



Lethbridge Police Service  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2022**



***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 2022 Lethbridge Police Service Annual Report to the citizens of Lethbridge.

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

This past year, the Commission was engaged in a number of activities designed to build capacity and enhance the overall effectiveness of its responsibilities. We held a strategic planning session which resulted in a plan that is intended to guide the Commission over the next few years in focussing on community safety and effective governance. We were able to collaborate with the LPS to engage the public in a Town Hall Meeting seeking input and direction for both the Service and the Commission. We worked closely with the Solicitor-General's office to provide Commission members with information and education in governance issues. Lastly, the Commission decided to move forward and hire a part-time Administrative Assistant, recognizing that the responsibilities of the Lethbridge Police Commission have been increasing over the past few years and the need for the Commission to remain focussed on its commitment to provide our community with an accountable and effective police service.

Looking back on 2022, this was a year that contained both challenges and celebrations. The Lethbridge Police Commission is proud of our Police Service and we are grateful for how everyone, from the volunteers, civilian staff, and the sworn officers, have worked tirelessly to provide a safe community for all Lethbridge citizens.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob van Spronsen'. The signature is stylized and written over a horizontal line.

Rob van Spronsen, Chair

## MISSION

*Through partnerships and collaboration, the Lethbridge Police Service strives to create a safe community for all.*

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## VISION

*Guided by the highest standards of policing, we are committed to supporting our community by addressing crime, maintaining public safety and strengthening public trust.*

---

## VALUES

*Respect  
Courage  
Accountability  
Professionalism  
Collaboration*



# MESSAGE FROM CHIEF SHAHIN MEHDIZADEH



I am extremely proud of our employees for their hard work over the past year and their continued commitment to creating a safer community for all. Our greatest asset is our people and 2022 demonstrated the strength and resilience of our team.

I am also grateful for the support we continue to receive from our community, the Lethbridge Police Commission, City Council and Administration.

Throughout 2022, the Lethbridge Police Service experienced staffing challenges and shortages that impacted the frontline. Our resources were significantly over-extended and difficult decisions were made to re-assign non-frontline positions to support our frontline response to calls for service. An increase in public order events further challenged our resources and capacity while public perceptions of policing as an institution continued to sustain criticism and calls for reform.

In addition to being the last year in a four-year budget cycle, 2022 further marked a year of transition with the re-branding of our mission, vision and values. Following an extensive consultation process where employees at all levels in the organization engaged with one another to consider who we are, what we do and what we aspire to achieve, a shift in the direction of the Service was achieved. The new narrative validates our identity, will serve as the guiding foundation for all that we do and continue to foster a police culture that models the way.

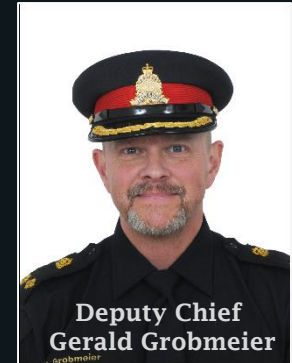
We celebrated a number of agency milestones in 2022, including the swearing-in of a new Deputy Chief, the Watch program's receipt of a Community Justice Award from the Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General in the 'partnerships and collaboration' category, the addition of a Facility Dog within our Victim/Witness Services Unit and a Belgian Malinois puppy that is being trained entirely in-house by our K9 Unit – something that hasn't been done in decades. In addition, we hosted our first Police Ball since the onset of the pandemic and our LPS Run and Community Town Hall Meeting returned to in-person events.

Operationally, LPS continued its commitment to crime reduction by enhancing our CompStat program, creating a standalone High Risk Offenders Unit to actively monitor and manage offenders in the community and implemented a dedicated Operational Intelligence Unit to provide investigators with real-time intelligence support.

Development of a number of initiatives began in 2022 that will benefit the community, including the Virtual Opioid Dependency Program (VODP) that will see the addition of paramedics in the LPS cellblock to provide addicted individuals taken into custody with immediate access to opioid agonist medications and connections for further support and treatment.

As we prepare for 2023 and the start of a new business cycle, I am honoured to be a part of the LPS team and a citizen in this great community. I look forward to the future with a sense of pride for what we have achieved and optimism for what is to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Mehdizadeh'.



