

WHAT WE HEARD REPORT
Land Use Bylaw Review Project:
Residential Workshop

Wednesday August 15, 2018



ABOUT THE PROJECT

Cochrane is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Alberta and has experienced considerable growth and development over the past decade. This rapid growth has presented Cochrane with new and diverse development trends with an ever-increasing level of complexity.

Cochrane's Land Use Bylaw is the municipality's primary tool to regulate this increasing growth and development, and to control and regulate how all land is used and developed in the community. The Land Use Bylaw is arguably one of Cochrane's most important documents, and has far reaching implications for how the community is shaped.

Cochrane's current Land Use Bylaw was adopted in 2004. Town Administration has initiated a comprehensive review and re-write to ensure it remains current and effective in regulating land uses and development within the Town. It is important that the Land Use Bylaw meets the land use and development needs of its citizens and reflects Cochrane's unique character and natural landscape. Community involvement and participation in the Land Use Bylaw Review Project is integral to its success.

The Land Use Bylaw Review Project has involved the community through a variety of means, including a public survey, and numerous engagement events. Among these events were two public workshops held on the evenings of June 13 and 14. The first workshop was oriented toward Cochrane business owners, and the second toward residents in general. This document provides an overview of the workshop process, and the comments received at the **residential** workshop.

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

On the evening of June 14, 2018, a public workshop was held with Cochrane residents and business owners to provide comments on various topics related to the Land Use Bylaw. The event was advertised on the Town of Cochrane website, through social media, and by email, and a total of 35 participants were present.

The workshop was conducted through World Café style round-table discussions, led by planning staff members. Various topics were discussed, included parking, garages and other structures, home-based businesses and day homes, land use and housing, residential lot design, and accessory suites. Participants were able to choose a topic that suited their interest, have a 15-minute focused discussion, and then move around the room to various tables to comment on each subject.

All comments received at each table were recorded, and participants also had the opportunity to write down any additional comments they had. The following provides an overview all comments received.

COMMENTS RECEIVED

Parking and Access

1. What issues have you experienced with parking in your neighborhood?

- Parking a vehicle in front of a house that doesn't move
- Frontage isn't enough to accommodate a vehicle without blocking the driveway
- Vehicle is blocking a driveway
- Using the garage for storage, not parking, and parking on the street
- Wider lots to allow more frontage and on-street parking
- P.O. Box parking- can't park without blocking P.O. boxes as they are in bad locations
- How are parking pads constructed at the time of development? Are they required?
 - Developer needs to provide at the time of development
 - Don't like the fact that parking pad was gravel-should be paved
- Appropriate space for schools pick-up/drop-off
 - Signage needed
 - Timeframes
- Restrict parking on turns (area that blocks view of oncoming traffic)
- No one using onsite parking/garages
 - Parking on-street
- Narrow lots decrease on-street parking
- Blocking driveways
- Increased number of vehicles per household
- Have resident permit parking
- Glen Summit- no parking on the road because it is too narrow
 - No visitor parking
- Not enough parking at schools
- Townhouses in front of school increases congestion
- Road width too narrow around schools
 - Two-way traffic
 - Four car widths minimum
- Parking density for non-single family households
 - Problem with higher density housing
- Too many cars
- People not using garages for parking
- No space due to high numbers of garbage bins
- Wider roads in high density areas and lanes needed
 - Also in front of schools and sports fields
- Drop-off/pick-up areas needed in front of schools
- Need parking garage on multi-dwelling (higher density) sites
- Need two stalls for each unit in multi-dwelling
- Approve of the angle parking in Historic Downtown

