



Community Safety  
**ACTION PLAN**

2026

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# Land Acknowledgment & Commitment to Reconciliation

The City of Lethbridge acknowledges that we are gathered on the lands of the Blackfoot people of the Canadian Plains and pays respect to the Blackfoot people past, present, and future while recognizing and respecting their cultural heritage, beliefs, and relationship to the land. The City of Lethbridge offers respect to the Métis and all who have lived on this land and made Lethbridge their home.



This acknowledgment is more than a statement. It is a call to action. As we develop and implement this Community Safety Action Plan, we commit to:

- **Honor Indigenous Knowledge and Leadership:** Continue to engage with Blackfoot Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community leaders to ensure their voices inform the development, delivery, and evaluation of community safety initiatives.
- **Recognize Historical and Ongoing Impacts:** We acknowledge the lasting effects of colonization, residential schools, and systemic discrimination on Indigenous communities, and we commit to addressing these impacts through inclusive and restorative practices.
- **Building Relationships Based on Trust and Respect:** We will continue to foster partnerships with Indigenous organizations and communities to co-create solutions that reflect shared values and priorities.
- **Supporting Cultural Safety and Inclusion:** We will continue to promote cultural awareness and anti-racism training opportunities for City Staff and Partners.

**These commitments will guide Indigenous engagement as individual actions and programs move into development and implementation.**

# Introduction & Context

Community Safety Action Plan 2026



## Message from the Deputy Chief of Police

Lethbridge Police Service supports a balanced approach to community safety. This approach is based on education, prevention, intervention, and enforcement. Carrying out enforcement duties is a core police responsibility; however, enforcement is not always the appropriate first response for every call for service.

Lethbridge Police Service is committed to working with the City of Lethbridge to apply a right-response model that aims to send the right resources to the right situation at the right time. These proposed actions and recommendations are designed to support the police service, not replace them.

A balanced approach is expected to strengthen the overall community safety system. It is anticipated to reduce unnecessary escalation, improve response efficiency, and support better outcomes for individuals, neighbors, and police members alike.

Our alignment with the City of Lethbridge reflects a shared commitment to coordinated effective responses that seek to strengthen community safety across Lethbridge.



**Gerald Grobmeier**  
Deputy Chief of Lethbridge Police Service



## Message from the **Director of Community Services**

Lethbridge continues to grow and change, and with that growth comes increasing complexity in the community safety issues faced by residents, service providers, frontline responders, and City staff. Concerns related to social crisis, vulnerability, neighbourhood impacts, and repeat calls for service affect quality of life across the community.

The Community Safety Action Plan (CSAP) provides a structured, coordinated approach to addressing these challenges. It recognizes that community safety is not the responsibility of a single department or service, but requires alignment across education, prevention, intervention, and enforcement. Municipalities are uniquely positioned to address many of the complex issues impacting communities today, and the CSAP provides a framework for doing so in a coordinated and evidence-informed way.

The development of this Plan was informed by collaboration across City departments, Lethbridge Police Service, Lethbridge Fire and Emergency Services, business owners, researchers, and community members. This collaborative approach reflects a shared understanding that fragmented responses are not sustainable, and that coordinated action is necessary to improve outcomes.

The CSAP is the result of years of public engagement, data collection and analysis, and discussion. It brings together community input, local data, and partner expertise to guide actions aimed at improving safety and reducing repeat service demands.

Guided by the vision that Lethbridge is a safe community for all, the Community Safety Action Plan establishes a coordinated framework to guide action across the City and its partners. Continued collaboration, accountability, and evaluation will be critical to ensuring the Plan delivers measurable and sustainable improvements to community safety.

**Carly Kleisinger**  
Director of Community Services



# Executive Summary

The Community Safety Action Plan (CSAP) establishes a clear five-year direction for how municipal services, programs, and partnerships will be aligned to improve community safety across Lethbridge.

Community safety remains a priority for Lethbridge City Council, but the nature of community safety challenges continues to shift. Frontline services are increasingly responding to complex, non-criminal situations related to housing instability, mental health, addiction, and social disorder. At the same time, the City's intention for how it responds to these challenges has evolved.

Previous initiatives, including the Downtown Clean & Safe Strategy (DCSS) and the Downtown Lawlessness Reduction Task Force (DLRTF), helped identify emerging pressures and highlighted the limits of short-term, siloed responses. The Community Safety Action Plan (CSAP) reflects a deliberate shift from reactive, issue-specific actions toward a coordinated, city-wide approach that aligns policy direction with implementation.

The CSAP supports a balanced response to community safety. This approach recognizes enforcement as essential while strengthening prevention, intervention, and education. This shift in approach is intended to ensure that the right response is delivered at the right time, by the appropriate service, and in a way that improves outcomes for both individuals and the community.

Through this plan, Council is asked to support a coordinated and evidence-informed approach that clarifies roles, strengthens accountability, and guides future investment. The CSAP is designed to be adaptive, using data and community insight to respond to changing conditions and reinforce community safety over time.



# Introduction

*The City of Lethbridge is taking a deliberate and coordinated approach to community safety through a community-wide strategy grounded in four strategic pillars: **Education, Prevention, Intervention, and Enforcement.***

This work builds on the foundation of the Downtown Clean & Safe Strategy (DCSS), recognizing that many social disorder challenges were initially concentrated in the downtown are now experienced across the city and require a broader, more integrated response. The four pillars are not standalone efforts. They are interconnected and designed to work together, ensuring that the City's responses to social disorder challenges are balanced, effective, and sustainable.

The strategy recognizes that no single solution can address the interconnected issues of homelessness, addiction, mental health, and public safety. This approach requires investment across the full continuum of response, including strengthening upstream prevention, ensuring timely and appropriate interventions, increasing public education and awareness, and maintaining strong enforcement where necessary. Expanding this approach city-wide requires strong alignment across municipal departments, external agencies, and community partners to avoid duplication, close service gaps, and maximize collective impact.

Data, evidence, and community insight are central to this work. The City is committed to using timely data and community feedback to guide decisions, evaluate outcomes, and continuously improve. This evidence-informed approach strengthens accountability and transparency while enabling the City to respond effectively to emerging and evolving safety concerns across all neighborhoods. To support this work, Lethbridge is participating in national and regional initiatives that support the building of internal expertise, accessing new tools, frameworks, and adapting proven practices to fit the unique needs of Lethbridge.

Together, the CSAP reflects a clear commitment to action, accountability, and continuous improvement at a community-wide scale. Community safety is a shared responsibility that requires collaboration across all levels of government and the community. The City of Lethbridge is committed to supporting Lethbridge Police Service through strategic collaboration, resource alignment, and community partnerships. This ensures that community safety efforts are not only sustained, but strengthened over time.

# Role of Government in Public Safety

Public safety concerns in Canada are a shared responsibility across all levels of government. Each level has authorities, policies, and funding mechanisms that shape how communities address crime, social disorder, and safety-related challenges.



## Municipal Government

Municipal governments are responsible for the day-to-day, visible aspects of community safety. They provide oversight and funding of local police services, operate municipal enforcement, and implement place-based strategies. Cities are, in fact, the first line of defence against crime and violence. It is through cities that cost-effective measures can be implemented and maintained, ensuring that they address local issues and are not simply an applications of a “one-size-fits-all” approach.



## Provincial Government

The provincial government oversees the systems most directly connected to social and structural drivers of crime and public safety. These include health care, mental health, addiction services, and emergency medical care. The province is also responsible for the administration of provincial courts, prosecution services, corrections, probation, remand facilities, and community-based justice programs. Provincial ministries administer income support programs, housing and homelessness services, Child and Family Services, and other social supports that influence stability and community well-being.



## Federal Government

The federal government establishes the national legal and policy framework that shapes public safety across Canada. These responsibilities include criminal law, national public safety policy, and legislation that governs how policing and justice systems operate across the country. The federal government is also responsible for the oversight of federal agencies, including the RCMP, Border Security, Intelligence Services, and National Emergency Management Structures. Through these responsibilities, the federal system sets the overarching direction for how public safety is approached across the country.



