



BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MAY 23, 2003

AGENDA ITEM NO. 03-05- 4-C
ACTION REQUESTED - APPROVE

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS

Meeting of May 2, 2003

The Regional Planning Committee meeting was held at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO) in conjunction with the Regional Workbench Consortium (RWBC). The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Lori Holt Pfeiler (North County Inland). Committee members and alternates in attendance were Patty Davis (South County), Jack Feller (North County Coastal), Jim Madaffer (City of San Diego), Ron Roberts (County of San Diego), Judy Ritter (North County Inland – alternate), Patricia McCoy (South County), Maggie Houlihan (North County Coastal – alternate), and Jerry Jones (East County – alternate). Ex-Officio members in attendance were Gene Pound (Caltrans), Leon Williams (Metropolitan Transit Development Board), David Druker (North County Transit District), Bill Chopyk (San Diego Unified Port District), Gail Goldberg (Regional Planning Technical Working Group), and Carol Bonomo (Regional Planning Stakeholders Working Group). Steve Erie, Director of the Urban Studies and Planning Program at UCSD, and Keith Pezzoli, leader of the RWBC, Urban Studies Professor at UCSD, and member of SANDAG's Stakeholders Working Group, also were in attendance. (Dr. Pezzoli was the person that invited the Regional Planning Committee to the SIO on behalf of the Regional Workbench Consortium and coordinated the details to make the meeting happen.)

CONSENT ITEMS

1. **ACTIONS FROM APRIL 4, 2003 REGIONAL PLANNING MEETING (INFORMATION)**
2. **REPORT ON REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (RCP) FROM APRIL 25, 2003 BOARD MEETING (INFORMATION)**
3. **WATER QUALITY COMPONENT OF RCP (INFORMATION)**

Action: The consent agenda was approved.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Residents from Oceanside spoke about sidewalk and school children safety in Oceanside and Carlsbad, pointing out that blockades and gates in both Carlsbad and Oceanside are blocking school children's access to local schools, causing the children to either have to climb over the blockades or fences to walk to school, walk along streets such as College Boulevard that have traffic loads of over 30,000 vehicles per day, or have their parents drive them longer distances to get there. The speakers also indicated that due to budget constraints, bus services in those same areas will not be provided next year.

5. VISION AND URBAN FORM ITEMS

a. "100 Year Sustainable Vision for the San Diego-Tijuana Region" Prepared by Gas Technology Institute, the San Diego Regional Energy Office (REO), and PDC Planning (INFORMATION/DISCUSSION)

Before this item started, the Regional Planning Committee viewed a Solid Terrain Model of the greater Southern California/Northern Baja California region. The solid terrain model is a combination of flat maps, satellite and aerial imagery, and 3-D physical terrain models that provides a bird's eye view of the whole area.

John Ruggieri of Project Design Consultants (PDC) then provided an overview of the "100 Year Sustainable Vision for the San Diego-Tijuana Region," a proposal developed by the Gas Technology Institute, PDC Planning, and the REO that has been selected to represent the United States at the International Competition on Sustainable Urban Systems Design, taking place in Japan this summer.

The proposal creates a binational vision of our border region in the next 100 years. It proposes innovative solutions to address global warming, integrating land use, energy, water, and transportation into a systems perspective. Global warming is a serious problem – greenhouse gas emissions have increased by 33% since the industrial revolution, causing temperature increases and rising tides. The goals of the competition are to explore integrated approaches to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and increase sustainability.

The proposal puts forth a vision for the region in 100 years in a way that conserves our resources and integrates our borders. The proposal estimates that the San Diego region will have between 4.5 and 6.5 million people by 2103, and that the Tijuana/Tecate region will have 11-12 million people within that time period, for a total of 15-18 million people on both sides of the border in 100 years. The proposal examines where growth should occur, and how that growth is served, especially with regard to increasing energy needs. Four major growth zones are proposed: Escondido, Sorrento Mesa/UTC, Downtown San Diego, and an International Border Zone. Each zone would integrate land use and transportation. Zones would be connected by a 4-tiered premiere mobility system, consisting of an interregional rapid transit system extending beyond Ensenada; a regional rapid transit system linking the four zones; a local express system akin to an automated guided tram system; and a local transit system from neighborhoods to village centers. The proposal assumes that the energy of the next century will be renewable and that technological advancements in water and energy will result in significant reductions in per capita energy and water consumption.

Mr. Ruggieri suggested that the proposal is significant in that it points out the need to look at planning from a longer-term perspective, allowing us to achieve better integration of our systems, with greater binational dialogue, and it highlights the need to develop regional sustainability criteria and embed them into long-term policies.

