

From: [Colin Drukker](#)
To: [Maria Ceja](#)
Subject: Fw: Barstow history
Date: Friday, June 27, 2025 2:31:15 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)

See full email chain below. Can you please augment the Barstow econ history with this information below? I don't think Jay included all of these. For those without dates, please do 5-10 minutes of research to see if you can find out general date info. Obviously, we don't want to get too negative (and these are a lot of failures, so discussing them in the right way is the challenge).

From: jeanette hayhurst <jethayhurst@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2025 11:59 AM
To: Genesis Crank <gcrank@barstowca.org>; msummers@chwlaw.us <msummers@chwlaw.us>; cheldreth@barstowca.org <cheldreth@barstowca.org>; Sydnie Harris <sharris@barstowca.org>; Michael Lewis <quigleysbarstow@yahoo.com>; Heidi Riley <hriley@barstowca.org>; BFPD Cory Cisneros <ccisneros@barstowca.org>; Daniel Arthur <darthur@barstowca.org>; jeanette hayhurst <jethayhurst@gmail.com>; Brad S. Merrell <brad.merrell@merrelljohnson.com>; Mark D. Rowan <mark.rowan@merrelljohnson.com>; Timothy Silva <tsilva@barstowca.org>; Rochelle Clayton <rclayton@barstowca.org>; Taylor M. Anderson <tanderson@chwlaw.us>; Adam N. Mentzer <amentzer@chwlaw.us>; Colin Drukker <cdrukker@placeworks.com>; Mark Teague <mteague@placeworks.com>
Subject: Fwd: Barstow history

Colin & Mark,
Below is a hodge-podge list of some of Barstow project failures over the years compiled by Mayor Silva, Brad Merrell and myself. Let us know if any of these interest you and we can provide you with additional information.
Jeanette

----- Forwarded message -----
From: jeanette hayhurst <jethayhurst@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Mar 27, 2025 at 11:17 AM
Subject: Re: Barstow history
To: Brad S. Merrell <brad.merrell@merrelljohnson.com>

Thanks, Brad!

On Thu, Mar 27, 2025 at 11:16 AM Brad S. Merrell <brad.merrell@merrelljohnson.com> wrote:

Jeanette,

My comments in are in red below.

Sincerely,

Brad S. Merrell, P.E. President

c) 760-900-7526 | brad.merrell@merrelljohnson.com

Merrell Johnson Engineering

22221 U.S. Highway 18, Apple Valley, CA 92307

o) 760 240 8000 | www.merrelljohnson.com

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From: jeanette hayhurst <jethayhurst@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2025 10:32 AM

To: Chris Heldreth <cheldreth@barstowca.org>; Matthew Summers <msummers@chwlaw.us>; Brad S. Merrell <brad.merrell@merrelljohnson.com>; Michael Lewis <quigleysbarstow@yahoo.com>; Rochelle Clayton <rclayton@barstowca.org>; Timothy Silva <tsilva@barstowca.org>; jeanette hayhurst <jethayhurst@gmail.com>

Subject: Fwd: Barstow history

Caution: External sender. Use caution with links and attachments.

OK, Team. Mayor Silva has started the list of "failed projects" in Barstow. See if you can add any others to this list.

Jeanette

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Timothy Silva** <tsilva@barstowca.org>

Date: Thu, Mar 27, 2025 at 7:58 AM

Subject: Re: Barstow history

To: jeanette hayhurst <jethayhurst@gmail.com>

1. Aluminum Plant:

Fact; CM, Curt Mitchell announced that the developer decided that the operation was not profitable due to the cost of energy needed to operate the plant.

Rumor; The developer had financial issues with their bank in China.

The Developer entered the witness protection program with the FBI because the Triads

were after him, for dishonoring developers uncle... when a certain person visited a similar aluminum company back east without permission, that blew the cover of the project with the aluminum industry. There was a lot of issues with this project, to say the least.

2. Casinos:

The city councils have approved every MSA with the Los Coyote, Chemehuevi and Big Lagoon tribes. All delays are due to the tribes, developers and the state and federal governments.

Land could never get placed in trust for Sovereign Tribal Land without a major push from state and federal elected officials. Developer pushing the effort passed away.

