Fostering Positive Relationships with Your Local Communities

AAPA Commissioners Seminar
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Port of Redwood City
Who cares?

Everyone!
Port of Redwood City and Redwood Creek Channel (aerial view)
Port Commissioners

Are you ready with interesting stories to answer citizens’ questions?

- Why did you become a commissioner?
- What do “they” do at the port?
- Why do we have a port?
- What do they ship at the port?
Treat the Port like a business

- Great businesses cultivate their public image.
- Elevator pitch—short, compelling answer when asked about your business.
- Stories, not statistics: make numbers come alive.
- How your cargo relates to people & jobs.
- Highlight your port’s connection to the global economy.
Make Friends before you need them!
Why?

- Support for your projects—infrastructure, expansion
- Allies in time of need—incompatible land use, protests
- Two-way communication with community leads to engagement & sense of ownership.
- Port as part of community, not outside of it.
How?

- Invitations to events
- Social media
- Support for community activities
- Showing up in public
- Connect to community organizations
Stories, not Statistics

Tonnage reports aren’t compelling unless they have a human element.

Your infrastructure project—how will it benefit your community?

Your job creation—how will it help?

Your environmental stewardship—what progress have you made?
Don’t reinvent the wheel!

- Join existing events as a sponsor
- Team up with other organizations
- Make sure kids are included
- Marketing—start small and build on success
- Convene a volunteer committee for ideas
- Cast your net broadly
Natural Allies

- Other boards & commissions (Parks & Rec, Historical, Cultural)
- Port Tenants
- Maritime organizations, yacht clubs
- Museums, arts community
- Educational groups, schools, Sea Scouts
- Marine science & environmental groups
- Coast Guard, Navy, Auxiliary organizations
- Recreation groups—boating, rowing, fishing
THE Port

becomes

THEIR Port
How did we communicate?

- Port Booth
- "Working Waterfront" trolley tours
- Dockside boat tours
- Marine Science Institute harbor tours
- Historical & other info booths
Simple Messages

- Jobs
- Economic contribution
- Positive environmental impacts
- Recreational activities, access to water
- Goods movement “gateway to world”
Messaging Outreach

- Port bulletin, website, Facebook, Twitter
- Flyers/postcards at local events
- School & yacht club newsletters
- Press releases—print & online articles
- Chamber of Commerce, & Seaport Indus. Assoc.
- Mothers Club and Service Organizations
- Senior citizen center
Examples of Community Engagement from Port of Redwood City

- Yacht Club, Youth & College Sailing Regattas
- Stanford Tree-athlon Fundraiser
- Bair Island Aquatic Center Rowing Race: Redwood City Council vs. Planning Commission
More examples

- Sponsor musical concerts in parks & at port
- Redwood City PortFest—an annual festival
- Port Poster Contest for local schools
More examples

- Tours: historic vessels, working waterfront, Port Director’s tour
- Holiday party
- & Toys for Tots collection
Keep your eyes on your business...
...but keep your heart in your community.
Thank You
American Association of Port Authorities
for your kind attention