

# **Circulation Analysis**

## **Stakeholder Interviews – Overview**

### **WCOG staff has interviewed the following stakeholders:**

- City of Abbotsford, BC
- City of Blaine, WA
- Canada Border Services Agency
- City of Langley, BC
- City of Lynden, WA
- BC TransLink
- Port Metro Vancouver
- City of Sumas, WA
- City of Surrey, BC
- U.S. Customs & Border Protection
- Washington State Department of Transportation
- Whatcom Transportation Authority

### **Interviews focused on:**

- Most current list of transportation-system improvement objectives,
- Expected changes in population or commercial activity,
- Expected or desired changes in land-use or development patterns,
- Specific concerns about border-crossing transportation.

### **Discussions also covered:**

- Information and data standards,
- Jurisdictions' authorities,
- Identification of other stakeholders,
- Observations of underlying structural changes,
- Ideas for future projects.

### **Interviews underscored the pursuit of specific tasks as part of the Circulation Analysis:**

- Commercial driver hours of service regulations and cross-border effects,
- Specific traffic modeling scenarios,
- Specific port-of-entry micro-simulation scenarios,
- Mapping methods,
- Partnerships to complement future agency projects.

## **Cascade Gateway Border Circulation Analysis Stakeholder Interview – City of Abbotsford August 12, 2008**

### **Participants**

Russ Mammel, Manager of Transportation, City of Abbotsford; Hugh Conroy, Project Manager, Whatcom Council of Governments; Melissa Miller, Project Coordinator, Whatcom Council of Governments

### **Transportation plan**

- Abbotsford is finalizing its transportation master plan this year. The plan is for a 25 year horizon.
- This is not a capital plan.
- Three new industrial areas are planned/in place:
  - New area next to the airport, transferred from the agricultural land reserve
  - A second area off of Clearbrook and King roads
  - A third area off of Trans Canada Hwy 1 and Mount Lehman Road.
- A truck route plan will be proposed to the Council in September. This will restrict truck movements on other routes.
- Vye Road, Huntingdon Road, and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue will all remain truck routes.
- The plan includes developing a 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue connection to Hwy 1 via King Road.
- 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue will continue as a two-lane road, with bike lanes included.
- The hope is that 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue will take some pressure off the Fraser Hwy (Hwy 1A) which is congested.
- BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (TRAN) has widened B.C. Hwy 11 north of Trans Canada Hwy 1.
- To service the industrial area at the border on Hwy 11, Abbotsford will be developing some parallel routes to the highway that service the neighborhood of Huntingdon (i.e. Vedder Way and Gladys Road).
- Plans to widen Riverside Road between Huntingdon Road and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue are in the capital plan for years 2012 and 2013. Widening on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the truck crossing are being completed this year
- Abbotsford would like to see Trans Canada Hwy 1 expanded to six lanes through Abbotsford to help movement of local travel. The Hwy currently has four exits, and Abbotsford would like five exits through town, including a new interchange at McCallum to service the new hockey arena and hospital. They would also like the exit at Clearbrook improved.

## Related plans

- The Abbotsford Airport's master plan includes expanding the terminal and adding an additional runway.
- Transport Canada has plans for a truck climbing lane just west of Abbotsford on Trans Canada Hwy 1.
- Langley is planning a large industrial park at Gloucester estates. 264<sup>th</sup> is a connector route for this. Trucks will also use Hwy 13 to Huntingdon Road and cross at the Huntingdon crossing.
- Abbotsford uses TransLink's model.

## Projected growth

- Additional land is being zoned commercial and industrial.
- Population growth will mostly be in the north-east part of the city.
- Current population is at 140,000 with a projected 194,000 by the year 2021 and 224,000 by 2031.

## Border concerns

- Backups continue to affect the Huntingdon neighborhood. They have to drive on the opposite side of the road/on the shoulder to get home during lengthy southbound queues.
- Backups occasionally extend beyond Vye Road.
- Abbotsford will be developing roads parallel to Hwy 11 to access industrial and residential neighborhoods at the border.

## Rail

- Abbotsford looked at mass transit options. A citizen group has looked at resurrecting the old inter-urban rail line.
- Currently buses service Abbotsford and provide transport to the rail line in Mission. There is also a park and ride up in Mission for rail users.

## Truck parking

- Truck parking is an issue for Abbotsford
- Truck parking was recently eliminated on city streets by an ordinance. Trucks now have to find off street parking.
- Agricultural parcels are allotted two trucks per parcel, and many farms are renting out this space and making arrangements with trucking owners.

## Transit

- The new bus route serving between Langley and Aldergrove and Abbotsford is very popular.
- No real strong interest in cross-border transit has been expressed.

## Air quality/Greening the border

- Air quality at the border is less of a concern than access for the residential community.

## **Cascade Gateway Border Circulation Analysis Stakeholder Interview – City of Blaine August 6, 2008**

### **Participants**

Stephen Banham, Public Works Director; Sergeant Ryan King, City of Blaine Police Department; Hugh Conroy, Project Manager, Whatcom Council of Governments; Melissa Miller, Project Coordinator, Whatcom Council of Governments

### **U.S. Peace Arch Port-of-Entry facility expansion**

- Re-routing traffic for the next 1.5 years
- Traffic using Exit 276 will not be able to get back on I-5 north. Instead will be re-routed east on D Street to SR 543 and need to take the Pacific Highway border crossing.
- Signage will need to be added to better direct traffic through the city.

### **Greening the Border Initiative**

- Stephen Banham noted that air quality is an issue for the Blaine community.
- Diesel trucks are doing less idling and are now turning off engines due to the cost of gas. This causes longer delays but leads to better air quality.
- It would potentially be possible to ticket to stop idling behavior.

### **Enforcement of border operational policies**

- Blaine police do have the authority to enforce NEXUS lane compliance and can issue citations. The problem is that, previously with CANPASS/PACE, a sticker on the car showed whether or not a driver was enrolled in the program. Now they would have to make social contact before determining lane usage status.

### **Safety concerns**

- Stephen Banham noted that, even though the Communications Protocol exists in this region, it has never really been tested. He suggested that, like many of the public safety agencies do, there should be a practice run to confirm that it works and how effectively VMS signs can alert the public of closures, reroutes, etc.
- Blaine Police Department does not have the contact numbers it needs in case of an emergency. Should be included in the communications list.
- Blaine Police Department has access issues due to construction. If they need to get north of the construction site during high traffic periods, their access is now limited.

