



Desert Hot Springs, California

# vortex

**Downtown  
Specific Plan**





An “Earth Energy Vortex” is described as a location where several natural energy powers converge, creating “power spots” or great concentrations of energy originating from the Earth .... a place in nature where the Earth is exceptionally alive and healthy, and the aliveness of the Earth is reflected in a unique natural beauty created by the combined elements of land, light, air and water.

Downtown Desert Hot Springs is such a location where five natural energy sources converge: 1) seismic energy fault lines; 2) geothermal underground water aquifer; 3) mountain thrust lines and peaks; 4) solar energy; and 5) wind energy. Within this Downtown Desert Hot Springs “Vortex”, these natural forces are consistently aligned in a northeast to southwest direction, thus creating a healthy, positive amplification and perpetuation of the planet’s energy.



*This page intentionally left blank.*

# Table of Contents

1.	Summary .....	2
2.	Project Background .....	4
3.	Overall Design Philosophy .....	6
4.	Context and Conditions .....	10
5.	Opportunities and Constraints.....	12
6.	Specific Plan Land Use .....	14
7.	Design Guidelines .....	24

## Appendices

- Appendix A**    **Implementation**
- Appendix B**    **Infrastructure Plan**
- Appendix C**    **General Plan Consistency**

*This page intentionally left blank.*



[www.cityofdhs.com](http://www.cityofdhs.com)

**Desert Hot Springs, California**  
Home of Award-winning Water  
and Natural Hot Mineral Springs



# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

## 1. Summary

### 1.1 Brand Audit and Positioning

During the latter part of 2006, the City of Desert Hot Springs retained consultants to work with elected officials, spa owners, developers, residents, and city management staff in an interactive brand-positioning exercise for the community. The findings of this timely analysis are vital to the direction of this Vortex Specific Plan, and are briefly summarized as follows:

- **Vision Statement:** *Desert Hot Springs is committed to becoming a truly world-class health and wellness destination based on its famous miracle waters, unique desert ecosystem, spectacular mountain views, and natural environment.*
- **Unique Personality:** *Unique attributes of the City's personality include: natural; tranquil; accessible; independent spirit.*
- **City's Visual Strategy:** *Unique equity elements of the community's visual strategy include: the water-related component; native desert/mountain component; Mid-Century Modern architecture; and a color palette that expresses its unique natural desert environment, healing waters; mountain horizons, and the ever-present influence of the desert sun.*

### 1.2 Purpose and Intent

The Vortex Specific Plan provides a new vision for the central area of Desert Hot Springs. The City has created this Specific Plan to transform a 151.6-acre area into a special place for the residents and property owners of Desert Hot Springs. What is now a collection of vacant and underutilized commercial and residential properties can grow into the "central place" of Desert Hot Springs and become revitalized as an oasis of commercial, health and wellness, destination resort, and mixed-use residential activities. The provisions of this Specific Plan will foster the creation of a landmark development that appeals to the City's population, expands the City's new employment opportunities and tax base, distinguishes itself from other development within the Coachella Valley, and provides unique gathering spaces for the community.

### 1.3 Vortex

Downtown Desert Hot Springs is unique in that it represents the natural convergence of five energy vortices. Energy vortices are "power spots" where a concentration of positive energy sources is evident at or near the earth's surface. In the extraordinary case of downtown Desert Hot Springs, these five energy vortices are: the San Andreas/Mission Creek fault lines (seismic); geothermal underground water; alignment of the

Little San Bernardino Mountains; wind energy; and solar energy. One primary objective of this Specific Plan is to clearly express this natural phenomenon in land planning, environmental systems, and architectural design standards.

### 1.4 Project Description

The Vortex Specific Plan is designed to foster the creation of a new mixed-use destination for the City of Desert Hot Springs and the broader Coachella Valley. Strategically located at the intersection of the Pierson and Palm Boulevard corridors, the historic and geographic center of the City, Vortex represents an opportunity to create a contemporary and unique lifestyle center, including fully integrated living, working, shopping, recreational and destination resort amenities. Departing from the fragmented low-scale resort development currently prevalent in the region, the Vortex Specific Plan will introduce a higher density and seamless Town Center mix of commercial, office, entertainment, destination resort, and residential land uses.

The unique blend of land uses proposed under this Specific Plan will allow for development of up to approximately 847,300 square feet of commercial, retail, office, restaurant, civic center, and entertainment uses, as well as up to 504 residential units and 100 hotel/timeshare units. The creation of a mixed-use development enables future residents to live within walking distance of stores, restaurants, and recreational areas, while visitors can walk and shop along the boulevards and enjoy an assortment of public plazas and parks. The comprehensively planned health and wellness resort and entertainment development will also stimulate a major new source of tax base for the City of Desert Hot Springs.

The increased intensity allowed under this Specific Plan will enable developments to incorporate additional new open space areas and recreational amenities. Public plazas and pocket parks will be linked with pedestrian walkways through retail and residential areas, connecting open space areas and allowing future residents and visitors to travel within the site without relying upon their cars. A planned Transit Center also offers a long-term expansion of diverse transportation choices for residents and employees.

### 1.5 Specific Plan Objectives

The overall purpose of this Vortex Specific Plan is to generate momentum and provide comprehensive direction for the development of the Vortex project site, while implementing the goals and policies of the City's General Plan. Thus, the project is to be guided by several major objectives:

1. **Establish a unified vision for the project site in order to guide a cohesive, complementary mix of uses structured around a comprehensive set of circulation and infrastructure systems.**

2. **Create a new mixed-use regional lifestyle destination development that stimulates a major new source of tax base for the City of Desert Hot Springs, incorporating the health and wellness industry as a theme.**
3. **Plan for an appropriate mix of commercial, office, entertainment, resort, and residential uses the context of a master-planned town center, in order to meet the trade area's growing demand, and build in the flexibility to respond to changes in the market.**
4. **Apply innovative planning and design solutions to create a sense of place at multiple scales.**
5. **Provide new housing concepts for the community, encouraging high quality, high density residential units that appeal to residents seeking shorter commutes to jobs, restaurants, and entertainment.**
6. **Take advantage of the area's location and exposure by establishing a welcoming town center within the City, characterized by distinct and attractive signage, architecture, and landscaping, both on-site and in the public right-of-way.**
7. **Implement an integrated circulation concept that optimizes connectivity for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic, internalizes pedestrian activity to buffer it from the vehicular traffic along perimeter roadways, and establishes close relationships between land uses that are infused with pedestrian-friendly and walkable spaces linkages.**

### 1.6 Authority

The City of Desert Hot Springs initiated and prepared the Vortex Specific Plan pursuant to the provisions of California Government Code, Title 7, Division 1, Chapter 3, Article 8 (Sections 65450 through 65457). The law allows for the preparation of specific plans as may be required for the implementation of the general plan. Specific plans act as a bridge between the general plan and individual development proposals. They combine development standards and guidelines, capital improvement programs, and financing methods into a single document that is tailored to meet the needs of a specific area. Jurisdictions may adopt specific plans by resolution or ordinance.

Upon adoption by ordinance, this Specific Plan will replace the current zoning for the properties involved. The plan establishes the necessary plans, development standards, regulations, infrastructure requirements, community design guidelines, and targeted implementation programs on which subsequent project-related development activities are to be founded. It is intended that local public works projects, design review plans, detailed site plans, grading and building permits, or any other action requiring ministerial or discretionary approval applicable to this area be consistent with this Specific Plan.

## Vision Statement

“The City of Desert Hot Springs is committed to becoming a world-class health and wellness destination based on its:

- \* famous miracle waters;
- \* unique desert ecosystem;
- \* spectacular mountain views; and
- \* natural environment.

The City of Desert Hot Springs is dedicated to improving the quality of life and economic opportunities of its residents, while preserving community and family values, encouraging social and community diversity and increasing recreational values.”

## Unique Attributes of City's Personality

natural  
tranquil  
accessible  
independent spirit

## Equity Elements of the City's Visual Strategy

water-related  
native desert/ mountain component  
classic Mid-Century Modern architecture  
color palette that expresses its

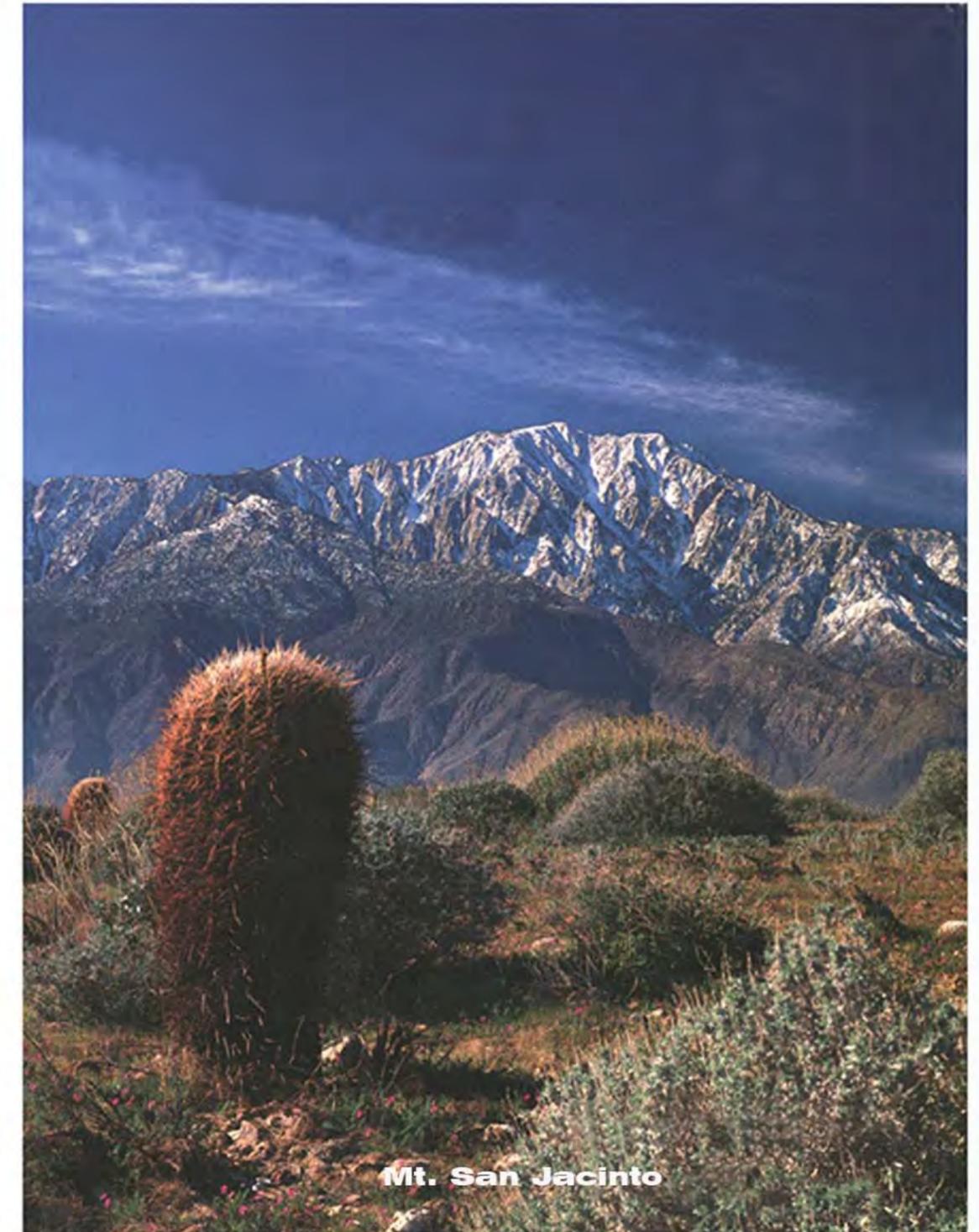
- natural desert
- signature healing water
- mountain horizons, and
- desert sun



air

sun

water





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

# 2. Project Background

### 2.1 Regional Setting

The City of Desert Hot Springs is the northwest quadrant of the Coachella Valley in Riverside County, nestled at the base of the scenic Little San Bernardino Mountains, and conveniently located to utilize the southern California freeway system via Interstate Highway 10. Desert Hot Springs is just north of the east-west I-10 corridor, which links the Los Angeles and Phoenix metropolitan areas. The Coachella Valley communities of Palm Springs, Cathedral City, and Rancho Mirage are south of I-10, and Banning is just west of the San Geronio Pass. Desert Hot Springs is the south gateway to the famed Joshua Tree National Park and views to the southwest from Vortex focus on Mt. San Jacinto, home of the internationally known Palm Springs Aerial Tramway and Mt. San Jacinto State Park and Winter Park Authority. The winter sports resort of Big Bear Lake is near Mt. San Geronio, northwest of the community in San Bernardino County.

### 2.2 Local Setting

The proposed project consists of the development of a specific plan for a 151.6-acre area of the City of Desert Hot Springs within its historic, central Old Town area, which was the center of the original town site of the City. The Vortex Specific Plan area is bounded by Cholla and West Drives on the west, Mesquite Avenue on the east, Second Street on the north, and Buena Vista Avenue on the south. This central area is also bisected by Palm Drive (proposed new designation as a boulevard) in the north-south direction and Pierson Boulevard in the east-west direction.

The resident population of the City of Desert Hot Springs fluctuates seasonally, swelling during the winter months with residents and tourists attracted by the mild desert weather and the hot mineral springs. Fluctuations in the local economy correspond with this seasonal population: commercial activity peaks during the winter months and diminishes during the long, hot summer when businesses primarily serve the year-round residents.

The City's traditional commercial center, Old Town, was developed during the 1950s around the intersection of Palm Drive at Pierson Boulevard, which remain the City's principal commercial corridors. The businesses are modest in size and many are locally owned and operated. Most provide an eclectic mix of services and merchandise that primarily targets local residents rather than the spa resort visitor population which energizes the local economic base.

Due to the small parcel sizes and fragmentation of property ownership, large scale redevelopment projects that would be catalysts for significant

economic revitalization of the historic commercial core of the community have not been possible in Old Town.

### 2.3 Previous Old Town Plans

In the past, the City and Redevelopment Agency have made some cosmetic changes to improve and revitalize the 'Old Town area. Street trees have been installed along Palm Drive and Pierson Boulevard; planters, benches, and other street furnishings have been provided; and small landscaped medians help beautify the boulevard corridors.

In 1995, the City commissioned the preparation of an "Old Town Design Plan." The stated purpose of the plan was "to provide a comprehensive vision for the development and revitalization of downtown Desert Hot Springs." The principal goal of the plan was "to create an inviting downtown that provides open plazas, landscaping, streetscape improvements and other amenities to attract visitors and shoppers; and to provide guidelines for new development and incentives for the rehabilitation of existing buildings."

Although the 1995 plan was well intentioned and emphasized a small-scale and nostalgic design theme, it did not adequately provide for redevelopment catalyst efforts targeted to the locally vibrant health-and-wellness tourism market as a major economic generator for the downtown core. The nostalgic design theme was not unique to Desert Hot Springs and was not based on a strong existing collection of historic sites or significant architecture in the downtown area. Consequently, the 1995 plan did not help energize an effort to create an attractive, economically viable downtown. This Vortex Specific Plan will replace the Old Town Design Plan.

### 2.4 General Plan Interactive Workshops

During the spring of 2005, the City of Desert Hot Springs and selected consultants facilitated a series of focus group workshops as part of an extensive General Plan Update process. One of these was a "Focus Group on Downtown Redevelopment/Urban Design."

The general composition of the Redevelopment/Urban Design Group was structured to focus on art, music, and culture through the creation of a Blue Ribbon Committee to advise Desert Hot Springs. The group included regional representatives of museums, theaters, and public art councils, as well as local hoteliers, music coordinators, mixed-use developers, landscape architects, and urban designers. This effort represented a major redirection for future downtown redevelopment and now provides a new cornerstone for the preparation of this Vortex Specific Plan.

### 2.5 Focus Group Recommendations

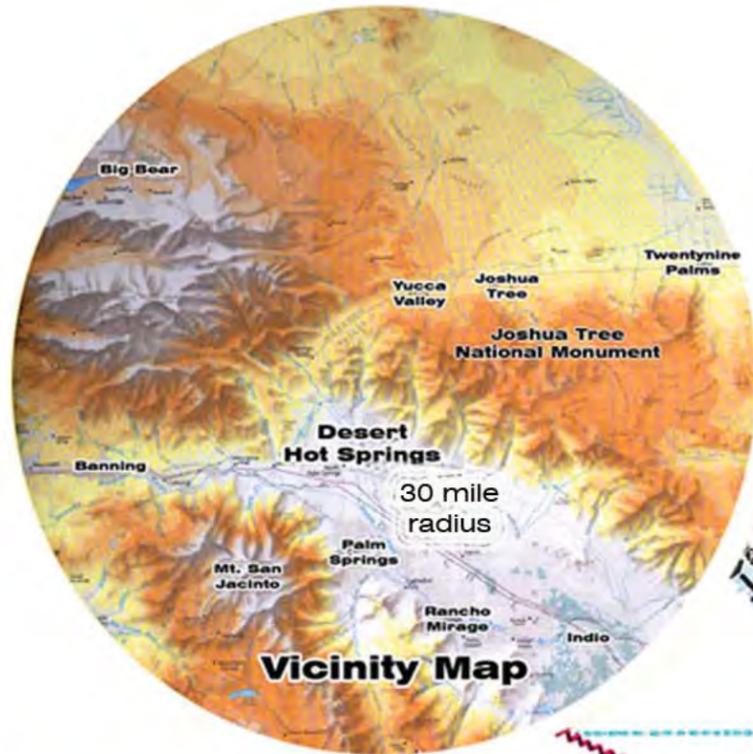
The Downtown Focus Group focused on healing waters, natural environment, community aesthetics, and regional parks. Participants discussed how rare community qualities could be captured to create a "world-famous Health and Wellness Downtown District." One of the strongest components of this group's contribution was the idea of linking downtown aesthetics to the surrounding natural environment of Desert Hot Springs, and how the City could take advantage of the public use areas—with appropriate urban trails, day spas, and strong hotel/restaurant development—to attract people to come and stay for several days in a destination environment.

Within the downtown core, this group felt that the natural environmental features of Desert Hot Springs should transition into a vibrant high-end entertainment district, distinctive and well defined in order to not interfere with the healing and privacy of the spa areas but designed to complement and enhance the destination spa resort experience. Within Vortex, as identified in this Specific Plan, the overall education/recreation focus of the community will transition into a multifaceted health-and-wellness oasis, buttressed by public art, music, and healing waters.





**Mt. San Jacinto**



**Signature Color Palette**



**Dynamics of the Desert Environment**



**Regional and Local Setting**





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

# 3. Overall Design Philosophy

### 3.1 Resource-Efficient Communities

It is becoming well understood that prevalent recent and current patterns of community development have significantly, negatively impacted our quality of life. They have resulted in more sprawl, which results in our increased dependence on automobiles and therefore more congestion and the need for costly horizontal improvements to roads and infrastructure. Other effects include the loss of publicly shared open space; the uneven distribution of high quality economic resources and opportunities; and the loss of community identity, uniqueness, and sense of place.

Therefore, in preparing the Vortex Specific Plan for the City of Desert Hot Springs, the authors of this document began with fundamental Community Design Principles to provide a sound philosophical foundation:

1. *Planning should emphasize the organic form of complete and seamlessly integrated communities and neighborhoods containing shops, housing, work places, parks, scenic open space and view corridors, and civic facilities.*
2. *Community size and neighborhood structure should be articulated so that jobs, basic daily needs, and essential services such as public transit stops are within walkable distances from each other.*
3. *Communities should contain a diverse mix of housing types to enable residents from a broad range of economic and age groups to live in its various neighborhoods.*
4. *Businesses in the community should provide a wide range of work opportunities for residents in order to achieve jobs/housing balance.*
5. *The community needs to have a center focus, or heart, that combines a seamless mix of commercial, civic, cultural, and recreational uses.*
6. *The community needs an adequate, visible, well-distributed, and publicly accessible open space system connecting pedestrian plazas, squares, courtyards, paseos, greenways, recreational parks, and scenic vistas.*
7. *Streetscapes, pedestrianways, and bikeways need to be incorporated in a user-friendly, fully integrated circulation system that combines with the open space system to provide a mix of attractive amenities to residents and visitors.*
8. *Wherever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation*

*of the community should be preserved, with all superior examples enhanced and celebrated within publicly accessible parks and greenways.*

9. *The community design should help conserve its natural resources and minimize waste, including provision for the efficient use of water through the specification of drought-tolerant landscaping, the recognition of natural drainage systems, and water recycling efforts.*

10. *Typically, street orientation, placement of buildings, and use of shading are all very important to the energy efficiency of any community. In desert communities, and specifically in Desert Hot Springs, this becomes critical.*

### 3.2 Bioclimatic Design Approach

In desert environments, visual and climatic contrasts are more direct and pronounced; the scarcity of natural resources and strong forces of nature are more apparent than in more moderate environments. The desert environment calls for a highly functional, direct, and minimalist approach to community planning and design.

This contemporary reality recalls the historic writings of the ancient Roman architect/engineer Marcus Vitruvius Pollio, who observed in *The Ten Books on Architecture*, “Physicists and philosophers have set forth that the primordial elements are four in number: Air, Fire, Earth, and Water” (c.100 B.C.). Today, the symbolism of these elements applies to the dynamics of the desert, and provides yet another cornerstone in the Vortex plan.

In Desert Hot Springs, there is an unusual convergence of five natural energy vortexes, as illustrated on the exhibit, *Regional and Local Setting*. This includes several earthquake faults, geothermal water, the visual alignment of the surrounding mountain peaks, as well as abundant wind and sun energies. Vortexes are defined as “power spots” where a great concentration of energy emits from the planet.

The San Andreas/Mission Creek fault lines, seismic energy offshoots of the famous San Andreas Fault, runs diagonally through the Vortex Specific Plan area. Also, a geothermal lake, with temperatures ranging from 90 to 160 degrees Fahrenheit is to the northeast of this fault zone and is edged by the rim of The Little San Bernardino Mountains, still another expression of natural energy forces at work. The community is also characterized by strong wind and solar energy.

#### 3.2.1 Horizontal Field Geometry

Mapping the natural energy vortexes shows that they are nearly parallel, oriented northwest–southeast and diagonal to the traditional north–south/east–west section/township/range (STR) survey lines of the original town

site and subsequent street and subdivision layouts of the community. This diagonal orientation is reinforced by the generally northwest–southeast direction of stormwater flow and natural slopes through the community. Further, the most dramatic and scenic view corridor from the center of Vortex to the dominating panorama of Mt. San Jacinto runs diagonal to the street and survey system, northeast to southwest.

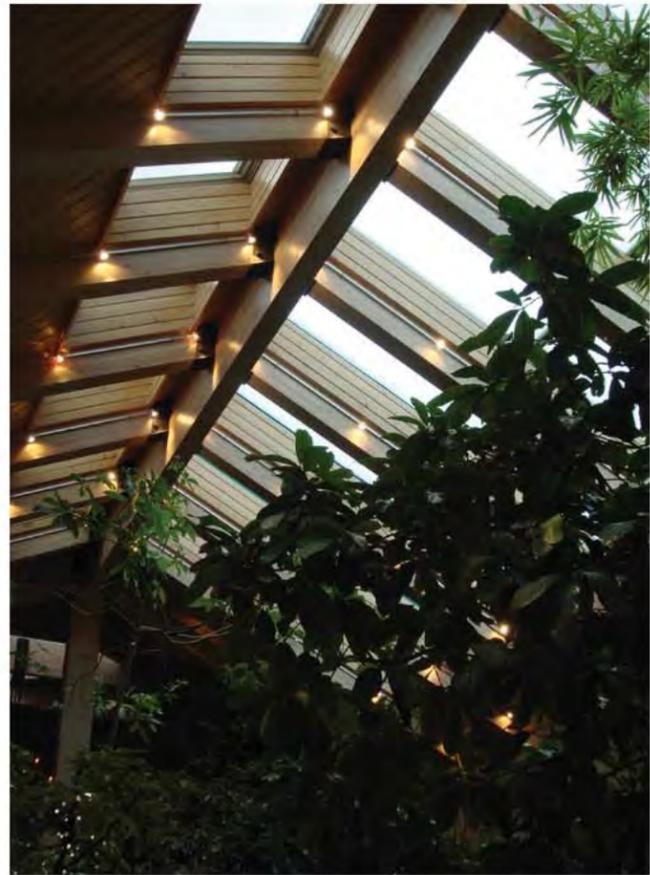
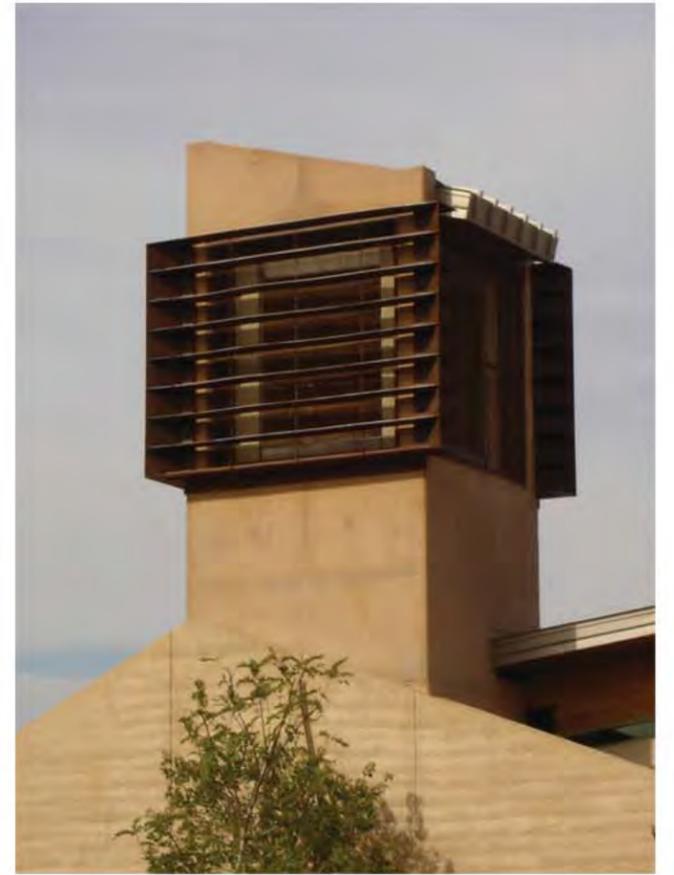
Thus, if the founders of Desert Hot Springs had been fully aware of this natural alignment of energy systems, they should have laid out the City on a northwest by southeast axis. Even further justification of this is that a southwest and southeast exposure for building entry elevations and outdoor activity areas optimize solar and wind energy impacts. To control solar energy and related heat gain impacts, large paved vehicular parking courts should be to the northeast of buildings and solar energy collection panels oriented toward the southwest. The most efficient orientation of windbreak landscaping is also in the diagonal direction relative to easterly and westerly seasonal winds.

Although changing the long-established street and subdivision orientation of the community is not feasible, new signature architecture and community development projects can distinguish themselves visually and environmentally by adopting this diagonal orientation as part of their unique Desert Hot Springs design vernacular. The juxtaposition of new signature architecture in a diagonal orientation with more traditional background or “matrix” buildings oriented within the standard STR framework will help make a strong statement about community uniqueness.

#### 3.2.2 Vertical Environmental Tiers

An appropriate architectural design response to the powerful natural desert environment is for a three-tiered vertical structure that will complement and reinforce the horizontal field geometry previously discussed. As shown on the following exhibit, *Bioclimatic Design Principles*, these tiers, or building environmental zones, evolve from the desert floor, transition into an expression of the vertical thrust forces of the local geological history, and culminate in an environmental control and shelter layer.

- **Earth Contact:** This low-profile foundation tier is well grounded within the strongly horizontal line of the desert floor. It may actually be recessed into the ground somewhat and expressed in curvilinear forms, with sculpted mounds and desert landscaping adjacent to the building to help mitigate interior heat gain. Appropriate building materials include reinforced concrete, masonry blocks, adobe, rammed earth, plastered straw bales, and a wide variety of prefabricated structural components.
- **Vertical Thrust:** A second vertical tier rises out of the Earth Contact Tier, and expresses or captures the angular and well-grounded geometry of the surrounding mountain ranges. It should be well massed, with simple, straightforward lines and a very strong emphasis on the



## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

building's functionality. Appropriate building materials include reinforced structural concrete framing, masonry-bearing wall construction, and a wide variety of prefabricated structural components.

- **Environmental Control:** This third vertical tier should express its function as an advanced technology environmental control "hat" that shelters the building interior from strong solar, wind, and climate impacts of the desert. It should be minimalist in structure, with an architectural direction toward Modernism. It should incorporate a three-dimensional solar control system, provide for well-insulated and/or double roofing systems that mitigate solar gain, and strive to incorporate alternative cooling systems such as evaporative coolers. Appropriate building materials for this layer include fireproofed structural steel as well as a wide variety of lighter prefabricated structural steel components.

Exterior building materials should be low maintenance and very resistant to the direct forces of the desert environment. For example, exposed exterior wood architectural elements or wall surfaces should not be used. Interior open courtyards, patios, gardens, and atriums as well as interior "sun scoops" and sheltered and insulated skylights are preferred to large expanses of windows.

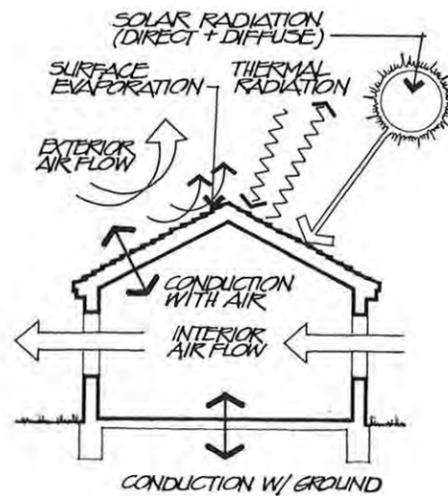
### 3.2.3 Sheltered Outdoor Spaces

Desert-sensitive development needs to emphasize the application of shaded and sheltered outdoor living spaces. Primary examples include:

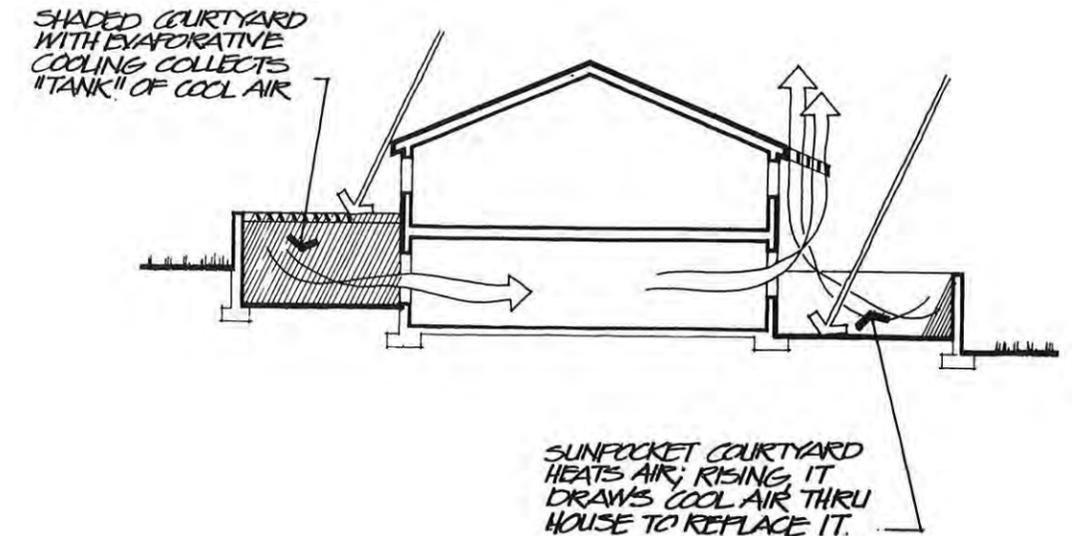
- Interior Courtyards, including atriums, patios, and gardens, open to the sun and sky but well shaded and buffered from the wind
- Portales, or covered porches, that also offer exterior shade and wind protection
- Zaguans, or open passageways, from the street frontage to internal courtyards

These important environmental control elements need to be integral to all new building and site design plans to help create a community design vocabulary that is truly responsive to desert development opportunities and constraints.

These basic elements will also help to form the foundation of a signature community design theme for Desert Hot Springs.

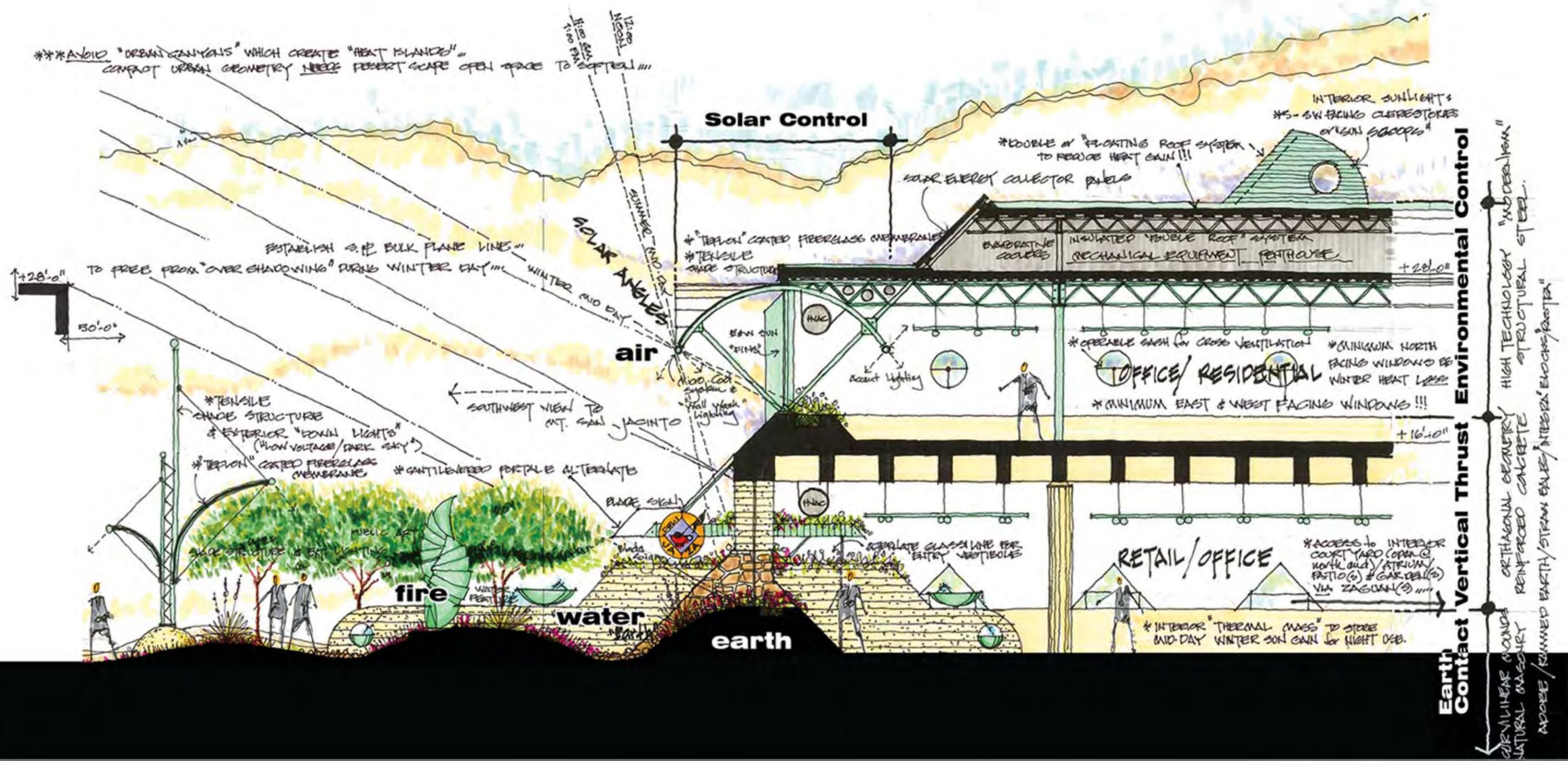


Paths of heating energy exchange at the building microclimate.



Dual courtyard design can be used to drive flow-through ventilation; one is used to cool air, the other to heat it.





# Bioclimatic Design Principles





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

# 4. Context and Conditions

### 4.1 Property Ownership Patterns

The Old Town area was developed within a traditional north–south/east–west pattern of streets. Palm Drive serves as the major north–south axis and Pierson Boulevard as the central east–west axis through the center of the downtown area. The Pierson at Palm intersection historically represents the geographic and commercial center of Desert Hot Springs. The blocks are about 1,300 feet long in the east–west direction and only about 260 feet deep in the north–south direction. ***This street grid pattern of extremely long and relatively narrow blocks is a deterrent to contemporary mixed-use development and a vibrant economic revitalization of the area.***

Parcels of private property within this area are fairly uniform consisting primarily of rectangular lots of only about 6,500 square feet each. Commercial and residential buildings are correspondingly small, and most buildings are single-story, light, wood-frame structures. Most of the commercial buildings along Pierson and Palm have been built to the street property line with parking in the rear. ***Any significant revitalization of the area will require some consolidation of parcel ownership to accommodate vibrant and contemporary uses of a size and scale needed to revitalize the area.***

### 4.2 Existing Land Use Patterns

Businesses in the Old Town area are primarily resident oriented, although there are some small and scattered service-related businesses that include real estate and medical offices, automotive repair, and a few locally owned restaurants. Destination retail uses are limited to a grocery market and hardware store. Major services in the area include the headquarters for the Mission Springs Water District, a Verizon substation, and offices of Time Warner Cable. Also, several churches and a mortuary are located within the commercial area. ***Scattered and random existing commercial land use patterns in this area exhibit a lack of “critical mass” to support high quality, vibrant development.***

Many of the parcels within the Old Town area and surrounding residential neighborhoods are vacant or underutilized. Vacant lots, including several that prominently front on Palm and Pierson, collect debris blown by the wind, have been used as dumping grounds, and are quite often overgrown with weeds. ***The predominance, pattern, and visibility of vacant and underutilized properties throughout the area call for selective new redevelopment projects strategically located and combined with targeted private property owner upgrades and coordinated renovation and rehabilitation efforts.***

### 4.3 General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Provisions

The City of Desert Hot Springs employs a “single map” system of land uses. This means that the City’s General Plan land use designations are the same as the City’s zoning designations. The Land Use Element of the Desert Hot Springs Comprehensive General Plan and the City’s Zoning Ordinance both currently show the Pierson and Palm Corridors “stripped out” in its General Commercial (C-G) land use category. This designation is intended for use in a variety of smaller commercial centers, between two and eight acres, and includes provisions for specialty retail shops, a broad range of clothing and apparel shops, jewelry stores, and a variety of personal service businesses. Hotels and motels are also noted as appropriate in these areas. Other Land Use Element uses in the area include: 1) High Density Residential (R-H), with a range of densities of up to 14 dwelling units/acre; and 2) Medium Density Residential (R-M), which includes a range of densities of up to 8 dwelling units per acre.

