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Winter 2006 Lethbridge Public Opinion Study


Economic Climate Report
for
Economic Development Lethbridge

April 16, 2006

Methodology


-  **Population** The city of Lethbridge has a total population of 77,202 residents (2005 municipal census) approximately 79% of which are 18 years of age or older (61,250 est.). A total of 37,546 residents are male (48.6%) while 39,656 are female (51.4%). South Lethbridge is home to 27,894 residents (36.1%) while the rapidly expanding west side is now home to 26,407 residents (34.2%). There are 22,911 north Lethbridge residents (29.7%).
-  **Sample** Data were collected by Lethbridge Community College and Athabasca University students enrolled in STS270 – Social Science Research Methods at Lethbridge Community College. In the winter of 2006, students interviewed 512 adult residents of the city of Lethbridge (February 11th and 12th 2006) by telephone using the Western Wats Lethbridge call center facility. Telephone numbers were selected using random predictive dialing from a sample drawn from the Telus Superpages. We sincerely thank Western Wats for their hospitality. We also sincerely appreciate and thank all the Lethbridge residents who took time out of their day to respond to our survey.
-  **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 where necessary to even better reflect the demographic distribution of the population (gender and area of the city).
-  **Confidence** 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.
-  **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 LCC. This particular set of questions was commissioned by Economic Development Lethbridge. We thank EDL for their ongoing support of our research endeavors.

Economic Climate – Business Conditions

 Lethbridge residents continue to express great confidence in the local economy. Almost three-quarters of all residents (71.8%) believe current business conditions are good, up from 67.3% last year and 50.6% in 2004. Nearly one-quarter of all residents think local business conditions are very good (22.9%), while almost half (48.9%) think they are good. Only 2.4% believe them to be poor while less than one percent (0.9%) believe business conditions are very poor.

Upper income residents and those with post-secondary education tend to be most positive.

	2004	2005	2006	2006	Full range of responses
Good	50.6	67.3	71.8	Very good	22.9
Adequate	35.4	27.1	24.9	Good	48.9
Poor	14.0	5.6	3.3	Adequate	24.9
				Poor	2.4
				Very Poor	0.9


 Lethbridge residents are also very confident about the future of the local economy. Again, almost three-quarters of all respondents (72.1%) believe local business conditions will be good six months down the road. Nearly one-quarter (22.6%) think business conditions will be very good in six months, while half (49.5%) think they will be good. Only 2.7% believe they will be poor, and fewer still (1.2%) think business conditions will be very poor in six months.

Middle and upper income residents are most optimistic.

	2004	2005	2006	2006	Full range of responses
Good	51.6	72.8	72.1	Very good	22.6
Adequate	32.7	21.1	24.0	Good	49.5
Poor	15.7	6.0	3.9	Adequate	24.0
				Poor	2.7
				Very Poor	1.2

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


Economic Climate – Employment Conditions

 Residents' confidence in the economy is also expressed in their very positive evaluations of current employment conditions. Almost three-quarters of all residents (71.0%) believe current employment conditions are good, up from 59.3% in 2005 and 46.4% in 2004.

Over one-quarter of all residents (27.3%) believe current employment conditions are very good while a further 43.7% believe employment conditions are good. Only 4.1% think current employment conditions are poor while even fewer (0.9%) believe them to be very poor.

Women, upper income residents, university graduates, seniors and generation-x tend to be most positive.


	2004	2005	2006	2006	Full range of responses
Good	46.4	59.3	71.0	Very good	27.3
Adequate	32.7	23.3	24.1	Good	43.7
Poor	20.9	17.3	4.9	Adequate	24.1
				Poor	4.1
				Very Poor	0.9

 Lethbridge residents expect the good employment environment to continue with 70.9% stating employment conditions will be good in six months, up from 64.1% who believed similarly in 2005, and 43.4% in 2004. One-quarter of all residents (24.4%) believe future employment conditions will be very good while 46.5% think they will remain good. Only 4.3% think they will be poor and a further 1.2% think employment conditions will be very poor in six months.

	2004	2005	2006	2006	Full range of responses
Good	43.4	64.1	70.9	Very good	24.4
Adequate	32.5	21.6	23.5	Good	46.5
Poor	24.1	14.3	5.6	Adequate	23.5
				Poor	4.3
				Very Poor	1.2

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


Economic Climate – Family Economic Situation

 Lethbridge residents express almost as much confidence in their own economic situations as they do with business and employment conditions. Two-thirds of all residents (66.0%) say their family's economic situation is good, up slightly from 64.1% in 2005 and 62.6% in 2004. One in five residents (21.0%) say their economic situation is very good while a further 45.0% say their situation is good. Only 4.5% say their family's economic situation is poor while a further 1.2% think their economic situation is very poor.

