



LETHBRIDGE  
**POLICE**  
SERVICE  
*Courage. Safety. Service.*

# Lethbridge Police Service **ANNUAL REPORT** 2021



***The Lethbridge Police Service 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 is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3.***

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## MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSION CHAIR

The Lethbridge Police Commission is pleased to present the 2021 Lethbridge Police Service Annual Report as part of our commitment to provide the citizens of Lethbridge with an accountable and transparent Service.

The Commission is responsible for civilian oversight of the Lethbridge Police Service and is committed to representing the community's interests and concerns in providing effective and responsible policing services to the City of Lethbridge.

2021 posed some particular challenges for the Service. In addition to the pandemic, the Service was confronted with various concerns regarding ethics and accountability which are rooted in past events.

The Service took those concerns seriously and developed initiatives to ensure high standards in ethics, accountability, leadership development, communications, and employee wellness. In addition, the Service also continued to develop initiatives to improve and enhance community policing and crime reduction.

The Police Commission is grateful for the dedication and commitment the LPS leadership, sworn officers and civilian employees exhibit on a daily basis to provide a high level of policing service for the citizens of Lethbridge.



Rob vanSpronsen



LETHBRIDGE POLICE COMMISSION

# MISSION

Courage. Safety. Service.

# VISION

Selflessly providing safety and service through excellence in community involvement, strong partnerships and continuous innovation.

# VALUES

ACCOUNTABILITY

RESPECT

PROFESSIONALISM

INTEGRITY

COMPETENCE

RELIABILITY

## LETHBRIDGE POLICE COMMISSION 2021



Rob van Spronsen  
Chair

Victoria Chester

Diane Conley

Dawna Coslovi

Rachel Hopf

Douglas Thorton

Bruce Thurber

Belinda Crowson

Blaine Hyggen

***“To ensure the Lethbridge Police Service will respond to the needs of the citizens of the City of Lethbridge and create a safe environment.”***

The Lethbridge Police Commission is composed of seven members of the public and two representatives from City Council to provide civilian oversight to the Lethbridge Police Service.

The Commission has the following responsibilities:

1. Allocate the funds that are provided by the Council;
2. Establish policies providing for efficient and effective policing;
3. Issue instructions, as necessary, to the Chief of Police in respect of the policies;
4. Ensure that sufficient persons are employed for the police service for the purposes of carrying out the functions of the police service;

In addition, the Commission appoints a public complaint director who can be contacted by members of the community by calling 403-308-6709 or emailing [complaints@lethbridgepolicecommission.com](mailto:complaints@lethbridgepolicecommission.com)

# MESSAGE FROM CHIEF SHAHIN MEHDIZADEH



Over the past year the Lethbridge Police Service has moved forward with many exciting initiatives to help reduce crime, strengthen public trust and modernize the organization. While 2021 presented a number of challenges, it was also very rewarding and provided many opportunities to collaborate with the community.

I am proud of our employees for their hard work and steadfast dedication, the positive changes that have been made within our culture and grateful for the support we have received from our citizens, the Lethbridge Police Commission and City Council and Administration.

Crime reduction was a priority for the organization in 2021 and the implementation of CompStat – using data to more effectively deploy resources – along with a targeted crime reduction strategy focused on prolific offender management, identification of crime hot spots and crime causation, helped LPS achieve an eight per cent overall reduction in person, property and drug crimes. This is a significant accomplishment but would not have been possible without the support of community members who took an active role in safeguarding their property to help reduce crimes of opportunity.

Operational successes ranged from numerous drug trafficking arrests and the removal of significant quantities of illicit drugs from city streets to the dismantling of a human trafficking ring. Our work also focused on enhancing collaboration with community partners. An Indigenous Advisory Council, comprised of Blackfoot Elders, was created to enhance communication, strengthen the relationship between the Service and Indigenous community and ensure LPS is meeting the needs of the Indigenous people we serve. A review of our School Resource Program resulted in the creation of our Youth Engagement Unit to enhance the service we provide young people both inside and outside the school setting.

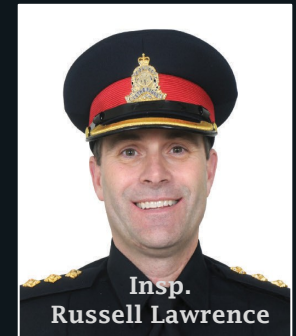
As part of our journey the organization has been committed to modernization – from changing our culture to ensuring our employees have the right tools and training. We must ensure the services we provide are appropriate and relevant to serve the community in 2022 and beyond.

Every officer has completed Brain Story certification to increase understanding about the effects that stress and adverse experiences can have on mental health so we can better serve individuals in crisis. All sworn employees have also completed Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) which provides active peer intervention strategies and tactics to help prevent misconduct and promote organizational wellness. Civilian staff will complete ABLE training by the end of 2022. In the last quarter Respect training was also initiated for all staff. The program equips employees with the skills needed to prevent bullying, abuse, harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

