

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

Thursday, April 23, 2026

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 Senate Bill 707, 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.

**WATCH THE MEETING LIVE:** Watch the City Council meeting live at the City's website: <https://palmdesert.zoom.us/> or on the City's [YouTube Channel](#).

**OPTIONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS MEETING:**

**OPTION 1: IN PERSON**

Attend in person in the Council Chamber, located at 73510 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert, California 92260.

**OPTION 2: VIA EMAIL**

Send your comments by email to: [CityClerk@palmdesert.gov](mailto:CityClerk@palmdesert.gov). Emails received prior to 10:00 a.m. on the day of the City Council meeting will be made part of the record and distributed to the City Council. Emails will not be read aloud at the meeting.

**OPTION 3: LIVE VIA ZOOM**

Access via [palmdesert.gov/zoom](https://palmdesert.gov/zoom) or [zoom.us](https://zoom.us), click "Join Meeting" and enter Webinar ID 833 6744 9572.

**OPTION 4: LIVE VIA TELEPHONE**

Call (213) 338-8477 and enter Meeting ID 833 6744 9572 followed by #.

**1. CALL TO ORDER - STUDY SESSION**

**2. STUDY SESSION TOPICS**

- 2.a Study Session Regarding Interview Procedures for the City's Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces** 5

Recommendation:

Provide direction to staff regarding whether the City's current interview procedures for Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces should be retained, modified, or replaced, including interview procedures, use of standardized interview questions, and the process for identifying recommended appointees following interviews.

- 2.b Update on the status of key projects by the Development Services department** 23

Recommendation:

Receive an update regarding key projects within the Development Services Department.

**3. ADJOURNMENT**

**4. PUBLIC NOTICES**

NOTE: Pursuant to Senate Bill 707, this meeting may be conducted by teleconference. Study Session is accessible in person or on the City’s website: [www.palmdesert.gov](http://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](http://www.palmdesert.gov) by clicking “Meetings & Agendas” at the top of the page.

Americans with Disabilities Act: It is the intention of the City of Palm Desert to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in all respects. If, as an attendee or a participant at this meeting, or in meetings on a regular basis, you will need special assistance beyond what is normally provided, the City will attempt to accommodate you in every reasonable manner. Please contact the Office of the City Clerk, (760) 346-0611, at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to inform us of your needs and to determine if accommodation is feasible.

**AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING**

I, Michelle Nance, 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](http://www.palmdesert.gov) no less than 72 hours prior to the meeting.

/S/ Michelle Nance  
Assistant City Clerk



# City of Palm Desert Staff Report

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Meeting Date: April 23, 2026

Prepared By: Anthony J. Mejia, City Clerk

Department: City Clerk's Office

Subject: Study Session Regarding Interview Procedures for the City's Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces

## Recommendation

Provide direction to staff regarding whether the City's current interview procedures for Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces should be retained, modified, or replaced, including interview procedures, use of standardized interview questions, and the process for identifying recommended appointees following interviews.

## Executive Summary

The purpose of this study session is to obtain City Council direction on the interview procedures for the City's appointed bodies. The discussion includes whether to retain, clarify, or modify the current streamlined reappointment process, whether to use standardized interview questions for future interview meetings, and whether to use named ranked choice ballots to identify recommended appointees following interviews.

## Background

On April 22, 2021, the City Council approved interview procedures for members seeking reappointment to certain appointed bodies. Under that action, the City Council established a streamlined reappointment process for some appointed bodies, under which an incumbent seeking reappointment to the same body would not be interviewed unless requested by a Councilmember.

Under the current framework, the following appointed bodies are subject to a streamlined reappointment process:

- Civic Engagement Committee
- Cultural Arts Committee
- Environmental Resources Committee
- Historic Preservation Committee
- Homelessness Task Force
- Library Advisory Committee
- Parks and Recreation Committee
- Public Safety Committee
- Housing Commission

Under the current framework, interviews are required for reappointments to the following appointed bodies:

- Architectural Review Commission
- Building Board of Appeals
- Finance Committee
- Planning Commission
- Rent Review Board

Since the adoption of the current framework, staff has identified implementation questions regarding how the streamlined reappointment process operates when additional applicants seek appointment to the same seat, as well as broader questions regarding whether the current distinction between appointed bodies continues to reflect the City Council's intended approach.

## **Discussion**

Staff's review of the current procedures has identified two issues for City Council consideration.

First, the current language does not clearly address how staff should proceed when an incumbent on a streamlined appointed body timely applies for reappointment and one or more additional applicants also apply for the same seat. The policy does not expressly state whether no interviews should be scheduled, or whether other applicants may be interviewed while the incumbent is considered for reappointment without an interview.

Second, the current framework gives incumbents on certain appointed bodies a procedural advantage unless a Councilmember requests an interview. While that approach promotes administrative efficiency, it may also reduce opportunities to reconsider long-serving incumbents and to interview non-incumbent applicants for the same seat.

