

PRESS RELEASE – Monday February 22, 2010

Eastern Alberta Corridor – An Alternative to Edmonton/Calgary Corridor?

Increased economic development in eastern Alberta is the goal of a bold new initiative. Three Eastern Alberta Regional Economic Development Alliances (REDAs) are embarking on this initiative that will create a plan to develop and promote an Eastern Alberta Corridor focused on highways 36, 41 and 63 from the US border to the oil sands of Wood Buffalo.

Alan Hyland, Chair of Palliser Economic Partnership, a REDA in south eastern Alberta, feels “Eastern Alberta needs to take advantage of Alberta’s recent membership in the ‘Ports to Plains Trade Corridor Alliance’ a north south economic trade corridor for rural development from the Gulf of Mexico to Alberta”

Bud James, Chair of Battle River Alliance for Economic Development, an east central REDA would like to see “industrial components destined for Fort McMurray to be at least partially assembled by businesses in communities along the Eastern Corridor.”

Don Whittaker, Chair of Alberta HUB, a REDA in north eastern Alberta, sees great potential for “expansion of existing businesses and creation of new businesses to not only supply the oil sands, but as well to export goods and services from eastern Alberta in all directions, including south to the US and Mexico.”

The three REDAs are collaborating on this initiative and have jointly hired the consulting firm Activation Analysis Group Inc. A wide variety of stakeholders including eastern Alberta companies, communities and economic development organizations can expect to be contacted for their input over the next few months. The draft development and marketing plan should be ready for presentation to regional stakeholders by this summer.