



**Town of Arnprior  
Regular Meeting of Council: March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Correspondence Package No. I-24-MAR-06**

**Recommendation:**

That the Correspondence Package No. I-24-MAR-06 be received as information and filed accordingly.

**General Information Items:**

**1. Correspondence from the Government of Ontario**

- a) [Be Bear Wise to Prevent Bear Encounters](#)
- b) [Ontario Introducing Measures to Help Improve Access to Veterinary Services](#)
- c) [Ontario Removing Barriers to Sport and Recreation](#)
- d) [Ontario Creating Conditions for Job Creation and Investment Attraction](#)
- e) [Ontario Expanding Access to Vital Government Services in the North](#)
- f) [Ontario Building More Inclusive Communities](#)

**2. Correspondence from the County of Renfrew**

- a) [County of Renfrew taking innovative steps to combat housing and homelessness concern in the region](#)

**3. Correspondence from the Renfrew County District Health Unit**

- a) [Overdose Alert for Renfrew County and District](#)
- b) [Board of Health Decides Against Voluntary Merger](#)

**4. Correspondence from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario**

- a) [Watch File – March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024](#)
- b) [Watch File – March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024](#)

## **5. Resolutions from Other Municipalities**

- a) County of Lambton – Uploading Major Municipally-Owned Highways to the Province
- b) Township of Amaranth – Pausing Highway 413 and Re-Directing Funds to Municipal Infrastructure and Housing Projects
- c) Town of Cobourg – Proposed Amendment to Subsection 27(16) of the Ontario Heritage Act (Removal of listed and non-designated properties from Municipal Heritage Registers)
- d) Township of Amaranth – Fairness in Provincial Operating Funding for Municipalities

## NEWS RELEASE

## Be Bear Wise to Prevent Bear Encounters

Public should exercise caution as bears come out of hibernation early

March 01, 2024

[Natural Resources and Forestry](#)

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The Ontario government and the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) are reminding the public to exercise caution as black bears begin to come out of hibernation. With this winter's mild weather and lack of snow, there have been reports of black bears coming out of hibernation early in some parts of the province.

At this time of year, there is little natural food for bears, causing them to search for other food sources, including garbage and bird feed.

Taking these simple precautions can help prevent attracting bears to your home and neighbourhood, keeping bears in the wild where they belong:

- Storing garbage in waste containers with tight-fitting lids (indoors if possible)
- Waiting until pickup day to put out garbage
- Taking away bird feeders for the spring and summer (you can offer birds natural alternatives, such as flowers, nesting boxes and fresh water)
- Cleaning food residue and grease from outdoor barbecue grills – including grease traps – after each use
- Keeping pet food indoors

Additionally, it is important to always leash your dog because unleashed dogs can lead bears back to owners and cause defensive bear attacks on people.

Bears entering your community are not necessarily a threat, but it is important to know who to call if you encounter one. The province operates a non-emergency, toll-free Bear Wise reporting line (1-866-514-2327). Because of the unseasonably warm weather this year, the line is open early, from March 1 to November 30 and is available 24/7.

If a bear is posing an immediate threat by showing threatening or aggressive behaviour, remain calm and call 911 or your local police department.

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## Quick Facts

- Visit [Bear Wise](#) to learn more about how to avoid attracting bears and what to do if you encounter one.
- Bears will remember their last source of food and return there when hungry, sometimes travelling over 100 kilometres.

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## Additional Resources

- [Bear Encounters — Who Do I Call?](#)

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## Related Topics

### Law and Safety

Ontario's laws and related information about our legal system, emergency services, the Ontario Provincial Police and victim services. [Learn more](#)

### Rural and North

Information about the province's Far North and rural communities. Get connected to business improvement organizations and learn more about funding and programs that support rural, northern and Indigenous communities. [Learn more](#)

### Travel and Recreation

Learn more about hunting and fishing, provincial parks, festivals and events, and visiting Ontario. [Learn more](#)

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## BACKGROUNDER

# Bear Encounters — Who Do I Call?

March 01, 2024

[Natural Resources and Forestry](#)

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Bears may wander into urban areas in search of food, but not every bear sighting is an emergency. Know who to call if you encounter a bear:

### Non-Emergency Encounters

**Call the toll-free Bear Wise reporting line at 1-866-514-2327 (TTY 705-945-7641) if a bear is:**

- Moving through a backyard or field but is not lingering
- Roaming around the neighbourhood
- Checking garbage cans
- Breaking into a shed where garbage or food is stored
- Knocking over a barbecue
- Pulling down a bird feeder
- In a tree

This line operates 24-hours a day, seven days a week, and is open this year from March 1 to November 30. Staff can provide advice about bear behaviour, how to avoid human-bear encounters, and how to manage attractants on your property.

### Emergency Situations

**Call 911 or your local police force if a bear poses an immediate threat to personal safety. Some threatening or aggressive behaviours include:**

- Entering a schoolyard when school is in session
- Stalking people and lingering on-site
- Entering or trying to enter a residence
- Wandering into a public gathering
- Killing livestock/pets and lingering on site.

Police are first responders for any emergency. If requested by police, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry may respond to emergencies to assist during daylight hours.

Visit [ontario.ca/bearwise](https://ontario.ca/bearwise) for tips on how to prevent human-bear encounters and avoid attracting bears.

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## Additional Resources

- [Be Bear Wise to Prevent Bear Encounters](#)
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## Related Topics

### Home and Community

Information for families on major life events and care options, including marriage, births and child care. Also includes planning resources for municipalities. [Learn more](#)

### Law and Safety

Ontario's laws and related information about our legal system, emergency services, the Ontario Provincial Police and victim services. [Learn more](#)

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## NEWS RELEASE

# Ontario Introducing Measures to Help Improve Access to Veterinary Services

New legislation recognizes important role veterinary technicians play in providing care

March 07, 2024

[Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs](#)

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TORONTO — Today, the Ontario government introduced legislation designed to enhance access to professional animal care.

The *Enhancing Professional Care for Animals Act* would, if passed, pave the way to formalizing the broad scope of practice for veterinary technicians that could result in an expanded role. The legislation would also streamline the complaints resolution process and increase penalties for actions that intentionally harm an animal.

“Continued access to safe and professional care is critical for pet owners and farmers which is why we are proposing to modernize the 35-year-old legislative framework regulating the veterinary profession,” said Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. “This bill is designed to enable better access to veterinary services, recognize the important role of veterinary technicians, improve oversight of the profession and increase quality assurance through measures like continuing education.”

Following extensive public consultations with stakeholders and partners on ways to modernize the laws governing veterinarians and improve access to care in Ontario, the proposed new legislation would provide a number of important benefits, including:

- Enabling the creation of a formal scope of practice for veterinary technicians that would allow them to perform to the full potential of their training and expertise.
- New requirements for continuing education similar to other regulated professions.
- An improved complaints resolution process to allow disputes to be addressed more quickly.

- Increased penalties to better reflect the seriousness of actions that could harm animals.
- Ensuring more public representation on the council of the regulatory college overseeing veterinary professionals to bring broader perspectives.

If passed, the new legislation would better align oversight of Ontario's veterinary profession with other self-regulated health professions in the province.

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### Quick Facts

- Through the proposed *Enhancing Professional Care for Animals Act*, the Ontario government is meeting commitments made in the 2023 Ontario Budget and taking action to reach the goals set out in the Grow Ontario Strategy.
- The government is expanding veterinary capacity in underserved areas of Ontario through the [Veterinary Incentive Program](#) which provides up to \$50,000 for up to 100 recently licensed veterinarians who locate in an underserved area to provide care to livestock and poultry in these communities.
- The government is also working to increase access to veterinary care by providing \$14.7 million over two years to create 20 new veterinary school spaces each year.
- For more information about OMAFRA programs and services, contact the Agricultural Information Contact Centre (AICC) by phone at 1-877-424-1300 or by e-mail at [ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca](mailto:ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca).

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### Quotes

"Today is a pinnacle moment, a significant step towards a robust and effective legislative framework to govern veterinary medicine in Ontario. This legislation strengthens public protection and more accurately reflects current veterinary practice. Our council and the licensed members of our college recognize that this legislation will support veterinary teams and enable us to serve the public with efficiency, transparency and accountability. This is good news for the public, for veterinary medicine, and for veterinary teams in Ontario."

**- Dr. Wade Wright**  
**President, College of Veterinarians of Ontario**

"After nearly a decade of tireless advocacy, OVMA is pleased that the concerns of the veterinary profession, stemming from an outdated legislative framework, have been heard and that a new Act has been introduced. OVMA supports legislation that reduces the regulatory burden on the profession by recognizing the vital role of Registered Veterinary Technicians. The association remains committed to ensuring that outcomes are fair, balanced, and reflective of the current profession and meet the needs of pet owners, producers, and Ontario's animals by providing a flexible framework that protects the public interest."

