Future Materials Alliance

Central Alberta Corridor Workshop Series

Output Report

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BMAC | Battery Metals Association of Canada

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About the Future Materials Alliance

A coalition of stakeholders and Rights holders united behind a common purpose of integrating Western and Northern Canada into the national and global critical mineral value chain.

Western Canada has the resources, expertise, and know-how to drive the future economy, especially when it comes to the minerals and materials needed to build resilient systems.

From extraction to processing to recycling, the west is set to build and integrate into supply chains that not only power the energy transition, but also support other critical sectors — while balancing economic opportunity with environmental and social responsibility.

Aligning Western Canada's strategic advantages to sustainably meet global critical materials demand and drive economic growth

As global supply chains shift and geopolitical competition intensifies, countries are racing to secure the inputs needed for growing industrial and social needs.

Western Canada can help meet these needs with its abundant critical mineral reserves, but currently lacks the midstream processing and refining capacity to convert raw resources into high-value materials.

While this gap presents a strategic vulnerability, it's also an opportunity for economic growth and trade diversification.

Yet without coordinated action, the status quo persists: raw materials are exported, finished goods are imported, and the economic value of processing is captured elsewhere.

By aligning industry, Indigenous partners, governments, and communities, we can coordinate efforts to secure Canada's place in global supply chains while ensuring the benefits are shared widely and the work is done sustainably.

The underlying logic of the *Future Materials Alliance (FMA)* is that purposeful and coordinated action is necessary for the West and North to more quickly and comprehensively integrate into the national and global critical material supply chain.

The Future Materials Alliance is a collaborative initiative to accelerate this opportunity.

Executive Summary

On October 21, 2025, forty-five representatives from governments, Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, industry, regulatory agencies, academia, and expert organizations convened in Red Deer for the inaugural Workshop of the Future Materials Alliance.

Formerly the Western Canadian Critical Materials Alliance (WCCMA).

This event marked the formal launch of the Central Alberta Corridor (CAC) as the first regional industrial zone within a broader, multi-year effort to build a resilient, more sovereign critical materials ecosystem across Western and Northern Canada.

The purpose of this Workshop was not simply to discuss supply chains. It was to begin building a shared understanding and a shared story about what the CAC could become in a global critical materials landscape, and how it fits into a broader Western and Northern Canadian ecosystem.

The Workshop launched a process rooted in the Energy Futures Lab methodology: build social infrastructure first, which accelerates the build-out of physical infrastructure. Establish shared understanding, trust, and collective purpose, then move toward joint action, project origination, and ecosystem formation.

A shared narrative emerged: Western Canada's potential for critical materials is immense but fragmented, requiring a fundamental shift from a commodity-based, project-focused mindset to a sophisticated, advanced materials industrial strategy rooted in collaboration.

The Workshop confirmed that the CAC is strategically positioned to anchor a multi-billion-dollar refining corridor for Western and Northern Canada, Canada's Midstream Anchor, leveraging its robust industrial infrastructure and specialized workforce.

Throughout the day, participants validated the Alliance's foundational thesis:

> ***Canada will not achieve economic security or global competitiveness in critical materials unless it develops an integrated, midstream-focused, ecosystem-based approach - one that connects communities, companies, governments, and Indigenous partners in shared strategy and implementation.***

This report synthesizes the insights and themes that emerged from the Workshop, incorporating participant feedback and recommendations from expert presentations. Together, these elements reveal a strong conviction that the CAC (as a part of Western Canada) has the talent, industrial capacity, and resource endowment to become a global leader in critical materials - provided it moves with intentionality, coordination, and a sustained commitment to ecosystem development rather than a patchwork of isolated projects.

Introduction and Context

Canada is navigating an era of profound economic and geopolitical transformation. The collapse of the post-Cold War trade regime, the rise of strategic resource nationalism, and the intensifying competition for technological leadership are reshaping the global order. Critical materials lie at the center of these shifts. They are the essential ingredients powering electrification, digitalization, defense systems, industrial decarbonization, and clean energy pathways. Yet, despite having abundant raw materials, Canada remains heavily dependent on foreign countries for the refining of its critical minerals and the production of high-purity materials.

The Future Materials Alliance was established in recognition of this vulnerability. Drawing upon five years of on-the-ground ecosystem engagement, the Alliance is designed as a cluster manager with a mandate to accelerate Western and Northern Canada's integration into domestic and allied supply chains. Its core strategy is to build a durable coalition capable of stewarding long-term, multi-jurisdictional, multi-sectoral action across political cycles and market fluctuations.

The Alliance will not achieve this solely through policy proposals or technical studies; its theory of change affirms that social infrastructure (i.e. respect-based relationships, common understanding, shared purpose, and a collaborative ethos) is the necessary foundation upon which physical infrastructure and industrial clusters can develop.

The Future Materials Alliance is a bold response to this moment designed to:

- Build a durable coalition uniting governments, industry, and communities;
- Embed Indigenous economic leadership;
- Accelerate learning, reduce duplication, and drive coordinated action;
- Move beyond "rip-and-ship" mentality toward value-added midstream processing;
- Move beyond fragmented project-level incentives to build an ecosystem capable of competing globally;
- Strengthen Canada's economic security, competitiveness, and sovereignty; and,
- Embody a nation-building ethos of working together across jurisdictions.

Central Alberta Corridor

The first of two workshops was held in Red Deer on Oct 21, 2025 convening ecosystem actors, stakeholders, and rights holders for the inaugural Workshop of the Future Materials Alliance.

The CAC is the first regional cluster to enter the FMA process - chosen for its industrial advantages, infrastructure, workforce, innovation ecosystem, and central geographic position between Western Canada's upstream resource regions and downstream industrial processing clusters. The region is positioned on a north–south industrial and innovation axis stretching from Alberta's Industrial Heartland (AIH) and the Edmonton Capital Region, through Red Deer and the Joffre complex, and down to the Calgary Region, encompassing a dense ecosystem of heavy industry, fabrication and services hubs, polytechnics, universities, Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, technology firms, and corporate headquarters.

It conceptually binds together the region's interconnected resource base - including lithium-rich brines between Edmonton and Calgary - with its processing infrastructure, workforce, and advanced materials capabilities into an integrated, place-based industrial cluster. Red Deer, as the geographic centre of the Corridor, was chosen for Workshop #1 to symbolically and practically reinforce that this is an initiative about the region as a whole, not only the dominant metropolitan centres.

The Workshop did not aim to produce a finished strategy in a single day. Rather, it was designed to initiate a shared understanding of the region's strengths, vulnerabilities, and opportunities; to surface what is already known from four-plus years of analysis and convening across Western Canada; to build relationships that will underpin a longer-term process of ecosystem development; and critically, to generate the first signals of collective priorities.

Why the Central Alberta Corridor

The CAC is uniquely positioned to serve as the midstream nexus of Western Canada's critical materials supply chain

Regionally situated between upstream resource zones to the north and west and downstream manufacturing clusters near Edmonton and beyond, it possesses the industrial infrastructure, workforce capability, regulatory environment, and logistical advantages necessary for processing and refining.

Among the existing strengths, the participants highlighted:

- the **Corridor's industrial ecosystem**, including the Alberta's Industrial Heartland and the Joffre/Prentiss clusters;
- A competitive regulatory environment for industrial projects;
- the concentration of transport infrastructure, including dual rail connectivity and pipeline networks; and,
- the presence of carbon capture and storage assets and abundant pore space; and,
- land availability as well as competitive land and tax rates.

