



WHAT WE HEARD REPORT

Resource Extraction
Regulatory Review Project

AUGUST 2020

DRAFT

b&a



WHAT WE HEARD REPORT

Resource Extraction
Regulatory Review Project



| | | |
|-----|------------------------------------|----|
| | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 4 |
| 1.0 | PROJECT OVERVIEW | 9 |
| 2.0 | ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH | 11 |
| 3.0 | ENGAGEMENT PROCESS | 13 |
| 4.0 | WHAT WE HEARD | 14 |
| 4.1 | INDUSTRY INTERVIEWS | 14 |
| 4.2 | COFFEE CHAT SESSIONS | 19 |
| 4.3 | ONLINE SURVEY | 22 |
| 5.0 | 5.0 NEXT STEPS | 41 |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A comprehensive public engagement program has been completed as part of the Resource Extraction Regulatory Review (RERR). The RERR seeks to better balance economic, social, health, and environmental outcomes related to the regulation and operation of the aggregate industry.

The month-long, first phase of public engagement (“Engagement Phase One”) spanned from May 19 – June 12, 2020. Engagement tactics used throughout Engagement Phase One included interviews with industry representatives, coffee chat sessions with members of the public, an online survey, and informal telephone and email correspondence with the public. In total, 210 online survey responses (including more than 7,000 inputs) were received. Nearly 250 residents and industry representatives were involved in interviews, phone call discussions, and coffee chat sessions overall.

Findings from Engagement Phase One, in addition to the Aggregate Best Management Practices Report (including a review of land use planning practices in twenty municipalities, aggregate best management practices, and federal, provincial, and municipal legislation), and feedback from the second engagement process (“Engagement Phase Two”) will inform the final Bylaw Amendment recommendation.

KEY FINDINGS – PUBLIC (From survey responses and coffee chat sessions)

The public engagement component of the RERR included an online survey and the option to participate in a coffee chat session. Coffee chats consisted of local residents and landowners, while (anonymous) survey participants may have included residents, landowners, employees of the aggregate industry, and anyone else with an interest in the project. Main findings from the public engagement program are outlined immediately below, while further detail about overall engagement results are explained further within this report.

- **60%** of survey respondents believe it is somewhat, or very reasonable to complete the Resource Extraction Regulatory Review project.
- **80%** of survey respondents agree that aggregate is essential to the construction industry and the economy in general.
- **69%** of survey respondents are somewhat, or very familiar with the typical aggregate application process, with 38% having been involved in an associated public engagement program for a project.
- Survey respondents say the top four priorities associated with this project are noise, water, traffic, and development setbacks.
 - » **Noise** – Most members of the public prefer reducing hours of operation and increasing enforcement to mitigate potential impacts.
 - » **Water** – Residents are mostly interested in protecting drinking water from potential impacts and increasing monitoring and enforcement to mitigate concerns.
 - » **Traffic** – Members of the public mostly mentioned pedestrian and driver safety and overall impacts to infrastructure as key issues.
 - » **Development setbacks** – The majority of combined participants (industry and public) agree that current setbacks are arbitrary, although some said that setbacks still should not be reduced.
 - » **66%** of survey respondents identify as residents and/or landowners within the County.

KEY FINDINGS – INDUSTRY (From industry interviews)

On March 18, 2020, Sturgeon County hosted a series of interviews with five sand and gravel industry representatives as part of the RERR. Through the feedback, three key themes have been identified and are: communication, correctness/accuracy, and clarity. Main findings from the industry interviews are outlined immediately below, while further detail about overall engagement results are explained further within this report.

- **Communication:** industry noted an overall improvement in communication between operators, the County and residents would best ensure overall understanding and help build trust.
- **Correctness/accuracy:** generally, industry agrees that science-based approach to both regulation and compliance is needed rather than arbitrary requirements.
- **Clarity:** industry claimed that lack of clarity on zoning, bylaws and regulations can create unnecessary confusion and lack of certainty in a project process.

Generally, industry noted that their primary interests are related to zoning, setbacks, performance standards, priority extraction areas and open pit limits and hoped to have such topics addressed through the RERR project.

In terms of the top four priorities (as mentioned in the previous section), industry responded as follows:

- **Noise** – Collectively, industry is open to improving potential impacts through the implementation of performance standards.
- **Water** – Residents are mostly interested in protecting drinking water from potential impacts and increasing monitoring and enforcement to mitigate concerns. Industry demonstrated openness to create a security fund as a potential mitigation/solution
- **Traffic** – Industry is generally supportive of increased mitigation measures related to haul traffic to reduce potential impacts. Members of the public mostly mentioned pedestrian and driver safety and overall impacts to infrastructure as key issues.
- **Development setbacks** – The majority of combined participants (public and industry) agree that current setbacks are arbitrary. Industry prefers to limit impacts through performance standards.

OVERALL FINDINGS

Shown below are key themes that emerged throughout the entire Engagement Phase One program. Additional details on overall feedback is summarized further in this report.

| TOPIC | COFFEE CHATS | INDUSTRY | SURVEY | COMBINED RESULTS |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| NOISE IMPACTS | *No significant findings | General comments demonstrated openness to expand and improve monitoring and mitigation measures through performance standards. | 94% of respondents say noise is either somewhat or a very important part of this project. 31% of respondents say restricting hours of operation and improving monitoring and enforcement would help reduce noise impacts. | Industry is open to improving through performance measures. Public prefers reducing hours of operation and increasing enforcement. |
| WATER QUALITY AND IMPACTS | Most comments made are related to the protection of drinking water and concerns regarding potential contamination. | Some comments made that demonstrate openness to holding a security to protect potential contamination issues. | 99% of respondents say water impacts are a somewhat or very important aspect of the review. 26% of respondents say increased and regular monitoring and enforcement is important. | Residents are highly interested in water impacts, particularly to drinking water. Increased monitoring, enforcement and security funds are listed as potential mitigations/solutions. |
| TRAFFIC/ROAD IMPACTS | Most expressed concerns related to safety and damage to roads caused by haul traffic. | Some comments were made to improve mitigations to reduce impacts. | 93% of respondents say traffic impacts are a somewhat or very important aspect of the project. 12% of respondents say industry should fund maintenance and upgrades to infrastructure. | Residents are highly interested in traffic impacts, particularly as it relates to safety and damage to infrastructure. Industry has demonstrated openness to improve mitigation measures. |
| DEVELOPMENT SETBACKS | Most believe setbacks are arbitrary, however did not want to reduce them. | Most believe current setbacks requirements are arbitrary, and that they preferred prescribed setbacks rather than case-by-case decisions. | 87% of respondents say setbacks are a somewhat or very important part of the project. About 72% of respondents say setbacks and operating standards should stay the same, or setbacks should be increased with a relaxation on operating requirements. 72% say that setbacks should be consistent between multi-lot residential and agricultural contexts. | Residents are highly interested in setbacks. The majority of participants think current setbacks are arbitrary. Some prefer not to decrease setbacks, while industry prefers to limit impacts through performance standards. |
| END LAND USE AFTER RECLAMATION | Most said efficient reclamation is important and prefer a variety of end uses including recreation opportunities. | Some comments made that progressive reclamation helps reduce impacts. | *No significant findings | Efficient, phased reclamation is important. Variety of end uses are important. |
| AIR QUALITY | Common concerns included impacts to human and animal health from silica and dust. | Some say that monitoring is a prominent tool to spot and reduce impacts. | 93% of respondents believe impacts to air quality are somewhat or very important. 26% of respondents believe current air quality regulations are suitable as-is. | Residents are highly interested in air quality, particularly impacts to human and animal health. Some say increased monitoring helps reduce impacts, while others say current regulations are fine. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| HOURS OF OPERATION | *No significant findings | Most said that mandated hours of operation would help alleviate public uncertainty and address some concerns. | 92% of respondents say hours of operation are somewhat or a very important component of regulations. About 20% of respondents suggest restricting hours of operation while another 20% say current regulations are fine as-is. | Most say structured and reduced hours of operation are important, while some are okay with current regulations. |
| ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS | *No significant findings | *No significant findings | *No significant findings | *No significant findings |
| VISUAL IMPACTS | Most say setbacks help reduce impacts. | *No significant findings | 86% believe it is somewhat or very important to reduce visual impacts. 19% of total respondents prefer vegetated buffers to reduce visual impacts. | Most believe vegetated setbacks and buffers are the most important mitigations. |
| CONSERVATION | *No significant findings | *No significant findings | *No significant findings | *No significant findings |
| IMPACTS ON CONFINED FEEDING OPERATIONS | Some say setbacks protect livestock from critical impacts. | *No significant findings | *No significant findings | *No significant findings |
| COMMUNICATION | Most preferred improved, streamlined and accessible communications from County and operators. | Most prefer updated, streamlined communication approaches between all parties from the outset. | About 40 mentions regarding communications included suggestions to improve notifications and streamline communications. | Majority say communications among operators, the County and community should be enhanced to increase understanding. |
| EXISTING BYLAWS AND APPROVAL PROCESS | Most liked concept of science-based performance standards in addition to setbacks. | Science-based, performance standards approach preferred to best ensure certainty for all parties rather than arbitrary setback requirements. | 67% of respondents say referrals to landowners, open houses and public hearings should be improved. | General openness to performance standards approach. Residents want enhanced communications and engagement opportunities. |
| MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT | Many said there are current operators who do not comply with guidelines and should be held accountable. | Most said performance standards are easily monitored and ensure improved operations. | About 130 mentions about monitoring and enforcement including improving testing of drinking water and noise assessments. | General comments about need to improve monitoring and enforcement. Industry says performance standards help. |
| NUMBER OF EXTRACTION ATTEMPTS/ SITE | *No significant findings | *No significant findings | 59% agree to limit number of entries, while 41% do not agree or are unsure. | *No significant findings |
| PRIORITY EXTRACTION AREAS | *No significant findings | Larger organizations tend to favor PEAs. | 62% of respondents say PEAs are somewhat or a very important aspect of the project. 19% say increased enforcement and monitoring would make PEAs more acceptable. | Some agree with PEA concept and prefer increased enforcement to make them more acceptable. |

