



International Mobility & Trade Corridor Program Steering Committee Meeting Summary

February 17, 2021

Meeting packet available at: theIMTC.com/meetings

Meeting location

Due to social distancing recommendations during the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held virtually.

Meeting attendance

B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (BCMoTI): Lina Halwani

B.C. Trucking Association [BCTA]: Cory Paterson, Levana Huang

Blaine, City of: Bernie Ziemianek, Michael Jones

Border Policy Research Institute [BPRI]: Laurie Trautman

Canada Border Services Agency [CBSA]: Harry Dearing, Michelle Copeland

Canadian Consulate Seattle: Megan Graves

Port of Bellingham: John Michener

Sumas, City of: Kyle Christensen

Surrey, City of: Ken Karunaratne

Transport Canada: Chris Hoff

U.S. Consulate Vancouver: Geoff Reid

U.S. Customs and Border Protection [US CBP]: John Dahm, James Steiner, Tish Griffin, Ryan King

U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA): Angel Rivera, Matt Kunic

Vancouver International Airport (YVR): Jason Tse

Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT]: Jay Drye

Washington State Patrol (WSP): Bruce Maier

Whatcom Council of Governments [WCOG]: Hugh Conroy, Jaymes McClain, Melissa Fanucci

White Rock, City of: Anthony Manning

Current Event Updates

Ken Karunaratne: The City of Surrey is monitoring traffic volumes during the COVID-19 pandemic and found volumes are down about 13 percent as compared to pre-pandemic levels.

Matt Kunic: The US Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has been working closely with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Rails and Ports division. WSDOT is planning a truck parking workshop, where participants will help in the development of a statewide truck parking plan. FHWA will also work with WSDOT on updating the Washington State Freight Plan.

Lina Halwani: The B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (BCMoTI) is working on the segmented widening of BC Hwy 1.

Jay Drye: WSDOT crews will be working on a fish passage project on Hwy 9 in Whatcom County this summer, which could affect cross-border freight traffic on that route. On Badger Rd near Lynden, crews will also be working on culvert replacements. WSDOT is also working with the City of Bellingham on a Bakerview Rd interchange improvement, which will add a northbound onramp to I-5.

John Michener: The Port of Bellingham is continuing to see interest from Canadian groups doing business in the Whatcom region despite the pandemic and border restrictions.

Jason Tse: At the Vancouver International Airport (YVR), passenger travel in 2020 was down 73 percent compared to the year before. Cargo traffic was overall down 19 percent, however express freight saw a 24 percent increase thanks to e-commerce.

Cory Paterson: There is a Canadian federal mandate that all electronic logging devices in commercial trucks be certified by a third party by June 12, 2021. The U.S. has a larger self-certified list of different device types, however in Canada there are only about a dozen different types allowed. All U.S. trucking carriers coming into Canada will have to have a third-party certified device.

The B.C. Trucking Association (BCTA) recently conducted a 7th iteration of its pandemic impact survey of its members. Trucking industry unemployment is less than the province overall. While overall truck trips and mileage are not down so much, carrier revenues have declined because loads are smaller, it is more difficult to get loads in both directions, and compliance with pandemic-related health protocols adds some costs.

Megan Graves: The Canadian Consulate in Seattle has learned that Pt Roberts residents will not be required to take a COVID-19 test when transiting through Canada to get to and from mainland Whatcom County.