Alberta's skilled workforce and world-class engineering and construction capacity were frequently mentioned as foundational strengths.

It was noted that while Alberta's polytechnics and universities have strong academic, research, and training capacity relevant to critical materials and advanced materials, programs must be updated to optimize training of new professionals.

Promising advantages to develop included:

- centralized hubs for midstream processing;
- a focused and supportive innovation ecosystem;
- a transparent and accessible data regime;
- **better integration with upstream extraction regions in Alberta, Saskatchewan, BC; and NWT;**
- **enhanced and integrated clean power infrastructure;**
- **stronger institutionalized Indigenous partnerships; and,**
- the deliberate use of Alberta's oil and gas expertise and assets as a bridge into critical materials and advanced material production.

Participants noted the potential to leverage defence infrastructure being built and expanded to support national and NORAD routes North.

Organizations Represented

Oct 21, 2025 Workshop at Red Deer Polytechnic

Participant Contributions

Resonant Ideas

Drawn from opening remarks delivered by the Energy Futures Lab's Brian Nicholson, participants recognized that minerals alone do not create security or prosperity, echoing the idea that without processing and manufacturing, Canada's critical minerals narrative is incomplete. Participants wrote that the lack of processing capacity is a bottleneck, and that the Alliance's decision to focus there feels both overdue and strategically sound.

Participants expressed a strong sense that the opportunity before Western Canada is real and significant. Many also appreciated the honest discussion of trade-offs: that it is impossible to maximize speed, sustainability, inclusivity, security, comprehensiveness, and competitiveness simultaneously, and that some form of equilibrium must be negotiated across these priorities. The importance of collaboration, shared decision-making, and Indigenous economic reconciliation resonated throughout the room.

Despite enthusiasm, participants felt that several important issues had not yet been fully addressed. Many wanted a better understanding of downstream demand, clearer pathways for offtake agreements, and deeper discussion of enabling infrastructure such as transportation corridors and clean power supply.

Others emphasized the need for early, sustained engagement with Indigenous communities and a better integration of Treaty Rights, Impact Benefit Agreements, and community priorities.

Several flagged the lack of alignment across federal and provincial governments and the absence of a coherent national industrial strategy capable of accommodating regional needs.

Inhibiting and Helping Forces

Inhibiting Forces

Participants were candid, identifying several obstacles that could impede progress.

- **An over-reliance on short-term political cycles, a perceived lack of political support and policy coherence, and intergovernmental tensions was among the most frequently cited challenges**.

- Participants emphasized a lack of policy coherence and specific critical material strategies supporting the build-out of the sector. Understanding what program supports are available for the sector and how to access them remain a challenge.

- Mindset and narrative barriers were also mentioned, with legacy industry mentalities and a **tendency for provincial leadership to remain anchored in conventional oil and gas** narratives a common concern.

- On the economic side, many expressed frustration with the **risk-averse nature of Canadian capital markets** and the **difficulty of financing midstream projects in the face of volatile commodity prices and technological uncertainty**. Participants cited the **mismatch between the long time horizons of midstream projects and the shorter time horizons of many investors**.

- Global market challenges were highlighted, **including China's state-supported dominance** in processing and refining, disruptive trade policies, and ongoing geopolitical tensions. US trade protectionism and focus on domestic production presents a significant challenge.

- The sheer size of Western Canada presents a major constraint, with the **distances between disaggregated mineral resources and the industrial clusters exacerbated by constrained rail and transport infrastructure**.

Industry Expert Insights

Throughout the workshop series, participants received several presentations from experts actively engaged in the sector, including Dr. John Zhou of Alberta Innovates and Emissions Reduction Alberta, Chris Malayney from Alberta's Industrial Heartland, the Battery Metals Association of Canada's Chairman - Eric Pelletier, Sosthène Ung of the Transition Accelerator, and John Merritt of PRISM Diversified.

Workshop 2 included a panel discussion on access to capital moderated by the Future Materials Alliance Director, Brian Nicholson, that featured Connie Stacey of Grengine, April Hayward of Li-FT Power, Brian Ceelen of E3, and John Merritt.

Dr. John Zhou

Alberta Innovates & Emissions Reduction Alberta

Dr. Zhou presented on the results of a rigorous examination of Alberta's real opportunities in critical materials and advanced materials, summarizing for the participants and cementing the technical case for high-value specialization focusing on Alberta's unconventional feedstocks.

He outlined the province's immense possibilities ("tens-of-billions-of-dollars" opportunities) for producing advanced carbon materials, including hard carbon, carbon fibre, activated carbon, and synthetic graphite. His message was nuanced: Alberta does not have outstanding deposits for every critical mineral, but it does have promising opportunities in brine-based lithium.

The emerging scientific evidence was laid out for the Workshop participants that Alberta's bitumen may be one of the province's most important feedstocks for future advanced materials industries.

Chris Malayney

Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association

Mr. Malayney shared with the group that AIH already possesses the kind of integrated energy, feedstock, storage, and logistics infrastructure that other regions would need decades to build from scratch. It is, in effect, a pre-built platform for additional midstream and materials processing.

AIH offers the CAC a uniquely mature industrial platform, combining dual rail connectivity, heavy-haul logistics, and immediate access to natural gas, NGLs, low-carbon hydrogen and industrial gases, and process chemicals - all supported by experienced constructors who routinely deliver complex, world-scale projects. Its integrated utility networks and proximity to CCUS infrastructure enable low-carbon processing that few jurisdictions can match. Critically, the streamlined regulatory regime, municipal tax incentives, and pre-zoned heavy-industrial lands create one of Canada's fastest, lowest-friction environments for siting new midstream and advanced materials facilities.

A recent minerals study was summarized for the Workshop participants, identifying the greatest opportunities for mineral processing in Alberta, concluding on synthetic graphite production and lithium brine processing (with nickel, cobalt, and rare earth processing determined to be moderate opportunities).

Eric Pelletier & Sosthène Ung

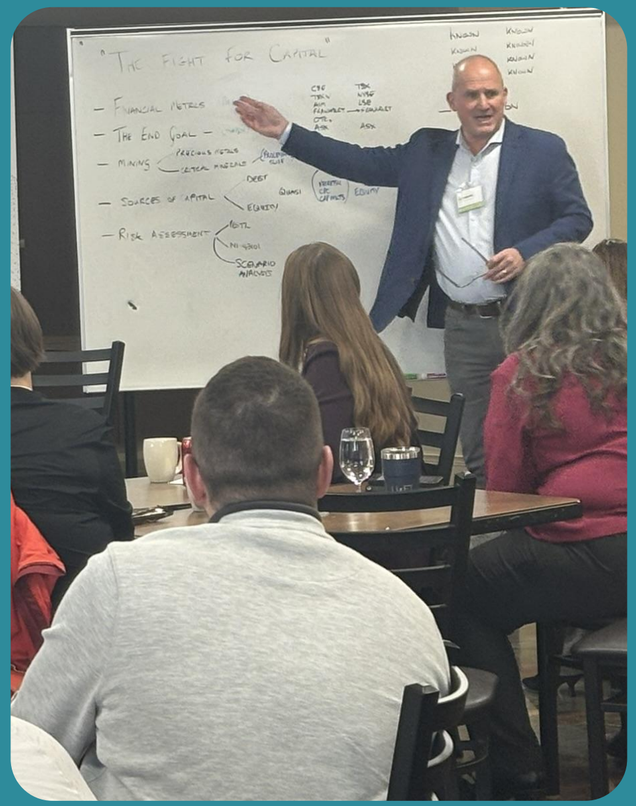
BMAC & Montrose Environmental; The Transition Accelerator

Messrs. Pelletier and Ung delivered the final presentation and shared with the audience several years of in-depth analysis informed by flowsheet mapping, cluster mapping, and Energy Futures Lab industry convening.

