



City of Palm Springs

**Addendum #2 to the
Final Environmental Impact Report
for the
Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan
(SCH# 2008061084)**

October 2015

**Addendum #2 to
Final Environmental Impact Report
for the
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I. INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT BACKGROUND

A. Summary

This Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan (SCH# 2008061084) has been prepared to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of a proposed project consisting of:

1. Amendments to the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan (Case No. 5.1204 SP-A1);
2. Refinement of the development plan of Block E as the Downtown Palm Springs Park;
3. Major Architectural Review for the development of Block B-1 (Case No. 3.3908 MAJ).

This section of the Addendum offers background information on project location and history. Section II provides a description of the proposed project and the purpose of this Addendum. Section III focuses on potential environmental impacts of the proposed project, and compares these impacts with those analyzed in the certified EIR.

B. Project Location

The Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan (referred to as the 2009 Specific Plan in this document) area is located in downtown Palm Springs and bounded by Tahquitz Canyon Drive on the south, Andreas Road (extended) on the north, Belardo Road and Museum Drive on the west, and Indian Canyon Drive on the east. See Exhibits 1 and 2.

C. Project History

1. Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan and EIR (2009)

In 2008, a draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared for the 2009 Specific Plan area, which covered approximately 20.6 acres in downtown Palm Springs. At the time the Specific Plan was proposed, the site was developed with retail commercial development, parking lots, and a vacant parcel that had been graded and scraped.

The Specific Plan Land Use Plan is shown in Exhibit 3. The project area consisted of three (3) planning areas that could accommodate mixed use development, including retail commercial,

office, hotel, timeshare, condo-hotel, and high-density residential uses, as well as parking and compatible accessory uses. At buildout, the Specific Plan would allow 400,000 square feet of retail or office development, 955 residential dwelling units, 620 hotel rooms and a public plaza. Development areas designated Blocks A through L were identified, and a Conceptual Phasing Plan was proposed.

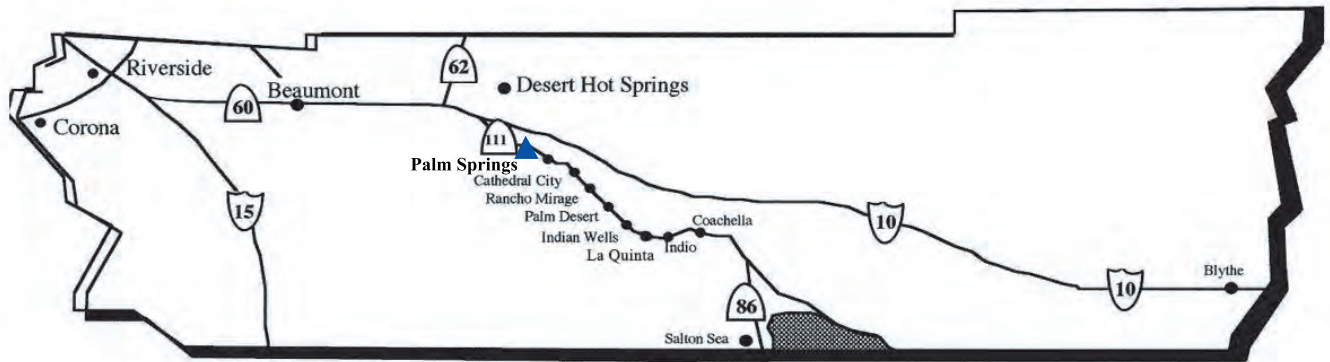
The EIR determined that the project would result in post-mitigation significant effects on aesthetics/visual resources, regional air quality, and cultural resources. However, the City Council concluded that the benefits of 2009 Specific Plan implementation would outweigh the potential adverse effects. Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations were adopted as part of EIR certification and Specific Plan approval on December 2, 2009. As part of 2009 Specific Plan adoption, the City Council deleted Planning Areas 2 and 3, both of which had been evaluated in the EIR; the remaining acreage totaled 19.4 acres.

2. EIR Addendum Prepared for “Downtown Palm Springs” Renovation Plan (2012)

In 2012, the City prepared an Addendum to the EIR for the Downtown Project Renovation Plan (referred to as the 2012 Project in this document). The proposed “Downtown Palm Springs” renovation project consisted of the subdivision and development of 13.2 acres within the Specific Plan area that could accommodate 1,237,000 square feet of mixed-use commercial development, a 170-room hotel with appurtenant uses, and a 1.3-acre outdoor performance space and entertainment venue for concerts and other special events and urban open space for cultural and social activities in Block E. The project also called for the extension of Belardo Road and Andreas Road through the site and approval of a parcel map to realign property boundaries, allow dedication of public streets and abandonment of certain rights-of-way, and offer public easements. The Downtown Palm Springs Land Use Plan is shown in Exhibit 4.

The Addendum focused on potential visual and aesthetic impacts that could result from these changes and found that the overall effects would be no more significant than those associated with implementation of the 2009 Specific Plan. No other environmental impacts were expected to result that were not analyzed and mitigated, as needed, in the previously adopted EIR, Statement of Overriding Considerations, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. The Addendum was adopted by the City Council in 2012. On September 17, 2014, the City Council approved the Fourth Amendment to the Project Financing Agreement, which provides for the City’s purchase of the outdoor entertainment venue on Block E, rather than leasing it from the owner of the property for ten years. The proposed use of Block E remained the same.

CALIFORNIA



RIVERSIDE COUNTY

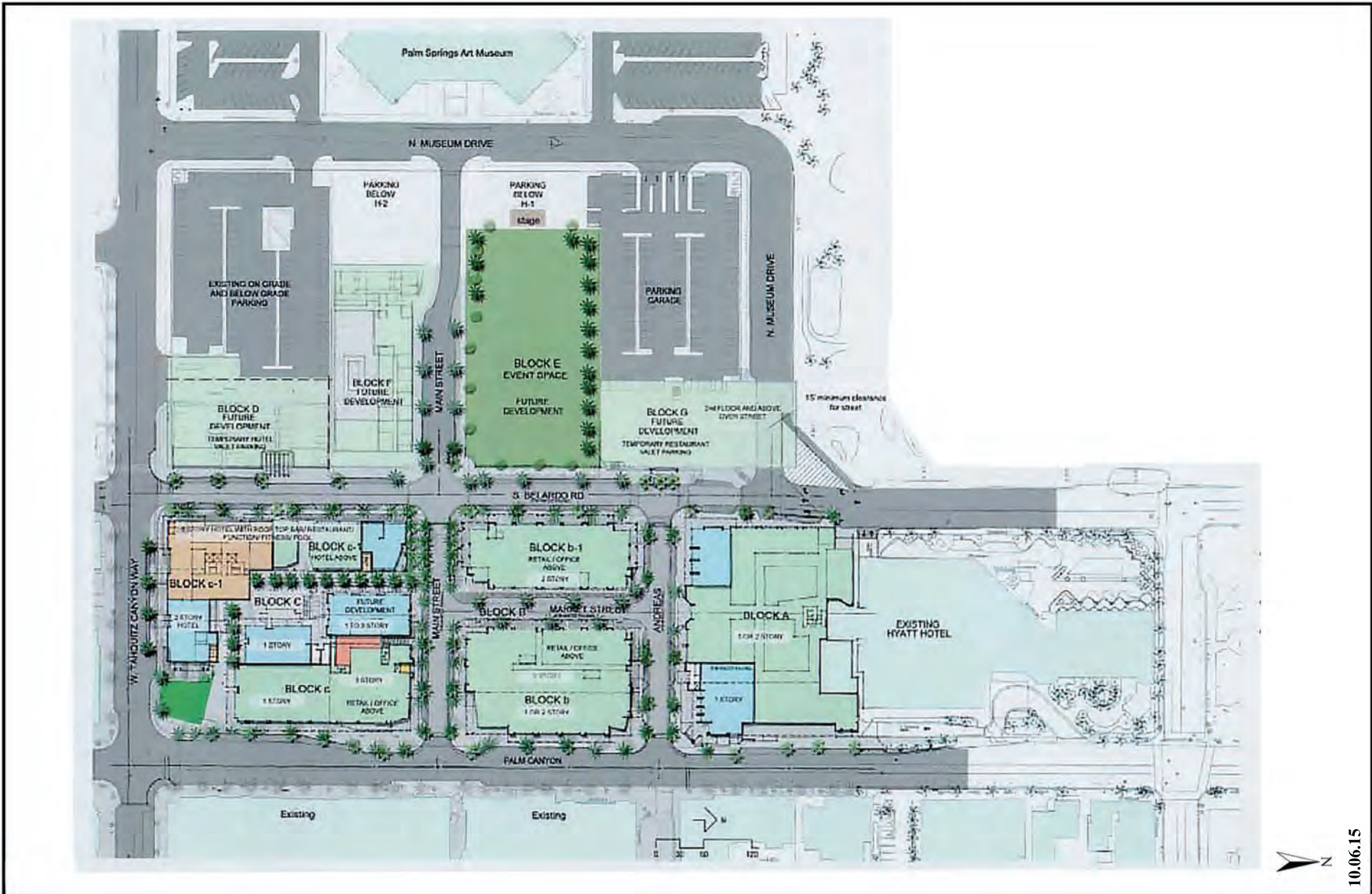
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Source: Google Earth, 2015



Museum Market Plaza EIR Addendum #2
 Vicinity Map
 Palm Springs, California



10.06.15

Museum Market Plaza EIR Addendum #2
 Downtown Palm Springs, Site Plan (Year 2012)
 Palm Springs, California

II. PROPOSED PROJECT MODIFICATIONS

A. Project Description

The project area is bounded by Tahquitz Canyon Drive on the south, Andreas Road (extended) on the north, Belardo Road and Museum Drive on the west, and Indian Canyon Drive on the east (see Exhibit 5). The project site consists of 20.15 acres, subdivided into multiple Blocks, as shown in Table 1, below.

