



While the Port of Stockton's 2020 annual report, *Navigating the Seas of Change*, focused on the Port's steady reaction to the outbreak of COVID-19 and the ensuing maritime shakeup, 2021's *Investing in Our Future* has a different story to tell. With continuing supply chain challenges, shippers quickly identified general cargo ports like the Port of Stockton as alternatives to congested container ports and began shipping previously containerized cargo as break bulk instead. This resulted in a record-breaking year in tonnage and vessel calls for the Port, but the success wouldn't have been possible without the long-term planning of infrastructure, facilities, capabilities, and expertise that the Port had developed over decades. As the title suggests, *Investing in Our Future* looks at the ways the Port's long-term vision leads to continued success, even in times of disruption.



You shouldn't judge a book by its cover, but readers that see this one and expect more vibrant photography and troves of information about a dynamic port inside won't be disappointed.

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

Every year, the Port of Stockton (Port) develops, creates, and distributes an Annual Report (Report) that provides the opportunity to share with stakeholders and the general public the previous year's wins and losses while looking ahead to the future. After a tumultuous 2020, the Port was back to setting records again in 2021, with the highest vessel calls and tonnage ever. The Report offered an opportunity to share the story of this impressive turnaround, putting it into greater context by underlining all the hard work, planning, and investments in infrastructure, equipment, and, most importantly, people that make it all possible.

Internally, the primary challenge was to collect and synthesize data, written summaries, and other information from every department throughout the Port to paint a complete, representative picture of

the year. Externally, the challenge was to distribute the Report widely and to the right people to increase awareness of the Port, the strategic advantages it offers, and how it contributes to the prosperity of Stockton and the greater San Joaquin Valley region.

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

The Port's 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. *Investing in Our Future* is organized into six sections, showing the Port carrying out its mission through different lenses of focus: our staff, our operations, our financials, our community, our environment, and our accomplishments.



### Section 3 – Financials

This section shares the Port’s 2021 year-end financials via two pie charts: one showing the Port’s revenue numbers broken down by property leasing and cargo types, the other broken down by revenue center. The numbers reflect the positive impact the Port’s continued success brings to Stockton and the surrounding region through both employment and tax revenues.

### Section 4 – Community

This section reflects on the contributions the Port makes to the local community, a key part of the Port’s stated mission. In addition to highlighting the sponsorship of 67 local non-profit events and donating over \$200,000 to local non-profits, the section provides details on a San Joaquin Delta cleanup event and the establishment of the Port Outreach Committee. This committee meets monthly and includes area residents, environmental advocates, and the business community, in addition to Port staff, with the goal of establishing an emission reduction strategy. In a year when in-person, indoor meetups were not feasible, the Port still managed to maintain strong ties with its surrounding community.

### Section 5 – Environmental

This section directly addresses the Port’s mission to be an exemplary steward of the environment. The Port has a robust, long-established environmental program and the “Protecting Our Waterways” article expands on the long-term planning required to make positive changes to the environment. Examples of projects include the enhancement of the Eastern South Ditch from a concrete channel into a natural, vegetated waterway that treats runoff, reduces stormwater volume, and promotes groundwater recharge. The article also details soil remediation and innovative beneficial reuse projects that saw huge strides in 2021.

### Section 6 – Recognition

This section celebrates awards the Port staff earned, from the American Association of Port Authorities among others. The final page of the report is a heartfelt sendoff to retiring Port Director Richard Aschieris, who had served in the position since the year 2000 and oversaw massive expansions of the Port in both land, capacity, and revenues. For over 20 years, Director Aschieris dedicated himself to carrying out the Port’s mission.

Part of investing in the Port's future is the investment in the people that work every day to bring the Port's mission to life. There are many smiling faces to be found throughout the Report, bringing out the Port's human touch. From the Board of Commissioners and both incoming and outgoing Directors, to Employee of the Year General Laborer Everardo Mendoza, to a crew of Coastal Cleanup Day volunteers – comprised of Port staff, tenants, and other community members, there was much to be proud of in 2021.



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

To prepare for this Report, Port staff engaged in the following activities:

**Research and Outreach** – The Port reached out to internal department leads and staff to gather information about their 2021 activities, accomplishments, and other notable bits of data to include in the Report.

**Article-writing, Photography, and Design** – Writing content for each article takes brainstorming, drafting, editing, rewriting, and finalizing. Photography is taken continually at the Port, in and around the facilities, and at various off-site events throughout the year. The Report’s layout and design, its “look and feel,” is established to maintain a consistent, professional presentation throughout.

**Distribution** – The physical Report book is widely distributed. 350 copies were printed and disseminated throughout the community to local and regional stakeholders, industry professionals, business partners, and federal representatives. It was debuted at the Stockton State of the City event on May 19, 2022 and was also on display at various trade shows including the Breakbulk Americas conference in Houston and the Railway Industrial Clearance Association conference in New Orleans. Online posts directed viewers to our website where the Report could be viewed with an elegant page-flipping interface. This online version of the Report has been accessed \_\_\_\_ times.

