

January 21st, 2026

Bulletin: Fruit-Bearing Plant Management Requirements (Human-Wildlife Conflict Reduction)

The Town of Cochrane will be implementing the following changes effective March 1st, 2026:

The Town of Cochrane is implementing requirements to manage the use of fruit-bearing trees and shrubs in urban development. These measures are intended to reduce the risk of human-wildlife conflict while supporting safe, resilient, and functional landscapes.

Regulatory Hierarchy

Landscape design and planting associated with development applications shall comply with the following, in order of precedence:

- Town of Cochrane bylaws, policies, and development requirements.
- City of Calgary Specifications for Landscape Design and Construction (current version), when not in conflict with Town requirements. When conflicts exist, Town of Cochrane requirements govern.

Applicability

These requirements apply to all landscape plans submitted for approval as part of new development and redevelopment applications, including infill and phased projects.

The requirements apply to all lands within the development area, including private lots, common and shared amenity areas, publicly accessible open spaces, parks, boulevards, environmental buffers, and stormwater facilities.

These requirements apply to approved landscape plans only. Post-occupancy homeowner planting is not regulated under this bulletin.

Prohibited Fruit-Bearing Shrubs

The following fruit-bearing shrub species shall not be included in any landscape plan submitted for approval:

- Buffaloberry (*Shepherdia canadensis*)
- Red Osier Dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*)
- Saskatoon/Serviceberry (*Amelanchier spp.*)
- Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*)
- Highbush Cranberry (*Viburnum trilobum*)
- Haskap/Honeyberry (*Lonicera caerulea*)
- Gooseberry & Currant (*Ribes spp.*)
- Wild Rose (*Rosa spp.*)
- Prickly Rose (*Rosa acicularis*)

These species produce edible fruit (hips or berries) that are known to attract wildlife and increase the likelihood of wildlife presence in developed areas.

Prohibited species shall not be used in landscape design plans, native or naturalized planting designs, parks, environmental reserves, buffers, or stormwater facilities. Native status does not override wildlife-conflict considerations.

Fruit-Bearing Tree Limits

Fruit-bearing trees shall not exceed 5% of the total tree population within a development or redevelopment area. This includes ornamental fruiting species.

Calculations must be based on all trees required under the approved landscape plan. Tree counts shall not be artificially inflated to achieve compliance.

Sterile or Non-Fruiting Cultivars

Sterile or non-fruiting cultivars of traditionally fruit-bearing tree species may be permitted and are exempt from the 5% limit.

Documentation confirming sterility, including nursery certification or cultivar descriptions, must be submitted at the time of landscape plan approval. The Town reserves the right to reject proposed cultivars where sterility cannot be adequately demonstrated.

Distribution and Clustering

Fruit-bearing trees shall be distributed to avoid concentrated wildlife attractants and shall not be clustered near residential frontages, pathways, playgrounds, recreational areas, school sites, environmental reserves, watercourses, or known wildlife corridors.

A concentration of fruit-bearing trees is defined as more than three (3) fruit-bearing trees within 15 meters of one another, or fruit-bearing trees comprising more than 10% of the tree population within a localized planting area, block, or park zone. Grouped plantings, linear rows, and concentrated pockets may be considered clustering, as determined by the Town.

Review and Approval

Compliance with this bulletin will be reviewed as part of the landscape plan approval process. The Town of Cochrane is the approving authority for determinations related to compliance, sterility documentation, and clustering.

For any questions, please contact CivilLandDevelopment@cochrane.ca.

Sincerely,



Trish Kluane
Acting Director, Operations Service

APPENDIX A – Definitions

Clustering – Three or more fruit-bearing trees located within 15 meters of each other or forming more than 10% of the local tree population.

Fruit-Bearing Plant – Any tree or shrub that produces edible fruit, berries, drupes, or pomes that can attract wildlife.

Fruit-Bearing Shrub – A woody perennial with multiple stems that produces edible fruit.

Fruit-Bearing Tree – A woody perennial with a single main stem/trunk that produces edible fruit.

Native or Naturalized Planting Design – Landscaping emphasizing native or regionally adapted species.

Sterile/Non-Fruiting Cultivar – A plant variety that produces no viable fruit or only negligible fruit not attractive to wildlife. Must be documented.

Total Tree Population – All trees required under the approved landscape plan (used for calculating percentage of fruit-bearing trees).