

**VENTURA PORT DISTRICT
PUBLIC AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN**



**Prepared for the
Ventura Port District**

**Prepared by
Brian D. Pendleton, General Manager**

**APPROVED
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	3
II.	PURPOSE.....	3
III.	WHAT IS CIVIC AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT.....	4
IV.	STAKEHOLDERS.....	5
V.	COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH.....	7
VI.	COLLABORATION.....	9
VII.	TRANSPARENCY.....	12
VIII.	NEXT STEPS.....	13
IX.	GENERAL CONTACT INFORMATION.....	13

I. INTRODUCTION

The Ventura Port District (“District”) strives to provide engaged, accountable, and effective government. As part of this commitment, the District seeks to develop a Public and Civic Engagement Plan (P.C.E.P.) that is consistent with the following long-term goals and 5-year objectives.

Long-Term Goals:

Goal 5: Relationships

- Build respectful, productive, and mutually beneficial business relationships with our tenants, public agencies, elected officials and the community.

Goal 6: Public Service

- Provide exceptional public service and transparency at all levels within the organization through effective leadership, training, mentoring, and oversight. This promotes accountability, increased public trust, and a more efficient, effective and public focused organization.

5-Year Objectives:

Objective E: Public and Civic Engagement Plan

- Strengthen communication and further develop close working relationships with stakeholders, business partners, and civic leaders
 - Collaborate with business partners and stakeholders through increased engagement, communication, and participation.

II. PURPOSE

The District’s purpose for developing this P.C.E.P is to facilitate meaningful community involvement. This P.C.E.P will answer the following questions:

- Who are the District’s stakeholders?
- How does the District communicate and outreach to its stakeholders?
- Who does the District collaborate with?
- How does the District showcase their efforts in transparency?

The P.C.E.P is a living document that establishes the approach to civic and public engagement for proposed policies, programs and projects. The P.C.E.P. also establishes methods for public participation, two-way dialogue and communication and documentation of the same.

Further, the District, its Commissioners, and staff seek to formalize through this plan, on-going efforts to strengthen communication, collaboration, and transparency with stakeholders, business partners, and civic leaders.

III. WHAT IS CIVIC AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The term “Civic Engagement” refers to working to make a difference in the civic life of one’s community and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes. ([Youth.gov](#)).

The term “Public Engagement” is any process that involves the public in problem solving or decision-making and uses public input to make sustainable and enduring decisions. Public engagement includes all aspects of identifying problems and opportunities, developing alternatives, and making decisions.

Planning for public engagement is a crucial step in ensuring that engagement efforts are effective. The planning process helps local governments refine goals, identify the community’s needs, determine key audiences, and plan for success.

IV. STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders play an important role in any governmental organizations decision-making process. The term “stakeholder” refers to one who is involved in or affected by a course of action. ([Merriam-Webster.com](https://www.merriam-webster.com)) This includes people who will benefit from the project or action, people who could be negatively impacted, and those who are simply interested.

Below is a list of stakeholder groups and categories with specific examples:

STAKEHOLDERS	WHO ARE THEY?	WHY INCLUDED?	WHAT DO THEY DO?
Ventura Port District Business Partners	Master Tenants Master Subtenants Village Tenants Charters Commercial Fishers	As business partners, good stewardship of the harbor benefits all as well as the public.	Create value for the public at large in turn generating income, revenue, and jobs.
Harbor Residents	Ventura Marina Mobile Home Park Portside Ventura Harbor Liveaboards	Members of the Harbor Community	Benefit from the natural assets and amenities of the Harbor. Contribute as members of the Harbor Community.
Visitors	Local Residents Out of City Out of State International	The public are the ultimate beneficiaries of the Port District's assets, infrastructure, and amenities.	Value created by the offerings of the harbor stimulates patronage from the public. Those funds are reinvested for the benefit of the public at large.
Water Activity Groups	Outriggers Paddleboards Kayakers Sailors Commercial & recreational fishers Swimmers Surfers	Care about the condition and health of our water and waterways and benefit from the results of good stewardship.	Benefit from the infrastructure and natural assets of the Harbor. Bring visitors/business to the Harbor.
Civic Leaders	City of Ventura County of Ventura State of California State Senate & Assembly US House of Representatives US Senate	Cooperative agencies are essential partners in the success of a Special District.	Many agencies have jurisdictional authority over the District. Many also have access to larger resource pools that can benefit the District and therefore its users and business partners.
Federal & State Agency's	US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) US Coast Guard (USCG)	Regulatory and responsible agencies are essential partners	Many agencies have jurisdictional authority over the District. Many also have access to

	California Coastal Commission National Parks Service California State Parks California Department of Fish & Wildlife	in the success of a Special District.	larger resource pools that can benefit the District and therefore its users and business partners.
Community Organizations & Non-Profits	Ventura Chamber of Commerce Ventura Visitors & Convention Bureau Ventura County Economic Development Association (VCEDA) Ventura County Special Districts Association Economic Development Collaborative (EDC) Women's Economic Ventures (WEV)	As a destination for both locals and the traveling public, relationships with economic development partners are crucial to keeping Ventura Harbor competitive for visitation.	Assist in generating awareness and traffic to the harbor. Additional visitation generates revenue for reinvestment in harbor facilities, assets, and amenities.
Environmental and Environmental Justice Organizations	Environmental Defense Center Santa Barbara Channelkeeper Friends of the Earth Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation California Coastal Protection Network Ocean Conservation Research Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance Oceanic Preservation Society Center for Biological Diversity Seven Circles Foundation Environmental Action Committee of West Marin	Care about the condition and health of our coastal environment and benefit from the results of good stewardship.	Work to protect and enhance local environment.

