MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

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

Tuesday, February 2, 2010
3:00 to 4:30 p.m.

SANDAG, 7th Floor Conference Room
401 B Street, Suite 800
San Diego, CA  92101-4231

Staff Contact:  Hector Vanegas
(619) 699-1972
hva@sandag.org

AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

• PROGRESS REPORT ON THE 2009 BINATIONAL SEMINAR’S RECOMMENDATIONS, AND PROPOSED THEME AND DATE OF THE 2010 SANDAG ANNUAL BINATIONAL EVENT

• OTAY MESA - MESA DE OTAY BINATIONAL CORRIDOR STRATEGIC PLAN
  - 2010 DRAFT ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT
  - THE FUTURE MASS TRANSIT SYSTEM IN TIJUANA

• TIJUANA: TIME FOR GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

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 input 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.

SANDAG offices are accessible by public transit.
Phone 1-800-COMMUTE or see www.sdcommute.com for route information.
ITEM # RECOMMENDATION

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

2. SUMMARY OF THE NOVEMBER 3, 2009, MEETING  APPROVE

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS AND MEMBER COMMENTS  INFORMATION

   Each speaker is limited to three minutes.

   **CONSENT (Item #4 )**

4. UPCOMING EVENTS  INFORMATION

   **REPORTS (#5 through #7)**

5. PROPOSED THEME AND DATE OF THE 2010 SANDAG ANNUAL BINATIONAL EVENT  DISCUSSION/RECOMMEND

   (Chair Paul Ganster and Hector Vanegas, SANDAG)

   The Committee will be asked to discuss and recommend to the Borders Committee that the 2010 binational event be held on Tuesday, June 1, 2010, and follow the format of the 2009 event as a binational seminar, focusing on local binational strategies for adaptation to climate change.

6. OTAY MESA – MESA DE OTAY BINATIONAL CORRIDOR STRATEGIC PLAN

   a) 2010 DRAFT ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT  DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION

      (Ron Saenz, SANDAG; and Luis Duarte, IMPlan)

      SANDAG and IMPlan staff will provide a progress report on the implementation of key actions included in the Otay Mesa –Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan in the areas of transportation, economic development, housing, and environment.

      **This item was not ready at the time of mailout. An electronic copy will be e-mailed when completed.**

   b) PROGRESS REPORT ON THE FUTURE MASS TRANSIT SYSTEM IN TIJUANA (Jorge Gutiérrez, City of Tijuana)  INFORMATION

      This report will present progress on the development of a new mass transit system for the City of Tijuana, including two main routes connecting the San Ysidro – Puerta México and the Otay Mesa – Mesa de Otay Ports of Entry, to the eastern and southwestern portions of the city.
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<th>ITEM #</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATION</th>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>TIJUANA: TIME FOR GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS INFORMATION</td>
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<td>(Gerardo Brizuela, DEITAC)</td>
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<td>This report will present a perspective from Tijuana of the Tijuana-San Diego Mega-Region Initiative.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION INFORMATION</td>
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<td>The next meeting of the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities is scheduled for Tuesday, April 6, 2010, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m., at SANDAG.</td>
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+ next to an item indicates an attachment
SUMMARY OF THE NOVEMBER 3, 2009, MEETING

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The November 3, 2009, Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) meeting was called to order by Chair Paul Ganster. The meeting was held at SANDAG.

Members present were: Co-chair Lydia Antonio, Consulate General of Mexico in San Diego; Gary Brown, City of Imperial Beach; Rosario Guerra, City of Tijuana; Alberto Pombo and Gabriela Muñoz, El Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF); Plinio Herrera, Universidad Iberoamericana Tijuana; Yolanda Walther-Meade, Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad; Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce; Thomas Currie, San Ysidro Chamber of Commerce; Mike McCoy, Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve; David Fege, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Border Liaison Office; Christina Luhn, San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation; and Efraín Ibarra, South San Diego County Economic Development Council. No advisory members were present.

SANDAG staff present were: Hector Vanegas and Jeff Wheeland.

2. MEETING SUMMARY

Chair Paul Ganster entertained a motion by Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, to approve the September 1, 2009, meeting summary. The motion was seconded by Thomas Currie, San Ysidro Chamber of Commerce, and unanimously approved.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS AND MEMBER COMMENTS

Chair Paul Ganster made three announcements. First, the Border Energy Forum will hold its next conference in September 2010. Second, the Southwest Consortium for Environmental Research & Policy (SCERP) will hold the Border Institute X which will look at the border and policy options to achieve a sustainable environment by 2030. Finally, he announced the release of a study on “The Flow of Used and Waste Tires in the California-Mexico Border Region” which estimates the economic and environmental impact of this trade.
Charles Pope, University of San Diego Transborder Institute, informed the Committee about the upcoming binational conference “Greening Borders: Cooperation, Security, and Diplomacy” that will focus on water use and management, development and growth, and public health in the border region. The conference will be held November 18-20, 2009, at the University of San Diego.