1.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW

On June 25, 2019, Sturgeon County Council made a motion directing a review of resource extraction regulations within the current Land Use Bylaw. This effort is encompassed by the Resource Extraction Regulatory Review (RERR). The RERR aims to understand whether modifications to the Land Use Bylaw are required to ensure the County is sustainably extracting a diminishing resource; it further seeks to establish the most effective balance between economic, social, health and environmental outcomes related to resource extraction.

Potential revisions to the Land Use Bylaw that acknowledge the County's context, regional positioning, and sound science were sought in an effort to ensure that Sturgeon County's Land Use Bylaw regulations respect aggregate extraction, reflect current conditions and best practices in aggregate extraction, and include feedback captured from the public through a comprehensive engagement process.

In addition to collecting public feedback, the engagement process offered an opportunity to share information with the public about the aggregate industry, including the economic impacts of the industry, the importance of aggregate, and information on how the industry is regulated, in addition to general information to educate residents who may have been unfamiliar with the industry. Through the educational materials and other information shared as part of the public consultation process, the message regarding the importance of making an informed decision to best accommodate social, environmental, and economic interests when considering resource extraction was shared.

- This report summarizes comments received from all participants, which includes:
- Sixteen coffee talk sessions attended by nineteen people
- 210 survey responses
- Five comprehensive industry interviews that involved detailed conversations and presentations with industry members

BACKGROUND

Aggregate (including sand, gravel and silica) deposits within Sturgeon County are highly valuable because of the quality and proximity to the Capital Region market. The Calahoo-Villeneuve area, which extends along the south side of the Sturgeon River from northwest of St. Albert toward the Hamlet of Calahoo, has significant sand and gravel deposits. Gravel extraction in this area has been ongoing for over thirty years, and these deposits are currently being progressively extracted. However, these deposits will eventually be depleted, made uneconomical to extract, or made inaccessible due to land use restrictions.

Proposed changes to Sturgeon County's Land Use Bylaw Resource Extraction District and Resource Extraction Overlay regulations will be informed by several key components (as listed below), including this report.

- Community engagement feedback collected through the survey
- Community engagement feedback provided during the coffee talks
- Interviews with aggregate industry representatives
- A review of land use planning best practices in nine counties
- A review of aggregate best management practices and federal, provincial, and municipal legislation
- Sturgeon County Administration's feedback
- Input from the Calahoo-Villeneuve Sand and Gravel Advisory Committee

2.0

ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH

The objective of the public engagement process was to share information about the existing aggregate industry and corresponding bylaws in Sturgeon County, as well as collect input on the following topics.

- Issues and opportunities related to resource extraction in Sturgeon County.
- Best practices and mitigation measures associated with resource extraction operations (including visual impacts, noise, air quality, traffic/hauling, environment, water, setbacks, hours of operation, reclamation, conservation, and impacts on confined feeding operations).
- Performance requirements that are based on scientific evidence and help prevent potential impacts caused by operations and inform mitigation measures.
- The quality and content of the communications and engagement process to help inform a more effective process for future projects.

The central goals of the communication and engagement strategy are to educate, work with and listen to those who have the potential to be impacted by the RERR through a meaningful and accountable process. The engagement approach is focused on informing and consulting with stakeholders and is based on the following principles.

AUTHENTICITY

- A successful engagement strategy is founded on honest dialogue and a genuine interest in understanding and evaluating different perspectives.
- A stakeholder analysis will help determine who should be involved, the level of engagement required for each stakeholder group and the most appropriate communications and engagement tools.
- We will provide multiple avenues for stakeholders to learn about and provide input on key aspects of the project.

TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATIONS

- Information must be shared with stakeholders and the public in a timely, easily accessible, and accurate manner.
- The team will develop and maintain an effective communication process with stakeholders through the distribution and posting of consistent and timely information.

SIMPLE LANGUAGE

- Clear, concise, and simple language will help communicate project information to best generate awareness and ensure collective understanding.

FOCUSED FACILITATION

- Our team can successfully guide and participate in conversations about the project while gathering and recording public input. Making the best use of stakeholder time is a key aspect of building trust.
- We are committed to clearly outlining what kind of feedback we are seeking and how it will shape the final report.
- Listening to perspectives, obtaining feedback and addressing questions, concerns and aspirations related to the project is a key component of effective facilitation.

INNOVATION

- Our team is continuously looking for ways to push the “standard” engagement tactics that can fail to generate excitement. We are committed to using innovative tools and techniques to enhance the stakeholder and public experience and ensure fair and timely access to information.

CONSISTENT DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING

- All stakeholder correspondence will be objectively recorded in a centralized database. After each phase of engagement, a What We Heard report will summarize feedback collected and will be shared publicly. A final report of all input received, including an explanation of how the input was used to influence project decisions, will be shared at the end of the project.

3.0 ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Information about the engagement process was shared with residents using the following methods.

- Community Mail Out: A project information package was mailed to more than 5,200 residents located in proximity to known aggregate operations and deposits.
- Project Webpage: A dedicated project webpage was launched from the outset and included project information (schedule, background information, and contact information), engagement opportunities and educational materials.
- Newspaper Ads: 12 newspaper advertisements were placed in three papers over a four-week span.
- Radio Ads: 97 radio advertisements ran on three community stations.
- Social Media: Social media updates on the County's Twitter and Facebook pages over a four-week span
- Road Signs: Temporary road signs in nine prominent, high-traffic locations
- Mailbox Signs: 35 signs (2'x2' wire stake style) were placed by community mailboxes in over 20 communities.
- News Release: A news release was issued following Sturgeon County Council's approval of the public engagement approach on April 28th, 2020.

Parties interested in participating in Engagement Phase One were able to do so through the following avenues.

- Online survey: An online survey was available through the project webpage; hardcopies were available to residents by mail, if requested. The survey was open from May 19, 2020 to June 16, 2020.
- Informal communications: Conversations via phone call and email were available to the public throughout Engagement One. Over 100 unique phone call conversations occurred during this time.
- Coffee Chat sessions: Residents were encouraged to register for a thirty-minute conversation with the RERR project team (consultant-led, with administration present) to share their perspectives and ask questions about the project. The schedule of online public engagement meetings was made available through the project webpage. 16 coffee chat sessions were held.
- Industry interviews: Representatives from five aggregate companies were invited to participate in interviews held on March 18, 2020. The purpose of the interviews was to help inform aspects of the public engagement process and made up part of the overall information collected.

