

## **2025 SPRING MEMBER FORUM**

### **Charting the Course in an Era of Uncertainty**

**April 30 and May 1, 2025**  
**Fairmont Hotel Macdonald & Government House**

Global economic forces, shifting trade dynamics, and political uncertainty in the U.S. are redefining the landscape for Canada's freight transportation and export sectors. WESTAC's 2025 Spring Member Forum will provide a forward-looking analysis of key economic and political developments, equipping industry leaders with the knowledge to navigate risks and seize new opportunities. From U.S. policy shifts and trade diversification to overcoming barriers in major projects, this forum will bring together top experts and industry leaders to discuss actionable strategies for securing long-term prosperity in Western Canada.

#### **Venues**

##### **Fairmont Hotel Macdonald**

10065 100 St NW

- Guest rooms
- Meeting (April 30)
- Breakfast (May 1)

##### **Government House (May 1)**

12845 102 Ave NW

- Leaders' Council
- Board of Directors meeting

[Register Online](#)

- 7:00 am **Hot Buffet Breakfast**
- 7:45 am **Annual General Meeting**
- Hon. Devin Dreeshen Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors, Government of Alberta & incoming Chair, WESTAC
- 8:00 am **Welcoming Remarks & Introductions**
- Hon. Devin Dreeshen Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors, Government of Alberta & incoming Chair, WESTAC
  - Lindsay Kislock, President & CEO, WESTAC
- 8:15 am **The First 100 Days**
- At the 100-day mark of President Donald Trump's second term, the administration has been moving quickly to implement its agenda, delivering on many campaign promises that are reshaping domestic and global dynamics. What can we anticipate from the administration for the remainder of 2025 and beyond? From trade and taxation to industrial policy and energy security, this session will uncover the enduring trends shaping American politics and how they will influence business and policy in the years ahead.
- Speakers:
- Bruce Mehlman, Mehlman Consulting (*confirmed*)
  - Hon. James Moore, former federal cabinet minister for Industry, and Secretary of State for the Asia-Pacific Gateway; member of Canada-US Trade Council (*confirmed*)
- 10:00 am **Break**
- 10:30 am **Trading Up**
- Trade is dominating the news these days. With a litany of mixed messages coming from the US, including continued talk about buy America and the threat of tariffs, it's easy to forget that much of our economic growth and prosperity comes from international trade. This session will focus on the realistic prospects for Western Canada to meaningfully diversify goods exports.
- Speakers:
- Ross Prusakowski, Deputy Chief Economist, Economic Development Canada (*invited*)
- 11:30 am **Lunch with Speaker**
- Dan Gardner, Author, How Big Things Get Done (*confirmed*)

1:00 pm

### **Getting Big Things Done: Overcoming Barriers to Major Projects**

Major infrastructure and industrial projects are essential for Canada's economic growth, yet they face daunting challenges—from cost overruns and delays to regulatory hurdles, investment uncertainty, and the need for meaningful Indigenous partnerships. This session will explore why so many projects fail, what it takes to get them right, and how smarter planning, better regulation, and stronger collaboration can unlock Canada's potential. Experts will share insights on streamlining approvals, improving execution, and ensuring government policies support—not obstruct—major investments.

- **Brad Gilmour**, Partner, ESG, Osler *(confirmed)*
- **Ryan Tones**, Senior Vice President, Kiewit Construction *(confirmed)*
- **Tim Philpotts**, Government & Public Sector Strategy and Transactions Market Segment Leader, EY Canada *(confirmed)*
- **Additional speaker tbd**

2:30 pm

### **Break**

3:00 pm

### **Getting to 100: Unlocking the Full Potential of the Northern Corridor**

The economic corridor linking Northern Alberta to the Port of Prince Rupert is a vital gateway for Canadian exports, offering exceptional access to global markets. But how can this corridor scale up to handle 100 million metric tonnes of cargo, generating \$100 billion in annual trade? This session will explore the investments, infrastructure, and innovations needed to unlock its full potential. Industry leaders will share insights on market opportunities, supply chain efficiencies, and policy considerations that will shape the future of this critical trade route.

- **Details to be announced shortly**

4:30 pm

**Keynote: Premier Danielle Smith** *(invited)*

5:00 pm

### **Reception**

7:15 am      **Breakfast at the Fairmont** (*open to all attendees*)

8:00 am      **Travel to Government House (complimentary shuttle via taxi)**

## **WESTAC LEADER'S COUNCIL**

**The Leader's Council is open to one representative of member organizations. Sustaining members are allowed one additional representative.**

8:30 am      Each forum concludes with an in camera, frank discussion among the most senior representatives of member organizations. Participation is limited to one representative from each member organization and excludes non-members. No reporting will take place.

The overarching goal of the Leader's Council is to have a frank, action-oriented dialogue among the most senior representatives of member organizations, driving meaningful outcomes for Canada's transportation sector.

More details to be released shortly.

10:30 am      Meeting adjourns

10:45 am      **Board of Directors Meeting**

12:00 pm      **Board Meeting adjourns**