



A SAFEBUILT COMPANY



# CITY OF PALM DESERT

Proposal For University  
Neighborhood Specific Plan Update |  
2023-RFP-203

*August 17, 2023 | 2:00pm | Electronic*



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Cover Letter

A

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## A. Cover Letter

August 17, 2023

City of Palm Desert  
73-510 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert, CA 92260



A SAFEbuilt COMPANY

**Re: 2023-RFP-203 Proposal for University Neighborhood Specific Plan**

1500 S. Haven Ave, Suite 220  
Ontario, CA 91761  
P (909) 295-3142

Dear Selection Committee,

Interwest Consulting Group appreciates the opportunity to submit this proposal to the City of Palm Desert, to provide urban design and planning services. Our multi-disciplinary team believes we are uniquely qualified to assist the City in updating its University Neighborhood Specific Plan to help transform the area into a livable and walkable neighborhood district. We offer the combination of knowledge, experience, and expertise that will ensure the future development of the University Neighborhood is a success.

We incorporate best practices and innovative tools from all approaches to preparing specific plans, including form-based zoning and transit-oriented development (TOD) /design principles. As presented throughout this proposal, we have prepared specific plans and master plans for a variety of cities in California and nationally, including communities similar to Palm Desert. Our proposal includes:

- *Cutting-Edge TOD and Place-making Expertise.* Combined with our extensive experience working with specific plans is our expertise on TOD and placemaking. Nick Pergakes, AICP, Project Manager, has prepared or managed over two dozen specific plans, downtown master plans, and design guidelines/objective design standards throughout California and nationally. He brings to this project an in-depth knowledge of mixed-use community planning, TOD planning, and zoning/form-based codes. Palm Desert will benefit from the use of the latest thinking in the world of TOD and place-making.
- *Real-World Planning Expertise.* Our qualifications statement highlights the 50+ years of both advanced planning and current planning experience that our key team members bring to this project. What this means for you is that we know what makes a successful Specific Plan and how to implement it.
- *Planning Leadership and Innovation.* The Interwest team is recognized throughout California as industry leaders and champions for local governments and effective planning. Our project leaders Nick Pergakes (Project Manager) and Richard Smeaton (Project Director) bring decades of experience serving and managing projects for local municipalities. Our specific plan approach strongly emphasizes collaboration and implementation of a strategic vision and character of a community, not just the regulatory direction of a typical zoning document.

The Interwest Team is very excited about this opportunity, and we look forward to sharing our ideas with you further. Please note that both the scope and budget are flexible and can be adjusted to meet your specific requirements and goals. This proposal remains valid for a period of 90 days.

Contact information for our team is as follows:

Shelby Sieracki  
Senior Account Manager  
626.224.2055 | ssieracki@interwestgrp.com

Nick Pergakes, AICP  
Project Manager  
626.676.9533 | npergakes@interwestgrp.com

Signing Authority: As President of Interwest Consulting Group, I am authorized to sign any agreements that may result from this proposal and will provide contract support to the proposed Interwest team. Should any questions arise, I can be contacted at 619.372.9962 or via email at pmeschino@interwestgrp.com; 1500 S. Haven Ave, Suite 200, Ontario CA 91761. We appreciate the opportunity to present our proposal to the City of Palm Desert and look forward to serving your community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Meschino".

Paul Meschino  
President

Experience and Technical  
Competence

**B**

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## INTERWEST COMPANY DATA

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**YEAR FOUNDED**  
2002

**TYPE OF ENTITY:**  
Corporation

### PROJECT OFFICE FOR THIS CONTRACT:

1500 S. Haven Ave, Suite 220  
Ontario, CA 91761

**NUMBER OF OFFICES:**  
10

**YEARS OF EXPERIENCE  
PROVIDING MUNICIPAL SERVICES:**  
21 years

### FULL SERVICE OFFERING:

- Planning & Urban Design
- Building Safety
- Capital Projects
- City Engineering
- Construction Management
- Development Services
- Land Development Design
- Right of Way & Real Estate
- Traffic Engineering
- Transportation Planning
- Transportation Programming

## B. Experience and Technical Competence

### 1. Background

Interwest Consulting Group (Interwest) is a multi-disciplinary firm that provides a range of services to municipalities across California, including Planning, Engineering and Public Works, Building and Safety, Transportation Planning, and Real Property. Our total client list exceeds 300 public agencies in California, and our team of more than 450 professionals has provided services to municipalities for two decades.

Our Planning Division brings a deep knowledge of planning practices and current regulations as we apply our knowledge in order to reach successful outcomes. Our team brings strong qualifications in entitlement reviews, zoning and development regulations, long-range planning, and urban design that will support agency planning programs.

Interwest is recognized throughout California as an industry leader and champion for innovative and effective planning. Our specific plans and design guidelines are highly customized, and we work closely with each client to identify the approach that will most effectively achieve the city's and community's objectives. We incorporate best practices and innovative tools in Zoning Code Updates, including form-based design and coding.

As presented throughout this proposal, we have prepared Specific Plans, Zoning Code Updates, and other long-range planning projects for a variety of cities in California, including communities similar to Palm Desert. We have experience providing solutions or alternative approaches to design regarding the siting of new buildings, design of open space, or parking facilities. Our experience as planners includes both decades of work in Planning departments—using and implementing Zoning Codes on a daily basis—and as planners writing updated Codes for counties and cities in California and other states.

Simply put, we know the types of questions that arise when implementing a Zoning Code, the types of regulations that work or cause problems, and the features that make a Zoning Code easy to use for both City staff and the public. Our decades

of experience will allow our team to effectively assess your Zoning Code and develop an effective program for the creation of Objective Design Standards.

The proposed Interwest team has extensive experience in developing zoning code updates and mixed-use zoning regulations for municipalities with similar attributes to those of the City. The project will be overseen by our team of planners with expertise in land use planning, urban design, municipal planning, and code implementation.

## Qualified Staff

**Richard Smeaton, AICP**, with over 25 years of experience in planning and community development, will serve as the Project Director with project oversight and quality control. **Nick Pergakes, AICP**, will serve as the Project Manager and will be the primary contact for the project. With more than 20 years of planning and urban design experience, Nick has managed and prepared specific plans, zoning code updates, and urban design plans in California and nationally. Since 2015, Nick has either prepared or is in the process of preparing several specific plans including the San Dimas Downtown Specific Plan, City of Hope Campus Specific Plan in Duarte, CA, and the Connect Southwest LA Specific Plan in Los Angeles County. He has also managed zoning code updates and prepared objective design standards for the following agencies: Corning, Rancho Cordova, Covina, Irwindale, San Dimas, San Benito County, and Mendocino County.

