COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (COBRO)
The Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) may take action on any item appearing on this agenda.

Tuesday, April 5, 2005
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF MEETING LOCATION

City of Chula Vista
Public Services Building, Conf. Rooms 2 and 3
276 Fourth Ave.
Chula Vista, CA 91910

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 present the slip to Committee staff. Also, members of the public are invited to address the Committee on any issue under the agenda item entitled Public Comments/Communications. Speakers are limited to three minutes. The COBRO may take action on any item appearing on the agenda.

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

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

The City of Chula Vista, in complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), requests that individuals requiring special accommodations to access, attend, and/or participate in a meeting, activity, or service, request such accommodation at least 48 hours in advance for meetings and five days for scheduled services and activities. Please contact the Secretary to the Redevelopment Agency for specific information at (619) 691-5047 or Telecommunications Devices for the Deaf (TDD) at (619) 585-5647. California Relay Service is also available for the hearing-impaired.

Phone 1-800-COMMUTE or see www.sdcommute.com for route information.
CHULA VISTA CIVIC CENTER
DIRECTIONS

FROM INTERSTATE-5
FROM INTERSTATE-5 [NORTH OR SOUTH], TAKE THE E STREET EXIT, EAST. TRAVELING ON E STREET, YOU WILL CROSS THROUGH BROADWAY AND FIFTH AVENUE, CONTINUING TO FOURTH AVENUE. AT FOURTH AVENUE, TURN SOUTH. THE CHULA VISTA CIVIC CENTER WILL BE ON YOUR RIGHT.

FROM INTERSTATE-805
FROM INTERSTATE-805 [NORTH OR SOUTH], TAKE THE SR 54 EXIT, WEST. TRAVELING ON SR 54, YOU WILL TAKE THE FOURTH AVENUE EXIT, SOUTH. YOU WILL CROSS THROUGH C STREET AND E STREET. THE CHULA VISTA CIVIC CENTER WILL BE ON YOUR RIGHT.
# COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

## Tuesday, April 5, 2005

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

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<th>ITEM #</th>
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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 also is an opportunity for COBRO members to make comments or announcements.

## CONSENT AGENDA

COBRO will review the consent agenda without further discussion unless an item is pulled by a Committee member or a member of the public for comment.

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<th>4.</th>
<th>STAFF REPORT</th>
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<td>a.</td>
<td>UPCOMING EVENTS</td>
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| b. | UPDATE ON BORDER ENERGY ISSUES GROUP ACTIVITIES  
(Hector Vanegas, SANDAG) |

This report provides the latest developments of the Border Energy Issues Group (BEIG), which was formed by recommendation from the 2003 Binational Summer Conference.
5. **ESTIMATING ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF BORDER WAIT TIMES AT SAN DIEGO-BAJA CALIFORNIA BORDER REGION** *(Elisa Arias, SANDAG)*

SANDAG, in partnership with Caltrans District 11, is conducting a study to estimate the impact of border delays on the economy of the San Diego and northern Baja California border region. Staff will present an overview of the results of surveys carried out at the San Ysidro-Puerta México, Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay, and Tecate-Tecate ports of entry between November 2004 and February 2005, and progress on the development of the economic impact model.

6. **A PERSPECTIVE ON NATURAL GAS IN BAJA CALIFORNIA** *(Virgilio Muñoz, Tijuana Trabaja)*

This report presents the outcomes and results of a survey and workshop held in 2004, reflecting the knowledge and understanding of the community of Baja California on the issue of natural gas. (Attached are the Introduction, Background, and Conclusion sections. Copies of the entire report will be distributed at the meeting. This document is only available in Spanish.)

7. **CROSS-BORDER PASSENGER TERMINAL OF TIJUANA’S INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN OTAY MESA** *(Councilmember Steve Castañeda, City of Chula Vista; Doug Perkins, Pacific Gateway)*

This report will update the status of this proposed terminal for passengers in Otay Mesa for the International Airport of Tijuana. This proposal has regional implications and is intended to support the region’s international air travel demands and will require a new pedestrian port of entry.

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

The Committee’s next meeting date is May 3, 2005, from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at SANDAG’s 7th Floor Conference Room.

