

EAST CORRIDOR

INSIDER

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*Understanding the people, places, projects and investments
shaping Calgary's East Corridor.*

Project Watch

DE HAVILLAND FIELD MOVES FROM VISION TO CONSTRUCTION

Why one of Canada's most significant aerospace developments is taking shape east of Calgary



Image courtesy of De Havilland

On May 15, De Havilland Canada officially broke ground on De Havilland Field—a 1,500-acre aerospace manufacturing campus located 11 kilometres west of Strathmore in Wheatland County.

Described by the Alberta government as the largest private aviation investment in provincial history, the development is expected to support as many as 3,000 permanent jobs once fully built.

But its importance extends well beyond the size of the site or the number of aircraft produced.

De Havilland Field has the potential to establish a new centre of advanced manufacturing in Alberta, attract suppliers and technology partners, strengthen Canada's domestic aerospace capacity and change how people, businesses and investment move through Calgary's East Corridor.

The groundbreaking marks an important transition: De Havilland Field is no longer simply a long-term vision. Construction has begun—and the region must now prepare for what follows.

THE PROJECT AT A GLANCE

1,500 acres

Purpose-built aerospace campus

11 km west of Strathmore

Approximately 30 minutes east of Calgary

Up to 3,000 permanent jobs

At full buildout

Three aircraft programs

DHC-515 Firefighter, DHC-6 Twin Otter and Dash 8-400

First building expected

Spring 2028

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What Is Being Built?

AN AEROSPACE CAMPUS—NOT SIMPLY A FACTORY

De Havilland Field is being designed as the company's permanent home and a fully integrated aerospace campus.

At full buildout, the development is expected to include:

- Aircraft assembly and production facilities
- Parts and aerostructures manufacturing
- Distribution and global logistics operations
- Maintenance, repair and overhaul services
- Testing and certification facilities
- Corporate and customer-support offices
- Workforce training and educational space
- A dedicated runway and aircraft-delivery infrastructure

Initial development will focus on De Havilland Canada's immediate manufacturing and distribution needs. Future phases are expected to expand final assembly, testing, certification and aircraft-delivery capacity.

The campus will eventually support three of Canada's best-known aircraft platforms: the DHC-515 Firefighter, the DHC-6 Twin Otter and the Dash 8-400. The Alberta government has already committed \$400 million to purchase five DHC-515 aircraft.

WHY WHEATLAND COUNTY?

The site combines something increasingly difficult to assemble near a major city: a large, contiguous development area with access to Highway 1, proximity to Calgary's workforce and international airport, and room for manufacturing, logistics and future expansion.

De Havilland Canada has also identified Alberta's labour pool, cost of living and transportation connections as important factors in the location decision.

The result is a project positioned between Calgary's metropolitan resources and Wheatland County's capacity for large-scale industrial development.

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CORRIDOR IMPACT

THE BIGGER OPPORTUNITY SITS AROUND THE CAMPUS

De Havilland Canada reports that approximately 80 per cent of its supply chain is Canadian-based. If De Havilland Field develops as planned, its regional impact will reach well beyond the company's own property.

SUPPLIERS AND INDUSTRIAL LAND

Aircraft manufacturing depends on a broad network of component manufacturers, machine shops, logistics providers, maintenance companies, construction contractors and professional services.

Some will serve the project from existing locations. Others may find strategic value in establishing operations closer to De Havilland Field.

That could create new demand for serviced industrial land and flexible commercial space along the Highway 1 corridor.

TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

A campus of this scale will generate employee commuting, construction traffic, parts distribution and international logistics activity.

Highway capacity, local road connections, utility servicing and transportation planning will become increasingly important as the development progresses.

The infrastructure decisions made before full employment arrives may ultimately determine how efficiently the region captures the project's benefits.

WORKFORCE AND TRAINING

The projected jobs span skilled trades, engineering, advanced manufacturing, logistics, maintenance and aviation services.

That creates an opportunity for partnerships with Alberta's post-secondary institutions, apprenticeship programs and technical-training providers. It will also increase competition for specialized workers already needed by other East Corridor employers.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Up to 3,000 permanent positions would create a significant new employment anchor near Strathmore.

Housing demand will not necessarily remain within one municipality. Strathmore, Wheatland County, Chestermere, Langdon and eastern Calgary could all play a role in accommodating employees and their families.

The communities that combine attainable housing with transportation access, schools, recreation and everyday services will be best positioned to benefit.

The broader employment and supply-chain expectations are outlined in De Havilland Canada's [groundbreaking announcement](#).

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Intelligence Brief

WHAT TO WATCH FROM HERE

The groundbreaking is significant, but the next milestones will reveal how quickly the project begins influencing the wider corridor.

1. FIRST BUILDING

The first building is currently expected to open in spring 2028. Site servicing, permits and visible construction progress will be important indicators.

2. SUPPLIER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Watch for aerospace, manufacturing, logistics and maintenance companies establishing or expanding operations in the region.

3. WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIPS

Training agreements, apprenticeship programs and recruitment initiatives will indicate how De Havilland Canada intends to develop its Alberta workforce.

4. TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT

Road access, intersections, freight movement and regional transportation connections will become increasingly important as construction and employment grow.

5. HOUSING AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY

Residential development, industrial land absorption and new service businesses may provide the earliest evidence of economic activity spreading beyond the campus.

FROM THE PUBLISHER

De Havilland Field represents more than a major employer arriving in Wheatland County.

It is a long-term economic anchor capable of connecting manufacturing, logistics, workforce development, housing and investment across Calgary's East Corridor.

The groundbreaking changes the central question. It is no longer whether the project will move forward.

It is whether the surrounding region will be ready to capture the opportunity as construction advances.

Lori Olijnyk
Publisher, East Corridor Insider

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Corridor Intelligence

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ABOUT LORI



Lori Olijnyk is Founder & Publisher of East Corridor Insider and a commercial and residential REALTOR® serving Calgary and the surrounding region. She is the 2025 CREB® REALTOR® of the Year, a CREB® Honorary Life Member, and a former Director of the Calgary Real Estate Board.

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STRATHMORE'S GROWTH TEST

What major employment growth could mean for housing, services and infrastructure.

FOUNDING PARTNERS

Founding Partner opportunities are now open for aligned businesses serving Calgary's East Corridor.