Yolanda Walther-Meade, Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad, commented that the University of San Diego is having an alumni reunion for Mexican alumni from the region. Also, Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad will be opening up funds for American organizations to do work in Mexico.

Angelika Villagrana commented that the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce will host a talk by Ellen Gerson, Alan Bersin, the new Commissioner of the Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and Oscar Acevedo Escobedo, the Secretary of Tourism in Baja California, on November 24, at 1 p.m.

Dave Fege, U.S. EPA, Baja California Environmental Protection Agency (SPA, in English), and SEMARNAT, announced three important projects related to air quality in Baja California:

1. Redoing the emissions inventory which will identify the sources of air pollution;
2. A review of Baja California’s emissions monitoring network in Tijuana, Mexicali, and Tecate; and
3. U.S. EPA is funding a project by the Secretaría de Protección al Ambiente (SPA) to create a climate action plan in Baja California.

The total amount of funding for the three projects is over $300,000.

Christina Luhn, San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation, announced that the Mega-Region Project is planning a 24-hour asset tour of Imperial County to look at renewable energy and water issues in the region.

Jussi Laine, SDSU graduate student, discussed his Ph.D. thesis comparing the San Diego-Tijuana border region to European border regions, to assess differences, similarities, and what each region can learn from the other to improve relations. He handed out a questionnaire to attempt to gain more data for this study.

4. UP COMING EVENTS

A list of upcoming binational events was provided by SANDAG staff and is included in the meeting’s agenda packet.
5. FOLLOW UP TO THE APPROVAL OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 2009 BINATIONAL SEMINAR “CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CROSSBORDER CLIMATE CHANGE COLLABORATION” AND UPCOMING 2010 BINATIONAL SEMINAR

Hector Vanegas, SANDAG, announced that COBRO’s recommendations were approved by the SANDAG Board of Directors at the October 23, 2009, meeting. In addition, the Board of Directors approved the recommendation that the 2010 Binational Seminar would focus on topics related to climate change and in the binational region.

Chair Ganster commented that he was impressed by the progression that was displayed by the mayors and elected officials to working binationally with stakeholders in Mexico. He believes that the work done by COBRO and the Borders Committee have gone a long way to improve the perception of the importance of binational cooperation.

Chair Ganster stated that, since there is no COBRO meeting until February 2010, it would be helpful to create a Task Force to work on specific proposals for topics and dates for the binational seminar. The following members volunteered for the Task Force: Gary Brown, City of Imperial Beach; Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce; Dave Fege, U.S. EPA; Gabriela Muñoz, COLEF; Christina Luhn, San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation; Efrain Ibarra, South San Diego County Economic Development Council; Lydia Antonio, Consulate General of Mexico in San Diego; and Dennis La Salle, Consejo de Desarrollo Económico de Tijuana (CDT).

6. PERSPECTIVES ON WATER USAGE ASSOCIATED WITH CLIMATE CHANGE IN BAJA CALIFORNIA

Alberto Pombo, COLEF, gave a presentation on the issue of water usage and climate change in Baja California. He noted that this presentation was a part of the Climate Change Action Plan in Baja California. Baja California has three main users of water: agriculture, urban populations, and industry. In Baja California, urban users have preference for water use. Although urban users are not the main users of water volume, they are legally the most important. Baja California has always undergone growth in the main cities: Tijuana, Mexicali, Tecate, and Ensenada. The rate of growth has fluctuated: in the 1970s Mexicali was the fastest growing city, while now it is in the coastal areas (mainly Tijuana). Tecate, Tijuana, and Rosarito are now the fastest growing cities in the region, at about 2-4 percent annual population growth. This trend means that the population of Baja California should approach 5 to 5.5 million people by 2030, nearly double the population today.

The water usage of the population of Baja California is highly concentrated in cities. In the past, water capturing was focused on river water, specifically the Colorado River. This surface water capture has been completely maximized, as all major rivers in Baja California have been dammed. This water is then transported through aqueducts to the cities; this gives around 92 percent of the population of Baja California access to water.
In Baja California, per capita water usage, on average, is about 200 liters per day. This is significantly lower than per capita water usage in San Diego, which is around four times higher per person. The World Health Organization estimated that to maintain a healthy population, per capita consumption must be at a minimum of 150 liters per day. Per capita water usage for the rural population of Baja California is very close to this cutoff level. This shows that there is very little opportunity to improve water levels by creating a program of reduction of use.

