COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (COBRO)

The Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) may take action on any item appearing on this agenda.

Tuesday, August 1, 2006
3 – 4:30 p.m.
SANDAG, 7th Floor Conference Room
401 B Street, Suite 800
San Diego, CA  92101-4231

Staff Contact:  Héctor Vanegas
(619) 699-1972

AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

- THE COBRO'S MEMBERSHIP
- SANDAG'S BINATIONAL ANNUAL EVENT
- HOW DO WE GROW AND STAY COMPETITIVE: A PERSPECTIVE FROM TIJUANA
- EQUITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: REFLECTIONS FROM THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER

MISSION STATEMENT

The Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) will advise the Borders Committee of the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) concerning both short- and long-term binational related activities, issues, and actions; provide recommendations regarding binational border-related planning and development; and identify ways to assist and coordinate with existing efforts in the binational area. The COBRO will serve as a working group to the SANDAG Borders Committee to facilitate a better understanding of the binational border-related issues and needs of the California-Baja California region.
Welcome to SANDAG! Members of the public may speak to the COBRO on any item at the time that the Committee is considering the item. Please complete a Speaker’s Slip which is located in the rear of the room and then present the slip to Committee staff. Also, members of the public are invited to address the Committee on any issue under the agenda item entitled Public Comments/Communications. Speakers are limited to three minutes. The COBRO may take action on any item appearing on the agenda.

This agenda and related staff reports can be accessed at www.sandag.org under meetings on SANDAG’s Web site. Public comments regarding the agenda can be forwarded to SANDAG via the e-mail comment form also available on the Web site. E-mail comments should be received no later than noon, two days prior to the COBRO meeting.

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<td>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS</td>
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<td>MEETING SUMMARY</td>
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<td>Meeting summary of June 12, 2006, meeting</td>
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<td>PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND MEMBER COMMENTS</td>
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<td>UPCOMING EVENTS</td>
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<td>THE COBRO’S MEMBERSHIP</td>
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<td>The Committee is asked to form a task force to follow up on the report presented in February of this year on its policies and responsibilities. The COBRO’s Charter states that every two years, or when it is needed, the Committee provides input to the Borders Committee regarding its leadership and membership.</td>
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<td>+6.</td>
<td>SANDAG’S BINATIONAL ANNUAL EVENT</td>
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<td>Every year since 1997, the COBRO has been tasked to support the organization of SANDAG’s annual binational event. Last year, this Committee recommended changing the format to a workshop to pursue the goal of effective binational planning. The Committee is asked to provide input to the Borders Committee and proceed in the organization of the 2006 event.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>HOW DO WE GROW AND STAY COMPETITIVE: A PERSPECTIVE FROM Tijuana</td>
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<td>(Alejandro Rivera, Desarrollo Económico e Industrial de Tijuana, A.C. – Tijuana EDC)</td>
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<td>The Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor: Draft Early Action Plan proposed several economic development actions. One of them is the development of the 2006 San Diego Regional Economic Prosperity Strategy with participation from crossborder stakeholders, including Tijuana EDC. This presentation will outline Tijuana EDC’s strategies for economic competitiveness.</td>
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+8. BOOK LAUNCHING: EQUITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (Jane Clough-Riquelme, SANDAG; Prof. Nora Bringas, COLEF)

UCSD’s Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies and the Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF) recently published an edited volume based on a collaborative effort to analyze how the agenda of sustainable development is being conceived, shaped, and implemented in light of the new geopolitics and global order, considering its implications in the U.S.-Mexico border region. The volume editors and one author, Tito Alegría, will share with the COBRO, a brief overview of the book and two chapter selections: one on poverty and environmental risk and one on social equity and housing in Tijuana.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION

The next meeting of the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities will be held on Tuesday, September 5, 2006, at 3:00 p.m.

+ next to an item indicates an attachment
1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The June 12, 2006, Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Lydia Antonio. The meeting was held at SANDAG.

