

PUBLIC HEARING

June 14, 2022

2:30 p.m.

Hearing Held in Council Chambers and via Electronic Communications

**Public Hearing for Bylaw 1597/22 - Diversified Agriculture - Amendment to Land
Use Bylaw 1385/17 - Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Recommendations
Implementation**

RECORD OF SUBMISSIONS

PUBLIC HEARING

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Public Hearing for Bylaw 1597/22 - Diversified Agriculture - Amendment to Land Use Bylaw 1385/17 - Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Recommendations Implementation

REGISTERED SPEAKERS

	NAME (please print)	In favour / opposed
1	Launi Julio	OPPOSED
2	Cheryl Gerlock	OPPOSED
3	Fred Fibi	OPPOSED
4	Tam Andersen	IN FAVOUR
5	Laurel Andersen	IN FAVOUR
6	Roger Kramers, Travel Alberta	IN FAVOUR
7	Heather Swain	IN FAVOUR
8	Clay Dillman	IN FAVOUR
9	Cathy Gilbert	IN FAVOUR
10	Greg Switner	OPPOSED
11	Michael Verheul	IN FAVOUR
12	Laurie McAllister	OPPOSED
13	Frances Gagnon	IN FAVOUR

PUBLIC HEARING

June 14, 2022

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Public Hearing for Bylaw 1597/22 - Diversified Agriculture - Amendment to Land Use Bylaw 1385/17 - Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Recommendations Implementation

The following written submissions were received:

	NAME	DATE RECEIVED	IN FAVOUR / OPPOSED
1	Kathy Larson	June 12, 2022	IN FAVOUR
2	Andre and Trish Lema	June 12, 2022	OPPOSED
3	Lola Labelle	June 12, 2022	IN FAVOUR
4	Heather Swain	June 13, 2022	IN FAVOUR
5	Leo and Valerie Belanger	June 13, 2022	OPPOSED
6	Terra and Jason Slaby	June 13, 2022	OPPOSED
7	Nancy Cornelius	June 14, 2022	OPPOSED
8	Heather Edwards	June 14, 2022	IN FAVOUR
9	Tam Andersen	June 14, 2022	IN FAVOUR
10	Keleigh and Pierre Cormier	June 14, 2022	IN FAVOUR
11	Frances Gagnon	June 14, 2022	IN FAVOUR
12	Rob Paradis	June 14, 2022	OPPOSED
13	Marsha Paradis	June 14, 2022	OPPOSED
14	Kevin Theroux	June 14, 2022	OPPOSED
15	Kaitlin Eyestone	June 14, 2022	OPPOSED
16	Laurel Andersen	June 14, 2022	IN FAVOUR
17	Launi Julio	June 14, 2022	OPPOSED
18	Nadine and Jason Stang	June 14, 2022	OPPOSED
19	Jon Mamela, Chief Commercial Officer, Travel Alberta	June 14, 2022	IN FAVOUR

Kathy Larson

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

Re: Public Hearing - Bylaw 1597/22 JUNE 14 2:30pm

Amendment to the Land Use Bylaw 1385/17

Please read my letter aloud into the public record.

Dear Mayor Hnatiw and Council

I am in full support of this new Bylaw 1597/22 amendment to include the creation of Diversified Agriculture as a permitted land use along with the creation of a new Agriculture 2 AG-2 District to allow more intensive and diversified agriculture uses as permitted uses.

We applaud Sturgeon County for doing what it will take to support local agriculture in the next decade.

I believe this excellent amendment to the land use bylaw will foster and support new value-added agriculture and rural tourism ideas that will improve the rural area of Sturgeon County vitality by making it a better place to live, work and play!

I am pleased to live in Sturgeon County, and to be employed by a local farm in Sturgeon County. It is important that I can find local employment in the region. I am certain that the Diversified Agriculture definition will provide new opportunities for youth and citizens of Sturgeon County to find work close to home.

Diversified agricultural farms - which include U-pick farms, bison ranches, alpaca farms, haskap and Saskatoon orchards, apple orchards, greenhouses, honey bee apiaries, and tree nurseries - that contain a recreational or educational enterprise component, such as tours of a working farm, horseback riding, or pick-your-own fruits and vegetables - are already existent throughout Sturgeon County. Diversified agriculture land use definitions will help Sturgeon County farmers and ranchers meet expectations of both the public, and regulators, while generating revenue from recreational or educational activities.

This new land use bylaw will secure the future of family owned farms in Sturgeon County. As the metro population of the greater Edmonton region grows, there will be an increased interest to support local farms, buy local food, and visit local farms. Diversified agriculture will help revitalize rural economies, educate the public about agriculture, and preserve agricultural heritage.

Clear definitions make it easy to invest, and sets clear expectations. Future research and support for diversified agriculture will provide key steps to success, address barriers to growth, and provide training to improve market readiness. Congratulations on taking this bold new step in Sturgeon County's land use definitions!

Respectfully,

Kathy Larson

June 12, 2022

Andre and Trish Lema

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

Sturgeon County

9613 100 Street

Morinville, AB T8R 1L9

RE: Public Hearing Bylaw 1597/22
Amendment to the Land Use Bylaw 1385/17
Agribusiness, Agritourism

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

We are long-term county residents. We think the amendment allowing event venues will turn our county into entertainment centres that cannot be regulated. It is counteractive to why we live here.

There is no way to mitigate or minimize the amount of noise and traffic created by event venues. Distance from residences is the solution but not possible with home density and few wide-open spaces. Many operators do not reside on venue sites and would not have these issues. It is the neighbours who bare a degradation of lifestyle.

