



HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD  
STAFF MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 18, 2014 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

SUBJECT: CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL REQUEST BY RICHARD WEINTRAUB OF NEW CHURCH II, LLC, FOR CASE 5.1345 PDD 372 CZ; THE ORCHID TREE RESORT AND SPA; ADAPTIVE REUSE OF THE COMMUNITY CHURCH, A CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE (HSPB 23) LOCATED AT 284 SOUTH CAHUILLA ROAD AND THE ORCHID TREE INN, A CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE (HSPB 72) LOCATED AT 226 W. BARISTO ROAD, ZONE R-3 (HSPB 23, HSPB 72 AND CASE 5.1345 PDD 372 CZ).

FROM: Department of Planning Services

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At its regular meeting of October 14, 2014, the Historic Site Preservation Board reviewed a proposal and received a presentation for the repurposing, relocation and partial demolition of Class 1 historic structures for the construction and operation of a banquet hall and five-story hotel on a roughly 3.1-acre site located at the northwest corner of Baristo Road and Belardo Road. In order to review all materials and receive a revised submittal mentioned by the applicant, the Board continued the item its regular meeting of November 18, 2014.

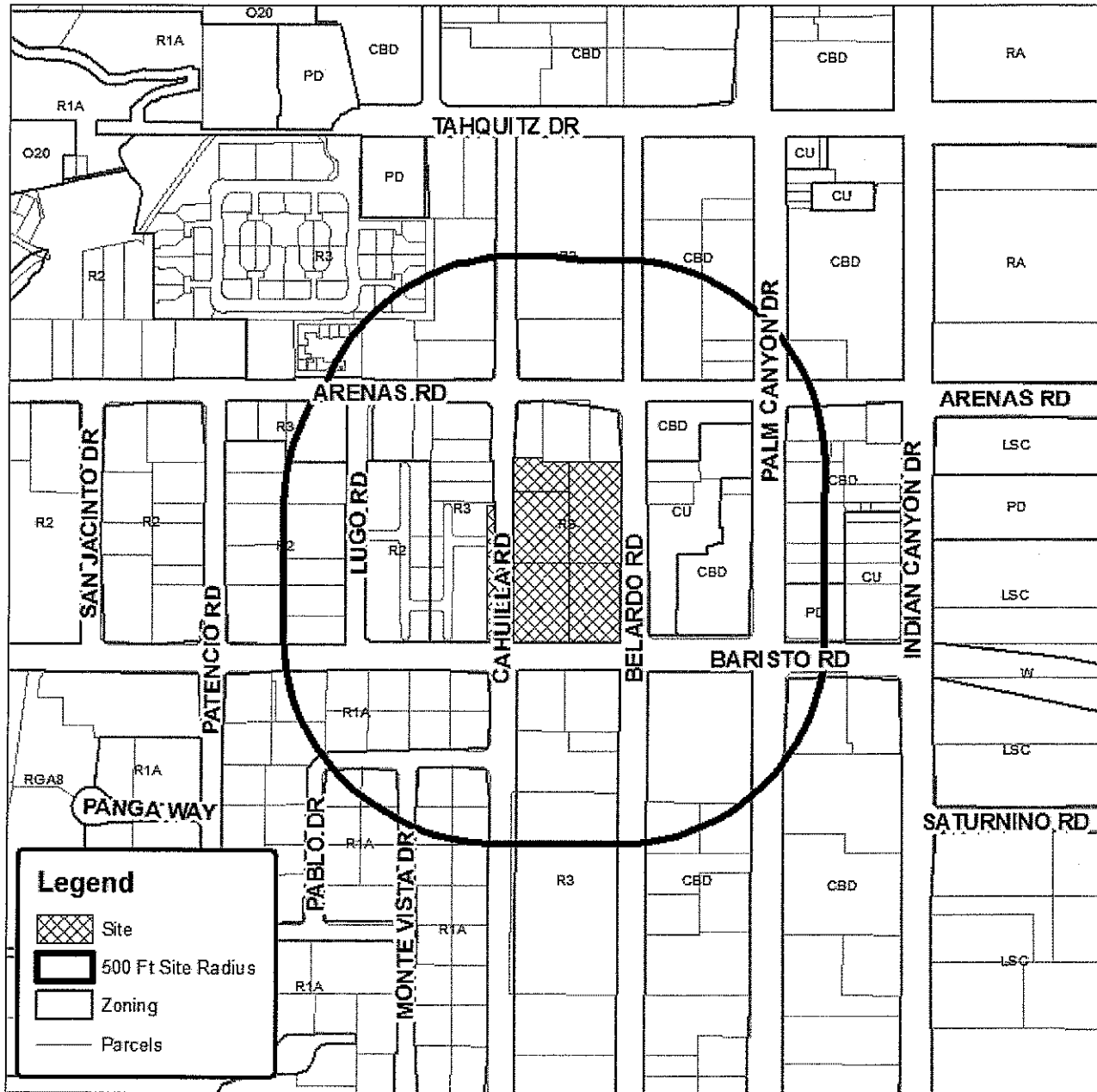
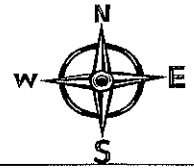
The revised plans are attached to this report. Additionally, correspondence from the public was received and is attached. Due to the late receipt of the revisions, a full analysis of the proposal against the Municipal Code will be provided to the Board prior to the November 18th meeting.

Attachments:

1. Vicinity Map
2. Public Correspondence:
  - a. Email dated November 8, 2014
  - b. Letter dated November 13, 2014
3. Reduced Plans



# Department of Planning Services Vicinity Map



**Legend**

- Site
- 500 Ft Site Radius
- Zoning
- Parcels

## CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

**CASE NO:** 5.1345 PD-372, ZC, HSPB 23, HSPB 72, 3.0678 MAJ.

**APPLICANT:** New Church II, LLC

**DESCRIPTION:** An application for a renovating the historic Community Church and Orchid Tree Bungalows and demolishing portions of the site for the construction of a new banquet hall and four-story hotel on a roughly 3.1-acre site located at 222 S. Cahuilla Road, Zone R-3.

November 8, 2014

City of Palm Springs Department of Planning Services

3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way

Palm Springs, CA 92262

Subject: Planned Orchid tree project/parking issues

Attn: David Newell Planner City of Palm Springs

Dear David,

I would like to address the issue regarding parking for the proposed Orchid Tree development and the on street parking on S. Cahuilla directly across the street from the proposed development.

A little background history will help you in understanding our concerns. We purchased the unit at 285 Cahuilla in December of 2102. We never were made aware that the St. Baristo HOA did not own the common parking spaces directly in front of our units and the other units on S. Cahuilla.

The parking spaces are paved in identical stone pavers as used through out the complex and the grounds were landscaped to match the décor of the St. Baristo condominiums.

It was only after the fact that we were casually told that these 24 parking spaces were granted back to the church facility across the street by the developer Wessman and not owned by us the HOA of St. Baristo.

I doubt if we would have bought the unit if we had known that the grounds across the street, which includes the church, were part of a much larger planned development. I am all for something being done with the burnt church and have made numerous inquiries of why it has taken so long to demolish or repair this structure. But now we have been informed that the new proposed Orchid Tree hotel and spa includes the church and will also have its main entrance on S. Cahuilla. As we have become more familiar with the overall plans, it is become very apparent that there is not sufficient parking to accommodate all of the proposed guests of the Hotel let alone any additional visitors to the restaurant, bar and spa.

Even if valet parking is part of the solution, we the owners of condos facing S. Cahuilla can expect cars, visitors, and valet attendants to park cars directly in our front area, at all times of day and night. Our bedrooms and balconies overlook these parking spaces and all our privacy and quiet nights will go by the wayside.

I would like answers to the following questions:

1. Did the Developer use the 24 common spaces which also have 2 clearly defined spaces marked as handicap to get the town's approval for the development of St. Baristo?

2. Did the Developer of the St, Baristo Condos also own the Church property while the developments of the condos were occurring?
3. Were the 24 spaces granted back to the Church property, or is this only rumor?
4. The parking limitations are not defined on the set of drawings I was given during the close of escrow. Reference Document # 2005-0957406 nor are they defined in a plan of the condo ownership on document # 2005-0957407 both filed 11/17/2005 with the County of Riverside.
5. This above statement brings up the following questions:

a. Why do the parking spaces have a sign " St. Baristo with our condo logo" stating " No Parking" with a horizontal arrow below the words " No Parking"? We the condo owners have been parking here since the units were completed to my knowledge.

b. In close proximity to and close behind the "No Parking" signs, we have other signs stating " Right to park by permission and subject to control of owner: section 1008 civil code? Who is granting this right?

c. The two most southern parking spots are designated and marked in blue pavers as Handicap spots... for whom? Does that mean only St, Baristo handicap owners or any handicap visitors we may have?

d. What city parking ordinance allows the developer of Orchid Tree to park vehicles related to a commercial hotel in use in such close proximity to the condominiums? My understanding from the city documents is that the parking for a hotel must be within 150 feet from the buildings they are to service.

e. Does the Orchid Tree project propose to park vehicles in these 24 spots in front of and in close proximity to the gate/door entrances to these condominiums along S. Cahuilla on a 24-hour basis?

f. Will the project exclude the condo owners from parking in these spaces?

g. Has the developer of the Orchid Tree project addressed this parking issue with the owners of the St. Baristo condominiums?

Again, buying without knowing all of the facts is my mistake. But the environment, landscaping, decorative nature of the parking spaces and surroundings were conducive to me believing what I was shown was part of my purchase, something in tune with imminent domain. If you have been using the space as yours for many years, than you have rights to continue to use the space.

A couple of possible suggestions to resolve or to mitigate the possible damages to my self and other St. Baristo condominium owners could be:

1. Give St. Baristo HOA the opportunity to purchase the 24 spaces at a fair price set by a neutral arbitrator.

2. The best solution would be to change the entrance to the Hotel and Spa to the Belardo Road side. This front location would be facing an existing City parking lot and has no residential units in front of the entrance.
3. Prohibit any movement of cars in the spaces after 10:30PM by the hotel and spa.

In conclusion when we purchased this unit at 285 S. Cahuilla, we were never informed the parking in front of our units was not owned by the HOA. We have only learned of this after our purchase and through the Orchid tree project approval process. So I leave you and the town council with the question...are we now to have parking at all hours of the night with guest coming and going while we are trying to enjoy the existing peace and quite of our neighborhood? It is one thing to have a larger complex across the street but for their parking to be directly under our windows and balcony leaves me very upset over the proposed plan and my purchase.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Kasper". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Ronald C. Kasper  
531 Santa Rosa Drive  
Los Gatos, CA 95032

**Joan Bove Forrer**  
**Michael E. Guerra, Attorney at Law**  
457 West Arenas Road  
Palm Springs, CA 92262  
760-416-5958 / 805-455-4982  
joniattahoe@aol.com / attyatlawca@hotmail.com

November 13, 2014

Hand Delivered

Historic Site Preservation Board  
3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way  
Palm Springs, CA 92262

**RECEIVED**

NOV 13 2014

**PLANNING SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT**

**RE: Case No. 5.1345 PD 372 CZ - Orchid Tree Resort & Spa Project**

Dear Honorable Chair and Members of the Historic Site Preservation Board:

The Orchid Tree Resort & Spa project ("Project") proposes renovation and adaptive reuse of the Community Church at South Cahuilla Road and the Orchid Tree Inn "Bungalow Court Cottages" on West Baristo Road. The original Project application also proposed a 4 and 5-story "L" shaped hotel. The Historic Church and Bungalows are Class 1 historic sites.

