

# Council and Committee Monthly Summary

## February 2026

Below you will find highlights of the County of Renfrew County Council and Committee meetings held February 11 and February 25, 2026.

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

The full [Council and Committee packages](#) can be found online.

The [February 11, 2026](#) and [February 25, 2026](#) meetings are on YouTube.

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## Warden's Address

### Key highlights

- At the February 11 meeting, Warden Jennifer Murphy acknowledged February as Black History Month, a time for honouring the legacy, leadership, and enduring contributions of Black Canadians in shaping our communities and our country. She noted this annual observance invites us not only to celebrate achievements but also to reflect on the ongoing work needed to advance equity, inclusion, and justice in every space we serve.
- On Thursday, February 5, she attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the [Renfrew County Mesa HART Hub](#). She thanked MPP Billy Denault and Parliamentary Assistant John Jordan for attending. The Warden was touched by the opportunity to speak directly with several clients of the Renfrew County Mesa HART Hub, who generously shared their journeys with addiction, recovery, and the challenges of being unhoused. Hearing firsthand how the Renfrew County Mesa HART Hub has provided stability, support, and a safe place to be during some of the most difficult periods of their lives was profoundly meaningful for Warden Murphy.
- The Warden also participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the County's new Electric Vehicle Charging Stations. These stations, located at the County Administration Building in Pembroke and Renfrew County Place in Renfrew, represent an important step forward in expanding sustainable infrastructure within our region. She thanked staff and partners for their hard work in bringing this project to completion. This initiative reflects the County's continued commitment to environmental stewardship, innovation, and supporting the evolving transportation needs of residents and visitors across Renfrew County.
- She extended congratulations on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bonnechere Cup. She was honoured to bring greetings on behalf of County Council and to celebrate this longstanding event in the community.
- The Warden highlighted an opportunity to hear the Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, speak in Toronto on the topic of *Protecting the Dream of Homeownership*. She noted this event was attended at the invitation of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus and provided valuable insight into current provincial thinking around housing affordability and supply issues that continue to be of direct relevance to municipalities across Eastern Ontario, including here in Renfrew County.
- She acknowledged the Township of Whitewater Region's recognition as an Ontario Age-Friendly Community at the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference and MPP Billy Denault's recent presentation of the official certificate to Council, staff and community partners.

This designation reflects a great deal of dedicated work focused on creating inclusive, supportive, and accessible communities for residents of all ages. It is an example of strong community collaboration.

- Warden Murphy congratulated Gerald Tracey on the sale of The Eganville Leader, which for more than 120 years has been a trusted voice for communities across the Ottawa Valley – recording stories, celebrating successes and connecting the region. She also wished new owners Ray Stanton and John Hueston success for the publication in the years ahead.
- February 25 was Pink Shirt Day – commonly known as anti-bullying day – with members of County Council and staff wearing pink in support of the idea of promoting kindness, inclusion and standing up against bullying and harassment.

## Operations Committee

### Presented by: Glenn Doncaster, Chair

- The general repairs Capital Budget will be used to replace a cross culvert under County Road 52 (Raglan Street South), approximately 90 metres south of Highway 60, in the Town of Renfrew. It is anticipated that the works will be completed in early March, subject to water levels and *Fisheries Act* restrictions. The replacement is expected to take one to two weeks. Staff are currently reviewing whether the work will be completed in stages or require a full road closure.
- Committee received the Trail Enforcement Reports from July to December of 2025. Over this six-month period, a total of 93 patrols occurred, multiple vehicles were stopped on each patrol, and 10 fines were issued.
- The approved contracts/tenders were as follows:
  - For the rehabilitation of County Road 70 (Ruby Road), from Wolfe Road to 125m East of Zadow Road, approximately 4.5km, in the Township of Bonnechere Valley, awarded to Bonnechere Excavating Incorporated, Renfrew, Ontario in the amount of \$1,288,223.63.
- At the February 25 meeting, Public Works and Engineering Director Lee Perkins presented the [2026 Capital Program](#), outlining an estimated \$30 million in investments that include 48.64 km of road rehabilitations, four bridge replacements, two bridge rehabilitations, four culvert replacements, 9.8 km of Algonquin Trail improvements, three trail bridge rehabilitations, roundabout utilities, four bridge designs, seven culvert designs, five trail bridge designs, the Scratch Coat Program, and traffic signal upgrades.
- At the February 25 meeting, Taylor Hanrath, Manager of Capital Works, presented the [Transportation Master Plan](#), a guiding/planning document outlining recommended improvements/common standards for transportation policies for the County of Renfrew. Following the discussion, it was determined a dedicated meeting to discuss the Transportation Master Plan is required and one will be scheduled later.

## Corporate Services Committee

### Presented by: Peter Emon, Chair

- Effective January 1, 2026, mileage rates have transitioned to 67 cents, aligned with the non-restricted automobile allowance rate approved by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).
- County Council approved a by-law to appoint Gregory Belmore as Deputy Treasurer for the County of Renfrew.
- County Council approved several changes to the Non-Union Staff Salary Grid within Employment By-law #1, including the removal, reclassification, creation of positions. Details are available

from our Human Resources department. This also includes a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) of 2.0%.

