



Town of Cochrane

Budget 2027 Survey Results



May 2026



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Table of Contents

1. Background and Objectives.....	1
2. Methodology	2
2.1 Project Planning.....	2
2.2 Survey Design	2
2.3 Survey Population and Data Collection	2
2.4 Survey Awareness.....	3
2.5 Analysis	3
2.5.1 Stat Testing.....	4
2.5.2 Segment Comparisons.....	4
2.6 Representativeness	4
3. Executive Summary	5
3.1 Quality of Life and Community Perceptions.....	5
3.2 Property Tax Value and Regional Perceptions.....	5
3.3 Fiscal Strategies and Tax Preferences.....	5
3.4 Service and Infrastructure Priorities.....	5
4. Detailed Findings	6
4.1 Quality of Life.....	6
4.2 Property Tax Value	9
4.3 Overall Property Tax Preference	15
4.4 Service Priorities	17
4.5 Infrastructure.....	19
4.6 Most Important Budget Consideration	22
5. Appendix.....	23
5.1 Weighted Respondent Demographics.....	23
5.2 Data Weighting.....	24
5.3 Survey Methodology Summary	25
5.4 Survey	26
5.5 Recruitment Letter	40

1. Background and Objectives

In early 2026, the Town of Cochrane contracted Advanis to design and administer the 2027 Town of Cochrane Budget Survey. The purpose of the study was to gather statistically valid and representative feedback from Town residents to help inform the Town's 2027 budget planning process and support municipal decision-making. Specifically, the research was designed to engage a broad and demographically representative sample of Cochrane residents, generate statistically sound insights supported by clearly defined methodology and confidence intervals, and provide actionable findings aligned with the Town's strategic priorities and fiscal planning cycle.

Advanis was responsible for the end-to-end delivery of the project, including survey design support, data collection, analysis, progress reporting, and preparation of this report. The study was designed to ensure representation across key demographic and geographic segments of the community. In total, 1,031 Town of Cochrane residents aged 17 and older completed the survey between April 2nd and May 6th, 2026.

This report presents the findings from the 2027 Town of Cochrane Budget Survey. Where applicable, results are compared with findings from previous budget engagement surveys to identify shifts or trends in resident perceptions, priorities, and opinions over time.

2. Methodology

All components of the project were designed and executed in close consultation with the Town of Cochrane. A detailed description of each task of the project is outlined in the remainder of this section.

2.1 Project Planning

Advanis team members reviewed the relevant documents and met with Town employees charged with leading this research to ensure total understanding of the purpose and needs of this study. Both the Town and Advanis agreed upon a research methodology and detailed work plan.

2.2 Survey Design

In 2026, the Town of Cochrane made the decision to update its budget survey to better align with the changing needs of the Town and Council. To ensure the new survey met the current goals, Advanis worked closely with the Town to review and prioritize key research objectives. This collaborative process informed decisions about which questions from the previous iterations of the survey to retain, revise, or remove as well as what new questions needed to be added. The result was a refined questionnaire that captures essential insights about citizen perceptions and budget planning priorities while also improving survey usability and reducing respondent burden. Note that given the survey was redesigned, trending is only available for select results.

The survey was then programmed and tested, and the Town had an opportunity to review the survey online and provide additional feedback. A text version of the final questionnaire is provided in the Appendix (section 5.4).

2.3 Survey Population and Data Collection

Advanis acquired a random set of landline telephone numbers and used Advanis' proprietary General Population Random Sample¹ wireless numbers for the Town of Cochrane. Potential participants were contacted by telephone and recruited to complete the online survey. A link to the online survey was provided either by email or text message.

Advanis also worked with the Town to design a letter to recruit households to complete the survey. The letter instructed residents to either manually text Advanis or scan a QR code (which would text Advanis) to receive a unique link to the online survey. The Town had the addressed letters printed and delivered to every household in Cochrane. In total, 1,031 residents completed the survey through this recruiting approach. For comparison, 820 respondents were recruited by letter and 205 respondents were recruited by telephone this year. Specific details of the recruitment letter used can be found in the Appendix (section 5.5).

Given that every household was invited to participate through the addressed letter campaign, this component of the research is considered a census rather than an open public survey. As all households had already been provided with instructions on how to access the survey, the Town was also able to promote awareness of the survey through the Let's Talk Cochrane website, social media channels, roadside signage, Town app, email communications, radio, and newspaper advertisements. These communications served to remind and encourage already-invited residents to participate, rather than broaden eligibility beyond the intended census population. Access to the survey remained controlled, as residents were required to request a unique survey link from Advanis and could only complete the survey once.

¹ For more information, visit <https://www.advanis.net/general-population-random-sample-gprs>.

Although survey respondents were recruited different ways (i.e., telephone and letter), both methodologies are considered statistically representative. Indeed, telephone recruitment is considered a random sample, while providing a letter to every household is considered conducting a census. Furthermore, since all respondents completed the survey online, we can be confident that the methodology is sufficiently consistent with previous years to allow for trending analysis.

The Town remains cognizant of the increased use of mobile devices within our community and recognized the importance of creating a mobile friendly platform for the 2027 Budget Planning Survey in order to engage all Cochrane residents most effectively. As mentioned, the survey platform used in 2025 allowed for a mobile-optimized experience ensuring that those who chose to complete the survey on a smartphone or tablet could do so with ease. In total, 79% of surveys collected for this report were completed on a mobile device.

A pre-test of the survey was conducted on April 2, 2026. The purpose of the pre-test was to ensure the survey was functioning as intended on the survey platform by collecting a limited number of completed surveys and reviewing the results. Since data checks did not flag any concerns, the survey was fully launched (and these results are included in this report). The primary fielding dates for the remainder of residents who completed the survey were from April 2nd and May 6th, 2026. In total, 1,031 residents completed the survey which implies a margin of error no greater than $\pm 3.0\%$ at 95% confidence.

2.4 Survey Awareness

Survey participants were asked if they recalled seeing or hearing an advertisement for the survey. In total, 65% mentioned that they learned about the survey from the letter they received in the mail. Other channels include 15% from road signs, 15% received a call, 10% from e-mail, 6% from social media, 5% from the Town of Cochrane website, 3% from the Town of Cochrane application, 3% from newspaper, 1% from radio, and 3% saw or heard an advertisement for the survey somewhere else.

2.5 Analysis

- Data for which the base of respondents is less than 30 are generally not reported.
- To simplify reporting, chart labels for values under 5% may not be shown.
- Results have been rounded to remove decimal places. As a result, the values shown may not sum to the shown total, sub-total, or nets due to rounding.
- Some results are compared to scores as determined by Advanis' municipal benchmarks. These results were obtained through a telephone recruit to web survey which asked, among others, some municipal questions. These benchmark results are based on an aggregation of results from most municipalities in Alberta with more than 15,000 residents² excluding Cochrane, Calgary, and Edmonton. In total, 248 records are used for the benchmarks. The data was collected between May 2025 and April 2026 inclusive.

² Population counts are determined by [Alberta Municipal Affairs 2025 population list](#). This includes the cities of Airdrie, Camrose, Chestermere, Cold Lake, Fort Saskatchewan, Grande Prairie, Leduc, Lethbridge, Lloydminster, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, Spruce Grove, and St. Albert, towns of Canmore, Okotoks, Stony Plain, and Sylvan Lake, as well as Fort McMurray and Sherwood Park. Note that Beaumont is not included as Beaumont is not specifically captured in the results.

2.5.1 Stat Testing

- All statistical testing was conducted at a 95% confidence level.
- Statistical testing between current results and results from the previous wave have been conducted at the 95% confidence level and statistical differences are indicated with an upward/downward arrow (↑↓).
- To simplify reporting, results of statistical testing may not be shown for values under 5%.
- Z-tests were performed to highlight differences between two proportions, T-tests were performed to highlight differences between two means.

2.5.2 Segment Comparisons

The analysis checked for statistical differences between the following groups:

- Gender (Woman, Man, Others)
- Age (17 to 34, 35 to 54, 55 to 64, 65 or older);
- Children in household (children, no children);
- Income (under \$50,000, \$50,000 to \$99,999, \$100,000 to \$149,999, \$150,000 or more);
- Employment status (employed full/part time, on leave/homemaker/student/not employed/retired);
- Home ownership (owning, renting);
- Overall quality of life (very good, good/acceptable/poor/very poor);
- Perceived value from taxes (fairly good/very good, fairly poor/very poor); and
- Preferred tax strategy (prefer to increase taxes, prefer to cut services).

The subgroup differences mentioned above are statistically tested in mutually exclusive groupings. For example, if a result says that it is statistically higher for those aged 17 to 34, this means that the result among those aged 17 to 34 is statistically higher than those who are not aged 17 to 34.

2.6 Representativeness

Weighting was used to better represent the population and reduce non-response bias.

- Results are weighted to match age & gender population counts from the the 2024 Municipal Census³.
- Weights ranged between 0.71 and 1.98 and have an overall weighting efficiency of 90%.
- Although the results are weighted, sample sizes for each question represent the number of actual respondents (i.e., unweighted n).
- Specific details of the weighting scheme used can be found in the Appendix (section 5.2).

³ <https://www.cochrane.ca/government/census>

3. Executive Summary

3.1 Quality of Life and Community Perceptions

- 99% of respondents rate Cochrane's quality of life as acceptable or better (39% "very good"), outperforming municipal benchmarks of 84% and 24%, respectively.
- 82% rate services and infrastructure as acceptable or better in meeting community needs (9% "very good").
- 65% are confident in the Town's long-term planning effectiveness.

3.2 Property Tax Value and Regional Perceptions

- 65% of respondents feel they receive good value for municipal taxes, above the provincial benchmark of 47%. Top positive drivers are infrastructure maintenance (11%) and general service levels (10%); primary concerns are desired service improvements (26%) and infrastructure maintenance (24%).
- 68% report value for taxes stayed about the same, 17% feel it worsened, and 4% feel it improved.
- While Cochrane's tax rate is objectively among the lowest of its regional peers, only 5% were aware of this. Instead, 36% believe it is higher, 33% view it as about the same, and 26% are unsure.
- 46% underestimated the provincial education tax share. When informed of the true breakdown, 52% are satisfied with how the Town balances its remaining 62% share of spending (25% neutral).

3.3 Fiscal Strategies and Tax Preferences

- 53% of respondents prefer to adjust or lower service levels to maintain or lower current taxes, while 38% prefer increasing taxes to maintain or expand services.
- Faced with a specific 2% to 4% property tax increase dedicated strictly to maintaining current infrastructure and services, respondents are split: 53% support the increase and 44% oppose it.
- Long-term fiscal sustainability (27%) is the top budget priority.