The Committee should discuss the possibility of changing its meeting day and time to ease members’ travel from and to Baja California.

(+) next to an item indicates attached report/material.
COMMITTEE ON BINATIONAL REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (COBRO) MEETING SUMMARY OF MARCH 1, 2005

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The March 1, 2005, Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO) meeting was called to order by Chair Paul Ganster. The meeting was held at SANDAG.

Members present were: Lydia Antonio, Mexican Consulate in San Diego; Elsa Saxod, City of San Diego; David Pérez-Tejada, City of Mexicali; Pedro Orso-Delgado, Caltrans; Mark Baza, Caltrans; Gustavo Pérez, City of Chula Vista; Yolanda Walther-Meade, Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad; Joaquín Luken, Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce; Nathan Owens, San Diego Dialogue; Angelika Villagrana and Viviana Ibañez, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce; Jim Neal, South County Economic Development Council; Alex Hidalgo, San Diego State University - Office of International Programs; Dave Fege, United States Environmental Protection Agency - Border Liaison Office; Francisco Gallego, City of Tijuana; Bob Leiter, Hector Vanegas, and Ron Saenz from SANDAG.

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

2. MEETING SUMMARY OF FEBRUARY 1, 2005

Nathan Owens, San Diego Dialogue, made a correction to the February 1, 2005, minutes. On page 10 of the minutes it now reads:

Nathan Owens, San Diego Dialogue, mentioned that the idea of a workshop is great, but he wondered if the region had the wherewithal to take the information and come out with something complete and concrete.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

District Director Alejandra Sotelo-Solis, Assemblywoman Lori Saldaña’s San Diego District Office, introduced herself and extended an invitation to Committee members and guests to attend an Open House on Friday, March 11, 2005.
Yolanda Walther Meade, Fundación Internacional de la Comunidad, A.C., announced the opening of the National Conflict Resolution Center partnered with the IberoAmericana in Tijuana that will perform the same functions as other centers located in the United States.

Angelika Villagrana, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, reminded the Committee of the upcoming 4th Annual Mexico Economic Outlook Conference to be held on Friday, March 18, 2005. She also announced that US-VISIT brochures written in Spanish were available to take to Tijuana.

4. STAFF REPORT

Hector Vanegas, SANDAG, reminded the Committee that there was a handout of additional upcoming events.

Ron Saenz, SANDAG, commented that since the Committee’s focus has been on Otay Mesa, the Otay River Watershed Management Plan is important to consider when looking at planning issues in the Otay Mesa area. Trish Boaz, the director of the management plan, will speak at the next Borders Committee meeting on March 18, 2005.

Chair Paul Ganster commented that watershed management plans are much in vogue in California. They have been stimulated by the availability of money that was raised though public bond issue Proposition 13, and then a later round under Proposition 50. The purpose is to establish management plans by ecological units known as watersheds in order to control non-point source pollution or the pollution that is produced by storm water runoff, which is the pollution that is the most difficult to control. It is something that some COBRO members have been working on for the Tijuana River Watershed. Since it is a binational watershed, they really can’t produce a management plan because there is no binational mechanism yet.

Chair Paul Ganster extended a special welcome to David Pérez-Tejada, the new representative to COBRO from the City of Mexicali.

5. PRESENTATION ON THE CITY OF CHULA VISTA’S GENERAL PLAN (Planning Department, City of Chula Vista)

Principal Planner Rick Rosaler, City of Chula Vista Planning Department, presented Chula Vista’s Vision 2020 General Plan Update (GPU) to the Committee.

The presentation focused on the following five topics: opportunities; community input overview; GPU East area themes and responses; overview of land use/transportation alternatives; growth management/economic development/university. Current opportunities include housing, employment, university campus, transportation and infrastructure, growth management and public facilities, and the environment.

East Chula Vista planning history includes master-planned communities: Eastlake Planned Community (1980s) and Otay Ranch Planning Initiative (late 1980s/early 1990s).