# Vision and Approach

Community Safety Action Plan 2026

# Vision & Approach

## OUR VISION

*Lethbridge is a safe community for all.*

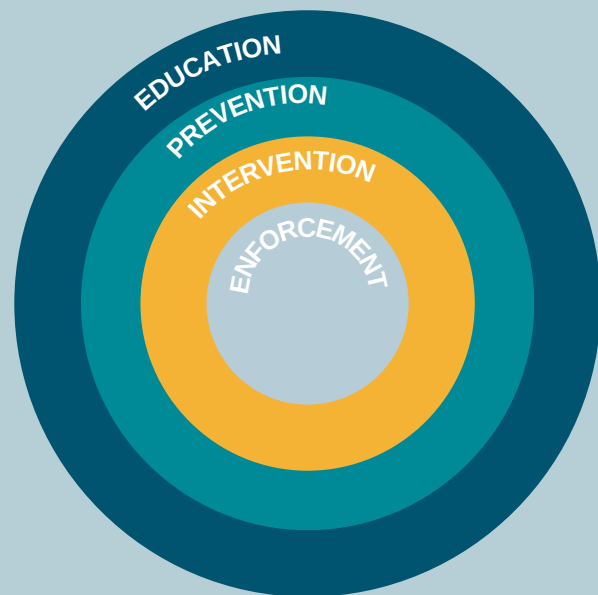
This vision reflects the City's commitment to ensuring that every resident; regardless of background or circumstance; feels secure, supported, and included in a thriving community.



## OUR APPROACH

*A balanced approach to community safety.*

This means aligning our efforts across four strategic pillars, **Education, Prevention, Intervention** and **Enforcement**. This ensures that responses are not only effective in the short term, but also sustainable in the long term.



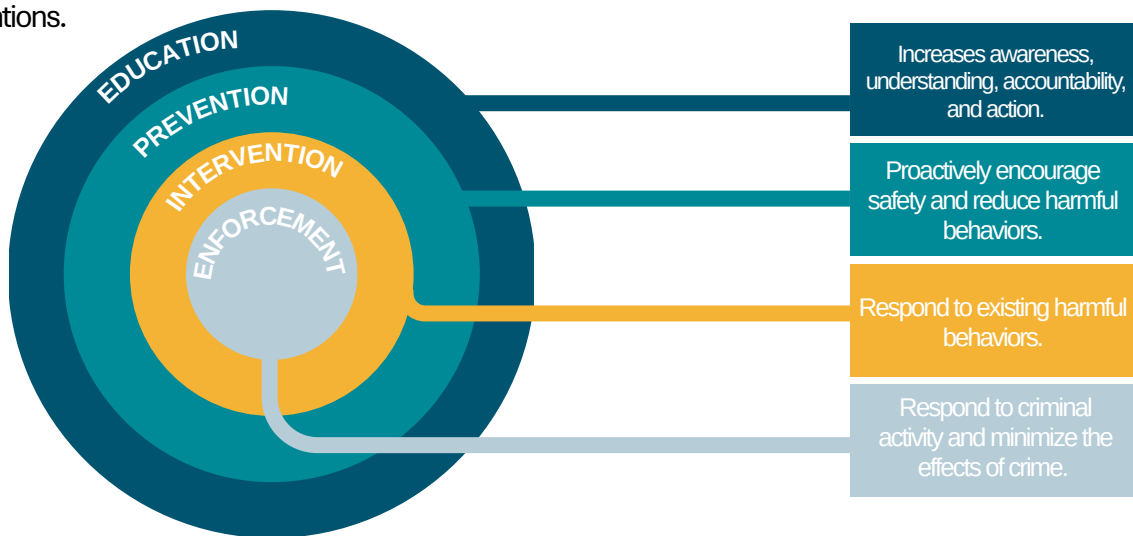
### Cross-Pillar Delivery of Community Safety Work

Many community safety initiatives, including those involving Lethbridge Police Service (LPS), operate across multiple pillars of the Community Safety Action Plan. Activities are not confined to a single category and often contribute simultaneously to education, prevention, intervention, and enforcement outcomes.

For example, police-involved initiatives may include enforcement activities while also supporting prevention through visibility, intervention through referral or diversion, and education through community engagement. This overlap reflects the complexity of community safety work and reinforces the need to view actions as interconnected rather than siloed.

# A Balanced Path Forward

The design of the pillars represents a structured and progressive approach to community safety. The outer layers focus on broad, proactive strategies that aim to build awareness and reduce risk. As the layers move inward, the focus becomes more targeted, addressing specific challenges and ensuring appropriate responses to complex situations.



**Education:** Increases awareness, understanding, accountability, and action.

Education plays a foundational role in community safety. It addresses the root causes of social disorder through awareness, empowerment, and capacity-building. Rather than reacting to incidents after they occur, education equips individuals, organizations, and systems with the knowledge and tools to prevent harm, respond appropriately, and foster a culture of shared responsibility.



**Prevention:** Proactively encourage safety and reduce harmful behaviours.

Prevention aims to reduce the likelihood of crime and social disorder before they occur. By investing in prevention, communities like Lethbridge can reduce harm, ease pressure on emergency systems, and promote long-term stability. A preventive approach builds resilience and fosters safer, healthier environments for everyone.



**Intervention:** Respond to existing harmful behaviours.

Intervention refers to targeted actions taken to address individuals or situations at risk of escalating into public safety concerns. These practices are designed to respond to real-time crises or emerging issues such as mental health crises, substance use, or housing instability, before they result in harm to individuals or the community.



**Enforcement:** Respond to criminal activity and minimize the effects of crime.

Enforcement plays a vital role in ensuring community safety by upholding laws, deterring criminal activity, and safeguarding public spaces. When implemented thoughtfully and in conjunction with prevention and intervention strategies, enforcement fosters accountability while preserving public trust. In Lethbridge, a balanced approach to enforcement guarantees that enforcement responses are not only effective and equitable but also aligned with overarching safety objectives.

# Addressing what Lies Beneath

## Understanding Social Disorder in Lethbridge

When this report uses the term “social disorder,” it refers to social conditions and systemic challenges, not to the actions or character of individuals. The intent is to highlight broader issues affecting communities, not to assign blame.

Social disorder refers to visible and disruptive behaviors or conditions in public spaces that contribute to a sense of insecurity, discomfort, or lack of safety among community members. Social disorder is a top concern for residents in Lethbridge. These visible signs, such as encampments, public substance abuse, and disruptive behaviors, are often the most immediate and noticeable. However, these are not the root causes. They are symptoms of deeper, systemic challenges.

What we see on the surface is just the tip of the iceberg. Below the surface lie complex issues such as housing insecurity, addiction, mental health challenges, and poverty. These intersecting factors contribute to cycles of vulnerability that impact individuals, families, and communities.

Addressing these challenges requires a coordinated response, one that brings together the strengths of law enforcement, municipal departments, health and social service providers, and community organizations. Police officers play a critical role in maintaining public safety, but they cannot, and should not, be expected to respond to every social issue alone.

The actions recommended emphasize upstream investment. By working collaboratively across sectors, we can reduce reliance on emergency response, improve outcomes for vulnerable populations, and build a safer, more resilient community for everyone.



*Social disorder is not a failure of enforcement. It's a signal that systems of support are strained. Real safety comes from meeting people's needs, not just managing their behaviors.*

# Governance & Reporting

Community Safety Action Plan 2026



The governance of the CSAP is intentionally structured to reflect municipal roles and authorities, while supporting strong collaboration with external partners.

## **Role of City Council**

City Council's role is to:

- Approve the Community Safety Action Plan, setting the strategic direction for community safety over the next five years.
- Establish desired community safety service levels through future operating budget decisions, including consideration of new initiatives as part of the 2028–2031 Operating Budget process.

Council approval of the CSAP does not constitute approval of individual program expenditures unless otherwise required through the budget process. Council maintains its oversight role through regular reporting, budget deliberations, and policy decisions.

## **Role of Administration**

Administration's role is to:

- Implement the Community Safety Action Plan, including delivery of the actions and initiatives.
- Coordinate municipal departments, external partners and Indigenous engagement to ensure an integrated and effective community safety response.
- Manage resources and expenditures in accordance with Council-approved operating budgets and the authorities delegated to the City Manager.
- Monitor progress, outcomes, and emerging trends, and adapt actions over time to ensure the Plan remains responsive to community needs.

As outlined in the Financial Summary, certain planned expenditures in **Phase 1-3**, utilize existing BAU/CBC funding. These expenditures fall within the City Manager's delegated authority and do not require additional Council approval, and are disclosed in this Plan for transparency and awareness. Funding for new or expanded initiatives beyond **Phase 3** will require Council approval through the Operating Budget.

## **Role of Lethbridge Police Service and Other Partners**

Lethbridge Police Service (LPS) is a key partner and collaborator in advancing community safety outcomes in Lethbridge.

This Action Plan:

- Does not alter or influence the governance structure of Lethbridge Police Service, including the authority of the Lethbridge Police Commission.
- Does not direct or determine police budgets, staffing, or operational priorities.