- Generally no parking problem in the Historic Downtown, however depends on the time of day and day of week
- Need a separate parking area for the Downtown provided by the Town of Cochrane
 - Need a place to park and then walk
 - Needs to accommodate R.V.s
- Historic Downtown should be car-free in the future
- Transit may lose parking stalls
- Parking could be based on bedrooms- 1 stall per bedroom
 - Parking should be in relation to the number of vehicles that you own
- Accessory suites should have 2 stalls minimum
 - Should have parking for vehicles owned
- Cannot park cars in front of homes due to no frontage and driveways
 - Lots need to be wider
- Not using garage or driveway for parking
- Over allocating for parking results in a lack of yard space
- Having a limit to the number of accessory suites in new neighborhoods
 - Better suited for existing, larger-lot communities
- Parking across whole lot causing drainage issues
- Assign parking frontage to homeowners
- Approve of free parking
- Commercial parking is ok
- Residentially there is a problem with the number of vehicles per house and high volumes of on-street parking
 - Increase in congestion on streets
 - Glen Summit
- Problem with parking in alleys- storage of trailers etc.
 - Kids playing and walking
 - Can create blind spots and be hazardous
 - Currently no enforcement (i.e., fines), and is needed
- Vehicles parked for months on the street
 - No enforcement
- Could potentially reward businesses for allowing parking on their site if it is vacant- taxes etc.
- Road allowances around schools are too narrow and currently dangerous
 - Need to be wider for parking
- Need to reword the 'parking stall' definition
 - Free access on roads
 - No tandem parking

Garages and Other Structures

1. What are your concerns with existing garages in town? What are your concerns with decks, fences, patios, sunrooms, and other similar structures?

- If a property borders a laneway there should be minimum setbacks for fences to enhance sightlines
- Corner sightlines for lots at intersections
- No suites built above garages
- Fines increased for builders who violate LUB regulations and setbacks
 - Large fines for builders, lower fine for property owner
- Street needs to be greater than 15.5 m streets with front attached garages
- Oversized garage with patio on the roof blocks the sun
- Want the ability to widen driveways to help solve problems surrounding on-street parking
- Wider lots so homes with upper decks have rooms for stairs in the side yard
- Wider lots will give residents more space between decks
- Use garage for intended purpose to avoid on-street parking
- Fence regulations should be driven by Town instead of developer for more pleasing neighborhoods
- Allow for larger front attached garages to allow for storage of recycle bins, storage, and vehicles
- More regulations with regard to location of sheds and accessory buildings < 10m²
 - Where they can be placed in the yard
- Concern over the height of detached garages
- Enforcement of LUB regulations and architectural concerns
- Uses within the garage- drainage of oil and chemicals in the sewer system
- Minimum setbacks in side and rear yards
- Penalties for those who do not abide by setbacks etc,
 - i.e., 10% of construction cost of garage
 - Many times people will build without permission and ask for forgiveness later
- Issues with density, and parking on-street instead of in the garage
- Garage isn't big enough to accommodate vehicle
- Height of garages and sheds should not be greater than the principal residence
- No accessory suites built above detached garage
- Lots with lanes are deep enough that there is space to park a vehicle in front of rear-lane garage
- People enclosing their patios under the deck is not aesthetically pleasing, and does not match the house
- Clotheslines in backyards
- Should be chicken coop allowances
- Unlicensed business operations in garages
- Garages being used for things other than parking

- Should have information regarding bylaws which concern neighbourhoods in the newspaper for educational purposes
- More yearly public forums on bylaw education
- Prohibit floor drains in garages
- No more 10' garage doors
- At alley intersections there should be no variances for garages, as it will create blind spots
- Would like the ability to wash cars in their driveways with certain restrictions
- Increase bylaw infractions with a penalty up to \$10, 000
- Fence heights should be higher when backing onto Environmental Reserve

Home Based Businesses and Day Homes

1. What types of home-based businesses are acceptable in a residential neighborhood?

- Day home
- Massage therapy
- Any that don't significantly impact the residential area- noise, dust etc.
- Personal training
- Hair salon
- Direct sales
- Business/tech services etc. (don't have clients coming and going)
- Childbirth classes
- Pet grooming (limit to the # of pets allowed at one time)
- Small consumer businesses (Tupperware etc.)
- Catering
- Music lessons
- Personal training
- Tutoring
- Online sales
- Anything that doesn't generate a lot of traffic/noise
- Day homes with a max number of kids
- Depends on community/neighbours
- Those that don't require parking for extended periods of time (i.e., 1-2 hours for massage, nails etc.)
- Those that don't create a lot of traffic and don't have a great volume of clientele coming and going
- Day homes
 - Enhance security in an area- having a presence during business hours when residential areas empty out
- Administrative businesses (accounting etc.)

