



Staff Report

Agenda Item No. D-3

To: City of Imperial Planning Commission

From: Yvonne Cordero, Planner

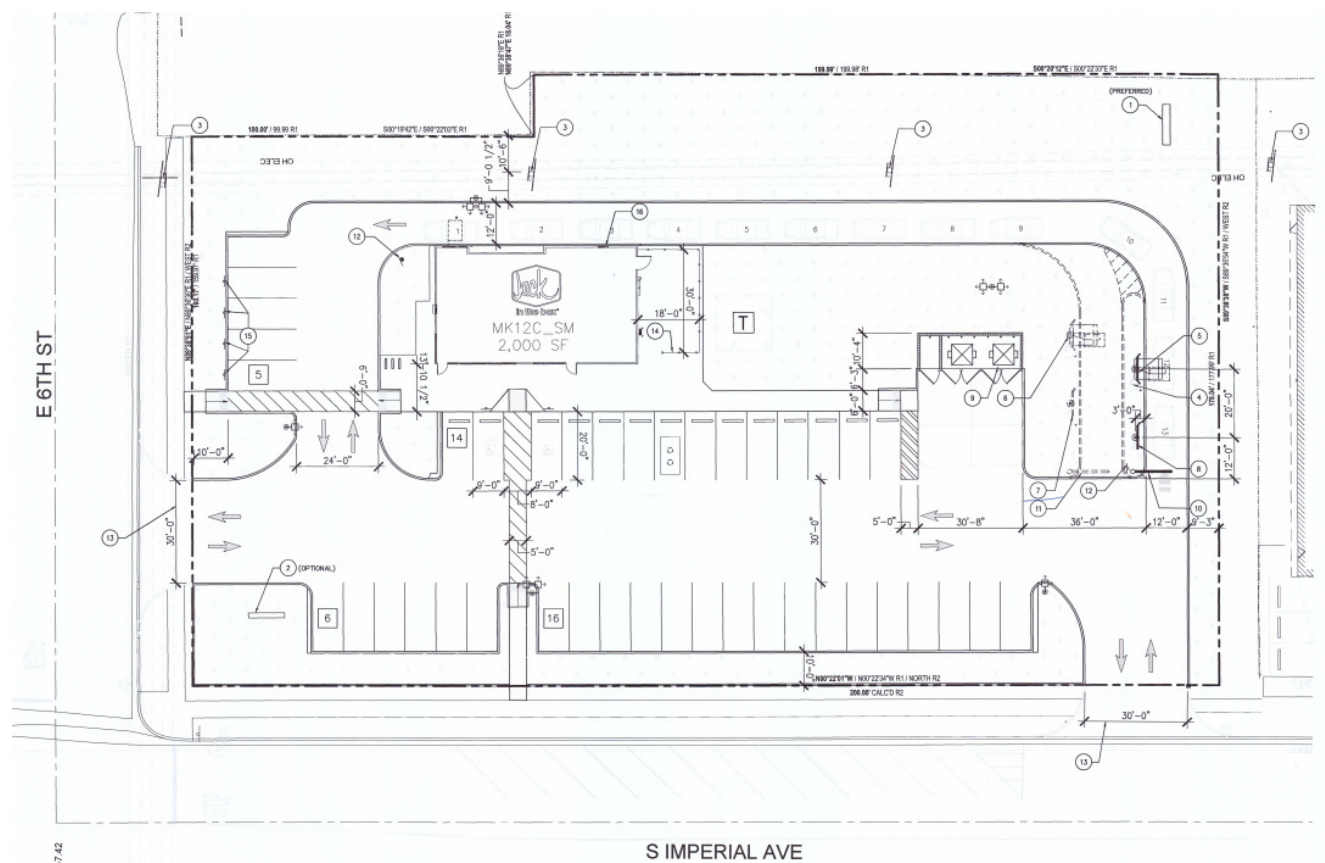
Date: April 14, 2025

Applicant:	Steve Schneider
Project Location:	304 S. Imperial Avenue
Project Description:	Conditional Use Permit 25-03 to allow a drive-thru at a proposed Jack in the Box Restaurant
Zoning:	Village Commercial (VC)
Environmental:	Categorically Exempt
Recommendation:	Approve, subject to Conditions of Approval

Background

Steve Schneider from Lyons Warren Engineers & Architects submitted a Conditional Use Permit application for a Jack in the Box Restaurant to be located at 304 S. Imperial Avenue. The proposed project consists of the development of a 2,000-square-foot fast-food restaurant with a drive-thru, thirty-three parking spaces, five dedicated waiting parking stalls, and landscaping along the perimeter of the project site.

The proposed Jack in the Box is anticipated to bring significant community benefits to the City of Imperial. Job creation is a primary advantage, as the new establishment will offer employment opportunities during the construction and operational periods. The restaurant will also contribute to increased tax revenue through sales and property taxes. This additional revenue can support vital public services, infrastructure improvements, and community programs, enhancing the quality of life for Imperial residents. Furthermore, the restaurant will offer enhanced services for residents by providing a convenient and accessible location for food and beverages. The inclusion of a drive-thru facility caters to the needs of busy community members seeking quick and efficient service without leaving their vehicles. The convenience and accessibility align with Jack in the Box's history of developing popular establishments that serve local patrons and attract regional travelers intersecting the City via Highway 86 - designated as the City's main arterial roadway and primary path, thus promoting economic growth and elevating the City's financial profile.



