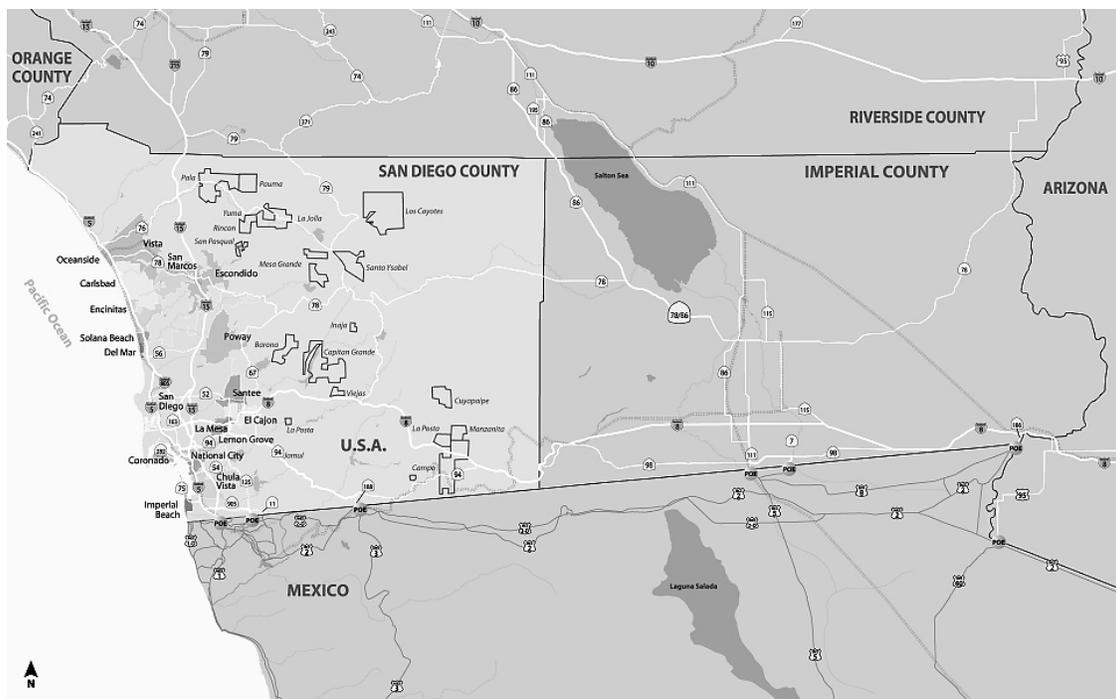


BORDERS

INTRODUCTION

The San Diego region's borders have traditionally been thought of as limited to the jurisdictional boundaries of San Diego County. However, over the years, the perceptions of our borders have expanded. San Diego County has increasingly close ties to its neighboring counties and Mexico, which challenge us to think of our region beyond our borders. In addition, San Diego County is home to 17 federally-recognized tribal nations with sovereignty over 18 reservations -- more than any other county in the United States (see Map 5). Our abundant natural resources, as well as our location on the U.S.-Mexico border, make our region an attractive place to live and work. Continued growth here, as well as in the surrounding regions, is evidence of this desirability. The region's distinct characteristics also present a variety of opportunities and challenges for planning and coordination along our interregional and binational borders.

**Map 5
THE SAN DIEGO REGION, SOVEREIGN INDIAN NATIONS, AND NEIGHBORING AREAS**



Source: SANDAG

An important issue is access to jobs and housing. The growth projected for the San Diego region over the next 30 years is a function of economic expansion and job creation, a continued influx of people moving to the area, and natural population growth within the area. However, home construction in the San Diego region has not kept pace with population growth. Consequently, housing prices have risen, making home ownership difficult for much of the population. As a result, many people who are employed in the region have started moving to neighboring regions, including southwestern Riverside County, Imperial County, and Baja California, in search of homeownership. As people move further away from their places of employment, increased pressure is placed upon our interregional transportation systems, affecting not only the long-distance commuter but also causing congestion for residents in communities along the transportation route.

The indicator data included in this chapter establish a baseline for tracking progress toward the following goal included in the RCP:

- Provide reliable and efficient transportation systems associated with key trade corridors, interregional commuting corridors, tribal reservations, and ports of entry.

