

# COUNTY connections



CELEBRATING THE  
MIDDLETONS: 2023  
EXCELLENCE IN  
AGRICULTURE AWARD  
RECIPIENTS

19



[SturgeonCounty.ca](http://SturgeonCounty.ca)

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# GETTING INVOLVED

## IN STURGEON COUNTY DECISIONS

Sturgeon County makes decisions that matter to residents, which is why Council and Administration want you to be informed and involved.

You have opportunities to provide input on projects and initiatives taking shape in Sturgeon County.

### In-person opportunities

We host in-person information sessions and open houses to provide information and allow attendees to ask questions. These opportunities are promoted via the Sturgeon County website, social media, mailed letters and more! View our events at [SturgeonCounty.ca/Events](http://SturgeonCounty.ca/Events).

### Council meetings

You're encouraged to attend Council meetings and provide your input on items that matter to you. Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month, at 9 a.m. in Council Chambers, unless otherwise specified. Council meetings are

open to the public and can also be livestreamed on our website at [SturgeonCounty.ca/CouncilMeetings](http://SturgeonCounty.ca/CouncilMeetings).

You can register to speak at a Council meeting, and you can attend a public hearing – either in-person or via videoconference – and speak for up to five minutes at that hearing. You can also submit written statements via email or mail.

Learn more about upcoming Council meetings and how you can provide input at [SturgeonCounty.ca/CouncilMeetings](http://SturgeonCounty.ca/CouncilMeetings)

### Council committees

County residents also play an important advisory role to Council, including on the County's six advisory committees that provide advice and recommendations directly to Council on matters related to resource extraction, community services, economic development, transportation, agriculture and youth.

The County is also looking at new ways to engage residents directly through panels, surveys, and other channels to gather input

and suggestions. We encourage you to become actively involved in the future of your community.

### Contacting Council members

You're invited to contact the Mayor or your Councillor to share your input or ask questions. Each Council member's contact information is listed on the following pages. Learn more at [SturgeonCounty.ca/Council](http://SturgeonCounty.ca/Council).

### Contact our staff

Our staff are happy to answer your questions! You can reach us on weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. by phone at **780-939-4321** or toll-free at **1-866-939-9303**. You can also email us at [hello@sturgeoncounty.ca](mailto:hello@sturgeoncounty.ca), or stop by our offices. Sturgeon County Centre is located at:

9613 100 St.  
Morinville, AB  
T8R 1L9

## AN EPIC DAY OF GOLF, COMMUNITY & GIVING

Sturgeon County helped raise more than \$30,000 for area food banks with the Mayor's Golf Tournament held this summer.

The event – held at the renowned Sturgeon Valley Golf and Country Club – seamlessly combined the love for golf, community spirit, and charitable endeavors.

Approximately 150 golfers participated and helped us raise more than \$30,000 for local food banks: Bon Accord – Gibbons, Morinville, Redwater Fellowship of Churches, and

St. Albert Community Village. These groups provide food for Sturgeon County and area residents in need, and can also help them access community-based social agencies.

The tournament brought together a diverse mix of attendees, including industry professionals, local businesspeople, elected officials, and senior administration from neighbouring regions. It provided a unique opportunity for networking, fostering friendly competition and building relationships in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere.

Our partners played a vital role in the success of the event and had the opportunity to showcase their brands. We encourage local businesses and industry to consider



# MESSAGES FROM COUNCIL



## MESSAGE FROM MAYOR ALANNA HNATIW

587-987-2907  
ahnatiw@sturgeoncounty.ca

We are so pleased to bring back County Connections to help keep you informed of Sturgeon County's work. I've committed six years to working with the past and present Council to build a high-functioning, adaptable and resilient community. We continue to respond to the energy evolution, rising costs, provincial funding cuts, increased demand for services, and complex social situations.

As we have seen with extensive public engagement on the Resource Extraction Regulatory Review and the implementation of our diversified agriculture bylaw, our residents share Council's commitment to our community. We will continue to work to balance the priorities of residents and businesses so both can thrive.

Sturgeon County offers a variety of residential lifestyles and is an internationally competitive and supportive municipality to locate and conduct business. Last month, we approved new plans for the lands around the Villeneuve Airport, which will enable billions in additional investment and thousands of new jobs in the coming decades (see page 7). The path to approval was not easy. Upon mandatory review by the regional growth board – the Edmonton

Metropolitan Region Board – our plan was rejected, and it was only upon our appeal that the plan was approved. This process exposed the flaws in the board's voting structure, which gives more control to urban municipalities than rural municipalities and allows the City of Edmonton to veto other municipalities' plans. We're trying to change this to ensure we protect local autonomy.

We also continue to advocate for hydrogen. Our region is among the world's lowest-cost producers of low-carbon hydrogen, and as both mayor and chair of the Edmonton Region Hydrogen Hub, I'm working to support new investment and sustain our competitive advantage (see page 21).

As a Council, we're continually working hard to enhance services and respond to the needs of our residents, as you'll see showcased in this newsletter. If you'd like to discuss your priorities with us, we encourage you to attend Council meetings, contact your Councillor and get involved in our numerous public engagement opportunities.



partnering with us for the 2024 tournament; more information will be shared next month!

We thank our local partners, attendees and vendors for helping support the community.

Sturgeon County is committed to building meaningful community connections and fostering safe, beautiful communities. Events like this demonstrate our commitment and support worthwhile groups serving County residents. Previous tournament charities include Jessica Martel Memorial Foundation, Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC), West Sturgeon Aging in Place and Sturgeon Victim Services.

Stay tuned to [sturgeoncounty.ca](http://sturgeoncounty.ca) for more information about the 2024 tournament.



**MESSAGE FROM  
DIVISION 1 COUNCILLOR  
DAN DEROUIN**

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dderouin@sturgeoncounty.ca

I'm a lifelong Sturgeon County resident – my family homesteaded here in 1897 – and am proud to see many positive changes in the County.

We continue to increase the number of road and drainage projects we complete and have a Transportation Advisory Committee with eight residents and two councillors working together to improve County infrastructure.

Our trail system is ever-growing; we completed the underslung bridge over the North Saskatchewan River to connect us to the City of Fort Saskatchewan. In partnership with the Edmonton Garrison, we completed a trail along Valour Avenue adjacent to the Highway 28 overpass. Working together with Athabasca Landing Trail and River Valley Alliance, we'll continue expanding our trail system so you can enjoy the County's natural beauty.

The Sturgeon Rural Crime Watch Association now encompasses the entire County. Contact me to learn about this group, which is helping keep Sturgeon County a safe place to live.

We've increased the number of full-time and paid on-call firefighters and continue to have a special accreditation that can save you money on home insurance (see page 11).

We continue to grow our broadband network so residents and businesses can connect to high-speed internet; I look forward to bringing this to the east side of the County.

I'd like to thank MLA Shane Getson, Minister Dale Nally, and federal MP Dane Lloyd for their continued support in making Sturgeon County a great place to live, work and play.

I am proud to call Sturgeon County home. And I am honoured to serve residents and help ensure the County remains a beautiful and affordable community into the future.

We have seen many improvements over the last five years including:

- > newly paved high-traffic roads
- > intersection improvements, such as the roundabout on Starkey Road and Bellerose Drive
- > new trails and greater trail connectivity
- > improvements to outdoor spaces like Cardiff Park and Bellerose Park
- > significant progress on our drainage master plan
- > many new or rejuvenated playgrounds

In the last year alone, we've seen many exciting projects in division two. We opened

a new off-leash dog park and upgraded the trail in Bellerose Park, improved the north playground and added a new volleyball court at Cardiff Park, and upgraded the playing surface in Manor Estates II.

