



PARTNERS IN POLICING FORUM

Feedback Report

December 2025

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PARTNERS IN POLICING FORUM OVERVIEW

On November 4, 2025, the Lethbridge Police Service (LPS) hosted its first *Partners in Policing Forum* to engage in meaningful discussion about the crime and public safety challenges facing our community, while exploring opportunities for greater collaboration and problem-solving.

Invitations were sent to a broad cross-section of community organizations and businesses, as well as the public-at-large. Individuals were asked to register and, in order to facilitate the forum's organization, answer the following question:

What are the most pressing public safety challenges impacting our community?

Based on the question responses from 61 interested registrants, the following eight categories¹ were identified as topics for discussion:

- Justice Systems and Budgets
- Impacts of Homelessness and Poverty
- Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Violence and Human Trafficking
- Safety and Perceptions of Safety (particularly Downtown)
- Drug Trafficking and Addictions
- Traffic Safety
- Fraud/Economic Crimes
- Property Crimes

On the day of the *Partners in Policing Forum*, 59 attendees were made aware of the different categories devised from the registration question. They then had an opportunity to move to three different tables of eight individuals, plus an LPS facilitator and notetaker, to discuss the topic over the course of the two-hour session. The first two rounds of conversation focused on fleshing out concerns, while the third round explored opportunities for collaboration and problem-solving.

The goal of this report is to:

- Provide a transparent summary of what was heard
- Highlight common themes, concerns, and opportunities
- Present a set of police-specific action items that are realistic, collaborative, and responsive to community needs

¹ "Mental Health" was also brought forward as a public safety challenge. However, as the concept was intrinsic to many of the other identified categories, it was determined that it would not be overlooked in discussions and so did not require a separate discussion category.

FORUM DISCUSSION SUMMARIES

1. JUSTICE SYSTEM AND BUDGETS

1.1 Key Concerns and Issues

The following concerns and issues were discussed by the forum participants about the “Justice System and Budgets” category:

Budget Pressures and Financial Sustainability

- The police budget is a four-year cycle that is presented at the municipal level with Police Commission oversight
 - Cost of policing continues to increase (technology, equipment, staffing, training)
 - Desire to ensure adequate funding so that resource needs are being met
 - Service is currently funded for 188 members total
 - Need to have higher numbers available where there is a higher concentration of issues (e.g. downtown Lethbridge)
 - Recognition of pressures on council to fund programs without overburdening taxpayers
- Programs aiming to address challenges to community safety (e.g. the encampment strategy) are forced to utilize a multi-level (municipal, provincial, federal) grant funding model that:
 - Forces advocates to compete for funds from the same limited pool
 - Complicates mandate and reporting requirements
 - Only funds for short durations that don't align with reality and make long-term program operationalization unsustainable
- Concern that changes to photo radar result in a reduction in police budgets and service
 - Funds from photo radar are directed to the municipality for traffic safety resources, not the police
 - Police use photo radar as a safety tool to reduce speeding and traffic accidents

Justice System Frustrations and Repeat Offenders

- Perception of “arrest and release” is demoralizing for community and officers
- Strong frustration with repeat offenders—small group responsible for major volume of crime
- Bail reform and parole decisions are outside local police control
- “Holes in the justice system” limit what front-line police can accomplish
- Lobbying occurs at MP/MLA level, but results feel slow

1.2 Solution-Oriented Suggestions

When exploring opportunities for collaboration and problem-solving regarding the “Justice System and Budget” category, the forum participants discussed the following suggestions:

Alternative Response Models

- Strengthen and use “Alternative Response Models” to better coordinate non-police community resources that can respond to needs, particularly for mental-health related calls
 - Better awareness of available services
 - Advocate and support stable funding sources
 - Police involvement is still important, but should not be dominant

Restorative Justice

- Use of specialized courts (e.g. Indigenous Court and Drug Treatment Court) to employ restorative justice (a voluntary process that focuses on repairing the harm caused by crime by encouraging dialogue to address the needs of victim, holding the offender accountable, and promoting healing and reconciliation)

Increased Collaboration and Strategic Investment

- Need more opportunities and better coordination between youth-serving stakeholders to support youth as early as possible
- Work with Lethbridge Corrections and other community-based supports to improve release planning
 - Lethbridge’s volunteer base could help fill reintegration gaps

2. IMPACTS OF POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS

2.1 Key Concerns and Issues

The following concerns and issues were discussed by the forum participants about the “Impacts of Poverty and Homelessness” category:

Complex Causes and Contributing Factors to Poverty and Homelessness

- Addiction
- Mental health
- Family trauma/violence
- Residential school impacts/intergenerational trauma
- Lack of viable employment
- Shut-down or inaccessible shelters in home communities
- Economic pressures
 - Rising food, transportation, and housing costs
 - Many people experiencing homelessness are working but still cannot afford housing

Barriers to Accessing Services

- The work to develop sufficient supports continues, but more is needed
- Supports can take time to set up
- Lack of awareness about available resources
- Lack of ID, mailing address, bank information, and transportation commonly block access to housing and supports
- Some avoid the shelter due to safety concerns or addiction-related restrictions
- Use of the shelter is voluntary
- Transportation/transit issues can impact ability to access services

Stigma and Negative Public Perceptions

- Homelessness is not inherently criminal, but it affects perceptions of safety
 - Trespassing laws can only be put into place when someone is not allowed to be on the property
 - Mixed views on encampment removals, balancing concern for health and safety with empathy for those affected
- Some feel ashamed to be accessing the food bank despite needing its services

2.2 Solution-Oriented Suggestions

When exploring opportunities for collaboration and problem-solving regarding the “Impacts of Poverty and Homelessness” category, the forum participants discussed the following suggestions:

Increase Awareness and Support for Resources and Services

- Increase awareness of available programs (Lethbridge Housing Authority, Streets Alive, Lethbridge Family Services, Community Links)
- Continue and expand agency collaboration to ensure needs are being addressed
 - CART (Coordinated Access Round Table) convenes 10–20 agencies weekly to coordinate supports (financial, security, etc.)
 - Point-in-Time (PIT) count increases awareness of individuals who need support and what points need to be enhanced
- Increase awareness that rental subsidies are available
- Go Friendly Shuttle can be booked to help seniors with transportation
- Community Links Booklet
- Incident reporting is available at the shelter

Identify and Address Service Gaps

- Advocate for sufficient long-term funding for programs
- Need for greater Indigenous representation for housing solutions (“Safe Lodge”)
- Need for mental health supports as well as compassionate understanding about the varied root causes of mental health issues
- Continue to expand housing options (shelter, transitional, recovery-focused, etc.)
- Consider rent control, as has been modelled in other provinces

Stigma Reduction and Public Understanding

- Recognize that each situation is different
- Increase understanding that there are a wide variety of reasons someone might be facing poverty and/or homelessness
- Encourage those who require assistance to access services without shame

3. INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE, SEXUAL VIOLENCE, AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

3.1 Key Concerns and Issues

The following concerns and issues were discussed by the forum participants about the “Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), Sexual Violence (SV), and Human Trafficking (HT)” category:

Prevalence and Impacts

- High rates of IPV/SV/HT exist in Lethbridge
 - Crown’s office notes that sexual assault files are a prevalent and increasing part of their workload
 - Over the past 20 years there has been a dedicated court to address IPV/SV files
- Lack of public awareness that IPV/SV/HT affect many people directly and/or indirectly and often occur behind closed doors/online
 - Many do not believe that human trafficking is occurring locally
 - Charge rates alone do not fully capture what is happening
- IPV/SV/HT are interconnected and have significant impacts on employment and community well-being
 - The vulnerable are the most at-risk

