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COUNTY OF RENFREW TRAILS STRATEGY



May 25, 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Linked Trail Strategy represents a shift in direction for the County of Renfrew. The Strategy includes two aspects:

- 1) County Trail Network (ownership and/or maintenance)
 - Rail Trails
 - Hardened Shoulders
 - County Forest Trails

- 2) Identification of Other Linkages to System of Trails (not owned or maintained by County)
 - Local Municipalities
 - Local Trail Groups
 - TransCanada Trail
 - Snowmobile Clubs

This Strategy is in reaction to an increase of usership, awareness, and demand for service by the residents of the County. In Renfrew County there are over 3,800 kilometres of trails. This includes but is not limited to over 1,200 kilometres of trails for such uses as all terrain vehicles, walking, cycling, hiking, snowmobiling, mountain biking, and cross-country skiing, including several routes designated as paddle routes and multi-use trails.

Trails provide health, economic, social and environmental benefits to people and communities. The County of Renfrew Linked Trails Strategy provides a vision for an organized trail system utilizing County Trails as a backbone to which local trails can connect. This Strategy is intended to provide action items that are the first steps in the process of implementing and achieving a co-ordinated trails system for the benefit of the region.

Planning a linked trail system for Renfrew County includes the following four aspects:

- 1) Rail Corridor Acquisition and Management
- 2) Active Transportation (hardened shoulder linkages)
- 3) County Forest Trails
- 4) Identification of Other Trails and Linkages

A successful linked trails system requires collaboration and partnerships with a variety of groups and stakeholders ranging from municipalities, landowners, trail groups/associations, provincial/federal government, local businesses and trail users. Local organizations and community groups are often the most important partnerships in a successful trail system. These groups are made up of volunteers who maintain and promote trails in their areas. There are

many examples of successful trail systems across the County that are organized and run by volunteers.

The County currently owns and maintains one trail known as the K&P Trail. The County recently finalized the purchase of the abandoned CP corridor for a multi-use trail. Together these lands will form the backbone to a regional trail system. Once the backbone is in place, opportunities to connect local trail systems to the regional network can be planned and put into action.

IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The following list is a summary of the recommendations to implement the action plan contained in the Linked Trail Strategy which include:

- a. That the K&P Management Advisory Committee structure not be changed;
 - i. That the Forestry and Trails Technician be responsible for providing administrative support to the committee.
- b. That a new trail management committee be created for the CP corridor;
 - i. That the Striking Committee establish an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of County Council members, and/or Local Municipal Council Members, and/or members of the public;
 - ii. Suggest that the new Ad Hoc Committee be called the “CP Management Advisory Committee”;
 - iii. That a Terms of Reference be established for the CP Management Advisory Committee and that the committee be given a mandate to promote and manage the CP corridor system;
 - iv. That the CP Management Advisory Committee undertake a public consultation process and to make recommendations to the County Development & Property Committee regarding the most appropriate uses of the corridor.
 - v. That the Forestry and Trails Technician be responsible for providing administrative support to the CP Management Advisory Committee;
 - vi. That at least one and not more than three of the CP Management Advisory Committee members sit as representatives on the “Co-Owners Committee” between the County of Renfrew, County of Lanark and the Township of Papineau-Cameron. The members of the Co-Owners Committee are to work together to the extent reasonably possible to achieve a consistent standard of construction, repair, maintenance and use along the CP corridor and to coordinate the use and operation of it.
 - vii. That the CP Management Advisory Committee work towards the creation of a trail management plan;

1. That a long-range budget be prepared for the creation, operation, and maintenance of the trail;
 2. That trail corridors and infrastructure be included in the County of Renfrew Asset Management Plan.
- c. That the Forestry and GIS Division continue to review trails on County Forest lands on a site by site basis and also through the review of the Forest Management Plan (FMP).
 - d. That the Public Works and Engineering Department continue to promote active transportation on County roads particularly where linkages between trail systems can be established.
 - e. That the County of Renfrew support the creation of a Trails association. The role of this association would be to work on a range of trail interests and management issues including collaboration with stakeholders from trail groups, landowners, local businesses, Renfrew County and District Health Unit, local municipalities, County of Renfrew, provincial associations and other associations of trail users.
 - i. That the Forestry and Trails Technician be responsible for providing administrative support to the trail association;
 - ii. That the association collaborate with municipalities both inside and outside the County of Renfrew on a variety of trail issues such as linkages, trailheads, promotion, and maintenance;
 - iii. That the Economic Development Division provide support to the association to develop a tourism related trail brand including a distinctive signage program;
 - iv. That the association would also contact the TransCanada Trail organization for the purposes of establishing an “Ontario Loop” to the TransCanada Trail;
 - f. That the Forestry and GIS Division undertake to complete a comprehensive trail inventory that includes a review of all existing trails, their conditions, and their suitability for a variety of trail uses and opportunities for improvement;
 - g. That the County of Renfrew Planning Division include land use policies for the integration of trail considerations into development review through the 5-year update to the County Official Plan;
 - h. That the County continue to facilitate discussions with representatives of CN Rail and three local municipalities (Whitewater Region, Laurentian Valley, City of Pembroke) regarding the future of the rail corridor.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Renfrew County is Ontario's largest county, covering over 7,650 square kilometres and comprising 17 municipalities. Located in eastern Ontario, the County of Renfrew stretches from the national capital region of Ottawa to the west, along the shores of the Ottawa River to the northern tip of Algonquin Park. Renfrew County had a population of 86,966 in 2011 according to Statistics Canada. Consisting of 12 Townships and 5 Towns, the County's population is projected to rise to approximately 102,000 by 2031.

Being the largest geographic County in Ontario, there is much diversity in the landscape. The County consists of urban areas, prime agricultural areas, forested areas, aggregate and mining resource areas, waterfront recreational areas, and rural areas. Renfrew County is an environment carved by four river systems: the historic Ottawa River, and flowing out of the Algonquin Highlands, the Petawawa, the Bonnechere, and the Madawaska Rivers. The landscape is flavoured with a history of first nations, exploration, settlement, forestry and agriculture that began more than 8,000 years ago, when paleo-Indian traders paddled the Ottawa River by canoe, part of the first cross-Canada transportation system. Champlain, a geographer, explorer, and colonizer, seeking the North Sea made a journey up the Ottawa River in 1613 which resulted in the first map of part of the Upper Ottawa River.

As sawmills and settlements opened up the interior of the Ottawa Valley in the 1850s, railways were extended into the Valley and a series of colonization roads were developed. The most significant of these was the Ottawa and Opeongo Road, better known as the Opeongo Line whose construction began in 1853. It followed a westward course in its climb from the Ottawa River to the Madawaska Highlands.

The spirit of adventure that attracted the pioneers remains. Today's "explorers" travel ancient canoe routes and the settlement, logging and rail routes of more recent times. Through the many initiatives over the years by trails and tourism organizations, publicly supported programs, and individual groups of trail enthusiasts, trail building continues. Many of these trails are on Crown land (which composes approximately 50% of the land base within Renfrew County) and municipal property. Local residents and visitors alike paddle, walk, hike, cycle, ski, ride on horseback, snowmobile, dog sled, and ATV to enjoy trails and waterways in every season of the year.

1.1 Trails in Ontario

According to the National Trails Coalition, Ontario is home to the second largest network of trails in Canada with over 80,000 kilometres spread out across the Province. In 2005 the

Province launched the Ontario Trails Strategy and is in the process of revisiting and updating that strategy. The strategy is grouped into five areas:

1. Improving collaboration among stakeholders;
2. Enhancing the sustainability of Ontario's trails;
3. Enhancing trail experience;
4. Educating Ontario citizens about trails; and
5. Fostering better health and a strong economy through trails (development).

In 2015 the Province of Ontario introduced Bill 100 called the *Supporting Ontario's Trails Act*. The Bill is currently referred to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly. According to the Environmental Registry, where proposed legislation is listed for consultation purposes, the proposed Bill would help to address a number of long-standing trail issues, including the need for a legislative mechanism to establish trail easements, clarifying liability and the standard of care required by not-for-profits and public organizations, and increasing allowable compensation for damage to property due to trespassing. It would also provide opportunities for enhanced trails tourism and the enhanced management, promotion and use of trails. The proposed Act would enhance the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry's ability to manage trails on Crown land by providing greater compliance and enforcement options, and by creating an offence for damage to Crown land and property.

1.2 County of Renfrew Trails Strategy Study

In 2007, a County of Renfrew Trails Strategy Study was produced. The study researched the benefits of trails, reviewed documents already produced by various groups and levels of government, and started an inventory of the existing trails and tourism-related infrastructure. The authors of the study met with stakeholders such as volunteers, trail groups, and trail users, held public meetings, and met with staff and public officials at both the County and local municipal levels during the preparation of the study. This study identified a number of economic and social advantages with the development of some type of centralized trails strategy in the County. Among the recommendations contained in the report was the timely purchase of available railway corridors, as these existing corridors could represent the backbone of a trail system.

The exercise of mapping the existing trails in Renfrew County showed that there are over 3,800 kilometres of trails throughout the County. This includes over 1,200 kilometres of trails for uses such as walking, cycling, hiking, mountain biking, and cross-country skiing, including several routes designated as paddle routes and multi-use trails. The rest are trails opened and maintained each winter for snowmobiling. The Trails Strategy Study included a quote made by a trail stakeholder at the final public workshop,

“We have the trails as evidenced by the trails maps, we have the ideas by considering all the ideas provided in the four workshops, and we have the people interested in trails by looking around the table tonight. What we need now is the political will that makes trails an important issue.”

The study provided the following vision and guiding principles for the development of this Trails Strategy.

The Vision

Renfrew County’s trail system enhances the health and prosperity of its residents. These essential assets provide opportunities for active living and meaningful ventures through a wide variety of trail experiences that connect people to each other and to the land. The residents of Renfrew County will treasure and care for this legacy, building on the past to provide for future generations.

The guiding principles included:

Leadership

Establish the County of Renfrew as a leader in trails among communities in Eastern Ontario

Essential Service

Develop a comprehensive trail system that is essential to creating a livable, dynamic, and economically vibrant County

Connected System

Protect and develop linear corridors through a wide variety of landscapes and terrain that is a continuous system and well connected to cultural, historic, recreational, and scenic destinations as well as places for food, shopping, and accommodations

Diversity and Accessibility

Provide a wide variety of high quality trail opportunities for all people and ensure access regardless of interest, age, gender, income, cultural background, or physical capabilities

Future Needs

Pursue all opportunities to provide trails in the towns and villages, the rural areas, through open spaces, and along the lakes and rivers that meet both current and future trail needs

Collaboration

Coordinate the planning, development, management, maintenance, promotion, and funding of trails by involving citizens, trail enthusiasts, businesses, and government representatives in all future initiatives for trails in the County

The 2007 study laid out a general direction for the Linked Trails Strategy. This Strategy is intended to guide the County through the process of implementing and achieving a coordinated trails system for the benefit of the region. The study was accepted by County Council but not adopted or implemented. It is proposed that these principles remain the basis of the Trails Strategy.

2.0 BENEFITS OF TRAILS

There continue to be many reasons to proceed with a Renfrew County Trails Strategy. Statistics Canada released a Health Profile for Renfrew County in 2013 which included the information:

56.9% of people (age 18+) are overweight or obese (Ontario average 52.6%)
21.7% of people (age 12+) have high blood pressure (Ontario average 17.6%)
182 (per 100,000 population) cancer deaths (Ontario average 159.1)
6.9% of people (age 12+) have diabetes (Ontario average 6.6%)
8.1 % of people (age 12+) have asthma (Ontario average 7.9%)

Trails provide health, economic, social and environmental benefits to people and communities. The 2007 Trails Strategy Study listed the benefits of trails and their relevance to the County of Renfrew. Additional details regarding the economic, health, and social benefits that trails can provide to the County and local municipalities are available in the 2007 County of Renfrew Trails Strategy Study. The 2007 Trails Strategy identified the following benefits:

2.1 Improved Health

- Trails support an active lifestyle that improves health;
- Trails appeal to all ages and can therefore provide physical activity opportunities for the widest range of people;
- Many trails are free to use, therefore providing affordable recreational opportunities;
- An increase in physical activity can save millions in health care spending in Ontario including the costs of medical care and sick leave, absenteeism in the workplace and health insurance claims;
- Improved health promotes longevity and independence of older adults thereby reducing the cost of healthcare;
- Physical activity promotes psychological well-being, pro-social behaviour, improved social cohesion, increased labour force activity and higher student achievement.

2.2 Strong Economies

- Trails attract tourists and create jobs, which puts money into the local economy;
- Trail users spend at local shops, restaurants, and accommodations, and on day trips and tours. This spending stimulates the economy and may lead to businesses expanding and new businesses opening;
- Trail construction and maintenance creates jobs;
- Properties near trails can have higher values and be easier to sell. MLS listings often cite proximity to trail systems as a selling point;
- Trails have potential to increase tax revenues;

- Companies cite availability of trails as a factor in their decision to relocate or establish headquarters;
- City mayors have credited trail construction for contributing to downtown revitalizations;
- The Ontario Trails Council estimates that trails contribute at least \$2 billion to the provincial economy annually.

2.3 Strong Communities

- Volunteers largely built Ontario’s trail system. People working together, volunteering their time, and sharing in meaningful activities are practices that create strong communities;
- Trails connect us physically to the places we live; they instill in us a sense of place, belonging and pride, which makes us care more about our surroundings;
- Trails link communities to each other thereby creating a sense of connection between communities in a region;
- Trails create opportunities to connect with others in our community;
- Trails are geographic and historical resources that can become focal points of civic pride;
- Trails help us learn about the history of the area in which they are located because they often follow historic routes. They provide a window into the past and help preserve important elements of it. There is a particularly great opportunity in the County of Renfrew to experience these benefits due to the area’s rich cultural history.

2.4 Healthy Environments

- Trails lead through incredibly varied landscapes, thereby instilling in their users an appreciation of nature and a concern for its conservation;
- Rivers, streams and lakes that are buffered by adjacent trails are protected against pollution run-off;
- Trails adjacent to waterways can serve as flood plains and absorb excess water during times of flooding, thereby mitigating damage caused by floods;
- Many trails are lined with plants that create oxygen, filter out air pollutants and generally improve air quality;
- Sensitive environmental features may be protected by keeping the impacts of human use confined to designated areas.

2.5 County of Renfrew Strategic Plan

In 2013 the County of Renfrew adopted a strategic plan to serve as a guide for present and future investment in terms of physical infrastructure and social and community development and the enhancement of the community. The strategic plan is aligned to three key themes: community well-being, economic opportunities, and community sustainability/viability. Seven priority strategies were developed to be dealt with before all others. Included in the seven were the priorities to develop a linked trail system and to promote active transportation.

