

## Petrochemical sector a realistic source of growth

**Alberta's Industrial Heartland remains a key player in job and economic expansion in province**

**Edmonton, Alberta (January 21, 2016)** – World demand for petrochemicals is expected to outpace GDP growth over the next decade. This growing demand coupled with Alberta's robust petrochemical sector and abundant feedstock fueled optimism among a capacity crowd at today's annual Stakeholder Luncheon. Key statistics and trends were shared with over 600 leaders in business, industry and government representatives curious about the state of industrial growth given sluggish oil prices.

"We can't change the price of oil. We can't change the global economy," commented Ed Gibbons, Chair of Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association. "We can, however, shift our focus to the petrochemical sector that has long been a strength in Alberta. Not only is it currently holding steady, this sector has the potential to expand despite a gloomy economy."

According to Allan Fogwill, President and CEO of the Canadian Energy Research Institute (CERI), expansion of the petrochemical industry in Canada is a reasonable option. A recent CERI study showed that low cost and abundant feedstock in the province is a key factor for a competitive petrochemical sector in Alberta.

Sharing details on exactly what this growth could mean for the province, Neil Shelly, Executive Director of Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association estimates new capital investment could total \$27.5 billion and generate 24,000 construction jobs. This includes new facilities to refine bitumen, produce fertilizer, and process propane.

"While we see the potential for Alberta, we are operating in a very competitive market for global investment," explained Shelly. He further noted that achieving success for Alberta will require a cooperative effort with industry, investors, and government on issues such as market access, capital cost, taxation, and regulatory processes.

"The Alberta government looks forward to working in collaboration with the Heartland region and its stakeholders as it looks at new ways to attract investment, create jobs and encourage innovation and diversification," remarked Honourable Deron Bilous, Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

### Project Updates

Six major companies [presented updates](#) of their existing operations and planned industrial projects in the Heartland. Their projects represent part of the \$12+ billion of construction activity underway.

Other featured topics included insight from the panel discussion of top industry executives, new technology, and industry's contributions to the community.

### **Keynote: Outlook on the global energy sector**

Keynote speaker Robert Johnston, CEO and Director of Global Energy and Natural Resources at Eurasia Group offered insight about emerging political risks and the geopolitical context reshaping global energy markets. He explained, "Given the groundbreaking international and domestic factors driving energy markets today, how is this structurally bearish operating environment affecting industry in Alberta? Canadian producers will need to address the current significant market challenges and regulatory risks in order to guarantee a better tomorrow."

For more information and regular updates on Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association, visit [www.industrialheartland.com](http://www.industrialheartland.com) or follow @ABHeartland on Twitter.

*Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association is dedicated to coordinating, advocating, and promoting sustainable industrial development in the region. The Association is a cooperative effort of Lamont County, Strathcona County, Sturgeon County, and the Cities of Edmonton and Fort Saskatchewan.*

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