Our crews did significant work to repair and stabilize the slope near the walking trail in Pinnacle Ridge. We reconstructed and surfaced Coal Mine Road and completed many other road improvements through regular paving and gravel road maintenance.

We are working hard to provide our communities with the amenities and infrastructure they need while carefully managing taxes, ensuring the best for our environment and creating opportunities for economic diversification. I am grateful for what we have here and look forward to a brilliant future.



**MESSAGE FROM  
DIVISION 2 COUNCILLOR  
KRISTIN TOMS**

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Sturgeon County is a vibrant community. We take pride in lending a hand, helping our neighbours and volunteering our time.

Volunteers do a lot for the community: they support seniors programming, package and distribute food at food banks, influence decisions through boards and committees, support community members in need through Victim Services, build a safer community through the Sturgeon Rural Crime Watch Association, and so much more.

We also have dozens of individuals serving as paid on-call firefighters throughout the County. Paid on-call firefighters respond to emergencies any time of day, and attend regular training. This is a paid position, but we recognize it can mean taking time away from their families, jobs and hobbies.

I'd like to thank our volunteers and paid on-call firefighters for showing up each day to build a stronger, safer and more stable community. Your contributions are the foundation of many of our beloved events and initiatives.

To those who have not yet volunteered, I invite you to join us. Volunteering is an excellent way to connect with your neighbours and nurture the place you call home.

To explore volunteer opportunities, visit [sturgeoncounty.ca](http://sturgeoncounty.ca) or contact your Councillor to learn about opportunities in your division. Let's work together to build a place of community values, where we lend a helping hand and grow together.



**MESSAGE FROM  
DIVISION 3 COUNCILLOR  
MATTHEW MCLENNAN**

780-974-4713  
mmclennan@sturgeoncounty.ca



**MESSAGE FROM  
DIVISION 4 COUNCILLOR  
NEAL COMEAU**

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ncomeau@sturgeoncounty.ca

As a lifelong resident of Sturgeon County, I often find myself reflecting on the vital role agriculture plays in our lives. As an industry, it weaves our community together and defines our history, culture, and future.

Farmers face many challenges to get food on our table, whether it's a late frost, an early snow, or fluctuating market conditions. We're looking forward to engaging farmers as we build our Agriculture Master Plan, which will help us set a vision specific to the agriculture sector.

This plan will consider previous work by Sturgeon County – including most recently to support agribusiness and agritourism – so the agricultural sector can continue to grow and thrive. It will also reflect the Regional Agriculture Master Plan, which helps our

region plan for the future of agriculture and the agricultural sector.

I am thankful for a successful harvest and thank our farmers for doing the hard work that feeds the future.

I am honoured to serve as the representative for rural municipalities at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). Through FCM, municipalities of all sizes can advocate to the federal government for their residents' interests. As the representative for rural municipalities, I advocate on behalf of rural communities and discuss important topics like rural infrastructure, economic development and access to high-speed internet.

I am proud to be able to represent rural municipalities and Sturgeon County.



**MESSAGE FROM  
DIVISION 5 COUNCILLOR  
DEANNA STANG**

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It's been a busy year in division five and I'd like to share some highlights of the work we've accomplished.

We've invested in infrastructure in the division so we could repair bridges, fix our roads, and address historical problem areas for drainage. While we have more work to do, we continue to make progress.

We're supporting the Sturgeon Rural Crime Watch Association as it builds membership and visibility in our region. With help from our Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) department, we're working to arm our community with the knowledge needed to protect themselves and their property and prevent crime.

We continue to help local organizations build playgrounds, parks and other open

spaces. In addition, we're supporting our local community halls, which create opportunities for families to enjoy a rural way of life.

We're continuing to diversify our tax base to help ease the burden on residents. We're doing this by leading the way with our support of clean energy like hydrogen, value-added agriculture, aviation, and much more.

We are proud to support the ALUS program and promote local farmers conserving marginal lands and creating healthy habitats for wildlife.

Building strong relationships and partnerships is important: it's the foundation of our community. I welcome the opportunity to build these relationships with you, and encourage you to contact me to discuss County issues.



**MESSAGE FROM  
DIVISION 6 COUNCILLOR  
JASON BERRY**

780-999-2381  
jberry@sturgeoncounty.ca

We've worked hard to make progress in several key areas benefiting County residents.

We repaired Victoria Trail Bridge to ensure it remains safe for the public. Work included bridge truss repairs, deck replacement and regrading the approaches. Another bridge we're looking forward to upgrading is Vinca Bridge. We're pleased the Government of Alberta is providing \$60.5 million over three years to replace this critical connection to north east Sturgeon County. Construction is expected to start in 2025.

The Heartland is our primary revenue base, and employs more than 30,000 people. It allows us to pay for the programs and services we use every day as residents. See page 11 for more information.

One of the many exciting projects to look forward to in Alberta's Industrial Heartland is

the Pembina Low Carbon Complex. This will be a multi-billion-dollar industrial complex for low-carbon energy infrastructure that will help companies develop projects while reducing costs, emissions, and risks. We have a lot to look forward to in the Heartland!

We continue to involve members of the public through our boards and committees, and I encourage Division 6 residents to apply for board positions. These groups make a real difference in our community.

Another area residents are making a difference is through the Sturgeon Rural Crime Watch Association. They serve as the eyes and ears for local RCMP, and contribute to safer communities. Thank you to our volunteers, peace officers and RCMP members for your continued work to keep the community protected.



## connecting OUR COMMUNITY

Internet access is increasingly important to everyday life; it is a necessity for business, education, and personal use.

In Sturgeon County, residents and businesses report an average internet download speed of 10 Mbps (megabits per second), one-fifth of the minimum Canadian standard, with some residents reporting only 3 Mbps.

Through various public engagement initiatives, Sturgeon County identified a need for improved access throughout the region that is secure, reliable, fast, and affordable. Fibre technology was chosen for these qualities; the Sturgeon County Broadband Fibre Network sets about bringing broadband connectivity to the densest areas of the County.

Over the last year, Sturgeon County has invested \$7.55 million, and along with its partner, Canadian Fiber Optics Corporation, has created a fibre broadband network that services nearly 1,000 premises in hamlets, subdivisions, business parks, industrial parks, and along the fibre route in the southwest portion of the County.

Our residents seek a connected community, where they can live, work and play with ease. Our businesses seek to advance and innovate in various business sectors.

This developing network helps to ensure that our community has access to the level of service needed to stay connected, work efficiently, and live in a digital world.

*“Sturgeon County recognizes the significance of reliable high-speed internet in fostering economic growth, enabling efficient public services, and improving overall quality of life,” said Mayor Alanna Hnatiw.*

### Project milestones:

- > May 2022 - Open house information sessions.
- > June 2022 - Sturgeon County entered construction on Phase 1 of the Sturgeon Broadband Fibre Network.
- > February 2023 - First beta tester went live.
- > March 2023 - Installation of ONTs began. *The Optical Network Terminal converts the optical signal coming through the fibre into separate signals for devices.*
- > August 2023 - Access Agreements for Phase 1 completed.
- > September 2023 - Public engagement survey completed.