One possible option for reducing water use is by enhancing water infrastructure to reduce waste. About 25 percent of water in Baja California is lost through runoff; highly efficient cities have around 6 percent of water loss due to runoff.

The primary water sources in Baja California are the Colorado River (51%) and regional aquifers (30%). As of today, Baja California’s water demand is below the supply; however, by around 2015, the demand is estimated to outpace supply. With or without climate change, groundwater is estimated to be the first source of water to collapse with this growth in demand from an increasing population. Today, most of the groundwater aquifers are over exploited in the cities of Baja California. With the combination of a growing population and climate change, this source of water will only continue to diminish. Surface water in Baja California makes up 51 percent of water sources, with the Colorado River supplying the large majority of this water. However, since the Colorado River originates in the U.S., this source of water is estimated to be reduced in the future. Therefore, it is important for Baja California to implement this reduction of surface water in their future allocation planning.

The largest user of water in Baja California is agriculture at 87 percent. The biggest concern of the water usage for agriculture is that only 60 percent of water delivery to agriculture reaches its intended destination. This is potentially the most important area where water usage efficiency planning can be applied: while enhancing water efficiency infrastructure in cities can help, it is very expensive. On the contrary, since agriculture is such a large user of water, improving water delivery to agricultural lands presents a very possible option for decreasing water waste.

Another option for increasing water in Baja California is desalination. This is already underway in Cabo San Lucas in Baja California Sur. Another option is wastewater recycling: purifying sewage can be a major source of replenishing local aquifers.

In conclusion, the most urgent problems for Baja California water usage are:

1. Insecurity of the provision of water
2. Low efficiency of water delivery (both tap water and irrigation)
3. Exploitation of aquifers
4. Water waste in rural agriculture delivery
5. Pollution of surface water

Angelika Villagrana asked how far along projects are for recycling wastewater in Baja California. Alberto Pombo stated that Comisión Estatal de Servicios Públicos de Tijuana (CESPT) has an institute that is studying the use of recycled water and is working diligently to maintain a focus on this source of water.
Christina Luhn asked if there are any plans to implement innovative technologies to improve water recycling. Alberto Pombo stated that these have not been undertaken in Baja California yet. There have been some studies, but these technologies are very expensive and require a long-term investment which has not taken place.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES IN THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER REGION

Gabriela Muñoz, COLEF, presented climate change issues in the U.S.-Mexico border region. This presentation was originally given in June at Arizona State University for the Border Governors Conference.

The U.S.-Mexico border region is the 33rd highest emitter of GHG emissions in the world with $1.6 billion in carbon output. In Mexico, a National Climate Change Strategy exists (Estrategia Nacional de Cambio Climático) but the U.S. does not have a federal climate change plan. Therefore, the climate plans are created by states and regions: Arizona, California, and New Mexico have finished their GHG inventories, while Texas has begun to assess its emissions.

Currently, GHG emissions in the Border States have different sources of emissions. However, the two largest contributors to GHG emissions are energy production and transportation. But, because there are great differences between the U.S. (who has not adopted the Kyoto Protocol) and Mexico (which has adopted the Kyoto Protocol), it is very important to harmonize these emissions inventories to better understand where changes can be made.

Some policy recommendations are:
1. Improving, expanding and strengthening existing energy efficiency (transmission, distribution and use) programs
2. Increasing the supply and use of renewable energy
3. Improving vehicle fuel efficiency
4. Improve water efficiency

It is important to utilize crossborder collaborative mechanisms to address climate change:
- Border 2012
- Local Governments for sustainability
- The U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement
- The Border Governors Conference
- The Chicago Climate Exchange
- The PG&E-California agreement
- The SEMARNAT-California agreement

A useful starting point to create a binational climate initiative would be California/Baja California for two reasons: first, both states have created GHG inventories (which are refined further at the regional level in San Diego’s case); and second, both states have finished their Climate Action Plans. This Climate Initiative California/Baja California should include actors already involved in climate change efforts such as municipal or regional agencies (SANDAG and IMPLAN), Governments of Baja California and California, CARB, and educational institutions such as the Energy Policy Initiatives Center (EPIC), University of San Diego, COLEF, and others.
The coordination of the appropriate agencies on both sides of the border should be first evaluated to investigate and gather existing baseline data on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the San Diego/Tijuana region and corresponding target reductions. This coordination could play a vital role in crossborder collaboration to create an initiative that could begin at a municipal level, developed jointly to the State levels, then integrated into regions to finally address the whole border.

Angelika Villagrana commented that the input of industry must be integrated to make this plan viable. Without the involvement of industry, this plan would be difficult to implement.

