IMTC

International Mobility & Trade Corridor Program
Steering Committee Meeting Summary

September 19, 2019

Meeting packet available at: theIMTC.com/meetings

Meeting location

The meeting was held at CBSA Douglas Port-of-Entry, Surrey, BC.

Meeting attendance

B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure [BC MoTI]: Simon Leung, Lina Halwani
B.C. Trucking Association [BCTA]: Lindsay Samson
Bellingham, Port of [POB]: John Michener
Canada Border Services Agency [CBSA]: Marcus Johnson, Bobbi Kerr, Linell Redmond, Shantel Lamons, Harry Dearing
Pacific Corridor Enterprise Council: Jim Kohnke
Surrey, City of: Don Buchanan*
Transport Canada: Brock Reidy
U.S. Consulate Vancouver: Adam Hantman
U.S. Customs and Border Protection [US CBP]: Kenneth Williams, John Dahm
U.S. Federal Highway Administration [FHWA]: Sharleen Bakeman*
Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT]: Cliff Hall, Todd Carlson
Whatcom Council of Governments [WCOG]: Hugh Conroy, Jaymes McClain, Melissa Fanucci

attended meeting by phone

Current Event Updates

Melissa Fanucci: The Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG) is working on a request for proposals (RFP) for the Cascade Gateway Border Data Warehouse 3.0 project. The B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (BC MoTI) and the U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are contributing to the funding, but the project is currently $50k short of its funding goal. The project will update the online data archive's interface, provide better data tools and include better passenger and freight data.

Todd Carlson: The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) will be meeting with Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) regarding potential highway approach changes to the Pacific Highway port-of-entry (POE), which is planned to be redeveloped in the near future.

Brock Reidy: Transport Canada is preparing for a potentially new Minister of Transport depending on the outcome of the impending Canadian federal election.

John Michener: The Port of Bellingham is continuing to work on developing a foreign trade zone (FTZ) on the Bellingham waterfront. Ports America will be operating the FTZ.

Hugh Conroy: On October 2 and 3, Mr. Conroy will be attending the Cascadia Innovation Corridor Conference. The B.C. Premier and Washington State Governor will be speakers. Mr. Conroy and Laurie Trautman of the Border Policy Research Institute (BPRI) contribute to the the land-port subgroup.

Mr. Conroy presented last week to the Western Governor Association's Canadian Consulate tour group at the Pacific Highway POE.

There have been recent complaints about lane inefficiency in the approach to the southbound Pacific Highway passenger vehicle POE. The eastern most lane often leads to one booth and the adjacent lane fans out to multiple booths. This can cause large discrepancies between calculated border wait-times and the wait-times experiences by individual travelers.

Simon Leung: BC MoTI is advancing its ITS (intelligent transportation systems) strategic plan for 2020 to 2030. They will be engaging border stakeholders in the near future about border technology over the past 15 years – what has worked and what has not – in preparation for planning for future technology.

> **Todd Carlson:** It would be a good exercise to coordinate a calibration/validation process between border agencies that manage ITS.

> **Simon Leung:** BC MoTI is working to make validation more routine and making sure there is always sufficient data.

Cliff Hall: The Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) application for Excellence in MPO Coordination and Partnership award that Mr. Hall submitted on behalf of WCOG was not successful, though he will engage the group at the upcoming AMPO Annual Conference October 21 to 25 in Baltimore, MD.

Bobbi Kerr: The BC Highway 13 widening project north of the Lynden-Aldergrove POEs is almost complete. Island medians were installed to prevent line-cutting from 0 Ave. Damage to the Aldergrove facility caused by a large excavator colliding with the building will be repaired over the next 8 to 12 months.

Harry Dearing: CBSA is looking at strategies to route more commercial trucks through the Aldergrove POE. The agency is interested in the potential IMTC study of cross-border freight through the Lynden-Aldergrove and Sumas-Abbotsford-Huntingdon POEs.

Lina Halwani: BC MoTI has a Letter of Agreement for funding support for the Cascade Gateway Border Data Warehouse 3.0 project.

The BC Highway 11 expansion project is moving along. The City if Abbotsford is leading the project. Funding was secured last month.

Blaine/Surrey Cross-Border Pedestrian Signage Plan update

Melissa Fanucci: CBSA has completed their pedestrian walkway improvements at their Pacific Highway facility. Washington State Parks has completed their part at Peace Arch Park – all that is needed is a ramp cut-out leading to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) facility on the General Services Administration (GSA) -owned property.