### **Option 1: Clarify Existing Streamlined Reappointment Process**

For appointed bodies subject to the streamlined reappointment process, if an incumbent timely applies for reappointment to the same seat and no Councilmember requests an interview, the incumbent would be deemed recommended for reappointment and placed on a subsequent City Council agenda for approval.

This is the narrowest revision to the current procedure. It resolves the ambiguity while preserving the streamlined approach previously approved by the City Council.

The benefit of this option is efficiency. It preserves the least burdensome process for routine reappointments while retaining Council discretion to request an interview.

The drawback is that it would formalize a process under which an incumbent on a streamlined body may be reappointed without an interview, even when another applicant seeks the same seat.

### **Option 2: Universal Interviews**

Require interviews for all applicants, including incumbents, for all Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces.

This option creates a single rule for all appointments and reappointments. It ensures that every applicant is considered through the same public interview process.

The benefits are consistency, transparency, and regular reconsideration of incumbents.

The drawback is reduced efficiency. Interview meetings would become longer and more frequent, including in routine reappointment situations where no competing applicant has applied.

### **Option 3: Interviews Whenever There Is Competition for the Seat**

Require interviews whenever more than one applicant applies for a seat, including when an incumbent seeks reappointment and one or more additional applicants also apply for that same seat. For streamlined appointed bodies, a Councilmember could also request an interview even if the incumbent is the only applicant.

This option preserves efficiency when an incumbent is the only applicant, while requiring interviews when the City Council must choose among multiple candidates. It also preserves the City Council's discretion to request an interview in other circumstances.

The benefits are that it preserves a streamlined process in uncontested cases, ensures that all candidates are interviewed when a seat is contested, and avoids requiring interviews in every reappointment cycle.

The drawback is that the process would vary depending on whether a seat is contested or whether a Councilmember requests an interview. As a result, one incumbent may be interviewed while another is not, based on the circumstances of the application cycle or City Council interest in conducting an interview.

### **Option 4: Automatic Interview After a Defined Service Threshold**

Maintain a streamlined reappointment process for certain appointed bodies, but require an interview for any incumbent seeking reappointment to a third or subsequent term, regardless of whether another applicant has applied.

This option preserves efficiency for shorter-serving incumbents while creating a regular review point for longer-serving incumbents.

The benefit is that it addresses extended tenure without requiring interviews in every reappointment cycle.

The drawback is that this option would require interviews for long-serving incumbents even when there is no competing applicant, which reduces the benefit of the streamlined process over time.

### **Summary of Options**

The following options reflect four different approaches to reappointments:

- **Option 1** would retain the current streamlined structure and clarify how it operates.
- **Option 2** would require interviews in all cases.
- **Option 3** would require interviews when more than one applicant applies for a seat, while preserving Council discretion to request an interview in other cases.

- **Option 4** would retain a streamlined process in some cases but require interviews for incumbents after they have served a defined number of terms.

### **Additional Procedural Considerations for Future Interview Meetings**

In addition to the reappointment procedures discussed above, Senate Bill 707 requires covered City Council meetings to include remote public access through a two-way telephonic or audiovisual platform. As a result, future interview meetings will occur in a more formal public setting than in the City's past practice.

In that setting, it is recommended to use a standardized bank of interview questions. A preapproved list could promote a more consistent process while still allowing flexibility within the time available for each interview.

If the City Council elects to use a standardized question bank, it may select questions from the approved list and ask follow-up or clarification questions related to an applicant's responses or application materials.

The City Council may also wish to authorize the City Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem, to update the question bank from time to time in order to address newly pertinent issues and newly formed bodies. For transparency and ease of public access, the City Clerk would maintain the approved interview questions on the City's website.

### **Selection Method Following Interviews**

The City Council Subcommittee on Boards and Commissions has recommended that, following interviews, the City Council use named ballots and a ranked choice voting method to identify recommended appointees.

Under this approach, each Councilmember would complete a ballot listing their ranked preferences for each seat after the interview process. Ballots would be submitted to the City Clerk and retained as part of the appointment process record. The City Clerk would then tabulate the ballots following the meeting and present the results at the subsequent City Council meeting at which the Council would consider affirming the appointments or engaging in additional discussion before taking final action.

Because appointment decisions must be made openly, secret ballots would not be used. Named ballots would preserve a clear record of each Councilmember's preferences as part of the public appointment process.

### **Legal Review**

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

## **Financial Impact**

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with this item beyond the normal staff time required to administer the appointment and interview process. Depending on the interview framework selected by the City Council, future staff time associated with scheduling, agenda preparation, and meeting administration may increase modestly.

## **Attachments**

1. Draft Interview Questions
2. April 22, 2021 Staff Report

## Conflict of Interest Awareness Checklist

**Note:** *This checklist is informational only and does not constitute a legal determination. Each Councilmember remains responsible for identifying, disclosing, and evaluating any disqualifying interests under the Political Reform Act and applicable FPPC regulations.*

### 1. Site-Specific Property Interest

Does this item involve a project site or other identifiable real property?

