

2023  
REPORT TO THE

# COMMUNITY

cochrane  
HOW THE WEST IS NOW







2023



# MAYOR'S MESSAGE

As I reflect on 2023, it's hard to ignore Cochrane's continuous transformation. Our community has undergone significant improvements in roadways, facilities, and neighborhoods, all while protecting our unique landscape and expansive natural areas.

Projects that were years in the making have come to fruition, demonstrating the gradual but significant nature of change. Cochrane has been deliberate in our prioritization and innovative in our delivery to adapt to changing markets and other impactful factors. The Highway 1A roadway project was completed this year and the province kicked off the Highway 1A/22 interchange. These investments mark substantial progress towards improving our traffic congestion. While considerable construction brought improvements it was not without significant challenges. We are committed to learning from mistakes made while continuing to drive forward progress.

As a community we embrace progress. Council's goal is to ensure planned and managed growth. We are investing in Cochrane, in an organization that can support the needs of our residents through the services and infrastructure that our community expects.

We strive to enrich the lives of our residents through vibrant events and initiatives that bring joy and foster connections among neighbours. Every year, more and more people are choosing to call Cochrane home, and as someone who grew up in Cochrane, raised my family, and started my business here, I understand why.

We are looking to the future and planning to ensure that growth is deliberate and beneficial. This year saw the kick-off of the Envision Cochrane 2050 project, a robust community engagement that will lead to a new Municipal Development Plan that will guide our growth, infrastructure and land use into the future.



These plans ensure that we are intentional about our growth and write a road map for the future in collaboration with Cochrane residents. I hope you will consider participating in the many engagement opportunities to have a say in the future of our community.

Our innovation space at The Station saw its first startup businesses in the incubator this year. The transformation of this space from an empty lot to a lively community gathering space, municipal office, and innovation centre where startup founders are fostering connection, innovation and business growth has been an exciting milestone for Cochrane.

Council and Administration are dedicating our time and energy to making Cochrane the best place to call home. Anticipating and embracing the exciting changes ahead, we are committed to shaping a vibrant future for our community.

Mayor Jeff Genung





# ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT

In 2023, Cochrane continued its trajectory of growth and transformation. Capital projects ran throughout the community to improve Cochrane and cater to the needs of our growing community.

Investment in Cochrane's critical infrastructure, encompassing maintenance and tracking, persistently underpins and sustains this ongoing expansion.

- **The Greystone development progressed significantly, now home to residents and contributing to the Town's expanding residential spaces. When fully built this community is planned to include a vibrant main street plaza, a serene pond, parks, a new grocery store, and a new hotel.**
- **Cochrane's newest community Southbow Landing broke ground, featuring a large commercial district, schools, pathways and parks.**
- **Cochrane experienced notable architectural growth with Garmin's construction of a third floor, signaling the continued flourishing of our business landscape.**
- **The Cochrane Business Incubator has started programming and residency, actively fostering new ideas and laying the groundwork for future business expansion.**





**35,825  
POP.**

ESTIMATED FROM  
PLANNING & GROWTH



**944**

**HOME SALES**

↑ 27.9% YTD

**\$561,200**

AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL  
SINGLE-FAMILY  
PROPERTY ASSESSMENT



2020 - 2023

**32.8%**

↑ INCREASE IN AVERAGE  
**HOME PRICES**

**510**

**HOUSING STARTS**



**59** NEW  
**BUSINESSES  
OPENED**

**2,172**  
**BUSINESS  
LICENCES**



**735**

TOTAL  
**ESTABLISHMENTS**

**787**

**HOME-BASED  
BUSINESSES**





# DELIVERING ON COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



# IDENTITY

*We commit to preserving our unique identity.*

**Envision Cochrane 2050:** The Envision Cochrane 2050 MDP Review Project began, seeking resident input on our collective vision for the future. Providing opportunities for everyone in Cochrane to have a say in how our community lives, works, plays and thrives. This process will lead to a new Municipal Development Plan to guide municipal growth, infrastructure and servicing needs and land use.

**Launch of new Cochrane.ca:** Cochrane launched a new website, proudly sharing all Town information and services and embracing the beauty and unique identity of our community.