The City of Palm Springs General Plan and Downtown Urban Design Plan (DUDP) recognize the Tennis Club District and the Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood as of historic significance and important areas in the City of Palm Springs. The Church and Bungalows both lie within the Tennis Club District and Tennis Club Neighborhood, as the Tennis Club District is within the boundaries of the Neighborhood.<sup>1</sup>

In the sections relevant to the Tennis Club District and Neighborhood, the General Plan and Downtown Urban Design Plan by their clear language were drafted by the City of Palm Springs to protect the historical development patterns in the Tennis Club District and Neighborhood, and to preserve their historic character, sense of place, style and charm by specifically limiting land use, building height, mass, orientation and design. (See, Attachment 2, General Plan, Community Design Element, pp. 9-44; Attachment 4, Downtown Urban Design Plan, pp. 24, 35, 37; Attachment 5, General Plan, Land Use Element, pp. 2-6, 2-28, 2-40, 2-41; Attachment 6, General Plan, Administration Element, pp. 1-10, 1-11.)

Joni Forrer and I are writing to voice our opposition to a Project hotel height greater than 3 stories. A hotel whose height and mass are greater than 3-stories would fail to comply with those standards in the General Plan and Downtown Urban Design

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<sup>1</sup> The Tennis Club District was established by the DUDP. (Attachment 3, Map excerpt from page 34 of the DUDP; Attachment 4, DUDP, pp. 34-37.) The Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood is a registered Neighborhood with the City of Palm Springs Office of Neighborhood Involvement, established in 2005. (Attachment 1, General Plan Map of Neighborhoods; Attachment 2, General Plan, Community Design Element, p. 9-45.)

Plan meant to protect the historic character, sense of place, style and charm of the Tennis Club District and Neighborhood.<sup>2</sup>

Further, within the context of these standards in the General Plan and Downtown Urban Design Plan, when analyzed under the guidance provided by Palm Springs Municipal Code, Section 8.05.190, subdivisions (1) and (2), if the Project's hotel height was over 3-stories with the accompanying mass, the Project would fail to achieve an appropriate level of integration with the historic value, significance and nature of the Church and Bungalows, as well as Tennis Club District and Neighborhood. A hotel greater than 3-stories would fail the balancing of factors required under Section 8.05.190, subdivisions (1) and (2). Thus, a Project proposal of a hotel height greater than 3-stories is not entitled to a Certificate of Approval from the Board.

### The Tennis Club District and Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood

We live at 457 West Arenas Road in Palm Springs. Joni purchased the property in the late 1990's. Our home lies between Lugo Rd. and Patencio Rd. within the Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood. (Attachment 1, Maps of Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood, excerpt from City of Palm Springs General Plan Maps, Neighborhoods, 09-03.) Our home lies one and a half blocks to the west of Cahuilla, which is the western border of the Tennis Club District and the proposed Project.

The Tennis Club District runs three blocks north to south, bordered by Tahquitz Canyon to the north, Ramon to the south, Belardo to the east and Cahuilla to the west. The southern most city block of the Tennis Club District consists of 1 and 2-story buildings: Ingleside Inn (1 and 2-story), Michael's House (1 and 2-story), Viceroy Hotel (1 and 2-stories), former La Serena (1-story), Del Marcos Hotel (1 and 2-story), Women's Club (1-story).

The next block north again consists of 1 and 2-story buildings, except for the 3-story Historic Church steeple: Community Church (1 and 2-stories with 3-story steeple), Orchid Tree Inn (1 and 2-stories), apartment building (2-stories), buildings at 239 Arenas Rd. (1-story), Desert House Inn (1-story). The most northerly block of the District consists of 1, 2 and 3-story buildings: Chase Hotel (1 and 2-stories), Palm Mountain Resort and Spa Hotel (2 and 3-stories).

The proposed Orchid Tree Hotel & Spa Project is bordered by South Cahuilla Rd. to the west and S. Belardo Rd. to the east, and the Project is within the Downtown Urban Design Plan's designated Tennis Club District. (Attachment 3, Map.)

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<sup>2</sup> This letter was submitted before publication of: (1) the HSPB Agenda for the November 18, 2014 meeting; and, (2) the accompanying documents for this Project. Accordingly, we have not reviewed the current submitted Project hotel height proposal, but have reviewed the proposal submitted for the October 14, 2014, HSPB meeting.

The Tennis Club District is designated Small Hotel under the General Plan, and is zoned R-3. Both the General Plan and Downtown Urban Design Plan recognize that the Tennis Club District requires special protection, direction and guidance for future development, in the context of its historical development patterns. The overriding standard applicable to the Orchid Tree Project, which lies within the District, is stated simply and directly in the Downtown Urban Design Plan:

"The Tennis Club district is an important historic area in downtown Palm Springs. It contains many architecturally, socially, and culturally important hotels, small resorts, and residences. **This district should continue to retain the current land uses, sense of place, and character that currently exists.** [emphasis added.]" (Attachment 4, DUDP, p. 37.)

The DUDP further states: "**The Tennis Club District:** Building heights should be consistent with current heights and zoning restrictions." [emphasis in original.] (Attachment 4, DUDP, p. 37.)

"Consistent" means: "2a: marked by harmony, regularity, or steady continuity: free from variation or contradiction <a consistent style in painting>." (*Merriam-Webster.com*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 6 Nov. 2014.)

The General Plan's GOAL CD30 for the Downtown area is to - "Support and sustain a vibrant and active Downtown," with one policy to achieve that goal as:

"Require new development in the Downtown area to conform to the Downtown Urban Design Plan for design guidelines. New development applications in the Downtown area shall include an analysis of a project's compliance with the provisions of the Downtown Urban Design Plan. (Attachment 2, General Plan, Community Design Element, Policy CD30.1, p. 9-64.)

Further, the General Plan cautions:

"Maintaining its status as a premier resort destination is a primary priority for the City. ...The small-scale boutique hotels that are found among the residential neighborhoods in the Warm Sands and Tennis Club areas also contribute to the City's charm and its appeal to resort visitors. Development within these areas must be carefully designed and planned to ensure that it continues to reflect the City's vision of being a "world class desert community." (Attachment 5, General Plan, Land Use Element, 'Resort Destination Image", p. 2-28.)

As described in detail above, the majority of buildings in the three block long one block wide Tennis Club District are 1 and 2-stories with some 3-story.



Analysis Under Municipal Code Section 8.05.190, Subdivisions (1) and (2)

A Project hotel height greater than 3-stories would not comply with the Downtown Urban Design Plan or the General Plan's vision and standards for protecting the Tennis Club District and Neighborhood, in which the Historic Church and Orchid Tree Bungalows lie.

Applying the various factors under Section 8.05.190, subdivisions (1) and (2) to the hotel, Church, Bungalows, Tennis Club District and Neighborhood in the context of the standards in the DUDP, a Certificate of Approval should be denied to a hotel height proposal greater than 3-stories.

Pursuant to Section 8.05.180, subdivisions (1) and (2) of the Municipal Code: "No person may undertake any of the following within or upon a Class 1 historic site without a certificate of approval from the historic site preservation board:[para.] (1) Construction of a new structure; [para.] (2) The moving, demolition or alteration of an existing structure in any manner which affects the exterior appearance of the structure;...."

As the October 14, 2014, Historic Site Preservation Board Staff Report states: "There are no specific findings required for Certificate of Approval, however, pursuant to Municipal Code Section 8.05.190, the Board shall consider the following in reviewing and acting upon a certificate of approval application:

- (1) The historic value and significance, or the architectural value and significance or both, of the structure and its relation to the historic value of the surrounding area;
- (2) The relationship of the exterior architectural features of any structure to the rest of the structure itself and to the surrounding area;
- (3) The general compatibility of exterior design, arrangement, texture and material which is proposed by the applicant;
- (4) Archaeological or ecological significance of the area."

Weighing the factors under Section 8.05.190(1), a Project hotel height greater than 3-stories, by its height and mass, is not consistent with the "historic value of the surrounding area."

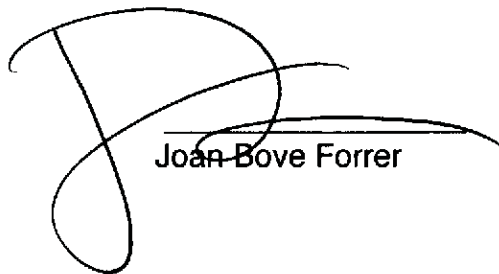
The "historic value of the surrounding area", includes the Community Church and Old Orchid Tree Inn, which are defined as Class 1 Historic Sites. It also includes the Tennis Club District and Neighborhood which contain "architecturally, socially, and culturally important' smaller scale boutique type hotels as well as residences. (See, General Plan, pp. 2-6 & 2-28; DUDP p. 37). These give the District and Neighborhood

their historic value, significance, character, sense of place, style and charm as discussed in the General Plan and Downtown Urban Design Plan.

Next, weighing the factors under Section 8.05.190(2) and considering "the relationship of the exterior architectural features of any structure to the rest of the structure itself and to the surrounding area," with an "L" shaped hotel height greater than 3-stories again under this criterion, its height and mass would be greater than any other building in the District and Neighborhood. Thus, the hotel would not conform to the historic character, design, sense of place, style and charm of the historic Church, Orchid Tree Inn, Tennis Club District or Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood. (Section 8.05.190(2).)

For all the above reasons, a Project hotel height greater than 3-stories should be denied a Certificate of Approval from the Board.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions please feel free to contact us at anytime.



Joan Bove Forrer

Sincerely,



Michael E. Guerra, Esq.

Attachments (6):

1. 2007 General Plan Map 09-03 Neighborhoods, Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood
2. 2007 General Plan Community Design Element, selected pages.
3. Map Except, Zones of Downtown Palm Springs, Downtown Urban Design Plan, p. 34.
4. 2005 Downtown Urban Design Plan, selected pages.
5. 2007 General Plan, Land Use Element, selected pages.
6. 2007 General Plan, Administrative Element, selected pages.

