



STAFF REPORT
4/1/2026

TO: Planning Commission Chair and Commissioners
FROM: Kendra Reif, Community Development Director
Nicole Sauviat Criste, Consulting Planner
SUBJECT: A Public Hearing to Consider Resolution No. PC 2026-09 of the Planning Commission of the City of Coachella: Request for Planning Commission recommendation of approval to the City Council of Change of Zone, CZ 20-01, from MH to MS and CG; and conditional approval of Tentative Parcel Map 39721; CUP 324 to allow commercial cannabis uses; CUP 325 to allow drive through restaurant; CUP 326 to allow service station and mini-mart; AR 20-04 to approve site design, architecture and signage (billboard) and DA 25-02 to approve a Development Agreement, for 43± acres of land located at the northwest corner of Airport Boulevard and SR 86 (APNs 763-330-013, 763-330-018, and 763-330-029), and recommending certification of the Coachella Airport Business Park Development Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 2023040106), including Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations, in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act. Applicant: Empire Airport LLC.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission open the public hearing, receive public testimony, and recommend the conditional approval by the City Council of Change of Zone, CZ 20-01, Tentative Parcel Map 39721, CUP 324, CUP 325, AR 20-04 and DA 25-02 for 43± acres of land located at the northwest corner of Airport Boulevard and SR 86 (APNs 763-330-013, 763-330-018, and 763-330-029), and recommending certification of the Coachella Airport Business Park Development Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 2023040106), including Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations, in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The applicant, Empire Airport LLC, requests that the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council the approval of:

- **Change of Zone No. 20-01** which changes the Zoning designation of the 40.8± acres from Heavy Industrial (MH) to Manufacturing Service (MS) and 2.2± acres from MH to General Commercial (CG);

- **Tentative Parcel Map 39721** which will subdivide the site into 8 lots, including the potential for condominium use;
- **CUP No. 324** which would allow the development of commercial cannabis uses on the 40.8± acres of MS land;
- **CUP No. 325** which would allow the development of a drive-through restaurant on the 2.2± acres of CG land (parcel no. 7 of the TPM);
- **CUP No. 326** which would allow the development of a service station and convenience store on the 2.2± acres of CG land (parcel no. 7 of the TPM);
- **AR 20-04** which provides for the design, architecture and landscaping for the Project, as well as allowing an electronic billboard on the east boundary of the site;
- **DA 25-02** which would establish the responsibilities of the developer and the City relating to the build out of the Project;
- **Coachella Airport Business Park Development Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 2023040106)** which analyzed the environmental impacts of the Project, and an adjacent future Imperial Irrigation District (IID) substation on 4 acres north of the Project.



Figure 1 - Vicinity Map

BACKGROUND:

The Project site is an isolated parcel that occurs between the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel (CVSC) and SR 86. Lands in this area are envisioned in the General Plan to be developed for industrial uses, and some of that type of development has occurred west of the Project site and beyond the CVSC along Grapefruit Boulevard. The Project site is located at the south boundary of the City, and the south side of Airport Boulevard is unincorporated Riverside County. The City and County are currently working toward improvements to the Airport Boulevard bridge immediately south of the Project site. These plans are well into design, and the Project has been designed to integrate into these improvements.

As shown in Figure 1, Vicinity Map, the Project site is located on currently vacant land at the northwest corner of Airport Boulevard and State Route 86. The site is bounded by the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel to the west, vacant Caltrans right of way to the north, SR 86 and the Airport Boulevard on- and off-ramps to the east with agricultural lands beyond, and Airport Boulevard and an existing mobile home park beyond to the south. Table 1 provides the existing conditions, including General Plan and Zoning designations for the site and its surroundings.

Table 1
General Plan, Zoning, and Surrounding Existing Uses

	General Plan	Zoning	Surrounding Existing Uses
Site:	Industrial District	Current: Heavy Industrial Proposed: Manufacturing Service, General Commercial	Vacant
North:	Industrial District	Heavy Industrial	Vacant
South:	Riverside County	Riverside County	Occupied mobile home park
East:	Industrial District	Heavy Industrial	SR 86, Agriculture
West:	Industrial District, Public Facilities	Open Space	Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel

The Project site totals 42.69± acres, extending along the SR 86 right-of-way. The applicant proposes the development of a master planned mixed commercial/industrial Project that will consist of the following development types/areas which are described from south to north on the Project site. For reference, the corresponding parcel number from the TPM is provided with each development type. The TPM is provided in Attachment 2, Tentative Parcel Map, Grading and Phasing Plans. The Project site plan is provided in Figure 2 below, and in Attachment 3, Architectural Plan Set.

- A 4,000± square foot convenience store with 6 pump stations (12 pumps) and a 4,650± square foot retail/drive-through restaurant building on 2.2± acres at the south end of the site (Parcel 7 of TPM);
- 81,000± square feet of office/business park space in 18 buildings immediately north Parcels 5 and 6 of TPM);
- 76,800± square feet of auto storage in 4 buildings (Parcel 4 of TPM);
- 128,600± square feet of self-storage space in 17 buildings (Parcel 3 of TPM);

- 233,100± of large warehouse space in 6 buildings ranging in size from 22,400 to 48,800 square feet each (Parcel 1 of TPM);
- 96,000± square feet of small warehouse space in 5 buildings ranging in size from 9,600 to 24,000 square feet would be placed along the east boundary of the site (Parcel 2 of the TPM).

