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# AGENDA

## SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE LA QUINTA CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION

CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
78495 Calle Tampico, La Quinta

**TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2022 AT 6:00 P.M. (or shortly thereafter)**

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### SPECIAL NOTICE

#### Teleconferencing and Telephonic Accessibility In Effect

Pursuant to Executive Orders N-60-20 and N-08-21 executed by the Governor of California, and subsequently Assembly Bill 361 (AB 361, 2021), enacted in response to the state of emergency relating to novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and enabling teleconferencing accommodations by suspending or waiving specified provisions in the Ralph M. Brown Act (Government Code § 54950 *et seq.*), members of the public, the City Council, Planning Commission, the City Manager, City Attorney, City Staff, and City Consultants may participate in this regular meeting by teleconference.

Members of the public wanting **to listen to the open session** of the meeting may do so by tuning-in live via <http://laquinta.12milesout.com/video/live>.

Members of the public wanting **to address the City Council and Planning Commission**, either for a specific agenda item or matters not on the agenda are requested to follow the instructions listed below:

**Written public comments** – can be provided in-person during the meeting or emailed to the City Clerk’s Office at [CityClerkMail@LaQuintaCA.gov](mailto:CityClerkMail@LaQuintaCA.gov) **preferably by 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting**, and will be distributed to the City Council and Planning Commission, incorporated into the agenda packet and public record

of the meeting, and will not be read during the meeting unless, upon the request of the Mayor, a brief summary of any public comment is asked to be read, to the extent the City Clerk’s Office can accommodate such request.

The email “subject line” must clearly state **“Written Comments”** and list the following:

- 1) Full Name
- 2) City of Residence
- 3) Phone Number
- 4) Public Comment or Agenda Item Number
- 5) Subject
- 6) Written Comments

**\*\*\* TELECONFERENCE PROCEDURES \*\*\***

**Verbal public comments via Teleconference – members of the public may attend and participate in this meeting by teleconference via Zoom** and use the “raise your hand” feature when public comments are prompted by the Mayor or Chairperson; the City will facilitate the ability for a member of the public to be audible to the City Council, Planning Commission and general public and allow him/her/they to speak on the item(s) requested. **Please note – members of the public must unmute themselves when prompted upon being recognized by the Mayor or Chairperson, in order to become audible to the City Council and Planning Commission, and the public.**

Only one person at a time may speak by teleconference and only after being recognized by the Mayor or Chairperson.

**ZOOM LINK:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82540879912>  
**Meeting ID:** 825 4087 9912  
**Or join by phone:** (253) 215 – 8782

It would be appreciated that any email communications for public comments related to the items on the agenda, or for general public comment, are provided to the City Clerk’s Office at the email address listed above prior to the commencement of the meeting. If that is not possible, and to accommodate public comments on items that may be added to the agenda after its initial posting or items that are on the agenda, every effort will be made to attempt to review emails received by the City Clerk’s Office during the course of the meeting. The Mayor or Chairperson will endeavor to take a brief pause before action is taken on any agenda item to allow the City Clerk to review emails and share any public comments received during the meeting. All emails received by the City Clerk, at the email address above, until the adjournment of the meeting, will be included within the public record relating to the meeting.

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**CALL TO ORDER**

ROLL CALL:

Councilmembers: Fitzpatrick, Peña, Radi, Sanchez, Mayor Evans

Commissioners: Caldwell, Currie, Hassett, McCune, Proctor, Tyerman, Chairperson Nieto

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

At this time, members of the public may address the City Council and Planning Commission on any matter not listed on the agenda by providing **written public comments** either in-person or via email as indicated above; or provide **verbal public comments** either in-person or via teleconference by joining the meeting virtually at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82540879912> and use the "raise your hand" feature when prompted by the Mayor or Chairperson. Members of the public attending the meeting in-person are requested to complete a **"Request to Speak"** form and submit it to the City Clerk. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes (or approximately 350 words). The City Council and Planning Commission value your comments; however, in accordance with State law, no action shall be taken on any item not appearing on the agenda unless it is an emergency item authorized by the Brown Act [Government Code § 54954.2(b)].

**CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**

**STUDY SESSION**

- 1. VILLAGE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

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**COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS' ITEMS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

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The next regular meeting of the City Council will be held on March 15, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. at the City Hall Council Chambers, 78495 Calle Tampico, La Quinta, CA 92253. The next regular meeting of the Planning Commission will be held on March 8, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. at the City Hall Council Chambers, 78495 Calle Tampico, La Quinta, CA 92253.