**- John Stevens**  
**CEO, Ontario Veterinary Medical Association**

"This is a historic moment for Registered Veterinary Technicians (RVTs), and I am so proud of the work we have done together with Minister Thompson to get here. This new legislation will expand scope of practice for RVTs, positioning Ontario as a future-ready leader in the regulation of veterinary medicine by enabling RVTs to participate in team-based veterinary care to the full extent of their abilities and training. We look forward to continuing to work with the Ontario government to grow our profession."

**- Kirsti Clarida**  
**President, Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians**

"The Ontario SPCA and Humane Society strongly supports allowing registered veterinary technicians to practice at a level reflecting their training and expertise. This is an important step to increase access to veterinary care in Ontario and we look forward to working with the province to further ensure all animals can get the care they need."

**- Doug Brooks**  
**President & CEO, Ontario SPCA and Humane Society**

"The Ontario Federation of Agriculture is pleased to see the Ontario government's modernization of the Veterinarians Act. Veterinarians play a critical role, promoting the health and welfare of animals and maintaining a healthy, safe and sustainable agri-food system. These proposed changes to modernize and streamline the Act will ensure Ontario farmers have access to modern and quality care for their livestock, a crucial component to the economic stability of Ontario's rural communities."

- Drew Spoelstra  
President, Ontario Federation of Agriculture

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### Additional Resources

- [Ontario Modernizing Legislation for Veterinary Professionals](#)
- [Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs](#)
- [2023 Ontario Budget: Building a Strong Ontario](#)
- [Grow Ontario Strategy](#)
- [College of Veterinarians of Ontario](#)

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## NEWS RELEASE

# Ontario Removing Barriers to Sport and Recreation

Province empowering girls to realize benefits of physical activity

March 08, 2024

[Tourism, Culture and Sport](#)

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TORONTO —The Ontario government is investing up to \$380,000 in [Canadian Women & Sport's](#) The Next Play program to create more opportunities for girls to be active. This funding is a part of the \$2 million that is being provided through the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport to up to 200 community organizations across the province to facilitate accessible, affordable and inclusive sport and recreation programming.

"Our government is proud to support the continued efforts of Canadian Women & Sport to create more opportunities for girls to realize the benefits of participating in active recreation," said Neil Lumsden, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. "This funding will expand the important impact that The Next Play program is having in communities across the province, removing barriers and improving the physical and mental well-being of even more Ontarians."

"The Next Play is arming community-based sport and recreation organizations across Ontario with the tools and resources they need to design sport that truly works for diverse girls. So many organizations and communities are ready to do this work and we are thrilled to support them," says Allison Sandmeyer-Graves, CEO at Canadian Women & Sport. "On International Women's Day, we're thrilled to announce this investment from the Ontario government which will provide new opportunities to create lasting change and inspire inclusion in our communities."

Canadian Women & Sport's The Next Play program equips participating organizations with specialized training to counter gender bias in program design and also provides start-up grants to support community initiatives to recruit and retain girls in sport. In 2023, 180 sport leaders from 90 organizations participated in The Next Play and engaged more than 3,000 girls across Ontario in community-based programming.

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## Quick Facts

- In 2022-23, Canadian Women & Sport received \$785,000 to support The Next Play program.
- The Ontario government invests over \$18 million annually to support local, inclusive physical activity programming, including: Ontario's After School Program, the Community Aboriginal Recreation Activator Program (CARA), the Sport Pathway for Ontario Native Wellness, and Variety Village.

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## Quotes

"Sports bring communities together, promotes inclusion and helps young people build friendships and self-confidence that will last a lifetime. This investment in The Next Play program will help break down barriers so that more young women and girls in Ontario can enjoy the exciting benefits that sports have to offer—empowering them to pursue their dreams and helping build a stronger Ontario."

- Charmaine Williams

Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity

"TMU applauds this significant investment to better support girls in sports. Our university is home to many varsity women's teams; our female athletes inspire us daily, proving that with the right support and opportunities, women's sports can reach remarkable heights. This funding will help more girls similarly pursue their passions."

- Mohamed Lachemi

President & Vice-Chancellor, Toronto Metropolitan University

"Investing in women's sports fosters an environment of support and inclusivity. It helps ensure that the pursuit of excellence knows no gender and helps give women's sport the platform to inspire the next generation of strong, confident, and determined leaders. "

- Gina Kingsbury

General Manager, Professional Women's Hockey League (Toronto)

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## Additional Resources

[Canadian Women & Sport](#)

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**Related Topics**

**Travel and Recreation**

Learn more about hunting and fishing, provincial parks, festivals and events, and visiting Ontario. [Learn more](#)

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## STATEMENT

# Ontario Creating Conditions for Job Creation and Investment Attraction

Province promoting economic growth across key sectors

March 08, 2024

[Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade](#)

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TORONTO — Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, issued the following statement on today's monthly employment release by Statistics Canada, which showed Ontario added 6,700 jobs in February, primarily in full-time employment.

"Our government is continuing to deliver on our plan to build a stronger, more resilient economy in the face of uncertainty here at home and around the world.

We're rebuilding our economy by making historic investments in the roads and highways, hospitals, schools and other critical infrastructure we need to support growth. We're keeping taxes low, cutting red tape, lowering the cost of doing business and creating the conditions to attract new investments and jobs.

Last month, an Ontario delegation returned from a successful trade mission to India to promote our skilled workforce and competitive business climate. While in India, we welcomed a \$4.7 million investment from [Piramal Pharma Ltd.](#) to modernize its facility in Aurora and an announcement from [CSM Technologies](#) about their plans to hire 150 highly-skilled tech workers for their new Toronto office.

Our growing auto industry was also on full display at the Canadian International Auto Show last month. We're rebuilding our auto industry, attracting over \$28 billion in electric vehicle and battery investments over the past three years and are building a home-grown EV supply chain. During the show, we launched the new Advanced Charging and Vehicle-to-Grid (V2G) Stream, providing local businesses up to \$1 million to develop advanced charging technologies.

We're going to keep working hard, everyday, to create opportunities for workers and businesses across key industries and to position Ontario as one of the best jurisdictions in the world for investment, growth, and job creation."

Related Topics

Business and Economy

Information about Ontario’s economy and how to do business here. Includes economic development opportunities, research funding, tax credits for business and the Ontario Budget. [Learn more](#)

Jobs and Employment

We’ve got the resource and supports to help connect job seekers with employers. [Learn more](#)

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## NEWS RELEASE

# Ontario Expanding Access to Vital Government Services in the North

New mobile service centre brings ServiceOntario closer to rural and Indigenous communities

March 11, 2024

[Public and Business Service Delivery](#)

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HUNTSVILLE — The Ontario government is making it easier and more convenient to access in-person government services, such as driver's licences and health cards, with the launch of a mobile service centre in six northern Ontario communities.

The mobile centre will deliver in-person access to services to the communities of MacTier, Burk's Falls, Apsley, Denbigh, Whitney, and Moose Deer Point First Nation. Service is now available in MacTier and Burk's Falls with the expansion into the remaining four communities taking place by April.

"Our government is delivering on its commitment to closing service gaps and enhancing the customer experience for northern Ontarians," said Todd McCarthy, Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery. "The mobile service centre is just one example of how, under the leadership of Premier Ford, we are constantly introducing innovative service delivery models and utilizing new technologies to better adapt to the unique needs of communities throughout Ontario."

The mobile service centre is accessible and offers service in both English and French. Community members can locate the regular days and hours of operation at [Ontario.ca/Locations](https://ontario.ca/Locations) and book a convenient appointment at [Ontario.ca/Appointment](https://ontario.ca/Appointment).

Recognizing there is no one size fits all when it comes to service excellence, the mobile service centre builds upon ServiceOntario's alternative service delivery initiatives to meet the unique needs of local communities, including:

- New municipal partnerships operating ServiceOntario centres in Chatham, Dresden and [Pickle Lake](#), providing one-stop municipal and provincial services in a single location.



