



GET A **RUNNING** START

2017

Information Guide for Candidates

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cochrane.ca/Election

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Information Guide for Candidates

A guide for candidates

Nomination day is September 18, 2017.
Election day is Monday October 16, 2017.

Serving on Town Council can be one of the most rewarding ways to contribute to our community. Council members are elected every four years and set public policy and direction for the Town of Cochrane, adopt bylaws and set strategic priorities for municipal staff.

Council meetings are held at the Cochrane RanchHouse on the second and fourth Monday of each month (Council meets only once in July, August and December).

Local Authorities Election Act

The Local Authorities Election Act (LAEA) is the primary legislation that guides the conduct of a municipal or school board election or by-election. Get copies through the Alberta Queen's Printer, www.qp.alberta.ca or 780-427-4952.

All definitions, procedures and processes outlined in this guide are from the LAEA. If you require clarification on anything, please check the LAEA, contact Cochrane's Manager of Legislative Services, call a Municipal Advisor, or seek an independent legal opinion.

All forms, including the notice of intent to run, nomination form and candidate's acceptance, and campaign disclosure statement can be found on the Alberta Municipal Affairs website, or cochrane.ca.

Municipal Government Act

The Municipal Government Act (MGA) is the primary legislation that governs municipalities. Get copies through the Alberta Queen's Printer, www.qp.alberta.ca or 780-427-4952.

Additional Information

If you require additional information on election planning, voting procedures and other related matters, please contact us directly:

Jaylene Knight, Manager, Legislative Services
Town of Cochrane
Phone: 403-851-2295
Email: jaylene.knight@cochrane.ca

IMPORTANT: this document is provided for information only — is not an official record of Town of Cochrane policy, procedure or governance.

Overview of the commitment

	MAYOR (ONE POSITION)	COUNCILLOR (SIX POSITIONS)
Hours Some meetings and events occur on evenings and weekends.	Estimated time commitment: Full-time	Estimated time commitment: 15-20 hours week (more during peak times of the year).
Responsibilities The Mayor and members of Council work together to guide long-term decision-making for the Town of Cochrane.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chairperson of Council ▪ Advisor to Council ▪ Consensus seeker among Council members ▪ Liaison with the Executive Leadership Team (Administration) ▪ Ex Officio on various boards and committees ▪ Ceremonial responsibilities ▪ Liaison with other levels of government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in Council meetings ▪ Participate in committee meetings ▪ Take a turn as Deputy Mayor when scheduled ▪ Make sure the powers, duties and functions of the municipality are appropriately carried out
Remuneration (including expenses).	\$84,671	\$29,214
Meetings If elected, you are expected to attend all Council meetings. Accommodation can be made if you are away (attend by phone, for example); you may not miss more than two Council meetings in a row.	<p>Council: Twice each month, currently on Monday evenings (one meeting each in July, August and December).</p> <p>Committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inter-Municipal Committee Rocky View County ▪ Calgary Regional Partnership 	<p>Council: Twice each month, currently on Monday evenings (one meeting each in July, August and December).</p> <p>Committees: Various days/times; each member of Council sits on three or four Committee at a time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cochrane Library Board ▪ Cochrane Planning Commission ▪ Family & Community Support Services ▪ Subdivision & Development Appeal Authority ▪ Bow Rivers Edge Campground Capital Reinvestment Committee ▪ Calgary Regional Partnership ▪ Rocky View Foundation ▪ Spray Lake Sawmills Recreation Park Society
Orientation Check your calendar! This session has already been scheduled; all members of Council are required to attend.	Two-day retreat-style orientation for all members of Council (with Senior Administration): Friday October 20 Saturday October 21	

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Who can run for office?

