

Strathcona County's

# Social Sustainability Framework



**Strathcona**  
County

March 2007

Strathcona County's

# Social Sustainability Framework



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Strathcona County's

# Social Sustainability Framework





## Executive Summary

### Overview

The framework described in this document was designed to help decision makers at the governance and service delivery levels in Strathcona County determine the impact of their decisions on social sustainability. The framework is consistent with the Strategic Plan approved by Strathcona County Council in May 2003.

A Sustainable Community balances its social, economic and environmental components while improving the quality of life for both existing and future generations. In addition to meeting the basic needs of residents; it has the ability to maintain and build on its resources while maintaining the resiliency to prevent or address problems.

The Social Sustainability Framework is a tool founded on the principle of evidence-based decision making. It will enable Strathcona County to build social sustainability and ensure a healthy, connected, supportive environment for its residents for years to come.

The Social Sustainability Framework was adopted by Strathcona County Council on March 27, 2007.

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The framework described in this document was designed to help decision makers at the governance and service delivery levels in Strathcona County determine the impact of their decisions on social sustainability.

## Purpose

- To serve as a foundation for responding to social issues
- To provide opportunities for the assessment of the impact of demographic, social, and economic changes on residents
- To provide for the assessment of the social impact of municipal decisions on the quality of life of residents
- To facilitate the prioritization and planning for current and future social needs
- To aid in monitoring key socio-demographic indicators to address issues as they emerge
- To clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the County and other sectors
- To guide the development of policies to address community and social issues
- To strengthen the County's commitment to integrated planning for all people services

## Vision

Strathcona County's vision is of a safe, caring and autonomous community that treasures its unique blend of urban and rural lifestyles while balancing the natural environment with economic prosperity; and through strong, effective leadership is a vibrant community of choice. Strathcona County seeks to promote a caring community that respects the needs and wants of a diverse population, encourages responsible citizenship and provides opportunities for healthy lifestyle choices.

The development of the Social Policy Framework represents an opportunity to build the capacity of our residents and of our community in accomplishing the goal of social sustainability and improving quality of life for all.

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The development of the Social Policy Framework represents an opportunity to assess the social impact of decisions, improving quality of life for all.

## Project Components

### Phase One

The first phase of the project consisted of collecting and analyzing information about the human condition of our community through three sets of data:

1. Twenty-five social indicators were developed in order to measure social change over time. These indicators were based on socio-demographic information compiled through census data; statistics from Capital Health; Elk Island Public Schools; Elk Island Catholic Schools; RCMP; Children's Services and other organizations; as well as data from a Community Health and Lifestyle Survey.
2. A youth survey was administered to over 400 youth to obtain benchmark information on issues which may impact their lives including growing up in the community; family dynamics; bullying; alcohol, drugs, and tobacco; sex and peer groups.
3. A Community Mapping process was developed to depict data geographically to identify social strengths, gaps and needs either by neighbourhood or other location. Community capacity can be mapped to determine whether programs and services are being delivered in the correct locations given the population base.

This information will be updated on a regular basis to monitor change and used to develop actions and strategies as necessary.

### Phase Two

The development of the framework itself included a broad range of consultation with the community, Council, organizations and municipal staff. A Steering Committee including representation from a cross-section of County departments guided the process and ensured different perspectives were considered. The consultation itself included a Community Values Survey, involving over 600 participants, a community roundtable discussion, and nine focus groups with key community stakeholders.

The results of the Community Values Survey were used to provide a base of information used for discussion, clarification and validation in the roundtable and focus groups. From these input sessions, 12 community value statements were developed. The value statements along with four guiding principles form the foundation of the framework.

## Strathcona's Four Guiding Principles for Social Sustainability

From public consultation, it became clear that four principles were widely shared by people within Strathcona County. These form the foundation for the Social Sustainability Framework.

1. **Social inclusion** is the process by which efforts are made to ensure that everyone, regardless of their experiences and circumstances, can achieve their potential in life. A socially inclusive society is one where citizens have the opportunity to access services, learning, and employment, recreational and cultural activities. It is fostered when all individuals and families benefit equitably from the distribution of resources and availability of opportunities to participate in all aspects of community life.
2. **Community connectedness** refers to the sense of belonging to a community that occurs through the formal and informal networks developed when people come together for social, educational, recreational, spiritual, cultural and/or work-related purposes.
3. **Social responsibility** is the experience and appreciation of our interdependence and connectedness with others. Social responsibility includes acceptance of consequences of one's own actions, a caring attitude toward others, acceptance of individual and cultural diversity and recognition of human rights. It occurs when citizens value the worth that the community derives from members expressing a sense of responsibility to each other through voluntary engagement and collective decision making.
4. **Health and well-being** is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social wellness. For individuals it includes the capacity of people to adapt to, respond to, or control life's challenges and changes.

A healthy community is one that is continually creating and improving physical and social environments and expanding resources which enable people to mutually support each other in performing the functions of life and in developing to their maximum potential. It is promoted when residents feel comfortable with the safety and cleanliness of their environment and have timely, equitable access to key services such as health, education, transportation and housing.



## Roles and Responsibilities

The Social Sustainability Framework outlines the roles and responsibilities of federal, provincial, and municipal governments, as well as business and non-profit organizations in addressing social needs within the community. Individual responsibility needs to be balanced with society's responsibility in creating and maintaining social sustainability.

## Community-Identified Priorities

Three primary areas were identified as priorities for Strathcona County.

- The need for increased services and supports for children and youth should be a key focus.
- Community affordability is a major concern.
- Additionally, people are experiencing high levels of stress, particularly in relation to balancing work and home demands. The impact of stress is related to a myriad of negative effects including medical problems, drug and alcohol abuse, and family breakdown.

## Initial Recommendations

1. That Social Sustainability become an integral component of Strathcona County's annual planning process. We will identify and incorporate actions that move our community toward social sustainability by including them as part of our business planning and budget processes.
2. That the principles of social sustainability be incorporated into our decision-making process through use of the Decision-Making Model and Guide. Environmental and economic assessments will be followed through in separate, linked processes.
3. That appropriate social impacts be incorporated into the assessment process for municipal development proposals.
4. That a coordinated approach be developed for the collection of social information which will ensure corporate and community information is compiled, updated, analyzed and made available to County departments and community organizations. This data must be easily accessible to all County departments and partners.
5. It is recognized that this is a changing and evolving document. Updates and revisions will be brought back to Strathcona County Council on a semi-annual basis.

Additional recommendations will come forward from departments as the process is implemented.

## Actions to be Explored

Issues with associated actions were identified. Potential actions will be researched with resulting recommendations coming forward to Strathcona County Council.

1. Undertake a review of affordable housing which examines a range of options to suit residents' needs at various stages of life.
2. Support the initiative by Pioneer Housing Foundation to expand Silver Birch Lodge and develop complementary facilities on the Lodge site.
3. Develop a standard fee-reduction policy for Strathcona County programs provided to the general public.
4. Explore the development of food securities options currently not in place including school breakfasts and/or snack programs and the enhancement of existing co-op garden initiatives.
5. Examine the potential for return to work programs including assistance with job searches, loans for work and professional clothing, transportation to job interviews, equipment/tools, and the development of community "apprenticing" programs both internally and in partnership with local business.
6. Strathcona County is currently reviewing its public transit service. When it is complete, follow up on any recommendations that affect affordability and accessibility.
7. Develop a comprehensive community seniors' plan to identify high priority needs and develop strategies for delivery of appropriate programs or services to ameliorate these needs.
8. Develop a volunteer home visiting program for people who are isolated by life stage or disability. Agencies such as the Strathcona County Health Centre could identify isolated persons and refer them to the program.
9. Increase promotion of the Information and Volunteer Centre as the identified community information hub.
10. Hold a Council-sponsored community event (e.g. barbecue) at which citizens are encouraged to get to know their mayor and councillors and submit ideas into a Community Suggestion Box.
11. Run a Get to Know Your Neighbour campaign involving the media to counter the negative effects of cocooning. Knowing your neighbours significantly reduces risk of theft. Use a facilitator to bring people of different life stages together.

12. Consider a 211 telephone system as a future initiative, providing residents with one-stop access to information about all services offered in the community.
13. Continue to support the work of the Relationship Violence and Bullying Committee as it continues to identify gaps by making recommendations to applicable organizations on how to fill those needs.
14. Continue to support the work of the Strathcona County Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy as it continues to identify gaps by making recommendations to applicable organizations on how to fill those needs.
15. In partnership with other organizations or on its own, Strathcona County should continue to deliver services to children and youth.
16. Explore opportunities to develop or enhance partnerships with Elk Island Public Schools and Elk Island Catholic Schools to promote schools as service hubs for delivery of needed programs, and community centres for activities.
17. Develop a model to consult with citizens in identifying needs and proposing activities to improve the well-being of children and youth.
18. Provide funding support for programs for children and youth which focus on non-structured activities, one-on-one mentoring, positive child and youth development, access to the resources, supports and opportunities that will enable them to overcome barriers and achieve their positive potential in life.
19. Develop employer and public education programs that assist in the early recognition and detection of stress symptoms, with information about how to prevent and reduce stress.

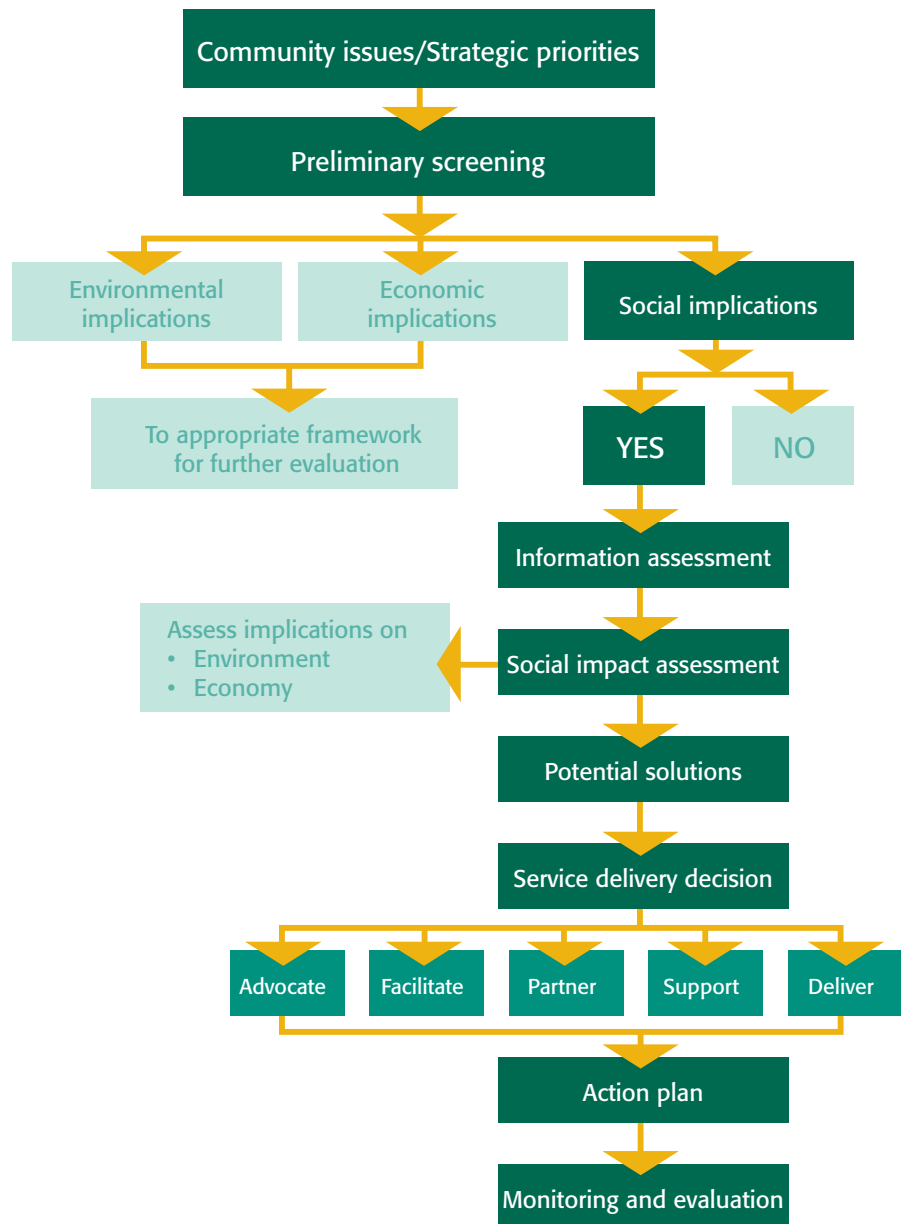
## Decision Model

Strathcona County has developed this model to assess the impact of decision-making in our community both at the municipal governance level, and in the way services are delivered. This model outlines the steps to be followed in considering the social implications of decisions.