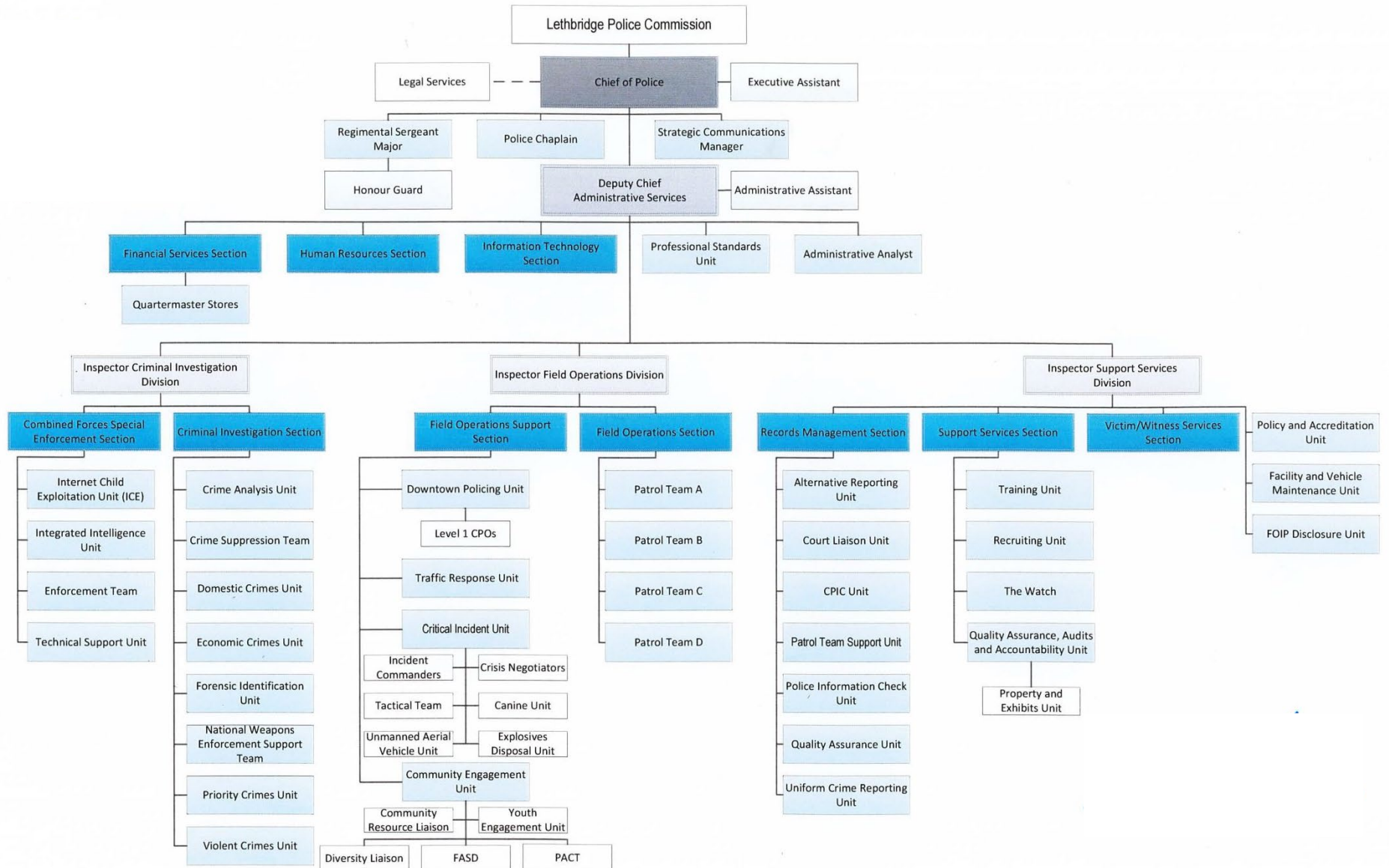
As we prepare for 2022, I'm looking forward to a rebranding of the organization with a new mission, vision and values – developed from the ground up by our employees – that will guide us with a renewed sense of pride well into the future.

It is an honour and privilege to be part of the Lethbridge Police Service team and a citizen of this community. I am confident the future holds great things for the organization and everyone we serve.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shahin Mehdizadeh', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.



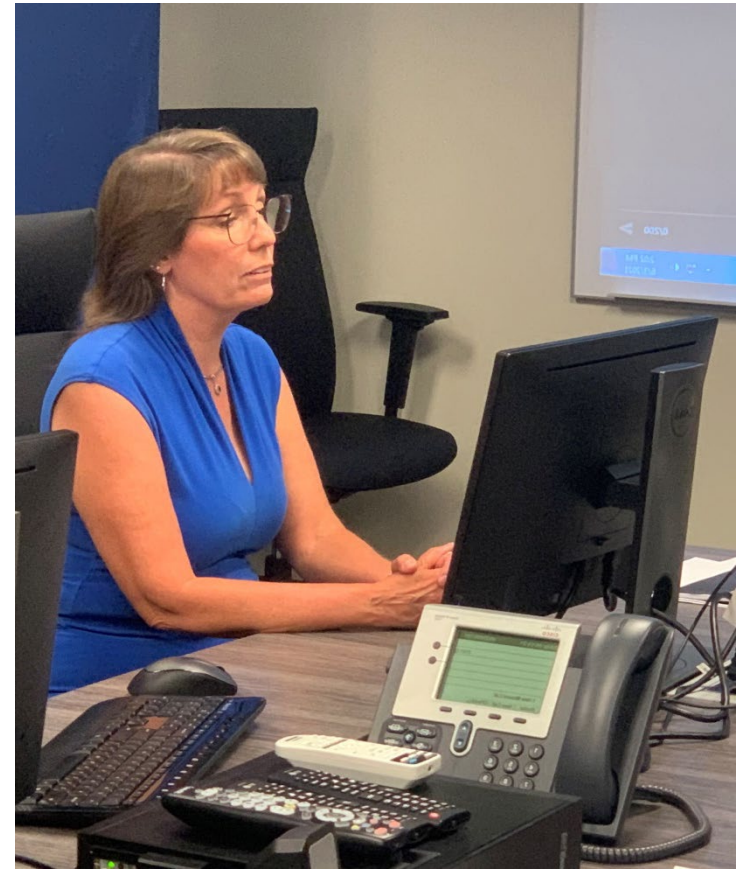
# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



# COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

With a deep-rooted desire for increased community engagement and fewer opportunities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Lethbridge Police Service looked to leverage technology in 2021 to hold its first-ever virtual town hall meetings. Lethbridge Police Chief Shahin Mehdizadeh and representatives of the Lethbridge Police Commission hosted three separate virtual meetings mid-May through early August. The goal was to share information with residents on crime trends in the community, the actions and initiatives being taken by police to reduce crime, and 'citizen engagement,' or the role everyone can play in helping create a safer community. The virtual town hall meetings were hosted on the YouTube live platform, with viewers able to ask questions during the event, as well as provide feedback through a survey they were invited to fill out afterwards. Participants were also able to further review the meetings through recordings posted on the Lethbridge Police YouTube channel.

The first of the virtual town hall meetings involved members of the City of Lethbridge executive leadership team. The second featured invited community stakeholders, many of which are partners with Lethbridge Police Service on different initiatives, while the final meeting was open to the general public. The surveys made available to participants were designed to help organizers better meet the community's needs at future town hall meetings, whether live or virtual.





## POLAR PLUNGE FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS

The 'BRRRrothers in Blue' consisting of Police Chief Shahin Mehdizadeh, Insp. Jason Dobirstein, Cst. Braylon Hyggen and City Councillor (at the time) Blaine Hyggen took an icy dip for a good cause during the 2021 Polar Plunge.

Due to the pandemic the 2021 Polar Plunge was a virtual event but that did not deter our dedicated Lethbridge plungers who raised almost \$13,000 for Special Olympics!





## CHARITY CHECK STOP

The Lethbridge Police Service held its second annual Charity Checkstop in late November and thanks to many generous community donations helped make Christmas a little brighter for the less fortunate.

The event collected donations of new, unwrapped toys, non-perishable food items and cash in support of the Christmas Hope Campaign, a collaborative effort between the Interfaith Food Bank, Lethbridge Food Bank, Lethbridge Family Services (Angel Tree), Salvation Army (Toys for Tots) and My City Care (Shop of Wonders).