In total, the Project would generate 624,500± square feet of building space. Due to its size, the Project will be phased. A Phasing Exhibit is included in Attachment 2.

Access to the Project is proposed from a central driveway on the north side of Airport Boulevard. A second emergency access point will be provided east of the primary access point, immediately west of the SR 86 off-ramp. The primary access will be signalized.

As described above, the Project TPM will divide the site based on the land use type envisioned for the property, and will result in 8 parcels. Table 2 provides a breakdown of the Project components, and Figure 2 represents the Project site plan.

Table 2
Project Information

Total Project Area	42.69
Parcels Created	8 Parcels
Convenience Store & Service Station	4,000 SF, 6 pump stations/2.2 acres
Retail/Drive Through	4,650 SF/2.2 acres
Business Park	81,000 SF/6.62 acres
Auto Storage	76,800 SF/4.62 acres
Self-Storage	128,600 SF/6.71 acres
Large Warehouse	233,100 SF/9.22 acres
Small Warehouse	96,000 SF/5.94 acres
Airport Boulevard ROW	0.8 acres
Internal Streets (TPM Parcel 8)	2.3 acres

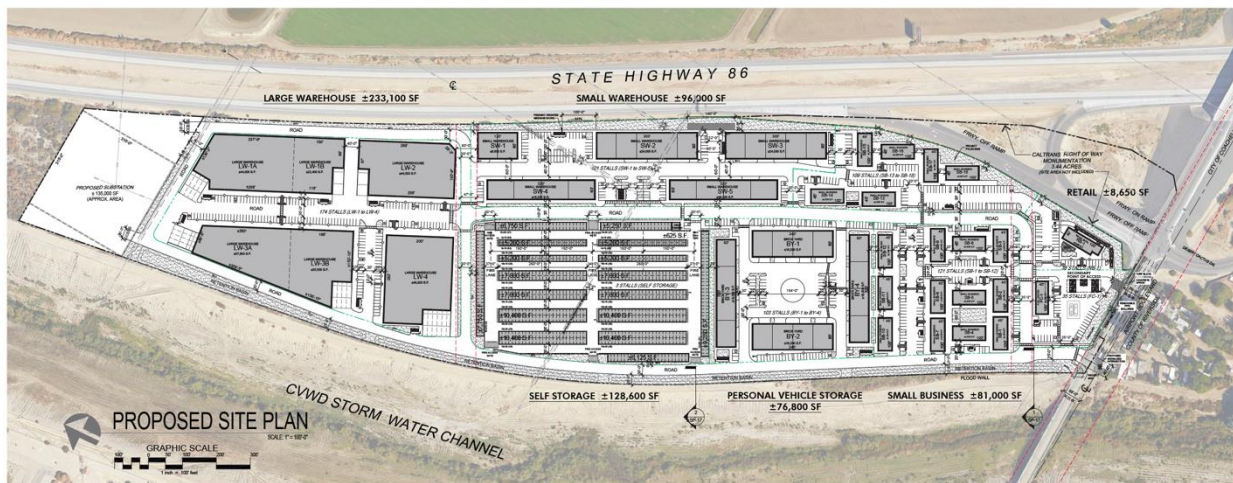


Figure 2 - Site Plan

The following sections address each of the applications described above individually. The Change of Zone application is the over-arching application for the Project. The three Conditional Use

Permits (CUP) address various specific land uses within the Project, and the Architectural Review application will guide the architecture and landscaping design through its ultimate build out. Finally, the Tentative Parcel Map provides for the legal means to convey the property to various potential ownership entities in the future, including the potential to establish a condominium map, which would function much like a residential condominium map, and provide for common area maintenance and coordinated implementation of Project plans.

CONSISTENCY WITH GENERAL PLAN

The Project site is located in an Industrial District, and further located in Subarea 8 as designated in the General Plan.

The Industrial District is envisioned to be made up of larger lots and buildings that support concentrations of business activity, with supporting retail and office uses. Projects are to be served by major City streets, and provide internal roadways that provide for internal circulation. Buildings are to be one- and two-story structures, with simple, attractive facades that face the street. Building materials should consist of masonry or concrete, and larger buildings should include multiple simple masses. Industrial Districts are intended to be separate from the City's neighborhoods and districts. Subarea 8 is envisioned as a transforming area that will create employment opportunities with a variety of industrial and office uses that take advantage of SR 86 and railroad proximity.

The Project conforms with the vision and policies established for the Industrial District and Subarea 8. It will provide a variety of employment opportunities from a broad range of business types, which are likely to include local business owners and regional or national brands. The Project will provide meaningful frontage on SR 86, and has been designed to provide defined architectural detail on the highway (see further discussion under Architectural Review, below). The Project is forecast to create about 740 jobs, which will range from professional and management position, to service industry employment. The commercial component located at the south end of the Project provides both a highway commercial function, and a local convenience for Project employees and surrounding businesses and residents.

