



Port of Stockton CALIFORNIA

Commemorative Coin — Fyffe Ave. Grade Separation Grand Opening

Miscellaneous

On October 6th, 2021, the Port of Stockton (Port) held a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Fyffe Avenue Grade Separation, the first project to be delivered under the new Senate Bill 1 Cycle 1 round of funding for the Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP). The TCEP's purpose is to provide funding for

infrastructure improvements on federally designated Trade Corridors of National and Regional Significance, on California's portion of the National Highway Freight Network, as identified in California Freight Mobility Plan, and along other corridors that have a high volume of freight movement. With over 3,000 trucks and cars a day entering the Port's West Complex, easing traffic congestion on Fyffe Avenue by grade separating trains and trucks represents a major operational and environmental upgrade. The completed will now save thousands of idling hours annually, eliminating any idle time at the former rail crossing and lowering fuel consumption. Three agencies in addition to the Port were closely involved in the design, funding, and construction of this project, including the California Department of



The Fyffe Avenue Grade Separation supports regional planning goals to leverage federal investments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Transportation (Caltrans), the California Transportation Commission (CTC), and the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG). As part of the celebration of this important project's completion, the Port distributed custom-made commemorative challenge coins, a nod to maritime tradition.

1. WHAT ARE/WERE THE ENTRY'S SPECIFIC COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGES OR OPPORTUNITIES?

The old at-grade rail crossing had a daily average of six unit trains that would delay traffic up to 20 minutes each time, resulting not only in the slower delivery of goods but also in a staggering amount of unnecessary greenhouse gas and harmful criteria pollutant emissions. With the completion of the grade separation, the Port had an opportunity to celebrate the win in and of itself, and also the strong relationship the Port has fostered with the three partner agencies, agencies the Port continues to work with to provide economic vitality through efficient goods movement while improving air quality and safety.

Internally, the Port brainstormed to decide exactly what sort of souvenir they should distribute. For several years now, the Port has opted for commemorative challenge coins for these types of occasions because the maritime industry has a long history of exchanging and collecting challenge coins. They're also a unique piece that recipients tend to display, making it a great conversation piece that keeps folks talking about the Port. Externally, the Port had to coordinate with a vendor (that operates in Florida but manufactures the coins in China) to ensure the coins came out exactly as designed.

2. HOW DOES THE COMMUNICATION USED IN THIS ENTRY COMPLEMENT THE ORGANIZATION'S OVERALL MISSION?

Our overall mission is to provide excellent service to our current business partners and attract new business, all while being a positive force for the local Stockton community and an exemplary steward of the environment at large. Though it is a small keepsake, at only 2" in diameter, the Fyffe Avenue Grade Separation coin represents the Port's mission on multiple levels. The project it commemorates prevents auto traffic from waiting for freight trains to pass at a key lynchpin at the Port, resulting in more speedy and efficient operation of the Port as a whole. This, in turn, represents a Port that provides excellent service to current business partners by constantly planning long-term strategic investments and improvements. New business will surely continue to be attracted to an efficient, strategic Port like this. A prosperous and vibrant Port means benefits to the community, including increased job creation and tax revenues, while the elimination of greenhouse gas and harmful criteria pollutant emissions associated with idle time at the crossing complements the Port's mission of being an exemplary steward of the environment.

Flip the coin over and you will see the logos of the entities responsible for the project. The Port celebrates the achievement with Caltrans, CTC, and SJCOG. These are entities that continually partner with the Port to improve operational and environmental efficiency, helping the Port achieve its overall mission, and the coin is one small way to celebrate their contributions to the Port.

3. WHAT WERE THE COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMPONENTS USED FOR THIS ENTRY?

The goal of distributing the commemorative coins was to celebrate not only the completion of the project, but also the Port's successful partnership with Caltrans, CTC, and SJCOG, who helped make the project come to fruition. Here are the steps we took to bring the coins to reality:

Brainstorm

Although the Port creates all kinds of memorabilia items and promotional pieces for various events and occasions, the challenge coins have been a favorite for several years. Challenge coins have a long military and maritime history, used to identify the coin-holder as a member of an elite group or organization. The choice of a coin as the item was made easily, and the next step was to brainstorm and sketch designs for both sides of the coin.





