

# BiNational and Corridor Planning Buffalo-Niagara Region Eastern Border Transportation Coalition



Tuesday, September 13, 2011  
Hal Morse, GBNRTC Executive Director

# 3rd Largest Urban Concentration In North America

20.4 Million

- New York-New Jersey-Long Island

16.2 Million

- Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County

**9.0 Million**

- Toronto-Hamilton- Niagara Falls-  
Buffalo-Rochester-Syracuse

8.9 Million

- Chicago-Gary-Kenosha

7.4 Million

- Washington-Baltimore



# Transportation Infrastructure



Four (4) International Motor Vehicle Bridges



QEW and Interstate I-90 (Major Connectors)



Two (2) Railway Bridges



Four (4) Major Railways



Rail Passenger Service VIA and AMTRAK



Commuter Rail – GO Train



Inter-City Bus Services



Four (4) Major Airports



Welland Canal (St. Lawrence Seaway), Several Ports



# US/Canada and NYS/Ontario Trade



- The trade relationship between the US and Canada is the largest in the world
- Volumes crossing the U.S. and Canada border encompasses more the US \$1.4B a day and over 200M people a year

# US/Canada and NYS/Ontario Trade

- The portion of that trade which flows between NYS and Ontario is a major part of that total trade relationship
- NYS-Ontario annual trade typically at least \$20B

# US/Canada and NYS/Ontario Trade

- 16 percent of all Canada-US trade crosses at the Niagara Frontier
- The region is clearly a key to economic gateway between the nations



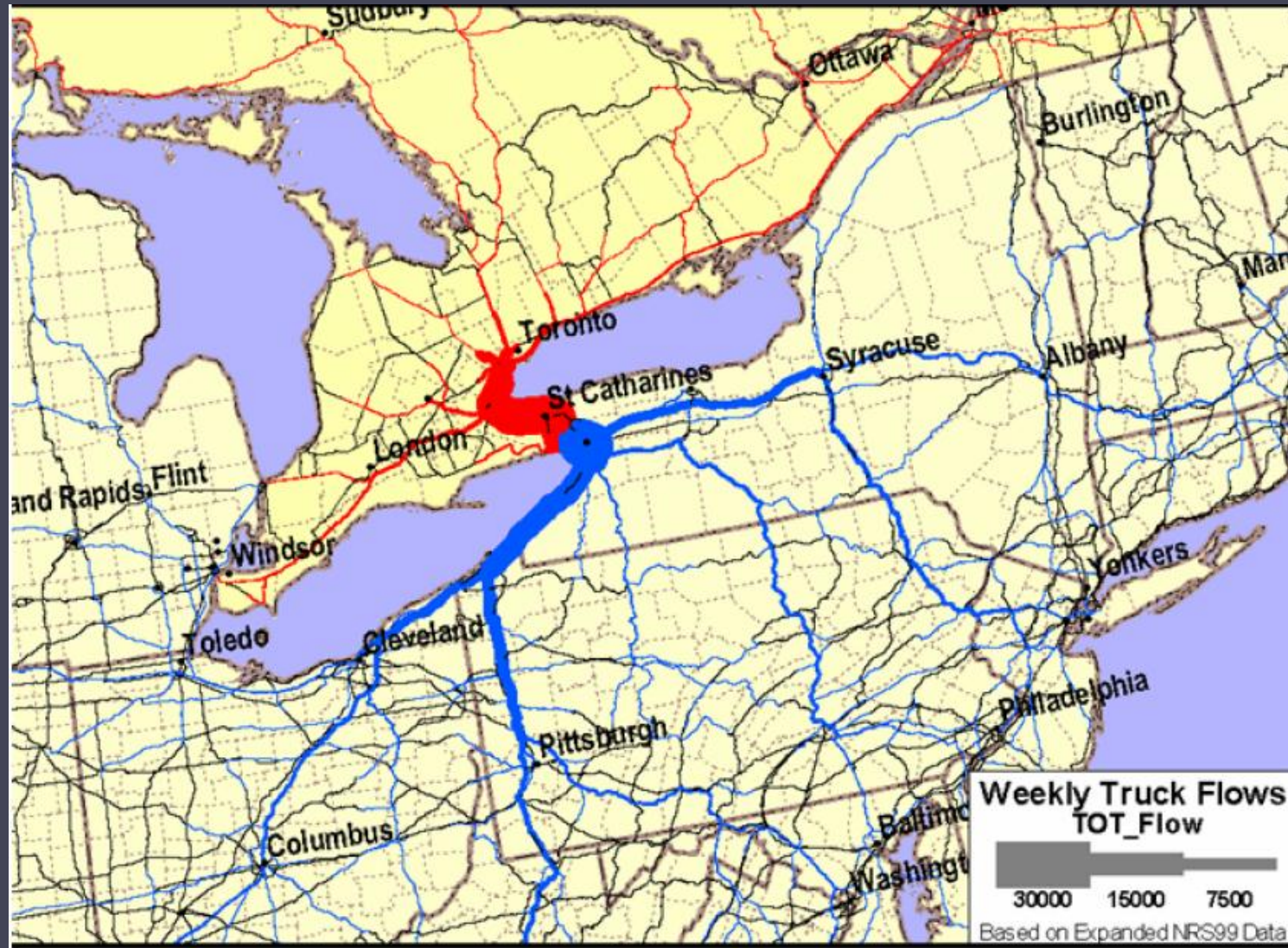


# Truck Flows: Queenston-Lewiston Bridge





# Truck Flows: Peace Bridge





# The New York-Ontario Summit



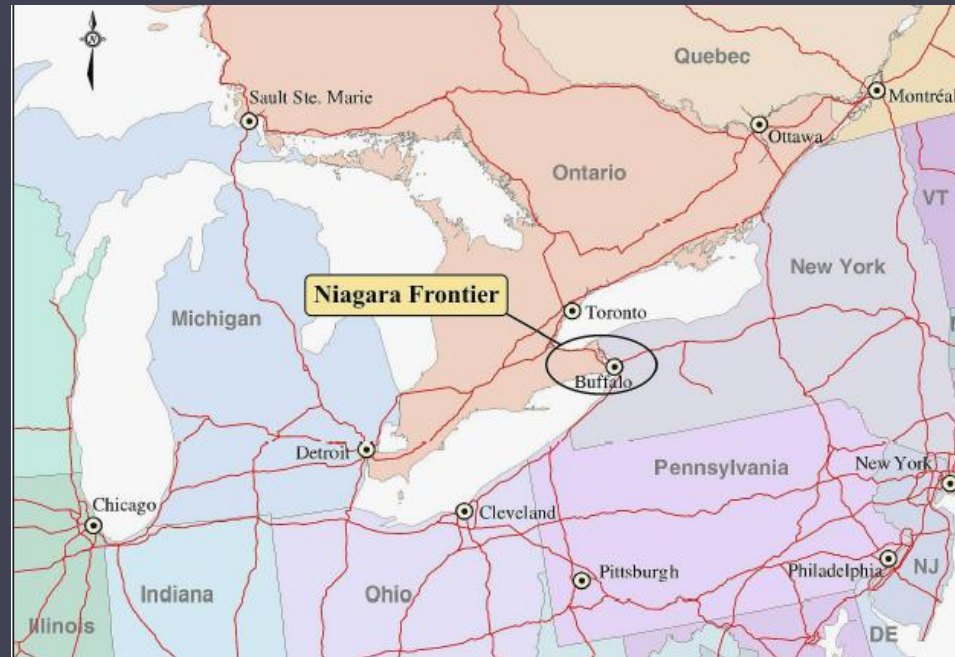
- Recognizing the close economic ties, the Province of Ontario and the State of New York organized a summit conference in June 2001 involving the Premier of Ontario and the Governor of New York.

