

Edmonton to Houston– Direct



**EDA Executive
Director, Pat Klak**

It just became a lot easier to do business in Texas (and beyond), with the re-establishment of Continental Airlines' non-stop air service between Edmonton and Houston. The new direct flights provided the perfect opportunity for regional political and business leaders to embark on a two-day business mission to Houston on November 16, 2009; a mission designed to build on the many economic relationships that currently exist between Alberta's Capital Region and Houston, and the fact that direct two-way trade between Alberta and Texas over the past five years has averaged \$4.3 billion annually.

The goals of the mission were three-fold: to stimulate passenger volume between Edmonton and Houston, to raise and improve the entire Capital region's image in key markets and to build effective and lasting relationships with Houston business and political leaders. Key messages included:

- Over \$136 billion in planned and proposed capital projects are slated for the greater Edmonton service region.
- Edmonton International Airport is the fastest growing major airport in Canada, offering non-stop daily service to more than 50 national and international destinations, including 11 U.S. non-stop cities.
- The development of Port Alberta; an integrated transportation hub on the region's doorstep, will offer logistics services and solutions for North America and global supply chains.
- Nisku -Leduc Business Park makes up Canada's largest energy park and North America's second largest (second only to Houston), where 30% of companies in the Parks have head offices in Houston and 75% are exporting all over the globe.
- Alberta's Industrial Heartland, just minutes from Edmonton, is one of the top chemical, mineral and energy related processing districts in Canada, where over forty industrial facilities are engaged in diverse activities such as fertilizer production, resource upgrading and refinement, petrochemical development and mineral processing.
- The Capital region is also a center of excellence for advanced manufacturing, agri-business, sustainable energy and environmental technologies and boasts an educated, entrepreneurial workforce of over 600,000.
- The region has ten world-class universities and colleges, led by the University of Alberta, which is on track to become one of the world's top 10 universities by 2020.
- The region enjoys one of the most competitive corporate tax environments in North America, with no provincial sales tax, capital tax or payroll tax.



*"the gateway
to opportunity"*

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The EDA took the opportunity to build on the region's partnerships in Houston with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Trade Center of Houston during the mission. This agreement recognizes that international investment and technology transfer are critical to creating and maintaining a strong economy and increasing the job market and states, in part, that the partners will work together to "facilitate trade opportunities for export and import between participating companies and countries, provide administrative and marketing services to companies, offer business counselling services as required and organize annual trade missions between Houston and Alberta's International Region."

As I said before – it just became a lot easier to do business in Houston! Stay tuned for the next steps in this exciting partnership by checking the EDA's website at www.internationalregion.com.