

2025

Report Card

December 3, 2025



We know true collaboration happened when the idea can no longer be traced to one person.

- Simon Sinek

2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

This end of the year update is meant to provide a broad stroke of achievements across all departments in 2025 and update you on the progress made on your 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, with the core focus on the six goals of Financial Sustainability, Workforce Development, Community Wellness and Health Care, Shared Services and Resources, Attainable Housing and Infrastructure, and Environmental Resiliency, as reaffirmed in September 2025.

The Council for the County of Renfrew has laid out a clear path, with clear direction, that includes several achievable objectives over the next few years. You have continued to chart the course for a proactive and collaborative municipal government ecosystem, even more evident by the cross-referenced items throughout this report card.

Administration & Corporate Services

- During 2023, the Director of Corporate Services retired, creating change in the Corporate Services department. Recruitment efforts were paused while the department continues to review a path forward. The Manager of Finance has stepped into the role of Treasurer and the CAO now leads the department on an interim basis, with the four managers reporting directly to the CAO. This continues to work very effectively. The structure will once again be reviewed, with recommendations to come forward to Committee and Council.
- In November, we hosted a successful day of advocacy at Queen's Park Day in Toronto. The opportunity to interact and dialogue with many of the Province's key cabinet ministers is an invaluable opportunity, especially ahead of the annual ROMA conference.
- Staff and Council advocated at the ROMA and AMO Conference with delegations that addressed a wide range of complex issues facing the County.
- Approval was received to move forward with structural change within the department that will transition certain management positions to a more collaborative Associate Director model.
- Once again, we brought many of the municipalities and local agencies together for a Renfrew County Day in October in the spirit of showcasing what local government provides to the public.
- We continue our investigation on the issue of shared services amongst the County and the lower-tier municipalities, with several conversations with staff and elected leaders on the provision of County services.
- We hosted a workshop for Directors, Managers, and those engaged in communications with RedBrick Communications on how to navigate the media and speaking engagements.
- We made the switch to a Committee of the Whole structure early in the year, with an effort to involve all of Council in fulsome discussions.
- The approval of our HART Hub application early in the year allowed us to coordinate our Mesa partners in an effort to continue our actions and advocacy for those suffering from homelessness, mental health, and addiction. A hub and spoke model centred around facilities in Pembroke, the Hub is one of 28 chosen across Ontario. It was operational in October.

- We developed a staff-focused, collaborative effort program to establish our “WHY”; a joint statement on what truly drives us as an organization - not just what we do, but why we do it.
Our purpose is to cultivate a compassionate, collaborative, creative and inclusive environment, providing our community with meaningful support and innovative solutions.
We are proud that this statement has now been adopted across the organization, including County Council.
- We are piloting a Diligent policy portal to work towards centralizing corporate policies and streamline tracking and improve review and renewal processes.
- Hosted the Eastern Ontario Wardens’ Caucus Clerks for the first time in the spring, which brings a wealth of information together from across the Eastern Counties.
- We were proud to host the AMCTO Zone 6 Meeting in the fall, which brought AMCTO staff as well we were delighted to have the President to visit us for the event.
- Advanced work on TOMRMS standards and record retention, especially in the electronic format as we slowly shift to paperless systems.
- Provided email training with the intent to reinforce record retention and compliance with destruction protocols.
- We have had several workshops on AODA training and have formed an internal staff AODA Committee. We had received funding to have an Accessibility Consulting Improvement Plan completed. The County is mandated to report on their AODA activities this year.
- MFIPPA requests are on the rise; historically there have been less than ten a year, and we are at over 30 requests so far, along with many inquiries searching for information pending a formal MFIPPA request.
- Administered onboarding and swearing-in of five alternate Councillors, ensuring smooth integration into Council processes.

Finance

- The 2025 budget was approved with a 5.6% levy increase in January.
- 2024 audited financial statements for the County of Renfrew & Renfrew County Housing Corporation approved in June. Clean audit opinions received with no major concerns noted by KPMG.
- An updated capital asset management plan and long term financial plan (version 3.2) was approved in October. \$61,923,112 of capital work received pre budget approval to commence prior to the 2026 budget.
- Ongoing efforts to replace/modernize the County of Renfrew ERP, Great Plains, prior to end of life April 2029.
 - Consolidation of scheduling software and processes into single platform (UKG), in testing phase as of Nov 2025
 - Payroll software to transition target date pay period 1, 2027
 - Transition to new financial software target date Jan 1st, 2028
 - Revised general ledger structure being reviewed
 - Workflow for common County-wide purchase order system in development

Human Resources

- In April, June, August, October and November, 15 Corporate Policies were reviewed for amendments and/or the implementation of new initiatives.

- **Policy B-01 Performance Appraisals:** This policy has been updated and now includes the use of FAST goals, a new concept being implemented at the County replacing SMART goals. FAST goals are Frequently Discussed, Ambitious, Specific, and Transparent and will be used to drive the performance appraisal process in the County's HRIS Workzoom.
- **Policy B-12 Performance Management:** This is a new policy, designed to cover the non disciplinary component of performance management, that had previously been included in the discipline policy, as well as to outline other non disciplinary measures used by the County prior to using progressive discipline.
- **Policy B-13 Total Compensation Philosophy:** This policy has been developed based on a recommendation from the Gallagher Report provided March 23, 2022, in relation to the non-union market review. One of the recommended administration items outlined in the report was to create a salary administration policy that outlines the corporation's philosophy and process for setting compensation, while ensuring pay equity, internal equity, providing consideration for the consumer price index and market comparators.
- **Policy G-07 Employee and Family Assistance Program:** This policy has been updated to reflect the change in name of our Employee and Family Assistance Program, as Inkblot was purchased by GreenShield. The update includes new portal access information and telephone numbers.
- **Policy G-08 Impairment in the Workplace:** This policy has been re-written to reflect current accepted terminology as it relates to substance use disorders. Previously the policy reflected substance abuse disorders, which holds a negative stigma towards those with these types of disorders. The policy was also condensed with clearer, more concise language.
- **Policy H-02 Discipline and Dismissal:** This policy has been updated to remove the non disciplinary measures previously included within it. It has also had its definition section updated to provide clarity on the terms used throughout the policy.
- **Policy F-01 Staff Training and Development:** This policy was last updated in February 2015 and has been amended to adhere to the new policy structure, including accessible language and formatting. It now recognizes roles other than full time and part time employees, reflecting the broadening nature of our workforce. The policy now recognizes a broad range of learning styles and opportunities and outlines the County's commitment to continuing education and succession planning. It also clarifies the approvals required, funding provided, and reimbursement commitments, as well as monitoring and reporting functions to enhance transparency and continuous improvement. The revised policy reflects a progressive shift toward a learning culture that supports career growth, operational excellence, and strategic workforce development. It empowers both employees and managers with clearer guidelines and more flexible options for professional development.
- **Policy A-07 Criminal Record Checks:** This policy has been amended to include volunteers and an update to accessible language and formatting.
- **Policy E-08 General Unpaid Leave of Absences or Statutory and Non-Statutory Leaves of Absence:** This policy has been amended to include the addition of Long-Term Illness Leave, a new statutory leave introduced into the Employment Standards Act by the provincial government effective June 19, 2025. This new unpaid, job-protected leave of absence is up to 27 weeks in a 52-week period for employees with at least 13 consecutive weeks of

