

# Grading Ordinance Amendment

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PALM DESERT CITY COUNCIL  
OCTOBER 24, 2024



# Overview

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- Public hearing for introduction of new Ordinance
- **Amend Sections of Title 27 of the Palm Desert Municipal Code (PDMC)**
  - Implement requirements for grading height transition standard for new development adjacent to existing residential
  - Stockpiling – require agreements and other securities
  - Definitions
- Publicly noticed – No public comments on draft ordinance
- California Environmental Quality Act – Exempt per CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) - “common sense exemption”



# General Background

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- On September 12, 2024, the City Council held a study session to consider policies for updates to Title 26 (Subdivisions) and Title 27 (Grading)
- Grading policies included updates for grading transition and stockpiling
- City Council was supportive of recommended updates
- Future comprehensive amendments to the Grading and Subdivision Ordinances for Q1 2025
- Unified Development Code

# New Definitions

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- New definitions in support new “Finished Grade Transition Standard”:
- “Abut”
- “Building pad”
- “Existing-, finished-, natural-grade”

# Finished Grade Transition Standard

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- Intended to create sensitive transition of finished grades between new development and existing residential land uses
- Limit height of new grades above existing grade at property boundary
  - Within 100' of property boundary, new grades are limited to 5' above existing grade.
- Exceptions for:
  - Master Planned Communities – planned for approval at same time, developed in phases
  - Environmental or Hazard Mitigation – the additional height is necessary to prevent adverse effects
  - Site Topography – consider existing topography conditions which render lower finished grades infeasible





# Stockpiling

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- Amend section to add requirements for agreements and securities including stocks and bonds
- Ensure work is completed and provide for site restoration
- Remove references to mining
  - Prohibited land use per Zoning Ordinance



# Recommendation

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Introduce an Ordinance entitled, “AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA, UPDATING SECTIONS OF TITLE 27 GRADING AND MAKING A FINDING OF EXEMPTION UNDER CEQA.”