

October 22, 2023

TO: Mr. Jaime Chamberlain, Chairman

FROM: Luis E. Ramirez Thomas, President, Ramirez Advisors Inter-National

SUBJECT: Monthly Report of Activities – September 2023

On behalf of Ramirez Advisors Inter-National, LLC (“RAI-N”) we are pleased to present our monthly activity report to you and the Board of Directors of the Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority (“GNSCCPA”). As always, we request and welcome your continued comments and suggestions as to how we can improve on our services, our communications, and our activities on your behalf. With your feedback, we will make every effort to improve our response to your directives and ensure an effective implementation of the initiatives at hand.

Our recent activities on behalf of the GNSCCPA have focused on the following key areas:

1. Latest Border Crossing Data.
2. Congressman Ciscomani Tours Mariposa Port of Entry.
3. First Interstate Bank Joins Port Authority as Ex-Officio Member.
4. DHS Directive Impacting Port Operations.
5. Congressman Grijalva on Lack of Federal/Local Coordination on Immigration.
6. Arizona Border Port Authorities Hold First Joint Meeting.
7. Mexico’s Temporary Closure of Morley Gate.
8. Port Authority Supports County's EDA Grant Application.
9. Port Authority Meets with Municipality of Nogales, Sonora.
10. USDOT announces Next Round of Thriving Communities Program.
11. Governor Announces Grant for Nogales Police Department.
12. Rural Transportation Summit to be held in Yuma.
13. Port Authority Briefs Consejo Empresarial de Nogales.
14. Port Authority recognizes SEAGO Executive Director.
15. City of Nogales Signs *Sister City Agreements* with Bacúm, Cananea, and Imuris.
16. Port Authority Participates in Dinner with new US Consul General.
17. Port Authority Leadership Transition set for January 2023.

This report is not intended to be a full description of all activities but rather, provides highlights and information on the direction of our activities to keep the Board of Directors informed and to ensure adherence to the vision and guidance imparted to RAI-N by the GNSCCPA and its leadership. Throughout this period, RAI-N has maintained active and frequent communications with Ms. Allison Moore, Mr. Josh Rubin, Mr. Guillermo Valencia, Mr. Bruce Bracker and other members of the Board of Directors and stakeholders to ensure that we have a fully coordinated approach to our efforts. RAI-N stands ready to address any issue, concern or suggestion that may arise from this report and from our ongoing dialogue with the leadership and the Board of Directors.

1. LATEST BORDER CROSSING DATA

- As reported to the Board on September 7th, the border crossing data through July shows continual growth in border crossing:

Overall, crossings are up for Nogales! Total people is up 5%, continuing to reflect a strong recovery and return to typical volumes for several modes. In fact, the total people through July 2023 is 2.5% higher than the same period in 2019. While personal vehicles have surpassed 2019 levels, pedestrian volumes has not caught up at the same pace. This could mean that cross-border visitors are opting to travel outside of downtown for their shopping and take advantage of a stronger Mexican peso. Identifying strategies to attract traffic to downtown Nogales are among the topics that could be addressed when the EPA Urban Design Study is underway.

Truck volumes are also up for Nogales by 2.9%, which now includes the grape season months. Should the current upward trends continue, Nogales may break another record for truck volumes. Truck and train crossings are also above the 2019 levels.

Nogales Totals

- **247,116 northbound trucks** crossed at Nogales from January-July 2023, an increase of 2.9% compared to the same period last year.
- **5.95 million total people** crossed northbound at Nogales from January-July 2023, an increase of 5% compared to the same period last year.
 - Please note that we have observed discrepancies in the bus passenger data for this year and have reached out to verify the reason for the incomplete data.
- **1.6 million northbound pedestrians** crossed at Nogales from January-July 2023, an increase of 17.1% compared to the same period last year.
- **2.1 million northbound cars** crossed at Nogales from January-July 2023, an increase of 2.3% compared to the same period last year.

Arizona Totals

- **295,535 northbound trucks** crossed at Arizona's ports of entry from January-July 2023, an increase of 1.6% compared to the same period last year.
- **13.7 million total people** crossed northbound at Arizona's ports of entry from January-July 2023, an increase of 6.3% compared to the same period last year.

R Ramirez Advisors
 Inter-National

Arizona Northbound Border Crossings(*)
 January-July 2022 vs January-July 2023

Port	Mode	Jan-Jul 2022	Jan-Jul 2023	Difference	Change
Douglas	Trucks	17,636	16,018	↓ -1,618	↓ -9.2%
	Personal Vehicles	866,692	943,759	↑ 77,067	↑ 8.9%
	Personal Vehicle Passengers	1,538,617	1,706,970	↑ 168,353	↑ 10.9%
	Pedestrians	369,927	406,167	↑ 36,240	↑ 9.8%
	Buses	67	102	↑ 35	↑ 52.2%
	Bus Passengers (*)	965	2,706	↑ 1,741	↑ 180.4%
	Total People (*)	1,909,509	2,115,843	↑ 206,334	↑ 10.8%
Nogales	Trucks	240,221	247,116	↑ 6,895	↑ 2.9%
	Personal Vehicles	2,116,282	2,165,412	↑ 49,130	↑ 2.3%
	Personal Vehicle Passengers	4,084,290	4,177,866	↑ 93,576	↑ 2.3%
	Pedestrians	1,418,597	1,660,913	↑ 242,316	↑ 17.1%
	Trains	474	514	↑ 40	↑ 8.4%
	Buses	3,963	4,989	↑ 1,026	↑ 25.9%
	Bus Passengers (*)	162,950	112,685	↓ -50,265	↓ -30.8%
	Total People (*)	5,667,865	5,951,464	↑ 283,599	↑ 5.0%
San Luis	Trucks	30,848	30,241	↓ -607	↓ -2.0%
	Personal Vehicles	1,909,150	1,975,289	↑ 66,139	↑ 3.5%
	Personal Vehicle Passengers	3,110,651	3,266,288	↑ 155,637	↑ 5.0%
	Pedestrians	1,159,787	1,280,845	↑ 121,058	↑ 10.4%
	Buses	39	65	↑ 26	↑ 66.7%
	Bus Passengers (*)	39	65	↑ 26	↑ 66.7%
	Total People (*)	4,270,477	4,547,198	↑ 276,721	↑ 6.5%
Lukeville	Trucks	476	459	↓ -17	↓ -3.6%
	Personal Vehicles	273,363	271,677	↓ -1,686	↓ -0.6%
	Personal Vehicle Passengers	601,409	620,792	↑ 19,383	↑ 3.2%
	Pedestrians	40,845	45,292	↑ 4,447	↑ 10.9%
	Buses	347	349	↑ 2	↑ 0.6%
	Bus Passengers (*)	1,871	1,882	↑ 11	↑ 0.6%
	Total People (*)	644,125	667,966	↑ 23,841	↑ 3.7%
Naco	Trucks	1,770	1,701	↓ -69	↓ -3.9%
	Personal Vehicles	176,203	187,226	↑ 11,023	↑ 6.3%
	Personal Vehicle Passengers	319,089	344,289	↑ 25,200	↑ 7.9%
	Pedestrians	50,787	44,577	↓ -6,210	↓ -12.2%
	Total People	369,876	388,866	↑ 18,990	↑ 5.1%
Sasabe	Personal Vehicles	15,762	16,121	↑ 359	↑ 2.3%
	Personal Vehicle Passengers	30,058	30,796	↑ 738	↑ 2.5%
	Pedestrians	632	308	↓ -324	↓ -51.3%
	Total People	30,690	31,104	↑ 414	↑ 1.3%