The indicators designated for tracking progress toward the above borders goal are as follow:

1. Interregional Traffic Volumes to and from Surrounding Counties and Baja California
2. Border Wait Times for Personal Trips and Goods Movement
3. Participation in SENTRI Lanes, Pedestrian Commuter Program, FAST Program (future indicator)

1. Interregional Traffic Volumes to and from Surrounding Counties and Baja California

Significance

A goal of the RCP relating to interregional and binational commuting is to ensure an efficient flow of people and goods across the international ports of entry and along key trade and interregional commuting corridors. A policy objective towards this goal is to reduce future long-distance interregional and binational commuting. Progress towards this goal can be measured by examining the flow of commuters crossing into the region each day. However, the existing data is limited to the Caltrans Traffic Census, which includes all vehicles, not just commuters. Additional data such as level of service or another measure of congestion would be useful in measuring our progress towards this goal.

The following data examines average weekday traffic volumes at the borders between San Diego and Tijuana, Imperial County, Riverside County, and Orange County, as seen in Figure 33. Total annual passenger vehicle and pedestrian border crossings are examined as well.

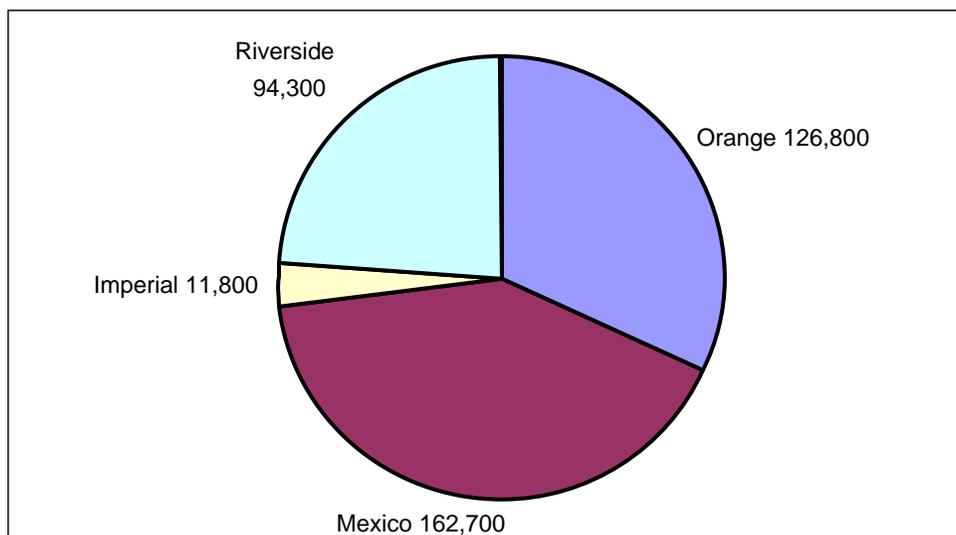
Findings

The largest volume of interregional trips takes place between Tijuana, Baja California and the San Diego region, followed by Orange County, Riverside County, and Imperial County, in that order. Note that these volumes include all vehicles going in both directions, not just commuters. They also include vehicles just passing through the region, for example, those going from Baja to Los Angeles. Between 2000 and 2004, Riverside County became the fastest growing contributor of interregional trips to and from San Diego, with a 37 percent increase in average weekday traffic volumes, as seen in Figure 34. Average weekday traffic volumes to and from San Diego from all neighboring regions grew 15 percent between 2000 and 2004, as seen in Figure 35.

The growth of interregional commuting between Riverside County and San Diego can be attributed to people seeking a lower cost of housing in Riverside County but continuing to work in San Diego. Long-distance commuting, both interregional and from within the region, puts a tremendous strain on our roads, freeways, infrastructure, and personal lives. While some amount of interregional commuting will always occur, providing additional housing capacity in key locations within the more urbanized areas of the region could assist in reducing the projected increases in interregional commuting and provide more housing and transportation choices to our residents. Additionally, another focus needs to be providing jobs in those communities where employees can afford to live.

