

Strategic Plan Review 2019 – 2022

Between April and July 2019, County Councillors and the Senior Leadership Team lead by the Chief Administrative Officer, Mr. Paul Moreau, held a series of strategy sessions with the goal to create a new Strategic Plan which would replace the previous plan that expired at the end of 2018.

Mr. Erik Lockhart, a facilitator from Queen’s University’s Executive Decision Centre, began the process with a session in early April involving 27 staff members from a cross-section of municipal departments at the County of Renfrew. These sessions explored issues, opportunities, and aspirations for the future of the County of Renfrew. The findings were shared with County Council and the Senior Leadership Team at a full-day workshop, focused on drafting a vision, key priorities, and objectives.

STRATEGY AT A GLANCE (2019 - 2022)



Mission: To deliver high quality services to the residents of the County of Renfrew in an efficient and cost effective manner

<h3 style="margin: 0;">Vision</h3> <p>The County of Renfrew is recognized as a model rural community balancing fiscal responsibility and the delivery of services and infrastructure that meet community needs. We have earned this reputation by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Having a strong voice with Federal & Provincial Government on shared investments; 2) Embracing technology that supports our residents and positions us as a leader in broadband connectivity; 3) Managing our fiscal picture through sustainable asset management; 4) Identifying efficiencies that allow the county to improve service delivery while meeting the service level expectations of our residents; 5) Enhancing the four pillars of economic development leading to improved quality of life;* 6) Working effectively with local municipalities. <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin-top: 5px;">*The four pillars of economic development are supported across all four priorities, by the provision of services and initiatives that enhance our community's quality of life.</p>	<div style="background-color: #8ebf42; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold; font-size: 0.9em;">Priority Strong Engagement & Relations with Federal and Provincial Government</div> <p>Goal: To inform the Federal and Provincial Government on our unique needs so that Renfrew County residents get their "fair share"</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Create a strategic communications plan 2) Identify and advocate for issues important to residents of the County of Renfrew 	<div style="background-color: #8ebf42; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold; font-size: 0.9em;">Priority Fiscal Sustainability</div> <p>Goal: Ensure ongoing financial viability while balancing expected levels of service to the community</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Commitment from Council supporting principles within the Long-Term Financial Plan 2) Establish Contingency Plan to respond to provincial and federal financial pressures and opportunities beyond the Long-Term Financial Plan
<div style="background-color: #4f81bd; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold; font-size: 0.9em;">Priority Service Delivery Review</div> <p>Goal: Find cost savings that demonstrate our leadership while still meeting community needs.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Complete community needs assessment 2) With identified partners implement plan to optimize service delivery to the benefit of our residents 	<div style="background-color: #4f81bd; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold; font-size: 0.9em;">Priority Technology Acceleration</div> <p>Goal: Position the County of Renfrew so that residents benefit from advances in technology, and to ensure residents and staff have fair, affordable, and reasonable access to technology</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) County of Renfrew is top of the list for Eastern Ontario Regional Network funding for mobile broadband 2) Lobby for secure broadband for first responders and government 3) County of Renfrew technology strategy in place 	






County Council approved the Strategic Plan on November 27, 2019.

The backdrop of this entire document is one of substantial adversity. The floods of 2019 were followed by a series of unfortunate events: the pandemic, lockdown(s), work from home difficulties, raging challenges in long-term care and paramedic services, among them. Throughout the entirety of the four years, County of Renfrew staff, supported by Council, persevered and continued to provide exceptional levels of service. The following is a sample of the accomplishments that were achieved throughout this period.

