

County Council Summary

March 27, 2024

Below you will find highlights of the County of Renfrew County Council meeting from March 27, 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.

[March meeting](#) YouTube link.

Warden's Address

Key highlights

- Warden Peter Emon highlighted areas of the 2024 Provincial budget, which was released March 26, that will impact the County of Renfrew – continued funding for the Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC); a path for funding the new mesa program; a new \$1 billion Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program; an increase to the Housing-Enabling Water and Sewer Fund, including communal systems, and a new \$200 million community, sport and recreation infrastructure fund that may help aging facilities in our communities. The County will continue to advocate for our fair share of infrastructure funding, including a commitment for Highway 17 expansion to and beyond the Town of Renfrew.
- He noted the early warm weather combined with the early snow melt and lower than usual precipitation this past winter is resulting in dry conditions that could result in an early fire season. Local municipal fire departments have already been called to grass and brush fires, prompting some departments to implement fire bans. He asked residents to be extremely careful with any open air burning.

During the month of March 2024, Warden Peter Emon attended 18 meetings on County business.

- On March 8, he had the opportunity to participate in the Upper Ottawa Valley Chamber of Commerce International Women's Day event. He acknowledged female staff and expressed appreciation for their dedication and hard work.
- On March 19, the Warden and CAO Craig Kelley met with the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC) for the afternoon to discuss the EOWC Regional Housing Plan, which also included a meeting with the Prime Minister's Office. During the meeting, they advocated for the '7 in 7' Plan, referencing that affordable rental housing and attainable rental is out of reach for so many in the region, largely because of a lack of supply.
- Also on March 19, he, Mr. Kelley and Daniel Burke, Treasurer/Manager of Finance, attended the Pembroke City Council meeting to present the County's 2024 operating budget. They also introduced the mesa initiative.
- On March 21 and 22, the Warden and CAO were in Kingston to attend EOWC planning sessions, which included Strategic Plans, Strategic Initiative Framework, and additional projects analyzed to determine common themes and action items across the EOWC members.

Delegations

- Lorenz Kelo of North Algona Wilberforce was honoured with a certificate presentation by Warden Peter Emon and County Councillor James Brose. Mr. Kelo recently received the Ontario Senior Achievement Award recognizing his more than 25 years of dedicated volunteer service to community causes close to his heart, including the Rankin Recreation Association with property maintenance and fundraising events; the Eganville and District Seniors Citizen Needs Association as a driver for Meals on Wheels, driving twice a week to reach isolated, at-risk seniors; and later as the chair of Home Support Services. Mr. Kelo calls volunteering satisfying work and it is something he will continue if he is able. He previously served 28 years as a municipal councillor.

Finance & Administration Committee

Presented by: Jennifer Murphy, Chair

- Save the Date: The 17th Annual Warden’s Golf Tournament, taking place Friday, June 7, 2024 at the Dragonfly Golf Links in the Township of Admaston/Bromley. Details about the event are still being finalized but an update will be provided once registration is open.
- County Council adopted a revised By-law to Establish and Require Payment of User Fees and Charges. Among the changes are increases to hourly rates for administration services since the rates had not been increased since 2016. There is also a new \$750 fee within Public Works and Engineering for speed/traffic review requests.

Community Services Committee

Presented by: Anne Giardini, Chair

- In the pursuit of tackling chronic homelessness within Renfrew County, an interdisciplinary collaborative team of County staff, in partnership with community service providers, is moving forward with a transitional supportive housing model. With a clear vision of prioritizing a “Housing First” approach, this model aims to establish supportive transitional housing for individuals enduring chronic homelessness, defined as lasting more than six months and compounded by health complexities such as mental health disorders and/or addictions. County staff is diligently crafting a memorandum of understanding to secure rental acquisition of approximately 20 units within the Pembroke area. The ambitious objective is to welcome the first guests into their new homes by the fall of 2024, marking a significant stride towards addressing homelessness and fostering stability and health within the community.
- The County of Renfrew is hosting an Affordable Housing Summit on April 4, 2024, at the myFM Centre in Renfrew. This full-day event will bring together industry experts and potential partners to delve into opportunities of using vacant municipal land, innovating around existing properties and fostering collaboration to tackle pressing housing needs. Developers, non-profit organizations, and companies interested in exploring development opportunities are encouraged to secure their seat by registering on [Eventbrite](#).

