

2019

**Niagara  
Falls  
Bridge  
Commission**

ANNUAL REVIEW





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This publication is produced to comply with the reporting requirements of the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission's enabling legislation which states, "An accurate record of the cost of the bridge and its approaches, the expenditures for maintaining, repairing and operating the same, and the daily tolls collected shall be kept and shall be available for the information of all persons interested."

The financial data contained herein has been taken from the NFBC's 2019 audited financial statements.

## Mission

To build, maintain and operate lower Niagara River border crossings, which facilitate the movement of people and goods in a safe, sustainable and efficient manner.

## Vision

To be a world class leader in cross-border operations, enhancing the quality of life for our employees, customers and partners.

# About the NFBC

Whether it's tourism or trade, our region's success relies heavily on the strength of the U.S.-Canada border—and the bridges that connect it. The Niagara Falls Bridge Commission (NFBC) maintains and operates the Rainbow, Whirlpool Rapids (Lower Arch) and Lewiston-Queenston Bridges. Now entering its 82nd year, the Commission was established through a joint resolution of the 1938 U.S. Congressional Third Session and subsequent amendments, and it is licensed to operate by the Extra Provincial Corporations Act of the Province of Ontario, Canada.

Consisting of eight board members—including four American and four Canadian representatives—the Commission's officers hold respective office for one year, until the next annual meeting. The American Commissioners serve at the pleasure of the Governor of the State of New York. The Canadian Commissioners serve at the pleasure of the Premier of the Province of Ontario.

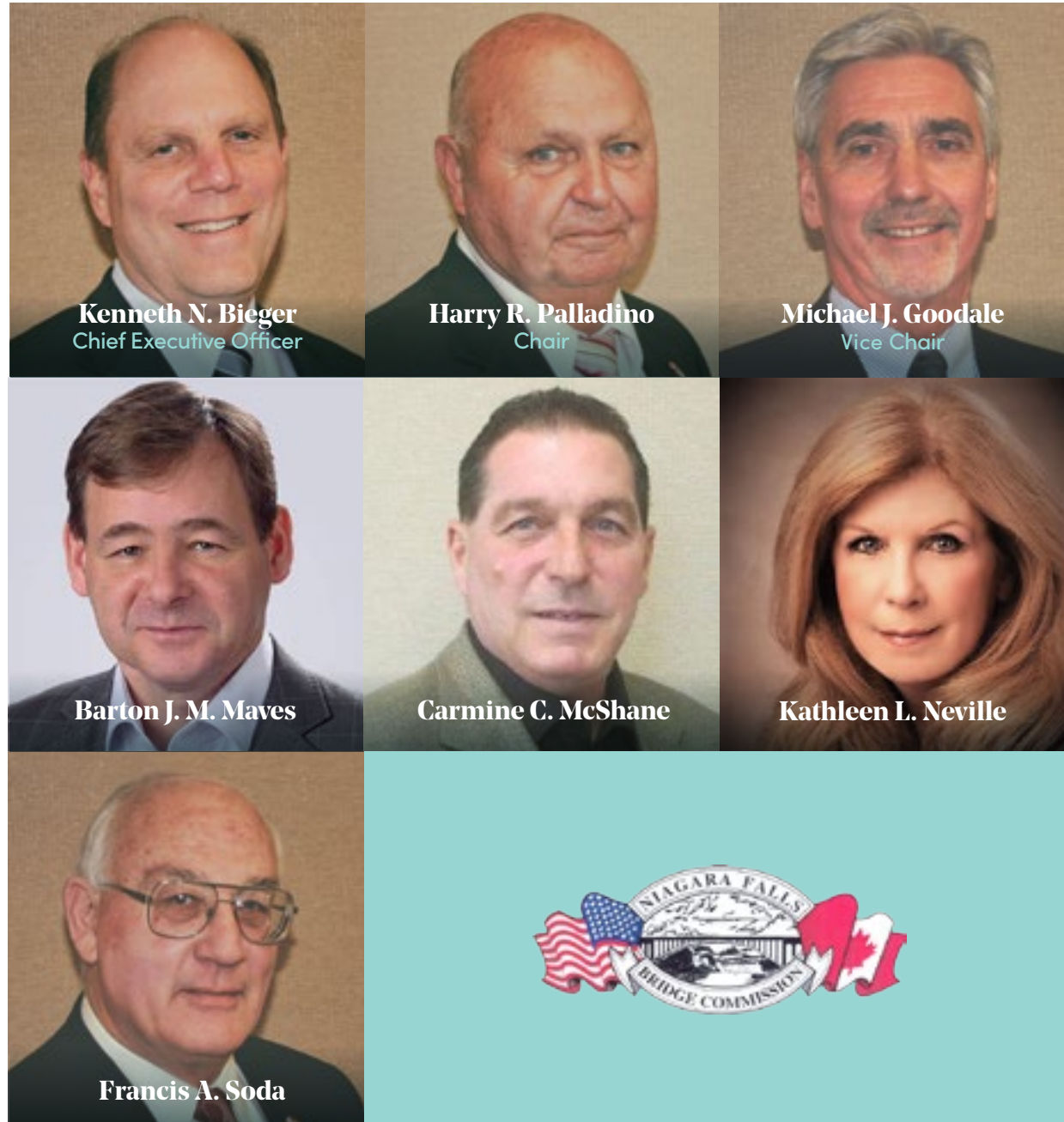
Initially established to finance, construct and operate the Rainbow Bridge, the Commission was later granted responsibilities for the trio of structures they now oversee. The Commission is funded through a collection of tolls and private and public sector tenant leases, except for one-time capital contributions from Canada and Ontario for the fifth lane on the Lewiston-Queenston Bridge and from Canada for the new Canada Border Services Agency facilities in Queenston.