Engagement is ongoing and administration will continue to invite questions and comments on the proposed bylaw changes, as well as share information about the project with residents and stakeholders, until the item is presented to Council at the Public Hearing.

4.0 WHAT WE HEARD

4.1 INDUSTRY INTERVIEWS

On March 18, 2020, Sturgeon County hosted a series of interviews with sand and gravel industry representatives as part of the broader Resource Extraction Regulatory Review Project. A list of questions was used to guide meetings and to ensure consistency in responses. The informal, virtual interviews were held via teleconference considering COVID-19 circumstances. Industry interviews were conducted with the following objectives in mind.

- Provide industry members with context about, and an understanding of, the RERR project.
- Develop relationships with industry related to the RERR project, as industry will play a necessary role in refinement and feedback later in the project.
- Retain feedback from aggregate industry representatives to inform potential bylaw amendment options.

Key Themes

Through the interview process, three key themes were identified and are outlined further below. Following the key themes is a detailed summary of other items discussed.

COMMUNICATION

- A streamlined method of communication from project teams and operators to communities would be beneficial.
- Education should be a key component of stakeholder communication.
- Communications should be transparent to improve trust between all parties (industry operators, community members, and the County).

CORRECTNESS

- A science-, reason-, and metrics-based approach to regulation and compliance is needed. Science-based approaches help inform meaningful conversations about regulations, why they are made, potential impacts, and why they should or should not be changed.
- The current 800m setback requirement is arbitrary.
- Operational standards approach provides more clarity to operators because they are based on scientific measures.
- Operational standards include ongoing monitoring to ensure that the “correct” execution of the development is taking place.

CLARITY

- The way land is zoned for resource extraction should be clear to a layperson.
- Uniformity in bylaws and regulations should be present.
- Lack of clarity can create confusion, and this confusion can cause fear and objection.
- The process for starting a resource extraction development should be clearly laid out.
- Allows for certainty about the investment for both the community and the resource operator.

Summary of Comments

CURRENT OPERATIONS

Most interviewees either had operations in Sturgeon County or had hoped to. In either circumstance, interviewees had a thorough knowledge of the regulations surrounding resource extraction in Sturgeon County.

WHAT'S WORKING WELL?

Industry interviewees were asked what regulations or circumstances currently work well, and what some of their positive experiences have been, both in Sturgeon County and elsewhere. The following commentary summarizes the responses received.

- **Sturgeon County's understanding of the industry:** Industry praised Sturgeon County for its understanding of the industry and its regulations. The Calahoo-Villeneuve Sand and Gravel ASP was an example mentioned where the municipality prioritized effective management of the industry.
- **Setbacks:** Industry mentioned that having setbacks (versus a case-by-case approach) is preferred. This is not to say the setbacks themselves are correct (see material on science-based approaches), but industry members agreed that having setbacks as a component of the regulatory approach is ideal.

REGULATORY PROBLEMS & OPPORTUNITIES

Interviewees were asked about the current regulations in Sturgeon County, and others they are familiar with, and to identify what regulations could be more effective. Items discussed included the following topics.

- **Zoning for Resources:** Some felt that resource extraction zoning should be adjusted, as residents are sometimes taken by surprise when resource extraction is proposed (residents see it as a change they couldn't have expected when they purchased their land). Similarly, residents often don't understand or are not aware of the ASPs, overlays, etc. Other industry members expressed that "rezoning" complicates the application.
 - » **Suggestion:** Instead of overlays, rezonings and ASPs, industry prefers the use and its rules be included as a discretionary use within any zone that extraction could occur in the Land Use Bylaw. Development regulations should require public consultation (to replace public hearings) to provide more transparency, and allow appeals.

- **Setbacks:** Industry felt that setbacks in Sturgeon County are arbitrary, and that a science-based approach would be preferable. They pointed out that setbacks vary widely between municipalities which doesn't make sense if setbacks are truly based on evidence or scientific reason. Problems resulting from arbitrary setbacks includes unnecessarily sterilizing areas from extraction (directly or indirectly), leaving areas with some deposits remaining for potential re-extraction in the future (environmentally unsustainable), as well as leaving hundreds of thousands of dollars in CAP Levy fees behind.
 - » **Suggestions:** Use science-based reasoning to develop setbacks; ensure setbacks are uniform (no differences between single and multi-lot); case-by-case setbacks are not favoured by industry (administratively taxing, doesn't provide a good outcome much of the time, if science-based approach is used, case-by-case doesn't make sense).
- **Performance Standards:** Industry members support performance standards in conjunction with science-based setbacks. There was agreement across all interviewees that performance standards help the community and the industry and improve accountability. Industry noted that performance standards are often measurable (air quality, noise, hours of operations) which makes regulation and enforcement objective and evidence based.
 - » **Suggestions:** Reasonable performance standards should be adopted (for instance, if a backup beeper goes on by accident once during "quiet hours," this should be forgiven) and the focus should be on repeat offenses and first-time serious offenses.
- **Quick Extraction Areas** ("priority" extraction areas): Some companies felt that the quick extraction concept is reasonable and achievable, whereas others felt that promising a set amount of time is not possible due to the variability of demand and economic fluctuations. Larger companies (with more pits, more flexibility) tended to respond that five-year timelines were reasonable, whereas small companies mentioned they are not a good idea. All industry members agreed that trust is impacted if the promised timeline is not adhered to, and enforcement is difficult.
- **Open-Pit Limits** (limiting the number of open pits at a time): Industry unanimously opposed this concept and noted that not all pits are the same, even though they might appear that way. Different resources meet differing demands, different phases of extraction support operations across multiple pits, and so forth. Implementing such a requirement was noted to be largely problematic to industry.
 - » **Suggestions:** Respondents noted that reclamation requirements (regulated through the province) and operating standards would address open pits better than limiting how many are open.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

Industry members were asked what problems residents often bring up as areas of concern, and how industry has (or can) address and mitigate these concerns.

- **Water:** Residents are often very worried about water impacts caused by resource extraction (i.e. affecting the water table, drying up wells), as water is an essential resource, and re-accessing water can be costly.
 - » **Suggestions:** One respondent mentioned they have previously put money in a trust held by a lawyer to be used for residents to re-drill wells and otherwise access water if industry affected water access. Industry suggested that Sturgeon County could consider holding this money, or requiring a lawyer holding this money, to help mitigate water table concerns.
- **Operating Hours:** Community members are often worried about hours of operation and how it may affect their quality of life (i.e. lights and noise being present at night). Most industry members agreed that operating hours should be reasonable.
 - » **Suggestions:** Some industry members suggested different operating hours based on proximity. Others mentioned that whatever the rules are, they should be the same across all operations, and could be included in a performance-based section of development regulations.
- **Dust:** Residents often note impacts to quality of life and health caused by dust. Industry members said there are ways to determine and communicate how far dust will travel using science-based approaches.
 - » **Suggestions:** Air quality monitoring can be implemented, and residents can be provided with third-party air quality reports on a regular basis. Air quality standards could be specified as part of a regulatory-based approach.
- **Trucking, Hauling and Traffic:** Traffic related concerns often arise when industry is engaging with communities. Industry agreed that traffic is certainly impacted by resource extraction development, and that solutions do exist. Industry also noted that measures limiting the number of total open pits could increase the amount of traffic at each pit.
 - » **Suggestions:** Hire traffic marshals, require hauling to be tarped (performance standards).
- **Silica Specific Extraction:** Concerns regarding health, air quality, and the location of silica mining is often a concern for residents.
 - » **Suggestions:** Industry noted that air quality monitoring can be employed and could be required in conjunction with a performance standards approach.

