

## STRATHCONA COUNTY'S STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Plan is Strathcona County's principal guiding document for governance, community development and service delivery. The Strategic Plan serves as the foundation on which the County's three-year Business Plans and annual budgets are developed. The Plan will evolve with the County, its changing profile and the needs that emerge from those changes.

The Strategic Plan provides two elements necessary for attaining a desirable future for the County and its residents:

1. **A strategic plan framework** - to ensure we have in place a sound process for making decisions

The framework identifies the need to consider three perspectives when making decisions:

- A governance perspective – how the decision aligns with the needs and wants of the community.
- A community development perspective – how the decision will affect the well-being of our residents, the sustainability of our community and the economic viability of our community.
- A service delivery perspective – how the decision will affect the County's ability to serve its residents.

The Framework also identifies the need to factor in two critical inputs to sound decision-making: communications with those groups and individuals who have a stake in the decision; and the responsible management of County and community resources.

2. **Strategic direction** – to describe our vision for the future, our goals, and strategies for achieving the goals.

The Strategic Plan is a dynamic document that requires annual review to allow for the fine-tuning of our goals and strategies to address changes to the internal and external environment in which we operate.

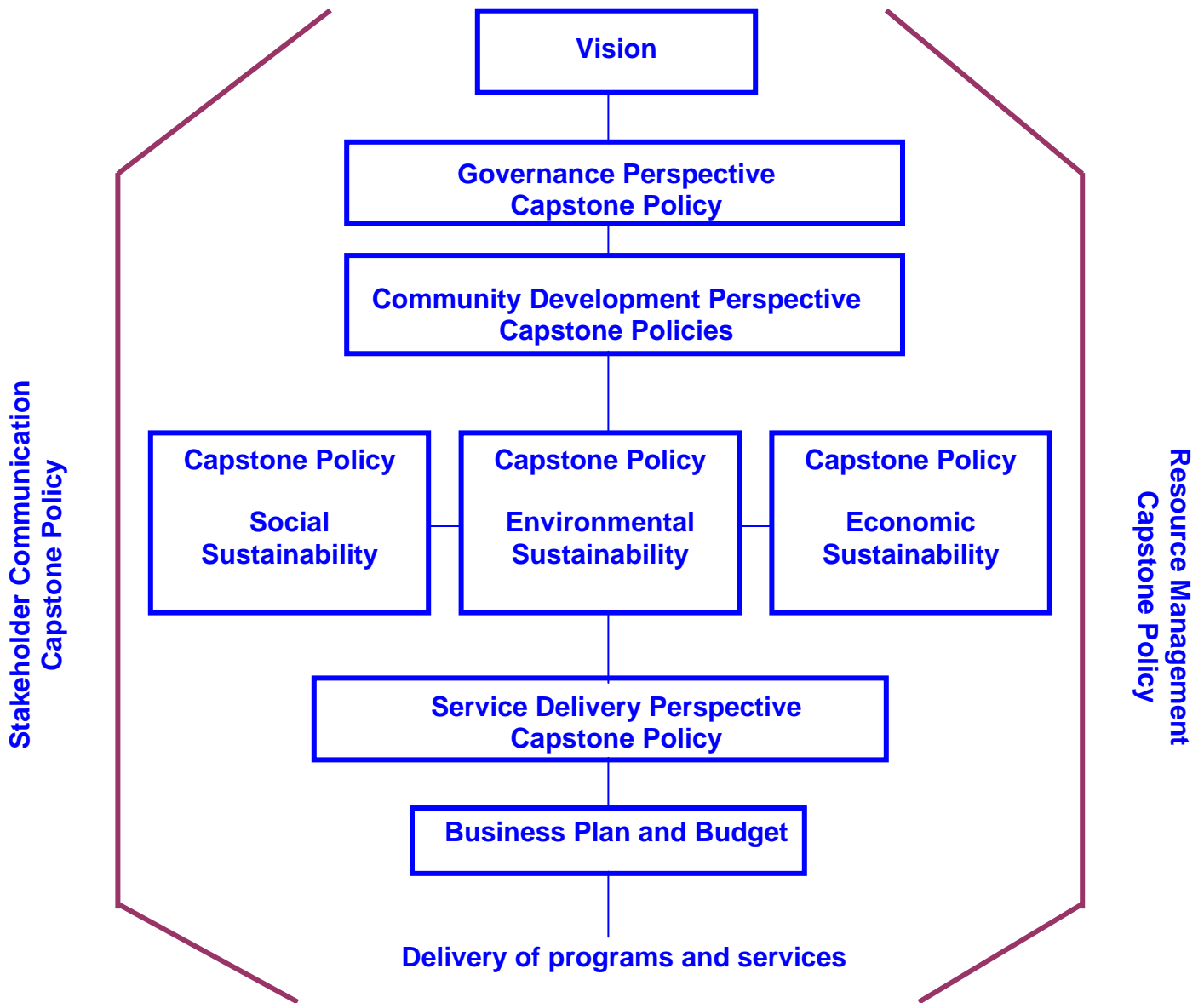
The plan was originally built on information gathered through a number of different methods, the single largest being *Community Consultation 2002*. This comprehensive input process included telephone surveys, household questionnaires, focus group meetings, and community dialogue sessions. Stakeholder groups included County residents, groups and organizations, businesses, industry, institutions and County employees.

