



Fact Sheet: Beyond the Border Facilitating Travel at the United States - Canada Border

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At 5,525 miles (8,891 kilometers), the United States-Canada border is the longest shared border in the world. The border, which crosses various terrains and environments, is a diverse region consisting of major metropolitan centers, integrated bi-national communities, numerous transit hubs, tribal lands, and vast regions with little or no population. It is also a dynamic border with accessibility and security requirements that vary significantly with the seasons.

Within this border environment, U.S. and Canadian officials work cooperatively to secure and facilitate cross-border travel. Our countries are connected by more than 120 land ports of entry, more than 115,000 annual flights, and the numerous commercial and recreational vessels that cross our maritime border. Every day, approximately 350,000 people cross the U.S.-Canada border for business, tourism, school, and visiting family and friends. This cross-border flow of people is vital to our economies and integral to our shared communities.

Through the trusted traveler program NEXUS, our countries partner to expedite travel via land, air, or sea for pre-screened, approved travelers. We also work together at ports of entry to reduce wait times and address threats. We facilitate safe and secure air travel between our two countries, including pre-clearing passengers destined for the United States from several Canadian airports. We cooperate to help keep the recreational and commercial boating community safe and secure while transiting our shared waters.

The *Beyond the Border Action Plan* seeks to build on these initiatives to further secure and facilitate cross-border travel. Among other things, the United States and Canada intend to increase harmonized benefits to NEXUS members, enhance border infrastructure and facilities, implement additional pre-clearance initiatives, and implement border wait-time technology at high-priority border crossings.

Read more about the specific initiatives to facilitate cross-border travel in the [*Beyond the Border Action Plan*](#).

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Fact Sheet: Beyond the Border Key Questions and Answers

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Q: Why is the United States pursuing the initiatives in the *Beyond the Border Action Plan*?

- As President Obama and Prime Minister Harper articulated on February 4, 2011 in a joint declaration, *Beyond the Border: A Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness*, given the intertwined nature of the economies and societies of the United States and Canada, as well as our shared critical infrastructure and key resources, a threat to one country is a threat to both.
- As each other's largest trading partners, we also recognize the importance of expedited and secure cross-border travel and trade to creating jobs and supporting economic competitiveness.
- Working more closely with Canadian officials to identify and address shared threats will make both countries safer. Identifying legitimate flows of people and goods away from the border as well as potential threats before they come to our shores will help us concentrate enforcement activities to target illicit activities.
- As we have seen in more than 60 years of working closely with Canadians at NORAD in the defense arena, cooperation between our governments can and does make both countries more secure while reflecting the deep partnership and values that we share.

Q: How does the *Beyond the Border Action Plan* build upon what we're currently doing?

- The United States works closely with Canada on a variety of discrete border, security, and competitiveness issues. This Plan includes a long-term coordinated vision of what we are trying to achieve.
- Through the *Beyond the Border* declaration, the President and Prime Minister articulated the long-term vision for security and economic cooperation, committing our countries to working together to address threats within, at, and away from our border while facilitating lawful trade and travel.
- The *Beyond the Border Action Plan* sets the path forward for how to achieve the President and Prime Minister's vision.

Q: How much will *Beyond the Border* cost to implement?

- We will make resource decisions related to implementing jointly identified efforts through the normal budget and appropriations process, in careful consultation with Congress.
- We expect that cooperation and better coordination with Canada, streamlining existing processes, and expanding the use of existing technologies related to our collective security efforts will make us more effective and efficient.

Q: How does *Beyond the Border* make us more competitive?

- Working with Canada to secure and facilitate the lawful movement of people, goods, and services will help create U.S. jobs by reducing barriers to our largest export market. We are also working to ensure that our travel and trade networks are protected from threats and economic disruptions.

Q: Does *Beyond the Border* affect NAFTA?

- *Beyond the Border* is not a trade agreement and does not implicate our NAFTA obligations. It is a clear directive from the President and the Prime Minister for the U.S. and Canadian governments to work together to improve how we handle common threats and better manage our mutual security to make us more secure and more economically competitive. Greater physical security will result in greater economic security, and this Declaration outlines a framework for the U.S.-Canada relationship going forward.

Q: What role do interested stakeholders have in the *Beyond the Border* initiatives?

- Partnerships will be critical if we are to achieve the goals set out in the *Beyond the Border Action Plan*. We are firmly committed to working with all stakeholders as the implementation work commences.

Read the [*Beyond the Border Action Plan*](#)

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