

# The Review

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## First rail spike to come out harbinger of big things to come

**I**t was only a short, slender piece of metal, weighing maybe a pound or so, but when it came out of the ground Wednesday it signalled a new day for Niagara Falls.

The ceremonial pulling of the first spike from the railroad tracks at the top of Clifton Hill opens enormous potential for the city - how many centres in the world can you name that have a monorail (if that's what is chosen as a new people mover system) running through them?

Moving the trains from that busy, congested area heralds the arrival of a new transportation system that will be safer, less intrusive and cleaner.

It's not the biggest thing to happen to Niagara Falls - the casino, for one, dwarfs this - but the removal of the trains is an important piece of the puzzle that will be the new shape of the tourist area.

Major work is continuing on both sides of Clifton Hill, modernizing the place though not completely eliminating the carnival atmosphere.

While it was Premier Mike Harris who removed the first spike (and received a boatload of accolades on probably his final visit here as premier), credit for the achievement goes to Mayor Wayne Thomson and the others at city hall who have long worked to make it happen.

Other partners are contributing toward the cost, but this has always been a city project first and foremost. Earlier, there were previous mayors, aldermen and city staff that also fought for it.

In a poor economy and in the midst of war overseas, good news like this is always welcome and points to a future that looks brighter for Niagara Falls.