Deputy Chief  
Gerald Grobmeier



Inspector  
Jason Dobirstein



Inspector  
Russell Lawrence

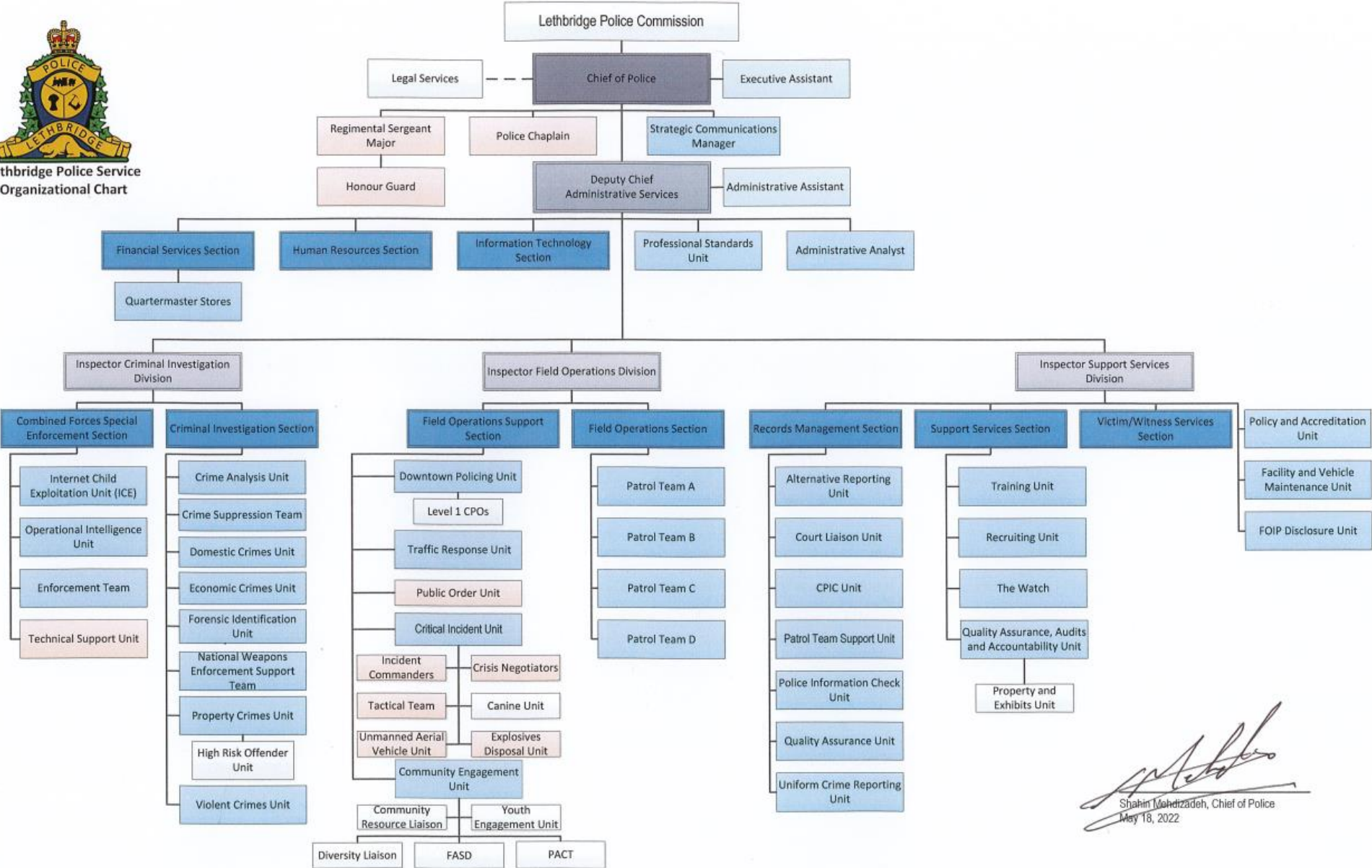


Inspector  
Jason Walper

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Lethbridge Police Service Organizational Chart



*Shahin Mahdizadeh*  
 Shahin Mahdizadeh, Chief of Police  
 May 18, 2022

# COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Collaboration with citizens remains a cornerstone of community policing and is critical in helping to drive operational decision-making to ensure the Lethbridge Police Service continues to meet the needs of the community.

In 2022, LPS contracted IPSOS to conduct a Community Survey that collected feedback from residents on their perceptions of the police service, community safety and policing priorities. Overall, a total of 78 per cent of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the services provided by LPS, with 86 per cent ranking the Service's performance as adequate to good. A total of 14 per cent rated performance as poor to very poor, with high crime rate and slow response times among the top reasons why. When asked about perceptions of safety, 71 per cent indicated Lethbridge is a safe community overall. Among the top reasons attributed to safety concerns were drugs, an increase in crime, homelessness and police staffing issues. Property crime, drug crime and crimes against persons were identified as the top three policing priorities.

In addition, LPS and the Lethbridge Police Commission hosted a Town Hall Meeting – the first in-person event post pandemic. The session included presentations by the Chair of the Police Commission, who provided an overview on the role of the Commission and details of their Strategic Plan, and Chief Mehdizadeh who shared information on crime trends, the challenges facing LPS and the actions and initiatives being taken to create a safer community. An open mic session followed and a number of community members spoke to police about being personally impacted by crime, issues they'd like to see police focus on and asked questions.

The feedback collected from the Community Survey and during the Town Hall meeting were later used as LPS developed its 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.

Moving forward, a Community Survey and multiple "Community Conversation" sessions are planned for each area of the city in 2023.



# FUNDRAISING FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS

The Lethbridge Police Service is a proud supporter of Special Olympics and each year officers and civilian staff host and participate in a number of community events to raise funds and awareness for the cause.

In 2022, the LPS Run returned to an in-person event following two years of virtual races. The fall race marked the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the run, which offers 5K, 10K and half marathon distances and attracts runners from across Alberta and beyond.

In addition, 2022 saw the 'BRRR'others in Blue police team take an icy dip into an Arctic Spas hot tub for the annual Polar Plunge and the Service partnered with the Alberta Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics on several events including Free our Finest, Cops, Pops and Pizza at Boston Pizza and more.

In total, the events LPS hosted and participated in raised nearly \$51,000.

Cst. Braylon Hyggen also applied for and received \$28,000 in total grant funding from Walmart Canada as part of their community grant program. All the funds benefit Special Olympics Alberta programming and services.





## CHARITY CHECKSTOP

The Lethbridge Police Service held its third annual Charity CheckStop in early December and thanks to many generous community donations helped make Christmas a little merrier for the less fortunate.

The event was hosted in partnership with Christmas Hope, a collaboration between Volunteer Lethbridge, the Interfaith Food Bank, Lethbridge Food Bank, Lethbridge Family Services (Angel Tree), Salvation Army (Toys for Tots) and My City Care (Shop of Wonders).

Despite the chilly conditions, vehicles steadily rolled up to the CheckStop with donations of new, unwrapped toys, non-perishable food items and cash.

In total, 490 gifts, 1,326 lbs. of food and \$1,039 in cash donations were received.

We are grateful for the tremendous community support received in 2022 and look forward to hosting the event again in the future.

