

**CITY OF PALM DESERT
PLANNING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

MEETING DATE: November 18, 2025

PREPARED BY: Carlos Flores, AICP, Deputy Director of Development Services
Madeline Luke, Consulting Planner

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A NEW, 546 SINGLE FAMILY UNIT RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY LOCATED SOUTH OF FRANK SINATRA DRIVE AND WEST OF PORTOLA AVENUE (APN: 620170009)

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 2904 entitled, "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING AN INITIAL STUDY MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION PURSUANT TO THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) AND APPROVING A PRECISE PLAN FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 546 SINGLE FAMILY UNIT RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY LOCATED SOUTH OF FRANK SINATRA DRIVE AND WEST OF PORTOLA AVENUE; CASE NO. PP/EA 25-0003"
2. Adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 2905 entitled, "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING TENTATIVE TRACT MAP 39159 FOR MASTER INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT LOCATED SOUTH OF FRANK SINATRA DRIVE AND WEST OF PORTOLA AVENUE; CASE NO. TTM 39159 Master Infrastructure Map"
3. Adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 2907 entitled, "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A TENTATIVE TRACT MAP FOR A PHASED 546 SINGLE FAMILY LOT RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY LOCATED SOUTH OF FRANK SINATRA DRIVE AND WEST OF PORTOLA AVENUE; CASE NO. TTM 39160 Subdivision Map"

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

Case No.: PP/EA25-0003/TTM 39159, TTM 39160. TTM 39276

November 4, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting

On November 4, 2025, the City of Palm Desert Planning Commission, upon staff recommendation, took the following actions:

1) Opened a public hearing for PP/EA25-0003, TTM 39159, and TTM 39160 and continued the public hearing to November 18, 2025.

2) Adopted Planning Commission Resolution No. 2906 entitled "A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING TENTATIVE TRACT MAP 39276 FOR FINANCING AND CONVEYANCE PURPOSES

LOCATED SOUTH OF FRANK SINATRA DRIVE AND WEST OF PORTOLA AVENUE; CASE NO. TTM 39276 Finance Map”

During said meeting, the Planning Commission heard basics about the project, opened the public hearing to receive public testimony from both the Applicant and the public, and approved Resolution No. 2906 for Tentative Tract Map (TTM), TTM 39276, a map for Finance and Conveyance purposes only, with no development allowed to commence as part of this approval. The remaining items continued to November 18, 2025 including Resolution No. 2904, a Precise Plan and CEQA determination for the 546 Single Family unit residential community (PP/EA 25-00003) establishing the site layout, lot sizes, and development standards, Resolution No. 2905 TTM 39159, and Resolution 2907 for TTM 39160. No new items are being introduced as part of this staff report. Below is a staff report that provides information on the entirety of the continued project:

Background

The proposed project includes development of 546 single-family residential (SFR) units on approximately 81 acres, with onsite circulation, utilities, stormwater facilities, lighting, and open space areas. The Project is consistent with the City’s PR (Planned Residential)-22 density designation (7–22 units per acre). The project provides flexibility for construction by multiple builders or a single developer while maintaining a cohesive community design.

The proposed project includes a multi-map process to coordinate infrastructure delivery and phasing:

- Precise Plan 25-0003: This establishes the site layout and development for the 546 SFR units, minimum lot sizes, location of single and two-story homes, location of streets, recreation, retention, open space areas, and landscaping layout.
- Master Infrastructure Map (TTM 39159): Establishes the project framework by subdividing the site into six lots, including three lettered lots for the spine road and retention basins, and one for the existing cell tower.
- Phased Subdivision Map (TTM 39160): Processed concurrently to create the residential lots and facilitate future sale or development of the parcels. This establishes the site layout and development for the 546 SFR units, location of streets, recreation, retention, open space areas, and establishes a phased approach. The Applicant may develop the project in phases as shown on the map.

Precise Plan

The proposed project includes development of 546 single-family residences a mix of single- and two-story homes, with the site plan showing restrictions on 2 story home locations, the onsite circulation, utility infrastructure, stormwater facilities, lighting, and open space areas. The 81-acre site is organized into four planning areas to provide a variety of housing types:

- Northwest: 88 homes on 5,000-square-foot lots
- Northeast: 255 clustered homes on lots ranging from 2,120 to 2,460 square feet
- Central: 103 homes on 3,000-square-foot lots
- South: 100 homes on 4,050-square-foot lots

The Precise Plan, and its conditions, would run with the entirety of the project and require conformance for all future development. Development of homes within the project would require application(s) of additional Precise Plan(s) to develop specific setbacks, heights, architecture, and landscaping, but need to conform with PP 25-0003, as shown in Exhibit 1 below. PP 25-

0003 establishes an approval for site layout, location of single- and two-story homes, minimum lot sizes, and lot designs.

