COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (COBRO)

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

Tuesday, February 1, 2005

3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

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

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) will advise the Borders Committee of the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) concerning both short and long-term binational related activities, issues, and actions; provide recommendations regarding binational border-related planning and development; and identify ways to assist and coordinate with existing efforts in the binational area. The COBRO will serve as a working group to the SANDAG Borders Committee to facilitate a better understanding of the binational border-related issues and needs of the California-Baja California region.
Welcome to SANDAG! Members of the public may speak to the COBRO on any item at the time that the Committee is considering the item. Please complete a Speaker’s Slip which is located in the rear of the room and then present the slip to Committee staff. Also, members of the public are invited to address the Committee on any issue under the agenda item entitled Public Comments/Communications. Speakers are limited to three minutes. The COBRO may take action on any item appearing on the agenda.

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ITEM # | ACTION
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1. | WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
2. | APPROVAL OF COBRO’S DECEMBER 8, 2004 MEETING MINUTES (pp. 5-9)  APPROVE
3. | PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS
   Members of the public will have the opportunity to address 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 (Hector Vanegas, SANDAG) (p. 10)  
   Upcoming Events  
   INFORMATION / POSSIBLE ACTION

REPORTS

5. | PROGRAMA PARCIAL DE LA MESA DE OTAY ESTE, CIUDAD DE TIJUANA – CITY OF TIJUANA’S SPECIFIC PLAN FOR THE AREA OF EAST OTAY MESA (Luis Duarte, City of Tijuana – Municipal Planning institute, ImPlan) (pp. 11-12)  
   The COBRO identified this program as one of the planning activities currently in development in Otay Mesa, which represents an opportunity for more effective binational planning and coordination in this region. (This presentation will be in Spanish. SANDAG’s staff will summarize and translate into English)  
   INFORMATION / POSSIBLE ACTION

6. | PREPARATION OF SANDAG’S 2005 BINATIONAL SUMMER CONFERENCE (Hector Vanegas, SANDAG) (p. 15)  
   The COBRO should discuss possible dates and venues for the 2005 Binational Summer Conference, and should identify the title of the conference, topics for the agenda and speakers for the program.  
   DISCUSSION / POSSIBLE ACTION
7. ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION

The next meeting of the COBRO will be held on Tuesday, March 1, 2005, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. at SANDAG’s 7th Floor Conference Room.

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

Visit us on the Web at:
www.sandag.org (under Borders)
COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (COBRO) SUMMARY OF DECEMBER 8, 2004

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The December 8, 2004, Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) meeting was called to order by Chair Paul Ganster. The meeting was held at SANDAG.

Members present were: Alfonso Bustamante, City of Tijuana; Sergio Pallares, Caltrans; Jaime González-Luna, Maquiladora Industry Association; Lydia Antonio, Consulate General of Mexico in San Diego; Gustavo Pérez, City of Chula Vista; Silvia Flores, El Colegio de La Frontera Norte; Yolanda Walther-Mead, Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad; Joaquín Luken, Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce; Nathan Owens, San Diego Dialogue; Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce; Viviana Ibañez, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce; Cindy Gomper-Graves, South County Economic Development Council; Bob Leiter, Hector Vanegas, Jane Clough-Riquelme, and Ron Saenz from SANDAG.

Chair Ganster welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. Self-introductions were conducted. Chair Ganster introduced Ron Saenz, new Associate Regional Planner with SANDAG. He also extended a special welcome to Alfonso Bustamante, City of Tijuana.


The meeting summary for October 5, 2004 was approved.

The meeting summary for November 3, 2004 was approved.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBERS’ COMMENTS

Chair Ganster mentioned that the membership list will be updated as soon as the new representatives are announced for the City of Tecate, Tijuana, and Mexicali.