CHANGE OF ZONE 20-01

As described above, the Project proposes a Change of Zone from Heavy Industrial (MH) to Manufacturing Service (MS) for 40.8± acres, and General Commercial (CG) for 2.2± acres of the site. Both these zoning designations are consistent with the Industrial District General Plan land use designation, insofar as MS allows a range of industrial uses, and CG in this case provides for supporting commercial uses that will serve both on-site employees and the general public. Given the site's location on SR 86, the less intense, more "industrial park" appearance generated by MS uses is desirable to provide a more attractive appearance on this regional roadway. Finally, the MS Zone, and the proposed Project, will create an employment center for the City in this location, and broaden residents' employment opportunities.

Conditional Use Permit 324

CUP 324 is proposed to allow for commercial cannabis businesses across the site. There are no specific users proposed at this time. However, by establishing the CUP, the individual buildings within the MS portion of the site could develop as cannabis businesses, without further consideration for their land use compatibility. Given the site's isolation from other parcels, and its location on a major City roadway, use of some of the buildings for cannabis cultivation or manufacturing would not impact residential neighborhoods within the City. The site provides for such a use in a controlled environment, and would be appropriate given the setting among other quasi-industrial uses. Cannabis uses, if proposed in the future, would be required to comply with Chapters 17.85 of the Zoning Ordinance, including the requirements for indoor use only, odor control, distance restrictions and compliance with all State laws and permitting. These restrictions ensure that the use can be operated with minimum conflicts with other land uses. Finally, any cannabis user would be required to the design established in Architectural Review 20-04, which ensures that the high quality of design required throughout the Project would be maintained. As described, the Findings for approval of this CUP can be made, and are provided below.

Conditional Use Permit 325

CUP 325 would allow the development of a drive-through restaurant on the 2.2 acre CG portion of the site. The use is consistent with the Industrial District designation of the General Plan, insofar as it provides a support commercial and retail use for the businesses within the Project, as well as travelers on SR 86. The site will have high visibility to the highway, and is provided direct access from the off-ramps and Airport Boulevard. The isolated nature of the Project limits the potential impacts associated with this use, including lights from vehicles and outdoor speaker systems on the residential uses on the south side of Airport Boulevard. The drive-through has been designed to provided sufficient stacking internal to the Project site, so as not to impact City roadways or the highway. As described, the Findings for approval of this CUP can be made, and are provided below.

Conditional Use Permit 326

CUP 326 is proposed to allow the service station and convenience store on the 2.2 acre CG portion of the site. The proposed use is consistent with the General Plan land use designation of Industrial District, insofar as it provides a supporting retail use for employees within the Project and travelers on SR 86. The use is also consistent with the MS Zone, as it is allowed with approval of a CUP. As with CUP 325, this CUP will provide a service to the employees and customers of the Project, as well as the traveling public on SR 86. The site is isolated, and is located internal to the Project, with sufficient maneuvering and stacking area to prevent interference with traffic movements on Airport Boulevard. The design of the building and the canopy are consistent with the design of the Project overall, and will integrate into the Project. The Findings for approval of this CUP can be made, and are provided below.

Architectural Review 20-04

AR 20-04 addresses the entire Project site, and provides a master plan for site design, architecture and landscaping within the Project. Although no specific users for the site are known at this time, the AR will assure cohesive and high quality development within the Project. As described above, and in Attachment 2 and below, the Project is proposed to develop in phases, and may take, depending on market forces, as long as 20 years to develop. As such, a master plan for the architecture and landscaping is critical to provide direction, but the AR may require amendment when specific users are identified, or changes in building footprints are identified to meet user needs. Any such changes would require amendment of the AR, which would be reviewed consistent with City requirements for such changes. As proposed, the Phasing Plan would assure that all Project components will be built in a unified manner, including the internal roadway system and perimeter landscaping, which are proposed in Phase 1. Development plans for the site will be provided as the applicant identifies buildings and areas for development, and will be processed through the Public Works and Building Departments, with the Planning Department assuring compliance with the approved AR.



Figure 3 – Phasing Plan

Future users would be required to conform to the AR, or would be required to amend it if inconsistent, which would assure that the City would maintain control on building designs throughout the build out of the Project. All references to page numbers within this subsection can be found in Attachment 3, Architectural Plan Set.

Site Design

The Project's circulation pattern provides an internal loop road, 30 to 35 feet in paved width, that connects all parts of the Project together. The primary roadway will extend from the Project entry along the entire western edge of the property, looping east at the northern boundary, and returning southerly to connect to the westerly road near the Project entry. Although parking is provided along this roadway, it is limited to assure fewer vehicle conflicts, insofar as interior parking areas are provided for each type of development within the site. Within this circulation system, the different types of buildings are organized together, so that the progression of uses extends from most customer-centric to least on the north end of the site. A second roadway, immediately north of the Project entry, is provided for direct access to the convenience store and service station. Please see page A-010.