Satisfaction with family's economic situation is highest amongst the wealthy, university graduates and, interestingly, the youth.

Lower income residents tend to be the least positive, but even they are twice as likely to state that their family's economic situation is good (44.4%) rather than poor (20.3%).

	2004	2005	2006	2006	Full range of responses
Good	62.6	64.1	66.0	Very good	21.0
Adequate	31.6	26.9	28.3	Good	45.0
Poor	5.8	9.1	5.7	Adequate	28.3
				Poor	4.5
				Very Poor	1.2

 Lethbridge residents are also positive about the future with 68.3% believing their family's economic situation will be good six months from now. This is down slightly from the 72.8% who thought similarly in 2005, but up from 67.3% in 2004.

Upper income earners, university graduates and the youth tend to be most positive about their future economic situations. But even lower income residents are three times more positive (49.2%) than negative (15.2%) about their economic futures.

	2004	2005	2006	2006	Full range of responses
Good	67.3	72.8	68.3	Very good	22.4
Adequate	28.3	21.9	27.0	Good	45.9
Poor	4.4	5.3	4.8	Adequate	27.0
				Poor	3.3
				Very Poor	1.5

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

Evaluations of current business conditions (February 2006)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Good	71.2	72.7	71.8
Adequate	25.1	24.5	24.9
Poor	3.7	2.8	3.3

	South	North	West
Good	70.9	69.5	74.4
Adequate	27.4	25.8	21.5
Poor	1.7	4.6	4.1

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$70,000	Over \$70,000
Good	63.6	72.8	76.6
Adequate	29.5	25.7	19.6
Poor	6.8	1.5	3.7

	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Good	70.5	65.2	77.0	75.0
Adequate	27.0	31.8	17.7	21.9
Poor	2.5	3.0	5.3	3.1

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Good	70.3	72.8	72.4	71.2
Adequate	25.8	25.2	23.1	27.9
Poor	3.9	1.9	4.5	1.0

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

Expectations of business conditions in six months (February 2006)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Good	72.0	72.2	72.1
Adequate	24.3	23.7	24.0
Poor	3.8	4.1	3.9

	South	North	West
Good	69.6	72.1	74.6
Adequate	26.2	23.1	22.5
Poor	4.2	4.8	3.0

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$70,000	Over \$70,000
Good	64.0	73.2	74.8
Adequate	28.8	24.2	21.5
Poor	7.2	2.5	3.7

	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Good	77.4	63.8	76.1	72.9
Adequate	19.1	32.3	18.3	24.0
Poor	3.5	3.8	5.5	3.1

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Good	72.4	69.2	72.7	73.4
Adequate	22.0	27.9	23.4	24.5
Poor	5.5	2.9	3.9	2.1

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

Evaluations of current employment conditions (February 2006)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Good	68.3	73.8	71.0
Adequate	26.7	21.3	24.1
Poor	5.0	5.0	4.9

	South	North	West
Good	70.5	68.3	73.5
Adequate	25.9	24.1	22.4
Poor	3.6	7.6	4.1

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$70,000	Over \$70,000
Good	66.1	71.0	73.6
Adequate	27.4	24.0	22.6
Poor	6.5	5.0	3.8

	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Good	74.1	58.3	74.5	79.2
Adequate	19.6	36.4	21.8	16.0
Poor	6.3	5.3	3.6	4.8

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Good	65.4	75.0	68.4	77.4
Adequate	29.2	20.8	25.3	19.4
Poor	5.4	4.2	6.3	3.2

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

Expectations of future employment conditions (February 2006)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Good	69.2	72.6	70.9
Adequate	25.4	21.6	23.5
Poor	5.4	5.8	5.6

	South	North	West
Good	69.2	70.6	72.8
Adequate	26.0	21.0	23.1
Poor	4.7	8.4	4.1

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$70,000	Over \$70,000
Good	64.5	72.2	74.8
Adequate	27.4	22.7	22.4
Poor	8.1	5.1	2.8

	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Good	72.6	58.6	74.3	80.8
Adequate	23.0	33.1	22.0	15.2
Poor	4.4	8.3	3.7	4.0

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Good	66.9	76.5	67.7	73.4
Adequate	26.2	20.4	24.5	23.4
Poor	6.9	3.1	7.7	3.2

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

Evaluations of family's current economic situation (February 2006)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Good	67.5	64.6	66.0
Adequate	27.2	29.2	28.3
Poor	5.3	6.2	5.7

	South	North	West
Good	62.4	66.7	69.5
Adequate	28.7	28.0	28.2
Poor	9.0	5.3	2.3

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$70,000	Over \$70,000
Good	44.4	67.0	88.2
Adequate	35.3	32.5	11.8
Poor	20.3	0.5	0.0