# The New York-Ontario Summit

- Led to the creation of a BiNational Working Group to oversee and set direction for the development of a BiNational Transportation Strategy for the Niagara Frontier
- Representatives from NYS Department of Transportation, Ontario Ministry of Transportation, both federal transportation agencies, local planning bodies and bridge authorities



# Vision for the Niagara Frontier



*People and goods move safely, securely and efficiently within the BiNational Niagara region via a transportation system that is unified, provides multimodal alternatives, is environmentally sensitive and supports economic growth.*

# The Vision is Supported by Specific Goals

Commuters and  
other travelers  
enjoy safe,  
predictable, and  
efficient trips  
across the Niagara  
region

National and  
regional economies  
expand and  
prosper with rapid,  
predication and  
safe movement of  
goods and people  
through the region

Goods and people  
move securely and  
infrastructure is  
secure

Decision-making  
recognizes the  
importance of  
environmental and  
the well-being of  
border  
communities

# Three Primary Considerations In Cross Border Travel



**Getting to the  
Border**



**Border  
Crossing  
Infrastructure**



**Border  
Management**



# Six Strategy Elements

## Strategy Element 1

Foster improved coordination  
between appropriate agencies and  
stakeholders

## Strategy Element 2

Ensure adequacy of highway  
approach corridor capacity,  
connectivity to economic centres  
and network flexibility, with priority  
on investment to facilitate efficient  
goods movement and tourist travel

## Strategy Element 3

Improve enforcement, processing  
and plaza infrastructure to enhance  
efficiency, security and safety

## Strategy Element 4

Provide sufficient river crossing  
capacity and network flexibility to  
meet demand

## Strategy Element 5

Optimize use of all transportation  
modes to improve the efficiency of  
the entire transportation system

## Strategy Element 6

Realize unique opportunities for  
overall border network management  
emphasizing innovative ITS  
strategies



# Post Summit Focused Activities

- BiNational transportation working group
- Niagara BiNational economic roundtable
- Ontario-New York Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation
- Federal border working groups
- Operational Coordination

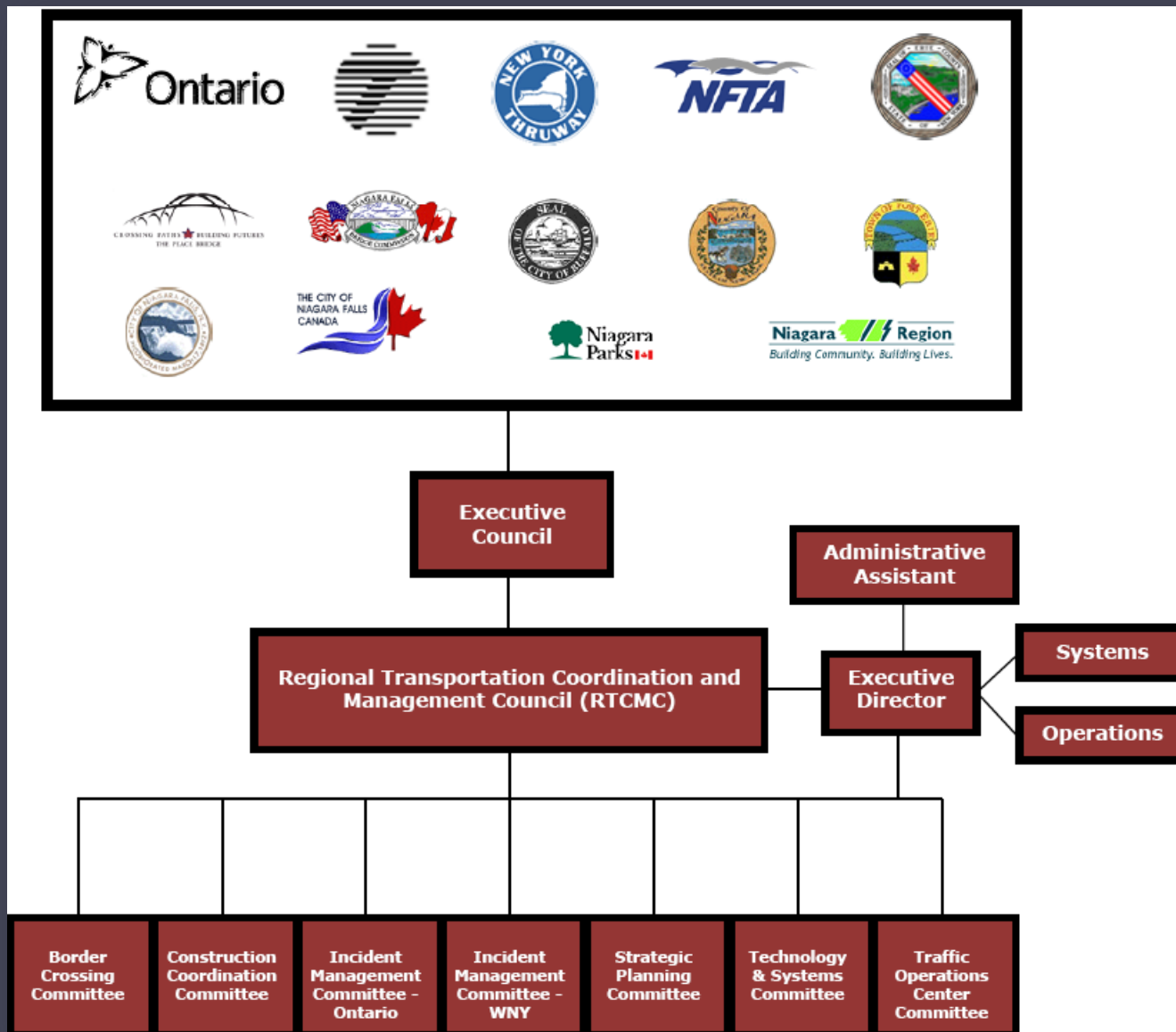
# Integrated Corridor Management in the BiNational Region



