THERMAL DESIGN GUIDELINES
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THERMAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

SUPERVISOR ROY WILSON
FOURTH DISTRICT, RIVERSIDE COUNTY

REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY FOR THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

RIVERSIDE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Prepared by
PDS WEST

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TABLE of CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE ........................................... 5

II. BACKGROUND - THE STORY OF THERMAL ....................... 8

III. DESIGN PRINCIPLES .......................................................... 9

IV. DESIGN CONTEXT AND INFLUENCES ............................. 11
   A. DESIGN STRUCTURE ..................................................... 13
   B. LAND USE PLAN ......................................................... 21
   C. COMMUNITY ICONS ..................................................... 22
      1. Community Logo .................................................... 22
      2. Community Entry Monument .................................... 23
      3. Street Signs .......................................................... 32
      4. Street lights ......................................................... 33
   D. THEME ROAD PLAN .................................................. 33

VI. ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES ........................................ 46
   A. PACKING HOUSE ARCHITECTURE - GENERAL GUIDELINES 47
   B. INDUSTRIAL THEME ARCHITECTURE - GENERAL GUIDELINES .......................................................... 47
   C. NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT ................................ 50
   D. RETROFITTING EXISTING COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES ....... 52
I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of these design guidelines is to capture and strengthen Thermal’s sense of place within the rapidly growing eastern Coachella Valley. Without attempts enhance its character and improve its aesthetics, there is a real possibility that Thermal’s identity will be subsumed by Indio to the northwest or Coachella to the northeast.

Unlike the resort-oriented communities such as Palm Springs, Palm Desert and Rancho Mirage to the northwest, Thermal grew from agricultural roots and the railroad. It represents the low-scale, expansive rural ambience of the eastern Coachella Valley. Its most distinctive design icons – packing houses, date palm groves, table and citrus croplands, and the single-engine plane of famed aviatrix Jacqueline Cochran, evoke an earlier time.

Celebrating its agricultural bounty, improving its streetscape landscaping, strengthening its community core and developing attractive public space are the major goals of these guidelines. Rather than impose an artificial architectural theme on the area, this document crystallizes Thermal’s best qualities and creates an attractive, low-key design vocabulary. But these guidelines are also forward-thinking and adopt principles of environmental sustainability, energy conservation and green building design. With its abundant resources, growing population and employment needs, Thermal is looking to the future to become a catalyst in creating buildings, industry and opportunities in green building and alternative energy.

This document establishes the aesthetic guidelines and design standards for subsequent discretionary review and permitting. As such, these guidelines are intended to be clear and descriptive while allowing creative design solutions consistent with the community character. Design and
Exhibit 1 | Thermal Boundary Map
Exhibit 2 | Packing-House Heritage
Packing houses abound in Thermal and are its most common architectural icon.

Exhibit 3 | Shipping by Train
The advent of the train through Thermal made it possible to economically ship the area’s many crops to a variety of markets.

development issues not addressed herein, as well as specific development standards are covered by the County of Riverside’s Design Standards and Zoning Ordinance and Development Manual.

Although intended to be prescriptive and specific, these guidelines are not meant to preclude creative design solutions that fit the context of the community. By providing illustrative examples and plans, the Thermal Design Guidelines will serve as a practical reference for the County, property owners, designers, and developers. It is expected that some design modifications may be necessary to meet the realities of engineering, cost and availability of materials, and construction and maintenance issues.

As shown in the Thermal Boundary Plan Exhibit, these Guidelines cover the northern and eastern portions of Thermal, its commercial core and future community center. The southwestern part of the community – the area south of 60th Avenue – falls within the South Valley Implementation Program Area. The Thermal Design Guidelines apply to this area as well, although some variations will be allowed as long they maintain design theme consistancy.
II. BACKGROUND - THE STORY OF THERMAL

The Community of Thermal was born with the discovery of abundant water, the introduction of the railroad and the expansion of agriculture. From a few scattered farms in the late 1800s, Thermal grew to become a major agricultural center, specializing in table grapes, assorted vegetables, grapefruit, and dates. Date palms proved to be one of Thermal’s most well-known crops and recognizable icons. Farmers learned to harvest and plant small trees from sprouts of the mother date palm tree. At one point, the Coachella Valley provided 95% of the nation’s dates. Groves of date palms are still one of the community’s most visible images and will be used as a backdrop to the entry monuments and street signs.

Other than agriculture, Thermal is home to two large scale facilities – one a regional airport; the other a large horse show exhibition area. The first amenity is related to Thermal’s most famous visitor - Jacqueline Cochran, the renowned aviatrix. She was a long-time resident of the Coachella Valley and is buried in Coachella Valley Cemetery. She regularly utilized Thermal Airport over the course of her long aviation career. The airport, which had been renamed Desert Resorts Regional, was again renamed “Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport” in her honor. Its annual air show is also named in her honor.

Thermal’s huge horse show exhibition area is one of the newest homes for the equestrian exhibition and competition circuit called “HITS” (Horse Shows in the Sun).

Today, agricultural is still the predominant land use, but, like its Coachella Valley neighbors - Indio and Mecca, population pressures are strong. Residential and commercial development is increasing, especially in and around the commercial core near Highway 111 and in the southwestern part of the community near Vista Santa Rosa. These guidelines help Thermal...
prepare for this future development by ensuring that it is of high quality, compatible with the community theme, and environmentally sustainable.

III. DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The Thermal Design Guidelines draw their inspiration from the community’s agricultural heritage and its beautiful desert setting. Building on the heritage of colorful “crate art” and packing labels, the architectural forms of packing houses and industrial themes, and the rich colors of the desert, these guidelines take familiar forms and use them as decorative elements to enliven buildings, signs and entry monuments.

The major design principles which guide this effort are the following:
• Create lasting design icons which mark Thermal as a special place within the Coachella Valley
• Enhance the sense of arrival into the community
• Incorporate vernacular architectural forms reflective of Thermal’s agricultural heritage
• Develop themed roadway landscape plans which enhance aesthetics, provide pedestrian comfort and create visual consistency
• Design attractive and usable public spaces within the Community Center
• Develop green building design guidelines which set energy-efficiency and environmental sustainability as key priorities.
Exhibit 7 | Architectural Forms
Variations of the shed roofs and low-lying forms of packing houses are appropriate architectural elements in Thermal.