Identifying stakeholders allows for clear communications during periodic updates or policy, program, or project progress meetings. Knowing who stakeholders are and where they fit in the development and implementation phases of a policy, program or project is vital to understanding and effectively addressing their expectations or concerns.

This list is not meant to be all inclusive and will likely expand as new stakeholders are discovered.

V. COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH

Traditionally, communications and outreach refer to strategies used to educate, engage and involve specific stakeholder groups around an agenda or mission. Communication is the development and delivery of a compelling message to critical audiences and outreach is the means by which you reach and deliver your message to those critical audiences. (bscpcenter.org)

The following are the District's methods for how we communicate and outreach information to our stakeholders:

1) Board Meetings

- Board meetings provide stakeholders with the opportunity to know what business is being discussed and the opportunity to participate in that discussion. With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, meetings have been conducted through an online platform.
- Board meetings are held twice per month, once in November and December, and typically dark in August. Special meetings can be called by the Board on an as-needed basis.
- The District may wish to consider a hybrid meeting format that allows for both in-person and remote observation and/or participation to increase stakeholder engagement and participation.
- Maintain interest lists:
 - Agenda Packets
 - Special Projects and Programs

2) Workshops

- Budget
- Goals and 5-Year Objectives Development Sessions
- Special Projects and Programs

3) Informational Notifications

- Emails from the General Manager
- Tenant Newsletters from Marketing

4) Social Media

- Instagram – 21,233 followers
- Facebook – 27,361 followers
- Twitter – 5,522 followers
- E-Newsletters – about 9,000 receive
- Blogs
- Harbor View Newsletter – 11,000 receive in Ventura Breeze

5) Websites

- venturaharbor.com (Ventura Port District)

- Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Content
 - a. VPD Mission
 - b. History
 - c. Organizational Structure
 - d. Commissioners with Contact Info.
 - e. GM & Managers with Contact Info.
 - f. Board Meeting Agendas, Minutes
 - g. Meeting Archives
 - h. Annual & Mid-Year Budget
 - i. News & Events
- venturaharborvillage.com (Ventura Harbor Village)
 - Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - Content
 - a. Tenant Names, Contact Info.
 - b. Events
 - c. Visitor Information

6) Community Organization Membership, Participation and/or Presentations

- Annual Grand Jury Protocol Visit
- Ventura Chamber of Commerce
- Ventura Visitors and Convention Bureau
- Rotary Club (and other service clubs)
- Pierpont Community Council, The Keys Neighborhood
- Ventura County and California Special Districts Associations (VCSDA and CSDA)
- Ventura County Economic Development Association

7) Events

- Village Tenant Recognition
- Master and Village Tenant Meetings
- Commercial Fishers Meetings

VI. COLLABORATION

The term “collaboration” refers to the act of working together, especially on a goal or shared project. ([Dictionary.com](#)) When used strategically, collaboration produces positive impacts, stakeholders committed to policy or program change, and strengthened capacity of individuals and organizations to effectively work together.

COLLABORATORS	WHO ARE THEY?	HOW DO WE COLLABORATE?
Ventura Port District Business Partners	Master Tenants Master Subtenants Village Tenants Charters Commercial Fishers	Collaborative teamwork in promoting a positive experience in harbor visitation benefits all partners and returns investment into infrastructure and services for the visiting public.
City of Ventura	Residents Economic Development Committee City Police/Fire Departments Councilmember & Administrative Liaisons	City Council appoints VPD Commissioners; Harbor Patrol and Fire Department MOU. Providing leadership through the appointment of the Board and governance through City codes and regulations.
County of Ventura	Environmental Health Division First District Supervisor's Office	Providing a safe experience to visitors and business patrons is essential to public wellbeing and a positive experience.
Federal & State Agency's	US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) US Coast Guard (USCG) California Coastal Commission National Parks Service California State Parks California Department of Fish & Wildlife	Work together to support projects and receive project funding, in particular ensuring that the federal navigation channel remains open.
Ventura Chamber of Commerce	Voice of local businesses when advocating public policy changes that stimulate and sustain growth for business resulting in the creation and retention of jobs	General Manager on Executive Committee and is Chair of Economic Development Committee Harbor Businesses Members