Port	Mode	Jan-Jul 2022	Jan-Jul 2023	Difference	Change
State Totals	Trucks	290,951	295,535	↑ 4,584	↑ 1.6%
	Personal Vehicles	5,357,452	5,559,484	↑ 202,032	↑ 3.8%
	Personal Vehicle Passengers	9,684,114	10,147,001	↑ 462,887	↑ 4.8%
	Pedestrians	3,040,575	3,438,102	↑ 397,527	↑ 13.1%
	Buses	4,416	5,505	↑ 1,089	↑ 24.7%
	Bus Passengers (*)	165,825	117,338	↓ -48,487	↓ -29.2%
	Trains	474	514	↑ 40	↑ 8.4%
	Total People(*)	12,892,542	13,702,441	↑ 809,899	↑ 6.3%

SOURCE: US Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics. All data provided herein subject to change without prior notice.

(*) NOTE: Total People is comprised of the number of passengers for buses, cars, trains, and pedestrians. Ramirez Advisors does not have the ability to verify the accuracy of the data published by USDOT. We have observed some unexplained variances that we believe impact our analysis of the data trends.

Updated 08/28/2023

2. CONGRESSMAN CISCOMANI TOURS MARIPOSA PORT OF ENTRY

- On September 7th, Congressman Juan Ciscomani visited the Mariposa Port of entry and engaged in detailed discussions with Customs and Border Protection on a variety of operational issues.
- Chairman Chamberlain joined the Congressman during the visit and participated in the discussions.
- The Port Authority appreciates the attention that Congressman Ciscomani gives to these border issues that are critical to port operations, regional trade and tourism, and national security.

3. FIRST INTERSTATE BANK JOINS PORT AUTHORITY AS EX-OFFICIO MEMBER

- As a result of the Board Retreat this summer, the Port Authority has invited First Interstate Bank's Alba Quijano to sit on the Board of Directors as an Ex-Officio Board member.
- During the retreat the Board unanimously agreed that financial services, and all that this entails for the community, local business, and investment, it was essential to invite a member of the financial sector so that the Port Authority could keep apprised of key issues in this area.
- Ms. Quijano is a Commercial Lender, Vice President, at First Interstate Bank with over 27 years' experience in the banking industry; 26 of those years were specifically in Commercial Lending holding various positions. Ms. Quijano is a current board member of the Rotary Club of Nogales and past President, is a member of the FPAA, CREW Tucson (Commercial Real Estate Women), Tucson Hispanic Chamber, and prior board member of the Risk Management Association. Ms. Quijano received a BS in Business/Accounting, an MBA, and completed Commercial Lending Credit College at Bank of the West. Ms. Quijano has three adult children, two of which are in college, and one is father to her very active three-year-old grandson. Other members of the family include a 6-year-old Mastiff and a 14-year-old bulldog mixed rescue.
- Welcome Alba Quijano!

4. DHS DIRECTIVE IMPACTING PORT OPERATIONS

- On September 15, the Port Authority was notified that Customs and Border Protection had received a directive from Washington, D.C. in which CBP would have to work to provide personnel from the ports of entry to support Border Patrol Operations away from the ports.
- This is not the first time this has happened. But this was a very sudden and unplanned directive that had the impact of forcing port directors to reduce the number of lanes that could be opened.
- While these reassignments of personnel are temporary in nature, there is no defined time for the end of the directive.
- Without accurate information in writing, there was confusion as to how many CBP officers would be reassigned, but it ranged up to as much as 50% lane closures. Based on multiple communications, it was determined that the number ranged from 50 to 60 CBP officers per shift that would be taken from the ports.
- To date, the reduction in lanes has had a more significant impact on non-commercial operations, with border crossing times increasing significantly, not just in Nogales but also in Douglas, Lukeville and San Luis.
- The Port Authority joined several local and regional organizations, including the City of Nogales and Arizona Border Counties Coalition, in communicating to the Department of Homeland Security, the Office of the Governor and the

Congressional delegation of this directive and the impacts for the border communities.

- As stated in the letter: *“Restricting the flow of legal traffic is a direct affront to key sectors in our regional and national economy, including tourism, retail, manufacturing, and the integrity of our nation’s food supply. This policy is not sustainable, nor acceptable, by the job creators of our community.”*
- A copy of the letters sent by the Port Authority, the City of Nogales, and the Arizona Border Counties Coalition are provided in Attachment #1.