Event venues have nothing to do with agriculture. Allowing them near any residence does not make sense. They are businesses that need to be in business parks, with supportive infrastructure.

Event venues should not be permitted. We are opposed to this type of land use and zoning.

Sincerely,

Andre and Trish Lema

Lola Labelle

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

Re: Public Hearing - Bylaw 1597/22 JUNE 14 2:30pm - Amendment to the Land Use Bylaw 1385/17

Dear Mayor Hnatiw and Council,

Please read my letter aloud into the public record.

I am writing in support of this new Bylaw 1597/22 amendment to include the creation of Diversified Agriculture as a permitted land use along with the creation of a new Agriculture 2 AG-2 District to allow more intensive and diversified agriculture uses as permitted uses.

Diversified Agriculture will represent as the future of the intersection between agriculture and rural tourism ...and the future is finally here.

I personally live in a multi-generational home, and this is where I talk about diversity because, I live it every day. In addition, I am employed full time by a local, multi-generational family-owned farm who employ several dozen employees from all age groups and nationalities.

COVID-19: when the world was in chaos... the most important lesson was reiterated to both myself and my family. Yet again as our elders always tried to impress upon us to shop locally and support our essential farmers and old traditional survival techniques. Younger generations have now faced the stark reality of empty grocery store shelves.

When we visit, local, and spend money at our local stores, gas stations, farmer's markets, and restaurants. This becomes an economic driver within our community. New jobs, new businesses and new monies for our local governments and residents.

We all agree to the growing need to get outside and reinvest in the things that matter most: family, relationships, safety, health, and wholesome entertainment. We seek wholesome experiences that emphasize family, fresh air, reconnecting with nature.

It is prudent for our municipal governments to recognize the world is changing and take a leadership role in creating something new and exciting in support of farm diversification and rural tourism. The family farm is under more pressure than it has ever been to remain sustainable.

This new land-use definition for Diversified Agriculture will be a positive step forward in supporting local farms, businesses that will allow them to thrive for decades to come!

As a proud resident of Sturgeon County, I am looking forward to a new era of collaboration, new jobs, and positive growth in my community.

Sincerely,

Lola Labelle

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

From:
To: [Legislative Services](#)
Subject: Letter for submission and to be read into the record for June 14th Public meeting
Date: June 13, 2022 10:30:00 AM
Attachments: [HDSWAIN Letter of support for 1597 - 22 Bylaw Sturgeon County.pdf](#)

Hello, my name is Heather D. Swain, I am submitting my attached letter to you today in regards to the public meeting on June 14th 2022 to amend Land Use Bylaw 1385/17 and the proposed Bylaw 1597/22 in the County of Sturgeon.

As this is a matter of great importance to me I kindly ask that you let me know you received my letter and that it will be read aloud into the public record tomorrow at the meeting.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,
Heather D. Swain

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

Heather D. Swain

Re: Public Hearing - Bylaw 1597/22 JUNE 14 2:30pm
Amendment to the Land Use Bylaw 1385/17
Please read my letter aloud into the public record.

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

Dear Mayor Hnatiw and Council,

I am in full support the new Bylaw 1597/22 amendment to include the creation of Diversified Agriculture as a permitted land use along with the creation of a new Agriculture 2 AG-2 District to allow more intensive and diversified agriculture uses as permitted uses.

While I consider myself an adopted Albertan, after living here for 30 years and therefore most of my working life, I am originally from Ontario. I am only one generation away from the farm. My family farm was in Northumberland County started by my great-grandfather in the early 1880's until it was sadly sold in 1981. I spent my summers on the farm and was continuity surprised how little I knew, as a city slicker, about the land and where my food came from. I can admit now, that as a young adult, it was eye opening for me to actually learn that pickles were cucumbers because as I told my farming cousins, "How would I know, pickles come in a jar with the name BICK's on it." It amazes me still today the majority of urban dwellers that have no connection to the land or the importance of spending time on the land. And yet that is changing and Agritourism is the reason for that shift.

It is now ease for me, when I return to Ontario, to see that farmers making use of Agritourism have brought life back to parts of the province that were starting to fade away and disappear. Taking drives around Ontario I find rural municipalities where I can visit local farms and wineries, purchase local products, stay overnight at a farm-stay, and enjoy a farm dinner, or local event. Four generations of my family grew up on the farm and I am certain that if Agritourism had been a growing concern back in 1980's that our family farm may have been able to avoid the auction block.

In this age of globalism, it is very important to support local farmers and buy local food. This reduces our impact on our environment, creates local jobs, and builds local food sheds. As an urban professional, I am fortunate to derive a portion of my annual income through working directly with local farms. My income depends on the success of this industry.

I would like also to bring to your attention to the fact that women empowerment is another area that reaps many dividends from rural tourism and Agritourism. Since women are often at the forefront of rural activities, women are the individuals who benefit by using their creativity to diversify family farms with the goal of keeping the family farm alive. Agritourism is providing essential full-time work for some and supplemental income for others making it possible for families to stay in Sturgeon County and therefore ensuring the future of Family Farming in Alberta.

It is neither inaccurate or lofty of me to state that Argictourism Farmers of Sturgeon County are providing essential wholesome entertainment needed to create a healthy and more caring society. I have witnessed many times the multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural connections being forged in rural communities on local farms. Give city folk a first experience of petting a goat or even simply watching a child pet a goat, I have seen time and time again barriers and divides melt away and smiles fill that gap. There's what I call the joy of a "first-timer" smile, when a child (and that child could be 60 years young) is standing a field for the first time, and is digging up a potato from the earth (and not to sound crony but) something magical happens and they will never forget that moment or the gift of learning and remembering that their food comes from the land. There is no better advocate for supporting Alberta farmers then a newly woke city folk that has had a FARM EXPERIENCE that shifted their realities in ways they never imagined. You all know the joy of the land... we city folk need and want to have the type experience that you maybe taking for granted.