- **Noise:** Community members are often worried about noise because this can impact their quality of life significantly.
 - » **Suggestions:** Industry noted that opportunities to reduce noise may include: special types of reverse beepers; higher berms; hours of operation; and setting limits on distances for primary and particularly secondary operations.
- **Setbacks:** This is often noted as a concern amongst residents, however industry noted that setbacks are often a concern because of other issues that may not be properly regulated or monitored. Industry noted that having setbacks, vs. a case-by-case approach, is positive as it provides predictability for operators and residents.
 - » **Suggestion:** Addressing other items explored in this section and building out stronger operational standards may be more effective than having arbitrary setbacks and no standards.
- **Uncertainty:** Overall, industry members noted that many landowners are often concerned about what might happen due to an operation. Such uncertainty is exacerbated by several factors such as inconsistent information across different sources, and a lack of easily available and digestible information. Community members often distrust industry-provided information at the time of development, because it is perceived as biased in the interest of supporting an approval. Interviewees also noted that “bad operators” who don’t operate responsibly, may be the source of poor perceptions. Finally, communication between residents and the developer often varies by project and community, as there is no ongoing avenue for this otherwise.
- **Perception vs. Fact:** Much of resident opposition is based on perceptions that are not supported by fact. Sometimes this is misunderstandings, such as knowing the differences between primary and secondary operations; other times it is a lack of science-based evidence. Unclear rules and regulations compound this problem.
 - » **Suggestions:** Industry noted that education must come before conversations to facilitate productive dialogue. Information on how the County and the province regulate aggregate operations should be uniform, laid out clearly, and enforced, to provide residents with certainty.

4.2 COFFEE CHAT SESSIONS

The coffee chat sessions gave residents the opportunity to lead the conversation and discuss any of their interests related to the Resource Extraction Regulatory Review project. Depending on the nature of the discussion, different questions were asked and were often related to:

- Participants' concerns related to the aggregate industry
- Participants' suggestions regarding resource extraction regulations
- Whether participants thought the existing regulations were appropriate or if changes were suitable
- Comments on setbacks

The following provides a summary of the main comments received during the coffee talks, grouped by theme.

COMMUNICATION

- Comments made: Difficulty accessing information about resource extraction projects, concerns often were not adequately addressed by the County (members of Council and / or Administration), and mixed relationships with aggregate operators (some being more transparent and accessible than others).
- Solutions offered: email notifications about general aggregate-related updates and nearby projects, or a central resource to find information on their own such as a dedicated webpage.

TRAFFIC AND ROADS

- Comments made: The volume of truck traffic throughout the County, potential impacts on driver and pedestrian safety, access points to personal properties impacted by operations, and the wear and tear on roads and vehicles caused by aggregate hauling.
- Solutions offered: recent improvements made to Sturgeon County roads, such as widenings and turning lanes has been helpful and appreciated.

HEALTH IMPACTS AND AIR QUALITY

- Comments made: Potential impacts caused by silica dust and general exposure to dust, potential impacts caused to animals (mostly livestock) and other less tangible impacts to residents such as increased stress and anxiety.
- Solutions offered: Extract further away from people, and Ambient Air Quality objectives are simply guidelines and more stringent bylaws are needed.

GROUNDWATER

- Comments made: Some concerns related to general groundwater disturbance.
- Solutions offered: Increased monitoring of residential wells to ensure they are not negatively impacted.

NOISE

- Comments made: This was not a primary topic brought forward by participants, however one caller mentioned they preferred increased buffers while another participant made note that noise can interfere with some livestock operations.

DEVELOPMENT SETBACKS

- Comments made: some questioned the intent of the 400m setback versus the 800m setback, some concerns about reducing setbacks, some noted 100m is too close to people, and some mentioned that impacts to farming operations are different then residential and should also be strongly considered.
- Solutions offered: consistent setback requirements based on scientific rationale, and landscaped berms.

VISUAL IMPACTS

- Comments made: Reduced setbacks would make this issue worse for some landowners.
- Solutions offered: Berms help reduce impacts and vegetated berms are preferred.

PROPERTY VALUES

- Comments made: This was not a primary topic brought forward by participants, however a few mentioned that their property values would be negatively impacted if a pit was approved nearby.

OVERALL RISKS

- Comments made: This was not a primary topic brought forward by participants, however one mention was made that livestock farmers assume all risk regardless of mitigations offered by industry, and some residents feel that their quality of life and safety is the most important priority and should trump operations.

EXTRACTION AREA TIMELINE / QUICK EXTRACTION AREA

- Comments made: Lack of transparency related to the timeline of operations, the term quick is arbitrary and general understanding that extraction is based on economy and demand.
- Solutions offered: Prefer a realistic timeline to be communicated clearly to those adjacent to the project.

UPDATED LAND USE MAPPING

- Comments made: The land use information available at the time of some residential purchases is different today (changes from agricultural to resource extraction).
- Solutions offered: Updated mapping to show current land use would be helpful.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- Comments made: Some said they understood the nature of the industry and worked in similar fields, many welcomed the idea of performance standards in addition to setbacks and that regulations should be based in science.
- Solutions offered: supportive of clearly articulated performance standards.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND ENFORCEMENT

- Comments made: There are poor operators within the County that do not monitor or comply with regulations, sometimes it is the resident's word against an operator, and general questions about how monitoring and enforcement works today.
- Solutions offered: Want increased inspection, enforce using fines, potential benefits of an inspector instead of a Bylaw officer and one mention of the 'Plan, Do, Check System' which could result in specific and desired outcomes for a project particularly as it relates to reclamation.

REGULATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND APPROVALS

- Comments made: The government and industry seem to revert to best practices but generally the best practices and the legislation are not connected, and there seems to be a fragmented approval process.
- Solutions offered: Oversight group to allow for efficient approvals among various governing bodies, encourage collaboration between Municipal and Provincial Government, and consider use of the Federal Land Suitability Rating system so inform reclamation.

RECLAMATION

- Comments made: Prefer alternative end uses to just agricultural, some pits sit un-reclaimed for years and are an eye sore
- Solutions offered: Parks, wetlands and amenity spaces mentioned as preferred end uses, increase industry accountability to reclaim site within a time frame, and hold a security to ensure the site is reclaimed and in case the operator gets into financial trouble.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- Is this focused in certain areas or overall County?
- What drove Sturgeon County to create this project?
- Sought clarity on the goal of this project.
- Comment that they want Sturgeon County to be a place where people want to invest and do business and it is important to have a healthy balance.
- Industry growth needs to happen, but it should not be at expense of the residents.
- Questions about the appeal process and if there is a limit to how many times an item can be appealed.
- Curious about the impact aggregate will have on this area with the airport and growth in the County.

4.3 ONLINE SURVEY

- 1. Given the significance of aggregate resources in Sturgeon County, how reasonable is it to re-evaluate existing bylaws to improve standards for aggregate operations?**

| | |
|---------------------|----|
| Very reasonable | 86 |
| Somewhat reasonable | 40 |
| Opposed | 32 |
| Neutral | 27 |
| Not reasonable | 19 |
| Unsure | 6 |

2. Please explain your answer (optional).

| | |
|---|----|
| Human health/safety important, protect people first | 16 |
| Bylaws should be reviewed regularly | 14 |
| Bylaws are fine as-is | 13 |
| Balance perspectives in process | 8 |
| Quality of life/social impacts is important | 8 |
| Extract away from people/increase setbacks (2miles, 10km) | 7 |
| Opposed/too costly/lacks credibility | 7 |
| Unclear on scope | 6 |
| Property values are important | 6 |
| Environmental protection is important | 6 |
| Project only benefits industry | 6 |
| Traffic/driver behavior is a concern | 6 |
| Noise is a concern | 5 |
| Aggregate provides economic benefit | 5 |
| Setbacks are restrictive/decrease | 5 |
| Project only benefits county/bias/misleading/mistrust | 5 |
| Protect setbacks/do not change what works | 5 |
| Industry creates employment/want more approvals | 4 |
| Animal/wildlife health is important | 4 |
| Tax/levy revenue from industry is important | 4 |
| Public engagement is important | 3 |
| Reclamation is important | 3 |
| Water contamination is a concern | 3 |
| Decisions are often profit-driven | 3 |
| Road improvements are important | 3 |
| Compliance is a problem | 3 |
| Regulations are costly for industry/improve process | 3 |
| Poor industry behavior is a concern/need accountability | 3 |
| Air quality/dust is a concern | 2 |
| Sustainable development/use is important | 2 |
| Red tape is a concern | 2 |
| Too many pits | 2 |
| Monitoring/enforcement is important | 2 |
| Need more information (impacts of industry, local statistics) | 2 |
| Unfair to landowners after land purchase/feel blind-sided | 2 |

3. Do you agree that sand and gravel as non-renewable resources are vital in the construction industry and the health of the local economy?

