

**PALM DESERT CITY COUNCIL
STUDY SESSION MEETING
AGENDA**

Thursday, April 10, 2025

2:30 p.m.

Council Chamber, City Hall

73-510 Fred Waring Drive

Palm Desert, California

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the purpose of the Study Session is to review the items listed on the agenda. No action will be taken.

This is a joint meeting of the Palm Desert City Council, Successor Agency to the Palm Desert Redevelopment Agency, Palm Desert Housing Authority, and Palm Desert Board of Library Trustees. Pursuant to Assembly Bill 2449, this meeting may be conducted as a hybrid meeting allowing public access via teleconference or in person, and up to two Councilmembers may attend remotely.

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OPTIONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS MEETING:

Send your comments by email to: CityClerk@palmdesert.gov.

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1. CALL TO ORDER - STUDY SESSION

2. STUDY SESSION TOPICS

2.a UPDATE ON THE PALM DESERT UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT REPORT

3

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive an update on the Palm Desert Unified Development Code and the Development Regulations Assessment Report.

3. ADJOURNMENT

4. PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTE: Pursuant to Assembly Bill 2449, this meeting may be conducted by teleconference. Study Session is accessible in person or on the City's website: www.palmdesert.gov under the Council Agenda link at the top of the page.

Agenda Related Materials: Pursuant to Government Code §54957.5(b)(2) the designated office for inspection of records in connection with this meeting is the Office of the City Clerk, Palm Desert Civic Center, 73-510 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert. Staff reports for all agenda items considered in open session, and documents provided to a majority of the legislative bodies are available for public inspection at City Hall and on the City's website at www.palmdesert.gov by clicking "Meeting Agendas" at the top of the page.

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AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

I, Michelle Nance, Acting Assistant City Clerk of the City of Palm Desert, do hereby certify, under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California, that the foregoing agenda for the Palm Desert City Council, Successor Agency for the Palm Desert Redevelopment Agency, and Housing Authority, was posted on the City Hall bulletin board and City website www.palmdesert.gov no less than 72 hours prior to the meeting.

/S/ Michelle Nance
Acting Assistant City Clerk

CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: April 10, 2025

PREPARED BY: Nick Melloni, AICP, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE PALM DESERT UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE AND
DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT REPORT

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive an update on the Palm Desert Unified Development Code and the Development Regulations Assessment Report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City of Palm Desert is working with Clarion Associates to assist in updating its development regulations and creating a new Unified Development Code (UDC), which will integrate and update or replace various existing City ordinances relating to zoning (Title 25), subdivision (Title 26), grading regulations (Title 27), and related topics such as landscaping and outdoor lighting. The UDC project intends to modernize regulations to better accomplish the City's long-term goals and vision. The new UDC will provide updated standards to implement the City's adopted and future plans, and to provide a strong foundation for future development in Palm Desert.

The study session will present the Development Regulations Assessment Report ("assessment report"), which is intended to serve as a roadmap for the Palm Desert UDC moving forward. This assessment report is a narrative which outlines five (5) key focus areas which serve as overall goals for the project:

1. Streamline the Development Review Process;
2. Enhance the Development Standards;
3. Fine-Tune the Zoning Districts;
4. Clarify the Land Use Regulations; and
5. Create a More User-Friendly Code

The assessment report is intended to provide a methodical assessment of the current development regulations and provides recommendations for how these regulations should be improved to address the five focus areas. The report is also accompanied by a Detailed Review of Current Ordinances, which analyzes the code in a chapter-by-chapter format. City staff will work with Clarion Associates, with the guidance of the City Council Subcommittee and a Technical Advisory Committee to begin drafting the annotated outline of the project, followed by drafting of the new Unified Development Code.

BACKGROUND:

On June 27, 2024, the City Council awarded a contract to Clarion Associates to develop a Unified Development Code for the City of Palm Desert (Contract No. C47890).

On September 12, 2024, City staff and Clarion Associates introduced the UDC project by providing an outline of the intent of the project, a timeline, and overview of the project phases and seeking direction on the formation of an Ad Hoc Subcommittee to review public drafts of the various work products throughout the project. The Council directed staff to await the November 2024 election results before forming the subcommittee to ensure continuity between City Council members.

On December 12, 2024, the City Council appointed Mayor Harnik and Councilmember Pradetto to an Ad Hoc Subcommittee on the Unified Development Code.

Between September 2024, and February 2025, the City and Clarion conducted initial outreach for the project which comprised of several meetings to gather stakeholder input by meeting with City staff, City review bodies including the Architectural Review Commission and Planning Commission, members of the development community to assist in identifying Development Code issues and values moving forward. An online survey was also provided for additional feedback. During this time, Clarion and City staff conducted an in-depth review of the City's existing development regulations.

ANALYSIS:

Section 2 of the Draft Regulations Assessment report outlines groups of issues that emerged from Clarion's review of the City's development regulations and initial project outreach. The discussion includes initial recommendations for how development regulations should be improved to address concerns associated with each focus area:

1. Streamline the Development Review Process
 - a. Consolidate and reorganize procedures.
 - b. Clarify the role of the Architectural Review Commission (ARC).
 - c. Provide objective review criteria
 - d. Allow minor modifications to approved requests
 - e. Improve the subdivision procedures

2. Enhance the Development Standards
 - a. Update the grading standards
 - b. Clarify view protection standards
 - c. Modify site design standards
 - d. Strengthen building design standards
 - e. Update Subdivision design standards
 - f. Consider flexible alternatives

3. Fine-Tune the Zoning Districts
 - a. Refine base zoning standards
 - i. Align zoning districts with the General Plan Land Use designations
 - ii. Reorganize zoning district information
 - b. Clean up overlay districts
 - c. Depict all overlay districts on the Zoning Map

- d. Clarify housing overlay district standards
 - e. Retire unused overlay districts.
4. Clarify the Land Use Regulations.
- a. Create a (single) consolidated land use table
 - b. Clean up land uses
 - c. Update use-specific standards.
5. Create a More User-Friendly Code
- a. Consolidate development regulations
 - b. Incorporate graphic elements
 - c. Define all key terms

Next Steps:

Following this session, City staff will work with Clarion and the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to prepare an annotated outline of the code issues and then begin drafting of the new Unified Development Code over the course of the next year.

Legal Review:

This report has been reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact to the General Fund with this action.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Development Assessment Report dated April 2025
2. Detailed Review of Current Ordinances dated April 2025
3. Palm Desert Unified Development Code Update Presentation



PALM DESERT
UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE

Development Regulations Assessment | April 2025



Part 1: Introduction

Part 2: Key Focus Areas for the New UDC

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1. INTRODUCTION

Project Overview

The City of Palm Desert is updating its development regulations and creating a new Unified Development Code (UDC) that will integrate and update or replace various existing City ordinances relating to zoning, subdivision, landscaping, grading, and related topics. The UDC project will modernize regulations to better accomplish the City's long-term goals and vision. The new UDC will better implement the City's adopted plans and provide a strong foundation for future development in Palm Desert.

The City is working with Clarion Associates, a Denver-based land use firm with experience writing development regulations throughout the west and the nation, to assist with this code update process. The focus areas and associated recommendations in this report are informed by information gathered during the Clarion team's initial site visits, stakeholder interviews, meetings with City staff, the results of a project kick-off survey, and an assessment of Palm Desert's existing development regulations. The team also reviewed relevant planning documents, including but not limited to the *2016 General Plan*, the *Millennium Specific Plan*, the *University Neighborhood Specific Plan*, and the recently adopted *Multifamily and Mixed-Use Objective Design Standards*.

Project Objectives

At least two overarching objectives emerged during the City's original structuring of this project, as well as initial stakeholder outreach:

Establish a Comprehensive Approach to Planning and Development

The existing Palm Desert zoning ordinance was adopted in 2013 and carries forward much of the city's original zoning ordinance that was adopted in 1975, two years after Palm Desert incorporated as a municipality. While portions of the zoning ordinance have been amended over the years, such piecemeal revisions have created a document with a somewhat unwieldy organization and occasionally conflicting regulations that do not always align well with the needs and desires of the community. Additionally, regulations dictating important land-use issues, such as how land should be subdivided and graded, are located outside the



Aerial view of Palm Desert.

zoning ordinance, creating a disjointed approach to regulating and reviewing development proposals. Recent initiatives such as the Multifamily and Mixed-Use Objective Design Standards (ODS) have been integrated with slightly different formats, which may create some confusion for code users.

The UDC project provides an opportunity for the City to establish a comprehensive approach to planning and development in Palm Desert that reflects the city's unique climate, setting, and population. This new Unified Development Code will act as a standalone resource for most of the City's land development regulations and implement the applicable goals and policies from the General Plan.

Celebrate Palm Desert's Setting and Character

Stakeholders also expressed strong interest in enhancing and solidifying Palm Desert's reputation as an attractive, well-designed community that recognizes and protects its unique desert setting and character. In addition to establishing a unified and updated approach to planning and development, this project presents an opportunity to preserve and celebrate Palm Desert's setting within the Coachella Valley and Sonoran Desert by adopting standards and guidelines that reinforce the community's unique character. This could take several forms in an updated code, such as zoning districts that offer more tools for protecting sensitive areas; strengthened development standards that offer more dark-skies protection and locally appropriate landscaping; and refined building design regulations to enhance Palm Desert's neighborhoods.

Report Organization

In this Document

This Development Regulations Assessment is intended to serve as a roadmap for the Palm Desert UDC project by identifying strengths and weaknesses of the current regulations and building consensus on the general scope of the issues to be addressed in drafting the new UDC.

The following section outlines groups of issues that emerged from Clarion's review of the City's regulations and initial project outreach. The discussion includes recommendations for how the regulations should be improved to address the underlying concerns associated with each major focus area, which include:

- **Streamline the Development Review Process;**
- **Enhance the Development Standards;**
- **Fine-Tune the Zoning Districts;**
- **Clarify the Land Use Regulations; and**
- **Create a More User-Friendly Code.**

A separate supporting document contains additional detailed comments, organized by ordinance section.

Future Considerations

While this assessment covers a broad range of topics, it is not exhaustive. Additional topics not covered here may merit additional consideration and potential ordinance updates in the future. It is not unusual for new topics to arise when a community undertakes a deep-dive review of its land-use and zoning regulations.

In Palm Desert, one such topic is **signage**. During stakeholder meetings, commissioners and staff raised concerns about the effectiveness of current sign regulations in a variety of contexts, such as master-planned centers and monument signs. The number of discretionary procedures required to review many sign types also is being examined. Further, the regulations should be reviewed to ensure all standards are content-neutral. To address these and other issues, a comprehensive review and update of the sign ordinance is being considered.

Another topic meriting discussion is **historic preservation**. Though Palm Desert is a relatively young community, there are buildings that have met or exceeded the 50-year mark, which is a traditional point at which historic significance often is measured. The city has begun developing a historic context document to explain the city’s architectural history and identify extant resources that may have historic significance. A new historic preservation ordinance may be considered to expand the zoning toolbox for protecting these resources.

Summary of Recommendations

The table below is organized around the five key focus areas introduced in the second part of this report and summarizes all recommendations.

Table 1: Summary of Recommendations

Critical Outcome	Recommendations
Streamline the Development Review Process	
Consolidate and reorganize procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine procedures from Titles 25, 26, and 27 into a single chapter of the UDC, written with a consistent level of detail in a standardized format and structure. • Reorganize specific procedures by type of request (rather than by final decision-maker). • Establish an administrative manual to house supporting materials outside the UDC.
Clarify decision-making authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate which development application should require public hearings, and which development applications should be delegated to staff review. • Where appropriate, separate existing development review applications into ministerial and discretionary

Table 1: Summary of Recommendations

Critical Outcome	Recommendations
	<p>requests based on the level of review required (i.e., minor precise plan vs. precise plan).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate the obsolete term “Zoning Administrator” and shift its responsibilities to the Director. • Update Table 25.60-1 to align with proposed changes in procedure organization and final approval authority, as necessary.
Clarify the role of the Architecture Review Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reestablish the scope of topics the ARC may consider as part of their review. • Establish objective criteria and findings by which ARC applications are reviewed against and clearly define what actions the ARC may take on a project (i.e., approval as presented, approval with modifications, or denial subject to findings). • Better define the design-related projects that may be approved administratively. • Clarify relationship between ARC and Planning Commission. • Consider limiting the number of ARC hearings a project may be subject to.
Provide objective review criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen existing and provide new objective review criteria for each specific procedure.
Allow minor modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better define thresholds for approved minor modifications. • Consider extending minor modification approval authority to development applications, not just approved requests.
Improve the subdivision procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate recommended edits to subdivision procedures based on staff edits in 2024 draft. • Reorganize the subdivision procedures. • Consolidate redundant subdivision adjustment procedures. • Identify opportunities for additional mapping applications. • Expand and clarify general dedication requirements. • Define opportunities for relief from subdivision standards.
Enhance the Development Standards	
Clarify view protection standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with other City partners to incorporate the new Hillside ODS into the UDC.