The LPS Charity Checkstop brought in 792 gifts, 585 kilograms (1,291 lbs.) of food and more than \$1,260 in cash and gift cards.



***"Christmas Hope isn't just a Christmas program. . . it is the shared experiences of an entire community, told with such emotion and clarity, that it lifts us."***

Michelle Gallucci  
Campaign Manager for Christmas Hope



## SHOES FOR KIDS

The Lethbridge Police Service was thrilled to partner with Connecting our Community Lethbridge, local branches of the Royal Bank, Blood Tribe Police Service and the Piikani Nation RCMP during the inaugural Shoes for Kids YQL: Stepping into the Future, One Sole at a Time campaign.

The goal of the initiative – to provide 200 pairs of new shoes to children so they could start the school year off on the right foot – was greatly exceeded thanks to the generous support of community donors who stepped up to help.

A total of 485 pairs of new shoes along with \$16,000 in monetary donations were collected for the cause.

The new shoes enabled hundreds of children to start the 2021 school year with dignity, increased confidence and made it a little easier to participate in physical activity.



***“There is no community without unity. We are beyond honoured to see this community support. Our event coordinators are in awe!”***

Mallory Kristjanson  
Connecting our Community Lethbridge

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY: PEOPLE

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES



“

We recognize the value of our employees and volunteers. We want all employees to be healthy, well-trained, committed and reflect the demographics of the communities we serve.

”

- The Lethbridge Police Service joined forces with Lethbridge College to develop an in-house leadership training course that will be delivered to employees starting in 2022. The three-day course, which will be instructed by two LPS employees – one sworn and one civilian – will provide an introduction to leadership and cover topics such as trust, leadership styles, emotional intelligence, ethical leadership and organizational awareness. The goal moving forward is to offer the program at least once per year and it will be mandatory for all new managers/supervisors.
- Members of the Criminal Investigation Section worked collaboratively with the Training Unit to identify subject matter experts and develop and deliver training courses in specialized areas including drafting search warrants and the provincial, standard Investigative Skills Education Program (ISEP) course which focuses on interview techniques. With the ongoing pandemic restrictions, LPS also found ways to adapt training delivery models with a greater emphasis on online and virtual training to minimize in-person gatherings.
- LPS partnered with Respect Group – an organization founded by former NHLer turned victims' rights crusader Sheldon Kennedy – to equip staff with the training and skills needed to prevent bullying, abuse, harassment and discrimination (BAHD) in the workplace. Respect training defines and deals with BAHD, empowers bystanders, helps individuals manage emotions, understand mental health outcomes due to maltreatment and understand individual responsibilities as a team member. The first sessions were initiated in late 2021 and all staff are required to complete the program by March 2022. In addition, all sworn officers have completed the Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) training which provides active peer intervention strategies and tactics to help prevent misconduct, reduce officer mistakes and promote longevity, health and organizational wellness. ABLE training remains ongoing and all non-sworn employees will be trained by the end of 2022.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY: CRIME

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- The Lethbridge Police Service concentrated its efforts in 2021 by focusing on three basic pillars: prolific offender management, identification of crime hot spots and crime causation as part of a comprehensive approach to reduce crime. In conjunction with the implementation of a CompStat model, where data and intelligence is used to identify crime trends and assign resources accordingly, LPS achieved a reduction in crime.
- Members of the Criminal Investigation Division completed a review of the High Risk Offenders Unit to ensure effective and efficient monitoring of habitual and serial offenders. The study included consultation with other agencies to enhance information sharing, the identification of training and research into the development of an electronic monitoring program for offenders within the city who are required by court to participate. As a result of the review, Priority Crimes Unit members have expanded their communications to all areas of the Service and increased intelligence-sharing within the Southern Alberta Hub. Further, increased contacts with community partners led to improved proactive investigations involving prolific and high risk offenders as well as the development of roll call training related to Conditional Sentence Orders.
- As part of ongoing efforts to combat fraud, the Economic Crimes Unit worked to enhance public awareness by increasing the distribution of crime prevention and education messaging through conventional and social media channels. ECU also delivered sessions to retailers regarding the use of gift cards in common scams, liaised with the Canada Revenue Agency and Alberta Securities Commission to share information on COVID-19 scams and drafted a proposal for additional software and training to better equip officers investigating cryptocurrency-related frauds, which are expected to continue increasing.

“

It is our goal to provide safe communities. We will continue to maintain public safety through prevention, detection and resolution of crime and disorder.

”





“

We are committed to remaining current in proven technology to ensure our staff has the tools and training needed to meet the changing demands of their jobs.

We will weigh all costs and benefits prior to implementing new technology.

”

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY: TECHNOLOGY

### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- The Lethbridge Police Service implemented CompStat, a performance management system used to reduce crime. CompStat emphasizes information-sharing, responsibility and accountability, and improving police effectiveness through timely and accurate intelligence-sharing, rapid deployment of resources, appropriate tactics and ongoing follow-up. Police analysts extract crime data to identify trends and hot spots within the community and the information is used to allocate resources that target unwanted behaviours. Since the implementation of CompStat in 2021, the Service has achieved an overall 7.89 per cent reduction in person, property and drug crimes.
- In partnership with Lethbridge College, multiple virtual reality crisis intervention scenarios were created to help train LPS cadets. The scenarios feature a variety of crises that require recruits to use critical skills and interventions, including de-escalation techniques, to safely resolve the situations. The new tool will be used by the upcoming 2022 cadet class to help them prepare for their official assessments. The Service and College are also working to create a 'Day in the Life of a Police Officer' virtual reality experience and emergency vehicle operations scenarios.
- LPS partnered with criminologist Dr. John Winterdyk to review current data collection practices and identify efficiencies to ensure appropriate resourcing of patrols. Following the study, Power BI software was used to create workload reports for Field Operations Division supervisors, monthly statistical reports were enhanced for greater clarity and quarterly surveys on patrol deployment are being used to aid in the implementation of a more effective patrol deployment strategy.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY: COMMUNITY