Cc:

Ken Lyon, Associate Planner  
Department of Planning Services  
3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way  
Palm Springs, CA 92262

David Newell, Associate Planner  
Department of Planning Services  
3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way  
Palm Springs, CA 92262

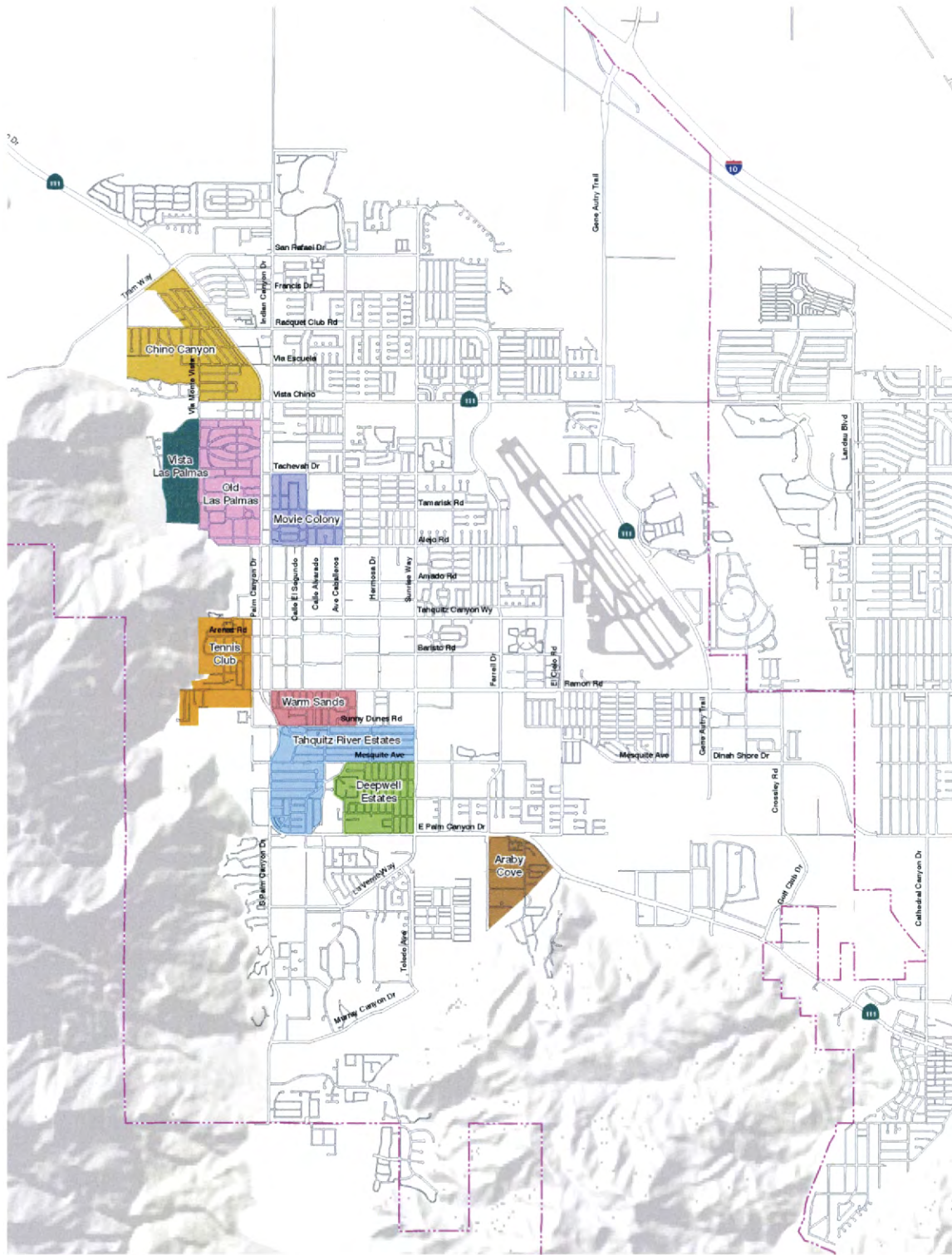
**ATTACHMENT 1**  
**(3 Pages)**

**City of Palm Springs 2007 General Plan Map 09-03 Neighborhoods**  
**Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood**

# General Plan Maps

**\*\*Please note the following maps are also integrated into the document(s) on the previous page\*\***

- 01-01 Regional Area
- 01-02 Redevelopment Areas
- 01-03 Tribal Land Status
- 02-02 General Plan Land Use (Citywide)
- 02-03 General Plan Land Use (Central Area)
- 02-04 Chino Cone Planning Areas
- 03-02 Housing Opportunity Sites
- 04-01 General Plan Circulation
- 04-03 Truck Routes
- 04-04 Recreational Trails
- 04-05 Bikeways
- 05-01 Parks & Recreational Facilities
- 05-02 Biologically Sensitive & Conservation Areas
- 05-03 Managed Production of Resources
- 05-04 Water Resources
- 05-05 Cultural Resources: Prehistoric
- 05-06 Cultural resources: Historic Archaeology
- 06-01 Seismic Hazards
- 06-02 Landslide Susceptibility
- 06-03 Geologic Map
- 06-04 Wind Hazard Zones
- 06-05 Flood Hazards
- 06-06 Direct Fire Protection Areas
- 06-07 Hazardous Materials Sites
- 06-08 Airport Compatibility Plan
- 07-01 Blowsand Areas
- 08-03 Future Roadway Noise Contours
- 08-04 Future Roadway Noise Contours (Northern Area)
- 08-05 Future Roadway Noise Contours (Central Area)
- 08-06 Airport Noise Contours
- 09-01 Community Design Features
- 09-02 Special Streetscape Treatments
- 09-03 Neighborhoods
- 09-04 Scenic Corridors



City Boundary

0 3,500'

Source: Office of Neighborhood Involvement, 2005

## Examples of Residential Neighborhoods Recognized by the Office of Neighborhood Involvement

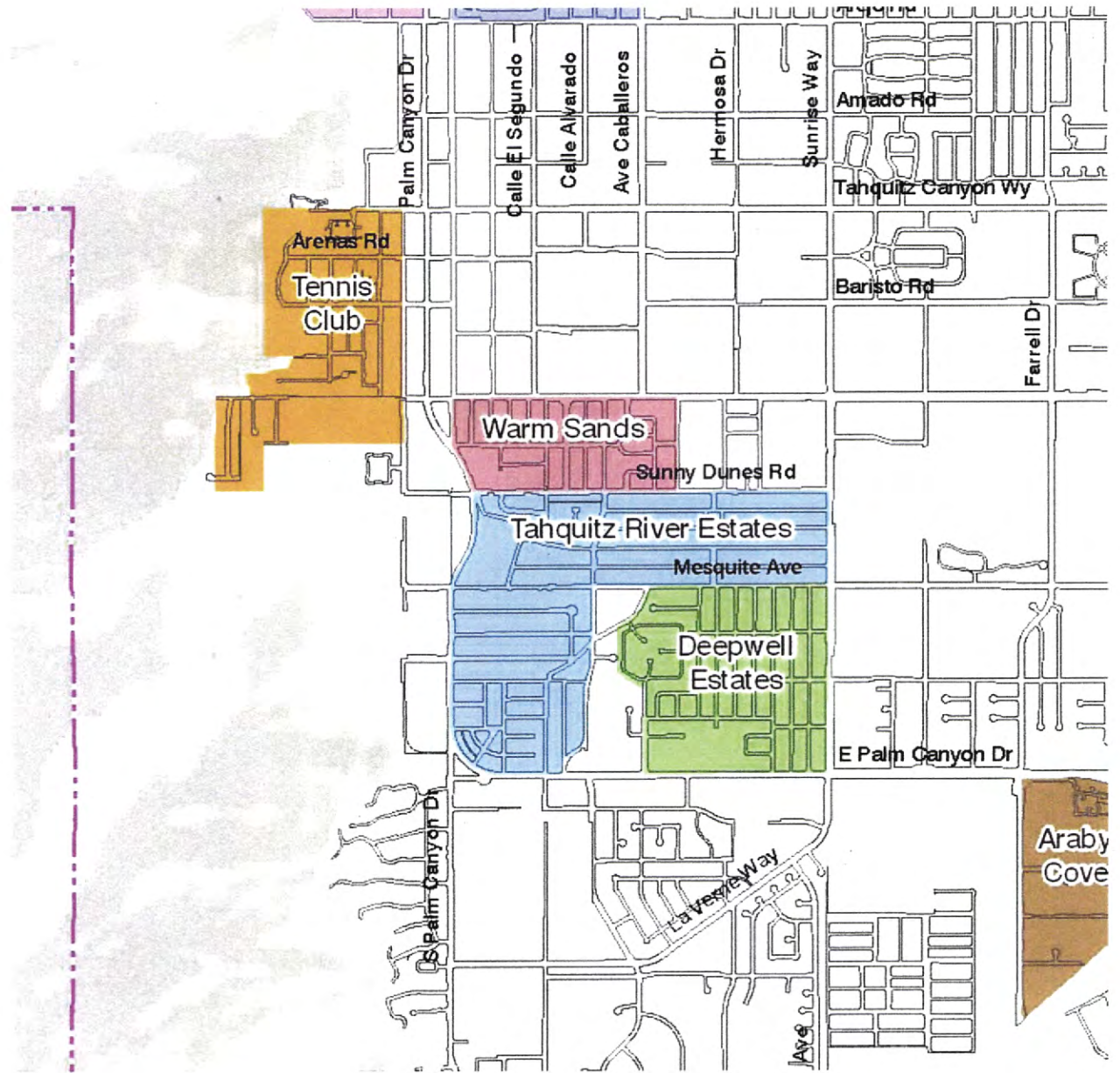


Community Design Element

Figure 9-3



**General Plan Maps - Excerpt from Figure 9-3 City of Palm Springs General Plan -  
Examples of Residential Neighborhoods Recognized by the Office of  
Neighborhood Involvement**



**ATTACHMENT 2**  
**(9 Pages)**

City of Palm Springs 2007 General Plan, Community Design Element  
Pages: 9-1, 9-2, 9-3, 9-4, 9-13, 9-44, 9-45, 9-64, 9-65

# 9. COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT

## BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

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Palm Springs has historically been the preeminent city in the Coachella Valley, drawing the rich and famous who seek a desert retreat. Today, the City's image as a premier desert resort community continues to attract visitors from around the world, as well as an increasing number of year-round residents. Palm Springs' image is based upon the City's unique past and diverse collection of assets, including the City's "village character," desert climate, mountain views, eclectic architecture, attractive streetscapes, and well-defined neighborhoods. A rich array of cultural, social, and recreational attractions, historic sites and buildings, and exclusive accommodations adds to the allure of the City.

Palm Springs is extremely fortunate to be recognized as a world-renowned community and should take steps to protect and enhance that identity. The goal of the Community Design Element is to create a cohesive and comprehensive community design strategy that reinforces and strengthens the City's image while enhancing the unique character of individual neighborhoods/districts.

Palm Springs has been active in urban design activities from its inception. The City Council created an Architectural Advisory Committee in 1967. Its duties were to determine whether (a) a proposed development will provide a desirable environment for its occupants, (b) is compatible with the character of adjacent surrounding developments, and (c) whether aesthetically it is of good composition, materials, textures, and colors. The City continues to seek opportunities that will further strengthen the quality of the built environment.

## DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The Community Design Element is intended to enhance the current community identity through the identification of design techniques, guidelines, and features that will enhance the City and its neighborhoods. It



will serve as a practical guide to City leaders, developers, architects, and residents as they develop the best possible projects for the City. Its contents are intended to stimulate rather than stifle design creativity. This part of the General Plan focuses on Citywide and neighborhood-level details rather than project- and parcel-based specifics. The objectives of this element are to:

- ◆ Preserve and enhance the visual quality of the City.
- ◆ Reinforce/strengthen the community identity of Palm Springs.
- ◆ Protect and strengthen the sense of place and character of neighborhoods.
- ◆ Enhance vehicular and pedestrian corridors through the use of consistent design features.
- ◆ Enhance the energy, vitality, and urban village character of the downtown.
- ◆ Retain the architectural quality and diversity of Palm Springs.
- ◆ Protect the character of historic neighborhoods.
- ◆ Protect viewsheds and scenic corridors.
- ◆ Encourage environmentally friendly and sustainable design and building practices.