***NIAGARA INTERNATIONAL  
TRANSPORTATION  
TECHNOLOGY COALITION***



# Organization





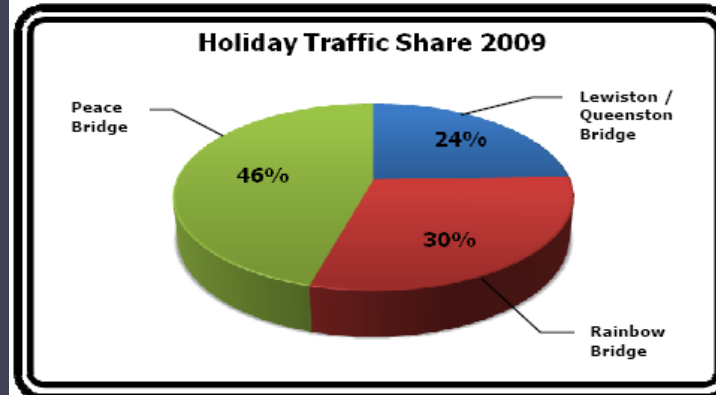
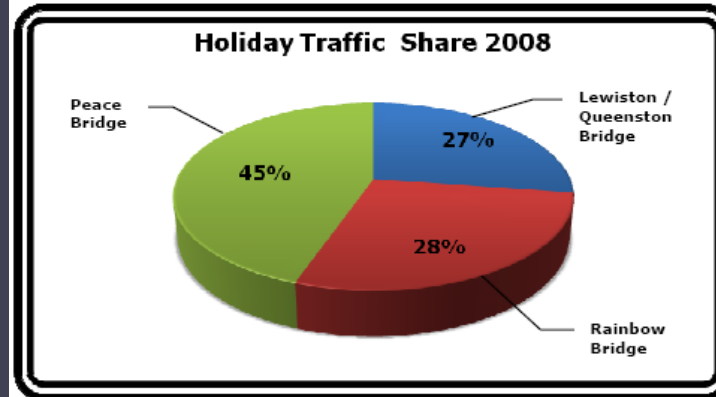
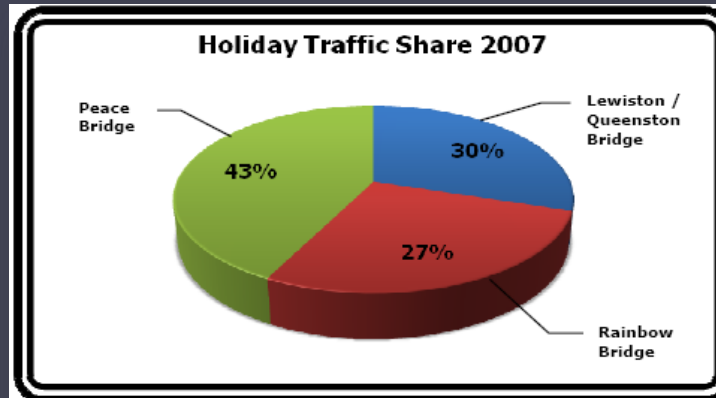
# Mission

- *To improve mobility, reliability, and safety on the regional BiNational multimodal transportation network through information sharing and coordinated management of operations*

# Regional Operation Functions

- Traveler information
- Border traffic management
- Congestion management
- Incident management
- Special event planning and management
- Transportation system monitoring
- Emergency management
- Weather and transportation system monitoring
- Construction coordination
- Performance measure reporting

# Managing Demand





# Integrated Corridor Management in the BiNational Region

Operational Category	Performance Measure
Agency Coordination	The use of established center-to-center communication links
Traveler Information	Use of real-time data has been determined
Mobility (Arterial, Border, Freeway, Transit)	Percentage of coordinated corridors
Incident Management	Incident measures are uniform



# Niagara BiNational Transportation Coordinating Group

August 2011 Meeting

# Purpose and Structure

- Review status of studies and projects of mutual interest
- Review BiNational Strategy for current relevance
- Discuss next steps and approach to strategic collaboration
- Participants included:

Ministry of Transport Ontario

New York State Department of Transportation

Niagara Falls Bridge Commission

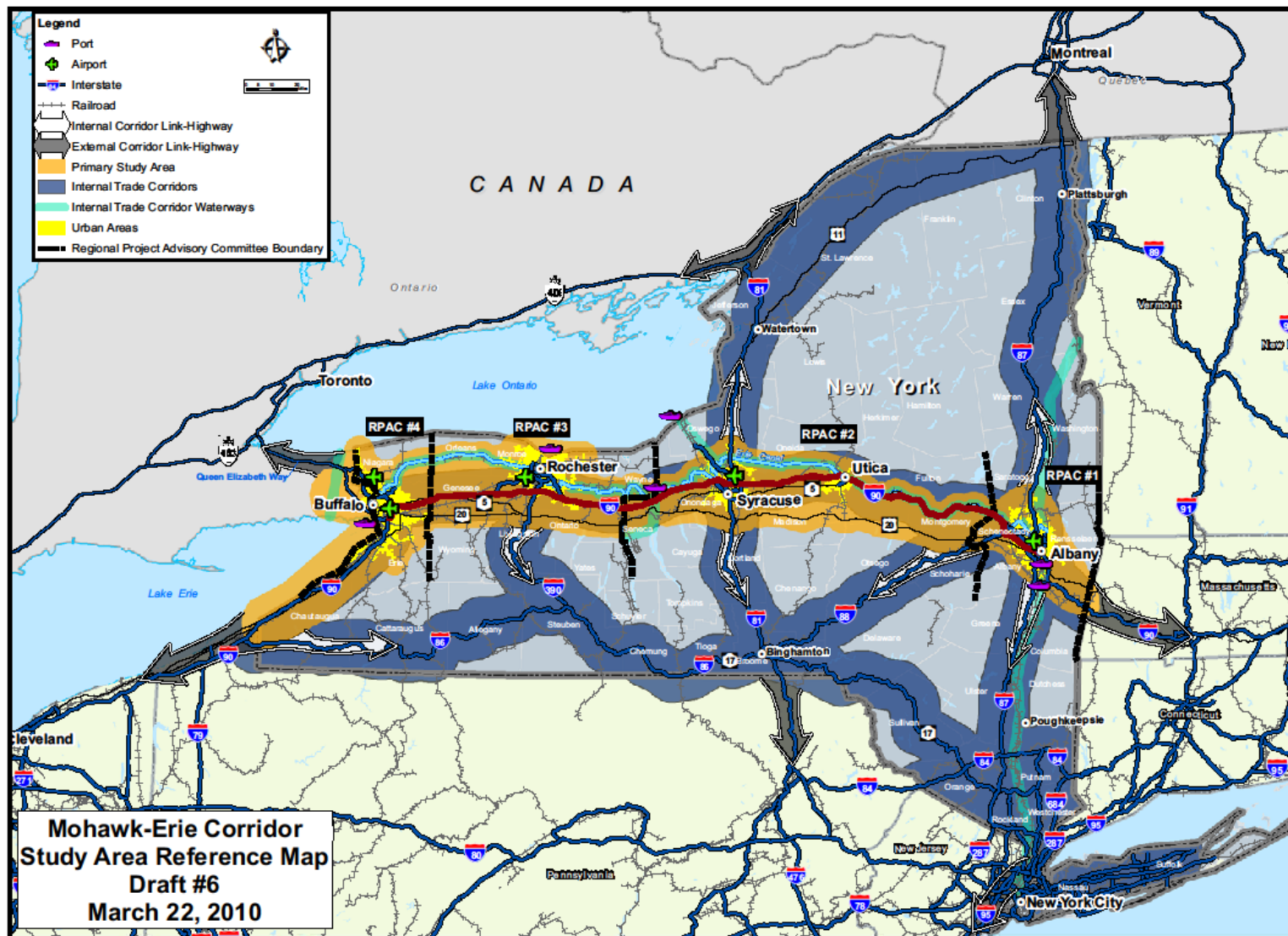
Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority (Peace)

