



COUNTY OF RENFREW
Active Transportation Strategy

(Adopted May 2012; Revised September 27, 2017)

1.0 RATIONALE FOR AN ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

As the largest geographical county in Ontario, roads and trails in Renfrew County connect our natural and built environments, thereby providing an opportunity for collaborative action that improves our health, well being and overall quality of life through the transportation, land use and planning sectors.

An increasing base of evidence links our health, community health, economic growth, social well-being and environmental benefits to regions that support active transportation. Infrastructure that promotes increased opportunities for physical activity such as bicycling and walking are clearly in the public interest.

1.1 WHAT IS AN ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY?

An Active Transportation Strategy is a documented strategy that provides a long-term vision for active transportation infrastructure and policies. It contributes to the physical, social, economic and health of a community where motorists, pedestrians, cyclists and community leaders share a common vision.

An Active Transportation Strategy identifies links to, and extensions of, existing bikeways, trails, sidewalks and roads. It also creates new walking and cycling connections throughout and between communities. It includes plans for prioritizing network projects, determining appropriate levels of operation and maintenance/capital funding levels, reviewing current standards, by-laws and identifies public promotion and education.¹

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.

Active Transportation traditionally takes place in two environment settings:

Built Environment refers to all human-made surroundings—the spaces where we live, work and play. The built environment includes tangible infrastructures, such as road systems, transportation networks, streets, parks, trails, businesses, schools, buildings and other infrastructure.

Natural Environment is made up of open natural spaces/land, waterways, parks, recreation areas, green spaces.² Natural spaces connect and include built environments that are essential for human and community health.³

1.2 BENEFITS OF THE RENFREW COUNTY ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

- Contributes to a higher quality of life for Renfrew County residents.
- Increases opportunities for improved health and well being for everyone.
- Contributes to healthier and more active communities.
- Decreases pressure on our health care system.
- Improves public education and knowledge of the links between active transportation, health, community well-being and improved quality of life.
- Increases community partnerships, engagement and social connections.
- Improves safety on and around roads and community spaces (decreases transport injuries and falls).
- Defines routes and possibilities for non-motorized commuting options.
- Contributes to economic development and a stronger economy (cycle tourism, trails, local business use, enhanced commuter and recreational use by residents and style of living appealing to many prospective new residents, productivity).
- Supports the provision of accessible infrastructure.
- Contributes positively to and connects us with the natural environment.
- Contributes to a reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and to Canada's commitment to the Paris Accord.
- Integrates and links community and government initiatives such as walking and cycling routes to schools and trails investments.
- Establishes linkages with local heritage and cultural destinations.
- Improves recreational and commuter accessibility to people of all ages, abilities and income levels.
- Enhances intergovernmental collaboration around active transportation.
- Coordinates Renfrew County initiatives with the appropriate provincial strategies (i.e., CycleON- Ontario's Cycling Strategy).

1.3 INTEGRATION OF THE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY WITH COUNTY PROGRAMS

The following identifies integration opportunities of an Active Transportation Strategy with existing County initiatives across four departments.

DEVELOPMENT AND PROPERTY

Forestry & GIS

- There are 240 km of trails currently under the County's jurisdiction. This infrastructure is designed and constructed to provide linkages to various trails and communities within the County.
- In response to increasing public demand for trail use, the County recognized an opportunity to optimize the use of the county's trail network by developing a Master Trail Strategy. There are currently 3,800 km of trails which fall under the jurisdiction of organizations other than the County of Renfrew.
- The County's GIS division plays an integral part in the mapping and displaying the trail information, and maintaining a current inventory of the linkages.

Ottawa Valley Economic Development

- Business opportunities for new investment (outfitters, bike repair, accommodations, special events and competitions, etc.).
- In-fill/downtown housing (Renfrew, Pembroke, Arnprior, and other).
- Commute-to-work options (livable/workable communities).
- Some "backroad" assistance to our smaller areas and very rural hamlets.
- Farm gate sales opportunities.
- Trail/Route construction and maintenance jobs.
- Improvements in employer/employee health due to access to outdoor facilities/opportunities.
- Enhanced style of living for prospective new residents and investors on par with or beyond urban centres.
- Desirable travel and recreation pathways to attract and retain residents.
- New product for tourism operators to utilize in marketing and to increase visitor satisfaction.
- A necessary component of a modern culture and community which will enhance attraction of new and young residents and investors.

- Commitment to this Active Transportation Strategy will demonstrate that there is a forward-looking and creative culture active in the County.
- This Active Transportation Strategy represents the most significant aspect of a healthy community.
- Provides a concrete manner in which to reduce the cost and burden on the County and municipalities of maintaining roads and transportation services.

Planning and Land Development

Policies promoting active transportation are included in the following sections of the County of Renfrew Official Plan through the five-year review process:

- » Section 2, General Development Policies;
- » Section 13, Transportation;
- » Section 14.4, Plans of Subdivision/Condominium; and
- » Section 16.5, Site Plan Control.