- A partnership with the North Shore Tribal Council, which operates a brick-and-mortar centre in Cutler as well as a mobile service unit that travels to communities throughout the Robinson-Huron Treaty area.
  - A central service hub with Employment Ontario in Eganville.
  - Retail partnerships with Canadian Tire, IDA, Home Hardware, and Staples Canada.
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### Quick Facts

- More than 24 million transactions are completed in person annually at 276 ServiceOntario centres throughout the province. Find a centre near you by visiting [Ontario.ca/Locations](https://ontario.ca/locations).
  - 55 of the most in demand services, more than half of total services, can be easily accessed online at [Ontario.ca/Services](https://ontario.ca/services).
  - In 2023, over 18.9 million individuals and businesses conducted transactions online through ServiceOntario.
  - Sign up for reminders by email, text or phone call so you always know when it is time to renew your important products at [Ontario.ca/Reminders](https://ontario.ca/reminders) or call ServiceOntario at 1-800-387-3445 (TTY 1-800-268-7095).
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### Quotes

"Improving access to important government services in small towns and rural communities is a top priority. We are closing the gap in service delivery in Ontario's smaller, more remote communities. I am pleased mobile service centres will be helping constituents across Parry Sound—Muskoka with important services, such as renewing health cards and driver's licences."

- Graydon Smith

Minister of Natural Resources, MPP Parry Sound—Muskoka

"I want to congratulate Minister McCarthy for delivering yet another innovative approach to providing services for rural communities in Ontario. I look forward to this mobile service centre which will provide more services to the residents in Hastings—Lennox and Addington."

- Ric Bresee

MPP, Hastings—Lennox and Addington

"Previously residents in North Kawartha would have to travel an average of 90 kilometres round trip to visit a ServiceOntario location. The provincial government is committed to ensuring all of Ontario has access to government services they need, and this is one more step towards that promise."

- Dave Smith

MPP, Peterborough—Kawartha

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## Additional Resources

Find information about the ServiceOntario mobile service centre at [Ontario.ca/ServiceOntarioOnTheGo](https://ontario.ca/ServiceOntarioOnTheGo)

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## Media Assets

ServiceOntario mobile service centre with accessibility ramp parked in a community.



ServiceOntario mobile service centre parked in a community.





## Service counters inside the ServiceOntario mobile service centre.



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### Related Topics

#### Business and Economy

Information about Ontario's economy and how to do business here. Includes economic development opportunities, research funding, tax credits for business and the Ontario Budget. [Learn more](#)

#### Rural and North

Information about the province's Far North and rural communities. Get connected to business improvement organizations and learn more about funding and programs that support rural, northern and Indigenous communities. [Learn more](#)

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## NEWS RELEASE

# Ontario Building More Inclusive Communities

Province investing \$750,000 to support independent and active living for people of all abilities

March 15, 2024

[Seniors and Accessibility](#)

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TORONTO — The Ontario government is investing \$750,000 this year to improve accessibility and support people of all ages and abilities throughout the province. Through the [Inclusive Community Grants](#) Program, 15 projects will receive funding to improve community life for older Ontarians and people with disabilities.

“Inclusive communities are key to helping people with disabilities and seniors with mobility issues take part in community life by removing barriers,” said Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility. “Through the Inclusive Community Grants Program, we are reducing social isolation and creating new opportunities for all Ontarians to stay active, healthy and independent.”

Since the Inclusive Community Grants Program was created in 2020, it has provided up to \$4.5 million to support 87 projects promoting inclusivity and accessibility in Ontario. This year that funding is supporting important projects such as:

- Haliburton’s Abbey Gardens Community Trust will establish an accessible recreational trail system for people of all abilities.
- The City of Kenora’s third phase of their Norman Park Accessibility project will build the only fully accessible park with lake/beach access in the area.
- Madawaska Valley is installing new fully accessible, wheelchair-friendly, all-weather picnic tables in seven municipal parks.
- Sault Ste. Marie’s Pointe Des Chenes Day Park and Beach is updating paths, adding Mobi mats for beach access, and making bathroom and change rooms more wheelchair friendly.
- Tay Valley Township is introducing new accessible, age-friendly sports and recreation activities and programs for 300 local residents in eight rural communities.

A list of projects that received an Inclusive Community Grant in the 2023-24 cycle can be found [here](#).

## Quick Facts

- Projects funded through Inclusive Community Grants are led by municipalities, not-for-profit organizations and Indigenous communities.

## Quotes

"I'm so pleased with the Inclusive Community Grants awarded to Algonquin Highlands and Abbey Gardens in Haliburton County. These projects offer much greater independence for seniors and folks with disabilities. Our sincere appreciation to Minister Cho."

**- Liz Danielsen**  
**Warden, Haliburton County**

"We are grateful to receive the Inclusive Community Grant to enhance the accessibility of the recreational space at Norman Park. Norman Park is a bustling place in the summer, and the new nature pathway will ensure that everyone, regardless of their abilities, can enjoy this wonderful lakeside park and all its amenities. We are excited to see the positive impact this project will have on our community."

**- Andrew Poirier**  
**Mayor, City of Kenora**

"While simplistic in nature, having a comfortable place to sit and participate in the enjoyment of outdoor spaces is significant. This funding allows us to provide vital access to these spaces for all."

**- Mark Willmer**  
**Mayor, Madawaska Valley Township**

"This funding from the Government of Ontario is greatly appreciated and I can say with certainty that it will be put to good use by increasing and improving access to a foremost recreational opportunity. It will help people with differing accessibility needs participate in recreation and leisure activities with family and friends at the Pointe Des Chenes Day Park and Beach."

- Matthew Shoemaker  
Mayor, City of Sault Ste. Marie

"Enhancing accessibility can be challenging in the natural beauty of Pointe Des Chenes. Thanks to the Inclusive Communities Grant, we're able to address these challenges to make this space inclusive for individuals with mobility impairments. The grant's support will be instrumental in implementing crucial infrastructure upgrades, fostering community engagements, and facilitating inclusive events and activities in this beautiful space."

- Diane Morrell  
Accessibility Coordinator, City of Sault Ste. Marie

"Tay Valley Township is pleased and excited to receive the province's support for our forthcoming accessible, age-friendly sports and recreation programming. The funding will help the township offer new programs, especially for older adults and people with disabilities, which will promote physical and mental health, reduce social isolation, and enhance the quality of community life for participants."

- Rob Rainer  
Reeve, Tay Valley Township

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### Additional Resources

- [Inclusive Community Grants](#)
  - [Creating a more inclusive Ontario: age-friendly community planning guide for municipalities and community organizations](#)
  - [Accessibility in Ontario](#)
  - [Programs and services to support Ontario's seniors](#)
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Related Topics

Home and Community

Information for families on major life events and care options, including marriage, births and child care. Also includes planning resources for municipalities. [Learn more](#)

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# County of Renfrew taking innovative steps to combat housing and homelessness concern in the region

Posted on Monday, March 11, 2024



## RELEASE DATE:

March 11, 2024

The County of Renfrew is pleased to announce the launch of a new initiative centred around a collaborative approach to providing compassionate care in the community.

This phased approach, named *mesa* (pronounced “mey-suh”), embodies bold and compassionate work to address the root causes of homelessness, substance abuse and addictions and mental health while fostering a resilient and healthier community for all residents of the County of Renfrew. It is a collaborative between three internal service providers – Community Services, Paramedic Services and our Development and Property Department, as well as partner organizations serving our communities.

Phase one of the approach was the County of Renfrew’s involvement in the “Out of the Cold” Warming Centre offered by The Grind Pembroke this past winter in

partnership with the City of Pembroke, Township of Laurentian Valley and Town of Petawawa.

Through this latest next phase, mobile response teams will be created with Community Paramedics and addictions and crisis workers responding to calls across Renfrew County. The idea is to meet individuals where they are in the community to provide the necessary supports and connect them with existing service providers.

Work has already begun on phase three of the project – to provide transitional housing supports for individuals in the community. More will be announced on this in the coming weeks.

Addressing these needs is part of the County of Renfrew's strategic plan goal of Community Wellness and Health Care. While individual departments have been providing services in these areas, this initiative provides an opportunity to move beyond the silos and align existing efforts to offer wraparound care for all community members to thrive. *Mesa* also addresses gaps identified through the Housing and Homelessness Strategy.

"The County of Renfrew is pleased to take a leadership role in this innovative approach to addressing the urgent needs of those individuals in our community who are struggling. We take these health-related issues seriously, as we want to ensure that the appropriate services are provided to the people of Renfrew County in an efficient and effective manner," said Craig Kelley, Chief Administrative Officer.

*Mesa* is an evidence-based "escalator model" designed to transition people out of harm and towards an equitable community landscape. The goal is to support everyone to move towards health, well-being and a safe place to call home. The one direction, fluid model provides the innovative care and access to secure housing required for community members to thrive independently.

