

Draft Community Action Roadmap

Empowering Near-port Communities









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For more information: www.epa.gov/ports-initiative

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How to Use this Document

This document outlines six key steps to effective community engagement on ports-related issues.

The Introduction section provides background for the use of this document and its companion document, the [Ports Primer for Communities](#).

In the Community Action Roadmap section, the Overview provides an outline of the roadmap and a diagram of the steps. Each step is described in more detail on the remaining pages, along with tips, exercises and references to related sections in the *Ports Primer for Communities*.

The final section, Community Action Resources, offers additional resources to assist with implementation.

Acknowledgements

The Ports Primer and Community Action Roadmap have been developed by the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ) in partnership with Regional Offices and the Office of Environmental Justice to support near-ports communities in improving their local quality of life.

This work builds off of the Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Roadmap, which originated with the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council. More information on the CARE Roadmap is available in the Community Action Resources section of this document.

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Welcome!

The Community Action Roadmap: Empowering Near-port Communities (Community Action Roadmap) provides a step-by-step guide to help near-port communities effectively engage in port decisions that may impact local land use, environmental health and quality of life. This *Community Action Roadmap* supplements the companion document, *A Ports Primer for Communities (Ports Primer)*. The *Ports Primer* provides an overview of ports planning and operations, potential benefits and impacts of ports operations, successful community strategies, and links to additional resources.

Background

Ports can benefit near-by communities by providing jobs, infrastructure and resources to support community amenities. However ports activities can also impact near-by communities with noise, air and water pollution, traffic related to transport, loading and related industrial land uses. Near-port communities, which are often low income and/or communities of color, bear a disproportionate burden from these impacts, including reduced health and prosperity.

According to EPA's Office of Environmental Justice:

Environmental justice "will be achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn and work."

Together, the *Ports Primer* and *Community Action Roadmap* offer information and tools to empower local community members and leaders to improve their local quality of life. Each step in the *Community Action Roadmap* process is designed to build community capacity to prioritize goals, identify opportunities for influence, build partnerships, develop an action plan, make a persuasive case and build momentum for change.



A Ports Primer for Communities is available for download from the OTAQ website at: www.epa.gov/ports-initiative

Getting to Know your Port

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* 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

Using the Community Action Roadmap

The Community Action Roadmap outlines six key steps for effectively engaging in local decision-making. As shown in the diagram on page 3, the steps are outlined in a specific order starting with setting goals; however, you may choose to begin at the step that best fits your unique situation. Timeframes for each step will vary depending on local needs and goals, and over time, communities may cycle through the steps several times to address new issues and strengthen their local partnerships.

Selecting a Starting Place

The following scenarios provide examples of how different communities may approach the roadmap.

Community Collaboration, Scenario A – Your community may have come together around a specific issue, but may be wondering how to build on this initial collaboration to do more. You may choose to start with Step 1 and involve residents and

organizations in developing a shared set of priority goals and concerns.

Community Participation, Scenario B – Your community may be interested in providing public comment on a ports-related issue (e.g. an infrastructure improvement project). You may start at step 2 by ensuring that community residents are informed about when and how they can provide their input during the decision-making process. Following successful participation in the comment period, you may decide to work towards capturing the community’s interest and momentum by circling back to step 1 and prioritizing additional community goals for continued engagement.

Community Partnership, Scenario C – Your community may have spent several years outlining a plan to improve quality of life. However, you are having trouble finding partners and resources to implement your goals. You may choose to enter the roadmap on step 3 and focus on building partnerships with agencies and organizations who may have expertise, resources or authority to help you achieve your priorities.

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*.

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?	



1 **Prioritize Goals and Concerns.**

Identify and prioritize goals and concerns that are motivating community leaders to engage with the Port.

Identify Levers for Change.

Identify port governance structure and key regulatory agencies. Identify upcoming planning processes, decision documents and other opportunities for community influence.



2



6

Build Momentum for Change.

Evaluate the results of community efforts, and share these with the public. Celebrate successes. Identify next steps to build community influence.



3

Build Relationships.

Identify key community stakeholders and resource partners. Conduct outreach and build relationships. Share information, and solicit input and feedback.



4

Develop an Action Plan.

Evaluate methods of engagement and select the most effective approach (may select more than one).



5

Make Your Case.

Gather information that supports community concerns and goals. Implement selected strategy.



Step 1: Prioritize Goals and Concerns

In this step, identify and prioritize goals and concerns that are motivating community members and organizations to engage on port issues.