The BMAC/TA/EFL reports demonstrated that Western Canada has all the ingredients for a competitive and resilient regional supply chain but lacks the coordination needed to connect these elements into an integrated whole. Their “give-and-go” and “bar-down” models illustrated how materials, energy, and expertise could flow among different industrial clusters if regional actors collaborate intentionally.

The Corridor is well-positioned for refining nickel, cobalt, and vanadium; producing sulfates and precursor cathode active materials; and leveraging its petrochemical and carbon infrastructure to produce anode materials such as synthetic graphite.

Their conclusion was that Western Canada’s opportunity is best understood as a system of connected clusters, each with distinct functions but linked through material flows and shared infrastructure. In that system, the CAC has the potential to play a pivotal role if it builds out the right capacities and relationships.



John Merritt

PRISM Diversified

In his presentation Mr. Merritt grounded the access-to-capital discussion in a fundamental reality: capital markets are not short of money, but they are highly selective, risk-driven, and unevenly distributed across commodities and project types. Traditional mining segments such as gold and base metals continue to attract capital, while many critical-materials projects struggle. This is largely because investors perceive them as unfamiliar, technologically complex, and exposed to compounded risks that are difficult to price.

Merritt emphasized that all capital allocation ultimately comes down to risk assessment. Investors are paid to understand, price, and manage risk, not to absorb uncertainty blindly. Using the “known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns” framework, he underscored that the most damaging barrier to investment is not technical challenge per se, but unidentified or poorly articulated risk. In sectors such as mining construction and mineral processing (where execution risk is high and knowledge is often siloed) unknown unknowns are what most often derail projects and deter capital.

The presentation walked participants through the full spectrum of capital sources, highlighting that different capital types enter at different stages of the project lifecycle. Merritt also outlined the strategic trade-offs between remaining private versus going public, noting that while public markets offer liquidity, they also introduce volatility, short selling, and dilution risks that can materially impair a company’s ability to raise primary capital at critical moments.

A central theme was the mining company growth lifecycle, illustrating how valuation rises as risk is retired and how early dilution, while unavoidable, can still create substantial long-term value if projects advance successfully. Importantly, Merritt reminded participants that only a small fraction of mining companies ever reach commercial success, reinforcing why investors apply conservative filters and why credibility, experience, and risk reduction are paramount.

Access to Capital

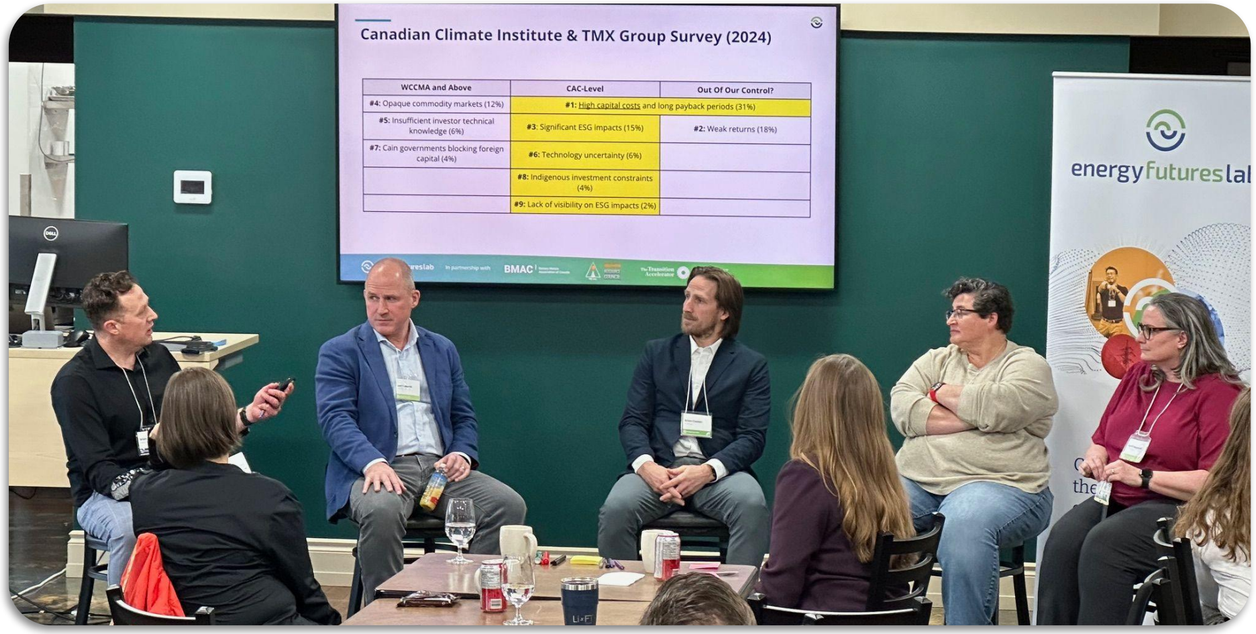
A critical challenge

Industry insiders joined us for a panel to discuss barriers, pain points, and success stories in accessing the capital and financing required to move their businesses, and projects forward in this highly rated session, signalling a need for coordinated action to meaningfully unlock investment.

Access to Capital

Access to capital was a recurring and persistent theme across the Central Alberta Corridor conversations. These concerns cut across upstream, midstream, and downstream segments, reinforcing that capital constraints are not isolated project-level issues, but ecosystem-level challenges. Together, these discussions surfaced how capital barriers shift over time, how investors price compounded risk, and why credibility, validation, and momentum often matter as much as technical fundamentals in determining whether projects attract investment.

Acting as a coordinated coalition (rather than as isolated proponents) allows the region to reduce risk, send clearer signals to investors, and do so more efficiently and effectively than any single project could on its own. The objective is not simply to advocate for more capital, but to build the confidence and credibility that it requires. The following takeaways reflect that collective insight and outline where coordinated action can most meaningfully unlock investment, and are drawn from participant feedback and an expert panel discussion held at the second workshop.



Access to Capital: Takeaways

1

Organizing for Capital is a Shared Imperative

Capital is not flowing into CAC critical-materials projects at the scale or speed required, and isolated projects cannot compete effectively for scarce investment.

A coordinated, regional approach can turn collective strength into investor confidence.

2

Reducing Ecosystem Risk Unlocks Capital

Investors underwrite the full bundle of technical, regulatory, market, and execution risk — not individual issues in isolation.

The CAC's value lies in reducing system-wide uncertainty through coordinated action across policy, infrastructure, technology, and markets.

3

Midstream is a Bottleneck - Solving it is the 'Capital Unlock' for NW Canada

The absence of commercial-scale midstream processing limits upstream project viability and investor confidence.

The CAC is uniquely positioned to act as a midstream anchor, aligning industry and government to accelerate shared infrastructure, technical readiness, and market access.

4

Policy Signals Now Shape Capital Flow as Much as Geology

Investors follow durable, credible policy commitment as closely as resource quality.

The initiative strives to provide continuity and confidence across political and market cycles, signaling that public support for critical materials will persist long term.