### **Cross-border commercial movements**

- Blaine community still having issue with car carriers off-loading export vehicles in their community as they wait the necessary three days for their paperwork to be processed before being allowed to bring cars into Canada.
- Blaine police have been ticketing to stop behavior and now the cars are being parked on private land, against land ordinances but still better than impacting the street network.
- Thursdays seems to have longer northbound backups, but otherwise not regularly an issue.
- Truck parking zones will be lost as part of the redevelopment of the airport. Truck parking seen as a burden on the local municipality. Trucks damage the roads. The community would prefer truck parking outside of the central city, ideally near the interstate.
- Truck parking is a border-related issue given the U.S. and Canada's different hours-of-service rules. A good **topic of study** for the Circulation Analysis would be truck parking's relationship to the border and the value of proximity to the border VS. land-use impacts (i.e. what's the government role? What is the status of regulatory standards? Parking lot configurations vs. typical parcel shapes?)
- Container drops are still occurring in Blaine, although mostly in private lots.

### **Blaine land use/transportation plans**

- Blaine will be closing its airport December 31, 2008. The land is being re-zoned commercial and industrial.
- Boblett Road will be extended through to Odell.
- H Street is a planned site for a new residential development, although this has slowed. Originally designed for 130 homes.
- Widening of H street to Harvey Road is in the TIP. Another (separate?) plan is to do a three-lane configuration between Ludwick and Vista on H Street., including a bike lane, pedestrian sidewalks, and shared turning lane. This improvement is dependent on the residential development, however.
- The Port of Blaine wants to redevelop some of its property in the wharf district, and is working on a master plan for \$50 million of investments to develop area between tracks.
- The new roundabout as part of the Peace Arch facility re-design will impact Exit 276 and improve the spur to Marine Drive. There are still some concerns with how the rail crossing just west of this on Marine Drive will work.

### **I-5 Exit 274**

- The interchange justification report (IJR) will be done this month. WSDOT will review, and then it will be forwarded to FHWA. Should be complete by the end of the year.
- The plan is to develop a full interchange. A preferred alternative has been defined, connecting with Hughes Road/Sweet Road which then connects to Badger Road (and onto Guide Meridian or further east to Sumas/Huntingdon).
  - The connection links all crossings, but also involves several 90-degree turns which is a safety concern for commercial vehicles.
  - This connector route is a county road.

- **A topic of study** (and a good scenario to evaluate as part of the circulation analysis) is the relative cost-benefit of improving the existing alignments VS. more fully building an extended east-west state route 546.

### **Rail issues**

- Residents still have access issues west of the railroad near Bell Road.
- The new interchange at Exit 274 will help alleviate some of these concerns.
- Problem may grow as Birch Bay sees greater population increases, and Birch Bay – Lynden Road experiences greater levels of congestion.

### **Other transportation concerns**

- There is interest in improving the bicycle and pedestrian routes across the border.
- There is also interest in speaking with WTA about better bus service to the area and improving cross-border transit connections. With the changes to the airport, and increasing residential density just across the border in Surrey, Blaine may want to discuss route changes with WTA.
- Another option to consider is a park n ride to tie in with bus system. Perhaps there are opportunities for Canadians to park in Blaine and take a bus to the airport in Bellingham.

### **Other comments**

- WCOG or another agency needs to do a data audit of the ATIS systems northbound and southbound to confirm that wait times represented are reasonably accurate for the traveling public.
- Has heard anecdotal stories of northbound Canadian drivers slowing at the VMS sign south of Bellingham and looking at the wait times. Lynden is a viable option for some travelers.

## **Cascade Gateway Border Circulation Analysis Stakeholder Interview – U.S. Customs & Border Protection August 27, 2008**

### **Participants**

James Rector, Assistant Port Director, U.S. Customs and Border Protection; Hugh Conroy, Project Manager, Whatcom Council of Governments; Melissa Miller, Project Coordinator, Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG)

### **Bus APIS**

- On Saturdays (related to summer cruise ship schedules), Pacific Highway southbound gets an average of 100 buses between the hours of 8:00am and 12:00pm. Bus lineups are an issue, and so U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) is looking into offering advanced passenger information system (APIS) to help expedite the clearance process at the border.
- Buses which would be eligible for such pre-screening would predominantly be companies that pick up passengers well in advance of the border and make no stops along the way (i.e. charter bus companies). They would need to submit a passenger list with information about the passengers (name, date of birth, passport number – although this has yet to be determined) and information would need to arrive half an hour to one hour before the bus arrives at the border.
- Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) is also interested in this issue and may work with CBP on a joint program.

### **Expanded NEXUS locations**

- CBP is interested in the option of expanding NEXUS services to other Cascade Gateway ports-of-entry southbound (Lynden and Sumas).
- CBP is currently testing NEXUS RFID reader technology to look into having RFID readers installed at all primary booths to allow for detection of NEXUS cards, enhanced drivers licenses (EDLs), and passports. This would allow any lane to be a NEXUS lane.
- Lynden has long backups in the summer, with 60-90 minute waits this summer.
- Congressman Larsen's office is a strong supporter of expanding NEXUS usage to other crossings.
- A main concern would be the infrastructure and how to accommodate a NEXUS lane at these ports. Currently the road alignment on B.C. Highway 13 allows for only two lanes to approach the port-of-entry, and sacrificing one entire lane to NEXUS would severely impact wait times unless a significant number of Lynden crossers were enrolled in the program.
- One idea is to have one lane at Lynden and Sumas be NEXUS only during Saturday/Sunday summer rushes, or any time a wait exceeds one hour.
- Hugh Conroy noted that various NEXUS lane/non-NEXUS scenarios can be modeled as part of this project.

## **Lynden crossing hours of operation and truck permit status**

- The issue of expanding Lynden hours of operation to 24 hours is still being discussed. Currently, CBP feels the evening and early morning hour volumes would be too low to warrant such an investment of staffing resources. However if volumes increase then CBP is open to consider it.
- Facility improvements are needed before Lynden could drop its permit-only status for commercial movements. The port does not have the facility for full inspections of cargo. Until improvements are made it will not change this status.

## **FAST program**

- There is some surprise that the northbound FAST lane is not receiving as much use as was expected.
- There are no plans to expand FAST clearance to ports other than Pacific Highway.

## **Sumas port facility**

- Any improvements to the Sumas port-of-entry are pending the completion of the Peace Arch facility redesign.

## **Transportation-related improvement requests**

- Wait time signage further north on B.C. Highway 99 (southbound) would perhaps help travelers make decisions not only between Pacific Highway and Peace Arch crossings, but choices that could include Lynden/Aldergrove as well.

## **Rail issues**

- There are ongoing negotiation issues with the second train, but not from CBP's perspective. CBSA has some concerns as the train arrives at Pacific Central Station late at night (eleven p.m.) and there are staffing issues. There are also ongoing negotiations about the cost for CBSA to inspect the second train.
- CBP continues to look into rail pre-clearance at the Pacific Central Station to allow the train to continue through the border and not stop until Bellingham. This issue is being pushed at headquarters level and has local support. The main issue is CBP staff and taking them from Vancouver International Airport. There also needs to be a better facility at Pacific Central Station for inspection officers.
- One change to help this issue is that CBP no longer needs to staff the NEXUS urban enrollment center in Vancouver.

