



# Community Engagement Phase 1 Summary

May 2023

Created For:



Prepared By:

Rick Engineering Company



## Table of Contents

1. Workshop #1 .....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Overview .....	2
1.3 Input Summary .....	4
1.4 Conclusion.....	6
2. Technical Advisory Group Meetings.....	7
3. Environmental Justice Working Group Meeting #1 .....	7
4. Niland Children’s and Families Health Fair Event.....	7
4.1 Themes .....	7
4.2 Conclusion.....	9
5. Online Platform .....	9
6. Emailed Comments .....	10
Appendix A – Workshop #1 Exhibit Images.....	A-1
Appendix B1 – Infrastructure Technical Advisory Group Meeting #1 Summary .....	B1-1
Appendix B2 – Land Use and Development Technical Advisory Group Meeting #1 Summary.....	B2-1
Appendix C – Environmental Justice Working Group Meeting Notes .....	C-1
Appendix D – Niland Children’s and Families Health Fair Images .....	D-1
Appendix E – Online Platform Comments.....	E-1



This document includes a summary of the initial community engagement efforts specifically related to the Lithium Valley Specific Plan and Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR), including the Community Workshop, Technical Advisory Group Meetings, Environmental Justice Working Group Meeting, and the Niland Children’s and Families Health Fair event. The following summaries describe the key themes that emerged from these engagement activities.

## 1. Workshop #1

### 1.1 Background

The first Community Workshop for the Lithium Valley Specific Plan and PEIR was held in-person on Thursday, January 19, 2023, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the auditorium of Calipatria High School at 601 West Main Street, Calipatria, CA.

The first Community Workshop introduced the Lithium Valley Specific Plan to the community, including the project background, purpose, timeline, constraints, and opportunities identified in the Draft Lithium Valley Specific Plan Baseline Report and Infrastructure Assessment. In addition to presenting the draft opportunities and constraints and the next steps of the process, the other main objectives of the workshop were to provide the community with an opportunity to ask questions, provide input on the opportunities and constraints, and raise their concerns.

The workshop save-the-date flyer was posted to the Lithium Valley website, emailed to community leaders, and posted on social media platforms. With the assistance of the Niland Family Resource Center and Calipatria Unified School District, hard copies of the save-the-date flyer were shared with the district’s students and their parents. Attendees were encouraged to RSVP for the event through the Eventbrite website which informed the project team on the amount of materials, refreshments and space needed to accommodate the group. Additionally, it allowed the project team to prepare sufficient live translation services for Spanish-speaking community members.

The introductory presentation was recorded and posted on the project website. For community members who were not able to attend the in-person workshop and for those who wished to provide additional comments afterwards, the workshop materials were posted to the project website in which users could submit a comment. Individuals visiting the website could access the comment submission form to solicit input on the content presented during the workshop. The online community feedback alternative was made publicly available on January 24, 2023. The online comment submission form was available through March 17, 2023.

The website hosts workshop materials such as workshop outreach boards, presentation recordings, links to relevant news publications, and other project background information. The project website also includes a link for community members to sign-up for project updates and review the latest events and analyses conducted by the project team. The project website is available here:

<https://lithiumvalley.imperialcounty.org/>

All input received from the in-person workshop, online platform, and email has been recorded in this Workshop #1 Summary document and appendices, which will be used to inform the next phase of the project process. The next project phase includes the preparation of land use alternatives, which will also be presented to the community for further collaboration on the Lithium Valley Specific Plan.

## 1.2 Overview

The first Community Workshop was organized into three components across the two-hour event period. The first component included a 25-minute overview presentation which introduced the project background, timeline, team and process. This included a brief summary of the draft constraints and opportunities identified through the Baseline Report and Infrastructure Assessment. The second component of the workshop involved a 20-min Q&A period which provided community members with an opportunity to voice their input and ask questions.



*Figure 1 Community Workshop attendees are seated while listening to the overview presentation.*

The open house comprised the remainder of the event's scheduled time and presented an opportunity for community members to learn more and ask about the draft opportunities and constraints identified by the project team. This interactive workshop activity involved seven stations that each addressed a key topic from the Baseline Report and Infrastructure Assessment. The seven open house stations were:

1. Land Use
2. Economics and Jobs
3. Public Services
4. Transportation
5. Infrastructure
6. Environmental
7. Environmental Justice and Social Conditions

Each station was equipped with an outreach board and led by a designated staff facilitator, available to answer questions and receive direct feedback from community members. The outreach boards listed the constraints and opportunities identified by the project team thus far and provided a space for community members to record their comments, voice their concerns and indicate which issues and opportunities may have been overlooked.

Participants were encouraged to visit each station to explore the topics in greater detail. Designated staff facilitators, comprised of County and consultant staff, facilitated conversations, answered questions, and guided community members through the exercise. Participants were provided with pens and sticky notes to contribute to the findings outlined by the outreach boards, whose community input is intended to drive later phases of the project.

Live Spanish translation services were provided via headsets and an in-person translator. Project team members were available toward the end of the workshop to answer individual questions about the project. The workshop formally concluded after that.



*Figure 2 Community Workshop attendees converse with each other and the project team during the open house.*



*Figure 3 Community Workshop attendees converse with each other and the project team during the open house.*

### 1.3 Input Summary

Approximately 91 public comments were received as part of Workshop #1 effort. Of those recorded public comments, two comments were received via email, and one comment was received via the website.

Similar to the station topics, the following comment themes were mentioned most by community members. Comment themes are listed in order of most written comments received.

1. **Local employment and economic opportunity:** Many community members expressed interest in the project's potential for increasing employment and economic opportunity in the County. Residents supported the project's expected contribution to the local workforce through the creation of quality jobs associated with geothermal production and lithium extraction. Individuals were also eager about the prospect for the project to introduce a new source of funding and revenue toward the local economy.
2. **Specialized education and training:** Workshop participants demonstrated support for expanding career and training programs to prepare the local workforce for the emerging renewable and lithium industry. Workforce development programs maximize employment opportunities for residents seeking to grow their technical skills and industry knowledge. On-the-job training programs, including internships, apprenticeships and mature-aged training programs offer opportunities to connect with and learn directly from industry professionals, while attracting talent for the future workforce. Residents encouraged continued collaboration with educational institutions, ranging from higher education to primary education, to develop industry-relevant curriculum, expand STEM programs and inform the community on workforce development opportunities.
3. **Poor air quality:** A common point of discussion involved concerns over poor air quality and proximity to major polluting sources. Dust, particulate matter, and chemicals from



agricultural activities, transportation and the Salton Sea contributed to the area's poor air quality and led to its failure to meet attainment of air quality standards outlined by the federal Clean Air Act. Participants requested transparency from the County in communicating what led to designation as a non-attainment area and steps being taken for regulatory compliance. The community also seeks to understand the expected air pollution levels from the expansion of geothermal and lithium extraction industries in the region.

4. **Limited water supply:** Community members raised concerns over the region's limited freshwater supply and infrastructure to treat and distribute water to the Study Area. Industrial processes associated with geothermal production and lithium extraction require a water source and may be constrained by water availability. Individuals expressed interest in the County's development of a regional water plant, as opposed to private facilities. Others requested improved water treatment facilities for freshwater supply being received from the Alamo River and New River into the Salton Sea.
5. **Viability of the Salton Sea:** The Salton Sea is supplied by the New River and Alamo River, primarily composed of weak agricultural and industrial drainage flows. The rivers are rich in fertilizers and toxic chemicals from agricultural and industrial runoff. Introduction of these pollutants have led to a series of environmental problems which have disrupted recreational activities in the Salton Sea. Beside water quality concerns, diminishing water levels and exposed lakebed have led to increased air pollution, which has had major public health impacts on the Salton community.
6. **Evaluation of public health impacts:** Participants highlighted the importance of conducting a Comprehensive Health Risk Assessment and Impact Assessment to evaluate the potential health effects of the project on the County population. Many were interested in a full toxicology report to determine toxins present, acceptable levels and human health impacts from geothermal production and lithium extraction. Various individuals also communicated that they would like transparency with the process, data gathering, participation and outreach for Comprehensive Health Risk Assessment and Impact Assessment. Individuals also inquired about occupational hazards to workers in the industry who are subject to higher rates of exposure.
7. **Concern for geologic hazards:** Community members expressed concern over the potential environmental impacts from the industrial processes necessary for geothermal production and lithium extraction, being increased seismic activity and elevated air pollution levels.
8. **Provision of essential public services:** Several community members described ongoing challenges due to the high existing demand on essential public services. Fire, police protection and medical care services were all noted as having been under intense strain in recent years. Residents noted that an expansion of services and infrastructure to prepare for growing demand is necessary for the project.
9. **Availability and access to community resources:** Community members described their aspiration for the project to improve and expand the availability and access to community resources. Community resources, such as a shelters, child care centers, health clinics and hydration centers, can serve to significantly improve quality of life for residents by increasing access to publicly funded services and facilities.



10. **Affordable housing:** As a County with high unemployment rates, low median income and high poverty rates compared to the rest of the state, community members were very motivated for the project to introduce new, affordable housing developments to accommodate for the future workforce and growing residential population.
11. **Consultation with indigenous communities:** Community members voiced concerns over the project's proximity to tribal lands and sensitive cultural resources. Individuals requested the inclusion of indigenous communities in all community outreach and stakeholder engagement activities.
12. **Existing conditions of the transportation network:** Individuals reflected on the current state of the transportation system, noting that certain roadways in the Study Area require repaving, several bridges are made of wood and that there is a lack of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations throughout the County.

## 1.4 Conclusion

In summary, the approximately 91 public comments received from Workshop #1 provide an overall snapshot of the opportunities, constraints, considerations, and priorities identified by the community.

The public input provided from Workshop #1 demonstrated the community's collective interest in being involved in the planning, outreach and implementation of the project. Community members provided comments on a variety of topics, highlighting the economy and employment, the environment, environmental justice and social conditions, public services, and infrastructure.

Feedback covered a broad range of topics, however community members shared similar sentiments regarding potential public health impacts when expanding the region's geothermal production and lithium extraction industry. Several participants stressed the importance for the project not to exacerbate the ongoing environmental challenges being experienced by residents due to air and water pollution.

The community expressed frustration that the Salton Sea has experienced degraded air and water pollution, consequential to human health and recreational interest in the area.