| | |
|-----|-----|
| No | 41 |
| Yes | 169 |

4. Please explain your answer (optional).

| | |
|---|----|
| Agree/aggregate builds local infrastructure | 25 |
| People/human health is most important | 17 |
| Not sustainable/focus on sustainability/renewable resources | 12 |
| Local resource is important/reduce hauling | 11 |
| Helps other industries/people in addition to construction | 11 |
| Develop away from people | 10 |
| Quality of life is important | 9 |
| Tax revenue from industry is important | 8 |
| Balance value with other industries | 7 |
| This is a leading question | 5 |
| Balance perspectives through project | 5 |
| Employment is important | 5 |
| Environmental concerns caused by industry | 4 |
| Industry destroys roads | 4 |
| Safety is a concern | 4 |
| Traffic is a concern | 3 |
| Meet standards/best practices | 3 |
| Support small businesses | 2 |
| Had different answer than what was supplied | 2 |
| Compensation to effected landowners | 2 |
| Improve monitoring/compliance issues | 2 |
| Farming/food security is more important | 2 |
| Disagree/doesn't benefit economy | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include: Responsible development is important, only benefits industry, property values are a concern, habitat loss is a concern, water contamination is a concern, invest in exploration, Division 6 is hit hardest by industry, noise is a concern, depleting resource in county, work in industry, resource must be affordable, gravel more important than sand, revenue overplayed, too many pits, innovation is important, 400m setbacks are too close, doesn't add jobs, mine in winter, improve notifications/communications with landowners, determine market demand, and more information is needed.

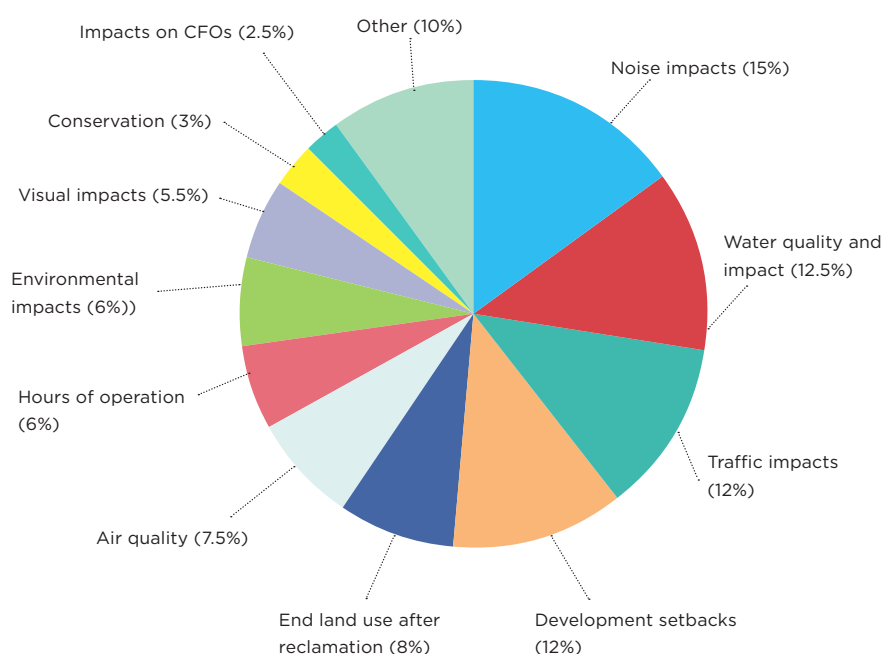
5. Applications for aggregate operations happen frequently within Sturgeon County; these applications generally provide opportunities for the public to be engaged if the application may affect them. How familiar are you with these types of applications?

| | |
|---------------------|----|
| Somewhat familiar | 96 |
| Not familiar at all | 63 |
| Very familiar | 49 |
| Unsure | 2 |

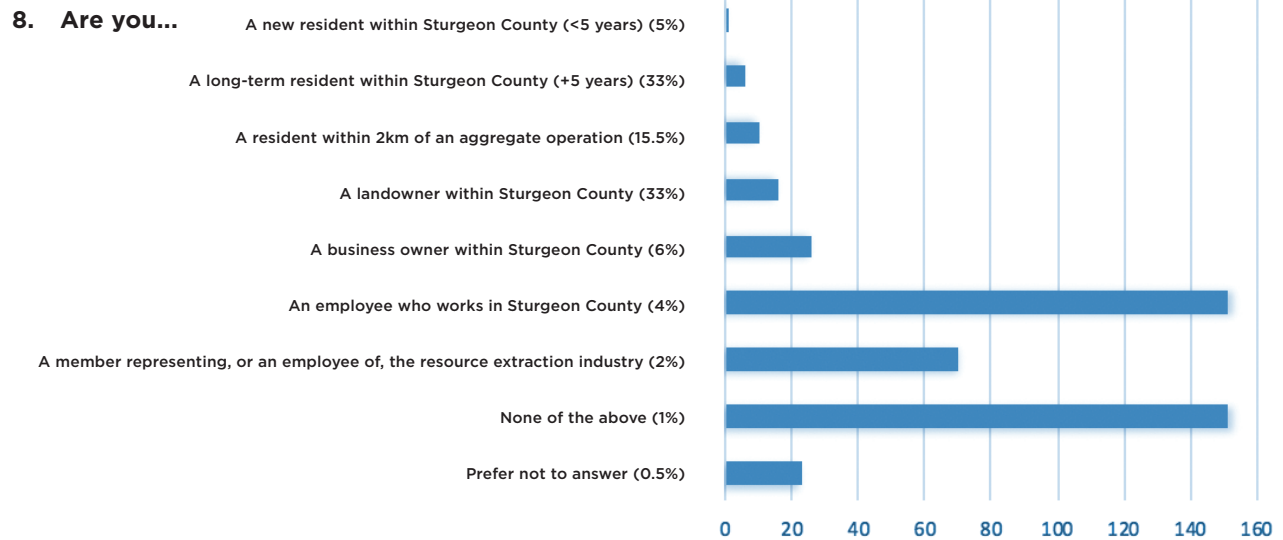
6. Have you ever been involved in public engagement for a resource extraction related application in the past?

| | |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | 79 |
| No | 131 |

7. Existing regulations monitor and enforce many aspects of aggregate operations, which could have varying impacts. In your opinion, what are the top three priorities that should be evaluated as part of this project (select up to three)?



‘Other’ responses include : Impacts to residents/proximity/Quality of life, all of the above, property values, air quality/dust, road maintenance, wildlife, length of time of operations, employment, driver behavior/truck traffic, safety, more than listed options, impacts to neighbouring properties, third party review of damages, sustainability, property rights, reclamation, loss of farmland, why amend laws?, people first, and debris.



9. Do you agree that it is important to reduce the number of times the same land is used for extraction, and limit extraction to once per site?

| | |
|--------|-----|
| Unsure | 47 |
| Yes | 112 |
| No | 31 |

10. Please explain your answer (optional).

| | |
|---|----|
| Prefer limited entries | 52 |
| Reclamation is important | 20 |
| Need more information/unsure | 10 |
| This is based on economy/demand | 10 |
| More impacts with more entries | 9 |
| Depends on scenario (location, flexibility) | 8 |
| Multiple entries okay if there is commitment to limit impacts | 7 |
| Prefer no extraction at all | 6 |
| Ensure effected landowners understand scope | 4 |
| Prefer short timelines | 4 |
| Poor policy/amend bylaws/long-term planning needed | 4 |
| Only re-enter if un-reclaimed | 4 |
| Extract away from people | 3 |
| Not always possible | 2 |
| Don't trust operators/manipulate timelines | 3 |
| Profit-driven | 2 |
| Limit number of open pits/too many already | 2 |
| Wildlife protection is a concern | 2 |
| Property values are a concern | 2 |
| Improve enforcement/operator contracts | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include: Leading question, seasonable operations are beneficial so don't change, many factors affect operation efficiency, ideal for small operators, flexibility is important, poor experience with multiple entries, unsustainable industry, safety is a concern, environmental impacts are a concern, and not relevant.