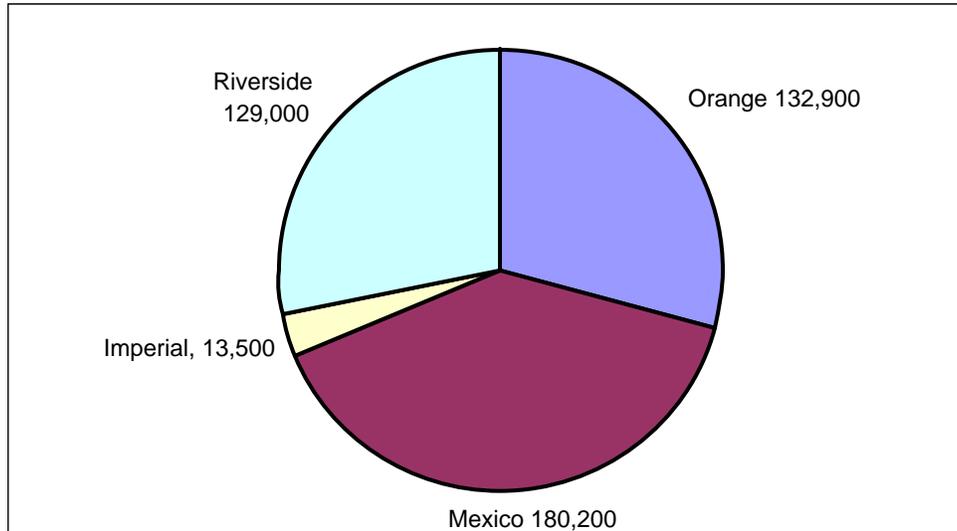
Between 1997 and 2004, the increase in the number of pedestrian border crossings outpaced the increase in the number of passenger vehicle border crossings; pedestrian border crossings grew 43 percent, while passenger vehicle border crossings grew 38 percent, as seen in Figures 36 and 37. As a result of stricter security screenings since the 9/11 events, there have been longer and more unpredictable waits at the border for vehicle crossings, which may have contributed to a shift from vehicle to pedestrian crossings.

Figure 33
SAN DIEGO REGION AVERAGE WEEKDAY TRAFFIC VOLUMES TO AND FROM ORANGE, IMPERIAL, AND RIVERSIDE COUNTIES AND TIJUANA, BAJA CALIFORNIA (2000)



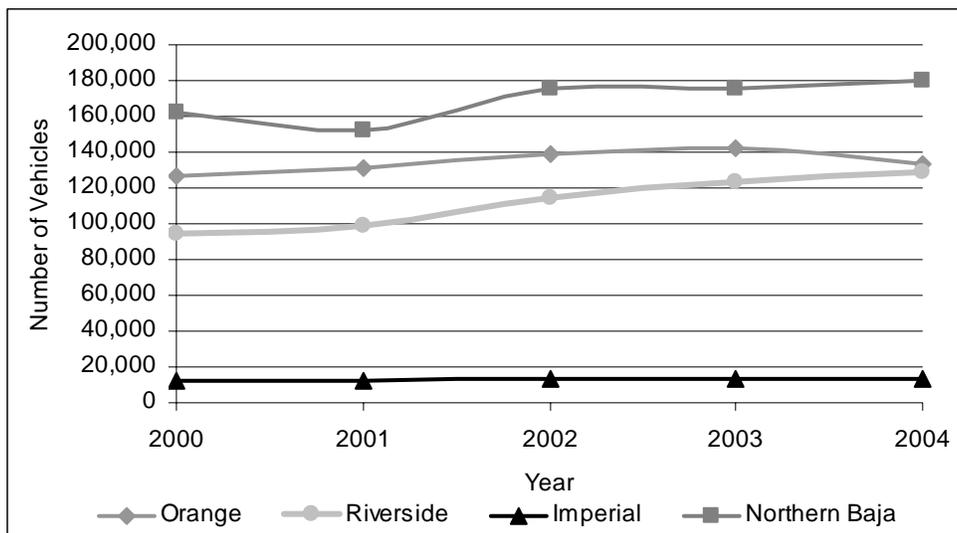
Source: Caltrans Traffic Census

Figure 34
SAN DIEGO REGION AVERAGE WEEKDAY TRAFFIC VOLUMES TO AND FROM ORANGE, IMPERIAL, AND RIVERSIDE COUNTIES AND TIJUANA, BAJA CALIFORNIA (2004)



