

2026 - 2030

STRATEGIC PLAN



cochrane
HOW THE WEST IS NOW



A MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL

We're proud to share Cochrane's 2026–2030 Strategic Plan — a plan shaped by the people who call this community home and by a shared vision for where we're headed next.

This plan reflects what we heard from our community and the future we are working toward together. Residents told us that growth must be thoughtful, infrastructure must keep pace and decisions must be transparent, responsible and grounded in what matters most to Cochrane. This plan responds directly to those priorities and sets a clear path forward.

At its core, the Strategic Plan expresses our shared direction. It captures the long-term aspirations that shape Cochrane's future, protecting what makes our community unique while preparing for the opportunities ahead.



Just as important, this plan is built to be put into action. It connects the long-term direction to clear priorities and measurable outcomes, along with the work required to move them forward. Through key results, projects and timelines, Council and Administration will translate this plan into meaningful progress that residents can see and experience.

The Strategic Plan is both a guide and a commitment. It guides decisions, focus and priorities over the next four years, while holding us accountable for results. We will report on our progress, adjust where needed and remain focused on delivering results that matter to our community.

We know that great communities are built together. Thank you to everyone who shared their ideas, perspectives and hopes for Cochrane's future. We invite you to explore the plan and follow our progress as we work to bring this vision to life.

HOW THE STRATEGIC PLAN GUIDES OUR WORK

The Plan guides decision-making, budgeting and where time and resources are focused. It ensures that day-to-day work and long-term planning are aligned with the priorities that matter most for our community.

It also helps us measure progress. Through clear outcomes, timelines and projects, we can track how work is moving forward and report progress back to the community.

While this plan identifies where change is needed most, it exists alongside the essential services residents rely on every day. Maintaining infrastructure, delivering programs and keeping Cochrane running remains a constant priority.

This is a living document. As our community grows and evolves, we will review and adjust the plan to stay aligned with Council's direction and community needs.

Above all, this plan is about action. It connects long-term goals to real work, ensuring residents see progress and results over time.





WHAT WE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS

Council heard clearly from our community. These priorities reflect what mattered most to residents and have helped shape the direction of this Strategic Plan.

Growth needs to be more thoughtful and sustainable.

Growth is happening faster than our community and infrastructure are ready to support.

Housing options do not meet the needs of people at all stages of life.

Recreation spaces and programs matter to everyday life and well-being.

Rules, processes and land constraints make it harder for businesses to grow.

Affordability is a concern and people want to better understand the cost of community decisions.

Protecting natural spaces and community character remains deeply important.

Reliable infrastructure is essential to Cochrane's quality of life.

Trust depends on transparency, accountability and follow-through.

OUR PROMISE TO THE COMMUNITY

Council and Administration commit to working together, serving the community with clarity, respect, accountability and purpose. Council sets direction. Administration delivers. Together, we work for Cochrane.

Here's what you can expect from us:

Make good decisions.

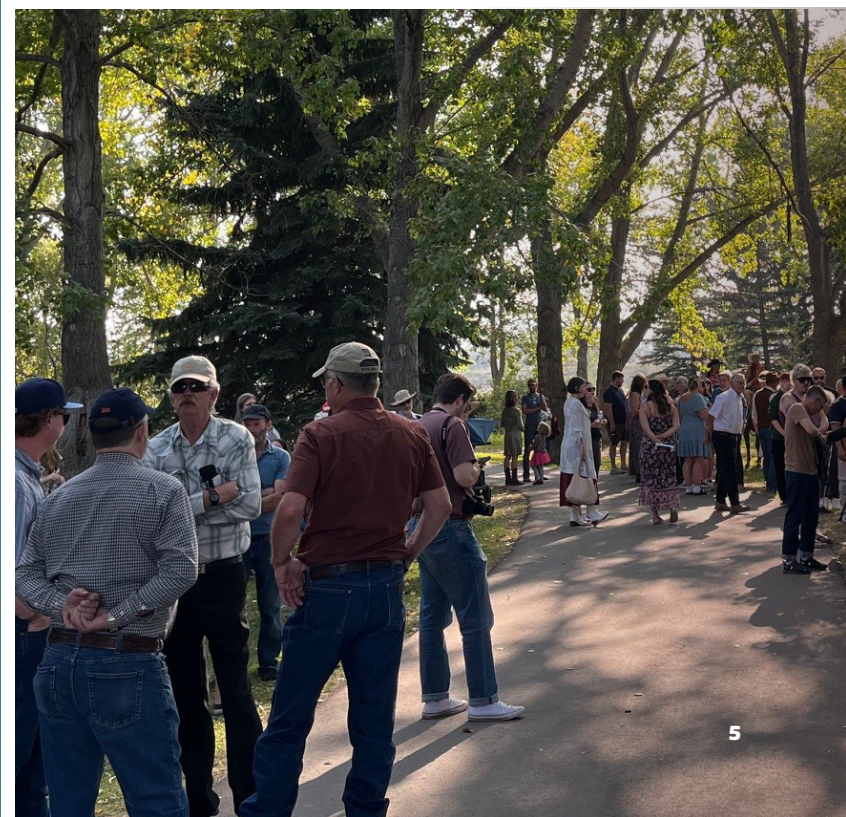
- We balance community priorities using evidence and expertise
- We make thoughtful, informed decisions
- We are fiscally responsible and plan for the long term

Communicate openly.

