



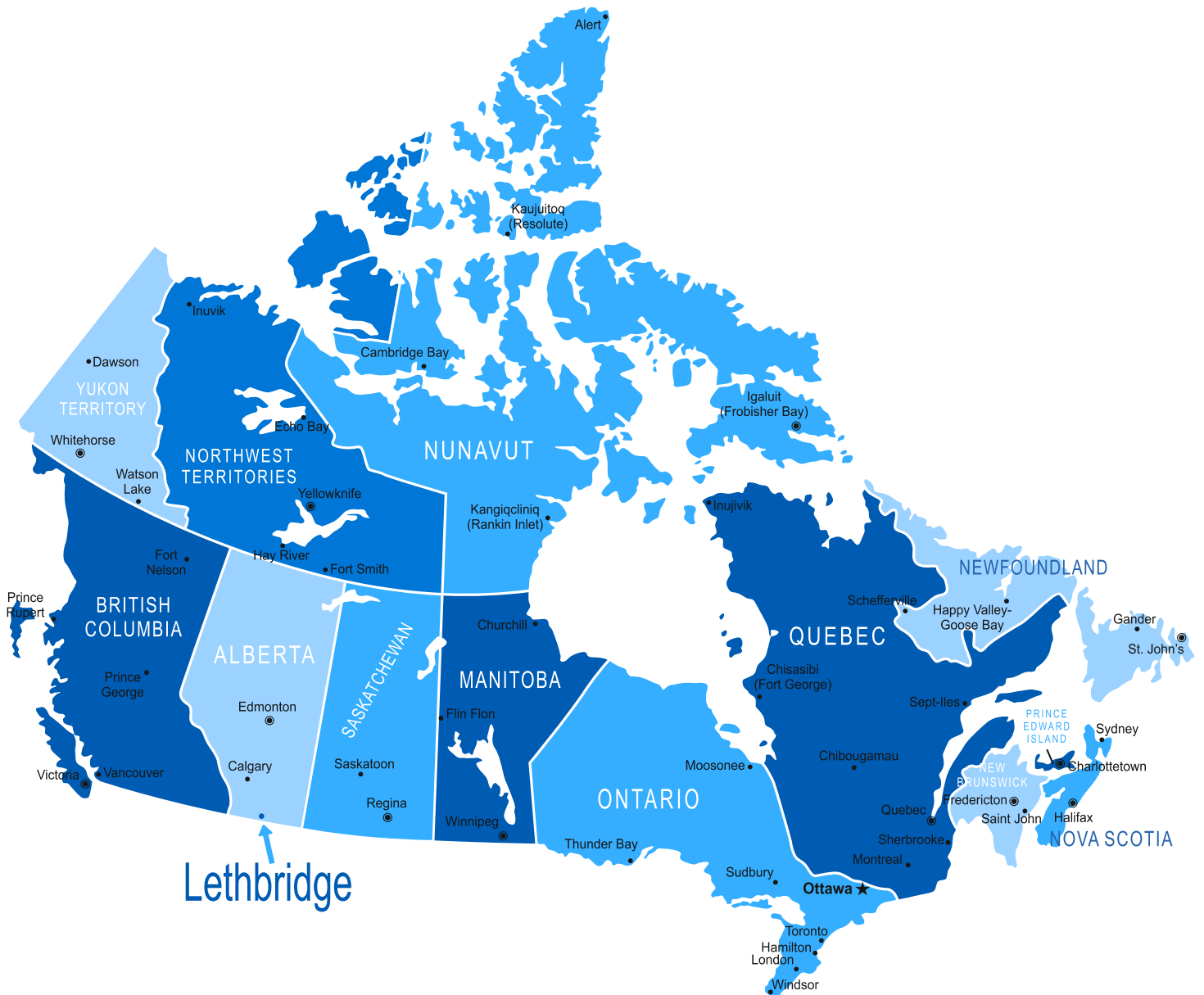
CITY OF  
*Lethbridge*

City of Lethbridge

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

December 31, 2020  
Alberta, Canada

Lethbridge is in southern Alberta and has a population of just over 100,000. There are many concrete reasons Lethbridge is a great location. With its low cost of living, mild climate, short commute times and wide range of recreation and culture opportunities, Lethbridge has something for everyone to achieve a perfect balance of work and life. The combination of city amenities and small-town charm, the easy lifestyle it affords and the sense of community it fosters continues to demonstrate that Lethbridge is the place to live.



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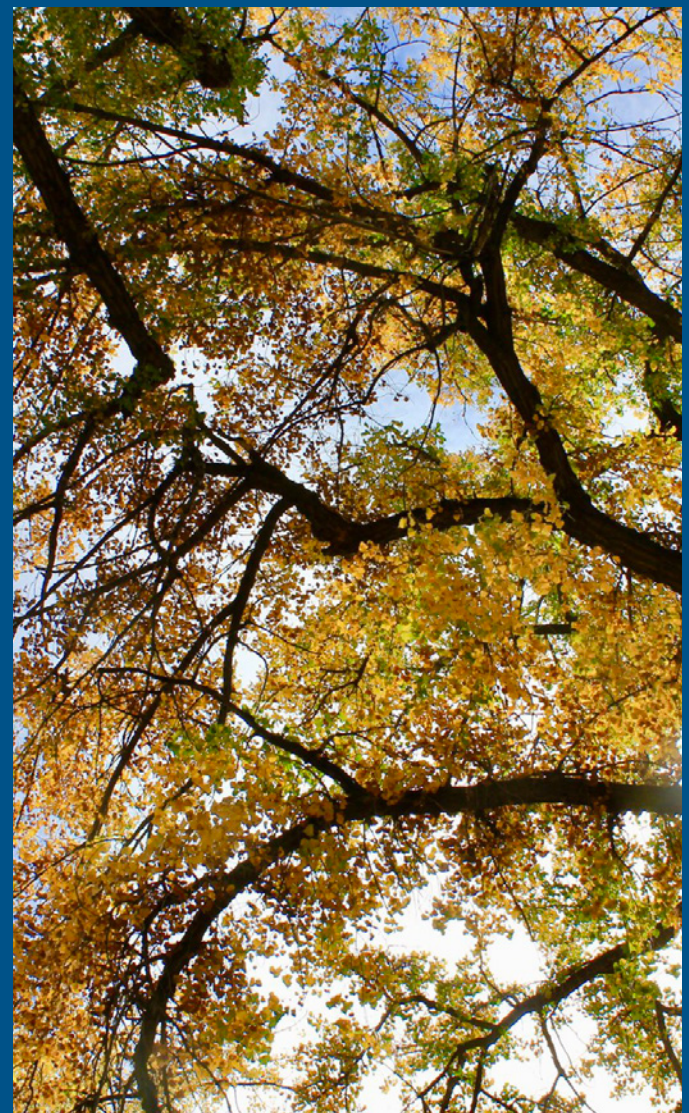
## PROJECTS & HIGHLIGHTS

## AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

The City of Lethbridge's 2020 Annual Report Highlights is designed to simplify and communicate financial information, operating results, achievements and successes to the citizens of Lethbridge.

The condensed financial information presented in this report has been collected from the City of Lethbridge's 2020 Annual Report. For more information, the 2020 Annual Report can be found at [www.lethbridge.ca](http://www.lethbridge.ca).

The Annual Report Highlights is produced by the Communications and Financial Services departments of the City of Lethbridge in cooperation with all civic departments and agencies.



City of Lethbridge  
910 - 4th Avenue South  
Lethbridge, Alberta, T1J 0P6

[lethbridge.ca](http://lethbridge.ca)  
[facebook.com/cityoflethbridge](https://facebook.com/cityoflethbridge)  
[twitter.com/LethbridgeCity](https://twitter.com/LethbridgeCity)

# MAYOR'S MESSAGE



“Our Annual Report Highlights is an opportunity to reflect and appreciate all of the effort that has went into getting us through the past year.”