The master-planned communities were a unique opportunity to try different planning concepts, from traditional auto-oriented to transit-oriented, pedestrian-friendly designs. The lessons learned from these master-planned communities in dealing with transit and pedestrian orientation are
being applied to the west side of the City as part of the GPU. Housing, employment, the university campus, and transportation infrastructure are part of the GPU, and are all opportunities to add more housing to the City to make it more affordable.

The following were taken into consideration when forming land use and concepts for Chula Vista’s Vision 2020 GPU: economic development strategy; community input through public participation programs, visions and goals, smart planning principles, and technical studies; regional factors (transit first, population growth, future jobs, and housing). Public comment output demonstrated that citizens are concerned with protecting open space and the Otay River Valley. They also showed support for a regional technology park, the university campus, and transit centers. Furthermore, they wanted to maintain freeway-oriented commercial shops and supported a 70-acre community park.

Chula Vista planning staff, the Planning Commission, and the City Council worked together to come up with three different alternatives. The steering committee then decided on the preferred alternative, which will go forward for a public hearing on March 2, 2005.

The Section 10 overview of the plan consists of six sub-areas sharing common characteristics: unincorporated seawater; unincorporated East Otay Ranch; master-planned communities; East Main Street; Otay Ranch; and other miscellaneous. These sub-areas are further differentiated into districts and focus areas. Topic areas for the Section 10 overview include: land use; density of development; community character-height and scale; connectivity/compatibility between areas and uses; and special needs and considerations. All existing policies were reviewed for relevance and organized by areawide considerations and factors, sub-areaewide considerations and factors, and district and focus areas.

The preferred alternative GPU is as follows:

Village Core - Additional multi-family units and supporting uses in Village 2 are in conjunction with an expanded transit system and station location. This area is surrounded by lower-density, single-family housing.

Community Park - A large community park provides an active sports complex serving a broad area.

Freeway Commercial - Multi-family units are added with retail commercial adjacent to planned transit.

University - Approximately 550 acres are designated for a multi-institutional university campus.

University Town Center - A higher-density “town center” is located adjacent to the University and provides higher-density housing, retail, and other uses in support of the university, and surrounds a planned transit route and station.

Regional Technology Park - A 125- to 200-acre “regional technology park” is located next to SR 125 to provide a greatly needed base of higher-value jobs for residents, and is envisioned to have ties to research and development opportunities at the University.
Town Center - A new “mixed use” town center with surrounding single-family neighborhoods is proposed at the intersection of Rock Mountain Road/La Media Road in association with expanded transit and a new station.

Otay Valley - Active recreational use areas are proposed within Otay Valley.

Industrial - Limited industrial uses clustered around the Otay Landfill and along Main and Heritage effectively create a buffer and provide expanded employment opportunities.

Chair Ganster commented that in terms of linkages with Otay Mesa and linkages with services there isn’t much going on. He asked if they took service linkages into consideration when formulating the original plan.

Mr. Rosaler, City of Chula Vista, stated that when the plans were originally drawn in the early 1990s, the County of San Diego was a partner and the focus was really on balancing housing in Otay Ranch with employment in Otay Mesa. Since then, the focus has shifted to technology and higher-paying jobs within the city, which is the reason for the 200-acre regional technology park and urban center. It is still viewed that SR 125 is the connection between the two, and the city is somewhat protective of making sure that SR 125 is successful as a toll road, so they are making sure that they have the appropriate connections. The City of Chula Vista is coordinating with the proper agencies, including Caltrans.

Bob Leiter, SANDAG, mentioned that the University site has been in the City of Chula Vista’s general plan since 1988 and the concept of creating a site for a future public university has always been an important topic, so much so that areas for the campus were reserved in master the plan. They are also working on the concept of several universities co-located around facilities such as libraries, much like the concept used in Denver and other parts of the country. One of the interesting aspects of Chula Vista building a university is that it could be a part of the binational planning corridor. This will allow us to take a deeper look into some of the environmental and economic issues that pertain to this corridor.