Stigma and Reporting

- Reducing stigma is essential for encouraging people to come forward.
 - Historically underreported (1 in 2 have experienced sexual violence)
 - The #MeToo movement was cited as having made a difference in willingness to report
 - Noting an increase in the number of victims willing to report and follow through with charges

3.2 Solution-Oriented Suggestions

When exploring opportunities for collaboration and problem-solving regarding the “Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), Sexual Violence (SV), and Human Trafficking (HT)” category, the forum participants discussed the following suggestions:

Increase Awareness and Support for Resources and Services

- City research underway on what additional supports might look like
- Need to ensure sufficient and stable funding for programs
- Available resources in Lethbridge:
 - YWCA - only women’s domestic violence shelter in Lethbridge over the past 40 years
 - Chinook Sexual Assault Centre and Chinook Child and Youth Advocacy Centre - busy and valuable when utilized
 - Lethbridge Family Services - provides counselling supports and offers educational workshops
 - Woods Homes for at risk youth aged 12–24
- Increased support from men for these issues
- Increased education and media support

Identify and Address Service Gaps

- Diverse supports for different age groups - including youth and seniors
- Mental health gaps, particularly in the 24–72 hours after incidents
- More back-end care/wrap around support following initial response
 - Economic literacy

Police Response and Approach

- More training for police on trauma-informed approaches is essential
 - Don’t be afraid to reach out and ask questions to increase understanding
- Participant notes that having female officers involved in some cases made a significant difference
- Two-way, collaborative relationships between police and community resources
 - Police participation in meetings aids understanding and coordination
- Important to “humanize the uniform” by attending public events and building relationships/trust

4. SAFETY AND PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY (PARTICULARLY DOWNTOWN)

4.1 Key Concerns and Issues

The following concerns and issues were discussed by the forum participants about the “Safety and Perceptions of Safety (Particularly Downtown)” category:

Perceptions vs. Reality

- Participants reported a “massive gap” between the reality and the perception of downtown safety
 - Some stated that downtown is not as dangerous as is reported and that positive engagement improves experiences
 - Others described not feeling safe, particularly with younger children in the downtown core
- It was noted that “perception is reality” for many community members
- Variance in perception when speaking to people versus social media

Observed Behaviours and Environment

- Witnessing loitering, panhandling, open drug use, and biohazards related to drug use
- Some people are unsure how to respond to panhandling
- Participants mentioned that living or working downtown makes people more alert and aware of what is happening

Perception of Police Presence Downtown

- Indigenous population can have hesitations going to police
- Appreciated the presence of downtown security, as LPS response times can be lacking

4.2 Solution-Oriented Suggestions

When exploring opportunities for collaboration and problem-solving regarding the “Safety and Perceptions of Safety (Particularly Downtown)” category, the forum participants discussed the following suggestions:

Addressing the Needs of the Marginalized

- Addressing issues while ensuring marginalized individuals are not pushed out
- Increased daytime programming for vulnerable individuals
- Collaborate to provide and direct vulnerable individuals to social programs and resources
- Make resources more visible to cement pathways to support
- Advocate in response to the province reducing the amount of money to some individuals on AISH (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped)

Downtown Improvements

- Lighting and environmental design were discussed, including a suggestion to make alleyways and other areas brighter
- Encouraging more functions and activities downtown to increase positive use

Collaboration and Supports

- Collaborate with private downtown security
 - Review private security contracts to understand their authorities and limitations
- Daytime programming to support vulnerable populations
- Social programs and resource availability
- Increased help-seeking behaviour and clear pathways to support
- Private security roles were discussed, including reviewing their contracts to clarify responsibilities

5. DRUG TRAFFICKING AND ADDICTIONS

5.1 Key Concerns and Issues

The following concerns and issues were discussed by the forum participants about the “Drug Trafficking and Addictions” category:

Addressing Drug Traffickers

- Community support for targeting drug dealers and delivering hard consequences that may deter them from the lifestyle
- Concern that drug dealers are quickly released on bail
- Noted that drugs are less accessible on reserves, leading some individuals to come into the city

The Needs and Realities of Addiction

- Drug addicts often lack of control over their addiction
- The addict themselves must ultimately want to change
- If they do make steps to quit, the right supports are required
- Aftercare following treatment is important to avoid relapse
- Children who experience trauma are more likely to have a drug addiction

Police Actions and Limitations

- Police consistently target drug use, particularly downtown
- Open drug use is not allowed – if openly using, individuals may be stopped, arrested, searched, and drug paraphernalia seized
 - CPOs have specific authorities given to them by the Justice Minister to address theft and mischief. Cannot confiscate drugs
- Need to follow the rules of admissible evidence
 - Want to make it more inconvenient to do/traffic drugs. Requires robust presence with both uniformed and covert officers
- Do not want to turn drug users into traffickers
- Federal Crown prosecutors handle larger drug files. Bail hearings used to emphasize vulnerability of victims targeted by traffickers

5.2 Solution-Oriented Suggestions

When exploring opportunities for collaboration and problem-solving regarding the “Drug Trafficking and Addictions” category, the forum participants discussed the following suggestions:

Community Assistance

- The community is encouraged to support police by reporting suspicious activities

Legal Changes

- Drug treatment court has experienced some successes
- *The Compassionate Intervention Act*, which received royal assent on May 15, 2025, was highlighted as a mechanism for requesting treatment for those whose addiction or substance use has made them a danger to themselves or others

Recovery Programs and Cultural Supports

- Need to have proactive and sufficient mental health supports to address the trauma that often leads to drug abuse
- Provide supports for children in the drug trade
- Funding and research to address drug trafficking problems
- Encourage the role of Indigenous elders in assisting Indigenous persons with recovery
- Expand and support current programs
 - Comprehensive recovery program, “Capturing Spirits” - Interest in seeing it used downtown
 - 416 Stafford - “True recovery facility”
 - Building Safer Communities initiatives addressing drug issues

6. TRAFFIC SAFETY

6.1 Key Concerns and Issues

The following concerns and issues were discussed by the forum participants about the “Traffic Safety” category:

Traffic Hot Spots

- Speeding and aggressive driving on major roads, even through construction (Whoop Up Drive, Highway 3, Scenic Drive, Métis Trail, Mayor Magrath Drive and other busy corridors)
- Playground/school zones (5 Avenue North and 9 Avenue North)
- Trucks using non-truck routes (23 Street North)
- Dangerous conditions at specific intersections (6 Avenue and 11 Street South, Pemmican Lodge/Galt Museum areas during Whoop Up construction)
- Noise violations/stunting/drag racing (West side, other residential areas, Métis Trail, 23 Street and 18 Avenue North)
- Deer on roads, with related collision risks
- Home businesses result in increased traffic in residential areas, making it less safe for kids playing outside

Enforcement and Visibility

- Perception that there are not enough visible traffic patrols
- Reports that police are seen but do not appear to be pursuing traffic offenders
- Frustration that, when pedestrian issues are called in, nothing appears to be done

Driver Behaviour

- Distracted driving for both drivers and pedestrians a major issue, more enforcement needed
- Problematic that many people (especially young drivers) do not know the rules of the road
- Lack of respect for pedestrians – ignoring crosswalks and lights
- Lack of understanding on how to use traffic circles/roundabouts
- Running of red lights

6.2 Solution-Oriented Suggestions

When exploring opportunities for collaboration and problem-solving regarding the “Traffic Safety” category, the forum participants discussed the following suggestions:

Infrastructure and Design

- Participants suggested that many traffic issues could be linked to infrastructure
- Increase traffic-calming measures (e.g. speed bumps in residential areas)
- Speed display boards were viewed as helpful in slowing people down
- Better light synchronization and consistency
- Over or underpasses to ensure pedestrian safety
- Better safety marking at 6 Avenue and 11 Street South (e.g., marked crosswalk, lights)
- Use old police cars parked on roadways to act as a deterrent for poor driver behaviour