Opportunities for collaboration, alignment, and coordinated service delivery may arise through implementation of the CSAP; however, all such work occurs within existing governance frameworks and through partnership, not direction.

Other community partners, agencies, and organizations similarly contribute to community safety outcomes through collaboration aligned with their respective mandates and authorities.



### Role of the Community Safety Strategy Committee

The CSSC's role is to:

- The CSSC, formerly, the Downtown Lawlessness Reduction Task Force, played an essential advisory role in informing and updating the Community Safety Action Plan.
- Regular meetings ensured that insights, program reviews, and community safety considerations were incorporated into the work.

Following completion and approval of the Community Safety Action Plan, the CSSC will remain an administrative committee and does not have decision-making authority over budgets or policy. The Terms of Reference for the CSSC will be reviewed and updated to reflect its role in supporting implementation.

### Membership Includes:

- Lethbridge Police Service
- Lethbridge Fire and Emergency Services
- Regulatory Services
- Corporate Communications
- Community Social Development (CSD)
- Urban Revitalization
- Downtown Business Owners
- Centre for Public Safety Applied Research (CPSAR), Lethbridge Polytechnic



# Reporting

Effective reporting is essential to ensuring accountability, transparency, and continuous learning over the life of the Community Safety Action Plan. Administration will provide regular updates to City Council and the public to demonstrate progress, measure outcomes, and ensure the Plan remains responsive to emerging community needs and priorities.

## **Reporting Framework**

Administration retains responsibility for coordinating reporting across departments, ensuring consistency, accuracy, and alignment with the goals of the Community Safety Action Plan. Administration will report on progress and outcomes of the Community Safety Action Plan through:

- Reporting to City Council will be as needed, with the first occurring as part of the 2028-2031 Operating Budget process, setting the stage for any new initiatives that are to be brought forward for consideration.
- Public-facing reporting tools, including a Community Safety Snapshot and data dashboards.
- Ongoing review and adjustment of actions to ensure effectiveness and accountability over the life of the Plan.

This layered approach ensures that reporting is not limited to compliance but supports decision-making, continuous improvement, and shared accountability across City departments and community partners.

## **Data, Measurement, and Ways of Knowing**

Where feasible, the City intends to draw on a federally supported, Indigenous-reviewed evaluation approach to complement this reporting. This approach emphasizes Indigenous ways of knowing, community voice, systems change, and learning over time. This is intended to enhance, rather than replace, existing municipal data and reporting practices, while respecting local context, capacity, and governance roles.

## Local Context & Data

Community Safety Action Plan 2026

# Strategic Alignment

## Updating the Downtown Clean & Safe Strategy (DCSS)

A high-level review of existing municipal strategies and frameworks was conducted to inform the CSAP. The City of Lethbridge has laid a strong foundation for community safety through a coordinated and strategic approach. The seven foundational documents reflect shared priorities and a commitment to collaboration, data integration, and community engagement. The review included the following documents:

- **Downtown Clean and Safe Strategy (DCSS), 2019.**
- **Municipal Development Plan (MDP), 2022.**
- **Lethbridge Police Service Strategic Plan, 2023-2026.**
- **Encampment Strategy, 2023.**
- **Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy (CWSS), 2024.**
- **Building Safer Communities Fund Community Safety Key Findings Report, 2024.**
- **Downtown Lawlessness Reduction Task Force Recommendations**



As the Community Safety Action Plan was developed, the focus is intended to shift from broad strategic direction to actionable initiatives that build on existing programs, avoiding duplication and ensuring alignment with community priorities and emerging needs. Current initiatives such as the Clean Sweep Program, the Encampment Response Team, and Outreach services exemplify this commitment in practice.

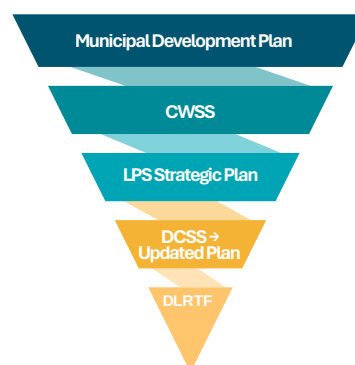
## Foundations Review

Across all referenced documents, homelessness, addiction, and mental health are identified as complex and interconnected issues requiring both system-level and immediate interventions. Recommendations range from housing supports, mental health services, and equity-focused strategies. A consistent theme across all strategies is the need for improved inter-agency coordination and data-driven decision-making, with calls for centralized dashboards and shared performance metrics to enhance transparency, accountability, and impact.

## Bridging Strategy & Practice

The transition from planning to implementation is not only procedural alignment but also a strategic investment and the allocation of appropriate resources to ensure successful implementation.

### Our Commitment:



# Understanding Safety in Lethbridge

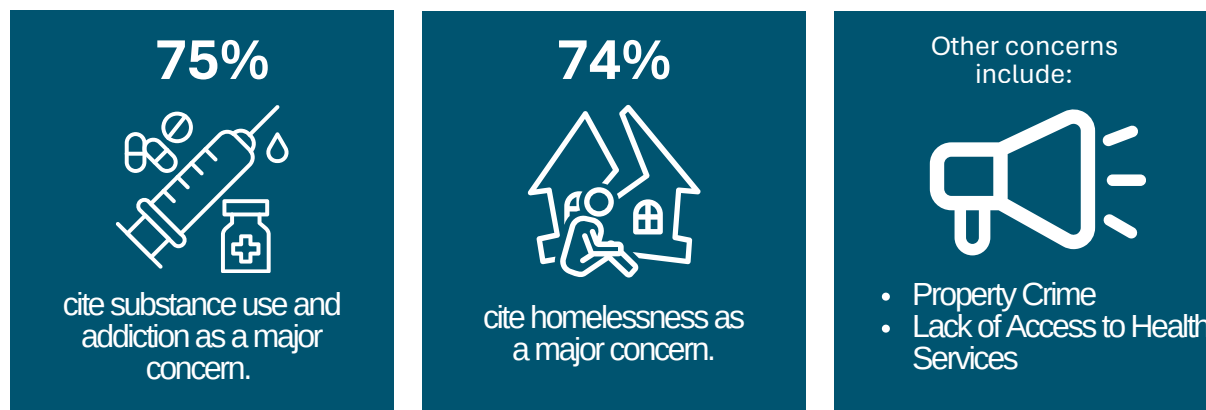
To better understand how residents perceive safety in Lethbridge, two recently completed surveys were leveraged to gather valuable insights from the community.

The following section provides an overview of the key findings from surveys and public engagement, offering insight into how residents perceive safety in their community and identifying areas of concern and opportunity that informed the development of this Action Plan.

## Survey Insights

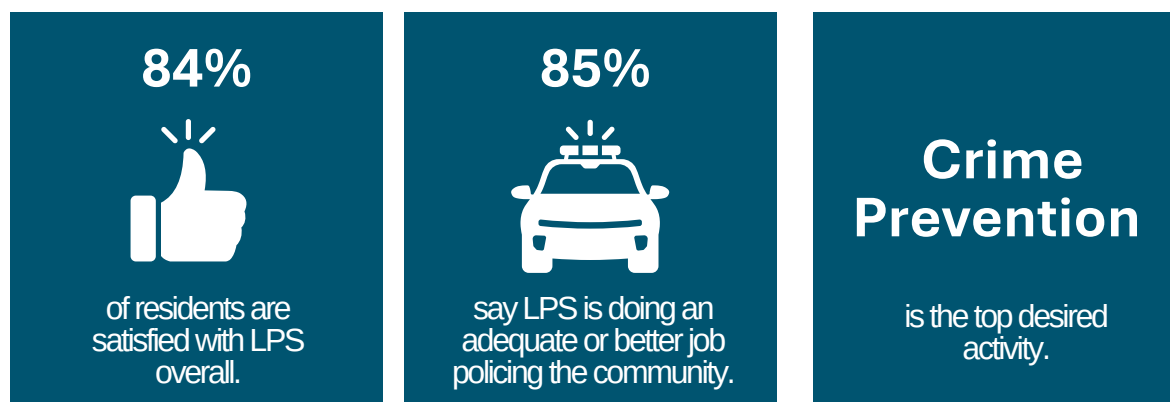
### Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF) - Community Safety Key Findings

The BSCF Key Findings report was released in April 2024. It summarizes the results of community safety research and engagement activities conducted between December 2023 and January 2024, including a significant level of response, with 1,704 responses.



### Lethbridge Police Service - 2024 Community Survey

In July 2024, Lethbridge Police Service released a public perception survey to assess how residents view the performance of LPS and the overall safety of the community. It was prepared by PRA Inc. and involved over 400 residents aged 18 and older through telephone interviews.