2. What types of home-based businesses are not acceptable in a residential neighborhood?

- Mechanic/ car repair
- Anything involving power tools/ heavy noise
- Cannabis sales
- Welding
- Car detailing/sales – depending on the # of vehicles being flipped

3. What issues have you experienced concerning Home Based Businesses / Day homes?

- Parking- can impede the enjoyment of your yard/personal property when you need to fill it with parking
 - Smaller lots can't physically fulfill the parking requirements for a home-based business
- Communication- sharing information about permits and educating surrounding land owners about what a proposed business will entail
 - Within the current system there is the possibility of appealing something without knowing all the facts
- Should be more information provided to adjacent landowners
 - Right now the onus is on the neighbours to get information about the Permits granted to surrounding residences
- There is a need to look at the conditions for appeal
- Should you have to get another permit (i.e., for a day home) when you move to a new area
 - The permit should be for the person, not the property
- Day homes should be a minor business in the LUB
- Issue with not being able to work until an appeal is resolved- could potentially lose a months income because one person files an appeal
- There should be a parking exemption for day homes
 - Drop-off/pick-up times are taking place during business hours when there isn't high traffic in neighbourhoods
- Misinformation about real-estate values going down from being next to a day home
- More information should be provided to adjacent land owners about what is being approved
- Could potentially look at district parking permits to solve parking problems
- Day homes should be permitted rather than discretionary
 - Should have no parking requirements
 - There is a case when all of the parents from one day home walk their kids over, so there are no vehicles
 - In any case it is only drop-off/pick-up, so vehicles won't be parked for an extended period of time
- Limit to sign size and number- signs in windows would be alright
- Signage/ advertising on vehicles is alright

- Bringing employees in to conduct business in your home will have greater implications for parking/traffic
- Cochrane should be more inclusionary of home-based businesses
- Day homes should be permitted in R1, R2, and maybe R3
- Needs to be much greater communication and education among neighbours
 - Currently, one person has the ability to halt an entire business, and it may be due to misinformation
- Stand-alone signs should remain restricted
- Parking should be restricted when clients are staying for a long period
- No on-street parking for home-based businesses
- Important that an area remains a neighbourhood and doesn't begin to feel like a commercial area
- In regard to day home operation- seeing kids in a neighbourhood makes it seem like a community
 - Creates vibrancy
- All parking for home-based businesses should be on the subject property
- Most drop offs for day homes take place when people are at work and don't significantly impact traffic
- Current hours of operation for home-based businesses make sense- shouldn't be any earlier than 7am
- Concerns with noise at night if businesses were to operate later than 8pm
- If there were employees there should be additional parking requirements
- Employees would need additional parking
- Limit to one employee (/1 vehicle) per business
- Appeal/notification process in need of revision
- Notifications should include more than adjacent landowners
- Cost of appeal process is too high- not going to get significantly more appeals if it cost \$50 vs \$200
 - The number of people behind an appeal should carry some weight (need to have a certain number of people to make it valid)
- Home based businesses should depend on a community's *need* for a certain service
 - Be in tune with what services are needed
- Day homes should be permitted vs discretionary
- Different means to determine who gets notified about a permit- should extend beyond adjacent homes
- Can't always rely on word of mouth for notification of households who are not adjacent to a potential home-based business
- People often are not aware of things until they are happening/operating
 - Need to look at timing of notification
 - Different means to provide notification beyond newspaper, and make it more accessible to read for people (legal addresses hard to interpret)
- Day homes don't require as much parking
 - Stagger timing of drop-off and pick-ups
- There should be no signage on properties- a max size window sign would be acceptable
- The Town needs to make things easier for day home providers