***None of these existing land use categories and zoning districts is adequate to encourage or support the larger scale and scope of redevelopment and revitalization required within Vortex. Therefore, this Specific Plan will focus on higher yields/densities and a Mixed Use Development (MXD) land use and zoning overlay more suited to the types of dynamic and vibrant community development required in the central core of Desert Hot Springs.***

### 4.4 Circulation System

The traditional Old Town area is entirely served by a traditional north–south/east–west grid system of local streets, with Palm Drive and Pierson Boulevard each serving as four-lane principal traffic Arterials connecting this core area to Interstate Highway 10 to the south and State Highway 62 to the west. Both Arterials have right-of-way widths of 100 feet and have the capacity to move average daily traffic (ADT) volumes of approximately 20,000 vehicles, with the emphasis on expediting through-traffic movements.

West Drive, Second Street, Mesquite Avenue, Cholla Drive, and Buena Vista Avenue form the boundaries of the Vortex Specific Plan area. Each is within an 80-foot-wide right-of-way and classified as a Secondary Road. These roads are similar in function to arterials, except that they operate with daily traffic volumes averaging between 10,000 and 20,000 ADT. Cactus Drive is an existing north–south Collector within a 60-foot-wide right-of-way, and with a capacity to carry ADT volumes of up to 10,000 vehicles. Each of the other streets in the Specific Plan area is classified as a Minor Road, located within a minimum right-of-way of 50 feet, and generally two lanes with parallel parking along each side.

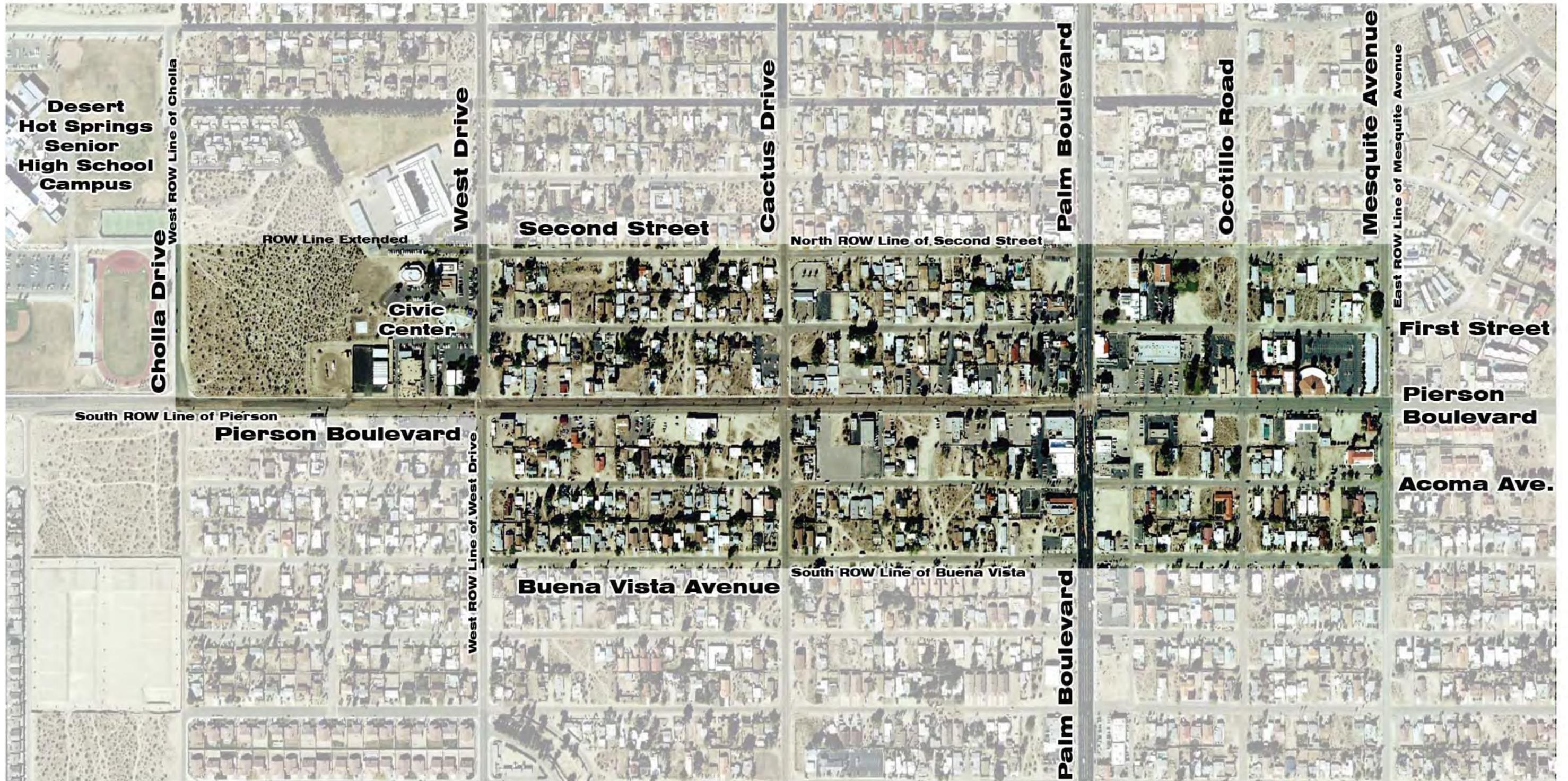
### 4.5 Specific Plan Area Boundaries

The Vortex Specific Plan Area includes 151.6 acres of land bounded as follows:

- **North Boundary:** The north right-of-way (ROW) line of Second Street, extending westerly from the east ROW line of Mesquite Avenue to the west ROW line of Cholla Drive. This includes the currently vacant property between West Drive and Cholla Drive owned by the City of Desert Hot Springs.
- **South Boundary:** The south ROW line of Buena Vista Avenue, extending westerly from the east ROW line of Mesquite Avenue to the west ROW line of West Drive and then westerly along the south ROW line of Pierson Boulevard from the west ROW line of West Drive to the west ROW line of Cholla Drive.
- **East Boundary:** The east ROW line of Mesquite Avenue extending southerly from the north ROW line of Second Street to the south ROW line of Buena Vista Avenue.
- **West Boundary:** The west ROW line of Cholla Drive extending southerly from the north ROW line of Second Street, as projected through the vacant City property, to the south ROW line of Pierson Boulevard and then southerly from the south ROW line of Pierson Boulevard along the west ROW line of West Drive to the south ROW line of Buena Vista Avenue.

The following exhibit, *Specific Plan Area*, illustrates this described area, which is to be applied throughout this document.





# Specific Plan Area





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

# 5. Opportunities and Constraints

### 5.1 Topography

The existing topography and natural slope of the Vortex Specific Plan area represents a clear development opportunity factor. The high points of the site run along the north side of the area in an east–west direction, aligned along Second Street. West of Palm Drive (Boulevard), the natural grade slopes down and directly south, at a grade ranging between 3.5 percent and 4.0 percent. East of Palm, the grade slopes in a diagonal direction, northeast to southwest, at slopes ranging from 2.5 percent to 3.0 percent. In both cases, the low points run along Buena Vista Avenue.

*Therefore, the ideal site plan and development situation would be to slope all new development at a maximum of 4.5 percent from northeast to southwest, thus stepping site development down the slope and orienting building pads along the southwest view corridor toward Mt. San Jacinto. The streets would need to maintain a maximum slope of 4.5 percent and the street intersections would need to maintain a maximum cross-slope of 1.5 percent. This would eliminate the need for pedestrian ramps with guardrails and landings every 30 feet, as required by Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The diagonal cross-slope would also encourage breaking down the horizontal scale of individual buildings, therefore discouraging long, monolithic structures.*

### 5.2 Earthquake Faults

The Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone Act was signed into law in late 1972 and went into effect in 1973. In 1994, the original name of the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone Act was changed to its current title of Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, and the name Special Studies Zones was changed to Earthquake Fault Zones as a result of a 1993 amendment. The purpose of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act is to regulate development near active faults mitigate the hazard of surface fault rupture from earthquakes.

Under the Act, cities and counties must withhold development permits for sites within certain zones, as identified by the State Geologist, until geologic investigations demonstrate that the sites are not threatened by surface displacement from future faulting. **Specifically, no structure for human occupancy is permitted on the trace of an active fault. Unless proven otherwise, the area within 50 feet of an active fault is presumed to be underlain by active branches of the fault.**

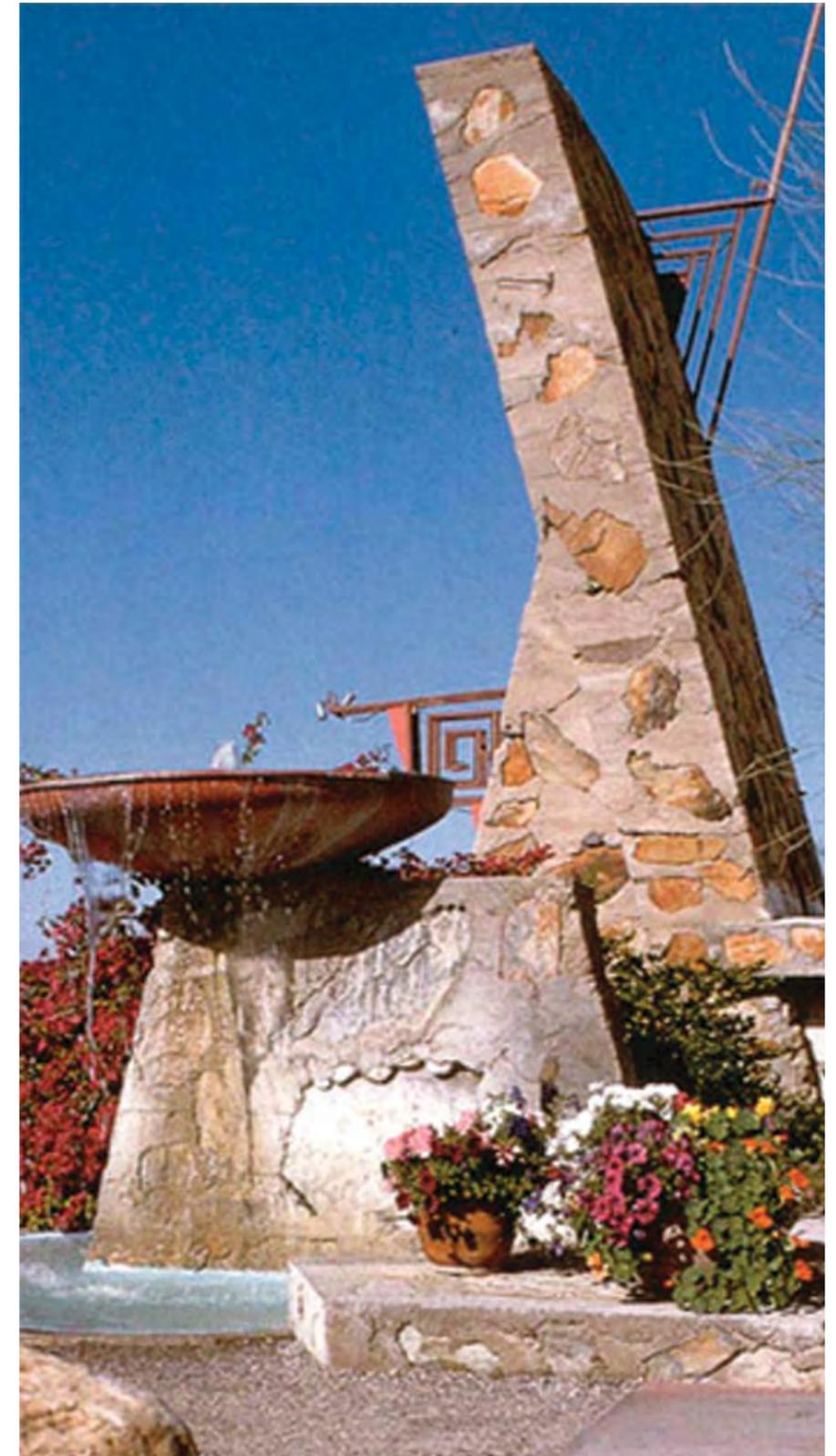
A significant earthquake fault zone runs northwest to southeast through the approximate center of the Vortex Specific Plan Area. This zone includes two active San Andreas Fault lines plus the Mission Creek fault, aligned essentially parallel and running from Second Street at Cactus Drive on the north to Buena Vista at Palm Drive (Boulevard) on the south area boundary. In addition, a separate Mission Creek fault line crosses the northwest quadrant of the Specific Plan area, also in the same diagonal direction.

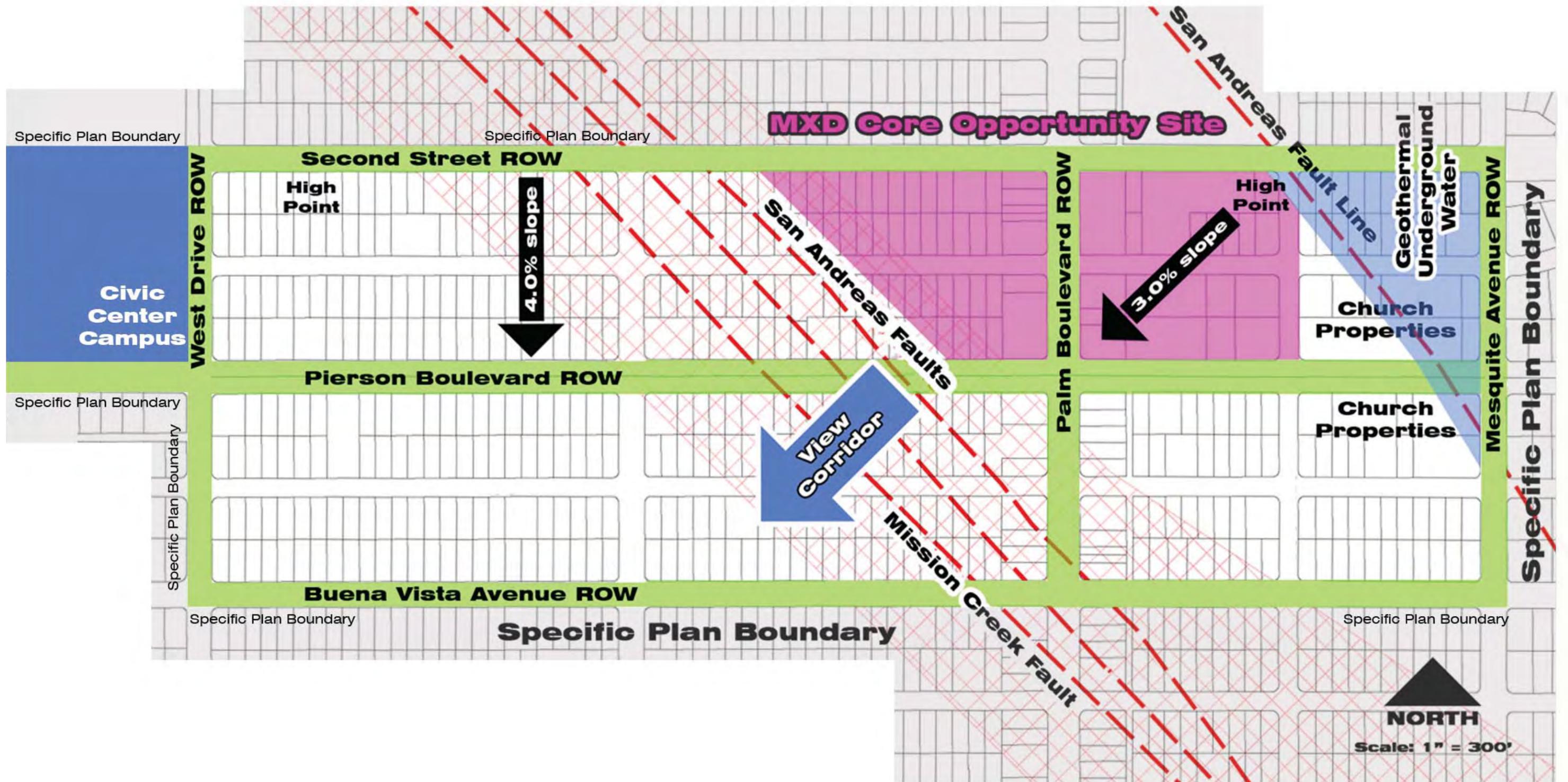
*These identified earthquake faults identify a significant development constraint that needs to be recognized in the planning process for the Vortex Specific Plan. However, since they are consistently aligned diagonal to the street grid and subdivision pattern, they can also be viewed as a design opportunity to further express the diagonal alignment of new buildings and site development, as previously discussed. For example, vehicular parking courts and recreational open spaces and plazas can be in the earthquake fault zone as complementary uses to adjacent buildings. Thus, this constraint becomes yet another “form-giver” for the future development of Vortex.*

### 5.3 Mixed-Use Development Core Opportunity

By considering the composite opportunities and constraints presented by existing topography and the identified earthquake fault zone and fault lines, a central focus development opportunity area is identified north of Pierson Boulevard, west of Ocotillo Road, and centered on Palm Drive (Boulevard). In addition, the focus opportunity area is at the “Main-at-Main” intersection of Palm Boulevard and Pierson Boulevard and is oriented to the northeast–southwest view corridor, toward the imposing natural landmark of Mt. San Jacinto.

This delineated mixed-use development core opportunity site is the central catalyst for the revitalization and redevelopment of the Vortex Specific Plan. This plan focus is the anchor around which downtown Desert Hot Springs may be planned for future economic vitality.





# Opportunities and Constraints





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

# 6. Specific Plan Land Use

### 6.1 Land Use Plan and Planning Areas

The Vortex Land Use Plan provides for a potential mix of approximately 847,300 square feet of commercial, retail, office, restaurant, destination health-and-wellness resort, civic center, and entertainment uses, as well as up to 504 residential and live-work units and 100 timeshare/hotel rooms. The Development Plan is designed to accommodate these uses through the creation of 22 planning areas and 5 land use categories that cover approximately 151.6 acres, inclusive of rights-of-way. The planning areas and land use categories allow for a greater variety of land uses and customized development standards than those currently found in the Desert Hot Springs General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

The Vortex Land Use Plan responds to the Specific Plan objectives. The Land Use Categories, shown in the exhibit, *Land Use Plan and Planning Areas*, will help implement these objectives.

#### 6.1.1 Mixed-Use Development (MXD) Core

##### PA 0.01 and 0.02

The Mixed-Use Core Development land use category represents the most intense and compact part of the Vortex Specific Plan, supporting the vertical and horizontal integration of housing and resort uses with commercial services in the center of the area. Spread throughout 16.43 acres, the mix of uses is intended to produce a unique and walkable shopping, working, resort, and living experience in the project and the City of Desert Hot Springs.

The greater intensity of development combines with the site's downsloping (southwesterly) topography to support mixed-use multiple-story buildings that gain visibility from surrounding roadways and provide expansive views without dominating the skyline.

The Mixed-Use Core category permits the widest range of uses within this Specific Plan, including community retail, restaurants, lifestyle center, professional office, live-work units, destination resort, attached single-family residential, attached multifamily residential, and community entertainment and recreational venues to create a lively and comfortable atmosphere for local residents as well as business and leisure travelers.

Although this category allows for various land uses, it does not require a specified mix of uses. Building heights of up to five stories are achievable in this area, given appropriate setbacks, open space, and view corridor conditions.

#### 6.1.2 Community Retail and Services (Retail)

##### PA 1.05, 1.06, 3.03, 3.04, 3.06 and portions of 1.07 and 1.08

The Retail land use category provides the project's shopping destination, which complements the Mixed-Use Core and offers a range of commercial, service, and eating establishments on 21.33 acres. These uses are best located along both sides of Palm Boulevard and Pierson Boulevard in order to be visible to the highest traffic volumes and pedestrian access.

#### 6.1.3 High Density Residential (HDR)

##### PA 2.01, 2.02, 2.04, 3.01, 3.02, 3.03, 3.05 and portions of 0.04, 1.07 and 1.08

The Residential land use category provides a more urbanized style of residential living on 24.38 acres adjacent to the project's Mixed-Use Core and Retail areas. Buildings up to four stories could contain dwelling units at densities reaching 28 units per acre (greater intensity can be reached with the inclusion of affordable housing).

#### 6.1.4 Public Facilities/Services (Public Facilities)

##### PA 1.02 and 1.03 plus 1.00 Civic Center Campus

Approximately 5.9 acres have been set aside along the western edge of the project and on both sides of Pierson Boulevard, conceptually for a Business Development Center and related Public Facilities uses. This includes a potential location for the expansion of City offices such as Economic Development and Planning/Engineering/Building, as well as a Business Development Incubator and Chamber of Commerce offices.

This "one stop shop" facility for community economic revitalization could be complemented by a central vehicular parking facility and SunLine transit station serving both City Hall and downtown.

In addition, a 25.86-acre Civic Center Campus is defined in the area bounded by West Drive on the east, Cholla Drive on the west, Pierson Boulevard on the south, and the Second Street ROW west on the north. Within this area, the City currently owns 15.75 acres of land, which includes its existing City Council chambers, police and fire stations, senior center, library, skate park, temporary City office units and vacant land.

Within the defined Specific Plan Area, adjacent to the City's property, at the northeast corner of Pierson and Cholla is a 10.11-acre vacant parcel currently under the single ownership of a private commercial developer. This Specific Plan proposes the public/private cooperative development of the combined property as: 1) a Civic Center Campus that will include parking for the new City Hall, Boys and Girls Club, and Community Center; and 2) a Retail Center/MXD which will include the new City Hall as a nonretail anchor for retail, professional services, and restaurant uses in

a mixed-use development. Of this 25.86-acres, 20.0 acres are included within the defined limits of this Specific Plan.

Thus, the combined Civic Center Campus will be directly east of the Desert Hot Springs High School Campus and will present additional location and expansion opportunities for College of the Desert and Mission Springs Water District as well as other, related activities. At buildout, this unique MXD Campus will include approximately: 85,000 square feet of City Hall and related office space; 40,000 of Retail Space, and 20,000 square feet of Restaurant and Food Service uses. A Boys and Girls Club, Community Center, and Community Park will complement these uses.

#### 6.1.5 Private Institutional (Institutional)

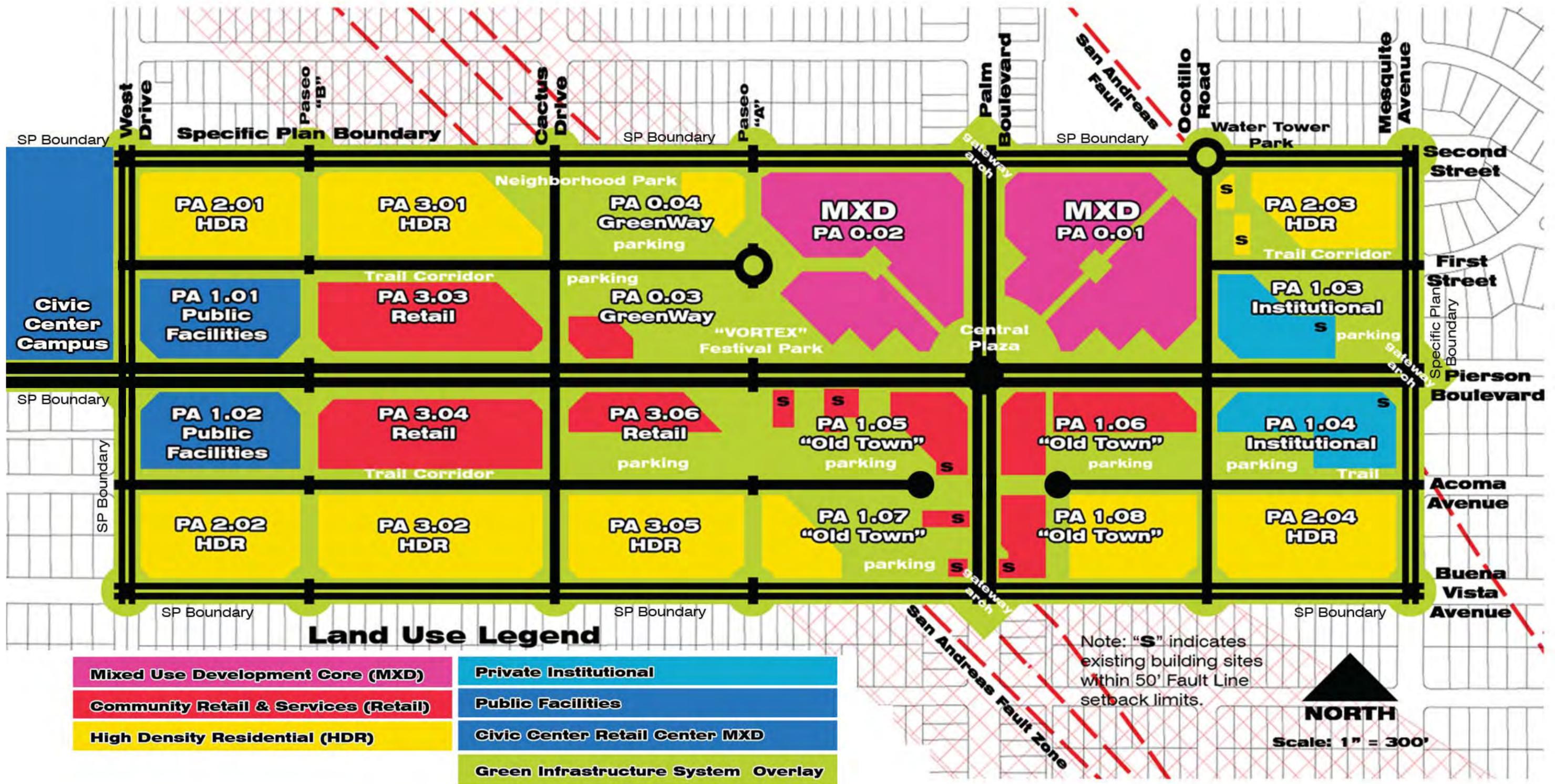
##### PA 1.03 and 1.04

Along the eastern edge of the Vortex Specific Plan area, on both sides of Pierson Boulevard, is a 6.56-acre area designated as a "Spiritual Growth Campus". This area is currently the location of several churches and related religious institutions and uses. The plan would accommodate master planning this area into a cohesive campus environment with shared parking and administrative uses.

#### 6.1.6 Minimum Parcel Size for New Development

*To facilitate the consolidation of very small lots into economically viable parcel sizes in the above zones, a minimum parcel size of 3.0 acres shall be required for all new development and redevelopment throughout the Specific Plan Area. Limited renovation, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse efforts on existing buildings may be exempted from this requirement by the City of Desert Hot Springs on a case-by-case basis.*





# Land Use Plan and Planning Areas



# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

## 6.2 Phasing Plan and Land Use Summary

### 6.2.1 Buildout Floor Areas and Dwelling Units

Within the MXD Core area of the Specific Plan, 130 HDR dwelling units are projected at an average annual absorption rate of 15 dwelling units per year. In addition, 100 Resort Hotel/Timeshare Units are projected.

Within the remainder of the Specific Plan area, around the MXD Core area, 374 HDR dwelling units are projected at an average annual absorption rate of 30 dwelling units per year.

**Table 6.1 Land Use and Quantities**

Planning Area	Existing Year 2010 Baseline GFA's			15 Year Buildout Total GFA's		
	Retail (SF)	Restaurant (SF)	Office (SF)	Retail (SF)	Restaurant (SF)	Office (SF)
New Civic Center	---	---	50,000	40,000	20,000	85,000
0.01	20,000	---	2,000	100,000	17,900	30,000
0.02	10,000	2,000	2,000	63,700	10,500	13,000
0.03	2,000	---	2,000	16,400	---	5,000
0.04	---	---	---	---	---	---
1.01	---	---	---	---	---	20,000
1.02	---	---	---	---	---	38,500
1.03	---	---	17,000 (churches)	---	---	38,500 (churches)
1.04	---	---	15,000 (churches)	---	---	37,500 (churches)
1.05	8,000	---	2,000	31,300	6,000	4,000
1.06	15,000	2,000	2,000	29,900	6,000	4,000
1.07	3,000	---	1,000	7,500	3,000	---
1.08	5,000	2,000	1,000	7,900	4,000	2,000
2.01	---	---	---	---	---	---
2.02	---	---	---	---	---	---
2.03	---	---	---	---	---	---
2.04	---	---	---	---	---	---
3.01	---	---	---	---	---	---
3.02	---	---	---	---	---	---
3.03	5,000	---	---	44,200	5,000	5,000
3.04	5,000	---	---	44,200	5,000	5,000
3.05	---	---	---	---	---	---
3.06	3,000	---	---	36,500	3,000	3,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>76,000</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>94,000</b>	<b>381,600</b>	<b>80,400</b>	<b>290,500</b>



**Table 6.2 Projected Annual Absorption Schedule**

Year	Specified Plan Area (around MXD Core Area)			MXD Core Area of Specified Plan			
	Residential (#DUs)	Commercial (net acres)*	Greenway (Acres)	Residential (# DUs)	Resort (# Rooms)	Commercial (net acres)*	Greenway (acres)
2010	—	4.0	1.0	—	—	3.0	—
2011	—	1.0	1.0	—	—	—	—
2012	—	1.0	1.0	—	—	—	—
2013	30	1.0	1.0	—	—	—	—
2014	30	1.0	1.0	15	50	3.0	2.5
2015	30	—	1.5	15	—	—	2.5
2016	30	—	1.5	15	—	—	2.5
2017	30	—	1.5	15	—	—	2.5
2018	30	—	1.5	15	50	3.0	1.5
2019	30	—	1.5	15	—	—	—
2020	30	3.0	1.5	15	—	—	—
2021	30	3.0	1.5	15	—	—	—
2022	30	1.0	1.5	15	—	2.0	—
2023	30	—	—	10	—	—	—
2024	30	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Totals</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>145.0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>11.5</b>

Notes: \* Not including residential;  
Public Facilities: 2.5 acres in 2012 and 2.0 acres in 2014;  
Private Institutional (churches): 2.5 acres in 2010 and 2.0 acres in 2012;  
City Hall/Civic Center: 5.0 acres in 2010 and 20.0 acres in 2014.

**Typical Permitted Uses**

Phase	Planning Area	Land Use Classification	Typical Permitted Uses									Land Areas			Intensity		Building Areas			Units/Height		
			Community Retail	Restaurants	Personal Services/ Spa	Entertainment Venues	Professional Office	Live-Work Units	Attached SF Residential	Attached MF Residential	Resort Hotel/Time Share	Public Facilities/ Transit	Private Institutions	Gross Land Area (acres)	Green Infrastructure System (acres)	Net Buildable Land Area (acres)	Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	Residential Density (DU/ acre)	Total Building Floor Area Yield (SF)	Non-Residential Bldg. Floor Area Yield (SF)	Residential Building Floor Area Yield (SF)	Number of Residential Units (DU's)
0 years 1 - 15	0.01	MXD Core (25)										8.05	2.47	5.58	0.65	25.0	227,900	147,900	80,000	30	50	55
	0.02	MXD Core (25)										8.38	3.44	4.94	0.65	25.0	237,200	87,200	150,000	100	50	55
	0.03	Greenway										3.28	2.80	0.48	0.15		21,400	21,400				30
	0.04	Greenway										3.28	2.60	0.68	0.20	25.0	21,400		21,400	14		40
1 years 1 - 5	1.01	Public Facilities										2.95	0.68	2.27	0.30		38,500	38,500				30
	1.02	Public Facilities										2.95	0.68	2.27	0.30		38,500	38,500				30
	1.03	Institutional										3.28	1.66	1.62	0.25		35,700	38,500				30
	1.04	Institutional										3.28	0.56	2.72	0.25		35,700	37,500				30
	1.05	Old Town Retail										3.79	2.30	1.49	0.25		41,300	41,300				30
	1.06	Old Town Retail										3.67	1.56	2.11	0.25		39,900	39,900				30
	1.07	Old Town Multiuse (18)										3.79	2.47	1.32	0.30	25.0	49,500	10,500	39,000	26		40
	1.08	Old Town Multiuse (12)										3.67	0.44	3.23	0.35	18.0	55,900	13,900	42,000	28		35
2 years 6 - 10	2.01	High Density Residential (18)										2.98	0.15	2.83	0.60	18.0	77,900		77,900	51		35
	2.02	High Density Residential (18)										2.98	0.23	2.75	0.60	18.0	77,900		77,900	51		35
	2.03	High Density Residential (12)										3.22	0.84	2.35	0.35	12.0	49,100		49,100	32		30
	2.04	High Density Residential (12)										3.22	0.17	3.05	0.35	12.0	49,100		49,100	32		30
3 years 11 - 15	3.01	High Density Residential (12)										4.15	0.46	3.69	0.35	12.0	63,300		63,300	42		30
	3.02	High Density Residential (12)										4.15	0.21	3.94	0.35	12.0	63,300		63,300	42		30
	3.03	Retail										4.15	1.12	3.03	0.30		54,200	54,200				30
	3.04	Retail										4.15	1.36	2.79	0.30		54,200	54,200				30
	3.05	High Density Residential (18)										3.25	0.17	3.08	0.60	18.0	84,900		84,900	56		35
	3.06	Retail										3.25	2.25	1.00	0.30		42,500	42,500				30
Land/ Building Development Totals												85.87	28.62	57.25			1,459,300	662,300	797,000	504	100	
Boulevard, Street and Paseo ROW's												45.69										
Civic Center Campus												20.00		20.00	0.20		185,000	185,000				35
SPECIFIC PLAN AREA TOTALS												151.56			0.25		1,644,300	847,300				

**Phasing Plan and Land Use Summary**





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

### 6.3 Green Infrastructure System Overlay

The Green Infrastructure System land use overlay reflects the project's need to accommodate a comprehensive and interconnected public realm system of parks and recreation features; adequate pedestrian and bicycle trail linkages; and landscaped vehicular parking courts, pedestrian plazas, and courtyards. For example, the combined seismic fault zone and identified fault line setback areas represent a significant development constraint, which can be turned into an asset for Vortex revitalization and redevelopment through the use of this category.

One of the key form-givers of this Specific Plan is a Green Infrastructure System Overlay that establishes a multipurpose open space or "no-build" matrix as a mechanism to geometrically organize and frame the net developable parcel areas within the plan area. This section presents an overview of potential tools for land assembly and implementation of a green infrastructure system in downtown Desert Hot Springs.

The components of the exhibit, *Green Infrastructure System Overlay*, as illustrated and defined in the exhibit (opposite page) are as follows:

- existing Pierson and Palm Boulevard ROWs
- existing Secondary Road ROWs of Second Street, Buena Vista Avenue, Mesquite Avenue, and West Drive
- existing Local Street ROWs of First Street (except the portion between Cactus Drive and Ocotillo Road, which is to be vacated), Acoma Avenue, Ocotillo Road, and Cactus Drive
- new ROWs for Paseo "A" and Paseo "B"
- expanded gateway arch intersections (4) and special intersection sight triangle areas (15)
- traffic roundabouts (2)
- trail corridors
- neighborhood park sites
- central plaza
- seismic fault zone and required setbacks
- consolidated public parking sites

This integrated public realm system is to be designed with an overall landscape, hardscape, lighting, wayfinding, and furnishings palette to clearly identify it as a framework for developing the Specific Plan area.

#### 6.3.1 Land Acquisition

Local jurisdiction mechanisms available for land acquisition and assembly include the following:

- fee-simple acquisition by City or RDA
- right-of way and access easement dedications to City
- conservation easements
- purchase of development rights
- transfer of development rights (TDR)

Private sector efforts could also include local land trusts, conservation easements, and fee-simple acquisition the City/RDA in a joint public-private effort.

The State of California could also potentially help through similar mechanisms:

- smart growth initiatives
- historic preservation easements
- conservation easements
- fee-simple acquisition

Additional federal sources could include Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Land and Water Conservation Fund grants.

#### 6.3.2 Regulation

Local regulatory mechanisms supportive of this Specific Plan could include any of the following:

- buffer or landscaping ordinances
- building permit restrictions
- development impact fees
- environmental impact regulations
- special assessment districts
- stormwater regulations
- subdivision regulations
- Zoning Ordinance (including downzoning, cluster zoning or open space zoning and performance zoning)

Local regulations can be balanced with locally administered incentives to private property owners, such as:

- management agreements
- notification and education recognition and awards
- tax incentives and estate management strategies
- local government technical assistance and support

#### 6.3.3 Funding

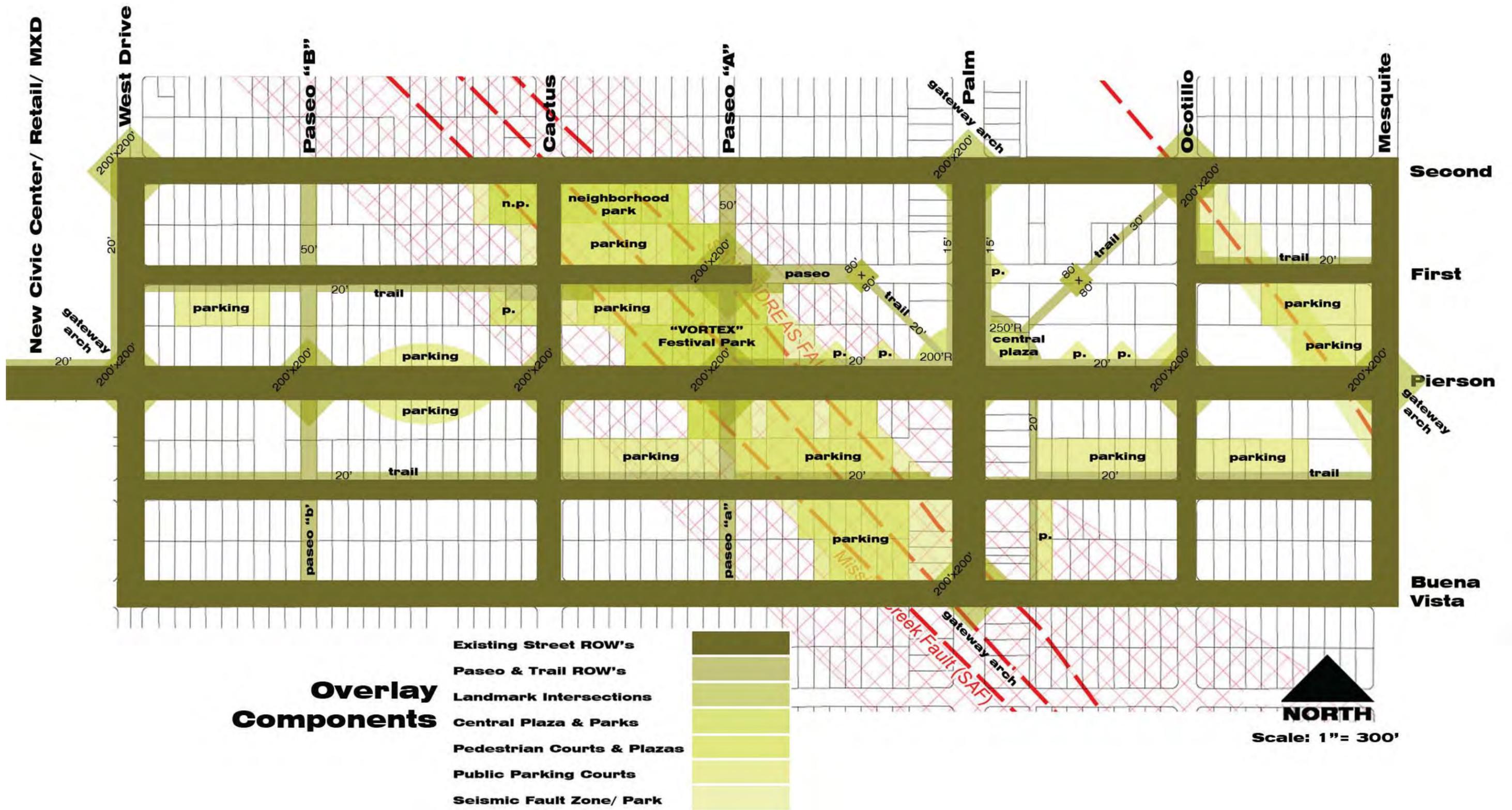
Multiple funding sources can be applied to the acquisition and implementation of a green Infrastructure system, including the following possibilities:

- City/RDA capital improvement program
- developer fees
- environmental impact fees

- environmental mini-bonds
- open space protection bonds
- special assessment fees
- transfer tax

One of the top implementation priorities of this Specific Plan is the establishment, development, and maintenance of the Green Infrastructure System Overlay as presented. This will provide the primary guidance mechanism toward a form-based development program for downtown Desert Hot Springs.