Table 1
Specific Plan Amendment Acreage

| Blocks | Acres (net) |
|---------------|--------------------|
| Block A | 1.59 |
| Block B | 1.5 |
| Block C | 2.41 |
| Block D & F | 3.21 |
| Block E | 1.36 |
| Block G | 1.73 |
| Block H1 | 0.31 |
| Block H2 | 0.41 |
| Block K1 | 0.89 |
| Block K2 | 5.0 |
| Streets | 1.74 |
| Total: | 20.15 |

The proposed project consists of the following:

1. A Specific Plan Amendment to the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan to:
 - a. Change the name of the project to Downtown Palm Springs.
 - b. Change the project site plan to reflect changes in the development patterns, development areas (referred to as Blocks in the document) and internal roadway alignments consistent with the changes made in the 2012 Project and EIR Addendum.
 - c. Refine the Block lot sizes to reflect the Parcel Map for the proposed project.
 - d. Change the land use for Block B to allow for residential, commercial and hotel uses for a Block previously considered for Open Space/Plaza land uses consistent with the changes made in the 2012 Project and EIR Addendum.

- e. Change the land use for Block E to allow for Open Space/Plaza land uses for a Block previously considered for residential, commercial and hotel land uses consistent with the changes made in the 2012 Project and EIR Addendum.
 - f. Modify certain development standards, including: permitted uses; the building height allowed on Block B from 16 feet to 40 feet for commercial uses; change the building height for Block B-1 to 60 feet for commercial and residential uses, and 75 feet for hotel uses; the building height allowed on Block E from 60 feet to 30 feet; reduce the overall permitted square footage within the project from 1,775,000 to 1,359,500; and make minor modifications to parking standards consistent with the changes made in the 2012 Project and EIR Addendum.
 - g. Eliminate the calculations of building mass included in Table III-3.
 - h. Make other administrative and miscellaneous changes to the text to reflect the updated development pattern of the project as it is being developed currently, and consistent with the changes made in the 2012 Project and EIR Addendum.
2. The refinement of the development plans of Block E, previously approved with the 2012 Project as a special event area and public park to accommodate passive and active recreation, including a special event area to allow for up to 4,000 attendees (including event staff, ancillary and support personnel and persons attending the event). The park will include minimal building construction, which is anticipated to include a police substation, public restrooms, and stage and support areas. It will also be connected to Block H-1 and H-2, which provide space for art displays and the relocation of the historic Aluminaire house. A conceptual site plan, which is subject to change, is provided in Exhibit 6.
 3. A Major Architectural Review for a resort hotel with up to 150 rooms to be located on the west half of Block B. The building will consist of six stories, including a roof-top lounge. Building height will vary from 60 to 69 feet, plus up to 6 feet for mechanical areas (stairwells, elevator shafts, etc.). The hotel will include restaurants, bars and a spa. The hotel will provide 200 parking spaces, in addition to those parking spaces already occurring or currently planned within the project site. See Exhibit 7.

The Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan was adopted by the City in 2009, concurrent with the certification of the Museum Market Plaza Environmental Impact Report. Since that time, demolition of the buildings on the Desert Fashion Plaza site (Blocks A through H) has been completed, and underground parking garages have been upgraded. Construction on Blocks A and C is currently under way. Development projects have been approved on parts of Blocks A, B, C

and D. Infrastructure, including the installation of Belardo Road and Main Street, is also under way.

In 2012, the City certified an addendum to the certified EIR which primarily addressed visual impacts, specifically reductions in maximum building height on most blocks, an increase in building height on Block B and the use of Block E as described above.

Over time, although the overall project or development area has not changed, the distribution of land uses has been proposed for modification. The Specific Plan Amendment’s purpose is to reflect this redistribution of land uses (referred to as Blocks in the Specific Plan).

Two projects are currently proposed within the Specific Plan area: the park on Block E, and a hotel on Block B. These projects have been incorporated into this EIR Addendum, to assure that they are consistent with the revisions being made to the Specific Plan. The following table compares maximum potential build out square footage analyzed for the 2009 Specific Plan with that allowed by the Specific Plan Amendment.

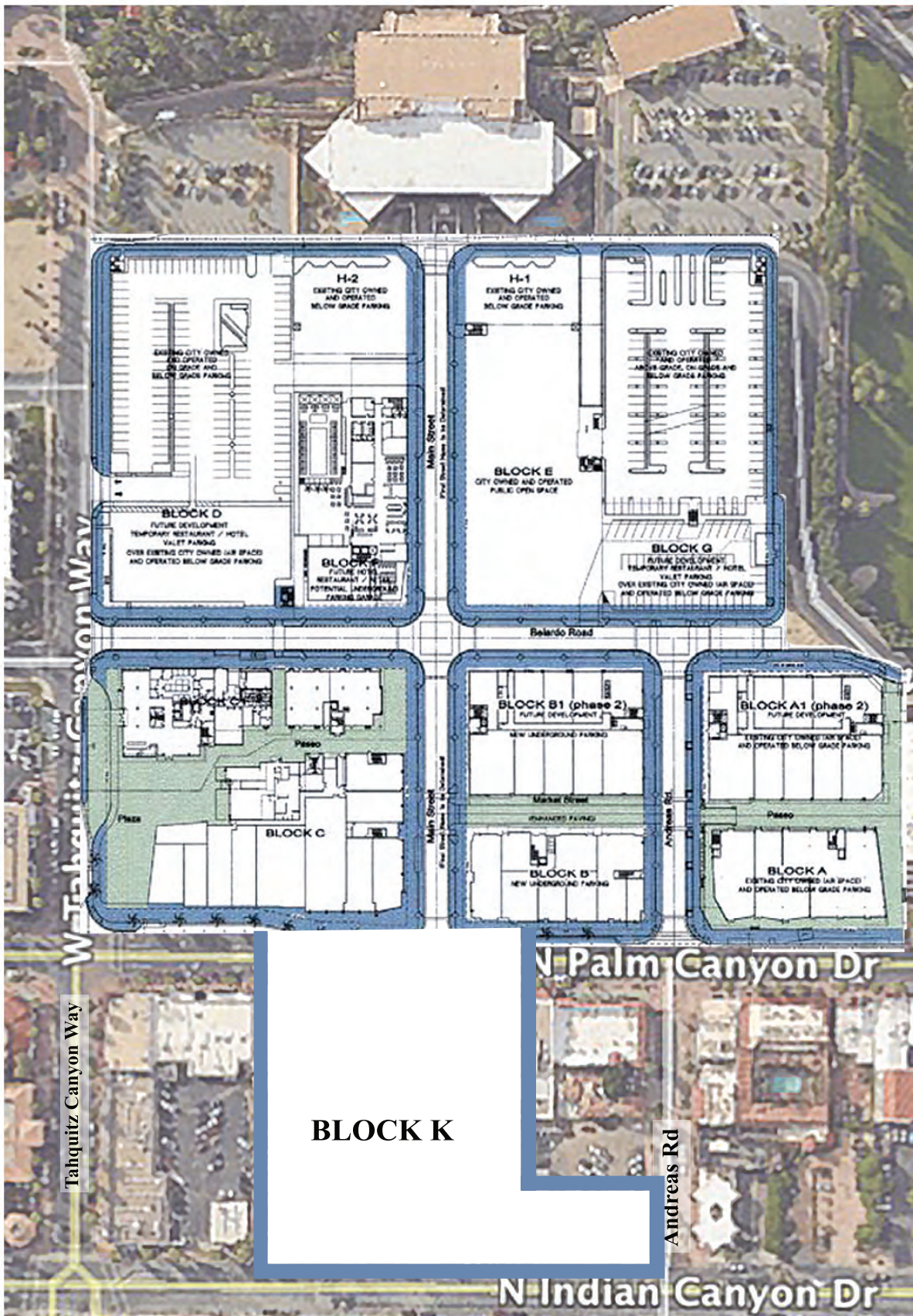
Table 2
Maximum Allowable Square Footage
2009 Specific Plan vs. Proposed Amendments

| Location | 2009 Specific Plan | Proposed Amendment |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Block A | 220,000 | 175,000 |
| Block B | 3,000 | 155,000 |
| Block C | 245,000 | 240,000 |
| Block D & F | 455,000 | 225,000 |
| Block E | 520,000 | 7,500 ¹ |
| Block G | | 225,000 |
| Block H ¹ | n/a | n/a |
| Block K1 | 181,000 | 181,000 |
| Block K2 | 151,000 | 151,000 |
| Total Potential Square Footage: | 1,775,000 | 1,359,500 |

¹ Block H consists of public open space to be potentially used for museum exhibitions or art installations.