Exhibit 8 | Architectural Forms
Building on the repetitive, clearstory roof forms of the packing houses is a classic element of the vernacular architecture of Southern California agricultural architecture. These elements can be enlivened with neon lighting, awnings, aluminum siding and vintage signage to create an attractive and appropriate architectural theme, evoking the community’s agricultural heritage and adapting it to a variety of uses.

Exhibit 9 | Public Places
Thermal’s community plaza will feature a long, cascading pool flanked by formally-arranged date palms. The water feature is an appropriate symbol of the area’s water resources and the palms are important icons in the region.

Exhibit 10 | Public Places
The community plaza will feature decorative paving, a central gazebo and shaded areas for relaxation.
IV. DESIGN CONTEXT AND INFLUENCES

The community of Thermal, although located in a beautiful and lush desert valley, suffers from a lack of consistent and distinctive architecture, street landscaping and signage. By incorporating a set of unifying community design elements, the community will begin to build a lasting and attractive sense of place.

Thermal’s downtown area is under utilized and lacks coordinated signage, street trees and pedestrian amenities. Existing commercial buildings and commercial streetscapes contain long, blank walls with few signs. The areas adjacent to the commercial core are an uncoordinated blend of residential and commercial uses with little public maintenance. Loading areas, storage lots and trailer parks are seldom screened from the public right-of-way. Residential fencing and walls are an inconsistent array of decorative, wrought-iron designs, chain link and cyclone fencing.

Currently, there is little delineation of Thermal’s boundaries and this has been a concern of residents for some time. The existing small and generic county signs at several entrances to Thermal are easy to miss and give no indication of community identity. This document calls for their replacement with an entry monument more fitting to the community’s developing character. These guidelines also address the lack of identifying community features within the community core by incorporating street trees, signs and lighting along with guidelines for residential architecture and neighborhood compatibility.

Thermal’s Land Use Plan shows agricultural land to the east and south of the commercial and residential core. Both light and heavy industrial uses are found mostly in the northwest portion of the community along Highway 111 and surrounding the regional airport. Thermal’s primary commercial core is located just north of Airport Blvd. and east of Highway 111. Medium to medium-high density residential uses surround the community center to provide support for retail uses. A broad mix of residential densities is located in the southwestern part of the plan area bordering Mecca to the south and Vista Santa Rosa to the west.
Much of Thermal’s commercial core contains underutilized buildings interspersed with a variety of vacant lots and unimproved streetscapes.

Security measures and lack of screening and maintenance often create a foreboding streetscape.
The vision of these guidelines is to strengthen Thermal’s identity by introducing distinctive design icons consistent with the community’s agricultural past and desert setting. These consist of entry monuments, street signs, architectural guidelines, a themed road plan, improved landscaping and a new community plaza which will become recognizable, attractive and lasting symbols of Thermal and its heritage. It is important to note that the guidelines not only improve aesthetics in the public realm but also provide practical, environmentally-sensitive and cost-effective guidance for future development. There is a strong social benefit as well. By improving streetscapes and providing attractive and comfortable public spaces – along streets, within shopping centers and larger gathering places, the residents of Thermal will have better opportunities for strolling, exercising, socializing and relaxing.

A. DESIGN STRUCTURE

The Thermal Design Guidelines adopts a six-pronged strategy for improving community identity:

• new community entry monuments to create a strong sense of arrival into Thermal
• hierarchical, themed roadway plans to create distinctive, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes
• new street signs and street lights for community identity and pedestrian comfort and safety
• architectural guidelines for new and existing commercial and residential architecture to strengthen Thermal’s identity and create neighborhood design compatibility
• comprehensive landscape program to offer an appropriate palette of street trees and desert shrubbery
• design concept of a Thermal town plaza to provide an attractive, large scale public amenity with the community center.
Exhibit 17 | Example of Industrial Themed Architecture
Exhibit 19 | Example of Packing House Architecture
Exhibit 24 | Desert Color Images

DESERT COLORS
Exhibit 25 | Desert Colore Palette
B. LAND USE PLAN

Thermal’s Land Use Plan shows agricultural land use designations to the east and south of the commercial and residential core. Both light and heavy industrial land use designations are found mostly in the northwest portion of the community along Highway 111 and surrounding the regional airport. Thermal’s primary commercial core is located on the north and south sides of Airport Blvd. and west of Highway 111. Medium to medium-high density residential zoning surrounds the community center to provide support for retail uses. A broad mix of residential densities is located in the southwestern part of the plan area bordering Mecca to the south and Vista Santa Rosa to the west.

The industrial land is very important to the future economy of the area. It is generally accepted that much of the agriculture in this portion of the Coachella Valley will be phased out over the next couple decades. There is a need to establish a new economic base for the area, in fact for the region. A movement is underway to bring green technologies and sustainable practices to the Inland Empire. As stated in the summary of the Green Valley Initiative, “This will reduce the region’s long commutes, under-utilized resources and non-cohesive business and land-use practices and become a place where sustainable economic development and quality of life go hand-in-hand.” This movement, the Green Valley Initiative, is a plan that integrates social, economic and environmental forces to bring new jobs, greater opportunities and a higher quality of life to the region. The Thermal area in particular, is well positioned to accommodate green industry including alternative energy production. Efforts are underway to attract State, national and international green industries into the Coachella Valley. With the Jacqueline Cochran Airport, alternative energy sources including geothermal, wind technology, solar and even biofuel production, and large amounts of available land, Thermal and the eastern Coachella Valley is particularly well-suited as a center for green industry.

These guidelines encourage and facilitate the use of green building techniques and sustainable energy production and use.
C. COMMUNITY ICONS

One of the major purposes of these guidelines is to create lasting design icons which are immediately recognizable as part of the Thermal. These include the community logo, entry monuments, and street signs, all of which incorporate the images of community’s agricultural resources and natural setting.