# Green Infrastructure System Overlay





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

### 6.4 Mixed Use Development Core (MXD)

#### 6.4.1 Development Program

The exhibit, *Mixed Use Development Core*, illustrates a conceptual form-based development plan for the MXD Core of this Specific Plan area. This configuration responds to a series of environmental design and land planning criteria previously established within this document.

This downtown core is intended to function as a high energy mixed-use development community unit anchored by a world-class Health and Wellness Resort. The hot water aquifer beneath and adjacent to the northeast corner of the site provides a unique natural resource, which can be capitalized upon as a catalyst for this overall development program. The development program for this component is briefly summarized as follows:

- **Gross Land Area: 16.43 acres**
- **Net Buildable Land Area: 10.52 acres**
- **Green Infrastructure System: 5.91 acres**
- **Principal Permitted Land Uses**
  - **Community Retail**
  - **Restaurants**
  - **Personal Services/Spa**
  - **Entertainment**
  - **Professional Office**
  - **Live-Work Units**
  - **Attached SF Residential**
  - **Attached MF Residential**
  - **Resort Hotel/Timeshare**
- **Floor Area Ratio (FAR): 0.65**
- **Residential Density: 25.0 dwelling units/acre**
- **Total Building Floor Area Yield: 465,100 square feet**
  - **Nonresidential: 235,100 square feet**
  - **Residential: 230,000 square feet (130 high density residential dwelling units plus 100 resort hotel/time share units)**
- **Maximum Building Height: 55 feet**
- **Phased Buildout Timeframe: 15 years**

#### 6.4.2 Development Plan Features

The illustrative Mixed Use Development Plan offers a broad menu of interactive land use activities that constitute a varied, flexible, and mutually reinforcing mix which can unify to stimulate downtown economic revitalization:

#### 6.4.3 Implementation

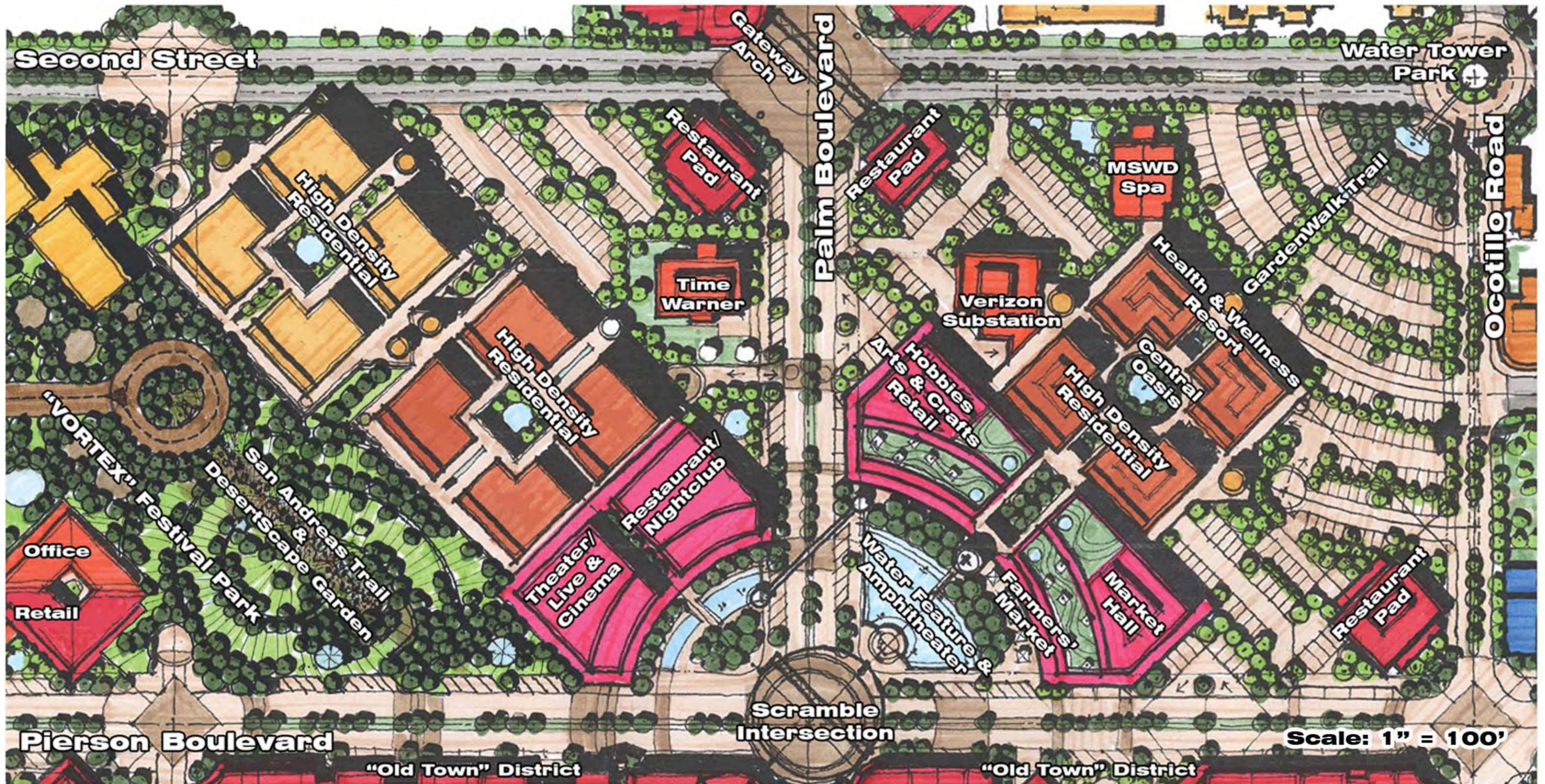
The highest of priorities should be placed on the land assembly process for this project through the cooperative efforts of current property owners

and the City's Redevelopment Agency. Once that has been completed, a master developer should be selected by the City to implement the project.

- Market hall and farmer's market retail anchor (relocation, retention and expansion of an existing grocery store)
- Hobbies, arts, and crafts retail anchor (relocation, retention and expansion of an existing hardware store)
- Opportunity site for a new live theater and cinema entertainment anchor
- Opportunity site for a new "high energy" themed restaurant/nightclub entertainment anchor
- Three opportunity sites for new freestanding restaurants
- Retention and renovation of Time Warner, Verizon substation and water district facilities
- Creation of a new major health-and-wellness resort with complete spa facilities, retail shops, central oasis court with pool, resort hotel/timeshare units and live-work suites
- High density residential neighborhood units with direct access to the central plaza/water feature and amphitheater, Vortex Festival Park, DesertScape Garden and GardenWalk Trail

Due to the natural slope toward the southwest, and due to the orientation of all planned structures to follow this grade, all buildings and each of their floor levels will be afforded commanding views of Mt. San Jacinto. The horizontal and vertical integration of residential and nonresidential uses presents a unique opportunity to create a landmark mixed-use community for shopping, dining, entertainment, and living in the heart of downtown Desert Hot Springs.





# Mixed Use Development Core





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

### 6.5 Civic Center Anchor

#### 6.5.1 Business Development and Transit Centers

Approximately 5.9 acres have been designated along the western edge of the project, located along both sides of Pierson Boulevard between West Drive and a new "Paseo B, for a business development center and transit center, as well as related public facilities uses as shown on the exhibit, *New Civic Center Retail/MXD*. This concept includes a potential location for the expansion of City offices such as economic development and planning/engineering/building, as well as a business development incubator and Chamber of Commerce offices.

This "one-stop shop" facility for community economic revitalization could be complemented by a central vehicular parking facility and SunLine transit station serving both City Hall and Downtown.

#### 6.5.2 New Civic Center Campus

In addition, a new 25.86-acre Civic Center Campus is proposed between West Drive along the east, Cholla Drive along the west, Pierson Boulevard along the southern boundary and Second Street ROW extended west along the northern boundary of the Specific Plan area. Within this area, the City currently owns 15.75 acres of land which includes its existing City Council Chambers, police and fire stations, senior center, library, skate park, temporary City office units and a substantial amount of vacant land. Located adjacent to the City's property, at the northeast corner of Pierson and Cholla, is a 10.11-acre vacant parcel under the single ownership of a private commercial developer.

This Specific Plan proposes the public/private cooperative development of the combined 25.86 acres of property as: 1) a Civic Center Campus which will include a new City Hall, Boys and Girls Club and Community Center; and 2) a retail center/MXD which will include the new City Hall as a nonretail anchor to be complemented by retail, professional services, and restaurant uses in a mixed-use development.

Thus, the combined Civic Center Campus of 25.86 acres will be directly east of the Desert Hot Springs High School Campus and will present additional location and expansion opportunities for College of the Desert and Mission Springs Water District, as well as other related activities. At buildout, this unique MXD Campus will include approximately:

- 85,000 square feet of City Hall and related office space
- 40,000 square feet of retail space
- 20,000 square feet of restaurant and food service uses (drive-thru service subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit)

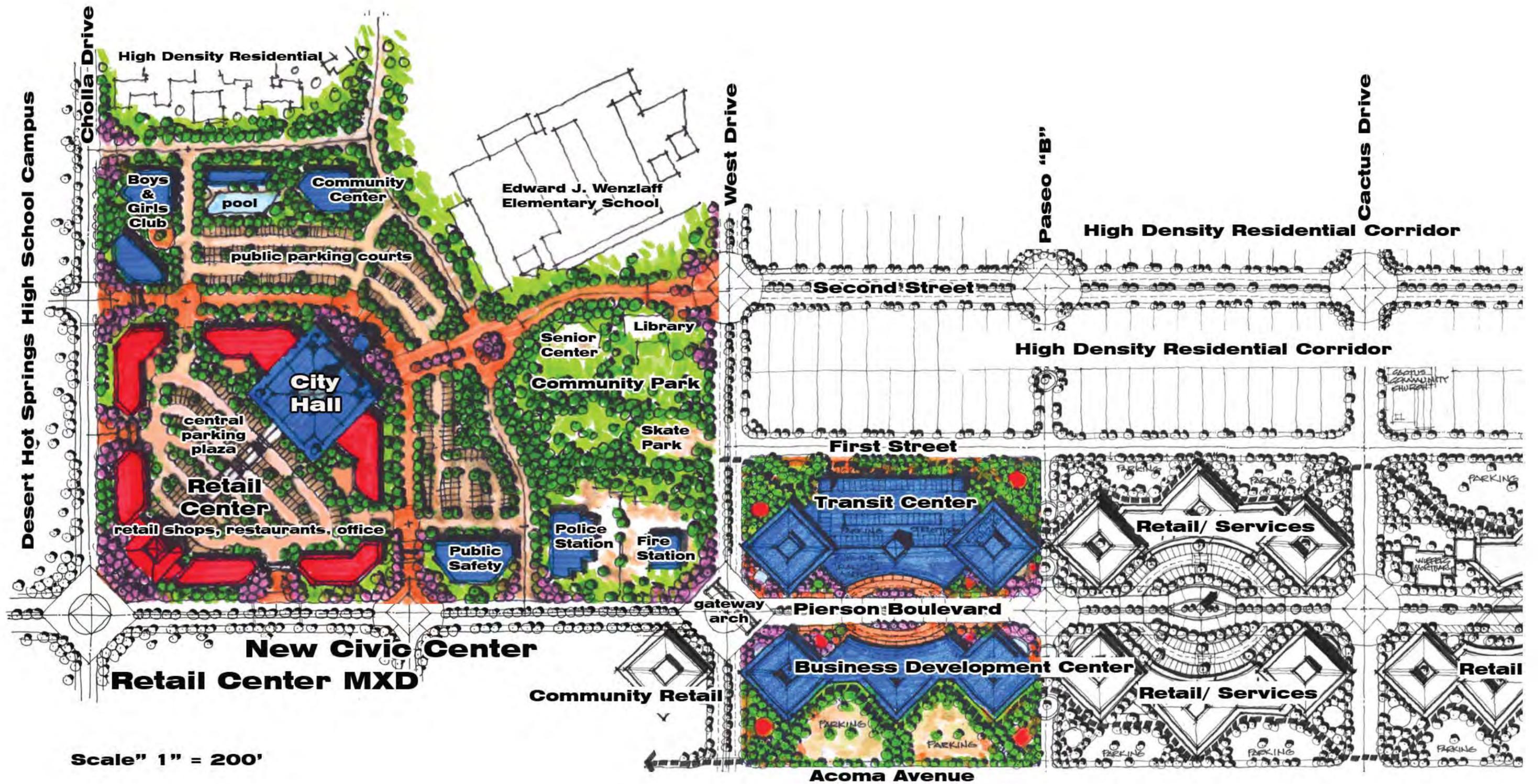
A Boys and Girls Club, Community Center, and Community Park will complement these uses and will be immediately north of the defined

Specific Plan area. A system of community park and trail linkages will provide open space connectivity through the campus. One element will include an outdoor amphitheater for the shared use of the senior center, City library, Wenzlaff Elementary School, and City Hall.

#### 6.5.3 Shared Parking Facilities

A central parking plaza within the retail center MXD component of this development will include approximately 220 parking spaces intended for the exclusive use of retail shop and restaurant patrons. In addition, approximately 600 spaces will be included within a series of parking courts incorporated into a shared parking corridor wrapping around the MXD to its east and north. These parking courts will serve City Hall visitors and employees, retail center employees, and users of other public facilities in the community park component of the plan.





# New Civic Center/ Retail/ MXD





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

# 7. Design Guidelines

### 7.1 Introduction to Design Standards and Guidelines

Quality development is achieved through attention to detail that is implemented from the initial conception of a project to the final construction of buildings, pathways, entry features, signage, and other design elements. This section outlines the design standards and guidelines for this Specific Plan that will encourage the highest level of design quality and creativity in site planning and architectural design, while allowing for variation and flexibility. All development within the Specific Plan area must address the fundamental elements of the design features covered in this chapter. The following guidelines establish a design framework to assist the City of Desert Hot Springs staff, citizens, design professionals, and developers understand and implement this project.

- City staff and decision makers will use these design guidelines to evaluate development proposals.
- Developers will not be required to necessarily meet all of these design guidelines, but must demonstrate a reasonable response to them.

Due to the mix of project types that the Specific Plan allows, the buildings will include a variety of design styles, and therefore allow a range of colors, materials, building detailing, and building orientation. However, these guidelines provide the necessary direction to ensure a coherent and complementary project. These guidelines supplement, but do not override, ADA Title 24 and additional requirements set forth in local and State of California building codes.

Unlike development standards, which constitute regulations, requirements, and by-laws by which development must abide and are indicated by the use of the word “shall”, design guidelines generally use the word “should” and identify actions or outcomes that are encouraged but not mandatory.

These design guidelines are divided into 12 sections:

1. Site Planning and Building Orientation
2. Architectural Design Guidelines
3. DesertScape Design Palette
4. Exterior Lighting Design Guidelines
5. Signage System Design Guidelines
6. Public Art Program Theme
7. Palm and Pierson Boulevards
8. Vortex Gateway Intersections
9. Central Plaza and Vortex Park
10. Traffic Calming Design Features

11. Vehicle Parking Design Standards
12. Sustainable Development Guidelines

### 7.2 Site Planning and Building Orientation

#### 7.2.1 Site Design

The integration of buildings, entries, parking lot layout, open spaces, and pedestrian and vehicular circulation is critical to achieving an overall sense of place. With the mix of proposed land uses within the Specific Plan area, it is important to set guidelines to coordinate site planning between distinct building types and to ensure the connectivity of public spaces. Site design guidelines also provide direction for building placement and orientation, creating a defined streetscape that gives the project a distinct character from the surrounding development.

Within the downtown Desert Hot Springs area, buildings should be positioned close to the street to create an intimate character. These site design guidelines encourage development to incorporate courtyard parking, which places buildings along the street edge with parking internal to each block. This creates a more engaging streetscape that promotes pedestrian activity along the street rather than allowing parking areas directly adjacent to the street, which would isolate the pedestrian.

The guidelines below are organized by area use. For structures within the Specific Plan area that combine commercial and residential uses within the same building, the site design guidelines for both commercial and residential areas shall apply.

#### 7.2.2 Commercial Areas

Building placement and orientation should be organized to create visual interest along public rights-of-way, particularly at intersection nodes and project entryways.

Buildings should be oriented so that public access or windows face areas of pedestrian activity, such as public plazas and pedestrian pathways.

Multiple buildings in a single area should be grouped and organized to demonstrate positive functional relationships to one another.

The grouping of multiple buildings should be clustered to create functional plazas and pedestrian corridors.

Where clustering is impractical, a visual link should be established between buildings through the integration of an arcade system, trellis, colonnade, or other such open structure.

Enhanced or “signature” architecture should be located at prominent locations. Buildings with unique architectural elements, such as theme towers and other landmark structures, should be positioned on corners of

significant intersections or entryways to enhance the sense of arrival and project monumentation.

#### 7.2.3 Residential Areas

Where possible, the front entries and building elevations of housing units should be oriented to streets and pedestrian walkways.

The windows of interior living spaces should overlook streets and public spaces to enhance community security and maximize view potential.

Residential buildings should be connected to public sidewalks, paths, recreational facilities, and enhanced edges.

Residential building entries should be configured and oriented to afford a sense of individuality and privacy and to create small-scale public spaces.

Residential and nonresidential uses should not have common entrance hallways or common balconies. This ensures the security of residents through the provision of separate and secure entrances and exits.

On-site recreational facilities should be conveniently and centrally located for the majority of units.

#### 7.2.4 Public Open Spaces and Pedestrian Areas

Areas other than those spaces occupied by buildings, service drives, or other surface circulation should incorporate amenities such as enhanced landscape or hardscape features. These include outdoor seating areas, trellises, ornamental trees, benches, planters, open space, water features, and pedestrian-friendly elements.

Land uses should consolidate or coordinate their open space requirements to provide larger public spaces that are centrally located, functional, and serve multiple uses.

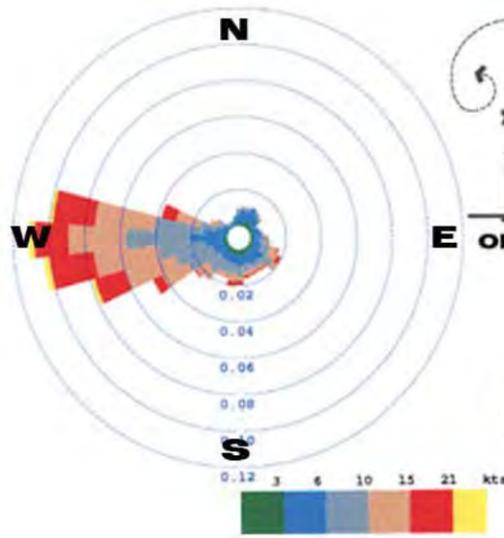
Public spaces should be strategically located along areas of pedestrian activity, such as shopping areas and major pedestrian thoroughways.

Public spaces should be oriented to maximize their visual and physical link from adjacent streets and pathways.

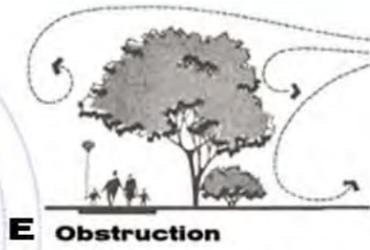
Pedestrian pathways should provide connectivity within the project by connecting each project to neighboring properties.

Pedestrian access should be provided that links public transportation stops to adjacent building entrances and pedestrian connections to surrounding uses.

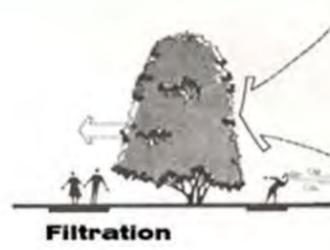
Safety and visibility should be considered in the design of both public spaces and pathways for the security of residents and their guests.



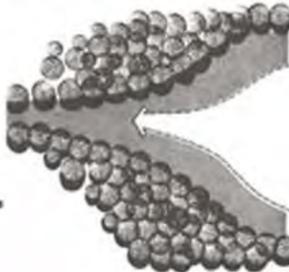
**Wind Rose**



**Obstruction**

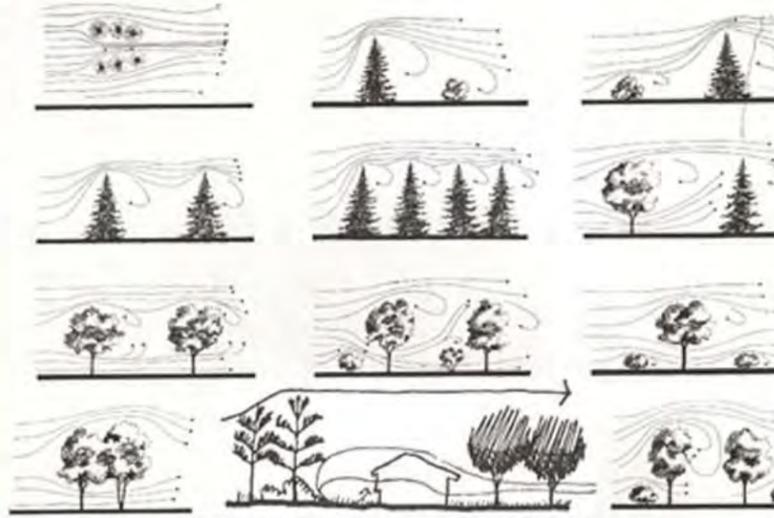


**Filtration**



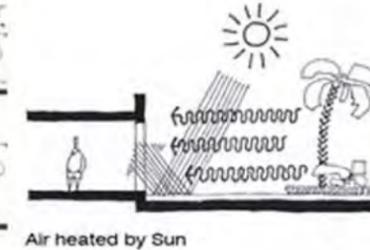
**Deflection**

**Wind Control**

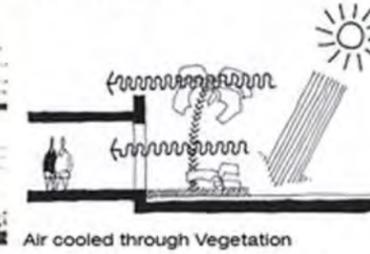


**Windbreak Patterns**

Evergreen trees with dense understory offer protection from strong winds. Deciduous trees with open understory permit the passage of cooling breezes.

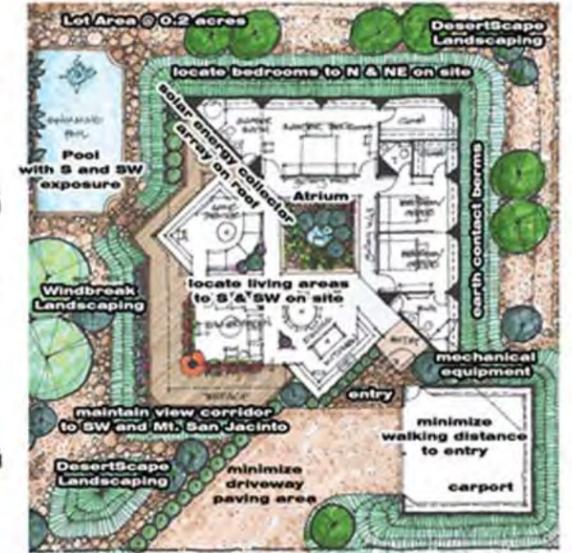


Air heated by Sun



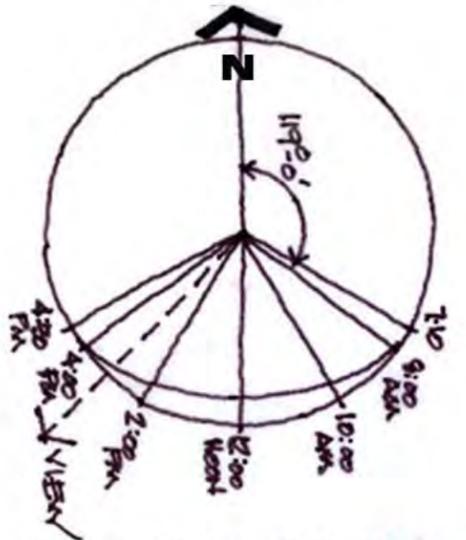
Air cooled through Vegetation

**Shade Next to Buildings**



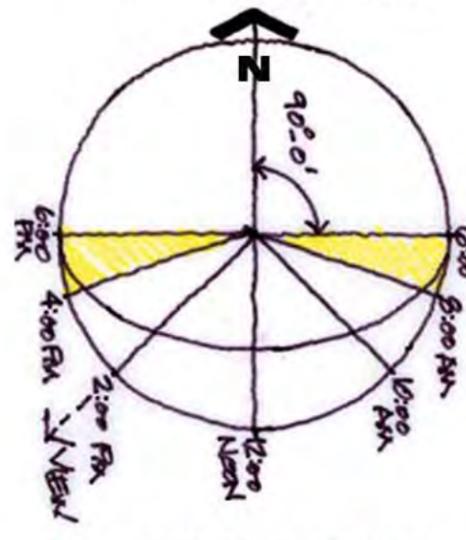
**Building Orientation**

**Winter**



AM	PM	AZIMUTH	ALTITUDE
NOON		180°-0'	31°-30'
10:00	2:00	149°-30'	25°-0'
8:00	4:00	126°-30'	8°-30'
7:10	4:50	119°-0'	0°-0'

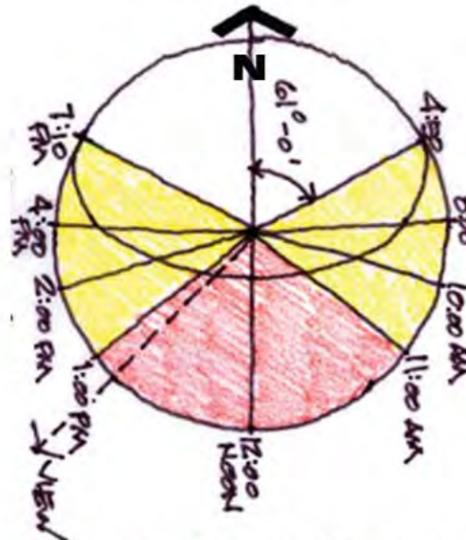
**Fall/ Spring**



AM	PM	AZIMUTH	ALTITUDE
NOON		180°-0'	55°-0'
10:00	2:00	135°-0'	45°-0'
8:00	4:00	108°-30'	24°-0'
6:00	6:00	90°-0'	0°-0'

**Solar Angles**

**Summer**

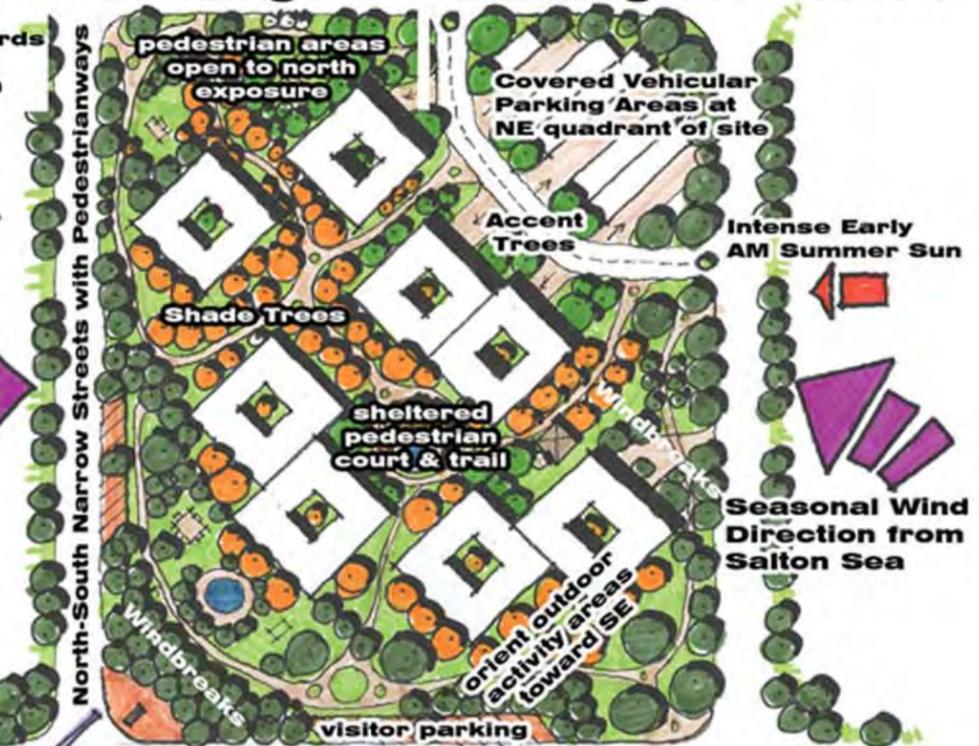


AM	PM	AZIMUTH	ALTITUDE
NOON		180°-0'	78°-30'
1:00	1:00	127°-30'	62°-30'
10:00	2:00	105°-30'	61°-30'
8:00	4:00	85°-30'	37°-0'
4:50	7:10	61°-0'	0°-0'

Cluster dwelling units to create interior courtyards and minimize exposed wall area to solar gain

Intense Late PM Summer Sun  
buffer East winds for cooling effect  
Primary Wind Direction from San Gorgonio Pass

Shaded SW orientation of buildings to maximize views  
SW View Corridor to Mt. San Jacinto



East-West Wide "Main Streets" Wind Circulation Corridors  
SE orientation of buildings to reduce solar gain  
Noon Sun

**Site Planning & Building Orientation**





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

### 7.2.5 Parking Areas

Entrance and exit points for parking areas and structures should be well marked with streetscape and landscape features, including enhanced paving, landscaping, and architectural features. Entry drives into parking areas should be located as far as practical from street intersections.

Parking areas should be clustered where feasible, and large, expansive parking lots should be minimized to the greatest extent possible. This maximizes security and efficient access.

Parking areas should be behind or to the side of commercial buildings where possible.

No more than 10 percent of the required parking should be adjacent to service loading areas within a project.

Parking should be screened from roadways with landscaped medians, berms, trellises, grade changes, or placement behind buildings.

One tree for every four spaces should be planted within the parking areas. They may be clustered or planted in a standardized fashion, so long as they provide shade for vehicles and pedestrians along walkways and parking lot entrance points.

Use of split-level parking structures is encouraged on slopes. Either underground or tuck-under parking is encouraged for mixed-use or residential uses.

The use of “wrap” structures—where the shops, offices, and/or residential units are wrapped around a centralized parking structure or surface lot—is highly encouraged.

Parking areas of 100 or more cars should exhibit clear circulation hierarchy, with only ADA parking permitted on the primary access drives near building entrances.

Diagonal and parallel on-street parking should be encouraged along the Palm and Pierson Boulevard corridors and adjacent to other high-activity areas.

Parking areas should clearly separate vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems. Pedestrian connections through parking areas should provide landscaping and amenities to create visual interest, pedestrian access, and rest breaks over long distances of pavement.

Public parking for commercial or office uses should be clearly separated from private residential parking areas by signage, pavement markings, and/or physical separation.

Residential parking spaces should be located within 250 feet in walking distance of the unit(s) they serve.

### 7.2.6 Traffic Calming Areas

Use of neck-downs, bulb-outs (which can also act as planters), and other traffic-calming measures are encouraged along the length of local streets and along the Palm and Pierson Boulevard corridors.

Minimize the radius of corners where pedestrian walkways cross intersections.

Use a variety of special paving treatments to identify and visually enhance intersections and pedestrian crossings.

Discourage cut-through vehicular movement to ensure that traffic noise and vibration are minimized throughout residential areas.

### 7.2.7 Service, Trash, and Utility Areas

Service and utility areas should be incorporated within the building envelope. If this is not possible, these areas shall be oriented away from public view and screened with walls, landscaping and “green screens.”

Roof-mounted mechanical equipment is highly recommended. Exterior roof-access ladders should be avoided. Access should be provided from within the buildings.

Exterior on-site facilities, such as sewer, gas, water, electric, telephone, and communications equipment, should be installed underground where feasible. Transformers and other utility equipment that must be above ground should be screened and incorporated into the adjacent structure or landscape wherever possible. An exception includes equipment that is located outside of public view, e.g., within a parking structure.

Trash and recycling enclosures should be contained within the building envelope. If this is infeasible, locate them in discreet places and design enclosures to architecturally integrate with the overall design theme of the development. Trash and recycling enclosures should be designed and constructed of concrete masonry units (CMU) with finishes of similar materials as the project building.

Trash and recycling enclosures should be planted with vines if located adjacent to or within a landscaped area to help screen the enclosure. When trash or recycling enclosures are placed in plain view away from other structures (such as in a surface parking lot), they shall incorporate decorative roof beams or trellises.

Trash and recycling enclosures and loading areas must be separated from adjacent parking stalls by planters that are a minimum of 4-foot-wide, which shall contain low-growing plant material.

Trash and recycling enclosures are to be large enough to contain the refuse generated by that site. A separate pedestrian access shall be provided to each enclosure so that large gates do not have to be opened.

### 7.2.8 Site Planning and Building Orientation

In Desert Hot Springs, it is of paramount importance to recognize the realities of solar and wind energy through the orientation of buildings and the organization of landscape windbreaks in this Specific Plan area. Relevant site planning and building orientation design principles are illustrated in the exhibit, *Site Planning and Building Orientation*.

Although the street and land subdivision grid of the historic center of Desert Hot Springs runs in the traditional north–south and east–west orientation, the microclimatic influences of strong sun and wind direction factors call for an optimized building orientation on a southwest/southeast diagonal axis. This optimized orientation will buffer intense late afternoon and early morning summer sun. It will also help deflect primary winds from the west and seasonal winds from the east rather than blocking them head-on.

Sheltered interior courtyards and pedestrian courts and trails are key form-giving design elements that help buffer pedestrians from harsh outdoor desert conditions. Shade structures and trees next to buildings are also helpful in this regard.

Architects and land planners need to give primary consideration to seasonal solar angles and the microclimatic Wind Rose for each development project and building. Wind and solar control will help define desert environmental design and development within a vernacular which is unique to Desert Hot Springs. Windbreak patterns for landscaping will reinforce and extend this design direction within a “response to environment” design philosophy.

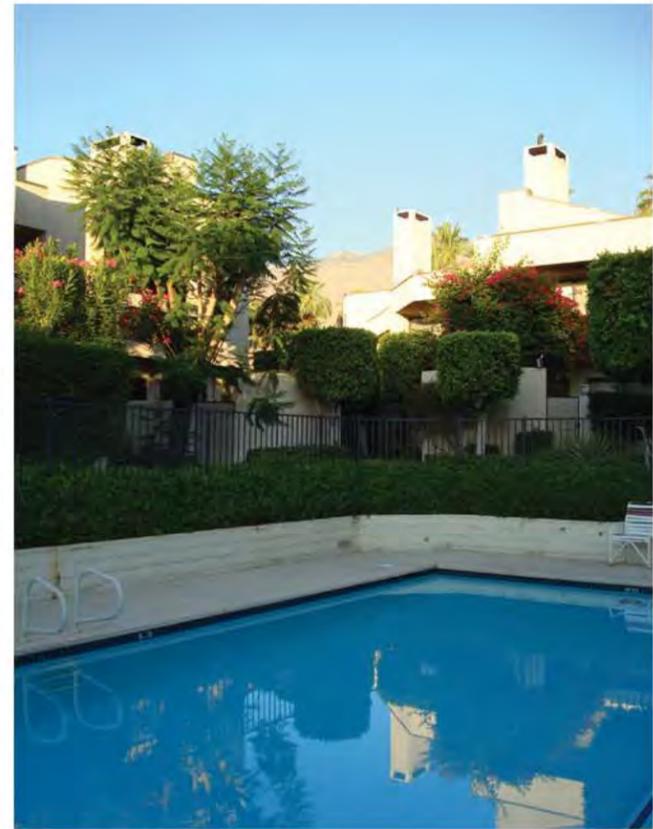
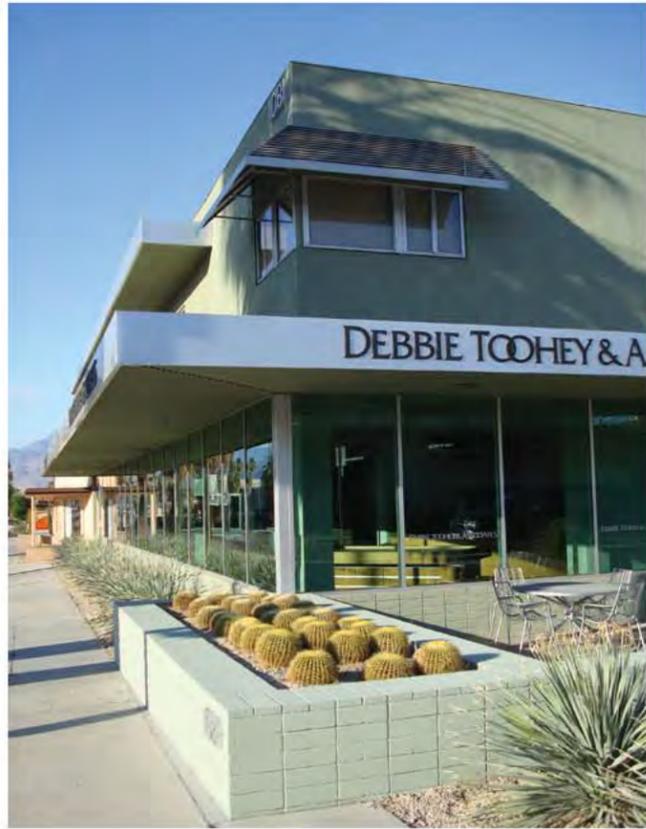
## 7.3 Architectural Design Theme

### 7.3.1 Building Design

The purpose of the architectural design theme is to ensure a high level of architectural quality and an attention to detail. The Specific Plan does not recommend a particular architectural style, but rather recommends consistency in styles throughout the project—with an emphasis on Contemporary Desert Architecture for new signature buildings, and promotes a unique style of building achieved through the creative use of massing, roof forms, and façades. The following guidelines direct the building form, architectural style, design details, and materials.

