

Sturgeon Valley Information & Engagement Session – May 30, 2024

Responses to Public Questions

The below questions/comments were received at the Information & Engagement Session on May 30, 2024. Where possible, questions are re⁷ected as they were submitted. Minor changes to spelling, sentence structure and punctuation have been made, as needed, for clarity. Further, we received a handful of duplicate questions, and have combined those where practical.

Regional Development Requirements

Why does Sturgeon County belong to the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB)?

Sturgeon County is mandated by the Government of Alberta to belong to the provincially established Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB), which is a regional growth management board established to collaborate on issues of shared importance such as land use and growth, infrastructure and funding of regional services. Sturgeon County has a strong voice at the table; it advocates for rural interests including a more balanced voting structure that respects rural members and their autonomy.

If Sturgeon Valley was designated as a “special study area” by the EMRB, why doesn’t the County do everything it can to keep it special?

In 2017, the provincially established Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) – which is a regional growth management board established to collaborate on issues of shared importance such as land use and growth – designated the Sturgeon Valley as a ‘special study area’ which meant Sturgeon County officials had to negotiate with the other municipal members of the EMRB on specific policies and development densities that would apply to this area. Following the conclusion of regional negotiations and the provincial approval of new rules for the Valley, the County was able to advance its own updated land use plans showing they complied with the negotiated densities and policies for the “Special Study Area”.

In creating its local area structure plans, the County worked to protect agricultural lands to the north of the existing Valley, confirm land use and infrastructure requirements for the Sturgeon Valley’s vacant lands, guard against annexation interests from communities that may not share the County’s vision, and ensure appropriate buffers/transitions between new and existing neighbourhoods.

Within the local vision for this area (captured within the County’s Area Structure Plan), Council has emphasized the need for the Valley to continue to be unique and ‘special’, such that it does not look and feel just like other neighbouring cities.

If we don’t have a voice on EMRB as a rural municipality, how are rural citizens in Sturgeon County going to have a voice when we are urbanized?

Sturgeon County has a strong voice at the table; it advocates for rural interests and a more balanced voting structure. The Sturgeon Valley is surrounded by expanding cities, and Sturgeon County believes in the importance of guiding the Sturgeon Valley’s growth itself rather than risk losing that authority in the future to adjacent urban communities. If Sturgeon County maintains jurisdiction to

plan for the area, the County will continue to use its voice to influence the development for the Sturgeon Valley.

Density & Land Use

With respect to Area C of the Sturgeon Valley Core, how will Sturgeon County ensure development is “complimentary” and “consistent” with existing development densities? So, in other words, how can development be kept consistent when densities of 20 dwelling units per net residential hectare are permitted?

While densities in the Sturgeon Valley Core are mandated by the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) – which is a regional growth management board established to collaborate on issues of shared importance such as land use and growth – to be a **maximum** of 20 dwelling units per net residential hectare, it doesn’t mean all proposed developments will be constructed at this density. New development in the Sturgeon Valley Core must complement existing neighbourhoods and preserve, protect, and enhance the rural and natural landscape as much as possible.

One way this will be done is through transitional densities or buffers between existing and new neighbourhoods. When a new neighbourhood is proposed directly adjacent to an existing neighbourhood, the **homes directly adjacent to existing homes must be built at the same density**. This means that the home immediately behind or beside you will look very similar to your property. Across the street and where lots do not back directly on to adjacent existing neighbourhoods, the lots could be smaller from those new homes on larger lots.

Development Process

- Private landowners/developers must hold an open house before submitting their plan to the County for initial feedback on their neighbourhood design.
- Private landowners/developers must submit a “what we heard” report from that pre-application open house alongside their application to the County.
- When private landowners/developers submit plans for new neighbourhoods, the County holds a public hearing to gather input from the public before considering approval. The “what we heard” report from the pre application meeting is included in Council’s agenda package for consideration of the development.
 - Public hearings are advertised in local newspapers, posted to the Sturgeon County website and shared on social media. Members of the public are encouraged to participate in public hearings and provide input on specifics of the proposed development.
- Council considers input received at the public hearing when making a decision on whether or not to approve the application. Council must balance public input with the rules and regulations set for developers and EMRB “Special Study Area” requirements.
- Council also considers Sturgeon County’s capital plans, including its ability to provide for infrastructure to support new neighbourhoods. This infrastructure is ultimately funded through direct contributions by developers, such that ‘growth pays for growth’, however the speed by which infrastructure is provided can also influence the speed of new neighbourhood development.

The Sturgeon Valley Core densities are mandated by the EMRB to be a maximum of 20 dwelling units per net residential hectare. Is there anything that Council can do to push the developers to lower densities within that mandated range to aid with the transition between new and existing neighbourhoods? Current plans for the Estates of Tuscany, for example, include lane housing which must exceed the maximum density. This could drive street parking into the adjacent areas. How does Council stand on that and what will you do about it?

While densities in the Sturgeon Valley Core are mandated by the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) – which is a regional growth management board established to collaborate on issues of shared importance such as land use and growth – to be a **maximum** of 20 dwelling units per net residential hectare, it doesn't mean all proposed developments will be developed at this density. New development in the Sturgeon Valley Core must complement existing neighbourhoods and preserve, protect, and enhance the rural and natural landscape as much as possible.