Under the community well-being theme, one of the strategies is to improve the linking of communities by upgrading roads, using abandoned rail beds and eliminating barriers to active transportation as a way of promoting healthier activity. One of the five strategies for creating economic opportunities is the creation of a linked trail system throughout the County of Renfrew. The strategic plan identified several actions required to achieve a linked trail system including:

- Confirm vision with both public and private sector stakeholders; evaluate best practices and what has worked elsewhere
- Engage CP in the acquisition of the discontinued rail corridor
- Operationalize the ongoing management of the rail corridor
- Integrate the discontinued line into existing strategies
- Undertake municipal and public consultations to determine use and management objectives

3.0 COUNTY OF RENFREW TRAIL STRATEGY

This Trail Strategy represents a shift in direction for the County of Renfrew. The Strategy includes two aspects:

- 1) County Trail Network (ownership and/or maintenance)
 - Rail Trails
 - Hardened Shoulders
 - County Forest Trails

- 2) Identification of Other Linkages to System of Trails (not owned or maintained by County)
 - Local Municipalities
 - Local Trail Groups (i.e. skiing, cycling, hiking)
 - TransCanada Trail
 - Snowmobile Clubs
 - Utility Corridors

Figure 1 provides an illustrated concept of a linked trail system. The County network would consist of the rail trail, hardened shoulder and County Forest trails. The linked trail system would be created by connecting other local trails and destinations (i.e. municipal recreation

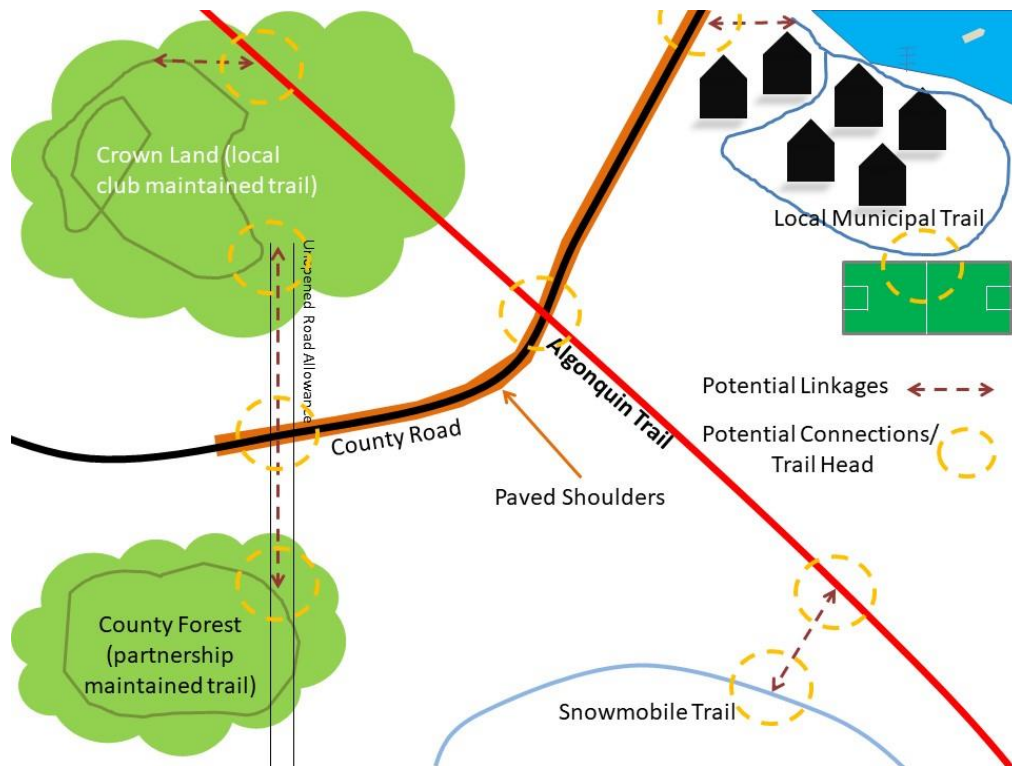


Figure 1 - Conceptual Lined Trail System

facilities, shopping areas, schools) with each other and the County network where possible. Due to constraints (i.e. financial, physical location) it is recognized that it is not feasible to link all trails together.

Despite the high potential for the development of a trails system, and the resulting social and economic advantages, there has been little coordinated effort to capitalize on the existing trails and natural resources. Renfrew County is set up as a two-tier system of local government. Upper tier municipalities often co-ordinate service delivery between municipalities in their area or provide area-wide services. In many cases, services are assigned by legislation to upper or lower tiers either exclusively or non-exclusively. In some cases responsibility can be shared by both levels of local government. Both upper tier and local municipalities, for example, can provide parks and other recreational facilities. While the local municipalities are responsible for providing the majority of recreational facilities, trails in particular benefit from planning at a regional scale. Linking trail networks together and developing connections to them will encourage the use of the trails within the County for recreational and tourist activities and will result in a better product for both residents and tourists.

Planning a linked trail network for Renfrew County includes the following four aspects:

RAIL CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT AND ACQUISITION

- Ongoing management of the K&P Trail
- Establishment and implementation of a trail management plan for the acquired CP corridor

TRAILS SITUATED ON RENFREW COUNTY FOREST PROPERTIES

- Development of trails
- Promotion and signage
- Development of long term partnerships (i.e. Beachburg Off-Road Cycling Association – BORCA)
- Health Promotion

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

- Paved or hardened shoulders and signage. The County of Renfrew will consult with local municipalities and other groups or organizations to determine priority linkages.
- Health promotion

IDENTIFICATION OF OTHER LINKAGES

- Identify local municipal trails and linkages
- Identify other recreational trails (ATV, snowmobile, hiking, etc)
- Identify linkages to trail systems outside of the County

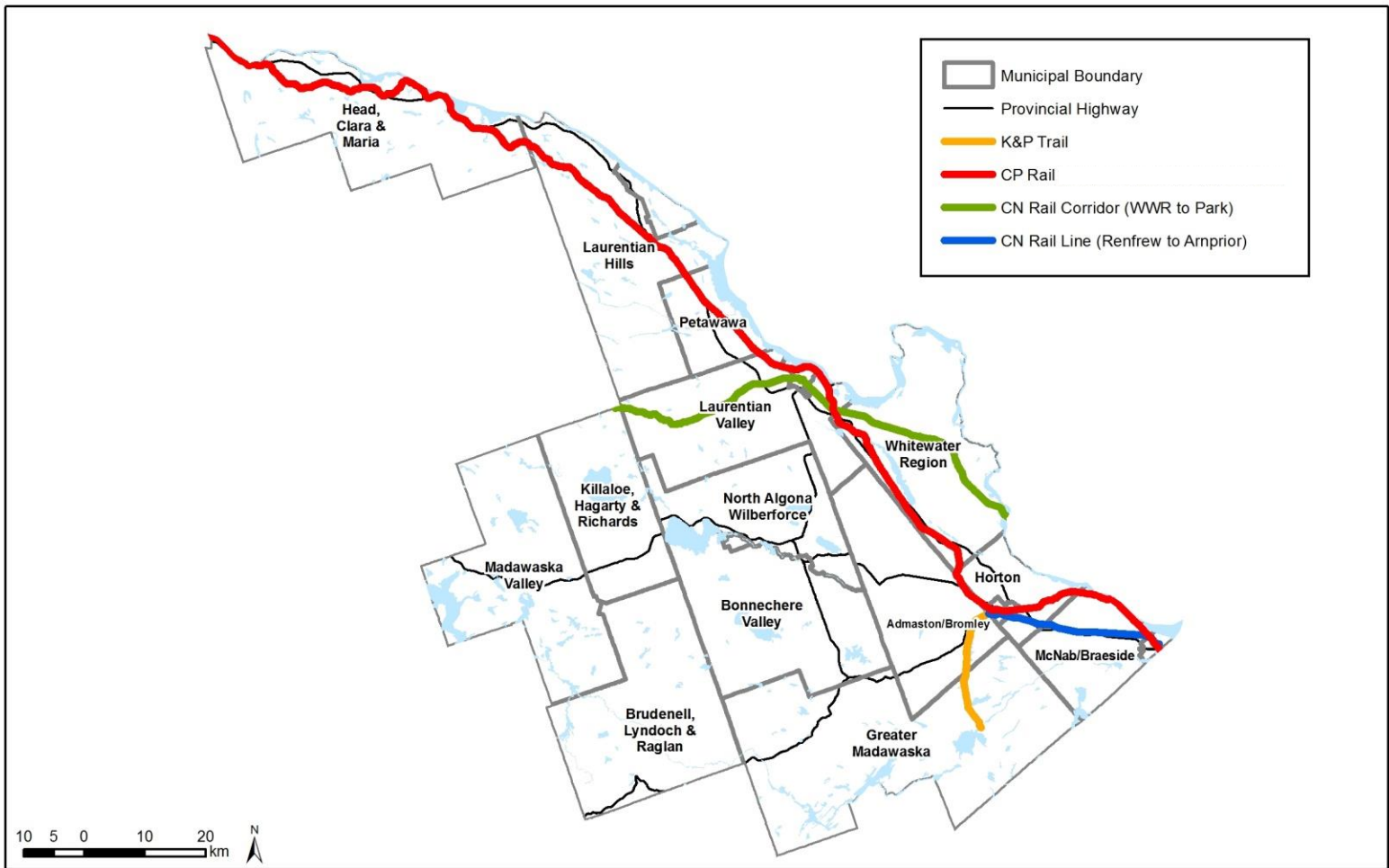


Figure 2 - Rail Corridors (existing K&P Trail and recently purchased CP)

4.0 RAIL TO TRAIL

County land use policy recognizes the importance of abandoned rail corridors as future utility/transportation/multi-use recreation corridors and states that the County of Renfrew shall purchase future surplus abandoned railway rights-of-way as they become available. The approved policy (by resolution in 1997) of the County of Renfrew pertaining to abandoned rail corridors is:

The County of Renfrew shall purchase future surplus abandoned railway rights-of-way as they become available, from time-to-time, for use as future transportation and utility corridors. In order to implement this policy, County Council shall seek to enter into an agreement with the owners of railway rights-of-way in Renfrew County to secure the opportunities to acquire surplus abandoned rights-of-way when such rights-of-way become available for acquisition by the County of Renfrew. Individual agreements will define in greater detail the location of lands to be made available for acquisition.

The vision for the County of Renfrew trails is to utilize abandoned corridors as the backbone of the system, and then work with partnerships to plan and create linkages to other existing trails networks and destinations.

One of the most challenging functions of trail creation is the acquisition phase. Abandoned rail lines provide ideal opportunities for public bodies to acquire long stretches of uninterrupted corridors. Instead of negotiating land deals with multiple property owners in an effort to achieve contiguous routes, the purchase of a rail corridor can provide the County with significantly long stretches of contiguous right-of-way, running through multiple local municipalities, by negotiating with one land owner. If not purchased by a public body, these rights-of-way can be parceled out to adjacent land owners resulting in a break in the corridor and limiting the future usefulness of the remaining lands to contribute to a network. Achieving a connecting link around a break in the corridor can be time consuming, costly, and sometimes not even possible. Once a rail corridor is lost it is gone forever, along with any future opportunities the corridor may have provided.

The County strategy, to purchase these corridors as they become available, ensures that the corridor will be protected for the long-term benefit to the residents of Renfrew County. Once the corridor is acquired, a detailed management plan can be established. It should be noted that rail companies also prefer selling the corridor as a complete unit as opposed to selling small multiple sections which expends additional time and money. It is recognized that not all rail corridors should necessarily become part of a County Trail system. There are some situations where it is more appropriate for an organization or a local municipality to acquire the corridor which has been done in the municipalities of Horton and McNab/Braeside.

Rail trails are made possible largely because many rail corridors are sold and abandoned as the rail industry undergoes consolidation and/or short line railway companies cease operation. Generally, railroad routes make outstanding four season trails. They traverse every environment, from urban, to suburban, to rural, including farmland, river valleys, wetland, forests and lake shores. Often these rights-of-way will connect several of these different environments and communities within a short stretch.

Rail corridors are generally flat or have gentle grades making them ideal for multiple uses, especially for persons who utilize assistance devices such as walkers, wheelchairs or motorized scooters. In addition, as a multi-use trail, it can also be used during the winter months for snowshoeing, cross country skiing, dog-sledding, snowmobiling, and other winter activities.

Throughout Ontario numerous abandoned railway and other corridors have been converted to recreation corridors. Many of these projects have developed with the assistance of federal and/or provincial funding through programs such as the Trillium Foundation.

The County owns and maintains one rail trail which is known as the K&P Trail. The County recently purchased a portion of the 296 kilometres Canadian Pacific (CP) Rail corridor.

4.1 K&P Trail – Calabogie to Renfrew

The K&P was chartered in 1871 and took 13 years to build with the 180 kilometres of main line and spurs being completed from Kingston to Renfrew in 1884. The promoters of the railway wanted to access the vast resources of pine and minerals available in the area between Kingston and Pembroke and have a link to the American market via Kingston and Lake Ontario. By the time the K&P reached Renfrew in 1884, the Central Canada Railway had built a line to Pembroke and the K&P never went further than Renfrew. The location of the County owned portion of the K&P is illustrated in Figure 3.

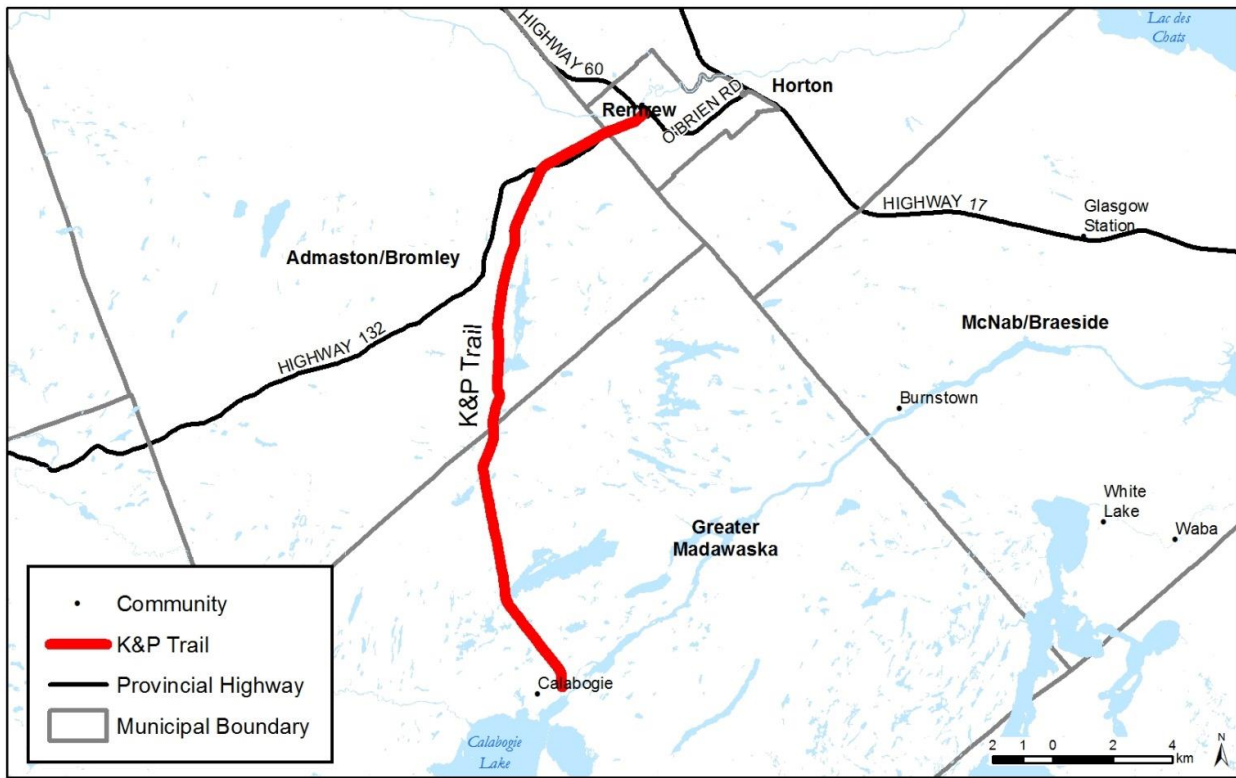


Figure 3 - K&P Trail

The K&P corridor was abandoned in the early 1970s and the rails and ties were removed. Although other portions of the corridor were purchased by public agencies or private companies (e.g. Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority, Bell Canada), the 21 kilometres stretch from Calabogie to Renfrew remained in the ownership of the Canadian Pacific Railway until purchased in 2001 by the County of Renfrew.

