



Jen Schmidt-Rempel, Lethbridge Council Candidate

What are your priorities for public services in our communities?

As a public sector employee myself, my priority for strengthening public services in Lethbridge is to support, advocate for, and secure the services we need. I'm committed to supporting our public services, such as firefighters and other first responders, and ensuring they receive the resources necessary to delivery the services we are asking them to provide. We need services focused on primary health care and mental health. We require services that will support a coordinated and integrated needs-based social services strategy. We also need to ensure that City staff are able to maintain the infrastructure and nature spaces we have grown to appreciate in our community.

What is your position on private-public partnerships?

As with all economic tools that could help our community, P3s around capital projects can offer some opportunity. For example, a performing arts centre has been on our community's radar for some time but the City doesn't have the funds. A P3 with a local developer could create a wonderful centre that also offers housing, retail and commercial space, or a hotel and conference facilities. Partnerships that can benefit the community and spark local investment ought to be explored.

What are your priorities for transportation?

I'm committed to working on the tasks outlined by Age Friendly Lethbridge, a designation that recognizes age-friendly cities and communities that promote healthy and active aging. That includes helping our city to move forward in the areas of transportation, social inclusion, and accessibility (among other areas). Integrating multimodal transportation is a great way of meeting carbon reduction targets and promoting health. Additionally, Lethbridge Transit just introduced a new service called "cityLINK" that combines High Frequency Lines, Neighbourhood Lines and Rides on Demand. I support these changes as they are aimed at improving the physical, economic, and social mobility of our community.



Do you support the change in campaign financing laws?

It's my opinion that provincial and federal politics, and large corporate and union donations have no place in municipal elections. Municipal election campaigns are an expression of ideas unique to a municipality, and it's up to the voter to vote on those ideas that they believe will best fit the needs of the residents in that municipality. I support what AUMA initially stated on June 24, 2020, about our municipal elections: that local elections remain local. That they are democratic, autonomous, local, inclusive and fair, scalable, transparent, and non-partisan. I do believe it should be up to the municipality as to whether donor lists should be revealed before or after the election, and third-party advertising should always be declared. I have no issue donating any leftover funds from my campaign to a local charity. Overall, I'm not convinced the changes in campaign financing laws the NDP or UCP governments made will achieve the goals that they were outlined to achieve. Neither spending cap amounts for individuals the parties propose "level the playing field," as in some municipalities they're still quite high for grassroots supporters - how you define grassroots supporters would be unique to the municipality - and realistically incumbents will always have an advantage.

What is your plan to address housing and homelessness in our communities?

The City of Lethbridge has begun work on a Community Wellness and Safety Strategy, and I support their work and objectives, especially meeting the housing needs in Lethbridge. I also support the work around affordable housing our city will need to do as we move forward with our age-friendly plans. However, I see gaps in workforce development and employment skills and missing opportunities to partner with our four post-secondary institutions in the city. I am also committed to seeing a coordinated and integrated needs-based social services strategy that involves all sectors and service providers in engagement, land use development, and planning. This means all of us working together, not against each other or in siloed groups. It means municipal, provincial, and federal levels of government working together and holding each other accountable to achieve housing needs in our community.

What are your priorities to address the fiscal relationship between the provincial government and municipalities?

Politics is becoming nastier. We seem to be losing our ability to communicate effectively and respectfully with those who hold differing opinions. Ultimately, Council's relationship with the provincial government needs to occur in a spirit of respect for the office, acknowledgement of the democratic responsibilities we all hold, and a cooperative approach to funding opportunities and outcomes. My priority is to ensure that the City of Lethbridge has a strong, positive, and firm relationship with the province focused on working cooperatively towards mutual outcomes. The Exhibition Park Project is one example of working together towards a shared goal!