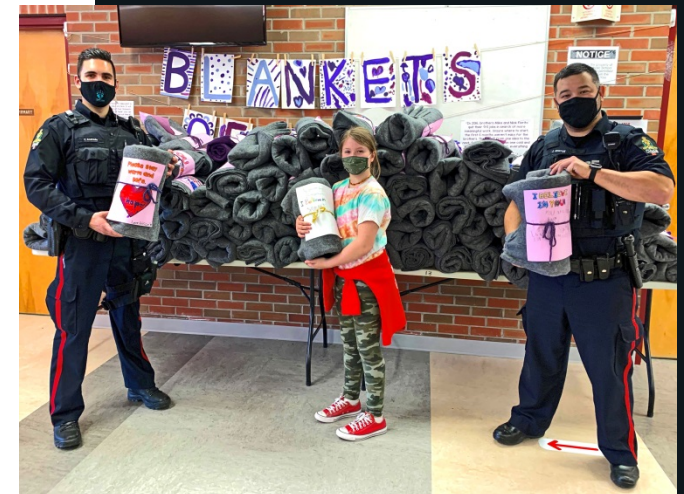
## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Three Town Hall meetings , hosted in partnership with the Lethbridge Police Commission, were conducted virtually and included presentations to the City of Lethbridge Leadership Team and Business Managers, community stakeholder groups and the general public. Information was shared in relation to crime trends, the actions and initiatives being taken by police to help reduce crime and the role the community can play in helping to create a safer city.
- In 2021, an Indigenous Advisory Council, comprised of Blackfoot Elders, was created to enhance communication and help strengthen the relationship between the Service and Indigenous community. The goal of the Committee is to provide education about the Blackfoot culture, guidance to ensure issues are addressed appropriately and the needs of the Indigenous community are met.
- In November 2021, the Victim/Witness Services Unit got confirmation they would be receiving a trauma dog in the first quarter of 2022. Two members of the VWSU have been designated as handlers and will receive the necessary training.
- The Lethbridge Police Service continued to expand the partnership with Children's Services, including the creation of a dedicated child interview room which was completed in 2021. LPS also has representation on the Chinook Child and Youth Advocacy Centre Multi-Disciplinary Team which works collectively to respond to needs of children and youth by taking a triaged approach in incidents involving child abuse. In addition, roll call training was developed and delivered to members on best practices when initiating child abuse investigations and provisions were made for external agencies to virtually monitor child interviews when required.
- In 2021, LPS officers completed 'Brain Story Certification,' an on-line tool that provides members with knowledge of brain development and the effects that stress and adverse experiences can have on physical/mental health. This training helps officers to have a better understanding of mental illness to enhance the response when they come into contact with people in crisis. In addition, it also helps officers understand and manage their own mental health.

“

We will advance public safety by continuing to build and invest in relationships with our partners and members of the communities we serve.

”





“

We are committed to continuously reviewing processes to enhance service delivery, identify efficiencies and ensure systems are in line with evidence-based practices.

”

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY: PROCESSES

### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- A new promotion process was implemented in March 2021 following a comprehensive and collaborative process involving a working group with representation from all ranks within the Service. In partnership with Lethbridge College and supported by the Lethbridge Police Association, a new process was developed to establish the steps following qualification testing leading to selection for promotion as well as ensuring employees entering the process are provided with the appropriate tools. In addition to technical and operational skills, the new process emphasizes personal character and the core values of each candidate. A review of the new process will be undertaken in 2022.
- A Patrol Shift pilot project was initiated in February 2021 with the intent of increasing officer staffing during peak call times, increasing proactive time and a seven-minute response time to emergent persons at risk/crime in progress calls. A number of frontline staffing challenges throughout 2021 ultimately resulted in a reduction in street strength due to COVID medical leaves and members being off as a result of professional standards matters. These impacts had a detrimental effect on the pilot project and as such it will be continued in 2022.

## THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

**101,482**

\*2020 City Census

**POLICING POPULATION**



**253**

**EMPLOYEES**

Police Officers :168  
Community Peace Officers: 7  
Civilians: 78 (FTE)

