

International Mobility & Trade Corridor Program Steering Committee Meeting Summary

January 19, 2017

Meeting packet available at: theIMTC.com/meetings

Meeting location

The meeting was held at CBSA Douglas POE, Surrey, BC.

Meeting attendance

Canada Border Services Agency [CBSA] (Brad Valentine, Dan Bubas, Ryan Vanderstar, David Lee, Matt Jollymore); **Whatcom Council of Governments [WCOG]** (Hugh Conroy, Melissa Fanucci, Jaymes McClain); **Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT]** (Todd Carlson, Cliff Hall, Jason Beloso); **US Customs and Border Protection [US CBP]** (John Dahm, Craig Hope, Kenneth Williams, Phillip Stanford); **City of Blaine** (Bill Bullock); **Congresswoman Susan DelBene's Office** (Kaylee Galloway); **BC Trucking Association [BCTA]** (Lindsay Samson); **City of Surrey** (Don Buchanan); **BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure [BC MoTI]** (Abid Sivic, John Schnablegger); **Border Policy Research Institute [BPRI]** (Laurie Trautman); **US Department of State** (Mike Bradecamp)

Current event updates

Bill Bullock gave an update of current transportation projects being conducted by the city of Blaine. They are at 30 percent design on the Hughes Ave project. The project realigns the intersection of Hughes Ave and Peace Portal Dr to provide for a better turning angle for commercial trucks as well as improve the Hughes Ave corridor, which acts as a secondary commercial truck route to the border. The project will cost about \$2.3MM, Mr. Bullock said, and they will probably phase it into two separate projects. The city is also putting out a request for proposals [RFP] for the design of a Boblett St rechannelization project. That project, among other things, would improve the intersection of Boblett St and SR 543. Mr. Bullock also said that the city recently met with Senator Doug Erickson and Representative Luanne Van Werven regarding improvements to I-5 exit 274. The leading alternative for the exit 274 design is a direct connection to Odell Rd, which would be much less expensive than previously discussed alternatives.

Laurie Trautman informed the group of last border brief put out by the Border Policy Research Institute [BPRI], which analyzes land-based freight flows between the U.S. and its partners in NAFTA. The freight analysis is broken up by port, she said. This study is a continuation of analysis done in 2008. Ms. Trautman also commented on concerns she has heard regarding possible renewed interest in the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System [NSEERS] by the incoming U.S. administration. NSEERS required non-

citizens from specific countries to register under the program as part of entry into the U.S. Ken Williams of U.S. Customs and Border Protection [US CBP] said he has not heard on any upcoming changes in policy.

Brad Valentine reported that Canada Border Services Agency [CBSA] is still 4 to 5 years away from fully redeveloping their Pacific Highway border crossing. They will be in discussion with US CBP and the Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT] as far as realignment of travel lanes to inspection booths. Mr. Valentine also said that there will be heating ventilation improvements to the current Pacific Highway building, which will cause disruption in traffic through the CBSA facility. Passenger vehicles will be moved to the commercial facility while the improvements are made. CBSA is also doing some work on the FAST-first commercial routing strategy, which would allow all three commercial inspection booths to be used for commercial traffic while still having a dedicated FAST lane. At a signal just before the inspection booths, FAST lane vehicles would be given priority. Regarding the Highway 15 pedestrian routing project, CBSA has funding ready for their portion of the project, Mr. Valentine said. Melissa Fanucci commented that they are still waiting on confirmations of funding availability from the BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure [BC MoTI] and the other stakeholders.

Todd Carlson said that WSDOT has a draft memorandum of agreement [MOA] for the FAST-first signal project. CBSA will own and operate the new infrastructure. The approach to the CBSA commercial facility from SR 543 will not change – there will just be a new signal near the final approach to the inspection booths. Brad Valentine added that commissioning for all of the equipment is happening next week, when they will also discuss the performance metrics of the new system.

Melissa Fanucci told the group that a Blaine community newspaper recently wrote an article about the Peace Arch Park sidewalk, reviewing the draft pedestrian plan that agencies are working on. She said that the survey recently sent out to IMTC members regarding the benefits of the IMTC forum garnered 23 responses, which will be included in the performance measurements report that IMTC develops annually. Funding for the maintenance of the Border Data Warehouse, which showcases border wait-time metrics from both the Cascade Gateway region and the Buffalo-Niagara region, will run out in a couple of months. They are working with the Transport Canada office in Ottawa to renew the funding. Hugh Conroy added that the Whatcom Council of Governments [WCOG] was originally approached by Transport Canada to head the maintenance of the website, so if funding is not renewed, WCOG does not plan to use internal funds to keep the project running. This is a separate, more national-level archive than the Cascade Gateway Border Data Warehouse, which will continue being maintained. Ms. Fanucci said that WCOG is updating the intelligent transportation systems [ITS] architecture for the Whatcom region as part of WCOG's regional transportation plan update, so she may contact agencies in that regard. She also informed the group that in talks with Ryan Vanderstar, they may set up a meeting focused on airports with staff from Abbotsford Airport and possibly the Port of Bellingham.

