

Land Use Bylaw Renewal

What We Heard Report #2 Summary

January - July 2025



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Report Purpose

This report serves as a summary of activities and results from public engagement conducted during Phase 2 of the Land Use Bylaw Renewal Project. Phase 2 of the project is dedicated to shaping Land Use Bylaw regulation on a number of key topics. It focused on hearing the community's thoughts on their neighbourhoods, local business, downtown and parking, among other topics to help the project team understand what outcomes the community wanted Lethbridge's Land Use Bylaw to produce. Community members, business organizations & industry professionals were encouraged to express their opinions, concerns and ideas through survey questions, in-person workshops, pop-up events, organization meetings and community conversations. These engagement activities took place over seven months, from the end of January 2025 to the beginning of July 2025. This report provides a summary of all of these events. A more detailed analysis of engagement feedback is available in the full Phase Two What We Heard Report.

Engagement Process

Phase 2A of engagement was focused on providing information and hearing community perspectives on **7 key topics** affected by the LUB. The topics are as follows:

1. Neighbourhood Housing
2. Neighbourhood Commercial
3. Local Businesses & the Economy
4. Downtown
5. Parking
6. Notifications
7. Direct Control Districts

Through questionnaires, discussions, presentations and more, people were encouraged to provide input on benefits, drawbacks, consequences and potential solutions.

Stakeholders

During this round of engagement the City heard from a variety of stakeholders, including:

1. Residents
2. Neighbourhood associations
3. Non-profit organizations
4. Development & Building industry representatives
5. Educational institutions



What We Heard Report #2 Summary

The City also engaged with specialized stakeholders through board meetings, conversations and presentations with the following groups:

1. Building Industry and Land Development Association Lethbridge (BILD) Builder Council & Developer Council
2. Citizens for Responsible Neighbourhood Lighting (CFRNL) Board
3. Grassroots Realty Group
4. Lethbridge Historical Society
5. University of Lethbridge (Seminar on Heritage)
6. Triple M Housing
7. Catholic Central High School Social Studies Class
8. Lethbridge & District Association of Realtors (LDAR)
9. London Road Neighbourhood Association Board
10. Streets Alive Mission
11. Southern Alberta Community Living Association (SACLA)
12. Southern Alberta Council on Public Affairs (SACPA)
13. Economic Development Lethbridge
14. Sumus Property Group Ltd
15. Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce
16. Lethbridge Construction Association
17. Downtown Lethbridge BRZ

Engagement Methods

Throughout Phase 2, a range of engagement methods were utilized to provide residents and stakeholders with the opportunity to have their voice heard in the ways that worked best for them.

These engagement activities were conducted at the Involve, Consult, and Inform levels of the IAP2 Spectrum, used in City hosted public processes, as shown below:

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives opportunities and/or solutions	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
Participants	706	2,185	488	0	Reserved for Council

What We Heard Report #2 Summary

An overview of the various methods used, the numbers of participants, and IAP2 engagement level for each method is provided below:

Engagement Method		Engagement Activities	Participants	IAP2 Engagement Level
Online information videos		2	468 views	Inform
Decoding papers		6	238 downloads	
Online Surveys	Phase Two Survey #1: "What is Important to You?" (Jan 21 - Feb 18, 2025)	3	516	Consult
	Phase Two Survey #2: "What Path do you Want to Take?" (Mar 12 - Apr 2, 2025)		248	
	Phase Two Survey #3: "What Changes Do You Support?" (Jun 6 - Jul 4, 2025)		488	
Pop-Up Engagement:		17	933	Involve
In-Person Workshops (Mar & Jun, 2025)		6	85	
Organization Presentations / Meetings:		20	281	
Open Houses (Feb & Jun, 2025):		3	82	
Totals		57	3,339	



What We Heard Report #2 Summary

Communcation Efforts

As part of phase 2, engagement opportunities were extensively promoted to residents and stakeholders. A summary of the communication methods conducted is provided below:

Communication Effort	Reach
Ads sent out with every physical & e-mailed City utility bill, to virtually every address in Lethbridge	41,273 addresses
Project Webpage	8,800 visits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6,404 aware • 2,164 informed • 1,157 engaged
4 online engagement documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Primer • Phase 2 Engagement Guide • Phase 2 Public Engagement Plan • Phase 2A WWHR 	586 downloads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 76 downloads • 319 downloads • 71 downloads • 120 downloads
3 Social media ads	200,739 impressions
9 official City of Lethbridge social media posts	12,850 reach
260 radio advertisements	215,599 audience reach
3 digital signs at 3 locations for 3 days	Unknown
3 public service announcements issues to media	35 online/print/radio articles
2 newspaper ads	~20,000 readers
1 full-page newspaper advertorial	~20,000 readers
5 email newsletters	1,583 recipients (cumulative)
6 A-frame advertisements in 6 locations	Unknown

What We Heard Report #2 Summary

Engagement Activities



Survey #1 - What is Important to You?