**83**

**VOLUNTEERS**

Victim Services: 60  
The Watch: 23

**124**

**SQUARE KILOMETRES  
OF POLICING JURISDICTION**

**CALLS FOR SERVICE**

**36,143**



519 LESS  
CALLS THAN 2020

**ONLINE**

**1,060**

**CRIME REPORTS**

**LPS SOCIAL MEDIA**

**52,000+**

**USERS**

**BUDGET**

**41.8M**

Salary & Benefits: 34.4 M  
Operating Costs: 7.4 M



**8,058**

**TOTAL CRIMINAL CODE CHARGES**

**ALBERTA TRAFFIC SAFETY ACT**



**6,994**

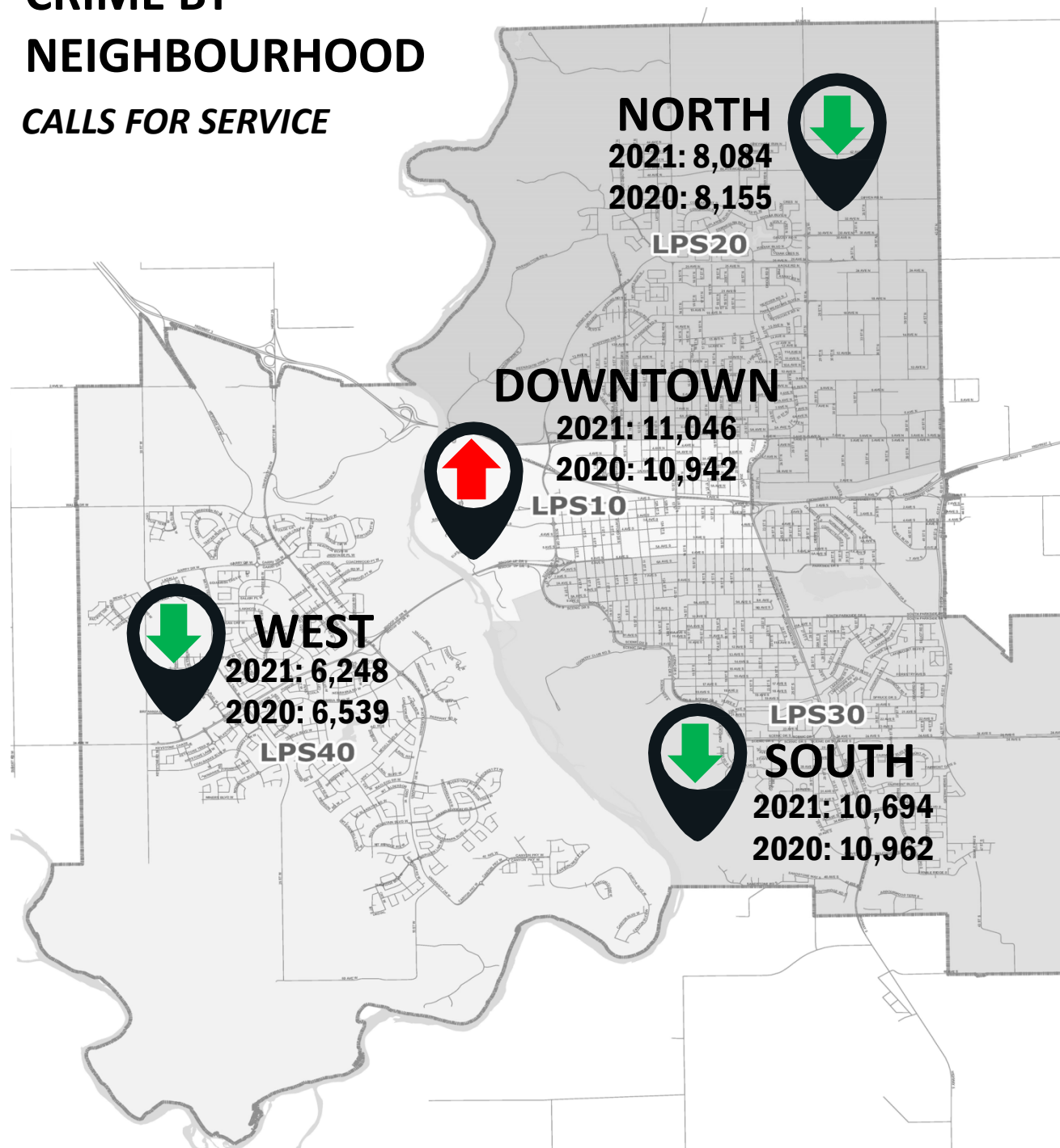


**CHARGES**

**AVERAGE 19 PER DAY**

# CRIME BY NEIGHBOURHOOD

*CALLS FOR SERVICE*



## TOP 5 CALLS

Disturbance/Nuisance  
Suspicious/Wanted Person  
Trespass/Unwanted Person  
Theft  
Public Service



## OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES

- Online Reporting
- Alternative Reporting Measures (Call Diversion)
- False Alarm Program
- Community Peace Officers Program
- The Watch

## OTHER POLICE RESPONSES

### CRITICAL INCIDENT TEAM

**12** 

#### DEPLOYMENTS

2020: 5  
2019: 12

### MISSING PERSONS

**356** 

#### REPORTED

ADULTS: 146  
YOUTH: 210

2020: 459  
ADULTS: 124  
YOUTH: 335

2019: 592  
ADULTS: 118  
YOUTH: 474

## CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS

|                                                                                                          | 2021  | 2020  | 2019  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
|  HOMICIDE               | 1     | 3     | 0     |
|  ATTEMPTED MURDER       | 0     | 0     | 2     |
|  SEXUAL ASSAULT         | 113   | 119   | 154   |
|  CHILD SEX OFFENCES     | 22    | 26    | 23    |
|  ASSAULT               | 1,216 | 1,141 | 1,231 |
|  CHILD PORNOGRAPHY    | 18    | 13    | 18    |
|  ROBBERY              | 57    | 47    | 59    |
|  CRIMINAL HARRASSMENT | 74    | 40    | 81    |
|  DOMESTIC VIOLENCE    | 1,820 | 1,667 | 1,779 |

## PROPERTY CRIMES

|                                                                                                                   | 2021  | 2020  | 2019  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
|  ARSON                           | 41    | 28    | 15    |
|  BREAK AND ENTER                 | 1,045 | 1,072 | 1,027 |
|  THEFT/SHOPLIFTING               | 3,464 | 4,160 | 4,901 |
|  THEFT OF VEHICLE                | 244   | 224   | 274   |
|  ATTEMPTED VEHICLE THEFT        | 14    | 24    | 36    |
|  POSSESSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY | 142   | 208   | 223   |
|  FRAUD                         | 577   | 725   | 746   |
|  MISCHIEF                      | 1,026 | 875   | 867   |

## DRUG OCCURRENCES

### GENERAL ACTIVITY

**413** 

REPORTS

2020: 441

2019: 460

### POSSESSION

**630** 

REPORTS

2020: 671

2019: 554

### TRAFFICKING

**203** 

REPORTS

2020: 236

2019: 182

# TRAFFIC SAFETY AT A GLANCE

## IMPAIRED DRIVING

**272** ↓

2020: 293  
2019: 422

## SPEEDING

**1,472** ↓

TICKETS

2020: 2,291  
2019: 1,965

## HIT AND RUN

**42** ↑

VIOLATIONS

2020: 24  
2019: 132

**238** ↓

CARELESS DRIVING  
TICKETS

2020: 347  
2019: 280



## DISTRACTED DRIVING

**458** ↓

TICKETS

2020: 570  
2019: 917



**251** ↓

TRAFFIC LIGHT/DEVICE  
VIOLATIONS

2020: 490  
2019: 455

## FAIL TO YIELD TO A PEDESTRIAN

**20** ↓

TICKETS

2020: 38  
2019: 46



## NO SEATBELT

**127** ↓

TICKETS

2020: 166  
2019: 362

## COLLISIONS

### FATALITIES

**3** ↑

2020: 2  
2019: 0

### INJURIES

**474** ↑

2020: 375  
2019: 457

### PROPERTY DAMAGE

**1,908** ↓

2020: 1,928  
2019: 2,177

## AUTOMATED TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT TICKETS



**PHOTO RADAR: 35,190**

2020: 32,502  
2019: 33,044

**ISD SPEED/RED LIGHT: 6,538**

2020: 5,970  
2019: 5,604

# ABOUT OUR EMPLOYEES



**168**

POLICE OFFICERS

AUTHORIZED  
STRENGTH: 173



**6**

CPOS

AUTHORIZED  
STRENGTH: 15



**78**

CIVILIANS



**83**

VOLUNTEERS

AVERAGE IN-SERVICE  
TRAINING HOURS

**19**

PER MEMBER/PER YEAR

OUR OFFICERS SPEAK

**17**

LANGUAGES

OFFICER EXPERIENCE

0-10  
YEARS

33%

20-30  
YEARS

16%



10-20  
YEARS

49%

30-35  
YEARS

2%

CHIEF (1)

DEPUTY CHIEF (1)

INSPECTORS (3)

STAFF SERGEANTS (8)

SERGEANTS (24)

CONSTABLES (131)

## ORGANIZATIONAL COMMAND STRUCTURE

## LONG SERVICE MEDALS

### 30 YEARS SERVICE

Staff Sgt. Dwayne Smith

### 20 YEARS SERVICE

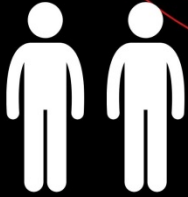
Staff Sgt. Pete Christos  
Staff Sgt. Robin Klassen  
Sgt. Jay McMillan  
Sgt. Steve Veale  
Cst. Wes Olsen  
Cst. Marco Pagliericci  
Cst. Chris Stock  
Cst. Les Vonkeman  
Cst. Stu Wickend  
Cst. Keon Woronuk

