

San Diego Association of Governments

# BORDERS COMMITTEE

April 16, 2004

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **1**

**Action Requested: APPROVE**

## APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 20, 2004, DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

The regularly scheduled meeting of the San Diego Association of Governments Borders Committee was called to order by Chair Crystal Crawford (North County Coastal). Other members in attendance were Ed Gallo (North County Inland), David Allan (East County), Ralph Inzunza (City of San Diego) and alternates Phil Monroe (South County), and Pam Slater (County of San Diego). Advisory/Liaison members in attendance were Thomas Buckley (Riverside County), Bill Figge (Caltrans), Javier Diaz (Republic of Mexico), James Bond (San Diego County Water Authority) and Elsa Saxod, representing the COBRO.

Chair Crawford welcomed everyone to the meeting and self-introductions were made.

### 1. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 12, 2003, MEETING MINUTES

Action: The Borders Committee voted to approve the December 12, 2003, meeting minutes. One member abstained.

### 2. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

Chair Crawford announced that on March 3, 2004, the California-Baja California Regional Workgroup of the U.S. EPA-Mexico's SEMARNAT (Secretariat of the Environment) Border 2012 Program will have its next meeting in Rosarito. The Borders Committee has been invited to present its Borders program jointly with the Consul General of Mexico, who will present the Border Energy Issues Group (BEIG). Copies of the draft agenda have been distributed to each member. She invited and encouraged all interested to attend.

Chair Crawford added that on February 12, 2004, the SANDAG Executive Director and Team Borders were invited to Tijuana to brief Mayor Jesus Gonzalez and his staff on the latest changes in SANDAG's legal framework, specifically SB 1703 and the Borders Chapter of the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP). Mayor Gonzalez presented a statue to SANDAG. The statue, a replica of the "Tower" of the old casino in Tijuana that was destroyed in a fire early last century, was built to commemorate Tijuana's 100<sup>th</sup>-year Anniversary.

Bill Figge noted that Caltrans will be hosting ongoing Tribal Training classes throughout the State to assist the tribal governments in dealing with local governments. In fact, a workshop being held in San Diego on February 20, 2004, will focus on how local governments can understand and learn to work with the tribal governments.

### CONSENT ITEMS (3 through 7)

3. COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES MEETING SUMMARY AND ACTIONS
4. I-15 INTERREGIONAL PARTNERSHIP MEETING SUMMARY AND ACTIONS OF JANUARY 16, 2004
5. UPDATE ON THE I-15 INTERREGIONAL PARTNERSHIP (I-15 IRP)
6. SANDAG'S 2004 ANNUAL BINATIONAL SUMMER CONFERENCE
7. DEVELOPMENTS OF U.S. EPA/SEMARNAT BORDER 2012 PROGRAM

Action: The Borders Committee approved Consent Items 3 through 7.

### REPORTS

8. UPDATE ON IMPERIAL COUNTY ISSUES

Chair Crawford commented that Supervisor Carrillo was unable to attend today's meeting but provided a copy of his testimony that was given at a Senate Budget Hearing on Transportation on Wednesday, February 18, 2004. The formal presentation of this item will be continued to the next meeting. However, Supervisor Carrillo agreed to allow his comments to be included in today's meeting actions.

9. IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES FOR THE REMAINDER OF FY 2004 AND THE PROPOSED FY 2005 WORK PLAN

Staff provided the Committee with an overview of the current "Borders" activities and areas described in the Borders Chapter of the draft Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) in order to establish priorities for the Committee's work program for the remainder of FY 2004 and FY 2005. The purpose of today's discussion is to determine what additional efforts need to be done now and what efforts need be done in the future. Future plans should be for FY 2005 and 2006.

The Committee discussed the key areas identified in the Borders Chapter of the RCP including access to jobs and housing, transportation, energy and water supply, environment, economic development, and homeland security in regards to the surrounding counties of Riverside, Imperial, Orange, the Republic of Mexico and the Tribal Governments. The Committee also discussed water issues, border wait times and its impact on the border economy. The Committee determined that it would be best to limit its efforts to no more than three or four issues relating to each neighbor. The Committee agreed to focus its attention on the following goals for FY 2005.