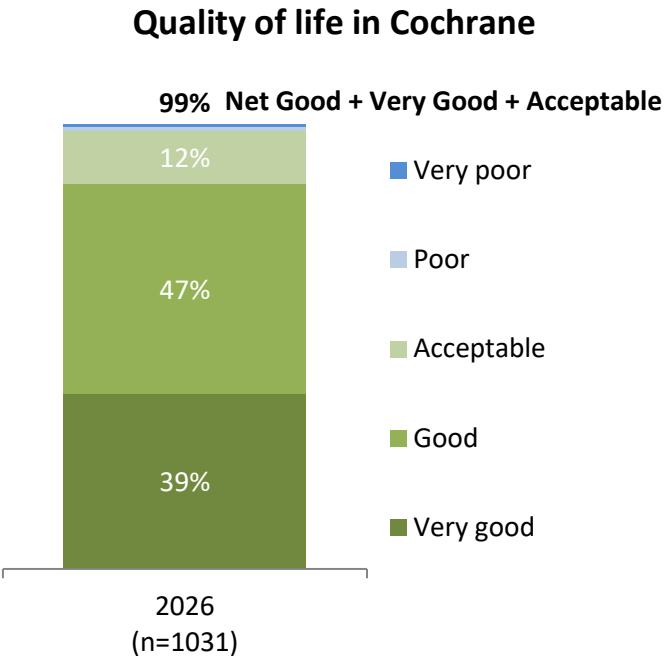
3.4 Service and Infrastructure Priorities

- Roads, parks and open spaces, fire services, and recreation are the top priority service and investment areas.
- Top infrastructure priorities include transportation infrastructure (27%), utility/core infrastructure (22%), and public safety facilities (20%).
- 60% favor a balanced investment approach to improving infrastructure while 21% prioritize current asset maintenance and 20% prioritize new public safety facilities construction to pace growth.

4. Detailed Findings

4.1 Quality of Life

To open the survey, respondents were asked to rate their overall quality of life. Nearly all Cochrane respondents (99%) rate their quality of life as acceptable or better, and 40% rate it as “very good”, which strongly outperforms the municipal benchmarks of 84% and 24%, respectively.



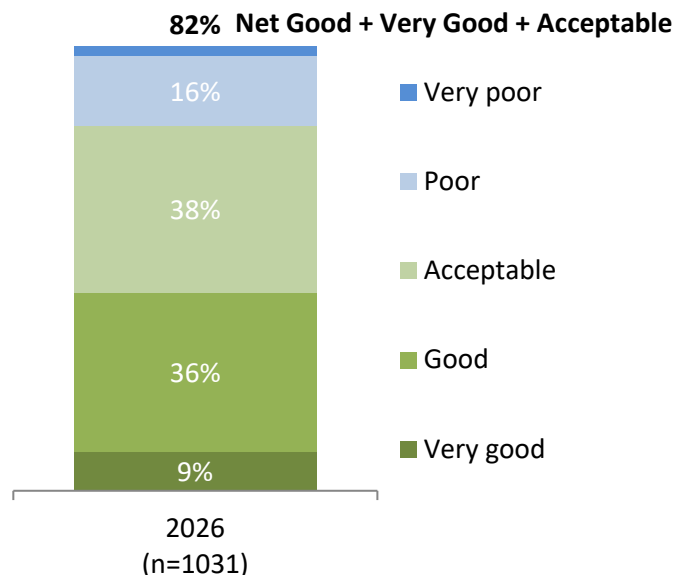
Values may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Bars missing values are less than 5%.

Subgroups that are significantly more likely to have a “very good” quality of life include:

- 55%: Ages 65+,
- 54%: Prefer to increase taxes,
- 51%: Feel they receive good value for their taxes,
- 50%: Not in the workforce,
- 47%: Income level \$50k – \$99k,
- 43%: Households with no children, and
- 41%: Homeowners.

Respondents were then asked to rate the Town's services and infrastructure in meeting the needs of residents. In total, 82% rated the services and infrastructure as acceptable or better, although only one-in-ten rate them as "very good".

Rating the Town's services and infrastructure in meeting the needs of residents



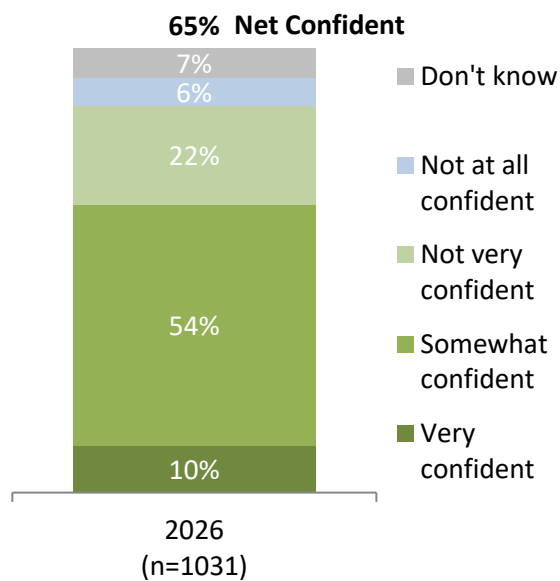
Values may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Bars missing values are less than 5%.

Subgroups that are significantly more likely to rate the Town's services and infrastructure as meeting the needs of residents as "very good", "good", or "acceptable" include:

- 94%: Feel they have very good quality of life,
- 94%: Feel they receive good value for their taxes,
- 90%: Ages 65+,
- 87%: Prefer to increase taxes,
- 86%: Households with no children, and
- 85%: Men.

When asked how confident they are that the Town is planning effectively for Cochrane's future, about two-thirds (65%) are "somewhat confident" or "very confident".

Confidence that the Town is planning effectively for Cochrane's future



Values may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Bars missing values are less than 5%.

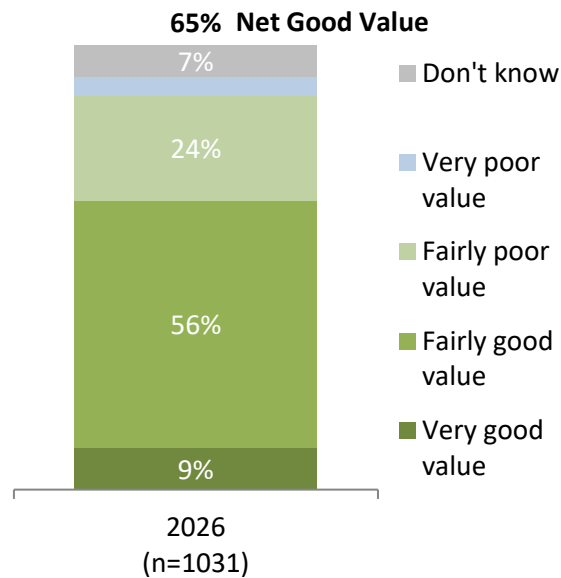
Subgroups that are significantly more likely to be "somewhat confident" or "very confident" that the Town is planning effectively for Cochrane's future include:

- 78%: Feel they have very good quality of life,
- 78%: Feel they receive good value for their taxes,
- 74%: Ages 65+,
- 74%: Prefer to increase taxes, and
- 70%: Not in the workforce.

4.2 Property Tax Value

Respondents were then asked to think about all the programs, services and infrastructure that are funded by property taxes and then to rate the value they feel they receive for their municipal tax dollars. In total, about two-thirds (65%) feel they receive good value with most (56%) feeling they receive “fairly good value”. This is far above the provincial benchmark of 47% who say they receive good value.

Perceived value received for taxes paid



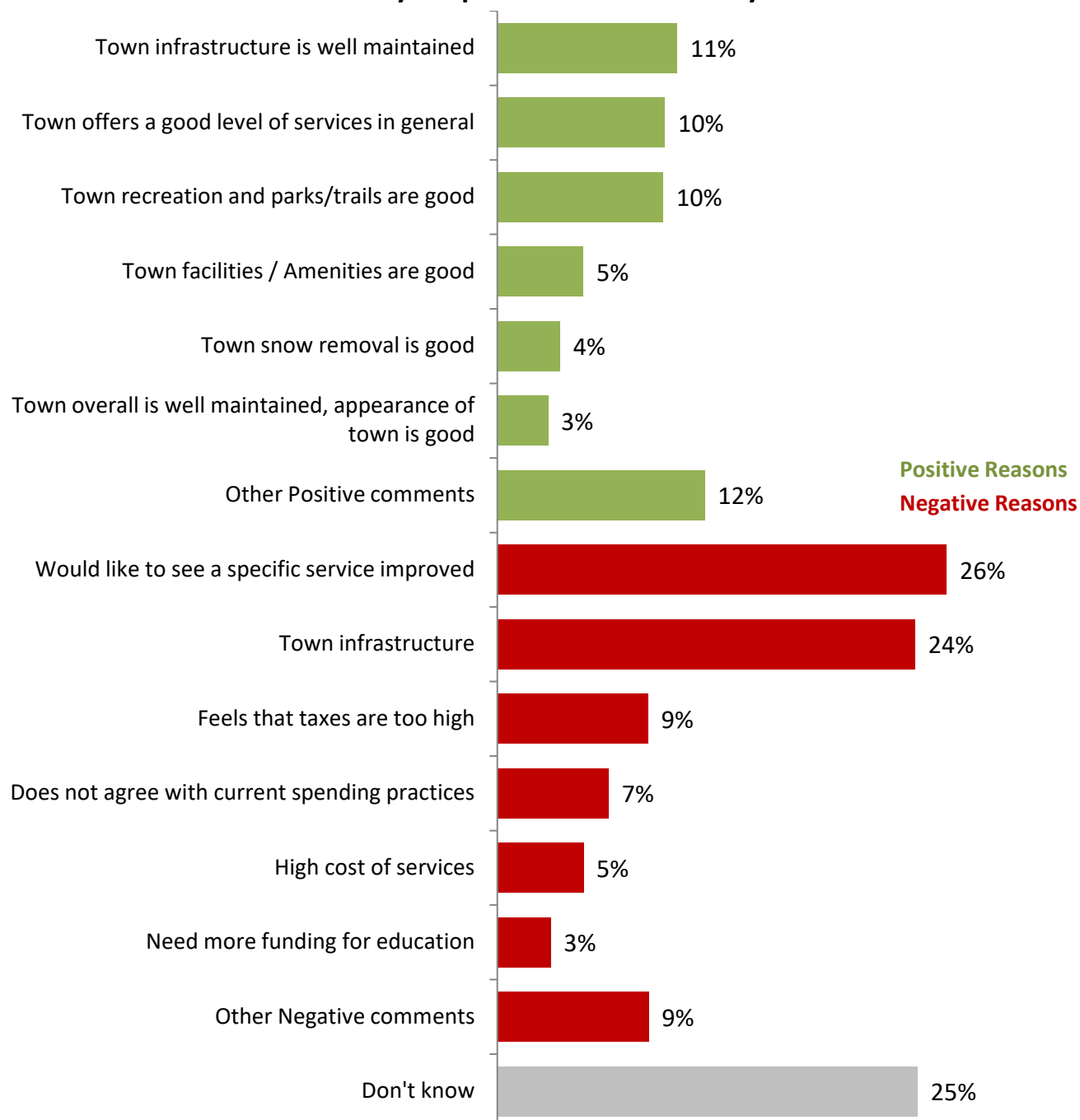
Values may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Bars missing values are less than 5%.

