

= Lethbridge =

Lethbridge / ˈleɪθbrɪdʒ / is a city in the province of Alberta , Canada , and the largest city in southern Alberta . It is Alberta 's fourth @-@ largest city by population after Calgary , Edmonton and Red Deer , and the third @-@ largest by area after Calgary and Edmonton . The nearby Canadian Rockies contribute to the city 's warm summers , mild winters , and windy climate . Lethbridge lies southeast of Calgary on the Oldman River .

Lethbridge is the commercial , financial , transportation and industrial centre of southern Alberta . The city 's economy developed from drift mining for coal in the late 19th century and agriculture in the early 20th century . Half of the workforce is employed in the health , education , retail and hospitality sectors , and the top five employers are government @-@ based . The only university in Alberta south of Calgary is in Lethbridge , and two of the three colleges in southern Alberta have campuses in the city . Cultural venues in the city include performing art theatres , museums and sports centres .

= = History = =

Before the 19th century , the Lethbridge area was populated by several First Nations at various times . The Blackfoot referred to the area as Aksaysim ( " steep banks " ) , Mek @-@ kio @-@ towaghs ( " painted rock " ) , Assini @-@ etomochi ( " where we slaughtered the Cree " ) and Sik @-@ ooh @-@ kotok ( " coal " ) . The Sarcee referred to it as Chadish @-@ kashi ( " black / rocks " ) , the Cree as Kuskusukisay @-@ guni ( " black / rocks " ) , and the Nakoda ( Stoney ) as Ipubin @-@ saba @-@ akabin ( " digging coal " ) . The Kutenai people referred to it as ?a ? kwum .

After the US Army stopped alcohol trading with the Blackfeet Nation in Montana in 1869 , traders John J. Healy and Alfred B. Hamilton started a whiskey trading post at Fort Hamilton , near the future site of Lethbridge . The post 's nickname became Fort Whoop @-@ Up . The whiskey trade led to the Cypress Hills Massacre of many native Assiniboine in 1873 . The North @-@ West Mounted Police , sent to stop the trade and establish order , arrived at Fort Whoop @-@ Up on 9 October 1874 . They managed the post for the next 12 years .

Lethbridge 's economy developed from drift mines opened by Nicholas Sheran in 1874 and the North Western Coal and Navigation Company in 1882 . North Western 's president was William Lethbridge , from whom the city derives its name . By the turn of the century , the mines employed about 150 men and producing 300 tonnes of coal each day . In 1896 , local collieries were the largest coal producers in the Northwest Territories , with production peaking during World War I. An internment camp was set up at the Exhibition Building in Lethbridge from September 1914 to November 1916 . After the war , increasing oil and natural gas production gradually replaced coal production , and the last mine in Lethbridge closed in 1957 .

The first rail line in Lethbridge was opened on 28 August 1885 by the Alberta Railway and Coal Company , which bought the North Western Coal and Navigation Company five years later . The rail industry 's dependence on coal and the Canadian Pacific Railway 's efforts to settle southern Alberta with immigrants boosted Lethbridge 's economy . After the Canadian Pacific Railway ( CPR ) moved the divisional point of its Crowsnest Line from Fort Macleod to Lethbridge in 1905 , the city became the regional centre for Southern Alberta . In the mid @-@ 1980s , the CPR moved its rail yards in downtown Lethbridge to nearby Kipp , and Lethbridge ceased being a rail hub .

Between 1907 and 1913 , a development boom occurred in Lethbridge , making it the main marketing , distribution and service centre in southern Alberta . Such municipal projects as a water treatment plant , a power plant , a streetcar system , and exhibition buildings ? as well as a construction boom and rising real estate prices ? transformed the mining town into a significant city . Between World War I and World War II , however , the city experienced an economic slump . Development slowed , drought drove farmers from their farms , and coal mining rapidly declined from its peak . After World War II , irrigation of farmland near Lethbridge led to growth in the city 's population and economy . Lethbridge College ( previously Lethbridge Community College ) opened in April 1957 and the University of Lethbridge in 1967 .

