History and Heritage

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Lead Role: Chief Commissioner   Replaces:
N/A

Last Review Date: May 10, 2011   Next Review Date: 05/2014

Administrative Responsibility: Corporate Planning & Intergovernmental Affairs

Special Notes:
The Strategic Plan is Strathcona County's principal guiding document for governance, community development, service delivery, resident and stakeholder communications and resource management. Based on the Strategic Plan, the History and Heritage Policy relates closely to the goals of these three capstone policies:

- Community Development:
    - Environmental Sustainability - to identify, preserve and protect natural features
    - Social Sustainability - speaks to a sense of place, important for a strong and sustainable community: social inclusion, community connectedness, social responsibility, health and well-being
- Resident and Stakeholder Communications: As they progress, all aspects of heritage projects will be communicated to residents and stakeholders as warranted.
- Resource Management: To maintain infrastructure rehabilitation programs

The Legacy Lands Policy (SER-012-010) provides a framework for the conservation of natural resources which will create a legacy of places of importance to Strathcona County for the benefit of its present and future generations.

The Cultural Services Policy (SER- 011-012) provides guidance for the provision of municipal cultural services for the benefit of Strathcona County residents.

The Naming of Development Areas, Roads, Parks and Public Facilities (SER-008-011) provides for a Commemorative Names Registry.

Policy Statement

Strathcona County shall enable responsible safeguarding and conservation of local history and heritage by:

1) providing a process for Strathcona County residents to assist them in protecting their history and heritage
2) recognizing the interconnectedness of its history, its intangible cultural heritage, its heritage buildings and sites, and its natural heritage
3) supporting and enabling activities that cultivate an appreciation of its history and heritage among its citizens by:
    a) integrating history and heritage into its overall planning, operations and communications,
    b) engaging the broader community to participate and collaborate in preserving, conserving, safeguarding and celebrating its history and heritage; and
    c) fostering a strong sense of belonging, identity and place, important in sustaining a strong and vibrant community for today and future generations.

Definitions

Commemorative Names Registry – means the compilation of names approved by Council and set aside for the purpose of naming a Development Area, road, park or public facility that signify persons, history, heritage, culture or natural geographic features of Strathcona County.

Community - considered in the broadest sense, includes either some or all of County residents, schools and places of worship, hamlets, districts and neighbourhoods, not-for-profit organizations and agencies, agricultural societies, community leagues, business and industry, community groups and the media.

Community Heritage Legacy Framework – a framework to strengthen the County's commitment to preserving its history and safeguarding its heritage. The framework sets out direction to engage the community in capturing and conveying its history and heritage, and identifies tools to do so. This framework focuses on intangible cultural heritage for its own value and also to connect with and communicate the value of the County's overall history and heritage.

Conservation – all actions or processes that are aimed at safeguarding the character-defining elements of cultural resources so as to retain its heritage value and extend its physical life. This may involve "Preservation," "Rehabilitation," "Restoration," or a combination of these actions or processes. Reconstruction or reconstitution of a disappeared cultural resource is not considered conservation.

Heritage – refers to all that is inherited from the past. It therefore includes the built environment, those buildings and works of the past, sites of historic events, historic skills, behaviours and patterns of life. A community's heritage encompasses its entire environmental inheritance.

Heritage Planning – the identification, inventory, survey, research and recording of historic resources in the County as they relate to planning initiatives.

Heritage Register – a register of key historic sites.

Heritage Resources Management Plan – a plan to identify historic resources, manage their preservation, and help guide and support their stewardship. The plan provides a framework for decision-making to help retain, maintain and appreciate these buildings, landscapes and structures in the community, whether publicly or privately owned.

Historic Resource – any work of nature or of humans that is primarily of value for its paleontological, archeological, prehistoric, historic, cultural, natural, scientific or esthetic interest including, but not limited to, a paleontological, archeological, prehistoric, historic or natural site, structure or object. (Alberta Historic Resources Act, Ch. H-9)

History – involves the study of past events, especially human affairs; the total accumulation of past events, especially relating to human affairs or to the accumulation of developments connected with a particular place (Canadian Oxford Dictionary, Second Edition, 2004).

Intangible Cultural Heritage – means the practices, representations, and expressions, as well as the associated knowledge and the necessary skills that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

The intangible cultural heritage is manifested *inter alia* in the following domains:
(a) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;

(b) performing arts;
(c) social practices, rituals and festive events;
(d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
(e) traditional craftsmanship. (UNESCO)

Local history is the examination of change over time involving interrelated aspects of families, schools, churches, farms, civic organizations and facilities, businesses and communities, province, country and the world. (Nearby History, David E. Kyvig, Altamira, 2nd Ed. 2000)

Safeguarding - means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage. (UNESCO)

Guidelines

The framework for enhanced local history and heritage initiatives is outlined in the Heritage Resources Management Plan and the Community Heritage Legacy Framework.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Director of Corporate Planning & Intergovernmental Affairs is responsible to:
-   Lead the implementation of the Heritage Resources Management Plan
-   Establish mechanisms for gathering public input
-   Seek resources both inside and outside the community for financial and advisory assistance
-   Survey and keep an inventory of the County's historic resources

The Director of Communications is responsible to:
-   Lead the implementation of the Community Heritage Legacy Framework, with a focus on the following goals:
    o   preserve history and safeguard intangible cultural heritage
    o   promote history and heritage through communications and education
    o   interpret and commemorate history and heritage
    o   integrate history and heritage with initiatives, programs and events
    o   secure and sustain resources for this work
-   Implement communications strategies, as outlined in the Heritage Resources Management Plan

The Director of Planning & Development Services is responsible to:
-   Establish a Heritage Planning function
-   Develop and maintain a Heritage Register for the protection of historic resources
-   Establish a process by which a property is identified and placed on the Heritage Register for designation as a municipal historic resource
-   Adopt a designation process that follows the national standards and guidelines for the conservation of historic resources
-   Establish a process that allows the municipality to review all zoning, subdivision, development and building permit applications affecting potential historic resources
-   Create an effective and manageable set of incentives to empower historic resource conservation
-   Revise municipal planning documents to recognize heritage conservation
-   Guide private owners in the process of applying for municipal heritage designation
-   Assess potential historic resources for their heritage value
-   Maintain the Commemorative Names Registry

The Director of Engineering & Environmental Planning is responsible to:
-   Develop conservation plans for significant County-owned historic resources

- Identification of land to protect areas of essential biological diversity

The Director of Recreation, Parks & Culture is responsible to:
- Identify heritage programming currently in place and any new or potential opportunities
- Work throughout the County with community groups to promote heritage awareness and conservation
- Identify and promote heritage awareness programs and events

The Director of Facilities Services is responsible to:
- Identify costs to ensure long-term management, maintenance and conservation of County owned heritage buildings
- Tie maintenance of County-owned heritage buildings to the County's Life-Cycle Maintenance Program

The Director of Legislative & Legal Services is responsible to:
- Provide access to Strathcona County's (municipal) archival information