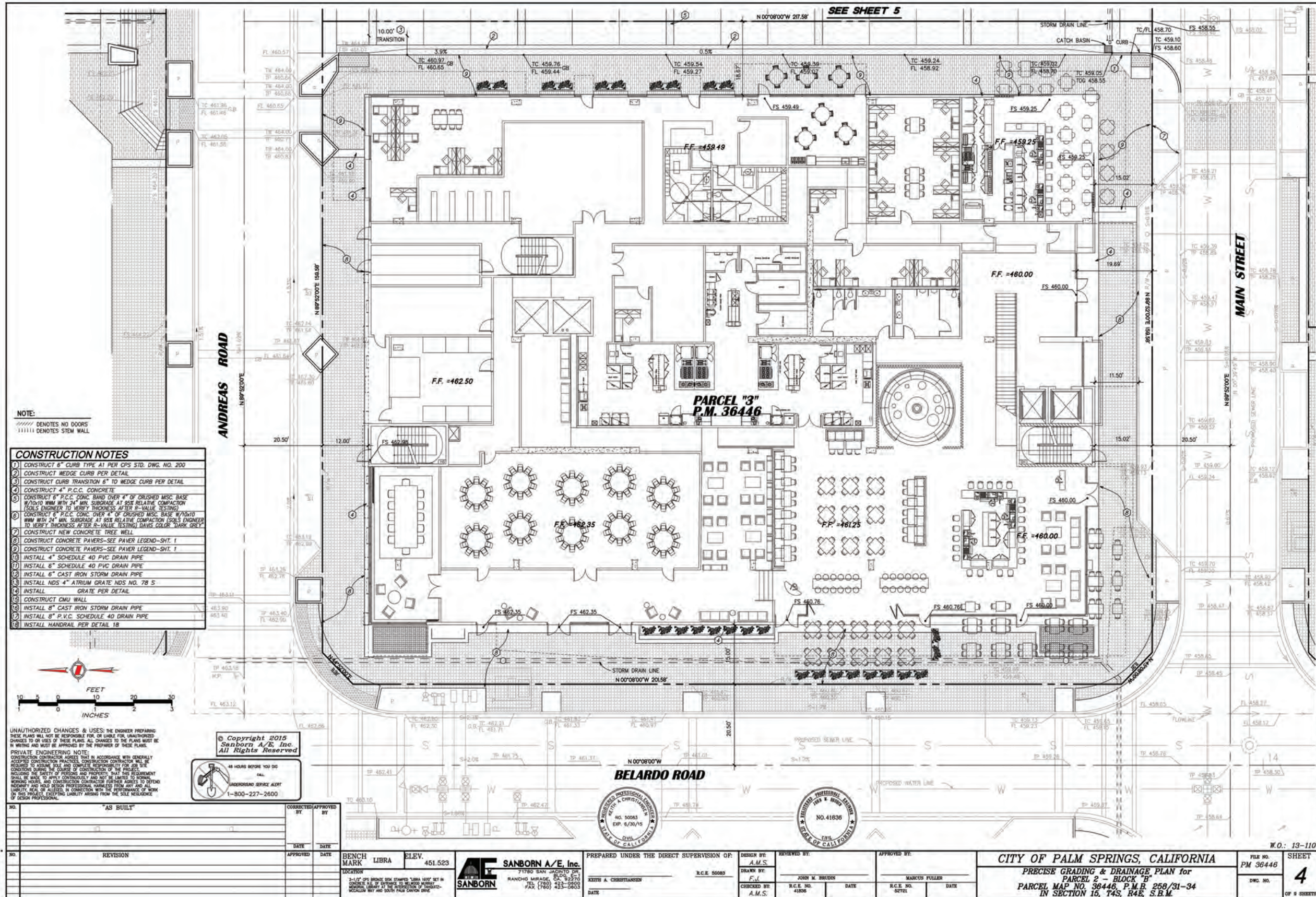
This EIR Addendum has been prepared based on both the certified EIR and the 2012 Addendum. The bulk of the analysis in this document compares the currently proposed project to the project analyzed in the 2009 certified EIR. The discussion of Aesthetic compares the currently proposed project to the analysis and findings of the 2012 EIR Addendum, as appropriate.

¹ The building area proposed for Block E consists of support facilities for the Park use, and does not include leasable square footage.





Source: RGA Landscape Architects, Inc.



B. Purpose of this Addendum

According to Section 15164 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Lead Agency is required to prepare an addendum to a previously certified EIR if changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred.

An Addendum has been prepared for the proposed project modifications because none of the conditions described in Section 15162 have occurred. Specifically:

- No changes are proposed that would require major revisions to the previous EIR due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects of a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.
- No substantial changes in circumstances under which the project is undertaken will occur that require major revisions of the previous EIR due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.
- No new information of significant importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete, shows any of the following:
 - The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR;
 - Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR;
 - Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found to not be feasible will, in fact be feasible, and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative; or
 - Mitigation measures or alternatives, which are considerable different from those analyzed in the previous EIR would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.

The following analysis supports the conclusion that the proposed modifications to the 2009 Specific Plan and EIR Addendum for the 2012 Project will not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of significant impacts that were identified in the certified EIR. The analysis compares the environmental impacts of the proposal with the impacts identified in the certified EIR. The Addendum addresses the same environmental topics addressed in the certified EIR and summarizes potential impacts associated with the proposed land use changes.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

A. Introduction

This section addresses all environmental topics previously analyzed in the certified Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan EIR. They are discussed in the same order as in the EIR. Each section includes: 1) summary of findings in the certified Final EIR, including existing conditions, potential project impacts and the level of significance of impacts after mitigation, as applicable; 2) analysis of environmental impacts and recommended mitigation measures for the proposed project modifications, including any relevant updated information, as well as a review of the mitigation measures from the certified EIR, and any necessary modification; and 3) a comparison of the impacts identified in the certified EIR with those identified in this document.

B. Aesthetics

1. Analysis of the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan Certified EIR

The unique topographic features of the Coachella Valley offer attractive and highly valued viewsheds. Distinctive scenic views of the nearby San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains and more distant Little San Bernardino Mountains exist throughout the City. The downtown area, in which the project area is located, contains several listed historic buildings and is well known for its Californian Modernist architectural style. North Palm Canyon Drive, Indian Canyon Drive, and Tahquitz Canyon Way are designated scenic corridors in the General Plan.

The project area is generally flat and, at the time the EIR was certified was nearly fully developed with commercial development, courtyards, and pedestrian corridors. The 2009 Specific Plan would allow the construction of buildings ranging from 33 to 79 feet in height immediately east of the San Jacinto Mountains. The EIR analyzed potential project-related viewshed impacts from 11 locations in close proximity to the project area. The analysis determined that development accommodated by the 2009 Specific Plan would result in changes to the existing visual character of the project site, including partial obstruction of mountain views in several surrounding locations, greater levels of illumination and glare, demolition of the Town and Country Center which was eligible for listing as a historic resource, indirect adverse impacts to the Lykken's Department Store building which was designated as a Class I (locally significant) historic building, and impacts to the Palm Springs Walk of Stars.

The 2009 Specific Plan included a range of design features, development standards, and other mitigation measures that would reduce potential project-related visual and aesthetic impacts. However, the EIR concluded that development facilitated by the 2009 Specific Plan, particularly the construction of tall structures, would result in unavoidable significant impacts to the existing visual character of the project area that were not completely mitigated. The adopted Statement of Overriding Considerations, however, determined that the benefits of 2009 implementation outweighed the potential adverse impacts:

“The City of Palm Springs hereby finds that impacts associated with scenic vistas, and the visual character of the Downtown constitute a significant unavoidable impact to aesthetics. Even with the implementation of mitigation measures, the build out of the proposed project will result in significant obstruction of mountain vistas, and impacts to the Lykken’s building. All reasonable and feasible mitigation measures that can substantially reduce impacts have been included in the EIR. No other feasible mitigation measures are available to further reduce impacts to scenic vistas and visual character. The City of Palm Springs finds that the remaining unavoidable significant effects are acceptable based on the inclusion of mitigation, the overall inability to mitigate the impacts despite inclusion of mitigation, the benefits associated with the proposed project, objectives established for the proposed project, and specific overriding considerations described in the Statement of Overriding Considerations.”

