

CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: October 23, 2025

PREPARED BY: Michelle Nance, Acting Assistant City Clerk

SUBJECT: RATIFICATION OF LETTER SUPPORTING THE USER FEE FACILITY
APPLICATION FOR JACQUELINE COCHRAN REGIONAL AIRPORT, IN
THERMAL, CALIFORNIA

RECOMMENDATION:

Ratify the issuance of the letter supporting the designation of the Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport (JCRA) in Thermal, California, as a User Fee Facility.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

The Riverside County Transportation & Land Management Agency (TLMA), Aviation Division, submitted a formal application to the U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) seeking designation of the Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport (JCRA) in Thermal as a User Fee Facility (UFF). A UFF designation authorizes CBP to provide customs processing at non-designated ports of entry, funded through fees paid by the local sponsor. Such designations expand CBP service capacity and enhance accessibility for international travelers and goods.

On September 25, 2025, The City of Palm Desert expressed its support for the application through a letter issued. The letter highlights the following benefits:

- **Regional Economic Growth:** Strengthens the Coachella Valley's economic vitality by promoting business aviation, international commerce, and tourism.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Expands CBP processing capacity in Southern California and reduces congestion at primary ports of entry.
- **Community Benefits:** Enhances the region's competitiveness in attracting investment, events, and new business opportunities benefiting Palm Desert and surrounding cities.

The Ad Hoc City Council Subcommittee on Governmental Affairs, comprised of Mayor Harnik and Mayor Pro Tem Trubee, reviewed and approved the letter in advance of formal ratification by the City Council.

Legal Review:

This report has been reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact associated with the issuance of this letter.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Letter of Support 29P BOMI Thermal Airport