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# *News Release Communiqué*

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No. H008/11

For release  
January 27, 2011

## **QUEENSTON-LEWISTON BRIDGE PLAZA IMPROVEMENTS COMPLETED**

QUEENSTON, ONTARIO — The Honourable Rob Nicholson, Member of Parliament for Niagara Falls, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, and Dr. Kenneth E. Loucks, chair of the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission, today celebrated the completion of the central plaza building at the Queenston-Lewiston International Bridge.

“The Government of Canada is proud to have invested in the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge, one of the busiest Canada-U.S. border crossings,” said Minister Nicholson. “Investments in the Queenston Plaza will help to reduce traffic congestion, facilitate local border crossings and improve this important trade link in the Niagara region.”

“Completion of the Queenston central plaza building on the northernmost of our three bridges will provide even more rapid border crossings for our cars, trucks and buses moving into Canada,” said Dr. Loucks. “As a binational commission, we work extremely hard to provide the highest-quality services to aid and guide the motorists who use our bridges. This building is another example of the success of that effort.”

This project was the second phase of improvements to the Canadian Plaza and included the construction of a central building for Canada Border Services Agency and Canadian Food Inspection Agency functions; 10 passenger vehicle primary inspection booths; and a separate bus-processing lane. These improvements will result in increased peak traffic capacity and faster processing times for travellers, strengthening trade and tourism between Canada and the United States.

Phase Two construction builds on the \$49-million Phase One redevelopment project undertaken and funded entirely by the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission. Phase One included the construction of a new elevated parking structure, a toll complex, a primary commercial customs processing facility, a retaining/security wall and a new maintenance storage facility.

The total cost for Phase Two improvements is \$78 million, with the Government of Canada contributing up to \$62 million through the Gateways and Border Crossings Fund (Building Canada Plan). The Niagara Falls Bridge Commission contributed \$16 million.

A backgrounder with further information about the Queenston Plaza Redevelopment project and the Queenston-Lewiston bridge crossing is attached.

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# *Backgrounder Information*

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## **QUEENSTON-LEWISTON BRIDGE**

The Queenston-Lewiston Bridge is the fourth-busiest Canada-U.S. commercial land border crossing and a key component of the Ontario-Quebec Continental Gateway and Trade Corridor. In 2009, bridge traffic included approximately 675,000 commercial trucks and over 2.6 million cars.

The second phase of a multi-phase project to redevelop and expand the Queenston Plaza on the Canadian side of the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge is nearly complete.

Phase One of the project was completed in January 2009. It consisted of the construction of a new elevated parking structure, a toll complex, commercial primary customs processing, a retaining/security wall to extend the usable plaza footprint and a new maintenance storage facility. The total cost of Phase One was \$49 million; the work was funded by the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission.

Phase Two of the redevelopment project included a new central building for the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). This will provide additional space and improved facilities for CBSA and CFIA personnel to perform their duties, which will ultimately increase their ability to process commercial and passenger traffic in a timely manner.

Phase Two improvements also included additional passenger vehicle primary inspection lanes, a new bus lane, commercial warehouse inspection facilities and commercial tollbooths that will allow for more efficient processing of vehicles. Improved efficiency will reduce traffic congestion at this key border crossing and will help reduce air pollution from idling vehicles. Additional features, such as a wall to separate Canada-bound and U.S.-bound traffic, will improve security.

The central plaza building and primary inspection lanes and booths at the Queenston-Lewiston International Bridge are now complete. Handover of the new central plaza building to the Canada Border Services Agency took place in late 2010, and the building will open for operation in February 2011. The remaining demolition and cleanup work will be completed by the fall of 2011.

The total cost for these Phase Two improvements is \$78 million, with the Government of Canada contributing up to \$62 million through the Gateways and Border Crossings Fund (Building Canada Plan). The Niagara Falls Bridge Commission contributed \$16 million.