

Worksheets for the

Community Action Roadmap:

Empowering Near-port Communities

*December 2019*

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## Statement of Purpose

The Community Action Roadmap (CAR) is a resource tool that provides a step-by-step process for preparing community stakeholders to effectively engage with nearby port facilities and influence decision-making on issues that may impact environmental health, quality of life, and associated issues of community interest. As an interactive implementation companion for the *Ports Primer for Communities*, the CAR is organized with flexibility in mind and includes varied scenarios to reflect how different communities may approach the CAR.

These Worksheets are extracted from the CAR so that participants can directly interact, collaboratively work through exercises that assess and build capacity for decision-making, practice problem-solving skills, and plan for action.

## Introduction - Getting to Know your Port – Community Action Roadmap Page 1

Before embarking on your community action, take the time to learn more about port facilities. Understanding some basic information about how your port authority is structured will help target your efforts more effectively. Sections 2 and 3 of the *Ports Primer for Communities* provide an overview of the role of ports, port operations and port governance.

After reviewing Sections 2 and 3, test your knowledge of your local port. Here are a few questions to guide your review:

* What is the difference between a port and a port authority?
* What is the name of your port authority? Can you locate their main office and website?
* Is your port authority an operational port or a landlord port? If landlord, what type of business?
* What is the governing structure of your port authority?
* What are some of the federal, state and local agencies that regulate port activities?

### Community Action Roadmap Overview – Community Action Roadmap Page 2

**Try It Out!**

The following self-assessment is designed to help you determine which step would most benefit your community at this time. Review the questions, and mark *no*, *some*, or *yes*. After completing the assessment, discuss where to start with your community. Consider starting with the step in the process where you first marked a *no* or *some*.

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| Step | Self-Assessment | Mark: no, some or yes |
| 1 | Has your community identified and prioritized a set of goals? |  |
| 2 | Does your community know the key agencies and decision-making processes that can have the most impact on your goals? |  |
| 3 | Does your community have relationships with the key decision-makers, the business community, environmental organizations and a range of community groups that reflect the diversity in your community? |  |
| 4 | Has your community evaluated a range of methods for achieving your goal and selected a few that will be most effective? |  |
| 5 | Does your community have an action plan and the data, tools and resources to make the case for the changes you want? |  |
| 6 | Has your community reflected on past efforts, celebrated successes and determined how to address lessons learned and build on strengths? |  |

### Step 1: Prioritize Goals and Concerns - Community Action Roadmap Page 4

**Potential Community Concerns**

* Noise
* Road Traffic/Water Traffic
* Smells/Odors
* Air Quality
* Human Health
* Pedestrian Safety
* Trash
* Abandoned Lots
* Brownfield Sites
* Polluted Waters
* Access to Open Space
* Light Pollution
* Natural Disasters
* Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Try It Out!**

1. **Identify Issues**: Review the checklist above, and mark which issues are the most important in your community now. Add the priority concerns and any others not included in the checklist to a chart like the one on the following page.
2. **Add Detail**:Once you have listed the key issues, describe each concern in as much detail as possible. For example, if air quality is a concern, try to identify the location of operations and times when the air quality is most concerning.
3. **Describe Impacts**: Describe the community impacts of each concern. For example, does air quality impact sensitive populations such as children or the elderly? Or residences along a truck route? Have community members experienced increased or exacerbated health challenges that they associate with poor air quality?
4. **Set Goals**: Translate each concern into a goal. For example, “Improved air quality in the neighborhood with a focus on reducing air pollution that directly impacts sensitive populations, such as children.”
5. **Prioritize for Action**: As a final step, try to prioritize the concerns and goals in order of most importance. Ask your community, “If there was only one change we could make this year, which would it be?”

| **Issues of Concern** | **Detailed Description** | **Impacts** | **Goal** | **Priority** |
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### Step 2: Identify Levers for Change – Community Action Roadmap Page 7

**Try It Out!**

Our priority goal is:

