

San Diego Voice and Viewpoint

Bi-national Group Speaks of Promise and Prosperity at Economic Summit

Tuesday, September 16, 2008, 8:00

San Diego, CA – The South County Economic Development Council (EDC) hosted its 18th annual Economic Summit on Friday, which focused on issues affecting economic progress in the South County and border regions.



California State Controller John Chiang kicked-off the summit, addressing the significance that the South County and border region play relative to the economic status of the State. He specifically discussed the downturn in real estate, the home mortgage crisis and their ripple effect throughout the economy. Chiang called for long-term solutions for the State's economic woes as opposed to what he called the "get-out-of-town" solution, where the legislature applies a fix just to "get it over with." He called for a mid-year budget review and a policy allowing for flexibility, warning against either permanent tax or spending cuts.

On a lighter note, Chiang delighted the audience by discussing his office's Unclaimed Property Program. He then proceeded to name over 20 individuals, all active in the EDC who are on his list of unclaimed property or assets, urging them to come forward and make their claim.



The first session of the day featured a debate over the highly controversial 10th Avenue Terminal Initiative, which is planned to be on the November ballot. Frank Gallagher, of San Diego Community Solutions, presented a brief overview of the project as well as the projected benefits the county may see. "The 10th Avenue terminal development is a win-win for the working waterfront," Gallagher said.

His presentation was followed by comments in opposition to the proposal from Lorena Gonzalez, Secretary-Treasurer of the San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor Council and Ray Carpenter of R.E. Staite Engineering. Both explained their position by citing reasons why the initiative would have a negative impact on jobs, the environment, quality of life and maritime commerce. Carpenter called the

initiative a “masterpiece of duplicity, a perfect bait and switch”. Dan Wilkins, Executive Vice President of the San Diego Unified Port District also appeared on the panel to answer specific, Port related questions.

The second session of the day, entitled, “Earth, Wind, Fuel and Fire” focused on the highly sensitive topics of energy, water and fuel. Matt Burkhart, of Sempra Energy, spoke to the sensitive balance needed between supply, demand and regulations. Burkhart reemphasized Sempra’s efforts toward renewable sources of energy and confirmed the company’s unwavering search for solutions.



Bob Yamada presented an overview of upcoming projects for the San Diego County Water Authority in response to the drought situation we are facing. Yamada proclaimed a goal of reducing imported water

dependency from 95% to 29% by the year 2020, stating that, “With our efforts to diversify our water supply and create more local sources, we are hoping to have 40% of our total water usage be from local sources.” He cited such regional CWA efforts as low-flush toilets.

Finally, Melinda Mironoff, of Valero Energy Corporation, discussed the need for the U.S., and energy companies in particular, to find reliable sources of supplies, including renewables. At the same time, they need to strongly encourage conservation. She explained how the east coast/Gulf of Mexico storms may or may not affect gasoline prices and how infrastructure is a major issue facing her industry today.



The final session of the day was focused on bi-national relations. The panel was a combination of leaders from both north and south of the border. Half of the panel addressed the attendees in Spanish and the other half in English, while being simultaneously translated. All participants spoke of representing one community. Assemblymember Mary Salas, Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox, Imperial Beach Mayor Jim Janney, National City Mayor Ron Morrison, San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders, Ensenada Mayor Pablo Alejo Lopez Nunez,

Rosarito Mayor Hugo Torres Chabert, Tecate Mayor Donald Penaloza, and Coronado Councilmember Al Ovrom made up the lively group.

“The border does not divide us as people,” Mayor Sanders said, “We are one region. We all share families on both sides of the border as well as economic resources such as tourism.” Mayor Sanders continued to address the need for a third port of entry, expanding existing ports, and his support of a cross-border airport terminal.

Chula Vista Mayor Cox noted the interest of Gaylord Entertainment as a barometer for the potential of the region. National City Mayor Ron Morrison urged the attendees to take action toward solutions to the regional issues, "All solutions come from a local level; from that level, we have the most impact," Mayor Morrison said.

About South County EDC

The South County EDC is a 501(c)3, non-profit organization founded in 1989, formed by a group of South San Diego County's business and community leaders who wanted to improve and boost the economy and quality of life in the area. Other goals are to heighten public awareness and enhance the image of South County San Diego and the border region. Funding for the organization is provided by grants from the county of San Diego, the San Diego Unified Port District, and the cities of Chula Vista, Coronado, Imperial Beach, National City and San Diego. For more information please visit: www.sandiegosouth.com.



