

## Request for Decision

<b>Title</b>	<b>Open Space Plan Review - Update and Recommendations</b>
<b>Proposed Motion</b>	That Council accept the Open Space Plan (2022) Review and Update as an appendix document to the Open Space Plan (2016) and adopt four of the stated policies to be implemented over the next five years.
<b>Administrative Recommendation</b>	<p>Administration recommends that Council accept the Open Space Plan (OSP) (2022) Review and Update as an appendix to the Open Space Plan (2016) as information and adopt the following four recommendations as Policies to be implemented over the next five years:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sturgeon County create development guidelines and policy that includes principles of biodiversity and low-impact development to help prioritize the protection of the natural environment.</li> <li>2. Ensure there is a cross-section of open space initiatives and acquisitions that are representative of the diversity of open spaces identified in the inventory.</li> <li>3. Support the environmental conservation, protection, and enhancement of County-owned open space for present and future generations.</li> <li>4. Prioritize open space projects based on the principles of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. strategic value (Plan alignment, regulatory, safety, life-cycle maintenance, cost efficiency, and multi-year capital plan sequencing);</li> <li>b. environmental ethic;</li> <li>c. community well-being and leading practice; and</li> <li>d. contributing to a <i>sense of place</i> (identity, history, culture, and design).</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>Previous Council / Committee Direction</b>	<p><u>June 8, 2021 Regular Council Meeting</u> Motion 321/21: That Council direct Administration to undertake work on the projects listed in Attachment 1, not to exceed \$500,000, funded from the Community Building Priority Reserve.</p> <p><u>May 11, 2021 Regular Council Meeting</u> Motion 281/21: That Council direct Administration to bring forward Open Space projects that could be advanced in 2021, not to exceed \$500,000, at the June 8, 2021, Council Meeting.</p>

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February 9, 2016 Regular Council Meeting

Motion 043/16: That Council approve the Open Space Master Plan and support its use by Administration in future planning.

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**Report**

Background Information

- The purpose of the Open Space Plan (OSP) approved in 2016 is to guide the acquisition, development, and disposition of open spaces in the County. It provides specific guidance regarding the development of assets within the open space system and site-specific capital improvements.
- At the May 11, 2021 Council meeting, Sturgeon County's open space vision was described as "to protect, preserve, and promote the County's beautiful and surprising natural spaces".
- The development and effective management of open space is critical to community well-being and helps maintain and enhance strong communities and a sense of belonging, pride, and connection
- COVID-19 highlighted the value and need for passive and natural spaces and amenities that foster healthy lifestyles in rural communities.
- The 2016-approved OSP recommended a high-level 5-year progress review and update. This review was approved at the June 8, 2021 Council meeting. The focus was on the following:
  - Define County open space based on the asset inventory;
  - Consolidate and prioritize regional open space plans;
  - Revise open space and trail typologies and level of service (LOS) standards and define principles;
  - Enhance decision-making tools for capital projects and the acquisition and disposition of open space;
  - Enhance environmental stewardship tools and strategies;
  - Develop additional maps and visuals spatializing the County vision; and
  - Define the scope of regional partnerships.

**Key Findings and Recommendations**

- The Open Space Plan (2022) Review and Update will be an appendix report to the approved Open Space Plan (2016).
- A key recommendation is the development of 16 typologies included in three primary categories (transects): 1. wild and natural areas, 2. working landscapes, and 3. developed areas. These typologies are more reflective of a rural landscape, including wetlands, grasslands, reclaimed resource extraction areas, urban forests, and urban streetscapes. The transects and a couple of typology examples are provided in Attachment 1.
- The acquisition of Environmental and Municipal Reserves (ER/MR) for new development will be guided by the proposed minimum and

	<p>maximum parcel sizes and high-level human and ecological activities suggested for each site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The OSP recommends the use of a Capital Project Scoring Matrix to assess and prioritize projects provided in Attachment 2.</li> <li>• The review includes 15 policy recommendations that should influence new policy and amendments to both existing statutory plans and non-statutory provided in Attachment 3.</li> <li>• Administration is proposing that <i>four key policy recommendations out of the 15</i> be accepted now by Council to guide open space planning and capital investments for the next 5 years as outlined in the recommendation above.</li> <li>• A comprehensive review of best practices and leading trends was completed.</li> <li>• The County maintains approximately 1,695 hectares of public open space, which was formally inventoried and mapped during this process.</li> <li>• The draft OSP Review and Update document is provided in Attachment 4.</li> </ul> <p><u>External Communication</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The intent of this review was to assess progress made on the OSP and to address gaps in the original OSP to advance the Open Space Program area. It will guide how resources are allocated to Open Space planning, investments, and management. The OSP and its updated document will be made available to the public on the County website.</li> </ul> <p><u>Relevant Policy/Legislation/Practices</u></p> <p>The OSP is a non-statutory plan. The Municipal Development Plan states under RG 1.3: <i>Developing and adopting Management Plans, Master Plan and Strategies that align with the vision and direction of the MDP and Capital Region Growth Plan.</i></p>
<p><b>Implication of Administrative Recommendation</b></p>	<p><u>Strategic Alignment:</u></p> <p>Open Space investment is a key priority for Council. The OSP assesses progress and identifies key recommendations to enhance alignment with the objectives of the County’s Strategic Plan by setting a direction, outcomes, and goals.</p> <p><b>Operational Excellence</b> – Enhancing mechanisms for land management that are consistent with legislation, master plans, policies, and procedures.</p> <p><b>Thriving Communities</b> – Committing the proposed resources to this project will support the development of integrated natural spaces and trail systems, cultivating safe, beautiful, and complete communities.</p> <p><b>Planned Growth</b> – Correcting open space deficiencies and defining new development expectations demonstrates Sturgeon County’s commitment to fund asset improvements that affect residents, advancing Council’s strategic priority of enhanced recreational and green infrastructure.</p>