Members present were: Lydia Antonio, Consulate General of Mexico in San Diego; Arnold San Miguel, Bi-State Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (BTTAC); Sergio Pallares, Caltrans; Gustavo Pérez and Miguel Z. Tapia, City of Chula Vista; Larry Van Wey, City of San Diego; Gerardo Chávez, City of Tecate; Anne McEnany, International Community Foundation; Alejandra Mier y Terán, Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce; Nathan Owens, San Diego Dialogue; Angelika Villagrana and Viviana Ibañez, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce; Esther Martínez-Gutierréz, State of Baja California; David Fege, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Bob Leiter, Héctor Vanegas, Elisa Arias, Ron Saenz, and Arturo Vázquez from SANDAG.

Chair Paul Ganster, Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias, was present at the meeting via teleconference.

2. MEETING SUMMARIES

The meeting summaries for the April 4th and May 2nd 2006 COBRO meetings were approved. Consul Lydía Antonio entertained a motion to approve. The meeting summaries were approved with two abstaining.

Gustavo Pérez, City of Chula Vista, and Arnold San Miguel, BTTAC, both abstained during the vote for approving for the April 4, 2006, COBRO meeting summary. They were not present at the meeting.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Chamber of Commerce, announced the “Business and Immigration Forum” on Wednesday, June 14, 2006, at the Double Tree Hotel. The key note speakers will include:
former U.S. Ambassador Jeffrey Davidow; Mexico Senator Héctor Osuna Jaime; Attorney Ginger E. Jacobs; Dr. Gordon H. Hanson, UCSD; and Dr. James Gerber, SDSU. The forum will address immigration issues from the business perspective.

Alejandra Mier y Terán, Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce, announced the annual MEXPORT trade show on Thursday, June 29th in Otay Mesa. COBRO members and the public are invited to attend the Otay Mesa Community Plan Update on Friday, July 7th at the Fish and Grill Restaurant at 8:30 a.m. Updates on the 905 freeway will be addressed.

Arnold San Miguel, BTTAC, invited members and the public to attend the next BTTAC meeting, which will be held on Tuesday, June 28th at 11 a.m. at SANDAG. BTTAC is a voluntary group of local, state, and non-government agencies that discuss binational transportation issues.

4. STAFF REPORT

Héctor Vanegas, SANDAG, provided an attachment for the upcoming events.

5. COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES CHARTER

Héctor Vanegas, SANDAG, mentioned that at the May 2nd COBRO meeting, the COBRO Charter was presented but could not be approved because no quorum could be reached. The Charter was modified to better describe its compliance with the Brown Act, the state law that governs open meetings for local government bodies with public access and input. This Committee is asked to approve the changes made to the COBRO Charter.

Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, made a motion to approve the COBRO Charter. Alejandra Mier y Terán, Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce, seconded the motion. The COBRO Charter was approved.

6. WESTERN HEMISPHERE TRAVEL INITIATIVE

Héctor Vanegas, SANDAG, mentioned that a report was provided at the request of one of the members to give an update on the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative. This Committee is asked to recommend if this issue should be addressed to the Borders Committee.

Angelika Villagrana mentioned that a meeting was held a month ago with representatives from Washington D.C. and a recent meeting with partner groups in Rosarito, in which tourism issues were discussed. One of the concerns addressed was that only 20 to 24 percent of U.S. citizens have passports and once this initiative is implemented, there will be a great demand for passports. There is a strong support to postpone this initiative until the middle of 2008. Angelika Villagrana asked whether the Borders Committee could take action on advocating this issue.

Héctor Vanegas responded that the legislative analysts at SANDAG will first need to be informed to evaluate this practice and later address this issue at the Borders Committee.
Angelika Villagrana recommended to ask the Borders Committee to step in and share some of the concerns addressed in the COBRO meeting, for example to: postpone the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative until middle of 2008 instead of the beginning 2007; push Washington to fight a resolution for the tourism issues; support the proposal to have passport cards instead of passports; and make sure there is communication or public relations initiatives so people will know before this initiative is implemented.

