

BUILDING A **BRIGHT** COMMUNITY.

2017 Year in Review

Economic Development

LETHBRIDGE

YEAR IN REVIEW

Our Commitment	3
EDL Board.....	4
Partners.....	6
Business Development.....	8
Entrepreneurship.....	10
Meeting & Event Development	12
Marketing & Advocacy	14
The Organization.....	16

“Lethbridge continues to be a thriving place where planned and balanced growth inspires business investment, however, that doesn’t happen on it’s own. As stewards of the economic strategy for the city, we continue to emphasize the importance of collaboration to support and create the framework that builds a bright community.”

TREVOR LEWINGTON

Chief Executive Officer
Economic Development Lethbridge

OUR COMMITMENT

At Economic Development Lethbridge, we are in the business of building community.

We are a support system, a community collaborator and a proactive advocate for the future evolution, growth and prosperity of Lethbridge. We connect, support and promote this city as a place for enterprise, but also as a place where businesses and citizens can thrive within a welcoming community.

With quality market data, a network of partners and a dedicated team, we work on projects to support:



























- business retention and growth
- investment attraction and business development
- entrepreneur training and development
- marketing and advocacy

Together we can build bright opportunities!

EDL BOARD

EDL is an arm's length organization, supported by the City of Lethbridge, governed by a 25-member volunteer Board of Directors and managed by a team of professionals dedicated to promoting economic prosperity in Lethbridge. Board Members are drawn from a diverse cross-section of the community with the intention of best accomplishing the mission and objectives of the organization.

2017 BOARD MEMBERS

-  **Aboriginal:** Rob Crow
-  **Agriculture:** Glenn Coulter
-  **Arts & Culture:** Danielle Tait
-  **Chamber of Commerce:** Keith Greeno
-  **City Mayor:** Chris Spearman
-  **City Councillor:** Liz Iwaskiw/Mark Campbell
-  **City Manager:** Garth Sherwin/Kathy Hopkins
-  **Commercial:** Lorna Peacock
-  **Construction:** Richard Thiessen
-  **County/Airport:** Steve Campbell/Klaas Vander Veen
-  **Environment:** Bill Spenceley (**EDL Board Chair**)
-  **Finance:** Jason Sentes
-  **Industrial:** Terry Friesen
-  **Lethbridge College:** John Jacobson
-  **Multicultural:** George Takashima/Jane Anderson
-  **Not-for-Profit:** Jennifer Schmidt-Rempel
-  **Past-President:** Paula Burns
-  **Regional:** Mark Brown
-  **Retail:** Julia Mitchell
-  **Seniors:** Pat Santa
-  **Service:** Sandra Mintz
-  **Sports & Recreation:** Todd Caughlin
-  **Technical/Research:** Chris Stasiuk
-  **Tourism:** Marie Milsom Galeana
-  **Transportation:** Dallas Sherwood
-  **University of Lethbridge:** Erasmus Okine

Note: Orange indicates City of Lethbridge appointed positions.

2017 FAST FACTS:

NUMBER OF PEOPLE
THAT HAVE SERVED
ON THE EDL BOARD

132

14 NUMBER OF YEARS EDL HAS
BEEN SERVING THE COMMUNITY

54 cents

TOTAL FUNDS LEVERAGED
AGAINST EVERY CITY DOLLAR

“During my year as Board Chair I saw, first-hand, how effective the EDL team can be and how the organization continues to work with a spirit of partnership and commitment to the city they serve.”

BILL SPENCELEY

Economic Development Lethbridge Board Chair 2017-2018

OUR PARTNERS

Economic Development Lethbridge has always been an organization that recognizes and embraces the value of partnerships and collaboration. From our Board of Directors and community leaders to student volunteers, we would like to say a sincere thank-you for the difference you make to our organization and the community!

We would like to acknowledge the support from more than 1,000 community members who have been part of the brand process through survey participation, stakeholder sessions and online feedback.

The following list highlights our 2017 initiative partners including Team Lethbridge, Meeting & Event Partnerships, Southern Alberta Investment Trade Initiative, Tecconnect and the Regional Innovation Network of Southern Alberta.

Thank you!