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North Point is at two dwelling units per net residential hectare. How can we have 35 dwelling units per net residential hectare immediately to the south of us and 17 dwelling units per net residential hectare to the north and create a reasonable transition?

While densities in the Sturgeon Valley Core are mandated by the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) – which is a regional growth management board established to collaborate on issues of shared importance such as land use and growth – to be a maximum of 20 dwelling units per net residential hectare, and densities in the Sturgeon Valley South are set at an average of 35 dwelling units per net residential hectare, it doesn't mean all proposed developments will be at these densities.

Transitional densities or buffers are needed between existing and new neighbourhoods. When a new neighbourhood is proposed directly adjacent to an existing neighbourhood, the **homes directly adjacent to existing homes must be built at the same density**. This means that the home immediately behind or beside you will look very similar to your property. Across the street and where lots do not back directly on to adjacent existing neighbourhoods, the lots could be smaller from those new homes on larger lots.

If you've invested millions of dollars in a country residential home, how would you like to see urban densities nearby?

Future development in the Sturgeon Valley South requires buffers/transitions between existing residential communities and more densely populated future neighbourhoods. In the Sturgeon Valley Core, future development must complement existing neighbourhoods and preserve, protect and enhance the rural and natural landscape as much as possible. This is a policy requirement that Council specifically included within plans to protect area resident interests.

If you're truly interested in building diversity so young couples and retirees have access to shopping, schools, medical facilities, etc., access to recreation areas is also important and is not in this area. Put the developments near existing infrastructure. Your arguments do not make any sense. Put people and the environment over profit.

Land in the Sturgeon Valley Core and Sturgeon Valley South is owned by private landowners. Some of these landowners are preparing detailed plans for specific neighbourhoods. If approved, plans for new neighbourhoods in the Sturgeon Valley South are expected to support new parks, trails, open spaces and other recreation opportunities. In addition, plans are expected to support the following:

- New housing options to meet the needs of current and future residents through their different life stages.
- Transitions between existing and new neighbourhoods, to ensure complementary development patterns.
- New small-scale shopping and employment areas.
- New transportation connections, such as a completed 127 Street connecting Sturgeon Road and the Anthony Henday, and other important improvements to minimize traffic.
- New community services, amenities and gathering places.
- Balance and stability in County's tax base.

Potential development areas are near existing infrastructure, while upgrades and extensions would be required as with any new neighbourhood development. These improvements are paid for by the private land developers and are not funded by taxes. Taxes are used to fund a variety of services, including recreation and emergency facilities.

Why are we building a new community where communities already exist that have the infrastructure to meet the growth you're forecasting? Morinville, Gibbons and Bon Accord are designed for urban density.

The Sturgeon Valley has been growing over more than 60 years. Land in the Sturgeon Valley Core and Sturgeon Valley South is owned by private landowners, and some want to develop their land for residential subdivisions. The Valley continues to be very desirable for residential development, due to proximity to regional communities, access to transportation networks, good servicing potential,

and abundant natural features. Market interest and economics also differ significantly in the Valley, compared to other communities such as Morinville, Gibbons or Bon Accord, and Sturgeon County has no control over where development interest exists.

Undeveloped lands are more likely than developed lands to be annexed by another municipality. The Sturgeon Valley is surrounded by expanding cities, and Sturgeon County believes in the importance of guiding the Sturgeon Valley's growth itself rather than risk losing that authority to another municipality in the future. Sturgeon County's growth, like other municipalities in the region, is bound by provincial and regional land use policies.

It was mentioned that future development must meet the intent and vision of the Sturgeon Valley. Why does administration think that 35-to-40 dwelling units per net residential hectare meets the intent and vision of the Valley?

The provincially established Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) – which is a regional growth management board established to collaborate on issues of shared importance such as land use and growth – mandates the development densities in the region, not Sturgeon County. Densities in the Sturgeon Valley Core are set at a maximum of 20 dwelling units per net residential hectare, while densities in the Sturgeon Valley South are set at an average density of 35 dwelling units per net residential hectare. Not all developments will be built to at these densities.

In creating its local area structure plans, which establish the vision for the area, the County consulted the public to ensure their perspectives were considered. The County worked to protect agricultural lands to the north of the existing Valley, confirm land use and infrastructure requirements for the Sturgeon Valley's vacant lands, guard against annexation interests from communities that may not share the County's vision, and ensure appropriate buffers/transitions between new and existing neighbourhoods for quality of life.

If land developers must comply with County plans, why doesn't the County make more reasonable plans?

The provincially established Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) – which is a regional growth management board established to collaborate on issues of shared importance such as land use and growth – mandates the development densities in the region. Densities in the Sturgeon Valley Core are set at a maximum of 20 dwelling units per net residential hectare, while densities in the Sturgeon Valley South are set at an average density of 35 dwelling units per net residential hectare. Not all developments will be built to at these densities.

Sturgeon County's area structure plans must comply with the density targets set by the EMRB. In creating its local area structure plans, the County consulted the public to ensure their perspectives were considered. The County worked to protect agricultural lands to the north of the existing Valley, confirm land use and infrastructure requirements for the Sturgeon Valley's vacant lands, guard against annexation interests from communities that may not share the County's vision, and ensure appropriate buffers/transitions between new and existing neighbourhoods for quality of life.