**Evaluation** – To measure the success of the Report, the Port seeks direct, honest, anonymous feedback using a survey administered online and in person. The Port’s primary target audience is the maritime industry and the Stockton and Central Valley business community and local government. Secondary target audiences are the public of Stockton and those who live in the Central Valley region who might be interested in what the Port does.

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

To create a Report that successfully communicates that the Port is living up to its mission and “Investing in Our Future,” the following strategies were implemented:

#### **Demonstrate a Long-Term Vision**

Detail the ways the Port plans for growth and expansion, like with the Fyffe Avenue Grade Separation Project, the acquisition of new cranes, and the welcoming of clean energy tenants that are bringing better jobs and a brighter future to the Stockton region.

#### **Highlight the Port’s Successes**

Provide financial information, tonnage breakdowns, a list of trade partners and tenants, and other hard data to substantiate the Port’s 2021 success story.

#### **Spotlight Community and Environmental Benefits**

Share the many ways the Port brings positive change to the surrounding region – not just by providing family-wage jobs, but through coastal cleanups, sponsorships & donations, soil remediation initiatives, an emission reduction strategy (directed by the inclusive Port Outreach Committee), and other efforts.

The Port engaged its Communications and Public Involvement sub-contractor, HDR, to guide the development of the Report and manage the creative design and production. HDR developed and implemented the following project timeline:



To stand out from the annual report crowd and make this Report a valued keepsake, the Port hired a freelance artist to create beautiful painterly depictions of port scenes. Each section divider reveals a different angle of port activity with a full-page spread that showcases the color and artistry of these gallery-worthy pieces. Each divider page also features a link to the Port's website (clickable on the digital version, short enough to type from the book) for more information on that section.

**01 Pursuing Excellence**  
STEADFAST OPERATIONS

**KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- New Port Director announced
- New Port of Stockton entrance sign installed
- Everardo Mendez named Employee of the Year

**02 Rising to the Challenge**  
SUCCEEDING AMIDST UNCERTAINTY

**KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Fyfe Avenue Grade Separation Ribbon Cutting
- Acquisition of two Lockheed 500 Mobile Harbor Cranes
- Port receives first wood pallet shipment

**03 Financials**  
STABILITY THROUGH DIVERSITY

**KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- \$200k grant awarded from California Energy Commission
- Port's highest operating revenue year

**04 Community**  
CONNECTIONS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

**KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- New Community ad campaign released
- First Outreach Committee held its first meeting
- Sponsored 47 local non-profit events
- Donated over \$200,000 to local non-profits

**05 Environmental**  
INNOVATIVE STEWARDSHIP

**KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Solar panels added to charging station structure
- 200 trees planted Port-wide
- Tree Platter online tree inventory

**06 Recognition**  
CELEBRATING OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

**KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- American Society of Civil Engineers Award - Fyfe Avenue Grade Separation
- ASPA Award of Excellence - Port of Possibility Ad Campaign
- ASPA Award of Distinction - 2018 Annual Report
- International Finance Officers Association Certificate of Achievement

TASK	RESPONSIBLE	DATE
Kick-off meeting with Department Leads	Port/HDR	1/14/21
Determine themes/article direction	Port/HDR	1/28/21
Gather/select photography	Port/HDR	2/2/21
Provide draft section content	Port	2/11/21
Progress check-in	Port/HDR	2/25/21
Final revenue/tonnage numbers	Port	3/4/21
Submit draft design layout for approval	HDR	3/11/21
Provide comments on Report design	Port	3/18/21
Submit complete draft for approval	HDR	3/25/21
Port provides final changes	Port	3/29/21
Submit final draft for approval	HDR	4/1/21
Final draft approval	Port	4/5/21
Format report for printing & send to printer	HDR	4/8/21
Create AnyFlip online version of Report	HDR	4/15/21
Printed reports arrive	Parks Printing	5/6/21
Begin distribution	Port	5/19/21

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

Feedback on the Report has been anecdotal in nature but almost unanimously positive. Readers have loved the dazzling photography, the approachable, colorful design and clean layout, and the informative articles on every aspect of the Port's activities.

Another sign of the Report's success is the utility it provides and the results it brings in the policy-making arena. The Reports are regularly provided to House and Senate Representatives and their staffers, as the Port justifies additional funding for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dredging projects from the Office of Management and Budget, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Transportation, Department of Commerce, and the Department of Homeland Security. As Jeff Wingfield, the Port's Director of Environmental and Public Affairs, explains: "We typically start out our meetings by opening to a specific page as a reference point and leave with staff as a reminder/leave behind. The visuals really help hammer home our points for additional federal funding and support as they see the bustling seaport and our cargo throughput and job numbers! Most people not in the area think of Stockton as a sleepy port but the images and figures help to demonstrate otherwise."

In this way, the Report serves as a helpful tool in demonstrating the Port's dynamism to policy-makers, thus ensuring the continued funding of dredging and other projects that keep the Port running strong.



The movement of cargo is the core of the Port's business. Fittingly, the Report dedicates many pages to expansive full-color photography depicting oceangoing vessels, train locomotives, tugboats, trucks, and cranes, all working in service to the Port's mission of maritime excellence.

