks for the buildings. At the time this memo was prepared, staff had not completed its analysis of the new plan's conformance with the development standards of the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan. A new analysis will be provided at the meeting of November 28, 2012.

Major Architectural Approval 3.3605 / Block A

This site is located adjacent to the existing Hyatt Suites Hotel, fronts N. Palm Canyon Drive and extends to Andreas and Belardo Roads (both new). The block is presently developed with a portion of the Desert Fashion Plaza multi-tenant building and this structure is to be retained and repurposed for retail use. No new square footage is to be added to the existing one-story, 52,608 sf building. New exterior building facades are proposed and the interior will be demised to allow multiple retail and food service tenants. The building maintains a height of 28 feet and lot coverage of about 78% of

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the block. The remainder of the site is divided between landscaping (10%) and paving (12%).

Major Architectural Approval 3.3606 / Block B

Block B is immediately south of Block A, fronting N. Palm Canyon Drive to the east, Belardo Road (new) to the west, and between Andreas Road (new) and a new street between N. Palm Canyon and the Palm Springs Art Museum. Two buildings are proposed, with a maximum of two-stories and 45 feet in height; they are proposed for use as retail, restaurant and office. The buildings are oriented in a north-south direction, each fronting either N. Palm Canyon Drive or Belardo Road (new). Between these buildings a private street ("Market Street") is proposed to provide vehicular and pedestrian access, but which can also be closed to traffic as a festival / event space. The buildings will cover about 66% of the site, with landscaping covering 25% and streets and paving 9%.

Major Architectural Approval 3.3607 / Block C

At the corner of W. Tahquitz Canyon Way and N. Palm Canyon, Block C is proposed to be divided into two projects. Block C-1 will include buildings ranging from one to three stories, with a maximum height of 52 feet. The buildings are oriented to W. Tahquitz Canyon Way and N Palm Canyon Drive, but also to the public open space in the middle of the Block. Uses will be retail, restaurant and office, totaling 57,050 square feet. Building coverage is 67% of this portion of Block C, with 26% landscaping and 7% paving.

Planned Development District PD 361 / Block C-1

A hotel is proposed on the westerly (back) half of Block C, with the entry fronting on W. Tahquitz Canyon Way. The main portion of the hotel runs along the east side of Belardo Road (new) and rises to a height of approximately 89 feet. Total square footage is approximately 140,272. The building footprint will cover about 51% of the site; landscaping will comprise about 26% of the site; and another 23% will be devoted to streets other paving.

Analysis:

The General Plan policies and zoning will be governed by the development standards and design guidelines of the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan. An analysis of the project against the Specific Plan development standards was presented to the Commission on November 14, 2012. The Specific Plan's design guidelines (see attached) also must be considered by the Commission and they are presented below.

Architecture - General Provisions

The Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan discussion of architecture identifies certain general principles for the physical development of the site. The existing surrounding environment needs to be taken into account so that development achieves, "... sympathetic relationships between the new buildings and the existing adjoining

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developments..." The blocks of the Specific Plan must be "...clearly identified by a coherent visual identity." Lastly, the Specific Plan calls for a, "...unified, distinctive and adaptable urban design concept, that is based on versatile design principles..."

The "sympathetic relationships" objective appears to be generally met by the project as the edge of the blocks fronting N. Palm Canyon Drive are proposed to be one story buildings, with the exception of the three story corner building in Block C, at Palm Canyon and "New Main". The major challenge is the height of the hotel along West Tahquitz Canyon Way, where the six-story building is setback from the street curb about 30 to 35 feet. Adjacent existing development includes the three-story Palm Mountain Resort & Spa at the southwest corner of Tahquitz and Belardo, but directly south is a surface parking lot serving the Oasis mixed use commercial building (southwest corner W. Tahquitz Way and S. Palm Canyon Drive). The overall plan respects the scale of development along Palm Canyon Drive and at the corner of Palm Canyon Drive and Tahquitz Canyon Way, but the hotel presents a significant mass close in to Tahquitz at Belardo Road..

The "coherent visual identity" objective is met in part by the grid of small, urban-scale blocks provides a repetitive block pattern along N. Palm Canyon Drive. Further, distinctive street paving will enhance a visual identity of the site. Finally, the landscape and street furniture plans have the potential to confirm a coherent visual identity, and should be reviewed with that goal in mind. Meanwhile, building architecture is not seen as fulfilling this objective as the elevations and building façades are proposed to vary throughout the site.

The last overall objective is to establish a "unified, distinctive and adaptable urban design concept". Since "unified" and "distinctive" are potentially conflicting ideas, the question is whether the sum of the projects' design elements provide meet the objective in a coherent, successful way. As noted above, the block pattern, streetscape and landscape should contribute to a unified look and should be sufficient for that purpose. Distinctiveness should be achieved through building architecture, materials, finishes and colors. The building elevations on Blocks A, B and C provide distinctive looks within a contemporary genre, but it is unlikely that upon completion the present design will be read as anything but a single project. The ability of buildings' to "learn" over time should mitigate this, as new tenants modify individual façades for their own branded look.

The last part of the objective is "adaptable", which has to be taken into consideration within the context of buildings which will have a life of thirty to fifty years. This proposal provides adaptability in the storefront elevations that will be modified by individual tenants, the open courtyards and Market Street that are available for outdoor uses and the flexible use of Block A as a new-styled multi-tenant retail complex.

Architecture - Building Height, Scale and Massing

The Specific Plan recognizes that the site is intended for "...an intensive level of development...", but that the pedestrian experience requires buildings to be

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"...designed to the human scale with active, pedestrian friendly frontages." View corridors and public and private open spaces are to be provided throughout. An average maximum height of 60 feet is to be maintained, although hotels may exceed 60 feet. Most significantly, building elements must be varied to reduce the appearance of mass and avoid "cliff-face" frontages. Guidelines for individual blocks are also identified, and discussed below.

The pedestrian-level objectives are generally met by the project as one-story buildings predominate along N. Palm Canyon Drive and the internal street frontages are primarily retail and restaurant spaces. Necessary "back-of-house" and service entries are minimized. View corridors along the internal east-west streets are provided. Public and private open spaces are found on Blocks B and C, with the existing building on Block A retained and re-purposed to including interior public circulation, including connection to the abutting Hyatt Hotel.