Regional Niagara Ontario

Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (MPO)

# Mohawk-Erie Corridor Study

## Startup and Project Scope



# Purpose of Study

- Understanding future transportation needs to support economic competitiveness and livable communities
- Stakeholder input to craft Vision for Corridor, role of transportation in achieving that vision
- Real implementation addressing transportation challenges within fiscal realities
- Identify investments, actions, policies
- Expected completion mid 2012

## Some key distinguishing characteristics of the transportation systems, as identified by stakeholders

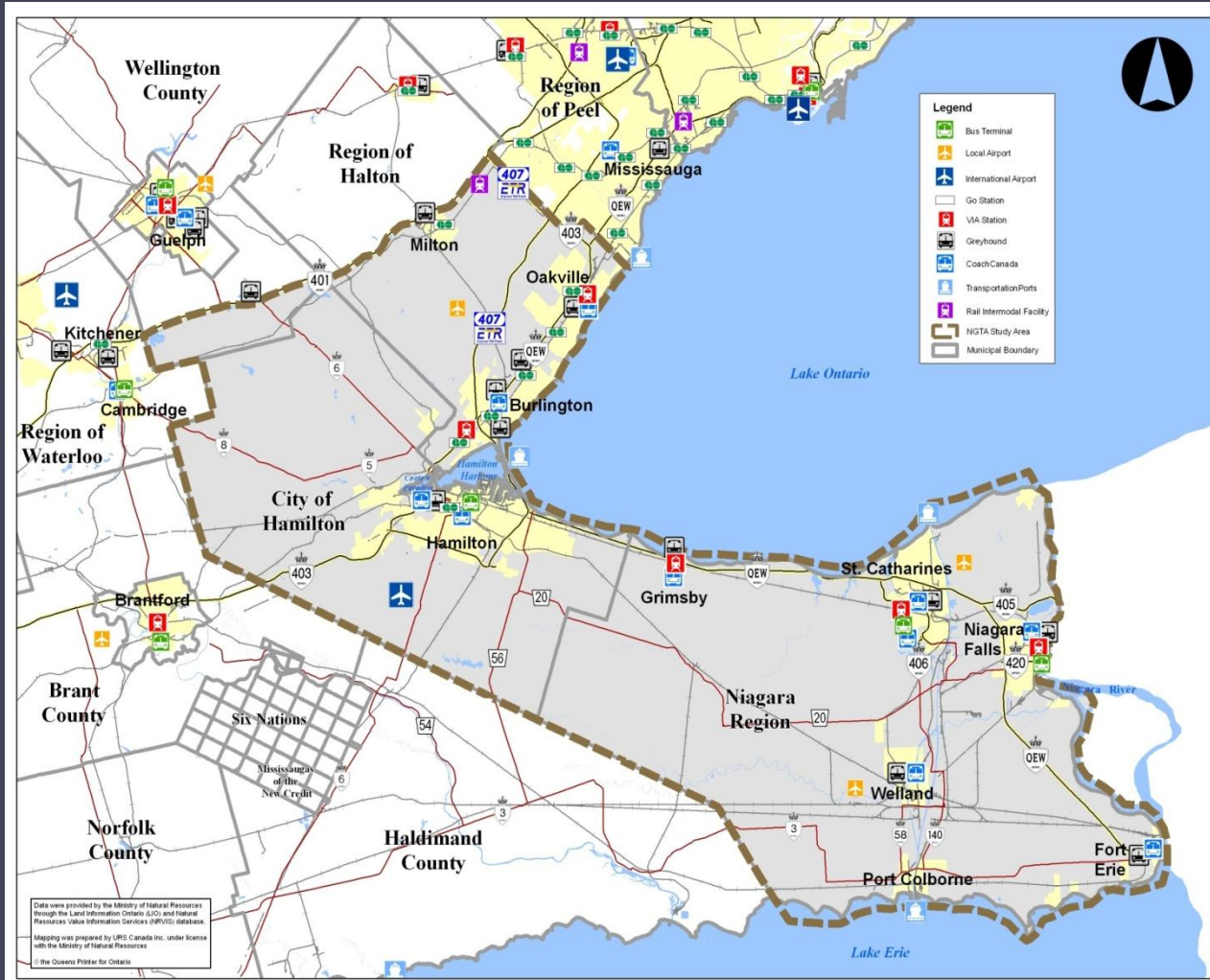
- Efficient and effective connections with Toronto/Canadian markets
- Connectivity – between modes and across the border
- Mode choice and ability to make modal connections to enhance quality of life and attract workers
- Well-maintained/reliable infrastructure
- Compatible regulations that consider the needs of business, especially related to movement of agricultural goods
- A transportation system that provides access to existing and emerging markets

