

# CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

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MEETING DATE: January 9, 2025

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SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF CONTRACT NO C47980H-1A AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LIVING DESERT AND THE CITY OF PALM DESERT AS IT RELATES TO FUNDING OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE EXPANSION OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND REPLACE CONTRACT NO. C47980H-1

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Approve Contract No. C47980H-1A, an agreement between the Living Desert Zoo and Gardens and the City of Palm Desert relative to funding the expansion of education programs at the Living Desert and replace contract No. C47980H-1 in its entirety.
2. Authorize the City Attorney to make any necessary non-monetary changes and/or amendments to the agreement.
3. Authorize the City Manager to execute the agreement and any other documents necessary to effectuate this action.

## **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:**

The Living Desert, a renowned nonprofit organization, has been dedicated to preserving and conserving desert ecosystems and their inhabitants for over five decades. As the leading attraction in the Coachella Valley, draws over 600,000 visitors annually from across the region and beyond. This influx of tourists stimulates the local economy, benefiting nearby businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and shops while also creating jobs.

As a global leader in conservation, education, and community engagement, it offers a variety of programs, interactive exhibits, and an educational speaker series for visitors of all ages. Accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) since 1983, The Living Desert upholds the highest standards of animal care, education, conservation, and public service. Its initiatives include conservation research, habitat protection, breeding programs, and education efforts at both local and global levels.

On June 27, 2024, the City Council approved Outside Agency Funding in the amount of \$1,250,000 for The Living Desert. The terms included five annual payments of \$250,000 to support the expansion of its education programs to better serve Palm Desert's residents and visitors. In return, the Living Desert will meet specific programmatic requirements outlined in Exhibit "B" of the funding agreement. Staff has worked with the Living Desert to define the program requirements and formalize the City's support.

Approval of this agreement not only strengthens tourism by leveraging marketing opportunities for both The Living Desert and the Palm Desert brand but also benefits residents and the community through enhanced educational opportunities, economic growth, community engagement, and cultural enrichment. This agreement represents a collaborative effort to meet the Living Desert's needs as an economic driver in the community, while enhancing Palm Desert's name recognition.

The funding agreement provides the City of Palm Desert with prominent recognition as a major supporter of The Living Desert, including annual and permanent donor acknowledgment in digital displays, signage, events, and promotional materials, as well as event naming rights as a presenting sponsor for "Glow in the Park 2025." Thereafter, Palm Desert Night at WildLights offers the community 500 complimentary tickets annually through 2028, allowing residents to experience this celebrated event at no cost. This initiative fosters local engagement and highlights the City's commitment to enhancing community access to cultural and recreational opportunities.

Staff recommends approval of the funding agreement between The Living Desert and the City of Palm Desert.

**Legal Review:**

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

**Strategic Plan:**

Approval of the Funding Agreement with the Living Desert supports the Tourism and Marketing Priority 4 by utilizing opportunities to partner with existing agencies to promote the Palm Desert brand by participating in a wide range of nature-based programming for the benefit of the community.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The full amount of \$1,250,000 will be funded over a five-year period. The first \$250,000 has been included in the FY 2024-25 Outside Agency Budget in Account No. 1104800-4389800. Upon execution of the agreement, the first payment of \$250,000 will be due and payable to the Living Desert and the remaining four (4) payments due on the annual anniversary date, subject to budget approval. This agreement would remain in effect through June 30, 2029.

**ATTACHMENT:**

1. Contract No. C47980H-1A