



## Summary of the SANDAG 2012 Binational Seminar

Tuesday, June 26, 2012

### 1. REGISTRATION AND NETWORKING TIME

### 2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

(Hon. John Minto, Chair of the Borders Committee; Hon. Remedios Gómez-Arnau, Consul General of Mexico in San Diego; Laurie Berman, Caltrans, District 11; and Alfonso Bustamante, City of Tijuana)

Hon. John Minto, Chair of the Borders Committee and City of Santee Councilmember, welcomed attendees and participants to the Seminar and mentioned that the Seminar was being digitally recorded and will be posted on the SANDAG Web site with the Seminar's material. He stated that the event is part of an effort that SANDAG initiated 15 years ago. The purpose of this year's seminar is to foster active communication among the binational border stakeholders and through joint discussions identify areas of effective collaboration that each region could consider incorporating into their regional planning documents, gain insight and consensus on how to move forward on those areas of potential collaboration, and explore the appropriate timing to move forward on future collaboration efforts. Mr. Minto explained that the outcomes from the seminar will be discussed by the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities (COBRO), which will explore possible recommendations with the Borders Committee.

Hon. Remedios Gómez-Arnau, Consul General of Mexico in San Diego, congratulated SANDAG for the binational work of COBRO and its contributions over the past 15 years. She stated that the Mexican Consular Representation in San Diego is happy to support ways to address issues and interests of the border region such as this year's Seminar topic. Consul General Remedios Gómez-Arnau highlighted the importance and opportunity of linking both regions' plans and improving the collaboration being made in the region.

Alfonso Bustamante, Director of Binational Affairs of the City of Tijuana, thanked for the opportunity of being part of the seminar. He added that this type of event highlights the efforts between the two regions, as well as the large improvements made.

Laurie Berman, Director of Caltrans, District 11, welcomed and thanked the coordinating agencies and attendees. She stated that Caltrans is pleased to have been the host for the past four years and explained that this year's Seminar theme is very important to Caltrans because it is a follow up of the 2004 Binational Seminar which produced the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan. Ms. Berman stated this seminar would be particularly

instructive, as attendees would learn about the planning efforts being made by both the San Diego region and the Tijuana, Tecate, and Playas de Rosarito Metropolitan Zone, which will also serve as input for the California-Baja California Border Master Plan 2012-13 update. Ms. Berman explained that one of the main objectives of this plan is to better understand the gaps between the two regions' modeling abilities, and be able to improve forecasts for the ports of entry system and implementing operational and infrastructure improvements.

3. SETTING THE STAGE FOR A DISCUSSION ON CROSSBORDER COLLABORATION  
(Hon. David Alvarez, City of San Diego; and Elisa Arias, SANDAG)

Hon. David Alvarez, Councilmember of the City of San Diego, welcomed attendees and participants to the Seminar and thanked visitors that came from other cities. He also thanked the staff's work on this seminar and throughout other collaborative efforts.

Councilman Alvarez stated that last year, the San Ysidro–Puerta México border crossing handled more than 30 million border travelers crossing from Tijuana to San Diego. If we double this figure to account for the return trips to Tijuana, the San Ysidro crossing processed more than 60 million people last year. Freight worth billions of dollars is transferred back and forth at the Otay Mesa border crossing, which is why these dynamics have important transportation, environmental, housing, and economic considerations. He went on to state that these crossings underscore the importance of supporting crossborder collaboration which is why we are all here today.

Councilman Alvarez stated that in 2004, the San Diego Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) was the first major planning effort in the San Diego region to strategically address binational border issues with input from COBRO and the Borders Committee, and other stakeholders. The 2050 Regional Transportation Plan and its Sustainable Communities Strategy (2050 RTP/SCS) is the most recent and relevant planning document for the San Diego region. The next major planning effort will be to merge the RCP and the RTP/SCS into a combined regional plan due in 2015.

Councilmember Alvarez explained that the Tijuana, Tecate, and Playas de Rosarito Metropolitan Zone will finalize its first strategic plan this fall. It builds upon the three municipalities local plans and it shares many common elements with San Diego's regional plans.

