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County of Renfrew  
Housing Need and Demand Analysis

Summary Document

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**November 2007**

Prepared by:



## 1.0 Introduction

In 2000, the County of Renfrew became the designated Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) responsible for the social housing portfolio under the Social Housing Reform Act. This responsibility is in addition to its traditional role of co-ordinating and facilitating the provision of housing through its responsibility in providing planning services and advice on planning matters to local municipalities, including the preparation of comprehensive planning documents such as the official land use plan (as well as the approval authority for several municipal official plans).

As Service Manager, the County is responsible for the administration and funding of various social housing and affordable housing programs. The social housing portfolio is comprised of public housing (managed by the Renfrew County Housing Corporation (RCHC)), and non-profit housing. Renfrew County also has rent supplement agreements with private and non-profit housing providers. There are currently 1,340 units within the entire social housing portfolio; 921 public housing units, 337 non-profit units, and 82 rent supplement units.

As a result of this broader responsibility towards housing, recent announcements of federal and provincial funding in housing and the establishment the Local Integrated Health Network (LHIN), the County felt it was an opportune time to undertake a comprehensive Housing Need and Demand Analysis for the County of Renfrew.

The study area for this report is the County of Renfrew, comprised of 17 area municipalities, and the separated City of Pembroke. The emphasis of the study is to evaluate the need and expected future demand for housing and to articulate a series of potential policies and actions that may facilitate both private and public sector partnerships in addressing the identified need and demand for housing.

## 2.0 Housing Context and Key Housing Issues

The Housing Need and Demand Analysis includes the discussion and evaluation of several components, these include: population and household characteristics, economic activity, income characteristics, the existing housing supply and an analysis of housing affordability. From the Housing Need and Demand Analysis (Part 1), a number of current and future challenges have been identified which have formed the Key Housing Issues. These 10 Key Housing Issues are the primary focus of the Recommended Policies and Actions (Part 2). The housing issues are not listed in priority of importance.

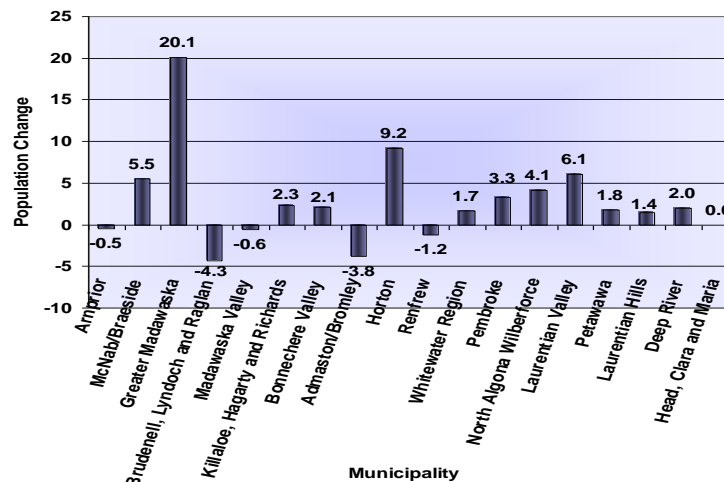
### ***1. There is a need to ensure that there is an adequate supply of housing opportunities in the future in particular in high growth areas***

The Need and Demand Analysis identified a strong need to ensure that there is an adequate supply of housing opportunities in the future. This is especially relevant for high growth areas.

## Population Trends

- Population trend analysis found that after a slight decline in population from 1996 to 2001, the population of the County of Renfrew increased by 2.5% reaching a population of 97,545 in 2006.
- This rate of growth is below that of Kawartha Lakes (7.8%) and Hastings County (3.6%) yet slightly above that of Bruce County (2.3%) and Lanark County (2.1%).
- Based on population growth from 2001 to 2006, areas with a comparatively higher growth rate (when compared to other area municipalities) include Greater Madawaska (20.1%), Horton (9.2%), and Laurentian Valley (6.1%) and McNab/Braeside (5.5%).
- In 2006, Pembroke (14.3%) and Petawawa (15.1%) comprised almost thirty percent of the total population of the County. Laurentian Valley (9.5%), Renfrew (8.1%), Arnprior (7.4%) and McNab/Braeside (7.4%) comprise an additional 32.4% of the total population.

Figure S 1: Population Growth by Municipality, Renfrew County, 2001-2006



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 and 2006 Census of Canada

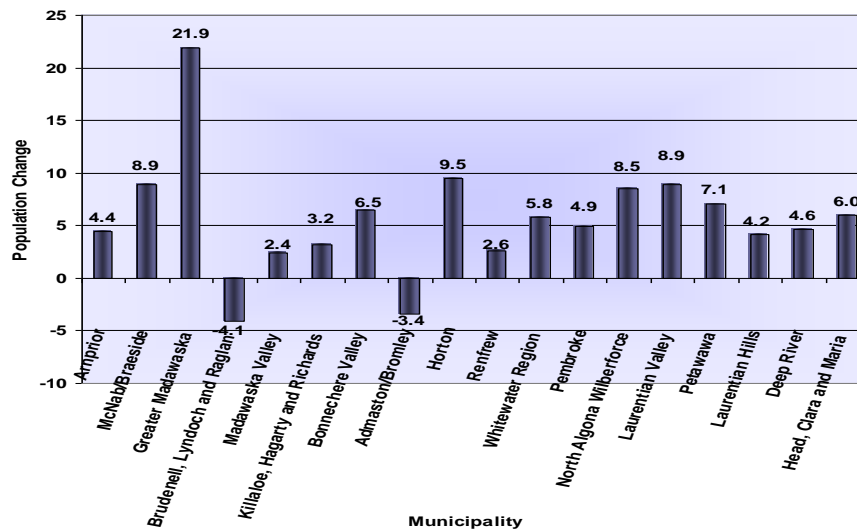
- Based on existing County of Renfrew population projections and using the high growth scenario, the population of Renfrew County (excluding the City of Pembroke) was expected to reach 83,972 by 2015. Based on 2006 Statistics Canada data, the population of Renfrew County (excluding Pembroke) was 83,209 persons. Even using the high growth scenario, the population of the County is expected to exceed its projections for 2015. Several areas, such as McNab/Braeside, Renfrew, Whitewater Region, Laurentian Valley and Petawawa have already exceeded the high growth projections.