Subsequent to the purchase of the corridor, the County of Renfrew established the K&P Management Advisory Committee (composed of elected officials and lay persons) to undertake a public consultation process and to make recommendations to the County Development & Property Committee regarding the most appropriate uses of the corridor. The Advisory Committee held meetings, met with the public, trail users, adjacent property owners, and stakeholders which resulted in the creation of a management plan for the corridor. The first recommendation of the committee was:

That the most appropriate use of the K&P Corridor between Calabogie and Renfrew is a multi-use recreation corridor. The potential social, economic and environmental benefits are significant and the concerns raised can be addressed through the proper management of the corridor.

Several management issues were discussed at public meetings which resulted in further recommendations by the K&P Management Advisory Committee.

HUNTING ALONG THE CORRIDOR

Hunting was raised as a public safety issue and several letters were received from abutting property owners who were concerned about the discharge of firearms from the corridor. It was found that hunting on the corridor is not considered acceptable, as it is simply not compatible with trail uses. Through permitted trail use, hunters may be able to use the trail to access hunting areas on public or private lands. The County requested the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and the Ontario Provincial Police to patrol the corridor to apply the provincial and federal laws related to firearms and hunting. Notices to this effect were placed in local newspapers and feedback from abutting property owners indicates that the discharge of firearms along the corridor has been significantly reduced.

VEHICULAR ACCESS TO THE CORRIDOR

Subsequent to the removal of the ties and rails in the early 1970's, the corridor had been open to vehicular traffic. Vehicles on the corridor have resulted in garbage dumping, physical damage to the traveled portion of the corridor, and increased hunting along the corridor. Abutting property owners have also indicated that the corridor has been used as an unpatrolled access route from which properties may be accessed by unauthorized persons. Members of the public indicated that the corridor is used to access bush lots, to access several cottages on Norway Lake, for farm crossing and to access hunting and fishing lands. For a number of years, the corridor has been used during the winter months as a snowmobile trail.

The K&P Management Advisory Committee recommended that through proper signage, gates and/or bollards and permission, the existing accesses to the corridor which are absolutely necessary can be maintained. However, the K&P corridor is not a private nor public road and no further uses/buildings requiring access over the K&P corridor should be permitted.

LONG-TERM MAINTENANCE

Maintenance costs include maintenance of the physical condition of the traveled portion of the corridor, drainage, brushing, fencing, animal control, signage, and barriers. To keep costs as low as possible, the County has worked with the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC), the local snowmobile clubs, local municipalities, the County Public Works and Engineering Department, and Ontario Power Generation. Several abutting property owners and volunteers have been active in maintaining portions of the corridor.

Although most of the corridor passes through forested lands, lands abutting parts of the corridor are used for agricultural purposes. In these areas, fencing is a concern of abutting property owners. Fencing issues are resolved through the K&P Management Advisory Committee on a site specific basis in cooperation with the property owner, the local municipality, and user and community groups.

LIABILITY AND SAFETY

Liability for the trail is covered under the general County of Renfrew insurance plan. To reduce the County's exposure to liability and maximize public safety, a comprehensive signage program was implemented. Signs are needed to identify appropriate uses, warnings of possible hazards and trail access and crossings. A trail inspection program was implemented so that hazards can be quickly identified and signed, or rectified accordingly.

IMPLEMENTATION

The K&P corridor is implemented through the management plan under the direction of the K&P Management Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee continues to deal with issues as they arise and require attention. A policy manual was developed to manage foreseeable issues such as permitted uses, encroachments, accesses, crossings, fencing, safety, drainage, weed and brush control, environment, costs, and administration.

4.2 Canadian Pacific (CP) Corridor

This abandoned rail corridor extends between Mile Marker 1.4 on the Chalk River Line outside the Town of Smiths Falls, and continues northwest through the County of Renfrew and ends in the Town of Mattawa on the North Bay Line at Mile Marker 70.0. The corridor has a total length of 184 miles (296 kilometres) of linear real estate. It is approximately 2,447 acres (990 ha) in size, with an average width of 90± feet (27 m). The corridor is illustrated in Figure 4.

Years ago, the Ottawa Valley Railway (OVR) began operating a long-term lease on the line from Smiths Falls to Sudbury owned by CP. In 1999, RailAmerica's Canadian subsidiary, RailLink, took over the OVR for its short-line service to such customers as Garrison Petawawa and the pulp and paper industry. In 2009, CP ceased using the OVR for its eastbound rail cargo, opting instead to rely exclusively on its main line through Toronto. As a result, car loads dropped dramatically from over 4,000 in December 2008 to under 1,000 in December of 2009.

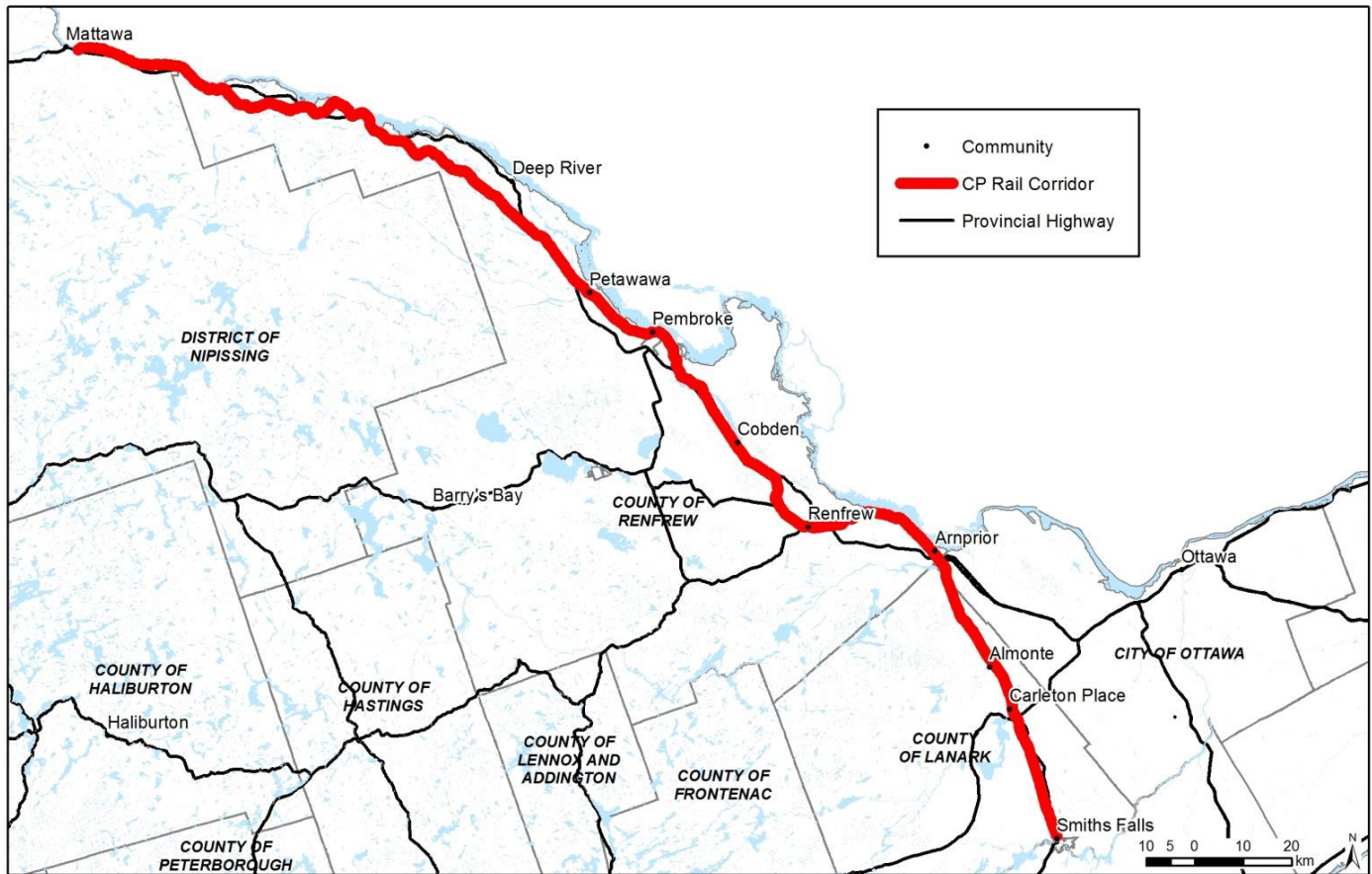


Figure 4 – CP Corridor Smith Falls to Mattawa

On January 5, 2010, CP advised stakeholders, including local governments, of its intent to discontinue and sell the line. Advertisements were published in February 2010, after which municipalities aggressively lobbied federal and provincial governments and OC Transpo for assistance in buying the rail line to preserve the infrastructure. In 2007, the County of Renfrew established a CP Corridor Committee with a mandate to move forward and negotiate the purchase of the abandoned corridor. A Project team (consisting of the Director of Development and Property, representatives from Public Works and the CAO as required) was created to support the CP Corridor Committee and make recommendations. For the purpose of discussions relating to areas outside of Renfrew County, this team also included representatives from County of Lanark and the Township of Papineau-Cameron. The negotiations by the Corridor Committee resulted in a successful purchase of the CP corridor in April of 2016.

The corridor extends through four upper-tier municipal governments and one single-tier: County of Renfrew (69.3%), County of Lanark (19.3%), Township of Papineau-Cameron (8.3%), City of Pembroke (1.6%), City of Ottawa (1.4%). The corridor length within the County of Renfrew (see Figure 5) is approximately 214 kilometres.

Below is a summary of the length of the corridor within the local municipalities:

- Arnprior = 3 km
- McNab/Braeside = 15 km
- Renfrew = 6 km
- Horton = 13 km
- Admaston/Bromley = 6 km
- Whitewater Region = 35 km
- Laurentian Valley = 13 km
- Petawawa = 18 km
- Laurentian Hills = 35 km
- Head, Clara & Maria = 65 km

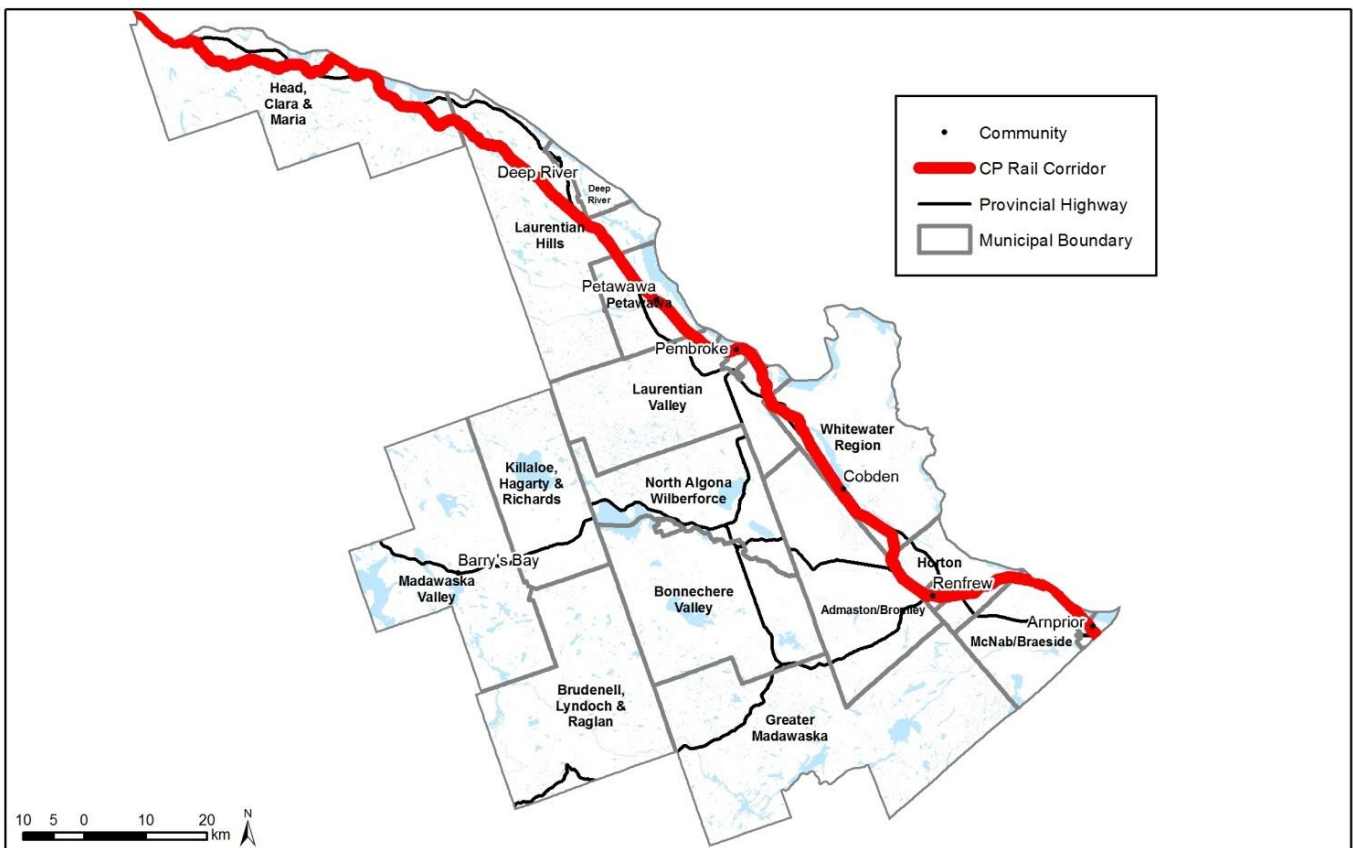


Figure 5 – CP Corridor within County of Renfrew

The CP corridor can become the central component of a linked trail system. It largely mirrors the main transportation route through the County (from Ottawa to North Bay) roughly parallel to Highway 17. The vision for the CP corridor would be similar to the K&P Trail. The K&P Trail has provided a solid model for usage and management structure. A recommendation of this report is to follow the K&P Management Advisory Committee example and apply it to a new CP Management Advisory Committee. The future CP corridor is the key element for the backbone

to a trail system. The CP multi-use trail would be the location for nodes and connections to other trails and destinations located in the County and beyond. The primary users of the CP corridor are anticipated to be:

- Spring/Summer/Fall
 - Pedestrian (walking/hiking/running)
 - Biking
 - Off-road motor vehicle
 - Equestrian
- Winter
 - Snowshoeing
 - Cross-country skiing
 - Snowmobiling

4.3 Canadian National (CN) Rail Corridor

The County was made aware in 2007 that this corridor (approximately 30 miles between the City of Pembroke and Algonquin Park) was available and a proposal was made to CN Rail to have the corridor transferred to the County in return for a charitable donation receipt based on the appraised value of the land. A Gifting Agreement was created and reviewed by the County's legal counsel but two issues delayed the implementation of the Agreement:

1. The environmental condition of the property and the release of reports by CN Rail to the County; and
2. Title issues.

These two items were of enough concern to the County that the Agreement was allowed to lapse.