Councilmember Alvarez added that this seminar is not just a great opportunity to strengthen our regional collaboration, but also to envision two regions that work, play, and thrive together because it is unacceptable to deny the possibilities of a joint work.

Elisa Arias, Principal Planner at SANDAG, stated that the seminar would focus on how we can move forward to continue to align regional planning across the border. She explained SANDAG and IMPLAN took a first step in 2007 with the development of the Otay Mesa-Mesa de Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan. The preparation of the first Metropolitan Strategic Plan in Baja California is now a driver to broaden the scope of our planning efforts.

Ms. Arias explained that the forthcoming presentations in the first part of the Seminar would provide the context for the second part in which Elsa Saxod, past Chair of COBRO, would be the moderator of a panel of experts from both sides of the border. The panelists would discuss existing border planning efforts, reflect on crossborder planning and collaboration best practices, and share their insights into potential areas of collaboration, referencing the White Paper prepared for the Binational Seminar that is included in the agenda packet.

4. OPPORTUNITIES FOR REGIONAL COLLABORATION ON THE BORDER: SHARING THE EUROPEAN BORDER EXPERIENCE WITH THE SAN DIEGO/TIJUANA REGION  
(Dr. Freerk Boedeltje, Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias, San Diego State University)

Dr. Freerk Boedeltje began his presentation by stating that one of the main issues crossborder collaboration faces is security and homeland defense. The border narrative in local politics in the San Diego region is focused on immigration and security despite approximately 50,000 northbound vehicles crossings every day through the Tecate, Otay Mesa, and San Ysidro Ports of Entry combined.

The 2012 U.S. federal budget for U.S.-Mexico border security, a record high, reached \$14 billion to support the border security. In contrast the U.S. federal budget in 2011 for security on the U.S.-Canada border was \$2.9 billion. It was reported that the U.S. spent \$90 billion over 10 years in securing the U.S.-Mexico border.

Dr. Boedeltje compared these statistics with the European Union (EU), in which Investment in security is significantly less. From 2007-2013 they spent only \$2.6 billion on external border security.

The EU has a focus on migration in southern Europe for which the EU Border Agency called Frontex coordinates border management, assisting member states with technology and resources. The EU pursues a friendly neighborhood policy through the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) created in 2004 that encourages crossborder cooperation beyond the external borders in order to help countries achieve European standards. The goal is to achieve a stable neighborhood, by reducing trade barriers and promoting human rights, market democracy and education, assistance in the field of justice, anti-terrorism and police; preventing new dividing lines between the EU and its neighbors, and increase stability.

Dr. Boedeltje explained that besides security, the U.S. federal interest in the border region has been sporadic over the years, especially when priorities changed to national security after September 11, 2001, and diminished the available funds for border collaboration and coordination. He added that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was an initial boost in border relations, but they ended up being a hybrid between the ENP and EU-Russia relations of "Special Partnership," where the main characteristics are "proximity, interpenetration, and asymmetry." Another obstacle is that regional governments in border regions are generally weak both in Europe and U.S.; since they are often far away from financial centers and capitals.

Dr. Boedeltje stated that the border delays cost U.S.-Mexico economies \$7.2 billion, and have reduced northbound crossings since 2001 despite growth in trade. In addition, 8 percent of the workers of Tijuana actually are employed across the border in the San Diego region; however, economic interaction has been hindered by excessive border regulations.

As elements of success in the EU collaboration, Dr. Boedeltje identified a political willingness to cooperate beyond the external borders, providing supra-national support for institutionalizing crossborder cooperation, the active promotion of border regions and cooperation (as the key to

raising awareness and promoting people to people contact). Dr. Boedeltje also identified improved efficiency at the border, with easier crossings, and better infrastructure, and the border evolving into less of a fortress to establish better circumstances for integration. In addition, he indicated that an active narrative to promote crossborder cooperation in policies and media, and a parallel effort in cooperation and securitization.

Dr. Boedeltje highlighted the following policy considerations to be made in our region in order to improve collaboration.

