

## **NFBC Works and Plans for Improved \$50 Million Lewiston Bridge Plaza**



### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NFBC Praises Support for Improved Lewiston Plaza** *Chairman backs two-nation agreement on bridge lane expansion*

**LEWISTON, NY Dec. 7, 2011** – The Niagara Falls Bridge Commission, which operates the Lewiston-Queenston and two other bridges between Canada and the United States, announced today that it is working hard to improve U.S side of the bridge.

President Barack Obama and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper said today that major renovations to the Lewiston-Queenston Bridge and the Peace Bridge are key elements of a cross-border management agreement between the two nations.

“Rebuilding the Lewiston plaza is a top priority for the commission as critical improvements are necessary to help alleviate the current challenges with the processing of motor coach, commercial truck and passenger vehicle traffic,” said Patrick Brown, NFBC chairman.

He said the commission long has planned ways to facilitate commerce and the movement of goods and people in a safe and efficient manner. The Lewiston Plaza, which was built in the early 1960s based on traffic patterns of that time, must be modernized to provide U.S. Customs and Border Protection the facilities to safely and securely process traffic efficiently, he said.

“With completion of a modern plaza facility in Canada at Queenston, which is being well received by Canada Border Services Agency and the travelling public, it is critical that similar improvements are made at Lewiston to allow the efficient processing of traffic in both directions,” Brown said.

The Lewiston Plaza currently has a total of 10 primary inspection lanes, four for commercial and six for vehicles. It also has outdated secondary processing and customs office buildings. Plans are underway for a projected \$50 million-plus development that could see the primary inspection lanes increased to 17, including 10 for vehicles, Brown said.

The increase in primary inspection lanes, improved secondary inspection facilities and an expanded administration building would go a long way toward providing Customs and Border Patrol with the necessary facilities to safely and efficiently process traffic.

“This project requires coordination and approval from various governmental agencies and we are aggressively working on it with a goal of being shovel ready by spring, 2013,” Brown continued.

The three bridges NFBC operates – which also include the Rainbow and NEXUS-only Whirlpool – handle seven million passenger vehicles annually and are important to the U.S. and Canadian economies. The Lewiston-Queenston Bridge handles about three million vehicles and 700,000 commercial trucks each year.

“The commission seeks the most efficient crossings possible at our three bridges on both sides of the border and that is why this project is so important. We appreciate the support received from Congresswomen Louise Slaughter and Kathy Hochul,” Brown added.

### Travelers Tips:

- Calling the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission’s toll free number at 1-800-715-6722 or call 511 for the latest traffic updates
- Tuning to radio to 1610 AM.
- Visiting any of the following websites: [www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov), [www.cbsa.gc.ca](http://www.cbsa.gc.ca), [www.nittec.org](http://www.nittec.org), [www.peacebridge.com](http://www.peacebridge.com), [http://niagarafallsbridges.com/traffic\\_conditions.php3](http://niagarafallsbridges.com/traffic_conditions.php3)
- Noting the NITTEC highway dynamic message signs with posted delays beyond 30 minutes
- Registering at [www.mynittec.org](http://www.mynittec.org) to receive a free personalized email or text notification of border and regional traffic information.
- Accessing Twitter at [www.twitter.com/CBSA\\_BWT](http://www.twitter.com/CBSA_BWT)
- Have a passenger use a cell phone to access travel information at [wap.gc.ca](http://wap.gc.ca) or [www.gc.ca](http://www.gc.ca)
- The more access citizens have to NEXUS and other passes that speed crossings the faster those crossings will be for all; that’s why I want to point out that the Whirlpool Bridge is NEXUS only, so cars entering either nation from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. can do so quickly, easily and almost never face delays. Everyone in the vehicle must have a NEXUS card in their name to use the Whirlpool Bridge. Motorists wishing to obtain NEXUS passes can do so easily and quickly on line.
- The application process can be accessed at [www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/trusted\\_traveler/nexus\\_prog/](http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/trusted_traveler/nexus_prog/) or via the commission’s web site. For more information, go to: <http://niagarafallsbridges.com/nexustoll.pdf>.

### About the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission

*A Joint Resolution of the 1938 U.S. Congressional Third Session created the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission. The Extra Provincial Corporations Act of the Province of Ontario, Canada licenses the NFBC. Canada and the U.S. are equally represented on the NFBC by an eight-member Board of Commissioners. Initially established to finance, construct and operate the Rainbow Bridge, the Commission proved sufficiently efficient and effective to assume responsibilities for the Whirlpool Rapids (Lower) and Lewiston-Queenston Bridges. The NFBC builds and maintains all facilities for Customs and Immigration functions on both sides of the international border. The NFBC is self-supportive, largely through user fees (tolls) and private-sector tenant leases. NFBC is federally chartered to conduct international commercial financial transactions and issue federal (U.S.) tax-exempt bonds.*

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