- service who are unable to work due to a serious medical condition certified by a qualified health practitioner.
- **Policy G-01 Occupational Health & Safety:** This policy was last updated in 2009 and has received a full rewrite to update it to accessible templates and language and to bring it in line with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (1990).
 - **Policy A-14 Retirement and Early Retirement:** This policy has been amended and now includes limitations on the amount of vacation employees may take consecutively before retirement, in line with the County's existing vacation policies. This update supports consistent service delivery, ensures fairness across departments, and helps maintain operational continuity. Extended absences leading up to retirement can create scheduling challenges, place additional strain on remaining staff, and delay important transitions or training for successors. By capping pre-retirement vacation usage, we are promoting better workforce planning and ensuring that all employees depart on equitable terms, while still recognizing and honouring their earned entitlements.
 - **Policy B-14 Contract Employees:** This is a new policy designed to clarify employment terms, wage progression, performance management and expiration/termination of contracts for those employees. Given the number of Employees who no longer fit the Full Time or Part Time definitions upon which many of our policies are based, HR created this new policy to provide clarity for the County's contract employees on key areas of importance to staff.
 - **Policy E-01 Hours of Work and Overtime:** This policy has been amended to add an exemption for RCHC and LTC supervisors' time in lieu received for being on call as part of a rotation from their time in lieu of overtime banks. This is being done in an effort to ensure the policy is equitable and treats all staff fairly, allowing the same opportunities to bank overtime without being penalized for also being on call. The policy has also been amended to embed the Public Works and Engineering departments' patrol supervisors on call language that was previously omitted and follows the language from Council resolution OP-CC-19-11-96. Lastly, the policy has been updated to clarify language on the payout of overtime for employees in Group B. This policy has been amended to include clearer language and set out expectations for attending work in significant weather events.
 - **Policy J-05 Employee Recognition Program:** This policy has been amended to reflect the County's new "Why" statement which is "To cultivate a compassionate, collaborative, creative and inclusive environment, providing our community with meaningful support and innovative solutions." This revamp changes our reward structure to align with new award categories that tie into the "Why" statement and removes the categories that aligned with the old core values.
 - **Policy F-02 Travel, Conferences, and Corporate Expense Reimbursement:** This policy was last updated in January 2013 and has been amended to adhere to the new policy structure, including accessible language and formatting. The revised F-02 policy, now titled Travel, Conferences, and Corporate Expense Reimbursement, reflects a significant modernization of the County of Renfrew's approach to managing travel and related expenses. Expanding its coverage to include both employees and Council members, the policy introduces clearer definitions and structured guidelines to ensure responsible use of public funds. It replaces the previous focus on conventions and seminars with a broader scope that encompasses all authorized County business travel. Key updates include the introduction of fixed meal

allowances, explicit identification of non-reimbursable expenses (such as alcohol, personal entertainment, and family travel), and a formalized approval and documentation process. The policy also adds provisions for cancellation reimbursements due to emergencies and outlines consequences for non-compliance, including potential disciplinary action. Overall, the updated policy promotes transparency, accountability, and fiscal responsibility while aligning with the County's mission and values.

- The Human Resources Division staff attended several career fairs throughout the year, aimed at recruitment to positions across the organization. These fairs included Ottawa, Pembroke, Renfrew, Pikwakanagan, Petawawa and Eganville.
- The HR team recruited and onboarded 168 people between January 1, 2025 and November 28, 2025. They assisted with the offboarding of 148 people in the same time period.
- The County of Renfrew is actively hosting Co-op students; we have expanded from hosting solely college/university co-ops to hosting high school co-op students as well. Over the course of 2025, the County has hosted more than a dozen co-op students from various local high schools across the County of Renfrew. All departments of the County have taken students, providing them valuable learning opportunities.
- The County launched Perkopolis as a new employee benefit, providing all County staff with exclusive access to discounts on travel, entertainment, shopping, wellness services, and more. This initiative enhances our total rewards offering and supports employee well-being at no direct cost to the County. By leveraging this nationally recognized platform, we've added meaningful value to the employee experience while maintaining fiscal responsibility.
- In June 2025 the County hosted another successful Wardens golf tournament at Dragonfly Golf Links in Renfrew. \$8,500 was raised to support The Darlene Aikens Memorial Fund at Family & Children's Services of Renfrew County and the Housing and Homelessness fund. 144 golfers attended, which was a sell out crowd and enjoyed a great day of golf supporting these worthwhile causes.
- The County was pleased to be able to provide employment opportunities to 17 summer students occupying positions across the corporation. Supporting summer students is a valuable investment for the County of Renfrew. It provides students with practical experience, helping them bridge the gap between education and the professional world. These opportunities cultivate essential skills such as communication, problem-solving, and teamwork, laying a solid foundation for their future careers, which may include municipal government.
- The Human Resource team actively supported the Renfrew Lanark Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) through meaningful engagement in their strategic planning process and community building initiatives. County employees also proudly participated in the Culture Connect Cricket Match, a vibrant event hosted at the Beckwith Recreation Complex that brought together staff from Renfrew and Lanark Counties to celebrate diversity, inclusion, and newcomer engagement through sport. These efforts reflect the County's ongoing commitment to fostering inclusive communities and supporting newcomer integration across the region.
- The County hosted AMCTO's Municipal Administration Program (MAP) Unit 1 at the County Administration Building (CAB), marking a significant step in supporting professional development for municipal staff across the region. This foundational course, "Introduction to Local Government," was delivered in partnership with AMCTO and featured instruction from local municipal leaders, including the County's own Manager of Human Resources, Greg Belmore and CAOs from neighbouring municipalities. By co-teaching key modules, our leadership team helped bring real

world context and regional relevance to the curriculum, fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing among emerging municipal professionals. This initiative underscores the County's commitment to education and shared services.

- The County hosted PFLAG Canada for an impactful presentation and training session, reinforcing the County's commitment to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and supportive workplace for all employees. The session provided valuable education on 2SLGBTQI+ identities, inclusive language, and allyship in the workplace. By partnering with PFLAG we equipped staff with tools to better understand and support diverse colleagues and community members. This initiative reflects our ongoing efforts to build a culture of equity, dignity, and belonging across the organization.
- The County engaged local youth through high school outreach and participation in the HIEC career lab, with members of the County's Human Resources team delivering interactive presentations on careers in municipal government. These sessions provided students with valuable insights into public sector opportunities, career pathways, and the skills needed to succeed in a dynamic workplace. By connecting directly with the next generation of talent, the HR team helped demystify municipal careers and reinforced the County's role as an employer of choice.
- The County collaborated with members of the Renfrew County Administrators Group (RAG) to host Day 3 of Advancing Truth and Reconciliation in the County, hosting over 50 employees from across the RAG membership at the County Administration building in a meaningful day exploring respect for Indigenous people and cultures. The RAG subcommittee on Truth and Reconciliation, which is represented by HR Manager Greg Belmore, crafted a statement, which was endorsed by County Council in November and reads as follows:

- **Renfrew County Administrators Group Reconciliation Commitment Statement**

Algonquin College's Pembroke Campus, the City of Pembroke, County of Renfrew, Family and Children's Services of Renfrew County, Pembroke Regional Hospital, Renfrew County and District Health Unit, the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board (RCCDSB), and the Renfrew County District School Board (RCDSB) acknowledge the deep and lasting harm caused by past and present policies and systems and how these actions have perpetuated continued racism, upheld systematic barriers, and have had lasting effects on Indigenous people. We acknowledge that we, through silence or inaction, have not always led to confront these truths or to support healing.

To the Algonquin people and to all Indigenous peoples who call this region home: we are deeply sorry. We are sorry for the pain and loss that has been experienced, and for the generations who continue to live with this legacy. We are sorry for not always listening, for not always understanding, and for the times when we did not act.

To all non-Indigenous people, we are sorry that our systems were built without the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge, ways of knowing and being, and without intercultural understanding and appreciation. Upholding these systems has led to imposed colonial thinking, implicit bias, and has created divisions, misunderstandings, and a collective loss that impacts us all.

An apology alone is not enough. Reconciliation requires meaningful action, consistent effort, and honest reflection. As we reflect on these truths, we do so with both sorrow and hope: sorrow for the injustices that have caused such deep, lingering and searing pain, and we express hope for the healing and renewal that can come from working together.

In moving forward, our organizations commit to systemic change rooted in:

- Respect for Indigenous Peoples & Cultures
- Humility & Collaboration through Authentic Partnership
- Accountability & Transparency
- Cultural Safety & Competency
- Community-Centred & Holistic Approaches
- Commitment to Education & Life-long Learning
- Relationships & Sustainability

We will:

- listen with openness to Indigenous voices and perspectives, and to build relationships grounded in respect, partnership, and trust.
 - educate ourselves, each other and the community about the history and ongoing impacts of colonialism.
 - seek meaningful opportunities, both large and small to advance the spirit and intent of reconciliation through our decisions, policies, and services.
 - walk alongside Indigenous Peoples, especially the Algonquin, to create a future that honours truth, respects sovereignty, and builds a more just, inclusive, and sustainable community for all.
- The County of Renfrew established its first dedicated Health, Safety & Wellness Coordinator position, delivering transformative results across departments. Achievements include modernizing programs to ensure legislative compliance, updating policies, overhauling and standardizing SOPs for clarity and consistency, launching a dynamic monthly wellness newsletter, and initiating a suite of engaging wellness campaigns. The coordinator also developed and delivered a robust calendar of health and safety training sessions, many of which were extended to lower-tier municipalities.
 - In 2025, we provided HR services to the following local municipalities:
 - Town of Renfrew;
 - Township of Bonnechere Valley;
 - Township of Greater Madawaska;
 - Township of Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards;
 - Township of McNab/Braeside;
 - Township of Madawaska Valley;
 - Township of North Algona Wilberforce; and
 - Township of Whitewater Region.