### 15 YEARS SERVICE

Sgt. Saska Vanhala  
Cst. Emory Adrian  
Cst. Darren Birrell  
Cst. Jonathan Blackwood  
Cst. Josh Buccis  
Cst. Jack Krystofiak  
Cst. Daniel Lomness  
Cst. Nathan Shenton  
Cst. Sean Walshe  
Cst. Jamie Williamson  
Cst. Mike Fielding  
Cst. Allister Koop  
Cst. Brent Lorenz  
Cst. Shaun McCarthy  
Cst. Joel Odorski  
Cst. Desmond Pike  
Cst. Tony Ramotowski  
Cst. Chris Robinson

## V/WSU 1991-2021

BY THE NUMBERS



526 AMAZING VOLUNTEERS

480,000 VOLUNTEER HOURS



41,091 SUPPORT FILES OPENED

87,600 HOURS OF PHONE SUPPORT



5,745 HOURS OF COURT SUPPORT

6,031 YOUTH & FAMILIES SUPPORTED



## VICTIM/WITNESS SERVICES 30<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

As one of the inaugural victim services organizations in Alberta, the Lethbridge Police Victim/Witness Services Unit was thrilled to celebrate its 30 year anniversary in 2021!

Over the past 30 years Victim Services has been committed to 'be there' with a legacy of 526 volunteers sharing empathy, compassion and concern for those in our community affected by crime and tragedy. For 30 years VSU has worked alongside the officers of the Lethbridge Police Service, collaborated with many amazing community services and sat beside victims as they moved bravely through the criminal justice process. For 30 years VSU volunteers have been there and are honoured to be included in this important piece of the Lethbridge Police Service's culture and history.

Over the month of September 2021 VSU shared highlights, incredible statistics and profiles of its amazing volunteers on Instagram during the #30daysfor30years virtual celebration. Every day the primary focus of the Victim/Witness Services Unit is helping people get through tough situations and feel safe in their everyday lives. It was with safety in mind that unfortunately the team was unable to celebrate as planned due to pandemic restrictions. Going forward, the hope is spring of 2022 will be better suited to gather, see a commemorative tree dedicated while in full bloom and celebrate the accomplishments and history of the past 30 years. The team is genuinely looking forward to seeing all 30 years of the VSU family around one table where everyone can take a moment to celebrate and reflect on the contributions and commitments made by so many.

In the meantime, VSU continues its legacy to support the community and LPS today and in the years to come. VSU remains committed to, and proud of, the heritage that has been built, the role its dedicated volunteers play within LPS and the community, and look forward to supporting people whenever they are called upon over the next 30 years.

# VICTIM/WITNESS SERVICES UNIT

The Lethbridge Police Victim/Witness Services Unit (VSU) is a 24/7 police-based victim assistance program that strives to provide information, support and referrals to victims or witnesses of crime or tragedy in the City of Lethbridge.

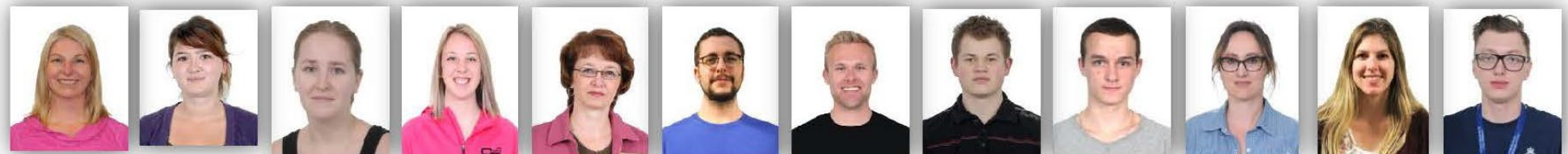
Volunteer Crisis Support Workers are civilian first responders who provide practical support during the first few critical hours after a crime or tragedy. VSU serves as a central information point for those who have been victimized, providing updates on the status of an investigation or subsequent court case as well as relay information about victim impact statements, requests for restitution, provincial financial benefits, and referrals to counselling services, specialized community resources, shelters, child protection, and crisis lines.

***"The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others."***

**#BETHEREVSU**



# VICTIM/WITNESS SERVICES – 2021 TEAM



# THE WATCH

The Watch Program is a volunteer-based initiative of the Lethbridge Police Service with the objective of enhancing the community as a safe and friendly place for everyone through social outreach, connection and intervention.

Members of The Watch manage a range of issues and events that historically involved police intervention, but in reality are not part of core police functions and most do not require police involvement. In many cases these issues are behaviours which are more annoying and inconvenient than unlawful. Having these kinds of issues managed by The Watch helps create capacity for police officers to manage issues of a criminal nature.

Under the supervision of an employee Team Lead, volunteers of The Watch patrol the downtown area on foot providing directions, first aid, tourist information and whatever assistance they can as required by whomever is in need.

The Watch acts as the eyes and ears of social and community services agencies and our emergency service providers. They connect people with Government of Alberta and local, private support agencies and organizations ranging from detoxification and treatment services to housing and shelter. They also arrange transportation, help people access services, connect people on the street with family, friends and their other supports, assist businesses in managing negative behaviours around their property and a host of other activities to serve and help everyone.

## In 2021 The Watch:

- Managed 6,517 events and issues and only had to involve the police in 1.2% of those
- Provided life-saving first aid and nasal Narcan in 47 opioid overdose incidents, providing 76 nasal Narcan doses in those incidents
- Conducted wellness checks on 369 people who appeared to be unresponsive or otherwise in need of assistance
- Arranged for 409 rides through community support agencies to take disadvantaged people wherever they needed to go in the city
- Advocated for and arranged intake for 16 people seeking detox and treatment for their substance use disorder
- Watch members arranged for 1,166 needle pick-ups through the Needle Debris Hotline

**4,483**

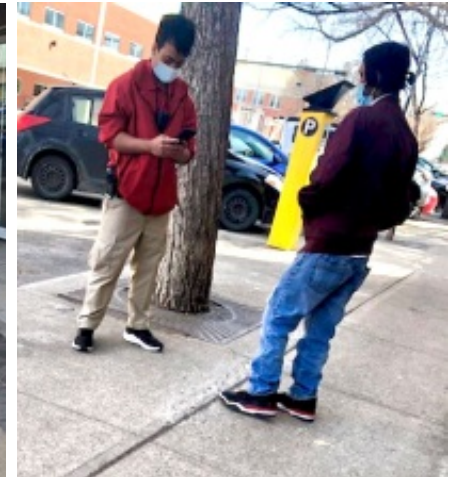
**VOLUNTEER  
HOURS**

**105**

**SAFE WALKS**

**6,517**

**TOTAL EVENTS  
& ACTIVITIES**



# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT UNIT

In 2021, following a review of the School Resource program, the Youth Engagement Unit was created to enhance the services provided to young people both inside and outside city schools.