Yes

No

**If yes, identify the project site:**

*Councilmembers should consider whether they own, lease, or hold interests in real property within 1,000 feet of the project site. (Gov. Code § 87103(b); FPPC Reg. 18702.2).*

### 2. SB 1439 / Gov. Code § 84308 Applicability (Campaign Contributions)

Does this item involve a license, permit, other entitlement for use, or a contract or franchise agreement that is not competitively bid, a labor agreement, or a personal employment contract?

Yes

No

**If yes, identify the applicant(s), appellant(s), party, or participant(s):**

*Councilmembers should review campaign contributions received within the prior 12 months from parties or participants to the proceeding and must not accept contributions over \$500 from those parties for 12 months following the final decision. (Gov. Code § 84308).*

## **Interview Question Bank for Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces**

### **General Questions**

1. Please tell us a little about yourself and what led you to apply for this board or commission.
2. What are you most looking forward to learning through this experience?
3. What motivates you to stay engaged in community service over time?
4. Is there a particular issue or idea you are especially interested in exploring if appointed?
5. Based on your understanding of this board or commission, where do you see the greatest opportunity for it to make a meaningful impact?
6. Boards and commissions do not always agree on every issue. How do you approach situations where your perspective differs from the majority?
7. If appointed, what would effective service on this board or commission look like to you by the end of your term?
8. In public service, avoiding a conflict of interest is not just about the rules, but also public trust. What does that mean to you?
9. Service on this board includes required ethics training and public financial disclosure filings. Are you comfortable meeting those requirements if appointed?
10. How would you balance your own views with the responsibility to consider the broader public interest and the board's advisory role to the City Council?

### **Incumbent Questions**

1. Since your appointment, what do you believe you have contributed most to the work of this board or commission?
2. Looking back on your current term, what have you learned that would make you more effective if reappointed?
3. What do you see as the most important issue or priority facing this board or commission in the next term?
4. How has your understanding of the board's advisory role to the City Council evolved during your service?
5. Reappointment is an opportunity for the City Council to consider both continuity and fresh perspective. Why are you seeking another term at this time?
6. What unfinished work or ongoing effort would you like to help carry forward if reappointed?
7. How do you think your service has helped advance the work of the board or commission as a whole, not just the issues most important to you?
8. If reappointed, what would successful service look like by the end of your next term?
9. How have you prepared for meetings and stayed engaged between meetings during your current term?
10. How have you helped support respectful discussion and productive meetings during your service?

## **Tailored Questions by Committee or Commission**

### **Architectural Review Commission**

1. What interests you most about serving on the Architectural Review Commission specifically?
2. How would you evaluate a project that is well designed in your personal view, but does not fully align with the City's adopted design expectations or surrounding context?
3. How do you think good architectural review contributes to the broader character and quality of life of the community?
4. How would you distinguish between personal design taste and the Commission's responsibility to apply the City's standards consistently?
5. When applicants have invested significant time and money into a proposal, how would you offer constructive feedback if changes are needed?

### **Building Board of Appeals**

1. What interests you most about serving on the Building Board of Appeals specifically?
2. The Board of Appeals may be asked to review decisions involving technical codes and standards. How would you approach a matter where the subject is highly technical but still requires your judgment?
3. How would you distinguish between sympathy for an applicant's circumstances and the Board's responsibility to apply the applicable standards fairly?
4. When reviewing an appeal, what factors would you want to understand before reaching a decision?
5. What does impartiality mean to you in the context of serving on an appeals board?

### **Civic Engagement Committee**

1. What interests you most about serving on the Civic Engagement Committee specifically?
2. What does meaningful civic engagement look like to you in a community like Palm Desert?
3. How do you think the City can encourage broader participation from residents who may not typically engage in local government?
4. How would you balance the goal of broad public participation with the reality that not every resident will engage in the same way?
5. What opportunities do you see for the City to improve how it connects with residents and encourages civic participation?

## **Cultural Arts Committee**

1. What interests you most about serving on the Cultural Arts Committee specifically?
2. When considering public art, what factors do you think are most important in evaluating whether a piece is appropriate for a public setting?
3. What do you think makes public art successful in a civic setting?
4. Public art involves not only selection, but also long-term care and stewardship. How would you think about maintenance, durability, and public investment when reviewing a proposal?
5. How should the City think about balancing permanent public art installations with temporary or rotating works?

## **Environmental Resources Committee**

1. What interests you most about serving on the Environmental Resources Committee specifically?
2. What do you see as the most important environmental issues or resource considerations for Palm Desert?
3. Environmental recommendations often involve balancing sustainability goals with cost, operations, and community needs. How would you approach those tradeoffs?
4. In your view, what does responsible environmental stewardship look like at the local level?
5. How do you think the City should balance environmental goals with the practical realities of implementation?

