



2007 Lethbridge Public Opinion Study (Fall)  
Police Service Evaluations  
for  
Lethbridge Regional Police Service

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# Methodology

-  **Population** The city of Lethbridge has a total population of 81,692 residents (2007 municipal census) approximately 80% of which are 18 years of age or older (65,832). A total of 39,941 Lethbridge residents are male (48.9%) while 41,751 are female (51.1%). South Lethbridge is home to 29,225 residents (35.8%) while the rapidly expanding west side is now home to 28,443 residents (34.8%). There are 24,024 north Lethbridge residents (29.4%). Unless otherwise specified, the data presented below represent the city of Lethbridge population.
-  **Sample** Data were collected by Lethbridge College and Athabasca University students enrolled in STS270 – Social Science Research Methods and PSC150 – Local Government in the fall of 2007. Students interviewed 866 adult city of Lethbridge residents and 140 Coaldale adult residents by telephone from September 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> 2007. Telephone numbers were selected from a sample drawn from Info Canada 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](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 and the town of Coaldale. The sample has been statistically weighted where necessary to even better reflect the demographic distribution of the population (gender and area of the city of Lethbridge).
-  **Confidence** The weighted sample yields a margin of error of  $\pm 3.3\%$ , 19 times out of 20 for the full 2007 Lethbridge sample and  $\pm 8.2\%$ , 19 times out of 20 for the full Coaldale sample. 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 LCC. This particular set of question was sponsored by Lethbridge Regional Police Service. We thank Lethbridge Regional Police for their support of our research endeavors.

# Perceptions of Lethbridge Regional Police Service

## Performance

A substantial majority of Lethbridge residents (64.1%) believe Lethbridge Regional Police Service is doing a good job policing the community. Only a small minority (7.2%) believes the police are doing a poor job, while slightly over one-quarter (28.7%) say the police are performing adequately.

A near majority of Coaldale residents (49.6%) believe Lethbridge Regional Police Service is doing a good job policing the community. More than one in five Coaldale residents (21.5%) believes the police are doing a poor job, while slightly over one-quarter (28.9%) say the police are performing adequately.

Within the city of Lethbridge, majorities in all demographic groups provide Lethbridge Regional Police Services with positive evaluations. West Lethbridge residents (67.0%), lower income earners (70.2%), and seniors (71.7%) are most positive. Middle income earners (58.5%) and generation-x residents (57.8%) are less positive, although these groups are still much more positive than negative.

	Lethbridge 2006	Lethbridge 2007	Coaldale 2007		Lethbridge 2006	Lethbridge 2007	Coaldale 2007
Good	63.7	64.1	49.6	Very good	19.9	23.7	11.1
Adequate	27.7	28.7	28.9	Good	43.8	40.4	38.5
Poor	8.6	7.2	21.5	Adequate	27.7	28.7	28.9
				Poor	6.1	5.5	12.6
				Very Poor	2.5	1.7	8.9

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

# Perceptions of Lethbridge Regional Police Service

## Meeting Expectations

Lethbridge residents are similarly positive when asked to rate how Lethbridge police are meeting residents' expectations of what a police service should be doing to make the community a safe and secure place to live. A clear majority of residents (58.3%) believe the police are doing a good job in meeting expectations, down slightly from the 64.3% who responded positively in 2006. A further 35.0% believe the police are adequately meeting expectations. Only 6.7% think the police doing a poor job meeting residents' expectations, very similar to what was measured in 2006 (5.6%).

Coaldale residents are less positive overall, but still much more positive than negative. Only 43.3% of Coaldale residents believe Lethbridge Regional Police Service is doing a good job meeting expectations. A further 40.3% believe the police are adequately meeting expectations, while 16.4% state the police are doing a poor job meeting expectation of what Coaldale residents expect a police service to be doing.

Within the city of Lethbridge, west Lethbridge residents (63.3%), lower income earners (61.8%), and seniors (63.0%) are again most positive. North Lethbridge residents are among the least positive (54.5%), but still much more positive than negative.

