

RESOLUTION NO. PC2026-31

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COACHELLA RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL CONDITIONALLY APPROVE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW NO. 25-07 TO APPROVE THE SITE PLAN, ARCHITECTURE, ASSOCIATED STRUCTURES AND IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE “COVA” PROJECT PROPOSING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HOTEL, RESORT, RESIDENTIAL, AND COMMERCIAL PUBLIC BEACH CLUB LOCATED ON APPROXIMATELY 87 ACRES ON FOUR CONTIGUOUS PARCELS (APNS 780-040-001, 780-040-003, 780-060-001, AND 780-060-002) SOUTH OF AVENUE 52, WEST OF VAN BUREN STREET AND EAST OF CALHOUN STREET, AND DETERMINE, PURSUANT TO STATE CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15183, THAT NO FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW IS REQUIRED. APPLICANT: RELEVANT COACHELLA OWNER, LLC

WHEREAS, on April 22, 2015, the City approved Resolution No. 2015-03 certifying the Program Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”) (SCH #2009021007) for the City of Coachella General Plan Update 2035 (“General Plan”) and Climate Action Plan; adopting environmental findings, a mitigation monitoring and reporting program, and a statement of overriding considerations; and approving the General Plan and Climate Action Plan pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, herein incorporated by reference; and

WHEREAS, on July 7, 2025, Relevant Coachella Owner, LLC (“Applicant”), submitted an application for a Tentative Tract Map, Architectural Review, Conditional Use Permit, Environmental Assessment, and Development Agreement for the proposed “COVA” project, consisting of hotel, resort, residential, commercial and public beach club uses on approximately 87 acres comprising four contiguous parcels (APNs 780-040-001, 780-040-003, 780-060-001, and 780-060-002) located south of Avenue 52, west of Van Buren Street and east of Calhoun Street (“Project”); and

WHEREAS, Architectural Review No. 25-07 proposes approval of the site plan, architecture, landscaping, associated structures, and site improvements for the COVA Project, including the commercial, lodging, resort, residential, recreational, and publicly accessible beach club components of the Project; and

WHEREAS, the Applicant subsequently submitted applications for Zoning Ordinance Amendment Nos. 26-02 and 26-03 as related entitlements for the Project; and

WHEREAS, the Project site has a zoning designation of (R-C) Regional Commercial and a General Plan 2035 land use designation of Regional Retail District, which allows a residential density of 10 to 15 dwelling units per acre and a floor area ratio of 0.35 to 2.0. The Project proposes a residential density of approximately 14.4 dwelling units per acre and a floor area ratio of approximately 0.65, consistent with the development

density and intensity established by the General Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed Project is consistent with and intended to implement the vision of the Coachella Municipal Code and the General Plan pertaining to land use patterns, building and site design, and public right-of-way improvements; and,

WHEREAS, Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and State CEQA Guidelines section 15183 provide that a project consistent with the development density established by an existing general plan for which an EIR was certified does not require additional environmental review except as necessary to examine whether the project would result in project-specific significant effects peculiar to the project or its site; and

WHEREAS, the City, as lead agency under the CEQA, prepared a Modified Initial Study/Section 15183 Checklist for the Project (the “15183 Checklist”) to determine whether further environmental review of the Project is required; and

WHEREAS, the 15183 Checklist concludes that the Project would not result in any environmental effects that (1) are peculiar to the Project or the parcel on which the Project would be located; (2) were not analyzed as significant effects in the certified General Plan EIR; (3) are potentially significant off-site or cumulative impacts that were not discussed in the General Plan EIR; or (4) are previously identified significant effects that, as a result of substantial new information not known when the General Plan EIR was certified, are determined to have a more severe adverse impact than discussed in the General Plan EIR. The 15183 Checklist further concludes that the potential environmental effects associated with the Project are within the scope of the impacts analyzed in the General Plan EIR and that all feasible mitigation measures from the General Plan EIR applicable to the Project, together with applicable uniformly applied development policies and standards, have been incorporated into or otherwise apply to the Project; and