Is this not prime agricultural land? Why is the County going against its own vision and mandate?

The provincially established Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) – which is a regional growth management board established to collaborate on issues of shared importance such as land use and growth – designated the Sturgeon Valley as a ‘special study area’ which meant Sturgeon County officials had to negotiate on specific policies and development densities that would apply to this area. All undeveloped lands in the Sturgeon Valley (Core and South) are currently zoned Agriculture and agriculture will remain the use until such time as development is imminent. Developers, at the time they want to develop, will need to apply to have the lands rezoned. Additionally, when the Valley Core ASP was approved, lands that were previously contained within the boundary of the ASP were removed (from Coal Mine Road to Highway 37); this was a 42% reduction in the amount of land identified for future development. In this way, Council conserved this large area of land for agriculture as well. Sturgeon County remains firmly committed to supporting and growing agriculture, agribusiness and agritourism.

The County used to embrace farming, country life, etc. Why are they going against that in the Sturgeon River Valley by filling it with dense neighbourhoods? I'm sure residents of the area aren't excited by the dense growth.

Any new development in the Sturgeon Valley must complement existing neighbourhoods and preserve, protect, and enhance the rural and natural landscape as much as possible.

In creating its local area structure plans, the County consulted the public to ensure their perspectives were considered. The County worked to protect agricultural lands to the north of the existing Valley, confirm land use and infrastructure requirements for the Sturgeon Valley's vacant lands, guard against annexation interests from communities that may not share the County's vision, and ensure appropriate buffers/transitions between new and existing neighbourhoods for quality of life.

Undeveloped lands in the Sturgeon Valley (Core and South) are currently zoned Agriculture and agriculture will remain the use until such time as development is imminent. Developers, at the time they want to develop, will need to apply to have the lands rezoned. Additionally, when the Valley Core ASP was approved, lands that were previously contained within the boundary of the ASP were removed (from Coal Mine Road to Highway 37); this was a 42% reduction in the amount of land identified for future development. In this way, Council conserved this large area of land for agriculture as well. Sturgeon County remains firmly committed to supporting and growing agriculture, agribusiness and agritourism.

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participate in public hearings and provide input on specifics of the proposed development.

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Will there be any more CR2 - Country Residential Estate zoning in Sturgeon County in the future? If not, why? Where is my inclusion for my kids that will also want to have a holiday trailer or boat or a place to have a little space?

The provincially established Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) – which is a regional growth management board established to collaborate on issues of shared importance such as land use and growth – designated the Sturgeon Valley as a ‘special study area’ which meant Sturgeon County officials had to negotiate on specific policies and development densities that would apply to this area. The result of the negotiation was establishment of development densities up to 20 dwelling units per net residential hectare on the remaining undeveloped Valley Core area lands and an average of 35 dwelling units per net residential hectare for the Valley South. In general, new country residential developments are not supported in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region.

I understand about having plans because the consequence of not having plans means being gobbled up by St. Albert or Edmonton. But as our elected officials, as we are voicing, we would like for you to be our voice to stand up to the regional communities to let them that we have a need for CR2 [Country Residential] and that there is a demand coming when people that live in the city currently need a place to park their extra vehicle for their kid that's going to university. There's a need for those people to also have a place to live. We established Sturgeon Valley as a beautiful area, a desired area and the reason it is desired is that people want to be in that community and they don't want density.

This was a statement and did not pose a question for response.

So you are basically telling people in Sturgeon County that have already lived here for a while that you will be developing their area and if they don't like it they can move somewhere else? That is NOT right.

Sturgeon County has noted that existing neighbourhoods will experience no development changes under current area plans. If new neighbourhoods are developed in the Sturgeon Valley Core, they must complement existing neighbourhoods and preserve, protect, and enhance the rural and natural landscape as much as possible.

Sturgeon County remains committed to hearing from residents about development in the Sturgeon Valley. Sturgeon County’s area structure plans must comply with the density targets set by the provincially established Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) – which is a regional growth

management board established to collaborate on issues of shared importance such as land use and growth. In creating its local area structure plans, the County consulted the public to ensure their perspectives were considered. Further, when private landowners/developers submit plans for new neighbourhoods, the County holds a public hearing to gather input from the public before considering approval. These hearings are advertised in local newspapers, posted to the Sturgeon County website and shared on social media. Members of the public are encouraged to participate in public hearings and provide input on topics that matter to them. Council considers this input when deciding on whether to approve the application. Council must balance public input with the rules and regulations set for developers.

I'm not opposed to development and obviously that's going to happen anyway. I'm worried about 20 dwelling units per net residential hectare. That's pretty scary, even way in the south part towards Edmonton. That feels like Edmonton and St. Albert moving into our backyard. So that's my fear.

This was a statement and did not pose a question for response.

I'm not a fan of retail/commercial development in Sturgeon. Residents are close enough to Edmonton or St. Albert for services.

This was a statement and did not pose a question for response.

Don't open multiple new areas at once. Having seen this happen before in Sturgeon County, it takes 15 years for buildout, such as with River's Gate and Pinnacle.

This was a statement and did not pose a question for response.