- We listen to understand
- We communicate clearly and consistently
- We share to support understanding

Follow through.

- We set clear goals
- We report progress
- We deliver results that matter to our community



VISION

Rooted.
In the land that shapes us and honouring the history that made us.

Connected.
To each other, to nature and to the places that bring us together.

Focused.
On protecting Cochrane’s character while planning for our future.

MISSION

Set clear direction for Cochrane by thoughtfully balancing responsible growth, reliable service and quality of life for our community.



FROM DIRECTION TO ACTION

Council has identified the priorities and objectives that will guide Cochrane’s work over the next four years. These reflect what matters most for our community and where focus is needed to move Cochrane forward.

Administration has translated this direction into key results and timelines, outlining how the work will be carried out and how progress will be measured.

Together, they create a clear path from vision to delivery:

PRIORITIES	OBJECTIVES	KEY RESULTS
Identify the most important areas of focus.	Describe what we aim to achieve within each priority.	Define the specific projects, initiatives and timelines.

This approach ensures that Council’s direction is turned into meaningful action, with clear accountability and measurable results that residents can see over time.

Each of the following sections highlights a priority, what we aim to achieve and the key actions that will move the work forward.

PRIORITY

RESPONSIBLE COMMUNITY GROWTH

Cochrane will guide growth through responsible decision-making that balances new opportunities with community character and readiness.

OBJECTIVES

BALANCED RESIDENTIAL GROWTH

Manage residential growth at a pace that aligns with service and infrastructure capacity requirements, minimizing cost impacts on existing residents.

COMMUNITY DESIGN STANDARDS

Guide new development so it reflects Cochrane's culture and character, strengthening a sense of place in buildings, streets and neighbourhoods.

GROWTH SEQUENCING

Plan where and when growth occurs by directing development in select areas to ensure it aligns with community infrastructure planning.

NATURAL SPACES

Integrate the protection of natural spaces and open areas into community growth decisions.

REGIONAL COORDINATION

Work with regional partners to plan for long-term growth.

KEY RESULTS

AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Complete an Area Redevelopment Plan for Cochrane's highest-priority redevelopment area to guide future growth and redevelopment. The plan will coordinate land use, transportation, utilities, parking, servicing and open space planning while supporting community priorities and informing future infrastructure investment.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Advance the development of a Growth Management Strategy to support sustainable growth, informed decision-making and long-term financial stewardship through a phased approach and future Council direction.

2026

2027

2028

2029

2030



KEY RESULTS

2026

2027

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IMPLEMENT AGE-FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN

Implement the eight priorities identified in Cochrane's Age-Friendly Action Plan to enhance housing, transportation, accessibility, outdoor public spaces, access to health services, lifelong learning, safe and inclusive communities and communication. These initiatives will strengthen community well-being and support Cochrane's ongoing Age-Friendly Community designation.



COMMUNITY DESIGN STANDARDS

Develop and implement municipal design policies, standards and guidelines that promote a consistent, high-quality approach to the design of development, infrastructure and public assets reinforcing Cochrane's unique identity and sense of place.



INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Update the Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) with Rocky View County to provide a coordinated framework for land use, development and infrastructure planning along shared municipal boundaries. This will improve certainty for residents and developers while strengthening collaboration and coordination between both municipalities.



INTERMUNICIPAL COLLABORATION FRAMEWORK

Update the Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF) with Rocky View County to establish a clear framework for the provision, funding and administration of intermunicipal services. This will support predictable service delivery, strengthen collaboration between municipalities and provide a clear process for resolving shared service and planning matters.



LAND USE BYLAW

Review and update the Land Use Bylaw to ensure it reflects current best practices and responds to emerging growth opportunities and community priorities. The update will consider recommendations from the Western Heritage Design Standards, Housing Needs Assessment, Bow River Strategy, Parks, Culture and Active Living Master Plan and other relevant plans and development initiatives.



ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS – NATURAL AREAS PLAN

Develop a Natural Areas Plan to guide the long-term protection, enhancement, management and stewardship of Cochrane's natural assets. The plan will establish priorities, inform future policy and land-use decisions and support the implementation of a coordinated Natural Areas Program.