- A Standard Operating Procedure for Social Media Commenting and Moderation was introduced as information. The SOP was created because of a growing volume of negative and hostile comments; increased misinformation and repetitive disruptive posting; heightened personal attacks directed at staff and elected officials; and increased staff time required to monitor and manage comment threads. The result was that commenting will be turned off for posts where allowable by the platforms.
- The CAO overviewed the Consent Report; a report on the Buy Ontario Act. Council members expressed concerns that the proposed Buy Ontario Act regulations could create rigid, burdensome requirements, especially for rural municipalities, by mandating Ontario-made sourcing, extensive documentation, and compliance processes that may disadvantage local and small suppliers. County Council approved a resolution directing staff to submit a response on behalf of County Council stressing that the provisions of any Act that is being brought forward remain flexible and has local context in mind and do not create additional undue burden to limited resources and capacity at both the municipal level and among smaller vendors in Ontario.

## Health Committee

### Presented by: Michael Donohue, Chair

- The County of Renfrew entered a partnership with the Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team (OVOHT) to deliver Supported Attachment Initiative Services for unattached patients for the 2025/26 fiscal year. The Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RCVTAC) will serve as the primary clinical entry point for unattached patients, with a focus on comprehensive onboarding to ensure patients are fully prepared for attachment to a new primary care provider. This includes gathering consent, medical and medication histories, clinical documentation, and coordinating warm handoffs to local providers with capacity. RCVTAC will stabilize patients, address immediate health needs, and ensure they are ready to transition seamlessly onto a physician's roster. The Community Paramedic will complement this work by identifying patients, providing outreach, and delivering community-based health and social supports, collectively improving continuity of care, reducing avoidable emergency department use, and advancing the OVOHT goal of full patient attachment across the region by 2029.
- Health Canada's Emergency Treatment Fund (ETF) provided support in 2025 for the development of a new Integrated Systems Navigation Tool for Renfrew County. The tool, currently called Wayfinder – your way forward, has been developed over the past five months to help residents quickly identify and access appropriate supports related to substance use and overall wellbeing. The project was co-created with community health partners, community members, the County of Renfrew Emergency Services, and the GIS team, resulting in a user-friendly, culturally informed mapping tool designed to connect individuals to the right services at the right time.
- Bonnechere Manor's Pinnacle North Resident Home Area has achieved Level 1 Butterfly Home Accreditation, the highest designation awarded by Meaningful Care Matters. The January 20, 2026 audit highlighted an exceptional culture of person-centred care, noting strong relationships, meaningful engagement, and an environment where residents and staff were observed to be "free to be me." The audit described Pinnacle North as a warm, inclusive home with a strong sense of connection, wellbeing, and shared community.

# Development & Property Committee

**Presented by: James Brose, Chair**

- County Council authorized the Warden, on behalf of the Corporation of the County of Renfrew, to write letters of support for the establishment of a provincial Ontario Airport Capital Assistance Program (OACAP) in support of the Pembroke and Area Airport and the Arnprior Airport. Within the County of Renfrew, the Pembroke and Area Airport and the Arnprior Airport provide critical infrastructure for local communities and are essential to residential safety, emergency preparedness, and regional connectivity, and would likely benefit from the establishment of an OACAP.
- County Council declared the cell tower located on the Algonquin Trail corridor in the Town of Arnprior surplus to the needs of the County of Renfrew, and directed staff proceed with the disposal process in accordance with County Policy.
- The County of Renfrew has updated its residential new build activity dashboard to include data for 2025. Please note that the information is based on Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) data and unit completion records. As a result, there may be differences between MPAC completion dates and the number of building permits issued by local municipalities. Over the past six years, an average of 450 units have been constructed annually. In the past year, residential construction was below this average, with 309 new units completed across the County. The [updated dashboard](#) is publicly available.
- The County of Renfrew is hosting the 2026 Ontario Professional Foresters Association Annual Conference & AGM, which will be held at the Best Western Pembroke from April 21-23, 2026. The conference will include a full-day field tour, two days of dynamic hybrid conference sessions, in-person workshops and social events that will support local businesses. More information is available on the [OPFA Conference website](#).

On February 25, Heather Inwood-Montrose, Small Business Advisor, Enterprise Renfrew County (ERC), made a presentation to committee. She noted ERC provides 300+ consultations annually, supporting entrepreneurs across Renfrew County. It delivered major economic outcomes (2022–2025): 191 new businesses, 346 jobs, \$352K in grants, \$1M+ leveraged investment. She also noted core provincial funding has been stagnant for more than 10 years, creating an annual \$35,000 budget shortfall. ERC is expanding revenue through sponsorships (growing to \$12,500 in 2025) and new fee-based services and paid programs launching in 2026, with long-term revenue potential estimated at \$10,000–\$20,000 annually once fully implemented.

# Community Services Committee

**Presented by: Anne Giardini, Chair**

- The Committee reviewed [Community Services statistics](#) including the number of licensed spaces available and the total number of children served; Community Housing Waitlist statistics, as of December 31, 2025; Ontario Works caseload totals; and Emergency Assistance and Homelessness Prevention applications by municipality for 2025.

## Additional Information

**Craig Kelley, Chief Administrative Officer/Deputy Clerk**

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