MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (COBRO)

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

Tuesday, September 5, 2006

3:00 – 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

- COBRO LEADERSHIP & MOBILE SEMINARS UPDATE
- OTAY MESA-MESA DE OTAY BINATIONAL CORRIDOR: DRAFT FINAL EARLY ACTION PLAN
- 2007 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) WHITE PAPER: CROSS-BORDER TRANSPORTATION

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.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), SANDAG will accommodate persons who require assistance in order to participate in SANDAG meetings. If such assistance is required, please contact SANDAG at (619) 699-1900 in advance of the meeting. To request this document or related reports in an alternative format, please call (619) 699-1990, (619) 699-1904 (TTY), or fax (619) 699-1905.

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<td>Summary of the August 1, 2006, meeting.</td>
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<td>COBRO LEADERSHIP &amp; MOBILE SEMINARS UPDATE</td>
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<td>(Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce)</td>
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<td>At the last COBRO meeting held on August 1, 2006, COBRO approved the formation of a task force to discuss and provide input regarding the Committee’s membership and leadership. At the same meeting COBRO discussed alternatives and options for the organization of SANDAG’s annual binational event. This report presents the input of the task force from its discussions held on August 11, 2006.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>OTAY MESA–MESA DE OTAY BINATIONAL CORRIDOR: DRAFT FINAL EARLY ACTION PLAN (Elisa Arias, SANDAG)</td>
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<td>Staff will summarize comments received on the Draft Early Action Plan, which have been incorporated in the Draft Final Report. The Committee will be asked to recommend that the Borders Committee approve the proposed Early Action Strategies at its meeting on September 8, 2006.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>2007 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) WHITE PAPER: CROSS-BORDER TRANSPORTATION (Elisa Arias, SANDAG)</td>
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<td>Several white papers are being developed for the 2007 RTP. Staff will present the draft white paper for Cross-border Transportation. This paper describes current cross-border travel patterns, discusses project growth in the border region and implications for cross-border travel, and identifies issues and potential solutions for evaluation.</td>
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4. CALIFORNIA BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL TO DISCUSS NATURAL RESOURCES ALONG THE BORDER (Ron Saenz, SANDAG)  

The California Biodiversity Council (CBC) will hold its fall meeting at the Coronado Community Center on September 28, following an all-day field trip to Tijuana on September 27. The theme of the meeting is “Biodiversity along the Border – Working Together in a Binational Watershed.” The Council is planning an interactive session with Mexican officials to discuss the preservation of wildlife corridors and habitat linkages along an urbanizing international border, and sedimentation and erosion control in a shared watershed. In Tijuana, the Council will view the habitat corridor proposed for preservation and visit the Los Laureles Canyon, where there are efforts underway to control sediments and pollutants transported by stormwater from Mexico to the United States.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION  

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

+ next to an item indicates an attachment
COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

September 5, 2006

AGENDA ITEM NO.: 2

Action Requested: APPROVE

COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (COBRO) SUMMARY OF AUGUST 1, 2006

File Number 3003200

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Tuesday, August 1, 2006, Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) meeting was called to order by Chair Paul Ganster. The meeting was held at SANDAG.

Members present were: Paul Ganster, Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias (SDSU); Lydia Antonio, Consulate General of Mexico in San Diego; Cindy Gompper-Graves, South San Diego County Economic Development Council; Arnold San Miguel, Bi-State Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (BTTAC); Sergio Pallares, Caltrans; Gustavo Pérez and Miguel Z. Tapia, City of Chula Vista; Gary Brown, City of Imperial Beach; David Pérez-Tejada and Kathya Yruretagoyena, City of Mexicali; Larry Van Wey, City of San Diego; Gerardo Chávez, City of Tecate; Alejandro Rivera, Tijuana Economic Development Corporation; Olivia Maldonado, City of Tijuana; Nora Bringas and Tito Alegria, El Colegio de la Frontera Norte; Yolanda Walther-Meade, Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad; Tatiana Suro, Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce; Nathan Owens, San Diego Dialogue; Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce; David Fege, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Bob Leiter, Héctor Vanegas, Jane Clough-Riquelme, Ron Saenz, and Arturo Vázquez from SANDAG.

2. MEETING SUMMARIES

The meeting summary for June 12, 2006, COBRO meeting was approved. Yolanda Walther-Meade, Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad, entertained a motion to approve. David Pérez-Tejada, City of Mexicali, seconded the motion.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

Steve Otto, San Ysidro Business Association, announced his support for the San Ysidro Chamber of Commerce’s application for a formal seat in the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO).

Yolanda Walther-Meade, Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad, invited COBRO members and the public to attend the 2006 Gala hosted by the International Community Foundation and Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad. The 2006 Gala will be held on Friday, September 8, 2006,
at the Kona Kai Resort in San Diego and will honor Malin Burnham, President of Burnham Real Estate, and Mauricio Fernández Margain, President of FEMA Automotriz.

David Isenberg, City of Chula Vista Police, announced the participation of the City of Chula Vista Police Department in the Committee. As a border city, the City of Chula Vista has an interest in public safety, especially since the City of Chula Vista is located in a binational region.

David Pérez-Tejada, City of Mexicali, announced that the Frontera Norte Forum (Northern Border Forum) will be held October 11 through October 13, 2006, in the City of Mexicali. The Border Forum consists of six Mexican states, and will attract business leaders along the border as well as politicians. The second event is the Binational Border Forum, which will be held August 30 through September 1. This Forum will address urban and regional development in Mexicali. More information will be provided later.

On a final note, David Pérez-Tejada announced his departure from COBRO. He has been invited to work on the campaign for governor candidate of Baja California, Oliverio Martínez Palmera. Kathya Iruretagoyena, City of Mexicali, will take his place representing City of Mexicali.

Chair Ganster thanked David Pérez-Tejada for his continuing work in the Committee and wished the best to him in his future endeavors.

Cindy Gompper-Graves, South County Economic Development Council, invited COBRO to the Elected Official Reception in Coronado, which will be held Thursday, September 14, 2006, at the Promenade in Coronado. She also invited the Committee to the 16th Annual Economic Summit, to be held Thursday, October 5, 2006, at the Convention Center.

Héctor Vanegas, SANDAG, gave an update on the Sectoral Subcommittee for Border Affairs meeting in Tijuana. The City of Tijuana created this Subcommittee, in which SANDAG and other COBRO members also were invited to participate. The Otay Mesa–Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor: Draft Early Action Plan was presented to the Subcommittee. The Subcommittee approved the recommendation to present the report to the Commission of Border Affairs for the City of Tijuana to approve this binational plan. The Subcommittee meets the last Wednesday of the every month at City Hall in the City of Tijuana and the meetings are open to the public.

Chair Ganster pointed out the importance of the Subcommittee and encouraged Committee members and the public to participate.

4. STAFF REPORT

A report was provided for the upcoming events.

5. COBRO’S MEMBERSHIP

SANDAG staff provided a report on the policies and guidelines of the COBRO membership.

Chair Ganster pointed out that like in any organization, COBRO often times finds it difficult to get everyone to attend meetings and attain a quorum to conduct business. Periodically, it is good to review who the members are and what members participate, as well as demonstrate good participation of stakeholders.
One of the challenges of COBRO is that some members have to cross the border, and wait times at the border have become extremely prolonged. Although the effort is made to have meetings south of the border, according to the laws of the State of California, COBRO cannot legally conduct business outside the County of San Diego.

Héctor Vanegas, SANDAG, presented a follow-up report made at the Tuesday, February 7, 2006, meeting in which COBRO reviewed the policies and attendance guidelines. COBRO approved a modification made to the COBRO Charter, allowing COBRO to hold meetings outside the San Diego region and in Baja California, all in compliance with the Brown Act.