Priority # 1: Strong Engagement & Relations with the Federal and Provincial Government

Goal: To inform the Federal and Provincial Government on our unique needs so that Renfrew County residents get their "fair share"

Key Objectives

1. Create a strategic communications plan
2. Identify and advocate for issues important to residents of the County of Renfrew

Accomplishments

- A Communications Plan was approved by County Council on May 27, 2020, and was designed to align whenever possible to directly support the priorities of the County of Renfrew Strategic Plan. This was effectively rolled out over the past 2 years and seeing a very marked increase in public engagement since Spring 2022.
- Effective and consistent communications surrounding the floods of 2019, including the coordination of key messaging amongst the many partnerships at all levels of government.
- On December 6, 2019, a meeting was held with Premier Doug Ford and Minister of Long-Term Care, the Honourable Dr. Merrilee Fullerton, to discuss opportunities to reduce pressures on health care and long-term care.
- In 2020, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care announced a 3-year funding commitment to the integration of Community Paramedicine with long-term care. The Service advocated for this program for Renfrew County due to the long-term care wait lists, overall pressure on the healthcare system, cost savings, and the desire of many residents to remain in their homes longer. The Service was successful in being one of five to pilot the program.
- Messaging with regards to the March 30, 2020 County of Renfrew declaration of a state of emergency due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The state of emergency ended on March 30, 2022.
- In 2020 in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC) was introduced and became a lifeline for our residents. Residents who did not have a doctor or could not reach their doctor could contact RC VTAC for medical treatment

instead of attending an Emergency Department. The County has held numerous meetings with the Minister of Health requesting that the province fund this service on an ongoing basis.

- In 2020, a meeting was held with the EOWC seeking support for the continuation of the Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC) model, funding mechanisms, and staffing to ensure a sustainability plan beyond September 2020. An impact analysis illustrates that in 2020, there was a 21% decrease in Emergency Department visits across Ontario, and in Renfrew County the decrease was 35%. Hospital admissions decreased by 12.3% in Renfrew County.
- In 2021, a vaccination policy for all staff including the long-term care homes was approved to help eradicate COVID-19, where messaging was an important piece of the dialogue.
- County has representation on the AMO, EORN, FCM and ROMA Boards, and Warden Robinson is a member of the AMO Board, as well as the AMO Health Task Force.
- Over the last three years, the County has met with the Minister of Health, during the AMO and ROMA Conferences to request the Province's commitment to fund RC VTAC on an ongoing basis to assist with the doctor shortage.
- The County of Renfrew has also met with various other ministers to advocate for additional funding for infrastructure, to have a municipal elected official at the governance table to participate in the Ontario Health Team and on local health and community service decisions, public health funding, seniors housing strategy, Long-Term Care priorities and the County Official Plan.
- In 2021, Renfrew County signed the finalized applications for Network 24 Ontario Health Team and the Three Rivers Health Team. The County has advocated for the need for governance to include municipal representation as a critical element of a future Ontario Health Team in the County of Renfrew. The County currently has 3 staff representatives on the Ontario Health Teams.
- The County of Renfrew's energetic promotion to the Province to utilize the Algonquin Trail as an Active Transportation alternative to Highway 17 led to the donation of over \$1,000,000 worth of aggregate that will aid in completion of the trail.

- The County of Renfrew will be participating in Renfrew County Day at Queen's Park on November 3, 2022 which provides an opportunity to benefit from greater relationships with the Provincial government leaders and their senior staff. As an economic development tool, several regions across Ontario have used a tool known as a Queen's Park Day to promote and inform those parliamentary decision makers on their communities, businesses, innovators, and complex issues.
- On December 15, 2020, Minister McLeod announced that the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries had approved the County of Renfrew to host the 2022 Ontario Winter Games. The Ontario Winter Games were postponed to February 2023 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- County Council adopted the Proclamation and Terms of Reference for the Partnership Agreement between the County of Renfrew and Renfrewshire Council, Scotland. The County is working with members of the Upper Ottawa Valley Chamber of Commerce (UOVCC) to discuss opportunities relating to a Chamber Initiated Business Twinning Mission with Renfrewshire's Chamber of Commerce(s). The UOVCC is extremely excited at the prospect of working with likeminded individuals in Renfrewshire, Scotland and the opportunities that exist, and will be forming a small committee of community leaders to shepherd this initiative forward in the coming months.
- County Council approved the construction of the County of Renfrew Reconciliation Garden with a budget of \$100,000. The official opening of the Noojimokamig [new-JIH-mah GAH-mig] Garden (A Place to Heal) was held on August 31, 2022.