3,200

Total hours contributed to EDL
by amazing volunteers!

#1

The Southern Alberta-China Investment
& Trade Initiative received an Economic
Developers Alberta award of excellence.

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry
Alberta Culture & Tourism
Alberta Economic Development and Trade
Alberta Health Services - South Zone
Alberta Innovates*
Alberta Southwest Regional Alliance*
Allied Arts Council
Blood Tribe Economic Development
Bow Valley College
Business Link
Calgary Technologies Inc (formerly Innovate Calgary)
Canadian Home Builders Association, Lethbridge
Chinook Country Tourist Association
Chinook Regional Foundation for Career Transitions
City of Lethbridge
Coast Lethbridge Hotel and Conference Centre
CodeYQL
Community Futures – Lethbridge Region*
Community Futures - Treaty Seven
Downtown Lethbridge BRZ
Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Separate Regional Division No. 4
Indigenous Business Support and Resource Group
LA Chefs
Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce
Lethbridge College*
Lethbridge Construction Association
Lethbridge County
Lethbridge and District Association of REALTORS®
Lethbridge Exhibition Park
Lethbridge Family Services
Lethbridge Lodging Association
Lethbridge Police Service
Lethbridge School District #51
Lethbridge Senior Citizens Organization
Lethbridge Sport Council
NRC-IRAP*
Teamworks Training Institute
Town of Taber Economic Development
Travel Alberta
Select People Solutions
Southern Alberta Women in Business
SouthGrow Regional Initiative*
TEC Edmonton
University of Lethbridge*
Whipcord

* Indicates partners in the
Regional Innovation Network
of Southern Alberta

Business Development

Helping businesses access the information and support needed to relocate, start or grow.

In 2017, Economic Development Lethbridge tracked 74 investment inquiries which is a slight decrease from the record-breaking total (79) from the previous year. From these, we assisted **7 businesses in Choosing Lethbridge** as their new location. Overall inquiries were strongest in the Agriculture, Energy & Environment and Other (construction, media and public) sectors while landed business was most prominent in the Information Technology and Tourism & Commercial Services sectors.

Ground was broken on Cavendish Farms' new \$360 million frozen potato processing plant which is the result of months of hard work and collaboration by EDL and key community partners. At the groundbreaking ceremony in September, Premier Rachel Notley said: "The record investment Cavendish Farms is making in Lethbridge is good for our farmers and producers, good for the entire community, and good for our growing economy. **It just reinforces what we've all known about Lethbridge for a long time, which is that it's a great place to live and do business.**"

The majority of inquiries originated from within Lethbridge followed by the rest of Alberta and Asia. The strength in local and provincial inquiries shows continued interest in our community due to our stable economy, well-planned infrastructure and business diversity. The increase in Asia-based inquiries likely reflects the emphasis on Foreign Direct Investment initiatives in 2016 and early 2017. This collaborative work was a targeted effort to expand our market opportunities within the region.



From an investment attraction perspective, we attended and exhibited at industry and investment-focused tradeshows in Alberta, Manitoba and the United States. We were also part of an **International Trade mission** to China and Japan to pursue economic development opportunities, support educational connectivity between partners, and continue fostering relationships.

On a local level, we worked to expand our local profile by exhibiting and supporting business trade shows and related events which led to multiple investment leads and connections with many citizens who were unaware of the supports we offer small business start-ups.

We continue to dedicate time and resources to the acquisition and analysis of quality market data and research to ensure we are equipped with the best information possible to help attract investment to Lethbridge. This includes the development and maintenance of our **online market data dashboard, production of economic trends reports and generation of commercial real estate statistics.**

In partnership with the City of Lethbridge and Lethbridge County, we led a Commercial and Industrial Land Development study to establish a land demand forecast that will help guide future development in the city. This research also suggests the potential for catalytic projects that could have a long-term, positive impact on the community.

\$5.5 billion

2017 GDP In Lethbridge

\$313.5 million

Total Building Permit Value.

48%

The percentage of investment inquiries originating in Alberta

Entrepreneurship

Growing the entrepreneurial ecosystem and adding to the diversity in the city.

