

Urban Hens  
for  
City of Lethbridge Regulatory Services

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Lethbridge Public Opinion Study – February 2019

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# Urban Hens in Lethbridge

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## Methodology

*Population* The city of Lethbridge has a total population of 99,769 residents (2018 census) approximately 80% of which are 18 years of age or older (79,800). A total of 48,883 Lethbridge residents are male (49.0%), 50,697 are female (50.8%) and 18 (0.2%) prefer not to identify. South Lethbridge is home to 32,109 residents (32.2%) while the rapidly expanding west side is now home to 39,960 residents (40.1%). There are 27,700 north Lethbridge residents (27.8%).

*Sample Data* Collected by Lethbridge College students in the winter of 2019. Students interviewed 882 randomly selected adult Lethbridge residents by telephone (landline, hybrid and mobile) from February 9 to 13, 2019 under the supervision of CSRL Research Chair, Dr. Faron Ellis. We sincerely thank all those who took time to respond to our survey. Full methodological notes and results from previous CSRL Opinion Studies can be accessed by visiting CSRL web pages at: <https://lethbridgecollege.ca/departments/citizen-society-research-lab>.

*Representativeness* Analysis of the demographic data indicates that, within acceptable limits, the sample accurately represents the demographic distribution of the adult population within the city of Lethbridge. The sample has been statistically weighted to even better reflect that of the population (sex, age, and area of the city of Lethbridge).

*Confidence* The sample yields a margin of error of  $\pm 3.3$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data.

*IB Commons Call Centre* The CSRL operates as a division of the Centre for Applied Arts and Sciences. Students conducted interviews using the facilities of the Lethbridge College IB Commons Call Centre with support from the Lethbridge College Facility Management, Instructional Technology, and Audio Visual teams.

*Sponsorship* These data are part of a larger study of the opinions and attitudes of Lethbridge residents conducted by the Citizen Society Research Lab at Lethbridge College. This particular set of questions was derived from student, faculty and community interest in the topic.

## Urban Hens in Lethbridge

When asked to offer their opinions on a proposal before Lethbridge City Council that would allow for a maximum of four hens to be kept on residential property in Lethbridge a clear majority of residents are opposed (58.6%). Slightly more than two of every five Lethbridge resident are supportive (41.4%). Support is up considerably from only 27.4% in favor when we asked a similar but not identical question in 2012. Some possible explanations for the differences are that concern about roosters has been removed, number of hens is now specified at a maximum of four per household, and a more general increase in awareness of and support for urban agriculture over the past few years.

- Opposition is much more intense than is support. For example, nearly two of every five residents is strongly opposed (37.9% while a further one in five (20.8%) is somewhat opposed. Conversely, strong support (15.4%) is less than is moderate support (25.9%).

More than two-thirds (70.1%) of residents do not want tax dollars spent to implement and administer and urban hen program.

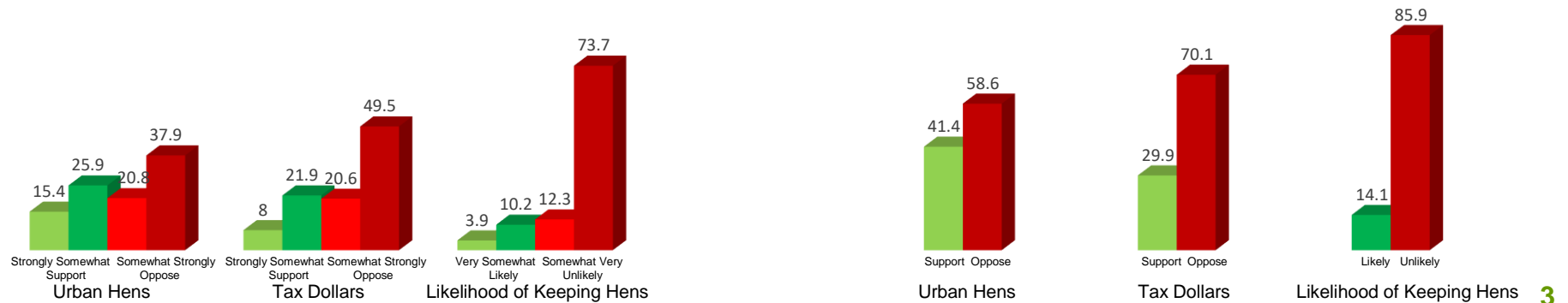
- Nearly half of all residents (49.5%) are strongly opposed to using tax dollars in support of an urban hen program while a further one-fifth (20.6%) are somewhat opposed. Fewer than one in ten Lethbridge residents (8.0%) are strongly support while approximately one in five residents are somewhat supportive (20.6%).