Moreover, this Committee is asked to form a Task Force to review the status of COBRO membership and provide recommendations to this Committee, and ultimately provide input to the Borders Committee for approval.

Chair Ganster pointed out the significance of this Task Force and asked for a few members to volunteer. The following COBRO members agreed to be part of the Task Force:

- Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Miguel Tapia, City of Chula Vista
- Gustavo Perez, City of Chula Vista
- Lydia Antonio, Consulate General of Mexico in San Diego
- Paul Ganster, Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias (SDSU)
- David Fege, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Cindy Gompper-Graves, South County Economic Development Council

SANDAG staff will contact the COBRO Membership Task Force and keep the Committee informed in the progress of this Task Force and present a report at the next COBRO meeting.

Chair Ganster called for approval of creating the COBRO Membership Task Force Action. Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, entertained a motion to approve. Miguel Tapia, City of Chula Vista, seconded the motion to approve.

Gary Brown, City of Imperial Beach, asked if the COBRO membership is already set, or whether the committee considered additional participation.

Chair Ganster pointed out that the Committee needs to discuss the incorporation of interested groups. Ideally, individuals would represent different stakeholders, agencies, and organizations in the region. However, a challenge is faced when there is a larger group and no quorum is reached.

Bob Leiter, SANDAG, added that the process that SANDAG follows with the COBRO Working Group is that COBRO would make recommendations on adding membership to the Borders Committee for approval. This process takes place every couple of years.
6. SANDAG’S BINATIONAL ANNUAL EVENT

Chair Ganster recalled past annual topics such as binational water issues. This is a significant issue across the region since it affects both sides of the border. Last year COBRO recommended SANDAG to proceed with specific activities such as the binational planning exercise. The Committee is pleased with the important studies generated and the improved dialogue and coordination across the border. Such activities have set a great example of binational coordination on transportation and related planning issues.

Chair Ganster pointed out that focusing on specific activities in concentrated ways proves to be productive and positive. COBRO is asked to provide input to staff on how to proceed this year. One suggestion is to organize small “mobile seminars.”

Héctor Vanegas, SANDAG, mentioned that in order to continue the momentum gained with the development of the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan, the recommendation calls for the creation of two Binational Planning Scoping Tours. The Binational Tours will focus on transportation, economic development, environment, and housing.

COBRO is asked to discuss this recommendation and provide input to the Borders Committee for approval.

Cindy Gompper-Graves, South County Economic Development Council, expressed her interest in partnering with SANDAG for the Binational Planning Scoping Tours. A recent tour was conducted for the Tijuana Economic Development Council, with the participation of Chula Vista, the San Ysidro Chamber of Commerce, and the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Miguel Tapia, City of Chula Vista, mentioned that the issue of transportation is very important to address given its intensity between both countries.

David Fege, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, asked whether transportation should be defined as moving people or moving goods.

Miguel Tapia stated that both issues are equally important.

David Fege mentioned that one of the environmental issues that should be addressed at the border is the air pollution caused by the traffic.

Bob Leiter, SANDAG, mentioned that staff would track down some of the issues identified in the Otay Mesa binational study. The study identified air quality and transportation, specifically at the third Port of Entry and its functionality. The tours would address these particular issues.

Moreover, the idea for the tours came after SANDAG organized a tour for the SANDAG Planning department in an effort to observe some of the issues identified in the study. The tour included a guided tour and a presentation by the Instituto de Planeación Municipal de Tijuana (IMPlan), which is developing their first ever transit plan.
The tour opened up the possibility to invite more stakeholders from the U.S. side to visit some of the urban development sites in Tijuana. IMPlan expressed an interest in visiting San Diego areas, which incorporate transit-oriented development and open-space conservation.

Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, asked if the tour would be open to some of the Borders Committee members.

Héctor Vanegas, SANDAG, mentioned the tours will be an open activity and open to the public as well, though space will be limited.

The Task Force on the SANDAG Binational Annual Event will consist of the same members previously mentioned to review COBRO’s Membership.

COBRO is asked to approve and take the concept of the SANDAG Binational Annual Event to the Borders Committee. Cindy Gompper-Graves, South County Economic Development Council, entertained a motion to approve. Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, seconded the motion.

7. HOW DO WE GROW AND STAY COMPETITIVE: A PERSPECTIVE FROM TIJUANA

Alejandro Rivera, Tijuana Economic Development Corporation (EDC), made a presentation on the Tijuana EDC’s strategies on “How to grow and stay competitive concept.” A copy of the “How do we grow and stay competitive: A perspective from Tijuana” presentation is available upon request.

The content of the presentation will include:

- Where is Tijuana today?
- How do we expect to grow?
- How do we expect to be competitive?
- About Tijuana EDC
- Summary

Where is Tijuana today?

Alejandro Rivera, Tijuana EDC, presented statistics on Tijuana’s current population, labor and employment, infrastructure, and education and quality of life.

How do we expect to grow?

Data was also provided on the State’s business development policy, special infrastructure projects, and economic clusters.

Alejandro Rivera mentioned the following are needed for State Business Development Policy:

- Prepared and coordinated by private and public sector
- Vision for 2025
- Identifies and promotes each city’s productive orientation
- Fiscal incentives for new investments (i.e., State Payroll Tax Exemption & workers training subsidy)

Special infrastructure projects are needed to offer outside and local investors. Some of the most important projects include Tijuana-Rosarito Corridor; De Las Palmas Valley Urban Project; Alamar River - Third Phase; Otay Border Crossing, Point II; and Tijuana Logistic Terminal (Inter modal Cargo Station).

A cluster development diagram was provided to better understand greater economic development in the region.

Some important development clusters activities include diagnostic study of each cluster; undertaking of specific strategies by involved organizations; consulting & training of current suppliers of each cluster; and training support for professional and technical employees.

The main industrial clusters include electronics and plastics; medical devices and aerospace; and automotive.

**How do we expect to be competitive?**

Alejandro Rivera, Tijuana EDC, mentioned that specializing and focusing on promoting strategies and strategic alliances are necessary in order to be competitive.

Some of the strategies in specializing and promotion included Industrial trade shows; trade missions; business seminars; book of facts; and a binational map.

Some of the strategic alliances included the State of Baja California; City of Tijuana; South County Economic Development Council; Mexico Business Center (San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce); California-Tijuana Business Forum; SANDAG; and the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation.

**About Tijuana EDC**

The Tijuana EDC (Economic Development Corporation) is a non-profit business organization dedicated to support companies interested in doing business in the Tijuana-San Diego Region.

Bob Leiter, SANDAG, asked what agencies will develop the Logistics Facility and where is the EDC in the selection process.

Alejandro Rivera, Tijuana EDC, mentioned that the private sector and certain companies are involved in developing this facility as well as the support of the State and City government. There have been three locations identified, two of which are in the eastern section of the City of Tijuana (El Florido and Valle Redondo).

David Pérez-Tejada, City of Mexicali, asked if the Tijuana EDC receives funding from the state and/or local government.
Alejandro Rivera mentioned that the Tijuana EDC receives funding from the state and local government. Tijuana EDC is a non-profit organization generated by the business sector.

Héctor Vanegas, SANDAG, asked what the current relation between Tijuana EDC and China is.

Since September 11, 2001, Tijuana has lost a lot of jobs and companies because of the recession and the China effect. However, once Tijuana EDC reviewed and signed the entrepreneurial economic policy, they identified that there was no competition with China. Rather, the Tijuana EDC identified the opportunities that China cannot provide. The vision of the Tijuana EDC is to provide flexibility and better volume vs. bulky products in order to provide better service to their customers.