"The County of Renfrew seeks to find innovation in delivering services to our residents and community wherever and whenever possible," added Renfrew County Warden Peter Emon. "The vastness of the County requires our service delivery partners to find non-traditional solutions to complicated problems. Collaborative efforts are the means to which we can work together for the betterment of all."

The full [mesa Report](#) can be found on the County of Renfrew website.

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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Tina Peplinskie	Media Relations Coordinator	613-735-7288
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# mesa

[ mey-suh ]

A collaborative approach  
to compassionate care



**Renfrew** County of  
Ontario . Canada

Paramedic Service,  
Community Services,  
Development and Property



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Peter Emon, Warden, County of Renfrew

As we deliver the essential health, social and infrastructure services supporting our residents and First Nation peoples, we are reminded of the privileges that we are afforded by living and raising our families across the Ottawa Valley. On behalf of the County of Renfrew and our entire community, we are grateful to live harmoniously with our neighbours in the unceded traditional territory of the Algonquin People. We would like to thank the Algonquin people and express our respect and support for their rich history. We are extremely grateful for their many and continued displays of friendship. We also thank all the generations of people who have taken care of this land for thousands of years.

# Executive Summary

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The current state of mental health, substance use and addiction challenges in the County of Renfrew, City of Pembroke and Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation is applying significant social and health pressures on County residents. Community services, emergency services and urgent care delivery systems are straining under the additional pressure, challenging our capacity to deliver basic service needs. Local data indicates that there is an increasing demand for social, health and emergency services that is placing our systems at a high level of risk. We are reaching a crisis point, requiring innovative thinking, integrated support systems and aligned, strategic investments moving forward.

Looking upstream, there is a clear connection between mental health, substance use and addiction issues and the decisions we are making in social services, planning and housing. As a growing and collective social crisis, our current state is reflected in a rapidly rising addiction and toxicity related emergencies, increased demand for mental health services, overall health declines, decreased quality of life and a resulting economic development impact. There is clear evidence to support that a shortage of safe, quality housing as well as shelter and housing supports are significant contributing factors to this crisis.<sup>1</sup>

The direct correlations between mental health, substance use and addiction, increasing demand for emergency services and social services, planning and housing investments is well documented.<sup>2</sup> In order to create and support effective and innovative solutions to mental health, addiction, emergency services and housing issues, this **evidence to action** model co-ordinates and integrates multi-sector approaches led collaboratively by the County of Renfrew's administration, community services, development and property and emergency services departments.

This approach, named mesa, embodies bold and compassionate work to address the root causes of homelessness, addictions and mental health while fostering a resilient and healthier community for all residents of the County of Renfrew. The name is derived from the term used for a flat-topped hill; a formation in the landscape that is stable and supported. Mesa comes from the Latin mensa meaning "table". Tables provide sturdy, inclusive platforms for healthy community members. This approach offers aligned programs, resources and wrap-around care for all community members to thrive.



# Mental Health

Mental health is a state of well-being that supports people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well, work well, and contribute to their community.<sup>3</sup> The number of people experiencing mental health challenges is significantly increasing and this is having a profound effect on both an individual's quality of life and our community's well-being. In order to better understand the wide scope of mental health challenges, it is important to recognize that there are distinct areas which include but are not limited to mood disorders (depression, bipolar disorder), anxiety disorder, personality and psychotic disorder (e.g. schizophrenia), post traumatic stress disorder (e.g. PTSD), neurodevelopmental disorders (e.g. autism, ADHD), and rising dementia, including Alzheimer's, diagnoses in our growing population of elders. In addition, our communities' youth are profoundly affected by mental health struggles early in life, placing them on a difficult lifelong trajectory and increasing their vulnerability to both urgent and chronic health issues.





According to the Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team data, approximately 19% of Renfrew County's population identify with having mental health or addiction challenges. This is higher than the provincial average. Of these people, one in seven do not have a primary care provider with slightly more females who have mental health concerns compared to males. 70% of those with mental health concerns visited an emergency room between April 2018 to March 2020. That number has increased significantly in 2023.<sup>4</sup>

Local 911 and emergency room data indicate that the number of mental health related 911 calls is increasing, with approximately 70% of the primary problems indicated as being related to a behavioural or psychiatric concern. Three out of four of the calls were urgent at the time of contact with the patient. The immediate emergency department impact includes 1,500 – 2,300 mental health related emergency department visits are made annually to Pembroke regional hospital, Renfrew Victoria Hospital, and/or St. Francis Memorial Hospital. Approximately 85% of these visits were related to what are identified as mental health syndromes and approximately 15% were related to toxicities. The most common diagnoses were depression (34%), anxiety (32%), stress (13%) and alcohol related (10%).<sup>4</sup>



**Housing is a key social determinant of health.** Safe, affordable and good quality housing is imperative for good physical and mental health and is a significant component of recovery and wellbeing for people with serious mental illness... **Good housing is the cornerstone of inclusive communities.** When people have good quality, affordable housing that meets their needs they are more likely to engage with and contribute to their communities.<sup>1</sup>

# Substance Use and Addiction

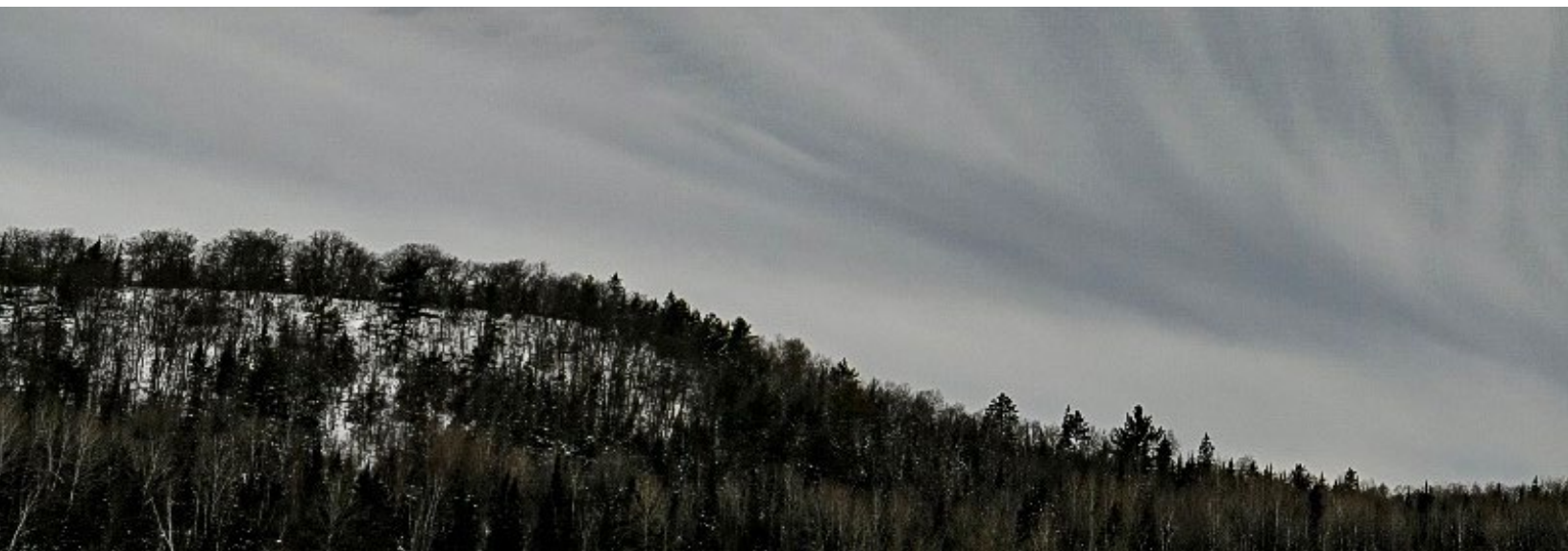
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Substance use and addiction are closely connected to mental health, trauma and social determinants of health. Each of these can co-exist to create complex challenges to our communities and our health and social service, emergency service, housing, law enforcement and judicial sectors.

Addiction related issues, and substance use emergencies and deaths are increasing significantly across the County of Renfrew. The rise in opioid-related emergency department visits at hospitals within Renfrew County and District are a clear indicator that requires additional local supports and attention.

In the Ottawa West Four Rivers (OWFR) Ontario Health Team (OHT), which includes the Arnprior and McNab Braeside areas of Renfrew County, 35% of emergency department (ED) visits were related to mental health and addictions, often overwhelming the EDs as the first point of contact for care. There has been a 75% increase in opioid-related deaths in 2021, revealing the severity of the overdose crisis. Hospitals are facing emergency department closures, and staff shortages have become common. Urgent action is needed to divert the strain on 911, Paramedics and emergency department flow to stabilise the system and prevent further deterioration.