1. Community Logo

Thermal’s community logo captures the essence of the community’s agricultural heritage and surrounding beauty. It recreates an agricultural packing label, featuring the lush fields of the Coachella Valley bordered in the foreground by table grapes and citrus crops. In the distance, one sees subtle silhouettes of date palms and the surrounding vista of purple mountains highlighting a beautiful sunset. Flying low overhead is a single-engine plane, symbolic of the area’s famous aviatrix, Jacqueline Cochran, after whom the regional airport is named. Along the bottom, within a slightly curved, red sign band, is the community name in bold white letters.

The effect is both nostalgic and dramatic, capturing the vibrant colors of the desert and the essence of Thermal’s identity. Using crate art as the community’s logo becomes the single most important unifying community design icon.

Exhibit 27 | Entry Monument

Thermal’s entry monument creates a strong sense of arrival using key elements of the community’s identity. The logo appears as crate art backed by three silhouettes evoking the steeply-pitched roof forms of the region’s agricultural packing houses.

Exhibit 28 | Thermal Logo Concept

The community logo is a stylized packing label evoking Thermal’s agricultural heritage, mountain vistas and regional airport.
2. Community Entry Monument

Thermal’s entry monument features the community logo as a colorful packing label placed on a light-brown stucco wall. Giving depth and visual prominence to the monument are three staggered, darker stucco forms representing the silhouettes of packing house clearstories. Backing the monument will be a staggered row of large date palms providing a vertical accent and symbolizing an important community icon.
Located at key points of arrival and backed by a row of date palms, Thermal’s entry monuments represent a highly visible and important community design icon.

Exhibit 30 | Entry Monument along 111 Hwy
Thermal’s entry monument features the community logo as a colorful packing label placed on a light-brown stucco wall. Giving depth and visual prominence to the monument are three staggered, darker stucco forms symbolizing the silhouettes of packing house clearstories.

Exhibit 31 | Enlargement Entry Monument along 111 Hwy
The colorful community entry monument with its background of date palms provides a prominent visual contrast to the low relief vistas of the desert valley.

Exhibit 32 | Entry Monument along 86 Hwy
Exhibit 33 | Entry Monument Night Scene along 86 Hwy

Dramatic yet sensitive night illumination of the community entry monument will alert travelers as they enter Thermal. Up lighting of the foreground logo will be complemented by illumination of the roof silhouettes and the accompanying date palms. The effect is one of depth and visual interest.
Important intersections in Thermal will receive enhanced landscaping and streetscape elements. Pedestrian-scale, low level decorative streetlights and street signs help the design blend into the natural surroundings. Pedestrian-scale, low level decorative streetlights interval placement along themed roadways will narrow from 40’ to 20’ on center for the last four lights at the intersection providing greater safety and visibility. Landscape accents will include canopy street trees, desert shrubs and date palms for visual accents on slightly raised berms.
Thermal’s new street signs contain the colorful community logo mounted on a decorative, capped post. The long sign plaque has a soft, white background, reminiscent of the light colors of packing houses, and the light-brown border and lettering capture the colors of the desert.

3. Street Signs

Street signs are a simple, effective and fairly inexpensive way to strengthen a community’s identity. Because they are placed at intersections, they are highly visible, providing a constant visual reminder to motorists and pedestrians of Thermal’s design themes.

Thermal’s new street signs contain the colorful community logo mounted on a decorative, capped post. The long sign plaque has a soft, white background, reminiscent of the light colors of packing houses, and the light-brown border and lettering capture the colors of the desert.
4. Street lights

Street lights are another very effective way to give a roadway a more distinct and visual coherent identity. The new light posts for Thermal are of vintage design with a small decorative cap and stylized base. In keeping with night illumination requirements of the desert (County of Riverside Light Pollution Ordinance) and more intimate scale of the Thermal community, the lamp cover casts light out and down on the sidewalks and street. This provides a more pedestrian-scale alternative to the elongated contemporary “cobra” head design so prevalent in southern California.

The green color of the standard is appropriate for the community and provides an appropriate contrast to the lighter street sign. The lamp cover itself is a shed style light with a subtle industrial feel. The pedestrian scale low level decorative light fixtures will be placed at regular 40’ intervals along the themed roadways with four lights placed closer at 20’ on center spacing at the intersections. This will provide greater safety, visibility, and visual accents as one approaches cross streets.

D. THEME ROAD PLAN

An important part of the overall design plan for the community of Thermal will be its hierarchical streetscape plan. Providing consistently placed street trees, landscaped parkways and medians along major roads are key elements in improving the overall appearance of the community. Since virtually all the roads within Thermal are straight and open to long vistas, the themed landscape plans lend themselves to a formal and consistent placement of tree specimens. A more natural desert-like appearance is created by informal clustering of boulders and shrubs within the medians and parkways.

Each major roadway will have its own landscape palette giving it a special identity within the community. Visual continuity will be achieved by using a common palette of desert shrubs for most roadway plans as well as the introduction of the new street light standards. Roadway classifications are based on county-wide standards.
The five categories of themed roads are as follows:

- **Themed Road(s) A: Gateway/Urban Arterial - Airport Blvd., Harrison St. and 62nd Ave.** These wide roadways (152’ R.O.W.) will be given a streetscape plan best described as “gateway” landscaping. With date palms as vertical accents along parkways and the median, sweet acacia and Chinese pistache trees will be placed at 4’ on center to provide lower scale canopies. The desired effect will be as a semi-formal gateway into the community and a key route to and from the airport.

- **Themed Roads B: Arterial – Polk St. and 60th Avenue.** These four-lane, 128’ wide arterials cross near the center of the community and will be given a distinctive signature with Mexican Fan Palms interspersed with colorful Chinese Flame Trees. Meandering sidewalks will be placed on both sides of the roadways flanked by parkways and planted landscaped strips. The verticality of the fan palms and the brilliant Chinese Flame Trees mark these roadways as important passageways within the community.