Héctor Vanegas asked if the private sector has contemplated the idea to have a public/private partnership to improve infrastructure, such as a partnership with the Otay Mesa Port of Entry II.

Alejandro Rivera mentioned that due to budget challenges and city growth, the private sector has made greater efforts in assisting public projects such as paving roads, water connections, and building infrastructure.

Patricia McCoy, City of Imperial Beach and Chair of the Borders Committee, asked what efforts the Tijuana EDC is making to provide an adequate water supply.

Alejandro Rivera responded that unfortunately he had no expertise in that area. He went on to say that the Comisión Estatal de Servicios Publicos de Tijuana (CESPT) or State Commission on Public Services would be able to answer those questions.

8. RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS: EQUITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Chair Ganster mentioned the recently published edited volume is based on how the agenda of sustainable development is being conceived, shaped, and implemented in light of the new geopolitics and global order along the U.S.-Mexico border region. The project was the collaboration of UCSD’s Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies and the Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF). Jane Clough-Riquelme, SANDAG, and COLEF researchers Nora Bringas and Tito Alegría collaborated in the project.

Jane Clough-Riquelme mentioned that the issues of poverty and environmental risks and social equity and housing in Tijuana are important to address when trying to explore economic prosperity.

FIRST PRESENTATION: URBAN STRUCTURE AND SOCIAL SEGREGATION

Tito Alegría, COLEF, presented the findings from research on social equity and housing in Tijuana. A copy of the complete presentation on Urban Structure and Social Segregation is available upon request.

The following is an outline of findings from the urban structure and social segregation included:

- Causality outline of infrastructure and environment outcomes
- Mechanisms generators of the interurban structure (land use patterns)
  - Localization of Manufacture
  - Determinants of localization and concentration of commerce and service sectors
SECOND PRESENTATION: SOCIAL VULNERABILITY AND DISASTER RISK IN TIJUANA: Preliminary Findings

Nora Bringas, COLEF, presented the findings on social vulnerability and disaster risk in Tijuana. The general objective is to identify zones of high risk for natural disasters in urban Tijuana through a vulnerability analysis.

The conceptual framework was presented, which includes urban system, build environment, biophysical and climate variability.

Some of the factors that contribute to vulnerability include exposure, social conditions, and lack of resilience.

A schematic outline of vulnerability was presented, which includes the lack of access, reduced capacity, lack of resources, and exposure.

Nora Bringas, COLEF, added that disasters occur, inevitably, in the context of a historic pattern of vulnerability as evidenced by location, infrastructure, dominant ideology, sociopolitical organization, existing production, and distribution systems.

Some of the problems in the City of Tijuana include flooding in low areas; surface runoff and modifications to the landscape; no rainwater infiltration; sealed surfaces; incomplete and poor maintenance of the drainage system; loss of vegetation; and topography.

Nora Bringas presented a map of the urbanization process of Tijuana. (A copy of the map is available upon request.)

Chair Ganster thanked both researchers for their presentations, and added that the presentations present a different perspective on the regional reality and indicate the many challenges the Mexican federal, state, and local governments face in the future.

Bob Leiter, SANDAG, added that both presentations provide helpful information to the Committee. Moreover, Item #8 on the agenda is better characterized as a presentation on the research and not necessarily as marketing this particular book. Due to the fact that SANDAG is funded by the federal government, the work developed at SANDAG falls in the realm of policy development and information gathering. On the other hand, if anyone is interested in the book, they may contact the researchers.

9. ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING DATE/LOCATION

Chair Paul Ganster thanked COBRO members and the public for attending. The next meeting will include presentations on cross-border transportation issues and updates on the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan. The next meeting of COBRO will be held Tuesday, September 5, 2006, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. at SANDAG’s offices.
UPCOMING EVENTS

WHAT: 2006 Annual Conference and Exposition: League of California Cities
WHEN: September 6-9, 2006
WHERE: San Diego Convention Center
MORE INFO: www.cacities.org
SPONSOR:

WHAT: Gala 2006 “San Diego-Baja California: One Region Working Towards a Brighter Future”
WHEN: Friday, September 8, 2006
WHERE: Kona Kai Resort, San Diego, CA
MORE INFO: Anne McEnany (858) 677-2915 or anne@icfdn.org
SPONSOR:

WHAT: Super Mixer Business Exchange & Showcase
WHEN: Wednesday, September 13, 2006
WHERE: Best Western Hacienda-Old Town
MORE INFO: (619) 544-1382 or echapman@sdchamber.org
SPONSOR:

WHAT: Transportation Solutions Summit
WHEN: September 13 & 14, 2006
WHERE: The Millennium Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles, CA
MORE INFO: (866) 298-9343 or registrations@strategyinstitute.com
SPONSOR:

WHAT: Elected Official Reception in Coronado
WHEN: Thursday, September 14, 2006
WHERE: Coronado, CA
MORE INFO: (619) 424-5143 or www.sandiegosouth.com
SPONSOR:

WHAT: 16TH Annual Economic Summit
WHEN: Thursday, October 5th, 2006
WHERE: San Diego Convention Center
MORE INFO: South County EDC (619) 424-5143 or www.sandiegosouth.com
SPONSOR:
Introduction

At the last Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) meeting, held on August 1, 2006, COBRO approved the formation of a task force to discuss and provide input regarding the Committee’s membership and leadership. Also, at the same meeting COBRO discussed alternatives and options for the organization of SANDAG’s annual binational event. This report presents the input of the task force, from its discussions held on August 11, 2006.

Recommendation

The task force requests COBRO to recommend the following be presented to the Borders Committee for approval:

Membership and Leadership:
1. Continue and reaffirm current COBRO’s leadership
2. Form a category of Advisory Members
3. Establish a rule for those members that fail to attend three consecutive meetings to be considered as advisory members, and keep a minimum of voting membership of 15
4. Approve new membership list (Attachment 1)

SANDAG’s Annual Binational Event:

To continue SANDAG’s strategy to pursue effective binational planning through the development of the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan, COBRO agreed to organize two field trips, or mobile seminars. The mobile seminars 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 strategies of the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan.

1. Design Mobile Seminars to visit Tijuana’s projects that link land use and transportation planning by the end of 2006; and transportation and other development projects in the border area of San Diego region in 2007.
2. Encourage participation from stakeholders and elected officials from both sides of the border.
3. Explore opportunities to partner with members of COBRO that currently organize similar activities.

Discussion

Membership and Leadership:

At its February 7, 2006 meeting, COBRO reviewed its guidelines on membership and leadership, vacancies and quorum. This last matter had been an issue of concern as quorum was not met in two meetings in 2005. Twenty-three agencies or organizations from the public, private and academic sectors of the United States and Mexico form its current membership. Twelve are stakeholders from the United States, ten are from Mexico and one is a bi-state California-Baja California group.

The task force reviewed an attendance matrix and a list of stakeholders that have expressed interest in becoming members of COBRO and others whose work is related to COBRO’s work plan. The task force agreed on the following:

1. Explore possibilities to have advisory members. The advisory members will be seated at the table, but will not count for quorum purposes.
2. Change the status of those regular members that have failed to attend three consecutive meetings to the status of advisory members.
3. Accept the petition of the San Ysidro Chamber of Commerce and the Tijuana River Watershed to become members of COBRO.
4. Reinstate the County of San Diego, and invite the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), San Diego Field Office, and Desarrollo Económico e Industrial de Tijuana (DEITAC in Spanish, known also as Tijuana EDC) to be members of COBRO.
5. Invite the Border Trade Alliance (BTA), Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC), the U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the U.S. General Service Administration (GSA) to be Advisory Members.

