

**Agenda Item: D.5**

Request for Decision

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| **Title** | **Agribusiness and Agritourism Review - Public Engagement and Communications Plan** |
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| **Proposed Motion** | That Council approve the Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Public Engagement and Communication Plan as presented. |
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| **Administrative**  **Recommendation** | On behalf of the Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Task Force, it is recommended that Council approve the Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Public Engagement and Communication Plan, to enable the Task Force to move forward with Phase 1 engagement activities. |
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| **Previous Council Direction** | March 9, 2021 Regular Council Meeting  Motion 118/21: That Council initiate an agribusiness and agritourism review, supported by a community-based Task Force as defined in proposed Bylaw 1538/21.  Motion 122/21: That Council give third reading of Bylaw 1538/21. |
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| **Report** | Background   * On March 9, 2021, Council passed Bylaw 1538/21, the Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Task Force (AARTF) Bylaw (see Attachment 1). This Bylaw describes the key deliverables required within the Agribusiness and Agritourism Review, including:   + an Engagement Plan for approval by Council;   + a What We Heard Report to Council for information; and   + a Final Report, containing specific recommendations. * The Task Force has completed the first deliverable, a Public Engagement and Communications Plan (PECP), for Council’s consideration and approval (see Attachment 2). * The PECP has been developed to provide Council an overall timeline of public engagement activities by the Task Force, supported by engagement consultants and Administration. * Due to the 2021 Municipal Election on October 18, 2021, the first phase of engagement is planned to take place after the incoming Council has been sworn in (after the October 26, 2021 Council Organizational Meeting). Note that advertising of engagement would occur one to two weeks prior to Council being sworn in.   + A delay in advertising to after October 26, 2021 would result in Phase 1 engagement completion in Q4 of 2021, but the overall project would require an adjustment, which would move the completion date from April 2022 to May 2022. * The engagement approach and scope for the PECP has been developed into two phases:   **Phase 1: October – November 2021**   * Will include the development and advertising of an online survey. The survey will ask participants to reflect on concerns they have related to land use compatibility; nuisance issues such as noise, odour, traffic, environmental concerns, and obstacles to implementation; and invite ideas on solutions needed to mitigate concerns and overcome obstacles. * The survey will be reviewed with Task Force members and administrative officials prior to posting through the AARTF webpage.   **Phase 2**: **January – February 2022**   * Will continue to build project awareness, engage, and validate draft recommendations. In Phase 2, engagement approaches will include requesting participants to validate the initial findings and identify gaps to strengthen the findings and recommendations prior to finalizing the report. * During Phase 2, two (2) in-person (dependent on public health restrictions at that time) open houses will be conducted to provide opportunity for participants to learn more about the review and findings / recommendations to date. Attendees may also ask questions of the Task Force members and project team, and share their feedback on the key research findings, draft recommendations, and potential gaps. * A second online survey will also be available to provide an additional opportunity for participants unable to attend an in-person open house to review project information and share their feedback. * Once both phases of engagement are completed, all stakeholder inputs will be reviewed, coded, and analyzed. Summaries after each phase will be completed and used by the Task Force to validate findings as the project develops. These high-level engagement summaries will then be consolidated into a What We Heard Report which will detail the engagement process, approaches, and inputs received throughout the engagement process. The What We Heard Report will be included in the Task Force’s Final Report.   External Communication   * If approved, the AARTF PECP will provide direction to planned engagement and communications activities (in two phases), as noted above.   Relevant Policy/Legislation/Practices:   * Bylaw 1538/21 - Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Task Force Bylaw * Bylaw 1313/13 - Sturgeon County Municipal Development Plan * Bylaw 1385/17 - Sturgeon County Land Use Bylaw * Economic Development Master Plan |
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| **Implication of Administrative Recommendation** | Strategic Alignment:  **Promoting an Integrated Economy**   * Goal 5.2 Through collaborative partnerships that support Sturgeon County's emerging sectors.   The PECP provides support for existing and new agribusiness and agritourism business owners and operators to provide input into a critical review and to collaboratively develop supporting policy for growth within the sector.  Organizational:  Administration will continue to support the Task Force in coordinating the advertising and required information for Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the PECP.  Financial:  The cost of advertising of the engagement activities in local newspapers has been included within the approved project budget. |
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| **Alternatives Considered** | Council may direct the Task Force to not move forward with the proposed engagement activities within the PECP. |
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| **Implications of Alternatives** | Strategic Alignment:  If Council does not approve the PECP as presented, engagement would not move forward for the review, which would impair the Task Force’s ability to deliver informed recommendations, unless alternative engagement methods are identified.  Organizational:  If Council does not support the PECP, the Task Force would seek to find alternative engagement activities which better align with Council’s vision.  Financial:  If advertising costs are not supported, those costs may be available to re-purpose. |
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| **Follow up Action** | Support the Task Force in scheduling and advertising the Phase 1 Engagement (Planning and Development Services / Economic Development Services / Corporate Communications, October 2021). |
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| **Attachment** | 1. Bylaw 1538/21 - Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Task Force Bylaw 2. Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Public Engagement and Communication Plan |
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| **Report Reviewed by:** | Natasha De Sandi, Planning and Engagement Officer, Planning and Development Services  Leanne McBean, Business Retention and Expansion Lead, Economic Development Services  Tyler Westover, Manager, Economic Development Services    Bonnie McInnis, Manager, Planning and Development Services  Travis Peter, Director, Development and Strategic Services  Reegan McCullough, County Commissioner – CAO |