It is important to note that similar processes are being developed so that community issues are also considered with respect to their environmental implications and economic implications. In balance, three factors—environment, economic and social—will lead to a strong community.

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### Decision-Making Model





# Strathcona County's Social Sustainability Framework

## Introduction

A Sustainable Community balances its social, economic and environmental components while improving the quality of life for both existing and future generations. It provides an integrated approach that recognizes the need for mutually reinforcing considerations of the three components. Ultimately, the goal of sustainability is to enhance people's well-being while living within the capacity of the eco-system.



A socially sustainable community offers a sense of community, tolerance and respect for cultural diversity, opportunities for cultural, leisure, community and civic activities for all residents, a strong sense of safety and security and a socially inclusive environment with life opportunities for all. There is effective engagement with neighbourhoods, strong partnerships between government, business and community, a strong sense of civic values, personal and community responsibility and community pride.

For a community to function and be sustainable, residents must first be able to meet their basic needs in terms of sufficient income for the support

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The 1995 United Nations' World Summit for Social Development defined the ultimate goal of social development is to improve and enhance the quality of life for all people.

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99.7% of County residents agree that all children should have a safe and healthy place to grow up.

of themselves and their family, appropriate and affordable housing, appropriate and affordable health care, nutritious food, access to jobs that utilize their skills and abilities, and safe communities and workplaces. These are necessary before social capacity can be built. A socially sustainable community must have the ability to maintain and build on its own resources and the resiliency to address problems or prevent their occurrence.

In order to have basic needs met, two types of attributes or resources are necessary for building social sustainability:

- Individual or human capacity includes those attributes and resources that people can contribute to their own well-being as well as to the well-being of the whole community. This includes such resources as education, skills, health, values and leadership.
- Social or community capacity refers to the relationships, networks and norms that facilitate collective action taken to improve the quality of life and ensure that such improvements are sustainable.

Strathcona County's vision strongly reflects these principles.

## Our Vision

Strathcona County is a safe, caring and autonomous community that treasures its unique blend of urban and rural lifestyles while balancing the natural environment with economic prosperity; and through strong, effective leadership is a vibrant community of choice.

This commitment is further enshrined as part of the Strathcona County's Strategic Plan Capstone Policies on Community Well-Being and Community Sustainability:

- To provide a safe community for residents and visitors
- To promote a caring community that respects the needs and wants of a diverse population
- To encourage responsible citizenship
- To provide opportunities for healthy lifestyle choices

The development of the Social Sustainability Framework represents an opportunity to recognize existing work and move forward in achieving the County's Vision and Capstone Policies and to build the capacity of our residents and of our community in accomplishing the goal of social sustainability and improving quality of life for all.

Strathcona County currently delivers, both by itself and in partnership with others, a wide array of programs and services that affect the quality of life for our residents. Our human services include parks and recreation,

arts and culture, library services, public transportation, community information and volunteer co-ordination services, services to families and the community and protective and safety services.

Subsidies are available to residents in need for recreation programs, seniors' bus passes, library cards, counselling and home care services. Through partnerships with other levels of government and community organizations, at-risk families have access to intensive home visitation services at no cost, all families with children aged 0 – 6 may access no-cost and low-cost programs and resources, and school-age children and their families can access family supports at no cost.

In partnership with Seniors' Management Services/Pioneer Housing Foundation, rent in self-contained seniors' apartments and lodge rates are maintained at affordable levels.

Strathcona County's Social Services Grants Program provides grants to community-based organizations for a broad range of programs and services addressing services ranging from sexual assault and family violence to internet safety for children, community mediation and youth justice.

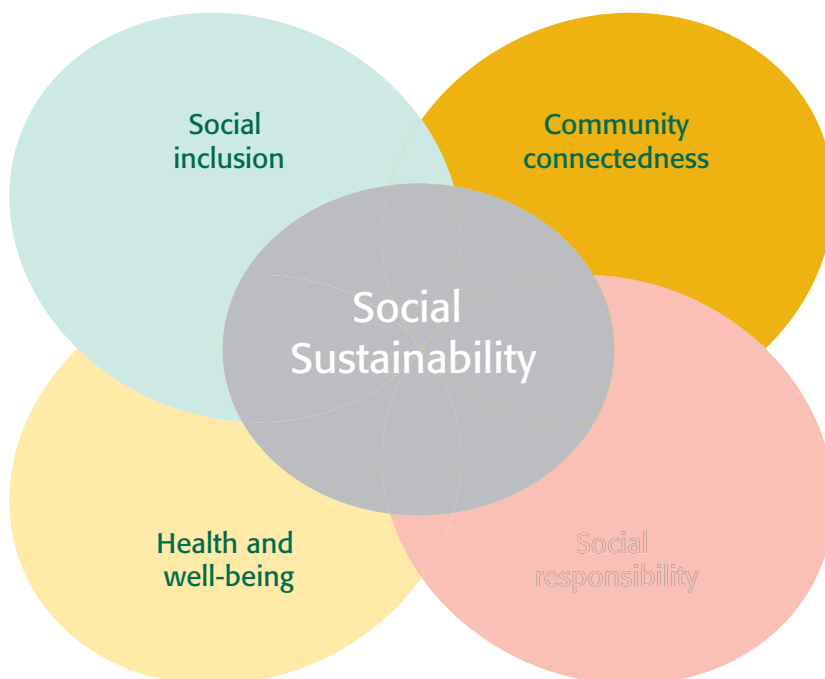
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560 residents accessed the recreation subsidy program in the first 9 months of 2006.

\$150,000 is available to community social services programs through the grants program.

## Strathcona County's Four Guiding Principles for Social Sustainability

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### Four guiding principles for social sustainability



### Strathcona County's Four Guiding Principles for Social Sustainability

1. **Social inclusion** is the process by which efforts are made to ensure that everyone, regardless of their experiences and circumstances, can achieve their potential in life. A socially inclusive society is one where citizens have the opportunity to access services, learning, employment, recreational and cultural activities. It is fostered when all individuals and families benefit equitably from the distribution of resources and availability of opportunities to participate in all aspects of community life.
2. **Community connectedness** refers to the sense of belonging to a community that occurs through the formal and informal networks developed when people come together for social, educational, recreational, spiritual, cultural and/or work-related purposes.
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4. **Health and well-being** is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social wellness. For individuals it includes the capacity of people to adapt to, respond to, or control life's challenges and changes. A healthy community is one that is continually creating and improving physical and social environments and expanding resources which enable people to mutually support each other in performing the functions of life and in developing to their maximum potential. It is promoted when residents feel comfortable with the safety and cleanliness of their environment and have timely, equitable access to key services such as health, education, transportation and housing.



# Purpose of the Framework

Strathcona County's Social Sustainability Framework is intended to:

- Develop a model for municipal involvement in responding to social issues within the context of maintaining and enhancing community well-being
- Offer regular opportunities for assessing the likely impact of demographic, social and economic changes for the residents of the County
- Provide for the assessment of the social impact of municipal decisions on the quality of life of residents
- Address community social well-being: facilitate the prioritization and planning for current and future social needs as they evolve
- Monitor key socio-demographic indicators to enable early development of targeted programs to address issues as early as possible
- Clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the County and other sectors in the provision of services
- Provide for the development of policies to address community and social issues
- Strengthen the County's commitment to integrated planning for all people services

Implementation of the framework will contribute to the following outcomes:

- Social consequences of municipal decisions will be assessed
- The role of the municipality in dealing with social issues will be clarified
- Policies will be developed which promote and enhance the quality of life for all residents
- The public will have greater opportunity for input into decisions affecting the social environment
- Data collection systems will be developed and utilized which contribute to making the right decision at the right time
- Business plans and strategic initiatives will consider the social impact of their implementation
- Programs, services and decisions will align with the needs of the community

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Why are we doing this?

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How will we know if we get there?

- The planning and implementation of community programs and services will be integrated

The Social Sustainability Framework will be complemented over time by the development of environment and economic frameworks.

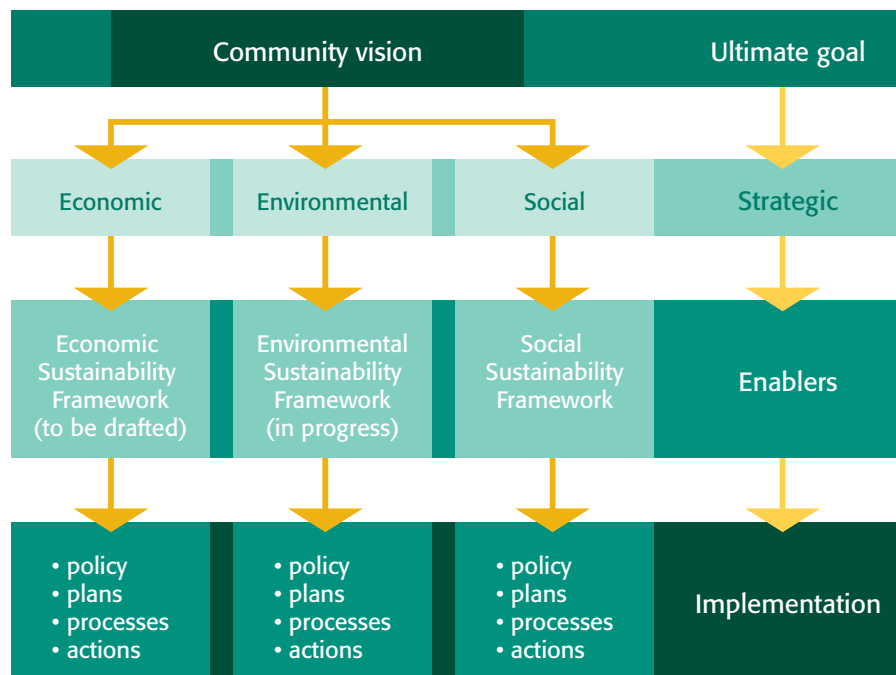
## Relationship to County Corporate Processes

### Social Sustainability and Strathcona County's Community Vision

The Social Sustainability Framework is one of the three enablers for the development of corporate policy, plans and processes. The Social Sustainability Framework facilitates building of social capital in Strathcona County.

It is intended to be a tool to assess the social impact of all business plans and strategic initiatives.

#### Social Sustainability Framework is one of the three enablers



# Developing the Framework

## Phase One: Data Collection

Changes have been occurring with the social services delivery system in Alberta over the past 10 years. Emphasis has shifted toward earlier identification of potential problems and earlier intervention strategies developed to reduce the severity of dysfunction experienced by individuals and families and to reduce the costs associated with interventions occurring at the point of crisis. This shift in program focus toward early intervention has resulted in the need to identify problems and potential risk factors as early as possible.

This need to use data to identify and monitor potential risk areas led to the development in 2003 of a Social Indicators template.

### 1. Social indicators

Social indicators are a way of measuring social change. They are used to determine whether the human condition is better or worse off over time. A set of indicators was developed to provide baseline information in order to measure key social changes in our community and serve as “bellwether warnings” of emerging problems.

A total of 30 indicators were developed in the areas of Healthy Community, Healthy Families, Healthy People, Healthy Children, Community Affordability and Community Participation. (See the full template on page 17.)

A variety of sources were used to create the baseline information for Strathcona County Social Indicators, including:



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A committee of residents and representatives from community volunteer boards guided the development of the Social Sustainability Framework

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25% of residents found it difficult to meet monthly expenses

90% of residents feel safe in their community

40% of residents rarely drink alcohol

65% of residents experienced high levels of job stress

- a Community Social Profile comprised of census data relevant to population growth, income, and family make-up.
- a Health and Lifestyle Questionnaire measuring residents' perception related to safety in neighbourhoods, affordability of housing, the ability to meet monthly expenses, family violence, and level and sources of stress.
- existing information from community organizations including Capital Health's Annual Report documenting health status in the community, statistics from the school systems, Children's Services, A Safe Place, Information and Volunteer Centre and the RCMP. See the Appendices for more detailed information.