## COMMUNITY DESIGN FEATURES

The City of Palm Springs is visually defined by both its natural and built environments. Traditionally, the City's built environment has respected and complemented the natural environment, creating an attractive and pleasant place to live and visit. The focus of this element is on maintaining and strengthening the City's community design identity—the collection of streets, buildings, neighborhoods, commercial centers, landscaping and public spaces which together comprise the image of the City. Figure 9-1, *Community Design Features*, identifies key gateways, corridors, and activity centers and shows how they interrelate. These features serve as a foundation for achieving the design objectives established by the City. The following are descriptions of these and additional features that contribute to Palm Springs' unique identity.

*Gateways.* Gateways are areas that define one's entrance to the City or a specific area within the City. They can consist of a number of design elements, including signage, landscaping, natural topography, monument features, water features, trees and other plantings, public art pieces, and specialized lighting.

*Transportation Corridors.* Residents and visitors view large parts of Palm Springs only by travel along corridors. Thus, these roadways provide excellent opportunities to create a design identity throughout the City. They should contain consistent design features such as formal landscaping, distinctive

# COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT

lighting elements and signage and specialized paving at key intersections to create a unified sense of place and identity throughout the City. Unique treatments along secondary and tertiary roads will strengthen the individual characters of the neighborhoods they serve.

*Activity Centers.* Activity centers, also called nodes, draw large numbers of people and serve as important public gathering places and economic centers of the City. Activity centers can include historical and cultural sites, such as the Palm Springs Art Museum, as well as commercial, office, mixed-use and industrial areas, such as the Downtown, the Uptown mixed-use centers, and Destination Ramon. The Convention Center, the casino, the airport, and community parks also serve as important activity centers for the City and the region. Despite the variety of uses and sizes of these activity centers, they all share the important role of serving as public gathering places. These nodes should be unique and clearly defined areas that add to the visual quality of the City while reinforcing the eclectic village character of the City.

*Neighborhoods.* Palm Springs has a unique and varied collection of easily identified neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are defined by the mix of predominant design elements, such as unique architectural styles and detailing, landscaping, walls, building heights and setbacks, and pedestrian connectivity that exist within the community. While some neighborhoods are defined by the surrounding roadways, others with a more defined design character and architectural style may span several blocks.

*Districts.* In addition to distinct neighborhoods, Palm Springs is comprised of a number of unique districts. Districts are defined by a collection of integrated uses or activities and are larger than neighborhoods. The Downtown, Uptown, and Section 14 are examples of districts in Palm Springs.

*Architecture.* Palm Springs' architectural eclecticism is essential to the charm and character of the City. Its large concentration of mid-century buildings designed by significant architects distinguishes it from any other city of its size in the nation. Sites and buildings of historical significance should be preserved when possible. New buildings should be designed to complement the desert climate and lifestyle, providing opportunities for solar access and outdoor living. They should also be attractively designed in styles, colors, and materials appropriate to the City and the surrounding natural environment.

*Scenic/View Corridors.* Palm Springs' location at the base of the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains creates opportunities for unparalleled mountain and desert views and multiple means of immediate access into these beautiful natural areas. Efforts should be taken to protect existing scenic/view corridors and to create new ones when possible, and to enhance and increase the character and quality of those natural resource access points.

## RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER DOCUMENTS AND PROGRAMS

The Community Design Element provides a guide for the visual design of the City. Zoning and Municipal Codes should be updated as appropriate to reflect the goals, policies, and action items found in this element. Future development should reflect the intentions of the Community Design Element and should consult the Downtown Urban Design Plan and applicable specific plans, master plans, and area plans when appropriate.

## NODES/ACTIVITY CENTERS

Nodes are recognizable areas with a high intensity of social/cultural or commercial/retail/industrial uses that attract many users and serve as hubs of activity within the city. Often nodes not only serve as public gathering places, but also act as economic focal points within the City. Nodes should be attractive and visually unique places that are well connected to each other and to other parts of the City, facilitating the movement of residents and visitors between these areas of activity. Primary nodes tend to draw visitors and residents for specialized goods, services, activities, and events, while secondary nodes are typically used only by residents and are visited on a more frequent basis for everyday goods and services.

Primary nodes within Palm Springs include:

- ◆ *Art Colony Commercial Center.* This area, located roughly at the intersection of Racquet Club Road and Palm Canyon Drive, should be a high-intensity, mixed-use neighborhood drawing residents from the northern portions of the city.
- ◆ *Uptown District.* The Uptown District, generally located along North Palm Canyon Drive and Indian Canyon Drive between Vista Chino and Alejo Road, contains multiple uses that collectively create an important center of activity within the City. The uses in this area should be further concentrated to create a hub consisting of three well-defined areas within the node: the Desert Regional Medical Center and related medical offices located to the east of Indian Canyon Drive, the Heritage District (an artist district with galleries and artist lofts) to the south of the hospital area, and a concentration of mixed-use development to the north of the hospital area.
- ◆ *Downtown.* The Downtown area, roughly bounded by Alejo Road, Ramon Road, Cahuilla Road, and Indian Canyon Drive, is the historic heart of Palm Springs. It provides retail, entertainment/cultural, and restaurant uses that draw both residents and visitors. This is an essential node that ties the City together and should be a cohesive community center. (See the Downtown section of this element and the Downtown Urban Design Plan for goals, policies, action items, and design guidelines for the downtown area.)
- ◆ *The Gene Autry Trail Corridor.* The area along Gene Autry Trail from Vista Chino to Ramon Road provides the opportunity for the creation of a regional jobs center. The area's proximity to the



*The Downtown is a vibrant collection of retail/restaurant and entertainment/cultural uses. It contains a number of areas such as La Plaza (above) that attract a wide range of residents and visitors of all ages.*





*Many of the City's single-family residential neighborhoods are clearly distinguished by design features such as landscaping, walls, tree plantings and architectural styles.*

## SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

A large part of Palm Springs' charm comes from the City's eclectic, well-defined, single-family residential neighborhoods. The older neighborhoods tend to be characterized by walls, landscaping, and unique architectural styles. Areas such as the Movie Colony and Las Palmas are distinguished by their walls and intense landscaping, which create a sense of seclusion. Other neighborhoods, such as the Deepwell Estates and the Racquet Club Estates, are distinguished by the prevalence of distinctive architectural styles. The Tennis Club district and areas along East Palm Canyon are distinguished by the mix of single-family residential uses and small hotel/resort uses with similar architectural and landscaping styles. Newer areas, especially those along the fringe of the mountains in the northwest and southern sections of the City, tend to be defined by their desert landscaping and the incorporation of the natural environment into building and site design.

Where there are single-family residential neighborhoods with unique character, they should be preserved and strengthened when possible. Additions to existing buildings and new or infill development within existing neighborhoods should be consistent with the character of the area and should add to the overall charm and visual appeal of the neighborhood. Potential design issues should be defined for key neighborhoods and studies or programs initiated to address the potential design concerns. (See Figure 9-3 and Table 9-1 for examples of key neighborhoods and a chart of important design characteristics and issues in each of the mapped neighborhoods.) New neighborhoods should be designed with their own unique design elements and styles to create visually interesting communities that will add to the character and diversity of the City.

The unique location of many single-family residential neighborhoods near and at the base of the San Jacinto Mountains creates opportunities for unparalleled views and mountain access. However, to preserve this asset for all residents of Palm Springs, care must be taken to ensure that development near and within hillside areas respects and enhances the surrounding topography and environment as much as possible and provide for adequate access to the natural areas. Hillside development should take the form of low profile homes that fit into the terrain and accentuate the surrounding natural environment. This type of development should be strictly regulated through development

# COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT

standards that ensure the protection of view corridors, prominent natural features, and public access to local and regional trails.

## GOAL CD22:

Create and maintain safe, attractive, visually interesting, identifiable, and well-connected single-family neighborhoods.

### Policies

- CD22.1 Require new and infill development to be of compatible scale, materials, and massing as existing development. Also ensure that the design character of the new development is appropriate to the area.
- CD22.2 Allow new and infill projects to be excluded from sidewalk and other streetscape improvement requirements if those requirements are not consistent with the existing neighborhood character (especially in historic areas). However, do not allow exceptions where the General Plan Circulation Element requires streetscape improvements along arterial highways.
- CD22.3 Ensure that new neighborhoods and communities are designed to be unique and visually pleasing additions to the City.
- CD22.4 Ensure that new residential development does not overwhelm natural features, especially washes and views of the mountains.
- CD22.5 Actively enforce development standards, design guidelines, and policies to preserve and enhance the character of neighborhoods in Palm Springs.
- CD22.6 Encourage buffers or transitions such as landscaping, or decorative screening, between single-story homes and multistory development.
- CD22.7 Ensure that residential communities are well connected with each other and with nearby commercial uses through the inclusion of pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly design features, such as trails, paths, and pedestrian-oriented streets, in the neighborhood's design.

#### **Office of Neighborhood Involvement:**

In 2005, the City Council established the Office of Neighborhood Involvement and created a neighborhood empowerment program. The intent of the City Council was to create a mechanism to facilitate communication between residents and the City staff and encourage continuous neighborhood improvement throughout the City.

#### **Neighborhoods registered with the Office of Neighborhood involvement include:**

The Historic Tennis Club, the Deepwell Estates, the Tahquitz River Estates, the Movie Colony, Bel Desierto, the Sunmor Estates, Warm Sands, and Vista Las Palmas.

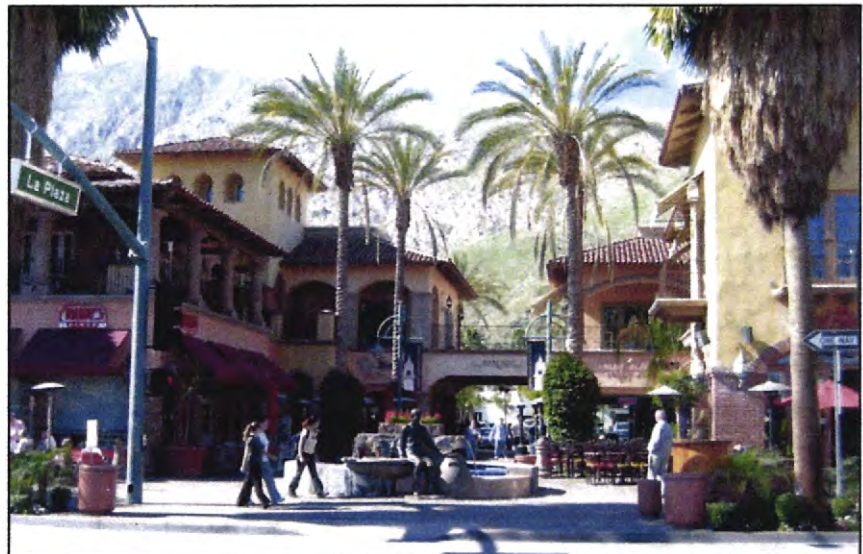


## SPECIAL DESIGN CONSIDERATION AREAS

A few specific areas within the City require special design attention because of the important role that they play in the City's image and success. The areas discussed in this section include the Downtown, Section 14, Gene Autry Trail, and the I-10 corridor.

### **Downtown**

Downtown Palm Springs is the heart of the City. Once the center of activity for the Coachella Valley, the Downtown remains an important part of Palm Springs and is still a key attraction for visitors and residents. The Downtown has a strong sense of place due in part to the eclectic mix of architectural styles and land uses, the prevalence of historically significant buildings, and the many cultural/entertainment attractions (including retail uses) located within the area. The unique character and charm should be preserved while allowing for the changes necessary to ensure the continued success of the Downtown area. Because of the Downtown's importance to the City, the Downtown Urban Design Plan was created to provide detailed design concepts and principles for the downtown area. This study should be consulted for design considerations for new projects in the Downtown.



