

EBTC ANNUAL REPORT

2018



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INTRODUCTION

This report highlights the activities in 2018 of the Eastern Border Transportation Coalition (EBTC) and its member provinces and states, working together to improve the safe and efficient movement of people and goods between the United States and Canada.

WHO WE ARE

The Eastern Border Transportation Coalition (EBTC) is made up of transportation agencies from the states of Michigan, New York, Vermont and Maine and the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, dedicated to improving the flow of people and goods across the Canada - US border.

EBTC works with US and Canadian federal, state and provincial governments, as well as a network of stakeholders, to identify and address the cross-border needs of business and citizens. These needs include improved physical border infrastructure, reduced processing times, expansion of border pre-clearance programs, and support for developing new technologies that will improve border crossings into the future.

EBTC ports of entry handled 62% of total US \$583 billion US - Canada trade in 2017. Of this total trade, US \$336 Billion was surface trade, where 80% of total truck traffic and 70% of total rail traffic relied upon EBTC Region Ports of Entry.

EBTC VISION

The Eastern Border shall be a model of safe, efficient and sustainable transportation of goods and people between the United States and Canada.

EBTC MISSION

EBTC provides leadership and informed dialog in improving the movement of goods and people across the Canada - US border.

2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS: PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS

Throughout 2018, EBTC continued to hold regular meetings with its members; planned and held a workshop for government, business and academic stakeholders; and continued to work on four primary areas of interest:

- Monitoring transportation and cross-border issues related to the US and Canadian federal governments (e.g. United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) negotiations, tariffs and trade);
- Continuing to monitor progress on initiatives started under the Canada - US Beyond the Border Action Plan and other federal initiatives related to or impacting cross-border transportation;
- Improving and advancing cross-border transportation service: expanded preclearance operations, improved infrastructure; and
- Reviewing and responding to federal funding programs developed to support border-related activities. test

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS:

- EBTC is working on a revised consultation and approval guide of regulatory requirements in support of border infrastructure planning and construction.
- As part of its mandate to support efficient trade flows, EBTC developed and delivered presentations to key stakeholders demonstrating the importance of the Eastern border area for Canada - US trade.
- Drawing on the policies and priorities of its members, EBTC continued to provide a focal point to engage legislators, regulators and stakeholders to advance targeted initiatives that support the improved flow of people and goods across the Canada - US international border.

EBTC'S ANNUAL FALL WORKSHOP BURLINGTON, VERMONT:

The September 2018 EBTC Workshop was themed "**Strong Connections / Strong Collaborations: Canada-US Border Cooperation**" and included discussion of the following topics:

- Insights from a diplomatic perspective into the border and trade-related policies of the Canadian and US governments;
- Examination of the critical role regional trade corridors and gateways play in handling 80% of the international surface trade between the United States and Canada;
- Updates and insights provided by border infrastructure and enforcement agencies on planned infrastructure projects, new initiatives for cross border transport / travel and the unique challenges associated with coordinating all parties at an international border;
- A discussion of current traffic flows from an operational perspective as plans for pre-clearance initiatives are advanced; and
- A look into the future of border traffic flows.

Planning has begun for the fall 2019 annual workshop.

ON-GOING COMMUNICATIONS:

- EBTC's Executive Director attended the spring Canadian / American Border Trade Alliance (Can/Am BTA) conference held May 6 – 8 in Ottawa.
- EBTC undertook the organizational and logistical tasks necessary to present and develop the agenda for the Coalition's fall 2018 workshop in Burlington, Vermont.
- EBTC's Executive Director attended and presented at the Transportation Border Working Group (TBWG) spring plenary in Minneapolis, Minnesota and provided updates on EBTC activities for TBWG's fall plenary in Halifax, Nova Scotia. EBTC also participated in the monthly TBWG steering committee meetings and planning sessions for the bi-annual plenary meetings.
- EBTC members participated in activities and meetings of the Northeast Association of State Transportation Officials (NASTO) and the Council of the Great Lakes Region (CGLR) Economic Forum.

At its annual Board meeting, held in September 2018, EBTC appointed officers for 2019: Sara Moore, Michigan Department of Transportation, was named the US Co-Chair and Jim Doyle, New Brunswick Department of Transportation and Infrastructure was named the Canadian Co-Chair. Maurice Rasheed, New York State Department of Transportation, was reappointed as the Treasurer/Secretary.