WHEREAS, a notice of a public hearing to consider Tentative Tract Map No. 39330, Zoning Ordinance Amendment No. 26-02, Zoning Ordinance Amendment No. 26-03, Conditional Use Permit No. 396, Conditional Use Permit No. 407, Architectural Review No. 25-07, and Development Agreement No. 25-01 was issued in accordance with Coachella Municipal Code Section 16.12.110, 17.72.010J, 17.74.010G, 17.80.010E, and 17.100.060 inclusive of the publication on September 17, 2026, of a legal public hearing notice which was published in the Desert Sun, the City’s newspaper of record and mailing of a public hearing notice to a certified list of property owners within 300 feet of the subject properties on September 17, 2026; and,

WHEREAS, on October 7, 2026, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing to consider the application for the Project during which evidence, both written and oral, including the staff report and supporting documents, was presented at said hearing; and,

WHEREAS, all other legal prerequisites to the adoption of this Resolution have occurred.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COACHELLA, CALIFORNIA DOES HEREBY FIND DETERMINE AND RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Incorporation of Recitals. The Planning Commission hereby specifically finds that all of the facts set forth in the recitals of this Resolution are true and correct and are incorporated into this Resolution by reference and constitute a material part of this Resolution.

SECTION 2. Compliance with California Environmental Quality Act. The Planning Commission has reviewed and considered the previously certified Coachella General Plan Update 2035 EIR (SCH No. 2009021007), the 15183 Checklist and supporting technical studies prepared for the Project, the staff report, all written and oral comments received, and the entire administrative record. Based on substantial evidence in the record, the Planning Commission recommends that the City Council make the following determinations:

- 1) The 15183 Checklist was prepared in compliance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines and reflects the City's independent judgment and analysis.
- 2) The Project is consistent with the City's General Plan Update 2035 for which an EIR was certified.
- 3) The Project would not result in any environmental effects that: (a) are peculiar to the Project or the parcel on which the Project would be located; (b) were not analyzed as significant effects in the certified General Plan EIR; (c) are potentially significant off-site or cumulative impacts that were not discussed in the General Plan EIR; or (d) are previously identified significant effects that, as a result of substantial new information not known at the time the General Plan EIR was certified, are determined to have a more severe adverse impact than discussed in the General Plan EIR.
- 4) All potential environmental effects associated with the Project are within the scope of the impacts analyzed in the General Plan EIR, and all feasible mitigation measures from the General Plan EIR applicable to the Project, together with applicable uniformly applied development policies and standards, have been incorporated into or otherwise apply to the Project.
- 5) The Project is exempt from further environmental review pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21083.3 and State CEQA Guidelines section 15183.

The applicable mitigation measures adopted in connection with the General Plan Update 2035 (GPU) EIR shall remain applicable to the Project and shall be incorporated into the Project's mitigation monitoring and reporting requirements.

SECTION 3. Architectural Review Findings. Based upon the evidence presented at the hearing, including the staff report and written and verbal testimony, which are all incorporated herein by reference, the Planning Commission finds that:

1. The proposed project is consistent with the General Plan.

The approximately 87-acre project site is designated Regional Retail District in the City of Coachella General Plan and is located within Subarea 3 – Van Buren Corridor. The project integrates hotel and resort accommodations, residential units, a publicly accessible commercial beach club, restaurants, entertainment uses, and recreational amenities. This combination supports the designation's intended mix of commercial, lodging, entertainment, and supporting residential development.

For purposes of the residential density calculation, all 402 units are included within approximately 28 acres allocated to residential development, resulting in approximately 14.4 dwelling units per acre. The commercial components are excluded from this residential acreage calculation. The resulting residential density falls within the General Plan range of 10 to 15 dwelling units per acre. The public sector uses have a combined FAR of approximately 0.65, which is consistent with the Regional Retail standard of 0.35 to 2.0. The project meets the intent and purpose, intended physical character, allowed land uses, and development intensity allowed in the Regional Retail District general plan designation. The project is compatible with the design standards for network connectivity, street design, parks and open space, and urban form guidelines of the Regional Retail District general plan designation.

