Benicia Refinery CAP

2025 Annual Report

The Benicia Refinery Community Advisory Panel (CAP) met six times in 2025 and received updates and presentations from refinery management about different aspects and incidents related to the refinery. Minutes and presentation material of each meeting are published on the CAP website.

February 11, 2025

The CAP received an update about refinery operations, a health, safety, environmental (HSE) report, and a community affairs (CA) update from refinery personnel. Vice President (VP)/ General Manager (GM) Lauren Bird and Valero's HSE Director, Melissa Manke-Fimbres gave an update about Valero's mutual aid assistance with MRC's refinery fire & an update will be published on the Bay Area Air District (BAAD)'s Root Causal Analysis webpage due to flaring that occurred in December 2024. The CAP's 2024 Annual Report was presented & discussion was held about the CAP's goals and the 2025 work plan.

April 8, 2025

The CAP received an update about refinery operations and a Community Relations Presentation from refinery personnel. CAP members discussed the approved Benicia Industrial Health & Safety Ordinance (BIHSO) and members raised concerns that the businesses need more information. There is also concern of what the financial impacts will be on small businesses that are now regulated in the BIHSO and additional discussion about the BIHSO fee schedule needs to occur with all impacted parties.

June 10, 2025

The CAP received an update about refinery operations, HSE issues, and a CA report from refinery personnel. VP/GM Lauren Bird informed the CAP that on April, 16, 2025, the Valero Energy Corporation informed the California Energy Commission (CEC) of the refinery's intent to idle, restructure or cease operation in April 2026. This notification adheres with the one-year notification requirement by the CEC to provide notification if/when refinery operations will significantly change. Discussion and details were provided about the refinery's May 5, 2025 fire and Lauren explained that at ~8:50 am a furnace stack that had internal corrosion fell and struck equipment causing a loss of containment which resulted in the fire. The Valero Fire Department put out the flames in 1 hour 20 minutes and the Benicia Fire Department was also on site but were not utilized for firefighting. The refinery submitted a 72-Hour Report which has been uploaded onto the City of Benicia's Public Information Bank website.

August 20, 2025

The CAP received a quarterly update about refinery operations, an HSE update that included an overview of the July 16, 2025 tabletop oil spill drill and a CA report about Valero's Guiding Principles Report. CAP members are focused on educating the public and alleviating concerns about the refinery transition and are using different outlets to get their message out. They are also reiterating that the city is not responsible for the remediation of refinery property. The Root Cause Analysis report of the May 5th incident was posted on the City of Benicia's Public Information Bank website.

October 14, 2025

The CAP received a quarterly update about refinery operations, HSE issues and a CA report about Valero's community investments to the City of Benicia from refinery personnel. Paul also shared the City's Community Impact Survey and Economic Impact Report. CAP members continue to focus on educating the public about the refinery transition & impacts related with it.

December 9, 2025

The CAP received a quarterly update about refinery operations, an HSE update about regulatory agencies & their jurisdiction and a CA report from refinery personnel. Lauren informed the CAP that the refinery is on track to cease operations by April 2026 and the refinery is unsure about what the state is going to do. CAP members are aware that BAAD is working on adjusting their distribution guidelines to disperse Local Community Benefit Funds for appropriate communities.

Membership Attendance

- Patrick Cawley - Benicia Chamber of Commerce – (4) meetings: February, April, June, August
- Terry Scott, City of Benicia – (5) meetings: February, April, June, August & December
- Amy Hirsch, Benicia Unified School District – (4) meetings: February, April, June, October
- Marilyn Bardet, GNS Committee – (6) meetings – February, April, June, October & December (*Constance Beutel – August)
- Rod Sherry, Benicia Industrial Park Association – (4) meetings: February, June, August, October
- Dennis Lowry, Community at Large – (6) meetings – February, April, June, August, October & December
- Cara Bateman, Community at Large – (5) meetings: February, April, August, October & December
- Kristine Passalacqua, Community at Large – (4) meetings: April, June, October & December (Kristine was appointed in April)