



STURGEON COUNTY

Villeneuve Airport Area – Area Structure Plan

Communication and Engagement Plan (DRAFT)

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1.0

Background

Sturgeon County (the County) launched the Villeneuve Airport Area Master Plan (VAAMP) to advance future land use and economic opportunities in the vicinity of the Villeneuve Airport. The VAAMP was informed by a collaboration between County personnel, members of the Villeneuve Landing Network (VLN), Edmonton Regional Airports Authority and stakeholder consultation; the goal of this collaboration was the development of a detailed growth framework.

Overall, the VAAMP concludes that the area represents a tremendous economic growth and diversification opportunity for the County, the region, and the province. Over the first 20 years of development, the study estimates:

- New development of over \$1 billion;
- 1,766 direct full-time jobs created;
- Over \$233 million in increased payroll receipts;
- Over \$14 million in annual tax revenue to the County (and potentially its partners if VLN arrangements proceed);
- Nearly \$63 million in annual taxation to provincial and federal governments; and
- Cumulative economic impact of nearly \$1.8 billion.

The VAAMP was approved by County Council unanimously on November 30, 2021. As a part of this approval, County Council directed County administration and Dillon Consulting Limited (Dillon), to proceed with the Villeneuve Airport Area-Structure Plan (VAA-ASP). The VAA-ASP is the vehicle for enabling development, while implementing the visionary concepts identified in the VAAMP.

The various engagement activities for the VAAMP project focused on engagement, with targeted stakeholders and landowners within the VAA-ASP plan area. Overall, the VAAMP was well received by targeted stakeholders and VAA-ASP plan area landowners.

There is an expectation that the Hamlet of Villeneuve and area residents are appropriately engaged in the VAA-ASP planning process to provide an opportunity for feedback regarding the future development of the VAA-ASP plan area.

On December 1, 2021, a Discovery Workshop was held with County staff and the Dillon project team. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the communications and engagement that will be used through the course of this project. This Communications and Engagement Plan has been prepared by Dillon for approval by County Council on December 14, 2021, with this Discovery Workshop serving as the foundation for this plan.

1.1 Project Overview

The current scope of the VAA-ASP preparation includes community engagement, which sits on the consult level within the County's Public Engagement Policy (2016). This level of engagement gives the public the ability to provide feedback on the draft VAA-ASP. The team recognizes that communications and engagement may be tailored specifically to the audience it is to serve, and may be adapted depending on the stakeholders that are being engaged and the project education that is required. However, overall communications and engagement should be consistent throughout the project. As a part of a What We Heard report, the project team will let the public and stakeholders know how their input influenced the final VAA-ASP.

The current proposed engagement activities are:

- A virtual presentation to the VLN;
- An in-person/virtual public event to share the VAAMP; and
- An in-person/virtual public event (e.g., open house) prior to the final draft.

1.2 Decision Making

The VAAMP has been received for information by County Council. At this stage in the project, the public and stakeholders will share feedback and let the project team know how future development could impact their community. The project team will then work with Administration to identify opportunities to mitigate any concerns, for incorporation into the VAA-ASP.

County Council is the ultimate decision-maker and will determine if the VAA-ASP is approved. This Communications and Engagement Plan will be recommended to County Council by Administration. If acceptable, County Council will approve the Communications and Engagement Plan before engagement planning begins.

1.3 Comment Management, Analysis, and Response Protocols and County Support

The following assumptions and understanding have been established as a component of implementing this Communications and Engagement Plan:

- Project email and social media accounts will be solely managed by the County.
- Dillon to offer support if there are technical responses required via email or over the phone.
- A guaranteed response time of two business days is critical for project reliability and relations with participants.
- All communications, comments and responses will be forwarded to the Dillon team.
- The Dillon team will track consultation feedback and provide summaries that will be used as the basis for reporting back to participants ("What We Heard").

- The County will be responsible for responding to media inquiries (where applicable).
- County staff will attend engagement events, as requested by Dillon.