### 7.3.2 Massing, Scale, and Forms

Buildings should be divided into distinct massing elements. Building massing addresses wall plan location, wall heights, and roof levels. Façades should be articulated with significant use of architectural elements and details, and repetitive elevations should be avoided by using a variety of building forms.





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

A variety of building heights and rooflines is encouraged to create visual interest. In residential areas, a combination of one-, one-and-a-half-, and two-story unit faces should be utilized to create visual interest.

Building façades should be detailed in a way that makes them appear smaller. This can be achieved by articulating the separate floors with horizontal bands or by increasing the detail on the building at the street or ground level. All buildings should have a visual base that allows the building to appear more human in scale.

Allow for visual relief to break up long, blank, unarticulated building façades. There shall be no long, flat expanses of walls that exceed 50 feet (100 feet for buildings larger than 50,000 square feet in size) without at least two of the following: color change, material change, texture change, plane projections or recesses, trellises or vines, balconies, or windows.

Maximum total blank wall (without windows or entrances) shall not exceed 30 percent of the first-story wall.

Building entryways should be clearly marked and emphasized to invite passing pedestrians and break up building massing. Projecting or recessing building entrances is encouraged. Recessed entries allow the pedestrian space to transition from the sidewalk to the interior of the building.

Surface detailing shall not substitute for variation in building massing.

Vertical and horizontal articulation, such as strategic placement of window and door openings, or through the use of balconies, awnings, and canopies, should be incorporated into structures.

Maximizing daylight, natural ventilation, and outward views is recommended, especially through the use of courtyards, plazas, and atriums.

Public plazas, outdoor dining, and other pedestrian-oriented activities are encouraged to divide ground-level building façades.

For residential development, each housing unit should be individually recognizable, either by varying front setbacks within the same structure, by staggering unit plans, or projecting features such as balconies, porches, bays, and dormers.

Residential units should be configured and oriented to provide privacy and individuality.

### 7.3.3 Architectural Style

***The overall character of the Specific Plan project should be established through complementary architectural styles that are compatible with Contemporary Desert Architecture as illustrated in the Architectural Design Guidelines graphic.***

Within the project, visual diversity should be promoted through the use of complementary architectural detailing. For example, different detailing may be used to distinguish between residential and commercial buildings.

Contemporary desert architecture should incorporate high quality and functional detail that includes the use of arches, courtyards, shade structures, arcades, loggias, towers, variations in building form, and color blocking to define buildings.

All exterior elevations shall receive architectural treatments, with an emphasis on the front façades.

### 7.3.4 Design Details

In preparing design details for architectural review by the City, some combination of the following should be included for each building.

- light fixtures
- balconies on the second or higher floors
- decorative bulkheads
- shutters
- awnings for windows or balconies
- contemporary, functional cornice
- pedestrian arcades

Building elements should be designed to enhance the visibility of merchandise and encourage window shopping.

Depth and shadow interest should be accomplished through building massing, with the addition of offsets, popouts, and overhangs.

Tower features help to create a landmark place and add architectural interest to otherwise standard structures. The scale of tower details should be designed to create a statement, but should not appear imposing to adjacent plazas and walkways.

Energy efficiency is encouraged through the use of window overhangs, arcades or loggia, solar hot-water heating, advanced heating and cooling systems, or other conservation measures.

Vines and trellises are encouraged for large expanses of building faces to cool and provide shade for building surface, and soften the wall's appearance.

### 7.3.5 Materials and Colors

High quality materials that weather well, with the appropriate use of colors and textures, should be used for building materials and design elements. Materials should convey a sense of durability and permanence and be compatible with the desert environment.

Only materials that perform well in the desert environment are permitted. Prohibited materials include: plain concrete block, plain concrete, corrugated metal, plywood, sheet pressboard, or vinyl siding. The use

of highly reflective materials is discouraged when exposed to direct sunlight.

To avoid monotony, a variety of "desertscape" color schemes is encouraged to provide visual interest. However, building color and materials should be complementary throughout the project and consistent with the surrounding architectural detailing.

Colors should include a base color and accent colors. Generally, a maximum of three colors should be used for each building. Color schemes should be selected with a harmonious range of accent materials and roof profile colors.

### 7.3.6 Roof Forms and Materials

Functional and clean breaks should be provided in roofline ridges or cornice lines to create a variety in roof form and elevation appearance.

A variety of roof types are permitted and encouraged within the project, including hip, gable, shed, and "butterfly" roofs. Roof overhangs which provide significant shade and shadow are encouraged.

Landscaped "green roofs" are highly encouraged for environmental and aesthetic reasons, as well as heat reflective/nonglare roofing membranes and materials.

Roof types should be consistent with the architectural concept and the style, materials, and scale of the building.

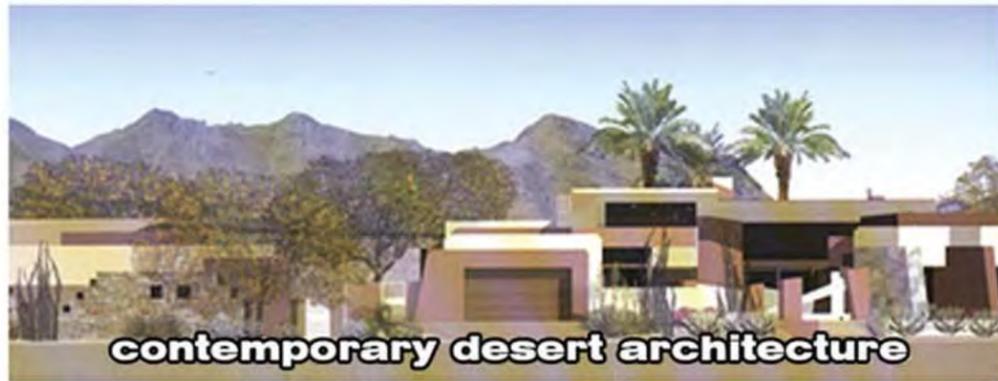
Roof heights, pitches, and planes should vary to create interplay between the roof and walls of the structure. Varying roof pitches on the same building shall be avoided unless they are integral to the architectural style or extending over porches and balconies.

### 7.3.7 Architectural Design Guidelines

Refer to the following *Architectural Design Guidelines* exhibit which illustrates the major components of Contemporary Desert Architecture. These include primary considerations for:

1. integral sun control and shading devices;
2. orientation for sun and wind control;
3. clean and horizontal geometric forms relating to the surrounding mountain ranges as well as the desert floor; and
4. earth contact design for energy conservation. Integrated use of courtyards and shade structures is also encouraged.

The exhibit summarizes the primary components of an indigenous desert architecture, which is distinctly suitable in Desert Hot Springs. This approach encourages the individuality of the "Desert Hot Springs spirit" as well as the variety of environmental conservation objectives of this Specific Plan.



contemporary desert architecture



entry



courtyards



shade



function



sun control



mountains



clean forms



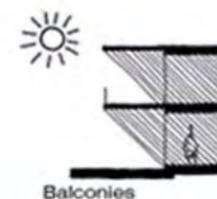
earth contact



horizontal



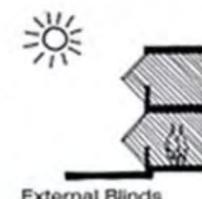
Pierced Canopies



Balconies



Vertical Screen



External Blinds



Adjustable Louvres



Section "A-A" Through Mixed Use Development

# Architectural Design Guidelines





# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

## 7.4 DesertScape Design Palette

### 7.4.1 “A Lush and Efficient Seasonal Festival of Color”

The landscape design will establish an identity and theme for the project and will act as an overall unifying element, transcending parcel boundaries and defining open space areas. The landscape plan provides guidelines for the treatment of areas within the Specific Plan, including the surrounding streets, boulevards, parkways, development edges, project entries, and open space areas.

The landscaping theme is influenced by the climate of the Coachella Valley, where native and drought-resistant plants are emphasized. The plant palette presented in the exhibit opposite provides a selection of desert-friendly trees and landscaping for the project. Landscaping is not limited to this list, but should fulfill the intent of the Landscape Plan by selecting similar plantings that respect native plant species and are compatible with the Coachella Valley climate.

Landscaping should consist primarily of plant materials and species that are native, drought tolerant and/or low water demand. Plants with similar water requirements should be grouped together, a technique known as hydrozoning.

Automated, high-efficiency irrigation systems (such as bubbler irrigation and low-angle, low-flow spray heads) should be installed to reduce water demand and use. Moisture sensors and other similar irrigation technology should be utilized to ensure that landscaping is watered only as needed.

Grey water and/or collected rainwater should be used wherever feasible for landscape irrigation.

Drought-tolerant or native canopy or deciduous tree species should be located around and near buildings, walls, windows, and paved areas to reduce solar heat absorbed by buildings and paved areas.

The recommended “Vortex” landscape palette to be utilized throughout this Specific Plan area, as illustrated in the following *DesertScape Design Palette*, is summarized as follows:

- **Skyline Tree: Mexican Fan Palm**
- **Signature Tree: Canary Island Date Palm**
- **Windbreaks: African Sumac**
- **Full Shade: Chilean Mesquite**
- **Walkways: Blue Palo Verde**
- **Courtyards: Chinese Pistache**
- **Parking Areas: Ironwood**
- **Accents: Grape Myrtle**
- **Shrubs: Lantana Camara, Texas Ranger and Bougainvillea**
- **Ground Covers: Periwinkle**
- **Ornamental Grasses: Red Fountain Grass**

- **Cacti and Succulents: Cape Aloe**
- **Desert Wildflowers: Desert Poppy**

Further, the identified selections for the “Earth,” “Air” and “Water” corridor districts may be selectively used to supplement the “Vortex” palette in order to create added diversity and visual interest.

### 7.4.2 Complementary Palms

In addition to the above theme palms, the following palms may be used as accents to add diversity and visual interest to the mix:

- Guadalupe Palms
- Mexican Blue Palm
- Pindo Palm
- Windmill Palm

### 7.4.3 Complementary Cacti

In addition to the above Cacti and Succulents, the following cacti may be used as accents to add vertical emphasis to the mix:

- Saguaro Cactus
- Organ Pipe Cactus
- Mexican Fencepost
- Hildmann’s Cereus

### 7.4.4 Grass Lawns

***Irrigated grass lawn areas should be minimized in order to conserve water consumption. If used, seeded common bermuda grass is acceptable in limited areas and quantities. Sodded hybrid Bermuda grass (“tif”) series is even better.***

### 7.4.5 Green Screens

A variety of green screen elements are encouraged along otherwise blank walls and similar opportunity locations. These include: 1) wall mounted trellis panels; 2) freestanding trellis fence; 3) column trellis elements; 4) aboveground planters; and 5) horizontal shade structures. In addition to aesthetic and environmental control values, these elements are also useful for security and graffiti control purposes.

### 7.4.6 Windbreaks

A combination of large and small trees and shrubs should be installed to mitigate the effects of blowsand, particularly along the perimeter of the Specific Plan boundary. Care should be taken to design the site so that the sand collection areas (on the windward side of the vegetative screen) are in appropriate spaces that are easily maintained.

## 7.4.7 Hardscape

Hardscape elements are decorative and functional elements of the streetscape, aside from landscaping features. Hardscape elements may include paving treatments, benches, chairs, tables, shade structures, bollards, drinking fountains, tree grates, trash receptacles, planters, bicycle loops, and newspaper stands. Some combination of these should be used as decorative elements for streetscapes and public spaces.

### General

Consistent design themes should be used for all the street furnishing elements throughout the project, and should complement surrounding architectural styles.

Furnishings should be constructed of high-quality, durable materials that can withstand the elements without showing wear.

Furnishings should be placed where pedestrian traffic, viewsheds, or building ingress and egress will not be obstructed.

Decorative features that prevent skateboarding along street furnishings shall be incorporated within the design of the street furnishings.

### Paving Treatments

Distinctive paving treatments give visual clues to users and emphasize different areas within the streetscape and public spaces. Patterned, enriched, or textured paving treatments should be used to denote important crosswalks, highlight pedestrian pathways and public spaces, and delineate parking areas adjacent to areas of high pedestrian activity. The use of specialized paving materials is encouraged along the major thoroughways and through public spaces.

Even and durable surfaces should be used in high pedestrian circulation areas.

The identification of building access points through the use of variations in patterns and colors is encouraged.

Acceptable paving materials for the streetscape and public spaces include interlocking concrete pavers, native stone, precast pavers, and brick. The use of stained or stamped concrete is discouraged, unless highly decorative and creative in nature. Interlocking concrete pavers, including permeable pavers, are particularly encouraged.

Painted paving surfaces should not be used except to indicate traffic lanes or parking spaces.

### 7.4.8 Seating Areas

Benches should be placed at selected shaded locations along major thoroughways and focused around public spaces to promote pedestrian activity.

Corridor District	Trees								Shrubs			Desert Floor			
	skylline	signature	windbreaks	full shade	walkways	courtyards	parking	accents	small (3')	medium (6')	large (12')	ground covers	ornamental grasses	cacti and succulents	desert wildflowers
<b>Earth</b>	 Italian Cypress	 California Fan Palm	 Mondel Pine	 Carob	 Desert Willow	 Sissoo Tree	 Argentine Mesquite	 Soaptree Yuucca	 Black Dalea	 Desert Cassia	 Arizona Rosewood	 Damianita	 Deer Grass	 Ocotillo	 Desert Marigold
<b>Air</b>	 Italian Stone Pine	 Arabian Desert Date Palm	 Arizona Cypress	 Modesto Ash	 Honey Mesquite	 Purple Orchid Tree	 Tipu Tree	 Jacaranda	 Ruellia	 Mexican Bird of Paradise	 Texas Mountain Laurel	 Trailing Lantana	 Mexican Thread Grass	 Desert Spoon	 Blue Flax
<b>Water</b>	 Aleppo Pine	 Queen Palm	 Swamp Maleo	 Drake Elm	 Sweet Acacia	 Texas Ebony	 Feather Tree	 Citrus	 Pyraoantha	 Red Bird of Paradise	 Texas Olive	 Dwarf Ruellia	 Bull Grass	 Murphy's Agave	 Desert Lupine
<b>Vortex</b>	 Mexican Fan Palm	 Canary Island Date Palm	 African Sumac	 Chilean Mesquite	 Blue Palo Verde	 Chinese Pistache	 Ironwood	 Crape Myrtle	 Lantana Camara	 Texas Ranger	 Bougainvillea	 Periwinkle	 Red Fountain Grass	 Cape Aloe	 Desert Poppy

**Wind Control and Windbreak Patterns**





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

Providing shaded seating areas adjacent to landscaping and public spaces invites people to enjoy the amenities provided. Moveable furniture should be provided to permit for a greater variety of seating arrangements and encourage use by individuals or groups.

Planters that also function as seating areas should be provided.

Trellises, market umbrellas, awnings, gazebos, and other forms of shade structures are encouraged along the major thoroughways and public spaces within the Specific Plan area.

Market umbrellas and awnings are particularly encouraged as they provide shade, soften hard building edges, and add color to the sidewalk area in front of shops and restaurants.

### 7.4.9 Water Features and Public Art

Water features and public art are streetscape elements that may be used to highlight public spaces and focal points along the streetscape. These components add an interesting characteristic to public spaces, and may be used as decorative features or interactive elements.

Water features and public art pieces should be located along viewsheds as accent features for public spaces and areas of high pedestrian activity.

These streetscape elements should not be placed where pedestrian traffic or building ingress and egress would be obstructed.

Water features and public art shall be well maintained to preserve their quality and appearance.

### 7.4.10 Miscellaneous Elements

Bollards should be located at intersections of local internal access streets and external periphery streets and thoroughfares, and in combination with handicapped/wheelchair access ramps to protect pedestrians from vehicular traffic.

Bollards should have a maximum spacing of four feet on center to prevent vehicular access, and chain loops between bollards should be avoided to minimize "trip and fall" hazards.

Bollards should be fabricated and finished to match surrounding street furnishing elements.

Bicycle racks should be provided at convenient locations throughout the Specific Plan area.

Tree grates should be uniform in size according to the tree hierarchy established in the landscape plan. For example, major trees along the primary thoroughways should share similarly sized tree grates, while trees clustered around a separate public space may share a different set of consistently sized tree grates.

Public trash receptacles should be on at least one corner of all internal street intersections.

Additional public trash receptacles should be adjacent to outdoor dining and parking areas.

## 7.5 Exterior Lighting System

### 7.5.1 Lighting Design

Lighting design throughout this Specific Plan area will highlight design and landscaping features, reinforce the community theme, and help ensure pedestrian and vehicular safety. Well-designed lighting fixtures also establish quality design. This program addresses lighting for roadways, parking areas, and pedestrian areas, as well as architectural and landscape lighting. General lighting design guidelines (illustrated on the exhibit, *Exterior Lighting Design Guidelines*) are summarized as follows.

- Lighting shall be designed to protect the beauty of the desert sky and shall respect the requirements and guidelines of the Palomar restricted nighttime light zone, as per Riverside County's Ordinance No. 655. Up-lighting is discouraged. IDA-approved Dark Sky-friendly fixtures are required.
- Warm white light is encouraged. Blinking, flashing, and oscillating lights are prohibited. Colored lights are not encouraged unless they contribute to the theming of commercial areas or establishments. Overly bright or glaring lights are prohibited.
- ***Light fixtures shall be consistent throughout the Specific Plan project, and should complement to the architectural styles of the area. The selected fixture type is Swiatlo Art Metal Latarie type "W" or equal. Pedestrianway mounting heights shall be 12 feet and parking lot mounting heights shall be 15 feet.***
- Standards and fixtures shall comply with local and state safety and illumination requirements.
- Exterior lighting shall be designed and located so as not to project off-site or onto adjacent uses. This is especially critical with neighboring residential uses.
- Outdoor lighting associated with the commercial uses shall not adversely impact the on-site or surrounding residential uses, but shall provide sufficient illumination for access and security purposes.
- Automatic timers should be programmed to maximize personal safety at night while conserving energy. They should be reset seasonally to match the flux of dusk and dawn.

### 7.5.2 Roadway Lighting

Lighting fixtures on roadways contribute greatly to the visual quality of a streetscape and improve vehicular and pedestrian safety, therefore:

- Stylized roadway lighting fixtures shall contribute to the community theme and establish a standard of quality for the entire development, and
- Lighting should be positioned to enhance safety at key points along the roadway, including intersections and crosswalks.

### 7.5.3 Parking Area Lighting

Lighting for parking areas is crucial to the personal safety of the user, and should be designed at a human scale of approximately 15 feet in height.

Parking area lighting should be designed using many small-scaled lights rather than fewer excessively tall lights.

Lighting fixtures should be a continuation of the theme of surrounding architectural styles, and in keeping with the quality of surrounding buildings.

### 7.5.4 Pedestrian Area Lighting

It is very important that pedestrian areas, including public spaces and pathways, are well lit for evening and night use to ensure safety of residents and visitors.

Lighting in these areas should be scaled for pedestrians and consistent with the surrounding architectural theme. If the lighting product is a lamppost style, the fixture should be not more than 12 feet high.

Where appropriate, pocket lighting may be incorporated in walls, stairs, or bollards.

### 7.5.5 Architectural Lighting

To accent walls, entries, and decorative architectural features, architectural lighting should be included into the design of buildings. Lighting should be used to subtly highlight architectural features, but not as an attempt to advertise the building to passing vehicles.

Architectural lighting should either be incorporated into design features of the building or concealed and flush with building walls.

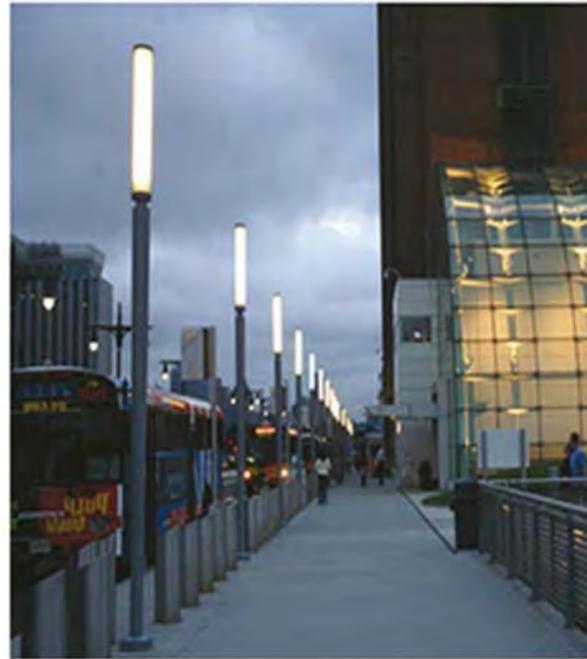
Architectural lighting should not be visible in daylight.

### 7.5.6 Landscape Lighting

Landscape lighting should be used to highlight important landscape features.

String lights—nonblinking with white bulbs—may be used to accent trees or trellises within public spaces to create a festive atmosphere at night.

Landscape lighting fixtures should be concealed or flush with grade unless their design plays a role in defining the character of the surrounding space.



# Exterior Lighting Design Guidelines





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

### 7.5.7 Outdoor Lighting Ordinance

The City of Desert Hot Springs shall prepare and adopt a new Outdoor Lighting Ordinance that responds to current and future environmental quality conditions in the community. Special emphasis needs to be placed on this Specific Plan area. The Mission Statement of the new Outdoor Lighting Ordinance should be:

***To preserve and protect the nighttime environment and the heritage dark skies through quality outdoor lighting design and luminaire selections for the community of Desert Hot Springs.***

The purpose of establishing a binding lighting ordinance that protects the unique night desert sky quality, and which is integral to the Planning and Building Departments' approval process for all projects within the community and this Specific Plan area, is to:

- Permit reasonable uses of outdoor lighting for nighttime safety, security and the enjoyment of architectural and landscape illumination while preserving the ambiance of the night.
- Curtail and reverse any degradation of the nighttime visual environment and the night sky.
- Minimize glare and obtrusive light by limiting outdoor lighting that is misdirected, excessive, or unnecessary.
- Conserve energy and other resources to the greatest extent possible.
- Help protect the natural environment from the damaging effects of night lighting.

### 7.5.8 Outdoor Lighting Ordinance Requirements

Within this ordinance, specific requirements are to be established for the following criteria:

- Approved lamp sources and mounting height requirements
- Lamp-source shielding requirements
- Maximum lamp wattage requirements
- Minimum footcandle requirements
- Minimum to maximum illumination ratios
- Average to minimum illumination ratios
- Glare control requirements
- Off-site maximum footcandle requirements
- Landscape lighting lamp and wattage requirements

### 7.5.9 Luminaire Styles

The intent of defining the approvable luminaire style(s) in the lighting ordinance is to ensure that each project building and landscape design is reflected in the outdoor lighting systems.

- Gateway entry and street luminaires shall be distinctive and shall be used at all major intersections from Interstate 10 and Highway 62 to the downtown area.
- Gateway luminaires shall have provisions for the attachment of banners and/or City identification emblems.
- Gateway luminaires shall utilize the Earth, Air, Water, or Vortex color palette when installed within that zone.
- Parking lot and area-lighting luminaires shall reflect and complement the distinctive architectural style of the adjacent building(s). ***The use of generic "shoe box" lighting fixtures is strongly discouraged.***
- Project pedestrian seating areas and walkways shall be illuminated with pedestrian scaled post lighting and/or bollard lighting fixtures that complement the area landscape and architectural design.

### 7.5.10 Lamp Sources

A limited palette of lamp sources shall be employed as follows:

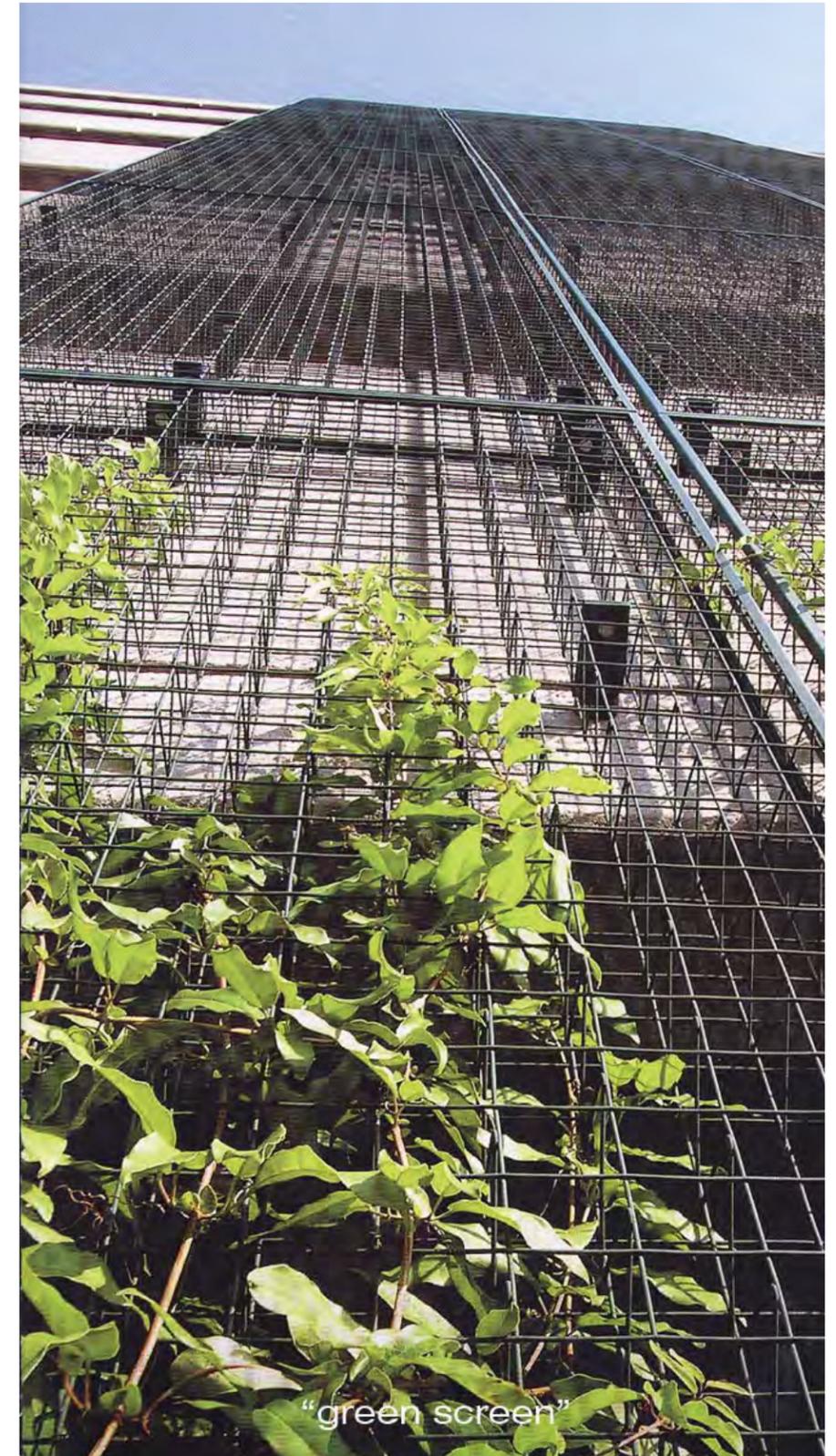
- High-pressure sodium (HPS) for all parking lot and area lighting luminaires
- HPS and metal halide (MH) lamps for all pedestrian-scaled luminaires
- Low-wattage HPS and MH for pedestrian-scaled bollard luminaires
- Low-wattage compact fluorescent, par metal halide and low voltage amp sources for landscape luminaires

### 7.5.11 Selected Downtown Area Fixture Type

***As previously discussed within this section, light fixtures shall be consistent throughout the Specific Plan project area, and should be complementary to the architectural styles of the area.***

***Therefore, the selected fixture type is Swiatlo Art Metal Latarie type "W" or equal. Pedestrianway mounting heights shall be 12 feet and parking lot mounting heights shall be 15 feet. The color of these fixtures should be Turquoise.***

***The unique wave profile fixture design and turquoise color are specified as an opportunity to celebrate the importance of water to the Desert Hot Springs design-themed approach. This opportunity should not be compromised at any location within the Specific Plan area.***







# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

## 7.6 Signage System

### 7.6.1 Signage Design

Signage identifies places, provides direction, and advertises businesses. Along with communicating information, signage should add to the character of the community and reinforce a sense of place. These guidelines address the general design of Vortex, including primary entrance signs, secondary entrance signs, and individual project signs.

In addition to these guidelines, a sign program shall be required on a project-by-project basis. The sign program will identify the hierarchy of signs with a common theme, as well as specifying the signage location and style. These sign programs shall be consistent and complementary within the Specific Plan. General signage system design guidelines are summarized as follows:

- Signs shall consist of high quality materials and color palettes that reflect the architectural themes of this Specific Plan project area. The designs should also complement the architecture of the surrounding environment.
- The design of all signage within the project should be consistent and complementary.
- Sign programs shall respect the following signage hierarchy:
  - Primary project entrance signage
  - Secondary project entrance signage
  - Individual project signs
- Internally illuminated signs are discouraged. Externally illuminated signs or backlighting of individual sign letters should be the standard.
- The use of pole signs, roof signs, temporary lettering on windows, and blinking/flashing signs are prohibited. The use of temporary signs is discouraged, with the exception of approved “grand opening” banners.
- The use of natural stone or concrete as a base material is encouraged.
- The location and placement of signs should not obstruct pedestrian or vehicular movement.

### 7.6.2 Individual Signage

Building signage shall be one sided, secured to building façade, and have a maximum area of 1.0 square foot per linear foot of tenant street frontage, up to a total of 50 square feet. In instances where a building has the principal entrance on a side façade, the side façade may be counted as street frontage in calculating maximum sign area. Maximum signage heights shall be as follows:

- Primary project entrance signage: 15 feet
- Secondary project entrance signage: 10 feet

### 7.6.3 Monument Entry Signs

Refer to the following signage design graphic, which illustrates the typical Boulevard district monument sign. The desert heritage of the site is to be expressed through handcrafted signs using a large river rock in a simple base that frames a sandblasted concrete or HDU sign foam element stained in a natural, desert tone. The lettering on the sign component is to be routed and recessed with either a channel or v-groove cut. The recessed letters are to be faux finished to match the patina of nearby decorative lighting fixtures, trash receptacles, and bollards.

### 7.6.4 Retail Shop Signs

The primary signage program for retail shop and restaurant signs in the Specific Plan Area shall also incorporate custom designed, handcrafted signs fabricated from sandblasted and stained HDU sign foam with a natural finish. The lettering and graphics on each sign are to be recessed and painted with colorful enamels. A limited color palette—a neutral “stained” earth tone background color plus three enamel accent colors on the lettering and graphics—will be permitted on a single sign.

All retail store signs are to be lighted at night by external “goose neck” or similar fixtures mounted separately on the building side or fascia and directed toward the sign. The light source will present a warm, incandescent-appearing glow that does not shine directly into the eyes of nearby pedestrians or drivers.

Retail shop signs are to be limited to two primary types: 1) main signs and 2) pedestrian convenience signs. Both sign types are to follow the overall design standards previously summarized for retail shop signs.

#### Main Signs

Main signs are scaled and oriented to vehicular traffic on Palm and Pierson Boulevards. They are to be mounted parallel to the street on the fascia or building side directly above the main customer entrance to the shop or restaurant. Individual letters may be used in lieu of a solid sign board background where this is style of sign is architecturally compatible with the background building. Main Signs should be articulated from the building face by a 1” space between the face of building or fascia and the back of sign (either sign board or individual letters).

Each retail shop or restaurant is to be allowed one main sign with a maximum sign face area of one square foot of sign area per foot of shop or restaurant street frontage between demising walls. Where a corner location exists, two main signs are allowed for that business, one main sign for each street frontage. In the case of individual letters, the building

face directly behind the articulated letters is considered to be the sign face and the same restrictions apply.

#### Pedestrian Convenience Signs

Each shop or restaurant is allowed two pedestrian convenience signs. These are often referred to as blade signs because they hang vertical to the building face and the sidewalk. They are two-sided, and are therefore oriented to pedestrian traffic along the street facing elevation and to the adjacent parking court on the rear elevation. The maximum size of each pedestrian convenience sign is to be four square feet in area, and this sign is to be two-sided.

#### Awning and Storefront Glass Signs

In addition to the main signs and pedestrian convenience signs, each business may apply for additional individual letter signs mounted directly on the fascias of awnings or on storefront glass areas along the ground floor. In the case of awning fascia signs, the individually applied letters shall be desert tan or white and a maximum height of six inches. As an alternative to the awning signs, individual letters may be applied to storefront glass areas. In this application, the individual letters shall be a maximum height of four inches and shall be limited to the lowest quarter of the specific glass area where this type of sign is to be applied. Either of these supplementary signage elements requires a discretionary approval process; the approval is to be for one or the other sign type, not both.

### 7.6.5 Signage System Design Guidelines

*The major thematic point made in the following exhibit, Signage System Design Guidelines, is that a creative and successful signage system in a destination resort community like Desert Hot Springs should have a fresh and colorful look. Architecturally integrated signage is also very important as a means to highlight and accent indigenous DesertScape materials and colors.*

*Downtown Desert Hot Springs should become renowned for its colorful, creative, and artistic signage program; that will help contrast this area with other Coachella Valley communities, who have taken a more conservative, utilitarian, and monochromatic approach to signage.*





# Signage System Design Guidelines



# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

## 7.7 Public Art Program

### 7.7.1 Theming of the Program

Desert Hot Springs has a unique opportunity to frame a Public Art Program theme for its downtown Vortex area as a distinct output of this Specific Plan. Using the broader bioclimatic and environmental theme as a focus, this plan proposes the following thematic responses to the “earth, air, fire and water” components of the desert environment.

### 7.7.2 Solar Energy

Solar energy, an overhead fire, can be expressed through the creative interaction of solar energy collection panels with sculptural and architectural compositions, as illustrated in this section (see *Public Art Program Theme*). Also, horizontal and vertical sun dial compositions can function dramatically within colorful pavement and wall graphics. An accurate and working sun dial could be incorporated within a public plaza to illustrate the sun’s movement across the desert sky. A colorful wall mural could also communicate the importance of this element of the Desert Hot Springs microclimate as a seasonally variable form-giver for environmentally relevant design statements. Shadow patterns cast by trellises can interact dynamically with static artwork on adjacent pavement or wall surfaces if the interactive designs are well conceived according to season.

### 7.7.3 Wind Energy

Wind energy is one of the major environmental influences in the Desert Hot Springs area, and can be creatively capitalized in a locally relevant public art program. In this regard, the use of sculptural windmill features is highly encouraged, as illustrated in this section of the Specific Plan. Artists’ studios and galleries throughout the Southwest feature a high quality array of sculptural and functional windmills, wind chimes, and wind speed/direction indicators that can become integral elements of a targeted public art program. Perhaps an “energy park” in downtown could combine an artistic wind farm statement with other related elements in a dynamic and ever-changing expression of this natural feature of the local environment.

### 7.7.4 Geothermal Energy

A very important defining resource of Desert Hot Springs is its supply of clean underground hot water and geothermal energy. This element defines Desert Hot Springs as an internationally recognized destination for health and wellness resorts. This underground fire can be celebrated artistically through pavement patterns and wall murals. Other more intricate and elaborate statements can be made through light sculptures or eternal-flame pieces, as illustrated in this section of the plan.

### 7.7.5 Water

The natural cool water aquifer below Desert Hot Springs has traditionally been one of the cleanest sources of drinking water locally, regionally, and

even nationally. The community can and should celebrate this unique resource through its public art program. Water in the desert is the life blood of successful community development, and Desert Hot Springs is uniquely blessed in this regard. Therefore, a series of water features can be incorporated into public art pieces in public plazas and courtyards. Water should always be used in an environmentally sensitive manner through the use of small waterfall elements, drainage channels, passive pools, and irrigation-themed elements. Vertical sprays of water should be avoided to reduce evaporation of this valuable resource. Wall murals and pavement patterns can illustrate the hydrologic cycle of water in the desert environment.