Mayor Chris Spearman

My City Council colleagues and I are pleased to bring you the 2020 Annual Report Highlights.

In a year that had been dominated by the challenges of managing a global pandemic, our annual report is an opportunity to reflect and appreciate all of the effort that has went into getting us through the past year.

The COVID-19 pandemic created an entirely new set of challenges in 2020, some which will continue to have effects for months and years to come. Despite this, our community has shown tremendous resiliency and determination and I am extremely proud of the opportunities that have been created through the challenges we have faced. Business owners, teachers, frontline health care workers and our own City staff have persevered to continue providing essential services to our community. For that, we are all extremely grateful.

Two major highlights of 2020 were the announcements of \$11 million in provincial funding for airport pavement rehabilitation and lighting upgrades, as well as \$900,000 for the development of a Festival Square Market Plaza. These are both part of an ambitious strategy to create jobs with shovel-ready projects in Lethbridge. This financial commitment from the Province ties directly to the goal of creating positive economic development for a post-pandemic world.

City Council is also investing in airport terminal improvements to enhance accessibility and security. These investments speak to the importance of the airport in our ability to grow our economic potential and create a catalyst for other projects and partnerships. We are thrilled to be moving forward on these improvements.

Another positive announcement came from the governments of Alberta and Canada to provide approximately \$3.4 million through the Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement for a new affordable 64-unit seniors housing project. A much needed initiative in our community.

2020 also saw the addition of our new City Manager Craig Dalton and our new Police Chief Shahin Mehdizadeh. These individuals bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to our organization and are already making great strides. We are very fortunate to have these seasoned leaders guiding our city. The Alberta Health Services decision to remove local EMS Dispatch was a change that will significantly impact how we provide our integrated Fire and Emergency Services in Lethbridge. It was an issue we advocated strongly against along with other impacted cities. We continue to watch and respond to any issues in the transition of this service to ensure the very best emergency services are being provided to our residents.

In one of the biggest tasks of the year, Council amend the City of Lethbridge 2021-2022 Operating Budget reducing spending to see an average annual change in municipal tax rate of 0% per year for the next two years and a 0% utility rate increase in 2021. This was important to council recognizing the economic situation we are facing coming out of COVID-19.

There is plenty of reason to be optimistic for 2021. The vaccine rollout has started in Alberta and we can now see a way through the pandemic. The health and safety of our community will always be our top priority as we look forward to brighter days ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Spearman".

Chris Spearman  
Mayor



## Legislative & Administrative Organization Chart

### RESIDENTS

### CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Chris Spearman

Councillor Jeff Carlson  
Councillor Jeffrey Coffman  
Councillor Belinda Crowson  
Councillor Blaine Hyggen

Councillor Mark Campbell  
Councillor Joe Mauro  
Councillor Rob Miyashiro  
Councillor Ryan Parker

Lethbridge Police Commission  
Lethbridge Public Library Board  
Sir Alexander Galt Museum Board

### CITY MANAGER

Craig Dalton (June 2020 - Current)

Jody Meli (Jan 2020 - May 2020)

**Chief of Staff**  
Carly Kleisinger

**City Solicitor**  
Brian Loewen

- Supporting Council's Strategic Priorities & Communications
- Corporate Communications & Marketing
- Corporate Strategic Planning
- Information Technology
- Downtown Redevelopment
- Human Resources
- Real Estate & Land Development
- Economic Development & Tourism Liaison
- Indigenous Relations

**City Clerk**  
Bonnie Hilford

**Interim Director of Community Services**  
Greg Adair

- Lethbridge Transit
- Helen Schuler Nature Centre
- Recreation & Culture
- Community Social Development
- ENMAX Centre
- Fire & Emergency Services
- Public Safety Communications Centre
- Cemetery Services
- Facility Services
- Regulatory Services

**Director of Infrastructure Services**  
Doug Hawkins

- Transportation Planning
- Public Operations
- Water Treatment Plant
- Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Utilities (Water, Wastewater, Electric Distribution, Sanitation, Landfill, Waste & Recycling)
- Stormwater
- Utility Services
- Lethbridge 311
- Urban Construction
- Asset Management
- Parks
- Fleet Services
- Intermunicipal Planning
- Community Planning
- Development Services
- Building Inspection Services

**Director of Treasury & Financial Services**  
Hailey Pinksen

- Treasury
- Payroll
- Purchasing & Stores
- Financial Reporting & Budget
- Long-term Financial Planning
- Risk Management/ Insurance
- Assessment & Taxation
- Lethbridge Airport

**Director of Organizational Performance & Continuous Improvement**  
Tony Vanden Heuvel

# CITY COUNCIL

## 2017-2021



### About City Council:

City Council consists of nine members: the Mayor and eight Councillors, who are elected at large. Lethbridge City Council was elected in October 2017 and will serve a four-year term.

#### Back Row (L-R):

Councillor Joe Mauro  
Councillor Ryan Parker  
Councillor Blaine Hyggen  
Councillor Jeffrey Coffman

#### Front Row (L-R):

Councillor Mark Campbell  
Councillor Belinda Crowson  
Mayor Chris Spearman  
Councillor Jeff Carlson  
Councillor Rob Miyashiro

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2021

### VISION

We will continue to work together to ensure that Lethbridge demonstrates active leadership in environmental stewardship and innovation and is recognized as being a safe, healthy, vibrant, prosperous, economically viable place where all people can fully participate in community life.

*Community Vision from the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan/Municipal Development Plan 2010.*

### MISSION

Respecting the framework of the Community Vision, City Council will serve and inspire the community through:

- Strong leadership
- Decisiveness
- Measurable actions

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- RESPECT & UNDERSTANDING
- GOOD GOVERNANCE
- ENGAGING ALL VOICE
- STRATEGIC & VISIONARY
- INNOVATIVE & CREATIVE
- WORKING IN PARTNERSHIPS

### STRATEGIC GOALS

- ACCOUNTABLE LEADERSHIP
- FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP & ECONOMIC PROSPERITY
- LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES
- COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITY
- PEOPLE PLACES FOR ALL

To view the complete 2017-2021 Lethbridge City Council Strategic Plan, visit our website [www.lethbridge.ca](http://www.lethbridge.ca)

# CITY MANAGER'S MESSAGE



“I am proud that during such a challenging year, the City of Lethbridge has continued our dedication to continuous improvement.”

Craig Dalton - City Manager

On behalf of the City of Lethbridge Administration, I am pleased to present the 2020 Annual Report Highlights. It will come as no surprise that this year presented significant challenges, and we know that Lethbridge has not been immune to the economic impact of COVID-19. In 2020 however, we also were able to realize the benefits of our diverse and adaptable economy, leaving us in a far stronger position than many others as we enter 2021.

Setting up Lethbridge for future success, City Council approved the capital budget in December for the design and construction of Festival Square Market Plaza and the renovations of the Lethbridge Airport Terminal and Airfield. Both projects will be made possible through grants, and will strengthen Lethbridge as a city to live in and visit. In addition to this, as part of the ongoing commitment to revitalizing the Lethbridge Downtown, in November City Council approved incentive packages to support investors, business owners and their employees. This incentive program saw an impressive uptake, and \$135,000 in local funding has already been approved.

Also in November, Administration presented expenditure reduction opportunities to Council to meet Council's goal of a 0 per cent tax increase for 2021. Across our organization, departments rose to the challenge, and worked diligently to find the best options possible to reduce the pressure on public funding, whilst maintaining the integrity of excellent customer service. This was not an easy task, but with Council's approval we were able to meet this goal successfully.

I am proud that our Administration did not allow 2020 to deter us from our task of serving the citizens of

Lethbridge. Our employees worked incredibly hard to ensure that our residents experienced high levels of customer service. In the face of COVID-19 restrictions, our 311 centre responded to a record number of requests and inquiries. Administration adapted quickly and swiftly to working from home, dedicated to playing our part in the prevention of the spread of COVID-19. Despite what was such an unprecedented year, our projects continued wherever possible and the completed Crossings playground was a particular success; an accessible destination playground set to keep children, from toddler to teen, engaged in physical activity, and fun.