## Household Trends

While population is an important indicator in housing markets, housing need is more directly related to the number and type of households as the range of dwelling units required in a housing market corresponds directly to the characteristics and trends of households comprising the Renfrew County housing market.

- In 2006, there were 39,225 households within the County of Renfrew (including the City of Pembroke). From 1991 to 2006 the number of households grew by 5,585 households or 16.6%.
- In 2006, the greatest number of households were located in Pembroke (6,012) and Petawawa (5,329) followed by Renfrew (3,549), Laurentian Valley (3,397) and Arnprior (3,158).
- The household growth rate from 2001 to 2006 was 6.2% in the County of Renfrew, only slightly below the provincial rate of 7.9%. During this period, areas such as Greater Madawaska (21.9%), Horton (9.5%), Laurentian Valley (8.9%), McNab/Braeside (8.9%) and Petawawa (7.1%) all had higher household growth rates than experienced by the County as a whole.
- By area municipality, the following trends for 1991 to 2006 were identified:
  - Township of Greater Madawaska (Calabogie) experienced the greatest percentage change at 72.8% (or 506 households) from 1991 to 2006 followed by North Algona Wilberforce at 30.5% (131 households).
  - The Town of Petawawa, however, experienced the greatest increase in number of households (944 households or by 21.5%) followed by McNab/Braeside (599 households or 28.7%).
  - Petawawa and Laurentian Valley also experienced comparatively higher increases in household growth at 20.7% and 30.5% respectively.
  - Pembroke experienced slower household growth (287 households or 5%) during this time period.
  - Deep River experienced an overall slight decline in number of households from 1991 to 2006 (0.1%), although showed an increase of 4.6% from 2001 to 2006.
- The County of Renfrew does not currently have household projections.

Figure S 2: Trends in Household Growth by Municipality, Renfrew County, 2001-2006



Note: 2006 figures are the number private dwellings occupied by usual residents  
 Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 and 2006 Census of Canada

Given these trends in household and population growth and the lack of projections currently in place, there is a need to monitor future growth and ensure an adequate supply of housing in the future.

## 2. Changing demographic, social and economic trends point to the need for a more diverse and flexible housing supply

The Need and Demand Analysis found that there are a number of changing demographic, social and economic trends that stress the need for a diverse housing supply.

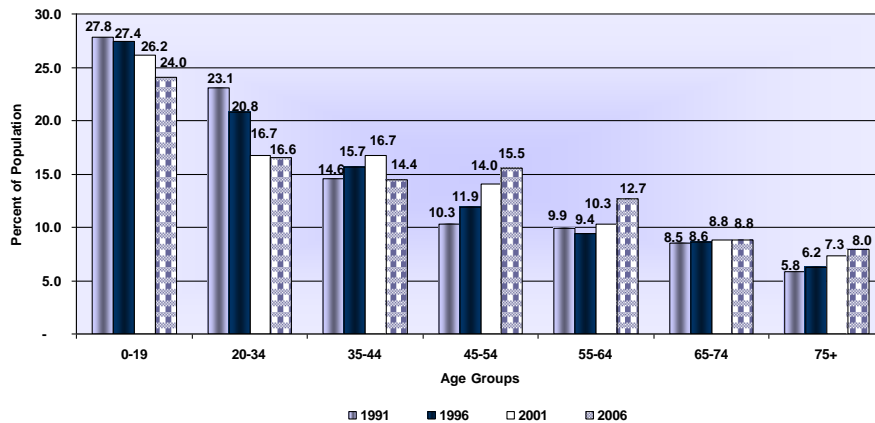
### Age Distribution

The first such trend is the strong variation in age distribution within the County. Overall, the population is aging. The following outlines specific trends identified within the Need and Demand Analysis:

- All age categories over the age of 45 showed an increase in population from 1991 to 2006. This is similar to the population growth trends throughout the province. The greatest increase in the proportion of total population was in the 45 to 54 age range (by 5.2% or 5,675 persons).
- All age categories under the age of 44 years showed a decline in their proportion of the population from 2001 to 2006.
- In 2006, seniors (over the age of 65) represented 16.8% of the total population; an increase of 2.5% or 3,222 individuals.
- Areas which showed a higher population growth also tend to show a lower proportion of seniors and higher proportion of youth (under the age of 34), suggesting a number of younger families and individuals moving into these areas (i.e. Petawawa, Laurentian Valley, Laurentian Hills, Horton and McNab/Braeside).

- The areas of Greater Madawaska (22.1%), Renfrew (22.5%), Pembroke (21.8%), Deep River (21.1%) and Madawaska Valley (23.1%) all had over one-fifth of their population over the age of 65 in 2001.

Figure S 3: Trends in Age Distribution (Percent of Total Population), Renfrew County, 1991-2006



Source: Statistics Canada; 1991, 1996, 2001 & 2006 Census of Canada

### Household Size and Type

A second trend identified in the Need and Demand Analysis is that household size and type is changing signalling a need to respond to changing demand.

- In 2001, the number of one and two bedroom households represented over 60% of the total number of households; an increase of approximately 5% (or 3,645 persons) from 1991.
- There is also some variation in household type. For example, areas such as McNab/Braeside (83.4%), Laurentian Valley (85.4%) and Petawawa (83.1%) had a greater proportion of family households compared with other areas, while areas such as Arnprior (34.0%), Renfrew (38.5%) and Pembroke (36.0%) all had a greater proportion of non-family households compared to other areas in the County.
- In 2001, non-family households represented 26.3% of all households.

### Labour Market

A third trend pointing to the need for a varied and flexible housing supply is the diversity within the Renfrew County labour market.

- As of 2001, Renfrew County had a labour force of 46,685 workers.
- Analysis of the County's labour market found that manufacturing is the largest employment industry within the County employing 6,950 workers in 2001. Manufacturing also showed the greatest percentage growth in its proportion of the labour force increasing by 1.3% from 1996 to 2001. Its overall rate of growth (in labour force) over this time period was 8%.
- Other industries showing growth include healthcare and social assistance (4%), construction (11%), educational services (1%) and finance and insurance (40%).