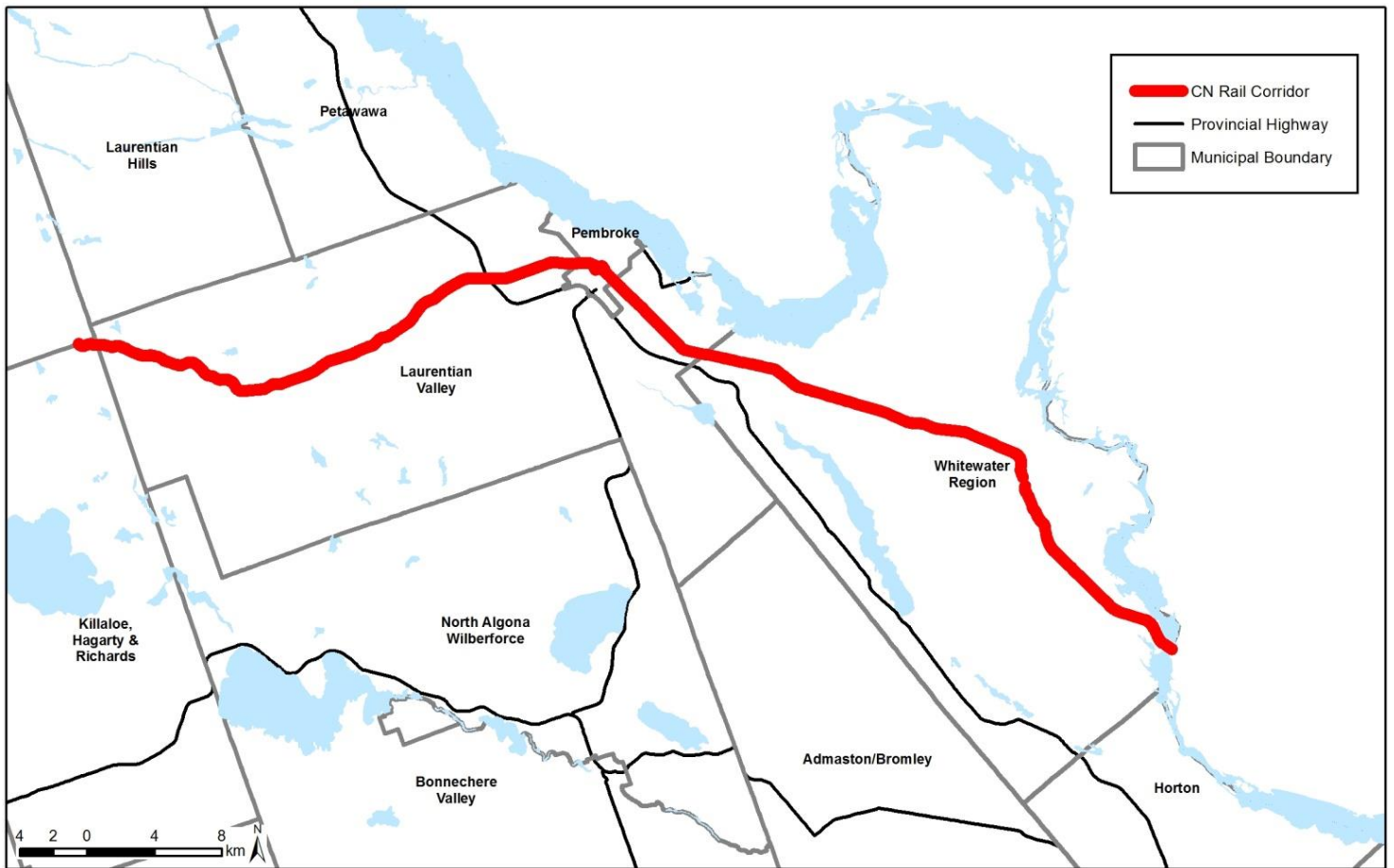


Figure 6 - CN Rail Corridor

CN Rail has re-engaged the local municipalities in a discussion regarding the intentions to acquire the abandoned CN Rail corridor between Pembroke and the Algonquin Park boundary. The County is providing a supporting role to facilitate discussions between the municipalities and CN Rail.

In addition to the CN Rail corridor from Pembroke to Algonquin Park, there is an additional corridor leading from Pembroke through Laurentian Valley and Whitewater Region to Quebec. Figure 6 illustrates the portion that could potentially be acquired. The current direction from County Council is that County staff participates in a supporting role to the local municipalities and the City of Pembroke in discussions with CN Rail regarding the potential acquisition and the use of the CN Rail corridor.

5.0 COUNTY FOREST TRAILS

The Renfrew County Forest (RCF) land base of 6,427 hectares represents about 0.8% of the total land in the County, or 1.4% of the total private land in the County. The County of Renfrew does not presently construct or maintain any trails on RCF and does not invite public use of existing trails. However, all RCF tracts have existing networks of logging roads and skid trails, both old and new. To various extents, the public has used these corridors for recreational pursuits. For harvest operations and property access, logging companies and local residents have used existing roads under the auspices of an Access Agreement. However, without the knowledge of or approval from the County of Renfrew, hunters, trappers, hikers and others have cleared many trails for ATVs, walking, skiing or other activities. The locations of the County Forest Tracts are illustrated in Figure 7.

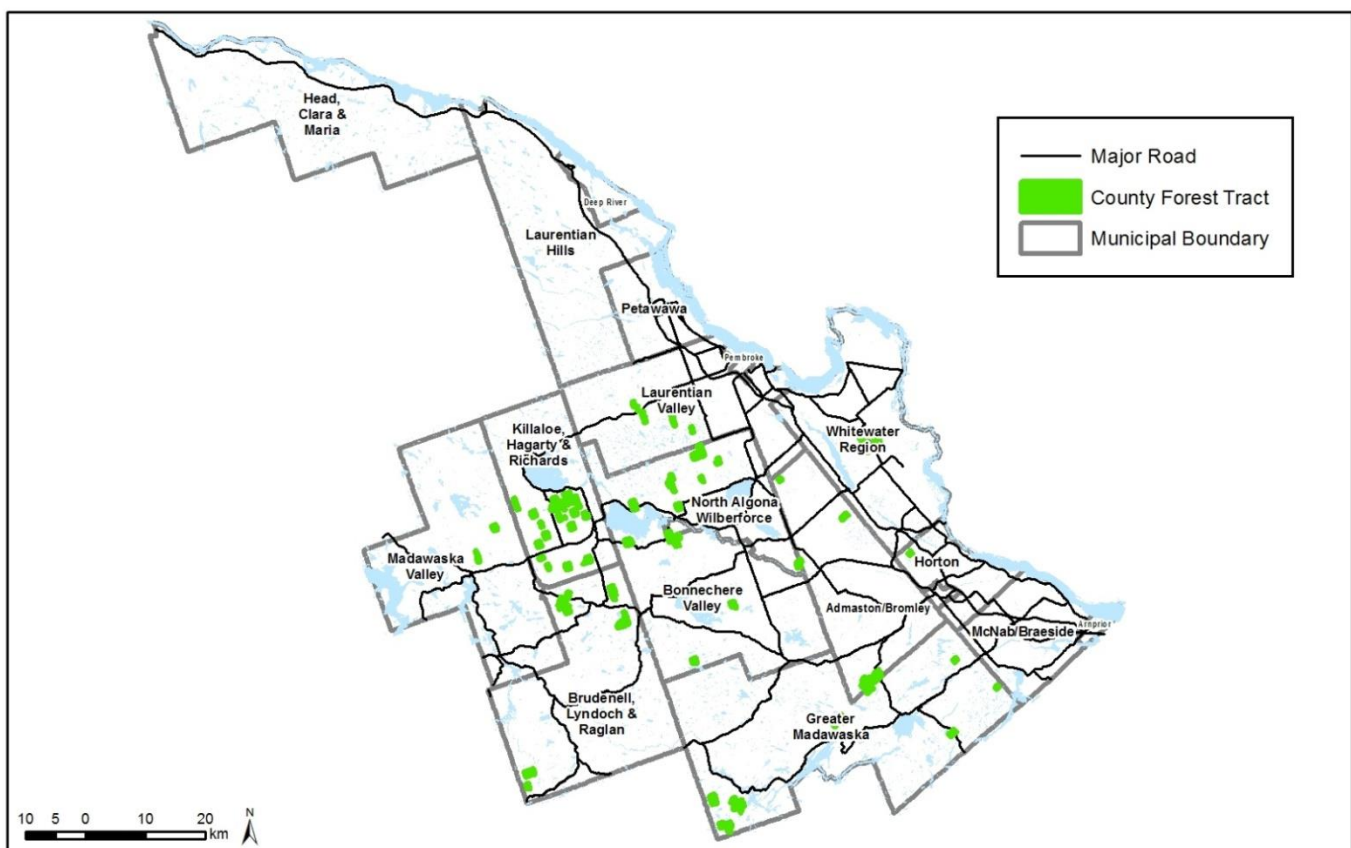


Figure 7 - County Forest Tracts

Presently, the County of Renfrew does not maintain or support the use of these trails. Despite the lack of maintenance, the trails continue to be used by members of the public. When County Forests were managed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, there was an interpretive trail complex built and maintained by the Ministry at the Beachburg Tract.

Provided recreational users have consideration for forest management objectives and the needs of other forest users, the following activities are examples of permitted recreation within the RCF:

- Cross-country skiing
- Dog sledding
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Nature study and appreciation
- Orienteering
- Snowshoeing
- Snowmobiling
- ATVing

SNOWMOBILING

Snowmobiling is a well-organized and regulated sport in the Province of Ontario and has spin-off economic benefits to the County of Renfrew, particularly in the tourism trade. Within RCF, the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) maintains several trails over two OFSC Districts.

Club members ensure that trails are well kept and maintain signage. Trail permits are required by the OFSC. Furthermore, snowmobile clubs and the Ontario Provincial Police patrol the trails.

County of Renfrew Forestry staff has good communication with the clubs and can easily address concerns, such as rerouting trails, when winter harvesting activities are planned. As snowmobiling is restricted to the winter months when other recreational uses are at a minimum, there is little potential for conflict with other County Forest users. Provided that Land Use Permission Agreements are in effect between the County and the snowmobile club, snowmobiling will be permitted on designated OFSC trails within RCF. With the consent of County of Renfrew Forestry staff, trails may be expanded or re-routed, provided they do not negatively affect forest management goals or other forest values.

MOUNTAIN BIKING

Mountain biking is a relatively low-impact use of RCF. It is increasing in popularity, particularly in County Forests that are close to developed areas. Generally, mountain biking has minimal impact on soils and vegetation. However, there is a low potential for site degradation and conflict with other users. Mountain biking is a permitted activity within RCF however; construction of new trails is prohibited unless authorized through a Land Use Permission

Agreement. Furthermore, organized groups require Land Use Permission Agreements when conducting activities within RCF.

OFF-ROAD MOTOR VEHICLE

For the purpose of this plan, an off-road motor vehicle (ORMV) is defined as any motorized vehicle, except snowmobiles, designed for off-road use that has a maximum gross vehicle weight of 400 kg. This includes all terrain vehicles (ATVs) and motorcycles.

ORMV numbers are increasing dramatically province-wide and more ORMVs are frequently using Renfrew County properties for recreational use. However, unregulated and unrestricted use of ORMVs has resulted in problems in many jurisdictions. Trespassing, conflicts with other forest users and damage to the environment have resulted in complaints to County of Renfrew Forestry personnel. Nevertheless, most ORMV users are respectful of the forest and other users. Greater ORMV usage can be linked to expanded tourism opportunities, such as ORMV tours. ORMV restriction would have a negative impact on hunters, trappers, tourism operators and occasional recreational users.

ORMV use is permitted within RCF. However, construction of new trails, installation of water crossings or upgrading of existing trails is prohibited unless authorized through a Land Use Permission Agreement. Furthermore, organized groups require Land Use Permission Agreements when conducting activities within RCF. At the discretion of County of Renfrew staff, ORMVs may be prohibited in some areas if:

- environmental damage is occurring;
- conflict with other forest users is occurring.

6.0 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Active Transportation is defined as any human powered (i.e., non-motorized) mode of transportation for commuter (purposeful) and recreational purposes. It involves movement from one destination to another for work, childcare, school, the store, community or neighbourhood destinations and recreation. It includes walking, running, cycling, in-line skating, skateboarding, non-motorized wheel chairing, skating, skiing, and canoeing/kayaking. Walking and cycling are the most common forms and can be combined with other modes. The County prepared an Active Transportation Strategy in 2012 that identifies the importance of links and extensions of existing bikeways, trails, sidewalks and roads. It also discusses the creation of new walking and cycling connections throughout and between communities.

