



# Environmental Checklist - Initial Study

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## MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

**VASQUEZ APARTMENTS**  
**CALIPATRIA RENTALS LLC**  
1274 PICO AVENUE  
APN 044-261-010

JUNE 2023

Prepared By:

Andrea Montano, Associate Planner  
City of El Centro  
Community Development Department  
Planning & Zoning Division  
1275 W. Main Street

## ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST/INITIAL STUDY

1. **Project title:** Vasquez Apartments
2. **Lead agency name and address:**  
City of El Centro  
1275 W. Main Street  
El Centro, CA 92243
3. **Contact person and phone number:**  
Andrea Montaña, Associate Planner (760) 337-4545
4. **Project location:**  
300 linear feet west of the northwest corner of Pico Avenue and 12<sup>th</sup> Street in El Centro, CA with a physical address of 1274 Pico Avenue with Assessors Parcel Number: 044-261-010 (Refer to *Figure 1-Location Map*).
5. **Project sponsor's name and address:**  
Carlos Vasquez  
Calipatria Rentals, LLC  
P.O. Box 54  
Imperial, CA 92251
6. **General Plan designation:**  
**Current-** Low Density Residential  
**Proposed-** High Density Residential
7. **Zoning designation:**  
**Current-** R1 (Single-Family Residential)  
**Proposed-** R3 (Multiple Family Residential)
8. **Description of project:** The project consists of a change of zone (COZ 22-05) and general plan amendment (GPA 22-05) effecting 2.39 acres of disturbed land located within the City of El Centro, California. Calipatria Rentals, LLC, the property owner and applicant, wishes to construct two (2) two-story apartment buildings at the project site for a total of fifty-six (56), residential units. There will be forty two (42) two-bedroom units that will measure 787 square feet. The remaining sixteen (16) bedroom units will be three-bedroom units that will measure one thousand and eighty (1,080) square feet. The property is currently zoned R1, which prohibits the construction of multifamily residential units. The applicant is requesting a change of zone from R1 to R3, which permits multifamily residential units. An amendment to the General Plan is being requested to designate the project site's land use from Low Density Residential to High-Medium Density Residential in conformance with the proposed R3 Zone.
9. **Surrounding land uses and setting:** The site consists of a 165-foot by 630-foot undeveloped parcel located in the northern portion of the City of El Centro. There are dilapidated wood structures onsite that will be removed. Please see *Figure 2 – Site Photographs* The site was previously used for agriculture purposes as late as 1971 per aerial imaging.

The project is located in the El Dorado neighborhood, located in the northern portion of the City of El Centro. The area was annexed in 1994, and mostly consists of single-family residences and large areas of vacant land previously used for agriculture purposes. Please see *Figure 1 – Location Map* of the project site and surrounding uses. Uses immediately surrounding

the project site are as follows:

North: Vacant land and single family homes

East: Vacant land and single family homes

South: Vacant land and single family homes

West: Vacant land, single family homes and self-storage facility.

10. **Other public agencies whose approval is required** (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.)

None



**1274 Pico Avenue Apartments  
CEQA, GPA and COZ**

# Project Location Map





**Eastern Property Line**



**Figure 2- Site Photographs**

**Western Property Line**

**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:**

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

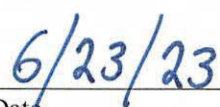
	Aesthetics		Agriculture & Forestry Resources		Air Quality
	Biological Resources		Cultural Resources		Energy
	Geology & Soils		Greenhouse Gas Emissions		Hazards & Hazardous Materials
	Hydrology & Water Quality		Land Use & Planning		Mineral Resources
	Noise		Population & Housing		Public Services
	Recreation		Transportation & Traffic	X	Tribal Cultural Resources
	Utilities and Service Systems		Wildfire		Mandatory Findings of Significance

**DETERMINATION:**

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

	I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
X	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
	I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
	I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document in accordance with applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Angel Hernandez, AICP, Director of Community Development

