COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (COBRO)

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

Tuesday, August 3, 2004

3 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF LOCATION

City of Tecate
Presidencia Municipal
Ortiz Rubio y Callejón Libertad No. 1310
Zona Centro
Tecate, Baja California 21400
México

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 cannot take action on any item appearing on the agenda as the session will take place outside of the jurisdiction of San Diego County.

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

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

*Phone 1-800-COMMUTE or see [www.sdcommute.com](http://www.sdcommute.com) for route information.*
CITY OF TECATE, BAJA CALIFORNIA
MAP AND DIRECTIONS

FROM INTERSTATE- 8

TAKE INTERSTATE 94 EAST, AFTER 35 MILES GO TO HIGHWAY 188 SOUTH INTO DOWNTOWN TECATE.
- CROSS THE BORDER
- KEEP ON CARDENAS STREET
- LEFT TURN ON JUAREZ AVE.
- RIGHT TURN ON ORTIZ RUBIO ST.

FROM TIJUANA

TAKE THE HIGHWAY TIJUANA-TECATE (EITHER TOLL ROAD OR CARRETERA LIBRE)
- TAKE JUAREZ AVE.
- RIGHT TURN ON ORTIZ RUBIO ST.
COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
Tuesday, August 3, 2004

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

ITEM # ACTION

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

2. MEETING SUMMARY OF JULY 6, 2004 (pp. 6-8) REVIEW

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBERS’ COMMENTS
Members of the public will have the opportunity to address the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) on any issue within the jurisdiction of the Committee. Speakers are limited to three minutes each. This is also an opportunity for COBRO members to make comments or announcements.

CONSENT AGENDA

4. Staff Report (pp. 9-10) INFORMATION

A. Upcoming Events

REPORTS

5. REPORT ON THE 2004 BINATIONAL SUMMER CONFERENCE (pp. 11-18) (Paul Ganster) INFORMATION
Chair Paul Ganster will report on the 2004 SANDAG Binational Summer Conference held July 16, 2004, at the San Ysidro Middle School.

6. REVISION OF FY 2005 COBRO WORK PLAN (Hector Vanegas) INFORMATION
The Committee will discuss the COBRO work plan presented by staff at the July 6 meeting in light of the Binational Summer Conference recommendations.

7. CITY OF TECATE (Eduardo Gonzalez) INFORMATION
Director of Urban Planning for the City of Tecate, Eduardo Gonzalez, will present updates on various activities in Tecate, including a report of the First International Roundtable on Sustainable Development held in Tecate on July 15-17, 2004.
8. ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION

The Committee’s next meeting is Tuesday, September 7, 2004, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. at the SANDAG offices, 401 B Street, Suite 800, San Diego.

(+) next to an item indicates attached report/material.

Visit us on the Web at:
www.sandag.org (under binational)
www.borderbase.org
COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

August 3, 2004

AGENDA ITEM NO.: 2

Action Requested: INFORMATION

COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (COBRO) SUMMARY OF JULY 6, 2004

The July 6, 2004, COBRO meeting was called to order by Chair Paul Ganster.

1. INTRODUCTION

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

2. MEETING SUMMARY OF MAY 4, 2004

The meeting summary for May 4, 2004, was accepted.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS, COMMUNICATION, AND MEMBERS’ COMMENTS

No public comments were made.

4. STAFF REPORT

Hector Vanegas reported on a procedural issue that COBRO will adopt from now on to comply with the Brown Act. Voting members of COBRO need to be identified with a name tent marked “voting member” to distinguish members and non-voting alternates at the table. He reported that the Bi-State Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (BITTAC) met on June 17, and that the new Chair is the City of Mexicali, Baja California and the Vice Chair the City of Calexico.

Chair Paul Ganster commented that it is necessary to define the steps for taking off members from COBRO’s membership list in case there is no participation. There are still members that need to be considered; a decision should be made as to whether they will continue to be part of COBRO.

It was noted that Tecate’s multiday event on sustainable development is at the same time as the summer conference. Eduardo Gonzalez of the City of Tecate encouraged COBRO members to attend the events prior to the summer conference.

Viviana Ibañez of the Mexico Business Center of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce reported on the event with Governor of Coahuila, who will be the next President of the Border Governors’ Conference. It was asked whether Governor Schwarzenegger would be participating in the Border Governors’ Conference. Sergio Pallares of SourcePoint responded that he believed he would be.
A report by Mario Lopez from Congressman Filner’s Office to update the group on HR 2525 was postponed due to Mr. Lopez’s absence.

Angelika Villagrana of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce reported on the implementation of the US VISIT Program. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has announced that it will be making the results of the contract process.

5. UPDATED COBRO CRITERIA FOR MEETINGS, MEMBERSHIP, AND LEADERSHIP

Hector Vanegas, SANDAG, reported that COBRO’s membership criteria is that when you miss three meetings you will no longer be a member.

Elsa Saxod, County of San Diego, pointed out that members need to notify staff why they will not be attending a meeting; otherwise, it will be considered an unjustified reason and they will risk not being COBRO members.

The Committee agreed by consensus on the criteria outlined in Item 5.

Consul General of Mexico Luis Cabrera asked if that policy was only for members, and Chair Ganster answered yes.

Sergio Pallares, SANDAG, pointed out that if we continue reducing the number of members, then COBRO will start losing its quorum.

Chair Ganster said that we still have the option of naming organizations that have irregular attendance as ex-officio members. This was the case for Imperial Valley. Chair Ganster asked what the mechanism was for filling vacancies. Staff responded that the SANDAG policy is to communicate with the representatives from the different regions and ask them to name a representative. If those same criteria were used for COBRO, we would ask the representative of Imperial County on the Borders Committee advice regarding the selection of representatives from that region.

Alex Hidalgo of San Diego State University (SDSU) suggested it might be more efficient to identify mid-level staff that are dedicated to participating in COBRO and not assume that the Executive Directors will attend on a regular basis.

It was determined during the conversation that the members of COBRO are the organizations, not the individuals. It is up to the representing organization to decide who their most effective representatives are. If a staff person representing a given organization leaves their post, the organization must notify COBRO and appoint a new representative, as was the case of BITTAC.

6. COBRO WORK PLAN FOR FY 2005

Hector Vanegas presented the draft work plan for COBRO for FY 2005. The framework for the work plan is the binational perspective of the Borders Chapter of the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP). He presented a tentative calendar of activities for the COBRO members to review and consider.

