



Questions to City Council and Mayoral Candidates from the Lethbridge Police Association

Dear city council or mayoral candidate,

The **Lethbridge Police Association** represents the sworn rank and file men and women of the Lethbridge Police Service. In an effort to better inform our members for the upcoming municipal election we seek your responses to questions of importance to our membership. The answers may be shared with our members, and we thank you for your considered responses to the following:

- 1. In previous municipal budget deliberations (2020-2021) City Council passed a motion to remove \$1m from the police service's budget. This came from the operating portion of the budget (minus wages/benefits) and had far-reaching ramifications related to the quality of policing services offered in our community. As an elected city council member would you support any similar reductions to the police service budget in the future?**

This term I supported providing the Lethbridge Police Commission and Lethbridge Police Service (LPS) with the resources necessary to deliver the services our community was asking you to provide. Stable, needs-based funding paired with transparency and oversight through the Police Commission is the path I have supported and will continue to support. That's consistent with what I told you in 2021, and I stand by that.

- 2. According to Statistics Canada the police officer to population ratio in Canada peaked in 1975 at 206 officers for every 100k population. Since then this number has been in steady decline and significantly so over the past decade. From 2019-2021 Lethbridge was ranked highest in the country on the crime severity index while in a staffing crisis. With an increase to the LPS authorized strength and a commitment to staffing it, the city's crime severity index rating has dropped appreciably yet remains in the top 10. Currently our authorized strength is 188 sworn police officers. As a city council member would you be in favor of continual growth and expansion of LPS authorized strength, along with the civilian and specialized positions required to support it, in an effort to match the ever-increasing needs being placed on our Police Service?**

Again, I support the Lethbridge Police Commission and LPS with the resources necessary to deliver the services we are asking you to provide. This includes support to maintain and, when operational analysis justifies it, increasing authorized strength alongside the civilian and specialized positions that keep officers on the street. That goes hand-in-hand with accountability through the Commission's strategic plan and public reporting, which I've helped

steward, and with tools that lift service quality (e.g., body-worn cameras) and downtown presence.

I supported LPS funding this term and supported the Chief's reappointment to maintain leadership continuity during staffing recovery, and I will advocate for provincial/federal resources where appropriate.

3. How will you support additional strategies that reinforce the police service's ability to deal with crime and disorder issues in our city?

I have been an active and engaged member of the Police Commission since being appointed in 2022, and I have participated in transformational, strategic change for our policing and safety services in Lethbridge. My work and support for Lethbridge Police Commission and LPS will remain one of my priorities and you can expect me to continue to be one of your strongest voices on Council. Although it's not the role of Lethbridge City Council to direct police operations, there is work that Council can do to support the work of the Police Commission and LPS including:

- Grow alternatives for social/non-criminal calls so sworn officers focus on policing. This is something I flagged in 2021 and will continue to support through Commission direction and partnership models.
- Expand and promote Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design supports and grants for residents and businesses; I've supported those programs and want to scale what works.
- Continue supporting the Downtown Policing Unit and practical activation measures that increase natural surveillance and foot traffic; I've walked downtown with officers regularly to stay grounded in on-the-street realities.
- Continue supporting encampment strategy improvements, supportive and transitional housing projects, and youth/early-intervention work that lowers disorder long-term. These are investments I've already supported, and will continue to support.

4. How do you intend to show your support for our public safety providers as a city council member?

- I will continue supporting LPS with clear goals and regular Lethbridge Police Commission reporting, exactly what I've advanced this term.
- I will participate in regular ride-alongs and on-foot check-ins with officers; it keeps Council's decisions connected to reality.
- I will continue to support robust Police Commission onboarding, and regular conversations with the Commission and LPA so front-line insights inform policy early.
- I will continue to share communications from the Police Commission and LPS with Council and residents.

- I will continue to support communications that highlight successful files, transparency tools such as body-worn cameras, and community education such as the Town Halls and other outreach events LPS undertakes.