

Draft Strategic Plan 2018-2027

Focus Areas



Planned Growth and Prosperity

Maintain and Enhance Strong Communities

Strong Local and Regional Governance

Community Identity and Spirit

Environmental Stewardship

Service Commitment



Operational Excellence



Introduction

Sturgeon County has opportunities at its door step. The County covers more than 2,300 square kilometers of land with agricultural and industrial opportunities and is located close to several large urban centres. With the Industrial Heartland within its boundaries and an abundance of natural resources in the area, Sturgeon County is preparing to successfully position itself for growth.

The Strategic Plan establishes priorities for Sturgeon County and guides Council and Administration through a logical and predictable decision-making process. As the world around us grows and changes, a strategic plan provides a sense of stability for our residents, businesses and organizations. By setting a long-term vision and defining the path to get there, the Plan focuses our efforts and positions Sturgeon County to meet the needs of current and future residents. The Strategic Plan was formally approved by County Council on July 12, 2011 and amendments were approved in August 2014. Council met in early 2018 and reaffirmed the vision, mission and community outcomes. This most recent version approved in June 2018 reflects the organization adapting to a changing environment and responding to direction set by Council.

Vision

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

Mission

To provide quality, cost-effective services and infrastructure to meet the diverse needs of the Sturgeon County community, while improving competitiveness and sustainability.

Our Values

■ Collaboration

- Achieve our vision and goals through cooperation and partnerships
- Be supportive team players at the department, division and corporate levels

■ Accountability

- Accept responsibility for your actions
- Maintain high standards of ethical and professional conduct in all interactions

■ Respect

- Value others' ideas, qualities, and time
- Build trust through open, direct and timely communication

■ Excellence

- Perform to the best of our abilities through continuous improvement, responsible risk taking and innovation
- Strive for the highest quality in all that we do

■ Safety

- Create a work environment that contributes to employee health and well-being
- Understand and follow safe work practices and standards



Roles and Responsibilities

Council

Sturgeon County Council is responsible for the governance of the municipality by setting policy and determining the priorities for services, programs and infrastructure.

Council balances the needs and expectations of residents in a financially responsible manner and is accountable to the community.

Sturgeon County Council's role is to:

- Set policies that align with the strategic plan;
- Ensure appropriate resources are provided to achieve Council's goals and strategies;
- Review progress and performance to track the success of the plan; and
- Review the strategic direction on a regular basis and ensure that the plan is responding to pressures in the local, regional and global environment.

Administration

Sturgeon County Administration is responsible for implementing the strategic direction of Council through solid business planning, resource management and service delivery.

Sturgeon County Administration's role is to:

- Ensure current services and programs align with the strategic plan;
- Implement and maintain the service standards set by Council;
- Ensure the efficient use of County resources; and
- Develop and maintain administrative systems and processes, such as annual and long-term budgeting, that support the implementation of the plan.

Strategic Planning Process

Sturgeon County uses a three-step process to develop and implement its strategic plan, as shown below.



Strategic Planning Process

Set Direction

Council initiated its long-range planning early in 2010 by calling upon residents to share their vision of what Sturgeon County will look like in 30 years and beyond.

This feedback was collected from the public through a number of different methods:

- Community Engagement Processes (e.g., Municipal Development Plan Community Engagement);
- Community Services Needs Assessment

We continue to gather information and feedback from the public and stakeholders through:

- Resident Satisfaction Surveys;
- Informal interactions between residents and Council;
- Election Processes;
- Feedback from Committees of Council; and
- Dialogue with regional partners.

This public input was used to create the vision for the County in 2010 and Council in 2018 validated the current mission and vision, along with the Community Focus areas which illustrate the values and aspirations of the Sturgeon County community.

Plan & Implement

The tasks and initiatives necessary to implement the Strategic Plan will be outlined in rolling three-year corporate plans (e.g. 2019-2021) and department business plans. The financial and human resources required to achieve these initiatives will be detailed in the annual operating and capital budget documents.

Review and Report

The Strategic Plan includes performance indicators which will tell us how we are progressing towards the outcome of each focus area. These indicators will form part of the annual reporting, measuring progress toward achieving the community's vision.