## **Finance Committee**

1. What interests you most about serving on the Finance Committee specifically?
2. This committee may review topics such as auditing, internal controls, financial reporting, investments, and municipal debt. Which of those areas are you most familiar with, and how would that experience inform your service?
3. How would you balance caution and fiscal stewardship with the need for the City to make timely decisions and invest in its priorities?
4. Finance Committee discussions may involve differing viewpoints about risk, reserves, debt, or long-term obligations. How would you approach those discussions in a constructive and objective way?
5. The Finance Committee's role is to review and advise the City Council on financial matters referred to it. How do you see the committee adding value within that advisory role?

## **Historic Preservation Committee**

1. What interests you most about serving on the Historic Preservation Committee specifically?
2. How do you think historic preservation contributes to Palm Desert's identity and sense of place?
3. How would you approach a situation where preserving a historic resource may conflict with a property owner's desire to make substantial changes?
4. How would you balance respect for historic character with the need for change, adaptation, or reinvestment over time?
5. What kinds of historic or cultural resources do you think are important for a city like Palm Desert to recognize and protect?

## **Homelessness Task Force**

1. What interests you most about serving on the Homelessness Task Force specifically?
2. Homelessness affects individuals, neighborhoods, service systems, and public spaces. How would you approach that issue in a balanced and constructive way?
3. What role do you think a city task force should play in addressing homelessness at the local level?
4. How would you balance compassion for people experiencing homelessness with community concerns related to health, safety, and quality of life?
5. In your view, what does meaningful progress on homelessness look like for Palm Desert?

## **Housing Commission**

1. What interests you most about serving on the Housing Commission specifically?
2. What do you see as the most important responsibilities of the Housing Commission in relation to the City's housing properties and programs?
3. How would you approach a situation where resident concerns are significant, but the available solutions may be limited by cost, timing, or operational constraints?
4. What factors do you think are most important when reviewing issues related to the operation or condition of City housing properties?
5. How do you think the Housing Commission can add value in advising the City Council on matters related to the City's housing portfolio?

### **Library Advisory Committee**

1. What interests you most about serving on the Library Advisory Committee specifically?
2. What role do you think the public library should play in the life of the Palm Desert community?
3. How would you approach recommendations involving limited resources and competing library needs such as collections, programming, technology, or facility improvements?
4. How would you balance preserving the library's traditional role with the need to adapt to new services, formats, and community uses?
5. What do you believe makes a public library welcoming, relevant, and useful to the community?

### **Parks and Recreation Committee**

1. What interests you most about serving on the Parks and Recreation Committee specifically?
2. What do you see as the most important role of parks and recreation services in a community like Palm Desert?
3. When thinking about parks and recreation, how would you balance new amenities, ongoing maintenance, and long-term stewardship of existing facilities?
4. How would you approach a recommendation where community interest is strong, but funding or space is limited?
5. How would you approach differing views about the use of park space, recreation programming, or facility priorities?

### **Planning Commission**

1. What interests you most about serving on the Planning Commission specifically, as opposed to another board or commission?
2. How would you approach a land use matter where nearby residents are strongly opposed, but the proposal appears to meet the City's adopted standards and policies?
3. When reviewing a project, how would you distinguish between your personal preferences and the standards the Commission is responsible for applying?
4. What planning or community development issue do you believe will be especially important for Palm Desert in the coming years?
5. What do you see as the Planning Commission's role in helping shape the City's growth and development?

## **Public Safety Committee**

1. What interests you most about serving on the Public Safety Committee specifically?
2. What do you see as the most important public safety priorities for a community like Palm Desert?
3. Public safety issues can involve prevention, enforcement, education, and community partnership. How would you think about balancing those approaches?
4. How would you approach a public safety issue that generates strong community concern but may not have a simple or immediate solution?
5. In your view, what does effective public safety look like beyond crime statistics alone?

## **Rent Review Board**

1. What interests you most about serving on the Rent Review Board specifically?
2. The Rent Review Board may hear matters involving competing concerns from landlords and tenants. How would you approach that responsibility fairly?
3. How would you approach a matter where both sides appear sincere, but their positions are clearly in conflict?
4. How would you distinguish between a personal opinion about housing issues and the Board's responsibility to apply the City's rules consistently?
5. What factors would you want to understand before making a recommendation or decision in a rent-related matter?

## **Tailored Questions for Regional Appointees**

### **Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District**

1. What interests you most about serving as Palm Desert's appointee to the Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District?
2. Vector control work involves public health, prevention, and community education. How do you think an appointee can best contribute to that mission?
3. What role do you think local coordination and communication should play in responding to mosquito and vector-related concerns affecting residents?
4. How would you approach representing Palm Desert's interests while working within a regional public health and service framework?
5. What would effective service look like to you in this appointment?

