

2015-18

Department Business Plan

Family and Community Services

Updated June 2017



Forward Looking

Strathcona County's Social Sustainability Framework, adopted by Strathcona Council in 2007, aimed to create a caring and connected community within the County. Since then, we have seen a 19% increase in population, increased diversity and changing community connections. Over the last two years, the County has also been impacted by a province-wide economic downturn and noted considerable changes within our community including increases in crime rates, mental health referrals, reported incidents of domestic violence, food bank usage and an overall increased demand for local supports.

It is difficult to predict how these changes, among others, will affect the community in which we live and the individuals that belong to them. Persistent issues, such as poverty, family violence, mental health, and addictions require the attention of multiple points of government, social serving organizations, families, and communities. Simply stated, we are working in a rapidly changing world where pathways for creating social and communal well-being are far from straightforward.

What does become clear is that change will persist, and the impacts will be both complex and dynamic.

If change is a given, how then do we embrace the opportunity and organize ourselves to rise to this challenge?

There is an increasing body of research that points us to pay attention to "how" we behave within and among our many social and government systems¹. From education to health, to municipal government, becoming intentional in how we engage, connect, and partner with one another will have a significant effect on our community and our citizens. Traditional, siloed mandates of separate sectors, ministries, and orders of government have served us to a point, yet as our challenges increase in complexity, something different is required from all of us.

In an effort to inform the path forward, 'Community Talk' engagement, launched on October 18th, 2016, and invited open and honest conversation to re-examine the County's priorities as a means to renew our community's social direction. Residents, businesses, associations, schools, support agencies and community groups took on an active role in this extensive public engagement resulting in nearly 8,000 citizens providing input through a survey, and over 600 individuals participating in 48 community conversations across the County.

¹ Cabaj & Weaver, Collective Impact 3.0" Tamarack Institute, 2016.

As a result, the following community outcomes emerged and these have formed the basis of the renewed Social Framework and our department initiatives in 2018:

1. Affordability
2. Access to programs and services
3. Safety
4. Connectedness and Inclusion

The outcomes described by community are broad, bridging many sectors and boundaries. To impact these outcomes, the social and community systems that have influence need to work collectively and transparently to act and innovate. Following Community Talk, a group of system leaders from education, emergency services, faith communities, government, health, housing, social serving organizations and the library convened to determine how best to improve upon these community outcomes. The intention is to move from fragmented approaches of addressing needs to an approach that supports coordinated and strategic effort to align planning, service delivery, and horizontal integration. By zooming out to a system level, we can better identify areas for greater, system-wide impact. Through this approach, the Steering Committee identified a social framework that will create a deeper, more durable impact.

Strathcona County Council approved the renewed Social Framework on May 23rd, 2017.

While the Family and Community Services Department overall business plan is intended to implement the renewed vision contained within the Social Framework, it is early days. The department is in the midst of an organization review and the results of the review are not yet known. Reflection and learning continues as the department and community adapts, changes and implements the overall direction. During this interim state, the historical organizational structure remains while initial key initiatives are being identified.

Strathcona County Council created a strategic plan which outlines their vision for the County in 20 years, and the priorities and strategic goals to achieve that vision.

Strathcona County Administration has developed a corporate business plan to create a bridge between the long-term, high-level goals and priorities outlined by Council in its strategic plan, and the short to medium-term operational goals and priorities of the organization and its departments. Business plans will include measures so we can report how we are doing in implementing Council's strategic plan, as well as achieving department and corporate goals.

Vision and values

Strathcona County, located in the heart of Alberta, is an energetic and thriving community. A leader in North America's petroleum industry and a champion for advancing diverse agricultural business, we use our energy to power our new tomorrow.

We are a specialized municipality, and work cooperatively with our urban and rural residents to govern as a single municipality. Proud of our distinct governance model, we promote and demonstrate our achievements.

We are a welcoming place to live and attract people of all ages, cultures and walks of life to join us. Families thrive in our dynamic, caring and safe community.

We strive to be a model of ecological integrity, protecting our environment and preserving our agricultural heritage. Investment in infrastructure, quality services, cultural and recreational programs and facilities is a priority and sets us apart.