The 2012 EIR Addendum analyzed potential visual and aesthetic impacts of the proposed Downtown Renovation Plan. Its visual analysis determined that the overall effect of the Downtown Palm Springs project on aesthetics and visual resources would be no more significant than that of the 2009 Specific Plan.

2. Analysis of the Proposed Project Modifications

The following section analyzes the potential impacts to aesthetic resources associated with development of the proposed project, including the Specific Plan Amendment, refinements to the Downtown Palm Springs Park project approved as part of the 2012 Project, and development of the western half of Block B for a hotel of up to 150 rooms.

Since the EIR was certified, existing buildings on Blocks A through H (Desert Fashion Plaza site) have been demolished. Much of the site is vacant and characterized by mass grading and site preparation activity, including the presence of construction vehicles and materials.

Construction on Blocks A and C, and construction of Main Street and Belardo Road, is under way. Block K is still developed as it was when the EIR was certified.

The perimeter of the project area is separated from vehicular and pedestrian traffic by temporary barriers and fencing. Approximately 40 palm trees exceeding 25 feet in height have been preserved along portions of the North Palm Canyon Drive, Tahquitz Canyon Way, and Museum Drive frontages. Two parking garages at the following locations were preserved, and underground structures have been upgraded: 1) at- and below-grade parking garage at the northeast corner of Museum Drive and Tahquitz Canyon Way, and 2) above-, at-, and below-grade parking garage at the southeast corner of Museum Drive and Belardo Road.

From the project site, views to the west include the Palm Springs Art Museum and nearly unobstructed views of the San Jacinto Mountains immediately beyond. Views to the north include the Hyatt Palm Springs hotel and trees on the O'Donnell Golf Club. Views to the east include one- and two-story commercial development and tall palm trees along the easterly side of North Palm Canyon Drive. Views to the south include tall palm trees and two- and three-story development along Tahquitz Canyon Drive, and more distant views of the San Jacinto Mountains.

As with the previously approved 2009 Specific Plan, the Specific Plan Amendment allows an intensive level of mixed use development in the downtown area. Both Plans include design features and restrictions aimed at creating and maintaining view corridors, open space, and pedestrian-scale spaces. The Specific Plan Amendment calls for an architectural design theme that reflects Modernist, Spanish, and Mediterranean styles, which is consistent with existing architectural styles in the downtown area and those set forth by the previously approved 2009 Specific Plan.

Aerial Simulations

Exhibits 8 and 9 are aerial simulations that show how the project area could potentially look at build out. The simulations are conceptual and depict building architecture, colors, materials, and other specific structural characteristics that are not yet proposed or approved; however, they offer a visual overview of building heights, setbacks, stepbacks, and spatial distribution that can be expected with Specific Plan implementation.

Exhibit 8 views the project area from the east, looking toward the west. Existing development along North Palm Canyon Drive is in the foreground, and the Palm Springs Art Museum and San Jacinto Mountains are in the background. Exhibit 9 is taken west of the project area, looking toward the east. The Art Museum is in the immediate foreground, and the project area is in the middle ground.



Source: Chris Pardo Design



10.12.15



Source: Chris Pardo Design



10.12.15

Building Height, Scale, and Mass

Under the 2009 Specific Plan, permissible building heights ranged from 33 to 79 feet, and most planning areas accommodated an average building height of 60 feet. A broad open space plaza was located in the east-central project area, which provided visual relief and passive public gathering space along North Palm Canyon Drive. The Plan provided flexibility with regard to building mass and architectural treatment to visually reduce building bulk.

Compared to the 2009 Specific Plan, the Specific Plan Amendment provides for a 24% reduction in maximum potential square footage, which constitutes a moderate reduction in building mass. Under the proposed Plan, the most substantial building mass and height (60 feet for Blocks A, C, D, F, G & K and 75 feet on Block B-1) is concentrated along the North Palm Canyon Drive frontage and central project area, and is generally associated with hotel and residential development. Like the previous project, buildings could be more than twice the height of existing one- and two-story development on the east side of North Palm Canyon Drive, and ground level views of the mountains will be blocked by structures in many locations.

The previously designated open space courtyard fronting North Palm Canyon Drive is now designated as Block B, which has a permissible height of 40 feet, among the lowest in the project area. It will continue to provide visual relief along North Palm Canyon Drive, but to a lesser extent than the previously approved open space as it is a continuation of the built environment. Higher elevations of the mountains may be visible over its building roofline. The Specific Plan Amendment continues to provide flexibility in building design to minimize visual impacts via setbacks, height variations, building articulation, and transfers of permitted building square footage between Blocks.

View Corridors

Under the 2009 Specific Plan, the primary view corridor was a new east-west trending street that bisected the project area and provided views of the San Jacinto Mountains immediately west of the project area. Under the Specific Plan Amendment, the location and layout of the street (now called Main Street) is generally the same west of Palm Canyon Drive, and it continues to provide the most direct and unobstructed mountain views within and through the project area. The new project also includes a westerly extension of Andreas Road, between North Palm Canyon Drive and Belardo Road, which serves as a secondary view corridor. This road segment was proposed as part of the 2012 Addendum, and associated visual impacts will be the same as those analyzed in 2012. Under the proposed plan, view corridors will be similar, and slightly enhanced, to those analyzed in the EIR.

Open Space

The 2009 Specific Plan included a landscaped plaza in Block B, which provided open space and relief from the built environment along North Palm Canyon Drive. Under the Specific Plan Amendment, public open space is concentrated on Blocks E, H-1, and H-2 in the western portion of the project area. They are integral components of the view corridor that extends from North Palm Canyon Drive to the Palm Springs Art Museum and showcases views of the mountains and museum. They also enhance east-facing viewsheds from the Art Museum, and offer an expanse of largely undeveloped space in the central project area. The Specific Plan Amendment provides more open space and community recreational amenities than previously analyzed in the EIR and, therefore, impacts will be less intense.

Block E Park

Under the 2009 Specific Plan, Block E was designated for 16,200 square feet of retail and 30,000 square feet (2 stories) of gym/spa uses. In the 2012 EIR Addendum, it was designated as an outdoor event space. Under the proposed project, Block E is conceptualized as a City park and event space that includes open space and a few ancillary structures, such as a police center and concession stand, which will be limited in height and square footage (maximum 7,500 square feet within Block E) to minimize visual impacts. Landscaping will include turf and drought-tolerant desert plantings. The park will be largely blocked from view on North Palm Canyon Drive by intervening structures in the project area. When viewed from west, north, and south, including from the Palm Springs Art Museum, the park will provide visual interest and relief from surrounding structures and improvements.

The proposed park replaces two-story structures in this portion of the project area with a 1.36 acre community park. Visual impacts will be less intense than those analyzed in the EIR.

Block B-1 Hotel

Under the 2009 Specific Plan, Block B-1 contained a 3,500 square foot restaurant and the westerly portion of the open space plaza. In the 2012 EIR Addendum, this site was designated for 90,000 square feet of retail/office uses. The Specific Plan Amendment allows up to 75 feet in height for hotel uses and up to 60 feet for commercial or residential uses on Block B-1. The current development proposal calls for a 6-story, 142-room hotel encompassing approximately 112,862 square feet. It will include a roof top deck with a maximum height of 74 feet 6 inches.

Both the EIR and EIR Addendum used a series of photo simulations to illustrate potential visual impacts in the Specific Plan area. A key map showing the location of the simulations is provided in Exhibit 10. The simulation that best depicted Block B-1 was called “View 4” in the certified EIR and 2012 Addendum; photo simulations from the EIR and EIR addendum for View 4 are

shown in Exhibit 11. The top photo shows conditions analyzed in the EIR, and the bottom photo shows conditions analyzed in the 2012 Addendum. The view is taken from the east side of North Palm Canyon Drive, approximately mid-way between the intersections with Tahquitz Canyon Way and Andreas Road. The viewer is looking north/northwest toward the west side of North Palm Canyon Drive.

Exhibit 12 shows a comparable simulation of how Block B-1 could look at build out of the proposed project. The comparison shows that the lower stories of the hotel will be blocked from view from North Palm Canyon Drive by development on Block B. However, from some locations, the upper stories will be visible over the rooftop of buildings on Block B. Views of the base of the mountains will be blocked by structures, but the upper elevations and ridge lines will be visible.