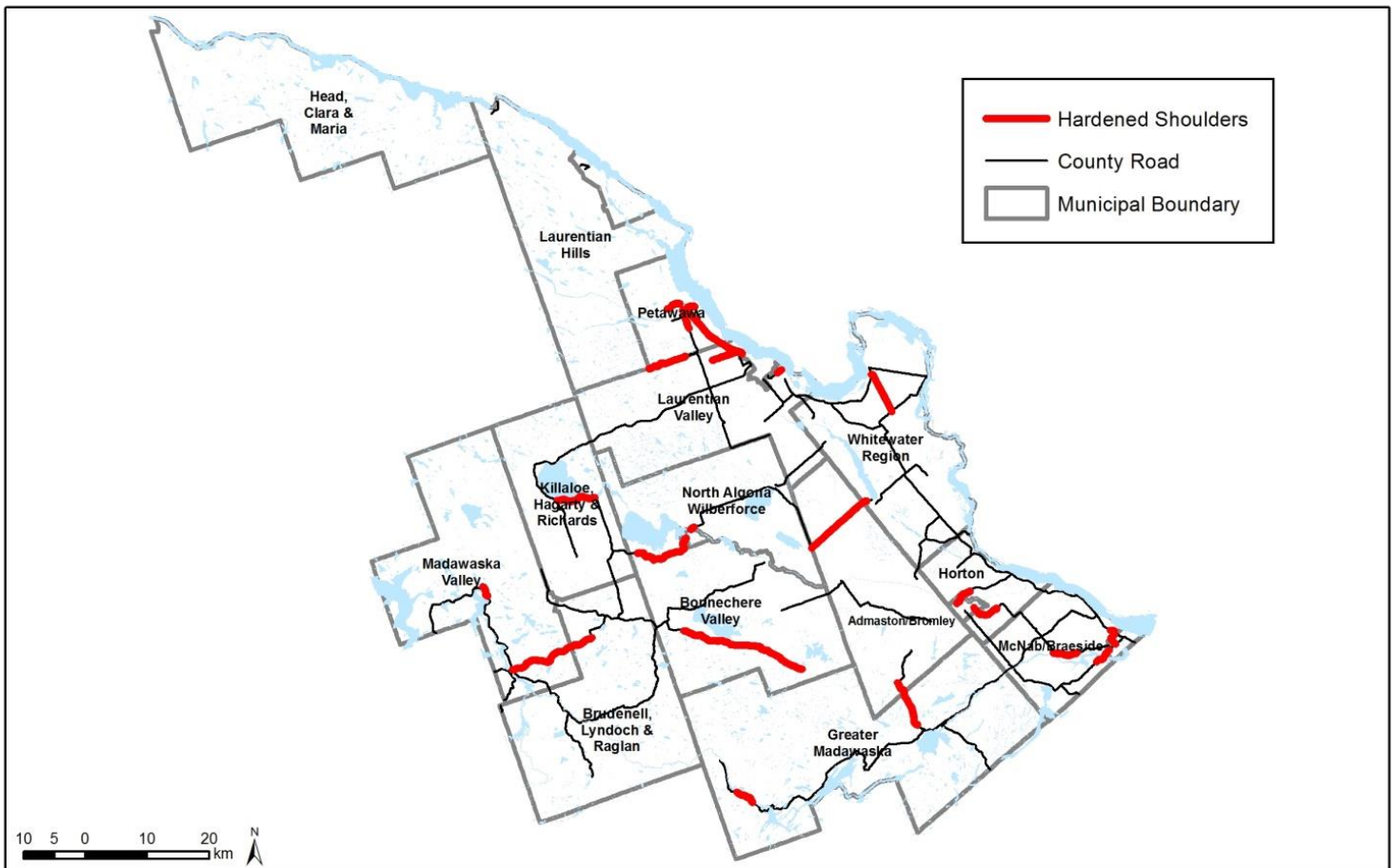


Figure 8 - Active Transportation - Existing Hardened Shoulders

There are approximately 810 kilometres of arterial roads currently under the County's jurisdiction. This infrastructure is designed and constructed to provide critical linkages to various communities within the County. In view of increasing public demand for active

transportation, there is an opportunity to optimize the use of the County’s road network by developing and implementing a proactive Active Transportation Strategy that integrates with the Public Works and Engineering Department’s 10 year capital program. The Active Transportation Strategy for the County of Renfrew proposes to utilize hardened shoulders that can be used for active transportation purposes such as biking and walking. The plans for hardening shoulders should be coordinated with the trails plan to provide safer linkages between trail systems along County corridors. Existing hardened shoulders are illustrated in Figure 8.

7.0 IDENTIFICATION OF OTHER LINKAGES

The value of trails goes beyond purely recreational benefits. Trails are now viewed as providing not only leisure and health benefits but also social, economic and environmental benefits for individuals and the community. The provision of a trail is a start. Linking trail networks together and developing connections will maximize the benefits that trails provide. Connecting the trail systems together will provide greater options, longer routes, different destinations (i.e. shopping, work, recreation), and overall will encourage the use of the trails. The result will be a better product for both residents and tourists. The County Trail network mainly consists of rail trails, hardened shoulders under the Active Transportation Strategy and natural trails on the County Forest properties.

The County of Renfrew Trail Strategy will focus on providing a regional connection to a trail system utilizing acquired rail corridors as a backbone to link up with local trails, recreation facilities, downtowns, waterfront areas, communities, landscape features (such as waterfalls or scenic lookouts) and other destinations as identified through consultation with the local municipalities and members of the public. Where there are trails or destinations identified that do not directly abut a regional trail system, the County can investigate whether the area would benefit from paved or hardened shoulders on a County Road to provide a safer linkage of active transportation activities. This Trails Strategy should be presented to each of the County's 17 municipalities (and the City of Pembroke) with dialogues on working together to ensure a consistent approach in acquiring, improving and maintaining a shared trail system. In addition to managing a regional trails system the County can assist local municipalities (when requested) with the following:

- Compiling a trail inventory;
 - This can include a review of existing trails, and conditions;
 - Suitability for a variety of uses (whether it is a bike trail, walking, skiing, multi-use) and accessibility rating; and
 - Opportunities for linkages.
- Map the geographic landscape, cultural or natural heritage, and economic assets of the County to identify new trail opportunities;
- Manage a trails mapping database;
 - The County would not necessarily “own” the data, rather the County would be a depository for all current mapping data;
 - Municipalities and trail groups would continue to generate trail data information. The data could then be readily accessed for production of maps and brochures to suit specific trail or trail user needs.

- Propose a tourism brand to increase awareness and interest of local residents and tourists in the trail experience and assist in the promotion of trails;
- Design a distinctive signage system and other graphic communication to identify trailheads, nodes, destinations, accessibility, and to promote/educate the public on the safe and appropriate use of trails;
- Identify a design package for trail improvements such as parking areas, crossings, landscaping, and amenity areas;
- Suggest tourism opportunities and products for further development.

Several County of Renfrew departments are required to be involved in implementing and maintaining a regional trail network including, Development and Property, Public Works and Engineering, and Emergency Services. The County will have to work collaboratively with many stakeholders to have a successful linked trail system. The stakeholders include volunteers, local municipalities, local businesses, public health unit, and other trail organizations (i.e. snowmobile/ATV clubs, cycling associations).

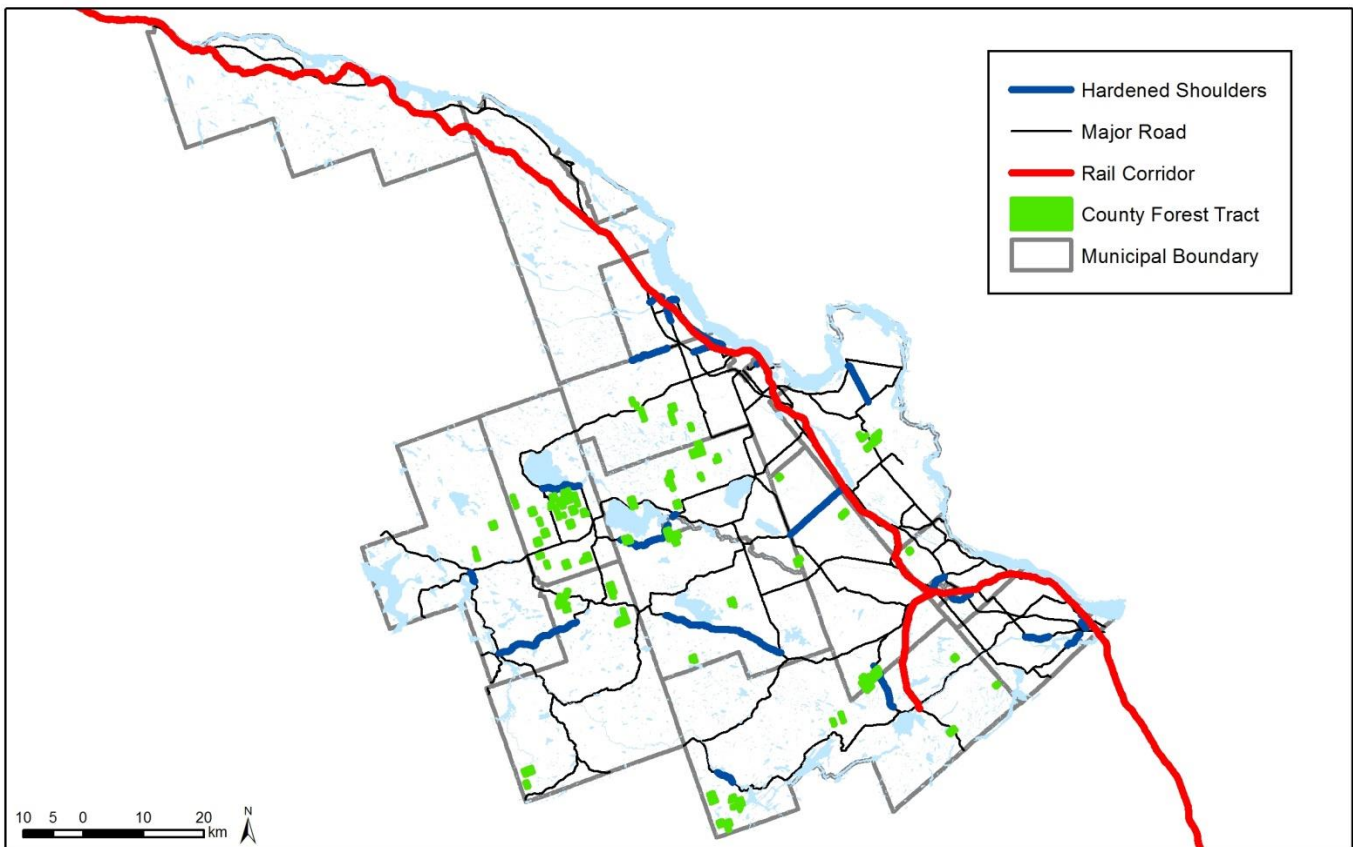


Figure 9 - County Network of Trails

Other potential lands to be utilized as trails include Hydro One power corridors or Enbridge pipeline corridors and unopened road allowances. As discussed in the active transportation section, hardened shoulders along roads can also be utilized to improve connections between trail systems.

7.1 Partnerships

Partnerships and collaboration with stakeholders are fundamental to a successful linked trail system. There are a variety of groups and organizations that might be able to participate in a trail system such as:

- Local Municipalities
- Non-government organizations
- Utilities
- Higher level Government (Provincial/Federal)
- Algonquin First Nation
- TransCanada Trail

Working, cooperating with each other, pooling resources and linking individual trails to a system of trails will be mutually beneficial, will enhance the community, help the economy and improve health of both the residents of Renfrew County and guests.

LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES

The first and most important partnership is the local municipalities. As discussed earlier in this report, the local municipalities are responsible for providing the majority of recreational facilities. They have boots-on-the-ground knowledge of their municipality and the needs of their ratepayers. Without the co-operation and partnership with the locals, the creation of linkages and a regional trails plan will not materialize.

Every local municipality has trails throughout their constituency, some are maintained and some are unmaintained/informal trails. Renfrew, Horton and McNab/Braeside use a former rail corridor which provides approximately 30 kilometres of contiguous trail. Figure 10 illustrates potential linkages since the County was successful in acquiring the CP corridor.

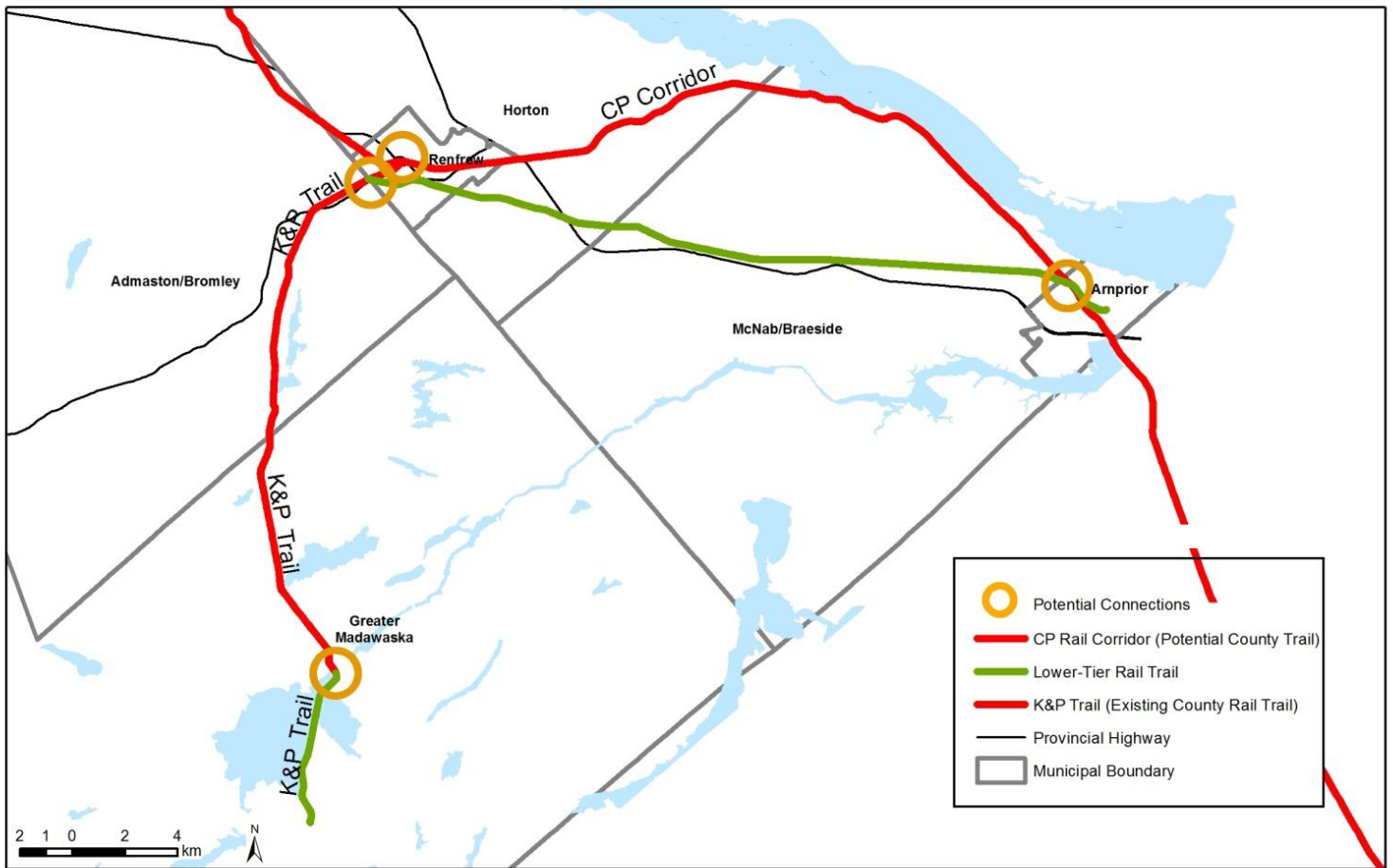


Figure 10 - Potential Linkages to Local Municipal Trails

Another example is the Town of Petawawa Emerald Necklace Trail System. The system was designed as Petawawa’s Millennium Partnership Program and includes the Millennium Trail, phase 1, a paved 2 kilometres walkway along the Petawawa River. The Trillium Trail is phase 2 of the trail system which was completed in 2003. This is a motorized trail that is shown on maps as the snowmobile trail. It joins the TransCanada Trail from Ottawa to North Bay in the winter. The Petawawa connection is 26 kilometres and runs parallel to the community’s main street, Petawawa Boulevard. The Petawawa Terrace Provincial Park contains an extensive trail system. It is best described as a 12 kilometres woodland walk, incorporating numerous interpretive panels along the way.

Not all trails need to be within a natural setting. The Town of Arnprior promotes a “Heritage Trail” which is a 2.9 kilometres route along their downtown. The Town has a map available on their website that provides directions for the route. Also available is a printout sheet containing facts and information for sites and buildings located on the course. The below figure illustrates many of the trails in the Town of Arnprior such as the Heritage Trail, the Gillies Forest Trail and a trail on a repurposed CN Rail corridor. The figure also shows the CP corridor and potential locations for connections and linkages to the Town’s system of trails. Figure 11 provides an illustration of potential linkages and connections between the local trail system and the potential CP corridor.