5. CONGRESSMAN GRIJALVA ON LACK OF FEDERAL/LOCAL COORDINATION ON IMMIGRATION

- On September 15, Congressman Raul Grijalva issued a press release and a letter sent to the Administration outlining growing concerns over the lack of coordination with local authorities on the response to the migrant crisis at the border.
- Here is the text of the press release:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 15, 2023

Press Contact:

Jason Johnson – 202-580-5289

Rep. Grijalva Urges Biden Admin, DHS to Address Lack of Coordination and Increase Resources for Southern AZ Communities

WASHINGTON – Today, Representative Raúl M. Grijalva (AZ-07) sent a letter to the Biden administration regarding recent community releases of asylum seekers into localities, mostly rural, across Southern Arizona. Many of these communities lack the infrastructure and capacity to manage the latest influx of migrants.

The letter highlights this critical issue:

“Some of these locations lack the infrastructure, such as housing, transportation, medical care etc., and capacity to provide migrants with the support they need. Subjecting migrants, including families, to this expedited process by way of street releases in parts of rural Arizona without the necessary resources, puts intense strain on our communities and is cruel. No migrant family or individual should be forced with the task of navigating a new country without help, many of which are struggling with language barriers. It is inhumane and against our values.”

In the letter, Rep. Grijalva also calls on the Biden administration's to improve federal coordination efforts with local communities and increase resources as quickly as possible:

“The federal government’s coordination efforts with local communities have fallen short and must be improved. The DHS preparedness plan calls for ‘improved coordination and information sharing with NGOs, states, cities, and other stakeholders.’ I urgently request that CBP and your Administration proactively engage and coordinate with these entities to prevent individuals and families from being released in areas without resources and logistics in place. I ask that you quickly assess current federal coordination efforts and provide a more detailed plan to improve the process for our nation... Lastly, I request that funding from the newly formed Shelter and Services Program be distributed in a transparent, equitable and accessible manner so that borderlands NGOs and local governments that have been assisting migrants are able to continue their vital work. It’s critical that we surge federal funding for these entities that support asylum seekers, including funding and transportation, as soon as possible to assist these communities with capacity issues.”

The full letter can be found [here](#).

6. ARIZONA BORDER PORT AUTHORITIES HOLD FIRST JOINT MEETING



- On September 18th, the three border port authorities in Arizona from Nogales, San Luis/Yuma and Douglas, came together to discuss issues of common interest.
- Several board members represented the Port Authority during the meeting:
 - Jaime Chamberlain
 - Mayor Jorge Maldonado
 - Supervisor Bruce Bracker
 - Guillermo Valencia
 - Joshua Rubin
 - Roy Bermudez
- Issues of common interest were discussed at length, including:

- Regional infrastructure
- Staffing
- Ports of entry
- Joint advocacy efforts



- Economic development
 - The three port authorities signed a Joint Resolution as a demonstration of the commitment to greater levels of coordination and collaboration.
 - Special thanks for Tucson Electric Power/Unisource for hosting the meeting at their offices in Tucson.
 - A copy of the Joint Resolution is provided in Attachment #2.

7. MEXICO'S TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF MORLEY GATE



- On September 21, the Mexican Department of Defense (SEDENA) posted an announcement indicating that the Morley Gate would be closed effective September 25 for a modernization project.
 - US federal agencies were taken by surprise with this announcement as it had not been previously disclosed and thus there was no preparation for the possible impacts of this temporary shutdown.
 - The Port Authority sent a letter to Mexican Consul General Marcos Moreno Baez, requesting better coordination and exchange of information by both countries on projects that could impact of curtail traffic at any port of entry.



- Additional letters were sent by:
 - Santa Cruz County
 - City of Nogales
 - Nogales-Santa Cruz County Chamber of Commerce
 - Copies of all letters can be found in Attachment #3.

8. PORT AUTHORITY SUPPORTS COUNTY’S EDA GRANT APPLICATION

- On September 19th, the Port Authority sent a letter to the Economic Development Administration in support of the \$500,000 Recompete Pilot Program grant application by Santa Cruz County.
- As stated in the letter: “We are committed to partnering with the county in advancing important workforce development initiatives that contribute to our region’s growth and economic development. We embrace workforce training opportunities that invest in local people, enabling them to access well-paying jobs and offer a career path.”
- A copy of the letter is provided in Attachment #4.

9. PORT AUTHORITY MEETS WITH MUNICIPALITY OF NOGALES, SONORA



- On September 21st, Vice Chairman Josh Rubin joined a delegation of business leaders for a meeting with Nogales, Sonora Municipal President Juan Jim to discuss the significant increase in border crossing wait times and the negative impacts this has on the binational community, trade, tourism, and the retail sector.
- The discussion included strategies to help minimize the impacts to the community.

10. USDOT ISSUES NOTICE FOR NEXT ROUND OF THRIVING COMMUNITIES PROGRAM



- On September 22nd, the US Department of Transportation issued an announcement of the next round of the Thriving Communities Program.
- This is a program designed to provide technical assistance for smaller rural communities in applying for larger federal transportation grants. It is a recognition that larger

- communities have more resources at their disposal and leads to an unfair competition with smaller communities.
- An email was sent to the distribution list with the information. The US Department of Transportation just announced the new round of the Thriving Communities Program. This program provides assistance to rural communities in applying for federal transportation grants that require substantial preparation. Both Douglas and San Luis were selected in a previous round. We encourage interested parties to consider applying!
 - Under the program: “TCP will provide up to \$22 million in funding for Capacity Builders to provide technical assistance, planning, and capacity building support to disadvantaged and under-resourced communities across the U.S. to help them advance the transformative transportation projects needed to thrive. This year’s program includes a pilot to fund State and Regional TCP activities.”
 - Additional information can be found at:
<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/thriving-communities>.

11. GOVERNOR ANNOUNCES GRANT FOR NOGALES POLICE DEPARTMENT

- On September 21st, Governor Hobbs announced a \$10 million grant to the Nogales Police Department to assist in securing communications equipment.
- At the request of the city, the Port Authority had contacted the Office of the Governor in past weeks in support of this grant request.
- This grant will help the department meet the essential communications needs of today.
- Below is a copy of the press release issued by the Office of the Governor on the grant award.
- Congratulations to the Nogales Police Department!