Ventura Visitors and Convention Bureau	Promotes the City of Ventura by capturing its spirit and showcasing the city's best attributes every single day. Works to strengthen positive exposure and awareness of the City's as a convention and visitor destination in hopes of increasing local business revenue and stimulating economic growth and development for the community.	General Manager on Executive Committee Board Help promote our Harbor Businesses Include marketing team in marketing events
Beach Erosion Authority for Clean Oceans and Nourishment (BEACON)	California Joint Powers Agency established in 1986 to address coastal erosion, beach nourishment and clean oceans within the Central California Coast from Point Conception to Point Mugu.	The agency promotes beneficial reuse of dredged material for beach nourishment – both of which provide great value to the District via maintaining the navigational channel as well as maintaining harbor beaches, protecting infrastructure, and providing ecological benefit through habitat preservation and restoration.
California Marine Affairs and Navigation Conference (CMANC)	Consortium of California harbors, ports and marine interest groups. Mission is to optimize California maritime benefits by providing advocacy for the maintenance and improvement of California harbors, ports and navigation projects. Works with the California legislature and congressional delegation to make sure California maritime interests are supported by federal and state government.	General Manager on Board BOM on CMANC Committee(s)
California Special Districts Association (CSDA)	501c(6) not-for profit association that was formed in 1969 to promote good governance and improved core local services through professional development, advocacy, and other services for all types of independent special districts.	Provides education and training, legislative advocacy, information for management and operational effectiveness. Letters supporting or opposing certain legislation

Community Organizations & Non-Profits	<p>Ventura County Lodging Association Ventura County Economic Development Association (VCEDA) Ventura County Special Districts Association Economic Development Collaborative (EDC) Women's Economic Ventures (WEV)</p>	<p>Resources for our Harbor Business Partners for business banking, finance programs. As many harbor businesses are also small businesses, active collaboration with small business resource agencies provides increased access to financing, consulting, and other expert services of particular benefit to small business enterprises.</p>
Environmental and Environmental Justice Organizations	<p>Environmental Defense Center Santa Barbara Channelkeeper Friends of the Earth Wishtoy Chumash Foundation California Coastal Protection Network Ocean Conservation Research Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance Oceanic Preservation Society Center for Biological Diversity Seven Circles Foundation Environmental Action Committee of West Marin</p>	<p>Participate in public policy, program, and project discussion.</p>

VII. TRANSPARENCY

Transparency is government's obligation to share information with stakeholders that is needed to make informed decisions and hold officials accountable for the conduct of the people's business.

Transparency exists largely on government websites. (American Legislative Exchange Council)

The term "Transparency" is characterized by visibility or accessibility of information especially concerning business practices. ([Merriam-Webster.com](#))

Listed below are ways the District is transparent:

- 1) District Transparency Certificate of Excellence
 - Sponsored by Special District Leadership Foundation and California Special Districts Association
 - Certificate duration 3 years
 - Deadline to submit is November 30, 2021
 - Purpose is to promote transparency in the operations and governance of special districts to the public/constituents and provide special districts with an opportunity to showcase their efforts in transparency.
- 2) Website (venturaharbor.com)
 - Transparency Reports
 - Financial Statements and Budgets (3 years)
 - Compensation Transparency
 - Grand Jury Reports
 - Administrative Policies
 - Enterprise System Catalog (SB272)
 - Requires special districts and other local agencies to create a catalog of their enterprise systems and make it publicly available at their office and online.
 - Defined as software applications or computer systems that collects, stores, exchanges, and analyzes information that the agency uses.
 - Port Commission
 - Commissioners and contact information
 - Agendas
 - Staff Reports
 - ADA Compliant
- 3) Public Records Act
In the interest of openness and transparency and in keeping with the public's right of access to all public records in the District's custody and control, and subject to certain exemptions as provided by law, the Ventura

Port District adopted Resolution No. 3274 approving policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the Public Records Act.

4) Board Meetings

- A formal meeting with a presentation and dedicated time for public comment. This is a legislated requirement for municipal decisions, where public notice of the hearing must be given and all stated opinions are recorded.

VIII. NEXT STEPS

- 1) The first steps in development of the P.C.E.P. is to hold a Board Meeting on March 3, 2021 to gather preliminary feedback from the Board and stakeholders.
- 2) Following the Board meeting, staff intends to reach out to stakeholders in a variety of ways to gather feedback on the draft P.C.E.P., and also determine what methods of communication and collaboration stakeholders feel are most effective and should be considered for inclusion in the P.C.E.P.
 - Outreach for this purpose will likely include direct communication, meetings, surveys, etc.
- 3) Return to a Board Meeting for follow-up discussion of common themes resulting from the outreach.
- 4) Return to the Board with a recommendation for P.C.E.P. approval.
- 5) The P.C.E.P. should be viewed as a living document for periodic review and update.

IX. GENERAL CONTACT INFORMATION

The following Ventura Port District personnel will serve as primary contacts for the P.C.E.P.:

- Brian D. Pendleton, General Manager
bpendleton@venturaharbor.com
- Jessica Rauch, Clerk of the Board
jrauch@venturaharbor.com
- John Higgins, Harbor Master
jhiggins@venturaharbor.com
- Todd Mitchell, Business Operations Manager
tmitchell@venturaharbor.com
- Jennifer Talt-Lundin, Marketing Manager
jtaltlundin@venturaharbor.com

Ventura Port District
1603 Anchors Way
Ventura, CA 93001
(805) 642-8538
venturaharbor.com