Table 1: Summary of Recommendations

Critical Outcome	Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate an updated version of the City’s grading ordinance into the new UDC. • Provide objective review criteria for hillside development plans. • Clarify application submittal requirements for hillside development projects.
Modify site design standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the landscaping standards based on the City’s preferred approach (either through cross-reference to Title 24 or by relocating standards to the UDC). • Refresh the City’s plant material list. • Clarify street tree placement and maintenance requirements. • Revisit parking lot landscaping standards to improve the efficacy of new shade trees and provide flexibility. • Strengthen standards and enforcement for long-term maintenance of required landscaping. • Evaluate existing parking ratios and adjust where necessary. • Clarify review procedures determining parking requirements for how unlisted uses. • Revise drive-through design standards. • Reorganize and provide additional tools for flexibility in meeting parking requirements. • Update the outdoor lighting standards based on the City’s preferred approach (either through cross-reference to Chapter 24.16 or by relocating and/or drafting new standards in the UDC). • Refine existing and add new residential adjacency standards to provide a smooth transition from low-density residential neighborhoods to larger or more intense uses. • Update regulations related to accessory site features based on the City’s preferred approach (either through cross-reference to applicable titles or by relocating/expanding standards in the UDC). • Consider requiring larger-scale projects to incorporate art onto their site, rather than paying into the art fund.
Strengthen building design standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider creating objective design standards for non-residential buildings. • Establish desert-inspired building design standards.

Table 1: Summary of Recommendations

Critical Outcome	Recommendations
Update subdivision design standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate design standards menus to identify preferred architectural treatments. Update subdivision design standards to support implementation of the General Plan.
Consider flexible alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a process to allow flexibility for unique design alternatives that meet the spirit of the UDC.
Fine-Tune the Zoning Districts	
Refine base zoning districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine base zoning districts, including purpose statements and dimensional standards, to ensure implementation of the General Plan. Consider targeted updates to district standards, including new tools for mixed-use and downtown district updates. Support more objective alternatives in the UDC to minimize the unpredictability of the planned districts. Reorganize zoning district information.
Clean up overlay districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the official zoning map to include overlay districts. Update the standards in the Housing Overlay District to reduce subjectivity. Retire any unused or unnecessary overlay districts, as appropriate.
Clarify the Land Use Regulations	
Create a consolidated land use table	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a single land use table that displays all zoning districts and land uses in a single location. Review land uses for all districts to ensure they match district intent.
Clean up land uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidate and retire specific uses, as appropriate. Define all use categories, subcategories, and specific uses. Consider incorporating new land uses, and applicable use-specific standards, for uses not explicitly addressed in Palm Desert’s existing development regulations.
Revisit use permissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure appropriate level of use approval is required for each use type. Consider whether additional standards could be applied to a use to eliminate the need for a higher level of scrutiny.

Table 1: Summary of Recommendations

Critical Outcome	Recommendations
Update use-specific standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify changes to use permissions during the drafting process. Consolidate and reorganize use-specific standards. Establish new and revise current use-specific standards to address potential land use impacts.
Create a More User-Friendly Code	
Consolidate development regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reorganize the development regulations into a Unified Development Code (UDC).
Incorporate graphic elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate illustrations and other graphic elements, such as summary tables and flow charts, throughout the new UDC.
Define key terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define all key terms. Revise complex or confusing definitions for clarity. Review all code language and rewrite for clarity, as needed.

2. KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR THE NEW UDC

Streamline the Development Review Process

Development regulations should clearly describe the procedures by which new development applications are accepted, considered, and acted upon by local officials. Well-written regulations make it easy for staff, the development community, and elected and appointed officials to know exactly what is required for approval of applications and help ensure consistent administration over time.

During our stakeholder interviews, we received extensive feedback about the development review process in Palm Desert.

While many interviewees expressed appreciation and support for the work City staff puts in to administering and enforcing the code, some comments were critical of the time and effort required to take a project from conception to approval and construction. Some of the concerns noted include:

- A desire to see more minor requests delegated to staff for review and approval.
- General lack of clarity regarding the review steps associated with each type of request.
- Confusion regarding the roles that the Architectural Review Commission (ARC) and Planning Commission (Commission) play in reviewing development proposals.
- Lack of clarity among staff around the role of the Zoning Administrator.
- The lack of objective review criteria or findings, which can result in regulations based on preference rather than clear standards.
- Confusion regarding which types of modifications to approved requests are considered "minor."

The recommendations provided below are intended to address the concerns listed above and streamline the City's development procedures.

Consolidate and Reorganize Procedures

Consolidate and Rewrite Procedures

In the current Palm Desert zoning ordinance (and other ordinances), procedures for considering various types of development applications are scattered throughout multiple locations and written with a varied level of detail. Procedures are not only separated across titles, but are also



Inside the Council Chamber at City Hall.

dispersed throughout the zoning regulations. Such an arrangement makes the development regulations longer, with unnecessary duplication of provisions addressing the same or similar steps and requirements. This duplication may also become burdensome for City staff, as amending a step or requirement in one location may lead to inconsistencies if not correctly amended throughout the document. In the new UDC, procedures should be consolidated in one chapter using a consistent format.


Organize Procedures by Type of Request

Several stakeholders shared that it is difficult to understand the sequence of actions, or steps, that each permit or entitlement request must follow based on the text of Title 25 alone. Specific procedures for different types of requests are currently organized by decision-making body, which can cause confusion because the final action is clearly highlighted but the intermediary steps between application submittal and final approval are not.

As part of the new UDC, we recommend organizing specific procedures by level of approval required (such as legislative, discretionary, and ministerial) rather than by decision-making body. Individual requests (such as text amendments, conditional use permits, and grading permits) can then be broken down to highlight each step within a specific review procedure. This organizational style will help clarify the review steps for each type of permit and entitlement.

Create an Administrative Manual

The current regulations contain information that is either technical in nature or otherwise not necessary to carry forward in the UDC. Such information should live outside the UDC in an administrative manual, guidebook, or dedicated webpage on the City's website that may be updated on a regular basis without undertaking a formal code amendment. During the drafting process, Clarion will maintain a separate document including content from the current regulations that should be considered for relocation. This will make the UDC shorter and more user-friendly, while also allowing staff to update the technical and administrative content over time without requiring a formal text amendment by City Council. The City will consider the format and contents of an administrative manual that would work beset for Palm Desert.



EXISTING ISSUES

Examples of technical or supplemental information to be removed from Titles 25, 26, and 27 include:

- *Application submittal requirements; and*
- *Subdivision map formatting and content specifications.*

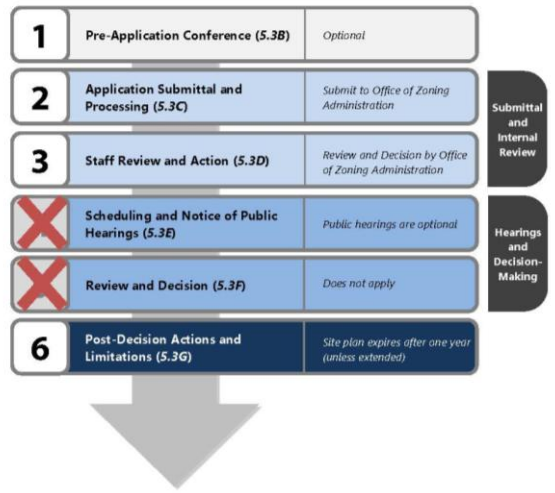
Recommendations

- Combine procedures from Titles 25, 26, and 27 into a single chapter of the UDC, written with a consistent level of detail in a standardized format and structure.
- Reorganize specific procedures by type of request (rather than by final decision-maker).
- Establish an administrative manual to house supporting materials outside the UDC.

Table 7.1: Summary Table of Review Procedures

R = review and comment D = review and decision A = appeal
< > = public hearing required ✓ = required <<public hearing discretionary>>

Procedure	Section	Notice			Pre-Application Conference	Staff	Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board	Board of Zoning Appeals	City Planning Commission	Common Council
		Published	Written	Posted						
Development Reviews										
Site Plan	Minor	7.4A(3)			✓	Optional	D	[2]	<A>	
Review	Major	7.4A(4)	✓	✓	✓	✓	R	[2]		<D>
Special Use Permit		7.4B	✓	✓	✓	✓	R	[2]		<D>
Sign Review		7.4C				Optional	D	[1]	<A>	
Off-Premise Advertising		5.4D	✓	✓	✓	✓	R	[2]		<D> [1]
Temporary Use Permit		7.4E				Optional	D		<A>	
Street Action		7.4F	✓	✓	✓		R			<R>
Planned District Plan		2.15	✓	✓	✓	✓	R	[2]		<R>



Above: A summary table of review procedures from another community. In this example, requests are organized by type of review (i.e., development reviews, ordinance amendments, etc.) but in Palm Desert, procedures may be organized by level of approval required (i.e., ministerial, discretionary, and legislative).

Left: An example flowchart of a minor site plan procedure in another community. We recommend that all review procedures be enhanced with flowcharts, which quickly convey the interrelationships between procedural steps.

Clarify Decision-Making Authority

Ensure Decisions are Made at the Appropriate Level

Code update projects provide an opportunity to reevaluate which review bodies make which decisions. A major concern for many communities in this regard, often coming from a budgetary standpoint but also in response to citizen feedback, is efficiency: the projects with the greatest potential community impacts should receive a relatively higher level of scrutiny and opportunity for public comment, while relatively smaller projects that comply with the code should generally be able to proceed through the system more quickly.

While there are multiple types of approvals in Palm Desert that can be made by the Zoning Administrator or Director, many permit and entitlement applications require a public hearing by ARC, Planning Commission, or City Council. Public hearings are an important part of the development process in terms of hearing public concerns and/or support for a complex or unusual project; however, requiring a public hearing for routine development applications or minor requests places an unnecessary burden on businesses, developers, staff, and the appointed and elected officials.

The UDC should strike a balance between establishing flexible and efficient review procedures, while ensuring elaborate and unique requests receive the appropriate level of discretionary review.

Combine Zoning Administrator and Director Approvals

Section 25.02.040, *Administrative Responsibility*, describes the roles and responsibilities of each decision-making authority identified in Title 25, including the Zoning Administrator and the Director. According to the text, the Zoning Administrator is appointed by the Director of Community Development and has discretionary review authority over certain requests, such as large family day care use permits and adjustments. In fact, however, staff notes that Palm Desert does not currently have an individual designated as “Zoning Administrator,” which can cause confusion around the review of certain permits and entitlements. For clarity, we recommend removing the “Zoning Administrator” term from the new UDC and shifting their existing responsibilities to the Director, who may already assign a designee to administer and enforce Title 25 on their behalf.

Update Table to Reflect Proposed Changes

Table 25.60-1: *Approving Authority for Land Use Permits/Entitlements*, identifies the review body, final decision maker, and appeal body for each type of land development request, as well as items that may be called up for review by City Council. This table should be updated to align with proposed changes throughout the UDC, including:

- Reviewing and updating the review body, final decision maker, and appeal body for each type of land development request, as necessary;
- Reorganizing specific permits and entitlements by type of request; and

- Adding columns to highlight additional steps (such as public meeting requirements), as desired.

Recommendations

- Evaluate which development application should require public hearings, and which development applications should be delegated to staff review.
- Where appropriate, separate existing development review applications into ministerial and discretionary requests based on the level of review required (i.e., minor precise plan vs. precise plan).
- Eliminate the obsolete term “Zoning Administrator” and shift its responsibilities to the Director.
- Update Table 25.60-1 to align with proposed changes in procedure organization and final approval authority, as necessary.


Clarify the Role of the Architectural Review Commission

Palm Desert is a community that recognizes the importance of high-quality site and building design in preserving and promoting its unique desert character, and the city’s zoning regulations have evolved to include a variety of tools and procedures to help evaluate the aesthetic characteristics of proposed development projects. This detailed approach to the visual appearance of projects and design is typical in the Valley and throughout California and indeed is necessary to ensure high-quality projects.