	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Good	65.0	61.9	61.1	74.6
Adequate	30.8	30.6	29.2	22.4
Poor	4.2	7.5	9.7	3.0

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Good	72.9	66.0	60.9	64.4
Adequate	20.9	28.2	32.3	32.7
Poor	6.2	5.8	6.8	2.9

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

Expectations of family's future economic situation (February 2006)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Good	70.0	66.8	68.3
Adequate	26.7	27.0	27.0
Poor	3.3	6.3	4.8

	South	North	West
Good	64.8	65.8	73.6
Adequate	27.8	28.2	25.3
Poor	7.4	6.0	1.1

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$70,000	Over \$70,000
Good	49.2	68.5	91.7
Adequate	35.6	30.0	8.3
Poor	15.2	1.5	0.0

	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Good	66.4	63.4	63.7	78.2
Adequate	26.9	32.1	31.0	18.8
Poor	6.7	4.5	5.3	3.0

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Good	76.7	67.0	64.8	63.1
Adequate	21.7	26.0	30.2	30.1
Poor	1.6	7.0	4.9	6.8

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

Demographics

Gender (%)		Area of City (%)		Income (%)		Education (%)		Age (%)	
Male	48.4	South	35.8	Under \$30,000	30.1	H-School/less	24.0	18-29	26.5
Female	51.6	North	29.7	\$30-\$70,000	45.7	Some P-Sec.	27.0	30-44	20.5
		West	34.6	Over \$70,000	24.2	Col-Tech-Grad	22.6	45-64	31.8
						University Grad	26.4	65 or older	21.2

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

Questions

How would you evaluate current business conditions in Lethbridge?

What do you expect business conditions in Lethbridge to be like six months from now?

How would you evaluate the current employment conditions in Lethbridge?

What do you expect employment conditions in Lethbridge to be like six months from now?

How would you evaluate your own family's economic situation?

What do you expect your own family's economic situation to be like six months from now?

Evaluations of current business conditions (February 2006) (full range of responses)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Very Good	24.7	21.3	22.9
Good	46.5	51.2	48.9
Adequate	25.1	24.4	24.9
Poor	2.5	2.4	2.4
Very Poor	1.2	0.8	0.9

	South	North	West
Very Good	19.4	25.5	24.0
Good	51.4	44.3	50.9
Adequate	27.4	26.2	21.6
Poor	1.7	2.0	2.9
Very Poor	0.0	2.0	0.6

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$70,000	Over \$70,000
Very Good	16.7	26.7	21.5
Good	47.0	46.0	55.1
Adequate	29.5	25.7	19.6
Poor	3.0	1.5	3.7
Very Poor	3.8	0.0	0.0

	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Very Good	26.8	18.9	23.0	24.0
Good	43.9	47.0	54.0	51.2
Adequate	26.8	31.8	17.7	21.7
Poor	1.6	0.8	5.3	2.3
Very Poor	0.8	1.5	0.0	0.8

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Very Good	13.2	25.2	26.3	27.9
Good	57.4	47.6	46.2	43.3
Adequate	25.6	25.2	23.1	27.9
Poor	3.1	1.0	3.8	1.0
Very Poor	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.0

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

Expectations of business conditions in six months (February 2006) (full range of responses)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Very Good	21.8	23.3	22.6
Good	50.2	49.0	49.5
Adequate	24.3	23.7	24.0
Poor	2.1	3.3	2.7
Very Poor	1.7	0.8	1.2

	South	North	West
Very Good	20.8	23.1	23.7
Good	48.8	49.0	50.9
Adequate	26.2	23.1	22.5
Poor	4.2	2.0	1.8
Very Poor	0.0	2.7	1.2

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$70,000	Over \$70,000
Very Good	17.6	25.3	21.5
Good	45.6	48.0	53.3
Adequate	28.8	24.2	21.5
Poor	4.8	2.0	2.8
Very Poor	3.2	0.5	0.9

	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Very Good	29.6	16.9	23.1	22.5
Good	47.8	46.9	53.7	50.4
Adequate	19.1	32.3	18.5	24.0
Poor	2.6	2.3	3.7	2.3
Very Poor	0.9	1.5	0.9	0.8

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Very Good	13.5	22.1	26.0	29.8
Good	59.5	47.1	46.8	43.6
Adequate	22.2	27.9	23.4	24.5
Poor	4.0	1.9	2.6	1.1
Very Poor	0.8	1.0	1.3	1.1

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

Evaluations of current employment conditions (February 2006) (full range of responses)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Very Good	31.4	23.3	27.3
Good	37.2	50.4	43.7
Adequate	26.8	21.3	24.1
Poor	4.2	3.8	4.1
Very Poor	0.4	1.3	0.9

