



2020 AAPA EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS

*Classification: Videos*

## 2020 State of the Port – Bridge Video



## 2020 State of the Port – Bridge Video

### Summary:

The Port of Long Beach's status as a major economic engine for the region and an international standard bearer for excellent service as well as sustainable movement of cargo make the Port's annual State of the Port a "must attend" event for the regional maritime and business community, as all face the same challenges of trade wars, competition and other developing issues. The State of the Port, produced by the Port's Communications and Community Relations Division, highlights the past year's accomplishments and milestones and sets the tone for the Port for the year ahead to address those challenges. The theme for the 2020 event was "The Year of Collaboration" – celebrating the relationships between the Port and its many industry partners. An important part of the keynote address by Executive Director Mario Cordero was an update on the Port's ongoing \$4 billion capital improvement program. A stunning centerpiece of the program is the \$1.5 billion Gerald Desmond Bridge Replacement Project, visible to the entire city with towers rising more than 500 feet into the sky. As the bridge nears completion – opening is planned for late summer or fall of 2020 – a video was produced featuring up-close drone footage of the bridge and the men and women at work constructing the new landmark on the California coastline. As a companion piece to another video produced for State of the Port – a salute to workers featuring Aaron Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man" – this video was set to the inspirational "Simple Gifts" theme from the composer's Appalachian Spring.



*New Gerald Desmond Bridge  
under construction*

# 7 Communication Challenges and Opportunities

The Port of Long Beach is the Port of Choice – the premier U.S. gateway for trans-Pacific trade and a trailblazer in innovative goods movement, safety, environmental stewardship and sustainability. As the second-busiest container seaport in the United States, the Port handles trade valued at more than \$170 billion annually and supports 2.6 million trade-related jobs across the nation, including more than 575,000 in Southern California. The Port of Long Beach prides itself on its top-notch customer service and operational excellence, and in 2019 industry leaders named it “The Best West Coast Seaport in North America.” Founded in 1911 with a single municipal dock at the mouth of the Los Angeles River, today the Port encompasses 3,200 acres with 35 miles of waterfront, 10 piers, 80 berths and 66 gantry cranes.

As Executive Mario Cordero reported in his 2020 State of the Port address, after a record year of cargo volumes in 2018, the Port of Long Beach faced a number of challenges in 2019. The trade dispute with China caused volumes to decrease 5.7%, but Long Beach was able to report its second-best year on

record, moving 7.6 million twenty-foot equivalent container units in 2019.

Although the outlook on the trade situation with China was seen as optimistic at that time, other challenges remained, such as new technologies, competition with the neighboring Port of Los Angeles, and the continued incremental loss of market share of both ports to other facilities around the country as customers explored new trade routes.

Close collaboration with the Port’s many industry partners was seen as key to overcoming these challenges, whether anticipated or unexpected, in 2020 and beyond.

One bright spot in 2019 was progress on the Port’s decade-long, \$4 billion capital improvement program, especially the two largest projects: The Middle Harbor Redevelopment Project, due to be complete in 2021, with two of the three project phases already open and operating, and the \$1.5 billion Gerald Desmond Bridge Replacement Project, scheduled to open in late summer or fall 2020.

Several construction milestones were completed on the Bridge Project during 2019, including making the final concrete pour, completing the approach structures, and connecting the main span to those structures. To commemorate those milestones, the challenge for the Port’s Communications and Community Relations team was to produce a video to incorporate in the Executive Director’s State of the Port address featuring stunning, up-close drone photography captured during the

latter stages of construction. This video would also serve to salute the bridge team and construction workers, exemplifying the theme of a “Year of Collaboration” making the Port’s success possible. The bridge video would serve as a companion piece to a second video included at the beginning of the address saluting all port workers. The two would be linked by sound tracks featuring the music of the great American composer Aaron Copland, continuing an inspirational thread throughout the address.