Few Lethbridge residents (3.9%) are very likely to keep hens on their property if the city of Lethbridge allows backyard chickens. Nearly three-quarters are very unlikely to keep backyard chickens (73.7%).

- A further one in ten (10.2%) is somewhat likely to keep hens should they be allowed while a similar number (12.3%) is somewhat unlikely to want to raise urban hens.

### Urban Hens in Lethbridge (%)

|                                 | <u>Hens</u> | <u>Taxes</u> | <u>Will keep hens</u> |         | <u>Hens</u> | <u>Taxes</u> | <u>Will keep hens</u> |
|---------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|---------|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Strongly support (very likely)  | 15.4        | 8.0          | 3.9                   |         |             |              |                       |
| Somewhat support (likely)       | 25.9        | 21.9         | 10.2                  | Support | 41.4        | 29.9         | 14.1                  |
| Somewhat oppose (unlikely)      | 20.8        | 20.6         | 12.3                  | Oppose  | 58.6        | 70.1         | 85.9                  |
| Strongly oppose (very unlikely) | 37.9        | 49.5         | 73.7                  |         |             |              |                       |



## Urban Hens in Lethbridge by Selected Demographic Groups

Very few differences of opinion are measured between different demographic groups when Lethbridge residents offer their opinions about backyard chickens. Only age has a significant impact on opinion with younger residents more supportive than are older residents.

- Nearly half of Lethbridge youth (48.3%) supportive. Support peaks amongst those aged 30 to 44 at slightly more than half in favor (54.7%). Older residents (45 to 64 years old) are more opposed (62.6%) as are seniors (67.4%) who are most opposed.
- Although minor differences are measured between genders, areas of the city, household incomes and education levels, none of these differences are large enough to be statistically significant.
- Similar patterns of opinion convergence and divergence were measured in both 2012 and 2019.

## Tax Dollars to Implement and Administer an Urban Hen Program by Selected Demographic Groups

Very few differences of opinion are measured between different demographic groups when Lethbridge residents offer their opinions about spending tax dollars to administer an urban hen program. Significant differences are measured between different areas of the city, income levels and age groups, but in no demographic group do a majority of residents support using tax dollars to implement and administer an urban hen program.

- South Lethbridge residents (35.2%) are slightly more supportive than are north (27.9%) and west Lethbridge residents (26.8%).
- Lower-income residents (37.9%) are slightly more supportive than are middle-income (29.2%) and upper-income residents (28.8%).
- Lethbridge youth are more supportive (45.8%) than are those aged 30 to 44 years (44.8%). Older residents (45 to 64 years old) are even less supportive (20.6%), as are seniors (21.4%).

## Likelihood of Keeping Urban Hens by Selected Demographic Groups

Very few Lethbridge residents plan to raise backyard chickens if allowed to do so by Lethbridge City Council (14.1%). Of those, less than one in twenty-five (3.9%) are very likely, while a further one in ten (10.2%) are somewhat likely to want to raise backyard chickens. Only age has a significant impact on opinion with younger residents more likely to be planning on raising urban hens than are older residents.

- The vast majority of Lethbridge residents (85.9%) do not plan to keep urban hens even if Lethbridge City Council approves the practice. Nearly three-quarters of Lethbridge residents (73.7%) are very unlikely to be planning on becoming urban chicken farmers with a further 12.3% somewhat unlikely.
- Younger Lethbridge residents (24.8% for those aged 18 to 29 and 21.7% for those aged 30 to 44) are considerably more likely to consider becoming urban chicken farmers than are middle-aged (10.5%) or senior (4.3%) residents.
- Although minor differences are measured between genders, areas of the city, household incomes and education levels, none of these differences are large enough to be statistically significant.

