

# Lethbridge Homelessness Study

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# City of Lethbridge

A garden city 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.

The south side'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.

Like most cities, Lethbridge has its own unique set of social issues including homelessness. Currently, the city has no permanent homeless shelter.

## Methodology

This report is based on data collected by Interdisciplinary Studies students and Communication Arts students enrolled in STS270 – Social Science Research Methods and PSC150 – Local Government at Lethbridge Community College in the fall of 2002. Students conducted 575 telephone interviews during October using numbers drawn randomly from the Lethbridge telephone directory.

Using this method, a sample size of 575 yields a margin of error of  $\pm 4.1\%$ , 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data.

The demographic data presented on page 7 demonstrate that, within acceptable limits, the sample accurately represents the demographic distribution of the voting age population within the city of Lethbridge.

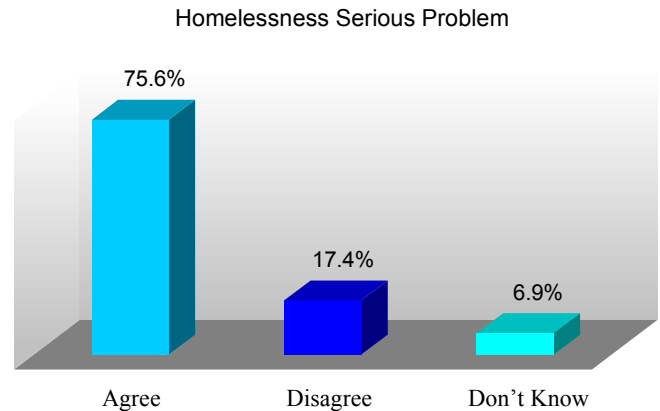
These data are part of a larger study of the opinions and attitudes of Lethbridge residents conducted by the Citizen Society Research Lab at LCC.

The following is a selection of or results.

## Homelessness a Serious Issue in Lethbridge (%)

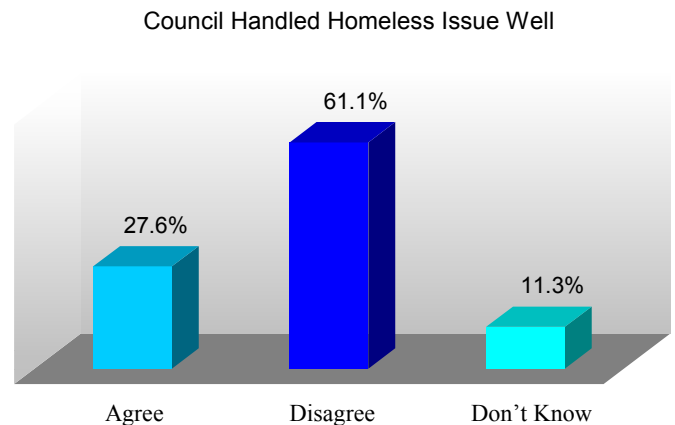
Initially, we discovered that over three-quarters of all respondents (75.6%) believe homelessness is a serious problem in Lethbridge.

Women (81.3%) are slightly more likely than men (69.5%) to view homelessness as serious while south side residents (70.4%) are slightly less likely than north side (79.9%) and west side (79.1%) residents to view homelessness as serious. The youth are the least likely to view homelessness as a serious problem (71.2%). Income and education did not affect opinion on this issue.



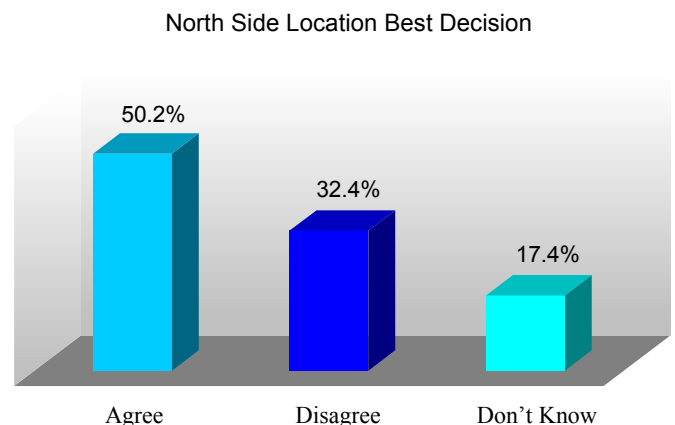
## Council Handled Homeless Issue Well (%)

A substantial majority of Lethbridge residents (61.1%) also believe that the Lethbridge City Council did a poor job in handling the homeless shelter issue over the past year. North Lethbridge residents were much more critical of Council (72.2% stating Council did not handle the issue well) than were west side (59.2%) and south side residents (56.8%). Middle-aged voters are more critical than either the youth or seniors, while lower income residents and those with the least amount of formal education were the least critical of council.