Services, Amenities & Taxation

Will you lessen taxes for these homeowners because of the new neighbourhoods?

Taxes will not be reduced for existing residents in the Sturgeon Valley because of future development.

Will taxes go up on properties (acreages) next to city housing because acreage land would be worth more?

The presence of higher-density homes does not automatically increase or decrease the value or taxes of surrounding country residential properties. Property assessment is based on the market value of the land, and municipal taxes are levied based on a property's proportional share of assessment.

The County will have to develop new services such as bus, garbage pickup, etc. How will this be paid for and will taxes go up or down?

Generally, as services increase, taxes will adjust to pay for those services: however new development also generates new taxation revenue so specific impact on taxes would depend on the type of development and the type/scale of the new services proposed. Currently, Sturgeon County utilities are paid for directly by utility customers, so residents without access to services like water are not contributing tax dollars to fund that service.

Overall, the County follows a “growth pays for growth” philosophy, meaning private landowners/developers would pay for the infrastructure needed to service new developments. The cost for infrastructure needed to service new developments would not be the responsibility of County taxpayers through municipal taxes.

Light pollution, what is going to be done to limit this?

If new communities are built out, streetlighting would be included in the development areas. This streetlighting would be designed with focus on safety in accordance with current standards, which generally promote directional lighting and energy efficiency. Further direction would be needed from Council to specifically research or implement the potential for further light pollution mitigation.

Water is already restricted in summer. What will be done to change this?

Water use in Sturgeon Valley is generally not restricted, unless a water demand measure is put in place to ensure adequate water for essential services like firefighting. This is not common, but can happen when regional water levels are low. Learn more about water demand measures at SturgeonCounty.ca/Water-Conservation.

Relative to Sturgeon Valley, developers are responsible for ensuring that appropriate/necessary upgrades to infrastructure, including water infrastructure, are made to support their development. This infrastructure is provided at the developer’s cost.

I would like to see more connectivity between existing neighbourhoods. Will/when could these areas be connected by pathways? I would love to be able to walk/bike with my family throughout the Sturgeon Valley Core. I'm not opposed entirely to plans, but if everyone needs to drive to amenities, it's not ideal.

Most existing neighbourhoods are in the Sturgeon Valley Core area. Existing neighbourhoods should expect no change under land use plans.

Sturgeon County completed a Trail System Gap Analysis in 2021 to help re-envision active transportation in the Sturgeon Valley Core by identifying existing network gaps and determining a future network to promote both recreational use and use for daily activities. Based on this report, the County is prioritizing its multi-year pathway capital projects. Information about projects is available on the County website.

The concern of local residents is urbanization of the Sturgeon Valley. The presentation language regarding aging in place with access to services and green spaces and walking paths indicates that you do not understand that to people choosing to live in the County, a walking path does not make it so. That's not country living. Green spaces and walking paths does not equal country life.

This is a statement and did not pose a question for response.

If we get annexed, my big fear —and a fear I'm sure of everybody here —is what happens with our taxes? We can't afford St. Albert taxes. If I want to pay those taxes, I could live in St. Albert. How are we seniors going to afford our taxes when St. Albert comes knocking?

Undeveloped lands are more likely than developed lands to be annexed by another municipality. The Sturgeon Valley is surrounded by expanding cities, and Sturgeon County believes in the importance of guiding the Sturgeon Valley's growth itself rather than risk losing that authority to another municipality through annexation in the future. If property is annexed, eventually property owners will be subject to the annexing municipality's tax rates. At this time, the municipal residential tax rates of both the cities of St. Albert and Edmonton are substantially higher than Sturgeon County's.

The reason I live in Sturgeon County is because of the lower tax base. Fully realizing we don't have the multimillion recreation centre, we don't have garbage pick-up, the garbage guys that are working small business, they're doing an amazing job. Why would you change that to increase taxes. So, keep doing what you're doing. Keep looking out for reduced taxes. We appreciate it.

This was a statement and did not pose a question for response.

Use the off-site levy system to bring water and sewer services into North Point.

This was a statement and did not pose a question for response.

Public Notifications & Engagement

We live right next to the new development called Pinnacle Village, and I just spoke to one of the County employees here earlier this evening. She mentioned that there was a developer consultation about two months ago, and there's a group of us here from Riverstone and none of us received any information on that. I'm just curious if there's anything that can be done, because we didn't receive any notice of that.

Private landowners/developers must develop detailed outline plans for new neighbourhoods in the Sturgeon Valley Core. These plans detail housing types, road networks, and community trails and parks. Developers must hold public engagement sessions about the outline plan before applying to the County for approval. Typically, these are promoted via newspaper advertising and mail.

The developer did advertise this public engagement via bulk mail to all postal codes in the Valley. The councillor for the area also indicated that homeowners' associations within the Valley will be notified of these developer engagements moving forward.

The developer has not yet submitted its plans to Sturgeon County. When it does, the County holds a public hearing to gather input from the public before considering approval. These hearings are advertised in local newspapers, posted to the Sturgeon County website and shared on social media. Members of the public are encouraged to participate in public hearings and provide input on specifics of the proposed development. Council considers this input when deciding on whether to approve the application. Council must balance public input with the rules and regulations set for developers and EMRB “Special Study Area” requirements.