Urban Hens in Lethbridge by Selected Demographic Groups (condensed) (%)

| Gender  | Male | Female | Lethbridge |
|---------|------|--------|------------|
| Support | 40.9 | 41.8   | 41.4       |
| Oppose  | 59.1 | 58.2   | 58.6       |

| Area    | South Lethbridge | North Lethbridge | West Lethbridge |
|---------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Support | 44.6             | 38.6             | 40.9            |
| Oppose  | 55.4             | 61.4             | 59.1            |

| Household Income | Under \$40,000 | \$40,001 to \$100,000 | Over \$100,000 |
|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Support          | 42.1           | 43.5                  | 39.4           |
| Oppose           | 57.9           | 56.5                  | 60.6           |

| Education | High School or less | Some Post-secondary | College-Tech-Trade | University Grad |
|-----------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Support   | 38.0                | 49.7                | 34.6               | 44.1            |
| Oppose    | 62.0                | 50.3                | 65.4               | 55.9            |

| Age*    | 18-29 | 30-44 | 45-64 | 65 and older |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| Support | 48.3  | 54.7  | 37.4  | 32.6         |
| Oppose  | 51.7  | 45.3  | 62.6  | 67.4         |

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; \* sig < 0.05

## Urban Hens in Lethbridge by Selected Demographic Groups (full) (%)

| Gender           | Male | Female | Lethbridge |
|------------------|------|--------|------------|
| Strongly support | 13.3 | 17.7   | 15.4       |
| Somewhat support | 27.7 | 24.0   | 25.9       |
| Somewhat oppose  | 19.8 | 22.1   | 20.8       |
| Strongly oppose  | 39.3 | 36.2   | 37.9       |

| Area             | South Lethbridge | North Lethbridge | West Lethbridge |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Strongly support | 17.2             | 13.5             | 15.2            |
| Somewhat support | 27.2             | 24.9             | 25.5            |
| Somewhat oppose  | 17.6             | 24.5             | 21.0            |
| Strongly oppose  | 38.0             | 37.1             | 38.3            |

| Household Income | Under \$40,000 | \$40,001 to \$100,000 | Over \$100,000 |
|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly support | 12.9           | 16.8                  | 15.0           |
| Somewhat support | 29.2           | 26.7                  | 24.4           |
| Somewhat oppose  | 21.8           | 21.9                  | 17.2           |
| Strongly oppose  | 36.1           | 34.7                  | 43.3           |

| Education        | High School or less | Some Post-secondary | College-Tech-Trade | University Grad |
|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Strongly support | 13.9                | 21.1                | 13.2               | 14.6            |
| Somewhat support | 24.1                | 28.7                | 21.4               | 29.5            |
| Somewhat oppose  | 22.3                | 20.5                | 23.3               | 18.4            |
| Strongly oppose  | 39.8                | 29.8                | 42.1               | 37.5            |

| Age*             | 18-29 | 30-44 | 45-64 | 65 and older |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| Strongly support | 20.8  | 20.6  | 13.3  | 10.3         |
| Somewhat support | 27.5  | 34.6  | 24.1  | 22.3         |
| Somewhat oppose  | 26.1  | 18.4  | 20.4  | 18.5         |
| Strongly oppose  | 25.6  | 26.5  | 42.2  | 48.9         |