## Firm's Unique Qualifications to Best Perform These Services

We pride our success on effective communication. We are committed to a "no surprises" approach built upon presenting ideas, asking questions, and identifying and addressing issues early in the process. We will propose options, seek direction, and implement solutions in close coordination with the City of Palm Desert. We welcome this opportunity to help maintain the quality of life and unique character that makes the City a desirable community and we believe our planning team will provide superior resources for meeting your immediate needs and long-term goals. Our team offers the following advantages to the City of Palm Desert:

- **Specific Plan Expertise.** Our team has worked on over two dozen specific plan and zoning code updates for cities and counties in California and nationally.
- **Broad Multi-disciplinary Skills.** The Interwest team is multi-disciplinary and brings a broad range of practice areas, including zoning, comprehensive planning, transportation planning, urban design, and public facilitation. Our range of skills and experience enable us to prepare effective development regulations that work in the real world.
- **Current Housing Law.** Interwest staff have worked diligently to stay current on California's housing laws. As any planner in California knows, housing is one of the most pressing issues in our state, and lawmakers have been very active creating in housing legislation for the past three years. Our team is here to help navigate the complex and occasionally poorly defined collection of recently enacted housing legislation in a manner that reflects local interests and values while complying with state law.
- **Advance Planning Meets Development.** Interwest's staff have long served as extensions to municipal planning and community development departments. We have processed projects, implemented planning documents and helped to design communities. This hands-on experience leads to practical solutions.
- **Unique Clients, Unique Solutions.** Interwest is recognized throughout California as an industry leader and champion for innovative and effective planning and design. We know each community is unique and our team will prepare Zoning Code and Specific Plan amendments that will meet the City's needs as well as consider economic and market realities.

## Awards and Accomplishments

While Interwest believes that the quality of our work, the experience of our staff, and the breadth and depth of our understanding differentiate us from other firms, the level of recognition we received across the municipal services sector is a true indicator. Awards from various renowned organizations in California have been bestowed on Interwest as a firm, a specific project we have led, and many staff members.

In addition to Excellence and Achievement in Planning, in 2023, we received the Best Practices Award of Excellence from the APA California Central Section Awards Program for our Planning Services work for Stanislaus County. We present some additional highlighted awards and recognitions below.

### LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE—EMERGING PLANNING AND DESIGN FIRM, AWARD OF EXCELLENCE, 2023

#### APA CALIFORNIA CENTRAL SECTION AND APA CALIFORNIA INLAND EMPIRE SECTION

Interwest received the 'Emerging Planning and Design Firm Award of Excellence' from the APA Inland Empire Section 2023 Leadership and Service. This award reaffirms our position as an emerging urban planning and design leader and is a testament to our mission of delivering exemplary services to our communities.

### URBAN DESIGN, AWARD OF MERIT, 2023

#### COUNTY OF SAN BENITO ZONING CODE UPDATE | AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION, NORCAL

The APA Northern California Section Urban Design acknowledged our group with the 'Award of Merit.' This was for our work on the San Benito County Zoning Code Update, ADU Design Handbook and Construction Drawing Templates project — a testament to our team's commitment to strategic urban design and innovative zoning solutions.

### EXCELLENCE AND ACHIEVEMENT IN PLANNING BEST PRACTICES, AWARD OF EXCELLENCE, 2023

#### STANISLAUS COUNTY, URBAN POCKETS PROJECT | APA CALIFORNIA CENTRAL SECTION

Adding to the list, the APA Central Section 2023 also honored us with the 'Best Practices Award of Excellence.' This was for our outstanding work on the Stanislaus County Urban Pockets Project. This award reflects our unwavering dedication to adopting best practices and enhancing the Stanislaus County community's quality of life and environment.

### BEST PARK AWARD, 2022

#### ENCHANTED HILLS PARK, CITY OF PERRIS | APWA, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

The Interwest Team has been working with the City of Perris, California on a new community park utilizing a \$8.5M grant from California's Prop 68. The city broke ground on the Enchanted Hills Park in 2021 and celebrated its grand opening in August of 2022. The park was selected as the APWA, Southern California Chapter's Best Park Award this year.



*"Interwest consulting group is a great partner to the city of perris. They were instrumental in the vision, financing and now construction of the 22-acre enchanted hills park. Their passion, professionalism and commitment were instrumental in Bringing the project to fruition."*  
Richard Belmudez, City Banager to the City of Perris



## 2. References

Interwest has extensive experience preparing specific plans, objective design standards, and zoning code updates. Below is a sample of client references and relevant project experience from the past seven years.

### City of Palm Desert // North Palm Desert Park and Lupine Plaza, City of Palm Desert

**CLIENT CONTACT: SHAWN MUIR, COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGER. PHONE: 760-346-0611  
EMAIL: SMUIR@PALMDESERT.GOV**

Interwest is familiar with the City of Palm Desert, as we are currently providing engineering and design services for Lupine Plaza, currently in the Public Engagement Phase; North Palm Desert Park, currently in the Conceptual Design heading into Schematic Phase; and recently provided On-Call Traffic/Transportation Engineering and Building Safety Plan Check and Inspection Services.

*Key Personnel: Gianni Feoli, Nicole Jules, and Joe Indrawan*

### DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN // CITY OF SAN DIMAS, CA

**CLIENT CONTACT: LUIS TORRICO, PLANNING MANAGER, 909.394.6208, LTORRICO@SANDIMASCA.GOV**

Interwest and Arcadis are assisting the City of San Dimas with the preparation of its first Downtown Specific Plan. The new Specific Plan will help establish a planning and zoning framework for encouraging innovative, transit-oriented development in the downtown area while preserving the historic character of the district. During the planning process, new housing, retail, employment, and hospitality uses in the downtown area will be proposed in conjunction with a new Metro light rail line and transit station opening in 2025. Several opportunity sites within walking distance of the transit station will allow significant potential for infill development and adaptive reuse of existing underutilized properties in the downtown. Creating a strong community identity and sense of place, with design guidelines for buildings and the public realm, will also be a key outcome of the process. *Key Personnel: Nick Pergakes, AICP; Jennifer Williams; Lexie Abrahamian*



### CITY OF HOPE CANCER RESEARCH CENTER // CITY OF DUARTE, CA

**Client Contact: Jason Golding, Planning Manager,  
626.357.7931 x 231, goldingj@accessduarte.com**

The City of Hope Cancer Research Center is a medical campus that was established in 1913 and is today regarded as a global pioneer for cancer research. The City of Hope Specific Plan provides a comprehensive framework for the long-term growth and development of the 115-acre campus. The specific plan, adopted in Fall 2018, will provide the City of Hope the ability to implement its long-term vision while meeting the community-wide goals of the cities of Duarte and Irwindale. Several new buildings, including medical, office, research, hotel, and parking structures, will be built and phased in over the next 20 years with streetscape improvements, open space, and sustainable design. Adopted in October 2018. *Key Personnel: Nick Pergakes, AICP*