Consul Lydia Antonio suggested forwarding this report to the Borders Committee for discussion and possible future action. Angelika Villagrana agreed to this course of action.

David Fege, U.S. EPA, mentioned that as a federal member of the COBRO committee, it would be inappropriate to vote on a policy affecting other federal agencies, especially in which U.S. EPA does not have any legislative authority or expertise. Therefore, the U.S. EPA is abstaining on this vote.

Alejandra Mier y Terán, Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce, seconded the recommendation to forward the report to the Borders Committee for discussion.

7. OTAY MESA-MESA DE OTAY BINATIONAL CORRIDOR: DRAFT EARLY ACTION PLAN

Elisa Arias, SANDAG, presented the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor: Draft Early Action Plan. The presentation summarizes the work that the team has done since the Binational Workshops in October 2005. Elisa Arias also mentioned that the Draft Early Action Plan also is under a 30-day public review for comments, which will end on July 12, 2006.

To view an updated list of the Proposed Early Action Strategies, please visit the SANDAG Web site:


Overview of the presentation included the following:

- Project background
- Collaboration and planning processes
- Description of the proposed early actions
- Next steps

In terms of project background, the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) for the San Diego region was adopted by the SANDAG Board of Directors in 2004. The plan recognizes the need for binational planning in the region and calls for the creation of partnership with Mexico to address binational border planning issues, including transportation, infrastructure, and environment.

At the SANDAG’s 2004 binational conference, the COBRO and other stakeholders discussed the importance of border cooperation in the region. One of the conclusions focused on the efforts for implementing strategies besides collaboration.
The collaboration process started with the two binational workshops sponsored by IMPlan (Tijuana’s Municipal Institute of Planning) and SANDAG in October 2005. Nearly 200 people attended these two workshops and provided input on issues to be addressed in the strategic plan. These issues were prioritized using interactive polling technology.

The Borders Committee has provided policy guidance in the development of the Strategic Plan, and the COBRO has served as the primary stakeholders group. The technical work has been provided by staff from IMPlan, SIDUE, Caltrans, and SANDAG. Input has been requested from several COBRO members and other stakeholders as well.

The issues of transportation, economic development, housing, and environmental conservation issues were identified by stakeholders.

A map presented the study area, which includes the eastern portion of the City of Chula Vista (east of I-805 and south of Olympic Parkway), the City of San Diego’s community planning area, the County of San Diego’s Otay community planning area, and also the plan areas of Mesa de Otay and Alamar in Tijuana.

A second map presented the study area in a larger regional setting, which includes South County in the San Diego region and most of the communities of Tijuana, as well as the neighboring cities of Tecate and Playas de Rosarito.

A joint work program was developed and presented to the COBRO and the Borders Committee in November of 2005. A profile was developed of the study area, including current and projected population, housing, land use, and employment. In addition, crossborder travel surveys were analyzed for trips crossing at the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Port of Entry (POE).

The project development team met monthly to share research on transportation, economic development, housing, and environmental issues. The team was able to better understand which issues could be advanced in the first phase of the Early Action Plan.

Elisa Arias, SANDAG, mentioned that the team will continue to work on the remaining issues that require further analysis or depend on ongoing planning activities of stakeholders, for example, the Brown Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan and the Otay Mesa Community Plan Update.

Within the study area, the population is expected to triple by 2030, with two thirds of the residents living Mesa de Otay in Tijuana.

The Housing forecast also shares a similar pattern, with the number of housing units expected to triple by 2030 and Mesa de Otay having two thirds of the total housing.

The City of San Diego’s Otay Mesa Community Plan Update reflects the adopted plan, which the City is currently updating and considering the potential for conversion of industrial zone land for residential uses.