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100; \* sig < 0.05

Tax Dollars to Implement and Administer an Urban Hens Program by Selected Demographic Groups (condensed) (%)

| Gender  | Male | Female | Lethbridge |
|---------|------|--------|------------|
| Support | 28.6 | 32.9   | 29.9       |
| Oppose  | 71.4 | 67.1   | 70.1       |

| Area*   | South Lethbridge | North Lethbridge | West Lethbridge |
|---------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Support | 35.2             | 27.9             | 26.8            |
| Oppose  | 64.8             | 72.1             | 73.2            |

| Household Income* | Under \$40,000 | \$40,001 to \$100,000 | Over \$100,000 |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Support           | 37.9           | 29.2                  | 28.8           |
| Oppose            | 62.1           | 70.8                  | 71.2           |

| Education | High School or less | Some Post-secondary | College-Tech-Trade | University Grad |
|-----------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Support   | 29.0                | 32.9                | 26.4               | 33.7            |
| Oppose    | 71.0                | 67.1                | 73.6               | 66.3            |

| Age*    | 18-29 | 30-44 | 45-64 | 65 and older |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| Support | 45.8  | 44.8  | 20.6  | 21.4         |
| Oppose  | 54.2  | 55.2  | 79.4  | 78.6         |

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; \* sig < 0.05



## Tax Dollars to Implement and Administer an Urban Hens Program by Selected Demographic Group (full) (%)

| Gender           | Male | Female | Lethbridge |
|------------------|------|--------|------------|
| Strongly support | 6.1  | 10.5   | 8.0        |
| Somewhat support | 22.5 | 22.3   | 21.9       |
| Somewhat oppose  | 20.9 | 20.0   | 20.6       |
| Strongly oppose  | 50.5 | 47.3   | 49.5       |

| Area*            | South Lethbridge | North Lethbridge | West Lethbridge |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Strongly support | 12.8             | 7.7              | 4.1             |
| Somewhat support | 22.3             | 20.2             | 22.8            |
| Somewhat oppose  | 19.0             | 24.0             | 19.4            |
| Strongly oppose  | 45.8             | 48.1             | 53.8            |

| Household Income* | Under \$40,000 | \$40,001 to \$100,000 | Over \$100,000 |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly support  | 9.2            | 9.3                   | 4.3            |
| Somewhat support  | 28.7           | 19.8                  | 24.5           |
| Somewhat oppose   | 28.7           | 19.0                  | 17.9           |
| Strongly oppose   | 33.3           | 51.9                  | 53.3           |

| Education        | High School or less | Some Post-secondary | College-Tech-Trade | University Grad |
|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Strongly support | 10.5                | 8.1                 | 6.5                | 8.7             |
| Somewhat support | 18.5                | 24.9                | 19.9               | 25.3            |
| Somewhat oppose  | 25.9                | 23.7                | 20.7               | 13.8            |
| Strongly oppose  | 45.1                | 43.4                | 52.9               | 52.2            |

| Age*             | 18-29 | 30-44 | 45-64 | 65 and older |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| Strongly support | 18.2  | 6.7   | 4.5   | 4.9          |
| Somewhat support | 27.6  | 38.1  | 16.2  | 16.5         |
| Somewhat oppose  | 29.6  | 18.7  | 20.6  | 12.9         |
| Strongly oppose  | 24.6  | 36.6  | 58.8  | 65.6         |

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100; \* sig < 0.05

Likelihood of Keeping Urban Hens on Property by Selected Demographic Groups (condensed) (%)

| Gender   | Male | Female | Lethbridge |
|----------|------|--------|------------|
| Likely   | 14.4 | 14.0   | 14.1       |
| Unlikely | 85.6 | 86.0   | 85.9       |

| Area     | South Lethbridge | North Lethbridge | West Lethbridge |
|----------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Likely   | 17.6             | 11.7             | 12.8            |
| Unlikely | 82.4             | 88.3             | 87.2            |

| Household Income | Under \$40,000 | \$40,001 to \$100,000 | Over \$100,000 |
|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Likely           | 14.9           | 14.0                  | 14.6           |
| Unlikely         | 85.1           | 86.0                  | 85.4           |

| Education | High School or less | Some Post-secondary | College-Tech-Trade | University Grad |
|-----------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Likely    | 12.0                | 15.6                | 15.4               | 13.0            |
| Unlikely  | 88.0                | 84.4                | 84.6               | 87.0            |

| Age*     | 18-29 | 30-44 | 45-64 | 65 and older |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| Likely   | 24.8  | 21.7  | 10.5  | 4.3          |
| Unlikely | 75.2  | 78.3  | 89.5  | 95.7         |