Brad Raulston, Bynational Olympic Organizing Committee, announced that his organization is currently looking at creating a bid for both the 2015 Pan American Games and 2016 Olympic Games. It is important to address transportation and infrastructure needs in the binational area. Currently the Binational Olympic Organizing Committee is working on the feasibility aspect of the games that will be addressed with an asset gap analysis due to be completed at the end of February 2005. The bid is comprised of two main components: 1) a financing plan and 2) federal funds for
transportation and security which historically become available with the games. Once the asset gap analysis is complete, Brad Raulston will return to the COBRO to present his findings.

Chair Ganster commented on the importance for binational and regional approaches to regional issues. He also said it is important to look to medium and long term issues for a prosperous region in the next 50 to 100 years.

4. STAFF REPORT

Hector Vanegas, SANDAG, commented that in the agenda packet there is a list of the events that will be taking place in the month of December.

Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, announced there is a meeting being held by US-Visit officials on Friday at 2 p.m. in Otay Mesa, and it could be an excellent opportunity to push the officials to provide the public with more ideas on what will happen on the exit inspection at the border.

Gustavo Pérez, City of Chula Vista, commented on the ongoing efforts of the City of Chula Vista to someday create a collaborative university in the region. In an upcoming COBRO meeting he will provide the committee with a presentation.

Chair Ganster mentioned the importance of having collaborative universities and joint degree programs to provide the next generation of leaders with the skills to understand how things work on either side of the border.

5. OTAY MESA COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE (Max Stalheim, Senior Planner, City of San Diego)

Chair Ganster introduced Max Stalheim, Senior Planner with the City of San Diego, who presented the committee with a slide presentation on the existing state of Otay Mesa as well as possible alternatives. The update process for the area is still within a year of completion.

The planning area is roughly divided by residential development on the west and industrial/commercial development (the Otay Mesa Development District) on the east. The planning area is approximately 12,000 acres and the present plan is comprised of 11,400 dwelling units with a population of about 40,000 residents. Community feedback has shown that it is important to improve the image of Otay Mesa and diversify employment opportunities. The northern part of the planning area may be developed into business parks for research and development companies.

A year and a half ago residential developers in the area formed a coalition with the goal of amending the community plan to offer more residential development in Otay Mesa. It is difficult to reconcile competing values in the area. Otay Mesa represents the last of the employment lands in the City of San Diego in terms of manufacturing and intense labor, but the area is experiencing housing shortages. The main question is how the City of San Diego plans to address this discrepancy. At the present time the City of San Diego is conducting economic impact analysis studies which will provide further input. The draft documents will be available in May 2005.

Joaquin Luken, Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce, mentioned that the Chamber is very much engaged in the planning process and they are concerned with the rezoning of current and future
industrial developments. The Chamber is in favor of intelligent rezoning and SourcePoint has been hired to conduct a study that should be done at the end of this summer.

Sergio Pallares, Caltrans, asked if the City of San Diego was going to address the position of the Port of Entry in east Otay Mesa.

Max Stalheim, City of San Diego, commented that the City has been working with the County to address the Port of Entry in east Otay Mesa.

Cindy Gomper-Graves, South San Diego County Economic Development Council, commented that it is important to take into consideration the nexus that exists between Otay Mesa and Tijuana, specifically addressing the impact of maquiladoras in an economic analysis.

Sergio Pallares, Caltrans, mentioned that the City of Tijuana is completing an economic analysis study on the Mexican side that is scheduled to be completed at the end of this month.

Cindy Gomper-Graves, South San Diego County Economic Development Council, asked about efforts to coordinate air transportation facilities in the border region.

Chair Ganster commented that previous efforts were turned back by members of Congress and others who were concerned that it would be facilitating undocumented immigration, which is not true because airports tend to have tight security. In a post 9-11 world this is an area where security has been increased and improved and perhaps it just comes down to the fact that people are not interested in collaborating regionally. There are many successful examples of collaboration around the world across borders such as Geneva. Such facilities could benefit from the current planning process for Otay Mesa.

Cindy Gomper-Graves, South San Diego County Economic Development Council, requested that Chair Ganster bring up the issue of binational air transport coordination to the Borders Committee as it is related to the Otay Mesa community planning project.

Chair Ganster agreed and reiterated the importance of regional collaboration. He thanked Mr. Stalheim for the slide show and presentation.

