

# Washington Border Planning

Facilitating Transportation Across The Northern Border



## Washington Border Transportation Planning

Border transportation planning involves multiple stakeholders collaborating to develop strategies toward safe, effective, cross-border transportation for travel and trade. FHWA, in partnership with Transport Canada, works to improve coordination and communication nationally among federal, state, and regional agencies, the private sector, and various stakeholders.

Regionally, FHWA supports and participates in organized border planning coalitions like the International Mobility and Trade Corridor Program (IMTC), which focuses on the Cascade Gateway between Washington State and British Columbia, Canada. Regional efforts complement national efforts with added information and analysis on local improvement priorities, feedback on national policy making, and coordination on resulting changes to border operations and infrastructure.



Vehicles prepare to cross at the Pacific Highway Land Port of Entry (LPOE) in Blaine, Washington.  
Source: IMTC.

## Focus on the Washington Border

Along the Washington border, planning efforts include:

### Coordination



In 2001, FHWA and its counterparts in Canada created the U.S.–Canada Transportation Border Working Group (TBWG). The FHWA Washington Division, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), the Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG), and the Border Policy Research Institute (BPRI) at Western Washington University coordinate and participate in many of TBWG's border-related events, studies, and workshops. In 2017, TBWG held its **spring plenary session in Bellingham, WA**.

### Policy, Plans, and Programs



In 2016, TBWG co-sponsored a **Regional Border Master Planning workshop** in Bellingham, Washington. More than 40 stakeholders who were interested in advancing border infrastructure improvements participated from federal, state, provincial, and private sector agencies. The event enhanced opportunities to advance regional border transportation planning efforts in Washington.

### Research



FHWA launched its **Border Wait Time Technology Deployment Initiative** in 2016, with the goal to accelerate the adoption of innovative technology. FHWA funded new technology for the Cascade Gateway

through a grant to WCOG for data integration. The goal of Washington's Booth Status Data Integration project is to provide southbound travelers better travel information through the use of an advanced roadside traveler information system.

## FHWA Coordination Spotlight: International Mobility and Trade Corridor Program

IMTC is a U.S.–Canada coalition of public and private agencies that promotes improvements to Cascade Gateway mobility and security. Administered by WCOG, IMTC participants coordinate planning, identify shared system needs, and optimize investments for operations via collaboration, innovation, and partnership. IMTC has served as critical partner for FHWA in the region and has supported numerous border-related initiatives.

## FHWA Research Spotlight: Booth Status Data Integration Project

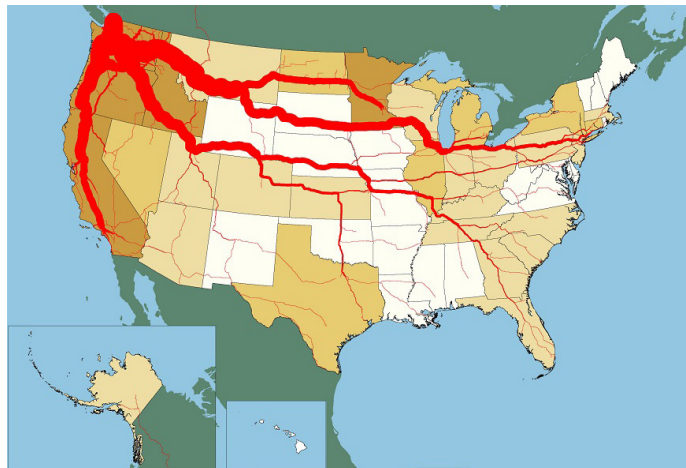
In 2016, a partnership between WCOG and the BPRI received a FHWA grant and funds from B.C. Ministry of Transportation (BCMOTI) and Transport Canada to conduct weekday vehicle observations and driver interviews at each of the regional commercial crossings. These observations were complimented by vehicle detectors, inspection agency system time stamps, carrier company interviews, and the U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics Transborder Database.

## FHWA Research Spotlight: Dynamic Border Management

FHWA co-sponsored the ongoing dynamic border management research project covering all ports of entry in the Cascade Gateway. This project will enhance the accuracy of models that project volume of passengers and goods at border facilities, integrate methodologies for calibrating border wait times, and support the business case for distribution of vicinity readable RFID border crossing documents to frequent travelers already in possession of valid passports.

# Washington Border Transportation: Facts and Figures

## 2040 Projection: Major Flows by Truck, WA



Credit: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Freight Analysis Framework, version 3.4, Office of Freight Management and Operations.