As a substantial amount of trade and tourism continues to cross our borders, the NFBC works to facilitate growth, create jobs and encourage economic development by enhancing and investing in the three international crossings it oversees.

# About

# 2019 Board of Commissioners

The Commission's eight-member board consists of four American and four Canadian representatives. The American Commissioners serve at the pleasure of the governor of the State of New York, and the Canadian Commissioners serve at the pleasure of the premier of the Province of Ontario. All officers hold respective office for one year, until the next annual meeting.



**Kenneth N. Bieger**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Harry R. Palladino**  
Chair

**Michael J. Goodale**  
Vice Chair

**Barton J. M. Maves**

**Carmine C. McShane**

**Kathleen L. Neville**

**Francis A. Soda**



# Community Sponsorships

In 2019, the NFBC supported a number of local not-for-profit organizations and cultural attractions, using funds generated by tenant leases through the donation of \$63,400 (USD) and \$63,400 (CDN).

- Artpark & Company, Inc.
- Canal Bank Shuffle Blues Festival Inc.
- Celebrating Wilson
- Cross Border Blues
- Destination Niagara USA
- Downtown Niagara Falls Business Association
- Friends of Fort George
- Historical Association of Lewiston
- Kiwanis Club of Lewiston
- Lewiston Council on the Arts, Inc.
- Lewiston Garden Club
- Lewiston Jazz Festival
- Lewiston Veterans of Foreign Wars Downriver Post 7487
- Music Niagara
- Niagara Beautification Commission
- Niagara Celtic Heritage Society, Inc.
- Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center
- Niagara Falls National Heritage Area
- Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Commission Inc.
- Niagara Pioneer Soccer League
- Niagara University
- Olcott Beach Carousel Park
- Olcott Beach Jazz Trail
- Ontario Power Generation Winter Festival of Lights
- Sanborn Area Historical Society
- Sanborn Business & Professional Association
- Shaw Festival Theatre
- Town of Niagara Business & Professional Association

# Niagara Crossings

## Lewiston-Queenston Bridge

### 2019 in Review

The previous year saw significant progress made on Phase 2A of the Lewiston Plaza project, with the majority of site work completed and work on interior finishes for the new Auto and Bus Secondary Inspection Facility are now underway. Along with the advancement of the Lewiston Plaza project, substantial portions of the Lewiston-Queenston Spot Painting Project were finished as well.

### History of the Span

Initially opened in 1962 at a cost of \$16 million, the Lewiston-Queenston bridge connects the villages of Lewiston, New York and Queenston, Ontario in the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Following the initial development, another \$45 million was invested in 2005 to fund the expansion from four fixed lanes to five reversible lanes—which allowed the span to be configured based on traffic volume. Sitting 370 feet above the water and 1,600 feet in length, as the world's longest hingeless steel arch bridge, the Lewiston-Queenston Bridge continues to be a popular choice for the hundreds of thousands of annual tourists and travelers visiting Niagara Falls and other great destinations in the region.

