

FOCUS ON THE UNIVERSITY

WEST IS BEST

For the University -- the west is best.

For the City of Lethbridge -- the west is best.

Lethbridge now has the chance of becoming the Showpiece of Southern Alberta, a magnet attracting residents, tourists, light industries from all over Canada and the United States. The opening up of the west side will give an unparalleled opportunity to the city for a balanced development with the beauties of the Japanese Gardens and Henderson Lake to the East, the expanded grounds and buildings of the Junior College to the South, a light industrial-village complex to the North on the leeward side of town, and then a broad and beautiful University campus with carefully controlled development to the West.

The fears of twin-city, rival-city growth need not trouble the citizens of Lethbridge provided the Council maintains an absolutely tight control on west-side development, and provided the citizens remain alert to what is happening. It is possible that the University may develop at first in what may seem to be "splendid isolation" until the city is in a position to allow a limited residential complex on the west. But such temporary isolation is nothing new in the history of Canadian Universities.

Forty years ago the University of British Columbia was housed in a building complex supplemented by a bunch of army huts, and the whole was surrounded by bush; it was several miles from downtown Vancouver. Even now the nearest relatively large complex of stores is more than a mile from the University.

Thirty years ago, the University of Alberta, located on the southern bank of the North Saskatchewan river two miles from the city business centre appeared to be standing in splendid isolation. Its 154 acre campus seemed entirely adequate. Today it is hemmed in by residential development and is desperately and expensively attempting to acquire adjoining land for its own expansion.

AS LITTLE AS EIGHT YEARS AGO, the University of Calgary stood way off to the north-west of the city -- two buildings on a bald prairie, and 212 acres to play with. Adjacent was a 235 acre reserve for higher education. Today, housing developments hem in the whole area and whilst the acreage may seem adequate for the present it is most unlikely to be adequate for a projected student population of 18,000.

The University of Lethbridge will be built on the west side of the Old Man River because, for the University and for the City, the west is best. The chosen location will allow City and University to reserve ample acreage for all foreseeable developments. We are in a position to profit from the experience of our sister institutions and cities to the north. To profit thus is the essence of wisdom. Naturally, citizens wonder how such development will affect them -- especially how it will affect their pockets. Inevitably there will be costs which will touch everyone's pocket but costs can be spread over many years and consequently need not weigh too heavily on anyone. But costs can also be offset by

increased revenue, greater business activity. The University is at the moment, and will becoming increasingly, an economic asset to the whole community.

Lethbridge citizens stand to gain in every way from the establishment of a University in this City, and from the locating of this University on the west bank of the river. "The showpiece of Southern Alberta" is no idle dream; it can become a reality, and WILL, with the enthusiastic backing of the whole citizen body and the commitment of the City Council.

*Ray Goodall*