Overall height of the three blocks is maintained at an average less than 60 feet, including the hotel in Block C which has a maximum height approaching 90 feet. However, the proposed hotel presents a tall façade at Tahquitz Canyon Way as well as a six-plus story building mass along Belardo. The architecture mitigates some of the building's height so that it does not appear "cliff-faced", but its overall volume is remains pronounced. Given the developer's expressed need for a hotel of 185 rooms to support the remainder of the project and the goals of creating pedestrian-friendly street frontages and useful open spaces, the design and placement of the hotel is the project's primary trade-off within the Specific Plan's design guidelines proposed by.

Block A

The massing of Block A buildings is required to respect of the Hyatt Hotel to the north. The existing mall building is to be retained, maintaining the existing relationship with the hotel's south elevation, and no changes are proposed here. The three street elevations are arranged with retail and restaurant facades "frames" that are oriented to pedestrian uses and available for future tenant customization.

Block B

The Specific Plan's approach to Block B has been modified by this proposal and the Council's conformity review of October 17, 2012. Consequently, the development of Block B with two two-story buildings and a private alley should be evaluated in light of the overall plan's scope. The one-story portion facing N. Palm Canyon Drive is respectful of the scale of development along the street, and the two story portion is setback significantly. The overall scale and placement of the Block B buildings is an appropriate transition between Block A and C; however the westerly building encroaches into setbacks and rights-of-way and is recommended for redesign.

Block C

Stepped frontages and massing "concentrated toward the center" are required in order that the volume of the larger buildings respects the surrounding streetscapes and

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development intensities. This is achieved along Palm Canyon in Block C, with the exception of a three-story building at the corner of Palm Canyon and "New Main" providing a modest landmark statement. As previously noted, the proposed hotel does not meet the guidelines for avoiding significant building mass along the street edge. Neither does it step back from Tahquitz Canyon or Belardo, nor concentrate that mass toward the center. Also previously noted, this arrangement allows for the lower, pedestrian-oriented buildings along Palm Canyon and the internal streets; for the open spaces within Blocks C and B; and for the size of hotel identified as necessary to support the project.

Architecture - Architectural Style and Treatment

Recognizing that Palm Springs' existing downtown development is an eclectic mix of styles, the Specific Plan also states that new development should be "of its time, using contemporary designs of a scale and form reflective of locally distinctive models." The challenge noted by the Specific Plan is to provide variations on a consistent architectural theme, with a variety of detailing and materials; the buildings should not be too "idiosynchratic".

Additional objectives include incorporating a sustainability paradigm, a response to the demands of the desert climate, and the sensitive treatment of street fronts. More specific direction is provided to assure the recesses and revieals provide shade and visual interest, including building projections, covered walkways and arcades. Buildings situated at important intersections should receive special treatments.

Overall, the project achieves the stated objectives. A contemporary style is adopted throughout the project, without the introduction of artificial variety (such as Mission Revival or Art Deco segments). The elevations at the street level as well as on the upper floors are composed of a variety of materials and colors arranged with slight variations in scale, massing, and repetition. The architecture supports the underlying objective of most downtowns: Providing "safe discovery" for pedestrians moving among the small blocks of shops and restaurants.

<u>Architecture</u> – Storefronts

According to the Specific Plan, storefronts should be "visually permeable", with clearly-defined entrances. While detailed storefront designs will be provided by individual tenants in the future, the elevations proposed for the retail and restaurant buildings show significant glazing and flexible "frames" for future tenant use.

<u>Architecture – Building Materials</u>

Exterior building materials are to be provided from a "rich palette of complementary materials and finishes." The Specific Plan also notes that the intense level of development contemplated for the area requires that building facades be "softened" by surface treatments. The deliberate and coordinated use of colors, materials, textures and glazing should aim to visually reduce building mass, create shadow effects and promote a sense of permeability and spaciousness.

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The project includes color / material boards for each block that provide coordinated, but varied palettes of muted colors for the main stucco finishes with stone, tile, aggregates and metals used for accents and highlights. for the four main developments (Block A, Block B, Block C and the hotel). The colors are muted desert colors, with coordinated accents, and materials include tiles and metal to add interest. It is expected that the ground floors will present more diverse and energized elevations, especially once tenants propose their specific storefront designs. Upper levels should be more subdued to achieve the 'softening' contemplated by the Specific Plan. Overall, the color and material boards achieve the Plan's objectives.

Connectivity, Streetscapes, Open Spaces

The Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan recognizes that the configuration and design of streets and passageways are vital to assuring full use of the downtown area by pedestrians and drivers. East-west linkages are especially important and the Tentative Parcel Map and proposed site plan provide an extension of Andreas Road, as well as a new "Main" street to penetrate the site. "New Main" Street's western terminus in front of the Palm Springs Art Museum will provide a formal and dramatic visual connection between N. Palm Canyon and a major community institution and architectural landmark.

The extension of Belardo Road through the site (north-south) further develops the idea of a downtown by creating small blocks for increased retail frontage and pedestrian access. Outdoor passageways within Blocks B and C and the indoor passage in the Block A building further enhance opportunities for exploring the area and creating the hierarchy of streets and pedestrian linkages called for in the Plan.

The importance of off-site views is highlighted in the Specific Plan as, "...existing view corridors are protected and new ones created." The new east-west streets provide for enhancement of existing and new views, with street trees providing a frame as called for in the Plan. The proposed arrangement of one-story buildings and six-plus story hotel is expected to have a mixed impact on views, depending on the location of the observer. By eliminating major portions of the existing Desert Fashion Plaza, the plan is anticipated to open up some views that did not exist before, while reducing others somewhat.

Street design treatments are to provide "...a strong sense of continuity and place..." Consistent with the Plan's direction, sidewalks are provided on the streets and internal open spaces, "... to accommodate a variety of compatible outdoor activities and thereby extend the hours of active use." Most sidewalks are at least 8-feet wide, and internal passageways range in width from ten (10) to eighty (80) or more feet. While street treatments and furnishings are not specifically identified, the applicant has indicated that pavers and other decorative treatment will characterize the streets and that asphalt concrete will be minimal. These treatments will provide the unifying character to the area as the buildings and open spaces provide unique shopping and dining experiences, storefront-by-storefront and block-by-block.

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Connectivity - Public Open Spaces

The Specific Plan's discussion of Block B highlights its role in the Plan's vision of a central public gather place. The City Council's October 17, 2012 conformity determination of the current site plan postpones this vision for the current renovation plan. The distinctive sense of place that is to be anchored by the public plaza is now achieved by other means: The Market Street in Block B, the pedestrian corridor from the Hyatt to the corner of Palm Canyon and Tahquitz and the use of Block D as an interim outdoor event space (not a part of the current entitlements).