The buildings are distributed throughout the site, and provide sufficient separation and setbacks from structures to allow for the masses of the buildings to be relieved. The setbacks and building heights provided meet the standards of the CG and MS zones, as applicable. Parking is also distributed throughout the site. A total of 682 parking stalls are provided, which exceeds the requirement for 668 stalls. As required by the Building Code, electrical vehicle and ADA spaces are included in this total.

Architecture

The arrangement of buildings within the Project is grouped by business type, with smaller building masses located closer to Airport Boulevard, and the largest building masses at the northern end of the site, in an area that will be less visible from City streets. Building architecture has been detailed for each area of the Project, and is provided on pages A-201 through A-206 of Attachment 3. Details are shown below.



Figure 4 – Retail Architecture

The architectural style of the Project is contemporary, and incorporates substantial articulation and materials/color variations to prevent monotony and long uninterrupted façades. A significant component of the design, as shown above and in Attachment 3, is that the buildings are architecturally detailed on all sides. This is particularly important in this case, where a number of buildings will back onto either the CVSC, and development beyond, and the SR 86. The level of detail will assure that the entire Project is cohesive, and that its appearance is consistent both on and off the Project site.

Building heights for the CG zone range between 24 and 28 feet, and for buildings within the MS zone, range from 24 to 50 feet, depending on the development area. Only the large warehouses are proposed to extend to 50 feet. These building heights are consistent with each zone’s development standards.

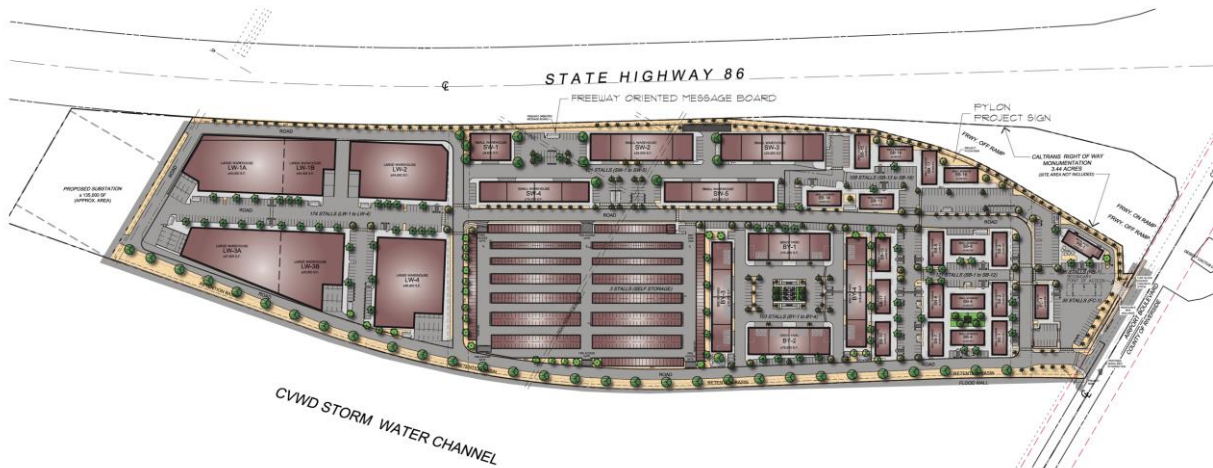


Figure 5 – Small Business and Large Warehouse Architecture

Landscaping

The overall landscaping plan is provided in Attachment 5. As shown, it provides for perimeter landscaping around the entire site, and landscaping along the internal roads and parking areas. The

species proposed include desert-adapted species, including Date and Mexican Fan Palms, Acacia, Bougainvillea, Ocotillo and Agave. A total of 12% of the site is landscaped.



Electronic Billboard

The plans for the proposed electronic sign on SR 86 are provided in Attachment. 4. The billboard is proposed for the center of the site, as shown in the site plan. The billboard is subject to the requirements of Municipal Code Section 5.48. Under that Section, the billboard is permitted by right in the MS zone, but is subject to development standards, including the following:

- Overall height no more than 40 feet above adjacent roadbed: Because of the 2 foot grade differential between the site and the SR 86 roadbed, although the sign will be 42 feet in height, it will be 40 feet above the roadbed.
- Sign face cannot exceed 700 square feet: The sign face is 14 feet by 48 feet, or a total of 672 square feet.



The sign will also be subject to Caltrans signage requirements for illuminated signs on a State highway.

Tentative Parcel Map 39721

The TPM will divide the property into 8 lots which are generally consistent with the development types proposed within the Project. It has been submitted as a condominium map, which will allow for the sale of buildings within the site, and will require a property owners' association for the maintenance of Project-wide improvements, including roads, parking areas, landscaping and

retention basins. The map has been reviewed by the City Engineer, and conforms to the City's subdivision standards. The map, as conditioned in the attached Resolution, meets City standards and provides for the logical subdivision of the property.