I am proud that during such a challenging year, the City of Lethbridge has continued our dedication to continuous improvement. We have worked diligently to implement the innovation and efficiencies recommended in phase one of the operational review, and with phase two presented to City Council in June, we have embraced the areas of operation that need to be strengthened. These recommendations highlight opportunities to enhance efficiency and effectiveness and to set up a stronger operational foundation for the future of the City of Lethbridge.

Within the page of this report you will see our dedication to customer service, and our commitment to building upon the great work of Lethbridge past, together moving forward into a stronger and brighter city for all.

Craig Dalton

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CD', written over a light blue grid background.

City Manager

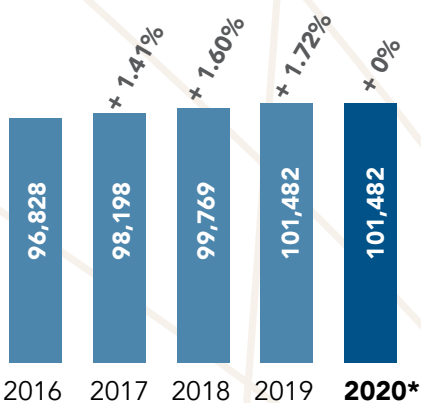
# ECONOMIC OVERVIEW



## POPULATION

Lethbridge broke the 100,000 threshold in 2019 and had a population of 101,482. The City of Lethbridge did not conduct a census in 2020.

### Total Population



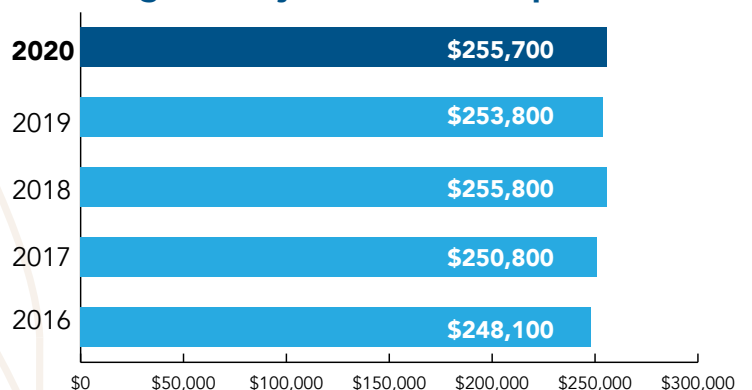
\* The City of Lethbridge did not conduct a census in 2020.

## RESIDENTIAL ASSESSMENTS

Your property assessment is an estimate of the price your property may have sold for on the open market by a willing seller to a willing buyer as of July 1 of the previous year. Assessed values reflect the physical condition of the property as of December 31, of the previous year.

Your property assessment is used to determine your share of the total property taxes your City needs to provide the services and infrastructure, as established in the annual budget.

### Median Property Assessment for Single Family Residential Properties



# ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

## UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

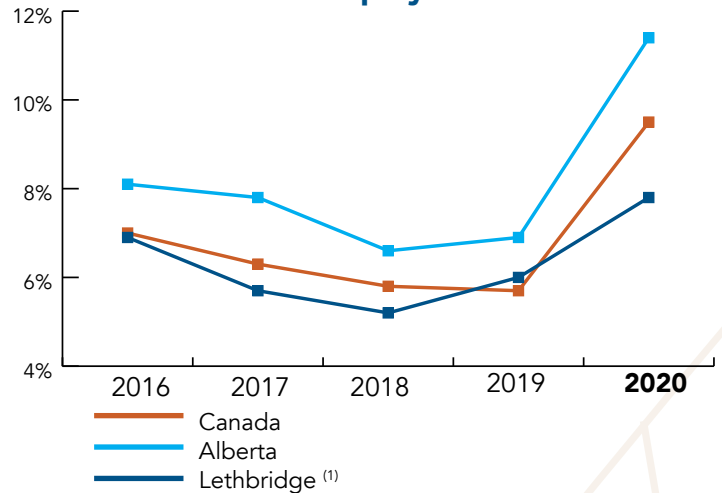
The annual unemployment rate in the Lethbridge region is low at 7.8% versus the Alberta rate of 11.4% and was close to the national average of 9.5%.

## DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION

Building permits are an important leading indicator as to where the construction market is headed. Development and construction highlights for the 2020 include:

- Industrial permit values totaled \$7.4 million in the most recent calendar year, a decrease over 2019 of \$11 million.
- Commercial permit values also saw a decrease to \$25 million in 2020, from \$32 million in 2019.
- Residential permits for single detached dwellings were down in 2020 with 218 permits issued versus 269 in 2019.
- Building additions, renovations and garage sectors saw an increase in activity this year with 909 permits issued, up from the prior year of 798 permits.

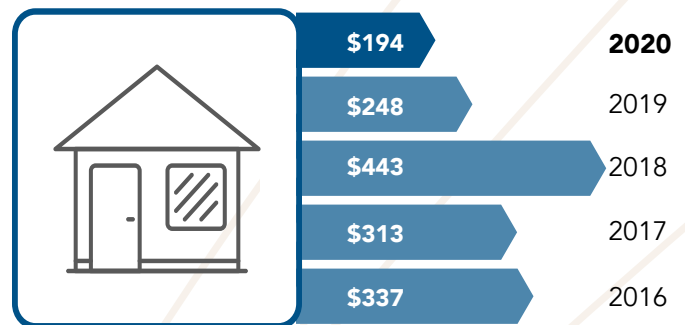
## Annual Unemployment Rates



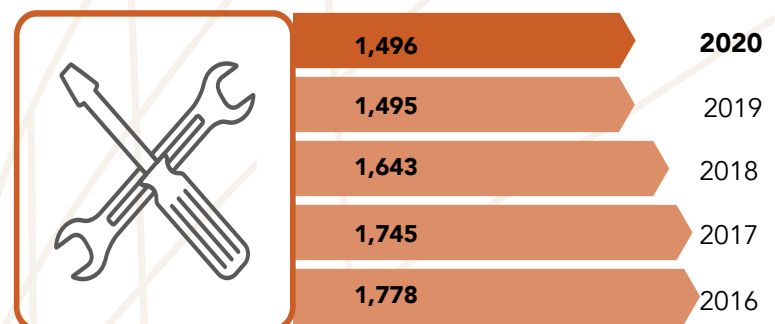
Source: Statistics Canada

(1) The unemployment rates include Lethbridge & Medicine Hat regions (for 2016-2019) and only includes the Lethbridge region for 2020.

## Building Permit Values (in millions of dollars)



## Number of Building Permits Issued



# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## CITY TREASURER'S MESSAGE



“During these difficult times, it reminds us how strong, resilient and responsive the City of Lethbridge is to the needs of our community.”

Hailey Pinksen - City Treasurer

The City of Lethbridge's 2020 Annual Report Highlights is designed to simplify and communicate our financial information, operating results, achievements and successes to the citizens of Lethbridge.

The financial information in this report has been summarized from the audited financial statements in the City's 2020 Annual Report that was prepared in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards. The detailed Annual Report can be found on the City's website at [lethbridge.ca](http://lethbridge.ca).

The City provides many services to our citizens such as water, streets, transit, police, fire, ambulance, parks, recreation and culture facilities, just to name a few. You may ask, where does the City get the money to pay for these services? To find out, take a peek at page 12, there you will see that the City collected \$441 million of revenue in 2020. Of this revenue collected, 43% was from sales and user charges which comes from the fees on your utility bill and user fees for recreation and culture facilities.

Now that you know a little bit about where the City's money comes from, you may ask how much do these services cost? Flip over to page 14, there you will see that City expenses cost \$397 million in 2020. Of the total City expenses, 22% is for protective services which includes police, fire and ambulance.