### Closing the digital divide

On August 21, 2023, the County launched a survey to engage residents, business owners, and other stakeholders to gather their feedback regarding current services, access to high-speed internet, and how improved access could positively impact and improve daily activities. This survey closed on September 29, 2023.

*“We have already invested \$7.55 million in broadband to date, and now we’re seeking community input to identify connectivity gaps and determine actions to ensure equitable access to digital opportunities,” said Hnatiw.*

This feedback will allow Sturgeon County to evaluate the need for increased digital infrastructure and investment opportunities while advocating to provincial and federal governments for funding to continue closing the digital divide in Sturgeon County.



## STURGEON COUNTY'S VILLENEUVE AIRPORT AREA IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS

The Villeneuve Airport area is poised to attract billions in investment now that new development and infrastructure plans are approved.

Sturgeon County's land use plan for the Villeneuve Airport area – the Villeneuve Airport Area - Area Structure Plan (VAA-ASP) – was approved by Council on October 10.

*“The Villeneuve Airport is a key regional asset and a primary development focus for Sturgeon County,” said Mayor Alanna Hnatiw. “It boasts the trifecta of multi-modal transportation – with air, road and rail – in addition to direct market access, existing broadband connectivity and other servicing. With our land use plan in place and our partnership with the Edmonton Regional Airports Authority, companies now have the certainty and options they need to confidently invest here.”*

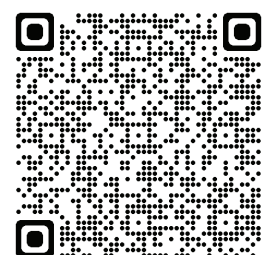
Investment is expected across many sectors including aviation and aerospace, defence, research and testing, advanced manufacturing, renewable energy research, agri-innovation and logistics. Recent economic analyses have validated the tremendous potential of the area; it's expected to create more than 1,700 new jobs over the coming decades and attract nearly \$2 billion in new development.

Work is already underway to facilitate new investment, which several companies are considering. We'll make announcements as they are confirmed.

The Villeneuve Airport is already home to 23 businesses with hundreds of employees in aircraft flight training, fixed-wing aircraft and helicopter maintenance, and aviation operations. The airport is operated by the Edmonton Regional Airports Authority, and currently generates \$61 million in economic output.



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MORE ABOUT THE VAA-ASP



# FITNESS & FUN KNOW NO BORDERS



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CAMERA TO LEARN  
ABOUT RECREATION  
OPPORTUNITIES



One of County Council's key priorities is to ensure residents have access to programs and services that contribute to their well-being and quality of life.

We know residents don't see the boundaries of municipalities; they see the opportunities.

To ensure County residents can enjoy programs and amenities in every corner of the County, Sturgeon County contributes funding to neighbouring municipalities.

The County has intermunicipal recreation agreements in place with Bon Accord, Gibbons, Legal, Morinville, Redwater, St. Albert, and the Canadian Forces Base – Edmonton Garrison. This means County residents pay the same rates and have the same access to regional recreational programs, facilities, and services, regardless of where they live.

Under these agreements, Sturgeon County contributes nearly \$3 million a year to help build, maintain, and operate local arenas, ice rinks, pools, skate parks and various recreation facilities.

*"These agreements demonstrate the County's dedication to building a strong, healthy, and engaged community," said Alanna Hnatiw, Mayor of Sturgeon County. "Collaborating with our neighbours to share recreation resources benefits everyone. We are stronger together."*

We encourage everyone to take part in the many fitness and recreation opportunities our regional partners offer throughout the County.

## Opportunities at CFB Edmonton

The Sturgeon County recreation agreement with CFB Edmonton opens the doors for Sturgeon County residents to enjoy everything the Edmonton Garrison Fitness Centre has to offer, including the following:

- > aquatic facility
- > climbing wall
- > equestrian centre
- > fieldhouse
- > golf course
- > hobby shop
- > ice rink
- > swimming pool and hot tub
- > squash courts
- > weights and cardio room
- > gym to play basketball, volleyball and more!

Plus, residents can receive up to 50 per cent off their membership fees at the Edmonton Garrison Fitness Centre. There are several different membership levels. If you have questions, please get in touch with the Membership Sales and Service Desk at **780-973-4011** extension **4694**.

*"I encourage all residents to get active and take advantage of the free and low-cost amenities and services available to them at the Edmonton Garrison, neighbouring municipalities, and through our parks and trail systems," said Hnatiw.*

Visit [SturgeonCounty.ca/Recreation](https://sturgeoncounty.ca/Recreation) for more information about the opportunities available.



# SAFE & RELIABLE ROADS

## THE STURGEON COUNTY WAY



Having safe, reliable, effective infrastructure is essential to Sturgeon County. Our people and businesses rely on our roads, and this is why infrastructure continues to be our largest budget item.

The County uses a multi-year capital budget where we identify future projects and expenses. Over the next three years, 70 per cent of this budget, at \$82 million dollars, will go towards infrastructure like roads, bridges and drainage.

With that investment, we'll upgrade more than 65 kilometres of road and maintain hundreds of kilometres of roadway. These road projects are in each division and involve both gravel and paved surfaces.

Our maintenance program covers three main areas: paved roads, gravel roads, and operational drainage.

### Paved roads

Maintaining our paved roads ensures our residents and businesses can travel safely across the County. Potholes, cracks and other road defects can cause accidents and injuries.

Sturgeon County is home to 377 kilometres of paved roads. When you report potholes, the location is passed along to our crews; they fix about 3,000 potholes every year.

These crews also provide sign maintenance, annual street sweeping, removing items from roads (fallen trees, garbage, dead animals, etc.), bridge deck repair, line painting, crack sealing, and concrete curb and gutter repairs.

The County's Pavement Preservation Program uses many different treatment types to preserve our roads. They all play an important role in preserving our roads and keeping them safe.

### Gravel roads

The County has an extensive network of gravel roads totalling 1,400 kilometres. This requires a lot of equipment!

Sturgeon County has 11 graders that also double as snowplows in the winter. But, during the warmer months, they're busy on our gravel roads. A three-year cycle is in place to ensure that surface gravel is in peak condition for traffic.

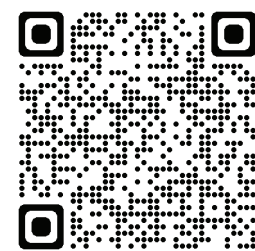
Drainage improvements at selected locations are also done along with roadside brushing.

### Operational drainage

Effective drainage is important to protect residents and property from flooding, especially during heavy rainfall events. It also helps to prevent waterlogged areas, which reduces erosion and enhances water quality in local streams and rivers.

The County has more than 9,800 culverts and 3,400 linear kilometres of ditches to maintain. Our crews are busy from the spring – with emergency response to mitigate flooding – right through to the warmer weather when an average of 140 culverts are replaced and 20 kilometres of ditches are improved.

Road maintenance is not just about repairing asphalt or fixing potholes; it's about keeping all of us safely connected with our families and our community. This investment in our roads ensures safe and efficient travel, helps with economic growth, and leads to all of us being able to travel our roads with confidence.



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## RESTORING & ENHANCING NATURAL LANDSCAPES WITH ALUS

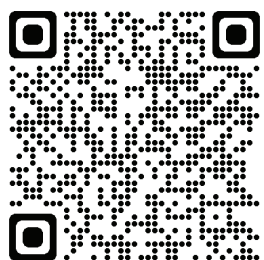
Sturgeon County's ALUS program supports farmers and ranchers by helping support projects that produce ecosystem services – like wetlands, restored tallgrass prairie and eco-buffers – on their land.