Information Technology

The County's IT department remains committed to modernizing infrastructure and supporting the strategic objectives of the organization. Investments in network, hardware, and software ensure reliable, secure, and scalable technology solutions for all departments.

- Implemented enhancements to cybersecurity controls, incorporating advanced managed endpoint protection as well as network detection and response capabilities.
- Numerous network connectivity upgrades have been implemented primarily at hard-to-service remote sites for improved communication and streamlined workflows.
- Information Technology fit-up for the new HART Hub facilities in Pembroke.
- Due to growth of the corporate network, an upgrade was completed to support the County's virtual server environment, introducing enhanced capabilities for disaster recovery and business continuity.
- Deployment of new virtual server technologies for ICON connectivity in the Provincial Offences Administration.
- Wi-Fi infrastructure refresh at Miramichi Lodge to support the increasing demands from resident use.
- Completed a Windows 11 operating system migration across the entire fleet of County computers.
- Surplus IT equipment was sold to County staff through silent auctions, which kept 168 items out of electronic waste recycling and generated over \$7,000.

Provincial Offences

- **Formation of Local POA Court Committee**

Building on the success of the East Region Spring Forum, a Local POA Court Committee was established in 2025. This committee brings together key stakeholders, including the Local Administrative Justice of the Peace, police and enforcement agencies, court management, the Crown Attorney's Office, defence counsel, and prosecutors. The committee will meet twice annually to address operational concerns, review case management practices, and discuss legislative changes and new initiatives.

- **Part III Prosecution Transfer**

Work continues on the proposed transfer of Part III prosecutions. The Crown Attorney's Office plans to present this matter to County Council for further consideration.

- **Automated Speed Enforcement Program**

The Automated Speed Enforcement program was in the final stages to go live and be implemented through the POA; however, recent changes to provincial legislation resulted in the cancellation of the program.

- **Technology Modernization**

In 2025, several technology enhancements were implemented to improve operational efficiency for court staff, including the full digitalization of prosecutorial disclosure. The provincial ICON (Integrated Court Offence Network) system has received renewed commitment from the province for a comprehensive modernization. Dedicated working groups have been established, and while implementation will take several years, this initiative is a significant step toward modernizing court operations and enhancing service delivery.

Community Services

Accomplishments

- Developed and launched the Department's first Community Services Strategic Plan, establishing a unified vision and clear priorities for 2025–2027.
- Enhanced collaboration across divisions by introducing shared Standard Operating Procedures and creating structured opportunities for frontline input into program and departmental decisions.
- Strengthened staff empowerment through improved onboarding, delegated decision-making authority, and clearer communication pathways that support independent professional judgment.
- Engaged Envisio Software Inc. to implement a data management and performance-tracking system to monitor progress on departmental strategic goals.
- Completed the County of Renfrew Directed Growth Plan to guide the expansion and development of new child care spaces under the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) program.
- Continued implementation of CWELCC into Year 4 of the 2022–2026 agreement, with parent fees currently capped at \$22 per day.
- Finalized the Child Care and Early Years Plan (2025–2029), providing a strategic roadmap for child care and early years service delivery across Renfrew County.
- Delivered the 12th Annual May Day professional learning event on May 30, 2025, supporting licensed child care centres, EarlyON programs, Algonquin College ECE students and staff, Ministry staff, and Community Services staff. Attendance exceeded 480 participants—the highest to date.
- Secured 261 new child care spaces and allocated them for creation in alignment with the Directed Growth Plan.
- Advanced the French Language Service Plan through increased recruitment of bilingual staff and expanded Francophone professional development opportunities.
- Served on the Renfrew County and District Drug Strategy Steering Committee, providing input to inform the County's drug strategy.
- Introduced a monthly Community of Practice for Community Services staff, facilitated by psychologist David Hesidence, to strengthen staff wellness and provide guided learning on boundaries and emotional support.
- Onboarded four new Community Services Outreach Workers and developed workplans to support high-needs clients, stabilize tenancies, and promote safety and well-being.
- Completed a full reorganization of the department's electronic records, implemented a new electronic filing system, and provided comprehensive records management training.
- Provided all staff with two-day Crisis Intervention Training to enhance competencies in de-escalation techniques and safety planning.
- Co-chaired the Community Response Table with Mental Health Services of Renfrew County to support aligned leadership and coordinated decision-making for HART Hub initiatives and operations.
- Co-facilitated the Mesa 2.0 Gathering at Miramichi Lodge on June 24, 2025, reconnecting community partners and renewing commitments to support individuals experiencing homelessness, mental health challenges, and addictions.
- Implemented Reloadable Payment Cards for Ontario Works recipients who cannot access banking services, enabling more timely payments and supporting the Ministry's transition away from paper cheques (go-live date: July 21, 2025).

- Hosted a professional learning day for educators from EarlyON Child and Family Centres in Renfrew County on September 18, 2025, at Miramichi Lodge, facilitated by Mary Hewitt.
- Participated in Recovery Day Renfrew County on September 19, 2025, at Ma-te-way Centre in Renfrew, hosted by Mackay Manor.
- Hosted an engagement session on October 22, 2025, for all non-profit housing providers to discuss ongoing partnership opportunities in the delivery of Community Housing and to review the new Service Agreement template as existing Operating Agreements conclude.
- Participated in the *Careteam* launch in November 2025, providing an integrated software platform to document and coordinate supports for individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Prioritized housing retention supports within RCHC, which includes referrals to community partners and enhanced data collection related to wellness checks.
- Partnered with Pembroke Regional Hospital for hoarding and high-content pilot to enhance tenant supports. This enabled Community Housing staff to further their professional development in this area and enhance their skillset.
- Participated in National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21, 2025.
- Representatives of the Ending Violence Alliance of Renfrew County will be participating in the December 6th vigil, which is the National Day of Action and Remembrance in honour of all people who lost their lives due to gender-based violence.
- Supported more than 35 households from the By-Name List (homelessness enumeration) to secure permanent housing.
- Collaborated with the Development and Property Department to identify opportunities to expand local housing stock, including the demolition of a single-family home on Francis Street in Renfrew and its replacement with a new triplex.

Development and Property

Planning

- The County has continued to advance its Climate Action Plan, focusing on sustainability initiatives and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Updated online web mapping GIS application – Held a series of training sessions for local municipal staff.
- Implementing New Changes to the Planning Act: The team worked diligently to implement recent changes to the Planning Act, ensuring compliance with updated provincial regulations.
- Implementation of the HYPE (Helping Your Place Excel) Regional Incentive Program.
- Creation of an online Active Consent Tracker available for the public.
- Significant Planning Files:
 - Multiple OLT hearings completed and ongoing (River Lane Subdivision (GM), Laventure consent (MB), Osborne St (MB))
 - Lake Clear Recreational Vehicle OPA
 - Plans of Subdivisions being processed and approved across the County
 - Passing of McNab/Braeside comprehensive zoning by-law
 - Significant Progress on BLR, LH, NAW, A/B and Horton comprehensive zoning updates
 - Consent Applications continue to be processed in accordance with the Planning Act
 - Processing ZBA and Site Plans for Local Municipalities
- Detailed site development plans were completed for Bonnechere Manor & 450 O'Brien, supporting their respective projects.
- Conceptual plans being developed for Miramichi Lodge property.

Forestry

- 45,800 seedlings were planted at the Beachburg Tract.
- Timber harvest operations are projected to generate over \$330,000 in revenue, significantly surpassing the \$180,000 originally budgeted.
- Many meaningful outreach activities were undertaken to promote local forest sector, sustainable forestry in RCF and careers opportunities, including classroom visits, presentations to community groups, forest tours and large career events.
- Members of County Council and local municipal councils were hosted on a tour of an active operation on the RCF and visited Pembroke MDF.
- Construction is complete on the Ireland South cell tower, a critical project to improve connectivity in the region.
- Advocacy continued on major issues facing the forest sector including species at risk and markets for low-end materials.
- Work is underway on the 2027-2036 Forest Management Plan for RCF, focusing on inventory work and consultation with Algonquin communities.
- Increased efforts are being undertaken to address trespass and encroachment issues through surveys, monitoring, surveillance and contracting by-law enforcement support. This included the purchase of a camera for frequent dumping areas, assigning by-law to investigate and pursue charges where evidence is found, and completing surveys for two Tract boundaries with historic encroachment issues.