A corporate performance measurement framework also sets out a model for corporate-level indicators and program-level outcomes. These metrics will be reported to Council as part of our regular reporting processes.

The Strategic Plan will be looked at by Council each year as part of their planning processes.

Term and Scope

The Strategic Plan will guide and inform the planning and decision-making of the County for a 10-year horizon. The plan is written to be flexible to allow the County to adapt to emerging issues, challenges, trends, and opportunities that will emerge through its 10-year life cycle. As such, the plan is reviewed more in depth at the beginning of a Council term to ensure it aligned with Council direction and responsive to the changing environment in which we operate.

Function

The Strategic Plan provides the foundation for all municipal long and short-term planning starting with the development of the corporate business plan and department business plans. Other major initiatives, master plans and strategies will be integrated with the overarching vision, community outcomes and goals outlined in this document.

Condition of Success

The success of this strategy depends on the largest asset of Sturgeon County - its staff. County employees pride themselves in providing high quality services and programs to residents and other customers. For this reason, Council and the Senior Leadership Team will focus on the following operational areas:

- sound leadership and management practices and processes;
- provide necessary organizational resources and infrastructure; and
- effective communication with staff.

Strategic Direction

To achieve success, Council needs to be very deliberate in moving forward. Work can be characterized in the following way:

Solidifying the Foundation

To execute the plan, priority will be given to reaffirming and establishing service standards and reviewing bylaws and policies to ensure they are current and meet the needs of our residents. This will be done while building resiliency in the organization to adapt and respond to opportunities in our fast-changing environment and fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation. It is also the time to set the groundwork, build relationships and establish agreements with partners and other municipalities. Recognizing the need and desire for long-term sustainability by Council and residents, this allows the organization to evaluate what we do and adjust as needed. achieved

Working together to Build our Community

As our plans are set and standards and specifications are developed, Council needs to communicate and educate this with Administration, residents, neighbouring municipalities and our business community. Success of moving towards our 30-year Community outcome hinges on the relationships we built and foster. Through open dialogue, we can adapt and work to increase awareness, respond to needs and build our future together. This allows us to be proactive and nimble and adjust to our changing environment.

Securing our Future

We will be competitive in the region and a sustainable municipality for future generations. Processes will be streamlined, infrastructure maintained, and residents see the value of the work being completed. Through solid policy development and education, there will be a common understanding of the importance of a balanced approach to multi-land use with residents, agriculture and industry.

Sturgeon County Council has established five focus areas which are further defined by:

- Community Outcome statements that reflect a 30-year desired state;
- Community Indicators;
- Goals and detailed strategies to produce identified outcomes over the next 10 years.

The strategic plan also outlines a commitment to how we work and achieve these outcomes through Operational Excellence. Operational Excellence is in place when there is consistency of set service standards and the organization continually works towards improved service delivery.



- By focusing its direction, Council will be better equipped to establish policies and directions that move the organization toward the desired Community Outcomes.

Focus Areas



Planned Growth and Prosperity

Maintain and Enhance Strong Communities

Strong Local and Regional Governance

Community Identity and Spirit

Environmental Stewardship

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Focus Area: **Planned Growth and Prosperity**

Community Outcome: We encourage varied and integrated enterprises that enhance our strong economic base, while balancing the needs of the community and natural environment.

Ten-year strategic direction

- Sturgeon County is a prosperous region that balances the expectations of the Sturgeon County community with the need for long-term financial sustainability.
- Sturgeon County is a central hub for value-added industry.
- Sturgeon County has an active and diverse Agriculture industry.
- Identified growth nodes and industrial parks are promoted and developed.

Community Indicators

- Healthy ratio of residential to non-residential assessment to support the sustainability of the County
- Population growth

Goal 1.1 Sturgeon County has a thriving business environment that supports a strong economic foundation

By having:

- 1.1.1 A competitive supply of serviced industrial land suitable to attract diverse and significant investments in petrochemical, advanced energy, manufacturing, transportation, and logistics sectors.
- 1.1.2 A commitment to agriculture, with enabling supports to maintain and improve the County's position as an agricultural leader.
- 1.1.3 Value added economic services to current and potential business partners, including information, advocacy, trade and other growth supports.

