International Mobility & Trade Corridor Program
Steering Committee Meeting Summary

March 15, 2018

Meeting packet available at: theIMTC.com/meetings

Meeting location

The meeting was held at Blaine Boat Center, Blaine, WA.

Meeting attendance

B.C. Trucking Association [BCTA] (Lindsay Samson); **Blaine, City of** (Ravyn Whitewolf); **British Columbia Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure [BC MoTI]** (Abid Sivic); **Border Policy Research Institute [BPRI]** (Laurie Trautman); **Canada Border Services Agency [CBSA]** (Dan Bubas, Dave Burnard); **Pacific Corridor Enterprise Council** (Jim Kohnke); **Sumas, City of** (Kyle Christensen); **Transport Canada** (Brock Reidy); **U.S. Consulate Vancouver** (Mike Bradecamp) **U.S. Customs and Border Protection [US CBP]** (John Dahm, Orlando Caridad); **Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT]** (Todd Carlson, Cliff Hall); **Whatcom Council of Governments [WCOG]** (Hugh Conroy, Jaymes McClain)

Current event updates

Todd Carlson said that Hugh Conroy will be meeting with the Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT]Assistant Secretary to discuss the IMTC forum and its continued funding. Mr. Carlson explained that in the past IMTC had been funded by U.S. Department of Transportation [USDOT] Coordinated Border Infrastructure program [CBI], which is now defunct. One of the notions is to start a dialogue with both the U.S. and Canadian federal governments regarding the programmatic funding for cross-border planning groups.

Todd Carlson also reported that the Canada Border Services Agency [CBSA] is proposing to install license plate readers leading up to CBSA's Pacific Highway commercial port-of-entry [POE] to evaluate the efficiency of the FAST-first system. CBSA and WSDOT are working on a Memorandum of Understanding to execute this project.

Orlando Coridad of U.S. Customs and Border Protection [US CBP] reported that cruise ship season will be starting up next month, with sailings starting April 10th at Canada Place in Vancouver.

John Dahm reported that he recently hosted the Deputy Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security [DHS] and they toured Peace Arch park. He also met with Jason Snow of Washington State Parks – the

Peace Arch pedestrian trail will start construction at the end of April and will take 2 to 3 weeks to complete. US CBP is in the early stages of discussing options for passenger vehicle lane expansion at their Pacific Highway POE. They have seen a 19 percent increase in passenger traffic at Pacific Highway over the last year, having to at times open most of the inspection booths as NEXUS to keep the NEXUS border wait-time to a 15-minute threshold. The Birch Bay NEXUS enrollment center is still very busy with interviews, Mr. Dahm reported.

Kyle Christensen introduced himself as the new Mayor of Sumas, WA, having been elected 2 months prior.

Dan Bubas explained that he expects the canopy work happening at CBSA's Doulgas POE to be completed by mid-May. The Large Scale Imaging [LSI] at the Pacific Highway commercial POE is installed and fully functional.

Dave Burnard reported that on Friday CBSA will reduce NEXUS inspections at Douglas POE to one booth. CBSA will inform NEXUS travelers about the capacity reduction and try to divert them to Pacific Highway.

Ravyn Whitewolf reported that the City of Blaine might apply for a Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board [FMSIB] grant for the addition of a lane on northbound State Route 543 leading to the Pacific Highway POE. She also mentioned that students in Blaine are planning to attend the March 24th March For Our Lives, where they would march to Peace Arch park.

Jim Kohnke reported that the B.C. Chamber of Commerce is gearing up for their Annual General Meeting [AGM], which will be held in Kamloops, BC at the end of May. There will be discussions over the North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA] and transportation issues.

Hugh Conroy reported that the 2018 IMTC Passenger Vehicle Intercept Survey is being planned for this summer. The U.S. Federal Highway Administration [FHWA] has committed $66k to the project, with match funding being provided by the B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure [BC MoTI], the Border Policy Research Institute [BPRI], the Whatcom Council of Governments [WCOG], and possibly others. The project will be jointly performed by WCOG and BPRI. Data collection will begin in early July.

2017 IMTC Performance Review

Hugh Conroy explained that the IMTC's annual review of meeting participation, project list development, and partner collaboration is nearly complete and will be available by next meeting.

Topic Focus: Cascade Gateway cross-border transportation operations and assessment

Objective: Review current practices and agency resources dedicated to optimizing transportation operations in the cross-border environment, update our knowledge of IMTC agencies' collective assets and capabilities, and identify opportunities for system investments, collaboration, and information sharing.

Trusted traveler & trusted trader programs

Hugh Conroy explained that in the 2013 IMTC Passenger Vehicle Intercept Study, there was a line of questioning regarding why the cross-border traveler was not enrolled in NEXUS. John Dahm expressed interest in revisiting traveler knowledge of NEXUS costs and eligibility in the next survey.

Abid Sivic explained that when applying for NEXUS online, Canadians have to pay the $50 fee in USD, which would be more expensive for them as compared to their American counterparts.

Dan Bubas suggested it would be beneficial to better advertise that NEXUS can be used for expedited screening at the airport, such as being eligible for TSA pre-check.

There was discussion on communicating the ease of applying for NEXUS as opposed to the process for passports. One suggestion was to make a collaborative video on the subject.