Landscaping

Landscape guidelines in the Specific Plan focus on assuring that landscaping adds to the area's high-quality design, while respecting the desert setting and the need to be drought-tolerant. The choice of landscape materials must also consider the "vertical dimension" in the use of palm trees, as well as trees that will provide shade. The Specific Plan calls for the establishment of three landscape zones: 1) The Streetscape Zone, with palm trees predominating along the streets (to emulate those on Palm Canyon Drive), 2) The Transition Zone with a greater variety of shade trees and shrubs on secondary streets (Market Street), and 3) The Open Space Zone, where the widest variety of plants is used in the plazas and public spaces.

Further, landscaping is supposed to highlight and enhance focal points, including a Major Focal Point at Museum Drive and New Main (called Museum Way in the Specific Plan). Minor Focal Points (Palm Canyon and New Main, Belardo and New Main, and Andreas and Belardo) must also be give special attention. Finally, the Specific Plan provides a recommended landscape palette from which a landscape plan should be developed. While only a conceptual landscape plan has been submitted, it appears to achieve the goals of the Specific Plan. More detailed landscaping needs to be presented before a final action is taken by the City.

Street Furniture, Lighting and Art

As a vision for a pedestrian-oriented area, the Specific Plan recognizes that "Well-designed street furniture, lighting and public art enliven townscape character and contribute to a strong sense of local identity." As with other design elements, street furniture, lighting, and art should be selected to support the overall identity of the planning area, yet also providing variety and distinctiveness. No plan for these elements has been presented, and detailed specifications and plans will be needed prior to final action.

Recommendation:

The Commission may close the hearing and discuss the project. Any actions on the applications should be in the form of motions to direct staff to prepare draft resolutions; these would be available for final action at your meeting of December 5, 2102.

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Attachments:

- Exhibits (previously distributed)
- E-mail to Michael Braun, November 14, 2012
- Revised Tentative Parcel Map 36446
- Palm Springs Zoning Code Section 94.04.D
- Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan Design Guidelines (pages III-17 thru -38)

Craig Ewing

From:

Craig Ewing

Sent:

To:

Wednesday, November 14, 2012 5:54 PM
Michael Braun (MBraun@wessmandevelopment.com)

Cc:

Terri Hintz; Doug Donenfeld

Subject:

Requirements for 11/28 Planning Commission - Downtown Palm Springs

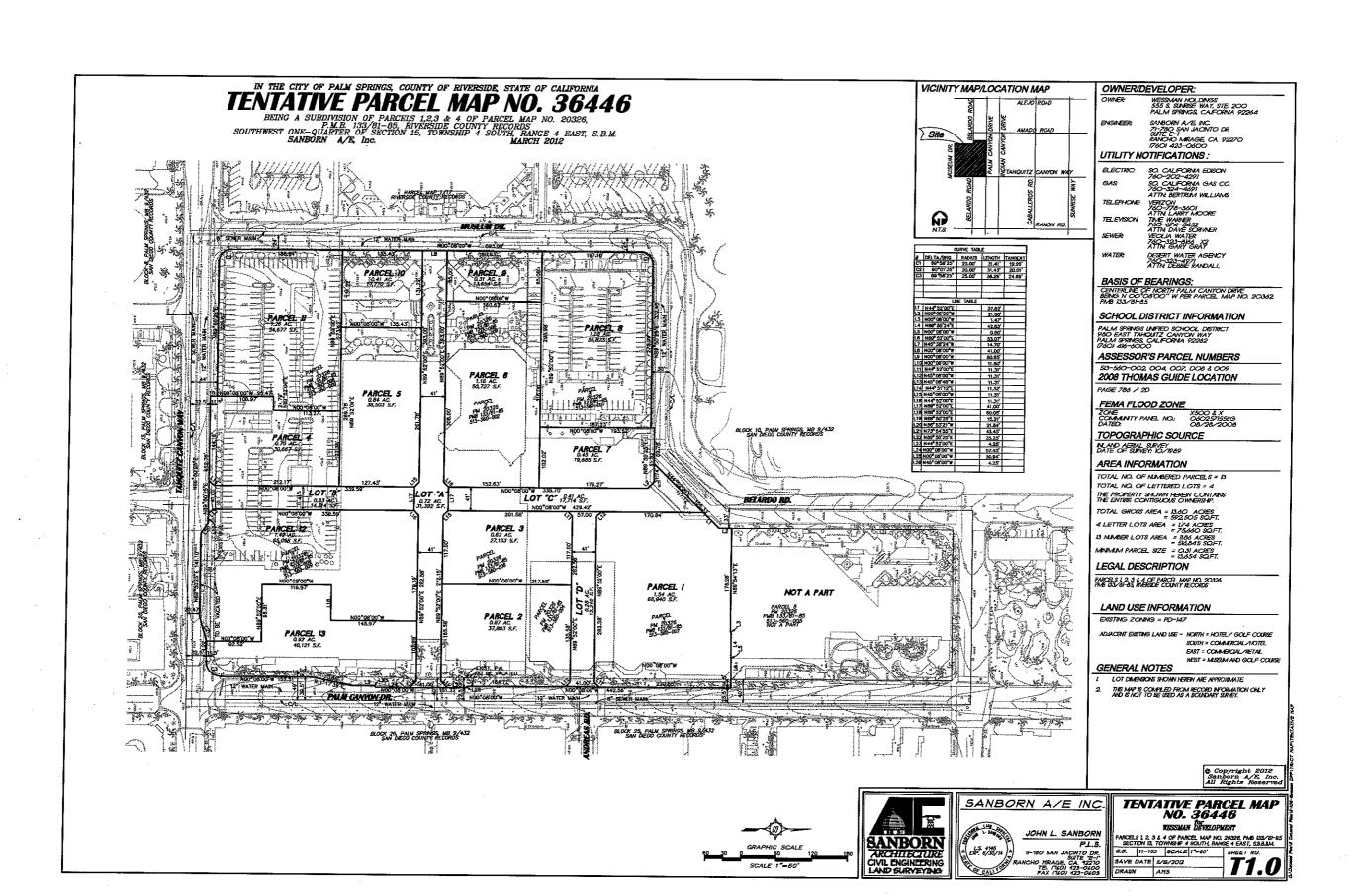
Michael,

Based on today's meeting, we will be seeking from you by noon, Tuesday, November 21 the following items:

- 1. Modeling of the project within the larger downtown area (update the last sheet of today's handout with more accurate building volumes),
- 2. Photo-simulations of the proposed project from the east side of N. Palm Canyon Drive,
- 3. The agreement regarding the interim use of Block D for a public event venue,
- 4. Design options for the 'billboard' space on the hotel's elevation tower (east elevation),
- 5. Sightline studies for views, comparing the existing condition with proposed project,
- 6. The structural configuration of the underground parking,
- 7. Sun / shadow studies for the open space areas (Blocks B and C),
- 8. Anticipate vehicular traffic movement patterns (see Public Works for assistance).