However, there are opportunities in Palm Desert to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the review authorities that evaluate project design to ensure that projects are evaluated consistently, equitably, and according to clearly defined standards.

In Palm Desert, the Architectural Review Commission (ARC) has primary responsibility for reviewing many applications for site and building design. They are not the only decision-maker on those projects, however; the staff, Planning Commission, and/or City Council may all have a role in reviewing and deciding on other aspects of the project review. Several stakeholders in the initial outreach for this project noted that the ARC review, while often resulting in high-quality designs, can be time consuming and difficult to navigate. Some issues that were noted include:

- The main items to be reviewed by ARC are included in Table 25.60-1; however, other information describing when/why/how the ARC may review less significant requests is spread throughout Title 25, sometimes buried in table footnotes.
- The types of projects that require ARC review may be too broad. Consider identifying design-related items that are exempt from full ARC review (and are instead approvable by staff). Expand upon the handful of such exceptions already in Title 25.

 **EXISTING ISSUES**

Information regarding regulations subject to ARC review are vague and spread throughout Title 25. For example, in Section 25.40.E – the ARC can approve setback exceptions of up to 20% and may approve “well-designed carport structures” with reduced setbacks, but the phrase “well-designed” is not defined.


- The description of the roles and responsibilities of the ARC in 25.02.040 is too vague. New language should be added to clearly identify the scope of items the ARC can review (i.e., site design, landscaping, architecture).
- Sometimes the comments/conditions offered by the ARC seem (to applicants) to be exercises of arbitrary/unfettered discretion, or to extend beyond the letter of the code. It is then unclear if applicants are required to update their proposals in response to/to incorporate these conditions.
- The findings associated with ARC review are considered too vague and subjective by some stakeholders. The lack of clear findings may contribute to stakeholders' perception of the ARC as getting "too bogged down in the details."
- The relationship between the ARC and Planning Commission is unclear.
 - Fuzzy line between the design-related issues the ARC looks at and the types of feedback the Planning Commission should provide.
 - Unclear if the Planning Commission supersedes the authority of the ARC.
 - Unclear what level of change between ARC approval and Planning Commission review/recommendation/approval would require an applicant to return to ARC for additional review.

Recommendations

- Reestablish the scope of topics the ARC may consider as part of their review.
- Establish objective criteria and findings by which ARC applications are reviewed against and clearly define what actions the ARC may take on a project (i.e., approval as presented, approval with modifications, or denial subject to findings).
- Better define the design-related projects that may be approved administratively.
- Clarify relationship between ARC and Planning Commission.
- Consider limiting the number of ARC hearings a project may be subject to.

Provide Objective Review Criteria

Throughout the UDC, the findings (or approval criteria) for all application types should be strengthened to be objective and clearer. One way to provide objectivity in approval criteria is to include examples of compliance. More objective criteria will improve the level of predictability in the development review process for community members and developers, and also lead to more efficient public hearings. Additionally, new objective review criteria could be provided for application types that are currently missing that information (such as hillside development permits and text amendments).

 **IN THE UDC...**

Examples of compliance could include highlighting elements of architectural design that would be reviewed when evaluating if a proposal is "in keeping with the character of the surrounding neighborhood," such as building massing, building height, roofline shape, location on the lot, etc.

Recommendation

- Strengthen existing and provide new objective review criteria for each specific procedure.

Allow Minor Modifications

There are multiple instances in Title 25 where the Zoning Administrator or Director has the authority to determine if a request to modify an existing approval is so minor in scope that it may be exempt from certain types of review, such as exempting a request to modify a precise plan from review by the Architectural Review Commission. While there is value in providing some degree of discretionary decision-making at the staff level, the current wording is vague and does little to assist applicants in identifying what level of scrutiny their applications will be reviewed under. The UDC should better define the code standards under which the Director has authority to grant ministerial exceptions. These sometimes may be summarized in a table or other user-friendly approach.

A related tool is the authority to approve similar minor adjustments to applications before they are approved. Such modifications may be necessary to ensure general, but not precise, compliance with development standards due to specific site conditions. For example, a development might be able to provide 98 but not 100 of the required minimum parking spaces. The new UDC might set a general allowance for such adjustments up to a certain threshold. A common starting point for communities introducing such a tool is a 10 percent level of deviation for certain numeric development standards (e.g., minimum parking spaces, minimum dimensions). The adjustments should not be allowed for changes to height or density standards.

Recommendation

- Better define thresholds for approved minor modifications.

- Consider extending minor modification approval authority to development applications, not just approved requests.

Improve the Subdivision Procedures

Title 26 was originally adopted in 1976 and has undergone minimal amendments since then. In 2024, the City began an internal process to update the subdivision ordinance, which has culminated in an internal draft that was circulated for staff review in the last few months. The following recommendations are drafted based on the project team’s review of the City’s draft subdivision ordinance. Some of these include:

- **Reorganize subdivision procedures.** Much like the zoning procedures, the subdivision procedures could be improved by organizing each procedure by type of request, rather than by review step, allowing an applicant to more easily identify each step in the review of a specific type of subdivision application. Additionally, the subdivision procedures could be reorganized in a way that clearly identifies the intensity of subdivision application (organizing procedures from most-intensive to least-intensive).
- **Consolidate redundant adjustment procedures.** The current parcel map waiver procedure identified in Chapter 26.34 outlines the steps for processing boundary adjustments, which are also addressed in Section 26.32.070, Lot Line Adjustments.
- **Identify opportunities for additional mapping applications.** Palm Desert’s existing subdivision regulations do not currently identify the full spectrum of subdivision requests, such as Vesting Tentative Maps and Finance and Conveyance Maps. These types of applications should be included in the UDC and supported by the establishment of clear procedures for staff and applicants to follow.
- **Expand and clarify general dedication requirements.** As part of the new UDC, general dedication requirements for public use or benefit, such as park dedications, rights-of-way for drainage, and other public easements, should be clarified and included as conditions for map approval.
- **Define opportunities for relief from subdivision standards.**

Recommendations

- Integrate recommended edits to subdivision procedures based on staff edits in 2024 draft.
- Reorganize the subdivision procedures.
- Consolidate redundant subdivision adjustment procedures.
- Identify opportunities for additional mapping applications.
- Expand and clarify general dedication requirements.
- Define opportunities for relief from subdivision standards.

Enhance the Development Standards

Setting a high bar for development aesthetics and quality is important for Palm Desert to continue to grow the City's economy and distinguish the City from other Coachella Valley communities. Projects such as the El Paseo Hotel and University Park are viewed as positive models of attractive site and building design that set Palm Desert apart from neighboring municipalities.

Many stakeholders emphasized that maintaining Palm Desert's high level of development quality should be a focus of the new UDC. In terms of opportunities for improvement, some suggested that the City could be more consistent in applying standards that reflect the community's overall design preferences. For example, some stakeholders noted that the findings and conditions applied as part of the discretionary design review process can vary across applications (as noted in the prior section of this report). In addition to clarifying the procedural aspects of design review, this project provides an opportunity to take a fresh look at the city's approach to design, focusing more on establishing unified, consistent standards for the entire City.



Parking lot with minimal landscaping in north Palm Desert.

The new UDC should build on the work that was done to create the Multifamily and Mixed-Use Objective Design Standards by setting clear, objective minimum standards for non-residential development. These standards should continue to raise the bar for design but not make code-based development overly complicated or cost-prohibitive. Standards should address both site design—how buildings relate to their site and surrounding development—and building design. The standards should allow enough flexibility to address unique sites and circumstances and to encourage innovation and creative design.

While many strong standards exist in the City's current development regulations, the following sections discuss several opportunities for improvement.

Clarify View Protection Standards

Palm Desert residents value the many unique viewsheds in the city, especially those of the mostly undisturbed hillsides and mountains. The need to protect undisturbed views of the city's striking and uncommon geography was a topic that came up frequently in the initial stakeholder interviews.

Cities rely on a combination of tools—including use restrictions, building height limits, sign controls, and grading regulations—to protect and enhance viewsheds. In Palm Desert's current regulations, there are scattered general standards aimed at protecting "views," though the specific visual assets to be protected are undefined and the issue is mostly considered on a project-by-project basis. Two zoning districts were established at least in part to protect the city's valuable visual assets: the Hillside Planned Residential District and the Scenic Preservation Overlay District.

Stakeholders expressed mixed views on the success of these existing tools. While the quality of many hillside projects has been quite high, there are concerns that the development standards intended to support view protection are vague and can be challenging to interpret.

Support the Creation of the Hillside Objective Design Standards

The City is currently working on a separate, parallel project to create objective design standards (ODS) for development across the city's hillsides. The new hillside ODS will focus on minimizing development on the hillsides, which will help protect views of the hillsides from throughout Palm Desert. The new standards proposed in that effort will help City staff, designers, and property owners by removing subjectivity from the current development standards in Section 25.10.050.A.

As part of the UDC process, Clarion will collaborate with the hillside project consultants to incorporate the hillside ODS into the UDC, as appropriate, and use the standards proposed by the hillside consultants to provide objective review criteria specific to hillside development plan applications.

Update Grading Standards

Closely related to the new Hillside Objective Design Standards, the new UDC should integrate an updated version of the grading ordinance. Grading standards will apply both to the hillsides and also any areas with topographical change throughout the city. The updated grading standards are expected to be influenced by the Hillside ODS project and generally focus on issues such as minimizing areas of disturbance, reducing cut-and-fill, and protecting natural topography and



EXISTING ISSUES

Examples of existing, vague view protection standards include:

- *"...shall be designed to eliminate or minimize any visual impact on the City..."*
- *"The overall plan shall achieve an integrated land and building relationship."*
- *"Architectural unity and harmony within the development and with surrounding properties shall be attained."*

drainageways. Areas of the current standards that have been identified as ambiguous will be clarified.

Identify and Protect Scenic Corridors

Scenic corridors are another type of visual resource worthy of protection in the new UDC. The 2004 General Plan identified scenic corridors within the city where additional land use controls should be considered to help protect scenic gateways (city or neighborhood entryways). The current General Plan does not carry forward that corridor concept. However, amendments to the circulation element of the General Plan should be considered to again designate certain scenic corridors and provide a foundation for stronger tools in the new UDC to protect these areas. Tools to limit development in these scenic corridors might include additional setbacks and landscape easements along project frontages along certain corridors.

Identify Appropriate Application Materials

When zoning regulations are established to protect certain views, applicants must submit materials demonstrating the potential visual impacts of new development in protected areas. (For example, will a proposed new building encroach into views of the hillside from a public park)? We heard from members of the design community that the lack of clarity in the current Palm Desert code around when additional graphics are required, and what information should be included in those graphics, makes it difficult to prepare materials for application submittal. Similarly, City staff and appointed officials expressed a desire to establish clear standards for the types of materials provided to them when conducting reviews of hillside development proposals.

Where appropriate, design professionals should be required to provide studies and visualizations as part of their development application materials to support the review of projects subject to view protection standards. In an effort to clear up confusion, the UDC will:

- Establish clear thresholds for when different types of visual aids are required;
- Provide examples of different types of visual aids (such a photo-renderings, line-of-sight analyses, and viewshed diagrams); and
- Clarify what type of information should be included in each type of visual aid.

Recommendations

- Collaborate with other City partners to incorporate the new Hillside ODS into the UDC.
- Integrate an updated version of the City's grading ordinance into the new UDC.
- Provide objective review criteria for hillside development plans.
- Clarify application submittal requirements for hillside development projects.

Modify Site Design Standards

Landscaping

Landscaping is an important element of Palm Desert's character. The City regulates landscaping not only for functional reasons, like to limit water use and provide shade, but also to enhance the aesthetic appearance of new development. Currently, the City's landscaping information is spread across Titles 24 and 25, making it difficult for designers to know if they have identified all the requirements that apply to their project. The following improvements should be considered when drafting the new UDC:



Commercial property landscaping.

- Provide clear cross-references to applicable landscaping information (such as planting heights, planting sizes, and spacing requirements) if located outside of the UDC.
- Refresh the City's plant material list and align with the creation of the Landscaping Master Plan, if possible.
- Clarify street tree placement and maintenance requirements.
- Revisit parking lot landscaping standards to improve the efficacy of new shade trees (possibly requiring fewer trees in larger planting beds) and consider providing flexibility for some uses (such as automobile sales lots).
- Strengthen standards and enforcement for long-term maintenance of required landscaping.