EBTC BORDER-RELATED ACTIVITIES / ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

EBTC members, through their state and provincial work, continue to follow and be engaged in a wide range of projects and policy initiatives stretching from the Michigan/Ontario ports of entry in the Great Lakes region to the Maine/New Brunswick/Nova Scotia crossings on the east coast. Some representative examples include:

ONTARIO-MICHIGAN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

On April 27, 2018, Ontario and Michigan signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will see the two jurisdictions work together to create more jobs and economic growth, foster a more competitive business climate, promote and encourage co-operation in tourism and protect shared resources for future generations.

The MOU supports enhanced bilateral trade, will help Ontario and Michigan cooperate more in attracting tourism, promotes the Mid-Continent Trade and Transportation Corridor and strengthens coordinated activities around the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes. Ontario/Michigan collaboration has already resulted in North America's [first national, cross-border automated vehicle test drive](#) through Southern Ontario and Michigan.

GORDIE HOWE INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE

The Gordie Howe International Bridge will be a six-lane, 2.5 kilometre long cable stayed bridge located 3 kilometres west of the existing Ambassador Bridge over the Detroit River, connecting Windsor and Detroit. The bridge will be delivered via a public-private partnership with the Government of Canada funding construction of the entire project. On October 5, 2018, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Michigan Governor Rick Snyder announced the official start of construction on the Gordie Howe International Bridge project.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation is working with the Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority to coordinate the construction of the Ojibway Parkway Overpass, which will connect the Rt. Hon. Herb Gray Parkway to the new customs inspection plaza for the future Gordie Howe International Bridge. Construction on this project has started.

LEWISTON-QUEENSTON BRIDGE (NIAGARA FALLS BRIDGE COMMISSION)

In November 2018, a \$91 million plan was announced that will add six lanes for vehicles entering the US across the Lewiston-Queenston Bridge. This will bring the number of lanes to 16 and will allow officials to dedicate lanes to specific kinds of traffic, e.g. trucks or cars, depending on volumes. The project also includes a new, larger customs building and new inspection booths. The project will be done in stages to minimize disruption. A new duty-free store was already completed in 2016 as part of the project.

PEACE BRIDGE (FORT ERIE, ONTARIO/BUFFALO, NEW YORK)

In 2016, the Peace Bridge Authority (PBA) initiated a three-year, self-financed, \$100 Million bridge deck replacement construction project. To ensure fluid bridge traffic movement over the three-year construction period, deck replacement activities were limited to the off-peak travel season only, i.e. mid October to early May, with only a single lane closure in place over the three fall/winter construction seasons. This enabled all three lanes to remain open during the summers of 2017 and 2018 while other elements of the rehabilitation project continued. The rehabilitation project is expected to be fully completed by June 2019.

RAINBOW BRIDGE (NIAGARA FALLS, NEW YORK/NIAGARA FALLS, ONTARIO)

In 2016, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) awarded the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission a \$100,000 grant under the FHWA Border Wait Time Deployment Initiative to expand the wait time system to the Rainbow Bridge and complete the regional border wait time system. Currently, this technology is in place at both the Peace Bridge and the Lewiston / Queenston Bridge. This system integration will now allow motorists to receive uniformly accurate information and supplement the current 511 and online sources on border wait time information. The installation of Bluetooth readers and supporting instrumentation was completed in early 2018 and the system is now fully operational.

THOUSAND ISLANDS BRIDGE (ALEXANDRIA BAY, NEW YORK / LANSDOWNE, ONTARIO)

Congress approved a project to address significant traffic queuing on the approach roads to the American plaza that cause major traffic delays and safety issues. The project includes construction of a new plaza that would expand the number of southbound travel lanes into the United States. This expanded capacity for primary and secondary inspection functions, including more inspection lanes, more space for queuing and secondary inspections as well as better-defined truck queuing and maneuvering areas will address current safety issues and increase efficiency. The existing roadways will be shifted, lengthened, or altered to accommodate the new port operations. All 14 new primary lanes will be equipped to process passenger traffic, with eight of those equipped for both commercial and passenger vehicles.

To accommodate a constrained project location where construction is further inhibited by the need to maintain full passenger and commercial processing as the facility is upgraded, the project will be completed in two phases. The 2016 US federal budget provided \$91 million in funding for the first phase and the 2018 federal budget funded phase two for another \$133 million.

Construction for the first phase got underway in early 2018 and is expected to be completed in January 2020. Phase one will consist of construction of new commercial primary inspection lanes, with hi/lo booths to accommodate non-commercial traffic, a new commercial inspection warehouse, expanded from 3,000 to 60,000 square feet, as well as inspection bays, a new veterinary services building and a new impound lot.

