

B. Presentation and Discussion of Priorities to Guide the Request for Proposals for the Zoning Code Update

Recommendation: Selection of the top priorities to include in the scope of work for the zoning code update RFP (request for proposals).

City Council Members - Zoning Code Priorities

Ranking of land use policy statements by City Council to guide the Zoning Code Update. From here, the consultant will be directed to provide a modern, streamlined zoning code that delivers the City's long-range vision in the General Plan, through the lens of Council's policy objectives.

* Required

1. The following distinction may be helpful in answering the first few questions: *design guidelines direct forms and appearance of the buildings such as roof types, building arrangement, and architectural styles, while development standards prescribe land preparation and setting such as setbacks, height, drainage, landscaping, parking. Both design guidelines and development standards may be tailored to apply to specific areas and/or types of development.*

Which areas of the City should Design Guidelines apply to? *

Please select at most 5 options.

- Downtown Cathedral City
- Commercial and mixed-use properties within the City
- Multi-family residential projects (of a specified size)
- All residential, including multi-family and single-family
- Design Guidelines shouldn't apply anywhere
- Other

2. Design Guidelines may be objective (prescriptive or "fixed") or they may be subjective (flexible, open to interpretation). How should the City's Design Guidelines be formatted: *

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Guidelines should be objective, leaving less room for interpretation or flexibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Allow for an alternate compliance where strict adherence to the standards would not allow for a non-standard design	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Guidelines should be more subjective, allowing more room for creativity and flexibility in design	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Which of the following development standards (*setbacks, height, parking, landscape, etc.*) would you like to see as priorities with this Zoning Code Update: *

Please select at most 5 options.

- The Downtown should have separate development standards from other commercial areas and zoning districts
- Development standards should be based on the area or the zoning district

- Development standards should apply to multi-family development (of a specified size)

- The City should create a process to consider alternative development standards for proposals that do not meet the standards, but would produce a higher quality project than if a strict adherence to the standards was required

- Consider spacing between certain types of businesses (such as auto repair and auto body shops, resale of used goods, cannabis facilities, personal service businesses) to promote business diversity within specific geographic locations or neighborhoods

- Modify residential development standards to promote greater development intensity and promote housing supply production, which may include increasing height limits, reducing minimum lot or dwelling unit sizes, decreasing setbacks, and increasing lot coverage

- None of the above

- Other

4. Which of these tools should the City leverage to promote economic development and infill opportunities : *

- Reduced parking standards when supported by shared parking arrangements

- Develop flexible parking standards that reflect today's lifestyles (ie: shop or work from home)

- Incorporate parking maximums

- Assess the Downtown Residential Neighborhood and Mixed Use Commercial zoning districts to ensure allowed uses provide appropriate opportunities in the downtown, and that the development standards are aligned with goals for these areas

- Expedite development approvals as appropriate that will attract a mix of primary jobs and housing to deliver proper growth and promote prosperity (similar to Resolution 2022-57, but with more specific objectives)

- Promote administrative level approvals for identified types of projects that support stated economic development objectives

- Expedite review of mixed-use or infill development that includes housing and neighborhood level commercial services
- Other

5. The following tools are recognized by California Department of Housing and Community Development as qualifications for the HCD Prohousing designation. Which of these should the City consider including in the Zoning Code update to increase housing supply: *

- Allow smaller multi-family projects (triplex, fourplex, or up to a specific number of units) by right in low-density single-family residential zones
- Create ministerial review process for certain housing types or applications for fewer than a specified number of units
- Require infill sites/vacant properties to include a minimum proportion of development as housing
- Increase the density bonus above what is prescribed by State law and adopted into the Municipal Code by reference
- Increase lot coverage allowance when the increase is to construct an ADU
- Reduce or eliminate minimum parking standards, with or without related provisions such as proximity to transit or other multi-modal options
- Promote housing supply production through incentivizing standards (allowing more height, less setback) for specific housing types
- None of the above
- Other

6. Please place the following policy objectives in order of preference. Note that some of these policies mentioned in the section above are also included here. The goal of this question is to assess and prioritize the policy goal's importance: *

Allow departmental or staff level approvals of certain developments to reduce time and minimize the need for board and committee meetings

Evaluate allowed non-residential uses to ensure they are appropriate in their zoning districts, and create a process to allow some unlisted uses (which are prohibited)

Create new development opportunities through incentives or other means for mixed-use development

Apply performance standards to support economic development by ensuring a good mix of primary jobs and key businesses

Promote uses and development patterns that support pedestrians, cyclists, and transit use

Promote housing supply production through a variety of robust allowances or incentives

Update the parking standards to reflect changing transportation choices, increase shared parking, and support multi-modal transit/access

