



Lethbridge Public Opinion Study – Fall 2008







Mayor and Council Report

October 28, 2008

Dr. Faron Ellis
Citizen Society Research Lab
Lethbridge College
3000 College Drive South
Lethbridge AB T1K 1L6
fellis@lethbridgecollege.ab.ca
www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca/go/csrl



Methodology

-  **Population** The city of Lethbridge has a total population of 83,960 residents (2008 municipal census) approximately 80% of which are 18 years of age or older (67,168). A total of 41,160 Lethbridge residents are male (49.0%) while 42,800 are female (51.0%). South Lethbridge is home to 29,773 residents (35.5%) while the rapidly expanding west side is now home to 29,673 residents (35.3%). There are 24,514 north Lethbridge residents (29.2%).
-  **Sample** Data were collected by Lethbridge College and Athabasca University students enrolled in Social Science Research Methods (STS270) and Local Government (PSC150) in the fall of 2008. Students interviewed 955 adult city of Lethbridge residents by telephone on October 4 and 5, 2008 under the supervision of School of Liberal Arts faculty members Faron Ellis, PhD and Marda Schindeler, MA. Telephone numbers were selected from a sample drawn from InfoCanada directories. We sincerely appreciate and thank all those who took time out of their day to respond to our survey. Full methodological notes for samples from previous Lethbridge Public Opinion Studies can be obtained by visiting the CSRL web pages at: 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 the demographic distribution of the population (gender, age and area of the city of Lethbridge).
-  **Confidence** The weighted sample yields a margin of error of ± 3.15 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data.
-  **IB Commons Call Centre** Students conducted interviews using the facilities of the Lethbridge College IB Commons Call Centre and applications developed by the Open Source Learning Lab. We thank Dr. James Manis and the OSL for their efforts in working with us to establish and maintain the IB Commons Call Centre.
-  **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 derived from the research interests of College students and faculty.

Lethbridge Mayor and Council Performance Evaluations

Lethbridge Mayor Bob Tarleck's approval ratings continue to decline but remain positive. Less than a majority of Lethbridge residents (47.1%) think Tarleck is doing a good job as mayor, his lowest positive evaluations since he became mayor in 2001, but still almost three times greater than the 16.4% who think he is doing a poor job. The Mayor's overall approval ratings have dropped 5.7% % since February, and are down 7.3% from one year ago. His disapproval ratings have increased 3.3% compared to a year ago. Slightly more than one-third of all residents (36.5%) currently believe the Mayor is performing adequately. Women (50.9%), west Lethbridge residents (55.1%), university graduates (52.3%), and the youth (56.7%) are most positive. Men (19.3%), north Lethbridge residents (21.7%), seniors (22.9%) and middle income earners (16.5%) are the most likely to believe the mayor is performing poorly.

City Council's positive evaluations have also dipped slightly with just over one-third of Lethbridge residents (37.6%) stating council is doing a good job. Council's disapproval ratings continue to climb, up 2.4% from one year ago. Currently, 16.4% of Lethbridge residents believe Council as a whole is performing poorly, with men (20.7%) and north Lethbridge residents (22.0%) most likely to evaluate council negatively.

Mayor Tarleck Performance

	Feb. '02	Oct. '02	Feb. '03	Oct. '03	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Feb. '06	Oct. '06	Oct. '07	Feb. '08	Oct. '08
Good	56.2	57.6	60.5	66.4	64.7	71.4	76.8	70.8	57.5	57.7	54.4	52.8	47.1
Adequate	39.8	33.0	33.9	27.6	28.7	24.2	18.5	23.5	32.0	26.2	32.5	33.3	36.5
Poor	4.0	9.4	5.6	6.0	6.6	4.4	4.7	5.7	10.6	16.1	13.1	13.9	16.4

City Council Performance

	Feb. '02	Oct. '02	Feb. '03	Oct. '03	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Feb. '06	Oct. '06	Oct. '07	Feb. '08	Oct. '08
Good	46.5	46.7	50.2	44.1	45.2	50.0	60.9	51.5	44.6	44.0	41.4	42.4	37.6
Adequate	44.4	39.8	39.1	43.1	43.5	41.0	33.8	41.5	44.3	42.5	44.6	43.7	46.0
Poor	9.1	13.5	10.7	12.8	11.3	9.0	5.2	7.0	11.0	13.5	14.0	13.9	16.4

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

Mayor Tarleck performance by demographic group (%)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Good	43.2	50.9	47.1
Adequate	37.6	35.4	36.5
Poor	19.3	13.7	16.4

	South	North	West
Good	46.7	38.0	55.1
Adequate	37.0	40.3	32.7
Poor	16.3	21.7	12.2

	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Good	46.5	47.8	50.7
Adequate	39.2	35.6	34.7
Poor	14.3	16.5	14.7

	High School or less	Some Post Secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Good	40.8	46.4	47.7	52.3
Adequate	39.0	41.9	36.4	30.5
Poor	20.2	11.7	15.9	17.2

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Good	56.7	47.6	46.2	39.0
Adequate	33.7	36.1	37.6	38.1
Poor	9.6	16.2	16.1	22.9

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

Lethbridge City Council performance by demographic group (%)

	Male	Female	All Residents
Good	32.6	42.6	37.6
Adequate	46.7	45.2	46.0
Poor	20.7	12.2	16.4

	South	North	West
Good	38.1	32.6	41.6
Adequate	45.8	45.4	46.6
Poor	16.0	22.0	11.9

	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Good	40.9	37.6	35.9
Adequate	44.9	47.4	45.7
Poor	14.2	15.0	18.4

	High School or less	Some Post Secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Good	40.5	40.6	35.0	40.5
Adequate	45.1	42.9	47.8	45.1
Poor	14.4	16.4	17.3	14.4

	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Good	38.1	36.2	37.2	38.0
Adequate	42.0	54.8	43.8	46.5
Poor	19.9	9.0	19.0	15.5

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

Demographics

Gender (%)		Area of City (%)		Income (%)		Education (%)		Age (%)	
Male	48.9	South	35.3	Under \$40,000	33.6	H-School/less	24.9	18-29	23.9
Female	51.1	North	29.4	\$40-\$80,000	36.8	Some P-Sec.	22.0	30-44	21.8
		West	35.3	Over \$80,000	29.6	Col-Tech-Grad	25.1	45-64	31.5
						University Grad	28.0	65 or older	22.9

Questions

How would you rate the overall performance of Lethbridge mayor Bob Tarleck?

How would you rate the overall performance of the current Lethbridge city council?