Phase 2 will include construction of new passenger primary inspection lanes, a new covered secondary inspection plaza, a new bus lane, a new main administration building, an outbound inspection building, veterinary services building, non-intrusive inspection facilities and employee and visitor parking areas. Phase 2 is expected to be substantially complete in August 2022.

SAULT STE. MARIE INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE

The \$51.6 (Cdn) Million redevelopment of the Canadian Plaza project was completed in 2017 and officially opened in August 2018. Phase one, completed in the fall of 2015, included expansion of the site infrastructure, widening the north access ramp to the bridge and construction of a new Duty Free shop and a new maintenance garage. Phase two involved construction a new CBSA traffic and commercial building and the addition of new and replacement of existing primary inspection lanes, which included the provision of Nexus and tour buses.

BAUDETTE-RAINY RIVER INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) is currently working in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) on the construction of the new Baudette-Rainy River International Bridge. The contract was tendered mid-February 2018 and was awarded in May 2018. Construction activities began in June 2018 and work is proceeding.

The International Bridge is located at the Canada – US border on Highway 11 in Rainy River, Ontario and on the Minnesota Trunk Highway 72 in Baudette, Minnesota. The project involves the design and construction of a new bridge and the removal of the existing bridge, which is at the end of its service life. The new bridge will include widened lanes and shoulders, guide rails, a sidewalk and an improved load capacity. The project is being cost-shared between Ontario and Minnesota. The Government of Canada is also contributing more than \$13 million towards this project.

LACOLLE, QUEBEC/CHAMPLAIN, NEW YORK PORT OF ENTRY (POE)

The Quebec Ministère des Transports and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) continued dialogue with the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) on the project to modernize the St-Bernard-de-Lacolle border inspection facility located on the Montreal / New York City trade corridor. This continued dialog contributed to on-going discussions around planned upgrades at this border crossing between a number of highway and border agencies: NYSDOT, MTQ, CBSA, US Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the US General Services Administration (GSA) and US Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

HIGHGATE SPRINGS, VERMONT / ST. ARMAND, QUEBEC

The US General Services Administration (GSA) feasibility study for replacement of the Port of Entry facility in the United States narrowed down possible alternatives from eight to three options. A preferred alternative was selected in May 2018 followed by the completion of a Feasibility Study in October 2018. Based on this study, a capital project submission will be made in the spring of 2019 for funding support in 2021.

Additionally, the State of Vermont Agency of Transportation is working on Phase III of their Auto-Route 35 traffic impact study in coordination and collaboration with State, Provincial and Federal agencies and stakeholders to craft a multi-year project plan to ensure continued safe and efficient flow of travel across the US-Canada border in this area while several planned port of entry and highway projects will likely impact traffic.

DERBY LINE, VERMONT / STANSTEAD, QUEBEC

In late 2016, the US GSA/CBP project to replace and expand the existing US port of entry at Derby Line, Vermont / Stanstead, Quebec crossing began. This project included expansion of lanes accessing the port to three, completed August 2017, new commercial inspection lanes and facility, completed December 2017, new trusted traveler facilities and new main passenger inspection facilities, completed in late 2018.

With entrance to the Port of Entry immediately on the US-Canada border, a major traffic coordination effort between the State and Provincial transportation agencies, the project contractor, the security agencies and highway safety teams on both sides of the border was required. During 2018, the Vermont Agency of Transportation completed a full reconstruction of the US Route 5/Caswell Street overpass at this same location – immediately over the entire Port of Entry entrance areas. The installation included new ITS technology and fiber optics to support both north and south bound traffic flow and also provided US and Canadian security agencies with overhead, advance warning signs to direct travelers entering their screening facilities.

SUTTON-EAST RICHFORD BRIDGE

Construction for the rehabilitation of the international and commonly owned Sutton-East Richford Bridge was underway in 2018. Project completion was moved out to spring 2019 due to challenges in securing steel components. This small, but locally important and historic structure, serves a variety of non-commercial travelers, including seasonal skiers, bicycle tourism and portage inspection for canoers and kayakers traversing the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, which links via connected waterways through New York, Vermont, Quebec, New Hampshire and into Maine.

MADAWASKA, MAINE / EDMUNDSTON, NEW BRUNSWICK – INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION

Planning for the construction of a new international bridge linking Madawaska, Maine and Edmundston, New Brunswick as well as a new border inspection facility in Madawaska, Maine is underway. Public information meetings were held in June 2017 and January 2018. In June 2018, a bridge Feasibility Study was released by Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) and New Brunswick Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (NB DTI). The General Services Agency (GSA) awarded the pre-design for the Madawaska, Maine Port of Entry and the subsequent Design / Build award is planned for July 2019. The target completion date for both the bridge and Port of Entry facility is December 2022.

