



# The BDC Times

A Quarterly Update from the Mesa Grande Business  
Development Corporation

## Tribal C-Store Market Study Completed BDC Begins Conceptual Site Planning Process

The C-Store feasibility study commissioned by the BDC in March has now been completed. The study has confirmed that a tribal convenience store and gas station incorporating several other key elements could form an attractive "mini-destination" for area residents and visitors, and could provide a healthy return on investment within 5 years. The envisioned site on the Golden Eagle provides excellent access from Highway 78, and the existing topography of that site is conducive to such development.

The BDC is now working on conceptual site planning, which will produce illustrations and renderings that will help the General Council understand what is envisioned as it makes the final "go-no go" decision on the project. The BDC will seek federal funding to cover development and construction costs. The study recommended a project with four core elements:



*Nationwide, 196 tribes operate 364 tribally-owned gas station/convenience stores in 27 states, including 32 tribal c-stores in California.*

**1**

**C-STORE WITH GAS PUMPS & EV CHARGING STATIONS PLUS TOILETS, SHOWERS & LAUNDRY FOR TRUCKERS & CAMPERS**

**2**

**NATIVE MARKET WITH FRESH PRODUCE, GRAB 'N GO DELI FOOD SECTION & WINE BAR (LOCAL WINES)**

**3**

**COVERED OUTDOOR SEATING PLUS OPEN OUTDOOR PLAZA FOR FLEA MARKETS, CULTURAL EVENTS, ART/CRAFT FAIRS, ETC.**

**4**

**RV PARK / CAMPGROUND WITH HOOK-UPS & EASY ACCESS TO C-STORE FOR CHECK-IN, PAYMENT, SUPPLIES AND SERVICES**

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## First Two Tenants Sign Golden Eagle Leases

The BDC has finalized agreements with two local businesses to lease equine facilities on the Golden Eagle. The first tenant is a local resort owner who will board 10 horses in a barn and pasture on the property so he can offer horseback riding as an amenity for his guests. The resort owner will also lease the central track on the Golden Eagle property. The other tenant is a non-profit organization that re-homes retired thoroughbred racehorses. The group will board as many as 70 horses on the Golden Eagle, and renovate a barn and a residence at its own expense to host private offices and meeting space.

BDC policies now require that a complete cultural assessment be conducted prior to disturbance of soil to ensure the protection and preservation of any historically or culturally significant sites before development.



### About the NAAF

In 1999, a group of Native and African-American farmers and ranchers brought a class action lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture, alleging that the USDA had denied them equal access to the agency's loan programs and services. As part of the settlement of that lawsuit in 2010, a dedicated trust fund was created to provide grants in support of individual Native farmers and ranchers, and also to benefit tribally-operated crop and livestock agriculture programs.

NAAF awarded \$2 million in grants to 22 tribal projects, including Mesa Grande's Tribal Gardens. Additional grants were awarded to educational institutions and non-profits working with tribal organizations to help build tribal food economies.

## BDC Receives Grant for Tribal Organic Garden Planning

The Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF) has awarded a small grant to the BDC to begin planning for Tekamuk Tribal Gardens, a venture that could ultimately include a revenue-generating 10-acre organic garden producing vegetables, fruits and herbs; a Community Garden where tribal members could work their own small garden plots and keep or sell their crops; and a publicly accessible Ethnobotanical Garden to educate visitors and reconnect tribal members to their ancient cultural lifeways.

The site tentatively selected for the Gardens is at the southern edge of the Golden Eagle along Highway 78, just east of the state-owned parcel on which the CalFire station is located.

The NAAF grant will enable the BDC to create the business plan for the Garden operation, prepare a portion of the site for planting with soil preparation and planting of ground cover, develop a small test garden, and initiate the Community Garden program with a limited number of micro-grants for individual tribal gardeners wishing to participate.



Because the amount funded was less than requested, the BDC must submit a revised budget and scope of work for approval by NAAF before funds are released, expected by mid-October.