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Barrio Logan Gateway Sign Project Breaks Ground

by BRENT E. BELTRÁN on JANUARY 16, 2014 · 2 COMMENTS

in ARTS, COLUMNS, CULTURE, DESDE LA LOGAN

***“This design is *of* the community,
by the community, and for the
community.”***

By Brent E. Beltrán

Barrio Logan, San Diego’s most historic Mexican neighborhood, is getting what most other local communities have: a gateway sign. This soon-to-be community landmark will span Cesar E. Chavez Parkway between Main St. and Newton Ave.



The Port of San Diego, in partnership with SANDAG, Caltrans and the City of San Diego, is the sponsor of the \$1.7 million Proposition 1B funded Barrio Logan Gateway Sign and Port Access Improvements project.



Artist rendering of the Barrio Logan gateway sign.

A ceremonial groundbreaking took place on Monday, January 13 with presentations by Bob Nelson, Incoming Chair of the Board of Port Commissioners, City Councilman David Alvarez, SANDAG Chairman Jack Dale, Caltrans Deputy District Director of Planning Bill Figge, and artist Armando Nuñez.

“This gateway design honors the legacy of Chicano Park and is an appropriate statement from and for the community,” said Bob Nelson.

Lead artist Armando Nuñez and Estrada Land Planning architect Vicki Estrada designed the sign through a collaborative process with area residents, property owners, business owners and artists.

“It was a true collaborative effort. We came together the best way and put together a project this community will be proud to have,” said Councilman Alvarez.



The Barrio Logan gateway sign is scheduled to be completed by the end of this year.

The Mesoamerican themed gateway was not only designed to stand as a symbol of community pride but it also has a practical

purpose. [Pollution and pedestrian danger](#) from trucks that use the Port of San Diego's 10th Ave. Terminal has been an issue for Barrio Logan residents for many years. The [Environmental Health Coalition](#) successfully negotiated with the Port to [divert truck traffic](#) off of neighborhood streets. Apparently some drivers didn't get the memo and many trucks still rumble down Chavez Parkway, including during Councilman Alvarez's presentation to ceremony attendees.

He stated that, "part of this was also to divert trucks and maintain a good quality of life for people that live here. It's not a truck route. It's actually a community corridor."



Caitrans Deputy District Director c/ Flanning Bill Figge, Fort Commissioner Rafael Castellanos, Vice Chairman c/ the Board c/ Fort Commissioners Bob Nelson, San Diego City Councilman David Alvarez, Community Artist Armando Nunez, SANLAG Chairman Jack Dale and Fort President/CEO Wayne Darbeau.

Large trucks are not supposed to travel on Cesar Chavez Parkway yet many still do either because they are unaware of Chavez being off limits or they simply don't care. The gateway sign will be a physical impediment to future truck traffic, unless an errant truck driver happens to smash right through it. Hopefully that won't happen.

The Barrio Logan gateway sign project is but one more positive aspect of the revitalization of Barrio Logan. The [burgeoning Barrio Logan Arts District](#) with the recent additions of Chicano Art Gallery and La Bodega on Logan Ave are others as well as the opening of the [Mercado](#)

[del Barrio complex](#) with the [Estrella del Mercado apartments](#) and the [construction of the Cesar E. Chavez Continuing Education Center](#).

The formation of the Barrio Logan Association Maintenance Assessment District and their hiring of [Urban Corps to clean up the community](#) five days a week is another example. [National treasure Chicano Park](#), with the help of Urban Corps, will also see some much needed [improvements](#) in the coming year. Through projects like these Barrio Logan is fast

becoming a neighborhood on the rise.

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Brent E. Beltrán is a third generation pocho that lives next door to Chicano Park in San Diego's Barrio Logan. He's the former publisher of Calaca Press, is married to his dreaming heart watcher and is the proud father of a baby Dino-saur. He's an MMA watching junkie who likes to get his nerd on by viewing superhero and sci-fi movies/tv shows. He writes the somewhat regular column Desde la Logan and is the newest addition to the SDFP Editorial Board. He can be contacted via email at desdelalogan@gmail.com and through his Twitter account [@DesdeLaLogan](https://twitter.com/DesdeLaLogan).

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