

**MINUTES OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
November 12, 2025**

The Imperial County Planning Commission convened a Meeting on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors Chambers, El Centro, California.

Staff present: Director, Jim Minnick; Assistant Director, Michael Abraham; Planner II, Alan Molina; Planner II, Luis Bejarano; Planner IV, David Black; Planner II, Rocio Yee; Clerks – Adriana Ceballos & Olivia Lopez

Chairman Rudy Schaffner called meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

I. Roll Call: Commissioners present: Schaffner, Roben, Cabañas, Gallegos, Medina, Wright, Gutierrez, Hinojosa

II. Pledge of Allegiance:

III. Public Hearings

- 1. Approval of Minutes:** Chairman Schaffner entertained a motion to approve the Planning Commission Minutes for the **October 22, 2025**, meeting as submitted by staff; Commissioner Cabañas made motion to approve minutes seconded by Commissioner Gallegos and carried on the affirmative vote by the Commissioners present Schaffner (yes), Roben (yes), Cabañas (yes), Gallegos (yes) Medina (yes), Wright (yes), Gutierrez (yes) Hinojosa (yes).
- 2. Consideration of Initial Study #24-0037** as submitted by Imperial County Department of Public Works (ICDPW), proposing to replace the existing Picacho Bridge over Yuma Main Canal leading into the Townsite of Winterhaven. The proposed Project presents a unique opportunity to construct a modern bridge that implements Best Management Practices (BMPs) concurrently with transportation amenities. Due to cracking and outliving its useful life, the existing wood bridge must be replaced to support commerce, access to the Quechan Reservation, the Bard community, and provide a safer crossing of the Yuma Main Canal. The proposed project is located along Picacho Road in Winterhaven, CA. The bridge lies within APN 056-600-011 with coordinates 32.7358 N, 114.6241 W, and further described as POR SEC 26 & 35 16-22 LY SWLY OF RR & NELY OF HWY 165.56AC, County of Imperial; State of California (Supervisory District #5), [Luis Bejarano, Planner II at 442-265-1736, or via email at luisbejarano@co.imperial.ca.us].

Actions:

- 1) Approve the Resolution adopting the Mitigated Negative Declaration by finding that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment as recommended at the Environmental Evaluation Committee hearing held on February 27, 2025.

Jim Minnick, Director: Gave a brief description of the project, and introduced, Planner II, Luis Bejarano, to read the project into the record.

Luis Bejarano, Planner II: Read the PowerPoint presentation of the project into the record, stated consultant was going to continue with presentation.

Scott Molloy, Consultant: Introduced himself; read the PowerPoint presentation of the project into record. Handed presentation back over to Planner Luis Bejarano.

Luis Bejarano, Planner II: Continued with the rest PowerPoint presentation into record.

Chairman Schaffner: Opened the public portion of the meeting.

Chairman Schaffner: There were no public comments. He then closed the public portion of the meeting and turned it over to the Commission for any questions and/or comments.

Commissioner Gallegos: I have a question; is this going to be a joint venture with the Indians or is the County going to absorb the whole cost?

Applicant, Robert Ureña: As of now the County is, right now we are seeking federal funds, we do have an application out right now, expecting hopefully good news sometime this month or December. We did try last year; of course we didn't receive it. This is the Bridge Investment Program funds. We met, we actually scored really high last year, but we were not selected to receive the funds. We resubmitted and are hoping for another chance this year.

Commissioner Gallegos: The only reason why I'm asking is because we have a lot of bridges in Imperial County, especially going into Calexico's backway. That bridge is terrible. Should they be closed for a long time? I just didn't know what the priority is or how it's going to be handled, because that bridge is going to cost a lot of money. You have an estimated cost on that?

Applicant, Robert Ureña: Are you asking about Picacho?

Commissioner Gallegos: Yes.

Applicant, Robert Ureña: Right now, we're looking at nine million (9,000,000). Last year we were at about eight point four million (8.4 million), but at this point we're at nine million (9,000,000).

Commissioner Gallegos: Ok, that's the only question that I have.

