

**Imperial County
Planning & Development Services Department
NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT EIR FOR THE
VIKINGS SOLAR ENERGY GENERATION & STORAGE PROJECT
FEBRUARY 6, 2022**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department, as lead agency, is circulating for public review a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed Brawley Solar Energy Facility Project.

Project Title: Conditional Use Permit #20-0025 Initial Study #20-0035 Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Vikings Solar Energy Generation & Storage (SCH 2021050036).

PROJECT LOCATION: The proposed project would be located on approximately 604 acres of private and Imperial County-owned land located at the intersection of Nelson Pit Road and Graeser Road in the western part of unincorporated Imperial County. It is approximately 5.5 miles east of the City of Holtville in Section 36 within Township 15 S, and Range 16 E of the San Bernardino Base and Meridian (SBB&M) of the "Holtville East" topographic quadrangles 7.5-minute (Assessor's Parcel Numbers [APNs]) 050-070-018, 050-070-019 and 050-070-021.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Project proposes to develop a 150-megawatt (MW) solar photovoltaic (PV) energy generation project with an integrated, not to exceed 300MW battery energy storage system (BESS) component. The electrical energy produced would be conducted through the proposed 230 kilovolt (kV) switching station and delivered to the Imperial Irrigation District's (IID) 230 kV KN/KS transmission line via a gen-tie line. The solar energy generation facility, battery storage system, substation switching station and gen-tie are collectively referred to as the "Proposed Project" or "Project."

The Project proposes to utilize either thin film or crystalline PV technology modules mounted either on fixed frames or horizontal single-axis tracker (HSAT) systems. The Project also includes a battery storage system that would consist of either lithium ion (Li-ion) or flow batteries. Depending on the selection of the battery technology, the batteries would either be housed in storage containers or storage buildings. The electrical energy produced by the project would be conducted through a new project substation which would take the delivery of the 34.5 kV power and increase the voltage to 230 kV, where it would feed into the interconnection switching station for metering and delivery to the IID.

DESIGNATED AREA PLAN: Two of the Project parcels are designated as "Agriculture" in the Imperial County General Plan and are zoned A-2-RE (General Agriculture with a Renewable Energy Overlay). The third Project area parcel is designated as "Recreation/Open Space" and is zoned GS-RE (Government/Special Public Zone).

Conditional Use Permit: Implementation of the project would require the approval of a CUP by the County to allow for the construction and operation of the proposed solar energy facility with an integrated BESS on land zoned A-2-RE (General Agriculture with a Renewable Energy Overlay) and GS-RE (Government/Special Public Zone).

Water Supply Assessment: Implementation of the project would require the approval of the Water Supply Assessment.

ANTICIPATED SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS: Aesthetics, Agriculture, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural / Tribal Resources, Energy, Geology/Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards/Hazardous Materials, Hydrology/Water Quality, Public Services, Transportation/Traffic, and Utilities and Service Systems.

COMMENTS REQUESTED: Written comments regarding the Draft EIR should be directed to Diana Robinson, Planner IV, Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department, 801 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243 and must be received **no later than March 25, 2022** (public review period is from February 6, 2022 through March 28, 2022). A Final EIR incorporating public input will be prepared for consideration by the Imperial County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors at a future public meeting.

For environmental review information for this project, please contact Diana Robinson at (442) 265-1736.

This notice was published in the Imperial Valley Press on February 6, 2022.