Comments by Committee members included:

- This is a thought-provoking discussion. The State Air Resources Board is pursuing hydrogen-based technology for buses and cars. In 100 years, we could be further along than the proposal suggests.

- The proposal rests on preserving our habitats and protecting our limited resources.
- They like the concept of the four urban regions, complimented by the non-urban backcountry.

b. Urban Form Options for the RCP (RECOMMENDATION)

At its last meeting, the Regional Planning Committee accepted a revised version of the regional vision and core values. The RCP will need to translate that vision and core values into a preferred regional urban form. The Urban Form chapter of the RCP will focus on how the region uses its land, from both a spatial and an urban design aspect. The Urban Form chapter will identify where future housing and employment growth should and should not be focused in the region from a sustainability perspective, in the context of habitat preserves, transportation networks, and other infrastructure systems. This will assist with the process of determining and allocating the region's housing needs. The chapter also will serve as the basis for prioritizing infrastructure investments that will be included in the Integrated Regional Infrastructure Strategy (IRIS).

The second round of RCP Workshops will focus on urban form. The Regional Planning Committee was requested to discuss the proposed guiding principles for urban form and potential alternative urban form scenarios, and make a recommendation on the second round of RCP workshops to the SANDAG Board of Directors.

Comments included:

- The level of information provided at the workshops has to be adequate in order to result in a productive discussion.
- People are afraid of density. We need to provide images of livable, pleasant places, examples of dense projects that work well. *Staff responded that a visual preference survey could be presented at the workshops in conjunction with the urban form discussion.*
- Individual jurisdictions need to be informed of the workshops and of their purpose.
- With regard to the proposed urban form guiding principles, the positive aspects of what a city "is" are missing. The principles need to include a broader perspective (education, culture, recreation, economy), and they need to be reworded to be more positive.
- We need to provide incentives, versus restrictions, for housing. Some of the principles are contradictory – for example, reducing land use consumption and increasing housing supply.
- The public's general consensus is that density has negative connotations. People know why they dislike densities in their own communities. The urban form exercise might result in people allocating densities to other areas. The concern is that then we are stuck with that.
- How do we keep employers here? The principles need to reflect jobs and the economy.
- We need to provide more jobs where we have a lot of housing.
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- We have to ask people what density means to them, and where they would put it in their own communities.

Action: The Committee directed staff to proceed with a second round of RCP Workshops focused on urban form and to re-evaluate the guiding principles outlined in the report.

6. LINKING PLANNING AND POLICY-MAKING TO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (INFORMATION/DISCUSSION)

This portion of the meeting was held at the SIO Visualization Center, which enables the display and integration of data sets for interdisciplinary research across many fields. The purpose of this portion of the meeting was to introduce innovative, cutting edge information and visualization technologies currently being developed by the Regional Workbench Consortium, and to explore how they might be applied to the preparation of the RCP.

As an introductory activity, the Regional Planning Committee was presented with a "fly through" of the Lake Tahoe Basin, showing multiple topographic layers of the Basin and surrounding areas from a 3-D perspective. Next, the Committee was presented with the 3-D Regional Canvass for the San Diego/Tijuana region, showing the watersheds, fault lines, mountaintops, dams, estuaries, reservoirs, deserts, coastlines, canyons, bluffs, and other physical features of the binational region.

The next activity was a demonstration of online interactive mapping capabilities currently being developed related to a variety of quality of life indicators and cross-border demographic and health information. For example, demographic data such as affordable housing can be queried and displayed upon other demographic variables, such as income, farmworkers, disabled, seniors, etc. Data layers can be interchanged, and integrated as necessary. These tools can assist in analysis, especially as related to environmental justice and social equity.

The final activity consisted of demonstrating the Accessible Visualization Project. This exercise provided a bird's eye view of the Tijuana River Watershed, with "quick time" panoramas of certain features, such as snapshots of the border fence along the U.S./Mexico border. Committee members also were shown an infrared image land use history of our border region, showing vegetation levels and extent of development through infrared images in 1976, 1989, and 1999.

Keith Pezzoli concluded by re-emphasizing that this region has an unparalleled talent in terms of technology and visualization, and that we can bundle these tools to help us solve land use and environmental issues, and to involve students in the learning process. He recognized the Center for U.S. Mexican Studies for their involvement, and thanked the Regional Planning Committee for coming to the SIO to hear about these innovative efforts to link planning and policy-making to science and technology.

7. ADJOURNMENT AND UPCOMING MEETING (INFORMATION)

The next Regional Planning Committee meeting will be held on Friday, June 6, 2003 from 12 noon to 2 p.m. at SANDAG.

GARY L. GALLEGOS
Executive Director