Commissioner Cabañas: Made a motion to approve **Agenda Item #2** seconded by **Commissioner Gallegos** and the affirmative vote by the Commissioners present as follows Schaffner (yes), Roben (yes), Cabañas (yes), Gallegos (yes) Medina (yes), Wright (yes), Gutierrez (yes) Hinojosa (yes).

Jim Minnick, Director: Stated **Agenda Item #2** stands approved by this Commission, the applicant or any member of the public wants to appeal must be done by filing the appropriate appeal in the next ten (10) days.

3. **Consideration of Lot Merger #00190** as submitted by Brandon Martin and Francesca Palmer, who are proposing a comprehensive lot merger between two contiguous lots to accommodate the installation of an accessory structure that would serve as a garage for off-road vehicles. All future developments will be made to County standards. "Parcel A" with Assessor's Parcel Number 013-081-021 (2286 Corona Avenue, Salton City, CA) is legally described as LOT 40 BOLCK 25 TRACT 527 FM 3 41; "Parcel B" with Assessor's Parcel Number 013-081-022 (2290 Corona Avenue, Salton City, CA) is legally described as LOT 41 BLOCK 25 TRACT 527 FM 3 41; both being a portion of Section 21, Township 10 South, Range 10 East of the San Bernardino Base Meridian (S.B.B.M.), in an unincorporated area of the County of Imperial, State of California (Supervisory District #4) [Alan C. Molina, Planner II, at (442) 265-1736, extension 1747 or via email at alanmolina@co.imperial.ca.us]

Actions:

1. Find that Lot Merger #00190 is categorically exempt from CEQA per Article 19, Section 15305 (Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations) and that no further environmental documentation is necessary; and,

2. Find that Lot Merger #00190 is consistent with applicable Zoning and Building Ordinances; and,
3. Approve Lot Merger #00190, subject to the attached conditions.

Jim Minnick, Director: Gave a brief description of the project, and introduced Alan Molina, Planner II, to read the project into the record.

Alan Molina, Planner II: Read the PowerPoint presentation of the project into the record.

Chairman Schaffner: Could we get your name and address for the record?

Timothy Riley, Applicant: Introduced himself.

Chairman Schaffner: Asked if he read and agreed with everything in the project, and if he had any questions or comments regarding the project.

Timothy Riley, Applicant: I do. There are some conditions that weren't really appropriate from the Public Works Department. I've reached out to them, and they've subsequently waived one of those conditions, and the same with IID; they weren't available for communication on Monday, and yesterday was a holiday, but there are some conditions that I foresee they will proactively waive. In that case, I expect that they will send an email to the Planning Department, Mr. Molina.

Chairman Schaffner: Ok, we're going to approve what we've got here. Are you confident that this is going to be changed after we approve it as it is?

Timothy Riley, Applicant: I foresee that some of the conditions from IID will be waived by them.

Chairman Schaffner: Opened public portion of the meeting.

Chairman Schaffner: There were no public comments. He then closed the public portion of the meeting and turned it over to the Commission for any questions and/or comments.

Commissioner Cabaña: Yes, has Public Works been communicating with you about the changes?

Alan Molina, Planner II: Yes, they sent me an email, and actually it's on the last page of the packet where it says which condition is to be removed.

Commissioner Cabañas: Made a motion to approve **Agenda Item #3** with the condition of Public Works waiving some conditions seconded by **Commissioner Gallegos** and the affirmative vote by the Commissioners present as follows Schaffner (yes), Roben (yes), Cabañas (yes), Gallegos (yes) Medina (yes), Wright (yes), Gutierrez (yes), Hinojosa (yes).

Jim Minnick, Director: Stated **Agenda Item #3** stands approved by this Commission, the applicant or any member of the public wants to appeal must be done by filing the appropriate appeal in the next ten (10) days.

4. **Consideration of Conditional Use Permit #25-0011** as submitted by Atlantic proposing a temporary employee parking area during the construction of the nearby Imperial Sun Solar Project. The proposed employee parking site is located on parcels (APN 059-250-022 & 023-000). The project is within (Supervisor District # 5). [David Black, Planner IV, at (442) 265-1736, extension 1746 or via email at davidblack@co.imperial.ca.us].

