

# Council highlights

## Delegation ~ Explore Cochrane

Callandra Caufield, Executive Director, Cochrane Tourism, provided Council with an update on the projects and programs funded by the Town, including the 2024 report and the 2025 tourism plan.

## Cochrane Age-Friendly Action Plan

Administration presented the Age-Friendly Action Plan, aimed at improving the quality of life for older adults. The plan addresses key issues such as communication, transportation, housing affordability, and healthcare access, with eight core actions for 2025-2029, including promoting age-friendly design and creating inclusive spaces.

Extensive public engagement, including surveys, workshops, and focus groups, helped shape the plan. The initiative was funded by a \$70,000 grant, with \$75,000 allocated for implementation in 2025.

At a future Council meeting, Administration will be requesting Council endorsement of the plan as well as a resolution to seek Provincial Designation as an Age-Friendly Community.

## Rocky View Foundation Request for Requisition of Capital Funds for Affordable Housing Reserve Fund

The Rocky View Foundation (RVF) presented information on a request for \$500,000 be included in the 2025 budget to establish an Affordable Housing Reserve Fund.

The reserve fund will allow RVF to:

1. Plan for future affordable housing projects based on community needs.

2. Leverage provincial, federal, and private funding through matching contributions.
3. Ensure financial stability by mitigating risks from unforeseen costs or market fluctuations.

By reducing its operating budget for the coming year, RVF ensures no increase in the municipality's requisition, supporting the creation of the fund to address the region's growing affordable housing needs.

## Cochrane Lions Club

Council is considering a 50-year agreement with the Cochrane Lions Club for the proposed Lions Legacy Park development on Fifth Avenue.

Administration recommended a phased plan, extending the current lease until December 2025 to allow time for comprehensive planning and negotiation, with the formal agreement set for January 2026.

Key elements of the phased approach include:

- Extending the existing lease to provide time for planning.
- Finalizing land use amendments for long-term development.
- Negotiating performance metrics, exit strategies, and stakeholder engagement.
- Establishing a governance framework and oversight mechanisms for long-term success.

Council will review the recommendation to proceed at a future meeting.

## 2024 Development Summary Report

Cochrane experienced significant growth in 2024, with a population increase of 2,082 residents (5.6%) and 770 new homes built, up from 510 in 2023.

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## Key highlights:

- 242 development permit applications, with 40 related to non-residential development and 95 for accessory suites and 20 for multi-unit dwellings—both of which saw significant growth from 2023.
- 727 certificates of compliance issued, reflecting ongoing housing activity.
- Cochrane's land supply remains sufficient to meet future growth, with 12.7 to 14.2 years of approved land use, slightly down from last year's 13.4 to 15.4 years.

## Community Growth Year-End Report

The Community Growth section provided an update on their progress and priorities, including:

1. Envision Cochrane 2050: Ensuring alignment with the Town's Municipal Development Plan and advancing the project on schedule and within budget.
2. Economic Development Strategy: Developing a comprehensive strategy to sustain momentum for initiatives like Cochrane Station, the Incubator Program, and SMARTstart.
3. Risk Mitigation & Resourcing Plans: Implementing strategies to strengthen Planning Services and Economic Development, modeled after the successful Safety Codes Resourcing plan.

These priorities focus on ensuring strategic growth, economic development, and efficient resource management for Cochrane's future. Regular updates will continue through mid-year and year-end reports.