



## International Mobility & Trade Corridor Program Steering Committee Meeting Summary

October 18, 2018

Meeting packet available at: [theIMTC.com/meetings](http://theIMTC.com/meetings)

### Meeting location

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

### Meeting attendance

**B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure [BC MoTI]** (Simon Leung, Lina Halwani); **Bellingham, Port of** (John Michener); **Border Policy Research Institute [BPRI]** (Laurie Trautman); **Canada Border Services Agency [CBSA]** (Chris Van Nes, Tracy Letain, Holly Stoner, Catherine Black, Daniela Evans); **Canadian Consulate Seattle** (Gail Horak); **Pacific Corridor Enterprise Council** (Jim Kohnke); **TransLink** (Edison Ting); **U.S. Consulate General Vancouver** (Adam Hantman, Geoff Reid); **U.S. Customs and Border Protection [US CBP]** (Craig Hope); **U.S. General Services Administration** (Darin Lenderink\*); **Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT]** (Todd Carlson, Cliff Hall); **Whatcom Council of Governments [WCOG]** (Hugh Conroy, Jaymes McClain, Melissa Fanucci)

*\*attended meeting by phone*

### Current Event Updates

Jim Kohnke reported that the US-Canada pre-clearance agreement was discussed at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce's Annual General Meeting in Thunder Bay, ON. The B.C. Chamber of Commerce submitted a resolution explaining that while they support the pre-clearance agreement, they do not support an "expedited removal" process that could deny Canadian citizens entry to the U.S. for up to 5 years or more. The resolution is attached in the meeting packet.

Hugh Conroy reported that the Whatcom Council of Governments [WCOG] and the Border Policy Research Institute [BPRI] will soon start planning for the winter wave of the IMTC Passenger Vehicle Survey. In late November the Transportation Border Working Group [TBWG] will hold a meeting in Halifax, NS. The Beyond Preclearance Coalition's white paper describing the coalition's vision and strategy for improving US-Canada cross-border flows will be discussed. The U.S. Department of Transportation [USDOT] has also developed a white paper on automated vehicles titled *Preparing for the Future of Transportation: Automated Vehicles 3.0*.

Laurie Trautman reported that she attended the Cascadia Innovation Corridor Conference last week. The B.C. Premier and Washington State Governor recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen their regional partnership. Ms. Trautman has been working on a cannabis communication plan with WCOG and the Canadian Consulate in Seattle. She is conducting a research study at Western Washington University [WWU], garnering students' perceptions of cannabis becoming legal in Canada and the restrictions with carrying cannabis across the border.

Gail Horak thanked U.S. Customs and Border Protection [US CBP] and Canada Border Services Agency [CBSA] for their support during the Western Governors Association meeting in June. Nine western states were represented at the meeting. The Canadian Consulate in Seattle is working on the cannabis communication plan – they are engaging media in the Puget Sound region to bring awareness to the restrictions on transiting cannabis across the border.

John Michener reported that the Port of Bellingham Commission approved a lease at the Bellingham Shipping Terminal with Ports America. Their next step is to work towards the creation of a Foreign Trade Zone [FTZ] usage-driven site on a parcel of property within the shipping terminal.

Edison Ting of TransLink said to anticipate more involvement from his agency at IMTC moving forward.

Daniela Evans reported that there is now signage on B.C. highways southbound towards the border regarding cannabis restrictions. CBSA Regional Director General, Pacific Region recently visited the area, touring the Tsawwassen Container Examination Facility and the Large Scale Imaging at the Pacific Highway port-of-entry [POE]. The CBSA Chief Transformation Officer also toured the facilities. There was discussion on RFID, loop detectors in roadways, and other land-border operations.

Craig Hope reported that US CBP has not yet seen much change at the border from cannabis legalization in Canada. They are monitoring entrepreneurs in the cannabis industry and the transportation of cannabis-related finances and paraphernalia across the border. US CBP is also monitoring cannabis e-commerce and cannabis-related goods being transported commercially across the border.

Daniela Evans reported that CBSA inspection agents are now regularly asking cross-border travelers about cannabis possession similar to questions about firearms.

Gail Horak said that the Canadian Consulate in Seattle is looking at the possibility of detailing cross-border restrictions on cannabis on a billboard in the Puget Sound area.

Lina Halwani said that she is interested in this region's high-speed rail initiative.

Melissa Fanucci announced that the latest traffic volume numbers show that over 50 percent of traffic through Peace Arch-Douglas is going through NEXUS lanes.

