



PORTS-TO-PLAINS

TRADE CORRIDOR



The Ports-to-Plains Trade Corridor Coalition is extending an invitation to participate in its initial Economic Development Workgroup meeting on November 13, 2008.

The Ports-to-Plains Trade Corridor Coalition is, above all, a 9-state network of people who share the same interest in the robust, sustainable growth of jobs and investment throughout the Ports-to-Plains corridor.

Ports-to-Plains Trade Corridor is not just a road. It is a 9-state economic development region whose communities share common opportunities and challenges in the new century. The Ports-to-Plains Coalition helps them to market themselves as part of major economic region driven not only by legacy industries like natural resource extraction, cattle-raising and farming, but by the new technologies in which the Ports-to-Plains region is destined to play critical, leadership roles for the entire world, such as biotechnology; biofuels; wind power; and clean energy technology.

This meeting will be held in Gering, NE on November 13, 2008 at the Gering Civic Center

from 9:30-11:30 a.m. Gering is located about three hours north of Denver in the Nebraska panhandle. This meeting is a critical step in helping member communities leverage the Corridor and the Coalition to promote local business and tourism, foster new economic activity and jobs, and attract new investment. Please consider attending this coalition-wide meeting. This meeting will be held in conjunction with the Heartland Expressway Conference which is described below. **If you plan to attend the Heartland Expressway meeting, please RSVP to Panhandle Area Development District so they can plan for lunch.**

Please confirm your intent to attend the Economic Development Workgroup to joe.kiely@ports-to-plains.com.



PORTS-TO-PLAINS
TRADE CORRIDOR



Limon Office
P.O. Box 9
Limon, CO 80828
Phone: 719/775/2346
Fax: 719/775/9073

Lubbock Office
5401 N MLK Blvd., Unit 395
Lubbock, TX 79403
Phone: 806/775/2338
Fax: 806/775-3981

www.portstoplains.com



Heartland **E X P R E S S W A Y**

“Preparing the Heartland Expressway for the Next Transportation Bill”

An Invitation to Community and Business Leaders

Thursday, November 13 at noon

Gering Civic Center
1050 M Street
Gering NE 69341

(Intersection of Highway 92 and Tenth Street in Gering, NE)

As we approach the next transportation reauthorization process, surface transportation in the United States may change dramatically. Ongoing discussions about the federal role in transportation programs and funding; funding shortfalls and the issues surrounding earmarks may make this reauthorization nothing like we have seen since the ISTEA Reauthorization in 1991 when Heartland Expressway was first designated as a federal high priority corridor.

In the 2005 SAFETEA-LU reauthorization, the final step in designating the Heartland route south and west of Scottsbluff was completed. South Dakota has made tremendous progress in developing the four-lane divided highway from Rapid City to the Nebraska state line. That work is scheduled for completion in 2012. Nebraska, through state and federal funding has made good headway. Working as a coalition, the western Nebraska communities were able to work with Governor Heineman to announce the \$25 million Kimball project will begin by the end of this year and a 14.5-mile, \$22.8 million segment of the Heartland Expressway along Highway 385 between the Morrill-Box Butte County line and Angora, will be moved up to 2010.

Those successes, however, are not the end of the trail. We must be diligent in completing work in those two states, but also must also take greater steps to cooperatively take steps to connect these completed roadways to the northwest, to the north and to the south.

To accomplish this larger vision and to help define and influence the next reauthorization rather than just respond to its outcome, we would like to discuss the formation of a larger alliance of nine states. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this important discussion that may effect our transportation system and economies for years to come.

Lunch is provided for persons who RSVP. A limited number of lunches will be available for \$10 to those who do not RSVP.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP to the Panhandle Area Development District at (308) 436-6584 no later than November 10, 2008

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