## North Side Location Best (%)

In spite of their overall critical evaluations of how City Council handled the homeless shelter issues, a slim majority of Lethbridge residents (50.2%) believe Council is headed in the right direction by supporting the north side location. A substantial plurality (32.4%) does not believe the north side location is best while a further 17.4% did not express an opinion. North side residents were only slightly more opposed to the new shelter location (37.6%) than were south side (30.6%) and west Lethbridge residents (31.6%).



# Tabular Data

## Homelessness Serious Problem in Lethbridge (%)

### Homelessness Serious Problem (%)

Agree	75.6
Disagree	17.4
Don't Know-Unsure	6.9

### Homelessness Serious Problem by Gender

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Agree	69.5	81.3	75.6
Disagree	22.2	13.0	17.4
Don't Know-Unsure	8.4	5.7	6.9

### Homelessness Serious Problem by Area of City

	<u>South</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>West</u>
Agree	70.4	79.9	79.1
Disagree	21.5	14.9	14.3
Don't Know-Unsure	8.1	5.2	6.6

### Homelessness Serious Problem by Age

	<u>18-29</u>	<u>30-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65 plus</u>
Agree	71.2	74.8	81.0	77.6
Disagree	21.8	18.5	13.3	13.2
Don't Know-Unsure	7.1	6.6	5.7	9.2

### Homelessness Serious Problem by Income

	<u>Under \$30,000</u>	<u>\$30,000- \$60,000</u>	<u>Over \$60,000</u>
Agree	73.7	74.5	75.2
Disagree	20.4	17.9	17.5
Don't Know-Unsure	6.0	7.7	7.3

### Homelessness Serious Problem by Education

	<u>HS or less</u>	<u>Some PS</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>University</u>
Agree	75.6	71.3	78.8	77.3
Disagree	17.6	22.0	15.9	14.5
Don't Know-Unsure	6.7	6.7	5.3	8.1

## Council Handled Shelter Issue Well (%)

### Council Handled Shelter Issue Well (%)

Agree	27.6
Disagree	61.1
Don't Know-Unsure	11.3

### Council Handled Shelter Issue Well by Gender

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Agree	28.9	26.3	27.6
Disagree	60.8	61.6	61.1
Don't Know-Unsure	10.3	12.1	11.3

### Council Handled Shelter Issue Well by Area of City

	<u>South</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>West</u>
Agree	29.1	18.8	30.6
Disagree	56.8	72.2	59.2
Don't Know-Unsure	14.1	9.0	10.2

### Council Handled Shelter Issue Well by Age

	<u>18-29</u>	<u>30-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65 plus</u>
Agree	35.5	22.7	21.0	28.9
Disagree	50.3	67.3	69.4	56.6
Don't Know-Unsure	14.2	10.0	9.6	14.5

### Council Handled Shelter Issue Well by Income

	<u>Under \$30,000</u>	<u>\$30,000- \$60,000</u>	<u>Over \$60,000</u>
Agree	39.2	21.4	22.2
Disagree	48.2	66.8	69.6
Don't Know-Unsure	12.7	11.7	8.1

### Council Handled Shelter Issue Well by Education

	<u>HS or less</u>	<u>Some PS</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>University</u>
Agree	33.1	33.6	25.6	20.5
Disagree	52.5	49.0	66.2	73.1
Don't Know-Unsure	14.4	17.4	8.3	6.4

## North Side Location Right Choice (%)

### North Side Location Right Choice (%)

Agree	50.2
Disagree	32.4
Don't Know-Unsure	17.4

### North Side Location Right Choice by Gender

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Agree	52.8	48.0	50.2
Disagree	30.5	34.0	32.4
Don't Know-Unsure	16.7	18.0	17.4

### North Side Location Right Choice by Area of City

	<u>South</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>West</u>
Agree	49.5	45.9	52.8
Disagree	30.6	37.6	31.6
Don't Know-Unsure	19.8	16.5	15.5