- **Themed Roads C: Major Highway – Tyler, 58th, and Fillmore.** These four-lane roadways contain a painted median and will be of lower scale with evergreen elms placed at 40’ on center intervals. The parkway elms border straight sidewalks and at maturity should provide a fairly broad shade canopy.

- **Themed Roads D: Secondary Highway – Olive, Church, Pierce, and Buchanon St..** These four-lane, 100’ R.O.W. thoroughfares in the eastern portion of Thermal will incorporate Chinese Flame Trees within their parkways. Seasonal color and a dense canopy will create an attractive and comfortable streetscape.

- **Themed Roads E: Internal Streets – All internal streets within Thermal will feature regularly-placed Golden Medallion parkway trees.** These 56’ R.O.W. streets will be of a more intimate, residential scale with the trees providing needed shade and seasonal color.
LEGEND

111 HIGHWAY
86 HIGHWAY
Themed Road(s) - A
(152' R.O.W.)
Airport Blvd, Harrison St. and 62nd Ave.
Themed Road(s) - B
(128' R.O.W.)
Piki St. and 60th Ave
Themed Road(s) - C
(118' R.O.W.)
Polk St., 59th Ave and Fillmore St.
Themed Road(s) - D
(100' R.O.W.)
Olive St., Church St., Pierce St. and Buchanan St.
Themed Road(s) - E
(66' R.O.W.)
All Internal Streets
Thermal Community Council Boundary
South Valley Implementation Program Area

Exhibit 39 | Themed Road Plan
Exhibit 40 | Themed Road(s) - A Section (152’ R.O.W.)

(Airport Blvd, Harrison Street, and 62nd Ave - per Countywide Design Guidelines)
Exhibit 41 | Themed Road(s) - A Plan (152’ R.O.W.)

(Airport Blvd, Harrison Street, and 62nd Ave - per Countywide Design Guidelines)
Exhibit 42 | Themed Road(s) - B Section (128’ R.O.W.)
(Polk Street, 60th Ave, and 111 Hwy - per Countywide Design Guidelines)
Exhibit 43 | Themed Road(s) - B Plan (128’ R.O.W.)
(Polk Street, 60th Ave, and 111 Hucy - per Countywide Design Guidelines)
Exhibit 44 | Themed Road(s) - C Section (118’ R.O.W.)

(Tyler Street, 58th Ave, and Fillmore Street - per Countywide Design Guidelines)
Exhibit 45 | Themed Road(s) - C Plan (118’ R.O.W.)
(Tyler Street, 58th Ave, and Fillmore Street - per Countywide Design Guidelines)
Exhibit 46 | Themed Road(s) - D Section (100’ R.O.W.)
(Olive Street, Church Street, Pierce Street, and Buchanan Street - per Countywide Design Guidelines)
Exhibit 47 | Themed Road(s) - D Plan (100’ R.O.W.)
(Olive Street, Church Street, Pierce Street, and Buchanan Street - per Countywide Design Guidelines)
Exhibit 48 | Themed Road(s) - E Section (56’ R.O.W.)

(All internal streets - per Countywide Design Guidelines)
Exhibit 49 | Themed Road(s) - E Plan (56’ R.O.W.)

(All internal streets - per Countywide Design Guidelines)
VI. ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

The design theme for Thermal’s architecture comes from its long-standing agricultural heritage. Throughout the eastern Coachella Valley, and especially in Thermal, there is a wide variety of packing houses and associated rural architecture. These building types have an even broader appeal, however. For many southern Californians, packing house architecture and their colorful crate labels are vivid reminders of the region’s former agricultural bounty.

Since Thermal’s new logo, entry monuments and street signs will carry the theme of “crate art” and packing house labels, variations on this vernacular architecture is particularly appropriate. Furthermore, this architectural theme is appropriately flexible, energy efficient and cost-effective – elements from it can be retrofitted on existing structures and used for new commercial, public and light industrial buildings. Its iconic forms are long building footprints, silhouetted clearstory rooflines (high-relief, repetitive roof forms with windows built into the steeply-pitched sides), horizontal sign bands, parapets, and awnings. This use of clearstory or long horizontal bands of roof windows, which allows ventilation and light into the large structures, is particular adaptable to energy efficiency, application of solar panels and the green building principles described in these guidelines.

The other iconic built form, which complements and overlaps with the packing house style, is industrial theme architecture. Although less common than the packing houses, these buildings are highly visible, standing in stark contrast to the flatness of the desert floor. The industrial theme is modern and functional, yet not visually monotonous. Common elements and materials include bold, geometric shapes, metal siding, large areas of multi-paned windows, long rooflines, parapets, and associated industrial equipment, such as exposed piping, ducts, and conveyer systems. As is the case with packing house architecture, industrial theme architecture lends itself to energy efficiency, natural lighting and accommodating solar panels.
A. PACKING HOUSE ARCHITECTURE – GENERAL GUIDELINES

There are many variations of packing house architecture throughout the region, but the following elements are recommended:

- Stucco, metal or horizontal wood siding
- Long, 1-2 story building footprint
- Long, horizontal sign bands at top of long building elevation
- Large painted wall signs at smaller, front elevation
- Parapet, gable or mission style front entry with identifying signage and awnings
- Long roof profiles punctuated with regularly spaced, steeply-pitched clearstories
- Shed, gable and Quonset hut roof designs
- Bands of windows at upper portions of elevations
- Large interior spaces for ventilation
- Interiors with exposed trusses

B. INDUSTRIAL THEME ARCHITECTURE - GENERAL GUIDELINES

This architectural theme overlaps and complements the packing house/shed design but with a few important distinctions. This motif can be readily adapted to commercial development. It incorporates:

- Metal or smooth stucco wall surfaces
- Clearstory, parapet or gable roofs
- Large expanses of multi-paned rectangular or square windows
- Façade articulation with industrial/mechanical elements such as exposed piping, ducts, spot lighting, trusses, storage drums and vents.
- Large interior spaces with exposed trusses

The classic roof profile for the packing house, and one used on Thermal’s new entry monument, is the long flat roof punctuated at regular intervals by steeply pitched clearstories. (Claremont Packing House, California)

The shorter, front elevation of packing houses often contain a parapet or shed-roof overhang with identifying signage and awnings.
Exhibit 51 | Industrial Building - Single Story Concept
Exhibit 52 | Industrial Buildings - 2nd Story Concept
C. NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The packing house and industrial theme architecture can also work quite well for commercial streets and shopping areas, although the scale is more intimate. Incorporating a variety of design motifs adds visual interest while still staying consistent with the community theme. The basic elements, materials and shapes are utilitarian and industrial in nature – square and horizontal windows, metal bracing and geometric volumes – but create visual interest through varied rooflines and second story overhangs. Similar to industrial buildings, this theme architecture lends itself to energy efficiency, natural lighting and solar panels.

