

YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN



2018-2022

The Youth Advisory Council exists to foster a relationship between Lethbridge City Council and the Youth of the City of Lethbridge.

*We will accomplish this through:
Advocacy,
Education, and
Engagement.*

Youth Advisory Council

2018-2022

Contents

Participants:	3
Attendees:.....	3
Background	3
Strategic Planning Agenda	4
History Since 2007	5
Notable Accomplishments	5
Current Context	7
Strengths, Problems, Opportunities And Threats	8
Focus Areas	9
Identified Opportunities	9
Increase Outreach	9
Improve Internal Processes	9
Increase Awareness	9
Focus Areas – Short Term	10
Focus Areas – Long Term	10
Closing Statement	12

Youth Advisory Council

Participants:

Original Attendees:

Luke Bendkowski
Dominique Charles
Liberty Charrissage
Chloe Devoy
Grace Forster
Dorothy Graham
Darren Nii Martey Armah
Conner Peta
Sean Sander
Alysha Smith
Derek St. Jean

2021 Update Attendees:

Alison Babtista
Kyle Degroot
Grace Forster
Josh Kroker
Ryan Lindbald
Chelsea Oyebola
Declan Sander
Sinéad Siever
Lana van Genderen
Tina Waters
Sydney Whiting

Background

The Youth Advisory Council (YAC) was created in 2007 out of the Lethbridge Youth Summit to address issues and initiatives affecting the daily lives of youth in Lethbridge. Through advocacy and engagement with City Council, City Administration and the community as a whole, YAC was tasked with providing the youth voice to decision making.

This mandate has seen YAC address issues across the community on topics such as: Hazing, Community Safety, Bullying Prevention, Curbside Recycling and Urban Fracking. YAC has also served as a focus group for City of Lethbridge departments, covering topics such as: Transit, Planning and Development, Community and Social Development, and Recreation and Culture.

In June 2017 support for YAC was transferred from the Community and Social Development Department to the Offices of the City Clerk and City Manager.