Priority # 2: Fiscal Sustainability

Goal: Ensure ongoing fiscal viability while balancing expected levels of service to the community

Key Objectives

1. Commitment from Council supporting principles within the Long-Term Financial Plan
2. Establish Contingency Plan to respond to provincial and federal financial pressures and opportunities beyond the Long-Term Financial Plan.

Accomplishments

- The Renfrew County Housing Corporation (RCHC) Board of Directors authorized the County of Renfrew to develop new housing on lands located on Lea Street in Pembroke, and currently owned by the Renfrew County Housing Corporation. The design RFP was awarded to +VG Architects in Ottawa for phase 1 of the project. The project details are still being discussed.
- During the term of this Strategic Plan, the Public Works and Engineering Department completed:
 - 82 Projects;
 - 110 km of County Road rehabilitated or reconstructed;
 - 41 County Structure rehabilitated or replaced; and
 - \$53,680,974 projected in capital expenses for the above projects.These projects do not include repairs under threshold, maintenance or our scratch coat program.
- In 2022, Mr. Gary Scanlon, Managing Director, Watson & Associates, Economists Ltd. overviewed to County Council the basics of Development Charges. Watson & Associates is engaged to provide a background study on Development Charges for the County of Renfrew. A summary of the best estimates of the length of time required to move from the acceptance of a proposal, through each phase of the project, ending in the implementation process (i.e. public meetings and by-law passage) indicates that it will take roughly 10 months from the time Watson & Associates is engaged to having a by-law drafted for consideration (June 2023).
- The County entered into a Contribution Agreement between the County of Renfrew and the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation as a condition of

the successful Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) grant for the rehabilitation of the Algonquin Trail.

- County Council approved an expenditure of \$1,920,655 on the Algonquin Trail for 2019 to 2021 and the 2022 budget commits an additional \$2,946,355. The County received \$477,948 in Federal/Provincial funding for 2019 to 2021 and the 2022 budget expects to receive another \$255,699. Other grants for the Algonquin Trail and K&P trail are pending announcement.
- During our annual Budget Workshops, Council received a presentation from staff highlighting our ability to meet Council's municipal levy target along with the alignment of the annual budget to our Strategic Plan, Asset Management Plan, 10 Year Capital Plan and the Long Term Financial Plan.

Priority # 3: Service Delivery Review

Goal: Find cost savings that demonstrate our leadership while still meeting community needs

Key Objectives

1. Complete community needs assessment
2. With identified partners implement plan to optimize service delivery to the benefit of our residents.

Accomplishments

- In 2019, the County initiated the renovation of the County Administration building to include the Provincial Offences Administration Office and Community Services Department (Renfrew County Housing Corporation, Ontario Works and Child Care). Municipal Modernization funding in the amount of \$750,000 was used for this project. The project was completed in 2021. This renovation is generating \$466,473 in annual efficiency savings which are being used to repay all construction costs over a 7-year period. After that, Council will decide how to invest the ongoing savings.
- The Community Services office at Renfrew County Place was renovated in 2019 with the official opening in January 2020. This renovation provides one common counter for Renfrew and area residents to receive assistance from our Child Care and Early Years, Ontario Works, and Renfrew County Housing Corporation programs. These significant changes to create a common counter, an integrated workspace and a renewed collaborative and integrated workplace culture to better serve residents of Renfrew County were recognized in 2021 when the Community Service Department was awarded the Local Municipal Champion Award by the Ontario Municipal Social Service Association (OMSSA).
- Service Delivery Review was completed by StrategyCorp to review the services provided by the County of Renfrew, and later included a comprehensive review of the Planning Division.
- Service Delivery Review Non-Union Compensation Review completed by Gallagher Group.
- Council Compensation review was completed by Gallagher Group.
- In 2019 the Opeongo Non-Profit Housing Corporation portfolio was amalgamated into the Renfrew County Housing Corporation.