Motion: Incorporate new issues or action items in work plan from binational conference. Cindy Gompper-Graves made motion; Angelika Villagrana seconded; passed.
7. **2004 BINATIONAL SUMMER CONFERENCE WORKING GROUP REPORT**

Chair Ganster provided an update on the plans for the binational summer conference. The agenda was set, and the final agenda was handed out to the members. Logistical arrangements are in place. The materials for the folders are being prepared, including a multimodal transportation map, FACT sheets on binational planning, and a background paper.

The main issue to discuss is additional promotion and the breakout sessions. Over 100 people have signed up online. Staff reminded members to sign up themselves, as we need to have a good count for meals, badges, etc.

The Committee discussed the possible topics for the breakout sessions and debated on how many and how specific they needed to be. Currently, the breakout topics coincide with the planning areas discussed in the Borders Chapter of the RCP; however, several members wanted to explore other possible topic areas including data sharing and governance and cross-border collaboration. Some members suggested keeping the topics very broad so as not to alienate anyone, while others felt it important to be more focused and specific. One issue that was raised several times was that the conference is for the whole border community and that recommendations should not be limited to what SANDAG can do; rather, recommendations should focus on what all member agencies can do and how they can work together.

It was agreed the recommendations from previous conferences would serve as a basis for the breakout session topics. Staff would e-mail at least the membership with the possible topics for feedback. Members need to respond within two days. Participants would sign up for breakout sessions on the day of the conference at the registration table. Facilitators who had volunteered will be meeting early next week to strategize on methods for efficient running of the breakout sessions. Hopefully, there will be two facilitators in each session—one from SANDAG and one from COBRO. In making the assignments, every effort will be made to assure that at least one person is bilingual. It was agreed that the maximum number of sessions is eight, and hoped that approximately 15 people sign up for each.

Chair Ganster recommended putting together a group of volunteers to see what results came out of the binational summer conference and, in August, have them work on the work plan. Staff noted that Nan Valerio will be the *rapporteur* and will provide the initial proceedings from the conference.

**Motion**: Appoint a group of members to go over the draft work plan and incorporate the recommendations from the Summer Conference into the FY 2005 draft work plan. Passed.

Mark Baza of Caltrans offered to send two staff members to help on the day of the conference.

8. **ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION**

The COBRO’s next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 3, 2004, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. The City of Tecate offered to host that meeting.

**THE ATTENDANCE LIST IS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.**
UPCOMING EVENTS

**WHAT:** 15th Annual MEXPORT (promoting maquiladora sourcing opportunities)  
**WHEN:** August 5, 2004 (10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)  
**WHERE:** 1855 Dornoch Court, San Diego, CA  
**MORE INFO:** Joaquin Luken at jluken@otaymesa.org or (619) 661-6111  
**SPONSOR:** Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce

**WHAT:** Joint Border 2012 Environmental Education Task Force and Environmental Education Council for the Californias Meeting  
**WHEN:** August 12, 2004 (10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.)  
**WHERE:** Location and agenda to be announced soon  
**MORE INFO:** Kama Dean at kama@propeninsula.org or (619) 723-0700  
**SPONSOR:** USEPA/SEMARNAT and the Environmental Education Council of the Calfironias (EECC)

**WHAT:** ESRI International User Conference  
**WHEN:** August 9-13, 2004  
**WHERE:** Convention Center, 111 W. Harbor Drive, San Diego, California 92101  
**MORE INFO:** http://www.esri.com/events/uc/index.html or (909) 793-2853, ext. 1-1363  
**SPONSOR:** Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI)

**WHAT:** 3rd Tijuana River Watershed Border 2012 Water Task Force  
**WHEN:** August 19, 2004 (12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.)  
**WHERE:** Hotel Pueblo Amigo, conference room “Premier,” Via Oriente 9211, Zona del Rio, Tijuana, B.C. 22320  
**MORE INFO:** Katherine Comer at kcomer@projects.sdsu.edu or (619) 594-5423  
**SPONSOR:** USEPA/SEMARNAT and the Binational Watershed Advisory Council

**WHAT:** Bus Tour of Tijuana  
**WHEN:** October 1, 2004  
**WHERE:** Contact South County EDC for details  
**MORE INFO:** Cindy Gompper-Graves at cindy@sandiegosouth.com or (619) 424-5143  
**SPONSOR:** South County Economic Development Corporation and the Building Industry Assoc.
WHAT: XI Border Energy Forum
WHEN: Save the Date! October 21-22, 2004
WHERE: To be determined
MORE INFO: Manuel García-Lepe at mgarcia@baja.gob.mx or (52-664) 634-36-35
SPONSOR: State of Baja California, Department of Economic Development

WHAT: 14th Annual Economic Summit: “A Seamless Region Filled with Opportunities”
WHEN: SAVE THE DATE! October 22, 2004
WHERE: Holiday Inn at the Bay
MORE INFO: Cindy Gompper-Graves at cindy@sandiegosouth.com or 619-424-5143
SPONSOR: South County Economic Development Council
REPORT ON THE 2004 BINATIONAL SUMMER CONFERENCE

Introduction

On July 16, 2004, approximately 180 individual stakeholders from the United States and Mexico, including government, the business sector, academia, non-governmental organizations, and community groups, gathered at the Multicultural Complex at the San Ysidro Middle School in San Diego to examine cross-border collaboration in the Californias in this year’s SANDAG Binational Summer Conference entitled, “Cooperation across the California-Baja California Border: Where do we go from here?” The focus of the conference was on formulating an effective framework for cross-border collaboration, comparing our region to other initiatives at various policy levels, assessing what needs to be done to improve efforts in various sectors in which the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) has participated, and making specific suggestions on actions to be taken.

Discussion

Organization

COBRO set up a summer conference taskforce in January of 2004, while SANDAG staff formed an internal taskforce to support the conference logistics and communication. The following COBRO members formed the taskforce: Angelika Villagrana and Viviana Ibañez, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce; Paul Ganster, Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias; and Lydia Antonio, Consulate General of Mexico. The theme and date of the conference were confirmed at the February meeting of the Borders Committee. As soon as the topic was confirmed, staff and the taskforce developed the agenda structure, identified speakers, and began making invitations. The process of consolidating the agenda took several months. At the same time, SANDAG staff worked on the logistical planning, including logo design, contracting with the site, caterer, and translation service, as well as producing various support materials for the conference. All COBRO members collaborated on publicity to encourage the widest possible participation. As this was a review of COBRO’s experience, it was important to tap a variety of sectors that had been involved in different years of the conference.

In terms of the logistics, evaluation comments were extremely positive. Conference participants were very satisfied with the venue, the organization, and the general service at the conference. The main suggestions for improvement gleaned from the evaluations and staff recommendations were to: (a) allow for breaks for networking and stretching; (b) place the translators farther from the
tables to prevent feedback; and (c) serve lunch apart from the breakout sessions so people can network first.