- Don't need as much notification/circulation of notice for day homes as what is currently required
- More park space needed
- The Town should encourage home based businesses (with restrictions) as opposed to large commercial developments
- Current operational hours required of home-based businesses are acceptable
- Need to be able to provide parking- could have signs for parking designating areas for the HBB as opposed to personal stalls
- Signage should remain restricted- small window signs ok
- Day homes should have staggered times for pick-up and drop-off
- Could have a notice sent by businesses to patrons about respecting neighbours
- Should have to reapply for a new permit if you move areas
- The number of day homes should be limited to a certain # per area/street
- Need changes to notification system- providing more details about an application
- Cost of appeals needs to be looked at

Land Use and Housing

1. What are your thoughts on the types of housing provided in Cochrane? What are the best features of your neighbourhood? What are the concerns?

- Bare land condo is lacking parking and has no on-street parking
 - Cramming in housing
 - Narrow roads impeding emergency access
 - No sidewalks
 - Can't change condo board rules after they are set by the developer
- Garages not being used, so everyone parks on the street
- Need to plan for increasing densities- parking, roads, connectivity
- Condos near Shoppers need to be better planned
- Underground parking should be required
- Larger lot sizes needed- like Glenbow
- Wooden fences, rather than chain link
- Local commercial development is important so people don't have to travel for goods/services- grocery store, coffeeshops, restaurants, daycare
 - This would also reduce traffic in the downtown
- One-way-in and one-way-out neighborhood design is not efficient, and unsafe
- Growth needs to slow because there is not currently the infrastructure to support it
- Cochrane is losing its small-town feel
- Prefer to separate residential housing types with R1, and then multifamily further away- needs to be planned for if happening
- Need to increase space between homes
 - Fireproofing and safe building materials

- Like the Western Heritage Design Guidelines- the town should keep its heritage
- Day homes needed in residential areas
- Like the mixing of housing types- increases affordability for some
- Like separated sidewalks and street-trees, especially for multifamily areas
- Don't need local commercial in every community, as it is nice to come into town, but it is nice for some areas to have it
- Like the location of the Heritage Hills community
 - For other communities you cannot walk downtown
 - There doesn't need to be more traffic going into town if we increase connectivity
- All housing types are important, and there needs to be options
 - Encourages multi-generational options
- There should be larger lots in the peripheral communities, and more compact in the central areas
- Walkability is important
- Lack of custom housing- private sale of lots should be available
 - A certain percentage that can still be the architectural controls of the developer
- Needs to be more choice in housing sizes etc., that can be built on each lot
- Should have more bungalows
- There needs to be an increase in pathways and connectivity throughout town so people don't need to drive everywhere
- Multimodal options for transport need to be facilitated in every neighbourhood
- Should have workout/fitness parks- i.e., Trekfit
- There should be more space between houses to mitigate damage from fires
 - Ban vinyl siding and use better building materials
- Mixed feelings on mixed housing types on the same block
 - Can cause parking issues
- Rear access lots across from schools
 - Parking on roads, and roads are too narrow
 - The residential road standard of 15.5 m is too narrow
- Should be local commercial in residential communities
 - Grocery, basic convenience stores, restaurants
- 8 UPA is a good density target
- Growth is currently controlled by developers- the Town needs to have better control, and stricter/additional rules
- Like the mix of housing types, but don't want to create increasing density in areas
 - Mixing within blocks is good, but needs to be planned for in terms of parking (driveways, rear-lanes, widened roads for on-street parking)
- Want to build smaller homes (or create smaller lots) – including in high demand areas
- Want the option to build custom homes, and should have lots set aside for this

