

Puente Power Project

- **PROJECT TYPE:**
Gas power plant
- **LOCATION:**
Oxnard, California
- **INVESTMENT COST:**
\$299 million
- **ORIGINAL CONSTRUCTION DATE:**
Late 2018
- **ORIGINAL OPERATING DATE:**
June 2020

OVERVIEW

- In April 2015, NRG Oxnard Energy Center filed an application for the Puente Power Project with the California Energy Commission (CEC) to provide backup power during peak times of energy use. The project was intended to assist California's transition to greater renewable energy use. In fact, the name "Puente" itself is derived from the Spanish word for "bridge."
- In June 2016, the California Public Utilities Commission approved the project, recognizing the need for highly flexible gas facilities such as Puente to balance intermittent resources to meet the state's 50-percent-by-2030 renewables mandate.¹
- Nonetheless, activists organized a campaign to stop the project. The Sierra Club called on activists to write letters to the CEC in opposition of the power plant, providing people with a sample letter, talking points and tips on how to write letters.²
- In January 2017, members of Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE) and other advocacy groups stood up in the middle of a CEC meeting, where they linked arms and chanted their opposition to the Puente Power Plant.
- At an August 2017 CEC hearing, unidentified activists made remarks both formally and informally outside of the building, stating, "We have to stop it right now. Never again should we be building a fossil fuel plant in the state of California," and "We need to make sure this plant does not get built."³ Billionaire KIITG activist Tom Steyer lent his support to the effort, speaking against Puente at a public hearing.
- In October 2017, after receiving hundreds of letters, CEC members Janea Scott and Karen Douglas issued a rare statement recommending that the full regulatory body reject the project, despite the California Public Utilities Commission's approval of it in June 2016.⁴

STATUS:

In an October 2017 response to the CEC statement, NRG Energy asked the CEC to "to end all hearings regarding its proposal while the company determines whether it will completely withdraw the application," effectively cancelling the project.

LOST OPPORTUNITY ECONOMIC IMPACT



**\$400 ↓
MILLION**
in GDP impact*



3,139 ↓
total full-time
equivalent job years*



**\$80 ↓
MILLION**
in lost tax
revenue*



**\$2.8 ↓
MILLION**
in lost annual
local tax
revenue during
operations**

*Because Puente operations would not have begun by August 2018, modeled impacts represent prospective lost opportunities from construction/operations/upstream

** Self-reported by project sponsor

1. [California regulators approve 262 MW Puente natural gas peaker plant for SCE](#), *Utility Dive*, 6/1/16
2. [Stop Puente Power Plant](#), Sierra Club website
3. [Puente Power Project hearing draws protesters to Oxnard \(VIDEO\)](#), *VC Star*, updated 10/17/17
4. [Power plant developer pulls the plug on its natural gas project in Oxnard](#), *Los Angeles Times*, 10/16/17