The information contained in the template will be updated on a regular basis to monitor change, whether positive or negative, with new strategies developed as necessary.

## 2. The Youth Survey

Results of the Health and Lifestyle Checkup carried out by Family and Community Services brought forward a question of youth input. As a result, in April 2004, Strathcona County Family and Community Services initiated an in-depth study on the behaviours and attitudes of youth ages 12 to 17 residing in the County.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the study was to establish benchmarks relating to the following issues for youth: growing up in the community; family dynamics; bullying; alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and sex; and peer groups. Students in Grades 6, 8 and 11 participated.

Again, several findings have relevancy for the Social Sustainability Framework. They include students' perceptions of safety in their neighbourhood, bullying in schools, the availability of family and community support (i.e., role models, knowing where to go for help), the availability of friends and positive spare time activities, taking responsibility for actions, dealing with anger or other problems, and the use of alcohol and drugs. Full results of this survey are available in the Appendices. This survey will be repeated regularly in order to monitor changes which may require attention.

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52% of Grade 11 students acknowledge bullying someone in the past year



93% of youth agreed their parents encourage them to do the best they can

11% of Grade 8 students felt pressured to try illegal drugs

1. Refer to Social Issues Impacting Strathcona County Youth 2005 Study Results, by Phil Kreisel, Ph.D., Strategic Information Analyst, Corporate Planning and Intergovernmental Affairs. September 2005.

## Social Indicators

These measures provide information about Strathcona County and the health and well-being of our community. By tracking these over time, we will be able to measure social changes in our community.

Healthy Community	Healthy Families	Healthy People	Healthy Children	Community Affordability
Safety 94.4% of residents feel safe	Family Stress 43.9% dealing with children 24.6% dealing with significant other	Infant Mortality Rate Per 1,000 live births 7.2	Youth Crime Males 125 Females 20 Total 145	Median Family Income All families \$78,955 Lone parent \$43,275
Charges against adults Male 268 Female 40 Total 308	Lone Parent Families 2,025	Life Expectancy Males 77.2 Females 82.6	Children Living in Poverty 1,330	Living Below Low Income Cut-off Lone parent families 330 Two-parent families 950
Employment Rate 15-24 yrs. 64.9% 25-54 yrs 86.5% 55+ yrs 48.3% Unemployment Rate 3.8%	Overtime Worked 35-50 hours 55.8% 50-plus hours 16.5%	Teen Birth Rate (women 15-19 yrs) 6.4/1,000	Reports of Child Investigations 179	Housing Affordability 14.8% not affordable 72.3% somewhat affordable
High School Completion Rate 84%	Perception of Violence Bullying 92.5% Family Violence 82.4% Spousal Abuse 82.8%	% Low Birth Weight Babies 4.9%	Number of Children Taken Into Care 35	Affordability 25.7% rated monthly expenses as very to somewhat difficult
Work Hours 36-50 per week 55.8% 51+ per week 16.5%	Number of Strathcona residents using Women's Shelter April-March 2002-2003 Total women 377 Total children 380 Turned Away 405	Health Rating 76.3%	Cohort Size (Jan - May) to 1 yr 296 8yr 1,127 1 yr 905 9 yr 1,149 2 yr 916 10 yr 1,160 3 yr 902 11 yr 1,249 4 yr 982 12 yr 1,325 5 yr 991 13 yr 1,280 6 yr 967 14 yr 1,345 7 yr 1,101 15 yr 1,329	Housing Costs Owner occupied \$969/month Renter occupied \$674/month
Social Cohesion 73.3% know 6+ adults by name in their neighbourhood 70% talk to neighbours 1 or more times per week 95.5% had someone other than family to turn to in an emergency		Personal Stress 41.6%	Feel Safe at School Felt safe 79% Didn't feel safe 15%	
Number of Volunteers 29,250 volunteers served 4,065,750 hours in 2002		Reported smoking rate 17.4%		

A survey was developed to gather information from the community on their attitudes and perceptions regarding a range of social values and issues and questions which have an impact on social sustainability (Appendix III). The survey was conducted by telephone with 403 randomly selected residents. An additional 210 responses were received from residents who completed the survey online or in response to a mail-out.

Respondents were asked whether they were interested in further consultation opportunities. Over 300 replied in the affirmative and were invited to participate in a community roundtable.

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See Appendix IV for samples of community maps.

### 3. Community Mapping

Community mapping has proven to be a powerful information tool and is being used by social service organizations across Canada to plan for and develop targeted programs. Community mapping is a process of depicting data geographically to identify social strengths, gaps and needs either by neighbourhood or other location. Data is presented visually in a format that can be easily understood. It can be used to validate perceptions, build consensus, and support the development of interventions or remedial actions.

Using the community mapping process, we have been able to plot population distribution, family income, type of housing, the availability of childcare resources and social vulnerability indicators. It can be used to identify areas where crime is occurring, where particular age groups are concentrated, persons participating in recreation programs or any information that would be useful in assessing and facilitating planning.

In addition, community capacity can be mapped to determine whether programs and services are being delivered in the correct locations given the population base.

Information on mapping was shared with community organizations in a workshop. Family and Community Services has been engaging community organizations and other County departments to determine the types of maps which may be of benefit to them.

#### Summary: Good information supports good decision-making

The development of systems for collecting information provides a first step toward decision-making. We will be able to identify problem areas sooner and put plans in place to address these issues. We will be able to determine where programs should be provided. In addition, using the existing data, and developing systems to collect further data, a comprehensive Social Information Database will be maintained to measure progress towards the desired social outcomes, and determine the impact of the initiatives implemented using the Social Sustainability Framework.

Having the best available information at hand provides a strong base for the municipality to not only facilitate awareness of social issues, but to develop a consistent way of making decisions across disparate issues.

A vital component of having the right information available includes public input and dialogue. In order to keep decision-making on track and as close to the needs of the user as possible, users and potential users must be consulted.



# Development of the Social Sustainability Framework

## Phase Two

The process has involved a broad range of input, including consultation with the general public, community agencies and organizations and municipal staff. The first stage involved bringing together groups of County staff at the management level to oversee the process.

- Establishing commitment

Given the proposed broad approach to human services that the social sustainability framework intends to address, it was important to obtain commitment from County Council, senior administrators and the heads of all relevant departments.

Therefore, a presentation was made to Council, and focus groups were held with senior managers of each department to explain the concept of the framework and identify potential points of connection with activities planned or underway elsewhere.

## The Steering Committee

A steering committee, which included a cross-section of departments having a major stake in delivery of people services, provided guidance to the Social Sustainability Framework (Appendix I). The Committee was consulted and provided advice at all key stages of the development of the plan. This also ensured a fit between the framework and work undertaken by other County departments.

## Examining frameworks of other municipalities

Frameworks or other documents prepared by other municipalities were reviewed for insight and examples of best practice. These included Ottawa, Hamilton, Edmonton, Toronto, and Caloundra, Australia. An initiative by the Greater Vancouver Regional District was found to be particularly helpful.

## Public Consultation

Three forms of primary research were used to gather data from residents of Strathcona County: a telephone survey, a community roundtable, and focus groups.

## Social Values Survey

A survey was developed to gather information from the community on their attitudes and perceptions regarding a range of social values and issues and questions which have an impact on social sustainability (Appendix II). The survey was conducted by telephone with 403 randomly selected residents. An additional 210 responses were received from residents who completed the survey online or in response to a mail-out.

Respondents were asked whether they were interested in further consultation opportunities. Over 300 replied in the affirmative and were invited to participate in a community roundtable.

## Community Roundtable

Residents, including survey participants, were invited to participate in a discussion of community social values, based on results from the Social Values Survey. This consultation was used to ensure that the values identified as part of the social survey, were in line with community thinking. It allowed for issues to be clarified and validated as well as to identify any gaps.

Following the roundtable, a set of social values was drafted.

## Focus Groups

A cross-section of stakeholder groups and organizations were invited to participate in the discussion of the values.

Nine focus groups were held between March and May 2006. The stakeholders included social services organizations, members of the business community and representatives of demographic groups and municipal staff.



Participants heard an overview of the results of the survey and were asked to further discuss the list of social values drawn up in the roundtable.

The survey provided a base of information from which roundtable and focus group participants generated considerable discussion, clarification and input.

## Community Value Statements the community's vision

Based on the combined input of the survey, roundtable and focus groups, the following values were identified as residents' vision for Strathcona County.

Residents would like:

1. Programs and services to be available and accessible to everyone regardless of income, age or ability.
2. Children in Strathcona County to have a safe, healthy environment in which to grow up.
3. Youth to have the programs, activities and support necessary to be contributing members of society.
4. Educational and learning opportunities to be available in the County.
5. Seniors and those with disabilities to live with dignity and respect.
6. Residents to feel safe and secure in their homes and the community.
7. Residents to acknowledge their accountability and assume greater responsibility for their actions.
8. Residents to be able to choose from a range of housing options.
9. Partnerships between community agencies and businesses to be facilitated and supported.
10. Residents to be supported in their efforts to make the community a better place for everyone.
11. Residents to perceive a balance in their lives – with time for family, friends, work and a range of other activities.
12. Individuals able to meet their basic needs.

Two types of resources are necessary to achieve social sustainability.

Individual/Human Capacity	Social/Community Capacity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have a safe, healthy environment</li> <li>• Youth have the programs, activities and support necessary to be contributing members of society</li> <li>• Seniors and those with disabilities live with dignity and respect</li> <li>• Residents acknowledge their accountability and assume greater responsibility for their actions</li> <li>• Residents perceive a balance in their lives, with time for family, friends, work and a range of other activities</li> <li>• Basic needs are met</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programs and services are available and accessible to everyone</li> <li>• Youth have the programs, activities and support necessary to be contributing members of society</li> <li>• Educational and learning opportunities are available in the County</li> <li>• Residents feel safe and secure in their homes and the community</li> <li>• Residents are able to choose from a range of housing options</li> <li>• Partnerships between community agencies and businesses are facilitated and supported</li> <li>• Residents are supported in their efforts to make the community a better place for everyone</li> <li>• Basic needs are met</li> </ul>

To be effective and sustainable, these individual and community resources must be developed and used with the context of the four key principles: social inclusion, community connectedness, social responsibility and health and well-being, around which the community values were categorized.



## Roles and Responsibilities

### Role of government

All orders of government make decisions which affect the quality of community life. The roles, however, are not always as clear-cut as we might expect.

The Canadian Constitution assigns exclusive legislative powers to the federal and provincial governments including the following in the areas of social infrastructure.

#### Federal Responsibility

- Employment insurance
- Fiscal equalization

The federal government also sets national standards to ensure comparable levels of public service across the country.

These must be flexible enough to fit the needs of different communities.

#### Federal funding

The Constitution does not explicitly define spending powers. While federal funds play a vital role in maintaining social infrastructure, lines of accountability can become blurred when spending overlaps into areas of provincial responsibility, as noted in the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Statement on Social Infrastructure. This can also impose cost pressures on provinces, especially when matching funds are required and consensus on priorities has not been reached.

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In 2003, the federal government made over \$1 billion available to the provinces over 5 years, conditional on expansion of regulated child care programs. In 2005, another \$5 billion over 5 years was committed, conditional on the development of government- regulated child care.

## Joint federal/provincial responsibility

- Pensions and income support
- Housing
- Post-secondary education, training and research
- Public health

## Provincial responsibility

- Primary and secondary education
- Health care
- Municipal government
- Social assistance and social services

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Survey respondents indicated local government should be involved in:

- establishing a child-friendly community (99%)
- providing programs for youth (98%)
- caring for the poor (96%)
- providing affordable transportation (95%)
- ensuring affordable housing options (92%)

In its 2006 Policy Statement on Social Infrastructure, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities stated that the provincial government is responsible for ensuring:

- that adequate federal and provincial resources are available to meet the demands for social infrastructure
- co-operation with municipalities in identifying needs
- equity between groups and municipalities

## Municipal responsibility

Alberta's Municipal Government Act states that the power of the municipality is to provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of Council, are necessary or desirable to maintain safe and viable communities. Local government is in the best position to help communities meet challenges of economic change through:

- Identifying problems
- Developing local solutions to local problems
- Building partnerships and relationships among sectors

Local government can promote awareness of social needs in the community, and foster a sense of responsibility for social well-being across all sectors. Local government can facilitate people coming together for social, educational, recreational and cultural purposes. This building of relationships, networks and shared norms that are created when people come together with shared goals, contributes to health and well-being and is called social capital. Municipalities are in a unique position to build and develop social capital which helps to build healthy and prosperous communities.