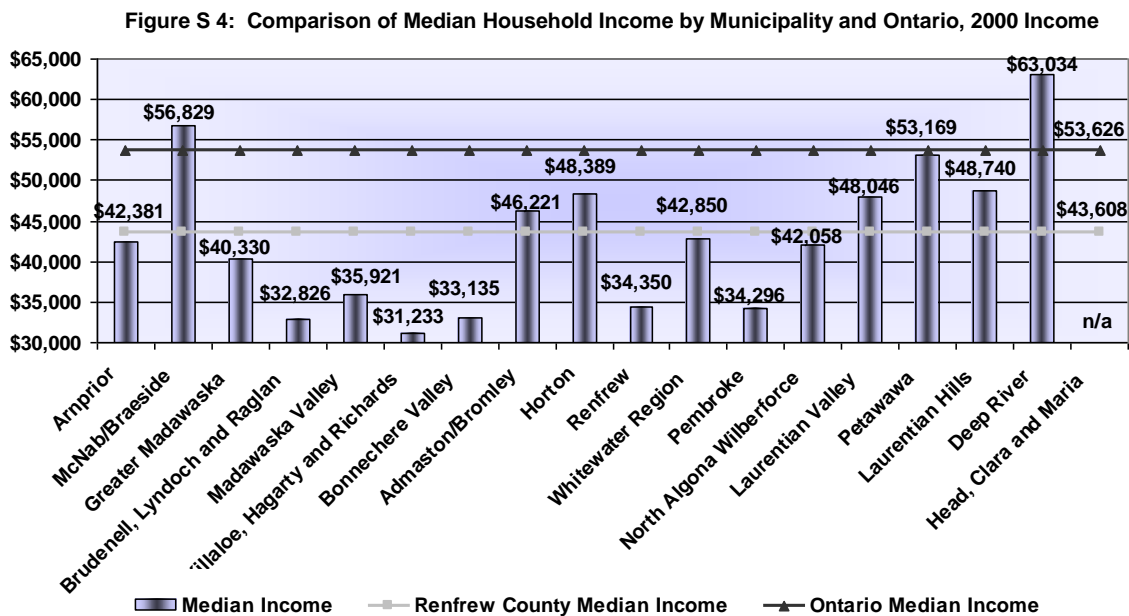
- While there is strong growth in manufacturing and construction which tend to be higher paying industries, those industries which tend to be lower paying, such as retail trade and accommodation and food services, also represent a large portion of the labour force (17.7%).
- In addition, in 2001 there were 21,780 workers (46% of those employed) employed in seasonal jobs.

The range in labour force by employment points to the need for a diversified housing supply in order to meet the housing needs of all residents within the County.

### Income

Varying incomes and affordability levels within the County point further to the need for a diverse housing supply.

- The average household income in Renfrew County, in 2000, was \$50,836. The median household income for the County was \$43,888. Using the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the estimated average household income would have been \$57,961 and the estimated median household income would have been \$49,888 in 2006.
- There is approximately a \$30,000 difference between the area with the highest median household income (Deep River at \$63,034) and the area with the lowest median household income (Killaloe, Hargarty and Richards at \$31,233). This clearly demonstrates the diversity of incomes among areas within the County of Renfrew and the need for a housing supply to respond to these income needs.



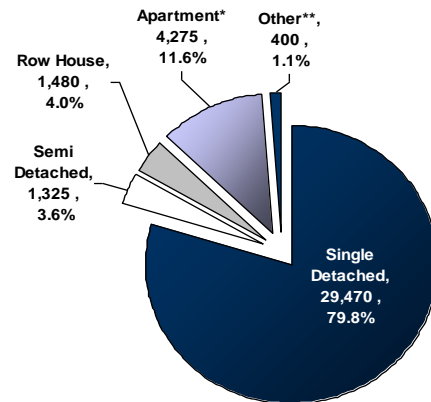
Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada

## Housing Supply

The recent housing activity presented within the Need and Demand Analysis indicates that the housing supply is not showing signs of diversifying. The following are some key trends identified in the Need and Demand Analysis:

- Single detached dwellings comprised almost 80% of the housing stock in 2001. The number of single detached homes increased by 3,710 units from 1991 to 2001.
- Ninety percent of housing starts in the Pembroke CA from 2000 to 2006 were singles and 98% of the starts in the Petawawa CA were singles.
- While household size has declined and the number of small (one and two-person) households has increased, the vast majority of new housing being built in Renfrew County is single detached dwellings which are generally best suited for families and larger households.
- The rate of homeownership in Renfrew County was 74.4% in 2001; greater than the provincial rate of 67.9%. More urban municipalities such as Arnprior, Renfrew, Pembroke and Petawawa have a lower rate of homeownership.

Figure S 5: Occupied Private Dwelling, County of Renfrew (2001)



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census

These changing demographic, social and economic trends when compared to the current housing supply point to a need for a diverse housing supply.

### ***3. There is a demand for more safe affordable rental housing, in particular for seniors, persons with disabilities, low income families, single parents, youth and single individuals***

The Need and Demand Analysis pointed to a strong demand for safe and affordable rental housing within the County.

## Survey Results

- This need was emphasized in the consultation phase of the study with 13 (out of 35 completed surveys) survey respondents noting a lack of affordable housing as a key concern. Particular groups noted as needing affordable housing were seniors (9), youth (3), persons with disabilities (7), low income families (3), single parents (2), and singles (1).
- The United Way Community Matters survey also indicated affordable housing as a concern. Overall, the need for safe and affordable housing ranked five (out of 43) in its survey results.

### Low Income

- In 2000, there were a total of 10,856 persons or 11.7% of the population in Renfrew County who met the Statistics Canada definition of low income. The incidence of low income is particularly significant for low income single individuals at 33.2% of all single individuals. A total of 2,540 families or 9.4% of families were living in low income in Renfrew County.
- The City of Pembroke has the greatest number and proportion of persons living in low income at 21.4% of the total population (more than one in five persons). Other areas with a comparatively higher proportion of low income population include Renfrew (17.6%), and Bonnechere Valley (16.5%).