Reporting and Enforcement

- Online reporting or the non-emergency phone line can both be used to report traffic violations and offenders to police
- Need sustained action from awareness campaigns and more proactive than reactive enforcement
- Photo radar:
 - Some noted the benefits of photo radar and advocated for re-implementation of its use
 - Others expressed that photo radar is sufficient as it is – in playground and constructions zones
- Need more red-light cameras to enforce speed and stopping at red traffic lights

Collaboration and Planning

- It is recommended that LPS and the City of Lethbridge’s transportation/infrastructure departments collaborate to:
 - Assess and implement traffic calming measures
 - Develop traffic plans that keep up with city growth
 - Ensure earlier implementation of safety measures during major construction projects
 - Ensure emergency preparedness so emergency vehicles can access the entire city when bridges are closed/backed up
- Advocating so that insurance companies may offer an incentive to drivers for having dash cams

7. FRAUD AND ECONOMIC CRIME

7.1 Key Concerns and Issues

The following concerns and issues were discussed by the forum participants about the “Fraud and Economic Crime” category:

Victimization Patterns and Impacts

- Fraud considered one of the fastest-growing crimes, with crime “escalating,” particularly through online and remote methods
 - International aspect and ability to hide behind the electronic screen makes it easy for criminals to dehumanize their impact
- Concerns about vulnerable individuals being targeted:
 - Senior citizens often victimized – can lead to inability to afford basic needs
 - Young, new Canadians can be victimized or potentially drawn into scam as accessories to crime
- Pride and embarrassment creating barriers to reporting and discussing fraud, especially for seniors
- Frustration when people are defrauded and legal outcomes are not communicated
- Banks also struggle to stop criminals even though they often move from bank to bank

Types and Methods of Fraud

- Running large-scale operations overseas with many staff making fraudulent calls
 - Intelligence tends to be siloed making investigations and tracking more difficult
 - International nature of the crime makes prosecution difficult
- Grandparent scam often succeeds despite many education campaigns
- Theft of documents in order to access loans
- Celebrity-related frauds use public figures’ names
- Criminal engineering increasingly sophisticated with the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Criminals posing as bank staff, staging phone numbers and verification processes
- Criminals sending links to ‘resolve issues’ which opens the victim up to the fraud

7.2 Solution-Oriented Suggestions

When exploring opportunities for collaboration and problem-solving regarding the “Fraud and Economic Crime” category, the forum participants discussed the following suggestions:

Enforcement, Investigation and Prosecution

- Parallels are sometimes drawn between property theft and fraud investigations, potentially leading to additional searches and charges
- National and international coordination required at all levels to prosecute criminals
- If you believe someone is a victim of fraud, call LPS right away for assistance
- Continue to encourage victims to report

Public Awareness and Education

- Post local fraud trends in a centralized location where public view activity (social media, website, Crime Mapping, etc.)
- Educate people about the importance of verifying sources
- Educate people about bank processes
- Expand education to seniors, ensuring sessions are well advertised
 - Current opportunities provided by LPS, Lethbridge Family Services and some banks. Consider further collaboration among partners
- Public awareness efforts increase in March for “Fraud Prevention Month”
- Educate retailers and banks to spot potential fraud and intervene at the point of purchase

8. PROPERTY CRIME

8.1 Key Concerns and Issues

The following concerns and issues were discussed by the forum participants about the “Property Crime” category:

Property Theft

- Increase in property theft, particularly bikes, which are more readily available and stolen often
 - Stolen bikes often modified to appear more discreet
 - Common conveyance for criminal activity
 - Importance of registering bikes (Bike Index)
- Emphasis on reporting suspicious bikes or property due to volume and condition indicators

Property Damage

- Fires are a concern, especially in cold weather
 - Need to remove debris and materials that could be used to start fires
 - Distinction made between fires used for warmth and fires set for thrill
- Graffiti - even when offenders are caught, graffiti remains
 - Consider restorative justice where offender removes the graffiti

Reporting and Accountability

- Feelings of helplessness when police do not attend after reports
- Concerns about citizens being charged when defending property

Underlying Causes

- Addiction was identified as fueling many property crimes
- Lack of daytime resources (food, water, air conditioning/heat) for unhoused people using shelters
 - Need for direction and constructive activities

8.2 Solution-Oriented Suggestions

When exploring opportunities for collaboration and problem-solving regarding the “Property Crime” category, the forum participants discussed the following suggestions:

Reporting and Accountability

- Important to continue to report crimes for justice system accountability
- Consider public education campaign:
 - What types of property incidents should always be reported?
 - Which numbers to call for general complaints?
 - Communities must work together to address crime, citizens should not be taking individual action against offenders

Business Safety and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

- CPTED identified as an option to help businesses deter crime
 - City offers a program. Fixed funding available
- Removal of debris or fencing noted as helpful in reducing fire risk and limiting encampments

Police Programs

- LPS CompStat program (use of analytics to identify and address frequent offenders and geographic hot spots) – continue and expand use
- Role of the Watch downtown is helpful - consider similar program for residential areas
- Young Offender Management Program identified as a tool for proactive assistance and prevention

Cameras and Surveillance

- Strategically placed cameras beneficial for capturing crime and charging offenders
- Interest in restarting a camera registry where residents willing to share footage can support one another

Collaboration with Community and Cultural Supports

- Providing additional resources to unhoused individuals staying at shelters during daytime hours

PLANNING AND ACTION ITEMS

Over the course of the *Partners in Policing Forum*, it was recognized that all of the identified issues were interconnected and incredibly complex. In addition, while law enforcement plays a role in addressing concerns, a larger more collaborative community response is essential to identifying and implementing any sustainable solutions.

In reviewing the feedback provided, the following items were identified as potential police-specific action items that are realistic, collaborative, and responsive to community needs:

Support and Advocacy:

- Advocate for stable program funding to ensure the long-term development of collaborative resources that can support vulnerable populations (e.g. mental health, housing strategies, drug recovery, sexual assault survivor resources, etc.)
- Advocate for daytime resources for the unhoused, providing for their needs and enabling more constructive activities
- Support and advocate for justice system improvements such as bail reforms and the use of specialized court to employ restorative justice opportunities
- Encourage accessing Indigenous elders to assist Indigenous persons with recovery
- Recommend insurance companies offer incentives to drivers for having dash cams
- Improve interjurisdictional cooperation between law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute fraud and economic crime
- Attend events that build relationships and ‘humanize the uniform’

Collaboration and Coordination

- Support and serve collaborative practices with local service providers (e.g., YWCA, Chinook Centres, Lethbridge Family Services) to improve community supports and reporting outcomes
- Work with Lethbridge Corrections and other community-based supports to improve release planning
- Coordinate with private security companies and business loss prevention officers to reduce theft and mischief
- Work with the City of Lethbridge’s transportation and infrastructure departments to:
 - Assess lighting and environmental design to deter crime and increase a sense of safety, particularly downtown
 - Assess and implement traffic calming measures/infrastructure, develop plans that consider emergency preparedness and keep up with city growth
 - Consider placing cameras in public locations to capture crime and charge offenders

Education and Awareness

- Increase awareness (for police and public) about available resources to vulnerable populations in order to better direct them to services
- Encourage the public to report suspicious activities; highlight information about when to report and how to report
- Use various methods of communication to educate the public, retailers and banks about fraud and how to protect themselves and others
- Increase awareness by posting local fraud trends in a central location
- Expand preventive programs such as CPTED guidance, camera registries, and Bike Index initiatives to support early identification, deterrence, and community reporting of property offences
- Expand and focus on trauma-informed training for LPS staff

APPENDIX A – PARTICIPANT RESPONSES

ROUND 1 – DELVING INTO THE ISSUES

The unedited notes from the conversations held at each table during Round 1 of the “Partners in Policing Forum,” are attached. Some cropping was done to increase font size and readability whenever possible. Every effort has been made to preserve the comments and their location on the sheet.

