

# Port district talks pollution minimization

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## Expansion plan for marine terminal gets smiley face, deemed "holistic"

*By Dave Rice, Dec. 14, 2016*

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A group numbering several dozen environmental activists along with residents of Barrio Logan and surrounding communities gathered at the Port of San Diego on Tuesday afternoon (December 13) to cheer the port's board of directors as they approved an environmental impact report that will pave the way for a fourfold expansion of the 10th Avenue Marine Terminal, which handles a large portion of San Diego's imports, including the country's supply of Dole bananas and pineapples.

Led by the [Environmental Health Coalition](#), the community had voiced strong opposition to [the port's original plan](#), which would have increased goods handling capacity by more than six times and brought unwelcome additional pollution to nearby residential neighborhoods.

In developing what port officials call a "sustainable terminal capacity alternative," a revised plan reduced the overall expansion by 25 percent, included 36 pieces of electric-powered cargo handling equipment (replacing current diesel-powered units), and added a renewable energy component to the redevelopment plan, which could include items such as solar panels for warehouse roofs.

The port will also use devices referred to as "bonnets," which fit over the smokestacks of vessels not equipped to run on shore power while in port, capturing emissions that otherwise would be released.

"The sustainable terminal capacity alternative is a holistic approach that, despite a fourfold increase in cargo throughput, would actually reduce emissions below today for certain criteria of pollutants," said port staffer Jason Giffen during a presentation on the revisions.

Staffer Joel Valenzuela added that the proposal represented "the cleanest feasible technology and infrastructure update consistent" with planning guidelines, noting that several improvements, such as re-routing truck traffic away from Barrio Logan neighborhoods and installing electrical shore power stations for ships capable of powering down while in port, had already been implemented.

"We commend the hard work and creativity of port staff who have developed a plan that is supported by a wide variety of stakeholders and community residents," coalition executive director Diane Takvorian told the port's board of commissioners. "This should be the new normal — a truly

green and sustainable port that operates with zero emissions. We'll continue to work with the port toward that end."

While acknowledging the compromise, not all community members were thoroughly impressed.

"Let's be clear — this is not a net-zero emissions plan," said Environmental Health Coalition research director Joy Williams. "The sustainable terminal capacity will quadruple cargo throughput and add impacts to a community where the cancer risk is already 38 per million people from the 10th Avenue terminal alone."

Barrio Logan resident Brent Beltran agreed, calling on the port to continue to "seek environmentally sound ways to mitigate the harmful impacts an expansion of the terminal would have."

Such solutions include several listed by the coalition and echoed by councilmember David Alvarez's office, such as an air-filtration system powered by renewable energy sources for nearby Perkins Elementary.

"My community rarely catches a break from the powers that be — the campaign to overturn our community plan proves this," Beltran continued. "But today, I'm hoping we can finally catch that break...mitigating the environmental impact of an expansion is a step toward being good environmental stewards of Barrio Logan."