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**New external advisory committee established to help Alberta's transportation system meet present and future challenges.**

Calgary... Experts from across the transportation industry are being brought together to assist the Alberta government in planning the future of transportation in the province and to provide input into the long-term vision necessary to address Alberta's transportation challenges.

Infrastructure and Transportation Minister Dr. Lyle Oberg has created the External Advisory Committee on Strategic Transportation Policy to review and provide advice on a broad range of provincial transportation issues.

"This committee will provide an essential outside perspective to government's planning and consideration of transportation issues ranging from road infrastructure to high speed trains and access to export markets," Oberg said. "The group will play a key role in ensuring Alberta is working strategically to respond to current issues and future opportunities."

The committee will be co-chaired by Oberg and Art Smith, former chair of the Alberta Economic Development Authority, and will be made up of representatives from transportation-related organizations and stakeholders, including municipalities. It will also include representation from the Alberta Economic Development Authority transportation committee. Membership will be determined by the two co-chairs. The committee's role will include providing feedback on government's long-range infrastructure plan, which covers all modes of transportation, and will also include identifying areas where the government should be targeting funding. The committee will also provide advice on legislative, policy and regulatory issues related to transportation.

"I've felt for some time now that the views of representatives outside of government on these issues should be available to the government in order for it to have the complete picture," Smith said. "This group of external experts will provide these views."

The committee will meet twice yearly with the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation, and is expected to have its first meeting early in the New Year.

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