

**CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
CITY OF PALM DESERT
STAFF REPORT**

MEETING DATE: March 26, 2025

PREPARED BY: Niko Romaidis, Planning Technician

SUBJECT: CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION COMMITTEE WORK PLAN
PRIORITY RANKING FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend the City Council approve the Cultural Resources Preservation Committee (CRPC) Work Plan for the 2025/2026 Fiscal Year, as presented in Table 3 of the staff report.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

On March 4, 2025, City Staff requested each of the seven (7) CRPC members to provide a ranked list of CRPC priorities they would like to focus on for Fiscal Year 2025/2026. The top five (5) goals selected by the CRPC form the basis of a workplan to present to the City Council. Three (3) CRPC members submitted rankings of their top goals which are provided as Attachment 1 of this report. Two (2) CRPC members stated they would agree with other committee members' priority rankings and found the current work plan acceptable. Two (2) CRPC members did not submit priorities but were part of the discussion. Priorities raised by multiple committee members are listed below in Table 1:

Table 1 – Multiple Vote Priorities

Committee Votes	Priority	Description
3	City wide survey	Complete the city-wide cultural resources survey, complete with GIS resources, provide quarterly updates, and inform residents .
2	Update the website	Update CRPC presence on city website to have correct and updated information.
2	Education	Establish onboarding resources for new CRPC members. Provide educational resources for CRPC members, residents, and visitors such as handouts, booklets, and informational workshops.
2	Active role in Modernism week	Encourage the City to have an active role in Modernism alongside HSPD.

The following are priorities that were provided by only one CRPC member:

Table 2 – Singular Vote Priorities

Priority	Description
Preservation of native plants in public spaces	Native plants that originate from city property don't require water but benefit from it. We need an educated horticulture department.
Research developing a Historic Districts program	While PD has a historic site program, it doesn't yet have a Historic Districts program. CR should investigate the pros/cons of having such a program and make a recommendation about PD adopting a Historic District program.
Development of Existing Partnerships	Review past partnerships and evaluate which ones should be deepened/developed.
Explore New Partnerships	Review potential new partnerships and evaluate which ones should be considered.

Staff recommends the addition of the Certified Local Government (CLG) Designation to the FY 2025/2026 Work Plan to carry over from the FY 2024/2025 CRPC Work Plan. If accepted, the final Work Plan presented to City Council would be as follows:

Table 3 – Proposed FY 25/26 CRPC Work Plan

Priority	Description	Cost	Time/Process
City wide survey	Conduct community workshops and education of Phase 1 of the Historic Context Statement and Survey and begin Phase 2	Estimate: \$100,000	<u>Time:</u> 6-9 months <u>Next Steps:</u> Phase 1 is currently being completed; Phase 2 is anticipated to begin next fiscal year
Update the website	Update CRPC webpage on City website with updated and accurate information.	City staff time	<u>Time:</u> 3-6 months <u>Next Steps:</u> City staff will work with Public Affairs to update and refresh website
Education	Establish onboarding resources for new CRPC members. Provide educational resources for CRPC members, residents, and visitors such as handouts, booklets, and informational workshops.	Estimate: \$3,000	<u>Time:</u> Ongoing <u>Next Steps:</u> Staff will seek educational resources to provide to CRPC and identify options for public education (booklets/pamphlets)
Modernism Week	Encourage the City to have an active role in Modernism week in collaboration with the Palm Desert Historical Society	City staff time	<u>Time:</u> 12 months <u>Next steps:</u> Reach out to event coordinators to discuss options
CLG Designation	Begin the process of an application to the California State Office of Historic Preservation office for a	Estimate: Included in City wide survey	<u>Time:</u> 9-12 months <u>Next Steps:</u> Wait for city wide survey to conclude then City staff will work on submittal of application

Cultural Resources Preservation Committee
City of Palm Desert
CRPC Work Plan Priority for Fiscal Year 25/26

	Certified Local Government designation.	Phase 2 (\$100,000)	
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ATTACHMENTS:

1. CRPC Ranking Sheets

Cultural Resource Preservation Committee – Work Plan Priority Ranking
FY 25/26
March 17, 2025

Below is a summary of the submitted CRPC priorities for Fiscal Year 2024/2025, organized by Committee members who submitted responses:

David Toltzmann

Ranking	Priority	Description	Justification
1	Continue the funding and cooperation for the city-wide survey.	Have the city give us quarterly updates on this as it moves along.	All other things hinge on this first step.
2	Website development make it easy to use with photos and descriptions to help with understanding and stimulate interest.	Have a cultural resource page for the cultural resource committee.	Homeowner education.
3	Community outreach and education.	Online information or booklet.	Homeowner education.
4	Encourage the city of PD to have an active role in Modernism alongside HSPD. It's educational and preserves our neighborhood architectural diversity.	A national landmark for Palm Desert.	Creating more landmarks for our city creates more desire \$\$\$ spent.
5	Preservation of native plants in public spaces. Like the Haystack Channel Project.	Native plants that originate from city property don't require water but benefit from it. We need an educated horticulture department.	\$\$\$ saved