Mike McCoy commented that in lieu of a cap and trade system, the carbon taxation system would be more important to reducing emissions. Without a regional system of taxation, many companies would move their activities to Mexico to avoid stricter emissions policies in the U.S.

8. NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION

The next COBRO meeting will be held February 2, 2010, from 3:00 - 4:30 p.m., at SANDAG.
UPCOMING EVENTS

WHAT: Gobernanza, la SED y experiencias de Evaluación en México
El Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF)
WHEN: February 2, 2010
WHERE: Casa Colef, Ciudad de México
MORE INFO: casacolef@colef.mx or +52(55) 5554-3545

WHAT: Metrópolis Transfronteriza
El Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF)
WHEN: February 3, 2010
WHERE: Casa de la Cultura, Tijuana, Baja California
MORE INFO: medios@colef.mx or +52(664) 631-6300 ext. 1155

WHAT: Cross Talk II: Building Common Security in North America
North American Center for Transborder Studies and Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars
WHEN: February 10-11, 2010
WHERE: Washington, D.C.
MORE INFO: http://nacts.asu.edu/cross-talk-ii

WHAT: Migraciones internacionales, expresiones de las inequidades mundiales
El Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF)
WHEN: February 12, 2010
WHERE: Sala Magna Rangel. COLEF - Tijuana
MORE INFO: sepmig@colef.mx or +52(664) 631-6300 ext. 1155

WHAT: 88th Annual Installation Dinner
San Ysidro Chamber of Commerce
WHEN: February 12, 2010
WHERE: Admiral Kidd Club
MORE INFO: (619) 428-1281

WHAT: Action Research and Environmental Health: A U.S-Mexico Border Initiative
American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)
WHEN: February 18-22, 2010
WHERE: San Diego Convention Center
MORE INFO: kpezzoli@ucsd.edu or (858) 534-3691
WHAT: **Border Institute X**
Southwest Consortium for Environmental Research and Policy (SCERP),
WHEN: March 8-10, 2010
WHERE: Rio Rico, Arizona
MORE INFO: (619) 594-5423, fax (619) 594-0752, or e-mail gwagner@projects.sdsu.edu.

WHAT: **San Diego/Baja California Mission to Mexico V**
Mexico Business Center - San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce
WHEN: April 26-29, 2010
WHERE: Mexico City
MORE INFO: jclark@sdchamber.org or (619) 544-1376

Key Staff Contact: Hector Vanegas, (619) 699-1972, hva@sandag.org
San Diego Association of Governments

COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

February 2, 2010

AGENDA ITEM NO.: 5

Action Requested: DISCUSSION/RECOMMEND

PROPOSED THEME AND DATE OF THE 2010 SANDAG ANNUAL BINATIONAL EVENT

File Number 3400200

Introduction

Every year since 1997, the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) has supported the organization of the SANDAG annual binational events. These events included six conferences, two workshops, two mobile seminars, and two binational seminars, which addressed a wide range of topics. The 2009 event focused on Challenges and Opportunities for Crossborder Climate Change Collaboration. COBRO created a task force at the November 3, 2009, COBRO meeting to begin the organization of the 2010 binational event. At its first meeting on December 1, 2009, the Task Force discussed its possible format, themes, dates, and location.

Recommendation

The Task Force proposes that COBRO discuss and recommend to the Borders Committee that the 2010 binational event be held on Tuesday, June 1, 2010, and follow the format of the 2009 event as a binational seminar, focusing on local binational strategies for adaptation to climate change.

Background

On June 2, 2009, the Binational Seminar, “Challenges and Opportunities for Crossborder Climate Change Collaboration” was held at Caltrans, District 11. COBRO and the Borders Committee discussed the outcomes from the seminar and proposed a set of four recommendations.

The following recommendations from the 2009 Binational Seminar were approved by the Board of Directors on October 23, 2009, with the directions to staff to address them in the implementation of the adopted Overall Work Program (OWP) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010, and in the formulation of the proposed OWP and Budget for FY 2011:

1. Recognize the importance of encouraging all levels of agencies and stakeholders in our San Diego – Baja California region to mutually agree on priority aspects of climate change collaboration, including mitigation, adaptation, and education strategies.

2. Encourage the inclusion of strategies for collaboration and sharing information on regional climate change action plans in San Diego and Baja California.

3. The FY 2010 binational event should follow up on topics related to climate change planning.
4. In FY 2010, produce a progress report on developments and actions taken in climate change planning as a result of the 2009 seminar recommendations.