## Whirlpool Rapids (Lower Arch) Bridge

### 2019 in Review

During April of 2019, demolition of the Robert Moses Parkway Bridge over the Whirlpool Plaza occurred, causing the Whirlpool Bridge to close for 36 days. Coordination with all related stakeholders and the public was largely successful, leading to a reopening of the bridge on time.

### History of the Span

In 1848, a fastened kite string became the first connection across the Niagara Gorge and would lead to the opening of the Whirlpool Rapids (Lower Arch) Bridge in 1897. The oldest of the three spans, the Whirlpool Bridge sits 225 feet above the Niagara River and covers a staggering 1,069 total feet.

As a dedicated commuter crossing under the NEXUS pre-authorized entry program to expedite clearance through customs, the Whirlpool Bridge is a favorite of the local frequent crossing public on both sides of the border.

## Rainbow Bridge

### 2019 in Review

While this past year brought a successful end to construction of the Rainbow Bridge Deck Rehabilitation Project, we also commenced planning for the Rainbow Bridge Illumination Project.

### History of the Span

A year after the Falls View Bridge collapsed in 1938, Britain's King George VI and Queen Elizabeth dedicated the site that would become home to the world-renowned Rainbow Bridge. Sitting 202 feet above the Niagara River, the Rainbow Bridge serves as a catalyst for tens of millions of dollars in economic activity as a result of tourism.

A favorite of visitors looking for a photo opportunity, surrounding sites including the Oakes Garden Theatre and Rainbow Gardens, provide a memorable backdrop for travelers. Decades after its initial opening in 1941, the Rainbow Bridge now includes four lanes, 33 Customs inspection booths and covers an impressive 1,450 feet between the two countries.



Lewiston-Queenston Bridge



Whirlpool Rapids Bridge



Rainbow Bridge

# Year in Review Highlights

## HUMAN RESOURCES

To ensure compliance with New York State legislation, the NFBC completed the roll-out of the new Sexual Harassment Policy, Complaint Form and required training in 2019. Also, changes to Bill C-63 and Bill C-83, which provided various amendments to Part III of the Canada Labour Code, were implemented with additional amendments to the Code planned for 2020 to be monitored and implemented accordingly.

## NEXUS PROMOTION

The Commission partnered with a public relations consultant on various outreach events to educate potential NEXUS enrollees by tabling at popular locations amongst travelers and tourists including the Buffalo Niagara International Airport, Fashion Outlets of Niagara Falls and Walden Galleria.

## PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

In 2019, the NFBC enhanced Rainbow Canada turnstiles by modifying coin acceptors, adding indicators and displays and improving signage to provide a better customer experience. All turnstile pedestrian crossings are now able to record a date and time stamp to provide increased analysis and auditing of revenue.

## COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

January 2019 brought about the ratification of the Teamsters Local Union No. 879 (Canadian Union) four-year agreement followed by a negotiation with The Niagara Falls Bridge Commission Employee Unit (NYSTU - U.S. Union), which successfully resulted in a ratified five-year agreement in October 2019.

## OVERWEIGHT VEHICLES

During the Peace Bridge re-decking operations, the Commission implemented a temporary accommodation plan in partnership with Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP). This plan allowed super loads to continue to be processed in the Niagara area instead of having to travel west or east to alternate crossings.

## E-GATE

The Canada Border Services Agency technical staff worked with the Commission on eGate implementation at the Whirlpool Bridge Canada. The two eGates systems are scheduled for installation in 2021.

## TRAFFIC VOLUME

Westbound, toll-paying automobile traffic was down -3.2% for the fiscal year of 2019, while commercial truck traffic increased by 1.7% for the same period. This compares to a 5.5% increase in automobile traffic and a -1.8% decrease in commercial truck traffic in the previous fiscal year.

# Information Technology

Many improvements were made to the Commission's information technology over the past year to help improve the efficiency of border operations. Significant accomplishments include the following:

Integrated Niagara Falls Bridge Commission video feeds with U.S. Customs & Border Protection to enhance video coverage during Lewiston Plaza Redesign.

Assisted in the review of Lewiston U.S. Customs & Border Protection systems in preparation for rerouting communications and power for existing U.S. Customs & Border Protection inspection lanes during Lewiston Plaza Phase 2.