**Initial
Photograph**

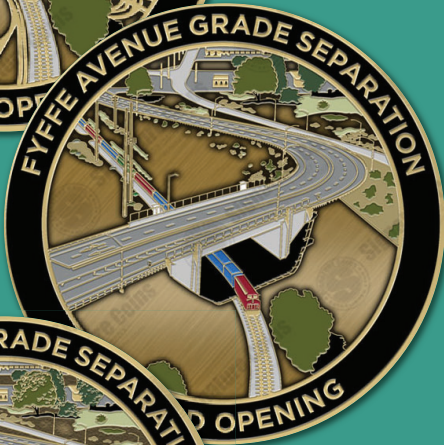
**1st Digital
Illustration**



1st Proof



2nd Proof



Final Proof



Final Coin



Design

A graphic designer with the Port's Communications and Public Involvement sub-contractor, HDR, sketched concepts for the front and back of the coin based on photos provided by the Port (see photos on next page). After approval from the Port, the designer created a digitally illustrated version of the main photo, recreating the scene in a style that would be reproduced well on coins (with thick lines and solid colors). The front side of the 2"-diameter coin, with antique gold plating, features an illustration of the grade separation with a train travelling underneath Fyffe Avenue. The surrounding text reads "Fyffe Avenue Grade Separation – Grand Opening." The back side of the coin displays the Port's seal along with the logos of the partner agencies instrumental to the grade separation project – Caltrans, CTC, and SJCOG. The text around the back side of the coin reads "First Completed TCEP Project – Port of Stockton."

Order

The coin vendor, Signature Coins, is based in Florida, but the actual manufacturing of the coins took place in China. First the order was initiated, with the Port submitting its custom design. Signature Coins took the design and made further tweaks and simplifications to be produced as coin, sending back a proof to the Port. The Port made a few further adjustments to the proof, changing colors and other details, until finally the Port had a design it approved of and Signature Coins had a layout it could faithfully manufacture.

Distribute

The primary audiences for these coins are the recipients of the coins – Port staff and staff of the three partner agencies on the project. The Port ordered 100 coins and distributed them roughly evenly between its own team and the three agencies shortly after the Grand Opening. Primarily, these coins celebrate the Port's working relationship with these agencies as together we find ways to improve freight movement, the environment, and overall economic prosperity for the region.

The secondary audience is anyone else who sees the coins. Perhaps a visitor sees the coin displayed on the desk of a Caltrans engineer. They might be curious about the Program and ask what it's about. It creates opportunities to spread awareness of Stockton's bustling port, the 2nd busiest inland port on the West Coast of the United States.

4. WHAT ACTIONS WERE TAKEN AND WHAT COMMUNICATION OUTPUTS WERE EMPLOYED IN THIS ENTRY?

Challenge coins were distributed because of their rich maritime tradition. The thinking is, when you receive a coin like this, you are part of something important, and we wanted to share that feeling of accomplishment not only with our own staff, but with those involved at Caltrans, CTC, and SJCOG. The steps detailed in Question 3 (Brainstorm, Design, Order, Distribute) are the tactics we employed to get high-quality, custom-made coins into the hands of the project team.

Timeline

The coin concept was brainstormed in September 2021 and the Port began work on the coin design in early October 2021. Final adjustments to the proofs from Signature Coins were completed in early November, beginning the manufacturing phase, and the coins were delivered to the Port in late November.

The Port's Environmental & Public Affairs staff engaged its Communications and Public Involvement sub-contractor, HDR, to design and illustrate the coin artwork. HDR also coordinated with the coin vendor, Signature Coins, to ensure the manufactured coins came out exactly as designed.

5. WHAT WERE THE OUTCOMES OF THE COMMUNICATION FROM THIS ENTRY AND WHAT EVALUATION METHODS WERE USED TO ASSESS THEM?

Like other challenge coins the Port has produced, the coins have been very well received.

"Since I manage a funding program, I'm disconnected from experiencing what is actually built. Having a physical coin reminded me that there's a physical outcome of the project we selected for funding and gave me a sense of participating in a larger group effort."

—Hannah Walter, Associate Deputy Director at California Transportation Commission (CTC)