Despite concerns with the project's potential impacts, community members also shared a cautious optimism for the project's potential to attract economic prosperity to the region. The prospect of quality, high-paying jobs, infrastructure improvements and expansion of public services and community resources all drew positive feedback from the workshop. The group demonstrated overwhelming support for the development of early career programs, education and training opportunities for the local community to make the most of an emerging industry.

Participants encouraged the County's continued engagement and collaboration with the community and environmental justice groups to remain involved in future steps of the planning process. They advocated for trust, transparency, and coordination with stakeholder groups to drive policy development. While the input gathered covered a broad range of topics, community members seemed generally aligned in their vision for what they want to see from the project.





## 2. Technical Advisory Group Meetings

As part of the community engagement strategy for the Lithium Valley Specific Plan and PEIR, two technical advisory groups were established. One technical advisory group (TAG) is specific to agencies and authorities related to infrastructure, and the other TAG is specific to land use and development agencies and interested parties. These TAGs will meet three (3) times each throughout the project process to discuss and evaluate various project topics and milestones.

On January 18, 2023, the inaugural TAG meetings were held at the Imperial County Administrative office. The meetings were held in a hybrid format with the option for TAG members to attend the meeting via Zoom. The meetings were hosted by the Imperial County Planning Department and the Department of Public Works and facilitated by Brian Mooney and Shannon Baer of RICK Planning + Design, and Matt Valerio of Dudek.

For the themes heard at the inaugural Infrastructure TAG Meeting, see **Appendix B1**. For themes heard at the inaugural Land Use and Development TAG Meeting, see **Appendix B2**.

## 3. Environmental Justice Working Group Meeting #1

On January 11, 2023, the Project Team held the inaugural Environmental Justice Working Group Meeting. The participants of the Environmental Justice (EJ) Working Group include representatives from Community-Based Organizations, Advocacy Groups, agencies, and educational organizations.

The meeting prefaced with a presentation to introduce the Project Team, the Project scope, and the purpose of the working group. The meeting then opened to questions and answers about the project and the format of this group moving forward. Meeting notes from the January 11<sup>th</sup> meeting are included as **Appendix C**, EJ Working Group Meeting Notes.

## 4. Niland Children's and Families Health Fair Event

On March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, between 1:30 - 3:00 p.m., Grace Smith Elementary School hosted the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Niland Children's and Families Health Fair. The event provided students, parents and attendees with a variety of opportunities to engage with local organizations, visit informational booths, and participate in community-centric activities. The Lithium Valley project team hosted a table, providing informational Lithium Valley Specific Plan and PEIR brochures and offered attendees the chance to participate in a brief activity to share their experience in the community. The activity was intended to inform community members of the project and gather their input on community benefits they'd like to see implemented in the Study Area. See **Appendix D**, Niland Children's and Families Health Fair Images, for a series of photos captured at the event, with a brief description of each.

### 4.1 Themes

Following a brief informational dialogue regarding the project, participants were invited to pick images of a variety of community amenities and quality of life components to contribute to the overall benefits of the Lithium Valley Specific Plan. Participants were also encouraged to draw or



write about additional community benefits they would like to see offered with the Specific Plan. The following themes were gathered from participant's comments and contributions, which are listed in order of most comments received:

1. **High need for development of community parks:** Many participants expressed support for the Specific Plan to include the development of new, high-quality parks and recreational facilities, which residents noted were lacking in the study area and surrounding communities.
2. **Expansion of employment opportunities and economic growth:** Upon hearing of the project's intention to expand the renewable energy and lithium industry in the County, several participants were interested in the introduction of long-term, quality job opportunities to the community. Residents noted that employment opportunities were limited, which has led to financial hardship in the community. They were galvanized by the potential for investment in the community to improve the quality of life for residents.
3. **Development of active transportation network infrastructure:** Participants were interested in the design and expansion of active transportation infrastructure for cyclists, pedestrians and residents who travel by wheelchair. Residents noted the lack of complete, paved, and illuminated sidewalks and bicycle routes throughout the County. They advocated for additional transit options and safer routes for residents commuting to work and school by foot. Additionally, additional shade was requested for active mobility users throughout the community to protect themselves during the hot summer months.
4. **Availability of affordable, high-quality housing:** Residents demonstrated interest in the development of high-quality, affordable housing in the Study Area. This included a variety of housing types, including multi-family, high density developments.
5. **Inclusion of art and cultural sites in the Specific Plan Study Area:** Several of the activity participants were excited about the opportunity for the Specific Plan to include art and cultural sites that celebrate the history and diversity of Imperial County. The area's proximity to the popular visitor attraction, Salvation Mountain, enthused several participants who expressed their interest in the site's appeal and financial accessibility.
6. **Restoration of the Salton Sea:** Many participants were interested in the Study Area's proximity to the Salton Sea and potential for the project to contribute to restorative efforts which would enhance recreational opportunities, improve air and water quality and protect wildlife. The CalEnviroScreen map presented on the board intrigued several participants, who varied in their understanding of the environmental challenges in the area due to air and water quality concerns. There was resounding support for Salton Sea Restoration to mitigate these public health issues and improve the quality of life for residents.
7. **Stakeholder engagement:** A representative requested several agencies and municipal departments to be involved in the development of the Specific Plan. These are listed in the final image in Appendix D, Niland Children's and Families Health Fair Event Images.
8. **Preservation of Imperial County's agricultural industry:** One participant shared their family's involvement in agriculture and encouraged it to be supported by the project.



## 4.2 Conclusion

The event provided the Project Team with an opportunity to engage with a variety of community members, including children, students, parents, and residents. Attendees visiting the booth demonstrated varied levels of understanding and interest in the project, providing an opportunity for residents who were first learning of it, to become involved.

Overall, participants were enthused for the project to support the development of community parks and recreational facilities in the Study Area, restoring the Salton Sea, and improving active transportation and mobility access in the community. The group expressed support for the project's ability to contribute to job creation and economic growth through expansion of the renewable energy and lithium industry in the Study Area. In summary, the group of participants collectively advocated for the health, well-being and safety of the community to be advanced and preserved by the project.

As residents become more informed and involved in the project, Community Engagement Phase 2 should continue to provide opportunities for the public to provide their input, given their shared experience living in the Study Area. As noted by a participant, the project team's attendance to community pop-up events, provides an opportunity for residents who are typically unable to attend formal Community Workshops to participate. The non-formal setting also encourages residents to express honesty in their responses, ask more informative questions and learn of the more formal outreach opportunities being held in the future.

## 5. Online Platform

For the community members who were not able to attend the in-person workshop and for those who wished to provide additional comments after the workshop, a virtual outreach effort was provided through comment submittal platform to solicit input on the Workshop #1 content. The comment period went from February 3, 2023 to March 17, 2023. The online platform received only one comment, as shown in **Appendix E**, Online Platform Comments.

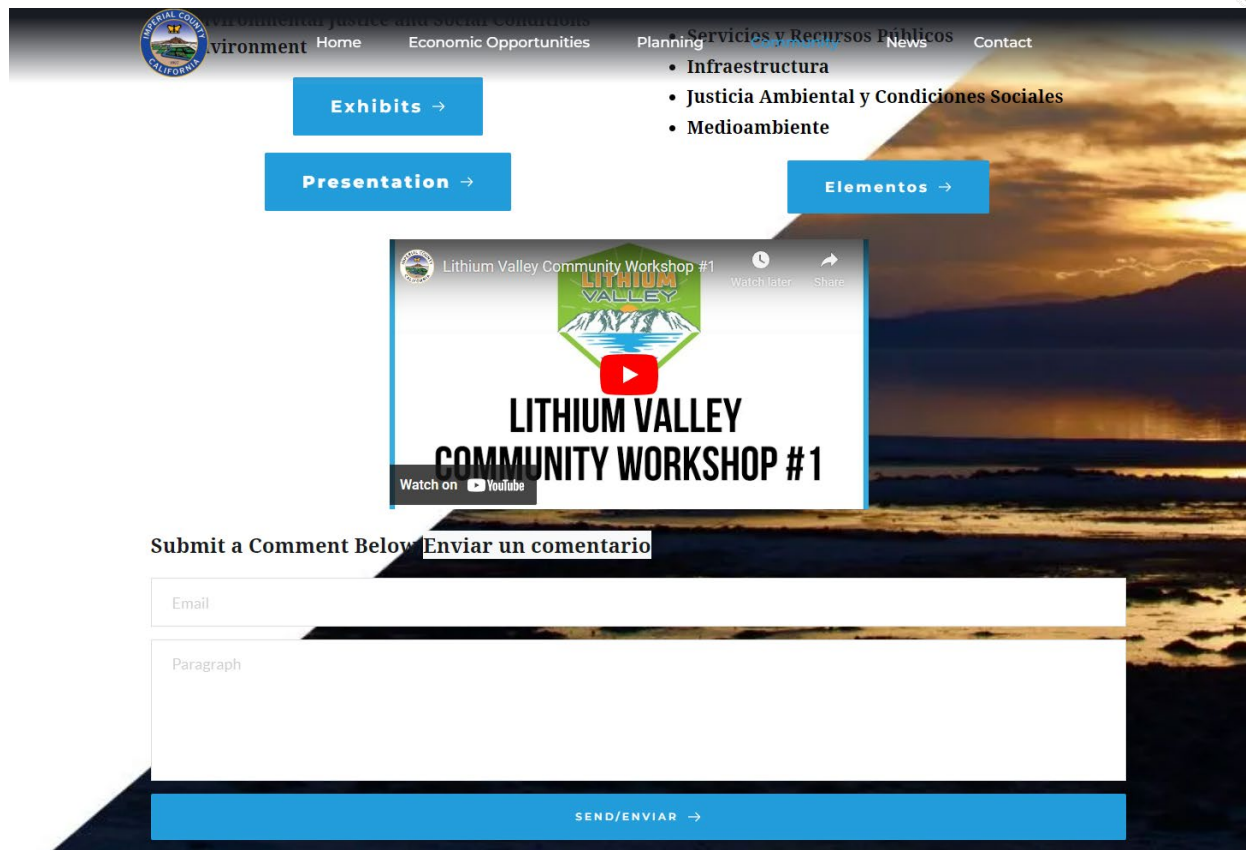


Figure 4 Imperial County's Lithium Valley Community Workshop page with the ability to submit comments.