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

## EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources cited. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained when it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from Section XVII, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced).
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
  - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
  - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
  - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures that were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Include references to information sources for potential impacts. Reference to a previously-prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page.
- 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's
- 8) The explanation of each issue should identify:
  - a) The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
  - b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>I. AESTHETICS</b> – Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
c) In nonurbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?				X
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				X
<p><b>Explanation:</b></p> <p>(a-b) The project is located in a developed portion of the City of El Centro, which lies on relatively flat topography. Notable scenic vistas are limited to distant views of the Superstition Hills, Mt. Signal and the peninsular mountain ranges to the west. Views of these vistas are obscured by trees and existing development to the west. Given the location of the property in a developed portion of the city, the lack of scenic resources at the vacant project site, and that existing development to west obscures distant views of mountains, it is determine that the project will not have an adverse impact on a scenic vistas or damage scenic resources including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings within a state scenic highway as there are none in the vicinity of the project site.</p> <p>(c) The project site is completely vacant and surrounding properties consist of single-family residential homes, vacant land, a mini storage facility, and medical and professional office plaza further to the west. If granted, the change of zone will allow for the development of two (2) apartment buildings that will contain fifty-six (56) units within an existing residential area. New residential development will adhere to the El Centro Municipal Code’s Section 29-54 Residential Zone Design standards. Because the site is vacant and the surrounding areas also consist of single-story residential uses, the proposed project will not degrade the visual character of the area.</p> <p>d) The project will not create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views of the area.</p>				



<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>II. AGRICULTURE &amp; FORESTRY RESOURCES:</b> In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding state’s inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause, rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined, by the Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Governmental Code section 51104(g))?				X
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
<p><b>Explanation:</b></p> <p>(a-b) The project site is designated as Urban and Built Up Land under the 2018 Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency. Urban and Built-Up Land is defined as built-up land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres. As such, the proposed project site will not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Given that the proposed project site is not zoned for agricultural use, the project will not conflict with any Williamson Act contract.</p> <p>(c) Currently, the land is zoned for single-family residential uses. As such, the project will not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause, rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production.</p> <p>(d) The project will not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use as the site is zoned for single family residential land uses and does not consist of forest land.</p> <p>(e) The proposed project will not involve other changes in the existing environment which could result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Pursuant</p>				

to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program land to the north, east, south and west is designated Urban and Built-Up land. There is no forest land near the project area or within the project area; thus, there will be no impact to forest lands.

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>III. AIR QUALITY</b> -- Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?			X	
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
e) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?				X
<p><b>Explanation:</b></p> <p>(a-c) The project will allow for the construction of up to fifty-six (56) dwelling units. The development would be required to comply with all Imperial County Air Pollution Control District rules and regulations and obtain a permit for construction activities including the preparation of a dust control plan. All new residential development is required to pay an operational development fee to mitigate the emissions from new residences including increase vehicle emissions and power generation emissions per ICAPCD Rule 310. The development would also be required to adhere to the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District Rules and Regulations, specifically Rule VII and Rule III.</p> <p>(d) A sensitive receptor is a person in the population who is particularly susceptible to health effects due to exposure to an air contamination. Sensitive receptor land uses include, schools, child-care centers, playgrounds, hospitals, retirement homes, and single/multi-family residential. The project is located in a single-family residential neighborhood. Dust and heavy equipment emissions will occur during construction, however, the applicant will be required to comply with ICAPCD regulations to reduce construction activities from impacting nearby homes.</p> <p>(e) The proposed project will allow the development of medium-density residential development. Uses that may generate any objectionable odors are prohibited in all residential areas and no noxious fumes or odors would result from construction or the operation residences.</p>				

