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Long Beach releases plan for largest offshore wind turbine facility at any U.S. port

A rendering shows a concept for Pier Wind, a proposed facility at the Port of Long Beach intended to help California and the nation meet renewable energy targets.
(Port of Long Beach)



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Within about a dozen years, floating wind turbines — as tall as the Eiffel Tower — will stand alongside the cranes and cargo containers at the Port of Long Beach as part of the largest offshore wind turbine facility in any U.S. port.

Once assembled in the Port of Long Beach, the 1,100-foot-tall turbines can be towed by sea to locations in Central and Northern California to generate renewable energy for the state.

The Port of Long Beach on Tuesday released plans for the offshore wind project — dubbed Pier Wind — to generate up to 20 megawatts of energy per turbine for the state, helping California move toward a zero-emission future.

“As society transitions to clean energy, our harbor is ideally located for such an enterprise — with calm seas behind a federal breakwater, one of the deepest and widest channels in the U.S., direct access to the open ocean and no air height restrictions,” Port of Long Beach Executive Director Mario Cordero said in a statement.

“No other location has the space to achieve the economies of scale needed to drive down the cost of energy for these huge turbines.”

The massive project would involve creating as much as 400 acres of new land for a terminal capable of handling heavy-lift crane operations and would cost nearly \$5 billion, according to port officials.

Construction is more than three years out as local officials still need to plan with state and federal entities.

The wind turbine facility could be operational by 2035, port officials said.

The 20 megawatts that each turbine can generate could produce all the 25 gigawatts of energy California hopes to generate via offshore wind by 2045 if the port is able to install between 1,000 and 1,600 of the turbines, according to a spokesman.