6. PRESENTATION ON THE COORDENADA PROJECT (Jorge Sanchez and Alfonso Paredes, RHINOCEROS S.A. de C.V)

Jorge Sanchez, Rhinoceros, stated that the objective of the presentation of the Coordenada Project was to give the Committee the opportunity to learn more about what is going on the other side of the border in terms of mapping. The main objective of the project is to create a map of the border region.

Alfonso Paredes, Rhinoceros, mentioned that to the best of his knowledge the reason why all maps end at the border is because both the United States and Mexico use different formats to present information. The maps of either side have different structure. It is not possible to use popular map search sites on the internet to look up a business on the Mexican side of the border. This is an important goal of the Coordenada Project. The technology used in this mapping software was
developed from scratch. As a result, Rhinoceros understands the internal structure. Rhinoceros is currently in the process of building a common set of maps for San Diego and Tijuana. There are certain ideas particular to the mapping process in Mexico. For example, landmarks are used frequently in providing directions so they are incorporated into the maps. There are some challenges in dealing with mapping Mexican areas. In general many streets share similar or the same names and the numbering of buildings are not always consistent. The Coordenada Project hopes to share its maps on both the City of Tijuana's and SANDAG's web sites which would provide broader access.

Gustavo Perez, City of Chula Vista, mentioned that the City of Chula Vista might be willing to partner with Rhinoceros to take advantage of a valuable economic tool as well as to decrease costs.

Alfonso Paredes, Rhinoceros, also suggested that the different agencies could try to make such connections with the municipalities to gain additional information. He mentioned that maps in Mexico are not routable and although they have developed the necessary software to do so, they are waiting for information from the City of Tijuana in order to complete the process. The City is currently gathering more information. He added that in the next few months, the Coordenada Project hopes to incorporate Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Monterrey into its mapping system.

Jorge Sanchez, Rhinoceros, commented that his company has also formed some strategic alliances to facilitate automatic vehicle location which they would like to offer to Mexican automotive manufactures and to other potential markets. He added that the software created by Rhinoceros is not only highly valuable to municipalities and agencies, but due to its friendly user interface it is the ideal software for the ultimate user.

Bob Leiter, SANDAG, asked if Rhinoceros has considered the J-S database and how it could be connected to the SANDAG database. In the SANDAG Planning Department one of the initiatives is to develop a baseline of both the existing land use and transportation systems in eastern part of the San Diego urbanized region and analyze their connections with planned area uses in Eastern Tijuana. This could lead to great collaboration in terms of resolving planning issues over time, and a good database is necessary to begin the process.

Alfonso Paredes, Rhinoceros, responded that it would be necessary to do some juggling with the different systems and the data formats but he thought it would be easy to do on a very large scale. He hopes to come back to a future meeting and present the differences in the data.

Bob Leiter, SANDAG, mentioned that he hoped the two organizations could start with a very large scale to see if there is enough compatibility to a landscape-level planning analysis. It is valuable for subsequent data analysis and mapping.

Gustavo Pérez, City of Chula Vista, mentioned that it would be very valuable to integrate all of the information into a regional map covering the border area. The City of Chula Vista receives quite a few visitors inquiring about directions to a specific location in Tijuana and the information they can provide often stops at the border.

Nathan Owens, San Diego Dialogue, asked what the issue was for the long wait in integrating the maps.
Alfonso Paredes, Rhinoceros, explained that the difference in the data formats used by both countries as well as the routing problems in mapping the Mexican side have prevented integration. It would take two months to come up with very compatible data systems.

Bob Leiter, SANDAG, asked if Rhinoceros had worked with ESRI (ESRI-type database) to see how their technology could be extended or fully integrated into a GIS type database.

Alfonso Paredes, Rhinoceros, responded that they have not worked with ESRI because their maps are drawn very differently and it would be a very difficult process to get in touch with the right person in the company because of its large size.

Bob Leiter, SANDAG, mentioned that SANDAG works closely with ESRI and their technology is pervasive not only in San Diego but also in most of the United States. He commented that perhaps SANDAG could be an intermediary between Rhinoceros and other mapping interests in Mexico.