Goal 1.2 Sturgeon County plans for responsible growth through the Sturgeon County Municipal Development Plan and regional growth management plans.

By having:

- 1.2.1 A balance of commercial, industrial, residential, and recreational land uses that attains long-term fiscal sustainability.
- 1.2.2 Land use activities that provide a positive return on investment and facilitate the development of complete communities.

Goal 1.3 Sturgeon County manages growth for current and future developments

By having:

- 1.3.1 Maximum development around existing County infrastructure and identified future growth areas.
- 1.3.2 Transparent and consistent bylaws, policies and processes that enable developers to effectively develop lands in the County.

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Focus Area: **Maintain and Enhance Strong Communities**

Community Outcome: We are committed to a safe, secure community, where our residents are provided with access to opportunities

Ten-year strategic direction

- Maintain a level of infrastructure and services such as roads, water and wastewater utilities, and programs that are affordable, safe and sustainable.
- Provide diversity of resources throughout the County to meet unique community needs.
- Planned, targeted and innovative infrastructure reinvestment is in place such as maintenance and road rehabilitation programs.
- Diverse housing forms and policies will be in place to reflect the needs of the County workforce, encourage aging-in-place and to keep young adults in the community.

Community Indicator

- Rating of quality of life in Sturgeon County

Goal 21 Sturgeon County residents have access to programs and services that contribute to their well-being and quality of life

By having:

- 2.1.1 Plans in place which define the County's mandate, role and responsibilities for the delivery of agriculture extension, social and recreational services.
- 2.1.2 Partnerships with other organizations to plan and offer services and infrastructure that are reflective of community needs.
- 2.1.3 Short and long-term impacts assessed on the changing needs in Sturgeon County.

Goal 2.2 Sturgeon County Residents have access to safe and reliable infrastructure assets

By having:

- 2.2.1 A well-maintained transportation network that meets the standards set by Council.
- 2.2.2 Effective drainage and storm management plans to mitigate the impacts on land and infrastructure.

- 2.2.3 Education and awareness for users of how to conserve Sturgeon County infrastructure
- 2.2.4 Technologically-advanced utility systems that are sustainable and self-supporting.

Goal 2.3 Sturgeon County promotes and protects the safety of people and property

By having:

- 2.3.1 County amenities designed and maintained emphasizing the safety of property and users.
- 2.3.2 Enforcement procedures to use for County bylaws to ensure the equal enjoyment of property.
- 2.3.3 Collaborative relationships with law enforcement entities, fire services, neighbouring municipalities and community groups.
- 2.3.4 Education and awareness programs for residents about public safety and the community resources available.

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Focus Area: Strong Local and Regional Governance

Community Outcome: We provide accountable leadership through collaborative and transparent processes.

Ten-year strategic direction

- Sturgeon County's long-term plans guide the policies and decisions of Council and Administration.
- Sturgeon County's taxes remain competitive in the region, be adequate to provide services to meet residents' needs and ensure long-term financial sustainability of the County.
- Relationships with residents, Council and Administration are healthy and strong.
- Collaborative relationships with our regional neighbours are built for the betterment of our communities.
- Residents engaged as active participants in municipal governance, representing the broader community.

Community Indicators

- Percentage of decisions by Council that are consistent with the strategic direction of Sturgeon County
- Number of applications for Sturgeon County Committee positions
- Residential Tax rates per resident
- Non-residential tax mill rate in comparison to other municipalities

Goal 3.1 Sturgeon County provides effective leadership and management

By having:

- 3.1.1 Bylaws and policies in place to provide clarity for Council decision making and Administration implementation.
- 3.1.2 Opportunities for residents to represent the community and participate in municipal matters, including Boards and Committees of Council.