Your community may have been focused on a single issue and is now ready to broaden to other concerns. Or your community may be overwhelmed with so many issues, it's challenging to know where to start. In either case, taking the time to reach out to others in your community and establish a shared list of prioritized goals is the first step in making concrete changes with collective action.

Some concerns may be directly related to the port operations, while others may be connected to port related industries and transport. In addition, many near-ports communities are isolated by infrastructure and industrial uses, reducing access to key amenities such as groceries, health services, open space and reliable transportation. Concerns may be related to ongoing operations or a specific project that may cause temporary or long-term impacts.

Tips

Strength in Numbers! Try to gather input from as many residents, business owners and local organizations as possible. Even if the concerns vary across the community, by developing a list of shared goals, the community can work together to tackle each one at the right time. There are many methods for gathering goals and concerns from your community, and it's often best to try more than one.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Conduct door-to-door outreach and discussion.
- Ask to visit community and faith organizations during their regular meetings.
- Hold a community meeting and invite participants to share their goals and concerns
- Ask for a show of hands, offer a survey, or invite dot voting on flip charts to help prioritize.
- Post an online survey.
- Provide translators/translated outreach materials.
- Use social media.

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
- Other _____

Check Your Ports Primer!

As you consider goals and concerns, the following Ports Primer sections provide more detail on potential community benefits and impacts related to land use, economy and the environment.

Land Use and Transportation: 5.1-5.3

Local and Regional Economy: 6.3

Environmental Impacts: 7.1 and 7.5

Try it Out!

- 1. Identify Issues:** Review the checklist on the previous page, 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 below.
- 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



Step 2: Identify Levers for Change

Your community has the potential to influence change on many ports related actions, including:

- Construction projects with temporary and/or long-term impacts
- Planning projects, including comprehensive plans, land use plans, transportation plans, and port expansion plans
- Regulatory changes, including changes in requirements and standards for noise, air emissions, water quality and the handling of hazardous materials.
- Operational changes, including times, locations and management practices for specific activities.

Some of these actions may be led by the port agency or authority, while others may be led by the local government or regional transportation planning agency. Finding the levers for change means identifying decision-makers, regulations, policies, planning documents and points in the decision-making process that are important for addressing your community's concerns. For new organizations, it can be difficult to know where to start. Sympathetic agency staff can often help outline the contact information and responsibilities of relevant authorities.

Check Your Ports Primer!

Review the following sections again to refresh your memory on some of the levers for change that may be relevant to your priority issue.

How Ports Work: 3.1-3.3

Land Use and Transportation: 5.1-5.2

Local and Regional Economy: 6.1 and 6.3

Environmental Impacts: 7.2-7.4

Tips

Develop an Elevator Speech! When calling agency staff for information, it can be helpful to organize your “elevator speech.” An elevator speech clearly communicates the who, what, when, where and why in 1 to 3 minutes. In general, try to state the facts and what you need without assigning blame. Here is an example:

Our neighborhood located across from the entrance of the port is experiencing heavy truck traffic and reduced air quality. This is impacting residents by creating busy, unsafe streets and increasing health concerns like asthma. Who do I contact to learn how to resolve this issue?

When you reach the right contact, you may ask,

Where can I find the regulation or plan that governs this issue? If I have questions about the regulation or plan as I review it, when would be a good time to follow up with you?

Use the Freedom of Information Act. With certain exemptions protecting interests such as personal privacy, national security and law enforcement, the Freedom of Information Act gives you the right to access records from any federal agency. In addition, most state and local governments are covered by state public records laws. See the Community Action Resources section.

Be Open to New or Unexpected Avenues to Change! After prioritizing your concerns and goals in step 1, members of your community may feel committed to a specific action or avenue to change. Remember that new or unexpected opportunities for creating positive change may come to light as you move through the rest of the roadmap. Keep your goal in mind, and be open to learning about new ways to achieve that goal.

Be Patient and Stay Nimble! Revisit and refine your goals periodically. If your research into levers for change reveals that your initial goal is not achievable in the near-term, don't be discouraged. Look for near-term opportunities that can help you take small steps towards your ultimate goals.

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 commissions 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

Once your community has prioritized a set of goals and identified the agencies and avenues to pursue, the next step is to build a coalition of supporters that can help influence positive change. Relationship building can occur on several levels simultaneously.

Review the list of relationship building areas below, and note the areas where you already have strong support and the areas where you would like to invest in building stronger relationships.