Thank you,

- Craig A. Ewing, AICP
- **Director of Planning Services**
- City of Palm Springs



94.04.D. Planning Commission Architectural Advisory Committee Review Guidelines.

The planning commission architectural advisory committee shall examine the material submitted with the architectural approval application and specific aspects of design shall be examined to determine whether the proposed development will provide desirable environment for its occupants as well as being compatible with the character of adjacent and surrounding developments, and whether aesthetically it is of good composition, materials, textures and colors. Conformance will be evaluated, based on consideration of the following:

- Site layout, orientation, location of structures and relationship to one another and to open spaces and topography. Definition of pedestrian and vehicular areas; i.e., sidewalks as distinct from parking lot areas;
- 2. Harmonious relationship with existing and proposed adjoining developments and in the context of the immediate neighborhood/community, avoiding both excessive variety and monotonous repetition, but allowing similarity of style, if warranted;
- 3. Maximum height, area, setbacks and overall mass, as well as parts of any structure (buildings, walls, screens, towers or signs) and effective concealment of all mechanical equipment;
- 4. Building design, materials and colors to be sympathetic with desert surroundings;
- 5. Harmony of materials, colors and composition of those elements of a structure, including overhangs, roofs, and substructures which are visible simultaneously;
- 6. Consistency of composition and treatment;
- 7. Location and type of planting, with regard for desert climate conditions. Preservation of specimen and landmark trees upon a site, with proper irrigation to insure maintenance of all plant materials;
- 8. Signs and graphics, as understood in architectural design including materials and colors;
- 9. The planning architectural advisory committee may develop specific written guidelines to supplement the design criteria and carry out the purposes of this chapter.

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F. Design Guidelines

1. Architecture

a. General Provisions

Consistent with the requirements and recommendations of the General Plan and the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines, all development within the Specific Plan area will complement the distinctive, eclectic townscape character that has made Palm Springs nationally and internationally famous. The existing built form and characteristic townscape spatial arrangements, together with the startling local topography, have created a unique environment that provides all users with a well-defined sense of place.

The northwest corner of the area contained within the Specific Plan fronts open space, but other than that, the Specific Plan addresses an area that is bordered on all sides by existing urban development. Achieving sympathetic relationships between new buildings and the existing adjoining developments will therefore be fundamental to the successful integration of forthcoming development into the wider context.

The Specific Plan area will be known as the Museum Market Plaza and its component blocks must be clearly unified by a coherent visual identity. An encompassing visual identity creates an essential sense of place and all design elements must work together to reinforce an underlying perception of continuity. The formulation of a unified, distinctive and adaptable urban design concept, that is based on versatile design principles and can, while retaining integrity, lend itself to interesting variations in application, detail and materials, is therefore an essential element of the Specific Plan.

b. Building Height, Scale and Massing

The Specific Plan allows for an intensive level of development, where careful attention to appropriate building height, scale and massing will be essential. The area is pedestrian oriented and all buildings should be sensitively designed to the human scale with active, pedestrian friendly frontages. Each of the component blocks must be effectively permeated with public and private open spaces, allowing view corridors to and from the public domain and thus avoiding the creation of an overwhelming and impenetrable built form. Within each block, individual buildings must be treated with care and consistency.

With the exception of Block K, all Blocks within Specific Plan are defined as Central Core in terms of the Palm Springs Downtown Urban Design Guidelines. In accordance with the recommendations of the Guidelines, this Specific Plan allows for an average maximum building height of 60 feet. However, with sympathetic massing and effective architectural treatment to visually reduce building bulk, hotels may exceed 60 feet, subject to City Council approval. The

design of the buildings, and the layout of the Specific Plan area, is intended to implement the goals of the General Plan, to create a new mixed use center of Palm Springs.

Building elements throughout the Specific Plan must be varied to include stepping down so that the apparent mass of the building is reduced, austere 'cliff-face' frontages avoided, and view corridors created.

In addition to conforming to the requirements concerning building height and stepped frontages, massing of the buildings in Block A must also respect the presence of the existing building to the north, the largely open space of the Plaza to the south and the hierarchy of streetscapes to either side.

Block B provides the public open space for the Plaza and the built form should therefore remain entirely subordinate to that of the blocks abutting, allowing views across the Plaza in all directions.



So that the unimpeded views and predominance of landscaping that typically characterize public open spaces can prevail, buildings shall be visually permeable and not exceed one story in height. They are limited to a maximum total area of 3,000 square feet and should be massed to the east and west of the block, gently framing a central open space.

Buildings included in Block C should conform to the requirements concerning building height and stepped frontages, with massing concentrated towards the centre. Sympathetic massing of the new built form will also respect the spatial characteristics of the Plaza to the north, the surrounding hierarchy of streetscapes and the modest levels of existing development to the southwest of the block.

The blocks defined as D and F may be developed together as one block, or as two blocks divided by a central access route, and with limited exceptions, the standard constraint on building height

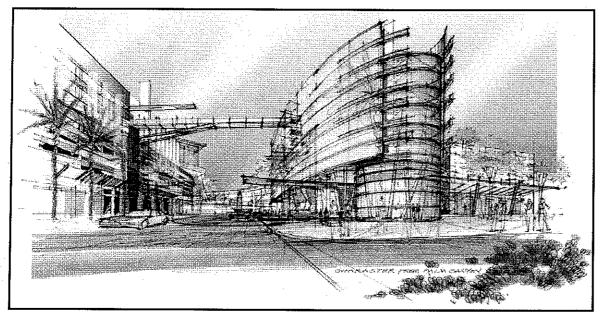


will apply, together with the requirement for stepped frontages. If developed as one block, massing should be concentrated away from Tahquitz Canyon Way, and pedestrian and visual permeability must be included so that the creation of an impenetrable and overtly urban mega-block is avoided. If the two blocks are separated by the introduction of a parking access drive, massing of the component buildings will require careful consideration so that the creation of an uninviting, alley-like access route is avoided. Sympathetic massing of the new built form will respect the spatial characteristics of the Museum and open areas to the west, as well as the surrounding hierarchy of streetscapes.