## 6. Emailed Comments

Two additional public comments were received by County staff via email prior to the close of the public comment period. These comments were from individuals that wanted to know if there would be an option to join the workshop virtually, or how they could view the workshop presentation after the workshop.



# Appendix A Workshop Exhibit Images

May 2023




Created For:



Prepared By:

Rick Engineering Company

# ECONOMICS & JOBS

## Constraints

- Emerging industries require specialized training and education.
- Lack of housing and infrastructure near areas of potential job opportunities.
- Emerging industries can choose to pursue other states with these resources.
- Raw materials for manufacturing are susceptible to supply chain issues.
- Limited water supply for emerging industries.

What are we missing?

Will we be investing in sectors more difficult to train for? (e.g. lithium extraction)

Technical Training Certification need to start now!

When will this happen in Bannock?

## Opportunities

- Nation's largest potential deposits of lithium.
- Renewable energy resources and lithium extraction can expand the quantity and quality of employment across Imperial County.
- Educational institutions can benefit by offering tailored training programs for young people.
- Potential development of lithium battery manufacturing operations to provide necessary supply chain support.

What are we missing?

We need to know the jobs & the skills needed

What type of jobs will be available?  
High school diploma, more Education needed

STEM at HS + JH + Elementary

Develop incubator pilot source for related & integrated business develop

pre-emptive programs


Elective courses (i.e. shop classes) at local high schools

existing RV Park for workforce + travel trailers

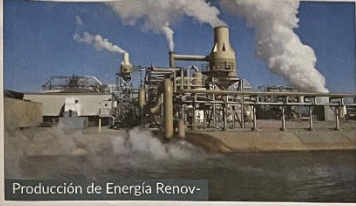
career fair outreach @ high schools

possibly 90 jobs for lithium extraction


Training available in Nevada or set up a facility in Imperial County




# ECONOMIA Y EMPLEO



Producción de Energía Renov-



Industrias Emergentes



Principales Empleadores

## Limitantes

- Las industrias emergentes requieren capacitación y educación especializada.
- Falta alojamiento y infraestructura cerca de áreas de oportunidades potenciales de trabajo.
- Las industrias emergentes pueden elegir otros estados con estos recursos.
- Las materias primas para la fabricación son susceptibles a problemas en la cadena de suministro.
- Agua limitado para industrias emergentes.

¿Qué nos hace falta?

Hermano Grants  
Para estudiantes  
de escuelas para  
entender recursos!

Información sobre  
oportunidades de  
trabajo es muy  
limitada.


BUS TRABAJO PARA  
TECHNICAL (electricity,  
solar, wind, geothermal, etc)  
SE USA O OCUPIA?  
¿VA A SER UNO DE LOS  
DE EMPLEADOS?

## Oportunidades


- La area tiene los depósitos potenciales de litio más grandes del país.
- Los recursos de energía renovable y la extracción de litio pueden expandir la cantidad y la calidad del empleo en todo el Condado de Imperial.
- Las instituciones educativas pueden beneficiarse ofreciendo programas de capacitación personalizados para jóvenes.
- Desarrollo potencial de las operaciones de fabricación de baterías de litio para proporcionar el apoyo necesario a la cadena de suministro.

¿Qué nos hace falta?


Trabajos deben  
ofrecer salarios  
competitivos a los  
jóvenes que se  
gananciales




# ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS



Socioeconomics



Public Health Concerns



Disadvantaged Communities

### Constraints

- Public data may be skewed without accounting for undocumented workers
- Population declines indicate out-migration
- Agriculture jobs are seasonal, thus a fluctuating workforce
- Social barriers to resources (e.g. language, income, broadband)
- Public health concerns affecting disadvantaged communities at higher rates

### Opportunities

- Designated "Disadvantaged Communities" may receive higher priority of investment
- High percentage of population at prime-working age
- Funds for restoration of Salton Sea and neighboring communities to lessen public health impacts
- Education programs to feed into highly-skilled jobs

#### What are we missing?

Where will people go in ~~the~~ dust storm?

offer job opportunities to young people

education and specialized spelled training

Can you define what environmental justice means to you? How will this be applied to lithium developments in Imperial valley?

Create business enterprise zone to incentivize businesses to build.

#### What are we missing?

Non Compliance w/ Clean Water Act

Exposure days with toxic chemicals, Unregulated Orphan Etc

Non attainment for Clean Air Act

Recognition of historic injustice in IV

Build trust w/ community. Deduct from community groups

Describe occupational hazards for workers in lithium development

Implementing projects in the valley that have low impact on the environment @ communities, water, & lithium


Principles of environmental justice need to be defined explicitly

Carve time to ensure EPA Plan has community oversight

We need a comprehensive regional health assessment to account for baseline conditions


With tax breaks, ensure at least 30% is for health and environmental condition research

Commitments for ~~non-industry~~ <sup>impairing</sup> baseline health conditions





# JUSTICIA AMBIENTAL Y CONDICIONES SOCIALES



**Limitantes**

- Información pública puede estar sesgado sin la participación de personas indocumentadas
- La disminución de la población al rededor al area de estudio indica emigración
- Los trabajos agrícolas son estacionales, resultando en fluctuaciones en la fuerza laboral
- Barreras sociales a los recursos (por ejemplo, idioma, ingresos, y acceso a tecnología)
- Problemas de salud pública que afecta comunidades desfavorecidas a tasas más altas


¿Qué nos hace falta?

**Oportunidades**


- Areas designado como "Disadvantaged Communities" reciben prioridad para prioridad de inversión
- Alto porcentaje de población esta en edad de trabajar
- Fondos para la restauración de Salton Sea para disminuir los impactos en la salud pública
- Programas educativos disponibles para alimentar trabajos requiriendo calificados elevados

¿Qué nos hace falta?


# ENVIRONMENT




Air Quality



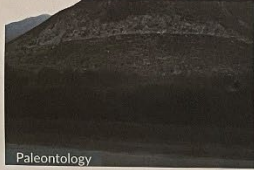
Hydrology




Geology




Biology



Paleontology



Noise



Water Quality

## Constraints

- The Salton Sea Air Basin is designated as a nonattainment area for pollutants such as O3 and PM10
- Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs) shall be cited at least 1,000 feet from sensitive receptors
- The dry Salton Sea lakebed contains fugitive dust and other toxics related to dust at la playa and should be avoided
- Federally and State-regulated wetlands and riparian communities (i.e. ayas, New River, Alamo River)
- Potential habitat for special-status species
- Geologic fault activity
- Concern for subsidence and seismicity with geothermal wells and lithium extraction
- Future development would need to be consistent with Land Use Noise Compatibility guidelines for Imperial County and Calipatria
- Formerly agricultural soil may have residual concentrations of pesticides

What are we missing?

## Opportunities

- A Health Risk Assessment as well as a Health Impact Assessment will help inform policy development and ways to minimize and improve health for nearby residents and sensitive receptors
- Further studies of proposed development
- Programmatic mitigation that's inclusive of all foreseeable impacts
- Strict monitoring of subsidence and groundwater management
- Develop proper health and safety soil management procedures for future grading activities where there are concentrations of pesticides in the soil

What are we missing?

*Do we have a groundwater model when the basin is dry?*

*How can this development not further degrade a nonattainment area?*

*When can the Community Trust have a presence in on pilot projects?*

*Question - Does lithium extraction create the same air quality in this area as well?*

*What will happen with the data that is collected for the health assessments?*

*Who will be responsible for conducting the assessments & how will results be reported?*

*DO NO HARM!*

*Water + Air Monitoring for Gases, Metals & PM10 & PM2.5*

*Exposed plays w/ toxic chemicals - Chemical release from Geothermal & Lithium Extraction*

*LACK of Fresh water*

*Question as to worker safety and protection from dust for workers at the facilities.*

*Comments Participatory Processes w/ assessment*

*Non Compliance w/ Clean Water Act*

*Non Compliance with Clean Air Act*

*Collaboration with the Salton Sea Management Program*

*Chemicals being used - Health concerns*

*Health Concerns both community workers and factory workers*

*I've found people or stepped concerned about community concerns in Salton Sea region w/ small dust coming from the sea*

*Transparency w/ nonattainment status & steps*

*When did IV get designated as nonattainment?*

*What steps does the county take to address nonattainment status?*

*LITHIUM VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN*


# MEDIOAMBIENTE




Cultura



Hidrología



Geología



Biología



Calidad del Aire



Ruido



Calidad del Agua

## Limitantes

- La cuenca de aire de Salton Sea está designada como un área de incumplimiento para contaminantes como O<sub>3</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>.
- Los contaminantes tóxicos del aire (TAC) se citarán al menos a 1,000 pies de los receptores sensibles.
- El lecho seco del Salton Sea contiene polvo fugitivo y otros tóxicos relacionados con el polvo de la playa que se deben evitar.
- Humedales regulados federal y estatalmente y comunidades ribereñas (es decir, playas, New River, Alamo River)
- Hábitat potencial para especies de estatus especial
- Actividad de falla geológica
- Preocupación por hundimiento y sismicidad con pozos geotérmicos y extracción de litio
- El desarrollo futuro tendría que ser consistente con las pautas de Compatibilidad con el Ruido y Usos de Terreno para el Condado de Imperial y Calipatria.
- El suelo anteriormente agrícola puede tener concentraciones residuales de pesticidas.

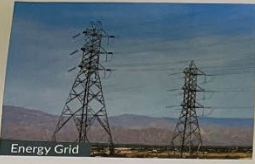
¿Qué nos hace falta?

## Oportunidades

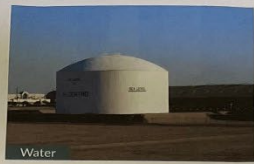
- Una Evaluación de Riesgos para la Salud y una Evaluación del Impacto en la Salud, ayudará a informar el desarrollo de políticas y ayudará a identificar las formas de mejorar la salud de los residentes cercanos y los receptores sensibles.
- Estudios adicionales del desarrollo propuesto
- Mitigación programática que incluye todos los impactos previsibles
- Supervisión estricta del hundimiento y la gestión de las aguas subterráneas
- Desarrollar procedimientos adecuados para salud y manejo del suelo para futuras actividades de nivelación donde hay concentraciones de pesticidas en el suelo.

¿Qué nos hace falta?