Subgroups that are significantly more likely to feel they receive “fairly good” or “very good” value include:

- 84%: Feel they have very good quality of life,
- 81%: Prefer to increase taxes,
- 79%: Ages 65+,
- 72%: Not in the workforce,
- 70%: Income level \$100k – \$149k, and
- 69%: Households with no children.

When asked to explain the reasoning behind their value-for-tax-dollar rating, respondents provided a variety of insights. The leading **positive** drivers included that the Town has well-maintained infrastructure (11%), a strong overall level of municipal services (10%), and high-quality recreation, parks, and trails (10%). Conversely, the most **negative** areas of concern were a desire for specific service improvements (26%) and a perception that town infrastructure is not well-maintained (24%). High taxes (9%) and disagreement with current spending practices (7%) rounded out the top four negative themes. Note that one-quarter (25%) of respondents did not provide a response and among those who did not rate their value for tax dollars, the most common reason was because they are new to Cochrane.

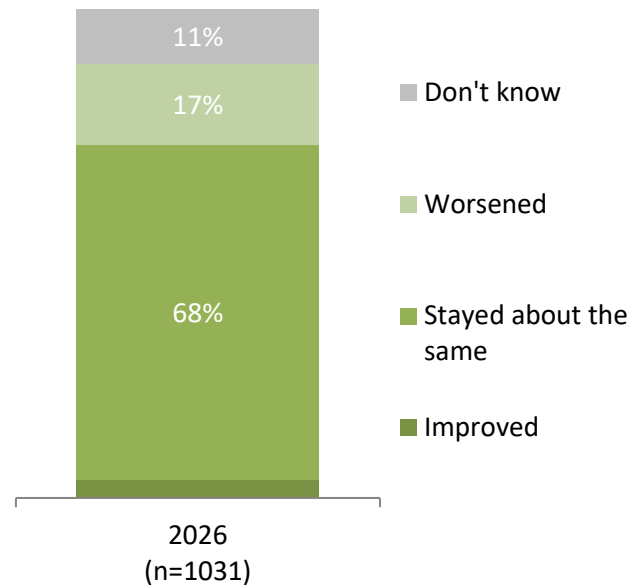
Why Respondents Feel this Way



n=966. Values may sum to more than 100% as multiple mentions were allowed. Responses <2% have been grouped into the "Other" category.

Respondents were then asked to compare the value they felt they received from their property tax in the past year compared to the previous year. The majority (68%) felt that it has “stayed about the same”, however there approximately four-times more respondents who feel the value they have received has worsened (17%) than who feel it has improved (4%).

Property tax dollars’ value compared to last year



Values may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Bars missing values are less than 5%.

Subgroups that are significantly more likely to say the value of their property tax dollars has **worsened** include:

- 37%: Those who feel they receive poor value for their taxes,
- 23%: Feel they have good to poor quality of life,
- 23%: Those who prefer to cut services, and
- 18%: Those who own their home.

Subgroups that are significantly more likely to say the value of their property tax dollars has **stayed about the same** include:

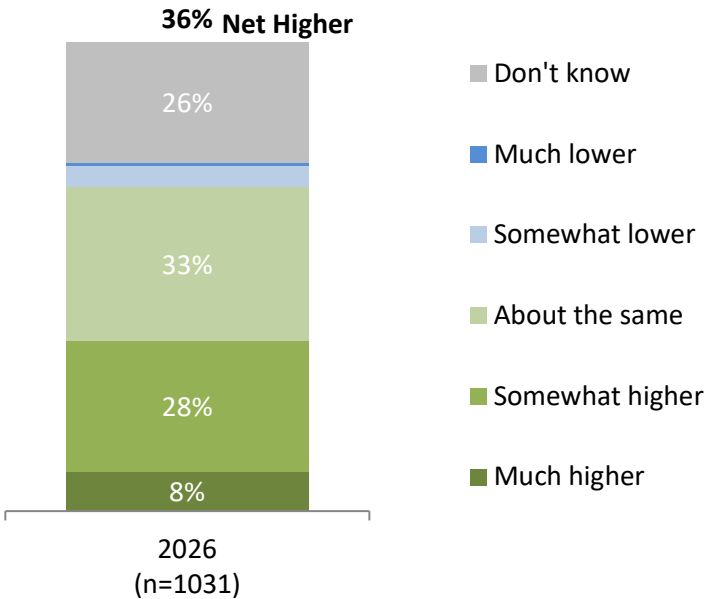
- 77%: Ages 65+,
- 77%: Feel they receive good value for their taxes,
- 76%: Prefer to increase taxes, and
- 74%: Feel they have very good quality of life.

Subgroups that are significantly more likely to say the value of their property tax dollars has **improved** include:

- 5%: Those with no children, and
- 5%: Those who feel they receive good value for their taxes.

Following the property tax evaluation, the survey explored how respondents perceive Cochrane's tax rates relative to peer municipalities. While Cochrane objectively maintains one of the lower tax rates among its regional peers⁴, public perception varies from reality. Only a small minority (5%) correctly identified the rate as lower. Instead, 36% believe Cochrane's taxes are higher, 33% view them as about the same, and 26% are unsure. This highlights that there is an opportunity to bridge the gap between public perception and reality.

Compared to other similar sized communities, Cochrane’s property tax rate is...



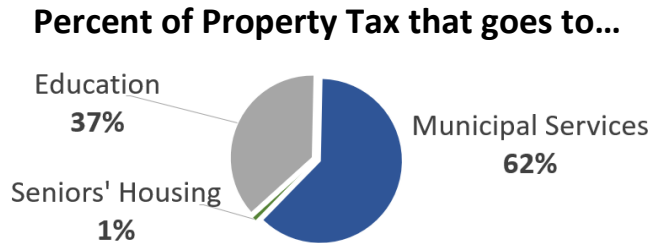
Values may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Bars missing values are less than 5%.

Subgroups that are significantly more likely to say the tax rate in Cochrane is higher include:

- 54%: Feel they receive poor value for their taxes,
- 47%: Prefer to cut services,
- 44%: Ages 55 to 64,
- 43%: Feel they have good to poor quality of life, and
- 40%: Households with children.

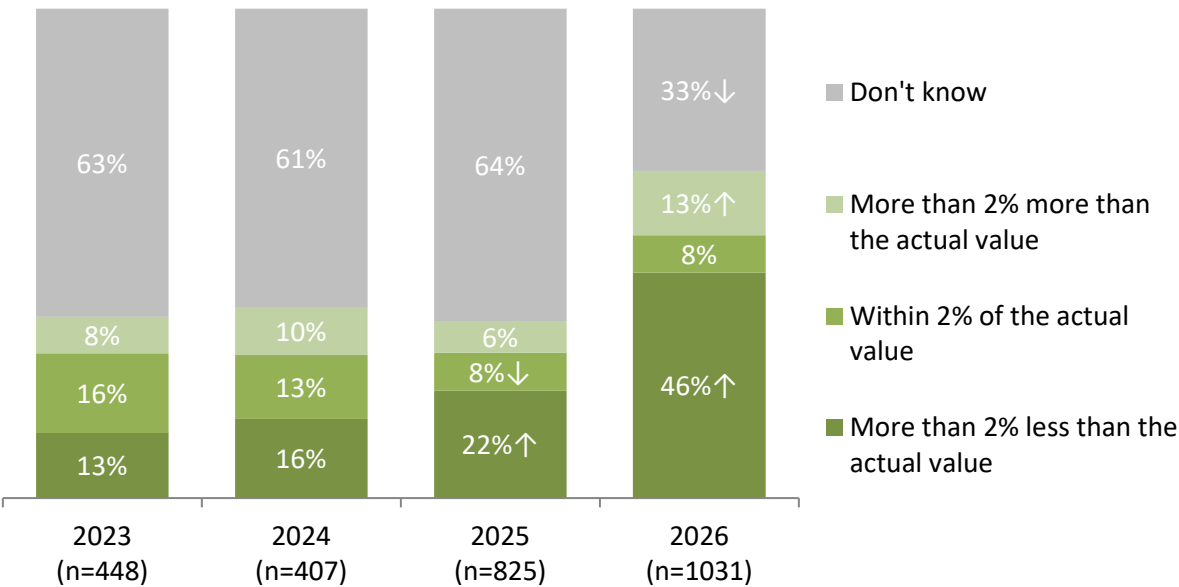
⁴ The Town of Cochrane's residential tax rate is 0.0065730 (<https://www.airdrie.ca/index.cfm?serviceID=2320>) which is lower than the residential tax rates of 0.0067274 in Okotoks (<https://www.okotoks.ca/sites/default/files/2025-06/Bylaw%2005-25%20Assessable%20and%20Supplementary%20Tax%20Rates.pdf>) and 0.008073 in Strathmore (<file:///C:/Users/pkyba/Downloads/25-11-property-tax-by-law-no-25-11-signed-copy-on-file.pdf>). However, Airdrie’s 0.00645561 rate (<https://www.airdrie.ca/index.cfm?serviceID=2320>) is slightly lower than Cochrane’s.

The survey then explained that a portion of the property taxes collected in Cochrane doesn't actually stay with the Town. It is collected on behalf of the Province of Alberta to fund education and senior living. The true percentages, which were shown later to respondents, are:



When asked about the percentage of a typical property tax bill that goes toward the Provincial education tax, fewer respondents selected “don't know” compared with previous years (33% vs. 64% last year). While the proportion correctly identifying the 37% share remained unchanged at 8%, respondents were more likely to either overestimate (13% vs. 6% last year) or underestimate (46% vs. 22% last year) the amount.