A map presented the current road network and land use distribution. The map illustrates I-805 adjacent to the study area, State Route (SR) 905 linking to I-805, Otay Mesa Road continuing to
SR 905 by the POE, the Tijuana-Tecate toll road, and a portion of the Tijuana-Rosarito Corridor planned to open late 2006 (refer to map).

In terms of the planned land use and transportation, the South Bay Expressway or SR 125 is anticipated to open in early 2007. A design is underway for SR 905, and work is expected to begin in 2007.

Planning is also underway for SR 11, which will connect to a new POE at East Otay Mesa. In addition, potential connections are shown of the East Otay Mesa POE to the Tijuana-Tecate toll road in Tijuana.

For a complete list of the findings of the surveys conducted in late 2004 and early 2005 at the three POEs in the region, please visit the SANDAG Web site:


**Transportation**

Alejandra Mier y Terán, Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce, asked whether the technical committee on Otay II will define the scope of work for Otay II as a commercial port. Elisa Arias, SANDAG, mentioned that one of the first studies the technical committee should undertake is the functionality of the future POE. Caltrans is currently working with General Services Administration (GSA) on a feasibility study discussing the scope of work that would look at the functionality of the POE. Similar studies also will be taken in Mexico. There also are evaluations of financial feasibility studies.

Alejandra Mier y Terán, also asked for more specifics on the issue of feasibility of short-term operational and capital improvements at the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Passenger POE (operations and facilities).

Elisa Arias responded that SANDAG will work closely with Caltrans. Since Caltrans has developed studies on improvements on the commercial POE, similar studies will be undertaken for the passenger POE and later bring in stakeholders, Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Mexican Customs, and GSA to discuss how to fund and implement these improvements.

Alejandra Mier y Terán, asked whether there is a future consideration for evaluating an additional SENTRI lane in Otay Mesa.

Elisa Arias responded that the team will consider this assessment.

(Teleconference) Paul Ganster, Chair, mentioned that on the improvements for the existing POE, there is probably not enough emphasis on upgrading pedestrian accessibility back and forth. Ganster mentioned that when the multimodal is later implemented, this will become important. However, at this moment it is difficult for pedestrians to move across.

Consul Lydia Antonio, Consulate General of Mexico, mentioned that this issue will probably be addressed by the new technical committee. She mentioned that both Consulates met last June 8th to review projects at the POE. It was agreed to create a technical commission under the umbrella of
the Border Liaison Mechanism (BLM) to have representation of state and local government agencies involved in the planning processes. Consul Lydia Antonio mentioned that the two federal agencies will be heading the work, the Federal Highway Administration in the United States and INDABIN in Mexico.

Gustavo Pérez, City of Chula Vista, mentioned that the strategic plan provides valuable information, especially of the City of Chula Vista. Gustavo Pérez asked if data is available on the specifics in regard to shopping, so that they could better understand when planning for the future.

Elisa Arias responded that the survey results were not broken down by purposes and jurisdictions, however, the data is available and this could be addressed.

**Economic Development**

Nathan Owens, San Diego Dialogue, thanked SANDAG for incorporating the “Crossborder Innovation and Competitiveness Initiative” into some working documents. Nathan Owens mentioned that part of this initiative includes the identification of funding. A meeting was held last week in which the Inter-American Development, Baja California Governor Eugenio Elorduy, Mayor Jerry Sanders, and Chambers of Commerce were present. The group responded very favorably to the creation of the Crossborder Center, however, a proposal is needed from the borrowing country of Mexico.

Nathan Owens also mentioned the creation of an internship and student exchange program with the collaboration of University of California, San Diego (UCSD), Universidad Autonuma de Baja California (UABC) and Centro de Investigación Científica y de Educación Superior de Ensenada (CICES). He will later inform this committee on future updates.