According to the Renfrew County and District Health Unit, the monthly average of suspected drug-related deaths in the district has increased, and between January and July 2023, there were 17 suspected-drug deaths (e.g. two – three deaths per month on average). In June, 2023, an overdose alert was issued for Renfrew County and District. In December, 2023, Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation declared a state of emergency as a result of rapid increases in overdoses and deaths faced by the community.



In addition, the proportion of individuals with mental health and addictions challenges who reside in a rural area in the Ottawa Valley OHT is 13 times higher compared to Ontario based on the Rurality Index for Ontario (RIO) scores.

The complexity of these issues require an innovative solution that includes compassionate care, a deep understanding of the social determinants of health and a co-ordinated, multi-sector intervention.

## SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH





# Provincial Evidence to Action

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There are evidence-informed regional and provincial models which offer innovative and effective approaches to address our communities' mental health, addictions and housing crisis. An integrated and community-based mobile team has the capacity to address the intersection of social determinants of health and immediate concerns and is able to provide compassionate care when and where it is needed.

The Mental Health and Addictions Model of Care is an Ottawa Paramedic Service initiative that has developed the Mental Wellbeing Response team to lead a treat and refer Model of Care for mental health and addictions clients. This trial was held in Ottawa and over 8 months resulted in a 66% emergency department (ED) diversion rate with no adverse outcomes reported. The model pairs a paramedic, specially trained in mental health and substance use, with a mental health professional such as a registered social worker or mental health nurse. It integrates social determinants of health training, trauma-informed education, cultural training and employs an integrated approach to the care continuum.

The Supportive Outreach Service (S.O.S.) in Grey and Bruce Counties meets people where they are at (physical location and their overall health and well-being) to provide person-centred health and wraparound mobile response to improve health outcomes and health equity of individuals who experience barriers to accessing health and social services. The social and health components of this program improved knowledge of services, strengthened partnerships, effectively eliminated barriers to care and improved system navigation for vulnerable populations.

The implementation of a locally developed Renfrew County model of care ensures that the residents and visitors to the County of Renfrew, City of Pembroke and Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation have access to the full range of quality health, housing and social services they need, when and where they need them, without the burden of financial, social or cultural barriers. In addition, it connects clients with care to ensure the full continuum of essential health services, from health promotion and prevention to urgent care. This approach includes treatment, harm reduction, rehabilitation, and palliative care as well as the necessary support, knowledge and resources to navigate housing related challenges and provide wrap-around compassionate care while addressing the social, health and housing crises further upstream.

*See Appendix A – A Renfrew County Model*



# Housing

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Safe, good quality housing is a human right and social determinant of health. Investment in innovative and effective planning, design and housing development enhances a communities' overall quality of life, attraction for economic development and decreases health care costs, social service costs, mental health and addiction crises and demand for emergency services. Housing and supportive social services intersect with mental health and addiction and contain inequities and challenges.

People with lived experience of mental health and addictions conditions are disproportionately affected by homelessness\* and the huge challenges that come with not having shelter or a home. When someone struggles with mental health and addiction, they remain homeless\* for longer periods of time and have less contact with family and friends. This leads to social isolation and further complicates health issues.

***While many factors can lead to homelessness, mental health plays a significant role—an estimated 25 to 50 per cent people who are without adequate housing live with a mental health condition. (Canadian Mental Health Association – CMHA)***

Improving this social crisis will require new ways of helping this critically vulnerable population. The complexity and consequences of not having shelter or adequate housing is amplified when a mental health condition is involved.

In addition, while specific data on the number of Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) experiencing homelessness is limited, what data does exist shows that First Nations people are dramatically overrepresented in the unhoused population across Canada.<sup>18</sup>

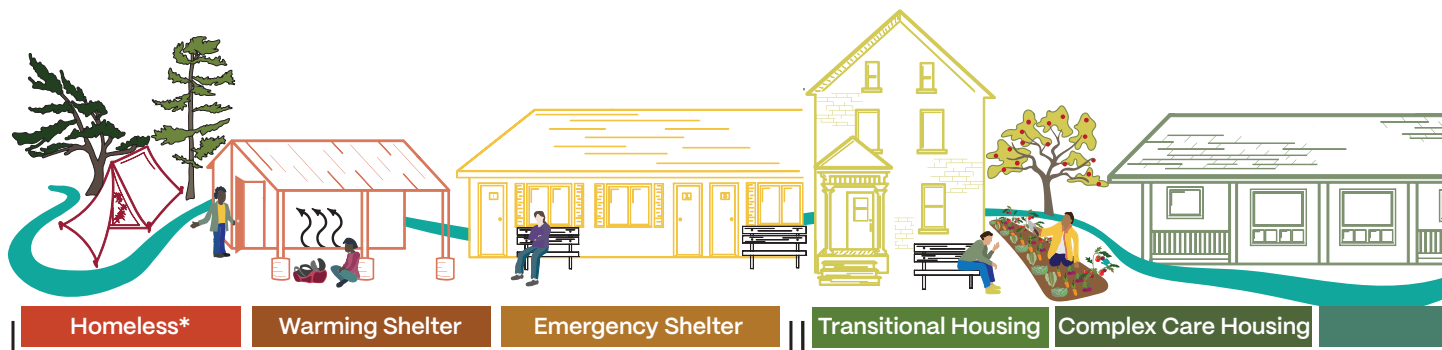


# Community Services and Housing

The County of Renfrew completes the Point-In-Time homelessness count annually and an ongoing homelessness enumeration ("By-Name List") is completed via the Built for Zero Canada initiative.<sup>5</sup> The September 2022 Survey resulted in 43 people disclosing homelessness on September 18, 2022. For the period of April 1, 2023, to August 31, 2023, 58 households identified as experiencing homelessness and of this group, 28 were chronically homeless (unhoused for more than 6-months). Survey participants reported additional challenges such as 53% had physical limitations, 44% included other medical conditions, 40% experienced mental health conditions, 33% reported substance abuse and 19% experienced cognitive limitations.

In the Community Services department, the Homelessness Prevention Program provides coordination and funding for hotel stays for people experiencing homelessness. This program is intended to generally provide two to three days of emergency shelter. However, shelter stays can be extended a few more days if required. For the period of April 1, 2023 to August 31, 2023 there were 199 hotel stays and the average length of stay was 5 days. In addition, recent data from the Grind indicated that the new warming centre in the City of Pembroke had up to 11 overnight stays per night since its opening at the end of 2023.

In order to obtain an accurate picture of the unhoused or homeless\* population in the County of Renfrew, it is important to note that not all people experiencing homelessness intersect with Community Services. It is suspected that the ongoing homelessness count is 40% higher than what is reflected within the By-Name List, and that approximately 81 people experience homelessness\* each month throughout Renfrew County.



Unhoused

Precariously

# Housing Continuum

To build a stronger understanding of housing as a continuum and invest in solutions to our housing crisis, it is essential to recognize that there is a housing continuum. Supporting people to move along this continuum improves every person and community's well-being.

This local Renfrew County Housing Continuum is designed on accurate housing examples found across the region. Local artist, Taylor Farquar, created this continuum to reflect three categories of housing. Each type of housing includes some details of resources, amenities, access to nature and social connections which all contribute to a housing continuum and quality of life. Following the housing continuum graphic is a table detailing the associated household income levels and relevant services and programs for each category.