## == Geography ==

The city of Lethbridge is located at 49 ° 7' north latitude and 112 ° 53' west longitude and covers an area of 127 square kilometres ( 49 sq mi ). The city is divided by the Oldman River ; its valley has been turned into one of the largest urban park systems in North America at 16 square kilometres ( 4,000 acres ) of protected land . The city is Alberta 's fourth largest by population after Calgary , Edmonton , and Red Deer . It is the third largest in area after Calgary and Edmonton and is near the Canadian Rockies , 210 kilometres ( 130 mi ) southeast of Calgary .

Lethbridge is split into three geographical areas : north , south and west . The Oldman River separates West Lethbridge from the other two while the Crowsnest Highway and the Canadian Pacific Railway rail line separate North and South Lethbridge . The newest of the three areas , West Lethbridge ( pop . 36,716 ) is home to the University of Lethbridge , opened at that site in 1971 , but the first housing was not completed until 1974 and the prime Whoop Up Drive access opened only in 1975 . Much of the city 's recent growth has been on the west side , and it has the youngest median age of the three . The north side ( pop . 26,751 ) was originally populated by workers from local coal mines . It has the oldest population of the three areas , is home to multiple industrial parks and includes the former Hamlet of Hardieville , which was annexed by Lethbridge in 1978 . South Lethbridge ( pop . 31,337 ) is the commercial heart of the city . It contains the downtown core , the bulk of retail and hospitality establishments , and the Lethbridge College .

## == Climate ==

Lethbridge has a semi-arid climate ( Köppen climate classification BSk ) with an average maximum temperature of 12 ° C ( 54 ° F ) and an average minimum temperature of 1 ° C ( 30 ° F ) . With precipitation averaging 365 mm ( 14.4 in ) , and 264 dry days on average , Lethbridge is the eleventh driest city in Canada . Mean relative humidity hovers between 69 % in the morning throughout the year , but afternoon mean relative humidity is more uneven , ranging from 38 % in August to 58 % in January . On average , Lethbridge has 116 days with wind speed of 40 km / h ( 24.9 mph ) or higher , ranking it as the second city in Canada for such weather .

Its high elevation of 929 m ( 3,047 ft ) and close proximity to the Rocky Mountains provides Lethbridge with cooler summers than other locations in the Canadian Prairies . These factors protect the city from strong northwest and southwest winds and contribute to frequent chinook winds during the winter . Lethbridge winters have the highest temperatures in the prairies , reducing the severity and duration of winter cold periods and resulting in fewer days with snow cover . The average daytime temperature peaks by the end of July / beginning of August , when it reaches 26 ° C ( 79 ° F ) . The city 's temperature reaches a maximum high of 35 ° C ( 95 ° F ) or greater on average once or twice a year .

The highest temperature ever recorded in Lethbridge was 40 ° C ( 104 ° F ) on 12 July 1886 . The lowest temperature ever recorded was -42 ° C ( -45 ° F ) on 7 January 1909 , 18 December 1924 , 3 January 1950 , and 29 December 1968 .

## == Demographics ==

The population of the City of Lethbridge according to its 2016 municipal census is 96,828 , a 2.1 % change from its 2015 municipal census population of 94,804 .

In the 2011 federal census , the City of Lethbridge had a population of 83,517 living in 34,140 of its 37,396 total dwellings , an 11.8 % change from its 2006 adjusted population of 74,685 . With a land area of 122.36 km<sup>2</sup> ( 47.24 sq mi ) , it had a population density of 682 / km<sup>2</sup> ( 1,767 / sq mi ) in 2011 .

In 2006 , the federal census reported a population of 74,637 in the city and 95,196 in its

census agglomeration . In 2006 , Lethbridge had a predominantly white population ; one out of eight people were non @-@ European , compared to one in ten in 2001 . Of those , 40 percent were aboriginal , most of whom came from the nearby Peigan and Kainai nations . Of the remaining 60 percent , Japanese , Chinese and Latin American made up the largest portion at over 1 @,@ 200 , 920 and 705 respectively .

The most commonly observed faith in Lethbridge is Christianity . According to the 2011 National Household Survey , 52 @,@ 595 residents , representing 65 percent of respondents , indicated they were Christian , down from 76 % in 2001 . Over 32 percent of Lethbridgians reported no religious affiliation , a substantial increase from 22 % in 2001 . The number of residents reporting other religions , including Buddhists , Muslims , Hindus , Jews and Sikhs amounted to 3 percent . For specific denominations , Statistics Canada reported 16 @,@ 945 Roman Catholics who were 21 percent of the population , and 7 @,@ 335 members of the United Church of Canada who were about 9 percent of the population .