You can run for the position of Mayor or one of six Town Council positions if you:

- have lived within Cochrane Town boundaries for at least six months before nomination day AND
- are eligible to vote in the 2017 municipal election (Canadian citizen, over 18 years old)

You may NOT run for office if you:

- are a Town employee (unless you take a leave of absence)
- owe property taxes or other debt to the Town (over \$50)
- have been convicted of an offense under the Election Act in the past 10 years

IMPORTANT: it is your responsibility to ensure you are not in violation of any conditions of eligibility.

How to run for office

Get prepared!

There's a lot of information available to help you get prepared to run for a seat on Town Council and serve the community as a member of Council:

- Check [Alberta Municipal Affairs](#) for legislation related to municipalities in Alberta
- Check [cochrane.ca](#) for local bylaws, legislation and planning documents
- Read Council agendas and minutes
- Sit in the gallery at Council meetings
- Talk to Town of Cochrane Senior Management

Registration

New for the 2017 election: if you intend to do any fundraising to finance your campaign, you must register your intent to run before gathering any funds. Go to [cochrane.ca/Election](#) for official forms and instructions.

If you plan to self-fund completely, you are not required to register. You must still submit nomination papers.

Nomination

Nomination day is September 18, 2017.

Nomination papers must be submitted in person at the Cochrane RancheHouse between 10am and noon on Nomination day. At noon on September 19, the Town of Cochrane publishes the list of candidates. Any member of the public may ask to see nomination papers after noon September 19.

Go to [cochrane.ca/Election](#) for official nomination forms and detailed instructions for submitting them.

Campaign advertising

Candidates may use a variety of media to promote their candidacy, within limits set by the Election Act and Cochrane bylaws:

- no advertising allowed inside or outside a building used as a polling station
- campaign signs may be displayed on private property only with permission of the owner
- campaign signs on public property is discouraged and will not be permitted prior to becoming an official candidate
- no campaign signs are allowed on centre meridians on Quigley Drive, Fifth Avenue and Railway, Fifth Avenue and Griffin Road; within 10 m of traffic control devices (stop signs, yield signs, etc.); within 10 m of pedestrian crosswalks
- all campaign literature must be removed by 8pm Wednesday October 18, 2017 (48 hours after the election)

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Agents, scrutineers, campaigners

You may ask friends and family to help with your campaign, or hire staff to support your efforts. If you do, they must also comply with the Election Act and Cochrane bylaws:

- your official agent must be named in your nomination papers; they must not have been convicted of an offense under the Election Act in the past 10 years
- scrutineers observe voting at a polling station on election day on behalf of a candidate. They must provide written notice (signed by the candidate) to the presiding official at the polling station before they may observe proceedings; they must not have been convicted of an offense under the Election Act in the past 10 years. Only one scrutineer per candidate is allowed per polling station
- campaigners must carry proof of identification when campaigning for a candidate

Offenses

The Election Act is very clear about what constitutes an offence under the Act.

Candidates may not:

- supply ballots to voters
- put ballots in or take ballots out of ballot boxes
- destroy or otherwise interfere with ballots
- create any material that shows a ballot marked for any candidate
- make any false statement related to the election or vote

Pecuniary interest

As a public servant, you are responsible for upholding the public interest ahead of any private interests you may have. The Municipal Government Act (MGA) describes pecuniary interest and sets out the procedures you must follow if a matter in which you have a pecuniary interest comes up at a council meeting or a committee of council meeting. These rules are designed to protect the public interest while ensuring that your ability to work is not adversely affected by your election to council (*source: Alberta Government*).

Find out more: [Pecuniary interest for Municipal Councillors](#)

Election Day

By the end of Monday, October 16, 2017, candidates and the community will know who has been elected to serve on Cochrane's Town Council.

Town of Cochrane Legislative Services staff handle implementation of all aspects of Election Day: polling stations, ballots, the voting process, voter identification, counting votes and declaring results.