In its March 2003 study, *The Social Role of Local Government*, the Caledon Institute of Social Policy stated:

*Local governments are in a position to promote awareness of the pressing social needs in the community and of the importance of social investment. They can foster a sense of responsibility for social well-being among all sectors including business, community groups and other levels of government... Equally important, they can undertake, in collaboration with key partners, several focused interventions – or flagship initiatives – in order to tackle major issues such as poverty reduction.*

Traditionally in Canada, municipal governments have not been active in addressing major social issues, leaving that role to provincial and federal levels and focusing instead on physical infrastructure and the support of social, recreational and cultural activities. However, current research points to the importance of local governments playing a larger role in social issues in order to benefit individuals and advance healthy communities. Municipalities are often well positioned to deal with social issues because they are most informed about what is happening within their realm. Furthermore, as the Caledon Institute of Social Policy points out, “The shift in local planning effectively recognizes the need for more intelligent growth that respects the links between a healthy environment and a good quality of life, including human well-being broadly defined.”<sup>2</sup> The challenge will be how to address the growing mismatch between fiscal capacity and the diverse responsibilities municipalities face.

## Role of nonprofits

There are over 19,000 nonprofits and voluntary organizations in Alberta as outlined in Imagine Canada’s 2006 document, “The Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector in Alberta: Regional Highlights from the National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations” by Robert Roach.

Strathcona County’s Information and Volunteer Centre has 122 organizations on its list of not-for-profits. They provide a range of services similar to those across Alberta including churches, recreation groups and associations, environmental groups, arts and cultural groups. In Alberta, nonprofits excluding hospitals and educational institutions depend on government for 43 percent of their funding. The national average is 49 percent. The remainder of their funding comes from earned income, gifts and donations.

2 Sherri Torjman and Eric Leviten-Reid. *The Social Role of Local Government*. Caledon Institute of Social Policy. March 2003. p. 3.

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In Alberta, 26% of nonprofit organizations are involved in sports and recreation, 19% in religion, 11% in grant making, fundraising and volunteer promotion, 10% in arts and culture, 9% in social services, 9% in education and research, 5% in development and housing. The majority of these (74%) serve the local community. Almost half of these (46%) serve the general public directly.

Nonprofit groups address gaps in public programs across the spectrum of services. They facilitate the giving, volunteering and participating that contribute to the development of a healthy community. Nonprofits and voluntary organizations are, however, facing significant challenges. In Alberta, these challenges for groups included raising the funds they need (20 percent reporting a decline in revenues), recruiting, training and retraining volunteers (21 percent reporting a decline in number of volunteers), obtaining board members and planning for the future.

In addition to providing services, nonprofits provide volunteer opportunities which are a building block in the creation of social capital. They also provide a vehicle for public input, both into community priorities and identification of service gaps; for example, A Safe Place, Boys and Girls Club, and Parents Empowering Parents.

The relationship between nonprofits and the public and private sectors is not clearly spelled out. It is a large and diverse sector that makes a meaningful contribution to the community, but its benefits are not clearly identified or tracked. Clearly defined partnerships would be of benefit in maximizing the capacity and effectiveness of the non-profit sector and our community. This could involve the role of government as “system manager,” developing a more empowering participatory approach; and the creation of an enabling environment.

Enabling environments are characterized by governments helping communities to help themselves, assisting with capacity building, and promoting active citizenship, including incentives to donate and volunteer. This contributes to the building of multi-layered citizen involvement, increased social cohesion and development of strong social capital assets.

In decisions affecting social sustainability, the role and responsibilities of community agencies will depend on their resources. Agencies can assume an essential role in providing data about, or reaching various stakeholder groups such as families, parents, seniors or people with disabilities. Strathcona County has a role in facilitating agencies’ and others’ involvement in the decision-making process, including bringing groups together to form partnerships.

## Role of the private sector

Traditionally, the private sector has been judged on profit margins and how well they serve stockholders. But a trend is emerging based on a new era of ecological limits, corporate ethics crises, and rising societal expectations which makes this too narrow a definition of success. New indicators of success mean not only making healthy profits, but emphasizing good jobs for employees, a clean environment, responsible

relations with the community, and reliable products for consumers. Consideration is being given to social responsibility and responsive governance.

There is growing recognition, that in order to create healthy consumers, the community must be healthy, and that businesses and corporations have a role to play. A sample of the considerations which have been developed to promote corporate social responsibility includes the following principles:

- A new relationship between corporations and communities
- Sustainable systems of production and equitable systems for distribution
- Participation in the decision-making processes of companies
- Preservation and protection of the environment for present and future generations
- Respect for the dignity of every person
- Strong codes of conduct for corporations and suppliers
- Affirmation of indigenous peoples' rights
- Development of a human rights policy based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Commitment to the principle that every worker has the right of access to health care
- Balanced corporate governance policies

Given this trend, there may be opportunity to develop a more formalized relationship for working with private sector organizations in social sustainability initiatives.

## Partnerships

Community organizations across Canada are recognizing the importance of partnerships for leveraging resources, building power and achieving meaningful community change. Partnerships can facilitate more comprehensive approaches to social problems and reduce duplication of efforts.

Strathcona County is in a position to foster a sense of responsibility for social well-being among all sectors, including non-profit agencies, school boards, health authorities, local community groups, business groups, neighbouring municipalities and other levels of government. Partnerships can provide:

- Access to comprehensive information about emerging social trends
- Sharing of resources to meet social needs in the most effective way using an integrated approach
- Improved communication and trust through building of relationships
- Better services to users through pooling of resources

### **Strathcona County builds successful partnerships**

Strathcona County has played a leadership role in the establishment of such partnerships in our community. Over the past three years the County has earned the Minister’s Award for Municipal Excellence in the Partnership category. The Partnership Award acknowledges leading municipal practice involving consultation, coordination and cooperation with other municipalities, agencies, non-profit organizations, community groups, and other orders of government.

In 2004, the County was part of a partnership recognized for diversifying economic activities through innovative agricultural tourism product development. In 2005, environmental stewardship was awarded in collaborative efforts to preserve the important Beaver Hills/Cooking Lake Moraine ecosystem. Now in 2006, a social initiative, the Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy has been recognized, rounding out the desired “triple bottom line” in community building.

In 2002, Strathcona County won its first Minister’s Awards for Municipal Excellence, the Outstanding Achievement Award for the collaborative partnership establishing Alberta’s Industrial Heartland Association. Strathcona County has also received several honourable mentions in all categories over the five years of the awards program.





## Initial Recommendations

It is recommended that Strathcona County implement these five recommendations as a foundation for social sustainability.

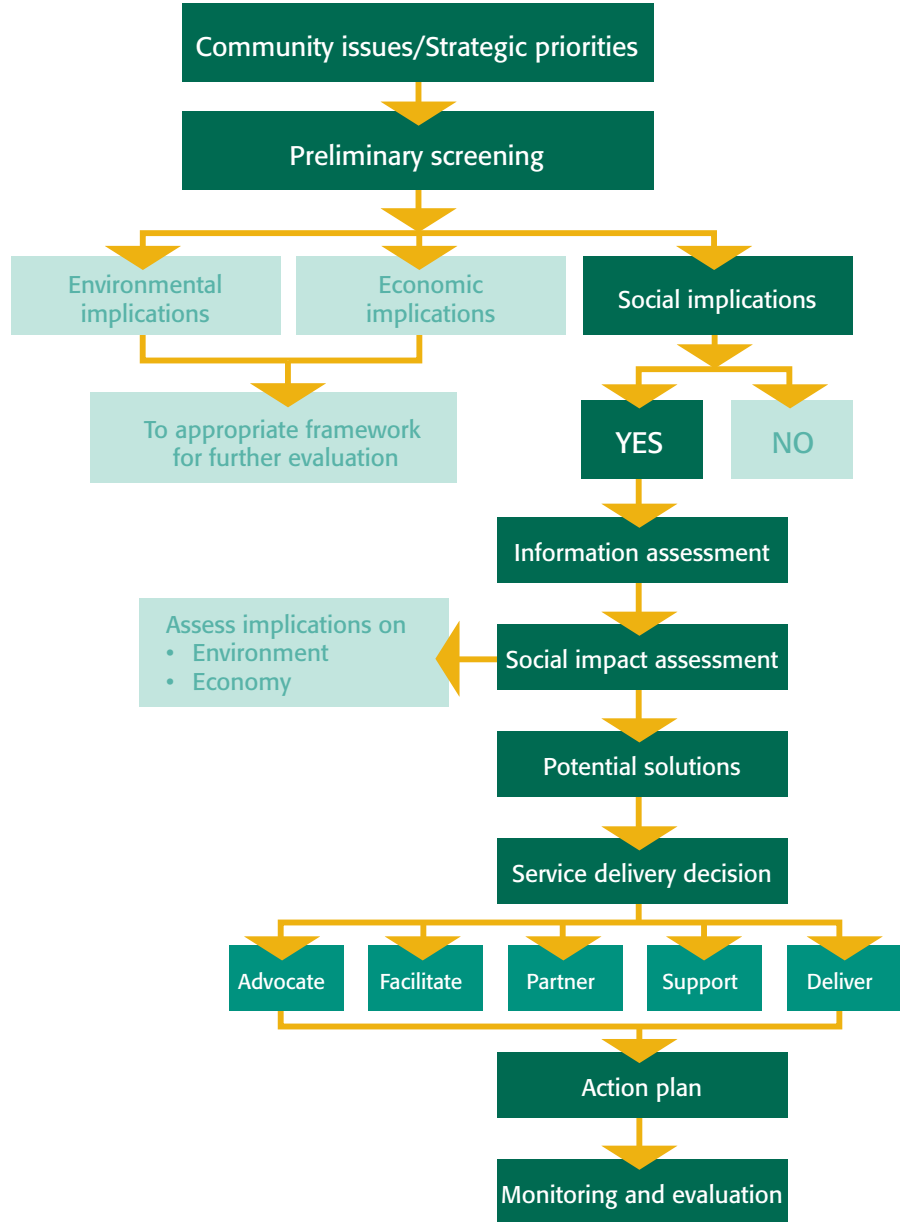
1. That Social Sustainability become an integral component of our planning process. Annually we will identify and incorporate actions that move our community toward social sustainability by including them as part of our business planning and budget processes.
2. That the principles of Social Sustainability be incorporated into Strathcona County's decision-making process through use of the Decision Model and Guide. Recommendations to Council will undergo a preliminary screening regarding their impact on the triple bottom line. Those having a social impact will undergo a more in depth assessment as outlined in the Guide. Environmental and economic assessments will be followed through in separate, linked processes.
3. That appropriate social impacts be incorporated into the assessment process for municipal development proposals.
4. That a co-ordinated approach be developed for the collection of social information which will ensure corporate and community information is compiled, updated, analyzed and made available to County departments and community organizations.

Sharing of information between organizations is critical to the right information being available in decision-making, not only to the County but to agencies serving the community. Valuable information is prepared by all sectors but lacks a dedicated co-ordinating function.

We need to ensure that the method for collecting data is consistent and conducted at regular intervals to allow comparison by field (age, location, income, etc.) over time. This data must be easily accessible to other County departments and partners.

5. It is recognized that this is a changing and evolving document. Updates and revisions will be brought back to Strathcona County Council on a semi-annual basis.

## Decision-Making Model





## Issues and Actions

Based on results of the consultation process in development of the Social Sustainability Framework, a number of issues have been identified, and along with them, potential actions which require further exploration using the Decision-Making Guide. They are categorized according to their primary impact on one of the four guiding principles for social sustainability. Proposed recommendations will be brought forward to Strathcona County Council.

### 1. Guiding principle: Social inclusion

Efforts are made to ensure that everyone, regardless of their experiences and circumstances, can achieve their potential in life. Citizens have a sense of belonging to their communities and have the opportunity to access services and activities. Social inclusion is fostered when all benefit equitably from the distribution of resources and availability of opportunities.

Examples of current programs/projects that support Social Inclusion:

- Subsidized fee rates:
  - Family and Community Services Counselling and Home Support Programs
  - Community Adult Learning Council bursaries
  - Recreation Access Program and Everyone Gets to Play
  - Transit Subsidization
  - Library – reduced membership fees
  - Emergency Services – flexibility in charging fees
- Seniors Hotline
- Bookmobile Services
- Boys and Girls Club programs
- Free programs in public spaces - parks and playgrounds
- Health Link

## Issue: Community affordability

While households in Strathcona County have an income higher than the Provincial average, we also have residents who are unable to meet their basic needs and to participate in activities which improve their quality of life.