It ain't Netflix its real. The creation of a new Agriculture 2 AG-2 District and the passing of Bylaw 1597/22 allowing Diversified Agriculture land use will help ensure the success, safety and future of family farming in Sturgeon County.

I thank you deeply for taking the time to hear my letter.

Heather D. Swain

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

June 13, 2022

Leo and Val Belanger

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

RE: Public Hearing Bylaw 1597/22

Amendment to the Land Use Bylaw 1385.17

Agribusiness & Agritourism

Dear Councilors and Mayor

We are long term county residents as well as many of our extended family and find this move to making our county as an entertainment center to be counter as to why we live here.

There is no way to mitigate or minimize the amount of noise and traffic that venues like these create. A good example of violating this bylaw was this past Saturday night June 11th where we could clearly hear the music and attendees were seen on the railroad tracks adjacent to the event premises.

Distance from residences is the only solution but this is near impossible as the housing density does not leave many wide-open spaces. Even the quietest of these is busy and noisy, many of the operators and not on the same site as the venue so these issues are not theirs, but the degradation of lifestyle is borne by neighbors to the venue.

Event venues such as this have nothing to do with agriculture and the purpose of having them in Sturgeon County residents back yards is lost on this resident. Event business already exist in the hamlet of Villeneuve where most events do take place. Event venues are a business and need to be hosted in a business park that has infrastructure to support them. This event venue Trestles Edge should not be permitted.

We strongly oppose this type of zoning as again first hand the bylaw was already violated.

Leo and Val Belanger

From: [Terra Slaby](#)
To: [Legislative Services](#)
Subject: Public Hearing Bylaw 1597/22 June 14
Date: June 13, 2022 6:23:15 PM

Please accept this email as a written submission expressing concerns regarding Bylaw 1597/22 and proposed amendments for the public hearing on June 14, 2022.

As homeowners in Sturgeon County, we do hope the amendments to the land use bylaw are VERY carefully examined as to how they will potentially affect residents.

We currently reside a short distance from a property that is seeking such an amendment. Unfortunately, this property has already begun operations as an "event venue" without following their due diligence. Construction and operations happened without proper permits or County approval, and without consultation with neighbours. Even when Sturgeon County has tried to stop events from happening, it has been unsuccessful. Bylaw and local RCMP has been called numerous times, leading to an absolute waste of resources.

We can already speak to the various concerns relating to having an "event venue" as a neighbour. Noise, traffic, parking, alcohol, destruction of crop are just a few of the issues that we have already observed. Sturgeon County officials are aware of the many issues regarding this specific property and have been the recipients of many "complaints" from neighbouring residents.

If we were currently in the market for a family home in Sturgeon County, residing next to such an event venue would be an absolute deal breaker. It's very disappointing this could become our reality.

While there may be areas for such venues to positively affect the County, a once family home, surrounded by many other family homes, is not one of them. In addition to the concerns listed above, how will these businesses/venues further influence the neighbours, land, services, taxes, property and resale value?

There needs to be very careful consideration as to how

a new business or venue will impact the County and its residents. A business or venue must bring legitimate and measurable value to the area. Revenue should not be a sole deciding factor. One cannot simply put an old tractor on the front lawn and claim to be “agribusiness” or “agritourism”.

Kind regards,

Terra and Jason Slaby

From:

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

To:

[Legislative Services](#)

Subject:

Written Submission Bylaw 1597/22

Date:

June 14, 2022 1:01:51 AM

Attachments:

[Nancy Cornelius Bylaw 1597 22 Written submission.docx](#)

Attached please find my written submission for the Sturgeon County Public Hearing on Bylaw 1597/22.

Thank you

Nancy Cornelius

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

Nancy Cornelius Written Submission – Bylaw 1597/22

My name is Nancy Cornelius and I have been a resident of Sturgeon County for almost 50 years. During this time I have been proud to call the county my home. It's a great place to raise a family. I love where I live and a large reason is the people in my neighborhood, both longtime residents and new neighbors. There have been many occasions when people on our road wanted to develop their property. They would canvas the neighborhood to ensure that no one had any objections, and for the most part, we would all give our opinions and approval, often offering helpful suggestions on how to help make the development more successful. A couple of years ago a farmer came to me to tell me about a plan he had to develop his property which was adjacent to mine. He told me precisely where his project would be located what he wanted to accomplish and we discussed his best options. I was very happy to give him my approval and appreciated his consideration of how it might affect my family.

This brings me to a concern I have with this bylaw amendment. Lately I have been hearing stories from people I know in the county about different developments that have been approved on adjacent properties that have not had happy endings. These developments have had problems with noisy attendees wandering off the venue property. There have been problems with traffic. People have lost their privacy and ability to even enjoy their own property. People have dealt with garbage, damage, and odors on their property, and are finding their property values dropping as a result.

I know that the amendment does address that these things in the application process, but once the permits are approved; there is no enforcement of the very same items the permits are approved on. And once a venue is approved and the facility is built, there seems to be no means for the permit to be revoked. While the permit process for developing event venues MAY require a community and neighborhood consultation plan, the Diversified Agriculture, Intensive Agriculture, and Agriculture support Service permit process has no such requirement. I feel that as the Section 6.7A facilities are often more permanent, it is even more important to include the community and neighborhood consultation to the permit process for obvious reasons.