	Lethbridge 2006	Lethbridge 2007	Coaldale 2007		Lethbridge 2006	Lethbridge 2007	Coaldale 2007
Good	64.3	58.3	43.3	Very good	15.9	14.8	6.7
Adequate	30.2	35.0	40.3	Good	48.4	43.5	36.6
Poor	5.6	6.7	16.4	Adequate	30.2	35.0	40.3
				Poor	3.6	5.5	9.0
				Very Poor	2.0	1.2	7.5

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

# Perceptions of Lethbridge Regional Police Service

## Changes in Meeting Expectations

Overall, the vast majority of Lethbridge residents believe Lethbridge Regional Police Service has neither improved nor worsened in meeting residents' expectations in the past year. Further, Lethbridge residents are three times more likely to believe the police have improved in meeting expectations (17.4%) than to view them as having gotten worse (5.4%).

Coaldale residents are more evenly split. Fully two-thirds (67.5%) believe Lethbridge Regional Police Service has neither improved nor worsened in meeting their expectations in the past year. However, 15.9% believe the police have gotten worse in meeting expectations, almost as many as those who believe the police have improved (16.7%).

Within the city of Lethbridge, south (19.2%) and north (18.9%) Lethbridge residents are among those most likely to see improvement, as are lower income earners (19.6%), seniors (22.2%), and those making daily trips downtown (22.4%). No substantial levels of discontent can be measures within any of the demographic subgroups.

	Lethbridge 2006	Lethbridge 2007	Coaldale 2007
Improved	24.3	17.4	16.7
Stayed the same	71.9	77.2	67.5
Gotten worse	3.7	5.4	15.9

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

# Online Reporting Service

## Online Reporting of Minor Complaints and Crime

Almost half of all Lethbridge (48.6%) and Coaldale (47.5%) residents state that they would report a minor complaint or crime by using an online reporting service. Slightly more than one in ten Lethbridge (12.5%) and Coaldale (10.1%) residents say they may use such a service. Approximately two in five Lethbridge (38.9%) and Coaldale (42.4%) residents state that they would not use an online reporting service.

Within the city of Lethbridge, west side residents (57.1%), upper income earners (64.3%), generation-x residents (60.1%), and those with completed post-secondary education credentials are most likely to say they would use an online reporting service. Lower income earners (45.0%), those with the lowest levels of formal education (54.5%) and seniors (57.4%) are the most likely to state that they would not use online reporting service.

	Lethbridge 2007	Coaldale 2007
Yes	48.6	47.5
No	38.9	42.4
Maybe/Uncertain	12.5	10.1

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

# Community Safety

## Neighborhood Safety

For the most part, Lethbridge and Coaldale residents feel safe in their communities and demonstrate similar overall patterns of opinion when considering the safety of their respective neighborhoods.

A majority of Lethbridge residents (49.8%) feel very safe in their neighborhoods. Although this is down somewhat from the 60.7% who felt very safe in 2006, the reduction in those who feel very safe is made up by a year-over-year increase in those who feel somewhat safe (32.2% in 2006 and 42.9% in 2007). Only 6.6% of Lethbridge residents currently feel somewhat unsafe in their own neighborhoods, while an even smaller group (0.7%) feels very unsafe.

Women are only slightly less likely to feel safe than are men. Seniors are just as likely to feel safe in their neighborhoods as are other age groups. The youth are the most likely to feel unsafe, but are still overwhelmingly more likely to feel safe in their neighborhoods than to feel unsafe. Upper income residents are most likely to feel very safe.

Coaldale residents demonstrate almost identical overall opinions about their neighborhood safety as do Lethbridge residents. Almost half of all Coaldale residents (48.2%) feel very safe in their neighborhoods while a further 43.9% feel somewhat safe. Only 5.8% feel somewhat unsafe and fewer still fell very unsafe (2.2%).

	Lethbridge 2006	Lethbridge 2007	Coaldale 2007
Very safe	60.7	49.8	48.2
Somewhat safe	32.2	42.9	43.9
Somewhat unsafe	4.9	6.6	5.8
Very unsafe	2.1	0.7	2.2

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

# Community Safety

## Downtown Safety

Overall Lethbridge and Coaldale residents also feel safe in downtown Lethbridge, although less safe than in their own neighborhoods.

A clear majority of Lethbridge residents feels somewhat safe (53.1%) while another quarter of all residents (23.2%) feel very safe downtown. About quarter of all Lethbridge residents do not feel safe downtown, with most of those (19.6%) saying they feel somewhat unsafe. Only 4.0% state that they feel very unsafe when they visit downtown. Lethbridge residents' opinions about downtown safety are virtually unchanged since 2006.