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 21, 2023

CONTACT:

press@az.gov

Governor Katie Hobbs Announces \$10 Million Grant to Nogales Police Department While Biden Administration Diverts Resources from Ports of Entry

Customs and Border Protection reassigns 50 critical CBP staff from Ports of Entry, Increases Street Releases

Phoenix, AZ– Today, Governor Katie Hobbs announced a \$10 million grant for the Nogales Police Department to assist with the purchase of communications technology as part of the administration’s continued efforts to support communities in ensuring a safe and orderly border.

This announcement follows the recent decision by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to reassign personnel from five Ports of Entry in Arizona to bolster Border Patrol efforts in streamlining migrant processing. This shift has caused extended wait times at all Arizona ports and a noticeable increase in the number of migrants released directly into our border communities.

“Time and again I’ve asked the Biden administration for assistance at the border, but instead they have chosen to redirect resources to speed the release of migrants without the support and coordination our local communities deserve,” **said Governor Katie Hobbs.** “Arizona is being overwhelmed, and we can’t afford to lose manpower at our ports of entry. I’m glad to deliver border security resources to our communities, but the federal government needs to do its job and take action to ensure our border is secure and the migration process is orderly and humane.”

Staff removed from Ports of Entry have now been deployed to expedite migrants through immigration processing, increasing street releases in border communities while shifting pressure from federal facilities to local communities.

To date, the State of Arizona has provided the following assistance to border communities:

- This year alone, DPS has seized over 12,200 pounds of drugs and 520 weapons while spending over \$35 million on border security, drug interdiction, anti-human trafficking and local community support
- DEMA has spent over \$10.5 million to support migrant transportation the transportation of 10,247 migrants to decompress border communities
- AZDOHS has awarded \$16,385,000 in grants to local and tribal law enforcement agencies to secure the border
- DEMA has committed to spend \$3 million in additional funding to support Pima County’s Drexel facility managing migrant services

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12. RURAL TRANSPORTATION SUMMIT TO BE HELD IN YUMA



- The Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization is hosting the 2023 Arizona Rural Transportation Summit in Yuma on October 18-19.
- This promises to be an informative discussion of transportation issues in the rural areas of Arizona, and opportunity to engage with other communities on similar issues.
- It is also an opportunity to engage with local, county, state, and federal transportation officials to highlight the areas of need in the community.
- We highly encourage a strong delegation to participate in this event.
- More information can be found at <https://www.azrts.org>.

13. PORT AUTHORITY BRIEFS CONSEJO EMPRESARIAL DE NOGALES



- On September 27, 2023, Chairman Chamberlain and Vice Chair Rubin participated in the meeting of the Consejo Empresarial de Nogales, Sonora to provide an update on activities.
- Among the topics for discussion was the increase in border crossing times, particularly for non-commercial operations.
- Industry is reporting that commercial crossing times have remained steady, with noticeable increases in daily crossing volumes.
- Additionally, there was discussion on the modernization of the Morley Gate by Mexican authorities which took the Arizona side by total surprise.
- This is part of the Board's directive to ensure better alignment with Nogales, Sonora on issues of common interest.

14. PORT AUTHORITY RECOGNIZES SEAGO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



- In anticipation of his retirement, the Port Authority presented a plaque to Randy Heiss, Executive Director of the Southeastern Arizona Governments Organization.
- After many years at the helm of SEAGO, Randy is finally retiring.
- He has been a continual partner and a strong advocate for many transportation issues and projects in Santa Cruz County and the region.
- Thank you, Randy and best wishes in your retirement.

15. CITY OF NOGALES SIGNS SISTER CITIES AGREEMENTS WITH BACUM, CANANEA AND IMURIS



- On September 28th, the City of Nogales signed Sister City Agreements with three Sonoran cities: Bacum, Cananea and Imuris.
- This is in addition to the existing Sister City Relationship with Nogales, Sonora.
- This was an unprecedented event in that close to 30 Arizona and Sonora cities participated in this signing ceremony helping to forge closer ties at the local level between Arizona and Sonora.
- Congratulations to Mayor Maldonado and the City of Nogales for these new partnerships.

16. PORT AUTHORITY PARTICIPATES IN DINNER WITH NEW US CONSUL GENERAL



- Special thanks for the invitation by US Consul General Michelle Ward for the Port Authority to participate in one of her first official community events in Nogales, Sonora.
- Chairman Chamberlain, Vice Chair Rubin, and Board Member Valencia joined about 40 local leaders in this open dialogue with CG Ward.

17. PORT AUTHORITY LEADERSHIP TRANSITION SET FOR JANUARY 2024

- After conferring with members of the Board, the officers and Board have agreed to move the transition of the new slate of officers to January 2024.
- The official ceremony will take place during the first board meeting, currently scheduled for January 24th, 2024.

Attachment #1

Copy of letters on CBP Personnel reassigned to support Border Patrol Operations



September 15, 2023

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
US Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

RE: DHS directive mandating the shutting of lanes at the ports to support Border Patrol operations

Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority, I write to express our dismay at the recent directive to significantly curtail Nogales Port services by closing, vehicular, commercial, and pedestrian lanes at our ports of entry. In some instances, up to 50% of those lanes. All so that Customs and Border Protection personnel can be taken from the ports to provide support for Border Patrol operations.

While we are cognizant of the dire situation faced by Border Patrol with the recent surge of migrants, the shutting down of lanes at our ports severely impacts the tourism, manufacturing, rail, and fresh produce/agricultural industries. These international commerce industries are the pillars of economic security for our community. These DHS directives weaken our efforts, at a time when we need to fortify our first line of defense against the deluge of illegal drugs, terrorists and counterfeit goods flowing into our country. We must recognize our added responsibilities as we search for and seize illegal guns, ammunition and cash flowing into Mexico. Our CBP partners face these challenges all while constantly being pulled away from their core mission to help with migrant processing. A task which is clearly not, "Protect the American people, safeguard our borders, and enhance the nation's economic prosperity".

