



**CITY OF PALM DESERT**  
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE  
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date: February 7, 2024  
To: Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers  
From: Anthony J. Mejia, City Clerk  
**Subject: City Council Goal Setting Study Session of February 7, 2024**

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Below you will find questions received from the Mayor or Councilmembers and answers provided by City staff regarding tonight's City Council meeting:

**Goal Setting Session**

Please note that the PowerPoint presentation has been revised to reflect the following changes:

1. Slide 8, Broadband Master Plan. The first accomplishment was a carryover from the Mall Redevelopment slide. This has been corrected to "Execute an agreement with HR Green to develop a broadband study."
2. Slide 12, Active Transportation Projects. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> bullet under Next Steps were combined as follows, "Finalize the progressive design/build specifications for Walk & Roll (Phase II) and issue the project RFP."
3. Slide 13, 2024 Candidate Goals Summary. This slide has been updated to add Mayor Pro Tem Harnik's fourth candidate goal regarding "sales tax initiative."

**Q1: Business Recruitment - Will the gap analysis TRC will generate be presented well in advance of the tax initiative discussions?**

A1: The Retail Coach (TRC) is anticipated to complete the gap analysis in March 2024 in advance of the tax initiative discussions.

**Q2: Mall Redevelopment - How large are the events under consideration?**

A2: Events under consideration include Farmer's Market, additional food/produce stands, and temporary leasing opportunities at the City-owned space. Events are not anticipated to be over 200 attendees at one time.

**Q3: Candidate Goal related to STR Only Development - Will staff provide info on how neighboring cities and cities outside the valley have boosted TOT without increasing the number of STRs?**

A3: At this point, Councilmember Trubee is requesting withdrawal of this candidate goal.

### **Staff Updates on Candidate Goals**

1. **Traffic Enforcement**: In December 2023, the City hosted the Valley Motor Enforcement Team, which deployed 21 motorcycle enforcement officers from Palm Desert and neighboring Coachella Valley cities. Subsequently, staff worked with the Sheriff's Lieutenant on enhanced traffic, crime suppression, and business district patrols that ran through December 31, 2024. The goal of the enhanced services was to collect metrics on the most effective police resources to utilize in traffic enforcement and crime suppression. Staff is utilizing this information as well as analyzing calls for service and response times over the last 3 years to present recommendations to the City Council for consideration in the development of the Fiscal Year 2024/25 budget.
2. **Streamline Information/Communication: PalmDesert.gov** - Staff has been working over the past year to remedy accessibility issues on the City's website, which currently has an accessibility score of 86/100 as rated by a third-party vendor. Some of the issues with the site are due to the Granicus platform on which the site is built. To address these concerns, staff is currently researching a widget that can be added to the existing site that would remedy a number of ADA-related concerns. For a long-term solution that would also make the site more mobile-friendly and to enhance the search function, staff is actively working on upgrading the Granicus platform itself. This is a multi-year project that will be brought to the City Council in the upcoming months for budget approval.

**Discover Palm Desert** – The City's tourism website forefronts Palm Desert hotels, restaurants, and events, but is designed to be a comprehensive guide to the entire Coachella Valley. This approach helps us rank higher on Google than other competing sites, so we draw more organic traffic as we capture people searching for attractions outside Palm Desert. This plays on Palm Desert's geographical location as the hub of everything else that's happening in the valley: when you're visiting the Coachella Valley, Palm Desert is the ideal place to stay because you can easily reach everything else from here.

**Palm Desert In Touch** – The primary use of this app has been as a portal for residents to reach out to the City, and less so as a broadcast channel for the City to reach residents. The calendar limitations are due to the Granicus platform of PalmDesert.gov and will be addressed by upgrading that website.

**Brightside** – Feedback the City has received indicates that the Community Pages insert in BrightSide continues to be well utilized by the community to know what is happening with the City's partner organizations, many of which depend on BrightSide to reach a broader audience.

### **Consultants List**

**Q1: Gonsalves & Sons - What are the success metrics used, or is it a standing contract? How much is left in the contract?**

A1: We do not have any successful metrics for Gonsalves & Sons. This is a standing contract and the retainer for their service is on an as needed basis. The retainer is renewed on an annual basis and the current term ends June 30, 2024. There is a remaining balance of \$15,000 on the contract retainer.

**Q2: Deckard - Does staff feel that this has been a successful contract? How much time is left?**

A2: The Deckard contract has been in place for 13 months and has been very successful, especially in notifying code compliance staff of unlicensed STRs. During that timeframe, we have issued approximately 50 citations for unlicensed STR units that levied \$256,670 in fines and have collected \$124,000 to date; the annual contract amount is \$69,400. The contract is annual with an option to renew; total duration 5 years.

**Q3: National Demographics Corp. - Was this only as related to the ballot initiative as part of the 2022 election, or is it part of the process to enact 5 districts?**

A3: The City entered into two agreements with NDC. The first was for NTE \$20,000 for an analysis of Advisory Measure B and to assist the City in preparing for the redistricting process, if directed by the City Council. Once the City Council directed staff to move forward with five districts, another contract was executed with NDC for NTE \$60,000. This contract was for the 2023 Redistricting process.