## MULTI-FAMILY ZONING CODE UPDATE // CITY OF COVINA, CA

**CLIENT CONTACT:** Brian Lee, AICP, 626.384.5450, [blee@covina.gov](mailto:blee@covina.gov)



Interwest assisted the City of Covina with an update of the City's multi-family zoning district to meet many recent state housing legislation changes. The project, funded by SB 2, included updating the RD zoning district to make it easier to use, and provide more guidance on producing Missing Middle housing types, such as bungalow courts and mansion apartments. The project also helped remove impediments to housing production and make it easier for developers to make it through the City's approval process. Interwest also prepared Objective Design Standards for developers to use for a ministerial review process under SB 35. This includes Objective Design Standards for neighborhood compatibility, massing, articulation, materials, site design, open space, and accessory site elements. The new Objective Design Standards include both written and illustrative standards to be incorporated into the updated zoning code and design guidelines. **Key Personnel:** Paul Junker; Nick Pergakes, AICP; Nancy Fong, AICP

## ZONING CODE, SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES UPDATE // CITY OF IRWINDALE, CA

**CLIENT CONTACT:** Marilyn Simpson, AICP, City Planner, 626.430.2209, [msimpson@irwindaleCA.gov](mailto:msimpson@irwindaleCA.gov)

The City of Irwindale adopted its first Zoning Code in 1966 and has only been amended incrementally over the past 50 years. Previously, the City had relied on the County's zoning that existed prior to incorporation. Numerous amendments happened over time, which have led to inconsistencies and complicated the Code's organization. The Code is being updated to not only incorporate current best practices, industry standards, and legal mandates, but also to comply with the City's General Plan and be internally consistent and user-friendly. Interwest is also assisting the City with preparing Objective Design Standards, as well as updating its subdivision regulations, ADU ordinance, and commercial and industrial design guidelines. Interwest is updating the City's design guidelines to implement Irwindale's design objectives for commercial and industrial development. The guidelines will convey to the reader Irwindale's expectations for high-quality development that helps realize the vision for the City of Irwindale and strengthens the character of the community. The new design guidelines will also address the public realm, including streetscapes and amenities to contribute to enhancing the character and identity of the City, including signage, lighting, landscaping, parking, streetscapes, and open space/public areas. **Key Personnel:** Nick Pergakes, AICP; Rick Smeaton, AICP; Liz Golden, AICP



## ZONING CODE UPDATE AND DESIGN STANDARDS // CITY OF RANCHO CORDOVA, CA

**CLIENT CONTACT:** Darcy Goulart, Planning Manager, 916.851.8784, [dgoulart@cityofranhocordova.org](mailto:dgoulart@cityofranhocordova.org)

The City of Rancho Cordova retained Interwest to update its Zoning Code and development standards in its Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan. These updates will establish consistency with current state law requirements, facilitate housing development and create objective development standards for housing and mixed-use projects. Bisected by an RT Light Rail corridor and Folsom Boulevard, the core of Rancho Cordova is well situated to accommodate higher-density residential

and mixed-use projects. This planning effort will provide a clear template for such development (Objective Design and Development Standards) and will explore changes to regulations such as development intensity and parking requirements to facilitate high-quality, higher-density development. The Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan provides land use regulation for much of the core of Rancho Cordova and Interwest will amend provisions of the Specific Plan as needed to ensure compatibility with the new Zoning Code regulations. As a parallel effort, the City is developing prototypes for higher-density residential and mixed-use development. Interwest is supporting this effort by ensuring draft regulations and development prototypes are consistent. We are also assisting the City in exploring policy options for amending its General Plan and development fee structure to facilitate higher-density residential and mixed-use development. The GP and fee amendments will be conducted in a future phase of work. **Key Personnel: Paul Junker; Nick Pergakes, AICP**



### ZONING CODE UPDATE // COUNTY OF SAN BENITO, CA

**CLIENT CONTACT: Arielle Goodspeed, Principal Planner**

**831.902.2547, agoodspeed@cosb.com**

Interwest and Arcadis worked with County staff to prepare a comprehensive update to the San Benito County Zoning Code. The Zoning Code was last updated in 1984, and prior to that date had last been substantially revised in 1966. As a result, the Code today is outdated and poorly organized, with topics and issues scattered in a way that makes it very difficult to use and interpret. In addition to reorganizing and rewriting the Code, Interwest's scope of work includes making revisions to implement the County's 2015 General Plan and to reflect recent changes in state legislation, including housing. The scope of work included updating the County's ADU ordinance, preparing Multi-Family Objective Design Standards, and other topics. Funded by a State of California grant, the Update began in October 2020 and was adopted in June 2022. **Key Personnel: Nick Pergakes, AICP; Eric Norris**



### CONNECT SOUTHWEST LA: A TOD SPECIFIC PLAN // LOS ANGELES, CA

**CLIENT CONTACT: Leon Freeman, 213.974.6404, freeman@planning.lacounty.gov**

Los Angeles County is working on a new neighborhood plan for the area between Los Angeles Southwest College and Metro's Green Line Vermont / Athens Station. Connect Southwest LA seeks to improve access to transit, housing, and jobs, while creating a healthier, safer environment for walking and biking.

The Connect Southwest LA plan is based on significant public outreach and input from residents, county agencies, adjacent cities, and other stakeholders. It contains zoning and land use standards, urban design guidelines, a mobility strategy, an economic development strategy, and a capital improvement plan. **\* Nick Pergakes served as Project Manager for this project while with a previous/past consulting firm in 2019.**



# Firm Staffing and Key Personnel

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## C. Firm Staffing and Key Personnel

### 1. Staffing and 2. Key Personnel

We pride our success in effective communication. We are committed to a “no surprises” approach built upon presenting ideas, asking questions, and identifying and addressing issues early on in the process. We propose options, seek direction, and implement solutions in close coordination with the City. We welcome this opportunity to help maintain the quality of life and unique character that makes the City a desirable community, and we believe our planning team will provide superior resources for meeting your immediate needs and long-term goal.

Led by Principal Planner, Nick Pergakes, the Interwest Planning group stands ready and capable to provide the City of Palm Desert with the expert-level service our clients have come to expect from Interwest and our team members. We possess extensive professional capabilities which allow us to innovate, create, and implement effective solutions with your agency, all while keeping the community’s interests in mind.

Summaries of qualifications and experience for the proposed seven (7) key Interwest staff are provided below and detailed résumés for all proposed staff are included in the Appendix. All proposed staff will be working for the City.

#### Project Manager & Primary Point of Contact



**Nick Pergakes, AICP**  
**PROJECT MANAGER // PRINCIPAL PLANNER**

Nick is an AICP-certified planner with more than 20 years of experience in land use planning, urban design, placemaking, and zoning/form-based codes. He has worked in both the public and private sectors as an urban planner, urban designer, project manager, and team manager. Nick has overseen and prepared award-winning master plans, specific plans, corridor studies, and zoning/form-based codes in cities across California and the Southeastern United States. Recent highlights of his work include writing Objective Design Standards for the cities of Corning, Covina, and Rancho Cordova; and managing the Downtown Specific Plan in San Dimas, CA. As a member of the American Planning Association and Congress for New Urbanism, Nick regularly presents at conferences on placemaking, transit-oriented development, and zoning/form-based codes. His research has been published by ITE and the Washington State Department of Transportation.