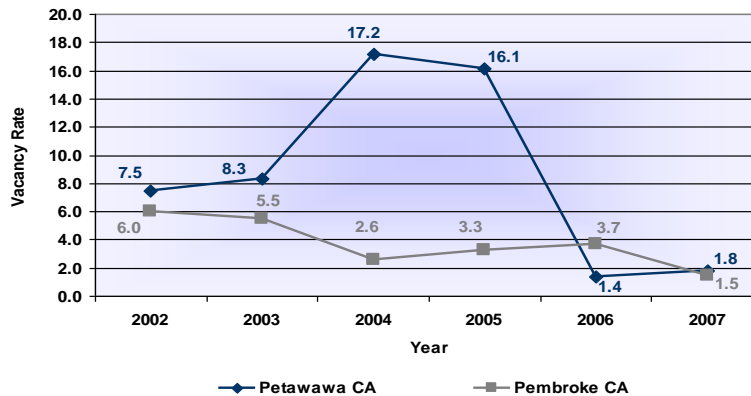
### Income Spent on Shelter

- The Need and Demand Analysis also found that many households are spending more than 30% of their income on rent.
- In 2000, approximately half of renter households earned less than \$30,000 and approximately one in three renter households were spending more than 30% of their income in rent. This is of particular concern in Pembroke which had over half (54.1% 1,185 households) of its renter households spending more than 30% of their income on rent.
- Other areas with a greater proportion of renter households spending more than 30% of their income on rent include Renfrew (44.6% or 570 households) and Arnprior (38.6% or 480 households).

### Low Vacancy Rates

- In addition to the trends in low income, vacancy rates have also been in decline showing a strong demand for the existing rental market.
- As of April 2007, Pembroke CA had a vacancy rate of 3.7% and Petawawa had a vacancy rate of 1.4%.
- CMHC data shows zero vacant one-bedroom units in Petawawa and Pembroke at the time of the spring 2007 survey.

Figure S 6: Rental Housing Vacancy Rates, 2002-2007, Pembroke and Petawawa



Note: 2007 figures as of April

Source: CMHC Rental Market Reports 2003-2007 Q1

Given these findings on the incidence of low income, income spent on shelter, low vacancy rates and findings from the survey, a key housing issue in the County is the demand for more safe affordable rental housing, in particular for seniors, persons with disabilities, low income families, single parents, youth and single individuals.

#### **4. Affordable homeownership opportunities for first time homebuyers should be explored**

The Need and Demand Analysis found that, like most areas across the province, average home sale prices are increasing in the County of Renfrew.

- From 2006 to 2007 the average sale price increased by 14.1% reaching an average price of \$176,503 in 2007.
- Based on the affordability analysis, presented in detail within the Need and Demand Analysis, the homeownership market is generally not affordable to households earning less than \$30,000 with few options for households earning between \$30,000 and \$40,000.
- Areas such as Arnprior, McNab/Braeside, Laurentian Valley, Petawawa, and Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards would all require an average annual household income of at least \$50,000.
- For households earning the average (\$50,665) household income the homeownership market is likely affordable and meeting the needs of residents. For households earning the median (\$43,608) household income, there are many homes available, however, there would likely be some limitations in several area municipalities (i.e. McNab/Braeside, Petawawa, Laurentian Valley).

**Table S 1: Affordable Ownership Costs Based on Household Income in Renfrew County**

Household Income	# of Total Owner Households (2001)	% of Total Owner Households (2001)	Affordable Ownership (Unit Cost)
Under \$10,000	800	3.0%	Under \$70,724
\$10,000 to \$19,999	2,910	11.0%	
\$20,000 to \$29,999	3,095	11.7%	\$106,088
\$30,000 to \$39,999	3,185	12.0%	\$141,451
\$40,000 to \$49,999	3,455	13.0%	\$176,815
\$50,000-\$59,999	2,855	10.8%	\$212,179
\$60,000-\$69,999	2,620	9.9%	\$247,542
\$70,000-\$79,999	2,110	8.0%	\$282,906
\$80,000-\$89,999	1,605	6.1%	\$318,270
<i>Sub-total</i>	22,635	85.4%	
\$90,000 and over	3,860	14.6%	over \$318,270
Total	26,495	100.0%	

Note: Mortgage Rate 6.11%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census, and SHS Calculations

Based on these rising prices, the affordability analysis, and feedback from stakeholders it was identified that affordable homeownership options need to be further explored, in particular for first-time homebuyers.

### ***5. Aging and quality of housing stock may become a concern, in particular for the rental housing stock***

The Need and Demand Analysis identified that just over half the rental housing stock in Renfrew County was built prior to 1960 and just 6% was built between 1991 and 2001.

- The areas of Deep River (60.3%), Renfrew (62.0%), Pembroke (56.2%) and Bonnechere Valley (52.2%) have a comparatively older housing stock with each having more than half their housing stock built prior to 1960.
- Based on the 2001 Census, 28.5% of households felt that their home was in need of minor repairs and 10.3% felt that their home was in need of major repairs, slightly higher than the provincial average (25.5% and 7.4% respectively).
- The quality of the housing stock in Renfrew County was noted as a key concern by stakeholders (4) responding to the Renfrew County Housing Need and Demand Survey. In particular respondents were concerned about energy efficiencies and environmental hazards.
- An aging housing stock can result in high maintenance and operating costs due to the lack of energy efficient designs and deterioration of a unit.
- During these times of rapidly increasing utility costs, it is likely that individuals in older dwellings are facing high costs for maintenance and energy.

The age and quality of the housing can create affordability challenges especially for individuals and families on a fixed income.

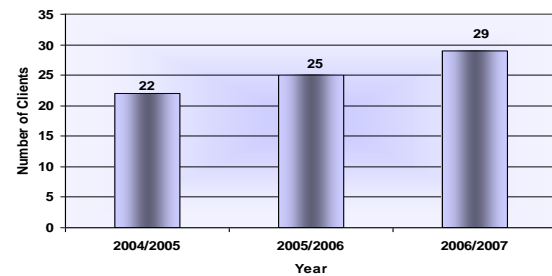
### ***6. There is a need to monitor to the demand for emergency and transitional housing within the County in particular for men, women fleeing abuse and youth***

Currently there are two providers of emergency and transitional housing within the County. Bernadette McCann House for Women Inc. is a 16-bed shelter for women and children operated through Women's Shelter and Support Services and Columbus House Inc. provides transitional housing for youth aged 16-21 years.

