

1. Lethbridge Police Downtown Policing Unit (DPU)

Program Description:

The 2024 Downtown Policing Unit (DPU) is composed of 1 Sergeant and 8 constables that operate in 4 teams. The DPU patrol on foot, bike when the weather permits and also the dedicated DPU Police vans.

Primary duties include:

- Visibility, engagement, problem solving, pro-active response and availability for calls for service;
- Interaction with citizens, business owners and vulnerable populations;
- Connection and dialogue with security guards deployed in the Downtown;
- Assignment of Downtown community problems for ownership, connection and follow up;
- Creation and implementation of projects to focus on recognized issues.

The Downtown is included in “10 beat” zoning structure of the police service, which will also have other members of Field Operations assigned. In addition to the DPU and 10 beat patrol members, other members may be dispatched to assist if required.

In-scope Activities:

Attending calls for service and taking a strong proactive role through foot and bike patrol.

Working close with the Crime Suppression Team and Priority Crimes Unit targeting illegal and negative behavior.

DPU works closely with the City of Lethbridge to enforce bylaws such as the Public Spaces Bylaw and the Encampment Strategy.

Out-of-Scope Activities:

Cannot represent any specific group or business within the community.

Program Opportunities:

DPU collaborates with the Property Crimes Unit, Crime Suppression Team, Community Peace Officers, The WATCH and multiple community agencies.

Program Limitations:

Criminal Code and Provincial Legislation guide enforcement and policing activities/projects.

Funding Details:

Annual LPS Budget

2. Crime Suppression Team

Program Description:

The goal, or mission, of the Crime Suppression team is to reduce violence and disorder, improve safety and enhance the quality of life for citizens of Lethbridge. The team consists of a Sergeant and 5 Constables who are part of the Criminal Investigation Section. They are on a rotational shift and can be called out after hours as the need arises. CST has the ability to operate in both covert and overt capacities.

In-scope Activities:

The Crime Suppression Team focuses on targeting enforcement action on individuals and groups demonstrating negative, unwanted behaviour, and are committing criminal offences within our community.

CST collaborates with outside stakeholders, partner agencies and with other units within the Service on a regular basis.

Out-of-Scope Activities:

CST does not provide contractual private security services.

Program Opportunities:

CST has collaborated with the Downtown Beat Unit on short term projects.

Program Limitations:

The application of law as outlined within the Criminal Code of Canada to ensure to the Charter of Rights of individuals are adhered to while conducting criminal investigations.

Funding Details:

Annual LPS Budget

3. Lethbridge Police Community Peace Officers (CPO)

Program Description:

The Community Peace Officer Unit (CPOU) is composed of 1 Sergeant and 11 Level 1 Community Peace Officers (CPOs) that consists of 2 CPO Patrol teams.

CPOs are appointed under the Peace Officer Act of Alberta and subject to the terms of their appointment. Lethbridge Police Service CPOs are appointed for the purpose of preserving and maintaining the public peace with authority to execute warrants, enforce provincial statutes, municipal bylaws, two Criminal Code offences and also operate the Judicial Interim Release office in the Short-Term Holding Facility of the Lethbridge Police Service.

CPOs on Patrol monitor and maintain public safety within their authorized scope of authority by patrol vehicle, and on foot, through responding to calls for service, actively deterring crime by being present in the community and building relationships with citizens and partnerships with stakeholders.

CPOs are dedicated to the Downtown of Lethbridge.

In-scope Activities:

Responding to calls for service within the Downtown, Theft under \$5000, Mischief under \$5000, executing warrants, community engagement, non-injury accidents, Judicial Interim Release Hearings. Providing information on safety and CPTED studies (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) to local businesses.

Out-of-Scope Activities:

Criminal Code investigations that are not within the enhanced authorities. Cannot represent specific groups or businesses.

Program Opportunities:

Collaborating with the Downtown Policing Unit, The WATCH, community partners and groups.

Program Limitations:

Government rules and guidelines, Peace officer Appointment (CPO Policy & Procedure).

Funding Details:

Annual LPS Budget

4. Watch Program

Program Description:

The Watch Program is a volunteer-based initiative of The Lethbridge Police Service (LPS) with the objective of enhancing the community as a safe and friendly place for everyone to live, work, shop and enjoy, through social outreach, connection and intervention. Members of the Watch manage a range of issues and events that historically involve police intervention, but in reality, are not part of core police functions and most do not require police involvement. In managing these kinds of events and activities in place of the police, capacity is created for officers to manage incidents that involve criminal activity.

In-scope Activities:

The Watch acts as the eyes and ears of social and community services agencies and our emergency service providers. They also connect people with Government of Alberta and local private support agencies and organizations. Watch teams connect people with detoxification and treatment services or housing and shelter, they arrange transportation, help people access services, assist businesses in managing negative behaviours in their area and a whole host of other activities to serve and help everyone. The Watch provides a highly visible deterrence to negative behaviours and crime, and a willingness and capacity to intervene in support of those who may be victimized in some way by crime. The Watch also acts in time of medical emergency providing lifesaving first aid and Naloxone when needed.

Out-of-Scope Activities:

- The Watch are not security
- They have a “hands off” approach
- No arrests
- Operate in downtown core
- Do not transport individuals but will coordinate with DOT team to do this.

Program Opportunities:

The Watch currently is in discussions with Community Social Development to provide outreach services to at risk population during daily interactions and prior to Tier III of encampment enforcement.

Program Limitations:

The Watch program is limited in areas they cover. Presently there are 5 zones that run from river bottom between 5 Ave North to 6 Ave South to Mayor Magrath Drive South. The other area of limitation is The Watch is a hands-off approach with no authorities under the law.

Funding Details:

Annual LPS Budget