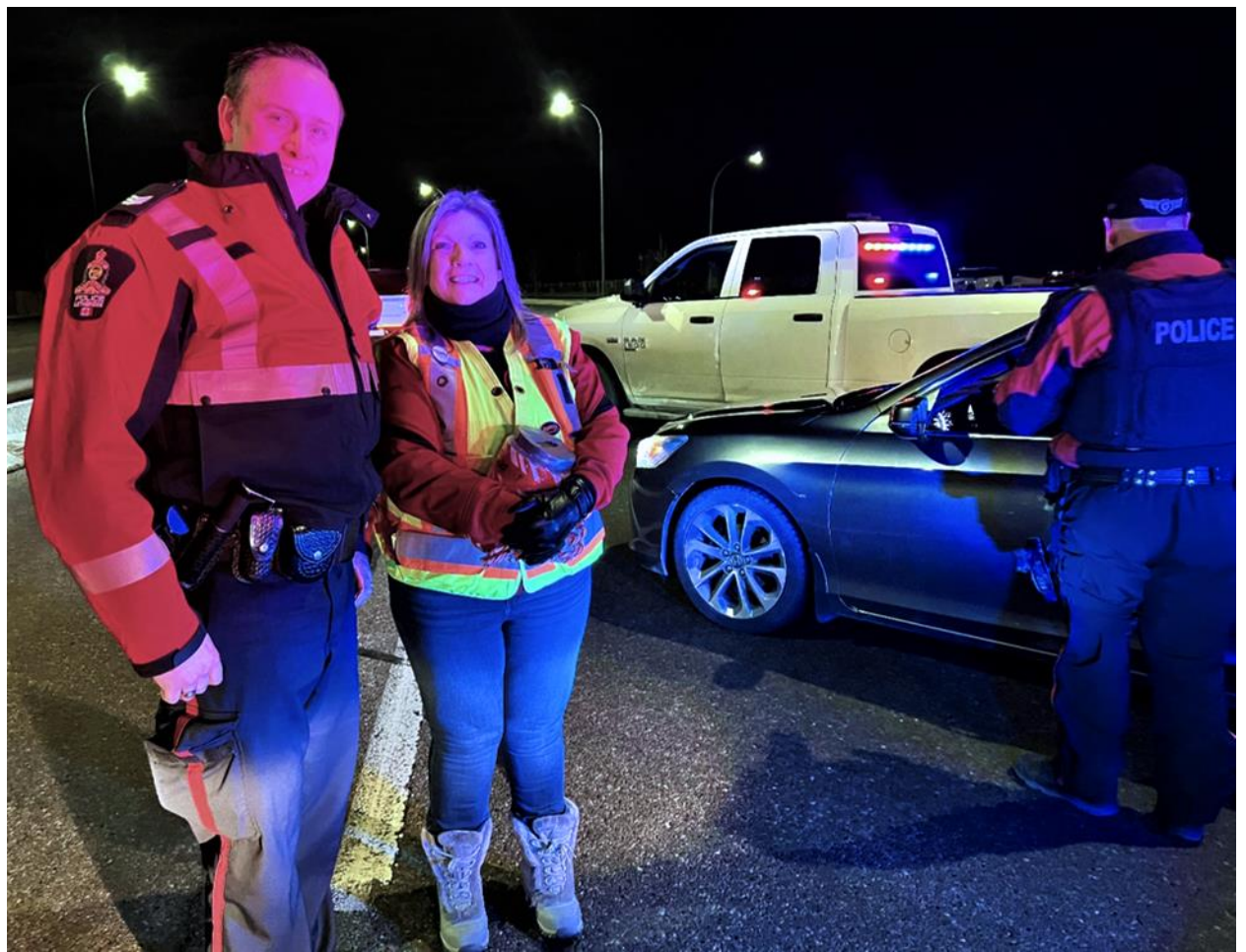




## MOTHERS AGAINST DRUNK DRIVING

The Lethbridge Police Service is a proud partner with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). Each year police and MADD work together during the Project Red Ribbon campaign to raise awareness and promote sober driving during the holidays. The red ribbon is a symbol of the wearer's commitment to never drive impaired, and helps keep the sober driving message top of mind for all who see it.

Volunteers with the MADD Lethbridge & Area Chapter also work roadside along with police during the LPS Christmas Check Stop campaign (and it's usually extremely cold!). Volunteers share information to help prevent impaired driving and also spread a little holiday cheer.



# 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.*

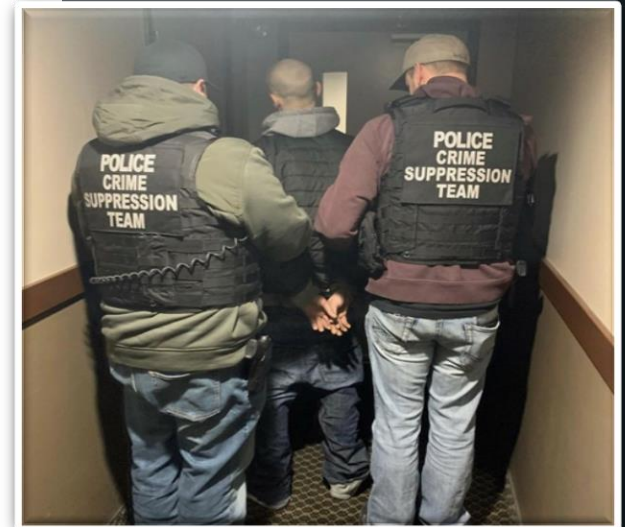
- The Lethbridge Police Service delivered two sessions of the in-house leadership training workshop that was developed in partnership with Lethbridge College. The spring and fall sessions were the first offering of this three-day workshop and included both sworn and civilian employees. The course provided an introduction to leadership and covered topics such as trust, leadership styles, emotional intelligence, ethical leadership and organizational awareness. The goal moving forward is to continue offering the workshop multiple times per year and it will be integrated into the new promotional process for 2023. In addition, several new facilitators – sworn and civilian – were trained in 2022.
- LPS re-established its Respectful Workplace Committee to represent a cross section of employees from across the organization, including union representatives and management. The group met on two occasions in 2022 and hosted a service-wide food truck event to bring employees together and foster an opportunity for camaraderie and peer-to-peer engagement.
- LPS engaged with City of Lethbridge People and Culture to collaborate on leadership training opportunities for civilian supervisory employees.
- A Human Resources firm was hired to conduct a Listening Tour with employees to help understand the environment and factors impacting employees. A summary of the findings was shared and included recommendations that were implemented in later 2022 to help improve employee experiences.
- The Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) training course continues to be an integral part of the Service's commitment to employee wellness. ABLE promotes a culture that supports peer intervention and equips officers with the skills to successfully intervene to prevent harm. LPS was the first agency in Canada to ABLE train its sworn officers and is currently awaiting the creation of a civilian ABLE program to deliver to non-sworn personnel.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY: CRIME

