



5/23/24

RE: May 23, 2024 City Council Meeting, Agenda Item 5.a: UPDATE: LIFT TO RISE
2024-26 ACTION PLAN

Dear, Mayor Quintanilla, Mayor Pro Tem Harnik, Councilmember Nestande,
Councilmember Trubee, and Councilmember Kelly,

I write to you today on behalf of The Pacific Companies to urge the Council to prioritize affordable housing development in Palm Desert and endorse Lift to Rise's 2024-2026 Action Plan, presented at the May 23 City Council Meeting.

The Action Plan is a roadmap co-created by members of Lift to Rise's Housing Collaborative Action Network (CAN), including staff from my organization and the City of Palm Desert, that outlines collective contributions over the next two years to achieve the initiative's goal of reducing rent burden in the Coachella Valley by 30% through the production of 10,000 affordable housing units by 2028.

The Housing CAN's efforts so far have transformed what is possible in terms of affordable housing development in the Coachella Valley. Prior to 2018 when Lift to Rise established the Housing CAN alongside Riverside County and other partners, an average of only 38 units of affordable housing units per year were being built in the Coachella Valley. Now, over 1,200 units are under construction with thousands more in early stages of the development process. Over the last two years, Lift to Rise and the Housing CAN have also committed over \$26 million in loans to 11 affordable housing projects through the We Lift Housing Catalyst Fund and mobilized over 1,700 residents to contact their representatives in support of affordable housing projects and policies.

As one of The Pacific Companies' representatives in the Housing Collaborative Action Network, I participated alongside more than 70 other partners in the creation of this Action Plan over a months-long facilitated process. The plan is comprehensive, rooted in data and community listening, organized around concrete and tangible results, and recognizes that everyone, no matter their interests or expertise, has a role to play in addressing the Coachella Valley's housing affordability challenges. The Action Plan will also help local jurisdictions like Palm Desert meet their affordable housing obligations from the State of California. Since 1998, The Pacific Companies has successfully completed more than 160 multifamily and charter school projects in the western states, with a special focus on California. We listen carefully to the desires of residents, local governments and other stakeholders to build communities and schools that truly satisfy. Every year since 2007, our commitment to affordable workforce and senior housing has placed

us proudly in the top 50 nationally in affordable housing production. We have several affordable housing projects underway in the Coachella Valley, including a project in the City of Palm Desert, and participating in Lift to Rise's Housing CAN helped us foster relationships with local city partners, community organizations, and other affordable housing developers active in the region.

As a Housing CAN member and co-creator of the 2024-2026 Action Plan, I urge you to continue to work with Lift to Rise and the Housing CAN to prioritize affordable housing development in the City of Palm Desert by publicly endorsing the Action Plan. The City of Palm Desert's commitment to addressing housing affordability challenges is crucial to the success of the plan and a thriving Coachella Valley.

Thank you for your consideration

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "DBA", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Darren Berberian
Business Development Partner
Pacific West Communities, Inc.