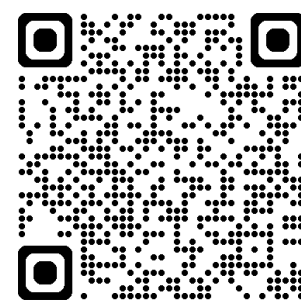


CITY OF STURGIS™ SOUTH DAKOTA

SCAN FOR
COMMUNITY CALENDAR



STURGIS INFORMATION PUBLICATION

VOLUME 17 ISSUE 10 OCTOBER 2025

Sturgis begins major ordinance recodification effort

The City of Sturgis has embarked on a comprehensive recodification of its ordinances — a multi-year project designed to modernize the city's laws, improve public access, and ensure consistency with the city's new form of government. This effort follows the April 2024 election, when Sturgis voters chose to return to a mayor–council form of government. Under this structure, the mayor now serves as the city's chief executive officer, and the City Administrator is appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the council to oversee day-to-day operations. City Attorney Eric Davis explained, "When the form of government changes, the law has to reflect that. While we have the 'hood up,' it's also the right time to review the code as a whole and ask whether certain rules still make sense, whether others need to be added, or whether outdated sections should be repealed."

Partnering with American Legal

To guide the project, the city has contracted with American Legal Publishing, a nationally recognized firm that specializes in municipal codes. The firm delivered a 60-page editorial review identifying 99 issues — far more detailed than the 10-page overview originally expected. These issues include outdated fines, old

building codes, and state legal changes. American Legal is also restructuring the code into a searchable, user-friendly online format with expandable sections, cross-references, and citations to state law. This will replace the current 770-page PDF that residents must now scroll through to find ordinances.

Committee Work Underway

To manage the workload, the city council has formed an ordinance committee consisting of elected officials, staff, and citizen representatives. Members include Mayor Kevin Forrester, City Administrator Aaron Jordan, City Attorney Eric Davis, Councilors Jesse Blakeman, Ruth Kopp, Jim Thompson, and Nick Jones, as well as citizens Steve Anders and Bob Haivala. Police Chief Geody VanDewater, Public Works Director Rick Bush, Finance Officer Ann Bertolotto, and Director of Communications Deb Holland also participate. The committee has outlined a three-phase plan for recodification:

- Phase 1: Correct typos, formatting issues, and repeal obsolete or duplicative laws.
- Phase 2: Update ordinances for legal compliance, address unconstitutional or outdated provisions, and incorporate new state laws.
- Phase 3: Consider policy changes, repeal unneces-

sary ordinances, and add new ones based on community needs.

A draft response to American Legal addressing the 99 flagged issues is due by October 6, and the next committee meeting is scheduled for October 8. Bob Haivala has been nominated as committee chair, with Councilor Jim Thompson as vice-chair, pending council approval.

Public Input and Long-Term Vision

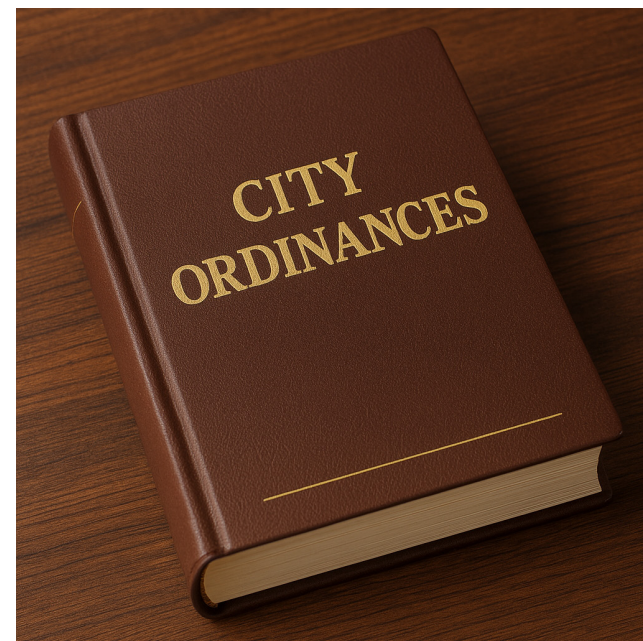
The city emphasizes that transparency and community engagement are essential to the process.