	South	North	West
Very Good	27.1	28.3	26.5
Good	43.4	40.0	47.1
Adequate	25.9	24.1	22.4
Poor	3.0	5.5	4.1
Very Poor	0.6	2.1	0.0

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$70,000	Over \$70,000
Very Good	19.5	27.5	34.0
Good	47.2	43.5	39.6
Adequate	27.6	24.0	22.6
Poor	3.3	4.5	3.8
Very Poor	2.4	0.5	0.0

	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Very Good	25.9	26.3	28.8	29.0
Good	48.2	32.3	45.9	50.0
Adequate	19.6	36.1	21.6	16.1
Poor	5.4	3.0	3.6	4.8
Very Poor	0.9	2.3	0.0	0.0

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Very Good	16.9	27.1	31.2	35.5
Good	48.5	49.0	36.9	41.9
Adequate	29.2	20.8	25.5	19.4
Poor	5.4	2.1	5.1	3.2
Very Poor	0.0	1.0	1.3	0.0

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

Expectations of future employment conditions (February 2006) (full range of responses)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Very Good	29.3	19.6	24.4
Good	39.7	53.3	46.5
Adequate	25.5	21.7	23.5
Poor	5.0	3.8	4.3
Very Poor	0.4	1.7	1.2

	South	North	West
Very Good	21.3	26.6	25.6
Good	47.9	44.1	47.0
Adequate	26.0	21.0	23.2
Poor	3.0	6.3	4.2
Very Poor	1.8	2.1	0.0

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$70,000	Over \$70,000
Very Good	17.1	23.1	34.6
Good	48.0	49.2	40.2
Adequate	27.6	22.6	22.4
Poor	4.1	4.5	2.8
Very Poor	3.3	0.5	0.0

	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Very Good	24.8	21.1	22.7	29.6
Good	47.8	37.6	50.9	51.2
Adequate	23.0	33.1	21.8	15.2
Poor	3.5	6.0	3.6	3.2
Very Poor	0.9	2.3	0.9	0.8

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Very Good	14.6	24.7	29.7	27.7
Good	52.3	52.6	38.1	45.7
Adequate	26.2	20.6	24.5	23.4
Poor	6.2	1.0	5.8	3.2
Very Poor	0.8	1.0	1.9	0.0

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

Evaluations of family's current economic situation (February 2006) (full range of responses)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Very Good	21.5	20.8	21.0
Good	46.3	43.8	45.0
Adequate	27.3	29.2	28.3
Poor	4.5	4.2	4.5
Very Poor	0.4	1.9	1.2

	South	North	West
Very Good	16.9	21.3	25.1
Good	45.5	45.3	44.6
Adequate	28.7	28.0	28.0
Poor	7.9	3.3	1.7
Very Poor	1.1	2.0	0.6

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$70,000	Over \$70,000
Very Good	7.6	18.1	40.0
Good	36.4	49.0	48.2
Adequate	35.6	32.4	11.8
Poor	15.9	0.5	0.0
Very Poor	4.5	0.0	0.0

	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Very Good	25.0	15.7	15.8	27.6
Good	40.0	46.3	45.6	47.0
Adequate	30.8	30.6	28.9	22.4
Poor	2.5	6.0	8.8	2.2
Very Poor	1.7	1.5	0.9	0.7

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Very Good	24.8	17.5	22.4	17.3
Good	48.1	48.5	38.5	47.1
Adequate	20.9	28.2	32.3	32.7
Poor	6.2	4.9	5.0	1.0
Very Poor	0.0	1.0	1.9	1.9

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

Expectations of family's future economic situation (February 2006) (full range of responses)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Very Good	23.4	21.6	22.4
Good	46.7	45.1	45.9
Adequate	26.6	27.1	27.0
Poor	2.0	4.3	3.3
Very Poor	1.2	2.0	1.5

	South	North	West
Very Good	18.8	23.0	25.9
Good	46.0	43.2	47.7
Adequate	27.8	28.4	25.3
Poor	6.8	2.0	0.6
Very Poor	0.6	3.4	0.6

	Under \$30,000	\$30,000 to \$70,000	Over \$70,000
Very Good	11.5	21.7	37.6
Good	38.2	46.8	54.1
Adequate	35.9	30.0	8.3
Poor	9.2	1.5	0.0
Very Poor	5.3	0.0	0.0

	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Very Good	28.0	15.7	18.6	27.8
Good	39.0	47.8	45.1	50.4
Adequate	27.1	32.1	31.0	18.8
Poor	4.2	2.2	4.4	2.3
Very Poor	1.7	2.2	0.9	0.8

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Very Good	27.7	18.0	21.7	21.4
Good	49.2	49.0	43.5	41.7
Adequate	21.5	26.0	30.4	30.1
Poor	1.5	4.0	3.1	4.9
Very Poor	0.0	3.0	1.2	1.9

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