Percent of property tax collected on behalf of the Province of Alberta for provincial education tax



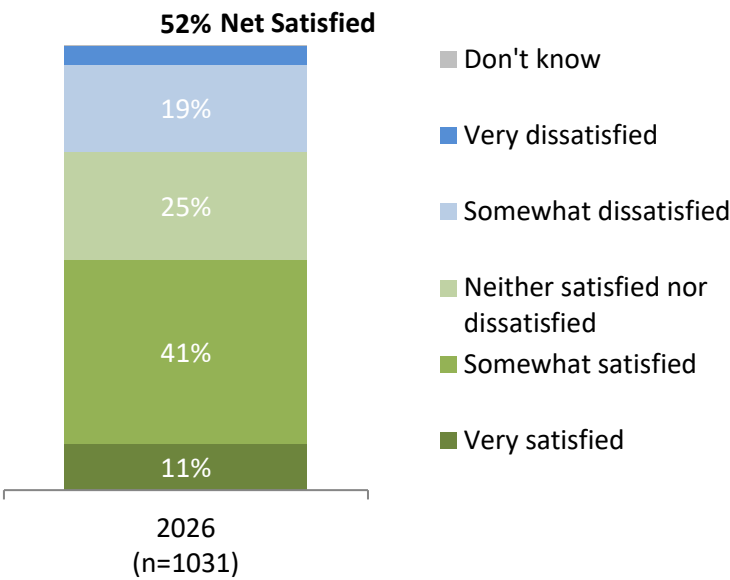
Values may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Subgroups that are significantly more likely to be correct (or close to correct) include:

9%: Households with no children.

After informing respondent of the actual percentages of property tax collected that goes to the Province of Alberta for education and for Seniors’ Housing, they were asked to rate their satisfaction with how the Town balances the spending of the 62% that is used to fund programs, services, and infrastructure like roads, parks, public buildings, and local programs. Slightly over one-half (52%) are satisfied with this spending while another one-quarter (25%) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Property tax spendings satisfaction level



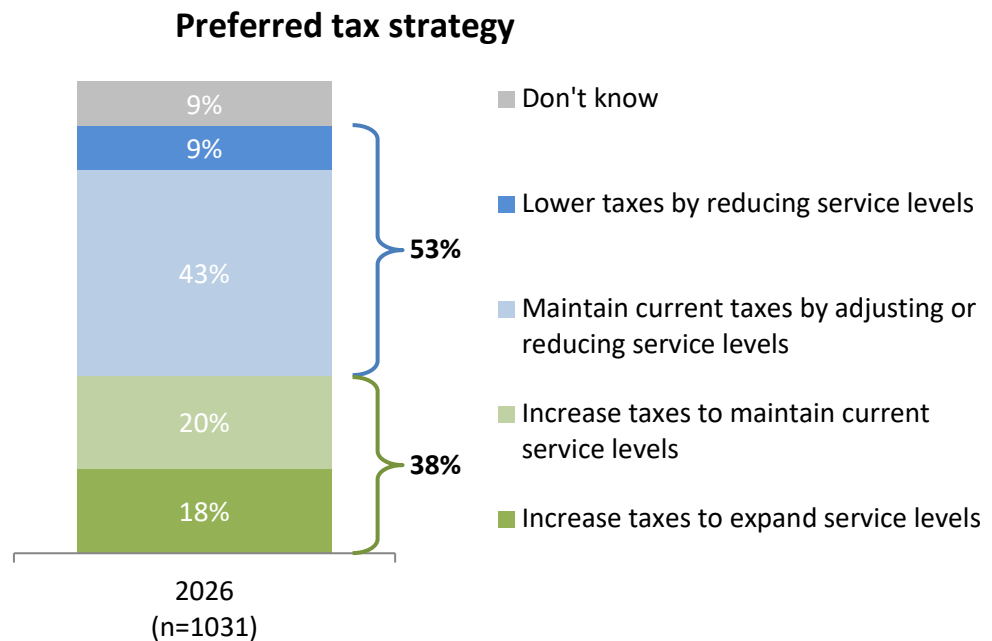
Values may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Bars missing values are less than 5%.

Subgroups that are significantly more likely to be satisfied overall with the spendings include:

- 72%: Feel they have very good quality of life,
- 69%: Feel they receive good value for their taxes,
- 68%: Prefer to increase taxes,
- 60%: Ages 65+,
- 59%: Not in the workforce,
- 56%: Women,
- 55%: Households with no children.

4.3 Overall Property Tax Preference

Next, respondents were shown four different tax strategies and asked for their preference. In total, 53% of respondents prefer to either adjust or lower service levels to maintain or lower current taxes, whereas 38% prefer an increase to taxes to maintain or increase services. A further 9% could not decide on what tax strategy they preferred.



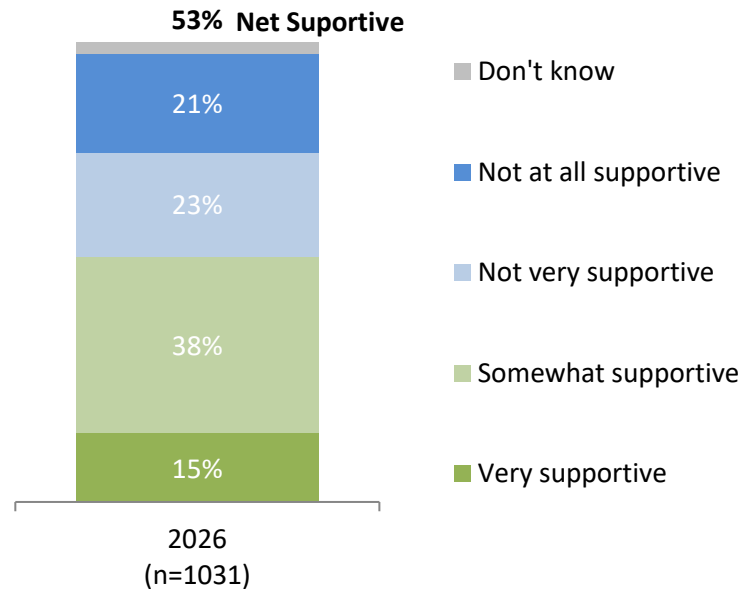
Values may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Significant subgroup differences include those who:

Increase taxes to expand service levels	Increase taxes to maintain current service levels	Maintain current taxes by adjusting or reducing service levels	Lower taxes by reducing service levels
24%: Income level, \$150k or more, 23%: Feel they have very good quality of life, 22%: Ages 35 to 54, 21%: Households with children, 20%: Women, and 20%: In the workforce.	33%: Ages 65+, 30%: Not in the workforce, 29%: Feel they have very good quality of life, 28%: Feel they receive good value for their taxes, 26%: Income level \$100k to \$149k, and 24%: Households with no children.	None.	25%: Feel they receive poor value for their taxes, 14%: Feel they have good to poor quality of life, 12%: Men, and 11%: In the workforce.

A question was then asked to gauge the level of support among respondents for a property tax increase of 2-4% in order to maintain current infrastructure and services. Results are fairly split with slightly more than one-half (53%) of respondents supporting an increase in the taxes while slightly less than one-half (44%) do not support the tax increase.

Support/Opposition for an increase in taxes to maintain infrastructure and services



Values may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Bars missing values are less than 5%.

Subgroups that are significantly more likely to **support** increasing taxes to maintain services include:

- 90%: Prefer to increase taxes,
- 71%: Feel they have very good quality of life,
- 68%: Ages 65+,
- 65%: Feel they receive good value for their taxes,
- 64%: Not in the workforce,
- 60%: Income level \$100k to \$149k,
- 58%: Households with no children, and
- 57%: Women.

Subgroups that are significantly more likely to **oppose** increasing taxes to maintain services include:

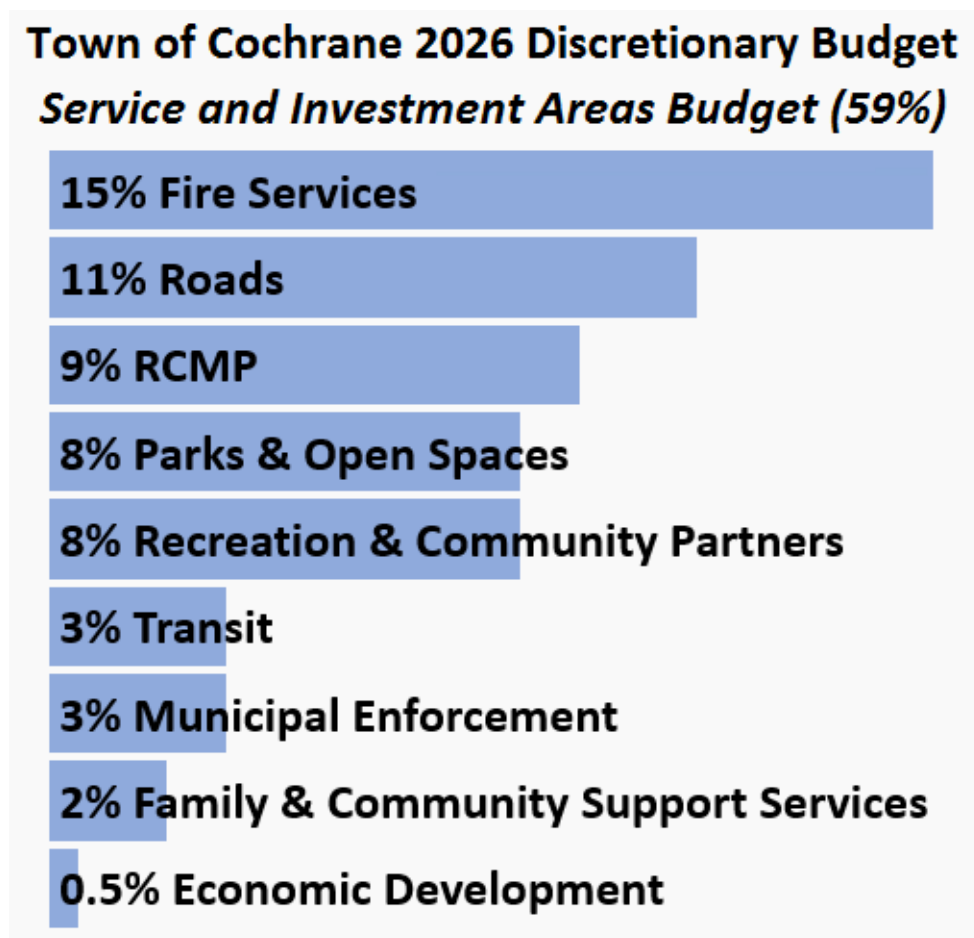
- 71%: Feel they receive poor value for their taxes,
- 67%: Prefer to cut services,
- 55%: Feel they have good to poor quality of life,
- 50%: Households with children, and
- 48%: In the workforce.

4.4 Service Priorities

The Town of Cochrane budget includes two spending categories:

- Essential spendings (about 41%) includes core items that are necessary to keep the Town running legally and safely. This includes areas like financial planning, customer service, and property assessments.
- Service and Investment Areas (about 59%) includes categories where spending can be increased or decreased based on community priorities. Changes here directly impact the level of service, infrastructure investment, and future projects.

