

**MINUTES OF THE  
ALUC MEETING  
August 21, 2024**

The Airport Land Use Commission convened a Meeting on Wednesday, August 21, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room at 940 Main St., El Centro, California.

Staff present: Assistant Director, Michael Abraham, Planner II, Gerardo Quero, Planner II, Luis Valenzuela, Clerk, Kamika Mitchell, Clerk, Valerie Grijalva.

**Chairman Mike Goodsell:** Called the meeting into order.

I. **Roll Call:** Commissioners present: Goodsell, Louge, Zamora, Arguelles. Absent: Chavez

II. **Pledge of Allegiance**

III. **Approval of Minutes** – July 17, 2024, Minutes

**Vice- Chair Logue:** I Motion to approve the minutes for the July 17, 2024, meeting.

**Commissioner Arguelles:** I will second.

**Chairman Goodsell:** We have a motion and a second, Roll Call.

Roll Call: Goodsell (yes), Louge (yes), Zamora (yes), Arguelles (yes)

IV. **Public Hearings**

**Chairman Goodsell:** Introduces Public Hearings.

1. Public hearing to consider the proposed NorthStar 1 Solar Energy Generation and Battery Storage project for consistency with the Imperial County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. The project is identified as General Plan Amendment #23-0001, Zone Change #23-0001, Conditional Use Permits #23-0005 & #23-0006, which consists of the construction and operation of a 50-megawatt (MW) solar photovoltaic (PV) energy generation facility with a 75-megawatt (MW) battery storage (BESS) component and an on-site transmission line to connect to the Imperial Irrigation District's existing 161kV "N" Line. The proposed project would be located on two privately owned parcels encompassing approximately 288 acres in the eastern portion of the County. The proposed project site is located at 8997 Wilkins Road, Calipatria, CA, on properties identified as Assessor's Parcel Numbers 003-110-005-000 and 003-110-007-000; and further described as Lot 5 & Portion of Lots 6, 7, 8 and 13 of Section 1; Lots 9, 10, 11 & Portion of Lot 12 and the Southeast Quarter of Section 1, respectively; Township 10 South, Range 13 East of the San Bernardino Base and Meridian (S.B.B.M.), Latitude 33° 20' 40.092" N – Longitude 115° 35' 1.0428" W. **(ALUC 8-24)** [Gerardo A. Quero, Planner II (442) 265-1736, extension 1748 or by email at [gerardoquero@co.imperial.ca.us](mailto:gerardoquero@co.imperial.ca.us)

**Gerardo Quero, Planner II:** Read the project into the record.

**Tim Gnibus, Environmental Consultant (via Zoom):** Thank you, I am the Environmental Consultant to the County. I don't have an opinion one way or another, I can say that the opt (operation) site's gentie line connection the height limit is 40 feet in that zone. The applicant does not propose to exceed that height limit. Sometimes you see a variance in front of you a height limit on transmission in towers and lines not the case for this project that would be the only thing I add.

**Chairman Goodsell:** Are you here as well for the second project

**Tim Gribus, Environmental Consultant:** I am, correct

**Chairman Goodsell:** I suppose with Lithium in the area we are going to see more projects like this springing up around the sea?

**Tim Gribus, Environmental Consultant:** They are starting to move out of the agricultural areas a little bit more.

**Chairman Goodsell:** Is there is anyone online or in person that wants to speak in favor of this project or in opposition? Put the question to the panel. Do you have any questions?

**Vice-Chair Logue:** It's kind of interesting that they have more battery storage than generation, which is kind of nice. That's good it will last overnight. I hadn't noticed that on previous project before, interesting.

**Vice-Chair Logue:** I would motion that we find this project consistent with the 1996 Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

**Chairman Goodsell:** Can we get a second.

**Commissioner Zamora:** Second

**Chairman Goodsell:** Roll call vote

Roll Call: Goodsell (yes), Louge (yes), Zamora (yes), Arguelles (yes)