Various evaluation forms pointed to the fact that there were no breaks between the sessions. As one respondent noted, “people will take breaks whether you schedule them or not, as networking is a critical component of this conference.” It might be suggested that COBRO consider extending the conference time to 4 p.m. and include two 15-minute breaks and a lunch with a keynote speaker.

**Materials**

Various new materials were created to support this year’s binational conference. A United States Border Multimodal Transportation Map was developed and produced based on the findings of the Binational Border Transportation Infrastructure Needs Assessment Study (BINS) of the U.S.-Mexico Joint Working Committee. Several new SANDAG fact sheets on binational planning were developed in both English and Spanish to clarify the role of SANDAG in the region and provide a clearer understanding of its organization. A discussion paper was written to provide a general background on the efforts of cross-border collaboration in the Californias and the role that COBRO has played in that process through the medium of the binational summer conferences. Evaluations highlighted the relevance and importance of the various documents for the conference. The entire folder is now available on the conference website in PDF format. Various COBRO members also had their organization’s materials available at the conference for distribution.

**Attendance**

Attendance at this year’s binational conference was approximately 180 individuals representing regional stakeholders from both Mexico and the United States. Eighty percent of the individuals were representing organizations in the United States, while almost 20 percent represented organizations from Mexico. In addition, there was one individual from the Canadian consulate. The conference attracted a broad cross-section of sectors, including all three levels of government, chambers of commerce, academia, and a variety of non-profit organizations from both the United States and Mexico.

![2004 SANDAG Summer Conference Participation Chart](image-url)
Staff tested a new mechanism for online registration, which will now be used for other SANDAG conferences. Next year we will improve the capture of information to facilitate the analysis of the conference participants, now that we have the program set up.

At the Executive Management Team meeting held with SANDAG’s Executive Director Gary Gallegos, after the conference it was suggested that a more focused effort be made to attract elected officials from both sides of the border, as well as more expanded participation from the agencies interested in border issues. SANDAG will make an effort to time the conference next year so as not to conflict with other policy meetings, thereby enabling the attendance of more regional policymakers.

Agenda

The Chair of the Borders Committee, Councilmember Crystal Crawford (City of Del Mar), inaugurated the conference and presented a welcome introduction, setting the context for the event. She was followed by Secretary of Infrastructure and Urban Development of Baja California (SIDUE), Hon. Arturo Espinoza Jaramillo. Sec. Espinoza discussed the importance of integrating the infrastructure needs in this binational region as Baja California, because of its geography, is closer to the United States than its counterpart states in Mexico. He announced the development of a Consolidated Municipal Commission representing Tijuana, Tecate, and Rosarito, which will be working on issues affecting the consolidated metropolitan area. Among priority infrastructure projects is the opening of a new Port of Entry in East Otay Mesa.

Dr. Robert L. Bach, Senior Fellow at the Inter-American Dialogue, then presented the thematic introduction. He emphasized that: (a) this region needs to determine if we, in this binational region, will be just neighbors or go further and become partners; (b) solutions to cross-border planning should be led by the regional stakeholders, while the federal level should facilitate; and (c) a true cross-border framework for collaboration must be integrated, including governance and financing. He suggested that we should create a vision for the region in which the well-being of all in the entire binational region is considered.

Consul General of Mexico in San Diego, Hon. Luis Cabrera, presented the Mexican perspective on cross-border cooperation. He emphasized that the San Diego-Tijuana region is indicative of the complexity of the U.S.-Mexico relationship. “Few relationships between the two nations have experienced a greater transformation than here at the border,” he stated. The challenge of NAFTA and global competition from China make it essential that the stakeholders work together in this region. He highlighted the success of the Border Liaison Mechanism (BLM) and the affirmation of Mexico’s interest in border affairs as demonstrated by the recent appointment of Mr. Arturo González Cruz to coordinate border affairs with the Secretary of Foreign Affairs. He suggested that the economy has driven the growth in the region, but that labor migration and its social impacts must also be dealt with fairly and for the greatest benefit to all. Collaboration in the areas of education and transportation can serve to unite the border region. Only through a partnership in the region can we progress.

Deputy Consul General Joyce DeShazo of the U.S. Consulate in Tijuana stated that she was impressed by the degree of cooperation between the U.S. and Mexico on border issues. These areas of cooperation include migration, environment, water, and law enforcement issues, among others.
She discussed the success of the Border Liaison Mechanism (BLM) and how it has been used to deal with a variety of regional issues requiring federal involvement. She commented that, “Border regions have shown the ability to adapt to rapid change. Border communities share opportunities to resolve issues across the divide.”

The second panel on models for cross-border collaboration was facilitated by Mayor Diane Rose, City of Imperial Beach and member of the Good Neighbor Environmental Board (GNEB), a citizen advisory committee to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) on border environmental issues. Edgar Ruiz, Program Director of the Border Legislative Conference (BLC), presented a model of cross-border collaboration among the legislative representatives from the ten border states of the United States and Mexico. Funded by USAID, the BLC is a program of the Council of State Governments West. Its mission is to promote cooperation among the border states to improve the quality of life, empower legislators to engage in the binational agenda, provide input into development policy, and to improve the capacity of legislators to deal with international issues.

David Randolph of the Arizona-Mexico Commission explained the vision of this organization founded in 1959 is to be a globally recognized public-private champion for improving the quality of life in Arizona through relationships with Mexico and Latin America. The Commission meets twice a year and develops joint agendas for action on a variety of issue areas.

Mr. James Miller, Executive Director, Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG) in the State of Washington, provided a model for cross-border collaboration from the U.S.-Canadian border. His association is the lead agency for the International Mobility and Trade Corridor Project—IMTC. He remarked that IMTC is a forum, a platform for coordination, and an informal coalition based on trust. It is not an agency, source of funding, a recipient of funds, or a policy-making body. IMTC has been working collaboratively to identify border gateway deficiencies, setting goals for the “Cascade Gateway,” identifying improvement projects, assembling match funding and supporting funding applications by member organizations, and providing advisory oversight of funded planning and construction projects. The objectives of IMTC are to jointly plan the “Cascade Gateway” as a system, improve traffic data and information, and identify and fund needed improvements in infrastructure, operations, technology, and security. Mr. Miller emphasized that the essential elements of the IMTC project are: coalition, funding, and focus, but most importantly, coalition.