- Increased measures are being implemented to control invasive plant species on RCF by setting up capacity for spot-treatment in-house. A grant of \$3,500 was received from the Invasive Species Centre to assist with this setup.
- Staff were invited to speak about Renfrew County Forests at several national events, including the Forests Canada conference in Toronto, International Model Forest Network Global Forum in Kemptville, the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers annual meeting in St. John's, and the Alberta Forest Products Association conference in Jasper.
- The County of Renfrew hosted the 2025 annual meeting of the Community Forest Managers and Tree By-Law Officers network in October, bringing 55 County and conservation authority staff from Central and Southern Ontario to our area for 2 days.

Economic Development

- Continued to deliver on the priorities in the 2024-26 Renfrew County Economic Development Strategic Plan.
- Launched Immigrant Settlement Services in partnership with Lanark County and hosted a Settlement Services Forum bringing together partners and services providers.
- Launched the development of a Renfrew County Agriculture & Agri-Food Strategy.
- Supported the potential development of various biomass investment, industrial park land and mine development opportunities across Renfrew County.
- Created an Industrial & Commercial Land Mapping asset tool to promote and support investment attraction.
- Organized and hosted two tours for elected officials and staff highlighting Agriculture & Forestry sectors.
- Hosted the Rooted in Resilience Renfrew County Economic Development Summit in partnership with Renfrew County Community Futures Development Corporation highlighting workforce attraction, youth leadership and succession planning.
- Delivered 5 events in the popular Taste of the Valley series, showcasing local producers and celebrating the region's diverse food culture. A mini Taste of the Valley event was also held during the Renfrew County Municipal Day in September.

Ottawa Valley Tourist Association (OVTA)

- Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) funds received from Pembroke & Petawawa.
- The 2025 edition of the Ottawa Valley Road Map was successfully produced and distributed, providing valuable resources for visitors and residents.
- An enhanced cooperative Marketing Opportunities program was developed and introduced to leverage buy-in opportunities with the local tourism industry.
- A celebratory tourism awards and AGM event was held in May with a revamped Ottawa Valley Tourism Conference delivered in October.

Enterprise Renfrew County (ERC)

- Two successful sessions of the Starter Company Plus program were delivered in the spring and fall, supporting local entrepreneurs with funding and mentorship opportunities.

- The Summer Company program was successfully delivered, providing students with the tools and resources to launch and manage their own businesses.
- A series of engaging workshops and events were hosted during the Francophone Entrepreneur Networking event in March and Small Business Month in October, offering valuable resources and networking opportunities for local businesses.
- A total of 30+ webinars and events for over 500 participants.

RCHC Capital / Real Estate & Property

In 2025, RCHC and Real Property delivered one of the largest combined capital and maintenance programs in recent years.

- RCHC invested roughly \$4.5 million in capital renewal, repairs, and redevelopment projects.
- Real Property invested over \$2.1 million, driven largely by new construction starts for new paramedic bases.
- Continued advancing multi-year projects such as:
 - Whitewater Paramedic Base- Land purchase (new construction)
 - 135 Francis Street (new triplex build)
 - 224 Vimy (office conversion to 2-bedroom housing unit)
 - 700 Mackay transitional housing wings
- Completed the full inspection of all RCHC balconies and walkways, identifying repairs, implementing risk mitigation, and advancing structural improvements.
- Used the new Building Condition Assessment as a strategic roadmap, prioritizing capital dollars toward the highest-need buildings and guiding future investment.

Major Capital Projects (RCHC + Real Property)

Completed a significant number of capital projects across both portfolios, including:

- **Bronx & Reynolds** – full exterior door replacements.
- **EV Charging Stations** – Level 2 chargers at 450 O’Brien and 9 International Drive.
- **41 Vimy** – porch roof structural correction, new supports, drainage improvements.
- **Whitewater Paramedic Base** – design-build award, site servicing, and commencement of construction.
- **Energy Efficiency Upgrades** – upgraded hallway lighting using incentive programs, insulation improvements, and reduced hydro consumption across multiple buildings.
- **Palmer Rapids** – full septic system replacement.
- **Paving & Asphalt Work** – County Administration Building, Hall Street and Eganville Paramedic Base, including operational improvements for ambulance access.
- **Roof Replacements** – completed at multiple paramedic bases and RCHC buildings including 26 Spruce Street.
- **450 O’Brien Logistics Centre** – retrofitted storage building into a logistics/support hub for Emergency Services.
- **Accessibility Modifications** – record number of completed requests: grab bars, automatic door openers, roll-in showers, upgraded handrails, lever hardware, and height-adjusted counters.
- **HVAC Replacements** – completed several full system replacements and implemented a proactive HVAC inspection program.
- **Generator Installations** – including 80 McGonigal (new standby power system).

135 Francis Street (Renfrew)

- Construction is underway on the new dwelling unit with two additional units (triplex).
- Work remains on schedule with anticipated completion Dec. 2025 and tenant occupancy targeted for Jan. 2026.
- Completed demolition, design review, and procurement for all trades and managed construction oversight in house.

Lea Street – Block E Redevelopment

- Vacated the entire row to complete a full row-house redevelopment, a new initiative for Real Property.
- Instead of renovating single units, the entire block received structural reinforcement, full energy-efficiency upgrades, and a complete interior refacing.
- This pilot project will guide the future redevelopment of the remaining Lea Street row houses over the next five years.
- A successful project with valuable learning curves and strong tenant outcomes.

224 Vimy

- Began converting former office space into a new 2-bedroom housing unit.
- On schedule to be tenant-ready in early 2026.

700 Mackay – Carefor Transitional Housing Wing

- The renovated first floor opened mid-2025, providing new transitional housing units — the first model of its kind for the County.
- Renovations for the second-floor wing begin this winter, with full operation targeted for April 2026.
- These wings offer supportive, case-managed transitional housing with private rooms, shared common areas, onsite wellness supports.

Intake Centre (Warming Centre)

- Continued improvements to support operations, including:
 - New staff office space
 - New bathroom for staff
 - Layout changes to improve flow and oversight

Nelson Street (Future Redevelopment)

- Began vacating the Nelson Street row houses in preparation for redevelopment and/or divestment as part of the long-term renewal strategy.

Vacancies

- Completed 92 unit vacancies in 2025 — a significant increase from 78 last year.
- Total current vacants - 50.
- Reduced turnaround times by:
 - Pre-ordering materials (kitchens, flooring, fixtures)
 - Adding additional contractors to increase scheduling flexibility
 - Logging bottlenecks and adjusting processes to improve flow
- Seven long-term vacancies required over a year due to major structural repairs — all now in progress.

Safety & Security

- Installed new ladder systems and rooftop protective devices to improve worker safety.
- Upgraded fire safety systems, including:
 - New fire alarm panels
 - Additional CO detectors and heat sensors
 - Improved emergency lighting
- Completed a significant overhaul of the camera systems at multiple buildings, increasing resolution and improving remote monitoring.
- Implemented upgraded FOB access control systems at several buildings, replacing outdated hardware and improving audit trails.
- Introduced quarterly safety reviews through ESA for a rotating portion of the housing portfolio to ensure compliance and proactive issue detection.
- Implemented additional security measures at high-risk buildings where feasible (lighting, signage, reinforcement, added cameras, better sight lines).

Unit Inspections

- Completed 100% tenant-unit inspections for the first time in over five years, addressing safety concerns, maintenance needs, and follow-up work orders.
- Implementing a new digital inspection and documentation platform (Encircle-style system) to streamline reporting, reduce paper files, and speed response to safety issues.

HVAC & Life-Safety Compliance

- Implemented a strong HVAC inspection and replacement program, reducing emergency failures and improving indoor air quality.
- Continued major life-safety improvements across the portfolio, including alarm upgrades and additional sensors.

Water Heater Program

- Successfully bought out the entire Enercare water heater rental fleet, eliminating long-term rental fees and saving up to \$1 million over ten years.

Laundry Facilities

- We are digitizing all laundry facilities to move fully coinless, improving tenant and staff safety while eliminating the administrative time spent handling coins. Implementation is underway with assistance from IT, with all sites planned to be fully operational in 2026.