Gustavo Pérez, City of Chula Vista, commented that the University location is a critical area in the region. Currently, the City is working with different institutions to develop a binational-type university and has been meeting with the State of Baja California Secretary of Education and Economic Development. They are seriously considering linkages with Mexican and U.S. schools, and recognize the potential for developing international relationships. It plans to follow the ‘Auraria Plan’ in which several universities, including a community college, are located in the same area and share facilities. It has been very successful in Denver. In fact, 50 percent of the students that enter the two-year program go on to a four-year program, and 90 percent of those students stay within the campus since they are familiar with the various facilities. There is a strong need for the area to have a four-year institution.

Mr. Rosaler, City of Chula Vista, pointed out that the three key points for the University project are: access, distinction, and economic development. He also commented that the Technology Park was designed in response to the region’s economic development strategies.
The Committee discussed transportation structure and issues in the Otay Mesa and Mesa de Otay region and agreed that it was important to ensure the movement of large groups of people in and around the region. They agreed to continue looking into transportation issues.

Chair Ganster thanked Mr. Rosaler for making the presentation and commented that it gave the Committee a lot of information in terms of how the plan is related not only to Otay Mesa and Mesa de Otay, but to Baja California, as well.

6. PREPARATION OF SANDAG’S 2005 BINATIONAL CONFERENCE (Hector Vanegas, SANDAG)

Chair Ganster began the 2005 Binational Conference discussion. The task force that volunteered to help in the planning for the Binational Conference met today to talk about the theme for the upcoming conference. They decided the theme will be ‘Cross-border collaboration and planning for Otay Mesa/Mesa de Otay’ for planning across the border region and will focus specifically on: housing; economic development; transportation; and conservation. Generally the conference is held in July, but the Committee has decided to hold the next Binational Conference in the fall. We would like to hold two workshops, one in Otay Mesa and another in Mesa de Otay. Each event would include an introduction on existing planning and a discussion on what the public and planners want to see happen. Then there would be a series of breakout sessions and a discussion of results and next steps. COBRO would then come together and draw some conclusions. We are looking to hold the conference the first or second week of October and we need full engagement from across the border at an early date, as well as approval of COBRO and Borders Committees. The taskforce has an outline for Committee approval. It is imperative that ImPlan and Caltrans, as well as similar agencies from Tecate and Playas de Rosarito, are involved.

The Committee discussed the different areas that it will focus on for the two workshops, and housing, economic development, transportation, and conservation were decided on for the focus topics because they also overlap with other important issues such as land use and regional growth.

Bob Leiter, SANDAG, motioned to add that those who participated in the Regional Comprehensive Plan workshops would recognize these Otay Mesa/Mesa de Otay workshops as the beginning to getting the public and stakeholders involved in the process. It is also similar to the beginning steps in the Interregional Partnership with Riverside. This is the opportunity to engage both sides of the border as well as to lay the groundwork for the next couple of years.

Chair Ganster added that the workshops will also lead both sides to a better understanding of planning processes on either side. We will soon have a fully urbanized area from Rosarito to Camp Pendleton, and planning lessons we learn can be applied along the entire border.

Pedro Orso-Delgado, Caltrans, mentioned that Caltrans has been trying to come up with a planning mechanism to look at the needs across the border, which will involve municipal, state, and federal agencies. Caltrans is also looking at Otay Mesa East-Mesa de Otay II Port of Entry with agencies in Baja California to develop this binational project, and currently they are at the scoping level.

Elsa Saxod, City of San Diego, moved to accept the Binational Conference recommendation in draft form and for it to be sent to the Borders Committee.

The recommendation was passed.
Michael Krichman, Executive Director of inSite_05, began the presentation with an overview of inSite.

It is a dynamic, collaborative undertaking of more than 15 nonprofit and public institutions in the United States and Mexico that facilitate the creation of new art in public spaces. It is dedicated to the realization of binational collaborative arts partnerships in the San Diego/Tijuana region. It brings together art and community leaders from San Diego, Tijuana, Los Angeles, and Mexico City. The inSite_05 project includes an extensive exhibition of commissioned art in public spaces, a variety of education programs, and residencies for curators and artists. inSite_05 has focused on artistic practices that explore peoples’ understanding of the terms “public,” “urban,” and “border.” It is made up of over 150 artists, 30 collaborating institutions, and over 100 commissioned projects. Audiences of over 200,000 attend each exhibition, and it has received critical reviews and press in over 100 local, national, and international publications. Many of the projects created here have gone on to be exhibited at high-profile venues in Europe and the Americas. The current version of the inSite project, inSite_05, will explore the specific dynamics of the binational region. More than 100 artists, curators, and theorists from around the region will participate in the four interdisciplinary components of inSite_05: Interventions/Bypass; Scenarios; Conversations; Two-City Exhibition/FarSites.