#### RECENT PROJECT EXPERIENCE

- *City of San Dimas Downtown Specific Plan | San Dimas, CA / Project Manager*
- *Medium Density Residential Site Planning and Design Concepts | Rio Vista, CA / Project Manager*
- *City of Hope Campus Specific Plan / Duarte, CA / Project Manager*
- *Pasadena General Plan Implementation Program / Pasadena, CA / Project Manager*
- *Connect Southwest LA: A TOD Specific Plan for West Athens-Westmont / Los Angeles County, CA / Project Manager*
- *Palmdale to Burbank Station Area Planning, California High-Speed Rail / Southern California / Project Manager*
- *Zoning Code and Design Guidelines Update / Irwindale, CA / Project Manager*
- *Multi-Family Zoning Code Update and Objective Design Standards / Covina, CA / Principal Planner / Urban Designer*
- *Zoning Code Update and Objective Design Standards / Rancho Cordova, CA / Project Manager*
- *Zoning Code Update and Objective Design Standards / San Benito County, CA / Deputy Project Manager*

## Project



**Richard Smeaton, AICP**  
**PROFESSIONAL IN CHARGE // PRINCIPAL PLANNER**

Richard has been providing professional planning services for more than 25 years. He has worked almost exclusively with public agencies as a staff member, contract planner, or consultant. Richard is a skilled Principal Planner who brings a wealth of experience in all aspects of urban planning and community development. This experience includes preparing and managing the processing of major projects, design review, annexations, cannabis uses, housing elements, and various planning studies. This also includes holding director-level positions in municipal government. His background and experience have afforded him the skills and sensitivity to complete projects on time and on budget.

## Project Support



**Jennifer Williams, AICP**  
**SENIOR PLANNER**

Jennifer has 15 years of experience working with local governments. She provides a range of planning services in support of our clients. Her duties include processing development applications. In this role, she ensures compliance and consistency with the General Plan, Zoning Code, Subdivision Map Act, CEQA, and applicable specific plans and design review requirements, as well as federal and state laws. Jennifer also assists with long-range planning.



**Richard Walker**  
**PRINCIPAL PLANNER**

Richard is an experienced Land Use Planner with a demonstrated history of California land use and environmental project management. Richard will support the Interwest team as a subconsultant and will use his expertise in Environmental Documentation (CEQA/NEPA) and Zoning Code. Additionally, Richard is experienced in Land Use, Environmental Law (CFR/PRC), Site Design, and Legal Research. Richard is a strong community and social services professional with more than 24 years of experience.



**Lexie Abrahamian**  
**ASSISTANT PLANNER**

Lexie has 3 years of relevant experience working in urban planning and related fields. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Community, Environment & Planning and is working toward a master's degree in Urban Planning. For the last 3 years, Lexie has served in regional planning and planning/policy research roles, where she has developed a passion for equitable community engagement and co-creation, and evidence-based solutions for the planning field's biggest challenges.



**Nicole Jules, PE**  
**PRINCIPAL TRAFFIC ENGINEER**

Nicole has over 25 years of progressive professional experience and a results-oriented track record. She has managed a variety of complex, controversial public works improvement projects in both private and public employment and enjoys being a civil servant. Her 27-year career spans all aspects of civil engineering, including working in a variety of environments. Her well-rounded experience has developed an ability to work successfully with varied clients and communities. Nicole has expertise in understanding how to balance good engineering with practical and feasible solutions. She has provided services that include traffic signal design and construction, roadway and pavement management techniques, traffic impact studies, traffic circulation and parking analyses, construction staging, and temporary traffic control plan design.



**Joseph Mullaney, EIT**  
**TRAFFIC ENGINEER**

Joseph possesses years of experience providing civil engineering services in the public arena, working with various municipalities. He has extensive experience in design, investigation, and coordination of fiber optic systems. He also is familiar with FTTP design regulations. Joseph's experience also includes supporting the preparation of engineering and traffic surveys. He is known for his ability to efficiently multi-task on projects, providing our clients with a broad range of services. Prior to joining Interwest, Joseph held positions with private design and construction firms where he gained experience overseeing multiple and development construction projects.



**Joe Indrawan, PE**  
**PRINCIPAL ENGINEER**

Joe has more than 35 years of civil engineering experience, including 30 years of service with municipal agencies. His diverse experience allows him to bring a clear understanding and considerable depth to any project, contributing to the successful delivery of all projects. Joe possesses excellent communication skills, providing high level customer service in a professional manner at all times. Joe is a strategic thinker and an innovative problem-solver, making him a strong asset to all projects.

Interwest will provide additional personnel as needed.