Voting

There are a variety of ways Cochrane residents can vote, provided they have appropriate identification:

- polling stations on Election day, open 7am-8pm
- special ballots: sent and returned by mail, available upon request
- advance polls: various days/times; advertised in advance
- institutional voting: at Big Hill Lodge and Bethany Care Centre
- at home: for incapacitated voters; available upon request

Media

Members of the media are not allowed to take photos or otherwise record activity inside polling stations.

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After Election Day

Once the votes are counted on election day, Town of Cochrane officials declare the official results. Candidates who have been elected are invited to the Council orientation session so they are prepared to serve on Town Council for the next four years.

Successful candidates are required to sign the Town of Cochrane Code of Conduct, agreeing to not engage in actions that could be perceived as damaging to the trust, confidence and faith of the public.

Candidates who are not successful are thanked for their efforts.

Contributions/expenses disclosure

After the election, all candidates must complete and submit a disclosure form identifying sources and amounts of campaign funding.

If you're elected

As a member of Council, it is your duty to establish policy for the Town. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) — Council's only employee — is an important bridge between Council and Administration. The CAO ensures Council has all the information it needs to make sound policy decisions, and ensures the municipality's work is carried out according to approved policy. Cochrane's CAO provides leadership and direction to approximately 320 full-time, part-time and seasonal staff.

The CAO is apolitical, overseeing municipal operations and ensuring Council's priorities and strategic goals are achieved in the most effective way. The CAO's training, experience and understanding of Town operations will be an important resource for you.

Orientation

The province requires municipalities to provide an orientation session for new Councils so they can learn their role as elected officials as well as the relevant procedures they will follow.

Cochrane's Council orientation schedule:

- Friday, October 20, 2017 at the Cochrane RancheHouse, 101 RancheHouse Road
- October 20-21, 2017 at Crossing at Ghost River, west of Cochrane

The two-day session includes:

- roles, responsibilities and relationships
- organizational structure, department overviews and key issues
- overview of legislative documents (Municipal Government Act, Land Use Bylaw, etc.)
- strategic planning and budget process
- Council meetings, Procedural Bylaw and electronic agendas
- Council Committee overview
- preparation for the Inaugural Organizational and Regular Council Meetings on October 23, 2017
- AUMA conference registration confirmation

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Budget

The Town's annual budget is one of the most crucial decision-making responsibilities of Council. Department budgets are developed from business plans, which flow from strategic plans. Cochrane's Strategic Plan for 2015-2018 has been approved by Council and is available on cochrane.ca/StrategicPlanning.

Budget schedule:

- 6pm, Monday October 23, 2017: budget presentation
- 8:30am-4:30pm, Friday November 17, 2017: budget review
- 8:30am-1pm, Saturday, November 18, 2017: budget review
- 8:30am-4:30pm, Monday November 20, 2017: budget review (if required)

Intramunicipal participation

Elected officials and senior administrators benefit from the Town's membership in organizations that provide opportunities to share information and collaborate on issues of interest to municipalities in Alberta and across Canada.

Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)

FCM pursues common national interests of all Canadian municipalities, especially as they relate to the actions of the federal government. Members of Council have the opportunity to attend annual FCM conferences. More information: fcm.ca

Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA)

Urban municipalities in Alberta have opportunities to benefit from services, programs and conferences offered by AUMA year-round. The AUMA conference is usually held in October; members of Cochrane Council are encouraged to attend. More information: auma.ca

Links, resources

Town of Cochrane

Town of Cochrane election details and forms: cochrane.ca/Election

Town of Cochrane Bylaws: cochrane.ca/Bylaws

Town of Cochrane Policies: cochrane.ca/Policies

Town of Cochrane planning documents: cochrane.ca/Planning

Province of Alberta

[Running for Municipal Office in Alberta: A Candidate's Guide](#)

[Roles and Responsibilities for elected officials and administrators](#)

[Municipal Government Act](#)

[Local Authorities Election Act](#)

[Municipal Councillor Guidelines for Conflict of Interest](#)

[Now That You've Been Elected](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions About Municipal Elections](#)