



PORTS-TO-PLAINS

TRADE CORRIDOR ALLIANCE



**Securing the Benefits of Commerce to
North America's Energy & Agricultural Heartland**

Ports-to-Plains

City of Lubbock

City News and Calendar

Province of Alberta Joins Ports-to-Plains Alliance, offers new leadership as northern anchor of rural economic development partnership. The First Canadian member joins nine-state coalition, to promote rural development in North America's energy and agricultural heartland

On Tuesday, Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach welcomed leaders of the Ports-to-Plains Alliance, a grassroots rural development coalition based in Lubbock, Texas, to celebrate the Province's recent admission as a member of the Alliance. The meeting took place at Premier Stelmach's office at the Legislature Building in Edmonton.

Through the Alliance, the Alberta government will strengthen its trade relations with local and state government leaders in the nine Alliance states, several of which already rank among Alberta's top trading partners: Texas, Colorado, Oklahoma, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Wyoming. The Alliance will give Alberta the chance to collaborate with other members to better address the challenges and opportunities common to all the communities in the Ports-to-Plains region, North America's energy and agricultural heartland.

"There may be an international border between us, but given the similarity of our priorities, our challenges and our common rural heritage, the potential of our collaboration is limitless," said Premier Stelmach. "We look forward to a highly engaged partnership in Ports-to-Plains activities."

The approximately 38.5 million U.S. citizens of the Ports-to-Plains region produce much of the United States' energy, more than 40 percent of America's agricultural goods, 14 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product, and they account for 20 percent of U.S.-Canada-Mexico trade. Today, the Alliance promotes a broader range of economic goals, all served by a regional inter-modal transportation network.

Tom Martin, Mayor of Lubbock, Texas, led the Ports-to-Plains delegation in Edmonton and welcomed Premier Stelmach and Alberta to the Alliance. "Alberta is the northern anchor of the Ports-to-Plains region," Mayor Martin said. "Tens of thousands of jobs in our region are sustained by trade with the province. Moreover, Alberta is one of the top oil producers in the world. It is only natural that our Alliance would seek out Premier Stelmach to benefit from his leadership and to explore ways to work together to preserve the rural heartland and to promote jobs and development in our rural communities."

Congressman Randy Neugebauer (TX-19), Co-Chair of the Ports-to-Plains Congressional Caucus, and founder of the Ports-to-Plains Trade Corridor Coalition, said, "Throughout the Ports-to-Plains region, our members share remarkably consistent concerns, values and priorities: rural development; the new energy economy;

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transportation and other infrastructure policies that ensure good connectivity between our farms and ranches, and our natural resources, and the urban consumer. It is gratifying to see our organization evolve in a way certain to make it one of the premier forums for North America's rural communities."

The membership announcement is the culmination of nearly two years of talks between the Ports-to-Plains Alliance, led by President Michael Reeves. "One quality of the rural folks who lead our Alliance is their readiness to work together in hard times, and to share in times of abundance," said Reeves. "I have taken many trips to Alberta in the past few years; every time I stepped off the plane, I felt like I was coming home. We are delighted at last to welcome the people of Alberta to the Ports-to-Plains family."

In addition to their meeting with Premier Stelmach, Ports-to-Plains delegation members met Edmonton Mayor Stephen Mandel, were introduced in the Speaker's Gallery of the Alberta Legislature by Alberta Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Len Mitzel, attended the annual Meet the North Trade Show, and announced the Alliance membership at the opening reception of the Alberta Regional Economic Development Conference. Members of the Alliance delegation included: Michael Reeves, President, Ports-to-Plains Trade Corridor Coalition; Joe Kiely, Vice President of Operations, Duffy Hinkle, Vice President of Membership and Marketing, and Scott Flukinger, Policy Advisor.

About the Ports-to-Plains Alliance

The Ports-to-Plains Alliance, based in Lubbock, Texas, is a non-profit, non-partisan, community-driven advocacy group led by mayors, councilpersons and other local elected leaders, economic development officials, business and other opinion leaders from a nine-state, region between Texas, and Alberta, Canada. Over the past decade, Ports-to-Plains Alliance members have helped to raise nearly U.S. \$1 billion in federal funding for road improvements in the nine-state Ports-to-Plains region. Today, we collaborate with our federal and state leaders, partners in Canada and Mexico, and industry partners, to deliver the infrastructure, food and fuel to secure the quality of life of North America's great cities. At the same time, we embrace America's new energy economy, and are capitalizing upon wind power, bio-fuels and other innovation sectors to renew one of America's greatest legacies, the rural heartland. For more information, visit www.portstoplains.com.



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