Address climate resilience and urban heat and provide incentives for mitigations such as renewable energy and turf removal, renewable energy generation, and hazard area planning



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SECTION 4 – SCOPE OF WORK

1.1 Context and Background:

- A. **Project Summary:** The City is seeking competitive bids to prepare a comprehensive rewrite of the City's Zoning Code to modernize and streamline the development review process. The Zoning Code was published in 1981 and needs modernizing to reflect current preferences, incorporate subdivision and design guidelines, ensure alignment with the General Plan adopted in 2021 and consider appropriate incentives to keep the City competitive and attractive as a top choice for housing development and infill opportunity.
- B. **Specifically:** The final product will incorporate the zoning and subdivision ordinances along with the revised design guidelines into a unified development code that aligns with other City functions. The adopted Code will be user-friendly yet comprehensive and inclusive, easy to understand and implement with supporting graphics and tables, provide appropriate level approval authority.
- C. **City Preparation.** The City has conducted a series of listening events with developers and applicants, a brainstorming session, and initial interviews and surveys, with the objective of gaining meaningful insight into challenges and issues from outside of the organization. The Contractor should extract insight from this data for use in the drafting of the revised Code and plan to engage in additional or follow-up interviews as deemed necessary. The Code update will include evaluation of the existing code to analyze permit processes and design more predictable, and timely processes. The consultant will review and consider data the City collected during surveys, interviews, and listening tours.
- D. **About Cathedral City.** Cathedral City lies immediately east of Palm Springs. The City was incorporated in 1981 and is home to 52,494 residents (2022 census data), the second most-populous city in the Coachella Valley, with about 14% of the Valley's population. The diverse city also boasts the lowest crime rate in the Coachella Valley, the greater regional area of about 370,000 people. The City serves as a service and housing hub between the more resort- and tourism-oriented destinations of Palm Springs and Rancho Mirage. Service and retail are primary sales tax generators, with automobile sales and related services comprising more than half of the City's sales tax revenues. The City has developed a solid foundation of long-range guiding documents that set a clear vision for the future of Cathedral City. Plans may be sidestepped due to challenges such as too-small lot assemblage, level of development capacity or expertise, or market forces. These factors combine making developing many of the City's vacant, infill, or opportunity sites particularly difficult. A clear pathway to achieve necessary flexibility at a staff level will add value to the City's reputation as a competitive economic player in the larger Coachella Valley region. The Code update should enhance both the community character and economic image.
- E. **Relation to General Plan and other Planning Documents.** In 1982 the City adopted Ordinance 16 which effectively enacted Riverside County's subdivision process. Standalone Design Guidelines were adopted by resolution in 1989. The vision to compel this Update was laid out in the 2021 General Plan which anticipates a comprehensive review and amendment of the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to maintain consistency with the General Plan. More recently the 5-Year Strategic Plan

envisioned a plan review system that is predictable, streamlined and operates in a facilitative rather than regulatory environment. In addition, the City has adopted a number of Specific Plans, which the General Plan envisions as “a preferred method of detailed and systematic implementation of the General Plan for large or complex planning areas”. In addition to Specific Plans, the Planned Unit Development process is available for evaluating development not contemplated by the zoning code. The update should include mechanisms to ensure proper application of these tools to achieve their stated intent. The City also aims to reduce unnecessary barriers by allowing ministerial approvals that increase housing supply to assist in implementing the Housing Element.

- F. Design Guidelines. The existing Design Guidelines are outdated. The Code update should explore incorporating revised design guidelines into the Zoning Ordinance.
- G. Subdivision Regulation. The County’s Subdivision Ordinance was adopted by reference and needs to be modernized, simplified, and incorporated as a standalone section in the City’s Code.
- H. Incentive Development. The Code update should include an overview of Resolution 2022-57. This resolution applies to a specific area of the city and provides valuable insight into City Council’s objectives in weighing tradeoffs to achieve mutually beneficial development outcomes. Similar incentivization should be explored for its appropriateness as inclusion into the final Code to offer flexibility to respond to external challenges. The Code update should evaluate opportunity sites throughout the City for appropriate incentives available to high quality development. Cathedral City’s Zoning Code should convey the City is a desirable and advantageous location for the development community beyond the City as well as beyond the Coachella Valley.

1.2 Scope:

- A. The Contractor shall prepare an updated Zoning Code and associated regulations for the City of Cathedral City. The zoning code update shall include at least these minimum elements:
 - 1. Background analysis of the existing Code in light of the inventory of known issues and concerns, and outline a framework for the new updated Code including timeframes and milestones. Milestones should be considered as elements of the final product delivered at key identified points along the timeline.
 - 2. Evaluation and alignment with the City’s 2020-2040 General Plan: Ensure consistency with the Elements, particularly with the Land Use, Circulation, Housing, and Community Design Elements. Identify potential sites to accommodate additional housing, commercial, or employment uses. Implement the policies of the General Plan, as applicable.
 - 3. Update Regulations pursuant to State and Federal Law: Ensure that the regulations of the Zoning Code are compliant with current State and Federal Law, including housing provisions, density bonuses, entitlement processes, federally-regulated uses like signage, wireless communication facilities, and alcohol sales.