COBRO Chair Dr. Paul Ganster discussed the history of cross-border collaboration in this region. He highlighted the fact that we have developed linkages through local government, universities, and the chambers of commerce over the years to deal with a variety of transboundary issues. He noted that SANDAG has had a consistent interest in cross-border collaboration beginning with the appointment of the Mayor of Tijuana as an Honorary Board Member in 1974. Our challenge is how to develop new institutions and funding to deal with border issues and find solutions. What happens in San Diego and Tijuana has a big impact on U.S.–Mexican relations. Although much has been accomplished, the need to find sustainable solutions is urgent.
Breakout Sessions

The breakout sessions were very well attended and seemed to represent long-standing interests of the group, as well as new areas of concern. All of the evaluations that were turned in noted the breakout sessions as one of the most interesting aspects of the conference. The sessions are organized from the largest to the smallest groups. The suggested actions outlined for each session were:

- **Border Infrastructure (20 participants)**

  1. Improve performance standards for ports of entry (POE) operation. Most importantly, to reduce border wait times by increased use of technology, develop small corridors, provide information about access to POE facilities, expand SENTRI programs or other type of programs for passenger vehicles, pedestrians and cargo, and the implementation of the US VISIT program. It is important to increase the hours of operation and staffing at POEs.
  2. Ensure linkage of POE improvements and transportation facilities that serve the POEs.
  3. Encourage innovative mechanisms for planning and financing projects.
  4. Take into account lead time to plan, fund, and implement projects at the border.

- **Environment: (15 participants)**

  1. Conservation and cross-border habitats. A few of the action that came out are that:
     
     (a) There needs to be a mechanism for conservation efforts that facilitates coordination of NGOs and others; i.e., the website could be one component of it;
     (b) There is a need for conservation areas across the border to help promote and organize workshops to educate the public on worldwide corridors on the importance of conservation. SANDAG could also work with appropriate Mexican agencies to help set up the transborder protected areas;
     (c) There needs to be a survey and inventory of species and habitats in the border region, and SANDAG could support the collection efforts.

  2. Watersheds: the discussion centered on addressing the institutional gap that exists. Actions were:
     
     (a) Setting up a formal binational mechanism to legally implement watershed objectives and planning;
     (b) Creating a formal master plan with community level subprojects and the plan needs to be supported and implemented by appropriate authorities and government agencies.
• **Housing (12 participants)**

The group discussed housing issues within the interregional and binational context. They looked at housing and redevelopment agencies, mixed use, and how to get owners to convert upper floors for affordable housing. The issue of housing price disparities between regions (*Calexico vs. San Diego* or *Tijuana vs. San Diego*) as well as the gap between the median income and the median home price. They also looked at transit needs, unmet transit needs, and models for connecting transit and land use utilizing *Smart Growth* principles. We need to provide education so the people will use public transit. Among their suggestions was the need to get more information on homeownership, community opportunities, developing incentives for public/private partnerships, and mixed-use opportunities/smart growth/more multi-family housing.

• **Economic Development (10 participants)**

1. Strengthen the approach that SANDAG is taking. Cooperatively and collaboratively work with Imperial County and Baja California using a team approach for discussing the housing, water, POE, and transportation issues in a comprehensive way.
2. We need to form a team and begin taking inventory of our economic resources, and define binational clusters that will benefit all of us. When we begin understanding what these clusters are, we can then start marketing them.
3. Develop a binational business/trade/industry promotion center, market a binational showcase, provide different services to businesses (banking, data banks, legal framework, inst. issues) that wish to come to our region and find higher-value-added industries.

• **Water Supply (9 participants)**

1. Reactivate the Border Water Council.
2. Teach a water ethic and make connections between water use in the U.S. and water needs in Mexico.
3. Examine the nexus between water and energy.
4. Study the Tijuana Master Plan as a best practice.

• **Homeland Security (9 participants)**

Align Homeland Security and regional needs:

1. Identify leadership/education:

   (a) Educate elected officials to make them understand the concerns of border stakeholders and the opportunities to create a “smart border” so that they can represent the region’s needs in Washington, DC, and speak with “one voice.”

   (b) Create a package of information (good data) about the region (e.g., statistics of cross-border traffic in goods and services flow to other parts of the country; importance of cross-border trade; potential smart border technological improvements, etc.).
(c) Hold Washington, DC, accountable to share information with border stakeholders.
(d) Mexico needs to be in the information loop.

2. Address Immigration Policy

(a) Current unfairness - Canada vs. Mexico visa policy.
(b) Mexicans feel like second-class citizens (even though they are our largest trading partners).

3. Continue advocacy for more “smart border” technology.

(a) Think out of the box; e.g., visa application paperwork could be set up through the Internet to reduce wait time.

- Data Sharing (5 participants)

The group agreed that many advances have been made in data sharing, but there are significant challenges. However, we need to:

1. Train the different agencies about the importance of data;
2. Classify data according to the different uses;
3. Promote the harmonization of data on both sides of the border;
4. Define the type of data that we need; and
5. Be able to not only ask for data, but to share in the generation of data.

- Governance and Cross-Border Collaboration (5 participants)

1. Think and act like partners and create partnerships;
2. Educate citizens and elected officials about each other and the issues;
3. Develop regional consensus to speak on issues of mutual concern; e.g., U.S. VISIT program;
4. Set up local working groups with participation by decision-makers from both sides of the border with local stakeholders to develop solutions to problems; e.g., Otay Mesa Commercial Port Working Group.

Overall Conclusions and Suggested Actions

After the reports from the breakout sessions, SANDAG's Executive Director, Gary Gallegos, closed the day's event with a challenge to work collaboratively on making this region globally competitive. He urged the participants not to wait for the federal governments of either country to come with solutions, but rather to be proactive in developing a vision for the region and innovative mechanisms for investing in our future. The comprehensive suggestions for action drawn from the conference are:
1. Support the creation of a regional partnership with Mexico;
2. Support the consolidated municipal commission formed by Tijuana, Tecate, and Rosarito;
3. Explore the possibility of innovative mechanisms for financing border infrastructure in the Californias; and
4. Conference reinvigorated the binational community.

Attached to this report are a matrix with information from prior binational summer conferences (Attachment 1) and a chronology of COBRO’s development from 1997 to present (Attachment 2).