The project supports the Subarea 3 direction for regional commercial destinations that coexist with surrounding neighborhoods. Its proposed landscaped frontage improvements along Avenue 52, Calhoun Street, and Van Buren Street include separated sidewalks, landscaping, and an equestrian trail. The Van Buren Corridor is at a key location between Indio, Coachella, and La Quinta and much of the land through the corridor is still available for quality development, providing Coachella with a great opportunity to create a strong neighborhood center and regional shopping district. The Van Buren Corridor will transform into a major sub-regional retail destination that will provide a wide variety of goods and services for Coachella residents, as well as neighboring communities. The large format, regional-serving retail will be built in a fashion so it coexists with existing and future neighborhood development in and around the Van Buren Corridor. The new commercial development will promote walkability with a mix of appropriately scaled buildings fronting the streets and large, block scale buildings throughout. These improvements enhance the project's interface with surrounding streets and contribute to the corridor's intended pedestrian environment.

Together, the integrated land uses, compliant residential density, architectural treatment, frontage improvements, and documented circulation design support consistency with the applicable General Plan designation and Subarea 3 policies.

2. The proposed project complies with zoning regulations.

The project site is zoned Regional Commercial (R-C). The Project is subject to the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Coachella which includes Chapter 17.28 R-C Regional Commercial Zone and Chapter 17.19 Supplemental Standards for Single-Family Residential of the Coachella Municipal Code (CMC). The project proposes a hotel, resort, residential, and commercial public beach club is consistent with the permitted uses of the R-C zone, including Hotel, Resort, Restaurant, and Private Swimming Pool uses. The project requires

approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow bars and cocktail lounges, liquor sales, and a special event establishment. The project requires approval of a CUP to allow single-family residential uses in conjunction with resort uses on the project site. The project includes a Zoning Ordinance Amendment to establish single-family residential uses in conjunction with resort uses as a conditionally permitted use in the R-C zone. The project proposes a mixed-use development, consisting of a total of 402 units on approximately 28 acres (14.4 du/ac), which is consistent with the R-C zoning residential density range of 10 to 15 dwelling units per acre. The project is compliant with Chapter 17.28 R-C Regional Commercial Zone and Chapter 17.19 Supplemental Standards for Single Family Residential of the CMC, except for certain development standards that comply with the standards allowed pursuant to the project Development Agreement in accordance with Chapter 17.100 – Development Agreements of the CMC.

The project is compliant with the residential density requirements, supplemental standards for single-family residential, yard requirements, landscape setback requirements, Energy Efficient Design and Heat Island Reduction Strategies, distance between building requirements, off-street parking and loading requirements, screening requirements, other property development standards, and architectural review standards as required by Chapter 17.28 – R-C Regional Commercial Zone. The project height requirements will be allowed flexible standards pursuant to the project Development Agreement in accordance with Chapter 17.100 – Development Agreements of the CMC.

The proposed single-family residential component requires adoption and effectiveness of Zoning Ordinance Amendment No. 26-02 to establish single-family residential uses in conjunction with a resort as a conditionally permitted use within the R-C zone, together with approval of Conditional Use Permit No. 407. Implementation of the single-family residential component shall be contingent upon those approvals.

3. The proposed project is consistent with the City’s design guidelines.

The project provides a coordinated architectural and landscape design for the commercial, residential, and lodging components within both the publicly accessible and private resort areas. The contemporary architectural character, complementary materials, earth-tone colors, and coordinated landscape treatments establish a cohesive development while distinguishing the buildings according to their functions.

Within the publicly accessible component, the agave-inspired beach club provides an architectural focal point complemented by the restaurants, supporting commercial facilities, lodging and residential buildings, and recreational amenities. Coordinated building placement, pedestrian connections, landscaping, and screening of service areas support compatibility among these uses.

Within the private resort component, the residential and lodging buildings incorporate complementary façade treatments, wood siding, dark metal-framed windows, and metal roofing. These features establish a consistent architectural character throughout the resort. Incorporation of existing date palms and drought-tolerant landscaping further integrates the public and private components with the surrounding desert environment.