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, Hydrological interruption, or other means?				X
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				X
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				X
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X
<p><b>Explanation:</b></p> <p>(a) The Programmatic Environmental Impact Report for the El Centro General Plan Update (2021) assessed the potential impacts to fish and wildlife species within the El Centro city limits and within the sphere of influence. The western burrowing owl is the one species identified in the document with potential to have habitat within portions of the city of El Centro and the surrounding areas. Specifically, the western burrowing owl has adapted to frequently use highly cultivated and disturbed areas such as agricultural lands. Because the project site consists area developed for residential uses, has not been used for agricultural uses since at least 1971, nor are there adjacent areas or property in the vicinity with the potential of habitat, there would be no impacts to any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or</p>				

special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

(b-f) The project site consists of vacant land within an urbanized area and devoid of any vegetation, bodies of water or wildlife corridors that could sustain wildlife or lead to the establishment thereof. Thus, the proposed project will not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat, or a substantially adverse effect on federally protected wetlands, or interfere with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species. Therefore, no impacts to biological resources would result from the proposed project.

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>V. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?				X
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?				X
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				X
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				X
<p><b>Explanation:</b>            (a-d) The project site is mostly vacant aside from existing dilapidated wooden structures previously used for residential purposes. In the unlikely event of the discovery of human remains during construction, State law (Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, and Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code of the State of California) requires that there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains until local authorities are notified and proper notification protocols followed.</p>				

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>VI. Energy --</b> Would the project:				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?				X
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?				X
<p><b>Explanation:</b>  (a-b) The proposed project involves the development of apartments. During construction there is negligible amounts of energy used to operate machinery necessary to build residential units. As required by State Law, the owner will be required to adhere to the current California Green Code and submit Title 24 Energy Calculations for design. Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards are designed to reduce wasteful and unnecessary energy consumption in newly constructed and existing buildings.</p>				

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:			X	
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.			X	
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv) Landslides?				X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				X
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?			X	
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?			X	
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?				X
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique Geologic feature?				X
<p><b>Explanation:</b>  (a-f) The project is located in Imperial County, a seismically active area of southern California. Several faults are within the vicinity of the City; however, no faults or faults zones are located within the City limits per fault zone maps provided by the California Department of Conservation. Because the City is located in the seismically active Imperial Valley, the City is considered likely to be subjected to moderate to strong ground motion from earthquakes in the region, especially from earthquakes along the Imperial, Brawley, and Superstition Hills faults. Ground motions are dependent primarily on the earthquake magnitude and distance to the rupture zone. Acceleration magnitudes are also dependent upon attenuation by rock and soil deposits, direction or rupture, and type of fault. Liquefaction generally occurs when granular soil below the water table is subjected to vibratory motions, such as those produced by earthquakes. As a result, ground motions and liquefaction may vary considerably in the same general area. The proposed project will require implementation of project design measures and adherence to the</p>				

California Building Code. Implementation of these design and building techniques would reduce the impacts to a level that is less than significant. The proposed project site is not located on an unstable geologic unit. The proposed project would not induce geologic or soil instability on or offsite. A geology and soils study shall be prepared with a clear identification of site-specific measure to ensure geotechnical stability and submitted as part of the building permit process.

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS -- Would the project:</b>				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			X	
(a,b) Increase greenhouse gas emissions from construction activities, electricity generation and additional vehicle trips will be less than significant. The proposed project would not generate significant greenhouse gas emissions that could significantly impact the environment. The project will also not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purposes of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.				

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</b> Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				X
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?				X
<p><b>Explanation:</b></p> <p>(a-c) The project will result in the residential development and will not use, transport or dispose hazardous materials. The proposed project is not within one quarter of a mile of a school.</p> <p>(d) The site is not listed as a hazardous waste and substances site list on Geotracker.</p> <p>(e) Imperial County Airport is located approximately 1.5 miles to the northwest of the project site. A Land Use Compatibility Plan has been established for the Imperial County Airport located 1.5 miles to the northwest of the project site. However, the project site is not within the plan area. The project will not result higher buildings than already allowed and will not result in a safety hazard for people living within the project area.</p> <p>(f) The project does not involve a land use or activity that could interfere with emergency-evacuation plans for the area.</p> <p>(g) The project site is located within an urbanized area, far removed from wildland areas.</p>				