The Tecconnect Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation continues to be fertile ground for local entrepreneurs to grow within a supportive and innovative environment. Since opening in 2011, **the companies in Tecconnect have created 165 new jobs with a combined incremental payroll of just over \$5 million.** Of those employed, fifty-seven percent are Lethbridge post-secondary graduates.

In 2017, Tecconnect provided incubator services to twelve companies that were innovating technologies in a range of industries including virtual accounting, media and post-production, biopharmaceuticals, amphibious equipment, health, financial and automotive services. Thirty percent of these startup companies' owners are Lethbridge post-secondary graduates.

In October, EDL and the Regional Innovation Network of Southern Alberta (RINSA) launched Tecconnect+ED, a new series of programs designed to help local entrepreneurs take their business from idea to market. **Tecconnect+ED** is part of the Alberta Entrepreneurship Incubator program, a two-year Alberta Innovates project that funds entrepreneur development and mentoring support programs in existing or new incubator spaces. Tecconnect+ED gives entrepreneurs access to professional advice and connects them to the resources and information to grow their business during the critical startup phase.



With this funding boost, Tecconnect directly provided, or facilitated the delivery of, **twenty-five workshops and three events to over two hundred entrepreneurs in Lethbridge.** Workshops and events were complemented by the provision of more than 287 hours of one-on-one coaching to 226 entrepreneurs (from October through December), by our Tecconnect+ED Business Advisors.

With strategic partnerships in place, we connected start-ups to resources and information within a robust network. We were also able to expand our reach into the community with events and resources developed for:

- Southern Alberta Women in Business
- Indigenous Entrepreneurs
- High School and Post-Secondary Students

As Tecconnect continues to be at the heart of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, we are committed to ensuring the building itself continues to be a professional and well maintained space. To that end there were a number of improvements in 2017 including LED lights, new work stations and updated flooring.

Supporting small business development is part of our mandate due to that sector's importance to the economy: the latest data from Industry Canada shows small businesses in Alberta accounted for 32 per cent of the provincial GDP.

\$9 million

Total Revenue reported by
Tecconnect companies

287 hours

One-on-one coaching provided by
our business adviser's

90%

Occupancy rate at the end
of 2017

28

Number of training sessions and
events in 2017

Meeting & Event Development

Pursuing opportunities to attract and host conferences, meetings and events in Lethbridge.

Meetings mean business in Lethbridge. The events that EDL supported or initiated in 2017 attracted more than 16,000 visitors to the city. Through meeting and event attendance, these visitors generated nearly \$8.5 million in economic impact for Lethbridge with spending most often occurring in the hotel, transportation, food and beverage, retail and entertainment industries. During 2017, **we also responded to 49 inquiries resulting in 4 pieces of new business.**

Previous data has shown that we typically see the highest conversion rate through targeted marketing and tradeshow attendance at a provincial level as opposed to national. With that, the EDL team implemented a more provincially focused strategy and by doing so were able to attend two new industry events in Calgary and Edmonton to connect with event planners and showcase the Lethbridge opportunity.

This shift in focus also created opportunity to further **promote our local businesses** through the development and distribution of downtown dining maps targeting major event attendees as well as the launch of a festival/event marketing campaign to enhance local event awareness outside of the local market through the use of social media.

Like our Business Investment portfolio, the industries with the highest inquiry levels were Agriculture, Energy & Environment and Information Technology. **We continue to see strong connectivity between our industry strengths and the strategic events we are able to attract.**

\$8.5 million

Economic impact of events EDL supported or initiated

\$34

The return on investment for every dollar of city supported funding

As the Destination Marketing Organization for the city, we continuously work to engage partners to maximize opportunities that increase awareness about the area meeting and event industry. In 2017, for every dollar the City contributed to EDL, we've shown a return on investment of \$34.64 through our support and attraction of events.

We attended six industry tradeshow providing us with an opportunity to promote the Lethbridge meeting and event industry to nearly 6,000 attendees.

Lethbridge was profiled in industry magazines such as:

- Association Magazine Western Edition
- Alberta Meeting and Event Guide
- Meeting Places Alberta
- Meeting & Incentive Travel Digital Guide



Marketing & Advocacy

Generating local, provincial and national awareness of the Lethbridge story.