Figure 11 - Potential Linkages to Local Trail System (Town of Arnprior)

The role of the local municipalities in the provision of recreational services, and specifically trail development, is not proposed to be changed as a result of implementing this Linked Trail Strategy. Municipalities will continue to be responsible for planning and maintaining local trails as their council deems appropriate. The County Trails system which would be operated and maintained by the County would be limited to the K&P and CP abandoned rail corridors as

discussed in the above sections. The County Forests would still be open to access by the public but not maintained as a trail system. To promote linkages the County may look at hardened shoulders in strategic locations (as discussed in the Active Transportation section) to assist in getting from a County trail to a local trail system. County staff would be available to assist local municipalities and other groups with certain aspects of trails planning such as: identifying and securing linkages, maintaining trail databases, and creating promotion materials. One of the greatest assets for the creation of linkages are unopened municipal road rights-of-way. These linear corridors offer prime, often uninterrupted, potential routes to connect key destinations and existing trail systems.

NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

There are non-government organizations and trail user groups who are important to collaborate with. The Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) is a group that is organized province-wide. The Federation is responsible for activities that the clubs deem are

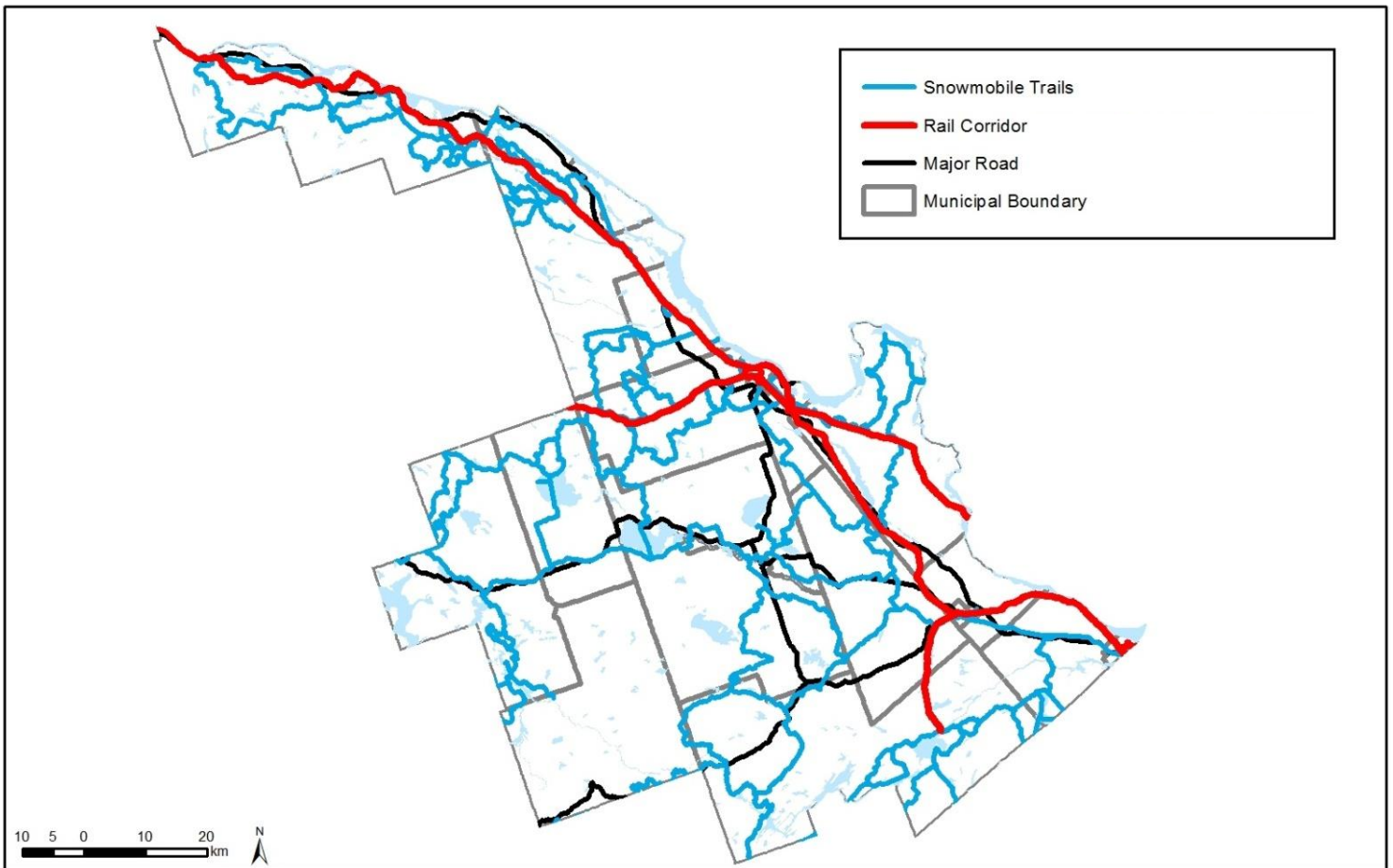


Figure 12 - Snowmobile Trails in the County of Renfrew

best handled at the provincial level such as policies and procedures, trail planning, insurance, safety, environment, and the user pay system. Proceeds from the sale of the trail permits required to enter OFSC trails provide primary funding for both the trail operations of local snowmobile clubs and their provincial organization. There are nine local snowmobile clubs in Renfrew County: Bonn Trae, Eganville SnoDrifters, Griffith Matawatchan, Keetna (Petawawa), Missing Link (Deux Rivieres), Opeongo Snowbirds (Barry’s Bay/Whitney), Peterson Pathfinders (Combermere), Timberline (Pembroke), and Whitewater Sno-Goers (Renfrew). The local clubs are responsible to establish and maintain quality snowmobile trails throughout the region. Figure 12 illustrates the existing snowmobile trail network within Renfrew County.

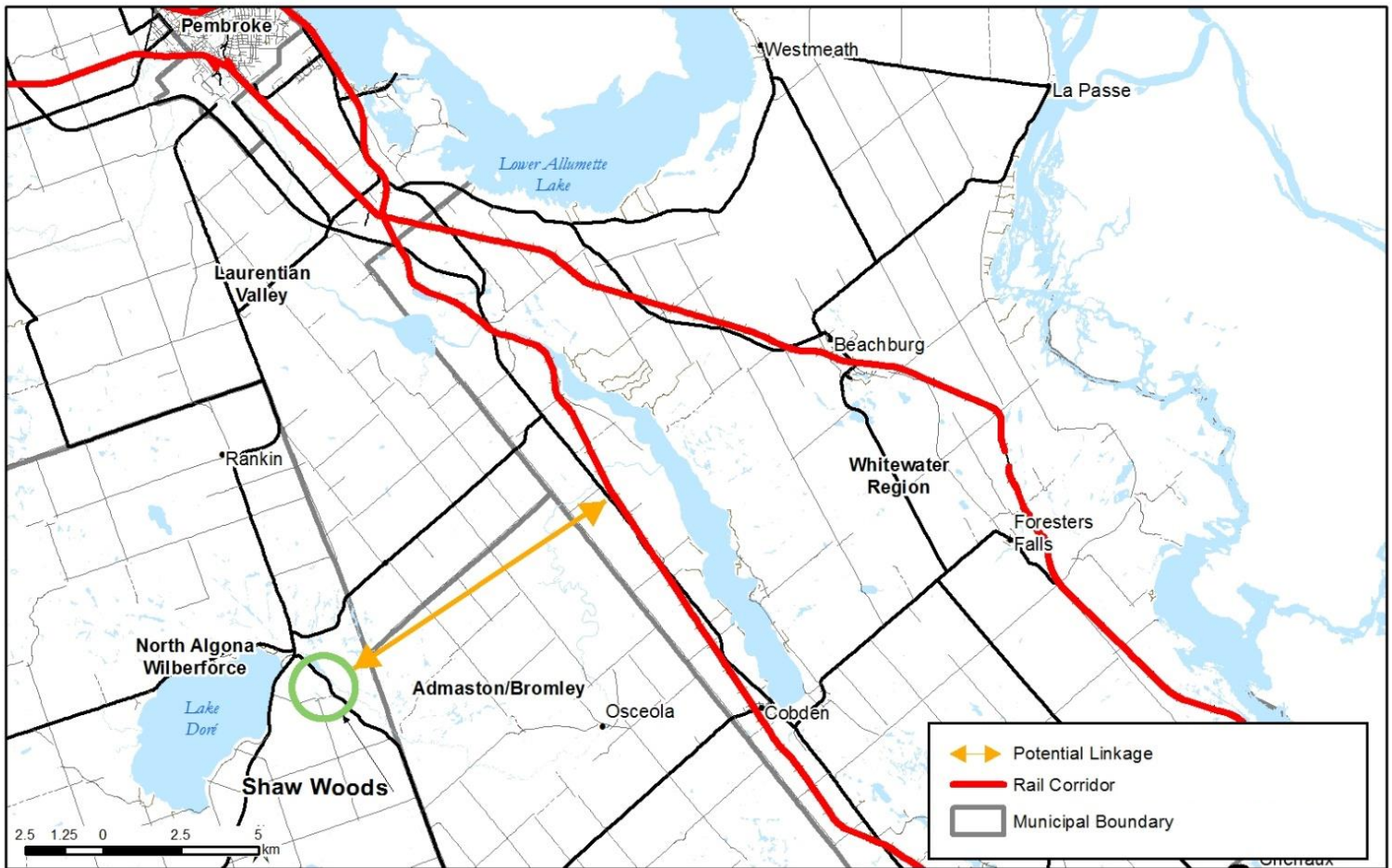


Figure 13 - Linkage Opportunity to Local Community Trail

Conservation groups also provide trails that are often open to the public. Two examples include the trails system in Gillies Grove and the Shaw Woods property. The Gillies Trail takes you along the Madawaska River, through Robert Simpson Park and through one of the oldest growth forests in Canada. The total distance for the main route of this trail is 2.7 kilometres.

Gillies Grove is a National Historic Site that is owned by the Nature Conservancy of Canada and managed with help from volunteers of the Land Preservation Society of the Ottawa Valley.

Another example of a non-government trail which would benefit from a Linked Trail Strategy is the Shaw Woods Outdoor Education Centre (SWOEC). The Shaw Woods is a volunteer, community based, not-for-profit, charitable organization offering curriculum based programs for school children and walking trails in the Township of North Algona Wilberforce. Within these woods you will find one of Eastern Canada's premier examples of 120 acres old growth maple/beech/hemlock forest. It supports a wide variety of ecological communities and has

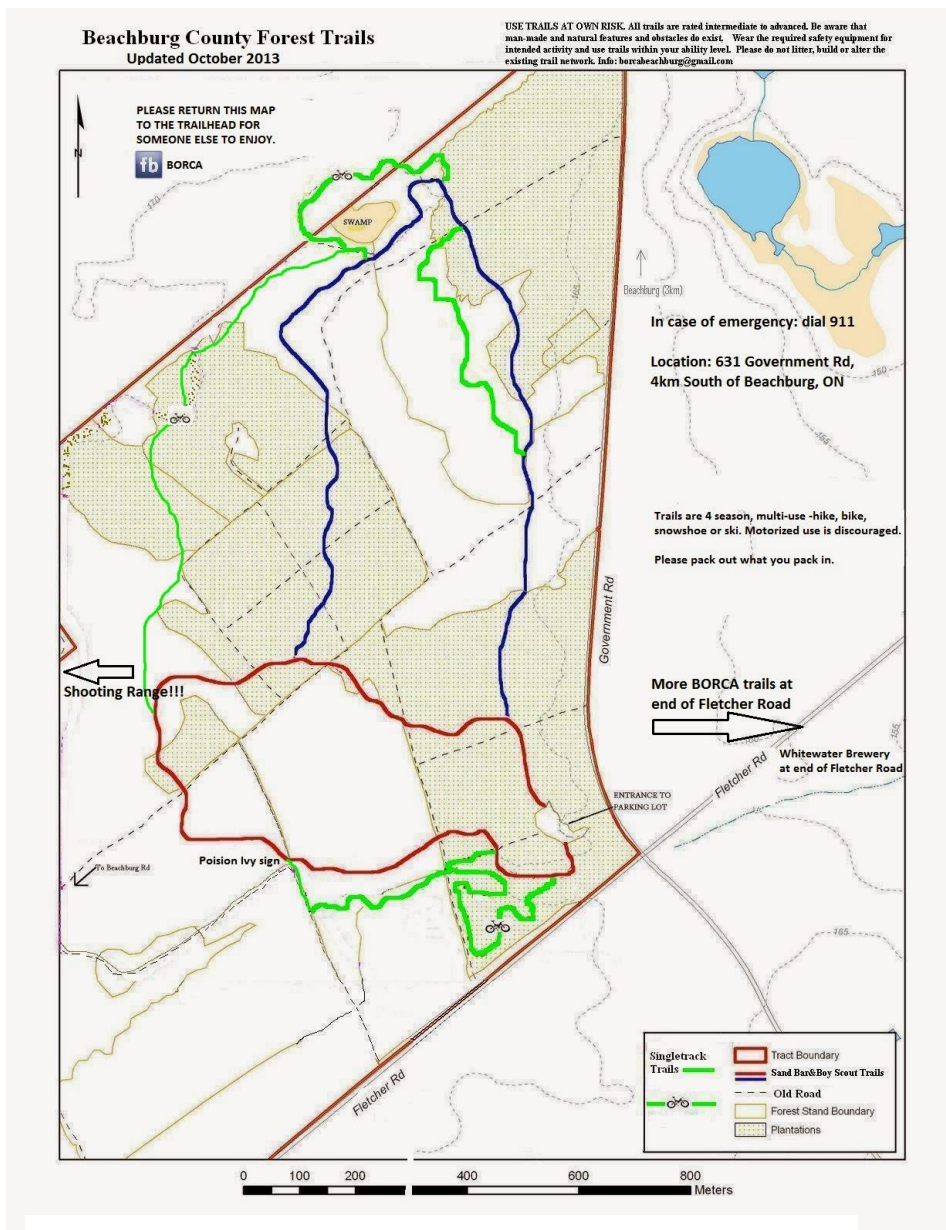


Figure 14 - BORCA's Trail Map (Trail located on County Forest)

been carefully protected for generations. In addition, the property features 13 kilometres of hiking trails. The location of Shaw Woods and the newly acquired County CP corridor is illustrated in Figure 13.

Local organizations and community groups are often the most important partnerships in a successful trail system. These groups are made up of volunteers who maintain and promote trails in their areas. One example is the Beachburg Off-Road Cycling Association (BORCA). This group is a not-for-profit association comprised of local outdoor enthusiasts, whose goal it is to develop multi-use, non-motorized recreational trails. Rider and trail advocacy are the core elements of BORCA’s mission. They organize trail maintenance days, create trails, produce/maintain signage, fundraise, and orchestrate events that utilize the trails. Some of the trails promoted by this group are on private land which requires good relationships and communication with the land owners.