- In 2020, the County hired Re/fact Consulting to complete a Seniors' Housing Strategy. This comprehensive review of senior services is intended to assist in strategic decision making and policy development regarding seniors' housing options not limited to "bricks and mortar" and including: Assisted living; supportive housing; Long-Term Care (LTC) / Community Paramedic Partnership in the client's home/virtual care; and/or additional Long-Term Care Beds.
- On August 19, 2021, County Official Plan 31 was adopted, signaling an opportunity to take a "Made in Renfrew County" approach to planning decisions.
- Miramichi Lodge partnered with Algonquin College to bring a 'living classroom' for a Personal Support Worker program in the home which commenced in September 2022. Bonnechere Manor has participated in this program in the past as well, and has graduated two such classes to date with plans to continue a third class in the fall.
- Implementation of the Butterfly Approach Program at both Bonnechere Manor (Pinnacle North) and Miramichi Lodge (1A) with the goal to eventually have the program through the entire Homes. This project was put on hold due to the pressures of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Utilizing new funding provided by the Ministry of Long Term Care, Bonnechere Manor and Miramichi Lodge hired full time social workers to assist families and residents with a variety of social issues from pre-admission consultation with families to ease the transition to long term care the provision of support services throughout the palliation continuum.
- Over the course of the pandemic Bonnechere Manor and Miramichi Lodge staff and management have put forth extraordinary effort to mitigate COVID spread and untoward effects to residents. Innovative measures such as the standing up of COVID isolation unit at Miramichi Lodge were implemented early in the pandemic to reduce harm to residents at a time when they were most vulnerable. As has been the case throughout the pandemic, infection prevention and control measures are executed on best practices basis exceeding the required minimums. Both Homes now employ full-time infection control practitioners with funding from the Ministry of Long Term Care.
- Bonnechere Manor and Miramichi Lodge continue to expand direct hours of care provision toward the provincial goal to achieve 4 hours of direct

resident care per day. Ongoing recruitment remains a significant challenge in what is a highly competitive market for limited qualified candidates.

- Bonnechere Manor and Miramichi Lodge were awarded Canada's highest accreditation award - Exemplary status. The Homes made application to Accreditation Canada for joint accreditation and Bonnechere Manor and Miramichi Lodge are now registered with Accreditation Canada as 'County of Renfrew Long Term Care Homes' and are scheduled for the completion of the accreditation survey in 2023.
- New Tariff of Fees By-law for Applications made in respect of planning matters was passed excluding the provisions for general inquiry fees; Council requested that the provisions for general inquiry fees be reviewed as part of the 2023 budget deliberations.
- Over the last three years, EMS cost savings that demonstrate leadership while meeting community needs has resulted in:
 - Mobile COVID-19 testing and assessment in the community
 - Response to a call for assistance from Ontario Health East – development of pop-Up Drive-Thru Testing model
 - Surge response for COVID-19 testing and vaccinations
 - Development and implementation of a Palliative Care Program, in partnership with Community partners
 - Successful grant applications for additional defibrillators, and outdoor heated cabinets enabling placement of defibrillators and any other necessary emergency items available throughout communities on a 24/7 basis. There are 368 active and registered automatic external defibrillators within the County of Renfrew.
 - A Memorandum of Understanding between the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service and Arnprior Regional Health transferring operational responsibility for the Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC)
 - Service Agreements between Arnprior Regional Health and the Pembroke Regional Hospital and the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service for Paramedics to assist with overburdened Emergency Departments
 - Development of an alternative care path for the diversion of non-acute patients from emergency rooms to be cared for in their own homes

- Transition from COVID-19 testing clinics to Clinical Assessment Centers to continue the process of monitoring the transmission and contraction rates of the population
- In 2020 the Community Paramedic Palliative Care was introduced to incorporate a palliative care program to continue to meet community needs
- The opioid crisis reached epidemic levels and in 2021, the Naloxone Ontario Project was announced and Paramedics administered the injection when needed

Priority # 4: Technology Acceleration

Goal: Position the County of Renfrew so that our residents benefit from advances in technology and to ensure our residents and staff have fair, affordable and reasonable access to technology

Key Objectives

1. County of Renfrew is top of the list for EORN funding for mobile broadband
2. Lobby for secure broadband for first responders and government
3. County of Renfrew technology strategy in place.