SANDAG’s Binational Annual Event:

The task force reviewed the development of this year’s efforts to pursue an effective binational planning effort with our partners in Baja California. The two binational workshops held in 2005 provided input for the preparation of the Otay Mesa – Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan, which requires the active participation of several binational stakeholders and planners. The task force considered it was opportune to continue this endeavor, and agreed that the Mobile Seminars would be a good approach to gather information and scope out areas that could provide further insight for the completion of the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan.

The task force agreed on the following:

1. The first Mobile Seminar should focus on land use and transportation planning activities in the Otay Mesa – Mesa de Otay binational corridor, include a visit to the proposed site of the East Otay Mesa-Otay II port of entry, the recently opened Tijuana-Rosarito Corridor, the Tijuana International Airport, a housing or industrial development, and learn about planning activities along the Alamar River.
2. To avoid conflicting calendars and to optimize use of resources, the task force recommended exploring opportunities to partner with COBRO members that have plans for similar activities.

3. Prepare a fact sheet with basic information to understand planning activities in Tijuana.

4. Send correspondence to leaders of the agencies that are members of COBRO, including a summary of the latest Committee’s accomplishments, requesting these agencies reaffirm their commitment to supporting COBRO’s activities.

COBRO’s input on its membership and responsibilities will be presented to the Borders Committee for approval.

Attachment: 1. Proposed List of Membership

Key Staff Contact: Hector Vanegas, (619) 699-1972; hva@sandag.org
# COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
## Proposed Membership List

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<td>Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias, SDSU</td>
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<td>Co Chair: Consulado General de México en San Diego</td>
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<td>Vice Chair: South San Diego County Economic Development Council</td>
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<td>Asociación de la Industria Maquiladora</td>
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**Advisory Members:**

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OTAY MESA-MESA DE OTAY BINATIONAL CORRIDOR STRATEGIC PLAN: DRAFT FINAL EARLY ACTION PLAN File Number 3006300

Introduction

The Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan is evaluating transportation, economic development, housing, and environmental conservation issues with the objective of creating an effective binational planning partnership. On June 12, 2006, the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor: Draft Early Action Plan was presented to the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) and released for a 30-day public comment and review period. The Borders Committee discussed the Draft Early Action Plan on June 23, 2006.

This report summarizes major comments received on the Draft Early Action Plan, which have been addressed as appropriate in the Draft Final Early Action Plan.

Discussion

In addition to comments provided by the Borders Committee and COBRO members at their meetings in June 2006, written comments on the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor: Draft Early Action Plan were received from the International Community Foundation on behalf of the Border 2012 Tijuana River Watershed Task Force, Ecology Sub Group; Urban Counsel Consultants; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and Greg Waite, Integral Communities. Responses to comments have been addressed in the Draft Final Early Action Plan, as appropriate.

Major comments and responses are outlined as follows:

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<th>COMMENT</th>
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<td>Request to update housing figures for the Otay Mesa Community Plan Update to reflect proposed land use alternatives released by the City of San Diego in July 2006 and to verify land use data for the County of San Diego’s East Otay Mesa Specific Plan in the Population, Housing, Land Use, and Employment chapter.</td>
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<th>RESPONSE</th>
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<td>The Otay Mesa Community Plan Land Use Alternatives section was updated, with the information released by the City of San Diego in July 2006. Data included in Table 9: Vacant Developable Acres (2004) was corrected.</td>
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Request to include San Isidro Mountain and Jesus Maria Mesa in Tijuana in future studies as potential mitigation areas and/or open space/conservation zones due to their high habitat and connectivity values.

Staff concurs with the request. The description of the Early Action has been revised to read as follows:

**Environmental Conservation Early Action — Explore the feasibility of a binational land use/open space conservation study for SR 11, the future East Otay Mesa-Otay II POE, and proposed connection from the POE to the Tijuana-Tecate Toll Road (Route 2D), including consideration of binational environmental mitigation strategies.**

As part of this feasibility analysis, the area of study will be defined. This study area may include areas of influence outside the current binational corridor study area that would help maintain north-south habitat connectivity. The study area would be evaluated for potential mitigation or as conservation zones in the context of the future East Otay Mesa-Otay II POE and connecting roads.

**LEAD/PARTICIPATING AGENCIES—** Caltrans, SANDAG, County of San Diego, California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, IMPlan, and U.S. and Mexican federal, state, and local agencies/organizations.

It should be noted that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service submitted a letter of support and expressed interest in being involved in the joint effort outlined above to address the establishment of binational open space corridors and protected areas that conserve sensitive species in the border region.

Comments received from Integral Communities focus on expressing support for two of the land use alternatives the City of San Diego is considering in its Otay Mesa Community Plan update. No response is needed in the Early Action Plan.

**Next Steps**

Staff members from Tijuana’s Municipal Planning Institute (Instituto Municipal de Planeación or IMPlan), Caltrans, the Secretariat of Infrastructure and Urban Development of Baja California (Secretaría de Infraestructura y Desarrollo Urbano del Estado or SIDUE), and SANDAG continue to work on the preparation of the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan. This Plan is anticipated to be finalized in early 2007.

**Key Staff Contact:** Elisa Arias, (619) 699-1936, ear@sandag.org
Introduction

SANDAG has identified several key components to be developed for the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). For each of these areas, staff is preparing a white paper to generate discussion and gather input from SANDAG’s technical committees and working groups.

The Cross-border Transportation white paper describes current travel conditions at the San Diego-Baja California Ports of Entry (POEs), identifies problems, and outlines potential solutions or alternatives. Recommendations from this paper will help guide the evaluation of projected cross-border travel demand and the assessment of needs related to border transportation infrastructure and services. On July 18, 2006, the Regional Planning Stakeholders Working Group discussed this paper. Comments from this Working Group have been addressed in the attached paper as appropriate. The Cross-border Transportation white paper is being translated to Spanish to facilitate information-sharing with stakeholders in Baja California.

Discussion

Border regions face the challenge of balancing security and the efficient movement of people and goods through the international POEs. Over time, delays at the border have increased and become more unpredictable.

The Cross-border Transportation white paper describes several projects that would improve cross-border travel capacity and enhance security at the San Diego-Baja California border region. However, most of these projects have limited funding available for implementation, share challenges for timely implementation, and compete with development pressure and rapid growth along the border.

These challenges can lead to opportunities to work with policymakers to advance transportation projects with the goal of reducing congestion and cross-border delay while enhancing security and improving the economy. Input from technical committees and working groups will be shared with SANDAG’s policy committees to develop strategies for inclusion in the 2007 RTP.
Next Steps

The Borders Committee is scheduled to discuss the Cross-border Transportation white paper on September 8, 2006. The Transportation Committee will be asked to accept this white paper for planning purposes in the 2007 RTP in October 2006.


Key Staff Contact:  Elisa Arias, (619) 699-1936, ear@sandag.org
INTRODUCTION

For many years, radio and television stations have been broadcasting traffic reports for major highways in the San Diego region. But it was not until the past few years that those traffic reports also began transmitting information on the number of vehicles and pedestrians waiting to cross at the Tijuana-San Diego border crossings.

Every day, about 68,000 passenger vehicles and 30,000 pedestrians travel from Mexico through the San Ysidro, Otay Mesa, and Tecate ports of entry (POEs). More than 2,500 northbound trucks also cross the border at Otay Mesa and Tecate on a daily basis. A similar number of border crossings are estimated to take place in the southbound direction.

Border regions face the challenge of balancing security and the efficient movement of people and goods through the international POEs. Over time, delays at the border have increased and become more unpredictable. These delays—especially in the northbound direction—are a result of growth in cross-border travel, transportation infrastructure that has failed to keep pace with this growth, and the implementation of stricter security screenings.

