



## New South County Region Employment Profile Released

Average Wages Grew by 8% Since 2003



**In the South County region between 2003 and 2005, real average wage increased by eight percent and private-sector jobs expanded by 865 jobs.**

The South County Economic Development Council (SCEDC) has released its latest economic study, an Employment Profile of the South County region. As a non-profit agency committed to fostering economic prosperity in this binational region, the SCEDC continually strives to understand what opportunities exist to enhance the already flourishing economy. This new Employment Profile is one of these opportunities.

The thorough report presents information on employment and wages within the largest trades in South County's major cities and communities. San Diego County has approximately 84,000 private-sector firms and just over one million jobs — approximately nine percent of these firms and about eight percent of the employment is located in the South County region.

The private sector of the South County, which encompasses an estimated 7,245

firms and 88,644 jobs, is the focus of the profile. The annual average wage in the private sector is \$31,000 with the highest paying industries being manufacturing, transportation and warehousing, wholesale trade, finance and insurance, and information.

While employment declined in some of these industries since 2003, the average wage in the South County region grew by eight percent, which is an especially positive trend when compared to San Diego County where the average wage in 2005 was the same as in 2003.

The bulk of the report takes an in-depth look into the six high-paying industries by examining the sectors that fall within each major industry. The final section of the report highlights the job numbers and average wages of each of South County's major cities and communities from Chula Vista with 44,004 jobs to Bonita with 1,571 jobs.

By providing a better understanding of the businesses and occupations South County has to offer, the SCEDC hopes to support existing businesses as well as entice complementary businesses to expand or relocate in South San Diego County.

To receive copies of the Employment Profile, email [cindy@sandiegosouth.com](mailto:cindy@sandiegosouth.com)

### South County Region Employment by Industry 2005



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## New Mayor of Tijuana Takes Office

A dedicated public servant for many years, Ramos has served as the operational deputy director of Tijuana, the technical director in the City Clerk's office, a city council member, municipal director of social development and, most recently, as the general director of the Public Services Commission for Tijuana-Rosarito.

Ramos holds a law degree from Iberoamericana University.

Ramos has said his priorities are to bring order back to the streets of Tijuana, specifically pledging to crack down on police corruption. He has said that public safety for both residents and visitors alike will be priority No. 1.

Ramos looks forward to working with delegates from the South County Economic Development Council on various projects to improve infrastructure and business prosperity on both sides of the border. He



**Jorge Ramos Hernandez officially took office as 19th Mayor of Tijuana on Dec. 1.**

is committed to working on binational issues for the greater Tijuana/San Diego region.

## Passports Now Required When Visiting Mexico

Beginning Jan. 31, 2008, U.S. and Canadian citizens 19 years or older who enter the United States at land or sea ports of entry from anywhere else within the Western Hemisphere will need to present government-issued photo identification, such as a driver's license as proof of identity, along with proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate or naturalization certificate, or a passport. Children age 18 and under will be able to enter with proof of citizenship only. Verbal claims of citizenship and identity alone will no longer be sufficient for entry into the United States.



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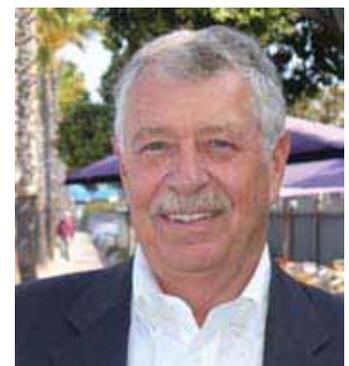
## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I believe water is one of the six major issues that will influence our efforts to position South County to be competitive in the evolving global economy. I'm not talking about the bottle of Aquafina or the Perrier we buy at the grocery store; I'm talking about our ability to assure ourselves and future employers of this region's "water stability." That means, to me, we must have both a reliable and renewable source of water that is free from interference by outside political or regulatory interruptions and, as importantly, that this water source is clean and safe for use by our various consumptive needs, i.e. drinking, manufacturing, irrigation, fire protection and other uses. We are at a crossroads in San Diego, where new policies and practices can make this happen... or not.

Earlier I mentioned that I saw water as one of six priority issues that I'd like the South County EDC to remain involved with in furtherance of our region's economic growth. For purposes of future messages, the other five areas of concern that are important to me involve our ability to: 1) educate our citizens; 2) ensure access to workforce housing; 3) improve regional energy reliability; 4) facilitate broader healthcare availability, and 5) provide for our future mobility needs. I hope, in subsequent months, to address each of these issues, but my message today is focused on recognizing the extraordinary opportunity and challenges we have in front of us, right now, to help stabilize and enhance our local economy through clear-headed thinking as it relates to the politics of water.