5

Ecosystems Generate Credibility and Traction

In capital markets, proof beats promise—traction, partners, and validation drive investment decisions.

By convening industry, governments, Indigenous partners, and capital, the Alliance accelerates credibility and shortens the path from interest to investment.

6

Government Supports Must be Modernized & Competitive

Many Canadian capital programs assume projects already have access to financing, creating barriers to scale.

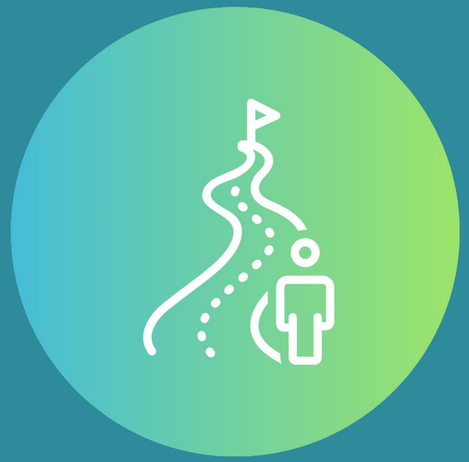
Modern, milestone-based and risk-aligned supports are needed to unlock early capital and reflect real commercialization pathways.

7

The Foreign Capital Debate Requires Nuance

Building competitive midstream capacity requires foreign capital, technology, and expertise that Canada does not yet have at scale.

A disciplined approach that balances sovereignty with strategic partnerships can help reduce risk, accelerate timelines, and improve competitiveness.



An Emerging Vision

Draft vision statement: the future we intend to create

To bring forth a future where the Central Alberta Corridor is a place where people and communities prosper through a world-leading, sustainable and integrated critical-materials industry.

What Success Looks Like

The participants initiated a discussion about a desired future for this work in the CAC.

Many described a region characterized by:

- **multi-billion-dollar midstream facilities**
- **integrated supply chains for key materials**
- **industry commitment to innovation**
- **growing investment** (domestic and international).

They described a region with fully integrated supply chains for at least several materials, where upstream extraction, midstream processing, advanced material production, and end-use manufacturing are tied together across Western Canada and anchored, in part, in the CAC.

Economically, they foresaw increased and future-focused economic diversification, revitalized municipal tax bases, and robust growth in diverse and high-quality technical jobs across communities that have experienced volatility in conventional oil and gas.

The participants envisioned Alberta and Western Canada becoming **destinations for talent and investment**, with a distinct regional identity tied to advanced materials and sustainable industrial development.

The question:

"What do we want communities in this corridor to look like in 30 years?"

In response, participants emphasized significant community benefits, all underpinning broad social support for the sector, including:

- **stronger community health indicators**
- **improved infrastructure**
- **capacity-building and educational opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth**,

They anticipated a shift in societal mindset toward one of strategic coherence and long-term thinking based on deliberate industrial strategy and international collaboration.

A future envisioned for the Central Alberta Corridor

In the future, Alberta's Central Corridor stands as a living example of what happens when communities choose to shape their destiny rather than wait for it.

- It has become one of North America's most competitive and reliable critical-materials supply chain hubs.
  - The region now hosts a continuum of activity—from ethically sourced extraction to precision processing, from specialized manufacturing to cutting-edge recycling—that feeds global markets hungry for secure, low-carbon materials.
  - Integrated logistics systems, streamlined permitting, advanced workforce pipelines, and strong municipal–industry partnerships have made the corridor a destination for international investment.

- What was once scattered potential has solidified into a unified, confident identity: a corridor where innovation thrives, collaboration is instinctive, and prosperity is shared across generations.
  - Young people speak with pride about staying, returning, or moving here, drawn by opportunities that are as meaningful as they are prosperous.

- This future is one of resilience and reinvention. Powered by clean energy and guided by responsible practices, the corridor has moved beyond the boom-bust cycles of the past, grounding its success in circular systems, long-term value, and deep partnerships with Indigenous communities, industry, and post-secondary institutions.

- Across the region, people say the same thing with quiet satisfaction: "***We became the place the world looks to—not because we waited, but because we built it.***"

A future envisioned for the Central Alberta Corridor

Specifically this means that the Central AB Corridor is home to …

- A Thriving Critical Materials Economy Anchored in Major Investments and Integrated Supply Chains
- A Strong, Resilient Regional Economy That Revitalizes Communities and Enhances Quality of Life
- A Destination for Talent, Innovation, and Global Expertise
- A Collaborative, Inclusive Ecosystem Rooted in Indigenous Partnership and Social Alignment
- A Globally Recognized Model of Integrated, Sustainable, and Future-Ready Critical Materials Development

Mission:

To bring this to life, we will mobilize regional actors to operate as an high-performing ecosystem through which we will catalyze investment in critical materials supply chain development and effectively integrate with broader regional players.

In order to move forward on this vision, it will be most important to prioritize work that reflects the following principles:

- “Collaboration produces better outcomes for everyone”
- “A critical materials industry can be sustainable, especially socially and environmentally”
- “We collectively have what it takes to be a global leader in critical materials innovation” (collective capability and ambition)
- “Innovation and knowledge sharing benefit everyone”
- “We can change, push through uncertainty and try something new” (optimism for transformation)

Solutioning

Between October and December 2025, participants in the Central Alberta Corridor workshops worked collectively to identify the primary barriers limiting the region's ability to develop competitive, resilient critical materials value chains. From those discussions, six solution initiatives were co-created by participants as strategic pathways to address these barriers in a coordinated and practical way.

The resulting initiatives are not isolated projects. They are deliberate, ecosystem-level responses to shared challenges such as fragmentation, misalignment between industry and innovation systems, infrastructure constraints, limited visibility to capital and partners, and the absence of credible pathways to scale. Each initiative is designed to tackle a specific set of constraints while reinforcing the others, forming a portfolio that is stronger and more effective as a whole.

Each solution initiative includes a set of opening moves: near-term actions that participants can pursue together to build momentum, reduce risk, and translate alignment into progress. These opening moves are intentionally focused on enabling conditions such as coordination, clarity, and credibility, recognizing that capital-intensive, long-lead-time industrial development requires disciplined sequencing rather than premature execution.

Taken together, the CAC solution initiatives represent a balanced and responsive portfolio. They reflect the lived experience, technical insight, and strategic judgment of workshop participants, and they define practical pathways toward a shared vision for the Central Alberta Corridor: an organized, investment-ready, and collaborative ecosystem capable of supporting durable industrial development and long-term value creation.

Solution 1

Alberta Critical Materials Research, Development and Innovation Network

The Challenge

Alberta has strong universities, polytechnics, applied research capacity, and deep industrial expertise, yet its critical-materials research, development, and innovation (RDI) system remains fragmented and poorly aligned with industrial reality. Industry struggles to identify relevant expertise or engage research partners, while researchers and training institutions lack clear, consistent signals about real operational needs. As a result, promising technologies stall before commercialization, training programs lag emerging demand, and Alberta's competitiveness for capital and projects is weakened.

In a global race to build resilient, non-Chinese critical-materials supply chains, success depends not on producing more research, but on translating knowledge into deployable technologies, skilled workers, and investable projects.

The Initiative

The Alberta Critical Materials Research, Development, and Innovation (RDI) Network is a proposed, post-secondary-led coordinating platform that brings together universities, polytechnics (including Indigenous-specific training institutions), applied research centres, industry, government agencies, and Indigenous rights holders.