*Downtown should remain a vibrant, walkable, pedestrian-oriented area with appropriately scaled and designed development to retain the eclectic nature and village character of the area.*

# COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT

## GOAL CD30:

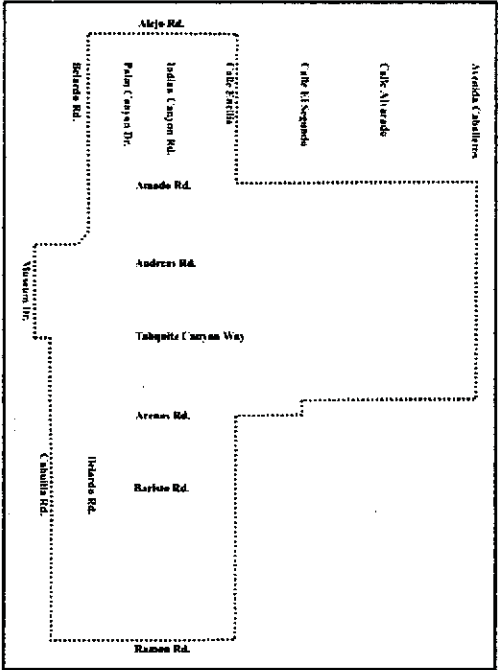
**Support and sustain a vibrant and active Downtown.**

### Policies

- CD30.1 Require new development in the Downtown area to conform to the Downtown Urban Design Plan for design guidelines. New development applications in the Downtown area shall include an analysis of a project's compliance with the provisions of the Downtown Urban Design Plan.
- CD30.2 Integrate streetscape improvements, landscaping, and signage that uniquely identify the Downtown area as the principal commercial activity center of the City.
- CD30.3 Encourage retail uses that maintain extended evening hours and support nighttime activity.

### Actions

- CD30.1 Evaluate and adopt the appropriate regulatory tools in the Zoning Code to implement the Downtown Urban Design Plan such as Specific Plan, design overlay, and/or zoning amendment.
- CD30.2 Distribute the Downtown Urban Design Plan to prospective merchants, developers, architects and others who might have an interest in developing projects Downtown.
- CD30.3 Facilitate continued communication between the Downtown merchants association and City staff to help maintain the unique character of the Downtown area.
- CD30.4 Coordinate and guide volunteer groups to assist with the beautification and maintenance of the Downtown area.

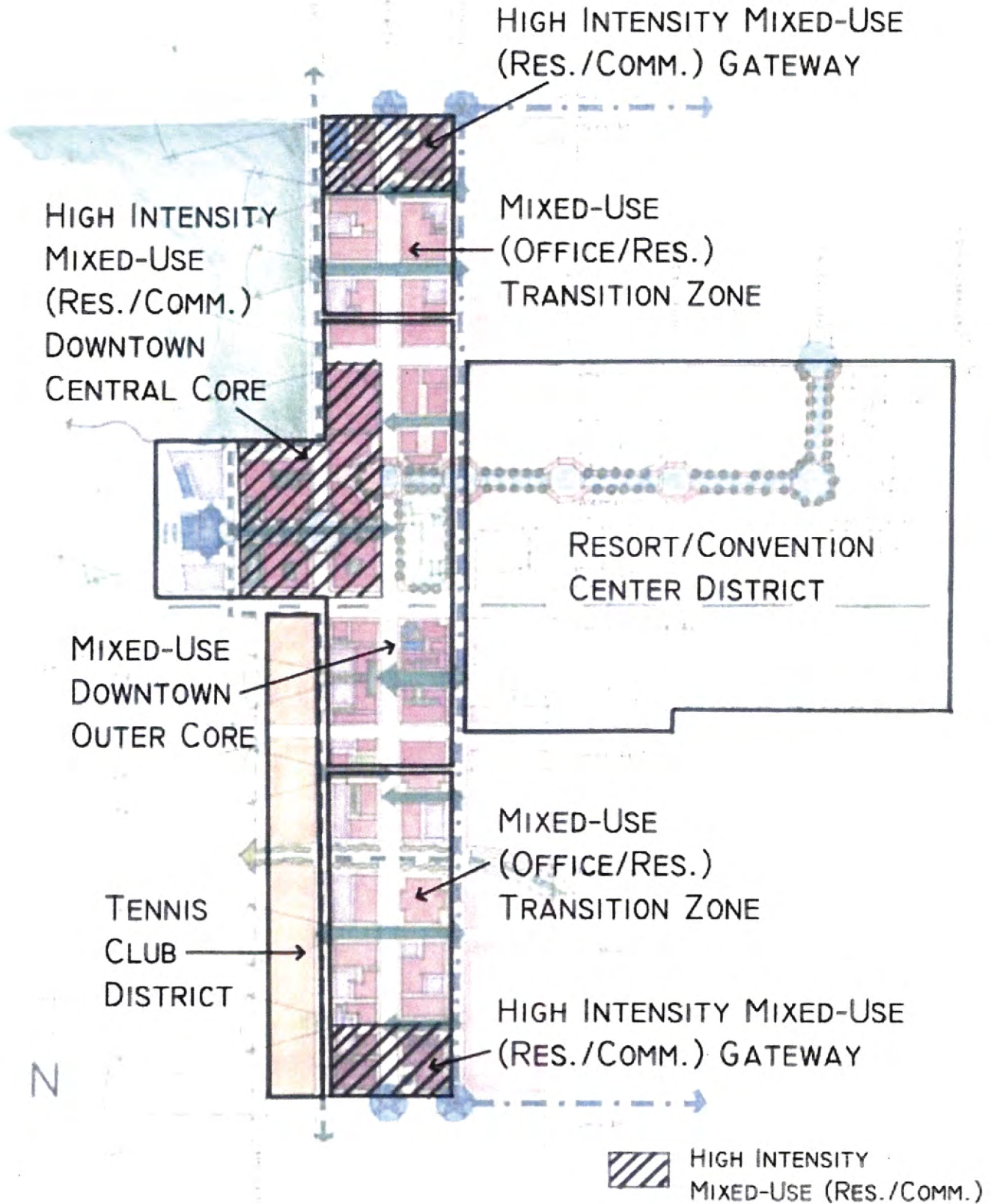


*A map of the study area covered by the Downtown Urban Design Plan.*



**ATTACHMENT 3**  
**(1 Page)**

Map Excerpt, Zones of Downtown Palm Springs  
2005 Downtown Urban Design Plan, Page 34



Above: A map of zones in downtown Palm Springs. (For building heights for the various zones see the "Building Height, Orientation, Massing, & Design" section starting on page thirty-six.) These zones should be further subdivided into theme based districts to create areas with separate and unique identities within the downtown.

**ATTACHMENT 4**  
**(7 Pages)**

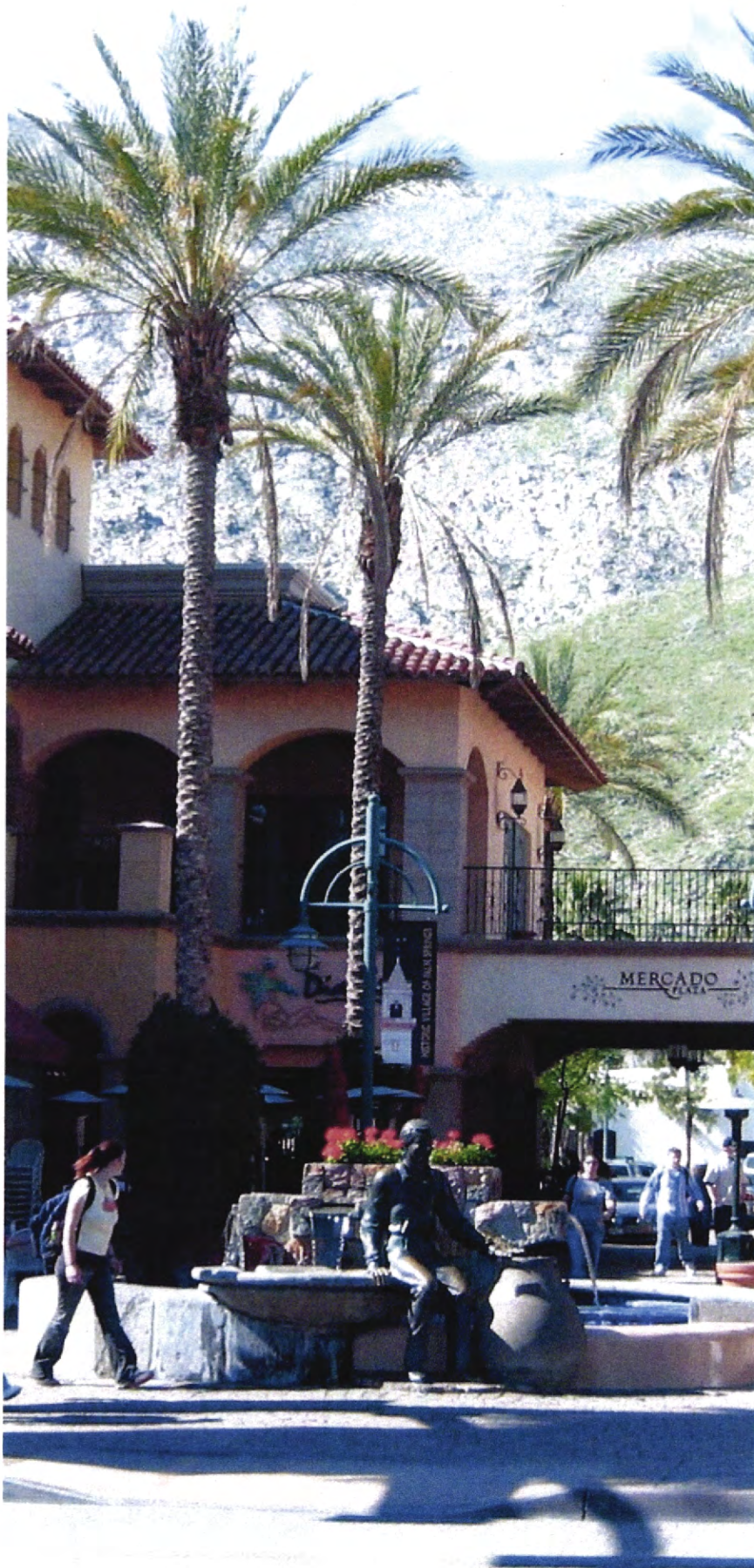
City of Palm Springs 2005 Downtown Urban Design Plan  
Pages: Cover, 11, 24, 34, 35, 36, 37