Real Property

- Total investment exceeded \$2.1 million, including new construction starts for both housing and paramedic bases.
- Advanced planning, design, and procurement for future County builds and lease conversions.
- Supported ongoing improvements at County Administration Building, Renfrew County Place and 80 McGonigal.

Eganville Paramedic Base

- Completed additional operational improvements, including asphalt paving, improved bay drainage, and upgraded site layout.

Whitewater Paramedic Base

- Major steps completed in 2025, including purchase of property, design-build procurement, site requirements, and commencement of construction.

Workforce Development & Training

- With support from Human Resources, staff completed increased technical and safety training, including:
 - Digital inspection training
 - Fire-safety system upgrades
 - Working at heights refreshers
 - Confined-space awareness (related to septic/roof work)
 - Electrical Safety Training
 - Enhanced contractor oversight training

Long-Term Care

Programs

- Butterfly Model of Care Accreditation – “Outstanding” status awarded to Miramichi Lodge as one of four Homes in Canada to achieve this highest standing. The world-renowned emotion based model of care focuses on understanding and embracing the feelings of our residents diagnosed with dementia. Environmental enhancements that accentuated sensory opportunity now adorn the Miramichi Lodge “Homestead” and have been very well received by residents, family and staff. Bonnechere Manor completed Butterfly “Chrysalis” program in preparation for 2026 certification.
- Certificate of Achievement recognizing an Integrated Approach to Palliative Care – awarded to Bonnechere Manor per the Ontario Centres for Learning Research and Innovation in Long-Term Care. Program milestones aim to improve resident quality of life; support families during the illness of their loved ones and during bereavement; provide team members support and education; and support the continuous improvement of palliative care.
- County of Renfrew Long-Term Care Homes Strategic Plan 2025-2030 – Collaborative stakeholder engagement inclusive of residents, family, staff, volunteers, management and municipal governance culminated in a five year strategic plan focusing on the following strategic priorities:

Bonnechere Manor

Strategic Priority 1: Butterfly Approach Model of Care

- Butterfly Approach Project—Pinnacle North Resident Home Area (RHA).
- Staff training to support the Butterfly Approach model of care, promoting a culture of care that prioritizes emotional well-being for our residents, has continued throughout the year as well the ongoing environmental changes to the Pinnacle North RHA to create a home-like atmosphere where residents and staff share meals and activities, fostering a sense of belonging. Meaningful Care Matters will provide an audit in the first quarter of 2026 to determine our accreditation status for the Pinnacle North RHA.

Strategic Priority 2: Employer of Choice

- Attract the best people.
- Foster staff retention.
- Promote equity, diversity, inclusion & anti-racism within the workplace.
- BM recruited 75 new employees. (65 remain).
- BM has supported 64 student placements from Algonquin College.

Strategic Priority 3: Clinical Best Practice Leader

- Clinical Pathways Programs completed per the Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario International Affairs. The foundation established toward achieving Best Practice Spotlight Organization designation for Bonnechere Manor and Miramichi Lodge.

Strategic Priority 4: Safe, Appealing & Technologically Innovative Home Environment

- Working to expand Sysco Food technology by using Digital Dining software to streamline menu planning, recipes, diets, therapeutics, etc.
- Enhancements to the Wayning Clay Great Hall, family dining and storage area in the Renfrew Rotary Hall and the first floor boardroom.

- LED lighting conversion project completed.

Strategic Priority 5: Campus of Care

- Leveraged AdvantAge Ontario advocacy efforts to expand seniors supportive housing and site is shovel ready.
- Toured Campuses of Care in Ontario consulting with project leads.
- Have participated in delegations with Minister of Housing, Minister of Seniors & Accessibility, Minister of Long-Term Care at Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) conferences.
- Awaiting funding opportunities, while exploring private-public partnership opportunities including a mix of market value properties.
- Auxiliary Committee.
- Supported resident ice cream events.
- Supported transport costs for resident outings to see the fall leaves.
- Assist in the purchase of Christmas gifts to ensure every resident has a gift to open.

Miramichi Lodge

Strategic Priority 1: Butterfly Approach Model of Care

- Expansion of the Butterfly Model of Care.
- Throughout 2025, the environmental elements of the Butterfly Approach model of care has spread from the Butterfly Homestead RHA, 1A to neighbouring RHA 1B.

Strategic Priority 2: Employer of Choice

- Attract the best people.
- Foster staff retention.
- Promote equity, diversity, inclusion & anti-racism within the workplace.

Strategic Priority 3: Clinical Best Practice Leader

- Clinical Pathways Programs completed per the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario International Affairs. The foundation established toward achieving Best Practice Spotlight Organization designation for Miramichi Lodge.

Strategic Priority 4: Safe, Appealing & Technologically Innovative Home Environment

- WiFi capabilities expanded throughout the Home in September.
- Working with Bonnechere Manor and Sysco Foods Digital Dining software to standardize between the Homes.
- Enhancements to furnishings in the family dining room, cafe and lobby.
- LED lighting conversion project completed.

Strategic Priority 5: Campus of Care

- Same information as list under Bonnechere Manor.
- Project Amplifi program integration completed at both Homes. A province wide initiative expediting enhanced communications and collaboration via secure sharing of electronic health records between both Homes and participating hospitals.

- All emergency code procedures as detailed within the County of Renfrew Long-Term Care Homes Emergency Plan exercised and analyzed for compliance in accordance with the Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021.

Recruitment and Retention

- Seventeen international personal support workers commenced employment at Bonnechere Manor effectively eliminating the need for agency person support workers.
- Additional Resident Care Coordinator Position – one full time per Home.
- Increased Recreation Programmer hours at each Home.
- Miramichi Lodge recruited and on boarded 97 new employees in 2025.
- Miramichi Lodge continues to work closely with Algonquin College and supported 180 student placements in 2025.
- Miramichi Lodge increased PSW hours further supporting an increase in direct hours of care.
- Increased Physiotherapy Assistants hours at each Home.
- Increased Assistant Food Service Supervisor (AFSS) securing one full time AFSS per Home.
- Increased Laundry Aide hours at Miramichi Lodge.
- Increased Food Services Worker hours at Miramichi Lodge.
- Increased Housekeeping Aide hours at Miramichi Lodge.
- Enhancement of hours of direct care worked (Personal Support Workers/Registered Practical Nurses/Registered Nurses/NP) achieved for each Home (Q2 2024 vs Q2 2025) Bonnechere Manor 3.59 to 3.91. Miramichi Lodge 3.50 to 3.77.

Funding

- 2023-24 One-time Capital funding of \$2,543 per bed to support maintenance and development projects: \$457,740 for Bonnechere Manor and \$422,138 for Miramichi Lodge.
- 2024-25 Case Mix Index Funding Increases: Bonnechere Manor \$489,300, Miramichi Lodge \$452,100.
- Both Homes continue to utilize funding through the Personal Support Worker (PSW) Funding Support 2023-26. This agreement with Ontario Health aims to support the recruitment of new hire PSWs between both Homes.
- Both Homes continue to utilize funding through the Community Commitment Program for Nurses 2024-27. This agreement with Ontario Health endeavours to enhance recruitment and retention for registered nurses and registered practical nurses with incentives up to \$25,000 over a two-year period for qualified applicants.
- Both Homes transitioned from MDS 2.0 classification system to new InterRAI April 1, 2025. Substantial training and configurations required. This was done in collaboration with Ministry of Long-Term Care to standardize coding for LTC homes across Ontario.
- 2025-26 Case Mix Index Funding frozen.
- Miramichi Lodge secured \$28,500 in Local Priorities Funding to assist with medically complex residents and prevent falls. A subsequent application was submitted by ML in September 2025.
- Bonnechere Manor secured \$20,451 in Local Priorities Funding to assist with medically complex residents and prevent falls. A subsequent application was submitted by BM in September 2025 with targeted goal of reducing ED visits and hospital stays.

Renovations and Enhancement Projects

- Bonnechere Manor kitchen serveries renovations.
- Bonnechere Manor continues courtyard/grounds furniture enhancements.