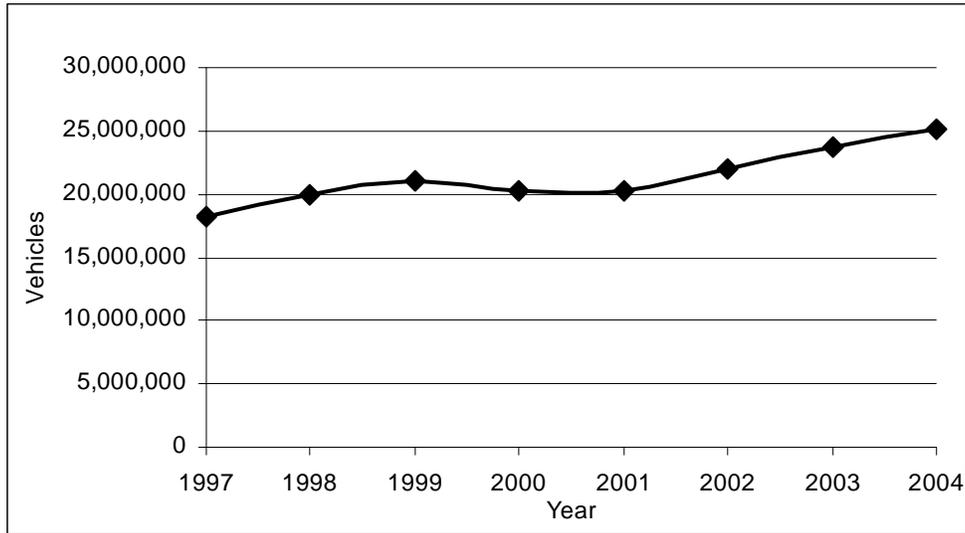
Source: Caltrans Traffic Census

Figure 35
SAN DIEGO REGION AVERAGE WEEKDAY TRAFFIC VOLUMES TO AND FROM ORANGE COUNTY, RIVERSIDE COUNTY, IMPERIAL COUNTY, AND TIJUANA, BAJA CALIFORNIA, (2000-2004)



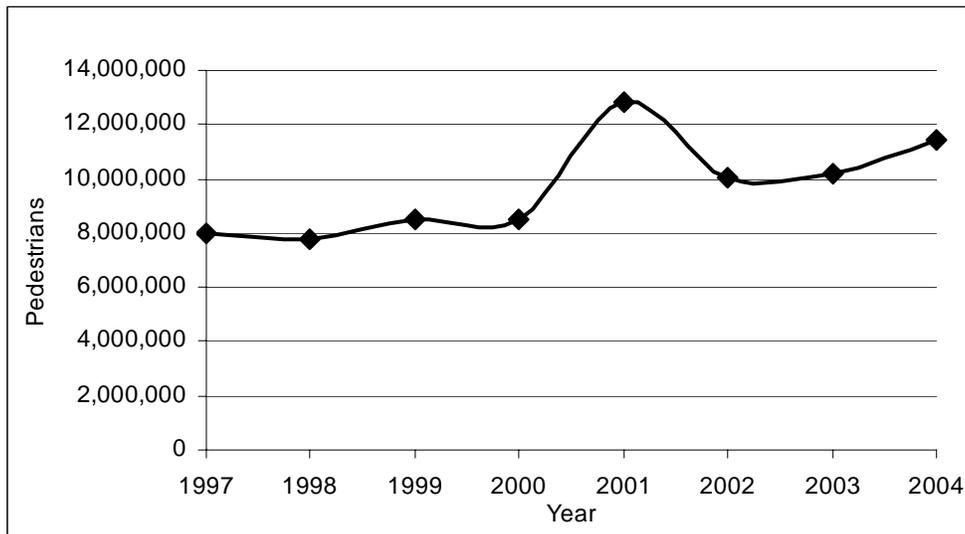
Source: Caltrans Traffic Census

Figure 36
NORTHBOUND ANNUAL TOTAL PASSENGER VEHICLE BORDER CROSSINGS (1997-2004)



Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics based on data from U.S. Customs Service, Mission Support Services, Office of Field Operations, Operations Management Database. Data include San Ysidro, Otay Mesa, and Tecate Ports of Entry.

Figure 37
NORTHBOUND ANNUAL TOTAL PEDESTRIAN BORDER CROSSINGS (1997-2004)



Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics based on data from U.S. Customs Service, Mission Support Services, Office of Field Operations, Operations Management Database. Data include San Ysidro, Otay Mesa, and Tecate Ports of Entry.

2. Border Wait Times for Personal Trips and Goods Movement

Significance

Providing reliable and efficient transportation systems associated with key trade corridors and ports of entry is a goal of the RCP. Wait times at the border provides a way to measure how efficiently people and goods are able to flow across our international ports of entry.

