

Department of Conservation and Development

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Contra Costa County



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NOTICE OF PREPARATION / NOTICE OF SCOPING MEETING FOR A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED MARTINEZ REFINERY RENEWABLE FUELS PROJECT

(COUNTY FILE# CDLP20-02046)

TO: RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES, AND OTHERWISE INTERESTED AGENCIES,
ORGANIZATIONS, AND INDIVIDUALS

As the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Lead Agency, the Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development (DCD) has prepared this Notice of Preparation for an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) regarding the proposed Martinez Refinery Renewable Fuels Project (project). Pursuant to CEQA, an EIR must be prepared for the proposed project prior to any final decision regarding whether to approve the project. The purpose of the EIR is to provide information about potential significant physical environmental effects of the proposed project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe and analyze possible alternatives to the proposed project. The County must review and consider the information contained in the EIR prior to making a decision, including comments from all responsible and trustee agencies, as well as interested agencies, organizations, and individuals. The DCD is issuing this Notice of Preparation pursuant to Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines.

PROJECT LOCATION

The project site is the existing Martinez Refinery located at 150 Solano Way, in unincorporated Contra Costa County, 3.25 miles east of downtown Martinez and just north of the City of Concord municipal boundary. The Martinez Refinery operates on several parcels that encompass approximately 2,000 acres of land. The Carquinez Strait and lower Suisun Bay are north of the project site, and Pacheco Creek borders the project site to the west. A variety of land uses are immediately east of the project site, including the Point Edith Wildlife Preserve and other marshlands, the unincorporated residential community of Clyde, the Contra Costa Water District's Mallard Reservoir, and multiple complexes of light industrial warehouse buildings. Additional complexes of light industrial buildings are immediately south of the project site, with the State Route 4 right-of-way just beyond. See attached Project Vicinity Map.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is a request by Tesoro Refining & Marketing Company, LLC, an indirect, wholly owned subsidiary of Marathon Petroleum Corporation (collectively, “Marathon”), to repurpose the existing Martinez Refinery (refinery) to discontinue refining of crude oil and switch to production of fuels from renewable feedstock sources including rendered fats, fish oils, soybean and corn oil, and other cooking and vegetable oils, but excluding palm oil.

The refinery has operated on the project site, under various owners, since 1913. The refinery has capacity to process up to 161,000 barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil, though Marathon recently suspended refining of crude oil in April 2020 due to a decrease in fuel demand as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to idling of the refinery, the majority of crude oil refined at the site was received via ship, with additional crude arriving at the facility by pipeline, and other (non-crude) refinery commodities arriving by rail. Products that can be produced at the refinery with existing equipment include gasoline, diesel, distillates, petroleum coke, propane, heavy fuel oil and refinery-grade propylene. Distribution of products from the facility to the market can be conducted by truck, rail, ship, and pipeline.

The proposed project would repurpose the refinery for production of renewable fuels rather than fossil fuels. Some existing refinery equipment would be altered or replaced, and additional new equipment units and tanks would be installed, to facilitate production of fuels from renewable feedstock. Crude oil processing equipment that cannot be repurposed for processing of renewable feedstock would be shut down. Upon completion of facility changes, the refinery is anticipated to process approximately 48,000 bpd of fresh renewable feeds and would produce renewable diesel fuel, renewable propane, renewable naphtha, and potentially, renewable aviation fuel. Product from the refinery would be distributed by truck to other distribution locations within the San Francisco Bay Area. Product would also be transported to destinations outside of the Bay Area by ship.

Marine transportation of renewable feedstock and fuels produced at the refinery would utilize the Avon Marine Oil Terminal (MOT) and the Amorco MOT, which are located approximately 0.5 mile north of the refinery and approximately 2.5 miles west of the refinery, respectively. Modifications to the Avon MOT, an existing point of distribution for distillate and gasoline produced at the refinery, would be necessary to accommodate the terminal’s use primarily as a facility for receiving renewable feedstocks. Finished petroleum products would also be received at the Avon MOT for local distribution but not processing at the refinery. Product from the refinery would be distributed from the Amorco MOT at an average rate of 27,000 bpd. Modifications to the Amorco MOT would also be necessary to accommodate higher volumes of smaller marine vessels (25,000- to 50,000-barrel capacities) than vessels that currently dock there. Renewable feedstocks would also be received at the refinery by rail, and other, non-feedstock commodities would continue to be received by rail.

Construction of the proposed project would begin as soon as all necessary permits are received, with a target date of October 2021. Operations under the proposed project are anticipated to begin in 2022 with an estimated production of 23,000 bpd, with full production of 48,000 bpd expected to be achieved by the end of 2023. The repurposed refinery would operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(d), the County will not prepare an initial study prior to commencing work on the EIR. The EIR will evaluate potential project impacts in the following CEQA topic areas consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines: Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities and Service Systems, Wildfire, and Cumulative Impacts, Alternatives, and other CEQA mandated discussions.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

All responsible and trustee agencies, and interested agencies, organizations, and individuals are invited to submit comments that address environmental concerns resulting from the implementation of the proposed project. Your comments should focus on potential significant environmental issues regarding the project, information that would help the environmental analysis, or factors to consider in the environmental analysis.

As required by CEQA, there will be another opportunity to submit comments on the proposed project and environmental analysis during the public circulation of the Draft EIR. A separate notice will be issued when the Draft EIR becomes available.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but no later than 30 days after receipt of this letter. The comment period will commence on Thursday, February 18, 2021. Correspondence must be received at the following address by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 22, 2021:

***Contra Costa County
Department of Conservation & Development
Community Development Division
30 Muir Road
Martinez, California 94553
Attention: Joseph W. Lawlor Jr***

Comments can also be submitted by e-mail joseph.lawlor@dcd.cccounty.us. The County File Number (#CDLP20-02046) should be included in all correspondence.

SCOPING MEETING

A scoping meeting will be held on **Monday, March 15, 2021, at 3:30 p.m.**, on a remote public meeting platform. Participation instructions can be viewed at the following link when the agenda becomes available. Follow the link then click the “Most Recent” agenda tab.

www.contracosta.ca.gov/ZA

At this meeting, interested agencies, organizations, and individuals may submit oral and written comments pertaining to environmental concerns related to the proposed project.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The project application and supporting documents are available for review at the Department of Conservation and Development, Community Development Division. If you wish to obtain a copy of any documents related to this project, please contact the Project Planner by telephone at (925) 877-8251 or by email at joseph.lawlor@dcd.cccounty.us.

Joseph W. Lawlor Jr, AICP, Project Planner
Contra Costa County
Department of Conservation and Development

Attach: Project Vicinity Map