The concern that was evident tonight was what will the future development look like. It feels like we are at the mercy of developers, the City of Edmonton, the province, etc. What can we do proactively to bring in new development and still keep the rural feel?

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Why are Facebook groups like Voice of Sturgeon County providing more information than the actual Sturgeon County site which doesn’t work most of the time? Links never work.

Sturgeon County encourages residents to seek out information from reputable sources, such as the Sturgeon County website. If you have questions that are not answered on the website, or if you’d prefer to speak with someone directly, you are encouraged to contact your elected official or a member of administration. Contact information can be found at SturgeonCounty.ca/ContactUs. If you’d prefer to access information via social media, you’re encouraged to follow us, and can send us a message if you require more information.

We’d like to hear from you about any issues you experience with the Sturgeon County website. On each page of the website, we have a link to a form where you can report issues or corrections. We

are proud to share that there are no broken links on the Sturgeon County website; we monitor this daily and should a link not work, it is addressed within one business day.

Why does Council not have meetings in the evening so people can actually attend? And why don't you provide the agenda at least a week in advance?

Recognizing that everyone has different schedules, it can be difficult to find a time that would work for all residents. Unless otherwise noted, Sturgeon County Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month, starting at 9 a.m. in Council Chambers. These meetings can also be viewed online at SturgeonCounty.ca/CouncilMeetings. Meetings are recorded and posted to the Sturgeon County website following the meeting.

Agenda packages are published on the Friday before the Council meeting at SturgeonCounty.ca/CouncilMeetings.

For items like public hearings, residents have several ways to participate and provide input. Residents are welcome to attend Council meetings in-person, register to speak via videoconference, or submit input in writing. These options are shared each time a public hearing is advertised in the newspaper, on the website or via social media.

Transportation

When is Sturgeon Road scheduled to be a four-lane divided highway?

Sturgeon Road between the City of St. Albert and Essex Point will remain a two-lane divided roadway with no plans or need for expansion to a 4-lane roadway.

Should development be supported, the construction of 127 Street (between Anthony Henday and Sturgeon Road) will accommodate future traffic generated by new development reducing traffic volumes along Sturgeon Road. For the purpose of long-term planning, Sturgeon County is protecting a corridor along Sturgeon Road East (the portion of Sturgeon Road from Essex Point to Highway 28); however, the need for expanding this road is not anticipated for decades to come and would depend on whether development occurs and the pace of that development.

127 Street/Range Road 250 was not built for the traffic we are now getting. Will the road be upgraded before any more developing takes places?

The concept of a future extension of 127 Street from Anthony Henday Drive to Sturgeon Road would improve traffic flow to and from Sturgeon Valley. A 'phase 1' 127 Street extension between Anthony Henday Drive and Sturgeon Road is a very costly initiative (over \$50 million), and development contributions would be required to cover this cost as well as generate traffic volumes to trigger such an improvement. Future phases of 127 Street extension that include a bridge over the Sturgeon River and connection between Sturgeon Road and Highway 2 north are conceptual, and are dependent on growth in that area and regional contributions. The proposed routing is shown on all area maps.

According to 2023 traffic Count data, Range Road 250 has an average daily traffic volume of 4,200 vehicles per day. The existing roadway is designed to accommodate up to 13,800 vehicles per day before upgrades are required.

For long term planning purposes, the County looked at future improvements to the corridor to accommodate new development if it advances. Initial plans are to urbanize this corridor by installing curb and gutter, turn bays and auxiliary lanes, street lighting, and a wide multi use trail. However, these improvements are not anticipated before the year 2055. Longer term plans for this corridor will be to twin Range Road 250 between Essex Point and the Anthony Henday decades in the future, and depending on whether development occurs and the pace of that development.

Is it the real intention of 127 Street extension to relieve traffic going through St. Albert? What is the car count per day expected to be once it's pushed through to Highway 2? Why is it being built right in the backyard of River's Gate homes?

Extending 127 Street from Anthony Henday Drive to Sturgeon Road would improve traffic flow to and from Sturgeon Valley. While there will be benefits to St. Albert and other regional municipalities, the extension will most significantly benefit the Sturgeon Valley South. This extension is expected to occur within a 25-year window, based on anticipated growth, and would be constructed once the Sturgeon Valley population reaches about 10,000. The existing Sturgeon Valley has a population of almost 4,500 residents. The initial stage of 127 Street from Sturgeon Road to Anthony Henday Drive will see traffic volumes of up to 18,000 trips a day at the north end and up to 27,000 trips a day towards the City of Edmonton. Extension from Sturgeon Road to Highway 2 is not anticipated within the next 30 years.

The proposed routing of 127 Street is shown on all area maps, and signage is in place near River's Gate to ensure awareness. The Rivers Gate community was built long after the proposed routing for 127 Street was developed.

Plans to extend 127 Street to Highway 2 are conceptual, again based on the potential for future growth and regional contributions.

This question is related to congestion at the junction of Highway 37 and 97 Street. Will the lanes be expanded for free flow either north-south or east-west? This area is always congested and there's no opportunity for turning lanes right now. The constant congestion is a safety hazard.