## **DECLARATION OF POSTING**

I, Monika Radeva, City Clerk, of the City of La Quinta, do hereby declare that the foregoing Agenda for the Special Joint Meeting of the La Quinta City Council and Planning Commission was posted on the City's website, near the entrance to the Council Chambers at 78495 Calle Tampico, and the bulletin boards at the Stater Brothers Supermarket at 78630 Highway 111, and the La Quinta Cove Post Office at 51321 Avenida Bermudas, on February 25, 2022.

DATED: February 25, 2022

MONIKA RADEVA, City Clerk  
City of La Quinta, California

### **Public Notices**

- The La Quinta City Council Chamber is handicapped accessible. If special equipment is needed for the hearing impaired, please call the City Clerk's office at (760) 777-7123, twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the meeting and accommodations will be made.
- If special electronic equipment is needed to make presentations to the City Council, arrangements should be made in advance by contacting the City Clerk's office at (760) 777-7123. A one (1) week notice is required.
- If background material is to be presented to the Councilmembers during a City Council meeting, please be advised that eight (8) copies of all documents, exhibits, etc., must be supplied to the City Clerk for distribution. It is requested that this take place prior to the beginning of the meeting.
- Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the City Council regarding any item(s) on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at the Community Development counter at City Hall located at 78495 Calle Tampico, La Quinta, California, 92253, during normal business hours.

# City of La Quinta

## SPECIAL JOINT CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING:

March 1, 2022

### STAFF REPORT

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**AGENDA TITLE:** VILLAGE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Discuss Village Commercial District Development Update.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- This report provides an update on development in the Village Commercial (VC) District, current planning efforts underway, and identifies some constraints as well as opportunities for development.

### **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

La Quinta's Municipal Code Section 9.70.100 states the purpose of the VC District as follows:

*"The purpose of the Village Commercial District is to develop the village area as a year-round commercial, residential and recreational location, serving residents and guests of the greater La Quinta community; to promote development standards to accommodate projects and activities which will provide goods, services and housing; promoting pedestrian accessibility and scale, maintaining connections to La Quinta's artistic and architectural heritage; and guiding design to acknowledge and embrace the desert environment.*

*Permitted uses in the VC zoning district will combine urban living, essential day-to-day neighborhood goods and services, tourism and visitor-based retail and entertainment opportunities, and facilities necessary for the operational demands of such uses."*

The VC District allows a wide range of nonresidential uses including general retail, office, and service uses, general services, dining and entertainment (restaurants, bars, theaters, lounges), recreational uses, assembly uses (churches and social clubs), hotels. Residential uses allowed are multi-family

residential (minimum three units) and mixed-use developments, such as ground floor commercial or office with residential floors above. Uses that are not allowed include new single-family homes, clinics, hospitals, drive-through restaurants, car washes and vehicle repair or sales shops, and warehousing or industrial uses.

### **Village Build-Out Plan Area**

The Village Build-Out Plan Area was established to “promote development and redevelopment of the village by providing development standards that encourage the implementation of mixed-use projects, pedestrian scale development and connectivity, and economic growth” (Code Section 9.70.110 – Village). Build-out assumptions were established and accounted for in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Village to allow for future development intensity and streamline the development review process. The build-out assumes several scenarios in different areas of the Village:

- 1) new dwelling units will be developed over commercial uses in multi-story buildings,
- 2) existing dwelling units will remain in place, and
- 3) some existing nonresidential buildings will be replaced with new buildings. For “Miscellaneous lots one-half acre or less - two-story buildings commercial only, no residential”.

The maximum density allowed in the Village Build-Out Plan Area is 25 units per acre south of Calle Tampico, and 30 units per acre north of Calle Tampico. Maximum building height is 45 feet, and up to 60 feet with a Conditional Use Permit.