Exhibit 1– Site Plan



No specific architectural plans are proposed at this stage. Final architecture, landscaping, and lighting design will be prepared by future applicants. These applicants will be required to submit detailed architectural elevations, final landscape plans, and lighting plans to the City via Precise Plan, subject to approval from the City’s Architectural Review Commission (ARC) and Planning Commission. Future applications may be submitted for single or multiple planning areas. These future submittals will ensure compliance with the City’s design guidelines and overall community design intent and establish final development standards per planning area.

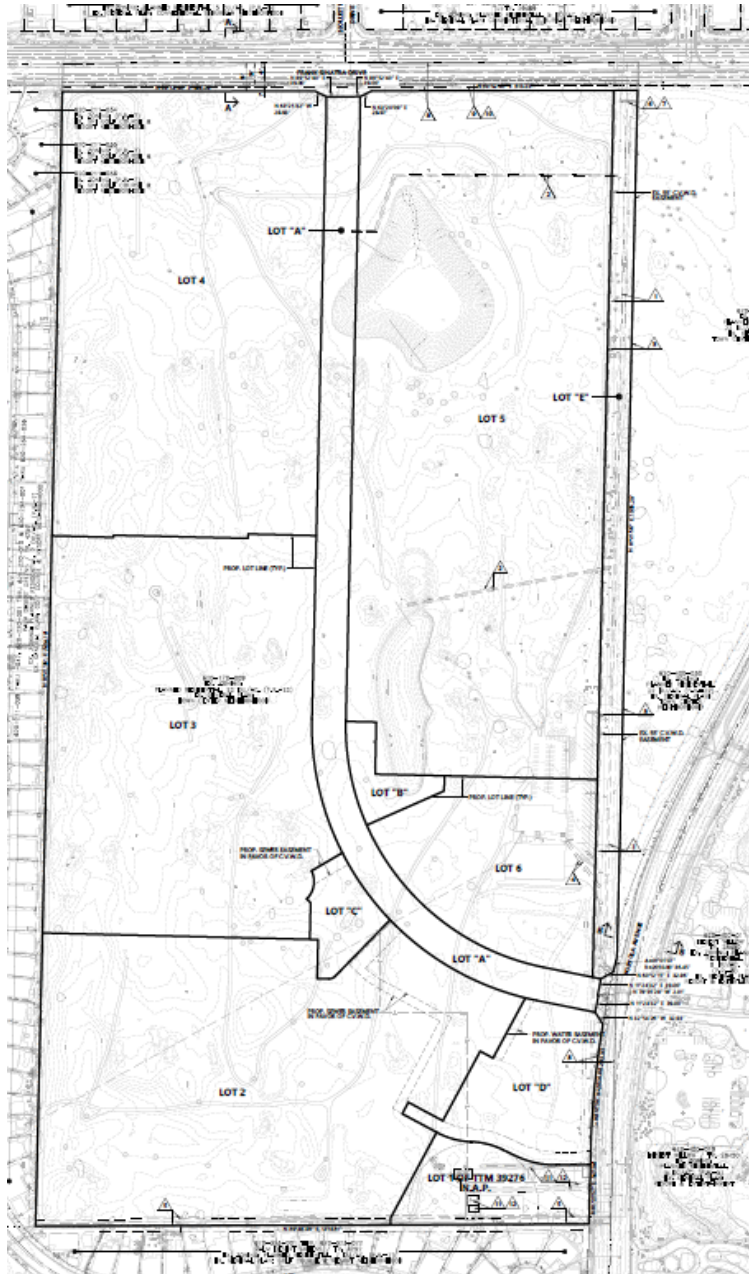
Tentative Tract Map (TTM) 39159 Master Infrastructure Map

The Applicant is proposing TTM 39159 to approve the project framework by subdividing the site into six lots, including three lettered lots for the spine road and retention basins, and one for the existing cell tower. Approval and ultimate recordation of this map would allow for construction of

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the master infrastructure of the site, including the spine road, mass grading, and common area improvements. Lot 1 includes the existing Cell Tower which will be parceled out in the subdivision and Lot 6 includes the future club house/recreation area.