Off-Street Parking and Loading

Stakeholders provided little feedback related to Palm Desert's off-street parking regulations, with some noting the importance of having access to off-street parking spaces during the hottest months of the year. With that feedback in mind, as well as our review of the City's off-street parking and loading standards, we recommend making the following changes to the UDC:

- Evaluate the existing parking ratios to determine where the current standards may be requiring too many (or too few) spaces.
- Clarify review procedures for how unlisted uses will be assigned a parking requirement.

IN THE UDC...

Additional opportunities to reduce off-street parking requirements may be provided, such as:

- *Reductions for proximity to transit services;*
- *Reductions based on an approved parking study; and/or*
- *Crediting on-street parking for off-street requirements.*

- Revise drive-through design standards to address placement on the lot, screening from public rights-of-way, and vehicle stacking requirements.
- Reorganize the off-street parking and loading section to clearly identify opportunities for reducing off-street parking requirements, and consider establishing additional options.
- Provide additional graphics, as applicable, to depict wordy explanations (such as the parking stall marking requirements of Section 25.46.070.B).

Outdoor Lighting

Title 25 currently contains a mix of lighting standards, as well as references to the outdoor lighting requirements of Chapter 24.16. Additional feedback is needed to determine if the existing regulations in Chapter 24.16 are working well to minimize light pollution and light trespass while ensuring safety for property owners and users. If so, the UDC should be written to replace existing, vague outdoor lighting requirements with references to the applicable standards in Chapter 24.16. If the regulations in Chapter 24.16 do not currently meet the City's needs, then a more comprehensive review and update of the City's outdoor lighting standards will be needed.



Outdoor lighting on a restaurant patio.

Residential Adjacency Standards

Many communities rely on residential adjacency standards to address building scale and form when larger or more intense land uses abut low-density residential neighborhoods. These standards might include building step-back requirements, articulation standards, screening requirements, or other considerations that help provide a smooth transition along shared property lines. Some of these standards already exist within the development standards for commercial and industrial districts.

As part of the UDC process, we recommend identifying and refining any existing residential adjacency standards that are difficult to implement and exploring the addition of new residential adjacency standards in areas that may currently create conflicts, such as for development in P/I, Public/Institutional district, that abuts low-density residential neighborhoods.

Accessory Site Features

Some stakeholders suggested that it would be helpful to review and comment on the placement of accessory site features, such as public art and solar panels, earlier on in the development process. However, these reviews are complicated by the disjointed nature of the City's existing

ordinances for regulating these accessory site features. Title 4 of the Code of Ordinances establishes the “art in public places fund,” which requires City capital improvement projects and private development projects contribute a percentage of the overall project construction budget (excluding land costs) to enhancing the visual appeal of the project and City, but there is nothing in this Title that addresses site planning considerations for public art. In the case of solar panels, State solar laws may add an additional layer of complexity to the City’s existing regulations in Title 15, which does little to address the location of solar panels as part of new construction.

The UDC process presents an opportunity to better address the broad range of topics associated with land development, either by providing cross-references to applicable regulations in other Titles or by expanding the review processes for accessory site features in the UDC.


Recommendations

- Update the landscaping standards based on the City’s preferred approach (either through cross-reference to Title 24 or by relocating standards to the UDC).
- Refresh the City’s plant material list.
- Clarify street tree placement and maintenance requirements.
- Revisit parking lot landscaping standards to improve the efficacy of new shade trees and provide flexibility.
- Strengthen standards and enforcement for long-term maintenance of required landscaping.
- Evaluate existing parking ratios and adjust where necessary.
- Clarify review procedures determining parking requirements for how unlisted uses.
- Revise drive-through design standards.
- Reorganize and provide additional tools for flexibility in meeting parking requirements.
- Update the outdoor lighting standards based on the City’s preferred approach (either through cross-reference to Chapter 24.16 or by relocating and/or drafting new standards in the UDC).
- Refine existing and add new residential adjacency standards to provide a smooth transition from low-density residential neighborhoods to larger or more intense uses.
- Update regulations related to accessory site features based on the City’s preferred approach (either through cross-reference to applicable titles or by relocating/expanding standards in the UDC).
- Consider requiring larger-scale projects to incorporate art onto their site, rather than paying into the art fund.

Strengthen Building Design Standards


The existing building stock in Palm Desert, especially newer construction, is generally of high quality, due in part to careful planning and dedicated enforcement of the city’s regulations by staff and community leaders. However, some stakeholders noted that many projects that result in high-quality buildings are subject to a lengthy public design review process, sometimes requiring multiple design review meetings for a single project. Changes to the UDC that are intended to clarify and strengthen building design standards include:

- **Creating objective design standards for non-residential buildings.** The ODS adopted in April of 2024 provides design standards for multifamily and mixed-use developments, and in the coming year(s), the City will work with John Kaliski Architects to develop object design standards for hillside development and development within downtown zoning districts. The UDC project provides the City with an opportunity to explore the creation of objective design standards for commercial and industrial development as well, using the City’s current ODS as a springboard for generating applicable building design standards. which in turn would make the design review process more predictable for everyone involved.
- **Identifying context-sensitive treatments informed by the City’s desert environment.** Several stakeholders shared a strong belief that all new buildings should be designed to reflect the look and feel of Palm Desert’s natural environment. The UDC will attempt to define building design features that a desert-environment project should contain, paying particular attention to color, materiality, and orientation.
- **Integrating building design menus and options.** Providing menus and optional approaches throughout the development standards will allow the City and applicants to meet the intent of the UDC, yet adapt each project to unique situations—such as redevelopment, infill, changes of use, challenging site conditions, or for concepts not anticipated by the community. These types of examples could be incorporated in other sections of the UDC as well to demonstrate ways of complying with complex standards.

 **IN THE UDC...**

Objective standards will be added to ensure building design is informed by the City’s natural environment, such as:

- *Defining a desert color palette;*
- *Providing examples of materials that hold up well in the harsh desert climate; and*
- *Emphasizing building layout and orientation to promote the use of passive solar.*

 **IN THE UDC...**

Menus may be used to provide a list of approaches for satisfying code requirements. Several menus are incorporated into the building architecture section of the Multifamily and Mixed-Use ODS, including menus for sloped roof materials and window and door details.

Recommendations

- Consider creating objective design standards for non-residential buildings.
- Establish desert-inspired building design standards.
- Incorporate design standards menus to identify preferred architectural treatments.

Update Subdivision Design Standards

Chapter 26.40, *Design Standards and Requirements*, provides a mix of technical and general standards for topics including street design, sidewalk requirements, and lot and block layouts applicable to new subdivisions. Staff noted that many of these standards are outdated, having last been updated in 1976, and may not align with the goals and policies of the General Plan.

The subdivision standards should be reviewed and updated as necessary to align with the General Plan. As with other parts of the new UDC, subdivision design standards should be simplified and made more user-friendly where possible through the use of summary tables and graphics, and similar formatting improvements. These changes should be made in coordination with the changes to subdivision review procedures recommended in the previous section of this report.

Recommendation

- Update subdivision design standards to support implementation of the General Plan.

Consider Flexible Alternatives

Many communities allow for “alternative equivalent compliance” for development proposals that meet the intent of the standards but for one reason or another cannot meet the strict letter of the law. These are not variances or waivers for standards, but rather alternative approaches deemed acceptable by the City because they offer greater benefit in exchange for accommodating unusual circumstances. If a proposed concept meets the intent of the UDC and results in a similar level of community benefit, then allowing alternatives to the standards administratively (or through design review) is a flexible approach to accommodating unique designs without compromising character.

Recommendation

- Establish a process to allow flexibility for unique design alternatives that meet the spirit of the UDC.

Fine-Tune the Zoning Districts

A comprehensive update of a community's land development regulations provides an opportunity to step back and review the current zoning districts to ensure they are appropriate to achieve local goals and to implement adopted plans. The zoning districts in Palm Desert should accommodate a wide range and mixture of housing types, commercial and mixed-use development, institutional uses, and recreational opportunities. The current districts should be reviewed and updated as appropriate to more accurately reflect desired conditions and to open up additional opportunities for mixed-use development in targeted areas.



Two-story building within the D-O, Downtown Core Overlay district.

The overall objective should be to broaden Palm Desert's zoning toolbox so that more types of projects may be built by-right and that planned development approvals are easier for City staff to track over time. Within each district, the dimensional standards should be reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect City goals and policies. The UDC may also incorporate new zoning district, even if they are not immediately applied to the zoning map, so that additional options are available to accommodate updates to the General Plan or future specific planning efforts.

As part of the Assessment of the current districts, the team considered the following:

- Are there districts in place to implement the General Plan and any specific plans?
- Is the intent of each district clear and does the district name match the intent?
- Is each district currently used, or are there districts that are obsolete and/or unnecessary?
- Are new types of districts needed (such as new mixed-use districts)?
- Are any districts so similar in purpose and standards that they could be consolidated?
- Are the dimensional standards for each district (setbacks, density, and height) appropriately tailored to the purpose of the district?

Based on these considerations, the team proposes the following modifications to the current lineup of zoning districts, as summarized in this section.

Refine Base Zoning Districts

The zoning districts must be capable of implementing Palm Desert’s adopted plans and policies. The General Plan, adopted in November 2016, represents the community’s overall vision of where and how it wants to grow and develop in the coming decades. The UDC is one of the primary tools for implementing that vision and should reflect the plan’s goals, policies, and strategies concerning the physical growth and development of the City.

Stakeholders provided relatively little feedback related to the effectiveness of the City’s existing base zoning districts. Based on our review of Title 25 and accompanying notes from staff, we believe the lineup of zoning districts in Palm Desert is generally in good shape. Targeted revisions are suggested below.

Align Zoning Districts with General Plan Designations

The General Plan identifies 14 designations, grouped into three place types, to help inform future land use and zoning policy, providing a foundation for considering updates to the menu of zoning districts available in the new UDC. The place types help convey the desired physical character, development intensities, allowed uses, network and connectivity, streetscape, and open space in different areas of the community. The General Plan includes a Future Land Use Map that spatially represents the collective vision for Palm Desert by identifying areas where the place types are appropriate.

Table 25.04-1 in Chapter 25.04 summarizes how the place types identified in the General Plan generally translate to the existing base zoning districts. As part of the UDC process, we recommend re-evaluating the existing lineup of zoning districts against the General Plan to ensure the City has the districts it needs to effectively implement the General Plan. This may require updating the dimensional standards to align with desired General Plan outcomes (such as modifying streetside setback requirements to reduce parking in front of the building).

Consider Targeted Updates to Zoning District Standards

Beyond reviewing the districts for General Plan conformance, a variety of targeted updates to specific district standards should be considered based on evolving policy goals. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Mixed-use:** Consider additional tools to allow mixed-use development at a variety of scales in some existing districts or in new districts. (Also see the discussion of revisions to the planned development districts below.)
 - There is interest in allowing residential development (especially multifamily) by right in some commercial corridor areas to encourage walkability. Larger commercial centers with abundant parking along Highway 111, many of which are currently zoned PC3, may be good candidates for such redevelopment opportunities. The current General Plan designations for some of these areas (Regional Retail and Suburban Retail Center) allow mixed-use, though the current PC3 zoning does not.

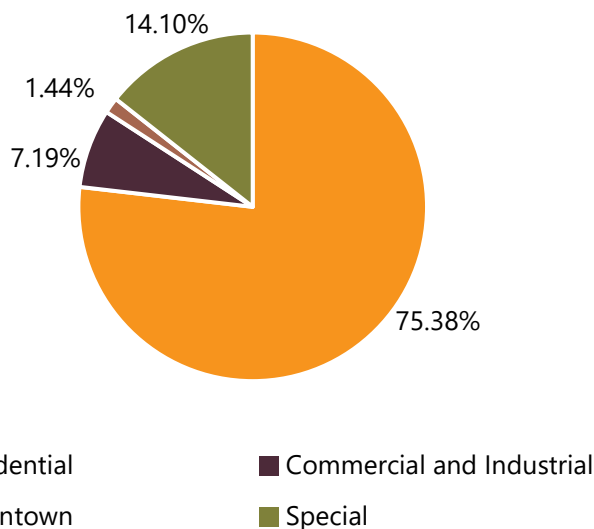
There are many examples in California and nationally of communities that have attempted to revitalize aging strip centers by integrating new multifamily development to replace current large parking areas. In Palm Desert, a new “regional mixed-use district” and might be appropriate to achieve these goals.