Gustavo Pérez, City of Chula Vista, asked who was appointed to the working group/technical committee from the City of Chula Vista. He expressed that the City of Chula Vista has its own economic development strategies, which were adopted by the City Council and the City did not appear in the work program.

Elisa Arias, SANDAG, clarified that she only mentioned those agencies which were more related to crossborder issues, however, all the Cities and Economic Development Councils in the region are part of the working group.

**Housing**

Anne McEnany, International Community Foundation, asked whether there was a timeline set for the Housing early action item.

Elisa Arias mentioned that SANDAG will be conducting work in the next six months and will be providing updates to the COBRO. The Community Plan Update is undergoing public review, and the City has proposed three different alternatives in conducting public outreach. The believed intention is to go to the Planning Commission either in spring or summer of 2007.
Alejandra Mier y Terán, Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce, mentioned the upcoming Second Planning Commission Workshop, scheduled for July 13th. Alejandra Mier y Terán suggested that SANDAG present the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor: Draft Early Action Plan to the upcoming Planning Commission meeting.

Elisa Arias mentioned that SANDAG staff can coordinate with the City of San Diego Planning staff in the coordination of this meeting.

Environmental Conservation

Elisa Arias expressed special thanks to the stakeholders participating in the study, including IMPlan, Caltrans, SIDUE, and SANDAG staff. She mentioned that the public review begins on June 12th, copies of the report are available upon request, and the report has also been posted to the SANDAG Web site.

In terms of next steps, the Draft Early Action Plan will be presented to the Borders Committee on June 23rd. Updates will be provided to this Committee as the program progresses. The final Plan will be presented to the Borders Committee and the SANDAG’s Board of Director in early 2007.

Anne McEnany, International Community Foundation, presented a letter on behalf of the Border 2012 Tijuana River Watershed Taskforce, Ecology Subgroup Members. The letter is directed to Chair Paul Ganster (a copy of the letter is available upon request).

The letter included the following highlights:

- That the study area lies in a California floristic province, one of only 25 biodiversity hotspots in the world. With over 400 species listed as endangered, threatened, or otherwise sensitive to human impact.
- That the study area also lies in the south coast floristic region, which contains the highest of endemic and relic plant species in the California floristic province and threatened habitat types.
- That the study area is located a critical opportunity area identified by the Las Californias Binational Conservation Initiative, the San Ysidro unit includes Otay Mountain, Cerro San Ysidro, Jesus Maria Mesa, San Miguel Mountain and Tecate peak.
- That the San Ysidro unit includes core populations of California gnatcatchers cactus, and coastal cactus wrens. That habitat fragmentation and urbanization are the greatest threats to regional habitat connectivity, especially in the San Ysidro unit.

The letter also mentioned that Cerro San Ysidro and Jesus Maria Mesa in Tijuana should be included in future studies as potential mitigation areas and/or open space conservation zones because of their habitats and connectivity values.

Bob Leiter, SANDAG, suggested pointing out the specific areas mentioned in the letter on a map provided. Anne McEnany identified these specific conservation areas on the map.

Bob Leiter responded that the Plan took into consideration both the binational vision for the Tijuana River Watershed and the Las Californias Binational Conservation Initiative.
As part of the moving forward process, there is opportunity to change the study areas and incorporate these conservation areas within the study area. In addition, if factors come into play just outside the study area, these can certainly be taken into account.

Bob Leiter added that the recent Border Institute meeting provided excellent information on the dimensions of watershed planning in the Tijuana River Watershed. Bob asked Chair Ganster if the recommendations provided at this meeting are on the right track in relation to the discussions that were held at the Border Institute meeting in Rio Rico, Arizona.

Chair Ganster responded that the draft document is very compatible with the discussions at Rio Rico and with the “Las Californias Binational Conservation Initiative.”

Consul Lydia Antonio congratulated SANDAG and IMPlan for the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor: Draft Early Action Plan. Consul Lydia Antonio mentioned that the document illustrates positive binational planning efforts.