## Did You Know?

- In 2016, **652,000 trucks**, **6.8 million personal vehicles**, and **12.3 million personal vehicle passengers** crossed through the **13 land ports of entry (LPOEs)** along Washington's **427 miles of shared border** with British Columbia, Canada.
- Sumas, WA—Abbotsford-Huntingdon, BC is the **second-busiest port for pedestrian crossings** on the U.S.–Canada border behind Buffalo, NY—Niagara Falls, ON. Over **33,000 pedestrians crossed in 2016**, primarily to access mailboxes.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2013, the IMTC Passenger Intercept Survey showed the majority of people who crossed at the Blaine, WA—Surrey, BC LPOEs (Peace Arch—Douglas and Pacific Highway) did so for **shopping, gas, vacation, and recreation**.

## Washington and the NEXUS Program

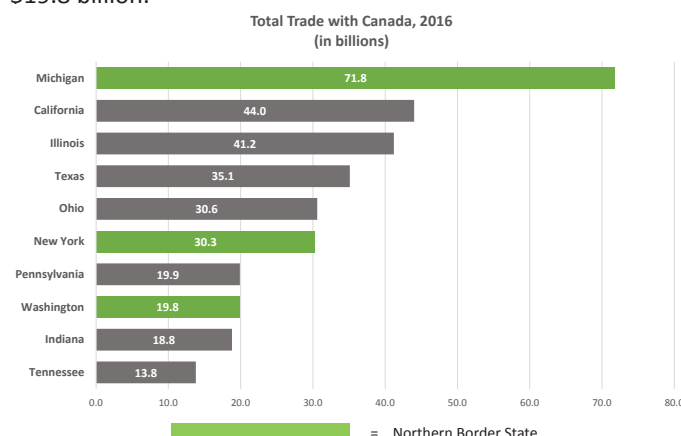
- The Cascade Gateway LPOEs have seen an **87 percent spike in passenger traffic** from 2005–2015. The majority of those passengers make daily or weekly trips.<sup>3</sup>
- Four of the five Cascade Gateway ports are equipped with NEXUS border crossing technology to facilitate the safe and expedited crossing of travelers.<sup>2</sup>
- Since 2010, weekend traffic from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. has seen an **18 percent increase in car volume**, but border wait times have **dropped 26 percent**.<sup>2</sup>
- The Peace Arch, WA—Douglas, BC port is the third-busiest passenger crossing on the U.S.–Canada border. Of the 4.2 million personal vehicles that crossed through in 2015, **46 percent used NEXUS lanes**.<sup>2</sup>

## Citations

1. Bureau of Transportation Statistics
2. IMTC Program
3. The International Mobility & Trade Corridor Program
4. International Trade Administration

## Importance of Washington – Canada Border Transportation to the U.S. Economy

In 2016, Washington conducted the **third most trade with Canada of any northern border state**, and eighth overall, at \$19.8 billion.<sup>1</sup>



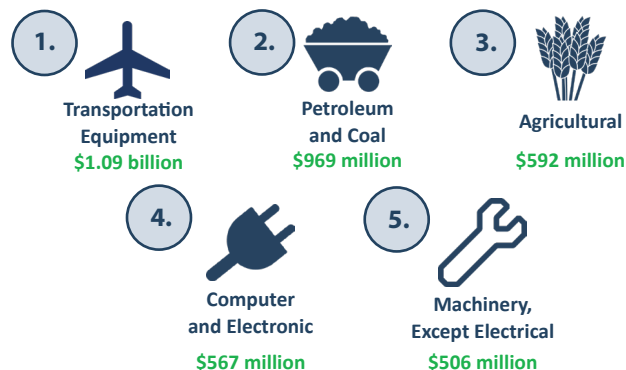
## The Cascade Gateway

The Cascade Gateway LPOEs—comprised of Point Roberts, WA—Delta (Boundary Bay), BC; Peace Arch—Douglas; Pacific Highway; Lynden, WA—Aldergrove, BC; and Sumas—Abbotsford-Huntingdon—are among the busiest and most important along the Canadian border.

- Over **36,000 trucks** cross through the Cascade Gateway ports each day, carrying almost **\$44 million in daily trade**.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2016, Blaine, Washington was the **third-busiest passenger vehicle crossing** (3.9 million) and the **fourth-busiest rail crossing** (167,000) on the U.S.–Canada border.<sup>2</sup>

Overall, Washington exports over **\$7 billion in goods** to Canada. Transportation equipment and petroleum and coal products are the state's two primary exports.<sup>4</sup>

## Washington's Top 5 Exports, 2016<sup>4</sup>



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