- Conversely, there is interest in allowing some new small-scale nonresidential development in some residential districts to allow the type of walkable, corner store-type development that could help reduce vehicle miles traveled. Current use-specific standards allowing mixed-use development in these areas are too vague (e.g., “review for compatibility with use in the vicinity.”)
- **Downtown:** The city anticipates revisions to the Downtown districts to be prepared as part of the development of new Downtown Objective Design Standards (ODS). These new or revised districts should be integrated when they are available. This may involve adoption of new base districts that replace the current overlay districts.

Minimize the Unpredictability of the Planned Development Districts

Today, just over 75 percent of land in Palm Desert is zoned for residential development, with more than 9,000 acres (or 57 percent of the City’s acreage) designated as PR, Planned Residential and another 630 acres (about four percent of the City’s acreage) as HPR, Hillside Planned Residential. The planned commercial (PC) districts are also used extensively, especially along Highway 111.

Land Area (% Acres) by Zoning District Category



Around 75 percent of land in Palm Desert is zoned exclusively for residential development, most of which (61 percent) is designated as a form of planned residential district, which allows for more flexibility in the creation of new housing projects, but also creates an added layer of difficulty for City staff to manage and review over time.

While the planned districts are widely used in Palm Desert, many stakeholders noted their relative lack of standards and predictability. The new UDC provides an opportunity to create an updated set of zoning districts that could serve as better tools to support and encourage the types of development called for in the General Plan. For example, the discussion above of refinements to the base districts notes several opportunities for creating new mixed-use tools to update or replace the PR and PC3 districts.

Another way to improve the planned districts would be up to create more predictable, objective standards for certain uses and development patterns that would be required to be used in the planned districts. For example, any new missing-middle housing would need to comply with objective standards in the UDC. Then, a developer would have a “tool kit” that establishes dimensional and development standards for each type of housing. Developers can then “grab the pieces” they want/need to build in the Planned Residential district.

Reorganize Zoning District Standards

Minor formatting and organizational improvements could be made to enhance all zoning districts, including:

- Rewrite zoning district descriptions to more accurately reflect the purpose of each district based on development intensities and land uses.
- Relocate land use permissions and use-specific standards in accordance with the recommendations made in the following section (Clarify the Land Use Regulations).
- Discuss the City’s preferred location for dimensional standards and associated district graphics. Should dimensional standards be grouped into one summary table by broader district category (as is currently provided) or should each district have its own dimensional standards table?

Recommendations

- Refine base zoning districts, including purpose statements and dimensional standards, to ensure implementation of the General Plan.
- Consider targeted updates to district standards, including new tools for mixed-use and downtown district updates.
- Support more objective alternatives in the UDC to minimize the unpredictability of the planned districts.
- Reorganize zoning district information.

Clean Up Overlay Districts

Depict Overlay Districts on the Zoning Map

Palm Desert’s online zoning map is accessible through the City’s website and allows users to view where each zoning district is applied throughout the community. The online map is an important tool for providing residents and property owners with accurate information about how land can be used and developed. Today, the zoning map only depicts two of the existing overlay districts (the Downtown Core Overlay and the Downtown Edge Transition Overlay),

making it seem at a glance that no other overlay districts are in use at this time. This could create confusion, as people using the map may not know that a different overlay district applies to the property they are viewing, and less experienced map users may not know how to interpret the category descriptions associated with a specific parcel. As part of the UDC process, we recommended updating the zoning map to depict where overlay districts are applied throughout Palm Desert, helping people form a better understanding of the regulations that apply to a given property.

Clarify Housing Overlay District Standards

The Housing Overlay District (HOD) is required by Housing Element program 8.A, which directs the City to maintain flexible development regulations, eliminate public hearing requirements, and waive review fees in the interest of creating housing developments with a minimum of 20 percent income-restricted units. While the existing HOD addresses these topics, the standards provided are vague and difficult to interpret. To simplify the review of projects within the HOD, we recommend clarifying undefined or subjective language within the overlay standards and further exploring how the Multifamily and Mixed-Use Objective Design Standards play into the review of proposed multifamily projects.

Retire Unused Overlay Districts

There are 13 overlay districts described in Chapter 25.28 of the Zoning Ordinance, three of which appear to be unused (the Natural Factors/Restricted Development, the Seismic Hazards, and the Mixed-Use overlay districts). As part of the UDC process, we will review the purpose statements and standards associated with each overlay district and evaluate where changes should be made to improve the usability of each overlay. If it is determined that an existing overlay need not be carried forward as part of the UDC, then it will be retired.

Recommendations

- Update the official zoning map to include overlay districts.
- Update the standards in the Housing Overlay District to reduce subjectivity.
- Retire any unused or unnecessary overlay districts, as appropriate.

Clarify the Land Use Regulations

Identifying the various land uses allowed within each zoning district is an important element of any zoning ordinance. Examples of different types of land uses include “single-family dwelling,” “restaurant,” and “automotive service facility.” The UDC project provides an opportunity to revisit the way the way Palm Desert defines, categories, and regulation various land uses. The recommendations described below are intended to help code users by consolidating use-specific information, adding modern uses, removing outdated uses, and providing clear definitions to support each use.



Restaurant use along El Paseo.

Create a Consolidated Land Use Table

Title 25 currently contains four use matrices organized by zoning district category, such as residential, commercial and industrial, downtown, and special districts. This layout is most effective in helping applicants with a specific property in mind identify which uses are permitted in their specific zoning district. However, this layout is less effective for applicants who know what land use they want to establish, but are not sure which zoning districts could support the creation of that specific use.

We recommend creating a consolidated use table that includes all districts and land uses permitted in Palm Desert. This will allow for side-by-side district comparisons and help the City evaluate whether or not the permitted uses are aligned with the intent of each district. Accessory uses will also be consolidated in the table, but they will be identified separately (i.e., grouped at the end of the table, similar to how temporary uses are currently organized) to emphasize the difference between primary and accessory uses. Cross-references will continue to be provided to direct the reader to applicable use-specific standards.

Recommendations

- Create a single land use table that displays all zoning districts and land uses in a single location.
- Review land uses for all districts to ensure they match district intent.

Table 4.2-1: Table of Allowed Uses

P = permitted use S = Special Use Permit required A = accessory use T = temporary use
Blank Cell = prohibited use

	Residential			Mixed-Use				Nonresidential				Use-Specific Standards
	R-1	R-2	R-3	M-1	M-2	M-3	M-4 [1]	CL	CG	LI	AA	
Residential Uses												
Household Living												
Cottage development			S	S								4.3.2.A
Dwelling, duplex			P									
Dwelling, fourplex			P	P								4.3.2.B
Dwelling, live/work		S	P	P	P	P	P					4.3.2.C
Dwelling, multifamily			S	P	P	P	P					4.3.2.D
Dwelling, single-family (attached)			P	P	P							4.3.2.E
Dwelling, single-family (detached)	P	P	P	P								4.3.2.F
Dwelling, triplex			P	P								4.3.2.G
Manufactured home development (HUD-Code)				S	S							4.3.2.H
Group Living												
Assisted living facility		S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S			
Continuing care facility			S	P	P	P	P	S	S			
Group care home, FHAA small	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					4.3.2.I
Group care home, FHAA large			P	P	P	P	P					4.3.2.I
Supportive housing, small					S	S	S					
Supportive housing, large							S					
Public, Institutional, and Civic Uses												
Community and Cultural Facilities												
Club or lodge					S	S	S	S	S		S	
Day care center, adult or child				S	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	4.3.3.A
Day care home, adult or child	A	A	A	A	A	A	A					4.3.3.B
Funeral facility								P	P			
Library				P	P	P	P	P	P	P	S	
Museum				P	P	P	P	P	P	P	S	
Park or open space, active	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Park or open space, passive	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		4.3.3.C
Place of worship	S	S	S	S	P	P	P	P	P	P	S	
Police, fire, or rescue facility (private)				S	S	P	P	P	P	P	S	
Police, fire, or rescue facility (public)	S	S	S	S	S	P	P	P	P	P	S	4.3.3.D

A sample use table from another community showing cross-references in the right column to use-specific standards that apply to some types of uses

Clean Up Land Uses

Consolidate, Define, and Retire Outdated Uses

A key step in clarifying land use regulations is to evaluate which land uses could be consolidated for simplification of the use table. Typical land uses that are good candidates for consolidation are those uses that are extremely specialized and have similar land use impacts to other allowed uses.

Part of this exercise should include review and likely removal of unnecessary or antiquated use types, like “sundries shop (general merchandise).” While the intent is to simplify and consolidate where possible, some uses should still be called out as a specific land use with different regulations, such as “amusement facility, indoors” and “amusement facility, outdoors.”

In the new UDC, each use category and subcategory should be defined to provide clear examples of the types of activities that are encapsulated within a broadly defined use type. This includes providing definitions for new and existing use subcategories, such as “automobile and vehicle uses” or “group dwelling uses” to provide a better foundation for determining which use types and activities fall within each category. These definitions will also help the City determine how to categorize new proposed uses in the future that are not listed in the use table.

Finally, all specific land uses in the new UDC will be defined. This includes updating definitions to reflect changes in how services are provided over time, such as clarifying if “therapy” should be regulated as a medical use (on-site visits by patients) or an office use (virtual therapy). Where specific uses are heavily influenced by State laws, such as group homes, those definitions will be updated to better align with the State.

Incorporate New Use Types

The new UDC should incorporate emerging land uses that have the potential of developing in Palm Desert. Proactively adding new uses to the UDC will give the City a leg-up in planning for and addressing potential impacts of emerging uses, rather than responding to requests for new uses as they arise. Clarion will work closely with staff and stakeholders to consider introducing a range of new use types, such as:

- **Artisan manufacturing.** These “maker” spaces are usually a hybrid between small-scale light industrial, office, and retail uses. For example, an artisan who owns a small welding business where they fabricate metal artwork and sell the products in a retail space, or an artist who fabricates ceramics and sells the products direct to consumers. Some

EXISTING ISSUES

The definition for “retail” may be rewritten to include many of the current land uses listed in the use matrix for downtown districts, such as “clothing and apparel shops,” “furniture stores and home furnishings,” “luggage shops,” and others that are commonly referred to as retail.

The use matrix for commercial and industrial districts lists “office, professional” and “office, travel agency,” which are both types of general office uses that do not have different land use impacts.

communities establish clear size thresholds for production and manufacturing and prohibit or limit distribution, warehousing, and/or wholesaling.

- **Breweries, wineries, and distilleries.** Title 25 identifies “bar or lounge,” “liquor store,” and “liquor, beverage and food items shop,” but fails to address the increasingly popular craft alcohol uses. The new UDC should explicitly include craft alcohol establishments and use-specific standards that address outdoor dining areas, storage of raw and processed materials, tasting facilities, and potentially differentiate between different types of facilities (e.g., craft breweries vs. larger breweries with distribution and/or bottling activities).
- **Data centers.** These large, warehouse-style buildings are quickly cropping up around the country to support national advances in technology. While Palm Desert likely does not have the water or energy capacity to support the creation of large-scale data centers, there may be value in identifying where, and under what conditions, data centers could be permitted in the future.
- **Prefabricated homes.** In contrast to stick-built homes, prefabricated homes are manufactured off-site and then transported to the construction site for assembly. Including prefabricated (or modular) homes as a use type in the new UDC provides the City with another tool for addressing the goals and policies in the Housing Element of the General Plan.

Recommendations

- Consolidate and retire specific uses, as appropriate.
- Define all use categories, subcategories, and specific uses.
- Consider incorporating new land uses, and applicable use-specific standards, for uses not explicitly addressed in Palm Desert’s existing development regulations.

Revisit Use Permissions

A key consideration when updating development regulations is to evaluate which land uses are allowed in each zoning district, which also requires evaluating the appropriate level of approval required for each use (i.e., whether the use is permitted by right, allowed subject to standards, or allowed only with an administrative or conditional use permit). It may be that some uses currently require a higher level of scrutiny than warranted, whereas other uses are being allowed without sufficient scrutiny of their potential impacts. In some cases, the addition of use-specific standards may be effective enough in addressing potentially unwanted impacts that a specific use can be re-assigned from a discretionary approval to a use permitted by-right.