Development & Property Committee

Presented by: James Brose, Chair

- Progress continues on the multi-unit affordable and supportive housing complex at the corner of Lea and Douglas Streets in Pembroke, Ontario. A [Zencity](#) webpage for the project features construction updates and provides the viewer with a description of the project along with progress images. The overall project is approximately 70% complete.
- Work on the retrofit of the new Eganville Paramedic Base is ongoing. A [Zencity](#) webpage for the project features construction updates and provides the viewer with a description of the project along with progress images. The overall project is approximately 60% complete.
- Tenders were requested for the construction of a Storage Shed at Renfrew County Place, 450 O'Brien Road, Renfrew, Ontario. The contract, in the amount of \$128,600, has been awarded to Stephen Sons Construction Inc., Douglas, Ontario.
- The County of Renfrew entered into an Enterprise Licensing Agreement (ELA) with ESRI in 2022 for the use of their product for both the County and local municipalities. The funding is being covered by the County of Renfrew and the modernization grant for the first three years. This agreement provides unlimited license access to ESRI's ArcGIS Software, including ArcGIS and ArcPro, at all software levels and specialized extensions for technical data analysis. Additionally, we now have unlimited ESRI usernames that grant access to ArcGIS Online for both the County and local municipalities, web maps and applications can be created and published. This year is a great opportunity to test out field maps, Survey123, and Quick Capture with staff and summer student positions. Examples of how the tools can be used includes public works, planning, tourism, asset management, tracking/inspections of licensed items (i.e. complaints, dog tags, short-term rentals, trailers, etc.).
 - If municipalities require assistance in setting up a work plan for data collection or upgrading existing information, they can reach out to the County's GIS team. In 2025 the three-year financing arrangement will expire. Staff will be developing a cost-sharing plan with all 17 municipalities to ensure the continuation of the ELA.
- Staff has initiated an Official Plan Amendment No. 44 (OPA 44) to implement alternative notice provisions due to the changing print media landscape locally, which makes providing printed notices for meeting under the Planning Act impossible for some municipalities. The Planning Act allows for local alternatives for providing notice, on the requirement that the Official Plan contains policies specifying details of the alternative notice. The County has circulated a draft wording of the proposed policy changes to local municipalities for comments. The Development and Property Committee will host the required public meeting in accordance with the Planning Act on April 9, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. at the start of the meeting.
- The Town of Deep River adopted Official Plan Amendment No. 6 to the Town's Official Plan. The County of Renfrew provided approval for the amendment, which proposed to re-designate the lands from Residential to Residential – Exception Five, to permit future development on partial servicing (municipal water and individual septic systems). The new policies are proposed to ensure that future residential development will be designed to be compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood.
- County Council directed the Warden to send a letter to the Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, and the Honourable Pablo Rodriguez, Minister of Transport, in support of modernizing VIA Rail's long-distance, remote and regional fleet to

provide passengers with a more reliable, appropriate, comfortable, sustainable and accessible travel experience.

- County Council adopted the Ottawa Valley Tourist Association (OVTA) 2024 budget as presented. The OVTA, the City of Pembroke, and the County of Renfrew are partners in the delivery of tourism marketing and tourism business development for the City of Pembroke, Renfrew County, and the Ottawa Valley. The annual budget approval is obtained first by the OVTA Board of Directors, secondly by approval of City of Pembroke Council and thirdly, by approval of County of Renfrew Council.
- County Council directed the Warden to send a letter of support to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, and the Premier's Office, for biomass initiatives that can benefit the wood basket of Renfrew County mills. Staff will continue its engagement and support of the forest sector on any biomass project possibilities in our area.
- County Council approved a contract in the amount of \$386,524.31, plus applicable taxes as submitted by Grand-Calumet Construction Inc., Luskville, Québec for the rehabilitation of three bridges located on the Algonquin Trail, around Garrison Petawawa, near Deluthier Road and Landry Road, Town of Laurentian Hills.

Health Committee

Presented by: Michael Donohue, Chair

- County Council directed staff to meet with the Renfrew County and District Health Unit, and Ottawa Public Health where appropriate, to discuss shared/combined service delivery models. A report containing the results and recommendations will be brought back to the Health Committee for consideration. County Council also directed the Warden to send a letter to the Honourable Sylvia Jones, Ontario Minister of Health, to consider such conversations in the same category as has been suggested throughout the consideration of voluntary health unit mergers.
- Community Paramedics were invited to the Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nation for an extensive third-party mental health training session led by the Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nation Mental Health Team. This specialized training equipped practitioners with enhanced skills and knowledge to engage and align with relevant local and broader knowledge and initiatives within the indigenous health circle.
- Community Paramedics engaged in meetings with stakeholders at the Grind Pembroke to discuss the creation of a comprehensive plan to provide support and resources for the precariously housed and mental health population in Renfrew County.
- County Council adopted a By-law to accept the Community Emergency Preparedness Grant – Transfer Payment Agreement that outlines the approved funding and required actions to receive \$49,600 in support of emergency preparedness in the County of Renfrew.
- County Council adopted a By-law authorizing the Warden and Clerk to sign a Letter of Agreement with the Pembroke Regional Hospital as represented by the Mental Health Services of Renfrew County (MHSRC) to provide Mental Health services to assist individuals in navigating the mental health care system through the mesa project, with the goal of reducing the number of community deaths and visits to hospital emergency departments.