Some notable development that has occurred over the last three to five years in the Village that is consistent with the purpose of the VC District and Village Build-Out Plan Area:

- **Village Make:** A 2017 event which showcased City Active Transportation Grant (ATP) improvements (roundabouts and midblock crossings), and other street improvements that make walking and bicycling in the Village safer and more enjoyable. The event included interactive art installations, and demonstrations activating alleyways, installing temporary art and providing for safe pedestrian crossings. Following the 2017 event, the Complete Streets project has been constructed, four murals have been commissioned; *Volta* by John Cuevas at the library, *Hydra* by John Cuevas at the Frontier building, *Chromaplex* by Chris Sanchez (Kasinfinitive) next to the Creation Station (makerspace), and most recently *Bird Song* by Nate Frizzell on the east

side of the lumberyard building. *True Blue* hummingbird and *Colibri* blue heron art sculptures by Don Kennell were purchased and placed within the Village. Colorful crosswalk artwork by John Cuevas has been added at mid-block pedestrian crossings at Calle Tampico and Eisenhower.

- **The La Quinta Village Complete Streets – A Road Diet Project:** focused on making roadways safer and more accessible to pedestrians and bicycles in the La Quinta Village and was completed in January 2021. The installation of five modern roundabouts allowed the four lane facilities to be reduced to two lanes, reclaiming as much as 35 feet for active transportation and water quality uses (through the installation of bioswales), while maintaining traffic flow. Safety was improved by significantly reducing speeds along three busy corridors, providing separation between pedestrian, bikes and vehicles and reducing conflict points at the intersections. For pedestrians and cyclists, signal-controlled intersections contain as many as 24 conflict points (locations in or approaching an intersection where paths merge, diverge, or cross with vehicles), with roundabouts having only 8 conflict points. Additionally, this project closed gaps in bicycle facilities by providing separated bicycle lanes and shared use paths (SUPs). The implementation of the road diet converted the La Quinta Village into an atmosphere that encourages alternative modes of transportation. The project also incorporated landscape enhancements, opportunities for future art installations, drainage, and water quality improvements.
- **Multi-family residential and mixed-use projects in the Village –** have been entitled and have begun the building permit process. Desert Club Apartments is a 16-unit apartment building on 1.3 acres (56,628 sq. feet) at 12.3 units per acre, and The Peak is a three-story mixed-use project on 0.38 acres (16,553 sq. feet) with office uses on the ground floor and eight (8) residential units on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors (21 units per acre as a mixed-use project). Both projects face Desert Club Drive, and are consistent with the Village Build-Out Plan for urban, multi-family residential living and mixed uses that are walkable to nearby restaurants, entertainment, and services.
- **Al Fresco Dining –** La Quinta’s Al Fresco Dining Program has allowed restaurants to expand their dining operations outdoors due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In Old Town and throughout, while some restaurants previously had outdoor dining, the Program has allowed restaurants to expand outdoor dining and has activated the Village area. Many of the restaurants continue to provide outdoor dining day and night. Staff is developing a permanent Program to establish design standards and a permitting process to assure compliance with City

building codes, proper clearances and access, public safety, and ABC licensing requirements.

- **La Quinta Village Shopping Center** (northwest corner of Calle Tampico and Washington Street) – after a 2020 zone change from Neighborhood Commercial to Community Commercial, 2021 saw significant activity with new development and businesses within this center, including:
  - New drive-through Starbucks with outdoor patio opened in early 2021,
  - Grocery Outlet opened in Fall 2021 taking up half of the old Ralph’s building,
  - Los Arcos restaurant opened in the former Pizza Hut suite,
  - A new “Village Peddler” bike rental business, and
  - Three new restaurants are anticipated to open in 2022.

## **Parking Studies**

In 2016, City staff completed an updated Village Parking Study, which included taking inventory of all parking spaces available to the public throughout the Village. There is a total of 4,126 spaces in the Village Build-Out Plan area (3,239 off-street, 887 on-street). From 2016-2020, Staff conducted biannual parking occupancy surveys in peak season (January) and off-peak season (August), where staff counted the number of parking spaces occupied throughout the day on a weekday and weekend (daytime and evenings), to study the parking demand in the Village. Staff found that approximately 17-30% of parking spaces were occupied in peak season and 13-22% of parking spaces were occupied in the off-peak season. In the “Village Core” zone (in and surrounding Old Town), anywhere from 55-80% of parking spaces were occupied in peak season, and 25-42% were occupied in the off-peak season. The parking count surveys demonstrate that there are always available parking spaces in the Village area, and about 20% of available parking in and surrounding Old Town during peak demand weekday/weekend evenings.