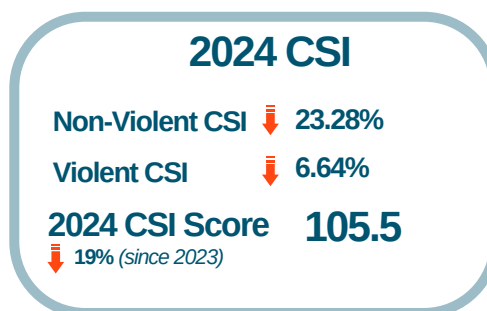
# Understanding Safety in Lethbridge

## Data-Driven Insights

Lethbridge's Crime Severity Index (CSI) continues to show meaningful improvement, reflecting reductions in the severity of police-reported crime. While CSI is an important measure of serious crime, it does not capture all the issues residents may experience. By combining CSI data, community feedback, and operational tools like CompStat, the City gains a full picture of safety trends to guide the CSAP.

### Lethbridge CSI

Lethbridge has seen a significant improvement in its CSI score, reflecting a positive shift in public safety. Lethbridge now ranks 9th nationally for CSI, down from 1st place in 2019–2021.



### Enhanced Policing & Recruitment

The drop in Lethbridge's Crime Severity Index in 2024 is attributed to a combination of strategic policing, community collaboration, and social development initiatives. Lethbridge Police Service hired 26 new police officers and 24 community peace officers in 2023, followed by additional hires in 2024. The new recruits allowed for reinvestment in specialty units, including the Downtown Policing Unit, and increased proactive policing efforts.

### Use of Data-Driven Tools

CompStat has been utilized by Lethbridge Police Service since early 2023. This is a data-driven model where analytics are used to identify high-crime areas, prolific offenders, and the most effective deployment of police resources.

*Understanding both the reality of crime trends and how residents experience safety helps ensure that actions in this plan remain targeted and effective*



# Understanding Safety in Lethbridge

## Community Conversations 2026

To support the development of the Community Safety Action Plan, the Community Safety Strategy Committee participated in Community Conversations that was held in early 2026. The committee hosted activities that were designed to gather resident perspectives on safety, supports, public spaces, and priority investments.

### Activity 1: How Residents Would Invest \$100 in Community Safety

Participants allocated a hypothetical \$100 across four pillars. This could be divided up, or the entire sum could be placed in one pillar. A total of 46 participants participated in person and combined there was \$4,600 allocated.



### Key Insights

- Enforcement received the **largest** single share, indicating community recognition of the need for **visible a response**.
- Nearly two-thirds of all funding (**63.9%**) was directed to **upstream approaches**. Education, Intervention, and Prevention combined.
- Prevention and Intervention were virtually tied**, suggesting people see the **value** in **reducing risk** before harm occurs and **responding early** when issues emerge.
- The results point away from an **"either/or"** between enforcement and social supports, and instead supports a **"both/and"** approach.
- Out of 46 participants, **eight residents** allocated their **entire budget** into **enforcement**.
- Education received the smallest investment**, however conversations revealed **significant gaps** in residents' **awareness of available resources**, reinforcing the critical role education plays in community safety.



# Understanding Safety in Lethbridge

## Activity 2: What Community Safety Means to Residents

Through a word-association activity, participants shared what comes to mind when they hear “Community Safety”.



## Activity 3: Top Ideas Residents Recommended

Participants were also asked to propose a single initiative to improve community safety.

- 24/7 Mental Health Response Teams.
- Drop-in Supports for Unhoused Residents.
- CPTED Improvements.
- Community Policing.
- Education on Disinformation/Misinformation.
- Alternative Response Models.
- More Events and Community-building Activities.
- Bylaw on Weekends.
- Advocacy on Federal Bail Reform.
- Drop-in Work Opportunities.
- Appropriate Compassion & People Need to be Involved.

## Overall Summary

Feedback from Community Conversations revealed that residents value a balanced approach to safety. Combining enforcement with prevention, intervention, and education. Residents want solutions that:

- **Address root causes.**
- **Strengthen community relationships.**
- **Improve access to supports.**
- **Maintain visible and responsive enforcement.**
- **Create safe, vibrant public spaces.**

The feedback points toward a whole-community model, where safety emerges from aligned social supports, smart prevention strategies, and responsive on-the-ground services.

# Environmental Scan

Community Safety Action Plan 2026

# Environmental Scan

An environmental scan of municipalities with community safety plans included strategy reviews and direct engagement. This scan revealed valuable practices we can adapt locally, allowing us to build a more effective and responsive action plan without reinventing the wheel. Learning from other municipalities strengthens our ability to implement practical, proven solutions tailored to the City's needs.



## Best Practices

### Alternative Response Models

Many communities are implementing non-police responses for calls involving mental health, substance use, and social disorder. These models help reduce strain on emergency services and improve outcomes for individuals.

### Youth Prevention

Investment in youth prevention addresses risk factors early, reducing the likelihood of future involvement in crime, addiction, or social disorder. It also builds protective factors such as resilience, education, and community connection, leading to healthier long-term outcomes for individuals and society.

### Power in Data

Data-driven decision-making is a cornerstone of modern community safety. Municipalities are leveraging open data to inform and engage.

## Community Insights - Alternative Response Models

In response to growing concerns around heavy reliance on enforcement, Albuquerque, New Mexico, developed a fully integrated Alternative Response Model known as Albuquerque Community Safety (ACS). Rather than serving as a strategic plan, ACS functions as a direct operation embedded within the City's public safety system, working alongside police, fire, and emergency services department. The return on investment has been significant. By reducing the volume of calls handled by police, ACS enables law enforcement to focus on criminal investigations and urgent public safety threats. This not only improves overall system efficiency but also enhances outcomes for individuals in crisis, who are more likely to receive appropriate support through ACS's specialized response teams.

## Impact

80%

Over 80% of ACS Calls in FY2025 Q1 were diverted from the Albuquerque Police Department.

1%

Only 1% of ACS calls resulted in police-call out.



# Environmental Scan

## Community Insights - Youth Prevention

According to Public Safety Canada, youth prevention is one of the most cost-effective and impactful strategies for reducing crime. During the environmental scan, the importance of supporting youth through targeted programs was consistently identified as a best practice in community safety.

### Impact

Through funding from Public Safety Canada's **Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF)**, the City of Lethbridge implemented targeted case management and an educational support model for youth identified as high risk for gang or justice-related involvement. These supports focused on strengthening protective factors, addressing service access barriers, and promoting pro-social engagement. As a result, several youth initially assessed at a high-risk level were successfully stabilized and re-assessed at medium risk, demonstrating measurable progress in reducing vulnerability and enhancing long-term safety outcomes.

"We stop a 14-year-old high risk youth from a life of crime, we would save society \$2.6 to \$5.3 million. If we start the process at birth, we would save \$2.6 and \$4.4 million."

(Cohen et al, 2009)

## Community Insights - How Data Transformed a City's Community Safety Response

When Edmonton began using real-time community safety indicators, including social disorder calls, overdoses, encampment locations, and outreach interactions, the City discovered patterns that were previously invisible through monthly or annual reporting.

### Most issues were concentrated in a small area

- Roughly 80% of high-needs calls were occurring in just seven neighborhoods, allowing the City to focus resources where they mattered most.

### Outreach teams were encountering the same individuals multiple times per day

- Real-time tracking identified who was at highest risk and where supports were duplicated, allowing services to coordinate more effectively.

### Mental health-related calls spiked at two specific time windows

- This led to adjusting PACT and outreach shifts so the right teams were working at the right time.

### Impact

Data didn't just inform decisions; it changed the entire deployment model, leading to more efficient use of resources, fewer duplicated responses, and clearer accountability across agencies.





# Implementation & CSAP Financial Summary

# Implementation Timeline

This section outlines the phased approach for the development, implementation, and review of the Community Safety Action Plan (CSAP) from 2025 through 2031. The timeline is designed to align with Council approval processes, operating budget cycles, and existing funding commitments, while allowing flexibility to introduce new initiatives as evidence and capacity evolve.

## Phase 1

### **Current Actions and Strategy Development (Q1 2025 – Q2 2026)**

The focus is on advancing current community safety actions while finalizing the overarching CSAP strategy, including continued implementation of approved initiatives and the refinement of strategic priorities informed by data, engagement, and operational experience. Council approval of the CSAP is targeted for Q2 2026, establishing the formal framework to guide subsequent phases.

