

Carolinian community, requires the use of beaches when a family member passes away (CNMI Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality 2015 pp. 87).

Separately, 67 archaeological sites have been determined not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and, therefore, are not considered historic properties under Section 106, as defined in the National Historic Preservation Act [54 U.S.C. section 300308]. Though these archeological sites have been determined not individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, they are still protected under other federal statutes including the Archeological Resources Protection Act, (16 U.S.C. section 470aa(b)), Antiquities Act (54 U.S.C. sections 320301et seq), Embezzlement and Theft (18 U.S.C. 641), Destruction of Government Property (18 U.S.C. 1361) and Trespassing (18 U.S.C. 1382).

3.6 Visual Resources

Visual resources on Tinian include natural features typical to the Pacific Islands region and human-built elements that, when viewed together as a landscape, result in a sense of place characterized by scenic views of tropical beaches and jungle areas. Natural views from coastal areas on Tinian include shorelines, seascapes, and cliffs. Inland, dominant natural features include vegetation, from dense jungle to sparser areas of shorter grasses, shrubs, and trees. Notable human-built and maintained features that contribute to the visual environment include cultural features, agricultural areas, parks and landscaping, and suburban-to-rural development. In the southern part of the island, south of the Military Lease Area, views are dominated by residential and commercial development, such as single-family homes and low-profile commercial and civic buildings.

The USAGM site on Saipan is composed of disturbed lands with five existing antenna towers and low buildings. Immediately west of the site is the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Agingan wastewater treatment plant and Agingan Point. The area is relatively flat and slopes away to the ocean.

The selection of viewpoints for analyzing impacts to visual resources was based upon the consideration of activities while viewing the landscape, the importance of the scenic quality to these activities, the potential number of viewers, and the frequency and duration of views. Based on these considerations, 17 viewpoints on Tinian were selected for initial review. Because no new training or construction is proposed on Saipan, no viewpoints on Saipan were considered. The selected viewpoints on Tinian represent views and scenic overlooks and well-known places and thoroughfares that people are accustomed to seeing as part of the Military Lease Area landscape. Field observations were then performed to document and describe the existing visual environment (Figure 3.6-1).

The north portion of the Military Lease Area on Tinian is primarily composed of previously developed and disturbed lands with a historic World War II-era airfield (North Field). The area is a relatively flat plateau that slopes down to the ocean on the north, east, and west sides of the island, with some variation in topography across the plateau. The southern side of the plateau is defined by a steep upward slope that connects to the Mount Lasso ridge line. Lake Hagoi is the lowest point within the North Lowland plateau, with a minimum elevation of approximately 10 feet above mean sea level.



Figure 3.6-1 Tinian Viewpoints and View Orientation


The north and northeast coastlines are covered with low, windblown vegetation and generally provide open and expansive views of the island of Saipan, the Pacific Ocean, Philippine Sea, and horizon. The northwest coastline is better protected from wind, with denser vegetation than that of the windward side. The dominant features are the beaches in the North Field National Historic Landmark. With the exception of the cleared airfield and connecting roads, vegetation is generally overgrown and covers large swaths of land. Views are generally closed in and somewhat constrained due to the surrounding dense vegetation.




The west side topography of the Military Lease Area is broad and gently sloping, with noticeable vertical elevation changes occurring primarily along the western shoreline in the southern portion as it extends north from the Marpo Valley.



The central highlands are dominated by Mount Lasso, with a maximum elevation of 545 feet above mean sea level. The steep topography along the eastern edge of Mount Lasso consists of native limestone forest vegetation. The steep, rugged terrain is not conducive to farming, and the area was not cleared by the Japanese to support sugarcane production in the 1920s. The western coast consists of steep cliffs, starting south of Unai Chulu and accessed via Riverside Drive. A visually dominant feature is an antenna array at the USAGM site consisting of tall towers and curtain antennae in an area located west of 8th Avenue.



The east side of the Military Lease Area is characterized by a central layered limestone plateau, mostly blanketed by dense vegetation with some areas of fenced, semi-cleared agricultural lands. The shoreline areas consist of gently sloping topography to the sea and beach areas. Most of these areas are rocky and windier compared to their counterparts on the west side of Tinian. Table 3.6-1 includes descriptions of the 17 Tinian viewpoints, including the primary element within its viewshed, the quality and character of the surrounding landscape, and an associated photo. Additional information on the visual environment can be found in Appendix I.