Rather than creating a new institution, the Network organizes and activates existing capabilities around a shared regional vision for critical-materials processing, refining, and advanced materials development. It provides a structured mechanism to connect siloed actors, align initiatives, and coordinate action across the ecosystem.

At its core, the Network acts as a practical interface between industry and the RDI system. Real-world industrial challenges (i.e. feedstock variability, process reliability, water and waste constraints, regulatory compliance, and cost competitiveness) are translated into research priorities, training needs, and technology-development pathways. In parallel, research outputs are translated into forms that industry, investors, and policymakers can act upon.

A central pillar is expertise and workforce development. The Network deliberately bridges Alberta's existing strengths in chemical engineering, process operations, automation, and large-scale industrial delivery, built through oil and gas, petrochemicals, and mining, into new applications in critical-materials processing and refining. This ensures training and innovation efforts prepare people to design, build, operate, and optimize real facilities.

Solution 1

Alberta Critical Materials Research, Development and Innovation Network

What Success Looks Like

Success is measured by outcomes, not activity: technologies moving from labs into pilots and facilities; training programs producing industry-ready talent; faster learning cycles between research and operations; and increased attraction of companies, capital, and talent.

Over time, the Network helps make Alberta an easier place to build, operate, and innovate, turning fragmented effort into a coordinated, competitive critical-materials ecosystem.

Opening Moves

Training Needs Framework: A value-chain-based framework co-developed with industry that identifies specific roles, skills, and experience requirements across critical materials processing and refining. It highlights where existing oil and gas, petrochemical, and mining expertise can be rapidly adapted through targeted upskilling and micro-credentials.

Innovation Living Labs: Applied, industry-anchored environments where technologies are tested under real-world conditions and advanced toward commercialization. These Labs integrate technical, economic, regulatory, and ESG considerations and draw on best practices from allied jurisdictions, particularly advanced European RDI hubs.

Technology & Capital Gathering: A purpose-built technology and capital gathering that brings senior capital market actors, public innovation agencies, Indigenous financial partners, and project proponents into direct, structured dialogue with the Alberta RDI Network. The gathering functions as a two-way learning platform, helping innovators better understand capital requirements while improving capital-market literacy around the unique risk, scale-up, and infrastructure realities of critical materials innovation. Linked to Supercharge the Alliance, it elevates senior champions, aligns public and private finance, and moves the ecosystem from fragmented conversations toward clearer capital pathways and actionable investment readiness.

Solution 2

Industrial Cluster Product & Capability Ecosystem Map

The Challenge

The Central Alberta Corridor lacks a shared, decision-grade understanding of its industrial ecosystem. Critical information on facilities, capabilities, material flows, research assets, and infrastructure is fragmented across disconnected datasets and informal networks.

This opacity reinforces siloed decision-making, limits coordination across parallel initiatives, and obscures opportunities for collaboration, investment, and circular value creation.

In a global context where competitiveness is increasingly ecosystem-driven, this fragmentation constrains the Corridor's ability to move from isolated projects toward a deliberate, cluster-based strategy.

The Initiative

The Industrial Cluster Product and Capability Ecosystem Map is a shared, data-enabled intelligence platform that provides an integrated view of the Central Alberta Corridor's industrial ecosystem. Its purpose is to make the ecosystem legible to regional and external partners by clarifying who is active, what capabilities exist, how assets connect across the value chain, and where coordination or investment can unlock the greatest value.

Designed as a living decision-support system, the map moves beyond static inventories or one-time studies. It integrates industrial assets, research and innovation capacity, workforce and training programs, infrastructure, regulatory context, and material flows into a single, evolving platform. The focus is on organizing and activating existing information, not creating new data.

Core elements include:

- Integrated data layers across industry, R&D, workforce, infrastructure, regulation, and material flows
- Structured "needs and haves" inputs to identify gaps, constraints, and partnership opportunities
  Capability and readiness framing to distinguish conceptual, pilot, and commercial-stage assets

The ecosystem map supports multiple objectives simultaneously, including:

- Project origination and investment attraction
- Alignment of research, development, and innovation with industrial demand
- Workforce and training planning based on real operating needs
- Infrastructure and site prioritization at the cluster level
- Policy development, regulatory dialogue, and standards discussions
- Identification of by-product utilization and circular opportunities, where appropriate

The platform is outward-facing by design, positioning the Central Alberta Corridor within a national and international context while translating ecosystem complexity into a clear, credible narrative for external engagement.

It enables benchmarking, partnership identification, and connection with allied jurisdictions and global markets, providing a foundation to move from fragmented awareness to deliberate, ecosystem-level action — accelerating decision-making, improving coordination, and surfacing opportunities earlier in their lifecycle.

Solution 2

Industrial Cluster Product & Capability Ecosystem Map

What Success Looks Like

Success is achieved when the ecosystem map becomes a shared, actively used foundation for how the Central Alberta Corridor plans, collaborates, and executes. Actors across industry, research, government, Indigenous communities, and investment communities use the map as the first place to understand the region, identify partners, diagnose gaps, and position projects within a broader system.

Over time, the map evolves into trusted, living infrastructure. Solution initiatives reinforce one another rather than advancing in isolation. Decisions are faster and coordinated, recruitment is targeted, investments align with industrial demand, and external partners encounter a coherent ecosystem.

The ultimate signal of success is a shift from fragmented, reactive activity to deliberate, ecosystem-level action. The Central Alberta Corridor operates as a coherent industrial system.

Opening Moves

Define the Data Focus and Architecture: The first opening move is to deliberately scope what the ecosystem map needs to be, and what it does not. Rather than building a bespoke platform from scratch, this phase builds from existing mapping efforts and adapts them to the industrial cluster scale and decision contexts of the Corridor. Key actions include confirming priority data domains, defining platform architecture and governance, designing the structured “needs and haves” layer, clarifying user groups and decision outputs, and establishing an outreach and trust building approach. The outcome is a clearly scoped, user driven blueprint for a practical, action oriented ecosystem map.

Activate the Ecosystem Map as a Cross Initiative Integration Platform: The second opening move deploys the ecosystem map as a shared integration and activation platform for the Corridor’s other solution initiatives. Initiative specific lenses support transport and logistics planning, centralized processing recruitment, external and Indigenous partnership readiness, and visibility into research, development, and innovation assets. The map allows Alliance members to see themselves as part of a larger system, supports targeted recruitment and sequencing, and provides a credible interface for governments, investors, and international partners.

Unlock Circular and By Product Opportunities Through Targeted Disclosure: Improve visibility of industrial byproducts and waste streams by advocating for targeted improvements to structured reporting within existing regulatory processes, and integrating this information into the ecosystem map with appropriate safeguards, the Corridor creates the conditions for new commercial pathways, applied research, and collaboration to emerge where they make economic and technical sense.

Solution 3

External Engagement and Partnerships

The Challenge

The Central Alberta Corridor (CAC) cannot build a globally competitive critical materials supply chain on its own. Scaling midstream and downstream capacity requires access to allied technologies, capital, operational expertise, and lessons learned. Attempting to replicate full processing and refining ecosystems domestically (or across every allied country) is neither realistic nor efficient.

At the same time, Alberta risks falling behind. While the federal government is rapidly expanding international critical minerals partnerships, Quebec, Ontario, and British Columbia are far more visible in global engagement. Without a coordinated international presence, the CAC's industrial strengths remain undervalued and disconnected from global capital, technology providers, and long-term offtake markets.