The proposed Town of Cochrane 2027 Service and Investment Areas budget is split between the following services:



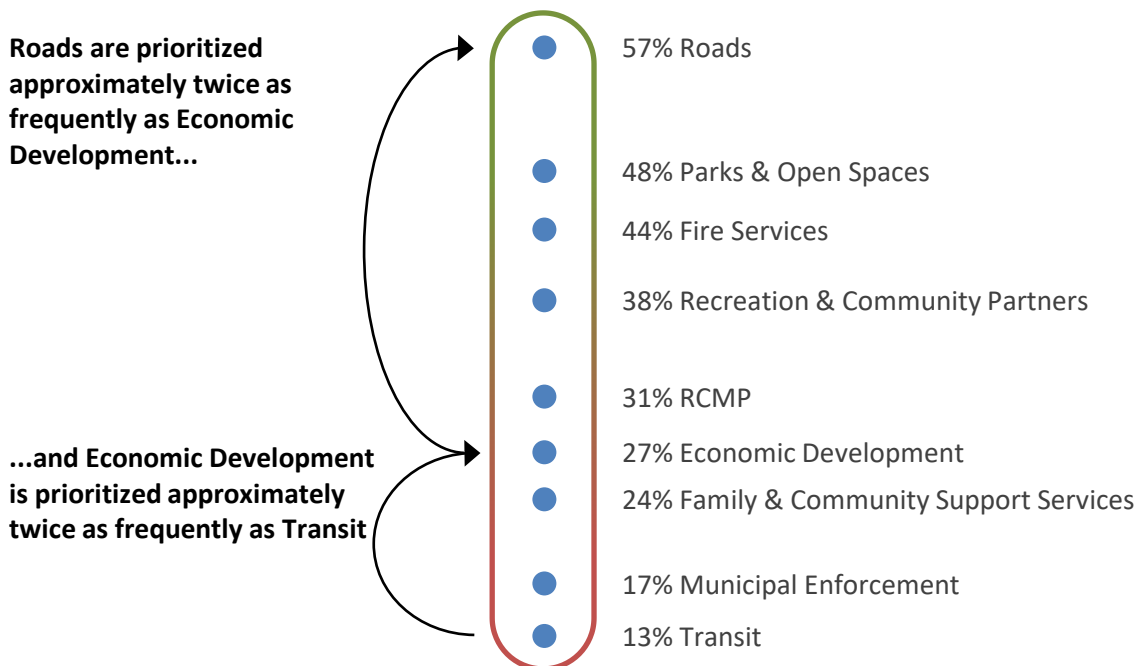
To better understand residents' priorities within the Town's discretionary budget, respondents participated in an exercise designed to measure the relative importance of the different Service and Investment Areas. Rather than asking residents to rate every item independently, respondents were shown groups of three Service and Investment Areas and asked to select the option they considered the highest priority. This process was repeated three times for each respondent, each time using a different (but controlled) combination of items.

This approach helps identify the relative priority all residents place on different areas of investment by requiring respondents to make direct trade-offs between options. This method also reduces the tendency for respondents to rate all items similarly important and provides a clearer distinction between priorities. By aggregating responses across all participants, the analysis produces a statistically reliable ranking of Service and Investment Areas based on their relative importance to residents.

Given these tradeoffs, the results should be interpreted as a measure of comparative preference rather than absolute support. Higher scores indicate areas respondents prioritized more often relative to other options presented in the exercise. The choices revealed a clear hierarchy of local priorities:

- **Top Tier:** Roads (57%) stood out as the primary service, followed by Parks and Open Spaces (48%), Fire Services (44%), and Recreation (38%).
- **Mid Tier:** RCMP (31%), Economic Development (27%), and Family & Community Support Services (24%) were all prioritized roughly twice as frequently as the lower tier services.
- **Lower Tier:** Municipal Enforcement (17%) and Transit (13%) were prioritized least often when forced against other choices.

Respondent priorities for service and investment areas



n=1031. Values may not sum to 300% (since 3 questions were asked) due to rounding.

Some key subgroups differences include:

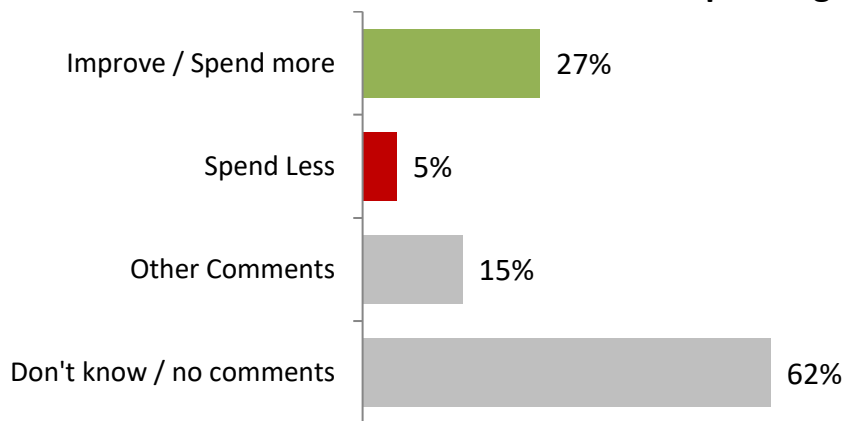
- Fire Services is the top priority among those with incomes under \$50,000⁵.
- Parks and Open Spaces is the top priority among those aged 17 to 34 years old and those with incomes of \$150,000 or more.
- Recreation and Community Partners are prioritized third overall by those aged 17 to 34 as well as those aged 35 to 54 years old, those with children in the household, those with incomes of \$150,000 or more, those who are employed, those who rent⁶, and those who prefer to increase taxes.

⁵ Note that the base size for those with incomes under \$50,000 is only 68 so results should be interpreted with caution.

⁶ Note that the base size for renters is only 66 so results should be interpreted with caution.

Respondents were then asked if there was anything else they would like to add about the services. While most (62%) did not provide any additional comments, 27% mentioned that they would like the Town to increase spendings and improve a specific service (for example, 6% suggested improving or spending more on recreation facilities and 5% reiterated their design to spend more on roads) while a small group (5%) mentioned that they want spending to decrease.

Services and investment spending feedback

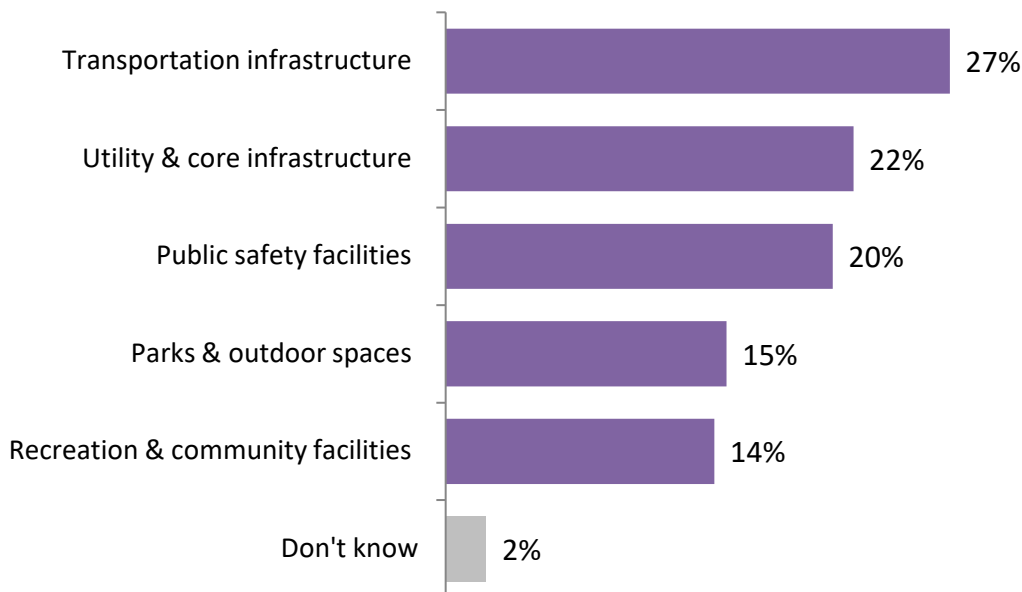


n=1031. Values may sum to more than 100% as multiple mentions were allowed.

4.5 Infrastructure

When presented with a list of core infrastructure areas and asked to identify their single highest priority for limited funding, respondents focused on three main categories. Transportation infrastructure was selected most frequently (27%), followed closely by utility and core infrastructure (22%) and public safety facilities (20%).

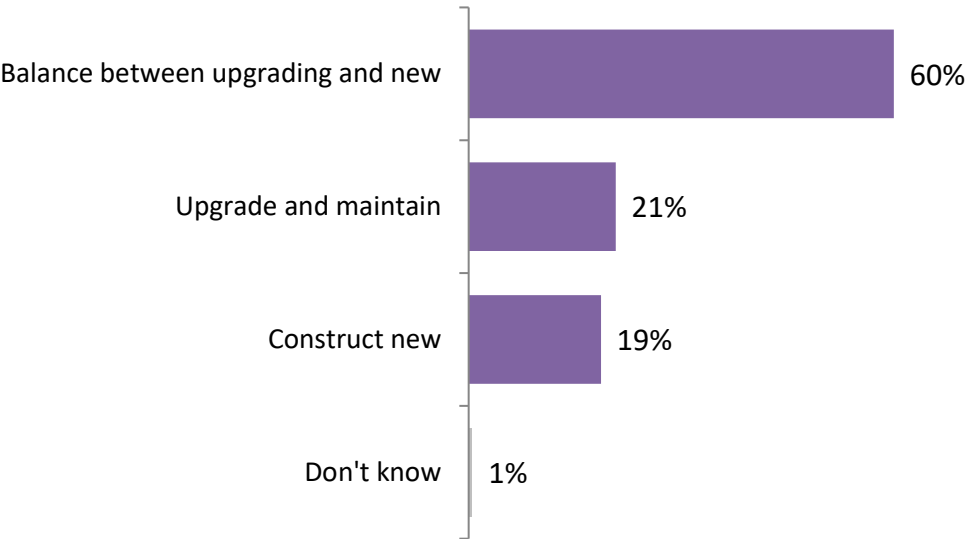
Projects or goals to prioritize with limited funding



n=1031. Values may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Existing infrastructure could be improved, or new infrastructure could be built. When asked to choose between maintaining existing assets and building for the future, a clear majority of respondents (60%) favored a balanced approach. This desire for equilibrium is further reinforced by the remaining respondents, who were split almost exactly down the middle with 21% preferring a focus on upgrading and maintaining current infrastructure versus 19% prioritizing building new infrastructure to pace Cochrane's growth.