Development Agreement 25-02

The Development Agreement is governed by the provisions of Chapter 17.100 of the Zoning Ordinance. It allows for the City and the applicant to establish responsibilities of both parties to facilitate the build out of larger or more complex projects. In this case, the DA provides that Development Impact Fees will be frozen at current levels for 5 years; water service will be provided by CVWD's water line, until such time as the City can serve; and the City and developer will share costs for the IID substation proposed at the north end of the site. The DA has been negotiated between the City and developer, and reviewed by the City Attorney.

PROPOSED FINDINGS:

Zone Change

1. That the proposed Zone Change is consistent with applicable general and specific plans;

The Project site is designated Industrial District in the General Plan. The site is currently zoned Heavy Industrial and is proposed to be changed to Manufacturing Service and General Commercial. The Industrial District designation describes a wide range of industrial uses, including manufacturing and light industrial or business park uses, supported by commercial services in areas that are separated from residential neighborhoods. The designation is also intended to create jobs and diversify the economy for City residents. The proposed Zone Change implements the intent of the General Plan by allowing the development of a broad range of businesses, building types and services that will be consistent with the intent of the designation. The commercial zone created at the south end of the Project will allow for retail services that support the employees working within the site, the traveling public and surrounding businesses and residents. The Zone Change is consistent with the General Plan.

Conditional Use Permit 324

Pursuant to Coachella Municipal Guidelines Chapter 17.74, Conditional Uses, subject to the provisions of this chapter, the Planning Commission must make the following findings for the CUP:

1. The proposed use will not be in conflict with, but will be in harmony with and in accordance with the objectives of the general plan.

The proposed CUP will allow for the development of cannabis-related businesses within the site. The Project location is isolated from residential neighborhoods, and surrounded by the SR 86, CVSC and Airport Boulevard, providing separation and distance from residential neighborhoods, as directed in General Plan Land Use policies 7.3 and 7.4. The potential for cannabis-related businesses allows the City an additional component to its economy that provides a service to City residents. The CUP is consistent with the General Plan.

2. The proposed use will be located, designed, constructed, operated and maintained so as to be compatible with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity and shall not change the essential character of the same area.

The development of cannabis-related businesses in this part of the City is consistent with the industrial character existing to the west, along Grapefruit Boulevard, and expected within Subarea 8 of the General Plan, which envisions this part of the City for industrial and quasi-industrial development to expand the City's economic base and increase employment opportunities, while isolating industrial development from sensitive uses. All cannabis businesses would be operated within buildings, and would be required to comply with all City and State requirements, including State permitting. The use would be located in a master planned project which has established high quality design for all buildings, and any user within a Project building would be required to comply with the internal character of the Project.

3. Consideration is to be given to harmony in scale, bulk, coverage and density, to the availability of public facilities and utilities, to harmful effect, if any, upon desirable neighborhood character, to the generation of traffic and the capacity of surrounding streets, and to any other relevant impact of the development.

The CUP would allow cannabis businesses in buildings already designed and proposed within the Project. Because the design is established in AR 20-04, any user would occupy building(s) that are compatible with the Project as a whole. Further, the use is consistent and compatible with industrial and business park uses, and will not impact residential neighborhoods or sensitive receptors. Generally, cannabis cultivation and manufacturing uses are low traffic generators, and given that the traffic study for the Project has studied trip generation and impacts on City streets, and identified improvement projects required to keep traffic flows operating at acceptable levels, the CUP would not negatively impact traffic or the capacity of surrounding streets.

4. Where the proposed use may be potentially hazardous or disturbing to existing or reasonably expected neighboring uses, it must be justified by the common public interest as a benefit to the community as a whole.

The CUP will not result in hazardous uses or substances. Cannabis uses would likely use fertilizers and pesticides, which are highly regulated. Any cannabis business would require permits from and compliance with RWQCB and State licensing agencies, including the management and disposal of hazardous materials. In addition, cannabis uses would occur within a master planned industrial/business park development, and not adjacent to residents or other sensitive receptors.

5. The proposed use will include vehicular approaches to the property designed for reasonable minimal interference with traffic on surrounding public streets or roads.

The CUP will allow the cannabis use only within the MS portion of the site, and only within buildings that are planned for the site. Therefore, any cannabis business proposed under this CUP would be required to access the site from the main entry drive on Airport Boulevard, and would use the internal street system. The CUP does not interfere with traffic on surrounding streets

because the traffic study prepared for the Project as a whole analyzed traffic impacts and provided mitigation measures and improvements required to maintain acceptable levels of service on City streets.

Conditional Use Permit 325

Pursuant to Coachella Municipal Guidelines Chapter 17.74, Conditional Uses, subject to the provisions of this chapter, the Planning Commission must make the following findings for CUP 325:

1. The proposed use will not be in conflict with, but will be in harmony with and in accordance with the objectives of the general plan.

The CUP would allow a drive-through restaurant to occur within the 2.2± acres of CG land proposed at the south end of the Project site. As described in the staff report, this use will provide support for workers in the Project, the traveling public and nearby residents and businesses. This is consistent with the intent of the Industrial District, which provides for support services for employees in industrial projects in the District. The CUP is therefore consistent with the General Plan.