Although more intrusive than the open space plaza and restaurant proposed under the 2009 Specific Plan, the proposed project is comparable to View 4 analyzed in the 2012 EIR Addendum, which shows a lower elevation structure adjacent to North Palm Canyon Drive, and a higher elevation structure to the immediate west. The hotel is also consistent with existing development in the project vicinity, including the Hyatt Palm Springs hotel immediately north of the project area (72 feet high at parapet level). The proposed hotel will not adversely affect other scenic resources, such as historic buildings. Overall visual impacts will be significant, and consistent with those analyzed in the EIR.



Source: Visionscape Imagery, 2015



Museum Market Plaza EIR Addendum #2
Visual Simulation Locations - Key Map
Palm Springs, California

Exhibit

10



Existing View



Proposed View

Source: Visionscape Imagery

10.12.15



Looking West down Main St. - Block "B" along Palm Canyon w/ the Park Hotel in the Background

Source: Visionscape Imagery



Light and Glare

The project area is within the downtown core, which is already impacted by light from vehicles, street lights, landscape and accent lighting, building lights, safety lights in parking lots, and glare from reflective surfaces such as windows, building materials, and vehicles. Compared to the 2009 Specific Plan, the Specific Plan Amendment reduces maximum allowable square footage by approximately 24%. This reduction in building area will result in less light and glare because of reduced building size, less area available for reflection of light, and reduced parking and security lighting. At project build out, impacts from light and glare will be less intense than levels anticipated by the 2009 Specific Plan.

Summary of Impacts

The Specific Plan Amendment, Block E Park, and Block B-1 hotel allow an increased level of development than currently exists in the downtown area, and vistas of the San Jacinto Mountains will be obstructed in multiple locations. Compared to existing conditions, impacts to visual resources will be significant. The Specific Plan Amendment continues to provide flexibility of design, with regard to building height, mass and other development characteristics that could effectively decrease impacts to visual resources in and around the project area.

The potential visual impacts of the Specific Plan Amendment, Block E park, and Block B-1 hotel will be no greater than those analyzed in the EIR or the 2012 EIR Addendum. The Specific Plan Amendment represents a 24% reduction in maximum allowable square footage compared to the 2009 Specific Plan and, therefore, overall building massing and coverage will be substantially reduced. Views of the San Jacinto Mountains from North Palm Canyon Drive will be blocked by intervening development where an open plaza was originally planned, but these views and their impacts were assessed in the EIR Addendum. The proposed land use distribution is consistent with the development plan analyzed in the 2012 EIR Addendum.

The Specific Plan Amendment proposes no changes to Block K, and no development proposals are currently known for this area of the Specific Plan, which occurs on the east side of Palm Canyon Drive and includes the Town and Country Center. Impacts associated with Block K, including the impact to the Town and Country project, and potential indirect impacts associated with proximity of the Block K structures to the Lykken's Department Store building, remain identical to those considered in the certified EIR, and are potentially significant and unavoidable.

Finally, the proposed Specific Plan Amendment will continue to have a potential impact on the "Palm Springs Walk of Stars," but those impacts will not be any different than those previously analyzed in the EIR for the 2009 Specific Plan. Those impacts will be equivalent to those

analyzed in the certified EIR, and require mitigation consistent with the mitigation measures provided in the certified EIR.

EIR Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures were included in the EIR, and are still considered appropriate for the proposed project:

1. Each application for Major Architectural Review or other discretionary permit involving structures within the Plan area shall include an analysis of the potential impacts associated with mountain views.
2. Design of structures shall be sensitive to surrounding mountain vistas, and shall incorporate visually permeable materials, step-backs and setbacks, and stepped building frontages to the greatest extent possible.
3. Building design for all structures along the perimeter of the Plan area, adjacent to existing buildings not in the Plan area, shall be set back from these buildings to the greatest extent possible to minimize indirect impacts associated with the visual character of the area.
4. All lighting proposals for Downtown Palm Springs will be reviewed by the City for compliance with the requirements of both the Specific Plan and the lighting ordinance. Permitted lighting levels shall be consistent with the urban core location and compatible with the mixed uses of the project.
5. All Developer proposals, including those for lighting and landscaping shall conform to the design guidelines set forth in the Downtown Palm Springs Specific Plan.
6. Any elements of the 'Palm Springs Walk of Stars' that may be impacted during build out of the Specific Plan shall be carefully removed from the site, cleaned and safely stored. Once surrounding construction work is complete, the stars shall be reset into the sidewalk as close as possible to their original location. Reinstated stars shall be refurbished as required to restore their original appearance.
7. Signage shall be in compliance with the City's sign ordinance and the requirements of the Specific Plan.

3. Comparison of Aesthetic Analysis and Impacts

As explained above, the Specific Plan Amendment, Park, and Block B-1 hotel will result in visual impacts that are comparable to, but no more significant than, those evaluated in the EIR and 2012 EIR Addendum. The Specific Plan Amendment will result in equivalent building heights, but a significant reduction in building mass, compared to the 2009 Specific Plan. The land use arrangement is comparable to that analyzed in the 2012 EIR Addendum. Impacts will remain significant as they relate to scenic vistas and visual character, and indirect impacts to the Lykken's Department Store will remain significant.

The adopted Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations addressed these impacts, however, and found that the benefits of the project overrode the potential impacts to aesthetic resources.

As described in Public Resources Code 21166 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, no new significant impacts have been identified and there will be no substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts.

C. Air Quality

1. Analysis of the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan Certified EIR

The Specific Plan area is located in the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB) and under the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), which is responsible for establishing air quality criteria and management policies for the air basin and neighboring air basins. Primary local mobile source emissions are from vehicle traffic, and primary stationary source emissions are from heating, cooking, and ventilation equipment at residential, commercial, and industrial facilities. The Coachella Valley has historically exceeded prescribed ozone and PM₁₀ standards. PM_{2.5} is also a pollutant of concern as it can cause adverse air quality conditions that affect human health.

At the time the 2009 Specific Plan EIR was written, the site was predominantly occupied by underutilized buildings, most of which were vacant. Specific Plan implementation would require demolition of several existing structures, which would contribute to local and regional air pollution. Other anticipated air pollution would result from emissions associated with grading and site preparation, construction activities, vehicular traffic, and post-development consumption of natural gas and electricity. Worst-case air quality impacts were projected assuming that demolition would occur in 2010, construction would occur in 2012, and build out would occur in 2016. The following tables summarize projected net emissions in the Specific Plan area, which represent the difference between existing emissions and emissions anticipated at Specific Plan build out.

Table 3
Projected Net Emissions at Build out of the 2009 Specific Plan

| | Gross Emissions | Existing Emissions | Net Emissions | SCAQMD Thresholds |
|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Carbon Monoxide | 1,052.14 | 435.56 | 616.58 | 550.0 |
| Nitrogen Oxides | 236.95 | 111.93 | 125.02 | 100.0 |
| Reactive Organic Gases | 122.29 | 53.82 | 68.47 | 75.0 |
| Sulfur Oxides | 3.77 | 1.5 | 2.27 | 150.0 |
| Particulates | 30.45 | 12.21 | 18.24 | 55.0 |
| Carbon Dioxide | 202,242 | 79,624 | 122,618 | N/A |

Source: Table III-13, Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan Draft EIR, October 2008.

Table 4
Projected Net GHG Emissions at Build out of the 2009 Specific Plan
(Metric Tons)

| Emission Source | Gross CO₂ Equivalent | Existing CO₂ Equivalent | Net CO₂ Equivalent |
|------------------------|--|---|--|
| Electricity | 6,044.49 | 2,433.69 | 3,610.80 |
| Natural Gas | 4,822.78 | 760.24 | 4,062.54 |
| Moving Source | 29,790.50 | 11,728.72 | 18,061.78 |
| Total | 40,657.78 | 14,922.66 | 25,735.12 |

Source: Table III-19, Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan Draft EIR, October 2008.

The analysis found that, at buildout of the 2009 Specific Plan area, several criteria pollutant thresholds were expected to be exceeded without mitigation, and impacts would remain significant and unavoidable even after mitigation. However, the City’s adopted Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations determined that the benefits of 2009 Specific Plan Amendment implementation outweighed the project’s unavoidable significant impacts on air quality:

“The City of Palm Springs hereby finds that impacts from nitrogen oxide, carbon monoxide and GHG emissions constitute a significant unavoidable impact to air quality. Even with the implementation of mitigation measures, air quality impacts associated with carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides will exceed SCAQMD thresholds; and GHG emissions will be greater than those on the project site in 1990. All reasonable and feasible mitigation measures that can substantially reduce impacts have been included in the EIR. No other feasible mitigation measures are available to further reduce emissions. The City of Palm Springs finds that the remaining unavoidable significant effects are acceptable based on the inclusion of mitigation, the overall inability to mitigate the impacts despite inclusion of mitigation, the benefits associated with the proposed project, objectives established for the proposed project, and specific overriding considerations described in the Statement of Overriding Considerations.”