### **Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Trails Management Subcommittee**

1. What interests you most about serving as Palm Desert's appointee to the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Trails Management Subcommittee?
2. This Subcommittee involves both habitat conservation and trail management. How would you approach balancing environmental protection with appropriate public access and recreational use?
3. How would you approach representing Palm Desert's interests while working within a regional framework focused on conservation and land management?
4. What factors do you think are most important when considering trail-related issues in areas that also serve habitat conservation purposes?
5. What would effective service look like to you in this appointment?

### **Joslyn Senior Center**

1. What interests you most about serving as Palm Desert's appointee to the Joslyn Senior Center?
2. What role do you think the Joslyn Senior Center plays in supporting older adults and seniors in Palm Desert and the surrounding community?
3. How would you approach this appointment in a way that reflects both community needs and Palm Desert's interests?
4. What do you think is most important for an appointee to understand when helping support an organization that provides services to older adults?
5. What would effective service look like to you in this appointment?

## **Palm Springs International Airport Commission**

1. What interests you most about serving as Palm Desert's appointee to the Palm Springs International Airport Commission?
2. The Airport Commission considers issues that affect residents, visitors, regional mobility, and the airport's long-term operation. How would you approach that broader regional responsibility?
3. How would you balance Palm Desert's interests with the need to participate constructively in a regional body serving multiple communities?
4. What factors do you think are most important when considering airport-related matters that may affect access, service, community experience, or regional connectivity?
5. What would effective service look like to you in this appointment?

**STAFF REPORT**  
**CITY OF PALM DESERT**  
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

MEETING DATE: April 22, 2021

PREPARED BY: Christopher Gerry, Senior Management Analyst

REQUEST: Approval of City Council interview policies for members seeking reappointments to advisory boards and other bodies.

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**Recommendation**

By minute motion, approve the following City Council interview policies for members seeking reappointments to advisory boards and other bodies:

1. Unless requested by a Councilmember, forgo an interview for a member who completes an application and desires to serve on the same advisory board: Art in Public Places, Resource Preservation and Enhancement, Parks and Recreation, Cultural Resources Preservation, Public Safety, Marketing and Housing; and
2. Require an interview for a member who completes an application for other advisory boards (other bodies): Architectural Review, Building Board of Appeals, Finance, Planning and Rent Review.

**Background**

On November 19, 2020, the City Council conceptually approved various recommendations regarding City commissions and committees (advisory boards and other bodies). Many of these recommendations required further City Council action, including revisions to ordinances, bylaws and other activities. Any approved revision resulting in a change to bylaws will be presented for City Council consideration at the conclusion of this comprehensive review.

**Streamlined Process for Potential Reappointment to an Advisory Board**

The City Council previously approved a recommendation in concept to create a limited review process for reappointments. The intention of the concept is to create efficiencies in the interview process for City Council, City staff and residents. The concept has been further developed by the Subcommittee for consideration.

As previously discussed by the City Council, various advisory boards and other bodies have a wide-range of responsibilities under their purview. Advisory boards routinely make recommendations to the City Council, including:

**Commissions**

Art in Public Places  
Parks and Recreation  
Public Safety  
Housing

**Committees**

Cultural Resources Preservation  
Marketing  
Cultural Preservation & Enhancement

For the advisory boards listed above, the Subcommittee recommends that, unless requested by a Councilmember, forgo interviewing a member who completes an application and desires to serve on the same advisory board. Please note a member would not be guaranteed reappointment to such position, but that an interview is not necessary for consideration. This recommendation only applies to members seeking the same reappointment.

Required Interview for Other Bodies

Unlike the advisory boards above, other bodies make decisions that are only reviewed under defined procedures. Those bodies include:

<u>Commissions</u>	<u>Boards</u>
Architectural Review Planning Rent Review	Building Board of Appeals

The Finance Committee plays a unique role in reviewing the financial standing of all city operations, which are governed by the actions of City Council and City staff.

For the other bodies listed above, the Subcommittee recommends requiring an interview for a member who completes an application. This recommendation continues to reinforce the City's commitment to fostering public trust and confidence in government.

Approval of the recommendations would be incorporated in the upcoming interview process, appropriate bylaws and a policy and procedure manual in the future.

**Fiscal Analysis**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this request.

LEGAL REVIEW	DEPT. REVIEW	FINANCIAL REVIEW	ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
<i>RH</i>	N/A	N/A	<i>Andy Firestine</i>
Robert W. Hargreaves City Attorney	Todd Hileman City Manager	Janet Moore Director of Finance	Andy Firestine Assistant City Manager
City Manager Todd Hileman:  <i>L. Todd Hileman</i>			

# MINUTES

APRIL 22, 2021

City Council, Successor Agency to the Palm Desert  
Redevelopment Agency, and Housing Authority Meeting

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This item was pulled from the Consent Calendar at the request of Councilmember Quintanilla for further discussion and action. Then it was voted on and approved.

**Upon motion by Jonathan, second by Nestande, and 3-2 vote of the City Council, said additional market was approved (AYES: Harnik, Jonathan, and Nestande; NOES: Quintanilla and Kelly).**

11. REQUEST FOR APPROVAL of City Council Interview Policies for members seeking reappointments to advisory boards and other bodies (CC).