# Theme for the Area

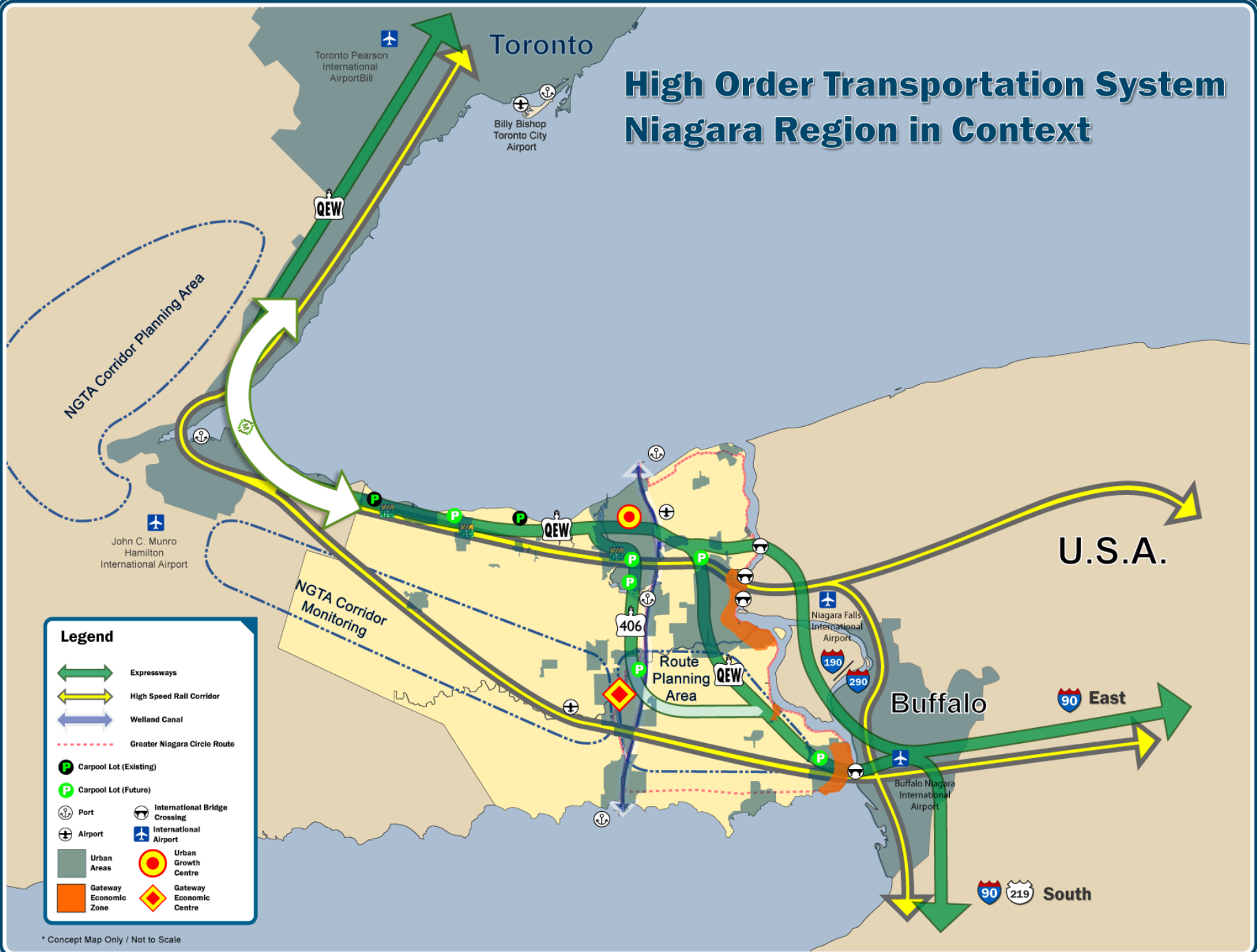
1. Efficient connections to Canada are important and a good direct route to the South.
2. Improved connectivity between modes and across the border could enhance existing multimodal elements.
3. Mode choice is important to quality of life and for attracting businesses/workers



# Niagara to GTA Study Area



# High Order Transportation System Niagara Region in Context



**Quality of Life**

**Environmental  
Stewardship**

**Travel & Commute  
to Surrounds**

**2010 STRATEGIC  
DIRECTIONS**

**Economic Growth  
Planned Land Use**

**Destination Access -  
Tourist- Recreational**

**Travel and  
Commuting**

**International  
Trade**

**Travel Choice**



# Emerging Passenger Rail Connectivity



- Existing Amtrak-VIA Service
- Empire Corridor (NY-Toronto) High Speed Rail
- GO Train Commuter Expansion
- Niagara Falls – Buffalo Commuter Rail

# NYS High Speed Rail EIS



Environmental Process in NYS



# High Speed Rail Empire Corridor Project

- High speed passenger rail is the future of transportation in New York State and the nation
- High speed passenger rail is expected to improve reliability, decrease travel times and increase train frequencies from New York City to Niagara Falls.

# Location



# High Speed Rail NY Coalition – Buffalo/Niagara

A substantial number of planning studies have indicated the need for better connectivity within the GGH and with the rest of New York State.

The BiNational Transportation Strategy indicated both short and longer term initiatives to strengthen BiNational trade and travel.

The New York State Rail Plan, the New York State Senate Task Force on High Speed Rail and the developing Empire Corridor West Railroad Transportation Plan Study all discuss rail passenger services and potential opportunities for improvements to infrastructure and operations.

Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) Long Range Plan indicates intercity commuter rail to provide substantial benefit within the region.

In support, an intermodal transportation project is underway in Niagara Falls, NY

GO Transit, is running several trains per day between Niagara Falls, Ontario and Toronto's Union Station as a summer service.



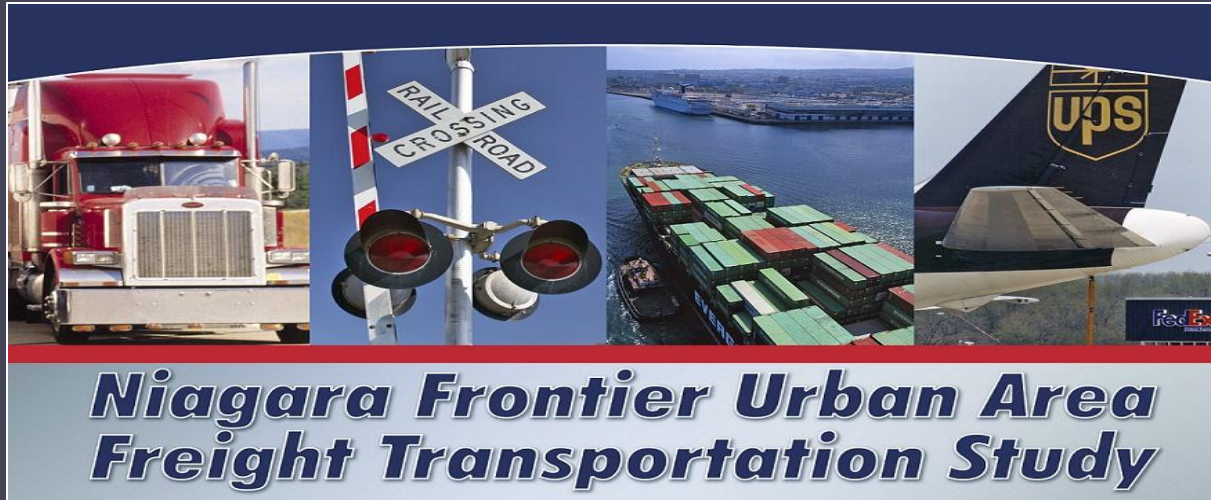
# GO Train: Study Purpose

- To expand public transit in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (CA) recognizing the increased pressure in existing transportation infrastructure
- To serve more people, stimulate the local economy, support community growth, and provide a connection to the Greater Toronto Area
- To reduce road congestion, air pollution, and energy consumption