Public hearings will be required for all revisions, and subcommittees will be established to handle complex or high-interest issues.

"This is a big project, but it's an exciting one," Davis said. "Our goal is to produce a code of ordinances that is modern, consistent, and reliable — one that will serve this community well for decades to come."

The council expects regular updates throughout the process, with opportunities for public input as draft sections of the updated code are completed.

"Investing the time and effort into recodification is a legacy project," Davis added. "It reflects not just the government we have today, but the kind of government we want to leave for the next generation of Sturgis residents."



What is Recodification?

Q: What does "recodification" mean?

A: Reviewing, updating, and reorganizing the city's ordinances to ensure they are accurate, consistent, and easy to use.

Q: Why is Sturgis doing this now?

A: The return to a mayor–council government requires updates to reflect the new structure. It's also an opportunity to clean up outdated references and improve usability.

Q: How will this benefit residents?

A: The new code will be hosted online in an organized, searchable format — no more scrolling through lengthy PDFs.

Q: How long will this take?

A: Up to two years, with opportunities for public input along the way.

Q: What is the goal of the project?

A: This will update outdated references such as old building codes and repealed ordinances.

Q: Will residents have a chance to weigh in on the changes?

A: Yes. Residents will have opportunities to review and comment during the process. This is a legacy project that establishes a modern code designed to serve Sturgis for years to come.

CITY OFFICIALS

MAYOR KEVIN FORRESTER

605-490-1177

COUNCIL MEMBERS

WARD ONE:

NICK JONES

605-215-5142

ALEX USERA

605-645-2468

WARD TWO:

RUTH KOPP

605-204-5841

TONY DARGATZ

605-646-2047

WARD THREE:

JIM THOMPSON

605-641-3630

MARK CHAPLIN

605-347-1771

WARD FOUR:

JESSE BLAKEMAN

605-206-0477

TERRY JENSEN

605-347-3928

STURGIS COMMUNITY

CENTER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

K-6th Girls Basketball

Registration

Sept 9 - Oct 5

Members \$30

Non Members \$40

Season begins - Oct. 20

Community Center Hours

Monday - Friday

5 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Saturday

8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday

Noon to 5 p.m.

“Next-level” teamwork saves motorcyclist

A nationally recognized emergency medicine physician and professor has lauded the efforts of a Sturgis EMS crew for their skill, professionalism, and teamwork during a complex and dangerous rescue during this year’s Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.

Dr. C.J. Winckler, an emergency physician and paramedic from Texas with deep South Dakota roots, was among the first people to arrive at the scene of a motorcycle crash in Vanocker Canyon during this year’s Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.

The rider had left the roadway and tumbled an estimated 30 to 40 feet down a steep, rocky cliff before landing on a ledge surrounded by trees.

“He was lucky to be alive,” Dr. Winckler recalled. “His right leg was shattered, his left arm badly broken, but he was alert, oriented, and able to talk to me. Still, his position on the cliff made everything about this rescue dangerous.”

Winckler, who grew up in South Dakota and now serves as Deputy Medical Director for the San Antonio Fire Department, used his paramedic experience to stabilize the rider until Sturgis EMS and the Volunteer Fire Department arrived. Within 10 minutes, Sturgis EMS providers Jarrod VanDewater and Bryson Kool were on scene.

“They were calm, professional, and had a plan,” Winckler said. “They didn’t gripe about the conditions or hesitate. They just got to work — exactly what you hope for in a crisis.”

The EMS team carefully assessed the patient, started an IV, and administered pain medication — all while balancing on the side of a cliff.