Justice System and Budgets

revenue from photo radar gap, how being filled does this impact ability to deliver service?

- impact in community more speeding, more traffic incidents.
- revenue goes to city not police directly, part of budget and divided up
- police view as traffic safety measure not revenue source
- directed by leg and goa on how manage traffic safety



does it make it easier to police by concentrating individual with high risk into one area

- yes overall as get to know area(s)

budget munipicle, police commission oversee budget, 4 year cycle. start cyle have asks resources, safety, presented through commisiosn to council. commission ensures service has funds to opporate efficiently, chief directs internal resource

concern as crime decreases does that negatively impact budget.

- no does not
- if special needs can go back to council through commission
- cost of policing has increased over time, technology, staffing, equipment, cost of investigation
- when more capacity and resource can be more impactful within community as have proper resources and tools
- increases in training costs
- as costs increase in budget cycle have to readjust

% of policing in downtown vs else where in city

- 7 officers in downtown coverage until 2 am
- 10 beat on patrols teams for policing
- 7-8 officers at anytime for downtown
- funded for 188 members
- 4 beats within city jurisdiction
- comment - expected higher # officers in downtown due to concentration of crime, problem behaviors in downtwon

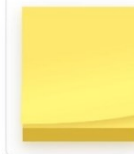
changes in bail reform

- within federal and provincial jurisdiction of authority not within municipal authority
- intent making harder to obtain parole
- police bound by legislation (pov and Fed)
- good relationships make a difference ex. Crown

- seems to be holes in justice system that can be frustrating for front line

- police have their roll and work within that roll
- look for ways to create efficiencies to assist frontlines

Justice System and Budgets



Impacts of Poverty and Homelessness

What is available for people?
People camp in the city Galt, 2 Ave. What resources are available or do they not know?

LHA and Streets Alive here.

Goals - expand housing (encampment, shelter, various levels of housing).
Shelter is 90 beds to 200 beds. Opened up transitional housing recently. LHA is working on expanding that. Adding 50 beds with supports on site.
Coordinated access to set individuals up with access for housing.

Homeless due to economic easiest to get out of the system. Mental health is more complicated and addiction adds another layer.

Addictions counselor working at the new Stafford building.

The shelter is voluntary, they cannot go to the shelter or streets alive. If not in danger, they can stay where they are.

PIT count helping LHA become aware of individuals who need support and what points need to be enhanced. Work alongside Streets Alive to support at the highest level.

What requirement to be Stafford? Must be sober to live there.

Superlodge can have alcohol or

Streets Alive opening a new facility near the shelter. Focused towards more people on the streets. Connecting with resources.

Old Elderado RV building,

Encouraging to hear - homelessness is not a crime. There is a impact on safety, but there are organizations taking place and helping. LPS has a role to play to be flushed out more.

Trespassing laws are put into place when not allowed to be on the property

Stafford Drive property - 30 beds with onsite supports. Sober or early stages of recovery. Staff on site 24/7 and secure. Providing food within rent. Open to the age of anyone over 18+

April - LHA purchased Superlodge. Short term stay coming from grant funding. Goals helping people finding employment and long term housing. \$40/day & \$1200/month. Security on site

Community Links is a great resource to address these issues. But it does take a bit of time to setup for support.

What is the province responsibilities to addressing this?

Funding from the ministry. They are watching closely to see if we need to replicate.

Streets Alive received funding and actively involved, especially in mental health

Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Violence, Human Trafficking



Safety and Perceptions of Safety (particularly Downtown)

massive gap
between
reality and
perception

when one works
downtown you
become alert and
become aware of
what is going on

downtown is
not as
dangerous as
what has been
reported

positive
engagement
the better

a beautiful
part of the city
and need to
encourage
more to enjoy

some incorrect
messages that
portray
downtown as
unsafe

coexist but
not push
marginalized
individuals out

when living in
downtown core
did not feel safe
to have younger
child outside, did
not feel safe

perception
is reality

witness
open drug
use,
loitering

some people
don't know
how to react
to pan-
handling

perception in
speaking to
people versus
social media

Safety and
Perceptions of...



Drug Trafficking and Addictions

Support
targeting
drug
dealers

Drug
dealers are
out because
of bail

Drugs are not as
readily accessible
on the reserve, so
they come into
the city

Comprehensive
recovery program,
"Capturing Spirits".
Would like to see
this used
Downtown

Indigenous
persons need
their elders to
assist with
their recovery

Those who abuse
drugs want to
quit, they just
need the right
supports

Indigenous elders
need to partner
with police to assist
indigenous persons
recover from drug
addiction

Funding and
research to
address drug
trafficking
problem

416 Stafford
is a true
recovery
facility

Building Safer
Communities
to assist with
drug issues

Children who
experience
trauma are more
likely to have a
drug addiction

Traffic Safety

23 St N townhouses - loud mufflers, squealing tires, donuts, at least once daily running red light at 18 St N. Hears about projects but doesn't see it. Doesn't seem like there's traffic patrols. Sees police but doesn't see them go after traffic offenders. Feels very safe in the city, except in my car or walking across the street

On Scenic Dr from Polytechnic to northside there's a lot of jockeying for position. Has infrastructure looked at a ring road or two ways both directions along Scenic Dr from south to north

People driving are very impatient, flying down whoop up, just a general lack of courtesy

A lot of traffic issues are infrastructure based - we need more traffic-calming measures

Is there an opportunity to send evidence of a violation to someone (we talked about non-emerg line, online reporting)

5th Ave & 9th Ave N used to be two school zones, now it's one playground zone and people are speeding when it's still in effect

Lots of research that supports benefits of photo radar. Can it be used more/brought back?

Trucks going up 23 St N when it's not a truck route

People not knowing the rules of the road is problematic. New drivers, young drivers

We need photo radar on Whoop Up and something on Scenic Dr near Pemmican lodge

Distracted driving is a big issue - drivers and pedestrians

Traffic Safety



Fraud and Economic Crime

concerned about young new
canadians being involved in
economic crime.
LPS trying to educate parents of
young new Canadians - getting
message out to the public
often money lost to overseas
organizations

often elderly folks
falling into fraud
schemes and not
affording housing
due to the loss

prosecutors face
difficult
prosecutions due to
complex (out of
country) tracking
education piece is
very important

pride is a tough
barrier for older
folks, to even
discuss the
circumstance
with family

dedicated service
has been offered
to seniors by LFS,
a valuable service
to coach them in
discussing

lps has offered to
some retailers in
coaching some older,
vulnerable people that
may need help on site
at the point of
purchase

fraud is
on the
up-tick

parallels/investigations
sometimes drawn
between property
theft and fraud by lps -
sometimes leading to
more searches and
charges

fraud is one of the
fastest growing
crimes in Canada -
means training local
stores, etc in
spotting potential
theft -- fraud

locations in other
countries literally
setup staffing of
60-80 people to
continuously make
fraudulent based
calls

Property Crime

Concerns regarding bike and property thefts in the city, importance of reporting suspicious property crime. Bikes available and stolen often.

Property damage due to fire, particularly important with the colder weather. Safety concerns, removal of debris and materials that are readily available that may be used to set fires

Property crimes to business, what is available to businesses to deter property crimes? CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) is an option to assist businesses, city offers program that offers fixed funding. Removal of objects that contribute to fires such as debris or fencing can assist in limiting property damage and encampments.