2. The proposed use will be located, designed, constructed, operated and maintained so as to be compatible with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity and shall not change the essential character of the same area.

The future drive-through on the Project site will be required to conform to AR 20-04, which master plans the architecture and landscaping for the entire Project site. The use is typical of a support service for an industrial or business park, or for commercial development at a freeway off-ramp. The area currently consists of a mix of businesses, vacant land and a mobile home park on the south side of Airport Boulevard, and is envisioned in Subarea 8 of the General Plan as an employment center area. Therefore, the CUP will be compatible with the character of the Project and the area, and will not change that character.

3. Consideration is to be given to harmony in scale, bulk, coverage and density, to the availability of public facilities and utilities, to harmful effect, if any, upon desirable neighborhood character, to the generation of traffic and the capacity of surrounding streets, and to any other relevant impact of the development.

The CUP would allow a drive-through in a building already designed and proposed within the Project for that purpose. Because the design is established in AR 20-04, any user would occupy a building that is compatible with the Project as a whole. Further, the use is consistent and compatible with industrial and business park uses, and will not impact residential neighborhoods or sensitive receptors. The Project EIR has studied trip generation and impacts on City streets, including a drive-through restaurant, and identified improvement projects required to keep traffic flows operating at acceptable levels. Therefore, the CUP would not negatively impact traffic or the capacity of surrounding streets.

4. Where the proposed use may be potentially hazardous or disturbing to existing or reasonably expected neighboring uses, it must be justified by the common public interest as a benefit to the community as a whole.

The development of a drive-through restaurant will not result in hazardous uses or the use of hazardous materials, insofar as a drive-through restaurant neither creates hazardous conditions, nor uses hazardous materials. Therefore, the CUP will not result in impacts to neighboring uses.

5. The proposed use will include vehicular approaches to the property designed for reasonable minimal interference with traffic on surrounding public streets or roads.

The CUP will allow the drive-through use only within a building planned for that use within the Project. Therefore, any drive-through proposed under this CUP would be required to access the site from the main entry drive on Airport Boulevard, and would use the internal street system. The traffic analysis included a study of stacking at the drive-through site, which found that all traffic would be contained on the site, and would not conflict with adjacent uses. The CUP does not interfere with traffic on surrounding streets because the traffic study prepared for the Project as a whole analyzed traffic impacts and provided mitigation measures and improvements required to maintain acceptable levels of service on City streets.

Conditional Use Permit 326

Pursuant to Coachella Municipal Guidelines Chapter 17.74, Conditional Uses, subject to the provisions of this chapter, the Planning Commission must make the following findings for CUP 326:

1. The proposed use will not be in conflict with, but will be in harmony with and in accordance with the objectives of the general plan.

The CUP would allow a convenience store and gas station to occur within the 2.2± acres of CG land proposed at the south end of the Project site. As described in the staff report, this use will provide support for workers in the Project, the traveling public and nearby residents and businesses. This is consistent with the intent of the Industrial District, which provides for support services for employees in industrial projects in the District. The CUP is therefore consistent with the General Plan.

2. The proposed use will be located, designed, constructed, operated and maintained so as to be compatible with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity and shall not change the essential character of the same area.

The future convenience store and gas station on the Project site will be required to conform to AR 20-04, which master plans the architecture and landscaping for the entire Project site. The use is typical of a support service for an industrial or business park, or for commercial development at a freeway off-ramp. The area currently consists of a mix of businesses, vacant land and a mobile home park on the south side of Airport Boulevard, and is envisioned in Subarea 8 of the General

Plan as an employment center area. Therefore, the CUP will be compatible with the character of the Project and the area, and will not change that character.

3. Consideration is to be given to harmony in scale, bulk, coverage and density, to the availability of public facilities and utilities, to harmful effect, if any, upon desirable neighborhood character, to the generation of traffic and the capacity of surrounding streets, and to any other relevant impact of the development.

The CUP would allow a convenience store and gas station in a building already designed and proposed within the Project for that purpose. Because the design is established in AR 20-04, any user would occupy a building that is compatible with the Project as a whole. Further, the use is consistent and compatible with industrial and business park uses, and will not impact residential neighborhoods or sensitive receptors. The Project EIR has studied trip generation and impacts on City streets, including a convenience store and gas station, and identified improvement projects required to keep traffic flows operating at acceptable levels. Therefore, the CUP would not negatively impact traffic or the capacity of surrounding streets.

4. Where the proposed use may be potentially hazardous or disturbing to existing or reasonably expected neighboring uses, it must be justified by the common public interest as a benefit to the community as a whole.

The development of a convenience store and gas station will result in the presence of large amounts of fuel on the property. The storage and dispensing of fuel is highly regulated by County, State and federal agencies, and any operator would be subject to these regulations. Because the regulations are intended to protect the public from hazards associated with the use, the CUP will not result in impacts to neighboring uses.

5. The proposed use will include vehicular approaches to the property designed for reasonable minimal interference with traffic on surrounding public streets or roads.