“The Sturgis EMS crew was professional and did a great job,” Dr. Winckler said. “They did everything just right... Stellar work in my humble opinion.”

Meanwhile, the Sturgis Volunteer Fire Department established a technical rope haul system to bring the patient back up to the road. Law enforcement and Highway Patrol officers also stepped in, providing much-needed manpower to move the stokes basket carrying the injured rider.

Winckler recalled one officer in particular: “I looked at him and said, ‘You’re going to have to help lift the backboard because I’m a little long in the tooth.’ Without hesitation, he jumped in. That’s the kind of teamwork we saw everywhere,” he said.

For Winckler, who has decades of experience responding to emergencies in major metropolitan areas, the speed and efficiency of the Sturgis response was remarkable.

“I would say this rescue was faster and smoother than many I’ve seen in big-city fire departments,” he said. “Everyone knew their role, but they also stepped outside their roles when needed. It was all hands-on deck, and it was impressive to witness.”

Sturgis Ambulance Service Director Aden Schillig echoed the sentiment: “This rescue really shows what makes Sturgis special,” Schillig said. “Our EMS crew, volunteer firefighters, and law enforcement officers came together seamlessly. The terrain was unforgiving, but their skill and teamwork ensured the patient received the care he needed and was safely transported.”

Winckler later wrote a letter of appreciation to Sturgis EMS, praising the crews for their professionalism and inviting them to attend the South Dakota State EMS Conference as his personal guests.

“This was next-level teamwork,” Winckler said. “It made me proud not only as a physician, but also as someone who grew up here. If I were ever in a wreck in South Dakota, I’d want these people responding.”



Bryson Kool



Jarrod VanDewater



Sturgis Public Library

Wisdom Begins in Wonder

Wednesday, Oct. 1 - 11 a.m. Special PreK Storytime Event! Children’s book author Whitnee Coy will share her very own stories and fun with kids ages 3–6.

Wednesday, Oct. 1 - 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Coding Club. Hands-on coding activities and programs, designed for ages 6-10

Thursday, Oct. 2 - 5 p.m. Join Chelle for a relaxing evening of crochet tips, techniques and creative fun perfect for teens and adults. All supplies are provided. It is free to attend, please RSVP with the library.

Saturday, Oct. 4 - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Genealogy Work Group The Sturgis Public Library and the Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society will be hosting their monthly genealogy work group. This month we will be looking at stepping up your research with AI. Learn the basics about using Artificial Intelligence in your genealogy, offering tools for your research, writing, photos, and so much more! Public is welcome!

Monday, Oct. 6 - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. LEGOs. All ages are welcome to come together to build and explore with bricks.

Monday, Oct. 6 - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The Sturgis Public Library will be hosting a Full Moon Hike. Meet at the Sturgis Brown High School parking lot for a gentle 3-mile loop under the glow of the full moon. Along the way, we'll pause for short talks about moon phases, nocturnal wildlife, and how our eyes adjust to the dark. Bring water, jackets, bug spray, and a flashlight! All Ages!

Tuesday, Oct. 7 - 3:30 p.m. Wonder Math Join Richard Moeller for science-based discoveries, activities, and more. All ages are welcome.

Tuesday, Oct. 7 - 10 a.m. Baby & Toddler Storytime (ages 0-3).

Wednesday, Oct. 8 - 11 a.m. Prek Storytime (ages 3-6).

Thursday, Oct. 9 - 5:30 p.m. MusicSpeaks This month, we celebrate Paul Simon's 84th birthday with a look at his life and songs from his debut with Art Garfunkel, to breaking racial lines in South Africa, to his more recent reflections on life and faith.

Monday, Oct. 13 - Closed for Native Americans' Day

Tuesday, Oct. 14 - 10 a.m. Baby & Toddler Storytime (ages 0-3).

