

# \$1.5B aluminum manufacturing plant coming to Barstow

Plant may employ 2,000 people

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## GEOFF FISK, STAFF WRITER

BARSTOW • The City Council on Monday night voted 5-0 to approve the framework of a development agreement that would bring a \$1.5 billion aluminum production facility and as many as 2,000 high-skilled manufacturing jobs to the Barstow area.

The proposed Exclusive Negotiating Agreement with Newport Beach-based Scuderia Development to build a 2.95 million-square-foot facility for China Zhongwang Holdings Limited on 964 acres between Lenwood and Hodge roads has been in the works since the fall, city officials said.

Scuderia Development filed a letter of intent with the city in November, with a proposal to build the plant on a lot just south of the defunct Sun & Sky Country Club and golf course in Lenwood.

One of the largest secondary aluminum production factories in the world would be constructed in multiple phases over several years, but the first phase of the project would likely be operational within three years, according to city documents.

Barstow Community College Superintendent/ President Dr. Debbie DiThomas called the news exciting and praised city leaders for their efforts.

"I was excited just because I know we need jobs," she said. "We need our community members who are out of work to get jobs and we need to bring in people to get jobs. It's a great opportunity for us as a community."

DiThomas said the college looked forward to helping meet Zhongwang's training needs.

"We haven't been involved in any of the negotiations, but I have talked to (City Manager) Curt Mitchell," DiThomas said. "Barstow College is really proud of our past collaborative efforts with local business and industry and we look forward to working to meet the needs of the new aluminum factory."

Barstow College has trained workers for the solar industry, logistics and manufacturing.

"We would like to, as quickly as possible, start discussions with them to see if we're already training people that would be eligible for their jobs," DiThomas said. "We just don't have any idea what they're going to need."

According to its website, China Zhongwang Holdings Limited is the world's second-largest manufacturer of industrial aluminum profiles. Founded in 1993 and based in the Liaoning Province, the company produces an array of aluminum products used in a variety of industries, from rail transportation to automobiles to aerospace.

China Zhongwang enlisted Scuderia to handle the project. Scuderia already owns more than 258 acres of land at the proposed facility site.

The city will "coordinate a process with the developer to deliver a labor pool of at least 2,000 qualified employees," according to Monday's meeting agenda.

*Staff writer Steve Hunt contributed to this story.*