In 2008, County Council revisited the plan to update it and develop Key Performance Indicators, which will help to measure Strathcona County's progress toward its goals.

# Vision Statement

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. Through strong, effective leadership, the County is a vibrant community of choice.

## Strathcona County Strategic Plan Framework



# Strathcona County Strategic Plan Direction

## Governance Perspective

### Capstone Policy

Strathcona County strives for excellence in effective government.

#### Goal

Strathcona County is an autonomous specialized municipality.

#### Strategies

- Maintain effective working relationships with the Federal, Provincial and neighbouring municipal governments
- Cultivate an active role as a leader and participant in regional initiatives
- Advocate for the recognition of municipalities as a formal order of government
- Take an active role in municipal advocacy organizations (e.g. FCM, AUMA, AAMD&C)
- Enhance communication with MLAs, MPs and those organizations and bodies that have a direct interest in the County.
- Increase representation on external bodies that can assist the County to advance its interests
- Build awareness and understanding among stakeholders of specialized municipality status and its significance
- Strengthen community identity and pride
- Identify new strategies to reinforce County autonomy

#### Key Performance Indicators

- Level of influence in regional relationships
- Level of independent decision-making
- Awareness among stakeholders of specialized municipality status and its significance
- Resident satisfaction with County autonomy

#### Goal

Strathcona County is governed by a clear municipal mandate.

#### Strategies

- Enhance lines of communication with the Provincial and Federal governments
- Work with service providers from the public, private and voluntary sectors to clarify roles and responsibilities
- Clearly define the role of the County in the areas of governance and service delivery
- Develop strategies to increase voter participation in municipal elections
- Increase community awareness of Strathcona County's Strategic Plan

#### Key Performance Indicators

- Awareness among stakeholders of Strathcona County's Strategic Plan
- Voter turnout for municipal elections

## Goal

Strathcona County has effective plans and policies that guide the corporation and the community.

### Strategies

- Establish processes to assist Council in prioritizing the needs of the community
- Provide stakeholder input and/or review as part of policy and plan development
- Ensure both urban and rural perspectives are represented in decision-making processes
- Continue to emphasize long-term planning
- Research “best practices” used by others
- Establish mechanism to regularly review policies and plans to assess current and future relevance and to identify possible gaps or need for amendments
- Develop indicators to measure effectiveness of County plans and policies
- Ensure all policy reviews meet their target review dates

### Key Performance Indicators

- Number of community members or organizations who offer input to planning and policy documents
- Completion of Strategic Plan and Policy revisions on target date
- Show links in relevant documentation between Council decisions and the Strategic Plan

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## Community Development Perspective: *Social Sustainability*

### Capstone Policy

Strathcona County is a safe and caring community whose residents enjoy opportunities for healthy lifestyles.

## Goal

Strathcona County is a safe community for residents and visitors.

### Strategies

- Maintain high quality, integrated police, fire and emergency medical services
- Facilitate the provision of safety programs and services by the community such as the Traffic Safety Strategic Plan
- Incorporate safety as a component of planning
- Educate residents on safety issues and solutions

### Key Performance Indicators

- Satisfaction with police - bylaw, fire and emergency medical services
- Resident satisfaction with community mediation
- Resident involvement in community safety programs
- Rate of crime against persons and property

## Goal

Strathcona County is a caring community.