Respondent preferences for infrastructure investment



n=1031. Values may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Subgroups that are significantly more likely to suggest **upgrading and maintaining** infrastructure include:

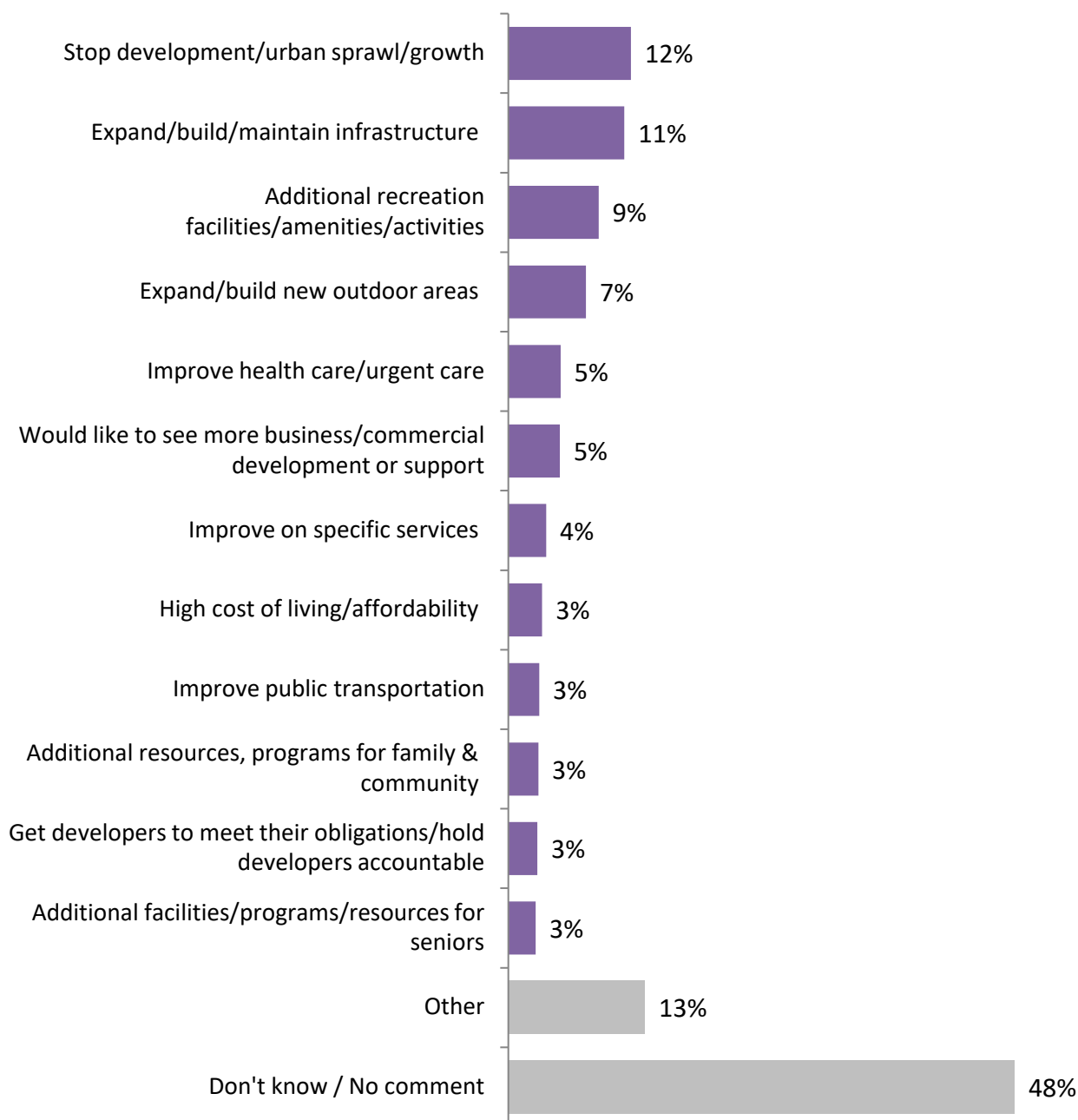
- 36%: Those who rent,
- 28%: Those who feel they receive poor value for their taxes,
- 27%: Those who prefer to cut services,
- 24%: Feel they have good to poor quality of life, and
- 23%: Those who are employed.

Subgroups that are significantly more likely to suggest **constructing new** infrastructure include:

- 25%: Those who prefer to increase taxes,
- 25%: Those with children in the household,
- 24%: Those who feel they receive poor value for their taxes, and
- 23%: Those earning \$150,000 or more per year.

When invited to share additional priorities for Cochrane's future beyond everything mentioned so far, nearly one-half of respondents (48%) offered no further comment, suggesting the previous questions captured their primary concerns. That said, opinions on community growth were closely divided: 12% advocated for curbing urban sprawl and slowing development, while 11% focused on expanding or maintaining infrastructure to support growth. Additionally, a combined desire for community amenities emerged, with requests for new indoor recreational facilities (9%) and expanded outdoor spaces or trails (7%) also being mentioned more often than other priorities.

Suggestions for other projects or goals

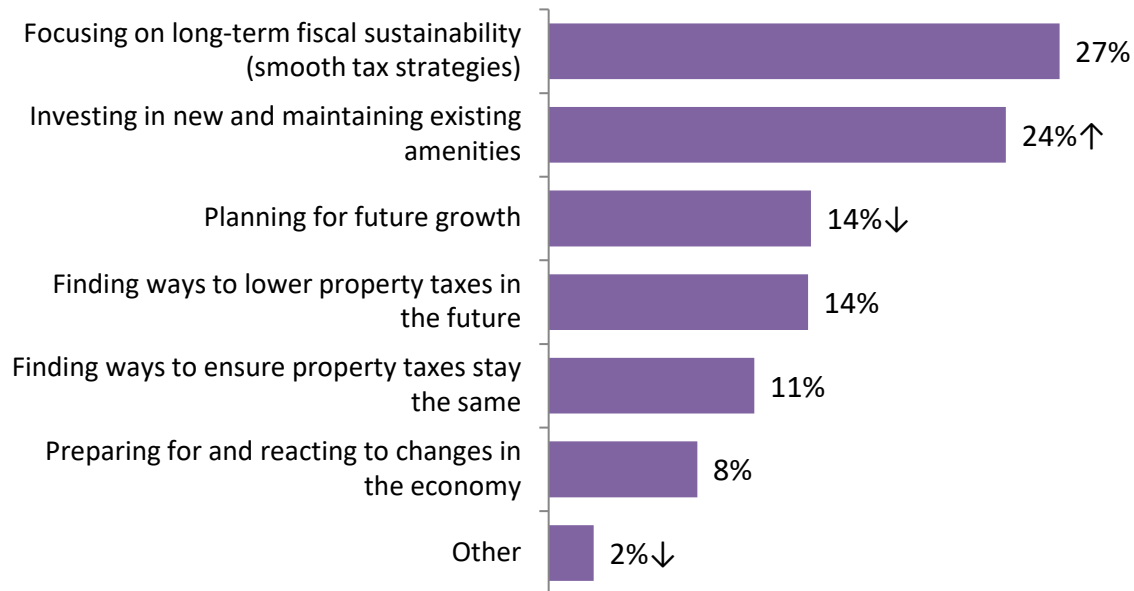


n=1031. Values may sum to more than 100% as multiple mentions were allowed. Responses <2% have been grouped into the "Other" category.

4.6 Most Important Budget Consideration

Finally, when asked to select the single top budget priority for the Town, the largest share of respondents (27%) identified long-term fiscal sustainability. This was followed closely by investing in new and maintaining existing amenities, which saw a notable increase to 24% (up from 13% in 2025). Planning for future growth and finding ways to lower property taxes both received 14% of selections, though support for prioritizing growth dropped substantially from 25% last year.

Most important priority facing the Town



n=1031. Values may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

5. Appendix

5.1 Weighted Respondent Demographics

	Percent of Respondents			
	2026 n=1031	2025 n=825	2024 n=407	2023 n=448
Age				
17 to 24	3%	2%	1%	2%
25 to 34	21%	21%	23%	22%
35 to 44	22%	25%	19%	21%
45 to 54	17%	14%	19%	17%
55 to 64	15%	15%	16%	16%
65 or older	22%	22%	21%	21%
Prefer not to say	1%	0%	0%	0%
Employment status				
Working full time, including self-employment	58%	57%	53%	52%
Working part time, including self-employment	8%	8%	8%	13%
On leave (disability, maternity, paternity, etc.)	2%	2%	2%	2%
Homemaker	2%	2%	4%	3%
Student	2%	2%	1%	1%
Not employed	1%	0%	2%	1%
Retired	24%	25%	25%	24%
Prefer not to answer	3%	4%	4%	4%
Household income*				
Under \$50,000	7%	-	-	-
\$50,000 to \$99,999	19%	-	-	-
\$100,000 to \$149,999	26%	-	-	-
\$150,000 or more	36%	-	-	-
Prefer not to answer	13%	-	-	-
Primary residence				
Own	91%	94%	91%	89%
Rent	7%	5%	7%	10%
Not Applicable	2%	1%	1%	1%
Gender*				
Man	46%	-	-	-
Woman	50%	-	-	-
Non-binary	0%	-	-	-
Prefer to self-describe	0%	-	-	-
Prefer not to answer	3%	-	-	-
Children (under 18) in household				
Yes	39%	36%	35%	41%
No	59%	63%	64%	57%
Prefer not to answer	2%	1%	1%	1%

Values may not add to 100% due to rounding.

*Data unavailable for previous years due to change in the question.

5.2 Data Weighting

The data was weighted to the age characteristics of the residents of Cochrane as determined by the 2024 Municipal Census. Population weights were based on known age and gender distributions. Because some respondents did not provide one or both of these characteristics, the population distributions were proportionally adjusted to account for missing responses in the corresponding variable. Respondents who provided both age and gender were weighted using the full adjusted age–gender distribution. Respondents missing either age or gender were weighted using only the available characteristic, with population proportions rescaled accordingly. Respondents missing both characteristics were assigned a weight of 1, as no demographic information was available for weighting.

The following outlines the weighting factors utilized in this research:

Gender	Age group	Number of completed surveys	Proportion of completed surveys	Census proportions	Weight factor
Woman	17 to 34	80	7.8%	12.3%	1.53
Woman	35 to 44	132	12.8%	11.3%	0.85
Woman	45 to 54	94	9.1%	8.3%	0.85
Woman	55 to 64	82	8.0%	8.1%	0.96
Woman	65 or older	115	11.2%	11.7%	1.03
Woman	Unknown/Refused*	1	0.1%	0%	1.02
Man	17 to 34	61	5.9%	12.1%	1.98
Man	35 to 44	126	12.2%	10.7%	0.83
Man	45 to 54	65	6.3%	8.4%	1.26
Man	55 to 64	82	8.0%	6.7%	0.79
Man	65 or older	148	14.4%	10.4%	0.71
Man	Unknown/Refused*	1	0.1%	0%	0.99
Other	17 to 34	6	0.6%	0%	1.17
Other	35 to 44	10	1.0%	0%	0.84
Other	45 to 54	9	0.9%	0%	1.02
Other	55 to 64	9	0.9%	0%	0.88
Other	65 or older	5	0.5%	0%	0.85
Other	Unknown/Refused*	5	0.5%	0%	1.00

* Respondents were allowed to refuse to answer their age as long as they confirmed that they are at least 17 years old.