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; \* sig < 0.05

### Likelihood of Keeping Urban Hens on Property by Selected Demographic Groups (full) (%)

| Gender            | Male | Female | Lethbridge |
|-------------------|------|--------|------------|
| Very likely       | 3.7  | 4.3    | 3.9        |
| Somewhat likely   | 10.7 | 9.6    | 10.2       |
| Somewhat unlikely | 15.3 | 9.8    | 12.3       |
| Very unlikely     | 70.3 | 76.2   | 73.7       |

| Area              | South Lethbridge | North Lethbridge | West Lethbridge |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Very likely       | 5.0              | 4.2              | 2.7             |
| Somewhat likely   | 12.5             | 7.5              | 10.1            |
| Somewhat unlikely | 10.4             | 15.9             | 11.3            |
| Very unlikely     | 72.1             | 72.4             | 75.9            |

| Household Income  | Under \$40,000 | \$40,001 to \$100,000 | Over \$100,000 |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Very likely       | 5.0            | 3.7                   | 3.2            |
| Somewhat likely   | 10.0           | 10.3                  | 11.4           |
| Somewhat unlikely | 10.0           | 15.7                  | 10.3           |
| Very unlikely     | 75.1           | 70.3                  | 75.1           |

| Education         | High School or less | Some Post-secondary | College-Tech-Trade | University Grad |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Very likely       | 2.4                 | 5.8                 | 4.1                | 3.1             |
| Somewhat likely   | 9.6                 | 9.8                 | 11.3               | 9.6             |
| Somewhat unlikely | 12.0                | 15.6                | 12.4               | 11.5            |
| Very unlikely     | 76.0                | 68.8                | 72.2               | 75.8            |

| Age*              | 18-29 | 30-44 | 45-64 | 65 and older |
|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| Very likely       | 5.8   | 6.5   | 3.4   | 1.3          |
| Somewhat likely   | 19.3  | 15.2  | 7.1   | 2.6          |
| Somewhat unlikely | 17.9  | 27.5  | 8.5   | 3.9          |
| Very unlikely     | 57.0  | 50.7  | 81.0  | 92.2         |

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100; \* sig < 0.05

## Demographics

| Area of City (%) | Gender (%)  | Income (%)          | Education (%)        | Age (%)          |
|------------------|-------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| South 32.9       | Male 49.6   | Under \$40,000 27.4 | H-School/less 19.2   | 18-29 23.5       |
| North 28.2       | Female 49.8 | \$40-100,000 47.7   | Some P-Sec. 20.1     | 30-44 15.7       |
| West 38.9        | Other 0.6   | Over \$100,000 25.0 | Col-Tech-Grad 30.6   | 45-64 34.1       |
|                  |             |                     | University Grad 30.1 | 65 or older 26.6 |

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

## Questions

The City of Lethbridge has been asked to implement an Urban Hen Program that would allow residents to keep up to four hens on their property for the purpose of egg production. (additional information: only hens, no roosters)

Please tell me how much you support or oppose people being allowed to raise backyard chickens within your neighborhood? Would you say you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose allowing backyard chickens. (probe for specificity... is that strongly or somewhat...)

- strongly support
- somewhat support
- somewhat oppose
- strongly oppose
  - don't know (unprompted)
  - refused (unprompted)

Please tell me how much you support or oppose City tax dollars being spent to implement and administer an Urban Hen Program? (additional information: administration includes education and regulatory enforcement) (probe for specificity... is that strongly or somewhat...)

- strongly support
- somewhat support
- somewhat oppose
- strongly oppose
  - don't know (unprompted)
  - refused (unprompted)

If the City of Lethbridge implemented an Urban Hen Program, how likely or unlikely are you to keep chickens on your property? (probe for specificity... would you say that is very or somewhat...)

- very likely
- somewhat likely
- somewhat unlikely
- very unlikely
  - don't know (unprompted)
  - refused (unprompted)

2012 Question: Some people who live in cities would like to be allowed to raise chickens in their backyards. Please tell me how much you support or oppose people being allowed to raise backyard chickens in your neighborhood.