- Consider having different rules (i.e., setbacks) for parcels adjacent to residential to have a buffer from potential noise/dust/lighting concerns
 - For example- noise from the sawmill
- Should have local commercial in every community- basic groceries etc., to limit travel to the downtown
- Need more pathways, benches, playgrounds
- Want more dog parks/off-leash areas
- Need wider roads by schools- currently causing parking issues and safety concerns regarding emergency access
- Sidewalks on both sides of the street
- Need diverse housing options to increase accessibility/affordability
- Sidewalks on both sides, wider streets, separated sidewalks, wider sidewalks (to accommodate 2 people side-by-side comfortably)
- One-way-in and one-way-in-out of communities needs to be changed
- Roads need to be able to accommodate traffic volumes proposed (or highways)
- Lot sizes need to be big enough to accommodate different housing forms
- Building materials need to be considered- no vinyl siding with houses in close proximity
- Should be street trees and trees on lots- 1 tree per house
- In favor of mixed housing blocks, but need to consider parking
 - Mixes generations
- More housing types on more desirable lots/areas (i.e., bungalows)
- Need to create more sense of community
- Need commercial node in communities
- Higher percent of park space- providing incentive for developers to go over the required 10%
 - Important for community building
- Environmental Reserve- private entitlement misconception needs to be corrected
- Developers need to follow through with planting trees, especially after being cut down
- Like the Western Design Guidelines
 - Main Street
 - Cobble stones
- More connectivity of walking paths
- Different styles of parks needed
 - Love green spaces
 - More access to the river
- CP rail crossings are dangerous
- More planning around railway- crossings, overpass, underpass
- Communal spaces in community needed for public gatherings
- No pedestrian paths to downtown for outlying areas
- Need wider/bigger lots
- Do not like estate homes- wasteful
- Need amenities in neighborhoods- grocery stores, services
- More off-leash areas that are an appropriate size

Residential Lot Design

1. Tell us your thoughts about the size of residential properties in Cochrane.

- Lots are currently too small/narrow
 - Need more room for parking
 - R1 lots need to be wider and longer
- Smaller lots should need to have a rear lane
- More space between homes
- More variety in lot size (corner vs. interior lots)
- Lots too narrow
- Need more greenspace
- Should have wider setbacks (~6 ft)
- Rear yards are important- minimum area of 25' x 35'
- Should encourage creativity in landscaping
 - Incentives for drought-resistant landscaping
 - Want to see more trees
- Current lot size is adequate
- Should address side-yard setbacks (emergency access)
- Drainage concerns on lots
- Should be more variety of lot design within a block
 - Develop a socially sustainable community
- Have active front yards
 - Consistent across community
 - Sidewalks
- Lots are currently much too narrow
 - To be 2x as wide as they are
- Larger side yard setback (~12 ft)
- Longer driveways to accommodate full-size trucks
- Encourage verandas, patios, and active front yards
- Rear-lane access or side-by-side home + garage
- Encourage more variety of housing styles (i.e., having width to accommodate bungalows)
- Need bigger rear yards
 - Focus on privacy
- Should remove tree setbacks for residents
- More space between homes
 - Need more separation (+1.5m)
- More variety of lots
- Driveway + front yard should be at minimum the length of cars
 - Option to reduce front yard up to sidewalk
- Would benefit from a mix of front and rear access
- Consistent application of current regulations to condos
- More landscaping and planting
 - More options for permaculture and drought-resistant design
- More variety of lots

- More space between homes
- Bigger backyards- preference for cul-de-sacs and pie shaped lots
- Human-scale development and living streets
- More space should be dedicated to landscaping

Accessory Suites

1. What are your thoughts on accessory suites in Cochrane, including:

a.) Types (basement, garage)?

b.) Number of suites per area?

c.) Parking (tandem)?

- Change minimum to allow for suites in semi-detached dwellings
- Must have minimum landscaping requirements
- Tandem parking is ok in the front, but not the rear
- Try to disperse suites throughout an area
 - Different zones so people know up front if there are suites in an area, or not
- Certain amount of landscaping should be required
- Zoning could be more specific so that you know what you are getting
- Current minimum requirements aren't working
- 10% is too high per neighborhood
- Suites would be too crowded in semi detached
- Want to be notified before a final decision is made
- Suites shouldn't be allowed at all
 - Traffic, density, parking, noise, changes the character of the neighborhood (owners to renters)
- Support suites as long as they meet parking regulations
- Parking is always an issue, but you make-do/ figure it out
- Work trucks on streets
- Don't agree with suites being in duplexes
- If homeowners are paying \$40, 000 to build a suite, how is that an affordable option for them?
- Having suites/rentable spaces can keep the younger generation in areas
- Suites above a garage stand out even when the house is two storeys
- Problem is with the side profile of the property
- Do not support paving of a whole backyard
- Do not support above-garage suites because they don't match garages on all the other properties
- Accessory suites don't suit certain areas
- Should be black & white, with no grey area- the developers should have to design it up front
- Don't agree with having them in semi detached homes, as there is not enough space