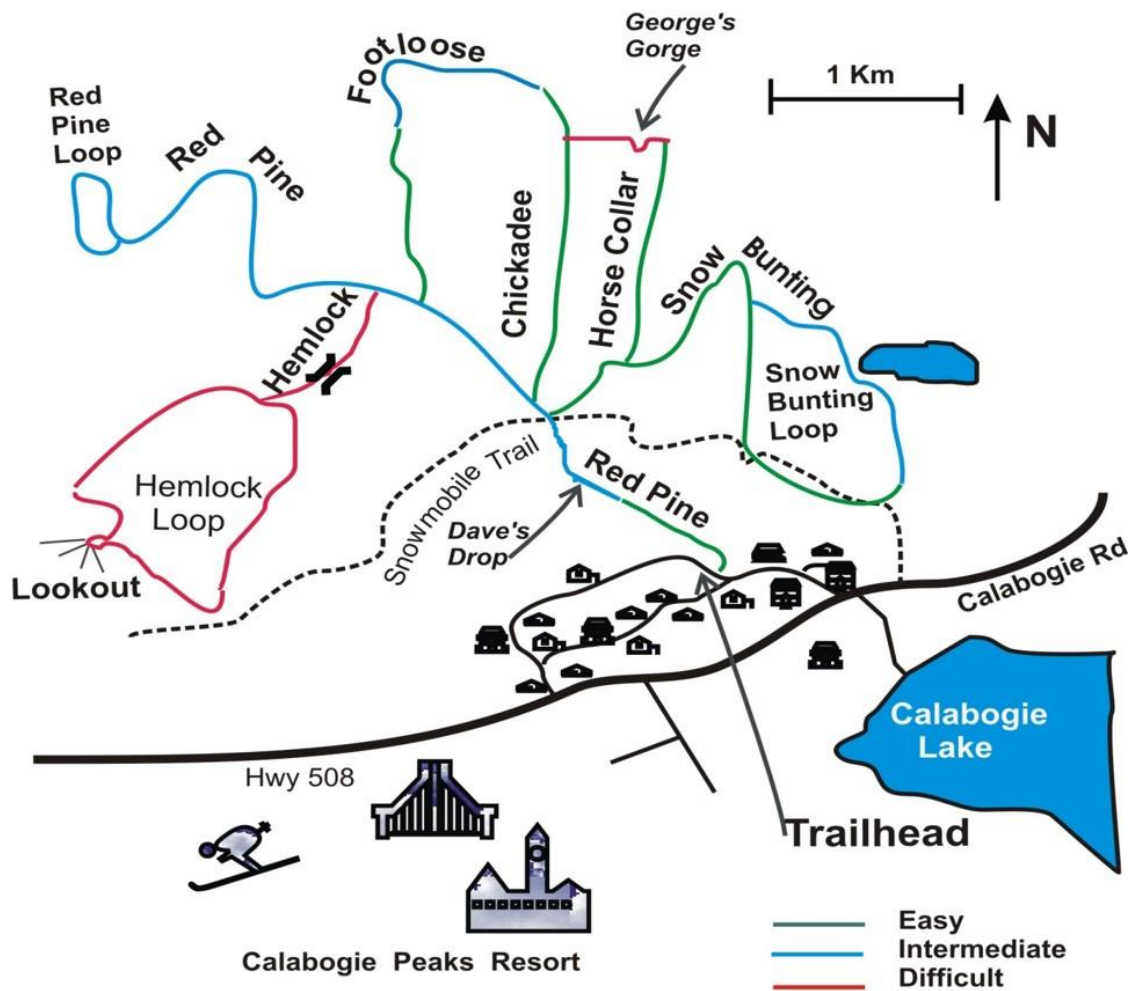


Figure 15 - Madawaska Nordic Ski Club Trail Map (Crown Land Trail)

Another example of a local community group is the Madawaska Nordic Ski Club located in the Township of Greater Madawaska. Madawaska Nordic is staffed entirely by volunteers who are responsible for development, maintenance and grooming of cross-country ski trails within the Township. The Township's Madawaska Nordic Trail System is supported by a number of volunteers and local businesses. For example, Calabogie Peaks covers the Land Use Permit for the Crown land on which the trail system is built. The trail system that is maintained by this group is illustrated in Figure 15. During the winter season the trails are for the use of cross-country skiing only. The trails are accessible for bicycling and hiking during the other seasons of the year.

A larger example of a multi-regional linked trail is a project called the Waterfront Trail. The Trail is illustrated in Figure 16. The Waterfront Regeneration Trust is the non-profit organization leading the movement to create a Waterfront Trail for the Canadian Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. They do this in partnership with 68 community partners, supporting corporations, foundations and partner organizations. The Trail can be enjoyed for a quick stroll or as part of a multi-day long distance adventure. The Trail is a combination of paths (21%), neighbourhood streets (21%), and rural roads (58%). Many urban centers have dedicated paths that are a central features of their waterfronts. Major trails including the Niagara River Path and the St. Lawrence bikeway are part of the Waterfront Trail network. It is largely paved and welcomes all types of non-motorized recreation including runners, cyclists, walkers, wheelchairs, strollers and rollerbladers. Both interactive maps and free downloadable PDF maps are available on the Waterfront Trail website to help visitors plan a route and enjoy the Trail. Route 10 is a proposed "Voyager Cycle Route: Sudbury to Deep River (with Ottawa link)." With the potential acquisition of the CP corridor, there may be an opportunity to connect the loop and join the system of trails.

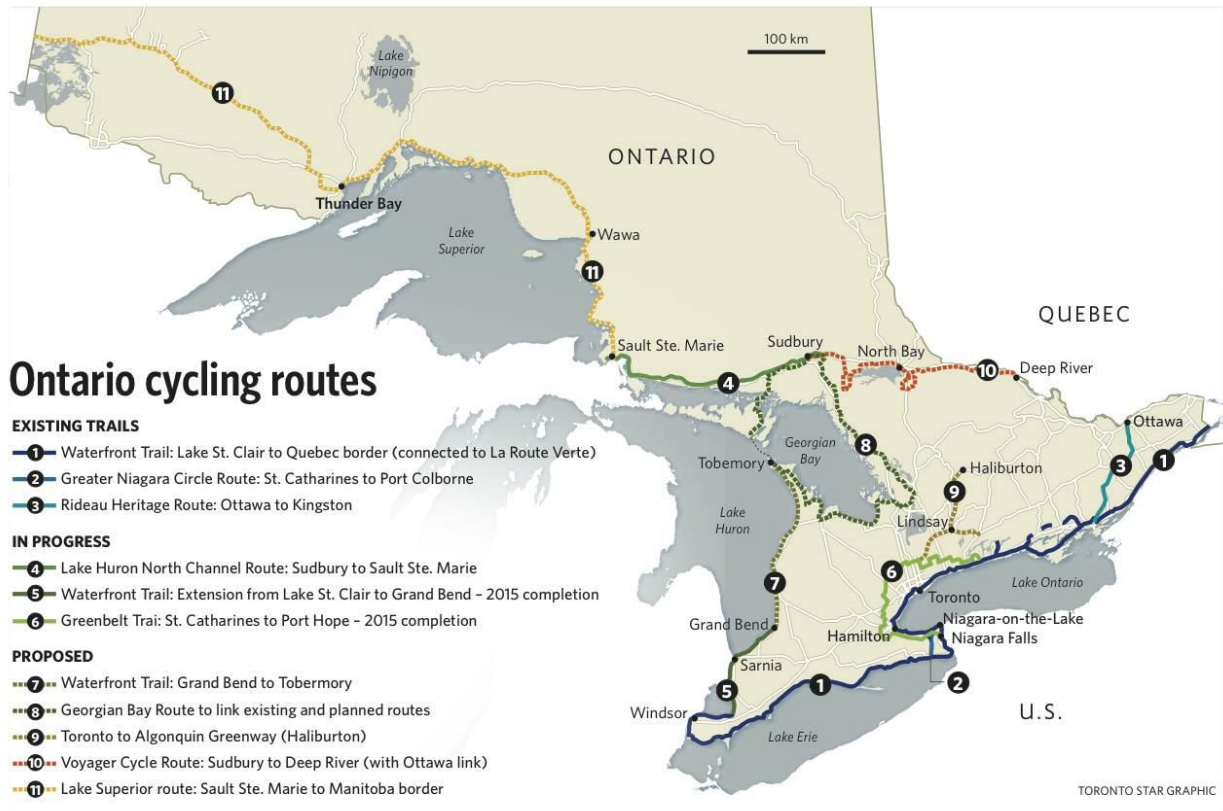


Figure 16 - Ontario Waterfront Trail (Multi-regional Trail)

UTILITY CORRIDORS

Utility corridors and rights-of-ways owned by organizations such as Hydro One, TransCanada Pipeline, and Enbridge also provide a potential opportunity for trail creation. These corridors, like rail corridors, are mostly linear and travel significant distances. Introduction of public trails along these corridors requires intensive active cooperation and planning between the trail or municipal agency and the utility company or entity in order to minimize and detail operation and maintenance impacts.

GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Approximately 50% of the land area within the County of Renfrew is Crown land. Crown land in Ontario is managed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Crown land is open to the public for access and there are an unknown number (000's) of kilometres of unorganized, unmaintained trails. Crown land trails are commonly maintained by the users. Existing trails on Crown land can be used for mapping out routes and linkages. The creation of new trails on

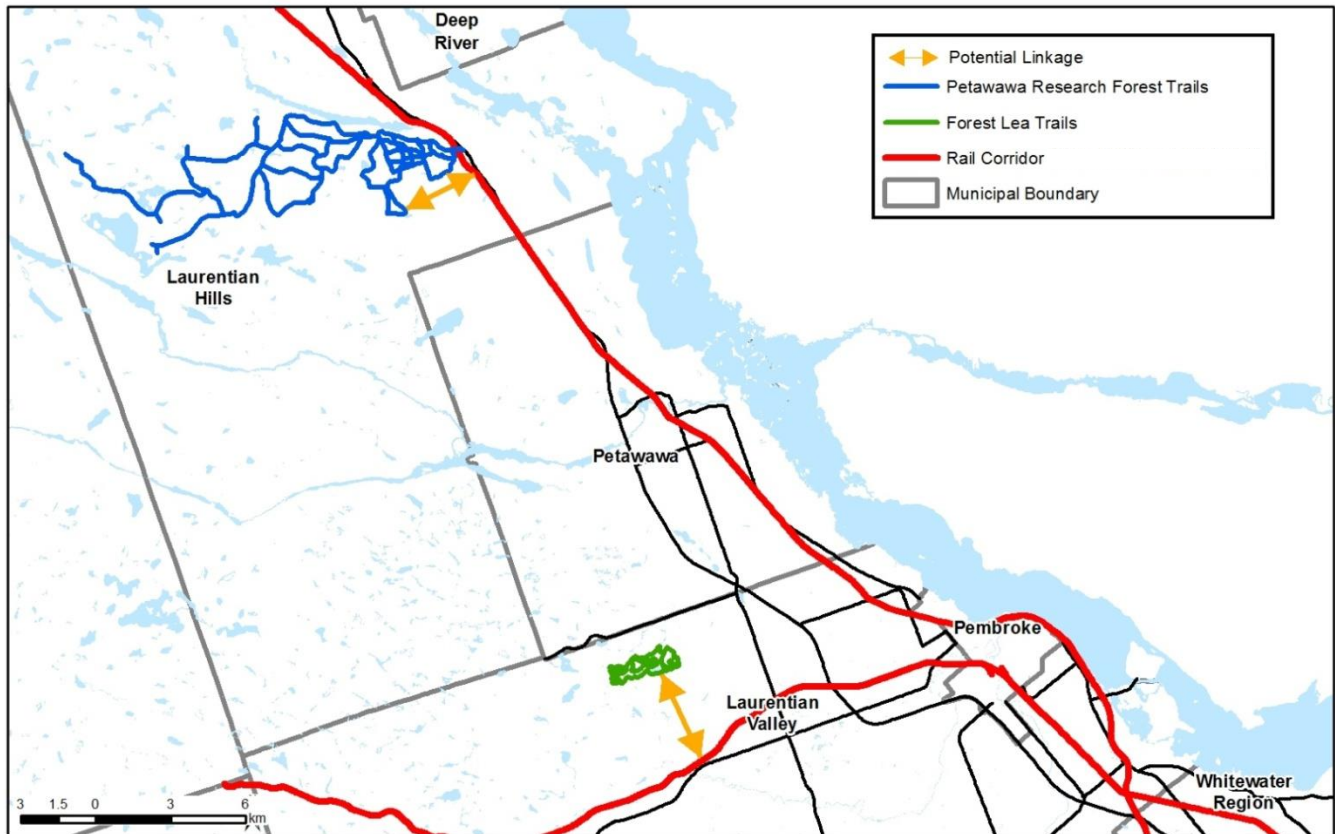
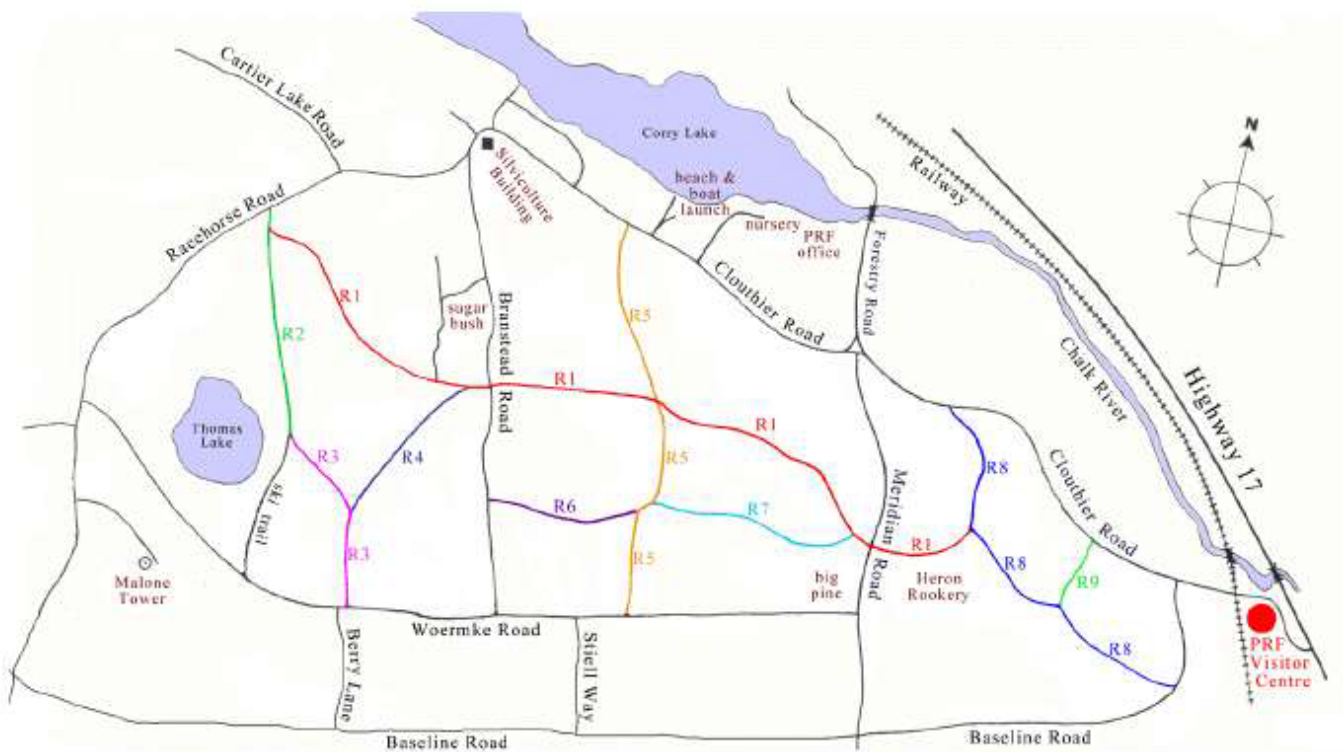


Figure 17 - Potential Connections to Existing Trail Systems

Crown land would typically require a work permit and approval from the Ministry. There are several provincial parks in the County which also have trails. Some parks are managed and require a fee for access (i.e. Algonquin, Driftwood) and others are free to access (i.e. Madawaska River, Westmeath).

