

Downtown Lethbridge Business Revitalization Zone
Downtown Issues Study

Faron Ellis

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Citizen-Society Research Lab

3000 College Drive South
Lethbridge, Alberta T1K 1L6

Telephone: (403) 320-3422

Fax: (403) 317-3540



faron.ellis@lethbridgecollege.ab.ca
lethbridgecollege.ab.ca/departments/research/csrl

City of Lethbridge

Located in southwestern Alberta, the city of Lethbridge is home to 72,717 residents, 57,674 of which are 18 years of age or older. The city is divided into six census areas, two each for its South, North and West geographic areas. It is divided north and south by Alberta highway 3, and east west by the Oldman River.



South Lethbridge's 27,941 residents represent 38.4 of the city's total population. West Lethbridge (22,429) and north Lethbridge (22,347) represent 30.8 and 30.7 respectively.

Downtown Lethbridge consists of the area between the river valley and Stafford Drive, and 1st avenue south and 6th avenue south. Downtown is considered the "heart of the city" and boasts a full range of commercial, retail, professional, dining, and entertainment attractions, as well as residential developments.

Methodology

This report is based on data collected by Lethbridge Community College and Athabasca University students enrolled in STS270 – Social Science Research Methods at Lethbridge Community College in the fall of 2004. Students interviewed 508 adult residents on October 2nd and 3rd, 2004 by telephone using the Western Wats Lethbridge call center facility. Telephone numbers were selected using random digit predictive dialing. We sincerely thank Western Wats for their hospitality.

The weighted sample yields a margin of error of $\pm 4.3\%$, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data.

Analysis of the demographic data indicates that, within acceptable limits, the sample accurately represents the demographic distribution of the voting age population within the city of Lethbridge. The sample has been statistically weighted where necessary to even better reflect the demographic distribution of the population.

These data are part of a larger study of the opinions and attitudes of Lethbridge residents conducted by the Citizen Society Research Lab at LCC. The Downtown Lethbridge Business Revitalization Zone (BRZ) sponsored this particular set of questions. We thank the BRZ for their support of our research endeavors.

What follows is a selection of our findings based on the questions below. It is important to note that these data were collected three weeks prior to the provincial election being called and prior to all of the parties having nominated their candidates in the Lethbridge ridings.

Faron Ellis, Ph.D.
Citizen Society Research Lab

- Q. If someone you know is visiting Lethbridge, how likely are you to recommend they go downtown for shopping, dining, or entertainment?
- Q. When you think about going downtown for shopping, dining or entertainment, which of the following statements best describes how you feel about safety and security issues downtown?
- Q. Please tell me whether you strongly support, support, oppose or strongly oppose the City of Lethbridge providing tax incentives for people to improve and develop properties in downtown Lethbridge.

BRZ Candidate Study – Executive Summary

Recommend Downtown to Visitors

Lethbridge residents indicate that they are likely to recommend downtown businesses to visitors.

Over one-third (35.3%) are very likely to recommend visitors go downtown for their shopping, dining and entertainment. A further 38.3% are somewhat likely while only 16.8% stated they are somewhat unlikely. One-in-ten (9.6%) Lethbridge residents state they are very unlikely to recommend downtown to visitors.

Southside residents are slightly more positive (40.6% very likely) to recommend downtown than are other Lethbridge residents. Youth are more likely to recommend downtown than are other age groups.

Recommend Downtown to Visitors (%)	
very likely	35.3
somewhat likely	38.3
somewhat unlikely	16.8
very unlikely	9.6

Downtown Safety

The vast majority of Lethbridge residents are not very concerned about safety and security issues when visiting downtown Lethbridge.

Almost one-in-four residents (39.5%) stated they are not at all concerned while nearly half (48.1%) stated they are only somewhat concerned. Although we did not specifically ask, many respondents indicated that their safety concerns were almost exclusively about visiting downtown during night time hours.

Men are much less concerned than are women. Interestingly, seniors are among the least concerned about their safety and security while visiting downtown.

Downtown Safety (%)	
not at all concerned	39.5
somewhat concerned	48.1
very concerned	8.4
so concerned won't go	4.0

Downtown Property Development Incentives

The vast majority of Lethbridge residents support the City of Lethbridge providing tax incentives to encourage property improvement and development in the downtown.

One-third of all residents strongly support tax incentives while another 49.4% generally support incentives.

Only 13.3% are opposed while 3.5% are strongly opposed.

Men (38.9%), north Lethbridge residents (38.2%), lower income residents (38.7%), and boomers (43.2%) are the most strongly supportive.

West Lethbridge residents (27.7%), seniors (21.2%), and those with the least amount of formal education (27.4%) are somewhat less supportive than are other groups.

