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Council highlights

Distinguished Budget Award

Kevin Blanchette, Executive Director, People & Strategy, shared that the Town is the recipient of the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the third consecutive year.

2026 1st Quarter Financial Report

Robbie Lowden, Manager, Financial Services, provided an overview of the Town's financial activity for the three (3) months ended March 31, 2026, comparing actual financial results to the approved 2026 Budget and reflects costs incurred to date for goods and services that have been delivered. Both operational and capital performance to date were outlined, including comparison results to the approved budget, identification of key variances and risks and a financial forecast for year-end.

This update supports ongoing monitoring of financial performance and enables timely identification of emerging issues to support informed decision making by Council.

Council received the report and presentation for information.

Parks, Culture & Active Living Master Plan

The Parks, Culture & Active Living Master Plan establishes a long-term strategic framework that supports responsible community growth by guiding future investment in parks, recreation, culture, active living, and community infrastructure, while balancing service delivery, financial sustainability and quality of life. It provides a comprehensive roadmap to help the Town respond to growth, changing demographics, evolving recreation trends, and emerging community needs while supporting evidence-based investment and service delivery decisions. All planned phases of the Master Plan, technical analysis, community engagement, stakeholder consultation, and Council review, has been completed and was presented for approval.

Council adopted the Parks, Culture & Active Living Master Plan as the Town's long-term strategic framework to guide future decision-making related to parks, recreation and culture over the next 10–15 years.

Recreation Infrastructure Feasibility Study ~ Scope Direction

Through the 2026 Budget process, Council approved funding for a Recreation Infrastructure Feasibility Study and directed Administration to return with proposed study objectives and scope following completion of the Parks, Culture & Active Living Master Plan. The Parks, Culture & Active Living Master Plan identified additional ice surface capacity and indoor turf as long-term recreation priorities. The proposed objectives and scope will guide the feasibility study and provide Council with the information necessary to evaluate community need, future infrastructure options, site options, financial implications and implementation strategies.

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Council approved the proposed objectives and scope for the Recreation Infrastructure Feasibility Study and directed Administration to proceed with procurement of the study.

Library Functional Needs Assessment

The Cochrane Library Functional Needs Study (Stage 1) provides an evidence-based assessment of the library's current and future space, service, and operational needs, while identifying opportunities to support broader community infrastructure planning.

The study confirms the library is a valued, well-utilized asset facing increasing pressure from population growth, evolving service expectations, and limited facility capacity. Through technical analysis, benchmarking, and community engagement, it identifies partnership-based and multi-use approaches that could enhance community benefit and improve long-term service delivery.

Beyond library-specific needs, the study establishes a strategic planning foundation for future infrastructure decisions, providing evidence to inform capital planning, partnership opportunities, business case development, and grant applications.

Council received the report for information.

2026 Mid-Year People & Culture Update

A mid-year update on People & Culture initiatives, including workforce metrics, total compensation, and health and safety were presented.

As of June 30, 2026, the Town employed 321 employees (excluding Council), with an average tenure of 6.4 years and turnover of 4.67%, reflecting a stable workforce.

The Town successfully rolled out its new market-based compensation framework in the first half of 2026 with minimal disruption. A recent pulse survey confirms compensation remains aligned with comparable municipalities at the target 60th percentile. A review of the employee benefits program is now underway to ensure total compensation remains competitive and sustainable, including consideration of upcoming provincial legislative changes.

Health and safety performance remains strong. The Town also launched its new safety identity, *Grounded in Community, Rooted in Safety*, reinforcing its commitment to embedding safety into every decision and interaction.

Council received the report and presentation for information and directed Administration to conduct an employee engagement survey in 2027 then resume the previously approved three-year employee engagement survey cycle.

Council Highlights is a summary of actions and decisions; it is not an official record of the meeting. For the full archive of agendas and minutes, visit cochrane.ca/agendas. Questions or comments: Legislative@cochrane.ca

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Seniors Engagement Session Follow-Up

At the March 7, 2026, Senior Engagement Session, a broad range of questions and concerns were raised by Cochrane's senior residents relating to housing, transportation, healthcare access, mobility, safety and community planning.

At the April 13, 2026, Regular Council Meeting, Council directed Administration to review the questions and concerns raised and provide a high-level public response by July 31, 2026. Administration's report demonstrates the Town's commitment to being responsive to its residents and reflects the collaborative effort of multiple departments providing meaningful responses across a broad range of community priorities.

Council received the report for information.

Notice of Motion ~ Non-Residential Development

Council directed Administration to review the current development land use and development permit process and bring back options to expedite and prioritize non-residential applications, to support local economic development and job creation prior to the end of October 2026.

Closed Session ~ Transportation

Council directed that the Closed Session discussion remain confidential pursuant to Section 29(1)(g) of the Access to Information Act; and further that Council direct Administration to proceed with Option 1 as presented in Closed Session.

Closed Session ~ Municipal Land Negotiations

Council directed that the Closed Session discussion remain confidential pursuant to Section 29(1)(g) of the Access to Information Act; and further that Council direct Administration to proceed with Option 1 as presented in Closed Session.