



PORT ALBERTA “CONNECTING THE DOTS”

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With the most available land of any major airport in Canada and a \$1-billion expansion program currently underway, Edmonton International Airport (EIA) provides a strong foundation for the ambitious Port Alberta development initiative.

Port Alberta is envisioned as a regional hub of international trade combining air, rail, road and marine modalities into an efficient, seamless transportation network.

Supporting the growth of the Alberta Capital Region's energy sector and a staging area for resource development in the North, Edmonton International Airport is a key link along the CANAMEX and Asia Pacific Gateway Corridors, not to mention one of Canada's fastest-growing major airports over the past three years.

“Our role as an economic driver and hub for Canada's northwest is of distinct importance because there are so many spokes on the Port Alberta wheel,” says airport President and CEO Reg Milley.

“We're Edmonton's airport, certainly, but we also provide air service to the region's 25 member municipalities. We also act as a connecting airport for our northern partner communities. Last year we served a record 6.4 million people including roughly one million connecting passengers.”

As such, Milley believes the success of Port Alberta will ultimately depend on

creating key partnerships and a broad regional perspective.

Partner organizations include the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, the City of Edmonton, Edmonton Economic Development Corp., Western Economic Diversification Canada, the Province of Alberta, City of Leduc, Leduc County and the Leduc-Nisku Economic Development Authority.

To date, these members have made significant progress in researching opportunities, communications, and the establishment of a business case and corporate governance structure.

Port Alberta is included in the strategic plans of many of its stakeholders and aligns with the efforts of the Capital Region Board, a provincially mandated collection of 25 area municipalities tasked with developing regional growth plans encompassing land use, transit, housing and geographical information.

“That degree of recognition of Port Alberta's potential is vital to the ongoing success of the initiative and the diligent

planning process that supports it,” says Milley.

“It's about connecting the dots,” he says. “We're definitely looking at the North and our inland capacity in relation to (moving goods and commodities to and from) Asia via the Port of Prince Rupert in B.C.”

With its year round ice-free, deep-water port Prince Rupert offers the tremendous advantage of being over two days closer sailing time to Asian markets than any other port along the continental west coast.

“Closer to home,” Milley adds, “we are exploring the synergies, efficiencies and opportunities between [Edmonton area] places like the International Region, the Industrial Heartland and the Acheson Industrial Area.”

Port Alberta is in the process of implementing its communications strategy, developing industry partnerships, hiring a president, applying a new governance structure, and instituting a long-term, industry-led, funding model.

For additional information and investment opportunities visit www.flyeia.com. ▲



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