This document also highlights many of the City's major projects for 2020. Starting on page 17 you can read

about various highlights, achievements and accomplishments that occurred around Lethbridge that demonstrate the City's dedication to serving our community.

At the beginning of 2020, we couldn't have imagined the social and economic challenges we were faced with during the COVID-19 pandemic. During these difficult times, it reminds us how strong, resilient and responsive the City of Lethbridge is to the needs of our community. We came together in partnership to ensure we continued to help make Lethbridge a great place to live, learn, work and play. I am proud of the collaboration between the City and the community during a year of challenges and uncertainty and I am confident the City is well positioned to make the most of its opportunities in the future.

As you review our Annual Report Highlights, I hope it helps to enhance your understanding of the City of Lethbridge finances. The City takes pride in being fiscally responsible and continues to achieve a strong financial position. I hope you enjoy reading this report and find its content useful.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hailey Pinksen".

Hailey Pinksen, CPA, CA, CIA  
City Treasurer

## UNDERSTANDING & INTERPRETING CITY OF LETHBRIDGE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

On an annual basis, the City of Lethbridge Financial Statements are prepared in accordance with provisions set out in the Municipal Government Act (MGA) and must comply with Canadian public sector accounting standards, which provides guidance for financial and other information reported by public sectors.

The condensed financial information presented in this report has been collected from the City of Lethbridge's 2020 Annual Report and is for highlight purposes only.

There are four main components to the City's Financial Statements:

### 1. Statement of Financial Position:

The Statement of Financial Position reports on the City's assets, liabilities and municipal equity at the end of each year. This statement will give the reader an indication whether or not the City has the necessary assets to provide services to its citizens in the future and meet its current financial commitments.

### 2. Statement of Operations:

The Statement of Operations reports on revenues, expenses and results of operations for the entire year.

### 3. Statement of Net Financial Assets (Debt):

The Statement of Net Financial Assets (Debt) reconciles the excess of revenue over expenses to the net financial assets (financial resources available to finance future transactions). Positive net assets are an indicator that the City is able to meet its liabilities and obligations out of existing assets and has resources to use in the future. Negative net assets (net debt) is an indicator that future resources are required to pay for past transactions events.

### 4. Statement of Cashflows:

The Statement of Cashflows identifies where the City's cash came from and how it was used. This statement explains the change in cash and cash equivalents since the previous reporting period.

## Notes to the Financial Statements

The notes to the Financial Statements contain important information and explanations, some of which are required by legislation and regulation. The notes highlight various aspects and provide background information on the impacts of specific values in the Financial Statements.

## Additional Details

City Council is responsible for ensuring that City Administration fulfills its responsibilities for financial reporting, internal control and risk management. To assist City Council with these responsibilities, a City Council appointed Audit Committee has been established.

The Audit Committee oversees the activities of the external auditors to help ensure Administration's accountability to Council. The Committee reviews the audit plan, year-end audit results, summary of audit differences, the Independent Auditors' report and the management letter. To fulfill the City's provincially legislated audit requirements, the Committee engages the external auditor, KPMG LLP who carries out the audit of the City of Lethbridge's financial statements, in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. The external auditors have full and unrestricted access to the Audit Committee to discuss their audit and related findings, as to the integrity of the City's annual Consolidated Financial Statements and related processes.

Based on the Committee's recommendation, City Council approved the 2020 City of Lethbridge Annual Report at its meeting on April 20, 2021.

## WHO USES THE CITY OF LETHBRIDGE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND WHY?

### City Residents:

Lethbridge residents use the City's Financial Statements to help them understand how financial resources have been used to provide services to their community.

### City Council:

The City's Financial Statements provides information to City Council on its financial position. This information has been validated by a professional, independent auditor.

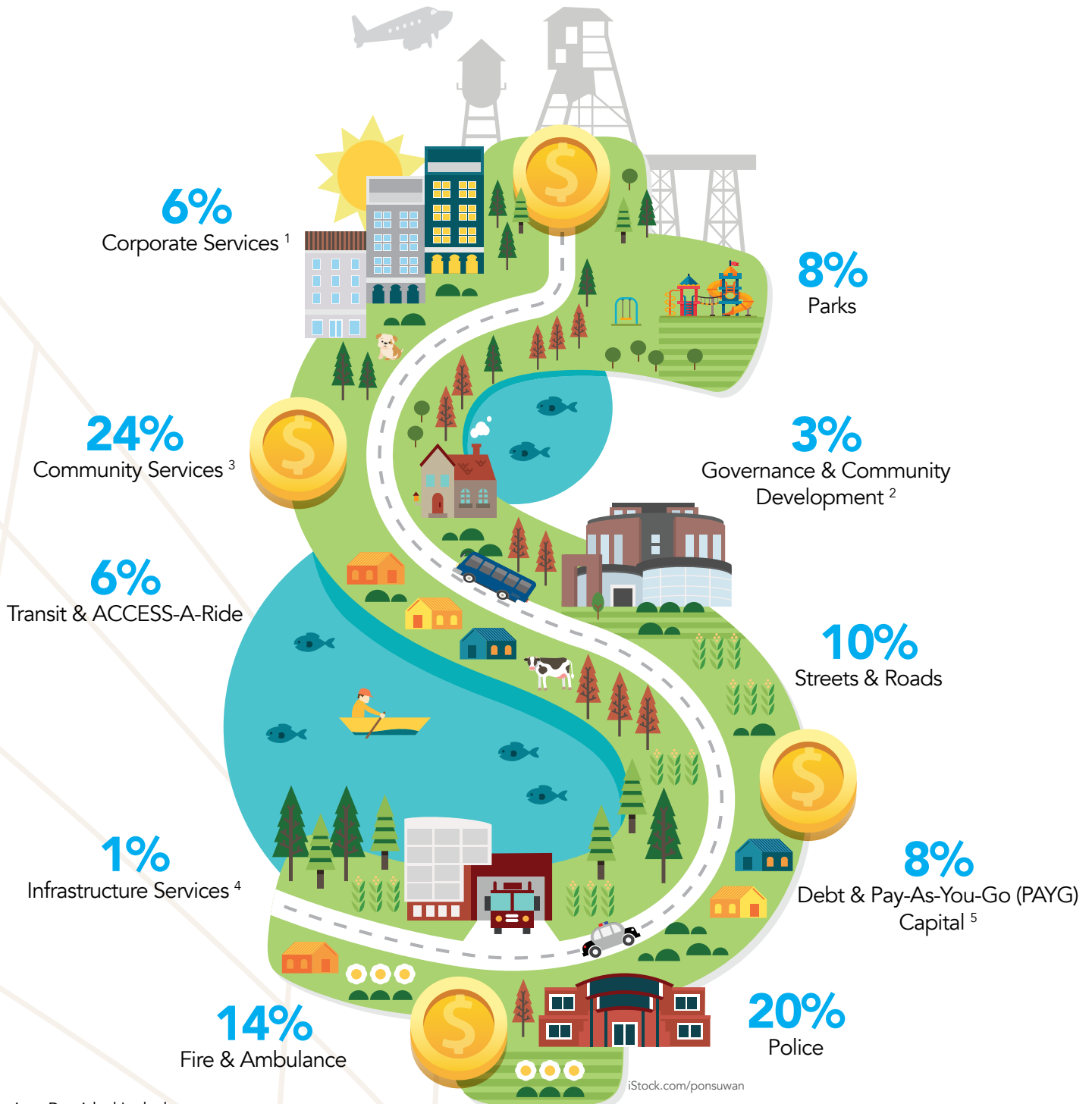
### Governments:

Senior levels of government use the City's Financial Statements to determine if funds were used in accordance with the funding requirements.

For more information, the 2020 Annual Report can be found at:  
[www.lethbridge.ca](http://www.lethbridge.ca).

