

Heartland Residents Task Force Report to Council – Administration’s Response

Recommendation from Task Force	Administrative Analysis	Anticipated Financial Cost	Anticipated Funding Source or Feasibility
Financial			
<p>1. That the County provide current, future, and/or retroactive tax relief to residential properties in the AIH to acknowledge the negative impacts of zoning and nearby industrial development.</p> <p>2. That the County obtains individual appraisals of residential properties in the AIH. The information would include both current property values and comparable values as if the properties were not in the AIH. Because residents are uncertain over possible land sale, this would establish a database of objective land valuations.</p> <p>3. That the County work to develop a plan for providing options that would allow remaining AIH residents to dispose of their property when they may choose to leave the AIH. Options may be similar to what had been available through the Voluntary Purchase Program. The County may consider working with other governing bodies in developing such a plan.</p>	<p>These recommendations are connected from an operational perspective, as all relate to the provision of direct financial support to property owners.</p> <p>Municipalities can cancel or reduce taxes as per Section 347(1) of the Municipal Government Act (MGA). Municipalities can provide tax relief going forward on an annual basis only.</p> <p>A legal opinion provides advice that when the County’s land use bylaw may impact the value or marketability of private lands, the municipality does not have a legal obligation to compensate the landowner(s) with regard to such an impact. In this way, offering direct financial support to homeowners for this purpose would be inconsistent with the legal opinion and could also create a precedent that may impact all ratepayers in the County over time.</p> <p>The County has participated in / contributed to a Voluntary Residential Property Purchase (VRPP) Program previously; however, following the conclusion of the VRPP no current program exists to offer this type of support. Until such time as similar conditions</p>	<p>Costs to compensate landowners for the appraised value of their property would require a specific review.</p> <p>Approximately \$48,000 per year of tax relief, with adjustments year over year per the municipal budget requirement.</p> <p>Approximately \$186,000 (\$6000 x 31 properties) in one time costs to fund homeowner appraisal costs.</p> <p>An example of a typical single-lot subdivision application cost including endorsement is</p>	<p>Depending on the scale of the required contribution by the County, receipt of significant growth revenue may be required to fund the expense / service enhancement. Implementing a program similar to the VRPP program would take significant staff time, and involvement from industry and other governing bodies.</p>

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<p>4. That the County compensate landowners for the difference between the appraised value of their land and the forced sale value a landowner receives when land is sold.</p> <p>5. That the County compensate landowners for the costs a landowner incurs to obtain the necessary professional advice to properly explore potential land sale options offered by developers. Examples are legal and accounting advice and costs associated with subdivision.</p>	<p>and stakeholder financial support are established, the County would be unable to provide similar support independently.</p>	<p>approximately \$2,025. Surveying costs of the new parcel can be estimated to be within \$3,000 - \$5,000. Registering caveats at time of registration is likely to be around \$250-\$300. Total = \$5275 to \$7325 Legal costs can be estimated to be approximately \$200/\$300 per hour Accounting advice costs can be estimated to be \$100/\$300 per hour.</p>	
Communication			
<p>6. That the county coordinate sources of AIH information including air emissions, emergency response planning, and roads and other related information into a one-window source for AIH residents.</p>	<p>All AIH information, including air emissions, emergency response planning, and roads and other related information could be located on the Sturgeon Services portal called 'Heartland Activities Information'.</p>	<p>Minimal direct cost, and 2-3 weeks of staff time</p>	<p>Existing operational budgets.</p>

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	At that location will be links to air quality information (Fort Air Partnership), Emergency Response Planning (NRCAER), the County Road Watch page, etc. Also included is the option to signup for email subscriptions at the portal.		
7. That the county provides regular, meaningful, in-depth and coordinated information on AIH industrial activities and development within the AIH.	<p>Currently there are regularly scheduled 'Life in the Heartland' meetings that are a good source for Heartland related information.</p> <p>As noted above, an online portal could be launched that would also include this type of AIH information.</p>	Minimal cost and 2-3 weeks of staff time.	Existing operational budgets.
Lighting			
8. That the County request existing industries to adhere to voluntary reduction of light emissions.	<p>Administration has contacted North West Refinery (NWR) and ATCO for preliminary information with regards to their existing lighting.</p> <p>NWR designed their facility to comply with the International Dark Sky Association's 'Model Lighting Ordinance' and mainly utilize a style of lighting equipment that has shields and can be directed down/toward site to reduce light pollution for neighbours. ATCO, although under safety and security regulation with regards to lighting, does have some flexibility in terms of the types of lights they use (Bay vs Directional) and could potentially increase the number of directional lights on site. ATCO also</p>	No cost.	N/A