The 'What is Important to You' survey was the first public online survey open from January 21 to February 18 2025. It consisted of 34 questions of various types, including multiple choice, checkbox and long answer questions. The survey received 507 responses. The survey questions focused on six topics asking participants to provide in-depth answers on their perspectives on neighbourhood housing, neighbourhood commercial, local businesses, downtown, parking, and notifications.

The purpose of the survey was to allow the project team to understand the community's high-level perspectives on items related to each of the key topics, and what their vision for Lethbridge's future was.

What We Heard at this Survey:

- People found the current Land Use Bylaw complex and difficult to understand.
- People wanted to be able to access a diverse range of housing to meet their needs, from single-detached housing to apartments.
- The majority of people were very concerned about housing affordability in Lethbridge.
- People wanted to be able to access a variety of amenities in their neighbourhoods, including green spaces, grocery stores, gas stations, restaurants, cafes, schools, and pharmacies.
- People wanted to feel safe, park their car/bike before walking around, and access diverse, local businesses downtown.
- People wanted to see more locally owned businesses, independent restaurants, entertainment businesses and grocery stores in Lethbridge.
- People preferred to be notified of developments near their property either by physical letter or signs on the property being developed.



Pop-Up Events

Pop-Up events conducted as part of the project were instances where members of the project team set up stands at high-traffic locations or as part of larger public events around the city, and engaged with community members in order to increase awareness of the Land Use Bylaw Renewal project, while gathering general feedback on each of the key topics.

These Pop-Up Events took place throughout January, February, March, April and June, with project team members attending a powwow, grocery store, leisure centre, seniors centre, library, university, polytechnic, community events, and more. Across 17 unique pop-up events the project staff spoke with 933 people and many more browsed the information available.

What We Heard Report #2 Summary

What We Heard at these Pop-Up Events:

- People wanted adaptable zoning, especially in residential areas, as well as increased walkability wherever they go.
- People wanted more choices in housing and were significantly concerned with housing affordability.
- To increase housing affordability, people wanted more housing type variation and an easier approval process.
- People wanted transit improvements and more community spaces.



Community Conversation

On January 29, 2025, the City of Lethbridge held a Community Conversation event. The event brought together more than 40 City projects, including the Land Use Bylaw Renewal, and 542 residents attended the event. The Land Use Bylaw Renewal project team spoke to over 40 residents and many more browsed the information available.

Feedback received at this event was combined with feedback captured during pop-up events.



Open House #1 - What Solutions should the City Pursue?

On February 11, 2025, the City of Lethbridge held an Open House event at the Galt Museum & Archives. The event lasted from 3-7 p.m. allowing community members to drop-in and attend at their convenience. The open house provided detailed information on the project, some of the challenges Lethbridge faces related to housing, neighbourhood commercial, downtown, parking, and more, as well as some potential options/opportunities the new LUB could pursue.

The event was open to any who wished to attend, and had 55 attendees who provided their feedback on a variety of issues both verbally to the project team, and physically through provided sticky notes.

What We Heard at this Open House:

- People thought there should be fewer barriers to zoning and less political interference in development.
- People felt that Lethbridge should accommodate a wider variety of housing types, including denser housing forms such as row-housing and multi-family housing.
- People wanted to be able to access a range of foods, services, and products available within each neighbourhood in Lethbridge.
- People felt that Lethbridge needed to reduce approval timelines and political red tape to attract businesses to Lethbridge.
- People wanted Downtown to contain more grocery stores and be focused on walking and biking.

What We Heard Report #2 Summary



Community Organization Meetings

Throughout Phase Two, the project team engaged with many key stakeholder community organizations through in-person meetings. Community organizations including non-profits, advocacy groups, educational institutions, business owners, and developers were given the chance to talk with the project team and provide feedback on the current Land Use Bylaw, what difficulties they thought the city was facing, and what changes they'd like to see as part of the Land Use Bylaw Renewal. Across 20 meetings with community organizations the project staff spoke with 281 individuals.

Feedback received at these meetings varied depending on the organization being engaged.



Survey #2 - What Path do you Want to Take?

The 'What Path do you Want to Take?' Survey was the second public online survey for this phase, and was open from March 12 to April 2, 2025. It consisted of 47 questions of various types, including multiple choice, ranking and long answer questions. The survey received 247 responses. The survey questions focused on six topics asking participants to provide their preferred approaches for regulation related to neighbourhood housing, neighbourhood commercial, local businesses, downtown, parking, and notifications.

Participants were able to self-select the topics that were interesting to them, customizing which questions they chose to answer. The purpose of the survey was to allow the project team to understand what regulatory approach residents preferred for each of the key topics, informing the project team on what to pursue when drafting future regulation.