## Phase 2

### **Next Steps – Utilizing Existing Funding (BAU/CBC) (Q2 2026 – 2027)**

Emphasizes maximizing existing funding sources, particularly through the BAU/CBC funding stream, including the continued use of existing funding to support the Community Safety Specialist position through to December 31, 2027. Activities during this period focus on completing outcome requests, program reviews, dashboards, and business cases to assess effectiveness and inform future decision-making.

## Phase 3

### **New Initiative Development (2027)**

Information gathered through reviews, dashboards, and business cases is used to identify gaps, opportunities, and emerging needs. Based on this analysis, new community safety initiatives are developed and prepared for consideration through the City's Operating Budget deliberations. This process ensures that proposed initiatives are evidence-informed, aligned with strategic priorities, and supported by clear outcomes and costing.

## Phase 4

### **Implementation of Approved Initiatives (2028 – 2032)**

Focuses on implementation. Initiatives approved through the Operating Budget process are rolled out and operationalized during this period. Implementation is aligned with Council-approved funding and priorities, ensuring consistency with broader municipal objectives. Ongoing monitoring and reporting support accountability and allow for adjustments as needed.

## Phase 5

### **Strategy Review (2031)**

A Formal review of the Community Safety Action Plan will be conducted in 2031. This review assesses progress toward intended outcomes, evaluates the effectiveness of implemented initiatives, and considers changes in community needs, risks, and best practices. Findings from the review will inform recommendations for future updates to the strategy.

# CSAP Financial Summary

The City of Lethbridge has a long history of investing in community clean and safe initiatives beyond the core operations of the Lethbridge Police Service. The longest-standing investment is the Clean Sweep Program (CSP), funded through Downtown/Urban Revitalization for more than 15 years. Other key initiatives, such as the Diversion Outreach Team (DOT), have been in place for more than 10 years and continue to play a critical role in reducing pressure on emergency and policing systems.

The City's investment expanded significantly in 2018–2019, during the height of the drug crisis, increasing visible homelessness and social disorder. In response to concerns raised by residents, businesses, and community partners, the City introduced the Downtown Clean and Safe Strategy (DCSS), with approximately \$1.6 million in one-time funding over three years (2020–2022) to enhance cleaning, outreach, and safety supports.

Many of these previously one-time initiatives then transitioned into ongoing operating budget commitments in the 2023–2026 Operating Budget, including:

- **Expanded CPTED Grant Program.**
- **Ongoing Downtown Safety Education Sessions.**
- **Increased funding for DOT.**
- **Increased funding for the Clean Sweep Program.**
- **Dedicated Encampment Outreach, later expanded into a full Encampment Response Team (2023).**

These long-term commitments now serve as foundational elements of the redefined Community Safety Action Plan.

## Future Funding

The intent of the Community Safety Action Plan (CSAP) is not to shift funding away from traditional policing, but rather to ensure that Clean and Safe investments remain a core and stable municipal commitment. Public engagement through the “fictitious dollars” activity demonstrated strong community support for a balanced approach across all four pillars: Education, Prevention, Intervention, and Enforcement.

This feedback reinforces the importance of continuing to build a community safety system that sees continued investment in upstream and alternative responses that complement emergency and policing systems, not replace them.

Looking ahead, the CSAP emphasizes that community safety funding does not need to rely solely on municipal tax support. The City has already successfully aligned several initiatives with external grant funding, including:

- Federal Reaching Home (homelessness supports)
- Government of Alberta FCSS (prevention and community development)
- Public Safety Canada – Building Safer Communities Fund
- Government of Alberta Needle Debris Mitigation Grant

The CSAP continues to identify advocacy and grant leveraging as core tools in expanding or modernizing community safety programming while minimizing municipal fiscal impact.

## Phase 1

### Current Funding

The funding chart outlines a mix of current City Operating Budget, grants, provincial, and municipal funding sources supporting community safety, outreach, and downtown initiatives for 2026. Major investments are directed toward Encampment Response and Outreach, and Clean Sweep Operations, with several programs supplemented by grant funding to enhance capacity.

| Initiative                                               | Budget Detail                                           | Budget Amount (2026)                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Diversion Outreach Team (DOT)                            | Operating Budget C-11.4 + OB Grant<br>Tax Supported     | $\$275,800 + 124,200 =$<br>\$400,000  |
| Clean Sweep Program (CSP) –<br>Main Program/Encampment   | Operating Budget C-11.5 + OB Grant<br>Tax Supported     | $\$350,000 + \$75,000 =$<br>\$425,000 |
| Clean Sweep Program – Needle<br>Debris                   | Provincial Grant                                        | \$115,000                             |
| Encampment Response Team                                 | MRSR                                                    | \$500,000                             |
| Encampment Outreach                                      | Operating Budget C-11.2                                 | \$260,000                             |
| Downtown Education Program                               | Operating Budget C - 11.3                               | \$12,000                              |
| Crime Prevention Through<br>Environmental Design (CPTED) | Operating Budget C-11.1                                 | \$109,800                             |
| Downtown Ambassador<br>Program                           | Operating Budget - Urban<br>Revitalization              | \$100,000                             |
| Galt Gardens Security                                    | Operating Budget- Urban<br>Revitalization & Rec/Culture | \$278,500                             |

## Phase 2

### Short-Term Funding Approach

While additional municipal investment in Clean and Safe initiatives may be required in the future, the immediate focus is on leveraging unspent funds previously allocated to Clean and Safe initiatives to bridge the period between Plan approval and the next municipal budget cycle (beginning January 1, 2028).

Approximately \$600,000 in unspent BAU/CBC Clean and Safe funding has been identified for this purpose. These funds are unspent, not because they were not required, but for several reasons including:

- C11.2 City Outreach (Encampment) (~\$205,000) due to start-up timing and efficiencies.
- C11.3 Downtown Education Sessions (~\$25,000) which were put on hold due to a need to rethink the delivery for greater effect.
- C11.4 Diversion Outreach Team (~\$370,000) due to leveraging of grant funding sources in place of taxation.

These funds will be used for one-time expenditures, including pilots, studies, program refinements, and time-limited initiatives that do not commit the City to ongoing operating costs. This ensures flexibility and fiscal responsibility while maintaining momentum on priority actions.

These funds will remain flexible at the discretion of the City Manager and the General Manager (GM) of Community Social Development. A detailed outline of intended expenditures will be inserted once finalized.

| Initiative                                              | Description                                                                                                                                                  | Est. Budget         |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Strengthen Organizational Capacity for Community Safety | Funding is currently in place until Dec 31, 2026, extend until end of 2027 incl. benefits, training, professional development, etc. <b>(Page 40)</b>         | \$100,000-\$200,000 |
| 2026 and 2027 CPTED Grant Top Up                        | Combine with 2026 admin unspent (approx. \$55,000) to support demand. <b>(Page 41)</b>                                                                       | \$60,000 - \$85,000 |
| Alternative Response Business Case                      | Additional research and other expenses such as consulting support, travel to other communities, public engagement, etc. <b>(Page 42)</b>                     | \$50,000 - \$75,000 |
| Prevention Academy                                      | Development of community-focused tools and training that support the prevention and reporting of hate motivated incidents and online harms. <b>(Page 43)</b> | \$25,000 - \$35,000 |

|                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                     |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Program Reviews                              | Funding will cover consultant fees to conduct formal program reviews and assessments. Costs may include survey development and administration, data analysis, and Partners engagement activities. Funding will also support preparation of final review reports and recommendations.<br><b><i>(Page 44)</i></b>                                                                                                                                                                                          | \$25,000 - \$35,000 |
| Strengthen Community Safety Through Research | Additional research and other expenses such as consulting support, travel to other communities, public engagement, etc. <b><i>(Page 45)</i></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | \$10,000 - \$25,000 |
| Education, Awareness & Public Education      | Development, design, printing, and distribution of educational materials. This also may include facilitator fees, venue rentals, and supplies for training sessions and community workshops. <b><i>(Page 46)</i></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | \$50,000- \$75,000  |
| Strategic Funding & Advocacy                 | Additional research and other expenses such as consulting support, travel to other communities, public engagement, etc. <b><i>(Page 47)</i></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | \$5,000 - \$20,000  |
| Other Eligible Project Costs / Contingency   | Funding may be used to support unforeseen or emerging project-related needs that align with the overall objectives of the actions/recommendations. Eligible expenses may include, but are not limited to, short-term consulting support, specialized services, unanticipated materials or supplies, inflationary cost adjustments, or minor scope changes required to ensure successful project delivery. Use of these funds will remain consistent with program intent and accountability requirements. |                     |

This bridging strategy allows Council and the community to see continued progress in the short term while ensuring that any long-term funding decisions for new or expanded programming are considered holistically alongside all other community requests within the 2027–2030 budget deliberations.