Actions:

1. Adopt the Negative Declaration and that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment as recommended by the Environmental Evaluation Committee (EEC) on September 11, 2025; and,
2. Make the De Minimus Findings as recommended by EEC on September 11, 2025, in a public hearing that the project will not individually or cumulatively have an adverse effect on fish & wildlife resources, as defined in Section 711.2 of the Fish and Wildlife Codes; and,
3. Approve Planning Commission Resolution, with the attached Findings, for Conditional Use Permit (CUP) #25-0011, subject to all the conditions and authorize the Planning Director to sign the CUP contract upon receiving the signed copy from the Permittee.

Jim Minnick, Director: Gave a brief description of the project, and introduced David Black, Planner IV, to read the project into the record.

David Black, Planner IV: Read the PowerPoint presentation of the project into the record.

Chairman Schaffner: Asked if there was a representative for the project to approach the podium.

Jurg Heuberger, Representative: Introduced himself. I'd like to add with the exception of condition S5 number one and S7, we are in agreement. For S5 number one, the Public Works Department has withdrawn that item, and there is an email that was sent to Mr. Minnick and myself a few minutes ago by the director. S7 is a Caltrans condition, which is no longer applicable because we are not tying into Highway ninety-eight (98). We ask that these items be deleted.

Chairman Schaffner: Can we do that?

Jim Minnick, Director: Sure. Actually, we have a couple more things to talk about for a second, Ok?

Jurg Heuberger, Representative: S5 number 1.

Jim Minnick, Director: I'm looking to see if I have an email.

Jurg Heuberger, Representative: Yeah, we have an email from John saying it's ok to delete item 1. We still have to get an encroachment permit. Understood.

Jim Minnick, Director: Ok, yes, so I do not have a problem with that one. All right, so a couple things real quick. This is covering two properties based on the APNs, which is about sixty (60) acres or fifty-eight (58) acres, but the project site, according to the front page, is two point seventy-seven (2.77) acres, and according to the S1 is two point sixty-seven (2.67) acres. Prior to any disturbance of land, I would like a defined engineered set of plans to show what exactly is the site.

Jurg Heuberger, Representative: Yes Sir.

Jim Minnick, Director: Because if we're affecting the ag field I need to know that.

Jurg Heuberger, Representative: Understood.

Jim Minnick, Director: Number two (2) on G9, which is time limits of proposing some changes. As we know, this is a temporary CUP, and yet the first line says after one (1) year they can have successive one-year (1-year) periods. I'm recommending that we have a two-year (2-year) extension, so one original one (1) year and two one-year (1-year) time extensions. So, I'd like to recommend that we modify that condition.

Jurg Heuberger, Representative: We're in agreement.

Jim Minnick, Director: So basically, if they can't get it done in thirty-six (36) months, it's going to come back to you for another extension. They get one (1) twelve (12)-month extension and two (2) in-house ones, as opposed to successive, because successive means that there's really no limit. That's what I proposal there. Then on the surety bond, which is G20, it identifies the surety bond as twenty-five thousand (25,000), not to exceed twenty-five thousand (25,000), but first I want to basically make a statement that says I want to modify this condition in two (2) ways, one, prior to any project activity being commenced, the permittee shall provide the surety, that's not listed in this statement. So, I recommend that we don't accept, we don't allow movement of dirt without having a surety in place. Number two (2), I recommend that surety be based on a study so that we can ensure that, should they abandon the site, prevailing wages will allow us to have the funding, there will be enough surety there for us to utilize, and prevailing wages to actually remediate the site.

Jurg Heuberger, Representative: We're in agreement as long as the engineered study simply means an engineer's estimate, and not some kind of elaborate study.

Jim Minnick, Director: Nope. Just something that basically shows that it can be cleaned up and it meets the county's definition of being able to abate, and we're good. I don't want it to go into some type of heavy list, but somebody pulling twenty-five (25) out of who knows where. So, I'm recommending changes to the G8, which is time extensions, G20, and clarification on the actual site plan or site that's going to be disturbed prior to disturbance. Otherwise, I'm OK with the changes that Jurg Heuberger asked for.

Chairman Schaffner: Opened public portion of the meeting.