Commercial streetscapes are enlivened by the addition of colorful signage, street trees and bollards. Pedestrian comfort and convenience is further supported by large ground-floor windows, awnings, horizontal metal trellises, and recessed entries. Rooflines emulate the clearstory silhouettes, shed roofs and parapets of the packing houses while allowing light, ventilation and extra commercial, office or residential space.
Packing house and industrial theme architecture can be adapted quite successfully to commercial streets. In this streetscape prototype, a consistent scale is maintained with one and two-story structures and visual interest is enhanced with a variety of roof styles, window types and storefront designs. Can apply to both commercial and industrial buildings.
D. RETROFITTING EXISTING COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES

The elements of both packing house and industrial theme buildings can be used to enliven many of the plain facades in Thermal’s commercial core. Where there are large expanses of blank, unadorned facades, large “crate art” sign labels can be applied to the sides of the buildings. Reminiscent of packing labels, “ghost signs” and desert murals, the new signs strengthen Thermal’s community design themes. New soft background colors of the body of the buildings further highlight the new signs. The technique serves two purposes – it provides effective advertising and beautifies the street scene.

Exhibit 55 | Existing Commercial Building 1

The crate art theme can be used to enliven the long, unadorned facades of existing buildings in the downtown. As in this example, store signs resemble large packing labels and add visual interest. The incorporation of street trees – in this case Chinese Flame Trees and Mexican fan palms – parkway shrubbery, and light, contrasting wall color background further softens and beautifies the streetscape.
Unadorned facades can be remodeled by adding an arcade, new color accents, roofline cornice, and wall sign. The materials of the add-on arcade match those of the existing structure and the sign design is consistent with the community’s crate art theme.
Exhibit 61 | Example of Commercial Building 1 - Alt.1
Exhibit 62 | Example of Commercial Building 1 - Alt.2
E. RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

The residential architecture of Thermal is low-scale, comfortable and eclectic. Therefore, these guidelines do not call for a particular architectural style, but instead focus on attention to scale, materials and neighborhood compatibility. Important considerations are to encourage residential design that contributes to an attractive street and incorporates the broad color palette described in these guidelines.

Scale and Neighborhood Compatibility
- Home placement should be close to the street where the best features of the architecture and entries and porches have a direct relation to the sidewalk and pedestrians.
- Set back second story elevations from the front setback and from neighboring single-story homes.
- Encourage front porches, arcades and archways.
- Vary building heights within a reasonable envelope to ensure both variety and consistency along neighborhood streets.
- Recessed and varied placement of garages create a more interesting streetscape.

Architectural Interest
- Require 360 degree architecture to ensure façade articulation and visual interest on all elevations of a home.
- Use high quality building materials – stucco, plaster, stone or naturally appearing stone or wood.
- Encourage tasteful façade, wall and post decorative elements such as tile, terra cotta, stone and decorative railing.
- Incorporate a complementary blend of desert colors from the adopted community palette for the main structure, accents and low-front walls and posts.
- Build from an appropriate menu of architectural styles and elements including: Spanish Colonial, Mission, Monterey, Pueblo, Desert Cottage, California Bungalow, California Ranch and Desert Contemporary.
Exhibit 64 | Single-Story Front

Exhibit 65 | Two-Story Front

Exhibit 66 | Residential Architecture Example 2
Exhibit 67 | Single-Story Back & Side - Unacceptable

Exhibit 68 | Single-Story Back & Side - Acceptable

Exhibit 69 | Two-Story Back & Side - Unacceptable

Exhibit 70 | Two-Story Back & Side - Acceptable
Streetscape Aesthetics

- Reduce visual impact of garages and parked cars.
- Encourage low-scale walls and decorative railing consistent with architectural styling of residence.
- Prohibit chain link or cyclone fencing.
- Develop a consistent front setback defined by low front yard walls, decorative railing and arches over driveway entrances at sidewalk edge.
- Support comfortable pedestrian environment of continuous sidewalks, canopy street trees and parkway plantings.
- Provide extensive front yard landscaping with draught-tolerant plants.

Green building, energy-efficient design

- Design an energy-efficient building using high levels of insulation, high performance windows and tight construction.
- Encourage passive solar design through window ventilation, shade structures, northern light exposure and landscape buffers.
- Consider Photo Voltaic Solar Panels on roofs. The Imperial Irrigation District (IID) offers excellent assistance and rebate programs, making solar energy financially feasible for residential buildings.
- Where solar panels are used, locate them parallel to the roof slope (if roof slope is between 30 and 43 degrees) and integrated into the roof design. Screen and enclose support equipment.
- The Coachella Valley is at a latitude of between 33N and 34N. At this latitude the panels should be oriented as close as possible to true south. The angle from horizontal should be between 30 and 43 degrees. In the winter the angle should be close to 43 degrees and in the summer near 30 degrees.
- Locate and orient buildings for passive solar heating in winter and solar energy collection in spring and summer months.
- Use permeable surfaces and drainage design to capture rainfall and prevent storm water runoff.
- Shape and orient homes and windows to prevailing winds.
- Use water-efficient, low-maintenance landscaping.
VII. COMMUNITY CENTER WITH TOWN PLAZA

The Thermal Design Guidelines envision the creation of a Community Center with Town Plaza within its commercial retail land use area. Currently, there is no gathering spot for the community of Thermal and, as its population grows, the need will certainly be greater. The plaza will function best and be used more when it is surrounded by retail and office uses, as the illustrations suggest. It is also an excellent location for public amenities such as a future library or post office. Both the specific plaza prototype and general guidelines which follow call for a pedestrian-friendly plaza with both aesthetic and practical elements. A Town Plaza Concept Illustrative is provided in Exhibit XX.

