

County Council Summary

April 24, 2024

Below you will find highlights of the County of Renfrew County Council meeting from April 24, 2024

Please note that this summary does not constitute the official record of the meeting and approved minutes should be consulted for that purpose.

The [full County Council package](#) can be found on our website.

[April meeting](#) YouTube link.

Warden's Address

Key highlights

- The first ever Renfrew County Housing Summit was held on April 4 at the myFM Centre in Renfrew. The Warden noted it was a very successful event with more than 110 attendees representing various segments of the housing spectrum. During the meeting, council had a chance to watch a summit wrap-up video. A fulsome report will be forthcoming in the months to follow, including action items and a discussion about tangible targets. Warden Emon thanked all involved in organizing the event.
- Warden Peter Emon noted the release of the federal budget on April 16. While the recently announced provincial budget had more direct implications to municipal operations, there were several items within the federal budget that focus on solving the housing and homelessness crises, including funding investments in infrastructure. He remains hopeful that the County of Renfrew will be an eligible partner in the funding allocations and applications when the programs get rolled out, including the \$6-billion Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund.

During the month of April 2024, Warden Peter Emon attended 20 meetings on County business.

- On April 12, he met with MPP John Yakabuski to discuss several issues including Queen's Park Days, Mesa funding for the Carefor project, Ministry of Transportation following up on the ROMA delegation on the Highway 17 brief, Child Care – CWELLC issues, Housing (funding and access/eligibility) for a modular project and housing stock revitalization, Enterprise Renfrew County and the Renfrew County and District Health Unit.
- On April 17, the Warden and CAO met with the Renfrew County and District School Board to discuss items of mutual benefit. In attendance were the new Director of Education Kristin Niemi, RCDSB Board Chair Susan Humphries and Executive Officer of Public Affairs Meredith Caplan Jamieson. The meeting identified several initiatives that the County and the School Board could collaborate on in the future.

Delegations

- Ann Pohl, Judy Sauve, Carol Sulpher of the Kitchissippi-Ottawa Valley (KOV) Chapter – Council of Canadians attended to discuss the Climate Action Petition in recognition of International Earth Day. They stressed the need for immediate action on climate change and the group requested the County of Renfrew take the lead on a Valley-wide Climate Action Committee.
- Jason St-Pierre, Chief Executive Officer, and Lisa Severson, Director of Communications, for the Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) provided an update on the cell gap project for eastern Ontario, specifically on Renfrew County current and planned projects. Approximately \$50 million is being invested in infrastructure in the County of Renfrew to increase broadband service. They also touched upon Communal Servicing Systems projects within Eastern Ontario. Communal services, also known as shared drinking water and sewage systems, provide water and wastewater treatment to clusters of residences and businesses.

Finance & Administration Committee

Presented by: Jennifer Murphy, Chair

- The Municipal Benefits Committee (MBC) has approved North Algona Wilberforce as a member. The MBC is chaired by the County of Renfrew and consists of lower-tier municipalities and partner agencies. The purpose of the MBC is to optimize the management of employee benefits programs, maximize efficiencies in program administration, share information and implement solutions, and benefit from economies of scale. These economies of scale include lower administration costs, higher breakeven points, improved trend factors, the use of reserves and risk sharing.
- County Council approved the Delegated Authority Policy which sets out Council's ability to delegate its powers and duties to staff. The intent of the by-law is to include appendices that would, i) consolidate all current delegated authority traceable to existing by-laws and/or Council resolutions, and ii) address administrative practices by staff lacking current approval via a by-law or Council resolution.
- By-laws were passed in relation to the 2024 Tax Policy:
 - A by-law to set tax ratios for County and lower-tier purposes.
 - A by-law to include a revenue neutral ratio for the Landfill class at 1.189066.
- County Council adopted a by-law to establish the 2024 Tax Rates for County of Renfrew purposes.