Chairman Schaffner: There were no public comments. He then closed the public portion of the meeting and turned it over to the Commission for any questions and/or comments.

Commissioner Cabañas: Made a motion to approve **Agenda Item #4** with following changes deleting conditions from Public Works department, Conditions for G8,G20 & the deletion of the Site Plan for getting a bond seconded by **Commissioner Gallegos** and the affirmative vote by the Commissioners present as follows Schaffner (yes), Roben (yes), Cabañas (yes), Gallego's (yes), Medina (yes), Wright (yes), Gutierrez (yes), Hinojosa (yes)

Jim Minnick, Director: Stated **Agenda Item #4** approved by this Commission, the applicant or any member of the public wants to appeal must be done by filing the appropriate appeal in the next ten (10) days.

5. **Consideration of Conditional Use Permit #23-0029** as submitted by Marty Tripes, proposing a Conditional Use Permit #23-0029 and a Lot Merger #00157 to combine two industrially zoned parcels for the development of a Recreational Vehicle (RV) Storage Facility that will also include on-site sales and repair services. The facility will provide spacious outdoor parking areas designed to accommodate Class B and Class A recreational vehicles, as well as long boats, motorhomes, and extended trailers. The project will be developed in three (3) phases and will not include an RV dump station, and it is proposed to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The proposed project site is located at 14 W. Highway 80 Ocotillo CA. 92251, on property identified as Assessor's Parcel Number 033-562-010-000 and 033-562-011-000, and further described as LOT 18 BLK 12 & ABAND OCOTILLO AVE ADJ ON S OCOTILLO UNIT 2, and, LOT 17 BLK 12 & ABAND OCOTILLO AVE ADJ ON S OCOTILLO UNIT 2, County of Imperial; State of California (Supervisory District #2), [Rocio Yee, Planner II at 442-265-1736, or via email at rocioyee@co.imperial.ca.us]

Actions:

1. Adopt the Negative Declaration by finding that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment as recommended at the Environmental Evaluation Committee (EEC) hearing held on October 10, 2024; and,
2. Approve the attached Resolutions and supporting findings for Conditional Use Permit (CUP) #23-0029 and authorize the Planning and Development Services Director to sign the CUP contract upon receipt from the permittee; and,
3. Approve Lot Merger (MERG) #00157, subject to the attached conditions.

Jim Minnick, Director: Gave a brief description of the project, and introduced Rocio Yee, Planner II, to read the project into the record.

Rocio Yee, Planner II: Read the PowerPoint presentation of the project into the record.

Chairman Schaffner: Asked if there was a representative for the project to approach the podium.

Cecilia Vogel, Representative: Introduced herself.

Chairman Schaffner: Asked if she read and agreed with everything in the project, and if he had any questions or comments regarding the project.

Cecilia Vogel, Representative: Yes.

Chairman Schaffner: No questions?

Cecilia Vogel, Representative: The only thing we have is that the environmental review did approve one hundred (100) spaces, and they'd like to change that to one hundred (100), because the spaces that are seventy (70) can actually fit three (3) twenty (20)s.

Jim Minnick, Director: My concern with that is we did receive your updated map, and you're showing sixty-three (63) to ninety-two (92) or two hundred twenty-one (221) spaces, so we're more confused than ever based on the map you provided us today.

Cecilia Vogel, Representative: Right, as explained to me, the environmental review, we have to go back if we went over one hundred (100), as we were approved for one hundred (100). So we'd like to just change it to one hundred (100). I can get you an updated site plan.

Jim Minnick, Director: Ok. The environmental documents one hundred (100) we don't have, I don't have an issue specifically on that. I do have other concerns. Number one (1), we received complaints last year that they were illegally using it as an RV storage lot while we were doing this work on getting it to you, and we received it again this year, as well as washing vehicles, running water down the road. So I want to make sure that this Commission, should they choose to approve this project, which I am one hundred percent (100%) in support of development in Ocotillo, that the applicant is well aware of the fact that they need to meet the minimum requirements for the development, that they cannot park on the dirt, that they cannot have runoff, and that if they're not prepared to do this, then maybe they're premature on this project. There is zero tolerance. I will bring this project back to this Commission for termination.

