

	<b>CITY OF PALM DESERT ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES</b>	
	<i>Subject</i>	<b>CEREMONIAL RECOGNITIONS POLICY</b>
	<i>Policy No.</i>	<b>CLRK-004</b>
	<i>Date</i>	<b>Issued: December 11, 2025 Amended: N/A</b>
	<i>Approved by</i>	<b>Resolution No. 2025-XX</b>
	<i>Authored by</i>	<b>City Clerk Department</b>

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish a comprehensive framework for ceremonial recognitions issued by or on behalf of the City of Palm Desert. This policy outlines the standards and procedures for Mayoral Certificates, Proclamations, Keys to the City, and Appointed Body service recognitions, ensuring the consistent, fair, and appropriate administration of these honors.

**II. SCOPE**

This Policy applies to all ceremonial recognitions requested of or issued by the City of Palm Desert, including Mayoral Certificates, Proclamations, Keys to the City, and Service recognitions for Appointed Bodies and outside agency representatives.

**III. GENERAL POLICIES**

**A. GENERAL AUTHORITY**

No commission or committee, individual Councilmember, or other City official shall issue a ceremonial recognition on behalf of the City of Palm Desert except as authorized under this Policy.

**B. MAYORAL CERTIFICATES**

The Mayor may issue a Mayoral Certificate to recognize individuals, groups, businesses, or organizations for achievements, milestones, contributions to the community, or other positive actions that merit acknowledgment. Mayoral Certificates may be approved and issued at the discretion of the Mayor and do not require concurrence from the Mayor Pro Tem or the City Council.

Mayoral Certificates may be presented by the Mayor at a City event, community event, meeting, or through personal delivery, mail, or other appropriate means. The Mayor may designate another Councilmember to present a Mayoral Certificate on their behalf.

### **C. PROCLAMATIONS**

**Review and Approval.** City staff shall review all requests for proclamations and forward them to the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem with a finding as to whether the request complies with this Policy. If a request does not clearly fall within or outside the categories described in this Policy, staff shall forward the request for direction without making a compliance determination.

If both the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem approve the request, the proclamation may be issued. If only one approves and wishes to proceed, the request shall be placed on a regular City Council agenda for consideration by the full City Council. If neither approves, the request shall not move forward.

**Eligibility Criteria.** The Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem may consider requests for proclamations on the following subjects:

#### **1. Community and Public Interest:**

- a. Significant matters of public interest that raise awareness about issues impacting Palm Desert residents or businesses.
- b. Observances, celebrations, or recognition periods at the community, regional, state, or national level.
- c. In memoriam recognitions honoring the life of long-time or prominent Palm Desert residents.

#### **2. Organizations, Businesses, and Services:**

- a. Local businesses, service providers, or philanthropic organizations located in or operating within the City that provide significant benefit to the community.
- b. Local sports teams based in the City, upon achieving noteworthy accomplishments or milestones.

#### **3. Individuals and Public Officials:**

- a. Individuals recognized for extraordinary achievement or outstanding community service.
- b. City officials and employees recognized for achievements or significant service milestones.
- c. Partner public officials from other public entities who served alongside the Palm Desert City Council on regional boards, committees, or commissions upon completion of their term or chairpersonship.

**Signatures.** Proclamations are intended to be signed by the full City Council. If any Councilmember declines to sign a proclamation, the Mayor may determine whether to proceed with the Mayor's signature alone or with the remaining Councilmembers.

**Presentation.** Proclamations should generally be presented outside of a City Council meeting, such as at a designated event, by mail, or by personal delivery. When a proclamation is to be presented at a City Council meeting, the Mayor shall determine the appropriate meeting for presentation. The City will strive to avoid scheduling more than three proclamation presentations at any single meeting.

