

Kitchen Table Conversation Report

Name of Group/Organization: City of Lethbridge Planning Department

Conversation Topic: Historic Resources – Topic 1

Number of people in Conversation: 6

Date: August 12th, 2016

Describe your Conversation: Over the lunch hour the Planning Department gathered around two picnic tables in Kinsmen Park to participate in a conversation based on some of the guiding questions within the Historic Resources section. The conversation lasted for a full hour and participants discussed the importance of historic resources at the level of individual community members, families and the entire community. The conversations were based on participants' own personal and professional experiences with historic resources. There was a great deal of consensus generally about the importance of historic resources, but differing insights into why they should be protected, and opportunities for enhanced historic resources preservation and identification work in Lethbridge (e.g., what the next direction of historic resources protection could be).



The conversation highlighted just how important historic resources preservation is, in terms of the diversity of benefits that it brings to the community: social, economic and environmental.

Conversation 1: Why is it important to protect historic resources from the perspective of individuals/families?

- Historic resources tell the stories of families' histories; they keep us in touch with our personal lineage
- Historic resources give us a connection to the past
- Living as a family in the City, they give us:
 - Appreciation
 - Attachment
 - Help new residents to connect
 - Connections to major world events
- Historic resource are a living history

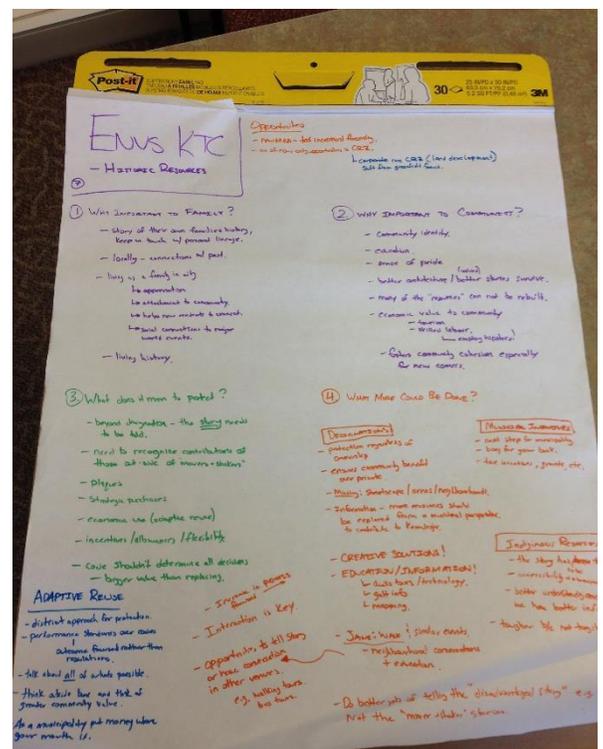


Figure 1 and 2 - City of Lethbridge Planning Kitchen Table Conversation in Kinsmen Park was captured by the conversation note-taker on a large poster paper. Every conversation was not captured word for word – the focus was on main themes.

Conversation 2: *Why is it important to protect historic resources from the perspective of the entire community?*

- Historic resources help create community identity
- Historic resources are educational resources
- Historic resources give us a sense of pride
- Historic resources tend to be those structures with “better” (what at a given moment is more valued) architecture and stories
- Historic resources are typically ones that cannot be rebuilt
- Historic resources bring economic value to the community
 - Tourism
 - Skilled labour
- Historic resources foster community cohesion, especially among newcomers

Conversation 3: *What does “protection” mean? Is it just about designation?*

- Beyond designation, the stories of resources need to be told
- Need to recognize the contributions of those “out-side” of our communities most prominent
- We can use plaques to tell stories
- We can do strategic purchases to protect important buildings/sites
- We can do adaptive reuse (which will also capture greater economic value of sites)
- We can provide incentives/allowances/flexibility to encourage more protection and use of historic resources
- The “code” shouldn’t determine all decisions
 - There is greater value in protecting than replacing

Conversation 3: *Is there more that can be done with historic resources protection in Lethbridge? / What’s next for historic resources protection in Lethbridge?*

Designation

- Benefits:
 - Protection regardless of ownership
 - Ensures community benefits over private
- Opportunities:
 - Missing: streetscapes/areas/neighbourhoods approach
 - Information: more resources should be explored from a municipal perspective to contribute to knowledge.
We need to do more storytelling.

Municipal Incentives

- This may be the next step for the municipality
- Greater “bang for your buck”
- E.g., tax incentives, grants

Indigenous Resources

- This story has to be told
- Need to provide accessibility and awareness
- There will hopefully be greater understanding once we have better information
- Sometimes this area is more challenging because the resources aren’t as visible/tangible

Opportunities

- Creative solutions
- Education and information
 - Audio tours / technology
 - Galt Museum
 - Mapping
- Jane's Walk and similar events
 - Instigate neighbourhood conversations and lead to education
 - Opportunities to tell stories or have conversations in other venues (e.g., walking tours, bus tours)
- Do a better job of telling the "disadvantaged story", not just the story of our community's most prominent people (the "average" story is just as important); e.g., the red light district
- MGA update: tax incremental financing (Community Revitalization Zone)
 - Corporate run CRZ (land development): shift from greenfield
 - E.g., East Village in Calgary

Adaptive Reuse

- District approach for protection
- Performance standards rather than codes
 - Outcome focused rather than regulations
- Talk about ALL of what is possible
- Think outside the box and think about greater community value
- As a municipality, put our money where our mouth is. E.g., committee funding, grants, tax incentives to support more work