Findings

In 2005, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Web site data, the combined average weekday wait time at the San Ysidro and Otay Mesa Ports of Entry (POE) was 34.4 minutes in general passenger vehicle lanes, and 4.4 minutes in SENTRI⁸ lanes between 5 a.m. and 9 a.m. However, on a typical weekday, observed waits during the morning peak periods appear to be higher than the delays reported on the CBP Border Wait Times Web page.

For commercial vehicles, CBP reported an average weekday wait time at the Otay Mesa POE of 27.5 minutes in general lanes between noon and 6:00 p.m. However, users report they experience longer waits to cross into the San Diego region. No delay data were available for FAST⁹ lanes in 2004 and 2005.

No data on border delays is available prior to 2004. Still, queues at the border have increased and become more unpredictable over time. Border wait times—especially in the northbound direction—are a result of growth in crossborder travel and stricter security screenings coupled with transportation infrastructure constraints.

A recent SANDAG study¹⁰ quantified economic opportunities lost because of current and projected traffic congestion and delays at the San Diego-Baja California POEs. In particular, current delays for both personal crossborder trips and freight movement cost the San Diego-Baja California region \$4.2 billion in lost output and a loss of more than 35,000 jobs in 2005. If steps are not taken to improve border crossing and transportation infrastructure and management, these losses are projected to more than double in the next ten years.

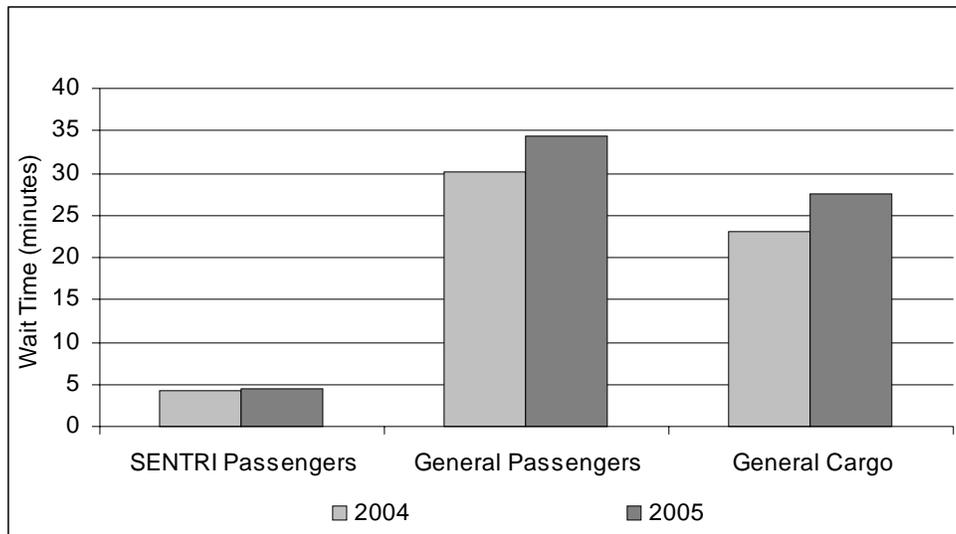
To provide additional crossborder travel capacity, a new POE has been proposed about two miles east of the existing Otay Mesa crossing. State Route 11, an east-west extension of future State Route 905, would connect the future East Otay Mesa-Otay II POE to a roadway in Tijuana, which would link to the Tijuana-Tecate Toll Road and the Tijuana-Rosarito Corridor.

⁸ SENTRI is a management process offered by CBP that expedites border crossings for pre-screened participants.

⁹ FAST is a commercial process offered by CBP to pre-approved importers, carriers, and registered drivers that results in quicker clearance across the border. FAST is available at the Otay Mesa POE only.

¹⁰ SANDAG, *Estimating Economic Impacts of Wait Times at the San Diego-Baja California Border*, 2006.

Figure 38
AVERAGE BORDER WAIT TIMES – NORTHBOUND INTO SAN DIEGO FROM TIJUANA
(2004-2005)



Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Border Wait Times: Southern Border Ports of Entry, 2004-2005

Table 16
AVERAGE BORDER WAIT TIMES – NORTHBOUND INTO SAN DIEGO
FROM NORTHERN BAJA CALIFORNIA (2004-2005)

	SENTRI Lanes Average Wait Time	General Passenger Lanes Average Wait Time	General Cargo Lanes Average Wait Time
2004	4.3	30.2	23.1
2005	4.4	34.4	27.5

Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Border Wait Times: Southern Border Ports of Entry, 2004-2005