Accomplishments

- During the Pandemic, the County utilized the Zoom platform to host all staff, committee and County Council meetings to provide a secure, economical and user-friendly solution to hold electronic meetings. Our POA also turned to remote audio courts during the pandemic and the presiding Justice of the Peace was complimentary of the County on organization of our process.
- In 2021 the County utilized \$75,000 from the Municipal Modernization Program Intake 2 Review Stream to fund a Digital Strategy. The Perry Consulting Group developed an Information Technology Digital Strategy by evaluating current use of digital business tools and identifying goals for the County including any gaps between the current state and desired future state. Efficiencies for both citizen and internal digital business functions were identified with an emphasis on digitization, automation, reduced duplication, and improved productivity. Additional funding from the Municipal Modernization Program Intake 2 Implementation Stream in the amount of \$312,000 has been allocated toward:
 - An agreement with Esri for the Small Local Government Enterprise License which will provide enhanced GIS/mapping for County and municipal staff (2022).
 - IT Network and hardware upgrades
 - Upgrades to the Administration Building Phone System to accommodate the addition of Community Services and POA staff.
 - Upgrades to the technology in Council Chambers that would now facilitate all standing committee and County Council meetings to be

live streamed and placed on the County's YouTube channel for residents to watch.

- Additional funding was received from the Municipal Modernization Program Intake 3 Implementation Stream in the amount of \$317,491 and has been allocated toward:
 - Human Resource Information System
 - IT network and hardware upgrades including new Firewalls and a new Storage Area Network (SAN)
 - A review of e-permitting for the purposes of land development is currently underway
- The Public Works and Engineering Department has completed installation of Auto Vehicle Locators (AVL) in all its units. This technology allows supervisor and staff to track movements of all PW&Eng equipment.
- The completion of the Road Weather Information System (RWIS) with the addition of cameras at both sites (CR512 and CR58) gives the patrol supervisors and the public (through Municipal511) the ability to view the onsite weather conditions at those two geographical areas.
- Renfrew County Paramedic Service was the first paramedic service in Canada to get approval from Transport Canada to use drones in medical emergencies.
- Through our efforts with EORN, Rogers won the procurement process to install cell communications towers throughout Ontario. There will be 25 upgraded and approximately 60 new towers in Renfrew County due to these efforts.
- Rogers Communications received approval to install communications towers at Renfrew County Place and county-owned forest property, the Ireland South Tract in the Township of Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan
- Through efforts of local municipal leaders, and various letters of support, Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) have been successful in many bids to bring fibre to households across the County.
- Residents have 24/7 access to the Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre which reduces the demand of 911 Paramedic responses and Emergency Departments, with appropriate level of care when they have any health concern including concerns related to COVID-19.

- Leveraging remote patient monitoring to monitor patients, including those who are COVID positive and determine where early intervention is needed
- Planning for the integration of a Point of Care Ultrasound Service (POCUS) rollout within the Community Paramedic Program.
- Leveraging provincial system to process and then upload to Ontario Laboratory Information System (OLIS) through Mobile Ordering Results Entry (MORE) system.
- Remote Patient Monitoring Program to support vulnerable patients who remain in their homes (approximately 140 patients). This technology monitors weight, blood pressure, oxygen levels and glucose measurement remotely.

Next Steps

In January of 2023, we anticipate starting the process to implement a new Strategic Plan and CAO/Clerk Mr. Craig Kelley will work with the management team and the new County Council who will be asked to review these goals and develop new goals for the County of Renfrew. It is anticipated that the new council will establish a 2023 – 2026 Strategic Plan in the 1st quarter of 2023.