# Keeping Our Community Safe

Community Safety Action Plan 2026

# Keeping Our Community Safe

## Work Already Underway

Community safety in Lethbridge is currently supported through a wide range of programs and services delivered by the City and its partners. This work happens every day, focusing on keeping people safe, supporting well-being, and maintaining welcoming public spaces.

## Education, Engagement, & Community Presence

- **Downtown Education Sessions** - Educational sessions intended to inform businesses and community members about safety resources and wellbeing initiatives that address emerging community issues.
- **Downtown Ambassador Program** - Promotes downtown Lethbridge through targeted engagement initiatives and supports the success of its local businesses.
- **Community Wellbeing Advisory Board (CWAB)** - Acts as the Community Advisory Board for the federal Reaching Home program, an advisory body aligned with Provincial Family and Community Support Services, and provides advice on broader community wellbeing issues.
- **Integrated Coordinated Access (ICA)** - A network that helps connect people to the services they need as quickly as possible to meet their needs and support their overall wellbeing. This is done through collaborative referrals, assessments and network navigation support.

### Building Safer Communities (BSC) -

- **Educator Services** - Builds content to support community groups, schools, and organizations on safety, prevention, and responses to emerging community safety issues.
- **Online Safety Toolkit** - Accessible, online resources to help residents understand safety risks, build digital resilience, and access supports related to online harm and exploitation.
- **Off the Record (OTR)** - Community initiative developed to foster meaningful and positive connections between youth and first responders through sport.

### Lethbridge Police Service

- **The Watch** - A volunteer-based initiative that enhances downtown safety through visibility, social outreach, service connections, and support for non-criminal incidents.

### Lethbridge Fire and Emergency Services

- **Safety Education and Fire Prevention** - Delivers public education, outreach, and prevention initiatives focused on fire safety, emergency preparedness, and reducing preventable risks in homes and public spaces.



## Grant & Funding Supports

- **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Grant** - Provides funding for safety-focused design improvements that reduce opportunities for crime and support safer, more welcoming spaces.
- **Community Wellbeing Call for Proposal** - Provides funding opportunities for community organizations through FCSS, Reaching Home, and the City's Diversion Outreach Team program.
- **Affordable and Social Housing Capital Grant** - Provides financial support for eligible projects that involve purchasing, constructing, renovating or retrofitting affordable and social housing units in our community.
- **Fee Assistance Program** - The fee assistance program provides subsidies so that everyone in the community has equal access to our recreation programs and arts and cultural programs.
- **Community Capital Projects Grant** - Not-for-profit organizations in the City of Lethbridge can apply for a Community Capital Projects Grant (CCPG) for financial support in two separate streams.
- **Make Your Mark Grant** - One-time grant opportunity in 2025 providing financial support for not-for-profit organizations to support capital development of their community facilities.

## Outreach, Response & Support

- **Encampment Response Team (ERT)** - Frontline unit responsible for identifying, triaging, and responding to encampments across Lethbridge.
- **Outreach Team** - Works closely with the ERT, LPS's Watch Program, and community agencies to streamline access to housing, health, and social supports.
- **Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS)** - The system is designed to collect, manage, and report on information about individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
- **Diversion Outreach Team (DOT)** - Mobile diversion response for vulnerable individuals who may be facing homelessness, mental health concerns, or addictions on the streets of Lethbridge. The DOT provides outreach, connection to supports, and transportation.

### Building Safer Communities

- **Case Managers** - Supports youth involved and/or at risk of justice involvement through targeted case management that reduces risk factors, builds protective supports, and strengthens positive connections across family, school, peer, and community environments.

### Lethbridge Police Service

- **Police and Crisis Team PACT** - A joint LPS and Alberta Health Services initiative that delivers coordinated, in-person responses to mental health and addiction-related crises, focusing on de-escalation, service connection, and short-term support.



## Clean, Safe, and Welcoming Public Spaces

### Clean Sweep Program (CSP)

Provides daily cleaning and maintenance in the downtown core, including litter removal, and graffiti clearing on businesses. The CSP also began biohazard and encampment cleaning to support the of rising number of incidents within the community.

- **Needle Debris Mitigation** - CSP handles the provincially funded Needle Debris Collection Program, the Needle Pickup hotline, twice-daily shelter cleanings, and regular sweeps of high-volume "hotspot" locations.
- **Downtown Graffiti** - Removes graffiti tags from private infrastructure.

**Galt Gardens Security** - Regular foot patrols throughout the park to maintain a visible presence and respond promptly to any incidents or safety concerns.

## Enforcement & Compliance

**Bylaw Officers** - Protect public health and uphold community standards by enforcing bylaws related to animal control, business licensing, rattlesnake mitigation, snow removal, unsightly properties, weed control and minimum property standards.

### Lethbridge Police Service

- **Community Peace Officers** - Uniformed, specially trained professionals who enhance public safety by addressing bylaw issues, social disorder, and community concerns through prevention, education, and problem-solving, allowing police officers to focus on criminal matters.

## Beyond Community Safety Initiatives



Lethbridge Fire & Emergency Services, the Lethbridge Police Service, the Public Safety Communications Centre, and 311 Lethbridge play foundational roles in keeping the community safe. Their work extends far beyond the initiatives highlighted in the Community Safety Action Plan and includes a wide range of emergency response, enforcement, communications, coordination, and service delivery functions that support public safety, community wellbeing, and effective City operations.

### Lethbridge Fire & Emergency Services

Staff deliver fire suppression and emergency response services to the Lethbridge community. The Fire Prevention Bureau delivers fire safety programs and education, and fire prevention assistance and enforcement. Staff also facilitate fire inspections for homes and new buildings/occupancy, distribute fire permits, and issue fire watches when environmental conditions and temperatures are conducive to a greater risk for fire.





## Beyond Community Safety Initiatives

### Lethbridge Public Safety Communications Centre (PSCC)

Primary emergency communications and dispatch hub for police, fire, and emergency response services. Dispatchers receive and process 9-1-1 and non-emergency calls, gather critical information, and coordinate the timely dispatch of police, fire, and emergency resources. Operating 24/7, ensures effective communication, coordination and awareness to support public safety and emergency response.

### Lethbridge Police Service

Responsible for maintaining peace and public order, protecting life and property, and investigating crime within the City of Lethbridge. Officers respond to emergency calls for service, conduct uniform patrols and carry out criminal investigations. Through targeted enforcement and specialty units, the Service addresses crime, disorder, and safety concerns to support safe neighborhoods and public spaces.

### Lethbridge 311

The City's centralized customer contact and service request centre provides residents with information and access to non-emergency City services. Customer service specialists receive inquiries, assess service requests, and route issues to the appropriate City department for response and resolution. By diverting non-emergency concerns from 9-1-1 and emergency services, 311 supports efficient service delivery, improves coordination across City operations, and helps maintain community safety and responsiveness.

These initiatives reflect sustained investment and support by City Council through approved strategies, budgets, and decisions focused on community safety.



## CSAP Actions & Recommendations

Community Safety Action Plan 2026



# Actions & Recommendations Overview

This section presents a structured framework for advancing community safety through actions, sub-actions, and recommendations. Each element serves as a distinct purpose and should be read together to understand the strategic directions and supporting guidance contained in this section.

## Actions

The CSAP includes **eight core actions**, which represent the primary areas of focus for enhancing community safety. The actions are intentionally high-level and strategic in nature, reflecting system-level opportunities that the City may pursue over time.

The Core Actions:

- **Action 1.0 Strengthen Organizational Capacity for Community Safety**
- **Action 2.0 Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**
- **Action 3.0 Strengthen Alternative Response**
- **Action 4.0 Prevention Academy: Strong Cities**
- **Action 5.0 Review & Strengthen Existing Community Safety Programs**
- **Action 6.0 Strengthen Community Safety Through Research**
- **Action 7.0 Education, Awareness & Public Information**
- **Action 8.0 Strengthen Public Safety Through Strategic Funding & Advocacy**

The actions are not listed in order of priority, nor are they intended to imply that all actions will be implemented at the same time. Advancement of actions will depend on factors such as funding availability, staffing and operational capacity, organizational readiness, partner participation, and external conditions.

## Sub-Actions

Each core action is supported by one or more sub-actions, for a total of **27 sub-actions across all eight sections**. Sub-actions provide additional detail and context, outlining specific activities, initiatives, or approaches that support the broader action.

## Recommendations

The recommendations provided at the end of this section are distinct from the actions outlined in this Plan and fall outside its direct oversight and implementation scope.