# Western New York Bi-National Logistics Hub Initiative





- Extensive set of studies examined issues and opportunities
- Discussions with stakeholders generating actions to implement
- Infrastructure upgrades for consideration in programming cycles
- Integrated Logistics Complex appears to have potential, BiNational approach important

# Freight Transportation Trends

- Competitiveness of Asian Products
- China Investment
- Supply Chain Reconfiguration
- Increasing Focus on Operating Cost Reductions
- Changes in Shipping Patterns
- Increasing West Coast Rates and Congestion
- East Coast Congestion
- More favorable Short-Haul Intermodal Economics





# Opportunity For a Regional Logistics Center

“Changes in the patterns of international trade, international consumption markets, and logistics technology will create opportunities for the Buffalo-Niagara region to leverage its freight transportation and real estate assets to stimulate regional economic growth”

# Critical Regional Success Factors

- Requires three main attributes
  - Location
    - 2.3 m in Western New York, 10.6 m in “Golden Horseshoe”
    - Educated Workforce
    - Low Real Estate costs
  - Accessibility
    - Efficient access to multiple modes of transportation
    - Four Class 1 and numerous short-line railroads
    - Extensive interstate highway system
    - Two airports
    - Numerous marine ports
  - Terminal Infrastructure
    - Located near existing and future sources of consumption or production
    - Foreign trade zones
    - Numerous brownfield sites available



# Goods Movement Nodes and Corridors

- Ontario is a nationally significant and strategic hub for goods movement.
- Five distinct nodes and corridors can be identified for International Trade

## Northern:

- Connections to Western Canada and Asia-Pacific Gateway
- Hub for Mining, Forestry and Agricultural exports

## Eastern:

- Connections to Montreal and Atlantic Gateway
- Strategic border connections to New York.

## GTA:

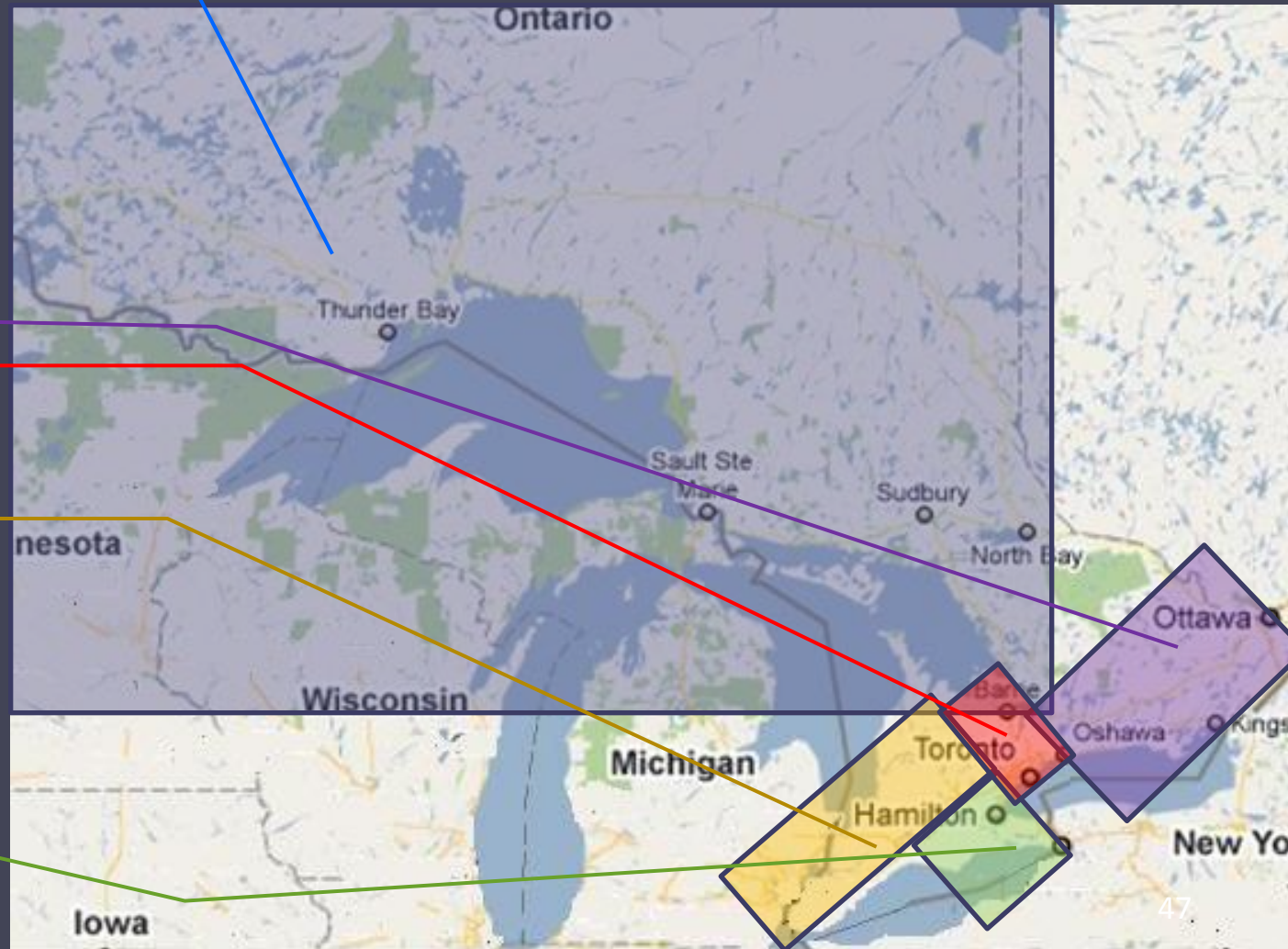
- Nationally significant production, consumption and re-distribution node for international trade.

## Southwestern:

- Strategic connections for road and rail trade with the U.S. Mid-west.
- Strategic point automotive sector, and petrochemicals

## Niagara:

- Strategic connections for road trade with New York and Eastern Seaboard.
- Strategic point for steel and manufacturing production inputs.