5.3 Survey Methodology Summary

Research sponsor (including all financial sponsors)	Town of Cochrane
Research/data collection supplier	Advanis
Population represented	Town of Cochrane Residents
Sample size	n=1031
Mode of data collection	Telephone recruitment to an online survey Letter mail-out to households where respondents can send an SMS to receive a link to the online survey (English only)
Source of sample	- Letters to all households in Cochrane via Canada Post - Advanis General Population Random Sample - ASDE Listed & Unlisted RDD landline numbers
Type of sample	Telephone numbers and letters to every household
Sample design	Census - all sample contacted
Start and end dates of data collection	April 2, 2026, to May 6, 2026
Strategies used to gain cooperation	Request permission on the phone, reminders to those who agreed to do the survey Sent letter to every household City advertised that the survey would occur Draw to win a gift certificate to a local Cochrane business of your choice (valued at \$150)
Margin of sampling error for total sample	+/- 3.0 percentage points at the 95% confidence level
Is data weighted?	Yes, based on resident age to the 2024 Municipal Census. See section 5.2 above for details.
Contact for more information	Patrick Kyba, pkyba@advanis.net Advanis (780) 229-1135
Survey text	See section 5.4 below

5.4 Survey

What follows is a paper version of the web survey.

Budget Planning Survey 2027

Town of Cochrane

Generated on 2026-05-13 at 15:51:10 MT



Languages: English

Survey Content

Page INTROS

Intro1



Have your say in Cochrane's budget planning process!

The Town of Cochrane is developing the next municipal budget. Your input will help Council and administration understand residents' priorities as it balances services, infrastructure investment, and property taxes.

The budget is a plan for tomorrow's Cochrane and this is your chance to share your thoughts with Town Council and administration to help guide the 2027 budget. Doing so makes you eligible to **enter a draw to win a gift certificate to a local Cochrane business of your choice (valued at \$150).**

We want to hear from you! Please use the arrows in the bottom right of your screen to move forward and backward in the survey, do not use your browser back button. If you get interrupted while doing the survey, you **can click on the same link** to pick up right where you left off. **Press the right arrow to continue.**

To ensure your confidentiality, the third-party vendor Advanis Inc. has been hired to ensure only aggregated results are shared.

© 2026__ Privacy Policy (<https://advanis.net/privacy-policy/english/>) CRIC Pledge

(<https://www.canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CRIC-Pledge-to-Canadians.pdf>)

Intro2

Please read each question and statement carefully. Throughout the survey, information will be provided to you so that you are able to reflect and provide an informed response to the questions. Pressing this icon ***?*** when shown will provide additional information. For each question, please select the response(s) that best represents your point of view.

Survey is open until May 4, 2026.

? This is just an example info button. On future questions where this button appears, you will see additional information that you may wish to review to help inform your answers.

D1

To begin, how old are you?

- ☐ ₁ 16 or younger
- ☐ ₂ 17 to 24
- ☐ ₃ 25 to 34
- ☐ ₄ 35 to 44
- ☐ ₅ 45 to 54
- ☐ ₆ 55 to 64
- ☐ ₇ 65 or older
- ☐ ₈ Prefer not to say

D1a Show if D1 Refused (D1 = 8)

We want to make sure we're hearing from a wide range of voices. To get started, can you confirm you are at least 17 years old?

- ☐ ₁ Yes
- ☐ ₂ No

T1 Show if D1 younger OR D1a no ((D1a = 2) OR (D1 = 1))

Unfortunately, you don't quite fit the criteria for this particular survey. We truly appreciate your time and your interest in Cochrane's budget planning.

S1

Do you live **within the town limits** of Cochrane?

- ☐ ₁ Yes
- ☐ ₂ No
- ☐ ₃ Prefer not to answer

T2 *Show if S1 Does not live in Cochrane (S1 != 1)*

Unfortunately, you don't quite fit the criteria for this particular survey. We truly appreciate your time and your interest in Cochrane's budget planning.

Page QUALITY OF LIFE & GROWTH CONTEXT**Q1**

Overall, how would you rate your quality of life in Cochrane?

- ☐ ₁ Very good
- ☐ ₂ Good
- ☐ ₃ Acceptable
- ☐ ₄ Poor
- ☐ ₅ Very poor

Q2

In your view, how would you rate the Town's services and infrastructure in meeting the needs of residents today?

- ☐ ₁ Very good
- ☐ ₂ Good
- ☐ ₃ Acceptable
- ☐ ₄ Poor
- ☐ ₅ Very poor

Q2a

Looking ahead, how confident are you that the Town is planning effectively for Cochrane's future?

- ☐ ₁ Very confident
- ☐ ₂ Somewhat confident
- ☐ ₃ Not very confident
- ☐ ₄ Not at all confident
- ☐ ₋₉ Don't know

V1

Thinking about all the programs, services and infrastructure that are funded by property taxes, please rate the value you feel you receive for your municipal tax dollars.

- ☐ 1 Very good value
- ☐ 2 Fairly good value
- ☐ 3 Fairly poor value
- ☐ 4 Very poor value
- ☐ -9 Don't know

V1Why1 *Show if rated value for taxes (V1 = 1,2,3,4)*

(if very good value (V1 = 1)) What is the **main reason** you feel that you receive very good value?

(if fairly good value (V1 = 2)) What is the **main reason** you feel that you receive fairly good value?

(if fairly poor value (V1 = 3)) What is the **main reason** you feel that you receive fairly poor value?

(if very poor value (V1 = 4)) What is the **main reason** you feel that you receive very poor value?

☐ -9 Don't know / No comment

V1Why2 *Show if value for taxes is dk (V1 = Don't know)*

What is the **main reason** you couldn't rate the value you feel you receive for your municipal tax dollars?

☐ -9 Don't know / No comment

V2

And compared to last year, do you feel that the value you feel you receive from your property tax dollars has...?

- ☐ 1 Improved
- ☐ 2 Stayed about the same
- ☐ 3 Worsened
- ☐ -9 Don't know

V3

Based on your general impression, how do you think Cochrane's property tax rate compares to other similar-sized communities?

- ☐ 1 Cochrane's property tax rate is **much higher**
- ☐ 2 Cochrane's property tax rate is **somewhat higher**
- ☐ 3 Cochrane's property tax rate is **about the same**
- ☐ 4 Cochrane's property tax rate is **somewhat lower**
- ☐ 5 Cochrane's property tax rate is **much lower**
- ☐ .9 Don't know

Q0

Every year, a portion of the property taxes collected in Cochrane doesn't actually stay with the Town. It is collected on behalf of the Province of Alberta to fund education and senior living.

Just based on what you know, what percentage of a typical property tax bill do you think goes toward this Provincial education tax?

After entering a value, please press the right arrow to continue.

Minimum: 1, Maximum: 99

_____ %

- ☐ .9 Don't know

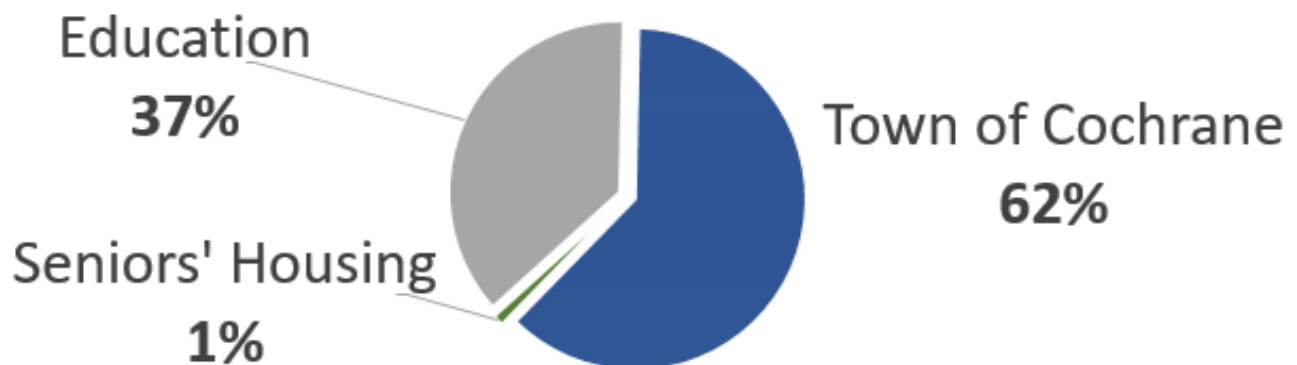
V4txt

To give you some context, for every dollar of property tax collected last year:

62 cents stayed right here to fund Town services and infrastructure;

37 cents went to the province for education; and

1 cent went to the Rocky View Foundation for operating seniors' housing.



Press the right arrow to continue.

V4

Thinking about that **62% of property taxes that stays in Cochrane**, how satisfied are you with how the Town balances that spending across programs, services, and infrastructure like roads, parks, public buildings, and local programs?

- ☐ 1 Very satisfied
- ☐ 2 Somewhat satisfied
- ☐ 3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ☐ 4 Somewhat dissatisfied
- ☐ 5 Very dissatisfied

Q3

As Cochrane continues to grow, the Town must balance service levels with property taxes. Which approach **best** reflects your view?

- ☐ 1 Increase taxes to expand service levels
- ☐ 2 Increase taxes to maintain current service levels
- ☐ 3 Maintain current taxes by adjusting or reducing service levels
- ☐ 4 Lower taxes by reducing service levels
- ☐ -9 Don't know

Q7

If additional investment were needed to maintain current infrastructure and services, how supportive would you be of a modest (2 - 4%) property tax increase?

- ☐ 1 Very supportive
- ☐ 2 Somewhat supportive
- ☐ 3 Not very supportive
- ☐ 4 Not at all supportive
- ☐ -9 Don't know

Section PRIORITIES

BlIntro, BlInstruction, BOS, Q4, Inf1, Inf2, Q5, Q6

Page SERVICES

BlIntro

To help make sense of how the budget works, we look at spending in two main ways:

The Essentials (About 41%)

These are the costs required to keep the Town running legally and safely. This includes things like financial planning, customer service, and property assessments. Because these are core requirements, we aren't focusing on them in the next part of the survey.

Service and Investment Areas (About 59%)

This is where the Town has more flexibility. These are the areas where funding can be increased or decreased based on community priorities. Changes here directly impact the level of service, infrastructure investment, and future projects.