By **Doug Paul**, South County Economic Development Council

Much has been made in recent past about the "yuck factor" inherent in reclaimed water. It should be understood that water is not pure in most of its natural occurrences. Even as it is falling from the sky as rain, it is picking up minute airborne contaminants. As runoff, it further absorbs and carries contaminants that ultimately can reach our lakes, rivers and ocean. Most things that water comes in contact with are soluble and can be dissolved in water. That means that our imported water, which we pay so dearly for, and which we pump and transport from the Colorado River or from Northern California is already likely to be grossly contaminated when it arrives in San Diego. This water comes to us courtesy of our Los Angeles neighbors, who operate the Metropolitan Water District's principle aquifers, pipes and reservoirs. Our San Diego County public agencies are responsible for subsequent local treatment and distribution and for assuring that our water meets drinkable standards. They do what they can, using the best *(continued on page 5)*



## Port Projects Help Protect South Bay's Environmental Health

The Port of San Diego has established a \$5 million environmental fund to complete environmental projects that preserve and enhance the bay and protect wildlife. Since the fund's inception last year, 28 projects have been approved by the board of port commissioners. Many of these projects focus on improving the water quality of the South Bay.



**The board of port commissioners has approved 28 environmental improvement projects, many of which focus on improving the water quality of the South Bay and protect wildlife.**

By the end of this year, cleanup efforts will be under way to remove engine blocks, fuel tanks and discarded batteries that litter the seafloor at the anchorage near National City. The port has contributed \$50,000 through its environmental fund for this effort. The anchorage is scheduled to close in late 2009.

Additionally, \$25,000 was awarded to the San Diego Audubon Society to restore the D Street fill area to encourage the return and nesting of the endangered western snowy plover. Located south of the Sweetwater Channel, work at this site includes recontouring the area and replacing invasive plants with native species.

During its 44-year history, the Port of San Diego has taken the lead in a variety of initiatives to enhance the environmental quality of San Diego Bay and its surrounding tidelands. These include wildlife and natural resource management, stormwater runoff programs, environmental education programs and environmental partnerships with public and private agencies.

The Port of San Diego is a public benefit corporation and special government entity. Created in 1963 by an act of the California legislature, the Port manages San Diego harbor and administers the public lands along San Diego Bay. The

Port has operated without tax dollars since 1970 and has been responsible for \$1.5 billion in public improvements in its five member cities - Chula Vista, Coronado, Imperial Beach, National City and San Diego. With a \$10.6 billion economic impact on the San Diego region, the Port oversees two maritime cargo terminals, a cruise ship terminal, 16 public parks, various wildlife reserves and environmental initiatives, a Harbor Police Department and the leases of 600 tenant businesses around San Diego Bay. For more information, visit the Web site at [www.portof-sandiego.org](http://www.portof-sandiego.org).

## Supervisor Cox Announces Major Transportation Funding

County Supervisor Greg Cox spoke before a crowd of 175 members and guests of the South County Economic Development Council at the annual Holiday Breakfast in early December. The supervisor came with great news as he and a delegation of officials from San Diego were successful in winning a recommendation for \$400 million in funding from the California Transportation Commission in late November for future transportation projects in San Diego's South County.



**Supervisor Greg Cox spoke before an enthusiastic and festive crowd at South Bay Fish & Grill in early December.**

The commission unexpectedly chose to allocate more than 13 percent of its total \$2 billion pool of funds toward South San Diego County projects, including \$75 million for the needed extension and improvements to state route 905; \$75 million for a second border crossing in the Otay Mesa area including its connector road, state route 11; \$100 million for improvements at 32nd Street and National City ports to improve maritime commerce via enhanced truck routes, and \$139 million for a new rail line for freight use from downtown San Diego to Mexico, including new train yards and a logistics center.

## New Aquatics Center Proposed For National City Bayfront

A new aquatics center is one of the new projects proposed for the exciting National City Bayfront. Administered by the South Bay Family YMCA, the National City Aquatics Center would include a 4,700-square-foot facility with classroom space, boat storage, locker rooms and public art. Programming for the new center is expected to include sailing, kayaking, windsurfing, and rowing, as well as training in first aid, CPR and boating safety. Even without a full-service facility in National City, the South Bay Family YMCA has provided exceptional aquatic programming in the city for over twenty years.



**The proposed National City Aquatics Center will bring a state-of-the-art, 4,700-square-foot facility to National City's waterfront region, where many new projects are planned.**

The proposed aquatics center is just one element of the 3.5 mile region known as National City's Harbor District that is quickly becoming the topic of local, regional and even international dialogue.

"For decades, many in the region were unaware that National City even had a waterfront," said National City Mayor Ron Morrison. "Well, it certainly does. We are only just beginning to enjoy it. National City's Harbor District Master Plan is focused on developing a vibrant long-term vision that in addition to the new aquatics center includes a brand new 250-slip, full-service marina and beautiful new hotel by Sycuan Tribal Development Corp."