11. Visual Impact: Sturgeon County's current bylaws protect against the visual impacts of resource extraction in some manners. Do you have any other ideas to enhance existing bylaws to protect against visual impacts?

| | |
|---|----|
| Vegetation between dwellings and operation/shelter belt/restore veg | 33 |
| Berms/higher berms | 20 |
| Extract away from people/farms | 20 |
| No | 14 |
| Setbacks/increase existing setbacks (2 miles) | 11 |
| Efficient, phased reclamation/reclaim as wetlands | 8 |
| Compliance issues/increase enforcement | 7 |
| No extraction at all | 7 |
| Fences | 4 |
| End use planning important (recreation) | 4 |
| Impacts are subjective/depends on scenario | 3 |
| Away from wildlife areas | 3 |
| Weed control is important | 3 |
| Property values are a concern | 3 |
| Protect trees/fringe/sensitive habitats | 3 |
| Limit operations in County | 2 |
| Safety is a concern | 2 |
| Buy out neighbours | 2 |
| Limit light pollution | 2 |
| Mitigations should be required | 2 |
| Profit driven solutions | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include: Don't trust operators, land destruction is a concern, stockpiles too high, not a concern, quick extraction guidelines, issues in east part of County, berms not always possible, may be too costly for operator, fine as-is, phased operations, protect undeveloped land, views are important, operations become dumping zones, build structures to contain stockpiles, well-maintained operations reduce issues, fences can be unappealing, unsure, dedicated haul routes, sight lines needed to ensure compliance, and ponds.

12. Visual Impact: How important to you are visual impacts from resource extraction operations?

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Very important | 103 |
| Somewhat important | 61 |
| Not very important | 21 |
| Not at all important | 4 |

10. Air Quality: Air quality is regulated by provincial and federal legislation regarding dust and air quality. Do you have any other ideas to enhance existing bylaws to protect air quality?

| | |
|---|----|
| No/fine as-is | 37 |
| Increase enforcement/monitoring (near receptors, third party) | 20 |
| Extract away from people | 8 |
| Not concerned | 6 |
| Spray roads/piles | 5 |
| No more operations | 5 |
| Protect vegetation | 5 |
| Unsure/need more information | 5 |
| Wind is an issue | 4 |
| Don't trust operators/monitoring | 4 |
| Use local resources to reduce hauling | 3 |
| Increase/strengthen regulations | 3 |
| Shelter/coverings | 3 |
| Stockpiles are an issue/reduce | 2 |
| No silica | 2 |
| Limit hours of operation | 2 |
| Pave roads | 2 |
| Real time results from monitoring | 2 |
| Improve communications/clear regulations | 2 |
| Defined haul routes/limit | 2 |
| Science-based regulations/use best possible standards | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include: Cease/desist orders, speed limits, complaint-based system is unfair to landowners, safety is a concern, other industries contribute too, traffic is an issue, unsupportive of industry, equipment exhaust, long term solutions needed, compensation to those effected, no solutions to this issue, increase setbacks, physical barriers, protect people first, no precious metals/gold, collaborate with CFOs, animal health is important, proactive solutions, and equipment standards should be improved.

14. Air Quality: How important to you are air quality impacts from resource extraction operations?

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Not at all important - 4 | 4 |
| Not very important - 9 | 9 |
| Very important - 141 | 141 |
| Somewhat important - 36 | 36 |

15. Water: Water is regulated by the province through many pieces of legislation to ensure that the water table and water quality is not affected during resource extraction. Do you have any other ideas to enhance existing bylaws to protect water quality and availability at the municipal level?

| | |
|---|----|
| Increase regular well tests/monitoring/enforcement (before and during, third party) | 40 |
| No | 24 |
| Province regulates well/fine as-is | 11 |
| Compensation for repairs/landowner contract | 6 |
| Protect water table | 6 |
| Need more information/unsure | 6 |
| No impacts should be allowed (residents, water bodies) | 5 |
| No extraction at all | 5 |
| Mistrust County/lack of accountability | 5 |
| Extract away from people | 5 |
| Reclamation should be efficient/focused on water | 4 |
| Science based/thorough research/trust experts | 3 |
| Share test results | 3 |
| Biggest concern/should be first priority | 3 |
| Improve planning | 2 |
| Known operator issues/non-compliant | 2 |
| Contain/divert run off | 2 |
| Avoid Sturgeon River and other water bodies | 2 |
| Improve communications with landowners | 2 |
| Mitigations are important | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include: Issues in east part of County, rural residents should get City water, County does a good job, have well water, wildlife impacted too, ensure adequate permits, too many regulations, work with environmental organizations, limit number of operations in County, dust in water, chemical leaks, don't use water to spray piles, buy out residents, more stringent bylaws, clean up contaminations, mandatory reporting, and known pay offs in community when violations occur.

16. Water: How important to you are impacts to water quality and availability from resource extraction operations?

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Not at all important | 1 |
| Not very important | 1 |
| Somewhat important | 27 |
| Very important | 161 |

17. Traffic: Traffic can be regulated by Sturgeon County; a traffic impact assessment may be required with a development permit application. Sturgeon County may restrict when (during what hours) hauling and other specific activities may occur. Do you have any specific ideas to enhance existing bylaws to protect traffic impacts of resource extraction developments?

| | |
|---|----|
| Industry funded maintenance/upgrades | 24 |
| Monitor/enforcement and compliance important | 17 |
| Restrict travel hours/daytime only | 16 |
| No | 15 |
| Upgrade current roads/already poor/trucks too heavy | 13 |
| Dedicated haul routes/ban some roads from truck traffic | 11 |
| Dust control is important | 8 |
| Traffic volume concerns | 8 |
| Reduce speed limit | 8 |
| Unsafe for residents | 8 |
| Extract away from people | 7 |
| Increase hauls to reduce project timelines/winter haul | 6 |
| Travel on paved roads only | 6 |
| Noise reduction is important | 5 |
| Mitigation measures important | 4 |
| Need more information/unsure | 4 |
| Public engagement/notifications important | 3 |
| Driver behavior is a concern | 3 |
| Traffic guards/police needed | 3 |
| Fine as-is | 3 |
| No extraction at all | 2 |
| Efficient travel is important/use HWY only | 2 |
| Use rail | 2 |
| Quality of life is important | 2 |
| Windshield damage compensation | 2 |
| Road use agreements | 2 |
| Avoid school bus travel times | 2 |
| Regular truck maintenance | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include: passing lanes needed, traffic lights needed, use only local resources, widen roads, too many restrictions, more wheels to spread weight, turning lanes needed, twin HWY 643, wind creates issues, too many pits, some roads are provincially regulated, improve clearing, and complaint line needed.

18. Traffic: How important to you are impacts to traffic from resource extraction operations?

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Not at all important | 1 |
| Not very important | 12 |
| Somewhat important | 51 |
| Very important | 126 |

19. Noise: Sturgeon County can regulate noise and requires the developer to prevent noise from becoming problematic. Do you have any specific ideas to enhance existing bylaws to protect against the noise impacts of resource extraction developments?

| | |
|--|----|
| Restrict hours/no weekends or nights | 27 |
| Improve monitoring/enforcement | 26 |
| No | 17 |
| Extract away from people | 13 |
| Berms/higher berms/sound barrier walls | 11 |
| Setbacks | 9 |
| Livestock/CFO impacts are a concern | 8 |
| Use new technology | 6 |
| Eliminate back up beeper noise | 5 |
| Mitigation measures are important | 5 |
| Improve/clarify regulations/more stringent | 3 |
| Quality of life is important | 3 |
| Fine as-is | 3 |
| Inspect the complaints of the community | 3 |
| No extraction at all | 3 |
| Shelter belts preferred | 3 |
| Share assessment results | 2 |
| Light pollution is a concern | 2 |
| Public engagement is important | 2 |
| More bylaw officers needed | 2 |
| Need more information/unsure | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include: County accountability is a concern, shroud machines, maintain equipment, designated haul routes, noise assessments are important, fences, traffic is a concern, pile locations should be strategic, once mining begins noise reduces, too many regulations already, mining creates noise no matter what, no jake brakes, food security more important, mufflers are important, human health is priority, and crush offsite

20. Noise: How important to you are noise impacts from resource extraction operations?

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Not at all important | 1 |
| Not very important | 9 |
| Somewhat important | 37 |
| Very important | 143 |