Community Services Committee

Presented by: Anne Giardini, Chair

- On March 20, 2024, a Mesa stakeholder engagement session was held in Pembroke. Representatives from the County of Renfrew's Community Services, Development and Property, and Emergency Services Departments participated in the meeting, along with local addictions and mental health service providers. The aim of the session was to exchange information on services and obtain feedback from stakeholders on strategies to better meet the needs of individuals experiencing mental health, addictions, and homelessness.

- County Council adopted a By-law authorizing the Warden and Clerk to enter into a 2024 Ontario Works Administration Transfer Payment Agreement with the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services. An Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement is required to be executed for the Corporation of the County of Renfrew to accept the 2024 Ontario Works Administration Funding in the total amount of \$2,022,000.
- Based on feedback received from the Province on the funding challenges being downloaded from the National Housing Strategy, County Council passed a motion requesting the Warden send urgent correspondence to the Provincial and Federal Ministers of Housing to confirm financial supports will continue for vulnerable households across Ontario and that he advocate to the Federal and Provincial governments to establish a trilateral table to negotiate a final three-year tranche of funding under the National Housing Strategy.

Development & Property Committee

Presented by: James Brose, Chair

- The County of Renfrew held an [Affordable Housing Summit](#) on April 4, 2024 at the myFM Centre, Renfrew, Ontario, with an excellent turnout from interested parties. Topics for the day were developer experiences, updates from Community Services, information on the County of Renfrew properties expression of interest and innovative partnerships, and the Mesa project. Staff will provide a report to Council at a future meeting.
- The County of Renfrew has two designated Recreational Trails – the ‘Algonquin Trail’ and the ‘K & P Recreational Trail’, and each trail is governed by a separate By-law setting the rules for use of the trails. For consistency across the County’s trails, including any future trails, the preference is having a single By-law capable of governing all of the County’s Recreational Trails. A new draft By-law to Regulate and Govern the Use of the Lands Identified as County of Renfrew Recreational Trails as Linear Parks ([Appendix II \(pgs 274-280\)](#)) is available for consideration and input. A notable change in the new draft By-law from the current By-law governing the Algonquin Trail is permitting dirt bikes and motorcycles on the trail. Dirt bikes and motorcycles would require insurance, a licence, and an Ontario Federation of All Terrain Vehicle (OFATV) trail permit. Input on the draft By-law should be provided no later than April 30, 2024 to Taylor Hanrath, Manager of Capital Works.
- Tourism Tomorrow: Cultivating Growth and Navigating Change was the theme of this year’s Ottawa Valley Tourism Conference and AGM that took place on April 16 at the myFM Centre in Renfrew. Presented by the Renfrew County Community Futures Development Corporation, and coinciding with National Tourism Week, event included a keynote address by Sara Norton of Reply All, a welcome to the land and a flash history lesson with Christine Luckasavitch of Waaseyaa Consulting, panel discussions about community partnerships, travel trade and succession planning.
The event wrapped up with the presentation of the [Ottawa Valley Tourism Awards](#):
 - Tourism Champion: Ron Moss, Ottawa Valley Cycling and Active Transportation Alliance (Laurentian Valley)
 - Business/Organization of the Year: Somewhere Inn Calabogie (Greater Madawaska)
 - Event of the Year: Pembroke Regional Silver Stick Tournament
 - Sustainability Champion: Anupaya Cabin Co. (Deep River)
 - New Tourism Product: Ottawa Valley Farm to Fork (Bonnechere Valley)
 - Tourism Marketing: Ontario’s Highlands Tourism Organization (Whitewater Region)