The program was launched in summer 2021, and provides annual payments for the management and maintenance of these important projects. Projects can include livestock watering systems, exclusion fencing for waterbodies, planting shelterbelts or eco-buffers, reforestation, pollinator planting areas, erosion control, fencing and watering systems for adaptive-multi paddock grazing, or installing bird nests or other habitat features.

Sturgeon County's ALUS program aims to value, protect and promote both the agricultural community and the region's unique and precious natural environment through the implementation of on-the-ground projects that rebuild, retain, and reconstruct natural areas such as wetlands, grasslands, riparian and treed areas.

In every ALUS community, staff works closely with landowners to develop and support projects that are best suited to local needs and priorities, and the ALUS Sturgeon Program Coordinator works with farmers and ranchers to help establish these projects. Through the ALUS projects, ALUS Sturgeon participants help produce cleaner water, cleaner air, and more biodiversity including pollinator habitat, for the benefit of everyone in the community.

If you are a farmer or rancher in Sturgeon County and are interested in ALUS Sturgeon, contact the Conservation Program Coordinator at **587-570-8712**.



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MORE ABOUT THE  
ALUS PROGRAM

# COUNTY RESIDENTS MAY QUALIFY FOR CHEAPER INSURANCE RATES

Many Sturgeon County residents can save money on their home insurance premiums for fire coverage due to the County's enhanced fire protection measures.

The County once again earned its accreditation through the Fire Underwriters Survey to provide Superior Tanker Shuttle Service (STSS). This recognizes the County's access to approved water sources and its ability to shuttle water during emergencies which can significantly reduce property damage in the event of a fire.

*"This accreditation is a testament to our commitment to provide top-tier fire protection services for our residents," said Acting Fire Chief Brad Reid. "We're proud that our efforts can help save residents money, especially when many costs continue to increase."*

Criteria for reduced rates includes:

- > Properties are located within eight kilometres of the Bon Accord, Calahoo, Gibbons, Legal, Morinville, Namao or Redwater fire stations.
- > Properties are located within five kilometres of a recognized municipal water supply.

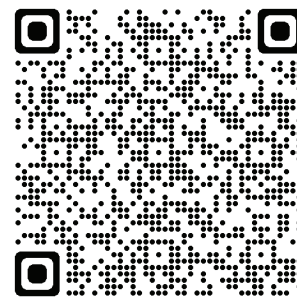
See if your property is eligible using our interactive map, and download the paperwork your insurance provider needs at [SturgeonCounty.ca/PropertyFireInsurance](https://SturgeonCounty.ca/PropertyFireInsurance)

If you think you qualify based on the above criteria, contact your insurance provider to discuss applying the STSS accreditation to your policy. If an insurance company does not recognize the STSS accreditation, consider seeking quotes from other providers who acknowledge the community's improved fire protection standards.

Additionally, if your property is not eligible but is located near or borders qualifying areas, reach out to insurance providers as some companies may extend the benefits of the STSS accreditation based on proximity.

Sturgeon County first became accredited in 2017 and must recertify every five years. The latest accreditation is valid until 2028.

Contact Protective Services at **780-939-8400** with any questions.



SCAN THIS QR CODE WITH YOUR SMARTPHONE CAMERA TO SEE IF YOUR PROPERTY IS ELIGIBLE



## SUPPORTING INDUSTRY THAT SUPPORTS OUR COMMUNITY

Sturgeon County is home to Alberta's Industrial Heartland, which is one of the world's most attractive locations for chemical, petrochemical, oil, and gas investment.

The Heartland is home to more than 40 companies that employ more than 30,000 people directly and indirectly. In addition to employing many of our residents, the Heartland provides millions of dollars in non-residential tax revenues to Sturgeon County, which is the County's primary revenue source.

With this tax revenue, the County can fund its operations, which benefits all property owners. It enables the County to fund emergency services, social and environmental programs, roads and bridges, parks and recreational opportunities, and so much more.

Sturgeon County is committed to investing in the Heartland so it can continue attracting global investors. For example, the County is working with its partners to expand water infrastructure in the area, so future investors have reliable access to affordable, safe water far into the future.

Building infrastructure is costly and can take many years to finalize, but is good news for the community. It will result in greater investment in the Heartland and, in turn, will generate new jobs for our residents and increase municipal revenues that will fund important local services.

# UPGRADING PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, & OPEN SPACES



BRISTOL OAKS

Parks, playgrounds, and open spaces are important to our community.

They offer residents a place to unwind, exercise, and connect with nature, fostering physical and mental well-being. Parks and playgrounds are where neighbours and families can come together to build strong community bonds.

This is why parks and open spaces are an essential part of Sturgeon County's commitment to building safe, welcoming, and beautiful communities.

Our open spaces include natural ecosystems such as forested areas and wetlands, parks and playgrounds, trails, and sports fields.

When planning new open spaces, parks, or trails, Sturgeon County gathers input from residents, developers and County administration. These ideas are used to transform undeveloped land into the park spaces used by residents and visitors throughout the County.

Guiding this planning is the County's Open Spaces Master Plan. This is a high-level document that ensures the work the County is doing suits both the current and future needs of residents. The plan is reviewed every five years to evaluate progress and identify any trends that might set a new course for development.

During the summer of 2022, the County reviewed the master plan and held community consultations to ask residents what they wanted and what improvements were needed in area parks. The community provided feedback that helped shape the Parks Refresh Program. The full report can be viewed at [SturgeonCounty.ca](https://sturgeoncounty.ca).

In Spring 2023, as part of the Parks Refresh Program, construction began in nine parks to install new playground equipment, create new amenities, and make significant improvements to modernize the areas and enhance safety and accessibility.

## 2023 projects included:

- 1) **Crestview Heights Park:** We installed new playground equipment and made other site improvements such as installing two benches, two picnic tables and a trash can.
- 2) **Cardiff Park:** We expanded the playground equipment for younger children at north playground. We also installed two new benches, added a new volleyball court, and improved the on-site washrooms.
- 3) **Bristol Oaks:** We installed a new playground structure.
- 4) **Manor Estates II:** We replaced the existing paved area with new asphalt, which is the foundation for an ice rink in the winter and court sports in the summer. Other site improvements include adding four benches, a trash can and two picnic tables.

# MOVING PEOPLE AND GOODS SAFELY AND EFFICIENTLY INTO THE FUTURE

Sturgeon County's Transportation and Engineering department is working to develop a Transportation Master Plan (TMP) to guide transportation investments within the County for the next 10 years.

A TMP helps address growing congestion and mobility challenges, making sure people and goods can move around the County efficiently. It helps make sure we have transportation options that enhance the quality of life for residents and supports growth.

Community participation was a cornerstone of the TMP's development. Through an online platform, residents shared their vision for what the County's future transportation network would look like. This feedback was used to refine and prioritize recommendations in the TMP.

- > **Objective 1:** Regional & County Integration. The County will ensure transportation priorities align with regional transportation objectives

showing a shared commitment to helping future growth and regional connections.

- > **Objective 2:** Asset Management: The County will maintain a fleet of road maintenance equipment to continue to provide regular maintenance and repairs to County roads.
- > **Objective 3:** Economy: The County will invest in the transportation network to support industrial and economic growth

**5) Bellerose Park:** We opened a new off-leash dog park in September and plan to construct a nature playground in 2024, along with other site improvements like a non-motorized hand boat launch to access Sturgeon River.

