



**A leading voice for a healthy and environmentally sustainable community.**

Box 383 Lethbridge AB T1J 3E9

January 21, 2016

To: Mayor Spearman, City of Lethbridge  
City Council

From: Braum Barber, Chair  
Southern Alberta Group for the Environment

Re: Residential Waste Diversion Strategy

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The Southern Alberta Group for the Environment (SAGE) is a non-profit, volunteer organization that advocates and advances environmental issues on behalf of our region. SAGE **supports** the efforts of the City of Lethbridge to advance waste diversion in the Construction & Demolition (C&D), Industrial, Commercial & Institutional (ICI), and Residential sectors.

We support the three sector strategies on the basis of better managing our natural resources, and reducing landfill emissions to the natural environment. According to the Conference Board of Canada, we produce more waste per capita than any other OECD nation, Alberta produces more waste per capita than any other province, and Lethbridge produces more waste per capita than the other cities in the province. This makes us one of the most wasteful groups of people on the planet.

Relying on voluntary recycling, only about 15% of the residential waste is diverted from the landfill, and the other sectors are even less effective. Research suggests that these rates of voluntary recycling will not substantially improve without implementing curbside recycling of materials and compostable waste. Clearly, with greater amounts of waste being diverted, Lethbridge will have to increase its capacity to sort, store and sell recycled commodities: SAGE supports the establishment of a city-owned, privately operated Materials Recycling Facility.

SAGE believes that City Council has the support of a majority of citizens in Lethbridge as evidenced by the Ipsos Reid poll conducted in 2013, and on the basis that most of the members of City Council were elected on platforms that included support for curbside recycling, based on a survey conducted by Accountability Lethbridge prior to the last election.

SAGE would like to commend the efforts of the Waste & Recycling Department for better positioning Lethbridge as it transitions towards greater environmental sustainability in the future, as directed in the Municipal Development Plan / Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (MDP/ICSP).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Barber".