Interventions is a series of artist residencies, which will culminate in 23 new projects sited in the public domain throughout San Diego and Tijuana. Scenarios will explore new forms of public practice in public space. It will support the production of new works in three arenas not traditionally associated with the visual arts. These new works include: online project, archive project, and sound and image project. The online project “Tijuana Calling” will enlist an international roster of artists for an online exhibition of interactive, web-based projects. Insight_Transborder Archive will create interactive archives in San Diego and Tijuana based on specific social, cultural, and political issues. The archive will solicit materials from multiple communities in the region and will be accessible to the public from July through December 2005. Conversations is an ongoing series of dialogues, workshops, lectures, and publications with local and international artists, curators, writers, and researchers.

Museum Exhibition/FarSites: inSite will present the first exhibit jointly organized by the largest cultural institutions in the region—The Centro Cultural Tijuana and the San Diego Museum of Art.

The region is fragmented. People do not understand what is happening on either side of the border. inSite considers itself to be a binational organization that enlists institutions from both sides of the border and is represented by both sides of the border. In the United States, funding is usually non-profit and private, whereas in Mexico, projects are funded by federal, state, or municipal governments. Currently, inSite is trying to find different ways of collaborating across the border and is in the process of preparing inSite_05.

Michael Krichman, Executive Director, thanked the Committee for the opportunity to present and encouraged continued cooperation and involvement. He commented that the artists involved in the projects have done a lot of research on the area and want to restore the circle that used to be the international border marker and bring back the tree planted by Pat Nixon. inSite cannot build ports
of entry but, as artists, their hope is to foster more dialogue. He suggested perhaps taking members on a tour of ongoing projects as a way to increase participation.

Chair Ganster thanked Mr. Krichman for making the presentation to COBRO and agreed that continued cooperation and involvement is important for any binational undertaking.

8. ADJOURNMENT, AND NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION

The next meeting of COBRO will be held on Tuesday, April 5, 2005, from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. The location for this meeting will be announced.
UPCOMING EVENTS:

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<th>WHAT</th>
<th>Desarrollo Economico, Curso Basico/Mexico Economic Development Course</th>
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<tr>
<td>WHEN</td>
<td>April 7–11, 2005</td>
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<td>WHERE</td>
<td>CETYS University, Campus Tijuana</td>
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<td>MORE INFO</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mmartinez@cetys.mx">mmartinez@cetys.mx</a>, <a href="mailto:mcarrillo@cetys.mx">mcarrillo@cetys.mx</a></td>
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<td>WHERE</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.scerp.org">www.scerp.org</a></td>
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<td>SPONSOR</td>
<td>Consorcio de Investigación y Política Ambiental del Suroeste / Southwest Consortium for Environmental Research and Policy</td>
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<th>WHAT</th>
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<td>May 14, 2005</td>
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<td>WHERE</td>
<td>San Diego Sheraton Hotel and Marina, San Diego, CA</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.icfdn.org/">http://www.icfdn.org/</a>, <a href="mailto:anne@icfdn.org">anne@icfdn.org</a></td>
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<td>WHEN</td>
<td>May 15-17, 2005</td>
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<td>WHERE</td>
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<td>SPONSOR</td>
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<th>WHAT</th>
<th>14th Annual Latin American Energy Conference</th>
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<td>WHEN</td>
<td>May 16-17, 2005</td>
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<td>WHERE</td>
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<td>MORE INFO</td>
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<td>Institute of the Americas</td>
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WHAT: Exhibit: “Taking the Bus Early”  
WHEN: Reception: May 19, 2005, 6:30 p.m. (Runs late April through August)  
WHERE: Kellogg Library, California State University San Marcos  
MORE INFO: http://library.csusm.edu  
SPONSOR: CSUSM