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- The Lethbridge Police Service enhanced its CompStat efforts in 2022, by shifting the model to focus on select persons of interest rather than a geographic area. The intent of focusing on select occurrence types that have a greater effect on the Crime Severity Index, is to more effectively address crime impacting community safety. Exploring the history of offenders enables police to determine the collective impact on the community by targeting individual offenders.
- In 2022, LPS created a standalone High Risk Offenders Unit (HROU) to actively monitor and manage the presence of high-risk offenders in the community. The work of the HROU includes monitoring offenders, enforcing breaches of release orders and other offences and entering or updating registrations with the national sex offender registry. The unit is also responsible for identifying offenders who pose a risk of harm to the public and undertaking the required legal processes to enable police to issue public notifications.
- In April 2022, LPS created a dedicated Operational Intelligence Unit (OIU). The OIU works closely with the Alberta Law Enforcement Response Team (ALERT) and other police and civilian partners to collect, analyze and share intelligence. The goal of the OIU is to provide investigators with real-time intelligence support.
- LPS recorded a number of significant drug seizures in 2022:
  - December –\$150,000 seizure of fentanyl and methamphetamine. This is the largest recorded seizure of fentanyl in the downtown core with more than 4,800 individual doses removed from the street
  - December – A targeted traffic stop resulted in the seizure of methamphetamine, fentanyl, cocaine and crack cocaine worth more than \$51,000
  - November – Seizure of fentanyl, MDMA, cocaine, methamphetamine and narcotics worth more than \$100,000 from a residence and vehicle. In addition, firearms and other assorted weapons were seized
  - June – More than \$126,00 worth of drugs seized plus nearly \$50,000 cash proceeds of crime following a search warrant at a northside home

*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 completed an organization-wide update to Windows 10. The upgrade project occurred in phases to ensure the appropriate safeguards for the back-up and retention of data. As part of the process the IT Section is also transitioning the Service to mobile workstations that will allow employees to work from remote locations. The building's wi-fi capabilities have been enhanced and the ability for employees to use their desktop computer remotely is anticipated in 2023.
- In 2022, the LPS upgraded its tactical robotics capabilities. The Service purchased an ICOR Mini Caliber tactical robot to replace an older model that was failing and offered very limited functionality. The remote-operated robot is used during critical, high-risk incidents to clear buildings, gather intelligence and perform a number of other tactical tasks without putting officers at risk.
- LPS continues to work in partnership with Lethbridge College to develop virtual reality scenarios to train officers in emergency vehicle operations. The virtual scenarios will supplement physical EVOC training, which is conducted every three years. The EVOC training simulations will provide a realistic experience and allow for additional training more frequently. Agencies throughout Alberta are watching the progress of this project with interest and once complete the scenarios may be adopted for use by other police services.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY: COMMUNITY

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- A Town Hall meeting was hosted in partnership with the Lethbridge Police Commission – the first in-person community engagement event post-pandemic. The session included presentations by the Chair of the Police Commission, Chief Mehdizadeh and provided citizens in attendance with the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback with respect to their policing priorities.
- In 2022, LPS began work with the province to implement the Virtual Opioid Dependency Program (VODP) that will result in the addition of paramedics who will be stationed in the short-term holding facility. The medics will provide individuals in custody with immediate access to opioid agonist medications to ease their withdrawal symptoms and further connect them with further supports and treatment options to address their addictions. Full program implementation is anticipated for the first quarter of 2023.
- Victim/Witness Services added a Facility Dog to provide comfort and support to victims in the community as well as the mental health and well-being of LPS staff exposed to traumatic events during the course of their duties. Kourt, a Golden Retriever/Lab cross provided by Dogs with Wings, is the first Facility Dog in LPS and V/WSU history.
- LPS partnered with Shoes for Kids YQL serving as a drop-off location for donations of new shoes for students in Grades 1-12. The program recognizes that a new pair of shoes can improve student behaviour, boost confidence and self esteem and increase participation in physical activity. In 2022, more than 300 pairs of shoes and more than \$19,000 in cash donations were collected to benefit students in need.
- Lethbridge Police Youth Engagement officers hosted Kids 'N Kops, a partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters Lethbridge that provide youngsters waiting to be matched with a Big Brother or Sister with strong adult role models while they learn more about police work. In addition, Youth Engagement officers hosted the sixth annual Youth Academy for local high school students interested in learning more about a career in policing.

*We will advance public safety by continuing to build and invest in relationships with our partners and members of the community 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

- The development of an LPS Master Plan was initiated in 2022 to evaluate current police service levels, equipment and infrastructure, identify potential areas for growth and provide a framework for future policing needs. Stantec was contracted following a procurement process and it is anticipated the plan will be completed by the spring of 2023.
- In 2022, the LPS Human Resources Section continued the implementation of Bamboo HR, a software solution used for opportunity postings, service announcements and job postings. HR completed digitization of all employee personnel files which will enable employees to access their own information electronically and supervisors the ability to access performance evaluations for those they manage. Starting in 2023, LPS will fully automate the performance assessment process.
- Research and work was initiated by the Promotion Process Committee to enhance the process to develop future leaders. In late 2022, a presentation was provided to Executive outlining a proposal for a leadership program where candidates will be required to complete training modules and work with a mentor to increase leadership skills as a prerequisite to promotion. The project was approved and work is progressing with the intent of rolling out the new initiative in 2023.

# THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

**101,482**  
\*2020 City Census  
**POLICING POPULATION**



**259**  
**EMPLOYEES**

Police Officers :162  
Community Peace Officers: 7  
Civilians: 90 (FTE)

**86**  
**VOLUNTEERS**

Victim Services: 67  
The Watch: 19

**124**  
**SQUARE KILOMETRES  
OF POLICING JURISDICTION**

**CALLS FOR SERVICE**

**36,143**

 **636 MORE  
CALLS THAN 2021**

**ONLINE**

**796**

**CRIME REPORTS**

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

**56,000+**

**FOLLOWERS**

**BUDGET**

**41.9M**

Salary & Benefits: 35.9 M  
Operating Costs: 6 M



**7,127**

**CRIMINAL CODE CHARGES**

**ALBERTA TRAFFIC SAFETY ACT**



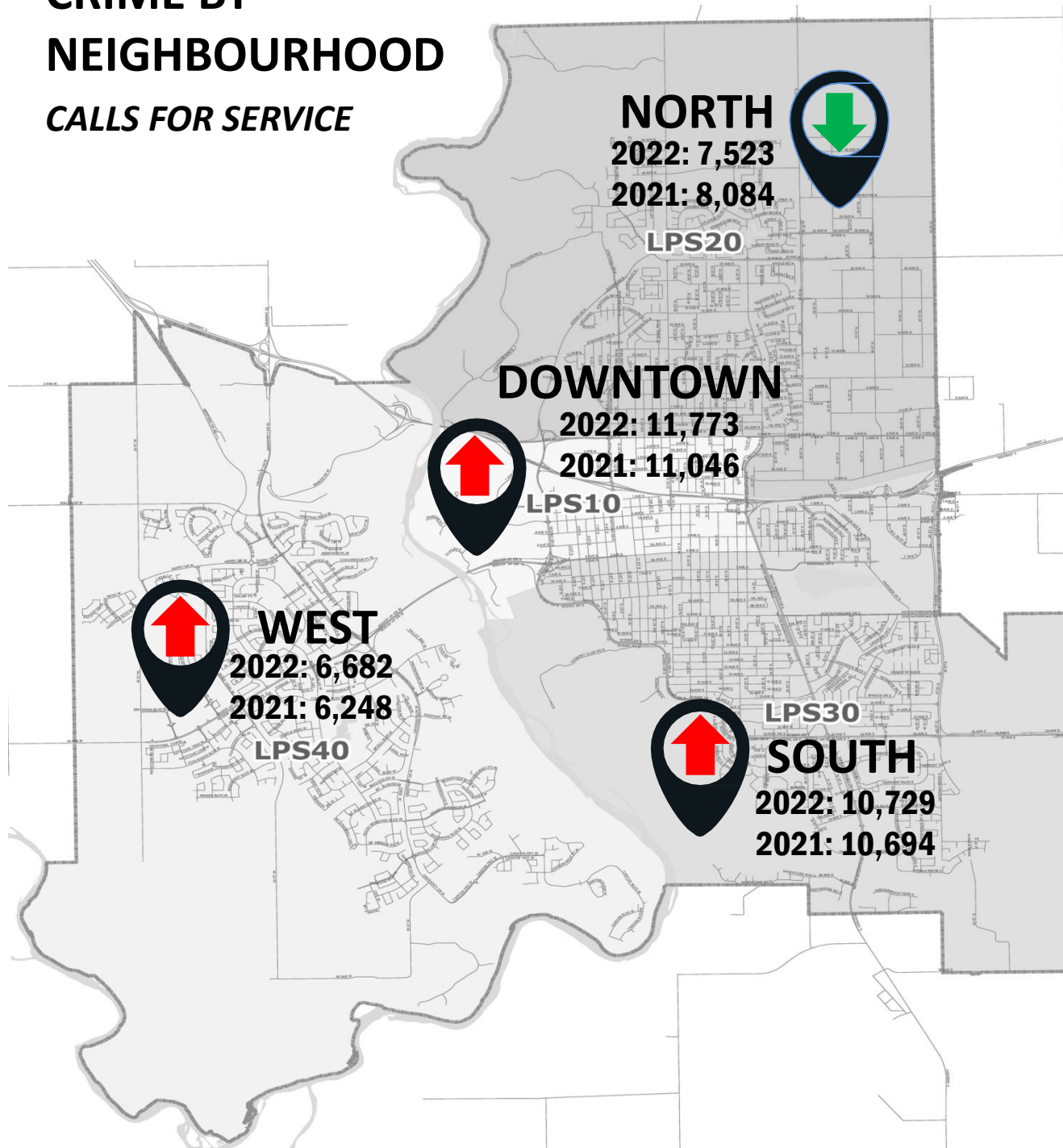
**6,417**



**CHARGES**

# CRIME BY NEIGHBOURHOOD

*CALLS FOR SERVICE*



## TOP 5 CALLS

- Disturbance/Nuisance
- Public Service
- Theft
- Trespassing/Unwanted
- Suspicious Person



## OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES

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

## OTHER POLICE RESPONSES

### CRITICAL INCIDENT TEAM DEPLOYMENTS

**12** 

2021: 12  
2020: 5

### MISSING PERSONS

**362** 










#### REPORTED

ADULTS: 143  
YOUTH: 219









2021: 356  
ADULTS: 146  
YOUTH: 210

2020: 459  
ADULTS: 124  
YOUTH: 335

## CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS

	2022	2021	2020
 HOMICIDE	2	1	3
 ATTEMPTED MURDER	2	0	0
 SEXUAL ASSAULT	133	113	119
 CHILD SEX OFFENCES	27	22	26
 ASSAULT	1,423	1,216	1,141
 CHILD PORNOGRAPHY	24	18	13
 ROBBERY	46	57	47
 CRIMINAL HARRASSMENT	70	74	40
 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	1,752	1,820	1,667

## PROPERTY CRIMES

	2022	2021	2020
 ARSON	14	41	28
 BREAK AND ENTER	965	1,045	1,072
 THEFT/SHOPLIFTING	4,002	3,464	4,160
 THEFT OF VEHICLE	375	244	224
 ATTEMPTED VEHICLE THEFT	46	14	24
 POSSESSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY	360	142	208
 FRAUD	978	577	725
 MISCHIEF	1,302	1,026	875