1.4

Communications and Engagement Team

In addition to County Administration, the communications and engagement team includes members of the Dillon project team. The Dillon engagement lead, Brandy MacInnis, is an International Association for Public Participation member, who will be supported by Dillon team members:

- Brandy MacInnis – Public and Stakeholder Engagement Lead
- Kristen Harder – Engagement Team Member
- Camila Ramos-Strankman - Engagement Team Member
- Avneet Sidhu - Engagement Team Member
- Administrative Support
- Technical team support, wherever required
- Dillon Community Engagement Network

2.0

Communications Planning

The following sections discuss the overall engagement approach, and identifies the objectives for communication and the purpose of the engagement process.

2.1

Approach

The County recognizes the importance of communicating pertinent information to County residents and soliciting feedback, where appropriate, on elements of the planning process. This Communications and Engagement Plan is tailored specifically for this project, and will be designed to support the County through ongoing collaboration with the County's engagement and communications teams. Working closely with the County project team, Dillon will undertake the public engagement and communications activities based on the requirements of this project, the resources available, and our experience and understanding of what is necessary to facilitate productive dialogues and meaningful engagement.

2.1.1

Building Relationships

Effective communication and engagement can be an important step towards building productive relationships based on trust and respect. Relationships of trust and respect provide the foundation for meaningful dialogue. From our experience, effective engagement takes into account the following:

- Understanding the level of engagement appropriate for each project;
- Learning about the community where we will be working before we engage with stakeholders;
- Understanding issues and hot topics that may be raised by stakeholders;
- Sensitivity to the setting, location of meetings and scheduling constraints;
- Encouraging discussion, good communication and open dialogue;
- Effective communications and outreach to build trust;
- Clear and plain language messaging;
- Utilizing community and outside resources to relay ideas and generate discussion; and
- Demonstrating ideas and concepts through practical examples.

2.2

Communications Planning

2.2.1

Communications Principles

- **Coordinated Communications and Engagement:** Communications and engagement are meant to work together. Our plan will align public communications with engagement activities.
- **Multiple Communications Methods:** Printed and digital communication tools will be developed to support the engagement process.

- **Consistent Visuals:** The County may develop a colour theme, graphics or a key theme that will brand the project. These visuals will be used throughout the engagement and communications activities, and will be carried through the VAA-ASP.
- **Accessible Language:** All communications will be reviewed for the use of plain language and concise messaging. Communications will be free of jargon, so that engagement activities and materials are accessible to a broad audience. The team will consider text legibility and size, and colour in the context of both print materials and website imagery.
- **Uniform Tone:** Engagement materials will be conversational and will fall between fun and formal. This uniform tone will help to brand the project and create consistent messaging across all communications and engagement materials.

2.2.2 Voice and Tone

An outcome of the Communications and Engagement Discovery Workshop is the voice, tone, and language the participants could expect in the communications and engagement materials. Based on feedback from the project team, communications and engagement should incorporate neutral language that is slightly less formal, with an appropriate amount of fun using a conversational tone.

2.3 Engagement Planning

A Discovery Workshop was held, with County and Dillon staff in attendance, to plan for the engagement associated with the VAA-ASP, laying the foundation for the communications and engagement that will be undertaken.

2.3.1 Engagement Goal

The project team identified the following engagement goal for this project:

Engagement will facilitate a Council-approved ASP for the Villeneuve Airport Area, which is generally accepted by the community, setting the path for future development, and economic development and diversification in the region.

2.3.2 Engagement Purpose

The engagement for this project has the following purpose:

- To communicate where we are in the planning and development process of the VAA-ASP.
- To provide clarity between the VAAMP and the VAA-ASP.
- To establish opportunities for stakeholder involvement and manage expectations around their influence on the project.
- To inform VAA-ASP landowners, and Hamlet of Villeneuve and area residents about the importance of the VAA-ASP, with regards to economic development to the region.
- To check in with stakeholders during key stages of the project process.

