

10.0 Summary: Consolidated List of Recommendations & Policy Direction

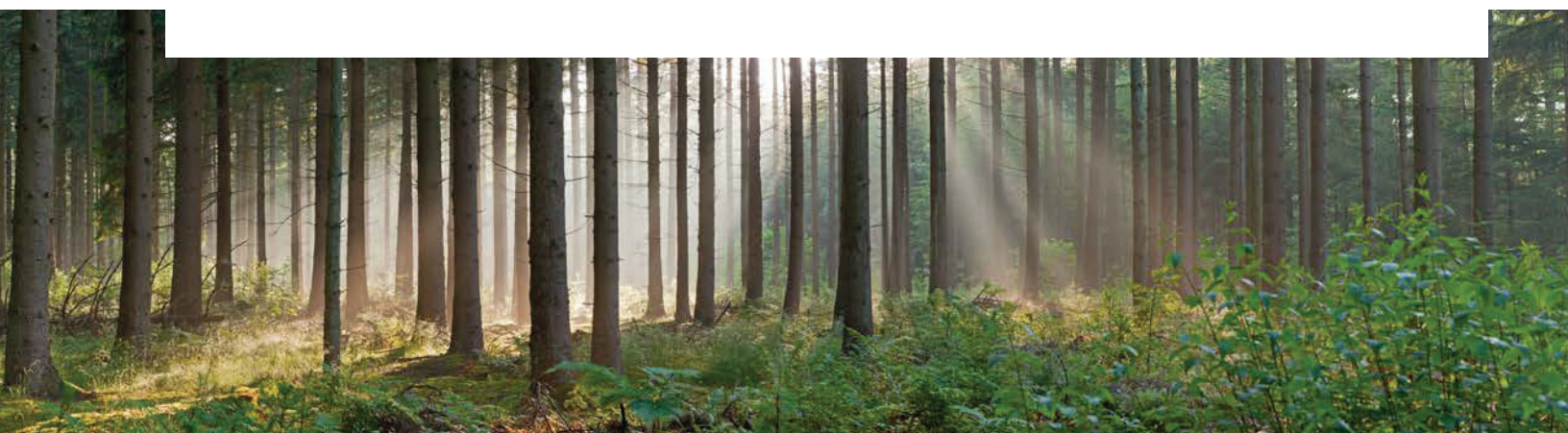
This update to the 2016 Open Space plan provides two main changes. First, the update rationalizes how open space is classified by including a new transect with four categories and 16 classifications of open space. This process identified that the County does not have an excess of any one category, and that there is a need to develop new types of open space as the County grows and population increases. Secondly, an evaluation tool was developed that will help to prioritize various projects against one another, ensure alignment with County-supported goals and objectives and to improve upon projects prior to implementing them.

Throughout the document, 15 policy directions were included and are summarized as follows:

Policy Direction #1: open space policies and the way in which sites are planned and developed needs to strike a fine balance between maximizing human recreation potential and ensuring ecosystems can

Policy Direction #2: open space planning and design should be coordinated with the desired community outcomes that have been identified in the 2021 Sturgeon County Strategic Plan for 2022-2025 as each of the guiding principles, community outcomes and the overall vision are directly relevant to open space planning.

Policy Direction #3: formulate policies so that they consider ecological impacts at a County-wide or watershed scale opposed to limiting impacts at a site scale. Partnerships with entities such as Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute (ABMI), is recommended.



Policy Direction #4: apply national, provincial and regional trends and leading practices into newly proposed capital project plans to determine alignment and support project selection.

Policy Direction #5: promote education of Sturgeon County residents and landowners on the value of protecting natural systems and forge a stronger environmental ethic: value in a balanced sense that considers a balance of ecological, human health and monetary benefits.

Policy Direction #6: the County's asset management system needs to include the inventory of public open space, recreational amenities and all parks assets. The asset management plan must address the needs for infrastructure renewal while having equal importance on preserving natural systems.

Policy Direction #7: Sturgeon County is encouraged to create development guidelines and policy that includes principles of biodiversity and low impact development to help prioritize the protection of the natural environment.

Policy Direction #8: ensure that there is a strong representation of open space typologies right across the transect provided, adding inventory to the open space network in areas that the system is deficient in as development continues and Municipal Reserve dedications and land swapping opportunities become available.

Policy Direction #9: prohibit the disposition of open space given the low supply of open space across the transect of different typologies. Develop a focus on enhancement of existing typologies and conduct a more detailed enhancement plan for key open spaces to more precisely delineate appropriate uses, setback requirements and environmental enhancement initiatives.

Policy Direction #10: encourage public education and develop stronger partnerships with private landowners to help preserve in-tact natural areas and to promote biodiversity, such as the Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) program that is common here in Alberta.

Policy Direction #11: implement the practice of completing the Capital Project Scoring Matrix for Parks and Open Space for all future projects to help prioritize projects against one another, and to identify areas where improvements can be made to the project charter prior and terms of reference prior to proceeding.

Policy Direction #12: internal policy should mandate a collaborative environment amongst administrative staff to help with the planning, delivery, implementation and long-term management of open space projects. Administrative structure should foster support from different departments to help deliver capital projects related to open space and to maintain open spaces in the long-term.

Policy Direction #13: work with private landowners adjacent to ER or MR areas to explore other tools such as conservation easements, giving land through land trusts or other private initiatives in key locations of critical ecological significance to create added buffers to ER or MR or establish stepping stones to and amongst regional ecological systems.

Policy Direction #14: conduct a County-wide review of ecological systems and update the 1989 Environmentally Sensitive Areas Technical Report to review all public land as well as privately held lands that may qualify as ER, CR or be candidates for conservation easements.

Policy Direction #15: put an emphasis on promoting the Green Acreages Program to help build a stronger environmental ethic amongst residents, and to help establish more ecological stepping stones.