2. Analysis of the Proposed Project Modifications

The following section analyzes the potential impacts to air quality associated with development of the proposed project, including the Specific Plan Amendment Amendment, refinements to the

Downtown Palm Springs Park project approved as part of the 2012 Project, and development of the western half of Block B for a hotel of up to 150 rooms.

Development and operation of the Downtown Palm Springs project will result in the direct and indirect emission of air pollutants. Criteria pollutants resulting from construction of the project will be temporary. Post-construction emissions will be ongoing and are associated with daily use once the project is occupied. The following discussion describes criteria pollutant emission projections associated with construction and operation of the proposed project.

Construction Emissions

Implementation of the proposed Downtown Palm Springs project will result in construction on approximately 20.15± acres in the City of Palm Springs. The Desert Fashion Plaza buildings previously occupying the site were demolished after approval of the original project, and portions of the site are currently being developed. The area identified as Block K in the 2009 Specific Plan remains in its original condition, and no immediate development is proposed for this Block. Impacts associated with demolition of this Block, when it occurs, would be equivalent to those analyzed in the certified EIR, and the Specific Plan Amendment will not change those potential impacts.

For analysis purposes, and to provide the most comprehensive and conservative estimates, site grading and construction that have recently occurred were captured in the air quality modeling report. To estimate the potential emissions of criteria pollutants associated with construction of the proposed Downtown Palm Springs project, the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) Version 2013.2.2 was used. The model is not the same model as was in use when the certified EIR was prepared, but is more advanced, and the model currently required by SCAQMD for air quality analysis.

The proposed project is expected to develop over a 5-year construction period, beginning in 2016 and ending in 2021. For purposes of this analysis, the land use plan is expected to include 650 high-density residential units (condominiums), 293,500 square feet of retail commercial and restaurant use, 97,800 square feet of office space, 1.74 acres of parkland, and 620 hotel rooms. At build out, the project is expected to generate a total of 26,290 two-way vehicle trips per day. It is estimated that 8,753 cubic yards of cut will be exported from the site during grading. Assumptions for the various construction parameters utilized in the model are detailed in Appendix A of this report, including construction period duration, construction equipment load factors, hours of operation, and horsepower.

Short-term emissions of pollutants will occur during site preparation/grading, building construction, roadway paving, and architectural coating. Sources of construction related emissions include the operation of construction equipment, soils exports, off gassing from asphalt, and vehicles transporting workers to and from the project site. Construction emissions were calculated based upon the daily use of various types of construction equipment to be used throughout the entire construction period. It should be noted that not all equipment will be used every day, and various construction activities generate different quantities of emissions.

The following Construction Emissions Summary table provides the projected maximum daily emissions across all construction activities. Construction related air quality impacts are short-term and will occur only during the construction phase of the project.

Table 5
Construction Emissions Summary for the Proposed Development
(lbs./day)

| Maximum Emissions | CO | NOx | ROG | SOx | PM₁₀ | PM_{2.5} |
|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2016 | 120.44 | 67.96 | 11.33 | 0.17 | 12.41 | 6.61 |
| 2017 | 111.15 | 47.06 | 10.18 | 0.17 | 12.17 | 4.74 |
| 2018 | 103.04 | 42.18 | 9.02 | 0.17 | 11.86 | 4.45 |
| 2019 | 97.04 | 38.36 | 71.29 | 0.17 | 11.62 | 4.23 |
| 2020 | 10.23 | 2.29 | 71.21 | 0.02 | 1.82 | 0.57 |
| 2021 | 9.81 | 2.11 | 71.16 | 0.02 | 0.45 | 0.55 |
| SCAQMD Threshold | 550.0 | 100.0 | 75.0 | 150.0 | 150.0 | 55.0 |
| Exceeds? | No | No | No | No | No | No |

Source: Appendix A: CalEEMod Version 2013.2.2. Average summer and winter emissions.

Note: Construction emissions are not cumulative. The emissions presented above are worst case scenario per each year of construction.

As shown in the table above, construction related activities for the project are projected to remain below established daily thresholds for all criteria pollutants. It should be noted that emissions shown include application of standard minimization measures, including the implementation of dust control practices in conformance with SCQAMD Rule 403, the use of low-polluting architectural paint and coatings per SCAQMD Rule 1113, and use of oxidation catalysts on all construction equipment. Additional minimization measures to further reduce emissions include, but are not limited to, proper maintenance and limited idling of heavy equipment and the implementation of best management practices (BMP). Emission projections for all criteria

pollutants during construction of the Downtown Palm Springs project are below thresholds of significance and are therefore expected to have less than significant impacts to air quality, consistent with the less than significant impacts identified in the certified EIR.

EIR Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures that were included in the certified EIR, and are still applicable to the proposed project, will further reduce construction-related impacts as follows:

1. Grading and development permits shall be reviewed and conditioned to require the provision of all reasonably available methods and technologies to assure the minimal emissions of pollutants from the development, including proper vehicle maintenance and site watering schedules.
2. The City shall coordinate with the project developers to encourage the phasing and staging of development to assure the lowest construction-related pollutant emission levels practical. As part of the grading permit process, the applicant shall concurrently submit a dust control plan as required by SCAQMD in compliance with Rule 403.
3. In response to requirements of SCAQMD to monitor air quality impacts associated with fugitive dust from site disturbance and grading activities, all construction activities within the project boundary shall be subject to Rule 401 Visible Emissions, Rule 402 Nuisance, and Rule 403 Fugitive Dust².
4. To reduce PM₁₀ emissions, the developer shall implement the following the greatest extent practicable:
 - chemically treat soil at construction sites where activity will cease for at least four consecutive days;
 - pave on-site construction access roads as they are developed; extend paving at least 120 feet from roadway into construction site and clean roadways at the end of each working day;
 - restore vegetative ground cover as soon as construction activities have been completed;
 - chemically treat unpaved roads that carry 20 vehicle trips per day or more;
 - plant tree windbreaks utilizing non-invasive species on the windward perimeter of construction projects, where feasible;

² "Final 2003 Coachella Valley PM10 State Implementation Plan," prepared by the South Coast Air Quality Management District, August 1, 2003.

- all construction grading operations and earth moving operations shall cease when winds exceed 30 miles per hour;
 - prior to turf raking, implement effective PM₁₀ control programs for turf over-seeding as outlined in the CV-SIP;
 - water site and equipment morning and evening and during all earth-moving operations;
 - spread soil binders on site, unpaved roads, and parking areas;
 - operate street-sweepers on paved roads adjacent to site;
 - re-establish ground cover on construction site through seeding and watering or other appropriate means; and
 - pave construction access roads, as appropriate.
5. To minimize construction equipment emissions, the developer and contractors shall implement the following:
- wash off trucks leaving the site;
 - require trucks to maintain two feet of freeboard;
 - properly tune and maintain construction equipment; and
 - use low sulfur fuel for construction equipment.
6. To reduce construction-related traffic congestion, the developer and contractors shall implement the following:
- configure construction parking to minimize traffic interference;
 - provide a flag person to ensure safety at construction sites, as necessary; and
 - schedule operations affecting roadways for off-peak hours, as practical.

Localized Significance Threshold (LST)

To determine if the proposed project has the potential to generate significant adverse localized air quality impacts, the 5-acre mass rate LST Look-Up Table for SRA 30 (Coachella Valley) was utilized. The nearest sensitive receptors are residential units located approximately 100 meters southwest of the project site boundary. Therefore, LSTs are summarized in the table below for sensitive receptors located approximately 100 meters from the emission source. Emission estimates show the highest emitting year for each pollutant. As shown in the following table, LST thresholds will not be exceeded during construction of the project.

Table 6
Localized Significance Thresholds: Construction
(lbs./day)

| | CO | NO _x | PM ₁₀ | PM _{2.5} |
|-------------------|--------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Project Emissions | 120.44 | 67.96 | 12.41 | 6.61 |
| LST | 5,331 | 425 | 67 | 19 |
| Exceed? | No | No | No | No |

Source: Appendix A: CalEEMod Version 2013.2.2

Operational Emissions

Operational emissions are ongoing emissions that will occur over the life of the project. They include area source emissions, emissions from energy (electric and natural gas) demand, and mobile source (vehicle) emissions. The table below provides a summary of projected emissions at operation of the proposed Downtown Palm Springs project. For analysis purposes, it was assumed that build out of the project would occur in 2020.

Table 7
Operational Emissions Summary (Gross)
(lbs./day)

| | CO | NO _x | ROG | SO _x | PM ₁₀ | PM _{2.5} |
|---------------------|--------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Area | 53.78 | 0.62 | 42.91 | 0.00 | 0.29 | 0.29 |
| Energy | 13.84 | 17.45 | 1.93 | 0.10 | 1.33 | 1.33 |
| Mobile | 819.18 | 150.05 | 81.40 | 1.40 | 94.95 | 27.18 |
| Total | 886.80 | 168.12 | 126.24 | 1.50 | 96.57 | 28.80 |
| SCAQMD Threshold | 550.0 | 100.0 | 75.0 | 150.0 | 150.0 | 55.0 |
| Exceeds? | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No |

Source: Appendix A: CalEEMod Version 2013.2.2. Average summer and winter, mitigated conditions.