The Port of Long Beach

## 2 Complementing the Overall Mission

The State of the Port is tailored to focus on sharing the Port's efforts to meet the goals of its Strategic Plan, and the speeches at the 2020 event focused on how the Port is meeting the six goals set by the Board of Harbor Commissioners in the most recent version of the Strategic Plan, updated and released in April 2019:

- Strengthen the Port's competitive position through secure and efficient movement of cargo while providing outstanding customer service;
- Maintain financial strength and security of assets;
- Develop and maintain state-of-the-art infrastructure that enhances productivity and efficiency in goods movement;
- Improve the environment through sustainable practices and the reduction of environmental

impacts from Port operations and development;

- Broaden community access to Port-related opportunities and economic benefits;
- Attract, develop and retain a diverse, high-performing workforce.

Producing videos to celebrate construction milestones on major capital projects like the Gerald Desmond Bridge Replacement aligns with all the goals outlined in the Plan. Including members of the Port's high-performing workforce clearly illustrates the economic benefits brought to the community by these construction projects through job opportunities. In addition, beautiful imagery featuring Port operations also serves as a subtle reminder of the Port's commitment to sustainability and reduction of environmental impacts.

## 3 Planning and Programming Components

### Goal

The goal for the State of the Port Bridge Video was to provide an awe-inspiring, action-packed illustration of Gerald Desmond Bridge Replacement Project construction progress and milestones as highlighted in Executive Director Mario Cordero's State of the Port address, also paying tribute to the Port's workforce and industry partners and reflecting the 2020 State of the Port theme, "A Year of Collaboration."

### Objectives

- Focus on capturing images of both the bridge construction underway and the men and women at work;
- Include panoramic harbor views to illustrate the Port's expansion, downtown location, clean air and clean water stories;
- Utilize emerging photo techniques to capture the dramatic action high above the harbor;
- Add an inspirational music track to help set the tone throughout the address;

- Enter the new video into the archive for use in future Port presentations;
- Produce the video on time and within a budget of \$ \_\_\_\_\_;
- Track the effectiveness of the video among State of the Port attendees.

### Target Audience

- Current and potential Port customers and vendors;
- Elected and appointed officials;
- Companies that service the Port;
- Government agencies;
- Environmental watchdogs and other Port stakeholders;
- Safety and security agencies;
- Long Beach and Southern California residents and community organizations;
- The Gerald Desmond Bridge workforce;
- Educators, students and future employees;
- People interested in bridges and major construction projects;
- Members of the news media.

# 4 Actions Taken and Communication Outputs Used

## Overview

The 2020 State of the Port event was held on Wednesday, January 22, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom of the Long Beach Convention Center, located in downtown Long Beach near the city's business center and the Port. Approximately 750 guests attended, filling the venue to capacity. Another 340 watched the event via live webcast.

**Full Video –**  
2020 State of the Port Webcast  
<https://vimeo.com/386783616>

Executive Director Mario Cordero's State of the Port address speech begins at 30:00, and the Bridge Video can be seen in the main presentation at 1:00:46.

**Bridge Video –**  
<https://vimeo.com/421291867>

## Production/Budget

**Video Content –** The 1:30 minute Bridge Video features:

- The final section of the bridge "floor" being set in place by workers.
- The existing bridge, still in use, as a background for the new bridge going up alongside. (The old bridge will be demolished once the new span is open to traffic.)
- Panoramic views showing the Port "at work," the Port's downtown Long Beach location, and evidence of the Port's success protecting the environment displayed in clear water and blue skies.

**Sound Track –** The stirring and familiar music of Aaron Copland, called "The Dean of American Composers," was selected to accompany the Bridge Video and a companion video saluting all Port workers that aired at the beginning of the Executive Director's address, setting the inspirational tone

for the presentation. Maintaining the theme, the Copland music was also broadcast as background music as attendees exited at the conclusion of the event. The Bridge Video featured the "Simple Gifts" theme from Copland's composition, Appalachian Spring, and his "Fanfare for the Common Man" was fittingly selected to accompany the Salute to Workers Video.

**Videography –** Longtime Port video contractor Media 360 produced the 1:30 video in collaboration with the Port's Manager of Creative Design. Both helicopter and drone were employed to capture the aerial footage – especially for this new video – of the bridge, surrounding Port vistas and activity, and city skyline views. The imagery was edited to fit the music.

**Budget –** Total out-of-pocket cost for the Bridge Video was \$ \_\_\_\_\_, including video and production charges. Port Communications staff time for coordinating with the contractor is not included.