Affordable housing is a particular issue. Young people, families of divorce and persons on fixed incomes, especially seniors, often have to leave the community because they cannot afford to remain here. There is an expectation that people who are unable to participate because of income should be provided with those opportunities, and that local government has a role to play in this area.

## Actions to be Explored

1. Undertake an affordable housing review which examines a range of life-cycle affordable housing options.

Identify strategies for each level of housing including:

- Legislative options and developer requirements
  - Monitoring and reporting on rental stock
  - Examination of both non-profit and private options to facilitate social interaction and intergenerational living
  - Housing options which target low-income families, persons with disabilities, seniors and single adults
  - Solutions including non-profit housing societies, establishment of affordable housing fund or trust incentives and other possible mechanisms
2. Support the initiative by Pioneer Housing Foundation to expand Silver Birch Lodge and develop complementary facilities on the Lodge site.
  3. That the County develops a standard fee-reduction policy for programs provided to the general public. The Statistics Canada Low Income Cut-off After Tax measure would be used in determination of the subsidy for the service. The fee reduction would vary depending on the type of service and costs associated with that service.

The Low Income Cut-Off after tax has been used by Statistics Canada since 1967 and is an accepted standard for determination of low income individuals and families.

In Strathcona County these levels are:

1 person - \$14,380

2 persons – \$17,502

3 persons – \$21,794

4 persons – \$27,190

5 persons – \$30,962

6 persons – \$34,338

7 persons – \$37,713

4. Explore the development of food securities options currently not in place including school breakfasts and/or snack programs and the enhancement of existing co-op garden initiatives.
5. Examine the potential for return to work programs including assistance with job searches, loans for work and professional clothing, transportation to job interviews, equipment/tools, and the development of community “apprenticing” programs both internally and in partnership with local business.

## Issue: Transportation

Public transportation systems can be a major contributor to social inclusion. Conversely, rates which do not take into account low incomes prevent people from accessing the system. Accessibility to bus stops and to the vehicles themselves is a source of exclusion for persons having mobility issues.

Access to community facilities and destinations can be a major source of social exclusion. Planning for new developments should include an assessment of mobility needs of all residents in that area.

## Action to be Explored

Follow up on recommendations resulting from a transit review that is currently underway in Strathcona County and scheduled to be completed early in 2007.

## Issue: Growth in the number of seniors

Looking at the population pyramid for Sherwood Park, we will see the first major wave of baby boomers reaching age 65 years in 2010. This will continue to increase by approximately 800 seniors a year through 2029. This increase will be felt primarily in Sherwood Park as a result of seniors moving closer to services. This issue is made more complex by a disparity in wealth among seniors as well as significantly differing needs across an age range of three to four decades between 55 and 90. With the growth and complexity of issues in the aging population, municipalities must ensure that they have planned adequately for the types and levels of services required by this group.

## Action to be Explored

Develop a comprehensive community seniors plan that will identify high priority needs and develop strategies for delivery of appropriate programs or services to ameliorate these needs.

## 2. Guiding principle: Community connectedness

The sense of belonging to a community that occurs through the formal and informal networks developed when people come together for social, educational, recreational, spiritual, cultural and/or work-related purposes.

Examples of current programs/projects that support connectedness:

- trail systems
- religious institutions
- farmers' markets
- block parties
- Welcome Wagon
- volunteer opportunities
- Communities in Bloom
- Chamber of Commerce
- Heritage Mile
- Canada Day celebrations
- Seniors' clubs
- Community hall operators' workshop
- Centre in the Park, the Prairie Walk and the Community Centre

- Parent Link Programs
- Information and Volunteer Centre programs and services
- Pride of Strathcona Awards

## Issue: Sense of community

The need for a greater sense of community was identified. While people generally feel connected as individuals, there was a sense of a need to broaden the connection to neighbourhood and beyond. With the growth of our population, and the movement occurring within Strathcona County, many people reported feeling somewhat disconnected from their neighbours and their community.

## Actions to be Explored

1. Develop a volunteer home visiting program for people who are isolated by life stage or disability. The Strathcona County Health Centre and other agencies could identify isolated persons and refer them to the program.
2. Develop a partnership with school systems to increase the use of schools as community centres, by encouraging their use for neighbourhood functions and activities in the evenings and on weekends.
3. Increase promotion of the Information and Volunteer Centre as the identified community information hub.
4. Hold a Council-sponsored community event (e.g. barbeque) at which citizens are encouraged to get to know their mayor and councillors and submit ideas into a Community Suggestion Box.
5. Run a Get to Know Your Neighbour campaign involving the media to counter the negative effects of cocooning. Knowing your neighbours significantly reduces risk of theft. Use a facilitator to bring people of different life stages together.

## Issue: Knowledge of resources

People continue to be unaware of the services that are offered until they personally need them. Often this occurs during a time of great stress, and it can be difficult to navigate the many systems to find the resources that are needed. The social service delivery system is complex and offered through many different agencies. Mandates are complex and interwoven, and often not apparent to the public at large.

## Action to be Explored

Consider a 211 telephone system as a future initiative, providing residents with one-stop access to information about all services offered in the community.

## 3. Guiding principle: Social responsibility

Social responsibility includes acceptance of consequences of one's own actions, a caring attitude toward others, acceptance of individual and cultural diversity and recognition of human rights. Citizens value the worth that the community derives from members expressing a sense of responsibility to each other through voluntary engagement and collective decision making.

Examples of current programs/projects that support Social Responsibility:

- Block Parents
- Rural Crime Watch
- CAER Fair
- water conservation programs
- Take Action on Bullying
- Safe and Caring Schools
- Traffic Safety Committee
- Victim Services
- Leaders-in-Training
- Audio intersection controls
- A Safe Place
- Saffron (Sexual Assault Centre)
- Strathcona County Youth Council

## Issue: Family violence and bullying

Family violence and bullying were identified as issues in the Health and Lifestyle Check-up, youth survey, focus groups, and Social Values Survey.

## Action to be Explored

The Relationship Violence and Bullying Committee continue to identify gaps, and make recommendations to applicable organizations on how to fill those needs.



## Issue: Drugs and alcohol

Drug and alcohol abuse can have devastating consequences for families and communities. The issues associated with substance abuse consistently cause increased social breakdown, and the widespread impact on communities should not be underestimated.

### Action to be Explored

The Strathcona County Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy continue to identify gaps, and make recommendations to applicable organizations on how to fill those needs.

## 4. Guiding principle: Health and well-being

Health and well-being includes physical, emotional, mental and social wellness. For individuals it includes the capacity to adapt, respond to and control life's challenges and changes. A healthy community continually creates and improves physical and social environments and expands resources which enable people to mutually support each other. It is promoted when residents feel comfortable with the safety and cleanliness of their environment and have timely, equitable access to key services.

Examples of current programs/projects that support Health and Well-Being:

- Parent Link
- Corporate Challenge
- Heartsmart
- Strathcona County Health Centre
- Family Farm Safety Fair
- Mayor's Walk and Run
- Red Cross Babysitting Safety
- Non-smoking campaign
- Safe Communities Initiatives
- Home Visitation Program
- Student Health Initiative Partnership (SHIP)
- Recreation programs (both municipal and private)
- Counselling programs

## Issue: Healthy children and youth

The single most consistent message from the public consultation was the importance of children and youth in our community – ensuring that young persons have a safe and caring environment in which to grow into responsible adults.

### Actions to be Explored

1. Strathcona County continues to deliver services to children and youth, either directly or in partnership with other organizations.
2. Strathcona County explores opportunities to develop or enhance partnerships with Elk Island Public Schools and Elk Island Catholic Schools to promote schools as service hubs for delivery of needed programs.
3. Strathcona County develops a model to consult with citizens in identifying needs and proposing activities to improve the well-being of children and youth. Children do better when families are strong, and families do better when supported by strong neighbourhoods and communities that help them to succeed.
4. Provide funding support for programs for children and youth which provide non-structured activities, one-on-one mentoring, positive child and youth development, access to the resources, supports and opportunities that will enable them to overcome barriers and achieve their positive potential in life.

## Issue: Stress

Stress emerged as a major issue through the public participation process. Respondents indicated that their highest levels of stress were related to work, and particularly with trying to balance family demands with work demands. This is not a local phenomenon but represents a national trend. Stress exhibits in a myriad of ways, from increased use and abuse of drugs and alcohol, to medical issues, to anger management issues, family violence and family breakdown.

### Action to be Explored

Develop employer and public education programs that assist in the early recognition and detection of stress symptoms, with information about how to prevent and reduce stress.



# Appendix I

## Members of the Steering Committee

Peter Faid from Community Consulting Services provided invaluable assistance with the synthesis of information to develop the community values, the Community Roundtable and focus group consultations.

Jackie Winter	Manager	Family and Community Services
Catriona Gunn-Graham	Coordinator, Community Development	Family and Community Services
Jocelyn Tennison	Manager	Communications
Thelma Scammell	Coordinator, Communications	Communications
Dwight Osbaldeston	Fire Chief, Manager Assistant Director, Emergency Preparedness	Emergency Services
Lynn Kelly	Manager	Public Transit
Peter Vana	Manager	Planning & Development Services
Cynthia Cvik	Coordinator, Long Range & Policy Planning	Planning & Development Services
Kevin Glebe	Manager	Corporate Planning & Intergovernmental Affairs
Russ Pawlyk	Manager	Recreation, Parks & Culture
David Turner	Associate Commissioner, Community Services	Executive Administration
Gary Steinke	Inspector	RCMP
Peter Nobles	Corporal Community Policing/Victim Services	RCMP

## Notes

## Appendix II

### Results of Social Values Survey

#### Telephone Survey of Residents

In November 2005, a total of 403 households responded to the multiple-choice survey; 263 resided in Sherwood Park and 140 lived elsewhere in the County. Following are the topics from each category or option on the survey where agreement was highest.

1. Listed below are values which may guide people's lives.  
Percentage who rated each of the following as very important:

1. Honesty	95.6%
2. Integrity	90.8%
3. Freedom	89.2%
4. Personal Responsibility	89.1%
5. Kindness	89 %
6. Personal Safety	88.3%
7. Dignity/self-esteem	87.6%
8. Peace	85.4%
9. Friendship	84.5%
10. Compassion	82.7%
11. Equal opportunities	79.7%
12. Spirituality	46.5%
13. Tradition	37.1%
14. Recognition	28.2%
15. Wealth	9.5%



**2. Following are some statements that people might say about life in our society and social responsibility:**

Percentage who agree:

All children have safe and healthy place to grow up.	99.7%
Equal opportunity to succeed.	96.7%
Education is key to economic growth.	95.2%
Program/services available to everyone regardless of income.	94.7%
Society should make sure everyone has enough to eat and a place to sleep.	94.5%
Would give part of my income if I knew money would be used to help people in need.	87.3%
Important for society to support people worse off than themselves.	86.6%
Responsibility of government to take care of people who can't take care of themselves.	78.5%
To reduce poverty, we need to accept increased costs in the short term.	74.5%

**3. Indicate your views on the following issues:**

Percentage who agree:

Individuals should take more responsibility in providing for themselves.	96.3%
There should be greater incentive for individual effort.	89.3%
Community should play greater role to ensure children grow up to be responsible members.	85.6%
Government should make sure all people have a roof over their heads.	73.5%
Government should take more responsibility to ensure everyone is provided for.	67%
Raising children is the sole responsibility of parents.	65.9%
All housing needs should be met by private sector. (60.9% strongly disagree)	39.1%
Incomes should be made more equal.	35.7%

#### 4. Indicate how important each of the following is in your life:

Percentage who responded as very important:

1. Family	98.2%
2. Friends	78.6%
3. Leisure time	59.6%
4. Job	54.2%
5. People you work with	36.4%
6. Religion	33.8%
7. Volunteer Work	30.2%
8. People in your neighbourhood	27%
9. People you've met once	1.3%

#### 5. People in need are that way because:

Percentage who agreed

They have not had the same advantages as others.	69.4%
Our society is unequal.	64.9%
Progress creates casualties.	49.7%
They lack willpower.	34.4%
They are lazy.	23.9%
They are unlucky.	20.6%