## DRUG OCCURRENCES

### GENERAL ACTIVITY

334 

REPORTS

2021: 413

2020: 441

### POSSESSION

485 

REPORTS

2021: 630

2020: 671

### TRAFFICKING

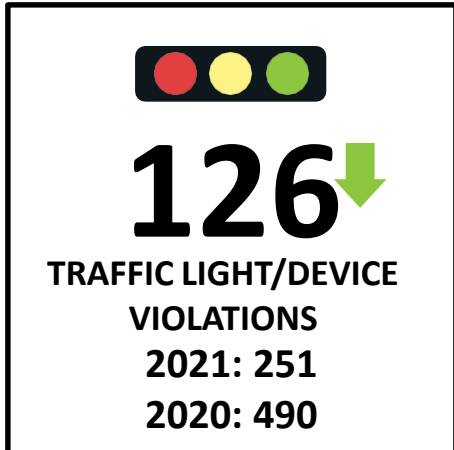
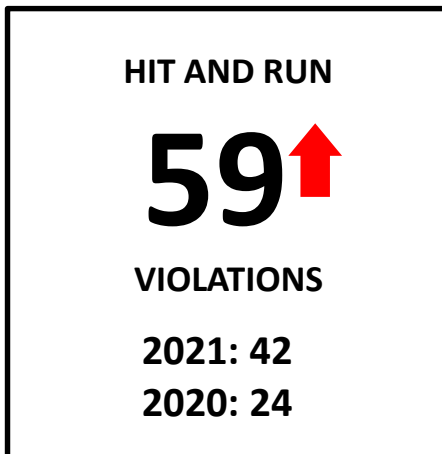
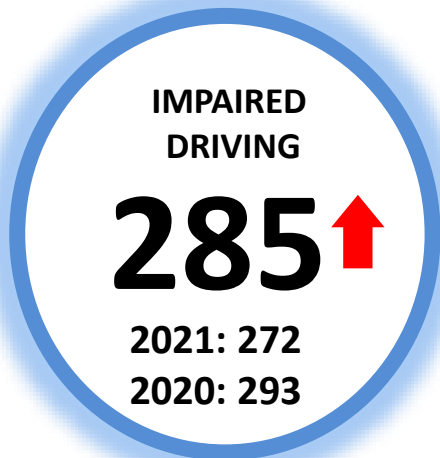
159 