Discussion

On December 1, 2009, the COBRO 2010 Binational Seminar Task Force discussed possible topics for the 2010 binational event that will further address the issue of climate change in our region, following the recommendation approved by the Board of Directors on October 23, 2009. Some potential topics mentioned were clean and renewable energy, water supply and climate change, and the emergence of a clean-tech cluster in the binational region. The Task Force agreed that these topics, as well as other issues such as habitat endangerment, vulnerability to floods, wildfires, sea level rise, public health concerns, etc., are of significant importance to our local communities and are likely to require adaptation measures.

The Task Force discussed that while mitigation of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) is crucial for addressing climate change, a regional emphasis on adaptation to the impacts of climate change also would be needed. Current California legislation, including Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32) and Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), focus on goals for reduction of GHG emissions as a way of mitigating global warming, but other issues will require equal attention for adaptability from a local perspective. The Task Force discussed some of the issues it considered most important to evaluate in a climate change adaptation strategy in a binational context:

- Water usage and security – it is anticipated that water supply will decrease as a result of climate change, affecting both urban and agricultural areas in our border region. In addition, emergency preparedness and water security - improving the security of our binational region's drinking water and wastewater infrastructures - should be evaluated in the context of natural/human-made disasters and contingency plans to protect water supply and quality.

- Energy issues – it is anticipated that rising temperatures will increase the use of energy to maintain comfortable temperatures in both residential and commercial sites. Also, energy use is closely related to any strategy developed to adapt to the shortage of water in our region: desalination, importing water from other sources, or increased water treatment.

- Natural disasters – it is anticipated that wildfires, sea level rise, and heat waves will be more common and severe.

- Environmental damage – it is anticipated that native species and ecosystems will be affected, some permanently. Implications for existing habitat conservation areas and adaptation strategies should be explored.

- Population growth and economic development should be analyzed in the context of crossborder climate change adaptation. Economic development strategies could explore adaptation strategies that attract industries that are less water/energy intensive or that can use recycled water and/or are energy efficient.
• Consider inclusion of presentations on other border regions’ best practices on climate change adaptation strategies, and explore ways to evaluate some of these practices as policy options for climate change adaptation in our border region.

The 2010 binational event would be an excellent opportunity to identify opportunities for collaboration on climate change adaptation and the many issues that are likely to affect the local communities in the California and Baja California border region.

Next Steps

COBRO’s recommendation is anticipated to be presented for review and acceptance by the Borders Committee at a future meeting.

Key Staff Contact: Hector Vanegas, (619) 699-1972, hva@sandag.org
San Diego Association of Governments

COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

February 2, 2010

AGENDA ITEM NO.: 6a

Action Requested: DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION

OTAY MESA – MESA DE OTAY BINATIONAL CORRIDOR STRATEGIC PLAN: File Number 3400200
2010 DRAFT ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Background

The attached Otay Mesa – Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan: 2010 Draft Progress Report highlights key transportation strategies that focus on the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay and Otay Mesa East-Otay II Ports of Entry. A revised draft of the 2010 Progress Report, including status on additional strategies, will be presented at the annual joint policy meetings of the Borders Committee, the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO), and the City of Tijuana that is tentatively scheduled to be held on March 26, 2010.


Key Staff Contact: Ron Saenz, (619) 699-1922, rsa@sandag.org
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INTRODUCTION

As a follow up to the RCP initiatives, in 2005, the SANDAG Borders Committee and the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) identified the Otay Mesa – Mesa de Otay binational corridor study area for a binational planning pilot project. Transportation, economic development, housing, and environmental conservation were identified as the main issue areas for the Otay Mesa – Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan.

The Otay Mesa – Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan created a process for collaboration and established a framework for binational planning. This partnership continues to grow through the implementation of several initiatives identified in the Strategic Plan and serves as a guide for future binational planning efforts.

The Otay Mesa – Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan was approved in 2007 by both the SANDAG Board of Directors and the City of Tijuana City Council. Since then, two annual joint policy meetings of the Borders Committee, the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) and the City of Tijuana were held in 2008 and 2009 to review progress on selected actions of the strategic plan. The third annual joint meeting is tentatively scheduled for March 26, 2010. The following are highlights of some key transportation strategies focused on ports of entries that will be included in the 2010 Progress Report.

TRANSPORTATION ACTIONS

**ISSUE** IMPLEMENT THE FUTURE

**OTAY MESA EAST-OTAY II PORT OF ENTRY (POE) AND CONNECTING ROADS**

**EARLY ACTION** Establish the Otay Mesa East-Otay II POE Technical Commission to advance planning and implementation of the future Otay Mesa East-Otay II POE and connecting roads as a binational project, in collaboration with Caltrans, SIDUE, and IMPlan, and based upon discussions with the United States (U.S.) interagency coordination group.