1. Leverage and synchronize economic ties between San Diego and Tijuana  
Develop and build on relationships between public agencies, universities, firms, etc. (San Diego State University (SDSU) had a fruitful network); the role for chambers of commerce to create cooperation narrative; rethink security in increased mobility (Better planning/infrastructure/mobility at ports of Entry); make links between regional plans together/coordinate plans (as currently being addressed); reverse narrative of fear to a narrative of cooperation; and
2. Evaluate business models such as the Port of San Diego and the San Diego International Airport as a potential example for land ports of entry.

Dr. Boedeltje stated that these steps should be followed with the purpose to upgrade collaboration to the next level: Cooperation 2.0.

As a conclusion, Dr. Boedeltje stated that in order to improve the binational relationship we, as a region, must determine the model of cooperation desired in the San Diego-Tijuana region, a list of necessary actions that will get collaboration to the desired level, and a clear vision of what we want for the border.

5. A VISION TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES ON CROSSBORDER PLANNING IN THE TIJUANA, TECATE, AND PLAYAS DE ROSARITO METROPOLITAN ZONE  
(Sara Topelson de Grinberg, Under Secretary of Urban Development and Territorial Organization of Mexico's Secretariat of Social Development (SEDESOL))

Undersecretary Sara Topelson began the presentation by explaining that the border is recognized as a region of contrasts and opportunities. It requires a focus in a comprehensive intervention process to address trends and issues related to flows, territorial expansion, connectivity, and economic dynamics, which represents a challenge of joint management schemes.

As key areas of joint collaboration, Undersecretary Topelson highlighted the binational coordination in border infrastructure (tools, planning, master plans), the binational management of risks (importance of information and technology for the movement of people and goods), binational mechanisms of public interaction (coordination and stakeholder participation), improvements to trade and crossborder ties, and bilateral cooperation in law enforcement and security.

Undersecretary Topelson also stated that within the major characteristics of the region we can find the amount of border crossings made and the number of people this represents, which also defines the development of the area due to the dynamics of people flow, goods, technology, and

most recently security. This has the ability of influencing other locations and regions in Mexico, as is the case of Sonora (San Luis Rio Colorado and Puerto Peñasco).

Undersecretary Topelson indicated that there are policies and strategies that are carried out for metropolitan development with better linkage of the less developed areas with those of comparative advantages in terms of location. It seeks to promote connectivity and integration, economic growth and creation of employment, ensuring social and cultural cohesion, and integration of urban land in order to control urban sprawl through re-densification policies for the suitable use of inter-urban land.

The Federal Government provides metropolitan funds to finance strategic projects of metropolitan areas. The Tijuana, Tecate, and Playas de Rosarito Metropolitan Zone received \$306 million pesos in the period of 2009-2012 for the construction, modernization and rehabilitation of various strategic projects.

Among the actions implemented with those funds, we can find the “Rescue of Public Spaces” program, which promotes social actions and construction of necessary infrastructure, and links urban development with social development to prevent insecurity and social violence.

Infrastructure projects such as Puerta Mexico–El Chaparral Port of Entry (POE), Mesa de Otay I and II POEs, and the Tecate POE will have a significant impact in speeding the flow of people and goods across the border.

In conclusion, Undersecretary Topelson indicated that the region presents challenges that need to be faced together, including boosting strategies to compensate for asymmetries in economic structures and urban areas of our cities. Undersecretary Topelson added that both regions would benefit from the opportunities that the tourism sector in the region offers in recreation, dining, health, business, and education, to promote links between governments of both countries and strengthen permanent areas for dialogue to generate more inclusive cities.

## 6. OVERVIEW OF THE SAN DIEGO REGION'S PLANNING EFFORTS (Carolina Gregor, SANDAG)

Carolina Gregor, Senior Planner at SANDAG, presented an overview of SANDAG's responsibilities and organizational structure and began describing the two major regional plans SANDAG has developed.