Chair Ganster commented that the issue of integrating data from the United States and Mexico is extremely important. In order to function as a region it is imperative to find out how to make data compatible in many different areas, especially when they have immediate implications.

Jorge Sanchez, Rhinoceros, responded that this might be the launching pad to begin formal collaborations in order to gain necessary information.

Ron Saenz, SANDAG, asked if they had worked with the city of Tijuana’s police and fire departments.

Alfonso Paredes, Rhinoceros, mentioned that the former municipal government had a lot of problems with street names. In the future it would be important to present these tools to the new government but more information needs to be gathered first for a complete presentation.

Alfonso Bustamante, City of Tijuana, commented that he would be happy to offer any assistance with any department that he can.

Chair Ganster thanked everyone for attending the meeting and mentioned that the presentations had given the Committee many important things to think about.

7. ADJOURNMENT, AND NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION

Chair Ganster commented that the next meeting is scheduled for January 4, 2005, but due to the upcoming holidays he suggested that it be canceled and rescheduled to February 1, 2005, unless there were strong objections. The program will include a presentation on the Plan Parcial de Desarrollo de Mesa de Otay (Neighborhood Plan for Otay Mesa, Tijuana) by the Municipal Planning Institute of Tijuana (IMPLAN).

The next COBRO meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 1, 2005 from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. at SANDAG’s offices in San Diego.
UPCOMING EVENTS:

WHAT: Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) for the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant
WHEN: Wednesday, February 2, 2005
WHERE: San Ysidro Middle School, Multicultural Complex, 4345 Otay Mesa Rd., San Diego, CA
MORE INFO: http://www.ibwc.state.gov/Files/SEIS/Draft_SEIS.pdf
SPONSOR: International Boundary and Water Commission, United States Section (IBWC)

WHAT: Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce, Installation Dinner and Silent Auction
WHEN: Friday, February 4, 2005. 6:00 p.m.
WHERE: Holiday Inn on the Bay, 1355 N. Harbor Drive, San Diego, CA 92101
MORE INFO: www.otaymesa.org
SPONSOR: Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce

WHAT: Border Lands: Three Photographic Perspectives on the San Diego/Tijuana Region
WHEN: Thursday, February 10, 2005. 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
WHERE: Geisel Library, UCSD
MORE INFO: Lynda Claassen. Lynda@library.ucsd.edu
SPONSOR: Mandeville Special Collections Library & Friends of the UCSD Libraries

WHAT: The View from Otay Mesa: Cultural Landscapes through Time
WHEN: Saturday, February 12, 2005
WHERE: San Diego Archeological Center, 16666 San Pasqual Valley Rd., Escondido, CA 92027
MORE INFO: acox@sandiegoarcheology.org (760) 291-0370
SPONSOR: Institute of the Americas

WHAT: The Coastal Storms Program. Southern California Regional Roundtable
WHEN: Tuesday, February 15, 2005. 9:00 a.m.
WHERE: DoubleTree Hotel, Mission Valley. San Diego, CA
MORE INFO: www.csc.noaa.gov/csi/
SPONSOR: NOAA / USC Sea Grant

WHAT: José Cuervo Tequila Talk: Eugenio Elorduy Walther, Governor of Baja California Norte
WHEN: Thursday, February 17, 2005
WHERE: Weaver Center at the Institute of the Americas Complex, UCSD Campus
MORE INFO: www.iamericas.org
SPONSOR: Institute of the Americas
PROGRAMA PARCIAL DE LA MESA DE OTAY ESTE, CIUDAD DE TIJUANA – CITY OF TIJUANA’S
SPECIFIC PLAN FOR THE AREA OF EAST OTAY MESA

Introduction

Acknowledging that several planning activities are currently in development in the binational area of Otay Mesa, the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) invited its member ImPlan, Tijuana’s Municipal Planning Institute, to give a presentation of the specific plan for the Mesa de Otay Este on the Mexican side of the border. The COBRO identified this program as one of the planning activities currently in development in that area which represents an opportunity for more effective binational planning and coordination in this region.