The **'This is Lethbridge'** visual identity and corresponding key messages served as the foundation that drove the creation of marketing tools to enhance our on-line presence, support investment attraction tactics and raise awareness about the opportunities in Lethbridge. In 2017 we:

- Redeveloped the chooselethbridge.ca website shifting it from a data-rich information website to a marketing website that creates synergies between areas of core business.
- Moved the stand alone tecconnect.ca website into our main site to better serve entrepreneurs and maximize time and resources.
- Produced more comprehensive magazine style publications that tell the Lethbridge story in a visually compelling way

As part of the Intelligent Community initiative, Economic Development Lethbridge continued work to **uncover and discover the brand** experience of living in Lethbridge and the values and aspirations that will inform the brand strategy. This included:

- Hosting Dr. Katherine Loflin at a Food For Thought Lunch focused on Place-Brand
- High-Level Market Testing of Brand Values
- Interactive Community Engagement Sessions
- On-line Community Engagement Tool

Work continues on brand as we move towards tangible development of the brand essence and corresponding assets.



Team Lethbridge headed to Edmonton on its fifth mission with approximately 50 representatives from 19 community organizations. The team was able to meet with 15 ministries in 2017 to hear more about the provincial government's priorities and key programs. Team Lethbridge continues to represent a group of community leaders interested in raising awareness of how the city of Lethbridge contributes to the province and how we can work with our government representatives to support long-term success for Alberta. It's also about people working together, with one collective voice, to share information related to the key priorities of our community.

We also hosted a new event called **IgniteYQL**. The ignite format gives each speaker 20 slides, which advance every 15 seconds, creating an opportunity to deliver a passion pitch in just five minutes. The fast-paced, dynamic nature of the Ignite format also resulted in powerful message sharing by our diverse group of presenters and sparked intriguing conversation at the networking event.

1,200+

Total number of people who have provided feedback during brand development

260,000

Twitter impressions on @chooseleth

50

Number of community leaders who represented YQL as part of Team Lethbridge

The Organization

Demonstrating organizational stability through a dedicated board and team.

Throughout the year, we continued to evaluate and refine process and policy to ensure organizational stability now and in the future. With a collaborative approach from team members and the Board, we are committed to finding opportunities to increase both efficiency and effectiveness.

In order to work on economic development strategies that resonate with the community, EDL team members also actively serve on a number of **boards and committees** throughout the city including; Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce, Heart of our City, Environment Lethbridge, 5th on 5th Youth Services, Community Social Development, YWCA Lethbridge, Lethbridge Sport Council Bid Committee, Lethbridge College Alumni Advisory Council, YPAL (Young Professionals Association of Lethbridge), Code YQL and more!

While this work is aligned with the roles and responsibilities of our team, a larger portion of these efforts are undertaken by our **team members** in a **volunteer** capacity, which simply reflects the **community dedication** that is inherent in the mind set of EDL and in how we do business.

As Economic Development Lethbridge and ambassadors of the Choose Lethbridge brand, we will be:

- **Innovative**
- **Collaborative**
- **Engaged**
- **Approachable**
- **Strong**
- **Leaders**

A few of our favourite Twitter mentions:

@SouthwestAB

With @chooseleth & 'city doctor' learning EVERYONE has a role to play in #yql brand- Looks like we are in this together! #intelligentyql

@RobMiyashiro1

#teamleth on the way to Edmonton to build positive relationships with #ABGov #yql @LethbridgeCity @chooseleth

@LC_President

Great to be at Cavendish groundbreaking in #YQL today! @RachelNotley and @Spearmac taking part. @chooseleth

@invest_canada

Check out @chooseleth 's new website! Congrats!

@gregrobinson800

Congrats to @SouthGrow @chooseleth & #absw for the business & investment large community/region award #eda2017 @edaalberta for china trade!!

@jessfehr5

I bet this will be an entertaining talk from Trevor @chooseleth #ForwardYQL @LethChamber Opportunity South in full swing.

@_outputmedia

Today marks Output's one year anniversary since joining @tecconnectAB in #YQL. Thank you to all of our clients and supporters! @chooseleth

