

International Mobility & Trade Corridor Program Steering Committee Meeting Summary

June 18, 2015

Meeting packet available at: theIMTC.com/meetings

Meeting location

The meeting was held at Lynden City Hall Annex, Lynden, WA.

Meeting attendance

B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure [BC MoTI] (Abid Sivic); **Border Policy Research Institute [BPRI]** (Laurie Trautman); **Canada Border Services Agency [CBSA]** (Matt Jollymore); **Pacific Corridor Enterprise Council** (Jim Kohnke); **Whatcom Council of Governments [WCOG]** (Hugh Conroy, Melissa Fanucci, Jaymes McClain); **Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT]** (Todd Carlson); **Canadian Consulate Seattle** (Kevin Cook); **British Columbia Trucking Association [BCTA]** (Greg Kolesniak); **City of Blaine** (Bill Bullock); **US Federal Highway Administration [FHWA]** (Sid Stecker); **City of Lynden** (Steve Banham); **Transport Canada [TC]** (Thomas Kwan)

Current Events Updates

Steve Banham commented on the construction activity happening in downtown Lynden. They are redeveloping a fire-damaged building on Front St, as well as the street itself. He also commented on a major cross-border business going in in Lynden's industrial area. It is a 300k sqft cold-storage facility and will house fruit coming across the border.

Matt Jollymore said that the Aldergrove port construction is moving ahead of schedule and could be done early. There is limited lane capacity right now, he said, since only two lanes are operating northbound.

Thomas Kwan said he has notes from Transport Canada [TC] about a regional wait-time system roundtable that occurred August 19th, if anyone is interested. TC is also conducting consultations with provinces for the next update to the Border Infrastructure Investment Plan [BIIP]. He also talked about the Canada-US preclearance agreement, saying that there will be some workshops coming to the BC region in the near future.

Hugh Conroy commented on the border wait-time conference call, saying that it will most likely be focused on the Point Roberts-Boundary Bay port-of-entry.

Bill Bullock said that the city of Blaine will start engineering design on its Hughes Ave project, Hughes Ave being a secondary truck route to the border. The project will widen the road and create a better turning angle

at the intersection of Hughes Ave and Peace Portal Dr. Their goal is to go to construction in 2017. He also commented on Blaine getting its first Starbucks across from Edaleen Dairy. He talked about working with the Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT] on improvements to State Route 543.

Melissa Fanucci said that data from the recently released IMTC Resource Manual is now available online on the IMTC website. There is a PDF of the manual online as well. She commented on the Aldergrove port tour being canceled for today's meeting, adding that hopefully when it is further along in construction we can tour the new facility. She also said she is working on a data sharing agreement with BC Ministry of Transportation [BC MoTI] and WSDOT. She hopes to document the data sharing of the different agencies for the Cascade Gateway Border Data Warehouse and use that as a stepping stone to get a similar agreement done with US Customs and Border Protection [US CBP].

Jim Kohnke said that the BC Chamber of Commerce held its Annual General Meeting [AGM] a couple weeks ago. He will give full report on the meeting at the next IMTC meeting.

Greg Kolesniak said that an annual truck carrier meeting with US CBP was held recently. At the meeting there was discussion on the commercial development on Highway 15 between 2nd and 4th Ave and how it conflicts with a future expansion of the FAST lane leading south to the commercial crossing. Mr. Kolesniak noted that traffic compliance at the Pacific Highway southbound crossing is still an issue, but the truck staging area works on the whole. Enforcement for compliance is also an issue, he added. He said that they will continue to educate carriers in the British Columbia Trucking Association [BCTA] about staging area procedures and about not lane jumping in the staging area.

Abid Sivic commented on the confusing wayfinding on BC Highway 13 leading up to the CBP Lynden Aldergrove crossing.

Sid Stecker commented on the two month pre-authorization extension, allowing Washington State to spend two more twelfths of its annual allocation of funds on transportation projects. About a month ago, he said Federal Highway Administration [FHWA] asked border states to provide a list of bicycle/pedestrian projects that could be started under existing funding scenarios. Now FHWA is granting additional obligation authority in order to get those projects going, Mr. Stecker said, at the request of the Secretary of Transportation.

Todd Carlson talked about bicycle/pedestrian projects that were submitted, including a shared use trail going from Blaine High School along Boblett St crossing State Route 543 near the Pacific Highway border crossing.

Sid Stecker said he will soon be approving the Whatcom Council of Government's [WCOG] Unified Planning Work Program [UPWP] and the statewide planning and research work program.

Todd Carlson said that the Washington legislature is in its 2nd session, which ends at end of month (June 29th). A transportation package is in there, he said, including a project that would widen State Route 539 from south Lynden to the border. He said the carbon tax issue is supposedly holding up some legislators from approving a package.

Kevin Cook said that Ottawa confirmed the next Beyond the Border [BtB] border ports and rail tour. It will be October 27th to 29th. He said they will focus a lot on the BtB Forward Plan Actions.

IMTC participant structure and meeting frequency

Hugh Conroy reviewed recent discussions on a desire to refocus steering committee agendas and attendance and correspondingly structuring core group agendas to be more tuned to a slightly broader audience.

