
News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 20, 2008

Port Alberta Funding to Build Blueprint for the Future

Edmonton, Alberta — The Government of Canada is investing in the development of a strategic plan to help position Port Alberta as a major North American inland trade and transportation hub.

The Honourable Rona Ambrose, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, announced federal funding of \$1.5 million toward the plan today.

"This investment marks an important step toward building the foundation needed to make Port Alberta a reality and success," said Minister Ambrose. "This investment will help develop a blueprint that will bring the Port Alberta concept to life and create an industry-led council to provide leadership for the initiative."

Port Alberta has the potential to transform Edmonton Region into a major North American warehousing and distribution hub that combines air, rail and road transportation infrastructure with links to Asia and the United States.

"Edmonton is a key inland staging area for trade between Asia and North America, so investing in Port Alberta is an investment in the future of the Edmonton Region," said Edmonton Mayor Stephen Mandel. "As the global port to the oilsands, Edmonton's future as an inland port is key to Canada's economic prosperity."

The funding from Western Economic Diversification Canada will support the building blocks of research, partnership and plans that will contribute to developing a strong and vibrant Port Alberta. The project will identify opportunities for Port Alberta, determine the economic impact and develop an action plan to ensure established targets are met.

"This new funding is vital to developing Port Alberta and positioning Edmonton International Airport, as part of this vital regional initiative, to become a major cargo processing centre, capable of hosting multiple modes of transportation and acting as a catalyst for advancing global trade and distribution across the region," said Reg Milley, President and CEO of Edmonton Airports. "Onsite warehouse and logistics facilities will serve North America's growing trade through NAFTA and with Asia and Europe."

Western Canada and Alberta are well positioned—both geographically and economically—to take advantage of changing dynamics in the global economy. The Edmonton region, in particular, has the potential to become a major North American trade and transportation hub between Asia and North America.

“Alberta’s business environment just got better,” said Martin Salloum, President and CEO of the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce. “In an ever-changing global environment, the communities that will survive over the long run are those that can effectively work together towards a common goal. Twenty years from now, residents of the Edmonton Capital Region will see a more diverse, dynamic economy thanks in part to the Port Alberta partnership and the investment made today by the Government of Canada.”

Efforts to develop Port Alberta were initiated by Edmonton Airports in June 2006. Along with the Airport, the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation and the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce have formed a partnership to champion and direct the initiative. The City of Edmonton has also been a strong advocate for Port Alberta.

"Alberta's vibrant economic growth is based on efficient access to North American and world markets," said Ron Gilbertson, president and CEO of Edmonton Economic Development Corporation. "Port Alberta will coordinate a strategy to optimize Greater Edmonton's road, rail and runway infrastructure so local industry can maximize growth internationally with new export and back-haul opportunities with Asian markets as well as service vital regional markets in Northern Alberta and the far North. Port Alberta will play a vital role in supporting the growth of companies currently in our region and attracting the firms necessary to help support and sustain our ongoing economic growth."

Western Economic Diversification Canada is a department of the Government of Canada that works in partnership with the provinces, industry associations and communities to stimulate and encourage diversification of the western economy. It also represents the interests of the West in national decision-making.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Donna Kinley
Manager, Communications
Western Economic Diversification
Canada
Phone: (780) 495-6892
Cell: (780) 991-7432
Toll-Free Number: 1 888 338-WEST
(9378)
www.wd-deo.gc.ca

Yuri Wuensch
Manager, Media Relations
Edmonton Chamber of Commerce
Phone: (780) 409-2141
E-mail:
wuensch@edmontonchamber.com
www.edmontonchamber.com

Michelle Mondeville
Senior Communications Advisor
Government and Public Affairs
City of Edmonton
Phone: (780) 442-5290
Cell: (780) 619-7246

Jim Rudolph
Corporate Communications Manager
Edmonton Airports
Phone: (780) 890-8454
Cell: (780) 717-5117
E-mail: jrudolph@edmontonairports.com
www.edmontonairports.com

Kenn Bur
Director of Communications
Edmonton Economic Development Corp.
Phone: (780) 917-7659
E-mail: kbur@edmonton.com

A stronger West. A stronger Canada

Backgrounder

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD)