Cecilia Vogel, Representative: Ok, so on the water issue that was reported, the Fire Department was there testing the hydrant, which is the parcel to the east of it on the corner. There's a hydrant there; they were testing the water, running it up the road. It was running down. I went there Saturday, and he literally put water on the

concrete where they say they were washing, which they do not wash anything there, and nothing ran down the road.

Jim Minnick, Director: Ok good and the parking of vehicles?

Cecilia Vogel, Representative: He's got some friends right now; I have informed him.

Jim Minnick, Director: Everything has to be off this property, paved in the phasing that they want to phase it. Great, we're in support of the phasing. We do not allow, and you're asking this Commission to attempt to actually give permission to have this business there, you have to meet the minimum standards, which is a paved parking lot to do this and a secured fenced parking lot. Again, I'm supportive of your project provided that we move forward in the right direction. But I will jump back here quickly.

Cecilia Vogel, Representative: Ok. I understand.

Chairman Schaffner: Ok, do we have anybody from the public that needs to speak on this item?

Chairman Schaffner: There were no public comments. He then closed the public portion of the meeting and turned it over to the Commission for any questions and/or comments.

Commissioner Gallegos: Do you agree with it?

Cecilia Vogel, Representative: I do agree with it and I've talked to the owner about it. He understands.

Commissioner Cabañas: OK, first of all, before I make a motion, I want you to be very clear, and maybe next time if you see the fire department doing things like that, take some pictures, OK, so everybody knows that. With this project, you can submit it to his department and say, look, this happened. And second, that it is very clear that in a certain amount of time every vehicle has to be out of there, or what is being stored.

Commissioner Cabañas: Is there anything you would like to say before we continue?

Cecilia Vogel, Representative: No, he was concerned that he can still do the fixing of vehicles; he does have the repair facility there, and he's got a concrete area.

Jim Minnick, Director: He can do the fixing of vehicles, the problem is I personally drive through San Diego every weekend. Every weekend I see the same vehicles. I'm assuming he's an excellent repair person and he gets those repaired and moved down the road. All last summer or last dune season, the same vehicles were there. Start of this dune season, magically they show back up. Getting complaints and visually seeing it myself, I want this project to move forward, I want this to be supportive, but I do not want to be dealing with chasing this around and not getting the improvements that are required

Cecilia Vogel, Representative: Ok.

Commissioner Cabañas: So, my motion is, if these things continue, this Lot Merger and this Conditional Use Permit will be revoked.

Cecilia Vogel, Representative: I understand.

Chairman Cabañas: Made a motion to approve **Agenda Item #5a** seconded by **Commissioner Gallegos** and the affirmative vote by the Commissioners present as follows Schaffner (yes), Roben (yes), Cabañas (yes), Gallegos (yes) Medina (yes), Wright (yes), Gutierrez (yes) Hinojosa (yes).

Chairman Cabañas: Made a motion to approve **Agenda Item #5b** seconded by **Commissioner Gallegos** and the affirmative vote by the Commissioners present as follows Schaffner (yes), Roben (yes), Cabañas (yes), Gallegos (yes) Medina (yes), Wright (yes), Gutierrez (yes) Hinojosa (yes).

Jim Minnick, Director: Stated **Agenda Item #5a/b** stands approved by this Commission, the applicant or any member of the public wants to appeal must be done by filing the appropriate appeal in the next ten (10) days.

IV. Public Comments: NONE

V. Planning Commissioner Comments:

Jim Minnick, Director: Yes, I'd like to introduce you to our newest planner Isara Galvez.

Isara Galvez, Planner I: Introduced herself.

VI. Director's Comments:

VII. Adjournment: Chairman Schaffner: Adjourned meeting. Meeting adjourned at 9:42a.m.

Submitted by Rudy Schaffner
Chairman of the Planning Commission

Attest:

Jim Minnick, Director of
Imperial County Planning Commission

Adriana Ceballos & Olivia Lopez - PC Recording Clerks
AT\\S:\\Clerical\\MINUTES & RESOLUTIONS\\2025\\PC\\11 12 25 PC MINUTES.docx