



STAFF REPORT
5/14/2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Kendra Reif, Interim Development Services Director

SUBJECT: Consideration to Fill Two Planning Commission Vacancies

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Mayor and City Council fill two vacancies on the Planning Commission.

BACKGROUND:

The Coachella Planning Commission is made up of five members and one alternative member, who are appointed to 4-year terms that are staggered. The City Attorney recently opined that the terms of the mayor's appointments are for a 2-year term based on Coachella Municipal Code (C.M.C.) Sections 2.32 and 2.26. Accordingly, every two years, three commissioners must be newly appointed. The C.M.C. Section 2.26.020 (B), states that each council member may nominate an individual to serve on each city commission and committee subject to appointment by the mayor, with approval by the City Council, at open session of a regular or special city council meeting. If a council member fails to nominate an individual, the mayor may appoint someone with approval by the City Council. The C.M.C. 2.26.020 (D), states that in an event of an interim vacancy, the council member who nominated the vacating member may nominate another individual, subject to appointment by the mayor with approval by the City Council, for the unexpired term of the member replaced. There is no individual council member nomination for the Alternate Planning Commissioner.

On February 26, 2025, Councilmember Perez nominated Margarita Lopez to serve a 4-year term as Planning Commissioner and was approved by the City Council. Margarita Lopez at that time declined the appointment and the City Council will need to fill the vacancy. Table 1 shows the Planning Commission Appointments from the February 26, 2025 meeting.

On April 9, 2025, Commissioner Yurema Arvizu resigned from her role as a Planning Commissioner. Former Commissioner Yurema Arvizu was previously nominated by Councilmember Figueroa and was appointed to the Planning Commission on March 8, 2023. Since this is a vacancy due to a resignation, the future appointee's term will continue where former Commissioner Yurema Arvizu's term left off and will expire in November of 2026. Table 2 shows the current Planning Commissioner roles and vacancies.

Table 1: Planning Commission Appointments February 26, 2025

Planning Commissioners	Appointed by	Term expires
Eva Lara	Mayor Pro-Tem Delgado	November 2028
Margarita Lopez	Councilmember Yadira Perez	November 2028
Oscar Fonseca	Mayor Hernandez	November 2026
Robert Caballero (Alternate)	Mayor Hernandez	November 2026

Table 2: Current Planning Commission Roles and Vacancies

Planning Commissioners	Appointed by	Term expires
Chairperson Isela Murillo	Councilmember Virgen	November 2026
Vice Chairperson Oscar Fonseca	Mayor Hernandez	November 2026
Commissioner Eva Lara	Mayor Pro-Tem Delgado	November 2028
Vacant	Councilmember Perez	November 2028
Vacant	Councilmember Figueroa	November 2026
Commissioner Robert Caballero (Alternate)	Mayor Hernandez	November 2026

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

The City Clerk's Office maintains a list of the following candidates for Planning Commission:

- Karla Flores Rosas
- Stephanie Ambriz
- Humberto Ortega
- Manuel Gaitan
- Margarita Lopez

The City Council may fill the current Planning Commission vacancies from the list of candidates or extend the deadline for Planning Commissioner applications.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There are no direct fiscal impacts by appointment of Planning Commissioners on the adopted budget for Fiscal Year 2024/2025.

ALTERNATIVE(S):

- 1) Fill the two existing Planning Commission vacancies from the submitted Planning Commissioner applications.
- 2) Request that City extend the deadline for Planning Commissioner applications and fill existing Commission vacancy at a future date.
- 3) Continue this item and provide staff direction.

RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE(S):

Staff recommends Alternative 1.

Attachments:

1. Planning Commission Applications

- Karla Flores Rosas
- Stephanie Ambriz
- Humberto Ortega
- Manuel Gaitan
- Margarita Lopez