## **CBP wait time definition**

- A recent study by a consulting group for CBP has looked at wait time measurements across the border and how this definition changes, and what technology is used to determine wait time. The finalized definition has wait time determined by end of queue to arrival at the primary booth.
- U.S. and Canadian federal inspection and transportation agencies are sponsoring pilot projects to look at wait time measurements and technology used to calculate this. Three projects, one in Blaine, are proposed.



## **Anti-idling efforts at the border**

- James Rector noted that CBP has no issues with anti-idling measures installed by B.C. Ministry of Transportation southbound, as long as the system doesn't create added delay.
- CBP may have a problem with northbound anti-idling efforts if they involve stopping cars on the bridge over the future inspection facility. This is a sensitive area.

## **Cascade Gateway Border Circulation Analysis Stakeholder Interview – Canada Border Services Agency September 18, 2008**

### **Participants**

Kim Scoville, Port Director, Canada Border Services Agency; Hugh Conroy, Project Manager, Whatcom Council of Governments; Melissa Miller, Project Coordinator, Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG)

### **NEXUS Expansion**

- NEXUS lane usage is on the rise, up to 32 percent of total traffic volume northbound at Peace Arch this summer.
- The new Douglas facility will offer two NEXUS lanes.
- The pickets have done a great job of separating NEXUS lanes and led to better lane functionality and usage.
- There is a greater sense of urgency to expand NEXUS to other ports-of-entry now. CBSA would be interested assuming that it could be established without damaging existing general lanes.
- There is interest in opening NEXUS at Sumas/Huntingdon and at Lynden/Aldergrove. Huntingdon is a priority.
- NEXUS is a highly successful program and CBSA has every intention of continuing its success and expanding opportunities for NEXUS users.

### **Lynden/Aldergrove**

- NEXUS is a possibility at this port.
- Due to the poor commercial processing capabilities at Aldergrove, CBSA is considering limiting commercial traffic through this port as a priority, similar to the U.S. permit-only port status.
- Future designs for the port may propose consider making Aldergrove a passenger vehicle only port, moving commercial vehicles east (Sumas/Huntingdon) and west (Pacific Highway).
- There is also consideration of making the commercial lane at Aldergrove a FAST only lane. This would move it from Pacific Highway to Aldergrove, to allow better usability of the existing FAST lane at Pacific Highway for general commercial traffic, and to increase the hours of service for FAST users.
- There will not be bus processing capabilities at the new Aldergrove facility.

### **FAST Lane**

- FAST lane could be moved to Aldergrove instead of Pacific Highway.
- There are no plans to expand FAST northbound to multiple ports-of-entry at this time.
- There is hope to possibly look at changes to the program in the future. CBSA is monitoring the program and its usage in this region and keeping the idea open.

- The paperwork savings for companies enrolled in FAST are huge. That said, this is more beneficial to the large companies with cross-border business in the mid west than here.

### **East-West Connector Routes**

- Kim Scoville expressed interest in any connection routes for better usability of the various crossings, including 0 Avenue and 16<sup>th</sup> in Canada, although he is less convinced of the benefits of 16<sup>th</sup> over 0 Avenue.

### **Other Technology**

- CBSA likes the new U.S. Customs & Border Protection technology that allows for advance screening of electronic identification such as enhanced drivers licenses (EDLs), NEXUS cards, and Pass cards in every lane. There is hope to have a similar system northbound in the future.

### **Bus traffic**

- CBSA is interested in a pilot project at Pacific Highway in coordination with CBP that could receive advance passenger manifests from approved charter companies such as cruise ship servicers.
- They are interested in looking at ways to improve bus passenger processing rather than simply offloading everyone.
- Does not see a public transit service crossing the border (such as a pilot from Whatcom Transportation Authority) as an issue. The bus would be processed like any other buses coming through at this time.

### **Advanced Traveler Information System (ATIS)**

- Kim Scoville said he is pleased with the way ATIS systems northbound and southbound are functioning and likes the direction they are going. The more information on websites, signs, and through text messaging that can be distributed to travelers the better.
- Wants to change the naming on the northbound WA State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) sign from saying “SR543” and “I-5” to say “Pacific Highway” and “Peace Arch” since that will make it clearer to the travelling public.

## **Cascade Gateway Border Circulation Analysis Stakeholder Interview – Township of Langley August 13, 2008**

### **Participants**

Paul Cordeiro, Manager, Transportation Engineering; Hugh Conroy, Project Manager, Whatcom Council of Governments; Melissa Miller, Project Coordinator, Whatcom Council of Governments

### **Background information about Township of Langley**

- Population at 100,000 (and 24,000 in the City of Langley).
- Boundaries are 196<sup>th</sup> and 276<sup>th</sup> streets.
- Most growth occurring north of the City. Population expected to double or triple in the Township over the next 20 years.
- The Brookwood community expected to double in population (currently at 20,000 people) due to Campbell Heights jobs.
- Based on trip diary data gathered in 2004, 70 percent of trips in Langley were internal.
- The Port Kells/Northwest Langley industrial area has already been redeveloped.
- There is heavy industrial at Gloucester Industrial Park, north of Highway 1 by BC Highway 13. Currently only two-thirds developed. Bigger users are planning to use that space and could increase traffic demand.
- The Campbell Valley Regional Park is the largest regional park in the GVRD and is split by 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

### **Transportation plan**

- The Township of Langley has a transportation plan in draft form which will be taken to the new council in January. He will send us a copy of the draft report.
- Main road network:
  - Trans Canada Highway 1 bisects the township
  - Major east-west roads are 16<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, and 32<sup>nd</sup>.
- The three major east-west roads will connect through to 216<sup>th</sup> but only 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue will continue east past this point.
- Due to the agricultural land reserve (ALR) it is difficult to widen east-west roads.
- Paul Cordeiro will email us a map of the truck routes. Any changes to truck routes must be approved by the TransLink board even if not a main road network road.
- Langley is changing its definition of a truck from anything over 4,500kg to 10,000kg and over, to coordinate with other regional municipalities.