21. Hours of Operation: Do you have any specific ideas to enhance existing bylaws to protect against the noise impacts of resource extraction developments?

| | |
|---|----|
| Restrict hours | 32 |
| No/fine as-is | 32 |
| Day time operations only, Monday - Friday (9am-5pm, 7am-5pm, 7am - 7pm, 7am - 8pm, 8am - 5pm) | 13 |
| Follow noise bylaws/assessments/noise concerns | 8 |
| Extract away from people | 7 |
| Monitoring/enforcement is important | 7 |
| No extraction at all | 6 |
| No back up beepers | 4 |
| Quality of life is important | 4 |
| Depends on proximity to residences | 3 |
| Setbacks important | 3 |
| Use new technologies | 3 |
| Increase hours | 2 |
| Mitigation measures are important | 2 |
| CFOs are impacted no matter what | 2 |
| Shift workers in region, sleep during day | 2 |
| Social contract/landowner agreement | 2 |
| Need more information/unsure | 2 |
| Berms/barriers important | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include: Process off site, operate 7 days a week, process on weekends, extraction and processing hours should be the same, increase operation seasons, 12 hr/day, 7 days/week, performance standards are important, best standards possible during night operations, reasonable hours, leading question, vegetation is important, strategic site plan, safety is important, no engine breaks, restrictions cause timeline extensions, reduce mining attempts per site, share operations plan publicly, restrict crushing, and no special conditions

22. Hours of Operation: How important to you are hours of operation related to resource extraction operations?

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Not at all important | 3 |
| Not very important | 12 |
| Somewhat important | 54 |
| Very important | 121 |

- 23. Setbacks: Primary measures (i.e. regulations directly addressing noise, air quality monitoring) should be prioritized over secondary measures (i.e. hours of operation, setbacks) which typically have less influence on potential impacts caused by operations (i.e. hours of operation, setbacks).**

| | |
|-------------------|----|
| Strongly disagree | 36 |
| Somewhat disagree | 29 |
| Unsure | 11 |
| Somewhat agree | 50 |
| Strongly agree | 63 |

- 24. Setbacks: If you clicked “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree,” what primary measures do you suggest or believe are the most important and why?**

| | |
|---|----|
| Noise | 28 |
| Air quality/dust control | 27 |
| Setbacks | 25 |
| All are important | 23 |
| Water | 10 |
| Extract away from people/increase setbacks | 9 |
| Quality of life | 7 |
| Traffic | 5 |
| Setbacks sterilize aggregate/reduce/remove setbacks | 5 |
| Hours of operation | 4 |
| Unsure/need more information | 4 |
| Human health priority | 4 |
| Safety is important | 3 |
| 800m setbacks for all operations | 3 |
| Improve mitigations | 3 |
| Maximize extraction | 3 |
| Misleading question | 3 |
| Existing issues with operators/compliance | 3 |
| Regulations should be clear to all/improve communications with landowners | 3 |
| Pollution is a concern | 3 |
| Visual impacts are a concern | 2 |
| Environmental protection is important | 2 |
| Reclamation is important | 2 |
| Proximity to homes is the problem | 2 |
| Compensation (loss of development opportunities/impacts) | 2 |
| Depends on proximity to people/operation | 2 |
| All industries should be accountable/just as harmful | 2 |
| Not near river/water bodies | 2 |
| Setbacks for livestock/CFOs | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include:
 400m minimum setback for all, science-based regulations important, stockpiles help, no extraction at all, air quality should stay with province, primary measures are most important, ground disturbance is a concern, equal setbacks, secondary methods more enforceable, no impacts ever, same setbacks CFOs must use, achieve balance, primary methods more important.

25. Setbacks: As mentioned in a previous question, setbacks are applied in different ways. This question asks about setbacks from single dwellings and multi-lot subdivisions/hamlets. At present in Sturgeon County, resource extraction and processing must be: a minimum of 400m from an existing dwelling, and a minimum of 800m from the edge of a multi-lot subdivision or hamlet with residences. Most neighbouring municipalities do not have two setback requirements, as it makes development applications more complex. Do you think that the setback distance should be different for a single dwelling on an acreage, versus dwellings in multi-lot residential subdivisions?

| | |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | 52 |
| No | 138 |

26. Please explain your answer (optional).

| | |
|--|----|
| Equal importance | 52 |
| 800m for both | 29 |
| More than 800m/400m/increase setbacks | 23 |
| Fine as-is | 9 |
| Extract away from people | 8 |
| Maximize extraction/reduce setbacks/setbacks sterilize | 7 |
| Landowner agreements needed | 7 |
| Setback designated for agriculture/CFO needed | 5 |
| Noise is a concern | 4 |
| Quality of life is important | 4 |
| Human health is important | 3 |
| Water contamination concerns | 3 |
| Multi-residential should have higher setback | 3 |
| Current setbacks are arbitrary | 3 |
| Performance standards important | 3 |
| Unsure | 2 |
| Unfair when adjacent land suddenly gets rezoned | 2 |
| Measure from property line | 2 |
| Compensation for landowners | 2 |
| Hours of operation help alleviate issues | 2 |
| Variances need local support | 2 |
| Variances are more acceptable in rural setting | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include: Loss of jobs is a concern, new residential development should have reduced setbacks/grandfather, people shouldn't be able to veto, air quality is a concern, safety is a concern, 400m setback for both, restrict extraction areas, property values are a concern, setbacks for environmentally sensitive areas, allow variances, impacts happen no matter what, impact assessments should determine setback, different setbacks for extraction and processing, reclamation commitment is important, no variance, setback categories needed, mistrust County, and traffic is a concern.

27. Setbacks: Sturgeon County is reviewing regulations around resource (aggregate) extraction, including minimum setback requirements and performance standards to mitigate potential impacts caused by aggregate operations. Current minimum setback requirements are explained above (400m and 800m). However, in balancing regulatory requirements, other opportunities can be considered. More predictable and stringent operating requirements to monitor and reduce impacts could be implemented alongside reduced setbacks. These stronger primary measures could help to directly address specific concerns (i.e. noise, traffic, etc.). This is a reasonable approach to monitor and regulate aggregate operations to better ensure safety, sustainability, and efficiency.

| | |
|-------------------|----|
| Strongly disagree | 69 |
| Somewhat disagree | 27 |
| Somewhat agree | 34 |
| Strongly agree | 42 |
| Unsure | 18 |

28. Setbacks: Please explain your answer (optional)

| | |
|--|----|
| Do not reduce/fine as-is | 33 |
| Setbacks reduce impacts/are enforceable | 18 |
| Increase enforcement/monitoring/requirements | 16 |
| Increase setbacks | 13 |
| Need more information/unsure | 9 |
| 800m setbacks for all/equal setbacks | 9 |
| Performance standards approach favoured | 6 |
| Poor operator behavior | 6 |
| Landowner consent needed to reduce setbacks | 5 |
| Noise is a concern | 4 |
| Reduce setbacks to allow one-time operation | 4 |
| Depends on scenario/impacts subjective | 4 |
| Leading question | 4 |
| Compensation/buy out | 3 |
| Setbacks sterilize/prevent landowner development | 3 |
| Traffic is a concern | 3 |
| No extraction at all | 3 |
| Mistrust County | 3 |
| Only benefits industry | 3 |
| Health and safety are a concern | 3 |
| Dust is a concern | 2 |
| Support a reasonable approach | 2 |
| Quality of life is important | 2 |
| No impacts ever/no increase in impacts | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include: Light pollution is a concern, pollution is a concern, restrict extraction areas, tax revenue is important, setbacks don't work, unfair restrictions near multi-lot, monitoring isn't the solution, hours of operation help, only in rural setting, existing impacts already, and CFO setback.