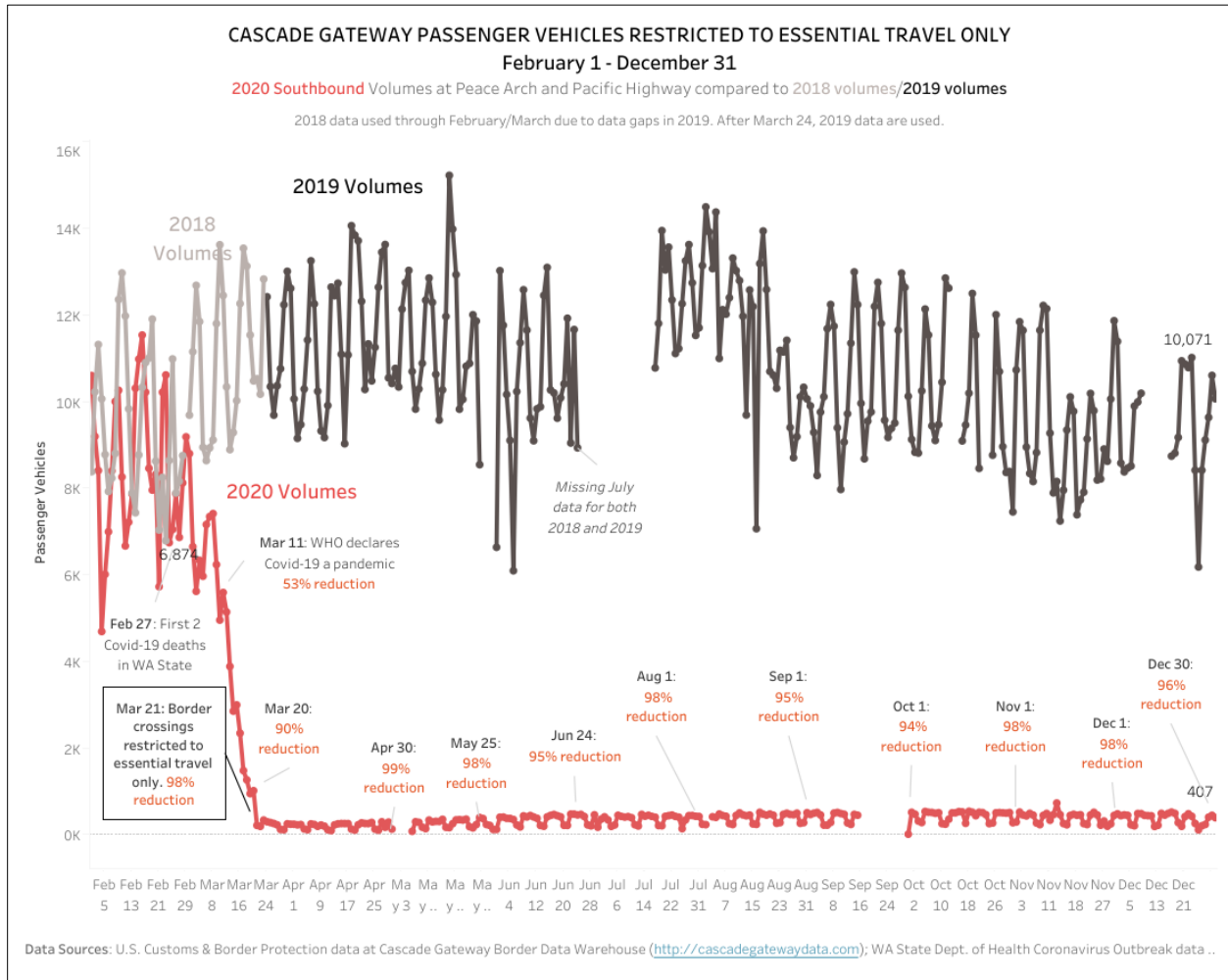
Laurie Trautman: The Border Policy Research Institute (BPRI) is working on a Canadian-supported project analyzing the effects of the US-Canada border restrictions in 8 different regions along the whole border, from Maine to Alaska, both in terms of GDP and local community issues.

The Whatcom Unified Command border task force is still meeting every other week.

Ms. Trautman is working with the Future Borders Coalition, which will convene a briefing next week discussing COVID-19 testing and proof of vaccine requirements at land ports of entry.

