

CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: September 25, 2025

PREPARED BY: Erica Powell, Management Analyst

SUBJECT: APPROVE DEACCESSION OF EL PASEO ENTRY SIGNS BY WATER
STUDIO

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the deaccession of two El Paseo entry signs by Water Studio.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

In 2003, the City of Palm Desert commissioned Orr Studio (now Water Studio) to design two entry signs for the El Paseo corridor. The signs were installed at the east entrance at Portola Avenue and the west entrance at Highway 74 as part of the City's Art in Public Places Program.

Each sign, constructed of copper with bronze patina and an integrated water feature, experienced ongoing deterioration due to the interaction of metal and water, resulting in frequent and costly repairs.

On November 20, 2023, the east entry sign at Portola Avenue was irreparably damaged in a vehicle collision and subsequently removed. The west entry sign at Highway 74 remained in place while replacement options were considered but continued to deteriorate and was removed by Public Works on May 29, 2025, for safety reasons.

On June 11, 2025, the Cultural Arts Committee voted 5-0 to recommend full deaccession of both signs. The artist has been notified and will retrieve the artwork by October 2025.

On September 11, 2025, the City Council awarded a Professional Services Agreement to Selbert Perkins Design, Inc., to work with Public Works on developing designs to replace the two monument signs along the El Paseo Parkway. Once a concept is prepared, Public Works will present the proposed designs to the City Council for review and feedback.

Staff recommends City Council approve the complete deaccession of the two El Paseo entry signs by Water Studio.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The original cost of the artwork was \$50,000 in 2004. There is no current appraisal or fair market value available. There is no fiscal impact to the General Fund associated with this action.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Entry Sign Photographs
2. Cultural Arts Committee meeting report dated June 11, 2025

3. Deaccession Worksheet
4. City's Public Art Deaccessioning Policy