

The Yuma County Board of Adjustment met in a regular session on September 16, 2025. The meeting was held at Aldrich Auditorium at 2351 West 26th Street, Yuma, Arizona.

**CALL TO ORDER:** At 1:00 p.m., Chairman Saltzer convened the Board of Adjustment meeting. Board members present: Eric Saltzer, Mike Pancrazi, Randy Ferguson, Rosalie Lines. Board member Harper was absent. Others present: Planning Director Maggie Castro, AICP; Deputy County Attorney Minda Davy, Associate Planner Amber Kelly and PZ Commission Administrative Specialist Heidi Ramirez.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chairman Saltzer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ITEM No. 3: Approval of the Board of Adjustment Regular meeting minutes of August 19, 2025.**

MOTION (LINES /PANCRAZI): Approve as presented.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Saltzer- AYE; Pancrazi- AYE; Ferguson- AYE; Lines- AYE

The motion carried 4-0.

**ITEM No. 4: Variance Case No. 25-15: Chris Thompson, agent for Jaime and Debra Meza, requests a variance from the Yuma County Zoning Ordinance, Section 906.00 (A)—Parking Area Paving and Surfacing, to not comply with paving and surfacing requirements for a community facility on a parcel 2.0 gross acres in size zoned Suburban Site Built-2 acre minimum (SSB-2), Assessor's Parcel Number 212-02-030, located on the south side of County 16 th Street approximately 800 feet of Avenue 2½ E, Yuma, Arizona.**

Amber Kelly, Associate Planner, presented Variance Case No. 25-15 recommending denial of based on:

1. Staff finds approval of this variance may have an adverse effect of public health, safety and welfare.
2. Staff finds there are no specific peculiar conditions applicable to this property to warrant granting of this variance.
3. Staff finds the condition is self-imposed.

If the Board of Adjustment approves this Variance, staff suggests attaching the following conditions:

1. This Variance is valid for the time limits outlined in Section 403.07 of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. The approval of this variance is based on the site plan submitted by the applicant. Any change from the site plan will require approval of a new variance by the Board of Adjustment.
3. Provide a maintenance plan for compacted gravel or crushed stone to stabilize the ADA areas to stay level and firm.
4. All required permits must be issued and finalized according to adopted Building and Fire Code requirements of Yuma County.

Board member Lines asked staff what the meaning of PM10 was.

Chairman Saltzer explained it was Particulate Matter of ten microns or larger, meaning it was dust and dust control.

Chairman Saltzer opened the discussion to the public.

Chris Thompson, 675 West 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Yuma Arizona, agent for Debra and Jaime Meza, 2613 E. County 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Yuma Arizona, approached the board requesting a variance to allow a hybrid parking design for their event venue. Their proposal includes paving the driveway, roundabout, and ADA-accessible spaces while using crushed gravel (AB cover) for the stationary parking spots to maintain a natural, Tuscan-style aesthetic. The design addresses dust control and ADA access, but Mr. Thompson noted a misunderstanding from Ty Martinez and Mr. Fell, clarifying that they are not leaving areas as raw dirt, but providing surfacing that controls dust. They emphasized that the site is low-volume and low-use, and agreed to staff's proposed conditions and maintenance plan, and expressed willingness to accept additional conditions if required.

Board member Pancrazi inquired if in the parking spaces, there was black top through and the dimension and it would fit two cars.

Mr. Thompson stated the dimensions were 26 feet and it was a two-way driveway. Mr. Thompson also noted they needed to have it that way for fire department access to the building and also the turn-around that is in the site plan would be paved.

Board member Pancrazi asked if the parking stalls were to be lined, graveled or concreted.

Mr. Thompson explained that permanent tire stops would be installed to designate and separate each parking space. He also clarified that the ADA spaces would be paved in concrete, painted, and striped for proper accessibility.

Board member Pancrazi asked where the drainage would be in the property, due to the property size.

Mr. Thompson noted that all drainage would remain on the parcel, with water naturally draining into the parking lot area itself. He explained that the gravel surface helps water percolate into the ground rather than sheet off, allowing the entire site to serve as water retention instead of relying on small basins. Since the site consists of sandy soil with a high percolation rate, they believe the gravel design will improve water dissipation.

Chairman Saltzer asked Mr. Thompson if the proposal for the hybrid paving solution got a chance to be reviewed.

Mr. Thompson stated the proposal was submitted with the variance request and believed it was important to clarify that their variance request was misunderstood as a proposal for a dirt parking lot. Mr. Thompson emphasized that their plan is more developed, with paved driveways, ADA spaces, gravel surfacing, and other improvements, and that this intent may have been lost in translation during the review process. They reiterated that they are not proposing 120 unpaved spaces, but rather a hybrid design.

Board member Ferguson asked if the turn-around was graveled or paved.