The Petawawa Research Forest (PRF) is located along Highway 17, just east of Chalk River, Ontario and is situated between Garrison Petawawa and Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (Canadian Nuclear Laboratories). The Petawawa Research Forest lands are owned by the Federal Government. The PRF encompasses 10,000 hectares in the northern area of the

Garrison Petawawa Reserve. Despite the cuts and closure of the main facilities, numerous studies are ongoing throughout the forest, conducted by the Canadian Forest Service, academia, various provinces and industry. The PRF remains a hub for forest research and continues to protect, preserve, and promote the forest’s historical and scientific legacy. The Petawawa Research Forest is also open to both the public and forest professionals to conduct continuing education programs through field demonstrations, tours and presentations. There are several loop trails and forest roads that are free to access that vary in length depending on time availability. Figure 17 illustrates the location of the PRF and potential connections to proposed CP corridor. In addition the Forest Lea Trails are illustrated with a potential connection to the proposed CN Trail.



The Friends of the Petawawa Research Forest Inc. assume no liability or obligation resulting from the use of this map for any purpose

Figure 18 - Petawawa Research Forest Trail System Map

ALGONQUIN FIRST NATION

The entire County of Renfrew is under a land claim by the Algonquin First Nation that covers a territory of 36,000 square kilometres. Through public consultation and information sessions, it was indicated that there is an “Agreement In Principle” that would potentially result in the transfer of 117,500 acres of Crown lands to Algonquin ownership. While there is no timetable for this agreement to be finalized, it is likely that many of the trails in the area will come under Algonquin ownership. There may be opportunities for municipalities to work collaboratively with the Algonquin First Nation regarding the continuation and possible creation of trails on Algonquin land.

TRANSCANADA TRAIL

The TransCanada Trail is a non-profit, registered charity. The group’s mission is to promote and assist in the development and use of the Trail in every province and territory. They also provide funding to local trail builders to support the development of trails. The group works with more than 400 local trail groups, municipalities and Conservation Authorities that build and manage the local sections of the Trail. The local trail builders do everything from planning trail routes, raising funds, clearing brush and installing bridges, to securing permits, putting up signs, running events and encouraging people to get out and enjoy the Trail.

Today, over 17,000 kilometres of trail has been developed. Once fully connected, the Trail will stretch nearly 24,000 kilometres from the Atlantic to the Pacific to the Arctic oceans, linking Canadians in close to 1,000 communities. To date the Trail is approximately 75% completed. The TransCanada Trail route (from west to east) goes from Sudbury to North Bay, and then dips south towards Parry Sound, Barrie and picks up portions of the Bruce Trail along the Niagara Escarpment before again heading east across the Greater Toronto Area and north shore of Lake Ontario. The Trail continues in a north east direction through Peterborough, passes north of Kingston before heading up to Ottawa and continues through Quebec. There may be opportunities to create a “TransCanada Trail Loop” utilizing the acquisition of the CP corridor providing a connection from Ottawa back west to North Bay. The TransCanada Trail and potential loop is illustrated on Figure 19. Becoming a trail building partner with the TransCanada Trail would allow the County to access TransCanada resources and branding, increase the exposure of the trail system in the County of Renfrew, and ultimately bring more visitors to the region.

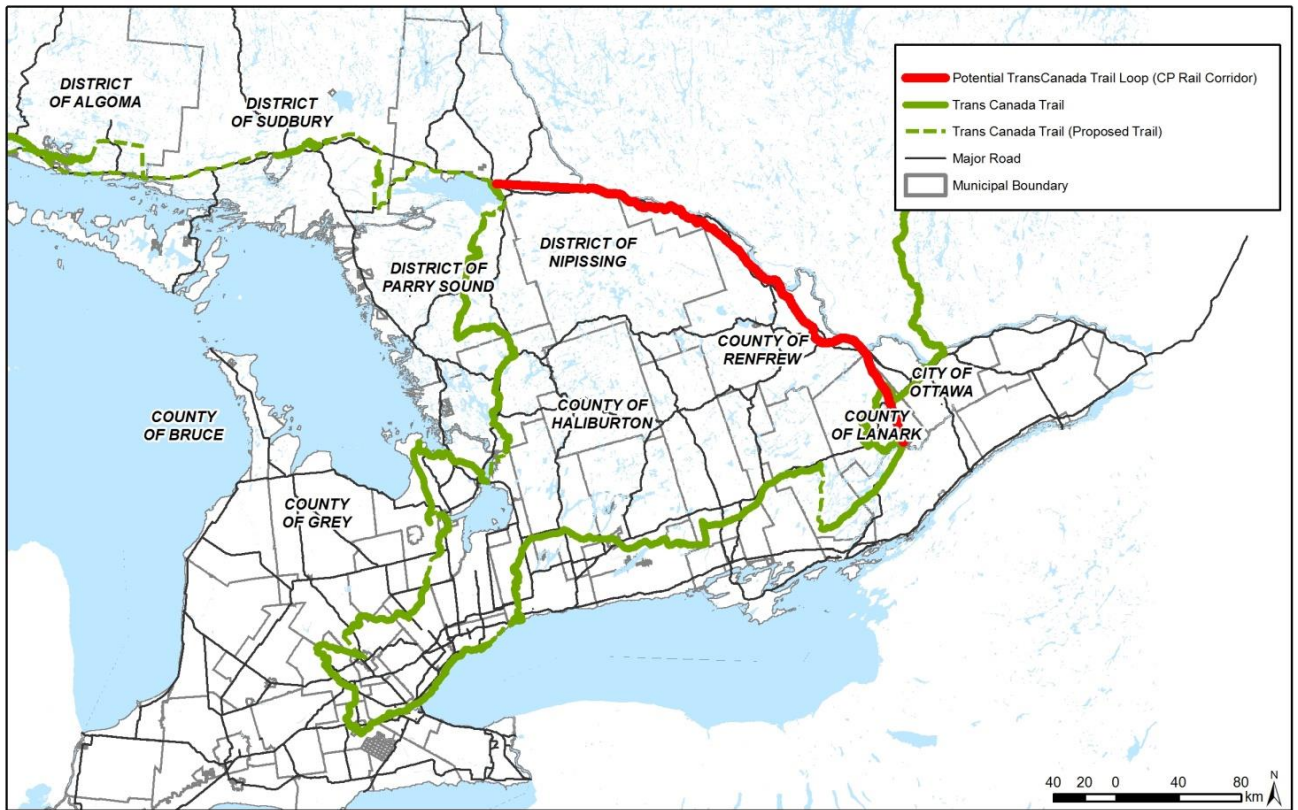


Figure 19 - TransCanada Trail (illustrating potential loop through the County of Renfrew)

8.0 FUNDING

Trails require funds for acquisition, construction, and ongoing maintenance. In addition to a budget item financed by County property tax dollars there is a variety of sources of funding for trails.

- Grants

Through the Provincial Government there are a variety of grants available that are applicable to trail acquisition, construction, and maintenance. Trails are eligible under several categories of grant applications such as sport and recreation, tourism and economic development. In addition, there is the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) which is an agency of the Government of Ontario, and Canada's largest granting foundation. The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) awards some \$110 million in grants each year to more than 1,300 community organizations. Many of the grants awarded throughout the Province have been for trail work that has promoted active, healthy lifestyles, and improved local economies.

In July 2014, the Federal government launched a National Recreation Trails Program. The government partnered with the National Trails Coalition to offer \$10 million between 2014 and 2016 to help expand and rehabilitate Canada's snowmobile, ATV and non-motorized trail systems. The County applied for \$20,000.00 for K&P Trail maintenance (signage, tree removal, bridge decking, grading and gravel). These federal dollars must be matched by cash contributions from the County (\$20,000.00).

The County application was successful for the full amount of \$20,000.00.

In addition to government grants, many large institutions (i.e. banks, Enbridge) at various times have provided funds to assist in local initiatives including trails. The County of Renfrew Economic Development Division is able to follow and pursue grants that may be applicable to achieving a linked trail system.

- Partnerships with local groups/clubs

In addition to providing volunteers who often do the hands on work of trail maintenance, local organizations such as the Beachburg Off-Road Cycling Association are resources for fundraising for specific trail sections. These not-for-profit groups are also eligible to apply for certain grants that are not available to either the lower or upper tier governments.

- Sponsorships

There may be opportunities to partner with local businesses to “sponsor” sections of trail in return for advertisement or mutually beneficial arrangements. Many businesses are supportive of local initiatives and are willing and want to assist and participate in the community. An example is the Madawaska Nordic Ski Club who partner with the Calabogie Peaks Ski Hill. Calabogie Peaks covers the land use permit on behalf of the club, and also provides the services of cross country ski rental and ski maintenance.

Another popular method of sponsorship is “crowd funding”. This approach allows individuals to sponsor small sections of trail (i.e. 10 metres) for a small fee. For example, with 10 metre intervals it would take 100 sponsors for 1 kilometre of trail. With a charge of \$2 per metre, a 1 kilometre section of trail could raise \$2,000. A plaque recognizing those who sponsored the trail can be located either at a trail head or at various intervals along the trail.

9.0 ACTION PLAN

The following actions are required to implement a linked trails system:

1) Trails Committee

The K&P Management Advisory Committee makes recommendations to the County Development & Property Committee regarding the most appropriate uses of the K&P corridor, which resulted in the creation of a management plan for the K&P corridor. This committee continues to make recommendations on the operations and management of the trail today. There are no proposed changes to this committee, which is composed of municipal politicians and lay persons.

Using the K&P Management Advisory Committee as an example, a new committee is recommended for the acquired CP corridor. The new committee should be provided with the mandate to promote and manage the corridor. The first action items for the committee would be to undertake a public consultation process and to make recommendations to the County Development & Property Committee regarding the most appropriate uses of the corridor. The committee would be devoted to the planning, development, maintenance and promotion of the trail system. It is recommended that the new committee have a dedicated staff member. The County of Renfrew recently created a new Forestry and GIS Division which has been tasked with the responsibility for trails. The former Forestry Technician job description was amended to become the “Forestry and Trails Technician” with the objective to assist the Manager of Forestry and GIS with the implementation of the County’s trail strategy. The Forestry and Trails Technician would be responsible for providing administrative support to the committee.

With the purchase of the CP corridor, the County entered into a “Co-Owners Agreement” with the County of Lanark and the Township of Papineau-Cameron. One of the action items in the Co-Owners Agreement is that a “Co-Owners Committee” be formed. The Agreement states that the County assign at least one and not more than three members to sit as representatives on the Co-Owners Committee between the County of Renfrew, County of Lanark and the Township of Papineau-Cameron. The representatives to sit as members may consist of Council members, staff, or members of the public. The members of the Co-Owners Committee are to work together to the extent reasonably possible to achieve a consistent standard of construction, repair, maintenance and use along the CP corridor and to coordinate the use and operation of it. It is recommended that the Renfrew County representatives to sit on the Co-Owners Committee also be members of the proposed CP Management Advisory Committee.

2) Master Plan

The new CP Management Advisory Committee would be responsible for the establishment of a Trail Master Plan for the corridor. The Master Plan would include the identification of existing and proposed connections to the other components of the County trail system and key locations for trailheads. The Master Plan would also include working with County of Renfrew Public Works and Engineering Department to identify key locations for hardened shoulders in accordance with the Active Transportation Strategy.

Using the K&P Management Plan as an example, the committee would also be responsible for the establishment of a management plan for the CP corridor. The management plan should create a program for implementation based on short, medium and long-term priorities. The program should identify capital costs and a budget for a short and long-term implementation plan and suggest possible funding scenarios that may be available at the time.

3) Trails Association

It is recommended that the County of Renfrew support the creation of a volunteer community Trails Association. The association would undertake building of community interest in trails through communication with trails groups and organizations, attracting new trails interests and groups, and engaging these groups in a collaborative planning process. The role of the association would include working on a range of trail interests and management issues from dealing with stakeholders from trail groups, landowners, local businesses, Renfrew County and District Health Unit, provincial associations and other associations of trail users.

The community Trails Association would be responsible for collaborating with municipalities both inside and outside the County of Renfrew on a variety of trail issues such as linkages, trailheads, promotion and maintenance. In addition the association would be the group to contact other trails associations such as the TransCanada Trail organization for the purposes of establishing an “Ontario Loop” to the TransCanada Trail.

The association could also work with the County Public Works and Engineering Department and the re-formulated Renfrew County Trails Committee to identify priorities and key locations that would benefit from hardened shoulders along County roads under the Active Transportation Strategy.

While it is not recommended that this trails association be a sub-committee for the County of Renfrew, the County can support the association by providing administrative support through the Forestry and Trails Technician. In addition the Economic Development Division can provide support to the association for the purpose of providing support to develop a tourism related trail brand including a distinctive signage program.

4) Trail Inventory

The County should undertake to complete a comprehensive trail inventory that includes a review of all existing trails, their conditions, and their suitability for a variety of trail uses and opportunities for improvement. With this inventory, the community Trails Association can plan for and identify potential linkages between different trails. Opportunities to connect to trail systems outside of the County should be explored and pursued (i.e. TransCanada Trail connection).

5) Branding/Signage

A distinctive tourism brand should be developed that promotes the County trail experience and also assists local trail providers and organizations. A distinctive signage system and graphic communication should be developed to identify features such as trailheads and destinations to assist trail users in navigating the trails, and to promote/educate the public on the safe and appropriate use of trails. The County of Renfrew Economic Development Division can assist in creating a tourism brand to captivate the interest of local residents and tourists in the County's trail experience and assist in the promotion of trails.

6) Budget

The proposed Trails Committee should be provided with a yearly budget. The Committee would provide recommendation on the best use of the funds (based on the Master Plan and Management Plan).

The County-owned trails should be incorporated into the County of Renfrew Asset Management Plan for proper budget planning. Over time, there will be repairs necessary to trail infrastructure such as bridges and culverts that would be acquired as part of the purchase of any rail corridor. By including the trails and infrastructure into the Asset Management Plan a long-range forecast of future costs can be considered and the appropriate financial arrangements can be made.

7) Coordinating Planning Documents

The Renfrew County Planning Division, through the review of the County Official Plan and when commenting on local Official Plans, should include policies for the consideration and incorporation of connections to and from trail systems through the review of development applications.

8) County Forest Trails

At this time there is no proposal or recommendation to expand or create a trails network on County Forest lands. If identified as a need in the future, the proposed trails association may recommend utilizing portions of forestry tracts to create connecting links to other trail systems or utilizing partnership opportunities with local groups. An updated Forestry Management Plan will be prepared in 2016. Any change in direction in respect to trails will be reviewed at that time. The current system of unorganized public access to the County Forest tracts has had minimal adverse impacts on forestry operations and seems to still be providing appropriate trail usage that satisfies the current needs of the community.