

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR THE LATITUDE 61 TOWNHOME PROJECT

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Pacific Region

ACTIONS: Finding of No Significant Impact

SUMMARY:

The Aqua Band of Cahuilla Indians submitted a lease request to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Palm Springs Agency, Division of Real Estate Services for the construction of 61 single-family attached townhomes on APN 508070020. The approximately 4.2-acre project site is located in Riverside County and in the city of Palm Springs, California. Based upon the entire administrative record including analysis in a September 2023 Environmental Assessment (EA), and mitigation imposed, the BIA makes a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) for the Proposed Action. This finding constitutes a determination the Proposed Action is not a federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, in accordance with Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C § 4321 et seq., an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.

PURPOSE AND NEED:

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to facilitate self-determination, economic growth and diversification for the Tribe. Additional details regarding the purpose and need can be found in EA Section 1.0.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Three (3) alternatives are analyzed in the EA: the No Action Alternative, the Allowed by Zone Alternative and the Proposed Action Alternative. The Proposed Action is summarized above and includes the construction of 61 single-family attached townhomes on approximately 4.2 acres. The Allowed by Zone Alternative, as proposed, includes the construction of a 97-room hotel in compliance the Section 14 Specific Plan Under the No Action Alternative, no federal actions would occur, and the Tribe would not construct townhomes on APN 508070020. Additional details regarding the Proposed Action and Alternatives can be found in EA Section 2.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

Potential impacts to land resources, water resources; air quality; biological resources; cultural resources; socioeconomics; environmental justice; transportation; land use and agriculture; public services; noise; hazardous materials; and visual resources were evaluated in the EA, with the following conclusions for the Proposed Action (see EA Section 3 for detailed analysis and for specific mitigation measures):

Land Resources

Land resources impacts could occur during the construction and operation of the Latitude 61 project. No significant impacts would occur.

Water Resources

Impacts to water resources could occur during construction and operation of the Latitude 61 project. No significant impacts would occur.

Air Quality

Impacts to air quality would occur during construction and operation of the Latitude 61 project. No significant impacts would occur.

Biological Resources

Impacts to biological resources would occur from the development of the Latitude 61 project. Mitigation measures detailed in EA Section 4 and as recommended by the BIA Regional Biologist would ensure impacts to biological resources are less than significant.

Cultural Resources

Impacts to cultural resources could occur from the development of the Latitude 61 project. Mitigation measures detailed in EA Section 4 would ensure impacts to cultural resources are less than significant.

Socioeconomics

Impacts to socioeconomics could occur during the construction/operation of the Latitude 61 project. No significant socioeconomics impacts would occur.

Transportation and Circulation

Impacts to transportation and circulation could occur during construction and operation of the Latitude 61 project. Mitigation measures detailed in EA Section 4 would ensure impacts to transportation and circulation are less than significant.

Land Use and Agriculture

No significant impacts to land use and agriculture would occur during construction and operation of the Latitude 61 project.

Public Services

Impacts to public services could occur from the operation of the housing project. No significant impacts would occur.

Noise

Noise and vibration impacts could occur during construction and operation of the housing project. No significant impacts would occur.

Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials impacts could occur during construction and operation of the housing project. No significant impacts would occur.

Visual Resources

Impacts to visual resource could occur from the development of the housing project. No significant impact would occur.

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY:

A Notice of Availability for the EA and the unsigned FONSI has been provided to agencies, organizations, and interested parties for a period of 14 days starting January 11, 2024 and ending January 25, 2024.

DETERMINATION:

The BIA, Pacific Region has determined that the proposed Federal action to approve a business lease for the construction and operation of 61 single-family attached townhomes on APN 508070020 does not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, in accordance with Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C § 4321 et seq., an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This determination is supported by the findings described in this FONSI and the analysis contained in the entire administrative record, including the September 2023 EA and the mitigation imposed. This fulfills the requirements of NEPA as set out in the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing NEPA (40 C.F.R. 1500–1508), and the BIA NEPA Guidebook (59 IAM 3-H, August 2012).

Approved:

Date:

Regional Director
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Pacific Region