Downtown Property Development Incentives	
strongly support	33.8
support	49.4
oppose	13.3
strongly oppose	3.5

Tabular Data

Recommend Downtown to Visitors (%)

Q. If someone you know is visiting Lethbridge, how likely are you to recommend they go downtown for shopping, dining, or entertainment?

Recommend Downtown to Visitors by Gender (%)

	Male	Female	Total
very likely	33.6	36.6	35.3
somewhat likely	40.2	36.6	38.3
somewhat unlikely	14.9	18.3	16.8
very unlikely	11.2	8.4	9.6

Recommend Downtown to Visitors by Area of City (%)

	South	North	West
very likely	40.6	30.5	33.3
somewhat likely	29.2	43.2	44.8
somewhat unlikely	20.8	13.6	14.9
very unlikely	9.4	12.7	6.9

Recommend Downtown to Visitors by Income (%)

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$60,000	Over \$60,000
very likely	38.9	33.1	34.6
somewhat likely	32.9	41.9	38.5
somewhat unlikely	14.1	18.6	19.2
very unlikely	14.1	6.4	7.7

Recommend Downtown to Visitors by Education (%)

	H-School or less	Some Post-Secondary	Col-Tech-Trade Grad	University Grad
very likely	38.5	38.0	29.9	34.7
somewhat likely	31.1	35.9	43.6	43.2
somewhat unlikely	18.0	17.6	17.1	14.4
very unlikely	12.3	8.5	9.4	7.6

Recommend Downtown to Visitors by Age (%)

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 or older
very likely	50.0	26.6	32.9	28.6
somewhat likely	32.9	42.7	37.9	41.6
somewhat unlikely	7.9	21.0	20.5	18.2
very unlikely	9.3	9.7	8.7	11.7

Downtown Safety (%)

Q. When you think about going downtown for shopping, dining or entertainment, which of the following statements best describes how you feel about safety and security issues downtown?

Downtown Safety by Gender (%)

	Male	Female	Total
not at all concerned	50.4	29.2	39.5
somewhat concerned	38.9	56.5	48.1
very concerned	6.6	10.0	8.4
so concerned won't go	4.1	4.2	4.0

Downtown Safety by Area of City (%)

	South	North	West
not at all concerned	38.2	39.0	39.8
somewhat concerned	48.2	50.8	47.7
very concerned	8.9	8.5	8.5
so concerned won't go	4.7	1.7	4.0

Downtown Safety by Income (%)

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$60,000	Over \$60,000
not at all concerned	36.1	38.0	42.0
somewhat concerned	45.6	53.8	46.6
very concerned	9.5	7.6	9.2
so concerned won't go	8.8	0.6	2.3

Downtown Safety by Education (%)

	H-School or less	Some Post-Secondary	Col-Tech-Trade Grad	University Grad
not at all concerned	36.4	37.9	35.3	48.3
somewhat concerned	45.5	50.0	52.1	45.8
very concerned	9.9	8.6	9.2	5.8
so concerned won't go	8.3	3.6	3.4	0.0

Downtown Safety by Age (%)

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 or older
not at all concerned	38.3	33.1	42.6	45.5
somewhat concerned	51.8	52.4	45.1	40.3
very concerned	6.4	9.7	8.6	9.1
so concerned won't go	3.5	4.8	3.7	5.2

Downtown Property Development Incentives (%)

Q. Please tell me whether you strongly support, support, oppose or strongly oppose the City of Lethbridge providing tax incentives for people to improve and develop properties in downtown Lethbridge.

Property Development Incentives by Gender (%)

	Male	Female	Total
strongly support	38.5	29.2	33.8
support	42.4	56.0	49.4
oppose	15.2	11.5	13.3
strongly oppose	3.9	3.3	3.5

Property Development Incentives by Area of City (%)

	South	North	West
strongly support	36.4	38.2	27.7
support	46.7	49.1	53.0
oppose	13.6	8.2	16.3
strongly oppose	3.3	4.5	3.0

Property Development Incentives by Income (%)

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$60,000	Over \$60,000
strongly support	38.7	34.6	35.4
support	49.3	45.5	50.4
oppose	7.7	16.0	12.6
strongly oppose	4.2	3.8	1.6

Property Development Incentives by Education (%)

	H-School or less	Some Post-Secondary	Col-Tech-Trade Grad	University Grad
strongly support	27.4	36.3	32.7	39.3
support	54.9	45.9	44.5	52.7
oppose	14.2	15.6	15.5	8.0
strongly oppose	3.5	2.2	7.3	0.0

Property Development Incentives by Age (%)

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 or older
strongly support	30.8	32.2	43.2	21.2
support	55.4	51.2	38.1	60.6
oppose	12.3	10.7	15.5	15.2
strongly oppose	1.5	5.8	3.2	3.0