

# INDIAN WELLS CITY COUNCIL

## January 15, 2026



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**To:** City Council  
**From:** City Manager Department  
**Prepared by:** Eric Ceja, Assistant City Manager  
**Subject:** **Council Member Whitman Request for Consideration of Inclusion of a "Resident Impact Statement" to City Council Staff Reports**

### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

Council **DISCUSSES** and **PROVIDES** direction on Council Member Whitman's request to include a "Residential Impact Statement" for future City Council staff reports; and

**FINDS** the project to be exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15378.

### DISCUSSION :

Pursuant to Section 3.01.030 "Placing Items on the Agenda" of the City Council Policy Manual, Council Member Whitman has made a request that the City Council discuss the inclusion of a "residential impact statement" to future City Council staff reports. This request was made at the December 4, 2025, City Council meeting and received support from the majority of the Council for further consideration.

Council Member Whitman's proposal would add a new header to City Council staff reports requiring staff to explicitly identify potential impacts to residents based on proposed policy actions of the City Council. The intent of City Council staff reports is to provide the City Council and public with clear information so that the City Council can make a well-informed decision on behalf of the community. These staff report already include:

- Background and history of the subject matter
- Analysis of impacts of proposed City Council actions,
- Provide options for City Council's consideration.
- Provide professional recommendations from staff and legal counsel,

In addition, these staff reports facilitate procedural and legal requirements, promote transparency and public understanding, and create a public record.

In review of other Coachella Valley cities, no other city contains a specific “resident impacts statement.” In addition, staff believe that the information contained in existing City Council staff reports identifies potential impacts of Council actions. As such, staff is concerned that a resident impact statement contained in a staff report could be considered subjective and could be politicized, depending on which side of a policy issue an individual is on. By maintaining neutrality and presenting facts and options for City Council’s consideration, staff avoid being put in a position whereby resident impacts are understated, ignored, or overstated; potentially leading to frustration and dispute due to its subjective nature.

### **OPTIONS:**

The City Council has the following options:

1. Instruct staff to include a “Resident Impact Section” on future staff reports;
2. Decide not to include a “Resident Impact Section” on future staff reports; or
3. Provide alternative direction.

### **CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC GOAL:**

The discussion of a residential impact statement does not implement any of the City Council’s Strategic Goals.

### **CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA):**

“The action is not a project within the meaning of Section 15378 of the State of California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) Guidelines, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change in the environment, directly or indirectly; and that the action is nonetheless exempt from the requirements of CEQA in that the activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. (15061(b)(3).) ”