

north/south fashion, other changes have also taken place. Free trade has created greater mobility of capital and thus has encouraged greater flexibility for investments (Merrett, 1996). Once again the borderlands have felt the impact of this policy through the creation and movement of branch plants, or *maquiladoras*, as they are known on the Mexican border. For example, Cheney, Washington lost its Keytronics computer keyboard plant in 1994 to a branch in Juarez, Mexico. However, later that same year the city gained Haakon Industries, a Canadian manufacturer of medical equipment, which opened the branch plant to not only improve access to U.S. markets, but to take advantage of lower costs for labor, land and transportation. Although the number of Canadian *maquiladoras* in the Inland Northwest is not as great as those along the I-5 corridor in western Washington, their presence is significant in that they indicate another aspect of the economic restructuring which is taking place in the borderlands region as a result of the FTA and NAFTA.

As a result of this increased interaction and exchange along the border, a variety of infrastructure improvements are taking place. Border crossing stations on both sides are being expanded and improved: for example, the commercial truck facility at Blaine, Washington--since 1989 the busiest customs port on the entire northern border--will shortly undergo a \$20 million dollar expansion which will involve levelling a previous facility built in 1976! Ironically, both countries made major improvements in crossing facilities in the early 1980's in anticipation of Vancouver's EXPO '86. Not only did these new crossings help fuel the cross-border shopping boom, but their very success has rendered them obsolete for current traffic levels.

Customs regulations are changing with the introduction of the Canpass/PACE program. This program allows people and vehicles who