



Caltrans Division of Research,  
Innovation and System Information

# Research



# Results



Planning, Policy &  
Programming

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**Project Title:**

California Integrated Border Approach Strategy, Phase 2

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## Improve Border Coordination in California at the U.S. and Mexico Border: California Integrated Border Approach Strategy, Phase 2

Improve multimodal regional mobility at communities abutting the State's international border with Mexico.

### WHAT WAS THE NEED?

In 2013, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) launched the California Integrated Border Approach Strategy (CA-IBAS) in response to a need for a better-integrated border transportation system that reduces impacts on border communities. Work was conducted in two phases to identify ways to better address regional mobility needs and the traveler experience in California's communities along the California-Mexico Border. The State of California, represented by Caltrans District 11, sought academic research advice to address solutions related to multi-agency planning and innovative project delivery. Research advice was needed to overcome shortages and individual agency limitations and to improve multimodal regional mobility at communities abutting the state's international border with Mexico. The California border region needs a multi-institutional border mechanism capable to serve as the lead coordinating entity for strategic planning, project delivery, and funding partnerships to address regional mobility needs at California's border communities.

### WHAT WAS OUR GOAL?

The goal was to identify California's communities on the United States (U.S.)-Mexico international boundary that would benefit from a multi-agency border coordinating structure between the various federal, state, and local agencies in charge of regional mobility and border security. U.S. federal, state, and local government agencies need to jointly review and analyze current issues, deficiencies, and impacts that cross border points-of-entries generate to California's border communities.



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## WHAT DID WE DO?

Research was a collaboration between Caltrans and The University of California Transportation Center (UCTC) at the University of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley). The research was carried out in six tasks:

**Task 1:** Overall project administration, as well as the development of a detailed work plan and meetings with a number of agencies with major responsibilities in the border region.

**Task 2:** The team's review of the following

- Existing conditions of points-of-entry (POEs) nearby communities
- Adjacent planning and agency landscape that defined the study area and its boundaries
- The impact of POE-related activities on surrounding communities.

**Task 3:** The first two tasks in turn informed the development of Task 3, the identification and analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges that would have to be dealt with in developing multi-agency coordination mechanisms.

**Task 4:** The project team identified strategies for improving transportation conditions by sharing resources, expanding funding options, increasing coordination, and/or instituting new institutional arrangements designed to implement a more comprehensive set of improvements.

**Task 5:** The legislative status of the various strategies and institutional arrangements was documented and assessed to determine the degree of implementation feasibility or need for legislative action. In addition, an assessment of experience with alternative project delivery methods was carried out.

**Task 6:** The project team developed a spreadsheet model for applying multi-criteria analysis to the

evaluation of the identified strategies. Criteria included time needed to implement, legislative precedent, project delivery implications, and other "measures of success" such as degree of congestion relief or emissions reduction.

## WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME?

Caltrans received advice from the selected U.S. federal, state, regional, and local agencies. Caltrans also received advice from companies in the private sector, with jurisdiction/interest at California's international border. The academic research conducted by the UCTC at UC Berkeley provided input to the State of California related to the California-Mexico border in the following areas:

1. Coordination Mechanisms to serve California's border communities.
2. Required legal framework for the proposed Coordination Mechanisms.
3. Innovative mechanisms for planning, funding, financing, and project delivery for California's border communities.

## WHAT IS THE BENEFIT?

This research provides a framework with which the State of California and key stakeholders can further consider improving governance and project delivery at the California/Mexico border.

The spreadsheet tool developed for this research project provides a user friendly, accessible method for evaluating potential governance arrangements. The tool is adaptable in that it can be adjusted to individual stakeholders' policy and planning goals in border governance.

## LEARN MORE

**California Integrated Border Approach Strategy, Phase 2**

<http://www.ucconnect.berkeley.edu/node/142>