

## INTRODUCTION

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The Transportation Research Board (TRB), a unit of the National Research Council, seeks to broaden the understanding of the complex, interdependent U.S. transportation system. It works to inform decision makers through expert panels, studies, and a broad dissemination of information and research findings on transportation policy, planning, design, maintenance and operating practices. The TRB is a respected source of facts on which policy decisions are based. This proceeding addressing port-land access is a product of the Ports and Waterway Committee (A1B08), one of three hundred committees, panels and task forces carrying out the work of the Board.

The "Port-Land Access: Public Policy Issues" panel convened on January 15, 1991, as part of the TRB Annual Meeting, to address the complexities of this key issue currently before decision makers. Ports and their linking of highways, railways, and waterways take world trade beyond the dock to and from U.S. industry and agriculture. The waterfront environment of the port is designed, not just for cargo handling, for there is no substitute for this function, but for its aesthetics and ecological values as well. Hence, its use must be shared and carefully allocated to insure that both cargo handling

capability and landside access are maintained for future generations. Successful transportation links from the cargo handling port are based on numerous partnerships, some contractual but most from established conventions. Today the partners -- the local governments, the neighborhoods, the unions, the states and the federal government -- are reassessing their priorities for land use. The successful transportation partnership, so critical in resource-scarce times, must be fostered and nourished. The catalyst may be the port, the shipper, the ocean carriers, the rail industry, the longshoreman unions, or the governments, among many other players. The key to adequate access is communication of mutual port and linking transportation needs followed by careful participatory planning.

This TRB panel of regional and national experts representing private and public interests addressed access to the ports, and related problems, solutions and most importantly, the dialogues necessary to realize workable long-term alternatives.

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