# INFRASTRUCTURE




Energy Grid



Water



Telecommunications



Wastewater

### Constraints

- Existing energy grid had lower voltage transmission lines through the Study Area
- Minimal telecommunication infrastructure in the Study Area
- Lack of stormwater infrastructure
- Wide 100-year floodplain for Alamo and New River
- Water supply availability is limited

What are we missing?

*Using the Bombay...*

*Regional Water Plant as opposed to Bombay*

*What will happen to Bombay?*

*Projects for improving quality of life - recreation centers - health clubs - tennis courts*

*Improve Transportation - ADA spaces - Green Areas*

### Opportunities

- Expand and upgrade transmission lines as future development occurs
- Utilize existing utility structures for telecommunication facilities
- Create program for new stormwater infrastructure
- Increase peak flow to Salton Sea
- Water quality improvements to Alamo River through restoration and water quality management plans
- Create policies for proposed land uses to conserve water usage

What are we missing?

*Public Regional Water Plant would be an opportunity*

*Who will fund the projects noted in the opportunities?*

*Who will construct & oversee these projects?*

*Funding for disinfection facilities from Boulder to Salton Sea*

*Noncompliance of Clean Water Act For Alamo & New River*

*Build Regional Water Plant*

**INFRAESTRUCTURA**

Red de Energía, Agua, Canales, Aguas Residuales

**Limitantes**

- La red de energía existente tenía líneas de transmisión de menor voltaje a través del Área de Estudio.
- Infraestructura mínima de telecomunicaciones en el Área de Estudio
- Falta de infraestructura de aguas pluviales
- Amplia llanura aluvial de 100 años para Alamo y New River
- El suministro de agua es limitada.

¿Qué nos hace falta?

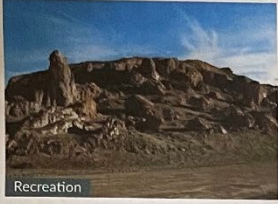
*Will infrastructure updates go beyond Lithium development? Or will the sole purpose of investment be for Lithium development?*

**Oportunidades**


- Expandir y actualizar las líneas de transmisión cuando empieza el desarrollo futuro
- Utilizar las estructuras de servicios públicos existentes para las instalaciones de telecomunicaciones
- Crear programa para nueva infraestructura de aguas pluviales
- Aumentar el caudal máximo al Salton Sea
- Mejoras al Río Alamo con planes para restaurar y gestionar la calidad del agua
- Crear políticas para los usos de la tierra propuestos para conservar el uso del agua

¿Qué nos hace falta?


# LAND USE




Recreation



Agriculture



Government/Public



Land Ownership

## Constraints

- Compliance with Airport Land Use Compatibility.
- Infrastructure and utility land uses are limited to developed areas.
- Land use compatibility concerns between industrial and recreation, residential, or wildlife habitat.
- Government compliance for environmentally sensitive lands.

What are we missing?

What will happen to Spa Road, Combs & Range Road?

Recognition of history instead of colonialism + land

Inclusion of indigenous communities

Water infrastructure - Sensors Infrastructure

How are we missing in medical infrastructure

How will the project address the relation of water flowing into the sea?

## Opportunities

- The Known Geothermal Resource Area will support site selection for renewable resource land uses.
- Maintaining nearby existing residential land uses and expand housing developments to support a future workforce population.
- Vacant and underutilized parcels offer land availability supportive of renewable energy and workforce opportunities.

What are we missing?


Will we include acknowledgment of the amount of Sacred Lake Cabule you are on Cabule land?

Respect tribal land + resources

Does Quechan tribe hold any parcels of the areas?

Will Land Use be changed? How long does it take?

Applicants must pay attention for mineral deposits



**USO DE TERRENO**

Recreación    Agricultura    Gobierno/Público    Propiedad de la Tierra

### Limitantes

- Compatibilidad con el uso de terreno dirigido para aeropuertos
- La infraestructura y los usos de terreno para servicios públicos se limitan a las áreas desarrolladas.
- Preocupaciones sobre intereses industrial y conflictos con usos de terreno para recreación, residencial o vida silvestre
- Cumplimiento del gobierno para tierras sensibles al ambiente

¿Qué nos hace falta?

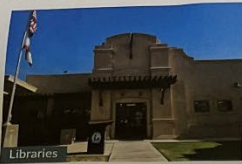
### Oportunidades

- El Área de Recursos Geotérmicos Conocidos apoyará la selección de sitios para usos de terreno intestado para la extracción de energía renovable.
- Manteniendo usos de terreno residenciales y expandiendo los desarrollos de viviendas para apoyar una población de trabajadores en la futura.
- Las parcelas vacantes y subutilizadas ofrecen disponibilidad de tierra que respalda la energía renovable y las oportunidades laborales.


¿Qué nos hace falta?

LIT

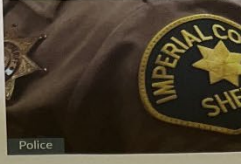
# PUBLIC SERVICES




Libraries



Fire Department



Police



Community Services

## Constraints

- Lack of existing infrastructure to provide public services, such as water for fire protection.
- Expanding services requires public funding sources.
- A growing population and workforce would put stress on existing facilities and may cause response times to suffer.

What are we missing?

Where will water supply be coming from?

Health or emergency urgent care limitations

County  
↓  
Local Fire public safety needed

Can you explicitly define public service? Will the investment include medical infrastructure? We are facing a close crisis of the potential closing of ECRMC.

Will you be investing in medical infrastructure as an aggregate? Both of the IV's hospitals have less than a C rating.

Where is Bombay Tonight?

## Opportunities

- Effective distribution of information to improve the community's access to public services and resources.
- Continuing agreements between city departments, special districts and the County to provide police and fire protection support.
- Meet or improve upon performance standards for emergency response time through effective training and staff recruitment.
- Target state and local funding towards educational improvements and expansion of available educational resources and facilities.
- Leverage Development Impact Fees to ensure new developments can connect with existing utility infrastructure and are provided the same standard of living to residents in an incorporated area.

What are we missing?

Support for Learning Centers and Child Care resources

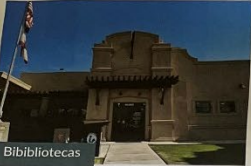
How accessible will these investments be?

Hospitals  
Visitor Care Needed


LITHIUM VALLEY VISITORS/INFO CENTER




# SERVICIOS PÚBLICOS




Bibliotecas



Protección contra Incendios



Policía



Servicios Comunitarios

### Limitantes

- Falta de infraestructura existente para servicios públicos, como agua para protección contra incendios.
- La expansión de los servicios requiere fuentes de financiamiento público.
- Una población y una fuerza laboral en crecimiento ejercerían presión sobre las instalaciones existentes y podrían causar que los tiempos de respuesta se bajen


¿Qué nos hace falta?

### Oportunidades


- Distribución efectiva de información para mejorar el acceso de la comunidad a los servicios y recursos públicos.
- Manteniendo acuerdos con departamentos de la ciudad, los distritos especiales y el Condado para brindar apoyo policial y de protección contra incendios.
- Cumpla o mejore los estándares de desempeño para el tiempo de respuesta de emergencia con entrenamiento y reclutamiento efectivo de trabajadores
- Dirigiendo los fondos estatales y locales para mejorar educación y expandir los recursos y facilidades educativos
- Aprovechar las tarifas de impacto de desarrollo para garantizar que los nuevos desarrollos puedan conectarse con la infraestructura de servicios públicos existente y que reciben el mismo nivel de vida a los residentes en un área incorporada.

¿Qué nos hace falta?


# TRANSPORTATION




Airports




Trains



Roads



Bridges



Goods Movement

### Constraints

- The majority of existing roads are currently unpaved, limiting development without significant improvement costs.
- Current pavement conditions are fair to poor on the majority of paved roads.
- Roadways may be too narrow for two-way heavy truck traffic.
- Bridges across the Alamo River are limited to only Sinclair Road.
- Most of the existing bridges in the Study Area would need to be removed and rebuilt to improve operations.
- Bus transit service typically exceeds one hour throughout the day.
- Imperial County Airport primary use is general aviation, military, and small-scale air cargo for FedEx and UPS
- No local air traffic control for Imperial County Airport
- Union Pacific Railroad has their own policies for new industrial development

What are we missing?

### Opportunities

- There is an extensive roadway network within the Specific Plan boundary, in a grid pattern.
- Existing traffic volumes in the Specific Plan study area are relatively low, and there is sufficient capacity on the existing roadways to accommodate additional traffic from new development.
- Federal funding is secured to replace the Brandt Road bridge over the Alamo River with a new single-span bridge.
- Provide additional bus stops within the Study Area where new development may occur.
- Opportunity for rail connection south of Niland Junction for possible industrial or manufacturing uses
- Expand Imperial County Airport for larger-scale air cargo capabilities

What are we missing?

Road ways will need to be constantly resurfaced


As we prepare for Lithium Valley to transition Imperial County will we be addressing the 100 of 177 bridges in Imperial County that are made out of wood?

Prioritize accessibility of underserved community at all projects

EV CHARGING STATIONS  
Build Trip up

Why not expand Broadway Airport to handle larger aircraft & cargo?  
Close to Lithium Site

What about Bombay?  
Meetings are at the same day 3 times




# TRANSPORTACIÓN



Aeropuertos




Trenes



Carreteras



Puentes



Movimiento de Mercancías

## Limitantes

- La mayoría de las carreteras actualmente no están pavimentadas, limitando desarrollo sin costos de mejora significativos.
- Las condiciones actuales del pavimento son pasable o malas en la mayoría de las carreteras pavimentadas.
- Las carreteras pueden ser demasiado angostas para el tráfico de camiones.
- Los puentes que cruzan el Río Álamo se limitan solo a Sinclair Road.
- La mayoría de los puentes en el área de estudio del Plan Específico tendrían que ser removidos y reconstruidos para mejorar las operaciones.
- El servicio de tránsito de autobuses generalmente excede una hora durante todo el día.
- El uso principal del Aeropuerto del Condado de Imperial es la aviación general, militar y carga aérea a pequeña escala para FedEx y UPS.
- No hay control de tráfico aéreo local para el Aeropuerto del Condado de Imperial.
- Union Pacific Railroad tiene sus propias políticas para nuevos desarrollos industriales.

¿Qué nos hace falta?