Key Staff Contact: Hector Vanegas, (619) 699-1909; e-mail: hva@sandag.org
# Overview from SANDAG Binational Conferences 1997-2003

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Issue Area</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Lead Agencies</th>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Water Supply</td>
<td>• Binational convening mechanism to share information, data and technology</td>
<td>• Created the Border Water Council within the BLM to explore opportunities for:</td>
<td>BLM Mechanism (U.S. and Mexican Consuls) Water Authority and CESPT</td>
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<td>• Public participation</td>
<td>• Binational Aquaduct</td>
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<td>• Development of new water sources</td>
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<td>• Watershed approach</td>
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<td>• Created the Border Water Council within the BLM to explore opportunities for:</td>
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<td>• Binational Aquaduct</td>
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<td>• Desalination studies /projects</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Watershed approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Economy and Population Growth</td>
<td>• Encourage the formation of an education work group under the Border Liaison Mechanism (BLM) framework to discuss educational and cultural issues.</td>
<td>• Committee on Binational Education and Culture (COBEC)</td>
<td>Regional Universities and Community Colleges</td>
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<td>• Reduce the red tape and create direct contact between the two educational systems in our border region.</td>
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<td>S.D. City Schools</td>
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<td>• Facilitate interaction in the business sector.</td>
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<td>County Department of Education</td>
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<td>• Conduct a specific assessment of border infrastructure needs to increase regional competitiveness.</td>
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<td>Secretaría de Educación de Baja California</td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Issue Area</td>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>Outcomes</td>
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| 1999 | Energy, Transportation, and Trade | • Prioritize a list of Border infrastructure needs.  
• Support the recommendation to expedite the formation of a binational convening mechanism.  
• Encourage the Borders Committee to recommend a Resolution at the Board of Directors, recognizing the necessity to address border infrastructure needs and financing, and being included in regional plans, such as the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).  
• Have briefings with elected legislative officials.  
• Encourage use of federal and state financing mechanisms. | • Support the “Regional Energy Strategy,” which includes a binational component (San Diego Regional Energy Office, SDREO).  
• Cross-Border Transportation Forecasting Model.  
• Border infrastructure needs and financing included in RCP and RTP. | Consul General of Mexico, Planning agencies from San Diego region and Mexican municipalities, SDREO. |
| 2000 | Effective Communication | • Expand the BorderBase.  
• Improve communications and cultural understanding.  
• Promote the use of technology for increased cross-border communication. | Borderbase.org | SANDAG and COBRO members |
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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Lead Agencies</th>
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</table>
| 2001 | Border Wait Times | • Coordinate regional action relevant to reducing border wait times and work with other agencies to build a local coalition to support improvements at the border.  
• Consider potential local funding contributions, and explore the potential for local funding contributions for ports of entry management.  
• Identify short-term solutions, while working on long-term issues.  
• Promote staffing all gates at ports of entry.  
• Collect reliable data regarding border wait times.  
• Evaluate potential involvement of NADB and BECC.  
• Add a “crossing the border” information section to the binational section of the website; request the Board to promote improvements toward better wait times.  
• Work with federal authorities to increase hours of operation. | • Economy and Security at the Border Study  
• Resolution 2002-15 (Nov.16, 2001) | SANDAG Board of Directors; binational border stakeholders. |
| 2002 | Infrastructure Needs and Financing | • Prioritize a list of Border infrastructure needs.  
• COBRO can support recommendation to expedite formation of the Border Energy Issues Group (BEIG).  
• COBRO can ask the support from Borders Committee for a Resolution at the Board of Directors, recognizing the necessity to address border infrastructure needs and financing, and being included in regional plans such as the Regional Comprehensive Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan (mentioned by Mr. Gallegos).  
• COBRO can recommend having briefings with elected legislative officials. | • SANDAG’s Board of Directors authorized the formation of BEIG.  
• Border projects included in RTP and RCP.  
• List of border financing institutions. | Borders Committee |
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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Lead Agencies</th>
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| 2003 | Homeland Security| • Promote the San Diego border region to the appropriate authorities as the ideal “test-bed” for new homeland security technology along the U.S. southwestern border.  
• Request periodic written reports from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on technology-related implementations and other security issues.  
• Identify gaps in binational planning efforts by coordinating resources among stakeholders to create a database of information for the region  
• COBRO requested that the Consul General of Mexico, in his capacity as advisory liaison to the Board of Directors: Promote the conference recommendations with the appropriate authorities in Mexico. | • Advocacy of the SD Alliance for Border Efficiency with DHS.  
• Inclusion of Homeland Security issues in the RCP.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Borders Committee             |

**Abbreviations:**
- BEIG: Order Energy Issues Group
- BLM: Order Liaison Mechanism
- BOD: SANDAG Board of Directors
- CESPT: Comisión Estatal de Servicios Públicos de Tijuana
- DHS: Department of Homeland Security
- RCP: Regional Comprehensive Plan
- RTP: Regional Transportation Plan
- SDREO: San Diego Regional Energy Office
COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (COBRO)

Meeting chronology – 1997 to present

Formation of the Committee:

February 9, 1996.
SANDAG’s Board directed the formation of a Committee on Binational Opportunities comprised of members of the Board and with participation of representatives of the public and private sectors. The private sector could include academia, business, environmental organizations, and economic development agencies. Mayor Mike Bixler, City of Imperial Beach, was appointed as the Chairman.

Purpose of the Committee:

September 26, 1996.
The COBRO met to discuss the purpose of the Committee, as well as to determine the scope of work. Possible areas to examine included: (1) an assessment of current activities conducted by local governments, local offices of federal and state governments, private foundations, universities, and other non-governmental organizations; (2) identification of gaps in binational coordination and cooperation; and (3) development of policies to fill these gaps. Ultimately, the purpose is to expand SANDAG’s cooperative efforts in the border region.

Initial Scope of Work:

December 5, 1996.

- Economic Development: Industrial development, NAFTA assessment, agricultural concerns, energy plan implementation.
- Environment: Water supply, sewage treatment (at the Tijuana River Valley), air quality.
- Ports of Entry: Clearance of goods and persons, technology improvements, wait times, resources, special fees.
- Recreational Activities: Sports and cultural events.
- Transportation: General infrastructure, State Route 905 funding, San Diego & Arizona Eastern (SD&AE) Railroad, and other links.

Other: Coordination with federal, state, local public agencies, the BTTAC, and private organizations; database sharing; hold border conference; be a voice on border issues; avoid duplication of activities.

Mission Statement:


“The Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) will advise the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) concerning both short- and long-term border-related planning activities, issues, and actions; provide recommendations regarding border-related planning; and identify ways to assist and coordinate existing efforts in the binational area. The Committee will be responsible for guiding SANDAG to understand border-related issues and needs of the San Diego-Baja California region.”

The Committee expanded its membership to include the Consul General of Mexico in San Diego, the Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce, and San Diego Dialogue.
The Committee addressed water supply issues in San Diego and Tijuana. The San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) presented the issues in San Diego. The Consul General of Mexico introduced Mexican representatives of the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) and Tijuana’s operator.

