

Resource Extraction Regulatory Review Implementation

Public Communications Plan

June 2023

Overview

At its regular meeting on Jan. 24, 2023, Council directed administration to bring forward a public communications plan – related to the implementation of Resource Extraction Regulatory Review (RERR) recommendations – when bylaws 1607/22 and 1608/22 are presented to Council for consideration of third reading (motion 009/23).

Subject to approval of the bylaws, the regulatory changes take effect **on** Sept. 30. In addition, administration will implement the following RERR recommendations **by** Sept. 30, 2023 (motion 010/23):

- Compile a groundwater monitoring policy and necessary management plans as required.
- Bring forward a budget recommendation for municipal compliance and education resourcing, to complement enhanced operator quarterly reporting and annual third-party validation requirements.
- Develop a new municipal communications and information platform to support all stakeholders in local resource extraction activity, inclusive of a dedicated web platform, educational materials, contact information, newsletters, and more.
- Conduct a review of the Community Aggregate Payment (CAP) Levy allocation model to reflect a greater expected revenue over time, the appropriate distribution of broad community benefit versus benefit to communities near aggregate operations, the percentage of allocations for different types of initiatives (regulatory support, community facilities, local programs, infrastructure, municipal tax relief, etc.); and the possibility for supportive policies and procedures related to the allocation of the CAP Levy.
- Review the Calahoo-Villeneuve Sand and Gravel Advisory Committee terms of reference to identify a geographic area, membership, and other elements that are reflective of known extraction areas in Sturgeon County.

Corporate Communications has prepared this preliminary communications plan to establish the overarching framework for how information will be shared with the public and stakeholders. Following approval of the bylaws, this plan will be refined to reflect the bylaws passed by Council.

This communications plan provides general direction for communicating with the public and stakeholders about resource extraction in Sturgeon County. It will be enacted if/when bylaws 1607/22 and 1608/22 are approved, and will be reviewed and amended during the implementation of the identified recommendations as well as leading up to the effective date of the bylaws to ensure adequate information sharing with the public and stakeholders, such as industry representatives, and board/committee members.

Background

The review began in 2020 with the desired outcome to help the County achieve a more competitive balance between economic, social, health and environmental outcomes related to the regulation and operation of sand and gravel (aggregate) industries.

The updated regulations consider the recommendations from the [RERR Final Report](#) as well as the input received during public consultation. The regulations better protect residents' health, safety and quality of life while positioning the County competitively and aligning with industry and municipal best practices.

The review process included extensive public engagement, where the County listened to residents', landowners' and operators' input. The County conducted surveys, interviews with industry members, several online and in-person open houses and more. A comprehensive [what we heard report](#) includes a summary of the feedback from all phases of engagement.

Goals

Sturgeon County balances the economic benefits of sand and gravel extraction with protecting the environment and residents' health and quality of life.

Objectives

To help achieve this goal, we will need to do the following:

- Landowners and sand and gravel extraction operators know about and understand the resource extraction regulatory changes in effect as of Sept. 30.

- Landowners and sand and gravel extraction operators know about the outcomes of implemented recommendations by Sept. 30.
- Sand and gravel extraction operators consult landowners on proposed and existing sand and gravel operations.
- Sand and gravel extraction operators create opportunities for information sharing and regularly share information with landowners.

Strategic Approach

Sturgeon County will communicate the outcome of Council's decision and updates during the implementation period using a variety of channels.

Audiences

Audiences include the following:

- Sturgeon County landowners, including those near existing or proposed sand and gravel extraction operations
- Existing and prospective sand and gravel extraction operators known to Sturgeon County
- Committee/board members (Calahoo-Villeneuve Sand and Gravel Extraction Committee, Transportation Advisory Committee and Economic Development Advisory Board)
- Sturgeon County employees

Tools and Tactics

As it relates to the implementation of RERR recommendations and the effective date of regulatory changes, Sturgeon County will use at least the below communication tools and tactics. The County will consider the use of other tools and tactics if appropriate for the information being shared and the audience.

- **Sturgeon County website** to provide information about regulatory changes/requirements and updates throughout the implementation period.
- **Online platform** to promote industry-hosted consultations and information sharing by industry to landowners.
- **Newsletters** to be sent to subscribers with information about regulatory changes/requirements, updates throughout the implementation period, details of industry-hosted consultations and information by industry to landowners.
- **Economic development newsletter** to include information about regulatory changes/requirements and key updates throughout the implementation period.
- **Social media (organic)** to share updates at key milestones throughout the implementation period, as well as to promote industry-hosted consultations.
- **Phone calls/emails with industry contacts** to provide information about regulatory changes/requirements and updates throughout the implementation period.
- **Emails to board/committee members** for Transportation Advisory Committee, Economic Development Advisory Board and Calahoo-Villeneuve Sand and Gravel Committee to provide information about regulatory changes/requirements and updates throughout the implementation period.

Budget

Internal budget re-allocations will be utilized to support proposed communications activities. If additional resources are required, the requirement would be brought forward for Council consideration.