This intersection is the jurisdiction of the provincial government, since it's a provincial highway. Sturgeon County encourages residents to contact their provincial representatives about potential upgrades, and Sturgeon County Council continues to advocate for priority provincial projects within the County.

Over the past 20 years, I've been requesting that the provincial government put in a full lane shoulder on Highway 37 and improve turning lanes. Going forward, is Highway 37 and Highway 28 a priority for the Mayor and councillors?

These roadways are provincial highways and are the jurisdiction of the provincial government.

While this intersection isn't Sturgeon County's jurisdiction, the County has advocated for improvements to improve safety, as a result of ongoing safety concerns and fatalities. Further, Council has committed funds towards improving the intersection, but improvements must be initiated by the province.

What changes will be made to Coal Mine Road over next 5 years? 10 years?

Sections of Coal Mine Road have recently been upgraded. The County is working with the City of St. Albert on future upgrades and connections of Coal Mine Road from Range Road 252 with Neil M. Ross. This project is forecasted for 2027 and is not dependent on development advancing.

We need turning lanes into North Point before any population increase.

Turning bays into North Pointe would not be required until upgrades to Range Road 250 are constructed. If development in the Valley took place, this would likely not occur until 2043. If development did take place in the Valley that required the construction of 127 Street, this would reduce the traffic volumes along Range Road 250, helping to mitigate the safety concerns along Range Road 250 / North Pointe access.

Other

How closely are you aligned with the clean energy program?

The Clean Energy Improvement Program is a financing program that enables residents to borrow funds at a competitive interest rate to make energy efficient upgrades to their homes. The borrowed money is paid back through municipal taxes. This program is administered by Alberta Municipalities and is funded through federal dollars and by homeowners. Learn more at SturgeonCounty.ca/CEIP

How could the County support energy efficient developments, because we really don't want the extreme weather which we're having now.

Some private landowners/developers have expressed an interest in developing more sustainable homes, whether than means incorporating solar or wind power, or reducing water demand within the home. Sturgeon County encourages developers to build affordable, energy efficient homes.

As a Metis man, if you say you acknowledge we are in Treaty 6 territory/land, why destroy all this land and displace so many animals if you respect OUR land. Nobody in their right mind would want more apartments in the country. Why not just leave it the way it is? I bet more people would be opposed to this development plan than not. But that's if they actually know about it. Not too many people in the affected areas actually know about these plans and that's not fair to them.

Land in the Sturgeon Valley Core and Sturgeon Valley South is owned by private landowners, and some want to develop their land. The Valley continues to be very desirable for development, due to proximity to regional communities, access to transportation networks, good servicing potential, and abundant natural features.

Undeveloped lands are more likely than developed lands to be annexed by another municipality. The Sturgeon Valley is surrounded by expanding cities, and Sturgeon County believes in the importance of guiding the Sturgeon Valley's growth itself rather than risk losing that authority in the future. Sturgeon County's growth, like other municipalities in the region, is bound by provincial and regional land use policies.

Sturgeon County remains committed to hearing from residents about development in the Sturgeon Valley. In creating its local area structure plans, the County consulted the public to ensure their perspectives were considered. Further, when private landowners/developers submit plans for new neighbourhoods, the County holds a public hearing to gather input from the public before considering approval. These hearings are advertised in local newspapers, posted to the Sturgeon County website and shared on social media. Members of the public are encouraged to participate in public hearings and provide input specifics of the proposed development. Council considers this input when deciding on whether to approve the application. Council must balance public input with the rules and regulations set for developers and EMRB "Special Study Area" requirements.

I own a house with a 10' wide x 200' long right of access. I want to buy it as I don't want the 30' trees knocked down. How do I do this?

Please contact Sturgeon County Planning and Development Services to discuss the specifics of your property and your development or land interests.

The survey is buried in the online newsletter and is not easy to find. It should've been easier to find for people to answer.

This comment was submitted prior to the survey launching on May 30, 2024. All attendees at the Sturgeon Valley Information & Engagement Session received a postcard with a direct link to access the survey. Further, all registered attendees also received an email linking directly to the survey. The survey was also promoted via newspaper, social media, the Sturgeon County website and road signs throughout the Sturgeon Valley following the session and in advance of the survey's closing date of June 16, 2024.

We've been in Sunnybrook for 18 years, and I think there was a little bit of miscommunication in the diagrams printed in St. Albert Gazette. Because they've repaved and done drainage along Range Road 252 from Bellerose up to Coal Mine Road. Are there plans to develop houses right up to that road or it's just repaving and drainage work? Will new homes be built by Range Road 252C in the next 5-to-10 years.

Sturgeon County has not received plans for development in that area, at this time.

No to: lane housing and alley ways.

This was a statement and did not pose a question for response.

For the public engagement undertaken between December 2020 and May 2021 to develop Sturgeon County's area structure plans for the Sturgeon Valley, we did not receive "any" of that information that you talked about. Most of the time we spent in different types of lockdown. I believe that process needs a reset. Can this happen?

Sturgeon County initiated a large-scale resident engagement (the Our Future Valley initiative) and developed the two Sturgeon Valley area structure plans based on that resident input. This included

many opportunities for public input through virtual information and engagement sessions, which were promoted in newspapers, direct mail, road signage, social media, and at public Council meetings. These sessions were held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic and public health measures. Visit SturgeonCounty.ca/SturgeonValley to learn more about the Our Future Valley initiative.