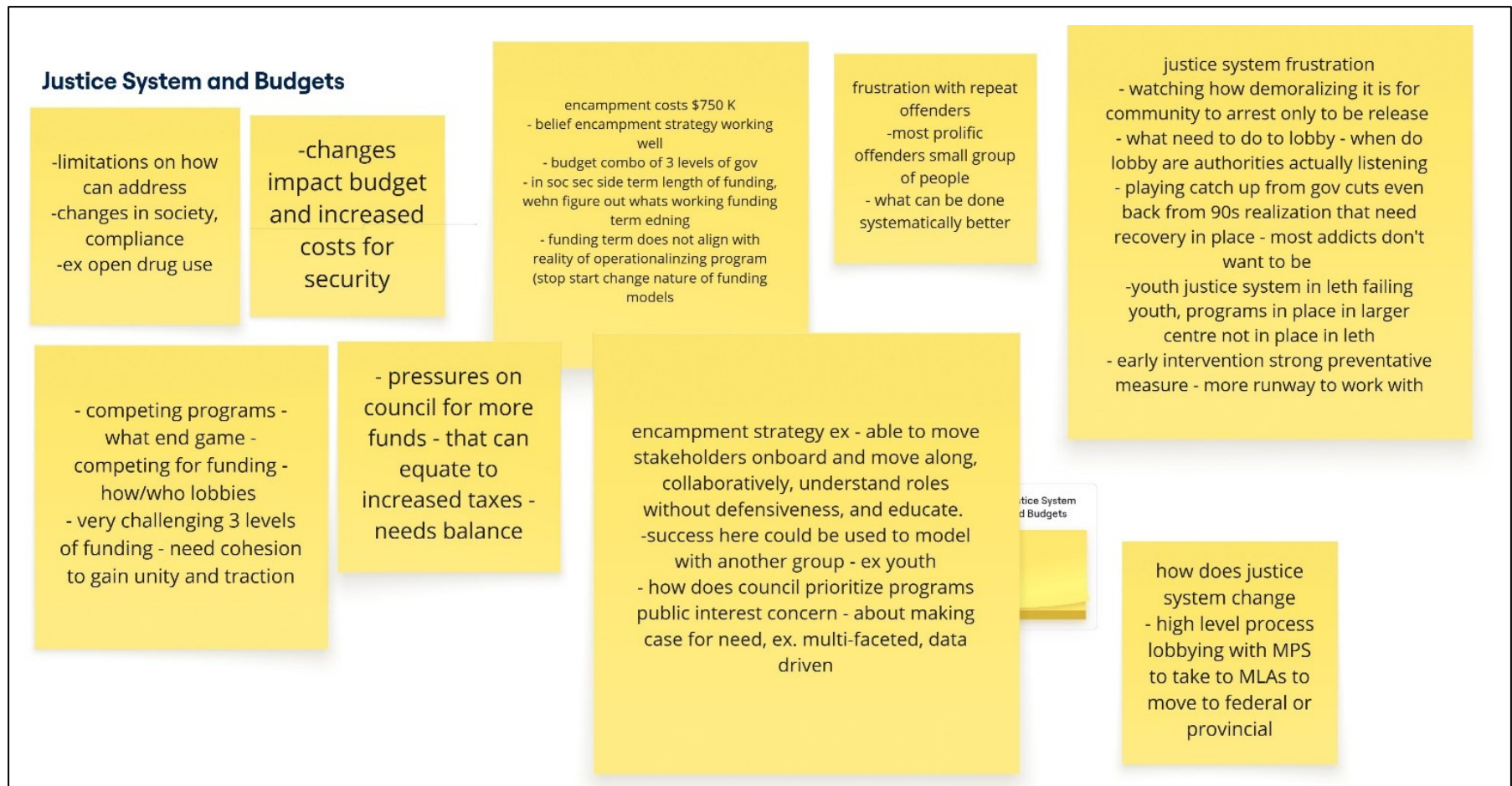
Use of LPS
COMPSTAT
program

Difference
between fires
to keep warm
and fires set
for a thrill

APPENDIX B – PARTICIPANT RESPONSES

ROUND 2 – DELVING INTO THE ISSUES

The unedited notes from the conversations held at each table during Round 1 of the “Partners in Policing Forum,” are attached. Some cropping was done to increase font size and readability whenever possible. Every effort has been made to preserve the comments and their location on the sheet.



Impacts of Poverty and Homelessness

Impacts depends on who we are talking about and focusing on those individuals experiencing it. Encampments near the soup kitchen, cleaned up every 72 hours. Folks are good at managing the system. Stack multiple items on wagons and coming back hours later to setup again.

What is their reason for being homeless?

Often reason are indigenous for lack of opportunities. Come to the city looking for resources and needs.

A lot of causes go back to family situation, residential schools, drug addictions, work on the reserve is limited. Shelters are getting shut down or torn down. Resulting coming into the city.

Coming into the city with limited skills and trauma.

Stafford is recovery focus. 30 bed unit fully supported. Meals, case managers to work with individual needs. Keep on the path to recovery. Already have a full waitlist. It's been a resource we are lacking within our community.

The community is doing a lot between LFS and LHA providing resources to get housing.

Impacts - stabilization factors involved. Lack of other factor (ie. having an address for mail). Education side at LFS see the impacts of poverty connect with violence. Experiencing homelessness often leaving violent situations. Inhibits ability to access services.

Wide variety as to why people are homeless. LHA can provide rent assistance.

Break the stigma
- not due to addiction or mental illness

People are working and still homeless

CART:

Coordinate Access Round Table
10-20 agencies weekly referral for someone at risk and presented to agencies. what agency can provide supports. Supports can look like financial or security.
Community collaboration.
Support member agencies

Costs of food, transportations, etc making people having to choose

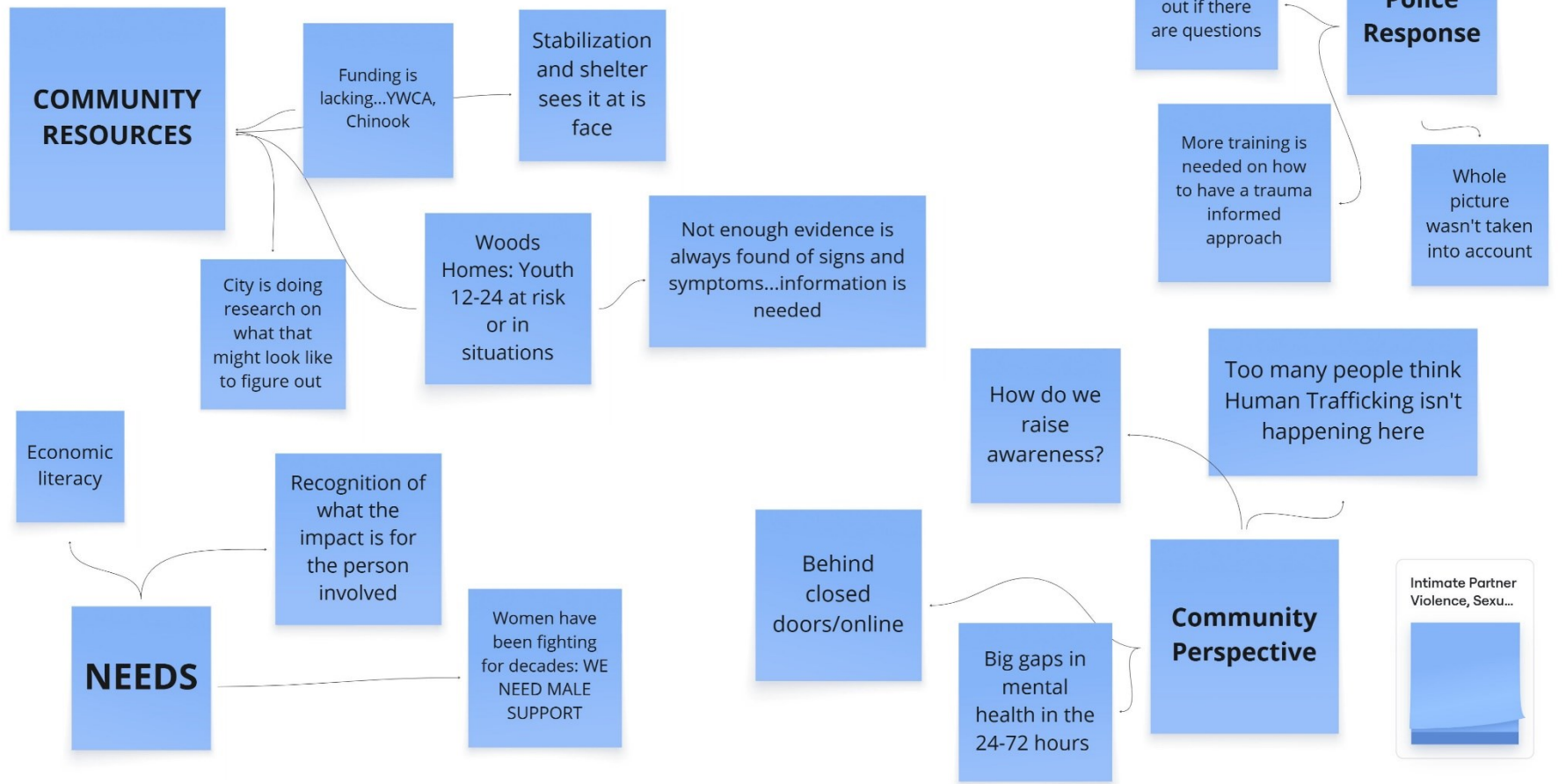
Having the full supports into place are important.

