

**Infrastructure and investment** is a second crucial issue. In several instances, infrastructure development is needed and this corridor can demonstrate that the funding of such investment in all three countries is justified in generating returns through economic growth and regional development. A strong case was shown to this Task Force for new investment in this corridor region for expansion of both trade and transportation facilities. The value of such investment in a series of targeted projects would help to improve the viability of corridor and make its use both more efficient and more attractive for users.

**Education and training** refers to issues surrounding the human resources and work skills that are emerging as crucial factors in relation to the corridor. There is considerable scope and potential for the integration of the training resources across the Corridor region, including the expansion of Manitoba's post-secondary educational system to deliver courses and programs beyond its provincial borders through distance learning. The growth of Manitoba as a primary centre for the corridor's educational services, in technical trades and logistics for the transportation industry, could be built on the existing foundations of the province's training systems. The relationships between educational institutions and industry sectors are becoming all the more important.

The fourth category of issues — **innovation** — should become a hallmark of the Mid-Continent Trade Corridor. It needs to develop unique characteristics and services which will set it apart from its competitors and demonstrate its value in more tangible ways. An example of one current initiative of this sort is the use of fibre optic cable along the interstate highway system in the corridor to allow data flows for customs clearance and tracing that would minimize vehicle inspection requirements. The unique characteristic this corridor should portray is its inventiveness and innovative approach, though it will require both investment and a considerable degree of marketing to demonstrate this capability. It will also necessitate research and development to pursue new technology and identify opportunities for applications. For this corridor, the growth and nurturing of an information highway across the corridor will be as crucial for its success as any investment in roads and railways.

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**Recommendation**  
Focus further negotiations with the US and Mexico under NAFTA to establish fair and consistent reciprocal arrangements for transportation sector personnel.