

CEQA

The California Environmental Quality Act

CASE STUDY

Impact on Equity and **Envirnomenal Justice**

SAN PEDRO, 2003

China Shipping Co. and 22nd Street Park

Reducing Air and Noise Pollution, Creating Community Green Space While Supporting Economic Growth

The ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach form the largest port complex in the nation. They fuel significant job growth and economic activity in the region, but they also create massive amounts of air and noise pollution, including from idling ships and from the diesel trucks hauling goods to and from the port, often through low- and middle-income communities such as San Pedro, Wilmington, and Long Beach. When a new shipping terminal was being built by the city, to be leased to the China Shipping Company, nearby residents feared the terminal would inundate their neighborhoods with round-the-clock truck traffic and air pollution. The terminal was going up within 500 feet of San Pedro homes.

In 2003, the port and city of Los Angeles settled a CEQA lawsuit brought by a coalition of community,

environmental and social justice groups. The settlement secured funding to mitigate impacts of the new terminal, including reducing air pollution from port operations, a program to get older trucks off the road, and the replacement of four 16-story-high cranes with lower-profile cranes. The precedent set by this settlement later led to the creation of the 22nd Street Park in San Pedro, which provided a much-needed greenspace and outdoor gathering place for residents. The CEQA process brought both sides to the table to work on common goals, and it empowered environmental justice communities to influence local land use and development decisions.

SOURCE: DANIAL NORD, RESIDENTS FOR AN EQUITABLE SAN PEDRO COMMUNITY TODAY

California Environmental Justice Alliance (CEJA)

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**CALIFORNIA
ENVIRONMENTAL
JUSTICE ALLIANCE**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is an important tool for advancing environmental justice (EJ) and protecting the rights of communities disproportionately impacted by pollution and poverty in our state. The law allows a community to not only be notified of development projects that are being proposed for their neighborhood; it also provides them with a formal process to share their concerns and recommend improvements so that a project can better serve and protect the community. CEQA also provides a mechanism for holding certain projects accountable if they insufficiently analyze potential harms against local residents and neighborhoods.