Staff presented its paper on water supply needs in the San Diego and Tijuana region and the Committee decided to address the issue of water supply by organizing a workshop on this issue within two months. The workshop was to be held on July 18, 1997.

1997 SANDAG’s Binational Summer Conference

The COBRO sponsored SANDAG’s first Binational Summer Conference on the binational needs for water and its potential supply in the San Diego-Tijuana region. The resulting recommendations were: (1) that proceedings and recommendations be distributed to attendees and stakeholders; and (2) to encourage the establishment of a Border Water Council.

September 18, 1997.
The agenda included reports on the meetings of the Good Neighbor Environmental Board, actions at the Border Environmental Cooperation Commission (BECC), and a status of the SD&AE Railroad. The Committee endorsed the efforts of the Consul General of Mexico to use the Border Liaison Mechanism (BLM) to help develop a regional consensus on improvements to border infrastructure.

November 6, 1997.
Vice Chair Art Madrid, City of La Mesa, ran the meeting. The Committee agreed to recommend that the Consuls General of Mexico and the United States proceed with the formation of the Border Water Council under the auspices of the BLM and supported the SCAG’s Southwest Passage Corridor Project. The meeting included presentations and discussions on the City of San Diego’s South Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant, Intelligent Transportation Systems, and San Diego Dialogue report on Internet service in the Binational region.

The Committee was briefed on the organizational meeting for the Border Water Council and the proposed Ports of Entry Council. The Consul General of the United States in Tijuana was invited to become a member of COBRO.

There was a discussion on the potential operations of the ocean outfall of the International Wastewater Treatment Plant in the Tijuana River estuary. An extensive discussion on the Ports of Entry Council took place in this meeting. The Committee approved to have the next Summer Conference on the topic of Growth.

The agenda included a report on the proposed Rural Highway 94 Corridor Study as this corridor serves those traveling to and from Baja California. The purpose of the study is to identify specific transportation, environmental, and community issues to be addressed. The Committee
also was briefed on the BLM and discussed its two most recent working groups (called Councils): the Border Water Council and the Ports of Entry Council. A draft agenda for the 1998 SANDAG’s Binational Summer Conference was presented.

1998 SANDAG’s Binational Summer Conference

The Conference was dedicated to exploring the challenges and opportunities created by the binational region’s projected population growth in the short- and long-term future. Some of the recommendations were to expand COBRO activities within the economic realm to include increased communication mechanisms and linkages, create a “Binational Education & Cultural Committee” under the BLM, decrease red tape, and create direct links between our border cities’ educational systems.

September 17, 1998.
An extensive Consent Agenda was included: the Automated Vehicle Crossings in San Diego-Baja California; Virginia Avenue Reuse Update; TEA-21 Border Program; Border Patrol Security Road; and the Tijuana River Watershed Management Study. The Committee heard a proposal to add sand to the region’s beaches with sand from Mexico.

November 19, 1998.
As a result of the Binational Conference, the Committee discussed the Committee on Binational Education and Culture (COBEC). Issues mentioned during discussions were the collaborative efforts of the Cities of San Diego and Imperial Beach to help repair clogged sewage drains in the City of Tijuana and mechanisms for emergency communications between Mexico and the U.S. The agenda included reports on the TEA-21 Border Program and the Border Patrol Security Road.

January 21, 1999.
San Diego County Water Authority made an update report on the Border Water Council, which will focus its work on addressing the adequacy of the emergency water connection between San Diego and Tijuana, recycle and use of water, and alternatives for new conveyance for Colorado River water. COBEC reported its intention to establish a Year 2000 group of special programs. It was noted that Tijuana was considering the creation of a Planning Institute to give continuity in planning.

March 18, 1999.
The Committee addressed the potential option for a port of entry west of San Ysidro. Reports included the San Diego-Baja California Cross-Border Transportation Study. The object of this is to create a systemwide approach for evaluating and forecasting vehicular travel across the binational border. The Consul General of Mexico reported its meeting with local business leaders that concluded with the need to improve coordination and expansion of existing data collection systems.

April 6, 1999.
A special meeting took place to inform the Committee on the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) of the International Wastewater Treatment Plant (IWTP). USEPA gave a brief overview of the document as well as the preferred alternative identified. The City of San Diego stated opposition to the proposed treatment ponds. The City of Imperial Beach
stated that, for them, the most efficient solution in the shortest period of time is the most desirable. An option, not included in the study, was presented in the meeting, Bajagua, which could be considered for secondary treatment of the expanded primary capacity of the IWTP.

May 21, 1999.
The agenda included follow-up reports of the BLM and a discussion of the contents of the 1999-2020 Regional Transportation Plan that relate to border infrastructure.

1999 SANDAG’s Binational Summer Conference

The Conference was dedicated to discuss the opportunities and challenges of linking energy, transportation, and trade in our binational region. It was recommended that a binational energy group be formed and one of its activities could be to review federal notices regarding energy transmission. Additionally, it was recommended to help to create a “binational vision” regarding cross-border transportation infrastructure, within a context that includes the private sector.

September 16, 1999.
Reports provided information on the Otay Mesa Electric Generating Project and the SCERP conference “U.S.-Mexican Border Environment: A Road to a Sustainable 2020.”

The Water Authority reported the status of the study to determine the feasibility of additional conveyances of water from the Colorado River. A report was provided on the House Resolution 8 to reduce air pollution from vehicles at the San Ysidro port of entry. Tijuana’s municipal planning institute, IMPlan, presented a report on growth and planning for that city. SANDAG presented San Diego’s regional growth strategy.

The issue of air quality at the San Diego-Tijuana border was discussed in this meeting. The Binational Air Quality Alliance (BAQA) and the San Diego Air Pollution Control District reported the status and progress of their work. The discussion was centered around the idea of whether a binational airbasin exists, and the impact of cars from Mexico on San Diego’s air quality. The Committee was briefed on the Presidential Interagency Task Force on Economic Development at the Border. Topics for the next summer conferences were discussed, including media relations pertaining to the border and air quality.

May 18, 2000.
Presentations during this meeting were on The Bight of the Californias, a pilot program focusing on establishing a basis for ongoing regional cooperation to protect the marine environment from land-based activities; the Binational Energy Strategy Committee (BESC), which was tasked to determine how the Tijuana-San Diego regions can best cope with the expected 30 percent increase in energy demand; and the BorderBase project, the binational website directory that was suggested to be incorporated in the program of the summer conference.
2000 SANDAG’s Binational Summer Conference

The purpose of this conference was to examine mechanisms of communication in the binational region and how various mechanisms have contributed to binational dialogues. The topic was Communication in the Border and the BorderBase Web directory was presented. The conference recommendations were: (1) expand the BorderBase; (2) improve communications and cultural understanding; and (3) promote the use of technology.