**6) Braun Village:** This site was identified during Council’s multi-year budget process for a new amenity. Community consultation is now underway to determine the right location and amenity for this space.

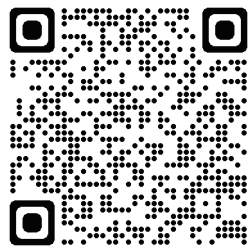
**7) Cameron Park:** The community has expressed desire for a non-motorized hand boat launch for canoes or fishing. Work is now underway to determine the project scope for construction.

These are just some highlights of the work that took place this year in Sturgeon County’s parks. We’re proud that this work was guided by the valuable input from our residents and stakeholders.

As we look ahead to 2024 and beyond, we anticipate great things for our parks, playgrounds, and trails system. There are significant upgrades planned for Cardiff Park and Bellerose River Walk and several other neighbourhood playgrounds.

Follow along with our progress at [SturgeonCounty.ca/ParksRefresh](https://SturgeonCounty.ca/ParksRefresh).

SCAN THIS QR CODE WITH YOUR SMARTPHONE CAMERA TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PARKS REFRESH



> **Objective 4:** Transportation Safety: The County will provide safe roads, sidewalks and trails and keep these in mind when designing and constructing transportation projects.

> **Objective 5:** Active Transportation: The County will create trails and pathway connections throughout the County, specifically in the places where you work, play, and live.

While the existing road network – including provincial highways and a mix of rural and urban roads – can handle the anticipated growth, there are areas identified for enhancement. Topping the list are improvements to Sturgeon Road, the extension of 127 Street to Sturgeon Road, and phase one of a new east-west arterial

road. Additionally, the County is dedicated to maintaining its roads through programs such as Intersection Improvement and Pavement Preservation.

The TMP reflects the importance of diversifying our transportation network. The County’s multi-use trail network underscores this focus. With the growing population in areas like Sturgeon Valley, the need to prioritize pedestrian safety while accommodating all road users has become a top priority. This reaffirms the County’s dedication to creating an inclusive, efficient, and safe transportation system for all residents.

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION AT THE HEART OF COUNTY BOUNTY

## Two-day community event showcases local business and food

This summer, thousands of area residents joined us in Cardiff Park for our first two-day County Bounty event.

This event was an opportunity to promote the community by showcasing the incredible range of small local businesses and fresh food available in Sturgeon County.

Despite a blanket of wildfire smoke that reduced air quality, we were delighted to see thousands of people attend the event. It was a great way for the community to connect with one another and enjoy one of our wide-open spaces in Cardiff Park.

County Bounty featured a vendor village with more than a dozen vendors, food from 10 food trucks including a handful using ingredients from six local producers, a free kids zone with a petting zoo, fire truck, and giant inflatables, and entertainment on the Atco Stage, including local band The Hedstrom Clan.

Our friends and neighbours from Alexander First Nation shared Indigenous culture with a showcase including drumming, dancing and storytelling. We were proud to welcome Dallas Arcand – a three-time world champion hoop dancer, storyteller, inspirational speaker and musician – both days to share his art with us.

Sarah Hall, a local Indigenous artist, hosted a very popular intuitive feather painting workshop that sold out both days!

The event also helped raise money for the Morinville/ Sturgeon Rotary Club with the help of the first-ever beer gardens selling local products.

County Bounty has been held annually in Cardiff Park since 2018, but this year was the first year we held the event over two days. Work is already underway to plan the next County Bounty in summer 2024, and we hope to see you there!





# PLANNING TODAY FOR FUTURE GROWTH & SERVICES IN STURGEON VALLEY

The Sturgeon Valley is a unique residential community that, in the decades to come, could be home to more people, more services, and more amenities.

Expected growth will take place south of the existing Sturgeon Valley neighbourhoods, between the cities of St. Albert and Edmonton. Planned development will include a variety of housing options, new shopping and employment areas, new community services, recreation opportunities, and more.

*“Sturgeon Valley is a gem within the region, and as it grows our Council is committed to ensuring it remains a unique community that we can be proud of, and that reflects input from residents and community partners,” said Mayor Alanna Hnatiw. “We’re committed to supporting a complete community with new housing options that appeal to families, seniors, younger people, new employment options for our residents, and local services that help keep cost-of-living manageable.”*

After decades of past review and following an extensive public input process (one of the most significant public engagement efforts undertaken by Sturgeon County to date), the vision for the Sturgeon Valley was solidified in 2021. Council adopted bylaws that approved the Sturgeon Valley South Area Structure Plan and Sturgeon Valley Core Area Structure Plan, and amended the County’s Municipal Development Plan.

Together, these planning documents guide the development of the Sturgeon Valley area by:

- > Specifying residential densification targets – as required by the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan – including measures such as transitions to provide a “buffer” between existing residential communities and more densely-populated future neighbourhoods.
- > Detailing areas for new residential and commercial development.
- > Planning for the infrastructure and transportation improvements needed to support growth.
- > Supporting a growing network of trails, parks and open spaces for recreational use and environmental protection.
- > Protecting prime agricultural lands.

Through planning for growth in Sturgeon Valley, the County has taken steps to respect the interests of existing residents and neighbourhoods, protect against future annexations, diversify Sturgeon County’s taxation base, and capitalize on the area’s location and existing infrastructure. At the same time, the County is enabling the creation of unique and distinct neighbourhoods that will meet the future needs of local and regional residents.

We encourage residents to stay engaged in this long-term development process and to weigh in on applications in the years and decades to come, as we build communities — together.

## ABOUT DENSITY IN THE STURGEON VALLEY

Most of the Sturgeon Valley Core – where existing neighbourhoods are located – has been developed at a density of two housing units per net residential hectare and most are large single detached homes.

In recent development areas such as River’s Gate, density is closer to 10 housing units per net residential hectare.

Remaining undeveloped areas in the valley core may develop to a maximum of 20 housing units per net residential subject to servicing availability.

In the Sturgeon Valley South areas (south and east of River’s Gate) the development density will vary, but requires transitioning from the densities of the Sturgeon Valley Core and an overall density of 35 housing units per net residential hectare. Closer to Edmonton and the Anthony Henday Drive, development densities will transition up to 45 units per net residential hectare. This aligns with the requirements of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Growth Plan, which Sturgeon County must conform to.

Development speed is dependent on market conditions and the investment interest of local landowners and developers. Sturgeon County expects development to occur over decades. Residents will be engaged throughout that process.



## MEADOWVIEW DRIVE & CUNNINGHAM BRIDGE

# A MAJOR FACELIFT FOR A CRITICAL CONNECTOR

With about 1,200 vehicles using it daily, Meadowview Drive bustles with constant activity and serves as a crucial transportation artery in the region.

It was built as part of the original range road system during the early part of the last century. A lot has changed since then, and Sturgeon County invested more than \$16 million to improve the road's design, drainage, and safety.

The 7.6-kilometre project involved the reconstruction and surfacing of Meadowview Drive from Highway 44 to Range Road 263A as well as from Range Road 261A to the St. Albert boundary. This work started in 2021 and finished in 2023.

When construction crews first started digging up Meadowview Drive, they found the early road with a clay and tree base. The road had minimal ditches and drainage culverts, which caused annual heaving and pothole problems.

Contractors removed the old asphalt, replaced substandard subgrade material with better quality clay, paved it, and rebuilt residential and farm access. As part of the work, crews cleaned ditches, added culverts, and added erosion prevention measures. Communication cables and power poles were repositioned, and nearby land was acquired to align the new road to design requirements.