Alejandra Mier y Terán, Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce, also thanked SANDAG for the document.

Nathan Owens, San Diego Dialogue, mentioned that a representative from the Inter-American Development Bank expressed positive remarks about the discussions regarding crossborder planning and items in the “Borderless Innovation” report.

8. LAND BORDER CROSSING CLOSURE

Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, presented a report on the May 18th fatal shooting at the border. This incident resulted in the southbound lanes of the land border crossing being closed for almost nine hours.

The incident raised the concern for safety due to the lack of information and organization. The incident also caused cell phone service to be suspended. In addition, there were small children, older people, and no public facilities. The problem could have been handled in a more organized way; there were no public announcements to inform the public.

Héctor Vanegas, SANDAG, shared his experience on the incident. He arrived five minutes after police authorities closed down the border, with no indication by the public officials that there was an incident. People were evacuated three hours later after the incident. The emergency plan issue was raised last November by a member of the Borders Committee as a lesson from the Katrina Hurricane in Louisiana. It was later discussed at the Public Safety Committee meeting, which brings together public elected officials and law enforcement agencies to discuss these types of issues.

Angelika Villagrana expressed that no “contingency plan” exists to address these issues. Perhaps it is important to inform the Public Safety Committee of this issue and possible alternatives to prevent this in the future.

Jason Wells, San Ysidro Chamber of Commerce (SYCC), mentioned that the SYCC notified Congressman Bob Filner’s Office immediately after the incident to set a roundtable meeting and
discuss a possible contingency plan. Last week, Congressman Filner accepted to set a meeting and discuss these concerns. Jason Wells cordially invited the COBRO to attend this meeting.

Gustavo Pérez, City of Chula Vista, mentioned that this is a good opportunity to have a group come together and look at alternative measures. For example, the El Chaparral and southbound trucks crossings could be utilized.

Sergio Pallares, Caltrans, reported that Caltrans has initiated conversations with the City of San Diego regarding the closure. The closure came after the request of the San Diego Police Department, as well as the Border Patrol to prevent this from happening again. Caltrans will report back on these updates.

Bob Leiter, SANDAG, summarized that the follow up will include a meeting with Congressman Bob Filner. He suggested collaborating on follow-up efforts described at the meeting and later provide the COBRO a briefing at the next meeting and determine if there is a need to move these issues forward to the Borders Committee or the Public Safety Committee.

Arnold San Miguel, BTTAC, mentioned that a recent meeting with the Governor’s Goods Movement Action Plan, where the Governor’s staff indicated that they were instituting a policy that would not shut down State highways. Arnold San Miguel suggested inviting staff from the Governor’s Office to this meeting.

Hector Vanegas, SANDAG, commented that David Perez-Tejada representing the city of Mexicali expressed his concern regarding this issue, and he commented that such incidents could also happen in the opposite direction. David Perez-Tejada suggested that the committee should include Mexicali since they have some experience on border closure south of the border in that city.

9. ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING DATE/LOCATION

Consul Lydia Antonio announced that the COBRO meeting for July 4th has been cancelled due to the 4th of July holiday. The next meeting of the COBRO will be held on Tuesday, August 1, 2006, from 3 to 4:30 p.m. at SANDAG’s offices.
Action Requested: INFORMATION

UPCOMING EVENTS

What 16th Annual Summer Scramble “BAJA GOLF TOURNAMENT”
When August 4, 2006 — Friday
Where Real del Mar Golf Resort & Country Club - Tijuana
More Info Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce (619) 661-6111 or www.otaymesa.org

What 2006 Annual Conference and Exposition: League of California Cities
When September 6 through 9, 2006 — Wednesday through Saturday
Where San Diego Convention Center
More Info www.cacities.org

What Gala 2006 “San Diego - Baja California: One Region Working Toward a Brighter Future”
When September 8, 2006 — Friday
Where Kona Kai Resort, San Diego, CA
More Info Anne McEnany (858) 677-2915 or anne@icfdn.org

