

## **AIMS' ATLANTICA CONCEPT ENTHUSIASTICALLY RECEIVED BY BUSINESS AND POLITICAL LEADERS IN BUFFALO, NEW YORK**

Atlantica is an underdeveloped region within a wealthy continent, but the very concept of Atlantica provides the blueprint to turn the region's economy around. The AIMS concept called Atlantica is a trade corridor reaching from Halifax to Buffalo — the International Northeast Economic Region — and it can change the prosperity of the region while improving the access of the North American heartland to emerging international trade patterns.

It would appear business and community leaders in Buffalo, New York agree, after hearing details of Atlantica from AIMS president Brian Lee Crowley. He explained to a breakfast meeting of political leaders and a luncheon crowd at the Rotary Club of Buffalo how the northeast trade corridor from Halifax to Buffalo would benefit all communities along the route.

Both events attracted the influential leaders of the community. State and municipal politicians attended the breakfast meeting at the prestigious Buffalo Club to learn more about how Atlantica could help Buffalo and area prosper. Included in the attendees were representatives for New York State Senator George Maziarz along with officials representing Erie County, four assemblymembers, two members of Congress, and the mayor of Buffalo.

But it wasn't just the politicians who wanted to hear about Atlantica. The chairman of the Peace Bridge Authority, Paul Koessler, attended the luncheon at the Harbour Club in Buffalo's landmark HSBC Arena along with the authority's Ron Reinas. Officials from the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council, New World Trading, Seneca Development, and the Buffalo Niagara Partnership were just some of the development and transportation groups represented.



NY Assemblymember Sam Hoyt attended the Rotary luncheon to hear more about Atlantica.



Brian Lee Crowley speaks to the Rotary Club of Buffalo in the Harbour Club of the HSBC Arena.

"In a world where global trade is growing by leaps and bounds, and North American ports and transport infrastructure are straining against capacity limits everywhere, Halifax and Buffalo represent different ends of a new international trade corridor with significant spare capacity," Crowley explained.

"In this world, whoever says 'spare capacity' is really saying 'major opportunity' — for those who know how to take advantage of it," he challenged the luncheon crowd.

In media interviews after the event, Roger Marsham, Canada's Consul General in Buffalo called the Atlantica concept "brilliant". Business leaders in Buffalo liked what they heard about the AIMS concept.



Brian Lee Crowley, centre, president of the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies speaks with Patrick J. Whalen, left, and Roger Marsham, Canada's Consul General about Atlantica. (Photo courtesy of The Buffalo News)

"I believe the way we can grow our economy here is to take advantage of that (trade) infrastructure," Pat Whalen, president of PJW Transportation Services, told reporters after hearing Crowley speak. Such support of Atlantica is having an impact on political leaders.

"This is not idle talk," said Crowley. "The US Transportation Secretary, Norm Mineta, has pledged Washington will carry out a multi-modal transportation study of the corridor that reaches from Halifax, right across New Brunswick, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and northern New York state to the Ontario border, including the

Buffalo-Niagara region. Congress has appropriated a million dollars for this. . . My Institute is working to make sure that the Government of Canada participates actively in that study and acts on its recommendations."

The potential economic future laid out for Atlantica can only come to pass if political leaders complete the market opening actions that are started, but not finished.

"We are treading water on negotiations for a free trade zone linking the EU and NAFTA, a zone that would tear down the transatlantic barriers that stand between us and opportunity," Crowley concluded to the Buffalo luncheon crowd. "But at least we're starting to think strategically about where we fit in continentally and globally. And Halifax and Buffalo, as the bookends to Atlantica, are in this together."