

Palm Desert City Council Goal Setting Session

February 26, 2026





Review of 2025 City Council Goals

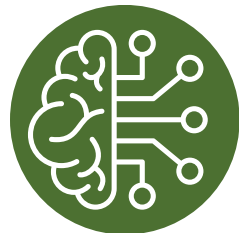
CSU Palm Desert Campus / AI, Business Innovation & Entrepreneurship Hub

Positioning Palm Desert as a regional center for higher education, workforce development, and innovation



Supported the Entrepreneur Resource Center (ERC)

- CSUSB partnership maintained through February 2027
- Infrastructure issues resolved to prevent program delays
- Delivered Mini-MBA and Business Startup Training



Advanced AI & Innovation Programming

- Initiated AI coursework and workforce training discussions with CSUSB
- Coordinated with UCR Palm Desert on AI program alignment
- Expanded regional outreach with Chamber and partners

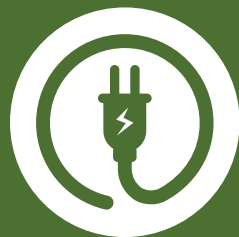


Positioned for Campus Expansion & Strategic Alignment

- Coordinated efforts to keep the Student Success Center project on track and aligned with campus development timelines
- CSUSB expressed interest in expanding AI offerings; proposal anticipated Q1 2026

North Sphere Development, Infrastructure Planning & Electrification

Support continued growth in the North Sphere by coordinating infrastructure, utilities, and long-range planning to remove barriers to residential and commercial development



Secured Long-Term Electrical Capacity

- Council approved funding and IID reservation agreement for Cook Street Energy Substation
- Advanced transformer procurement and substation coordination



Addressed Water & Sewer Constraints

- Coordinated with CVWD and developers on capacity solutions
- Monterey Crossing sewer improvements in plan check
- Evaluated Community Facilities District and private financing options



Continued Residential & Commercial Growth

- Major projects underway: Agate, Millennium, Vitalia, Meritage, Explorer, Palm Villas
- Approved Catavina (546 lots) and Portola Springs (156 lots)
- Ongoing commercial permitting at Monterey Crossing



Advanced Planning & Regional Facilities

- Circulation Element adopted, including Portola Interchange
- Evaluated park options within UNSP
- Advanced draft UNSP updates including park allocation

Mall Redevelopment / Experience-Based & Family-Friendly Destination

Support redevelopment of the mall properties into a vibrant, experience-driven, family-friendly destination that strengthens economic vitality and community engagement



Advanced Site Planning & Owner Coordination

- Continued coordination with mall ownership on a comprehensive Specific Plan
- Evaluated residential opportunity on ~10 acres (north portion of site)
- Explored partnership models to address financial constraints



Positioned City-Owned Sears Property

- Completed appraisal, survey, and environmental reviews
- Issued Notice of Availability to comply with SLA Process; one proposal received
- Submitted Notice of Determination for the Sears Site to clear the SLA Process



Market Outreach & Tenant Interest

- Conducted ICSC outreach to experience-based tenants
- Identified interest from experiential retail, fitness, furniture, and theaters

Update to the Development Code / Fire Prevention by Design

Modernize development regulations to improve clarity, efficiency, and flexibility while integrating fire prevention by design to enhance public safety



Advanced Unified Development Code (UDC)

- Progressed comprehensive UDC consolidating zoning, subdivision, grading, and related regulations
- Completed Draft Regulations Assessment Report and held Council study session
- Advanced Administration & Procedures section through Subcommittee and Council review
- Conducted stakeholder outreach (ARC, Planning Commission, development community)



Strengthened Fire Prevention by Design

- Adopted 2025 California Building Standards Code (effective Jan 1, 2026)
- Adopted updated Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps
- Implemented in-house Fire Marshal model to integrate fire review early in the development process

Crime Prevention Technology

Expand technology-driven public safety solutions to enhance crime prevention, situational awareness, and law enforcement effectiveness



Expanded ALPR Network

- Council approved expansion of 44 cameras (113 → 157 total planned)
- 144 cameras installed to date
- 13 remaining cameras in permitting (El Paseo phase)