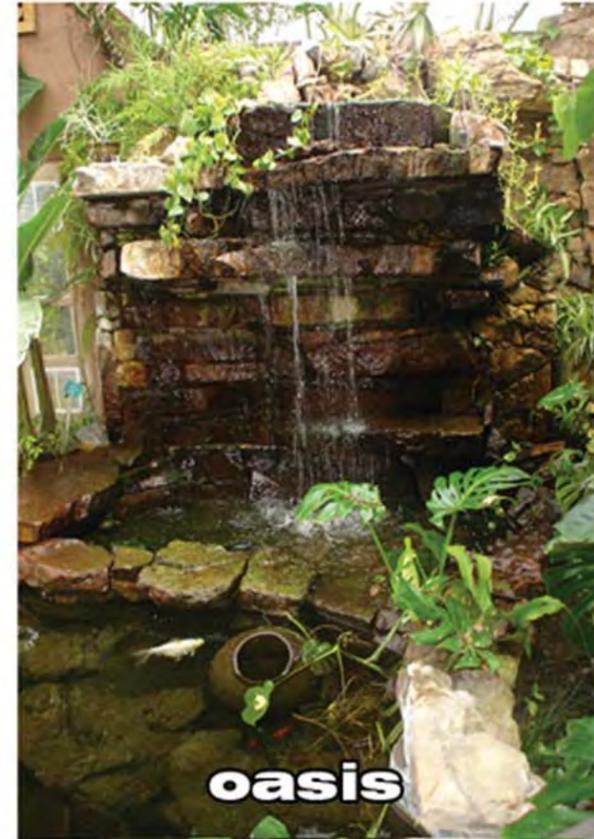
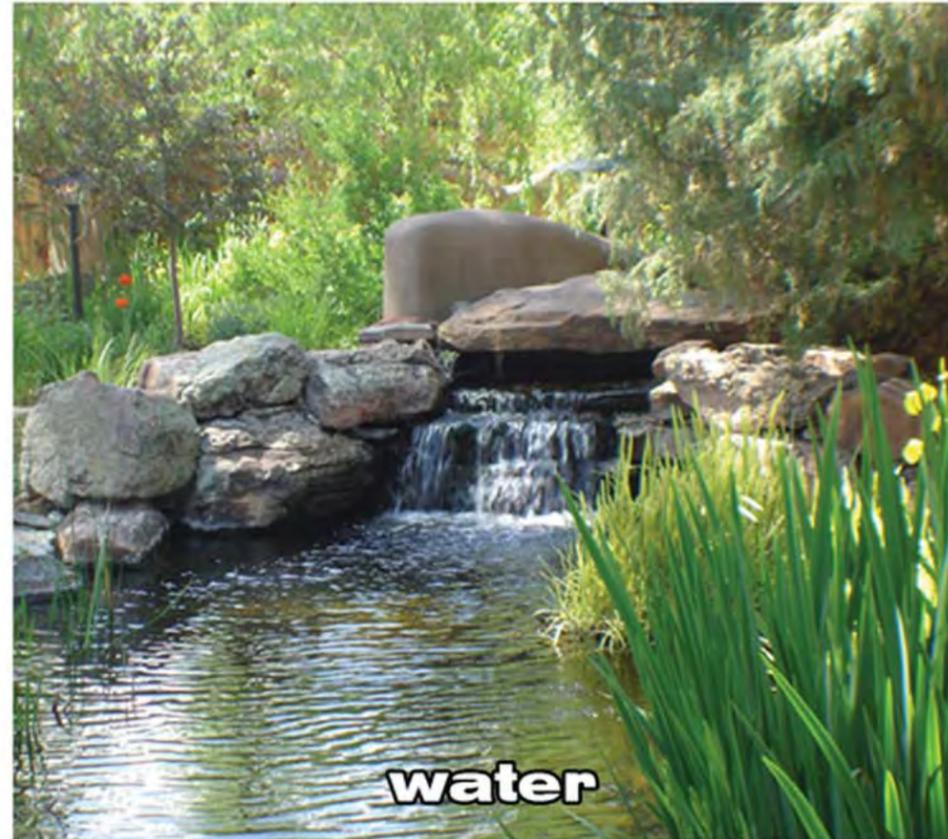
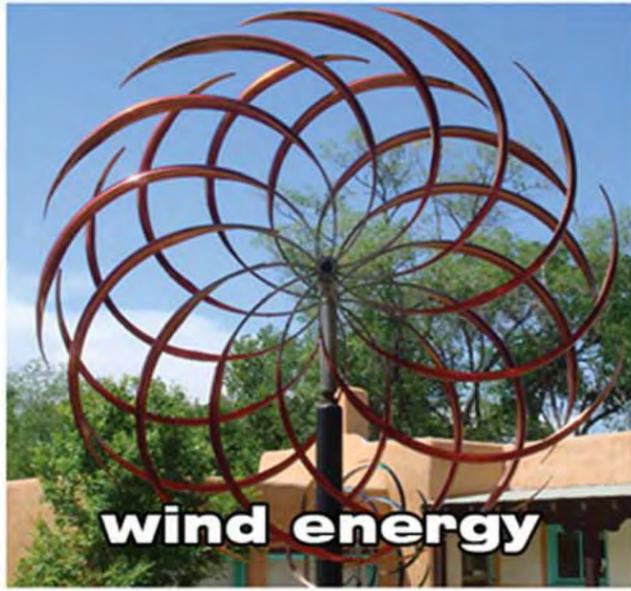
### 7.7.6 Oasis

The creation of a series of interior “oasis courtyards” is a unique and functional opportunity in Desert Hot Springs that can combine the artistic use of water with earth sculpture and plant material compositions. The oasis in the desert is a powerful environmental theme with practical consequences in a resort-oriented community. The romantic feel and history of the protective oasis is a natural icon for the health and wellness industry. This type of setting can also incorporate water gathering and storage pottery elements. The artistic use of water storage towers should be considered where natural elevation and topography will permit.

### 7.7.7 Vortex

In the context of the City of Desert Hot Springs, the term “vortex” refers to a location where several natural forms of energy converge. By this definition, downtown Desert Hot Springs certainly qualifies as an energy vortex. This unique feature of the community should be expressed in a public art program. The exhibit shows a bronze sculptural piece that symbolized this natural phenomenon. The illustrated form rises phoenix-like as a flame from below the desert floor, is altered by the forces of wind, and rises majestically into the sun-drenched desert sky. This type of vertical piece and should be placed centrally in downtown clearly expresses the earth, air, fire, and water theme in a dramatic manner.







## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

### 7.8 Palm and Pierson Boulevards

#### 7.8.1 Boulevard Improvement Theme

Palm and Pierson Boulevards form the north-south and east-west axes for development through the heart of the Specific Plan area. Both are landscaped boulevard street sections with a center median. The Pierson and Palm intersection is the Main-at-Main central location in the community and within the Specific Plan area. Thus, these boulevards and their intersection represent the symbolic and economic development heart of downtown, as well as of the City of Desert Hot Springs.

#### 7.8.2 Pierson at Palm Intersection

This major intersection is conceived as a central landmark within the community and the Specific Plan area. It is proposed as a fully signalized intersection with a purely pedestrian phase in the signal sequence program that will allow pedestrians to cross in any direction, including diagonally. During this phase, all vehicular traffic will be stopped in both directions. This is referred to as a “scramble intersection” and acknowledges the prominence of pedestrian traffic in the downtown area. It will also function as a traffic-calming device in the downtown area.

As an illustrated concept, a circular, elevated ring structure defines the “central place” function of the intersection, and is to be fabricated out of bent steel pipe sections. The ring structure is to be elevated fourteen feet above the street surface to allow service trucks and emergency vehicles to safely pass underneath. Further, it should be powder coated in a satin stainless steel color and patina and should house variable-color neon accent lighting, which will form a seasonally themed, indirect “halo” effect around the “central place” at night. The ring structure should be supported by precast concrete columns, as illustrated in the following exhibit.

This “central place” intersection should also include themed street lighting, landscaped median sections, and bollards to define pedestrian crosswalks in a dramatic piazza statement. It should become the symbolic and functional focus of the community, emphasizing the singular identity and energized economic activity of downtown Desert Hot Springs.

#### 7.8.3 Pierson and Palm Boulevard Sections

Both of these boulevards are classified as four-lane principal traffic movement Arterials in the Desert Hot Springs General Plan. Both also have right-of-way widths of 100 feet, which is considered minimal for a median-divided boulevard with on-street curbside parking.

The following exhibit, *Palm and Pierson Boulevards*, shows a typical as well as a redevelopment cross-section for these boulevards. The typical section provides two driving lanes, each 11 feet wide plus an 8-foot parallel parking lane on one or both sides of the 10-foot landscaped median. A 15-foot-

wide sidewalk is provided along the commercial frontage for pedestrian access and limited outdoor dining area opportunities.

The alternate redevelopment section allows a single 20-foot-wide combination traffic movement and parking access lane plus a 16-foot-wide diagonal parking bay (45 degree) on one or both sides of the landscaped median. This allows vehicles to park while through-traffic continues at reduced speeds, instead of being stopped by other vehicles parking. In this instance, the required 15-foot sidewalk can only be provided through an additional 6-foot-wide sidewalk access easement. Thus, this section would yield more on-street parking spaces than the typical section and can best be achieved within redevelopment projects that are not encumbered by existing buildings fronting the right-of-way.

#### 7.8.4 Downtown Secondary Road Sections

West Drive, Mesquite Avenue, and Cholla Drive in the north south direction and Second Street and Buena Vista Avenue in the east west direction form the edges of the Specific Plan area and serve as Secondary Roads. These will also function as relievers for the boulevard traffic flow when a variety of traffic-calming design elements are introduced into downtown. These streets have right-of-way widths of 80 feet which will allow a landscaped median but will not permit on-street curbside parallel parking spaces in order to provide an adequate width of landscaped buffers and sidewalks.

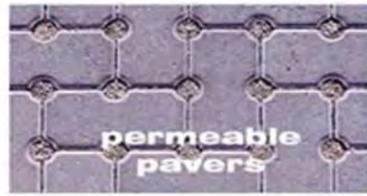
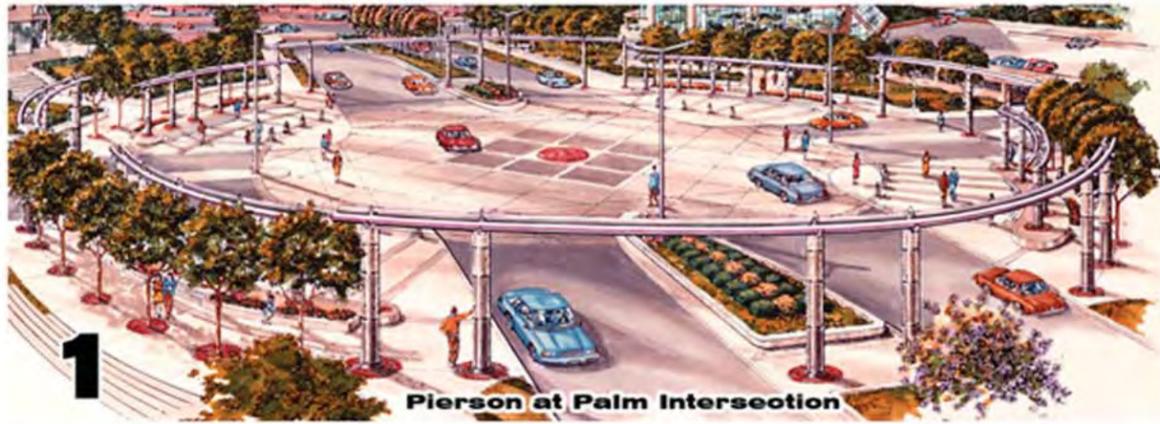
The proposed street cross-section is to include two 11-foot-wide driving lanes in each direction, totaling 44 feet in overall dimension. With the inclusion of a 10-foot landscaped median, 13 feet on each side of the street is allowed for a combined landscaped buffer and pedestrian trail system. The elimination of on-street parking will also allow these Secondary Roads to operate at higher traffic movement efficiencies while acting as reliever streets to complement and augment the capacities of Pierson and Palm Boulevards.

#### 7.8.5 Streetscape Landscaping Theme

Rather than identify a street tree and landscaping palette for each street type, as typically done in other communities, this Specific Plan has specified a single DesertScape Palette that is to be applied uniformly to all streets, parking areas, and other public spaces in the downtown area. This area-wide “landscape overlay” will expand the impact of landscaping beyond the traditional limits of a hierarchy of street right-of-way corridors.

Thus, landscaping along Palm and Pierson Boulevards will be consistent with that along West Drive, Mesquite Avenue, Cholla Drive, Second Street, and Buena Vista Avenue, creating a stronger visual cohesiveness throughout downtown and helping mitigate the comparative narrowness of existing street rights-of-way through the area.





1

Pierson at Palm Intersection

architectural asphalt

permeable pavers

light

wind

vortex

outdoor dining courts and terraces with live entertainment, lush landscaping and thematic lighting located at street intersection pop-outs and mid-block, with encroachment licenses and insurance

system of mid-block crossings, event courts and pedestrianways linking downtown anchors with retail and restaurant locations



fan palm

canary island date palm

palo verde

seasonal & special event banners

crappé myrtle

chinese pistache

canopy with micromist

uplighting on trees

75% of street front exterior walls to be storefront displays in downtown core & mixed use areas

2

15' sidewalk 8' parking lane (2)-11' driving lanes 10' median 20' driving lane 16' diagonal parking bay 15' sidewalk (requires additional 6' sidewalk easement)

Typical Downtown Boulevard Section | Alternate Redevelopment Boulevard Section

Palm and Pierson Boulevards





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

### 7.9 Vortex Gateway Intersections

#### 7.9.1 Purpose of Gateways

This Specific Plan identifies four Vortex Gateway Intersections that mark the major entrances to the downtown:

- South Gateway: Palm Boulevard at Buena Vista Avenue
- North Gateway: Palm Boulevard at Second Street
- East Gateway: Pierson Boulevard at Mesquite Avenue
- West Gateway: Pierson Boulevard at West Drive

The gateways create a dramatic sense of arrival to downtown and reinforce other elements of the unique place-making design theme presented throughout this plan.

#### 7.9.2 Gateway Intersection Plan

The typical gateway intersection, as illustrated in the exhibit, *Vortex Gateway Intersections*, is a fully signalized intersection with left turn pockets included in all landscaped center medians that meet at the intersection. A circular “pedestrian zone” is clearly identified in the street surface through the use of contrasting pavement materials and patterns provide ample and safe setbacks for vehicles waiting to move through the intersection. This circular area also defines adequate site line setbacks for vertical elements and landscaping at the four corners of each intersection. Accessibility requirements are met through the integration of pedestrian ramp sections at each corner of the intersection.

The paving materials utilized within each gateway intersection can include a mixture of colored and scored or stamped concrete, interlocking concrete pavers, and colored architectural asphalt. Pedestrian crosswalk areas should be clearly identified through the use of color, material, and texture, with pedestrian areas using a smooth surface that is “user friendly” for pedestrians and other nonmotorized traffic.

Streetscape landscaping at these four locations should emphasize the use of vertically impressive specimen Skyline and Signature trees, as illustrated on the DesertScape Design Palette exhibit. These should be complemented with Full Shade and Courtyard trees along pedestrian walkways.

#### 7.9.3 Gateway Arches

The gateway arch element is intended to create a strong sense of arrival and identity for downtown Desert Hot Springs patrons, residents, and visitors. The Vortex Gateway Intersection conceptual exhibit illustrates a possible structural steel truss with a 95-foot clear horizontal span and a minimum 14-foot vertical clearance. This gateway crosses the intersection diagonally rather than at a 90 degree angle. This innovative and unconventional

approach would contrast with more conventional gateway arches in other communities. The basic reasons for this unusual diagonal orientation are:

- it is in keeping with general orientation of Vortex Specific Plan to the northwest southeast
- when viewed from the north and east, the diagonal arch frames a view of Mt. San Jacinto at each of the four identified locations
- when viewed from the south and west, each arch frames a direct view of the base of the Little San Bernardino Mountains at each of the four identified locations
- both east west and north south intersecting streets are treated equally, thus emphasizing the two-dimensional street grid rather than a one-dimensional linear corridor in either direction
- a single, four-sided turning movement traffic signal can be hung from the midpoint of the arch in lieu of four separate turning movement signals
- the unusual orientation of the arch has added value as a traffic-calming mechanism, helping slow vehicular traffic as it enters the downtown area
- when viewed from any angle, either as a pedestrian or from within a vehicle, this element clearly identifies the creative and individualistic spirit that has historically characterized the residents and visitors of Desert Hot Springs

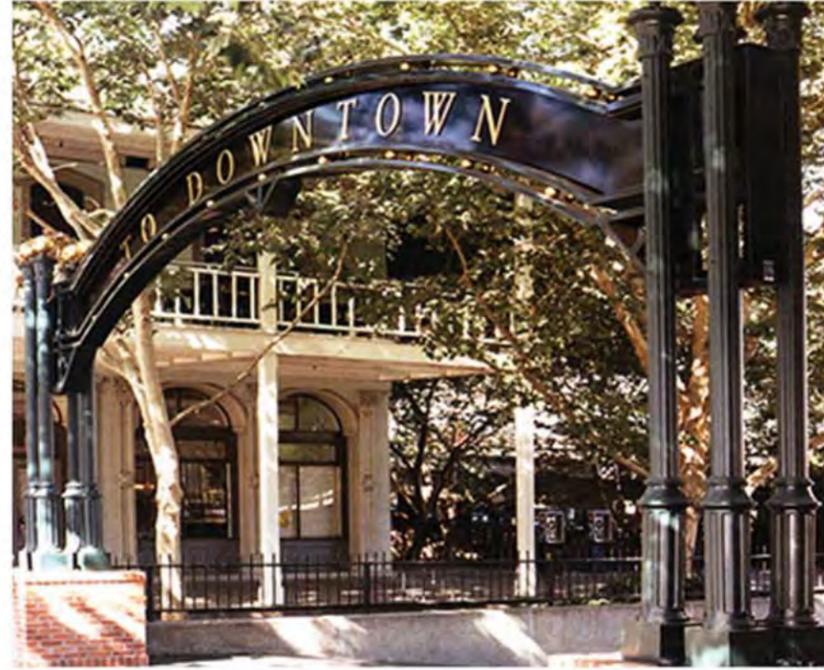
Reinforced concrete pylons rise diagonally out of the ground plane to support the arch and complete the gateway form. They also provide opportunities to integrate traffic control signals for straight through-movements in either direction.

#### 7.9.4 Gateway Streetscape Accessories

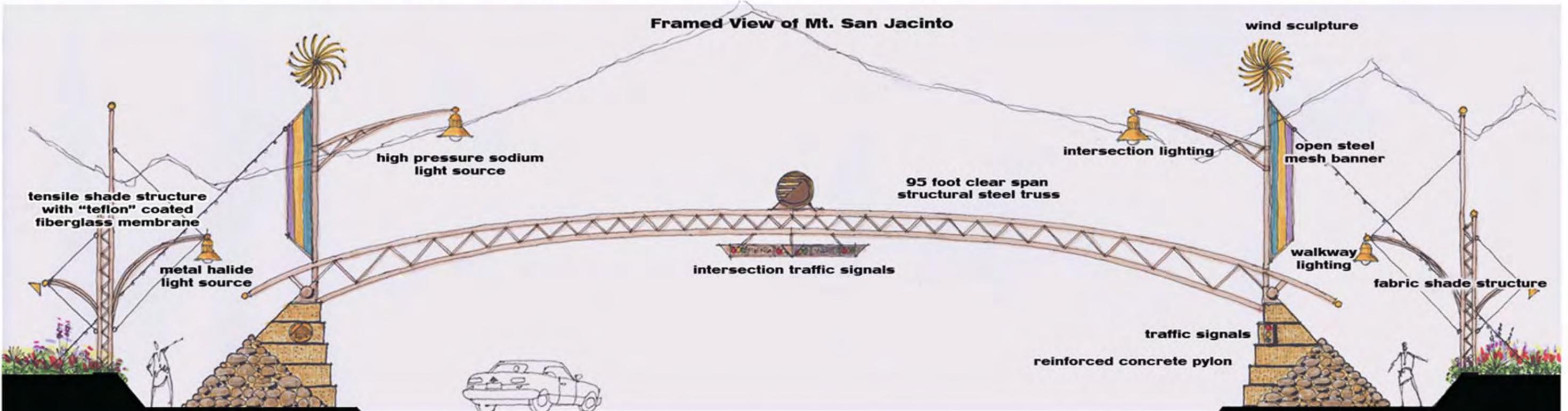
Each gateway arch also presents multiple opportunities to fully integrate streetscape furnishings and accessories, such as: intersection/street lighting (high-pressure sodium); pedestrian walkway lighting (metal halide); architectural accent uplighting for the arch and associated landscaping; decorative City logo elements and street name identification signs; fabric shade structures; wind sculptures as public art elements; and open steel-mesh decorative banners to resist wind forces while providing a low-maintenance color accent to the gateway.

In summary, gateway intersections can become another powerful signature design element that clearly distinguishes Desert Hot Springs as a unique destination resort community. The additional unit cost increment in comparison to a more conventional approach should be viewed as an investment in the dynamic future marketing of the community.





**Gateway Intersection Plan**



**Gateway Arch Southwest Elevation**

**Vortex Gateway Intersections**





# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

## 7.10 Central Plaza and Vortex Park

### Place Making Focus in Downtown

This Specific Plan conceptualizes a *Central Plaza and Vortex Park* (see exhibit) located just north of the previously discussed scramble intersection at Pierson and Palm. This intersection identifies a central place that articulates vehicular and pedestrian traffic movements. The adjacent central plaza frames a complementary central activity space for community events and attractions. Within this framework, several elements are intended to contribute to the vitality and functionality of the outdoor space.

### 7.10.1 Interactive Water Feature and Outdoor Amphitheater

A combination interactive water feature and outdoor amphitheater should anchor the multipurpose and multidimensional central plaza. This feature can be partially drained for concerts and other special events. Water will normally course into the water feature in gentle sheet patterns and small waterfalls while operations avoid the spraying of water into the air in order to minimize evaporation.

A sculptural "wind farm" could be positioned on a grid pattern within the water feature as a dynamic and functional work of public art. Thus, an interactive and distinctive attraction will be the activity focus of downtown Desert Hot Springs. It will also serve to visually define the community as a destination resort community for the health-and-wellness industry, as well as an energy "vortex".

### 7.10.2 Central Plaza

A landscaped central plaza will wrap around the interactive water feature and outdoor amphitheater, and will include the following components:

- an outdoor stage with a fabric shade structure for live concerts and plays at the amphitheater
- a freestanding panorama tower that offers unobstructed views and vistas of the surrounding mountains and desert
- retail and restaurant kiosk structures to provide for the sale of specialty foods, beverages, and themed memorabilia to patrons of the downtown
- an outdoor farmers' market and festival marketplace with live entertainment and special promotional and community events
- a formal DesertScape demonstration garden with specimen Chinese pistache trees for shade and seasonal color
- fabric shade structures and micromist outdoor cooling systems for the year-round comfort of patrons

- a customized sculptural aqueduct and waterfall feature spanning Palm Boulevard that abstractly expresses the mechanics and materials of the irrigation industry in the desert
- an opportunity pad site for a Vortex sculptural statement to be implemented through a public art program

As envisioned, this central plaza will provide a central activity focus to Downtown Desert Hot Springs that is unique to Coachella Valley and elsewhere. The thematic emphasis on "earth, air, fire and water" is thus carried throughout this dramatic place-making statement in the heart of downtown.

### 7.10.3 Downtown Park

A proposed downtown park west of the central plaza in a Vortex festival park is to include:

- a children's playground for residents, visitors, and guests
- a directly adjacent San Andreas Trail and DesertScape Garden for educational programs relating to "living with the desert" and for the use of all ages of residents, visitors, and guests
- a nearby Vortex festival park for major special events too large or too high in maintenance for the central plaza

This feature will help attract people of all ages to the downtown community as a means to build pedestrian traffic counts and to attract and retain retail and restaurant patrons for longer periods of time in the immediate area.

This section of the Specific Plan is intended to help create a combined public/private sector initiative for a central activity and symbolic visual focus in downtown that will help attract significant private sector redevelopment and revitalization investments in the future. As the central plaza and Vortex festival park improvements are implemented and become a local and regional attraction for major events and celebrations, this feature will function as a "nonretail anchor" for the ultimate revitalization of downtown and the entire community.





**fabric shade structures**



**interactive water feature and outdoor amphitheater**

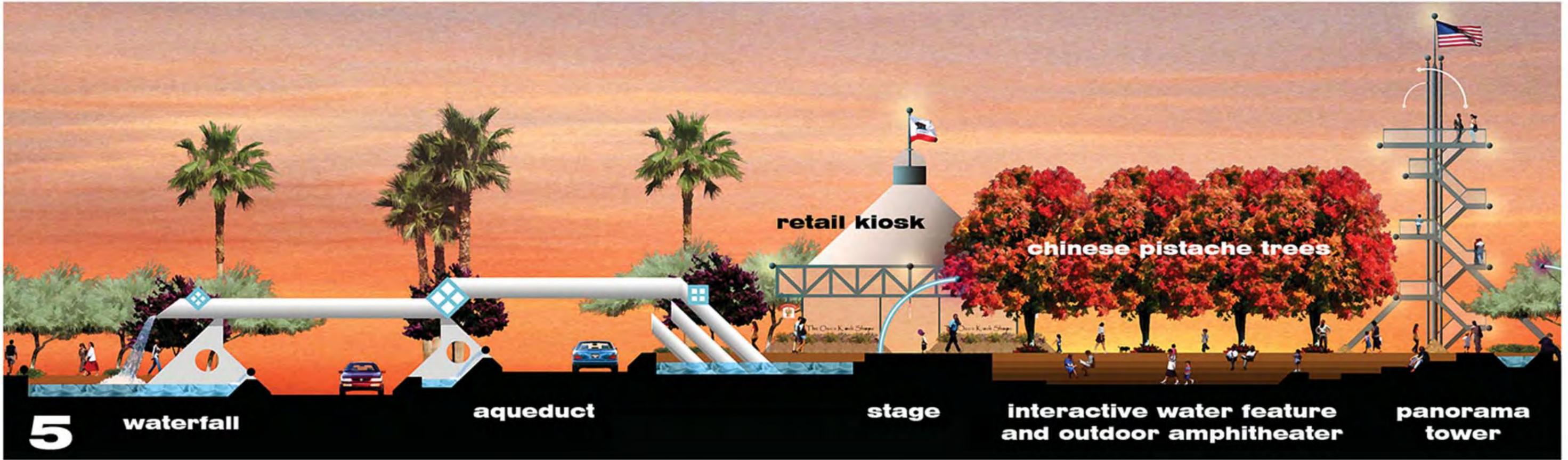


fabrio shade structure

**3**

**4**

**Downtown Park**



**retail kiosk**

**chinese pistache trees**

**5**

**waterfall**

**aqueduct**

**stage**

**interactive water feature and outdoor amphitheater**

**panorama tower**

**Central Plaza and Vortex Park**



# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

## 7.1.1 Traffic-Calming System

### 7.11.1 Traffic-Calming System Objective

The primary objective of a systematic traffic-calming program in downtown Desert Hot Springs is to reduce through vehicular traffic speeds and volumes while encouraging destination-oriented vehicular trips to the downtown area.

This is desired in order to:

- enhance the quality and safety of pedestrians' shopping, living, and entertainment experience in the area and thus
- help promote the economic vitality of downtown businesses.

Desert Hot Springs has developed as a traditional strip commercial community, and this trend continues throughout the community and in the downtown area. A comprehensive traffic-calming program is warranted to help change downtown into a planned destination center with a distinctive sense of place. This can be encouraged through the application of several relevant design features.

### 7.11.2 Design Features

A number of design features have been strategically applied in this Specific Plan. These features, illustrated in the following *Traffic Calming Design Features* exhibit, include but are not limited to:

- Gateway Arch Intersections
- Roundabout Intersections
- Pierson at Palm Boulevard Scramble Intersection
- On-Street Parking Lanes and Bays (diagonal and parallel)
- Narrowed Widths of Traffic Lanes to Accepted Minimums (11' 0")
- Landscaped Curb Pop-outs and Islands
- Landscaped Boulevard Center Median
- Signalized Intersections and Midblock Pedestrian Crosswalks

By increasing the perception of "friction" to traffic flow along Pierson and Palm Boulevards through the application of the above traffic-calming design features, and by providing a parallel system of Secondary Roads to function as relievers for nondestination traffic volumes, the creation of a pedestrian-friendly downtown Desert Hot Springs is very possible.

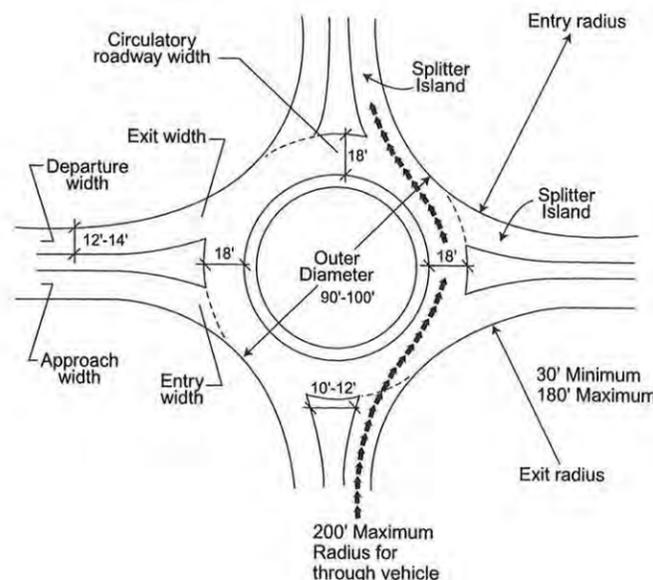
### 7.11.3 Funding and Implementation

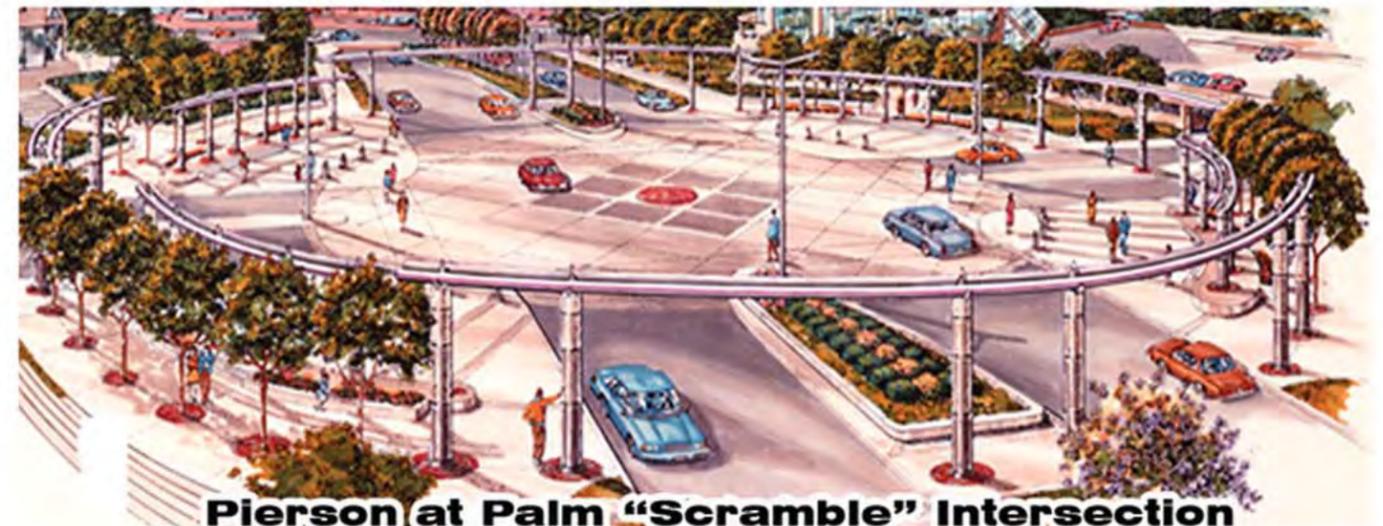
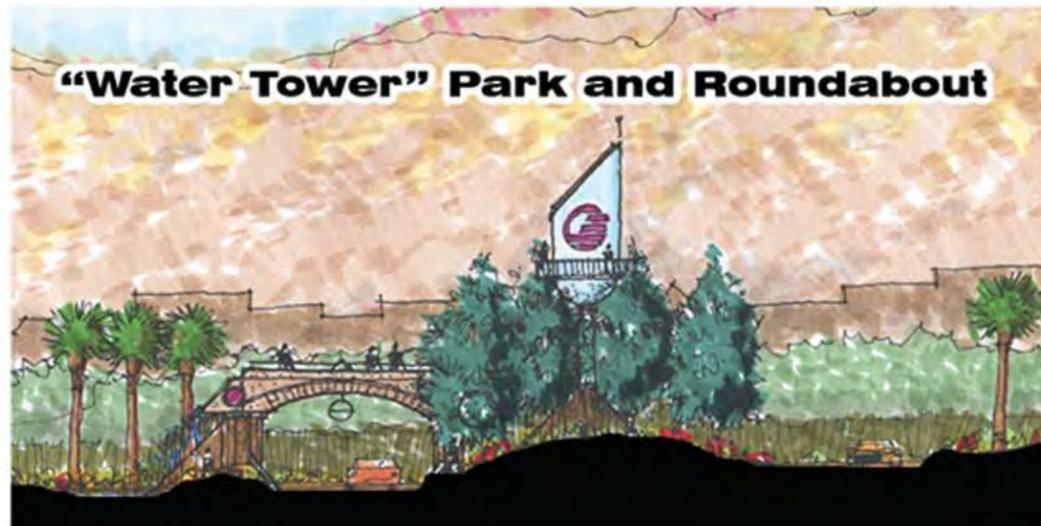
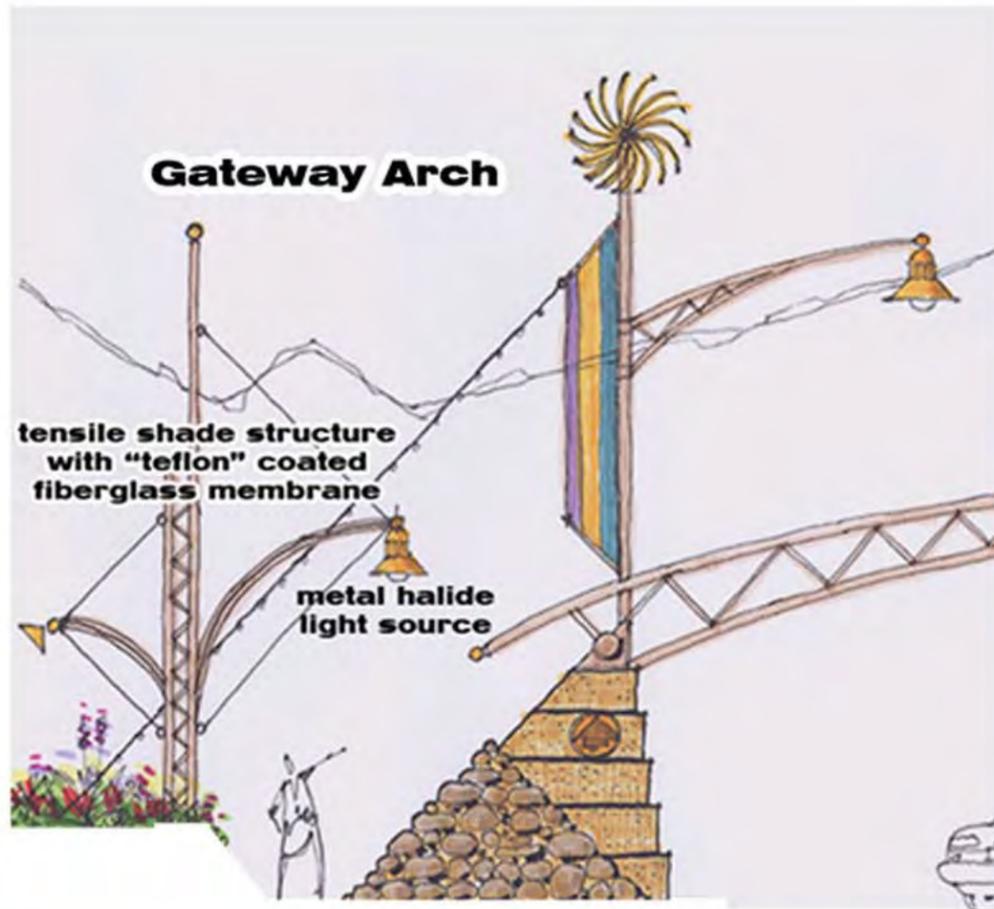
The implementation of this traffic-calming system is obviously reliant on funding by the City/RDA within a 15-year capital improvement program. By phasing these improvements on an annual basis, Desert Hot Springs residents and visitors can adjust to incremental changes. This strategy is summarized in Section 10.2 of this Specific Plan, under the general topic of Implementation Measures and the specific discussion of Capital Improvement Program.

In addition, several of the listed traffic-calming design features can be incorporated into larger downtown redevelopment projects as off-site improvements. For example, on-street parking credits could be applied to the calculated parking requirements of a directly adjacent redevelopment project in exchange for that project funding or actually constructing diagonal on-street parking bays and related landscaped curb pop-outs and islands to shelter that parking from oncoming traffic. A credit of 0.5 parking space credit for each on-street space thus realized is an equitable plan that provides a direct benefit to the developer while recognizing the general public's parking needs in the downtown. Street intersection and mid-block pedestrian crossings and related signalization are also examples of off-sites that are typically applied to larger redevelopment projects.

For commercial area revitalization projects that involve several adjoining property owners renovating existing buildings in combination with new construction in adaptive reuse projects, the costs of directly beneficial traffic-calming design features can be shared on a pro rata cost basis. Also "Adopt-a—" programs are available for voluntary participation by local or regional private sector sponsors and organizations.

The implementation of a comprehensive and systematic traffic-calming program in downtown Desert Hot Springs is quite possibly the most significant component of a phased capital improvement program in terms of generating private sector investment in significant economic revitalization and redevelopment within this Specific Plan area. It also is a key component of a physical design and development program that will uniquely define downtown Desert Hot Springs as a regional destination for health-and-wellness resort and related mixed-use development.





**Traffic Calming Design Features**



## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

### 7.12 Vehicle Parking System

#### 7.12.1 Environmental Impacts of Surface Parking

Traditional asphalt-surfaced vehicle parking lots present unique problems in the desert environment due to their tendency to attract, collect, store, and intensely radiate heat. This is particularly a problem during the summer and fall/spring “shoulder” seasons. A primary site planning objective in this regard is to minimize the size of unsheltered surface parking lots to the extent possible while providing an adequate supply of convenient vehicular parking for patrons of downtown businesses and residents of downtown housing units. In addition, the following measures need to be applied to deal adequately with this environmental reality:

- provide generous, specimen canopy tree spacing at approximately one tree per four parking spaces for short-term and mid-term parking spaces (up to two hours)
- provide trellis and similar types of shade structures for long-term parking spaces such as for employees and residents (three to eight hours)
- provide attractive, sheltered “path of travel” pedestrian walkways from parking bays to adjacent retail or residential uses
- provide landscaped buffer areas next to buildings to reduce the amount of heat gain into the buildings due to reflected heat from the parking surface
- create smaller parking courts and plazas that are well lighted and landscaped, rather than large, hot parking fields prevalent in conventional shopping centers
- consider the use of alternate paving materials, such as permeable interlocking concrete paving stones when budget will permit
- apply shared-use parking standards to balance the parking needs of day peak and evening peak uses to reduce the total number of parking spaces provided
- consider the use of tuck-under covered parking when the existing slope approximates 4 to 6 percent
- consider the application of structured parking for higher density mixed-use developments when budget will permit

As an economic development-related mitigation measure, downtown Desert Hot Springs should also consider encouraging evening events and promotions, particularly during the summer and fall/spring shoulder seasons, as a means to soften the impact of hot surfaces on pedestrians. This is also an attractive feature for local residents and spa guests as well.