Complex needs:

- addiction
- seniors
- mental health

Upset about encampments being moved. But understanding health and safety perspective

Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Violence, Human Trafficking



Safety and Perceptions of Safety (particularly Downtown)

indigenous
population
can have
hesitations
going to police

perceptions of
safety - there are
issues and public
should have that
awareness

have to start
focusing on dealing
with people on the
streets, especially
with winter
approaching

perceptions
that
downtown
is not safe

need for better
collaboration
with other
partners - private
downtown
security

need to look at
contracts of
private security
companies to see
what they are
able to do

worked with
downtown security
and the problems
are real. LPS
response times can
be lacking.

biohazards
due to
open drug
use

is it possible to
have an initiative
where the
community takes
the community
back?

poll when running
for election - do
crime or social
issues affect the
public going to
downtown - 64%

Safety and
Perceptions of...



Drug Trafficking and Addictions

Police initiatives to target drug use downtown... if openly using, get stopped, arrested, searched, and seize drug paraphernalia.

Open drug use is not allowed.

How to support police to get some higher priority drug traffickers... be a good witness!

Need stakeholders to be the eyes and ears for the police.

Compassionate Intervention Act. Community members can make a report on repeat drug users in community and they would be detained and provided treatment.

Drug treatment court has seen some successes.

Limitations to drug trafficking? Drug dealers tend to go back to the street right away.

Don't want to make drug users into drug traffickers.

When run bail hearing, and explain how they are targeting vulnerable persons to convey the severity.

Need to follow the rules of admissible evidence.

General population gets frustrated with repeat drug offenders being released.

CPOs have specific authorities given to them by the Justice Minister to address theft and mischief. Cannot confiscate drugs.

Supports for children in the drug trade?

Drug Trafficking and Addictions



Traffic Safety

6 Ave and 11 St S
difficult to
maneuver -
needs a safety
measure (marked
crosswalk, lights)

Walked the whole city - in
certain places it's
dangerous. People ignore
crosswalks, lights, it's
super busy. Over or
underpasses would be
more safe. Drivers do not
respect pedestrians

Have tried calling
in pedestrian
issues but
nothing is done,
the vehicle is
gone

Online
reporting is an
option to report
traffic violations
and offenders

People were driving
very aggressively
during construction
on Whoop Up, also
Highway 3 (still
happening)

Lots of challenges
keeping up with
growth of the
city. We need to
catch up

On westside
lots more drag
racing and
noise issues,
stunting

Deer pose a
significant risk as
drivers will stop
but others aren't
paying attention

Need traffic calming
measures - speed
bumps in
residential areas,
Lethbridge is
behind

Distracted
driving a major
issue, more
enforcement
needed

More photo
enforcement
needed

Need sustained
action from
awareness
campaigns and
more proactive
than reactive
enforcement

Better light
synchronization
and
consistency

Is there enough
safety egress -
ability for
emergency vehicles
to get through
when bridges are
closed/backed up

Noise, drag
racing on Metis Tr
is a constant
issue. Called in
several times to
report

Traffic circles - we
don't have proper
traffic circles.
People don't know
how to use the
roundabouts we
have

Home businesses
are resulting
increased traffic in
residential areas,
making less safe for
kids playing outside

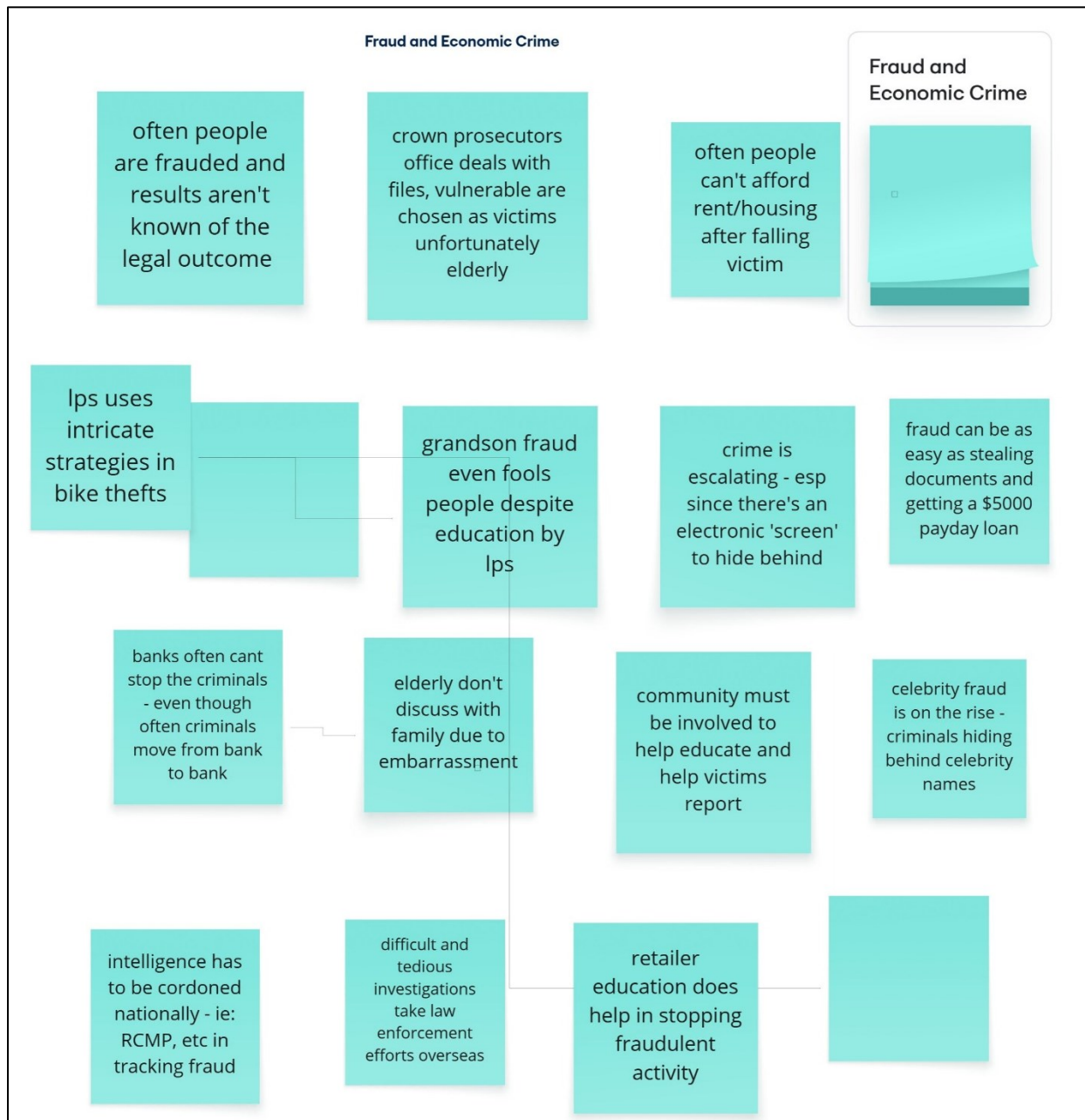
Photo radar
sufficient as is
- playground
zones and
construction