Table 3.6-1 Description of Existing Tinian Views





<i>Viewpoint</i>	<i>Description of Existing View</i>
1: North Field National Historic Landmark, Looking South	<p>Viewpoint 1 looks south and includes pavement in the foreground and dense vegetation in the middle-ground and background. Degraded tarmac, Japanese air raid shelters, and other World War II structures and monuments are observed from this viewpoint. The entire area was once open and clear to accommodate World War II air combat operations. However, the visual connections and relationships between airfield buildings and structures are presently much harder to recognize amidst the overgrown vegetation. Two historic bomb loading pits are preserved at the North Field National Historic Landmark. The pits are slightly visible toward the middle and right of the photograph. The aprons surrounding these bomb pits are preserved in a mostly paved and unvegetated state, so the views around and between the bomb pits remain unobstructed. The bomb pits themselves are covered by protective enclosures of metal and glass with historical photos and text within.</p> 




<i>Viewpoint</i>	<i>Description of Existing View</i>
2: North Field National Historic Landmark, Looking North-northeast from Boston Post Road	<p>Viewpoint 2 looks north-northeast from Boston Post Road toward the proposed Multi-Purpose Maneuver Range (panorama photo). The foreground includes the degraded paved road, and the middle-ground and background are dominated by low-growing, dense shrubs, and trees.</p> 
3: North Field National Historic Landmark, Looking North-northwest	<p>Viewpoint 3 looks north/northwest from Broadway toward the proposed Multi-Purpose Maneuver Range and associated Landing Zone and ammunition holding areas. The foreground includes the degraded paved road, and the middle-ground and background are dominated by low-growing dense shrubs and trees.</p> 
4: North Field National Historic Landmark, Looking North-northeast	<p>Viewpoint 4 looks north-northeast from Taxiway 7/8 toward the western edge of the proposed Multi-Purpose Maneuver Range. The foreground is dominated by the degraded tarmac. The middle-ground includes landscaped grass and coconut trees and a wall of dense vegetation. The background includes dense vegetation interspersed with taller trees.</p> 


<i>Viewpoint</i>	<i>Description of Existing View</i>
5: Unai Babui Looking Southwest	<p>Viewpoint 5 looks southwest at Unai Babui—a beach located on the northwest coast that is part of the North Field National Historic Landmark. Unai Babui is smaller than Unai Chulu and is located about 0.65 miles north of Unai Chulu. It has rugged coral outcroppings along the shoreline edge and thick vegetation extending close to and upward from the shoreline's edge. The shallow reef flat is easily seen from the coastline.</p> 
6: Unai Chulu, Looking North-northeast	<p>Viewpoint 6 looks north-northeast at Unai Chulu. Unai Chulu is one of only a few sandy beaches on this part of Tinian. It is a long, wide beach with open vegetated areas located between the beach and the densely vegetated area further inland to Riverside Drive. These nearshore areas are commonly used for picnics and social gatherings because they provide shade and views of the beach and the ocean.</p> 

<i>Viewpoint</i>	<i>Description of Existing View</i>
7: Ushi Point at the Road, Looking North	<p>Viewpoint 7 looks north toward Ushi Point from the roadway. This view mostly consists of an unpaved road with low-cut vegetation at its shoulders, dense vegetation farther from each shoulder, and open views of the ocean and horizon straight ahead. A maritime navigational aid beacon and some coconut trees are in the middle-ground. A gently sloping open area and road can also be seen in the middle-ground. An unimpeded view of the ocean and horizon are in the background due to the flat terrain and maintained vegetation in the immediate vicinity of the roadway.</p> 
8: Ushi Point at the Coast, Looking South	<p>Viewpoint 8 looks south and facing away from the ocean. This view mostly consists of green, low-growing vegetated ground cover. A maritime navigational aid beacon and some coconut trees are in the foreground. A gently sloping open area and road can be seen in the middle-ground. A stand of coconut trees and thick forest is in the background.</p> 

<i>Viewpoint</i>	<i>Description of Existing View</i>
9 and 10: Runway Able, Looking South- southeast and West, respectively	<p>Runway Able is one of four World War II-era airstrips situated in the boundary of the North Field National Historic Landmark over the former Japanese Ushi Point Airfield. Viewpoints 9 and 10 show the length of Runway Able. Viewpoint 9 looks south-southeast from the west end of the runway and Viewpoint 10 looks west from the east end. The aesthetic value of the North Field National Historic Landmark runways lies in both the existing visual landscape and their value as a part of Ushi Field–North Field Trail. The visual landscape of the airstrip consists of long linear runway of eroded tarmac infiltrated by vegetation and bordering the runway.</p> <p>Viewpoint 9 photo:</p>  <p>Viewpoint 10 photo:</p> 