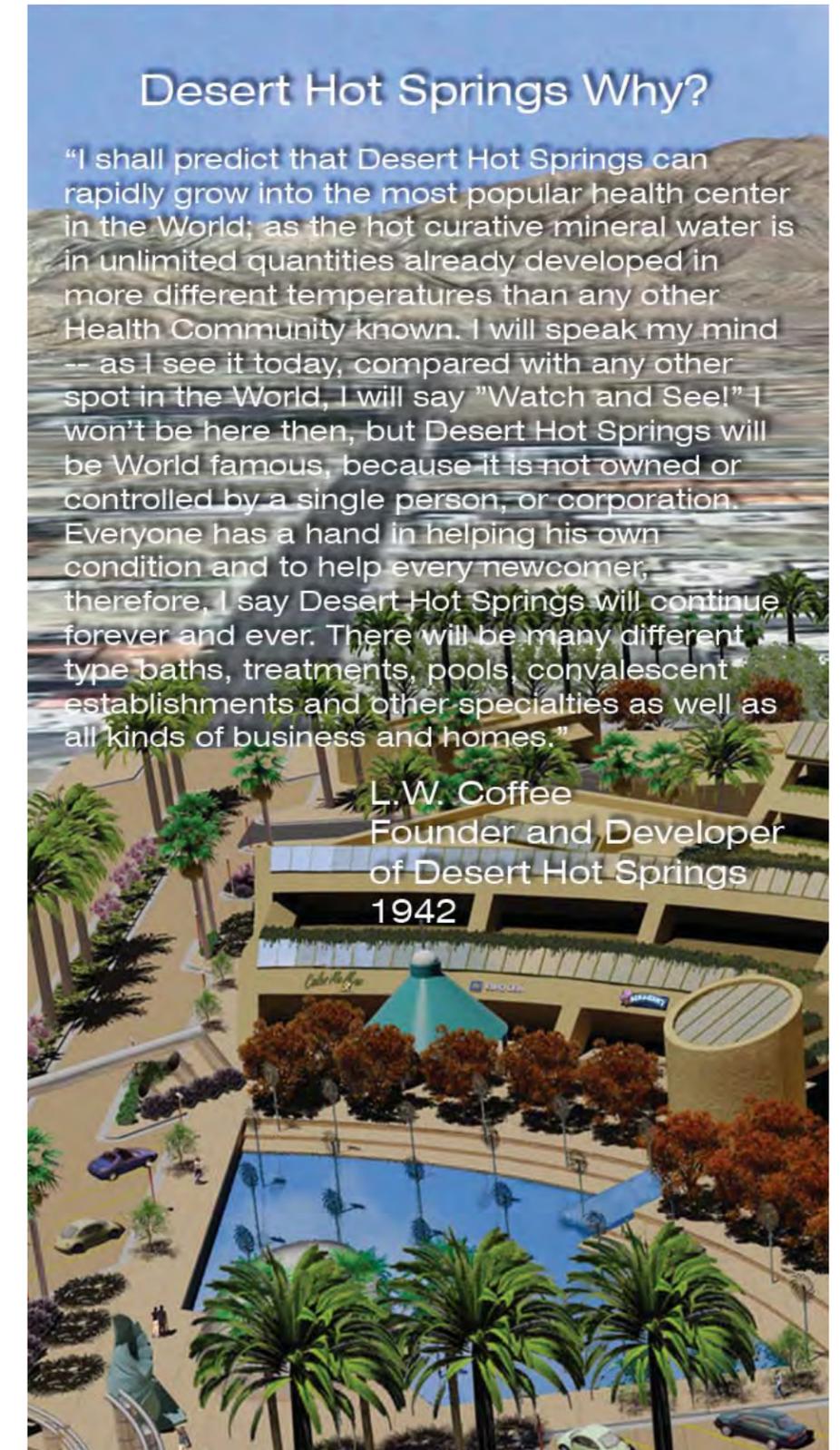
#### 7.12.2 Creative Alternatives for Parking Facilities

The following *Vehicle Parking Design Standards* exhibit illustrates several techniques that can be employed to more sensitively address surface vehicle parking facilities in the desert:

- use of on-street parking lanes and bays for parallel and diagonal parking spaces along Pierson and Palm Boulevards
- creation of “boulevard parking plazas” along Pierson and Palm Boulevards in conjunction with new development projects
- strategic placement of landscaped parking plazas toward the side and/or rear of buildings facing Pierson and Palm Boulevards
- clustering of long-term employee parking spaces away from major building entries, also toward the side or rear of buildings

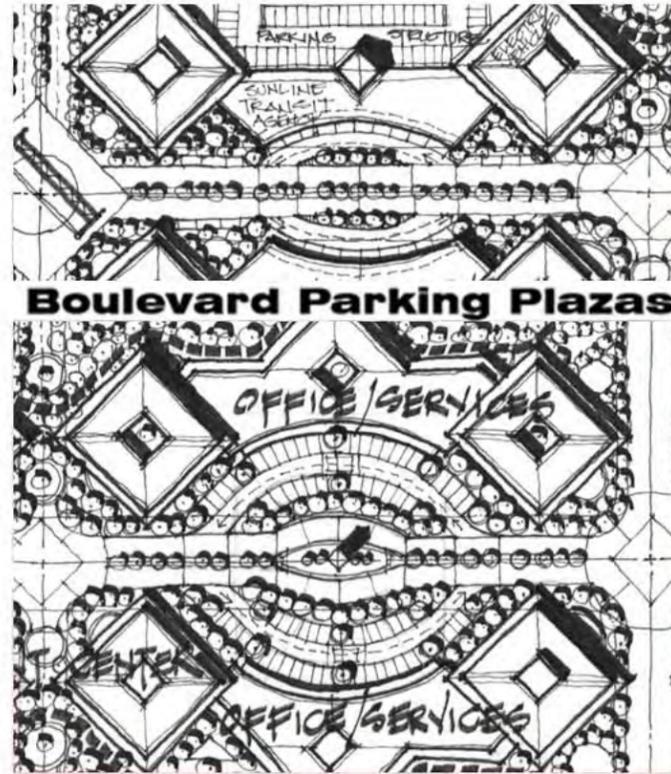
Desert Hot Springs should implement an assertive program to create, provide, and maintain an excellent vehicle parking program throughout its downtown area. This program, if thoroughly implemented, will help identify this area as a unique and user-friendly commercial and residential neighborhood, in stark contrast with other communities in the Coachella Valley which still employ traditional and generic surface parking solutions which are not well suited to the unique characteristics of the desert environment.

In this manner, Desert Hot Springs can become an industry leader in this aspect of community development, which should also translate into the creation of a more attractive and profitable destination resort. Vehicle parking design standards are a major key to the success of this downtown and should be carefully implemented by the City as an economic development incentive as well as an environmentally sensitive recognition of the realities of desert living.



# Parking Standards

Topic	Standard	Notes
<b>Commercial/ Office</b>		
General Retail	3.0 per 1,000 SF GLA	Day Peak/ Shared
Family Restaurant	10.5 per 1,000 SF GLA	
Fast Food Restaurant	15.0 per 1,000 SF GLA	
Casual and Fine Dining	18.0 per 1,000 SF GLA	Evening Peak/ Valet
Live Entertainment	1.0 per 5 seats	Evening Peak/ Shared
General Office	3.5 per 1,000 SF GLA	Day Peak/ Shared
Medical Office	4.0 per 1,000 SF GLA	Day Peak/ Shared
<b>Wellness Resort</b>		
Resort Hotel/ Timeshare	1.15 per room	
Restaurant/ Lounge	10.0 per 1,000 SF GLA	Evening Peak/ Shared
Meeting Area/ Banquet	30.0 per 1,000 SF GLA	Evening Peak/ Shared
Fitness Center	3.0 per 1,000 SF GLA	Evening Peak/ Shared
<b>Residential</b>		
Single Family Attached	1.85 per dwelling unit	+ 0.15 Visitor/ DU
Multifamily Attached	1.55 per dwelling unit	+ 0.15 Visitor/ DU



## Vehicle Parking Design Standards





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

### 7.13 Sustainable Development

#### 7.13.1 Overview

The pursuit of already established sustainable best management practices, such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification, ComfortWise, and EnergyStar Home, are strongly encouraged in Desert Hot Springs. The comprehensiveness of these certification programs guarantees, for their respective types of development, the achievement of a high minimum standard. For maximum flexibility, however, developers and builders may implement sustainable building and development practices most appropriate to the specific context within Desert Hot Springs.

Builders are also encouraged to participate in programs offered or sponsored by local utilities such as California Energy Star New Homes Program, Residential Property Development Program, California Home Energy Efficiency Rating System Program (CHEERS), and Savings by Design Program.

Buildings should be designed to facilitate and accommodate photovoltaic cells for solar power. Solar-heated hot water is an efficient way to reduce energy needed for household activities.

Architectural features that increase daylighting, such as light shelves that bounce light farther into interior spaces, should be installed to reduce the need for electrical light.

Developments shall minimize light pollution by avoiding outdoor lighting where unnecessary, emphasizing shielded fixtures, and avoiding overhead lighting of areas such as walkways. Low-scale, accent, and back-lighting shall be used to highlight key entry points, signage, enhanced intersections, and feature landscaping.

Builders are encouraged to use flooring and insulation products that are low emitters of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and formaldehyde. Low- and zero-VOC paints, finishes, adhesives, caulks, and other substances are also recommended to improve indoor air quality and reduce the harmful health effects of off-gassing.

The use of light-colored roofing materials to reflect heat and reduce cooling requirements of buildings, particularly Energy Star-labeled roofing materials, is encouraged.

Energy Star-labeled appliances (e.g., water heaters, particularly tankless) should be installed to the greatest feasible extent. Solar, electric (efficiency rating of at least 0.92) or lower-nitrogen oxides (as defined by the Air Quality Management District) gas-fired water heaters are strongly encouraged.

Buildings shall not be constructed primarily of materials that perform poorly in environments subject to blowsand, such as glass and wood.

#### 7.13.2 The California Green Building Program

More specifically targeted to residential development, and in order to fully implement the environmental quality objectives of this Specific Plan, the City of Desert Hot Springs is highly encouraged to actively join and promote the California Green Builder Program, which is being offered through the regional Building Industry Association. This program was conceived to encourage builders to construct cost-effective “green” homes that benefit the entire community. Building with reduced environmental impact, while still enjoying a fair rate of return on investment, is a mutually desirable set of reasons to “go green.” These benefits are also passed along to the ultimate consumer, the homeowner:

- improved indoor comfort level
- reduced dust, pollen and other pollutants
- savings on monthly utility bills
- conservation of natural resources, such as wood and water
- reduced impact on local landfills
- sense of satisfaction at having done something good for the environment

The components of this program are:

- **Higher Energy Efficiency Standards:** California Green Builder homes exceed strict California Energy codes by 15 percent and are inspected by California Energy Commission third-party inspectors.
- **Water Conservation:** California Green Builder homes use at least 20,000 gallons less per year than similar nongreen homes.
- **Wood Conservation:** California Green Builder homes use wood from managed forests that harvest timber at a rate that can be permanently sustained, while leaving the environment intact, enhanced, or restored. The homes also use engineered wood or components that minimize wood waste.
- **Advanced Ventilation:** California Green Builder homes ensure comfort by using engineered heating, ventilating, and air conditioning systems; tight ducts; superior insulation; and spectrally selective window glass.
- **Waste Diversion:** The California Green Builder program requires that at least 50 percent of waste generated while each house is being built is diverted from local landfills.

The Building Industry Institute, California Building Industry Association, CBIA builder members, local governments, state and federal organizations, environmental groups, and local building organizations have worked cooperatively to develop the California Green Builder Program. The City of Desert Hot Springs can become a regional leader in this program while reinforcing other environmental quality objectives and programs delineated within this Specific Plan.

#### 7.13.3 Green Roof Technology

Green roofs, also known as vegetated roof covers, eco-roofs, or nature roofs are multibeneficial structural components that help mitigate the effects of urbanization in water quality by filtering, absorbing, or detaining rainfall. They are constructed of a lightweight soil media, which is underlain by a drainage layer and a high quality impermeable membrane that protects the building structure from water damage. The soil is planted with a specialized mix of plants that can thrive in the harsh, dry, and hot conditions.

In addition to being aesthetically pleasing, green roofs also provide several environmental benefits that are particularly suited to desert living:

- reduction of heat island effect of urbanization
- reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> impact
- reduction of summer and shoulder-season air conditioning costs
- potential lengthening of roof life by two to three times

The following *Sustainable Development Guidelines* exhibit illustrates a typical cross-section through a green roof. This technology represents a sound, environmentally sensitive, construction technique for the desert, and also presents an architectural form-giving tool that will help in the creation of a distinctive and unique desert architectural vernacular when combined with similar tools and techniques.

#### 7.13.4 Other Environmental Control Systems

Sustainable development in the desert can also be greatly assisted by incorporating other environmental control systems into buildings that complement green roof technology. Some of the more prominent possibilities in this regard include but are not limited to:

- photovoltaic solar panel arrays and solar energy power generators
- active and passive solar energy design features
- windmills and wind energy power generators
- evaporative cooling systems, including “swamp coolers”
- natural insulation through earth contact design principles and application of rammed earth and adobe wall construction

Sustainable development is generally important for today’s and tomorrow’s development and construction industries. It is even more important within the desert environment. Desert Hot Springs has the opportunity to step out as a leader in the sustainable development industries, both as a consumer market for relevant goods and services and as a source of fabrication, distribution, and marketing of innovative and energy-efficient systems.

## Green Roofs

Vegetation

Growing Medium

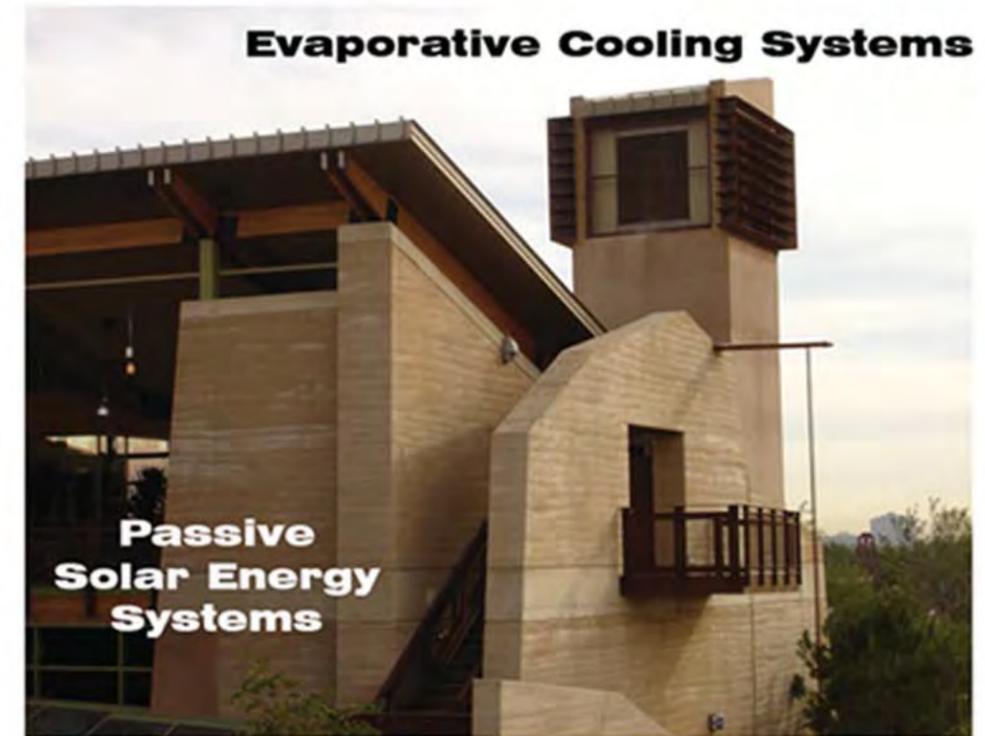
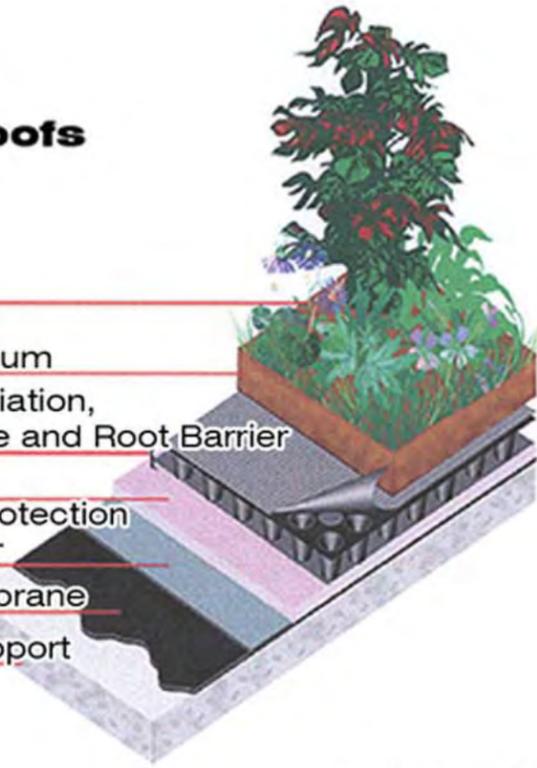
Drainage, Aeration,  
Water Storage and Root Barrier

Insulation

Membrane Protection  
& Root Barrier

Roofing Membrane

Structural Support





## **Vortex Downtown Specific Plan**

*This page intentionally left blank.*

## Appendix A: Implementation



Desert Hot Springs, California



# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

## Appendix A: Implementation

### Regulations and Ordinances

This chapter contains the regulations, requirements, and by-laws by which development must abide, indicated by the use of the word “shall.” These regulations are mandatory and cover general development standards, open space requirements, parking standards, nonconformities, lighting standards, sign programs, maintenance standards, and other standards for accessory structures. Provisions within these standards may also use the word “should,” in which case the standard is encouraged but not mandatory.

### Development Standards

The development standards set forth for commercial, residential, and mixed-use development are intended to provide for flexibility in site design and methods to integrate commercial and residential uses within the Specific Plan area. These development standards prescribe the minimum standards for development and typically concern topics such as permitted uses, density, building and property dimensions, and the quantity of parking and landscaping.

### Permitted Uses

Each land use category is defined in precise terms to ensure that the range of permitted and conditionally permitted uses respects the intent of the plan and the conditions encountered in each portion of the site. Table A.1 outlines, by land use designation, the permitted uses (P) and conditionally permitted uses (C) in the Specific Plan. This list was derived from other existing zoning regulations to allow greater or lesser flexibility in some areas and to customize land use requirements in response to site characteristics, potentials, and limitations. This tailored use list is specifically aimed at stimulating investment on this site to generate a land use pattern of higher value and quality than may be possible under conventional zoning. The table also lists prohibited uses to avoid potential conflicts between uses within and adjacent to the site.

Those uses not specifically listed in the table are subject to review based on consistency with the purpose and intent of the land use categories and planning areas and are subject to the approval of the Director of Community Development. The Director may refer uses or interpretation of permitted uses to the Planning Commission.

Table A.1 Permitted Uses

Use Category	Typically Permitted Uses	Mixed-Use Core (MXD)	Community Retail/Service (Retail)	High Density Residential (HDR)	Green Infrastructure Overlay	Public Facilities/Svcs/Civic Center (MXD)	Private Institutional
Retail	Accessory uses and structures (e.g., storage)	C	C				
	Art, antiques, collectibles, gifts	P	P			P	
	Bars, alcoholic beverage drinking places (on-site consumption)	C	C				
	Building material stores >5,000 square feet	C	C				
	Building material stores ≤5,000 square feet	C	C				
	Convenience stores	C	C			C	
	Furniture, furnishings, equipment stores	C	P				
	Grocery stores	P	P			C	
	Health/fitness centers	C	P			C	
	Indoor amusement/entertainment centers	C	C			C	
	Liquor stores (off-site consumption)	C	C				
	Nightclubs, with or without food service	C	C				
	Pet stores	P	P			C	
	Plant nurseries					C	
	Restaurants (fast food)		C			C	
	Restaurants (specialty)	P	P			P	C
	Restaurants (standard)	P	P			P	
	Retail stores (general merchandise)	P	P			P	C
Warehouse retail stores							
Office/Service	Accessory uses and structures	P	P	P			
	Automated teller machines (ATM)	P	P	C		C	
	Banks and financial services	P	P			P	
	Bed and breakfast inns	C	C	C			
	Broadcast and recording studios	C	C			C	
	Business support services	P	P			C	
	Car (motor vehicle) washes						
	Dry cleaning (drop-off only)	P	P			P	
	Hotels	P	C				
	Medical services, clinics, laboratories	C	P			P	
	Offices (professional)	P	P			P	P
	Personal Services	C	P			C	
Office/Service (Cont'd)	Repair and maintenance (consumer products)		C			C	
	Service stations		C			C	
	Spa facilities	P	P			C	C
	Veterinarian clinics and animal hospitals		C				
Residential	Accessory uses and structures	P	C	P			
	Child care centers (up to 14 children)	P	P	P		C	C
	Child care centers (15 to 30 children)		C	C		C	C
	Community apartments and condominiums	P		P			
	Employee housing			C			
	Manufactured housing			C			
	Multifamily housing	P	C	P			
	Residential care homes (up to 8 clients)	C		C			C
Residential care homes (9 or more clients)	C					C	
Mixed Use	Vertical or horizontal attached buildings with 2 or more different uses (e.g., commercial, residential), but excluding live-work units unless attached to a separate commercial or residential building	P	C	C		C	C
<b>LIVE-WORK</b>							
Food Sales/Svcs.	Restaurants and eating establishments	C	C				

**Table A.1 Permitted Uses (continued)**

Use Category	Typically Permitted Uses	Mixed-Use Core (MXD)	Community Retail/Service (Retail)	High Density Residential (HDR)	Green Infrastructure Overlay	Public Facilities/Svcs/Civic Center (MXD)	Private Institutional
Professional, Administrative, and Business Uses	Architect/engineer/planner	P	P				
	Attorneys	P	P				
	Billing service providers	P	P				
	Consulting and business services	P	P				
	Dance teachers	P	P				
	Estate planners	P	P				
	Income tax service/accounting	P	P				
	Interior decorators	P	P				
	Internet or web-oriented businesses	P	P				
	Kitchen and bath designers	P	P				
	Music teachers	P	P				
	Photography studio/portrait/bridal services	P	P				
	Planning consultants	P	P				
	Public relations consultants	P	P				
	Real estate developers/specialty contractors	P	P				
	Secretary/communication service providers	P	P				
	Retail Sales/Service	Building contractor offices	C				
Business consulting		P	P			P	
Catering services		C	C				
Child care facilities		C	C			C	
Electronic/computer equipment repair		C	P				
Flower shops		P	P			P	
Landscaping offices		C	C				
Pick-up and delivery services		C	C				
Printing and lithography facilities		C	C			C	
Studios	Ceramic and pottery studios	P	P			P	
	Copywriter studios	P	P			P	
	Commercially operated professional studios	C	C			C	
	Fine-art studios, museums, galleries	P	P			P	
	Photography studios	P	P			P	
	Video producer studios	P	P			C	

Use Category	Typically Permitted Uses	Mixed-Use Core (MXD)	Community Retail/Service (Retail)	High Density Residential (HDR)	Green Infrastructure Overlay	Public Facilities/Svcs/Civic Center (MXD)	Private Institutional	
Open Space/Recreation	Open space (private or public)	P	P	P	P	P	P	
	Residential recreational facilities (private)	C	C	P	C	C	C	
Education, Public Assembly, Public Institutions	Churches/places of worship	C	C	C		C	P	
	Community/cultural centers	C	C	C		C	C	
	Country clubs	C		C				
	Fire stations	C	C	C		C		
	Government offices	C	C			P		
	Libraries and museums	P	P			P	P	
	Membership organization facilities	C	C			C	C	
	Police stations	C	C	C		P		
	Post offices	C	C	C		P		
	Schools (specialized education and training)	C	C			C		
	Theatres, auditoriums, meeting halls	P	C			P	P	
	Transportation and Communication Facilities	Alternative fuels and recharging facilities	C	C	C		C	
		Public utility facilities	C	C	C	C	C	
		Satellite antennae	C	C	C		C	
Bus stations or taxi stands		C	C	C	C	C		
Rail stations and terminals								
Manufacturing and Processing	Wireless facilities	C	C	C	C	C		
	Furniture/Fixtures/cabinet shops							
	Handicraft industries, small-scale assembly							
	Printing and publishing					C	C	
	Recycling facilities, small collection facility		C			C		
Temporary Uses	Recycling facilities, reverse vending machines		C			C		
	Outdoor displays and sales of merchandise	C	C				C	
Other Uses	Business operating between 10 PM and 6 AM	C	C				C	

Use Category	Typically Permitted Uses	Mixed-Use Core (MXD)	Community Retail/Service (Retail)	High Density Residential (HDR)	Green Infrastructure Overlay	Public Facilities/Svcs/Civic Center (MXD)	Private Institutional
Prohibited Uses	Automobile sales (new or used)						
	Auto parts and supplies						
	Check-cashing, payday loan services						
	Industrial uses						
	Mobile home, recreational vehicle sales						
	Off-site advertising						
	Sexually oriented business establishments						
	Single-family detached housing						
	Storage facilities (self-service, personal storage)						
	Uses that generate excessive vibrations, noise, heat, or odors						
	Uses that cause caustic chemicals on-site (other than those used in copy machines), hazardous activities such as, but not limited to, welding, open flame, or storage of flammable liquids						
	Vehicle repair and maintenance						

(P) Permitted; (C) Conditional Use Permit; ■ Not Permitted

Notes for Table 8.1:  
For buildings that already exist and are to be occupied by a use that is permitted by right, only a certificate of occupancy and business license shall be required.  
Mixed-use buildings are permitted by right in the Mixed-Use Development land use category, except when a use to be included in the mixed-use building requires a conditional use permit, in which case the entire mixed-use building shall require a conditional use permit.



# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

**Table A.2 Building Setback Standards**

Location	Minimum Setback (1)
Building to Building (2)	10 feet
Building to Drainage Channel	20 feet from the property line
Parking Area to:	
Boulevard Corridor	28 feet from the back of curb (3)
Secondary Road	18 feet from the back of curb; buildings may encroach or project up to 6 feet (4)
Local Street or Entry	14 feet from the back of curb; buildings may encroach or project up to 4 feet (4)
Building to Alley	2 feet, to allow for a landscape apron (4)
Building to Service Road	4 feet, to allow for a landscape apron (4)
Building to Parking Structure	15 feet (5)
Building to Parking Area/Drive Aisle	10 feet with walkway; 4 feet without walkway (must be landscaped)
Notes: (1) All uses are allowed to be attached horizontally. Accordingly, the setback requirement for the building at the point of the shared wall is zero. Setbacks are measured from the closest point of a building. (2) Commercial buildings greater than 20,000 square feet must be set back a minimum of 20 feet from another commercial building that is greater than 20,000 square feet or any residential, live-work, or mixed-use building. Commercial buildings greater than 20,000 square feet must be set back a minimum of 15 feet from a commercial building that is 20,000 square feet or less. (3) Encroachments/projections must maintain a minimum 4-foot walkway and are subject to the approval of the Director of Community Development. All projections must allow for a minimum of 8 feet of headroom below. (4) Projections within alley and service roadways must maintain a minimum clear width of 26 feet within the right-of-way. (5) Buildings can reduce the building-to-parking-structure setback to 3 feet if the adjacent wall is appropriately reinforced with soundproof technology. Further reductions may be approved by the Director of Community Development.	

## Live-Work Standards

Live-work units are a unique type of mixed-use development that combines residential living space and commercial or office space within one structure for a single owner. They offer similar benefits to mixed-use development and eliminate the need to commute to work. This Specific Plan recognizes the changing patterns of work and technology that are leading to an increased number of home-based workers. Live-work uses enable the City to adapt to changes in the economy and meet the needs of special groups such as artists or new businesses that need affordable work and housing space.

Live-work uses are similar to home occupation uses currently permitted in the City's Municipal Code through a home occupation permit. However, in the current Municipal Code, a home occupation use is intended to maintain a residential nature and prohibits alteration of appearance, advertising of the occupation, or sale of merchandise. In comparison, live-work uses are permitted to act and appear as functional businesses on the ground floor of the building. Accordingly, live-work units and buildings are subject to

the following standards and shall not be subject to the requirements and procedures of the Municipal Code:

- The work portion of the live-work unit shall not be initiated until a current business license is obtained in compliance with Municipal Code Chapter regarding business licenses and fees. Generally, immediately following the effective date of an approved Home Occupation permit, when no appeal has been filed, the applicant shall obtain a business license.
- Work on the premises of a live-work unit shall be limited to persons who live in the live-work unit. Living and working spaces shall not be rented or sold separately. The owner/occupant of a live-work unit shall notify the City of any change in use or occupancy. Any change of use or occupancy shall comply with the uses identified in this Specific Plan and will require a new certificate of occupancy.
- Off-street loading will be accomplished by the temporary use of planned parking spaces, or in parking spaces limiting a vehicle's permitted parking time (e.g., parking stalls designated with 20-minute parking limits).
- Additions or enlargements of structures, modification of floor areas dedicated to living and working spaces, or any subsequent change in the approved live-work units shall require a Specific Plan amendment, administrative clearance, or conditional use permit, depending on the nature and scope of change being sought.
- Live-work units and buildings must comply with any requirements intended to protect the public health, safety, and welfare, imposed by the Desert Hot Springs Public Works and Community Development Departments and Riverside County Sheriff and Fire Departments.
- An administrative approval or conditional approval of the commercial/work component of the live-work units shall be granted to the owner of the unit. Approvals of commercial uses may not be transferred between units. A copy of all conditions of the approval of the project shall be provided to all future owners/occupants of the building prior to their execution of a lease or purchase agreement for the live-work unit. Project conditions are required to be recorded with the County Recorder's Office prior to exercise of entitlement.
- Businesses using commercial vehicles are prohibited. Commercial vehicles are vehicles used for purposes other than transporting passengers, such as those used for the transportation of goods, wares, and merchandise.
- Covenants, conditions, and restrictions for individual live-work projects may further restrict and prohibit uses, but shall not be more permissive than the requirements imposed by this Specific Plan.

## Open Space Standards

The unique character of this Specific Plan requires special open space standards to ensure adequate space for the residents and consumers while also recognizing the unique types of spaces that work best within a mixed-use setting. Residents living in mixed-use developments tend to consist of singles or young couples, who do not require the large private and common open spaces normally associated with families and traditional suburban and resort-style development. Instead, smaller, centrally located plazas and recreation areas are encouraged to provide a more intimate, urban lifestyle.

### 8.1.5 Residential Open Space Standards

A minimum of 200 square feet of outdoor usable common and private open space shall be provided per dwelling unit.

1. A minimum of 70 square feet per unit shall be private with a minimum dimension of 7 feet in any direction. Private open space shall be accessible directly from the living area of the unit, in the form of a fenced yard, patio, deck, or balcony.
2. A minimum of 100 square feet per unit shall be usable common open space. Usable common open space shall have a minimum level surface dimension of 20 feet in any direction and a minimum area of 400 square feet.
  - The dimension for usable common open space areas shall be measured from the outside of any private open space attached to a unit at ground level.
  - The dimensions for usable common open space may include the building setback area if the buildings facing the open space area display a high degree of articulation and the building setback area is heavily landscaped. Landscaping may consist of in-ground or potted plantings.
  - Usable common open space shall not include: a) any area counted as private open space; b) sidewalks and paved pathways; c) any portion of open and enclosed parking areas, garages, streets, driveways, automobile turning aisles, or turnaround areas; d) storage areas (refuse or otherwise) or any areas fenced or otherwise inaccessible to the residents; e) slope areas exceeding 7 percent; or f) areas within public rights-of-way along roadways.
3. A minimum of 30 square feet per unit shall be provided in the form of common or private open space. This space can also be referred to as "flex space" and can be added to the private or common open space areas.

### **Live-Work and Mixed-Use Residential Open Space Standards**

A minimum of 100 square feet of usable common open space shall be provided for each live-work unit or any residential unit in a mixed-use building. Usable common open space shall have a minimum level surface dimension of 20 feet in any direction and a minimum area of 400 square feet. The dimensions for usable common open space areas shall be measured from the outside of any private open space attached to a unit at ground level.

The dimensions for usable common open space may include the building setback area if the buildings facing the open space area display a high degree of articulation and the building setback area is heavily landscaped. Landscaping may consist of in-ground or potted plantings.

Usable common open space shall *not* include: 1) any area counted as private open space; 2) sidewalks and paved pathways; 3) any portion of open and enclosed parking areas, garages, streetscape driveways, automobile turning aisles, or turnaround areas; 4) storage areas (refuse or otherwise) or any area fenced or otherwise inaccessible to the residents ; 5) slope areas exceeding 7 percent; or 6) areas within public rights-of-way along roadways.

The residential open space requirements of mixed-use buildings must be met in addition to any public plaza space requirements generated by nonresidential portions of the mixed-use building.

### **Commercial and Office Open Space Standards**

Each building with a commercial or office gross leasable area (GLA) of 15,000 square feet or less shall contribute toward public plaza space equal to 10 percent of the total GLA of the building. Each building with a commercial or office GLA greater than 15,000 square feet shall provide or contribute towards public plaza space equal to 5 percent of the total GLA of building.

Public plazas shall have a minimum dimension 20 feet in any direction and a minimum area of 400 square feet.

Public plazas may consist of pedestrian-accessible spaces, including outdoor seating areas, open space, water features, and landscape areas.

Outdoor eating areas provided as part of private eating establishments cannot be counted towards the public plaza requirement, unless the eating areas are open and accessible to the public, with no fencing or other barriers or obstructions. If the eating areas are enclosed by fencing or landscaping no greater than 4 feet in height, these areas may count toward up to 20 percent of the total public plaza requirement.

Public plazas shall exclude parking areas, roadways and the first 5 feet surrounding all sides of the buildings.

Commercial or office space provided within a live-work unit is exempt from the public plaza requirement.

### **Special Open Space Provisions**

Usable common open space or public plaza space requirements do not need to be immediately next to their individual buildings, and are instead encouraged to coordinate with other uses to provide larger open spaces that are centrally located and serve multiple buildings.

The usable common open space and public plaza requirements of mixed-use buildings that contain residential and commercial uses can be combined into one or more large spaces to satisfy the usable common open space requirements of all residential uses as long as the space is centrally located among and directly accessed by those uses.

The public plaza requirements of commercial or office buildings may be combined into one or more large spaces to satisfy the open space requirements of all buildings, so long as the space is centrally located along and directly accessed by those uses.

Usable common open space or public plaza requirements of a proposed project may be added to an existing open space or public plaza area as long as the proposed open space or public plaza area is contiguous to the existing open space or public plaza area and permission is granted by the existing property owner.

For additions to existing, previously permitted commercial or office uses (or uses as part of a mixed-use building), the applicant shall only be required to provide plaza space as 5 percent of the new additional square footage of GLA. For example, if an existing 40,000-square-foot commercial building adds 10,000 square feet of GLA, 500 square feet of additional public plaza space must be provided (10,000 X 5%).

The common open space or public plaza requirement shall be waived for additions to existing buildings or the construction of new buildings within the same planning area if existing open space provided by the existing building is of sufficient size to satisfy the total requirement of the existing and added square footage. For example, if an existing 40,000-square-foot commercial or office building adds 10,000 square feet of GLA, it would be considered a 50,000 square foot building. If the existing building already provides a 2,500 square foot public plaza (50,000 X 5% = 2,500 square feet), then no additional public plaza space shall be required.

A maximum of 33 percent of the area used to satisfy the public plaza requirement may be landscaped with vegetation or hardscape materials that cannot be walked or sat upon. In-ground flowerbeds are an example of vegetation that cannot be walked or sat upon.

### **Public Art**

Public art is an instrumental feature that can be used to create a connection between the public and any particular project or space. Public art makes spaces more interesting, helps to distinguish one place from another by creating landmarks that are easily recognizable, and creates a unique shopping, working, or living environment. By enhancing the overall quality of a project and giving it a unique character, public art increases a project's value. The Specific Plan sets forth several public art requirements and guidelines.

Public art within the Specific Plan project area shall be provided for:

1. New residential, commercial, live-work, or mixed-use development having total project costs of \$300,000 or more, as determined by the City's valuation of building permits issued for the development.
2. Expansion of existing buildings or remodeling of existing buildings when any such work has a building permit valuation of \$300,000 or more.

Public art provided shall have a value equal to one-half of 1 percent (0.50%) of the total building costs (as measured by building permit valuations), excluding land, site development, off-site requirements, and remediation costs. The value of the public art shall include the art piece itself and the cost of installation.

Public art may be installed concurrently with and adjacent to each building that triggers the public art requirement; or the value of the required public art for each building can be consolidated, or banked, and applied to the provision of larger installations that serve multiple buildings.

The public art requirements shall not apply to reconstruction of structures that have been damaged by fire, flood, wind, earthquake, or other calamity.

### **Parks**

A Specific Plan parks requirement for residential development of three acres of parkland per 1,000 residents shall be met through a combination of land dedication, improvements, private recreation, and in-lieu fees.

### **Vehicle Parking Standards**

Parking is an important component of development for the Specific Plan area. Due to the size of the project area and the mix of land uses proposed, the amount of parking required to satisfactorily park the project will take up a significant portion of the area. The various uses, such as residential, commercial, restaurant, entertainment, and hotel, will be required to meet the parking standards specified in Table 8.3. The amount of parking will vary depending on the number of units proposed and square footage of



# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

a particular nonresidential use. The parking may be provided through a combination of surface parking, covered parking, and parking structures.

There is a significant opportunity to share parking among different land uses, which could considerably reduce the number of parking spaces needed to adequately park the project. Shared parking can create opportunities for more compact development, more space for pedestrian circulation, and more open space and landscaping.

Many city codes require parking spaces to accommodate the peak-hour demand by any land use at any time. Shared parking analyses establish that as different land uses peak at different times, these land uses do not need their maximum parking supply at the same times. Planning for each land use individually would result in an oversupply of parking in a location where there is a combination of land uses. Therefore, for mixed-use areas, there is a potential to share a pool of parking that is smaller than the amount that would be required for each land use individually. However, because shared parking reductions depend on the specific type and size of land uses within a project, the specific parking demand ratio for each land use involves further study involving the specific type of land use and peak-hour demand.

A more specific shared parking analysis approved by the Director of Community Development and City Traffic Engineer may be completed for projects submitted under this Specific Plan. As part of the study, the applicant will have to demonstrate that the proposed uses have differing peak hours of parking demand or that the total parking demand at any one time will be adequately served by the total number of parking spaces proposed. Guidance on shared parking pertinent to the Vortex Downtown Specific Plan is presented in Table 8.3.