Rec: By Minute Motion, approve the following City Council interview policies for members seeking reappointments to advisory boards and other bodies:

- a) Unless requested by a Councilmember, forgo an interview for a member who completes an application and desires to serve on the same advisory board: Art in Public Places, Resource Preservation and Enhancement, Parks and Recreation, Cultural Resources Preservation, Public Safety, Marketing, and Housing.
- b) Require an interview for a member who completes an application for other advisory boards: Architectural Review, Building Board of Appeals, Finance, Planning, and Rent Review.

Councilmember Jonathan requested to register his vote on this item separate from the remaining items on the Consent Calendar.

**Upon motion by Harnik, second by Nestande, and 4-1 vote of the City Council, the City Council Interview Policies for members seeking reappointments to advisory boards and other bodies were approved as presented (AYES: Harnik, Nestande, Quintanilla, and Kelly; NOES: Jonathan).**

12. REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION of Donation of the USS Ronald Reagan Aircraft Carrier Model Replica and Related Informational Signage to the Palm Springs Air Museum (CC).

Rec: By Minute Motion, that the City Council authorize the donation of the USS Ronald Reagan Aircraft Carrier Model Replica and related informational signage and documents to the Palm Springs Air Museum and declare the model surplus.

**Upon motion by Harnik, second by Nestande, and 5-0 vote of the City Council, the remainder of Consent Calendar was approved as presented (AYES: Harnik, Jonathan, Nestande, Quintanilla, and Kelly; NOES: None).**



# City of Palm Desert Staff Report

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Meeting Date: April 23, 2026

Prepared By: Carlos Flores, AICP, Deputy Director of Development Services

Department: Development Services

Subject: Update on the status of key projects by the Development Services department

## Recommendation

Receive an update regarding key projects within the Development Services Department.

## Executive Summary

Development Services staff has compiled a list of key department projects to provide City Council with a status update.

## Background

The Development Services Department manages programs and initiatives that support the City's growth, infrastructure, and regulatory responsibilities. These efforts span multiple divisions, including Planning, Building and Safety, Code Compliance, Land Development Engineering, Housing, and the Development Services Center. On January 9, 2025, City Council received an update of key projects at that time. This update focuses on active or proposed, long-range projects that are separate from the day-to-day operations.

## Discussion

The attached presentation provides a detailed overview of nineteen (19) current projects organized by division/program. For each current project, the following information is included:

- Project name, description, and outcome
- Whether the project is being completed by internal staff or supported by a consultant
- Estimated completion timeline

The presentation also provides information on six (6) potential projects that require direction. For each of these projects, key considerations include:

- Timing and prioritization
- Feasibility assessment
- Need for contracted services

Staff continues to evaluate workload, resource allocation, and project timelines to ensure efficient delivery of services and alignment with City Council goals.

## **Legal Review**

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

## **Financial Impact**

There is no financial impact with this action.

## **Attachments**

1. Development Services Key Projects

## Conflict of Interest Awareness Checklist

**Note:** *This checklist is informational only and does not constitute a legal determination. Each Councilmember remains responsible for identifying, disclosing, and evaluating any disqualifying interests under the Political Reform Act and applicable FPPC regulations.*

### 1. Site-Specific Property Interest

Does this item involve a project site or other identifiable real property?

Yes

No

**If yes, identify the project site:**

*Councilmembers should consider whether they own, lease, or hold interests in real property within 1,000 feet of the project site. (Gov. Code § 87103(b); FPPC Reg. 18702.2).*

### 2. SB 1439 / Gov. Code § 84308 Applicability (Campaign Contributions)

Does this item involve a license, permit, other entitlement for use, or a contract or franchise agreement that is not competitively bid, a labor agreement, or a personal employment contract?

Yes

No

**If yes, identify the applicant(s), appellant(s), party, or participant(s):**

*Councilmembers should review campaign contributions received within the prior 12 months from parties or participants to the proceeding and must not accept contributions over \$500 from those parties for 12 months following the final decision. (Gov. Code § 84308).*