- On April 2, 2024, Pembroke City Council voted in favour to implement a 4% Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) that will be applied to all roofed and non-roofed transient accommodations for overnight stays of 30 days or less with a proposed implementation date of January 1, 2025. The City of Pembroke also identified the Ottawa Valley Tourist Association (OVTA) as the eligible tourism entity to receive 50% of the collected funds. Staff will be working with the City over the coming months to finalize arrangements and develop plans for use of the funds to promote and develop tourism for the City of Pembroke.
- On February 14, 2024, a Request for Quotations (RFQ) was issued to six known service providers for 25 hectares of chemical site preparation at Beachburg Tract. This area is scheduled to be planted with 45,000 white and red pine in 2025 and the seedlings have already been ordered. It is anticipated that chemical site preparation will be necessary this year to control poplar and red maple competition in advance of planting. The area will be assessed by County staff mid-June to confirm that a chemical site preparation treatment is warranted. The estimated cost of chemical is less than \$500. The quote of \$10,201.25 + chemical from Heritage Reforestation Inc., Waltham, Québec was accepted with a maximum price of \$11,000. Significant public outreach and education by County staff will occur in advance of this work, and the area will be signed and closed by the contractor according to the requirements of the Pesticides Act and any other relevant regulations.
- The fit-up on the first floor of 450 O'Brien Road in Renfrew, consisting of 1,744 sq. ft. has been completed and is now functional at Renfrew County Place. Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC), which was temporarily located on the second floor, moved into this newly renovated area on March 27, 2024. Staff continues to look for future interested tenants for the remaining vacant space.
- The GIS Division has created two dashboards to view data/information regarding building activity and vacant land availability within Renfrew County. The [building dashboard](#) provides information on the location, type of unit, and year that residential buildings have been constructed. The [vacant land inventory dashboard](#) provides information regarding the location, size, and services of properties across Renfrew County.
- In partnership with Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), Renfrew County and local municipalities are preparing for an effective response to any future potential flood mapping funding opportunities. This project is aligned with the federal flood mapping framework (NRCan, 2018), of which the objectives of this project will be to identify current mapping status, identify shortfalls in current data and mapping, identify and prioritize areas for acquiring new mapping, and develop a plan to acquire data required for flood mapping and implement flood mapping across the county. Phase 1 of the flood-mapping framework (Flood Hazard Identification and Priority Setting) is complete and has been accepted by NRCan. The final reports are posted on the County of Renfrew [Zencity](#) platform.
- County Council directed staff to undertake an Official Plan Amendment and development of a Regional Incentives Program, enabling the County to offer financial support to local municipalities for implementing their respective CIPs. It is estimated at a high-level that this project could be done in-house and potentially completed in time for consideration of funding levels for the 2025 budget.
- County Council also directed staff to pursue a change to the regulation under the Planning Act to become a "Prescribed Upper-tier Municipality" for the purposes of developing an affordable housing Community Improvement Plan (CIP). If successful, the County could proceed with formulating its own CIP, particularly focused on affordable housing initiatives.

- County Council directed staff to prepare a report within three months on steps to form a Municipal Services Corporation to address communal water and wastewater systems in Renfrew County or join another Municipal Services Corporation and the possible scope of services that could be provided, for consideration by County Council. A Municipal Services Corporation can provide other services that are impractical for a single lower-tier municipality to manage efficiently on its own.
- County Council adopted a By-law authorizing Pro-tec 5, Pembroke, Ontario to act as By-law Enforcement Officers on County of Renfrew owned Recreational Trails on behalf of the County of Renfrew. It is anticipated approximately 27 patrols can be completed before the end of 2024, which is substantially more than past years with paid duty police officers.
- County Council adopted a By-law to approve Official Plan Amendment No. 44 to introduce an Alternative Notice Provisions policy into the Official Plan. The Planning Act allows for local alternatives for providing notice if the Official Plan contains policies specifying details of the method of notice. This amendment would introduce the required policies to allow municipalities to utilize “alternative notice” provisions under the Planning Act. Staff will continue to use print media when available.
- County Council adopted a By-law to approve Official Plan Amendment No. 45 to redesignate lands in the Township of Horton from “Rural-Exception Four” to “Rural-Exception Twenty”. The amendment allows the subject lands to finish the remaining development of the property to proceed through the consent (severance) process, rather than by means of a registered plan of subdivision.
- County Council adopted a By-law to approve Official Plan Amendment No. 46 to redesignate lands in the Township of McNab/Braeside, located along Gunsmith Road, Hidden River Road, and along Robertson Line from the Madawaska River to Hanson Creek from “Rural-Exception Sixteen” to a “Rural” designation to remove the restriction on lot creation for these lands.