The CUP will allow the convenience store and gas station only within a building planned for that use within the Project. Therefore, any such use proposed under this CUP would be required to access the site from the main entry drive on Airport Boulevard, and would use the internal street system. The traffic analysis included a study of traffic accessing the gas station, which found that all traffic would be contained on the site, and would not conflict with adjacent uses. The CUP does not interfere with traffic on surrounding streets because the traffic study prepared for the Project as a whole analyzed traffic impacts and provided mitigation measures and improvements required to maintain acceptable levels of service on City streets.

Tentative Parcel Map 39721

Pursuant to Coachella Municipal Guidelines Chapter 16.12, Tentative Map, subject to the provisions of this chapter, the Planning Commission must make the following findings for Tentative Map approval:

The Planning Commission shall deny approval of a tentative map, as required by the Subdivision Map Act, if it makes the following findings:

1. That the proposed map is not consistent with applicable general and specific plans;

The Project site is located in the Industrial District as defined by the General Plan. The TPM proposes the subdivision of the parcel consistent with the uses included in the Project, which are allowable and foreseen uses in the General Plan. The TPM will therefore be consistent with the General Plan, and this finding does not apply to the proposed TPM.

2. That the design or improvement of the proposed subdivision is not consistent with applicable general and specific plans;

The General Plan designates the Project site an Industrial District. The TPM includes improvements, including streets, retention basins, utility connections and other features that are necessary for the operation of the Project, and consistent with the City's standard requirements, including requirements for industrial, business park and commercial uses. The size and shape of the parcels are consistent with the various uses proposed within the Project, and the design includes improvements to serve all of these uses. The TPM will therefore be consistent with the requirements of the General Plan, and this finding does not apply to the proposed TPM.

3. That the site is not physically suitable for the type of development;

The Project site is generally flat, and does not contain any physical features which would prohibit or constrain development. The Project will connect to Airport Boulevard, and has integrated plans for improvements to the Airport Boulevard bridge which are consistent with the County's plans for that bridge. The distribution of buildings, streets and other facilities within the Project site allows for the safe and orderly movement of vehicles and people throughout the site. Therefore, this finding does not apply to the proposed TPM.

4. That the site is not physically suitable for the proposed density of development;

The Project is proposed in the MS and CG zones, and proposes development consistent with the development standards of both zones. The Project includes all of the ancillary facilities needed for the proper operation of a master planned industrial/commercial project, including roads, parking areas, retention basins and utility connections necessary for the safe operation of all components of the Project. The site is therefore physically suitable for the Project, and this finding does not apply to the proposed TPM.

5. That the design of the subdivision or the proposed improvements are likely to cause substantial environmental damage or substantially and unavoidably injure fish or wildlife or their habitat;

An EIR was prepared for the proposed Project which analyzes all the potential impacts of the Project, and proposed mitigation measures where necessary to reduce impacts to less than significant levels. Mitigation measures have been applied to assure that impacts to biological

resources, including birds and bats which could occur on the site, will be less than significant. The EIR also found that the Project would have significant and unavoidable impacts associated with VMT generated from the site. However, the City Council will consider, as allowed under CEQA, whether the benefits of the project outweigh the impacts associated with VMT, and make Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations when they consider the Project for final approval. The approval of the Project would also include a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program which will assure that the required mitigation measures are implemented throughout construction and operation of the Project. Therefore, this finding does not apply to the proposed TPM.

6. That the design of the subdivision or the type of improvements is likely to cause serious public health problems;

The TPM proposes the subdivision of 43± acres of land into 8 parcels to facilitate the development of a master planned industrial/business park/commercial project. All components of the Project have been reviewed by the City Engineer, and the City's Utilities Department to assure that sufficient improvements and facilities are proposed to adequately serve the Project area, including all of the uses proposed. These requirements and conditions of approval are designed to assure that no impacts to public health will occur. Therefore, this finding will not apply to the proposed TPM.

7. That the design of the subdivision or the type of improvements will conflict with easements, acquired by the public at large, for access through or use of property within the proposed subdivision. In this connection, the governing body may approve a map if it finds that alternate easements, for access or for use, will be provided, and that these will be substantially equivalent to ones previously acquired by the public.

The proposed TPM will not conflict with any public easements acquired for access or use by the public at large within the proposed subdivision. The Riverside County Office of the Fire Marshal and Engineering Department/Public Works Department have reviewed and approved the access points to the site. The subdivision of land will not conflict with easements for access through or use of property and as such, the subdivision's design is confirmed to be in harmony with existing public easements. Therefore, this finding does not apply to the proposed TPM.

Architectural Review 20-04

Pursuant to Coachella Municipal Guidelines Chapter 17.72, Architectural Review, subject to the provisions of this chapter, the Planning Commission must make the following findings for the Architectural Review:

1. The proposed project is consistent with the general plan;

AR 20-04 will result in an industrial and commercial master planned project with uses permitted and conditionally permitted in the Industrial District of the General Plan, and the MS and CG zones of the Municipal Code. The design and distribution of the buildings is consistent with the development standards and requirements of the Industrial District as specified in the Land Use Element. The AR will also result in the generation of jobs opportunities for City residents, and provides an isolated site which does not conflict with surrounding neighborhoods.