#### 6. Free choice and control over lives:

They had a good deal of control.	88.4%
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#### 7. Impact on making your community a better place to live:

Big and huge impact	35.6%
Moderate	50.1%
Moderate to huge impact.	85.7%

#### 8. Volunteered within past five years: 69.4%

**9. Reasons for volunteering:**

Compassion for those in need.	71.5%
Personal satisfaction.	55.6%
Opportunity to repay my community or give something back.	53.9%
To bring about social change.	36.3%
To gain new experience.	30.7%
Identify with those who suffer.	30.1%
A sense of duty.	22.8%
To meet people.	21.0%
To fill time.	3.8%
Couldn't refuse.	3.3%

**10. Possible changes which could be made in our society:**

Percentage who indicated changes as desirable:

More emphasis on family life.	99.1%
Encourage simple, more natural lifestyle.	95.0%
Greater respect for authority.	94.0%
Less emphasis on money and material possessions.	91.2%
More emphasis on developing technology.	85.3%
Decrease impact of work in our lives.	74.6%

**11. How involved should local government be in:**

Percentage who indicated government should be involved:

Establishing child friendly community	99%
Providing programs for youth	98%
Caring for the poor	96%
Providing affordable transportation	95%
Ensuring affordable housing options	92%
Providing subsidized recreation programs	91%
Reducing unemployment through strong economic practices	91%



**12. Social problems that are more of a problem now than a few years ago:**

Percentage who indicated issues as more of a problem:

Amount of drug use	92.3%
Criminal activity	82.3%
Vandalism	76.1%
Cost of living	69.2%
Affordable housing	59.5%
Alcohol use	55.4%
Available quality child care	28.7%
Accessible transportation	16.2%
Lack of employment opportunities	5.4%

**13. Initiatives that could be pursued which are high priorities for the community:**

**High priorities**

Ensuring community is a good place for children to grow up.	89.3%
Ensuring economic growth is balanced by environmental considerations.	69.7%
Developing ways people can have more say in how things are done.	54.3%
Progressing toward less impersonal – more connected society.	44.8%
Maintaining a high level of economic growth.	44.4%

**Medium priorities**

Making Strathcona County more beautiful.	55.4%
Maintaining high level of economic growth.	48.6%
Building facilities so people have access to recreation opportunities.	47.2%
Progressing toward less impersonal more connected society.	45.1%

#### 14. Potential problems that need to be addressed:

##### High priority

Dealing with criminal activity	89%
Dealing with illegal drugs	88.8%
Dealing with family violence	84%
Dealing with bullying	77%
Dealing with unsupervised teens	69%
Dealing with the homeless	51%
Affordable quality child care	50%

##### Medium priority

Affordable/accessible transportation	53.3%
Affordable housing	53.2%
Dealing with gambling	45.3%

#### 15. Percentage agreement with each of the following:

Agree that seniors live with dignity and respect.	91%
Agree that children have safe places to go before and after school.	87%
Agree that residents are safe and secure in their neighbourhoods.	86%
Agree that there are good job prospects and career opportunities for young people.	81%
Agree that more needs to be done to ensure our young people can remain in our community.	78%
Agree that Strathcona County needs to encourage cultural diversity.	73%
Agree that the County has a good mixture of housing types so people of different ages and incomes can live here. (41% disagree)	59%

## Appendix III

This appendix contains a summary of the information contained in the following documents:

- A Community Social Profile
- The 2002 Health & Lifestyle Check-up for Strathcona County
- Youth Survey

**The Community Social Profile provides the following socio-demographic picture of our community:**

- The population of Strathcona County has been increasing steadily, having grown by 5.5 percentage points between 2001 and 2003.
- Population growth is occurring primarily in the urban areas, particularly Sherwood Park. Between 1996 and 2003, the urban population increased by 24.5 percent compared with a 7.2 percent growth in the rural areas.
- The average salary for a full-time worker (\$51,836) was 17.6 percent higher than the provincial average.
- As a source of income, government transfers accounted for 5.8 percent of all income, which was 9.3 percentage points lower than the average for Alberta.
- Just under 10 percent of the 21,015 families in the County in 2001, are headed by a lone parent. A female is the head of three-quarters of those 2,025 families.
- When the Low Income Cut-off was applied to households in the county in 1996, it was determined that 7 percent or 4,340 residents were considered to be living in relative disadvantage. Twenty-two percent of all children 14 and under were disadvantaged. Two percent of all residents were living in deep poverty.



### Highlights from The Health and Lifestyle Questionnaire administered in 2003 to 400 random residents:

- People living in the County were familiar with other people living in the same neighbourhood. Over one-third of all residents knew 11 or more adults in the neighbourhood by name. However, single parent families knew fewer neighbours by name.
- Residents reported feeling very safe (58.8%) or reasonably safe (35.6%) in their neighbourhood. Women were less likely to feel safe than men, however, with 44.9 percent feeling very safe and 45.5 percent feeling reasonably safe.
- Regardless of where they live in the County, a strong majority of residents (72.3%) described housing as “somewhat affordable.” Nearly fifteen percent (14.8%) thought housing was unaffordable. Single parents or singles in multiple adult households were least likely to describe housing as affordable.

According to 42.9 percent of all single parents, housing in the County is not affordable. Sixteen percent of singles in multiple adult households also described housing as unaffordable, as did 12.1 percent of families with children, 13.6 percent of couples without children, and 14.3 percent of single adults.

- Six out of ten single parents (60.9%) reported having a very difficult or somewhat difficult time meeting monthly household expenses.
- When asked about bullying, 42.5 percent of respondents thought that bullying was a major problem in junior high schools. Bullying was more likely to be seen as a minor problem in elementary and senior high schools.
- Family violence was identified as a major problem by 12.5 percent of respondents, and a minor problem by 69.9 percent. Spousal abuse was described as a major problem by 15.8 percent of respondents and a minor problem by 67.0 percent. Married respondents with no children were more likely to identify spousal abuse as a major problem (20.2%).
- Respondents were asked a series of questions about sources of stress in their lives. By far, job-related stress was the most frequently cited source, with 64.7 percent reporting stress levels of 5 or more (on a 10 point scale). No significant difference in response was noted by gender, age or type of family.
- Two-thirds of respondents had to take a major step in dealing with a family problem in the previous five years. In descending order

the nature of the problem was personal stress, caring for (including financially) an elderly family member, and dealing with someone who had a problem with drugs or alcohol.

- Women and people in the age groups 18 to 24 and 45 to 54 were more likely to report personal stress as a problem.
- The perception was that illegal drugs are available in the County. Over 90 percent of respondents felt that obtaining illegal drugs would be very easy or somewhat easy.

### The Community Youth Survey was undertaken in April 2004 to assess youth attitudes and behaviors in our community.

Three hundred twenty three students ages 12 to 17 in Grades 6, 8 and 11 were surveyed on a number of issues including: growing up in the community; family dynamics; bullying; alcohol, drugs, tobacco; sex, and peer groups.

Again, several findings have relevancy for the Social Sustainability Framework. They include:

- A majority of students in all grades felt safe walking alone in the neighbourhood after dark. Females were less likely to perceive the neighbourhood as safe.
- A strong majority of students in all grades reported having adult role models in their lives that they could look up to. The percentage agreeing or strongly agreeing by grade was 84.1 percent Grade 6; 80.5 percent Grade 8; and 72.0 percent Grade 11.
- Similarly high percentages said they knew where to go when they needed help.
- Sixty-seven percent of Grade 6 students and 56.3 percent of Grade 8 students agreed or strongly agreed that they live in a very caring community, while only 43.2 percent of Grade 11 students so responded.
- With regard to family support, 82.2 percent of Grade 6 students, 77.6 percent of Grade 8 and 62.1 percent of Grade 11 students agreed or strongly agreed that they received lots of support from family. A larger majority agreed or strongly agreed that their parents are available when needed (92.5% - Grade 6; 88.3% - Grade 8 and 83.8% - Grade 11). Students in all three grades felt able to talk to their parents about serious issues or concerns and that their parents spend enough time with them.
- When asked about taking responsibility for their actions when they got into trouble, 57.4 percent of all males and 69.5 percent of

all females agreed that they did take responsibility. Recognition of the need to take responsibility increased with age, rising from 55.2 percent agreement among Grade 6 students to 71.2 percent agreement among Grade 11 students.

- One in four Grade 6 students (40.2%) reported having been bullied in the previous 12 months, compared with 45.7 percent of Grade 8 respondents and 28.2 percent of Grade 11s.
- The percentage of students that reported having picked on someone else at least once in the previous 12 months increased with age, rising from 27.1 percent in Grade 6, to 51.4 percent in Grade 8, and 52.2 percent in Grade 11.
- Questions about the use of alcohol and drugs indicated that 60.3 percent of Grade 11 students occasionally drink with friends, compared with 27.2 percent of Grade 8 students and 3.8 percent of Grade 6 students.
- A majority of students reported never having used hard drugs (defined as cocaine, crystal meth and crack):
  - Grade 6 (84.1%)
  - Grade 8 (71.5%)
  - Grade 11 (88.3%)
- Twenty-eight percent of Grade 6, 77.7 percent of Grade 8 and 91.0 percent of Grade 11 students reported knowing someone who has tried illegal drugs.
- When asked if they are able to deal with anger or problems without resorting to violence, 50.5 percent of Grade 6 students said they were, as did 49.0 percent of Grade 8 and 61.2 percent of Grade 11.
- The most frequently mentioned spare time activity was “hanging out” or playing with friends. The percentage reporting increased with age, from 17.9 in Grade 6, 27.5 in Grade 8 and 43.9 percent in Grade 11.
- While a majority of all students feel they have enough friends, the percentage answering in the affirmative was higher among Grade 8 students (93.2%) than among Grade 6 (73.8%) or Grade 11 (81.1%) students.
- Similarly, most students report that their parents like their friends, with the percentage increasing from 63.6 among Grade 6 students to 73.8 and 78.2 percent among Grades 8 and 11 students.

## Appendix IV

### Community Maps

#### Community Mapping

The following data using the community mapping process is currently available:

##### Childcare Resources

- 0-4 childcare
- Childcare Rural
- Childcare Urban

##### Family Income

- Family Income

##### Housing

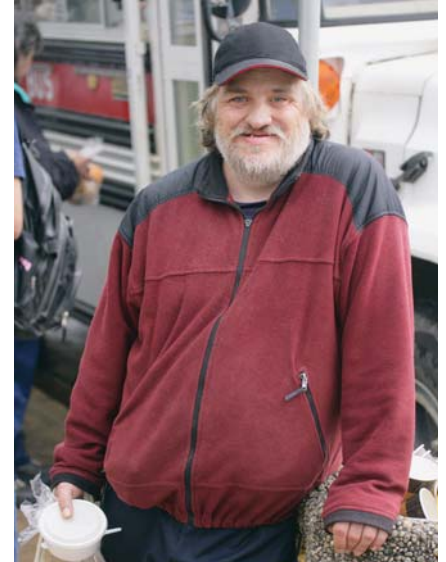
- Average assessment price of residential properties

##### Population breakdown

- Total population of Strathcona County
- Child-Youth Age Cohorts (ages 0-4, 5-9, 10-14, 15-19)
- Seniors

##### Social Vulnerability Indicators

- Unemployment rate
- Home ownership
- Households spending more than 30% of income on housing
- Proportion of total households paying more than 30% of their income on housing expenses



- Proportion of households that own their dwellings paying more than 30% of their income on housing expenses
- Proportion of total income coming from government transfer payments
- Incidence of low income
- Proportion of population that immigrated to Canada since 1991
- Lone parent families
- Mobility
- Proportion of population speaking neither official language
- Less than High School (percentage of the population without a high school diploma)
- Strathcona County Social Vulnerability Index

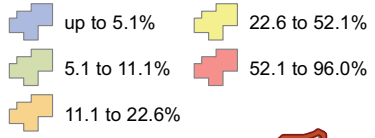
## Sample maps

The following pages show sample community maps.