The next step is to get sign-off from all participating agencies on the current signage designs so that the group can move ahead with funding strategies. Ms. Fanucci will provide more information in a conference call with participating agencies.

Cascade Gateway vehicle counting methods review – initial findings

Hugh Conroy: There has historically been a discrepancy in northbound and southbound truck counting in the Cascade Gateway, particularly between the Sumas and Abbotsford-Huntingdon POEs where more trucks cross south through Sumas than north through Abbotsford-Huntingdon. When all Cascade Gateway POE volumes are summed, the difference is more negligible – southbound counts are still consistently higher, but only between 2 to 9 percent so.

In discussions with CBP and CBSA, it was determined there were no apparent differences in counting methods for policies that would contribute to discrepancies with their current truck counting. This is important to clear up before Cascade Gateway vehicle counts are used to assess the impact of operational differences and truck routing strategies.

> **Harry Dearing:** It could be in-transit shipments going east through Sumas that is causing the discrepancy in counts. There is industrial growth east of Vancouver near Chilliwack and Abbotsford.

Potential placement of a non-intrusive inspection (NII) system in the southbound Pacific highway truck staging area – U.S. Customs & Border Protection

Ken Williams: There is no room to expand commercial inspection booths at CBP's Pacific Highway facility. New non-intrusive inspection (NII) technology could help move trucks more efficiently without booth expansion.

Around 44 percent of U.S.-bound trucks through Pacific Highway is are empty. Being able to process these empty trucks more efficiently would benefit all vehicles. Instead of CBP officers having to check a truck's empty trailer, CBP could scan the truck with NII. The driver would be scanned at a low energy level and then trailer would be scanned at higher energy with images being sent to a CBP command center. The goal is to eventually have all drivers possess RFID and use e-manifests so that empty trucks do not have to stop at the primary inspection booth unless scans warrant further inspection.

Because there is no room on the U.S. side, the scanning unit would most likely need to be installed in Canada in the southbound truck staging area. The currently proposed conceptual design would place the unit in the southwest corner of the staging area. Signage would direct empty trucks to a specific lane where they would go through the scanning portal. The FAST lane would remain.

CBP started installing a passenger vehicle NII Z-Portal at the Peace Arch POE last week. The unit will be completed in November. This is the same technology that would be used for trucks.

> **Hugh Conroy:** This could generate interest in the FAST program in this region if the requirements for using the NII lane overlap with FAST program requirements.

WSDOT's July 2019 Ultra-High-Speed Ground Transportation Business Case Analysis observations and discussion of cross-border elements

Hugh Conroy: Mr. Conroy would like to invite WSDOT to present on the Ultra-High-Speed Ground Transportation (UHSGT) Business Case at the next IMTC Core Group meeting. Their analysis report was released in July.

With current funding, WSDOT can establish a steering committee, finalize a governance model, and assess the laws of all jurisdictions involved. In the future, with additional funding, they can develop a purpose and need, conceptual alignment options, financing alternatives, a funding plan, further ridership analysis, and explore emerging technology.

New analysis suggests that intermediate stops, such as Surrey, Bellingham, and Tacoma, would benefit ridership and revenue. The "Transportation Spine" strategy would connect other locations using other transportation modes to the main UHSGT corridor. There is an expectation that UHSGT would serve high value freight as well.

Regional BC and WA land use / growth planning and trends – early review of recent publications

Hugh Conroy: According to Metro Vancouver's regional growth strategy (updated in 2017), most of the population growth in the western BC Lower Mainland is expected to live in Surrey (27 percent growth there in 20 years).

The Fraser Valley Regional District does not have a recent population forecast, but using BC Province's forecasts, there is estimated to be a 21 percent population growth in Abbotsford and 37 percent growth in Chilliwack by 2041.

TransLink's Transport 2050 plan is currently in phase 1 – development of values, vision and ideas. In 2020, the plan will go to phase 2 and 3, where ideas and trade-offs are considered and a new regional transportation strategy is drafted.

Metro Vancouver's Regional Goods and Movement Strategy *Moving the Economy* details that in 5 to 8 years the region will explore mobility pricing strategies to reduce road congestion. Other highlighted strategies include creating a regulatory environment that minimizes empty miles and facilitates more efficient load consolidation, reducing the overall number of trips.