

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR THE PLANNING CASE NO. 20-04 – VUE PALM SPRINGS
SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PROJECT**

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs

ACTIONS: Finding of No Significant Impact

SUMMARY:

The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (Tribe) submitted a request to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) for approval of a Lease (PSL-591) with GHA VUE PS, LLC for the development of a residential project known as VUE Palm Springs (Proposed Action). The proposed residential project would be located on 7.59 acres of vacant land located on the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians Reservation on the southeast corner of East Tahquitz Canyon Way and South Hermosa Drive (the Project Site). Based upon the entire administrative record including analysis in a February 2021 Environmental Assessment (EA), 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 Tribe has a need to generate long-term income and broaden its economic base for its varied governmental needs and expenses. BIA is required to review and approve leases and subleases on tribal land and this approval triggers BIA compliance with NEPA.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Three alternatives are analyzed in the EA: the Proposed Action, the Allowed by Zone Alternative and the No Action Alternative. The Proposed Action is summarized above and includes the construction of a 46 single family detached one-two story homes on the Project Site and associated infrastructure.

The Proposed Action would best meet the purpose and need and therefore has been identified as the Preferred Alternative and is the subject of this FONSI. Under the No Action Alternative, no federal actions would occur, and the housing development would not be constructed. Under the Allowed by Zone Alternative, a hotel would be construction on the Project Site consistent with current zoning. Additional details regarding the Proposed Action, the Allowed by Zone Alternative and the No Action Alternative can be found in EA Sections 1 and 2.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

Potential impacts to land resources, water resources; air quality, living resources; cultural resources; socioeconomic conditions; resource use patterns; and other values were evaluated in the EA, with the following conclusions (see EA Sections 3 and 4 for detailed analysis and for specific mitigation measures):

Land Resources

Land resources impacts could occur during the construction of the project. Mitigation measures detailed in EA Section 4 would ensure land resources impacts are less than significant.

Water Resources

Impacts to water resources would occur during construction of the project. No significant impacts would occur.

Air Quality

Impacts to water resources would occur during construction of the project. Mitigation measures detailed in EA Section 4 would ensure land resources impacts are less than significant.

Living Resources

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

Cultural Resources

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

Socioeconomic Conditions

Impacts to socioeconomics would occur during construction of the project. No significant impacts would occur.

Resource Use Patterns

Impacts to resource use patterns would occur during construction and operation of the project. Mitigation measures detailed in EA Section 4 would ensure impacts to cultural resources are less than significant.

Other Values

Impacts to other values (including noise, visual and light, public health trust assets, hazardous materials, and climate change) would occur from the development and operation of the project. Mitigation measures detailed in EA Section 4 would ensure impacts to cultural resources are less than significant.

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY:

The EA developed jointly with the Tribe to comply with the Tribe’s Environmental Policy Act (TEPA) Ordinance No. 28. The EA was made available to the public, agencies, organizations, and interested parties for review. No comments were received during the public review period.

DETERMINATION:

It has been determined that the proposed Federal action to approve a Lease (PSL-591) with GHA VUE PS, LLC for the development of a residential project known as VUE Palm Springs 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 aforementioned findings described in this FONSI and the analysis contained in the entire administrative record, including the December 2018 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:

Superintendent
Palm Springs Agency Office
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Pacific Region