**Progress**

In the past year, Caltrans, the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), the County of San Diego, SANDAG, and the Mexican government continued to make progress to advance the implementation of the proposed Otay Mesa East – Otay II POE and connecting roads on both sides of the border (Figure 1). Caltrans District 11 has taken the lead on several planning tasks to advance this project. In Mexico, the Secretariat of Communications and Transportation (SCT) also has undertaken required studies for the Mesa de Otay II POE and connecting roads (described below).
Figure 1
State Route 11 / Otay Mesa Port of Entry

Source: Caltrans, 2009
PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (PEIS/PEIR) FOR SR 11 AND THE OTAY MESA EAST POE

Caltrans, in cooperation with GSA and FHWA, initiated project-level environmental clearance studies for State Route 11 (SR 11) and the Otay Mesa East POE. A Tier II Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) is evaluating design and operational alternatives for SR 11, the POE, and a potential Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Facility (CVEF). The Tier 2 EIR/EIS for both SR 11 and the new POE, is anticipated to be completed by December 2010.

In addition, the engineering studies for both SR 11 and the new POE are also expected to be completed by December 2010. The design and right-of-way acquisition are scheduled for 2011 and construction is expected to begin in late 2012/13, with completion in 2014/15.

Future Project Financing

A total of $13 million is programmed by the state for the environmental clearance phase. SAFETEA-LU also includes $800,000 for this project, and an additional $75 million has been allocated toward construction from the state’s Proposition 1B Trade Corridors Improvement Fund. Depending on the alternative and year of construction, the cost for SR 11 ranges from $300 to $360 million. The POE facility is estimated to cost in the range of $300 to $350 million depending on the functionality of POE.

SANDAG and Caltrans are working jointly to develop a financial strategy to build the SR 11/Otay Mesa East POE project. The financial plan for the project will include guidance from the Public Financial Management Group (PFM, Inc.) as financial advisor to SANDAG. Additionally, SANDAG will seek services from an investment banking team to assist with bond placement, traffic and revenue study, and specialized legal and bond counsel.

SANDAG also is submitting a letter of interest for a possible Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan. SANDAG anticipates a TIFIA loan could cover up to one third of the eligible costs for the SR 11/Otay Mesa East POE; and the loan would have to be repaid with future toll revenues. SANDAG is also forging a Master Agreement with project partners such as the U.S. GSA and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

ITS Pre-Deployment Strategy for the Otay Mesa East POE

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA’s) vision for the research of Intelligent and Efficient Border Crossings is to enable the implementation of innovative Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) solutions for a binational border system that ultimately improve safety and mobility, reduce emissions, and facilitate trade and travel without compromising the vital mission of securing America's borders. To advance this vision the FHWA Office of Freight Management and Operations offered a research grant to explore ways of effectively deploying this technology at the U.S.-Mexico and U.S.-Canada POEs.

In effort to evaluate these technologies, SANDAG and Caltrans District 11 applied in the Fall of 2009 for this FHWA grant to study an ITS pre-deployment Strategy for the Otay Mesa East Port of Entry. The title of the proposed study is the: Technology Pre-Deployment Proposal for Otay Mesa East Port of Entry A Clean, Green, and Smart Border. This proposal was selected in January 2010 for an approximately $1.5 million grant (this requires approximately $375,000 dollars as a local match).
This grant will be used to research the Otay Mesa East POE as a case study for an intelligent and efficient border crossing through the use of ITS applications. These applications would be used to reduce delays caused by traffic congestion, better accommodate projected trade and travel demand, and increase economic growth and job opportunities on both sides of the border without sacrificing border safety and security.

This study will also include the collaboration of FHWA to support the development of a plan for a tolling system that can accommodate dynamic pricing at the border. This opportunity also allows all parties involved to plan a holistic approach to ITS at the new border crossing that enables a "Clean, Green, and Smart Border".

The ITS components/areas included in this research are: electronic toll collection systems, border wait-time monitoring systems, variable pricing of tolls to reduce wait times, enhanced border security systems, and advanced traveler information systems. It will be the first North American international land border crossing project that proposes the use of nontraditional transportation project financing to improve capacity and operation of an international land border crossing.

Another key aspect of this research initiative is to examine and develop marketing strategies such as discounting for lower-emission trucks (promoting a green border) and advance toll payment (pre-payment discounting). It will also focus on prioritizing the discounting or pricing for guaranteed usage and on determining what ITS technology is needed to implement these strategies.