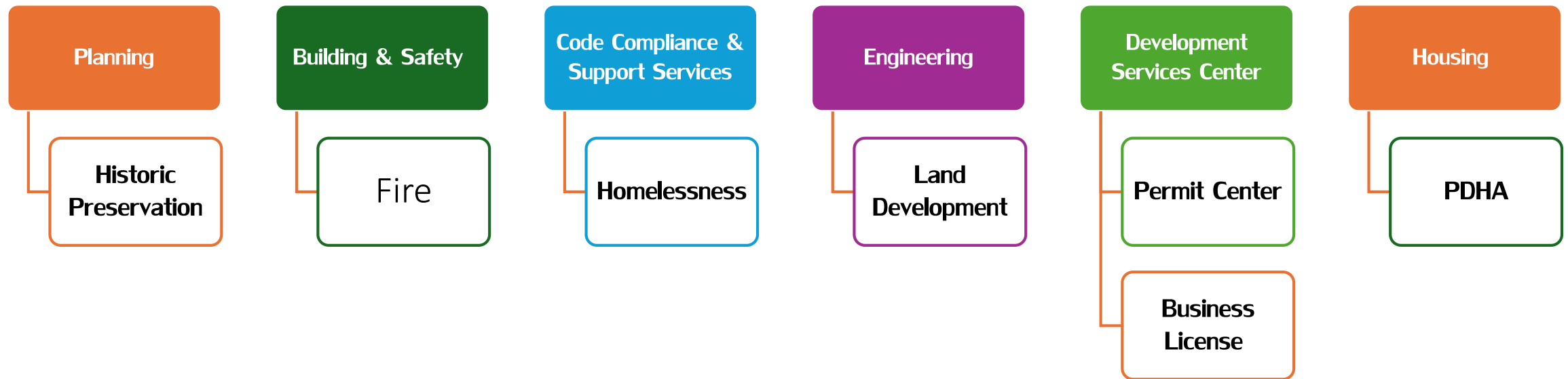


# Development Services Department FY 26/27 Key Projects – Status Update

April 23, 2026



# Development Services Department



# Current Projects

## Key Components:

- ✓ Project Description
- ✓ Consultant onboard to support staff
- ✓ Outcome of project
- ✓ Future Study Session
- ✓ Estimated completion

## Q2 2026

- Renaming North Sphere

## Q3 2026

- Phase 2 Clariti Permitting Software
- Fire Fees
- Business License Ordinance Update
- Business Compliance Program
- Homelessness Services & Funding Analysis
- Pro-Housing Designation Program
- Views Analysis

## Q4 2026

- Clariti – Fire Applications & Permits Incorporation
- Clariti – Business License Implementation
- Mobile Home Rental Rates Evaluation
- PDHA Rent Evaluation
- Unified Development Code (UDC)
- Phase 2 Historic Survey
- Downtown (DT) Drainage Analysis

## Q1 2027

- Western Center Stipulation

## Q2 2027

- Certified Local Government
- UNSP Update
- DT Objective Design Standards (ODS)

# Potential Projects - Direction Needed

## **Key Considerations:**

- ✓ Timing & prioritization
- ✓ Feasibility assessment
- ✓ Need for external/contracted services

If Council proceed with any project, staff will:

- 1) Research budget needed
- 2) Convene with a Sub-Committee to go over impacts to priorities and timing

- **Downtown Land Uses**
- **Downtown Streetscape**
- **Parking Analysis**
- **Entertainment Zone (Outdoor Dining)**
- **Outdoor Dining Expansion**
- **Additional Zoning Updates**

# Key Projects - Development Services Center

Project	Consultant Supporting	Description	Outcome	Future Study Session	Completion
1. Phase 2 Clariti Permitting Software	Yes	Software implementation of deferred Phase 1 items	Software streamline system processes	N/A	Q3 2026
2. Fire Fees	Yes	Incorporate Fire fees for new inhouse services	Fee Schedule Update	Yes	Q3 2026
3. Clariti – Fire Applications and Permits Incorporation	Yes	Software implementation of Fire applications and permits	Software incorporation of Fire permits	Yes	Q4 2026
4. Clariti – Business License	Yes	Software implementation of Business licenses	Launch in-house business license program	Yes	Q4 2026

# Key Projects – Code Compliance & Supportive Services

Project	Consultant Supporting	Description	Outcome	Future Study Session	Completion
5. Business License Ordinance	Internal only	Update municipal code to modernize and streamline business licensing requirements	Municipal Code Update to Chapter 5	Yes	Q3 2026
6. Business Compliance Program	Internal only	Focused on voluntary compliance to enhance the city's appearance and supporting local businesses meet city standards including nuisance, signage, lighting, landscape, etc.	Business friendly; proactive compliance program	N/A	Q3 2026
7. Homelessness services and Funding Analysis	Internal only	Review of current year funding sources and services	Potential for new service model	Yes	Q3 2026

# Key Projects - Housing

Project	Consultant Supporting	Description	Outcome	Future Study Session	Completion
8. Pro-housing designation program	Internal only	State recognition program that rewards cities for adopting policies that encourage housing production	Priority access to dedicated state funding, grant opportunities	Yes	Q2 2026
9. Rental Rates	Yes (legal)	Working with legal on analysis on CPI for mobile homes	Resolution establishing mobile home rates	Yes	Q3 2026
10. PDHA Rent	Yes (legal)	Working with legal on analysis on conformance of stipulation	Document with needs for Western Center discussion	Yes	Q4 2026
11. Western Center Stipulation	Yes (legal)	1990s court agreement establishing obligations and restrictions on rental rates for the PDHA Properties	Possible PDHA fund changes & PDHA Property discussion	Yes	Q1 2027