# CONNECTIVITY

*We commit to bringing people together physically and socially.*

**HWY 1A Improvements Project:** Driving through Cochrane became a smoother experience with the completion of the Highway 1A roadway improvements. Widened lanes, realigned roads, improved access, pedestrian pathways, and enhanced aesthetics – a testament to progress and connectivity.

**Advancing Highway 1A/22 Interchange project:** A new roadway and intersection emerged with the start of the Highway 1A/22 interchange project. This vital development promises significant improvements in traffic flow and connectivity throughout our community.

**Centre Ave Phase 3:** The transformation began on a critical corridor through Cochrane. Widening Centre Avenue from Powell Street to 1st Street included the relocation and installation of utilities and acquiring land on the west side to enhance connectivity through road expansion.

# VIBRANT ECONOMY

*We commit to creating an atmosphere where the modern economy can thrive.*

**Cochrane Business Incubator:** Cochrane Council and administration warmly welcomed the first members of the Cochrane Business Incubator. Housed in the Station at the Cochrane Crossing, the incubator provides comprehensive resources and mentorship for four inaugural start-up founders over the next one to two years.

**Connect at the Station:** As Cochrane's centre for business, The Station's boardrooms were open for bookings related to business programming. This encompassed planning sessions, business strategy meetings, workshops, networking events, and more—offering a conducive space for businesses to thrive and foster connections





# LIVABILITY

*We commit to creating a vibrant and active community with connected neighbourhoods.*

**Grand opening Protective Services Building:** We stepped into a new era of safety and collaboration with the grand opening of the Protective Services Building – a collaborative effort between the RCMP and municipal enforcement. This state-of-the-art facility symbolizes our commitment to safety and community well-being.

**Cochrane Cares & Age Friendly:** We strengthened community well-being with the launch of Cochrane Cares, a mental health support website. Simultaneously, we initiated the Age-Friendly Community Initiative, aiming to eliminate barriers and create an inclusive environment where everyone, regardless of age, can access services, programs, businesses, and facilities. These efforts reflect our commitment to fostering a thriving and supportive Cochrane for all.

**Fire Services Master Plan & Safety Messaging:** Growth comes with responsibility. To protect our community's future, the Fire Services Master Plan was created. Seasonal safety messaging was shared with the community to create a safer and more resilient community.

**Building Relationships Traditional Pow Wow:** Bears paw First Nation, Chiniki First Nation, Goodstoney First Nation, and the Town of Cochrane, in partnership with Spray Lake Sawmills Centre celebrated a historic moment with the first-ever Building Relationships Traditional Pow Wow, a cultural celebration that resonated with the spirit of unity and inclusivity.



# OPEN SPACES & NATURAL AREAS

*We commit to protecting, nurturing and enjoying our natural landscape*

**Jim Uffelmann Park Environmental Study:** Cochrane undertook a comprehensive environmental study of Jim Uffelmann Park in recognition of its significance to the community. Working with external consultants, the study assessed environmental conditions, identified sensitive areas, and engaged with over 1,150 residents to address conflicts in recreational use, visible bank erosions, and environmental sensitivity. The goal of this ongoing project is to preserve the park's integrity and explore potential recreational enhancements through continued community engagement.

**Sunset Pond Irrigation:** We successfully installed a new aeration system in Sunset Pond to address the odors resulting from decaying vegetation under the winter ice during spring thaw. This strategically placed system not only enhances the pond's beauty but also promotes a healthier ecosystem, providing a delightful and odor-free oasis for our community year-round.

**Tree planting:** We're not just growing physically but also ensuring our natural beauty thrives. In 2023, approximately 3,500 trees were planted, reaffirming our commitment to environmental protection and sustainable development.

**Matt Krol Playground:** We celebrated the reopening of Matt Krol Playground, a community-driven project achieved through collaboration with the Parks and Rec committee and the Riverview Community Association. The enhanced playground now features brand-new inclusive equipment, offering a wide range of climbers, slides, the world-famous expression swing, a collaborative see-saw, and sensory elements, providing endless entertainment for all ages.



