

Lethbridge Trail Alliance Association (LTA)

Questions for Candidates, Mayor and Councilor, City of Lethbridge

Deadline for response: October 6, 2021, 4:00pm to lethtrailalliance@gmail.com

September 28, 2021



To the candidates for Mayor and Councilors in the City of Lethbridge,

On behalf of the Lethbridge Trail Alliance (LTA) we would like to invite each candidate for Mayor and Councilors an opportunity to answer a series of questions to inform voters prior to the Municipal Election on October 18, 2021. This document and all responses will be posted to our Facebook page named 'Lethbridge Trail Alliance (LTA)'. Currently we have a following of 689 members as of September 28, 2021.

The LTA was formed following the cancellation of Pathway 24, which proposed to develop a 6.4km limestone pathway to connect the southern coulee of Lethbridge College to Botterill Bottom Park, west of the Scenic Drive Dog Run within Six Mile Coulee. Public opposition from a diverse group of River Valley users was strong and in July 2020 the project was cancelled. Several members of the community recognized the opportunity to band together in the interest of improving the network of sustainable singletrack trails in the city. Our current relationship with the City of Lethbridge is positive and we look forward to working together to help fulfil our mission.

Our Mission Statement is:

To represent a diverse group of trail users in Lethbridge, Alberta with a unified voice dedicated to singletrack trail advocacy and stewardship.

Working together with coulee stakeholders, the community and City officials, the LTA seeks to design, protect, develop and promote the singletrack trail network for use by local and visiting hikers, trail runners, mountain bikers and all other trail users. We advocate responsible trail use and will promote environmental sustainability, accessibility and safety.

The LTA will provide expert assistance in sustainable trail network design and development, maintenance and impact reduction, user education and tourism to ensure enjoyment for many years to come.

Please provide responses to the following questions before October 6, 2021, 4:00pm:

- 1) What are your perspectives on the multiple uses in the River Valley?

We need to ensure that Lethbridge is an attractive and healthy city. Our physical community spaces, and how we approach land use and infrastructure development is inherently linked to our people, services, and businesses. We have many great spaces to explore in our city, including our river valley.

You'll find my commitment to our natural spaces, including our river valley, under the "Community" pillar of my platform (www.jenschmidtrempe.ca).

I'm committed to preserving and enhancing our natural spaces and areas, and the interconnectivity of our river valley, parks, recreational areas, and open spaces. This includes:

- Ensuring we're caring for our urban forest.
- Ensuring accessibility and future interconnectivity as we improve and build parks, pathways, and recreational areas, and consider year-round outdoor activity development for these areas.
- Asking that we build and plan for future sustainability and for our geography.

2) What are your perspectives on future trail development in the River Valley?

I recognize the potential for economic development and tourism opportunities. Much like Fernie, Castle Mountain area, and even Medicine Hat, we should look at building the tourism opportunities around our river valley trails as well as those activities on the Oldman River.

Further, direction on the city's new Municipal Development Plan outlines assisting Tourism Lethbridge in its efforts to develop nature-based, adventure, and eco-tourism activities for Lethbridge's open spaces, particularly the river valley.

3) How do you envision balancing the competing priorities of the River Valley system for all users?

We all need to be working together and ensure that we're caring for our river valley space. Communication is key. I believe in bringing together all stakeholders to work with the City on finding a balance that meets the needs of environment, activity, historical preservation, and our sense of community.

4) What are some key issues and opportunities within the River Valley that you would like to see addressed by the City of Lethbridge?

Again, key opportunities would be around economic development and tourism.

Key issues that I would see the City and LTA addressing would be those around ensuring the preservation of any historical artifacts or archaeological sites, wildlife landscape, on and off trail signage, and ensuring stewardship of the environment.

Specific to the City of Lethbridge would be ensuring that we are meeting infrastructure and safety requirements such as access and emergency response.

5) What kind of activities do you participate in within our River Valley?

I'm an avid hiker and do a fair bit in our river valley. I do agree that our trail system is weakly interconnected and was disappointed that it wasn't rebuilt after flooding. As a U of L student, I often rode my bike to and from the west side using the interconnected trail system that was available at that time.

I've not yet done this, but I'd also like to start paddleboarding on the river. I'm interested in river surfing and need to do a lot more research on this.

- 6) Have you visited other municipalities or parks where they have an established singletrack trail network for multi-users? What were your thoughts, impressions, takeaways?

I have not, but I have several friends that do, and they most often visit Fernie's Alpine Resort Bike Park. This summer they also visited trails in Revelstoke area. Their experiences were incredibly positive. Wouldn't we want positive experiences for our residents and tourists here?

- 7) How would you envision engaging with the LTA for the work outlined in our mission statement?

What I appreciate is that this group is forward thinking and has already brought solutions and ideas on how to move ahead to the table, as well as a demonstrated desire to work with other community stakeholders, and a commitment to maintaining our river valley.

I see engagement being regular communication and consultation with all stakeholders and finding a balanced and strategic approach to moving forward.