- Within the community.** Reach out to other organizations in your community who may interact with residents on different issues, such as health care, youth groups, family support, faith or sports. If possible, ask to join their regular meetings to inform participants of the issues and ask for their support.
- With adjacent communities who are also impacted.** Often adjacent communities may seem a world away due to different demographics or infrastructure barriers such as rail lines, highways or industrial superblocks. However, putting differences aside and joining forces on an issue that impacts both communities can be very effective in promoting change on tough issues. City staff who work in outreach, planning, social services and grants may be able to identify community leaders in adjacent neighborhoods who could be allies.
- With liaisons and opinion leaders.** Chambers of Commerce and neighborhood associations are structured as liaison organizations between the community and local government. See if you can find a member who may be sympathetic to your concerns. They can be helpful partners if they already have working relationships with staff and decision-makers, and may also be able to offer guidance in navigating the system effectively.
- With elected officials, commissioners, agency leaders, and decision-makers.** Gaining the ear and support of elected officials and agency leads can provide significant leverage in making changes. They may feel obligated to be more responsive, or see different opportunities to support your goal than the program or technical staff on the ground because they are aware of other programs or policies that may help.
- With agency staff who may have relevant expertise, resources or programs.** Some agency staff may not have the authority to make the desired changes, but they may be able to provide technical expertise, programs or grants that can help, as well as be an internal champion for your issue within their agency.
- With other interest groups, such as business, environment, youth and schools.** Consider linking up with schools or businesses who may have a vested interest in the issue and have greater influence with decision-makers. It could also be advantageous to partner with a local environmental group who has a track record of successful advocacy and change.
- With the staff and decision makers of the responsible agencies.** Building relationships with the responsible agency staff can be challenging if the agency has not been sympathetic to community concerns in the past. A respectful tone can reduce defensiveness and encourage more productive communication. Look for creative ways to help agency staff understand the issue from the community's perspective and become invested in helping. For example, taking staff on a tour to look at the issue in the field can be more impactful than putting them on the spot at a large public meeting.

Special Note

In many communities across the US, stakeholders have advocated for years to reduce pollution from local port operations with little or no success. This document recognizes that a lack of time and resources is often a reality in communities. Taking these steps and achieving outcomes can be more challenging in some communities than others.

Tips

Listen Well! One reliable way to build support is to ask for input and feedback. When sharing information about your issue, whether with your neighbor or the mayor, ask what they think of the issue, what they recommend to help resolve it, and who else to talk to. Identify areas of common interest.

Connect on Common Ground! Not everyone may be eager to work closely with you at the beginning. Remember that regardless of your new contact's current perspective or position on your priority issue, he or she is a potential ally. When possible, find common points of connection around which to build a cordial relationship.

Stay in Touch! Always follow up with new contacts. Thank them for their support and keep them posted on status and events. Additional tips: Stay committed to your goals and be positive. Establishing dialogue and trust is extremely important.

Try It Out!

1. Who are the influencers in your community?

2. Which stakeholders are already supporters?

3. Review the list of potential supporters on page 8. 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.

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?

Check Your Ports Primer!

Review the following sections again to refresh your memory on the agency and regulatory structure for your issues. This framework will help ensure you identify partners in each sector with expertise or authority related to your issue.

How Ports Work: 3.1-3.3

Land Use and Transportation: 5.1-5.2

Local and Regional Economy: 6.1 and 6.3

Environmental Impacts: 7.2-7.4



Step 4: Develop an Action Plan

For the next step in the process, collaborate with your partners to select a project and develop a robust action plan for achieving your goal. An action plan outlines the set of activities for your project, and designates timing and leads for each activity. In addition, you will need to consider what engagement strategy will best support your project and define how you plan to measure success for your efforts.

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 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 the next page 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. 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.

Check Your Ports Primer!

Review section 4.1 “Tools for Influencing Ports Planning and Operations” for more ideas on what actions could help build support for change. Then, explore the case studies in the *Ports Primer*. Select which approaches might be a good fit for your community’s goals and describe why.