Women feel only slightly less safe when they are downtown than do men, while seniors are more likely than any other age group to feel very safe downtown.

Coaldale residents feel slightly less safe when visiting downtown Lethbridge than do Lethbridge residents. Almost three-quarters of all Coaldale residents feel safe in downtown Lethbridge, with 16.2% of those feeling very safe and a further 56.2% feeling somewhat safe. About one-quarter feel unsafe in downtown Lethbridge, with most of those feeling somewhat unsafe (22.3%). Only 5.4% of all Coaldale residents feel very unsafe in downtown Lethbridge.

	Lethbridge 2006	Lethbridge 2007	Coaldale 2007
Very safe	24.1	23.2	16.2
Somewhat safe	54.9	53.1	56.2
Somewhat unsafe	16.9	19.6	22.3
Very unsafe	4.0	4.0	5.4

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

# Downtown Lethbridge

## Frequency of Visits to Downtown Lethbridge

Most Lethbridge residents frequent downtown on a regular basis. About one in five (19.9%) go downtown daily, while a further 46.2% visit downtown on a weekly basis. A further 19.3% visit at least monthly, while only 14.5% go downtown infrequently. Men, west Lethbridge residents, upper income earners, and the youth are among those who visit downtown Lethbridge most frequently.

Coaldale residents visit downtown Lethbridge less frequently than do Lethbridge residents. Nevertheless, more than one-third of all Coaldale residents (36.7%) visit downtown Lethbridge on a weekly basis, and a further 12.2% make daily trips to downtown Lethbridge. Slightly less than one-quarter of all Coaldale residents (23.7%) report infrequent visits to downtown Lethbridge, while a further 27.3% report monthly visits.

	Lethbridge 2006	Lethbridge 2007	Coaldale 2007
Daily	23.6	19.9	12.2
Weekly	47.8	46.2	36.7
Monthly	17.4	19.3	27.3
Infrequently	11.3	14.5	23.7

	Lethbridge 2006	Lethbridge 2007	Coaldale 2007
Daily	23.6	19.9	12.2
Weekly	47.8	46.2	36.7
Monthly	17.4	19.3	27.3
Few times per year	4.8	7.3	12.9
Rarely or never	6.4	7.3	10.8

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

## Lethbridge Regional Police Service Performance (October 2007)

Gender/Municipality	Male	Female	All Lethbridge	Coaldale
Good	61.7	65.8	64.1	49.6
Adequate	29.5	28.2	28.7	28.9
Poor	8.8	6.0	7.2	21.5

Area	South	North	West
Good	63.6	61.8	67.0
Adequate	30.3	27.4	28.5
Poor	6.1	10.8	4.4

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Good	70.2	58.5	63.0
Adequate	23.0	35.3	28.5
Poor	6.9	6.2	8.5

Education	High School or less	Some Post Secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Good	65.3	65.4	61.4	64.1
Adequate	25.9	27.7	32.4	30.0
Poor	8.8	6.9	6.2	5.8

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Good	60.3	57.8	64.5	71.7
Adequate	32.2	34.2	28.0	23.5
Poor	7.5	8.1	7.6	4.8

Visits Downtown	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Infrequently
Good	65.2	67.4	62.0	54.3
Adequate	29.3	26.6	29.1	34.5
Poor	5.5	6.0	8.9	11.2

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

## Meeting Expectations (October 2007)

Gender/Municipality	Male	Female	All Lethbridge	Coaldale
Good	56.3	59.8	58.3	43.3
Adequate	34.8	35.1	35.0	40.3
Poor	8.9	5.2	6.7	16.4

Area	South	North	West
Good	57.4	54.5	63.3
Adequate	35.0	35.8	34.1
Poor	7.6	9.7	2.6

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Good	61.8	57.3	55.7
Adequate	30.9	37.6	35.9
Poor	7.3	5.1	8.4

Education	High School or less	Some Post Secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Good	58.8	58.0	60.5	56.1
Adequate	36.1	33.8	32.9	37.6
Poor	5.1	8.3	6.7	6.3