<i>Viewpoint</i>	<i>Description of Existing View</i>
11, 12, and 13: Runway Baker, Looking West, South, and North, respectively	<p>Runway Baker is one of four World War II-era airstrips constructed at North Field National Historic Landmark over the former Japanese Ushi Point Airfield. Viewpoint 11a looks west from the west end of the runway Baker toward the proposed surface radar site, Viewpoint 11b looks west from the center of runway Baker, Viewpoint 12 looks north from the south side of the runway Baker, and Viewpoint 13 looks south from the north side of runway Baker. The visual landscape consists of long linear runway, bordered by varying amounts of vegetation, depending on when vegetation clearing takes place.</p> <p>Viewpoint 11a photo:</p>  <p>Viewpoint 11b photo:</p>  <p>Viewpoint 12 photo:</p>  <p>Viewpoint 13 photo:</p> 

<i>Viewpoint</i>	<i>Description of Existing View</i>
14: Mount Lasso Scenic Overlook, Looking East-northeast	<p>Viewpoint 14 looks east-northeast from the Mount Lasso overlook, providing a panoramic view over the eastern portion of Tinian, with Saipan in the background to the north. Located south of the North Field National Historic Landmark, Mount Lasso is a scenic lookout point frequently visited by tourists. As Tinian's second highest point, and due in part to its central location on the island, Mount Lasso was an important communications and visual reconnaissance center during World War II. Both Japanese and American radar systems were located on top of Mount Lasso, and concrete mountings for the facilities remain.</p> 
15: TNI Terminal, Looking North-northwest	<p>Viewpoint 15 looks north-northwest from the terminal at TNI. The airport is located south of the Military Lease Area and west of Broadway and is surrounded by dense vegetation. From the primary public viewpoint at the airport terminal, foreground views include the paved runway and taxiway, inclusive of the airplanes, vehicles, and other equipment in support of airport operations. Middle-ground and background views are dominated by the expanse of dense vegetation surrounding the airport.</p> 
16: Unai Masalok, Looking North-northwest	<p>Viewpoint 16 looks north-northwest from Unai Masalok, a beach approximately 154 feet in length located on the east coast of Tinian. It is protected by an offshore reef and has rugged coral outcroppings along the shoreline edge and thick vegetation extending close to and upward from the shoreline's edge. The shallow reef flat is easily seen from the coastline.</p> 

<i>Viewpoint</i>	<i>Description of Existing View</i>
17: Unai Dankulo, Looking Southwest	<p>Unai Dankulo is accessible through the forested Unai Dankulo Trail that opens to an expansive beach extending north. Viewpoint 17 looks southwest from the end of Unai Dankulo Trail, facing away from the beach toward Landing Zone 5. The beach and flat nearshore environment allow direct vehicle access to picnic spots that are located within somewhat shaded coconut groves adjacent to the beach. Thick grasses, shrub vegetation, and trees dominate the viewshed along Unai Dankulo Trail that leads to Unai Dankulo. While more windswept than the leeward beaches, the wind is buffered by inland vegetation.</p> 

Legend: TNI = Francisco Manglona Borja / Tinian International Airport.

3.7 Transportation

This section discusses the existing ground, water, and air transportation systems on the island of Tinian. The existing transportation system on Tinian consists of paved and unpaved roads, the Port of Tinian, and TNI. The roadway transportation network providing access to the USAGM site on Saipan is also described.

3.7.1 Ground Transportation

Tinian has approximately 68 miles of roads, most of which were constructed in 1944 to accommodate heavy truck traffic when the military population on Tinian was approximately 150,000. The CNMI is responsible for basic maintenance and repair of roads within the Military Lease Area, however, DoD may exercise United States reserved rights to maintain, repair, or construct roads within the Military Lease Area. The Seabees repaired roads and constructed Marpo Heights Road on Tinian in 2022. Routine road maintenance within the former Lease Back Area is conducted by the CNMI Department of Public Works. The CNMI Department of Public Works owns and maintains all other roads on Tinian south of the Military Lease Area. Several roads are part of the CNMI Territorial Highway System and eligible for federal aid administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration. There is no existing public transportation service on Tinian. Figure 3.7-1 shows the existing road network on Tinian.

Table 3.7-1 provides a description of key transportation routes in and near the Military Lease Area and provides traffic volumes documented in the *CNMI 20-Year Highway Master Plan* (CNMI Department of Public Works 2023). Broadway and Grand Avenue have the highest traffic volumes, with about 1,560 and 2,130 vehicles per day, respectively. Other roads not listed in the table typically have the following characteristics:

- Within the Military Lease Area: roads are generally unpaved and moderately to severely overgrown by vegetation with traffic volumes of less than 100 vehicles per day.
- Outside of the Military Lease Area: roads are generally two lanes wide (one for each direction of travel), paved and undivided with no median, and carry between 25 and 300 vehicles per day.