Ken Williams commented on the pedestrian crossing project, saying that US CBP's lane expansion project at Pacific Highway may be delayed. Hugh Conroy encouraged agencies to coordinate signage in order to have consistent messaging for pedestrians along the border path.

Jaymes McClain attached a technical memo from the IMTC Border Freight Operations study [BFO] in the meeting's packet. The memo includes some analysis on dangerous goods moving across the border during the project's field data collection in 2016. He also said to expect the full BFO report out in February.

Kaylee Galloway reported that the new district director for Representative Suzan DelBene, Molly Keenan, just started and is working out of the Bothell office. She also said that Rep. DelBene was chosen to join the House Way and Means Committee and a subcommittee on trade.

Ryan Vanderstar explained that cross-border cargo movement and changing freight strategies in the Cascade Gateway are a focus right now for CBSA commercial. He also suggested that pedestrian pathing at the Abbotsford-Huntingdon port be part of the cross-border pedestrian conversation, as that port sees the largest pedestrian volume in the Cascade Gateway and second most on the US-Canada border. In 2015, about 46,000 pedestrians crossed at Sumas-Abbotsford-Huntingdon.

Matt Jollymore explained the relationship of the strength of the Canadian dollar with volumes of traffic crossing the border and enquired if there were any interest in forecasting this relationship. Melissa Fanucci said that they can do forecasts based on historic trends, but it would be difficult to predict how the dollar will fluctuate going forward.

Lindsay Samson of British Columbia Trucking Association [BCTA] said that the Canadian Trucking Association [CTA] has been talking with CBSA regarding emissions penalties and how to minimize those. She also noted that Greg Kolesniak, who had represented BCTA at IMTC meetings in the past, is now with TransLink.

Dan Bubas said that for the FAST-first improvement, two of the three inspection booths at Pacific Highway commercial were just wired up, and once that is all done they will do a testing phase in the coming weeks. There is talk of a soft opening that could be attended by agencies that have collaborated on the project. He also announced that the steel frame for the large scale imaging system facility is complete. The project is supposed to be done by the end of March.

Jason Beloso said that WSDOT is in the final stages of its truck parking study, which will be completed in the next couple of weeks. Demand for truck parking is increasing while the supply is holding steady. One low cost solution to truck parking issues is a comprehensive truck parking map, which WSDOT is nearly ready to distribute online and as a hard-copy. He said that there are provisions for truck parking funding in the FAST Act federal authorization, and that WSDOT is looking at their own properties for possible parking locations and increasing current parking locations' capacity by downscaling some of the landscaping. WSDOT is also updating its 2014 Freight System Plan starting this month, and the goal is to finish the update by end of year to comply with federal guidelines. They have done some work on the update already, such as identifying critical rural and urban corridors across the state and the developing the 2016 Prioritized Freight Project List. Mr. Beloso also mentioned that in the governor's transportation budget, there is draft language for a feasibility study for high-speed rail (250mph+) between Portland and Vancouver, which would refresh a high speed rail study that WSDOT conducted in from 1991.

Phil Stanford said that he is interested in updates on the Canadian highway improvement projects happening near-border. He and other US CBP officials have had a series of meetings with CBSA regarding highway improvements (which affect U.S. border crossings in the Cascade Gateway). Mr. Stanford also noted the value of frequent communication between U.S. and Canadian agencies regarding these transportation projects.

John Schnablegger gave updates on BC MoTI projects happening near the border. The BC Highway 13 improvements are going well and they are finishing designs. He said that when the truck lanes are completed

southbound, they will need help from US CBP (and most likely the General Services Administration [GSA]) for aligning the Highway 13 approach with the appropriate booth lanes at the Lynden crossing. The project is slated to be done by the end of 2017, with tendering occurring in March or April. Abid Sivic added that the same loop detector system will be used for the Lynden port approach with updates for the improved lane configuration. Mr. Schnablegger also said that the BC Highway 11 NEXUS lane improvement, which extends the southbound NEXUS lane north past Vye Rd, will be starting in fall of 2017 at the latest. BC MoTI will also be working on widening BC Highway 1 from Highway 13 to 208 St, which is a \$250MM initiative that is just being put together. Regarding flooding issues at the Aldergrove port, Mr. Schnablegger said that BC MoTI is focusing on better drainage at the port.