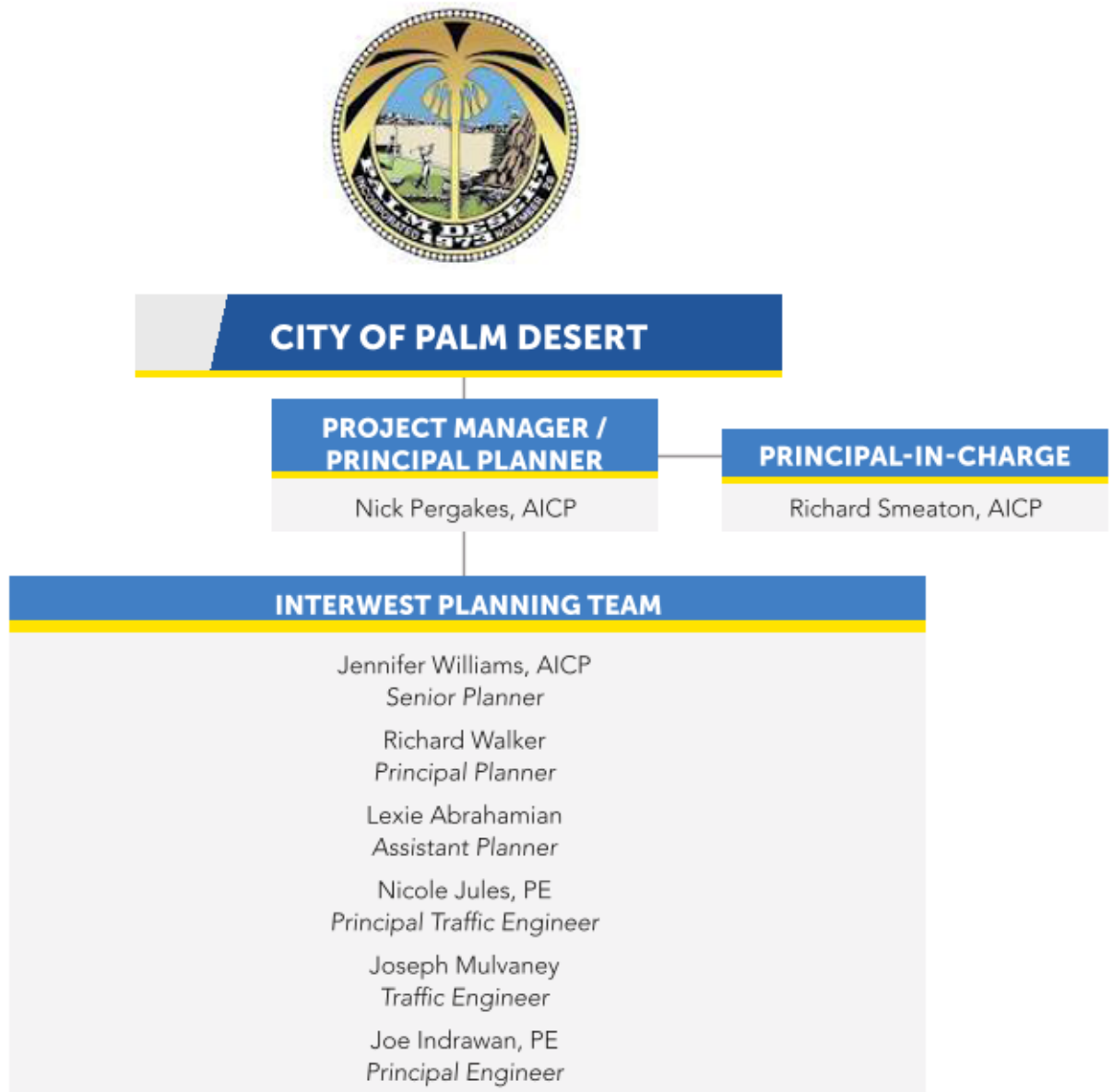




### 3. Team Organization

#### Organizational Chart

Our committed team members **will provide exceptional service to the City of Palm Desert.** The Interwest team will be led by Project Manager/Principal Planner, Nick Pergakes, AICP. As the primary contact to the City, Nick will work with our Professional-in-Charge, and the Interwest project team to complete all services required by the project on-time, on/under budget, and with a few disruptions as possible. Our team structure is as follows:





## 4. Subcontractors

Interwest Consulting Group will not be partnering with subconsultants for this opportunity, as our team can provide the requested services.

## 5. Disclosure

Interwest Consulting Group has not previously performed work for a City of Palm Desert private property owner or developer over the past year.



Proposed Method to  
Accomplish Work

D

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## D. Proposed Method to Accomplish Work

### 1. Project Understanding

The City of Palm Desert is looking to update its University Neighborhood Specific Plan (“UNSP”) to meet recent policies and programs in the City’s updated Housing Element, while creating a sustainable, unique, and vibrant district. Creating opportunities for new residential development in the specific plan area, planning for additional parks and open space, and creating a community gathering space are key goals of this project. Public outreach for the update of the UNSP will be important to ensure public input and feedback is received during the updating the Specific Plan.

### Purpose of Updating the University Neighborhood Specific Plan

The City of Palm Desert recognizes the need for thoughtful and strategic urban design and planning. The UNSP was adopted in 2016 and contains approximately 400 acres intended for development of a new, mixed-use, walkable community adjacent to planned campuses for California State University San Bernardino and the University of California Riverside. The overall goal is to provide a variety of housing options, business opportunities, and open space that stimulate residential and commercial activity and economic development.

The update will focus on evaluating existing and potential land uses, analyzing circulation and infrastructure conditions, developing land use regulations, and implementing objective design standards to promote high-quality residential development that fits the scale and neighboring uses within the project area.

### Goals and Objectives

In addition, primary objectives to be achieved through the UNSP update are:

- Ensure consistency with the General Plan Land Use, Housing Element, Open Space and Circulation Element and/or consider making the Specific Plan the effective land use document over the project area.
- Engage and inform the public and existing Plan area residents about transit-oriented design concepts, provide a potential update to development standards and the general UNSP update process through a comprehensive community involvement strategy. This strategy will gather significant resident input from a variety of Palm Desert residents and incorporate this input into the UNSP updated policies and design guidelines.
- Revise land use plan and policy framework to transition from significant commercial use requirements to increased

housing density and development, while also allowing other neighborhood supportive uses such as retail and office mixed-use throughout the Plan area.

- Improvement of motorized, non-motorized, and transit connectivity between the Plan Area, and existing and future commercial and residential areas (and circulation infrastructure) in and adjacent to Palm Desert city boundaries (as feasible).
- Development of objective design standards which promotes walkable and livable environments, while being compatible with surrounding existing development within the Specific Plan area.
- Prepare development and subdivision standards that promotes walkable environments and incorporates policies of the General Plan.
- Prepare the necessary CEQA documentation for the update of the Specific Plan, building on the adopted Environmental Impact Report, as appropriate.

## Key Considerations

During the University Neighborhood Specific Plan update, the following factors will be taken into account:

**a. Community Input:** Engage with the local community, stakeholders, and residents throughout the planning process to gather valuable insights and feedback. Consider the public's preferences and concerns while evaluating and updating the University Neighborhood Specific Plan.

**b. General Plan and other Document Consistency:** Ensure that the updated Specific Plan aligns seamlessly with the City of Palm Desert's General Plan such as the Land Use Element, Circulation Element, Open Space Element, and Housing Element. The University Neighborhood Specific Plan should complement the broader vision of the City's growth and development. During the update, we will ensure that internal documents are consistent with UNSP Design Guidelines. Furthermore, we will review and update the adopted Environmental Impact Report (EIR) while updating the UNSP, and ensure new traffic impacts are analyzed along with the updated uses.

**c. Provision of Open Space:** Redistribute open space to include a new Regional Park (approximately 30-40 acres) in the Specific Plan area. Ensure connectivity between the existing and proposed open space areas, and provide additional guidelines for areas between the park site and adjacent planning areas.

**d. Land Use and Density Changes to Accommodate New Uses:** Review General Plan land use designations and potential densities. Include two, 5-acre sites (120 units each site) for affordable housing per City's 6th Cycle Housing Element. Consider viable area for a major grocery store, and examine height limits and compatibility of new development with neighboring single-family residential sites.

### e. Mobility and Circulation Improvements:

- Examine how to make streets function better and allow for multi-modal movement
- Focus on making "Complete Streets" for creating safe and walkable environments.
- Provide a circulation network that is highly connected and continuous with adjacent existing or planned development within the UNSP.
- Create pedestrian networks that connect walkways in the interior and exterior of public and private properties.
- Consider and evaluate the possibility of paired one-way streets through the Specific Plan area.

**f. Economic Viability:** Evaluate the economic feasibility of the proposed plan, including potential impacts on property values, business growth, traffic, and local economy to create a sustainable and thriving University Neighborhood.

**g. Regulatory Compliance:** Comply with all relevant local, state, and federal regulations while updating the Town Center Specific Plan. This includes adhering to the latest California zoning laws, building codes, and environmental guidelines.