The Committee celebrated the elections in Mexico and expressed hope for more improvements in Mexico by the new government. The San Diego Chamber of Commerce reported on its Media Committee activities and distributed a Media Guide. The Committee received a report on the alternatives to use the Virginia Avenue parcel for the redevelopment of the San Ysidro port of entry. The Institute for Regional Studies of the California (IRSC) presented the Border Area Planning Atlas, a collaborative effort with SANDAG and IMPlan.

SANDAG presented the results of the two-year project Cross-Border Traffic Study, which was funded by Caltrans to develop a model for the border region. The model inputs include projected economic and demographic data, origin and destinations, employment, traffic, and wait times at the ports of entry. A report was provided on the BESC, in which its mission was presented. The scope of work includes: being a forum for discussion, a means of communication with energy agencies on both sides of the border, and a source of information and education for decision-makers and the public.

The Committee evaluated its Mission and its past programs. It was suggested to have at least one meeting south of the border and invite participation by Mexican counterparts; COBRO should facilitate the continued organization of the binational summer conference. Issues such as attendance, COBRO’s relation to the Board, and transportation projects were mentioned in this discussion. Suggestions for other areas where the COBRO can work are housing and environmental issues on the border. It was recommended that COBRO have a retreat.

The Committee approved a work plan for the summer conference, focusing on wait times at the ports of entry. COBRO recommended increasing staff and opening all gates to the agencies in charge of operating the region’s ports of entry. COBRO will work to get attention paid to issues and impacts of wait times on the border.

A briefing on the Border Governors Conference was presented to the Committee; of particular interest was the report on the Transportation Work Group which called to continue and expand funding for border highways; to reduce border wait times to a maximum of 15 minutes for passenger vehicles and 20 minutes for commercial trucks; develop procedures for planning coordination; provide local input for the implementation of entry-exit controls among others. The summer conference topic would be on Border Wait Times.
2001 SANDAG’s Binational Summer Conference

The focus of the conference was on border wait times at the region’s ports of entry and the recommendations were to: (1) coordinate regional action relevant to reducing border wait times and work with other agencies to build a local coalition to support improvements at the border; (2) consider potential local funding contributions, and explore the potential for local funding contributions for ports of entry management; (3) identify short-term solutions, while working on long-term issues; (4) promote staffing all gates at ports of entry; (5) collect reliable data regarding border wait times; (6) evaluate potential involvement of NADB and BECC; (7) add a “crossing the border” information section to the binational section of the website and request the Board to promote improvements toward better wait times; and (8) work with federal authorities to increase hours of operation.

September 13, 2001.
The Committee reviewed the recommendations from the summer conference and began a discussion to explore options to expand its membership to include representatives of Baja California, at the time that SANDAG is reorganizing its 47 standing or advisory committees to be more effective in providing program review, comments, and advise to the Board of Directors.

The Committee reviewed SANDAG’s Resolution 2002-15 (approved on November 16, 2001) that requests that state and federal entities take action to improve security and efficiency at our ports of entry and to support the border economies. Other projects conducted by SANDAG presented to the COBRO were the “Survey and Analysis of Trade and Goods Movement Between California and Baja California” and partnering with Caltrans the “Binational Border Transportation Infrastructure Need Assessment Study.” This meeting also included a presentation on the plans and programs for improvements to Tijuana’s overall wastewater infrastructure and a discussion on the committee restructuring process at SANDAG.

March 21, 2002.
A subcommittee formed to present recommendations regarding potential changes to the COBRO mission, membership, and committee appointment structure gave its recommendations.

April 4, 2002.
A special meeting took place to discuss the reorganization of the Committee to adapt it to SANDAG’s new structure and to recommend Border Committee approval of the modification to its mission, membership, and leadership.

New Chair and approval of monthly meetings

May 23, 2002.
Chair Mike Bixler was recognized for his six years of service as Chair of COBRO, spearheading this regional effort to deal with binational issues, and turned over the meeting to the new Chair, Elsa Saxod, Director of Binational Affairs for the City of San Diego. The Committee approved to have monthly meetings and suggested the possibility of having COBRO meetings in Mexico. A subcommittee was created to help prepare the summer conference.
July 2, 2002.
Staff reports included updates on legislation with potential impact on the border, such as AB 2562 (Vargas), SB 865 (Polanco), and HR 4827 (Davis). Additionally, the Committee was briefed on the Data Management Improvement Act (DMIA), which pursued the implementation of border entry-exit control policies of Section 110 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996. Other issue discussed was the southbound truck export route. Staff presented SANDAG’s guidelines for members of its committees and working groups.

2002 SANDAG’s Binational Summer Conference
July 20, 2002.
The event addressed the challenges and opportunities regarding border infrastructure needs and financing and concluding requesting greater focus at all levels of governments for these issues. The conference participants recognized the need to focus financing requests on priority projects and include them in regional plans, such as the Regional Comprehensive Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan.

August 6, 2002.
The agenda included an update on Caltrans infrastructure improvements projects and a report on the U.S.-Mexico Smart Border Agreement. The International Community Foundation presented its work and projects. The members also discussed the meeting of the Binational Group on Bridges and Border Crossings to be held in San Diego; the meeting of the Border Governors Conference; the SENTRI Focus Group conducted by the INS and the Mexican Consulate’s Matricula Consular. Staff reported on the issue of inspections of commuter students as a consequence of 9/11.

September 3, 2002.
The General Services Administration updated the Committee on the Virginia Ave.-El Chaparral port of entry reuse, which responds to new federal security mandates involving increased southbound inspection requirements, and to provide new and improved facilities. GSA presented a preliminary project schedule. The agenda included also a presentation on the multinational sustainable indicators being developed at the Southwest Center for Environmental Research and Policy (SCERP). Tijuana Trabaja presented its work and projects.

October 9, 2002.
The San Diego Alliance for Border Efficiency was presented to the Committee, as well as its role in the meeting of the Binational Group on Bridges and Border Crossings. The agenda included also a report on the Southern Border Council of State Governments Binational Programs, which provides a non-partisan platform for regional cooperation and collaboration among legislatures of the thirteen western states.

November 5, 2002.
The Committee received a report from the Maquiladora Industry in Tijuana that after three decades is facing important competitive challenges to continue generating employment and investment to the region. EPA presented the Draft Border 2012 Plan that takes the place of the previous Border XXI, with longer planning periods, increased regional participation, and greater focus on environmental results.
The first meeting in Mexico

December 3, 2002.
The Committee held its first meeting in Mexico at the City Hall of Tijuana. The meeting was translated simultaneously in English-Spanish. The agenda included the following presentations: IMPlan’s Master Plan for Tijuana, the priorities of the San Diego Alliance for Border Efficiency, and the Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad presented its work and projects. Tijuana councilmembers attended the meeting, as well as Congressman Bob Filner.