Hugh Conroy updated the group on the US Federal Highway Administration's [FHWA] second Strategic Highway Research Program [SHRP2]. He said that over the last couple of years, he has been submitting reports about the IMTC's performance measuring strategies. A recent meeting seemed to close that dialogue, and Mr. Conroy said that he and Todd Carlson presented some of the IMTC's documentation, which was of interest to the group. Mr. Conroy also said that legislation in the US for preclearance has passed, and once it is passed in Canada, there will need to be a policy framework developed.

Don Buchanan announced that he will be representing the city of Surrey at IMTC meetings moving forward, as Kristen Teide has changed positions.

Status/next steps of current IMTC projects

Hugh Conroy explained that the IMTC BFO and Dynamic Border Management [DBM] projects have so far been under budget for the work that already has been completed for both projects. There is remaining funding for additional research tasks that could be fit in to the original project scopes.

Border Freight Operations [BFO]

Regional Freight Trends Analysis

Ryan Vanderstar noted that for other transportation modes, inspection agencies have knowledge of when vehicles are arriving at the border, but this not the case with land border freight. He suggested a process to better predict freight flows and have inspection agencies be better connected with the freight industry in general. Mr. Vanderstar said that it would also be important to understand the decision making process in commercial vehicles selecting a border crossing so that ports can be better prepared with their staffing.

Dan Bubas added that CBSA has recently seen freight border-crossing trends change, where there are now more crossings at night due to congestion during the day.

Hugh Conroy said that WCOG plans on continuing its interviews of frequently crossing carrier companies as part of the BFO project. They can address some of these concerns with carriers during the interviews.

Todd Carlson said that the Washington State Patrol did a quick study of commercial trucks on SR 9, where local residents believe there is an issue with commercial vehicles overusing the small highway that parallels I-5. Of trucks they pulled over, almost all were in compliance and not overweight, citing that they just liked the route.

Ken Williams said that with e-manifests, truck drivers do not have to use the port of entry that is marked down for them by their broker. US CBP has the technology to change the port information on the paperwork if for instance a truck driver decides to cross through the border at a location different from what was originally intended because of congestion. He noted that some brokers are moving their offices away from the border, as they are not necessarily needed locally at the border anymore. Dan Bubas also said that it is fine for trucks to come to a CBSA port if it says another port on their documentation.

Freight/Carrier Time Motion Study – consider travel time for freight moving between Seattle and Vancouver

Regarding previous discussion of a freight oriented time-motion study, Hugh Conroy said that the US Department of Transportation's [USDOT] National Performance Management Research Data Set [NPMRDS] uses cellphone probe data to estimate travel times on the transportation network. With the data, one can look at specific road segments and their associated travel times over different times of the day and compare the data between different origins and destinations. Jaymes McClain added that the datasets include freight-specific GPS probe data.

Modeling US CBP proposed operational changes – ending cash payments and requiring manifests for all trucks (including empties)

Craig Hope said that there has been some analysis done internally at US CBP on ending cash payments, but he would be interested in the time savings benefit being modeled using WCOG's simulation software. John Dahm explained that one of the main positives of ending cash payments at US CBP inspection is agents doing less data entry, which makes the inspection quicker and allows agents to focus on more important matters. That would also be the case with moving I-94 processing to an off-site location, which Mr. Dahm said he has seen done successfully on the southern border. Ryan Vanderstar added that preclearance legislation allowing an I-94 processing site in Canada would be a benefit to CBSA because those that are denied I-94s would not have to be routed back through a CBSA inspection facility, as is the current case.

Ken Williams said that the potential policy for requiring manifests for all commercial vehicles is stalled at the moment due to changing U.S. administrations. He added that the freight industry seems resistant to a universal manifest requirement because business practices would have to change. However, a uniform requirement would provide data on the locations and entities involved in smaller carriers' transportation of goods across the border into the US.

Dynamic Border Management [DBM]

Proposed use of remaining funds: Benefit-cost analysis of CBP's regional interest in a possible alternative to processing Form I-94 – a pre-border processing facility possibly feasible under a future preclearance framework.

