

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



**Prepared for the
Ventura Port District**

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

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Ventura Port District (“District”) strives to provide engaged, accountable, and effective government. As part of this commitment, the District developed a Public and Civic Engagement Plan (P.C.E.P.) that was approved by the Board on July 7, 2021, and is consistent with the Guiding Principles and 5-Year Objectives adopted by the Board on April 6, 2022, which can be found on the Districts website: <https://venturaharbor.com/mission-vision/>.

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](https://www.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) 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 District Employees	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 & Neighboring Residents	Ventura Marina Mobile Home Park Portside Ventura Harbor Liveaboards The Keys	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/boaters 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 Ventura County Air Pollution Control District Ventura Local Agency Formation Commission Oxnard Harbor District (Port of Hueneme) 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 in	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	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 California Special Districts Association (CSDA) Ventura County Special Districts Association Economic Development Collaborative (EDC) Women's Economic Ventures (WEV) California Central Coast Tourism Cal Travel Association Los Angeles Convention & Visitors Bureau	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 & 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 Surfrider	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. Board meetings are held in-person and via Zoom.
- 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 implemented a hybrid meeting format that allows for both in-person and remote observation to increase stakeholder engagement and participation.
- Maintain interest lists:
 - Agenda Packets
 - Special Projects and Programs
 - Harbor Village Tenants
 - Master Tenants
 - District Employees

2) Workshops

- Budget
- Guiding Principles and 5-Year Objectives Development Sessions
- Special Projects and Programs

3) Informational Notifications

- Emails from the General Manager
- Tenant Newsletters from Marketing

4) Content Development

a) Social Media

- Instagram
- Facebook
- X

b) E-Newsletters/Blogs

c) Short Video Compilations

d) Paid Media

- Digital
- Print
- e) Media
 - Press Releases
 - TV Coverage
 - Radio Ads
- f) Tenant Recognition
 - VC Reporter “Best Of” Awards
 - District Tenant Recognition Celebration

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. Financial Reports
 - i. Administrative Policies
 - j. News & Events
 - Parking Management Program Information
- venturaharborvillage.com (Ventura Harbor Village)
 - Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - Content
 - a. Tenant Names, Contact Info.
 - b. Events
 - c. Visitor Information
 - Parking Management Program 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)
- California Central Coast Tourism
- Cal Travel Association
- Los Angeles Convention & Visitors Bureau

7) Events, Meetings

- Village Tenant Recognition
- Master and Village Tenant Meetings
- Commercial Fishers Meetings
- Aquaculture Meetings
- Grand Jury Protocol Visits
- Monthly and Holiday Event Promotions for Visitors
- Employee Recognition Events

8) Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI)

- District Career Opportunities
 - Employee opportunities posted in Spanish and published in Spanish publications.
- Tenant Cultural Recognition
- Lease Marketing
 - Advertising vacant spaces in LGBTQ/Spanish publications
- Celebration of annual multicultural events and dates of significance through marketing recognition and programming.

9) Annual Tenant Surveys

- Annual Operations/Management Survey
- Ventura Harbor Village Market Data Survey

VI. COLLABORATION

The term “collaboration” refers to the act of working together, especially on a goal or shared project. ([Dictionary.com](https://www.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 District Employees	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 City Manager’s Office Community Development Department Public Works Department Councilmember & Administrative Liaisons Ventura Water (VenturaWaterPure)	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 Ventura County Air Pollution Control District Ventura Local Agency Formation Commission Oxnard Harbor District (Port of Hueneme) Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	Providing a safe experience to visitors and business patrons is essential to public wellbeing and a positive experience. Commissioner on LAFCo Board.
Federal & State Agency’s	US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) US Coast Gard (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	Deputy General Manager on Board. 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 is Board President and on Executive Committee. 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.	Deputy General Manager on Board, 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
Ventura County Special Districts Association (VCSDA)	Since 1974, has been representing over 20 independently governed special districts located in Ventura County. VCSDA's purpose is to promote the efficient, economical and responsive public services offered by the independent special districts of Ventura County—independent special districts governed by a locally elected board of directors.	Chapter of CSDA General Manager member of Board

Community Organizations & Non-Profits	Ventura County Lodging Association Ventura County Special Districts Association Economic Development Collaborative (EDC) Women's Economic Ventures (WEV) California Central Coast Tourism Cal Travel Association Los Angeles Convention & Visitors Bureau	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.
Environmental & 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 Surfrider	Participate in public policy, program, and project discussion.

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](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/transparency))

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
- 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.
- Certificate duration 3 years
 - Awarded January 5, 2022

2) Website (venturaharbor.com)

- Transparency Reports
 - Financial Statements and Budgets (3 years)
 - Compensation Transparency
 - 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 contact information
 - Agendas
 - Staff Reports
 - Minutes
 - Audio recordings of meetings
 - Meeting archives
 - Ethics training completion certificates
 - Board Protocols and Policies Manual and other Board policies
- ADA Compliant
- Compliment/Complaint Form

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. 3468 updating 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.

5) Annual Tenant Surveys

Administration staff creates and sends an annual survey to all tenants regarding the Ventura Port Districts operations and management. The results are presented to the Board of Port Commissioners at a public meeting.

Marketing staff creates and sends an annual survey to all tenants regarding Ventura Harbor Village Market Data. The results are incorporated into the Marketing Plan, which is presented to the Board of Port Commissioners at a public meeting.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The Board approved this Plan on July 7, 2021. The P.C.E.P is a living document for periodic review and update. Staff will continue to review this plan and endeavor to bring to the Board annually for review.

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, Harbormaster
jhiggins@venturaharbor.com
- Todd Mitchell, Deputy General 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