This project also included Cunningham Bridge. This is an established two-span girder bridge with a concrete foundation. It spans the Sturgeon River and is a crucial crossing point, and it needed rehabilitation work due to its age and deteriorating condition.

The timing and approach to the work were carefully planned to discourage birds from the area, particularly during their nesting season. This helped ensure their safety and allowed construction work to continue without delays.

The rehabilitation work was extensive. Engineers and workers identified and carried out repairs to the bridge's curbs, deck, girders and more. The bridge deck was cleared of the asphalt and even the old wooden planks.

The extensive upgrades to the 65-year-old bridge will extend the life of this bridge, ensuring it safely serves the community for another 25 years.



# TWO LOCAL STUDENTS RECOGNIZED FOR COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP, AWARDED SCHOLARSHIP

Volunteering is a meaningful way to contribute to the community, and it helped two local students earn a scholarship to put towards their post-secondary educations.

Shelby Pierce and Julianne Roe are the 2023 recipients of the Dale MacMillan Memorial Scholarship for Community Leadership, and were each awarded \$2,000. Sturgeon County Council presented the awards at the July 18 Council meeting.

Shelby is enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts degree program, with a major in Sociology, at the University of Alberta. She works for the Jessica Martel Memorial Foundation and is a member of the Sturgeon County Youth Advisory Committee, and aspires to work in counselling, where she can continue to help others.

She says it's an honour to be chosen for an award that has such a strong focus on volunteerism.

*"I value the time and effort that was given to me by volunteers growing up," said Shelby. "By giving back that same effort and time, I hope to make an impact on someone else."*

Julianne is also studying at the University of Alberta and is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in nutrition and food science. She has served in numerous volunteer roles through 4H in Bon Accord, Morinville, and Legal. She is currently a member of the University of Alberta Agricultural Club.

For Julianne, receiving the scholarship makes her feel proud of her volunteer experiences and the impact she's had on residents and the community.

*"Through volunteering, you become closer to your community," said Julianne. "You have a sense of pride and accomplishment in helping to make your community a better place."*

Julianne would like to use her degree to help her rural community by supporting producers as they market their products.

The Dale MacMillan Memorial Scholarship for Community Leadership is presented to



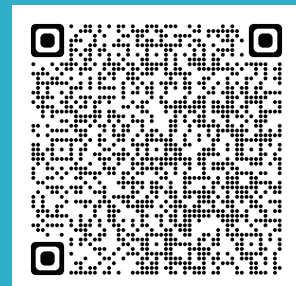
Julianne Roe (pictured above) and Shelby Pierce were awarded the Dale MacMillan Memorial Scholarship for Community Leadership in summer 2023.

a Sturgeon County resident enrolled in a recognized post-secondary institution who also practises community leadership and involvement. The awards are made possible through the Calahoo-Villeneuve Gravel Community Enhancement Fund.

Dale MacMillan was instrumental in helping achieve a balance between residents and gravel extraction operations in the Calahoo and Villeneuve areas. The scholarship also recognizes his commitment to community involvement.

The Calahoo-Villeneuve Sand and Gravel Advisory Committee ensures the sustainability of the scholarship fund, evaluates the applications, and selects the recipients. Applications are accepted in early April until the end of May.

More information is available at [SturgeonCounty.ca](http://SturgeonCounty.ca).



SCAN THIS QR CODE WITH YOUR SMARTPHONE CAMERA TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP



## STURGEON COUNTY TRANSPORTATION CREWS ARE READY FOR SNOW!

Just as we get our homes ready for cold weather, Sturgeon County's fleet of snow clearing equipment also needs to get ready.

The change over for equipment starts in early September. Our fleet maintenance staff ensures that the trucks have salt and sand spreaders installed, and by the end of October, the graders have their snow wings in place.

Road salt and sand orders are placed in early fall, everything is ready in case there's an early snow fall!

To prepare for major storms, or a snow event with more than 10 cm of snow on the ground, we have set service goals and a priority sequence for clearing County roads.

### Snow event service goals

Our goal is to finish snow and ice control on priority 1 roads within 24 hours, and priority 2 and 3 roads within 72 hours after a snow event ends.

Roads are plowed in priority sequence:

- > **Priority 1:** Paved and oiled access roads (arterials, collectors) that have high traffic volumes.
- > **Priority 2:** Other paved and oiled roads within subdivisions (local roads).
- > **Priority 3:** Gravel roads (collectors, local roads) and subdivisions.

Sturgeon County crews are scheduled to work weekdays in two shifts that work between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. to plow, sand, and clear snow. After a significant snowfall of more than 10 centimetres, our plow operators will increase their hours and work seven days a week to meet the service goals.

Alberta Transportation is responsible for snow and ice removal on all provincial highways.

### Clearing snow from your driveway

While County crews are working to ensure our roadways are safe to drive on, residents too are faced with the responsibility of clearing snow.

When you are removing snow from your driveway, be sure to push it off to the right side. This way, when the snowplows and graders come by, they do not push it back onto your driveway. Nobody wants that to happen!

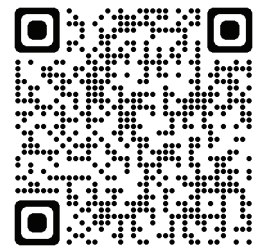
Also, you should never push the snow across the road into the ditches. Crossing into oncoming traffic is dangerous, and the chunks of snow and ice left behind on the road can create a hazard for other drivers.

Remember, obstructing the road in any way, even with pieces of snow and ice, is an offence under the Traffic Bylaw and carries a fine of \$500.

### Winter private driveway grading service

If you would rather not deal with clearing snow this winter, Sturgeon County can help! We offer plowing and/or grading of private driveways at a full cost recovery, as per Sturgeon County's Fees and Charges Schedule. In 2023, these fees were \$110 each and are subject to change.

To apply for this service, go to [TransFeedback.SturgeonCounty.ca](https://TransFeedback.SturgeonCounty.ca) and select "Grading/Plowing - Private Work" or scan the QR code below.



Sturgeon County is committed to safe and well-maintained roads throughout the winter season. Please always prioritize safe driving.

# CELEBRATING THE MIDDLETONS

## 2023 EXCELLENCE IN AG AWARD WINNERS



### Jo-Anne and Ward Middleton were awarded the 2023 Excellence in Agriculture Award from the Agricultural Service Board

Planting 45,000 trees on potential farmland could raise a few eyebrows, but for Sturgeon County's Jo-Anne and Ward Middleton, it's a responsibility.

For them, the trees provide a personal recreation area, a shelter belt, and an area to help manage water. Wildlife and future Sturgeon County residents will also benefit from this area for years to come.

Since 2009, the family has been paying a significant portion of the cost to plant fast-growing native tree seedlings such as pine and spruce on the 80-acre parcel. They hope it will help to double the forest's footprint.

It wasn't a difficult decision for the family to return the land to its natural forested condition. The land wasn't suitable for growing the organic wheat and rye that they sell directly to customers through their business, Midmore Farms. Instead, they considered it their responsibility to be stewards of the land.

"It was strictly a personal choice," explained Ward of the reforestation project located a few minutes from the Middleton farm, which is seven kilometres north of Morinville. The idea was sown after a discussion 30 years ago with a farmer in Sweden.