I am completely in favor of people developing their property and I love to support local businesses, but I am concerned that without including neighborhood consultation, there will be issues that could have been resolved with a little consideration and cooperation. To me, the most important thing is preserving the peace and sense of community that is found in our county. We all live here because we want to experience country living and to be able to enjoy the scenery, peacefulness, and wildlife around us. We all need to be considerate of our neighbors and be encouraged to cooperate with them. This should be incorporated into the permit application process. When we work together Sturgeon County is a great place to live.

Sturgeon County needs to take more steps to inform the people of various bylaw changes. This bylaw is an important one which potentially affects everyone. There was very little chance for the public to give input and very little information about it to be found. The Sturgeon County website is very hard to navigate. There was no mention of it on the Sturgeon County Facebook page, and I think the notice about it might have been buried somewhere in a newspaper. But I feel that the county should welcome public input into this bylaw and it needs to put more effort into educating the public about this and other important bylaws and legislature issues in the future.

From: [Heather Edwards](#)
To: [Legislative Services](#)
Subject: Diversified Agricultural Land Use
Date: June 14, 2022 7:31:50 AM
Attachments: [Letter to Sturgeon County.docx](#)

Please find attached my letter of support of the Diversified Agricultural Land Use.

Thank you.

Heather Edwards

Pottery by Heather
Heather Edwards

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

Re: Public Hearing - Bylaw 1597/22 JUNE 14 2:30pm

Amendment to the Land Use Bylaw 1385/17

Please read my letter aloud into the public record.

Dear Mayor Hnatiw and Council

I am writing in support of this new Bylaw 1597/22 amendment to include the creation of Diversified Agriculture as a permitted land use along with the creation of a new Agriculture 2 AG-2 District to allow more intensive and diversified agriculture uses as permitted uses.

Diversified Agriculture will represent is the future of the intersection between agriculture and rural tourism ...and the future is finally here.

20 years ago, I was involved in organizing the Country Soul Stroll, a rural tourism initiative that showcased the diversity of agriculture and the arts in Sturgeon County. This circle tour brought urbanites from Edmonton to share our appreciation of the rural lifestyle of the region – the food, the incredible range of agricultural products, the farmers, local artisans and artists. It was an amazing collaboration with positive results.

The Country Soul Stroll was a shining example of what can happen when Sturgeon County collaborates with local farmers, artists, artisans and chefs – providing opportunity for families from Sturgeon County and beyond, who find joy and value in something that has been around for generations — agri-tourism.

Families and groups of friends can enjoy unique experiences – ranging from bee keeping, to sampling Saskatoon pie at a local farm, picking flowers, visiting an apple orchard, or stopping at a local pottery studio, like mine. When they visit, they support local, and spend money at our local stores, gas stations, farmer's markets and restaurants. Simply put – this becomes an economic driver within our community. New jobs, new businesses and new monies for our local governments and residents.

As COVID-19 coated the world with fear, concern and family tragedy, there have been a few silver linings that have risen from the wreckage. One of these is a growing need to get outside and reinvest in the things that matter most: family, relationships, safety, wellness and wholesome entertainment.

Consumers seek wholesome experiences that emphasize family, fresh air, downtime, reconnecting with nature, shopping locally and friendly experiences.

It is prudent for our municipal governments to recognize the world is changing, and take a leadership role in creating something new and exciting in support of farm diversification and rural tourism. The family farm is under more pressure than it has ever been to remain sustainable.

This new land-use definition for Diversified Agriculture will be a positive step forward in supporting local farms, businesses and creating new networks of rural tourism providers in Sturgeon County.

I am looking forward to a new era of collaboration, new jobs and positive growth in Sturgeon County.

Yours truly,

Heather Edwards

Pottery by Heather
Bon Accord, AB

Tam Andersen

56311 Lily Lake

Re: Public Hearing - Bylaw 1597/22 JUNE 14 2:30pm

Amendment to the Land Use Bylaw 1385/17

Honorable Mayor and Council

I am here today to present in support of the new Bylaw 1597/22 amendment to include the creation of Diversified Agriculture as a permitted land use along with the creation of a new AG-2 District to allow more intensive and diversified agriculture as permitted land use.

I am a farmer in Sturgeon County, and have spent the past 38 years of my career building my very local diversified agricultural business, Prairie Gardens. We did not choose this path because we wanted a different lifestyle. We chose this path so we could be sustainable, even thrive, on a small family farm.

Sturgeon County's agricultural landscape is undergoing significant changes due to advancements in technology, a shift in population growth, and consumer demands. By 2070, Edmonton's population is forecast to expand to over 2 million people. There is increasing pressure on the rural areas of Sturgeon County for acreage development and rural residential living. These changes are forcing farmers to adapt to new realities and contemplate new strategies to keep their farms viable as land availability decreases and prices increase.

Statistics Canada data demonstrates a trend that corporate farms are becoming larger, there are fewer family farms, and there are fewer and fewer farmers. The average age of a farmer is currently 57 years old. Over the next decade, as farmers retire, or expire, we will see the single largest shift in land ownership since the World War 2.

It begs the question: What are we going to do to preserve the family farm in Sturgeon County?

We are pleased to see that Sturgeon County Council has recognized the challenges and opportunities that are emerging for farmers. Residents of Sturgeon County are looking for access to locally grown food, and things to do with their families. There is a yearning to get re-connected to nature, to local farms, to find educational opportunities to teach children where food is grown, or to get together with friends to enjoy farm dinner, picking apples or pumpkins, and even the possibility of an overnight farm stay for international visitors. This trend represents opportunity to create better place to live, work and play in Sturgeon County through ag diversification. It will encourage local innovation, regeneration, and resilience.