## Oportunidades

- Hay una extensa red de carreteras dentro de los límites del Plan Específico, en un patrón de cuadrícula.
- Los volúmenes de tráfico existentes en el área de estudio del Plan Específico son relativamente bajos y hay suficiente capacidad en las carreteras existentes para acomodar el tráfico adicional de nuevo desarrollos.
- Fondos federales para reemplazar el puente de Brandt Road sobre el Río Álamo con un nuevo puente de un solo tramo.
- Proporcionar paradas de autobús adicionales dentro del área del Plan Específico donde pueda ocurrir un nuevo desarrollo.
- Oportunidad de conexión ferroviaria al sur de Niland Junction para posible usos industriales o de fabricación
- Expandir el Aeropuerto del Condado de Imperial para capacidades de carga aérea a mayor escala.

¿Qué nos hace falta?





# Appendix B1 Infrastructure Technical Advisory Group Meeting #1 Summary

May 2023

Created For:



Prepared By:

RICK Engineering Company

## MEMORANDUM

Date: February 1, 2023

To: Jim Minnick, Planning Director, Imperial County

From: Brian Mooney, FAICP, Planning Director, RICK Planning + Design Division

Project: Lithium Valley Specific Plan & Programmatic Environmental Impact Report

Subject: Infrastructure Technical Advisory Group Meeting #1 Summary, January 18, 2023

---

### Background

On January 18, 2023, the inaugural Infrastructure Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting was held at the Imperial County Administrative office at 2pm. The meeting was held as a hybrid format with the option for TAG members to attend the meeting via Zoom. The meeting was hosted by the Imperial County Planning Department and the Department of Public Works. The meeting was facilitated by Brian Mooney and Shannon Baer of RICK Planning + Design, and Matt Valerio of Dudek. The following summary outlines the discussion points communicated at the meeting.

#### 1. Present Infrastructure TAG Member Introductions

Paula Grath, LAFCO  
Jurg Heuberger, LAFCO  
Jamie Asbury, IID  
Jeff Enz, IVC/IVTelecom  
David Salgado, SCAG  
Francisco Olemdo, ICDPW  
Zack Bradford, CEC  
Daphne Molin, CEC  
David Godsey, Golden State Water  
David Aguirre, Imperial County Transportation Commission  
Roger Sanchez, Caltrans  
Mark McCumsey, Caltrans  
Charlie LeCourtois, Caltrans  
Sandy Vasquez, Caltrans

#### 2. Presentation from Project Team (see presentation for content)

- a. Project Background
- b. Project Process
- c. Additional opportunities to provide feedback and input

- d. Infrastructure existing conditions
  - i. Electricity and Energy Grid
  - ii. Airports
  - iii. Roads and Bridges
  - iv. Railroads
  - v. Hydraulics
  - vi. Water and Wastewater

### 3. Open Discussion

- a. The rationale for the study boundary and defining the 10,000-acre portion and the 50,000 acre area is TBD.
- b. Concern for water availability and allocation for the project – consult Tina Shields, Michael Pacheco, Justina Gamboa-Arce, with IID water department for that discussion.
  - i. There is an interim water supply policy that is currently insufficient for existing uses.
  - ii. Think about how we can conserve water with these land uses and how we can reuse and recycle water for such purposes.
- c. Be aware that the Army Corps of Engineers is updating their flood zones around the Salton Sea.
- d. SCAG is preparing next Regional Transit Plan (RTP), to be approved in 2024. Make sure any recommended improvements get incorporated into the RTP to be eligible for funding.
- e. The existing generator tie lines out there are for retail customers, including geothermal and hydrogen. There is development of an additional transmission line into the Salton Sea area into the Edison system. IID will provide the County what they can.
  - i. Development pays for development, meaning transmission upgrades come one at a time as things get constructed. If IID were to build transmission lines themselves, it would be costly to rate payers.
- f. Imperial Valley Telecommunications Authority (IVTA) can only provide service to public agencies.
  - i. Consider a special district for the area.
- g. IID utility poles are available for private telecommunication infrastructures.
- h. Would be good to understand the existing private telecommunication coverage out there.
- i. Caltrans has concerns regarding safety for trucks on narrow and unpaved roads.
  - i. Caltrans will defer to the County for LOS or VMT based analysis.



# Appendix B2 Land Use and Development Technical Advisory Group Meeting #1 Summary

May 2023

Created For:



Prepared By:

RICK Engineering Company

## MEMORANDUM

Date: February 1, 2023

To: Jim Minnick, Planning Director, Imperial County

From: Brian Mooney, FAICP, Planning Director, RICK Planning + Design Division

Project: Lithium Valley Specific Plan & Programmatic Environmental Impact Report

Subject: Land Use & Development Technical Advisory Group Meeting #1 Summary, January 18, 2023

---

### Background

On January 18, 2023, the inaugural Land Use & Development Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting was held at the Imperial County Administrative office at 4pm. The meeting was held as a hybrid format with the option for TAG members to attend the meeting via Zoom. The meeting was hosted by the Imperial County Planning Department and the Department of Public Works. The meeting was facilitated by Brian Mooney and Shannon Baer of RICK Planning + Design, and Matt Valerio of Dudek. The following summary outlines the discussion points communicated at the meeting.

#### 1. Present Land Use & Development TAG Member Introductions

Laura Cervantes, IID Real Estate  
Debbie Salas-Rico, Niland Chamber of Commerce  
Mariela Moran, Controlled Thermal Resources  
Chris Froelich, North End Action Council  
Patrick O'Dowd, Salton Sea Authority  
Frank Ruiz, Salton Sea Authority  
Bari Bean, BHE Renewables  
Mark Gran, Calenergy/ BHE Renewables  
Rand Center, NAVFAC  
Vanessa Perez, State Lands Commission  
Blaise Boyle, Viridos  
Tyler Salcido, City of Brawley  
Romualdo Medina, City of Calipatria  
Sophie Parker, The Nature Conservancy  
Felicia Sirchia, USFW  
Jonathan Shore, National Fish and Wildlife Services, Sonny Bono Salton Sea National Wildlife  
Refuge  
Magdalena Rodriguez, California Department of Fish and Wildlife



Shelby Trimm, COLAB  
Howard Elmore, Vail Ranches

## 2. Presentation from Project Team (see presentation for content)

- a. Project Background
- b. Project Process
- c. Additional opportunities to provide feedback and input
- d. Existing Land Uses
- e. Existing Land Ownership

## 3. Open Discussion

- a. Niland community members are concerned about the public health impacts of potential future development.
  - i. As part of this project, there will be a Health Risk Assessment and a Health Impact Assessment to assess the public health impacts of potential future development.
- b. Consider the environmental impacts on avian species/colonies.
  - i. The CEQA technical documents will look at the impacts on migratory and residential bird species.
  - ii. Consider the indirect impacts to migratory birds.
- c. Will NEPA be triggered?
  - i. As of now there is no NEPA nexus, but if there does become a nexus, we will cover that.
- d. Is there a megawatt (MW) or measurable goal for geothermal energy or lithium recovery?
  - i. No specific goal established yet for the County.
  - ii. Part of the intent of the project is to contribute to achieving the State's 2030 greenhouse gas emission reduction goals.
  - iii. Individual geothermal and lithium recovery companies have their own MW and goals.
- e. IID receives inquiries about purchasing land out there; IID should be consulted on any future changes to land uses and zoning as properties are bought/redeveloped to avoid nonconforming uses.
- f. Concern for land efficiencies, keep consideration for the geographic footprint of new geothermal development.
- g. As the Salton Sea recedes, USFW should be involved in establishing restoration buffers from new development.
- h. COLAB acts as a facilitator; can utilize for disseminating information to their members
  - i. Need to coordinate with the State (DWR, DFW) in land use alternatives because there's plans for 30,000 acres of dust suppression along the shoreline and habitat restoration for federally endangered species.
- j. Coordinate with State 10-year plan for habitat project – Red Hill Bay project. There's an opportunity to identify areas in Specific Plan boundary for habitat projects and restart some of the failed conservation projects.

- i. There are also State endangered species in the study area.
- k. Should coordinate with the State and Army Corp of Engineers on providing road access to geothermal areas within future State species habitat restoration areas via new roads.
- l. Should consider and incorporate the Salton Sea Management Plan efforts and the associated environmental study conducted by Army Corps of Engineers.
- m. Infrastructure will be a key consideration – rail, goods movement, bridges.
  - i. Most roads around CTR facility are unpaved.
- n. Maps should cover the projected areas that may be outside the Specific Plan boundary since geothermal facilities need X acres for X megawatts.
- o. BHE could break ground for commercial scale lithium extraction facility in 2024.
  - i. BHE has expected workforce calculations that may be utilized.
- p. Be aware of potential permitting requirement for future development to preserve farmland. Look at whether this will be approved and if there will be an exception for renewable energy production.
- q. The Nature Conservancy produced a report on potential lithium extraction from this area around the Salton Sea; the data and report can be shared with the team.
  - i. The Nature Conservancy supports direct lithium extraction as opposed to evaporative concentration extraction to prevent environmental harm. This is a major finding of the report.
  - ii. This file can be uploaded to the shared OneDrive folder.
- r. Study Area Rational – what is the reason for including areas not in KGRA, and not including Niland?
  - i. The study area was extended east to include SR 111 and extended north to include rail junction.
  - ii. Consider extending the study area for transportation and good movement to extend south to include Eddins Road, a County Collector that may be detrimental to goods movement.
- s. Include Calipatria representative in Infrastructure TAG to speak to wastewater needs
  - i. The Calipatria wastewater treatment plant may be available for shared facilities.
- t. The railroad line runs through Calipatria; if rail functions are increased there would be concern for the low-income population against the railroad line that may be affected.
- u. Ground-truth the existing vacant land uses – IID leases the wildlife refuge that may appear vacant.
- v. Consider the air and water vapor effects on naval pilots in the airspace within and around the Study Area.



