



## **Addressing a need for agricultural recreation space**

A history of Strathcona County's multi-purpose agriculture facility



# Project history

From the beginning, the vision for a multi-purpose agricultural facility was driven by the expressed need for agricultural recreation space in the community. Every step of the way, the project was built on sound decisions, research, planning and engagement.

- **December 2012** - Responding to a need for agricultural recreation space identified in several County planning documents and by residents and community organizations, Council approved funding to support a feasibility study to build a multi-purpose agricultural facility.
- **March to October 2013** - As part of the feasibility study, Strathcona County residents and local user groups were interviewed and surveyed to determine needs and viability of a multi-purpose agricultural facility.
- **January 20, 2015** - Strathcona County Multi-Purpose Agricultural Facility Feasibility Study presented to Council, who accepted the results and directed administration to take the next steps as outlined in the study.
- **Summer 2016** - Strathcona County interviewed local community groups to confirm user requirements and inform functional programming and design concepts.
- **October 25, 2016** - [Council approved](#) the regional facility concept. They also approved the purchase and servicing of additional land and outdoor amenities, to allow for future growth to a provincial level facility.
- **September 12, 2017** - following an internal site selection process, Council unanimously selected a location for the facility. Administration worked to secure the land purchase leading up to the announcement in March.
- **December 12, 2017** - Council approved \$16.1 million for the 2018 budget to complete design layout and servicing of the purchased site, including outdoor amenities.
- **March 13, 2018** - Strathcona County [announced the selected location](#) will be next to the Bremner Heritage Site in rural Strathcona County.
- **September 24, 2019** - Council directs administration to proceed with detailed design for ease of future expansion and to best meet community needs. The direction also included to proceed with design for a serviced campground, and an increased size for a covered outdoor arena to support more variety of uses; and to explore costs associated with a kitchen facility.

## Supported by resident and community organizations

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- The multi-purpose agricultural facility has been requested by many residents and community organizations. The design and purpose has been informed by residents.
- Extensive research and community consultation has been completed. We started with a [feasibility study](#) in 2013. This included a survey of 21 local community groups; interviews with 16 stakeholder groups; and a telephone survey of 400 residents. At the same time, input was gathered at local agricultural events, and a visioning session was held at the Colchester Community Hall with local and provincial stakeholders.
- After the feasibility results were accepted by Council in 2016, we interviewed local community groups again to confirm their requirements and inform [functional programming](#) and conceptual design of a regional facility model. A total of 61 local and provincial groups were consulted.
- Resident input has been integral to the design and purpose of the facility. In October 2018, the County [engaged community groups](#) for input on the functionality of the layout and key design features.
- The design process on large infrastructure projects includes refinements at every stage, from concept development and throughout schematic design. Strathcona County has confirmed direction with Council and the community along the way, to ensure the facility supports community needs and timing.
- On September 24, 2019, Council reviewed options for a refined design based on community input, site servicing needs, engineering and building best practices. Community groups provided input on the facility and site design concept such as specific program, sport and recreation standards and regulations. This determined the architectural, landscape, structural and mechanical requirements.



## Aligned with the County vision

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- The need for a multi-purpose agricultural facility is referenced in several Strathcona County planning documents.
- Responding to these needs aligns with [our vision](#) to preserve our agricultural heritage; to advance diverse agricultural business; and to invest in cultural and recreational programs and facilities that set us apart.



## Designed for a growing region

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- Council approved the purchase and servicing of additional land and outdoor amenities, to allow for future growth to a provincial level facility with the capacity to host larger and higher-level events and competitions.



## Informed by community groups

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- Design continues to be developed with input from local stakeholder groups to ensure resident and stakeholder needs are met. Input has come from many different communities:
  - agricultural societies
  - youth clubs and activities
  - cattle
  - canine
  - equine clubs
  - events and shows
  - heritage
  - education
  - urban business



