



INSPIRING ACTION

STRATEGIC PLAN

2018-2021



environmentlethbridge.ca

Vision

Lethbridge is a sustainable community and all residents are actively engaged in contributing to its sustainability.

Mission

Environment Lethbridge inspires and equips people to create widespread community action and engagement towards sustainability.

Values - DRAFT

Partnership and Collaboration

We envision Lethbridge as a leader in sustainability and we believe that a sustainable city can only be achieved through partnership and collaboration with the entire community. Environmental challenges are broad and far reaching and we must work together to find solutions.

Diversity and Respect

We respect community values and welcome all sectors. Everyone is encouraged to share their opinions and actively participate in the organization. We will ensure that people feel comfortable sharing their opinions and that concerns and controversial issues are dealt with respectfully.

Community Action and Appreciation

We believe that positive solutions are more likely to result in action and that everyone can contribute to Lethbridge's environmental goals. We know that not everyone is ready to make big changes, but they might be ready to make small ones. We help people take action in ways that work best for them.

We recognize that many people and organizations have already taken action to reduce their environmental impacts and believe that small actions add up. Everyone should be celebrated for making an effort to be more sustainable.

Science-based Decision Making

We offer realistic, innovative solutions that will lead to action and results. Our decision-making is based on credible science and evidence.

Environmental Sustainability

We strive to reduce our environmental footprint and be a leader in environmental sustainability.

Context

Environment Lethbridge was formed in 2012 by a group of concerned community members and business leaders. We are supported by and collaborate with a diverse group of organizations and agencies. Our focus is specific to the city of Lethbridge and we envision Lethbridge as a sustainable community.

The Institute for Sustainable Communities defines a sustainable community as “one that is economically, environmentally, and socially healthy and resilient. It meets challenges through integrated solutions rather than through fragmented approaches that meet one of those goals at the expense of the others. And it takes a long-term perspective - one that’s focused on both the present and future, well beyond the next budget or election cycle.”

Within this context, Environment Lethbridge has a key role to play in supporting Lethbridge residents and businesses in improving their environmental sustainability and the environmental sustainability of the city as a whole.

Environment Lethbridge’s mission and goals align with the following City of Lethbridge planning and policy documents:

Municipal Development Plan/Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (2010) includes provisions for minimizing Lethbridge’s ecological footprint by using resources effectively.

The 2017-2022 Lethbridge City Council Strategic Plan supports the development of a resilient food system including promoting and encouraging local and urban agriculture and expanding opportunities for community gardens.

City Council Policy CC51-Environment states that the City is “committed to taking a responsible leadership role in the efficient use of natural resources.”

Finally, the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP) Compliance Initiative requires the City of Lethbridge to ensure that all City policies are in compliance with the planning direction of the SSRP which is intended to “set the stage for robust growth, vibrant communities and a healthy environment within the region over the next 50 years.”

Overall Strategic Direction

Environment Lethbridge advances our mission of **inspiring community action on environmental sustainability** and seeks to **create a sustainable community** by serving **residents and businesses** within the **City of Lethbridge** through **credible science and research, opportunities for learning and action, and public policy** that emphasizes our advantages of **diverse and well-executed programs and effective communications that raise visibility and inspire action.**

Focus Areas

1. Waste Reduction

Lethbridge has some of the highest per capita waste disposal rates in Canada. The full implementation of curbside recycling by the City in 2019 will have a positive impact on Lethbridge's waste diversion as will future plans for organics collection. However, on its own, recycling is not enough to solve our waste problems. Additional emphasis on reducing and reusing is equally or more important.

Current initiatives connected to this focus area:

Reuse Rendezvous

Wasteless

Fix-it Fair

Say No to Plastics Challenge

Additional program activities may be targeted at reducing single use plastics and food waste and on increasing the use of reusable alternatives such as reusable bags, coffee cups and water bottles.

2. Climate and Energy

The impacts of climate change are being felt in Lethbridge and around the world. Addressing climate change involves taking action to both mitigate emissions and to respond to the impacts caused by changes in climate such as changes to our water supply, increased risk of severe weather, air quality and health concerns.

Current initiatives connected to this focus area:

Lethbridge Green Challenge

Small Business Energy Efficiency Program

PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy)

Renewable Energy Co-operative Feasibility Study

Future work in this area may focus on facilitating community-wide planning to address community needs related to climate resilience.

3. Food Sustainability

Developing resilient food systems is a critical component of our future adaptations to climate change. Although Lethbridge is a regional hub for large-scale agriculture, its efforts to create and support urban agriculture are emergent. Creating a resilient local food system has been identified as a priority under the City of Lethbridge Council Strategic Plan.

Current initiatives connected to this focus area:

Lethbridge Community Garden Network

Seedy Saturday

Future areas of focus may include creating community resiliency and in using urban agriculture to develop opportunities for people to learn about and connect with their local environment.

Strategic Priorities

Knowledge and Research

The community has an understanding of Lethbridge's environmental health.

Learning and Action

Residents are inspired to learn and take action to increase the environmental sustainability of their homes and businesses.

Public Policy

The City of Lethbridge adopts policies that support and promote environmental sustainability.

Operational Stability

Environment Lethbridge is an effective and efficient organization that achieves long-term stability.

● PRIORITY 1: Knowledge and Research

The community has an understanding of Lethbridge's environmental health.

Strategies

1. Compile research into Lethbridge's overall environmental health and our identified focus areas

Environment Lethbridge has a unique opportunity to compile credible information about Lethbridge's environmental health and communicate that information to decision-makers and local residents.

2. Increase environmental literacy and close knowledge gaps

Credible, local information about our environment can help to increase Lethbridge residents' knowledge and understanding about local issues and solutions. By finding ways to engage residents in the collection of data, we can increase their environmental literacy at the same time.