# Appendix C Environmental Justice Working Group Meeting Notes

May 2023

Created For:



Prepared By:

Falcon Strategies



*January 11, 2023  
EJ Working Group Meeting Notes*

Participants:

Belen Leon, ICAPCD  
Monica Soucier, ICAPCD  
Hector Meza, IBEW 569  
John Hernandez, ORMC  
Daniela Florez, IV Equity + Justice  
Perry Elerts, LCJA  
Jim Minnick, ICPDS  
Diana Robinson, ICPDS  
Nilda Ruiz, Alianza  
Aydee Palomino, Alianza  
Eric M. Reyes, Los Amigos de la Comunidad  
Rosa Diaz, IV LGBT RC  
Efrain Silva, IVC  
Gina Nuñez, SDSU-IV  
Joey Espinosa, IV LGBT RC  
Evelia Jiminez, ICPDS  
Sandra Mejorada, IV LGBT RC  
Kristen Salgado, UCMG  
Jose Luis Olmedo, Comite Civico del Valle  
Brian Mooney, Rick Engineering  
Shannon Baer, Rick Engineering  
Clarissa Reyes Falcon, Falcon Strategies  
Aida Castañeda, ACC

**Meeting Notes:**

Presentations from Project Team

- Introduction of Project Team by the County of Imperial Staff
  - Dudek
  - Rick Engineering

- Falcon Strategies
- Specific Plan Scope of Work Presentation made by Brian Mooney of Rick Engineering
  - Technical Advisory Committees
  - Timeline
  - Process
- Purpose of the Environmental Justice Working Group Presentation by Clarissa Falcon of Falcon Strategies
  - Goals and outcomes
  - Described engagement with organizations that care about environmental justice
  - Future meetings and opportunities for engagement with the broader community surrounding the Salton Sea project area

### Q&A

- Qualitative and quantitative data for the IV on Lithium Valley
  - When will the County be ready to release the baseline data?
  - Will the specific plan for Lithium Valley process align with the County's Environmental Justice Plan?
  - Does the County have dedicated staff for EJ?
- How is Environmental Justice defined?
  - Need to adhere to the principles of environmental justice as defined by Fed/State/Local government entities
  - Need clarity on how EJ is applied in the context of this work
  - How will achieve consensus on those principles?
  - Are we helping facilitate the EJ principles in government?
  
  - This project needs to be intentional with EJ and engagement with the communities
  - Other EJ players need to be at the table
    - Ex. IID
  - Desire for a truly environmental document from this process
  - Do we need a sub-committee on EJ of experts?
    - How is EJ being defined?
  - Are we (stakeholders invited to the working group) here as the movement?
- Economic Development and Workforce Development—how many employees/skills level
  - Academic programs need to reflect the workforce and skills needed for Lithium Valley
  - How will the manufacturing affect the general area?
  - Education required to manifest these projects
  - Expand industry in Brawley
- Preparing local Academic programs to accommodate workforce needs
  - How do we corner the industry in the IV

- The final phase of getting approval for three new technical programs
    - Plant operator program
    - Instrumentation technician program
    - Chemical lab technician program
  - Fall Semester of 2023 – One Year Courses
- Key issues that also affect EJ – Water and Transportation
  - ICTC and their regional transportation plans
  - Salton Sea and environmental health impacts from continued evaporation of the Sea’s water levels
  - Irrigation District – Baseline on where to start with on environmental health.
    - Challenges to achieve baseline:
      - Reluctant researchers
      - Already have an environmental damage air basin
      - High cancer | respiratory issues that have not been quantified
      - Ongoing water transfers – who do we hold accountable for that?
      - Have the best remediation and mitigation measures in place for all of these issues that are produced
- Dudek Recommendations – on PEIR
  - All Environmental impact cited, explained, and spoken to.
  - Key elements
- SB 1000—2016 CA Environmental Justice Alliance
- IBEW—we need to uplift our communities and provide:
  - Labor environmental experts
  - Alignment with the EJ community
- Meet the community where they are at
  - Need to engage neighboring communities and present Lithium Valley in an understandable way
  - Need to have Spanish translation
- Medical Field also needs to be here at the EJ Working Group
  - IV Medical associations
  - IV Federally qualified clinics
  - Nurses/Doctors’ associations
- Workshops—who are we going to follow up and process the information when we meet thereafter
  - How will the feedback be incorporated into the plan?
  - How will the county work directly with Lithium Valley Commission and CA Energy Commission?
- How do we build solid communications?
  - Taking minutes
  - Upload documents onto the website
  - How will information be shared between the EJ Working Group and the TACs?
  - Dudek leading the environmental reports need to be present



# Appendix D Niland Children's and Families Health Fair Images

May 2023

Created For:



Prepared By:

Rick Engineering Company

Appendix D – Niland Children’s and Families Health Fair Images



*Figure 1 A student at the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Children’s and Families Health Fair in Niland visiting the project team’s table to discuss and learn about the project.*



*Figure 2 A County representative attending the event contributing their ideas for the vision of the project and identifying key project stakeholders.*



Appendix D – Niland Children’s and Families Health Fair Images



*Figure 3 An overview of the Niland Children’s and Families Health Fair venue and participants.*



*Figure 4 Two students visiting the project team’s table contributing to the vision of the Specific Plan, pasting images onto the poster board of amenities they’d like to see in the community.*

Appendix D – Niland Children’s and Families Health Fair Images



*Figure 5* A student expressing interest in seeing more quality job opportunities and science-based extra-curricular programs in the community.

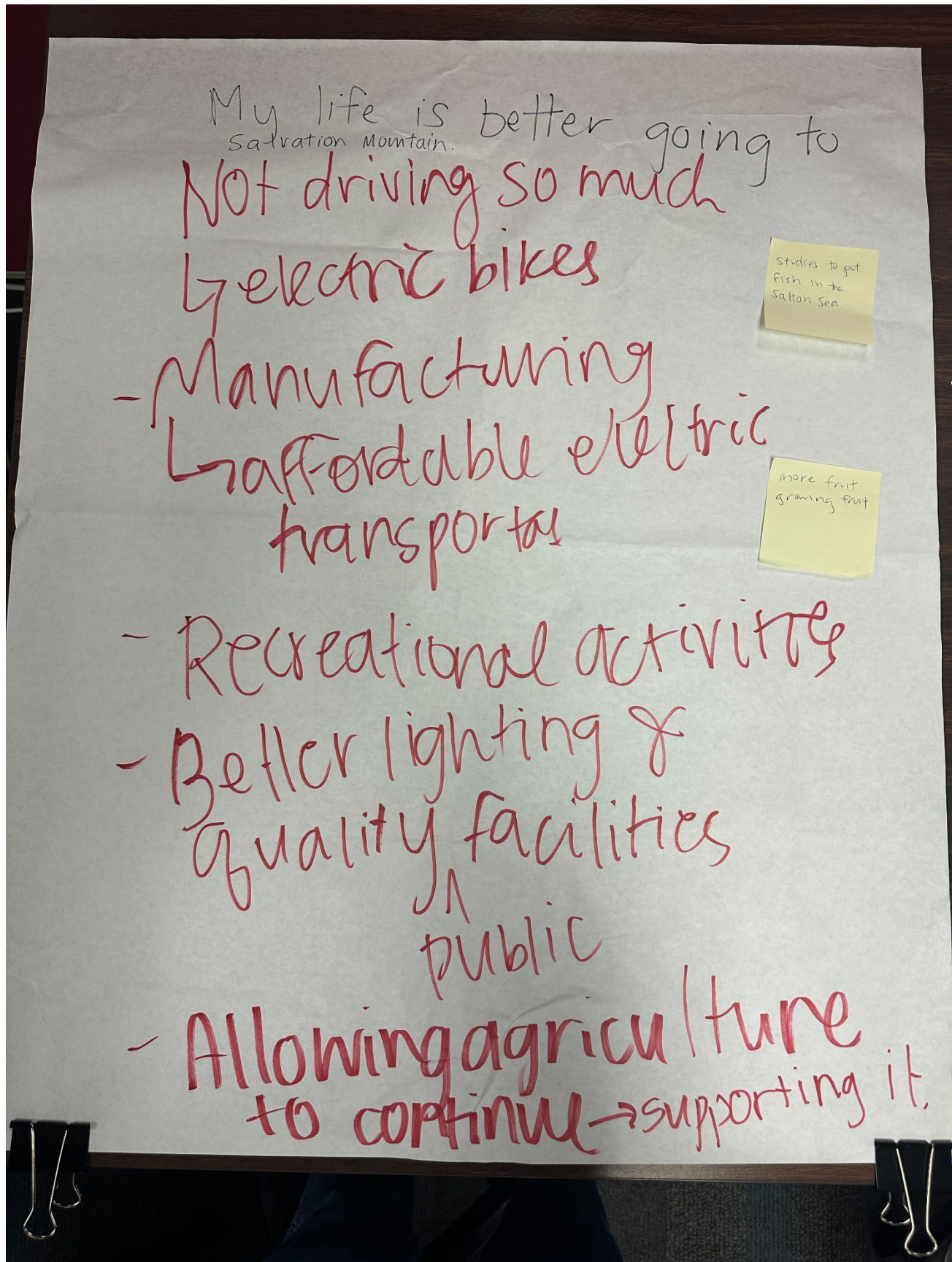


*Figure 6* A student, with family working in the industry, sharing their interest in preserving the rich agricultural history of the area.

Appendix D - Niland Children's and Families Health Fair Images



Figure 7 A snapshot of the completed public outreach board with all of the contributions provided by students, parents and visitors who participated in the visioning activity.



\* This community needs more parks,  
Not much for kids to do in summer.