For the purposes of the Specific Plan, Blocks E, G and H are discussed as a single entity. However, with sympathetic massing and effective architectural treatment to visually reduce building bulk, elements to the north and west of the block may be

developed as a hotel to a height exceeding 60 feet, subject to City Council approval. To the north east of Block E, G and H, built form of approximately 75 feet in height already exists and its well-articulated frontage provides an effective edge to the open space of the golf course. Subject to sensitive architectural treatment, the new built form will continue the adjacent well-defined edge along the northern frontage of Block E, G and H. Massing of the new development towards the north and northwest of the block also results in it having minimal impact on any of the significant streetscenes within the Specific Plan. To avoid the creation of an impenetrable and overtly urban mega-block, effective massing of the new built form will include ample provision for visual and pedestrian permeability.

Another potential exception to the 60-foot height limit may be at Block K, where subject to City Council approval, additional building heights may be developed. Increased building height at



Block K will result in the new built form providing visual continuity between the constrained level of development allowed to the west and the intensive levels of existing and proposed development in Section 14, to the east, including the new proposed Spa Hotel and Hard Rock Hotel, both proposed at 100 feet in height. Block K includes a private street that provides east-west permeability and connects the areas to the east of the Specific Plan with the new Plaza and the existing Museum. The fragmented nature of the block presents challenges in terms of achieving sympathetic massing, as all street frontages should be designed to the human scale and the existing modest levels of development at abutting sites must be respected.

Exhibit III-2: Cross Sections with stepbacks.

c. Architectural Style and Treatment

Eclectic Architecture is a defining feature of Downtown Palm Springs and while renown for its uniquely Californian Modernist buildings, the area is also rich in interesting examples of Spanish and Mediterranean styles.

Where the distinctive character of an area derives from its diversity of development over many decades, new built form that merely replicates previous styles is counter to the way in which the area has evolved. New development, while contextual, should therefore be of its time, using

contemporary designs of a scale and form reflective of locally distinctive models.

Aside from landmark buildings, most buildings forming part of a streetscape do not need to be idiosyncratic. Too many buildings of individual dominance and distinction compete with each other and create urban chaos. A more harmonious townscape is achieved by using variations on a consistent architectural theme, with variety in the detailing and materials.

With reference to the City's legacy of Modern, Spanish and Mediterranean styles, a forward-looking

architectural theme recognizing a new sustainability paradigm is the primary direction for future development in the Specific Plan area. The theme seeks to encourage architecture that builds on Palm Springs' tradition of responding to the demands of a desert climate, but with new respect for minimizing energy and materials use in construction and occupancy. New design esthetics will be needed to incorporate solar control, passive energy production (solar and wind), and

wireless technologies with time-honored concerns for pedestrian entries, security and orientation, building function, view preservation and visual appeal in the manipulation of form, materials and color. Particular attention to the sensitive treatment of the street front forms a core objective within the unified Urban Design concept. Together, these principles will

provide the Museum Market Plaza area with a cohesive and distinctive character. Within this overall architectural theme, interesting variation in

rooflines, elevational articulation, detailing and materials will be needed to create a richly textured built

environment. Recesses and reveals that provide shade and create shadow lines, such as building projections, covered walkways, colonnades, arcades, and other human scale openings shall be included to reduce the impact of building mass and create visual interest. The means of enclosure



to courtyards and balconies shall be visually permeable where appropriate and the stepping back of upper floors will also be utilized to further reduce the visual impact of building mass and maximize view corridors.

In accordance with the prevailing architectural theme, buildings are to be clearly legible with active main frontages and well-defined entrances. All elevations of a building shall be consistently treated, and rooftop mechanical and electrical equipment must be screened as an integral part of the architectural treatment.

Buildings situated at important intersections should receive special treatments. The inclusion of architecturally definitive features and corner cut-backs assists in the creation of a distinctive sense of place, as well increasing opportunities to create useable outdoor public spaces.

Block K will accommodate an architecturally inspired landmark building that will be the 'Flagship' of the Museum Market Plaza. In its location at the eastern end of the new east-west thoroughfare, it will form a balanced counterpart to the Palm Springs Art Museum building located at the western extreme of the new street. Although standing alone as a landmark building,



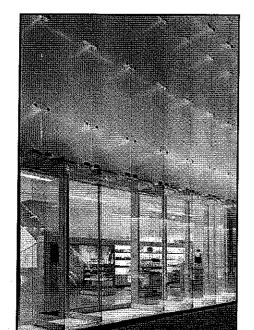
its architectural treatment will complement the architectural theme prevailing throughout the Museum Market Plaza. In addition to the frontages enclosing the private street that bisects block K, the building will have two major street frontages and distinctive 'gateway' features must form an integral part of the architectural treatment of both the eastern and western facades.

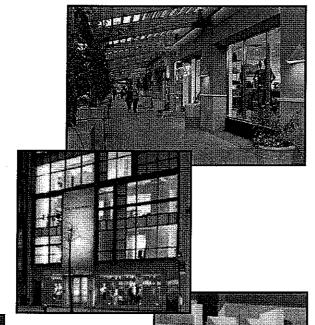
Special architectural treatments will also be required for the western and northern elevations of the buildings included in Block EGH, and the western elevation of Block DF. While consistent with the prevailing architectural theme, western elevational treatments should defer to the presence of the adjacent Art Museum building and relate to the public open space immediately in front of it. Effective articulation of the northwestern and northern frontages of Block EGH will be essential to reduce the visual dominance of the tall building.

Parking structures at street level have a potential to result in austere and impermeable frontages. While consistent with the prevailing architectural theme, they will require special design treatment to minimize the impact of the structure on the pedestrian experience. Parking structures must be visually permeable and include 'designed-in' safety features. Elevations require effective articulation, incorporating projections, recesses and interesting combinations of materials to avoid the creation of continuous, harsh frontages. Parking structures must also have well defined entrances, easy access and legible interior spatial arrangements to invite consistent usage.



Exhibit III-3 Architectural Treatments









d. Storefronts

Well-designed storefronts make a significant contribution to streetscape character and assist in the creation of lively frontages. The pedestrian experience is enhanced by visually permeable, largely glazed storefronts that minimize the division between interior and exterior space, and allow interesting views of inviting interiors. Clearly defined and easily accessible entrances create active frontages and draw people into the store, while visually permeable design treatment allows the interior of the store to function as an extensive display area at all hours, thereby maximizing economic opportunities for vendors.

Essential security equipment must be inconspicuously located so that the creation of a hostile atmosphere is avoided. If permitted, security grilles must be internally mounted, fully retractable during trading hours and visually permeable when in use after the store is closed.