COVID-19 border impacts: comparing 2019 and 2020

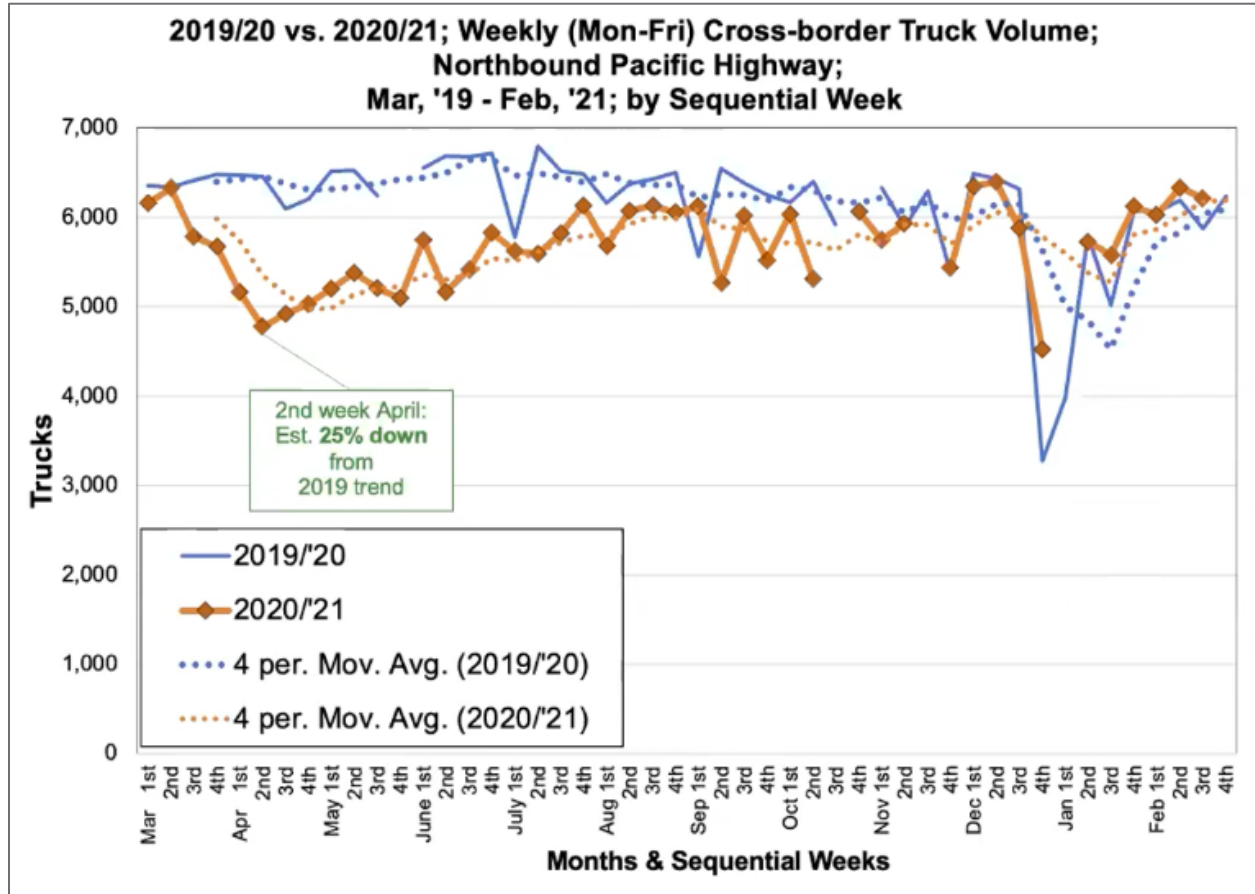
Passenger vehicle volumes



[Link to Tableau data dashboard](#)

Melissa Fanucci: Cascade Gateway passenger vehicle volumes though the end of 2020 have steadily remained at 95-98 percent below 2019 levels.

