

Request for Decision

Title	Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Recommendations Implementation - Bylaw 1597/22 - Amendment to Land Use Bylaw 1385/17 – Diversified Agriculture - First Reading
Proposed Motion	That Council give first reading of Bylaw 1597/22.
Administrative Recommendation	That Council give first reading of Bylaw 1597/22, which reflects the Land Use Bylaw related recommendations of the Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Task Force, to allow for the proposed amendments to proceed to a Public Hearing to receive feedback from interested / affected parties.
Previous Council / Committee Direction	<p><u>April 12, 2022 Regular Council Meeting</u> Motion 130/22: That Council direct Administration to bring forward amendments to the Land Use Bylaw that would enact associated Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Task Force recommendations at the May 3, 2022, Council meeting, for consideration of first reading and scheduling of a Public Hearing.</p>
Report	<p><u>Background Information</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On March 9, 2021, Council passed Bylaw 1538/21, which supported an Agribusiness and Agritourism Review to be conducted through a community-based Task Force. • This Task Force was designed to evaluate and bring forward recommendations to Council related to economic opportunities, regulatory requirements, landowner perspectives, and overall best practices. The scope of the Agribusiness and Agritourism Review, and the Task Force, was as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evaluate the current state of agribusiness and agritourism in Sturgeon County, including economic impact; any real or perceived barriers to agribusiness or agritourism growth and success; and identify the needs and expectations of Sturgeon County’s businesses and landowners. ○ Review local, provincial, and national agribusiness and agritourism regulatory best practices. ○ Investigate and recommend appropriate licensing requirements or regulations related to hosting events on agricultural parcels.

- Evaluate the real or perceived impacts (positive and negative) that agribusiness and agritourism operations of different types and sizes have on surrounding landowners.
 - Recommend and undertake an engagement and communication strategy with key stakeholders.
 - Produce a “What We Heard” report summarizing the consultation feedback and comments.
 - Present a Final Report containing the Task Force findings and recommendations on potential regulations and policy for Council consideration.
- On April 12, 2022, the Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Task Force presented their Recommendations Report to Council. The Task Force recommendations are as follows (for more details see the Final Report attached to this RFD):
 1. That the following amendments to the Land Use Bylaw be supported:

Add the following Definitions of Uses

 - **Event Venue** means a use primarily intended to hold events and includes the provision of facilities to enable entertainment, public assembly, and/or the preparation of food and beverage services. This use does not include bed and breakfast, recreation facilities, visitor accommodation, or home-based business.
 - **Diversified Agriculture** means an agricultural use that brings additional traffic to the agricultural parcel than those anticipated in the AG - Agriculture District. Typical activities include value added agricultural processing, retail sales of agricultural products and products complementary and accessory to the agricultural use, and allows for commercial experiences related to the enjoyment, education, or activities and events related to farming or farm life. This use does not include home based business, intensive agriculture, event venue, agriculture support services, Cannabis Production and Distribution, or Cannabis Retail Sales.

Update the following Terminology

 - **Event** means a limited term commercial activity or gathering that may include entertainment, food and beverage services, additional parking, and other additional services. Examples may include weddings, ceremonies, retreats, parties, corporate functions, concerts, tradeshow, markets, and farm suppers.
 - **Guest Unit** means an attached or detached room, cottage, cabin, yurt, or campsite that is designed to be used as temporary accommodations for one or more people. All guest units provide for sleeping and sanitation, although sanitation may be provided through shared bathrooms. A guest unit may be equipped with a partial kitchen.

Amend AG – Agriculture District

- To include **Event Venue** as a discretionary use (AG Major/AG Minor and AG Res parcels)
- to include **Diversified Agriculture** as a permitted use.

Create a new **AG-2 District**

- that supports more intensive and diversified agricultural uses as permitted uses.

Process **other amendments** as required to support alignment and consistency across the Land Use Bylaw.

