

2003 Lethbridge Public Opinion Study (Fall)

# LA Transit Link Service

October 2003

Faron Ellis



**Citizen-Society Research Lab**

3000 College Drive South  
Lethbridge, Alberta T1K 1L6

[www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca](http://www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca)  
[faron.ellis@lethbridgecollege.ab.ca](mailto:faron.ellis@lethbridgecollege.ab.ca)

Telephone: (403) 320-3422  
Fax: (403) 317-3540

## 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.

## Methodology

This report is based on data collected by students enrolled in STS270–Social Science Research Methods and PSC150–Local Government at Lethbridge Community College in the fall of 2003. Students interviewed 769 adult residents by telephone over a two-week period from October 1 to 15, 2003 using numbers drawn randomly from the Lethbridge telephone directory.

Using this method, the sample yields a margin of error of  $\pm 3.5$ , 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data.

Analysis of the demographic data indicated that, within acceptable limits, the sample accurately represents the demographic distribution of the adult population within the city of Lethbridge.

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 questions were based on student interest in these issues. This analysis and report was written at the request of the City of Lethbridge's LA Transit.

This selection of our findings is based on the questions below.

Faron Ellis, Ph.D.  
Citizen Society Research Lab

## Questionnaire

Q. Overall, how often do you use the City of Lethbridge Bus system?

| Bus Use             |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Daily               | 4.0  |
| Few times per week  | 3.6  |
| Few times per month | 4.2  |
| Few times per year  | 4.7  |
| Rarely              | 13.8 |
| Never               | 69.7 |

Q. How would you say the new North-South direct link bus service has effected your commuting?

| Effect of Link (regular users only–daily to few/year) |      |
|---|------|
| Very positive   | 18.1 |
| Somewhat positive                                     | 17.8 |
| Somewhat negative                                     | 4.3  |
| Very negative   | 0.6  |
| No impact   | 59.1 |

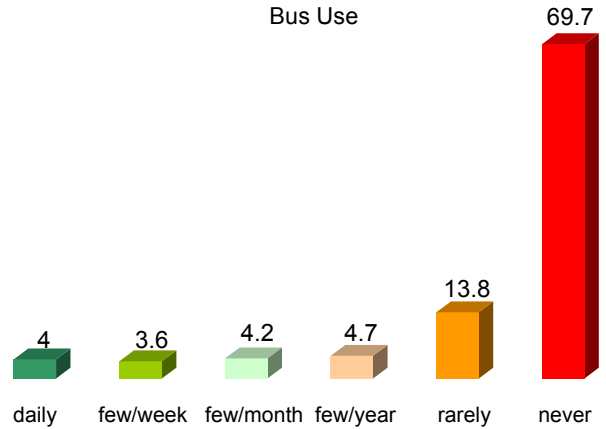
## Bus Use

When asked how frequently they use the LA Transit buses, almost seven-in-ten Lethbridge residents stated they never ride the busses. A further 13.8% stated they rarely use LA Transit.

The remaining 16.5% of Lethbridge residents use the bus system on a more regular basis. Overall, 4% stated they make daily commutes while 3.6% use LA Transit a few times per week. A further 4.2% use the busses a few times a month and another 4.7% are more sporadic commuters making use of the Lethbridge transit system a few times a year.

Women (4.5%) are slightly more likely than men (3.3%) to be daily transit users, while north side residents (4.7%) and west side residents (4.9%) are more likely to be daily users than are south Lethbridge residents (2.8%).

As expected, lower income residents (6.7%) are more likely to be daily users than are other residents. Younger residents are also more likely to be frequent LA Transit commuters than are older residents.



## Effect of Link on Commute

The 83.5% of Lethbridge residents that rarely or never use LA Transit were excluded from our more in-depth analysis of the effects of the new direct north-south Link service. We asked the 16.5% who are daily, weekly, monthly or yearly users to evaluate the impact of the Link on their commutes.