PRIORITY

STRONG
FINANCIAL
STRATEGY

Cochrane will strengthen its financial position through transparent decision-making and responsible planning.

OBJECTIVES

MUNICIPAL
REVENUE

Diversify and strengthen revenue sources to support long-term financial sustainability.

OPERATING
COSTS

Keep operating costs sustainable with a commitment to community affordability.

ASSET
MANAGEMENT

Protect and manage assets to maintain value and support reliable service over time.

DEBT AND
RESERVES

Manage debt and build reserves to ensure long-term financial stability and service demands.

MUNICIPAL TAX
RATES

Set tax rates that balance service levels, community priorities, affordability and service costs.

KEY RESULTS

CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Establish a Corporate Asset Management Program to support informed decision-making, long-term planning and sustainable investment in Town assets. The program will provide a consistent framework for managing asset lifecycles, aligning service levels with community priorities and ensuring the delivery of safe, reliable and sustainable services for current and future residents.

→ Create and bring the policy forward for Council approval

→ Develop AM Strategy and Governance Structure

→ Complete development of Asset Management Plan

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KEY RESULTS

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FISCAL FRAMEWORK

Review and update the Town's financial policies to strengthen long-term financial sustainability, support responsible growth, enhance transparency and identify sustainable revenue opportunities that advance community priorities while reducing reliance on future tax increases.



UTILITY RATE REVIEW

Review utility rates to reflect the full cost of delivering water, wastewater and stormwater services, ensuring they are fair, transparent and sustainable as our community grows. This work will support reliable service, regulatory compliance and long-term investment in the infrastructure needed for a growing community.



10-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

Develop a 10-year Capital Plan to provide a long-term roadmap for investing in the infrastructure needed to support Cochrane's growth. Aligned with the Growth Management Strategy, the plan will guide responsible financial stewardship, support informed decision-making and prioritize investment in roads, parks, facilities, utilities and other essential infrastructure.



GRANT FUNDING STRATEGY

Develop a Grant Funding Strategy to establish the systems, relationships and strategic intelligence needed to proactively identify, pursue and secure external funding opportunities that support Council priorities.



MUNICIPALLY CONTROLLED CORPORATION EXPLORATION

Continue exploring the potential establishment of one or more Municipally Controlled Corporations (MCCs) to support the delivery of municipal services, particularly water, wastewater and land management. This work will assess the potential benefits, governance models and financial implications to inform future Council decision-making.



PRIORITY

INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY

Cochrane will invest in infrastructure and community spaces to support dependable services today and into the future.

OBJECTIVES

UTILITIES

Ensure services have the capacity for growth.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Ensure Cochrane’s transportation network and services support efficient movement through and within the community.

RECREATION AND CULTURE

Deliver recreation and culture spaces that strengthen Cochrane as an active living community.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Explore opportunities for regional partnerships.

PATHWAYS

Create pathway connections to improve movement throughout the community.

KEY RESULTS	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN Update the Transportation Master Plan to guide the long-term planning and investment in Cochrane’s transportation network, including roads, pathways, transit and active transportation. The updated plan will improve safety, connectivity and mobility while supporting future growth.	✓	✓	✓		

KEY RESULTS	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
PARKS, CULTURE AND ACTIVE LIVING MASTER PLAN Develop and implement the Parks, Culture and Active Living (PCAL) Master Plan to guide future investment in parks, recreation, culture, pathways, natural areas and active living opportunities. The Master Plan will establish priorities and initiatives that support a connected community.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓+
→ BOW RIVER STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION Advance priority projects, partnerships and environmental stewardship initiatives identified through the Bow River Strategy to strengthen community connections to the Bow River corridor.		✓	✓	✓	✓+
→ PATHWAYS AND TRAILS STRATEGY Develop a Pathways and Trails Strategy to provide a long-term roadmap for expanding and enhancing Cochrane’s pathway and trail network. The strategy will prioritize investments that improve connectivity, support active transportation and enhance access to parks, open spaces and community destinations.	✓				

UTILITIES MASTER PLANS

Update the Utilities Master Plans to provide a long-term roadmap for water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure. The updated plans will identify future infrastructure needs, support reliable and resilient service delivery and guide capital investment to accommodate growth.

✓✓✓✓✓

→ STORMWATER MASTER PLAN

Develop the Stormwater Master Plan to identify drainage challenges and guide long-term investment in stormwater infrastructure. The plan will reduce flood risk, protect homes and the environment and support Cochrane’s continued growth.

