

## Kitchen Table Conversation Report

**Name of Group/Organization:** Institute of Transportation Engineers (Lethbridge Chapter)

**Conversation Topic:** Growth/Land Use/Transportation

**Number of people in Conversation:** 7

**Date:** October 18th, 2016

**Describe your Conversation:** The Lethbridge Chapter of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) are local members of an international educational and scientific association of transportation professionals who are responsible for meeting mobility and safety needs. ITE facilitates the application of technology and scientific principles to research, planning, functional design, implementation, operation, policy development and management for any mode of ground transportation.

Seven members of ITE gathered around a table at a local restaurant to participate in a conversation on how transportation today and in the future is related to Efficient Land Use and future growth in Lethbridge. The conversations were based on individual's perceptions/opinions and do not reflect the opinions of the organizations they represent.



Conversations were focused on the current and future trends in development as well as current issues and potential solutions in transportation. There was a general agreement that many of our current practices will be changing rapidly over the next 10-20 years as there is a significant shift taking place in terms of the kinds of developments the population want to see and the way transportation infrastructure is provided and that this is largely due to a generational culture shift that is less inclined to drive, and is more supportive of alternative modes and development that is supportive.

It was brought up that Lethbridge is in a unique position in that we are a smaller sized city, but with constant growth we have the ability now to adapt and change to new ways – if we wait too long we will be too large and accepting change may be harder.

**Conversation 1:** *Using the neighbourhood classifications list identify what neighbourhood type does each individual currently live in?*

- Central Area = 2 individual
- Mature Area = 0 individuals
- Established Area = 0 individuals
- Developing Area = 2 individual
- County/Other = 3 individual

There was some diversity in respect to where individuals lived in the city, however there was no representation from the Mature or Established areas of the city. With 3 of 7 living outside the city there was some discussion around the population just reaching 100,000 and that Lethbridge is actually probably a City of 120,000 because it is a draw for lots of surrounding areas in terms of service provision, amenities, and employment. Those living outside of the city discussed that their decision to do so was largely based on lower costs of living, similar commute times, “small town living”, and connection to family.

Those who live in the Central Areas noted that they chose those areas based on proximity to downtown services and amenities (especially with only 1 vehicle for the family), proximity to work, ability to walk everywhere, convenience, and the fact that they moved to Lethbridge from a larger center and downtown was the most ‘urban’ area they could live.

**Conversation 2:** *What are some of the positive trends you see in urban development in 2016 that you would like to see continue or increase into the future?*

- **Infill and redevelopment** taking place in older neighbourhoods. This is needed to keep the older neighbourhoods “alive”. However, balance is important as we need to be careful of gentrification and retaining character. Overall feeling that the London Road is an area where a good job has been done of protecting heritage while allowing new.
- **Mixed Use redevelopment in the downtown** (e.g. The Bargain Store redevelopment into multiuse commercial/residential) will change the dynamic of the downtown in a positive way as more people living downtown will attract young professionals who want to live in a walkable urban environment.
- **New commercial areas** and their more pedestrian scale with walkable sites. Having a place that you can drive to but then park and navigate the site and buildings on foot is a huge success. Also opportunities for live, work, play. This differs from lots of our old style car-dominated big box commercial (e.g. south mayor magrath drive) where we rarely see people walking.
- **Changing downtown culture** is starting to feel more personalized as residential, small coffee shops and boutiques are coming in. Starting to see a shift from “4-wheel culture” especially in downtown.
- **Multimodal shift** taking place with more people embracing walking and cycling. Hope that cycling master plan has outcomes that come to fruition making commuter cycling a legitimate option.
- **Live, Work, Play Communities** in both new developments and in redevelopment. Moving away from neighbourhoods that just have one land use or one type of development.
- **Influential Young Generation** that will greatly effect change in our city (e.g. Car Ownership decreasing).

**Conversation 3:** *What are some of the transportation related issues you see occurring in 2016 that need to be addressed in the future?*

- Parking in certain areas are thought to be a problem (University, Downtown, and Hospital)

- Cost of traditional transportation infrastructure incredibly high and will continue to rise
- We currently do not look at alternative modes of transportation (cycling, walking, transit) through the same lens as roads – programming, cost, construction, land dedication
- Current transit model does not work for a number of reasons, including:
  - o Takes too long to travel. The difference between driving a car and taking transit is too great.
  - o Transfers are inconvenient and take time.
  - o Poor priorities – service over frequency
  - o Lack of understanding of the system, scheduling, and timing
- Poor connectivity for modes other than vehicle to key areas of the city including industrial park and airport
- Currently no incentives in place to shift behavior from car (time or \$)
- Poor transportation relationship between city and nearby municipalities (transit service and pathways)

**Conversation 4:** *What are some of the transportation related solutions you see that could be implemented in the future to address some of the issues and concerns?*

- Autonomous vehicles, both private and public vehicles such as buses. Lots of potential positives.
- Better relationship with neighbouring municipalities – regional transportation plan
- Preserving corridors and guiding redevelopment to create corridor spacing to allow for future transit, or multimodal access.
- Transit shuttles/system changes
- Thinking of cars differently. A combination of UBER and Cars2Go where instead of leaving your vehicle parked for an extended period of time like during work, it can be rented or used by someone else during this period.
- Road Pricing/Toll Roads – understanding and implementing an economic cost to the decision to drive (e.g. Whoop Up Drive Toll Bridge that charges \$3/trip to cross by private vehicle during peak times, \$1 to cross by private vehicle during non-peak times, Free by bus/cycling/walking)
- Staggered work times to alter or reduce peak hour. This should be started by big organizations such as the City of Lethbridge and University)
- Share traffic density statistics – what times are the worst to drive in certain areas – better informed residents may change their patterns.
- Change work place to working from home – this would alter the number of trips required in day.