



# Council highlights

## Delegation: Helping Hands Society

Laura McDonald, Executive Director, Helping Hands Society Cochrane, provided the Committee of the Whole with an update on the community programs and services they provide.

As Cochrane grows, grassroots charities like Helping Hands play a crucial role. Founded in 2007, Helping Hands connects community members with ways to support each other. With 4 staff and 240 volunteers, they're set to achieve 13,000 volunteer hours in 2024, a 30% increase over last year. Their programs focus on community support, client assistance, and food security.

## Bylaw 25/2024: Southbow Landing Stage 1 Land Use Amendment

Administration presented the proposed Southbow Landing Stage 1 land use amendment at the Committee of the Whole meeting.

The proposed changes include:

- modifications to lotting, street, and park layouts in the south-central portion
- reclassification of the utility corridor to Parks and Recreation, and
- an increase in commercial and industrial lands along the western boundary near Highway 22

Council received the report for information.

## Southbow Landing Stage 1 Neighbourhood Plan Amendments

Administration presented the proposed amendments to the Southbow Landing Neighbourhood Plan (NP), originally approved in 2015 and acquired by Qualico in 2023. These amendments, focusing on the western portion of the plan area, included adjustments to wetlands, pathways, roadways, land use, and parks.

The key changes include:

- **Wetlands:** Removal of a Class III seasonal wetland to increase commercial and industrial land, with Alberta Environment and Parks approval; preservation of Class IV wetlands as green space.
- **Pathways and Roadways:** Updates for enhanced safety, including pathway upgrades, bike lane relocation, and elimination of a Highway 22 access point.
- **Land Use and Parks:** Changes in lot layout and reclassification of the utility corridor to Parks and Recreation zoning. The amendment increases commercial land by 0.87 ha, reduces industrial land by 2.76 ha, and adds 1.52 ha to Parks and Recreation. It also updates the NP phasing and slightly raises the population estimate to 8,000–10,200 residents.

Council discussed the proposed amendments, which aim to align development with modern standards and support community needs.

## Bylaw 26/2024: Election Bylaw

Administration presented the proposed amendments to Cochrane's Election Bylaw in response to recent changes introduced by the provincial government through Bill 20. The updates include the establishment of a permanent electors register and expanded use of special ballots, now mandated under the Local Authorities Election Act.

Additional changes address compliance and best practices, such as procedures for a counting center, criminal record checks, the conduct of scrutineers, joint elections, and publication of nomination papers.

The new bylaw, drafted to meet Bill 20's requirements, is set to take effect on December 31, 2024, or upon Bill 20's proclamation, ensuring alignment with provincial legislation while enhancing election transparency and procedural integrity.