This challenge is intensified by geopolitics. Critical materials supply chains are now tightly linked to national security, defence, and industrial policy. China's dominance in processing technology and state-backed overcapacity continues to suppress prices and deter investment. To compete, the CAC must be credible, coordinated, and integrated into allied strategies, with Indigenous Nations engaged early to ensure legitimacy and long-term viability.

The Initiative

External Engagement & Partnerships positions the Central Alberta Corridor, through the Future Materials Alliance, as an active contributor to Canada's allied critical materials strategy. It does not replace federal diplomacy or trade promotion. Instead, it ensures Western and Northern Canada's industrial capabilities, Indigenous partnerships, and ecosystem readiness are visible, legible, and effectively integrated into Canada's global relationships.

The initiative functions as both an outward-facing engagement platform and an inward-facing learning and coordination engine. External engagement is treated as an ecosystem function, connecting Indigenous leadership, industry, research and innovation, infrastructure planning, and investment attraction into a coherent outward posture that strengthens national objectives and improves Canada's ability to implement allied commitments.

Engagement is used not only to attract capital and partners, but to import best practices, proven technologies, and policy lessons that reduce execution risk and shorten learning curves.

External Engagement & Partnerships functions as an enabling layer that:

- Supports federal partners with grounded, region-specific insight
- Enables industry and Indigenous partners to access global opportunities
- Helps allies understand where and how Canada can reliably participate in ESG-aligned supply chains

Insights feed directly into the broader CAC solution portfolio, ensuring global relationships translate into domestic outcomes.

Solution 3

External Engagement and Partnerships

What Success Looks Like

Success is achieved when Western and Northern Canada are consistently visible, credible, and constructively integrated into Canada's international critical materials engagement. Indigenous Nations and organizations participate as early, informed partners and are recognized as differentiators in Canada's value proposition.

The Corridor engages externally with a shared outlook and aligned messaging that strengthens federal efforts and allied collaboration. International interest translates into aligned investment, inclusive partnerships, and clearer follow-through, with external engagement embedded as a core function of how the Corridor plans, coordinates, and executes.

Opening Moves

Indigenous Without Borders
Establish an engagement framework that ensures Indigenous Nations are informed, included, and positioned as partners from the outset. Key actions include supporting Indigenous participation in trade missions, linking Indigenous economic actors into ecosystem mapping, facilitating Indigenous-to-Indigenous international engagement, and clearly communicating Indigenous partnership expectations to external partners.

Shared Outlook, Orientation, and Voice
Develop a common understanding of the global landscape and aligned outward-facing narrative for Western and Northern Canada. This includes synthesizing global context, clarifying trade-offs, and producing shared framing and pitch materials that complement federal engagement while allowing for regional differentiation.

Joint External Outreach
Translate alignment into coordinated action through shared presence in trade missions, investor outreach, buyer–supplier forums, and allied initiatives. FMA-supported outreach emphasizes targeted engagement, reduced duplication, and strong feedback loops to other CAC initiatives.

Solution 4

Strengthening the Coalition

The Challenge

The Future Materials Alliance has successfully convened a diverse ecosystem, but the coalition remains under-structured relative to the scale now required.

As the Central Alberta Corridor shifts from alignment to execution, limited senior-level participation, unclear structure, and fragmented messaging constrain influence beyond the immediate ecosystem. Participation skews toward technical experts rather than decision-makers who control capital, policy, and strategy.

Awareness across Indigenous Nations is uneven, creating risks to legitimacy if formalization is not deliberate. Externally, weak brand recognition and limited momentum make it difficult to attract sustained attention at a moment when scale and speed matter.

The Initiative

Strengthening the coalition is about deliberately maturing the FMA from an effective convening platform into a more visible, credible, and influential coalition that can shape outcomes. As the Central Alberta Corridor moves toward execution, the coalition must evolve to operate with greater clarity of purpose, stronger leadership, and a more coherent external presence.

At its core, the initiative advances three reinforcing shifts:

- From informal participation to a more deliberate and inclusive coalition, with clear pathways for engagement by industry, Indigenous Nations, governments, researchers, and investors
- From fragmented messaging to a shared outlook, orientation, and voice that strengthens regional, national, and international engagement
- From background coordination to visible leadership, champions, and momentum that attract attention, capital, and policy alignment

Particular emphasis is placed on proactive awareness building across Indigenous communities so Nations understand the initiative and can engage on their own terms.

The initiative also creates space to deliberately recruit and integrate senior decision-makers from industry, finance, and government. Their participation signals seriousness, anchors discussions in real authority, and strengthens the coalition's ability to influence outcomes.

In practical terms, Strengthening the Coalition will:

- Clarify participation structures and how regional and sub-regional convening align
- Align branding and messaging with the shared outlook developed through External Engagement and Partnerships
- Build a visible bench of champions across industry, finance, government, and Indigenous leadership
- Generate momentum through coordinated announcements, partnerships, and anchor initiatives

A stronger coalition underpins every other solution initiative, making external engagement more credible, investment attraction more effective, and coordination across RDI, infrastructure, and ecosystem mapping more actionable.

Solution 4

Strengthening the Coalition

What Success Looks Like

Success is achieved when the coalition operates as a visible, trusted, and influential platform that decision makers recognize and engage early.

Indigenous Nations across Western and Northern Canada are aware of the coalition and see it as a credible platform for partnership and participation. Senior leaders from industry, finance, and government participate as champions, lending authority and follow through. Anchor initiatives generate attention and confidence, drawing in capital and policy focus.

Ultimately, the Central Alberta Corridor is no longer explained project by project. It is understood as a coherent, organized, and investable ecosystem that decision makers recognize, trust, and actively engage when shaping the future of critical materials supply chains.

Opening Moves

Formalize The Coalition: Move decisively from informal convening to a formal coalition with clear structure, identity, and purpose. Establish defined membership, shared objectives, and basic governance so participants can explicitly identify as part of the coalition and publicly stand behind it. Formalization creates legitimacy, accountability, and a durable platform for collective action, advocacy, and engagement.

Rebrand: In parallel with formalization, develop a short, compelling, place-based brand that clearly signals capability, ambition, and relevance. The current name is descriptive but too long to function as a magnetic public identity. The goal is an intuitive brand that policymakers and investors can quickly understand and remember, and that members can confidently adopt. Under this banner, deploy a coherent narrative supported by evidence and supply-chain clarity to show why the coalition matters and why the opportunity is timely.

Build Champions and Hype: Identify and support political champions, industry leaders, and trusted public voices who can represent the coalition externally. In parallel, rally the coalition behind one or more anchor initiatives capable of generating attention and confidence. Coordinated announcements, MOUs, and public commitments create momentum and demonstrate scale, helping the region break through and attract sustained engagement.

Solution 5

Transportation and Logistics

The Challenge

The Central Alberta Corridor faces transportation and logistics constraints that limit its competitiveness as a global critical materials hub. Mineral resources are dispersed across Northern and Western Canada, while refining and conversion capacity is primarily concentrated in Alberta's Industrial Heartland. Moving bulk materials efficiently between and within these locations can be difficult and costly.

Key barriers include constrained rail and road capacity, aging infrastructure, and limited investment-ready industrial sites with direct connectivity. Many sites lack rail access, while those that do are largely occupied.