Mr. Thompson confirmed that paving would extend from the driveway through the main drive and around the turnaround. The ADA spaces would also be paved and connected to the sidewalk, which then connects to a paved concrete path leading directly to the building entrance.

Board member Pancrazi inquired what was on the far right of the parking areas.

Mr. Thompson discussed the use of gravel for the overflow perimeter, noting it would provide an option for vehicles to turn around or pass through designated breaks without needing to exit fully. While most of the area would remain gravel, the section intended for fire truck access must be paved in compliance with code requirements, but the applicants are open to other conditions the Board may approve.

Mr. Thompson also emphasized the importance of guest experience upon arrival, noting this venue will be the first of its kind in Yuma. Rather than stepping from asphalt directly into the Tuscan-Italian inspired setting, the design envisions guests arriving onto firm natural gravel, which better supports the desired aesthetic. However, the plan also ensures compliance with all building code requirements, including fire department access and ADA accessibility and the request pertains specifically to the zoning ordinance.

Board member Pancrazi asked if the applicants thought about the idea of paving the other side of the parking lot, rather than gravel.

Mr. Thompson acknowledged that the Board may request additional paving. The design presented reflects the applicant's ideal preference, but they would be open to a condition requiring the other side also to be paved if necessary.

Board member Pancrazi commented the PM10 was concerning.

Mr. Thompson commented dust from nearby farming, noting that fields adjacent to the site create significant dust and mentioned that while paving is often suggested as a dust-control measure, doing so across dunes or farmland is not practical.

Mr. Thompson also noted that the area is not a street or high-speed roadway, but rather a low traffic setting where vehicles move at approximately five miles per hour or less, with pedestrian activity expected. Given the site-specific nature of the variance, this supports the suitability of leaving portions of the area unpaved.

Chairman Saltzer inquired about the variance that was proposed, why the hybrid solution was not included in the variance.

Mr. Thompson clarified it should have been, since they submitted the information with the variance.

Planning Director Maggie Castro, AICP, stated the request that was before the Board was to not comply with the county parking requirements, which would require that the whole parking and circulation area be paved. They are proposing paving the driveway, the circulation area, but not the parking spaces. They're proposing gravel for the parking spaces.

Debra Meza, owner, explained that events at the venue are typically limited to Saturday evenings and generally involve a modest number of guests and vehicles. Large gatherings occur only occasionally, with most events hosting 50–100 attendees. Traffic impact is therefore expected to be minimal, and all activities will remain within the agreed-upon code requirements.

There being no one else to come forward, Chairman Saltzer closed the discussion to the public.

Chairman Saltzer inquired staff regarding variance request related to paving requirements under the Yuma County Zoning Ordinance.

Planning Director Maggie Castro, AICP, noted that Yuma County Zoning Ordinance requires circulation and parking areas to be paved with Portland cement or asphalt concrete. The applicant proposed to pave the driveway and cul-de-sac, where most traffic will occur, while using gravel for the parking spaces since vehicles enter them at very low speed and there may have been a misunderstanding—particularly from ADOT which may have been under the impression that no parking lot improvements were being proposed and there are.

Chairman Saltzer commented there being similar areas in the County where you see agricultural trucks parked in large lots, where there is no gravel and assumed those fall out of the dust compliance issues.

Planning Director Maggie Castro, AICP, indicated that those were agriculture exemptions, exempt from zoning.

Board member Pancrazi inquired staff if the Board could add further stipulations if needed for example another lane of asphalt.

Planning Director Maggie Castro, AICP, clarified that the proposed driveway and cul-de-sac are wide enough to accommodate two-way traffic, eliminating the need for an additional entrance or exit lane. The intent of the proposal is for all vehicles to enter and exit through the improved driveway.

Chairman Saltzer inquired if the new EPA standards are what do not comply with the proposal.

Planning Director Maggie Castro, AICP, explained that the comments from ADOT had to do with the fact that they were under the impression that the applicants were not proposing any improvements to the parking and circulation.

Board member Lines disclosed that upon initial review, there was concern because they lacked details in the initial report regarding hybrid work, painting, and ADA compliance. Further review clarified that substantial compliance with the issue was being addressed.

Board member lines also commented that at the Crossing Park, parking occurs on gravel areas without clear delineation and at Tuscan Plaza, for example, similar patterns are observed throughout the week with vehicles accessing doctor's offices, making travel potentially problematic if there was gravel, but something like the proposal seems reasonable.

MOTION (LINES/ PANCRAZI): Approve as presented.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Saltzer- AYE; Pancrazi- AYE; Ferguson- AYE; Lines- AYE

The motion carried 4-0.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 1:36 p.m.

Approved and accepted on this 21<sup>st</sup> day of October, 2025.

  
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Eric Saltzer, Chairman

ATTEST:



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Maggie Castro, AICP, Planning Director