Hugh Conroy explained that one of the main elements of the DBM project, developing a business case for distributing RF-documents in the Cascade Gateway, was completed. The business case was presented to the Transportation Border Working Group [TBWG] last year and was well received, Mr. Conroy said. FHWA, which granted funding for DBM, has been pushing for the DBM project to be wrapped up. Mr. Conroy said that an RFID-distribution pilot is not yet in sight, and the IMTC can instead use the remaining funding for modeling the benefits of pre-border I-94 processing.

The group agreed to go forward with using the remaining DBM funding for modeling the effects of processing I-94s offsite.

John Dahm said that secondary wait-times can be a problem for US CBP, as the lobby at Blaine inspection facilities can be full at times. He suggested that it would be good to look at metrics for lobby queuing as it relates to I-94 processing being moved offsite. He added that a customer service element could be analyzed as well, for instance bathrooms.

Blaine/Surrey Port of Entry Pedestrian Plan

Melissa Fanucci said that she is working on the draft for the pedestrian plan. There is a draft map of proposed improvements to the pedestrian pathing at Peace Arch border crossing attached in the meeting packet. She explained that pedestrian infrastructure and better signage on the US side of the Peace Arch Park are what is being looked at. They are also looking at clarifying the northbound pedestrian route from Blaine through the US CBP facility towards Canada.

IMTC ongoing products

Cascade Gateway construction schedule

Hugh Conroy showed the group the current best-estimate construction timelines of several projects in the IMTC Project List. Beyond IMTC agencies, it is currently not intended to be a public document since timelines don't necessarily align with agencies' current public information on individual projects.

Communications Protocol, Project List, IMTC calendar information

Mr. Conroy informed the group that the communications protocol is being updated information with contact information for agencies that would respond the incidents at the border. If there are standard operating procedures for each agency, that can be added, he said.

Border Master Planning - next steps

Hugh Conroy handed out a draft document of performance measures for prioritizing future IMTC projects. The measures are broken up by type of project, which include port-of-entry, road-POE operations, road, non-motorized, and planning.

Mr. Conroy also showed draft border master planning language added to the IMTC's existing work program. Of the draft elements, he made note of documenting partner agencies' project planning practices and better defining the IMTC's planning and coordination geography. Transportation circulation analyses within the IMTC's geographic planning range have in the past been informed by origin-destination data from IMTC survey projects, and moving forward that could be an area to think about updating. Mr. Conroy also touched on the group's interest in developing a 5-year strategy for things like infrastructure, technology, and operations. There has been talk in years past about an even greater planning horizon, for instance 30 years, where potential long-term plans can be addressed.

Hugh Conroy discussed USDOT's new 30-year transportation planning framework, called Beyond Traffic. The planning document identifies several megaregions, which are "networks of urban clusters connected by economic and social relationships." Each megaregion has a designated Innovation Center, which is a university located in the region. The Cascadia region encompasses western Washington and Oregon, with the Innovation Center located at the University of Washington [UW]. He is inquiring who at UW is heading this

effort. Mr. Conroy also said that it would be beneficial to include the greater Vancouver, BC area in the Cascadia megaregion, which is currently not the case.

Abid Sivic suggested adding NEXUS performance measures to the draft for prioritizing future IMTC projects. The measure could be slotted under the *Road-POE operations* category for projects.

Ken Williams suggested adding passenger rail performance measures to the list, especially with talks of high speed rail between Seattle and Vancouver. He also expressed interest in comparisons of freight goods volumes by rail and truck, and if there is correlation between the modes.

Cliff Hall brought up autonomous vehicles as something to keep in mind for performance measurement, especially in a long-range master planning effort such as this. Autonomous vehicles may have an impact on the border environment that cannot yet be predicted. Dan Bubas added that automated commercial vehicles are already in the early stages of development.

TBWG in Bellingham (May 2 and 3) - updates and ideas for regional agenda items

Hugh Conroy said that the next TBWG will be located at WWU and hosted by BPRI. The first steering committee meeting for the TBWG agenda is in early February, where Mr. Conroy said he can suggest topics of local interest such as rail VACIS and offsite I-94 processing.

Regarding preclearance, Mr. Conroy has made inquiries about any follow-up to the memorandum of understating between the Washington State Governor and the British Columbia Premier on cross-border transportation coordination. Due to elections happening in BC in May, the TBWG meeting will occur during a period where provincial government staff are not allowed to participate in public events. The Washington Governor, Jay Inslee, has been invited to the meeting to give an overview of the state's cross-border interests and ongoing transportation coordination between the state and the province.