Fragmented data on infrastructure, site readiness, and market demand prevents coordinated planning. Without system-level alignment, transportation risks becoming a structural ceiling on growth, delaying or pushing value-added activity offshore. Aging infrastructure and uncoordinated investment further threaten reliability, capacity, and long-term market access.

The Initiative

This initiative positions the FMA as a catalyst for unlocking transportation and logistical constraints that limit the movement of critical materials into and within the Central Alberta Corridor. The objective is to enable affordable, reliable, and scalable connectivity between upstream resource regions and downstream industrial clusters, ensuring that transportation does not become a binding constraint on value added development.

Rather than advocating for isolated infrastructure projects, the initiative is designed to create system level understanding, prioritization, and sequencing through a coordinated set of third party led studies. Together, this work establishes a shared, evidence-based foundation that allows governments, industry, and investors to align around where interventions will unlock the greatest economic and industrial value.

At a high level, the initiative focuses on:

- Clarifying where transportation and logistics constraints are occurring across the Corridor and what is driving them
- Integrating infrastructure condition, site readiness, and market demand into a single analytical framework
- Prioritizing interventions based on economic impact, feasibility, and sequencing rather than isolated needs
- Reducing the risk of fragmented or duplicative infrastructure investment.

Taken together, the initiative reframes transportation and logistics from a reactive constraint into a strategic enabler. It provides governments with credible evidence to prioritize funding, gives investors confidence that infrastructure will scale in step with demand, and allows project proponents to plan development pathways with greater certainty and lower risk.

Solution 5

Transportation and Logistics

What Success Looks Like

Success is defined by clarity, coordination, and confidence. Decision makers have access to credible, shared data on logistics constraints, infrastructure condition, site readiness, and market demand.

Governments and investors can clearly see where targeted interventions will unlock the most value.

Opening Moves

Infrastructure Prioritization Matrix: A corridor wide assessment of existing municipal, provincial, and federal transportation infrastructure to identify current and near term constraints in roads, bridges, rail lines, and corridors. The work distinguishes between condition related limitations and usage driven bottlenecks, integrates market context, and produces a prioritized matrix linking infrastructure condition, demand, and economic impact. The outcome is a decision grade tool to guide funding and investment prioritization.

Site Access Assessment: A systematic evaluation of transport capacity and site availability across Alberta's Industrial Heartland and other industrial clusters in the Corridor. This work moves from abstract land supply to actionable, investment ready site intelligence by identifying where targeted, lower cost interventions such as rail spurs or localized road upgrades could unlock the greatest number of sites. The focus is on opening the most sites for the lowest cost.

Market and Logistics Assessment: A demand driven analysis that quantifies inbound and outbound logistics requirements associated with current and potential critical materials activity. Using aggregated, confidential project level data, this work assesses volumes, timing, transport modes, and commercial capacity needs. The results provide realistic demand signals that inform infrastructure and site level decisions and reduce the risk of stranded or underutilized assets.

Solution 6

Centralized Lithium Refinery

The Challenge

Western Canada lacks a centralized, commercial-scale lithium refinery to reliably offtake the region's growing lithium brine projects. Many proponents are advancing Direct Lithium Extraction or early-stage concentrates, but without a viable, bankable pathway to battery-grade refining at scale.

Standalone refineries are capital-intensive, technically complex, and scale-sensitive, limiting economics and increasing risk. Without domestic refining, the Central Alberta Corridor remains a supplier of intermediates rather than higher-value midstream and downstream segments.

Global oversupply and price volatility complicate near-term investment. Refining facilities require long lead times; not advancing planning, partnerships, and siting now risks missing the next upswing and reinforcing status quo.

Advancing a coordinated, centralized refinery is essential to unlock economies of scale, improve environmental performance, support feedstock flexibility, and anchor downstream investment.

The Initiative

The Centralized Lithium Refinery initiative supports the development of a feedstock flexible, commercial scale lithium refining facility anchored in the Central Alberta Corridor and serving Alberta and Saskatchewan. Its purpose is to create a shared midstream asset that provides a credible, bankable pathway from lithium brine production to battery grade lithium chemicals within Western Canada.

Rather than duplicating refining capacity project by project, the initiative advances a single, large scale, centralized facility designed to aggregate supply, concentrate technical expertise, and leverage shared infrastructure. This approach improves economics, reduces execution risk, and strengthens the viability of upstream lithium projects across the region.

The refinery follows a clear hub and spoke model:

Spokes: Independent Direct Lithium Extraction operators and lithium concentrate producers focus on extraction and early stage processing, generating standardized intermediates such as lithium chloride or lower purity lithium carbonate.

Hub: A centralized refinery converts these intermediates into battery grade lithium chemicals, such as lithium hydroxide or lithium carbonate, using shared utilities, advanced processing systems, and specialized operating expertise.

The facility is designed to be feedstock flexible and modular. A phased build out enables earlier cash flow, incremental capacity expansion, and continuous learning. Operating at a smaller scale initially allows technical expertise and operational confidence to develop before expanding capacity, reducing execution risk and de-risking long term scale up.

As a midstream anchor, the refinery improves project economics across the ecosystem and creates the conditions needed to attract downstream investment, including future pCAM, CAM, and battery cell manufacturing. Advancing the project during the current price downturn is a deliberate strategy, positioning the Corridor to move decisively when markets recover rather than reacting too late.

Beyond lithium, the initiative is intended to function as a flagship anchor project. In alignment with the coalition's champion building and momentum efforts, a centralized refinery provides a tangible focal point that builds awareness, credibility, and excitement around the Central Alberta Corridor and the broader coalition.

Solution 6

Centralized Lithium Refinery

What Success Looks Like

Success is a commercially viable, globally competitive lithium refining hub in the Central Alberta Corridor that strengthens the Western Canadian ecosystem.

- Capital flows more readily as downstream uncertainty decreases
- Producers benefit from shared infrastructure, lower costs, and reduced execution risk
- Downstream investment and international partnerships are attracted
- Environmental performance improves through scale, energy integration, and circular systems
- Alberta captures higher-value midstream activity and long-term industrial capacity

The refinery also serves as a visible anchor project, generating awareness, confidence, and sustained momentum across the Corridor and coalition.

Together, these outcomes signal a shift from fragmented potential to coordinated execution, with centralized lithium refining acting as a cornerstone of a globally relevant critical materials ecosystem.

Opening Moves

Identify Interested Lithium Proponents: The first step is to reality-check the concept by testing whether sufficient industry interest exists to support a shared refinery. This is a coalition-building exercise focused on moving from informal interest to visible alignment. Key actions include identifying potential suppliers, understanding their timelines and feedstock profiles, building critical mass, and engaging Indigenous partners and financial organizations early. The outcome is a clearly defined group prepared to advance the concept together and commission a study.

Build the Business Case: With industry alignment in place, the next move is to develop a credible, evidence-based business case. This includes commissioning a scoping or pre-feasibility study to assess technical, economic, and environmental viability; evaluating feedstock availability and consistency; testing processing designs and byproduct opportunities; and assessing siting and infrastructure options within the Corridor. This step translates shared interest into a defensible investment narrative that can support government engagement, attract a qualified operator, and advance toward financing.

Set the Foundation: The third move focuses on aligning the enabling environment with industrial reality. This includes policy and incentive alignment for large-scale chemical processing, tenure and cost structure reforms that reduce early-stage burden on lithium projects, permitting certainty for industrial sites, and coordinated approaches between Alberta and Saskatchewan. The objective is to reduce structural barriers and create a predictable pathway from planning to execution.