SANDAG informed the Committee on border transportation projects that are included in the Regional Transportation Plan Mobility 2030. A discussion was held on the 2003 work plan, including the Borders Chapter of the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP), the Binational Summer Conference, and border-related legislation. Staff presented a report regarding border and transportation security reorganization of the federal governments and the new Department of Homeland Security. The Committee discussed potential topics for the summer conference and agreed to focus its attention on Homeland Security issues.

The Committee continued its discussion on goals and objectives for 2003, focusing on transportation infrastructure, water, and ports of entry. Other topics addressed in this meeting were: new customs regulations for commercial operations; SENTRI application process and extension of duration of enrollments to two years; and the environmental assessment for the Tijuana/Rosarito water and wastewater master plan.

April 1, 2003.
Adele Fasano, Director of Field Operations of the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) of the Department of Homeland Security, was introduced and presented the current reorganization, as well as future projects to advance the objective of “moving the borders out” and expanding SENTRI. Staff presented AB 1183, a new bill that would establish the California and Mexico Border Economic Infrastructure Financing Authority for Imperial County and updated the Committee on the Borders Chapter of the RCP. The agenda included a presentation of the California-Mexico Network (Cal-Mex-Net) project, which is intended to facilitate linkages and provide information on professional skills certifications, government, and community organizations.

The meeting was attended by a Consul of Canada in Los Angeles. Members reported on the Border Institute V meeting, the new Cargo Port Working Group, the meeting of Secretaries Tom Ridge of the U.S. and Santiago Creel of Mexico, the NADB Workshop, the regional workshop of the Border 2012 Program, the meetings of the Binational Group of Bridges and Border Crossings and the Border Governors Conference, and improvements to the street near the Puerta México port of entry in Tijuana. The Committee supported the SAFE Border Act of Rep. Susan Davis. Mexico’s Commission for Northern Border Affairs provided an overview of its development program for that region.
Second meeting in Mexico

The City of Tijuana presented its urban development plan for the next 22 years, including water and wastewater treatment, transportation, infrastructure, investments and financing, public safety, natural gas production, and energy solutions. The Committee reviewed and supported the Las Californias Binational Conservation Initiative and discussed the preliminary results from the survey on Homeland Security issues prepared for the summer conference.

2003 SANDAG’s Binational Summer Conference

July 11, 2003
As a consequence of the tragic events on September 11, 2001, it was decided that the summer conference addressed the issue of Homeland Security in the San Diego-Baja California region. The recommendations from this conference were to: (1) promote the San Diego border region to appropriate authorities such as the Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Senate, and the House of Representatives, among others, as the ideal test-site for new homeland security technology along the U.S. Southwestern border; and (2) request periodic written reports from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on technology-related implementations and other security issues.

The Consulate of the United States of America presented the new website designated to provide legal, medical, and other general interest information to travelers visiting Baja California, TraveltoBaja.net. The Committee reviewed the conclusions from the breakout sessions of the summer conference.

The Committee received a brief on the project of the San Diego-Tijuana 100 Years Vision and commented the results of this initiative that was presented in an international competition. Other topics discussed were the future implementation of FAST (Free and Secure Trade) in Otay Mesa port of entry, the Technology Transfer Center in Baja California, the new joint graduate program by SDSU and UABC, the Border Energy Issues Group (BEIG), and the Border Governor Conference.

Third meeting in Mexico

This meeting took place at the Tijuana City Hall. The Regional Energy Office presented the San Diego-Tijuana 100 Years Vision project that was presented and recognized in an international competition. The Committee reviewed and commented the Survey and Analysis of Trade and Goods Movement between California and Baja California (Maquiladora Survey), prepared for Caltrans by SAIC on behalf of SANDAG. Tijuana Trabaja presented its work on Water and Energy: Challenges for the Future Development of Tijuana.

The Maquiladora Survey was discussed and additional comments were prepared for the consideration of the Borders Committee. The agenda included a study on the voluntary environmental management practices in the Mexican chemical industry.
The Committee received a report on the U.S. VISIT Program and expressed concerns associated with the implementation of this entry-exit control measure at the region’s ports of entry. Staff reported on SANDAG’s guidelines for Committees and Working Groups, and the status of funding for construction of SR 905. Other topics discussed were the extension of trial period of extended hours of commercial operations at the Otay Mesa port of entry and options for reactivating the Governor’s Office for California-Mexico Affairs.

SANDAG presented its San Diego-Tijuana Consolidated Metropolitan Area study, which is a demographic outlook of the largest cross-border metropolitan area along the U.S.-Mexico border. A subcommittee reported on the development of the process for organizing the binational summer conference. Other topics discussed were the Border Energy Issues Group (BEIG), the Board support of the Las Californias Binational Conservation Initiative, the U.S. VISIT program, and the Border 2012 California’s Workgroup meeting in Rosarito, Mexico.

Members informed on recent events related to the binational agenda: the Homeland Security Townhall, organized by the Washington-based Council for Excellence in Governance; the meeting on LNG Projects in Baja California, sponsored among others by Tijuana Trabaja; and the binational projects to be developed by the San Diego County Water Authority. The Committee received a report on the findings of a public opinion poll on San Diegans’ perceptions of Tijuana, conducted by Competitive Edge Research in association with KPBS.

The agenda included a report on the Borders Committee priorities for FY 05, where the focus with Mexico will be on setting up an interregional partnership to address the various transboundary issues. The ICF presented its study “Blurred Borders: Transboundary Impacts and Solutions in the San Diego-Tijuana Border Region,” a binational study on cross-border collaboration, which included preliminary results of bilingual survey on mutual perceptions of San Diego and Tijuana. Other issues addressed were the opening of the SD&AE Railroad and the first anniversary of the creation of the Department of Homeland Security.

April 6, 2004.
The Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) presented a report on its functions and role in naturalization and residency adjudications.

First meeting held in Chula Vista
May 4, 2004
The Committee met with Deputy Legal Counsel of SANDAG, Julie Wiley, to discuss leadership, membership, and meeting protocol. Paul Gansler was elected Chair for the next term. Cindy Gomper-Graves was elected Vice Chair. Consul General of Mexico, Luis Cabrera, recognized the outgoing Chair, Elsa Saxod, for her service in leading COBRO for the last two years. Caltrans was approved as a new member agency to COBRO.