



# Downtown Parking for Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce

---

March 15, 2013

Faron Ellis PhD  
Marda Schindeler MA

Citizen Society Research Lab  
Lethbridge College  
3000 College Drive South  
Lethbridge AB T1K 1L6

[faron.ellis@lethbridgecollege.ca](mailto:faron.ellis@lethbridgecollege.ca)  
[marda.schindeler@lethbridgecollege.ca](mailto:marda.schindeler@lethbridgecollege.ca)  
[www.lethbridgecollege.ca/go/csrl](http://www.lethbridgecollege.ca/go/csrl)









## Downtown Parking

### Contents

Methodology .....	2
Executive Summary .....	3
Frequency of Visits to Downtown Lethbridge .....	4
Change in Frequency of Visits to Downtown Lethbridge .....	6
Importance of Parking in Downtown Lethbridge .....	8
Desired Parking Proximity to Destination When Visiting Downtown Lethbridge .....	10
Demographic Profile of Downtown Employment ... ..	12
Demographics .....	13
Questions .....	13

## Methodology

-  **Population** The city of Lethbridge has a total population of 89,074 residents (2012 census) approximately 80% of which are 18 years of age or older (71,260). A total of 43,011 Lethbridge residents are male (48.9%) while 44,871 are female (51.1%). South Lethbridge is home to 30,795 residents (34.5%) while the rapidly expanding west side is now home to 32,847 residents (36.9%). There are 25,432 north Lethbridge residents (28.6%). Coaldale has a total population of 7,493 residents (2011 census).
-  **Sample Data** Collected by Lethbridge College and Athabasca University students enrolled in STS270 – Social Science Research Methods in the winter of 2013. Students interviewed 835 randomly selected, adult Lethbridge and Coaldale residents by telephone on February 9–10, 2013 under the supervision of School of Liberal Arts faculty members Faron Ellis and Marda Schindeler. Telephone numbers were selected from a sample drawn from InfoCanada directories. We sincerely appreciate and thank all those who took time to respond to our survey. Full methodological notes for samples from previous Lethbridge and Alberta Public Opinion Studies can be obtained by visiting the CSRL web pages at: [www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca/go/csrl](http://www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca/go/csrl)
-  **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 (gender, age and area of the city of Lethbridge).
-  **Confidence** The weighted sample yields a margin of error of  $\pm 3.4$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data. For example, the Lethbridge subsample margin of error is  $\pm 3.6$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, while the Coaldale subsample has a margin of error of  $\pm 9.8$  percentage points 19 times out of 20.
-  **IB Commons Call Centre** Students conducted interviews using the facilities of the Lethbridge College IB Commons Call Centre and applications originally developed by the Dr. James Manis of the Open Source Learning Lab.
-  **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 question was sponsored by the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce. We thank the Chamber for its support of our research efforts.

## Downtown Parking – Executive Summary

### Frequency of Visits to Downtown Lethbridge

Most Lethbridge residents frequent downtown on a regular basis. Nearly one in five (18.5%) go downtown daily while a further 45.9% visit downtown on a weekly basis. Nearly one-quarter of Lethbridge residents (23.3%) visits downtown at least monthly, while only 9.0% go downtown infrequently. Aside from those who work downtown, men, upper income earners, and university graduates are among those who visit downtown Lethbridge most frequently.

### Change in Frequency of Visits to Downtown Lethbridge

Nearly half of all Lethbridge residents (49.3%) told us that they have not changed the frequency of visits they make to downtown Lethbridge in the past five years. Of those who have changed the frequency of their visits, a larger proportion of Lethbridge residents (29.3%) are making more trips downtown than those making fewer trips (21.4%). West Lethbridge and younger residents are the most likely to report making more trips downtown than they were five years ago.

### Importance of Parking in Downtown Lethbridge

A clear majority of Lethbridge residents (64.4%) believes the availability of customer parking is an important consideration when making their decision whether or not to visit downtown Lethbridge for business, shopping or entertainment activities. Nearly one in four (39.4%) state customer parking is a very important consideration while another quarter (25.0%) think it is somewhat important.

