



**PALM SPRINGS
PRESERVATION
FOUNDATION®**

July 9, 2024

SENT VIA EMAIL

Scott C. Stiles, City Manager
City of Palm Springs
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Consent Calendar Item 1.E. Adopt a Resolution
Approving Palm Tree Trimming Policy and
Superseding All Previous...Procedures and Policies

Dear Mr. Stiles,

We would like to register our concerns regarding the subject Consent Calendar item. In reviewing the staff report we have concluded that the detrimental effects of the proposed palm tree skirt trimming plan have not been fully considered. For example:

- The palm skirts have become a distinctive characteristic of the Palm Springs landscape as represented in dozens of vintage and contemporary postcards, and photographs. The current “look” of the palms (i.e., skirts trimmed to approximately 12-feet off the ground) have become inextricably linked with our downtown image and may have risen to the level of becoming a “cultural resource.” By way of background, in 1949, Palm Springs' first Councilwoman, Ruth Hardy, spearheaded an effort to get 300 palm trees planted along Palm Canyon Drive, from Tamarisk to Alejo. Planted 35-feet apart, these palms formed a stately allée through the main business district. Neel's Nursery provided the trees, a selection of native California fan palms, as well as Mexican fan palms.

- The palm skirts are micro environments for a host of wildlife (e.g., bats, birds, lizards, etc.). Bats, in particular, are essential to controlling the flying insect population. Certainly, a more expert analysis of these micro environments is warranted.

- While we understand the city's desire to avoid litigation, arguably there are far more important measures that could be taken. For example, the city's continuing support of parklets protruding into the thoroughfare on Palm Canyon Drive pose a greater danger to the public safety and hence represent a much greater potential for expensive litigation.

We strongly recommend that the subject item be moved from the Consent Calendar and elevated to a Public Hearing. This will solicit the opinions and views of the many informed citizens of Palm Springs. Additionally, it might be prudent to receive input from the city's Historic Site Preservation Board to evaluate if significant changes to these trees are impacting a legitimate cultural resource.

If you require any additional information, please contact me at info@pspreservationfoundation.org.

Sincerely,

Gary Johns
President