2. That a public communications plan be developed and implemented regarding the updated bylaw / regulations, educating residents on what Diversified Agriculture is and is not.
3. That Council support municipal fee waivers for rezoning and/or development permitting fees for 2022, for existing agritourism, agribusiness and event venue operators needing to come into compliance with the new regulations.
4. That ongoing agribusiness and agritourism economic development opportunities be considered through the Economic Development Advisory Board and the Agricultural Service Board, and that Council explore additional governance options (sub-committees, etc.) for this sector in the future.
5. That County Administration internally trial an “Impact Matrix” for new Diversified Agriculture applications, assessing the tangible effect of applications and assessing their appropriate use classification, with results brought back for Council by August 2024 to determine effectiveness and potential implementation.

Recommendation Implementation Actions

- Recommendation 1 (Land Use Bylaw Amendments to Facilitate Diversified Agriculture) – The proposed amendments to the Land Use Bylaw are captured within this report, and first reading of the amendment bylaw is proposed.
- Recommendation 2 (Public Communications Plan) – A public communications plan has been prepared in draft, with associated implementation and resourcing requirements. These will be confirmed following the Public Hearing of the Land Use Bylaw and the plan will be brought forward for Council’s consideration with the final proposed reading(s) of the Land Use Bylaw amendments.
- Recommendation 3 (Temporary Fee Waivers for Existing Operators) – Council may approve temporary fee waivers, per the Fees and Charges Bylaw, via a Council resolution. The waivers would take effect for a prescribed type of applicant and application type and would be effective for the duration of 2022. This motion would be brought forward for Council consideration concurrently with third reading of the amended Land Use Bylaw, if it proceeds.

- Recommendation 4 (Ongoing Economic Development Opportunities at Municipal Boards) – Administration will bring forward proposed amendments to the mandate letters of the Economic Development Advisory Board and the Agricultural Service Board to the May 12, 2022 Governance and Council Services Committee meeting, as the approval of mandate letters is within that Committee’s mandate as delegated by Council.
- Recommendation 5 (Application Matrix Trial) – Administration has noted this recommendation and will prepare and trial a matrix in the manner described in the Task Force report, for Council consideration before August 2024. The intensity matrix would be designed to assist in determining impacts of proposed development and may require conditions of development. The intensity matrix will also be used to determine a proposal’s use between the Intensive Agriculture, Diversified Agriculture and Agriculture Support Service uses.

Recommendation 1 - Proposed Land Use Bylaw Amendments

Administration reviewed the Task Force Recommendations with an eye to making sure the recommendations can be implemented while also ensuring functionality of the Land Use Bylaw (LUB) as a whole. As such, the following amendments, consistent with the recommendations, are proposed:

- Create a Diversified Agriculture use to be placed within the AG – Agriculture district as a permitted use.
- Diversified Agriculture means an agricultural use that brings additional traffic or impacts to the parcel than activities anticipated in the Extensive livestock or Extensive and Intensive agriculture uses. Typical activities include value added agricultural processing, retail sales of agricultural products and products complementary and accessory to the agricultural use, and allows for commercial experiences related to the enjoyment, education, or activities and events related to farming or farm life. This use does not include home based business, visitor accommodation, intensive agriculture, event venue, agriculture support services, Cannabis Production and Distribution, or Cannabis Retail Sales.
- Modify the definitions of Intensive Agriculture, and Agriculture Support Service to ensure the distinction between the new Diversified Agriculture use.
- Create regulations for Diversified agriculture and Agriculture support services.
- Create a new district AG 2 – Agriculture 2 district to provide an option to support agriculture developments that are a greater impact and intensity than typical uses under the AG - Agriculture district.
- Create an Event venue use to be placed within the AG – Agriculture district as a discretionary use and within the AG 2 – Agriculture 2 as a permitted use.

- Add Community Building as a permitted use to commercial districts C1, C2, and C3 as permitted uses and to AP (Airport Support District) as a discretionary use.
- Modify the definitions of Community building, Recreation facility – indoor, Religious assembly, and Resort to better delineate due to the inclusion of event venues.
- Create regulations for Event venues and Community buildings.
- Additional proposed changes to the Land Use Bylaw, including:
 - Add / modify terminology for Value Added Agricultural Processing, Campsite, Guest unit, and Event.
 - Add / modify parking regulations.
 - Clerical change to Industrial uses.
- The above amendments are captured within the proposed amending bylaw attached to this Request for Decision (RFD).