While allowing flexibility for individual distinctiveness, shopfront design should be compatible with the Museum Market Plaza architectural theme and reflect the appearance and scale of the building above.

e. Building Materials

Designed as an integral component of the Museum Market Plaza architectural theme, a rich palette of complementary materials and finishes will create subtle continuity throughout the area by visually linking eclectic architectural styles. While consistent with the broader theme, it is essential that materials, colors and finishes are appropriate to the architectural style of individual buildings.

The Specific Plan allows for an intensive level of development and building facades must be softened and articulated by the innovative use of a harmonious range of surface treatments. In addition to visually reducing building mass, interesting variety in color and material assist in the creation of a lively townscape. Intense sunshine is a prevailing feature of the Palm Springs environment and textured surface finishes on which interesting shadow effects can be achieved will contribute much to distinctive local character. Wide expanses of glazing blur the distinction between interior and exterior space, promoting an essential sense of permeability and spaciousness long associated with the Palm Springs townscape.

2. Connectivity, Streetscapes, Open Spaces

a. Connectivity and Streetscenes

Streetscape character has a fundamental impact on the vitality of downtown by either encouraging or deterring pedestrian activities and a legible, well defined hierarchy of streets and pedestrian links, connected by a sequence of versatile public open spaces, effectively permeates the Specific Plan.

East-west connectivity is facilitated for both vehicles and pedestrians. Upgrading the streetscape of Andreas Road and introducing a street that bisects block K and continues through to the Art Museum will enhance connectivity to and from Section 14, as well as providing an opportunity to form several definitive intersections. The existing link between Museum Drive and Belardo Road is not essential to successful circulation, and subject to an appropriate design solution, severance of the two could occur.

Permeating the blocks included in the Specific Plan with well-designed pedestrian connections avoids the creation of overwhelmingly urban mega-blocks, adds visual interest to the streetscene and encourages pedestrian activity. The design treatment of pedestrian links, both within the Plan

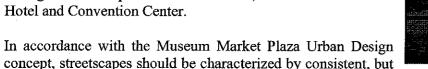


Area and to adjacent development, forms an integral part of the Museum Market Plaza Urban Design concept, creating inviting, multi-purpose spaces of distinctive character that include 'designed-in' safety features.

View corridors have contributed much to the unique townscape character of Palm Springs. The mountains form a spectacular backdrop to the City and downtown streetscenes offer distinctive longitudinal views, where the vertical rhythm of the mature palm

trees acts as an effective foil to the general horizontality of the built form. In terms of preserving local distinctiveness, it is important that existing view corridors are protected and new ones created. As building heights within the Specific Plan generally exceed those previously existing,

it is essential that architectural elements and building components be varied and reduce the overall perception of mass, resulting in graduated frontages that allow generous view corridors. A particularly definitive local view will be created by the opening of a new east-west street that allows tree-framed views in both directions. Views to the east will extend to the startling focal point of the new building and views to the west will include the iconic Art Museum, with the mountain behind. The new street will also be the starting point of an interconnected town center extending from the Museum, through the new Spa Resort and Casino, and to the Hard Rock Hotel and Convention Center.





adaptable, design treatments so that a strong sense of continuity and place is achieved. Component spaces of special use or interest can be individually defined by a complementary variety of detailing and material. Major vehicle and pedestrian routes within the Specific Plan shall be enclosed by active frontages, with sidewalks designed to accommodate a variety of compatible outdoor activities and thereby extend the hours of active use. Consistent with the Urban Design concept for the Museum Market Plaza, a full range of features and amenities to

enhance the pedestrian experience and encourage pedestrian activity shall be incorporated into the design of sidewalks and other public open spaces (see Section III.4 Street Furniture). Parking structures at street level have a potential to result in austere and impermeable frontages and the sidewalk fronting a street level parking structure will require sensitive design treatment and landscaping to soften the visual impact of the parking structure.

Within the Specific Plan, a hierarchy of definitive intersections is to be created. Street surfaces at selected intersections will be given visual definition by the introduction of special surface finishes, while landscaped sidewalk projections or 'bulbs', together with building corner cutbacks, will create useable public open spaces and contribute to a more pleasing pedestrian experience. All design treatments will be consistent with the unified Urban Design concept, with special interest and variety being achieved in the detailing. Key definitive intersections should

be created at all four corners of the Main Plaza and at the junctions of Tahquitz Canyon Way



with Belardo Road and North Palm Canyon Drive. Secondary definitive intersections may be created at other minor intersections within the Specific Plan area. A visual link between the Museum Market Plaza and the Section 14 district immediately to the east should be achieved by the introduction of special street surface finishes to Indian Canyon Drive, at the gateway to the new connector through Block K. This will draw the attention of drivers to the gateway as well as encouraging pedestrian circulation between the two areas.

Exhibit III-4: Open Spaces



b. Public Open Spaces

The Main Plaza, occupying Block B fulfills the need for a public gathering place in the Specific Plan area. Successful, pedestrian oriented open spaces have clearly defined edges, are well connected by being situated adjacent to, but not on, main movement spaces and they are well



integrated into the surrounding urban fabric. The Main Plaza is centrally located between North Palm Canyon Drive and Belardo Road, thereby linking two important north-south routes and providing east-west connectivity. The area is effectively enclosed by the surrounding blocks and its spatial characteristics provide opportunity for extended and varied uses. The Main Plaza is fundamental to the creation of a distinctive sense of place and it will be a definitive space, forming the nucleus of the Museum Market Plaza. Design and detailing must be consistent with the

wider Urban Design concept and the Main

Plaza will include a distinctive central focal point, such as a commanding piece of art or water feature, creative landscaping and a wide range of amenities to facilitate pedestrian activities. Built form within the Plaza will remain limited and subordinate; wide views should exist in all directions.

Public gathering spaces on a smaller scale will also be created in front of the Art Museum and in the center of Block K. The two secondary open spaces will form an integral part of the significant view corridor that will expect the Art Museum to the Plance of the Plan



exist between the Art Museum to the west and the Block K buildings to the east. The design treatment of the two spaces will complement that of the Main Plaza so that a clear hierarchical relationship between the open spaces within the Museum Market Plaza is evident and continuity of theme maintained.

c. Common Open Space in Residential Projects

Common area open space for residential projects is intended to provide opportunities for views within the blocks to the surrounding mountains and streetscene. When designed in conjunction with building articulation, the aesthetic effect will be improved for residents and visitors alike. Permeating the built form with interesting and sensitively designed open spaces prevents the creation of continuous frontages and overwhelming urban 'mega-blocks', while facilitating the safety of users by allowing spontaneous observation.