We are Canada's most livable community.

Corporate values

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| Integrity | We demonstrate ethical standards and behaviours; We display honest behaviour at all times; We do what we say we will do. |
| Respect | We treat others with care and dignity; We pay attention to each other; We welcome a variety and diversity of ideas. |
| Safety | We consistently demonstrate safe work practices; We build an environment of openness and trust; We make it safe for each other to voice opinions or concerns. |
| Fairness | We consider how our actions might affect others; We treat everyone impartially and equitably; We are willing to share the reasoning behind our thinking and decisions. |
| Cooperation | We support, assist and learn from each other; We give credit to others for their contributions; We compromise when needed to achieve common goals. |

Department mission

Family and Community Services strengthens the social well-being of individuals, families and community through responsive, collaborative and integrated services.

Department values

Family and Community Services supports all corporate values of the organization in addition to those specific to working in the human services field and include the following additional values:

Professional Ethics	Adhering to professional codes of practice
Responsibility to Clients	Maintaining confidentiality while ensuring the priority of the client's interests and promotion of self-determination
Social Justice	Promoting the principles of fairness and mutual obligation
Service to Humanity	As human services professionals, acting as agents to assist and or empower individuals, groups, families and communities

Department overview

Family and Community Services provides four core functions in the delivery of preventive social services that enhance the social well-being of our residents. Our core functions are organized around effectively meeting the complex social needs of our clients and consequently are multi-layered and cross branch structures. Our staff are an innovative and inclusive team, who work together to educate, support and inspire a healthy and happy community.

Provincially, the Family and Community Services department receives its mandate from the Family and Community Support Services Act and Regulation.

Individual and family supports

Teams of professionally trained staff work directly with individuals and families facing challenges in day-to-day living; or, by providing community support services. This continuum of service provides effective and appropriate resources, education and supports to assist our clients in developing the skills and tools that will strengthen and empower their positive development as individuals, as families and within the community. This continuum of care includes:

- Counseling
- Family school liaison
- Trauma supports for children and youth
- Parent-teen conflict
- Parent Link Center
- Family Day Homes
- Municipal subsidy administration
- Intake

Outreach supports

Frontline services are provided in home or community to ensure access by reaching out to marginalized and/or vulnerable populations to help deal with issues that may be complex and resistant to traditional solutions. These services are provided where those in need are located to ensure accessibility. These services bring health and human services to a person's home and establish beneficial connections between them and community. These services include:

- Home visitation – children and families
- In-home Care Support
- Seniors outreach
- Youth outreach/At-risk support

Developing community

The well-being of individuals and families is inextricably tied to the well-being of the community. Community and social development is based on the idea that neighborhoods are like ecosystems, interconnected so that the health of each part depends on the well-being of the whole. Community development is about working collectively in ways which aim to empower communities and increase community well-being. It involves engaging people in a process of identifying issues and coming together to find solutions. These services include:

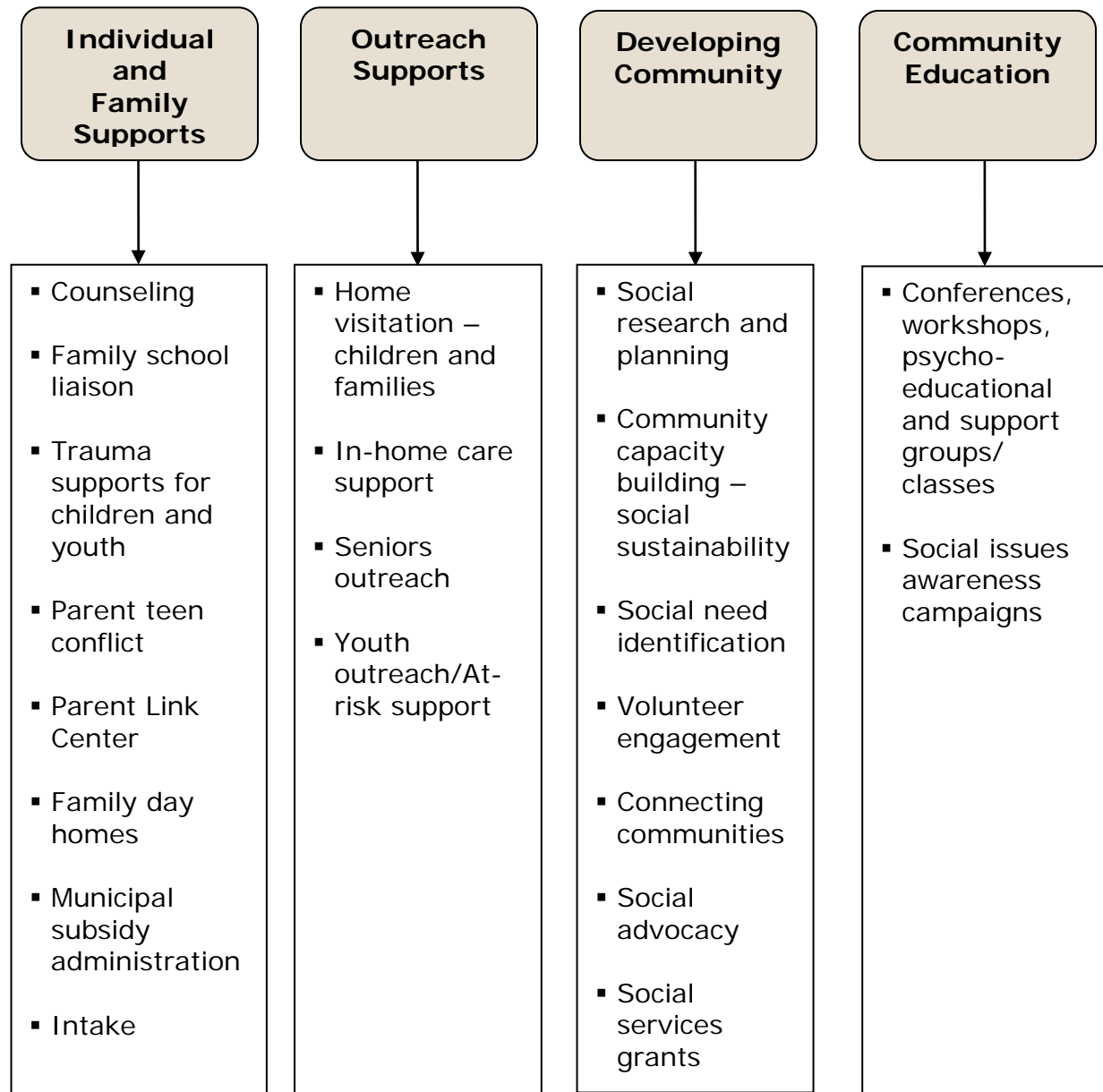
- Social research and planning
- Community capacity building – social sustainability
- Social need identification
- Volunteer engagement
- Connecting communities
- Social advocacy
- Social services grants

Community education

Residents of all ages are provided the opportunity to participate in learning opportunities that facilitate personal growth and support, and enhance their quality of life. Accessible education for everyone within community increases both skill development and awareness of community resources.

- Conferences, workshops, psychoeducational and support groups/classes
- Social issues awareness campaigns

Department core functions and programs



Department goals

Goal 1: Residents of all ages are supported as valued members of the community.

Outcome: Residents are satisfied with community supports and find them easy to access.

Linkages:

Strategic Plan (prioritized):

Goal 7: Build strong neighbourhoods/communities to support the diverse needs of our residents.

Corporate Business Plan:

Goal 2: Strathcona County priorities, successes and challenges are known.

Goal 4: Informed decision making supports quality of life in the community.

Goal 5: We are efficient and effective in daily operations.