Kim Housken

Ranking	Priority	Description	Justification
1	City Wide Survey	Ongoing	Needed
2	Historic Context Statement	In conjunction with survey.	Provides a framework with which to evaluate potential cultural resources
3	Education	Inform residents and visitors of the rich history of the city and buildings that pre-date 1974 incorporation. We are more than a 40-year-old city.	Doing so is specified in the Purpose of the Committee.
4	Workshop regarding Education of residents and visitors	Have brainstorming workshops to discuss ways to reach out to the community.	To find/develop ways to Educate our

Cultural Resource Preservation Committee – Work Plan Priority Ranking

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			residents/visitors about our history, as that is one of our purposes
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Rochelle McCune

Ranking	Priority	Description	Justification
1	Review of information on City's CR site & update as needed	<p>Partner with the City/IT staff to review, prioritize & update information on the City of Palm Desert's Cultural Resources page, determining what needs to be updated, possibly including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the Landmarks List • Update the 2007 Driving Tour • Update the "unofficial list" • Update the Landmarking Your Home tutorial to make it more "newbie" friendly • Consider creating a Guide to El Paseo Architecture that can be provided to people that ride the El Paseo Shuttle • Consider creating additional driving and/or walking tours of Palm Desert promoting our unique architecture and historic sites • Consider creating a user-friendly Building Resources Guide for people considering restoring/rehabbing their property. If we focus on Palm Desert resources, we would be engaging local businesses. • Consider writing and publishing a "How to Do a House History" article to get folks interested in their property. <p>Website: https://www.cityofpalmdesert.org/departments/building-and-safety/cultural-resources </p>	<p>The current CP page seems a little dated. Once updated, perhaps reviewing the CP page should become regular scheduled activity (annual or bi-annual) by the committee so it stays "fresh" and relevant.</p>
2	Research developing a Historic Districts program	<p>While PD has a historic site program, it doesn't yet have a Historic Districts program. CR should investigate the pros/cons of having such a program and make a recommendation about PD adopting a Historic District program.</p>	<p>It is a vital part of a robust CR program and something we should consider and decide whether or not to do.</p>

Cultural Resource Preservation Committee – Work Plan Priority Ranking

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3	Development of Existing Partnerships	<p>Review past partnerships and evaluate which ones should be deepened/developed, possibly including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with the City on a 50th Anniversary event celebrating our architecture and other cultural resources • Celebrate buildings that 50yo+ (already built by the time the City was incorporated) • Work with Thomas Soule to add Cultural Resources content to city's "PR" site. • Deepen partnership with HSPD & its A&D committee to celebrate Palm Desert's architectural heritage • Explore working with Modernism Week & the City to sponsor/join/coordinate Modernism Week event(s) in Palm Desert • Explore hosting events and/or lectures with key partners 	Building we've had in the past partnerships will allow us to be more productive, successful and reach more people.
4	Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider posting preservation & restoration resources on a website (HSPD, Engage PD, PD Heritage) • Consider posting "case study" articles on a website, find people who have restored/rehabed PD properties and interview them • Consider posting house/building histories on a website • Consider creating PD version of Preservation Bingo and post on a website • Consider writing & publishing a "How to Do a House History" article to get people interested in the history of their property. 	Most of these items may/can be done with HSPD and/or Thomas Soule or be done next year.
4	Onboarding program for committee members	Consider creating a framework (handbook) for institutional knowledge to be saved and passed on to new board members	Having an onboarding process would allow members to get educated faster & be more productive.
5	Explore New Partnerships	<p>Review potential new partnerships and evaluate which ones should be considered, possibly including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Palm Desert institutions that already put on events (HSPD takes its firetruck & a display table to events) - such as Golf Cart Parade, Art Walks, Concerts, Car Night and such. 	Building new partnership will allow us to be more productive and reach more people. Maybe consider doing <i>next</i>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Centers/Schools/Parks to host “heritage” events. • Brainstorm on civic & neighborhood identity projects that could benefit everyone. Identify & cultivate potential partners: City of PD, Chamber of Commerce, Business Associations, “historic” developments, schools, country clubs • Consider partnering with Palm Springs’ Preservation Matters to promote Palm Desert’s architectural heritage. • Research PR sources to promote Palm Desert’s unique identity. For example, working with Steve Somali of NBC’s “Our Desert Past” to promote stories about Palm Desert. 	<p><i>year, once our already</i> Are existing partnerships more solidified?</p>
6	Request for Survey	Submit a Request for Survey & Context to the city.	Request drafted, Researching funding. <i>Waiting for CLG? Next year?</i>

Don Graybill:

Agree with recommendations of other committee members

Tom Mortensen:

Happy with current work plan