

of a binational transportation network and have made a number of policy proposals to federal governments.

Yet despite these numerous links, and irrespective of the friendship our nations share, Canadians and Americans also place a high value on the geographic and symbolic line which defines our respective spaces. Simply put, we want the geographic border to remain. Wanting a border, but wanting it to be more permeable, is best summed up by the emerging truism that "Canadians and Americans like having a border – they just don't want it getting in their way."

The border – but more particularly, the management of the processes which take place at the border – is thus important to the well-being of our two nations. Getting the border "right" matters in a very tangible way. Canadians and Americans justifiably assume that governments will maintain a regime of border management which is cooperative and efficient.

FTA, NAFTA and Beyond

The border relationship has evolved over two hundred years, with each government developing its own legislation, regulations and infrastructure. Border inspection services from both countries are mandated to act on behalf of over 50 government agencies. For the private sector, the border is essentially in the middle of the production line, representing a significant transactional factor for just-in-time delivery systems. For local communities along the border, the economic benefits of cross-border trade are obvious. But border congestion has meant that these communities assume a much larger share of the infrastructure, social and environmental costs associated with trans-boundary traffic.

Since the implementation of the *Canada-U.S. Free Trade*