- While Bernadette McCann House has seen a decline in clients housed over the past few years, the number of nights spent in a shelter by women and children has increased. The total number of nights spent in a shelter in 2006 was 1,398 by women and 737 by children.
- The current length of stay in Bernadette McCann House is 4 to 6 weeks; however, staff notes that it is often very difficult to secure housing for women in just a few weeks.
- Additional challenges noted were a lack of affordable and suitable housing (security is the main concern) in the Pembroke area. Transitional housing for women fleeing abuse may provide a more suitable option for women and children leaving the shelter.

- Columbus House is a transitional housing provider for youth (16-21 years); it is the only transitional housing provider within the County. Columbus House can accommodate up to thirteen youth; seven at the female residence and 6 at the male residence.
- Columbus House has seen a steady increase in the number of youth served from 2005-2007. There are currently two females on the waiting list for Columbus House; turnover rates tend to be slower for females compared to males.
- There are currently no shelters or transitional housing for men within the County. A concern regarding a lack of options for homeless individuals, including the lack of a shelter for men, were noted by several (4) survey respondents.

Figure S 7: Number of Clients Housed, Columbus House



Source: Columbus House, Supportive and Emergency Housing Survey, 2007

Given the increasing number of nights spent at the women's shelter and youth transitional house, as well as the lack of emergency housing for men, a need to monitor the demand for this form of housing within the County has been identified.

### ***7. There is a demand for more supportive housing for persons with disabilities and the hard to house***

Supportive housing can be defined as the integration of housing and support services for individuals who require specific services to maintain their housing and well-being. Currently, supportive housing providers within the County include several Community Living Associations (Arnprior, Renfrew, Madawaska Valley and Upper Ottawa Valley), L'Arche Arnprior (housing for persons with disabilities) and MacKay Manor (housing for men with alcohol and substance abuse problems).

- The Need and Demand Analysis found that wait times for community living units (housing for persons with developmental disabilities) can range from 3-5 years and in some cases longer. As supportive housing is long-term, once residents are in supportive housing they generally stay for their life time.
- In addition to the supply of supportive housing, Kinsmen Court is an alternative housing provider who houses tenants who are homeless and generally hard to house. Services are provided by agencies such as Community Living, and Community Mental Health. Wait times for this building however are very long. Currently there are approximately 100 applicants waiting with an annual turnover of just 1-2 units.
- The need for more supportive housing options for persons with disabilities was also noted by several survey respondents (7).

Given the concern expressed by respondents of the survey and long waiting lists within the County, a demand for more supportive housing was identified as a key housing issue.

## ***8. There is a need for to provide a continuum of care and supportive housing for seniors and persons with disabilities***

A number of key findings point to the need to provide a full range of care and supportive housing for seniors and persons with disabilities.

### **Aging Population**

- The Need and Demand Analysis identified the trend towards an aging population within the County of Renfrew, specifically:
  - In 2001, the County of Renfrew had a population over the age of 65 of 15,195 which increased to 16,355 in 2006 (by 8%).
  - The population between the ages of 50 and 64 years is also growing.
  - The need to ensure housing options for this population is critical.

### **Supportive and Assisted Housing**

- The Need and Demand Analysis survey noted a lack of supportive and assisted housing options for seniors (9) and persons with disabilities (7); the second and third most noted comments following the need for more affordable housing.
- The lack of supportive housing is resulting in many seniors and persons with disabilities to be forced to live in a Long-Term-Care (LTC) home. Stakeholders have noted that often minimal supports are all that is required to keep seniors in their homes.
- Discussions with the Local Health Integrated Network (LHIN) further support the need for more supportive housing, as well as supportive services, for seniors, persons with addictions and mental health issues.

### **Accessible Housing**

- The Champlain LHIN noted that there is a need for better adapted housing (i.e. accessible).
- The need for accessible housing was also identified as a key concern within the Renfrew County Housing Need and Demand Survey (3).

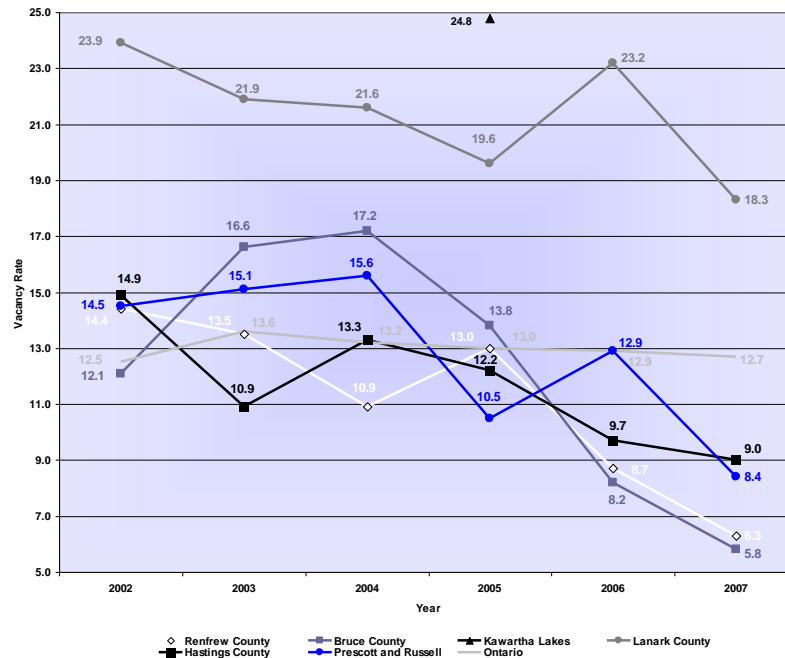
### **Seniors Income**

- In 2000, half of all seniors earned less than \$20,000 and over two-thirds (68.5%) earned less than \$30,000.
- The number of seniors living in low income also points to the need to meet the housing demand of seniors at all income levels.

### **Vacancy Rates**

- Vacancy rates of Renfrew County retirement homes further indicate the strong demand for seniors housing within the County.
- In 2007 the overall vacancy rate was 6.3%, well below the provincial average of 12.7%.
- All bedroom types showed an overall decline in vacancy rates from 2002 to 2007.