Strategic Planning Agenda

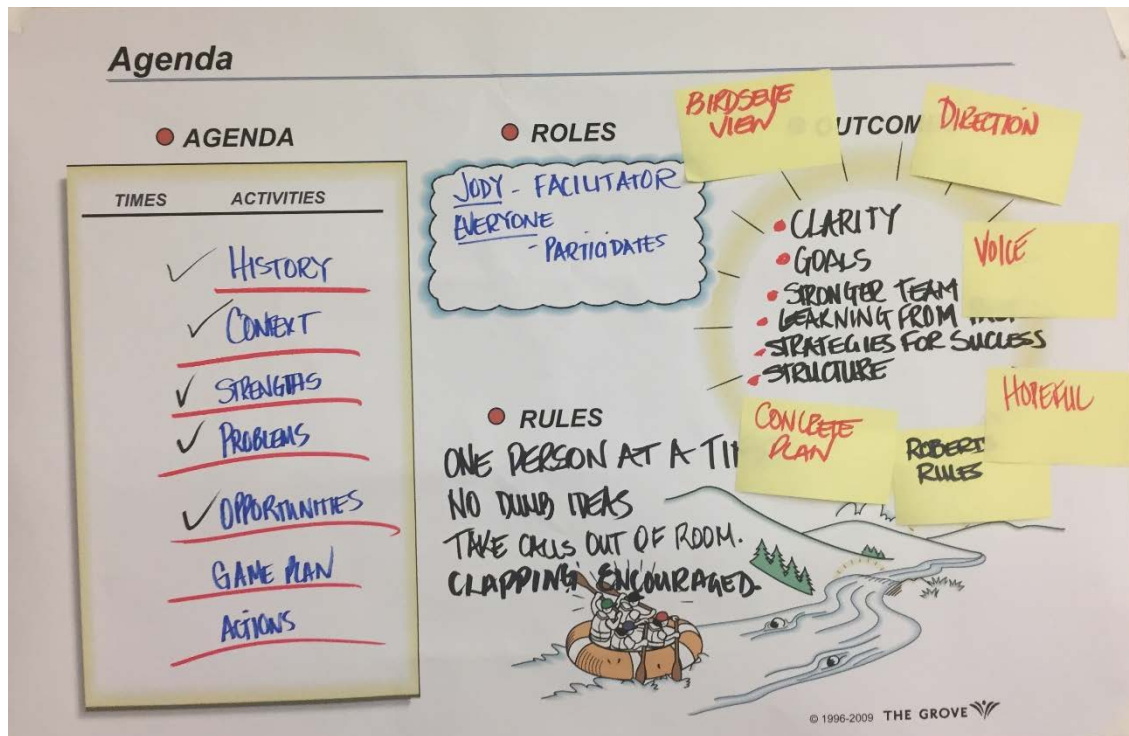


Figure 1: Strategic Planning Agenda

In light of the June 2017 transition of administrative support, and the Municipal Election, the Youth Advisory Council (YAC) determined there was a need to revisit their current strategic plan.

YAC members were asked to identify the context through which youth issues surrounding them were being viewed. Members were also tasked with categorizing their individual purposes for joining YAC. These purposes were found to be directly correlated to the context that the Youth Advisory Council are operating within.

Members worked to create a SPOT (Strengths, Problems, Opportunities and Threats) Matrix to address where YAC is currently working on youth issues and determine where to concentrate their activities moving forward. Through this process, YAC members identified a need to create an actionable plan for their initiatives. With this plan, YAC members were able to identify how and when they were going to fulfil their mission and advisory role with City Council over the next four years.

History Since 2007

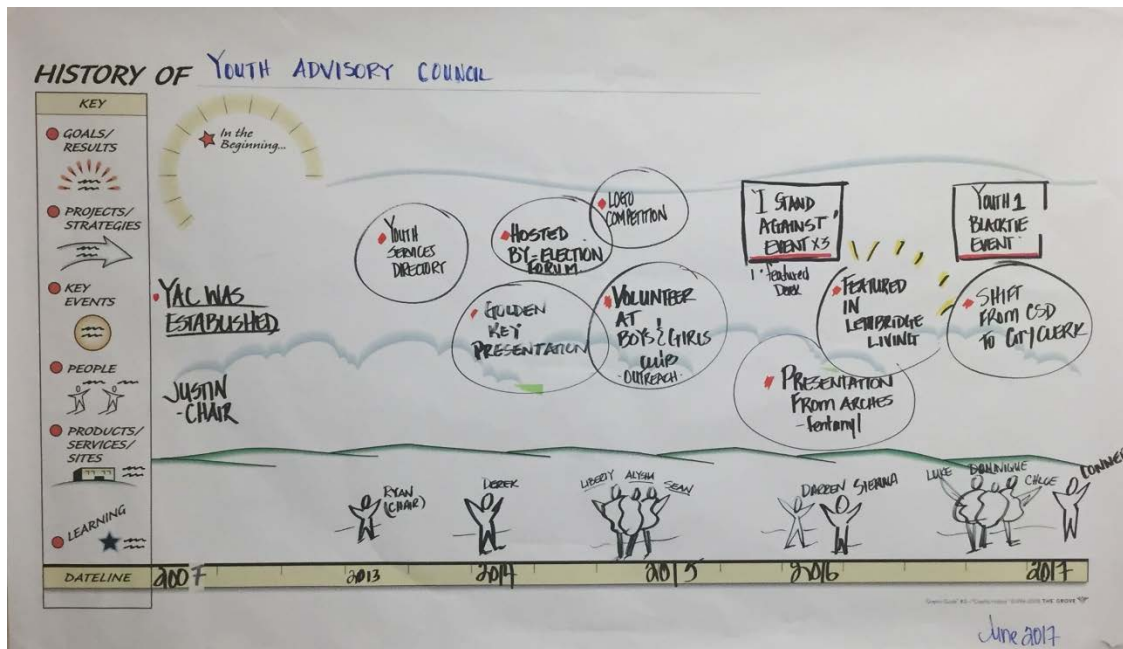


Figure 2: History Map

Notable Accomplishments

2013

- Created a Youth Services Directory in partnership with Community and Social Development.