REPORTS

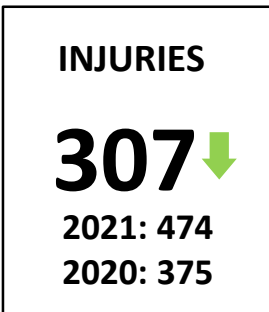
2021: 203

2020: 236

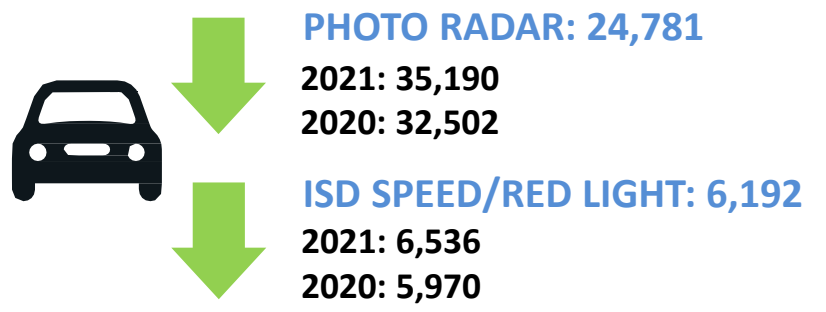
# TRAFFIC SAFETY AT A GLANCE




## COLLISIONS



## AUTOMATED TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT TICKETS



# ABOUT OUR EMPLOYEES

 **162**  
POLICE OFFICERS  
FUNDED  
POSITIONS: 173

 **7**  
CPOs  
FUNDED  
POSITIONS: 15

 **90**  
CIVILIANS

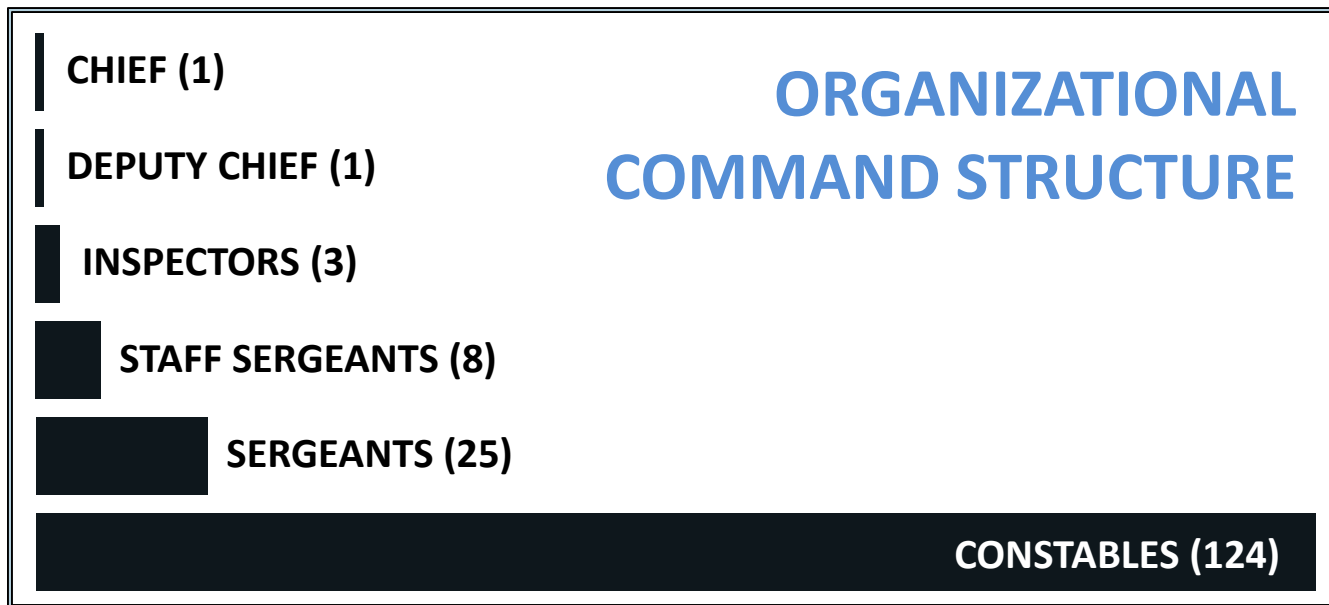
 **86**  
VOLUNTEERS

AVERAGE IN-SERVICE  
TRAINING HOURS  
**26**  
PER MEMBER/PER YEAR

OFFICER EXPERIENCE

0-10 YEARS 38%	<b>+</b>	10-20 YEARS 48%
20-30 YEARS 13%		30-35 YEARS 1%

TOTAL VOLUNTEER  
HOURS  
**9,050**



## LONG SERVICE MEDALS

### 30 YEARS SERVICE

Insp. Jason Dobirstein  
Sgt. Bill Basso

### 20 YEARS SERVICE

Staff Sgt. Jason LeBlanc  
Staff Sgt. Kyle Meyers  
Sgt. Leanne Christos  
Sgt. Travis Evenson  
Sgt. Rod Pastoor  
Sgt. Bryan Whelpley  
Sgt. Steve Veale  
Cst. Richard Borthwick  
Cst. Brent Brussee  
Cst. Shawn Davis  
Cst. Jack Krystofiak  
Cst. Kip Lewis  
Cst. Wes Olsen  
Cst. Don Realini

### 15 YEARS SERVICE

Cst. Steve Baker  
Cst. Dana Holland  
Cst. Brent Lorenz  
Cst. Shaun McCarthy  
Cst. Lyle Millhouse  
Cst. Desmond Pike  
Cst. Leslie Pollard  
Cst. Chris Robinson  
Cst. Chris Running  
Cst. Rob Saar  
Cst. Sam Scarpelli

### SERVICE RECOGNITIONS

CHIEF'S COMMENDATION  
Cst. Dave Easter

## NEW DEPUTY CHIEF

On March 7, 2022, Gerald Grobmeier was sworn in as Deputy Chief during a ceremony that included a smudge and blessing from Elder Patrick Black Plume. Grobmeier, a retired RCMP Superintendent with nearly 30 years of policing experience, is the third Deputy Chief in Lethbridge Police history. Throughout the course of his career, Grobmeier served in detachments across Canada and spent four years in Berlin as the liaison officer in charge of all international investigations involving Germany, Poland and Austria.





## FACILITY DOG KOURT

Kourt – the first Facility Dog in LPS history – was added to the Victim/Witness Services Unit in the spring of 2022. The two-year-old female Golden Retriever/Lab cross is trained to provide comfort and support to victims in the Lethbridge community as well as the mental health and well-being of LPS employees exposed to traumatic events during the course of their duties.

The four-legged V/WSU member received extensive training through the Lions Foundation of Canada in Ontario and Dogs with Wings in Alberta. Unlike traditional assistance or companion dogs that serve one person, Facility Dogs are trained to work with a handler to serve numerous people.

Kourt, is the pawfect addition to Victim/Witness Services and is co-handled by Program Manager Catherine Pooley and Administrative Assistant Vicky Snider. She spends her days at the office and in the community with Pooley and goes home with Snider where she spends her evenings and weekends relaxing in a family setting.

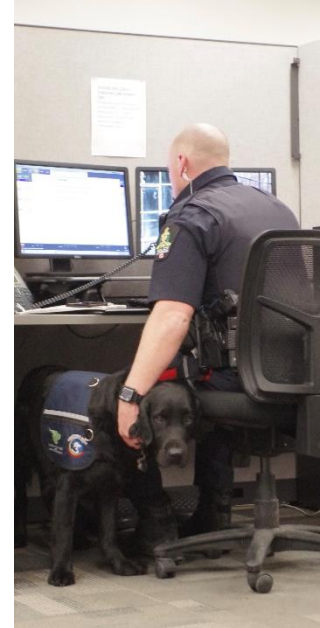


*The Lethbridge Police Victim/Witness Services Unit (V/WSU) is a 24/7 police-based victim assistance program that strives to provide information, support and referrals to victims or witnesses of crime or tragedy in the City of Lethbridge.*

*Volunteer Crisis Support Workers are civilian first responders who provide practical support during the first few critical hours after a crime or tragedy. V/WSU 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.*

## 2022 IN REVIEW

- 4,474 volunteers hours
- 1,239 volunteer shifts
- 227 call outs
- 11,150 on call hours
- 2,310 training hours
- 14,722 files reviewed



## VICTIM/WITNESS SERVICES UNIT

The Victim/Witness Services Unit (V/WSU) had a year of new beginnings in 2022. The year started with the training of a group of new Crisis Support Workers, bringing the team up to 58 people. The addition of the service's first Facility Dog, Kourt, in March changed the capacity of the unit to support both victims and staff alike. Kourt's amazing combination of playfulness and patience has quickly made her a staple of the unit. With a focus on internal wellness she has been able to support the LPS team in very special and authentic ways.

The office V/WSU works out of also saw a new beginning with a much-needed renovation allowing for a more trauma-informed approach with victims as well as increased efficiency and confidentiality for the Crisis Support Workers on-call. This renovation, driven by victim needs, helped this highly public-facing unit to feel welcoming and inviting as well as allow V/WSU to facilitate CCTV testimony in cases where it would serve the victim and criminal justice process well.

As the year drew to a close, V/WSU experienced the highest response to a recruitment process in its 32-year history seeing a remarkable number of applicants to fill the available Crisis Support Worker positions. In December, offers of acceptance went out to 25 new volunteers who would start their training in January and with them, the total volunteer team reached an all-time high at 67 Crisis Support Workers, making LPS V/WSU the largest volunteer base victim services unit in Alberta.

# THE WATCH

The Watch Program is a volunteer-based initiative of the Lethbridge Police Service that works to enhance community safety by providing social outreach, connection and intervention.

Members of The Watch provide a highly visible presence to help deter negative behaviours and crime and manage a range of issues and events that do not require police involvement.

Watch members patrol the downtown area on foot serving as the eyes and ears of social and community services agencies and emergency service providers. They connect people with support from public and private agencies and organizations ranging from detoxification and treatment services to housing and shelter. They also arrange transportation, help connect people on the street with family, friends and their other supports and assist businesses in managing unwanted behaviours in and around their property.