What Transportation Solutions Summit
When September 13 and 14, 2006 — Wednesday and Thursday
Where The Millennium Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles, CA
More Info (866) 298-9343 or registrations@strategyinstitute.com

What Meeting of the Regional Council and Policy Committees
When September 14, 2006 — Thursday
Where Southern California Association of Governments
More Info www.scag.ca.gov

What 16th Annual Economic Summit
When October 5, 2006 — Thursday
Where San Diego Convention Center
More Info South County EDC (619) 424-5143 or www.sandiegosouth.com
San Diego Association of Governments

COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

August 1, 2006

AGENDA ITEM NO.: 5

Action Requested: APPROVE

THE COBRO’S MEMBERSHIP

File Number: 3003200

Introduction

The Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) was created in 1996 to: address short- and long-term binational-related activities, issues, and actions; provide recommendations regarding binational border-related planning and development; and identify ways to assist and coordinate existing efforts in the binational area. To be more effective, the COBRO reorganized in 2002 to include membership from both sides of the border and adopted SANDAG’s policy committee’s guidelines for leadership, attendance, vacancies, quorum, and voting. Requested by the Chair, a report was presented in February of this year to remind some members of their commitment to participate in the meetings.

Recommendation

To follow up the report in February 2006, the Committee is asked to form a Task Force to evaluate and make recommendations on its membership and leadership.

Discussion - COBRO Criteria for Leadership and Membership

The COBRO will continue sending recommendations regarding its leadership to the Borders Committee every two years and, as it was agreed during the May 4, 2004, meeting, those recommendations regarding its membership will be presented to the Borders Committee every time they are needed. Appointments would be for a two-year term, but would have no limit on consecutive terms. In this manner, every two years the COBRO leadership and membership will be evaluated by the Borders Committee who will have the opportunity to approve the re-appointment of members and Chairs and the appointment of a new Chair and Vice Chair to the COBRO.

COBRO Leadership

The criteria for the selection of Chair and Vice Chair of the COBRO are the following:

- Experience with the COBRO;
- Significant experience with and understanding of a broad range of border issues;
- Understanding of systems and “rules of the game” of both sides of the border; and
- Bilingual preferred.
COBRO Membership

Criteria for membership and potential new members:

- Institutional or organizational legitimacy;
- Fulfill the requirement of geographic representation;
- Multiple issues area expertise, not single-issue advocate; and
- Significant experience with border issues.

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<td>2. Consul General of the United States in Tijuana</td>
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<td>3. State of Baja California</td>
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<td>4. USEPA Border Liaison Office</td>
<td>Current Member</td>
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<td>5. City of Chula Vista</td>
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<td>6. City of Imperial Beach</td>
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<td>11. Instituto de Planeación Municipal de Tijuana (IMPlan)</td>
<td>Current Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. South San Diego County Economic Development Council</td>
<td>Current Member</td>
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<td>13. San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Current Member</td>
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<td>14. Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Current Member</td>
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<td>15. Asociación de la Industria Maquiladora</td>
<td>Current Member</td>
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<td>16. San Diego Dialogue, UCSD Extension</td>
<td>Current Member</td>
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<td>17. Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias, SDSU</td>
<td>Current Member</td>
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<td>18. El Colegio de la Frontera Norte</td>
<td>Current Member</td>
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<td>19. Internacional Community Foundation</td>
<td>Current Member</td>
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<td>20. Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad</td>
<td>Current Member</td>
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<td>21. Tijuana Trabaja</td>
<td>Current Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. Bi-State Transportation Technical Advisory Committee</td>
<td>Current Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. Caltrans</td>
<td>Current Member</td>
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SANDAG Policies Affecting COBRO

On January 10, 2003, the SANDAG Board of Directors approved revisions to the policies and procedures for the policy advisory committees. These revisions clarified regulations on vacancies, attendance, quorum, and voting, which the COBRO adopted for its own policies on its February 4, 2003, meeting.