**Table A.3 Parking Standards**

Topic	Standard	Notes
<b>Commercial and Office</b>		
General retail	3.0 per 1,000 SF GLA	Day peak shared with office allowed
Family restaurant	10.5 per 1,000 SF GLA	
Fast food restaurant	15.0 per 1,000 SF GLA	
Casual and fine dining	18.0 per 1,000 SF GLA	Evening peak valet allowed by permit
General office	3.5 per 1,000 SF GLA for first 5,000 SF	Parking standard decreases to 2.5 per 1,000 SF GLA for additional SF Day peak shared with retail allowed
Medical office	4.0 per 1,000 SF GLA for first 5,000 square feet	
<b>Hotel</b>		
Resort hotel/timeshares	1.15 per room	
Restaurant/lounge	10.0 per 1,000 SF GLA	
Meeting area/banquet room	30.0 per 1,000 SF GLA	Parking standard refers to "gross assembly or viewing area." Evening peak shared use allowed.
Fitness center	3.0 per 1,000 SF GLA	
<b>Residential</b>		
Multifamily attached	1.55 per unit	All spaces must be enclosed in a garage. Studio units smaller than 850 square feet must only provide 1.5 parking spaces enclosed within a garage.
Guest spaces for multifamily	0.15 per unit	Spaces may be uncovered.
Single-family attached	1.85 per unit	All spaces must be enclosed in a garage.
Guest spaces for single-family	0.25 per unit	Spaces may be uncovered.
<b>Structured Parking</b>		
Landscaping	50% coverage of visible concrete surfaces	Parking structure facades shall achieve 50% coverage of visible concrete surfaces with landscaping. Coverage can be achieved through measures such as planters along the visible edge of the structure planted with cascading vines, or through a vertical trellis surface with vines planted at the car parking level, or by other means.
<b>Bicycle Parking</b>		
Bicycle parking	1 rack per project that requires 40 or more nonresidential parking spaces	For any development that requires 41–80 nonresidential parking spaces, 1 rack that can support 2 bicycles shall be provided. For any development that requires more than 80 nonresidential parking spaces, 1 rack that can support 4 bicycles or 2 racks that can support 2 bicycles shall be provided.
<b>Alternative Vehicle Parking</b>		
Golf cart or neighborhood electric vehicle (NEV) parking	1 dedicated space for 0–25 residential units; 2 dedicated spaces for 26–50 residential units; 3 dedicated spaces for 50–100 residential units; 4 dedicated spaces for 101 or more residential units	Parking stalls shall be provided in a central location accessible to the residential units. Parking stalls shall be covered to shield the vehicles from sun and weather. The parking area may also function as a recharging station by providing electric vehicle ports. OAs an alternative, projects may provide these spaces within an enclosed garage as part of an individual unit as long as the space is in addition to the area needed to accommodate the standard parking spaces.
<b>Parking Dimensions</b>		
Parking for retail use:		
90 degree parking stall	9 feet x 18 feet	
45 degree parking stall	9 feet x 19 feet	
Parallel parking stall	9 feet x 24 feet	
Parking for residential use:		
90 or 45 degree parking stall	9 feet x 18 feet	
Parallel parking stall	8 feet by 22 feet	
Parking for alternative vehicle use:		
90 or 45 degree parking stall	8 feet x 16 feet	
Parallel parking stall	8 feet x 20 feet	

## Noise

Where residential uses are potentially exposed to interior or exterior noise levels greater than those permitted by the City's Municipal Code, certification from a licensed acoustical engineer shall be obtained to document attenuation to those maximum levels. The exterior standards shall be measured either at the property line or the nearest noise-sensitive use such as a patio, yard, or landscaped open space, whichever is closer.

Commercial uses shall be designed and operated, and hours of operation limited, where appropriate, so that neighboring residents are not exposed to offensive noise, especially from traffic, trash collection, routine deliveries, or late-night activity. No use shall produce continual loading or unloading of heavy trucks at the site between the hours of 8 PM and 7 AM.

As part of a development application, the applicant shall prepare and submit to the City a site-specific noise study and shall design and implement noise-attenuation measures such as walls, berms, landscape buffers, soundproofing, or other features that would reduce exposure to excess roadway noise.

Prior to issuance of building permits, the applicant shall submit a detailed acoustical study demonstrating that all project structures will meet applicable City interior noise levels and exterior living-area noise levels, in accordance with applicable noise standards and zoning regulations.

The study shall be prepared by a City-approved acoustical expert and to the satisfaction of the Director of Community Development.

The study shall document projected ultimate noise exposure for interior office, retail, and residential space and shall demonstrate that project design plans have incorporated adequate sound attenuation measures to achieve the applicable noise standards.

Noise mitigation and proper design may include, but shall not be limited to, building orientation, double or extra-strength windows, wall and ceiling insulation, and orientation and insulation of vents. Where it is necessary that windows be closed to achieve the required level, means shall be provided for ventilation/cooling to provide a habitable environment.

## Vibration

No use, activity, or process shall produce continual vibrations or noxious odors that are perceptible without instruments by the average person at the property lines of the site or within the interior of residential units on the site.

## Phased Capital Improvement Program

The proposed capital improvements program for the implementation of the public improvements aspects of this Specific Plan is founded on three basic assumptions:

1. **All costs are expressed in Calendar Year 2008 terms, with no allowances for inflation over time, if improvements are phased**
2. **A total buildout phasing program assumption of fifteen (15) years beginning in Calendar Year 2010**
3. **Land acquisition costs are not included.**

Given these basic parameters, improvements are proposed as follows.

### Potable Water

The Mission Springs Water District (MSWD) will provide water supply service to the redeveloped Specific Plan area, but there is a calculated need to upgrade 6,800 lineal feet of existing six-inch lines to eight-inch water supply lines in the following locations, as illustrated in the *Water, Wastewater and Drainage* exhibit in Appendix A:

- Mesquite Avenue
- Acoma Avenue
- Buena Vista Avenue

**Total Project Budget: \$500,000 (including 20% contingencies allowance)**

### Recycled Water

The MSWD plans to incorporate recycled (grey) water into its supply mix by Year 2015 in order to serve landscaping irrigation needs within the redeveloped Specific Plan area. Therefore, there is an identified need to construct a separate nonpotable irrigation system and recycled water source. There is no identified project budget for this system at this time.

**There is no identified project budget for this system at this time.**

### Wastewater

The MSWD will also provide wastewater management services for the redeveloped Specific Plan area, but there is an identified need to construct the wastewater collection system improvements in the following locations, as illustrated in the *Water, Wastewater and Drainage* exhibit in Appendix A:

- Upgrade Existing 10-inch to 12-inch sewer main:
  - Palm Boulevard
  - West Drive
- Construct new 8-inch sewer main:
  - Pierson/Ocotillo/MXD Core

- Second Street
- Buena Vista Avenue

- Abandon 8-inch sewer main MXD Core/Old Town

**Total Project Budget: \$850,000 (including 20% contingencies allowance)**

### Drainage

According to the Riverside Flood Control and Water Conservation District's "Desert Hot Springs Area Master Drainage Plan," there is a need to construct the following master drainage system improvements in the following locations within the Specific Plan area (see *Water, Wastewater and Drainage* exhibit in Appendix A):

- Line A-1
- Line A-3
- Line A-3a
- Line A-3b

**Total Project Budget: \$1,900,000 (including a 35% planning-level contingencies allowance; but excluding land and ROW acquisition, environmental permitting and mitigation, and agency permits and fees)**

### Gas

Southern California Gas Company is the gas provider for the City of Desert Hot Springs and existing gas main sizes are adequate to supply the redeveloped Specific Plan area. However, there will need to be a gas main abandonment for a small portion on First Street between Palm Boulevard and the proposed Paseo A. Reference should be made to the *Dry Utility Systems Plan* exhibit included in Appendix A.

There is no project budget estimated for this line abandonment at this time, and these can only be estimated on a project-by-project basis as individual development plans are actually filed for properties in this area.

### Electricity

Southern California Edison (SCE) is the electricity provider for the City of Desert Hot Springs. Reference should be made to the *Dry Utility Systems Plan* exhibit included in Appendix A. Within the Specific Plan area, all existing overhead electricity lines shall be removed and relocated underground into dedicated easements on a phased basis. Costs of removal of existing overhead lines and construction of new underground system will be determined by SCE at the time City approved project plans are submitted.

There is no project budget estimated for these improvements at this time, and these can only be estimated on a project-by-project basis at the time



# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

City-approved development plans are actually filed for properties in this area.

## Telephone

Verizon is the telephone service provider for the City of Desert Hot Springs and existing and conceptual telephone plans are shown on the *Dry Utility Systems Plan* exhibit included in Appendix A. Within the Specific Plan area, all existing overhead telephone lines shall be removed and relocated underground into dedicated easements on a project-by-project basis.

There is no project budget estimated for these improvements at this time, and can only be estimated at the time City-approved development plans are actually filed for properties in this area.

However, there will be a portion of telephone line rerouting between Palm Boulevard and Ocotillo Road which will be required by the redevelopment of the Mixed-Use Development Core area of the Specific Plan and which has been estimated to have a cost of \$1,200,000. However, proper coordination with Verizon at the project development planning stage may result in a substantial cost saving.

## Television/Cable

Time Warner Cable is the TV cable provider for the City of Desert Hot Springs and conceptual cable plans are shown on the *Dry Utility Systems Plan* exhibit included in Appendix A. All existing overhead cable lines shall be removed and relocated underground within dedicated easements on a project-by-project basis.

**Estimated Project Cost: \$900,000** (cable and fiber optic costs after Year 2008 should be estimated with a 10% cost increase per mile)

**Total Utilities Systems Budget: \$4,450,000** (including contingencies allowances as specified above)

## Circulation System

The existing street system in the Specific Plan area has adequate widths and geometrics to serve the proposed redevelopment plan at buildout. However, traffic signalization needs to be installed or upgraded in conjunction with the four gateway arch elements at the central ring structure. Costs of these improvements are summarized as follows:

### Gateway Arches

- Palm Boulevard at Second Street Intersection: \$290,000
- Palm Boulevard at Buena Vista Intersection: \$290,000
- Pierson Boulevard at West Drive Intersection: \$300,000
- Pierson Boulevard at Mesquite Avenue Intersection: \$300,000

## Central Ring Structure

- Pierson at Palm Boulevard Scramble Intersection: \$500,000

Each of the above costs is a lump sum estimate based on recent comparable projects and includes a 15% contingencies allowance plus a 6% design fee. Estimated removal and retrofitting costs for existing signalization at Pierson/West and Pierson/Mesquite are also included.

## Secondary Roads

Aesthetic improvements to the existing system of Secondary Roads are proposed in this Specific Plan and include a landscaped median and some incremental widening at key intersections and within redevelopment projects. Costs of these improvements are summarized as follows:

- Second Street \$650,000
- Mesquite Avenue \$250,000
- West Drive \$250,000
- Buena Vista Avenue \$650,000

Each of the above costs includes a 15% contingencies allowance plus a 6% design fee allowance.

**Total Circulation System Project Budget: \$3,480,000 (including 15% contingencies plus 6% design fee allowances)**

## Central Plaza

The Pierson at Palm Boulevard intersection is proposed as an impressive central plaza that will function as the activity and community design hub of the downtown area and the entire Desert Hot Springs community. This central plaza will include:

- Interactive Water Feature \$850,000
- Decorative Concrete Hardscape \$400,000
- Plaza Lighting, Furnishings and Landscaping \$200,000

Each of the above costs is a lump sum estimate based on recent comparable projects and includes 15% contingencies plus 6% design fee allowances.

**Total Central Plaza Project Budget: \$1,450,000 (including a 15% contingencies allowance plus a 6% design fee allowance)**

## Streetscape Improvements Program

Throughout the Specific Plan area, with emphasis on the Palm and Pierson Boulevard corridors, a comprehensive streetscape improvements program is proposed. It is envisioned that this program will include the following components:

- Decorative paving (sidewalks and intersections) \$6,000,000
- Landscaping \$900,000

- Irrigation \$400,000
- Lighting \$1,900,000
- Street furniture and furnishings \$150,000
- Themed SunLine bus shelters 150,000
- Monument entry signage \$125,000
- Public art program \$300,000
- Vortex festival park Improvements \$500,000

Each of the above costs is a lump sum estimate based on recent comparable projects and includes a 15% contingencies allowance plus a 6% design fee where applicable.

**Total Streetscape Improvements Program Budget: \$10,425,000 (including 15% contingencies plus 6% design fee allowances)**

## Public Parking Facilities

- Parking Courts (5) in Pierson Boulevard Corridor: \$2,000,000
- Parking Courts (1) in Palm Boulevard Corridor: \$400,000

Each of the above costs is based on recent comparable unit costs and includes a 15% contingencies allowance plus a 6% design fee. Land Acquisition costs are not included. Also, landscaping, irrigation and lighting cost have been included previously in the streetscape improvements program. The conceptual proposal for a transit center with structured public parking, as illustrated in Planning Area 1.01, is also not included in these estimates.

**Total Public Parking Facilities Program Budget: \$2,400,000 (including 15% contingencies plus 6% design fee allowances)**

## New Civic Center Campus

- Public Parking Courts: \$1,500,000
- Landscaping: \$500,000

**Total Civic Center Campus Improvements Program Budget: \$2,000,000 (including 15% contingencies plus 6% design fee allowances)**

## Phasing and Investment Program

Based on the capital improvements costs identified in this section of the Specific Plan, an investment of approximately \$24.2 million will be required to fully implement the plan. This will require the involvement of public and private sector sources in coordinated redevelopment efforts. Stated in Year 2010 terms, this would equate to approximately \$1.5 million per year as a redevelopment target for capital improvements. A summary of public financing mechanisms follows, which identifies alternative sources of funding for these line items.

## Public Financing Mechanisms

A variety of public debt financing mechanisms are available to fund public improvements in California. The advantage of most of these programs is that they provide tax-exempt financing at lower interest rates than are available through construction loans and other forms of conventional financing.

*To avoid the imposition of additional burdens on the City's General Fund and existing taxpayers, and to recognize the fact that the project is within the City's redevelopment boundaries, the available financing mechanisms should be limited to those that would be solely the responsibility of the Community Redevelopment Agency and property owners located within the Specific Plan itself.*

This section of the Specific Plan provides the City of Desert Hot Springs with a comprehensive overview of potential resources to be selected for targeted application within a funding strategy for project implementation. These sources need to be creatively and opportunistically applied to public improvements projects throughout this Specific Plan area.

This listing is organized into three broad categories: 1) local government resources; 2) state government resources; and 3) federal government resources.

### Local Government Resources

These resources provide the backbone of any financing and funding strategy for public improvements within the local community. Therefore, the initial search for project funding needs to begin with this list:

- General taxes (including excise taxes, utility user taxes, and real estate property tax)
- Transient occupancy tax (tourism industry TOT)
- Assessment-backed debt (tied to BIDs and LIDs)
- Business improvement district (BIDs)
  - Property owners' BID
  - Business owners' BID
- Local improvement districts (LIDs)
- City general fund
- Development impact fees
- RDA tax increment financing
- RDA bond program
- City general obligation bonds
- Nonprofit organization 501(c)(3) bonds

- City revenue bonds
- User fees (parking, building approval, building space rental)
- "Adopt-a Light" program (also applicable to benches, trees, banners, special event signs, public art, paving surfaces by property and or business owners)

### State Government Resources

The uniqueness and timing of this Specific Plan present opportunities for creative grant writing by the City/RDA and application for targeted funding from a variety of state agencies.

- California State Department of Transportation (CALTRANS)
  - Environmental and Mitigation Fund
  - Safe Routes to School Program
- California Department of Housing and Urban Development
  - Downtown Rebound Program (adaptive reuse)
- California Trade and Commerce Agency
  - California Main Street Program
- California Division of Tourism (CalTour)
- California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
  - Urban Forestry Program: Trees for the Millennium
  - Leaf-It-To-Us: Kids' Crusade for Trees
  - California ReLeaf
- State of California Resources Agency
  - Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program

### Federal Resources

Once again, the unique aspects of this Specific Plan also present multiple opportunities for creative grant writing and application for funding from a number of federal agencies.

- Department of Housing and Urban Development
  - Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
  - CDBG Technical Assistance
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
  - Rural Development Through Tourism Grants
- National Foundation on the Arts
  - National Endowment for the Arts Design Program
- Small Business Administration (SBA)
  - Guaranteed Loans (7a Program)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
  - Environmental Education Grants
  - Innovative Community Partnerships (ICP Grants)
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

- Job Access Grants Program
- Livable Communities Initiative
- US Department of Transportation (USDOT)
  - Millennium Trails Program

This comprehensive listing should be matched with specific projects within the City/RDA capital improvement program to structure a funding/financing strategy that is consistent with local resources and potential supplementary assistance from outside sources.



## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

# Environmental Documentation

A Program EIR has been prepared for the VORTEX Specific Plan. The Program EIR is intended to provide the environmental clearance for subsequent applications, that are submitted to obtain City and responsible agency approvals for discretionary actions required for site-specific development projects within the Specific Plan area. If determined necessary, an initial study will be prepared by the agency required to take the discretionary action for each future development application within the Specific Plan area to determine if a Subsequent or Supplemental EIR or other environmental documentation is necessary to comply with the CEQA. Sections 15162–15164 of the CEQA Guidelines state the conditions that are necessary for the preparation of a Subsequent or Supplemental EIR, or Addendum:

### Section 15162

- (a) When an EIR has been certified or a negative declaration adopted for a project, no subsequent EIR shall be prepared for that project unless the lead agency determines, on the basis of substantial evidence in the light of the whole record, one or more of the following:
  - (1) Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects;
  - (2) Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or
  - (3) New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted, shows any of the following:
    - (A) The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or negative declaration;
    - (B) Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR;
    - (C) Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible, and would substantially

reduce one or more significant effects of the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.

### Section 15163

- (a) The lead or responsible agency may choose to prepare a supplement to an EIR rather than a subsequent EIR if:
  - (1) Any of the conditions described in Section 15162 would require the preparation of a subsequent EIR, and
  - (2) Only minor additions or changes would be necessary to make the previous EIR adequately apply to the project in the changed situation.

### Section 15164

- (a) The lead agency or responsible agency shall prepare an addendum to a previously certified EIR if some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred.

In addition, Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines describes when a Program EIR can be used for later activities, as described below:

### Section 15168

- (c) Use with Later Activities. Subsequent activities in the program must be examined in the light of the Program EIR to determine whether an additional environmental document must be prepared.
  - (1) If a later activity would have effects that were not examined in the Program EIR, a new initial study would need to be prepared leading to either an EIR or a negative declaration.
  - (2) If the agency finds that pursuant to Section 15162, no new effects could occur or no new mitigation measures would be required, the agency can approve the activity as being within the scope of the project covered by the Program EIR, and no new environmental document would be required.
  - (3) An agency shall incorporate feasible mitigation measures and alternatives developed in the Program EIR into subsequent actions in the program.
  - (4) Where the subsequent activities involve site specific operations, the agency should use a written checklist or similar device to document the evaluation of the site and the activity to determine whether the environmental effects of the operation were covered in the Program EIR.

- (5) A Program EIR will be most helpful in dealing with subsequent activities if it deals with the effects of the program as specifically and comprehensively as possible. With a good and detailed analysis of the program, many subsequent activities could be found to be within the scope of the project described in the Program EIR, and no further environmental documents would be required.

If a Subsequent or Supplemental EIR is required, those documents can incorporate relevant information from the Program EIR by reference, and limit its focus to the particular characteristics and effects of the individual project. If, on the other hand, the City or responsible agency finds that the future project is consistent with the project described in this EIR, would have no new significant environmental effects not analyzed in this EIR, and would not require any new mitigation measures, it may approve the future project(s) without preparing additional environmental documentation. The City or other responsible agency will, however, in its future discretionary actions, continue to apply the Mitigation Measures identified in the Final Program EIR for this project and adopted by the City.

When public notice is required for a future discretionary approval, permit or development application that is consistent with this Program EIR and does not require subsequent environmental documentation, that notice will include a statement that a) the project is within the scope of this Program EIR, and, b) this Program EIR adequately describes and analyzes the environmental effects of that project for the purposes of CEQA.

# Specific Plan Administration

## General Administration

This Specific Plan and its provisions shall be implemented as the zoning for the site. In the event of a conflict between the provisions of this Specific Plan and the provisions identified in the City of Desert Hot Springs Municipal Code, this Specific Plan shall prevail. If this Specific Plan is silent regarding any development standard or process, the provisions identified in the Municipal Code shall prevail.

## Interpretation

In case of uncertainty or ambiguity of the meaning or intent of any provision of this Specific Plan, the Assistant City Manager or Director of Community Development (Director) has the authority to interpret the intent of the provision. The Director may, at his/her discretion, refer interpretations to the Planning Commission for consideration and action. Such a referral shall be accompanied by a written analysis of issues related to the interpretation. All interpretations made by the Director may be appealed to the Planning Commission in accordance with the appeal procedures set forth in the City's Municipal Code.

## Severability

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Specific Plan, or future amendments or additions hereto, is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of any court, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of the plan.

## Approval Authority

The responsibilities of the Director shall include administering, interpreting, and enforcing all requirements and standards of this Specific Plan, including the acceptance and processing of all land use permit applications. The Director or designated representative may approve, conditionally approve, or deny minor development plan permits that meet the requirements of this Specific Plan and requests for minor variances of Specific Plan standards. The Director holds authority for final approval and enforcement of building permits, certificates of occupancy, sign permits, and temporary use permits.

The Planning Commission may recommend for approval, conditional approval, or denial of conditional use permits, applications for variances, specific plan amendments, and appeals to Director actions to the City Council.

The City Council may approve, conditionally approve, or deny conditional use permits, applications for variances, specific plan amendments, and appeals to Planning Commission actions.

## Environmental Review

The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) serves primarily as a source of environmental information for the City of Desert Hot Springs, the lead agency for the project. The EIR describes the potential impacts that could result from the adoption of this Specific Plan. Subsequent development projects within this Specific Plan are anticipated and, while the EIR has been prepared as a project EIR (as defined by Section 15161 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines), subsequent projects that are within the scope of this EIR may be subject to a more limited environmental review process if deemed necessary by the Director.

## Review and Approval Process

A Preapplication Conference with the Director or his/her designee should be held before a proposed project can be submitted and accepted for processing, as identified in the City's Municipal Code. Preapplication conferences are recommended before the submittal of any land use permit or approval applications.

All applications for a development plan permit, conditional use permit, minor variance, or variance shall be subject to the Design Review process outlined in the City's Municipal Code. Because the successful implementation of this Specific Plan is dependent on the careful planning and synergistic relationship of the uses permitted in the project area, it will be extremely important to ensure that, as projects are developed at different times and phases, all new development is thoughtfully integrated into existing or proposed development within each planning area and between adjacent planning areas.

In particular, the internal circulation and open space systems are integral to the efficient use and interconnectivity of properties within this Specific Plan area. It is likely that the location and design of internal roadways and open space features in each planning area will be influenced by the first property owner to submit a proposed development for a planning area. The Director may therefore require an applicant to submit concept plans that illustrate open space and circulation systems for pedestrians, bicyclists, electric cars, golf carts, and other vehicles within the planning area, even on properties that are not owned or developed by the applicant.

The City recognizes that any such plans will be conceptual in nature and will not bind a particular property or property owner to a specific site design. The intent is to gain a comprehensive understanding of potential development and to ensure cohesive development that maximizes connectivity throughout this Specific Plan. The City strongly encourages

property owners to work together to design and develop entire planning areas at one time so that a comprehensive plan can be created.

## Development Plan Permit

Applications that comply with the provisions of this Specific Plan and do not require the approval of a conditional use permit may be approved or conditionally approved by the Director through a development plan permit. Uses requiring the approval of a development plan permit are identified in this Specific Plan as permitted uses (P). The development plan permit process shall be the same as that outlined in the City's Municipal Code, except that no hearing shall be required for approval of a Preliminary or final development plan permit. Development plan permits shall also be subject to the supplemental findings required as part of this Specific Plan.

Once the Director has taken administrative action on a preliminary development plan permit, the applicant, the owner or owners of the property subject to the development plan, and the Planning Commission shall be promptly notified of the Director's decision. The Director shall also present approvals or denials of preliminary development plan permit applications at the Planning Commission meeting following the date of action(s).

The decision of the Director shall be final and effective 14 days after a written determination has been made unless, within said time, a written appeal to the Planning Commission is filed by the applicant, property owners subject to the development plan, or by any member of the City Council or Planning Commission. Appeals shall be undertaken in compliance with the procedures outlined in the City's Municipal Code.

The approval of a project subject to a development plan permit is conditional on the privileges being utilized within one year after the effective date, and if they are not utilized or construction work is not begun within this time and carried on diligently in accordance with conditions imposed by the Director, this authorization shall become void, and any privileges, permit, or conditions granted shall have lapsed. Upon written request, the Director may grant one extension of an additional 12 months in compliance with the City's Municipal Code. Approved projects that will be carried out in two or more phases are not required to begin all phases of work within the 12-month approval window.

## Conditional Use Permits

Uses requiring the approval of a conditional use permit are identified in this Specific Plan. Uses in this Specific Plan requiring a conditional use permit shall be subject to the requirements and procedures identified in the City's Municipal Code. Uses shall be subject to the findings required for conditional use permits in the Municipal Code, as well as the supplemental findings required as part of this Specific Plan.



## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

The approval of a project subject to a Conditional Use Permit is conditional upon the privileges being utilized within one year after the effective date, and if they are not utilized or construction work is not begun within this time and carried on diligently in accordance with conditions imposed by the City Council, this authorization shall become void, and any privileges, permit, or conditions granted shall have lapsed. Upon written request, the Director may grant one extension of an additional 12 months in compliance with the City's Municipal Code. Approved projects that will be carried out in two or more phases are not required to begin all phases of work within the 12 month approval window.

### Temporary Use Permits

Temporary use permits identified in this Specific Plan shall be subject to the provisions of Chapter 17.46 of the City's Municipal Code.

### Minor Variance

Minor variances from the requirements and standards of this Specific Plan shall be subject to the provisions of the City's Municipal Code. In addition to the minor modifications permitted by this chapter, the Director shall have the authority to approve the expansion or reduction of the acreage covered by a given planning area within the Specific Plan by no more than 10 percent.

### Variance

Where practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships would occur as a result of the strict interpretation and application of the provisions of this Specific Plan, a variance may be considered subject to the requirements and findings of the City's Municipal Code.

### Amendments to this Specific Plan

Approval of this Specific Plan indicates acceptance by the City Council of a general framework for community development. Part of that framework establishes specific development regulations that constitute the zoning regulations for this Specific Plan. It is anticipated that certain modifications to the Specific Plan text, exhibits, and/or project may be necessary during the development of the project. Any modifications of the Specific Plan shall occur in accordance with the process prescribed in the City's Municipal Code. In all cases, Specific Plan amendments must be found to be in conformance with the objectives and intent of this Specific Plan.

Amendments may be requested at any time pursuant to Section 65453(a) of the California Government Code. Depending upon the nature of the proposed Specific Plan amendment, a supplemental environmental analysis may be required, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15162.

### Live-Work Units

Live-work units shall be processed through a development plan permit or conditional use permit, as identified within this Specific Plan. Live-work units shall not be subject to the requirements or procedures of the City's Municipal Code.

### Submittal Requirements

Projects subject to a Development Plan Permit or a Conditional Use Permit shall be required to submit the following as part of any entitlement application:

1. A site plan containing:
  - Dimensions, shape, and orientation of the parcel(s)
  - Placement of buildings and structures on the parcel(s)
  - Height, setbacks, bulk, and building materials
  - Distance between buildings or structures
  - Location, number, and layout of parking and loading spaces, including plans for shared parking
  - Internal vehicular patterns, bikeways, golf cart or electric car circulation, pedestrian circulation, and pedestrian safety features
  - Location, amount, and nature of landscaping, walls, and fences
  - Location, amount, and design plans for private open space, common open space, and public plaza areas, specifying location and extent of landscaping and irrigation systems
  - Placement, height, and direction of illumination of lighting features
  - Location, number, size, and height of signs (a subsequent master sign program shall be provided outlining the construction details of signs proposed for the application)
  - Location and method of screening refuse and storage areas, roof equipment, pipes, vents, utility equipment, and all equipment not contained in the main buildings of the development
  - Provisions for property- or homeowner association(s) where that method of management is proposed
  - Documentation identifying the existing and proposed square footage, residential units, and traffic generation in the specified planning area and verification that the proposed project is within the thresholds as set forth by this Specific Plan
  - Other information that the Director may require to make the necessary findings that the provisions of this Specific Plan are met

2. A comprehensive recycling plan consisting of a construction-debris recycling program and a general recycling program for residential, office, and commercial uses prior to building permit approval.
3. A blowsand mitigation plan prepared by a licensed civil engineer and submitted to the City Engineer for plan check and approval. The blowsand mitigation plan shall identify the specific measures and describe the specific procedures that will be implemented to adequately mitigate blowsand impacts on all of the project's on-site and off-site improvements. All improvements for blowsand protection shall be depicted on the project's grading and drainage plan.

### Required Findings

Applications for new projects within this Specific Plan area may be approved or conditionally approved if it is determined that the project can, based on the application, plans, and materials submitted, meet these Specific Plan objectives (where applicable). Overall, the project shall:

- Establish a unified vision for the project site in order to guide a cohesive, complementary mix of uses structured around a comprehensive set of circulation and infrastructure systems.
- Create a new mixed-use development regional destination that stimulates a major new source of tax base for the City of Desert Hot Springs.
- Plan for an appropriate mix of commercial, office, entertainment, destination resort, civic center, and residential uses within the context of a master-planned Downtown Center, to meet the trade area's growing demand and build in the flexibility to respond to changes in the market.
- Apply innovative planning and design solutions to create a sense of place at multiple scales.
- Provide new housing concepts for the community, encouraging high quality, high density residential units that appeal to residents seeking shorter commutes to jobs, restaurants, and entertainment opportunities.
- Take advantage of the area's location and exposure by establishing a welcoming Central Place within the City characterized by distinct and attractive signage, architecture, and landscaping, both on-site and in the public right-of-way.
- Implement a circulation concept that optimizes circulation for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic, internalizes pedestrian activity to buffer it from the vehicular traffic along major roadways, and establishes connectivity between uses infused with pedestrian-friendly and walkable spaces.

- Not exceed the traffic thresholds established by the certified EIR.
- Not exceed maximum development thresholds established for the project as a whole.

## **Implementation, Maintenance, and Monitoring**

### **Residential Development Transfer Program**

A tracking system shall be established to monitor the number of residential units permitted in each planning area, the number of constructed units, remaining development potential, any approved transfers of residential units, and the resulting density of each planning area after any approved transfers.

### **Traffic Thresholds**

For each planning area addressed by an applicant, the applicant shall provide an analysis that evaluates the traffic impacts of existing development, potential traffic impact of the proposed development, and the remaining traffic threshold (ADT, AM/PM peak-hour trips, etc.) for any undeveloped land in the planning area. The analysis shall be prepared by a City-approved traffic engineer and submitted to the City Traffic Engineer for approval.

### **Parking Management**

Parking management in this Specific Plan will entail a combination of providing physical spaces for parking and managing those spaces so that they are properly allocated to and used by residents, visitors, and businesses. Parking management can help prevent situations such as permanent residents using guest parking spaces instead of the enclosed parking spaces allocated to them.

For developments using shared parking, a tracking system shall be established to determine whether a new or revised shared parking study is necessary due to changes in tenants or uses.

Covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&Rs) for this Specific Plan shall address the shared nature of parking for the overall project. It is the intent that residential uses proposed within the Specific Plan area would be allowed to use parking spaces within commercial areas in off-peak hours. Mechanisms shall be instituted in the owner associations' CC&Rs that clearly define this relationship and how the parking will be managed throughout the project.

### **Owner Associations**

It is envisioned that the majority of the properties within this Specific Plan will be managed by one or more property-, business-, or homeowner association(s). If roadways internal to the project remain under private

ownership, then those roadways will be privately maintained by one or more of the owner associations.

Prior to the approval of any new development, the applicant shall provide a clear description of the role of the association in providing and maintaining private roadways, amenities, landscaping, and other improvements.

### **Right-of-Way Transfer**

The right-of-way previously used for the abandoned portions of First Street shall be consolidated with adjacent property(ies), as appropriate to facilitate development of the Specific Plan.

### **Financing**

Several mechanisms will need to be considered to fund the public improvements necessary to develop this Specific Plan. These improvements include, but are not limited to, traffic signals, access driveways and drive aisles, and median improvements. Some of the public improvements are incremental in nature and can be borne by an individual developer. Other public improvements benefit the project as a whole and may need to be constructed and paid for prior to buildout of the Specific Plan. In these instances, the City must create a mechanism by which each property owner and developer pays their fair share cost of the public improvements.

### **Reimbursement Agreement**

One method to distribute and capture costs for larger public improvements is to create a reimbursement agreement. A reimbursement agreement is a contract between the City, property owners, and/or developers under which parties can be reimbursed for funding public improvements that benefit properties beyond their own and/or are greater in size than would be required by their development.

One example of such an improvement is the creation of a new signalized intersection. Although one developer may pay the initial costs of installing the new intersection to create access to their own property, the new intersection is necessary for the full buildout of the Specific Plan and will enhance access for adjacent property owners within the Specific Plan. Accordingly, the developer would seek to be reimbursed for the costs of installing the new intersection, less their own fair share portion of the costs.

To create a reimbursement agreement, the City will need to first perform an analysis to determine the total costs of public improvements required for this Specific Plan. Then, a fair share analysis will need to be conducted to determine the distribution of costs for each planning area and type of development. Both of these analyses will form the basis for a reimbursement agreement, to be created and managed by the City.

*This page intentionally left blank.*

## Appendix B: Infrastructure Plan



Desert Hot Springs, California





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

# Appendix B: Infrastructure Plan

### Traffic Circulation System

#### Overview

The Vortex Specific Plan includes a proposed redevelopment of approximately 150 acres in central downtown Desert Hot Springs, California. The redevelopment includes retail, office, residential, hotel, restaurant, institutional (church), civic center, and related commercial land uses. The area is bordered on the north and south by the roadways of Second Street and Buena Vista Avenue, respectively, and generally bordered on the west and east by West Drive/Cholla Drive and Mesquite Avenue, respectively. Twenty-five intersections are included within this project study area. The purpose of the traffic circulation element of this Specific Plan is to forecast future traffic volumes and evaluate issues associated with implementation of the proposed Vortex Specific Plan and to identify potential mitigation measures as necessary to meet City of Desert Hot Springs circulation network level of service (LOS) criteria.

#### Traffic Analysis

The traffic circulation study analyzes existing conditions (2008), Vortex Specific Plan buildout conditions (Year 2023), and the general plan buildout condition (Year 2030). For project year scenarios (Year 2023 and Year 2030), the intersection and roadway link volumes are projected by combining existing and future through baseline-traffic volumes with traffic volumes generated by the proposed Vortex Specific Plan land, uses. Specific Plan traffic forecasts are based on trip rates from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation (7th ed.) The distribution of project traffic volumes is based on the circulation network provided with implementation of the Vortex Specific Plan and is consistent with the existing regional traffic distribution.

#### Findings and Recommendations

The existing (2008) study area intersections are operating at LOS C or better based on existing peak hour intersection volumes and all roadway links are operating below 24-hour LOS D capacity.

The target level of service to be maintained throughout the project study area has been established by the City General Plan policy as LOS D.

For Year 2023 Vortex Specific Plan traffic conditions, new traffic signal installation is required to mitigate traffic impacts on the study circulation network and meet level of service requirements.

*Improvements to be completed by 2023 include traffic signal installations at the intersections of Palm Boulevard and Second Street and Palm Boulevard and Buena Vista Avenue. Each of these intersections is identified in the Vortex Specific Plan as a "Gateway" intersection which includes signalization and special aesthetic treatments. Roadway improvements and cross-sections as identified in the Vortex Specific Plan are consistent with and provide acceptable level of service for forecast traffic volumes.*

No additional mitigation is necessary for the Vortex Specific Plan study area in the General Plan Buildout year of 2030. All intersections are anticipated to operate at LOS C or better and all roadway links will operate below 24-hour Level of Service D capacity.

**Reference: "Traffic Circulation Study for Vortex Specific Plan"; VA Consulting, Inc.; February, 2008.**

### Water, Wastewater, and Recycled Water

#### Potable Water Master Plan

The proposed water plan is shown in the following exhibit, Conceptual Water Master Plan. The water master plan was designed to accommodate the Vortex Project's domestic water demand. The Mission Springs Water District (MSWD) will provide water service for the project, which involves the redevelopment of existing downtown area.

The existing water use of the project area based on information provided by MSWD is about 347 acre feet per year (AFY). The total demand for the proposed project will be about 546 AFY. Therefore, the proposed project will have additional demand of 199 AFY which can be met by current sources.

The on-site water distribution system with upgrades to existing system as shown on the exhibit, will include pipes ranging from 8 to 16 inches in diameter.

A water supply assessment and water supply verification report for the project were prepared based on MSWD's 2005 Urban Water Management Plan. The proposed conceptual water master plan has been prepared consistent with the water supply assessment and adequate resources are currently available.

#### Wastewater Master Plan

MSWD will also provide wastewater service for the project. The upgrade and improvement to existing collection system are shown in the following exhibit Conceptual Wastewater Master Plan. The sewer flow generation

rates for the project and proposed upgrades and improvements to the existing collection system are based on the district's guidelines and specifications. The network of collection system includes existing, proposed, and upgraded sewer mains ranging from 8 to 18 inches. The project is expected to generate an average daily flow of about 300 AFY (0.27 million gallons per day), and current resources are available to handle this demand.

#### Recycled Water

As stated in its 2005 Urban Water Management Plan, the MSWD plans to incorporate recycled water into its supply mix by 2015. The proposed project's irrigation/landscaping water demand for green belts and open areas is about 170 AFY. Therefore, a separate nonpotable irrigation system will be constructed, which will be initially served by the potable water system. Subsequently, a recycled water source could easily be connected to the nonpotable supply system serving the project at any time in the future when and if recycled water is available.

**Reference: "Water Supply Assessment and Verification for the Vortex Project" VA Consulting, Inc., March, 2008.**

### Drainage and Water Quality

#### Master Drainage Plan

The Desert Hot Springs Master Drainage Plan calls for regional facilities to be constructed to serve the Specific Plan area. The redevelopment of the Specific Plan area will likely cause flow increases to downstream properties. Therefore, redevelopment will require the construction of drainage improvements to provide adequate flood protection to these properties. The following paragraphs describe the proposed Master Drainage Plan facilities that affect the Specific Plan area, including the following:

- Line A. This facility has been identified in the Master Drainage Plan as a trapezoidal earthen channel, of approximately 4 feet deep with a 7-foot-wide channel bottom.
- Line A-1. This facility has been planned as a 42-inch pipe at its upstream origin and incrementally increases to a 72-inch pipe at the junction with Line A.
- Line A-1a. This facility is planned as a 36-inch pipe.
- Line A-3. This facility is planned to be a 32-inch pipe at its upstream origin, which incrementally increases to a 76-inch pipe at its junction with Line A.
- Lines A-3a, A-3b, and A-3c. These facilities will all serve the Specific Plan area.