**MEXICO**

**Garita Mesa de Otay II (POE)**

All the road access projects connecting to Mesa de Otay II POE are being planned by the SCT with input from Tijuana’s Municipal Planning Institute (IMPlan) and the Secretariat of Communications and Transportation (SCT), and the Secretariat of Infrastructure and Urban Development of Baja California (SIDUE). There is no definite construction start date as this is dependent on a bidding process in Mexico. The executive project design stage is at 25 percent completion and construction cost estimates are approximately $50 million dollars. This would include: Boulevard Las Torres as a passenger vehicle access, a dedicated boulevard for commercial truck access, and the construction of three interchanges at the Tijuana-Mexicali Toll road with Boulevard Hector Teran Teran, Calzada Las Torres and the Cañon Rinconada cargo access to Mesa de Otay II POE. (Figure 2).
The configuration of the pedestrian and public transit access to the planned Mesa de Otay II are being developed. The new Mesa de Otay II POE is planned to have 20 northbound lanes to cross into the United States and 12 southbound lanes crossing into Mexico. Eight northbound and four southbound lanes will be dedicated for commercial trucks. Work on this POE is programmed to begin in 2010 and end in 2014 with a total cost of $123 million. A transit facility is planned to be conveniently located to connect the new POE and the future mass transit service in Tijuana.

The State of Baja California announced that funds to acquire the POE parcel were secured by the Mexican federal government and this transaction is under way.

**ISSUE**

IMPLEMENT IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING OTAY MESA-MESA DE OTAY POE AND CONNECTING ROADS

**EARLY ACTIONS**

a. Coordinate with CBP and Mexican Customs on the process to fund and implement identified short-term capital and operational improvements at the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Commercial POE.

b. Explore the feasibility of short-term operational and capital improvements at the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Passenger POE (operations and facilities).
**Progress**

As last reported, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in April 2009, was awarded approximately $21.3 million of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds for some initial Otay Mesa POE modernization projects which will cover the cost of land acquisition and design for the expansion project. The expansion project would make improvements to both commercial and non-commercial portions of the existing port.

In July 2009, GSA awarded the Architecture and Engineering design contract for the Otay Mesa POE Modernization project. This began a design phase that is scheduled to be complete in May 2011. In addition, an EIS for this project is anticipated to be released in early 2010. Construction is subject to the availability of construction funding that has not yet been authorized by Congress. The construction authorization is anticipated to be made in Fiscal Year (FY) 2012. If the authorization is given as planned, construction completion would be in December 2015.

Some highlights of the proposed Otay Mesa POE Modernization include:

- Expansion of the passenger vehicle crossing from 12 to 24 primary passenger vehicle inspection booths;
- Acquisition of a 10.5 acre parcel immediately east of the commercial facility that would accommodate four new commercial inspection booths; and
- Relocation of the existing hazardous waste inspection facility located just west of the southbound vehicle crossing in Otay Mesa.

**MEXICO**

In 2009, the City of Tijuana repaved the south and northbound lanes connecting to the Mesa de Otay POE with ‘white topping’. The landscaped area between the southbound and northbound crossing was removed to add an additional northbound passenger vehicle lane. The northbound taxi lane that connects to the Mexican Customs facility and runs parallel to the southbound crossing lanes will eventually be eliminated when the POEs modernization is completed (Figure 3).
Figure 3
Otay Mesa/Mesa de Otay Port of Entry

1. Pedestrian bridge & Ramps
2. Flag pole
3. Drop off/pick up
4. Taxis Parking Area (42 Spaces)
5. Services/Information

- Pedestrian walkway
- SENTRI lane
- Bus lane
- Public transit route (buses)
- Public transit route (taxis)
- INDAABIN’s project area
- ADUANA’s project area

Source: IMPlan, 2009
There also have been advances in the planning of an east-west pedestrian bridge and the installation of a transit intermodal center. They both are 80 percent complete per the executive project design stage. Final designs are anticipated to be complete by February 2010. Construction would immediately follow when the POEs modernization is completed. It is expected to take four months to construct and a total cost of approximately $3 million. Recommendations from SANDAG’s study “Evaluation of Tijuana’s Public Transportation Facilities at the Otay Mesa – Mesa de Otay Port of Entry; South Bay BRT” completed in 2008 were considered in this planning.

The configuration of the pedestrian and public transit access to Mesa de Otay is in the planning stages. These plans are dependent on the commencement of United States construction to modernize the Otay Mesa – Mesa de Otay POE.

The improvements at Avenida Josefina Rendon and the SENTRI lane access also is at the 80 percent executive project design completion stage. When the POEs modernization is completed, construction would immediately be initiated and completed in four months. The total cost of this project would be approximately $1 million.

Engineering and design work has been completed to resolve an ongoing bottleneck that occurs at the Mexican Commercial (Imports) Customs exit to Boulevard Bellas Artes. The traffic improvement consists of adding traffic signals at this location and signal synchronization throughout the boulevard that will be completed in the first four months of 2010 with a cost of approximately $300,000.