The domestic use of common open spaces in residential projects must be reflected in spatial proportions to the human scale and in gentle means of enclosure that, while providing residents

with an essential level of privacy, allow landscape features and a sense of spaciousness to prevail. Design treatments must be consistent with the wider urban design concept and result in lively and inviting common spaces that complement the architectural style of the adjacent buildings and encourage appropriate use.

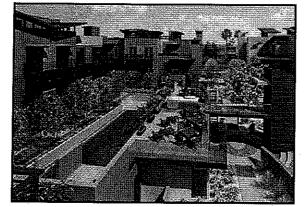


Exhibit III-5: Conceptual Master Landscape Plan

3. Landscaping

Highly defined landscaping is an essential part of achieving quality design within the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan, and will have a profound effect on the quality of life enjoyed by residents and visitors. Development of this landscape plan has been guided by a variety of considerations, including the natural and developed setting within which the planning area

occurs.

The Specific Plan landscape plan has been designed to be compatible and consistent with the local setting as well as the Downtown Design Guidelines. Landscaped open space areas that are responsive to desert conditions, utilizing thoughtful and creative designs that limit water demand and are in harmony with the natural setting. The master landscape palette includes a variety of drought tolerant and native species.



Use of landscaping throughout the site to

provide connectivity linking all residential, commercial and mixed-use areas. Open space areas provide for pedestrian and bicycle access and connect to the hotels and Convention Center to the east.

Landscaping will be utilized as a functional design element within all planning areas. Landscape treatments and enhancements are designed to maximize the use of native desert and compatible drought-tolerant planting materials. Landscape plans will address water erosion issues and must demonstrate the water efficiency gained from plant and irrigation system selection.



To accomplish the design objectives, landscape elements will incorporate vertical dimension. Fan palms, date palms, acacia and Rhus lancia are appropriate trees within the project. Trees can also be used to provide shading and cooling. Use of trees shall take into careful account the viewsheds, as well as that rightfully enjoyed by adjoining properties.

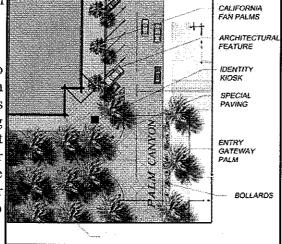
The conceptual Master Landscaping Plan for the Museum Market Plaza is shown in Exhibit III-5.

The Museum Market Plaza is divided into a series of Major and Minor Entries, and Major and Minor Focal Points.

As the central focal point to the entire project, the Main Plaza is to be given particular attention and care. The Plaza is to transition between the regimented street landscaping on surrounding streets, into a shaded, people friendly place where the atmosphere invites visitors to sit, enjoy the cool air, and the water feature. Shade trees are intended to have larger canopies, including Desert Museum Cercidium, and Tipu Tree. Although by necessity the Plaza will be finished in decorative pavement to a great extent, lawn areas

and fountains are encouraged in this area, as are benches, and restaurant terraces associated with the two planned single story buildings.

From the Plaza, the landscaping plan returns to the theme of California fan palm and date palm trees lining interior streets, with shade trees provided at intersections. Additional planting along the streets should focus on potted accent palms, typical of an urban environment, rather than planting strips and beds. Planting beds are appropriate when surrounding shade trees near parking areas, particularly on secondary streets, to soften the asphalt and hardscape.

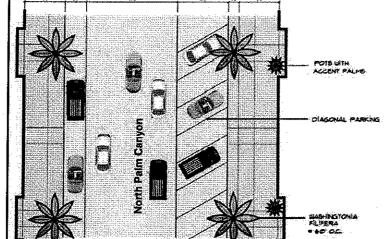


Landscaping Zones

The landscaping concept divides landscaping into three "zones": the Streetscape Zone, the Transition Zone and the Open

Space Zone.

The Streetscape Zone is designed to integrate into the landscaping patterns already occurring in Downtown Palm Springs. Street trees and plantings will emulate the rows of palm trees which now flank Palm Canyon Drive, and will extend throughout the primary streets in all planning areas. Shade trees are provided at intersections to break up the linear nature of the palms, and



cool the environment for both pedestrians and vehicles. Plantings are focused on potted palms and annual color, which does not block pedestrian activity.

The Transition Zone has a less intense focus on palm trees, and introduces a greater variety of shade trees and shrubs. The Transition Zone plants should apply to the secondary streets and the

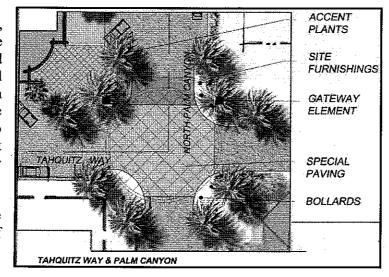
residential areas, to soften the built environment, and provide greater shade and cooling. Planting areas should include a mix of potted palms and plants, as well as planting beds surrounding street trees, to reflect a less intense urban environment.

The Open Space Zone applies not only to the Main Plaza, but also to the common area open spaces that will be created within each Block. This Zone includes the widest variety of plant materials, and is intended to connect the Streetscape and Transition Zones. In areas away from the Main Plaza, the focus should be on canopy and accent trees, and a higher intensity of groundcovers, particularly in areas where the primary uses are residential.

Entries and Focal Points

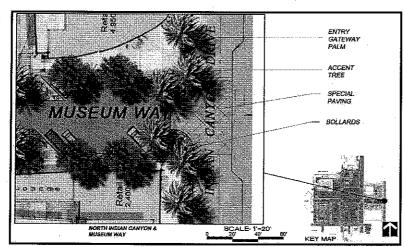
In addition to the Main Plaza, particular care must be taken in the landscape design of Major and Minor Entries, and Major and Minor Focal Points, as depicted in Exhibit III-7. The Entries to the Specific Plan must be designed to include the signature palms, accent trees and special paving, to draw the visitor in, and define the space.

The Major Focal Point in the project will be the intersection of Museum Way and Museum Drive. This area, in front of the Museum,



must be designed to draw the eye from as far away as Indian Canyon, and should include not only significant vertical elements, but also extensive special paving and public art. Landscaping in this area should act as a frame to the Museum building, and not obliterate the structure.

At Minor Focal Points, the emphasis must be on landscaping and hardscape which is at a pedestrian scale, and provides opportunities for street furniture, directional signage and shade. Again, accent paving which defines the area is critical to providing a sense of place within the project.



