

Bi-weekly Residential Curbside Waste and Recycling Services Lethbridge Public Opinion Study – Winter 2018

© 2018 Lethbridge College

Faron Ellis PhD, Research Chair
Citizen Society Research Lab

faron.ellis@lethbridgecollege.ca

Lethbridge College
3000 College Drive South
Lethbridge AB T1K 1L6

www.lethbridgecollege.ca



Methodology

Population The city of Lethbridge has a total population of 98,198 residents (2017 census) approximately 80% of which are 18 years of age or older (78,500). A total of 48,173 Lethbridge residents are male (49.1%) while 50,002 are female (50.9%). South Lethbridge is home to 31,660 residents (32.2%) while the rapidly expanding west side is now home to 39,085 residents (39.8%). There are 27,453 north Lethbridge residents (28.0%).

Sample Data Collected by Lethbridge College students enrolled in 9 sections of 6 courses in a variety of Lethbridge College programs in the winter of 2018. Students interviewed 1,288 randomly selected adult Lethbridge residents by telephone from February 10-15, 2018 under the supervision of CSRL Research Chair, Dr. Faron Ellis. We sincerely appreciate and thank all those who took time to respond to our survey. Full methodological notes and results from previous Lethbridge and Alberta Public Opinion Studies can be accessed by visiting the CSRL web pages at: <https://lethbridgecollege.ca/departments/citizen-society-research-lab>.

Representativeness Analysis of the demographic data indicates that, within acceptable limits, the sample accurately represents the demographic distribution of the adult population within the city of Lethbridge. The sample has been statistically weighted to even better reflect that of the population (sex, age, and area of the city of Lethbridge).

Confidence The sample yields a margin of error of ± 2.7 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data.

IB Commons Call Centre The CSRL operates as a division of the Centre for Applied Arts and Sciences. Students conducted interviews using the facilities of the Lethbridge College IB Commons Call Centre and support from the Lethbridge College Facility Management, Instructional Technology, and Audio Visual teams.

Sponsorship These data are part of a larger study of the opinions and attitudes of Lethbridge residents conducted by the Citizen Society Research Lab at Lethbridge College. This particular set of questions was derived from student, faculty and community interest in the topic.

Curbside Recycling in Lethbridge

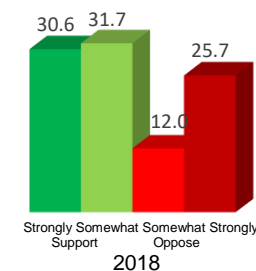
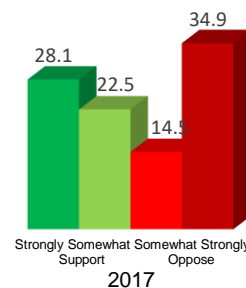
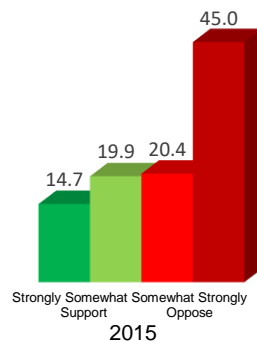
Lethbridge City Council has repeatedly debated, and until recently, rejected the idea of universal curbside blue-bin recycling services. During its 2014 operating budget deliberations, council deferred decision on curbside recycling until early 2015 when it debated and rejected four new curbside recycling and waste collection options. In November of 2016 council revisited the issue and decided by an eight-to-one vote to adopt the previously debated Option 3. The new service plan will end weekly residential curbside waste collection and replace it with bi-weekly waste and alternate-bi-weekly blue-bin curbside recycling services at an additional cost of \$7 per month per household. A pilot will be implemented in 2018 with full rollout of the new service plan in 2019.

When asked to express their opinions about the City of Lethbridge's new plans for bi-weekly curbside waste and recycling collection, after years of resistance, Lethbridge residents are now willing to give the new system a try.

- More than three of every five Lethbridge residents (62.3%) are supportive of the new plan, up from 50.6% in 2017, and only slightly more than one-third (34.6%) who were supportive in 2015 when the current plan was only one of four options for change. Approximately half of supporters (30.6%) are strongly supportive with the other half (31.7%) somewhat supportive.
- Less than two of every five Lethbridge residents are opposed (37.7%). Opposition opinion is less balanced with twice as many opponents strongly opposed (25.7%) as somewhat opposed (12.0%).