- WD works in partnership with the provinces, industry associations and communities to stimulate and diversify Western Canada's economy, as well as to represent the interests of the West in national economic policy.
- WD is announcing an investment of \$1.5 million towards the development of a strategic plan to establish Port Alberta as a major North American trade and transportation hub.
- WD's investment, made through its Western Diversification Program (WDP), supports the department's priority on facilitating innovation, promoting a competitive and expanded business sector, and fostering community economic development.
- The underlying objective of the WDP is to create *a stronger West and a stronger Canada*. Several guiding principles are used to help assess how initiatives contribute to this objective, including:
 - increased economic activity that improves the viability, prosperity, and standard of living for individuals and communities across Western Canada.
 - increased economic research in the areas of innovation, entrepreneurship and community economic development to provide a sound base for economic diversification in areas of importance to Western Canada.
- Other elements that are considered when determining the relative merit of proposals include: the measurable impact on the western Canadian economy, viability and sustainability, long-term benefits, and the participation of other stakeholders.

Edmonton Airports

Edmonton Airports is a major contributor to regional economic and community development and the fastest-growing major airport in Canada. Located near Edmonton, Alberta's capital city and centre of one of the most vibrant economies in the world, Edmonton Airports is establishing a major, multi-modal transportation hub that links Asia, NAFTA and Europe. Port Alberta will be a significant link in the global supply chain and offer effective, innovative logistic solutions for domestic and international markets.

Originated by Edmonton Airports, Port Alberta is an inland port that takes advantage of Edmonton and Edmonton International Airport's (EIA) strategic location to create a regional, national, and international cargo hub by improving the integration of the supply chain through efficient links between air, surface, rail and marine transportation.

Edmonton and EIA's Strategic Location

- Closest major centre to the Alberta oilsands and the Canadian North's growing diamond industry
- At the heart of Western and Northern Canada - one of world's strongest economic regions
- Immediate access to the CANAMEX transportation corridor connecting Canada, the United States and Mexico
- Adjacent to the largest industrial park in Western Canada and second largest in North America for oil and gas manufacturing
- Situated at the intersection of existing global air routes
- First major centre inland from the Port of Prince Rupert
- Access to complete network of North American rail transportation through CP/CN's rail system in the Edmonton region, including rail links to both west coast points
- Most northern major airport in North America

Infrastructure

- Largest airport by area in Canada with scheduled air service
 - Over 7,000 acres in total; 3,000 available for development
- Two all-weather unrestricted runways
 - 10,600 ft. and 11,000 ft. in an "open-V" configuration to maximize utilization and efficiency with no curfew lights or operating restrictions
- Designated a transshipment zone
 - Imported goods permitted to move via EIA to export without traditional duty tariffs
- Home to Nav Canada's largest air operation centre

Edmonton Chamber of Commerce

Facilitating the development of an inland port in Edmonton is one of the Chamber's five strategic priorities. The goal of the Chamber is to facilitate the creation of an inland port that achieves optimal development and coordinated operation of all modes of transportation infrastructure (roads, rail, air, water and pipeline) for the movement of people and goods that services the World Trade Centre Edmonton Northern Economic Region in the smoothest, most effective and efficient manner possible.

The Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, as advocates of industry, has facilitated multiple venues and channels of communication in support of the strategies. As leaders of the World Trade Center Edmonton network throughout the northern corridor and the Greater Edmonton Regional Chambers of Commerce, the Chamber has a key role to play in aligning industry and influencing advancement of the Port Alberta Strategy.

The Chamber has commissioned a study on Edmonton's potential as an inland port and facilitated meetings and workshops to explore that potential with expertise from Global Trends LTD and the Holland International Development Council.

Edmonton Economic Development Corporation

Edmonton Economic Development Corp. is a not-for-profit company owned by the City of Edmonton that is responsible for regional economic development, regional tourism marketing, the Shaw Conference Centre and Edmonton Research Park.

The City of Edmonton

The City of Edmonton is connected to a world of trade and transportation and is a hub to Alberta's energy, manufacturing and natural resource sectors. As the first major centre on the CN rail line from the Port of Prince Rupert, Edmonton is an extremely desirable connection to rapidly growing Asian markets.

The City of Edmonton is a major contributor to the Port Alberta initiative and recognizes Port Alberta's potential to enhance our region's transportation links and to maximize the economic and trade opportunities between Asia and North America.

Edmonton City Council included Port Alberta as one of its council initiatives for the 2007 – 2010 term with Mayor Stephen Mandel leading this initiative. The city has committed to contributing project resources and support as required to Port Alberta.