Upgraded video exchange with Niagara International Transportation Technology Coalition (NITTEC) from a microwave-based network to a fiber-optic network.

Cameras were relocated from the Whirlpool Bridge to support the Whirlpool Bridge timber deck replacement project.

Evaluated Lewiston Port Runner touchscreen interface in preparation for installation in the new Lewiston Administration Building.

Added access points for broader WiFi coverage.

Upgraded workstations to Office 2019 and the Active Directory environment to Windows 2016.

Implemented Cyber Security Awareness Training along with a new antivirus and patch management solution.

Improved the Power Management System generator scheduling, alerting and user interface.

Completed numerous network upgrades to enhance network architecture.



# Partnerships

To aid in the improvement of border management and transportation operations, the NFBC leveraged several partnerships in 2019. The resulting impact of those partnerships include:

Monitored U.S. Customs & Border Protection's movement of officers to the Southern Border and worked with the agency to mitigate the effects where possible.

Developed and implemented the public notice campaign for the Whirlpool Bridge closure and worked with both U.S. Customs & Border Protection and Canada Border Services Agency to establish alternative crossing strategies for NEXUS patrons.

Participated in the 2019 Logistics Outlook: "The Border of the Future" and 7th Annual Cross-Border Partnership Reception with the Consul General of Canada.

Represented the Commission's interests in the transportation development planning process for Niagara Falls Canada Tourist Area planning sessions.

Met with various partners on the Niagara Falls Rail Preclearance initiative.

Hosted the Transportation Border Working Group's bus tour of the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission's three international bridges.

Hosted various events, including the National Academy of Finance.

Passed Transport Canada Audits.

Served on the Advisory Committee for the Buffalo-Niagara Incident Command Model.

Participated in the Sir Adam Beck Dam Safety Table Top.

Hosted members from the Bridging North America and Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority to share and discuss best practices and operational challenges.

Hosted various events on the Rainbow Bridge, including the Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run, Indian Defense League of America Crossing, Annual Tug of War, and the Ride for Roswell.

These events were all facilitated with little or no disruption to traffic.

The manager of Human Resources, Security and Agency Relations chaired the NITTEC Border Crossing Committee, which examined such issues as corridor management planning, effective border wait time measurement, incident management planning and the impact of the Canadian Motor Speedway.

Met with representatives and elected officials in both the U.S. and Canada—including senators, city mayors and other prominent community leaders.

Met with the U.S. Customs & Border Patrol to discuss the NFBC's role in future U.S. Customs & Border Protection pilot programs concerning biometrics, non-invasive inspection (NII) using x-ray technology and other advancements.

The Commission hosted the first Bridge and Tunnel Operators Association's Financial Summit, which provided the bridge and tunnel operators with a forum to discuss best practices.

# Scholarship Winners

Each year the NFBC awards scholarships to dependents of current Commission employees. Candidates must be entering their freshman year of an accredited post-secondary educational institution and provide verification of scholastic standing, individual achievement and participation in extracurricular activities to initially qualify for the program. Students receiving the first year college/university scholarship award are eligible to reapply for additional funding for years two to four of their undergraduate studies and for the first year of a master's degree.