WHAT: 2nd Annual Conference on Latin American Sustainable Development  
WHEN: June 16-17, 2005  
WHERE: Weaver Center, Institute of the Americas  
MORE INFO: www.iAmericas.org  
SPONSOR: Institute of the Americas

WHAT: 6th Annual Mexport Trade Show  
WHEN: Wednesday, June 22, 2005  
WHERE: San Diego Business Park, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
MORE INFO: marisol@otaymesa.org, www.mexport.org  
SPONSOR: Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce

WHAT: US-Mexico Border Energy Forum  
WHEN: October 13-14, 2005  
WHERE: Santa Fe, New Mexico  
MORE INFO: http://glo.state.tx/energy/border/forum/  
SPONSOR: Texas General Land Office
UPDATE ON BORDER ENERGY ISSUES GROUP ACTIVITIES

Introduction

In 2003, the SANDAG Board of Directors authorized the Borders Committee to facilitate an exploratory group, the Border Energy Issues Group (BEIG), to promote open dialogue between sector leaders from the United States and Mexico with the goal of recommending strategies to address energy infrastructure and supply needs. It also will focus on the efficient and environmentally-sound production and use of energy resources in the region. Since its formation, this group has meet on ten occasions, and has participated with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s and Mexico’s Secretaría del Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales’ Border 2012 Program and the California Energy Commission’s workshops.

Discussion

The issue of energy supply in the San Diego-Baja California region has played an important role in SANDAG’s 1999 and 2002 Binational Summer Conferences. The 1999 conference entitled, “Energy, Transportation, and Trade: Linking Binational Opportunities in the San Diego-Baja California Region,” recommended to “create a binational energy group for the San Diego/Baja California/Imperial County border area composed of key energy players from government agencies, energy providers, universities, and companies to discuss important binational energy issues and opportunities.” Three years later, the Board of Directors followed the recommendations of the 2002 conference to “authorize the Borders Committee to help expedite the formation of the Binational Energy Forum,” later known as BEIG.

Some topics discussed at past BEIG meetings are:

- San Diego’s and Baja California’s heavy dependence on energy resources from outside the region.
- San Diego’s importation of 55 percent of its power and all of its liquid fuels.
- Baja California’s power grid and natural gas pipeline systems isolation from the rest of Mexico, but connection to the U.S. Western Grid System.
- Transportation sector is largest energy consumer on both sides of border.
- Demand for power in Baja California is expected to grow by 6 to 7 percent per year for the next ten years, and by 3 percent per year for San Diego.
Demand for natural gas in Mexico is expected to increase 8.7 percent annually for the next ten years.

BEIG has identified some opportunities and challenges for this border region in terms of energy supply. Some of the opportunities identified are the availability of new energy supplies to the binational region, new investment in energy infrastructure in both Mexico and California, and the development of new energy service industries that could serve the binational energy market. In contrast, some challenges identified are the environmental effects that power plants, natural gas pipelines, liquid natural gas (LNG) facilities, and other energy-related infrastructure projects can have on Mexico and California. The most significant of those effects will be on air quality, water quality and quantity, and land use.

During the last two years, BEIG has been able to facilitate a binational dialogue between government agencies, academia, NGOs, and citizens interested in energy supply. This has provided a better understanding of our shared future in this matter. Currently, members of the BEIG are supporting the California Energy Commission (CEC) on its preparation of the state energy plan, in which the CEC plans to include a chapter on border energy.

A recurring theme in BEIG’s discussions is the need to have better border-wide planning and coordination of energy projects. At the moment, there is no coordination of projects on either side of the border, and each energy project—be it power plants, LNG facilities, or transmission lines—is treated separately, with little or no coordination or communication taking place with stakeholders on the other side of the border. Since all energy projects have environmental and economic impacts that affect citizens on both sides of the border, some mechanism needs to be developed to address this shortfall.