Strengthened Operational Integration

- Coordinated deployment plan with RSO and Flock Safety
- Integrated ALPR data for real-time monitoring and investigations
- RSO implemented electronic citations to improve field efficiency



Interdepartmental Coordination

- Worked with Public Works on permitting, median access, and utilities
- Identified optimized camera locations for El Paseo

Assessment of City Medians & Rights-of-Way

Develop a cohesive, cost-effective landscape strategy to improve maintenance efficiency, aesthetics, and long-term functionality of City medians and rights-of-way



Initiated Landscape Master Plan

- Awarded professional services agreement to Hermann Design Group
- Completed base plans and citywide analysis using aerial imagery
- Developed tiered design concepts and plant/material palettes



Policy & Stakeholder Engagement

- Presented draft plan to Architectural Review Committee
- Conducted City Council study session for policy direction
- Presented refinements to Active Transportation Subcommittee



Identified Pilot Projects

- Selected three pilot locations representing each design tier
- Began preparation of construction documents

2026 Proposed Goals Summary

Member	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Priority 5
Harnik	Charter School Concept at CSUSB Palm Desert Campus	Update Citywide Lighting Ordinance	Business Attraction in North PD/University Area	Leverage Upcoming Global Events	
Nestande	North Sphere Planning & Infrastructure	Mall Redevelopment			
Quintanilla	Extreme Heat Mitigation	Public Engagement & Communications	Stimulate Entrepreneurship and Local Businesses		
Pradetto	North Sphere Planning & Infrastructure	Mall Redevelopment	Zero Blight Challenge		
Trubee	Enhance Support of CVDPN (Emergency Preparedness)	Palm Desert Historical Society	Welcome/Gateway Sign on El Paseo	Farmers Market	Indoor Sports/Event Facility

2026 Proposed Goals - Councilmember Harnik

Priority	Title	Description
01	Charter School Concept at CSUSB Palm Desert Campus	A charter school on the CSUSB PD campus would serve our community and region and provide relevant and accessible education for students of all ages and academic tracks - from the Pre-K students to the CSU students working towards any and all degrees. The symbiotic relationship is evident, and the benefits are abundant.
Justification:	The north (University area) side of Palm Desert is experiencing significant growth, yet educational offerings have not kept pace. An educated community is a strong community. We must provide extraordinary and innovative education to maintain a strong, relevant, and viable community. An investment in our students will pay dividends for the future.	
02	Update Citywide Lighting Ordinance	Palm Desert's lighting ordinances have not been updated since... before LEDs! Maintaining the aesthetic quality that is aligned with the Palm Desert brand, as well as safety considerations, is foundational to Palm Desert's emphasis on quality of living and the character that is projected visually.
Justification:	A drive through Palm Desert highlights the need for updated ordinances. Glaring neon in windows, poorly installed string and tube lighting, imposing lamps shedding light offensively, etc., call out the need for a review and modernization of ordinances. The ambience of well-applied lighting attracts visitors, guests, customers, and business investors, and generally refines any location. With the types of lighting available, directional and shading applications, lighting can enhance architecture, landscaping, and protect the natural emphasis and beauty of our dark skies. A well-written lighting ordinance is a gift to developers, designers, and businesses.	

2026 Proposed Goals - Councilmember Harnik

Priority	Title	Description
03	Business Attraction in North PD/University Area	Develop programs, messaging, marketing plans, etc., to attract businesses to fulfill the needs of the rapidly growing population in the university/northern area of Palm Desert.
Justification:	Palm Desert has worked diligently to foster a community environment that encourages home development. Palm Desert has, and is, successful in that effort. Current and future residents need businesses, e.g., clothing stores, grocery stores, drug stores, etc., in their neighborhoods. Creating walkable neighborhoods is important to the Palm Desert community and brand. Creating the '15-minute neighborhood' where residents can access daily needs, either by walking or biking, builds a sustainable and healthy community, by myriad definitions.	
04	Leverage Upcoming Global Events	The events coming to Los Angeles within the next few years will offer international recognition. People around the world are paying attention!
Justification:	The opportunity presented by the number of world-class events that will be hosted by Los Angeles in the immediate future must be seized upon. Viewing gatherings and parties, themed events, creative adventures and experiences, etc., offer motivation to visit surrounding areas and to elevate recognition of Palm Desert. This is a marketing and business opportunity.	

