

**PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF PALM DESERT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

March 17, 2026

Present: Commissioner John Collum, Vice-Chair John Greenwood, Chair
Lindsay Holt, Commissioner Alex Meyerhoff, Commissioner
Joshua Nickerson

Staff Present: Director of Development Services Rosie Lua, Recording
Secretary Michelle Nance, Deputy City Attorney Verdugo, Deputy
Director of Development Services Carlos Flores, Associate
Planner II Robert Keatinge

1. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order by Chairperson Holt on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at 6:01 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall, located at 73-510 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert, California.

2. ROLL CALL

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Collum led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion by: Vice-Chair Greenwood

Seconded by: Commissioner Meyerhoff

To approve the consent calendar as presented.

Motion Carried (5 to 0)

5.a APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by: Vice-Chair Greenwood

Seconded by: Commissioner Meyerhoff

Approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 3, 2026.

Motion Carried (5 to 0)

6. ACTION CALENDAR

6.a REVIEW THE 2025 GENERAL PLAN AND HOUSING ELEMENT ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS AND RECOMMEND THAT THE CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZE SUBMITTAL TO THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF PLANNING AND RESEARCH, AND DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Carlos Flores, Deputy Director of Development Services, narrated a PowerPoint presentation and responded to Commissioner inquiries.

Motion by: Commissioner Collum

Seconded by: Commissioner Nickerson

Recommend that the City Council authorize City staff to submit the General Plan and the Housing Element Annual Progress Reports to the State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

Motion Carried (5 to 0)

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

7.a CONSIDERATION TO ADOPT A NOTICE OF EXEMPTION PURSUANT TO THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) AND APPROVE A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) TO OPERATE A NEW 1,900 SQUARE-FOOT BAR USE AT 73-730 EL PASEO, SUITE C

Bobby Keatinge, Associate Planner, narrated a PowerPoint presentation and responded to Commissioner inquiries.

Chair Holt opened the public hearing.

Geoffrey Gregory, applicant, provided a report and responded to Commissioner inquiries.

Patrick Masur, business owner, responded to Commissioner inquiries.

The following individuals spoke in support of the project:

- Justin Ross
- Natale Hanna
- Sama
- Bill Kelly
- Jay Masur

The following individuals spoke in opposition of the project:

- Joni Maggio
- Hiedi Miedecke
- Mike Morsch
- Aaron Eller
- Sheri Pierattoni
- Joy Miedecke
- Sandy Carroll
- Paula Studdard
- Brenda Malloy
- Rob Carroll

Geoffrey Gregory, applicant, expressed appreciation to all attendees and provided closing comments.

Patrick Masur, business owner, provided closing comments.

Commissioner Collum emphasized the importance of maintaining El Paseo as a premier destination and expressed interest in applying similar operational standards to other businesses in the area. He stated he was somewhat conflicted about the proposal and raised concerns regarding how the project would be presented to the public, as well as the appearance of the storefront.

Commissioner Nickerson questioned whether the proposed use could successfully coexist on El Paseo under the proposed conditions and noted the project could set a precedent for similar uses. He suggested the City Council consider broader improvements along El Paseo and recommended additional conditions, including measures to address nuisance odors.

He also proposed enhanced operational requirements, including a pre-opening acoustical review and sound testing, restrictions on low-frequency music prior to 9:00 p.m., and strengthened loitering and patron dispersal policies. Additional suggestions included extended security presence and active monitoring, maintaining security logs, evaluation of entry operations (including potential VIP access), and installation of interior and exterior cameras with battery backup.

Commissioner Nickerson further recommended that staff approve an outdoor queuing plan to ensure ADA compliance and safety, expressed concern regarding occupancy levels, and suggested prohibiting open flames. He also proposed a provision that if three violations occur within a 12-month period, the hours of operation be reduced to end at 12:00 a.m.

Vice Chair Greenwood expressed support for providing the applicant an opportunity for additional community outreach and noted differing perspectives among Commissioners regarding compatibility, while also emphasizing the importance of maintaining economic vitality.

Commissioner Meyerhoff acknowledged staff's efforts in developing conditions and noted the Commission's ability to regulate time, place, and manner, but expressed concern that the proposed use may not be compatible with the surrounding area.

Chair Holt suggested that an initial review of the operation be conducted after three months.

The Planning Commission recessed at 8:03 p.m. and reconvened at 8:14 p.m.

Motion by: Vice-Chair Greenwood

Seconded by: Commissioner Nickerson

To continue the public hearing to a date uncertain, with the following direction to:
The Applicant:

1. Conduct an additional community outreach meeting with nearby residents, business owners, and adjacent neighbors.

Staff:

1. Return with revised plans, operational details, and updated draft Conditions of Approval, including but not limited to: hours of operation; a statement of operations and use; clarification of entertainment components; and evaluation of primary and rear access.
2. Review and propose revisions, as appropriate, to Conditions of Approval related to:
 - a. Site cleaning and end-of-night operational responsibilities;
 - b. Noise mitigation measures, including review by a licensed acoustic engineer, a pre-opening sound test with City staff present, and restrictions on low-frequency amplified music prior to 9:00 p.m.;
 - c. Security measures, including prohibition of outdoor congregation after 1:45 a.m., provision of security staffing through 2:30 a.m., and an outdoor queuing plan;
 - d. Security camera requirements, including interior coverage and battery backup;
 - e. Prohibition of open flames; and
 - f. A storefront appearance and signage plan compatible with the pedestrian-oriented character of El Paseo.

Motion Carried (5 to 0)

8. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS & COMMENTS

8.a SUMMARY OF CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS

Rosie Lua, Development Services Director, provided an update on recent City Council actions and presented a summary of upcoming agenda items.

8.b COMMITTEE MEETING UPDATES

8.b.1 Cultural Arts Committee

Commissioner Collum provided an update on recent Cultural Arts Committee actions.

8.b.2 Parks and Recreation Committee

None.

8.c PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

Commissioners expressed appreciation to Siji Fernandez, Senior Planner, for his assistance with the Planning Commissioners Conference.

8.d CITY STAFF

8.d.1 Attendance Report

Report on file; no formal action taken on this item.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The Planning Commission adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

City of Palm Desert Planning Commission Minutes
March 17, 2026

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Nance, Assistant City Clerk
Recording Secretary

Rosie Lua, Director of Development Services
Staff Liaison