WHAT WE HEARD

One example of use permissions to review during the UDC process are those for “retail, golf carts and neighborhood electric vehicles (NEV).” While some stakeholders believe golf carts should be permitted to be serviced in retail districts, others felt that servicing of golf carts is a more intensive use that warrants more restrictive use permissions.

During the draft phase, the team will present updates to land use allowances in a way that highlights proposed changes for easier review and discussion.

Recommendations

- Ensure appropriate level of use approval is required for each use type.
- Consider whether additional standards could be applied to a use to eliminate the need for a higher level of scrutiny.
- Identify changes to use permissions during the drafting process.

Update Use-Specific Standards

Use-specific standards address the impacts associated with particular land uses. They may be tailored based on specific location (such as zoning district or proximity to environmental features) and typically address issues such as distance requirements from lower-intensity uses and size limitations of the structure or use.

Use-specific standards are different from conditional uses, which are land uses requiring Planning Commission approval following a public hearing. Instead, use-specific standards apply to the use type regardless of the required approval (by-right vs. conditional use permit). Generally, for each use in the consolidated use table, the City should evaluate whether the use could be permitted “by right” if certain standards were in place, or whether certain standards should be in place regardless of the process for approval.

Reorganize Use-Specific Standards

In addition to the creation of a consolidated use table, we propose consolidating all use-specific standards into one section of the UDC. Currently, use-specific standards are listed under the residential, commercial, and industrial district chapters as well as in Chapter 25.34, Special Use Provisions. Cross-references will continue to be provided so that users can easily access the standards associated with a given use, with hyperlinks that send the Code user to the applicable section.

Establish New and Revise Current Use-Specific Standards

New standards may be needed to mitigate the impacts of certain uses regardless of the underlying zoning district. This approach often allows uses to be permitted by right or with limited staff review, subject to conformance with the standards, rather than requiring discretionary review at a public hearing. This approach also helps ensure consistency by making sure standards are uniformly applied, rather than negotiated for each application, and streamlines the development review process. Based on input received during the initial stakeholder interviews, new or revised use-specific standards may be added for the following land uses:

- **Accessory dwelling units.** Verify use-specific standards align with State requirements.
- **Drive-through and drive-in facilities.** Revisit permitted locations and clarify screening requirements.

- **Electric vehicle charging stations.** New use that may benefit from use-specific lighting and parking lot landscaping requirements.
- **Massage parlors.** Update definition and consider expanding application of spacing requirements.
- **Sport courts.** Consider providing standards to regulate noise, particularly if a pickleball court is proposed. Lighting standards may also be appropriate.
- **Tattoo parlors.** Consider applying spacing requirements and operational standards (such as those limiting hours of operation).

Recommendations

- Consolidate and reorganize use-specific standards.
- Establish new and revise current use-specific standards to address potential land use impacts.

Create a More User-Friendly Code

In addition to the substantive issues discussed in this document, several stakeholders shared that they find the City's current development regulations difficult to navigate and implement. Some stakeholders shared that they felt a lack of written interpretations has left the development regulations "a mess," requiring entry-level planners to run, what should be, simple questions up the chain to arrive at a consistent, clear answer. This is especially true for procedures, and can be exacerbated by the presence of conflicting code provisions.

These challenges are not unusual. Many communities find that, as development regulations are updated over time, they become increasingly complicated and more difficult to navigate and understand. The recommendations below are intended to make the UDC more user-friendly, which should improve the efficiency of the review process and overall effectiveness of the UDC.

Consolidate Development Regulations

A key focus of this project is to help the City implement a comprehensive approach to planning and development in Palm Desert. We recommend integrating the development regulations in Title 25, Zoning, Title 26, Subdivision, and Title 27, Grading, into a single Unified Development Code to reduce repetition across regulations and strengthen the City's wholistic approach to reviewing development proposals.

Recommendation

- Reorganize the development regulations into a Unified Development Code (UDC).

Incorporate Graphic Elements

Flowcharts, tables, photographs, illustrations, maps, and other graphics are useful for conveying information concisely. While Title 25 currently provides a mix of graphic elements to support written standards, Titles 26 and 27 are text-heavy and include almost no visual aids, aside from tables. We recommend expanding the use of graphics in the UDC to help explain how the regulations are intended to work, such as providing flowcharts to describe how a specific entitlement application is processed and adding illustrations to support subdivision design standards.

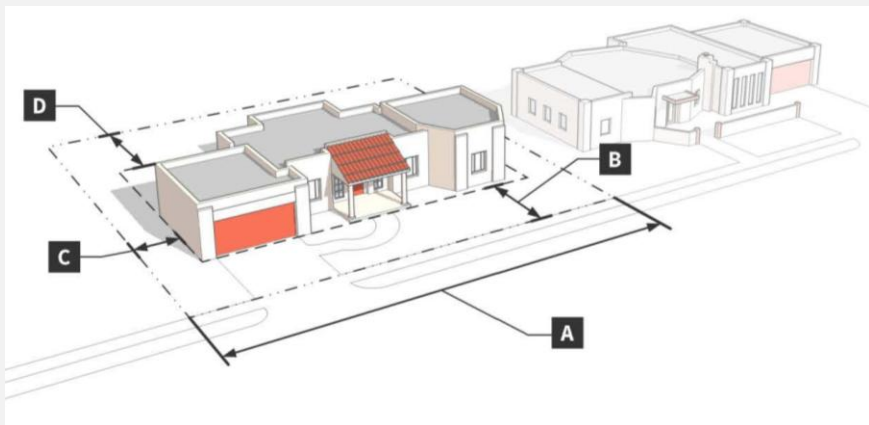
Recommendation

- Incorporate illustrations and other graphic elements, such as summary tables and flow charts, throughout the new UDC.

Key Focus Areas for the New UDC
Create a More User-Friendly Code



This illustration shows one example of how pedestrian access through a parking lot could be designed.



Lot Standards		
A	Width (minimum)	145 feet
	Area (minimum)	35,000 sq. ft.
	Density (maximum for new subdivisions) [1]	1 du/acre
Setbacks (minimum)		
B	Front	40 feet
C	Side	20 feet
D	Rear	40 feet
Height		
	Building height	See 2.24.E
Impervious Coverage (maximum)		
	Building coverage	15 percent
	Total coverage	40 percent

This graphic illustrates some of the basic dimensional requirements for a single-family zoning district. Labels (A) through (D) correlate to a dimensional table that identifies setbacks, height, and lot requirements.

This illustration depicts refuse area screening. Labels could also be added to identify specific standards, such as wall height or setbacks.



Define Key Terms

In terms of user-friendliness, the use of clear and precise language is just as important as document organization and format. While Title 27 consolidates all definitions into a single chapter, Titles 25 and 26 define terms in multiple locations. In the UDC, all key terms (including all land use types) should be defined, and repetitive or inconsistent definitions should be reconciled in one consolidated set of definitions. As part of this process, any regulatory information found in the definitions will be relocated to the main body of the UDC.

Beyond the definitions, all text in the UDC should be reviewed and rewritten as necessary to provide greater clarity. Instances of “legalese” or “plannerese” should be removed, and jargon should be replaced with plain language. These changes should result in a UDC that all users can understand, from the individual land owner looking to expand their house to the professional designer drawing a new development.

EXISTING ISSUES

Most definitions are housed in Chapter 25.99 of Title 25, but some use-specific definitions are also provided in Chapter 25.34, Special Use Provisions.

Some key terms, such as “drive-through” are currently undefined, which may cause confusion between similar terms (such as “drive-through” and “drive-in”).

Recommendations

- Define all key terms.
- Revise complex or confusing definitions for clarity.
- Review all code language and rewrite for clarity, as needed.



PALM DESERT
UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE

Detail Review of Current Development Regulations



April 2025

REVIEW OF CURRENT DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

In addition to the comments noted in the Zoning Code Assessment, the table below provides a review of the elements of Palm Desert’s current Code of Ordinances that will be incorporated into the new Unified Development Code (UDC). This analysis was informed by discussion with staff and stakeholders, as well as observations made by the project team. The table below does not include detailed comments on every section, though every section of the identified ordinances will be reviewed and modified, as needed, as part of the UDC drafting process.

Existing Section	Comments
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the recommendations from the Development Regulations Analysis report. • Replace outdated department references with references to the applicable City departments. • Replace outdated content references with live cross-references to applicable sections of the UDC. • Verify and update all references to regulations located outside the UDC (such as other PDMC titles or State law). • Relocate submittal requirements to the City’s website or provide as part of an administrative manual.
Title 8—Health and Safety	
Chapter 8.12 Discarded Material Enclosures	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate to the development standards chapter and add standards to require architectural compatibility between the primary structure and the trash enclosure • Replace references of approval authority to Director of Development Services Department or designee.
Chapter 8.40 Recreational Vehicles on Private Property	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate long-term parking permit for recreational vehicles procedure to the UDC. • Relocate RV storage and screening requirements to development standards chapter and align requirements with other screening standards, where appropriate. • Provide illustrations to clarify design requirements.
Title 24—Environment and Conservation	
Chapter 24.04 Water-efficient Landscape	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry forward references to applicable State requirements and the Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) model ordinance.

Existing Section	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the City’s landscape palette to establish a clear landscape theme, and to identify which types of plants should be used in different locations. Incorporate applicable terms defined in the CVWD model ordinance into the definitions section of the UDC. If desired, align applicability thresholds with those described in the CVWD model ordinance.
§24.04.060 Invasive, Noxious, and Nuisance Plant Species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate prohibition of invasive, noxious, and nuisance plant species into landscaping section of the UDC.
§24.04.070 Landscape and Irrigation Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require maintenance security at time of installation for landscaping located within the City right-of-way.
Chapter 24.08 Transportation Demand Management Requirements	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update to align with recent State legislation, as necessary. Clarify at what point in the development review process a qualifying applicant must submit a TDM plan.
§24.04.050 Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update list of TDM plan options Evaluate existing TDM plan options for consistency with the off-street parking requirements of Title 25. Consider incentives for applicants who incorporate more than the mandatory requirements in their TDM plan.
Chapter 24.12 Fugitive Dust (PM10) Control	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update to align with proposed changes to the grading chapter (former Title 27), as necessary. Cross-reference Chapter 24.12 in the updated grading chapter, particularly as it relates to erosion control measures.
Chapter 24.16 Outdoor Lighting Requirements	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the City’s preferred approach to regulating outdoor lighting, including the possibility of creating lighting zones. Add applicability statement to outdoor lighting section and clarify exemptions to standards. Reorganize outdoor lighting section, starting with generally applicable standards before listing site-specific standards. Clarify prohibited light sources/fixtures. Incorporate outdoor lighting definitions into the definitions section of the UDC.
§24.16.025 Public Street Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the City’s preferred approach to regulating public street lighting, and update standards accordingly.
§24.16.040 Light Trespass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update light trespass standards to address backlight, uplight, and glare (BUG) fixture ratings.

Existing Section	Comments
Chapter 24.20 Stormwater Management and Discharge Control	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add cross-reference(s) in the development standards chapter of the UDC to applicable stormwater management standards.
Title 25—Zoning	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use consistent language when referencing the General Plan. • Zoning Districts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rewrite zoning district purpose statements to clarify the objective purpose of each district. ○ Add example illustration to support each zoning district description. • Land Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consolidate all use matrices into a single land use table in a new use regulations chapter. ○ Clarify the intent of each land use symbol (i.e., P, A, C). ○ Symbolize uses not permitted with a blank cell in the table. ○ Relocate all specific use standards to new use regulations chapter.
Chapter 25.02 Introductory Provisions	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add severability section.
§25.02.010 Title and Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update reference to be “Unified Development Code” or “UDC.” • Clarify relationship of the UDC to the General Plan and other adopted planning documents. • Remove “Role of Zoning Ordinance” statement, which is covered more effectively in the Purpose statement.
§25.02.030 Scope, Interpretation, and Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify how the UDC applies to public or quasi-public development. • Clarify how internal and external code conflicts are resolved. • Include a statement addressing the UDC’s relationship to private covenants. • Add a subsection to address how the adoption, and subsequent amendments, to the UDC impact projects under review.
§25.02.040 Administrative Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the roles and responsibilities of decision-making bodies to align with the recommendations in the “Streamline Development Review Processes” section of the Development Regulations Analysis report. • Add a cross-reference to the development review procedures summary table provided later in the code.
§25.02.050 Rules and Interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate to new rules of construction and definitions chapter of the UDC.