3. Sun Cal Development:

The developer didn't pursue the development due to the housing crises that arose during the Great Recession.

Water was also a big issue with approval.

4. Walmart Cold Food Distribution Warehouse:

No facts here, I believe that Walmart chose another location not in the high desert. The staff and council were 100% behind this project.

Rumored the location and approval in Barstow was a negotiating ploy, to get approvals elsewhere?

5. Spanish Trails:

I believe that this project is still moving forward. The city and council have fully supported the development. The CM, Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem negotiated with the BLM to get a part of the land into the developers title.

Major developer (Malcolm Riley) passed away. He left the project in business partners hands (Joseph Brady) He is still trying to get the land from the State Land Commission, who stole the land from the City's deal with the Low Lands Act. He is also try to get the state highway easement removed from the property which makes the land worthless. This process is moving slowly with an agenda item going to council this month... to accept some excess land, that is holding up the Caltrans Directors Deed to relinquish the easement.

6. Senior Assisted Housing Development at Mt. View & 7th.

The developer failed to get the financing to proceed with the development.

Developers were not successful in obtaining a housing grant to build the project.

7. The development of an egg farm within the industrial park, consisting of 12 million laying chickens, and a rail spur for chicken feed. All initiated from the 2008 Prop 2 (farm animal act) for more room for animals to live without cruelty. It was going to shut down eggs being brought into California. Courts over turn the Prop 2 and the project went away.

8. Industrial park was a site for a very large private Correctional Facility due to overcrowding of correctional facilities in the state, due to three-strikes law. Developer never could get the state to commit to a deal. The City was also in the running for a juvenile detention facility that was ultimately built in Apple Valley.

9. Highway 58/ Interstate 15 development for commercial development like the outlet area. Developer could not overcome the lack of physical access from I-15, due to the configuration of the old interchange. City has pushed Caltrans with the Express Train Project to Las Vegas to reconstruct this interchange for access. Still pending review. Still pushing the project to fix.

That's what I have off the top of my head. I'll follow up with more if I can remember any others.

Here's a couple more (Jeanette)

10. The city competed for the original Walmart Distribution Center in the 90s. This project was built in Apple Valley.

11. The City successfully recruited High Torque Marine (HTM), a high performance boat manufacturer, to build in Barstow. Shortly after opening, the owner was killed in a boating accident and the facility (located at I15 & I-40) closed.

12. Newmark, concrete pole manufacturer opened in the late 90s. (It is located on Lenwood Road in the land not acquired for BIG.) It lasted for several years and then closed in the early 2000s.

13. The original Lake Dolores Water park is located just east of Barstow north of I-15. The property was purchased and re-named Rock-a-Hula water park in the mid 90s. Lots of money was spent to upgrade the property but it didn't have enough cash flow and closed within couple years. It has become an abandoned "skate board park" visible from the freeway.

14. Southwest Gas & Southern California Edison closures. Due to "right-sizing" by utility companies, most services are now offered online with no in-person customer service representatives. Southwest gas still has its facility in Barstow but offers no services. SCE has its building and conducts maintenance operations from their location on Rimrock but there are no customer service reps.

15. Barstow Mall - Was built in the 1980s. It was the first mall in the High Desert (even before the Mall of Victor Valley) with K-Mart and Sears as its anchor stores. It has outlived its useful life (as malls have across America) but is a painful reminder to Barstow residents of past prosperity.

Jeanette

Sincerely,



Timothy R. Silva
Barstow Mayor
220 E Mountain View,
Barstow, CA 92311

Office (760) 256-3321
Cell. (760) 447-5050
tsilva@barstowca.org



On Mar 26, 2025, at 5:09 PM, jeanette hayhurst <jethayhurst@gmail.com> wrote:

[NOTICE: THIS IS AN EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Do not open any suspicious attachments or links. Do not reply to any requests for sensitive information. If in doubt, call the sender to confirm!

As part of the general plan update, we need to share why the BIG project is so important to Barstow. One way to do this is to list the "almost came here" projects.

Can you all please share a list of some of Barstow's 'failed' projects. Please include a brief description in case others aren't aware.

Jeanette