Project Location



Discussion/CEQA Analysis

Land Use - The subject site is zoned within the Village Commercial (VC) Zone, which is intended as the social and civic heart of the City of Imperial. It features attractive housing, small retail shops, outdoor dining, parks, and civic facilities in a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, and family-oriented atmosphere. The surrounding designated land uses are as follows:

Direction	Land Use	Zoning
North	Raspalandia and Together for Children Preschool	Village Commercial (VC)
South	City of Imperial City Hall	Residential Apartment (RA)
East	Faith Assembly Church and School	Neighborhood Commercial (C-1)
West	Residences and Melissa Michael's Spa	Village Commercial (VC)

The relationship between land use and zoning compatibility within the Imperial General Plan is important for orderly development. Land uses must be arranged for compatibility with abutting land uses and properties should be consistent with the land use policy map. Using the General Plan's Land Use Compatibility Matrix, the adjacent land uses of Village and Neighborhood Commercial are compatible land uses. Although City Hall is located within a Residential Apartment Zone, public facilities are compatible land uses within all zoning designations throughout the City.

Traffic and Circulation - The project site is fronting and accessed directly from Highway 86. Highway 86 is designated as one of the City's major arterials that move traffic through a City from one point to another. Mitigating the potential for excessive drive-thru queues extending out to Imperial Avenue was a significant concern for this project.

Traffic mitigation measures include:

- 1) Placing the ordering boards forward to allow additional queue space.
- 2) Imperial Avenue traffic is routed to the 6th Street entrance with directional signage.
- 3) Installation of five waiting stalls for patrons waiting for their orders.
- 4) Option to close Imperial Avenue entrance and install future traffic control devices and directional signage.
- 5) Option to install a future secondary ordering lane.

Parking – Parking requirements were reviewed during the Site Plan Review process and determined to have met the requirements.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis - Due to the retail nature of the project being a restaurant less than 50,000 square feet and the project site being within the low VMT Traffic Analysis Zone, no VMT Analysis is required.

Environmental Compliance

The proposed drive-thru restaurant qualifies for a Categorical Exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per Section 15332 – Infill Development Projects. Projects that qualify for this exemption are those that are consistent with the General Plan, are within city limits, are no more than five (5) acres, and are generally surrounded by urban uses without significant environmental effects on environmental resources. The project does not significantly impact air quality and will not result in an increase in population or demand for public services that exceed the public utilities' capacity. Mitigation measures such as a landscaped perimeter for noise level reduction and the implementation of directional signage to eliminate traffic concerns are conditionally imposed on the proposed project.

Evaluation

The Zoning Ordinance provides flexibility in the regulation of uses to ensure that unusual characteristics of certain uses are properly addressed in furtherance of the Imperial Zoning Ordinance. Section 24.19.340 of the City of Imperial Zoning Ordinance requires that the Commission make specific findings when reviewing a Conditional Use Permit. The required findings are listed below in ***bold italics***, followed by an evaluation:

1. ***That the proposed location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed use is in accord with the Title and Purpose of this Ordinance, the purpose of the zone in which the site is located, the Imperial General Plan, and the development policies and standard of the City.***

The subject site is within the Village Commercial (VC) Zone, intended as the social and civic heart of the City compatible with commercial and residential environments. The proposed restaurant will provide patrons of the surrounding commercial businesses and residents in proximity to the project site with an enjoyable meeting place. Its operation is consistent with the objectives of the Village Commercial Zone and the City's development goals.

2. ***That the location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed use will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or be materially detrimental to adjacent uses, residents, buildings, structures, or natural resources with***

consideration given to those items listed in Section 24.19.340.B of the Imperial Zoning Ordinance.

The location is ideal for a Jack in the Box restaurant. Its use would be consistent with the General Plan and would offer an additional eating establishment for Downtown Imperial and neighboring communities. The restaurant does not appear to be detrimental to adjacent uses, residents, or buildings.

- 3. That the proposed location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed use and the conditions under which it would be operated or maintained will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare, or materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity.***

With the established Conditions of Approval and traffic mitigation measures, the proposed project will not negatively impact public health, safety, or welfare, or be materially injurious to properties in the vicinity.

- 4. That the proposed Conditional Use will comply with each of the applicable provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, except for any approved Variance.***

The proposed project complies with all applicable provisions of the City of Imperial's Zoning Ordinance. There are no variances requested or required for this project, and all zoning regulations and requirements will be fully adhered to. By meeting these conditions, the project ensures alignment with the City's zoning standards and regulations.

Public Notification

The public hearing scheduled for April 23, 2025, was duly noticed in the Holtville Tribune and Calexico Chronicle, newspapers of general circulation, on April 10, 2025. A Notice of Public Hearing was mailed to all property owners within 300 feet of the property. The City of Imperial has not received any public comments for or against this project as of the date of this report's publication.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Planning Commission conduct a public hearing to receive comments for and against the project. Unless sufficient evidence to the contrary is presented at the public hearing, Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve Conditional Use Permit 25-03 to allow a drive-thru at the proposed Jack in the Box restaurant.

Attachments

- Attachment A – Resolution PC2025-07 with Conditions of Approval
- Attachment B – Submitted Project Plans

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Othon Mora', enclosed within a blue oval-shaped stamp or seal.

Othon Mora, MCM, CBO
Community Development Director