2. The proposed project complies with zoning regulations;

The buildings, parking and ancillary structures proposed in the AR conform to the development standards of the MS and CG zones, as applicable. Setbacks and building heights are consistent with the requirements in each zone, and do not exceed these standards. The Project is consistent with Fire Department and Engineering requirements, and has been conditioned appropriately to comply with City standards.

3. The proposed project is consistent with the city's design guidelines;

The Project will provide a high quality design for an industrial, business park and commercial project, including a unified design theme for architecture and landscaping. All future users within the Project will be required to maintain the same level of development and maintenance to assure the long term quality of the Project.

4. The proposed development will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare, or materially injurious to properties and improvements in the vicinity;

The Project proposes a master planned, self-contained development that will be isolated from sensitive receptors and residential neighborhoods in the City. The uses likely to locate within the Project are not expected to propose businesses that contain or use hazardous materials, and those that could will be regulated by City, County, State and federal agencies. The improvement of the property will facilitate the development of other surrounding properties by extending utility services in this area of the City, which is still developing and expanding.

5. The proposed project is located, designed, constructed, operated and maintained so as to be compatible with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity and shall not change the essential character of the same area.

The Project is proposed in the Industrial District, and in Subarea 8, as defined in the General Plan. This area is envisioned for long term economic growth in the City, and for the development of projects similar in style, use and scope to that proposed by the Project. The Project's design consists of a unified architectural and landscaping theme that will assure a high quality of development and support future developments in the area to also develop to a high standard. The Project will include a Property Owners' Association or similar mechanism to manage the Project's facilities in total, and assure long term maintenance of the site.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE:

A notice of public hearing to consider the Project was published in the Desert Sun, the newspaper of record, on March 13, 2026, and a public hearing notice was mailed to property owners within a radius of 300- feet of the subject property on March 13, 2026, pursuant to Section 17.74.010G of the Coachella Municipal Code. At the time of issuance of this staff report, staff had not received public comments on this application.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The City determined that the Project as proposed could have a significant impact on the environment, and required the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The EIR analyzed all of the required environmental issue areas and found that mitigation measures could be applied to the Project to reduce impacts to less than significant levels for all issue areas except the Project's impacts from the generation of Vehicle Miles Traveled. As described in the EIR, those impacts remain significant and unavoidable. The EIR is available at: <https://www.coachella.org/departments/development-services/environmental-reviews>

The City circulated the Draft EIR for public comment between July 1 and September 3, 2025. During that time, the City received 17 comments from various public agencies and private parties. In response to these comments, the City prepared a Final EIR/Response to Comments, which is provided as Attachment 6. The Final EIR contains all responses to public comments, changes made to the EIR as a result of these responses, and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Project.

Because the EIR identified that VMT impacts would be significant and unavoidable, the City Council will need to consider whether the benefits of the Project outweigh the impacts associated with VMT, as provided in CEQA Guidelines Section 15093. As stated in that section:

“CEQA requires the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered “acceptable.””

As provided in the Resolution, the Planning Commission would recommend not only that the City Council certify the EIR, but that City Staff prepare and provide Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations for the City Council's consideration. In this case, it is Staff's recommendation that the impacts associated with VMT, which at 30.2 VMT per employee will exceed the County's 29.0 VMT per employee, even with the implementation of mitigation measures, are outweighed by the economic, legal, social and technological benefits associated with the Project, and that the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council adopt Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations for the Project.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1) Approve Resolution No. 2026-09 recommending that the City Council approve Zone Change 20-01, CUP 324, CUP 325, CUP 326, Tentative Parcel Map 39721, AR 20-04 and DA 25-02 with the findings and conditions as recommended by Staff, and certify the Coachella Airport Business Park Development Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 2023040106), including Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

- 2) Approve Resolution No. 2026-09 recommending that the City Council approve recommending that the City Council approve Zone Change 20-01, CUP 324, CUP 325, CUP 326, Tentative Parcel Map 39721, AR 20-04 and DA 25-02 with the findings and conditions as recommended by Staff, with modifications as proposed by the Planning Commission, and certify the Coachella Airport Business Park Development Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 2023040106), including Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations.
- 3) Deny Resolution No. 2026-09
- 4) Continue this item and provide staff and the applicant with direction.

RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE(S):

Staff recommends Alternative #1 for recommending that the City Council approve Zone Change 20-01, CUP 324, CUP 325, CUP 326, Tentative Parcel Map 39721, AR 20-04 and DA 25-02 and certify the Coachella Airport Business Park Development Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 2023040106), including Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Attachments:

1. Resolution No. 2026-09
2. Tentative Parcel Map, Grading Plan and Phasing Plan
3. Architectural Plan Set
4. Pylon Sign Plans
5. Landscape Plans
6. Final EIR and MMRP
7. Published Copy of the Notice of Public Hearing