# The City of Palm Springs

## Downtown Urban Design Plan



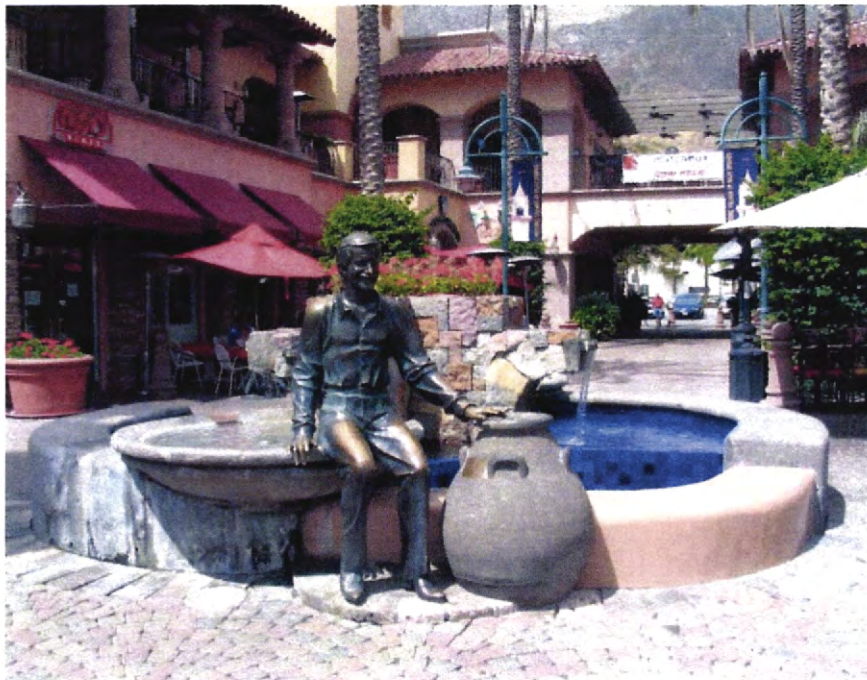
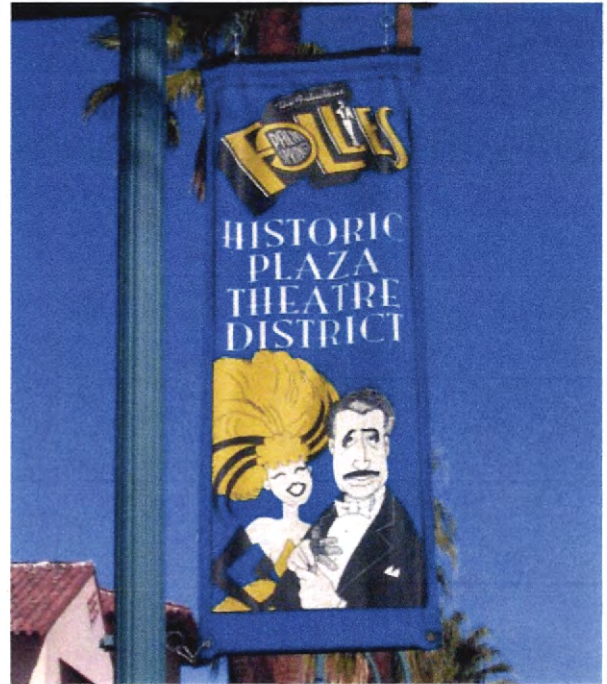
Adopted  
July 20, 2005





**RETAIL / RESTAURANTS** – Downtown Palm Springs contains a unique mix of a wide variety of restaurants and shops. Many locally owned boutiques and stores create a unique and pleasant shopping experience. The large variety of excellent restaurants and open air dining options adds to the vitality of downtown.

**VILLAGES / DISTRICTS** – Downtown has a number of existing and developing theme based districts, such as a furniture and art gallery district, a restaurant district, the historic Tennis Club District, and the historic Plaza Theatre District to name a few. These districts add to the vitality of downtown by providing different experiences and serving as hubs of activity.



*Top: Downtown has a wide variety of indoor and outdoor dining options. The Chop House and The Deck are two very popular downtown restaurants that provide outdoor dining opportunities and contribute to the vitality of the street scene.*

*Above: The downtown area consists of many theme based districts. These districts add to the eclectic nature of the downtown area. Signage should be used to strengthen the identities of the districts.*

*Left: The Mercado Plaza offers a number of different retail and dining options in addition to creating an interesting public space.*

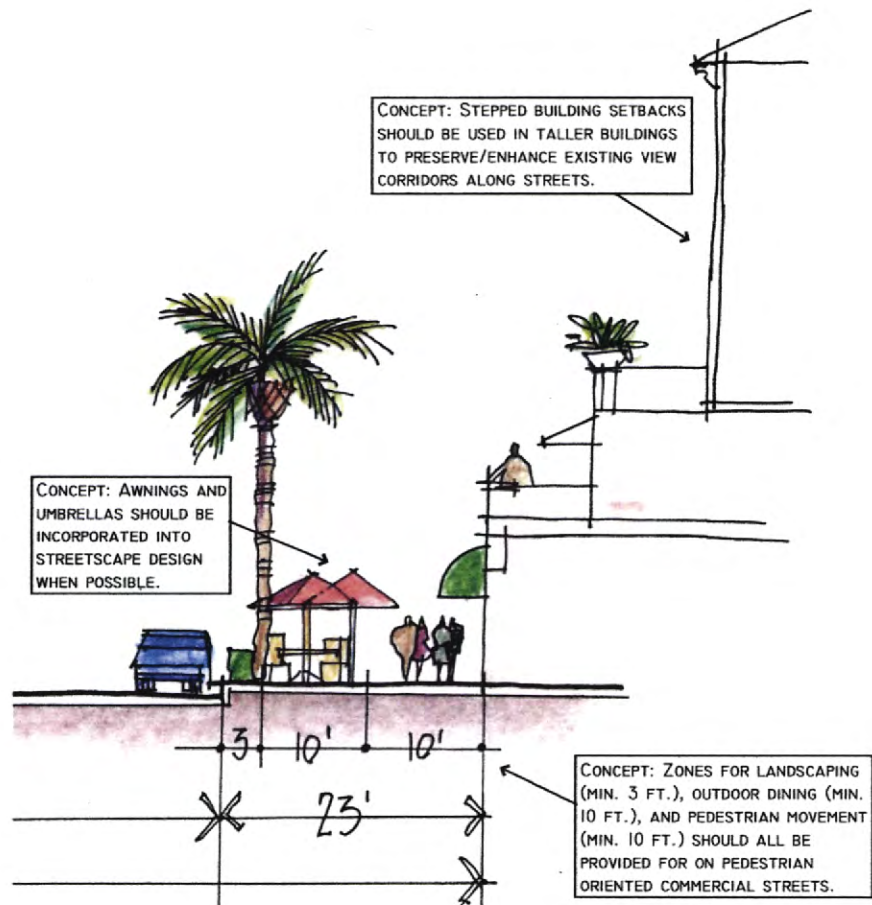


## Sidewalks

- Sidewalk width is dependent on surrounding uses and scale of street. Core commercial areas need to include zones for window shopping, through pedestrian traffic, outdoor eating, trees, and landscaping.
- Where appropriate, sidewalks should reflect historic scoring patterns or distinctive paving or surface treatment to create patterns and consistency.
- Along pedestrian-oriented streets, large windows of ground-level retail should provide visual interest and information for shoppers and strollers.
- In commercial areas where pedestrian uses are encouraged, wider sidewalks and sidewalk shade trees are preferred over landscaped medians to maximize the usable space for pedestrian activities and movement.
- Sidewalks should be designed to be handicapped accessible as set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).



*Above: The section of the Heritage Trail along Belardo Road is a wonderful asset. It is a good example of how a wide sidewalk can serve both pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The Heritage Trail should be extended to connect with other parts of the city and the mountains.*

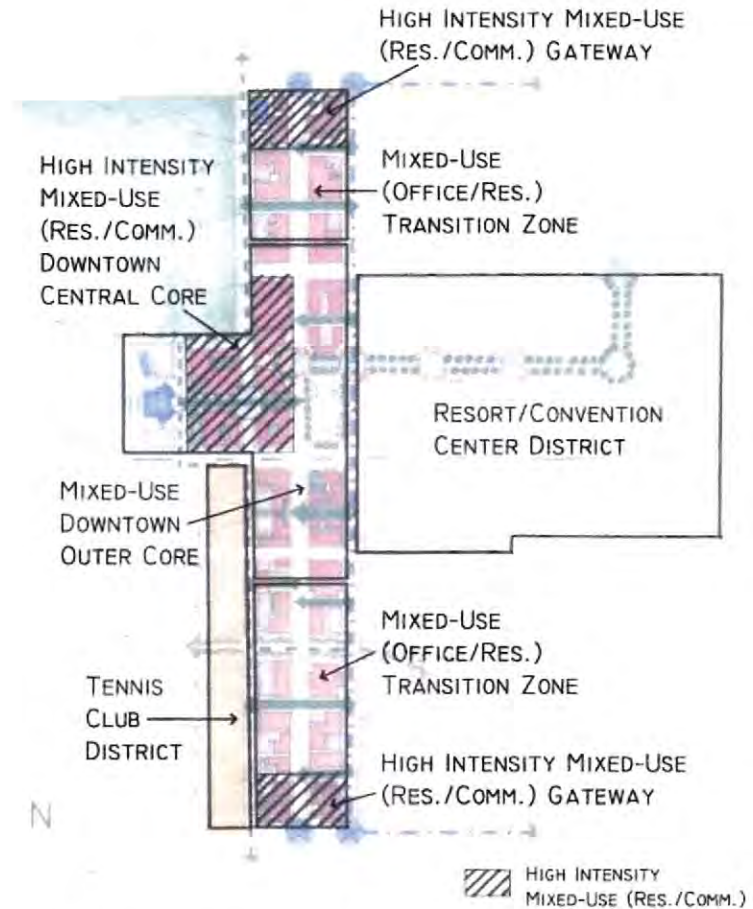


*Right: Sidewalks should provide ample room for concurrent uses. It is recommended that sidewalks in pedestrian areas have at least ten feet for window shopping / pedestrian through-traffic, ten feet for outdoor dining, and three feet for landscaping and shade trees.*

## land use & development / districts

Currently, the majority of downtown Palm Springs is used primarily during the daytime. However, there is potential to extend the hours of use and to create a more exciting and lively atmosphere in downtown Palm Springs through the introduction of mixed-use residential developments and the expansion of nighttime commercial/retail uses. People create a sense of vitality through activity and use of the streets and sidewalks. Downtown residents would enliven the area by using downtown areas when others have left and by creating a new nighttime market for activities, stores, and restaurants. Therefore, downtown Palm Springs would benefit from downtown residents and those new residents would benefit from the exciting and lively atmosphere of the area.

To achieve the desired mix of vitality and activity, downtown Palm Springs should be comprised of a number of different zones distinguished by land use and height. These zones include: the core (comprised of a high intensity mixed-use center with taller buildings surrounded by a vibrant mixed-use area); two shorter, less intense mixed-use transition zones to the north and south of the core; taller, more intense north and south gateway areas; the Resort/Convention Center District; and the Tennis Club District (see map to the right). Further defined theme based districts (areas identified by specialized uses, such as cultural and art uses, restaurant uses, nightlife uses, etc.) within these larger districts are encouraged and should be strengthened where they already exist when possible.



*Above: A map of zones in downtown Palm Springs. (For building heights for the various zones see the "Building Height, Orientation, Massing, & Design" section starting on page thirty-six.) These zones should be further subdivided into theme based districts to create areas with separate and unique identities within the downtown.*



## Land Use & Development / Districts

- **Downtown Core:** The downtown core (approximate area bounded by Amado Road and Arenas Road and Museum Drive and Indian Canyon Drive) should be a vibrant, compact, and walkable center of activity in the downtown area. The core should be comprised of a central core area consisting of taller (max. 60 ft; see “Building Height, Orientation, Massing, & Design” section starting on the next page for more detail on allowed building heights in the downtown), high intensity mixed-use (residential/commercial) buildings surrounded by an equally vibrant, but shorter (max. 30 to 45 ft.) mixed-use (commercial/office/residential) outer core area.