### Desired Parking Proximity to Destination When Visiting Downtown Lethbridge

Nearly one-quarter of Lethbridge residents (24.3%) want to park within one-half block of their downtown destination or they will consider taking their business elsewhere; only 3.8% want to park 'right in front' of their destination while one in five (20.5%) prefer to park no more than one-half block away. A further two of every five Lethbridge residents are willing to park one block away from their destination (40.3%), while 15.8% are willing to park two blocks away or more. Nearly one in five residents (19.6%) state that downtown parking is not an issue for them or that they do not drive downtown.

### Demographic Profile of Downtown Employment

As an employment district, downtown Lethbridge attracts workers from all over the city, particularly from west Lethbridge (37.9%) and south Lethbridge (37.9%). A majority of downtown workers are men (54.2%), although women represent a substantial number of those employed downtown (45.8%). Downtown workers also tend to have higher levels of education than average, are wealthier than average, and, understandably, are more likely to be middle aged or young rather than seniors.

## Frequency of Visits to Downtown Lethbridge

### Frequency of Visits to Downtown Lethbridge

Most Lethbridge residents frequent downtown on a regular basis. Nearly one in five (18.5%) go downtown daily while a further 45.9% visit downtown on a weekly basis. Nearly one-quarter of Lethbridge residents (23.3%) visits downtown at least monthly while only 9.0% go downtown infrequently. Aside from those who work downtown, men, upper income earners, and university graduates are among those who visit downtown Lethbridge most frequently.

Men (21.5%) are more likely to visit downtown Lethbridge on a daily basis than are women (15.7%). Upper income residents (25.7%) are more likely to make daily visits than are middle income (20.3%) residents, and much more likely than lower income residents (7.9%). South (20.8%) and west (20.9%) Lethbridge residents are more likely to make daily trips downtown than are north Lethbridge residents (12.5%). Also, middle aged residents are more likely to make daily visits to downtown (31.1% for those 30 to 44 years of age and 21.6% for those aged 45 to 64) than are the youth (9.1%) and seniors (12.1%).

As expected, those who work downtown are most likely to go downtown on a daily basis (75.3%) while a further one-fifth make weekly trips (19.4%). Among those who do not work downtown, only 10.9% report making daily trips. A further 49.4% make weekly trips while nearly two of every five (39.7%) make less frequent trips to the downtown core.

Frequency of Visits (%)	2006	2007	2010	2011	2012	2013
Daily	23.6	19.9	20.4	15.9	18.9	<b>18.5</b>
Weekly	47.8	46.2	47.0	51.6	46.5	<b>45.9</b>
Monthly or less	28.7	33.8	32.6	32.4	34.6	<b>35.5</b>

Frequency of Visits (%)	Work Downtown	Doesn't Work Downtown	All Lethbridge
Daily	75.3	10.9	18.5
Once per week	19.4	49.4	45.9
Once per month or less	5.4	39.7	35.5

Frequency of Visits (%)	Work Downtown	Doesn't Work Downtown	All Lethbridge
Daily	75.3	10.9	18.5
At least once per week	19.4	49.4	45.9
At least once per month	4.3	26.1	23.3
A few times per year	1.1	10.0	9.0
Rarely or never	0.0	3.6	3.3

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

## Frequency of visits to downtown Lethbridge (February 2013) (%)

Gender*	Male	Female	Lethbridge
Daily	21.5	15.7	18.5
Once / week	47.7	44.1	45.9
Once / month or less	30.8	40.3	35.5

Work Downtown*	Yes	No
Daily	75.3	10.9
Once / week	19.4	49.4
Once / month or less	5.4	39.7

Area	South	North	West
Daily	20.8	12.5	20.9
Once / week	43.8	40.6	52.1
Once / month or less	35.4	46.9	27.1

Household Income*	Under \$40,000	\$40-100,000	Over \$100,000
Daily	7.9	20.3	25.7
Once / week	53.2	45.1	43.0
Once / month or less	38.9	34.6	31.3

Education*	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Daily	14.8	18.8	16.4	22.0
Once / week	36.9	49.7	46.5	50.6
Once / month or less	48.3	31.5	37.1	27.4

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Daily	9.1	31.1	21.6	12.1
Once / week	59.4	37.8	40.2	48.5
Once / month or less	31.5	31.1	38.2	39.3

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

## Change in Frequency of Visits to Downtown Lethbridge

### Change in Frequency of Visits to Downtown Lethbridge

Nearly half of all Lethbridge residents (49.3%) told us that they have not changed the frequency of visits they make to downtown Lethbridge in the past five years. Of those who have changed the frequency of their visits, a larger proportion of Lethbridge residents (29.3%) are making more trips downtown than those making fewer trips (21.4%). West Lethbridge (33.3%) and younger residents (38.8%) are the most likely to report making more trips downtown than they were five years ago.