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## WHAT YOUR 2020 MUNICIPAL PORTION OF YOUR TAX DOLLARS WERE USED FOR



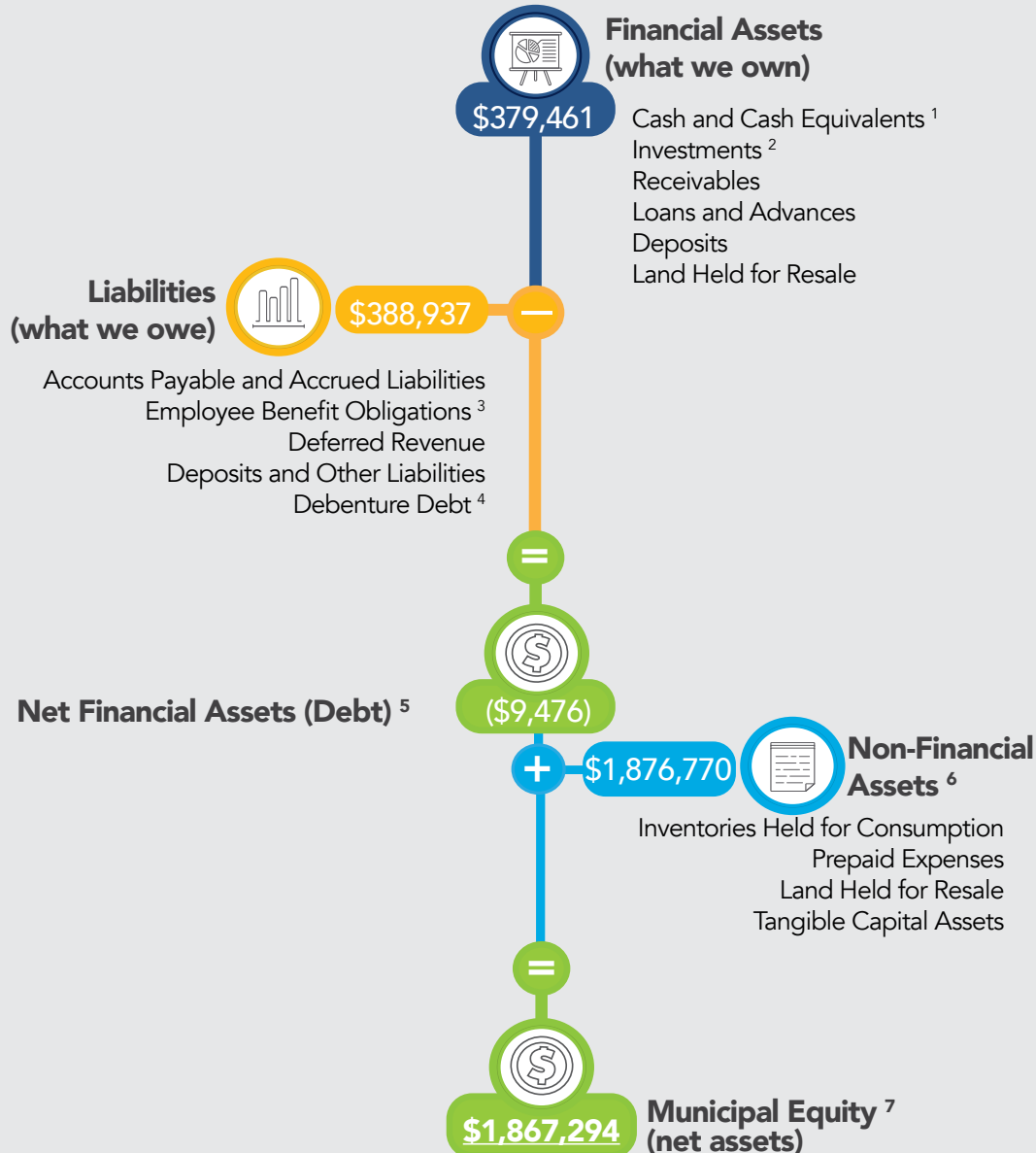
### Services Provided Include:

1. Information Technology, Financial Services, Human Resources, Assessment & Taxation, Risk Management, etc.
2. City Council, City Manager, City Solicitor, Economic Development, Planning & Development, etc.
3. Recreation & Culture, ENMAX Centre, Regulatory Services, Cemetery Services, Lethbridge Public Library, Galt Museum & Archives, etc.
4. Airport, Community Lighting, Storm Water, Asset Management, Urban Construction, Parking, etc.
5. PAYG - costs associated with capital projects that are recurring, relatively small scale or for short lived improvements.

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## 2020 SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL POSITION (in thousands of dollars)

Source: City of Lethbridge Consolidated Statement of Financial Position for the year ended December 31, 2020



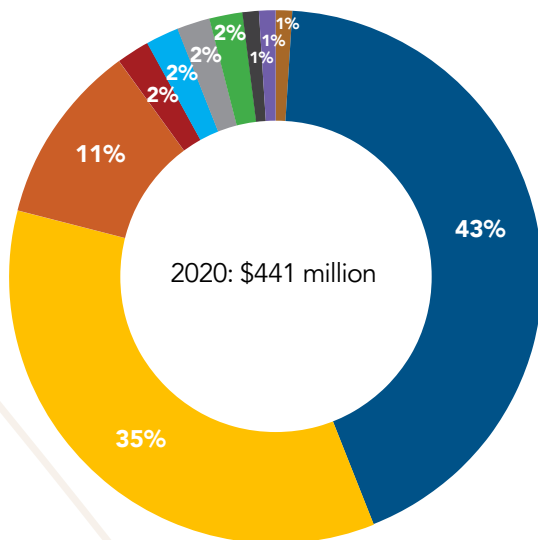
### Notes:

- Cash includes cash on hand, balances with financial institutions and short term investments with original maturities less than three months.
- Investments consist primarily of money market instruments such as Guaranteed Investments Certificates, government bonds, financial institution bonds and term receipts. These investments are in qualifying institutions as defined in the City's investment policy.
- Employee benefit obligations include vacation, overtime and sick pay.
- Debenture debt is an external borrowing from the Alberta Capital Finance Authority that is used for capital funding. A by-law must be authorized by City Council prior to any external borrowing.
- Net Financial Debt - this negative balance is an indication that future resources are required to pay for past transactions events.
- Non-Financial Assets are not available to discharge existing liabilities and are held for use in the provision of services. They have useful lives extending beyond the current year and are not intended for sale in the ordinary course of operations.
- Municipal equity reflects the net assets that have accumulated over time. Municipal equity consist of restricted and unrestricted amounts, including the accumulated unrestricted surplus, reserves, equity invested in tangible capital assets and the capital fund.

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## WHERE THE MONEY CAME FROM: 2020 GROSS REVENUE

Source: City of Lethbridge Consolidated Statement of Operations for the year ended December 31, 2020



**Sales & User Charges** are the revenue from the sales of goods and services to individuals, organizations or other governments. This includes utility service charges and user fees for recreation and culture facilities.

**Net Taxes and Special Municipal Levies** are the net municipal portion of all property taxes and grants in lieu of taxes levied or collected.

**Government Transfers** are essentially grants from senior levels of government.

**Other** includes revenues which are not included in the revenue categories defined above.

**Contributed Assets** are tangible capital assets recorded at their fair market value that have been transferred to the City. These contributions are from privately developed subdivisions and include assets such as water systems, wastewater systems, storm systems, roads and parks.

**Return on Investments** is the net revenue resulting from investments.

**Fines & Penalties** are revenue collected from the violation of a law or a bylaw. This includes fees for impounded animals, overdue charges for library books and fines generated by the province on behalf of the City.

