Public Port Governance and Marine Terminal Industry Structure; Issues and Trends

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Institutional Setting

1. Limited federal role based on historic lineage—12th century Hanseatic League
2. US public port as a public enterprise established in early 20th century
3. US public ports decentralized—state, bi-state, county or city government, or special district
4. Functional responsibilities derived from enabling mandate—can be broad and diverse.
5. Public ports governed by elected (30%) or appointed commissions (70%)—serving as corporate boards “typically” to hire executive director and set policy
Public Ports as Public Enterprise
Doing the Public’s Business in a Dynamic Environment

- Greater Autonomy—Business focus
- Greater Accountability—Public Focus

- Self Sustaining
- Strong Competitive Position
- Coherent Strategic and Business Plans

- Public subsidies
- Env. and Quality of Life Concerns
- “Big Fish in Small Pond”
- Governance/Mgmt Controversy
Major Trends

1. Politicalization
2. Privatization
3. Federalization
4. Regionalization
5. Partnerships
   - Public/private
   - Public/public
6. Changing Role—quality of life
Canada’s Gateway Ports: Recognizing Intermodal Opportunities
Public and Business Expectations Continue to Rise

• Assure sufficient capacity and efficient operations through modern, well maintained facilities

• Generate strong balance sheets and positive cash flow

• Create jobs and economic opportunity

• Enhance environmental value and local quality of life

• And, provide whatever other public amenities governing bodies decree

• HOW?
Conclusion

1. Governance matters--it is dynamic and it affects you and your port

2. Will and should the current model of ports as public enterprise endure?