Staff also prepared a study on increasing the number of parking spaces in and surrounding Old Town, where parking demand is the highest. The current parking lot west of Stuft Pizza (off of Avenida Bermudas) could be redesigned to add more parking spaces, and the current parking lot just east of Old Town (across from RD RNNR) could be expanded into a portion of the vacant lot next to it. The study included updating lighting, parking curb and landscaping improvements, ADA parking spaces, adding golf cart and motorcycle parking, and electric vehicle parking and charging stations. The study demonstrated that 24 spaces could be added to the west lot (across from Stuft Pizza) and 70 spaces added to the east lot (across from RD RNNR), a total of 94 additional



parking spaces. The additional spaces are achieved with reconfiguration and more efficient layout of the parking spaces on the lots, including additional area to the east lot from an adjacent gravel lot. The costs for the design and construction improvements range from \$207,400 to \$900,000. This project is not currently included in the CIP.

### **Cultural Campus/Museum Master Planning**

A Cultural Campus Project/Museum Master Plan and design services will be completed this year. The Master Plan will create a cohesive cultural site that features enhancements to the La Quinta Museum and casita, redesign of the lumberyard, and development of an art promenade and cultural garden. The site would provide the community and visitors a space to enjoy cultural and artistic experiences, performances, and educational workshops, and the Plan will consider enhanced pedestrian connectivity to other Village amenities and attractions.

### **Development Constraints and Challenges**

Over the past several years, the City's economic development team has actively pursued and marketed development of vacant parcels in the Village, especially City-owned parcels (Attachment 1 – Map of City-owned parcels and private-owned parcels within the Village Commercial District). Through meetings with property owners and developers, the City's economic development team has learned of some of the constraints and challenges of development within this area from developers:

- Project engineering is cost-prohibitive; multi-level development is costly.
- La Quinta's Municipal Code (Chapter 8.03 Electrical Code) restricts the installation of above-ground electrical and other utility components in new construction. The developer's obligation is to underground all existing power and communication transmission lines that exist on the site and adjacent right-of-way. The Village has a complicated network of utility poles serving the area. Undergrounding utility poles for new construction on one development site likely affects many other properties, is costly, and the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) has a long process.
- Village Build-Out Plan encourages lot consolidation to achieve mixed-use residential/commercial developments at higher densities, but lot consolidation in some of the areas in the Village is difficult when there are multiple owners for each parcel in one area, or there are already adjacent developed properties making lot consolidation unachievable. For some of the vacant lots, these become infill sites surrounding an already built environment

- Single lots remain vacant. Lots of approximately 5,000 square feet or less in size are difficult to develop because of constraints due to size.

### **Some options/opportunities**

- Staff has met with a developer who is interested in building a tourist house/home on a single lot in the Village. Tourist houses/homes, to be used exclusively for transient occupancy for 30 days or less, are not listed as a permitted use in the Village. Hotels and short-term rentals are allowed in Village Commercial District. However, construction of new single-family homes, which then can be permitted as a short-term rental use, are not a permitted use in the VC District. Tourist houses/homes could be added as a permitted use with a zoning code amendment. Tourist houses/homes would be consistent with the Village's purpose of allowing uses for guests and tourists, promoting tourism in an appropriately zoned area, contributing to the local economy and producing additional transient occupancy tax (TOT) revenue.
- Impose a surcharge or in-lieu fee on new development in the Village to help fund future undergrounding of utilities; Prepare a fee study to impose a surcharge on new development to pay their fair share of the costs to underground the utilities.

### **Feasibility Study for Undergrounding Utility Poles**

Staff is proposing to include a Village Undergrounding Feasibility Study as part of the FY2022-2022 Capital Improvement Plan currently under staff development. The Feasibility Study will assess the costs and process for undergrounding all IID utility poles within the outlined Village area.

