

- 7.6 The United States decided some years ago to close its trade consulate in Winnipeg, and there is no one in the province representing that government to work with Manitobans seeking information on trade issues from the US perspective. It would be useful for both the United States and Mexico to arrange to have local international trade representation of some sort to work directly with potential Canadian exporters, importers and investors in the corridor.

Recommendation

Encourage the US Government to re-establish a consulate in Winnipeg, and work with the Mexican federal government to establish commercial representation in the province to promote trade links.

Infrastructure and Investment

- 7.7 A set of issues arose in the Task Force discussions concerning the need to ensure that the corridor obtains adequate investment in infrastructure and services. The Government of Canada should be making its case for investments that reinforce Canada's corridor initiatives, particularly to its counterpart in Washington where US federal government funding is currently being allocated for transportation development across the United States. The states and local governments in the region would find it helpful for the Canadian government to support their case for the Mid-Continent International Trade Corridor region's priority in the allocation of US government funds. The Government of Canada, in conjunction with Mexico, could do so by demonstrating the international trade benefits which all three countries would receive from such investments in the corridor's transportation infrastructure.

Recommendation

Encourage the US Government to give priority to directing its funding for transportation infrastructure investment into projects that will build the corridor and its border crossings, and more efficiently link the trade systems of the three countries.

- 7.8 There is an opportunity for Canadian trade development to become a corridor-wide initiative, establishing common marketing themes and projects for the central North America region. The Government of Canada should look carefully at the value of strengthening its trade commission representation in the United States and Mexico. It could also contribute to the corridor's viability by coordinating the resources of the three Canadian consulates in the US segment of the corridor and the Monterrey and Guadalajara consulates in Mexico. The use of Canadian trade representatives across the region has been of great value to small- and medium-sized firms, particularly those entering the US and Mexican markets for the first time.

Recommendation

Ensure coordination of the work of the Canadian consulates in Monterrey, Guadalajara, Dallas, Chicago and Minneapolis to assist Canadian firms and expand opportunities through trade missions and investment promotion across the Mid-Continent International Trade Corridor region.