A. TOWN PLAZA CONCEPT FOR THERMAL

The concept plan for the Thermal Town Plaza incorporates the guidelines above in the context of a specific design prototype (see Exhibit XX). The plaza is virtually symmetrical in design with a great variety of comfortable pedestrian amenities, user options and aesthetic touches. It contains both formal and informal design features, appealing to wide group of potential users. It is accessible on all four sides, maintaining a strong relationship to the surrounding street and stores, while at the same time providing a moderate sense of enclosure and intimacy. The Thermal Town Plaza contains:

• An open, central space with a decorative paving and a gazebo/bandstand for performances and large group gatherings.
• Diagonally placed, decorative walkways accessing the plaza from opposite corners and containing long, rectangular fountains flanked by rows of date palms.
• A tot lot on one side of the central space with a shaded, paved area on the other for vendor carts, displays or picnics.
• Two citrus groves on opposite edges of the plaza adjacent to the street-edge sidewalk.
• Grassy, slightly inclined sitting areas bordering the central space and acting as an informal amphitheater.
Exhibit 72 | Town Plaza Illustrative
B. GENERAL TOWN PLAZA DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Plaza proportions should have a formal, symmetrical layout, either square or rectangular. If rectangular, the length should be approximately 1 ½ times the width.
- Buildings around the plaza should have awnings (of canvas, metal or other durable material), shade structures, or arcades wherever practical, and be set as close as possible to the edge of the sidewalk to provide a greater sense of enclosure.
- Adequate off-street parking for the businesses should be located behind the buildings.
- Buildings around the plaza should face the plaza with main entrances on the plaza side. Secondary entrances in backs of buildings should access parking or pedestrian ways should be made for visitors to walk between buildings to get from parking to plaza entrances.
- Narrow streets with parallel parking should be provided between the plaza and surrounding buildings.
- Curb-adjacent walks should be provided on the building side of the plaza to enable passengers to exit parked cars.
- Good street to plaza visibility should be maintained for primary and secondary access and security. This can be achieved by:
  - not allowing walls and planting to screen or block off the plaza from the street
  - designing the plaza elevation as close as possible to the same elevation as the streets.
- Effective night time lighting is important to both extend use and to enhance safety and aesthetics.
- Ample shade should be provided by large canopy trees as well as shade structures.
- Good seating is essential to consistent plaza use. Without it, few people will stop to use the space. The following guidelines should be followed:
  - Provide plentiful seating and maximize opportunities for sitting by using walls, steps, planters, ledges and benches.
Exhibit 73 | Town Plaza Entry Fountain
Exhibit 74 | Town Plaza Central Court
Exhibit 75 | Perspective of Central Court
- Provide a variety of seating orientations, towards the street, inward towards the plaza, next to attractions and amenities, in the shade and in the sun.
- Provide a variety of seating types, for both groups and individuals.
- Provide comfortable, movable seating with armrests and back contours.

• Activity generators such as a stage or bandstand for concerts, plays or other public gathering should be provided.
• Usable amenities and specialized activity features are highly encouraged to create a sense of liveliness and richness. Some examples are:
  - Fountains
  - Kiosks for information
  - Children’s play equipment
  - Bike racks
  - Drinking fountains
  - Waste receptacles
  - Managed, colorful vending stands

• Spatial variety within the plaza will provide greater options to users. There should be a large, dominant space suitable for a large gathering of people, but also a full hierarchy of smaller spaces. Small spaces can be articulated in the edges surrounding the large space. Spaces can be defined by paving, planting and in particular, the use of trees, canopies, trellises and planters.
• Parking lots should be located behind buildings and not interrupt the pedestrian shopping experience along the street. Parking lots should be heavily shaded with canopy trees or shade structures.
Exhibit 76 | Town Plaza Vendor Carts/Overflow Area
Exhibit 77 | Town Plaza Tot-Lot
Exhibit 78 | Bird’s Eye View of Town Plaza
Exhibit 79 | Entry Fountain to Town Plaza
Exhibit 80 | Perspective of Storefronts and Town Plaza
VIII. GREEN BUILDING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

These guidelines also recognize the importance of addressing future economic trends in design and environmental sustainability. With its prime location, employment needs and abundant resources, Thermal can look to the future to become a leader in sustainable development, energy efficiency, and green building design. Considering that buildings consume approximately 40% of non-renewable energy resources, the savings benefits are substantial. In the rapidly growing Coachella Valley, desert communities can seize the opportunity to grow their economies in the burgeoning field of alternative energy development and save vital resources.

The following green building design principles form the basis for this movement towards environmental responsibility:

- Conserve non-renewable energy and scarce materials
- Use site conditions to maximize passive solar design, including day lighting, ventilation, solar collection, and shading.
- Support pedestrian, bicycle, mass transit use, and other non-fossil fuel vehicles.
- Locate to the extent possible, employment opportunities in reasonable proximity to housing.
- Use water efficient landscape systems and plant palettes.
- Design landscape features for shade, building cooling, and aesthetics.
- Encourage active solar systems for energy generation, heating, and cooling.
- Require recycling and recycled materials in all phases of construction and operation of residential, commercial, and industrial buildings.
- Provide incentives for LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified buildings and design.
- Develop education and cooperative partnerships with schools, colleges, neighboring communities, and County government to promote understanding of and opportunities for green building and sustainable development practices.
BEST BUILDING ORIENTATION

NORTH TO NORTH EAST

SOUTH TO SOUTHWEST

CLEARSTORY

PHOTO VOLTAIC SOLAR PANELS

NATURAL LIGHT (DAY LIGHTING) NO DIRECT SUN

NATURAL LIGHT

VERTICAL TO 15° 30°-45°

GREEN APPLICATIONS ON PACKING SHED ARCHITECTURE

Exhibit 81 | Green Architecture - Concept 1
GREEN APPLICATIONS ON INDUSTRIAL-STYLE ARCHITECTURE

CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO TRUE SOUTH

PHOTO VOLTAIC SOLAR PANELS

RAISE TO 30°-43°

LOW PITCH ROOF

PARAPET WALL

Exhibit 82 | Green Architecture - Concept 2
GREEN APPLICATIONS ON PACKING SHED ARCHITECTURE

NORTH

SOUTH

PHOTO VOLTAIC SOLAR PANELS

CLEARSTORY

PHOTO VOLTAIC SOLAR PANELS

NATURAL LIGHT (DAY LIGHTING) NO DIRECT SUN
X. CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE

A. CONSTRUCTION
As previously mentioned, all of the design elements required and recommended by these Design Guidelines will not be constructed at one time. They will be built incrementally over many years as part of new construction and development projects or funded public improvement projects. See Implementation Matrix on next page.