	<p><b>Collaborative Governance</b> – Endorsing this project plan would reinforce Council’s commitment to ongoing community consultation and engagement and leveraging regional partnerships</p> <p><b>Environmental Stewardship</b> – OSP makes key recommendations to assess, identify and sustainably manage County land and new acquisitions which highlights Council’s commitment to sustainable land management.</p> <p><u>Organizational:</u> Subject to Council direction, further planning and implementation of the recommendations over the next five years to enhance open space will impact budget decisions and the allocation of resources. The OSP will inform the Open Space Program area to plan its work, as well as define what skills will be necessary for new positions and contracted services. Additional work to enhance collaboration among impacted departments will be advanced, e.g., operations, structure, service levels, staff capacity.</p> <p><u>Financial:</u> The OSP provides a framework for Council consideration to assist with prioritizing and allocating funds to investments in open space. A consolidated Plan coordinates processes and standards to enable Administration to provide a well-defined project list for Council’s consideration. Council approved Budget 2022, which includes \$1,573,875 for the Open Space Program.</p>
<b>Alternatives Considered</b>	No alternatives were considered.
<b>Implications of Alternatives</b>	None.
<b>Follow up Action</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prepare the OSP and Update to post on the County website and share with relevant stakeholders (Open Space Lead/Community Services, Q2 2022).</li> <li>2. Prepare a well-defined project list for Council’s consideration for the 2022 approved budget (Open Space Lead/Community Services, Q2 2022).</li> <li>3. Initiate process to prepare Open Space budget for the next three years for Council’s consideration (Open Space Lead/Community Services, Q2 2022).</li> </ol>
<b>Attachment(s)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attachment 1: Open Space Transects</li> <li>2. Attachment 2: Open Space Capital Project Scoring Matrix</li> <li>3. Attachment 3: Open Space Plan 15 Recommendations</li> <li>4. Attachment 4: Open Space Plan Review and Update</li> </ol>
<b>Report Reviewed by:</b>	<p>Karolina Drabik, Open Space Lead, Family &amp; Community Services</p> <p>Reegan McCullough, County Commissioner – CAO</p>

## Strategic Alignment Checklist

**Vision:** *Offering a rich tapestry of historical, cultural, and natural experiences, Sturgeon County is a municipality that honours its rural roots and cultivates desirable communities. Uniquely situated to provide world-class agricultural, energy, and business investment opportunities, the County prioritizes responsible stewardship and dreaming big.*

**Guiding Principles:** Collaboration | Accountability | Flexibility | Excellence | Safety | Future Readiness | Affordability | Innovation

Community Outcome	Not consistent	Consistent	N/A
<b>Planned Growth</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internationally competitive to attract, grow and sustain diverse businesses; tenacious focus on new growth and innovation</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modern broadband and digital capabilities</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low cost, minimal red-tape regulations</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reliable and effective infrastructure planning; comprehensive land use and infrastructure planning</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Thriving Communities</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beautiful, surprising places with high standards; integrated natural spaces &amp; trail systems; healthy and resilient</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging cultural, historical, and civic amenities; strong community identity and pride</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safe, welcoming, and diverse communities; small community feel and personal connection; commitment to high quality of life</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Environmental Stewardship</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean air, land, and water; Carbon neutral municipal practices; circular economy opportunities</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conservation of natural areas and agricultural lands; enhanced greening and biodiversity; safekeeping ecosystems</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable development; partnerships with industry and others to drive emission reductions</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Collaborative Governance</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Predictable and stable external relationships; volunteer partnerships</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meaningful connections with Indigenous communities</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing community consultation and engagement; transparent and action-oriented decision making based on sound rationale</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respectful and informed debate; clear and supportive governance processes</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Operational Excellence</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaged and effective people – Council, Admin and Volunteers; continuous learning and improvement mindset; nimble and bold, with strong leadership</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality cost-effective service delivery; robust procurement and operational practices and policies; asset management and performance measurement; careful debt and reserve stewardship; long-term financial planning and sustainability</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Future focused thinking to proactively respond to emerging opportunities and challenges</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternative revenue generation and service delivery models integrated strategic and business planning</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>