## Palm Desert University Neighborhood Specific Plan Update Scope of Services

### TASK 1 | PROJECT INITIATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Interwest will engage in project administration activities as needed to ensure delivery of the highest quality project in a timely fashion, including on-going monitoring of the schedule and budget. Additionally, our team will coordinate and regularly meet with City of Palm Desert Staff and other key stakeholders.

#### TASK 1.1 KICK-OFF MEETING

Interwest will participate in a “Kick-Off Meeting” for the project. The intent of this meeting is to accomplish the following: 1) introduce and identify the roles of key members of the consultant team, City Staff, and other stakeholders as appropriate; 2) establish reporting protocols; 3) discuss project objectives, issues, and opportunities; 4) confirm project schedule and work program, and review outreach methods and timing; and 5) identify and transmit pertinent documents and studies, and other relevant data to the Interwest Team.

##### 1.1 DELIVERABLES:

- Kick-Off Meeting Participation
- List of Data Needs
- Agenda & Meeting Summary

#### TASK 1.2 FIELD TOUR OF STUDY AREA

The Interwest Team will join key City Staff (and other stakeholders as appropriate) in an initial field tour of the University Neighborhood area, as well as surrounding areas to gain a holistic understanding of the physical and environmental context. It is recommended that this field tour is coordinated with the Kick-Off Meeting.

##### 1.2 DELIVERABLES:

- Initial Field Tour with City Staff
- Follow-up Site Reconnaissance as necessary to record key site conditions



#### TASK 1.3 PLAN AND POLICY REVIEW

Interwest staff will review the existing University Neighborhood Specific Plan, as well as other relevant City policy and regulatory documents to understand the existing site and area conditions of the University Neighborhood area. We will also review the tentative and final maps for TR37056 to understand the number of units and densities that have been entitled to date under the existing University Neighborhood Specific Plan.

##### 1.3 DELIVERABLES:

- Plan and Policy Review Memo

#### TASK 1.4 PROJECT STATUS MEETINGS AND ADMINISTRATION

Interwest will coordinate and regularly consult with City Staff to review progress and ensure that necessary information and documentation are shared and incorporated into the work product in a timely manner. For this task, Interwest will participate in bi-weekly meetings virtually with City Staff to assess progress and direct forthcoming work. Additionally, we will participate in conference calls as needed to track progress and coordinate efforts.

**1.4 DELIVERABLES:**

- Project Status Meetings (virtual)
- Agendas & Meeting Summaries

**TASK 2 | COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Interwest will actively incorporate engagement with key stakeholders and the broader community into the planning process to ensure that we have a full understanding of the issues and potential opportunities in the UNSP area. Engagement activities and facilitation will include up to five community workshops, as well as other innovative methods to gain input on the plan from members of the community.

**TASK 2.1 DEVELOP COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Interwest will actively incorporate engagement with key stakeholders and the broader community into the planning process to ensure that we have a full understanding of the issues and potential opportunities in the UNSP area. Engagement activities and facilitation will include a project website and community workshops, as well as other innovative methods to gain input on the plan from members of the community. A Community Engagement Strategy memorandum will be prepared and provided to City staff for their review and input prior to getting underway with the outreach efforts.

**2.1 DELIVERABLES:**

- Community Engagement Strategy memorandum (electronic copy)

**TASK 2.2 PROJECT WEBSITE**

Interwest will develop and provide background and meeting information, maps, and reports related to the project for a project specific webpage. The project webpage will be part of the City's website. City staff will post information and keep the site current, with updated content provided by Interwest.

**2.2 DELIVERABLES:**

- Project webpage content and materials

**TASK 2.3 COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS**

Interwest will work with City Staff to facilitate two (2) community workshops. The overall intent is to inform the community about the project; achieve an updated consensus vision for the UNSP area; allow for their valuable feedback and evaluation of concepts and recommendations; and build support for the final UNSP document.

Our team will coordinate with City Staff to determine the appropriate timing for each workshop, as well as to develop a strategy that ensures each workshop is informative and engaging; we offer a range of formats and interactive tools (e.g., charrettes, small group exercises, round table discussions, etc.) that may be utilized with each of these participation events.

**2.3 DELIVERABLES:**

- Community Workshops; attendance and lead facilitation at a maximum of two (2) workshops
- Collateral / Communications Materials as appropriate (e.g., PowerPoint presentations, exhibits, etc.)
- Community Workshop Summaries presented in memo format

## TASK 3 | OPPORTUNITY SITE ANALYSIS AND ALTERNATIVE LAND USE ANALYSIS

### TASK 3.1 OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS

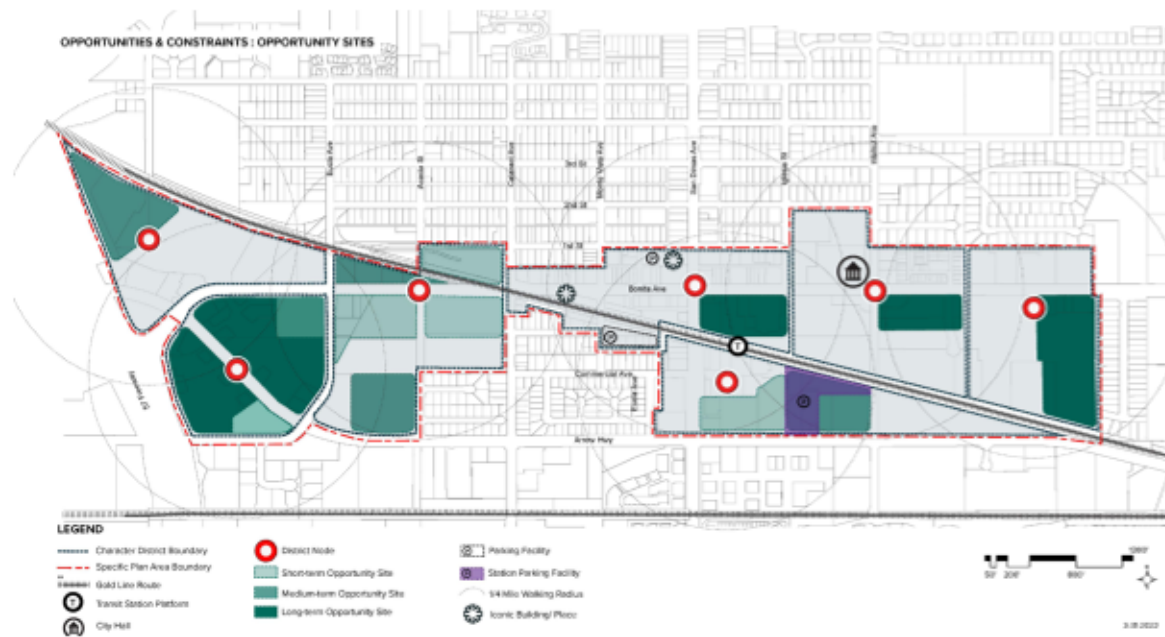
Interwest will synthesize our site reconnaissance, document review and evaluation, and other inputs (e.g., web-based research, City staff inputs, etc.) into diagrams/maps with summary text that 1) communicate our understanding of the project site and its context, and 2) clarify physical development opportunities and constraints.