**Connor Dineen**

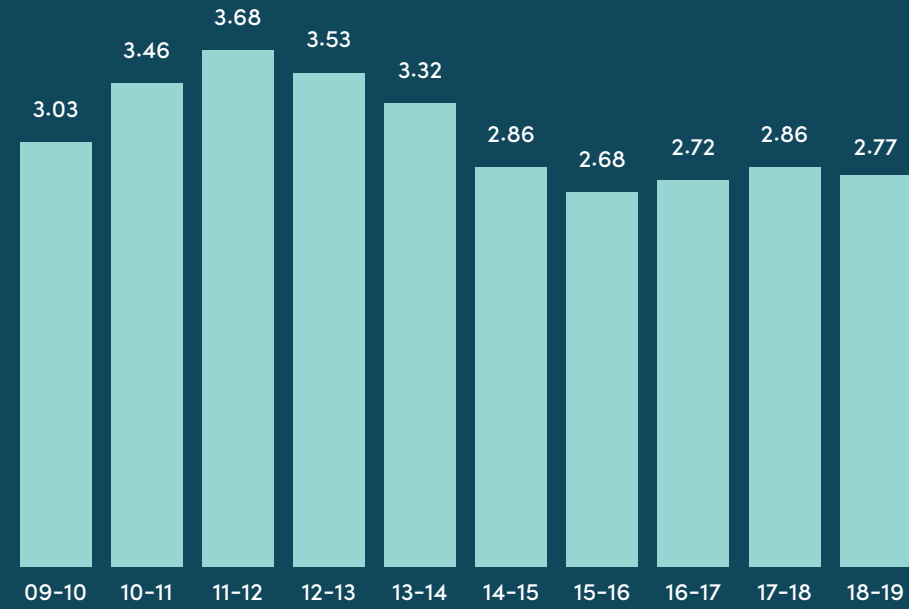


**Carson Koabel**

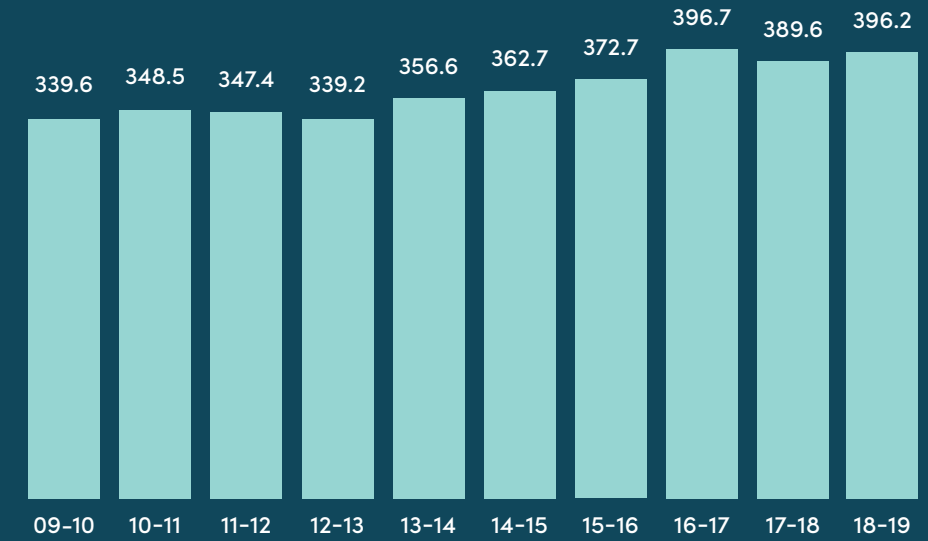


**Matthew Phillips**

10 YEAR WEST-BOUND AUTO TRAFFIC IN MILLIONS

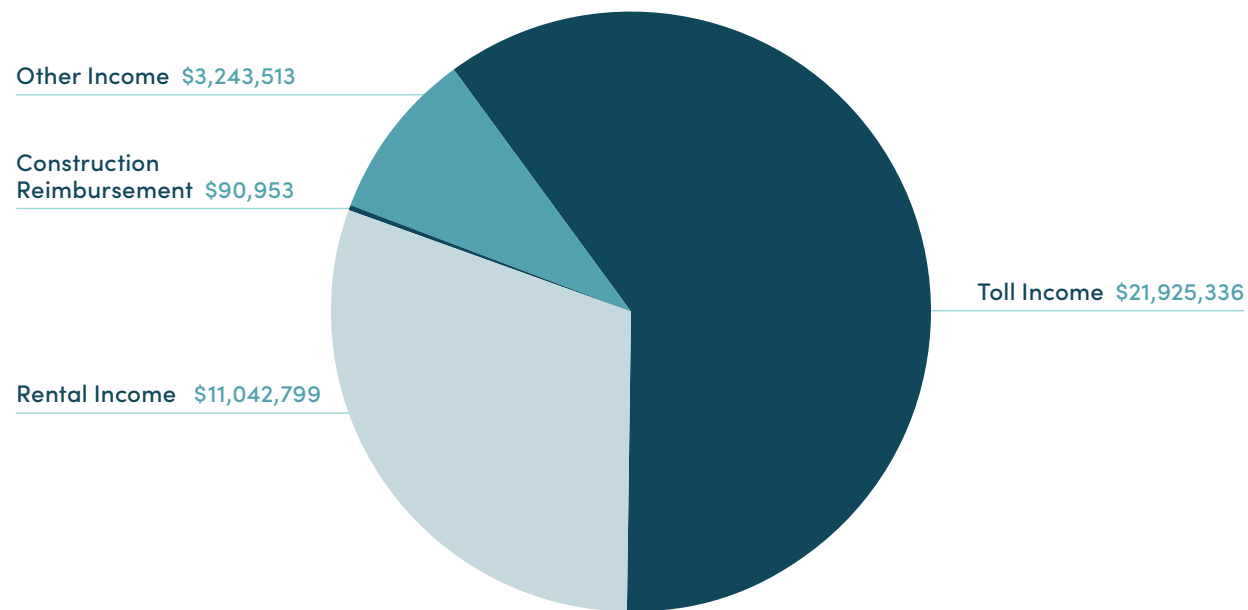


10 YEAR WEST-BOUND COMMERCIAL TRUCK TRAFFIC IN THOUSANDS



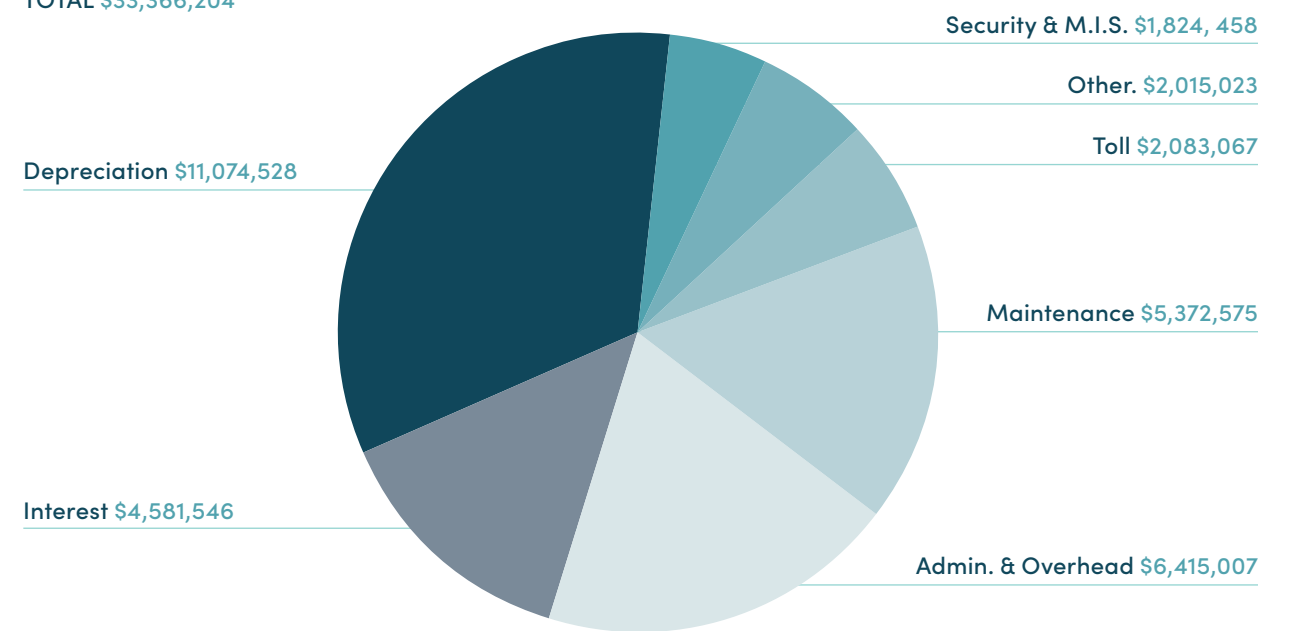
## Income

TOTAL \$36,302,601



## Expenses

TOTAL \$33,366,204





# Finances

## Statements of Financial Position October 31, 2019 and 2018

ASSETS	2019	2018
<b>Current assets:</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$21,243,977	\$88,890,880
Accounts receivable	\$2,061,738	\$3,483,509
Prepaid expenses	\$628,901	\$466,063
Investments	\$57,614,816	\$7,213,383
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>\$81,549,432</b>	<b>\$100,053,835</b>
<b>Noncurrent assets</b>		
Investments	\$44,923,228	\$54,839,513
Land, bridges, buildings and equipment, net	\$299,906,502	\$303,719,880
Construction in progress—30 year plan	\$39,153,125	\$10,956,448
Construction in progress—other	\$10,070,623	\$2,918,191
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$475,602,910</b>	<b>\$472,487,867</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Current portion of bonds payable, net	\$2,160,000	\$6,800,000
Current portion of postretirement benefit obligation	\$871,404	\$833,890
Accounts payable	\$10,804,689	\$7,154,113
Accrued wages and related withholdings	\$1,002,469	\$1,442,249
Other accrued expenses	\$407,915	\$671,772
Bond interest payable	\$361,018	\$383,684
Deferred income	\$983,730	\$1,020,404
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>\$16,591,225</b>	<b>\$18,306,112</b>
<b>Noncurrent liabilities</b>		
Postretirement benefit obligation	\$26,385,676	\$24,494,341