- Percentage of Population Age 65+
- Population densities within Community Hall Areas of Influence
- Urban Child Care Facilities
- Percentage of Population age 0-4

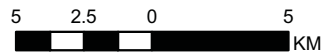


### Legend



**Sherwood Park**

## Percentage of Population Age 65+ Within 2005 Enumeration Areas



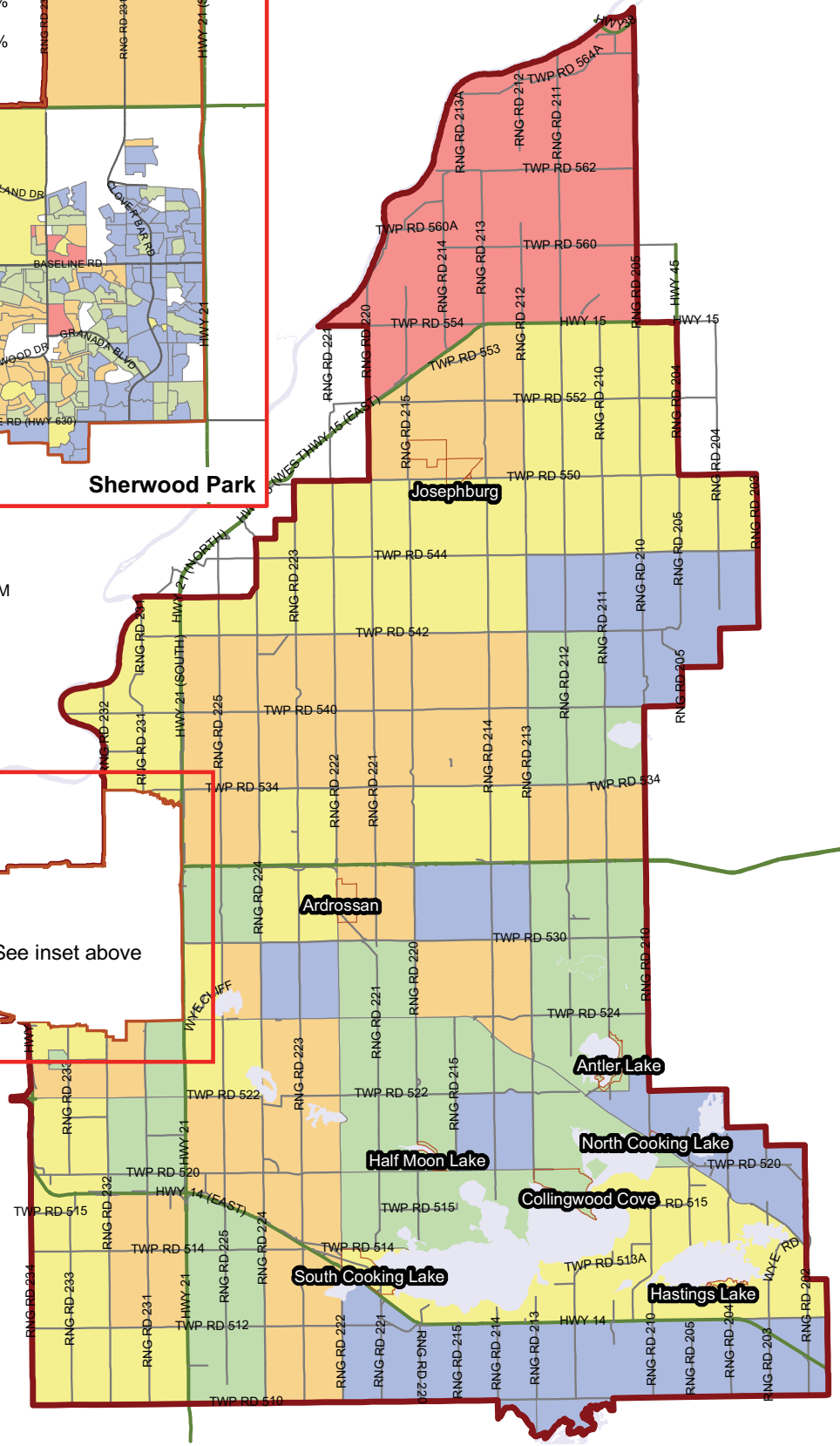
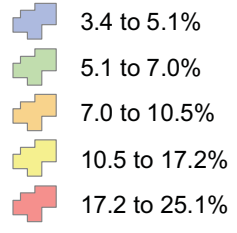
Data from 2005 Municipal Census  
Not Responsible for Errors or Omissions  
Not to Standard Scale

**Strathcona County**  
FAMILY & COMMUNITY SERVICES



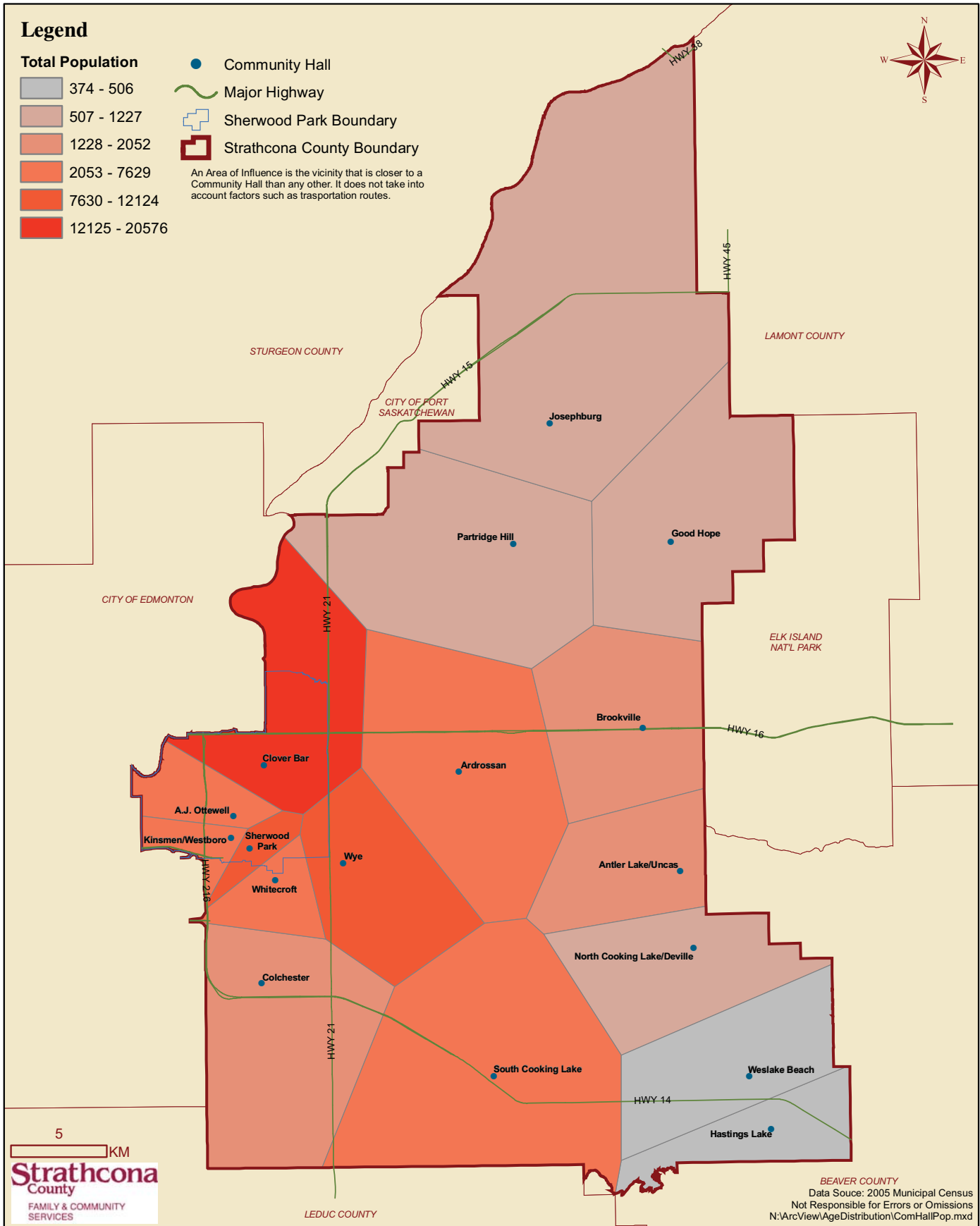
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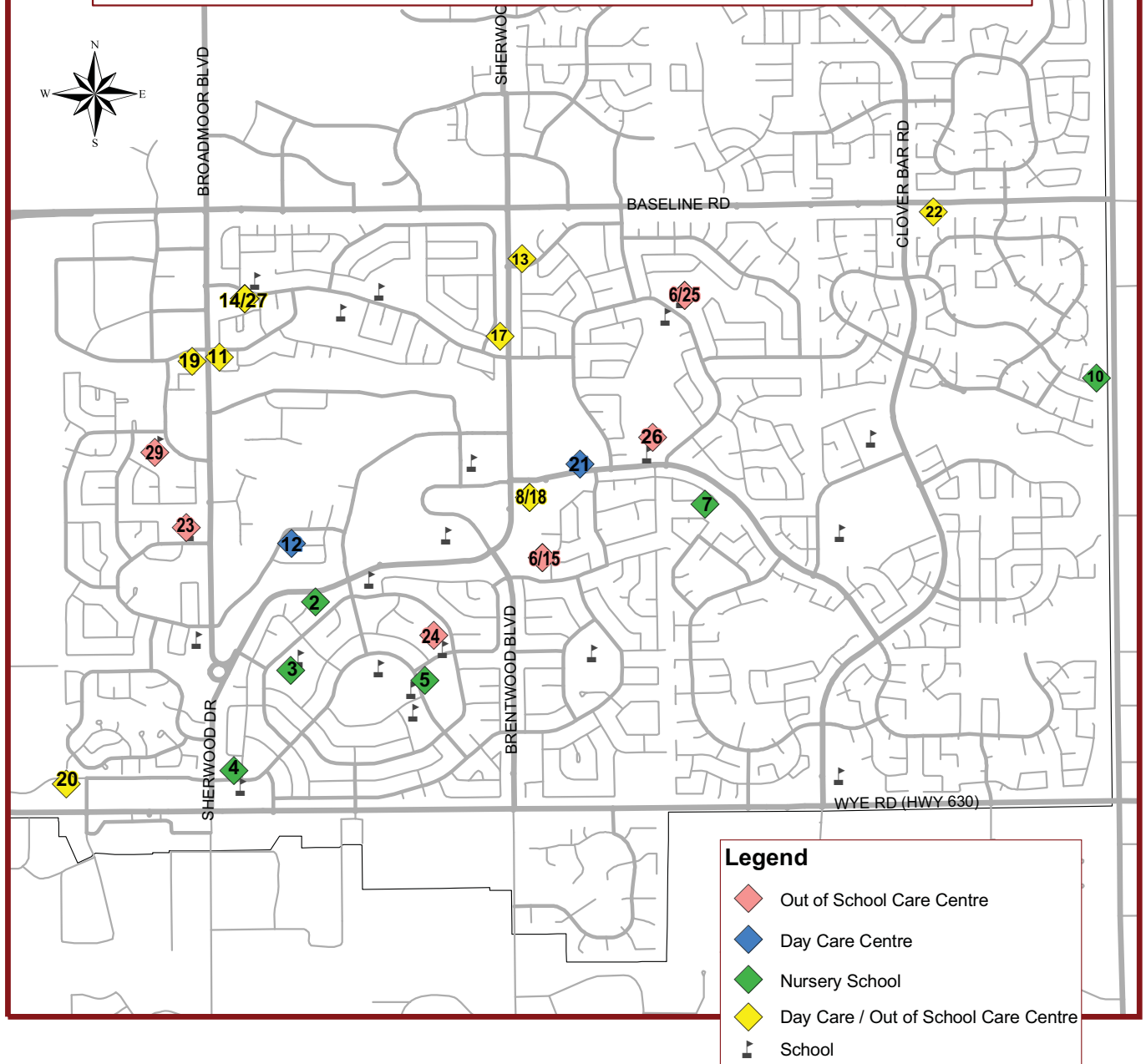


**Rural Area**

# Population Densities within Community Hall Areas of Influence



# Urban Child Care Facilities



- 2 - The Learning Safari Preschool
- 3 - Les Petits Soleils Preschool
- 4 - Love to Learn Preschool and Kindergarten
- 5 - Sherwood Heights Nursery School
- 6 - Discover and Learn Preschool
- 7 - Sherwood Forest Pre-Kindergarten
- 8 - Sunshine Park Nursery School
- 10 - France Dufour French Immersion Preschool
- 11 - Mr. Cakes Day Care / After School Care
- 12 - Nanny's Place Day Care Inc.
- 13 - Just Like Home Child Care Centre / Out of School Care
- 14 - Town & Country Child Care Centre / Out of School Care (Millshaven)
- 15 - Sadochuk
- 18 - Town & Country Child Care Centre / Out of School Care (Franklin)
- 19 - Brite Beginnings Day Care #2 / After School Care
- 20 - A & D Day Care Centre / Before & After School Centre

- 21 - Park Plaza Day Care Centre
- 22 - Heritage Hills Montessori Child Development Centre / Out School Care
- 23 - Westboro School B.A.S.C.
- 24 - Town & Country Out of School (Pine Street)
- 25 - Glen Allan Out of School Care Ltd.
- 26 - Wes Hosford Out of School Care
- 27 - Town & Country Child Care Centre / Out of School Care (Millshaven)
- 29 - Woodbridge Farms Parents' Association Out of School Care

Day Care Centre: Provides care for 7 or more children under the age of 7 for more than 3 but less than 24 consecutive hours per day.