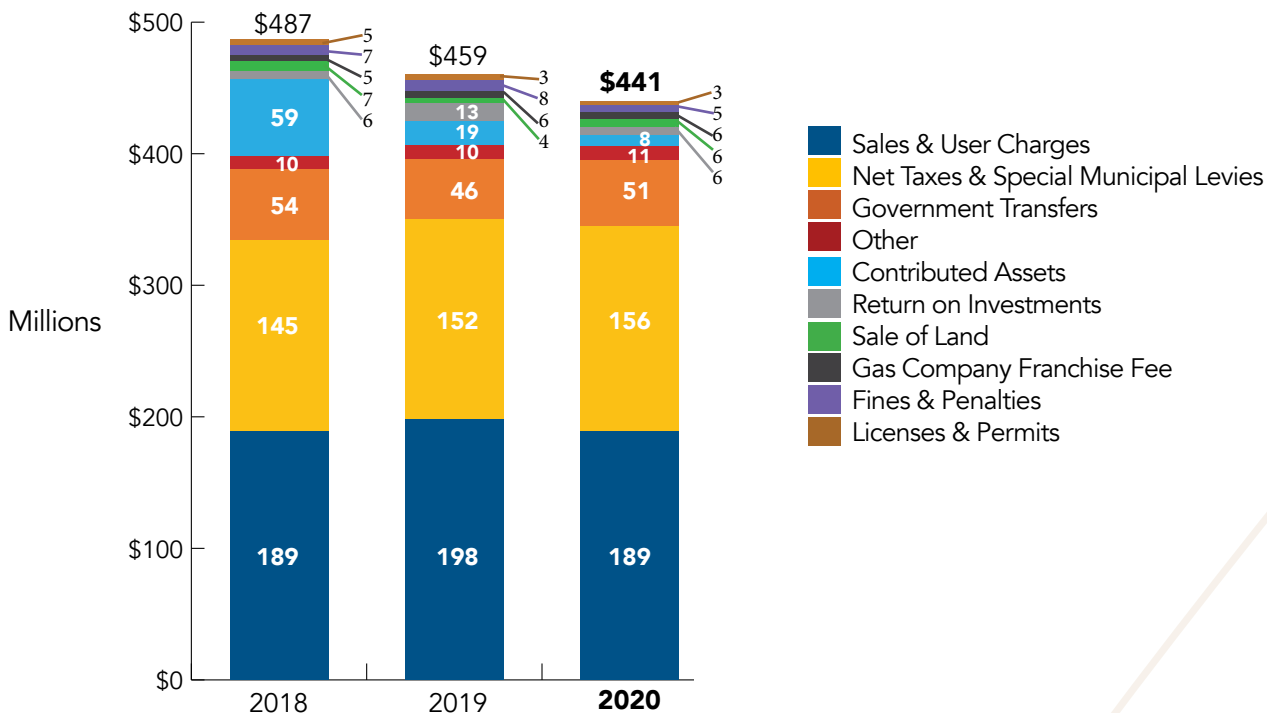
**Gas Company Franchise Fee** is revenue collected from a utility company that allows the exclusive right to provide services within city boundaries under an agreement and for the use of municipal land upon which the utility system is located.

**Sale of Land** includes revenue from lot sales of residential and industrial subdivisions that have been developed by the City.

**Licenses & Permits** include revenue collected from municipal licenses such as business, taxi, and animal licenses. It also includes revenue collected from permits such as building, construction, demolition, gas, plumbing and electrical permits.

## WHERE THE MONEY CAME FROM: THREE YEAR COMPARISON OF GROSS REVENUE

Source: City of Lethbridge Five Year Summary of Consolidated Revenues



### 2020 Revenue Changes:

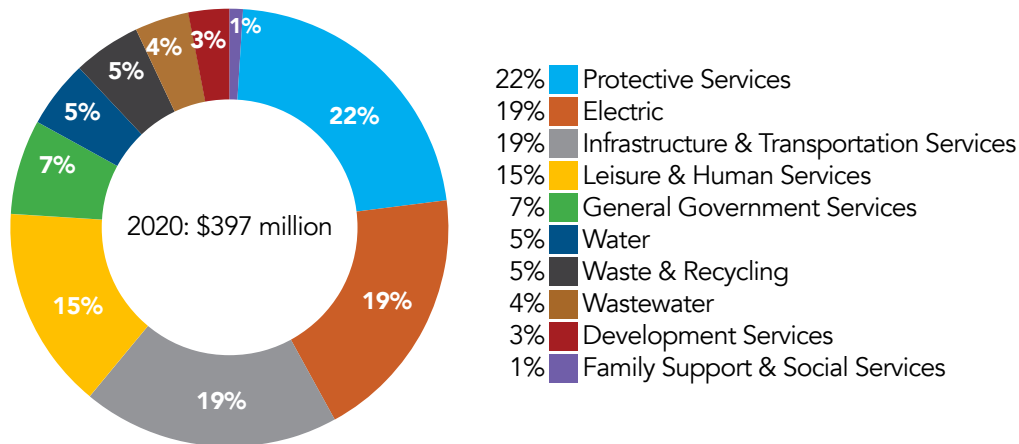
- The overall revenue had an overall decrease of \$18.2 million or 3.9% with total revenue of \$440.7 million (2019 \$458.9 million).
- Sales and user charges decreased by \$8.8 million or -4.4% from 2019 primarily due to decreases in revenues related to operational changes due to the pandemic, recreational facilities and programs decrease, Transit revenue decrease, Airport revenue decrease as well as offsite development decrease.
- Property tax is a primary revenue source available to the City to pay for municipal services. In 2020, net taxes available for municipal services of \$155.8 million was \$4 million or 2.65% higher than 2019, and accounted for 35.4% (2019 33.1%) of gross revenue. The net tax increase was primarily a result of commercial property growth as council eliminated the budgeted property tax increase of 1.82%.
- Government Transfers increased by \$4.2 million from 2019 due to timing of government transfers provided to fund operating or capital expenses. These revenues are externally restricted and recorded as a deferred revenue until used for the purpose intended.
- Contributed assets had a decrease in 2020 of \$10.9 million. Contributed assets are those typically contributed from other developers.
- Return on investments was \$6.3 million which was a \$6.4 million decrease from the previous year (2019 \$12.7 million). The overall decrease was due to a decrease of \$5 million primarily as a result of decreased grant interest revenue due to the timing difference in recording interest revenues associated with grants and \$1.4 million decrease in investment income.

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## WHAT THE MONEY WAS USED FOR: 2020 EXPENSES BY FUNCTION

Source: City of Lethbridge Consolidated Statement of Operations for the year ended December 31, 2020

### 2020 Expenses by Function



**Protective Services** includes dispatch, police, fire, disaster services, ambulance, inspection services, business licenses, parking enforcement, regulatory services and animal control.

**Electric** provides several electrical utility services that can be segregated into two major functions: transmission and distribution. Transmission provides Lethbridge with access to the provincial electricity grid. Distribution involves the final step of delivering electricity from one of the City's 6 substations to homes and businesses. The City is responsible for maintaining 4,800 transformers, 2,450 km of underground lines and 450 km of overhead lines.

**Infrastructure & Transportation Services** includes engineering services, fleet, roadway and parking services, storm sewers, transit and airport.

**Leisure & Human Services** includes recreational and cultural facilities and programs. Also includes library, museum and parks maintenance.

**General Government Services** includes council, legislative and general administration.

**Water** distribution system consists of 590 km of water main and 6 storage reservoirs with pump stations. The water mains and pump stations deliver water to residences and businesses through the city and neighbouring communities. The water treatment plant draws the water supply from the Oldman River and it processes an average of about 53 million litres of high quality drinking water on a daily basis.

**Waste & Recycling** provides environmentally safe, time responsive and cost effective collection, disposal and recycling services for residents as well as waste collection for commercial customers in Lethbridge.

