**Jamestown, NY – what a car-dependent city showed me**

Jamestown is on Lake Chautauqua, just south of Lake Eerie. It is known for being the home of Lucille Ball, but its foundations were built on timber furniture, and it flourished due to the rail network.

The city has boomed and almost busted, and is dealing with a legacy of pillaged resources, a polluted lake, inadequate three waters management, empty houses, one remaining furniture factory (down from a peak of 110), low rates base, large travel distances between populations and shops, economic and environmental change. Housing is cheap but without a car, accessing shops and services is often not viable.

My daughter is a NJCAA athlete at State University of New York in Jamestown. Student athletes travel. A lot. Did someone say Carbon Footprint? Axing the student athlete machine could make a dent in the university’s carbon emissions, but no-one is ready for that. I am conflicted – on one hand, she has had a great opportunity and the university benefits from the diversity brought by the athletes. On the other, we are effectively continuing the mistakes of the past with huge amounts of travel.

The council, together with First Nations locals and environmental groups are doing their best with the lake but they have a big task ahead. The lake has to be cleaned up but then it will attract more people…

The high amount of travel for people going about their daily lives doesn’t look like ceasing. The irony is that they kind of need more people to make the city better but this generates more travel.

The council is, however, making some headway with the first cycle lanes (to the astonishment of most locals) and I really liked their all-way Stops and their LED-surround curve chevron signs as safety tools – these are ideas worth copying.