According to the 2011 census , more than 87 percent of residents spoke English as a first language . Nearly 2 percent spoke German ; just over 1 percent each spoke Spanish , Dutch , or French ; and almost 1 percent each spoke Chinese ( unspecified ) , Tagalog , Polish , or Hungarian their first language . The next most commonly spoken languages were Japanese , Italian , Ukrainian , Nepali , Cantonese , Vietnamese .

= = Economy = =

Lethbridge is southern Alberta 's commercial , distribution , financial and industrial centre ( although Medicine Hat plays a similar role in southeastern Alberta ) . It has a trading area population of 275 @,@ 000 , including parts of British Columbia and Montana , and provides jobs for up to 86 @,@ 000 people who commute to and within the city from a radius of 100 kilometres ( 62 mi ) .

Lethbridge 's economy has traditionally been agriculture @-@ based ; however , it has diversified in recent years . Half of the workforce is employed in the health , education , retail and hospitality sectors , and the top five employers are government @-@ based . Several national companies are based in Lethbridge . From its founding in 1935 , Canadian Freightways based its head office there until moving operations to Calgary in 1948 , though its call centre remains in Lethbridge . Taco Time Canada was based in the city from 1978 ? 1995 before moving to Calgary . Minute Muffler , which began in 1969 , is based in Lethbridge . International shipping company H & R Transport has been based in the city since 1955 . Braman Furniture , which has locations in Manitoba and Ontario , was headquartered in Lethbridge from 1991 ? 2008 .

Lethbridge serves as a hub for commercial activity in the region by providing services and amenities . Many transport services , including Greyhound buses , four provincial highways , rail service and an airport , are concentrated in or near the city . In 2004 , the police services of Lethbridge and Coaldale combined to form the Lethbridge Regional Police Service . Lethbridge provides municipal water to Coaldale , Coalhurst , Diamond City , Iron Springs , Monarch , Shaughnessy and Turin .

In 2002 , the municipal government organized Economic Development Lethbridge , a body responsible for promoting and developing the city 's commercial interests . Two years later , the city joined in a partnership with 24 other local communities to create an economic development alliance called SouthGrow , representing a population of over 140 @,@ 000 . In 2006 , Economic Development Lethbridge partnered with SouthGrow Regional Initiative and Alberta SouthWest Regional Alliance to create the Southern Alberta Alternative Energy Partnership . This partnership promotes business related to alternative energy , including wind power , solar power and biofuel , in the region .

= = Arts and culture = =

Lethbridge was designated a Cultural Capital of Canada for the 2004 ? 2005 season . The Southern Alberta Ethnic Association ( Multicultural Heritage Centre ) promotes multiculturalism and ethnic heritage in the community .

The city is home to venues and organizations promoting the arts . Founded in 1958 , the Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge is the largest organization in the city dedicated to preserving and enhancing the local arts . In the spring of 2007 , the Allied Arts Council Facilities Steering Committee initiated the Arts Re : Building Together Campaign , a grass roots campaign initiative to raise awareness and support for improving arts facilities in Lethbridge . The campaign identified three arts buildings : the Yates Memorial Centre , the Bowman Arts Centre , and the Southern Alberta Art Gallery as cornerstone facilities in the community requiring care and attention . On 14 July 2007 , the Finance Committee of City Council approved four arts capital projects for inclusion in the City ' s Ten Year Capital Plan . Under the campaign to 2010 , the renovation and expansion of the Southern Alberta Art Gallery was completed , a new Community Arts Centre will be built in downtown Lethbridge , the City of Lethbridge has a Public Art Program , and a committee was formed to research the possibility of a new Performing Arts Centre in Lethbridge .

Lethbridge has a public library and three major museum / galleries . The Southern Alberta Art Gallery is a contemporary gallery ; the community arts centre Casa , administered by the Allied Arts Council ; and the University of Lethbridge Art Gallery produces contemporary exhibitions including works from its extensive collection of Canadian , American and European art .