Prairie Gardens was first established in 1956 as a tree nursery. We are know from coast to coast to coast for our Prairie hardy fruit trees, which we now sell not only onsite, but also through mail order. During the Covid pandemic, we responded to supply chain issues by increasing our market garden food production to serve our local community with over 35 acres of potatoes, strawberries, squash, pumpkins and vegetables. As the pandemic subsides, we expect to see a shift in consumer needs and desires for more rural experiences. As international borders open, we hope to innovate to welcome international travelers to Prairie Gardens. This in turn will allow us to grow our value-added agricultural product production like jams and pickles.

At Prairie Gardens, we have taken a number of steps to make sure we are in alignment with these proposed new land-use policies. We have reviewed our offerings, made adjustments, and updated all of the permits we are required to have to operate our tree nursery, garden centre and u-pick farms. We would hope to apply for this new land use designation once it is available.

We are pleased to see that Sturgeon County has responded to our concerns on traffic safety, with a speed reduction along Lily Lake Road, and no parking signs. We have responded with a traffic impact analysis with recommendations going forward. We have accumulated decibel reading records to demonstrate that our noise levels, year-round, are within the range of a normal workplace or quite library, even during an evening event.

We respectfully ask Council members to support this new land use designation based on key take-aways:

1. As famers, these new rules allow us to invest in Sturgeon County and our farm business with certainty.
2. Our daughters can now have a future here, in Sturgeon County, on our family farm.
3. Diversified agriculture is a great way to create local jobs, and stimulate vitality and growth in our community.
4. Direct contact between farmers and visitors not only empowers us as farmers to tell our own stories; it showcases the wonderful diversity of Sturgeon County's agricultural products to visitors who will return to purchase them to support local farms.
5. We recognize that providing rules and regulations creates safety, cooperation and collaboration with Sturgeon County staff, neighbors, and visitors. This will make agri-diversification easier to navigate and accomplish successfully.
6. We are satisfied that this land use designation is consistent with regulations in other provinces, such as BC and Ontario, who have been leading the way in saving the family farm by allowing diversification as a strategy for farmers to stay farming.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely, Tam Andersen

From: [Keleigh Cormier](#)
To: [Legislative Services](#)
Cc: [Pierre Cormier](#); [tam](#)
Subject: Public Hearing for Diversified Agriculture June 14 - 2:30 pm Sturgeon County - Letter of Support
Date: June 14, 2022 12:46:19 PM
Attachments: [2022_06_14_Sturgeon_County_Letter_of_Support_Agritourism.pdf](#)

Dear Legislative Services:

Please find attached our letter of support to be included with the above mentioned public hearing.

Thank you,
Keleigh

From the desk of:

Ms. Keleigh Cormier FCMC, CAC
founder and president, ClearThink™ Group, Management Consultants
t: 780.922.3211
www.clearthinkinc.com

Recipients:

- 2021 Constantinus International ICMCI Global Consulting Silver Award, Vienna, Austria & CMC-Canada Project of the Year, "Business Coaching Program, Town of Sylvan Lake".
- 2018 Constantinus International ICMCI Global Consulting Silver Award, Milan, Italy & CMC-Canada Project of the Year, "Back to Business Coaching Program, Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo".

June 14, 2022

Legislative Services, Sturgeon County
email: legislativeservices@sturgeoncounty.ca

Re: Public Hearing (1597/22) for Diversified Agriculture June 14, Sturgeon County
- Letter of Support

Dear Community:

We are writing this letter to support the passing of the bylaw to amend the Land Use Bylaw for Sturgeon County to support agribusiness and agritourism.

The Bylaw proposes to amend the Land Use Bylaw by enacting recommendations of the Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Task Force Recommendations Report.

After facilitating agritourism development with over 40 Alberta farms, ranches, greenhouses, garden centers, culinary experiences and more, we believe that agritourism is an excellent way for farm families to diversify their operations, increase profits, become more sustainable, educate the consumer and help revitalize rural communities.

After studying this sector for the past 8 years, we see consumer interest in agritourism growing on the Canadian Prairies because:

- Increasingly, as food production and distribution become of greater public concern, families want to know where their food comes from. Meanwhile encouraging them to look at eating and preparing more local food, more often.
- Visitors want to escape the hustle of the city, connect with their cultural heritage, be in a natural environment, and enjoy an authentic and leisurely experience.
- Farms are becoming attractive destinations as visitors are nostalgic for a simpler time.

So, now's a great time to be looking at agritourism as another option to diversify local farm/ranch operations. It may be the biggest opportunity for the agricultural sector in Canada to directly engage with consumers as agritourism is a very effective platform where farm families can tell their story (educate), diversify product offerings, build customer loyalty and widen their revenue streams. Rural communities are also well positioned to support agritourism with their offerings of popular and complimentary amenities and services.

We whole heartedly support the passing of diversified agriculture in Sturgeon County and wish Tam, her family and other farm families continued success in delivering exceptional agritourism experiences.

Please reach out if you require more information or have any questions to 780-922-3211.

Sincerely and with kind regards,

Keleigh Cormier FCMC, CAC

Pierre Cormier CMC, CAC

This letter of support has been prepared by Certified Management Consultants who abide by the Uniform Code of Professional Conduct for the Canadian Association of Management Consultants. The purpose of the code is to identify those professional obligations, which will serve to protect the public in general, and the client in particular.