Moving Solutions Forward

Western and Northern Canada do not lack opportunity. They lack a sufficiently organized system to convert opportunity into execution at speed and scale.

The Central Alberta Corridor solution initiatives are a deliberate attempt to close that gap. They are designed to make the region easier to invest in, easier to partner with, and harder to overlook. The portfolio exemplifies the Future Materials Alliance approach:

1. **Ecosystem-first, not project-first:** The CAC portfolio is designed to build shared conditions for success rather than pick winners. Its purpose is to reduce systemic risk across many projects, not to advance isolated assets or individual companies.

2. **A single, integrated system:** Each initiative is intentionally incomplete on its own. Value is created through their interaction, with the portfolio functioning as one coordinated system with multiple entry points for participants, partners, and funders.

3. **Coordination is the binding constraint:** The central challenge is not technology, capital, or ambition, but coordination. The work prioritizes legibility, alignment, de-risking, and credibility as hard prerequisites for capital-intensive, long-lead-time industrial execution.

4. **Indigenous inclusion as core infrastructure:** Indigenous participation is treated as structural to ecosystem readiness, not as consultation or risk management. Early, meaningful inclusion is fundamental to legitimacy, durability, and long-term investability.

What does winning mean: In a global minerals and metals market projected to reach US$220–$290B by 2030, unlocking full supply-chain potential depends on moving beyond raw material exports to capture value through scalable midstream processing and refining. The **Central Alberta Corridor** is positioned today — with existing industrial infrastructure, logistics, workforce capability, and permitting readiness — to advance large-scale midstream ecosystem development.

Maintaining the Advantage: In the Central Alberta Corridor, long-term competitiveness depends on converting today's strengths into durable, scalable midstream industry. **Four focus areas** reinforce areas of strength while closing critical system gaps to accelerate progress toward scale.

STRENGTHS	COMPETITIVE FACTORS		SYSTEM GAPS	OPENING MOVES
Conventional mining/refining of geologic resources Concentration of lithium brine Access to feedstocks and refining/conversion inputs Materials recovery from waste streams	CRITICAL FACTORS	Resource Advantage M	Limited cross-province mechanisms to aggregate feedstocks for refining	
Transport infra to the north and west for inbound materials, and U.S./intern. markets for outbound products Access to lower-emissions energy (renewables, CCS, etc.)	CRITICAL FACTORS	Existing Infrastructure L/M	Limited readiness for large-load industrial growth Fragmented planning across power, water, and transport Limited system-wide visibility of existing infrastructure, assets, and capabilities	**Enhanced Transportation Network** **Cluster Product & Capability Ecosystem Map**
Existing refining and industrial facilities Decades of experience running complex value chains Deep industrial services & EPC ecosystem	CRITICAL FACTORS	Relevant Experience H	No centralized refining hubs (limits downstream integration)	**Centralized Lithium Refinery**
workforce skilled/experienced with hazardous/complex materials complimentary services - drilling, geosciences, env. management	SECONDARY FACTORS	Skilled Labour Force M	Skilled workforce dispersed across institutions and regions	
Mature regulatory regime Established industrial permitting and environmental standards Designated Industrial model (e.g. AIH) = accelerated permitting	SECONDARY FACTORS	R&D Ecosystem L	Fragmented institutional scaffolding uneven access to scaled infrastructure	**Alberta Critical Materials Research, Development, and Innovation Network (initiate in the CAC)**
Funding vehicles, technical support for early-stage projects Incentives not restricted to mining and fit lithium-from-brines pathways	SECONDARY FACTORS	Govt. Financial Incentives L	Incentives dispersed across junior firms, research initiatives, and smalls cale pilots Capital markets smaller, conservative, focused on gold and base metals	
Mature regulatory regime Established industrial permitting and environmental standards Designated Industrial model (e.g. AIH) = accelerated permitting	SECONDARY FACTORS	Regulatory Environment H	Limited alignment with international standards Inconsistent disclosure and reporting expectations	
Desire among allied countries to reduce dependence on China Federal and provincial strategies are well-aligned Opportunity/interest by rural and Indigenous communities	SECONDARY FACTORS	Roadmap / Strategy L	Unclear value-chain priorities Coordination relies on informal networks	

Maturity today:
H = well established
M = moderate
L = limited

Conclusion

The conclusions of the two-workshop series in the Central Alberta Corridor reflect a multi-stakeholder effort that brought together a cross-section of the critical materials ecosystem: industry, all levels of government, Indigenous community representatives, economic development groups, academics and researchers, and more. It acted as a catalyst for this diverse set of actors to see themselves as part of a shared regional project, one capable of reshaping Western Canada's economic future.

The significance of this convening lies not merely in the insights it generated, but in the relationships it began to forge, the shared narrative it helped articulate, and the strong signals of collective purpose that emerged.

Participants coalesced around a draft vision for the region, strengthened ecosystem connectivity, and identified a suite of solutions with momentum that are ready to be actioned. Interested and influential parties signalled willingness to drive solutions forward and turn ideas into tangible initiatives.

The workshops highlighted that coordinated ecosystem-level approaches amplify the impact of individual projects. Aligning across governments, Indigenous communities, and private-sector actors creates stronger, more resilient outcomes than working in isolation.

Western Canada has the industrial strengths, talent, and raw materials to succeed—but this potential is maximized when stakeholders collaborate strategically and in alignment.

The Workshop validated the Alliance's core thesis: that ecosystem development, with a focus on midstream capacity, must sit at the centre of Canada's critical materials strategy if the country is to become more integrated, resilient, and sovereign in this domain. It also confirmed the value of ecosystem, rather than a project-by-project, approach to development.

Going forward, Indigenous participation will continue to deepen, ensuring communities are fully informed and positioned as active partners. The insights and initiatives emerging from these workshops now need to feed into a broader regional strategy, connecting the Central Alberta Corridor to other parts of Western and Northern Canada, aligning priorities, and maximizing collective impact.

This is not the conclusion of a series of workshops — it is the beginning of a multi-year journey. With participants rowing in the same direction, the Future Materials Alliance provides a neutral, credible platform to coordinate, catalyze, and translate this momentum into a globally competitive, resilient critical materials ecosystem.

Participants

The Future Materials Alliance and its partners would like to thank all of the participants of the two Central Alberta Corridor workshops for their contributions.

Content included in this report reflects synthesized and themed feedback, and does not imply that individual participants have endorsed all findings or recommendations.

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Future Materials Alliance

Orchestrating the critical materials ecosystem across Canada's abundant North and West

What We Do:

- Convene multi-stakeholder participants across industry, government, Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, researchers, and investors
- Catalyze midstream, infrastructure, and value chain initiatives by aligning priorities and de-risking projects
- Steward a shared outlook, voice, and narrative to strengthen regional, national, and international engagement
- Provide a credible interface for federal, provincial, and international partners
- Integrate insights across solution initiatives to turn collective intent into coordinated action

Why It Matters:

- Ensures the region acts in alignment, maximizing impact of individual projects
- Builds confidence among investors, governments, and partners that the Corridor is organized and investable
- Supports Indigenous participation as active, strategic partners in the ecosystem
- Creates momentum, visibility, and credibility for Western Canada's critical materials leadership

The Future Materials Alliance seeks to more quickly, comprehensively, sustainably, and equitably integrate Western and Northern Canada into national and allied critical material supply chains.

This document is an output of the Future Materials Alliance

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