The Lethbridge Symphony Orchestra has been performing in the city since 1961 . It has produced spin @-@ off music groups , the Lethbridge Musical Theatre and the Southern Alberta Chamber Orchestra . Vox Musica , which traces its roots back to 1968 , is a community choir based at the University of Lethbridge and has been performing since 1984 . Theatrical productions are presented by the University of Lethbridge 's theatre department and the New West Theatre , which produces seven shows annually . New West Theatre performs at the Genevieve E. Yates Memorial Centre using its two theatres : the 500 @-@ seat proscenium Yates Theatre and the 180 @-@ seat black box Sterndale Bennett Theatre .

= = Attractions = =

The city , which began as a frontier town , has several historical attractions . The Lethbridge Viaduct , commonly known as the High Level Bridge , is the longest and highest steel trestle bridge in North America . It was completed in 1909 on what was then the city 's western edge . Indian Battle Park , in the coulees of the Oldman River , commemorates the last battle between the Cree and the Blackfoot First Nations in 1870 .

Originally known as Fort Hamilton , Fort Whoop @-@ Up was a centre of illegal activities during the late 19th century . It was first built in 1869 by J.J. Healy and A.B. Hamilton as a whiskey post and was destroyed by fire a year later . A second , sturdier structure later replaced the fort .

As the cultural centre of southern Alberta , Lethbridge has notable cultural attractions . Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden in south Lethbridge was opened in 1967 as part of a Canadian centennial celebration attended by Japan ' s Prince and Princess Takamatsu . Galt Museum & Archives is the largest museum in the Lethbridge area ; the building housing the museum served as the city 's main hospital during the late 19th century and early 20th centuries .

Several structures such as the post office are prominent on the skyline of Lethbridge . Less well @-@ known than the High Level Bridge , the post office is one of the most distinctive buildings in Lethbridge . Built in 1912 , the four @-@ storey structure is crowned by a functioning clock tower . Other prominent buildings include office towers ; the water tower , which was originally built in 1958 and sold to a private developer who converted it into a restaurant ; and the Alberta Terminals grain elevators .

= = Sports and recreation = =

Lethbridge has designated 16 percent of the land within city boundaries as parkland , including the 755 hectares ( 1 @, @ 870 acres ) Oldman River valley parks system . It has facilities for field sports and baseball , a disc golf course , 2 skate parks , a BMX track , a climbing wall , a dozen tennis courts , and seven pools . It is home to five golf courses , including the award @-@ winning

Paradise Canyon Golf Resort , and is within 30 kilometres ( 19 mi ) of several others .

Built for the 1975 Canada Games , the ENMAX Centre is Lethbridge 's multipurpose arena . The 6 @, @ 500 @-@ seat facility has hosted concerts , three @-@ ring circuses , multicultural events , national curling championships , basketball events , banquets , skating events and the Lethbridge Hurricanes , a major Western Hockey League franchise . The arena has a running track , racquetball and squash courts , and a full @-@ size ice rink . An outdoor sports field with capacity for 2 @, @ 000 people is adjacent to the centre . In 1997 , the 58 @, @ 000 @-@ square @-@ foot ( 5 @, @ 400 m2 ) Community Savings Place ( formerly the Lethbridge Soccer Centre ) was built directly south of the ENMAX Centre and added two regulation size indoor soccer pitches to the complex .

Several winter sports venues are in or near Lethbridge . The city has six indoor ice arenas with a total ice area of 11 @, @ 220 square metres ( 120 @, @ 800 sq ft ) and a total seating capacity of 8 @, @ 149 . Other than the ENMAX Centre , all ice surfaces are available from October to April only . Lethbridge is 150 kilometres ( 93 mi ) east of the Castle Mountain ski resort .

= = Government = =

Eight councillors and a mayor make up the Lethbridge City Council . City voters elect a new government every four years . The last election was October 21 , 2013 . Lethbridge does not have a ward system , so the mayor and all councillors are elected at large . The 2009 ? 2011 operating budget of the City of Lethbridge was C \$ 250 ? 278 million , more than half of which came from property tax . One Member of Parliament ( MP ) representing Lethbridge sits in the House of Commons in Ottawa , and two members of Alberta 's legislative assembly ( MLAs ) , representing Lethbridge @-@ East ( NDP ) and Lethbridge @-@ West ( NDP ) , sit in the legislative assembly in Edmonton .

