

Harbor Community Benefit Foundation

# HARBOR COMMUNITY OFF-PORT LAND USE STUDY

A LOOK AT THE PORT OF LOS ANGELES, SAN PEDRO, AND WILMINGTON



HARBOR COMMUNITY  
BENEFIT FOUNDATION



raimi+  
associates

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## CONTEXT

Sea ports are a critical ingredient to keep our current global economic system running. International producers benefit by having access to global markets and American consumers benefit by having easy access to goods imported from all over the world.

The Port of Los Angeles is the busiest port in the United States by container volume. This massive port is also next to the Port of Long Beach, which is the second busiest port in the country. These two ports combined create the ninth busiest container port in the world. They shape much of the economy and infrastructure in the immediate region.

The communities of San Pedro and Wilmington border the Port of Los Angeles. While residents and businesses in these communities also reap these consumer benefits, they bear a disproportionate burden of the Port- and related off-Port activities. Since the Port of LA has expanded over the past few decades, these communities have experienced increased impacts to their economic, aesthetic, environmental, and social conditions – all which can impact health.

## PROBLEM/PURPOSE

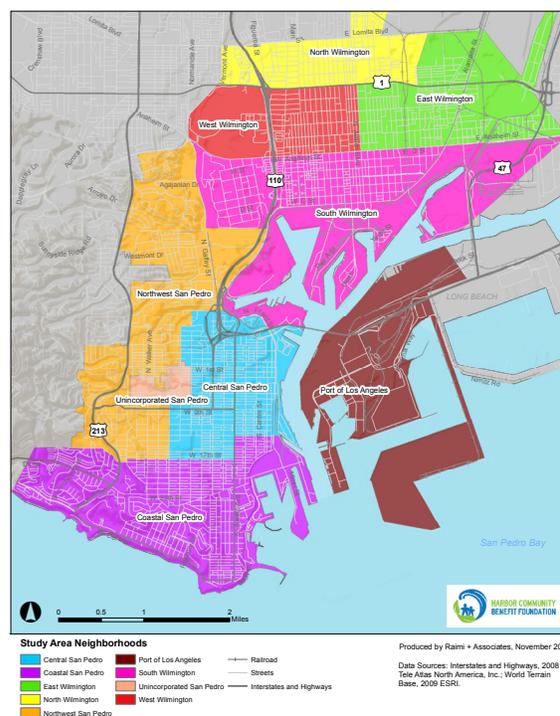
The Port of LA has numerous community mitigation programs in place to lessen the negative impacts, however they are limited in how and where they can spend their revenues based on the California State Lands Commission's (CSLC) public trust doctrine. This legal framework requires that "there must be a nexus that can be justified, documented, and that is proportional to a port's impacts and/or operations and the proposed off-site project". Because of this, previous Port of L.A. impact studies only analyzed direct impacts of Port activities. However, community members experience a host of "off-Port" impacts from the Port of Los Angeles and Port-related businesses which are important to understand and document.

The Harbor Community Benefit Foundation commissioned the Harbor Community Off-Port Land Use Study to:

1. Explore and document off-Port community impacts in San Pedro and Wilmington;
2. Explore the relationship between these impacts with the Port of Los Angeles operations and related activities;
3. Inform future activities of the Harbor Community Benefit Foundation and community groups.

While this document does not create a legal nexus to alter what the CSLC considers a Port impact, it offers theoretical causal pathways about and documents, visualizes, and quantifies the types of Port- and off-Port impacts that residents experience every day. The Harbor Community Benefit Foundation hopes that the information provided here is used to inform future decision making.

### Study Area Neighborhoods



## KEY FINDINGS

### ROAD AND RAIL MOBILITY, SAFETY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

This chapter explores industrial land use impacts on walkability, truck and vehicle collisions, truck volumes, and railroad crossings and infrastructure.

- Industrial land uses and urban form create unpleasant walking environments and increased exposure to pollutants. In the study area, blocks with industrial uses are almost twice as large as blocks with non-industrial uses. This reduces the number of intersections which negatively impacts pedestrian activity.
- Truck traffic and parked trucks reduce pedestrian visibility, increasing the perception of crime in these areas. Reduced visibility due to trucks also leads to a higher density of vehicle collisions along certain routes.
- Many at-grade railway crossings increase traffic delays and lack enhanced safety infrastructure which poses a safety risk to pedestrians and bicyclists.

### LAND USE

This chapter examines incompatible land uses, Port and Port-related businesses, vacant property, storage yards, and aesthetic and visual impacts.

- The visual impact of a poorly maintained and barren industrial landscape takes away from the beauty of the bay and poorly affects property values.
- Two percent of all parcels in the study area assessed as a lower-intensity use (i.e., commercial, recreational, residential, or institutional), but are zoned for a higher-intensity use (i.e., industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, processing, etc.)
- Port-related businesses (PRBs) are three times as likely to locate in San Pedro and Wilmington than in the City of Los

Angeles overall. PRB's demand for land near the Port of L.A. competes with other community-serving uses and businesses.