1. In addition to the port authority, what are the other state and federal agencies, local departments, regional boards or commission who may be able to influence your priority issue? List 3 to 5 entities who are likely to have the biggest influence on your issue. Identification process can sometimes be challenging. Agency staff can play a key role in assisting with this challenge.
2. Locate the website for each entity and list the major services and responsibilities that relate to your issue.
3. Scan the news section of each website to see what projects or initiatives are planned that might be related to your prioritized goals. Additional places to look for information on projects and initiatives include: 1) meeting minutes from the port authority, metropolitan planning organization, and city council; 2) Federal register notices; 3) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews and agencies’ NEPA websites (including EPA’s Environmental Impact Statement database). Note the contact information and any upcoming meetings or comment periods. Try to identify which regulations and plans govern your issue.
4. After your initial research, you may need to call the agency contacts to confirm which departments and staff are responsible, where to find the regulations and plans that govern your issue, and what are the best near-term opportunities for promoting change. Identifying contacts can sometimes be challenging. Agency staff can play a key role in assisting with this challenge.
5. As a final step, develop a contact sheet outlining the information you have gathered for future reference, including agency contacts, plans, regulations, and upcoming events

### Step 3: Build Relationships – Community Action Roadmap Page 9

**Try It Out!**

1. Who are the influencers in your community?
2. Which stakeholders are already supporters?
3. Review the list of potential supports on page 8 of the Community Action Roadmap. Who else could you connect with to build support, resources and influence for your issue? Use a chart like the one below to capture opportunities for new relationships. As you move forward, continue to update the contact sheet you started in Step 2.

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| **Potential Supporter** (name and organization) | **What kinds of support could this person offer?** | **Are there opportunities to offer them mutual support?** | **Who can help build this relationship?** | **What strategy(ies) should we use to share our community’s perspective?** |
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### Step 4: Develop an Action Plan – Community Action Roadmap Page 10

**Try It Out!**

1. **Pick a Project.** What project will help you best meet the goal you established in step 2? Review the exercise under Check Your Ports Primer for Communities! for ideas of what has worked in similar communities. Consider what project makes sense for you to pursue now and what others you would like to keep in mind as you build your capacity and momentum? Also, consider whether a direct dialogue with port decision-makers at this time could be helpful for selecting a near-term project that engages the port collaboratively.
2. **Select Your Engagement Strategy.** Review the chart on page 11 of the Community Action Roadmap and determine which method is the most effective way for you to engage the community and decision-makers? Depending on where you are in the process, you may choose to focus on education, input, collaboration, mitigation, advocacy, or some combination.
3. **Develop an Action Plan.** Develop a chart similar to the one below, and list each activity needed to accomplish your project, then designate a lead and a timeframe. Establish a regular check-in schedule between lead partners to stay coordinated and help each other problem-solve when you encounter roadblocks. Keep your supporters updated, motivated and involved.
4. **Define Success.** Place a star next to key milestones in your action plan to evaluate and celebrate success. Review the two Measuring Success resources listed on page 16 of the Community Action Roadmap. What are some metrics for measuring your process and organizational capacity (building skills)? What metrics (methods for measuring) can help measure tangible outcomes?
5. **Identify Resources.** Reach out to partner agencies and organizations to identify grants, technical assistance, programs and other resources to help implement your project. If your organization is new, you can partner on grant applications to build your grant management track record, and ask agency staff for assistance.

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| **Task** (\* = milestone) | **Description** | **Lead Person or Organization** | **Timeframe** |
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### Step 5: Make Your Case – Community Action Roadmap Page 12

**Try It Out!**

**Gather information that supports your community concerns and goals.** Data can be collected from many sources. Review the types of data in the checklist below and identify which you already have and which new sources could be useful for making your case. Work with your partners. Engage agency staff who are positioned to help or local academic institutions in gathering data and information.