What We Heard at this Survey:

- The majority of people would be comfortable having single detached dwellings, secondary suites, duplexes, and row housing developments in their neighbourhood.
- As Lethbridge grows in the future, people would prefer for additional density to be accommodated as high density development downtown and along major roadways, and as duplexes mixed in low-density residential areas of the city.
- The majority of people agreed with making duplexes and secondary suites permitted uses in low-density residential neighbourhoods.
- The majority of people wanted to see more grocery stores, cafes, restaurants, small-scale retail stores, and doctor's offices in their neighbourhood.
- People wanted small-scale commercial uses to be located at corner locations within or on the outer edge of their neighbourhoods, as opposed to only being found at large shopping centres at select locations in the city.
- The majority of people wanted downtown to be pedestrian focused, and permit a more diverse range of businesses.
- People felt that improving housing affordability, strengthening local businesses, and having easy access to amenities was more important than having easy access to parking
- The majority of people believed businesses should be able to decide how much parking they provide, rather than the City deciding for them.

What We Heard Report #2 Summary



Key Topic Workshops

On March 19 and 20, 2025 the project team facilitated four engagement workshops in the Culver City Room at City Hall. The workshops lasted about 2 hours each and had a total of 69 participants. Each workshop focused on a different key topic, and provided varied activities for participants to work in small groups, discussing amongst themselves and providing feedback based on the current activity.

The workshops focused on the following topics:

- Workshop #1: Parking
- Workshop #2: Neighbourhoods & Notifications
- Workshop #3: Local Businesses & the Economy
- Workshop #4: Downtown

Additionally, opportunities for mingling and networking were provided prior to workshop discussion, in order to foster an open and inclusive environment, intended to result in more constructive activities.

In addition to the 4 workshops open to the public, 2 additional workshops were subsequently hosted with key stakeholder groups. The first of these occurred on June 4, with the Lethbridge Region Building Industry & Land Development Association (BILD). The second was a workshop targeted towards Indigenous community members in Lethbridge, and was held on June 19 in the Galt Museum & Archives.

In-depth feedback received at these meetings varied depending on the topic being discussed.



Survey #3 - What Changes do you Support?

The 'What changes do you support' Survey was the third public online survey for this phase, and was open from June 6 to July 4, 2025. It consisted of 32 questions of which the majority were likert scale questions, though some ranking and long answer questions were also included. The survey received 488 responses. The survey questions focused on presenting participants with potential changes to the LUB drafted by the project team and asking them to identify the extent to which they agreed with each change. These changes were related to neighbourhood housing, neighbourhood commercial, local businesses, downtown, parking, and notifications. Participants were able to self-select the topics that were interesting to them, customizing which questions they chose to answer.

The purpose of the survey was to inform the project team of the community's support of their preliminary proposed changes to the bylaw, and whether to continue in the pursuit of these changes.

What We Heard at this Survey:

- The majority of people agreed with reducing the number of commercial districts in the LUB from 6 to 3.
- The majority of people agreed with maintaining the 3 current industrial districts as is.
- The majority of people agreed with reducing the number of residential districts from 16 to 5.
- People preferred secondary suites and two units being a permitted use on corner lots and laned parcels, and discretionary elsewhere. The second most common preference was for secondary suites and two units to be permitted everywhere.

What We Heard Report #2 Summary

What We Heard at this Survey (Continued):

- The majority of people agreed with creating a new use to regulate 'short-term' accommodations.
- The majority of people agreed with maintaining a notification distance of 60m.
- The majority of people agreed with removing parking requirements for commercial and industrial developments.
- The majority of people disagreed with standardizing residential parking requirements to 1 stall per unit. Of those who disagreed, approximately half disagreed because they believed more parking should be required, while the other half disagreed because they believed no parking should be required.



Open House #2 - What Changes does the Community Approve?

On June 18th, 2025, the City of Lethbridge held an Open House event at the Galt Museum & Archives. The event lasted from 3:00 to 7:00 pm allowing community members to drop-in and attend at their convenience. The open house provided detailed information on the project, and an opportunity for community members to provide feedback on potential changes to the LUB drafted by the project team in-person, enabling the project team to provide answers to any of the community's questions.

The event did not require registration and was open to any who wished to attend. Attendees provided their feedback on a variety of issues both verbally to the project team and physically though provided sticky notes. For those who could not attend in person, but still wanted to provide comments on the proposed changes, a supplementary open house was hosted online on June 25 from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The material presented at this online open house mirrored the in-person event. Collectively, 27 people attended the online and in-person open house.

What We Heard at this Open House:

- People felt that the LUB should be more flexible and promote greater municipal efficiency.
- The majority of people agreed with reducing the number of commercial and industrial uses in the LUB by consolidating similar uses.
- People agreed with consolidating four-plexes, townhouses, and apartments into a single use.
- People agreed with reducing the number of residential districts in the bylaw, and permitting two-units and secondary suites in low-density residential areas.
- People agreed with reducing the number of medium and high density residential districts in the bylaw, so long as proper consideration was given to parking.
- People agreed with removing parking requirements for commercial and industrial developments.
- People agreed with standardizing residential parking requirements to 1 stall per unit.

Project Information

Visit the project website to view the full What We Heard Report for Phase 2 at:
getinvolvedlethbridge.ca/lub

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