Priority Initiatives:

a. State of the Environment Report

The State of the Environment report examines environmental indicators and trends for the city of Lethbridge in seven different categories: biodiversity, local food, water, air, waste, energy and climate change. An update to this report is planned for 2020.

b. Citizen Science

Citizen science projects, where data is collected by members of the public, can be effective in filling data gaps. The development of a citizen science program could be an effective way to fill gaps identified in the 2017 State of the Environment report.

Outcomes:

Decision makers have credible information about environmental indicators

Community members are directly engaged in environmental health data collection

Local data is available to fill gaps in the SOE

Indicators of Success:

of residents participating in citizen science initiatives

of decision makers referencing the report

of indicators with updated data

● PRIORITY 2: Learning and Action

Residents are inspired to learn and take action to increase the environmental sustainability of their homes and businesses.

Strategies

1. Provide tools to Lethbridge residents to help them take positive actions to be more sustainable.

People are inspired to take action in different ways. For some people, increasing their knowledge of sustainability issues and options can result in action. For others, seeing examples of actions taken by others can be inspiring.

2. Support small and medium-sized businesses and help them to take action to be more sustainable.

Businesses, particularly small and medium sized businesses, have an important role to play to in improving sustainability in Lethbridge. Working with local businesses requires a targeted approach and has the opportunity to provide an earned revenue stream for EL.

3. Support the engagement of youth in awareness and action towards sustainability.

For a city of its size, Lethbridge is unique in having two post-secondary institutions. As a result, a 16.9% of the population are between the ages of 15 and 24, the highest percentage of any population cohort.

Priority Initiatives:

a. Tools and Resources

Develop resources such as sustainability guides, online tools, maps, and other resources to provide residents, businesses and youth with credible information to make positive environmental choices.

b. Opportunities to Learn

Provide opportunities for people to learn about environmental sustainability including Environment Week, Seedy Saturday, Lethbridge Community Garden Network, and Wasteless.

c. Opportunities for Action

Deliver programs that convert learning to action including the Lethbridge Green Challenge, Say No to Plastics Challenge, Fix-it Fair, Reuse Rendezvous, Youth Leadership Program and the Small Business Energy Efficiency Program.

d. Celebrate Success

Celebrate those who take action through the Green Superhero project and Small Business Recognition Program.

Outcomes:

Residents have a solid base of knowledge to help them take action to be more sustainable

Residents can see and learn from examples of sustainable action in Lethbridge.

Increasing numbers of small and medium sized businesses are adopting sustainable practices.

Indicators of Success:

of residents who commit to taking action through EL programs

of small and medium sized businesses who commit to taking action through EL programs

● PRIORITY 3: Public Policy

The City of Lethbridge adopts policies that support and promote environmental sustainability.

Strategies

1. Policy Development

Environment Lethbridge has the opportunity to support environmental policy development in the City of Lethbridge by providing credible information to City departments such as Planning and Waste and Recycling. In addition, Environment Lethbridge can choose to offer policy suggestions and information in a more public manner through educational tools or policy research.

Priority Initiatives

a. Collaboration with City

Environment Lethbridge collaborates extensively with the City of Lethbridge. This includes working with City departments such as Planning and Waste and Recycling as well as with City Council through the City Council Environment Committee.

b. Policy Research and Development

EL also has the ability to propose policy initiatives by researching key issues and presenting suggested policies to the City and the community.

Outcomes

City of Lethbridge staff and City Council respect and seek out our input and expertise and look to EL to inform City policies and planning.

Indicators of Success:

of City initiatives EL is asked to participate in

of policy initiatives connected to EL's work

● **PRIORITY 4: Operational Stability**

Environment Lethbridge achieves long-term sustainability.

Strategies

1. Board Development and Governance

Strong and effective governance provides a foundation for EL to be successful. Over the next three years, the Board of Directors will focus on strengthening our policies and procedures, developing best practices for human resources and developing the overall effectiveness of the Board.

2. Resource Development

EL cannot deliver its mission without adequate financial resources, professional staff capacity and internal expertise.

3. Community Outreach

Outreach and communications to the public are critical to the success of EL's mission and programs. EL has a robust Communications Strategy to guide this work. Key objectives from this strategy are to establish EL as the local leader on urban environmental and sustainability issues and to provide accurate and engaging information to local residents and business owners.

4. Membership

Growing a diverse membership of Lethbridge residents, organizations and businesses will give EL credibility and stability.

Outcomes:

EL has the necessary funding to support the capacity needed to deliver its programs.

EL is widely known in the community.

EL provides credible environmental information to the community on an ongoing basis and that information causes people to take action.

EL is backed by a diverse membership of businesses, organizations and residents who support us financially.

EL has necessary policies and procedures to guide its work.

Indicators of Success:

EL is governed using best practices

Funding targets are met or exceeded

Membership numbers increase

Online and inperson engagement with EL increases

Budget Projections

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Revenue					
City of Lethbridge (requested)	79,667	75,000	70,000	65,000	60,000
Grant Funding	60,000	62,500	90,000	95,000	100,000
Donations and Sponsorships	5,000	10,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Other Funding	5,000	10,000	15,000	20,000	20,000
In-kind Support	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Total Revenue	179,667	187,500	220,000	225,000	225,000
Expenses					
Salary and Wages	130,000	130,000	154,500	154,500	154,500
Office Expenses (Rent, phone, insurance, bookkeeping, supplies)	15,500	15,500	15,500	15,500	15,500
Program Expenses	34,167	42,000	55,000	55,000	55,000
Total Expenses	179,667	187,500	225,000	225,000	225,000
Ratio of City to Other Funding:	1:1.25	1:1.5	1:2.2	1:2.5	1:2.75