**Figure S 8: Vacancy Rates of Retirement Home Beds by Type, Renfrew County, Bruce County, Kawartha Lakes, Lanark County, Hastings County, Prescott and Russell United Counties and Ontario, 2002-2007**



Source: CMHC Retirement Homes Report, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 & 2007

## Supportive Housing

- The Need and Demand Analysis also found that current supportive housing providers (for seniors) are experiencing an increase in demand for services.
- Five individuals are waiting for supportive housing at Marianhill and 116 are waiting at North Renfrew LTC Services (turnover was just two units as of September 2007).

Overall, more options are needed. Currently, there are some in-home supports available (such as meal services, housekeeping and some hygiene services), however, often the next option is a long-term care home; there are few options in-between for seniors and residents with disabilities in the County.

### ***9. There is a demand for more social housing units in particular one-bedroom units***

The analysis of the social housing stock found a demand for more units, in particular one-bedroom units.

- There are currently 1,340 units within the entire social housing portfolio; 921 public housing units, 82 rent supplement units, and 337 non-profit units.
- Social housing waiting list analysis found that overall, the demand exceeds the supply:
  - 72% percent of the waiting list (2006) applicants are seeking one-bedroom units, while only 62% of the supply is made up of one bedroom units
  - 20% of the waiting list applicants are waiting for a two-bedroom unit; however, the supply is just 15% of the total supply

- 8% of the waiting list applicants are seeking a three-bedroom unit; however, 17% of the supply of social housing stock is comprised of three-bedroom units.
- 2% of the waiting list applicants are seeking a four-bedroom unit; however, 5% of the supply is comprised of four-bedroom units<sup>1</sup>.
- By area, the demand is generally consistent with the supply, for example:
  - 45% of waiting list applicants are waiting for a unit in Pembroke which comprises 43% of the housing stock
  - 18% of the social housing stock is located in Renfrew and 19% of the waiting list applicants are seeking housing in Renfrew
  - 24% of the social housing stock is located in Arnprior while comprising 23% of the waiting list applicants
  - The only exception is in Palmer Rapids which contains 2% of the social housing stock yet just 0.3% of the waiting list.
- Waiting list analysis also shows that the number of applicants on the waiting list has increased steadily. In 2002, the number of applicants was at 470 increasing by 191 applicants or 41% by 2006.
- Wait times for individuals housed in 2006 range from just one month to up to two years. Turnover rates in several areas, in particular in Pembroke, suggest a longer wait time of up to several years. Wait times are generally longer for one-bedroom units and are generally longest in Pembroke, Barry's Bay, Renfrew, and Arnprior.

Given the increasing number of applicants waiting for social housing (in all buildings), and long wait times, a demand for more social housing units, in particular one-bedroom units, has been identified as a key housing issue.

### ***10. Rural residents within Renfrew County face challenges in accessing services***

Based on the Need and Demand Analysis as well as consultation results from the first community consultation session (June 2007), the challenges facing rural residents in accessing services was identified as a key housing issue.

- The lack of transportation and access to services was noted as a concern by two survey respondents as well as by members attending community consultation sessions.
- Access to services was of particular concern for persons with disabilities, seniors, and low-income families.
- Supportive housing for persons with disabilities is also more generally located in larger centres (i.e. Renfrew, Pembroke, Barry's Bay, and Arnprior).
- There is currently no public transportation to accommodate rural residents from accessing services. Most services (i.e. hospitals and medical care) are located in the larger urban centres.

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<sup>1</sup> It is noted that applicants waiting for larger units (i.e. three and four bedroom units) often represent at least five individuals.

- LTC homes within the County, which are generally the more affordable option for seniors who require more care, are located only in Renfrew (2), Cobden (1), Deep River (2), Arnprior (1), Barry's Bay (1) and Pembroke (2).

Lack of public transportation, access to services and lack of supportive and long term care facilities are some of the key challenges faced by rural residents which have a impact on housing need and demand.

### 3.0 Recommendations on Policies and Actions (Part 2)

Part 2 of the study identifies a number of opportunities for the County of Renfrew and area municipalities to expand on the supply of affordable housing and meet the housing needs of County residents. These opportunities require a strong commitment from all levels of government, the private sector, service agencies and local communities to work together to realize success.

It is not intended that each of the recommended options for policy and action be initiated immediately nor is it intended that these options be the sole responsibility of the County. These recommendations represent short, medium and longer term strategies and require the coordination of many stakeholders to have the full impact achieved. An implementation plan should be developed to provide direction on the County's approach to implementing the various options for policy and action.

The set of Recommendations for Policies and Action are grouped by five key housing directions:

#### **Strategic Direction 1: Options for Housing Choices**

*Provide Housing Choices for all Residents in Renfrew County.*

This housing direction addresses the following key housing issues:

- *There is a need to ensure that there is an adequate supply of housing opportunities in the future in particular in high growth areas*
- *Changing demographic, social and economic trends point to the need for a more diverse and flexible housing supply*

#### **Strategic Direction 2: Options for Housing Affordability**

*Ensure Affordable Housing Options are available to all Residents of Renfrew County.*

This housing direction addresses the following key housing issues:

- *There is a demand for more safe affordable rental housing, in particular for seniors, persons with disabilities, low income families, single parents, youth and single individuals*
- *Affordable homeownership opportunities for first time homebuyers should be explored*

#### **Strategic Direction 3: Options for Housing Quality**

*Maintain and Preserve the Existing Housing Stock within the County.*

This housing direction addresses the following key housing issue:

- *Aging and quality of housing stock may become a concern, in particular for the rental housing stock*

**Strategic Direction 4: Options for Housing Supports and Services**

*Expand the Range of Housing Support and Service Opportunities for Renfrew County Residents.*

This housing direction addresses the following key housing issues:

- *There is a need to monitor the demand for emergency and transitional housing within the County in particular for men, women fleeing abuse and youth*
- *There is a demand for more supportive housing for persons with disabilities and the hard to house*
- *There is a need for to provide a continuum of care and supportive housing for seniors and persons with disabilities*
- *There is a demand for more social housing units in particular one-bedroom units*
- *Rural residents within Renfrew County face challenges in accessing services*

**Strategic Direction 5: Options for Housing Coordination**

*Pursue Community Partnerships and Increase Public Awareness of Housing Issues within the County.*

This housing direction addresses all key housing issues through the promotion of effective communication and coordination in meeting all housing needs.