1. Riverside: Continue the work with the I-15 Interregional Partnership (IRP) regarding transportation and job/housing. Strengthen the relationship by expanding the scope of cooperation to include energy and water, as well as economic development.
2. Imperial County: Advance discussions with Imperial County regarding transportation, access to jobs and housing, economic development, and homeland security upon agreement with

the representative from Imperial County. Additionally, request that COBRO strengthen its relationship with Imperial County to support the Borders Committee's efforts in engaging this neighbor and have a more comprehensive vision of the international border in California.

3. Orange County: Inform local elected officials on the activities of the Borders Committee with a focus on the RCP Borders Chapter framework. Send a letter reiterating interest to have a representative appointed to the Borders Committee.
4. Tribal Government: Focus efforts on the creation of a mechanism for communication and representation. Build on current projects related to transportation, such as the rural transit study.
5. Republic of Mexico: Set up an interregional partnership with the Republic of Mexico focused on energy and water, homeland security, and transportation issues. Continue engagement in binational environmental initiatives such as Border 2012 Program and the *Las Californias Binational Conservation Initiative*.

Public Comment:

James Snider, representing the U.S. Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP), commented that he is responsible for organizing the CBP Port Working Group. He assured the Committee that the Working Group is taking every approach to decrease border wait times. The CBP is also working to implement the Free and Secure Trade (FAST) Program, the commercial vehicle automated dedicated lane, at Otay Mesa Port of Entry.

Jim Neal, representing the South San Diego County Economic Development Council, noted that the SD&AE railway was able to bring a train from Jacumba to Imperial Valley through the Carrizo Gorge. This was considered an historic event because now San Diego and Tijuana are connected to the Union Pacific Railway, after 23 years of being closed.

Based on the Committee's comments, staff will develop a work plan to help implement the Committee's ideas.

**10. NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION**

The next meeting of the Borders Committee will be held on Friday, March 19, 2004, from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Escondido City Hall. This will be an I-15 IRP meeting.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Crawford adjourned the meeting at 2:20 p.m.

San Diego Association of Governments  
**BORDERS COMMITTEE**

April 16, 2004

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **3a**

**Action Requested: INFORMATION**

COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (COBRO)  
SUMMARY OF FEBRUARY 3, 2004.

The February 3, 2004, COBRO meeting was called to order by Chair Elsa Saxod.

**Introduction**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. Self-introductions were conducted.

1. MEETING SUMMARY OF JANUARY 3, 2004

The meeting summary for January 3, 2004, was accepted with no changes.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATION

No public comments were made.

3. CHAIR AND COBRO MEMBERS REPORT

Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Chamber of Commerce, updated the Homeland Security Town Hall meeting held in January 15 at the studios of KGTV10. Secretary Ridge opened the meeting which was organized by the Council for Excellence in Governance, a Washington-based group, and hosted by various local agencies. Among the audience in the studio were: Angelika Villagrana, Alejandra Galvador, Hector Vanegas, and Borders Chair, Crystal Crawford. According to Angelika, the information presented was very general and did not serve to move the dialogue further on issues relevant to the border region. She was, however, able to personally hand Secretary Ridge the letter from the Alliance for Border Efficiency requesting follow up to Mr. Williams' visit in November and the creation of a liaison mechanism for effective public input from the regional community on the development of USVISIT program.

Alejandra Galvador commented that no new information was presented, but San Diego was identified as an important area for homeland security issues. She didn't feel that the issues were very specific to San Diego. In the audience there was good representation from City of San Diego. The point was made clear by various participants in the audience that funds that had already been promised to San Diego for implementing programs associated with Homeland Security needed to be expedited.

Ms. Villagrana mentioned that recently the tourism industry has approached the Alliance for Border Efficiency (ABE) with concerns that tourism will suffer because visa waiver countries will not be able