



Tourism Lethbridge
2805 Scenic Drive South
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News Release

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Virtual Reality Video Showcases Lethbridge Business Event Facilities

LETHBRIDGE, Alta – September 27 is **World Tourism Day**, which raises awareness about the impact of tourism. To celebrate the occasion, Tourism Lethbridge is releasing of a **360° virtual reality (VR) video of public meeting and event spaces** in the city that will assist Lethbridge event spaces in attracting new business events.

Meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) are vital to the tourism economy. Business events bring visitors to our community for the event, and are an opportunity to generate return family and leisure travel. Prior to COVID, Destination Canada reported that MICE travellers had a **\$1billion impact on the Canadian economy**.

“Lethbridge is such a great place to host business events, conferences and meetings,” said **Erin Crane**, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Tourism Lethbridge. “With the upcoming launch of the Agri-Food hub by Lethbridge District and Exhibition, it was the perfect time for facilities to come together and let viewers really experience the unique facilities we offer in our city.”

The 360° video format gives event planners and conference organizers an immersive view of the unique business event spaces in Lethbridge. The video is hosted on the [YouTube channel](#) of Tourism Lethbridge, and it can also be found on [MeetInLethbridge.com](#). Viewers can control the direction of the camera with their mouse on a desktop or laptop computer. The best experience is viewing the video on a phone or VR headset, where moving one’s device controls what they are seeing.

The innovative 360° VR Video was created by **Winged Whale Media**. Founders Ed & Claudia Limon expanded the studio from the Greater Toronto Area to Lethbridge last year. “It is an honour to show off Lethbridge using our three-hundred-and-sixty-degree camera technology,” said **Ed Limon**, CEO and Digital Media Director. “Working on this campaign gave me a new appreciation of the incredible landscape in the City of Lethbridge as well as it's unique meeting facilities.”

One highlight of the video is a preview of the final look of the new **Agri-Food Hub and Trade Centre**, currently under construction on the eastern edge of Henderson Lake.

“The Agri-food Hub and Trade Centre will be a hub for the community as a marquee agri-food tourism and event destination,” says Mike Warkentin, Chief Executive Officer, Lethbridge & District Exhibition. “We are excited to give viewers a virtual first view of our new 268,000 square foot facility ahead of opening our doors in 2023.”

The **power of event tourism** is dramatic. Despite COVID still affecting travel and gatherings, the first six months of 2022 saw dramatic increases in travel and the resulting money spent at Lethbridge businesses. The economic impact of events, including sports, in Lethbridge during the first six months of 2022 is estimated to be **almost \$22 million**. See the attached Power of Tourism infographic attachment for more figures and details.

The Tourism Lethbridge VR video will be launched in market to business event professionals and planners at the CSAE Annual Conference this October in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Tourism Lethbridge is also currently producing a follow-up VR video of the sporting facilities in the city. This video will assist Lethbridge in bidding on sport tournaments and other events. It will be launched at the Sport Event Congress in Edmonton this November.

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