\* More active transportation  
& infrastructure for bike  
routes, pedestrians, etc. x2

\* Cultural Sites are fun and pretty

**Parks!**

Public Works - (Air Pollution / <sup>(Air)</sup>Flag Project

Public Health - Health Policies

Schools

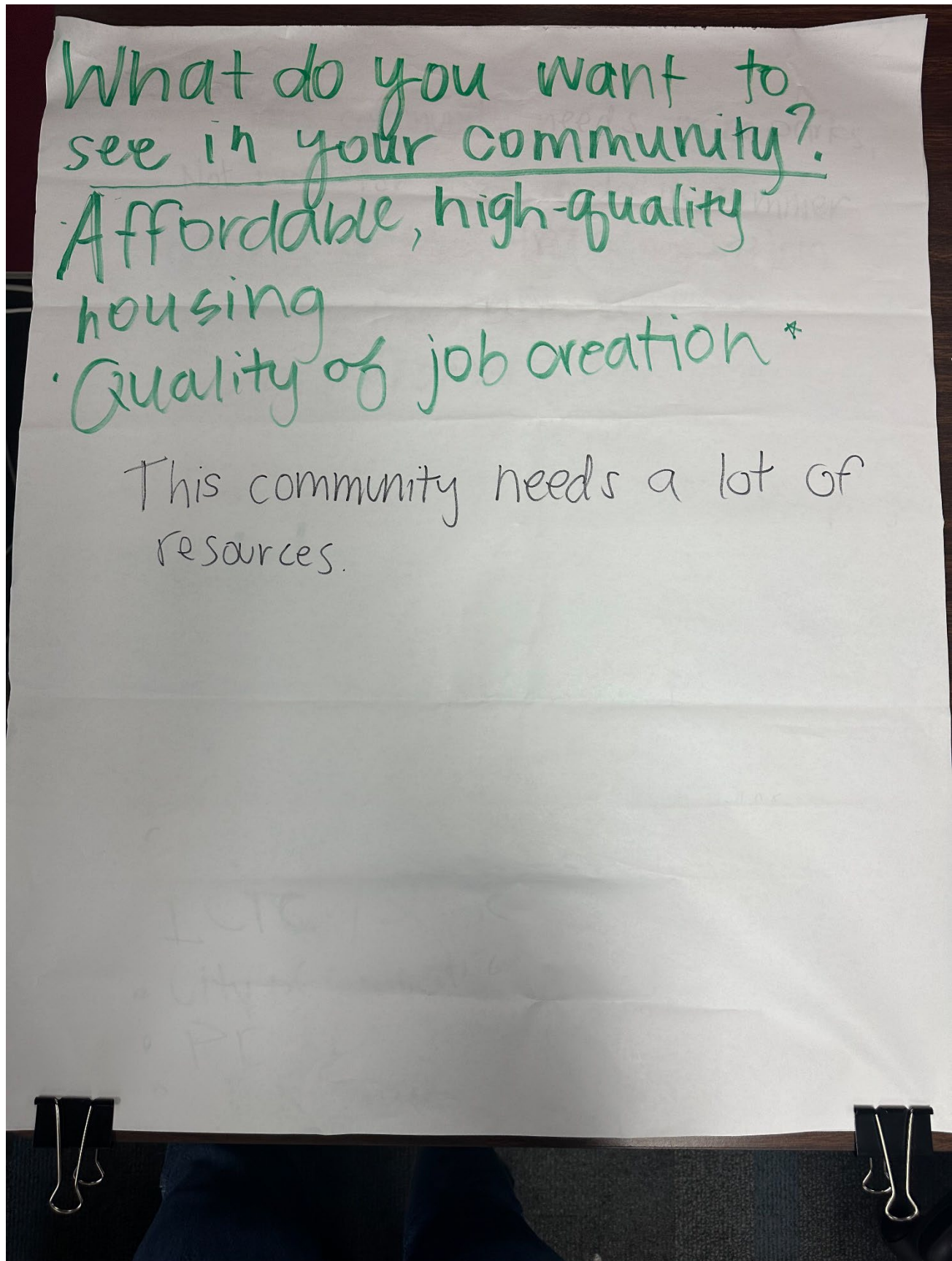
Community Parks / Lib. / Facilities

ICTE / SGAC

City of Calipatria

PD / Law enforcement

Bus Services



What do you want to see in your community?

• Affordable, high-quality housing

• Quality of job creation\*

This community needs a lot of resources.



# Appendix E Online Platform Comments

May 2023

Created For:



Prepared By:

Rick Engineering Company

# ADAMS BROADWELL JOSEPH & CARDOZO

A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

## ATTORNEYS AT LAW

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MARC D. JOSEPH  
DANIEL L. CARDOZO

February 28, 2023

### **Via Email Only**

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Lithium Valley Project Team  
**Email:** [lithiumvalley@co.imperial.ca.us](mailto:lithiumvalley@co.imperial.ca.us)

### **Re: SAFER CA Comments on Community Workshop #1 for the Lithium Valley Specific Plan and Programmatic EIR – Proposed High Road Contracting Goals and Strategies for Projects Extracting, Processing, Producing or Utilizing Geothermal or Lithium Resources**

Dear Mr. Minnick, Ms. Acosta, and the Lithium Valley Project Team:

On behalf of Safe Fuel and Energy Resources California (“SAFER California”), we appreciate the opportunity to comment on Community Workshop #1 for the Lithium Valley Specific Plan and Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”). SAFER California is a coalition of labor organizations advocating for safe processes during the construction and operation of California industrial facilities to protect the health, safety, standard of life and the economic interests of its members. We urge Imperial County to incorporate high road contracting goals and strategies for projects that extract, process, produce or utilize) geothermal or lithium resources in the County in order to maximize economic and job development outcomes from the exploitation of these unique, but limited, County resources.

The Lithium Valley Specific Plan is a planning document being prepared by Imperial County (“County”) to expedite the development and permitting of renewable industries in the County, particularly in regards to lithium resources near the Salton Sea. The Plan Area is an approximately 49,721-acre area along the

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eastern shore of the Salton Sea. The communities of Brawley, Calipatria, and Niland currently provide the majority of community-supporting services and infrastructure in the Project vicinity.

The County has proposed a series of community workshops to solicit input from the community on the Specific Plan's objectives and strategies. The first Community Workshop for the Lithium Valley Specific Plan and Programmatic EIR was held in-person on January 19, 2023 at Calipatria High School. The purpose of the meeting was to receive the community's input on existing opportunities and constraints within the Specific Plan boundary with regard to several issue areas, including Land Use, Economics and Jobs, Transportation, Public Services and Resources, Infrastructure, Environmental Justice and Social Conditions, and Environment. At the meeting, members of the public commented on the need for the Specific Plan to promote fair compensation and workforce development opportunities.

We submit these comments to provide further input on the opportunities and constraints in the Plan Area with regard to Economics and Jobs and Environmental Justice. As explained below, the Lithium Valley Specific Plan is a unique opportunity to bolster the economic vitality of Imperial County, while supporting opportunities for the County's disadvantaged residents to enter into middle class career pathways. It is in the interest of the County to ensure that projects that exploit the County's limited geothermal and lithium resources provide fair compensation and workforce development opportunities to its residents. Accordingly, these comments will illustrate the benefits of local hire goals, multi-craft project labor agreements, and requirements to utilize apprentices and apprentice graduates from state-approved joint-labor management apprenticeship programs. These comments also propose specific provisions to include in the Specific Plan that promote these community benefit and sustainable local workforce development goals.

**I. THE LITHIUM VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN SHOULD INCLUDE SPECIFIC GOALS AND STRATEGIES TO MAXIMIZE ECONOMIC, EMPLOYMENT, JOB TRAINING, AND OTHER COMMUNITY BENEFITS WHEN PROJECTS PROPOSE DEVELOPING COUNTY NATURAL RESOURCES**

The recent heightened global interest in the exploitation of Imperial County's geothermal and lithium resources provides both a threat and an opportunity for the

February 28, 2023

Page 3

County. Outside companies and investors seek to profit from the County's natural resources, and the County has the opportunity to ensure that these limited resources are responsibly used. If these natural resources are developed by "low-road" operators who are not committed to providing community benefits to the County and its residents, then a key economic development opportunity for the County will be lost.

The Lithium Valley Specific Plan provides the opportunity to ensure that the development, which includes, but is not limited to, extraction, processing, production and use, of the natural geothermal and lithium resources found in the Specific Plan area maximizes economic, employment, job training, and other community benefits to the County and its residents. We urge the County to set forth goals and strategies in the Specific Plan to ensure that the development of these resources results in the creation of an equitable and sustainable economy benefiting the County's local residents and communities.

This goal can be achieved most effectively by adopting policies encouraging developers to construct and perform contracted out maintenance work on geothermal and lithium projects in the County under multi-craft project labor agreements that include local hire goals and requirements to utilize apprentices from state-approved joint-labor management apprenticeship programs. A multi-craft project labor agreement is a project labor agreement to which the local building and construction trades council is a party.

Multi-craft project labor agreements ensure developers bring value to the community by investing in the construction workforce through local hire provisions, job training and support of apprenticeship programs, and ensuring payment of family supporting wages and the provision of healthcare and retirement benefits. Projects constructed and, when contracted out, maintained under multi-craft project labor agreements enable more of the County's disadvantaged workers to enter the pathway to a long-term, family-supporting career in construction by increasing the demand for apprentices and apprenticeship graduates.

Joint-labor management apprenticeship programs are a primary pathway for providing disadvantaged workers good-paying construction-career opportunities and for reducing the wage and benefit inequities that are widespread in the construction industry. The California Department of Apprenticeship Standards requires every apprenticeship program to include an equal opportunity program with an affirmative action plan to recruit women and minority applicants. Contractors that

do not participate in apprenticeship programs are not subject to these requirements. More than two-thirds of participants in union apprenticeship programs are people of color and 95 percent of apprenticeship graduates are produced by union programs. In addition to the union outreach programs to recruit women and minority applicants, union veterans programs such as Helmets to Hardhats have an unparalleled track record of recruiting, training and placing veterans in quality construction careers.

Multi-craft project labor agreements with local hire goals also ensure that local workers are employed in the construction and contracted-out maintenance of geothermal and lithium projects in the County. This not only ensures construction jobs for County residents, it also creates thousands of additional jobs across all sectors of the economy by providing local residents good-paying jobs that boost local consumer spending. Studies have found that each dollar paid at prevailing wages to construction workers produces \$1.50 in economic activity.<sup>1</sup> The value of every dollar in construction wages spent by local workers is multiplied as it is recirculated through the local economy, and generates increased sales tax revenue as wages are spent locally by residents.

Multi-craft project labor agreements also provide an effective framework to address wage and benefit inequities that women, workers of color, and immigrants often face in the non-unionized workplace. Unions have been found to effectively “reduce wage differentials and occupational segregation in the workplace itself, as well as help offset the negative career effects of unequal access to good schools and job-hiring networks.”<sup>2</sup> This is due largely to the standardized training, wages and workplace rules that level the playing field for all employees.

## **II. PROPOSED HIGH ROAD CONTRACTING GOALS FOR THE LITHIUM VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN**

The Economics and Jobs section of the Lithium Valley Specific Plan should include the following high road contracting goals and objectives to maximize the economic, employment, job training, and other community benefits to the County

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<sup>1</sup> See Gin et al, The Economic Impact of the Downtown “Convadium” Proposal (2016), Appendix A. Prevailing wage is the total wage package (hourly wage and benefits) paid to the majority of workers, laborers, and mechanics within a particular area as determined by the California Department of Industrial Relations pursuant to Labor Code sections 1773 and 1773.1, taking into consideration the rates negotiated by collective bargaining agreements.