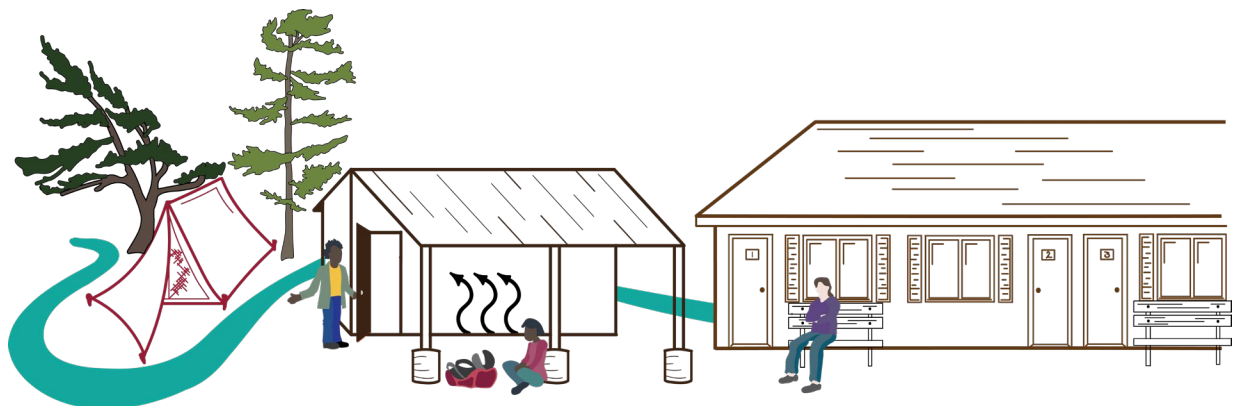
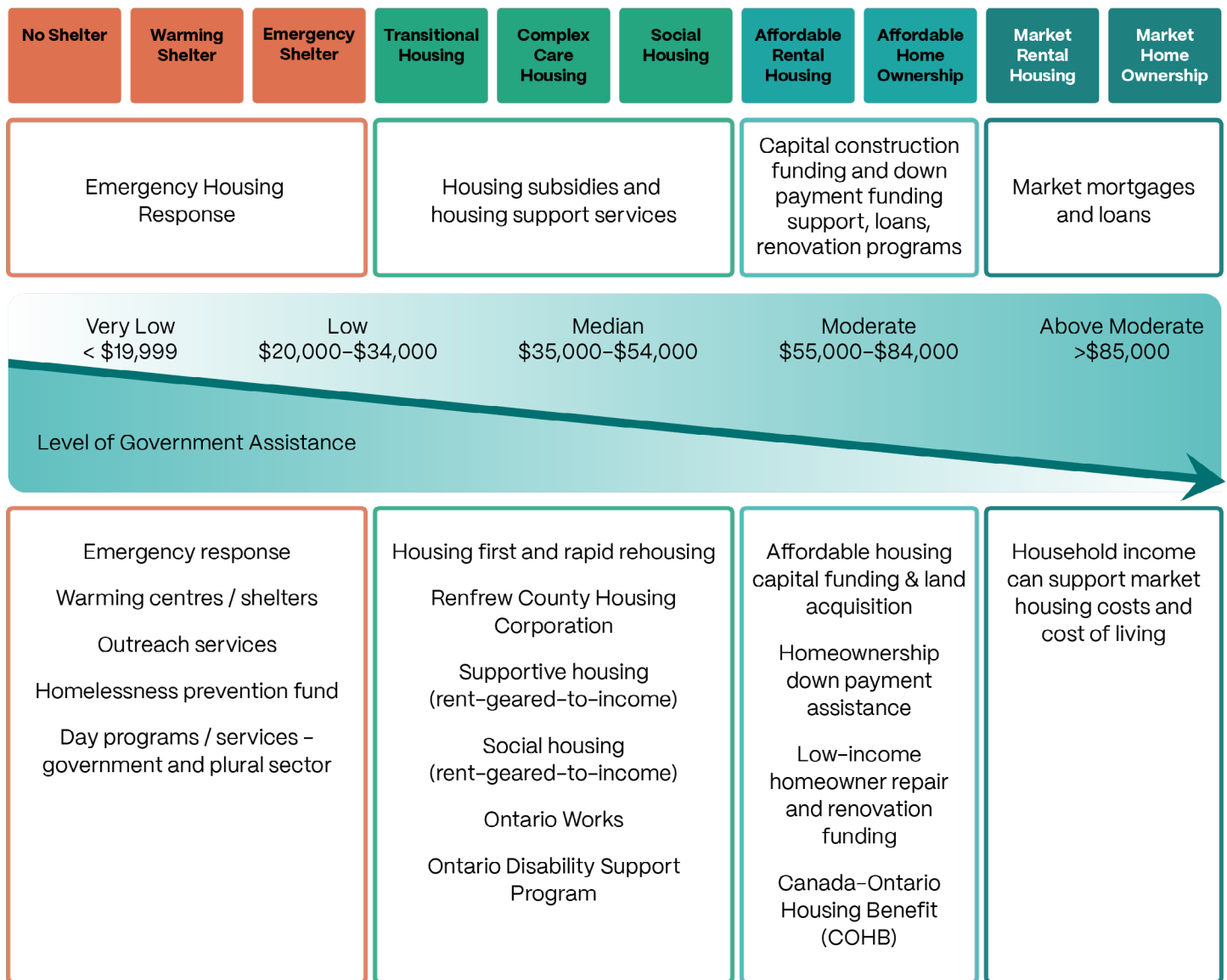
*\*homeless describes individuals without a physical and/or fixed address. Unhoused describes the same issue and is increasingly used in order to humanise the issue and focus on housing as the issue, not people. This document uses the term homeless in the context of referencing existing documents and system measures that provide data in order to support the need for effective interventions. This work acknowledges the complexities and nuances of language and the importance of context and knowledgeable, compassionate use of terminology. Unhoused is used where we are referring to the categories that define where we, as community members, are in terms of our housing situations.*



Housed

Securely Housed

## HOUSING CONTINUUM, INCOME, SERVICES AND PROGRAMS



# Housing Categories

Unhoused	Precariously housed	Sustainably housed
Living on the street, in a park, on a couch and all definitions of homeless*	Transitional housing	Affordable home ownership
Encampments	Complex care housing	Market rental housing
Warming centres	Social housing	Market home ownership
Emergency shelters	Affordable rental housing	

It is essential to acknowledge, understand and address the spectrum of realities for people struggling with housing experiences. Precariously housed or housing insecurity indicates people are at risk of losing their current housing. For these individuals or families, maintaining their house is unaffordable and other needs (e.g. heat, nutrition and other health and well-being foundations) are at risk in order to keep a house. Precarious housing circumstances significantly undermine people's health and place increased pressures on municipal services such as emergency services and property and development.

Warming centres, emergency shelters and supportive or transitional housing are all critical resources that address immediate risks for our most vulnerable populations. These are interim measures. Our goal is to support movement along the continuum to secure housing. Complex mental health challenges, toxicity and/or overdose crises, addictions and other community risks such as high incidences of intimate partner violence (IPV) and gender based violence all require emergency housing and safe and supported housing first before health and social issues can be addressed. Housing is a foundational and complex basic need. It is an upstream investment that is essential to adequately address our communities' most urgent health issues. Building compassionate communities includes supportive systems that work to eliminate the housing crisis and design innovative, evidence based, and sustainable housing solutions.



## JURISDICTIONS, POLICIES, PLANS AND PROGRAMS

Lower Tier Municipality (17 in the County of Renfrew)	Upper Tier Municipality (County of Renfrew; City of Pembroke)	Province of Ontario	Government of Canada
Official Plans  Policy and zoning regulations for new housing  Building codes	Official Plans  Policy and zoning regulations for new housing  Building codes	Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)  Housing Services Act regulates social housing	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) administers mortgage insurance programs and conducts data collection and research
10-yr Housing and Homelessness Plan	10-yr Housing and Homelessness Plan	Provincial and shared federal housing funding	National Housing Strategy – design and implementation
Social housing programs	Renfrew County Housing Corporation  Affordable Home Ownership Program  Funding and administration of social housing programs  Design and administration of homelessness programs  Administers Ontario Works and ODSP	Funds Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)	Establishes fiscal policy that impacts housing costs including setting interest rates  Responsible for supporting safe and affordable on-reserve housing through funding from Indigenous Services Canada.  The Canadian Forces Housing Agency (CFHA) provides housing solutions to members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and their families. Garrison Petawawa housing is funded by the CFHA. The Canadian Forces Housing Differential provides housing policy (CFHD)
Partnerships with local non-profit and private housing developers to construct new below-market rate housing	Partnerships with local non-profit and private housing developer to construct new below-market rate housing	Incentivization programs with private and non-profit sector developers	Incentivization programs with private and non-profit sector developers
EOWC's 7 in 7+ Regional Housing Plan	EOWC's 7 in 7+ Regional Housing Plan		

# A Safe Place to Call Home

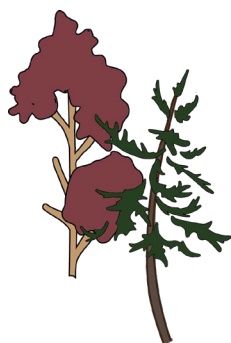
The concept of home is a complex social issue. Safe housing and a place to call home requires physical, mental and emotional safety. According to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) Housing and Mental Health Policy Framework, "Safe, affordable and good quality housing is important for health, wellbeing and inclusion and is a key component of recovery for people with serious mental illness. Evidence-informed supportive housing leads to improved personal, health and social outcomes for people with serious mental illness, including those who have long histories of hospitalizations, trauma and complex needs. Affordable and supportive housing benefits communities and contributes to long-term cost savings for governments."<sup>7</sup>

Housing is a basic human right and a requirement for good health. The United Nations' Universal Declaration Of Human Rights states that the right to housing is protected under international law, and Canada has endorsed such rights guaranteeing "an adequate standard of living... including adequate food, clothing and housing."<sup>8</sup> In addition, the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion identifies shelter as a basic prerequisite for health.<sup>9</sup> It is a collective responsibility to support secure housing as a foundation for good health and well-being.