3. Participation in SENTRI Lanes, Pedestrian Commuter Program, Free and Secure Trade (FAST) Program

Significance and Future Indicator

At least 30,000 commuters pass northward through our border ports of entry on a daily basis¹¹. Projections indicate that cross-border vehicle traffic will more than double between 2000 and 2020. To accommodate the dynamic border transportation system, MOBILITY 2030 includes projects to

¹¹ Economic Impacts of Border Wait Times at the San Diego- Baja California Border Region, June 2005

improve access to border crossings, expand freight rail service, coordinate commercial vehicle crossings, and implement programs such as the Secure Electronic Network for Travelers Rapid Inspection (SENTRI) and Free and Secure Trade (FAST) that expedite border crossings for pre-screened participants. Currently there are approximately 71,000 vehicle SENTRI participants and 5,500 Pedestrian SENTRI participants. In addition, there are 1,588 FAST enrollees.

BORDERS SUMMARY

Conclusions

Current data suggests that we are not meeting our objective of reducing future long-distance interregional and binational commuting. Interregional and binational trips are increasing and are expected to continue to increase as the population grows. Additional data such as level of service or another measure of congestion would be useful in measuring our progress towards this goal. In addition, periodic surveys of interregional and crossborder travelers would be useful to better estimate the volume or share of commute trips from the overall travel volumes.

Future Target Setting

Several work efforts are underway that may begin to establish potential targets for the indicators in this section such as the Otay Mesa-Otay de Mesa Binational Corridor Strategic Plan and the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan. Additionally, indicators measuring cooperation with neighboring jurisdictions, including the region's Tribal Governments, could be developed as means of measuring inter-regional cooperation.

SANDAG Role

I-15 Interregional Partnership (IRP)

One of the most active interregional programs at SANDAG is the I-15 IRP. The IRP is a voluntary partnership among elected officials representing communities along Interstate 15. As part of Phase One, SANDAG and the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) worked to address congestion on the I-15 by looking at jobs-housing imbalance. The result was twenty-three short, medium and long term interregional strategies in transportation, economic development and housing. Phase Two involves analyzing the ways in which the Riverside and San Diego economies are connected through a joint employment cluster study. Additionally, several transportation projects are underway including a Caltrans County Line Study to identify transportation issues facing the I-15 corridor and an interregional Bus Rapid Transit bus operation plan. Work is also being done to encourage workforce housing in north San Diego County.

Tribal Liaison Program

It is through the Borders Committee that SANDAG has been pursuing government-to-government relations with tribal governments in the region. In 2002 SANDAG held a regional Tribal Summit as

part of the development of the 2003 RTP. Since that time the agency has incorporated tribal liaison work into its work plan and a “tribal government-to-government” component in its Public Involvement Policy. In 2005, SANDAG built partnerships with two regional intertribal councils – the Reservation Transportation Authority (RTA) and the Southern California Tribal Chairmen’s Association (SCTCA). In that same year, the SCTCA became an advisory member on the SANDAG Borders Committee. SANDAG, together with the RTA and SCTCA, co-hosted the 2006 San Diego Regional Tribal Summit. This second summit was held between elected tribal leaders from the 17 tribes in the San Diego region and the SANDAG Board of Directors which has lead to several follow-up actions to build government-to-government relations including the assembly of an Interagency Tribal Technical Working Group. Additionally, through the Tribal Liaison Program and with assistance from Caltrans, SANDAG will be working with the tribal governments on a Tribal Transit Feasibility Study and the development of a Tribal Transportation Demand Management Plan.

Economic Impacts of Border Wait Times

SANDAG, in cooperation with Caltrans, completed an extensive study to gauge the economic impacts of border wait times on the binational economy. This first set of results, released in June 2005, focused on personal travel. The latest study looked at freight movement. Findings show the effects of border crossing delays on productivity, industry competitiveness, and lost business income at the regional, state, and national level for the United States and Mexico.

Also in partnership with Caltrans, SANDAG has developed an economic model to assess the magnitude of regional economic impacts resulting from delays at the ports of entry. This model will serve as an analysis tool that can be used to understand economic impacts as the volume of travel increases and/or as a result of security screenings.

Otay Mesa-Mesa De Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan

The SANDAG Borders Committee and the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) identified the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay binational corridor as an area of opportunity to create an effective binational planning partnership. Transportation, economic development, housing, and environmental conservation are the four key issue areas that were recognized for evaluation as part of the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan. The draft Early Action Plan was released in June 2006. The Final Strategic Plan is anticipated to be completed in early 2007.