- **Transition Zones:** The transition zones should serve as less intense connector areas between the high intensity downtown core and north and south gateways to help create a varied downtown experience. These areas are ideal for theme based districts (areas with similar or complementary uses such as restaurants, art galleries, etc.) and should consist primarily of shorter, one to two story (max. 30 ft.) commercial/office mixed-use buildings. Slightly taller mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail/office and residential lofts above (max. 45 ft.) are permitted on the east side of Palm Canyon Drive.

- **Gateways:** The north and south entrances to the downtown (along Alejo Road and Ramon Road between Belardo Road and Indian Canyon Drive) should be well defined areas that make one’s entrance into the downtown a memorable experience. They should be taller (max. 60 ft.), high intensity mixed-use (residential/commercial) areas with distinctive landscaping and signage marking the entrance to downtown.

- **The Resort/Convention Center District:** This district is completely contained within the Section 14 area and its land uses are defined by the Section 14 Specific Plan. The district’s location adjacent to the downtown core makes it an integral part of the downtown. It should be well connected with the rest of the downtown to ensure the success of the entire downtown area.

- **The Tennis Club District:** The Tennis Club district is an important historic area in downtown Palm Springs. It contains many architecturally, socially, and culturally important hotels, small resorts, and residences. This district should continue to retain the current land uses, sense of place, and character that currently exists.

- Within all of the downtown zones (especially in the core and transition areas) theme based villages or districts are encouraged. These districts should be lively, walkable areas with similar or complementary uses that create a sense of district identity. These areas should be connected with each other and the central downtown core to create a dynamic and pedestrian friendly downtown. Existing theme based districts should be strengthened and new ones created when possible.

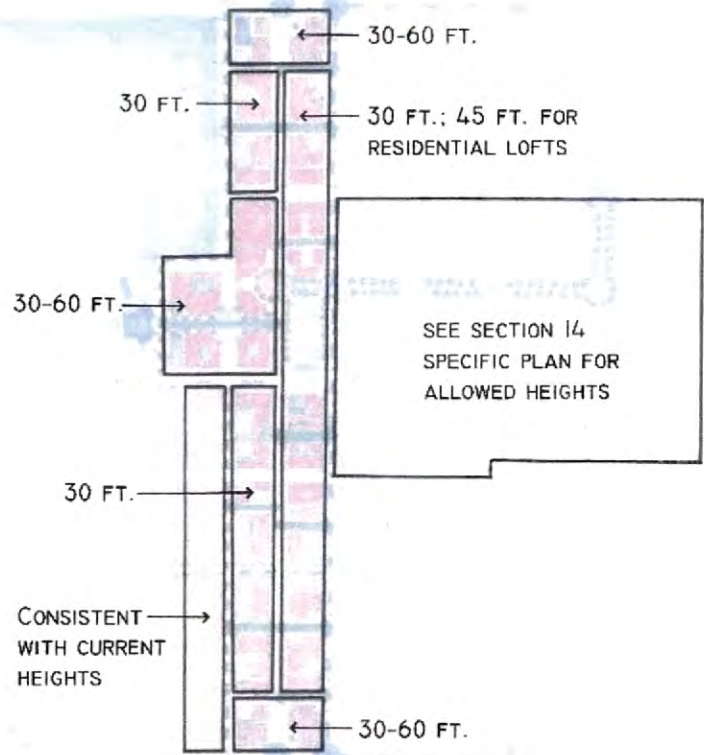
## land use & develop- ment / districts



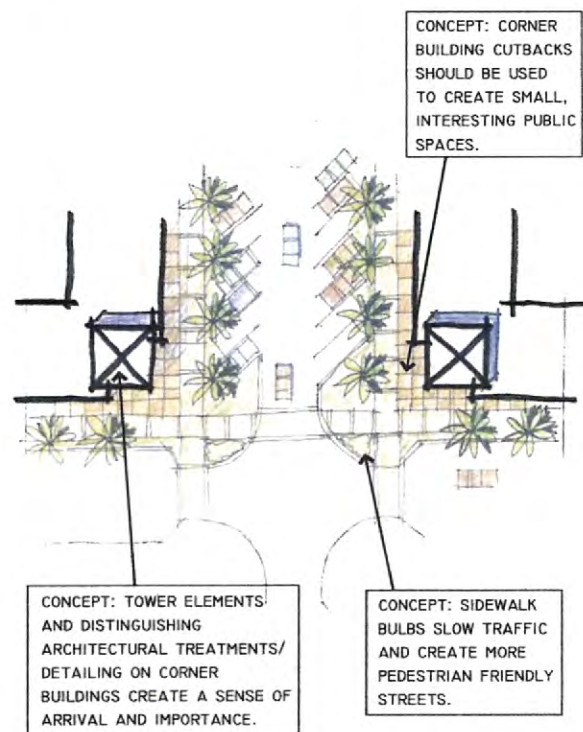
# building height, orientation, massing, & design

Building height, orientation, and massing all affect the character of a downtown. Currently, the majority of buildings in downtown Palm Springs are low-rise structures facing onto the street. These building types help create the pedestrian friendly village character of downtown. If the correct techniques are used, taller buildings can produce the same effect while allowing for increased residential and retail uses in the downtown area. However, care must be taken to protect existing public view corridors along streets, and when possible, to create new ones.

Another defining feature of the village atmosphere of downtown Palm Springs is its eclectic architecture. Early homes were constructed primarily in Spanish Colonial and Mediterranean styles. Mid-century and post-World War II buildings and homes were designed by an array of well-known Modern architects. The result is an architecturally rich and varied downtown. New buildings should be sensitive to the historic context and complement the unique mix of architectural styles. In addition, new projects should strive for excellence in architectural design.



Above: A map of building heights by zone in downtown Palm Springs. (For more detail on the characteristics of the zones see the "Land Use & Development/Districts" section starting on page thirty-four.)



Above: Gateway corners, which have distinguishing buildings set back from the corner, should be used at entrances to the downtown area.

## Building Height

- **Downtown Core:** Building height in the central core area should be a maximum of 30 feet on the street front stepping back to 60 feet in height with minor intrusions for architectural features. The surrounding mixed-use areas in the downtown outer core should be a maximum of 30 feet with intrusion areas for architectural features on the west side of Palm Canyon Drive and a maximum of 30 feet for office/retail mixed-use and 45 feet for buildings with ground floor office/commercial uses and second story residential lofts with intrusion areas for architectural features on the east side of Palm Canyon Drive.
- **Transition Zones:** Building height in transition areas should be a maximum of 30 feet with intrusion areas for architectural features. On the east side of Palm Canyon Drive mixed-use buildings with residential lofts are excepted from the 30 foot restriction. They should be a maximum of 45 feet (18 feet on street front stepping back to 45 feet on the second floor) to accommodate the residential lofts.
- **Gateways:** Building height in the north and south gateway areas should be a maximum of 30 feet on the street front stepping back to 60 feet in height with minor intrusions for architectural features.
- **The Resort/Convention Center District:** Allowed building heights can be found in the Section 14 Specific Plan.
- **The Tennis Club District:** Building heights should be consistent with current heights and zoning restrictions.
- Building heights should result in a varied skyline. Taller buildings, if properly designed, will create dramatic view corridors that will add to the vitality of downtown.
- Taller buildings (in excess of three stories) should compensate for their height through the provision of grade level public open space, preservation of views, superior design, and quality construction.
- First and second floors of taller buildings should be pedestrian friendly through the use of large display windows, awnings or other shade covers, architectural detailing, etc. They should contain elements at a pedestrian scale and provide pedestrian uses, such as retail, restaurant, and office spaces.

## Orientation & Massing

- An east-west orientation of taller buildings will reduce the bulk facing the mountains, which will help create/preserve view corridors in the downtown area. The east-west orientation of taller buildings is recommended when appropriate.
- Building massing should step back above the ground floor to maintain and protect public view corridors along streets. (See the bottom of page twenty-four for a graphic representation of a building step back.)
- Buildings should have variable roof lines.

*building height,  
orientation, massing,  
& design*

**ATTACHMENT 5**  
**(7 Pages)**

City of Palm Springs 2007 General Plan, Land Use Element  
Pages: 2-1, 2-5, 2-6, 2-7, 2-28, 2-40, 2-41

## 2. LAND USE ELEMENT

As the backbone of the General Plan, this element sets forth the distribution, location, and intensity of land uses throughout the City. It represents the land use “road map” for Palm Springs—guiding it into the future with goals, policies, and actions.

### LAND USE PLAN

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One of the most visible components of the General Plan is the Land Use Plan, which depicts where and how development should occur and provides descriptions of each of the City’s land use designations through text and a land use diagram. State law requires that general plans identify land use designations and the development intensities that are associated with them for the 87,600 acres of land that are located within the City and Sphere of Influence. In addition, state law also requires that the locations and distribution of the land uses be identified through text and mapping. The locations of each land use can be found on the Land Use Plan (Figures 2-2 and 2-3). The text in this element provides the land use goals, policies, and actions that are necessary to achieve the vision.

In general, the majority of the City’s existing land uses were retained in place in the new plan, and focused changes occurred in areas that were either underutilized or areas that required specialized land use guidance or refinement. Focused land use changes also occurred in areas where change is either imminent and needs guidance or where change is desired and needs stimulation and guidance. The revitalization of Downtown and hillsides were also issues of high interest and, as a result, customized policy guidance was developed for these issues.



## RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

**Estate Residential (0–2.0 dwelling units per acre).** The Estate Residential designation provides for the development of large-lot, single-family residences that are custom in design. This designation is predominantly located in areas adjacent to the City’s hillsides, reflecting the natural and environmental constraints that must be addressed there. Minimum lot sizes are generally 20,000 square feet in this designation; guest ranches are permitted on parcel areas of five acres, with a minimum lot area of 4,000 square feet per guest ranch unit.

**Very Low Density Residential (2.1–4.0 dwelling units per acre).** The Very Low Density residential is the most prevalent land use designation within the City, representing typical single-family detached residential development. Lot sizes in this land use designation generally range from 16,500 to 8,500 square feet.

**Low Density Residential (4.1–6.0 dwelling units per acre).** Similar to the Very Low Density Residential designation, the Low Density Residential designation also represents “typical” single-family detached residential development. This designation accommodates typical lot sizes ranging from 10,000 to 8,000 square feet.

**Medium Density Residential (6.1–15.0 dwelling units per acre).** This residential land use category accommodates a range of residential housing types, including single-family attached, single-family detached, patio homes, duplexes, townhomes, multiple-family, and mobilehome projects.

**High Density Residential (15.1–30 dwelling units per acre).** Typical development in this category would include duplexes, townhomes, and apartments. Hotels and motels are also permitted up to 43 rooms per net acre (up to 86 rooms per net acre permitted on Indian Land) as long as they are consistent with the design and character of the surrounding neighborhoods and do not create significant design, parking, or traffic impacts to the surrounding residential neighborhood.



