

Greetings candidates,

Please find below, Common Sense Lethbridge's candidate survey.

I know you are all busy in these closing few weeks of the campaign, but we'd love to get your answers to our supporters as soon as possible, and thanks to some websites updates over the past week, we will be able to upload your answers to our website within just an hour or two of you sending them back to us, and we will be heavily promoting them and the site to our list in the coming days.

Feel free to simply type your answers in the space below each question, and we will take care of any formatting issues when we add your response to our site.

Thank you all for helping us with our mission to promote informed voting, and good luck for the final stretch of your campaigns.

Regards,

Common Sense Lethbridge

What work experience do you have that's relevant to the role of a Councillor and how do you feel the skills and perspective you have gained will help you in your role as a Councillor?

Council is the Board of Directors for the City of Lethbridge. I have ample experience governing organizations. I currently serve on the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce Board. I am a past president of the Alberta Magazine Publisher's Association, Allied Arts Council, and Economic Development Lethbridge. I have served on the board of Magazines Canada and on the Covenant Health Community Board. I currently serve on the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board and volunteer for Alberta Health Services. I have also participated in 6 successful Team Lethbridge missions – representing a variety of organizations – and worked on a number Lethbridge BILD committees.

I'm the past owner and editor of Lethbridge living magazine and am the partner in a communications and marketing consulting business as well as three quick-serve restaurant franchises.

I am also an avid viewer of Lethbridge City Council meetings and have faithfully watched Council meetings as well as Operating and Capital budget processes with much interest over the past 15 years.

I know what good governance looks like, I know what it is to own a business in our city, I know how to connect people in our community, and I know the stories of our city. I have the

experience of being able to work effectively with all levels of government in a variety of capacities and I'm able to work across the entire political spectrum.

You can learn more in my bio at: <https://jennschmidtrempe.ca/about/>

What do you think are the biggest issues affecting Lethbridge are, and how would you approach being an elected representative?

Community safety, supports for people experiencing homelessness and addictions, and a lack of “listening” at City Hall are three significant issues. There appears to be a disconnect between the City of Lethbridge and its residents, there's division in our community, and residents have lost faith in all levels of government and feel that there's little to no leadership.

In my platform (www.jennschmidtrempe.ca) I emphasize the importance and need for meaningful engagement and communication. This includes understanding the value of listening and hearing what people have to say. I don't claim to have all the answers, but I will listen, learn, and I will not be afraid to ask questions. I will also work hard to rebuild faith in our local leadership by working effectively with our residents, and different levels of government – holding them accountable for the services our city needs: from healthcare and mental healthcare supports, to supporting our post-secondary and skills building institutions. We need to be holding these levels of government accountable to our residents.

What do you think is the role of a municipal government? Do you think the City does too many things, not enough, or just the right amount?

The Municipal Government Act has a list of basic duties that municipalities need to fulfil and can perform. To me, the role is to provide the core services to ensure we “maintain a safe and viable”, sustainable community. We need to do so while constantly evaluating what services are provided and how they are accomplished.

Do you think property taxes are too high, too low, or just about right?

The City of Lethbridge is facing some immediate challenges, and we're going to need to have some honest conversations around level of service and fiscal management. Our taxes pay for services, and we need to evaluate spending based on service levels and program effectiveness. Council is going to have to ensure our residents feel they are receiving good value for their tax dollars, while investing where we need to invest, such as with our first responders, firefighters, and police services.

We also need to ask residents where they can find efficiencies in the services they use. We can all cut programs we don't use, so we need to start by evaluating all our programs and ask those who use them where they can find efficiencies.

Over the next four years, should the City spend less in absolute terms, increase spending but by less than the rate of inflation and population growth, increase by the rate of inflation and population growth, or increase faster than the rate of inflation and population growth?

Spending must be based on demonstrated need and support for services delivered in an efficient and effective manner. There is no one formula as Program A may require an increase but Service Level B is decreased because of found efficiencies.

Over the next four years, Council must continue to evaluate programs and service levels, and they should allocate funds to the programs and policies that meet the level of service people expect.

Everyone says they support affordable housing, but what does that term mean for you? Do you think the City should be subsidizing housing for lower-income residents? Or focused on keeping the cost of all housing from getting out of control? Or perhaps some combination of the two? If so, how?