Exhibit 2 – TTM 39159

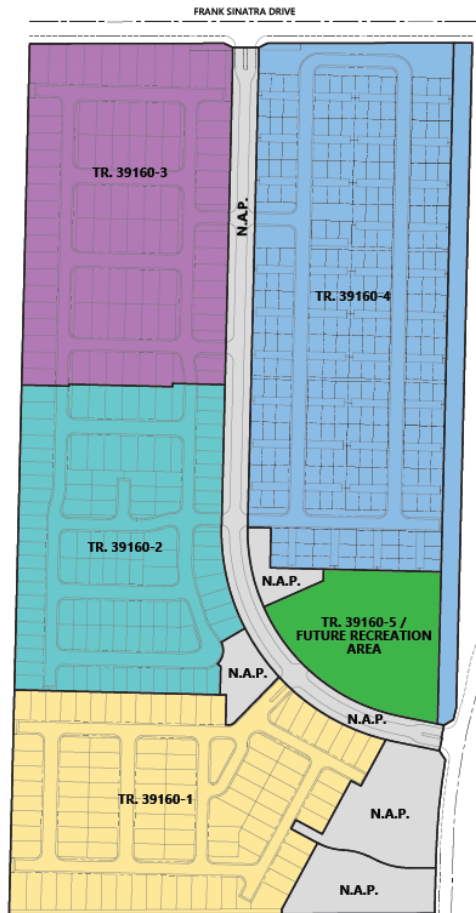


Phased Map TTM 39160

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Processed concurrently to create the residential lots and facilitate future sale or development of the parcels. This establishes the site layout and development for the 546 SFR units, location of streets, recreation, retention, open space areas, and establishes a phased approach. The Applicant may develop the project in phases as shown on the map. Each phase would require submittal of detailed architectural elevations, landscape plans, and lighting plans to the City via Precise Plan, subject to approval from the City’s Architectural Review Commission (ARC) and Planning Commission.

Exhibit 3 – TTM 39160 Phasing



PHASING MAP

A. Property Description

The proposed Residential Development will be South of Frank Sinatra Drive and west of Portola Avenue. The project site consists of a disturbed, vacant lot that previously operated as the Santa Rosa Country Club Golf Course from approximately 1978 until its closure in 2015. The site is dominated by ruderal and non-native grasses and does not support any natural vegetation communities. There are two dried-up artificial ponds in the northern and central portions of the project site that are associated with the former golf course. Existing remnants of a cement cart path, clubhouse, cart storage structure, and asphalt parking lot are distributed throughout the

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site. Approximately 1.1 acres of the southeast portion of the project site is developed with a cell tower, which would be established as its own parcel.

B. Zoning, General Plan and Adjacent Uses

The existing General Plan Land Use Designation is Town Center Neighborhood with a zoning of Planned Residential PR-22. The purpose of this district is to provide for flexibility in residential development, by encouraging creative and imaginative design, and the development of parcels of land as coordinated projects involving a mixture of residential densities (4.0—40.0 du/ac), mixed housing types, and community facilities. The district is characterized as providing for the optimum integration of urban and natural amenities within developments and is organized around formal, walkable, and highly connected streetscapes.

Table 1 – Adjacent Land Use and Designations

	Existing Uses	General Plan	Zoning
Project Site	Vacant	Town Center Neighborhood	Planned Residential PR-22
North	Frank Sinatra Drive and Single Family Residential	Conventional Suburban Neighborhood	Planned Residential PR-5
East	Vacant Parcel Portola Avenue	Town Center Neighborhood	Planned Residential PR-22
West	Single-Family Residential	Golf Course and Resort Neighborhood	Planned Residential PR-7
South	Single-Family Residential	Golf Course and Resort Neighborhood	Planned Residential PR-7

C. Project Description

Site Plan

Access to the site would be provided via one access point on Frank Sinatra Drive at the northern site boundary and one access point on Portola Avenue at the southeast portion of the site. Access and circulation improvements would be designed and constructed consistent with City design and engineering standards, as shown in Exhibit 2. Key site features include distributed landscaping throughout the site, meandering pedestrian walkways, three retention basin located southeast of the site, and a recreation open space also on the southeast, as shown on Exhibit 1 above.

Architecture

The proposed Tentative Tract Maps (TTMs) and Precise Plan are intended to allow future applicants to construct the residential portions. At this stage, no specific architectural plans are proposed. An applicant will be required to submit architectural elevations, final landscape plans, and lighting plans to the City for approval. The project will conform to the City of Palm Desert

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Zoning Code (Municipal Code Title 25, Zoning), which establishes design standards related to building height, setbacks, and open space. The Applicant prepared a preliminary landscaping layout (Attachment 4) for the common area landscaping. Prior to construction of landscaping, the Applicant will submit a Design Review application for Architectural Review Commission approval.