## 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue

- 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue currently experiencing 10,000 average daily traffic. Expecting that to increase to 16,000 ADT in five to six years.
- Forecasts of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue traffic account for the development at Campbell Heights in Surrey and the increased industrial usage and growth at Abbotsford Airport. It does not factor in a connection between B.C. Highway 99 and Trans Canada Highway 1 in Abbotsford.
- 24 percent of the traffic on 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue is trucks, mostly gravel and construction, fewer container trucks.
- Langley currently improving four intersections along 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, adding left turn lanes. The interchange at 216<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue will get a roundabout.
- Plan is to widen 16<sup>th</sup> avenue to four lanes. However need to expand right-of-way which is difficult given the ALR. In Surrey, the development areas can help offset costs but for Langley they have to purchase the land outright.
- There is some opposition from local residents on 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the expansion.
- 16<sup>th</sup> is a designated truck route. It is also part of the major road network, meaning that TransLink has a say in the future of the road even though it does not own it.
- Langley interested in showing whether 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue or 0 Avenue is a better option for widening to address east-west movements.
- Concerns with the 0 Avenue option include: need to purchase ALR land is still present; conflicts with border crossing intersection; very hilly route; local access a concern.
- Cost to expand Langley portion of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue to four lanes is \$80 million, not including any frontage road construction. More likely closer to \$100 million. This would include buying land and widening 13 miles of roadway.

## 200<sup>th</sup> Avenue

- Langley also concerned with widening 200<sup>th</sup> Street (north-south) to six lanes to better accommodate traffic coming from the six-lane Golden Ears Bridge. North of the city, 200<sup>th</sup> is very busy (40,000-45,000 ADT). Golden Ears Bridge is projected to eventually see 60,000 cars a day.
- Langley is improving some parallel north-south routes to take some of the traffic off 200<sup>th</sup>.
- Pitt Meadows is planning a redevelopment of their airport and industrial zone and also anticipates an intermodal container yard.
- Much of this container traffic may take 200<sup>th</sup> down to 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the Pacific Highway port-of-entry.

## Trans Canada Highway 1

- A new highway interchange at 216<sup>th</sup> and Trans Canada Highway 1 is built.
- An overpass at 208<sup>th</sup> will be doubled.
- A tunnel under Trans Canada Highway 1 is planned at 202<sup>nd</sup>.
- Up to 200<sup>th</sup>, Trans Canada will be widened to two general purpose and two HOV lanes. After 200<sup>th</sup> there will be just HOV additions.

## Transit

- Bus rapid transit lanes included in plans.

## Rail

- Plan to have eight rail separations between Delta and Langley as part of the Roberts Bank/Delta increases of rail cars. The cost is \$300 million and will be paid by several funding partners.
- Local rail advocacy group pushing to restore interurban rail line between Chilliwack to Vancouver. This would be expensive.
- Recent rail study showed that main rail line has two choke points that are too busy with cargo for regular passenger rail service (20-22 trains a day, planned increases to 40 trains a day).
- Langley's focus is not on intercity rail service, since the city has a goal of creating a job for every person who lives in Langley and to remain as a sustainable community.
- Instead of rail, looking at bus lanes along main thoroughfares.

## Truck parking

- Truck parking is an issue in Langley. Complaints are regularly received.
- Like Abbotsford, Langley farms provide some parking for trucks.
- Trucks are not allowed off of the truck routes, although this is not enforced.
- Individual businesses are being required to provide parking for their own vehicles, and to not have them on city streets. Long haul drivers park in their driveways.
- Langley sees this predominantly as a private industry solution. B.C. Trucking Association is located in Langley and they have concerns. One solution would be to pursue a private sector parking location off-street. The municipality will not pursue this issue at this time.

## Anti-idling

- Langley has an anti-idling initiative and pilot project underway at rail crossings. Flyers have been distributed and signs erected in the crossing area. A study was done before and one will be completed after the campaign.
- There is no Township law against idling. This is a pilot project only.

## Border concerns

- Issues with the intersection right at the border on Zero Avenue. People are driving on the wrong side of the road, on the shoulder, etc.
- Langley considering turning restrictions to reduce accident hazards.
- Ideally Highway 13 could be widened and a through-lane provided.

## Other issues

- Langley lights and other traffic management equipment not tied into the B.C. TRAN system or other regional system

- Langley has plans to build a new traffic management center. This will also tie in with the integrated regional signal system project, partnering with Surrey, TransLink, TRAN, and Transport Canada.
- Currently Langley's technology is not compatible with TransLink's system.

## **Cascade Gateway Border Circulation Analysis Stakeholder Interview – City of Lynden August 27, 2008**

### **Participants**

Amy Harksell, Planning Director, City of Lynden; Hugh Conroy, Project Manager, Whatcom Council of Governments; Melissa Miller, Project Coordinator, Whatcom Council of Governments

### **Transportation projects**

- WA State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is in the process of widening Guide Meridian (SR 539)
- As part of this project they will be improving lights and adding roundabouts which will affect Lynden.
- No new roads are planned within Lynden's urban growth area. The focus of development is within these boundaries.
- Improved connections between I-5 and Lynden (either along Birch Bay-Lynden Road or any other east-west corridor) are viewed as positive for economic development.
- Improvements of Badger Road are also supported, better connecting Lynden and I-5.
- The only concern regarding a more developed 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue in B.C. would be the issue of B.C. stormwater flowing across the border and flooding N. Whatcom County. Development on the Canadian side of the border has increased water coming across the border. Water has been lstanding on Boundary Road, Badger road, and has flooded fields.
- There is hope that discussions regarding the storm water issue are occurring at the state and province levels. Department of Fish and Wildlife is also involved.
- Dale Purcell will send WCOG a copy of Lynden's truck route map.

### **Trade analysis**

- Lynden completed a retail trade area analysis (which did not include cross-border travelers since that target market is so strongly affected by exchange rates). The study did not identify target industries but specified numerous component manufacturers (i.e. Lynden Door). St. Joseph's Hospital also owns land.

### **Rail**

- Lynden has one rail spur predominantly used by Westfarm and Versacold. There is no land along the line for further development and no depot for loading or unloading, so its prospects for further development are limited.

### **Lynden-Aldergrove Port-of-Entry**

- Lynden would support a 24-hour border crossing, especially to accommodate the numerous cross-border commuters who travel to and from Lynden.



- Acknowledges this would require some changes with emergency services but few planning concerns.
- NEXUS at Lynden would be a benefit especially for regular crossers and commuters. Currently there are long lines southbound at 7:30 in the morning, waiting for the port to open. Trucks also block the lanes.
- Amy Harksell acknowledged that many pilots who fly out of YVR and Abbotsford live in Lynden and cross the border regularly.

### **Truck parking**

- Truck parking is not a concern in Lynden. A few trucks have been noticed parked at Cost Cutter and there has been some discussion from folks interested in developing a trailer parking area, but this is not a big issue.

### **Relocation of cross-border businesses**

- Amy Harksell noted a change where businesses have relocated their warehousing facilities on the U.S. side of the border to avoid long queues at the border when servicing a large U.S. market.
- The addition of a NEXUS lane and 24-hour operations at Lynden would benefit these companies relocating to the U.S. for the sake of employees and other services.