* *Reports developed by city, county, state or federal agencies, non-profits or academic institutions* lend credibility and can have the benefit of presenting data that has already been compiled, analyzed and displayed graphically. Looking at older reports can be useful to learn about the history of the port and regulations. These reports can also help identify people involved in decision-making at the port.
* *Census data including demographics, income and health statistics* can be helpful to identify vulnerable populations and disparities between your community and others in the region.
* *Environmental standards, regulatory information and data from county, state or federal agencies* can be used to show violations, exceedances in standards, or disparities between your community and regional or national averages.
* *Geographic Information System (GIS) data or online mapping tools* can be used to map the proximity of the issue to impacted communities as well as disparities in health, quality of life and environmental risk.
* *Community experience data* can document personal and collective impacts to community members through photos, podcasts, video, experience maps, or personal logs
* *Citizen science data* can empower community members to fill data gaps and gather information they trust by collecting their own data. This alternative data source can prompt agencies to verify the information by gathering additional data which they otherwise may not have collected.

**Practice crafting your message!** First, determine your target audience and develop a message that responds to the questions below. Review the list of potential partners on page eight of the Community Action Roadmap for reference. Remember to use language that the audience you selected will recognize. Next, pick a second target audience and see how your message might differ.

1. *Who is your target audience? What is their main interest or concern?*
2. *Craft your message – succinctly answer the questions below.*

*What’s the issue?*

*Where is the issue a concern?*

*Why is it important? How is it affecting the community?*

*How do you want the issue to change?*

*When is the time for input or action?*

**Design your message in printed form or other media**. Depending on your audience, this could be a presentation, a handout, a poster, a press release, a video, a public service announcement or a technical briefing document. State your message and what you would like changed as clearly and briefly as possible.

It may be helpful to develop additional messages tailored to fit the specific audience, with a focus on expressing the shared nature of goals and/or principles held in common. This helps to bridge differences in perspectives and help others understand how your goal fits with things they care about, so your goal will resonate with them.

**Use Images!** As the saying goes, a picture says a thousand words. Here are some tips on using images to convey a quick and compelling message. Check the images below that will be most effective for your message.

* Use photos showing the impact of the issue on the community. Include people in the photos when possible.
* Use a map to show where the impact occurs and the proximity of the issue to vulnerable communities (e.g., schools, preschools and senior facilities) or valuable resources (e.g., creeks, housing, businesses or open space).
* Use maps to show related health, environmental or economic disparities between your community and surrounding communities.
* Use graphs to show data and how the issue relates to regulatory standards or national averages.
* Highlight quotes from local or other respected opinion leaders. Include a photo of the speaker.
* Show or tell a success story from a similarly-affected community to demonstrate that change is not only needed, it’s possible.

### Step 6 Build Momentum for Change – Community Action Roadmap Page 14

**Try It Out!**

**Evaluate Your Process**. Use a self-evaluation to improve and identify next steps. Ideally, you should include feedback from your key partners. You can use an anonymous survey or discuss as a group and flip chart the notes. Walk through each of the key functions (e.g., outreach, volunteer coordination, fundraising, data gathering and analysis, the message, enlisting partners) and solicit feedback.

*Example Self-Evaluation*

1. What worked well?
2. What could be improved?
3. What are some ideas for addressing those challenges?
4. Do you have existing partners who could help build success in these areas?
5. Are there any new partnerships you could form to address any gaps?
6. What are some next steps?

**Celebrate Creatively!** It is important to recognize hard work and accomplishments. Review the ideas below and add your own. What would draw on local talent and demonstrate success and appreciation?

*Celebrate Accomplishments*

* Develop a press release.
* Send thank you notes.
* Post video interviews online.
* Present recognition awards.
* Paint a mural with local artists.
* Host a block party or hold a parade.
* Invite a motivational speaker.
* Enlist a youth band or dance group.
* Provide food from a local vendor.
* Include activities for children/youth.

**Consider Ways to Institutionalize.** Consider which of the following tools would help you be more effective and then describe why. Are there other tools you could add to the list?’

*Ways to Institutionalize*

* Form a coalition or partnership.
* Apply for non-profit status.
* Establish key roles (within your organization or across multiple partner organizations).
* Develop a decision-making structure and process.
* Establish an outreach strategy.
* Identify an academic partner to support research and data analysis.
* Secure more funding.

**Capture Your Momentum**. When you have fully completed your project, revisit the priority goals you identified in step 1. Based on the work you have done, are there any new goals you would add? Select the next goal or project to tackle!