The speed
boards are
helpful to slow
people down

MMD had become a
speedway.
Speeding
throughout the city
significant issue

Traffic Safety





Bike index for
registering
bikes - lots of
bikes in LPS
lot

Why report
crimes?
Accountability in
justice system,
you don't see
criminals again

Stolen bikes
modified to be
more discreet,
common mode of
conveyance for
criminals

Importance of
community to call in
bikes/property that
look suspicious due
to volume or
condition

Role of the Watch to
assist primarily
downtown, what is
there in residential
areas
(Neighborhood
Watch)

Potential for
cameras set up to
capture crime is
beneficial,
strategically
placed cameras.

Residential
cameras hugely
beneficial,
willingness to
share camera
data with police

Camera
registry,
looking out for
each other

Young offender
management
program as a tool
to proactively assist
with resources to
prevent issues

APPENDIX C – PARTICIPANT RESPONSES

ROUND 3 – COMMUNITY-LED SOLUTIONS

The unedited notes from the conversations held at each table during Round 1 of the “Partners in Policing Forum,” are attached. Some cropping was done to increase font size and readability whenever possible. Every effort has been made to preserve the comments and their location on the sheet.



Impacts of Poverty and Homelessness

More voices for aboriginal housing. More representation for the indigenous population. Work on cleaning up Galt Gardens. Safe lodge instead of the shelter (due to safety)

Shelter guests don't like accessing the shelter as its last resource.

These individuals still have a voice.

Focus on homeless side which is visible. Poverty level in Lethbridge is huge. Daily battle for rent, housing options, place of employment. Fragile state

People are sleeping in vehicles near the shelter for security checks, using the soup kitchen to shower and eat.

Mental health supports are huge

Resources are based on finances which can be challenging when funds are depleted... then what?

When accessing the shelter? Then what? Do they need ID, bank information

Certain things need in place almost act as a barrier

There is incident reporting at the shelter.

One solution - awareness with stigma towards mental health. Understanding where it comes from? Genetics? Drug use impacting chemicals in brain?

Understanding people in encampments are not addicted. More understanding as to why they are homeless

Other provinces have looked at rent control. City of Lethbridge has not been directed too.

Transit services can make it challenging.

Go friendly for seniors.

Listed in Community Links Booklet

People that can go into housing need to sustain their housing as well.

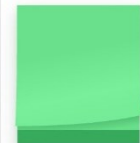
Each person is a case by case need.

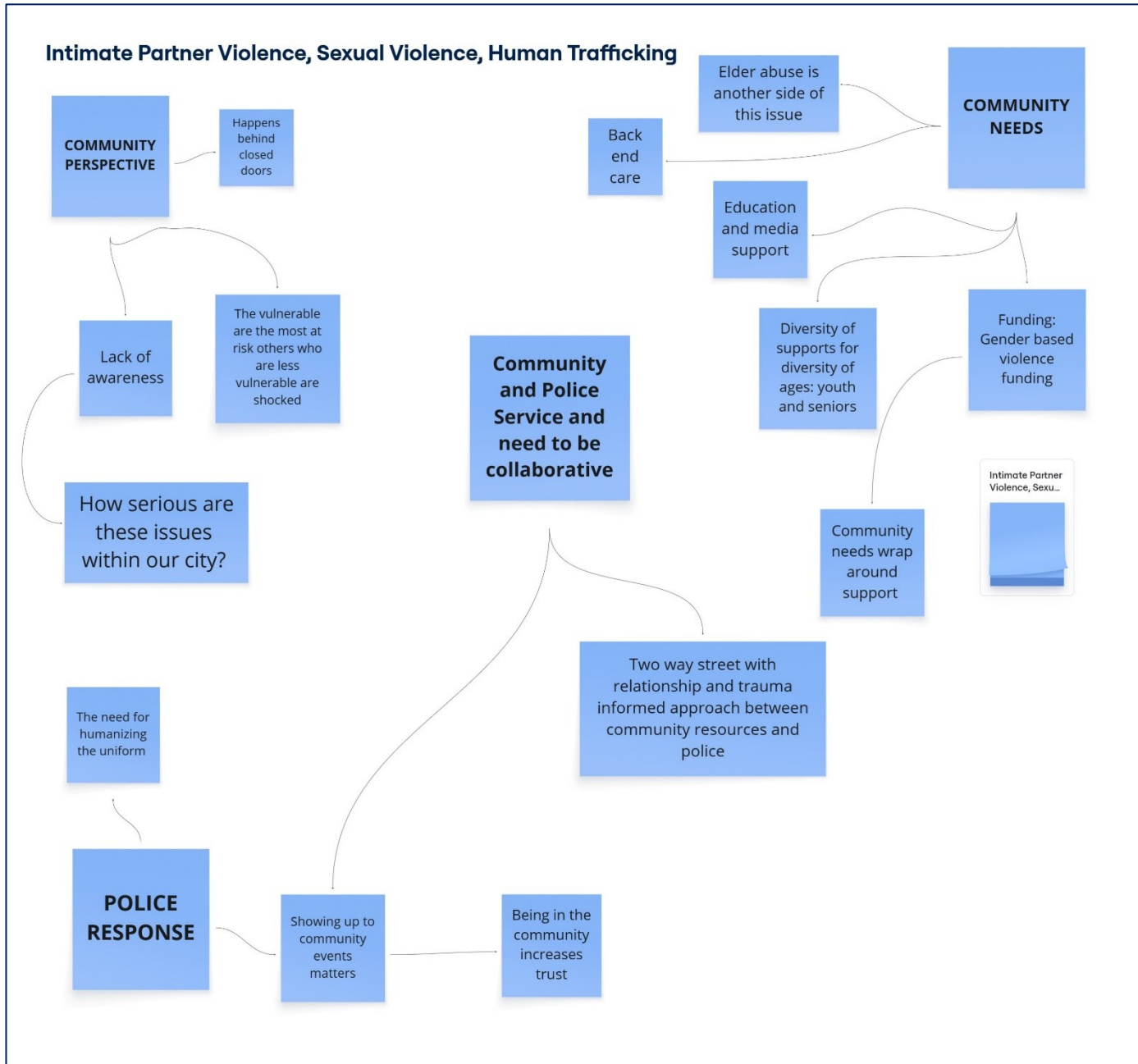
Not a one size fits all.

Rent subsidy available to keep people in their housing. Not a lot of awareness regarding these resources

Stigma accessing the food bank or don't have transportation to get there

Impacts of Poverty and...