PUBLIC WORKS & ENGINEERING

- 820 km of arterial and collector roads currently under the County’s jurisdiction. This infrastructure is designed and constructed to provide critical linkages to various communities within the County.
- Responding to 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 department’s 10 year capital program.
- The Active Transportation Strategy, in concert with other management plans, will develop policies and standards for active transportation needs in the County’s multi-year capital works programs. This will include design standards and signage for designated active transportation infrastructure as well as policies for maintenance requirements and financial sustainability.
- The approved Asset Management Plan will serve as a foundation document to develop priority implementation strategies.
- Reduce congestion on roads and bridges.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

- Recognizing the ever-present pressures within the health care system and increased demand for Emergency Services, the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service is responding through their Community Paramedic Program.

- Community and industry partnerships are having a positive impact on morbidity and mortality rates.
- Aging at Home, Wellness Clinics, Heart Wise Exercise Program, defibrillation-CPR and Paramedic and Community Care Team programs represent innovative and valuable health promotion and illness prevention work.
- Transportation contributes to placing the Paramedic Service in the position of supporting the health needs of every local community in Renfrew County by encouraging exercise, promoting health resilience and creating a safer environment.
- In emergency situations, Paramedic Services will provide Patrol & Response Service to the trail network.

SOCIAL SERVICES

- Active transportation provides a viable alternative to more expensive proximity transportation for improved access between social housing and community services.
- Improves access to housing, community destinations and Ontario Works sites.
- Increases opportunities for health equity by improving access to physical activity, recreation, essential services and community destinations.
- Improved active transportation infrastructure supports increased physical activity and community engagement opportunities for children ages 0 to 6 in childcare settings.

2.0 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Renfrew County Active Transportation Strategy effects:

1. Develop County policy and a coordinated approach to Active Transportation.

- Development of land use (to be included in the Official Plan), transportation and other relevant public policies.
- Coordination of policy development with existing Operational Plans.
- Support economic development as a key component of an Active Transportation Strategy.
- Support and integrate with the County of Renfrew's Trail Strategy, and be complementary to associated trails management plans (K&P Trail, Algonquin Trail).
- Development of departmental policies and community programs that mirror approved active transportation objectives and implementation.

- Support willing partnerships with local level municipal leaders to enhance and build municipal capacity for active transportation planning, consultation and implementation.
 - Adoption and adaptation of detailed design guidelines for safe active transportation infrastructure.
 - Development of design guidelines for land use planning and site planning practices that encourage active transportation in Renfrew County. Integrate guidelines into the Operational Plan.
 - Promotion of Active Transportation components--including active transportation policies, programs and infrastructure at county events, buildings and facilities.
 - Research liabilities/legal requirements associated with the implementation of active transportation infrastructure.
 - Include liability and risk management education and knowledge sharing to ensure that stakeholders and elected officials share a common understanding of the real risks, the risk benefits and liability issues associated with active transportation.
- 2. Set measurable goals to guide the development of a safe, sustainable and coordinated active transportation network in Renfrew County.**
- Promote and enhance an inventory of trails, infrastructure and roads suitable for active transportation based on existing reports, community input and GIS mapping.
 - Commit to measurable, achievable targets and goals on the status of active transportation and infrastructure development (eg: hardened shoulders, hardened trailways, connected pathways, signs, etc.).
- 3. Promote and build safe and connected active transportation networks for all residents and visitors to Renfrew County.**
- Review County's multi-year road and trails program to determine feasibility/impacts of providing for active transportation infrastructure. Emphasis will be given to the Algonquin Trail and to priority road networks.
 - Support policy that requires active transportation infrastructure to be considered in all future Renfrew County projects.
 - Develop benchmark costs for active transportation infrastructure.
 - Develop an active transportation tourism policy and plan in collaboration with Economic Development and the Ottawa Valley Tourist Association.
 - Maximize the use of Provincial and Federal funding opportunities.
- 4. Explore opportunities to raise awareness and support knowledge sharing and events that help County of Renfrew residents to choose safe active transportation options more often.**

- Allocate resources for improvements to active transportation infrastructure.
 - Actively partner and collaborate with the Physical Activity Network, Healthy Community Partnership, private businesses, school boards, Renfrew County social service organizations and schools to coordinate the Active Transportation Strategy with existing trail, cycling and walking initiatives.
 - Support the existing initiative on school travel planning to include all student travel requirements and to include active modes of transportation.
 - Work with local stakeholders, networks and provincial organizations to introduce and improve cycling and road sharing educational opportunities in Renfrew County.
- 5. Establish a framework to sustain the Active Transportation Strategy in Renfrew County.**
- Continue to collaborate with the existing Physical Activity Network and the Ottawa Valley Cycling and Active Transportation Alliance as the champions for Active Transportation.
 - Integrate active transportation opportunities into multiple sectors, programs and levels of government.
 - Explore and actively pursue all relevant funding opportunities, through various levels of government and community partnerships.
 - Identify current, or other, organizations whose mandate addresses or contributes to active transportation.