Existing Section	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocate “Calculations—Rounding” to new rules of measurement section and align rounding provisions for affordable housing with State density bonus law.
Chapter 25.04 Establishment of Zoning Districts	
§25.04.020 Zoning Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace zoning districts descriptions with a table of all zoning districts established in the UDC. Update Table 25.04-1: Zoning Districts to align proposed zoning districts with General Plan land use designations, as needed.
§25.04.030 Zoning Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify how the official zoning map and zoning district boundaries are interpreted and maintained.
Chapter 25.10 Residential Districts	
§25.10.030 Allowed Land Uses and Permit Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider removing the following land uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Condominium (define as an ownership style) Noncommercial livestock raising Kennel Neighborhood government office Consider incorporating use-specific standards for the following land uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duplexes Group homes of seven or more residents Domestic animals Converted condominium hotel
§25.10.050 Development Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace “Hillside Planned Residential Development Standards” with new Hillside Objective Design Standards. Overhaul the Planned Residential district as described in the Development Regulations Analysis report. Relocated approval criteria for Planned Residential developments to applicable procedures section. Clarify modifications to dimensional standards that may be permitted by the ARC, as footnoted in Table 25.10-3.
Chapter 25.16 Commercial and Industrial Districts	
§25.16.030 Allowed Land Uses and Permit Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider expanding land use permissions in the SI district to allow more heavy commercial uses. Consider removing the following land uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caretaker housing Convention and visitors bureau Time-share project Consider adding the following land uses:

Existing Section	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bar or lounge ○ Golf cart/neighborhood electric vehicle sales ○ Personal storage facility ● Consider incorporating use-specific standards for the following land uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Single-room occupancy ○ Homeless shelter ○ Outdoor entertainment facilities ○ Commercial parking lot ○ Accessory massage establishment ○ Outdoor sales ○ Automotive gasoline station ● Rename commercial communication tower to wireless communication facility and expand to include the full spectrum of possibilities.
§25.16.040 Specific Use Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relocate drive-through standards to off-street parking and loading chapter.
§25.16.050 Development Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consolidate setback information from Table 25.16-2 into the general development standards table. ● Clarify distinction between front yard and street-side setbacks throughout Table 25.16-5. ● Relocated residential adjacency standards to new development standards chapter.
Chapter 25.18 Downtown Districts Development Standards	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to explore the creation of a Downtown ODS.
§25.18.030 Characteristics of Downtown Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider converting the existing downtown overlay districts to base zoning districts.
§25.18.040 Land Use and Permit Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider modifying land use permissions and associated standards for residential development in the downtown districts to support the creation of mixed-use developments.
§25.18.050 Development Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explore modifications to dimensional standards, where appropriate.
§25.18.060 Illustrated Glossary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relocate illustrated glossary contents to general measurements sections.
Chapter 25.20 Downtown Districts Design Guidelines	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with the City to identify and incorporate modifications to the existing downtown districts design guidelines that align with the work that has already been done on the Downtown ODS.
Chapter 25.22 Special Districts	

Existing Section	Comments
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update land use permissions and dimensional standards as needed to align with the Public Facility/Institutional District land use designation in the General Plan.
Chapter 25.28 Overlay Districts	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depict overlay districts on the zoning map.
§25.28.020 Senior Housing Overlay District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider retiring Senior Housing Overlay district and adding senior housing as a use with associated standards. Remove conflicts with State density bonus law, as needed.
§25.28.030 Housing Overlay District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define “smaller residential projects.”
§25.28.040 El Paseo Overlay District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider retiring the El Paseo Overlay District and applying the existing standards as a new downtown base district.
§25.28.045 San Pablo Overlay District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simplify formula business prohibitions along San Pablo Avenue.
§25.28.050 Mixed-Use Overlay District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retire or rethink—not currently applied.
§25.28.060 Planned Community Overlay District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define “master plan.”
§25.28.070 Freeway Commercial Overlay District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide cross-references to applicable development standards. Review and update landscaping requirements.
§25.28.080 Scenic Preservation Overlay District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update process for developing in the Scenic Preservation Overlay. Clarify line of sight study submittal requirements.
§25.28.090 Drainageway, Floodplain, Watercourse Overlay District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add cross reference to Title 28, Flood Damage Prevention.
§25.28.100 Natural Factors/Restricted Development Overlay District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retire—only applied to one parcel.
§25.28.110 Seismic Hazards Overlay District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retire—not currently applied.
§25.28.120 Bermuda Dunes Airport Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider incorporating or adopting by reference the Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Policy Document.
§25.28.130 Open Space/Residential Overlay District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider modifications to the applicability of this overlay district.
Chapter 25.34 Special Use Provisions	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate the standards of this chapter into the new use regulations chapter.

Existing Section	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize use-specific standards alphabetically by land use category. Relocate all use-specific definitions to the general definitions chapter and cross reference as needed.
§25.34.020 Home Occupations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider additions to the list of permitted and prohibited uses. Consider expanding allowances to include any residential unit (not residential district).
§25.34.030 Accessory Dwelling Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align standards with recently adopted Ord. 1423. Add graphics and tables to supplement text (see subsection F).
§25.34.040 Affordable Housing and Density Bonus Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update standards for conformance with State density bonus law.
§25.34.050 Residential Condominium Conversions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include cross reference to applicable notice procedures. Consider additional standards for conversion projects (e.g., fire protection standards and utility metering requirements).
§25.34.080 Temporary Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand list of permitted temporary uses. Consider establishing different requirements for major and minor temporary uses.
§25.34.090 Automotive Service Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider incorporating use-specific standards to address decommissioning of closed gas stations (e.g., removal of fuel pumps).
§25.34.100 Restaurants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separate drive-through standards from restaurant use-specific standards. Consider incorporating “ghost kitchen” as a distinct use. Review and update outdoor seating requirements (maximum allowances, thresholds for review, etc.)
§25.34.110 Adult Entertainment Establishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add cross-reference to applicable definitions in Chapter 5.88.
§25.34.140 Exceptions Based on Unconstitutional Takings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocate this section to the procedures chapter.
§25.34.180 Two-Unit Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add cross-reference to urban lot split requirements. Incorporate graphics to support subsection 6, unit standards.
Chapter 25.40 Site Development Provisions	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create new rules of measurement section to address general rules (e.g., rounding, measuring height, measuring distance) and specific rules (e.g., lot dimensions, setbacks, lot coverage, density, etc.) Update existing and incorporate new graphics to support measurement requirements.

Existing Section	Comments
§25.40.020 Yard Measurements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish method for determining which lot line is the front lot line. • Consider differentiating between required setbacks and required yards. • Relocate requirements of §25.40.020.D to residential district dimensions table.
§25.40.030 Projections into Required Setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add cross-reference to applicable fences and walls section. • Clean up Table 25.40-1: Projections by explicitly listing all projection types and differentiating between porches, patios, and decks.
§25.40.040 Height Measurements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the City’s preferred approach for measuring building height, and update accordingly. • Expand building height discussion to include how basements and mezzanines are reviewed. • Reframe §25.40.040.B to explicitly address a range of exceptions to building height requirements, such as architectural features, elevators and stairways, and mechanical equipment.
§25.40.050 Accessory Buildings and Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add purpose statement as suggested by staff. • Clarify applicability of this section (Only applies to residential districts? Or to all zoning districts?) • Add requirement that accessory structures cannot be constructed before the primary structure. • Reformat standards in §25.40.050.B into a table. • Incorporate design standards to require compatibility between primary and accessory structures. • Consider adding metal shipping containers to the list of prohibited structures.
§25.40.060 Swimming Pools and Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reformat section to incorporate standards into a table, as applicable. • Clarify what qualifies as “appropriate documentation.”
§25.40.070 Private Tennis Courts and Sports Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add purpose statement as proposed by staff. • Clarify if these standards apply to common area amenities included as part of larger developments. • Update process from ARC review to CUP approval.
§25.40.080 Fences and Walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate fences, walls, and screening standards for non-residential developments. • Identify prohibited materials for fences and walls. • Establish temporary fencing allowances and requirements (e.g., construction, PM-10 wind fencing, securing vacant sites). • Discuss and update applicability, height, and design requirements for §25.40.080.C. • Add cross-reference to sight visibility triangle regulations.

Existing Section	Comments
§25.40.090 Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate screening language as proposed by staff.
§25.40.100 Traffic Sight Obstruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Either incorporate as part of the fences and walls section or add cross-reference to the requirements from fences and walls section. Compare requirements to Caltrans standards and update accordingly. Consider allowing flexibility based on approval by City engineer. Incorporate graphics to support regulations.
§25.40.130 Required Park Dedication Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocate to subdivision design chapter.
Chapter 25.42 Multifamily and Mixed-Use Objective Design Standards	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-adopt Multifamily and Mixed-Use ODS by resolution, as proposed by staff.
Chapter 25.46 Off-Street Parking and Loading	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restructure purpose and applicability statements to express key objectives as bullet points, as recommended by staff.
§25.46.030 Parking Lot Design Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate graphics to support regulations Add table and graphic to clarify stall dimensions, stall angle, and drive aisle requirements. Consider requirements for improving safety and comfortability of internal pedestrian walkways (e.g., wheel stops, lighting). Update parking lot screening requirements in line with Growth Plan Land Use Policy 2.2.
§25.46.040 Parking Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and adjust minimum parking requirements, as appropriate. Align Table 25.46-1: Parking Schedule with the new use table. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add ADU parking requirement Add STR parking requirement Differentiate between multifamily parking requirements for market rate and affordable units. Add cross-reference to residential parking structure standards (§25.40.050). Incorporate opportunities for parking reductions, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared (joint use) parking In-lieu parking payments Proximity to public transit
§25.46.060 Bicycle Parking Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add design requirements for long-term bicycle parking.
§25.46.070 Clean Air Vehicle Parking Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update to align this section with the requirements of the California Green Code, as necessary.

Existing Section	Comments
§25.46.100 Off-Street Loading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify location, screening, and maneuvering requirements in line with staff recommendations.
Chapter 25.52 Landscaping	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restructure purpose and applicability statements to express key objectives as bullet points, as recommended by staff. Add cross-reference to Chapter 24.04. Incorporate general landscaping standards that apply to all developments (e.g., materiality, size of plantings, screening and buffering requirements, etc.) Replace reference to landscape manager with applicable approval authority.
§25.52.030 Residential Landscape Provisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update to align with CVWD residential landscaping standards.
§25.52.040 Nonresidential Landscape Provisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Table 25.52-1 to remove outdated information and align with setback standards established in the applicable dimensional standards table.
§25.52.050 Parking Lot Landscaping Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Figure 25.52-4 to align with written requirements and add new graphics to depict design standards. Replace subjective language with objective standards.
§25.52.060 Landscape Maintenance Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add cross-reference to maintenance standards in chapter 8.70 and incorporate additional maintenance language as proposed by staff. Consider adding requirement for a landscape maintenance bond.
§25.52.070 Parking Lot Landscaping Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish tiered review system for landscaping plans (staff-level and ARC review).
Chapter 25.56 Signs <i>Not included in this effort</i>	
Chapter 25.60 Procedures	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retitle chapter "Administration and Procedures." Restructure procedural information to create a single administration and procedures section, which consolidates and reorganizes information from chapters 25.60, 25.64, 25.68, 25.72, and 25.78 into different sections within the chapter administration and procedures. Add new section to address pre-application meetings.
§25.60.020 Application and Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine with sections 25.60.030 and 25.60.170 to create new application submittal and processing section. Clarify who may submit a development application. Clarify that, when projects require multiple entitlements, those entitlement requests may be reviewed concurrently. Provide examples of materials that may be requested as part of an application submittal.

Existing Section	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate requirement for fiscal impact assessment for projects greater than 5 acres in size. • Incorporate fee language as proposed by staff.
§25.60.030 Determination of Completeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate determination of completeness language as proposed by staff. • Clarify procedure for when an applicant fails to submit a complete application (withdrawal vs. deny without prejudice).
§25.60.040 Environmental Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine with section 25.60.050 to create new application review and analysis section. • Incorporate scope and applicability language as proposed by staff.
§25.60.060 Public Hearing and Public Notice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update content to align with recent modifications to public notice and hearing procedures proposed by staff.
§25.60.070 Approving Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate Table 25.60-1 to the beginning of the chapter. • Incorporate procedures from Titles 26 and 27. • Update content to align with proposed changes to review and approval authority, as needed. • Clarify the ARC’s role in reviewing applications that require multi-step approval (e.g., precise plans, conditional use permits, variances, etc.).
§25.60.080 Appeals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine with sections 25.60.090, 25.60.100, 25.60.110, 25.60.130 to create new post-decision actions and limitations section.
§25.60.090 Effective Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate effective dates as proposed by staff.
§25.60.100 Land Use Permit Time Limits and Extensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate all time limit and extension standards to this section, then cross-reference where appropriate. • Incorporate time limit language as proposed by staff. • Express time limit and extension periods in terms of months, not years. • Differentiate between actions for exercising building permits and actions for exercising use permits. • Incorporate permit extension language as proposed by staff. • Clarify findings for permit extensions, as proposed by staff.
§25.60.110 Modification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiate between City-initiated punitive modifications and applicant-initiated amendments to approvals.
§25.60.120 Revocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace existing content with general revocation standards. • Incorporate existing content as part of conditional use permit procedures (content is specific to revocations of land use entitlements).
§25.60.140 Enforcement and Penalties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate to general enforcement section.