[Social Sustainability Framework](#)

Initiatives:

Guide service delivery through the following activities:

- assess social trends and needs through community engagement
- consult with agency partners and clients to determine needs and gaps
- collaborate with community partners and agencies to ensure most effective and efficient utilization of resources
- monitor social-demographic information to identify trends

Promote development of social and support networks that enhance community connectedness

Ensure supports assist with the needs of our residents during times of vulnerability and need

Key Performance Indicator/Measures	Benchmark	Target
High satisfaction rating for Family and Community Services	75% (2013)	76% (2018)
% residents using Family and Community Services	9.2% (2013)	9.5% (2018)
Very important rating for Family and Community Services	74% (2013)	75% (2018)

Goal 2: Individuals and families experience social well-being.

Outcome: Individuals and families have stronger coping skills, increased resilience and greater independence.

Linkages:

- Strategic Plan (prioritized):
 - Goal 7: Build strong neighbourhoods/communities to support the diverse needs of our residents.
- Corporate Business Plan:
 - Goal 4: Informed decision making supports quality of life in the community.
 - Goal 5: We are efficient and effective in daily operations.

[Social Sustainability Framework](#)

Initiatives:

- Continuous improvement of social and emotional development across the lifespan
- Ensure a broad continuum of social supports, education and resources are available that evolve to meet the changing needs of individuals and families
- Provide opportunities for individuals and families to be empowered through social and psycho-educational programs in a broad range of community settings

Key Performance Indicator/Measures	Benchmark	Target
% of residents satisfied with life	92% (2014)	93% (2018)
% of residents seeking support for coping skills	30% (2012)	28% (2018)

Goal 3: Community social issues and needs are identified, understood and supported.

Outcome: Increased awareness of the impact of social issues to empower individuals, families and the community to respond.

Linkages:

- Strategic Plan (prioritized):
 - Goal 4: Increase public involvement and communicate with the community on issues affecting the County's future.
 - Goal 7: Build strong neighbourhoods/communities to support the diverse needs of our residents.

- Corporate Business Plan:
 - Goal 2: Strathcona County priorities, successes and challenges are known.
 - Goal 4: Informed decision making supports quality of life in the community.

[Social Sustainability Framework](#)

Initiatives:

- Redevelop and continue to promote and implement the Social Sustainability Framework
- Build capacity for families, individuals and community to advocate for themselves
- Build community awareness of social issues to facilitate social inclusion of all residents
- Increase effectiveness of community education programs and awareness campaigns
- Ensure guidelines are flexible enough to evolve to meet changing needs of the community
- Work in partnership with residents and community stakeholders to address social issues through communication, cooperation, coordination and collaboration

Key Performance Indicator/Measures	Benchmark	Target
% of residents aware of high risk issues	50% (2012)	55% (2018)

Goal 4: A stronger sense of community is built through the development of positive relationships in an effort to strengthen the social fabric of our community.

Outcome: Individuals, families and groups feel more connected to others.

Linkages:

Strategic Plan (prioritized):

Goal 7: Build strong neighbourhoods/communities to support the diverse needs of our residents.

Corporate Business Plan:

Goal 2: Strathcona County priorities, successes and challenges are known.

Goal 4: Informed decision making supports quality of life in the community.

[Social Sustainability Framework](#)

Initiatives:

Continue to promote opportunities that facilitate connections to neighbours and community

Work toward collaboratively building community capacity to enable collective change, build social capital and address local issues

Key Performance Indicator/Measures	Benchmark	Target
% of residents satisfied being part of the community	88% (2014)	90% (2018)
% of adults who know six or more neighbours by name	68% (2012)	70% (2018)

Goal 5: A healthy staff environment is essential in maintaining high-quality services.

Outcome: FCS is a high functioning, cohesive work team.

Linkages:

Corporate Business Plan:

Goal 6: Strathcona County is an employer of choice attracting and retaining the best people in all aspects of municipal service delivery.

Initiatives:

Sustain a high level of staff engagement, cohesion and work/life balance for staff

Ensure that decision making occurs at the right level to ensure service provision is flexible and responsible

Key Performance Indicator/Measures	Benchmark	Target
Staff satisfaction rating	75% (2014)	85% (2018)
Opportunity to use expertise	97% (2014)	98% (2018)
Encouraged to be innovative	77% (2014)	85% (2018)
Motivated to go above and beyond	92% (2014)	95% (2018)