2.3.3 Public Participation Spectrum

For the most part, the public engagement associated with this project is anticipated to fall on the engagement spectrum on the consult range on the spectrum. We will gather public feedback and keep the public informed, as the project progresses as to how this feedback was used. It is important the different stakeholder audiences understand the limits of influence on their feedback, and that the County let them know how their feedback was considered, as the VAA-ASP is drafted and finalized.

2.3.4 Engagement Outcomes

The following engagement outcomes have been identified by the project team. Engagement will:

- Build awareness and support for the VAA-ASP;
- Develop a plan that reflects stakeholder input, where it is appropriate;
- Confirms with VLN and targeted stakeholders that the VAA-ASP meets their development objectives, and will enable development; and
- Engagement provides the planning framework for the successful development of the VAA-ASP plan area.

2.4 Public Participation Mapping

2.4.1 Stakeholder Audiences

County staff, as well as the project team, identified the following key stakeholder groups:

- Hamlet of Villeneuve residents;
- VAA-ASP landowners;
- VAAMP targeted stakeholders;
- VLN;
- Local businesses;
- County Departments; and
- County Council.

2.4.2 Barriers to Participation

We understand that there can be barriers that make it difficult for people to participate, the following barriers have been identified by the project team for this project:

- COVID-19 gathering restrictions (capacity, vaccination status);
- Physical accessibility (in person);
- Scheduling;
- Convenience;
- Visual and cognitive barriers; and
- Access to the internet (virtual).

Although not an exhaustive list, identifying the potential barriers noted above will help the project team to develop messaging to address these challenges.

2.5 Project Theme

The main theme proposed for the project is the concept “the Future Takes Flight”. This theme was discussed with County staff and the project team during the Communications and Engagement Discovery Workshop. The theme leverages previous economic development initiatives in the County; therefore, continuity to current initiatives.

Key messages will be developed to support the engagement process, building on the main theme of the project. These key messages should be reviewed by the project team, County staff and Councillors on a regular basis, building a consistent message regarding this project. Key messages will be developed that may incorporate the following keywords:

- Future
- Flight
- Innovate
- Energy
- Partnership
- Economic Development
- Diversification
- The prosperity of the region
- Job creation

The key messages will reflect the main points to be communicated and are not intended to be used verbatim.

3.0

Communications and Engagement Strategy

The following section describes the tools and techniques that will be used to achieve communications and engagement objectives. Details regarding the tools and techniques are further detailed in **Section 3.3** of this plan.

3.1

Engagement Tactics

COVID-19 requirements have created the need for virtual engagement opportunities. The following tools and techniques have been used by the team in the past to achieve high levels of engagement through small group meetings, presentations, online platforms, and virtual meeting breakout rooms.

The current proposed engagement activities are:

- **Public Event:** Two public events will be held with Hamlet of Villeneuve residents, VAA-ASP landowners, and area landowners. The project team will actively monitor COVID-19 protocols and proceed with the appropriate tactic for the each public events, which may be held in-person or virtual.
 - **Public Event #1:** The first public event will be held prior to drafting the VAA-ASP, with invitations to the Hamlet of Villeneuve residents, VAA-ASP landowners, and area landowners. The session will provide an overview of the Master Plan process completed to-date, along with a description of the VAA-ASP process moving forward. Feedback will be compiled for review and consideration by the project team, as the VAA-ASP progresses. Engagement techniques will be identified that will encourage the public to provide feedback for consideration in the VAA-ASP.
 - **Public Event #2:** The second public event will be held after completion of the draft ASP to present the draft document, and will provide an overview of the draft ASP planning framework and associated policies. Planning and Development Subject Matter experts will take the public through key aspects, sections, and policies of the draft ASP. Comments on development concepts and economic analysis completed as part of the Master Plan process will be noted.
- **Presentation to the VLN:** A virtual presentation will be given to the VLN and the targeted 155 stakeholders previously engaged as part of the VAAMP process. The presentation is anticipated to be given by the Economic Development Team at the County, in partnership with the project team. Where possible, members from the VAAMP and VAA-ASP technical team will be present to answer questions regarding the plans. The purpose of the presentation is to share the draft VAA-ASP with stakeholders, and receive comments regarding the plan's ability to accommodate development potential for stakeholders, and any barriers the VAA-ASP may have on stakeholder endeavours. The presentation can be held on a virtual platform chosen by the County. The team is experienced with Microsoft Teams, Zoom and Google Meet.