#### 3.1 DELIVERABLES:

- Opportunities & Constraints Analysis Diagrams

### TASK 3.2 ALTERNATIVE LAND USE SCENARIOS

Following the initial meetings and outreach, Interwest will develop up to two (2) land use alternatives for the UNSP area. The scenarios will be developed to support bus transit as well as to facilitate safe pedestrian and bicycle travel. The land use alternatives will promote development of a healthy, walkable district with easy access to services in



the surrounding area. Revisions to the development standards or incorporation of form-based regulations may be considered in the update of the UNSP document. The alternatives will consider information prepared through the planning process and from the community outreach.

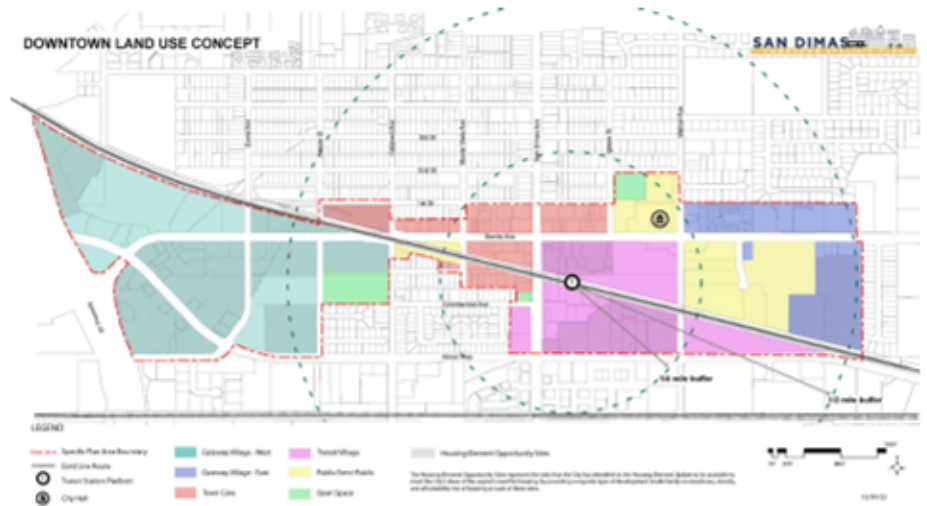
Residential, commercial, office, mixed-use, and open space land uses will be analyzed and strategically placed to maximize community connectivity and create a level of synergy between adjacent single-family residential neighborhoods. The alternatives should consider information generated through the previous analysis in Task 3.1.

#### 3.2 DELIVERABLES:

- Display graphics illustrating the alternative land use and circulation plans with a combination of drawings, diagrams, sketches, and/or visual simulations
- Land Use and Circulation Alternatives Memorandum

### TASK 3.3 PRESENTATION OF LAND USE AND CIRCULATION ALTERNATIVES

Interwest will present the alternatives to City staff for review, feedback, and possible refinement prior to presentation at a community workshop. Interwest will utilize different community outreach methods techniques to understand participants’ preferences. This may result in a clear preference for one alternative or in a hybrid concept which combines components of each.



#### 3.3 DELIVERABLES:

- Presentation materials for community workshops

### TASK 4 | PREFERRED LAND USE ALTERNATIVE

#### TASK 4.1 PREPERATION OF A PREFERRED LAND USE ALTERNATIVE

Based on input received from the City staff, and the public, Interwest will develop a preferred land use alternative which will serve as a basis for the draft UNSP. The preferred alternative will be presented to City staff for review and feedback. The community will also be asked to respond to the preferred plan at a community workshop. Input received will be used to refine the alternative and develop the draft UNSP document.

Once the preferred alternative is finalized, an analysis of future development in the UNSP area will be prepared showing the number of housing units, non-residential floor area, population and employment figures in a future year (such as 2045).



#### 4.1 DELIVERABLES

- Preferred land use plan alternative diagram and other graphics as necessary
- Preferred land use plan memo with buildout analysis table



## TASK 5 | INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES PLAN

### TASK 5.1 INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES PLAN

Interwest shall prepare a conceptual Infrastructure Development and Services Plan to determine infrastructure needed to support land uses and improvements identified in the preferred alternative, as well as to meet the needs of CEQA. The analysis shall describe infrastructure conditions and improvements needed to support the UNSP in terms of water, wastewater, storm drainage (including low impact development), electricity, gas, cable, telephone service, internet/fiber, transportation, and parks. Interwest will analyze existing versus future development for improvements so future costs can be appropriately attributed. In addition, increased demand for public services such as transit, schools, police, and fire required to serve the UNSP area will be identified.

#### 5.1 DELIVERABLES

- Infrastructure Development and Services Report

## TASK 6: DRAFT UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD SPECIFIC PLAN UPDATE

### TASK 6.1 PREPARATION OF DRAFT UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD SPECIFIC PLAN UPDATE:

Interwest will prepare a draft updated Specific Plan, which will serve as the City's long range, comprehensive land use, circulation, and implementation plan for guiding development within the plan area boundaries. The UNSP shall contain the following components:

- **Introduction.** An overview of the UNSP, the contents of the plan, and how it meets state laws will be in the first chapter of the document. In addition, a description of the planning process to develop the Plan and the role the public played in creating the Plan will be included.
- **Land Use/Housing.** Description of land use designations, including number of residential units, potential square footage of mixed use and or neighborhood-serving retail development, and employment generating land uses will be provided. Revisions to development standards or implementation of form-based code regulations will reviewed and updated as needed to implement the preferred land use plan.
- **Objective Design Standards.** The University Neighborhood Specific Plan will need to be updated with new objective development and design standards to be in compliance with the Housing Authority Act (HAA), SB 35, and SB 330. Interwest has the experience and track record of creating and implementing objective design and development standards with communities across California.
- **Transportation and Mobility.** The plan will include a description of circulation for motor vehicles, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians. New streets, paired one-way streets, trails/paths, and connections will be evaluated and recommended. Policies regarding complete streets and the circulation element of the General Plan shall also be included.
- **Public Services.** The plan will include information about services and infrastructure needed to implement the updated Plan. This should include specific policies regarding utilities, public safety, parks.
- **Implementation Plan.** Identifies actions and strategies for Plan implementation, including a rough budget estimate. Infrastructure improvements needed for Plan implementation will also be discussed.

An administrative draft UNSP document shall be prepared for review by City staff. Comments received shall be incorporated into the public review draft Specific Plan. The draft UNSP document shall then be presented to the Planning Commission at a public workshop and then to City Council at a Study Session to present the final draft and accept any remaining comments and requested changes.