- Bonnechere Manor domestic hot water boiler replacement.
- Bonnechere Manor emergency generator replacement.
- Bonnechere Manor refresh and relaunch of Administration Boardroom, Wayning Clay Great Hall, the Harold Irving Court Yard and Renfrew Rotary Hall.
- Bonnechere Manor made numerous upgrades to fire doors throughout the home to ensure continued legislated requirements are met.
- Bonnechere Manor flooring upgrades continue on the 2nd floor.
- Bonnechere Manor freight elevator upgrades completed.
- Bonnechere Manor Pinnacle North Unit upgrades continue along the road to Butterfly Accreditation Status.
- Miramichi Lodge 600 volt, 600 amp ASCO bypass transfer switch project completed.
- Miramichi Lodge upgrades to nurse call system.
- Miramichi Lodge refresh and relaunch of resident private dining room.
- Miramichi Lodge improved Wander Guard system.
- Miramichi Lodge moved resident smoking area away from the main entrance to ensure safety of residents while improving the air quality at the front entrance of the home.
- Miramichi Lodge continued with LED upgrades to common areas within the home.
- Automated medication dispensing cabinets commissioned in both Homes.
- Improved Wifi capabilities in both Homes with the addition of several new access points throughout.

Paramedic Service / Emergency Management

The County of Renfrew Paramedic Service in 2025 reflects a fully integrated, modernized system that combines emergency response with prevention, community health programming, coordinated service models and targeted risk managed special operations to ensure that every person requiring Paramedic Care receives it where and when they need it. The Paramedic Service continues to evolve into a comprehensive system that supports vulnerable populations, strengthens operational impact, and improves County-wide resiliency and quality of life and wellness as a scalable model being replicated internationally.

Community Paramedic Programs

Clinical Impact

- Community Paramedics continue to expand in-home clinical care, supporting early intervention, chronic disease management, and reduction of avoidable 911 usage and ED visits. Over 16,000 visits and 21,000 interventions to date in 2025.
- Delivery of individualized, patient-centred care plans demonstrating measurable improvements in chronic disease stability, medication adherence, and patient satisfaction. Over 3,000 direct 911/ED diversions through Community Paramedic intervention and over 4,000 diversions through 1-844 line calls to date in 2025.
- Collaborations with over 250 community partners continue to strengthen and expand awareness of, and access to, local health services and essential supports.
- Enhanced ability to assess, diagnose, and treat acute illnesses at home through timely consultation with our point of care testing. The new addition is our Pocus.
- The newly added Nurse Practitioner will be supporting hospital avoidance and reduced primary care burden and support the County of Renfrew employees.

Strengthening System Integration

- Continued integration with Community Lung Health East, increasing access to respiratory assessments, COPD self-management support and action plans, and pulmonary rehabilitation pathways for high-risk residents.
- Expansion of palliative care supports with Petawawa Centennial Family Health Centre, including a new remote patient monitoring (RPM) integration to improve symptom tracking, reduce crisis events, and support patients to remain comfortably at home.
- Active participation in food security initiatives, addressing social determinants of health through coordinated referrals, home-based assessments, and delivery pathways for vulnerable patients.

New and Strengthening Partnerships

- Through partnership with Healthcare Excellence Canada development of social prescribing pathways with County-wide partners, enabling Community Paramedics to link patients directly to community, social, and wellness supports that reduce isolation and improve quality of life.
- Increased system integration with 911 operations by expanding non-transport referral pathways and ensuring low-acuity callers receive rapid access to appropriate in-home or community-based services.

- Implementation and growth of POCUS (Point-of-Care Ultrasound) capabilities to support timely diagnosis, clinical decision-making, and reduced reliance on emergency department imaging for select presentations.
- Strengthened partnership and integration with the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation community, supporting culturally appropriate care, improved access to in-home services, and collaborative health initiatives.

Collaboration and Community Engagement

- Collaborations with community partners continue to strengthen and increase awareness of local health services, enabling smoother care transitions and better access to supports where patients live.
- Enhanced coordination with primary care, home care, and specialist services to streamline care pathways and reduce gaps for high-needs populations. Community Paramedics participate in weekly, biweekly and monthly meetings with various community partners, such as hospital discharge rounds, situation tables, palliative meetings and other regional groups.

Strategic Partnerships and Health System Advancement

- Active participation in regional, provincial and national quality improvement and innovation networks, to advance best practices, innovation, and quality standards in Community Paramedicine.
- Ongoing advocacy and systems-planning discussions in support of stable, permanent funding to sustain and expand Community Paramedicine programs aligned with provincial health transformation goals.
- Collaboration with public health, hospital systems, and community organizations to address population health needs and ensure coordinated service delivery across the County.

Mesa – 2025 Program

The Mesa program has strengthened Renfrew County's ability to support vulnerable residents by delivering coordinated, relationship-based outreach across a large rural geography. By integrating Community Paramedics with mental health, addictions, peer support, housing, and Ontario Works outreach, the program increases access to care, reduces service duplication, and stabilizes individuals who face significant barriers. Through proactive outreach, supportive housing, harm-reduction services, and improved system communication, Mesa has enhanced health, safety, and community wellness across the region.

Strengthened an Integrated, Multi-Agency Outreach System

- Expanded Mesa's collaborative network to include Peer Support, Case Coordination, Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and Ontario Works Outreach staff, and increased our relationships with our Indigenous partners.
- Established shared communication pathways, unified documentation expectations, and cross-team referral processes across the entire outreach ecosystem.
- Improved system cohesion through bi-weekly Mesa huddles, cross-agency reflective sessions, and a County-wide communication strategy.

Launched the Updated Mesa Supportive Housing (Motel Stay) Model

- Designed and deployed a standardized Supportive Housing Model with social contracts and low-barrier eligibility, including updated intake, consent, and care-planning tools.

- Introduced a team-lead assignment model ensuring coordinated case management and wraparound supports.

Expanded Harm Reduction & Drug Checking Services

- Operationalizing SCATR Drug Checking Services with Mesa-ready SOPs, training binders, reference guides, mobile-friendly quick-reference tools, and paramedic workflows.
- Launching a coordinated outreach model integrating Public Health clinic partnerships, safer-supply navigation, Naloxone distribution, and harm-reduction education across the County
- Strengthened alignment with Health Canada SUAP standards, Western University partners, and community harm-reduction programs.
- Public health data:
 - 62% decrease in reduction of emergency visits compared to 2024
 - 60% decrease in reduction of toxicity deaths compared to 2024
 - 283 unique patients served
 - + 3,000 tasks completed in 2025

Built a Shared Navigation & Resource Directory for the Entire County

- Developing a unified Mesa Navigation Tool covering Housing, Mental Health, Substance Use, Well-Being, Gender-Based Violence, Indigenous Supports, and more.

Strengthened Housing Pathways & Homelessness Prevention

- Integrated Ontario Works Housing Stability, Case Coordination, and Community Paramedic outreach into streamlined pathways.
- Improved County-wide referral processes for transitional housing, Indigenous housing supports, RGI/community housing, and homelessness prevention.
- Collaborated with municipal HPP programs to align Mesa outreach with broader system planning.

Prepared for Future System Innovations (Mesa HART Hub)

- Created a future-state plan merging:
 - Drug checking + Public Health
 - Navigation Tool integration
 - Indigenous community partnership alignment (TRC-focused)
 - Centralized service coordination under the Mesa HART Hub model

Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC)

2025 was another year that demonstrated why RC VTAC remains one of Ontario's most innovative and effective rural primary care models. As attachment to a primary care physician or provider challenges deepen across the province, RC VTAC continues to deliver practical, patient-centred solutions that keep residents connected to care, reduce avoidable emergency department visits, and strengthen the overall health system across Renfrew County.

Strategic Milestones & Provincial Recognition

- Celebrated RC VTAC's 5th Anniversary with a historic visit from the Honourable Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. Her recognition as an Honorary Paramedic Chief symbolizes the province's continued confidence in the RC VTAC model.

- The Deputy Premier and Ministers visit reaffirmed the importance of RC VTAC's role as a provincial leader in hybrid primary care, showcasing what's possible when clinical innovation meets community need.

Impact at Scale: Who We Served

- 19,048 unique residents served (2025).
- 75% of encounters supported residents without a primary care provider.
- 6,500+ individuals newly attached to primary care through the Integrated Virtual Care program in partnership with the Petawawa Centennial Family Health Centre.

RC VTAC has become the primary care safety net for Renfrew County—and a model increasingly studied across Canada and internationally.

Clinical Capacity that Changes Outcomes (2025)

In 2025, RC VTAC medical receptionists managed 68,361 requests for assistance, resulting in:

- 20,639 medical receptionist referrals to community programs.
- 4,138 in-person paramedic assessments.
- 3,481 hybrid virtual physician & in-person paramedic assessments.
- 40,103 family physician virtual appointments.
- 200,000 family physician appointments provided since March 2020.