Investment in the availability of more equitable access to high quality housing and supportive housing results in savings across health and social services. According to the At Home/Chez Soi national housing study by the Mental Health Commission of Canada, there is clear evidence to support that for every \$10 spent on supportive housing, there is a downstream savings of \$21.72 and a significant reduction in emergency department use.<sup>10</sup>

According to the research by the University Health Network, investments in housing are both cost savings and beneficial to our community as a whole. Prescribing housing is a valuable solution to a health crisis.<sup>17</sup>

Hospital Ward	Provincial Jail Costs	Shelter	Supportive Housing
<b>\$32,500</b> per month	<b>\$15,000</b> per month	<b>\$7,500</b> per month	<b>\$3,500</b> per month



Stakeholder voices are essential to understanding the issues and creating successful solutions. The Ontario Human Rights Commission's Poverty POV – What We Are Hearing states that "For people who are experiencing mental health and addiction disabilities, finding housing with the appropriate supports is even more challenging. We heard that more supportive housing will benefit communities and save government money in the long term, as emergency services are far more costly... We heard that when vulnerable people are unable to access housing, they have increased vulnerability to a range of negative outcomes, such as gender-based violence, human trafficking, and very poor mental and physical health outcomes." According to Statistics Canada, intimate partner violence is a leading cause of homelessness among women.<sup>12</sup>

Interventions for youth is an important part of this work. Evidence supports that "Precariously housed youth reported higher rates of problematic substance use and crime/violence issues. Precariously housed youth were 48% more likely to endorse concurrent disorders, which was largely driven by the high rate of concurrent disorders among precariously housed females."<sup>13</sup>

**Principles for action identified by the Public Health Agency of Canada to prevent substance-related harm among youth include health equity, compassionate, non-judgemental and strength-based approaches, harm reduction, multi-sectoral partnerships and evidence-informed practice.<sup>16</sup>**

In 2019, Canada released the National Housing Strategy Act (NHS Act) in order to support and put into practice the human right to housing through existing national policies. The Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC) is the organisation largely responsible for delivering the strategy.<sup>14</sup> Their goal is to ensure that every Canadian has a home they can afford that meets their needs by 2030. Local municipal alignment with this strategy requires an innovative approach to integrated decision-making.

Municipalities are at the front line and in a position to provide innovative housing leadership. Regionally, the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC) is committed to a lead role in the housing crisis. Vulnerable community members are waiting an average of almost 5 years and up to 10 years in some cases to access affordable community rental housing units. "The EOWC's '7 in 7+' regional housing plan proposes building at least 7,000 community rental units over seven years across the region to address the wait lists. The plan would require partnering with the Federal and Provincial Governments, as well as the private and non-profit sector, and Indigenous partners. Using a mixed-model approach, the '7 in 7+' plan has the added benefit to bring on nearly 21,000 additional market rate units. This would total 28,000 housing units."<sup>15</sup>

Now is the opportunity to support regional efforts and invest in an innovative and integrated local response to our mental health, substance use, addiction and housing challenge. Further understanding of the development process, the role of the Official Plan and alignment with the jurisdictional responsibilities of development and property



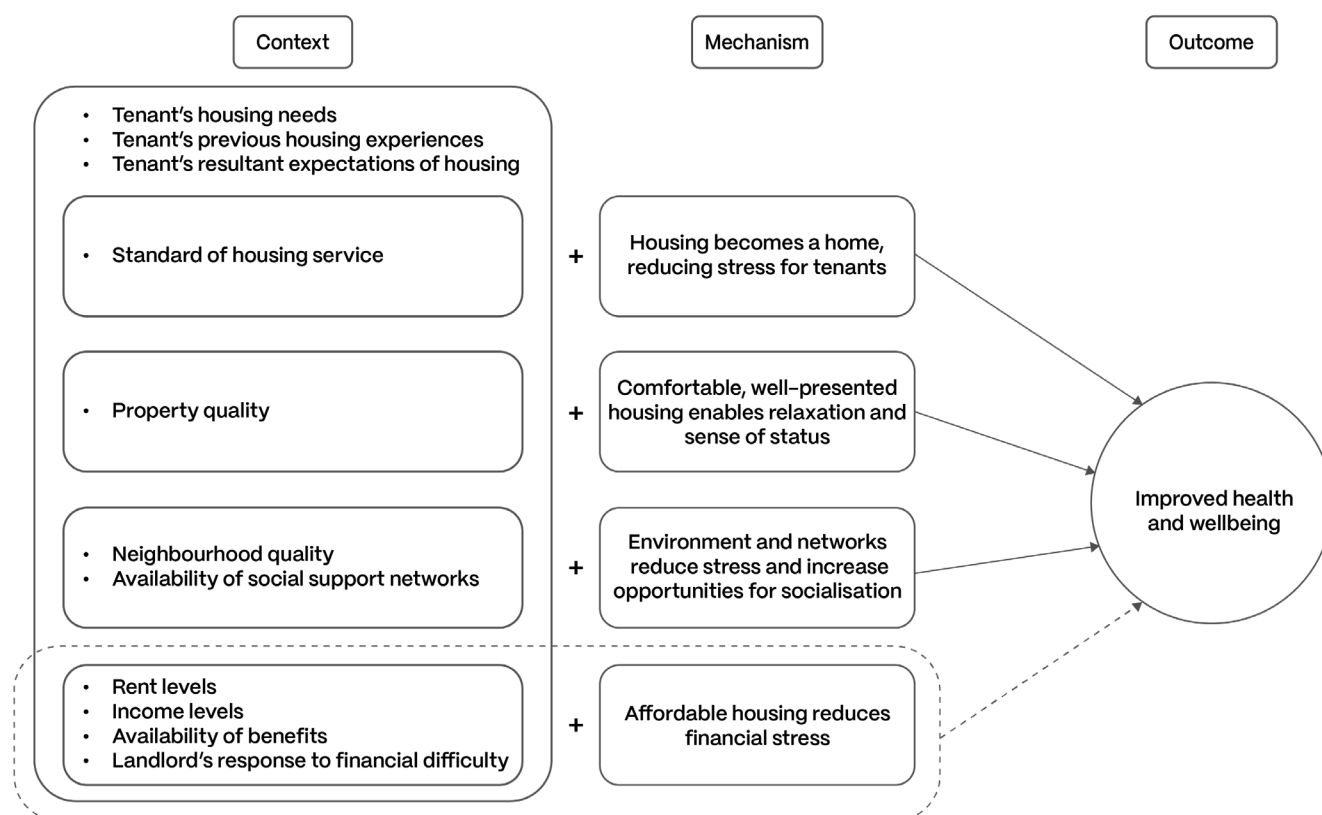
is an important component to a seamless system of change. Alignment and investment require an evidence to action approach and the County of Renfrew is well positioned to move forward effectively.

## Development and Property

The Development and Property department has the knowledge and tools to support increased housing availability and affordability through examples such as the Official Plan, policy and zoning regulations, the Renfrew County Housing Corporation (RCHC), a community housing provider in the County of Renfrew with over 1000 community housing units, expertise in the Provincial Planning Act and the Provincial Policy Statement.

Renfrew County, like many communities and regions, is experiencing the profound impact of our housing crisis. As a region, we are unique in our geographic size, and demographic and require an innovative approach to building a healthy and prosperous community for everyone. In contrast to many urban areas in Ontario, Renfrew County is fortunate to have significant land availability. In addition, Renfrew County has a flexible Official Plan which supports growth and development of new residential builds in towns such as Arnprior, Renfrew, Petawawa and Deep River, Barry's Bay and Eganville, as well as rural areas across the County. The Official Plan also contains existing and potential opportunities to prioritise policies that support innovative affordable housing initiatives.

### Housing as a social determinant of health and wellbeing<sup>20</sup>



# Housing Availability and Affordability

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Renfrew County is experiencing the urgent need for new housing, similar to what is being felt regionally and provincially across Ontario. This urgency is underscored by the Provincial Government's call for the construction of 1.5 million new homes by 2031. In 2022, Renfrew County actively participated in the Rural Housing Affordability Roundtable and provided feedback to the Ontario Government on recommendations from the Ontario Housing Affordability Task Force. Currently, Renfrew County has approximately 2,572 approved residential units within draft-approved subdivisions awaiting development. As well, rural areas of the County have 4,982 vacant parcels ranging from 0.25 acres to 5 acres and 6,246 vacant parcels exceeding 5 acres in size. With existing approvals for around 13,800 residential units, the County is working to be in a shovel ready position for construction.