Continuity of Theme

The overall theme of the landscaping plan must be maintained throughout the Specific Plan. Since it is expected that the project will develop in phases, and that individual buildings and blocks will have differing architectural character, the connecting thread between the buildings and blocks will be the landscaping. As projects are reviewed and approved, the least amount of variation should be allowed in landscaping patterns, unlike the architectural variety which is expected in architecture. Since the Main Plaza and major roadway streetscapes are expected to be the in the first phase of development, these areas will set the tone for the balance of the landscaping plans throughout Museum Market Plaza. Once established, their design theme should be adhered to for all subsequent phases of the project.

Table III-5 Landscape Palette

Landscape Palette							
Plant		t	Scientific Name	Common Name	Size		
Zone		9					
			Palms				
S		0	Butia capitata	Pindo Palm	36"-Box		
S			Phoenix dactylifera	Date Palm	20' B.T.H.		
S	T	О	Washingtonia filifera	California fan palm	8' – 20' ht.		
STOV		0	Washingtonia robusta	Mexican fan palm	8' – 16' ht.		
S	Т	0	Chamaerops humillis	Mediterranean fan palm	24" - 36"Box		
5 1 0			Trees		-		
S			Acacia salicina	Willow Acacia	24" – Box		
		0	Citrus sp.	Citrus sp.	24" – Box		
	T	О	Fraxinus udei 'Majestic Beauty'	Evergreen ash	36" - Box		
S	T		Cercidium 'Desert Museum'	Desert Museum	36" – Box		
S	Т		Prosopis h. 'Phoenix'	Phoenix	24" - 36"Box		
	T	О	Rhus lancea	African sumac	24" – 48"Box		
	T	О	Schinus molle	California pepper tree	24" – 48"Box		
		О	Schinus terebinthifolius	Brazilian pepper tree	24" - 36"Box		
	T	О	Ulmus parvifolia	Evergreen Elm	24" - 36"Box		
	T	О	Tipuana Tipu	Tipu tree	24" - 36"Box		
			Accents				
		О	Beaucarnea recurvata	Ponytail palm	15 – Gal.		
		0	Cycas revoluta	Sago palm	24" – Box		
S	T		Dasylirion longissima	Mexican grass tree	15 – Gal.		
S	Τ		Daslirion wheeleri	Desert spoon	15 – Gal.		
į	T	0	Muhlenbergia rigens	Dear grass	5 – Gal.		
			Shrubs				
S	T	0	Bougainvillea 'Oo La La'	Bougainvillea	5 – Gal.		
S	T		Caesalpinia pulcherrima	Red Bird of Paradise	5 – Gal.		
S	T	0	Carissa grandiflora spp.	Natal plum	5 – Gal.		
S		0	Cassia artemesoides	Desert cassis	5 – Gal.		



Table III-5 Landscape Palette

Landscape Palette							
Plant		t	Scientific Name	Common Name	Size		
Zone		e					
S	T	0	Cassia nemophila	Bushy senna	5 – Gal.		
S	T	О	Dodonaea viscose	Hopseed bush	5 – Gal.		
$\begin{bmatrix} S & I & O \\ S & O \end{bmatrix}$		0	Euryops pectnatis	Green leaf euryops	5 – Gal.		
S	T	0	Hesperaloe parvifolia	Red yucca	5 – Gal.		
		О	O Hibiscus Rosa-Sinensis	Chinese hibiscus	5 – Gal.		
S	T		Leucophyllum spp.	Texas ranger	5 – Gal.		
	Т	О	Nandina domestica	Heavenly bamboo	5 – Gal.		
	T	0	Nerium oleander 'Petite'	Dwarf oleander	5 – Gal.		
		О	Pittosporum t. 'Variegata'	Variegated Pittosporum	5 – Gal.		
		0	Pittosporum t. 'Wheelers dwarf'	Wheelers dwarf tobira	5 – Gal.		
		О	O Rhaphiolepis indica	India hawthorn	5 – Gal.		
S	Т		Salvia greggii	Red salvia	5 – Gal.		
S	T	О	Thevetia peruviana	Yellow oleander	15 – Gal.		
S	Т	0	Xylosma congestum 'Compacta'	Xylosma	5 – Gal.		
S		О	Prunus caroliniana	Carolina laurel cherry	15 – Gal.		
		О	Ligustrum j. 'Texanum'	Japanese privet	5 – Gal.		
			Vines & Groundcovers				
S	T	0	Bougainvillea 'B. Karst'	Bougainvillea Barbara	15 – Gal.		
				Karst			
S	T	О	Calliandra inaequilatera	Pink powder puff	15 – Gal.		
S	T	О	Tecoma spp.		15 – Gal.		
S		0	Carrisa g. 'Green Carpet'	Green carpet	1 – Gal.		
		0	Annual Color	Seasonal	Flats		
S			Baccharis h. 'Thompson'	Desert Bloom	1 – Gal @ 5'		
					o.c.		
S	T	О	Lantana montevidensis	Trailing lantana	1 – Gal @ 4'		
					o.c.		
S	T	0	Lantana 'New Gold'	New Gold Lantana	1 – Gal @ 4'		
					o.c.		
		0	Trachelospermum	Star jasmine	1 - Gal.		
			jasminoides	- 10g (12g)			
	_		Cobble 'Sunburst Pebbles'		2" – 4" dia.		
			DG	3/8" Minus Desert Gold	Compacted 2"		
					depth		
_	\dashv		0) 5) 11				
			2' – 5' dia. Desert Chocolate				
	1	\rightarrow	Boulders				
Soc			Hybrid Bermuda				
Le	gen	<u>a: S</u>	= Streetscape Zone; T= Transiti	on Zone; O= Open Space	Zone		

Exhibits III-6: Landscaping Hierarchy



4. Street Furniture, Lighting and Art

Well-designed street furniture, lighting and public art enliven townscape character and contribute to a strong sense of local identity. The Museum Market Plaza is a pedestrian oriented area and street furniture should be designed to the human scale and placed to enhance the pedestrian experience. While consistent with the general design principles included in the Palm Springs Downtown Urban Design Plan, a variation on the recommended theme that complements the Urban Design concept for the Museum Market Plaza should be implemented within the confines of the Specific Plan. Special detailing will define the Museum Market Plaza as an area of distinctive identity, while maintaining continuity of theme ensures that the downtown area as a whole engenders a clearly perceptible sense of place. While allowing for interesting variations in complementary design, all elements must work together to create a distinctive, unified identity.

The Plan's downtown location offers many opportunities for public art and items of cultural or educational interest to be incorporated into the design of public open spaces, with the Main Plaza presenting an opportunity to display an exceptionally commanding piece. Lighting, while facilitating public safety, should provide illumination levels appropriate to the uses of the area and contribute to the general ambience.



Exhibit III-7 Street Furniture