This blended approach—combining paramedics, physicians, and digital tools—continues to deliver timely, effective, community-based care at a scale unmatched by traditional models.

System Impact: Keeping People Out of the Emergency Department

Continued to prevent more than 2,000 emergency department visits per month. This diversion effect reduces 911 calls to Paramedics and helps hospital resources remain available for time sensitive illnesses and injuries - reducing wait times, relieving pressure, and improving overall system flow.

The impacts are further validated through the following two International Publications by RC VTAC in 2025:

- Buchanan S, Cronin S, St-Amant A, Fitzsimon J. Evaluating Patient Experience with Integrated Virtual Care (IVC), a Hybrid Primary Care Model in Rural Ontario, Canada: A Cross-Sectional Survey. J Prim Care Community Health. 2025 Jan-Dec;16:21501319251345741. doi: 10.1177/21501319251345741. Epub 2025 Jun 29. PMID: 40581963; PMCID: PMC12206991.
- Cronin, S., Patel, K., St-Amant, A. et al. Understanding the experience of clinicians and non-clinical staff in Integrated Virtual Care, a hybrid primary care program in rural Ontario, Canada: a qualitative study. BMC Health Serv Res 25, 1274 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-025-13501-2>

Patient Experience: High Trust, High Satisfaction

- A new automated survey system generated 5,000+ patient responses, creating one of Ontario's most detailed datasets on rural patient experience.
- 70% of surveyed patients reported they would have used an emergency department if RC VTAC had not been available.
- 98% satisfaction for in-person paramedic appointments.

These numbers reflect deep community trust—RC VTAC has become a reliable and respected point of care for residents who might otherwise have nowhere to turn.

Integration & Community Partnerships

RC VTAC continued to strengthen coordination with:

- Community Paramedicine,
- Mesa,
- Paramedic Services,
- Local hospitals and health system partners,

Assessment centre services have expanded across Pembroke, Renfrew, Arnprior, Petawawa (two days/week), and Eganville, ensuring care is accessible where residents live—not only in centralized facilities.

Research & Leadership on the National Stage

- Peer-review papers published in 2025 included:
 - Understanding the experience of clinicians and non-clinical staff in a hybrid primary care program in rural Ontario, Canada [BMC Health Services Research](#)
 - Cronin, S., Patel, K., St-Amant, A. *et al.* Understanding the experience of clinicians and non-clinical staff in Integrated Virtual Care, a hybrid primary care program in rural Ontario, Canada: a qualitative study. *BMC Health Serv Res* 25, 1274 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-025-13501-2>
 - Assessing patient experiences with a Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (VTAC) [BMC Primary Care](#)
 - St-Amant, A., Peixoto, C., Bair-Patel, D. *et al.* Assessing patient experiences with a Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (VTAC): a mixed-methods study using an online survey and semi-structured interviews in Renfrew County, Ontario. *BMC Prim. Care* 26, 21 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12875-025-02719-y>
 - Evaluating patient experience with a hybrid primary care model in rural Ontario [Journal of Primary Care & Community Health](#)
 - Buchanan S, Cronin S, St-Amant A, Fitzsimon J. Evaluating Patient Experience with Integrated Virtual Care (IVC), a Hybrid Primary Care Model in Rural Ontario, Canada: A Cross-Sectional Survey. *J Prim Care Community Health*. 2025 Jan-Dec;16:21501319251345741. doi: 10.1177/21501319251345741. Epub 2025 Jun 29. PMID: 40581963; PMCID: PMC12206991.
 - Fitzsimon, J., Cronin, S., Gayowsky, A. *et al.* Assessing the impact of attachment to primary care and unattachment duration on healthcare utilization and cost in Ontario, Canada: a population-based retrospective cohort study using health administrative data. *BMC Prim. Care* 26, 72 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12875-025-02771-8>
 - Impact of changes in primary care attachment: a scoping review [BMJ Family Medicine and Community Health](#)
 - Godfrey L, St-Amant A, Premji K, Fitzsimon J. Impact of changes in primary care attachment: a scoping review. *Family Medicine and Community Health*. 2025;13:e003115. <https://doi.org/10.1136/fmch-2024-003115>

RC VTAC research featured at national and international conferences, solidifying Renfrew County as an innovation hub in hybrid primary care delivery. This growing body of research ensures RC VTAC's voice influences provincial and national policy conversations.

Paramedic Service 911 Program in 2025

The County of Renfrew Paramedic Service continues to meet the evolving demands of our community, facing increasingly complex medical emergencies, while consistently delivering timely, skilled, and compassionate care.

Throughout 2025, the Service strengthened operational readiness through enhanced deployment, evidence-based clinical practices, and data-driven deployment strategies, all aimed at improving efficiency and patient outcomes. County of Renfrew Paramedic Service Operations achieved:

911 Operations & System Modernization

- Ministry of Health approved Treat and Refer/Discharge Mental Health & Addictions and Low-Acuity Non-Emergent Patient Care Pathways, further enhancing the ability for paramedics to get patients the right care at the right time.
- Received commitment for two new paramedic bases in Whitewater Region and Pembroke to expand operational capacity and align with long-term infrastructure modernization.
- Continued implementation of advanced dispatch oversight and quality assurance through the Commander in CACC. Recognized by the Ministry of Labour through enhancing Paramedic and community safety, the Commander in CACC audited over 2,500 Ambulance Call Reports and over 1,000 Incident Reports, while also provided Service Delivery oversight to balance workload, increasing meal breaks achieved and reducing overtime.
- Offload Paramedics at Pembroke Regional Hospital, funded through the Designated Offload Nursing Program (DONP), reduced Paramedics time on offload by over 250 hours, allowing for enhanced availability of crews to respond to 911 calls in the community.
- Supported the response to a critical infrastructure failure in the City of Pembroke that left Miramichi Lodge and two surrounding blocks without water. The Paramedic Service assisted Long-Term Care through dedicated paramedic resources and a mobile RC VTAC clinic, ensuring continuity of care throughout the incident.

Specialized Response: SIERRA Team

- In 2025, SIERRA operations saw substantial growth, taking on more high-risk remote-access missions. The SIERRA team responded to 111 calls, marking a 152% increase from the previous year. New satellite-to-text technology improved communication in remote areas, supporting 32% of all remote-access responses. SIERRA Paramedics also provided specialized support on 18 marine incidents and 25 aerial deployments.
- Recognized as a centre of excellence, SIERRA Team Leadership held a multi-service training program in October 2025 for Cochrane District, Temiskaming District, Sudbury Manitoulin District, and ORNGE sharing the foundations of remote access Advanced Paramedic Care.
- Between March 30 and April 6, 2025, the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service deployed its Sierra Team, Community Paramedics, and support assets to assist Haliburton County during a catastrophic ice storm that devastated the region. This deployment exemplified inter-municipal cooperation and emergency response capabilities, resulting in 164 patient contacts over seven days while supporting critical infrastructure recovery.
- Supported several community events through inter-agency collaboration including Guitars & Gasoline Music festival assessing and treating 15 patients and supported the Council of the Federation Premiers Meeting in Muskoka by providing additional 911 response, a mobile VTAC clinic, and SIERRA Team capabilities.

2025 Logistics and Fleet Highlights

The continued advancement of Paramedic operations, communications, and service delivery in 2025 was strongly supported by sustained high-quality logistical planning, modernization, and infrastructure development.

- Joined HealthPRO Canada to leverage national contract purchasing and procurement. Resulting savings include:
 - 11.5% on new medical transport chairs
 - 36% on thermometers
 - 72% on examination gloves, alongside improved pricing stability for parts and assets
- Established the new centralized Logistics Warehouse at Renfrew County Place, enabling streamlined workflows, improved inventory accuracy, and increased operational efficiency across the entire supply chain.
- Activated five new ambulances as part of the Service's vehicle lifecycle program, ensuring frontline crews have reliable, modern, fully equipped units.
- Achieved certification as an official Ministry of Health vehicle vendor, expanding the Service's capability to onboard new units efficiently and to produce certified vehicles for other Ontario paramedic services.
- Expanded all vehicle inspection tasks to an electronic format, further enhancing consistency, accuracy, and compliance tracking across the fleet.
- Successfully completed Ministry of Health certification, a rigorous regulatory requirement performed once every three years.
- Modernization of Logistical Workflows: The Service expanded logistical support to paramedic and partner facilities, delivering nearly 250,000 items across the County in 2025. Modernizing workflows, centralized ordering and distribution has resulted in greater operational efficiencies through optimized routing, decreased administrative, and order duplications.
- Cleaned, updated, and modernized seven paramedic bases, improving workplace conditions, safety, and operational readiness for frontline staff.
- Supported a fleet of 41 emergency response vehicles and additional support units travelling nearly two million kilometres this year.