By definition, affordable housing is housing that costs less than 30% of pre-tax income. Since the market sets housing prices, affordability can be partially addressed through reductions in costs associated with planning, zoning, permitting, infrastructure requirements, and dwelling construction. The City can look at how these factors contribute to housing costs.

As with all my answers here, there is no one approach to any of the problems facing us. There may be projects that require the City to advocate to the province for funding, but other projects that may require grants or incentives to spur investment. Lobbying the federal government on mortgage rules is another option. Council can help increase access to housing, including the idea of appropriate housing, by ensuring that it's addressing all needs and costs across the housing continuum.

What do you think is the best approach to attract businesses to Lethbridge? Direct incentives to specific businesses, paid for by slightly higher taxes, or lower tax rates for all businesses.

Right now, focusing on economic recovery and development is key to our city's future, and core to my platform (www.jenschmidtrempel.ca). We need to continue to make Lethbridge an attractive place to do business. Economic development is business investment attraction, business retention and expansion, and entrepreneurship and innovation, all of which lead to job creation. Economic development, which includes supporting our local businesses in what they need, pays for services and creates a vibrant community, and we need a workforce to attract these opportunities. It's not just about taxation for business; we need to look at all financial and policy supports.

I'm committed to promoting the benefits of doing business in Lethbridge through red tape reduction initiatives, reviewing policies that create artificial barriers to growth, exploring private business opportunities to enhance public services options, and working with local businesses to achieve their goals for recovery, retention, and expansion.

Should we defund the police? If yes, what exactly does defunding the police mean to you? If not, what should the City do to address both historical and ongoing injustices?

The Police Commission needs to ensure that it is doing everything in its power to provide safe, efficient police-related services in our city and Council needs to fund it appropriately. I support providing the Lethbridge Police Commission and our police services with the resources necessary to deliver the services we are asking them to provide. I am also committed to holding the Police Commission accountable for their oversight of Lethbridge Police Service and its budget. Supporting respectful, professional, and ethical policing in our community is core to my platform (www.jenschmidtrempe.ca).

The Police Commission also needs to lead the work with communities that face historical and ongoing injustices starting with listening to these communities and understanding how policing policies can target individuals because of their race, gender, sex, ethnicity, and social condition. They can then review and amend those policies to ensure that policing is about safety and not power.

The Lethbridge Police Service has courted controversy in the last few days, from their viral arrest of a stormtrooper on Star Wars Day to their coordinated surveillance of a provincial MLA, all while the crime rate and police response times remain among the highest in the country. These concerns are so significant that the current provincial government has threatened to dissolve the force. What, if any, reforms would you advocate for?

An Action Plan has been submitted by the Lethbridge Police Services to the Provincial Government. I will commit to holding the Lethbridge Police Commission accountable and reporting back on that Action Plan.

Lethbridge City Council does not manage police services in our city. That's the role of the Police Commission. The Commission submits an operating budget request to Council, Council determines how much funding to provide the Lethbridge Police Commission, and the Commission allocates dollars based on the Service's need.

I would also like to see a Police Commission built around a skills matrix with input from members of police services, as well as training for new Commission members. Other boards in our community do this, we need to ensure we're doing it with our Police Commission as well. Further to that, I would support regular meetings with members of City Council, the Police Commission, and members of the Lethbridge Police Association so Council can learn directly

from officers about challenges going on in our community. I firmly believe in opening lines of communication.

While the concept of a secret ballot is essential, many of our supporters have told us that they'd like to know the political alignment of their candidates. So, if - and only if - you feel comfortable saying so, who are you voting for Mayor and why, and if you are affiliated with any provincial or federal political parties, which ones and why?

You are correct, the ballot is a secret. If you elect me to City Council, I need to be able to work openly and effectively with all of Council for the betterment of our city. Naming names here doesn't get any of us off to a good start! The great thing about elections is that campaigns are an expression of ideas, and it's up to you, the voter, to vote for those ideas. You need to vote for the people you believe will do the best job representing the broad views our community.

That said, you can be sure that I'll be voting for this person: <https://bit.ly/3DwkZBx>