Nursery School: Provides care for 7 or more children for less than 3 consecutive hours per day.

Out of School Care: Provides care for 7 or more children before and after school, during the lunch hour or when schools are closed.

Data Sources: Child Care Services, Region 6 Edmonton & Area, Child & Family Services Authority

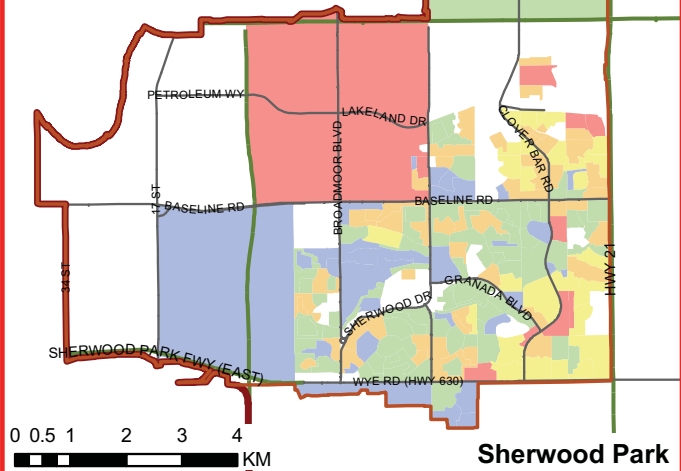
The information presented in this map is accurate to the best of our knowledge. No person, firm or company may produce all or any part of the material without express written permission of Strathcona County. Strathcona County accepts no liability for the misuse of this information.



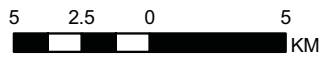
N:\ArcView\Project\Childcare\ChildcareUrbanLtr.mxd

### Legend

- up to 2.3%
- 2.3 to 5.0%
- 5.0 to 7.6%
- 7.6 to 11.1%
- 11.1% to 18.8%

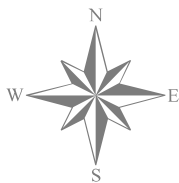


### Percentage of Population Age 0-4 Within 2005 Enumeration Areas



Data from 2005 Municipal Census  
Not Responsible for Errors or Omissions  
Not to Standard Scale

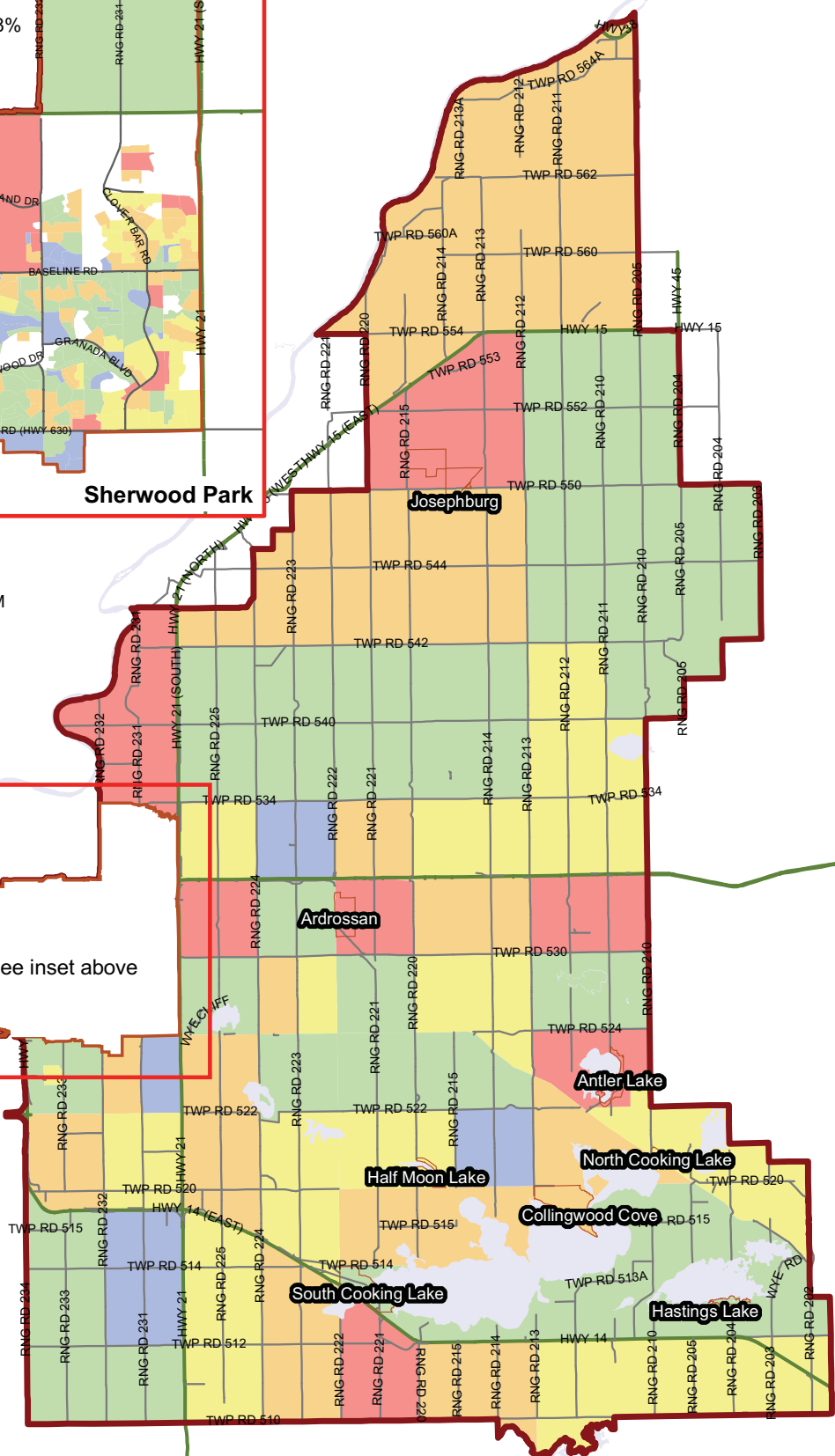
**Strathcona**  
County  
FAMILY & COMMUNITY  
SERVICES



See inset above

### Legend

- Up to 2.2%
- 2.2 to 3.7%
- 3.7 to 4.4%
- 4.4 to 6.0%
- 6.0% to 9.2%



**Rural Area**

# Appendix V

## Social Sustainability Decision-Making Guide

### Social Sustainability Decision Making Guide



## Definitions

**Social inclusion** is the process by which efforts are made to ensure that everyone, regardless of their experiences and circumstances, can achieve their potential in life. A socially inclusive society is one where citizens have a sense of belonging to their communities and have the opportunity to access services, learning, employment, recreational and cultural activities. It is fostered when all individuals and families benefit equitably from the distribution of resources and availability of opportunities to participate in all aspects of community life.

**Community connectedness** refers to the sense of belonging to a community that occurs through the formal and informal networks developed when people come together for social, educational, recreational, spiritual, cultural and/or work-related purposes.

**Social responsibility** is the experience and appreciation of our interdependence and connectedness with others. Social responsibility includes acceptance of consequences of one's own actions, a caring attitude toward others, acceptance of individual and cultural diversity and recognition of human rights. It occurs when citizens value the worth that the community derives from members expressing a sense of responsibility to each other through voluntary engagement and collective decision making.

**Health and well-being** is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social wellness. For individuals it includes the capacity of people to adapt to, respond to, or control life's challenges and changes. A healthy community is one that is continually creating and improving physical and social environments and expanding resources which enable people to mutually support each other in performing the functions of life and in developing to their maximum potential. It is promoted when residents feel comfortable with the safety and cleanliness of their environment and have timely, equitable access to key services such as health, education, transportation and housing.

**Basic needs** include sufficient income for the support of individuals and their families, appropriate and affordable housing, appropriate and affordable health care, nutritious food, jobs that utilize people's skills and abilities and safe communities and workplaces.

1. Community Issues/Strategic Priority

Describe

2. Preliminary Screening

A. In which area does it impact social sustainability most?

- The ability of residents to meet their basic needs
- Social responsibility
- Social inclusion
- Community connectedness
- Health and well-being
- No appreciable impact

Describe

B. What is the environmental impact of the issue and will it be referred for environmental review?

Describe

C. What is the economic impact of the issue and will it be referred for economic review?

Describe



**3. Information Assessment:**

- A. What information about this issue is available from Strathcona County or from the community?

Describe

- B. What information needs to be collected?

Describe

4. Social Impact Assessment of the Issue

A. Who is impacted? General public, a specific age group, families, individuals?

B. How are they impacted?

C. What are the immediate, short- and long-term implications for those impacted?

D. What is the effect on those not directly impacted?

E. What is the impact for the affected group of not addressing the issue?

F. How is the issue viewed by the community at large?

G. Does the public good outweigh any negative impact?

H. What has happened in other municipalities?

**5. Potential Solutions**

What type of services or interventions could address this issue?

Describe

**6. Service Delivery Assessment and Decision**

A. What is the best delivery mechanism for this service/issue?

(Check one.)

- Private
- Public: Federal, Provincial, Municipal
- Not-for-Profit
- Partnership

Explain

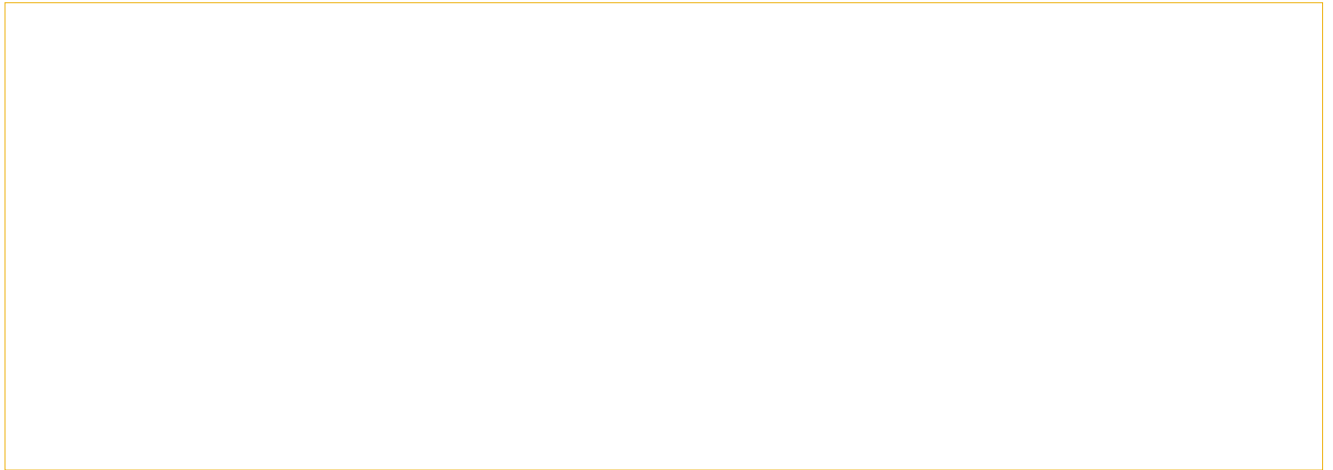
B. Recommended role of the municipality: (Check one.)

- Direct Service Delivery
- Advocacy
- Facilitation
- Funding
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe

C. What resources are required to adequately address this issue?

Explain



D. What public engagement around solutions has occurred, or needs to occur?

Explain



E. What are the implications of this solution/intervention on:

1. The environment

Describe

2. The economy

Describe

**7. Development of Action Plan**

A. Relationship to Strategic Plan

B. Development of Strategies

C. Development of Outcomes

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