Hugh Conroy said that US CBP headquarters had an inquiry about posting NEXUS border wait-times on the Advanced Traveler Information Signage [ATIS]. Currently signage in this region does not post NEXUS wait-times, but they are archived with standard traffic wait-times in the Cascade Gateway Border Data Warehouse. John Dahm suggested that ATIS-posted NEXUS border wait-times would be great exposure for the NEXUS program.

Hugh Conroy recounted Kenneth Williams' description of a NEXUS enrollment promotion implemented at a Buffalo Bills football game in Buffalo, NY. The same could be considered at Seattle sports events.

Advanced cargo information / ACE / E-manifest

Dan Bubas explained that many commercial truck drivers don't know that they can cross northbound through any POE in the region regardless of what is outlined on their paperwork.

There was discussion on improving carrier, broker, and even individual inspection agent knowledge regarding the ability of trucks to reroute to different crossings.

Border wait time systems & traveler information (VMS, web, etc.)

There was discussion on general traveler knowledge of the Pacific Highway POE as another crossing option to Peace Arch-Douglas. Dan Bubas suggested there could be a WSDOT video showing how to get to Pacific Highway from I-5 and explaining that it's a mixed-use crossing, not just a freight crossing.

There was discussion that apps used for directions, such as Waze, Google Maps, or other in-vehicle systems, could be routing travelers through Peace Arch-Douglas regardless of wait-times. Could these apps prompt border wait-time information when routes near the border?

Incident response protocol

Todd Carlson and Dan Bubas discussed their agencies' incident response policies relative to the IMTC protocal. WSDOT and CBSA have personnel dedicated to incident response. There were talks of coordinating efforts and possibly running a joint table-top exercise.

Dynamic booth management (Standard, NEXUS, RFID-only)

Hugh Conroy discussed the RFID business case completed in 2014. Analysis from the 2013 IMTC Passenger Vehicle Intercept Survey and from CBSA indicated that a relatively small number of non-NEXUS Canadian travelers make up a large share of cross-border trips occurring in the Cascade Gateway. By giving this group (about 75,000 people) RFID cards, the system benefits would be very significant in terms of reduced border congestion and wait-time.

John Dahm explained that NEXUS seems a better investment that non-NEXUS RFID technology. US CBP's Ready Lane, an inspection lane dedicated to RF-enabled documents, is not very well advertised and only operates weekdays and specific hours.

FAST-first metered release to primary inspection

Dan Bubas explained that the license plate snapshots used for tracking performance of the FAST-first system will be not be usable for CBSA to pre-populate data entry.

Bus advanced manifests

Dave Burnard explained that there are no requirements for buses to provide advanced traveler manifests to inspection agencies. There is also no requirement for bus carriers to ensure cross-border passengers have the required travel documents.

John Dahm explained that the software needed for bus companies to provide advanced traveler manifests was too expensive. Additionally, the pilot project of "sealing" buses of pre-inspected cruise-ship passengers was successful but did not move beyond the pilot phase.

Dynamic lane assignment and booth management

Hugh Conroy explained that last year an honors math student at Western Washington University developed his senior thesis on using upstream traffic the predict near-future border congestion. The Whatcom Council of Governments [WCOG] provided him with general guidance through the process, offering highway traffic and border performance measure data sources.

There was discussion on better using historic border volume data to plan border inspector staffing schedules.

John Dahm explained that while an inspection booth can be switched from "general" to NEXUS in an instant by way of dynamic signage, it still takes time for the general traffic queue to merge into other lanes.

Hugh Conroy explained a common anecdotal complaint of travelers in the southbound Pacific Highway POE border queue. Of the two initial approach lanes, often times one leads to multiple booths while another leads to only a single booth, creating a discrepancy in wait-times based on lane position. Mr. Conroy asked if there were lane management systems that could help all lanes proceed more efficiently.

Roadway incident response

Dan Bubas explained that if a commercial truck has a breakdown while in line at the border, it is the responsibility of the driver and carrier company to contact a tow-truck to move the vehicle out of inspection lanes. Commercial drivers at CBSA primary inspection are required to turn off their engines, and if they cannot restart the engine then the inspection booth is temporarily blocked.

There was discussion about have a priority response agreement with a local tow-truck company for when breakdowns occur. John Dahm suggested a vehicle that could be shared between CBSA and US CBP that could tow a stalled vehicle out of the inspection lanes to a designated area where a tow company could later get the vehicle.

Communications between various transportation management centers (TMCs)

There was discussion on convening a future TMC peer exchange and having a focus topic be border issues and solutions.

Applications of real-time probe data (increasingly available for purchase from the private sector)

Hugh Conroy announced that WCOG will be contracting with StreetLight Data to acquire probe data to create an external trip matrix for Whatcom County. The data will include the routes of vehicles entering and exiting Whatcom County, which will be useful to inform traveler characteristics in WCOG's travel demand model. The geographic coverage of the data will only include Whatcom County. The resulting trip matrix will apportion trips with an origin or destination outside of Whatcom County to a transportation analysis zone [TAZ] of trip-ends in the county and corresponding routes into or out of the county. Along with informing the WCOG model, the data outputs could be useful for better understanding the travel habits of border crossers.