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Good	57.5	52.5	58.5	63.0
Adequate	35.6	38.9	33.9	33.7
Poor	6.8	8.6	7.6	3.3

Visits Downtown	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Infrequently
Good	59.0	61.2	60.1	45.2
Adequate	35.5	33.8	31.6	42.6
Poor	5.4	5.0	8.2	12.2

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

## Changes in Meeting Expectations (October 2007)

Gender/Municipality	Male	Female	All Lethbridge	Coaldale
Improved	17.6	17.2	17.4	16.7
Stayed the same	76.0	78.1	77.2	67.5
Worsened	17.6	17.2	5.4	15.9

Area	South	North	West
Improved	19.2	18.9	13.9
Stayed the same	74.9	73.7	83.3
Worsened	5.9	7.4	2.9

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Improved	19.6	17.9	12.2
Stayed the same	74.2	77.5	80.1
Worsened	6.2	4.6	7.7

Education	High School or less	Some Post Secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Improved	21.1	16.2	15.9	15.8
Stayed the same	73.4	77.0	80.0	78.7
Worsened	5.5	6.8	4.1	5.4

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Improved	11.7	15.4	18.1	22.2
Stayed the same	80.5	80.1	76.3	73.5
Worsened	7.8	4.5	5.6	4.3

Visits Downtown	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Infrequently
Improved	22.4	14.7	17.1	19.3
Stayed the same	73.7	81.3	74.7	72.5
Worsened	3.9	4.0	8.2	8.3

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

## Online Reporting of Minor Complaints and Crime (October 2007)

Gender/Municipality	Male	Female	All Lethbridge	Coaldale
Yes	49.9	47.7	48.6	47.5
No	39.4	38.6	38.9	42.4
Maybe/uncertain	10.8	13.7	12.5	10.1

Area	South	North	West
Yes	45.6	43.3	57.1
No	43.4	43.0	30.2
Maybe/uncertain	11.0	13.7	12.7

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Yes	43.8	49.8	64.3
No	45.0	37.2	24.6
Maybe/uncertain	11.2	13.0	11.1

Education	High School or less	Some Post Secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Yes	31.8	46.9	57.0	58.7
No	54.5	40.0	33.2	28.3
Maybe/uncertain	13.6	13.1	9.8	13.0

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Yes	51.7	60.1	52.4	30.9
No	34.7	29.8	34.0	57.4
Maybe/uncertain	13.6	10.1	13.6	11.7

Visits Downtown	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Infrequently
Yes	44.9	51.4	53.7	37.7
No	41.3	35.1	38.9	47.5
Maybe/uncertain	13.8	13.4	7.4	14.8

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

## Evaluations of Neighborhood Safety (October 2007)

Gender/Municipality	Male	Female	All Lethbridge	Coaldale
Very safe	49.9	49.7	49.8	48.2
Somewhat safe	43.7	42.4	42.9	43.9
Somewhat unsafe	5.8	7.1	6.6	5.8
Very unsafe	0.6	0.8	0.7	2.2

Area	South	North	West
Very safe	47.1	36.8	66.3
Somewhat safe	47.8	51.2	29.3
Somewhat unsafe	4.8	10.7	4.0
Very unsafe	0.4	1.4	0.4

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Very safe	46.4	46.0	59.4
Somewhat safe	45.6	48.3	34.7
Somewhat unsafe	7.2	5.0	5.3
Very unsafe	0.8	0.8	0.6

Education	High School or less	Some Post Secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Very safe	44.5	51.9	46.0	57.0
Somewhat safe	45.9	40.6	47.0	38.2
Somewhat unsafe	8.2	6.3	7.0	4.4
Very unsafe	1.4	1.3	0.0	0.4

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Very safe	51.0	48.8	50.5	49.7
Somewhat safe	38.1	45.2	43.0	45.0
Somewhat unsafe	8.2	5.4	6.5	5.3
Very unsafe	2.7	0.6	0.0	0.0

Visits Downtown	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Infrequently
Very safe	49.7	54.0	46.0	41.3
Somewhat safe	41.9	40.6	44.7	49.6
Somewhat unsafe	7.2	4.9	8.1	9.1
Very unsafe	1.2	0.5	1.2	0.0