**Chairman Goodsell:** Are you speaking as well on item #2?

**Gerardo Quero, Planner II:** Yes.

2. Public hearing to consider the proposed NorthStar 3 Solar Energy Generation and Battery Storage project for consistency with the Imperial County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. The project is identified as General Plan Amendment #23-0002, Zone Change #23-0002, Conditional Use Permits #23-0007 & #23-0008, which consists of the construction and operation of a 100-megawatt (MW) solar photovoltaic (PV) energy generation facility with a 200-megawatt (MW) battery storage (BESS) component and an on-site transmission line to connect to the Imperial Irrigation District's existing 161kV "L" Line. The proposed project would be located on three privately owned parcels encompassing approximately 585 acres in the northwest portion of the County. The proposed project site is located at 4580 West Highway 86, Westmorland, CA, on properties identified as Assessor's Parcel Numbers 017-350-031-000, 017-350-030-000 and 017-350-027-000; and further described as That Portion of West Half of Section 25; West Portion of West Half of the East Half of Section 25; and Southeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter & the East Half of the Southeast Quarter of Section 25, respectively; Township 11 South, Range 10 East of the San Bernardino Base and Meridian (S.B.B.M.), Latitude 33° 11' 4.5708" N – Longitude -115° 53' 6.4716" W. (ALUC 9-24) [Gerardo A. Quero, Planner II (442) 265-1736, extension 1748 or by email at [gerardoquero@co.imperial.ca.us](mailto:gerardoquero@co.imperial.ca.us)

**Gerardo Quero, Planner II:** Read the project into the record.

**Clerk Grijalva:** Should we open to the public discussion?

**Chairman Goodsell:** I will open it to public discussion anyone want to speak in favor of this project? Anybody opposite? Ok Jerry.

**Chairman Goodsell:** Let's have a motion if you would like.

**Commissioner Arguelles:** I motion that we find this project consistent with the 1996 Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

**Chairman Goodsell:** I second his motion.

Roll Call: Goodsell (yes), Louge (yes), Zamora (yes), Arguelles (yes)

### **NON-ACTION ITEMS:**

**Chairman Goodsell:** Now, for item 6, Non-Action item, we are going to discuss the update of the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan and get into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**Luis Valenzuela, Planner II:** We are going to pick up from the last time where we left off, where we showed you the cover, this cover and this is the cover that you chose. We have Madeline from Coffman Associates who's going to present the ALUC Update plan.

**Consultant Madeline Holliman:** Good evening, Luis, good evening, Commissioners, thank you so much for the opportunity to present to you this evening the progress that we have made on the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Update. As you remember, in April, we began with the Kick-off meeting and since then we have been working through phase (2) of the update. All the items that you see on the screen in blue are what Coffman has been preparing in preparation for the upcoming meeting, which we have scheduled for September. Content that you can expect to see in the plan update: There will be (3) chapters that comprise the bulk of the plan and then a separate appendix for each airport. This is the setup, an outline that we have seen successfully implemented in other counties that we have prepared Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan for and a benefit that you have here, is that your compatibility criteria will be contained in the chapters and then if there is a substantial change to operations or configuration at (1) of the (7) airports, then the appendix associated with that specific airport can be updated. So that you're not having to go back and update the actual chapters of the Plan if you need to do an amendment in the future. Since this is a long-term planning project this is a benefit that we have seen be successful, so that is the outline that we are purposing. In chapter 2 of the Plan Update, you will find that in addition to narrative describing the processes that an applicant can expect to go through for a compatibility review, we also include these graphics so this a useful flow chart, where you can see step by step, steps that an applicant will go through to receive a compatibility determination. Timelines are included in the graphic. We think these flow charts are helpful and will also be an improvement for you. Then we get into chapter (3), which is the heart of your Compatibility Plan, the criteria that you look at when you are evaluating consistency. We use a tabular format which is similar to what you are used to in the current plan. You will see that this table contains (6) zones. These correspond to the 2011 Caltrans Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan planning handbook. Caltrans has really spelled out for counties, how to draw these handbooks zones and includes the rationale for how they are drawn as well as, the criteria for each zone. We have the table here with the (6) zones. In addition to this, we have included a Zone 7 which represents the airport influence area which is the part (77) conical surface for each airport. We also see this as a benefit because you are having all the information in one place instead of having a separate height and air space requirement criteria, separate from the safety zone criteria and as you'll see with the Zone 7 its just related to air space review. You have the California (6) handbook Zones and then your height review area, that's your Zone 7. We see this as an improvement too, it streamlines and puts everything in one place for you. Additional work that we have completed for the Planning Department, we provide comparison exhibits that show you your current zones compared to the 2011 Caltrans recommended zones, so you can quickly visually see what could potentially be different when updating to streamline to the Caltrans handbook zones. What you can expect to see in the exhibit for each airport, which we have prepared for the appendices are these exhibits listed here for each airport, including the 7 safety zones we mentioned previously, as well as we completed noise contours for each airport, we included the part 77 Airspace drawing which is based on the ultimate configuration from the airport. Where do you get the ultimate configuration? It comes from the airport layout plan so we have included the airport layout plans that we have gathered from the various airports as well as there were two airports where an airport layout plan was not provided so our GIS team provided an airport diagram which replicates an airport layout plan and will allow the airport to certify that the existing condition matches the plan future condition since this is a long-term planning project that's required that we use the ultimate condition so all of that is contained on the ALP or the