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June 14, 2022

Frances Gagnon

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

Sturgeon County
9613 100 Street
Morinville, AB T8R 1L9

RE: Public Hearing Bylaw 1597/22
Amendment to the Land Use Bylaw 1385/17

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

The vision statement in the 2022 - 2025 Strategic Plan states that Sturgeon County is a municipality that honours its rural roots and cultivates desirable communities. It values its agribusiness operators, and the ability for residents to peacefully grow and enjoy their properties.

For the purpose of this Public Hearing, I speak as an advocate for my parents who are long-term land owners and active community members. I resided in Sturgeon County as a youth, on a quarter-section west of St. Albert, NW10-54-W4, along the Sturgeon River. I spend much time in Sturgeon County, enjoying the company of family and community in the beautiful Sturgeon countryside.

I trust amendments to the Land Use Bylaw will support the **regulation and enforcement** of Event Venues specifically, as well as any agribusiness and agritourism ventures. Three years ago, an event venue began operating across the river on a residential parcel of land. No one resides on the property; it is used as an event venue for wedding ceremonies and parties, overnight guests and camping. It is a difficult situation for everyone, and was outlined numerous times to administration and task force.

I encourage members of Council to review the "What We Heard" report by the Management and Economic Consultants. Residents describe their lived experiences in written submissions and presentations, about event venues needing proper locations, regulation, and enforcement.

Bylaws are for the wellness, health and safety of the community. The task force recommendations need balance with the perspectives of landowners and residents. The negative impacts are real, not just perceived. Detailed regulations are required, rather than vague or high-level definitions. Administration will need financial support and resources to handle the complaints and enforcement.

I question Recommendation 3 (Temporary Fee Waivers for Existing Operators) – Council may cancel fees and charges for existing operators. It seems self-serving with task force members, and does it benefit Council and the County?

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Frances Gagnon

From: [Rob Paradis](#)
To: [Legislative Services](#)
Cc: [Marsha Paradis](#)
Subject: Agritourism & Agrbusiness Meeting
Date: June 14, 2022 1:32:48 PM

My name is Robert Paradis, I live on road RR 231. When our new neighbors purchased the Dubois residence approximately 2.5 years ago, they tried to transform a quiet beautiful acreage into a commercial wedding & event business. All of this being done without any permits or notification of what there intended use of the property was to the county or surrounding neighbors. The location is not suitable for their intended use, neighbors immediately adjacent to this property cannot be subjected to the noise, traffic & commotion created by a commercial event venue. This type of venue needs to be secluded in a remote area of the county, or in a designated high volume use area such as the Sturgeon Industrial Park. The lack of respect shown by Mr Lail for his neighbors in dealing with this ongoing situation has elevated this situation, bylaw enforcement & the RCMP are now having to try to enforce court orders and county bylaws, at county & taxpayers expense. The county needs to have a proper application & review process for such intended land use, however I am doubtful that it is possible to draft up new bylaw rules that could deal with all situations, each application needs a complete review & impact study. Don't let Mr Lail & others bully there way through what is proper & right for residents, enforce the lack of permit applications & wrongful development, shut this down. It is known they constructed an outdoor shelter building overtop the acreage septic field & subjected event patrons to raw sewage, this landowner has abused his rights and privileges as a county resident, stop this now please.

Rob Paradis -
Sent from my iPhone Rob Paradis -
Sent from my iPhone

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

From: [Marsha Paradis](#)
To: [Legislative Services](#)
Cc: [Marsha Paradis](#)
Subject: Events in Sturgeon Agritourism Agribusiness
Date: June 14, 2022 3:12:25 PM

June 14, 2022

My name is Marsha Paradis. I live in Sturgeon County on Range Road 231 north of hiway 37.

Our neighborhood community has been dealing with unsettling issues in regards to the commercial event and wedding business owned by Mr. Lail.

Mr. Lail bought the acreage which is right next door to 3 neighbourhood families and began to make additions to his home and yard. No one knew that he was planning an event and wedding business, as he had not applied for permits; thus no one received notice from Sturgeon asking our opinions about a business being run in our community.

Weddings lasting 2-4 days were booked and took place, partying late into the evening with loud music, lots of traffic, using water from our community line, an outdoor party shelter building overtop the acreage septic field. Clearly several unacceptable conditions arise in our community.

- Traffic problems turning onto the range road off a very busy hiway
- Decreased volume of water running to those north of his property during an event
- Patrons possibly subjected to raw sewage at the outdoor party shelter
- Trespassing into the cattle pen and field of the neighbour to the south
- Loud music for days in a row into the evening which effects neighbours on the road but especially those in close proximity
- Concern for neighbours with little children in regards to noise and traffic level
- Lack of honesty and integrity on behalf of Mr. Lail.
- Disregard on behalf of Mr. Lail about abiding restrictions presently in place and for the well being of neighbours who have built homes on what was thought to be a peaceful property.

I am not against Mr. Lail having such a business on property that is a great distance from neighbours or in a commercial area in Sturgeon that is zoned for this type of business.

The fact that Mr. Lail has been granted permission to apply for permits after the fact is appalling. It

is evident that he will do as he so pleases, as if it is his right, disrespecting bylaw enforcements and RCMP.

This is not a situation that can now be permitted depending on the new by-laws Sturgeon brings into place. With Sturgeon reviewing Agribusiness regulations in the county, it is important that the county not try to create broad rules and regulations and allow businesses into the county without doing an in depth analysis of EACH application as to its benefits and/or detriments to surrounding residents.

