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Carlos Navarro

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Construction Begins On Large Industrial Park In San Luis Rio Colorado, Near Sonora-arizona Border

by Carlos Navarro

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After a delay of several months, construction has finally started on a new 8,000-acre (3,217-hectare) "industrial city" near San Luis Rio Colorado, located near the Sonora-Arizona border (for previous coverage see SourceMex, 03/17/93). Original plans called for construction to begin at the end of March, but unforeseen delays pushed back the start of construction until October. Enrique Orozco Oceguera, assistant general director of the project, told reporters that the investor group comprised of North American and European companies plans to spend about US$60 million over the next three months to lay the basic infrastructure such as street lights, electricity and telephone lines in a portion of the development. Ultimately, the investors hope to raise US$2.7 billion to put into the project over the next 15 years for construction of factories, businesses, parks, and residential areas on an 8,000-acre site owned by Ejido San Luis. Amendments to Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution opened up ejidos communal or public lands to private investment (for more details on Article 27 reforms see SourceMex, 01/13/93). The partnership dubbed NAFTA, SA includes managing investor Matthews Group of Ontario, Canada; World Common Market of Spain; Arizona-based Jamison & Gutierrez, and members of Ejido San Luis. The foreign investors are putting venture capital into the project while seeking to attract businesses to fill the proposed industrial park. The investors hope to attract enough businesses to the industrial city to employ 85,000 people directly and generate indirect employment for another 225,000. "The park has enormous potential because of its location near the US-Mexico border and the Port of Los Angeles," said Orozco. He said another advantage is that the industrial park will be located near a little-used US-Mexico border crossing while it is also relatively close to large communities such as Yuma, Arizona, and Mexicali, Baja California state. (Sources: La Jornada, 10/24/93; El Financiero International, 11/01/93

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