

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF DRAFT EIR FOR BRAWLEY SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY PROJECT AND
NOTICE OF PUBLIC EIR SCOPING MEETING**

The Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Brawley Solar Energy Facility Project as described below. A public scoping meeting for the proposed EIR will be held by the Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department on **August 12, 2021 at 6:00 P.M.** The scoping meeting will be held at the Planning & Development Services, Conference room located at 901 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243. Comments regarding the scope of the EIR will be accepted at this meeting.

SUBJECT: Brawley Solar Energy Facility Project EIR

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CONSIDERATION: To Be Determined.

PROJECT LOCATION: The project site is located on approximately 227 acres of privately-owned land (Assessor Parcel Nos. [APN] 037-140-006, -020, -021, -022, and -023) in the unincorporated area of Imperial County, CA. The site is approximately one mile north from the City of Brawley's jurisdictional limit. The project site is south of Baughman Road, west of Best Road, and north of Andre Road. The Union Pacific Railway transects the project site. The City of Brawley Wastewater Treatment Plant is located along the western edge of the project site.

The gen-tie line would originate from the southern edge of the project site and then head west along Andre Road to interconnect to the Imperial Irrigation District's (IID) existing North Brawley Geothermal Power Plant substation, located at Hovley Road and Andre Road. The gen-tie line route would be approximately 1.8 miles.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The project applicant, ORNI 30, LLC, proposes to construct and operate a 40 megawatt (MW) photovoltaic (PV) solar facility with an integrated 40 MW battery energy storage system (BESS) (not to exceed 80 MW) on approximately 227 acres of privately-owned land. The proposed project would be comprised of bifacial solar PV arrays panels, an on-site substation, BESS, fiberoptic line or microwave tower, inverters, transformers, underground electrical cables and access roads. The proposed project would connect to the existing North Brawley Geothermal Power Plant substation located southwest of the project site via an approximately 1.8-mile long aboveground 92 kilovolt generation tie line.

The County Land Use Ordinance, Division 17, includes the Renewable Energy (RE) Overlay Zone, which authorizes the development and operation of renewable energy projects with an approved conditional use permit (CUP). CUP applications proposed for specific renewable energy projects not located in the RE Overlay Zone would not be allowed without an amendment to the RE Overlay Zone. The northern portion of the project site (APNs 037-140-020 and 037-140-021) is located within the Geothermal Overlay Zone. However, the entire project site (APNs 037-140-020, 037-140-021, 037-140-022, 037-140-023, and 037-140-006) is located outside of the RE Overlay Zone.

Implementation of the project requires an amendment to the County's General Plan Renewable Energy and Transmission Element, Zone Change, and approval of a CUP, as described below:

- **General Plan Amendment:** The applicant is requesting a General Plan Amendment to include/classify all five project parcels (Assessor Parcel Nos. [APN] 037-140-006, -020, -021, -022, and -023) into the RE Overlay Zone. No change in the underlying General Plan land use (Agriculture) is proposed.
- **Zone Change:** The entire project site is currently zoned General Agricultural with a Geothermal Overlay (A-2-G). The applicant is requesting a Zone Change to include/classify all five project parcels into the Renewable Energy/Geothermal (REG) Overlay Zone (A-2-REG).
- **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 General Agricultural with a REG Overlay Zone (A-2-REG).
- **Water Supply Assessment:** Implementation of the project would require the approval of the Water Supply Assessment.

PROJECT APPLICANT: ORNI 30, LLC

URBAN AREA PLAN: None, located in unincorporated area of County of Imperial

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DISTRICT: District 4, Supervisor Ryan E. Kelley

ANTICIPATED SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS: The EIR will analyze potential impacts associated with the following: Aesthetics; Agricultural Resources; Air Quality; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Geology/Soils; Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Climate Change; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology/Water Quality; Land Use/Planning; Public Services; Transportation; Tribal Cultural Resources; Utilities and Service Systems including water supply; Cumulative Impacts; and, Growth-Inducing Impacts.

COMMENTS REQUESTED: The Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department would like to know your ideas about the potential effects this project might have on the environment and your suggestions as to mitigation or ways the project may be revised to reduce or avoid any potentially significant environmental impacts. Your comments will guide the scope and content of potential environmental issues to be examined in the EIR. Your comments may be submitted in writing to David Black, Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department, 801 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243. Available project information may be reviewed at this location.

NOTICE OF PREPARATION REVIEW PERIOD: July 26, 2021 through August 30, 2021