



**To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044**

**From: City of Benicia
250 East L Street
Benicia, CA 94510**

**Subject: NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP) OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
REPORT (EIR) AND NOTICE OF SCOPING MEETING:
Valero Crude by Rail Project**

Date: August 9, 2013

On May 31, 2013 the City of Benicia issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Valero CBR project. The issuance of the NOI started a 30-day comment period, which concluded at 5 PM, Monday, July 1, 2013. During the comment period the City received 34 written comments. Subsequent to the closure of the MND comment period the City received an additional 27 written comments as of August 2, 2013.

On July 11, 2013 the Planning Commission held a public meeting on the Valero CBR project. During the meeting 31 speakers commented on the project, in addition to questions from the Planning Commission.

The City received voluminous comments on the draft MND. Many of the comments stated that the project may have a significant effect on the environment, such that the City should prepare an Environmental Impact Report pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064. In light of the comments, Section 15064, and the desire to ensure full consideration of all environmental issues, the City has decided to prepare an Environmental Impact Report for the project.

Additional information on the project can be found on the City's website at:
http://www.ci.benicia.ca.us/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={C45EA667-8D39-4B30-87EB-9110A2F9CE13}

Project Description:

The proposed Valero Crude by Rail Project would allow the Valero Benicia Refinery (Refinery) access to additional North American-sourced crude oil for delivery to the Refinery by railroad. The proposed Project would involve the installation and

modification of Refinery non-process equipment that would allow the Refinery to receive a portion of its crude oil deliveries by railcar replacing equal quantities of crude currently being delivered to the Refinery by marine vessel. Valero intends to replace up to 70,000 barrels per day of the crude oil currently supplied to the Refinery by marine vessel with an equivalent amount of crude oil transported by railcars. The crude oil to be transported by railcars is expected to be of similar quality compared to existing crude oil imported by marine vessels. Crude delivered by rail would not displace crude delivered to the Refinery by pipeline.

Location of the Project

The Valero Refinery is located at 3400 East Second Street, Benicia.

Issues To Be Addressed In The EIR

The EIR will identify the potentially significant environmental effects of the Project, including those resulting from its construction, operation and maintenance. The EIR also will discuss and analyze a reasonable range of alternatives to the Project, including a No Project alternative, and alternatives to the Project that could attain most of its basic objectives while avoiding or reducing any of its significant environmental effects.

Below is a list of the project's potentially significant effects:

Air Quality: Potential air quality impacts during project construction would be reduced by implementation of Bay Area Air Quality Management District's basic control measures during construction.

Biological Resources: Construction activities would avoid nesting season impacts to nesting birds, and buffers would be implemented if nesting birds are identified.

Cultural Resources: Inadvertent discovery of cultural or paleontological resources or human remains would be mitigated by cessation of construction activities, notification of relevant authorities, and proper treatment of resources.

Geology and Soils: Implementation of recommendations contained in a site-specific geotechnical report would reduce impacts regarding groundshaking, liquefaction, and landslide hazards.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials: Potential impacts from upset and accident conditions during transportation of crude oil to the refinery would be investigated in detail and evaluated against existing risks of crude oil transportation by marine vessels.

Hydrology and Water Quality: Implementation of a storm water management plan would reduce water quality impacts during project construction.

Transportation/Traffic: Potential impacts regarding train crossings would be reduced through train scheduling and coordination between the City's Fire and Police Departments and the refinery's emergency response team.

Public Scoping Period for this Notice of Preparation

State law mandates a 30-day time limit after the date of the NOP for the scoping period. The scoping period for this Project begins on Friday, August 9, 2013 and closes at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 13, 2013. Public comments received will become part of the public record. Please include a name, organization (if applicable), address, and e-mail address of a contact person on all written comments for future notification related to this process.

Please send your comments to:

**Amy Million, Principal Planner
Community Development Department
250 East L Street
Benicia, CA 94510
Fax: (707) 747-1637
amillion@ci.benicia.ca.us**

Scoping Meeting

In order for the public and regulatory agencies to have an opportunity to submit comments on the scope of the EIR for the Project, a meeting will be held during the scoping period at the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting. The meeting will be held:

**Thursday, September 12, 2013
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
City Hall Council Chambers
250 East L Street
Benicia, CA 94510**

Following a brief presentation, interested parties will be provided an opportunity to provide comments about the Project. Written comments also may be submitted anytime during the NOP scoping period to the address or facsimile number provided above.

REMINDER:

All comments will be accepted by postmark or facsimile through 5 p.m. Friday September 13, 2013. Please be sure to include your name, organization (if applicable), address, and e-mail address. If you submit by email, your email will not be considered accepted until you received an email to confirm it was received.