

Questions for Council Candidates from **CUPE Local 70**

As workers who serve the public directly, our members are deeply invested in the decisions made by City Council — particularly those that affect the delivery of public services, workplace conditions, and community well-being.

We would appreciate your response to the following questions:

1. Public Library Services:

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, public library hours in Lethbridge have been reduced, even as staff continue to respond to increasingly complex community needs. What will you do to ensure the public library has the capacity to grow and meet the evolving needs of our community?

Lethbridge's Public Library is one of our community's most valuable civic institutions. It's more than books, it's a hub for digital access, lifelong learning, early-childhood development, community programming, and social connection. Since 2021, I've consistently supported investments in community wellness, accessibility, and literacy initiatives.

Our city has grown, and its needs are changing. I believe the first step is working to ensure its service levels are clearly defined, reviewed, appropriate, and able to be met – and I would like to see staff involved in these conversations. I support ensuring that the Lethbridge Public Library, and its staff, have the tools needed to do the work we're asking them to do in our city. I believe that library services should be positioned to grow in Lethbridge, and would work to advocate for that with data and information provided by the Lethbridge Public Library. I would also look forward to regular meetings with Library leadership and staff to better understand the changing roles and public library services needed in our city, and who the Library is partnering with to address and identify emerging community needs.

2. Privatization of Public Services:

Where do you stand on the privatization of public services?

Public services, from water and wastewater to transit, public safety, and emergency response, exist to serve our residents equitably, not to generate profit. Lethbridge's strength lies in a skilled, dedicated public workforce that ensures accountability, reliability, and public trust.

I see the changing needs in our city and the demands of our residents for transparency, as well as a need to rebuild public trust, and morale within the City of Lethbridge workforce. I'm seeing that it's time for clearly defined service levels that are regularly reviewed, appropriate, and able to be met – and I want our staff involved in these conversations. I support ensuring that our public service staff, have the tools needed to do the work we're asking them to do so that they can deliver at the service levels our residents expect, and feel proud of the work they do.

I also support staff-led initiatives, innovation, and suggestions for improvement. I want our staff to feel proud of the work they do, not afraid to bring ideas forward, recognized for their innovation, and trusted by the public.

3. Public-Private Partnerships (P3s):

Do you support the use of public-private partnerships to finance municipal infrastructure or service delivery projects?

My position would be on a case-by-case basis, guided by research, evidence, and fiscal responsibility. I would include public employees in my research, because I believe in being informed by our front-line workers.

The key for me is due diligence: I will continue to insist on full lifecycle cost analysis and public transparency before supporting any partnership.

4. Affordable and Supportive Housing:

What are your goals for addressing the need for affordable and supportive housing in Lethbridge?

Increased access to housing is one of Lethbridge's most pressing issues, and one of my top priorities.

During this term, I've:

- Approved projects such as Lethbridge Housing Authority's Nokoowaayi supportive living project and Cottages at Southgate.
- Supported Aboriginal Housing Society and Blackfoot Family Lodge Society projects, and the YWCA Hope Program.
- Backed housing incentive programs and market/affordable developments across the city.
- Advanced updates to the Encampment Strategy to ensure coordinated responses with housing agencies.

If re-elected, I'll continue to:

- Align Council actions with the Municipal Housing Strategy and Municipal Development Plan to deliver homes across the housing spectrum.
- Focus on integrated, needs-based service planning – housing, childcare, and workforce development go hand-in-hand.
- Strengthen partnerships with local housing providers and advocate for sustained provincial and federal investment.

Housing stability is economic stability – for families, employers, and the community.

5. Encampments and Public Safety:

Do you think the City is doing a good job managing encampments? Should this be a City-led initiative or a police-led initiative? In your view, should the City expand its current Encampment Response Program or increase investment in police services?

Encampments are a complex social and safety issue, not solely a policing issue.

At this time, I believe the City's Encampment Response Program should remain a City-led initiative, supported by coordinated partnerships between Lethbridge Police Service, Fire/EMS, and social-service agencies. Our role must balance compassion with community safety; ensuring people in encampments are treated with dignity while also maintaining safe, accessible public spaces for everyone.

We have made some good progress over these past 4 years: the City's revised Encampment Strategy, developed in consultation with service providers, is producing good outcomes and we are sharing this strategy and information with other communities.

6. Remote Work and Return to Office Mandate:

The City recently implemented a return-to-office mandate. What is your position on remote and flexible work options for municipal employees?

Flexibility and trust in the workplace matter.

While in-person collaboration is critical for some municipal roles, the pandemic showed that many functions can be performed effectively through hybrid or remote models, improving productivity, retention, and work-life balance, particularly for young families and primary caregivers.

I believe the City should:

- Continue exploring flexible work options where operationally feasible.
- Use data and employee feedback to assess outcomes (for instance: service delivery, morale, and costs).
- Model modern employment practices that help recruit and retain top talent, particularly as workforce competition intensifies.

Public service excellence depends on engaged, respected employees. A rigid one-size-fits-all return-to-office policy doesn't serve that goal.

A final thought I'd like to share: CUPE Local 70 members are the backbone of municipal service delivery, and I deeply respect the work City employees do every day to keep Lethbridge safe, clean, and operational.

My approach is straightforward: collaboration over confrontation. Council must continue building strong, respectful relationships with its workforce, grounded in shared values of accountability, service, and community well-being. If I am successfully re-elected I would like to regularly meet with members of CUPE 70, and its executive, to continue building these relationships and share feedback on what we're each hearing from staff.