Those who work downtown are also making more (25.8%) rather than fewer (19.4%) trips downtown. Further, those who do not work downtown are increasing their frequency of visits at an even greater rate (29.7%) compared to those who are making fewer trips downtown (21.7%).

West Lethbridge residents (33.0%) are more likely to be making more trips downtown than are north (27.6%) and south (26.8%) Lethbridge residents. Further, while about one quarter of south (25.4%) and north (25.8%) Lethbridge residents report making fewer trips downtown in the past five years, only 13.9% of west Lethbridge residents are making fewer trips downtown than they were five years ago.

Lethbridge youth (38.8%) report making more trips downtown now than they were five years ago. Only 12.5% of the youth are making fewer trips downtown. Similarly, those who are 30 to 44 years of age are also much more likely to be increasing their frequency of visits (36.3%) than reducing them (14.9%), while more seniors are reporting fewer trips (33.2%) than those who are increasing their frequency of visits (21.3%).

Change in frequency of visits to downtown Lethbridge (%)	Work Downtown	Doesn't Work Downtown	All Lethbridge
More likely	25.8	29.7	29.3
About the same	54.8	48.6	49.3
Less likely	19.4	21.7	21.4

Change in frequency of visits to downtown Lethbridge (%)	Work Downtown	Doesn't Work Downtown	All Lethbridge
Much more likely	18.3	10.1	11.0
Somewhat more likely	7.5	19.5	18.3
About the same amount	54.8	48.6	49.3
Somewhat less likely	10.8	16.2	15.5
Much less likely	8.6	5.6	5.9

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

## Change in frequency of visits to downtown Lethbridge (February 2013) (%)

Gender	Male	Female	Lethbridge
More likely	28.1	30.4	29.3
About the same	51.3	47.5	49.3
Less likely	20.6	22.0	21.4

Work Downtown	Yes	No
More likely	25.8	29.7
About the same	54.8	48.6
Less likely	19.4	21.7

Area*	South	North	West
More likely	26.8	27.6	33.0
About the same	47.8	46.6	53.1
Less likely	25.4	25.8	13.9

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40-100,000	Over \$100,000
More likely	30.2	35.3	19.8
About the same	47.6	43.4	58.7
Less likely	22.2	21.3	21.5

Education	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
More likely	26.9	32.6	29.6	27.5
About the same	38.3	55.8	49.0	54.1
Less likely	34.9	11.6	21.4	18.5

Age*	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
More likely	38.8	36.3	24.7	21.3
About the same	48.8	48.8	53.6	45.5
Less likely	12.5	14.9	21.7	33.2

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



## Importance of Parking in Downtown Lethbridge

### Importance of Parking in Downtown Lethbridge

A clear majority of Lethbridge residents (64.4%) told us that the availability of customer parking is an important consideration when making their decision whether or not to visit downtown Lethbridge for business, shopping or entertainment activities. Nearly two in four (39.4%) stated customer parking is a very important consideration while another quarter (25.0%) state that customer parking is somewhat important.

Those who do not work downtown (65.2%) were even more likely to think the availability of customer parking was important than were those who work downtown (57.4%). Further, although those who visit downtown daily view customer parking as important, they are somewhat less likely to think so than are weekly visitors (68.0%) and those who go downtown infrequently (65.1%).

The availability of customer parking is viewed as important by all demographic groups with women (70.3%), those aged 30 to 44 years old (69.1%), those who visit downtown weekly (68.0%), and west Lethbridge residents (67.1%) among the most likely to view downtown parking as important.