*"He said he had a moral obligation to plant those trees there because somebody had [previously] planted the trees for him," recalled Ward. "He said they were in straight rows, so somebody had the foresight to plant those rows of trees 250 years ago."*

*"It was an epiphany moment for us," said Ward.*

The Middletons' subsequent tree planting and other conservation practices were recently recognized by Sturgeon County through a 2023 Excellence in Agriculture Award, an honour given out to residents who demonstrate excellence in improving the environment, local communities, and the economy.

The family has done other projects through the ALUS (Alternative Land Use Services) program, of which Sturgeon County is a member. They built fences around a dugout and a riparian area after their cattle caused damage trying to get to the water. There was also a risk of surface water contamination from the manure, so solar energy is now used to pump water year-round to the drinking troughs in the pasture.

Environmental stewardship is a value passed down from Ward's father, Armer, who once transformed a slough into a permanent wetland with three protective islands for ducks after he saw coyotes preying on the young birds.

*"It's in the middle of our field — we still farm around it. It is a legacy that nobody else in the public can see, but we know that it's there," said Ward of his dad's contribution to the farm that's been in the family for 85 years. "My father would allow a tree to grow even if it was in the way. He would say, 'the tree should be given more respect than our man-made buildings and structures.'"*

The couple hopes more people will explore the ALUS program and discover the long-lasting benefits.

*"If you have a project that has been on the backburner, whether or not there's resources at play, it's worth contacting the Sturgeon ALUS coordinator and just talking about it," said Ward.*

Jo-Anne encourages other farmers with unusable land pockets, such as field corners too tight to navigate equipment turns, to think about planting a few trees through the ALUS program.

*"I guess as we get older, we realize, well, we won't be here forever...so maybe we can inspire."*

Learn more about the ALUS program on page 10.

Stay connected with us!  
SturgeonCounty.ca | @sturgeoncounty



NEWS • EVENTS • CLOSURE NOTICES & MORE



# PRESERVING NATURE'S GUARDIANS: WETLAND REPLACEMENT

We often drive by them, unaware they are there and unaware of their important role for our environment: they are wetlands in Sturgeon County.

Wetlands are unassuming, considering the important role they play. These areas are typically less than two metres deep and some hold water for only one-to-two weeks after a heavy rainfall or snowmelt. All wetland classes are important for different reasons, and all are protected under the Alberta Wetland Policy.

Wetlands provide habitat for wildlife, fish and a variety of plants. They slow and limit the spread of wildfires and can filter out pollutant by slowing runoff water and allowing plant roots and vegetation to absorb the pollutants. This sponge-like quality also helps lessen the impacts of drought.

*“Another important function is storing carbon,” explained the Conservation Program Coordinator. “Wetlands store more carbon than any other ecosystem, helping to reduce the greenhouse gas effects. It takes 10 years for one centimetre of peat to form — that’s why it’s important to protect these areas.”*

This is where Sturgeon County comes in. Sturgeon County is committed to environmental stewardship. In 2022, the County partnered with the University of Alberta to build wetland basins at the university’s St. Albert Research Station, located just north of St. Albert. Sturgeon County identified these lands as being a potential site for wetland replacement, which involves restoring drained or filled-in wetlands, whether they have water-related functions or not.



The wetlands are thriving today. A recent site visit found that the area is now home to roughly 20 waterfowl. Native wetland species including wild mint, tall manna grass, water smartweed, and various sedges and rushes were added in September.

The university provided the land, Sturgeon County provided the expertise, and the provincial government provided the funding. Alberta Environment and Protected Areas provides the funding for wetland replacement projects and focuses on fostering partnerships with municipalities and non-profit organizations that have a vested interest in wetland replacement.

It is hoped that with help from the provincial program, landowners will partner with Alberta Environment and Protected Areas to protect or restore wetlands and not drain them. Without written approval, draining wetlands is a violation of the *Water Act*.

## Expanding wetland replacement efforts

Sturgeon County’s first wetland replacement project was so successful that two more proposals have been submitted to Alberta Environment and Protected Areas for review. If approved, we expect these new projects to be completed by 2024.

## VALOUR AVE TRAIL CONNECTIONS

Sturgeon County partnered with the Canadian Forces Base, Edmonton Garrison, to construct a new trail connection along Valour Avenue adjacent to the Highway 28 overpass.

Valour Trail was a significant undertaking that required collaboration with several levels of government as a portion of the shared-use pathway is located on federal land (CFB Edmonton). The Canadian Forces contributed more than \$68,000 of the total project cost of approximately \$200,000.

*“We are proud of our ongoing partnership with CFB Edmonton,” said Alanna Hnatiw, Mayor of Sturgeon County. “We are dedicated to building a strong, healthy, and engaged community and finding ways*





Sturgeon County's Agriculture Services department – the lead on wetland replacement projects in the County – looks forward to future projects that will play a pivotal role for environmental stewardship and help ensure the health of our natural ecosystems for years to come.

For information on Sturgeon County's project, visit [SturgeonCounty.ca](https://sturgeoncounty.ca). To learn more about the Government of Alberta's program, visit [Alberta.ca/Wetland-Replacement-Program](https://alberta.ca/Wetland-Replacement-Program).

*to collaborate with our neighbours and share resources to deliver on that commitment."*

Construction of the approximately 600-metre-long and three-metre-wide asphalt trail extension started in the spring of 2023 and was completed this fall. The project joined the existing pathway west of Highway 28 to the path owned by the Edmonton Garrison.

## EMBRACING HYDROGEN OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE CLEAN ENERGY ECONOMY



Alberta is the largest hydrogen producer in Canada, and Sturgeon County – alongside existing industry – is leading the transition to a low-carbon future.

Hydrogen is a low-carbon energy source that only produces emissions in the form of water vapour. By 2050, 30 per cent of end-use energy is expected to be from hydrogen.

Mayor Alanna Hnatiw is the chair of the Edmonton Region Hydrogen Hub, which helps advance the hydrogen industry in the region, province and country.

*"Hydrogen is our future, and we are taking a leadership role in investing in and cultivating the hydrogen industry," said Hnatiw. "The region has vast experience and expertise in hydrogen production and carbon capture and storage, due in large part to industry in Alberta's Industrial Heartland, which is partially located in Sturgeon County. This means we are well-positioned to lead these efforts."*

The Edmonton region is among the world's lowest-cost producers of low-carbon hydrogen, and the Heartland area is Canada's largest hydrocarbon-processing region, producing thousands of tonnes of hydrogen each day.

Currently, two refineries – NWR Sturgeon Refinery and Shell – operate in the Heartland with carbon capture technology and are proving that carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS) can safely and effectively reduce CO2 emissions from the energy industry. Sturgeon County is a key location for the deployment of CCUS technology, with three of the six provincially approved storage hubs located within our borders.

The Edmonton region is home to more than 25 projects relating to the production, transportation and end use of hydrogen, and CCUS. This is helping the region compete on a global level in the production and export of low-carbon hydrogen. There is significant economic opportunity associated with low-carbon hydrogen; by 2050, it's expected to be an up-to-\$2.5 trillion global industry.

The County is currently exploring ways to adopt innovative hydrogen technologies in its municipal operations, which demonstrates environmental stewardship, and will save taxpayers money.

# APPLYING FIRESMART PRINCIPLES TO PROTECT YOUR HOME & LAND FROM WILDFIRE

In the past months, we've seen the devastating impact wildfires can have on people and communities.

We want to lessen the community impacts of a wildfire should one impact Sturgeon County. To do this, we need your help.