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	<p>noted that there are new federal standards coming into place that deal with perimeter lighting, and that they would work internally to see if they can keep impacts minimal or non-existent to residents.</p> <p>The County's Land Use Bylaw now includes a section on Lighting (5.14) that did not exist in the past when the existing industrial facilities in the Heartland were built. Section 5.14 states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) No direct rays of light are directed at any adjacent parcels; b) Indirect rays of light do not adversely affect any adjacent parcels; and c) Direct and indirect rays of light do not interfere with the effectiveness of any traffic control devices. <p>CKPC's recent development permit approval included these conditions and the lighting plan for the facility will comply with these conditions.</p>		
<p>9. That the County develop a dark sky policy for the AIH.</p>	<p>As noted above, the County's Land Use Bylaw now includes a section on lighting restrictions, Administration could investigate a Dark Sky Policy/Bylaw for Council's consideration if required.</p> <p>There are several considerations in establishing a voluntary or mandated</p>	<p>Minimal direct cost, with approximately 3-4 months of preparation time.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

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	program. Note that this would also only apply to the County's portion of the Industrial Heartland.		
Emergency Response Planning & Rural Safety			
<p>10. That the County work with the North East Region Community Awareness Emergency Response (NR CARE) and the Sturgeon Region Emergency Management Partnership to ensure a coordinated emergency management approach with industry, and to ensure that a proper notification protocol is in place for AIH residents.</p>	<p>Sturgeon County is a member of the well-established Sturgeon Regional Emergency Management Partnership – a collaboration between the County and the towns in the area. Partnership with industry is in place and continues through NRCAER and directly with Industry (NWR, Pembina, Agrium, CKPC, etc.)</p> <p>If property owners are within a company's Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ), in case of an emergency said company will contact the resident through collected notification means, e.g., cell phone, home phones, email. In addition, companies within Sturgeon County have the ability to contact Sturgeon County Emergency Services and to have an "Alberta Emergency Alert" message created and sent out. Provincial emergency alerts are now received via, tv, radio and through cellular device.</p> <p>NR-CAER also utilises AB Alert system which industry partners belong to, NR CAER also has a notification line that they post messages to and that residents can sign up with in order to receive information/notifications. NRCAER will</p>	Not applicable - already within ongoing County operating budgets	N/A

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	<p>also be rolling out electronic road signs with messaging placed strategically throughout the Heartland.</p> <p>Attached are links to a “Heartland 101” on Emergency Notification, as well as our video that explains:</p> <p>http://www.nrcaer.com/videos/2014/1/3/northeast-region-caer-emergency-notification</p> <p>http://lifeintheheartland.com/wp-content/uploads/documents/heartland_101_201505_emergency_notification.pdf</p> <p>Sturgeon County utilizes Alberta Emergency Alert system, website, social media such as Twitter/Facebook. SREMP also has a website that emergency messages are posted on. If required, notification will be made door to door by Fire, Peace Officers or RCMP members.</p> <p>To address the concern of being out in the “field”, it would be recommended to residents to establish a communication link to another family member, neighbour or co-worker similar to a “work alone” program in that in the event of an emergency someone is monitoring and or checking in regularly. Many Industry Partners and Municipalities with todays technologies have many means of sending messages. In circumstances of</p>		

