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Daily Business Report

June 27, 2008

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ECONOMY

USD's Index of Leading Economic Indicators for the county fell 1.1 percent in May. For the sixth consecutive month, the leader on the downside was a sharp drop in consumer confidence. Initial claims for unemployment insurance and help wanted advertising also were down considerably. Three components -- building permits, local stock prices and the outlook for the national economy -- were positive, but only slightly so. With May's decline, the USD Index has now fallen in 25 of the last 26 months and it has declined significantly for eight straight months.

The economic report says there is no sign of any change in the negative outlook for the local economy for the near future, with the slump now likely to extend through the first half of 2009. The labor market is looking particularly weak at this point. For the second time in three months, job growth in May was down on a year-over-year basis. Employment growth for 2008 as a whole through May is now just barely positive with a gain of only 400 jobs compared to the same period in 2007. Barring a huge surge in jobs in June, employment growth for 2008 as a whole will probably turn negative when the next employment report is released. How long the job losses continue and how deep they will be is uncertain at this point.

May's decrease puts the USD Index at 119.7, down from April's revised reading of 120.9.

REAL ESTATE

DPR Construction Inc. has purchased the **Governor Tech Center** office building at 5010 Shoreham Place in San Diego for \$6.85 million and intends to relocate into the building. Five tenants lease space in the building -- **National City Mortgage, Pentech Financial, Kleinfelder Inc. Guild Mortgage Co.** and **D.C. Pulido Engineering.**

The 33,705-square-foot office building, originally built in 1984, was sold by Shoreham-Viewridge LLC.

Tony Russell, Richard Gonor, Steve Rowland, Brian Starck and Michael Roberts of **Grubb & Ellis|BRE Commercial** represented the seller in the transaction. **Jed Stirnkorb** of **CB Richard Ellis** represented the buyer.

BIOTECH

Biocom and the **Southern California Biomedical Council** (SoCalBio) have formed an alliance to promote the state's life science industry. The **California Life Science Alliance** is based upon a memorandum of understanding signed at the 2008 BIO International Convention in San Diego. Under the three-year agreement, the organizations will pool resources and work together to address a range of public policy issues.

At Ogilvy, Graham managed all creative work for **Cisco Systems**, **ARCO** and **am/pm** stores. He has worked at **Kirshenbaum Bond + Partners West**, San Francisco and **J. Walter Thompson**, San Francisco, and has led projects for **PeopleSoft** software, **wine.com**, **Nestle**, **e*trade** and the **California Lottery**.

As a student of **Miami Ad School**, Helgaas completed international internships in Hamburg, Germany and Stockholm, Sweden. He interned at **McGarry Bowen** in New York. Cliett comes from **DDB Seattle**. Floro specializes in brand design and identity at Bailey Gardiner. Green supports the **Brookfield Homes**, **Vet-Stem**, **BeautyEncounter.com**, **San Diego Association of Realtors** and **Point Loma Outfitting** accounts at Bailey Gardiner.

NONPROFITS

Business and community leaders have been selected as members of the 2008-09 board of the San Diego/Imperial Counties chapter of **the American Red Cross**. After serving three years on the board and holding the positions of finance chair and vice chair, **Marilyn Creson Brown** will become the new board chair. She replaces outgoing chair **Vincent Mudd**.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

The **Board of Supervisors** has approved a long-awaited plan to consolidate a dozen unincorporated area fire agencies that have suffered from inadequate budgets and low staffing. Vice Chairwoman **Dianne Jacob**, who has championed the consolidation effort, called the decision "historic" and said it radically transforms the region's network of fire protection and emergency medical services. "Over half the county will be unified into a single, less-fractured, more efficient agency," Jacob said. "This means stronger and better coordinated services in our rural areas. And, it brings us significantly closer to our eventual goal of creating a Countywide fire entity to serve the region."

The board agreed to spend \$15.5 million annually to bring additional resources and firefighters to more than 50 existing fire stations throughout the backcountry. The plan calls for 12 agencies to merge in three phases, starting with six volunteer companies: **Sunshine Summit**, **Intermountain**, **Ranchita**, **Shelter Valley**, **Ocotillo Wells** and **Dulzura**. The **Campo**, **Boulevard**, **San Pasqual** and **Mount Laguna** fire agencies would be next to join while the **Rural** and **Pine Valley** fire protection districts would join in a final third phase.