Recommendations:

- **Strengthen & Leverage Bylaws and Licensing to Support Public Safety**
- **Advance Indigenous Relations Strategy & Calls to Action**
- **Enhance Safety through Public Art, Placemaking, and Placekeeping**

These recommendations aim to enhance community safety outcomes by identifying emerging needs, promising practices, or system gaps that may require future attention. They are intended to foster dialogue and learning, serving as valuable resources for capacity building.

## 1.0 Strengthen Organizational Capacity for Community Safety



This initiative focuses on ensuring the City of Lethbridge, through Community Social Development (CSD) department, has the appropriate capacity, organizational structure, and oversight mechanisms to effectively coordinate, manage, and adapt its growing portfolio of community safety initiatives. Community safety work within the City has expanded significantly over recent years and now spans multiple programs, funding sources, and partnerships. Sustained success requires both immediate capacity to lead implementation of the Community Safety Action Plan and a deliberate examination of longer-term organizational options to support effective delivery, accountability, and integration.

### Sub-Actions

|                                             |                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.1                                         | Extend Community Safety Specialist role.                                                                 |
| 1.2                                         | Develop a business case for an integrated community safety function within Community Social Development. |
| Estimated Budget Range: \$100,000-\$200,000 |                                                                                                          |

Currently, multiple actions are in progress, others have not yet been initiated, and several require adjustment as community conditions, service pressures, and partner capacities change. This work extends beyond initial plan development and requires sustained attention.

#### Role in Driving Follow-Through and Adaptation

The Community Safety Specialist position provides dedicated capacity to drive follow-through on CSAP actions and monitor change over time. This role supports the City's ability to move from implementation to adjustment by:

- Tracking progress on active CSAP actions and identifying where work has stalled.
- Monitoring emerging trends and operational pressures impacting community safety.
- Flagging when existing strategies are no longer aligned with current conditions.
- Supporting informed adjustments to CSAP actions based on observed change.
- Maintaining continuity as priorities, personnel, and external conditions shift.

This adaptive function does not occur within existing operational roles.

#### Expected Outcomes:

- Implementation of the Community Safety Action Plan.
- Sustained organizational capacity to coordinate, oversee, and adapt the City's community safety portfolio over time.

#### Implementation:

- CSD to extend Community Safety Specialist position and build business case for an integrated community safety function within the department.

*Municipalities across Canada maintain dedicated positions to lead community safety plans because sustained capacity is required to coordinate partners, monitor implementation, manage reporting, and adapt plans over time.*

2.0 Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)



The City will strengthen placed-based safety across Lethbridge by expanding CPTED capacity, improving program administration, and enhancing effectiveness of environmental design interventions through training, funding, and consistent governance.

Sub-Actions

|                                             |                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2.1                                         | Provide a one-time funding top-up for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Grant.                                                                     |
| 2.2                                         | Facilitate a five-day, Advanced CPTED Certification training for City departments, Lethbridge Police Service, Community Peace Officers, and external partners. |
| 2.3                                         | Review CPTED administrative responsibilities, grant distribution guidelines, and alignment with Community Safety Action Plan                                   |
| 2.4                                         | Form a CPTED Advisory Committee to guide place-based safety improvements, review CPTED Grant Program applications, and support community-led design solutions. |
| Estimated Budget Range: \$60,000 - \$85,000 |                                                                                                                                                                |

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased internal CPTED Capacity.
- Consistent decision-making.
- Improved environmental safety across neighborhoods.



Implementation:

- Training coordinated through accredited CPTED providers.
- Advisory Committee established with Terms of Reference.
- Incorporated into Annual Community Safety Reporting.

## 3.0 Strengthen Alternative Response



The City will evaluate and modernize crisis response and compliance tools by developing an evidence-based Alternative Response Model (ARM) business case and analyzing options to expand Police and Crisis Team (PACT) coverage. This business case will integrate findings from the “*Policing Persons with Perceived Mental Illness at Lethbridge Police Service*” research report to guide decisions on effective and coordinated crisis-response models.

### Sub-Actions

3.1

Develop a comprehensive business case for implementing an Alternative Response Model (ARM) to divert non-criminal, vulnerability-related calls from police to specialized teams. The business case will identify service gaps, service model options (civilian, co-response, hybrid), define expected outcomes, and detail logistics such as staffing, training, dispatch protocols, and governance.

3.2

Lethbridge Police Service explore expansion of the Police and Crisis Team (P.A.C.T) to ensure service coverage is provided across each team rotation.

**Estimated Budget Range: \$50,000-\$75,000**



**POLICING PERSONS WITH PERCEIVED MENTAL ILLNESS AT LETHBRIDGE POLICE SERVICE**  
FINAL RESEARCH REPORT

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**Study collaborators:**  
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Carleton University  
Lethbridge Police Service



The Centre for Public Safety Applied Research highlights the need to strengthen crisis response pathways for individuals experiencing mental health-related interactions.

#### Expected Outcomes:

- Stronger evidence base for crisis-response decisions.
- Clear response to service gaps and mental health-related call patterns identified through research.

#### Implementation:

- Business case for ARM led by the Community Safety Specialist.
- Working group across departments as well as Lethbridge Police Service.

*Low-priority mental health calls rarely involve risk or police action. These calls consume significant resources without requiring police. Civilian-led models like Albuquerque Community Safety, divert thousands of calls monthly, improving outcomes and reducing strain on emergency services.*

*(Source: Final Report, pp. 52–53)*

## 4.0 Prevention Academy: Strong Cities



The City will participate in the Strong Cities Network Prevention Academy to build internal training capacity, strengthen public awareness, complete a local threat assessment, and develop community-focused tools and training that support addressing hate, extremism, and social polarization.

### Sub-Actions

|                                                         |                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.1                                                     | Staff participation in the Prevention Academy that offers specialized training modules on addressing hate, extremism and social polarization. |
| 4.2                                                     | Completion of a city-specific threat landscape to identify community vulnerabilities, risk factors and emerging trends.                       |
| 4.3                                                     | Coordinated hate-motivated violence prevention training with Lethbridge Police Service, City employees, and community organizations/members.  |
| 4.4                                                     | Public Hate Crime and Hate Incident Toolkit.                                                                                                  |
| <b><u>Estimated Budget Range: \$25,000-\$35,000</u></b> |                                                                                                                                               |

#### Expected Outcomes:

- Clear understanding of Lethbridge's local threat landscape.
- Improved recognition and reporting of hate-motivated incidents.
- Consistent prevention training across City staff, LPS, and community partners.
- Strengthened community awareness and resilience to hate, extremism, and online harms.

#### Implementation:

- Training delivered through Strong Cities modules for City staff.
- Threat assessment completed through Strong Cities
- Coordinated community training sessions with youth-serving and newcomer agencies.
- Public-facing hate-motivated incident reporting toolkit developed post-assessment.

*Police-reported hate crimes in Canada nearly doubled between 2019 and 2023 and remained at historically high levels in 2024, with 4,882 incidents reported nationwide, indicating an urgent need for improved prevention, reporting, and community awareness. [[crrf-fcrr.ca](https://www.crrf-fcrr.ca)]*

## 5.0 Review & Strengthen Existing Community Safety Programs



The City will review key community safety programs including the Clean Sweep Program (CSP), Diversion Outreach Team (DOT), and Integrated Coordinated Access (ICA) to strengthen effectiveness, improve coordination, and ensure these programs remain responsive to emerging safety needs. This action also includes a review of the Community Safety Strategy Committee (CSSC) Terms of Reference to ensure governance, roles, and accountability structures remain aligned with the evolving scope of community safety work.

### Sub-Actions

|                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5.1                                              | Conduct a comprehensive review of the Diversion Outreach Team to assess its effectiveness in meeting community needs, reducing non-criminal police calls, and coordinating with other outreach services. |
| 5.2                                              | Conduct a comprehensive review of the Clean Sweep Program to evaluate its effectiveness, alignment with community needs, and resource adequacy.                                                          |
| 5.3                                              | Continue to monitor and align community safety actions with the Municipal Housing Strategy and the Encampment Strategy.                                                                                  |
| 5.4                                              | Conduct a comprehensive review of Integrated Coordinated Access (ICA).                                                                                                                                   |
| 5.5                                              | Update the Community Safety Strategy Committee (CSSC) Terms of Reference.                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Estimated Budget Range: \$25,000-\$35,000</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

#### Expected Outcomes:

- Improved alignment and coordination across Clean Sweep, DOT, and ICA.
- Enhanced service pathways and navigation for vulnerable populations.
- Clear identification of system gaps, delays, and duplication.