Tuesday, Oct. 14 - 3:30 p.m. Needs & Noodles Teens are invited to learn basic cooking and life skills in a fun, hands-on environment. Only for ages 12+. Participants are expected to show respectful and cooperative behavior to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone.

Wednesday, Oct. 15 - 11 a.m. Prek Storytime (ages 3-6).

Wednesday, Oct. 15 - 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Coding Club. Hands-on coding activities and programs, designed for ages 6-10

Thursday, Oct. 16 - 7 p.m. Author Talk Join David Fierst on a discussion of his book, "Hidden Disgrace — Revealing the Distress Signals Covered by North American Indian Myths." His book is the result of a visit to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in April 2014. After viewing the living conditions on the reservation, he became curious about the history of the Lakota people and Native Americans in general; he also wanted to understand the current situation for these people. Fierst conducted original document research at such diverse venues as the National Archives in Washington, D.C., the Minnesota Historical Society in St. Paul, and the Lilly Library in Bloomington, Indiana.

Monday, Oct. 20 - 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. LevelUp! Gaming Gamers 10 and up are invited to play Nintendo, card games, board games, and have snacks.

Tuesday, Oct. 21 - 10 a.m. Baby & Toddler Storytime (ages 0-3).

Tuesday, Oct. 21 - 3:30 p.m. Wonder Math Join Richard Moeller for science-based discoveries, activities, and more. All ages are welcome.

Wednesday, Oct. 22 - 11 a.m. Prek Storytime (ages 3-6).

Wednesday, Oct. 22 - 3:30 p.m. Youth Book Club Calling all young readers ages 10 and older! Join our open book club to chat about your favorite books, discover new stories, and hang out with others who love reading — snacks included!

Thursday, Oct. 23 - 6 p.m. Books On Tap The Sturgis Public Library is hosting Books On Tap at 44 North. Book Theme: "Murder SHE Wrote". Choose a killer book by a woman author to discuss at our October meeting. All readers 21+ are invited to join us.

Saturday, Oct. 25 - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Youth Halloween Party Youth ages 8 and up are invited to join us for a spook-tacular Halloween Party! Come dressed in your favorite costume, build your very own haunted house, and play chilling games with costumed characters. Treats and thrills await—if you dare!

Monday, Oct. 27 - 4 p.m. S.T.E.A.M. Team Kids (ages 6-10) This month, we will be featuring "Haunted Bridge Builders". You will be challenged to design a bridge strong enough to hold a mini pumpkin using only candy corn, marshmallows, and toothpicks.

Tuesday, Oct. 28 - 10 a.m. Baby & Toddler Storytime (ages 0-3).

Tuesday, Oct. 28 - 3:30 p.m. Needs & Noodles Teens are invited to learn basic cooking and life skills in a fun, hands-on environment. Only for ages 12+. Participants are expected to show respectful and cooperative behavior to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone.

Wednesday, Oct. 29 - 11 a.m. Prek Storytime (ages 3-6).

Friday, Oct. 31 - 10 a.m. to noon Tiny Tot Social Toddlers are welcome to join their friends at the Sturgis Public Library for snacks and unstructured playtime. Sensory bins, blocks, and books will be out for play.

Community Calendar

OCTOBER

2 – Sturgis Area Chamber Annual Agriculture Appreciation Banquet, 5 p.m., Sturgis Armory.

2 - Armchair Travelers Book Club, Noon, Sturgis Public Library Lushbough Room

2 - Sturgis Ambulance Blood Drive, 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sturgis Fire Hall, 1901 Ball Park Rd.

3-4 - Twilight Tours, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., Old Fort Meade Museum

4 - 2025 Sturgis Fall Community Yard Sale, throughout Sturgis

6 - 10 - Sturgis Fall Citywide Clean-up. Find out more details at <https://tinyurl.com/cp577cp8>

9 - Sturgis Area Arts Council meeting, 2:30 p.m., Sturgis Public Library Lushbough Room

13 - Native Americans' Day, City offices closed. Trash normally collected on Monday will be picked up on Tuesday.