- Additional tactics may be proposed to supplement the above, such as:
 - A survey launched through a survey platform favoured by the County for feedback on the draft VAA-ASP.

3.2 Communication Tactics

Working in collaboration with the County communications and engagement team, the following communications tactics may be used to share project updates with stakeholders and the public.

- **Social Media:** Rather than creating new social media accounts for this project, we will leverage established accounts such as @SturgeonCounty on Twitter and Facebook, with the hashtag #thefuturetakesflight. As such, the County staff should be prepared to respond constructively to comments and concerns from residents. Dillon can work with the County's communications team to develop wording to share on these platforms.
- **Presentation Materials:** Presentation materials, such as information boards, will be prepared by the project team, with the purpose of educating stakeholders and visitors at the open houses (online or in-person) regarding the draft plans to encourage discussions and solicit feedback.
- **Letters and Mail outs:** Dillon will work with the County to prepare the letters or mail outs to landowners within the plan areas to advise them of engagement opportunities and how to get involved.
- **Project Page:** Updates on the ASP will be available on the County website project page with project updates and information on how to participate in the engagement events.
- **Sturgeon County Council Recap:** As updates on the VAA-ASP are presented to Council there is the opportunity to use this platform as a way of updating the public on the progress of the VAA-ASP.
- **Promos:** If recommended by the County's communication and engagement team, promos may be used to share with the public additional VAA-ASP details at key milestones in the project.
- **Call-a-Planner:** At key milestones in the project, Dillon staff and Administration may make themselves available during publicized times for the public to call in to have their questions answered about the project.

Additional tactics may be considered in collaboration with County Staff, based on past successful projects. On past projects, Dillon has worked with Administration to prepare for radio interviews to share project news, creating excitement for the project and generating additional public involvement in project engagement processes.

It is worth noting that a letter will be sent to landowners in proximity to the VAA-ASP plan area notifying them of the public hearing and how to get involved when the VAA-ASP is considered for approval by County Council.

3.3 Critical Path - Engagement Plan

Table 1 below provides a high-level implementation plan for the engagement process, listing engagement outcomes for each decision step. The tactics and techniques identified have been informed by the engagement principles, and describes corresponding tools and timing and includes roles and responsibilities for the Dillon team and County staff.



Table 1: Engagement Plan

Task	Detailed Purpose	Notice of Engagement	Tactics and Materials	Timing	Roles and Responsibilities
1. Engagement Planning and Public Project Launch	Develop a Communications and Engagement Plan that considers how participants would could meaningfully engage in the process	Internal communications	Engagement and Communications Plan Scope definition, stakeholder identification and analysis, detailed engagement timeline, preliminary engagement goals and objectives, as well as SWOT, issues, and decisions analysis Materials: Communications and Engagement Plan	November 2021 - December 2021	Communications and Engagement Plan developed by Dillon. Plan recommended by the County's Administration for approval by County Council.
Deliverable: Communications and Engagement Plan					
2. Public Event #1	Inform the public regarding the VAAMP and VAA-ASP project process Receive public feedback for consideration in the VAA-ASP	Resident mail out Social media County website Other County communication channels	Project Page Launch Public event in the form of an Open House/Workshop. Held virtually or in-person. Materials: Text for resident mail out, text for update to County project page, presentation or workshop materials, meeting minutes, compilation of stakeholder feedback	January/February 2022	Presentation materials developed by the County economic development team with input from the consulting project team.

