



# City of Santa Barbara

Office of Mayor

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[www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov](http://www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov)

August 4, 2015

Helene Schneider  
Mayor

Honorable Planning Commissioners  
San Luis Obispo County  
c/o James A. Bergman, Director of Planning and Building  
976 Los Osos Street, Room 200, Fax # (805) 781-5603  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

City Hall  
735 Anacapa Street  
Santa Barbara, CA  
93101-1990

Subject: Phillips 66 Santa Maria Refinery Rail Spur Project

Dear Honorable Chair and Commissioners:

Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 1990  
Santa Barbara, CA  
93102-1990

Tel: 805.564.5323  
Fax: 805.564.5475

On behalf of the City of Santa Barbara, I am writing to relay concerns about the proposed project plan to transport crude oil through the City of Santa Barbara to the Phillips 66 Santa Maria Refinery. This project poses increased risks to public safety, to the environment and to the economic interests of our local businesses. I respectfully request that the City's concerns be taken into consideration when evaluating the project details, and encourage the commissioners to deny the transport of significant amounts of crude oil via unit train through our City as proposed by the subject Rail Spur Project.

The recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) estimates that the project could increase the occurrence of unit trains up to five per week on the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) mainline delivering crude oil to an extended rail spur at the Santa Maria Refinery. The potential increase in the number and frequency of trains transporting hazardous materials (crude oil) through our City raises the probability of a spill or accident occurring along a rail line that is densely populated with residences and businesses and crosses environmentally-sensitive creeks and wetlands.

Some of the hazards associated with crude oil transport are documented within the DEIR and include Class 1 (unmitigatable) impacts to public safety, biological, and water resources. Each crude oil train could carry more than two million gallons of crude oil, exposing our community to almost eleven million gallons of hazardous and potentially explosive oil product each week. The trains traveling through Santa Barbara would stretch over a mile long, along the Pacific Ocean shoreline, between the public beaches and Highway 101. The rail line through Santa Barbara passes right through areas densely packed with hotels, restaurants, galleries, tourist destinations, business centers and the downtown shopping area. Hundreds of houses and apartments back right up to the rail line and several schools, fire stations, and Santa Barbara's hospital are within less than a quarter mile from the tracks.

Another Class 1 impact states that a rupture or leak from a rail car could substantially degrade surface water and groundwater quality. Santa Barbara's wastewater treatment and desalination facilities are directly adjacent to the rail line. Any accident impacting either of those facilities could potentially shut down vital services affecting all residents and visitors to Santa Barbara. The trains would parallel the environmentally sensitive bodies of water including the ocean, the Andree Clark Bird Refuge wetlands, Mission Creek, Arroyo Burro Creek, and San Roque



Please consider the environment before printing this letter.

Creek. A major derailment or explosion not only has the potential for long-lasting harm, but would immediately consume all available local emergency response resources, also cited as Class 1 impact in the DEIR. Although the probability of major spills, derailment, fire, and/or explosions may be relatively low, the impacts of such an event could be devastating to the City of Santa Barbara.

What the DEIR *does not* include, is any analysis of the potential negative economic impacts due to loss of business to the local industries in the event of a spill or accident. Nor is there any analysis of the potential increase of greenhouse gas emissions released in Santa Barbara County.

In summary, the City of Santa Barbara has serious concerns regarding any increase of rail transport of volatile crude oil through our city. The first and foremost priority is protection for the hundreds of families living in homes adjacent to the rail line. Secondly, we must protect the water resources and sensitive creek and ocean habitats. And thirdly, much of Santa Barbara's economic prosperity is based on Santa Barbara remaining an environmentally clean and beautiful destination location.

The risks make this project unsupportable by the City and I respectfully request that you deny the project.

Sincerely,



Helene Schneider  
Mayor

CC San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors  
Congresswoman Lois Capps  
California State Senator Hannah Beth Jackson  
California Assembly Member Das Williams  
City of Santa Barbara Councilmembers  
Dave Mullinax, League of California Cities