

# History

The City of Lethbridge has been an active member of planning and assembling land since the 1940's. The foresight of that era in our city's land development brought about key changes that would come to define Lethbridge in several ways:

- the first vision for a coulee top scenic drive
- establishing an industrial park in the north east (to compensate for our prevailing winds)
- founding a community west of the Old Man River

We have seen these ideas come to fruition since that time, along with many other changes in our city. Lethbridge is home to many new private land development companies and residential, commercial and industrial development in our city has stretched our borders, our population and our economic strength.

Our role as a land developer has continued to evolve as our city has grown. In fact, since the late 1990's, we have become increasingly competitive in the marketplace and have made organizational changes which allow us to operate much like our competitors. Our ties to the City are manifest in what we do, and, much like private firms, we are given direction from a board of directors; in our case, City Council. The most important of these is our resolute commitment to community development in Lethbridge. We are proud to be a socially conscious developer driven not by financial gain but rather by creating vibrant, sustainable communities within our city.

While our story began more than 60 years ago, it has occurred in chapters. Some of these chapters are longer than others, but all of them have played an important part of our storyline and who we are today.

## **Chapter 1**

The City of Lethbridge was the primary developer of industrial and residential land in Lethbridge.

## **Chapter 2**

The University of Lethbridge moved to West Lethbridge in 1972, necessitating residential developments for faculty members and staff. Need met function and form with the onset of "Ridgewood". This would become the first residential development in West Lethbridge to grow under the auspices of the City of Lethbridge. Ridgewood set many things into motion that would later shape how we operate today.

## **Chapter 3**

At some point after this, Economic Development Lethbridge took land development under its wing. At this time, the agricultural sector as well as services and sub trades became an increasingly important part of our city's economic growth. Industrial development was a compelling tool both to lure new business here as well as to maintain strong partnerships. To achieve this, the City of Lethbridge offered heavy industrial land at a very reasonable cost. It had a bigger plan in mind than simply making money. The plan then - as it is now - was to

grow a stronger community, slowly, carefully and with long-term goals in mind.

#### **Chapter 4**

By 1999, industrial and residential land development had grown in both scope and philosophy. At that time, Lethbridge Land became an autonomous arm of the City of Lethbridge. Projects during this period included:

- managing 2000+ properties throughout the city (land and buildings)
- RiverStone Development in west Lethbridge
- Churchill Industrial development in north Lethbridge

#### **Chapter 5**

We got more than a new name at this point. RiverStone marked a new era in land development in our city and by our City. With this development, we firmly placed our "social hat" on our heads and planned for a new kind of community. Because we weren't (and aren't) driven by making a profit, we took our time and thought carefully about what kind of community we wanted to grow. What kind of community would we live and raise our families in? How could we make living better in our city? How could we take RiverStone from a "subdivision" to a vibrant community that would serve the needs of the people who lived there?

Here are some of the things that happened as our plan unfolded:

- we responded to a need that was not being met by other developers
- we created a community that raised the bar in terms of amenities
- we developed a higher standard for comfortable living
- we planned for smarter, lasting infrastructure
- we placed our focus on community, not profit
- we sold lots to individuals, not just builders, allowing for more choice and options
- we provided opportunities for smaller, independent builders to grow their own businesses

We did all of this without cost to taxpayers. In fact, we were (and are today) a revenue center for the city.

#### **Chapter 6**

Our awareness of the need for sustainability in our city happened long before 2004. In fact, we had been planning with sustainability in mind long before that. However, the idea of developing a completely "green" community became an increasingly compelling idea as we learned more about what construction and day-to-day living costs our environment.

Again, we took our time. We brought together everything we knew about leading edge building practices, sustainable living and long-term environmental factors. Two fundamental things arose as we put together a plan:

1. A new standard for building residential communities that will have a long-term and positive impact on the environment.
2. SunRidge - Canada's first "green" subdivision/community.

SunRidge gave us the opportunity to truly become the leader in land development in our community. Since that time, other developers in our city have embraced sustainable design and construction practices. Perhaps they would have in any case. But we feel confident that we've led the way and are proud that we've played an important part in helping our residents to decrease their footprint on the environment.

## Chapter 7

In the mid-2000's, two fundamental needs were addressed:

1. We had almost 0% inventory in our industrial lots.
2. The west side core was growing.

Out of those needs, two new projects have taken shape. The first of these is the **Sherring Industrial and Business Park**. With almost 500 acres of serviced industrial land, a major sports field complex, a commercial area anchored by Wal-Mart, an integrated pathway network and a transitional landscape zone, this business park is an idea whose time has come in our city.

**Crossings** - the newest community in west Lethbridge - while it is still formulating, its growth will be anchored around the development of a joint-district high school and branch library, 45 acre sports field and the underway Leisure complex. From a conceptual perspective, The Crossings represents the leading edge of our development in many ways. This community will embody exciting change and innovation in our city. It will be a gathering place for the best in urban life, converging on the 4 pillars of community:

- knowledge
- commerce
- recreation
- residential living

Each of these pillars will embrace diversity, environmental sustainability and provide a complete neighborhood filled with nightlife, shopping, culture and activity.

### Who We Are Today

Lethbridge Land is committed to innovative land development practices within Lethbridge. We are a leader among land developers in our city and we plan to stay that way by:

- staying on the leading edge of new products and design practices
- creating a higher standard for community living
- minimizing long and short-term cost of maintaining infrastructure
- achieving performance goals and operational excellence

We are a community land developer that truly puts its residents first. We are proud to lead the way in Lethbridge and will continue to do so with strength, determination and vision.