



Vehicle Performance Centre Opens in Portage la Prairie

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Portage la Prairie MB
Immediate Release**

Western Canada Testing Inc. (WESTEST) and its associate the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute (PAMI) celebrated the completion of a new vehicle testing facility—Vehicle Performance Centre—with a Grand Opening today. The event took place on location at 390 River Road in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.

Candice Hoepfner, Member of Parliament for Portage - Lisgar, on behalf of the Honourable Lynne Yelich, Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification, and the Honourable Stan Struthers, Minister of Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, the department responsible for PAMI operations in Manitoba, attended today's ribbon cutting event marking the official opening of the new building.

"Our Government is pleased to support this exciting and innovative facility," said MP Hoepfner. "WESTEST will help local manufacturers bring new technology to the marketplace, while strengthening Manitoba's transportation industry."

The Vehicle Performance Centre expands WESTEST's industrial site and broadens its capabilities to research and test many aspects of vehicle design and performance including biofuels. The facility will provide industry with access to sophisticated facilities to test new and existing transportation technologies.

"Manitoba is becoming a leader in the bioproduct industry and creating new economic opportunities throughout the province," said Minister Struthers. "This new addition will enable the Vehicle Performance Centre to test a wide variety of biofuels such as ethanol, biodiesel and other emerging renewable fuels that are being produced here, providing valuable research that will help move this industry forward."

Real-time testing of fuel efficiencies and vehicle performances with respect to Canadian climate and terrain will be beneficial to the makers of agricultural equipment, transit buses, highway transport equipment, and other sectors by providing the ability to evaluate and produce high-quality products backed with simulation data and the ability to test and design prototypes.

WESTEST Chairman, Jerry Engel expressed gratitude to the other funders on behalf of the organization's Board. "This is an example of what can be accomplished when Governments and Industry join forces", said Engel. "We have today a facility that any one organization would have difficulty building on its own; but by working together we can bring some really powerful tools within reach of all industry players."

Final cost of the completed facility totaled \$2,297,353, with four funders covering this cost. Western Economic Diversification Canada provided the majority of funding at \$1,675,620, while the Province of Manitoba and the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute together provided \$400,553. WESTEST provided \$221,180 on behalf of Industry, who will also provide ongoing support, through user fees.

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