2026 Proposed Goals - Councilmember Nestande

Priority	Title	Description
01	North Sphere Planning & Infrastructure	The population in the North Sphere is growing quickly with more than 6,000 housing units over the coming years.
Justification:	Ensure the North Sphere has the infrastructure needed to support its growth and public amenities including a regional park.	
02	Mall Redevelopment	Continue to evaluate options for adaptive reuse of the Mall.
Justification:	It is the center of our region and key to economic stability and growth.	

2026 Proposed Goals - Councilmember Quintanilla

Priority	Title	Description
01	Extreme Heat Mitigation	Utilize innovative technologies that refract heat, reduce surface temperatures, and mitigate extreme heat in parks, at bus stops, and buildings owned by the City of Palm Desert.
Justification:	Proposition 4, the Climate Bond, funds extreme heat projects. The revised Governor's Budget Summary allocates \$110 million for extreme heat in 2025-26 and proposes \$241 million for 2026-27. This can lead to greater energy efficiency, with the potential to reduce the cost of living. There are a variety of products and coating materials that will increase safety in public spaces and improve the overall quality of life.	
02	Public Engagement & Communications	Improve community engagement by modernizing City communications and expanding accessible programming. Ensure all materials and presentations are ADA compliant, reduce barriers to participation on Engage Palm Desert by allowing submissions without registration, redesign the BrightSide to improve relevance and cost-effectiveness, and expand public events, activating the new Library as a central gathering space
Justification:	Current engagement tools are underutilized and create unnecessary barriers to participation. Registration limits interaction on Engage Palm Desert, and BrightSide's low readership raises concerns about cost-effectiveness. Streamlining communication and expanding programming will strengthen participation and community connection.	

2026 Proposed Goals - Councilmember Quintanilla

Priority	Title	Description
03	Stimulate Entrepreneurship and Local Businesses	Stimulate local small businesses and online entrepreneurs with monthly evening markets, featuring live music.
Justification:	San Pablo was designed to be "Downtown" Palm Desert. Closing the street once a month for evening markets gives local vendors, farmers, food trucks, and online entrepreneurs the opportunity to work with the Economic Development Department and increase their chances of success. This will bring people from across the valley and visitors seeking local experiences. This is an opportunity to develop Palm Desert's character by building a unique social, gastronomic, cultural, and economic event in the middle of the Coachella Valley, accessible to locals and guests.	

2026 Proposed Goals - Mayor Pro Tem Pradetto

Priority	Title	Description
01	North Sphere Planning & Infrastructure	We've made significant progress by signing an agreement and funding a portion of a new IID substation in Thousand Palms. Now, we can shift our attention to the sewer infrastructure in the area.
Justification:	Development in parts of the City's North Sphere has languished due to a lack of sewer and electrical infrastructure. We have a solution for the electrical part of the equation and may now focus more attention on the sewer side.	
02	Mall Redevelopment / Increase Experienced Based & Family Friendly Activities	Continuation of last year's goal of the same name
Justification:	We have not yet accomplished the goal, and it remains an important component of the City's economic development potential.	

2026 Proposed Goals - Mayor Pro Tem Pradetto

Priority	Title	Description
03	Zero Blight Challenge	Abandoned shopping carts, graffiti, and littered trash are examples of blight. The Zero The Blight Challenge aims to reduce and eliminate blight by providing a rapid response to clean or repair blight reported through the city app or any other reporting method to the city. At present, our city app notification states a remediation goal within 48 hours. I would like to improve that to 24 hours, or even 12 hours.
Justification:	A clean and well-maintained community is inviting and attracts visitors and businesses. It gives residents pride in their community. Keeping public spaces safe and clean is a core function of local municipal government.	