Contentious Issues Climb to Top at South County Summit

Friday, September 12, 2009

By Mike Allen

State Controller John Chiang, who has refused to follow Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's order to pay state workers minimum wages until a budget is passed, said during the South County Economic Summit on Sept. 12 that he has a constitutional obligation to make prescribed payments and that doing the governor's bidding could cost the state triple damages after a judge hears the case.

While Chiang is paying most of the state's bills and hasn't stopped any debt obligations, payments to private vendors have been suspended because there's no budget in place.

The 18th annual South Bay summit, held at the San Diego Convention Center for the fourth straight year, drew nearly 400 attendees.

The event included a panel discussion on the Port of San Diego's Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal development issue that was ruled eligible for the Nov. 4 ballot following a decision by a state appellate court panel Sept. 10.

Frank Gallagher, representing a development group seeking to change the port's master plan to permit commercial development at the terminal, said an estimated \$600 million platform above the terminal could accommodate the current maritime cargo operations and commercial uses, including a hotel and major sports complex.

Ray Carpenter, owner of R.E. Staite Engineering, a longtime maritime engineering expert, said such a decked project can't be found anywhere in the world.

Said Carpenter about the referendum that appears on the ballot in five port cities: "It's a masterpiece of duplicity. It truly is a bait and switch."

Later, Carpenter said the measure was "a land grab, pure and simple."

Gallagher said his group has spent more than a million dollars on the project and will likely spend millions more to get the measure passed by a majority vote of all the voters in the cities.



Panel to debate deck proposal

By Ron Powell

September 11, 2008

SAN DIEGO – Speakers for and against a ballot initiative proposing construction of a deck over the 10th Avenue Marine Terminal in downtown San Diego will square off Friday morning at the San Diego Convention Center.

Yet another court allows port-deck plan on ballot.

A panel discussion will be held at 8:45 a.m. at the convention center, 111 W. Harbor Dr., in room 33BC. It will be held as part of the South County Economic Development Council's 18th annual economic summit.

Cleared this week to appear on the Nov. 4 ballot by the state Fourth District Court of Appeal, the proposal seeks voter approval to allow construction of a 40-foot-tall platform over the cargo shipping terminal, operated by the San Diego Unified Port District. It would also allow construction of commercial uses on the terminal itself as long as maritime operations remain the top priority.

Proponents say the deck could accommodate numerous uses, including an expansion of the nearby convention center, a hotel, sports arena or a stadium – possibly answering the needs of a Chargers team in search of a new place to play.

Opponents – including the Port District, its tenants and longshore workers – believe it would irreparably harm shipping business.

Panelists include Frank Gallagher, whose group San Diego Community Solutions is sponsoring the initiative; Dan Wilkens, executive vice president of the Port District; Lorena Gonzalez of the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council; and Ray Carpenter of R.E. Staite Engineering Co.

Dennis Morgigno of Cox Communications will moderate.



County mayors meet with Baja California counterparts

Border waits and trade top agenda

By Sandra Dibble

September 13, 2008

SAN DIEGO – From Tijuana to San Diego, from Tecate to National City, more efficient border crossings and greater binational collaboration are critical to the growth of communities on both sides, their mayors said yesterday.

The occasion was the 18th annual economic summit of the South County Economic Development Council, where three Baja California mayors joined five San Diego County counterparts in a panel discussion on the future of the binational region.

Sharing the dais of a conference room at the San Diego Convention Center, the eight mayors stressed their interdependence on a broad range of issues, including trade, infrastructure, the environment and water.

“The largest issue for all of us is the border wait,” San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders said. “It impacts our economy, our global competitiveness, because we are one region . . . it affects our relationships, because we share families on both sides of the border.”

For Baja California, the clogged border crossings have meant fewer U.S. tourists, and that has affected communities such as Rosarito Beach, which is heavily dependent on California visitors. While the North American Free Trade Agreement has been a boost for trade and industry in Baja California, “it has not benefited the tourism industry,” Rosarito Beach Mayor Hugo Torres said.

Sanders and Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox urged a binational terminal for A.L. Rodríguez International Airport in Tijuana, allowing U.S. passengers to check in before crossing the border to catch their flights in Mexico.

Ensenada Mayor Pablo Alejo Lo'pez Núñez urged better cross-border planning, saying combined efforts could turn the region into the world's third-largest economic region.

National City and Tecate have used their sister-city relationship to grow closer in recent months, their mayors said, laying the groundwork for further cooperation.

“There have to be strong personal relationships,” said National City Mayor Ron Morrison, saying he has been meeting frequently with Tecate Mayor Donald Peñalosa. “We have to break down the walls. A lot of the walls are between people, and it's up to us as leaders to say, 'The walls are going to come down,' ” he said.