29. Which of the following primary mitigation measures and setbacks do you most agree with?

| | |
|---|----|
| Setbacks should be increased with a relaxation of operating requirements | 62 |
| Setbacks should stay the same with no change to operating requirements | 64 |
| Setbacks should be decreased in favour of more stringent operating requirements | 48 |

30. Setbacks: How important to you are development setbacks in regulating impacts from resource extraction operations?

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Not at all important | 11 |
| Not very important | 13 |
| Somewhat important | 36 |
| Very important | 130 |

31. Please explain your answer (optional).

| | |
|--|----|
| Increase setbacks and increase/maintain operating requirements | 23 |
| Bias survey/had different answer then supplied | 23 |
| No/fine as-is | 18 |
| Increase setbacks | 10 |
| Prefer performance standards | 7 |
| Setbacks sterilize/reduce setbacks | 7 |
| Landowner consent to vary setback | 5 |
| Setbacks work | 4 |
| Listen to community | 3 |
| Compensation/buy-out landowners | 3 |
| Depends on scenario | 3 |
| 800m setback for all | 3 |
| Measure from property line | 2 |
| Support reasonable approach | 2 |
| Need more information | 2 |
| Long term planning needed | 2 |
| Quality of life is important | 2 |
| Flexibility/allow variance | 2 |
| Current lack of enforcement | 2 |
| Setbacks for farms and CFOs | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include: Reduce hours of operation, people should be the priority, third party enforcement, setbacks provide certainty for all, support extraction industry, limit number of attempts, increased regulations increase cost for all, water concerns, mistrust County, maintain vegetation, no extraction at all/not compatible, too much impact, 400m setbacks for all, and frac sand security is important.

32. Priority Extraction Areas: A priority extraction area (or “quick extraction area”) includes a specific area of an operation in which an operator must mine all materials out within a rapid and agreed-upon time frame (i.e. 5 years). The purpose of a priority extraction area is to minimize potential impacts to those nearby, by reducing the length of time of an operation, where possible. Note that priority extraction areas are sometimes difficult to enforce; additionally, having a shorter time frame for extraction sometimes requires longer operating hours, and can be affected by seasonality. What ideas do you have to enhance policies for priority extraction areas?

| | |
|--|----|
| Enforcement/monitoring | 27 |
| Disagree with Priority Extraction Areas concept | 13 |
| No/fine as-is | 10 |
| Agree with Priority Extraction Areas concept | 8 |
| Reclamation is important | 6 |
| Compensation when extended/buy-out | 6 |
| Dependent on economy/demand/difficult to enforce | 6 |
| Daytime hours only/limit hours | 6 |
| Increase setbacks | 5 |
| Need more information/unsure | 5 |
| Extract away from people | 5 |
| Ensure it is possible | 5 |
| No extraction at all | 4 |
| Public engagement is important/listen to community | 3 |
| 5 years is too long | 3 |
| Rushing could create other problems | 3 |
| Landowner consent needed | 2 |
| Mistrust County | 2 |
| There should be no impacts ever | 2 |
| All projects should have timelines | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include: Have larger workforce, use best mitigations possible, relax reclamation timelines, no timeline extensions, mandatory when close to subdivisions, suspend operations when in low demand, reduce setbacks, operator behavior is a concern, water contamination concerns, shouldn’t stop and start/efficiency important, noise monitoring is important, quality of life is important, performance standards are important, increase extraction options, operator should decide, require community benefit, and okay with longer better controlled projects.

33. Priority Extraction Areas: Given the above information, how important do you feel that priority extraction areas are as an option for resource extraction? (i.e. not all municipalities have “priority extraction” areas – is having this option important?)

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| Not at all important | 41 |
| Not very important | 31 |
| Somewhat important | 74 |
| Very important | 44 |

34. Approval Processes: Given the above information, which parts of the approval processes do you feel could be improved (select all that apply)?

| | |
|---|-----|
| Referrals to adjacent and nearby landowners | 116 |
| Public open houses | 89 |
| Public hearings at Council | 75 |
| Rezoning to allow resource extraction | 53 |
| None of the above | 17 |
| Other | 46 |
| Improve engagement/notifications, listen to community | 16 |
| Increase efficiencies | 5 |
| Fine as-is | 3 |
| Compensation to those effected | 3 |
| Reduce appeal attempts | 2 |
| No extraction at all | 2 |
| Maps | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include: Unsure, all of the above, impacts to CFOs/farms, don't favour industry, citizen vote, food security most important, no more rezoning, be business friendly, limit number of application attempts, employment is important, water, Indigenous engagement, innovation, engagement fatigue, multiple zones in one, County favours industry, profit-driven, poor timing, fair representation at hearings, no, and long term planning needed.

35. Approval Processes: Please explain your previous answer – how could the approval process be improved?

| | |
|---|----|
| Public engagement is important (at all stages/should be accessible/multiple formats/flexible) | 30 |
| Improve/expand notifications and communications | 26 |
| Transparency/correctness is important | 14 |
| Survey is bias to industry/mistrust County | 7 |
| Make it efficient/quick/simple | 7 |
| Allow public votes | 5 |
| Enforcement is important | 4 |
| No/Fine as-is | 4 |
| Rezoning shouldn't be required/should already include multiple uses | 4 |
| Unsure | 3 |
| Clarify/improve rezoning process | 3 |
| No extraction at all | 3 |
| More environmental regulations | 2 |
| No more residential development in Natural Resource overlay | 2 |
| Reduce ability to appeal | 2 |
| Landowner consent should be required | 2 |
| Balance perspectives | 2 |
| Employment is important | 2 |
| Increase setbacks | 2 |
| Limit who can speak at hearings (no lawyers, only those affected) | 2 |
| Restrict extraction/number of pits | 2 |
| Industry has too much power/don't trust industry | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include: Make it cost effective, extract away from people, more landowner rights, east County is worse than west, people should be the priority, delays kill projects, regular project reviews, all of the above, no certainty for anyone, protect water, science-based decision making is important, reclamation is important, more maps, tax revenue is important, no impacts should be allowed ever, public hearings, don't make it easier for industry, consider agriculture zoning, community benefits should be included, good neighbour agreements needed, and compensation to adjacent landowners.

36. The information and questions presented in this survey were clear and easy to understand.

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Disagree | 32 |
| Somewhat agree | 104 |
| Strongly agree | 26 |
| Strongly disagree | 12 |
| Unsure | 2 |

37. Following your review of the information package and this survey, do you have any remaining questions or comments about the Resource Extraction Regulatory Review Project (for example, what has your experience with the aggregate industry or operations involved? What has this experience been like? What could be improved, and what worked well?)

| | |
|--|----|
| County is biased to industry/mistrust County | 25 |
| More information needed (bylaws, setbacks)/unsure/unclear of scope | 13 |
| No/fine as-is | 10 |
| Unsatisfied with survey/bias/confusing | 9 |
| Negative industry experience | 7 |
| Survey was fair/feel informed | 6 |
| Positive experience with industry | 6 |
| Lack of enforcement/monitoring is an issue | 6 |
| Reclamation is important/plant trees | 5 |
| Improve/continue communications and engagement | 5 |
| Environmental damage/water concerns | 4 |
| Transparency is important | 4 |
| Increase setbacks | 4 |
| People are more important than industry | 3 |
| Engagement fatigue | 3 |
| County is biased against industry/business/wants more regs | 3 |
| Support industry/aggregate is critical | 3 |
| Compensation or tax breaks to those effected | 3 |
| Road improvements needed | 3 |
| Driver behavior is a concern | 2 |
| Delay due to Covid-19/bad timing | 2 |
| Long term planning needed | 2 |
| Listen to community | 2 |
| Committee is wanted | 2 |
| No extraction at all | 2 |
| Property values are a concern | 2 |
| Support reasonable approach | 2 |

Unique responses (only mentioned once) include :
 Setback language is misleading, priority topics language is misleading, extraction should benefit all, citizen votes needed, no exceptions to industry, wanted final comment box, why study now?, like priority extraction areas concept, quality of life is important, rezoning is confusing, employment is important, timelines are unclear, with extraction there are better roads, tax revenue is important, good promotions for this project, reduce restrictions to shorten timelines, weeds are a concern, will anything change?, mixed experience with industry, no experience with industry, setback for farms/CFOs, support project, and project should balance perspectives.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

Following a careful review of the summary of feedback collected, the aggregate extraction and processing best management practices report, the summary of land use planning practices in the surrounding municipalities, and the proposed land use bylaw amendment approaches, the draft land use bylaw amendments will be finalized for review during Engagement Phase Two. Details about the second public engagement will be shared publicly in mid-August.

Once the final recommended amendments are complete, they will be presented to Sturgeon County Council through the standard reading and public hearing process.



WHAT WE HEARD REPORT

Resource Extraction
Regulatory Review Project