2026 Proposed Goals - Mayor Trubee

Priority	Title	Description
01	Enhance Support of CVDPN (Emergency Preparedness)	Provide material and/or financial support for this organization so that more of our residents will be prepared for an emergency situation and less reliant on governmental help during times of crisis when our emergency services would potentially be overwhelmed.
Justification:	Resilient and independent residents are the end goals, as well as taking the burden off of our public safety services	
02	Palm Desert Historical Society	Fold the Historical Society operations into our Library Services.
Justification:	The Historical Society is currently at a crossroads. They will be without leadership starting this June, and no other Board Members are willing to step up to assume the role of President or Vice President. Their board and staff are all volunteers, and the workload has become overwhelming for their membership, most of whom are retired and over 70. A community that forgets its history risks losing its vision for future growth and its identity. This is what we need to avoid.	
03	Welcome/Gateway Sign on El Paseo	Solicit estimates for a welcome sign to El Paseo that would be placed across the street at one or both ends.
Justification:	El Paseo is already a well-known boulevard, but by adding a cross street welcome sign/archway, we can further enhance the sense of place, appeal, and recognition that El Paseo deserves. Funding sources could be private donors, El Paseo BID, the City, or any combination thereof.	

2026 Proposed Goals - Mayor Trubee

Priority	Title	Description
04	Farmers Market	Solicit bids and interest from farmers markets to begin operating in our city.
Justification:	A thriving farmers market has a multitude of benefits.... it offers our residents healthy food choices that may not be available in traditional grocery stores. It supports traditionally sustainable farming and locally owned and operated farmers, their families, and employees. And it attracts shoppers and tourists from outside Palm Desert, helping generate revenue and foot traffic in our city.	
05	Indoor Sports/Events Facility	The VGPS is spearheading an effort to bring a 200,000 square foot indoor event space to the Valley to attract year-round scholastic sports tournaments. This will provide a positive economic impact on our sales tax and TOT revenue streams.
Justification:	VGPS has already conducted a feasibility study and a funding study... they are simply looking for a logistically sound location to build it, and I believe Palm Desert is that place. I have faith in Scott White and his team, and I believe that Palm Desert is the ideal location for this venue due to our proximity to the interstate as well as the number and quality of amenities and services that we offer. The added revenue will provide an indirect benefit to our residents, but they will also enjoy a direct benefit by having a venue where Local youth can participate in sports year-round and have opportunities to compete in tournaments closer to home.	

2026 City Council Proposed Goals

01	Charter School Concept at CSU Palm Desert Campus
02	Update Citywide Lighting Ordinance
03	Business Attraction in North PD/University Area
04	Leverage Upcoming Global Events
05	North Sphere Planning & Infrastructure
06	Mall Redevelopment
07	Extreme Heat Mitigation
08	Public Engagement & Communications

09	Stimulate Entrepreneurship and Local Businesses
10	Zero Blight Challenge
11	Enhance Support of CVDPN (Emergency Preparedness)
12	Palm Desert Historical Society
13	Welcome/Gateway Sign on El Paseo
14	Farmers Market
15	Indoor Sports/Event Facility

2026 City Council Goals - Proposed

01	<p>North Sphere & University Area Development (Nestande #1, Pradetto #1, Harnik #1 & #3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Infrastructure readiness (electric + sewer)• Regional park and amenities• Charter school feasibility at CSU Palm Desert• Indoor sports/event facility feasibility• Business attraction strategy for the university/northern area
02	<p>Mall Redevelopment & Family-Friendly Activation (Nestande #2, Pradetto #2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adaptive reuse of the Mall• Experience-based redevelopment• Family-friendly and community-oriented uses
03	<p>Citywide Economic Activation & Events (Quintanilla #3, Trubee #4 & #5, Harnik #4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monthly evening markets/entrepreneurship activation• Farmers market exploration• Leverage LA 28, FIFA, and Paralympics for tourism and brand positioning

2026 City Council Goals - Proposed

04	<p>Community Engagement & Civic Identity (Quintanilla #2, Trubee #2, Trubee #3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modernize communications (BrightSide, Engage PD, ADA compliance)• Historical Society integration into Library Services• El Paseo gateway enhancements
05	<p>Community Resilience & Climate Strategy (Quintanilla #1, Trubee #1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extreme heat mitigation and climate funding strategy• CVDPN support and emergency preparedness
06	<p>Clean, Safe & Attractive City Standards (Harnik #2, Pradetto #3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lighting ordinance modernization• Zero Blight rapid response initiative