## 6.1 DELIVERABLES

- Administrative Draft Specific Plan
- Public Review Draft Specific Plan
- City Council Study Session, including attendance and facilitation, and all necessary meeting materials
- City Council Study Session summary

## TASK 7 | GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING CODE AMENDMENTS

### TASK 7.1 GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING CODE AMENDMENTS:

Interwest and City staff will evaluate properties within the UNSP project boundaries to determine which sites would need General Plan land use amendments and rezoning based on the preferred alternative developed in Task 5. Some of the sites may be identified as part of the Housing Element update (6th cycle) and will be determined whether the existing land use designations will be utilized. Interwest and City staff will work to incorporate any text within the General Plan.

### 7.1 DELIVERABLES

- List of properties, and associated maps, requiring General Plan land use designation amendments, and to what designation they will be amended (maps must be compatible with ESRI Geographic Information Systems)
- List of General Plan text amendments
- List of properties, and associated maps, requiring UNSP rezoning, and to what designation they will be amended (maps must be compatible with ESRI Geographic Information Systems)
- List of Zoning Code text amendments

## TASK 8: ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

### TASK 8.1 PREPARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT:

Interwest will review the adopted and certified UNSP Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and determine the appropriate California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process for conducting the UNSP update. Interwest shall also prepare responses to comments received during the public review period, a mitigation monitoring and reporting program, and statement of overriding considerations, as necessary. The environmental analysis will evaluate all necessary environmental factors and shall consider the following areas:

- **Land Use Consistency and Compatibility.** The analysis will describe existing land use and development patterns and evaluate the proposed project's consistency with adopted City plans and policies.
- **Population, Housing and Employment.** The environmental analysis will analyze projected population, housing and employment impacts of the draft Specific Plan update.
- **Transportation and Circulation.** The environmental analysis will define and establish both the Transit Priority Area(s) within the Plan area and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) standards for residential, office and retail development and in accordance with City-adopted guidelines. The analysis will further analyze VMT per capita associated with the proposed land uses within the Plan area. The analysis shall also evaluate the Level of Service (LOS) impacts of the amendment.
- **Air Quality.** The environmental analysis will address the project's impact on air pollutants and their precursors as well as localized carbon monoxide impacts utilizing the appropriate air quality modeling tools. The analysis will address both operational, including vehicular emissions (long term), and construction level (short term) impacts on local and regional air quality.

- **Energy/Climate Change.** Changes in energy consumption anticipated through implementation of the draft Specific Plan update shall be analyzed. Greenhouse gas emissions anticipated from the project shall be included. The environmental analysis shall analyze how development anticipated by the Specific Plan will be affected by climate change and how implementation of the Plan will affect climate change. While analysis of this topic is evolving, this environmental analysis should include the most current thinking and practice regarding impacts of greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Water Usage.** Evaluate if a water supply verification/water supply assessment is required based on any potential increases in total dwelling units or employment.
- **Cultural Resources.** Evaluate cultural and tribal resources within the specific plan area and coordinate required tribal consultation pursuant to SB 18, and/or AB 52.

In addition, the environmental analysis will include discussion of growth inducing and cumulative impacts, and significant, unavoidable impacts, if any and as necessary.

If required, pursuant to CEQA, Interwest will facilitate a scoping meeting and a public hearing on the environmental analysis. Interwest will prepare responses to comments received during the public review period and at the public hearing on the environmental analysis. Interwest shall coordinate the printing of all final environmental documents.

### 8.1 DELIVERABLES

- Draft and Final Initial Study and any appendices (Word & PDF)
- Notice of Preparation/Scoping Meeting (Word & PDF format)
- Public scoping meeting for environmental analysis preparation
- Administrative draft environmental analysis (Word and PDF format)
- Draft environmental analysis (Word and PDF format)

## TASK 9: PRESENTATION AND ADOPTION OF DRAFT UNSP AND ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

### TASK 9.1 ADOPTION HEARINGS AND PREPARATION OF FINAL UNSP DOCUMENT:

Interwest, in collaboration with City staff, will assist in preparing the Planning Commission and City Council packet materials. This may include the staff report, PowerPoint presentation, resolutions and ordinances. Interwest will also present the draft Specific Plan update, and any necessary environmental analysis, at public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council. Interwest shall make any final revisions to the Specific Plan and environmental analysis based on changes recommended by the City Council.

### 9.1 DELIVERABLES

- Planning Commission staff report and PowerPoint presentation
- Presentation of Draft UNSP update at one (1) Planning Commission hearing
- City Council Staff Report and PowerPoint presentations
- Presentation of draft UNSP update at first City Council public hearing

## Timeline

Interwest has a successful track record of completing complex projects on schedule. Our proposed schedule for the project (shown below) anticipates completing the entire scope of work within approximately 12 months.

### Schedule for Completion

Tasks	Months											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Scope of Services</b>												
<b>Task 1 - Project Initiation and Administration</b>	Task 1											
1.1 Project Kick-off Meeting												
1.2 Field Tour of Study Area												
1.3 Plan and Policy Review												
1.4 Project Status Meetings and Administration												
<b>Task 2 - Community Engagement</b>	Task 2											
2.1 Develop Community Engagement Strategy												
2.2 Project Website												
2.3 Community Workshops												
<b>Task 3 - Opportunity Site Analysis and Alternative Land Use Analysis</b>	Task 3											
3.1 Opportunities and Constraints Analysis												
3.2 Alternative Land Use Scenarios												
3.3 Presentation of Land Use and Circulation Alternatives												
<b>Task 4 - Preferred Land Use Alternative</b>	Task 4											
4.1 Preparation of a Preferred Land Use Alternative												
<b>Task 5 - Infrastructure Development and Services Plan</b>	Task 5											
5.1 Infrastructure Development and Services Plan												
<b>Task 6 - Draft University Neighborhood Specific Plan Update</b>	Task 6											
6.1 Preparation of University Neighborhood Specific Plan Update												
<b>Task 7 - General Plan and Zoning Code Amendments</b>	Task 7											
7.1 General Plan and Zoning Code Amendments												
<b>Task 8 - Environmental Analysis</b>	Task 8											
8.1 Preparation of Environmental Document												
<b>Task 9 - Presentation and Adoption of Draft UNSP and Environmental Document</b>	Task 9											
9.1 Adoption Hearings and Preparation of Final UNSP Document												

Interwest believes this schedule is both realistic and in keeping with the priority the City has placed on this project. We will be happy to work with City staff to revise this schedule as needed before and during the update process.

Over years of managing projects similar to this project, Interwest staff has developed a variety of tools to keep projects on schedule and ensure that staff are well informed at all times:

- We maintain an up-to-date schedule throughout the project to ensure that all team members are aware of upcoming meetings and product due dates.
- We stay in close, regular contact with staff and our subconsultants and document important decisions about the project in writing, which ensures that decisions are understood by all team members.
- We schedule project due dates for staff with adequate time for editing and formatting into finished reports.
- We prepare monthly status reports for submittal regarding progress on the preparation of specific plan updates.