4. Update other pertinent regulations in the City of Cathedral City Municipal Code as necessary to modernize or ensure consistency, and incorporate the following policies into the updated Code, including but not limited to:
 - i. Devise an alternate compliance option that delivers high performance in an alternate design;
 - ii. Promote mixed-use in existing commercial space (including reuse and infill) to allow housing choice along commercial corridors;
 - iii. Creative solutions for infill development, such as incremental build-outs;
 - iv. Tools for increasing housing supply with a mix of types for families;
 - v. Updating design standards to use design to our competitive advantage – create interest and excitement for developing in Cathedral City;
 - vi. Incentive infill and adaptive reuse of existing corridor sites through mixed-use opportunities and alternative compliance options (including flexible parking);
 - vii. Respect existing standards and ensure there are adequate protections and buffers in place.
5. Incorporate the Housing Element and Affordable Housing Tools: Propose tools to remove barriers to housing production, in evaluation with available supply of land. Propose potential zoning changes to facilitate housing production. Consider a robust set of incentives and tools to increase housing supply. Provide recommendations from the list of California Department of Housing and Community Development [Prohousing Designation Program](#) incentives, as appropriate. Objective design standards are also required as part of housing affordability objective and should comply with at least the state minimum standards.
6. Update the Design Guidelines: Development, and relevant standards of design that are well-organized, flexible, and easy to understand for their respective geographic areas. Include an appropriate review process that allows for creativity and flexibility at a staff level. Design Guidelines should remain consistent with the Community Design Element.
7. Reduce Review Burdens: Eliminate the need for public meetings and hearings for applications more appropriate to staff-level review to maintain adequate levels of transparency and adherence to design principles.
8. Incorporate the Subdivision Ordinance: Update the subdivision ordinance, in conformance with state and local laws. Streamline the process ensuring it integrates with other City processes and divisions.
9. Prepare Relevant Maps and Figures: For readability and ease of understanding, the Code update should include illustrative figures and graphical depictions. Information that is more succinctly conveyed in tabular form should be formatted as tables and incorporated into the draft zoning code.
10. Promote flexible and easy to understand development standards: Identify barriers to development and recommend solutions to facilitate development and expedite the approvals process. Examine opportunities incentives to attract affordable housing development. Identify potential tools to incentivize economic

development and primary job creation, and opportunities for base income generation.

11. Ensure the Zoning Code is user-friendly. The revised Code should be easy to understand by both the development community and the general public, ensuring consistency in definitions, and organizing the document in an easy to read format with liberal use of tables, illustrations, and other graphics that aid in clearly communicating the Code's goals, objectives, and regulations. Digital copies of final materials shall also be transmitted to the City for public dissemination.
12. Public Engagement and Consultation: A robust outreach strategy will be necessary, in both English and Spanish, with all public-facing documents available in both languages. Outreach and engagement will include background/analysis phase to outline the revised Code framework and develop an inventory of identified issues/needs for the revision. This may involve open houses, targeted stakeholder interviews, and surveys as appropriate and agreed upon with the City. The City anticipates engaging a Steering Committee as well as a Technical Advisory group to aid in ensuring the draft code meets its objectives. Anticipate appropriate number of meetings with the Steering Committee and Planning Commission throughout the drafting process. The contractor will consider the data the City has collected through surveys, interviews and listening sessions and will reconcile the draft code with the inventory of identified issues.. A final draft will be presented to the City's Planning Commission prior to consideration by the City Council at public hearing.
13. Environmental Documentation/CEQA: The Contractor shall prepare any necessary documentation to ensure compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which may include the preparation of a Negative Declaration or an Exemption.

1.3 Deliverables:

The Zoning Code update will require the minimum set of tasks and deliverables:

A. Background Analysis

1. Kick off meeting with relevant City Staff.
2. Review recent changes to relevant state laws pertaining to land use and development, including for example S.B.9, S.B.330, and other regulatory changes that direct the zoning and land use process.
3. Review the General Plan to identify items to be implemented in the Zoning Code and other changes necessary to provide consistency.
4. Research recent development activity through the City and Coachella Valley to identify development trends and regulatory gaps that may exist.
5. Evaluate existing neighborhoods to identify gaps or conflicts in zoning, or opportunities to better facilitate the City's land use goals and objectives, with particular focus on managing state-mandated density (ADUs, lot splits, etc.) and appropriate densification.
6. Investigate best practices from other jurisdictions as it relates to updating and modernizing the City's Zoning Code with a focus on affordability, intensification, economic development and diversification, natural resource preservation,

sustainability, climate resiliency, and urban heat mitigation, and provide appropriate recommendations accordingly.