Objectives for 2007 RTP

The objectives of this white paper for the 2007 RTP are threefold. They include:

1. Assessing current crossborder travel conditions.
2. Identifying current and future multimodal transportation needs to facilitate cross-border travel, based on an evaluation of projected growth in the San Diego-Baja California border region.
3. Evaluating potential traditional and innovative funding sources to advance implementation of transportation and port of entry infrastructure.

Background

San Diego Region-Baja California Ports of Entry: Current Conditions

Three POEs link the San Diego region and Baja California. The San Ysidro-Puerta México border crossing serves passenger vehicles and pedestrians while the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay and the Tecate-Tecate POEs handles passenger vehicles, pedestrians, and commercial vehicles. Freight rail inspections are conducted at the San Ysidro rail yard. Figure 1 illustrates the border region and the three POEs.

San Ysidro-Puerta México

The San Ysidro POE is the busiest passenger border crossing along the United States-Mexico border. In fact, it is reported to be the busiest land port of entry in the world. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and handles about 70 percent of the vehicle crossings and more than 80 percent of people traveling on foot into the San Diego region.
Figure 1 - San Diego-Baja California Ports of Entry
Up to four of the 24 primary vehicle inspection lanes at the San Ysidro POE are dedicated commuter or SENTRI\(^1\) lanes, where travelers and vehicles that have passed background checks and inspections are processed more quickly. The SENTRI vehicle lanes operate between 4 a.m. and midnight, seven days a week. A separate pedestrian facility serves people crossing on foot. Since September 2004, a pedestrian SENTRI lane has been operating as a trial program during peak crossing hours (5 to 9 a.m. and 3 to 7 p.m.) on weekdays.

Processing of bicyclists is handled at the pedestrian facility. Following a significant increase in travelers crossing the border on bicycles after 9/11, CPB allowed cyclists to be processed ahead of other pedestrians in line. However, this expedited process was terminated in May 2006 because, according to CBP, some cross-border travelers rented bicycles just before crossing the border to get ahead in the pedestrian line.\(^2\)

To accommodate cross-border cyclists who continue their trip by other modes, Caltrans has installed a small bicycle parking facility with racks for about 15 bicycles west of Interstate 5 (I-5) (on Camiones Way). A second bicycle parking facility will be located east of I-5 (on San Ysidro Boulevard adjacent to the I-5/San Ysidro Boulevard on-ramp). This facility will accommodate parking for about 110 bikes and is expected to be completed in spring 2007.

Completed in 2005 and adjacent to the San Ysidro POE, the San Ysidro Intermodal Transportation Center improved pedestrian access to the Blue Line Trolley, intercity buses, taxis, and shuttles. More than 28,000 people are estimated to access transit services at this location daily.

Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay

The Otay Mesa POE is the busiest commercial border crossing on the California-Mexico border. Among all United States-Mexico commercial POEs, Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay ranks third in terms of trade value, after the Laredo and El Paso POEs in Texas. In 2005, the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay border station handled $24.4 billion in merchandise in both directions, which were moved in more than 1.4 million trucks. Loaded trucks crossing into San Diego are processed from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays.

In 2005, the Free and Secure Trade (FAST) program began operating at the Otay Mesa POE. FAST is a commercial process offered to pre-approved importers, carriers, and registered drivers that results in quicker clearance across the border.

Since 2003, the passenger inspection facility operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and serves about one-fourth of the northbound passenger vehicle and bus crossings. There is a total of 14 inspection lanes at this facility. One is a SENTRI lane that operates between 5 a.m. and 8 p.m., seven days a week. People crossing on foot are processed at a separate pedestrian facility.

The Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) operates bus Route 905 between the Otay Mesa POE, the Iris Trolley Station, and the San Ysidro Trolley Station every 30 minutes on weekdays during morning and afternoon peak periods. Service starts at 4:50 a.m. and ends at 7 p.m. However, there

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\(^1\) SENTRI is the acronym for Secure Electronic Network for Travelers Rapid Inspection. This program began operating at the Otay Mesa POE in 1995 and at the San Ysidro POE in 2000. In June 2005, two additional lanes were converted for optional SENTRI use at San Ysidro depending on traffic conditions.

\(^2\) Before 9/11, bicyclists were inspected at the primary inspection booths for the current SENTRI lanes. However, since then, CBP has moved all bicyclists to the pedestrian facility for safety reasons.
is no service between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. In 2005, nearly 441,000 passengers traveled on MTS Route 905.

Tecate-Tecate

The Tecate POE is the smallest of the three land border crossings in the San Diego-Baja California region. The passenger inspection facility operates seven days a week between 5 a.m. and 11 p.m., with two inspection lanes. This border station also handles commercial vehicles. Northbound loaded trucks are processed from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays.

Figures 2 and 3 show historical northbound border crossing data at the three POEs for pedestrians and personal vehicles, including buses. Figure 4 illustrates northbound truck crossings as well as U.S.-Mexico trade by truck via the Otay Mesa and Tecate commercial POEs.
Identification of Problems

Despite significant growth in bilateral trade moving across the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay and Tecate-Tecate POEs and established social and economic ties between the San Diego-Baja California border region, few improvements to border crossing infrastructure have been implemented in the San Diego-Baja California border during the past 20 years. Projected population increases and continued growth in international trade will result in greater demands on the existing infrastructure.

On a typical day, approximately 160,000 people cross the border from Mexico into the San Diego region in private vehicles, buses, and on foot. By 2030, cross-border vehicle traffic is projected to double from current volumes (2005).

Congestion and delays for freight movements and cross-border personal travel at the San Diego-Baja California POEs have increased and have become more unpredictable. These delays were estimated to cost the San Diego-Baja California economies nearly $4.2 billion in lost output and a loss of more than 35,000 jobs in 2005. Both output and job losses are projected to more than double in the next ten years if steps are not taken to improve border crossing and transportation.
infrastructure and management. Air quality at the border also is affected by excessive idling from trucks and private vehicles.

While the priority mission of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is homeland security, one of CBP’s strategic goals is to “facilitate the more efficient movement of legitimate cargo and people.” CBP has implemented programs such as SENTRI and FAST to expedite expedited border crossings for pre-screened participants. Up to four vehicle SENTRI lanes and one pedestrian SENTRI lane operate at San Ysidro and one vehicle SENTRI lane functions at Otay Mesa, but even these lanes experience congestion at peak periods. Innovative approaches to manage current POE infrastructure as well as to develop and operate new, smart border crossings will be needed to accomplish CBP’s goals.

Better intermodal access for travelers who cross on foot also is needed. Pedestrians crossing from Mexico are unable to be picked up conveniently since there are no short-term parking lots in the vicinity of the San Ysidro or Otay Mesa POEs. Unlike the Blue Line Trolley in San Ysidro, the stop for MTS Route 905 is not adjacent to the Otay Mesa inspection facility.

Improving or developing new border crossings and connecting roads is more complex than implementing transportation projects within the San Diego region. In addition to sharing similar funding shortfalls, POE projects involve close coordination and collaboration with governmental agencies on both sides of the international border at the federal, state, regional, and municipal levels. Project development includes the border stations in each country and roads connecting those border stations to the regional transportation network. Various entities are responsible for different planning, approval, and implementation activities in the United States and Mexico, which results in long lead times for project completion.

There are community concerns regarding the impact that the upcoming implementation of the US-Visit program may have on southbound vehicular traffic, including backups on Interstates 5 and 805 and local interchanges in San Ysidro. In addition, the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative will require U.S., Mexican, and Canadian citizens entering or re-entering the United States through land POEs to carry a valid passport by December 31, 2007.