Bi-weekly Curbside Waste and Recycling Services (%)

	<u>2015*</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>		<u>2015*</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
Strongly support	14.7	28.1	30.6	Support	34.6	50.6	62.3
Somewhat support	19.9	22.5	31.7	Oppose	65.4	49.4	37.7
Somewhat oppose	20.4	14.5	12.0				
Strongly oppose	45.0	34.9	25.7				



Curbside Recycling in Lethbridge by Selected Demographic Groups

- Two-thirds of Lethbridge women (67.2%) support the new waste and recycling plan. Although a majority of men are also supportive (57.8%), male support is significantly lower than female support.
- Clear majorities in all areas of the city of Lethbridge are supportive, with west Lethbridge residents (63.6%) leading the way, followed by north (61.3%) and south (60.5%) residents.
- Majorities of all income groups are supportive with upper-income (68.7%) and lower-income residents (66.0%) most supportive. A less substantial majority of middle income residents are also supportive (59.6%).
- University graduates (67.9%) and those with some post-secondary education (66.2%) are more supportive than are other education groups, although majorities in all education groups support the new waste and recycling plans.
- Age is the most significant predictor of opinion with sizable majorities of all age groups except seniors supportive of the new waste and recycling plans. Younger Lethbridge residents are more supportive than are middle aged residents, while seniors (57.4%) are the only age group to maintain majority opposition to the new plan.
- Federal and provincial partisanship are not important predictors of opinion on this issue and for the most part only demonstrate varying degrees of support.
 - Majorities of all provincial party partisans are supportive of the new waste and recycling plans, led by NDP voters (79.7%) who are most supportive, and UCP voters who are least supportive, but where a majority is still in favor of the new plans (54.5%).
 - Clear majorities of all federal party partisans are also supportive of the new waste and recycling plans. Again, NDP voters are most supportive (79.0%) while a less substantial majority federal Conservative voters are also in favor of the new plans (55.1%).

Bi-weekly waste and recycling collection (%)

Gender*	Male	Female	Lethbridge
Support	57.8	67.2	62.3
Oppose	42.2	32.8	37.7

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Support	60.5	61.3	63.6
Oppose	39.5	38.7	36.4

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Support	66.0	59.6	68.7
Oppose	34.0	40.4	31.3

Education*	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Support	56.1	66.2	58.3	67.9
Oppose	43.9	33.8	41.7	32.1

Age*	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Support	71.7	79.6	61.0	42.6
Oppose	28.3	20.4	39.0	57.4

Provincial Vote*	NDP	UCP	Liberal	AB Party	Undecided
Support	79.7	54.5	69.8	59.6	62.2
Oppose	20.3	45.5	30.2	40.4	37.8

Federal Vote	Liberal	Conservative	NDP	Green	Undecided
Support	73.7	55.1	79.0	67.3	67.2
Oppose	26.3	44.9	21.0	32.7	32.8

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; * sig < 0.05

Bi-weekly waste and recycling collection (%)

Gender*	Male	Female	Lethbridge
Strongly support	23.3	37.7	30.6
Somewhat support	34.5	29.4	31.7
Somewhat oppose	11.8	12.3	12.0
Strongly oppose	30.4	20.6	25.7

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Strongly support	32.5	27.7	31.5
Somewhat support	28.0	33.4	32.1
Somewhat oppose	14.3	10.2	11.6
Strongly oppose	25.2	28.7	24.8

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Strongly support	27.7	29.7	39.4
Somewhat support	38.2	29.7	29.3
Somewhat oppose	12.6	13.5	11.4
Strongly oppose	21.4	27.0	19.9

Education*	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Strongly support	21.7	34.9	28.0	36.3
Somewhat support	34.4	31.2	30.4	31.7
Somewhat oppose	12.3	11.2	13.3	11.3
Strongly oppose	31.6	22.7	28.3	20.6

Age*	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Strongly support	32.6	46.8	28.1	20.3
Somewhat support	39.1	32.8	32.7	22.3
Somewhat oppose	12.7	10.2	11.1	14.5
Strongly oppose	15.6	10.2	28.1	43.0

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100; * sig < 0.05

Demographics

Area of City (%)		Gender (%)		Income (%)		Education (%)		Age (%)	
South	32.0	Male	49.0	Under \$40,000	29.4	H-School/less	18.3	18-29	23.8
North	27.7	Female	50.3	\$40-100,000	45.8	Some P-Sec.	24.9	30-44	19.7
West	40.3	Other	0.7	Over \$100,000	24.8	Col-Tech-Grad	28.2	45-64	33.7
						University Grad	28.7	65 or older	22.7

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

Question

- Thinking for a moment about local issues, Lethbridge City Council recently decided to implement a new residential curbside recycling program that will also make changes to the frequency of residential garbage pick-up. The new plan will include blue-bin recycling pick-up once every two weeks and change black-bin garbage pick-up to once every two weeks from the existing weekly pick up. The new curbside program is projected to add \$7 to residents' monthly utility bills. Please tell me how much you support or oppose the city's new residential curbside recycling and garbage pick-up program.

Supplemental Information about capital costs if requested:

Capital costs include \$15 to \$17 million to build a Materials Recovery Facility to sort and process recyclable materials.