Key Staff Contact: Hector Vanegas (619) 699-1972; hva@sandag.org
A PERSPECTIVE ON NATURAL GAS IN BAJA CALIFORNIA

The attached report, available only in Spanish, will present the outcomes and results of a survey and workshop held in 2004, reflecting the knowledge and understanding of the community of Baja California on the issue of natural gas.
Energía para el desarrollo regional sustentable

Gas natural en Baja California
encuesta estatal

Tijuana Trabaja, Asociación Civil
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Encuesta sobre desarrollo económico y gas natural en Baja California

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1. Presentación

El tema de la energía es crucial para Baja California. Nuestra región carece de suficientes recursos naturales para sustentar, por sí misma, un acelerado proceso de incremento demográfico, de crecimiento económico y de expansión urbana. En particular, el estado carece de suficientes fuentes de agua y energía.

Estas carencias geográficas se convierten en una dependencia estructural: en tales circunstancias, el abastecimiento de agua y energía constituyen, a largo plazo, los retos fundamentales para mantener el ritmo de crecimiento de la economía y elevar el nivel de bienestar de la sociedad.

Bajo esas premisas, los retos de la energía y del agua son cruciales para lograr un desarrollo regional estable, duradero y equilibrado. Por encima de otros problemas de circunstancia o de ciertas medidas de coyuntura, tarde o temprano la región deberá enfrentar y resolver el desafío del agua y la energía.

En un contexto de retos y oportunidades, el tema del gas natural aparece como una opción que resolvería las necesidades energéticas del estado, que contribuiría a la reactivación y competitividad económicas de la región y que aportaría importantes elementos en materia de empleo y sustentabilidad ambiental.

La premisa es que el gas natural sigue siendo una opción atractiva de energía limpia, segura y barata para el desarrollo de la ciudad. Es deseable entonces que se hagan esfuerzos para remover aquellos obstáculos que podrían impedir el establecimiento de empresas regasificadoras.

Es necesario que, en el marco de la legislación vigente, las empresas de gas natural –como todas las demás–, reciban suficiente garantías de certidumbre, agilidad y transparencia, de manera que sus
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inversiones tengan aceptables márgenes de rentabilidad y puedan brindar el apoyo al crecimiento de la economía local.

Al estar garantizados el cumplimiento de la ley, el orden urbano, la protección del ambiente y la seguridad de la población, se deben propiciar condiciones que aseguren el establecimiento de plantas de gas natural en la región, como un paso necesario para que el crecimiento acelerado se convierta en desarrollo armónico.

Con estas consideraciones, Tijuana Trabaja llevó a cabo una encuesta estatal sobre gas natural y desarrollo económico. Con un diseño riguroso y resultados confiables, esta investigación científica muestra y demuestra cuál es la opinión y postura de la población sobre el tema del gas natural en Baja California.

Virgilio Muñoz,
Director de Tijuana Trabaja, A. C.
2. Antecedentes

Desde 1986, se planteó la inversión de empresas de gas natural en Baja California. A mediados de la década de los 90, se autorizaron los primeros permisos para establecer una planta en Mexicali y conducir gas natural hacia la termoeléctrica de Rosarito. En 2001, se anunciaron otros proyectos para la zona costa.

Desde un principio, estos proyectos de inversión en empresas almacenadoras y distribuidoras de gas natural en la entidad han encontrado el cuestionamiento de algunos sectores y la oposición de determinados grupos que, en el fondo, evidenciaban posiciones políticas, intereses económicos o problemas de información.

Al desvincular el tema del gas natural del contexto del desarrollo regional sustentable y al detectarse que las posturas críticas se sustentaban en el prejuicio y, sobre todo, en deficiencias de información documentada, objetiva y oportuna, Tijuana Trabaja realizó hace un año un estudio local sobre agua y energía.

En dicha investigación, que estaba basada en análisis de información, entrevistas de especialistas y encuesta de opinión, se estableció una conclusión: “Se puede decir que hay información, pero existe una sociedad desinformada. Los esfuerzos en este sentido enfrentan un problema de confianza.”

“Las opiniones que han manifestado rechazo a las plantas gaseras –se señalaba en dicho estudio--, se refieren a la localización de las instalaciones, a los riesgos sociales, al impacto ambiental y a los beneficios para la ciudad. Estas preocupaciones son legítimas, aunque no todas están fundadas.