The RCP, adopted in 2004, is the strategic planning framework for the San Diego region and extends through 2030. It creates a regional vision, provides a broad context in which local and regional decisions can be made that foster a healthy environment, a vibrant economy, and a high quality of life for all residents. It balances regional population, housing, and employment growth with habitat preservation, agriculture, open space, and infrastructure needs and moves the region toward a sustainable future — a future with more choices and opportunities for all residents. True to its name, the RCP is comprehensive in its scope. It looks beyond borders and considers the planning and growth underway in Imperial, Orange, and Riverside Counties as well as in Baja California, Mexico.

The other major regional plan is the 2050 RTP/SCS adopted in 2011, which covers the period from 2011 to 2050. It was developed around five primary components: a SCS; Social Equity and

Environmental Justice; Systems Development; Systems Management; and Demand Management. Each component has a unique, yet interdependent role in creating a sustainable transportation system that improves mobility, reduces greenhouse gases, and increases travel choices for everyone in the San Diego region through 2050. Just like the RCP, the 2050 RTP/SCS also considers the planning and growth underway in Imperial, Orange, and Riverside Counties as well as in Baja California.

Ms. Gregor highlighted that the RCP includes a regional vision that states “To preserve and enhance the San Diego region's unique features – its vibrant and culturally – diverse communities, its beaches, deserts, mountains, lagoons, bluffs, and canyons, and its international setting – and promote sustainability, economic prosperity, and an outstanding quality of life for everyone.”

Ms. Gregor indicated that the next steps for these efforts will be to merge both regional plans in to one new combined regional plan by July 2015. This new plan will address emerging areas and will include public outreach and stakeholder participation.

## 7. OVERVIEW OF TIJUANA, TECATE, AND PLAYAS DE ROSARITO METROPOLITAN ZONE'S PLANNING EFFORTS

(Daniel Rubio and Rodolfo Argote, Tijuana's Metropolitan Planning Institute)

Daniel Rubio, Executive Director, and Rodolfo Argote, Director for Land Use Planning of IMPLAN, gave an overview of the development of the 2011-2034 Tijuana, Tecate, and Playas de Rosarito Metropolitan Zone Strategic Plan, which is a guide towards achieving substantial change in the environmental, economic, urban, social, and institutional development of the Metropolitan Region of Tijuana, Tecate, and Playas de Rosarito. Starting with the commitment of the different urban stakeholders, the main goal is to improve the citizens' quality of life, and ensure the governance and achievement of a shared vision.

The Metropolitan Zone Strategic Plan seeks to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the environmental, economic, urban, social, and institutional sectors of the metropolitan region in a context that highlights the global role of Tijuana, Tecate, and Playas de Rosarito and its transformation into an urban space of social cohesion and international influence.

The vision for the Metropolitan Region in 2034 is the following: “In the year 2034, the Metropolitan Region of Tijuana, Tecate, and Playas de Rosarito is a global metropolis competitive worldwide, within a platform of connectivity and distribution of international networks and the international flow of goods and services. It is characterized as an educated and innovative leading community that promotes the conservation, reuse and recycling of natural resources and use of alternative energy sources. Its high quality of life and economic competitiveness are the reflection of the citizens own security, high level of knowledge, use of cutting-edge technologies, broad ecologic diversity, efficient coordination between the governing representatives, and the enhancement of the potential found in its strategic geographic coastal and border location. Its inhabitants, proud of the identity and culture of their territory, constitute a society that supports solidarity, and that is healthy and active in the sustainable development of the metropolis.”

The Plan covers a great variety of issues, from sustainability with strategies regarding improved management of water resources, to quality of life with actions oriented to the improvement of housing.

The specific objectives of the 2034 Metropolitan Zone Strategic Plan are as follows:

1. Support the institutional and socio-economic development of the Metropolitan Region, in order to improve the quality of life of its inhabitants.
  2. Consolidate the planning processes of infrastructure, economic and social development for the Metropolitan Region, which will also promote the participation of every stakeholder from different sectors.
  3. Define a management process for metropolitan environmental sustainability.
  4. Determine an instrument of metropolitan management, which allows for dialogue between the different stakeholders on sustainable development, working for the metropolitan integration and shared financing of strategic projects.
  5. Generate a metropolitan agenda of actions and strategic projects that identifies stakeholders and responsibilities.
  6. Position the Metropolitan Region in the national and international context.
8. **ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON REGIONAL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING**  
(Binational Panel) (Moderator Elsa Saxod, Past Chair of the Committee on Binational Regional Opportunities)

Tito Alegría, El Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF), stated that because San Diego and Tijuana respond to their own federal governments, the border collaboration lacks enough legal framework to achieve the necessary results. The main issue they are able to efficiently work on is Transportation, which is why it should be the main focus, as it includes border crossings and wait times. This represents the main issue that needs to be addressed in order to improve the flow of people and goods across the border and mitigate collateral damage.