Health Committee

Presented by: Michael Donohue, Chair

- On March 20, the Mesa team, in collaboration with the Ontario Health Teams, hosted a community meeting with 20 community partners to discuss the new Collaborative Approach to Compassionate Care. Paramedics involved in the Mesa team are participating in regular visits with the Ontario Provincial Police and the Mental Health Crisis Rapid Response Team. They are involved in regular clinics at The Grind in Pembroke and the demand for services is increasing as trust and education are built through educational programs, system navigation, RCVTAC consultations and paramedic-lead interventions.
- County Council adopted a By-law authorizing the Warden and Clerk to sign a Letter of Agreement with MacKay Manor as represented by Community Withdrawal Management Services of Renfrew County (“CWMS”) and Addiction Treatment Services (ATS) for the provision of addiction and withdrawal services related to the Mesa Program.
- County Council adopted a By-law authorizing the Warden and Clerk to sign the 2023/24 one-time Increase to Long-Term Care Home Funding Agreement to assist in relieving financial pressures and addressing key priorities related to Ontario Fire Code requirements, addressing deferred maintenance and proceeding with (re)development projects in the amount of \$2,543 per bed with Ontario Health.

Operations Committee

Presented by: Glenn Doncaster, Chair

- County Council endorsed a letter of support, under the Warden’s signature, be sent to the Township of Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards to endorse their application to the My Main Street, Community Activator Program for the “Killaloe: A Main Street Enhancement Project”.
- County Council denied the request from the Township of McNab/Braeside to lower the posted speed limits along County Road 3 (Usborne Street) between McLean Drive and River Road.
- County Council adopted a By-law to enter into an agreement to provide funding in the amount of \$2,460,000 to the Town of Petawawa for the reconstruction and urbanization of County Road 37 (Murphy Road). The Town of Petawawa will be managing the project and has provided the County of Renfrew with an Agreement to acknowledge the County of Renfrew’s contribution of \$2,460,000.
- County Council approved several contracts/agreements as submitted:
 - Rehabilitation of County Road 5 (Stone Road), from Mhusk Road to Highway 60, a distance of 5.13km, Township of Admaston/Bromley, to Thomas Cavanagh Construction Limited, Ashton, Ontario, in the amount of \$1,413,700, plus applicable taxes.
 - Rehabilitation of County Road 8 (Cobden Road) from Highway 60 to Urban Limit, a distance of 11.51km, Townships of Admaston/Bromley and Whitewater Region, Walker Construction, Niagara Falls, Ontario, in the amount of \$1,197,073, plus applicable taxes.
 - Rehabilitation of County Road 13 (Mountain Road) from Stafford Third Line to Highway 17, a distance of 4.01km, Townships of Laurentian Valley and Whitewater Region, Greenwood Paving (Pembroke) Ltd., Pembroke, Ontario, , in the amount of \$1,419,067.13, plus applicable taxes.
 - Contract Administration and Construction Supervision Services for the rehabilitation of County Structure B007 (Butler Bridge), Township of Admaston/Bromley, Stantec Consulting Limited, Ottawa, Ontario in the amount of \$151,640.10, plus applicable taxes.
 - Rehabilitation of County Structure B181 (Peter Black Bridge), located on County Road 24 (White Water Road), approximately 1.5km east of Highway 41, Township of Laurentian Valley, Bonnechere Excavating Incorporated, Renfrew, Ontario, in the amount of \$1,282,480, plus applicable taxes.
 - Supply and installation of traffic signal equipment at various County of Renfrew intersections within the Town of Petawawa and the Township of Laurentian Valley, in the amount of \$232,500, plus applicable taxes, to Partham Engineering Limited, Richmond, Ontario.
 - Supply and delivery of seven light duty pick-up trucks, in the amount of \$392,065, plus applicable taxes, to Surgenor Chev Buick GMC Cadillac, Ottawa, Ontario.

Additional Information

Craig Kelley, Chief Administrative Officer

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