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City of Palm Springs Continues to Delay College of the Desert's Tramview Property Sale

The City of Palm Springs (City) is delaying the proposed sale of the 119.4-acre property at the northwest corner of Tramview Road and Indian Canyon Drive. This site was originally selected as the location of the future Palm Springs Development Project, however, in consultation with the City, an alternate location was selected along Tahquitz Canyon Way and Farrell Drive (the "mall site").

In 2014, the City and COD announced the move from Tramview to the mall site based on the request from the City. Beginning January of 2016, representatives from COD met with representatives from the City to discuss the Tramview Property, and the parties agreed that the Property was not suitable for COD's Palm Springs Development Project, the City did not object to COD's plan to sell the Property or claim COD was somehow obligated to build a campus on the Property, and the City agreed that it did not have a right to reclaim the Property if COD did not use it for a campus and that the City was not entitled to any payment received as a result of the Property sale.

After following a surplus property process and receiving approval from the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges system, COD ultimately entered into a Purchase Agreement dated August 17, 2020, to sell the Property to Watermarke at Palm Springs, LLC ("Watermarke") for \$5.7 million — all of which will be spent by COD for the Palm Springs Development Project. The City understands that COD remains in escrow with Watermake for this proposed sale, but seems to be refusing to process Watermarke proposed residential project application. Instead, the City continues to inappropriately use this Property sale as leverage to attempt to direct COD's decision making regarding the Palm Springs Development Project at the mall site.

"COD absolutely worked, planned, and followed a sale process for the Property with the City fully informed and in agreement. Again, to suggest otherwise is not even remotely accurate," said College of the Desert Attorney Andreas Chialtas in a response letter to the City. The letter

outlines the issues and background related to the Property and offers that the City and representatives from COD and Watermarke meet to discuss possible options.

Despite the delay of the sale of the Tramview property, COD continues to move the Palm Springs Development Project-Phase 1 forward at the mall site. The project is currently in the finalization of the programming (pre-design) phase and moving into the schematic design phase by the end of September.

During the upcoming September 15, 2022 Board of Trustees meeting, an in-depth presentation of the findings from the programming phase will be shared. At the meeting, the members of the newly-formed Citizens Advisory Group for the Palm Springs Development project will be announced. The community is highly encouraged to attend the meeting via live Zoom, stream or in person.

For more information about the Palm Springs Development Project or items on the agenda, please visit www.CollegeoftheDesert.edu.

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