**Strategic Alignment Checklist**

**Vision:** *Sturgeon County: a diverse, active community that pioneers opportunities and promotes initiative while embracing rural lifestyles.*

**Mission:** *Provide quality, cost effective services and infrastructure to meet the diverse needs of the Sturgeon County community, while improving competitiveness and sustainability.*

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| **Focus Areas** | **Not consistent** | **N/A** | **Consistent** |
| **Planned Growth and Prosperity** |  |  |  |
| *We encourage varied and integrated enterprises that enhance our strong economic*  *base, while balancing the needs of the community and natural environment.*  *(Strategic Plan and MDP pg. 36)* |  |  |  |
| * *Supports a strong thriving business environment to strengthen our economic foundation* |  |  |  |
| * *Plans for responsible growth through the MDP and regional growth plan.* |  |  |  |
| * *Manages growth for current and future developments through:*   + *transparent bylaws, policies and processes to enable responsible land development* |  |  |  |
| * + *targeting growth around existing and identified future growth areas* |  |  |  |
| **Maintain and Enhance Strong Communities** |  |  |  |
| *We are committed to a safe and viable community, where our residents are*  *provided with access to opportunities and quality of life.*  *(Strategic Plan and pg. 27 MDP)* |  |  |  |
| * *Provides access to programs and services that have a positive impact on residents’ quality of life* |  |  |  |
| * *Provides access to safe and reliable infrastructure assets* |  |  |  |
| * *Supports the safety of people and property* |  |  |  |
| **Strong Local and Regional Governance** |  |  |  |
| *We promote consistent and accountable leadership through collaborative and*  *transparent processes (Strategic Plan and pg. 27 MDP)* |  |  |  |
| * *Provides effective leadership and management consistent with Strategic Plan, MDP, master plans, bylaws, policies, community engagement* |  |  |  |
| * *Considers fiscal stability and sustainability* |  |  |  |
| * *Fosters collaborative intergovernmental partnerships* |  |  |  |
| **Community Identity & Spirit** |  |  |  |
| *We will build upon our strengths, where together we will create an inclusive, caring community (Strategic Plan and MDP pg. 27)* |  |  |  |
| * *Promotes and/or enhances residents’ identification with Sturgeon County* |  |  |  |
| * *Support and/or collaborate with voluntary organizations in the region* |  |  |  |
| **Environmental Stewardship** |  |  |  |
| *We foster a healthy environment and minimize our impact on ecosystems. (Strategic Plan and MDP pg. 27)* |  |  |  |
| * *Plans and partnerships that minimize environmental impact on natural areas* |  |  |  |
| * *Provides awareness of environmental issues impacting the County* |  |  |  |