The plan requires final approval from **the Local Agency Formation Commission**, the state agency responsible for creating and dissolving public entities.

PORT DISTRICT

The **Board of Port Commissioners** will hold its July meeting in National City. The meeting will begin at 1 p.m. on Tuesday (July 1) in the **Council Chambers** at 1243 National City Blvd. The Port of San Diego final budget for fiscal year 2008-09 will be presented at the meeting for board approval.

ORCHIDS & ONIONS

The **San Diego Architectural Foundation** kicks off the 2008 Orchids & Onions program with the launch of a new Website (www.orchidsandonions.org) designed to encourage public participation in the program. The nomination period is now open. The Website encourages commentary, both comparable and contrary, to provide as much information as possible about nominated projects.

"The new Website will allow for more interaction between the general public and the people responsible for these projects," says **Maxine Ward**, program co-chair and foundation board member. We hope to inspire an educational and insightful conversation."

KPBS Program Director **Keith York** manages the Website's blog, a new feature. He is to

ensure that issues surrounding controversial nominations are brought into the spotlight.

OrchidsandOnions.org will allow the jury to review public and professional commentary before they vote. The jury includes nine professionals from the design, development and art worlds. As in previous years, the residents of San Diego are also able to cast ballots for the People's Choice Award. Nominees will be posted on the Web site in October.

Projects can be nominated by submitting them to the new Website. To be eligible, the project must be in San Diego County and must not be a single-family residence. Projects in the planning stages will be considered if they have been subjected to public scrutiny. It is recommended that digital photos, illustrating the reason for the nomination, accompany submissions. Aug. 31 is the cutoff date for nominations for the 2008 awards. Nominations received after this time will be considered for next year's awards.

Nominations may be submitted in one of eight categories: Architecture; Landscape Architecture; Urban Design; Public Art; Planning Policies; Sustainable Design; Historic Preservation; Interior Design.

The 2008 awards presentation will be at the **San Diego Hall of Champions** in Balboa Park on Nov. 13. A roundtable discussion will complement the awards presentation.

SPORTS & RECREATION

The **San Diego Padres** are offering July Dollar Days next month, a deal that prices hot dogs and soft drinks at \$1 and cuts \$1 off the price of all beer sold at the ballpark. "We are excited about this program, which is based in part on input from our fans," says Padres CEO **Sandy Alderson**. "We hope July Dollar Days will provide some relief to all our fans from higher gas prices and the current overall economy."

The Padres are home July 7, 8 and 9 vs. **Florida Marlins**; July 11, 12 and 13 vs. **Atlanta Braves**; and July 28, 29 and 30 vs. **Arizona Diamondbacks**.

Nonprofits will benefit when the **Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International** holds its ninth annual Bowling FUNdraiser on July 19 at **Brunswick Premier Lanes** in Chula Vista. The theme this year is "Bowling for Scholars." Attendees will be dressed up as their favorite teacher, principal, jock, nerd or favorite fictional school character. The local chapter of HSMIAI has more than 130 members. Additional information is hsmiaid.org.

SMART GROWTH

The **San Diego/Tijuana District Council** of the **Urban Land Institute** held its fourth annual Smart Growth Awards program this week to honor distinguished planning and design achievements as well as individuals helping to advance the principles of smart growth. ULI defines smart growth as development that is economically sound, environmentally friendly and supportive of community livability

- Four Blueprint for Excellence in Smart Growth Awards went to the 2008 City of San Diego General Plan update, the City of Chula Vista Urban Core Specific Plan, the San Marcos Creek Specific Plan and the Otay Binational Corridor Strategic Plan.

The San Diego General Plan update provides the framework for future growth and development in the city over the next 20 to 30 years and is designed to promote smart growth, sustainability and environmentally responsible development.

The Chula Vista Urban Core Specific Plan calls for developing a mix of residential, retail, office and recreational uses within the existing downtown urban area and promotes green building measures.

The San Marcos Creek Specific Plan aims at revitalizing and conserving 214 acres along San