Town of Cochrane 2026 Discretionary Budget

Service and Investment Areas Budget (59%)

15% Fire Services

11% Roads

9% RCMP

8% Parks & Open Spaces

8% Recreation & Community Partners

3% Transit

3% Municipal Enforcement

2% Family & Community Support Services

0.5% Economic Development

In the next section, we want to hear your thoughts on priorities for this 59% of the budget.

Press the right arrow to continue.

BInstruction

Help Us Prioritize Our Services

This next part is the heart of the survey. We're going to show you a few different groups of Town services. For each group, we'd like you to pick the **one** service that is the **most important** to you.

It might be tough to choose, but your answers will give us a clear picture of what the community values most. If you aren't sure what a specific service includes, just tap the info icon ****** for a quick description.

Ready to have your say? Press the right arrow to begin.

****** This is just an example info button. On future questions where this button appears, you will see additional information that you may wish to review to help inform your answers.

BOS

Looking at these three services, which one would you say is the **highest priority** for you and your household?

<item 1>

<item 2>

<item 3>

BOS Cards: 3

BOS Responses:

1. Fire Services ******
****** Includes Fire response, as well as community prevention and inspection services and emergency preparedness
2. Roads ******
****** Includes street, parking lot and alleyway seasonal cleaning, sanding, snow plowing and snow removal, as well as regular street and sidewalk repairs and maintenance
3. RCMP ******
****** Includes RCMP contract and detachment administrative support
4. Parks & Open Spaces ******
****** Includes maintaining 440 acres of parkland, 43 playgrounds, 80kms of pathway, outdoor skating rinks, as well as the maintenance of sports fields and cemeteries
5. Recreation & Community Partners ******
****** Includes organizations that are in partnership with the Town of Cochrane including Spray Lake Sawmills Centre, community grants, and the Cochrane Public Library
6. Transit ******
****** Includes the COLT (Cochrane On-Demand Local Transit) services which includes the E-Scooters, E-Bikes and Rocky View Handibus
7. Municipal Enforcement ******
****** Includes enforcement of community bylaws, education to reduce violations, traffic enforcement, development compliance and creating a safer space for all residents.
8. Family & Community Support Services ******

? Includes connecting people and systems, preventative and early intervention programs, affordable housing, and family resource network

9. **Economic Development *?* ***

? Includes business attraction and retention, and downtown vitality

*Levels marked with * are randomized*

Page SERVICES1

Q4

Is there anything else you'd like to add about the services we just covered? We value any extra context you can provide.

☐ .8 No additional feedback

Page INFRASTRUCTURE

Inf1

If the Town has to prioritize where to put limited funding first, which of **these areas is most important** to you and your household right now?

- ☐ 1 Public safety facilities (e.g., new fire hall, emergency facilities) *
- ☐ 2 Recreation & community facilities (e.g., outdoor recreation amenities such as baseball, soccer, etc.) *
- ☐ 3 Transportation infrastructure (e.g., major road expansions, intersections) *
- ☐ 4 Utility & core infrastructure (e.g., water, wastewater, stormwater expansion) *
- ☐ 5 Parks & outdoor spaces (e.g., parks, trails, public spaces) *
- ☐ .9 Don't know

*Levels marked with * are randomized*

Inf2

When it comes to those projects, there is often a balance between taking care of what we already have and building for the future. Which approach do you think the Town should prioritize?

- ☐ 1 Focus on upgrading and maintaining our current infrastructure and amenities to keep them in good shape *
- ☐ 2 Focus on constructing new infrastructure and amenities to keep up with Cochrane's growing population *
- ☐ 3 Finding a steady balance between maintaining current and building new infrastructure and amenities
- ☐ .9 Don't know

*Levels marked with * are randomized*

Q5

Beyond what we've already covered, what else would you like to see the Town prioritize in the coming years? We'd love to hear any other ideas or goals you have for Cochrane's future.

☐ -8 Don't know / No comment

Q6

When it comes to planning the Town's budget, everyone has different priorities. If you had to pick just **one** of these areas for the Town to focus on most, which would it be?

- ☐ 1 Focusing on long-term fiscal sustainability (smooth tax strategies) *
- ☐ 2 Planning for future growth *
- ☐ 3 Investing in new and maintaining existing amenities *
- ☐ 4 Finding ways to lower property taxes in the future *
- ☐ 5 Finding ways to ensure property taxes stay the same *
- ☐ 6 Preparing for and reacting to changes in the economy *
- ☐ 7 Other (specify): _____

*Levels marked with * are randomized*

Section Demographics

DTxt, Gender, D2, D6, D3, D4, D7GP, I0, I1, I2, End

Page DEMOGRAPHICS

DTxt

We're almost done! This last set of questions helps us make sure we're hearing from a good cross-section of the community.

Just a reminder: your answers are completely anonymous. We'll only look at these details as part of a group, and nothing will ever be linked back to you or your household.

Please press the right arrow to continue.

Gender

What is your gender? **

** Refers to current gender which may be different from sex assigned at birth and may be different than what is indicated on legal documents.

- ☐ 1 Woman
- ☐ 2 Man
- ☐ 3 Non-binary
- ☐ 4 Prefer to self-describe: _____
- ☐ 5 Prefer not to answer

D2

Are there any children under the age of 18 in your household?

- ☐ 1 Yes
- ☐ 2 No
- ☐ 3 Prefer not to answer

D6

Which of the following categories applies to your total household income before taxes in 2025?

- ☐ 1 Under \$50,000
- ☐ 2 \$50,000 to \$99,999
- ☐ 3 \$100,000 to \$149,999
- ☐ 4 \$150,000 or more
- ☐ 5 Prefer not to answer

D3

Which of the following **best** describes your current employment status?

- ☐ 1 Working full time, including self-employment (more than 30 hours per week)
- ☐ 2 Working part time, including self-employment (30 hours per week or less)
- ☐ 3 On leave (disability, maternity, paternity, etc.)
- ☐ 4 Homemaker
- ☐ 5 Student
- ☐ 6 Not employed
- ☐ 7 Retired
- ☐ 8 Prefer not to answer

D4

Do you own or rent your primary residence in Cochrane?

- ☐ 1 Own
- ☐ 2 Rent
- ☐ -8 Not applicable

D7GP

How did you learn about the survey?

Please select all that apply

- ☐ 1 Road signs *
- ☐ 2 Social media (Facebook & Instagram) *
- ☐ 3 Town of Cochrane website or Let's Talk Cochrane website *
- ☐ 4 Town of Cochrane App *
- ☐ 5 Letter in the mail *
- ☐ 6 Radio *
- ☐ 7 Newspaper *
- ☐ 8 Email *
- ☐ 10 I received a call mentioning this survey *
- ☐ 9 Other (specify): _____

*Levels marked with * are randomized*

Page End survey**I0**

We really appreciate your time today. To say thanks, we're giving away one \$150 gift certificate to a local business of the winner's choice. Would you like to be included in the draw?

Rest assured, your contact info is used only for the prize draw and stays completely separate from your survey responses.

- ☐ 1 Yes, enter me in the draw
- ☐ 2 No, I do not wish to enter the draw

I1

And, finally, the Town of Cochrane regularly conducts research about other topics affecting its citizens. Would you be interested in participating in future research conducted by the Town of Cochrane?

- ☐ 1 Yes, I allow Advanis to provide the Town of Cochrane with my contact information so I may participate in future research
- ☐ 2 No, I do not wish to participate in future research

I2 Show if I0 yes or I1 yes ((I0 = 1) OR (I1 = 1))

(if I0 yes and I1 no ((I0 = 1) AND (I1 = 2))) Please provide your contact details so that we may contact you should you be the winner of the draw.

(if I0 no and I1 yes ((I0 = 2) AND (I1 = 1))) Please provide your contact details so that we may contact you should you be invited to future research.

(if I0I1 yes ((I0 = 1) AND (I1 = 1))) Please provide your contact details so that we may contact you should you be the winner of the draw or invited to future research.

Personal information collected as part of the Town of Cochrane Budget Survey contest and future research is done so under Section 4(c) of the Protection of Privacy Act. It will remain confidential, and it will only be used to contact the individual who has won the draw or is being invited to participate in future research.

First name:

Last name:

Email:

Phone number:

☐ -8 [Not interested in entering the draw or participating in future research / Not interested in entering the draw / Not interested in participating in future research]

End



Thank you very much for your participation in this important study, your time and feedback are greatly appreciated by the Town of Cochrane!

Please note that the results of this survey will be shared with Town Council during the budget planning process for 2027. Should you have any additional questions, please contact:

Town of Cochrane Communications

403-851-2503

communications@cochrane.ca

You will be redirected shortly to the Town of Cochrane website.

Status Code: -1

Help Page

CRIC: Advanis is a registered member of the Canadian Research Insights Council. Advanis upholds their pledge. This can be accessed at:
<https://www.canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CRIC-Pledge-to-Canadians.pdf>
CRIC Verification Number: 20260331-AD814

Town contact:

Email: communications@cochrane.ca

General town phone number: 403-851-2503

If you are having some stress/emotional difficulties at this time, it might help to talk to someone. I have a toll free number I could give you if you were interested in talking to someone.

Canada: 1-800-784-2433 or 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)
US: 1-800-273-8255

5.5 Recruitment Letter

April 2026

Town of Cochrane
101 Ranchehouse Road
Cochrane, AB T4C 2K8

RE: Help shape Cochrane's 2027 budget

Dear Cochrane resident,

Your input helps shape Cochrane's future! For the past few years, the Town has partnered with an independent research company, Advanis, to gather feedback that reflects the views of residents across Cochrane. Your input directly influences, and helps, to guide decisions about funding for services, projects and staffing.

Cochrane's budget is more than just numbers—it's a plan that reflects our community's priorities and helps guide decisions about the future. As we begin planning the 2027 budget, we invite you to share your thoughts once again. Every response helps ensure the budget reflects the priorities of our community. Your feedback will help guide how we prioritize spending in the year ahead.

To participate – you have two options:

✓ **Text "Cochrane" to 587-412-2994**

✓ **OR scan the QR code:**



As a thank-you for your support, you will have the chance to enter to win a \$150 gift certificate for a local business of choice. **Survey is open until May 4th, 2026.**

Please direct questions to: communications@cochrane.ca

Visit www.letstalkcochrane.ca/2027budget to learn more.

Advanis is a privately owned Canadian market and social research firm known for its innovation, technology leadership, and client responsiveness. Advanis staff are located across Canada in Edmonton (Alberta), Waterloo (Ontario), and Montreal (Quebec). Advanis is a member of The Canadian Research and Insights Council (CRIC), the industry association for the market / survey / insights research industry, and follows the ICC/ESOMAR International Code of Market, Opinion, and Social Research and Data Analytics.

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