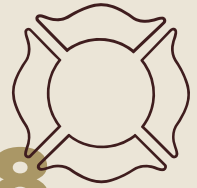


**3,838**  
INDIVIDUALS RECEIVED  
**SUPPORT**

FROM FAMILY &  
COMMUNITY SUPPORT  
SERVICES



**324 km**  
OF  
**ROADWAYS**



**1,268**  
**CALLS**  
**RESPONDED**

TO BY FIRE SERVICES

**6,784**

PARENTS/CHILDREN  
ATTENDED  
PROGRAMMING

**486**  
**WATER**  
**REBATES**  
**ISSUED**



**2,682**  
**CALLS/**  
**REQUESTS**  
**RESPONDED**

TO BY MUNICIPAL ENFORCEMENT



**531**  
HECTARS OF  
**GREEN**  
**SPACE**

**40**  
**PLAYGROUNDS**



**10,179**  
**SAFETY**  
**CODE**  
**INSPECTIONS**

COMPLETED



**36**  
**TOWN**  
**FACILITIES**



**3,315**  
**OPERATIONS**  
**REQUESTS**



**4,453**  
**PERMITS**

ISSUED



**639**  
**SERVICE**  
**REQUESTS**

RESPONDED TO  
BY FACILITIES



**510**  
**DWELLING**  
**UNITS**

ISSUED





COMMUNITY

# ENGAGEMENT



## YOUR THOUGHTS

REGISTER TODAY, STAY INFORMED  
AND PROVIDE YOUR FEEDBACK ON  
[LETSTALKCOCHRANE.CA](http://LETSTALKCOCHRANE.CA)





**Community engagement is based on the democratic idea that everyone who is affected by an issue that impacts their community should have a say in the decision making around it.**

It, moreover, holds the promise that public participation can influence decisions that affect the provision of services, future visions and sustainability of our communities.

In 2023, Council invested in Cochrane's public engagement with a dedicated roll added to the organization to support this critical function. These investments are paying true dividends.

In May, we launched a new Let's Talk Cochrane platform, which emerged as a vital hub for engagement, attracting 12,145 visitors and boasting an impressive engagement rate of 26%. Seven hundred and seventy five people registered for the site in the first six months, reflecting a growing eagerness for residents to stay informed and involved in their community.

In 2023, Cochrane coordinated a number of public engagement initiatives, including:

- Budget engagement
- Envision Cochrane (Phase 1)
- Age-Friendly Initiative
- Name our fleet contest
- Let's Talk public engagement survey and focus group

The budget engagement, facilitated consultant, sought community input on how we should allocate tax dollars to enhance services for our 2024-2026 budget cycle. We conducted a statistically valid telephone and online survey. The feedback led to increased investment in parks, pathways, roadways and community safety with the addition of more firefighters.

The Let's Talk public engagement provided insight into community feedback on current public engagement practises. What we heard from residents was that while influencing decisions was a top reason for engagement, sharing ideas, concerns, and brainstorming solutions were also key motivations. This emphasized the importance of seeing results, creating safe spaces for open and respectful conversations, and having fun and flexible participation options, including online opportunities and engagement with Administration and Council.

Looking ahead, Cochrane is committed to enhancing engagement practices by developing an internal framework, embracing mobile and online opportunities, ensuring transparent reporting, and reflecting the diversity of its population.

The year ahead offers an exciting opportunity for Cochrane to build upon the successes of 2023 by embracing a balanced approach of new and innovative practices, while also recognizing budgetary considerations. Change takes time, and we are committed to making meaningful strides moving into 2024, sharing our learnings with the community and improving as we move forward on this exciting journey.

**12,662**  
**FACEBOOK**  
FOLLOWERS

**775**  
**INDIVIDUALS**  
REGISTERED ON  
LETSTALKCOCHRANE.CA

**11,394**  
**RESPONSES**  
ON LETSTALKCOCHRANE.CA  
MAY - DECEMBER 2023





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403-851-2500

**Stay informed and stay connected:**  
**cochrane.ca**  
**letstalkcochrane.ca**