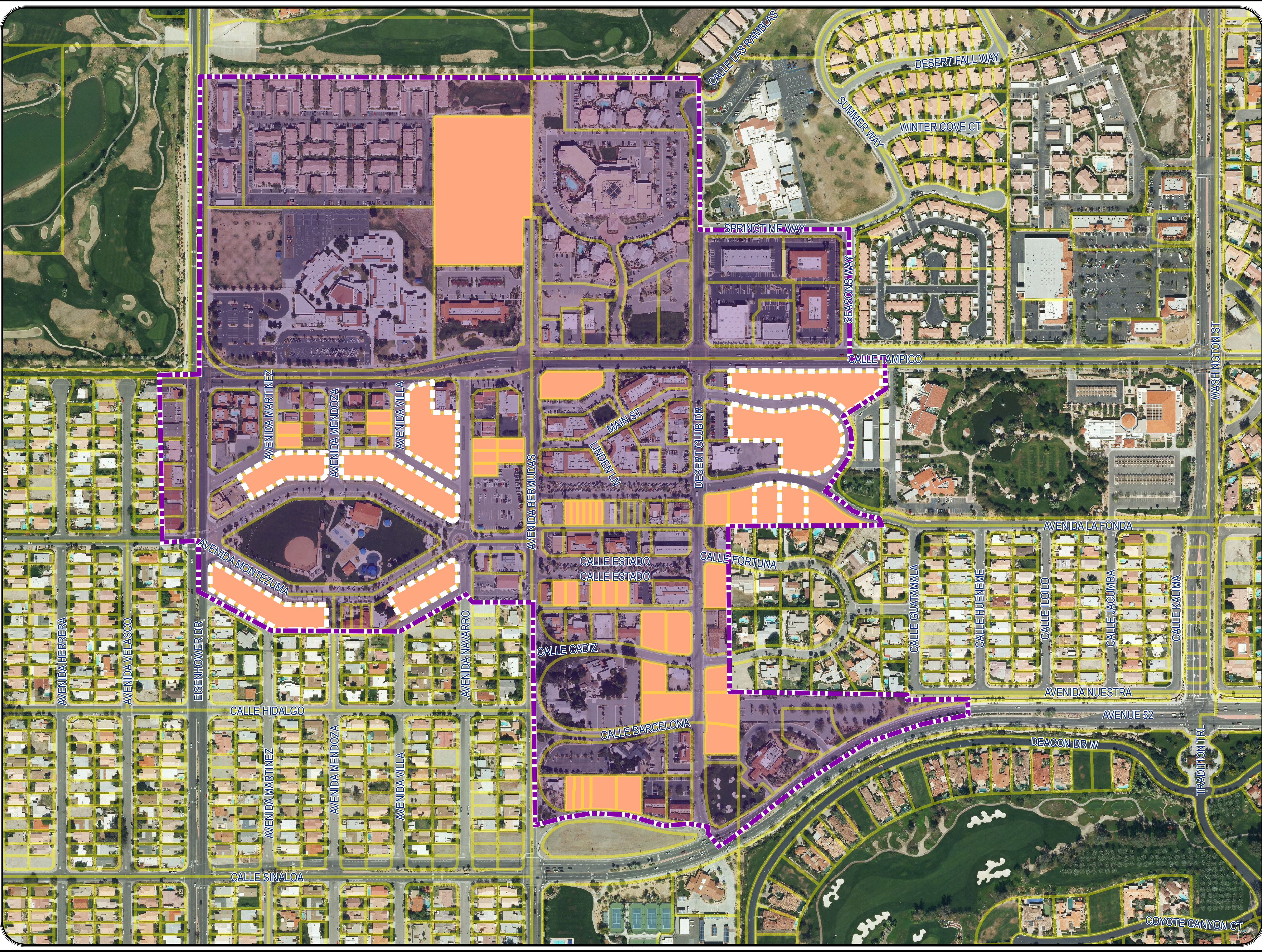
Prepared by: Danny Castro, Design and Development Director

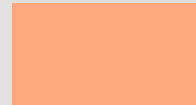


Approved by: Jon McMillen, City Manager

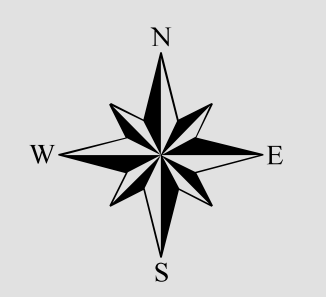
Attachment: 1. Map of City-owned parcels and private-owned parcels within the Village Commercial District

# Village Development

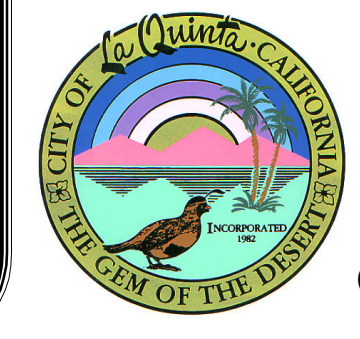
## ATTACHMENT 1



-  Vacant Properties
-  City-owned Properties
-  Village Zoning District



October 14, 2014



**City of La Quinta**  
Planning Division  
Community Development Department