## **Cascade Gateway Border Circulation Analysis Stakeholder Interview – Port Metro Vancouver October 8, 2008**

### **Participants**

Dennis Bickel, Senior Manager, Supply Chain, Port Metro Vancouver ; Hugh Conroy, Project Manager, Whatcom Council of Governments; Melissa Miller, Project Coordinator, Whatcom Council of Governments

### **Lower Mainland shortsea shipping project**

- Transport Canada has announced five funded projects to establish shortsea shipping within the Lower Mainland region to serve domestic routes.
- Projects will begin in 2009.
- The projects include new terminal infrastructure.
- Five projects were chosen for the Asia Pacific program. Two of the projects will be at deep sea ports and three at private facilities.

### **Amalgamated port authority**

- Five ports merged together to join the amalgamated port authority called Port Metro Vancouver (PMV).
- An origin-destination analysis was completed after the amalgamation to look at supply chain issues. There is an increase in containerized movements and domestic re-stuffing of goods.
- The merger provided additional land as well as assistance to the smaller ports. Data from each port is different however so now PMV is working to consolidate and coordinate data.

### **Freight movements**

- There is a split between goods going on truck and on rail from the port.
- Most of inbound freight at PMV is destined for Canadian markets. Midwest and U.S. markets are predominantly served by Port of Prince Rupert in Canada
- 60 – 70 percent of the rail is for imports from vessels.
- The port has dramatically reduced the numbers of trucks serving the area. This has improved air quality standards and improved coordination with the companies that are serving the port. The goal was to make sure the vehicles are inspected and safe, and that movements are coordinated. They instigated a port licensing system and have reserved the right to refuse access to the port.
- The port is now working with MOT and TransLink looking at an RFID tag pilot project to monitor movements. Eventually the port wants all trucks to have mandatory two-way readers.
- 95 percent of trucks leaving the port facilities are destined for the Lower Mainland. A lot of the long-haul has shifted to rail.

- The origin-destination analysis did not include the type of facility at destination (i.e. distribution centre) so where goods went from that point is uncertain. The study tracked the movement of the truck, not the goods.
- The port is looking at options for container handling. The goal is to improve accounts with inland container services. PMV is also looking for opportunities to develop inland container-handling facilities.<sup>1</sup>
- The port has been somewhat buffered from the worldwide recession given the strong Canadian market. However exports are slowing down to Asia and demand is decreasing which will affect trade. They also have some exports backing up at the facilities due to credit issues.
- Statistics still show the port growing. The port is currently at an annualized 3 percent growth rate.

### **Model**

- PMV has a general model and planning model for movement of its freight. It is recognized that the movement of freight from the port on the land side is messy.
- The port has a trip generation model to forecast volume and distribution of modes and commodities to and from the port facilities.
- PMV will be working with TransLink in 2009 to update the regional model based on their trip generation model.
- The model includes both a road and a rail analysis. They also account for passenger rail movements in their model. They will also include a variable for shortsea shipping in the near future.
- Port modeling is not based on horizon years for forecasting, but instead uses a threshold basis. They will then either accelerate or decelerate their plan based on model results.<sup>2</sup>

### **Port Authority road network**

- This road network is a platform they advocate for improvements to roads servicing the port.
- The process confirms their major road network routes.
- PMV wants to optimize the allocation of road usage based on demand to reduce truck congestion on particular routes.

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<sup>1</sup> Question for circulation analysis – how would location and associated modal split with these facilities change the volume and location of regional, cross-border movements?

<sup>2</sup> Question for circulation analysis – good potential here for data/information collaboration

## **Cascade Gateway Border Circulation Analysis Stakeholder Interview – City of Sumas August 12, 2008**

### **Participants**

Mayor Bob Bromley, City of Sumas; Rod Fadden, Utilities Superintendent, City of Sumas; Hugh Conroy, Project Manager, Whatcom Council of Governments; Melissa Miller, Project Coordinator, Whatcom Council of Governments

### **Border concerns**

- City of Sumas has closed down Cleveland Street at Railroad because U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) continue to use Railroad Ave., a city road, as a storage lane for inspecting trucks. Trucks are parked while truckers have to file for paperwork.
- Northbound truck queuing is the biggest challenge.
- When passenger vehicles queue up along Cherry Street they block truck access to the Garfield Street truck route. Sumas wants to have a variable message sign on WA SR 9 which would reroute trucks west and then back east along Bob Mitchell Road so they can avoid the Cherry Street passenger queues when they are long.
- CBP is performing a larger number of outbound inspections, two to three times a day in the passenger lanes, which interferes with car traffic and backs it up, backing up truck traffic as well. If this continues, Sumas requests an additional sign south of the city to redirect trucks from Highway 9 to Bob Mitchell Road when this occurs.

### **Passenger vehicles**

- Most Sumas residents travel to Bellingham by going Hovel Road to Goodwin Road to Siper Road, which spits a driver out at Nugent's Corner on SR 542.
- For non-residents, the Badger Road connection is important, as is Highway 9.
- There is interest in a NEXUS lane, although there wouldn't be enough traffic at present to justify designating a lane every day to NEXUS.

### **Rail**

- Currently 4 trains a day pass through Sumas. That's expected to double eventually with the garbage hauling to eastern Washington. And additional trucking terminals are looking at rail relocation and transfers as well.
- Weight limitations on the bridges of the BNSF short line are too low for some companies that were considering relocating in Sumas. They located in Ferndale instead. These limitations also affect Canadian industrial movements.
- Rabanco hauls Canadian garbage from Abbotsford south. Sumas limits the train parking to twenty-four hours but occasional delays have led to complaints regarding the smell.

### **Truck parking**

- More and more streets in Sumas are being designated no truck parking.
- There are only a few truck parking facilities in the area. There is hope that a private truck parking area may be established near the Starvin Sams store at the old car wash. Twenty semis could be parked there.

### **Future plans**

- Sumas may add additional industrial lands on the Bob Mitchell Road side of town.
- Federal appraisers came out in March to appraise properties for a proposed expansion of the U.S. port facility in Sumas.

### **Lynden/Aldergrove 24 hour concerns**

- Sumas warns the City of Lynden of the additional costs for servicing a twenty-four hour port facility with emergency services (police and fire). Sheriffs department will also need to respond.

## **Cascade Gateway Border Circulation Analysis Stakeholder Interview – City of Surrey August 13, 2008**

### **Participants**

Jaime Boan, Transportation Manager, Engineering Department, City of Surrey; Mirjana Petrovic, Transportation Engineer, City of Surrey; Hugh Conroy, Project Manager, Whatcom Council of Governments; Melissa Miller, Project Coordinator, Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG)

### **Transportation plans**

#### **16<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

- The City of Surrey would like to consider an interchange at B.C. Hwy 99 and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, however they have already proposed an interchange at Hwy 99 and 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue so B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (TRAN) may not support the concept.
- Any improved access on 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue could be reached from B.C. Hwy 99 via the King George Highway exit or a future 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue exit.
- Surrey is interested in a model showing the effects of linking 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Abbotsford along King Road to Trans Canada Hwy 1, as this may affect Surrey volumes.
- Plans include widening 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 6 lanes between B.C. Hwy 15 and 152<sup>nd</sup>. However it may be important to consider further widening depending on modeling results from Abbotsford.