Both land POEs and connecting regional highways are an integral component of international and domestic trade corridors. Since benefits from trade expand well beyond the San Diego region to California and the United States, it is vital to secure scarce state and federal resources to improve this trade corridor infrastructure.

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5 For land border crossings, SENTRI and FAST program cards as well border crossings cards (i.e. laser visas) also are anticipated to be acceptable under this Initiative.
DISCUSSION

Potential Solutions/Alternatives

As described in this section, several projects to improve cross-border travel capacity and security are under various planning and execution stages. However, most of these projects have limited funding available for implementation.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has begun to implement the US-VISIT program, which will lead to an automated entry/exit system for cross-border travelers at the land POEs. Incorporating smart border technologies to optimize security screenings of people, vehicles, and trade at the POEs will be crucial to facilitate cross-border travel while enhancing security at the border.

Land POEs, Highways, and Transit

San Ysidro POE Realignment

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is leading a project to upgrade and expand the San Ysidro border station to increase efficiency, security, and safety for federal agencies and cross-border travelers. In 2002, GSA prepared a Feasibility Study that developed four expansion options, including facility layouts and north-south traffic routes. Three of the four options were devised to align with a southbound crossing point at the proposed Virginia Avenue-El Chaparral facility in Tijuana, located west of the current crossing. The fourth option would maintain the current routing of southbound and northbound traffic via I-5.

In 2003, GSA initiated the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in cooperation with Caltrans. A draft EIS/EIR is scheduled to be completed in fall 2006. Construction of this project is anticipated to begin in 2009 and be completed in 2013, pending the allocation of additional funding.

A concept currently under discussion by private transit operators and CBP is the implementation of Advanced Bus Manifests. This program would allow enrolled transit operators to transmit passenger travel information to CBP in advance to expedite the identification process at the POE.

More frequent service for the Blue Line Trolley is planned for phased implementation in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). In the off-peak, frequencies would increase to 10 minutes from the current 15 minutes in 2010, and to 7.5 minutes by 2020. Peak frequencies will remain at 7.5 minutes.

Las Americas Pedestrian Bridge

In 1998, the City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency received a proposal from a private developer for the construction of a tolled cross-border pedestrian bridge west of the San Ysidro POE. The bridge is part of the International Gateway of the Americas project. It would span the Tijuana River.

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6 City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency, Las Americas Pedestrian Bridge Fact Sheet, 2005.
and connect the Las Americas site (west of the southern terminus of Virginia Avenue) and an area of commercial development in north Tijuana.

The goals of the project are to decrease traffic congestion at the San Ysidro-Puerta México POE, increase pedestrian crossings through the Las Americas shopping center to promote economic growth, and establish a world-class gateway.

Two Presidential Permit applications for this project have been submitted to the U.S. Department of State (DOS) since 1999, but no approvals have been granted. A new application to U.S. DOS is anticipated in late 2006.

Transportation Improvements Serving the Otay Mesa POE

Interim State Route (SR) 905 (SR 905/Otay Mesa Road) links the Otay Mesa POE to the regional highway system. The first segment of the SR 905 extension, from the Otay Mesa POE to Airway Road, opened to traffic in September 2005. Construction of the second segment, from east of I-805 to Airway Road, is scheduled to begin in early 2007 and would take three to four years to complete. The City of San Diego is working on improvements to the southbound truck route serving the Otay Mesa Commercial POE, which are anticipated to be finalized in 2010. Cost increases, especially related to right-of-way acquisition, and funding shortfalls have delayed the completion of these projects.

Scheduled to open in early 2007, the Southbay Expressway (SR 125 Toll Road) will provide a new north-south corridor linking the border area and eastern Chula Vista to the rest of the San Diego region. This toll road is being funded through a public-private partnership.

As a result of the MTS Comprehensive Operational Analysis, improvements to bus Route 905 are scheduled to start on September 3, 2006. In particular, Route 905 will operate throughout the day with 30-minute frequencies (instead of only morning and afternoon peak periods), extending the service until 8:25 p.m. During peak periods, additional service will be provided to serve Otay Mesa business parks (Route 905A). Also, there will be new transit service on weekends every 30 minutes. The end point of bus Route 905 will be at the Iris Avenue Trolley Station, while Route 929 will provide service between the Iris Avenue Trolley Station and the San Ysidro Trolley Station. Route 929 will increase to 15-minute frequencies all day on weekdays and 30-minute service on weekends.

The planned South Bay Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) will provide direct service between the Otay Mesa POE and downtown San Diego. This BRT route would travel on the South Bay Expressway, I-805, and SR 94, and would serve the developing communities in eastern Chula Vista. Service between eastern Chula Vista and downtown San Diego would be implemented in 2010, and the extension to the Otay Mesa POE is anticipated to begin operations in 2015.

Tecate POE

Upgrades to the Tecate POE were completed in 2005. Planning is underway for a new Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Facility, which is anticipated to be built by late 2008.
Federal agencies in Mexico and the United States are investigating ways to better connect the Tecate POE with the proposed Mexican Commercial Vehicle Customs Facility (700 meters to the east of the existing POE). One proposal is a 700-meter sterile corridor (fenced truck route) between both border stations, while the other is construction of a U.S. Commercial Vehicle POE directly across from the proposed Mexican facility.

Proposed East Otay Mesa-Otay II POE

Caltrans is sponsoring the development of a new border crossing at East Otay Mesa. The East Otay Mesa POE will be linked to SR 905 and the South Bay Expressway via the future SR 11. In Mexico, the Otay II border station will connect to the Tijuana-Tecate Toll Road and the Tijuana-Rosarito corridor.

In January 2006, the U.S. DOS sent the Embassy of Mexico a diplomatic note stating the interest of the U.S. federal government in the construction of a new border crossing at East Otay Mesa. A response from the Embassy of Mexico was forwarded to U.S. DOS in May 2006 indicating the Mexican government’s interest in conducting the necessary feasibility studies on both sides of the border.

The proposed East Otay Mesa POE and SR 11 are currently in the environmental phase. Caltrans will prepare a Tiered or Programmatic environmental document. The first phase will consist of a preliminary environmental document that will cover the footprint for both the POE and SR 11. This will allow for protection of the corridor and will improve the ability to compete for capital funding. The second phase would include project-level environmental documents developed separately for each portion of the project.

The cost of SR 11 is estimated to range between $230 million and $280 million. While approximately $9 million is programmed for SR 11, no additional funding sources have been identified. As noted in the Transportation Funding Revenues White Paper, certain transportation corridors—such as SR 11—may be candidates for Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), pending findings of financial feasibility studies.

In Mexico, Tijuana’s Municipal Planning Institute (Instituto Municipal de Planeación or IMPlan) coordinated the preparation of a Partial Program for the Improvement of Mesa de Otay Este (Programa Parcial de Mejoramiento de la Mesa de Otay Este), which covers the period from 2004 to 2025. This document considered the location of the future Otay II POE in Mesa de Otay Este. It also developed a circulation study to analyze three alternatives to link the proposed POE to Tijuana’s regional transportation network. Concurrently with the preparation of the Partial Program, in August 2005, the Municipality of Tijuana issued a resolution that restricts the use of a 37-hectare parcel adjacent to the international border in Mesa de Otay Este for the future Otay II POE.

Binational coordination of planning and implementation activities for the proposed East Otay Mesa-Otay II POE and connecting roads will be accomplished through the East Otay Mesa-Otay II POE Technical Commission under the San Diego-Tijuana Border Liaison Mechanism. This Technical

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7 Secretaría de Desarrollo Urbano and IMPlan, Programa Parcial de Mejoramiento de la Mesa de Otay Este, en la ciudad de Tijuana, Baja California, 2005
8 XVIII Ayuntamiento de Tijuana, Declaratoria de Destino para la Localización del Puerto Fronterizo Otay II, 2005
Commission was established in June 2006 and held its first meeting in July 2006. Staffs from U.S. Federal Highway Administration and the Mexican Secretariat of Communications and Transportation are co-chairs of this Technical Commission.

