



EBTC Members are the Transportation Agencies of the U.S. States of Michigan, New York, Vermont and Maine and the Canadian Provinces of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland & Labrador

(Honorary members are the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council and the Regional Municipality of Niagara)

ISSUE: INFORMATION NEEDS IN SUPPORT OF INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

BACKGROUND:

Significant data gaps in coverage exist in the patchwork of passenger and multi-modal freight information blended to represent vehicular traffic volumes and trade moving across our U.S.-Canada border. Criteria-based investment strategies based on sound data are critical to building an equitable degree of reliable crossing capacity, meeting the needs of border states, provinces, and trade partners far removed from the border.

Trade volumes have rebounded as the U.S. economy has slowly improved and multi-jurisdictional planning efforts dealing with security and transportation issues can ill afford to impede national and regional economic growth.

North American supply chains, for both large and small companies, are highly integrated with plants, distribution centers, warehouses and retailers dispersed between the two countries. Efficient border crossings are vital to the global competitiveness of Canadian companies that have supply chains that span between U.S. and Canada.

Congestion continues to be a serious problem at Canada-U.S. land border crossings, impacting the ability of companies to move goods efficiently. A major factor in the reduced cross border passenger travel is long and unpredictable border delays. Having accurate and current information on border wait times, traffic volumes, trip origin and destinations, commodities, etc is key to identifying solutions, whether they are infrastructure improvements and/or border processing improvements.

CURRENT SITUATION:

States and provinces have been working with federal agencies to improve the availability of trade and traffic data. With financial support from the U.S. Federal Highway Administration, the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) is conducting, a commercial vehicle survey along its borders with Minnesota, Michigan, and New York. If funds become available, MTO will also conduct a passenger vehicle survey. These

surveys will provide transportation planners quality data to assist them in infrastructure and policy planning, project development, implementation, and prioritization along their mutual borders.

Ontario is developing the iCorridor, an innovative, web-based, and user friendly GIS information sharing platform that provides a central database solution for transportation data storage and analysis, where analysis and flow maps from the Ontario Border Survey will be available. The iCorridor application can be used as an evaluation tool for analyzing infrastructure investment decisions.

In 2010, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Transport Canada (TC) and Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) signed a Memorandum of Cooperation to collaborate on border wait time initiatives. The Beyond the Border Action Plan, signed in 2011 committed both countries to implement border wait time measurement technology at 20 high priority border crossings. The federal working group is managing the implementation of the border wait time initiative.

EBTC ACTION:

EBTC provinces and states strongly supports border data collection and dissemination efforts undertaken by federal, provincial, state and regional government entities that reduce existing data gaps; that assist transportation and border agencies to identify and prioritize border investments and policy development that improve the cross border movement of people and goods.

- EBTC will continue to advocate for increased federal funding for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of trade and traffic data across the Canada/U.S. border to strengthen infrastructure planning and prioritization.
- EBTC will advocate for the sharing of cross border trade and travel data collected by federal, provincial, state, and regional transportation agencies, and border inspection agencies to strengthen infrastructure planning and prioritization.
- EBTC will support and assist the federal working group on border wait time data as requested.
- EBTC will support provincial, state, and regional border data initiatives as requested.