- Need two stalls for a suite
- 10% of suites on a block is too high
 - You feel it if its 3 in a block of 30 homes
- Leads to more traffic and congestions
- If you bought an R-1 home it should remain single family
- Suites are OK in semi-detached, as long as the space is big enough
- Lead to extra cars and garbage bins
- Suites not OK in semi-detached because it will cause problems for traffic/parking
- Be more clear with the regulations
- Need to make sure there is enough parking regardless of where they are
- Area needs to meet the needs of the community
 - Should look at the population/demographics of an area
- Lack of predictability in the current system
- Lots should be larger, too small right now
- Should be dependent on the neighborhood and not across the town as a whole

Other Comments (Open Table)

- Appeal process is too expensive for residents
- Raw land condo should have private roads, not public
- Clarity of use for OS zoned ER designated land
- Make sure developers follow and complete the agreements they make, and fine them heavily if infringed
- Need a town employee who goes around to various neighbourhoods to spot bylaw infringements and enforce bylaws
- Maintain current process of appeal for day home permits in private residences
- Plan and design for community, not density
- Cochrane needs to have oversight on developers architectural controls
- More than one access point to/from subdivisions
- Appeals of permitted businesses should not cause the business to have to shut down until the appeal is successful
- Limit the number of unsold homes under construction in developing neighbourhoods- vacancy is an issue, yet we keep approving new developments
- Limit the percentage of building permits/ vs spoken-for (sold) lots
- Appeals should not be so pricey
- Enforce your bylaws and have more fines for infractions
- Don't approve new developments until ones in progress are completed
- More clarity and definitions for: M-BP, UR-R, PS
- Do not approve home based businesses until appeal period is over
- Who controls Western Heritage Guidelines?
 - I.e., Palm trees at restaurant off highway, Remax building
- Finish the Sunset Regional Pathway from Sunset to the Ranche before 1A/22 construction starts
- There should be areas for safe school bus pick up and drop off required in every new community/subset of area
- Do not let ER be used for off leash
 - No multi-purpose off leash areas

- Permits should be able to be cancelled if you move homes
- Safety checks/inspections should be required if you request a permit
 - Health record
 - Education
- Need parks
- Riversong needs playgrounds- especially for children under 12!
- Bylaws for commercial businesses that neighbor residential areas should be stricter (noise, fencing, what is put in parking lots) than commercial which is not near residential
- Appeal process for development permits should not equate to an injunction ceasing a business. Should be able to continue if permit requirements are satisfied and only be forced to shut down IF and by WHEN appeal is allowed. Should also be an ability to quash meritless appeals quickly and without a hearing
- Remove R-CL → no cluster!!
- Use garages for parking cars
- Educate dog owners about cleaning after dogs
- Enforce clearing snow on sidewalks
- Enforce noise bylaw
- Unsuccessful appeals of permitted home businesses should have to pay costs of the business in defending itself
- More spacing between houses
- Appellants should be required to prove an evidentiary foundation for their appeal (i.e., expert opinion from a realtor etc.). If they do not, appeal should not be accepted for filing
- Town should have the ability to dismiss appeals of permitted home businesses without a hearing if they fail to raise a complaint based on evidence
- When there are appeals against day homes there needs to be less than 1-month appeal time
 - Parents need to have a place for their kids, and to wait for 1 month is too long
 - Daycare should not go through appeals. When they are approved by “Playdays” and the Town that should be enough.
- Install more pathways for people
 - Gets people off the roads
 - Encourages people to be outside in Cochrane
 - There should also be more benches, so people will want to stay outside rather than go inside and take a seat
- Will public comments and concerns really be taken seriously