Proposed Jacumba-Jacumé POE

An additional port of entry is being considered as a long-term project east of Tecate. In 2000, SANDAG and Caltrans evaluated a future border crossing linking Jacumba, in southeastern San Diego County, and Jacumé, in the Municipality of Tecate, Mexico. The State of Baja California Secretariat of Infrastructure and Urban Development (SIDUE) also has considered this location for a future port of entry in its long-range planning work.

Representing the state governments, both Caltrans and SIDUE have made presentations on this future POE to the United States-Mexico Binational Group on Bridges and Border Crossings for the past several years. Currently, no additional planning activities are being conducted to advance the implementation of the Jacumba-Jacumé POE.

Freight Rail and Maritime Transportation

The San Diego & Arizona Eastern (SD&AE) Railway connects the San Diego region to the north via the Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Union Pacific Railways. The SD&AE also links San Diego to the Imperial Valley via the Tijuana-Tecate Railway, which is owned by Mexico, and the SD&AE Desert Line. The Desert Line was reopened to limited service in 2005. Further rehabilitation of both the Desert and Tijuana-Tecate Lines and restoration to modern service is necessary to improve the market potential of this route for international and interstate movement of goods in, out, and through the Southern California-Baja California region.

Rehabilitation of the Desert Line to modern service would likely attract companies with east-west shipping interests to locate in northern Baja California. In addition, proposals to expand facilities at the Ports of San Diego and Ensenada (Mexico) and a proposal for a new Baja California seaport and rail line at Punta Colonet (south of Ensenada) are likely to affect cross-border freight transportation. No evaluation of those potential impacts has been conducted at this time.

Cross-border Airport Terminal

Since the late 1990s, the concept of a cross-border passenger terminal has been discussed to improve access for travelers from the United States to the Tijuana International Airport. Travelers would park at a terminal to be located in the community of Otay Mesa and proceed to the Tijuana Airport via a secured walkway. This airport serves passenger and cargo with routes to major cities in Mexico.

In 1998, the South County Economic Development Council conducted a study that concluded that a cross-border terminal would reduce vehicular congestion at the San Ysidro and Otay Mesa POEs by as much as three percent. According to the study, direct foreign flights would increase the economic activity along the Otay Mesa-Tijuana corridor and extend the operational life of the

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San Diego International Airport. Surveys conducted at the Tijuana airport for this study estimated that 1.09 million annual passengers originate from Southern California.

In December 2005, the possibility of the cross-border terminal was discussed with Mexican government officials during a trade mission to Mexico City arranged by the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce’s Mexico Business Center. In July 2006, the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority’s Board accepted its Strategic Planning Committee recommendation to develop a scope of work for a cross-border terminal development with participation from other stakeholder agencies, including the operator of the Tijuana International Airport. The scope of work and cost estimate are anticipated to be presented to the Authority’s Board in September 2006 for action. Following approval from the Authority’s Board, staff would seek funding from the Federal Aviation Administration.10

**Issues and Policy Implications**

As described earlier in this paper, several projects to add cross-border travel capacity or improve operations are under development or have been proposed as future solutions. The following are the primary challenges for timely project implementation:

- Shortfalls of traditional funding sources for POE infrastructure and operations as well as for transportation facilities serving POEs.

- Binational coordination and collaboration is required with a myriad of local, regional, state, and federal agencies in the United States and Mexico.

- Lack of clear understanding among governmental agencies on how each agency’s project priorities are established.

In addition, development pressure and rapid growth in border communities conflict with the long lead-time for project implementation and can preclude cross-border transportation improvements as land develops for other uses. For example, vacant land available in Tijuana for the future Otay II border crossing has been urbanized over the years. Understanding this situation, the Municipality of Tijuana has taken steps to restrict the use of the only vacant area adjacent to the international border for the proposed Otay II POE.

The challenges outlined above can lead to opportunities to work with policymakers to advance transportation projects, with the goal of reducing congestion and cross-border delay while enhancing security and improving the economy. As described in the Transportation Funding Revenues White Paper, it will be important for the San Diego region to be an active participant as enabling state or federal legislation is drafted to implement PPPs or public tolled facilities.

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10 San Diego County Regional Airport Authority, Authority Board Meeting, July 24, 2006.
RECOMMENDATIONS

For RTP Update

It is recommended that the RTP consider projected growth in northern Baja California and the San Diego region, in conjunction with the cross-border projects described in this paper, to evaluate future cross-border travel demand.

Also, it is recommended that a financial feasibility assessment of SR 11 and the East Otay Mesa POE be conducted to evaluate the viability of using tolls and/or fees to establish a revenue stream that would cover the overall project costs, including the ability of the project to attract capital (debt or private equity) at a reasonable cost.

For Future Analysis

As proposals for maritime and freight rail projects move forward in the Southern California-Baja California region, an evaluation of the implications for cross-border freight movements at the California-Baja California POEs is recommended to be undertaken, as well as an analysis of the potential use of rail for cross-border passenger service.

It is recommended that SANDAG monitor developments related to the proposed cross-border airport terminal, in the context of airport planning activities in the region.

Also, it is recommended that DHS explore and implement state-of-the-art technologies and processes at the POEs to achieve the dual goals of facilitating the cross-border movement of people and goods, while securing the international border (e.g., stacked booths, all lanes SENTRI-compatible, and electronic seals for cargo containers). These processes should include contingency plans developed in partnership with agencies in Mexico in case of emergency situations at the POEs. Expansion of effective programs such as FAST and SENTRI to include additional lanes for trucks, buses, and private vehicles, as well as dedicated lanes for pedestrians and bicycles also should be considered.

In addition, it is recommended that economic impacts due to delays at the San Diego-Baja California region POEs be estimated periodically as new border crossing and wait time data becomes available.
Introduction

The California Biodiversity Council (CBC) will hold its fall meeting in Coronado on September 27-28, 2006. The theme of the meeting is “Biodiversity along the Border – Working Together in a Binational Watershed.”

The CBC is a statewide council established to design strategies for preserving biological diversity and to coordinate implementation of these strategies through regional and local institutions. Mike Chrisman, Secretary, The Resources Agency, and Mike Poole, State Director, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, co-chair the Council. Del Mar Mayor Crystal Crawford represents SANDAG on the Council.

The Council holds bi-annual meetings around the state to improve coordination among state and federal land management agencies and local interests.

Discussion

The two-day meeting will focus on biodiversity, habitat, wildlife corridors, and water quality along the border; trends in growth and development and the underpinnings for those trends; and conservation challenges facing the three levels of government on both sides of the border as they work together to accommodate the needs of the rapidly growing Tijuana-San Diego binational region.

Wednesday’s Field Trip

A day-long field trip is planned for Wednesday, September 27. CBC members and guests will visit East Otay Mesa to see firsthand the biodiversity and natural resources occurring along this section of the border and to hear an overview of the development plans for Otay Mesa and the adjoining Tijuana region. Then, the CBC group will travel along the Tijuana-Tecate toll road to Tecate where they will view the area proposed for conservation in Mexico and where it will connect with the regional preserve system in San Diego County. While traveling through the City of Tijuana to Los Laureles Canyon, the CBC will view new developments in eastern Tijuana and hear about Tijuana’s growth challenges and development plans to meet those challenges from Mexican planning officials.
At Los Laureles Canyon, officials from the City of Tijuana will dedicate a community park equipped with play equipment for the children of Los Laureles. The CBC provided support for locating and installing the play equipment. After the park dedication, the CBC will view the sites of two previous paver projects, one for a local road and the other for a school plaza, both funded in part from a State of California Coastal Conservancy grant. The paver blocks were designed and constructed by the residents of Los Laureles Canyon in an effort to effectively manage storm water and control erosion. Then the CBC will view the area where 40 model homes will be built utilizing sustainable design principles as developed from a project with the Iberoamerican University of Tijuana Architecture Department.