The following Table summarizes the recommended options for policies and actions, identifies timeframes and priority levels, and identifies options for partnerships. The timeframe has been organized into short (0-2 years), medium (3-5 years) and longer term strategies (5+ years). Due to the nature of some of the policy options, a timeframe of 'on-going' has been identified where appropriate. Medium and longer term strategies are identified as having a 'lower' priority level while short term strategies are identified as having a 'higher' priority level. In some cases a short term strategy has been identified as 'immediate' in order to emphasize its high level of priority.

Timeframe and Priority Level	Options for Policies and Actions	Options for Partnerships
<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1: OPTIONS FOR HOUSING CHOICES</b>		
SHORT (Higher)	1. That the County of Renfrew, using the recently released 2006 Census figures, update its population projections and establish household projections for the County and area municipalities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (Lower)	2. That the County of Renfrew consider incorporating additional specific housing policy statements and objectives within its Official Plan, as appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (Lower)	3. That the County of Renfrew consider putting in place a system to monitor new housing production and mix on a regular (i.e. annually) basis to support the development of an appropriate range and mix of housing options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (Lower)	4. That the County of Renfrew, upon completion of housing projections and updating population projections, establish affordable housing targets to ensure development is responding to demand for housing within County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (Lower)	5. That the County of Renfrew encourage all area municipalities to consider permitting accessory apartments in all residential zones, subject to appropriate standards of health and safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> </ul>
<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2: OPTIONS FOR HOUSING AFFORDABILITY</b>		
MEDIUM (Lower)	6. That the County of Renfrew promote the principles of Flex Housing, in particular for units created under the Affordable Housing Program as well as other affordable housing developments as appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> <li>• Private sector (i.e. builders/developers of affordable housing)</li> </ul>

Timeframe and Priority Level	Options for Policies and Actions	Options for Partnerships
MEDIUM (Lower)	7. That the County of Renfrew consider adopting the definition of affordable housing contained in the Provincial Policy Statement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (Lower)	8. That the County of Renfrew encourage all area municipalities to consider permitting garden suites/granny flats in certain residential areas as appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (Lower)	9. That the County of Renfrew work with area municipalities, federal (i.e. Canada Lands) and provincial government (i.e. Ontario Realty Corporation) to create a comprehensive inventory of surplus government lands and identify which sites may be suitable for affordable housing development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior levels of government</li> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> <li>• Local school boards</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (Lower)	10. That the County of Renfrew and area municipalities consider establishing a “housing first” policy for surplus municipal lands. Specifically, that the first priority in the decision making process respecting surplus or potentially surplus municipal real property be for affordable housing development and that the surplus property be made available (if deemed appropriate based on recommendation above) for affordable housing purposes at a reduced cost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (Lower)	11. That the County of Renfrew encourage area municipalities to consider utilizing alternative development standards on a case-by-case basis for residential developments that provide new affordable housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Private sector (builders/developers)</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (Lower)	12. That the County of Renfrew urge the federal and provincial governments to examine the tax system to find ways to eliminate barriers to the development of new rental housing in Ontario.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> </ul>
SHORT (Immediate/Higher)	13. That the County of Renfrew advocate to the federal government to expedite the implementation of its low-income housing tax credit program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> </ul>

Timeframe and Priority Level	Options for Policies and Actions	Options for Partnerships
MEDIUM (Lower)	14. That the County of Renfrew and area municipalities consider examining the feasibility of providing financial incentives (i.e. capital housing reserve funding, capital grants, grants-in-lieu of development charge, and equalization of the taxation rate), in conjunction with federal and/or provincial funding, to the private and not-for-profit sector in order to support the development of affordable rental housing including transitional and supportive housing on a case-by-case basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (Lower)	15. That the County of Renfrew work with area municipalities, with downtown cores, to consider establishing convert-to-rent funding programs to encourage the creation of rental housing in certain areas (i.e. downtown Pembroke).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> <li>• Private sector (i.e. local business associations)</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (Lower)	16. That the County of Renfrew work with area municipalities to consider establishing tax-increment financing to encourage the creation of rental housing in urban locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> </ul>
SHORT (Higher)	17. That the County of Renfrew investigate the feasibility of increasing the number of County funded rent supplement units in order to provide long-term solution to housing affordability for Renfrew County residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Housing providers</li> <li>• Private landlords</li> </ul>
SHORT (Immediate/Higher)	18. That the County of Renfrew support (i.e. staff time, information sharing) community partners interested in taking the necessary steps to establish a Habitat for Humanity Chapter in the County of Renfrew.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> <li>• Community organizations</li> <li>• Public</li> </ul>
<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3: OPTIONS FOR HOUSING QUALITY</b>		
On-going	19. That the County of Renfrew continue to inform residents and builders of the federal funding programs available to renovate and repair older existing housing units.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Private sector</li> <li>• Public</li> </ul>
On-going	20. That the County of Renfrew continue to participate in the administration of the Energy Emergency Fund.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Ontario Works</li> </ul>