External Communication

- The Task Force conducted an engagement of local agribusiness operators and area residents, in accordance with its Council approved communications and engagement plan.
- Land Use Bylaw amendments will require public hearing at which time members of the public will be able to make submissions regarding the proposed amendments.

Relevant Policy/Legislation/Practices

- Agribusiness Agritourism Review Task Force Recommendations Report, April 2022
- Bylaw 1538/21 – Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Task Force Bylaw
- Sturgeon County Strategic Plan
- Sturgeon County Land Use Bylaw
- Sturgeon County Economic Development Strategy

Implication of Administrative Recommendation

Strategic Alignment:

Planned Growth – Task Force recommendations are meant to provide future focused planning and investment certainty for those in agribusiness and agritourism industries. Sturgeon County will continue to be a low cost, internationally competitive location to conduct business.

Collaborative Governance – Having community members engaged in the Task Force also showcases a collaborative and transparent approach to governance while still providing for Council authority and decision-making. Resident engagement in policy formation was a key facet of the process.

Organizational Excellence – The Task Force’s report is designed to position the municipality well into the future, to proactively respond to opportunities and challenges.

	<p><u>Organizational:</u> Providing more intensive uses of agricultural lands may increase volumes of both permit applications as well as complaints which may require additional staff resources over time.</p> <p><u>Financial:</u> Allowing more intensive uses of agricultural lands may trigger increased impacts to transportation and utility networks. These impacts would require case by case consideration.</p>
Alternatives Considered	Council could choose to support some or none of the Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Task Force’s Recommendations.
Implications of Alternatives	<p><u>Strategic Alignment:</u> Planned Growth – Choosing not to support clarity on event venue and agritourism related uses could result in continued investment and neighbour uncertainty within the County. Choosing to amend the recommendations would require a case-by-case analysis of the impacts.</p> <p>Collaborative Governance – Rejection of the Task Force’s recommendations would be seen as misaligned with collaborative decision making.</p> <p><u>Organizational:</u> Additional time and effort from Sturgeon County Administration enforcing uses and activities not currently defined or regulated in the Land Use Bylaw.</p> <p><u>Financial:</u> Potential for increased enforcement of non-compliant uses, incurring both legal and other related costs.</p>
Follow up Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Schedule a public hearing with respect to the Bylaw (Planning & Development Services, June 2022). 2. Bring forward other recommendation implementation matters for consideration concurrent with Land Use Bylaw amendment finalization (Planning & Development Services, June 2022).
Attachment(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attachment 1: Bylaw 1597/22 2. Attachment 2: Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Task Force Final Recommendations Report
Report Reviewed by:	<p>Bonnie McInnis, Manager, Planning & Development Services</p> <p>Tyler Westover, Director, Economic Development & Ecosystem Services</p> <p>Jesse Sopko, General Manager, Corporate Services</p> <p>Travis Peter, General Manager, Development & Strategic 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
Planned Growth			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internationally competitive to attract, grow and sustain diverse businesses; tenacious focus on new growth and innovation 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modern broadband and digital capabilities 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low cost, minimal red-tape regulations 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliable and effective infrastructure planning; comprehensive land use and infrastructure planning 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thriving Communities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beautiful, surprising places with high standards; integrated natural spaces & trail systems; healthy and resilient 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging cultural, historical, and civic amenities; strong community identity and pride 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe, welcoming, and diverse communities; small community feel and personal connection; commitment to high quality of life 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Environmental Stewardship			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean air, land, and water; Carbon neutral municipal practices; circular economy opportunities 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation of natural areas and agricultural lands; enhanced greening and biodiversity; safekeeping ecosystems 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable development; partnerships with industry and others to drive emission reductions 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Collaborative Governance			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predictable and stable external relationships; volunteer partnerships 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meaningful connections with Indigenous communities 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing community consultation and engagement; transparent and action-oriented decision making based on sound rationale 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respectful and informed debate; clear and supportive governance processes 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Operational Excellence			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged and effective people – Council, Admin and Volunteers; continuous learning and improvement mindset; nimble and bold, with strong leadership 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future focused thinking to proactively respond to emerging opportunities and challenges 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative revenue generation and service delivery models integrated strategic and business planning 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>