#### **24<sup>th</sup> Avenue and new developments**

- Large new commercial and industrial developments are planned for 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
- Commercial development is 90 percent constructed and functional.
- New land use plans have five subareas which call for much higher densities on 24<sup>th</sup> and environs.
- Campbell Heights developments will provide 40,000 jobs.
- Area One (west of 192<sup>nd</sup>) is almost complete. Area Two (east of 192<sup>nd</sup> and west of 196<sup>th</sup>) is the second phase of the project.

#### **Other plans**

- Surrey's plans for King George Hwy and B.C. Hwy 99 include widening to six lanes with two additional lanes in each direction (one lane dedicated to rapid bus transit). Bus lanes are planned but not yet funded.
- TRAN currently expresses no interest in increasing access to B.C. Hwy 99. Numerous studies have been done on Hwy 99 interchanges but current priorities at TRAN are opposed to additional interchanges and more focused on multimodal development.

- Many roads in Surrey are designated by TransLink as part of the Major Roads Network. TransLink therefore has a say in the planning for these roads and provides 50 percent of improvement funds.
- 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue will be connected through and link the Nordell neighborhood to Delta.
- 88<sup>th</sup> Avenue will be widened.
- Colebrook Road is being evaluated for a toll expressway with standard interchanged and four lanes. It will continue through Langley and connect to Trans Canada Hwy 1 via the B.C. Hydro corridor (tying in at 196<sup>th</sup>).
- A new industrial area is being developed along B.C. Hwy 99.
- There are designated truck and hazardous material routes through Surrey and they are enforced. Truck routes include 16<sup>th</sup>, 32<sup>nd</sup>, and 192<sup>nd</sup> to Hwy 10.
- Jaime Boan will send a list of planned improvement projects.

## Population forecasts

- Between 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and B.C. Hwy 15, the new development near the border will be built out to approximately 4,000 people.
- Grandview Heights developments will house 35,000 – 40,000 people.
- Semiahmoo Town Centre between 16<sup>th</sup> and 152<sup>nd</sup> Avenues will also have large developments, including 40 story residential towers. White Rock is planning similar high-density structures in the area.
- Semiahmoo Town Centre is a ten year plan, included in the TransLink model. Mira Petrovic will inquire as to whether the plan is available.

## Rail

- The proposal to move the rail line east to run parallel with B.C. Hwy 15 still exists but the project is very expensive. There is still interest in moving the rail off the waterfront but the priority does not match the cost..

## Bus

- Surrey, TransLink, and B.C. Province are partnering to build rapid bus lanes along King George Hwy, Fraser Hwy, and 104<sup>th</sup> Street.
- New bus routes will take passengers to SkyTrain in Richmond.

## Truck parking

- Truck parking is not as big a problem in south Surrey as it is in north Surrey. A large number of trucking companies are based in north Surrey and are private owned by residents living in the area (predominantly in the Newton neighborhood). They are parking illegally on city roads or on agricultural land.
- Several approaches to the problem have been presented:
  - Develop a truck parking coordinator position through the City of Surrey which would set up a website and provide a list of where parking is available

- Change the bylaws to increase the number of trucks allowed at industrial zone properties.
- Looking at on-street parking locations.
- Develop agreements for a private cooperative near B.C. Hydro lines for private commercial parking.
- Surrey is not currently addressing the issue of illegal parking on agricultural lands.
- Surrey would prefer to have a private agency address these issues.



## Cascade Gateway Border Circulation Analysis Stakeholder Interview – TransLink September 4, 2008

### Participants

Keenan Kitasaka, Manager, ITS, TransLink; Helen Cook, Program Manager, Roads & Infrastructure Planning; Hugh Conroy, Project Manager, Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG); Melissa Miller, Project Coordinator, Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG)

### Major Road Network (MRN)

- A review of MRNs is currently underway. A more formal process about how these routes are identified and included in the MRN will be developed.
- Currently the MRN designation has been given to roads based on certain criteria:
  - Provides intra-regional access to a predefined regional activity centre
  - Carries a minimum of:
    - 70 percent of trips longer than 10km in peak hour and peak direction AND total peak hour peak direction volume of traffic is greater than 800 vehicles per hour
    - 10 through buses in peak or peak direction OR
    - 800 trucks per day
  - Meets an overall check for reasonableness completeness
- Former process involved the above criteria, some filtering, and then negotiations with municipalities.
- The purpose of the review is to take a step back – the network exists but no plan on how to manage/update that network. They will set policy and also develop objectives and goals, and define the lengths of segments.
- 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue is a good example of a road that is not part of the MRN but should be looked at as a possible addition.
- Routes that are connected to major TransLink improvement projects also get upgraded to MRNs, such as 200<sup>th</sup> Avenue, which connects to the new Golden Ears bridge.
- Currently municipalities are not required to consult with TransLink on their MRNs except for truck route designations or changes to people moving capacity (see presentation on *Legislative Context of the Major Road Network*). Municipalities can apply for funds from TransLink for improvements, but will need to match funds provided. Maintenance funding is provided for MRNs from TransLink; it is based on a dollar value per lane kilometer (currently approximately \$12,000 CDN).
- For 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue to be upgraded to a MRN, Surrey and Langley would have to designate it, put funding into it, and then approach TransLink for assistance in capital funding. This may be complicated by how the municipality itself would pay for improvements (some have development money tied to improvements where negotiations occur with individual land

developers to determine development costs). This is more of an issue with the right-of-way along the Agricultural Land Reserve.

- The work on 16<sup>th</sup> would have to be done before it is designated part of the MRN.

## Regional plans

- TransLink has completed a Transport 2040 Long Range Plan, and Metro Vancouver (GVRD) is updating the Livable Region Strategic plan.
- Several capital projects are underway, including the Roberts Bank rail corridor system, B.C. Hwy 10 improvements, and improvements on Fraser Hwy.

## Truck routes

- Just because a route is in the MRN does not necessarily mean it is a truck route.
- Of the 22 municipalities in the Lower Mainland there are numerous types of truck route designations. TransLink is working to develop standards and shared measurements among these routes.
- Helen Cook will get WCOG a copy of the truck route map.