Timeframe and Priority Level	Options for Policies and Actions	Options for Partnerships
<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4: OPTIONS FOR HOUSING SUPPORTS AND SERVICES</b>		
SHORT (Higher)	21. That the County of Renfrew continue to partner with Bernadette McCann House for Women when distributing the Affordable Housing Program Housing Allowance funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Bernadette McCann House</li> <li>• Service providers (i.e. women's support groups)</li> </ul>
SHORT (Higher)	22. That the County of Renfrew explore opportunities to work with the Champlain Local Health Integration Network, as it relates to the Aging at Home program and the funding of supportive housing and support services in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• LHINS</li> <li>• Community health organizations</li> <li>• Housing providers</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (Lower)	23. That the County of Renfrew, in conjunction with community agencies, encourage area municipalities to monitor the effectiveness of their group home distancing bylaw in reducing barriers to the creation of this form of housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> <li>• Supportive housing providers</li> </ul>
On-going	24. That the County of Renfrew continue its efforts to provide information and educate residents on Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation funding programs, in particular the Shelter Enhancement Program, the Emergency Repair Program, Proposal Development Funding and SEED funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• CMHC</li> <li>• Emergency, transitional, supportive housing providers</li> <li>• Non-profit and community agencies</li> </ul>
SHORT (Immediate/Higher)	25. That the County of Renfrew consider partnering with a community agency to approach Housing and Homelessness Branch (Services Canada) to allocate funds under the New Homelessness Partnering Strategy to Renfrew County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Emergency housing providers</li> <li>• Community homelessness organizations</li> </ul>
On-going	26. That the County of Renfrew continue to participate in the administration of the Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Program (which includes the Transient Program and the Staying Put Program) and the rent bank program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Emergency housing providers</li> <li>• Community organizations</li> </ul>
SHORT (Higher)	27. That the County of Renfrew continue to follow the development of the Rental Opportunity for Ontario Families (ROOF) program and as appropriate inform residents of this opportunity for funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> </ul>

Timeframe and Priority Level	Options for Policies and Actions	Options for Partnerships
SHORT (Lower)	28. That the County of Renfrew advocate to the provincial government of the need for long-term funded rent supplement programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Housing providers</li> </ul>
SHORT (Higher)	29. That the County of Renfrew lend its support to community agencies interested in pursuing additional funding from Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) to address the identified needs for special needs housing as outlined in the Housing Need and Demand Analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Community organizations</li> <li>• Supportive housing providers</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (Lower)	30. That the County of Renfrew work with local community agencies providing support services to seniors and persons with disabilities to pursue strategies to bring more support services to rural areas to help residents stay in their communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Community organizations</li> <li>• Rural residents' associations</li> </ul>
<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTION 5: OPTIONS FOR HOUSING COORDINATION</b>		
On-going	31. That the County monitor the impact of the newly enacted Residential Tenancies Act on the creation and ongoing management of rental housing and work with municipal sector organizations such as Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the Service Manager Housing Network to advocate for changes as required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Housing providers</li> <li>• Private landlords</li> </ul>
On-going	32. That the County of Renfrew monitor the development of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards and provide support (i.e. education and awareness) to private and not-for-profit housing providers covered by the new regulation to ensure compliance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> <li>• Community organizations</li> <li>• Housing providers</li> <li>• Private sector (builders/developers/landlords)</li> </ul>
On-going	33. That the County of Renfrew monitor the implementation of the Economic Development Masterplan for any impact or opportunities it may present for the County of Renfrew Recommendations on (Housing) Policies and Actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County (planning, housing, economic development)</li> </ul>
LONGER (Lower)	34. That the County of Renfrew, through the Housing Network, conduct further research into identifying the transportation needs of communities, in particular rural communities, within the County of Renfrew.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> </ul>

Timeframe and Priority Level	Options for Policies and Actions	Options for Partnerships
On-going	35. That the County of Renfrew continues to work with community partners (i.e. Algonquin College) in supporting the actions identified within the 2007 Trends Opportunities Priorities (TOPS) report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> <li>• Educational institutions (i.e. Algonquin College)</li> <li>• Local business associations</li> </ul>
On-going	36. That the County of Renfrew continue to foster close partnerships with school boards to put in place a protocol for notifying the County of surplus or potential surplus school properties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Local school boards</li> </ul>
SHORT (Higher)	37. That the County of Renfrew consider inviting Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to hold a Strategies for Gaining Community Acceptance workshop to provide private and non-profit housing developers, in communities that have experienced not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY), with strategies for gaining community acceptance of their propose projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• CMHC</li> <li>• Private sector</li> <li>• Supportive housing providers</li> </ul>
SHORT (Higher)	38. That the County explore the option of having Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation conduct its Homeownership Education and Training Program in Renfrew County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• CMHC</li> <li>• Private Sector</li> </ul>
SHORT (Immediate/Higher)	39. That the County of Renfrew explore the option of partnering with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to conduct its Accessibility Forum to create awareness for the need for accessible buildings and homes in Renfrew County and to begin a multi-disciplined approach to addressing accessibility issues within the County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• CMHC</li> <li>• Supportive housing providers</li> <li>• Private sector</li> <li>• Community organizations</li> </ul>
SHORT (Immediate/Higher)	40. That the County of Renfrew, co-ordinated through the Renfrew County Housing Corporation, establish a Housing Network to initiate the implementation of the Recommendations on Policies and Actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> <li>• Community organizations</li> <li>• Housing providers (emergency, supportive, social)</li> <li>• Community Living</li> <li>• Private sector (builders, developers, financial sector, real estate board)</li> <li>• Public</li> </ul>

Timeframe and Priority Level	Options for Policies and Actions	Options for Partnerships
SHORT (Immediate/Higher)	41. That the County of Renfrew, through the Housing Network, identify opportunities to bring together additional partners (i.e. County and municipal staff, community organizations (including representatives from seniors organizations, accessibility committees etc.), private corporations, builders and developers, financial institutions, support service agencies, housing providers, real estate sector etc.) to enhance the capacity for the development of affordable housing projects and build awareness and acceptance in the community of the need for a range of housing types to meet the needs of all County of Renfrew residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Area municipalities</li> <li>• Community organizations</li> <li>• Housing providers (emergency, supportive, social)</li> <li>• Private sector (builders, developers, financial sector, real estate board)</li> <li>• Public</li> </ul>
SHORT (Immediate/Higher)	42. That the County Renfrew, through the Housing Network, develop and implement a Communications Plan including communications activities to support the recommendations within the County of Renfrew Housing Need and Demand Analysis and Recommendations on Policies and Actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Housing Network</li> </ul>
Annual Basis	43. That the County Renfrew, through the Housing Network prepare an annual Report Card monitoring the progress of the Recommendations on Policies and Actions and reporting on any new initiatives that should be undertaken.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Housing Network</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (Lower)	44. That the County of Renfrew, through the Housing Network, explore ways of better meeting the emergency/transitional and supportive housing needs of residents including the range of housing needs of seniors and youth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• Community organizations</li> <li>• Emergency service providers</li> <li>• Emergency housing providers</li> </ul>