

MBCA



morongo basin conservation association

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May 15, 2026

San Bernardino County Land Use Services Department
Planning Commission / Planning Division
385 N. Arrowhead Avenue, 1st Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92415

Submitted via email to: [luis.rodriquez@lus.sbcounty.gov]

cc Dawn.Rowe@bos.sbcounty.gov
chuckb193@outlook.com

Subject: FORMAL OPPOSITION – Proposed Self-Storage Project in Lucerne Valley Commercial Core Project Application / Case Number: PROJ-2025-00039 (APN 0450-141-08)

Project Location: Near Highway 18 and Highway 247, Lucerne Valley, CA

Dear Mr. Rodriquez,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed project. The Morongo Basin Conservation (MBCA) has significant concerns about the proposed 5-acre, 4,220 square foot self-storage facility planned near the intersection of Highway 18 and Highway 247. While the parcel may hold a commercial zoning designation, the industrial nature, massive scale, and low-utility layout of a self-storage facility directly conflicts with the binding directives of the San Bernardino Countywide Plan and the Lucerne Valley Community Action Guide (CAG).

We object to this project based on the following specific planning discrepancies:

1. Destruction of the "Core" Community Vision: The project site sits less than one block from the main four-way intersection—the designated "heart" of Lucerne Valley. *The Community Profile mandates preserving this zone for high-priority local services (such as a pharmacy or hardware store) and community gathering spaces. A self-storage facility creates "dead frontage," eliminating pedestrian engagement and permanently displacing prime real estate meant for active economic use.*
2. Failure to Maintain Rural Desert Character: The Community Action Guide (CAG) *places heavy emphasis on preserving Lucerne Valley's "small-town character" and scenic, open-range visual*

gateways. Erecting a massive, industrial-style storage structure at the primary entrance to the town severely degrades the community's desired "village" feel.

3. Negative Economic Development Impacts: The Countywide Plan *explicitly calls for commercial projects that generate local employment and provide essential daily services*. Self-storage facilities require virtually no on-site labor post-construction, locking up 5 acres of vital commercial land while generating zero meaningful jobs for local residents.
4. Pedestrian Safety and Connectivity Disruption: *Strategic goals for the downtown core focus on improving walkability and safety* near the Highway 18/247 junction. This project relies on *heavy perimeter fencing, automated security gates, and commercial truck traffic, creating a hostile environment for pedestrians and permanently fracturing downtown connectivity*.

A 4,220 square foot industrial facility is fundamentally disproportionate to the neighboring, smaller, locally owned storefronts that form the backbone of the Lucerne Valley economy. Additionally, we question the viability of a self-storage facility in Lucerne Valley. The most recent data indicates the population of Lucerne Valley is less than 6,000 people with less than 2,000 households. The population density is 50.5 inhabitants per square mile; it is not a densely populated area. If the proposed development fails, it will be difficult to redevelop the site given the costs to demolish and remove the infrastructure from the failed self-storage facility. There is developable land outside the heart of the community that would be more suitable for development that would not negatively impact future economic opportunities.

Recently, the Board of Supervisors upheld a decision to allow development of the Sienna Solar project. The long-term impacts of this solar development are universally negative, particularly with respect to the health of residents and local property values. If this current project is granted a permit, it will be more of the same – development that does not support the community interests and negatively impacts economic opportunity. Lucerne Valley is identified as economically disadvantaged. As noted previously, this project will not benefit the economy of the community, and it ties up valuable real estate which should be used to support high-priority local services. We ask that the County not set aside stated community interests in favor of this inappropriate commercial development.

We urge the Land Use Services Department and the Planning Commission to deny the permits for this project and uphold the integrity of the San Bernardino Countywide Plan. The county must protect the town center for developments that align with the community's vision. The unincorporated areas of the county are not sacrifice zones.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and service to our community.

Sincerely,



Erin Gatlin
Vice President MBCA