2014

- Hosted a Municipal By-Election Forum.
- Initiated a community logo design competition.
- Took a stance against the proposed Golden Key Oil exploration in West Lethbridge.

2015

- Began an ongoing volunteer role with Boys and Girls Club of Lethbridge.

2016

- Featured in a Lethbridge Living article.

2017

- Hosted a Municipal Election All-Candidates Forum in partnership with the University of Lethbridge Students Union.
- Completed the development of a four-year strategic plan.
- Prepared a revised Terms of Reference.

2018

- Published and Distributed an Updated Youth Services Directory
- Updated strategic plan
- Worked on Health Initiative by Developing a Social Media presence for Bell Let's Talk
- Worked with Communications to Create an Increased Social Media Presence
- Further Revised Terms and Reference
- Partnered with Youthful Cities to get Lethbridge on the 2019 Canadian Index

2019

- Attended Lethbridge Pride Fest for the First Time
- Attended several Get Involved Lethbridge Events to Promote YAC
- Presented on Youthful Cities Data to City Council

2020

- Hosted YAC's First Virtual Youth Forum on Racial Discrimination
- Supported Lethbridge City Council's Bylaw to Ban the Practice of Conversion Therapy
- Reconfigured YAC's Meeting Structure to Connect Virtually during the Covid-19 Crisis
- Partnered with L'Arche for Youth Volunteering Options and as part of the Mental Health Initiative

Current Context



Figure 3: Context Map

The process of creating a context map is to identify the many different factors and issues that influence how youth in the community are portrayed and supported.

Broadly Represented Trends

- The need to ensure the voices of youth are heard and represented
- Outreach geared towards engagement with youth (schools and community)

Uncertainties

- Poor job prospects
- Changing career climate
- What will be inherited from others

Political Factors

- Increased calls for inclusion
- Truth and Reconciliation

Economic Climate

- Transit costs
- Educational costs
- Youth have less disposable income

Technology Factors

- Access to WiFi
- Youth and social media impact

Trends

- Youth are both more and less involved with their community and government
- People are becoming more passive about their role in society
- Most communication is short and to the point

Customer Needs

- Youth in between school and adulthood
- Education on government
- Connection to local business

Strengths, Problems, Opportunities And Threats



Figure 4: SPOT Matrix Map

The SPOT Matrix exercise was conducted to assess the Strengths, Problems, Opportunities and Threats in the areas that YAC operates. These four categories help to build an identifiable map to where YAC is currently achieving its mandate, where YAC could be attaining more success, and where YAC needs to work on improving its advocacy role.

Strengths

- Outreach in community is grassroots
- Invited to sit on other committees
- Awareness
- Honest
- We are youth too
- Relationship with City Staff and Council
- Identify youth issues in the community
- Connected
- Diverse
- Optimistic
- Educated and experienced

Problems

- Ability to see a project through
- Trying to do too much
- Confusion over who we represent
- Unclear direction, purpose and place
- Busy schedules
- Time and resources
- Outreach and ability to get things done
- Not enough budget

Opportunities

- Mentorship with Staff and Council
- Easy access to networking
- Creating interest
- Increasing YAC membership
- Involvement in Elections
- Surveys
- Terms of Reference
- Recruitment strategy
- Guest Presentations
- Getting Focused
- Better Attendance
- Disseminate information to youth
- Better relationship with City Council

Threats

- Similar college-based towns
- Not much keeping youth here
- Turnover of membership
- Changes in orders of government

Focus Areas

Identified Opportunities (2021 Updates)

Through the strategic planning process YAC members have identified the following list of opportunities and the subsequent supporting projects.

