



NOTICE OF PREPARATION
of an Environmental Impact Report for the
Costco Fuel Facility Project
State Clearinghouse Number (SCH) No. 2021010190

Date: August 10, 2023

To: State Clearinghouse
Responsible Agencies
Trustee Agencies
Marin County Clerk

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CLERK

NOP Comment Period: Written comments must be submitted to the City's Community Development Department no later than **Monday, September 11, 2023, by 5:00 p.m.**

Project Location: 300 Vintage Way – see Figure 1 (attached)

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City of Novato
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INTRODUCTION

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been issued to notify interested parties of the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Costco Fuel Center Project (project). The City will be the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and will prepare an EIR to evaluate the environmental effects associated with the project. This NOP has been issued to provide an opportunity for responsible and trustee agencies to submit comments on the scope of the EIR in relation to the project description. Agencies should comment on such information as it relates to their statutory responsibilities in connection with the project.

The City originally prepared an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the project, and approved the IS/MND and the project on March 9, 2021. The sufficiency of the IS/MND was challenged in court. The trial court determined that evidence in the administrative record supported a fair argument that there *may* be a significant environmental impact from the project with respect to air quality and health risks requiring preparation of an EIR. Therefore, an EIR is being prepared to study air quality, as well as other CEQA topics of public interest. The City has conducted an Initial Study to assess which topics need

not be evaluated within the EIR. The Initial Study is available for review with this NOP and will be included as an appendix to the EIR.

This NOP, the Initial Study, and background documents associated with the project are available for review on the City's webpage at: <https://www.novato.org/government/community-development/planning-division/planning-projects/costco-fuel-facility>.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project would develop a new fuel facility in place of an existing parking area adjacent to an existing Costco Wholesale store (Costco), on an approximately 1.15-acre portion of the Costco parking lot site. Costco is a membership-only store, and the proposed project would be for use by Costco members, and not open to the general public who are not members. The project includes a 10,244-square-foot fuel dispenser canopy, 14 dispensers (28 fueling positions), three 40,000-gallon gasoline underground storage tanks (UST), one 1,500-gallon additive UST, an approximately 125 square-foot controller enclosure, a vapor processing unit, directional striping, and an approximately 6,086 square-foot net increase in landscaped areas.

The project would remove 129 existing parking spaces from the Costco warehouse development. Additionally, one row of 62 parking spaces and associated tree planters would be relocated two (2) feet to the northwest to allow for adequate drive aisle spacing between the parking row and fuel facility. The project would also relocate an existing driveway on Vintage Way from approximately 320 feet south to approximately 260 feet south/southeast of the 9 Corners Wellness Spa pad building (208 Vintage Way, Suite K29). Costco would modify a segment of Vintage Way to provide a left-turn pocket providing access to the relocated driveway. Adding the left-turn pocket would involve modifying lane striping to accommodate two vehicle travel lanes and the left turn-pocket within the existing curb-to-curb width of Vintage Way. This lane reconfiguration would result in the replacement of an approximately 200-foot segment of Class II bike lane with a Class III bicycle route (i.e., bicycles and vehicles share the same lane) and associated pavement markings and signs.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND SCOPE OF THE EIR

The EIR for the project will focus on the resource areas/issues germane to this particular project. The EIR will evaluate the potentially significant environmental impacts of the project and, if any significant environmental effects are identified, will evaluate whether there are feasible mitigation measures that may lessen or avoid such impacts. The EIR will also identify and evaluate alternatives to the project that could lessen or avoid any significant environmental impacts. As to the topics identified for study in the EIR, the EIR will evaluate all environmental issue areas identified in Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*. Potential impacts will be addressed at both project and cumulative levels. The City has prepared an Initial Study to evaluate which environmental topic areas can be scoped out of the EIR, and it will be included as an appendix to the EIR. As to certain environmental topic areas, the Initial Study concluded that mitigation measures can be implemented to ensure that no significant environmental impacts will occur; such mitigation measures will be imposed as conditions on the project (if approved) and incorporated into the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. Based on the results of the Initial Study, and to respond to

the court decision and prior community interest in certain topics, the following topics will be analyzed in full in an EIR:

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Transportation
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

NOP Comment Period: In accordance with the time limits identified in State law, your response to this NOP must be submitted to the City at the earliest possible date, but **not later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday September 11, 2023** (32 days following the date this notice was first posted). Please submit written comments to the Novato Community Development Department (including the contact person's full name and address) to:

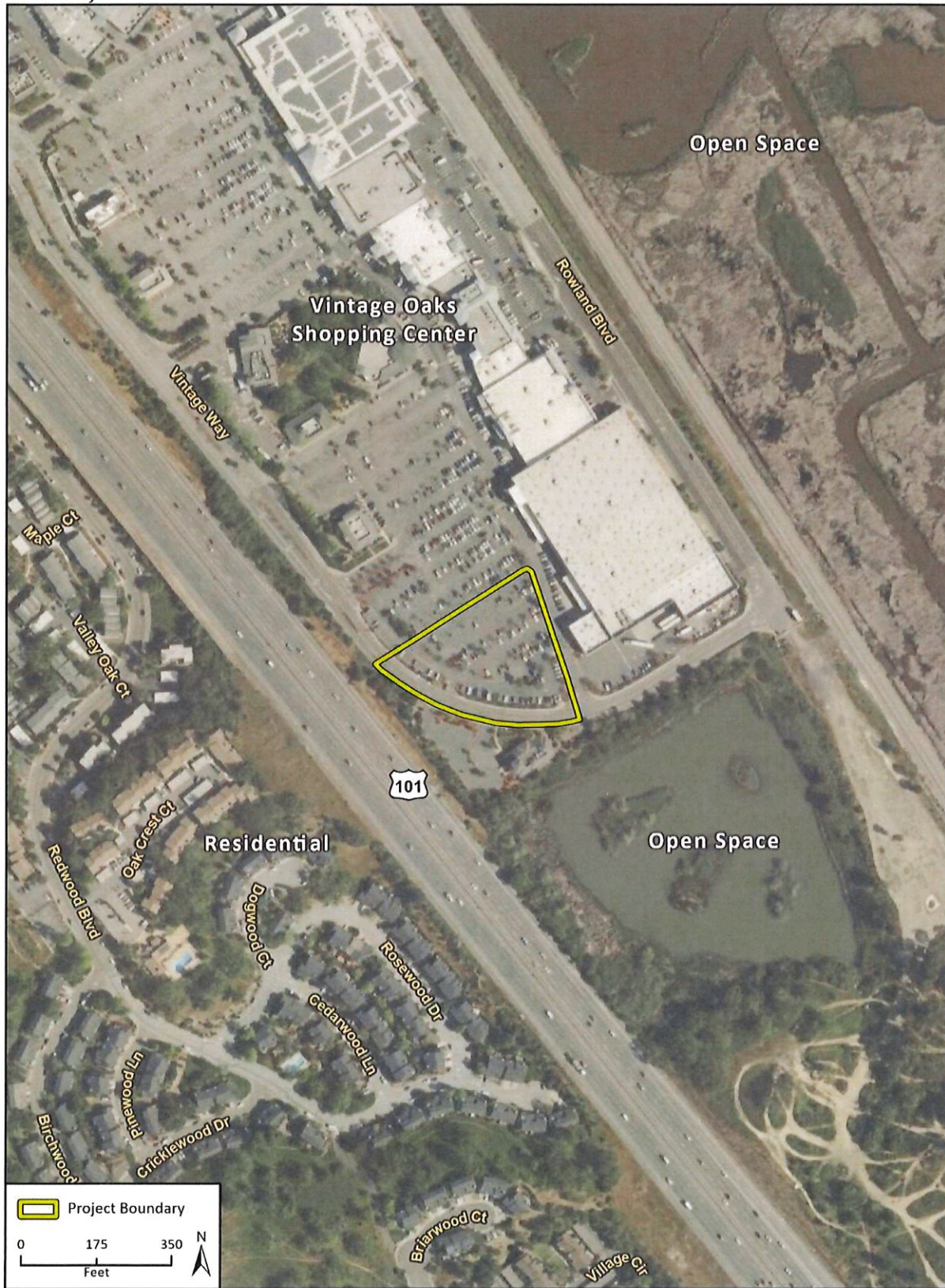
Brett Walker, AICP, Senior Planner
City of Novato: Community Development Department
922 Machin Avenue
Novato, CA 94945
Email: bwalker@novato.org

Scoping Meeting: A scoping meeting will be conducted on MONDAY, AUGUST 28, 2023 at 7:00 pm as part of the regularly scheduled Planning Commission hearing which will be held at: Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue, Novato, California 94945 and virtually.

The meeting agenda, which will include remote (virtual) public participation/comment instructions, will be available at the following website at least 72 hours before the meeting start time: <https://www.novato.org/government/city-council/agendas-minutes-videos>

This NOP, an Initial Study, and background documents are available for review on the project webpage at: <https://www.novato.org/government/community-development/planning-division/planning-projects/costco-fuel-facility>.

Figure 1 - Project Site Location



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Fig 1-Project Location