Section 4.2: Port-Community Relations

Section 5.4: Land Use and Transportation

Section 6.4: Jobs and Benefits

Section 7.6: Environment

Section 8.3: Citizen Science

Task (* = milestone)	Description	Lead Person or Organization	Timeframe

Engagement Strategy	Example Actions	Considerations
Build community support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute information about port activities, impacts and opportunities for public comment. • Provide peer-to-peer training using the Ports Primer or other educational materials. • Form a coalition of organizations focused on resolving the issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds broad based support. • Ensures advocacy goals reflect issues and concerns from the broader community. • Builds capacity for outreach, problem solving and action.
Provide feedback to the port and regulators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback via public comment periods during formal decision-making processes (e.g. through the National Environmental Policy Act process). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents goals and concerns in a written record. • A potential approach if there is a significant document or project proposal under public review. • May influence further evaluation or alternative approaches. • Commenting earlier in the process will have more potential to influence change.
Develop port-community collaborations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the community’s general goals and concerns with port governing bodies or businesses, and conduct a dialogue to identify opportunities for collaborative projects that help achieve these goals. • Join a port citizen advisory group (or lobby to create one). • Serve on a Port Authority board. • Develop a specific collaboration between the port and community, such as piloting a new program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantageous at any point in the process. • Empowers community to directly inform specific decisions. • Tends to be a more proactive, problem-solving role. • Builds productive relationships to tackle bigger issues in the future.
Act independently to mitigate port impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for community funding to mitigate an impact. • Pilot a new program through a local government or organization. • Seek opportunities to partner with state or local agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A potential approach if communicating with port and related agencies is unproductive. • Empowers community to effect change independently. • Community may have more direct control over project design and implementation. • May mitigate only a portion of the full issue or concern.
Apply political or legal pressure on decision-makers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby elected officials. • Hold the port authority and responsible agencies accountable for evaluating and reducing community impacts. • Negotiate for a community benefits agreement. • Pursue litigation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A potential avenue if communicating with port and related agencies is unproductive over time. • May promote more adversarial relationships. • Has potential to create more significant changes. • May set precedents for progressive change in other near-port communities. • Litigation may cost more in time and money than other strategies.



Step 5: Make Your Case

When you are ready to implement your project, consider how you can involve all the partners you gained in step 3. Ideally each partner can play an instrumental role based on their skills, expertise, authority, connections and influence. No matter which project you have selected, take the time to plan your actions and carefully make your case.

To keep your project on track, it is important to develop an action plan that identifies key tasks, partners and a timeline. Invite each partner to play their role and ask for their feedback and input on the action plan. Taking the time to identify these steps and lead partners can ensure that everyone has the same understanding as you move forward.

As you implement your action plan, consider the following tips for tailoring your message. These considerations can help ensure that you are making a strong case for the changes you would like to see.

Tips

Determine who is the audience or decision-maker. Depending on your project, this may be fellow community members, elected officials, or ports agency staff. You may find that you will have multiple audiences over the course of your effort.

Identify your target audience's concerns. Are they interested in health, jobs, the economy in general, the environment, city image, regulatory compliance or social justice? Your message needs to build a bridge from your concern to theirs, and describe how the issue and your solution relates to their interests.

Check Your Ports Primer!

Refresh your memory on data, analysis and mapping tools that may support your case:

Section 4.1: Mapping disparities

Section 8: Scientific data and citizen science

Appendix: Mapping and data tools

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 may already have and which new sources could be useful for making your case. Work with your partners. Engage sympathetic agency staff or local academic institutions in helping you gather relevant 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 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

During and after implementation, there are a number of steps you can take to make sure that you are capturing the energy and effort of your actions in a way that builds momentum for the future.

Reflect and Evaluate

After your project is done (and along the way!), take time to reflect and evaluate. For grassroots efforts using a lot of volunteer support, it's natural that some areas excel from passion alone, while other areas are more challenging and have a steeper learning curve.

As you evaluate, revisit your measures of success for (1) process and organizational capacity and (2) environmental and/or quality of life improvements. Metrics for the former can usually be assessed using a self-evaluation like the one below. Metrics for the latter may require data collection and analysis.

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 Success

It's important to celebrate small successes as you go and to share the results of your project with the public. Whether or not you were able to accomplish all of the intended outcomes, celebrating the efforts of community members and partners can help ensure supporters feel appreciated and maintain momentum for the next round.

Try It Out!

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.

Formalize and Institutionalize

The close of your first project may also be a time to reflect on your organizational and communication structure. Whether you entered the Community Action Roadmap as an individual activist, a newly formed environmental justice organization, or a seasoned organization, after all the work you have done, you have likely built quite a bit of capacity that did not exist before. Now is the time to think about how to institutionalize (build a lasting organization) that capacity so that it can be used again and again.

Would it be helpful to organize your partnerships into a more formal coalition? Could you formalize some key roles, (such as outreach, fundraising, media, technical analysis, government liaison, volunteer coordinator) to streamline your process? Are there ways to enhance communication and outreach?

Try It Out!

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.

Decide What's Next!

