



# Ambassador Niagara

## Signature Bridge Group

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### **Removal of Black Rock Toll Barrier Scores Big for the Ambassador Niagara Project**

Buffalo, N.Y. – The road to the successful completion of the Ambassador Niagara Signature Bridge Group Project became clearer today when the New York State Thruway Authority voted unanimously to stop collecting tolls at the Black Rock toll barrier, located on the Niagara Section of the New York State Thruway (I-190). A cause of frequent traffic tie-ups, the toll barrier was cited by the Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority as a “fatal flaw” against Ambassador Niagara’s proposal to construct a privately funded bridge immediately north of the barrier.

Now, with the removal of the toll barrier -- this unsubstantiated fear of increased traffic congestion due to the bridge’s proximity to the toll barrier has been put to rest.

The Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority and their consultants stated that construction of a second upper Niagara River crossing, so close to the barrier, would increase traffic congestion along the I-190. These beliefs were voiced during the scoping phase of the Peace Bridge Bi-National Integrated Environmental Review Process (BNIEP), which sought public input on alternative locations for additional border crossing capacity at sites within the upper Niagara River corridor, including the current Peace Bridge, the International Railroad Bridge and Grand Island.

Although five of the alternatives within the International Railroad Bridge corridor were ranked within the top eight alternatives by public participants in Workshop #4 -- these five alternatives were systematically dropped by the by the Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority following this workshop. The rationale for omitting the International Railroad Bridge alternatives from further consideration relies on the assumption that an increase in traffic within the corridor would require additional toll booths and the widening of the I-190.

The removal of the tolls from the I-190 invalidates this assumption and assures our belief that this project will improve the transportation infrastructure of the region and provide greater economic opportunities and viability for all of Western New York.

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