### Master Drainage Plan

Estimated Cost: \$1,900,000

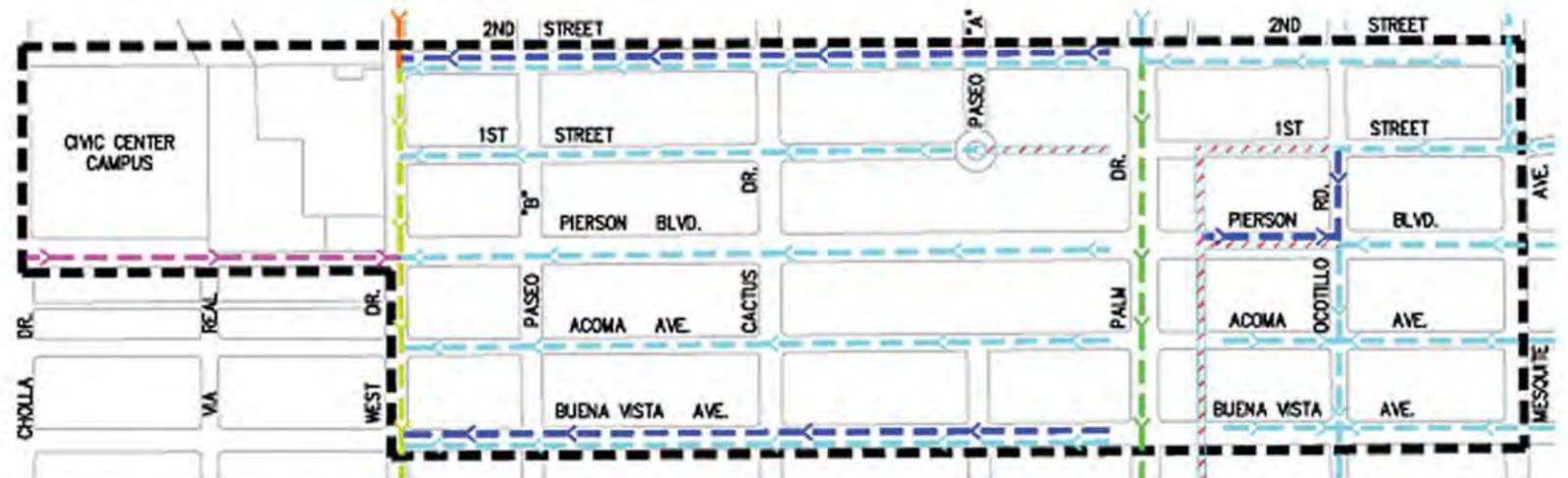


Estimated Cost: \$500,000

### Conceptual Potable Water Master Plan

**Legend:**

- Specific Plan Boundary
- - - Existing Water Lines
- - - Upgrade Existing 6" to 8" Water Line (Proposed)



Estimated Cost: \$850,000

### Conceptual Wastewater Master Plan

- Specific Plan Boundary
- - - Existing 8" Sewer Main
- - - Existing 10" Sewer Main
- - - Existing 15" Sewer Main
- - - Existing 18" Sewer Main
- - - Proposed 8" Sewer Main
- - - Upgrade 10" to 12" Sewer Main (Proposed)
- - - Abandon 8" Sewer Main

# Water, Wastewater and Drainage Plans





## Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

### FEMA/Floodplain Management

The effective Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for the Specific Plan area currently shows the vast majority of the Specific Plan area to be located within Zone X, that is not within the 100-year flood event. Therefore, a FIRM map revision is not a floodplain management requirement as defined by FEMA regulations.

### National Pollution Discharge Elimination System/Water Quality

Best Management practices that would be required to address water quality runoff from individual development proposals should be conditioned on individual development based on site-specific conditions.

**Reference: “Conceptual Drainage and Water Quality Plans for the Vortex Specific Plan,” VA Consulting, Inc., February, 2008.**

### Dry Utility Distribution Systems

#### Gas

Southern California Gas Company is the gas provider for the City of Desert Hot Springs. The existing and conceptual gas plans are shown in the following exhibit. Existing gas main sizes are sufficient for the proposed Specific Plan and have been reviewed by a Southern California Gas Company planner assigned to the Desert Hot Springs area.

**Gas main abandonment will be needed for a small portion on 1st Street between proposed Paseo A and Palm Boulevard as shown on the Land Use Plan and Planning Areas.**

A leakage survey study will be needed prior to any structure removal and street improvement construction. Southern California Gas Company will need City-approved plans for gas main depth review on street improvements. The costs of improvements can be estimated by the Southern California Gas Company only after receiving the development plans.

#### Electricity

Southern California Edison is the electricity provider for the City of Desert Hot Springs. The existing and conceptual electricity plans are shown in the following exhibit. All existing overhead electricity lines will be removed and relocated underground to the dedicated easements.

Costs of removal of existing electricity lines will be determined by Edison after receiving City-approved plans for the Specific Plan area. Edison's Planning Department will need City-approved plans prior to construction for electricity line sizing and to determine costs for labor and materials.

### Telephone

Verizon is the telephone service provider for the City of Desert Hot Springs. The existing and conceptual telephone plans are shown in the following exhibit. Verizon's central office is at the northeast corner of the 1st Street and Palm Boulevard intersection, and serves all areas north of Interstate 10.

With the development of the Specific Plan area, all existing overhead telephone lines shall be removed and relocated underground into the dedicated easements. Removal of existing telephone lines will be under separate cost, which will be determined by Verizon Construction Department after receiving final development plans.

There will be a portion of telephone line re-routing between Palm Boulevard and Ocotillo Road, which has been estimated to have a cost to exceed \$1.2 million. However, proper coordination with Verizon at next planning stage of the development may result a substantial cost saving.

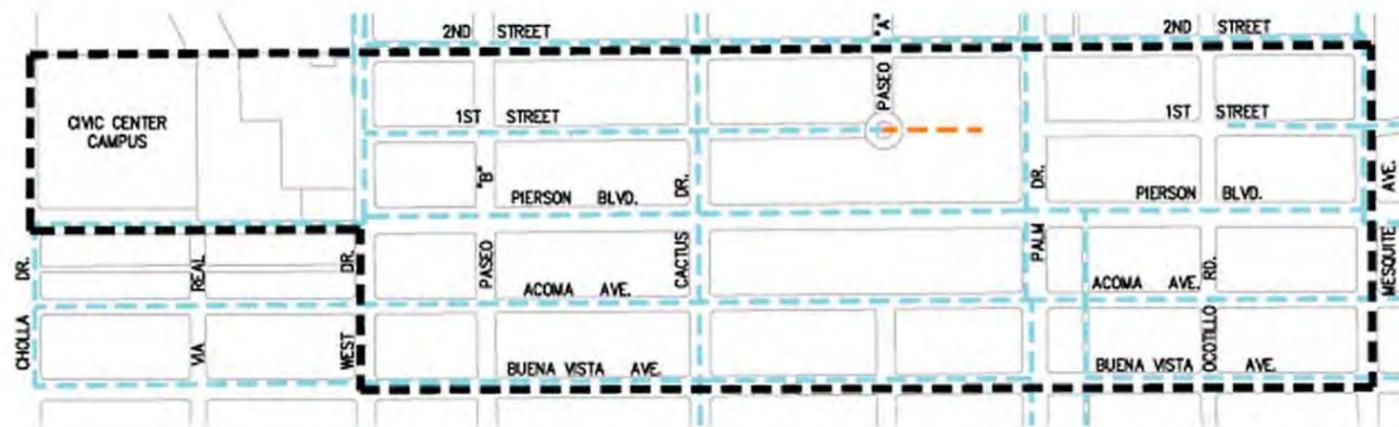
An engineering study by Verizon is required prior to any construction and has been estimated to cost slightly more than \$10,000. In case Verizon's central office needs to be relocated per area building designs, the cost of relocation has been estimated to exceed \$10 million. However, this Specific Plan does not propose this relocation.

### Television/Cable

Time Warner Cable is the TV cable provider for the City of Desert Hot Springs, and the existing and conceptual cable plans are shown in the following exhibit. All existing overhead cable lines shall be removed and relocated underground to dedicated easements. The associated cost for year 2008 has been estimated at \$95,000 per mile and \$57,000 per mile for fiber-optic lines.

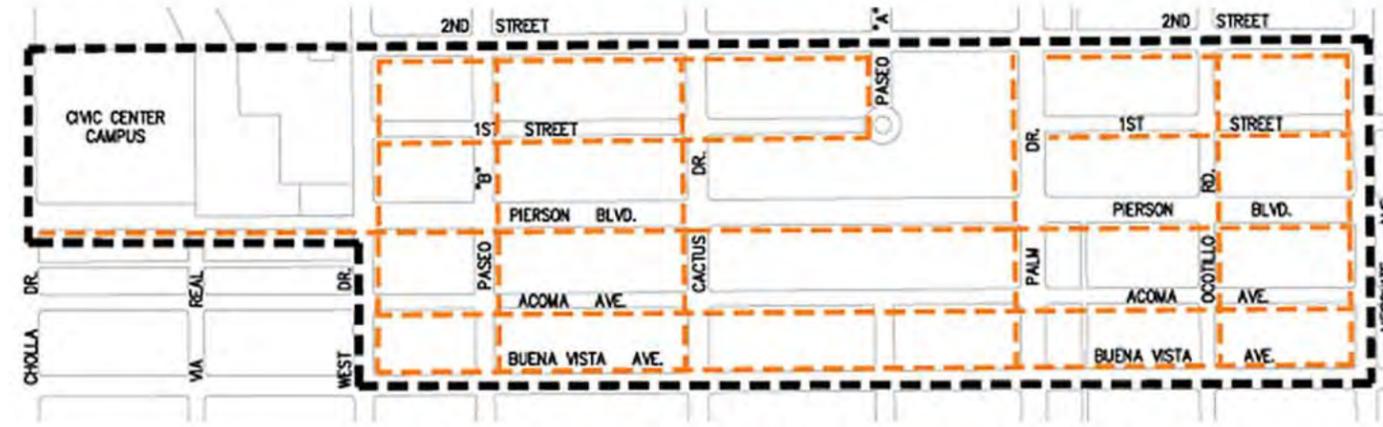
The Specific Plan has an estimated street improvement length of six miles, which makes a development cost of \$912,000 for television cable improvements. Cable and fiber-optic costs after year 2008 should be estimated with a 10 percent increase per mile. Proper coordination is required with Time Warner Cable Planning Department and Engineering Department for accurate design, labor, and material costs.

**Reference: “Dry Utility Study for the Vortex Specific Plan” VA Consulting, Inc., March, 2008.**



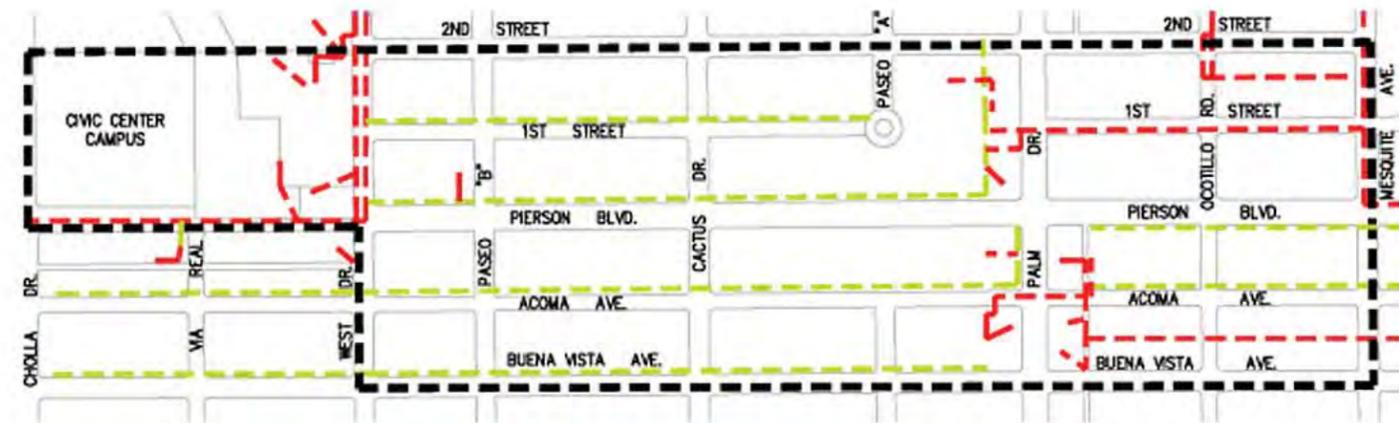
- Legend:**
- Specific Plan Boundary
  - Existing Gas Line
  - Abandon Gas Line

**Gas**



- Legend:**
- Specific Plan Boundary
  - Proposed Line (Underground)

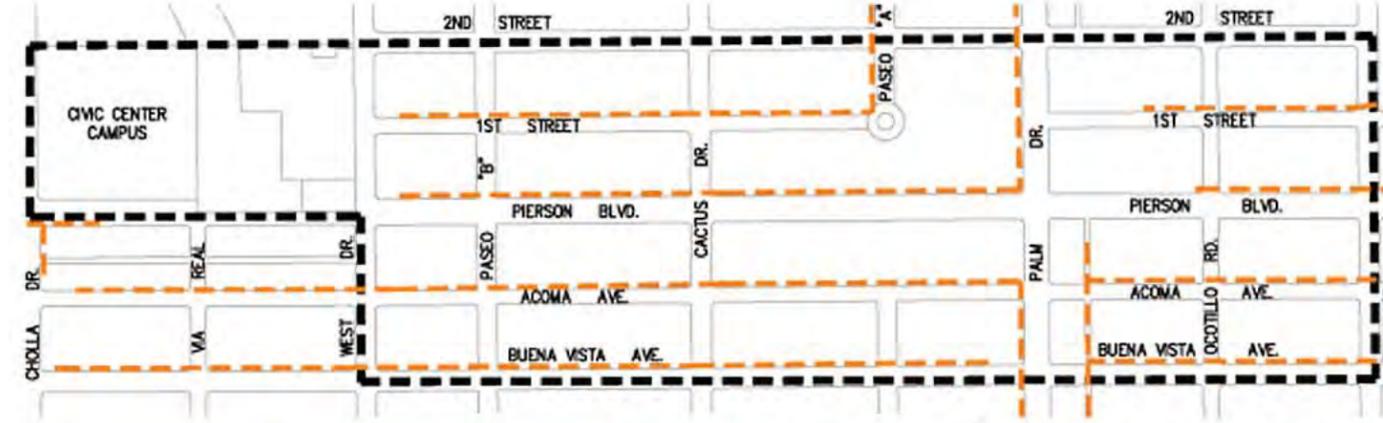
**Electricity**



**Estimated Cost: \$1,200,000**

- Legend:**
- Specific Plan Boundary
  - Existing Buried Line
  - Proposed Line (Underground)

**Telephone**



**Estimated Cost: \$900,000**

- Legend:**
- Specific Plan Boundary
  - Proposed Cable Line (Underground)

**Television**

**Dry Utility Systems Plans**



*This page intentionally left blank.*

**Appendix C:  
General Plan  
Consistency**



Desert Hot Springs, California





# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

**Table C-1  
Consistency with City of Desert Hot Springs  
General Plan Goals and Policies**

Relevant Policy	Compliance with Policy
<b>ADMINISTRATION ELEMENT</b>	
<b>Goal 1: Comprehensive and integrated administration and implementation of all elements of the Desert Hot Springs General Plan through consistent and effective policies and programs.</b>	<i>Not applicable.</i> This Goal does not apply to specific development projects.
<b>Policy 2</b> The City shall provide for the use of Specific Plans as a preferred method of detailed and systematic implementation of the General Plan.	<i>Consistent</i> – The Vortex Specific Plan establishes a mix of land uses and associated infrastructure to allow for the redevelopment of the City’s downtown in furtherance of many of the City’s General Plan policies.
<b>Policy 4</b> On a periodic and on-going basis, the City shall examine and review the long-term implications of General Plan policies and programs as they relate to the City’s ability to provide public services and facilities.	<i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan includes development of public facilities/services, which includes a potential location for the expansion of City offices such as an Economic Development and Planning/Engineering Building, as well as a Business Development Incubator and Chamber of Commerce offices. The Specific Plan also plans for a 25.86-acre Civic Center Campus at the northwest corner of Pierson Boulevard and West Drive that currently contains various public facilities such as City Council Chambers, police and fire stations, senior center, library, and temporary city office units. The Specific Plan would expand its role as a public facilities hub by planning for the public/private cooperative development of a new City Hall and the Boys and Girls Club and Community Center within the Civic Center Campus. Additionally, the Specific Plan includes a development plan structured around a comprehensive circulation and infrastructure system for long-term viability of the Specific Plan.
<b>Policy 5</b> The City shall assure that properly filed development applications shall be processed in an expeditious and timely manner.	<i>Consistent</i> – Upon adoption and certification of the Specific Plan EIR, individual development projects within the scope of the Specific Plan EIR would be processed expeditiously since only a limited environmental review process would be necessary.
<b>Policy 6</b> Master facility and similar plans shall be utilized by the City to address the recreation, drainage/flood control, infrastructure, utility management, traffic control, and other facility needs of the community.	<i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan involves preparation of the Water Master Plan and Wastewater Master Plan to accommodate the water and sewer demands of the proposed project. Additionally, drainage and flood control infrastructure would be constructed in accordance with the Master Drainage Plan.
<b>LAND USE ELEMENT</b>	
<b>Goal 1: A balance mix of functionally integrated land uses meeting general social and economic needs of the community through simplified, compatible and consistent land use and zoning designations.</b>	<i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan allows a mix of land uses such as residential, commercial, public, institutional, entertainment, and recreation/resort uses, thereby functionally integrating living, working, shopping, recreational and destination resort amenities.
<b>Goal 2: A resort residential community of desirable neighborhoods, a complementary employment base and a variety of community facilities.</b>	<i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan allows a mix of land uses such as residential, commercial, public, institutional, entertainment, and recreation/resort uses, thereby functionally integrating living, working, shopping, recreational and destination resort amenities.
<b>Policy 3</b> The City shall integrate land use analysis and planning as an essential part of development of a master strategic plan for economic development.	<i>Consistent</i> – The Vortex Specific Plan is a planning and design guide that integrates a mixture of land uses such as residential, office, commercial, entertainment, and destination resort on a 151.6-acre site. The Specific Plan would allow for development of up to approximately 847,300 square feet of commercial, retail, office, restaurant, civic center, and entertainment uses, as well as up to 504 residential units and 100 hotel/timeshare units. Such a master planned development would prevent the existing fragmented, low-scale, resort -oriented development pattern in the region and allow formation of developments that supports a wide range of work opportunities that could stimulate economic development.
<b>Policy 4</b> Enhance the character and viability of the City’s commercial areas, primarily in the Palm Drive corridor, by integrating nearby higher density residential uses with retail and office commercial development.	<i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan would redevelop and revitalize the City’s traditional Old Town area along the intersection of Palm Drive and Pierson Boulevard. The mixed-use development core would be situated along both sides of Palm Drive, north of Pierson Boulevard. The mixed-use development core would provide various community retail and professional office uses integrated with residential units (live-work units, attached single-family, and attached multifamily). Additionally, high density residential districts would be provided adjacent to the mixed-use development core district.
<b>Policy 5</b> The City shall assign Specific Plan overlay designations to land located in the City’s incorporated limits and Sphere-of- Influence to guide and assure an effective and integrated mix of commercial, office, industrial and residential uses.	<i>Consistent</i> – The project area is designated as Commercial (C-G), High-Density Residential (R-H), and Medium Density Residential (R-M) by the City’s General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The proposed Specific Plan would create different overlay districts that integrate community retail and services, high-density residential, private institutional, public facilities/services, and a green infrastructure system, thereby directly supporting this policy.
<b>Policy 7</b> In-fill development shall be encouraged by prioritizing capital improvements in the developed areas of the City.	<i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan involves redevelopment of the old downtown area around the intersection of Palm Drive at Pierson Boulevard, which is the City’s principal commercial corridor. The Phased Capital Improvement Program included in the Specific Plan identifies necessary infrastructure improvements and the estimated project budget and funding mechanisms for the improvements.



# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

**Table C-1  
Consistency with City of Desert Hot Springs  
General Plan Goals and Policies**

Relevant Policy	Compliance with Policy
<b>CIRCULATION ELEMENT</b>	
<b>Goal 1: A circulation network that efficiently, safely and economically moves people, vehicles, and goods using transportation facilities that meet the current demands and projected needs of the City, while maintaining and protecting its residential and spa resort character.</b>	<i>Consistent</i> – See below.
<b>Policy 1</b> Establish and maintain a master plan of roads, which sets forth detailed improvement plans and priority schedules for implementation, to assure minimal levels of mid-block roadway and intersection operations at LOS C and LOS D, respectively.	<i>Consistent</i> – As determined by the Traffic Circulation Study, dated February 2008, implementation of the Specific Plan would not result in exceedance of LOS C for the midblock roadway and LOS D for intersection operations.
<b>Policy 4</b> Encourage expansion of the service area and the ridership of the public transit systems operated by the Sunline Transit Agency within the City.	<i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan includes a planned development of the Sunline transit station at the corner of Pierson Drive and West Drive, which would facilitate long-term expansion of diverse transportation choices and increase public transportation ridership within the City.
<b>Policy 5</b> As a means of reducing traffic associated with work-related out-migration, make every reasonable effort to enhance the City's jobs/housing balance.	<i>Consistent</i> – One of the project objectives for the Specific Plan is to provide a wide range of work opportunities for residents in order to achieve a jobs/housing balance. The current jobs/housing ratio for the City is housing rich at 0.86. The Specific Plan would provide approximately 1,695 jobs and 504 residential units, resulting in a 3.36 jobs/housing ratio for the Specific Plan area. At buildout of the Specific Plan in 2020, the jobs/housing balance for the City would be enhanced from 0.51 without project to 0.59 with project.
<b>Policy 6</b> Promote the use of multi-occupant modes of transportation, and the shifting of employment-related trips out of current peak traffic periods.	<i>Consistent</i> - The Specific Plan includes planned development of the Sunline transit station at the corner of Pierson Drive and West Drive that serves both City Hall and downtown, which would facilitate ridership of public transportation within the City.
<b>Policy 7</b> Develop and encourage the use of continuous and convenient bicycle routes and multi-use trails to places of employment, shopping centers, schools, and other high activity areas with potential for increased bicycle use.	<i>Consistent</i> – The Green Infrastructure System of the Specific Plan includes a comprehensive and interconnected system of parks and recreation features that includes bicycle routes and pedestrian trails. The Specific Plan was designed to link each development area to neighboring properties and provide adequate pedestrian access from public transportation stops to adjacent building entrances and pedestrian connections to surrounding uses.
<b>PARKS AND RECREATION ELEMENT</b>	
<b>Goal: A balanced quality system of parks, trails, and recreational areas that support a broad range of activities, as well as cultural, and passive open space enjoyment opportunities for current and future residents.</b>	<i>Consistent</i> – See below.
<b>Policy 2</b> The City shall plan, develop and maintain quality outdoor recreational and open space areas, which utilize and enhance the unique aspects of the desert environment and are properly developed for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.	<i>Consistent</i> – The Central Plaza would function as a multipurpose recreational area for residents and visitors in the Vortex Specific Plan. A combination of interactive water features and an outdoor amphitheater wrapped by landscaping would be provided within this outdoor space. A downtown park would also be developed west and adjacent to the Central Plaza. The downtown park would include a children's playground for the recreational use of residents and visitors, DesertScape Garden for educational programs, and Vortex Festival Park for major special events.
<b>COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT</b>	
<b>Goal 1: City-wide design and development which enhances the community's distinctive character as a desert-oriented resort residential community and preserves and enhances the natural scenic resources in harmony with the built environment.</b>	<i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan includes design guidelines that establish design framework to ensure the community's distinctive character as a desert-oriented resort residential community. Instead of recommending a particular architectural style, the Specific Plan provides consistency in styles throughout the project that are compatible with Contemporary Desert Architecture, as illustrated in the Architectural Design Guidelines of the Specific Plan. Such an approach in design would provide necessary flexibility while maintaining the community's character as a desert resort.
<b>Goal 2: Variety of community design, architecture and landscaping compatible with the City's desert setting and surrounding development.</b>	<i>Consistent</i> – See below.
<b>Policy1</b> Private and public sector development projects shall equally apply City community design standards, thereby protecting the community's scenic viewsheds, providing community cohesion and enhancing the image of Desert Hot Springs as a resort residential community.	<i>Consistent</i> - The Specific Plan incorporates resource conservation practices such as integrating the natural environment into the proposed project. One of the project objectives for the Specific Plan is to provide adequate, visible, and publicly accessible open space; and in addition, offer unobstructed views and vistas of the surrounding mountains and desert environment to the public. The natural grade slopes downward in a southwesterly direction, and such sloping topography supports mixed-use multiple-story buildings that gain visibility from surrounding roadways and provide expansive views without dominating the skyline.



# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

**Table C-1  
Consistency with City of Desert Hot Springs  
General Plan Goals and Policies**

Relevant Policy	Compliance with Policy
<p><b>Policy 2</b> The planning and design of residential neighborhoods shall provide distinctive and characteristics design elements along public rights-of-way within the project creating a recognizable sense of place.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – Consistent landscape design that transcends parcel boundaries and defines open space areas would act as an overall unifying element. The landscape plan would provide guidelines for the treatment of areas within the Specific Plan, including the surrounding streets, boulevards, parkways, development edges, project entries, and open space areas. Consistent design themes would also be used for all the street furnishings and exterior lighting elements throughout the project.</p>
<p><b>Policy 4</b> Commercial development and mixed use projects shall consists of integrated design that incorporate safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian-oriented circulation, safe and convenient ingress and egress, shared parking, screened outdoor storage/loading and other noisy or unsightly areas, and protected outdoor seating areas, lighting, signage and the planting of mature landscaping to provide an immediate effect of permanency and quality.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan incorporates a pedestrian-oriented plan that allows public plazas and pocket parks to be linked with pedestrian walkways through retail and residential areas, connecting open space areas and allowing future residents and visitors to travel within the site without relying upon personal vehicles. The Pierson and Palm intersection is planned as a fully signalized intersection with a purely pedestrian phase included in the signal sequence program in order to allow pedestrians to cross in any direction, including diagonally, during the dedicated pedestrian phase. The Specific Plan also strategically places pedestrian activity near major pedestrian thoroughways, allows shared parking, and permits limited outdoor dining opportunities. Such intersections would include themed street lighting, landscape median sections, and bollards to define pedestrian crosswalks to emphasize the visual cohesiveness. The Specific Plan specifies a single “DesertScape Palette” to be applied uniformly to all streets, parking areas, and other public spaces within the downtown area. In this manner, an area-wide “landscape overlay” district approach is created, which would expand the impact of landscaping beyond the traditional limits of a hierarchy of street right-of-way corridors.</p>
<p><b>Policy 5</b> Detailed landscape architectural and special signage designs, which reflect the character of the development, shall be required for City and project entries, scenic roadways and other City focal points.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – A signage system and a landscaping theme are incorporated in the design guidelines of the proposed project. The design guidelines for the proposed project contain “Vortex Gateway Intersections” identifying the major entrances to the project area. Various design guidelines, such as landscaping and pedestrian zones, are applicable (or applied) to these intersections.</p>
<p><b>Policy 7</b> Integrate native and other appropriate desert landscape materials and site-sensitive architectural designs into all public and private building projects to enhance the community’s cohesion between the built and natural environment.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> –The landscaping theme found in the Vortex Specific Plan design guidelines is influenced by the desert climate. Landscaping consists of native plant materials and species. The Vortex Specific Plan architectural designs place development on a diagonal, horizontal orientation, intended to optimize solar and wind energy impacts on community.</p>
<p><b>Policy 10</b> Lighting shall be limited to the minimum height, number and intensity of fixtures needed to provide security and identification in residential, commercial, and industrial development, taking every reasonable measure to preserve the community’s night skies.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> –The Lighting Design guidelines states that exterior lighting shall be designed to protect the desert sky as well as the Palomar Observatory’s nighttime sky. Therefore, the guidelines prohibit blinking, flashing, or oscillating lights and sets standards on lighting levels, types of lighting and fixtures, and the location of lighting.</p>
<p><b>Policy 13</b> Overhead utility lines shall be undergrounded to the greatest extent practical through the establishment of an underground program and guidelines. Overhead utility lines along scenic roadways shall have first priority for City and other funding for utility undergrounding.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan includes design guidelines recommending, where feasible, facilities such as sewer, gas, water, electric, telephone, and communications equipment be installed underground.</p>
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT</b>	
<p><b>Goal 1: A broadly based, healthy and balanced economy that provides a full range of economic and employment opportunities.</b></p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> - The Specific Plan encompasses approximately 151.6 acres and provides a variety of economic development opportunities through planning for an appropriate mix of commercial, office, entertainment, resort, and residential uses. The Specific Plan would provide development and design guidelines to establish a regional lifestyle destination place with urban trails, day spas, hotel, restaurant, and entertainment development, thereby creating a potentially new market area and tax base for the City to the surrounding communities.</p>
<p><b>Goal 2: Continued growth, which assures the maintenance of a revenue base adequate to support present and future public services and facilities needs.</b></p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – At buildout, the Specific Plan development would provide opportunities for approximately 381,600 square feet of retail building space, 80,400 square feet of restaurant building space, and 290,500 square feet of office building space, which are revenue-generating development that create employment. Such commercial development would support the destination resort/hotel and timeshare development, thereby providing an opportunity for economic development through employment, shopping, entertainment, and housing for residents, employees, and visitors.</p>
<p><b>Policy 1</b> Establish and maintain the City’s role as an important commercial center serving the Desert Hot Springs area and the upper Coachella valley.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan encompasses approximately 151.6 acres and provides a variety of economic development opportunities through planning an appropriate mix of commercial, office, entertainment, resort, and residential uses. The Specific Plan would provide development and design guidelines to establish a regional lifestyle destination place with urban trails, day spas, hotel, restaurant, and entertainment development, thereby creating a potentially new market area and tax base for the City to the surrounding communities.</p>



# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

**Table C-1  
Consistency with City of Desert Hot Springs  
General Plan Goals and Policies**

Relevant Policy	Compliance with Policy
<p><b>Policy 2</b> Actively solicit employment and revenue generating development, including resort, commercial and industrial project compatible with the City's General Plan.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – At buildout, the Specific Plan development would provide opportunities for approximately 381,600 square feet of retail building space, 80,400 square feet of restaurant building space, and 290,500 square feet of office building space, which are revenue generating development that create employment. Such commercial development would support the destination resort hotel/timeshare development, thereby providing an opportunity for economic development through employment, shopping, entertainment, and housing for residents, employees, and visitors.</p>
<p><b>Policy 7</b> Adopt and implement plans and development guidelines, which encourage and enhance quality development and renovation in the downtown area, and along the Highway 62 and Interstate-10 corridors.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan would establish development and design guidelines for approximately 151.6 acres that encompasses the City's historic downtown. These guidelines would direct the land use types and design of the development, including architectural style of the buildings, roadway system, public infrastructure, lighting, etc. Such development and design guidelines would improve and transform the currently underutilized downtown area.</p>
<p><b>Policy 12</b> Encourage and promote special activities and uses, which strengthen and promote the City's image, prestige and attractiveness as a resort and tourist/visitor destination.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan is a planning guide that establishes a regional lifestyle destination place with urban trails, day spas, hotel, restaurant, and entertainment development. The mixed-use core development area is planned for a new major health and wellness resort with complete spa facilities, retail shops, central court with pool, and resort hotel/timeshare units, which is consistent with this policy of promoting the City's image as a resort and tourist destination.</p>
<b>AIR QUALITY ELEMENT</b>	
<p><b>Goal: Good regional air quality preserved and enhanced for the protection of the health and welfare of the community as a whole.</b></p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – See below.</p>
<p><b>Policy 3</b> The City shall promote the development of pedestrian-oriented retail centers, as well as community-wide multi-use trails and bike paths, dedicated bike lanes and other desirable alternatives to motor vehicle traffic.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan has been designed so that public plazas and pocket parks are linked with pedestrian walkways through retail and residential areas, connecting open space areas and allowing future residents and visitors to travel within the site without relying upon motor vehicles. A planned transit center would also offer a long-term expansion of diverse transportation choices for residents and employees.</p>
<p><b>Policy 4</b> The City shall promote the appropriate and cost-effective development and coordination of mass transit/shuttle service linkage residential, shopping, resort and commercial centers of the City, and participate with CVAG, Southern California Association of Governments and public and private service providers to improve and optimize regional transportation services.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan includes potential development of the Sunline transit station at the corner of Pierson Drive and West Drive that serves both City Hall and downtown, which would facilitate ridership of public transportation within the City.</p>
<p><b>Policy 5</b> The City shall encourage the use of clean alternative energy sources for transportation, heating and cooling whenever practical.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – The Vortex Specific Plan recommends sustainable building and development practices, such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification in the implementation of the proposed project.</p>
<p><b>Policy 6</b> All development proposals brought before the City will be reviewed for potential adverse effects on air quality and will be required to mitigate and significant impacts.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – Adverse air quality impacts associated with development and operation of the Specific Plan will be reviewed by SCAQMD prior to project approval and potentially significant impacts are required to be mitigated to the extent feasible.</p>
<b>ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES ELEMENT</b>	
<p><b>Goal: Conserve and thoughtful management of energy sources and mineral deposits, assuring the long-term viability of limited and non-renewable resources.</b></p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – See below.</p>
<p><b>Policy 1</b> Promote energy conservation in all areas of community development, including transportation, development planning, public and private sector office construction and operation, as well as in the full range of residential, commercial and industrial projects.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan includes a section in sustainable development, which promotes implementation of sustainable building and development practices most appropriate to the specific context within the City. While not mandated, builders within the Specific Plan would be strongly encouraged to participate in sustainable best management practices such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, ComfortWise, EnergyStar Home, California Green Builder Program, etc. Through these design practices, buildings would be designed to use solar power to heat hot water, install light shelves that bounce light further into interior spaces to reduce the need for additional electrical light, etc.</p>
<p><b>Policy 2</b> The General Plan and other community plans shall assure an efficient circulation system and land use pattern in the City, which minimizes travel.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan provides community retail, office, restaurants, and entertainment uses in close proximity of residential units to allow alternative modes of transportation such as walking, biking, and public transportation.</p>



# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

**Table C-1  
Consistency with City of Desert Hot Springs  
General Plan Goals and Policies**

Relevant Policy	Compliance with Policy
<p><b>Policy 3</b> Major mixed-use developments, which provide significant employment centers, shall be required to provide convenient and safe access to the public transit system.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – One of the Vortex Specific Plans objectives is to provide a wide range of job opportunities within walkable distances from public transit.</p>
<b>FLOODING AND HYDROLOGY ELEMENT</b>	
<p><b>Goal: Comprehensive flood control system that assures the protection of lives, property and essential facilities within the community and assures all-weather access to regional roadways.</b></p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – See below.</p>
<p><b>Policy 1</b> Assure that updated and effective Master Drainage Plans are implemented in a timely fashion for the near and long-term protection of the community and its residents.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – The project area has been previously studied by the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (RCFC&amp;WCD) and the results were documented in the Desert Hot Springs Master Drainage Plan. The Conceptual Drainage and Water Quality Plan for the Vortex Specific Plan identifies existing and planned regional facilities in accordance with the Master Drainage Plan. Therefore, construction of a planned drainage system in coordination with the RCFC&amp;WCD would ensure that an effective flood control system is provided in a timely fashion.</p>
<p><b>Policy 2</b> Provide for the implementation of drainage control and improvements that enhance local conditions and are consistent with and complement the Master Drainage Plan.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – The Conceptual Drainage and Water Quality Plan for the Specific Plan is based on and consistent with the Master Drainage Plan. The Specific Plan would require that planned regional facilities are constructed prior to Specific Plan development.</p>
<p><b>Policy 7</b> All development proposed on lands of one (1) acre or larger shall be required to retain 100 percent of the 100-year storm runoff that is generated by development, on-site.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – Development projects within the Specific Plan area will have a minimum parcel size of 3.0 acres and will be required to retain 100 percent of the 100-year storm runoff. However, the majority of the Specific Plan area is located outside of the 100-year flood zone, except for a small area at the intersection of Ocotillo Road and Buena Vista Avenue. Development of this area will be conditioned to retain 100 percent of the 100-year storm runoff.</p>
<b>FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION ELEMENT</b>	
<p><b>Goal: A high level of police and fire protection and service.</b></p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – See below.</p>
<p><b>Policy 1</b> All new and improved developments shall be reviewed for their impact on safety and the provision of police and fire protection services.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – Implementation of the Specific Plan would result in increased demand for fire and police protection services. However, it is anticipated that provision of additional fire and police facilities and personnel would occur incrementally as the need arises. All buildings would be required to comply with applicable fire code, be approved by the Fire Department, and appropriate fire facilities fees would be assessed prior to issuance of building permits.</p>
<p><b>Policy 2</b> Enforce fire standards and regulations in the course of reviewing building plans and conducting building inspections.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – Individual projects within the Specific Plan would be required to comply with the Uniform Fire Code and other applicable codes and regulations from Riverside County Fire Department. Each individual project would require plan approval by the Riverside County Fire Department and subsequent building inspections.</p>
<p><b>Policy 5</b> Emergency police, fire and paramedic vehicle access shall be provided with all new development to the satisfaction of the City.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – Vehicle access, including emergency vehicle access for each development project within the Specific Plan area would be reviewed and approved by the City of Desert Hot Springs Fire Department and the Public Works Department prior to construction. Additionally, the Specific Plan does not substantially change the City's existing roadway system and would not conflict with the City's policy to use, preserve, or reestablish the use of Palm Drive, Mission Lakes Boulevard, Pierson Boulevard, Dillon Road, Hacienda Avenue, Interstate-10, and SR-62 as emergency evacuation routes and to provide for the development of an emergency response plan that assures the timely repair of major roads and highways damaged by earthquakes, flooding, or other disasters.</p>
<b>SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES ELEMENT</b>	
<p><b>Goal: Educational and library facilities in the City of Desert Hot Springs providing quality services and faculties', and convenient access to these important educational and cultural resources.</b></p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – See below.</p>
<p><b>Policy 1</b> The City shall cooperate and coordinate with the Palm Springs Unified School District to identify sites needed to meet future District growth demands. The City shall encourage that potential school sites are planned within centrally location areas of residential development.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – Schools (specialized education and training) are permitted within the mixed-use core (MXD), Community Retail/Services (Retail), and Public Facilities/Services/Civic Center (MXD) of the Specific Plan. However, no public school sites by the Palm Springs Unified School District (PSUSD) have been planned. Desert Hot Springs High School and Wenzlaff Elementary School are located immediately west and northwest of the Specific Plan area. Development within the Specific Plan would be required to comply with Senate Bill 50 (SB 50) to mitigate school impacts so that PSUSD could use the collected mitigation fees to plan schools where necessary.</p>



# Vortex Downtown Specific Plan

**Table C-1  
Consistency with City of Desert Hot Springs  
General Plan Goals and Policies**

Relevant Policy	Compliance with Policy
<p><b>Policy 5</b> Support the expansion of educational opportunities for the City's residents at all levels.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan supports various educational opportunities for the City's residents through allowing churches, community/cultural centers, country clubs, libraries and museums, schools (specialized education and training), theaters, auditoriums, and meeting halls within appropriate areas of the Specific Plan.</p>
<p><b>PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES ELEMENT</b></p>	
<p><b>Goal: Compatible and aesthetic integration of public buildings and facilities providing existing and future residents with dependable and cost-effective public services and facilities.</b></p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – See below.</p>
<p><b>Policy 2</b> Develop public buildings and facilities, which house City government activities in a functional, aesthetically pleasing, and convenient place for residents and City officials to conduct business.</p>	<p><i>Consistent</i> – The Specific Plan includes development of public facilities/services along the western edge of the project area, along both sides of Pierson Boulevard. This includes a potential location for the expansion of City offices such as an Economic Development and Planning/Engineering Building, as well as a Business Development Incubator and Chamber of Commerce offices. The Specific Plan also includes a 25.86-acre Civic Center Campus at the northwest corner of Pierson Boulevard and West Drive, which currently contains various public facilities such as City Council Chambers, police and fire stations, senior center, library, and temporary city office units. The Specific Plan would expand its role as a public facilities hub by planning for the public/private cooperative development of a new City Hall and the Boys and Girls Club and Community Center within the Civic Center Campus.</p>
<p>Source: City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan</p>	

*This page intentionally left blank.*