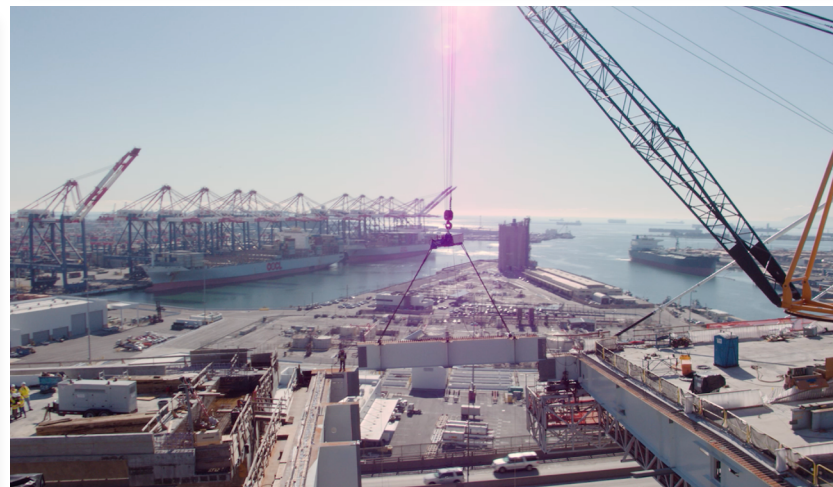


Workers on the new Gerald Desmond Bridge



State of the Port - Bridge Video clips

<https://vimeo.com/421291867>



# 5 Communications Outcomes and Evaluation Methods

## Objectives

- 750 attended the live event, 50 more than the 2019 event.
- 340 watched the live webcast, a few more than 305 in 2019.
- 587 viewed the archived 2020 webcast through mid-May, compared to 623 for the same period in 2019.

## Survey Results

An 11-question email survey (SurveyMonkey) was distributed the day following the event to those who indicated by R.S.V.P. that they would attend. Of the 750 attendees, 184 responded to the survey. The survey focused on the event as a whole, but one question focused on presentations and videos. Asked to “Rate Presentation Slides and Videos,” 97% indicated “Excellent” or “Good.” Twenty-nine respondents added comments, including:

- Inspiring videos.
- Music and slides were tastefully done.

- The background music was amazing.
- Good sound which is sometimes difficult.
- Loved it!
- Aaron Copland music and video were cool.
- I loved the music and the video it was tied to. Very cool.
- Fantastic. My personal favorite.
- These were well done, well placed and well timed.
- Very exciting.
- Wonderful music.
- I like the professionalism of the event, but the presentation was a little long.
- Lots of great video footage, but videos could have been a little shorter.
- Loved that there were lots of videos.
- Great production quality.
- Very informative, Good quality of picture and sound.



*New Gerald Desmond Bridge under construction*

*"We have so much to be proud of here in the City of Long Beach and at the Port. It was fascinating watching the construction on the Gerald Desmond Bridge Replacement Project in that drone video. You can already see the new bridge from all over downtown as it rises above the harbor, and one day this epic cable-stayed bridge will be recognized as a primary landmark on the West Coast skyline. This project deserved to be set to that inspiring music by Aaron Copland, one of my favorite composers."*

*– Mario Cordero,  
Executive Director, Port of Long Beach*

*"I have a great Communications team at the Port of Long Beach and long-time contractors that we know we can rely on. Jen Choi, our very talented Manager of Creative Design, outdid herself overseeing this video, sure to include all the important elements we discussed, and, as always, Media 360 put it all together beautifully, perfectly combining video and music."*

*– Kerry Gerot,  
Director of Communications and Community Relations,  
Port of Long Beach*

*"I love that music! I always learn so much at this annual Port review and future cast, but that Aaron Copland soundtrack put me in a good mood that lasted all day. Inspiring. So is our incredible Port of Long Beach. From what I gathered at the 2020 State of the Port, we appear to have some challenges ahead for the industry, but I'm convinced our Port, in collaboration with their partners and stakeholders, will continue to do just fine providing the powerful economic engine my small business and many other Long Beach entities rely on."*

*– Lovetta Kramer,  
Kramer Communications – Contract Writer,  
Port of Long Beach*

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