In addition to their ongoing work as resource officers assigned to local schools, members of the YEU are focused on providing outreach in the forms of early intervention, positive mentorship, connections with support services, building relationships and keeping young offenders out of the criminal justice system through diversionary programs aimed at changing behaviours.

The scope of the new initiative has involved a partnership between both city school divisions along with other community agencies including Child and Family Services, the Youth Justice Committee and various youth homes. This collaborative approach will allow for greater information-sharing between police, schools and service agencies to promote more proactive involvement with young people in an effort to identify at-risk youth earlier so mentoring and supports can be put in place sooner.



# STOP THE OPP!

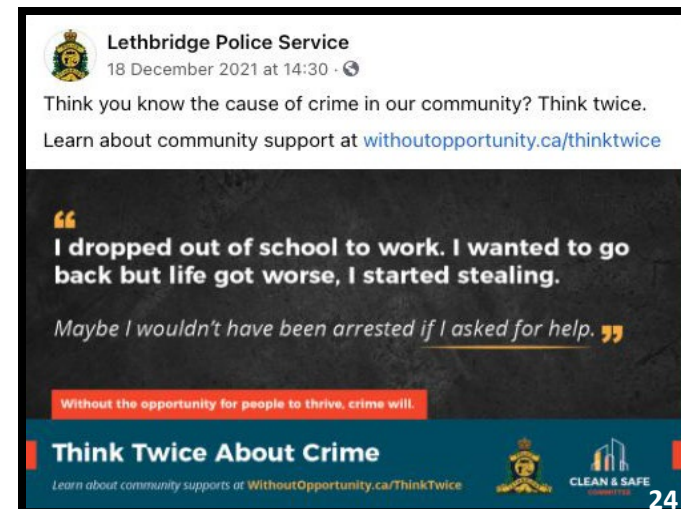
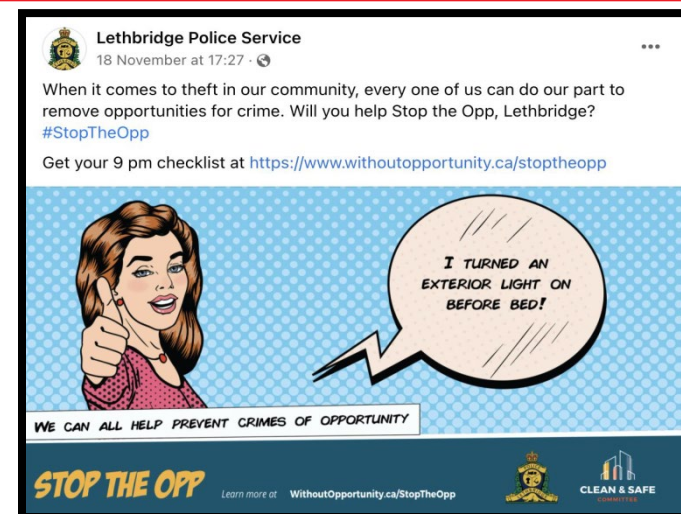
Lethbridge Police partnered with the City of Lethbridge Clean and Safe Committee and Calgary-based Help Seeker to roll-out a crime prevention campaign aimed at reducing opportunities for property crime and creating awareness about the root causes and consequences of crime.

In November 2021 the campaign kicked off across all LPS social media platforms with a series of comic book-style information graphics and videos. The campaign took more of a lighthearted approach than has been taken in the past in an effort to convey the importance of taking preventative measures to protect personal property, while avoiding perceptions of victim-shaming. Content was also focused on the consequences of crime and the impacts on offenders, victims and the broader community as well as the causes of crime including addictions, poverty and past trauma.

To tie the elements of the campaign together, the Without Opportunity website ([www.withoutopportunity.ca](http://www.withoutopportunity.ca)) was created to provide additional information including resources available to vulnerable individuals ranging from substance use and housing supports to financial and food supports.

## How LPS is working to reduce property crime:

- The Police Service uses CompStat, a data-driven approach, to gather timely and accurate information on criminal activity, trends and prolific offenders. The intelligence is analyzed and then operationalized by deploying resources to specifically target the areas where crime is occurring
- LPS has a dedicated Priority Crimes Unit whose mandate is to investigate property-related offences and monitor high-risk/habitual offenders in an effort to reduce recidivism
- The Crime Suppression Team works to proactively target high-crime areas and unwanted behaviours through a combination of high-visibility enforcement activities and covert investigative techniques
- Youth Engagement Officers work to identify at-risk youth, including those who have committed property-based offences, and provide outreach in the form of early intervention, mentorship, connections with support services and other measures to divert them from the criminal justice system
- LPS engages in public education initiatives through social media and traditional media channels to provide crime prevention strategies aimed at helping citizens reduce the likelihood of victimization
- Some individuals who commit property crimes struggle with substance use, mental health issues, past trauma, homelessness, and more. LPS works with numerous community partners and social service providers to connect vulnerable people with supports such as treatment, housing and other services to help break the cycle of crime



## POLICE AND CRISIS TEAM

The Police and Crisis Team (PACT) was developed as a partnership between the Lethbridge Police Service and Alberta Health Services (AHS), Addictions and Mental Health, to support individuals with mental health and addictions who have had recent contact with the criminal justice system. The primary objective is to support individuals by helping to facilitate access to community-based resources and decrease calls to emergency services or the hospital.

