

Palm Springs Campus Update – July/August 2026

THE PALM SPRINGS CAMPUS VISION IS BECOMING VISIBLE

College of the Desert Palm Springs Campus Event Center reveals a distinctive new face at the corner of Tahquitz and Farrell in Palm Springs

For years, College of the Desert has described a Palm Springs Campus designed specifically for its setting—one that respects the city's celebrated architectural legacy while creating a new kind of learning environment for the future.

Now, that vision is becoming visible.

New three-dimensional architectural cladding is wrapping the Palm Springs Campus Event Center at the prominent corner of Tahquitz Canyon Way and Farrell Drive. The sculptural façade catches the desert light, creating an ever-changing pattern of highlights and shadows across the curved building.

The result is already capturing the attention of neighbors, passersby and others who have watched the campus rise from the former Palm Springs Mall site.

The Event Center at Tahquitz and Farrell

The building taking shape at the corner of Tahquitz and Farrell is the campus Event Center—a flexible gathering place designed to support College programs, educational activities, community events and industry-connected learning.

Its highly visible location helps establish a welcoming public face for the campus. Its proximity to the Culinary Institute will also create opportunities to connect hospitality, culinary education, event operations, workforce preparation and community programming in new ways.

The Event Center is not intended to stand apart from the educational mission of the campus. It is part of a broader vision in which learning can happen throughout the campus—in classrooms and laboratories, in studios and kitchens, at events and demonstrations, and in the shared spaces where students, employers and community members come together.

Modernism Reimagined for Learning

The Event Center façade is more than a dramatic exterior finish. It reflects an architectural vision established for the Palm Springs Campus from the beginning.

Inspired by Palm Springs' modernist legacy, the campus design uses clean lines, expressive structures, sculptural forms, generous shade and strong connections between indoor and outdoor spaces. These principles are being reinterpreted for a contemporary public college serving students, working professionals, employers and lifelong learners.

Across the campus, architectural identity and environmental performance are designed to work together. Sweeping roofs will provide shade for outdoor circulation and gathering. Structural “trees” inspired by palms and windmills will mark major entries and shared spaces. Patterned screens, desert-responsive landscaping, an all-electric central plant and rooftop solar installations will help the campus respond to its climate and setting.

The Event Center cladding is one of the first finished exterior elements to make that larger design story visible from the street.

A community like no place else deserves a campus like no other.

CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS: WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW

Construction is advancing throughout the 27-acre campus as the project moves from major structural work into building enclosure, interior construction and installation of specialized systems and equipment.

Current and upcoming work includes:

- Completing roofing, glass, cladding and other exterior finishes.
- Continuing construction of classrooms, laboratories, offices and student-support areas.
- Building out film and television studios, recording spaces, screening rooms and other media-production environments.
- Advancing teaching kitchens, the demonstration kitchen and theater, food-service systems and other Culinary Institute spaces.
- Installing mechanical, electrical, technology and audiovisual infrastructure.
- Advancing rooftop solar installations and the all-electric central plant.
- Continuing parking, roadway, utility, sidewalk and landscaping improvements.

Permanent electrical power is targeted for several campus buildings this fall. The Event Center is scheduled to become substantially enclosed and weather-tight later in 2026, allowing interior construction and systems installation to accelerate.

Testing and commissioning will follow as building systems become operational. These are important steps toward completion, but the campus remains an active construction site with significant interior construction, equipment installation, site improvements and opening preparations still ahead.

College of the Desert's Palm Springs Campus is targeted to open in Fall 2027.



Photo: New three-dimensional architectural cladding wraps the Event Center at College of the Desert's Palm Springs Campus, creating a distinctive pattern of desert light and shadow at Tahquitz Canyon Way and Farrell Drive.

WHAT IS COMING TO THE PALM SPRINGS CAMPUS

The 175,000-square-foot campus is being created as a regional hub for learning, creativity, careers and community engagement. Planned features include:

- Academic Accelerator and Accelerator Learning Lab
- Artificial Intelligence Hub and technology-rich makerspaces
- Film, television, radio and recording studios
- Culinary Institute and demonstration theater
- Healthcare and allied-health laboratories
- Hospitality classrooms and mock hotel rooms
- Architecture and sustainable-design studios
- Event Center and outdoor event lawn
- Student services, health and basic-needs support
- Industry testing, customized training and workforce-development spaces
- 10 Gbps broadband at opening, expandable to 100 Gbps



Photo: The Event Center is establishing a recognizable public face for the Palm Springs Campus at one of the city's most visible intersections. The campus is targeted to open in Fall 2027.

The Palm Springs Campus will serve recent high school graduates, university-transfer students, working adults, employers, industry partners and lifelong learners from throughout the Coachella Valley and beyond.

FOLLOW THE PROGRESS

Visit codpscampus.org/photo-gallery for the latest construction photographs and drone footage, explore the planned learning spaces, or sign up to receive project news and milestone updates.