Each commercial, lodging, and residential building shall comply with the City's applicable design requirements for its approved use and building type, including applicable single-family residential supplemental standards and multifamily objective design standards where applicable. Final plans shall demonstrate compliance with required building articulation, entry treatments, materials, screening, privacy, lighting, and pedestrian access provisions. Implementation of the single-family residential component remains contingent upon adoption and effectiveness of Zoning Ordinance Amendment No. 26-02 and approval of Conditional Use Permit No. 407.

The project is required to comply with the Supplemental Standards for Single-Family Residential, as required by the Regional Commercial zone. The project is compliant with the access and connectivity, street and pathway landscaping, parking, service and utilities, refuse and recycling, architectural variability, façade modulation and articulation, window trim and recess, building entries, building roofs, colors and materials, transitions and privacy, and accessory structures standards for single-family residential of the Coachella Municipal Code (CMC). As a result, the project is in compliance with the city's design guidelines.

Based on these design features and subject to the applicable approvals and conditions of approval, the commercial and residential components within both the publicly accessible and private resort areas are consistent with the City's applicable design guidelines.

4. The proposed development will not be detrimental to public health, safety, or welfare, or materially injurious to nearby properties and improvements.

The project's site design separates public commercial access from private resort access and includes a separate back-of-house entrance. This arrangement provides a basis for managing visitor, resident, employee, service, and emergency circulation.

The approved plans and conditions shall require accessible pedestrian routes, safe crossings where pedestrian routes intersect vehicular circulation, required emergency access, and compliance with applicable building and fire requirements. Parking and loading shall comply with applicable requirements or an expressly authorized alternative supported by the required analysis.

Exterior lighting shall be designed and directed to control glare and light spill onto adjoining properties and public streets. Refuse areas, loading areas, mechanical equipment, and utility facilities shall receive appropriate screening. Required grading, drainage, utility, and geotechnical improvements shall be incorporated into the final construction plans.

Special event and alcohol-related operations remain subject to their respective CUP requirements, including applicable controls addressing noise, attendance, hours, security, and parking. With implementation of these design requirements and operational conditions, the development will protect public health, safety, and welfare and avoid material injury to surrounding properties.

Furthermore, the project is consistent with the analysis performed for the GPU EIR. Further, the GPU EIR adequately anticipated and described the impacts of the project, identified applicable mitigation measures necessary to reduce project specific impacts, and the project implements these mitigation measures (see Table 1.0-1, Impacts Overview Matrix, of the GPU EIR for complete list of GPU Mitigation Measures).

A comprehensive environmental evaluation has been completed for the project as documented in the attached §15183 Exemption Checklist. This evaluation concludes that the project qualifies for an exemption from additional environmental review because it is consistent with the development density and use characteristics established by the City General Plan, as analyzed by the City GPU EIR (SCH #2009021007), and all required findings can be made.

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines §15183, the project qualifies for an exemption because the following findings can be made:

1. The project is consistent with the development density established by existing zoning, community plan or general plan policies for which an EIR was certified.

The project is located within the City's General Plan Regional Retail District, and Regional Commercial (R-C) zoning designation. Regional Retail Districts and R-C zones allow 10 – 15 dwelling units per acre and a floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.35 – 2.0. The project would be consistent with the Regional Retail District land use designation identified for the site in the GPU. Similarly, the project would be consistent with the Regional Commercial (R-C) zoning designation for the site in the Zoning Map once the application to amend the City's Zoning Code is approved, as discussed above. The project proposes 14.4 dwelling units per acre and 0.65 FAR, which is consistent with the Regional Retail Districts and R-C zone.

2. There are no project specific effects which are peculiar to the project or its site, and which the GPU EIR failed to analyze as significant effects.