# Capacity Issues in the Niagara Region

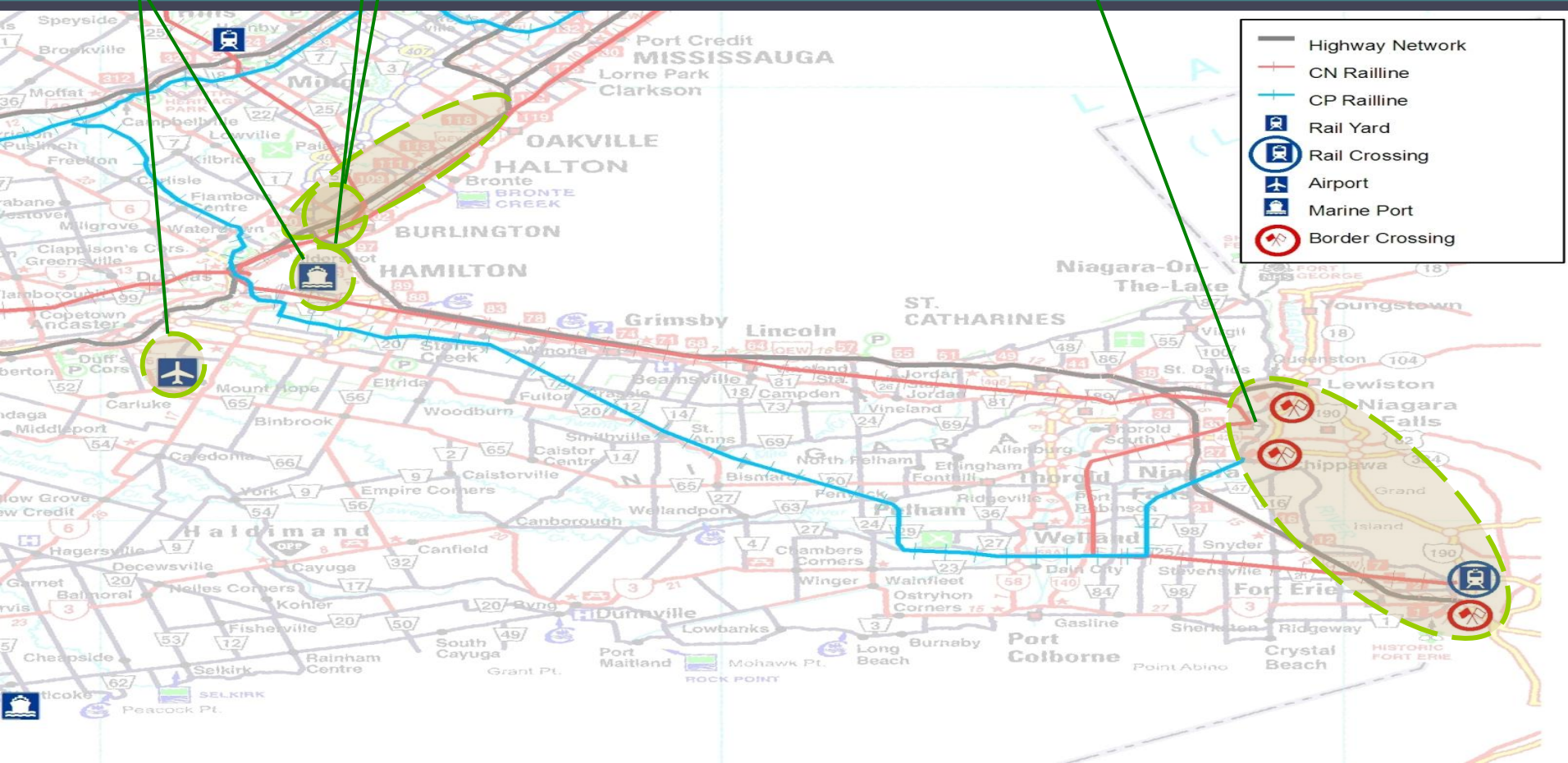
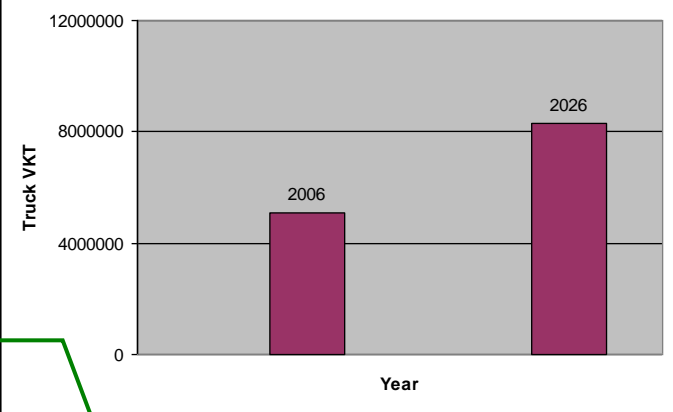
Port and Airport Expansion Plans

Road/rail level crossing in Burlington impedes GO train operations

QEW: Peel west to Hamilton, segments with TW-CDI above 75th and 90th percentile

Border crossings frequently congested

Truck VKT Growth MTO Central Region



# Benefits of One Location Serving Two Nations

- Cost reduction.
- Proximity to major U.S. and Canadian metro areas enables companies to quickly grasp and adjust to changing market conditions.
- Opportunity to promote light manufacturing and assembly since companies tend to locate near transportation and distribution hubs.

# Benefits of One Location Serving Two Nations

- Reduction of tariffs by utilizing more favorable codes and foreign trade zones.
- This encourages foreign companies to ship components, instead of finished products, here for assembly... then locally source components.
- Adding value to goods heading to and from Canada, as well as goods to and from third countries. (Truck traffic via Buffalo to rise 90% from 2010-2035).

# Enhancing North American Competitiveness

- U.S. and Canadian companies increasingly partner to produce quality goods and services for global markets.
- Improved transportation and logistics infrastructure — resulting from the Bi-National Logistics Hub — will further boost supply chain efficiencies, and
- Encourage U.S. and Canadian companies to further integrate manufacturing and service sectors.



# Action Steps

- Continue to present study findings and opportunity
- Engage ESDC and emerging Regional Council
- Build U.S. side stakeholder/industry group through Buffalo-Niagara Partnership Logistics Council
- Plan ramp up of activities, including cooperative marketing, issues identification, capital projects, operational improvements, regulatory/border, etc
- Identify and engage Canadian stakeholders and industry group representatives
- Deepen and develop BiNational Logistics Hub concept





# Shared Border Management

Legislative/Political Environment and  
Prospects for Action

# Declaration by President Obama and Prime Minister Harper of Canada - Beyond the Border

## A Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness

- Intend to pursue a perimeter approach to security
- Working together within, at, and away from the borders of the two countries to enhance security and accelerate the legitimate flow of people, goods, and services between the two countries
- Address security threats at the earliest point possible in a manner that respects privacy, civil liberties, and human rights

# Agreement Intent

- Promote the free flow of trade— including goods, people, and services
- Tighten border security using enhanced screening, “new technologies,” biometrics to track travelers, and information-sharing among law enforcement to identify “threats” early
- Build on existing bilateral law-enforcement programs
- Ensure a bi-national defense relationship and military support for disaster response efforts and infrastructure protection
- Help research, develop, and share carbon-capture technologies and renewable energy sources.