7. Conduct analysis on the current Code to identify opportunities, and challenges to ensure the Zoning Code is responsive to current and forecasted development trends and forecasts.
8. Identify inconsistencies in the regulatory framework and discrepancies between zoning districts and the built form.
9. Analyze current entitlement processes and application procedures to identify opportunities to expedite processing times and remove barriers to development with a focus on housing development and economic diversification.
10. Milestone for completion: summary of findings and a detailed timeline for completion and adoption.
11. Plan of implementation: practical routes in implementing the updated Code, with implementation documentation, as needed.

B. Outreach and Citizen Participation.

1. Working with City staff, develop a public outreach strategy designed to inform stakeholders and community members and solicit input on potential changes to the Code. The outreach plan should include a variety of forums and strategies, including online surveys, open houses, stakeholder meetings, virtual meetings, and web/social media interactions.
2. Provide outreach to stakeholders and interested citizens relative to any background research/analysis, supporting studies/materials, draft plans, and final plans.
3. Prepare presentation and outreach materials.
4. May require up to two study sessions with the Planning Commission during the background/analysis and drafting phase to gather input prior to advancing for public review.
5. The City desires forming a technical advisory committee and steering committee to advise throughout the process and the consultant shall draft sections of the code to be reviewed by both review groups and feedback considered for inclusion into revised drafts.
6. Establish a website (or utilize the City's "Discover Cathedral City") to inform and educate and engage the public about the Zoning Code Update.
7. Create an on-line survey or similar tool to solicit feedback from community members.
8. Collect data and information from stakeholders, citizens, and other interested parties to assist in forming recommendations.

C. Drafting of Revised Zoning Code

1. Prepare drafts of the Revised Zoning Code, including all required maps and graphic materials, for review by City staff and use in public engagement.

2. Prepare any recommended changes to other relevant City policy or ordinance, including the Municipal Code, to modernize and ensure consistency with updated regulations.
3. Incorporate any changes that result from staff and stakeholder engagement.
4. Prepare digital copies of all materials, including relevant maps in a format that can be integrated with the City's internal GIS system as well as for potential public use on a digital platform.

D. Preparation of Environmental Documentation

1. Prepare an Initial Study in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), if required. The Initial Study shall evaluate all potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed amendments to the Zoning Code. The City assumes that if an Initial Study is warranted, it will result in the preparation of a Negative Declaration.

E. Public Hearing and Adoption

1. Anticipate a minimum of two public hearings, each, before the Planning Commission and before the City Council.
2. Incorporate any changes into the draft Code that arise from the public hearings or as directed by the Planning Commission or City Council.
3. Assist in the preparation of any staff reports or presentation materials needed to present the revised plans to the public, Planning Commission, or City Council.

F. Final Updated Zoning Code

1. Prepare a Final Zoning Code, complete with changes as approved by the Planning Commission and City Council. A master copy shall be provided to the City from which copies may be made.
2. A digital copy in an electronic PDF format shall be provided that can be easily placed on the City's website for access by the public.
3. The Contractor will also provide the City with an editable version in MS Word.

G. Electronic/Online Land Use Code

1. Contractor will prepare an electronic version of the Code for posting on the City's website for access by the public. This may include a PDF of the entire Code, or a segmented version, at the discretion and need of the City.
2. Shapefiles for revised zoning district boundaries and other associated maps shall also be provided for incorporation into the City's GIS software for both internal and external use.

1.4 Schedule:

Work is anticipated for both zoning code update and urban design guidelines to commence in November 2024 and expected to be completed by the as follows:

The proposed project schedule is listed in the chart below: **ALIGN WITH TIMELINE IN FRONT SECTION**

Notice to Proceed	
Initial Kick Off Meeting	
Initial Study Session – Planning Commission	
Initial Public Outreach	Dates TBD
First Draft	
Outreach on Draft	
Final Draft	
Public Hearings/Adoption	

1.5 Compensation:

Work will be compensated on a lumpsum basis for each of the tasks. Contract pricing includes all labor, expenses, and incidentals to complete the work outlined in the contract scope. The Contractor may request monthly payments based on the percentage of work completed for the previous month as long as a detailed progress report is provided to support the amount requested. No additional compensation will be due by the City unless the contract is modified for additional work requested by the City. The City has allocated \$360,000 for the general zoning code update, with an additional \$120,000 targeted for housing incentives and tools aimed at increasing production.