Importance of Customer Parking (%)	Work Downtown	Doesn't Work Downtown	All Lethbridge
Important	57.4	65.2	64.4
Unimportant	42.6	34.8	35.6

Importance of Customer Parking (%)	Work Downtown	Doesn't Work Downtown	All Lethbridge
Very important	30.2	40.2	39.4
Somewhat important	27.1	24.8	25.0
Not very important	16.7	19.1	18.7
Not at all important	26.0	15.9	16.9

Importance of Customer Parking (%)	Daily	Weekly	Infrequently
Important	57.4	68.0	65.1
Unimportant	42.6	32.0	34.9

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

## Importance of parking in downtown Lethbridge (February 2013) (%)

Gender*	Male	Female	Lethbridge
Important	58.5	70.3	64.4
Unimportant	41.5	29.7	35.6

Work Downtown	Yes	No
Important	57.4	65.2
Unimportant	42.6	34.8

Area	South	North	West
Important	62.5	63.1	67.1
Unimportant	37.5	36.9	32.9

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40-100,000	Over \$100,000
Important	65.6	65.6	61.0
Unimportant	34.4	34.4	39.0

Education	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Important	57.7	65.5	71.2	62.8
Unimportant	42.3	34.5	28.8	37.2

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Important	60.6	69.1	63.3	64.2
Unimportant	39.4	30.9	36.7	35.8

Frequency of Downtown Visits (%)	Daily	Weekly	Infrequently
Important	57.4	68.0	65.1
Unimportant	42.6	32.0	34.9

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

## Desired Parking Proximity to Destination in Downtown Lethbridge



### Desired Parking Distance From Destination When Visiting Downtown Lethbridge

Nearly one-quarter of Lethbridge residents (24.3%) want to park within one-half block of their downtown destination or they will consider taking their business elsewhere; only 3.8% want to park 'right in front' of their destination while one in five (20.5%) prefer to park no more than one-half block away. A further two of every five Lethbridge residents are willing to park one block away from their destination (40.3%), while 15.8% are willing to park two blocks away or more. Nearly one in five residents (19.6%) state that downtown parking is not an issue for them or that they do not drive downtown.

Lethbridge residents who do not work downtown are only slightly more likely than those who work downtown to want parking very close to their destination. Further, those who only visit downtown infrequently (28.0%) are more likely than regular downtown visitors to want parking within one-half block of their destination.

North Lethbridge residents (30.9%) are more likely than west (20.8%) and south (22.6%) residents to want very close parking. Older residents are also more likely to want very close parking than are younger residents.

Preferred Parking Distance (%)	Work Downtown	Doesn't Work Downtown	All Lethbridge
Half block or less	21.1	24.9	24.3
One block	42.1	39.7	40.3
Two blocks or more	13.7	16.1	15.8
Not Issue/Don't Drive Downtown	23.2	19.2	19.6

Preferred Parking Distance (%)	Work Downtown	Doesn't Work Downtown	All Lethbridge
Park in front	0.0	4.4	3.8
Half block	21.3	20.5	20.5
One block	42.6	39.7	40.3
Two blocks	10.6	11.3	11.1
More than two blocks	2.1	4.8	4.7
Parking not an issue	21.3	16.4	16.9
Don't drive downtown	2.1	2.8	2.7

Preferred Parking Distance (%)	Daily	Weekly	Infrequently
Half block or less	17.6	23.4	28.0
One block	49.3	39.1	38.3
Two blocks or more	12.8	19.4	13.0
Not Issue/Don't Drive Downtown	20.3	18.1	20.7

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

## Desired parking proximity to destination in downtown Lethbridge (February 2013) (%)

Gender	Male	Female	Lethbridge
Half block or less	22.1	26.7	24.3
One block	41.2	39.2	40.3
Two blocks or more	14.0	17.6	15.7
Not Issue/Don't Drive DT	22.6	16.5	19.6

Work Downtown	Yes	No
Half block or less	21.1	24.9
One block	42.1	39.7
Two blocks or more	13.7	16.1
Not Issue/Don't Drive DT	23.2	19.2

Area*	South	North	West
Half block or less	22.6	30.9	20.8
One block	39.8	33.6	46.2
Two blocks or more	17.5	13.9	15.3
Not Issue/Don't Drive DT	20.1	21.5	17.7

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40-100,000	Over \$100,000
Half block or less	28.1	21.3	24.9
One block	27.3	43.2	44.8
Two blocks or more	14.8	18.8	12.2
Not Issue/Don't Drive DT	29.7	16.7	18.2