Vacancies

Vacancies shall be filled as they occur.
Attendance

Regular and alternate members are encouraged to attend. Roll call shall be taken at the beginning of the meeting to determine the voting members present at that time. If a regular member misses three consecutive Committee meetings without justification, the position will be considered vacant.

Quorum

A simple majority of members (either regular or alternates) constitutes a quorum.

Voting

Regular members vote on all COBRO actions. Alternates vote only when their corresponding regular member is absent. A simple majority of the quorum of regular and eligible alternate members voting constitutes approval.

Key Staff Contact: Hector Vanegas, (619) 699-1972, hva@sandag.org
SANDAG’S BINATIONAL ANNUAL EVENT

Introduction

Every year since 1997, the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) has been tasked to support the organization of SANDAG’s annual binational event. Last year, this Committee recommended changing the format to a workshop to pursue effective binational planning. The Committee should discuss the following proposal to provide input to the Borders Committee so staff can proceed in the organization of this event.

Recommendation

In continuance of SANDAG’s strategy to pursue effective binational planning through the development of the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan, it is recommended to organize the Binational Planning Scoping Tours. The first tour will be in late 2006 and the other in early 2007.

Discussion

In 2005, SANDAG held two action-oriented binational workshops to pursue an effective binational planning partnership with Tijuana and adjacent jurisdictions. The two workshops were attended by nearly 200 people representing governmental agencies and academia, as well as business and non-governmental organizations. Based on the output received at these workshops, staff developed a work program to prepare the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan focusing on the areas of transportation, environment, housing, and economic development. Staff from the City of Tijuana’s Municipal Planning Institute (IMPlan), Caltrans, the State of Baja California’s Secretariat of Infrastructure and Urban Development (SIDUE), and SANDAG have conducted the technical work for the preparation of the Strategic Plan through a joint Project Development Team (PDT) that has met monthly. As a result, the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor: Draft Early Action Plan was presented in June 2006.

The tours will be an information-gathering exercise, which will be an opportunity to scope out areas that provide further insight and information which can be incorporated into the early actions identified in the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor: Draft Early Action Plan.

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BOOK LAUNCHING: EQUITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Nearly 35 years ago at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972, the world’s leaders for the first time seriously discussed the relationship between prevailing economic models of industrial expansion, depletion of the world’s natural resources, and the health and well being of humanity. The framework for ‘sustainable development’ — based on the notion of intergenerational stewardship, conservation of natural resources, and the right of every person to human dignity and the satisfaction of basic needs — has been pursued at a global level since that time. Unfortunately, despite decades of international policy development, we are still far from a fundamental shift in the economic paradigm that fuels the global economy.

The contradictions inherent in the search for sustainable alternatives to modern development can be seen in all of their complexity on the U.S.-Mexico border. Here, the industrial and developing worlds are juxtaposed in stark relief over a 2,000-mile-long borderland punctuated by the local realities of city-regions from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico. Despite significant advances in public awareness about the environmental and social costs of industrial development in the region, the creation of crossborder institutions to deal with them, and explicit commitments by the Bush and Fox administrations to facilitate further improvements, most indicators show deteriorating conditions of life and livelihood for the majority of border region inhabitants.

In December 2002, UCSD’s Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies and the Colegio de la Frontera Norte convened an international conference in Tijuana to reflect on the regional implications of the recent World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, with a particular focus on social equity and environmental justice. The two-day event brought together a unique group of theorists, planners, researchers, and advocates who share concern for the future of the border region. One objective of the conference, and of this edited volume, was to create a framework and collaborative research agenda for equity and sustainable development in the context of borderlands. The two editors and one of the contributors, Tito Alegría, will provide a brief overview of the book and two illustrative studies of particular interest to COBRO on environmental risk and housing equity in Tijuana.

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