



**GREG COX**  
SUPERVISOR, FIRST DISTRICT  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**AGENDA ITEM**

**DATE:** March 17, 2015

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**SUBJECT:** A MARITIME VISION FOR SAN DIEGO COUNTY (DISTRICTS: ALL)

**Overview**

San Diego is unique in that our region is geographically defined by the Pacific Ocean, an international border, a 125,000 acre military base and the desert. Because of our location on the Pacific Rim, and due to our natural harbor and near-shore deep-water ocean currents, we have long had a rich maritime culture that includes the Navy, academia, fishing, shipbuilding, and hundreds of maritime-related businesses. Taken alone, these attributes are all assets any city or county would enjoy having. We have the opportunity to add to our collective identity and our competitive advantage by packaging these resources into a maritime vision that balances environmental conservation and economic growth.

Our maritime vision should include the creation of BlueTech incubators and related Centers of Excellence. We already have the largest identified BlueTech cluster in the country. We should bring these elements together and promote innovation in a collaborative environment where experts in desalination, aquaculture, shipbuilding, biomedicine, sports technology, underwater acoustics, underwater robotics, unmanned systems and security feel inspired to test their technologies and incubate new startups.

Today's action will initiate a maritime vision for San Diego County and launch a coordinated effort with the City and Port of San Diego to create a BlueTech incubator and related Centers of Excellence. Working with our partners at the cities and the Port, economic development officials, academia and industry, we can collectively pivot our attention to our ocean resources and market San Diego as the place to do business for maritime-related companies.

**Recommendation**

**SUPERVISOR GREG COX**

Adopt a Resolution of the Board of Supervisors entitled RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO INITIATING A REGIONAL MARITIME VISION AND LAUNCHING A COORDINATED EFFORT TO CREATE A BLUETECH INCUBATOR AND RELATED CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE.

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**Fiscal Impact**

N/A

**Business Impact Statement**

N/A

**Advisory Board Statement**

N/A

**Background**

The San Diego County Board of Supervisors will initiate a maritime vision for San Diego County and launch a coordinated effort with the City and Port of San Diego to create a BlueTech incubator and related Centers of Excellence. Working with our partners at the cities and the Port, economic development officials, academia and industry, we can collectively pivot our attention to our ocean resources and market San Diego as the place to do business for maritime-related companies.

Our maritime vision should include the creation of BlueTech incubators and Centers of Excellence that highlight our strengths as a region. We already have the largest identified BlueTech cluster in the country. We should bring these pieces together and promote innovation in a collaborative environment where experts in desalination, aquaculture, shipbuilding, biomedicine, sports technology, underwater acoustics, underwater robotics, unmanned systems and maritime security feel inspired to test their technologies and incubate new startups.

San Diego is already known as a maritime region, with our culture of surfing and sailing, fish tacos and fishermen’s markets. Our relationship with the ocean began with the Kumeyaay Nation who relied on the ocean and bay for sustenance and cultural significance, and includes the explorer Juan Cabrillo who sailed into our natural harbor in 1542 aboard the Spanish galleon San Salvador, which is being commemorated with the launch of a full-scale working replica by the San Diego Maritime Museum in April 2015.

Since this pivotal beginning in our country’s origin story, people have been drawn to our natural harbor as a source of enjoyment, economic opportunity, and national defense.

The United States’ orientation towards the Pacific flourished with the gold rush and later with the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914. West coast ports became drivers of economic prosperity and safe harbors for our nation’s military. Coronado became the birthplace of Naval Aviation, and our bay continues to be a strategic military port located on the Pacific Rim with the largest concentration of military personnel in the world.

Our military attracted research grants for new technologies in desalination, underwater acoustics, maritime security and oceanographic and atmospheric research. These investments by the federal government were a catalyst for technologies that helped boost our BlueTech cluster and support maritime service companies in San Diego.

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The San Diego Maritime Industry Report in 2012 found over 1,400 maritime-related companies in San Diego County, with over 46,000 jobs and more than \$14 billion in annual direct sales. This cluster includes traditional industries like shipbuilding, commercial fishing and marine recreation, but also includes the nascent and largest identified BlueTech cluster in the United States; maritime companies in industries like underwater robotics, biomedicine, desalination, telecommunications and a variety of innovative maritime-based companies, many of which are exporting up to 99% of their products and growing 35% per year.

This hotbed of innovation is boosted by world-class institutes like the Hubbs-Seaworld Research Institute and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

San Diego has all the elements to be the world-leader in water technology, BlueTech and the Blue Economy. By collaborating with academia, non-profits, for-profits, economic development and workforce development officials and government agencies, we can establish a maritime vision for San Diego County that pulls together all of these great resources, turns our collective attention to the ocean and supports the creation of BlueTech incubators and related Centers of Excellence.

**Linkage to the County of San Diego Strategic Plan**

N/A

Respectfully submitted,

GREG COX  
Supervisor, First District

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

Resolution of the Board of Supervisors entitled “INITIATING A REGIONAL MARITIME VISION AND LAUNCHING A COORDINATED EFFORT TO CREATE A BLUETECH INCUBATOR AND RELATED CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE”

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**AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**

**REQUIRES FOUR VOTES:**  Yes  No

**WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED**  
 Yes  No

**PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:**  
N/A

**BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:**  
N/A

**BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:**  
N/A

**MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:**  
N/A

**ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):**  
N/A

**ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:** District 1, Board of Supervisors

**OTHER CONCURRENCES(S):** N/A

**CONTACT PERSON(S):**

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