Education	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Half block or less	26.4	16.7	26.9	23.8
One block	38.5	43.3	38.7	42.5
Two blocks or more	11.5	17.3	17.0	17.5
Not Issue/Don't Drive DT	23.6	22.7	17.5	16.3

Age*	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Half block or less	22.0	21.2	27.3	25.5
One block	33.3	49.2	42.0	36.1
Two blocks or more	17.0	15.1	15.5	15.4
Not Issue/Don't Drive DT	27.7	14.5	15.1	23.1

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

## Demographic Profile of Downtown Employment

### Demographic Profile of Downtown Employment

As an employment district, downtown Lethbridge attracts workers from all over the city, particularly west Lethbridge (37.9%) and south Lethbridge (37.9%). A majority of downtown workers are men (54.2%), although women represent a substantial number of those employed downtown (45.8%). Downtown workers also tend to have higher levels of education than average, are wealthier than average, and, understandably, are more likely to be middle aged or young rather than seniors.

Demographic Profile of Downtown Employment (%)	Work Downtown	Doesn't Work Downtown
Area of City		
South	37.9	34.2
North	24.2	29.5
West	37.9	36.3
Gender		
Male	54.2	49.6
Female	45.8	50.4
Education*		
High-school or less	14.7	23.9
Some post-secondary schooling	18.9	19.0
College - trade - tech	29.5	26.9
University graduate	36.8	30.2
Income*		
Under \$40,000	14.5	20.9
\$40,001 to \$100,000	31.3	54.8
Over \$100,000	54.2	24.3
Age		
18-29	21.1	21.0
30-44	35.8	20.9
45-64	36.8	29.3
65 and older	6.3	28.8

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

## Demographics

Gender (%)		Area of City (%)		Income (%)		Education (%)		Age (%)	
Male	49.2	South	34.8	Under \$40,000	20.0	H-School/less	22.4	18-29	21.1
Female	50.8	North	28.7	\$40-100,000	51.8	Some P-Sec.	19.1	30-44	23.2
Employed Downtown (%)		West	36.5	Over \$100,000	28.1	Col-Tech-Grad	27.3	45-64	30.1
Yes	12.0					University Grad	31.2	65 or older	25.6
No	88.0								

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

## Questions

How often do you visit downtown Lethbridge for work, business, shopping or entertainment? (For any reason.) Would you say you visit downtown Lethbridge...

Overall, would you say you are more likely or less likely to visit downtown Lethbridge for business, shopping or entertainment than you were five years ago? Would you say that you are...?

Do you currently work in Downtown Lethbridge?

Is the availability of customer parking an important consideration for you when making your decision whether or not to visit downtown Lethbridge for business, shopping or entertainment activities?

When driving downtown to conduct business, shopping or entertainment activities, how close do you want to park to your destination before you decide not to conduct your business downtown and go elsewhere? Would you say that...

# Extra to Downtown Lethbridge Parking Study

## Community Safety

### Downtown Safety

Overall, Lethbridge residents feel safe in downtown Lethbridge, although less safe than they feel in their own neighborhoods. A majority of Lethbridge residents feel somewhat safe (55.6%) downtown while just under one quarter (23.1%) feel very safe while visiting the downtown core.

Only about one in five Lethbridge residents do not feel safe downtown with most of those (18.9%) saying they feel somewhat unsafe. Only 2.3% feel very unsafe when visiting downtown Lethbridge.

Women feel slightly less safe when they are downtown than do men. Seniors are more likely than any other age group to feel very safe downtown, while younger residents are the least likely to feel very safe when visiting downtown Lethbridge.

For a full analysis of this item see: *Lethbridge Regional Police Service Evaluations* reports and analysis at [www.lethbridgecollege.ca/go/csrl](http://www.lethbridgecollege.ca/go/csrl)

	2006	2007	2010	2011	2012	<b>2013</b>
Very safe	24.1	23.2	25.1	30.7	29.5	<b>23.1</b>
Somewhat safe	54.9	53.1	53.6	52.4	53.8	<b>55.6</b>
Somewhat unsafe	16.9	19.6	18.1	15.0	14.9	<b>18.9</b>
Very unsafe	4.0	4.0	3.2	1.9	1.8	<b>2.3</b>

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