Discussion

The preparation of City of Tijuana’s Specific Plan (Attachment 1 and 2) for East Mesa de Otay is a joint effort among federal, state, and municipal governmental entities in Tijuana, Baja California. Its creation was in response to the city’s Urban Development Program 2002 – 2025 that identifies the Mesa de Otay, as a priority area. The main feature identified in this area is the proposed construction of a new port of entry known as Mesa de Otay II, east of the current port of entry.

The construction of a new port of entry in east Otay Mesa is considered strategic by the authorities of Tijuana because it will have intra-urban and regional repercussions, including impacts to housing, commercial and urban developments, educational institutions, transportation and transit systems, as well as important environmental considerations.

ImPlan recognizes that as the rest of the City of Tijuana, this zone shows strong contrasts mixed with important economic activities, dense populated areas and topographic challenges that have to be faced in a comprehensive way.

This program has the following goals:

- Support policies to mitigate and address urban development risk factors related to land use guidelines, public services, and public safety considerations.
- Prepare transportation infrastructure guidelines to provide access to a new port of entry and connect it to the Tijuana-Rosarito 2000 corridor.
- Provide financial options or alternatives to fund the construction of city streets in the area of the proposed new port of entry.
- Establish a planning framework for the area.

For the preparation of the program, ImPlan has defined an open process for consultation and participation to include public and private entities, as well as the community on both sides of the border.
border. Through this process, Implan will gather information, establish contacts, receive comments and build consensus to develop a vision for the area for the next 25 years.

This plan is significant because it opens up an opportunity for coordinating the Binational Corridor, including the Tijuana-Rosarito 2000 Corridor and the new Mesa de Otay II (East Otay Mesa) Port of Entry. SANDAG will be working with all of the federal, state, and local agencies on both sides of the border to take advantage of this opportunity.

BOB LEITER
Director for Land Use and Transportation Planning

Attachments

Key Staff Contact: Hector Vanegas, (619) 699-1972; hva@sandag.org
Programa Parcial de Desarrollo Urbano para la Mesa de Otay Este
Programa Parcial de Desarrollo Urbano para la Mesa de Otay Este
PREPARATION OF SANDAG’S 2005 BINATIONAL SUMMER CONFERENCE

Introduction

Since its creation in 1996, the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) has been tasked to lead and support the organization of SANDAG’s Binational Summer Conference, with the purpose of bringing together speakers and participants from both sides of the border to discuss topics of binational interest. As a result of the 2004 conference, the COBRO’s recommendation to the Borders Committee was that this year’s conference be dedicated to explore opportunities to establish a Planning Partnership with Tijuana, Baja California, within the framework of the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP).

Discussion

One of the overall recommendations of the 2004 Binational Summer Conference was to create a formal partnership in the binational region and to establish a cross-border framework for collaboration. It was suggested that this framework must be integrated in a manner which facilitates the sharing of resources and decision-making. During its discussions following the conference, the COBRO also agreed to recommend an area of opportunity to focus this effort. COBRO recognized that Otay Mesa is that area of opportunity for improved and more effective binational planning and coordination. This is particularly true since the City of San Diego is updating its community plan and the City of Tijuana is developing its specific plan for the Mesa de Otay area. Additionally, the plans for the City of Chula Vista and the County of San Diego are also looking to this area for future growth. This recommendation follows the model of the existing I-15 Interregional Partnership with Riverside and also is congruent with the strategic initiatives stated for the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

On December 17, 2004, SANDAG’s Board approved the objective, “to support continued efforts to establish an interregional planning partnership with Mexico”, and at its January 21, 2005 meeting, the Borders Committee received a presentation which gave an overview and introduction to the planning activities in the Otay Mesa – Mesa de Otay corridor, by COBRO’s Chair Paul Ganster.

The COBRO should discuss possible dates and venues for the 2005 Binational Summer Conference, and should identify the title of the conference, topics for the agenda and speakers for the program.