B. MAINTENANCE
All of the forgoing improvements to the Community of Thermal must be maintained. The entry monuments, street signs, street landscaping, walls and fences must have ongoing maintenance. Design element that are part of new development projects may be maintained by home owner associations on residential projects, or as part of the common area maintenance on commercial/industrial projects. These private projects as well as publicly financed projects may also be annexed into existing maintenance assessment districts or be a part of new assessment districts. See Implementation Matrix on next page.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Construction / Installation</th>
<th>Maintenance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Street Signage</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Entry Monument Signs,</td>
<td>Developer or Community Facilities District (CFD)</td>
<td>County Service Area (CSA) or Community Service</td>
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<td>Secondary Monument Signs</td>
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<td>District (CSD) or Lighting and Landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directional Signage</td>
<td>Developer or CFD</td>
<td>CSA or CSD or LLMD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Street signs (custom)</td>
<td>Developer or CFD</td>
<td>CSA or CSD or LLMD</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Road Right-of-Way Facilities</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalks, Storm Drain Inlets,</td>
<td>Developer or CFD</td>
<td>Transportation Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right-of-Way Medians, Right-of-Way</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drainage Swales</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Lights (custom)</td>
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<td>CSA or CSD or LLMD</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Landscaping</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting (other than street lights)</td>
<td>Developer or CFD</td>
<td>CSA or CSD or LLMD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paseo/Greenways, Plazas, Right-of-</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Way Landscaping</td>
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<td><strong>Walls and Fences</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Trails</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Trails (Class I), Signage,</td>
<td>RCRP&amp;OSD</td>
<td>RCRP&amp;OSD</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic Trails, Regional Trials</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Trails (Class II and III)</td>
<td>Transportation Department</td>
<td>Transportation Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Trails</td>
<td>Developer or CVP&amp;RD or RCRP&amp;OSD</td>
<td>CVP&amp;RD or RCRP&amp;OSD or LLMD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf Cart Paths (off road / non-adjacent)</td>
<td>Developer or CVP&amp;RD or RCRP&amp;OSD</td>
<td>CVP&amp;RD or RCRP&amp;OSD or LLMD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**List of Agencies / Entities Implementing Design Guidelines**

- Coachella Valley Park and Recreation District (CVP&RD)
- Community Facilities District (CFD)
- Community Service District (CDA)
- County Service Area (CSA)
- Developer / Private Entity
- Homeowners Association (HOA)
- Lighting and Landscape Maintenance District (LLMD)
- Local Parks and Recreation Districts (LP&RD)
- Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District (RCRP&OSD)
- Transportation Department
- County Service Area (CSA)
XI. WALLS AND FENCES

Walls and fences are an important streetscape feature for functional, security and aesthetic reasons. They play a particularly important role since Thermal residents have evolved their own distinctive style of personalized, ornamental wrought-iron fencing. These guidelines encourage a continuation of these personalized and creative designs around residential neighborhoods and private homes. Where longer lengths of walls and fences are required, such as those around schools, commercial buffer zones or public facilities, the use of natural materials and colors, view fencing and design variety are strongly encouraged.

For residential neighborhoods:
- Along residential streets, wall and fences should be sited on the sidewalk edge to continue existing streetscape patterns and to provide privacy and safety for residents.
- Creative and personalized wall, pilaster caps and wrought-iron designs are highly encouraged throughout Thermal’s residential neighborhoods.
- Wall and fence material and color should be compatible with those of the principal residence.
- In general, wall and fence bases should be no taller than three feet, with the exception of pilasters or entry columns and sidewalls.
- Where practical, wrought-iron color should capture trim accents or detailing found in elements of the home.
- Resulting streetscapes should feature a variety of color, fence styles, architectural styles within a context of consistent scale, defined sidewalk edge, and elements such as wrought-iron detailing, arcades, and covered porches.
- Along streets with larger multi-family housing, ornamental wrought iron, view fencing combined with low stone or block walls with pilasters should be used.

For public and commercial areas:
- Where slump block walls are used, they should be no taller than 6’ high, be of natural earth tones, and contain vertical and ground cover shrubbery to soften their appearance.
- Smooth stucco walls should be of light desert color and be punctuated with regularly spaced stone pilasters with caps. The stucco portions of walls should be softened with vines, vertical plant specimens and ground cover.
- Where ornamental, wrought iron view fencing is used, a 2’ base stucco wall should be used in combination with 7’ capped pilasters. Compatible but contrasting colors for the base wall, pilasters and wrought iron should be chosen.
- Creative wrought iron patterns, reflective of views, physical features and nature, are encouraged.

XII. TRAILS OPPORTUNITY MAP

The Trails Opportunity Plan shown on page 86, represents proposed trails at the time of adoption of these guidelines. To view the most current trails plan, refer to the Riverside County General plan or contact the Riverside County Planning Department or the Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District for information.
The appearance of slump-block walls shall be improved with split-faced caps, climbing vines and low-lying planting.

Exhibit 85 | Slump Block Wall
Exhibit 86 | Stucco Finished Wall With Stone Pilasters

Stone pilasters provide visual contrast along smooth stucco walls. Climbing vines should be planted on all stucco walls.
Individualized wrought iron fences add a decorative element to many homes in Thermal. The base wall and posts should match the color and materials of the main residence.