## Coronado Celebrates Golf Course's 50th Anniversary

In mid-October, golfers and non-golfers alike celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Coronado Golf Course as the city officially commemorated one of the major jewels in its

*(continued from page 3)*

crown. The day's activities included a series of 9-hole tournaments, many off-course activities and an evening gala.

Opened in 1957, the Coronado Municipal Golf Course is considered one of the finest public golf courses in Southern California. Open year round, the course provides recreation for residents and visitors to Coronado. The course has won multiple awards for Best Value in San Diego County by Greenskeeper.org and received a top rating by the San Diego Union-Tribune.

For the past 50 years, the Coronado Golf Course has played host to celebrities, prominent athletes and dignitaries, including United States presidents. For those who arrive in Coronado via the San Diego-Coronado Bridge, the Coronado Golf Course is on the left to greet them, lending park-like beauty to the shoreline.

This 18-hole, par 72 course- a challenge to golfers of all levels- offers wide, inviting fairways, manicured greens, and dramatic views of the San Diego-Coronado Bridge, the Hotel del Coronado, and the San Diego and Glorietta bays. The golf course also features a clubhouse facility with a full-service pro-shop and a restaurant.



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## New Shopping Center Opens In Chula Vista

Village Walk at EastLake, an upscale boutique-style commercial center, is the city's newest addition to the growing number of shopping districts available to Chula Vistans.

The center, at EastLake Parkway and Miller Street, offers an impressive line-up of new shops, markets and restaurants that includes Chula Vista's first Trader Joe's and a Border's bookstore.

While wandering along the stone walkways in this 166,000-square-foot Tuscan-style shopping district, enjoy all of the extra touches that make the center inviting and unique — rose gar-

dens, fountains, bronze sculptures, resting benches and even a footbridge that crosses a koi pond.



**Chula Vista's new Tuscan-style shopping district features inviting walkways and scenic landscaping. (Photo by Don Russell, ProDigital Real Estate Photography)**

## What A Difference A Decade Makes For Imperial Beach

In the last decade, the city of Imperial Beach has done much to become more visitor-friendly, commercially viable and overall more aesthetically pleasing.

It was only a few years back, 1999 to be exact, that the city rebranded itself as "Classic Southern California" and is doing all it can to live up to this ideal, starting with making its beach more attractive for families and visitors. Imperial Beach is home to the Dempsey Holder Safety Center, opened in 1999 as one of the most state-of-the-art, year-round lifeguard facilities in California, and is one of only a few San Diego beaches where both smoking and drinking have been banned. In fact, Imperial Beach is regularly skipped on countywide beach cleanup days because it is so well maintained there is very little to clean there.

When visitors tire of the beach, they can take in Portwood Pier Plaza, a sand-fronting multi-use park and retail center home to "Surfhenge," Imperial Beach's unofficial icon and one of several public artwork installations along the oceanfront. Opened in 1999, Portwood Pier Plaza was one of the city's first redevelopment projects and was soon followed in 2001, by the redevelopment of the Imperial Beach Promenade shopping center. Progress is being made on Imperial Beach's latest redevelopment undertaking, a new and improved 78-room Seacoast Inn beachfront hotel, with construction beginning in about a year.

Further changes are in the pipeline as the city is now in the process of assessing other

commercial redevelopment opportunities including a new mixed-use development along the beautifully landscaped Palm Avenue/SR-75, and other potential development sites along Seacoast Drive, Old Palm Avenue, and the 13th Street/Imperial Beach Avenue areas.

While still in its infancy stages, the city's ambitious redevelopment plan is gaining national attention. This new-and-improved approach has extended into the appearances of existing establishments as many local businesses have taken advantage of the city's generous Facade Improvement Program, which encourages business to spruce up their storefronts by offering up to \$20,000 in incentives. So far, 29 businesses have made improvements and 19 more are hoping to be next.



**Named for Allan "Dempsey" Holder, the first official lifeguard in San Diego County in 1940, the Dempsey Holder Safety Center opened in November 1999, and is just one of the many new offerings Imperial Beach has seen in recent years.**

Also sporting a new look -- and a prestigious award to go with it -- is the Tijuana Estuary Visitor Center. The Orchid Award by the San Diego Architectural Foundation recognized the work done to upgrade the visitor center, including the addition of a conference center, courtyard, shaded amphitheater, research labs and additional offices. This latest award joins the city's other two Orchid Awards won in 1999 for the redesign of Portwood Plaza and its Surfhenge sculpture and the landscaped medians along Palm Avenue (Highway 75).

## South County EDC Takes Business Outreach To Otay Mesa

*Information Distributed on Tax Credits, Workforce and Financial Assistance Programs*

The South County Economic Development Council, in partnership with the Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce and the city of San Diego, continued its business outreach program in Otay Mesa in early November. Groups of volunteers went door-to-door distributing information to business owners about the plethora of resources available to help their companies.