# Obama – Harper Talks This Fall

Suggested best outcome would be a series of specific, concrete reforms that would help ease border congestion and speed up the flow of trade and travel (Star 8/28). Examples are:

- Reforming current operations to ensure that companies and individuals who qualify as trusted shippers and travelers really do get expedited passage at the border
- A so-called “one window” information system that would correct current problems arising from having different information systems on each side of the border
- A moratorium on new user fees
- Better coordination of infrastructure programs to ensure, for instance, that freeways on one side of the border don’t lead to two-lane roads on the other

# Implementation and Oversight

- Establish a Beyond the Border Working Group (BBWG) composed of representatives from the appropriate departments and offices of our respective federal governments
- Responsibility for ensuring inter-agency coordination will rest with the President and the Prime Minister and their respective officials
- Develop a joint Plan of Action to realize the goals of this declaration, that would, where appropriate, rely upon existing bilateral border-related groups, for implementation
- The BBWG will report on the implementation of this declaration to Leaders on an annual basis

# Status of the BiNational Strategy



# Viabile Attributes of an Effective BiNational Entity

- Lean, focused, core group for issues management and assignment
- Larger cadre of committed stakeholders available for cooperative consultation and action
- Cross cutting approach needed to achieve consensus decisions

# Some Existing BiNational Networks

Ontario-New York  
Declaration of  
Partnership and MOU  
on Cooperation

Niagara 10

Buffalo Fort Erie  
Public Bridge  
Authority

Niagara Falls Bridge  
Commission

NITTEC

University at Buffalo  
Regional Institute

Niagara Regional  
Observatory

World Trade Center  
Buffalo Niagara

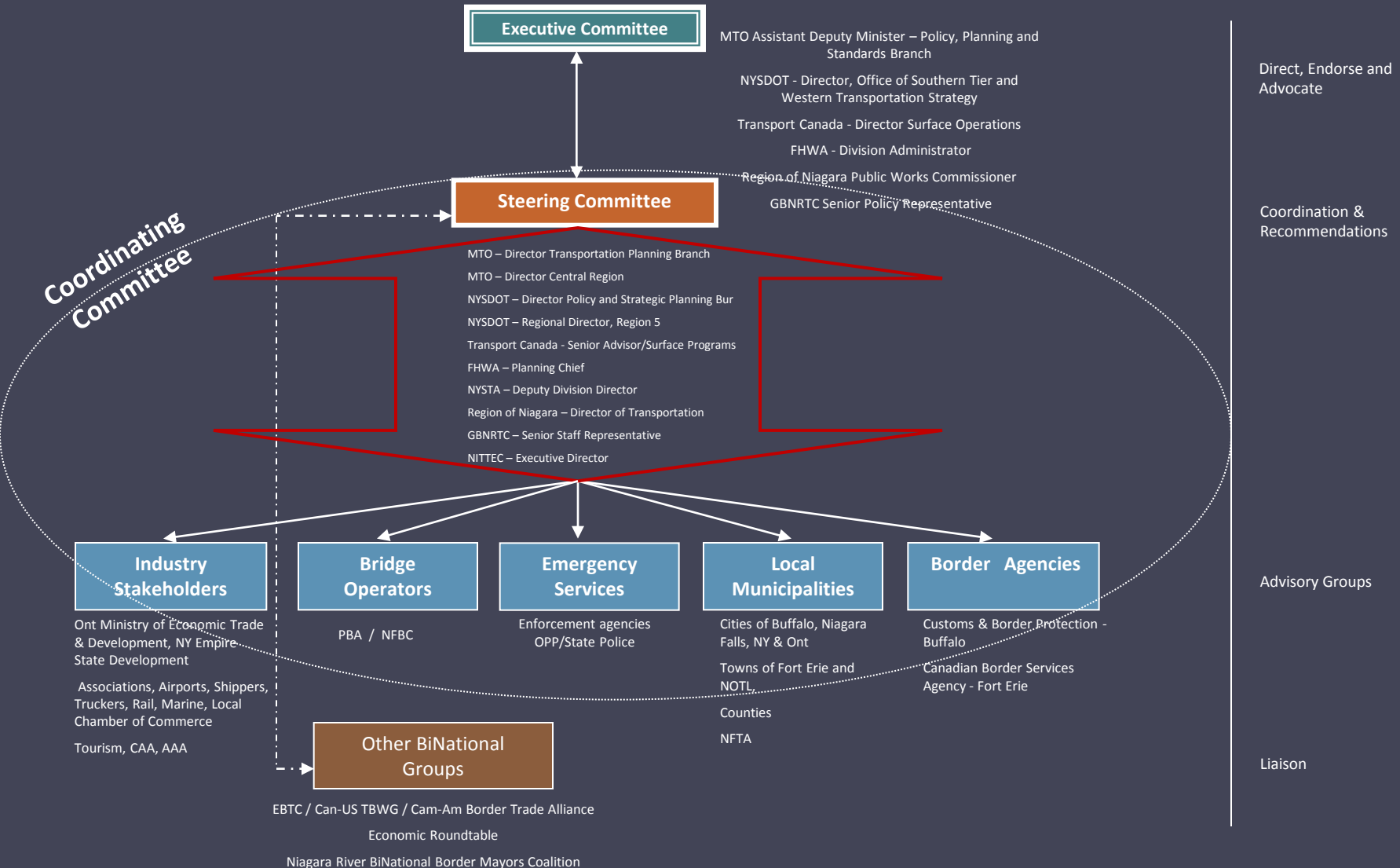
BiNational Tourism  
Alliance

Brock  
University/University  
at Buffalo Exchange  
Agreement

Canada-U.S. trade  
Center, University at  
Buffalo



# Original Concept Niagara BiNational Transportation Coordinating Group



# Challenges in the Concept

- Diversity of the Mission
  - Infrastructure/Land use/Economy/Environmental
- Coordination of Numerous Ongoing Activities and Relationships
- Governance and Management of an Effective BiNational Entity

# Future Needs

- Technical aid in linking global economic perspective and transportation
- Specific, focused, infrastructure improvement plan and implementation program
- Federal investment in corridors and borders
- Innovative, coordinated border management
- Ongoing commitment to cooperation and progress at all levels

# Next Steps

- Revisit and update Strategy based on changing environment
  - Shared Border Management (SBM)
  - Western Hemisphere Travel Intuitive (WHTI)
  - Economic and Demographic Forecasts
  - Projects completed or deferred
- Establish objectives and performance measures
- Contemporary governance approach