Exhibit 87 | Wrought Iron Wall Concept #1
Exhibit 88 | Wrought Iron Wall Concept #2
Decorative wrought-iron, view fencing is one of Thermal’s most distinctive architectural features and must be a part of all view walls.
LEGEND

Types of Trails
- Regional Trails
- Class 1 Bike Path
- Class 3 Bikeway
- Combination Trails
- New Bridge
- Existing Bridge
- Potential Trailhead
- Staging Facilities
- Thermal Boundary

TRAILS OPPORTUNITY MAP

Exhibit 90 | Trails Opportunity Map
XIII. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - PLANT PALETTE

The plants listed for each Street Type shall be the dominant plants used on each street. These may be supplemented with existing plants and by plants listed under “Additional Shrubs and Groundcover,” on the next page.

### Street Trees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Botanical Name</th>
<th>Common Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Themed Road(s) - A Trees</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acacia Stenophylla</td>
<td>Shoestring Acacia (30’ high and 20’ wide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoenix Dactylifera</td>
<td>Date Palm (70’+ high and 20’-30’ wide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pistacia Chinensis</td>
<td>Chinese Pistache (30’-60’ high and as wide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Themed Road(s) - B Trees</strong></td>
<td>Chinese Flame Tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koelreuteria Bipinatta</td>
<td>(20’-40’ high and 20’-40’ wide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washingtonia Robusta</td>
<td>Mexican Fan Palm (50’+ high)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Themed Road(s) - C Trees</strong></td>
<td>Evergreen Elm (35’ wide and as wide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Themed Road(s) - D Trees</strong></td>
<td>Golden Medallion Tree (20’-40’ high and as wide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassia Leptophylla</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Themed Road(s) - E Trees</strong></td>
<td>Chinese Flame Tree (20’-40’ high and as wide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koelreuteria Bipinnata</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parking Lots Trees:</strong></td>
<td>St. John’s Bread (20’-40’ high and as wide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acacia Stenophylla</td>
<td>Chitalpa Tashkentensis (20’-30’ high and as wide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassia Leptophylla</td>
<td>Washingtonia Robusta (50’+ high)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mexican Fan Palm</td>
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### Additional Trees:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Botanical Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acacia Stenophylla (25’-30’ high and 15’-20’ wide)</td>
<td>Shoestring Acacia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brahea Armata (20’-30’ high and 10’ wide)</td>
<td>Mexican Blue Palm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassia Leptophylla (20’-25’ high and 30’ wide)</td>
<td>Golden Medallion Tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceratonia Siliqua (20’-40’ high and as wide)</td>
<td>St. John’s Bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamaerops Humilis (10’-12’ high and 8’ wide)</td>
<td>Mediterranean Fan Palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chitalpa Tashkentensis (20’-30’ high and as wide)</td>
<td>Chitalpa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cupressus Arizonica (30’-40’ high and 30’ wide)</td>
<td>Arizona Cypress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fraxinus Greggii (25’ high and 20’ wide)</td>
<td>Little Leaf Ash</td>
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<tr>
<td>Koelreuteria Bipinnata (20’-40’ high and as wide)</td>
<td>Chinese Flame Tree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Olneya Tesota (25’-30’ high and as wide)</td>
<td>Desert Ironwood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phoenix Dactylifera (70’+ high and 20’-30’ wide)</td>
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<td>Pistacia chinensis (35’-45’ high and as wide)</td>
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<td>Prosopis Glandulosa (30’ high and as wide)</td>
<td>Texas Honey Mesquite</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ulmus Parvifolia (35’ wide and as wide)</td>
<td>Evergreen Elm</td>
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### Primary Shrub/Groundcover Palette:

#### Shrubs:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Botanical Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alyogyne Huegelii</td>
<td>Blue Hibiscus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anisacanthus species</td>
<td>Desert Honeysuckle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caesalpinia Gilliesii</td>
<td>Yellow Bird of Paradise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caesalpinia Pulcherrima</td>
<td>Red Bird of Paradise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Callistemon Viminalis</td>
<td>Fairy Duster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Callistemon Viminalis</td>
<td>Little John Bottlebrush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalea Pulchra</td>
<td>Bush Dalea</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encelia Farinosa</td>
<td>Brittlebush</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eremophila Maculata</td>
<td>Red Eremophila</td>
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<td>Euphorbia Rigida</td>
<td>Gopher Plant</td>
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<td>Fallugia Paradox</td>
<td>Apache Plume</td>
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<td>Hesperaloe parviflora</td>
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<td>Leucophyllum f. ‘Green Cloud’</td>
<td>Green Cloud Texas</td>
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<td>Muhlenbergia capillaries</td>
<td>Ranger</td>
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<tr>
<td>Muhlenbergia rigens</td>
<td>Regal Mist</td>
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<td>Salvia Clevelandii</td>
<td>Deer Grass</td>
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<td>Simmondsia Chinensis</td>
<td>Cleveland Sage</td>
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<td>Viguiera Deltoida</td>
<td>Jojoba</td>
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<td>Golden Eye</td>
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<td><strong>Groundcover:</strong></td>
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<td>Baccharis hybrid ‘Starn’</td>
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<td>Convolvulus Cneorum</td>
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<td>Dalea capitata ‘Sierra Gold’</td>
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<td>New Gold Lantana</td>
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<td>Oenothera Caespitosa</td>
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<td>Oenothera Stubbei</td>
<td>Saltillo Primrose</td>
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<td>Wedelia Trilobata</td>
<td>Yellow Dot</td>
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<td><strong>Additional shrubs/groundcover to use in conjunction with the above list:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Botanical Name</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Calliandra Californica</td>
<td>Red Baja Fairy Duster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calliandra Eriophylla</td>
<td>Fairy Duster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassia Artemisioides</td>
<td>Feathery Cassia</td>
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<td>Cotoneaster glaucophyllus</td>
<td>Bright Bead Cotoneaster</td>
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<td>Rosa Bonica</td>
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<td>Prostrate Germander</td>
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