Mr. Lail's event and wedding business does not belong on Range Road 231. Furthermore, I have lost faith that Mr. Lail is concerned for our community and will proceed in an honest manner, creating an uneasy atmosphere in our community.

Sincerely,

Marsha Paradis

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kevin Theroux](#)
To: [Legislative Services](#)
Subject: Land use bylaw
Date: June 14, 2022 4:10:52 PM

I Kevin Theroux am against the bylaw. After listening to the presenters all I hear is entitlement. No acknowledging solutions to the concerns. Traffic management. Why.

A few current business owners trying to increase profits.

Eating dirt once a year won't change your chemical makeup of your brain, city folk want to get out of the city at our expense. I haven't seen a country wedding show much interest in the farm other than the quality or the food and beverage.

Events are becoming very disruptive. The proof of a provincial court order being disregarded and end in site just more issues continue

Kevin Theroux

I



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Meeting today

1 message

Kaitlin Eyestone

Tue, Jun 14, 2022 at 1:00 PM

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>> Hello,

>> My name is Kaitlin Eyestone. I live on RR231 north of highway 37. We have had some issues on our road with one of our neighbors (Mr Lail) trying to convert a residential property into a wedding/event space. We were never given any option in the matter as he never applied for permits. The neighborhood community does not support this business as we purchased/developed our homes to be in quite, secluded areas to enjoy. Mr Lail held a few events last year and they were quite disruptive to the neighborhood. There was an overwhelming amount of traffic; lots of traffic coming from the highways with a disregard to speed limits. There are many of us who have children on this road and traffic is one of my biggest concerns. Our road is also not designed for the high volume in traffic, we already have issues with it let alone with an increase of vehicles. The noise level that was produced during the events was also unsettling. We neighbors have a right to have quiet evenings in the country and not have to be subject to loud, disruptive music/sounds. Also because the property was never designed to be an event venue the water consumption is also a concern. I built my home 9 years ago and I wasn't allowed to connect to the water line but with their venue they're able to use copious amount of water which depletes the amount available to other neighbors. This doesn't make sense to me. They also don't have the proper space for a venue as the backyard space to the North is on their septic field which they have a tent over so this to me would raise a health issue concern. Mr. Lail has also had to deal with the bylaw officers & RCMP since he did not comply with the stop work orders put into effect. I do not feel he should have the right to move forward with the event venue. If you are willing to make exceptions for Mr Lail (our residential area is not zoned for business, he never got permits and did not abide by the stop work order) and there are there are no consequences, you're setting a terrible precedent for other people within the county to do what they want with their property with no fear of repercussion. Please do the right thing and shut down any option he has to move forward with creating the venue permanently. We deserve to live in our community without it.

>> Thank you,

>> Kaitlin Eyestone

>>

>> Sent from my iPhone

Severed in line with Section 17 of the FOIP Act

Laurel Andersen

Sturgeon County,

Re: Public Hearing - Bylaw 1597/22 JUNE 14 2:30pm

Amendment to the Land Use Bylaw 1385/17

Honorable Mayor and Council

I am here today to present in support of the new Bylaw 1597/22 amendment to include the creation of Diversified Agriculture as a permitted land use along with the creation of a new AG-2 District to allow more intensive and diversified agriculture as permitted land use.

As a young farmer it is incredibly exciting to see the County supporting innovation and creating opportunities for young people and families to start a path in agriculture. Bylaw 1597/22 opens the door to investment because it provides a framework for diversified agriculture farms to operate within, and offers stability within the County.

The world is changing. The last few years in particular have shown how volatile the weather can be as climate changes continues to disrupt traditional agricultural cycles. That is part of the reason why diversified agriculture is so important to the survival of agriculture within the Country – and within the country. Diversified agriculture gives the opportunity for farmers to increase streams of revenue and mitigate risks of harsh growing seasons.

I want to be part of a sustainable future on a sustainable farm and I want to help educate our neighbours in the city what it actually looks like to produce delicious and healthy food. So many folks don't know where their food comes from or how much work goes into it. Diversified and agritourism provide such a unique opportunity to share knowledge.

It's horrifying to me sewage sludge from the cities, along with the heavy metals and contaminants that come with it, has become almost common practice as free fertilizer. Reports of water table contamination from the overuse of pesticides run rampant.

Sustainable agriculture is multi-pronged, and to really understand how to support it, you need to understand how your food grows. There is a big gap between urbanites and rural farms That's where agritourism helps.

Getting up close and personal with your food and touring these farms gives you an education the internet can't always provide.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Laurel Andersen

My name is Launi Julio and I have lived in Sturgeon County almost all my life. I come from a long line of farmers, I grew up on a mixed family farm and have my B.Sc in Agriculture. I understand Agribusiness and Agritourism and I want to be very clear and express my support of business growth and development in Sturgeon County. **However**, I am opposed to the current Bylaw proposal involving Event Venues. The County has to get these Bylaws correct, otherwise the amount of money and resources used to mitigate non compliant situations, I believe will be exhaustive.

I don't believe there has been enough input from County residents and I believe public information/engagement sessions should have been conducted. The fact that the Task Force collected less than 40 surveys in our county with the number of residents we have cannot properly reflect opinions. There needs to be more work! I believe new Event Venues that are not tied to Agriculture and are coming to the County thinking they can do whatever they want just because they have some extra space, is not going to work. Zoning a larger area for those to congregate collectively may be an option. But nestling them into AG residential areas is not the answer unless there is affected party agreement and significant rules laid out and quickly enforceable when not adhered to.