## Infrastructure

### **U.S. Pacific Highway POE – Passenger vehicle booth additions planning update - *Darin Lenderink, U.S. General Services Administration***

Darin Lenderink of the U.S. General Services Administration [GSA] reported that the final draft of the feasibility report for the US CBP Pacific Highway booth expansion project is out. The goal of the project is to expand the number of primary inspection booths for passenger vehicles at the US CBP Pacific Highway POE. They are in the review phase right now and will be incorporating comments before a final report document is out in mid-November. As a next step, US CBP and then GSA need to prioritize this project in their respective capital budgets.

### **BC Highways 13 & 11 project updates - *Lina Halwani, B.C. Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure***

Lina Halwani updated the group on the improvements to B.C. Highway 13 near the CBSA Aldergrove POE. The federal and B.C. governments are apportioning \$25.5MM to widen Highway 13 from 2 lanes to 5 lanes, which will include a southbound NEXUS lane. GSA is conducting a feasibility study for new signage. Construction started in July 2018 and they plan to wrap up the project in Spring of 2020. The new southbound NEXUS lane will merge with the general purpose lanes until US CBP adds a dedicated NEXUS inspection booth at the Lynden POE. Currently crews are working on a retaining wall and fixing drainage issues near 0 Ave.

Ms. Halwani also said that B.C. Highway 11 improvements near the CBSA Abbotsford-Huntingdon POE are planned to start in the Spring of 2019. The improvements are being funded by both the City of Abbotsford and the BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure [BC MoTI], with the City leading the project. The project is expected to be announced after the B.C. elections in the coming weeks.

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Daniela Evans commented on the anti-idle zone in the southbound approach lanes to US CBP's Peace Arch POE. She advocated for a similar northbound anti-idling zone towards CBSA's Douglas POE with a traffic control light north of the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel.

Melissa Fanucci explained that if a traffic control light were constructed north of 49<sup>th</sup> parallel, it would still need to be coordinated with WSDOT because it would tie into their loop detectors and corresponding variable messaging signs [VMS].

Todd Carlson explained that WSDOT has looked at an anti-idle zone northbound on I-5, but not north of the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel. WSDOT's concerns were with traffic backing up to the D Street onramp and the NEXUS lane being blocked by non-NEXUS traffic entering from D Street.

## Operations

### Update on development of truck-towing alternatives

Hugh Conroy explained that at IMTC's last meeting the problem of commercial trucks breaking down in primary inspections lanes was discussed. There seem to be more occurrences northbound than southbound - CBSA reported that in one month of tracking the issue, there were 13 incidents of trucks breaking down, 86 percent of which required a tow, and the average duration of a primary inspection lane being closed was 90 minutes.

Whatcom County has one class C towing company with another company potentially acquiring the necessary license to tow semi-trucks in the near future. Both companies are based in Bellingham. Mr. Conroy said he has tried gathering information from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police [RCMP] regarding their procedures for towing commercial trucks, but has not yet connected with the right department. Lina Halwani offered to share relevant RCMP contact information.

### Setting up a tabletop exercise for the IMTC Communications Protocol

Hugh Conroy reminded the group that the IMTC Communications Protocol for transportation incident management was recently updated with new contact information and the sequences of communication were confirmed. During that update process, the group discussed the possibility of a tabletop exercise for border incident communication. Mr. Conroy asked that if such an exercise can be organized, should certain secondary agencies be involved, such as hazardous material response crews.

Lina Haliwani said that it would be beneficial to run through the communication protocols with core border agencies first before making this a larger scale exercise.

Edison Ting asked if trucking associations and other bus or truck carrier companies would be involved in the tabletop exercise. Hugh Conroy explained his understanding that the BC and WA State traffic management centers would communicate with those more specific entities. The tabletop exercise would help confirm this kind of communication would transpire.

Daniela Evans commented that with staff turnover and agencies changing policies over the years, a tabletop exercise would be critical for keeping border incident protocol up to date.

Hugh Conroy suggested that the tabletop exercise could include traffic rerouting and agency resource sharing.

## Data

### Cascade Gateway Border Data Warehouse – out of funding as of December 31: next steps and future upgrades discussion

Melissa Fanucci explained that border traffic data has been archived in the Cascade Gateway Border Data Warehouse since 2007. Funding to maintain the data archive will be used up by December 31, 2018. The lowest cost estimate for keeping the archive alive is \$3k annually. A basic update to the 2010-designed system would be a \$250k project, plus \$30k annual maintenance. Improving the user interface and providing better data querying capabilities would cost \$400k with 5 years of maintenance included.