Traditionally , political leanings in Lethbridge have been right @-@ wing . Federally , from 1917 to 1930 , Lethbridge voters switched between various federal parties , but from 1935 to 1957 , they voted Social Credit in each election . Progressive Conservatives held office from 1958 until 1993 , when the Reform Party of Canada was formed . The Reform party and its various subsequent incarnations such as the current Conservative Party of Canada have dominated the polls since . In contrast , the city 's two provincial electoral districts are both represented by the centre @-@ left Alberta New Democratic Party .

The Alberta government through Alberta Health Services administers public health services . Chinook Health oversees facilities in southwestern Alberta , such as the Chinook Regional Hospital and St. Michael 's Health Centre .

= = Infrastructure = =

= = Transportation = =

Mass transit in Lethbridge consists of 40 buses ( with an average age of 10 years ) operating on more than a dozen routes . Traditionally , bus routes in the city started and ended downtown . In the early 21st century , however , Lethbridge Transit introduced cross @-@ town and shuttle routes , such as University of Lethbridge to Lethbridge College , University of Lethbridge to the North Lethbridge terminal , and Lethbridge College to the North Lethbridge terminal . Several routes converge near the Chinook Regional Hospital , although it is not officially a terminal .

The Parks and Recreation department maintains the citywide , 30 @-@ kilometre ( 19 mi ) pedestrian / cyclist Coal Banks Trail system ( map ) . The system was designed to connect the Oldman River valley with other areas of the city , including Pavan Park in the north , Henderson Lake in the east , Highways 4 and 5 in the south and a loop in West Lethbridge ( including University Drive and McMaster Blvd ) .

Four provincial highways ( 3 , 4 , 5 , and 25 ) run through or terminate in Lethbridge . This has led

to the creation of major arterial roads , including Mayor Magrath Drive , University Drive and Scenic Drive . This infrastructure and its location on the CANAMEX Corridor has helped make Lethbridge and its freight depots a major shipping destination . Lethbridge is 100 kilometres ( 62 mi ) north of the United States border via Highways 4 and 5 and 210 kilometres ( 130 mi ) south of Calgary via Highways 2 and 3 . Highways 2 , 3 and 4 form part of the CANAMEX trade route between Mexico , the United States , and Canada .

Lethbridge is near the Lethbridge Airport and the CPR rail yards in Kipp , Alberta . The airport provides commercial flights to Calgary and Edmonton , as well as private and charter flights elsewhere . The airport provides customs services for flights arriving from the United States . The rail yards were moved to Kipp , just west of the city , from downtown Lethbridge in 1983 . The yards were planned for redevelopment with a mix of multi @-@ family residential , commercial and light industrial land uses . The Park Place Mall is now located on the portion of the former rail yards north of 1 Avenue South between Scenic Drive to the west and Stafford Drive to the east .

#### = = Education = =

The Lethbridge School District No. 51 and the separate Holy Spirit Roman Catholic School Division administer grades kindergarten through 12 locally . The Palliser School Division , which is based in Lethbridge , administers public primary and secondary education in the outlying areas . Lethbridge School District No. 51 administers four high schools ( Chinook High School , Lethbridge Collegiate Institute , Winston Churchill High School and Immanuel Christian High School ) , four middle schools , and 12 elementary schools in Lethbridge .

Lethbridge is home to Lethbridge College , founded in 1957 , and the University of Lethbridge , founded in 1967 . Red Crow Community College has a campus in the city . During the 2003 ? 2004 school year , the University of Lethbridge and the Lethbridge College had a combined enrolment of 14 @, @ 000 , which was 20 percent of the city 's population .

#### = = Media = =

Lethbridge has two major newspapers : the daily Lethbridge Herald and the weekly Lethbridge Sun Times . The university and college each have a student @-@ run , weekly newspaper . There are 11 FM radio stations , including CKXU @-@ FM , a campus radio station located at the University of Lethbridge and the pop station , CJBZ @-@ FM .

The city is also served by four broadcast television channels . Global Lethbridge ( CISA @-@ DT ) and CTV Lethbridge ( CFCN @-@ DT ) air local newscasts along with their respective network programming .