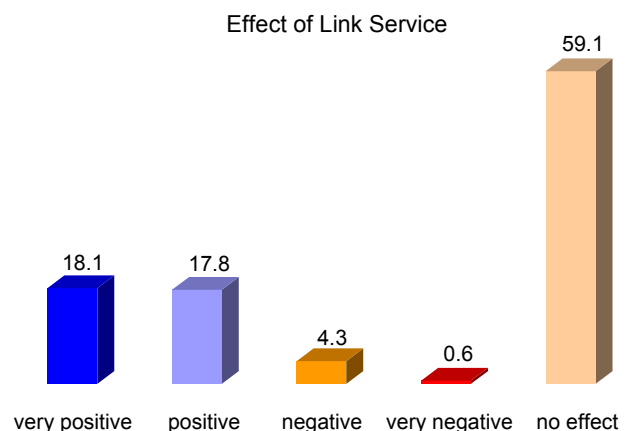
Almost three-in-five regular LA Transit users (59.1%) stated that the new Link service had no effect on their commute.

Of those who viewed the Link as having an impact, an overwhelming majority of them felt it had impacted their commute in a positive way with 17.8% stating the Link was positive and a further 18.1% told us the Link was a very positive contribution to their commute. Only 4.3% stated the Link has had a negative impact on their commute while 0.6% viewed the link very negatively.

The area of the city a commuter lives in was the most important factor in determining how positive an effect the link has had. North Lethbridge commuters are most likely to view the Link as having an impact on their commute (only 25% stated it had no impact) and they are very happy with the Link service. Over one-third of regular North Lethbridge commuters view the link as having a positive impact on their commute (34.4%) with an equal number (34.4%)

stating the Link service has had a very positive impact. Regular west Lethbridge commuters were understandably most likely to state the Link has had no impact on their commute (71.7%) but, south Lethbridge regular commuters were almost equally likely to state the Link service has had no impact on them (69.6%).

A majority of daily users (54.9%) view the Link positively with only 35.5% stating the new service has had no impact. Weekly, monthly and yearly users were less likely to view the Link as positive, but only because they were likely to see no impact rather than a negative impact.



## Bus Use

Q. Overall, how often do you use the City of Lethbridge Bus system?

### Bus Use by Gender (%)

|                     | Male | Female | Total |
|---------------------|------|--------|-------|
| Daily               | 3.3  | 4.5    | 4.0   |
| Few times per week  | 3.3  | 4.0    | 3.6   |
| Few times per month | 4.1  | 4.3    | 4.2   |
| Few times per year  | 4.9  | 4.5    | 4.7   |
| Rarely              | 12.3 | 15.1   | 13.8  |
| Never               | 72.1 | 67.6   | 69.7  |

### Bus Use by Area of City (%)

|                     | South | North | West |
|---------------------|-------|-------|------|
| Daily               | 2.8   | 4.7   | 4.9  |
| Few times per week  | 4.1   | 3.1   | 4.0  |
| Few times per month | 3.8   | 4.2   | 5.4  |
| Few times per year  | 6.0   | 3.6   | 4.5  |
| Rarely              | 14.2  | 12.0  | 15.7 |
| Never               | 69.0  | 72.4  | 65.5 |

### Bus Use by Income (%)

|                     | Under<br>\$30,000 | \$30,000 to<br>\$60,000 | Over<br>\$60,000 |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Daily               | 6.7               | 1.5                     | 2.9              |
| Few times per week  | 5.4               | 2.7                     | 2.3              |
| Few times per month | 7.1               | 2.3                     | 5.7              |
| Few times per year  | 4.9               | 6.2                     | 3.4              |
| Rarely              | 16.5              | 12.0                    | 10.3             |
| Never               | 59.4              | 75.3                    | 75.4             |

### Bus Use by Education (%)

|                     | H-School<br>or less | Some Post-<br>Secondary | Col-Tech-<br>Trade Grad | University<br>Grad |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Daily               | 4.0                 | 4.7                     | 4.6                     | 2.6                |
| Few times per week  | 3.5                 | 5.2                     | 3.0                     | 2.6                |
| Few times per month | 5.8                 | 2.6                     | 3.6                     | 5.2                |
| Few times per year  | 5.2                 | 4.7                     | 4.6                     | 3.6                |
| Rarely              | 12.7                | 16.8                    | 12.2                    | 13.0               |
| Never               | 68.8                | 66.0                    | 72.1                    | 72.9               |