Summary of current focus items from Canadian Trucking Association – *Greg Kolesniak, B.C. Trucking Association*

Greg Kolesniak reviewed a BCTA memo that about the association's current priorities. BCTA is non-profit organization that represents carriers in British Columbia, he said. They represent 230 suppliers and 1000 carriers who employ more than 26,000 people. BC trucking members generate about \$3.8 billion to the provincial GDP every year, Mr. Kolesniak said. Annually there is about \$3 billion worth of goods that flows between BC and the rest of Canada, and six times that, \$18 billion, flows between BC and the United States. The Cascade Gateway sees about \$12 billion cross through it annually, Mr. Kolesniak estimated.

Mr. Kolesniak talked about the differences in pre-clearance and pre-inspection in the trucking world, saying pre-clearance would mean a truck is pre-inspected away from the border, cleared by customs, and at the border the truck does not stop. He said they are not expecting pre-clearance like this anytime soon.

Mr. Kolesniak also commented on the pre-inspection pilot done in Fort Erie at Peace Bridge, which showed positive gains in border freight crossings not necessarily tied to pre-inspection. The removal of cash collection at inspection booths proved to save about 2 minutes per inspection, and E-manifests for empty trucks saved about 40 seconds compared to empties without E-manifests. A driver carrying RFID documentation also brings down inspection times by about a minute and a half. He said adding up all the time savings, about 4 minutes could be shed from truck inspection times, adding that at Peace Bridge, the utilization of E-manifests for empties and omitting cash collections at booths would be the equivalent of adding 12 primary inspection booths.

In terms of omitting cash collection, many trucks already use transponders that do not require a cash transaction at the booth. However, the transponder fee of over \$100 a year is discouraging for carriers that only make a few cross-border trips a year, Mr. Kolesniak said.

Greg Kolesniak touched on the goal of harmonizing the trusted trader programs between the US and Canada, and bringing in other government departments into the fold in terms of going paperless. He also said that there is a commitment to decouple Partners in Protection [PIP] and Customs Self Assessment [CSA] as a result of the Bluewater Bridge pilot in Ontario.

He said they are expecting notice to allow an in-transit shipment pilot to be run with 9 carriers participating. This would allow Canadian carriers to enter the US and use US infrastructure when transporting goods from one Canadian location to another, and vice versa with US carriers.

Dynamic Border Management Project update

Hugh Conroy gave an overview of the IMTC's Dynamic Border Management project [DBM]. The initial tasks were to build a border area simulation model, then apply the model to operational scenarios such as radio frequency identification [RFID] uptake, booth management, and wait-time system validation.

Recent applications of simulation model

US CBP approached WCOG, the agency running the model, about using the model to test scenarios for operating NEXUS capacity during days of high crossing volume. Using data from CBP, WCOG developed scenarios regarding NEXUS booth management during the busy Victoria Day weekend at Peace Arch.

Jaymes McClain talked about the mechanics of the simulation scenarios. The model runs on a 24 hour schedule, and within the 24 hours the model is capable of opening and closing booths and changing booth types. Using CBP's day-specific data, Mr. McClain created a baseline scenario that represented, in the model, the kind of wait-times experienced on that day based on that day's booth scheduling. From there, the goal was the find a booth scheduling scenario that met CBP's service standard of NEXUS wait-times not exceeding 15 minutes while best balancing the wait-times of standard vehicles. Staffing levels were kept the same in each scenario as they were in the baseline scenario.

Preliminary results showed that opening increasing NEXUS booths earlier in the day as opposed to responding to an already lengthy NEXUS queue diminished NEXUS wait-times before they exceeded service standard levels and resulted in the best balance between NEXUS and standard wait-times. This type of scenario also freed up booths for standard traffic later in the day that are used for NEXUS processing in the baseline scenario.

The WCOG will create scenarios for other high volume days as well, Mr. McClain said.

There was discussion on gathering better arrival rate data of vehicles approaching the border, in part to better calibrate the model and to calculate trends in arrivals that may contribute to preventative booth management that may cut down on wait-times before they occur.

RFID business case update

Hugh Conroy talked about the current status of the development of a business case for an RFID pilot.

David Davidson at the Border Policy Research Institute [BPRI] estimated in a 2014 BPRI border brief that 40 percent of trips crossing the border through the Cascade Gateway are executed by between 50k-100k unique individuals. Using data provided by CBSA, a similar calculation pointed to 40 percent of trips being executed by about 75k unique individuals. This data will be implemented into the WCOG's RFID simulation modeling, Mr. Conroy said, in an effort to showcase the potential wait-time reduction benefits of RFID use among standard cross-border travelers.

Update schedule for 2015/16 IMTC CVO Study

Hugh Conroy said that WCOG has received their finding authorization from FHWA for the commercial vehicle operations study, however the timing of the authorization requires the delay of some of the data originally slated to be collected this summer. This summer carrier names, hazard placard information, and FAST lane arrival observations will be collected. In-booth data collection will occur next summer.

Mr. Conroy said that later in the summer they will begin contacting the most frequently crossing carriers and gather feedback about their routing and operations regarding the new Aldergrove commercial facility, trusted trader programs, and other topics.

Meeting adjourned 11:30 AM