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South County EDC to speak on energy, development, binational business

By NATALIE WARDEL,

Thursday, September 11, 2008

The South County Economic Development Council is hosting its 18th Annual Economic Summit on Friday, focusing on topics concerning economic progress and regional development in the South County and border regions.

The day-long summit will feature former San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown, State Controller John Chaing, and city of Tijuana Mayor Jorge Ramos.

The three panel discussions in the morning are a debate on the 10th Avenue Marine Terminal, an outlook on the future of energy use in the South County and a panel titled "The Future of our Bi-national Region: Up Close and Personal with Bi-national Region Leadership."

The binational panel will feature representatives from Chula Vista, Imperial Beach, Coronado and National City, as well as the mayors of Tecate, Rosarito and Ensenada.

The summit will include a luncheon and awards ceremony in addition to the panel discussions, debates and presentations.

The event will be held at the San Diego Convention Center. The panel discussions are in room 33BC and lunch will be in room 20D.

Mayors from both sides of the border talk of future plans

By NATALIE WARDEL,

Friday, September 12, 2008

The border that separates the United States and Mexico is one with the potential to stop commerce or let it flourish, a panel looking at the binational region said Friday at the South County Economic Development Council's 18th Annual Economic Summit.

The panelists hope to join together to let it flourish.

On the panel from the United States were the mayors of San Diego, Imperial Beach, Chula Vista and National City, as well as a council member from Coronado.

For Mexico, the mayors of Ensenada, Tecate and Rosarito were on hand.

"The border is just that, it's a line," said Chula Vista Mayor Cheryl Cox. "I don't think it needs to divide us as a people."

Cox said the mayors could collaborate in using energy because pollution spreads to both sides of the border. Also, tourism and business developments on either side of the border help residents of the binational region find jobs and enjoy themselves.

Rosarito Beach Mayor Hugo Torres Chapert said his city has spoken to Sempra Energy (NYSE: SRE) about potential developments and looked at building a desalination plant and shipping the water to the United States.

"I believe that all solutions come from a local level," said National City Mayor Ron Morrison. He spoke of the development his city was doing with a unified council and said unifying as a binational region would help progress.

Ensenada Mayor Pablo Alejo López Nuñez said if the region could get together it could move from being the eighth largest economic region in the world to the third. Part of that is due to the massive port his city is building, called Punta Colonet, that will do double the work of Mexico's 24 ports in place and generate 80,000 jobs. From the port, a train will be built to take goods north to the United States, Nuñez said through a translator.

One primary project the representatives from both sides said they want to focus on is a third border crossing, and more efficiency at the two already-existing crossings.

"An inefficient border crossing system is literally costing the economy billions and billions," said San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders, noting there is \$8 billion lost annually in the current system.

The two nations are already intertwined economically. Fifteen percent of California's exports go to Mexico, and 18 percent of all Mexican exports come to California, said Assemblywoman Mary Salas, of District 79.

A relationship with Mexico helps in tough economic times, Salas said, noting that up to 16,000 jobs are created in the United States for every \$1 billion worth of goods sent to Mexico.

"We politicians on both sides of the border need to recognize that what we do affects the cities on the other side of the border and vice versa," she said.

As the owner of the Rosarito Beach Hotel and the mayor of a city that depends on a tourism boost for the economy, Chapert is concerned about how people view Rosarito -- and how the media covers the area's crime. He said he has called media outlets for a correction if they have facts wrong.

"We believe we need to work with and provide information to the American media," Chapert said through a translator.

Moderator of the panel, Aida Bustos Garcia, Latino Affairs editor for the San Diego Union Tribune, said news outlets are most interested in public safety concerns, but aim to do it correctly.

That said, the panelists said they were aware the border region does have crime and that it could prevent them from reaching their potential as cooperating binational region if the area is unsafe.

"We need to combat crime on both sides of the border," Chapert said.

Continuing the theme, one of the summit's keynote speakers was Tijuana Mayor Ramos Hernandez.

"We share our vision with you, that we have to work as a unit," he said. "Whatever happens in San Diego is good for Tijuana."

Representing the largest metropolitan area in his country, with a 5 percent annual growth rate, Hernandez spoke about the \$200 million that Tijuana is directing into their infrastructure to build a better city. He hopes the project will make the city safer and cleaner and help tourists navigate through Tijuana.

"What really makes us strong is we share values, we share principles, we share friendship, and there is no wall that can stop that," he said.



Debate Heats Up Over 10th Avenue Marine Terminal

09-12-08 at 5:09PM

Come November, voters will decide the fate of a plan to build a double-deck platform on San Diego Bay that could include a new football stadium. People on both sides debated the issue today at the Convention Center.

The initiative would force the port district to develop the 10th Avenue Marine Terminal.