Bonds payable, net	\$102,081,795	\$104,159,074
Total liabilities	\$145,058,696	\$146,959,527
<b>Net assets without donor restriction</b>		
Revenue	\$1,368,639	\$1,523,310
Operation	(\$28,882,212)	(\$27,603,437)
General	\$55,537,298	\$53,915,912
Renewal and replacement	(\$4,009,036)	(\$583,164)
Deby sinking	\$3,799,220	\$3,751,019
Construction	\$308,003,585	\$299,530,111
	\$335,817,494	\$330,533,751
<b>Cumulative effect of foreign currency translation</b>	<b>(\$5,273,280)</b>	<b>(\$5,005,411)</b>
<b>Total net assets without donor restriction</b>	<b>\$330,544,214</b>	<b>\$325,528,340</b>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets without donor restriction</b>	<b>\$475,602,910</b>	<b>\$472,487,867</b>

## Statements of activities and changes in net assets for the years ended October 31, 2019 and 2018

REVENUES	2019	2018
Toll income	\$21,925,336	\$21,331,613
Rental income	\$11,042,799	\$10,958,945
Construction reimbursement	\$90,953	\$1,444,760
Investment income, net	\$3,088,205	\$1,989,805
Miscellaneous	\$155,308	\$157,808
<b>Total revenues</b>	<b>\$36,302,601</b>	<b>\$35,882,931</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Administration and overhead	\$6,415,007	\$6,428,897
Maintenance	\$5,372,575	\$5,336,785
Toll	\$2,083,067	\$2,163,971
Management information systems	\$945,511	\$918,966
Security	\$878,947	\$887,031
Postretirement	\$1,932,302	\$1,875,662
Depreciation	\$11,074,528	\$10,506,528
Interest on indebtedness	\$4,581,546	\$2,887,601
Amortization of bond financing expenses	\$82,721	\$86,742
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$33,366,204</b>	<b>\$31,092,183</b>
<b>Change in net assets before unrealized gain (loss) on investments and change in foreign currency translation</b>	<b>\$2,936,397</b>	<b>\$4,790,748</b>