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

## Evaluations of Downtown Safety (October 2007)

Gender/Municipality	Male	Female	All Lethbridge	Coaldale
Very safe	28.4	19.5	23.2	16.2
Somewhat safe	54.2	52.4	53.1	56.2
Somewhat unsafe	15.3	22.7	19.6	22.3
Very unsafe	2.1	5.4	4.0	5.4

Area	South	North	West
Very safe	25.3	16.8	27.9
Somewhat safe	49.8	55.9	53.3
Somewhat unsafe	19.5	23.1	16.2
Very unsafe	5.4	4.2	2.6

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Very safe	23.1	22.2	26.8
Somewhat safe	49.6	57.6	53.6
Somewhat unsafe	22.7	17.1	16.7
Very unsafe	4.6	3.1	3.0

Education	High School or less	Some Post Secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Very safe	19.1	18.9	19.8	32.7
Somewhat safe	55.0	54.7	53.6	50.9
Somewhat unsafe	22.0	20.8	23.7	12.4
Very unsafe	3.8	5.7	2.9	4.0

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Very safe	19.0	19.3	23.6	29.5
Somewhat safe	55.1	51.6	55.1	49.4
Somewhat unsafe	20.4	24.8	18.0	17.6
Very unsafe	5.4	4.3	3.3	3.4

Visits Downtown	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Infrequently
Very safe	29.5	26.9	15.3	11.3
Somewhat safe	54.2	53.9	56.1	44.3
Somewhat unsafe	12.0	16.6	25.5	34.0
Very unsafe	4.2	2.6	3.2	10.4

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

## Frequency of Visits to Downtown Core (October 2007)

Gender/Municipality	Male	Female	All Lethbridge	Coaldale
Daily	18.9	20.6	19.9	12.2
Weekly	51.5	42.6	46.2	36.7
Monthly	16.3	21.4	19.3	27.3
Infrequently	13.4	15.4	14.5	23.7

Area	South	North	West
Daily	20.1	18.2	21.5
Weekly	46.2	40.5	52.4
Monthly	19.0	21.3	17.5
Infrequently	14.7	19.9	8.7

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Daily	21.6	19.2	22.2
Weekly	44.0	46.0	51.5
Monthly	18.8	18.8	19.9
Infrequently	15.6	16.1	6.4

Education	High School or less	Some Post Secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Daily	19.1	22.5	20.5	18.7
Weekly	40.0	45.6	48.4	50.4
Monthly	20.9	18.8	17.2	20.9
Infrequently	20.0	13.1	14.0	10.0

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Daily	17.0	27.4	21.4	11.6
Weekly	62.6	39.9	42.1	47.1
Monthly	16.3	22.0	20.4	18.0
Infrequently	4.1	10.7	16.2	23.3

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

# Demographics

Gender (%)		Area of City (%)		Income (%)		Education (%)		Age (%)	
Male	48.6	South	35.0	Under \$40,000	35.8	H-School/less	27.8	18-29	22.9
Female	51.4	North	29.3	\$40-\$80,000	39.3	Some P-Sec.	19.1	30-44	23.3
		West	35.7	Over \$80,000	24.9	Col-Tech-Grad	25.6	45-64	31.9
						University Grad	27.4	65 or older	21.8

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

## Questions

- Q. How would you rate the job the Lethbridge police are doing in policing our community. Would you say they are doing...?
- Q. Overall, how safe do you feel in your neighborhood? Would you say your neighborhood is...? (overall, day and night)
- Q. Overall, how safe do you feel when visiting, working or shopping in the Downtown core of Lethbridge? Would you say downtown Lethbridge is...? (Overall, day and night)
- Q. How often do you visit downtown for work, shopping, entertainment or other business? Would you say you visit downtown...?
- Q. The Lethbridge Regional Police Service is considering implementing a system for on-line reporting for minor complaints (Internet, website.....). Would you report crime on-line via the internet ...?
- Q. We would like to know how the Lethbridge Regional Police Service is meeting your expectations about what the police should be doing to keep Lethbridge a safe and secure place to live and work. Would you say.....?
- Q. In the past year, would you say that Lethbridge Regional Police Service has improved in meeting your expectations of what a police service should be doing, has neither improved nor worsened, or that Lethbridge Police Service has gotten worse in meeting your expectations of what a police service should be doing?