

# New bridge would boost local job market



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Friday's announcement about a new bridge crossing could be great news for the local job market.

If the \$1 billion project deal is announced as expected, it could create tens of thousands of new jobs in the area.

Windsor's local chamber of commerce has come out as a strong advocate for the new bridge.

Matt Marchand, president and CEO of the chamber, says that a new bridge would bring new prosperity to Windsor-Essex.

“The cross-border infrastructure is the lifeblood of the Windsor-Essex and Ontario economy—and the national economy, for that matter,” he said. “25 percent of all Canada-

US trade comes through Windsor-Detroit, and all of our infrastructure that we have is very dated.”

In fact, the last time we invested in cross-border infrastructure was in the 1920s, Marchand says.

“Our cross-border trade infrastructure needs to be updated, and quicker is better,” he said.

Especially when so much of Canada's trade with our state-side partners takes place via the Windsor-Detroit border.

“They're our largest trading partner, we're their largest trading partner, and the focus of all that trade is Windsor-Detroit,” he said.

Observers hope the new bridge will help alleviate some of the heavy traffic and bottlenecks that occur at the existing crossing on a daily basis.

“The infrastructure that's in place was built and designed in the 1920s, so how could it do anything else but improve our cross-border trade infrastructure?”

A new bridge will also create an estimated 12,000 new jobs per year over the four years of construction, according to a Centre for Automotive Research report.

It would also create about 8,000 permanent jobs once the bridge is operational.

An official announcement about the new bridge is expected Friday afternoon during Prime Minister Stephen Harper's visit to Windsor.

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