Goal 3.2 Sturgeon County is financially stable and fiscally sustainable

By having:

- 3.2.1 Short-term and long-term financial plans developed that ensure the provision of core services and infrastructure to residents.
- 3.2.2 Financial policy that guides the application of funding sources.
- 3.2.3 A level of infrastructure provided that is affordable, safe and sustainable as set by long-range plans.

Goal 3.3 Sturgeon County fosters collaborative intergovernmental partnerships

By having:

- 3.3.1 Intermunicipal agreements developed which strengthen the competitiveness of Sturgeon County and the Capital Region.
- 3.3.2 Local and sub-regional service-delivery and cost-sharing frameworks in place.
- 3.3.3 Council consistently advocate and represent Sturgeon County's interests, per the Strategic Plan, at the regional, provincial and federal levels.

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Focus Area: **Community Identity and Spirit**

Community Outcome: We build upon our strengths, where together we create an inclusive, caring community.

Ten-year strategic direction

Residents are proud that Sturgeon County is their home, feel connected to their community and have a sense of belonging.

Sturgeon County is a strong and welcoming community that supports and provides opportunities for recreational, entertainment and cultural activities that increase social interaction.

The cultural and historical identity of the County is honoured to recognize, educate and preserve the uniqueness of the region's history.

Community Indicators

- Participation in County-sponsored community events
- Awareness of Sturgeon County **#Sturgeon Proud** Brand

Goal 4.1 Sturgeon County residents and stakeholders have a strong identity with the County and are proud to live here

By having:

- 4.1.1 Support and investment in community-building events and programs that promote our heritage and future.

Goal 4.2 Sturgeon County actively supports and collaborates with voluntary organizations in the region

By having:

- 4.2.1 Partnership agreements that specify the County's relationship with community associations, not-for-profit organizations and private/public enterprises.
- 4.2.2 Volunteerism supported and promoted in Sturgeon County.

Focus Area: **Environmental Stewardship**

Community Outcome: We foster a healthy environment and minimize our impact on ecosystems.

Ten-year strategic direction

- The environment is sustained for current and future generations through responsible practices.
- Healthy co-existence of natural, industrial and urban environment.
- The County is a responsible steward by following and enforcing environmental legislation.
- County residents are aware of environmental issues such as watersheds and impacts of waste.

Community Indicator

- Number of Environmental Farm Plans completed

Goal 5.1 The environmental impact on natural areas is minimized for the enjoyment of the local and regional community.

By having:

- 5.1.1 Plans in place which manage environmentally significant and sensitive areas and protect our natural areas from encroachment and private uses.
- 5.1.2 Partnerships and plans are with other organizations and levels of government to protect environmentally significant and sensitive areas including our river valley, watersheds and identified natural areas.

Goal 5.2 Sturgeon County provides awareness of environmental issues impacting the County

By having:

- 5.2.1 Environmental education available on relevant topics impacting the County, including waste mitigation, agriculture impacts, water and waste water management, and industrial uses.
- 5.2.2 Collaborative relationships with residents to preserve and enhance natural areas.
- 5.2.3 Practices in place to reduce Sturgeon County operations environmental impacts.

Service Commitment



Operational Excellence

Service commitment through Operational Excellence

To Sturgeon County, Operational Excellence means delivering consistent and defined levels of service to all stakeholders in a professional and cost-effective manner. This service commitment is the foundation of how Sturgeon County achieves our mission and the Strategic Plan. Council and Administration both have a role in this service commitment.

As a Council, we will work to ensure bylaws, policies and resources are in place to provide a consistent level of quality services that are cost-effective and offers ratepayers positive value-for-money.

As an employer, Administration will create an inclusive work environment that fosters a culture of continuous improvement and develops productive and professional employees who are committed to Sturgeon County.

By having:

- Knowledge, skills and innovation capability to thrive within a rapidly changing environment;
- Streamlined operational processes, through standardization and continuous improvement;
- Policies, directives, operating systems and practices that support effective and professional interaction with stakeholders;

Our commitment to residents is to:

1. Establish, communicate, and deliver defined levels of services to residents and stakeholders.
2. Provide cost-effective service delivery, while maintaining quality of service.
3. Attract and retain quality employees who consistently demonstrate the Sturgeon County values.