"The South County EDC strives to assist and support businesses of all sizes in our communities," said Cindy Gompper-Graves, CEO of the South County Economic Development Council. "With extensive workdays, it's often difficult for a business owner to seek out the resources available to help their companies. The resources we provide directly relate to improving the businesses in Otay Mesa."

Volunteers distributed information about an assortment of resources including

employer hiring, tax credits, expansion assistance, management strategies and financial aid programs. One of the South County EDC's foremost goals is promote diversified business development. To meet this objective, it has created several

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*— Cindy Gompper-Graves,  
CEO, South County Economic  
Development Council*

programs to provide small businesses with loans, grants and other resources.

"Today's effort was about connecting business owners with the resources they need to grow their businesses. By directly reaching out to business owners, we hope to increase awareness of the programs we offer," added Graves.

*(continued from page 2)*

science available, to make our water safe for drinking...but water's "pedigree" before treatment cannot be guaranteed. Even after treatment, it can become contaminated by careless handling. Therefore, most water professionals agree that the water we have historically imported for the past decades has likely been in and out of other people's homes (toilets) before its arrival in San Diego and thus is not much different than the proposal now before this city to recover our own reclaimed water and treat it sufficiently to allow it to be reintroduced into our reservoir system.

There are also proposals to draw salt water from our oceans and desalinate the water to produce fresh/potable drinking water. This process is actually more expensive and difficult. The chemistry involved to remove ionized particles (salts) is more complicated and costly than the process to remove suspended particles. This doesn't mean, however, that we should not consider all available sources of water in a broad regional strategy. In order to develop a much stronger economy, it's important that we have the security of water availability and are not subject to interruption in our water supply — as could likely happen when the Metropolitan Water District shuts off our tap in favor of Los Angeles. Their operating charter gives them the right to do this in any sustained drought condition, leaving San Diego highly vulnerable in its current state. This is why I would encourage us to look beyond the rhetoric of catch phrases designed to trigger our "yuck factor" and, instead, think about the real science methodology that we have at our disposal to stabilize our regional water. What we do in San Diego will ultimately have positive repercussions in our neighboring communities throughout Northern Baja. I challenge members of the South County Economic Development Council to stay current and informed about this most critical issue and help us achieve the water independence that I believe is so important to our region.



**Thank you to all the members who attended the annual Holiday Breakfast in early December. More than 175 of you were in attendance! In addition, thank you to the following members who brought a potential new member to the free event: Doug Paul, Cindy Gompper-Graves, Lisa Johnson, Shannon Brown, Tom Tourtellott, Janine Pairis, Patricia Trauth, Denny Cuccarese, Angelika Villagrana, Bill Clevenger, Dan Cruz, Julie Williamson and Pete Mabrey.**



# South County School Places In National Robotics Competition

The Education and Workforce Development Committee of the SCEDC announced in November that Hilltop High School in Chula Vista placed 15th nationwide at U.S. First, a national robotics competition among high schools. The competition promotes participation in technical careers and also encourages students to go on to college and further their studies in science and engineering.

Bill Tunstall, co-chair of the Education and Workforce Development Committee, said more than 95 percent of the students nationwide that participate in this robotics competition go on to college and pursue science careers. Tunstall added that SCEDC would like to facilitate additional high schools in the South County participating in this competition and, to that end, is soliciting sponsors and mentors for the

program. AT&T stepped up to the plate and announced a \$7,500 grant to the Hilltop High Robotics Program.

"This year, we hope to generate a synergistic partnership between local governmental leaders, corporate sponsors, educational leaders, community leaders and the local media to further the cause of U.S. First, which is 'to create a world where science and technology are celebrated... where young people dream of becoming science and technology heroes,'" said Sandra Hodge, coordinator of the program at the Sweetwater Union High School District. "I am convinced that this program is more than just building robots -- it's about building people, building relationships, and building a community!"

"The AT&T Excelerator grant program, in partnership with organizations like the Sweetwater Education Foundation, can support innovative ways to use technology to provide educational opportunities and reach the communities they serve," explained Christine Moore, director of



**Hilltop High School's first robotics team was selected as the "2007 Rookie Team of the Year" at the U.S. First competition. With very limited funds, a second-year teacher, and only five students, this fledgling team built a working robot that made an excellent showing at the competition.**

external affairs for AT&T. "I'm thrilled that our support will help inspire young people at Hilltop High School to learn more about engineering and technology -- and get excited about potential careers in the sciences. Support for the Robotics Competition program is truly an investment in the future of our community."

*The South County Economic Development Council is funded in part by grants from the cities of Chula Vista, Coronado, Imperial Beach, National City and San Diego, the County of San Diego and the Port of San Diego and our members.*

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