As property owners, there is a lot you can do to increase the chances of your home surviving a wildfire. And while the winter months may not be the most practical months to take some of the below actions, you can start planning for them now so in the spring, you have a head start on making your home FireSmart.

FireSmart means making simple choices when maintaining your property, landscaping your yard, or undertaking a renovation or construction project. This can significantly lessen the chance that your home will be lost or damaged by wildfire.

The Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction found that during the Fort McMurray wildfire in 2016, FireSmart homes were significantly less likely to have been lost. In fact, four of every five homes that survived the fire were considered FireSmart.

Our homes and land are often largest investment we make in our lives. And our homes often hold a lifetime of memories. Let's work together to preserve those memories and protect your property.

## Home/yard maintenance

- > Remove items that can burn – like dried branches, leaves, lawn furniture, propane tanks, firewood and debris – from within 1.5 metres (five feet) of your home, shed and other buildings, and from under your deck or porch. Consider screening or boxing in areas below decks to prevent debris from gathering.
- > Move firewood at least 10 metres (33 feet) from your home.
- > Remove and properly dispose of debris, leaves and other material from your roof, gutters and decks.
- > When the ground thaws, keep your lawn watered and maintained. Ideally, grass and weeds should be less than 10 centimetres (four inches) high.
- > Add non-combustible three-millimetre screens to external vents (except dryer vents) to keep embers out.
- > Prune trees so the lowest branches are at least two metres (six feet) from the ground. Make sure branches are at least 1.5 metres (five feet) from your home, deck or fence.

## Landscaping

- > Plant wildfire-resistant plants and trees. Deciduous (leafy) trees are better options than coniferous (evergreen) trees, as they don't provide significant fuel for the fire.
- > Space trees, particularly evergreens which are more flammable, at least three metres (10 feet) apart to slow the spread of wildfire.
- > Avoid using bark mulch, which is highly flammable.

## Farm/acreage maintenance

FireSmart Alberta suggests the following actions:

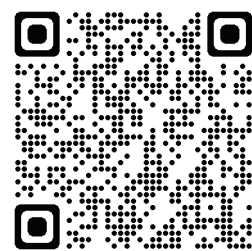
- > Cut your grass. Ideally, grass and weeds should be less than 10 centimetres (four inches) high. Mowing grass short in the fall is especially helpful and can slow wildfire spread.
- > Till around your home and outbuildings to prevent the spread of fire into your yard.
- > Clean up the down and dead wood in your yard, shelter belts, woodlots and near your home and fences.
- > In the spring, check for trees and branches that may have fallen on power lines over the winter. Check your poles for rot and contact the local utility provider if you have concerns.

## Renovation and construction

If you are doing or planning construction or upgrades to your home, consider using fire-rated materials and making simple adjustments – like installing non-combustible vents, installing a screen on your gutters, installing a spark arrester on your chimney and more – to reduce fire risk.

Learn more and view resources at  
[SturgeonCounty.ca/FireSmart](https://SturgeonCounty.ca/FireSmart)

SCAN THIS QR CODE WITH YOUR  
SMARTPHONE CAMERA TO LEARN  
MORE TIPS TO PROTECT YOUR  
PROPERTY



# TIRED OF HIGH ELECTRICITY BILLS?

# GO SOLAR!



The Clean Energy Improvement Program (CEIP) is a new, voluntary, financing tool to help property owners pay the upfront costs of energy efficient and renewable energy upgrades.

CEIP is an optional program, and homeowners only apply if they want to join the program. The program allows you to take advantage of a competitive interest rate and convenient repayment through your property taxes.

Eligible residential upgrades include:

- > doors, windows, insulation and air sealing
- > heating, ventilation and air conditioning
- > lighting
- > renewable energy, solar, PV and thermal
- > water heating

The program is administered through Alberta municipalities. Sturgeon County has invested \$705,700 to fund CEIP projects that will be paid back through residential property taxes.

The program is currently available for residential buildings, but in the future, it will be expanded to include non-residential developments such as commercial buildings and farms.

In addition to helping homeowners finance home upgrades, the program also creates local jobs, provides more resilient building stock, and helps achieve sustainability goals.

Learn more about the program, including what projects are eligible, at [MyCEIP.ca/Sturgeon](http://MyCEIP.ca/Sturgeon). You can also scan the QR code to the right with your smartphone or call **1-888-506-9996** for more information.



## EYES TO THE SKY:

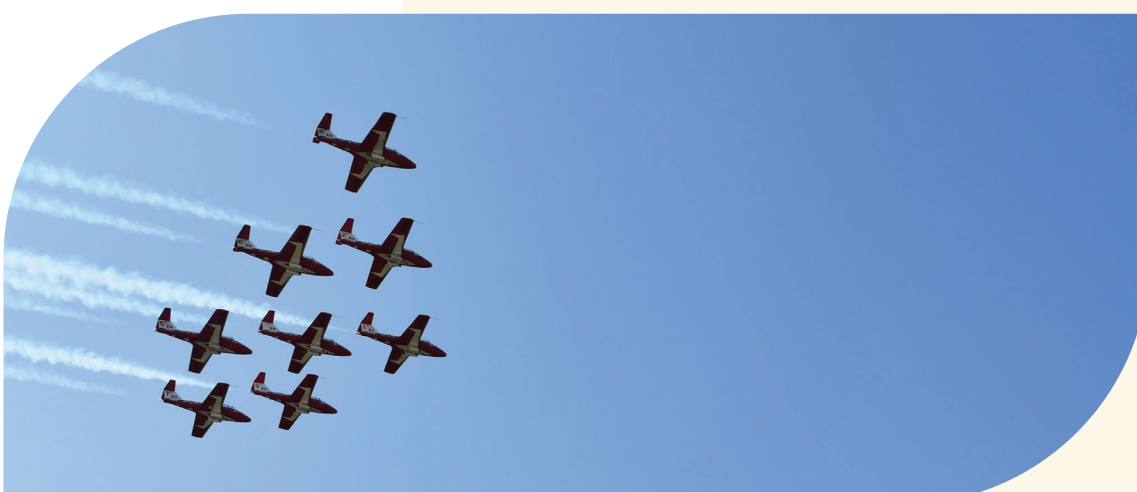
### STURGEON COUNTY HOME TO ALBERTA INTERNATIONAL AIRSHOW

After two years of cancelled events, the Alberta International Airshow was back this year at the Villeneuve Airport.

Sturgeon County took an active role in this year's planning alongside the organizers, the Edmonton International Airport and the City of Edmonton, which helped make this one of the most successful and well-run airshows in Villeneuve Airport's history.

The event was a resounding success, drawing more than 25,000 aviation enthusiasts from near and far to take in the thrilling performances and displays. The event included performances and stunts by nine teams, including the Canadian Forces Snowbirds, the CF-18 Demonstration Team and the SkyHawks — the Canadian Forces parachute team.

The Villeneuve Airport is a premier destination for innovation and investment. This key regional asset was showcased at the event for all to see.





AVAILABLE  
ONLINE

## REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

### Register online

[SturgeonCounty.ca/Programs](https://SturgeonCounty.ca/Programs)

### Register in person

Sturgeon County Family and Community Support Services  
9608 100 Street in Morinville, AB

Office is open Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to noon and  
12:30 to 4:30 p.m.

### Register by phone

Call **780-939-8334**

[SturgeonCounty.ca/Programs](https://SturgeonCounty.ca/Programs)