Council adopted the area structure plans, which adhere to the density requirements of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB) – which is a regional growth management board established to collaborate on issues of shared importance such as land use and growth. Sturgeon County remains committed to hearing from residents about development in the Sturgeon Valley.

Development Process

- Private landowners/developers must hold an open house before submitting their plan to the County for initial feedback on their neighbourhood design.
- Private landowners/developers must submit a “what we heard” report from that pre-application open house alongside their application to the County.
- When private landowners/developers submit plans for new neighbourhoods, the County holds a public hearing to gather input from the public before considering approval. The “what we heard” report from the pre application meeting is included in Council’s agenda package for consideration of the development.
 - Public hearings are advertised in local newspapers, posted to the Sturgeon County website and shared on social media. Members of the public are encouraged to participate in public hearings and provide input on specifics of the proposed development.
- Council considers input received at the public hearing when making a decision on whether or not to approve the application. Council must balance public input with the rules and regulations set for developers and EMRB “Special Study Area” requirements.
- Council also considers Sturgeon County’s capital plans, including its ability to provide for infrastructure to support new neighbourhoods. This infrastructure is ultimately funded through direct contributions by developers, such that ‘growth pays for growth’, however the speed by which infrastructure is provided can also influence the speed of new neighbourhood development.

It feels like the “little guy” doesn’t really have much say if and when big urban centres such as Edmonton or St. Albert decide they want to annex our land. I get that Sturgeon County is just “playing with the cards that they’ve been dealt” however, it feels like there is no power for the people and that is threatening to a landowner. This, I feel, is the biggest frustration.

This was a statement and did not pose a question for response. For questions or comments related to municipal annexations in Alberta, a local MLA or the provincial government Minister of Municipal Affairs would be the best contacts.

***Really – sidewalks and curbs? Cost, maintenance, mess, water puddles and sewers.
Really – bike lanes and dog parks?!
Coffee shop might be nice...I’m kidding.***

This was a statement and did not pose a question for response.

Why are you insulting us by having bylaw officers attend this meeting?

Bylaw officers were requested to attend the meeting due to the size of the gathering, which was expected to be nearly 300 people. This was in no way intended to insult attendees.

How many Council are against high density? Show hands.

Sturgeon County encourages the attendee to contact elected officials directly if they wish to get Council perspectives on the potential plans for development in the Sturgeon Valley. All decisions related to Sturgeon Valley plans and bylaws are made in public, and the public is invited to attend and observe at the time, or watch footage thereafter.

What will the population in the Valley be in 10 years? 20 years?

Pending approval of private applications and consideration of market conditions, the population of the Sturgeon Valley South could increase by about 2.1% each year (with about 80 dwellings per year initially and increasing to 235 dwellings in later years). In 10 years, the population of the Sturgeon Valley South could be about 2,500 residents, and in 20 years the population could be about 6,000 residents.

In the Sturgeon Valley Core, the population could increase by about 2.1% each year (with about 65 dwellings per year initially and increasing to 80 dwellings in later years). The current population of the Core is approximately 3,700 residents. In 10 years, the population of the Core could be about 5,900 residents, and in 20 years the population could be 8,100 residents.

Again, all population estimates are conceptual, and pace of growth is contingent on development approvals, market conditions, available infrastructure, and several other factors.

Is this meeting just a formality and all has been planned?

The Sturgeon Valley Information & Engagement Session was held to provide information and gather input from residents. Sturgeon County remains committed to hearing from residents about development in the Sturgeon Valley. Council is considering the input it heard at the session, as well as input received in the subsequent survey to inform next steps.

Development Process

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What misinformation has been shared?

What a bunch of crap. This went in when COVID was used as fear. So many people did not pay attention to the land use bylaws. The mayor went to Toronto to the Trudeau Conference in 2023. He made it clear that the more density the more money will be given. We are in the country not city. We don't need to belong to the EMRB. This is all the plan that the 2023 agenda wants. This Liberal ideology is happening all across our Alberta. We don't need this high-density crap. The Trudeau government letting all these people in should not happen. He needs to be re-elected. Is the mayor going to Indonesia to attend more land grab ideologies. This is a terrible government that we have.

The majority of our taxes are going to administration. These people are overpaid, when there are so many people losing everything. Roundabouts are a terrible idea. Don't sell your crap to us. It is sad that we can't ask questions at the meeting so everyone can hear your answers. Again deception.

This submission does not pose a question related to development in the Sturgeon Valley. Further, this submission includes incorrect information, including the following:

- Sturgeon County has not received any federal funding for development in the Sturgeon Valley, and has not applied for nor received federal housing funding.
- Sturgeon County is mandated by the Government of Alberta, to belong to the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB), which is a growth management board established to collaborate on issues of shared importance such as land use and growth, infrastructure and funding of regional services.
- Governance in Sturgeon County has nothing to do with the federal government, the Liberal Party of Canada or Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Municipalities are also created by legislation passed by provincial governments, and locally governed within those rules.
- The Sturgeon County Mayor has not attended a ‘Trudeau Conference’ in 2023, nor any other year.
- Sturgeon County employees are compensated in line with policy and detailed analyses that considers the compensation of similar positions in comparative municipalities, and the County attempts to affordably attract and retain qualified, capable employees.
- Taxes are used to fund a variety of services provided to Sturgeon County residents. A portion of these tax dollars is used to pay staff wages so they can deliver the programs and

services. Staff in Sturgeon County are not overpaid; these staff are paid similarly to staff in other municipalities, often making less than those in similar positions in the private sector.