<b>Unrealized gain (loss) on investments</b>	<b>\$2,347,345</b>	<b>(\$1,302,326)</b>
<b>Change in foreign currency translation (See Note 2)</b>	<b>(\$267,868)</b>	<b>(\$3,649,425)</b>
<b>Change in net assets</b>	<b>\$5,015,874</b>	<b>(\$161,003)</b>
<b>Net assets without donor restriction—beginning of year</b>	<b>\$325,528,340</b>	<b>\$325,689,343</b>
<b>Net assets without donor restriction—end of year</b>	<b>\$330,544,214</b>	<b>\$325,528,340</b>



## In memory of Russell G. Quarantello

The community lost a devoted and enthusiastic leader with the passing of Russell G. Quarantello on August 10, 2019.

Commissioner Quarantello was a Master Electrician and, throughout his career, held positions as a General Foreman, Electrical Foreman and Journeyman Electrician. He was a dedicated member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local #237, serving as an Executive Board Member, President and, most recently, Business Manager. In 2004 and 2005, he also worked for the U.S. Small Business Administration, traveling to the homes of those affected by hurricanes and floods, to provide disaster relief. He was devoted to his community and volunteered his time with many organizations, including the Niagara Falls Boys and Girls Club, the United Way and Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center.

Commissioner Quarantello joined the Board of Commissioners in March of 2012, and served as Chairperson in 2017. He worked diligently on behalf of the Commission. We are grateful for his service and the positive impact that he had within the communities surrounding the Commission's bridges.

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