<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY</b> -- Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?				X
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?				X
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?			X	
i.) Result in a substantial erosion or situation on- or off-site;				
ii.) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;				
iii.) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or				
iv.) Impede or redirect flood flows?				
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?				X
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?				X
<p><b>Explanation:</b>  (a-b) The project would not violate any water quality standards or discharge requirements. The project would also not deplete ground water resources as potable water is available to the site.  (c-e) While the project will result in development at the site and will increase the area of impervious surfaces it is not located in a floodzone. Prior to issuance of any buildings permits, a grading and drainage plans shall be prepared in accordance with City storm water requirements to reduce the amount of surface runoff. Implementation of City storm water requirements and regulations will result in in a less than significant impact resulting from surface runoff.  (f) The proposed project will not otherwise degrade water quality.</p>				



<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING - Would the project:</b>				
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?			X	
<b>Explanation:</b>				
(a) The proposed project will not physically divide an established community. The project will result in the construction of new housing on vacant land within a residential neighborhood.				
(b) The proposed project will change the zone from R1 (Low Density Residential) to R3 (Multiple Family Residential) of 0.5 acres of vacant land for the purposes of constructing two(2) apartment buildings that will house 56 apartment units which are permitted in the R3 zone. If approved the change of zone will allow construction of up to sixty (60) dwelling units at the project site. Land uses surrounding the property consist of single-family homes and vacant land. Concurrently an amendment to the General Plan will also be processed to modify the land use map to be consistent with the new zoning designation.				

<b>XII. MINERAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:</b>				
<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X
<b>Explanation:</b>				
(a,b) The project site is within an urban area and is not identified in the General Plan as having any known mineral resource value or as being located within any mineral resource recovery site.				

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>XIII. NOISE</b> Would the project result in:				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			X	
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
<b>Explanation:</b> (a-b) The proposed project will involve construction of two (2) apartment buildings that will house fifty-six (56) apartment units and potential roadway improvements and resulting in temporary increase of noise and groundborne vibration levels in the area. Noise levels during the construction may temporary exceed noise levels as established in the Noise Element of the General Plan, however they shall be required to meet noise City requirements for the operation of construction equipment. Noise generated at the duplexes will be within noise levels for residential areas. (c) The project site is not located within an airport land use plan and as such exposure to residents at the project site from aircraft noise will be less than significant.				
<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING –</b> Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				X
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
<b>Explanation:</b> (a) The proposed project will result in the construction of up to fifty-six (56) new dwelling units. Estimates from the US Census, estimates an average household size of 3.27 persons per households. Using this data,				

it is estimated that that the project will house one hundred and eighty-four (184) persons, resulting a less than significant population growth.  
 (b) The project will construction residential dwellings on vacant land and will not result in the displacement of housing or people.

**XV. PUBLIC SERVICES**

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?			X	
Police protection?			X	
Schools?			X	
Parks?			X	
Other public facilities?			X	

**Explanation:**

(a) The City of El Centro Fire Department (ECFD) provides service within the City Limits. Additionally, ECFD responds to mutual aids throughout the Imperial Valley and the State when requested through mutual aid agreements with Imperial Valley Fire Departments and the State of California. The ECFD has three (3) stations staffed on a 24-hour basis to serve the public as follows: Station #1 is located at 775 State Street, Station #2 is located at 900 S. Dogwood Avenue, and Station #3 is located at 1910 N. Waterman Avenue. The Fire Department logged an average response time of approximately 4 to 6 minutes for emergency calls and 10 to 15 minutes for non-emergency calls. It is not anticipated that the construction of fifty-six (56) dwelling units will result in substantial adverse physical impacts to fire facilities. The project site is adjacent to El Centro Fire Station #3 and would be served by this station.