“En unos casos –apuntaba una de las conclusiones--, el rechazo a las empresas regasificadoras puede ser explicado por falta de información; en otros, por razones de interés particular; en unos más,
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por reservas de orden ideológica; las razones más imponentes tienen que ver con la rentabilidad política.”

“Es muy importante que la ciudadanía se convenza de que estos proyectos son parte de una estrategia de desarrollo congruente con una visión del largo plazo –concluía el estudio de Tijuana Trabaja. De lo contrario, no habrá una correcta relación e involucramiento de la sociedad.”

Como resultado de esta investigación se plantearon varias recomendaciones, a efecto, de ahondar en estos temas cruciales, de manera que se pudiera contribuir al progreso de la región, “desde una perspectiva de cultura ciudadana para un desarrollo duradero, sustentable y equitativo.”

Sobre esa base, se realizaron decenas de reuniones con grupos representativos, en las que se presentaron los resultados del estudio y se plantearon los retos y alternativas del desarrollo sustentable, desde la perspectiva de los retos y oportunidades de la energía, en particular, del gas natural.

En el año 2003, se publicó el estudio sobre agua y energía.1 En diciembre de ese mismo año, se realizó una reunión binacional sobre desarrollo binacional y sustentable, que congregó a importantes personalidades y organismos vinculados al desarrollo económico y al medio ambiente en ambos lados de la frontera.

Durante los meses de julio y septiembre, se diseñó y aplicó una investigación social, basada en una encuesta estatal, sobre el gas natural, en el contexto del desarrollo económico sustentable. Los resultados de este trabajo muestran, de manera clara y objetiva, la postura de los ciudadanos de Baja California hacia el gas natural.

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5. Conclusiones

La encuesta estatal sobre gas natural arroja las siguientes conclusiones:

1. El 44.9 por ciento considera que en la vocación de Baja California predominan las actividades industriales.

2. El 29.5 por ciento considera que infraestructura y servicios son determinantes en el desarrollo, por debajo de la educación.

3. El 38.7 por ciento de la población consideró que el gobierno debe brindar mayor apoyo a la industria.

4. El 67.8 por ciento considera que la electricidad es la principal fuente de energía para la industria estatal.

5. El 5.9 por ciento considera que, en la actualidad, el gas natural es la fuente de energía más importante para la industria.

6. El 25.6 por ciento estima que el gas natural es la fuente de energía más utilizada para generar electricidad en el estado.

7. El 67.8 por ciento desconoce la relación entre disposición de gas natural, generación de electricidad y abastecimiento de agua.

8. El 70.2 por ciento tiene una opinión positiva o muy positiva a traer gas natural a precios económicos.

9. El 64.6 por ciento manifestó una postura entre positiva y muy positiva a la instalación de empresas regasificadoras.

10. La oposición al establecimiento de este tipo de empresas sólo representa el 17.7 por ciento del total.
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11. El 74.9 por ciento apoya y sólo el 17.9 por ciento rechaza la posibilidad de que el gobierno promueva plantas de gas natural.

12. El 84.2 y el 51.7 por ciento, respectivamente, desconoce a la autoridad y las normas relacionadas con el gas natural.

13. El 19.3 por ciento de los entrevistados conocen o han escuchado acerca de los proyectos de gas natural licuado en la región.

14. El 55.2 por ciento de los entrevistados no ha participado en reuniones públicas sobre proyectos de gas natural en el estado.

15. El 69.4 por ciento de las personas se informó sobre el tema del gas natural a través de la televisión.

16. El 10.8 por ciento se enteró del tema por otras personas, lo que es superior al porcentaje que se enteró por periódico o radio.

17. La mayoría de los bajacalifornianos estimar que las ventajas de contar con plantas de gas natural licuado en el estado, serían:

   a. El 36.7 por ciento de la muestra opinó que la principal ventaja era tener acceso a gas natural más barato.

   b. El 19.9 por ciento señaló que era la posibilidad de dejar de importarlo desde Estados Unidos.

   c. El 18.8 por ciento consideró que la principal ventaja sería tener abasto suficiente sin depender del mercado norteamericano, y

   d. El 14.2 por ciento estimó que esta ventaja sería generar electricidad suficiente a precios competitivos.