The last stop will be the Border Field State Park, where the CBC will learn about the history of this international park and hear about how the site was previously used. From this location the CBC will be able to view the southern half of the Tijuana River estuary and learn about the sediment issues and restoration actions being considered. The CBC will also view the Goat Canyon Sediment Basin to discuss the challenges of managing both sediment and trash, including the many tires that wash down from neighborhoods in the Los Laureles Canyon.

**Wednesday Evening**

The Council will return to the Coronado Community Center for dinner. The dinner speaker will be Dr. Ezequiel Ezcurra, Director of the Biodiversity Research Center of the Californias for the San Diego Natural History Museum. Dr. Ezcurra will discuss his views about conservation in Mexico and California.

**Council Meeting**

On Thursday the CBC will welcome and introduce Mexican officials from Baja California and the City of Tijuana, who were invited to participate in the discussion. The Council will discuss challenges and opportunities for transborder cooperation along the U.S.-Mexican Border, the Las Californias Binational Conservation Initiative, the Los Laureles Community Plan, and the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan, which is being coordinated by SANDAG through the Borders Committee and Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO). The Council will discuss a list of proposed actions designed to address the goals of erosion and sediment control, habitat conservation, sewage treatment, and trash and tire control in the border region.

**Registration**

It is not too late to register! To date there has been a high level of interest in this meeting; the two tour buses for Wednesday's field trip are nearly full, yet there is plenty of space available at the Coronado Community Center for the meeting on Thursday. The CBC encourages and welcomes local participation and hopes to meet many of the local officials and citizens from the United States and Mexico who have been working on border issues. The registration form is attached to this report.

Attachment: 1. Registration Materials

Key Staff Contact: Janet Fairbanks, (619) 699.6970, jfa@sandag.org
**Accommodations**

Blocks of rooms has been set aside at the Crown City Inn and the Glorietta Bay Inn for the California Biodiversity Council’s members and participants. You MUST, however, contact one of these hotels to reserve your room. Please inform the hotel that you are with the California Biodiversity Council to ensure that you receive the government rate. Please call to reserve a room as soon as possible; we expect a large number of participants and availability is not guaranteed beyond 40 rooms.

**Crown City Inn**
520 Orange Ave.
Coronado, CA
(619) 435-3116

**Glorietta Bay Inn**
1630 Glorietta Blvd.
Coronado, CA
(619) 435-3101

**Directions**

**Coronado Community Center, 1845 Strand Way, Coronado, CA**
From the San Diego Airport take I-5 South towards Downtown San Diego. Take CA-75 to Coronado. CA-75 goes over the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge to the island of Coronado and then bear to the right as it turns into 4th St.
Continuing on CA-75, turn left on Orange Ave. Orange Ave then turns into Silver Strand Blvd which parallels Strand Way. Turn left on Avenida de Las Arenas and right on Strand Way.
Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Departing from Coronado Community Center, 1845 Strand Way, Coronado, CA

8:30am  Depart for Tijuana River Watershed Field Trip
This full-day field trip will highlight the conservation and development issues within the Tijuana River Watershed, on both sides of the international border. We will visit Otay Mesa to view the rapid growth in Tijuana abutting the border fence due west of the Otay Mountain Wilderness Area, part of an internationally recognized biodiversity hotspot. We will cross the border at the Otay Mesa Port of Entry and travel along the the Tijuana-Tecate Toll Road to view the last remaining large intact wildland between Tijuana and Tecate. We will learn about growth and development pressures and view the urbanization adjacent to the Tijuana River as we cross Tijuana to the neighborhood of Los Laureles. In Los Laureles we will meet officials from the City of Tijuana who have collaborated on a local community development project that address the sedimentation and erosion problems that plague the watershed. Once returning to California, we will make our final stop at Border Field State Park which contains the Tijuana River Estuary, the final drainage point for the international watershed.

Notes: You must have your Driver’s License to cross the border! Box lunches will be provided for those who signed up and paid for them. Please wear comfortable shoes and be advised that there will be some walking on unpaved/uneven surfaces.

5:00pm  Return to the Coronado Community Center

6:00pm  Dinner Program
Coronado Community Center, 1845 Strand Way, Coronado, CA

6:00pm  No-host Cocktails and Poster Session
7:00pm  Dinner and Speaker Presentation

Dinner Speaker: Dr. Ezequiel Ezcurra, Director of the Biodiversity Research Center of the Californias for the San Diego Natural History Museum

Thursday, September 28, 2006

Coronado Community Center, 1845 Strand Way, Coronado, CA

8:00am  Registration

8:30 – 9:30 Welcome, Introductions and Council Announcements

9:30 – 10:00 Resources Agency Presentation

10:15 – 10:30 Overview of the San Diego/Tijuana International Setting (Google ‘Flyover’ Video Presentation)

10:30 – 11:00 Challenges & Opportunities for Transborder Cooperation along the U.S. Mexican Border

11:00 – 12:00 Las Californias Binational Conservation Initiative

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch

1:00 – 1:30 Los Laureles Presentation

1:30 – 2:00 Otay Mesa/Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan

2:00 – 3:00 Council Discussion

3:00pm  Adjourn
REGISTRATION FORM

Name: ________________________________
Title: ______________________________________
Organization: ________________________________
Address: ______________________________________
City, State, Zip: ________________________________
Phone/Fax: ______________________________________
E-mail: ______________________________________

**Note regarding the Sept. 27 field trip:**
Registration for the field trip is being taken separately, due to the logistical complications of crossing the international border. The registration deadline for the field trip is August 15. If you would like to attend the field trip, please contact Lauren McNees ASAP.

**Online Registration**

The California Biodiversity Council now has online registration! You may register for the meeting as well as pay by credit card for your meals. Of course, if you prefer to fill out this form and pay by check, you are welcome to do so. Visit the link below to check out the online option:

[http://ceres.ca.gov/biodiversity/registration.html](http://ceres.ca.gov/biodiversity/registration.html)

**Wednesday, September 27, 2006**

____ I have already signed up for the field trip (registration being taken separately by Lauren McNees and due Aug. 15) and I would like a lunch on the field trip: $12 select one: □ ham □ turkey □ veggie

____ I will attend the buffet dinner at Coronado Community Center at 6:00pm on September 27th: $25

**Thursday, September 28, 2006**

____ I will attend the Biodiversity Along the Border meeting at the Coronado Community Center from 8:00am-3:00pm on September 28th.

____ I would like a lunch at the Biodiversity Along the Border meeting: $12 [buffet; vegetarian choices available]

**Total due** (make check payable to “UC Regents”)

Note: Credit card payments are only being accepted online at this time; please visit [http://ceres.ca.gov/biodiversity/registration.html](http://ceres.ca.gov/biodiversity/registration.html)

Please complete and submit this form by Fri., Sept. 15, 2006 to:
Sherry Cooper
UC Cooperative Extension Center for Forestry
1851 Hartnell Avenue
Redding, CA 96002-2217
Phone: (530) 224-4902  Fax: (530) 224-4904
Email: slcooper@nature.berkeley.edu

Questions?
Contact Lauren McNees,
CBC Communications Coordinator,
(916) 445-5845 or lauren.mcnees@fire.ca.gov