



CITY OF MORRO BAY

CITY HALL

595 Harbor Street
Morro Bay, CA 93442

March 12, 2025

sent via email

Jim Burke, President, CEO
Claudia Morrow, Senior Vice President of Development
Vistra Corporation
6550 Sierra Drive
Irving, TX 75039

Subject: A Collaborative Path Forward for 1290 Embarcadero

Dear Mr. Burke and Ms. Morrow,

On behalf of the Morro Bay City Council, I am reaching out regarding the future of the former Morro Bay Power Plant at 1290 Embarcadero, a property owned by Vistra Corp. and positioned at the heart of our waterfront.

We recognize Vistra's efforts to identify viable uses for this site; however, as you are aware, the community has overwhelmingly expressed its opposition to the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) project. The passage of Measure A-24 in November 2024 reaffirmed the city's commitment to preserving this site for visitor-serving and commercial uses, requiring voter approval for any industrial development. Furthermore, in response to public concerns, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 670, placing a temporary prohibition on grid-scale BESS projects while we develop comprehensive safety and land-use regulations. The legislative landscape is shifting as well, with Assembly Bill 303 poised to introduce stricter statewide oversight following the recent fire at Vistra's Moss Landing BESS facility.

Given these realities, we recognize that Vistra faces significant regulatory, financial, and community-related challenges in moving forward with the BESS project at this location. Rather than a prolonged, uncertain, and costly entitlement process, we believe there is a more constructive path forward—one that benefits both Vistra and the Morro Bay community.

We would like to explore the possibility of Vistra transferring ownership of the property to the City. Such a move would:

- **Resolve regulatory and entitlement challenges:** With Measure A-24 in place and growing state-level scrutiny of BESS facilities, industrial redevelopment at this site faces high hurdles. A property transfer would allow Vistra to avoid years of legal, environmental, and political challenges.
- **Demonstrate corporate leadership and community partnership:** By facilitating a land transfer, Vistra would turn a contentious situation into an opportunity to showcase goodwill, environmental stewardship, and a commitment to responsible corporate citizenship.

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- **Enhance Vistra's public image:** The Moss Landing fire has placed increased scrutiny on BESS projects along the California coast. A cooperative approach in Morro Bay could help reinforce Vistra's reputation as a responsive and community-focused company.
- **Provide a clean exit strategy:** Rather than navigating an uphill battle for project approvals, Vistra could streamline its portfolio by removing an asset with complex development obstacles while earning positive recognition for reinvesting in community-oriented solutions.

The City of Morro Bay is ready to work with you to ensure a smooth transition, and we welcome the opportunity to discuss how this can be structured in a way that benefits all parties. Please contact the City Manager at ykimball@morrobayca.gov, (805) 772-6206, or me directly at cwixom@morrobayca.gov.

We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate and find a resolution that serves both Vistra and our community.

Sincerely,

Carla Wixom

[Carla Wixom \(Mar 12, 2025 08:17 PDT\)](#)

Carla Wixom

Mayor, City of Morro Bay

Cc: Morro Bay City Council

2025.03.12 Mayor letter to Vistra (final)

Final Audit Report

2025-03-12

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