Next Steps

IMPlan will continue to work with stakeholder agencies on both sides of the border to ensure efficient pedestrian and transit movement and connectivity. As preliminary POE designs are developed, more detailed discussions will focus on pick-up and drop-off points for public transportation near the Mesa de Otay POEs.

ISSUE FACILITATE IMPROVEMENTS TO CROSS-BORDER AND REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

EARLY ACTION Initiate advanced planning work to extend the South Bay Bus Transit (BRT) service between Eastern Chula Vista and the Otay Mesa POE.

Progress

SANDAG is in the process of completing the environmental document for the Phase One Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) alignment. Figure 4 illustrates the South Bay BRT alignment. Several technical studies are being conducted including: traffic, habitat, noise, and visual. Extensive public outreach was done in Fall 2009 as part of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) is expected to be completed and permits are anticipated to be secured by Spring of 2010. Final design is expected to start in April 2010 and completed in 2011. The South Bay BRT project is on schedule to be implemented in late 2012.
Figure 4

Source: SANDAG, 2008
Pending the completion of the MND, SANDAG negotiations with the land owner at Nicola Tesla Court are on hold. This is the location of the proposed transit station, which could be either on a long-term lease or acquisition. The proposed transit station is adjacent to the Otay Mesa POE.

**EARLY ACTION** Evaluate the City of Tijuana’s draft Public Transportation Plan, focusing on routes that would serve the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay POE and the proposed Otay Mesa East-Otay II POE.

**Progress**

The City of Tijuana is incorporating the Federal Program of Mass Transit Support to develop studies to be delivered to Mexico’s National Infrastructure Fund (FONADIN) with the review of SCT, SEDESOL (Secretariat of Social Development) and SHCP (Secretariat of Finance) with the purpose of securing funding for project investment.

It is anticipated that in 2010 these studies will be completed which will permit the identification of specific goals. Once approved by FONADIN, the solicitation bidding process will begin for construction and concession of two transit corridors and their respective auxiliary routes. The two high volume trunk lines that will be constructed are: Route 1, traversing 18.4 Km or 11.4 miles that would connect downtown Tijuana with the Puerta Mexico (San Ysidro) POE and the southeastern part of the city and Route 2 (BRT type) will connect the Mesa de Otay area (including the POEs) along a 30 Km or 18.6 mile route to Santa Fe and Ciudad Industrial on the southwest portion of the city (Figure 5).

**Figure 5**
Draft/Preliminary Corridor Analysis for the Metropolitan Zone

27% of the metropolitan zone demand is captured on Corridor 1 (Refugio – San Ysidro)

45% of the total metropolitan zone demand is captured on the two corridors

18% of the metropolitan zone demand is captured on Corridor 2 (Santa Fe – Otay)

Source: IMPlan, 2009
NEW ACTION  Collaborate with the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority in the upcoming market demand study of a cross-border terminal connection between Otay Mesa and Tijuana International Airport (TIJ) toward its possible implementation.

Progress

The proposed San Diego-Tijuana Cross Border Facility (CBF) project includes the construction and operation of the CBF and an above-grade pedestrian bridge linking border facilities in the United States with a commercial passenger airport terminal at the TIJ. The CBF would enable ticketed airline passengers to travel between Mexico’s TIJ and San Diego, California, via an enclosed, elevated pedestrian bridge. The CBF will consist of: a main building on the U.S. side of the border housing U.S. CBP inspection facilities along with shops and services to accommodate travelers; an approximately 525-foot pedestrian bridge from the main building on the U.S. side connecting into TIJ’s passenger terminal on the Mexican side; and parking facilities and areas for car rentals and potentially bus service on the U.S. side. The CBF is expected to serve 2 million passengers annually, a number that is forecasted to increase to 4.9 million by 2030.

The following summarizes the latest project developments:

- Per the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) was released on December 29, 2009. The draft EA addresses the potential environmental effects of the construction and operation of the United States portion of the CBF. Input is being sought on whether issuance of a Presidential Permit for this proposed bridge would be in the U.S. national interest. Comments regarding this draft EA are due by February 12, 2010.

- Concurrent to the EA process the project proponents are seeking to receive the City of San Diego’s Planned Development Permit and Vesting Tentative Map approvals including the Otay Mesa Community Plan Update approval. In addition, this project will be evaluated through the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) approval process, which is expected to begin in February 2010.

Approval of the Presidential Permit from the Department of State is pending. Tijuana Venture LLC anticipates that the crossborder airport terminal could be operational as early as 2012.

- On October 2, 2009, the U.S. Department of State published in the Federal Register a Notice of Receipt of Application for a Presidential Permit for the CBF. The notice requested comment on Otay-Tijuana Venture, L.L.C.’s application for a Presidential permit to authorize the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new international pedestrian bridge by December 30, 2009.