#### Implementation:

- Reviews led by Community Social Development.
- Mixed-methods approach including program mapping, data analysis, and partner engagement.
- Findings incorporated into updated deployment models and coordinated response planning.

Improving the effectiveness of existing programs ensures cleaner public spaces, improved outreach and diversion outcomes, and clearer pathways for individuals navigating to the right supports.



## 6.0 Strengthen Community Safety Through Research

The City will strengthen evidence-informed community safety planning by completing targeted micro-research projects and formalizing a partnership with the Centre for Public Safety Applied Research (CPSAR). This work provides localized evidence to guide program improvements, resource allocation, and community safety priorities.

### Sub-Actions

|                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6.1                                       | Micro-Research with Centre for Public Safety Applied Research (CPSAR) Project. This research project aims to analyze local encampment dynamics, service gaps, and community impacts. |
| 6.2                                       | Establish a research partnership with Lethbridge Polytechnic Centre for Public Safety and Applied Research.                                                                          |
| Estimated Budget Range: \$10,000-\$25,000 |                                                                                                                                                                                      |

#### Expected Outcomes:

- Stronger evidence base for City and partner decision-making.
- Alignment between research findings and future strategic actions.

#### Implementation:

- Community Safety Specialist partaking in encampment-based Micro-Research project.
- Research partnership established with CPSAR and led by Community Social Development.

*The Centre for Public Safety Applied Research (CPSAR) aims to inform evidence-based practice and policies in the Canadian field of justice, while also providing Lethbridge Polytechnic diploma and degree students with numerous opportunities to hone their research abilities. Our goals reflect the mandate, mission, and vision of Public Safety Canada to keep Canadians safe and contribute to strong and resilient communities.*

## 7.0 Education, Awareness & Public Information

The City will strengthen public understanding of community safety issues, supports, and expectations through coordinated education campaigns, clear information pathways, transparent reporting, and accessible public tools.

### Sub-Actions

|                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7.1                                       | Develop and maintain a public-facing online Community Safety presence. This presence will highlight key trends, initiatives, and annual progress on the Community Safety Action Plan.                                                     |
| 7.2                                       | CSAP Progress Dashboard.                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 7.3                                       | Collaborate with Fire/EMS, Bylaw Enforcement, and Waste and Environment to educate businesses, residents, and vulnerable populations on safe storage, hazard reduction, and encampment-related fire risks.                                |
| 7.4                                       | “Know When to Call” Public Education Toolkit. Develop and distribute a toolkit to help residents understand when to contact police, bylaw, outreach, or other services.                                                                   |
| 7.5                                       | Explore and formalize collaboration opportunities with the Lethbridge Police Service (LPS) and the <u>Alberta Centre to End Trafficking in Persons</u> to strengthen local prevention, identification, and response to human trafficking. |
| Estimated Budget Range: \$50,000-\$75,000 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

#### Expected Outcomes:

- Increased public understanding of where and how to access help.
- Reduced misdirected calls and improved service use.
- Improved transparency and trust through regular safety reporting.

#### Implementation:

- Led by CSD and partnered with appropriate department depending on sub-action.
- Integrated digital tools (dashboard, online toolkit, web updates) developed with IT for accessibility and usability.
- Multi-channel campaigns delivered through print, digital, and community partners.

Research highlights that communities require clearer, simpler navigation pathway supports to improve safety outcomes and reduce strain on response systems.

## 8.0 Strengthen Public Safety Through Strategic Funding & Advocacy



The City of Lethbridge will actively apply, and support community partners in applying for competitive federal and provincial program-based grants when available that support public safety initiatives, including alternative response models, mental health integration, and community safety programs.

In addition, the City's early and ongoing advocacy for resources and sustained funding, before grant programs are implemented, supports long-term implementation, shared responsibility, and scalability of initiatives.

The City will continue to work towards establishing shared funding and accountability with provincial and federal partners to strengthen system-wide capacity for preventive service delivery.

### Sub-Actions

|                                    |                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8.1                                | Pursue grant opportunities and advocate to the provincial and federal government to support priority community safety initiatives. |
| 8.2                                | Advocate for sustainable public safety funding.                                                                                    |
| 8.3                                | Support Lethbridge Police Service in navigating and applying for competitive funding programs.                                     |
| Estimated Budget: \$5,000-\$20,000 |                                                                                                                                    |

#### Ongoing Council Advocacy Priorities

The City of Lethbridge has three current advocacy initiatives related to CSD's Community Safety Action Plan:

#### Community Cleanliness & Safety

**GOAL:** Advance a shared-responsibility funding partnership with the province and federal government to support programs that address social disorder in public spaces and currently require more than \$2.5 million annually in municipal funding.

#### Supportive Housing

**GOAL:** Advocate for increased provision of both capital and operational funding for the development of additional supportive housing units in Lethbridge, with appropriate supports for individuals with high acuity needs.

#### Family and community Support Services (FCSS) Funding

**GOAL:** Strengthen Alberta's FCSS funding program so municipalities can reliably deliver prevention-focused supports that keep pace with community needs, population growth, and rising service pressures.

## Strengthen & Leverage Bylaws/Licensing to Support Public Safety



Clarify and strengthen the role of Bylaw Enforcement within the community safety ecosystem and leverage bylaws and licensing to enhance public safety. This includes a coordinated response to non-criminal issues such as public space management, environmental concerns, and nuisance complaints, while reducing weapon availability and promoting retail accountability.

### This may include:

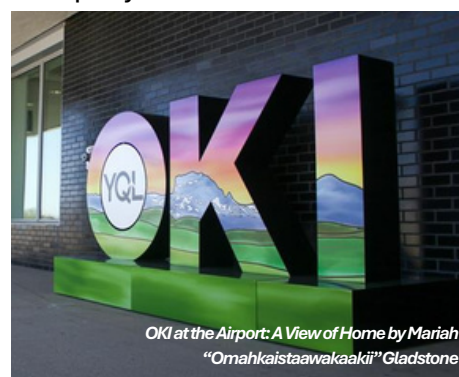
- Engaging with Legal Services to evaluate the potential for new business licensing requirements or restrictions for retailers of weaponizable items, imitation weapons, and adult massage parlors in response to emerging public safety concerns, and to prepare any draft bylaw amendments for Council consideration.
- Reviewing existing bylaws and enforcement mechanisms through a holistic community safety lens to better support effective enforcement, reduce safety risks, and improve public experience in all City spaces.

## Advance Indigenous Relations Strategy & Calls to Action



It is recommended that the City continue to advance the Reconciliation Implementation Plan and the related Calls to Action, including guidance from Murdered & Missing Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) frameworks. These efforts lie outside the operational scope of the CSAP but remain essential to strengthening public trust, safety, belonging, and culturally informed service delivery across the municipality.

This work recognizes that community safety extends beyond enforcement and emergency response and must address the social, cultural, and systemic factors that contribute to vulnerability, marginalization, and harm. Advancing reconciliation-focused actions supports safer outcomes by strengthening trust between Indigenous communities and municipal systems, improving service accessibility, and embedding cultural understanding into City programs, practices, and new actions.



## Enhance Safety through Public Art, Placemaking, and Placekeeping



Support public art and placemaking in areas with safety concerns, such as underpasses, alleys, and trails, by combining creative interventions with lighting, seating, and seasonal activation. Public art signals care, fosters belonging, and encourages positive use, reducing conditions that lead to social disorder. Ensure geographic equity and include Indigenous visibility and storytelling

Public art and placemaking improve safety by changing the physical conditions that contribute to disorder. These improvements make spaces more visible, easier to monitor, and more welcoming for everyday community use. Well-maintained and intentionally designed environments discourage vandalism and unsafe behaviour by increasing accountability in public spaces.



## Referenced Documents and Data Sources

Community Safety Action Plan 2026

# Referenced Documents and Data Sources

The following documents, data sources, surveys, and web-based resources informed the development of the Community Safety Action Plan. These materials are referenced and hyperlinked throughout the document where relevant and reflect the information available at the time of writing. Data and survey findings are presented at a thematic level to illustrate key trends, priorities, and community perspectives. Some sources referenced include internal administrative data and non-public engagement processes.

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**Results-Based Crime Prevention, Public Safety Canada, 2017.**

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**Tackling Hate in Canada. Canadian Race Relations Foundation, 2021.**

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*Jurisdictional engagement and review of community safety plans, programs, and alternative response models through discussions with Canadian and U.S. municipalities, including York Region, Red Deer, Halifax, Penticton, Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton, Kelowna, Nanaimo, Niagara Region, Toronto, Ottawa, Albuquerque, Denver, San Francisco, Tucson, Greensboro, and Minnesota jurisdictions.*