Salvador Gomez Rocha, SEDESOL, added that there are security and collaboration issues, up until now, metropolitan planning has been non-existent, and continues to be very fragile. Constitutional changes are needed in order to allow real regional planning in Mexico.

Bill Anderson, President Elect of the American Planning Association (APA), stated that the City of San Diego is the second largest city in California and eighth largest in the U.S. If we add the San Diego region's population and the population of the Tijuana, Tecate, and Playas de Rosarito Metropolitan Zone, it becomes a region with 5.5 million people, which places it as the tenth largest metropolitan region in the U.S. With projections for 2030, it would become the fourth largest metropolitan region. Our regional location is unique because it is an intersection of three important world economies (North America, Latin America, and the Pacific Rim) with great projections for future economic growth. All of this just highlights the importance of working jointly in order to achieve better results.

Christina Luhn, San Diego Regional EDC, explained that as a region, we need to identify correctly the advantages and challenges we face along the border; we also need to designate strategies from a marketing perspective to make it more competitive and attract investors. In

order to achieve this we need to determine how to approach stakeholders and get them to work jointly.

Moderator Elsa Saxod, Past Chair of COBRO, added that besides the physical separation, there is a “mental” border which remains as an obstacle between the two regions. However, we share issues that go beyond those borders, such as water issues. Tijuana and San Diego both will continue to grow, raising the question of how to provide enough water for the whole region. There are also questions regarding investments, competitiveness and so forth, all of those issues being the main argument for collaboration in order to successfully resolving them.

## 9. OPEN DISCUSSION

One of the main factors the San Diego and Tijuana, Tecate, and Playas de Rosarito regions need to address is how to involve federal governments and bring decisions to a local level. Collaboration is currently greater than before, with more interest and stakeholders, but obstacles remain including the decision making structure, institutional growth, and financing. SANDAG has a good consensus-building model, but we still need to find a way to provide appropriate structure for our border areas, supported by a corresponding legal framework. An opportunity in Mexico to give this type of input might be to provide comments on the “Mexican National Development Plan” (Plan Nacional de Desarrollo) which will be published in 2013.

Also, the potential of facilitating freight movement by train through Tecate could improve the flow of goods across the border crossings. There are other opportunities to link additional strategies from both sides of the border in other areas of transportation, as well as in other areas such as the environment, water, housing, and economic development.

Taking advantage of this strategic location we need to look for economic engines from Tijuana able to complement San Diego sectors and truly collaborate as one region, using our university links, knowledge, digital connections, and technological improvements. We also need to design strategies from a marketing perspective to make our mega-region more competitive and attractive for investors. In order to achieve this, we need to determine how to approach stakeholders and get them to work jointly. In addition, we need to find the reasons why the U.S. is outsourcing to other countries, instead of near sourcing to Tijuana, and work together to bring investment, labor, and companies back.

We need to look at the business models of the Port of San Diego and San Diego International Airport as an opportunity for international land ports of entry.

## 10. CLOSING REMARKS

Chair John Minto, stated that this year’s Binational Seminar had been a great effort in educating us about the overall situation of the border. Mr. Minto explained that we need to find a way of being more inclusive of other cities to improve collaboration and find the support that is required to be able to move forward and achieve our goals as a region. Part of this effort will be to educate legislators on the subject to achieve adequate representation that can get the support needed and get more attention at the federal level.

Mr. Minto suggested for next year's binational event, we could discuss all improvements made throughout the years, the accomplishments as a result of these discussions after the Seminar, and finally, the next steps that need to be taken.

11. END OF SEMINAR