<sup>2</sup> Thomason & Bernhardt, UC Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education, *The Union Effect in California #2: Gains for Women, Workers of Color, and Immigrants* (June 2018) at p. 1.

when development proposes to extract or utilize the natural geothermal and lithium resources found in the Specific Plan area:

A. Discourage the exploitation of the County's limited, natural geothermal and lithium resources by "low-road" operators who are not committed to providing economic, employment, job training, and other community benefits to the County and its residents.

B. Encourage companies to enter into multi-craft project labor agreements with local hire and apprentice utilization provisions for the construction and contracted-out maintenance of projects extracting, processing, producing or utilizing geothermal and lithium resources in the County. A multi-craft project labor agreement is a project labor agreement to which the local building and construction trades council is a party.

C. Encourage geothermal and lithium projects in the County to commit to local hire goals and commit to utilizing apprentices enrolled in state-approved joint-labor-management apprenticeship programs.

D. Adopt County minimum wage requirements equivalent to prevailing wages for construction workers that build or maintain facilities that extract, process, produce or utilize geothermal or lithium resources in the County.

E. Ensure that geothermal and lithium projects in the County are constructed and maintained safely and minimize environmental impacts by, among other measures, requiring construction by a skilled and trained workforce.

F. Evaluate the impact of the exploitation of the geothermal and lithium resources in the County on local job creation, job quality and job training opportunities through ongoing data collection.

### **III. PROPOSED STRATEGIES FOR ADOPTION IN THE LITHIUM VALLEY SPECIFIC PLAN**

In order to implement the above objectives, the Lithium Valley Specific Plan should adopt the following strategies to maximize the economic, employment, job training, and other community benefits to the County:

**A. Voluntary High Road Contracting Goals for Projects  
Extracting, Processing, Producing or Utilizing Geothermal or  
Lithium Resources**

1. Applicants for the construction or operation of projects extracting, processing, producing or utilizing geothermal or lithium resources in the County shall meet with County staff at least 90 days prior to Board approval of the proposed project to discuss the County's high road contracting and other community benefit goals and to present the Applicant's intentions for meeting those goals.

2. The County shall seek to enter into a voluntary Development Agreement with developers of geothermal or lithium projects located in the County of Imperial, with terms that shall include the following requirements.

(a) All contractors and subcontractors performing construction and contracted-out maintenance work on the project shall pay prevailing wages at the rates set forth pursuant to Labor Code sections 1773 and 1773.1,

(b) All contractors and subcontractors performing construction and contracted-out maintenance work on the project shall employ apprentices consistent with the requirements of Labor Code section 1777.5, and

(c) All contractors and subcontractors performing construction and contracted-out maintenance work on the project shall ensure that all construction work that falls within an apprenticeable occupation in the building and construction trades shall be performed by a skilled and trained workforce in accordance with Chapter 2.9 (commencing with Section 2600) of Part 1 of Division 2 of the Public Contract Code.

(d) Requirements (a), (b) and (c) shall be deemed to have been met if the developer enters into a multi-craft project labor agreement for construction and contracted-out maintenance of the Project. A multi-craft project labor agreement is a project

labor agreement to which the local building and construction trades council is a party.

**B. Mandatory Data Collection Requirements**

1. Applicants for the construction or operation of projects extracting, processing, producing or utilizing Imperial County's limited natural geothermal and lithium resources shall provide to the County, and the County shall make available to the public, at least 14 days prior to Board of Supervisor consideration of approval of the proposed project, the following information;

(a) Terms of any public financial support or contribution, transfer or lease of real property, and/or development agreement; and

(b) A list and description of all community benefit and job development commitments, including the following information:

- i. Whether construction and maintenance of the project will be performed under a multi-craft project labor agreement.
- ii. Local hire goals and plan for implementation of those goals if not implemented under a multi-craft project labor agreement.
- iii. Apprenticeship utilization commitments.
- iv. Commitments to use skilled and trained workforce as defined in Chapter 2.9 (commencing with Section 2600) of Part 1 of Division 2 of the Public Contract Code.
- v. Minimum wage and benefit commitments for construction workers and delta between commitment and prevailing wage rates, if any.

2. As a condition of issuing permits for the development of lithium or geothermal projects, developers shall provide the County monthly reports containing the following information to document the Project's success in meeting the Specific Plan's mandatory and voluntary high road construction goals:

(a) The total number of construction workers employed and total hours worked.

(b) The number of construction workers that are Imperial County residents employed on the Project, and the total hours worked by those residents.

(c) The number of apprentices utilized in construction of the project, the names of the apprenticeship programs in which the apprentices were enrolled, and the total hours worked by each apprentice.

(f) The pay rate for each construction worker, and the difference between that pay rate and the prevailing wage rate for the work performed, if any.

(g) Proof that workers compensation coverage was provided for all on-site workers.

Relevant information submitted by developers will be used to evaluate workforce and economic impacts of geothermal and lithium projects. Where requested by the County, payroll records shall be provided to verify the data.

3. The mandatory data collection requirements of this section shall be waived for projects that enter into and implement multi-craft project labor agreements with local hire and apprentice utilization provisions. A multi-craft project labor agreement is a project labor agreement to which the local building and construction trades council is a party.

**C. Minimum Wage Requirements for Construction Work on Projects Extracting, Processing, Producing or Utilizing Geothermal or Lithium Resources**

The County shall adopt an ordinance setting a minimum wage equal to the prevailing wage set forth pursuant to Labor Code sections 1773 and 1773.1 for construction work on projects extracting geothermal and lithium resources in the County.

**D. Safety Requirements for Construction Work on Projects Extracting, Processing, Producing or Utilizing Geothermal or Lithium Resources**

The County shall adopt an ordinance requiring all construction work that falls within an apprenticeable occupation in the building and construction trades on projects extracting or utilizing geothermal and lithium resources in the County to be performed by a skilled and trained workforce in accordance with Chapter 2.9 (commencing with Section 2600) of Part 1 of Division 2 of the Public Contract Code.

**IV. THE PROPOSED HIGH ROAD CONTRACTING PROVISIONS ARE CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT GENERAL PLAN PROVISIONS**

The Renewable Energy and Transmission Element (“RETE”) of the Imperial County General Plan, adopted in 2016, strongly supports inclusion of the goals and strategies proposed above in the Lithium Valley Specific Plan.<sup>3</sup>

Goal 3 of the RETE sets forth that a key goal of renewable energy development in Imperial County is to enhance the economic vitality of the County.<sup>4</sup> The RETE explains that the economic vitality of the County is currently impacted by the emigration of young adults from the County, and that the growth of the renewable energy industry represents an opportunity to reduce emigration:

New geothermal-related jobs will not be seasonal, so the development of geothermal energy could help to stabilize the County's economy. Local

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<sup>3</sup> The Renewable Energy and Transmission Element is available at <https://www.icpds.com/assets/planning/renewable-energy-and-transmission-element-2015.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Imperial County, Renewable Energy and Transmission Element, pg. 25, Goal 3 (“Support development of renewable energy resources that will contribute to and enhance the economic vitality of Imperial County”).



statistics continue to indicate that young adults now tend to leave the County shortly after high school. This emigration might be reduced if geothermal development offers a variety of jobs for those wishing to remain in the County. The employment generated will also produce jobs in other sectors of the local economy, utilize a greater range of job skills, and provide new employment opportunities for local unemployed residents.<sup>5</sup>

The RETE also contains provisions recognizing the importance of local hire and workforce development to the economic vitality of the County:

- Objective 3.5 encourages employment of Imperial County residents “wherever and whenever possible.”<sup>6</sup>
- Objective 3.6 encourages “the establishment of necessary and applicable renewable energy training programs in local school systems in association with the renewable energy industry.”
- The RETE states that the County shall “[c]ooperate and participate in studies, as appropriate, of ... the effect of renewable energy development to the economic vitality of Imperial County, with special attention to continued 1) agricultural viability, 2) job quality, 3) skilled career training, and 4) local hire practices”<sup>7</sup>
- The RETE provides that “[i]n order to implement the policies set forth in this Element, the County shall: ... Provide information to the public on necessary occupational skill levels required for employment in the renewable energy industry, and encourage educational institutions, unions, and industrial companies to offer appropriate courses and training programs.”<sup>8</sup>

The General Plan goals encouraging employment of Imperial County residents in fairly-compensated, skilled jobs are directly achieved through the voluntary high road contracting goals and mandatory data collection requirements described in our comments. And our proposed goals and strategies promoting joint-labor management apprenticeship programs are encouraged by the General Plan provisions above. Further, Specific Plan provisions encouraging multi-craft project labor agreements would reverse the emigration of young adults from Imperial

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<sup>5</sup> *Id.*, pg. 72; *see also* pg. 2 (“The benefits of Renewable Energy development in Imperial County are ... Social and fiscal benefits from increased economic activity and local employment opportunities that do not threaten the economic viability of other industries”).

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*, Objective 3.5 (“Encourage employment of County residents by the renewable energy industries wherever and whenever possible.”)

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*, pg. 34.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*, pg. 33.

February 28, 2023

Page 11

County by enabling disadvantaged workers to achieve a long-term, family-supporting career. Thus, to promote the goals of the General Plan, the above-described proposed goals and strategies should be incorporated into the Lithium Valley Specific Plan.

## V. CONCLUSION

In summary, the Lithium Valley Specific Plan presents a major opportunity for Imperial County to bolster its economic vitality. But in order to ensure that the economic benefits of the Plan are shared by the community, the Specific Plan must ensure, to the extent possible, that geothermal and lithium projects in the Plan Area provide fair compensation and workforce development opportunities to the County's residents. To achieve this objective, the Specific Plan must include local hire goals, provisions encouraging multi-craft project labor agreements, and requirements to utilize apprentices from state-approved joint-labor management apprenticeship programs. We respectfully request the County consider the provisions proposed in these comments for inclusion in the Specific Plan. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this process.

Sincerely,



Thomas A. Enslow  
Aidan P. Marshall

TAE:acp

cc:

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