The subject property currently operates as a combination of an active date palm grove and grape vines that have been allowed to go fallow. The site is surrounded by agricultural uses, vacant land, and scattered residential properties. Currently, the subject property operates similarly to the surrounding uses. The project proposes to develop a hospitality project with resort, residential, and recreational uses. The project is consistent with the City's Regional Retail District land use designation and Regional Commercial zoning designation. The project does not propose project-specific effects which are peculiar to the project or its site. The project site does not contain any unique or peculiar environmental features that would result in environmental effects beyond those previously identified and analyzed.

In addition, as explained further in the §15183 Exemption Checklist below, all project impacts were adequately analyzed by the GPU EIR. Applicable mitigation measures specified within the GPU EIR have been applied to the project.

3. There are no potentially significant off-site and/or cumulative impacts which the GPU EIR failed to evaluate.

Preparation of the §15183 Exemption Checklist did not identify any significant off-site and/or cumulative impacts which the GPU EIR failed to evaluate.

4. There is no substantial new information which results in more severe impacts than anticipated by the GPU EIR.

As explained in the §15183 Exemption Checklist below, no new information has been identified which would result in a determination of a more severe impact than what had been anticipated by the GPU EIR.

5. The project will undertake feasible mitigation measures specified in the GPU EIR.

As explained in the §15183 Exemption Checklist below, the project will undertake feasible mitigation measures specified in the GPU EIR. These GPU EIR mitigation measures will be undertaken through project design, compliance with regulations and ordinances, or through the project's conditions of approval.

5. The project is compatible with the existing or intended character of the surrounding area and will not change its essential character.

The project's integrated commercial, resort, entertainment, and residential components are compatible with the intended Regional Retail District character of the Van Buren Corridor. The publicly accessible commercial component preserves the site's role as a regional destination, while the residential component is integrated with the resort.

The coordinated architectural materials and colors, distinctive beach club design, landscaped frontages, and decorative perimeter walls establish a consistent visual character. Required setbacks, building placement, landscape buffers, screening, and privacy treatments shall provide transitions between the project and nearby residential properties.

Compatibility also depends on the approved building heights, pedestrian connections, lighting controls, service-area treatment, and operational restrictions. These requirements shall be maintained throughout the life of the project. With these measures, the development will be compatible with the area's existing residential context and intended regional commercial character without changing its essential character.

SECTION 4. Location and Custodian of Records. The documents and materials that constitute the record of proceedings on which these findings are based are located at Coachella Civic Center. The Community Development Director is the custodian of the record of proceedings.

SECTION 5. Execution of Resolution. The Planning Commission Chairperson shall sign this Resolution and the Planning Commission Secretary shall attest and certify to the passage and adoption thereof.

SECTION 6. Recommendation to City Council. Based on the foregoing recitals and findings above, and the written and oral comments, facts and evidence presented, the City of Coachella Planning Commission recommends the City Council to conditionally approve Architectural Review No. 25-07 for the “COVA” project proposing the development of a hotel, resort, residential, and commercial public beach club located on approximately 87 acres on four contiguous parcels (APNs 780-040-001, 780-040-003, 780-060-001, and 780-060-002) south of Avenue 52, west of Van Buren Street and east of Calhoun Street (“Project”). The applicant shall demonstrate compliance with ALL Conditions of Approval, as set forth in Exhibit “A” of this Resolution. Failure to demonstrate compliance with these conditions of approval may result in the delay of the Proposed Use or the rescinding of the City of Coachella’s conditional approval. Where the term “Applicant” is used in any condition of approval, this term shall also apply to the Property Owner, any developer, or any successor in the interest of the Applicant. It is the Applicant’s or Applicant’s successor in interest responsibility to fully comply with the conditions of approval unless subsequently modified in accordance with the City’s required processes and procedures.

SECTION 7. Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion of this Resolution is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Resolution. The Planning Commission of the City of Coachella hereby declares that it would have adopted this Resolution and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion thereof irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, phrases, or portions be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

PASSED APPROVED and ADOPTED this 7th day of October 2026.

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Eva Lara, Chairperson
City of Coachella

ATTEST:

Kendra Reif
Planning Commission Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Best Best & Krieger
City Attorney