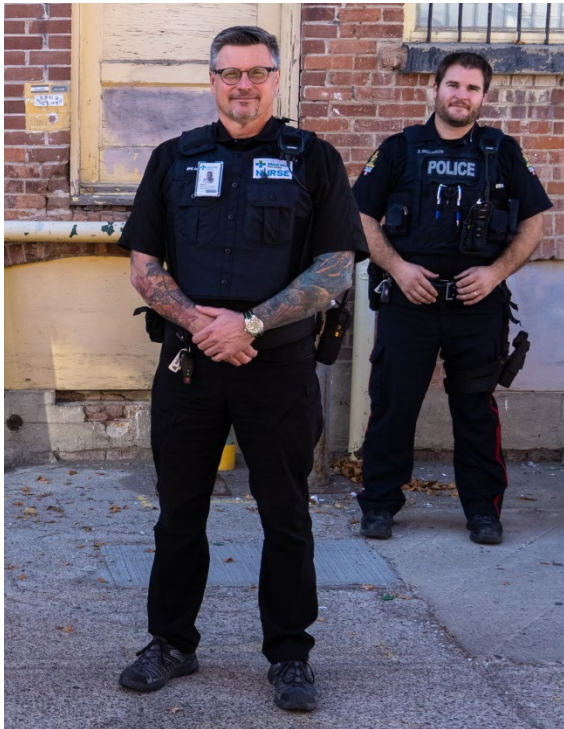
In 2021, a second PACT team was added to LPS. The teams consist of a Constable and a Mental Health Therapist, who work on a case management model to connect individuals with community support services.

PACT works with various agencies within the legal system, Alberta Health Services and community agencies to:

- Help stabilize individuals experiencing physical, addictions and/or mental health issues by diverting them to appropriate resources in the community, if possible
- Liaise with Chinook Regional Hospital to advocate for admissions if needed and support other police members when dealing with Mental Health Act warrants
- Connect or reconnect individuals to new or pre-existing services related to mental health or addictions inside and outside AHS
- Connect individuals to various housing and financial services when needed
- Provide consultation with various community agencies, AHS services and police members for complex case planning and management
- Monitor individuals for short term durations until they have connected with appropriate services

PACT works to promote a positive image and decrease the negative stigma that is associated with mental health issues and the interactions these individuals have with police.

PACT Constables have all the same authorities as patrol Constables and work with frontline officers on a case-by-case basis to determine the most appropriate and effective response and follow-up.



## Community Resources

Distress Line of Southwest  
Alberta  
403-327-7905

Lethbridge Police Service  
403-328-4444

Chinook Regional Hospital  
403-388-6111

Crisis Intervention Team  
403-381-1116

Alpha House (Shelter)  
403-942-8281

Wood's Homes Youth Shelter  
403-317-1777

Harbour House  
403-320-1881

Community Links  
403-328-5465

Canadian Red Cross  
403-327-7117

HomeBase  
403-942-7040

Diversion Outreach Team  
403-892-3707

Addiction & Mental Health  
Lethbridge Clinic  
403-381-5260

Mental Health Help Line  
1-877-303-2642

AHS Addiction Services  
24 hour Help Line  
1-866-332-2322

Kid's Help Phone  
1-800-668-6868

# COMPSTAT AND CRIME REDUCTION

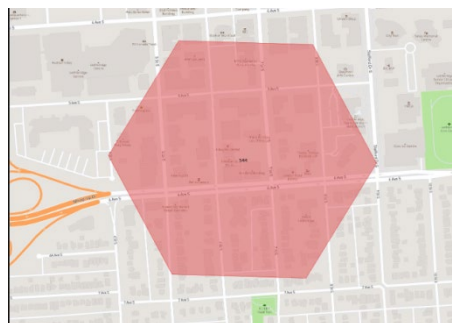
With the implementation of CompStat and a specific crime reduction strategy focusing on prolific offender management, identification of crime hot spots and crime causation, targeted enforcement efforts by the Lethbridge Police Service helped achieve nearly an eight per cent overall reduction in person, property and drug crimes in 2021.

CompStat – short for Computer Statistics – is a performance management system that was pioneered by New York City Police Department Commissioner Bill Bratton in the 1990s. CompStat emphasizes information-sharing, responsibility and accountability, and improving police effectiveness through information sharing, effective deployment of resources and ongoing follow-up. Police analysts extract crime data to identify trends and hot spots within the community and the information used to allocate resources that target the unwanted behaviours.

Since the implementation of CompStat police have not only had success in contributing to an overall reduction in crime, but greater information sharing and analysis has also led to more effective deployment of resources to better address crime and negative behaviour in problem areas.

## Core Components of CompStat

- Timely and accurate information or intelligence
- Rapid deployment of resources
- Effective tactics
- Relentless follow-up



# PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

The purpose of the Professional Standards Unit is to safeguard public trust and confidence in the Lethbridge Police Service by investigating and resolving complaints regarding policy, service delivery and employee conduct in a timely, unbiased and transparent manner. Complaints are received from the public or initiated internally and may be criminal in nature and/or identified as an officer misconduct or complaint against police policies under the Alberta Police Act. Under Section 46 of the Police Act, serious and sensitive allegations are forwarded to the Director of Law Enforcement for review and may be assigned to the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team.

## Statutory Investigations

In 2021 there were four statutory investigations, however no criminal charges were laid. Three of the matters remain under investigation by the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) and the RCMP has carriage of the fourth file.

## Alberta Serious Incident Response Team

ASIRT is investigating three criminal code investigations that were initiated in 2021. In addition to the 2021 matters, there are currently eight outstanding ASIRT investigations related to LPS members where dispositions have not been completed.

## Law Enforcement Review Board

There were two appeals accepted by the Law Enforcement Review Board in 2021. The first matter was from 2018 and the appeal was heard in December 2021 with a decision expected in early 2022. The second matter was from 2020 with a hearing date scheduled for 2022.

## Public Complaint Investigations

In 2021, the Chief of Police directed investigations with respect to 13 public complaints that involved the following allegations: unnecessary use of authority (3 counts); discreditable conduct (8 counts); inappropriate/unlawful use of force (5 counts); breach of confidence (1 count); insubordination (4 counts); neglect of duty (8 counts) and unnecessary/unlawful use of authority (3 counts).

### Disposition/Actions Taken:

- One sustained – supervisor intervention/counselling
- Four dismissed/not sustained
- Eight remain under investigation

## Service Investigations

In 2021, the Chief of Police directed five service investigations that involved the following allegations: discreditable conduct (5) and insubordination (2).

### Disposition/Actions Taken:

- Two sustained – supervisor intervention/counselling
- Three remain under investigation

## Citizen Contacts

There were 72 citizen concerns resolved by way of Citizen Contacts. Of those, two involved documented counselling issued by a supervisor.

## Compliments

In 2021, LPS received a total of 107 compliments.



**General Inquiries: [inquiries@lethbridgepolice.ca](mailto:inquiries@lethbridgepolice.ca)**

**Switchboard: 403-327-2210**

**EMERGENCY 911**

**Non-emergency complaints: 403-328-4444**

**135 1 Avenue South  
Lethbridge, AB T1J 0A1**



**CONNECT WITH LPS**  
**[www.lethbridgepolice.ca](http://www.lethbridgepolice.ca)**