3.0 STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

The following visual framework outlines the flow and process that will be followed for the development of the Active Transportation Strategic process. It is consistent with standard, evidence based models that are being implemented across Ontario and Canada in both rural and urban regions.

framework



4.0 STRATEGY LINKAGES

The Renfrew County Active Transportation Strategy will link with several other County strategies (as amended) including, but not limited to: County of Renfrew Strategic Plan, County of Renfrew Trails Strategy, Ottawa Valley Economic Development Strategic Plan, County of Renfrew Asset Management Plan, CycleON- Ontario Cycling Strategy, Voyageur Discovery Routes Strategic Plan, and the County of Renfrew Official Plan.

5.0 PROMOTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

Building on existing initiatives and ongoing community engagement, promotion, education and awareness of the County's commitment to the benefits of Active Transportation provides a foundation for the successful implementation of the strategy. Education and promotions will be integrated with existing department initiatives and coordinated with community lead programs that support active and safe routes to school, active commuting, road safety, and public health initiatives. Education and knowledge sharing will address benefits of liability and risk issues associated with upper and lower tier municipal involvement in active transportation initiatives and infrastructure enhancement.

6.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The Renfrew County Active Transportation Strategy was originally developed in consultation with the expertise and community input of the Physical Activity Network and the Active Transportation working group. The consultation process included more than 150 multi sector community stakeholders committed to building opportunities for more active and healthy residents and visitors in Renfrew County. The working committee of 25+ active users of our road, trail and waterway systems represent a wide and geographically balanced group of stakeholders.

The Strategy was presented and adopted by County Council in May 30, 2012.

7.0 MONITORING PROGRAM

An Active Transportation Strategy monitoring program will be identified and achieved in coordination with standardized health indicators, traffic, connectivity, road safety and injury prevention statistics. Local data will be collected and integrated into an approved evaluative method.

Connectivity is the measure of the efficiency of a transportation network. It refers to the directness of transportation links and the number of connections in the path or road network. Linkages between communities is a priority and will be a strong indicator for monitoring of the Active Transportation Strategy.

8.0 HARDENED SHOULDERS/HARDENED TRAILWAYS

Since 2010, the County of Renfrew has embarked on a program of hardening shoulders on County Roads, in conjunction with the annual road rehabilitation program. This program has added a minimum of one (1) metre to the road surface width, allowing for movement that is potentially removed from the main flow of traffic. At the same time, it has lessened deterioration from edge breaking. In every situation, this effort has proven popular with local residents for walking and cycling. By the end of 2016, the County's road network includes approximately 172 km on which hardened shoulders have been provided.

The K&P Trail, an abandoned 21 km former rail corridor that stretches from Calabogie to Renfrew, currently enjoys 14 km of hardened trailway. The application of limestone dust has created an environment that allows cycling, walking and non-motorized activities to co-exist with motorized summer and winter recreational activities. Enhancements to the K&P Trail will continue as the link to the Algonquin Trail will be made at the intersecting point in Renfrew, in 2017.

Beginning in 2017, the abandoned CP Rail corridor that was purchased by the County of Renfrew, now named the Algonquin Trail and forms the County portion of the Ottawa Valley Recreation Trail that stretches from Smiths Falls to near Mattawa, will begin to see improvements made. Surface improvements are planned for 2017 that would involve the application of limestone dust, similar to the practice along the K&P Trail, in the more urban centres of the County. Upgrades to sections of the trail will continue annually as funding allows. Paved trailways and/or twinned trailways will be considered where and when appropriate and funding allows.

9.0 PRIORITIES

The County of Renfrew will endeavour to focus on the following main priorities for active transportation, and will pursue as funding is available and allocated:

- Hardened shoulder program continuation each year where appropriate;
- Upgrades and hardened surface application to the Algonquin Trail in urban centres

(2017-2018);

- Surface improvements to the Algonquin Trail (2018-2027), which may include paved sections to facilitate commuter cycling, rollerblading, wheelchair accessibility;
- Hardened surface improvements to the K&P Trail (2017-2021).

All of these improvements will help facilitate active transportation. These improvements, along with local municipal active transportation projects, will continue to showcase the County of Renfrew as a leader in active transportation.

10.0 WORKPLAN

Appendix #1 (MAP OF COMPLETED AND CONTEMPLATED WORKS)

REFERENCES

1. Bergeron, K. and Cragg, S. (2009). *Making the Case for Active Transportation: Bulletin #8—Role for Municipal Decision Makers*. Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, Ottawa, Canada.
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3. Kuo, F. (2010) *Parks And Other Green Environments: Essential Components of a Healthy Human Habitat*.
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5. Bergeron, K. & Cragg, S. (2009). *Making the Case for Active Transportation: Bulletin #3—Economic Benefits*. Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, Ottawa, Ontario.
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8. *2012 Benchmarking Report—Alliance for Biking and Walking*.10. *Active Transportation in Canada—a Resource and Planning Guide*, Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Government Services Canada. (2010) Retrieved from https://www.fcm.ca/Documents/tools/GMF/Transport_Canada/ActiveTranspoGuide_EN.pdf .
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APPENDICES

Map of Active Transportation Identified Routes