As operational demands grow, additional fleet and logistical resources will be required. Continued modernization, including eliminating paper-based inventory and fuel-purchase processes, will further enhance financial, regulatory, operational, and patient-care outcomes.

Emergency Services & Disaster Preparedness Programs

- The County continues to strengthen preparedness through multi-agency exercises, reviews, and coordinated emergency planning efforts.
- Procurement of new emergency preparedness equipment—funded through provincial grant support—enhances County and municipal readiness for disaster events.
- Renewal of key service agreements, including Fire Dispatch and 911 Primary Public Safety Answering Point (P-PSAP), ensures continuity of critical public-safety infrastructure.
- DELTA Program – Volunteer-Based Emergency Response created in 2025:
 - Launch of the Disaster and Emergency Local Team Activation (DELTA) Program, a volunteer-based initiative to support emergency response across the County
 - Designed to augment municipal resources during large-scale or prolonged incidents, including natural disasters, extreme weather events, or public safety emergencies

- 150 Volunteers have received specialized training, operational guidance, and integration with existing emergency management structures, enhancing community resilience and response capacity

Impact

- These combined efforts strengthen the County's overall emergency preparedness, ensuring rapid, coordinated, and effective responses to incidents of any scale.
- The DELTA program adds a critical layer of community-based support, empowering local volunteers to act as force multipliers in emergency situations.
- Investments in planning, equipment, and inter-agency collaboration reduce risk to life, property, and infrastructure, while building trust and confidence among residents.

Public Works & Engineering

Capital Works

- 2025 was another busy but successful year for the Capital Works Division of the Public Works & Engineering Department, with over thirty-six million dollars in capital works completed on all types of infrastructure, as highlighted below:
 - 333 Permits and Municipal Consents
 - 72 different Request for Quotations (RFQ), Request for Tenders (RFT), and Request for Proposals (RFP) documents issued
 - 60.58 km of County Roads rehabilitated:
 - All designed and overseen by County staff
 - 4.5km constructed primarily by County staff
 - 8 County Structures rehabilitated or replaced:
 - 4 designed by County staff
 - 4 constructed by County staff
 - 52.4km of Algonquin Trail completed
 - 42km of former CN Line, as trail, from Quebec border to Hawthorne Lane
 - 6.8km of K & P Recreational Trail leased, with Purchase Agreement in place
 - 9 County Structure designs proceeding by County staff

Administration

Request for Quotations (RFQs), Request for Tenders (RFPs), and Request for Tenders (RFTs) are used to procure supply of materials, consulting services, or contract services for all aspects of Capital Projects that are not accomplished solely by County staff and equipment. In 2025, 72 different procurement documents such as these were drafted, reviewed, and issued by Departmental staff for competitive bids and proposals in support of the Capital Program.

Nearly 500 civic addressing signs have been requested, reviewed, and updated in cooperation with GIS staff. Additionally, on top of the 500 new or replacement signs processed, Administrative staff have been working with GIS to ensure our 911 signage, database, and mapping system are prepared and ready for Next Generation 911.

Corridor Control

- The following Permits and Municipal Consents were processed, to-date, in 2025 in order to control works within the County's road and trail corridors:
 - 130 Municipal Consents
 - 38 Oversize/Overweight Vehicle Trip Permits
 - 55 Oversize/Overweight Vehicle Annual Permits
 - 64 Road Occupancy Permits
 - 33 Entrance Permits
 - 10 Sign in Right-of-Way Permits
 - 3 event in Right-of-Way Permits
- More than 35 different traffic counts were completed, with several other speed studies and a few different intersection turning movement counts completed as well.

A number of developments were also reviewed for their impact on the County's road and trail network to ensure that the proper studies were undertaken and appropriate mitigation measures or infrastructure were incorporated.

Asset Management

- The annual review of the Asset Management Plans for Roads, Structures, and Trails was completed and submitted for consideration. The updates to these plans were based on a large range of inspections having been completed, including but not limited to the following:
 - 423km of County Roads were inspected
 - 179 County Structures were inspected in compliance with the regulated Ontario Structure Inspection Manual (OSIM)
 - 47 Trail Structures were inspected in compliance with the regulated Ontario Structure Inspection Manual (OSIM)
 - 3 County Structures had detailed condition studies and rehabilitation study reports completed
 - 625m of storm sewer was inspected with condition reports completed
- The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) for the County of Renfrew is also nearing completion, with the report anticipated for finalization.

Trails

- Substantial works have been completed on the County Recreational Trails in 2025. The development of approximately 52.4km of Algonquin Trail will be completed and opened before the end of 2025. The Algonquin Trail will then be developed and open from Arnprior to Bissett Creek, a distance of approximately 215km.
- Trail structure AT009 (Jeffreys Creek) was replaced, with design and construction having been completed by County staff. Additionally, the rehabilitation/replacement study has commenced for Trail Structure AT032 (Bissett Creek & Hwy 17), and is anticipated to be completed in 2026.
- A wide range of maintenance activities were completed on both the Algonquin Trail and the K & P Recreational Trail, thanks in large part to contributions from the Operations Division. Maintenance on the recreational trails included grading and packing of the surface, ditching, brushing, dust suppression, bridge deck repairs, and more.
- The Lease Agreement and Purchase Agreement for K & P Recreational Trail from Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority (MVCA), in partnership with Lanark County, have been finalized. These Agreements will add an additional 6.8km to the County of Renfrew's K & P Recreational Trail portfolio. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was agreed to with the Townships of Whitewater Region and Laurentian Valley to facilitate the development and finalization of a Property Transfer Agreement for the former CN Rail Line from the Quebec border to Hawthorne Lane. Once finalized, this will add 42km of Recreational Trail to the County's portfolio.

Road Construction

- A substantial amount of road projects were undertaken in 2025, all of which were designed and supervised by County staff. 57.2km of County Roads were budgeted for rehabilitation in 2025, with 57.2km planned at a budget cost of \$26,886,220. However, due to savings on a number of projects, 60.58km of County Roads were rehabilitated at a projected cost of \$28,881,463. Rehabilitation methods included the below:

- Surface Sealers 0.00km
- Asphalt Overlay 22.46km
- SAMI or Fiber Reinforced Asphalt Overlay 7.23km
- Mill and Pave 5.82km
- Pulverize & Pave 17.64km
- Pulverize & Pave with Base Repairs 6.79km
- Reconstruction 0.64km

The above includes approximately 5.98km of County Road 512 (Foymount Road) which will be required to be carried over for asphalt overlay in 2026. Staff are working with the Contractor to have the project area closed out for the winter and establishing the cost to be carried over into 2026.

The Scratch Coat Program also proceeded in 2025, with a large number of patches and thin lift overlays completed. However, a portion of this contract will also be required to be carried into 2026 and staff are working with the Contractor to confirm the value to be carried over.

Structure Construction

- Construction was completed to rehabilitate or replace 7 different County Structures at an overall projected cost of approximately \$10,594,936. Projects included the below:
 - Bridge Rehabilitations: 2
 - Structural Culvert Replacements: 3
 - Structural Culvert Rehabilitations: 2
- Design was also started or continued on an additional 16 County Structures for construction in the future.

Operations

The Operations group continues to deliver outstanding service to the residents of Renfrew County. As part of the First Responder Community, Public Works is often the first on the scene, working closely with emergency personnel to close roads and manage traffic, and typically the last to leave after cleaning up. The team also continues to focus on modernization and efficiency through electronic tendering and group procurement. Key achievements for 2025 include:

- Roadside Maintenance
 - Mowing
 - Shoulder repairs
 - Beaver dam removal
 - Pothole repairs
 - Sign replacements
 - Brushing and tree removal
- Snow and Ice Control covering 816 kilometers of County roads, following Ontario's Minimum Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways (Regulation 239/02).
- Small Culvert Replacements
- Fleet Management
- Day Labour Crew Assistance emergency culvert repairs

- Trail system maintenance (brushing, tree removal and grading):
 - Total projected maintenance costs for the Algonquin and K&P Trails= \$228,900
 - Structure and surface repairs
 - Ditching and mowing
 - Dust suppression
 - Animal control
 - Legal fees, taxes
 - Signage, gates, locks, etc.
 - Enforcement