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	concern residents and or those operating in the Heartland area need to ensure they have subscribed to one or more of these sources.		
11. That the County increase bylaw patrol in the AIH to correlate with activity times in the area.	Sturgeon County Enforcement Services currently employs an early shift. Early shifts/patrols begin at 0600 am Monday through Friday. Officers work the Industrial Heartland area proactively for the duration of the morning commute, approximately two hours. Subsequently similar presence, patrols are conducted at the end of the day normally between 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm. The addition of two (2) new Peace Officers, along with a dedicated traffic position enhances our ongoing presence. Regular liaison occurs with RCMP who serve the area as well.	Not applicable, already within ongoing regular operating budgets.	N/A
12. That the County consider an enhanced rural crime watch system for AIH, similar to what has been done in the Barrhead area.	<p>Information on the Barrhead notification system has been explored and Council has received a presentation. Currently Sturgeon County employs many different means of communication (social media, newspaper, internet etc.) and also has many avenues for residents to contact staff.</p> <p>Sturgeon County currently supports the local Sturgeon Rural Crime Watch group and residents are always encouraged to become members. To develop or move to a similar system like the Barrhead one could be seen as duplication to what we already employ and further would rely heavily on the local RCMP</p>	Estimate of \$40,000.00 - \$50,000.00 in program costs. Impact on staff capacity is difficult to estimate but would be significant (18-24 months, with additional potential for contract services).	Service enhancement would be required.

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	input. This item is one that would need to be looked at corporately and requires the inclusion of the Communications department. Prior to moving in such a direction more time should be given to evaluate the viability and results.		
Air Quality and Monitoring			
13. That the County host an event to up-date residents on air quality monitoring within the AIH.	Administration could host an event to inform/update residents on air monitoring within the AIH. This would be consistent with Council's interest in supporting resident quality of life.	Minimal cost, with expected ~3 months of time for preparation and data collection.	Existing County operational budget
14. That the County provide additional active air monitors with locations determined with residents.	<p>Administration has collected information on the costs of additional active air monitors as per the recommendation. Administration also collected information on passive monitoring devices.</p> <p>Fort Air Partnership (FAP) provided the following: "Continuous monitoring station costs for purchasing and operating will depend on the analyzers that are included in the station, but a standard continuous station with the analyzers required to calculate the Air Quality Health Index will cost approximately 300,000 to build and site, and approximately 60,000 per year to operate.</p> <p>Passive monitoring devices on the other hand are much cheaper, however they can only be used to monitor certain substances and only</p>	<p>Passive monitors are approximately \$100 to install and \$2,000 per year to operate. Standard continuous monitoring stations - approximately \$300,000 to build and \$60,000 per year to operate. Approximately 6 months of staff time would be required.</p>	Funding source dependent on type and number of monitors chosen, and a review of potential partnerships with external organizations.

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	<p>provide monthly averages. They cost approximately \$100 per unit to install (this is the cost for the passive hood, and they can be mounted on a fence post or other stationary item). The filters are collected from these units each month and sent to a lab for analysis, so there is a cost for someone to exchange the filter, and a cost for analysis. Based on FAPs current annual cost to run its passive network of 43 analyzers, the cost is approximately \$2,000 per year to operate one passive device.”</p> <p>It may be advisable to first host the air quality monitoring event proposed in the recommendation above, and based on that information and other research (as well as consulting with residents in the area) determine the type and potential locations of air monitors and bring a report back to Council for its consideration. This report could also include information on what substances a passive monitoring device can be used to monitor, whether the County could potentially purchase monitors for the Fort Air Partnership, and answer the question of who would replace the filters and send the results to a lab for analysis, etc.</p>		

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Ongoing work not part of the Heartland Residents Task Force recommendations			
Increased Traffic Counts in the Heartland	Traffic counts have increased in the Heartland, and efforts to collect this information have been increased for 2019.	None at this time.	N/A
Signal Light Timing	Administration has requested Alberta Transportation to review the signal timing of Highway 643/Highway 825 intersection.	None.	N/A
Intersection Line Painting	Administration is working with Alberta Transportation on the line painting for the intersection of Highway 643/Highway 825. The County is in a review process before finalizing the final placement of the markings. The County has provincial approval to undertake the work once its review has been completed.	None.	N/A