

## Briefing Note

<b>Title</b>	<b>5:00 p.m. Public Hearing – Bylaw 1597/22 - Diversified Agriculture - Amendment to Land Use Bylaw 1385/17 - Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Recommendations Implementation</b>
<b>Issue</b>	To provide an opportunity for members of the public to submit their comments regarding Bylaw 1597/22, following amendments made at second reading.
<b>Previous Council / Committee Direction</b>	<p><u>September 13, 2022 Regular Council Meeting</u> Motion 339/22: That Council give second reading of Bylaw 1597/22 as amended.</p> <p>Motion 340/22: That Council schedule a Regular Council Meeting on October 6, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. in Council Chambers for the purpose of holding a second Public Hearing for Bylaw 1597/22.</p> <p><u>May 3, 2022 Regular Council Meeting</u> Motion 187/22: That Council give first reading of Bylaw 1597/22.</p> <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>
<b>Report</b>	<p><u>Background Information</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On March 9, 2021, Council supported the launch of an Agribusiness and Agritourism Review, to be conducted through a community-based Task Force and supported by expert advisors.</li> <li>This Review was designed, and Task Force mandated, to evaluate and bring forward recommendations to Council related to economic opportunities, regulatory requirements, landowner perspectives, and overall best practices for agribusiness and agritourism.</li> <li>The scope of the Agribusiness and Agritourism Review, and the work of the Task Force, was as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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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; and
  - 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 its Recommendations Report to Council. A summary of the Task Force's recommendations are below, with implementation status *(for more details on each recommendation see the attached Final Report – Attachment 2)*:
    - **Recommendation 1 (Land Use Bylaw Amendments to Facilitate Diversified Agriculture)** – The proposed amendments to the Land Use Bylaw are captured within the next section of this Briefing Note and are provided in Bylaw 1597/22 (Attachment 1).
    - **Recommendation 2 (Public Communications Plan)** – A public communications plan, with associated implementation and resourcing requirements, will be presented for Council's consideration with third reading of Bylaw 1597/22, if it proceeds.
    - **Recommendation 3 (Temporary Fee Waivers for Existing Operators)** – Council may cancel fees and charges for existing operators. This would be brought forward for Council consideration concurrently with third reading of Bylaw 1597/22, if it proceeds.
    - **Recommendation 4 (Ongoing Economic Development Opportunities at Municipal Boards)** – At the May 12, 2022 Governance and Council Services Committee meeting, the Committee advised that it would await approval of Land Use Bylaw amendments prior to approving revised mandate letters for Boards and Committees.
    - **Recommendation 5 (Application Matrix Trial)** – Administration 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 would also be used to determine a proposal's

use between the Intensive Agriculture, Diversified Agriculture, and Agriculture Support Service uses.

- For those operators who are currently operating non-permitted agritourism operations, this proposed bylaw amendment would provide a pathway to come into Land Use Bylaw compliance. This does not negate the need for operators to ensure building, parking, traffic, and other safety or nuisance related requirements are attended to.
- For those operators who are currently operating permitted operations, this proposed bylaw amendment would have no effect. This bylaw amendment also has no effect on operators who are engaging in ‘traditional’ agriculture activities, such as the raising of crops or livestock.

#### Recommended Land Use Bylaw Amendments

- In response to the Task Force’s first recommendation above, Administration prepared draft Land Use Bylaw amendments (through Bylaw 1597/22) that reflect the recommendation while also ensuring functionality of the Land Use Bylaw (LUB) as a whole. These proposed LUB amendments include the following:
  - 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 Service.
  - Create a new 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 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.
- **In response to the public comments from the June 14, 2022 Public Hearing** at the September 13, 2022 Council Meeting, Council gave second reading of Bylaw 1597/22 as amended, with the following changes:
  - Modified the inclusion of Event Venues within the AG 2 – Agriculture 2 to be a discretionary use instead of a permitted use and removed the inclusion of Event Venue use from the AG – Agriculture district. Essentially, this means that event venues would not be permitted at all within the AG district, and that event venues could occur in AG 2 districts, but neighbours would have the ability to appeal such a use.
  - Modified the proposed Diversified Agriculture definition to bring greater clarity by adding the words “but does not include events that are not primarily agricultural in nature, such as weddings, retreats, ceremonies, and corporate events” to the definition. Essentially, this means that weddings, retreats, ceremonies, and corporate events would not be permitted in general AG districts.
  - Removal of the recreational vehicle restriction from the *visitor accommodation* regulations to better clarify within the Bylaw the intent of the recommendations.

