

**Priorities Committee Meeting\_July15\_2025****STRATEGIC INITIATIVE AND UPDATE**

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**Community Hall Strategy****Report Purpose**

To provide the Priorities Committee with an update on a renewed Community Halls Strategy and a matrix on the current state of community halls.

**Our Strategic Goals**

Goal 2 - Healthy and Safe Community

Goal 4 - Municipal Excellence

Goal 2 Priority - Social supports that enhance community well-being and safety, and build community connection

Goal 4 Priority - Optimal use of resources that meets the community's needs

Please select a priority from the list

**Report**

Community halls are vital social, cultural, and historical assets in our communities. They offer places for people to connect, hold events and run programs. During emergencies, they can provide infrastructure for community support. They help make communities lively and healthy, but they face challenges like changing community needs, aging facilities, dependence on volunteers and the complexity of navigating the County's systems and processes. Community halls are valued as an important piece of community infrastructure in the County and contribute to Strathcona County's vision to become Canada's most livable community.

The purpose of the Community Halls Strategy is to:

1. Share a vision for community halls in Strathcona County and guiding principles to achieve it.
2. Introduce shared outcomes and priority areas for action for Hall Operators and County to work toward the vision.
3. Identify supports and priorities for the viability and sustainability of Hall Operators and their organizations.
4. Clarify the roles and expectations of Hall Operators and Strathcona County.
5. Provide community data and insights to support decision-making.

The vision statement for Community Halls is "Strathcona County Community Halls are vibrant volunteer led, inclusive hubs that foster intergenerational connections, celebrate community, and enrich lives through diverse programs and events."

Four principles were developed. The first principle is Trust and Accountability. Community Halls and the County aim to build relationships based on respect, clear communication and transparency, to create lasting impact and a stronger network of communities. The second principle is Community Building. We value community halls as extensions of our homes.

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We use them to make social connections and contribute to the overall wellbeing of our communities. The third principle is Inclusivity and Diversity. Our facilities and activities are accessible, welcoming, and beneficial to everyone including families, older adults, persons with diverse abilities, people of all social and ethnic backgrounds. The fourth principle is Sustainability. We focus on being financially and environmentally responsible, recognizing the limits of financial and environmental resources, social and human capacity

The shared outcomes for the Community Halls and the County are:

<b>Connected Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community halls and their operators meet evolving community needs and interests and reflect local voices through collaborative processes</li> <li>- Everyone feels welcome and a sense of belonging, with opportunities to participate as user groups, volunteers, leaders, or attendees</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration and Partnership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community halls are supported with opportunities to collaborate, network, share information and work toward shared vision</li> <li>- Strengthened partnership between County and Hall Operators improves resource efficiency, reduces duplication and enhances service delivery</li> <li>- During emergencies, community halls provide infrastructure and support, contributing to community resilience</li> </ul>
<b>Community Wellbeing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Halls serve as essential social and cultural hubs facilitating access to programs, services and information</li> <li>- Halls are accessible and welcoming places that encourage neighborliness, community safety and reduce social isolation</li> <li>- Community halls reflect and celebrate their unique physical, cultural and social characteristics</li> </ul>
<b>Financial Sustainability and Asset Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community halls are maintained for long-term viability</li> <li>- Sufficient revenue covers operating costs, with surplus reinvested into building improvements, community events activities and future projects</li> <li>- Financial management is transparent and accountable</li> <li>- Reinvestment decisions are guided by lifecycle assessments. Community input further helps prioritize equitable provision of services and facilities that meet current and future utilization needs</li> </ul>

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### Next Steps:

1. Develop an implementation plan that specifies timelines, roles, and resources needed to address the priority areas for action. This plan will enable both the County and Hall Operators to address priorities while identifying future actions to sustain progress toward the vision.
2. Define evaluation methods and regular reporting processes to monitor progress on priority areas for action and shared outcomes, supported by regular reporting processes. These efforts will promote transparency and accountability and guide the County and Hall Operators to assess impact, identify challenges and make data informed adjustments to strategy implementation.
3. Develop an investment framework to inform financial decisions for community halls, prioritizing long-term viability and evolving community needs and alignment with the County's social, environmental, and financial priorities.
4. Foster continuous collaboration and communication with Community Hall Operators and other key partners to gather input, receive feedback and maintain transparency by keeping everyone informed and involved on the progress.

### **Council and Committee History**

January 30, 2018	Update to Priorities Committee on the progress of the Community Hall Sustainability Strategy implementation.
November 22, 2016	Council approved the 2017 budget recommendations to implement the community hall sustainability strategy and to develop a support program for the community hall associations.
May 17, 2016	Council requested an update on the public consultation and community hall condition assessments completed in Q1 of 2016.
July 14, 2015	Council directed administration to bring forward a report on the utilization, functional obsolescence and overall physical condition of community halls and senior centres after a public consultation has been completed with the community and licensed hall operators.

### **Other Impacts**

**Policy:** n/a

**Financial/Budget:** n/a

**Legislative/Legal:** n/a

**Interdepartmental:** Implementation of the Strategy will be led by Recreation, Parks and Culture in coordination with Fleet and Facility Management.

**Master Plan/Framework:** n/a

### **Enclosures**

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| 1 | Strathcona County community halls strategy draft |
| 2 | Community halls strategy presentation            |