Operations Committee

Presented by: Glenn Doncaster, Chair

- During the 2024 construction season, staff intends to issue monthly updates on construction projects being undertaken by the Public Works and Engineering Department. The update, provided through a link on the County of Renfrew website, will connect to the [Zencity](#) engagement platform for the 2024 Transportation Infrastructure Projects, will be shared with County staff, County Council, local municipalities, OPP, and on social media. The 2024 Transportation Infrastructure Projects page provides the option for individuals to subscribe and receive notifications when a monthly project update is posted. The first update will commence during the first week of April and will describe all projects planned for 2024.
- A Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued to prequalified firms for the inspections of County of Renfrew and Town of Petawawa structures. A total of 126 County structures were included for the standard Ontario Structure Inspection Manual (OSIM) inspections, 12 County structures for enhanced OSIM, and 8 County structures for structural evaluation for the purposes of load posting evaluations. Two Town of Petawawa structures were also included as part of the standard OSIM inspections. Committee directed staff to proceed with awarding the contract, in the amount of \$101,900.58, to HP Engineering Incorporated, Ottawa, Ontario. Staff will be invoicing the Town of Petawawa for their two structures once the inspections are completed.
- County Council passed a resolution to implement a \$750 fee for speed/traffic review requests generated outside of the Corporation of the County of Renfrew. To achieve a balance between the quantity of applications and the associated expenses for the requested studies, a fee of \$750 covers the services of the Infrastructure Technician. This includes tasks such as installing and overseeing data collection, interpreting the gathered data, and drafting a report for County Council.
- County Council supported the Township of Madawaska Valley request for the realignment of County Road 62 and Highway 60 to a maximum upset limit of \$175,000, pending approval of Madawaska Valley's application to the Connecting Links program.
- County Council adopted a resolution for the development of a Municipal Operator Course at Fanshawe College which was initiated by the Association of Ontario Road Supervisors (AORS).
- County Council supported the resolution from the County of Lambton requesting the Province of Ontario upload from local municipalities the responsibility of and costs associated with the continued construct, operation and maintenance of major municipally-owned highways throughout the Province of Ontario to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation or increase the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund to municipalities.
- County Council directed staff to move forward with incorporating white vehicles as part of their fleet for future purchases. Under the direction of the Operations Committee, staff initiated a survey, conducted by the Renfrew County Supervisors Association, to explore the idea of having all upper-tier and lower-tier municipal public works vehicles coordinated to be the same colour (white) and specifications in the future. Eight lower-tier municipalities, responded to the survey, with the majority indicating they have already moved in the direction of transitioning to white vehicles.
- The rehabilitation of County Structure C012 (Farquharson's Culvert), on South McNaughton Road, Township of Admaston/Bromley, will not proceed as tendered as the lowest tender came in well over budget. Staff will continue to monitor the service life of the structure.

- County Council adopted a By-law designating County Road 16 (Victoria Street) at Wolfe Avenue as a Pedestrian Crossover. Public Works and Engineering staff conducted a review of the proposed location, including a traffic count, to determine if the location meets the warrants for a dedicated pedestrian crossover. The results indicate that the location does not meet the warrants for a pedestrian crossover based upon the total traffic and pedestrian volumes. Regardless of the findings, staff is in favour of permitting the installation since the Town Council has shown its support and tendered the installation as part of an upcoming Town construction project. It is noted that the location does provide a link between a Town trail and Municipal sidewalks, although it does not appear that most pedestrians use this location to cross Victoria Street.
- County Council approved several contracts as submitted:
 - For the rehabilitation of County Structures C001 (Berlanquet Creek Culvert), located on County Road 5 (Stone Road), Township of Admaston/Bromley and C134 (Campbell Drive Culvert), located on Campbell Drive, Township of McNab/Braeside to Clearwater Structures Inc., Ajax, Ontario in the amount of \$833,656.50, plus applicable taxes.
 - For the rehabilitation of County Structure C204 (Bellows Creek Culvert), located on County Road 12 (Westmeath Road), approximately 4.5 km east of County Road 21 (Beachburg Road), Township of Whitewater Region to Premier North Ltd., Huntsville, Ontario in the amount of \$963,752, plus applicable taxes.
 - For pavement marking to Trillium Pavement Marking (TPM), Carleton Place, Ontario, in the amount of \$690,471.23, plus applicable taxes. This is an extension of the 2023 contract.

Additional Information

Craig Kelley, Chief Administrative Officer

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