#### External Communication

- The review has been ongoing since early 2021. Review information has been included on the County’s website, social media, and print advertisements at several points.
- The Review Task Force developed and presented a communications and engagement plan to Council for approval, which guided its engagement efforts. Engagement occurred throughout the review with a variety of stakeholders – operators, landowners, experts, and the public – to allow for input related to agribusiness and agritourism.
- Initial engagement included an online survey to provide awareness about the review and collect input on agribusiness and agritourism practices. Respondents were specifically asked to reflect on land use compatibility and issues such as noise, odour, traffic, and parking. Respondents were also asked to provide ideas on solutions to overcome obstacles relating to agritourism and agribusiness.
- When initial definitions and core criteria were developed, a second survey was provided to agritourism and agribusiness operators and area

	<p>property owners. Information was mailed to 384 properties (36 agribusiness / event operators and 348 adjacent landowners), of which 39 responded to the survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The mailout also included an invitation for those who wanted to make a presentation to the Task Force. Fifteen people took advantage of the opportunity and either sent in their submissions or presented to the Task Force on January 20, 2022.</li> <li>• The June 14, 2022 Public Hearing for this Bylaw was advertised in the <i>Morinville Free Press</i> and <i>Redwater Review</i> for two consecutive weeks (June 1 and June 8, 2022) in accordance with the advertising requirements of section 606 of the <i>Municipal Government Act</i> (MGA).</li> <li>• Comments were requested from the County's Economic Development Advisory Board and Agricultural Service Board on the proposed amendments. Both Boards expressed overall support for the proposed amendments.</li> <li>• The second Public Hearing for this Bylaw was advertised in the <i>Morinville Free Press</i>, <i>Redwater Review</i> and in the <i>St Albert Gazette</i> for two consecutive weeks (September 21 and September 28, 2022) in accordance with the advertising requirements of section 606 of the <i>Municipal Government Act</i> (MGA).</li> </ul> <p><u>Relevant Policy/Legislation/Practices</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bylaw 1538/21 – Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Task Force Bylaw</li> <li>• Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Task Force Final Recommendations Report</li> <li>• Sturgeon County Strategic Plan</li> <li>• Sturgeon County Land Use Bylaw</li> <li>• Sturgeon County Economic Development Strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Implication</b>	<p><u>Strategic Alignment:</u></p> <p><b>Planned Growth</b> – The Task Force recommendations and amendments to the Land Use Bylaw are meant to provide future-focused planning and investment certainty for those in agribusiness and agritourism industries. Sturgeon County desires to be a low-cost, internationally competitive location to conduct business.</p> <p><b>Collaborative Governance</b> – Having community members engaged in the Task Force showcases a collaborative and transparent approach to governance while retaining Council authority and decision-making. Resident engagement in policy formation was a key facet of the process.</p> <p><b>Organizational Excellence</b> – The Task Force's report is designed to position the municipality well into the future, to proactively respond to opportunities and challenges. The proposed land use bylaw amendments attempt to apply the Task Force's recommendations while reflecting the public opinion expressed at the first Public Hearing.</p> <p><u>Organizational:</u></p> <p>Providing more intensive uses of agricultural lands may increase volumes of both permit applications and complaints, which may require additional staff resources over time.</p>

	<p><u>Financial:</u></p> <p>Allowing more intensive uses of agricultural lands may trigger increased impacts to transportation and utility networks. These impacts would require consideration on a case-by-case basis.</p>
<b>Follow Up Action</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bring Bylaw 1597/22 back to Council for consideration of third reading (Planning and Development Services, October 2022).</li> </ol>
<b>Attachment (s)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attachment 1: Bylaw 1597/22</li> <li>2. Attachment 2: Agribusiness and Agritourism Review Recommendations Report</li> <li>3. Attachment 3: Public Hearing Process</li> </ol>
<b>Report Reviewed by:</b>	<p>Bonnie McInnis, Manager, Planning &amp; Development Services</p> <p>Travis Peter, General Manager, Development &amp; 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
<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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low cost, minimal red-tape regulations</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>