In accordance with Section 25.10.050 (Development Standards), the maximum building height is limited to 40 feet or three stories, whichever is less. Setbacks range from 25 feet along local streets to 50 feet along freeways, while two-story single-family homes must maintain a minimum 100-foot setback—or one lot depth, whichever is greater—from the project perimeter. Building separation standards require a minimum of 7 feet between single-story units and 10 feet between two-story units. Additionally, a minimum of 20 percent of the site’s net area will be dedicated to common open space, ensuring compliance with City development standards and promoting a cohesive, high-quality neighborhood design. The properties to the south will be setback at least 15’ by an existing easement that runs along the southern property line.

Per PDMC Section 25.10.050(B)(14), two-story, single-family detached buildings shall be setback a minimum of 100 feet. The Commission may waive this requirement when adjacent developments are planned simultaneously. The Applicant is proposing for homes on the eastern perimeter to be two-story homes, only setback 55’. The Applicant has submitted applications for a development directly abutting this east perimeter, as the same ownership, and requested to meet the allowance of two-story homes along this perimeter.

ANALYSIS:

The project site is zoned PR-22 which allows single family residential uses with the approval of a Precise Plan (PP) by the Palm Desert Planning Commission in accordance with Table 25.10-3 for development standards and Section 25.72.030. The Project site is designated as Town Center Neighborhood by the City of Palm Desert General Plan. The project would need to conform with the General Plan Land Use and Zoning. The development standards have no side, front, or rear yard setbacks and would be subject to review in future Precise Plans when architecture and landscaping plans are submitted per planning area.

Table 2 – Development Standard Consistency

STANDARD	PR-22	PROJECT	CONFORMS
Minimum Lot Size.	None	2,120-5,000 sq.ft.(per PA)	Yes
Lot Coverage	50%	No Construction Proposed	N/A
Maximum Height	40’-0”	No Construction Proposed	N/A
Maximum No. of Stories	3 Stories	2 stories as proposed by the applicant	Yes
Maximum Building Size	None	No Construction Proposed	N/A

Parking

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Under PDMC Section 25.46.040 Parking Requirements, there are 2 car garage or carport parking spaces required per single family residence. The proposed 546 single family unit residential development would require 1,092 covered parking spaces.

Environment Assessment/Environmental Review:

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA guidelines, an Initial Study has been prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the project. The documents have been completed in compliance with the CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines, and the City of Palm Desert local CEQA guidelines. The document finds that all environmental impacts of the project are either insignificant or can be mitigated to a less than significant level pursuant to the mitigation measures outlined in the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), attached as Exhibit A in Attachment 1. The City published a Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration on October 1, 2025, in accordance with CEQA guidelines. The public review period for the MND was from October 1, 2025 through October 20, 2025. The City received two (2) comment letters which have been responded to.

Public Notification:

Community Engagement

The Applicant met all of the requirements outlined in PDMC 25.60.160 Community Engagement. This included conducting two (2) publicly noticed community engagement meetings on May 21, 2025 and September 10, 2025, with a City staff representative in attendance. The Applicant responded to questions about two-story homes, development timeline, traffic and circulation, and dust control. The meetings had approximately 33 people in attendance.

Public noticing was conducted for the November 4, 2025 Planning Commission meeting per the requirements of Palm Desert Municipal Code (PDMC). A Public Hearing notice was published a minimum of 10 days before the hearing date on Friday, October 24, 2025, in The Desert Sun newspaper. Notices were mailed to all property owners within 1,000 feet of the project site. The Planning Commission continued the public hearing to a date certain of November 18, 2025. During the November 4, 2025 Planning Commission public hearing, public comments were received with concern on distance to neighbors, traffic, and heights.

Findings of Approval:

Findings of Approval can be found in draft Resolution No. 2904, 2905, and 2907

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Resolution 2904 (PP25-0003)
 - a. Exhibit A Initial Study Mitigated Negative Declaration
 - b. Exhibit B PP25-0003 Conditions of Approval
2. Draft Resolution 2905 (TTM 39159)
 - a. Exhibit A TTM 39159 Conditions of Approval
3. Draft Resolution 2907 (TTM 39160)
 - a. Exhibit A TTM 39160 Conditions of Approval
4. PP25-0003 Site Layout Plan
5. TTM 39160 Subdivision Map
6. Prelim Grading Exhibit TTM 39160

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7. TTM 39159 Master Infrastructure Map
8. Prelim Mass Grading Exhibit TTM 39159
9. Community Engagement Letter
10. CEQA Notice of Intent
11. Public Hearing Notice