For months, Nogales and other border communities have been pleading with the administration for additional resources to support port operations and border security. The City of Nogales and Santa Cruz County for instance, are doing as much as they can to ensure that the necessary services are provided for the migrant population. In the past 48 hours alone, Border Patrol started doing local releases of migrants without notification to the local community, nor ensuring that migrants would be offered safe means of transportation to major urban centers like Tucson and Phoenix for additional services. And now, the policies mandated by your department are severely affecting our livelihood.

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The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
US Department of Homeland Security
September 15, 2023

Restricting the flow of legal traffic is a direct affront to key sectors in our regional and national economy, including tourism, retail, manufacturing, and the integrity of our nation's food supply. This policy is not sustainable, nor acceptable, by the job creators of our community.

It was just yesterday that we were informed that the Mexican government was shutting down the Morley Gate, a pedestrian-only port of entry in downtown Nogales, for over two months. This was a shock to our community, and to our downtown merchants particularly. It is essential that policies that are defined and mandated from Washington, D.C. and Mexico City take into consideration the repercussions to the local communities – to those of us that must live with the consequences. In this instance, it seems that someone forgot that in addition to trade tourism and national security functions, ports must also process migrants. Nogales Deconcini Port alone, through the CBP-ONE program, processes a minimum of 120 migrants every day! All these functions do not go away but border wait times will surely skyrocket, deterring tourists from visiting Nogales and Arizona at the start of a national holiday that is typically a huge opportunity for our retail and tourism sectors.

Mr. Secretary, we request the immediate repeal of this directive and return Customs personnel to the posts where they are most effective – the ports of entry. We don't want another 9/11 tragedy to occur because our ports are vulnerable and weak with low staffing numbers because of this directive to help Border Patrol. Washington and DHS are doing a disservice to both organizations by not properly staffing or funding them to the best of our abilities. We don't have the luxury of delaying the movement of people, and legal goods from being imported and exported. Nor can we afford the economic consequences of not repealing this directive. It will be devastating to Nogales and all US border communities. We hope you understand our sense of urgency in this matter. We are appreciative of the collaborative relationship local stakeholders have with our Nogales Ports director, Mike Humphries, and our Director of Field Operations, Guadalupe Ramirez, but you just made their job harder.

We look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible,

Respectfully,



Jaime Chamberlain
Chairman

CC: The Honorable Katie Hobbs, Governor
The Honorable Kyrsten Sinema, US Senate
The Honorable Mark Kelly, US Senate

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The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
US Department of Homeland Security
September 15, 2023

The Honorable David Schweikert, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Raul Grijalva, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Elijah Crane, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Ruben Gallego, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Greg Stanton, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Andy Biggs, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Juan Ciscomani, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Debbie Lesko, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Paul Gosar, US House of Representatives

CITY OF NOGALES

HONORABLE JORGE MALDONADO

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



September 22, 2023

Honorable Joseph Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20528-0525

Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Ms. 0525 United States Secretary of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave SE
Washington, DC 20528-0525

RE: Current actions mandating the closing of lanes at Port of Entry

Dear President Joseph Biden and Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas:

As mayor of the City of Nogales, Arizona, I write to express my dismay to the current changes imposed on us and strongly urge you to revoke them. These changes made to the southern ports of entry gravely impact efficiency of port operations due to the reallocation of Customs and Border Patrol Agents to supplement U.S. Border Patrol. In some instances, up to 50% of those lanes will be closed.

By reallocating Custom Agents to the Nogales Sector Border Patrol, you reduce the capability of the port to operate efficiently. While we are cognizant of the dire situation faced by Border Patrol with the recent surge of migrants, the shutting down of lanes at our ports severely impacts the tourism, manufacturing, rail, and fresh produce/ agricultural industries. These international commerce industries are the pillars of economic security for our community. This affects our resident's quality of life, access to healthcare and goods, international trade, tourism, travel, agricultural labor and many of our economic pillars. These DHS directives weaken our efforts, at a time when we need to fortify our first line of defense against the deluge of illegal drugs, terrorist and counterfeit goods flowing into our county. We must recognize our added responsibilities as we search for and seize illegal guns, ammunition and cash flowing into Mexico. Their job ensures that our communities are kept safe from drugs, trafficking and other dangerous threats that are aiming to come across the border.

We became aware that Border Patrol started doing local releases of migrants without notification to the local community, nor ensuring that migrants would be offered safe means of transportation to major urban centers like Tucson and Phoenix for additional livelihood. The City of Nogales and Santa Cruz County are doing as much as we can to ensure that the necessary services are provided for the migrant population. Our non-profits and first responders have had years of withstanding these challenges brought on by your inability to address the crisis. There is no resolve in sight with these organizations having to respond in order to provide basic human need and to keep our American communities safe. This issue is federal, not local, and we have had no action leading to an effective plan. And now, the policies mandated by your department are severely affecting our livelihood and we should not be expected to step up and address this change.

We are barely beginning to recover from the horrific impacts of COVID-19. The traffic at the pedestrian port is now beginning to meet pre-COVID levels which is key to our economic recovery and we were informed that the Mexican government was shutting down the Morley Gate, a pedestrian only port of entry in downtown Nogales, for the next two months. This was a shock to our community, and especially to our downtown merchants. It is essential that policies that are defined and mandated from Washington, D.C. and Mexico take into consideration the repercussions to the local communities since we must live with the consequences. In this instance, in addition to trade tourism and national security functions, ports must also process migrant. Nogales Deconcini Port alone, through the CBP-ONE program, processes a minimum of 120 migrants every day. All these functions do not go away but border wait times will skyrocket, deterring tourists from visiting Nogales at the start of a national holiday that is typically a huge opportunity for our city.

I strongly urge for the immediate reversal of this policy and expect the White House and the Department of Homeland Security to address this national immigration crisis without adding more burden to the already burdened border communities. I hope you understand our sense of urgency in this matter.

