



STAFF REPORT
10/12/2022

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Dr. Gabriel Martin, City Manager

SUBJECT: Resolution No. 2022-92 in Support of Action by the Desert Community College District to Establish a Branch in the Eastern Coachella Valley

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council approve Resolution No. 2022-92 in supporting action by the Desert Community College District to establish a College of the Desert branch in the Eastern Coachella Valley.

BACKGROUND:

In 1958, the voters in the Coachella Valley approved the formation of the Desert Community College District (“District”) to create a local two-year college (College of the Desert) that currently serves over 400,000 residents, 9 local cities and 3 local K-12 school districts. In March 2004, the voters in the District voted overwhelmingly approved the Measure B General Obligation Bond, to authorize the sale of bonds, in the amount of \$346.5 million, that would enable the District to renovate its 40-year old campus and expand for future growth.

The District has already funded and completed various projects, such as renovations to the nursing building, the business building, and dining hall; along with new construction projects like Alumni Centre, Baker Foundation Nursing Complex, Burn Tower Training Facility, Central Plant, Public Safety Academy, Cravens Student Services Center, Indio East Valley Campus, and the Math Science Technology Center building.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

The District currently has (Exhibit A) 10,998 students enrolled with 8,213 students being Hispanic/Latino, which is 75% of its student population; furthermore, 3,902 students enrolled at College of the Desert (Exhibit B) are from the City of Coachella, which makes up 35% of its student population. The College of the Desert is federally recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HIS).

The success of the East Valley’s economic and social future is enhanced by the educational attainment of its residents, especially post-secondary attainment. Student participation in quality

post-secondary education is dependent on equitable access to transportation, affordable student housing and equitable instruction. Historically, students living in the eastern most portion of the Coachella Valley have had limited access to consistent and comprehensive post-secondary academic and vocational instruction, leading to associate in arts or science degrees.

Currently, there are classes being offered at the Coachella Public Library; however, those courses are limited and do not offer complete program or degree pathways. The College of the Desert is currently conducting tenant improvements in a commercially leased unit in the new Pueblo Viejo Villas, which is an affordable housing project located at 1279 6th Street in Coachella. The 1,355 sq. ft. space will serve as a new Student Services for the residents of Coachella and is estimated to cost \$667,000. On August 25, 2021, the City of Coachella leased the Old Library building, located at 1538 7th Street in Coachella, to the College of the Desert as a temporary Student Service Center until the tenant improvement project at the Pueblo Viejo Villas is complete. The City did not charge them a monthly lease rate; instead, it agreed to allow the District to provide \$80,000 in tenant improvement to the Old Library Building.

The City Council would like to request that the District conduct a thorough planning process with sufficient community outreach for a feasibility study to identify potential sites to establish a branch in the eastern part of the Coachella Valley. Furthermore, request that the District direct and authorize the President of the District to work with the City Manager to continue to communicate and strategize on possible rebuilding, renovation upgrades, and programs needs within the Eastern Coachella Valley.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. To not approve resolution and provide new direction to Staff

FISCAL IMPACT:

No Fiscal Impact.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Resolution No. 2022-92
- Exhibit “A”
- Exhibit “B”