Increase Outreach

- Educate Youth about the resources offered at the Public Library ✓
- Develop a YAC Health Initiative
- Coordinate a Youth Conference
- Host a YAC Open House
- Increase engagement with schools on local government
- Engage with students about their passions
- Share and celebrate local First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Culture to reduce racism and stigma
- Encourage Mask Use in Youth
- Update Youth Services Directory and make it more accessible online
- Create an LGBTQ+ services directory
- Rebuild Youth Engagement after Covid-19
- Create a Relationship with the Sister-Cities Program

Improve Internal Processes

- Review the current Terms of Reference ✓
- Increase engagement with City Council ✓
- Create a New Member Orientation (Onboarding and Off-boarding process) ✓
- Create engagement with City Administration ✓
- Development of a clear and concise Mission Statement ✓
- Practice good governance

Increase Awareness

- Create a standard presentation that can be used at community events and speaking engagements ✓
- Organize a public debate on youth issues
- Ensure youth in the community can easily contact YAC ✓
- Reach out to high schools to provide education about YAC
- Provide speaking engagements at Post-Secondary Clubs and other Youth Organizations
- Collaborate with High School Student Unions to support their initiatives
- Create posters and information bulletins for distribution

- Actively recruit new members from high schools and post-secondary ✓
- Attend more youth orientated community events
- Create a YAC website
- Create Initiatives to Reduce Racism and Discrimination
- Work with community organizations like l'Arche

Focus Areas – Short Term

Initiative	Description
Foster Volunteerism with L'Arche.	Encourage volunteerism and mental health by partnering with and promoting L'Arche.
Encourage Youth Mask Use	Encourage youth mask use by sponsoring and promoting the YQL mask challenge.
Update the Youth Services Directory	Update the YAC Youth Services Directory and make it more accessible online.
Create an LGBTQ2+ youth services directory.	Create and distribute a LGBTQ2+ services directory.

Focus Areas – Long Term

Initiative	Description
Develop a YAC Health Initiative	Partner with community organizations, businesses and schools to create a community approach to healthy living for youth.
Coordinate a Local Leaders Forum	Coordinate and host a forum to bring together local leaders and speak about youth issues.

Increase engagement with City Council	Actively work alongside City Council to understand the bylaw and policy development process, Council agenda development and daily interactions of City Councilors.
Create a Relationship with the Sister Cities Committee	Work to foster a relationship with the Sister Cities committee in order to create opportunities for youth relationships
Rebuild Youth Engagement after Covid-19	Identify and implement opportunities to improve youth engagement in the community after Covid-19.
Work to eliminate Racism and Discrimination	Identify opportunities to help eliminate racism and discrimination in Lethbridge

Completed Goals

Initiative	Description
Educate youth about the resources offered at the Public Library	A project focused on ensuring youth in the community understand and have access to the many resources offered by the Public Library.
Review the current Terms of Reference	A review of the current terms of reference to determine if they currently support the purpose and direction of the Youth Advisory Council.
Create a New Member Orientation (Onboarding and Off-boarding process)	Creation of a template for welcoming new members to YAC, identifying key information and materials crucial to their participation. As well, include a process for departing members.
Create a standard presentation that can be used at community events and speaking engagements	Creation of a template presentation that supports the purpose of the Youth Advisory Council and can be utilized across many different events with minimal additions. In place for future YAC members to encourage continuity.
Ensure youth in the community can easily contact YAC	Creating a central location where youth can easily find information on and contact YAC.

Improve YAC's communications with the community.	Improve YAC use of social media to engage with the community
Organize a public debate on youth issues	Organized an online event to increase dialogue on racism and discrimination's impact on youth in Lethbridge, providing YAC with a public forum to gather input.

Closing Statement

Throughout the Strategic Planning process, members of this council echoed the need to create a working relationship with City Council, while also working to increase our profile and interaction within the community. The ideas and work that have been put into the development of this document will guide us in this role.

We are thankful for the support and contributions of all our members in developing this document. Each member has worked to ensure we maintain our focus – the youth of Lethbridge. We would also like to thank the Community and Social Development Department for their long-term contributions and support. Looking forward, we are excited for the opportunity to work with both the Offices of the City Clerk and City Manager.

Finally, working to accomplish this plan will require that we are actively engaged with City Council. We look forward to providing City Council with this document, as well as a sustained voice on those issues and decisions that affect our demographic. We look to build upon the foundation for which we exist as a council – advocate, educate and engage Lethbridge's youth.

The Youth Advisory Council is ready to continue its role as a voice for Lethbridge's youth.

Our work has just begun.