In 2022, The Watch was recognized with a Community Justice Award from the Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General. The awards acknowledge individuals and organizations who have made extraordinary contributions to community justice through sustainable and effective crime prevention, victim service, youth justice or restorative justice work. The Watch was selected for an award in the 'partnerships and collaboration' category.

Watch Manager Jeff Cove was also honoured in 2022 with a Blackfoot name. Cove was given the name "Travelling Amongst" by Piikani Elder Morris Little Wolf in recognition of his years of service in Lethbridge within the urban Indigenous community and to provide direction in his future interactions with the Blackfoot people.

## 2022 IN REVIEW:

- The Watch managed 11,892 events and issues. Only 0.8% required police involvement
- Served 4,576 volunteer hours
- Provided life-saving first aid and nasal Narcan in 31 overdose incidents
- Conducted wellness checks on 436 people
- Arranged 338 rides through support agencies for disadvantaged people
- Arranged intake for 21 people to enter detox and treatment programs
- Watch members arranged for 1,399 needle pick-ups

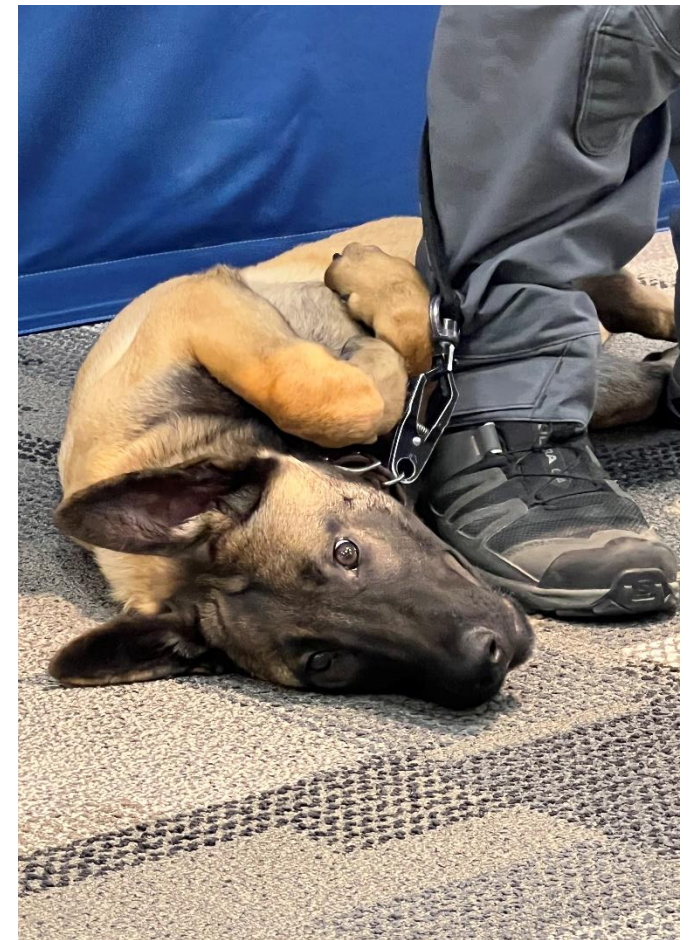


## NAME THE PUPPY

In 2022, LPS obtained a 12-week-old Belgian Malinois and invited city children to help choose his name. A “Name the Puppy” contest was held in June and after receiving more than 700 entries from city children, the name Bridge was selected. Bridge was chosen in tribute to the city’s most iconic landmark and as a symbol of strength and connection with the community. The name was submitted by 13-year-old Kassie Hotton.

The addition of Bridge marks the first time in decades LPS is training and testing a puppy entirely in-house. In the past, the K9 Unit has obtained dogs that are about 15-months to two-years-old and have already been named and tested to ensure they are suitable for police work.

The training process for a puppy includes learning skills in obedience, agility, tracking and evidence searching. Bridge has been in training since his arrival at LPS and continues to progress. If he passes his skill testing and his temperament is determined to be suitable for policing he will be ready to hit the street with a handler in 2024.



## 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 2022, there were three statutory investigations, however no criminal charges were laid. Two of the investigations were concluded as unfounded and one file remains open awaiting Crown review.

### Alberta Serious Incident Response Team

There were no incidents or investigations involving ASIRT in 2022. However, there are currently six outstanding ASIRT investigations involving active LPS members. The onset of these files ranges from 2018 to 2021.

### Law Enforcement Review Board

There were two appeals accepted by the Law Enforcement Review Board in 2022. The first appeal alleged the Chief's analysis and determination of allegations received against the Service failed to meet the formal requirement of a complaint as defined by the Act. When new information came to light the matter was re-assigned for investigation and it currently remains ongoing.

The second appeal related to sanctions resulting from a disciplinary hearing where the complainant was of the opinion that a harsher penalty was warranted. The matter remains before the LERB with a decision expected in 2023.

## Public Complaint Investigations

In 2022, the Chief of Police directed investigations with respect to six public complaints that involved the following allegations: breach of confidence (6), corrupt practice (1), deceit (1), discreditable conduct (5), insubordination (1), neglect of duty (7), unlawful/unnecessary use of authority (4) and unlawful/inappropriate use of force (1)

### Disposition/Actions Taken:

- Zero sustained
- Three dismissed/not sustained
- Three remain under investigation

### Service Investigations

In 2022, the Chief of Police directed four service investigations that involved the following allegations: deceit (1), discreditable conduct (7), insubordination (4), unlawful/unnecessary use of authority

### Disposition/Actions Taken:

- Two dismissed
- One sustained/sustained in part
- Three remain under investigation
- One loss of jurisdiction
- One official warning/reprimand

### Citizen Contacts

There were 52 citizen concerns resolved by way of Citizen Contacts

### Administrative Review

One Administrative Review was directed in 2022 related to a training incident

### Compliments

In 2022, LPS received a total of 90 compliments



Email: [inquiries@lethbridgepolice.ca](mailto:inquiries@lethbridgepolice.ca)

General Inquiries: 403-327-2210

Non-Emergency Complaints: 403-328-4444

**\*EMERGENCY 911\***

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**CONNECT WITH LPS**

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