Existing Section	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify that all conditions of approval are enforceable in the same manner and to the same extent as any other applicable requirement of the UDC.
§25.60.150 Certificate of Use and Occupancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocate to site development procedures section. Differentiate between certificate of use procedures and certificate of occupancy procedures.
§25.60.160 Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine content to public hearing and public notice section.
§25.60.170 Application Withdrawal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiate between City-initiated withdrawals and applicant-initiated withdrawals.
Chapter 25.62 Nonconforming Provisions	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate applicability statement as proposed by staff.
§25.62.030 Nonconforming Lots, Buildings, and uses in Nonresidential zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove duplicative change in status of nonconforming use regulation.
§25.62.080 Conforming Process for Legal Nonconforming Residential Uses in Residential Zones and Office Professional Zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add certificate of conformance to table 25.60-1. Provide objective findings for certificate of conformance requests.
§25.62.100 Abatement Hearings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and align hearing procedures with updates to general procedures, as appropriate. Consider relocating abatement hearing procedures to new flexibility and relief procedures section.
Chapter 25.64 Decisions by the Zoning Administrator	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove the Zoning Administrator from the UDC delegate their existing responsibilities to the Director.
§25.64.030 Adjustments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify permissible adjustments and summarize opportunities in a table.
Chapter 25.68 Decisions by the Architectural Review Commission	
§25.68.020 Design Review Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separate design review purpose statement from design review applicability statement. Clarify which types of projects require ARC review. Consider relocating two-story development standards to a different section of the UDC (Use-specific standards? Development standards?).
§25.68.030 Exceptions to ARC Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify exceptions to ARC review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a threshold for what qualifies as a “minor modification.”

Existing Section	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expand the list of projects that are reviewed by staff (e.g., ADUs, eligible facilities requests, temporary structures, etc.)
§25.68.040 Findings of the ARC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Incorporate new section to address the scope of the ARC’s design review (i.e., site design, landscaping, and architecture), as recommended by staff. ● Update findings to better align with the ARC’s scope of review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Remove finding B related to traffic; ○ Update finding C to reduce subjectivity; and ○ Remove finding E related to land use.
§25.68.050 Sign Design Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update findings to better align with the ARC’s scope of review.
§25.68.060 Comprehensive Sign Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relocate comprehensive sign program findings from §25.56.100.E to this section.
Chapter 25.72 Decisions by the Planning Commission	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reorganize content to include all steps for a specific procedure into one section (such as zoning amendments or hillside development plan).
§25.72.020 Use Determinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update procedure to allow approval by the Director with the option to refer up to the Planning Commission. ● Clarify purpose statement as proposed by staff. ● Include applicability statement. ● Consider additional steps for adding new uses, approved through use determination, to the UDC.
§25.72.030 Precise Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider establishing two types of precise plans: administrative and non-administrative (requiring PC approval). ● Update purpose statement as proposed by staff. ● Establish separate procedures for minor modifications to precise plans (approved by Director), design modifications (approved by ARC), and major modifications (approved by PC).
§25.72.050 Conditional Use Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish separate procedures for minor modifications to CUPs (approved by Director) and major modifications (approved by PC). ● Consider listing examples of the types of changes that are considered minor in nature. ● Remove 1-year time limit for minor modifications. ● Replace §25.72.050.L with cross-reference to general post-decision actions section.
§25.72.060 Condominium Conversion Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Require submittal of a tentative map as part of a condominium conversion permit application. ● Include cross-reference to §25.34.050. ● Incorporate findings specific to condominium conversion projects.

Existing Section	Comments
§25.72.070 Variances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update applicability statement as proposed by staff.
§25.72.080 Hillside Development Plan, Commission Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In light of the Hillside ODS, discuss where hillside development plan procedures should be located in the UDC.
Chapter 25.78 Decisions by the City Council	
§25.78.020 Hillside Development Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align hillside development plan approval thresholds with new hillside ODS (such as allowing administrative approvals for developments that conform to the ODS). Consider requiring an environmental constraints analysis for projects located within or adjacent to a conservation area as established by the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan. Incorporate findings specific to hillside development plans.
§25.78.030 Amendments – Zoning Ordinance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rename “UDC Text Amendment.” Clarify who may initiate a text amendment. Remove 40 day time constraint. Incorporate findings specific to UDC text amendments.
§25.78.040 Amendments – Zoning Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate findings specific to zoning map amendments. Replace §25.78.040.E with cross-reference to general post-decision actions section.
§25.78.050 Prezoning for Annexed Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace §25.78.050.A with purpose statement or update §25.78.050.A for clarity. Update applicability language as proposed by staff. Change “unannexed” to “upon annexation.”
§25.78.060 Development Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add authority for development agreements language as proposed by staff. Review and update topics that must be addressed in the development agreement, including land dedication, applicant financing, and other topics deemed necessary by City Council. Consider incorporating a timeframe for when construction must commence by.
§25.78.070 General Plan Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update findings for property owner-initiated general plan amendments.
§25.78.080 Specific Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and clarify instances when a specific plan may be required.
Chapter 25.99 Definitions	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove all standards from definitions and relocate to the applicable development standards section. Remove all definitions for terms that are no longer used in the UDC. Define all City officials referenced throughout the UDC (such as City Attorney, Chief Building Official, etc.).

Existing Section	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add the following definitions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Abandoned○ Accessory residential building○ Assisted living○ Bedroom (see chapter 5.10)○ Casita○ Floor area, net○ Ground-mounted utility pole○ Master plan○ Second dwelling○ Sports court○ Tower element○ Utility, transportation, public facility, and communication use• Update the following definitions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Abut○ Commercial (separate out “commercial complex”)○ Condominium conversion project○ Density, gross○ Density, net○ Dwelling, guest○ Face or wall of a building○ Floor area ratio○ Gross area○ Hillside areas○ Hillside ridge○ Institution, general○ Line of sight○ Lot line, front○ Maintenance yard○ Manufactured housing○ Master plan of arterial highways○ Master plan of drainage○ Medical marijuana dispensary... or dispensary○ Mezzanine○ Mixed-use○ Mortuary○ Net area

Existing Section	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nonconforming structure ○ Nonconforming use ○ Objective design standards ○ Planned development ○ Planned unit development industrial ○ Planned unit development residential ○ Roof deck—prohibited ○ Sidewalk ○ Warehouse • Clarify the difference between the following uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Amusement facility and entertainment facility ○ Accessory dwelling unit, casita, and guest dwelling • Add cross-reference to PDMC 5.88.020 as part of adult entertainment definition. • Replace roadway classification definitions with cross-reference to the terms as defined in the Growth Plan.
Title 26—Subdivisions	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate Title 26 into the new UDC.
Chapter 26.08 Definitions	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate subdivision definitions into the definitions section of the UDC. • Compare the definitions in this chapter with the definitions in the state Subdivision Map Act. • Add definition for “dead-end street.”
Chapter 26.12 General Requirements	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and incorporate subdivision review and approval authority into the existing authority statements in Title 25.
Chapter 26.16 Processing—Responsibilities	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace outdated employee references with references to the applicable City staff member(s). • Relocate applicable review and approval authority information into the existing authority statements in Title 25. • Consider replacing §26.16.090, Failure to Comply—Illegal Division of Land with general violation statement(s).
Chapter 26.20 Tentative Map	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate tentative map procedures to new administration and procedures chapter.

Existing Section	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify review and approval authority for each type of tentative map request (i.e., tentative tract and vesting maps should be discretionary; tentative parcel maps within certain thresholds administrative). Consider incorporating procedures for additional tentative maps (e.g., reversion to acreage and finance and conveyance maps). Consider relocating map detail requirements (e.g., drawing specifications) outside of the UDC. Clarify the makeup, role, and authority of the Land Division Committee. Consider establishing thresholds for administrative approval of revisions to approved tentative maps.
Chapter 26.24 Final Map	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocate final map procedures to new administration and procedures chapter. Consider relocating map detail requirements (e.g., size, material, scale, and map notes) outside of the UDC. Update final map filing requirements to allow for digital submittals. Determine if the City should require detailed street improvement plans at the final map stage, or if estimated street improvement plans would suffice.
Chapter 26.28 Public Improvement Requirements	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate regulations allowing the City engineer or director to release surety for improvements that are minor in nature. New streets should be released by council.
Chapter 26.30 Urban Lot Splits	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocate definition of “urban lot split” to definitions section. Discuss and determine appropriate location for urban lot split development regulations (which may be de-coupled from procedural information). Incorporate tables and illustrations to support urban lot split development regulations.
Chapter 26.32 Parcel Splits	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidate redundant procedural information between Chapter 26.32, Parcel Splits and Chapter 26.34, Parcel Map Waiver. Provide illustrations to show the different types of requests covered in this section.
Chapter 26.34 Parcel Map Waiver	

Existing Section	Comments
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidate redundant procedural information between Chapter 26.32, Parcel Splits and Chapter 26.34, Parcel Map Waiver.
Chapter 26.36 Deposits and Fees	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider relocating fee information into a single chapter or section that applies to all development regulations (e.g., zoning, grading, and subdivision).
Chapter 26.40 Design Standards and Requirements	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align design standards and requirements with the goals, policies, and roadway typologies in Chapter 4 of the General Plan. Update Table 26.40.040 to align with General Plan roadway classifications. Align written street naming regulations with the City's current practice. Align §26.40.110, Hillside Subdivisions and Planned Unit Developments, with the recommendations in the forthcoming Hillside ODS. Work with utility providers to determine appropriate minimum width requirement for utility easements. Remove specific lot standards from subdivision design requirements (in favor of allowing zoning district dimensional standards to dictate minimum lot sizes).
Chapter 26.44 Public Improvements and Grading	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add cross-reference to applicable grading standards, as appropriate. Determine whether or not sidewalks should be required as part of new developments.
Chapter 26.48 Neighborhoods and Community Public Facilities	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine with public facilities information from Title 25 (i.e., park dedication, Quimby fees).
Chapter 26.49 Drainage Facilities	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add cross-reference to applicable stormwater management regulations, as appropriate.
Chapter 26.52 Limitation on Final Decisions	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace with standardized procedural language related to post-decision actions in new administration and procedures chapter.
Chapter 26.54 Conversion to Condominiums	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocate Chapter 26.54 to new administration and procedures chapter.

Existing Section	Comments
Title 27—Grading	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate Title 27 into the new UDC.
Chapter 27.08 Definitions	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate grading definitions into the definitions section of the UDC.
Chapter 27.12 Requirements and Standards of Land Alteration	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify types of grading permits addressed in the UDC. Define instances when a grading permit is required (such as any grading in excess of a specific amount, or the creation of slopes over a specific height). Define exceptions to grading permit requirements. Consider relocating plan submittal requirements (e.g., drawing scale, digital vs. hardcopy submittal) outside of the UDC.
Chapter 27.16 Subdivision Grading	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine whether or not the City would like to require subdivision approval prior to grading. Relocate land alteration permit information to the new administration and procedures chapter.
Chapter 27.20 Exemptions	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate current list of exemptions and determine if any new exemptions should be added or any current exemptions should be removed.
Chapter 27.24 Bonds	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate language for regulating the release of bonds. Consider providing opportunities for bond reductions.
Chapter 27.28 Administration	
Generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocate applicable contents of Chapter 27.28 to the new administration and procedures chapter. Update grading administration information to align with the formatting of other development regulations procedures. Consider relocating plan submittal requirements outside of the UDC. Relocate design standards (e.g., landscape berms, walls, etc.) to the new design standards chapter of the UDC.