



# staff report

Agenda Item No. C-1

**To: Imperial Planning Commission**  
**From: Yvonne Cordero, Planner**  
**Date: July 16, 2025**  
**Subject: 2025 City of Imperial Service Area Plan**

## **Background**

The Service Area Plan (SAP) outlines the City's public services and facilities, estimates the current and future demand, and describes how they may be developed or financed. The SAP is required to be updated every five years by cities and be approved by the Imperial County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo). LAFCo is a countywide agency that regulates boundary changes and changes to the sphere of influence of cities and special districts in Imperial County. When evaluating these requests, the SAP is used to demonstrate the capacity and ability for local jurisdictions to accommodate future growth and demand resulting boundary changes. As it relates to the City of Imperial, an updated SAP is required prior to LAFCo reviewing any proposals to annex territory into the city.

## **Discussion/Analysis**

The 2025 Service Area Plan (SAP) provides a comprehensive evaluation of the City of Imperial's capacity to serve existing development and accommodate future growth within both the city limits and the broader sphere of influence. The SAP is intended to satisfy the requirements of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act and is used by the Imperial County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) when reviewing proposals involving annexations and boundary changes.

The SAP covers a 20-year planning horizon from 2025 to 2045. During this period, the City's population is projected to grow from approximately 22,853 to 43,061. At full buildout of the city limits and all annexation areas, the total estimated population could reach approximately 70,224, though that scenario extends beyond the current planning period.

Key elements of the SAP include:

- **Performance Standards:** Each service, such as administrative services, drainage, fire protection, law enforcement, parks, libraries, circulation, wastewater, and water, is evaluated based on defined service standards. For example, 842 sq. ft. of administrative space per 1,000 population, or 1.6 sworn police officers per 1,000 residents.
- **Facility Adequacy and Deficiencies:** The SAP identifies current gaps in several service areas. These include a shortfall of administrative building space, park acreage, police staffing and facilities, and fire apparatus. The SAP also outlines projected infrastructure needs based on population growth and increased development activity.
- **Phasing and Annexation Planning:** The SAP divides future annexation areas into 5-, 10-, and 20-year horizons, based on anticipated development timing. These phasing estimates support targeted infrastructure planning and help the City sequence capital investments effectively.
- **Mitigation Measures:** The SAP recommends that the City continue monitoring annual service demands and proactively address deficiencies through capital improvements. Development projects are expected to fund or construct infrastructure improvements in compliance with City standards and regulatory requirements, particularly for drainage, water, and wastewater systems.
- **Financing Strategy:** Funding sources include the General Fund, development impact fees, special assessments, Community Facilities Districts (CFDs), bonds, and user fees. The SAP also identifies potential state and federal grant opportunities to support capital projects.

Following internal review and incorporation of feedback from City departments and the Development Review Committee, the SAP was presented to the Imperial County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) and formally approved on June 26, 2025. This approval allows the City to move forward with future annexation requests and confirms that sufficient planning is in place to provide municipal services to anticipated growth areas.

**Environmental Compliance**

The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), per Section 15306, Class 6, which consists of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities that do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource.

**Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission review the 2025 Service Area Plan and **APPROVE** Resolution PC2025-10 (Attachment B), recommending City Council approval of the 2025 Service Area Plan.

**Attachments**

Attachment A – 2025 Service Area Plan

Attachment B – DRAFT Resolution PC2025-10

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Othon Mora', is written over a horizontal blue line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Othon Mora, MCM, CBO  
Community Development Director