### North Side Location Right Choice by Age

	<u>18-29</u>	<u>30-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65 plus</u>
Agree	59.9	46.0	47.4	44.9
Disagree	26.3	36.7	33.3	32.1
Don't Know-Unsure	13.8	17.3	19.2	23.1

### North Side Location Right Choice by Income

	<u>Under \$30,000</u>	<u>\$30,000- \$60,000</u>	<u>Over \$60,000</u>
Agree	56.1	45.4	49.3
Disagree	25.6	40.3	33.6
Don't Know-Unsure	18.3	14.3	17.2

### North Side Location Right Choice by Education

	<u>HS or less</u>	<u>Some PS</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>University</u>
Agree	50.4	53.4	49.2	48.2
Disagree	26.5	28.4	37.1	36.5
Don't Know-Unsure	23.1	18.2	13.6	15.3

## Council Performance (%)

### Council Performance (%)

Good	46.7
Adequate	39.8
Poor	13.5

### Council Performance by Gender

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Good	45.8	47.4	46.7
Adequate	39.4	40.1	39.8
Poor	14.7	12.4	13.5

### Council Performance by Area of City

	<u>South</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>West</u>
Good	43.3	52.5	45.0
Adequate	41.4	36.1	41.1
Poor	15.2	11.5	13.9

### Council Performance by Age

	<u>18-29</u>	<u>30-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65 plus</u>
Good	52.6	49.3	33.3	56.2
Adequate	40.1	37.1	46.5	32.9
Poor	7.2	13.6	20.1	11.0

### Council Performance by Income

	<u>Under \$30,000</u>	<u>\$30,000- \$60,000</u>	<u>Over \$60,000</u>
Good	52.0	44.2	45.0
Adequate	38.0	39.8	39.5
Poor	10.0	16.0	15.5

### Council Performance by Education

	<u>HS or less</u>	<u>Some PS</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>University</u>
Good	54.1	54.8	37.5	41.4
Adequate	28.8	37.8	48.3	42.6
Poor	17.1	7.4	14.2	16.0

## Mayor Tarleck Performance (%)

### Mayor Tarleck Performance (%)

Good	57.6
Adequate	33.0
Poor	9.4

### Mayor Tarleck Performance by Gender

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Good	53.0	61.7	57.6
Adequate	37.2	29.2	33.0
Poor	9.9	9.1	9.4

### Mayor Tarleck Performance by Area of City

	<u>South</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>West</u>
Good	52.9	65.0	59.2
Adequate	34.1	24.2	35.6
Poor	13.0	10.8	5.2

### Mayor Tarleck Performance by Age

	<u>18-29</u>	<u>30-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65 plus</u>
Good	59.5	63.6	49.6	60.6
Adequate	36.5	29.3	36.9	26.8
Poor	4.1	7.1	13.5	12.7

### Mayor Tarleck Performance by Income

	<u>Under \$30,000</u>	<u>\$30,000- \$60,000</u>	<u>Over \$60,000</u>
Good	60.0	59.2	56.9
Adequate	33.1	31.0	34.6
Poor	6.9	9.8	8.5

### Mayor Tarleck Performance by Education

	<u>HS or less</u>	<u>Some PS</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>University</u>
Good	58.3	61.6	45.6	61.5
Adequate	27.2	31.9	43.0	31.1
Poor	14.6	6.5	11.4	7.5



## Demographics

Gender	(%)
Male	47.6
Female	52.4

Area of City	(%)
South	40.4
North	24.1
West	35.5

Age	(%)
18-29	30.7
30-44	27.1
45-64	28.3
65 or older	13.9

Income	(%)
\$30,000 or less	33.6
\$30,001-\$60,000	39.1
Over \$60,000	27.3

Education	(%)
High School or less	20.8
Some post-second	26.1
College-tech grad	23.0
University grad	30.1

## Questionnaire

- How would you rate the overall performance of the Lethbridge City Council (since being elected one year ago)?
- How would you rate the overall performance of Mayor Bob Tarleck?
- Homelessness is a serious problem in Lethbridge.
- Overall, Lethbridge City Council did a good job handling the Streets Alive homeless shelter issue over the past year.
- Lethbridge City Council made the right decision concerning the new north side location for the Lethbridge homeless shelter.
- Gender
- Age
- Education
- Income
- Area of city