- We worked with community groups (Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma (LBACA) and Coalition for a Safe Environment (CFACE)) and local residents to collect and ground truth new data on chassis, truck, and container storage yards. There are 383 parcels with these storage uses totaling 329 acres of land. These storage yards create a nuisance for residents by harboring rodents and increasing air pollution, noise pollution, and large truck traffic through residential neighborhoods.

### HAZARDOUS AND POLLUTING LAND USES

- This chapter documents and analyzes the location and proximity of hazardous and polluting land uses in the study area.
- Beach water quality is worse close to the Port of L.A. operations, limiting safe recreational opportunities for residents.
- East and South Wilmington are in the highest percentile of pollution burden in the state according to CalEnviro Screen.
- 62% of the study area residents live within 1,000 feet of hazardous or polluting land use and face a higher risk of cancer and other health related disorders.
- The study area has 8 times the number of cleanup sites 65 times the number of groundwater impact sites per square mile compared to L.A. County.

### ACCESS TO NEIGHBORHOOD GOODS AND SERVICES

This chapter focuses on understanding the effect of on- and off-Port activities on the availability of neighborhood goods and services in the study area.

- San Pedro and Wilmington have fewer child care slots per 100 children than L.A.

County.

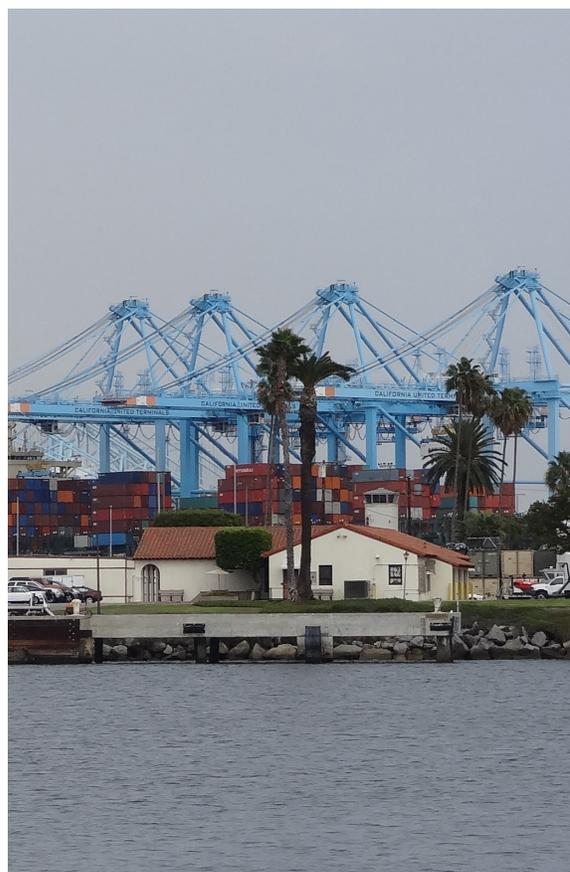
- L.A. County has approximately 1.4 times the number of medical facilities compared to the study area.
- The study area has more than twice the number of fast food restaurants per capita compared to the City of L.A. (84 fast food restaurants).
- 54% of study area residents live within a quarter-mile of a fast food restaurant and only 23% live within quarter-mile of a healthy food option.

### EMPLOYMENT AND REAL ESTATE

- This chapter analyzes Port-related employment opportunities and how on- and off-Port activities correlate with residential property values.
- South and East Wilmington and Northwest and Central San Pedro have the highest number of port-related jobs.
- Of all the employed residents in the study area – we estimate that only 3.5% them work in “port- or port-related” jobs in the full study area.
- Resident assumptions that San Pedro’s cost per square foot increases as distance to the shoreline increases seems to be correct, inverse to other coastal communities where proximity to the beach yields more expensive real estate values.
- In our exploratory statistical model of residential real estate values, assessed price per square foot has a positive correlation with distance from beach, distance to industrial or manufacturing parcels, distance to rail lines, distances to storage yards, and number of Port-related businesses within a quarter-mile.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The final chapter in this study presents recommendations collected from a peer review expert panel, community stakeholders, and the HCBF Board of Directors. This study explores a broad array of topics which opened up additional research questions worthy of study. The most important recommendation is that this study is widely distributed among community members, businesses, decision makers, Port staff, City staff, public health professionals, and other interested parties so that discussions about community improvement can be more data informed for better health, environmental justice, and economic prosperity for all!



Meghan Reese, Executive Director  
 meghan@hcbf.org | (310) 997-7116 | www.hcbf.org  
 302 W. 5th Street, Suite 300, San Pedro, CA 90731