We live adjacent to a non permitted and non compliant Event Venue and it has negatively impacted all the immediate neighbors as well as a larger outcropping of neighbors. While I understand this Public Hearing encompasses the entire County and a larger scope of Agribusiness/Agritourism and not just Event Venues, we do find those to potentially more problematic based on our experience.

In the amendment to the Land Use Bylaw **there is an addition that states...and I quote "at all times the privacy of the adjacent residential dwellings shall be preserved and shall not, in the opinion of the Development Authority, unduly interfere with or affect the use, enjoyment or value of neighbouring or adjacent parcels."**.... end quote. As things stand now, our use and enjoyment not to mention value has been negatively impacted.

Here are some of our concerns and experiences, but do to time constraints I am unable to address them in greater detail:

Traffic:

Substantial increase in traffic volumes.

Increases risk associated with alcohol consumption resulting in impaired driving, excess speed, and potential for serious accidents with close proximity to a major Highway.

Witnessing failure to Stop or signal, backing up on a major highway due to missed turns, cutting off highway traffic, increased vehicle honking due traffic near misses.

Excessive Noise:

Tents with Music or loud speakers outside where noise travels more easily.

Music level was reduced only when RCMP was involved and warnings issued.

Environmental concerns:

Increase in garbage, including empty liquor bottles in ditches.

Sewage and water issues as our infrastructure is not like a major city when dealing with repetitive 150+ person events.

If property owners refuse access to the property, how are environmental risks being monitored.

Parking lot development and drainage with vehicle directly adjacent to livestock and crops.

Other concerns in point form:

Taxes and Property Value;

Trespassing, property damage;

Harassment and Disrespect to neighbours and County officials/employees;

Safety and security;

Potential for increased criminal activity;

Fire and EMS protocols;

Vacant Properties throughout certain times of the year if only used for Events and not Agriculture related;

Difficulty distinguishing between “family/personal events vs. commercial events” especially if the are limited events allowed per year. It should be all encompassing, an event is an event...period!

As neighbours we have been the eyes and ears of the community and we are being left to witness and then report to the County or RCMP and it is not going well! Tensions have escalated and someone could potentially get hurt. Just last weekend Bylaw was called to another event but was refused entrance by the property owners. If this is indicative of what might be ahead once a Bylaw is passed and precedents are set, it will not go well for any of us. If we cannot even stop the illegal Event Venues more quickly, how can we possibly begin to encourage new ones. There needs to be more research and strict guidelines around them. I'm not certain what the answer is but what is happening to us and surrounding neighbours is definitely not the answer!

I recognize that **our** situation is potentially a worst case, or at least I am hopeful of that, but it still exists and we need to make certain that Bylaws are set up correctly and action can be taken swiftly, otherwise any County revenue generation and resources will quickly be lost managing this.

From: [Nadine Gaumont](#)
To: [Legislative Services](#)
Subject: Range Road 231
Date: June 14, 2022 4:53:35 PM

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to share our concerns with the proposal of a wedding/event venue popping up beside us with no awareness or consideration of neighbours thoughts towards the new business.

The number one reason why we live where we do is for the peace and quiet of the country life. This will be disrupted by large noisy gatherings that when we moved here from the city we 100% intended to leave those things behind.

The increase of traffic on our range road is also a concern. This will affect the number of vehicles turning on and off hwy 37, the parking on the range road which causes safety issues, and the awareness of our properties and our assets to many people who would not have visited our area before hand, could lead to increase of crime. Increase in road damage ie, more pot holes, ruts and rumble strips will also occur from the up in vehicular activity.

Noise and vehicle pollution are why we moved away from the city.

Alteast the county should have to poll and ask neighbour's of the venue their opinions. I just do not see how this event venue can be beneficial to anyone but the people making money off of it.

I do believe in ag business, but in my opinion this has nothing to do with ag.

Thankyou,

Nadine and Jason Stang



Travel Alberta
400-1601 9 Avenue SE
Calgary, Alberta
Canada T2G 0H4

☎ 403-648-1000
☎ 403-648-1111
🌐 travelalberta.com
🌐 industry.travelalberta.com

May 30, 2022

Mayor Alannah Hnatiw and Council
Sturgeon County
9613 – 100 Street
Morinville AB T8R 1L9

Dear Your Worship and Council,

Travel Alberta is pleased to support Sturgeon County's agri-tourism initiatives, including advancing new land use classification and on-farm stays. Sturgeon County has an opportunity to be a leader in the province in this designation, which will highlight the significant role agri-tourism can play.

This is an excellent opportunity to build on Alberta's agri-tourism and food tourism sector, which is an important and growing component of our tourism industry. The initiatives will provide much needed support and encouragement for operators in the agri-tourism sector as they continue to recover from the financial fall-out of the pandemic.

Travel Alberta has enjoyed a long and collaborative partnership with Prairie Gardens as Tam developed her tourism offerings for domestic and international travellers, with Prairie Gardens becoming one of the first fully export-ready agri-tourism products north of Edmonton.

As the destination management organization for the Government of Alberta, we recognize how vital partnerships and alignment are to the successful recovery and growth of Alberta's visitor economy. This designation will support other stakeholders who seek to provide exceptional rural and experiential opportunities, ultimately enhancing local destination profiles around the province, attracting domestic and international visitors to Alberta, and bringing more revenue and opportunities to local communities.

In conclusion, we support the efforts of Sturgeon County in designating land as agri-tourism land in alignment with Travel Alberta's efforts to recover and grow Alberta's visitor economy.

Sincerely,

Jon Mamela
Chief Commercial Officer