Opponents say the plan amounts to a private takeover of public land. Developers say the project would bring in new revenues for the City of San Diego.

"Now that we've been through the litigation, now that we get the truth out, people can vote yes or no, and if you like the idea, vote yes. If you don't like it, vote no.

Voters in five different bayside cities have to approve the plan before it can move forward.



Noticias

Debatirán sobre futuro de la región binacional

Edna Cabrera
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SAN DIEGO, California (PH) Este viernes se llevará a cabo en el Centro de Convenciones de San Diego la 18 Cumbre Económica Anual organizada por el Comité de Gobiernos, Sandag y la Organización de ciudades del Sur de San Diego.

En este evento participan también funcionarios de Tijuana entre los que destaca la conferencia magistral que ofrecerá el Alcalde Jorge Ramos.

El registro de participantes se llevará a cabo desde las 7:45 horas en el lugar y la Exposición de negocios estará abierta a partir de las 8:15 horas.

El evento iniciará con la bienvenida por parte de Dan Biggs, Presidente del Consejo de Desarrollo Económico del Sur del Condado y de Robert Valderrama Comisionado del Puerto de San Diego.

Entre los paneles de discusión que se llevarán a cabo esta el Debate de la terminal de la ave 10, así como debates sobre los combustibles, así como debates sobre los combustibles y el futuro de la región binacional

En este ultimo participan el Senador Denise Ducheny, la asambleísta Mary Salas, el alcalde de San Diego Jerry Sanders, la alcaldesa de Chula Vista Cheryl Cox, el alcalde de National City Ron Morrison y el alcalde de Imperial Beach Jim Janney.

Asimismo, participarán sus homólogos de Baja California Pablo Alejo Lopez Nuñez, presidente municipal de Ensenada; Hugo Torres Chabert, de Rosarito y Donaldo Peñalosa de Tecate.

Después de un receso, a las 12:45 horas se dará paso a las conferencias principales que estarán a cargo de el alcalde de Tijuana, Jorge Ramos, y el alcalde de San Francisco, Willie Brown.

Nota Publicada: 10/09/2008 11:19



Coinciden en oportunidades entre ambos lados de la frontera

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SAN DIEGO, California(PH)

Autoridades de ambos lados de la frontera discutieron el futuro de la región binacional en la 18 Cumbre Económica organizada por el Consejo del Sur del Condado de San Diego y la Asociación de Gobiernos Sandag.

En el evento participaron los presidentes municipales Pablo Alejo, de Ensenada; Hugo Torres, de Rosarito; Donaldo Peñaloza, de Tecate; así como los alcaldes de San Diego, Chula Vista, National City, Coronado e Imperial Beach.

Pablo Alejo señaló que las nuevas economías tienen que ser muy agresivas.

“El reto es que cada región se dedique a su especialización”, dijo.

Dijo que era importante definir una vocación y estar comunicados para lograr la regionalización.

Hugo Torres Chabert, alcalde de Rosarito, habló del proyecto de instalar una planta desaladora en dicho puerto y así traer agua limpia hasta California.

Asimismo hizo un llamado para que no hagan caso de las noticias sobre la inseguridad.

“Rosarito vive del turismo del Sur de California y ahora con los tiempos de espera para cruzar y las noticias de violencia ya casi no va la gente”, admitió.

Buscan aprovechar aeropuerto de Tijuana

Cheryl Cox, de Chula Vista, y Jerry Sanders coincidieron en que es una buena oportunidad aprovechar el Aeropuerto Internacional "Abelardo L. Rodriguez" para traer gente a San Diego.

"Se debe revisar el plan", dijo.

Sanders por su parte dijo que ya se habló con Luis Tellez, Secretario de Comunicaciones y Transportes para abrir una garita en los terrenos del aeropuerto con el fin de facilitar y fomentar el uso del aeropuerto mexicano a viajeros con destino a San Diego.

Con respecto a la garita, dijo que con el nuevo sistema recién instalado se aumentará la capacidad.

Dijo que a raíz de los lentos cruces, San Diego ha perdido ocho billones de dólares por gente que deja de visitar este lado de la frontera.

Hay interés por Punta Colonet

Finalmente hubo entre los asistentes inquietud por participar en el proyecto Punta Colonet, por lo que Alejo les informó que este será el quinto o cuarto puerto más importante del mundo.

"En él se manejarán 6 millones de contenedores anualmente, lo que representa el doble de lo que se maneja actualmente en el país", informó.

Dijo que para el 2020 se pretende haya 31 puntos de embarque y que el año que entra empezarán las licitaciones.

"Este puerto será puntal para la región y para seguir desarrollando nuestras ciudades ya que será un puente muy importante entre China y América.