The City of El Centro Police Department (ECPD) is the primary law enforcement agency that serves the citizens of the City and land within the City boundaries. The Police Department has a main police station, located at 150 N. 11<sup>th</sup> Street. The City of El Centro has a total of 54 sworn officers, employs 28 non-sworn personnel and has an average emergency response time of 7-10 minutes. The construction of fifty-six (56) dwelling units will not significantly increase the demand of police protection and will not require the construction of new police facilities.

The project may generate additional demand to schools, parks or other public facilities however it will not significantly increase the demand of public facilities. Furthermore, new development will be subject to development impact fees to mitigate increases for demand of schools, parks, fire protection, police projection, and administrative facilities. This will result in a less than significant impact to public services.

<b>XVI. RECREATION. --</b>				
<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			X	
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				X
<p><b>Explanation:</b>  (a, b) The project will slightly increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities, however not to a level that would lead to substantial physical deterioration of recreational facilities as the proposed project will not induce a significant increase in the population. Prior to issuance of a building permit, development impact fees for parks will have to be paid to offset increase park and recreational facility use. The proposed project will not induce population growth to a degree large enough that would require the expansion of recreational facilities that would have an adverse effect on the environment.</p>				

<b>XVII. TRANSPORTATION--</b> Would the project:				
<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?			X	
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?				X
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				X
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?				X
<p><b>Explanation:</b></p> <p>(a) The proposed project will allow the construction of up to fifty-six (56) dwelling units at the project site with an expected 378 daily trips generated is not anticipated to reduce the performance or lead to congestion on adjacent roadways. The site is 300 linear feet from the intersection of North Imperial Avenue and Pico Avenue which are designated as 6-Lane Arterial and 2-Lane Collector respectfully per the Mobility Element of the General Plan. Arterial roadways are high capacity roadways designed intended to connect collector roads to freeways and or highways. Collector roadways are designed to serve secondary traffic generators such as high density or large scale residential areas. Furthermore, the project site is within 0.3 miles from Imperial Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Street both designated as Arterial streets in the General Plan. Considering the expected low increase of traffic generated to the site and proximity to major roadways the project will not have a significant impact to City’s traffic circulation system.</p> <p>(b) The City of El Centro adopted the Transportation Study Guidelines in June 2022 in order to ensure consistency and conformance with all applicable City and State regulations. Using the screening map using the El Centro VMT Dashboard we were able to determine that the project is located in a VMT Efficient Area. Therefore, the project will not conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including level of service standards, travel demand measures, or other standards established by the City or the county congestion management agency. e e) The proposed project will not increase hazards due to a design feature as the proposed project does not involve construction that would increase hazards. The project would not result in inadequate emergency access.</p> <p>(c)The proposed project does not propose any hazardous design features or uses that would be incompatible with the surrounding transit.</p> <p>(d) The proposed project will not result in inadequate emergency access.</p>				

<b>XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:</b>				
<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe, and that is:			X	
i.) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or				X
ii.) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.				X
<b>Explanation:</b>				
(a) The project site is not listed in the California Register of Historical Resources or in a local register of historical resources. Pursuant to SB18 and AB52, the 14 tribes included in the consult list provided by the Native American Heritage Commission. To date, staff has not received comments from any tribe. In addition this site has been previously developed with homes. While it is unlikely that there are going to be any resources on site, should any be uncovered during construction, the developer shall stop construction and contact City Staff for additional instruction. Staff will immediately contact all tribes.				