### Strategies

- Incorporate the principles of the Social Sustainability Framework into County decision-making processes
- Review the roles of the public, private and voluntary sectors in the delivery of social services
- Encourage and support volunteerism
- Incorporate the requirements for accessibility into protocols for planning, infrastructure and programs
- Celebrate individual and community diversity
- Increase public awareness of social issues and solutions
- Identify and address the needs and wants of the County's diverse population
- Monitor demographic changes and make the information available to the community, especially with respect to housing information
- Examine housing trends to determine their applicability to Strathcona County
- Engage the community by seeking advice in planning and decision-making
- Educate County youth on the importance of being responsible citizens
- Publicly acknowledge outstanding examples of good citizenship

### Key Performance Indicators

- Council receives semi-annual updates on the Social Sustainability Framework
- Number of neighbour-to-neighbour contacts
- Number of block party permits
- Resident satisfaction with Family & Community Services
- Number of active volunteers

## Goal

Strathcona County offers a broad range of opportunities for healthy lifestyles.

### Strategies

- Invest in both indoor and outdoor facilities, in accordance with the Open Space and Recreational Facility Strategy
- Promote the benefits of participating in recreational, cultural and educational activities
- Create community partnerships to increase lifestyle choices
- Increase trail linkages throughout the County
- Incorporate lifestyle choices as part of infrastructure and program planning
- Strengthen the County's relationship with the education and health sectors and other community partners

### Key Performance Indicators

- Resident and visitor use of recreation, cultural and open space facilities
- Kilometres of trails in comparison to other municipalities
- Resident satisfaction with recreation facilities and programs

## **Community Development Perspective: *Environmental Sustainability***

### **Capstone Policy**

Strathcona County practises sound environmental stewardship.

#### **Goal**

Strathcona County reflects a natural environment balanced by healthy urban, suburban and rural communities.

#### **Strategies**

- Adopt an environmental sustainability framework that uses strong environmental measures and includes key performance indicators.
- Incorporate the principles of the environmental sustainability framework into County decision-making processes
- Increase community awareness about the impact of activity on the natural environment
- Promote environmentally friendly recycling and commodity management practices
- Encourage conservation easements
- Identify, preserve and protect natural features
- Encourage development initiatives that demonstrate the wise and best use of land
- Facilitate development initiatives that help sustain an effective mix of urban and rural lifestyles
- Develop creative options to meet the changing environmental needs of the community
- Build a proactive planning process based on sustainable development policies and characterized by a strong sense of stewardship
- Consider the synchronicity of this goal's key performance indicators with the Municipal Development Plan
- Work with Federal, Provincial, industry and other partners to ensure air and water meets or exceeds approved standards

#### **Key Performance Indicator**

- Council approves an environmental sustainability framework and subsequently receives annual reviews

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## **Community Development Perspective: *Economic Sustainability***

### **Capstone Policy**

Strathcona County fosters an economy which benefits residents, business and industry.

#### **Goal**

Strathcona County supports a healthy economy.

#### **Strategies**

- Develop an economic sustainability framework that includes measures and key performance indicators (KPI).
- Incorporate the principles of the economic sustainability framework into County decision-making processes
- Maintain a fair and competitive tax structure

- Continue to invest in community infrastructure
- Provide municipal services that support business
- Acknowledge the economic contribution of industry and business to the community

#### **Key Performance Indicator**

- Council approves an economic sustainability framework by the fourth quarter of 2010 and subsequently receives annual reviews

#### **Goal**

Strathcona County harbours a viable community of businesses that reflect its rural-urban diversity.

#### **Strategies**

- Develop plans to attract business in the following areas: research and development, post-secondary affiliates, technology and agribusiness
- Educate the community about the rights and responsibilities of farmers
- Preserve the lands that are best suited to support agriculture
- Continue to attract a range of commercial businesses
- Identify appropriate locations for businesses rooted in agriculture and/or food production
- Encourage business development in hamlets

#### **Key Performance Indicator**

- To be established following the adoption of an economic sustainability framework by the fourth quarter 2010

#### **Goal**

Residents, business, industry and the County benefit from the County's economic prosperity.