**D. KEYS TO THE CITY**

The Key to the City is a rare and distinguished ceremonial honor awarded to individuals or organizations whose contributions or achievements bring extraordinary benefit, distinction, or visibility to the City of Palm Desert. Keys to the City may be awarded under one of the following categories:

1. **Community Contribution Key.** Awarded to individuals or organizations whose exceptional and long-term service has strengthened the civic life, integrity, and development of the City of Palm Desert. Contributions must reflect a sustained and meaningful commitment that enhances the quality and character of life in Palm Desert, through community service, philanthropy, leadership, business, education, public service, or other fields that enrich civic life. Visible and behind-the-scenes contributions are equally valued.
2. **Community Impact Key.** Awarded to individuals or organizations whose achievements, public presence, or creative work foster a positive and meaningful connection with the Palm Desert community. Recipients should have attained significant public recognition that brings favorable attention to Palm Desert or contributes to its cultural, social, or economic vitality. The honoree's appearance, performance, collaboration, or association with the City should generate community excitement, engagement, or cultural significance, such as participation in a City-sponsored or community event that promotes civic pride.

**Review and Approval.** All nominations for Keys to the City shall be reviewed jointly by the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem. If either wishes to advance the nomination, it shall be placed on a regular City Council agenda for consideration and final approval by the full City Council. If neither wishes to advance the nomination, it shall not move forward.

**Frequency.** Because it is a rare and distinguished honor, Keys to the City shall be awarded sparingly and only in circumstances that reflect extraordinary or distinguished contributions as described in this Section.

**Presentation.** Keys to the City shall be presented at a City Council meeting or at another appropriate ceremonial event as determined by the Mayor.

#### **E. SERVICE RECOGNITIONS FOR APPOINTED BODY MEMBERS**

Service recognitions for members of City Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces (“Appointed Bodies”) and for Palm Desert representatives serving on outside agencies, such as the Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District, the Palm Springs International Airport Commission, and the Joslyn Center Board, shall be issued as follows:

1. **Incomplete or Partial Term.** Members who do not complete their term, or who serve a partial term, shall receive a Certificate of Recognition signed by the Mayor. The certificate shall be presented at the Appointed Body’s meeting by the assigned City Council Liaison. If the Appointed Body does not have an assigned City Council Liaison, the Mayor will be requested to present the certificate.
2. **Completion of One Term or Service Totaling Four (4) or More Years.** Members who complete one full term, or who have service totaling four years or more, shall receive a small “Thank You” clock or a similar commemorative item. The item shall be presented at the Appointed Body’s meeting by the assigned City Council Liaison. If the Appointed Body does not have an assigned City Council Liaison, the Mayor will be requested to present the item.
3. **Completion of Two Terms or Service Totaling Eight (8) or More Years.** Members who complete two full terms, or who have service totaling eight years or more, shall receive a large “Thank You” clock or a similar commemorative item. The item shall be presented at the Appointed Body’s meeting by the assigned City Council Liaison. If the Appointed Body does not have an assigned City Council Liaison, the Mayor will be requested to present the item.
4. **Completion of Three or More Terms or Service Totaling Twelve (12) or More Years.** Members who complete three or more full terms, or whose service totals twelve years or more, shall receive a large “Thank You” clock or a similar commemorative item, which shall be presented by the Mayor at a City Council meeting.

**Declining a Presentation.** If an outgoing member declines a public presentation, the certificate or commemorative item may be mailed or made available for pickup.

#### **IV. COUNCIL AUTHORITY TO ISSUE RECOGNITIONS**

Nothing in this Policy restricts the City Council from issuing a ceremonial recognition by majority vote at a duly noticed meeting.

#### **V. IMPERMISSIBLE SUBJECTS**

Ceremonial recognitions issued under this policy shall not be granted:

1. **For candidates for elected public office**, or in connection with campaign activity, fundraising events, or endorsements.
2. **For religious or political events**, activities, or positions.
3. **For activities or events that are contrary to City policy** or that conflict with adopted City goals or values.