CANADA-US PRECLEARANCE AGREEMENT

Efforts in support of the implementation of preclearance initiatives continued during 2018. At the fall workshop, EBTC moderated a session to discuss the latest developments in preparing for preclearance, while also considering other strategies to gain more efficient operation at border crossings today such as the Pre-Arrival and Readiness (PARE) pilot being conducted by the Peace Bridge Authority and US Customs and Border Protection available at the EBTC website: http://ebtc.info/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/CBP-Border-Innovation_Sept-12-2018_CL_-V2.pdf.

INTERNATIONAL PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE:

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) continued to provide operating support to Amtrak for the two cross border passenger rail services in accordance with the *Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008* (PRIIA) Section 209 policy. The *Adirondack* service between New York City and Montreal carried 57,000 passengers across the Canada – US border in 2018. Amtrak's *Maple Leaf* service between New York City and Toronto saw more than 31,000 passengers in cross-border travel between the US and Canada in 2018.

The States of Vermont and New York, the Province of Quebec and Amtrak continued their efforts to develop a secure preclearance facility inside Montreal Central Station that will support passengers using New York's *Adirondack* service and Vermont's planned extension of their *Vermonteer* service over the border. This collaboration includes cooperative efforts with both US and Canadian security agencies and federal departments of transportation.

NEW ENGLAND GOVERNORS AND EASTERN CANADIAN PREMIERS (NEGECP)

At their August 12-13, 2018 meeting in Stowe, Vermont, the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers (NEGECP) acknowledged the Canada - US international trade in their region as the most important economic partnership in the world, supporting 9 million jobs and over US \$680 Billion in 2017 trade. Two resolutions committed the governments to support regional economic cooperation and encouraged the process to successfully renegotiate North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA AGREEMENT (USMCA)

On September 30, 2018 the United States, Mexico and Canada announced the completion of negotiations toward a new United States – Mexico - Canada Agreement (USMCA). After more than a year of negotiation, the agreement in principle indicates an understanding between the three countries in key areas, including rules of origin for automotive manufacturing, agriculture, labour, intellectual property rights, culture and dispute settlement. The leaders of the United States, Canada and Mexico signed the new agreement to replace NAFTA at the G20 summit in Argentina on November 30, 2018. Subsequently, each of the USMCA Parties will seek authority to sign the agreement under their domestic processes and, once signed and ratified by all parties, it is expected that the USMCA will replace NAFTA.

FEDERAL FUNDING FOR BORDER INVESTMENTS AND SERVICES

CANADA:

On November 21, 2018, the Government of Canada released the **2018 Fall Economic Statement**. Reducing trade barriers and improving both internal and external trade were priorities for transportation including:

- Immediate launch of a six year, \$1.1 Billion Export Diversification Strategy to help businesses access new markets. The target is to double exports by 2025.
- Accelerating infrastructure spending with \$773.9 million of new funding, over five years, under the National Trade Corridors Fund. Capacity constraints along rail and highway corridors and at marine ports will be targeted.
- Improving transportation data to help shippers optimize routes and enable governments to improve supply chain fluidity through targeted investments.

UNITED STATES:

In 2018, the **Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development, or BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grant program**, replaced the previous program, *Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or TIGER Discretionary Grants*, as the mechanism for the US Department of Transportation (DOT) to invest in road, rail, transit and port projects. The BUILD program enables DOT to use a rigorous merit-based selection process, explore ways to deliver projects faster, save on construction costs and re-balance a ten-year underinvestment in rural communities.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 appropriated \$1.5 billion for BUILD Transportation grants. BUILD Transportation grants set a maximum project grant of \$25 million and a maximum state grant of \$150 million. There is a \$5 million minimum award for projects located in urban areas and a \$1 million minimum for rural projects.

In 2018, project applications were evaluated based on safety, economic competitiveness, quality of life, environmental protection, state of repair. Rural applications represented 59 percent of the applications, double those from the previous year's TIGER applications.

REGULATORY UPDATES

The EBTC provincial and state transportation agencies continued to inform stakeholders in the trucking industry and the trade community of regulatory changes, policies and programs that could impact their activities at the Canada/ US border. For example, the Canadian federal government, provinces and territories continued to work together to enable businesses to transport goods more easily across the country by harmonizing requirements for the trucking industry.

CONCLUSION

The coming year presents new challenges to the mission of the EBTC. Planning for the 2019 workshop has started, work has begun on the new consultation and approval guide for international construction projects and EBTC will continue to produce a weekly newsletter that provides the latest border-related news of interest to its network of stakeholders.