<b>XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS.</b> Would the project:				
<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?				X
c) Result in a determination by the waste water treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the projects projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				X
d) Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?				X
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X
<p><b>Explanation:</b></p> <p>(a) The El Centro Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) has the capacity to accommodate 8.0 million gallons of wastewater per day. The treatment plant would be able to treat additional wastewater as it has sufficient capacity. The project site is connected to the City's sewer system. The project may result in the construction of up to sixty (60) new dwelling units and require paying applicable wastewater capacity fees to offset impacts from the increase wastewater generated.</p> <p>(b) The proposed project will not require or result in the construction of water or wastewater treatment facilities. As such, there will no environmental impacts due to the construction of water and wastewater treatment facilities. Both, water and wastewater treatment facilities have the capacity to continue to serve the project.</p> <p>(c) The project will not require the construction of new storm water facilities. Thus, there will be no impact to storm drain facilities.</p> <p>(d) The City of El Centro Water Treatment Plant (WTP) is permitted through the State Department of Public Health and has a capacity of 14 million gallons per day and has the available capacity to serve the project site. The City of El Centro receives raw water from the Imperial Irrigation District and treats the raw water for consumption for use by its customers. The City of El Centro has sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources and no new or expanded entitlements are needed to serve the site.</p>				

(e) The current solid waste service provider is CR&R Waste Services, who has sufficient landfill capacity to serve the project site. The City of El Centro has renewed its contract with CR&R through 2027. Any future development at the site must comply with all applicable federal, state and local statutes and regulations pertaining to solid waste.

**XX. WILDFIRE.** -- If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?				X
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines, or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?				X
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?				X

**Explanation:**

(a- d) This location is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones.

**XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE. --**

<b>Issues:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				X
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)				X
c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				X
<p><b>Explanation:</b>                      (a-c) The project will result in the development of up to sixty (60) dwelling units within a 2.39 acres of vacant and previously disturbed land. The project will result in an increase in traffic generated up to 378 new trips per day. In addition, the project is located in a VMT efficient area which complies with the City of El Centro adopted Transportation Study Guidelines. Overall, the proposal will not have a significant impact on the environment as project will result in a minimal development on vacant property in a developed area within the City Limits of El Centro.</p>				

## FINDINGS

The environmental analysis of this Initial Study indicates that the proposed project would not have the potential for significant adverse environmental impacts. The following findings can be made regarding the mandatory findings of significance set forth in Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines, as based on the results of this environmental assessment:

The proposed project would not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment and would not reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

- The proposed project would not have the potential to achieve short-term goals at the expense of long-term environmental goals.
- The proposed project would not have immitigable environmental impacts, which are individually limited but cumulatively considerable, when considering planned or proposed development in the immediate vicinity of the site. The proposed project would not cumulatively lead to significant adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated to a level of less than significance, when added to proposed, planned, or anticipated development in the area.
- The proposed project would not have environmental impacts, which may have adverse effects on humans, either directly or indirectly.
- The City of El Centro has determined that the proposed project would not have significant adverse impacts on the environment and no additional environmental analysis. The City of El Centro intends to adopt a Negative Declaration for proposed Change of Zone 22-05 and General Plan Amendment 22-05.

## SOURCE REFERENCES

The following is a list of references used in the preparation of this environmental document. Unless attached herein, copies of all referenced reports, memorandums and letters are on file with the City of El Centro Community Development Department – Planning & Zoning Division. References to Publications prepared by Federal or State agencies may be found with the agency responsible for providing such information.

- 1) California Building Code, based on 2021 IBC
- 2) City of El Centro General Plan, adopted June 2021.
- 3) City of El Centro General Plan Update – Programmatic Environmental Impact Report, adopted June 2021.
- 4) City of El Centro Traffic Study Guidelines, adopted June 2022.
- 5) City of El Centro Zoning Code, adopted June 2021.
- 6) County of Imperial. *GIS Map Data*. Retrieved from <[new.geoviewer.io](http://new.geoviewer.io)> on May 1, 2023.
- 7) Imperial County Air Pollution Control District Rules and Regulations, revised October 20, 2012.
- 8) Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture. *Soil Survey of Imperial County, California: Imperial Valley Area* .1981.
- 9) City of El Centro Housing Element, adopted March 2022.