## Bus routes

- TransLink designates where rapid bus transit routes go, working with municipalities. Major corridors have been identified and modeled for future bus rapid transit.
- Some dedicated bus rapid transit lanes are built by TransLink but the municipality owns the right-of-way.
- Some municipalities are more open about using the existing right-of-way in a new way (i.e. Langley and Surrey).
- Expanded transit service is expected in some areas. 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue is a good possibility if it is included in the MRN over the next few years.
- The lanes on B.C. Highway 99 in the southbound direction in Richmond are HOV 2++ and are shared by buses. There is a project underway through the Ministry of Transportation to designate a northbound bus lane north of the Massey Tunnel and ending at the exit to the Canada line at Bridgeport.
- Changes may occur to restructure routes in Surrey as part of the planned Semiahmoo transit center. These will not be major changes.
- There is a new bus interchange in Newton.
- Surrey is looking to develop a downtown core and perhaps move its city hall to this location.
- There is a South Surrey Transit Plan that can be referenced for more information.
- Helen Cook will send WCOG a link to the frequent transit routes map, and to the MRN map.

## Changes in service area

- Recent legislation has increased TransLink's service area east between Pemberton and Hope. Opt-in is required from municipalities.
- This new service area includes bus service only, done on a service contract basis.

- It is unlikely this will expand the taxation authority of TransLink into these areas.
- It also seems doubtful at this time that the authority would include any road network changes/improvements.

## **ITS and interoperability**

- A focus for the region is interoperability of technology and making sure toll RFID at Golden Ears is the same as that elsewhere. Once the new Port Mann bridge is completed that will also be tolled, along with the Potello Road bridge.
- The FAST program tag is not compatible with other regional systems.
- Operation Greenlight is a program to streamline movements of commercial goods across the Alberta and B.C. border, allowing for bypassing weigh stations to expedite traffic.
- B.C. has opted out of Norpass with the Greenlight program.
- There are negotiations underway with Ecomm, the emergency service agency for the Lower Mainland, to display real-time accident and detour information on I-Move to help travelers.
- Updates to the regional architecture are planned.

## **Smart Corridors**

- The Smart Corridors initiative is a review of the needs for high-priority goods movements through the Lower Mainland of B.C.
- The initiative includes a large data gathering and needs assessment exercise. The initiative is project-oriented.
- The strategy will be completed this October and will be followed by a pilot project to improve goods movement in the region.
- The program is partially funded by the Asia Pacific Gateway Program. Other project partners include TransLink, B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Port Metro Vancouver, and Transport Canada. ICBC may also be interested in deployments related to safety benefits. Municipalities also have an interest.
- Pilot projects could include controlled access, priority truck access, truck-activated signals, etc.
- The detailed design of the project will be developed in 2009.
- It seems likely that the border could be part of a pilot project, along with the B.C. Hwy 99/Hwy 91 couplet and the Knight Street corridor.
- Once the Smart Corridors conclusions are presented regionally in October a presentation could possibly be made to the October 16 IMTC Steering Committee.

## **Border crossings**

- There is interest in expanding the [www.i-move.ca](http://www.i-move.ca) system to include truck wait times along Pacific Highway.
- I-move also needs to include cameras and wait time information northbound at Lynden/Aldergrove and Sumas/Huntingdon ports-of-entry from WA State Dept. of Transportation's (WSDOT) system.

- It would be beneficial to have a variable message sign further north on Hwy 91 to provide wait times to allow for diversions to other crossings for commercial vehicles.

### **Cross-border transit**

- The person to discuss this with at TransLink is the Transit Planning Manager, Jim Prokop.
- Coast Mountain bus is the sub-contracting agency that operates TransLink's bus service.

## **Cascade Gateway Border Circulation Analysis Stakeholder Interview – Whatcom County August 19, 2008**

### **Participants**

Gary Davis, Transportation Planner, Whatcom County Planning ; Hugh Conroy, Project Manager, Whatcom Council of Governments; Melissa Miller, Project Coordinator, Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG)

### **Current projects**

- Whatcom County recently adopted its six year transportation improvement program (TIP).
- Funding is being scaled back due to rising expenditures and so they are working on safety issues only at this time. There are few countywide improvement projects at this time.
- The current plan is to adopt lower levels of service (LOS) for certain county roads (LOS is a volume-to-capacity ratio). For example, Birch Bay – Lynden Road currently has a LOS C rating (.75) which limits development along the road and would require additional improvements if traffic increases substantially. The County is looking at downgrading primary routes to LOS D to allow for higher volume-to-capacity ratios.
- There is some consideration of shrinking Blaine’s urban growth area (UGA).
- A development is slated for the Kendall area. Originally proposed 700 units but now down to 289. This will mostly affect SR 542.

### **East-west connectors**

- There are no plans to make any changes to H Street (outside the City of Blaine’s possible widening).
- SR 542 is owned by WA State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) but they are working with the County to adopt matching LOS on this route.
- The connection affected by changes at Exit 274 has not been considered as a primary route and there could be some real challenges to developing that route. Currently there are numerous 90 degree turns, difficult for trucks. In addition, the area has many wetlands which make widening projects difficult.
- Current comprehensive plan includes a new east-west connection between Grandview and Pole Road across the river. But this will most likely be removed in the new comp plan.

### **Other notes**

- Download the map of functional categories for county roads – federal function classes are important for federal funding purposes.
- WCOG has primary routes map.
- There is no specific designation for truck routes through the county. Trucks are advised to take primary routes.

- Road classifications are also important for new developments.
- Hannegan Road is a major north-south road that also has LOS concerns as it enters Lynden.
- More information about future projects can be obtained from Joe Ruttan.

## **Cascade Gateway Border Circulation Analysis Stakeholder Interview – Whatcom Transportation Authority August 19, 2008**

### **Participants**

Rick Nicholson Director of Service Development, Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA); Hugh Conroy, Project Manager, Whatcom Council of Governments; Melissa Miller, Project Coordinator, Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG)

### **Rural Routes**

- WTA's Strategic Plan in 2004 included monitoring transportation needs between rural regions and Bellingham.
- There was unspecific mention of connections *between* rural areas (i.e. east-west connections between Sumas and Lynden).
- WTA occasionally receives comments asking to connect Blaine and Lynden, or Ferndale and Lynden.
- There used to be a dial-a-ride service between Everson, Nooksack, and Lynden, but this connector was merged into the Bellingham to Sumas fixed route (with flexible service) in 2005. Some from Everson, Nooksack, and Sumas wanted to maintain the connection to Lynden.
- Ridership on this east-west connectors was low.
- Rural connectors are a low priority. Higher priority is better connections between the rural communities and employment center of Bellingham. The demand is there for service between Bellingham and rural routes.
- Ridership on rural routes has been increasing dramatically. Some buses are leaving folks behind, and others are standing room only, even from distances as far away as Kendall. Kendall and Sumas ridership is up 40 percent.

