

CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: August 22, 2024

PREPARED BY: Thomas Soule, Public Affairs Manager

SUBJECT: OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL FOR THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGER TO
ATTEND THE LAS VEGAS SOUVENIR & RESORT GIFT SHOW

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve out-of-state travel for the Public Affairs Manager to attend the Las Vegas Souvenir & Resort Gift Show from September 17-20, 2024.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

One of the most common inquiries at the Discover Palm Desert Visitor Center is where our visitors can purchase Palm Desert merchandise such as t-shirts, mugs, and ball caps. Although the Visitor Center sold such merchandise at its previous locations, this practice was discontinued due to space considerations when operations moved to City Hall nine years ago. Now that the Visitor Center has moved to the revitalized Palm Desert Library, the City once again has the opportunity to provide Palm Desert merchandise for sale.

In the past, Visitor Center staff ordered this merchandise wholesale at the Las Vegas Souvenir & Resort Gift Show. Staff is requesting authorization to attend the show in September to re-establish vendor connections and order an initial inventory of goods to sell, potentially including t-shirts, caps, mugs, postcards, and magnets. The plan is to start small with an investment in unique, high-quality goods that will represent the Palm Desert brand well.

Staff will monitor sales closely to ensure that the goods provided for sale meet market demand and will grow the program over time. The Visitor Center and Public Affairs team is working closely with Finance to establish an inventory control plan, a process that will provide a solid foundation for our operations. The City's purchasing policy will be followed to procure the goods to be sold, ensuring transparency and accountability.

Legal Review:

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

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The Las Vegas Souvenir & Resort Gift Show is free to attend. Funds for travel costs in an amount not to exceed \$1,000 are available in the Marketing budget, Conf-Seminars-Workshops Account No. 1104417-4312000. Funds for the initial purchase of merchandise are already available in the Public Affairs budget, and there is no additional impact to the General Fund. Costs of the merchandise are expected to be covered by the revenue from the sales.