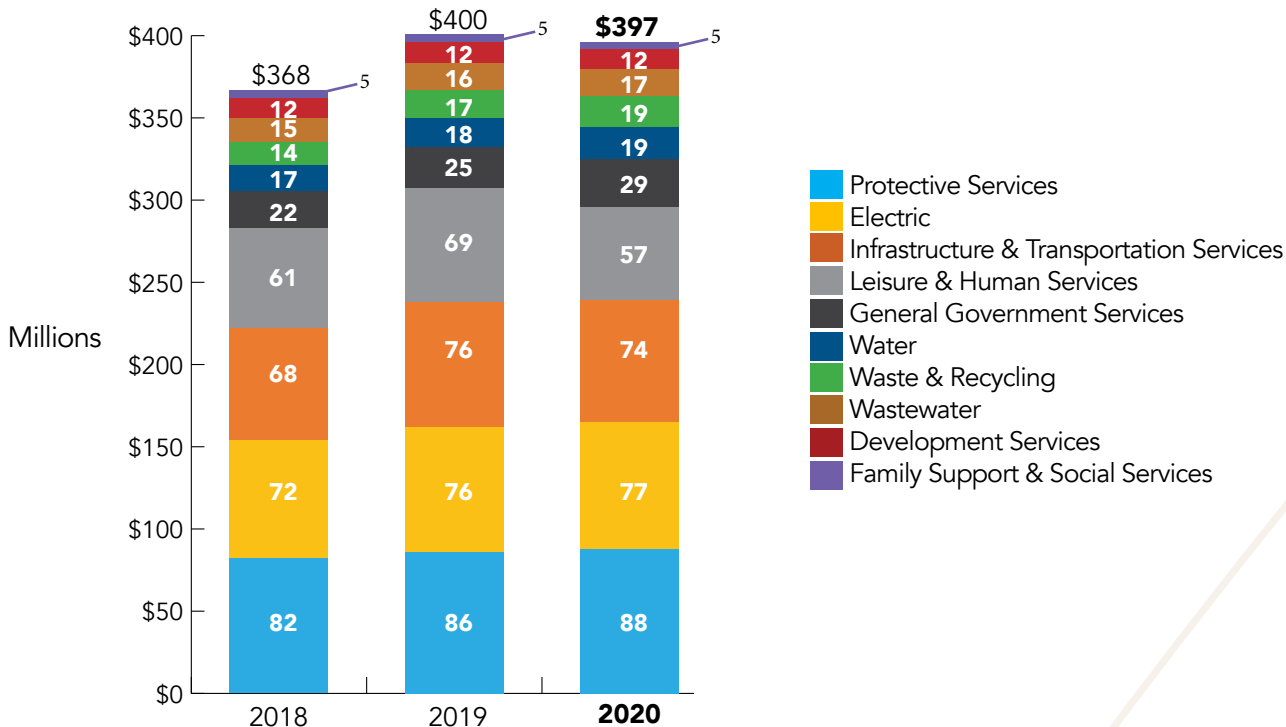
**Wastewater** collection system consists of 520 km of sewer and 23 lift stations. The sewer and lift stations convey wastewater from residences and businesses in all areas of the city to the wastewater treatment plant.

**Development Services** includes economic development, planning, public housing and land development.

**Family Support & Social Services** includes community and family support, cemeteries and other public health support.

## WHAT THE MONEY WAS USED FOR: THREE YEAR COMPARISON OF EXPENSES

Source: City of Lethbridge Five Year Summary of Consolidated Expenses



### 2020 Expense Changes:

- In 2020, the consolidated expenses of \$396.9 million were \$3.7 million or 0.9% lower than the previous year.
- Protective Services expenses increased by \$2.9 million to \$88.4 million from \$85.5 million in 2019. This was primarily due to additional personnel costs of \$2.9 million, and an increase of \$1.1 million in other expense areas, offset by a decrease of \$1.1 million in contractual services.
- The Electric Utility expenses increased by \$0.8 million from \$76.5 million in 2019 to \$77.3 million in 2020. The increase is primarily due to a decrease in contractual services and changes in expenses recovered related to capital projects.
- Infrastructure and Transportation expenses decreased by \$1.6 million to \$74.1 million from \$75.7 million in 2019. This decrease is primarily a result of a decrease in materials and supplies expenses related to milder winter months and lower expenses in graveled roadway maintenance and lane maintenance programs.
- Leisure and Human Services ended the year with \$56.8 million in expenses. This segment was impacted by facility closures and programming changes due to pandemic restrictions. The decrease of \$11.9 million from 2019 was due to a decrease in expenses from COVID-19 related restrictions for recreation facilities and programs of the following: ENMAX Centre decrease of \$4.8 million, aquatics decrease of \$1.8 million, a decrease in capital project expenses of \$1.6 million, arenas decrease of \$0.5 million, and a decrease in other recreation of \$1.4 million. In addition to a decrease of \$1.8 million in cultural facilities expenditures.
- General Government Services increased by \$3.9 million to \$29.2 million in 2020 from \$25.3 million in 2019. This was due to an increase of \$2 million in Wages & Corporate Benefits, an increase of \$2.7 million in contractual services related to facility maintenance, operational reviews and studies, offset by a \$1 million decrease in transfer to other agencies, and a \$0.2 million increase in other expense areas.

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

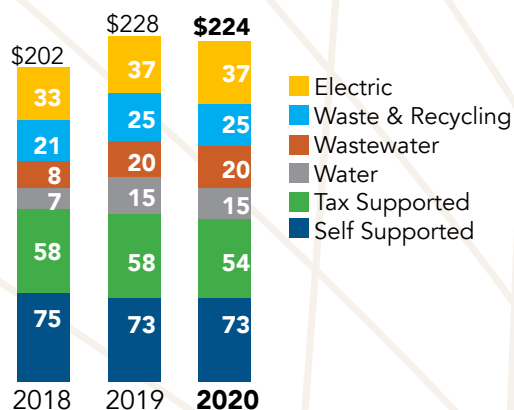
## DEBENTURE DEBT

The City of Lethbridge borrows money to help finance capital projects. These loans called debenture debt are borrowed from the Alberta Capital Finance Authority (ACFA), a provincial authority. ACFA makes loans to Alberta municipalities, school boards and other local entities at interest rates based on the cost of its borrowings.

The Municipal Government Act (MGA) establishes limits for municipal debt levels and annual debt servicing costs. The City's debt limit in 2020 was \$610 million.

In 2020, the City's debenture debt was \$224.4 million. This was a decrease of \$3.6 million, -1.6% from the 2019 balance. The debenture debt decrease was primarily due to the timing of major capital projects. The 2020 borrowings for capital projects included the Wastewater Treatment Plant Clarifier Replacement, Water Treatment Plant Residuals Management, Electric Distribution Extension & Improvement, Waste & Recycling Centre Site Enhancements, Waste & Recycling Centre Disposal Cell Development and Closures and University Drive.

### DEBENTURE DEBT (millions)



## THREE YEAR SUMMARY OF DEBENTURE DEBT

Source: City of Lethbridge Five Year Summary of Debenture Debt

(in thousands of dollars)

	2020	2019	2018
<b>GENERAL</b>			
Tax supported			
Recreation & Culture Facilities	\$ 54,261	\$ 58,006	\$ 58,164
Self supported			
Offsites	50,388	50,191	50,253
Industrial park servicing	11,697	11,353	12,806
Commercial land servicing	10,163	10,869	11,555
Airport	566	605	644
Local improvements	-	-	25
	127,075	131,024	133,447
<b>UTILITIES</b>			
Water	14,738	15,120	6,411
Wastewater	21,248	20,011	7,564
Waste & Recycling	24,462	25,272	21,163
Electric	36,872	36,563	33,295
	97,320	96,966	68,433
<b>TOTAL DEBT</b>	<b>\$224,395</b>	<b>\$227,990</b>	<b>\$201,880</b>
<b>POPULATION</b>	101,482	101,482	99,769
<b>DEBENTURE DEBT PER CAPITA</b>			
General - mill rate supported	\$ 535	\$ 572	\$ 583
General - self supported	718	720	755
Utilities	959	955	686
	\$ 2,212	\$ 2,247	\$ 2,024
<b>DEBT LIMIT (as per MGA)</b>			
Total debt limit	\$609,794	\$612,482	\$578,773
Total debt (above)	(224,395)	(227,990)	(201,880)
<b>DEBT LIMIT UNUSED</b>	<b>\$385,399</b>	<b>\$384,492</b>	<b>\$376,893</b>
Percentage of debt limit used	36.8%	37.2%	34.9%

# PROJECTS & HIGHLIGHTS



Crossings' Playground

## SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS & HIGHLIGHTS

### Crossings Playground

A major highlight the year, was the construction and opening of Crossings Playground, a large scale, accessible destination playground featuring a 25' climbing tower, a dual zip track, and many more elements to keep large numbers of children, from toddler to young teen, active and engaged.