✓✓✓

→ WATER UTILITY MASTER PLAN

Update the Water Utility Master Plan to guide the transition to a two water treatment plant system and identify future infrastructure requirements. The updated plan will improve system reliability and redundancy while supporting Cochrane’s long-term growth.

✓✓

→ SANITARY MASTER PLAN

Update the Sanitary Master Plan to identify the wastewater infrastructure needed to support future growth. The updated plan will improve system capacity and guide long-term infrastructure investments.

✓✓

A THRIVING ECONOMY

Cochrane will create a strong business environment that encourages local investment, job creation and a healthy tax base.

OBJECTIVES

EMPLOYMENT LANDS

Ensure Cochrane has an abundance of industrial, commercial and business lands to attract investment and support economic growth.

NON-RESIDENTIAL TAX BASE

Expand and diversify tax revenue sources to reduce reliance on residential property taxes.

BUSINESS GROWTH AND RETENTION

Streamline rules and processes and foster a supportive environment that makes it easier to start, grow and retain a business.

INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

Attract investment that supports job creation and local economic growth.

CONNECTIVITY

Invest in transit infrastructure and services to support workforce mobility.

KEY RESULTS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Develop a 10-year Economic Development Strategy to provide a long-term roadmap for Cochrane’s economic growth, diversification and resilience. Building on *Envision Cochrane 2050*, the strategy will guide investment in employment lands, support key industries and strengthen the Town’s ability to attract, retain and grow local business.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE

Review economic development incentives to evaluate opportunities that support business attraction, retention and expansion.



KEY RESULTS

BUSINESS LICENSE MODERNIZATION

Modernize the business licence program by reviewing business processes, updating the Business Licence Bylaw and improving supporting technology. This work will streamline licensing, strengthen financial oversight, improve data quality and reporting and enhance customer service.



GROWTH BEYOND OUR BORDERS

Evaluate future growth opportunities beyond Cochrane’s current boundaries to identify strategic land opportunities and priority industries. This work will inform a long-term strategy for land acquisition and growth that supports sustainable development and economic prosperity.



PARKING STRATEGY

Develop a Parking Strategy to provide a long-term approach to parking that supports redevelopment, mobility and future growth. The strategy will evaluate parking supply, management and governance to meet the community’s evolving needs.



TRANSIT MASTER PLAN

Develop a 5-year Transit Master Plan to guide transit service planning, multi-modal integration and future investment. The plan will support a safe, accessible and efficient transit system that meets the needs of a growing community.



PRIORITY

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE

Cochrane will enable a full spectrum of housing options that help people thrive in all stages of life.

OBJECTIVES

URBAN REVITALIZATION

Strengthen and reinvest in existing residential neighbourhoods to support vibrant, livable communities.

REDEVELOPMENT

Create policy to ensure thoughtful redevelopment that respects and fits within existing neighbourhoods.

HOUSING DIVERSITY

Expand housing options to address gaps and support housing types that are limited or not currently available in Cochrane.

KEY RESULTS	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
HOUSING DIVERSITY Advance Housing Diversity to support a range of housing options that meet the needs of a growing community. Through initiatives such as <i>Envision Cochrane 2050</i> , the Age-Friendly Action Plan and affordable housing partnerships, the Town will encourage affordable, attainable and diverse housing opportunities for residents at every stage of life.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
→ COMMUNITY HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT Complete a Community Housing Needs Assessment to identify current and emerging housing needs across the housing continuum. The assessment will identify gaps and opportunities across rental, homeownership, attainable, below-market and non-market housing to inform future planning and investment.	✓				
→ HOUSING STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN Develop a Housing Strategy and Action Plan to guide municipal policies, partnerships and investments that increase access to diverse, attainable and affordable housing. The plan will establish priorities and identify actions to address current and future housing needs.	✓	✓			
→ AFFORDABLE HOUSING PARTNERSHIPS Advance Affordable Housing Partnerships to support the delivery of attainable housing. The Town will work with developers, housing providers and community partners to reduce barriers, strengthen partnerships and create the conditions needed to increase housing opportunities for current and future residents.	✓	✓	✓	✓	
HOUSING LAND STRATEGY Develop a Housing Land Strategy to identify and advance land opportunities that support future affordable housing needs. Through strategic partnerships and collaboration, the Town will expand its inventory of land to support greater housing choice, with a particular focus on affordable and rental options.	✓	✓	✓		

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Town of Cochrane gratefully acknowledges that we are situated on Treaty 7 territory, the traditional lands of the Iyarhe Nakoda peoples of the Chiniki, Bearspaw and Goodstoney First Nations. Treaty 7 is also home to the Tsuut’ina and the Niitsitapi peoples of the Siksika, Piikani and Kainai First Nations. We further acknowledge that Cochrane is located within the Métis Nation homeland.





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PLAN**

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MORE**



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