As shown in the table above, three criteria thresholds will be exceeded after application of mitigation measures; these include carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and reactive organic gasses (ROG). However, these emissions do not take into consideration the removal of operational emissions associated with the Desert Fashion Plaza, which has been demolished. Operational emissions for the Desert Fashion Plaza are provided in the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan EIR and were subtracted from the proposed project's gross operational emissions.

The following table provides net operational emissions of the proposed Downtown Palm Springs project after removal of the Desert Fashion Plaza’s emissions.

Table 8
Operational Emissions Summary (Net)
(lbs./day)

| | Gross Emissions | Desert Fashion Plaza | Net Emissions | SCAQMD Thresholds | Exceeds? |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| CO | 886.80 | 435.56 | 451.24 | 550.00 | No |
| NOx | 168.12 | 111.93 | 56.19 | 100.00 | No |
| ROG | 126.24 | 53.82 | 72.42 | 75.00 | No |
| SOx | 1.50 | 1.50 | 0.00 | 150.00 | No |
| PM ₁₀ | 96.57 | 12.21 | 84.36 | 150.00 | No |
| PM _{2.5} | 28.80 | (incl. in PM ₁₀) | 28.80 | 55.00 | No |

Source: CalEEMod Version 2013.2.2; Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan EIR, prepared by Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc., 2009.

Net operational emissions demonstrate that no thresholds will be exceeded, and therefore, impacts related to air quality will be less than significant.

EIR Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures, included in the certified EIR, will ensure operational emissions are further reduced.

7. To minimize indirect source emissions, the developer shall:
 - install low-polluting and high-efficiency appliances;
 - install energy-efficient street lighting; and
 - landscape with native and other appropriate drought-resistant species to reduce water consumption and to provide passive solar benefits.

8. To minimize building energy requirements, the developer may also implement the following:
 - assure the thermal integrity of buildings and reduce the thermal load with automated time clocks or occupant sensors;
 - use efficient window glazing, wall insulation and ventilation methods;
 - introduce efficient heating and other appliances, such as water heaters, cooking equipment, refrigerators, furnaces and boiler units;
 - incorporate appropriate passive solar design, including solar heaters, and solar water heaters, to the greatest extent feasible;
 - use devices that minimize the combustion of fossil fuels; and
 - capture waste heat and re-employ this heat, where feasible.

9. Architecture and construction activities and materials shall utilize green buildings and alignment principles, as appropriate, including standards as defined in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building standards for municipal buildings to the greatest extent possible. The use of solar panels is encouraged.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The proposed project will generate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions during both construction and operation. As with construction and operation criteria pollutant emissions, CalEEMod was used to quantify greenhouse gas emissions. Construction related greenhouse gas emissions will be temporary and will end once the project is completed. Operation of the proposed project will create on-going greenhouse gases through the consumption of electricity and natural gas, moving sources, the transport and pumping of water for onsite use, and the disposal of solid waste. Similar to operational emissions, GHG emissions associated with operation of the Desert Fashion Plaza were subtracted from the proposed project’s gross GHG emissions. The following table provides projected short-term and annual GHG generation associated with the Downtown Palm Springs project.

**Table 9
Projected GHG Emissions Summary
(Metric Tons)**

| Phase | Gross CO₂e | Existing GHG¹ | Net CO₂e |
|------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Construction (5-years) | 6,073.46 | NA | 6,073.46 |
| Operational (Annually) | 26,566.12 | 14,922.66 | 11,643.46 |

Source: CalEEMod Version 2013.2.2.

1. Existing GHG emissions derived from Table III-18 of the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan EIR.

There are currently no adopted thresholds of significance for GHG emissions for construction or operation of projects similar to Downtown Palm Springs. It is recognized that GHG impacts are intrinsically cumulative. As such, project construction and operation will be conducted in a manner that is consistent with applicable rules and regulations pertaining to the release and generation of GHG’s. Statewide programs and standards will further reduce GHG emissions generated by the project, including new fuel-efficient standards for cars and newly adopted Building Code Title 24 standards.

Although implementation of the proposed project will produce GHG emissions, the project is consistent with the requirements of SB32 to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels, because

operational GHG emissions from the project will be lower than operation of the site in 1990. Therefore, impacts of build out of the proposed project on GHG emissions will be less than significant.

Potential Odors

The proposed project is not expected to generate objectionable odors during any phases of construction or at project buildout. The proposed project has the potential to result in short term odors associated with asphalt paving and other construction activities. However any such odors would be quickly dispersed below detectable thresholds as distance from the construction site increases. Therefore, impacts from objectionable odors are expected to be less than significant.

3. Comparison of Air Quality Analysis and Impacts

The previous analysis for the Museum Market Plaza was conducted using the modeling software URBEMIS2002 Versions 8.7.0, EMFAC 2007 Version 2.3, and the CEQA Air Quality Handbook. Since the approval of the previous project, CalEEMod has become the required modeling software essentially superseding URBEMIS and EMFAC for air quality modeling. There are many differences between the previous and current modeling software, including data input procedures, updated equipment and utility emission rates, and emission reporting format. Overall, CalEEMod has improved upon the air quality modeling process and accuracy of emission projections. Therefore, comparing modeling assumptions and impact findings between the Museum Market Plaza and Downtown Palm Springs projects will not be exact, and emission projections will vary.

The table below provides a comparison of air quality modeling assumptions used for both analyses.

Table 10
Comparison of Air Quality Monitoring Assumptions

| | Previously Analyzed (Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan) | Proposed Modifications (Specific Plan Amendment) |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Modeling Tools | URBAMIS2002 V. 8.7.0; EMFAC 2007 V. 2.3; CEQA Air Quality Handbook | CalEEMod V. 2031.2.2 |
| Buildout Schedule | 2010 - 2016 | 2016 - 2022 |
| Total Acreage | 20.6 acres | 20.15 acres |
| High Density Residential | 955 units | 650 units |
| Retail Commercial | 275,000 square feet | 293,500 square feet |
| Office Space | 100,000 square feet | 97,800 square feet |
| Restaurant Use | 25,000 square feet | (Combined with Retail) |
| Hotel | 620 rooms | 620 rooms |
| Two-Way Vehicle Trips | 27,520 per day | 26,290 per day |
| Material Export | Unknown | 8,753 cubic yards |
| Material Import | Unknown | 0 cubic yards |

Comparison of Construction Emissions

As previously discussed, emission projections are expected to vary due to changes in modeling software. Construction emissions for the 2009 Specific Plan were presented by construction phase, including site preparation/demolition, grading, and building construction. Each phase provided the maximum daily emission per criteria pollutant. For purposes of this analysis, the highest maximum daily emission across all phases, per criteria pollutant, was used to project emissions of the proposed Downtown Palm Springs project.

The following table compares construction related, maximum daily emissions for the Museum Market Plaza (previous) and the Downtown Palm Springs project (proposed). The proposed Downtown Palm Springs project will result in fewer residential units and overall building square footage; however, construction emissions show an increase in the majority of criteria pollutant emissions. Again, this is due to changes in the modeling software, and proposed emissions will remain less than significant.

Table 11
Comparison of Construction Emissions
(lbs./day)

| | Previous (Museum Market Plaza SP) | Proposed (Downtown Palm Springs SP) | Difference | Exceeds Threshold? |
|-------------------|--|--|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| CO | 52.86 | 120.44 | + 67.58 | NO/NO |
| NO _x | 118.33 | 67.96 | - 50.37 | YES/NO |
| ROG | 59.23 | 71.29 | + 12.06 | NO/NO |
| SO _x | 0.26 | 0.17 | - 0.09 | NO/NO |
| PM ₁₀ | 4.83 | 12.41 | + 7.58 | NO/NO |
| PM _{2.5} | 4.29 | 6.61 | + 2.32 | NO/NO |

Source: CalEEMod Version 2013.2.2; Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan EIR, prepared by Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc., 2009.

Construction emissions for the Downtown Palm Springs project will not exceed established thresholds for any criteria pollutant; however, the 2009 Specific Plan has the potential to exceed NO_x thresholds by 18.33 pounds during grading. Mitigation measures were set forth in the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan EIR to reduce emissions. Nonetheless, NO_x emissions were considered significant and unavoidable, requiring Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Comparison of Operational Emissions

Similar to construction, comparison of operational emissions shows a variation in air quality projections due to changes in modeling software. To remain consistent with the previous analysis, net operational emissions were provided for the proposed Downtown Palm Springs project, which include the removal of the Desert Fashion Plaza.