Task	Detailed Purpose	Notice of Engagement	Tactics and Materials	Timing	Roles and Responsibilities
3. Public Event #2	<p>Share the Draft ASP with the public and stakeholders</p> <p>Understand and acknowledge public feedback</p> <p>Receive comments for consideration in the VAA ASP</p>	<p>Resident mail out</p> <p>Social media</p> <p>County website</p> <p>Other County communication channels</p>	<p>Project Page Update</p> <p>Public event in the form of an Open House/Workshop. Held virtually or in-person.</p> <p>Materials: Text for resident mail out, text for update to County project page, presentation materials, meeting minutes, compilation of stakeholder feedback</p>	March 2022	<p>Presentation and text materials developed by Dillon with support by the consulting project team. Reviewed by Sturgeon County.</p>
<p>4. Project Page Update</p> <p>4.1 Proposed Survey</p>	<p>Share project updates with residents and stakeholders</p> <p>Share the Draft ASP with the public.</p> <p>Understand and acknowledge public concerns</p> <p>Receive comments for consideration in the VAA- ASP</p>	<p>Resident mail out</p> <p>Social media</p> <p>County website</p> <p>Other County communication channels</p>	<p>Project Page Update</p> <p>Proposed Survey</p> <p>Materials: Survey text, text for update to County project page</p>	March 2022	<p>Text materials developed by Dillon. Reviewed by Sturgeon County.</p>

Task	Detailed Purpose	Notice of Engagement	Tactics and Materials	Timing	Roles and Responsibilities
5. VLN Network and VAAMP Stakeholder Presentation	Share the Draft ASP with the VLN and targeted stakeholders Receive comments for consideration in the VAA-ASP	Email stakeholder invitation	Stakeholder Invitation Virtual Presentation Materials: Text for stakeholder invitation, presentation materials, meeting minutes, compilation of stakeholder feedback	March 2022	Text materials developed by Dillon. Reviewed by Sturgeon County.
6. What We Heard Report	Summary of feedback received in the two public events and the VLN and stakeholder presentation. Understand and acknowledge public concerns	Internal communications	Materials: What We Heard Report Summary	March/April 2022	Prepared by Dillon. Reviewed by Sturgeon County.
Deliverable: What We Heard Report					
7. Public Hearing	Support for VAA-ASP by Council and the public. May include update from the Mayor through Sturgeon County Council Recap in the Newsroom	Internal communications	Materials: Presentation materials, meeting summary	March/April 2022	Prepared by Dillon. Reviewed by Sturgeon County. VAA-ASP recommended by the County Administration for approval by County Council.
Deliverable: Public Hearing Summation					

4.0

Evaluation Plan and Reporting

4.1

Evaluation

At its most basic, our evaluation will answer the following questions on an ongoing basis after each outreach tactic, engagement event and at the end of the project:

1. Has the engagement initiative succeeded?
2. Has the process for engaging the audience worked?
3. What impact has the engagement process had?
4. What was the level of engagement?
5. Are changes needed to how we communicate or engage prior to the next activity?

The project team will consider the engagement and communications work associated with this project a success, if the following have been achieved:

- Engagement encourages dialogue between residents and stakeholders, and the project team.
- Engagement informs achievable recommendations and clear priorities for the VAA-ASP, where appropriate.
- The County is seen as transparent, trustworthy, and helpful.
- Council ultimately approves the VAA-ASP.

To understand if engagement was successful, at appropriate events evaluation forms will be sent to event participants so they can let the team know their thoughts about the event, and to provide any additional feedback they want to share after the event.

4.2

Reporting

After each round of engagement, Dillon will prepare an internal “What We Heard” document for internal purposes for the County. The report will include:

- Overview of the communications and engagement (what we did):
 - Communications Techniques Used; and
 - Engagement Tactics and Outcomes.
- Evaluation (based on whether stated objectives were met);
- What We Heard;
- Next Steps; and
- Lessons Learned.