*Estate Residential*



*Medium Density Residential*



## COMMERCIAL

**Tourist Resort Commercial (0.35 FAR for stand-alone commercial uses; 43 hotel rooms per net acre; 86 rooms per net acre on Indian Land).** This land use designation provides for large-scale resort hotels and timeshares including a broad range of convenience, fitness, spa, retail, and entertainment uses principally serving resort clientele. Commercial recreation and entertainment facilities, such as convention centers, museums, indoor and outdoor theatres, and water parks are included in this designation, but should be designed to be compatible with neighboring development. Tourist Resort Commercial facilities are most appropriate in the Palm Canyon Drive and Tahquitz Canyon Drive corridors. It is intended that the primary use in any Tourist Resort Commercial area shall be hotel/tourist-related uses; if residential uses are proposed within the Tourist Commercial Designation (timeshares, condominiums, etc.) they shall be a secondary use ancillary to the proposed hotel uses and shall not exceed a maximum of 30 dwelling units per acre. Permanent residential uses and commercial activities are allowed subject to approval of a planned development district.



*Tourist Resort Commercial*

**Small Hotel Resort Commercial (15 hotel rooms per net acre; 10 dwelling units per acre).** This designation applies to areas with smaller-scale, boutique type hotels that are typically found in the Warm Sands and Tennis Club neighborhoods. It is intended that the tourist resort character of these neighborhoods be preserved; as a result, new residential uses or conversion of small hotels to residential uses are permitted as long as they comply with the conversion requirements outlined within the City's Zoning Code. Stand-alone retail and commercial uses are not permitted in this land use designation. Ancillary commercial uses such as a gift shop associated with a small hotel use are allowed.

**Neighborhood/Community Commercial (0.35 FAR).** Areas designated as Neighborhood/Community Commercial provide an opportunity for convenience commercial uses that serve adjacent residential neighborhoods. The commercial opportunities created under this designation are intended to be an integrated element of the neighborhood, providing to nearby residents services such as dry cleaners, grocery stores, bakeries, bank and post office branches, bookstores, drugstores, and smaller-scale restaurants. Harmonious relationships between these commercial uses and adjacent residential uses shall be achieved through compatibility of site design, building scale, pathways and circulation design, and architectural treatment of structures.

**Regional Commercial (0.50 FAR).** Regional Commercial areas are intended to provide for large-scale commercial uses that serve an area larger than the City boundaries. Allowable uses include department stores, theatres, and restaurants. Uses such as automobile dealerships that have a regional draw are



# LAND USE ELEMENT

also included in this land use designation. These uses are generally located in areas that will benefit from a higher level of exposure to residents located outside of the City, such as properties located on Ramon Road adjacent to the City limits and selected properties adjacent to the I-10.

## MIXED USE

**Central Business District (1.0 FAR; 21–30 dwelling units per acre).** Bounded approximately by Ramon Road, Calle Encilia, Alejo Road and Belardo Road, the Central Business District designation allows for a mix of commercial, residential, and office uses at a higher concentration, density, and intensity than in other areas of the City. The CBD serves as the main activity center and cultural core of the community and, as such, theatres, museums, retail, and other entertainment venues are encouraged here. Uses such as grocery stores, hardware stores, and convenience or pharmacy stores that provide services to the Downtown's residential population are also encouraged. The Central Business District is subdivided into zones or areas that provide for diversity in development standards and land use intensities. These subareas are defined in Appendix A, *Downtown Urban Design Plan*. Examples include the gateways into Downtown, Downtown Central Core, and the Downtown Outer Core. The Downtown Central Core (roughly bounded by Amado Road, Tahquitz Canyon Way, Museum Drive, and Indian Canyon Drive) and the Gateway areas (at roughly the north and south ends of the CBD) may be developed with a maximum FAR of 3.5. If projects in these areas provide substantial public spaces or plazas, an FAR of up to 4.0 may be developed upon approval of a Planned Development District or Specific Plan. The Downtown Central Core may also accommodate up to 70 dwelling units per acre for residential or hotel uses if a Planned Development District or Specific Plan is prepared and approved.



*Central Business District*

**Mixed-use/Multi-use (Maximum of 15 dwelling units per acre for residential uses and a maximum 0.50 FAR for nonresidential uses).** Specific uses intended in these areas include community-serving retail commercial, professional offices, service businesses, restaurants, daycare centers, public and quasi-public uses. Residential development at a maximum density of 15 units per acre is permitted; planned development districts may allow residential densities up to 30 du/acre and also ensure that all proposed uses are properly integrated and allow the implementation of development standards that are customized to each site.

Additional information related to the location and desired mix of uses in each mixed-use/multi-use area can be found on page 2-30 of this element.

## RESORT DESTINATION IMAGE



*There are over 6,500 hotel rooms in Palm Springs—the largest collection in the Coachella Valley. The Spa Resort Casino caters to tourist and convention center clientele, furthering the image of the City as a destination resort.*

Palm Springs has always embraced its reputation as a world class resort, holding such titles as “America’s premier desert resort city,” and “America’s Resortport.” Minutes away from any location in town are bike paths, hiking and equestrian trails, parks, tennis courts, retail and entertainment venues and golf courses. The City is also home to the Palm Springs Art Museum, the Palm Springs Air Museum, and Knott’s Soak City Water Park, which are geared toward family recreation and entertainment.

Year-round special events blend sophistication and relaxation in a style that is typically Palm Springs. Locals and visitors enjoy many of the City’s unique events such as the Concourse d’Elegance, the Palm Springs International Film Festival, and Villagefest, the City’s weekly outdoor marketplace.

The City currently is host to over two million visitors annually. Palm Springs maintains the largest number of hotel rooms in the Coachella Valley: 6,500 of the total 15,865 rooms (source: Economic Conditions and Trends Report, 2005). These accommodations range from small, three-room boutique or bed-and-breakfast-style inns located in residential neighborhoods to multistory resort hotels designed to accommodate larger corporate events.

In addition, the Convention Center serves as a major center of business and tourist activity within the City. Providing approximately 211,400 square feet of conference facilities, the Convention Center generates large numbers of conference attendees who support nearby hotel and convention-related businesses and who often extend their stays to take advantage of the recreational activities that Palm Springs has to offer. The City should constantly assess how it can continue to draw increasing numbers of visitors and provide them with a special experience that keeps them returning year after year.

Maintaining its status as a premier resort destination is a primary priority for the City. The General Plan land use patterns reflect a concentration of tourist commercial uses predominantly comprised of commercial and hotel uses along Palm Canyon Drive and Tahquitz Canyon Drive. The small-scale boutique hotels that are found among the residential neighborhoods in the Warm Sands and Tennis Club areas also contribute to the City’s charm and its appeal to resort visitors. Development within these areas must be carefully designed and planned to ensure that it continues to reflect the City’s vision of being a “world class desert community.”



**Downtown Vision**

(from the *Downtown Urban Design Plan*)

*A dynamic, vital, and economically successful area that retains the historic and cultural character of Palm Springs and yet meets the changing needs of residents and visitors alike.*

This vision can be realized with the introduction of mixed-use development concepts to replace more traditional horizontal clustering of land uses.



*The Plaza Theatre is home to the Fabulous Palm Springs Follies, a major entertainment attraction in the heart of Downtown.*

Performance criteria related to building height, orientation, and massing, as well as customized guidance for parking, architecture, landscaping, lighting, and street furniture in the Downtown area can be found in the *Downtown Urban Design Plan*. The goals and policies identified below serve as the foundation for future land use distribution and economic strategies proposed Downtown and are intended to complement the direction identified in the *Downtown Urban Design Plan*.

**GOAL LU10:**

**Maintain a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly Downtown that serves as the economic, civic, historic, cultural, and recreational center of the City.**

**Policies**

- LU10.1 Support the development of a centrally located “village square” to serve as the key visual, social, and aesthetic component of the Downtown revitalization effort.
- LU10.2 Encourage development of housing and mixed-use land uses Downtown to increase activity in this area.
- LU10.3 Encourage development that promotes a flow between indoor and outdoor activities such as outdoor cafes, arcades, paseos, and courtyards.
- LU10.4 Accommodate a broad range of uses Downtown to meet the needs of both residents and visitors and to stimulate both daytime and evening activity.
- LU10.5 Facilitate and promote special events and community celebrations in the Downtown area to stimulate its role as a community focal point.
- LU10.6 Strengthen the unique sense of place currently present in Downtown by preserving and incorporating cultural and historic uses.
- LU10.7 Provide a logical transition between land uses and the built environment in Downtown and those proposed in the Section 14 Specific Plan.
- LU10.8 Maintain the Plaza Theatre for use as a multipurpose community performing arts center for film festivals, premieres, and live stage productions, while preserving its historical value.

## LAND USE ELEMENT

- LU10.9 Require all new development in Downtown to be consistent with the design principles found in the Downtown Urban Design Plan that address streets and circulation, parking, public spaces and gathering places, landscaping, signage, lighting, street furniture, and building height, orientation, massing, and design.
- LU10.10 Encourage higher density housing at the perimeter of the downtown retail area.

### Actions

- LU10.1 Develop a phasing and funding program for the necessary streetscape and infrastructure improvements within Downtown.
- LU10.2 Amend the Central Business District (CBD) to include a wide range of uses (such as grocery, hardware, and convenience/drug stores) that provide services and amenities to the Downtown residential population.
- LU10.3 Establish specific criteria or incentives to determine if new projects within the CBD qualify to develop above a 3.5 FAR as identified in the land use designations. In no event shall development exceed an FAR of 4.0.

## PALM SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Known as “America’s Resortport,” the Palm Springs International Airport serves as the primary air transportation access to the Coachella Valley communities in one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. Located on over 930 acres of land on the eastern edge of the City, the airport not only serves as a major transportation and tourist hub, but is also an asset to the City’s economic development.

In 2003, approximately 1.25 million annual passengers flew into and out of the airport. Airline activity has increased at an average annual growth rate of 3.4 percent from 1994 to 2004. As the number of aircraft trips grows, it will become increasingly important to ensure that the surrounding land uses are compatible with airport activities and the City continues to build upon the economic potential and business relationships generated by the airport. High-quality industrial and business park uses should also be promoted in this area.



*The Palm Springs International Airport serves as a major transportation hub in the Coachella Valley.*

**ATTACHMENT 6**  
**(3 Pages)**

City of Palm Springs 2007 General Plan, Administration Element  
Pages: 1-1, 1-10, 1-11



# I. ADMINISTRATION

## PREFACE

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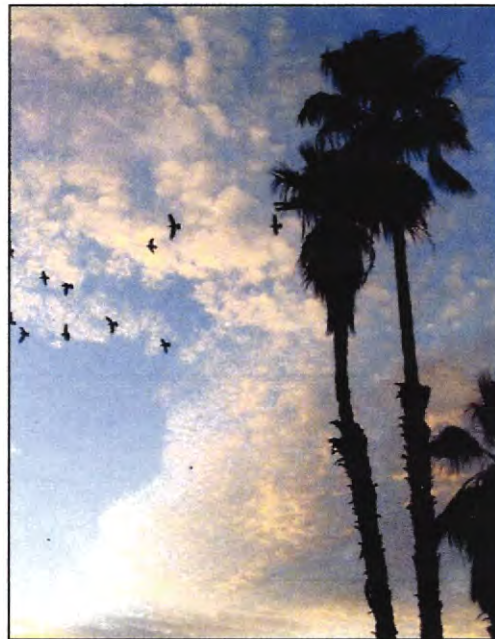
Our City is unlike any other—we have a reputation as a world class desert resort and we are one of the nation’s most recognized winter playgrounds. We are proud of the timeless character of our Downtown, our celebrated history with the Hollywood entertainment community, our relaxed desert lifestyle,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



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

# ADMINISTRATION

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