Respectfully,



Jorge Maldonado,
Mayor, City of Nogales



September 22, 2023

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Re: DHS Directive Reallocating Customs and Border Protection Personnel Away from Ports of Entry to Support Border Patrol Operations

Secretary Mayorkas,

On behalf of the Arizona Border Counties Coalition (ABCC), consisting of Yuma, Pima, Santa Cruz, and Cochise Counties in Arizona, we write to urge you to reverse the directive that moves Customs and Border Protection (CBP) personnel out of the ports of entry to assist Border Patrol (BP) in their migrant enforcement operations.

As described in our letter to you of September 15, 2023, ABCC members, along with key non-profit organizations in our region, have worked to support your department's efforts to address and respond to the surge of migrants seeking asylum in the United States. We have assisted in transportation, health screening, sheltering and other related services that are desperately needed. Throughout we have stressed the need to deploy additional resources, including financial, personnel and more, so that the migrant population would receive the appropriate attention and services, but also so that our residents and our local economies would not be negatively impacted by the growing numbers of people being processed, and now, being released into our border communities.

As border counties, we are cognizant of the dire situation faced by Border Patrol as we live it every day. And we have no doubt that you are aware of the role that ports of entry play in our communities, including the essential functions that support industrial and commercial supply chains, facilitating the flow of visitors that are critical for our tourism and retail sectors, and are at the forefront for efforts to protect the homeland against many threats including terrorism, the flow of killer narcotics and human smuggling. That is why we are surprised by the recent directive that takes CBP personnel out of the ports of entry to assist on BP operations.

To be clear, we are strong advocates for BP to get the necessary assistance and resources required to effectively conduct their mission, but this must not be done at the expense of CBP operations at the ports of entry. We have been apprised that as many as 50 CBP

The Honorable Secretary Mayorkas
Re: **DHS Directive Reallocating Customs and Border Protection Personnel Away from Ports
of entry to Support Border Patrol Operations**
September 22, 2023
Page 2

officers are being reassigned per shift, which may not seem like many, but for the ports at Douglas, Nogales and San Luis, this has meant that several lanes are being closed each shift, leaving some of our ports with only one or two car lanes open at a time, resulting in wait times that easily exceed two to four hours to cross the border! This is having a detrimental impact on our economy, on our families and on our local businesses that rely on the daily crosser. For instance, in Yuma County, during the harvest season, between 3,000 to 5,000 people cross each day through the San Luis 1 port of entry to work on local farms that produce close to 90% of the leafy greens consumed in the US. If people cannot cross to work on the fields, it will have an impact on the nation's food supply.


Mr. Secretary, we request the immediate repeal of this directive and that you return CBP personnel to the posts where they are most effective – the ports of entry. It is essential that both BP and CBP be funded and staffed to meet their needs and perform their duties effectively and efficiently. We hope you understand our sense of urgency in this matter.


We look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Sincerely,


The Honorable Sharon Bronson
Pima County Representative
Arizona Border Counties Coalition


The Honorable Ann English
Cochise County Representative
Arizona Border Counties Coalition


The Honorable Bruce Bracker
Santa Cruz County Representative
Arizona Border Counties Coalition


The Honorable Tony Reyes
Yuma County Representative
Arizona Border Counties Coalition

c: The Honorable Mark Kelly, US Senator
The Honorable Kyrsten Sinema, US Senator
The Honorable Juan Ciscomani, Congressman, Arizona 6th Congressional District
The Honorable Raul Grijalva, Congressman, Arizona 7th Congressional District
Richard Karwaczka, Cochise County Administrator
Jesus Valdez, Santa Cruz County Manager
Ian McGaughey, Yuma County Administrator
Jan Leshner, Pima County Administrator

Attachment #2

Copy of Port Authorities Joint Resolution

**JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE ARIZONA BORDER PORT AUTHORITIES
ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BORDER FOR TRADE, TOURISM, AND SECURITY,
AND THE NEED TO ELEVATE COMMUNITY NEEDS AS STATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES**

TUCSON, ARIZONA
SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

WHEREAS Arizona's relationship with Mexico is the example to follow in North America and beyond for cross-border collaboration and cooperation;

WHEREAS Arizona's trade with and tourism from Mexico are a significant contributor to Arizona's economy;

WHEREAS, in 2022, trade with Mexico reached \$19.6 billion, and that the first half of 2023 shows an annualized growth rate of 5.5%;

WHEREAS, in 2022, more than 810 trains, 452,000 trucks, 9.4 million cars and 22.6 million people crossed the border from Mexico into Arizona, and data to date for 2023 indicates that border crossing volumes have returned or exceeded pre-pandemic levels;

WHEREAS the three border communities of Douglas, Nogales and San Luis are the principal gateways for Arizona's trade with and tourism from Mexico and the effective, efficient, and safe flow of goods and people at these locations are essential to the local, regional, and national economy;

WHEREAS the border communities are the most impacted by state and federal policies pertaining to the border, and, as demonstrated during the pandemic, are essential to the nation's supply chain, food supply and national security;

WHEREAS, more and more each day, communities throughout Arizona, regional supply chains and the Arizona-Sonora Megaregion recognize the importance of the cross-border flows of both goods and people;

WHEREAS once you consider the volumes and impacts of the thousands of crossers each day, communities like Douglas, Nogales, and San Luis, have impacts to their roads, infrastructure and public services that are equivalent to those of much larger communities;

WHEREAS ports of entry and the road infrastructure that connects them to the federal highway system are critical assets to Arizona and the nation;

WHEREAS the border communities work hand in hand with their sister communities on the Mexican side of the border, creating unique sister cities of Douglas/Agua Prieta, Ambos Nogales, and San Luis/San Luis Rio Colorado;

WHEREAS Customs and Border Protection faces a number of challenges in the recruitment and hiring of personnel for sworn officers and personnel that provides clerical and logistical support for operations at ports of entry on the border with Mexico;


WHEREAS the binational nature of border communities creates issues that other communities in Arizona do not have to address and border communities are at the forefront of our nation's security; and

WHEREAS the border port authorities that include the Douglas International Port Authority, the Greater Nogales and Santa Cruz County Port Authority, and the Greater Yuma Port Authority have common goals of improving the ports of entry and contributing to the economic development and quality of life of their respective communities and have been effective community advocates for many years;