### Bus Use by Age (%)

|                     | 18-29 | 30-44 | 45-64 | 65 or older |
|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|
| Daily               | 7.7   | 2.9   | 1.7   | 2.8         |
| Few times per week  | 7.2   | 0.6   | 2.1   | 4.6         |
| Few times per month | 3.8   | 4.7   | 4.7   | 2.8         |
| Few times per year  | 4.7   | 6.4   | 3.9   | 5.5         |
| Rarely              | 13.2  | 11.7  | 15.9  | 11.9        |
| Never               | 63.4  | 73.7  | 71.7  | 72.5        |

## Effect of Link on Commute (regular riders only)

Q. How would you say the new North-South direct link bus service has effected your commuting?

### Effect of Link by Gender (%)

|                   | Male | Female | Total |
|-------------------|------|--------|-------|
| Very positive     | 13.2 | 21.0   | 18.1  |
| Somewhat positive | 22.6 | 14.8   | 17.8  |
| Somewhat negative | 3.8  | 3.7    | 4.3   |
| Very negative     | 0.0  | 1.2    | 0.6   |
| No impact         | 60.4 | 59.3   | 59.1  |

### Effect of Link by Area of City (%)

|                   | South | North | West |
|-------------------|-------|-------|------|
| Very positive     | 12.5  | 34.4  | 13.0 |
| Somewhat positive | 14.3  | 34.4  | 8.7  |
| Somewhat negative | 3.6   | 6.3   | 4.3  |
| Very negative     | 0.0   | 0.0   | 2.2  |
| No impact         | 69.6  | 25.0  | 71.7 |

### Effect of Link by Income (%)

|                   | Under<br>\$30,000 | \$30,000 to<br>\$60,000 | Over<br>\$60,000 |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Very positive     | 17.5              | 15.2                    | 24.0             |
| Somewhat positive | 14.0              | 15.2                    | 12.0             |
| Somewhat negative | 5.3               | 3.0                     | 4.0              |
| Very negative     | 0.0               | 0.0                     | 4.0              |
| No impact         | 63.2              | 66.7                    | 56.0             |

### Effect of Link by Education (%)

|                   | H-School<br>or less | Some Post-<br>Secondary | Col-Tech-<br>Trade Grad | University<br>Grad |
|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Very positive     | 22.9                | 14.3                    | 25.0                    | 10.3               |
| Somewhat positive | 17.1                | 11.4                    | 31.3                    | 10.3               |
| Somewhat negative | 0.0                 | 5.7                     | 3.1                     | 10.3               |
| Very negative     | 0.0                 | 0.0                     | 3.1                     | 0.0                |
| No impact         | 60.0                | 68.6                    | 37.5                    | 69.0               |

### Effect of Link by Age (%)

|                   | 18-29 | 30-44 | 45-64 | 65 or older |
|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|
| Very positive     | 21.1  | 16.0  | 21.9  | 5.3         |
| Somewhat positive | 21.1  | 20.0  | 9.4   | 15.8        |
| Somewhat negative | 3.5   | 4.0   | 9.4   | 0.0         |
| Very negative     | 0.0   | 4.0   | 0.0   | 0.0         |
| No impact         | 54.4  | 56.0  | 59.4  | 78.9        |

### Effect of Link by Frequency of Use (%)

|                   | Daily | Few/Week | Few/Month | Few/Year |
|-------------------|-------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Very positive     | 19.4  | 25.0     | 22.6      | 11.1     |
| Somewhat positive | 35.5  | 17.9     | 3.2       | 25.9     |
| Somewhat negative | 9.7   | 0.0      | 6.5       | 3.7      |
| Very negative     | 0.0   | 0.0      | 3.2       | 0.0      |
| No impact         | 35.5  | 57.1     | 64.5      | 59.3     |