Whether you win or lose your first battle, generally there is more to accomplish. Based on the successes and challenges you identified during your self-evaluation, determine what remains to be done to achieve your goal. You may be ready to move on to tackling a new goal, or you may have ideas about new projects that could help you meet your initial goal.

If you are ready to consider selecting a new goal to work on, circle back to step 1 to identify which priority goal(s) to tackle next. Cycling through the steps a second time will likely be much quicker, and can add value and ensure you are building the necessary capacity for each goal to achieve your vision.

Try It Out!

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!



Community Action Resources

Setting a Timeline for Your Roadmap

The timeframe for each step in the Roadmap process will vary, depending on your goals. In some instances, there may be external deadlines your community must respond to, such as an established timeframe for a public comment period. These deadlines can create the need for an accelerated timeframe. (This could be as short as a month or two!)

In other cases, your community may be able to set its own goals for timing that respond to the scope of desired community engagement and partnership building. The more partners you are trying to engage, or the more complex the topic or ambitious your goal, the more extended the timeframe will need to be. For short, discrete projects, such as an established community-partnership to distribute information about air quality to community residents, the timeframe for moving through the Roadmap could be three to six months. For larger efforts, such as a broad-based community visioning and implementation effort, the timeframe could be extended to one to two years.

In any scenario, it is a good idea to set target deadlines for each step of the process. This can help build momentum and generate enthusiasm and a sense of accomplishment for you and your partners along the way.

Measuring Success

One way to track success over time is to establish measures of success at the outset of a project. You may wish to develop metrics (qualitative and quantitative) for (1) your process and organizational capacity (e.g., engaged five new partners) and (2) environmental and/or quality of life improvements (e.g. air quality measures).

The following resources provide additional considerations for establishing and tracking performance metrics:

- *Measurement Tips and Resources for Community Projects* (EPA CARE Program)

Located at: https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-04/documents/care_measurement_tips.pdf

- *Evaluation Metrics Manual: Chapter 6 - Capacity Building* (National Institutes of Health)

Located at: http://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/supported/assets/docs/j_q/peph_evaluation_metrics_manual_chapter_6_508.pdf

Using FOIA

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is a law that gives you the right to access information from the federal government. It is often described as the law that keeps citizens in the know about their government. FOIA requests can be used to gain access to government records that are not routinely made available to or easily accessible by the public. For more information on FOIA and how to make a FOIA request, visit: <http://www.foia.gov/about.html>.



Community Guidance Publications

The following chart contains resources on additional subjects that may be of interest to near-port communities, including community engagement, collaborative problem-solving, land use and equitable development. Additional resources that pertain directly to port operations and impacts can be found in the *Ports Primer*.

Resource (Author)	Description	Available online at:
<i>CARE Roadmap: A 10-Step Plan to Improve Community Environment and Health</i> (EPA)	A tool to help communities identify, prioritize, and address environmental health risks.	https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-04/documents/care-roadmap.pdf
<i>Creating Equitable, Healthy, and Sustainable Communities: Strategies for Advancing Smart Growth, Environmental Justice, and Equitable Development</i> (EPA)	Principles and approaches for promoting equitable, sustainable development.	https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/creating-equitable-healthy-and-sustainable-communities
<i>Developing Effective Coalitions: An Eight Step Guide</i> (Prevention Institute)	A step-by-step guide to coalition-building.	http://www.preventioninstitute.org/component/jlibrary/article/id-104/127.html
<i>Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Model</i> (EPA)	A handbook explaining how to use the Collaborative Problem-Solving to address environmental issues in distressed communities.	https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/epas-environmental-justice-collaborative-problem-solving-model
<i>Environmental Justice: Key Resources for Building a Community of Practice for Local Use Planning</i> (EPA)	Resources to inform the land use planning process, promote a collaborative decision-making process and support environmental justice.	http://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPURL.cgi?Dockkey=P100LBP8.txt
<i>Equitable Development Toolkit</i> (PolicyLink)	Tools to reverse patterns of segregation and disinvestment, prevent displacement, and promote equitable revitalization.	http://www.policylink.org/equity-tools/equitable-development-toolkit/about-toolkit
<i>Local Government Advisory Committee's EJ Best Practices for Local Government</i> (EPA)		https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-10/documents/2015_best_practices_for_local_government.pdf
<i>Public Participation Spectrum</i> (International Association of Public Participation)	A framework for setting expectations and understanding the impact of various types of public participation.	http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/imported/IAP2%20Spectrum_vertical.pdf