NOW THEREFORE, in the City of Tucson, Arizona, on this the 18th day of September of the year 2023, the Arizona border port authorities, during a joint session of the respective Boards of Directors, **JOINTLY RESOLVE THAT:**

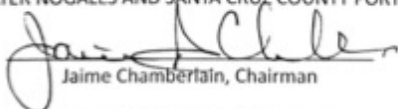
- The Port Authorities agree to unite their voices to advocate for the needs of the border communities and for the betterment of the Arizona-Sonora Megaregion.
- Ports of entry and their connectivity to the highway system in both countries need to be recognized as state and national priorities.
- That the model that is utilized to determine the staffing needs at each port of entry be updated to reflect the new realities of the border.
- That a pilot program be created to promote local hiring of sworn officers and clerical/logistical support staff at ports of entry.
- The governments of the United States and Mexico create regional technical mechanisms that ensure the proper alignment and development of ports of entry to maximize the return on federal, state, and local investments.
- Request that US Customs and Border Protection look for ways to streamline the recruitment process for new personnel which currently exceeds 12 months.
- The Port Authorities establish a working dialogue with local electric, water, and broadband service providers to ensure that they consider the sustainable growth of the communities.
- Request that the federal government create a priority funding program for infrastructure projects that are necessary and essential for the safe and efficient operation of ports of entry, including funding for water, wastewater projects to be administered by the North American Development Bank.

FOR THE DOUGLAS INTERNATIONAL PORT AUTHORITY



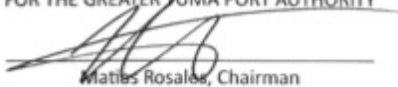
Carlos Fernandez, Chairman

FOR THE GREATER NOGALES AND SANTA CRUZ COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY



Jaime Chamberlain, Chairman

FOR THE GREATER YUMA PORT AUTHORITY



Matias Rosales, Chairman

Attachment #3
Copy of letters on Closing of Morley Gate



September 22, 2023

Marcos Moreno Baez
Consul General of Mexico in Nogales - Arizona
Consulate General of Mexico
135 West Cardell Street
Nogales, Arizona

RE: Infrastructures projects in Nogales, Sonora

Dear Consul General Moreno Baez,

I wanted to follow up with you on our conversation about the investments being made by the Mexican government at the Morley and DeConcini ports of entry. As you know, the Port Authority, from inception, has been a persistent advocate for infrastructure investments that offer improvements to the safe and efficient flow of goods and people and that contribute to the security of both nations.

But we have also been active promoters and participants in efforts to ensure the binational coordination that projects of this nature require. That is why we were taken by surprise by the announcement that the Morley Gate port of entry would be closed for several months due to a project on the Mexican side. There was little or no notification to the Arizona side that this would be happening, and Morley Avenue retailers were not able to prepare for the closing of such an essential gateway for their shoppers.

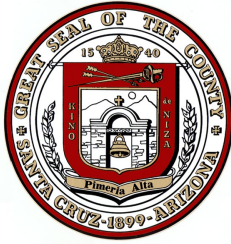
Additionally, I understand that there is a project to make significant modifications to the Mexican side at the DeConcini port of entry. As you are aware, the US government will soon start the planning process for the modernization of this major port of entry and we want to make sure that the modifications under consideration by Mexico are taken into account in the binational planning process.

We would look forward to the opportunity of participating in a dialogue with you and other appropriate authorities to make sure we have accurate and timely information on these projects.

Respectfully,

Jaime Chamberlain
Chairman

CC: The Honorable Jorge Maldonado, Mayor, City of Nogales
The Honorable Bruce Bracker, Supervisor, Santa Cruz County



Board of Supervisors Santa Cruz County

BRUCE BRACKER
District 3

September 22, 2023

Marcos Moreno Baez
Consul General of Mexico in Nogales, Arizona
Consulate General of Mexico
135 West Cardell Street
Nogales, Arizona

RE: Closure of Morley Gate

Dear Consul General Moreno Baez,

Per our conversation of September 21, 2023, I wanted to express my concern over the unannounced closure by Mexico of the Morley Gate Port of Entry at Downtown Nogales. While I remain a strong advocate for the improvements of the infrastructure that connects our two cities and our two nations, unilateral actions that impede the flow of traffic cannot be conducted in a unilateral fashion.

I am certain that projects that will close a port of entry for several months take time to plan and coordinate. That is why I and my fellow Nogalians were surprised when a sign was posted on the wall on the Mexican side of Morley Gate and the crossing was closed to the public. I, along with several stakeholders, just attended in the US-Mexico Binational Bridges and Border Crossings meeting in Washington, D.C. which included participation from many high-level representatives of key Mexican federal agencies and the two governments literally covered every port of entry project, and the project at Morley Gate was not mentioned.

Morley gate may be small, but it serves a crucial role for the merchants on Morley Avenue and the surrounding downtown area, as it is the fastest and most convenient way for crossers to access that retail section of our community. As it is, pedestrian traffic has had a downward tendency over recent years and this certain to have a dire impact.

I was also made aware that the Mexican government is planning significant improvements at the DeConcini port of entry, and I would ask that more details be provided as the US General Services Administration is set to begin the Feasibility Study for the modernization of that port. It is imperative that short-term projects not impact the ability to modernize this port thus we would ask for the necessary information be provided so that the appropriate binational planning can be done as soon as possible.

We are excited to see that investments by Mexico in our ports of entry but we want to make sure that projects that have a bearing on both countries be coordinated in a binational manner. I would be happy to work with you and other stakeholders to host binational planning meeting as soon as convenient so that the community can be apprised of the investments and we can plan accordingly for any unintended consequences.