#### **Strategies**

- Use business retention, expansion and attraction to establish industrial and commercial diversity
- Seek businesses that provide local employment opportunities
- Encourage local shopping and business purchases
- Promote Strathcona County as a tourist destination and host for major sports and cultural events

#### **Key Performance Indicator**

- To be established following the adoption of an economic sustainability framework by the fourth quarter 2010

## **Service Delivery Perspective**

### **Capstone Policy**

Strathcona County practises excellence in customer service based on the principles of effectiveness, efficiency, economy and equity.

#### **Goal**

Customers are satisfied with the quality of County service delivery.

#### **Strategies**

- Review alternative delivery models for improved effectiveness and cost efficiencies
- Incorporate innovative ideas to improve service
- Enhance opportunities for customer feedback
- Investigate options to address customer inquiries and complaints
- Continue to use customer feedback to improve service delivery
- Continue to train staff in service delivery excellence
- Clarify the roles of Council and administration in communicating with stakeholders and establish protocols

#### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Resident satisfaction with service delivery
- Business satisfaction with service delivery
- Industry satisfaction with service delivery
- Councillor and resident satisfaction with inquiry / complaint handling processes

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## **Resident and Stakeholder Communications**

### **Capstone Policy**

Strathcona County communicates effectively with its stakeholders.

#### **Goal**

Strathcona County uses effective mechanisms to facilitate two-way communications with residents and other stakeholders.

#### **Strategies**

- Continue to implement “best practices” for collecting community input
- Establish protocols for communication for Council internally and Council-staff
- Evaluate and improve communication based on timeliness, effectiveness of media, clarity and success in reaching intended audience
- Enhance the ability of staff to serve as facilitators

#### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Resident, industry, and business satisfaction with County communications
- Stakeholder satisfaction with opportunities to provide input
- Stakeholder awareness of County services, programs and current issues
- Councillor satisfaction with information on ward activities provided by staff

## Goal

Stakeholders are well informed about and confident in their local government.

### Strategies

- Investigate opportunities to improve processes that involve the public
- Develop strategies to make governance more transparent

### Key Performance Indicators

- Stakeholder participation in governance-related activities
- Community confidence in County governance

## Goal

Stakeholders understand the role of the County in governance and service delivery.

### Strategies

- Inform the public about municipal issues
- Enhance the awareness and understanding of Strathcona County among staff with respect to governance and service delivery

### Key Performance Indicators

- Community satisfaction with information regarding municipal issues and services
- Community awareness of County services

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## Resource Management

### Capstone Policy

Strathcona County's human, financial and physical resources are managed in a manner that addresses community needs and priorities.

## Goal

The County makes full use of its human resource potential.

### Strategies

- Continue to support the recruitment and retention of quality employees
- Provide educational opportunities for staff
- Encourage creativity and innovation
- Plan for succession development

### Key Performance Indicators

- Number of qualified applicants received per competition
- Funding to support staff training and development based on business needs and individual needs assessments
- Number and magnitude of innovations and "best practices" as recognized by other employers and organizations
- Proportion of promotional opportunities awarded to internal candidates

## **Goal**

The County's financial resources are responsibly managed.

### **Strategies**

- Develop policies and procedures that ensure County financial resources are used effectively, efficiently and economically
- Ensure that reporting procedures maximize transparency and accountability to Council and the public
- Use asset management programs to support sound budgeting and accounting practices
- Annually review selected areas of the organization with respect to effectiveness, efficiency, economy and equity

### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Achievement of balanced budget target
- Achievement of on-time and on-budget targets for capital projects
- Efficiency of energy and utility consumption

## **Goal**

Life expectancy of municipal and community infrastructure is met.

### **Strategies**

- Identify life expectancy for all municipal and community facilities
- Maintain infrastructure rehabilitation programs
- Promote energy and utility efficiency in facility design and operation
- Establish design and development standards that will maximize infrastructure life
- Use long-range planning to guide facility and open space development
- Promote shared use of community/school facilities

### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Length of time between identifying infrastructure issues and addressing them
- Ensure life cycle programs are established and maintained for municipal infrastructure