### **Cross-Border Transit**

- The WTA Strategic Plan in 2004 included cross-border transit as an objective.
- WTA originally considered a two year pilot project offering cross-border service to White Rock to connect with TransLink buses. The pilot was originally planned to take place around the Olympics.
- Last year WTA evaluated different service models and how to offer enough frequency to make the service viable and not interrupt existing services to Blaine. They determined that two dedicated buses operating seven days a week would be needed for the service. Four round-trips could be made each day (with approximately 20-30 minutes allowed for the crossing).
- Annual operating costs would be \$1 million for two buses, plus \$400,000 per bus. They estimated the total cost for 2 years of a pilot to be \$3 million.

- Also considered drop-offs at the border which can be more problematic because TransLink has no plans for a reciprocal service and only the truck crossing allows buses to get close enough to both sides. But this location is not ADA approved. Plus it will take a long time since each bus would have to arrive, wait 30 minutes for people to clear, and walk to the other bus.
- Since WTA does not want to ask for federal funding for this (as it would potentially compete with their \$15 million fleet replacement request) they looked at what pilot project they could support with local funding. They came up with a shorter, three month project. Originally the plan was to operate before, during, and after the Olympics in February, 2010. But there is also concern that running a pilot during the least busy/coldest months of the year might be a mistake.
- Rick Nicholson has suggested running the three month pilot project during the summer months instead, when demand for cross-border travel is highest and weather is better.
- There is support for the three-month trial project on the Board but it is secondary to other WTA priorities.
- The plan that WTA is considering submitting to their board would be for a three month pilot in the summer, where WTA can use extra buses that usually serve Western Washington University in the school year. Then they would not need extra buses or drivers. With the same original schedule, 12-14 hours a day, seven days a week, two buses, the cost for the pilot is reduced to \$250,000.
- Right now, with long-range funding concerns, it is uncertain if the board would approve this.

## WTA Future Plans

- WTA has more requests for expanded service than ever before, especially between rural routes and Bellingham, and a greater span of service hours and weekend service.
- Due to budget constraints (fuel costs, dropping sales tax revenue, rising costs of medical and PERS payments, and the need to replace entire fleet) Board has decided to halt service expansion.
- WTA plans to replace entire fleet over the next few years at a total cost of \$15 million. They don't want to request additional federal funds for an Olympics-related project that could compete with their request for fleet funding.
- WTA is seeking federal funding of \$1-2 million per year and has sought Senator Patty Murray and Congressman Larsen's support for this.
- The Board decided not to look for additional local funding.
- WTA will not be increasing fares this year but may the following year, with cash fares possibly rising up to \$1.
- WWU's universal bus pass also increased ridership everywhere.

## Other

- Hugh Conroy mentioned that, as part of the Border Circulation Analysis, WCOG may complete a catalog of planned extensions of TransLink bus service to the border and other transit hubs in the area for connectivity.



- Research from ridership surveys shows that WTA is serving more “choice riders” (those who could take a private car, carpool, or take a taxi instead of the bus) than ever before – and that number is increasing.

## **Cascade Gateway Border Circulation Analysis Stakeholder Interview – Vancouver Airport Authority August 7, 2008**

### **Participants**

Alix Li, Cargo Marketing Manager, Vancouver Airport Authority; Hugh Conroy, Project Manager, Whatcom Council of Governments; Melissa Miller, Project Coordinator, Whatcom Council of Governments

### **Background information about YVR**

- YVR is an international air cargo airport. Much of the cargo is transshipments.
- As it was recently delegated a transshipment airport it is no longer as constrained by bilateral policies and can accept certain cargo types it couldn't before. The new designation opens the airport to new markets
- YVR doesn't have data as to where shipments go once loaded onto trucks and taken from the airport.
  - This is a main point of interest for study in the Circulation Analysis: volume and characteristics of cross-border freight that is coming from or going to airports. This would be an analysis based on the forthcoming NRS data – possibly future e-manifest summaries.
- The term “flying trucks” refers to a few carriers that work specifically with goods either being loaded on or coming off of airplanes.
- Becker is a trucking company working at YVR that handles a lot of cross-border transshipment air cargo. Some smaller companies are also used.
- YVR has 225,000 tons of freight a year (230,000 tons in 2008). By contrast, Seattle/Tacoma does over 300,000 tons a year.
- YVR is the third largest cargo airport (after Toronto and Montreal).
- Goods from the airport go to Lower Mainland, the U.S., Alberta, and Alaska.
- Most goods are time sensitive.
- Border congestion affects the on-time delivery capabilities of air cargo coming in at YVR and destined across the border.
- Major YVR air cargo export: seafood.
- Major imports: food, clothing, consumer electronics, manufactured goods.
- Unlike many other airports, the ratio of imports and exports at YVR are balanced with the high demand for Canadian seafood in the Asia Pacific region. Carriers rarely have trouble “filling their belly”
- As Cargo Marketing Manager, Alix Li works with airlines to find new business, and work with existing clients to improve customer service and meet their needs. His role is as an interface

between the airport authority and the airlines. He also solves problems associated with the “cargo village” on the property.

- They also work with freight forwarders and put them in contact with known shippers.
- Vancouver Port Authority deals with millions of tons of cargo in comparison. Airport deals with much smaller volume – but the VALUE of the commodities coming into the airport is significant.
- Has security concerns but the entire airport is secure under strict protocols.
- Loads are usually bonded, and given their value, rarely sit, are always in movement.
- Three types of air cargo carriers:
  - Pure freighters: cargo only airplanes (i.e. Great Wall Airlines)
  - Combo carriers: airlines that have both passenger aircraft and freighters (i.e. Cathay Pacific).
  - Passenger carriers: most common. Cargo carried in bellies of plane.
- Air Canada makes 11-12 percent of profits on cargo; United Airlines makes 11-15 percent of profits on cargo shipments. Cathay Pacific makes 30 percent from freight.
- Cargo in plane bellies used by all airlines.

#### **Future plans – air cargo**

- YVR hopes to have its air traffic double over the next 20-30 years.
- As part of this, they hope to expand air cargo operations to 500,000 tons a year.
- There is a strategic plan – will see if we can have a copy. There is no model
- Due to space for expansion, YVR does not worry about capacity issues in its near future. Space constraints not an issue. And the amount of cargo puts less strain on the connecting infrastructure than other generators (i.e. sea ports).
- The Lower Mainland Gateway Program through Transport Canada does not have any specific improvements related to air cargo but will improve the overall network to the benefit of the air freight movements.
- Freight more likely to grow at other airports (i.e. Seattle/Tacoma where there is a lot more manufacturing i.e. Boeing, Microsoft, Costco, etc).
- Given the secure location, and bonded status, would be interested in working with FAST lane requirements to better improve on-time reliability of cross-border shipments.

#### **Future plans – passenger travel**

- YVR plans to greatly expand its passenger travel service.
- Aggressive forecasts, including 30 million passengers by 2030 (currently 18 million per year). In comparison, Seattle/Tacoma does 32 million passengers now, mostly domestic.
- International passenger travel a focus.
- Goal is to develop the airport as a regional hub.