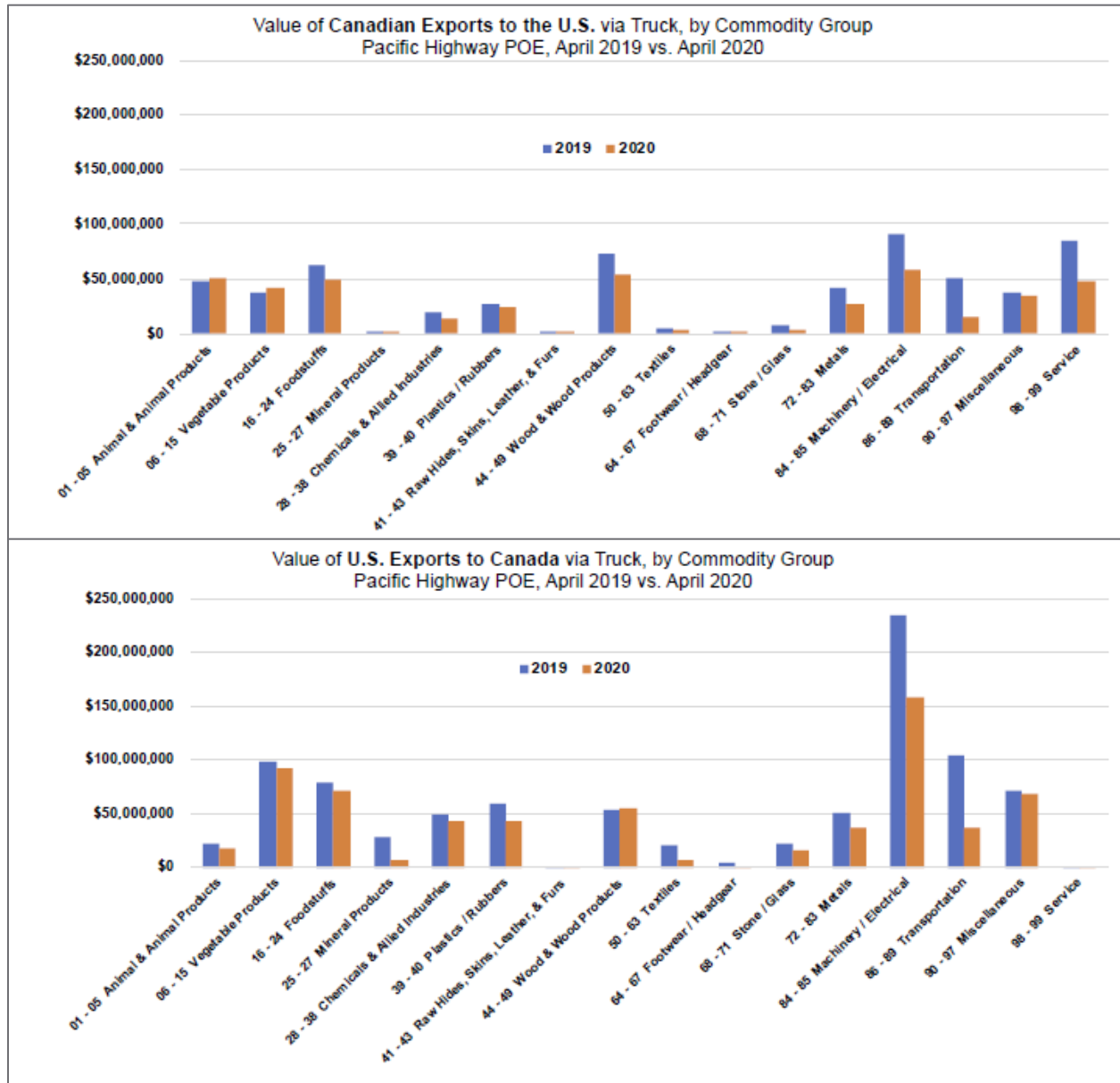
Commercial truck volumes



Truck volumes from [Cascade Gateway Border Data Warehouse](#)

Hugh Conroy: Similar to air freight at YVR, commercial truck volumes through the Cascade Gateway have made a gradual return to pre-pandemic levels.

Freight commodity values



In coordination with Transport Canada, Mr. Conroy has been researching changes in freight commodity values (the amount of goods being moved based on their value) transiting the Cascade Gateway throughout the pandemic.

Hugh Conroy: Southbound (Canada exports to U.S.), commodity groups that fell most in value at the outset of the pandemic in 2020 compared to 2019 are wood products, machinery/electrical, transportation, special classification provisions. Northbound (U.S. exports to Canada), machinery/electrical, mineral products, and transportation commodity groups saw the largest drops.

When looking at values of 2-digit commodity groups of regional U.S. exports to Canada, aircraft supplies have taken the biggest hit in 2020, down 49 percent as compared to 2019. Wood products, after an initial dip at the start of the pandemic, have increased in 2020 (29 percent overall), especially over the last quarter of 2020 when wood product values nearly doubled.

Jason Tse: Could COVID-19 vaccine proliferation between the US and Canada be visible in this commodity data?

Hugh Conroy: Vaccines could be visible in pharmaceutical commodity codes. The BTS commodity data is released months after the fact, so a spike in the data could be visible down the line.

Laurie Trautman: With respect to the mineral fuel trade from Washington to B.C., it would be interesting to look at the trends and differences between the amounts carried by truck and the amounts carried by marine modes.

New Cascade Gateway Border Data Warehouse and border delay subscriptions: www.borderdata.org

Melissa Fanucci: Border Data Warehouse has been in use since 2007, longest active data archive for US-Canada border data. Finished update to website this month with new data displays, downloadable data, and reporting options. Hover over data displays for more breakdown. New booth status data feed (cars grouped by license plate, passenger occupancy, for US-bound cars). Subscribe for email updates (delay threshold), can set up an account and edit your subscriptions.

Securing America's Ports Act

Hugh Conroy: The Securing America's Ports Act was signed into law on January 5, 2021. The Act requires inspection agencies to develop a plan for non-intrusively scanning 100 percent of commercial trucks and passenger vehicles (and freight rail) through land POEs in six years. The Act defines "scanning" as non-intrusive imaging or radiation detection. Traffic operation implications of increased scanning could be evaluated with simulation modeling, which WCOG has pursued on behalf of the IMTC.

2020 IMTC Performance Review

Melissa Fanucci: Every year a performance review of the IMTC program is released, which evaluates how well the program met its objectives, used its funding, and summarizes the projects or coordinated efforts that were achieved over the course of a calendar year. Specific topics for review include meetings, projects, data sharing, and partner agency collaboration. The finalized review for the 2020 calendar year will be available soon to IMTC members and will be posted in the IMTC website.