



# International Mobility & Trade Corridor Program (IMTC) Purpose, Goals, & Strategies

March 2024

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## Purpose

The International Mobility and Trade Corridor Program (IMTC) is a binational coalition of government, business interests, and non-governmental entities that supports improvements to **safety, mobility, and security for the Cascade Gateway** – the five land border ports-of-entry connecting Western Washington State and Lower Mainland British Columbia.

The IMTC Program is administered by the Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG), a U.S. metropolitan planning organization (MPO) in Bellingham, Washington. Being largely comprised of government agency representatives, the IMTC coalition does not advocate for regulatory or legislative changes. Rather, through the IMTC Program, participants **coordinate planning, identify shared system needs, and optimize investments and operations through collaboration, innovation, and partnership.**

## Goals and strategies

IMTC participants have identified goals along with specific strategies to accomplish them. These goals and strategies (below labeled with a “G” or an “S” respectively) are periodically reviewed and updated to align with changes in regional needs and the policy and legal environments surrounding cross-border trade and travel. This version of the IMTC Goals & Strategies was approved by the IMTC Steering Committee on March 20, 2024.

### G1. Coordinate planning

For this collection of border crossings that serve a major North American travel and trade corridor, IMTC provides structured communication between the multiple entities whose facilities and operations converge at these connection points.

- S1.1** Regularly convene representatives of the agencies that own and operate regional border crossing transportation and inspection facilities (The IMTC Steering Committee)
- S1.2** Convene larger meetings for a broader range of public and private border stakeholder organizations (The IMTC Assembly).
- S1.3** Develop and periodically update a list of projects that are:

- Improvements to the Cascade Gateway cross-border transportation and inspection system desired by multiple IMTC participants but most feasibly advanced as a multi-agency partnership,
- Advanced and funded by a single agency but can benefit from coordination with adjacent or logistically connected facility owners, or
- Expected to result in temporary or long-term change to cross-border trip routing, and travel time.

**S1.4** Support operations and improvements to the Cascade Gateway as a system rather than as five individual ports-of-entry.

**S1.5** To plan for future capacity of Cascade Gateway land border facilities as trade and travel volumes grow, periodically update estimates of how all modes (road, rail, marine, and air) could be optimally used to serve international transportation demand on the corridor.

**S1.6** Engage with other regional, cross-border coalitions and participate in the border-wide Canada-U.S. Transportation Border Working Group (TBWG).

**S1.7** Conduct near-term and long-term planning for the Cascade Gateway.

### **G2. Improve regional, cross-border trade and transportation data**

Planning and systems management requires current, data-based information. Furthermore, information best supports *multiagency* cooperation when all parties are involved in how data are collected and synthesized.

**S2.1** Collect and share transportation and trade data.

**S2.2** Maintain and improve border wait time systems.

**S2.3** Maintain and improve data products including border wait time data archives, booth-status data, and periodic sample surveys of cross-border trucks and passenger vehicles.

### **G3. Support infrastructure improvements**

Given that border crossing infrastructure (roads, port facilities, ITS, etc.) consists of components owned and operated by multiple agencies in two countries, coordinated planning is needed to identify opportunities for increased efficiency and productivity. Sustained, proactive coordination also increases opportunities for funding partnerships.

**S3.1** Improve border crossing approach roads.

**S3.2** Improve cross-border pedestrian and bicycle connections.

**S3.3** Improve cross-border rail.

**S3.4** Improve corridor connections of trade and travel routes.

**S3.5** Integrate Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) including harmonization of standards and products.

#### **G4. Support coordinated implementation of U.S. and Canadian border policy**

IMTC provides an important regional mechanism for federal *and* state & provincial government agency representatives to collaboratively assess needs for border-related policy changes and to consider if coordinated strategies could improve the implementation of national and binational policies.

- S4.1** Coordinate improvements, operations, and communications in accordance with the goals of federal policies.
- S4.2** Complement, as appropriate, border related initiatives of British Columbia and Washington State.

#### **G5. Improve operations**

IMTC supports dialog between agencies, industries, and communities that helps identify and evaluate improvements to border facility operations and how some aspects of traffic and inspection programs (e.g. NEXUS, FAST) are managed.

- S5.1** Improve traffic management at all Cascade Gateway ports-of-entry.
- S5.2** Support ongoing effectiveness of the NEXUS program.
- S5.3** Support optimal operations of the FAST (Free and Secure Trade) programs.
- S5.4** Coordinate support for adequate staffing of border inspection facilities.
- S5.5** Use data-based tools to evaluate operational alternatives such as transportation demand modeling and facility simulation modeling.
- S5.6** Support identification of regular funding for maintenance of ITS (wait time, traffic management, etc.)
- S5.7** Support the implementation of pre-clearance for passenger rail.
- S5.8** Support consideration of alternatives enabled by The Agreement on Land, Rail, Marine, and Air Transport Preclearance (LRMA) between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Canada such as shared border operations zones at ports-of-entry and off-border inspection functions.
- S5.9** Support coordinated evaluation and integration of new technologies for application in border operations e.g.: Bluetooth, radio frequency identification (RFID), radar, facial recognition, location-based services data, vehicle-to-infrastructure communications, etc.
- S5.10** Regularly assess and update IMTC's *Protocol for Binational, Interagency Communication about Highway and Border Station Incidents that Affect Cross-border Travel*.
- S5.11** Help increase the resiliency of cross-border mobility in the face of environmental, public health, and other major disruptions (e.g. flooding, wildfires, health/pandemic travel policies, etc.).
- S5.12** Maintain a schedule of upcoming construction projects that may impact cross-border traffic flow to develop mitigation strategies.