diagram. Additionally, we were able to make contact with the cities and gather their zoning and general plan plan-use information that's included in the appendix. That just gives you a snapshot of what's going on around the airports today. The final exhibit that you will find in each appendix is the compatibility factors and that is reference material that shows you the data behind how the handbook safety zones are drawn as well as the flight tracks that were used for noise modeling. For the noise modeling, we completed noise modeling for all the airports. This is based on a number of inputs which are described in the appendix. I believe your previous plan probably utilized the outdated FAA model, so we are using the most recent 3F of the aviation environmental design tool which is the FAA approved & published model to model noise for each of the airports. You'll find those inputs in the appendix, as well as the result and just to summarize for you what we found: the noise contours actually remain on airport for all 6 of the civilian airports. What that means for the plan, is that your plan in Chapter 3, will still contain the noise compatibility criteria. However since there are not any off airport land uses subject to 60 CNEL or higher, those criteria won't actually apply around any of the airports however, like we mentioned before with the outline, if there is a substantial change in operations or in the configuration of the airport or anything else that would require an update to the contours, you have all the inputs right there. The contours could be easily updated and then amendments can occur on the Appendix by Appendix basis, So we think that's a great improvement. We have the contours ready for you for those airports. For our next steps, we scheduled a meeting with the Planning staff, we'll invite the Planning Advisory Committee to a meeting on September 26<sup>th</sup> and in that meeting we will have provided the draft materials for review from our stakeholders and we'll get their feedback much like we did in the first meeting, really dig into the details of the plan, get their recommendations, including like I mentioned multiple times, the Caltrans handbook. We do have a member of Caltrans, a representative that was able to attend the first meeting. We expect him to continue to be involved in update process and give his feedback, as well as that same evening we expect to have a public workshop where we invite members of the public to an open-house format meeting. We will have display boards set up and we will just walk through and give members of the public who are interested in the plan, the opportunity to speak with us, the consultants and with the planning staff to get their input as well as their concerns they may have about the plan itself. We did want to invite you. We are very excited to be returning to Imperial County and if any Commissioner members are available that evening and would like to come, we would love to have you there for your support for the plan update. That concludes my presentation for this evening. Thank you again for the opportunity.

**Chairman Goodsell:** Thank you, so how ambitious is that calendar? Are we going to have a new plan before the first quarter's century is over?

**Luis Valenzuela, Planner I:** Yes, if we are lucky.

**Chairman Goodsell:** Good, it would be nice to see a new date on that thing, right? Did you want to share something?

**Vice-Chair Logue:** What time in the evening is the public meeting?

**Luis Valenzuela, Planner II:** From 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. It's going to be here in the Board room. On the 26<sup>th</sup>. On Thursday.

**Chairman Goodsell:** Well, thank you. It's exciting for us, we have been anticipating this for quite some time; changes need to be had. Don't know what the public is going to say but maybe many of us will have something to say. We'll look forward to this whole process and what we can learn from it.

**Consultant Madeline Holliman:** Thank you very much.

**Luis Valenzuela, Planner II:** Thank you, Madeline.

**Chairman Goodsell:** Alright, don't get too giddy guys. When it's going to happen, it's going to happen. If there is nothing else, then we will be adjourned.

**Vice-Chair Logue:** I think Michael might have something.

**Michael Abraham:** I know you guys had a question last meeting, regarding whether or not ALUC Commissioners could be elected officials. The answer is yes, they can be.

**MEETING ADJOURNED.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Minnick", written over a horizontal line.

Jim Minnick, Secretary  
Airport Land Use Commission

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