# Key Projects - Planning

Project	Consultant Supporting	Description	Outcome	Future Study Session	Completion
12. Renaming North Sphere	Internal only	City Council tasked Development Services and Economic Development on analysis and options	TBD	N/A	Q2 2026
13. Views Analysis	Yes	Citywide analysis of public views	Policy document; recommendations on revisions to recommendations on revisions to municipal code, municipal code, policy, and/or goals.	Yes	Q3 2026
14. Unified Development Code (UDC)	Yes	Update to the Zoning and subdivision sections of the Municipal Code	Municipal Code Update	Yes (Multiple)	Q4 2026
15. Phase 2 Historic	Yes	Intensive analysis of historic eligible properties required for Certified Local Government (CLG) certification	Municipal Code Update	N/A	Q4 2026
16. Certified Local Government	Internal only	City's certification as Certified Local Government (CLG), State Office of Historic Preservation	Certification by City and eligibility for funding opportunities	N/A	Q1 2027
17. UNSP Update	Yes	City Controlled 170 acres; revising final land use plan to add indoor sports complex and 28-acre park	Policy document; Updated Specific Plan and associated CEQA analysis	Yes	Q1 2027

# Key Projects – Downtown (DT)

Project	Consultant Supporting	Description	Outcome	Future Study Session	Completion
18. DT Drainage Analysis	Yes	Analysis of existing capacities and opportunities for drainage changes in downtown	Policy Document; findings and recommendations on improvements needed to reduce drainage requirements	Yes	Q4 2026
19. DT Objective Design Standards (ODS)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ODS guides building form, appearances, and placement to ensure consistent high quality development</li> <li>• Pending completion of Views &amp; UDC</li> </ul>	Municipal code update	Yes	Q2 2027

# Key Projects – Downtown (Discussion)

Project	Additional Funding Needed	Consultant Required	Description	Outcome	Options
20. DT Streetscape	Yes	Yes	Analyze updates to El Paseo and/or Highway 111 to incorporate streetscape changes (Bollards, landscaping, travel lane and right of way changes)	Policy Document: analyzing streetscape design options on El Paseo and/or Highway 111 and recommendations for capital project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Hire consultant on El Paseo and/or Highway 111; would incorporate Parking and outdoor dining. Would delay DT land uses and any DT capital projects related to signage or drainage</li> <li>2) No option for internal staff completion because of design requirements</li> </ol>
21. DT Outdoor Dining	Yes	Yes (partially can be completed by staff)	Subcommittee exploring permanent solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal code update with updated guidelines</li> <li>• Permanent solution either through special program and/or streetscape change</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Can occur before, during, or after any streetscape changes. Before or during would delay streetscape changes and DT ODS.</li> <li>2) Project would require scope change for DT ODS and could require additional funding for any design guideline changes</li> </ol>

Project	Additional Funding Needed	Consultant Required	Description	Outcome	Options
22. DT Entertainment Zone for outdoor dining	Yes	Yes (partially can be completed by staff)	State legislation allow outdoor dining and alcohol consumption in public areas in designated Entertainment Zones Downtown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Municipal Code updates for the creation of an Entertainment Zone per state law</li> <li>Policy Document; analyzing streetscape changes to accommodate sidewalk and street modifications.</li> </ul>	<p>1) Can occur before, during, or after any streetscape changes.</p> <p>2) Before or during streetscape changes would delay streetscape changes and DT ODS</p>
23. DT Parking analysis	Yes	Yes	Up to date parking counts and analysis within selected downtown area(s)	Policy Document: Parking management plan + recommendations on infrastructure and operations	<p>1) Hire consultant on El Paseo and/or Highway 111; could be done ahead of and independent of #22 but be limited in scope</p> <p>2) No option for internal staff completion because of design requirements</p>
24. DT Land Uses	Yes	Yes (partially can be completed by staff)	Need block by block analysis of appropriate land uses in downtown, including transition and existing overlay areas	Municipal code and Zoning Map updates	<p>1) Impacts the DT ODS and adoption of new DT zoning map and development standards.</p> <p>2) With consultant support, could be completed at same time as DT ODS (Q2 2027). Without, DT ODS and DT changes until Q4 2027</p>

# Key Projects – Planning (Discussion)

Project	Additional Funding Needed	Consultant Required	Description	Outcome	Options
25. Additional Zoning Updates	Yes	Yes (partially can be completed by staff)	Adding the following discussion topics to UDC consideration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Citywide light ordinance</li> <li>- Pickleball</li> <li>- Golf Cart</li> <li>- Downtown revisions (land uses, street scape, outdoor dining)</li> <li>- Views analysis revisions</li> </ul>	Municipal Code Updates	For any item: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Incorporate into UDC; Contract scope change and UDC adoption until Q2-3 2027</li> <li>2) Internal only: Can be done pre-UDC and cause delay in UDC OR can be done post-UDC adoption</li> </ol>

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