17 - History at High Noon, “What’s in the names? For Wood Place and Besant Park Road – Stagecoaches and Trains” by Nancy Davis, Sturgis Public Library

26 - Sturgis Golden K Kiwanis Hobo Stew feed, 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., Sturgis Community Center

27 - Sturgis Alliance of Churches Chili Cook-off, 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m., Sturgis Community Center

NOVEMBER

1 - Sturgis Golden K Kiwanis Food Drive. 9 a.m. to noon. Drop off food or monetary donations at one of four convenient locations: Grocery Mart parking lot, Lynn’s DakotaMart parking lot, Sturgis Elementary parking lot (across from the fire station on Ball Park Road) or Sturgis Kiwanis Food Pantry (801 6th Street).

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City of Sturgis launches new transportation safety initiative

The City of Sturgis has officially launched its Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) project, a major step toward making local streets, sidewalks, trails, and highways safer and more accessible for everyone.

Supported through a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation, the project will bring together community voices and expertise to shape a safer future for Sturgis.

Public Works Director Rick Bush said the initiative is about more than pavement and traffic signals.

“We want every resident, visitor, and family to feel safe whether they’re walking to school, biking across town, or driving to work,” he explained. “That starts with listening to the community. People know the streets and intersections they use every day, and their experiences will guide this plan.”

The project officially began with its first Advisory Team meeting on Sept. 3, where community organizations, bike and trail advocates, public safety officials, school leaders, and local healthcare providers came together.

“The advisory team will help us look at safety from all angles,” Bush said. “It’s not just about cars and trucks—it’s about

pedestrians, cyclists, kids on their way to school, and even emergency vehicles needing quick access. We want to build a culture of safety that serves everyone.”

To capture as many voices as possible, the city is inviting residents, workers, students, and visitors to share their thoughts in a short online survey at <https://forms.office.com/r/V5juULFWP2> “Every single voice matters,” Bush said. “If there’s a crosswalk that makes you nervous, a street that feels too fast, or a spot where you’ve seen near-misses—we want to hear about it. Those stories and observations will shape real improvements.”

The survey is just the beginning. As the plan develops, additional opportunities for public comment will be announced.

Bush summed it up best: “We’re building a roadmap for safer streets, but it won’t work unless it reflects the real, everyday experiences of the people who live here. Together, we can make Sturgis safer today and for generations to come.”

For more information, contact Rick Bush, Public Works Director, at RBush@sturgisgov.com or (605) 347-3916, or visit www.sturgis-sd.gov



Sturgis Public Works Director Rick Bush and Police Chief Geody VanDewater speak with Kristen Ohnoutka with JEO Consulting Group during a presentation about the Safe Streets & Roads for All plan.

Project Advisory Team

Rick Bush	City of Sturgis
Jesse Blakeman	City of Sturgis
Aaron Jordan	City of Sturgis
Geody VanDewater	City of Sturgis
Mark Schmidt	Monument Health
Wayne Wormstadt	Meade 46-1 School District
Richelle Bruch	Sturgis Outdoors
Hanz Nelson	Sturgis Rotaract
Sam Greear	Black Hills Trails
Karen Lynas	Parks and Recreation Board

Safe Streets and Roads for All – Key Focus Areas
Safer People – Encourage responsible driving, biking, and walking so everyone can reach their destination safely.
Safer Roads – Design streets and intersections that reduce mistakes and protect vulnerable users.
Safer Vehicles – Support use of vehicle safety systems that prevent crashes and minimize harm.
Safer Speeds – Promote safe, context-appropriate speeds through design, education, and enforcement.
Post-Crash Care – Improve emergency response and ensure safe conditions for first responders.

Scan the QR code with your smart phone’s camera to access the survey or visit:
forms.office.com/r/V5juULFWP2