Respectfully,



Bruce Bracker
Supervisor, District 3

CC: The Honorable Jorge Maldonado, Mayor, City of Nogales
Jaime Chamberlain, Chairman, Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority
Guadalupe Ramirez, Director, Field Operations, Customs and Border Protection

Santa Cruz County Complex

2150 N. Congress Drive • Room 119 • Nogales, Arizona 85621
(520) 375-7812 • FAX (520) 761-7843 • TDD (520) 375-7934

CITY OF NOGALES



HONORABLE JORGE MALDONADO

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

September 22, 2023

Marcos Moreno Baez
Consul General of Mexico in Nogales, Arizona
Consulate General of Mexico
135 West Cardwell Street
Nogales, Arizona 85621

RE: Closure of Morley Gate

Dear Consul General Moreno Baez,

I want to express my concern over the unannounced closure by Mexico of the Morley Gate Port of Entry at Downtown Nogales. While I remain a strong advocate for the improvements of the infrastructure that connects our two cities and our two nations, unilateral actions that impede the flow of traffic cannot be conducted in a unilateral fashion.

Morley Gate may be small, but it serves a crucial role for the merchants on Morley Avenue and the surrounding downtown area, as it is the fastest and most convenient way for crossers to access that retail section of our community. As it is, pedestrian traffic has had a downward tendency over recent year and this certain to have a dire impact.

We are beginning to recover from the horrific impacts of COVID-19. The traffic at the pedestrian port is now beginning to meet pre-COVID levels which is key to our economic recovery so the abrupt notice that the Mexican government was shutting down the Morley Gate is of utmost disappointing. This is a shock to our community, and especially to our downtown merchants. It is essential that policies that are defined and mandated from the Mexican government take into consideration the repercussions to the local communities since we must live with the consequences.

I was also made aware that the Mexican government is planning significant improvements at the DeConsini port of entry, and I would ask that more details be provided as the US General Services Administration is set to begin the Feasibility Study for the modernization of that port. It is imperative that short-term projects not impact the ability to modernize this port thus we would ask for the necessary information be provided so that the appropriate binational planning can be done as soon as possible.

I am excited to see that investments by Mexico in our ports of entry but we want to make sure that projects that have a bearing on both countries be coordinated in a binational manner. I would be happy to work with you and other stakeholders to host binational planning meeting as soon as convenient so that the community can be apprised of the investments and we can plan accordingly for any unintended consequences.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Maldonado', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jorge Maldonado
City of Nogales, Mayor



123 W. Kino Park | Nogales, Arizona 85621
Phone Number: (520) 287-3685 | Fax Number: (520) 287-3687
Email: info@thenogaleschamber.org
Website: www.thenogaleschamber.org



Sept. 25th, 2023

Marcos Moreno Baez Consul General of Mexico in Nogales
Arizona Consulate General of Mexico
135 West Cardell Street
Nogales, Arizona 85621

RE: Infrastructure Projects

Dear Consul General Moreno Baez,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing on behalf of our organization, Nogales Santa Cruz County Chamber of Commerce to express our deep concerns regarding the recent closure of the Morley Port of Entry due to construction on the Mexican side. This closure has raised significant apprehensions among our merchants, particularly in light of its timing, as businesses prepare for the upcoming holiday season and the peak tourism period.

We recognize and support the commendable efforts made by the Mexican government in enhancing the infrastructure of our border ports. The modernization and improvements to our ports are essential for the safe and efficient flow of goods and people, which directly contribute to the prosperity and security of both nations. However, we were taken by surprise by the abrupt closure of the Morley Port of Entry for an extended period, without adequate prior notice. This decision has had a profound impact on our local businesses, not only in Arizona but also across the border in Nogales, Sonora. The months leading up to the holiday season are crucial for commerce, and the closure during this period is particularly challenging for our merchants.

We believe that open communication and collaboration are vital to addressing these concerns. While we fully support the infrastructure developments, we would appreciate the opportunity to participate in the planning process to ensure that our concerns are considered, and the projects are executed with minimal disruption to our local economies. One possible solution we would like to explore is the possibility of scheduling construction projects during periods of lower traffic, such as the summer months. This could help mitigate the adverse effects on our businesses during peak seasons.





123 W. Kino Park | Nogales, Arizona 85621
Phone Number: (520) 287-3685 | Fax Number: (520) 287-3687
Email: info@thenogaleschamber.org
Website: www.thenogaleschamber.org

Consul General Moreno Baez, we kindly request the opportunity to engage in a productive dialogue with you and other relevant authorities to address these concerns effectively. We value your insights and collaboration as we work together to find solutions that benefit both sides of the border.

We look forward to your response and the possibility of working together to plan these projects more effectively, ensuring minimal disruption to our local economies.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Olivia Ainza-Kramer
President

CC: The Honorable Jorge Maldonado, Mayor, City of Nogales
The Honorable Manuel Ruiz, Supervisor, Santa Cruz County
Nogales Santa Cruz County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors
Chairman Jaime Chamberlain, Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority
US Consulate General Nogales/Nogales, Sonora

PROMOTING THE ECONOMY AND

CULTURAL WELFARE OF NOGALES

AND SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Attachment #4

Copy of letter in support of EDA Recompete Grant Application



September 19, 2023

Assistant Secretary Alejandra Castillo
Economic Development Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW, Suite 71014
Washington, DC 20230

RE: Support for 2023 Santa Cruz County EDA Recompete Pilot Grant - Recompete Pilot Plan and Strategy Development Grant

Dear Assistant Secretary Castillo:

On behalf of the Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority, I am writing to express our support for Santa Cruz County's grant application for \$500,000 under the US Economic Development Administration's Recompete Pilot Plan Grant program.

We are committed to partnering with the county in advancing important workforce development initiatives that contribute to our region's growth and economic development. We embrace workforce training opportunities that invest in local people, enabling them to access well-paying jobs and offer a career path. Business trends and technology advancements indicate that workers must demonstrate competency in key areas, especially in digital literacy, to ensure that our workforce offers a skill set that matches current and future needs for employers.

The Port Authority will coordinate with the county in efforts to disseminate information on the program and offer our vast network of public and private sectors contacts to maximize the return on the investment. This initiative is an essential component of our efforts to move vast sections of our employment from seasonal to year-round structures, offering a more stable local economy and tax base.

We hope both the designation and grant are awarded, as they would create much needed pathways for local workers to access better jobs and higher wage employment.

We look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible,

Respectfully,

Jaime Chamberlain
Chairman