### Legacy Park

Phased construction of Legacy Park continued and saw the completion of the Community Pavilion that contains the mechanical room for the future spray park, provides public washrooms, a food concession and space for community meetings and events. The picnic shelter was also completed to provide amenities for group picnic bookings.

### Online Leisure Services

Great strides were made in bringing convenience and ease of access to the public through online services in 2020. Newly implemented online services through the [Online Leisure Services](#) website included: access to online facility booking, online program and rental availability schedules, program registration including online skate registration, and online invoice payment ability.

### Public Art Projects

*Coyote2Coyote* created by artist Muse Atelier, was installed in Saint-Laurent, QC as part of a public art exchange. City Council initiated this in 2016 to celebrate Lethbridge's 50 year twinning relationship with Saint-Laurent.

# PROJECTS & HIGHLIGHTS



Outdoor Parklet the Downtown

## Public Realm Enhancement Program

Reinvestment in the downtown's public realm was undertaken including: installation of downtown branded streetlight banners, new self-watering planters, and expanded use of public spaces through the creation of parklets near existing eateries.

## Major Redevelopment

A highlight for 2020 was the start of a major redevelopment project on the historic Post Office building in Downtown Lethbridge. Following more than a year of behind the scenes planning, the Sumus Property Group Ltd. began a major redevelopment and modernization project on this iconic building. Construction costs of the Post project are set to exceed \$12 million, making the commitment by Sumus the biggest single private investment in downtown Lethbridge in almost 20 years. The Post Office, also known as the J.D. Higinbotham Building, has both municipal and provincial heritage designation. The building's height, architectural detail, and unique character of the domed clock have made it a landmark building in the city. Sumus have described the goal of the project as creating a vibrant downtown hub for business, innovation, community and collaboration.

## Indigenous Cultural Centre (ICC) Feasibility Study and Governance Review

This project analyzed the business case and governance models for an Indigenous Cultural Centre in Lethbridge, by reviewing existing programs and services in the community. One of the lasting legacies of this project was strong Indigenous community engagement for which this project was recognized internationally by the Commonwealth Association of Planners. Indigenous community members were actively involved in planning and delivering engagement, including through:

- Focus Groups
- Interviews
- Site Visits
- Workshops and,
- A Conference

# PROJECTS & HIGHLIGHTS

## University Drive Construction

The University Drive Twinning project started in April 2019. This project includes the design and construction of the second two lanes of University Drive West from the existing four-lane section just south of the University of Lethbridge Stadium access to SunRidge Blvd and Riverglen Link West. It also includes new asphalt pathways, two new traffic signals and a new two-lane roundabout. This project has a budget of \$10.9 million and was completed in November 2020.



University Drive Twinning Project

## Co-op Community Outdoor Classroom

After two years of dedicated fundraising activities, led by Friends of the Helen Schuler Nature Centre Society, November marked the completion of Lethbridge's premier outdoor classroom space! The dramatic transformation features breathtaking scenic views of coulees, cottonwood forest and the iconic High Level Bridge. Flexible seating is inviting for groups and individuals. The Co-op Community Outdoor Classroom also features full, universal accessibility as well as improved efficiencies for winter maintenance. This project was possible thanks to generous support from residents, businesses and local not-for-profits.



Co-op Community Outdoor Classroom

## Waste & Recycling

During 2020, more than 22,300 tonnes of old concrete and asphalt was recycled. The recycled concrete aggregate was used in innovative pavements and roadway projects at the Waste & Recycling Centre. Over 450 tonnes of glass was recycled and will be used as a base layer in future pathway projects. More than 13,000 tonnes of recyclable wood waste was processed into wood mulch for use in various composting operations in Alberta.

## Crossings Branch Toy Library

Thanks to generous donations from Friends of the Lethbridge Public Library and FortisAlberta, the Crossings Branch became home to a new toy library in February. The Friends inspired the project with an initial donation, and further grant funds from FortisAlberta made it possible for Library staff to purchase toys made by companies that have committed themselves to considering best environmental practices in the manufacturing of their products.



Opening the Crossings Branch Toy Library

# AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

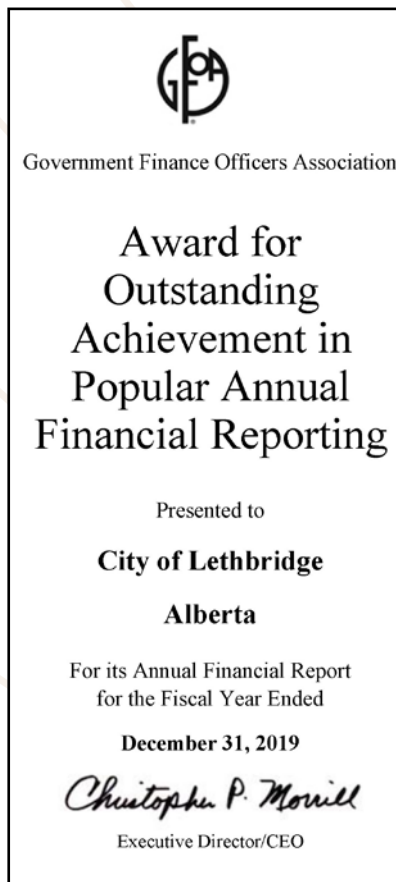
## FINANCIAL RECOGNITION

### Popular Annual Financial Report Award

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has given an Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting to the City of Lethbridge for its Popular Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2019. The Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting is a prestigious national award recognizing conformance with the highest standards for preparation of state and local government popular reports.

In order to receive an Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting, a government unit must publish a Popular Annual Financial Report, whose contents conform to program standards of creativity, presentation, understandability and reader appeal.

An Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting is valid for a period of one year only. We believe our current report continues to conform to the Popular Annual Financial Reporting requirements, and we are submitting it to GFOA.



### Canadian Award for Financial Reporting

- The City of Lethbridge received a Canadian Award for Financial Reporting for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2019. This award is from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA).
- 2019 was the twenty-fourth consecutive year the City has received this award.
- In order to be awarded a Canadian Award for Financial Reporting, a government unit must publish an easily readable and efficiently organized annual financial report, whose contents conform to program standards.

### Distinguished Budget Presentation Award (2019-22)

- The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) presented a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award to the City of Lethbridge for its four year budget beginning January 1, 2019.
- The budget conforms to the program requirements and the award is valid for a period of four years only.

## OTHER RECOGNITION

### Taxation & Assessment

- Public Information Program Award for HEART program from the International Association of Assessing Officers.

### Galt Museum

- Spirit of Reconciliation Award from the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce.
- GLAMi Award from MuseWeb.

### Helen Schuler Nature Centre

- The Nature Centre was honoured to receive the Allied Arts Council (AAC) Service Organization Award for outstanding contributions to the Lethbridge community through the arts.

### Lethbridge Public Library

- Minister's Award for Excellence in Library Service – 2019 Big Truck Petting Zoo (Government of Alberta, Municipal Affairs).
- Special Service Award – CEO, Terra Plato (Canadian Mental Health Association, Alberta Division).

### Community Social Development

- The Community Social Pandemic Response received international recognition from the World Health Organization.



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*Lethbridge*

The Annual Report Highlights is produced by the Communications & Financial Services departments of the City of Lethbridge in cooperation with all civic departments and agencies.



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# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

[lethbridge.ca](http://lethbridge.ca)