- Attendees were welcome to ask questions at the Sturgeon Valley Information & Engagement Session, which Council members and staff responded to directly in a large group setting, and there was a period to speak to County officials conversationally as well.

Will Council actually “place final decision making in the hands of the public”? As per page 3 of the public policy.

Sturgeon County’s Public Participation Policy establishes a consistent and effective approach to public engagement, based on international standards. The referenced page details the Spectrum of Engagement, as established by the International Association of Public Participation. And is intended for many different organizations and groups who undertake public engagement and is not geared to municipalities specifically.

This spectrum features five levels of public participation, which each provide the public with a different level of influence on the decision to be made. When Sturgeon County embarks on an engagement process, the scope of engagement and the commitment to stakeholders will be clarified at the beginning of the process. For development in the Sturgeon Valley, the public’s level of influence is consistent with the “Consult” level, in which the County listens to public input and considers that input when deciding. Further, there is a commitment to reporting back on the input shared, and how the input influenced a decision. We’ve committed to reporting back on our findings of the engagement session and subsequent survey in the summer. This will be shared in Council and at SturgeonCounty.ca/SturgeonValley.

The referenced statement “to place final decision making in the hands of the public” aligns with the “Empower” level of public participation. This means the public has full control over the decision to be made. It’s important to note that Mayor and Council members are elected to make decisions in consultation with and on behalf of the public. Sturgeon County believes in public participation and involving the public in decision-making processes however, the provincial government through the Municipal Government Act gives municipal Councils the authority to make decisions on behalf of their constituents on matters including land use planning and development

Why was this passed on Sept. 14, 2021, when three people abstained from vote? And then-Councillor Karen Shaw said residents didn’t have enough say.

Decisions are made democratically, and majority of Council members voted in support of the three bylaws that approved the Sturgeon Valley South Area Structure Plan and the Sturgeon Valley Core Area Structure Plan, and amended the Municipal Development Plan. Council members are entitled to have their own perspectives, and to bring those forward at Council meetings for discussion and decision.

It’s important to note that when a Council member isn’t present for a public hearing on a particular bylaw being considered, they are not able to vote on the matter when it comes back to Council for a decision. This ensures that only Council members who have heard public input are able to weigh in on the decision being made. Council members may miss a meeting for numerous reasons, such as illness, scheduling conflicts or other. In the case of the Sturgeon Valley ASP bylaws, those that

abstained were not in attendance at the public hearings. The motion to approve the bylaws was supported by most Councillors eligible to vote.

Is there any federal money being offered? And is there federal pressure for high-density housing?

There is no federal money being offered to or received by Sturgeon County for development in the Sturgeon Valley at this time.

Land in the Sturgeon Valley Core and Sturgeon Valley South is owned by private landowners. Some of these landowners are preparing detailed plans for specific neighbourhoods. There may be some federal programs offering funding for privately constructed affordable housing, it would be up to the individual landowners to apply for that funding; Sturgeon County has no role in this. Sturgeon County has not applied for nor received federal housing funding.

The following was submitted as a letter at the Information & Engagement Session.

When planning development in the river valley do you consider the Sturgeon River and what it needs for its health which in turn benefits people? What river experts do you consult?

Why are some people through contract keeping 40 feet of natural vegetation (trees) intact while in the same subdivision others have eliminated natural vegetation right to the river's edge which causes erosion, subjecting the river to change course, impacting boundaries between landowners in the river valley.

What about industry being allowed too close to the river. Check out the area in Fort Saskatchewan which has stunted trees and a toxic odour. Why is there not more cultivation of natural native trees, fruit trees and plants? Did you know that burdock roots and dandelion root is excellent, our which keeps individual's organs healthy?

What regulations do you have in place to guard the river's health with native vegetation? Vegetation in our climate sustains us better than any imported foods which are gathered green and are not sun ripen. To be healthy and strong, it is to our advantage to eat choke cherry, Saskatoon berries, high bush cranberry, pinch cherry and hazelnuts. This contributes to lowering transportation pollution.

The City of Edmonton took out all development from the river, leaving parks. Also, the city centre was treed but now the park in city centre has been completely turned into concrete. Do people who administer the County understand that without trees and plant life we do not have oxygen? I sincerely hope people concreting the planet would be sent to Mars where they can concrete it all they desire.

When considering approval of proposed developments, Sturgeon County is obligated to consult the provincial government (through Alberta Environment and Parks), which is responsible for the *Water Act*. This ensures development is not harmful to water bodies, such as the Sturgeon River.

At the time of subdivision, the County is obligated to dedicate/ and protect a minimum of 6 metres from the high water mark of any crown waterbody or river as Environmental Reserve. There is to be no development within this Environmental Reserve area including disturbance to vegetation for anything other than public access and trail connections.