Table 12
Comparison of Operational Emissions
(lbs./day)

| | Previous (Museum Market Plaza SP) | Proposed (Downtown Palm Springs SP) | Difference | Exceeds Threshold? |
|-------------------|--|--|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| CO | 616.58 | 451.24 | - 165.34 lbs. | YES/NO |
| NO _x | 125.02 | 56.19 | - 68.83 lbs. | YES/NO |
| ROG | 68.47 ¹ | 72.42 | + 3.95 lbs. | NO/NO |
| SO _x | 2.27 | 0.00 | - 2.27 lbs. | NO/NO |
| PM ₁₀ | 18.24 | 84.36 | + 66.12 lbs. | NO/NO |
| PM _{2.5} | (incl. in PM ₁₀) | 28.80 | + 28.80 lbs. | NO/NO |

Source: CalEEMod Version 2013.2.2; Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan EIR, prepared by Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc., 2009.

1. ROG emissions from pavement and architectural coating off-gassing were not accounted for in the Museum Market Plaza due to limitations of the modeling software. Therefore, ROG emissions were understated in the previous analysis.

As shown in the table above, operation of the Downtown Palm Springs project will not exceed thresholds for criteria pollutants, and impacts are considered less than significant. Build out of the 2009 Specific Plan was projected to exceed thresholds for CO by 66.58 pounds and NO_x by 25.02 pounds. Operational impacts associated with the 2009 Specific Plan were considered significant and unavoidable, requiring Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations. The operational emissions associated with the proposed project are expected to be less than significant, insofar as none of the SCAQMD's thresholds will be exceeded. As a result, impacts associated with air quality during the life of the project will be less than those analyzed in the certified EIR, and will be less than significant.

Comparison of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Both projects will generate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions during construction and operation. The following table provides projected short-term and annual GHG generation associated with the 2009 Specific Plan and Specific Plan Amendment projects.

Table 13
Comparison of GHG Emissions Summary
(Metric Tons)

| Phase | Previous (Museum Market Plaza SP) | Proposed (Downtown Palm Springs SP) | Difference |
|-----------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|
| Construction (5-years) | 6,646 CO ₂ e | 6,073.46 CO ₂ e | - 572.54 CO ₂ e |
| Operational 2022 (Annually) | 25,735.12 CO ₂ e | 11,643.46 CO ₂ e | - 14,091.66 CO ₂ e |

Source: CalEEMod Version 2013.2.2; Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan EIR, prepared by Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc., 2009.

As shown in the table above, projected GHG emissions from the proposed project are significantly lower than GHG emissions from the 2009 Specific Plan. This is largely due to a lower transportation trip-rate, fewer proposed residential units, and the more stringent requirements of the Uniform Building Code now reflected in the air quality modeling software.

There are currently no adopted thresholds of significance for GHG emissions; however, it is recognized that GHG impacts are intrinsically cumulative. As previously discussed, GHG emissions from the proposed Downtown Palm Springs project are considered less than significant because emissions are lower than 1990 site-specific levels. As shown in Table 9, emissions from the Desert Fashion Plaza, which was operating in 1990, totaled 14,922 metric tons of CO₂e. The Specific Plan Amendment will result in 11,643 metric tons of CO₂e. The build out of the proposed project, therefore, will reduce GHG emissions to lower levels than those of the Desert Fashion Plaza in 1990, and will meet the criteria established by the State for GHG reduction.

Because implementation of the 2009 Specific Plan was projected to increase GHG emissions above 1990 site-specific levels, it was considered inconsistent with the requirements of SB32. The Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan EIR indicated that impacts to GHGs were significant and unavoidable, requiring a Statement of Overriding Considerations. The Findings statement is provided below:

“The City of Palm Springs hereby finds that impacts from nitrogen oxide, carbon monoxide, and GHG emissions constitute a significant unavoidable impact to air quality. Even with the implementation of mitigation measures, air quality impacts associated with carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides will exceed SCAQMD thresholds; and GHG emissions will be greater than those on the project site in 1990. All reasonable and feasible mitigation measures that can

substantially reduce impacts have been included in the EIR. No other feasible mitigation measures are available to further reduce emissions. The City of Palm Springs finds that the remaining unavoidable significant effects are acceptable based on the inclusion of mitigation, the overall inability to mitigate the impacts despite inclusion of mitigation, the benefits associated with the proposed project, objectives established for the proposed project, and specific overriding considerations described in the Statement of Overriding Considerations.”

As described in Public Resources Code 21166 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, no new significant impacts have been identified and there will be no substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts.

D. Cultural Resources

1. Analysis of the Museum Market Plaza Specific Plan Certified EIR

Much of the project area has undergone several phases of redevelopment over many decades, and at the time the 2009 Specific Plan EIR was prepared, the site was nearly fully developed. Ground disturbance, excavation, grading and construction activities had considerably lowered the potential for archaeological or cultural resources to exist onsite. Three archaeological sites including two with surface scatters of artifacts and bedrock milling features, and a burial site have been recorded within a half-mile radius of the Specific Plan area. The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) conducted a search of the Sacred Lands File and confirmed that no sites were recorded within the Specific Plan area. Eight Native American tribes were contacted for information. The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians responded to the City’s request, but had no concerns with the planned project.

Historic resources in the project area included the Town and Country Center, which was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources, with a local level of significance. The EIR’s cultural resources study found that it made a material contribution to the historic character of Downtown Palm Springs. Several other listed historic buildings exist in close proximity to the project site, including Lykken’s Department Store, a Class I historically significant building.

The EIR determined that, although the project area had been extensively disturbed by development, it still had potential to harbor unearthened archaeological resources. If such features were discovered during project development, potential impacts were determined to be adequately

mitigated through an assessment and treatment plan conducted by a qualified archaeologist and approved by the Tribe and City.

Implementation of the 2009 Specific Plan proposed the demolition of the Town and Country Center. The EIR found that this constituted a significant impact under CEQA. Mitigation measures included a documentation and display program to commemorate the Center; however its demolition was determined to be an unavoidable significant impact that could not be fully mitigated.

2. Analysis of the Proposed Project Modifications

The following analyzes the potential impacts to cultural resources associated with development of the proposed project, including the Specific Plan Amendment, refinements to the Downtown Palm Springs Park project approved as part of the 2012 Project, and development of the western half of Block B for a hotel of up to 150 rooms. This analysis considers the changes resulting from these projects as they relate to historic and prehistoric resources in the project area.

The Downtown Palm Springs Park and proposed hotel on Block B all occur on the west side of Palm Canyon Drive, in an area that was previously determined in the certified EIR not to contain cultural resources. The proposed Park and hotel will be constructed on areas of the project that have been graded as part of earlier project activities. These portions of the proposed project will have no impact on cultural resources.

The Specific Plan Amendment continues to include the development of lands on the east side of Palm Canyon Drive, extending to Indian Canyon Drive. This portion of the Specific Plan area contains the Town and Country Center, which was determined in the certified EIR to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historic Places. The Center was also identified as potentially locally significant in City surveys conducted in 2004. Since certification of the EIR, the Historic Preservation Commission requested that the City Council consider listing the Town and Country Center as a Class 1 historic site. The City Council did not support the request. Nonetheless, the Center remains a potentially significant historic resource, and its demolition would constitute a potentially significant impact. The mitigation measures included in the EIR, and re-stated below, would reduce the potential impact, but not to a less than significant level. As a result, the impacts of the build out of the Specific Plan Amendment, as it applies to Block K, would remain significant and unavoidable.

EIR Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures included in the EIR remain germane to the proposed project, and will be implemented, as follows:

1. On-site commemorative signs or displays recognizing the historic value of the two previously occurring historic sites to the west of Palm Canyon Drive shall be incorporated into the proposed project.
2. A comprehensive documentation program shall be completed for the Town and Country Center prior to any building altering activities on the property. The documentation shall be consistent with Historic American Building Survey (HABS) procedures, and shall include detailed architectural description, photographic records, scaled mapping and completion of a historic record of the property. The resulting records shall be curated at the City of Palm Springs and the Eastern Information Center.

Commemorative signage and displays shall be incorporated into the proposed project.

3. In the event that inadvertent archaeological discovery is made on the project site during ground disturbing activities, all activity shall stop in the vicinity of the discovery, and the City and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer shall be contacted. If determined necessary by the Tribe and the City, a qualified archaeologist shall be hired by the contractor to assess the find. If the find is determined significant, a Treatment Plan shall be prepared and submitted to the Tribe and City for approval.

An additional mitigation measure was added at the time that the EIR was certified, to provide additional protection for the Town and Country Center:

1. No permit for the demolition or substantial alteration of any portion of the Town and Country Center will be issued until (a) all discretionary entitlements consistent with the Specific Plan have been approved for the renovation or redevelopment of the existing Desert Fashion Plaza; (b) building permits in furtherance of such renovation or redevelopment have been issued; and (c) substantial work consistent with such building permits have commenced on the existing Desert Fashion Plaza.