Safety and Perceptions of Safety (particularly Downtown)

lighting
perspective - can
we make it
brighter, so it is
less dark, such as
alleyways

need for daytime
programming to
assist vulnerable
population

increase help
seeking
behaviour, be
seen, be heard,
cement pathways
for support

collaboration
approach of
different
resources at the
same address

pushback to the
province about
reducing the
amount of money
to some individuals
on AISH

balance of how
people can enjoy
downtown plus
balance the
marginalized
population

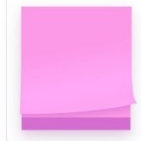
the more
functions
downtown
the better!

availability
of
resources

identify
perceptions
and
addressing
them

need for
social
programs

Safety and
Perceptions of...



Drug Trafficking and Addictions

How can the municipality support? Be great witnesses and be willing to make that phone call.

Some refuse to report to police due to busyness, slow response times, or belief that nothing will be done.

Federal Crown prosecutor does our trials for larger drug files.

Making progress on certain traffickers.

We have the resources to respond (6 Constables plus a Sgt. downtown)

How to make more inconvenient / a hassle to do drugs?
Answer: A more robust officer presence and having covert officers.

Advantageous to have more reporting from the general public.

Drug addicts have a lack of control over their addiction.

The only person that changes you is you. Drug addicts have to want to change.

Compassionate Intervention Program is so important.

Lack of mental health supports for those who have experienced trauma that leads to drug abuse.

Aftercare following drug treatment helps avoid relapses.

There is a disconnect with supports.

Need hard consequences for drug dealers. Would push some away from that lifestyle.

Traffic Safety

Lots of people
observed
running red
lights

More of a delay
at intersections
may help - more
time between
yellow and red

More cameras
at lights to
enforce speed
and red light

US research shows
when people are
forced to slow
down they will
(speed bumps,
traffic circles, other
calming measures)

More partnership
with City
transportation and
infrastructure to
assess needs and
implement traffic
calming measures

Pemmican Lodge area and
Galt museum loop during
construction on Whoop Up
was extremely dangerous -
measures should have
been implemented sooner

Use old police
cars parked
on roadways
to act as a
deterrent

Insurance
incentive for
having dash
cams??

a centralized approach - where public can view fraud activity - on social media, website

post trends in fraud so public can read, be aware of whats going on

posting publicly is helpful, not necessarily on facebook - perhaps on TV, or a crime map (for fraud)

online crime is evolving. banks have online seminars but no one knows they're happening

people need to be educated the processes that banks use

criminals pretend to be a banker, with a preset phone number that is staged, to have the victim call - emulating a bank verification process

criminals send links since its seen as convenient by a victim to resolve = the education piece is needed



people have to do extra due diligence in verifying a source

lps educates at the seniors centres, trying to get a strategic but basic message out

the criminal engineering is pretty sophisticated, esp with AI

March is fraud awareness month, with a huge public awareness effort by lps

a phonecall to LPS is all thats needed to get a victim - you think needs help - assistance.

boiler rooms are setup in other countries, where criminal staff are protected. strategies are highly engineered

Property Crime

What is available to unhoused people staying at the shelter during the day? Day program with resources, food, air conditioning, dignified options and care

Removal of graffiti, catch person responsible but graffiti is still there. Recommend restorative action - i.e. remove graffiti

Direction, constructive activity, day program for unhoused

Collaboration between Community Engagement, cultural groups

Addiction fuels a majority of property crimes, get to the root of the issue

Citizens taking action against offenders themselves vs. communities taking action to work together

Citizens charged for defending their property, other ways to deal with issues, citizens feeling helpless if they report and police don't show up

PSA - kinds of things you should always report, info to public. Number to call for general complaint? Education/PSA on this.

Property Crime



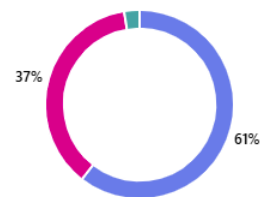
APPENDIX D – PARTICIPANT RESPONSES

FINAL THOUGHTS SURVEY RESULTS

Forum attendees were asked to provide their feedback about the Forum and to share any additional insights they may have had.

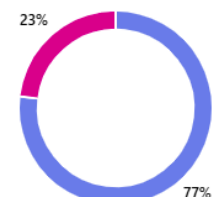
1. How satisfied were you with the Partners in Policing Forum overall?

Very satisfied	23
Somewhat satisfied	14
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	1
Somewhat dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	0



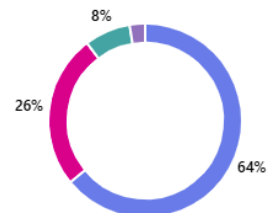
2. Did you feel your voice was heard during the Partners in Policing Forum?

Yes	30
Somewhat	9
No	0



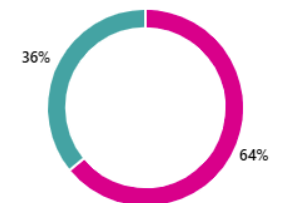
3. How would you rate the facilitation and organization of the session?

Excellent	25
Very Good	10
Good	3
Fair	1
Poor	0



4. Was the length of the session appropriate?

Too long	0
About right	25
Too short	14



5. What follow-up actions would you like to see after the Partners in Policing Forum? (22 unedited responses)

- Educational opportunities
- Love this
- Emailed response data
- More discussion forums
- Continuing to work with the public and community
- Public report
- Just a little longer to discuss the topics
- I would appreciate any action steps you can share
- Sharing out the answers
- Public education that this event occurred so folks know to attend in the future
- Continued meetings
- Report out to community about what was heard and what it connects to in both the city and LPS plans — what are you changing, taking about, or considering based on the engagement
- Feedback compilation to all participants
- It's very challenging to balance time for these sessions. 15 minutes per topic felt too short, but also more time may have been too much
- A general follow up brief with the feedback
- Publish the overall thoughts taken from this event
- City of Lethbridge to actively work with LPS on alternative responses for people with mental illness (that do not just rely on the police). It's a community issue
- A safer community
- Unsure
- Responses to concerns, good ideas, and why? Bad ideas, and why? Most importantly, all the notes from all the tables be accessible
- Future meetings, as this. Also, a publishing of all the input. Public awareness efforts, so we can feel we can be part of the solution
- Summary Report avail on website if possible, for us who don't do social media !!

6. Is there anything else you'd like to share? (19 unedited responses)

- Great 2 hours. Thanks for doing this
- Excellent forum. Thankyou for leading this open communication and dialogue in our community
- No
- Thank you for this opportunity
- Very well done. Do this again
- Excellent event
- Partnerships and collaborations are key
- Thank you
- The run down of what happened at each table after each round was long. Perhaps not needed. People more want to share and discuss. Maybe less full run downs and more tables to go to
- Having some guided questions at each table may have assisted the facilitators to keep people on topic. Very much appreciate the forum. Thank you
- Thank you for this opportunity to share voices and partnerships within Lethbridge! This was great
- Perhaps in future the questions by section could be made available prior to the session to give time for opinion gathering. Also, perhaps allow community to complete answers to those questions
- Thanks for the invitation! Really appreciated
- Continuous collaboration
- Nothing further, thank you
- Increase the time of talking. There was 2-4 people per table that wouldn't have the time to communicate on topics. Please look at drastically increasing times to not only further communicate concerns, but hold more viable conversations that can generate solutions
- One of the areas that was talked about was the perception of safety in the downtown area. It sounds like the narrative of the downtown area needs to change. Coming from a social work student could the Lethbridge Police work with social work students at the University to come up with an initiative to change the narrative of what it actually looks like when you are in downtown Lethbridge. Changing the narrative to the idea that it is safer than what people perceive it to be
- Bring Lethbridge churches on board to help with some solutions and/or funding, but especially prayer
- Not enough time to share