The opportunities for supporting new affordable housing across Renfrew County are substantial and the timing is urgent. With the launch of this collaborative approach to addressing health and housing in our communities, we are in a strong position to address challenges being felt at local, provincial and federal levels. Identifying shared systemic barriers is a part of the process of clearing the path towards our goal of good health and secure, long-term housing for everyone.

Housing availability and security is increasingly being addressed by more than housing sectors and recognized as an integral health issue. The University Health Network invested in the value of the 51 supportive housing modular units, built in the Parkdale community in Toronto, "We're not putting a limit on how long someone can live in the units, because evidence from around the world shows that short-term solutions (like 30 days in a house) are not enough to put someone back on track. Our ultimate goal is to help our residents become healthy enough to move out and back into the world."<sup>17</sup>



Challenges	Opportunities
Housing is a fundamental and foundational Social Determinant of Health and addressing it requires aligned jurisdictional responsibility.	Interdepartmental and cross sector community collaboration, planning and program implementation.
Housing supply is a critical local, provincial and national issue, requiring shared investment.	Leverage existing and emerging provincial and federal funding.
Financialization is a contributing factor to affordable housing challenges.	Strengthen relationships with the emerging pleural sector opportunities and identify shared values and processes with private developers.
Stigma, discrimination and 'not in my backyard' isms are barriers to integrated or mixed housing development.	Develop a strong communication platform and public health promotion with public health and community partners.
Planning, policies and design all play a significant role with the potential to create positive, upwards health and housing momentum.	Integrated, interdepartmental decision making in the planning and design phase of development and inclusionary policies. Similar to the 5% allocation to green space in the Provincial Planning Act, a percentage could be included for developers to contribute to affordable housing.
Challenges to new housing construction include high interest rates, shortage in skilled labour, high costs of building supplies and being located in slow-growth/low-demand geographic area.	The County of Renfrew has access to ample land, the opportunity to strengthen relationships with Colleges who support the trades and building suppliers and innovative enterprise and economic development efforts.
Shovel ready projects require planning and investment.	<p>The County of Renfrew is currently developing and quoting shovel ready affordable housing projects across various sites, ready to commence once funding becomes available.</p> <p>Planning approvals are already secured for private lands, and the County itself owns land that could be utilised for affordable housing initiatives.</p>
Maintenance and care for existing social housing units. High tenant turnover rates and disrepair and damage to social housing units affects housing stock availability.	Seamless, wrap around, trauma-informed care through mesa that supports community members in crisis and addresses social and health challenges.



According to insights from private sector expertise, efforts need to be focused on doubling the social housing stock to help those in greatest need and unlock greater supply across the continuum. This relieves pressure across the system. In addition, the need for governments to provide higher grant-based approaches. This is the most cost efficient approach for all sectors.<sup>19</sup>

The Property and Development department is well positioned to contribute to the conditions that affect our most vulnerable community members and play a strong role in the concept of 'raising up' vulnerable populations through a housing lens. In collaboration with the Paramedic Service and Community Services, there is a clear opportunity to proactively support harm reduction efforts and address housing inequities to build a best practice planning system that is seamlessly integrated, equitable and inclusive.

*See Appendix B for additional development and property context and opportunities.*



# Integrated Evidence to Action Model – mesa

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The County of Renfrew is moving forward with the mesa program as an opportunity to align local economic development, planning, community well-being, social services and emergency services (including mental health, substance use and addiction) priorities with the CMHC housing goal to ensure that every Canadian has a home they can afford that meets their needs by 2030. Alignment presents a unique opportunity for innovative housing investments, community design and development in an integrated local, rural model. Upstream thinking and investment directly address housing as an essential social determinant of health and the foundation for improving the quality of life for all residents. Innovative housing investment is a unique opportunity that sets the stage for thriving communities, higher quality of life and smart planning, economic development and growth.

Aligned with the County of Renfrew 2023–2026 Strategic Plan, this document provides an integrated **evidence to action** framework that meets multiple objectives in the sections, Attainable Housing and Infrastructure, Shared Services and Resources, Community Wellness and Healthcare as well as Financial Stability and Environmental Resiliency. Moving forward, there are innovative opportunities and existing programs to build on, invest in and highlight. The next steps outline an evidence-based path forward, including alignment with existing strategies and investments.



# Conclusion

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Mesa is an evidence-based “escalator model” designed to transition people out of harm and towards an equitable community landscape. Our goal is to support everyone to move towards health, well-being and a safe place to call home. The one direction, fluid model provides the innovative care and access to secure housing required for community members to thrive independently.

This document lays a foundation for the commitment of the County of Renfrew’s administration, community services, development and property, and emergency services departments to work collaboratively towards a shared purpose that moves beyond silos and leverages the collective expertise and resources of the community.





Mazinaw Rock (meaning 'painted image' in Algonquin language) is located on Mazinaabikinigān-zaaga'igan (Mazinaw Lake) in Bon Echo Provincial Park. It is a very meaningful site to Anishinabek Nation communities and is a place of sacred and spiritual importance.



# Next Steps

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## ENGAGE AND ALIGN

1. Identify County of Renfrew interdepartmental shared goals and strategies to create an integrated framework for action.
2. Engage, collaborate with and commit to a working group of multi-sector leaders.
3. Engage with populations served to co-design an effective pathway forward.
4. Create the framework protocols (terms of reference) to guide decision making and share evidence based knowledge.
5. Align action with existing municipal, provincial plans and strategies.

- **Local**

Strategic Plan 2023–2026 | County of Renfrew (2023)

County of Renfrew Seniors Housing Strategy (2020)

Municipality endorsed Community Safety and Well-being Plans (2019–2023)

Community Safety and Well-Being Plan – Madawaska Valley+ (2022)

Upper Ottawa Valley Community Safety and Well-being Plan (2023)

- **Regional** – Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus

7 in 7+ Regional Housing Plan (2023)

- **Provincial**

Ontario and National Housing Strategy (2023)

Community Housing Renewal Strategy | ontario.ca (2019)

- **National**

The National Housing Accord (2023)

- **Indigenous**

National First Nations Homelessness Action Plan (2023)

6. Engage and align with relevant local and broader knowledge and initiatives.

- Indigenous Health Circle
- Situation table, now the Renfrew County Community Risk Watch (RCCRW).
- Align work with the Substance Use and Addiction Proposal for a Renfrew County Mobile Substance Use Service.



7. Identify and engage populations living on the brink of our rural communities, isolated and in need of resources, reflecting recommendations from the Rural Ontario Municipal Association Fill the Gaps Closer to Home Improving Access to Health Services for Rural Ontario
8. Leverage existing programs and services in a team-based approach to address identified barriers and challenges to safety and well-being and build a communication strategy platform.

## **MOBILISE KNOWLEDGE AND PROMOTE BEST PRACTICE**

9. Prioritise prevention and focus on social determinants of health.
10. Develop a detailed understanding of the Housing First Finnish model and adapt for a Renfrew County context.
11. Engage housing expertise to complete a cost benefit analysis (financial expertise delegated to calculate mixed housing financial formulas for optimal ratio of housing type development – new builds and updated housing to work towards 30% of supportive, complex, social housing. See \*Finland's Housing model recommended ratio)
12. Design and roadmap an innovative local operational wrap around model of care.

## **DEVELOP, SHARE AND IMPLEMENT AN EVIDENCE TO ACTION PLAN**

13. Create an integrated Community Services, Development and Property and Paramedic Service planning table.
14. Develop an action plan based on upstream (prevention) interventions in mental health, addictions, and housing based on evidence and best practice (Housing First, Finland).
  - Design the system to support anyone facing or at risk of homelessness.
  - Adopt municipal guidelines to address encampments. Homeless Encampments: Municipal Engagement Guidance.
15. Develop a roadmap to procure and invest in innovative, affordable housing developments, including shovel ready innovative housing projects.
16. Build a strategy to strengthen supportive/transitional housing. See Appendix B
17. Implement, assess and share the mesa team model. See Appendix A

## **RESEARCH, MEASURE AND EVALUATE**

18. Identify, align, choose and track indicators to measure impact.
19. Design and share a measurement tool.

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# Appendix A

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## RENFREW COUNTY MESA TEAM

### 1.0 Summary

As an innovative model of care, the mesa team aligns the strategic efforts of the Community Services, Development and Property and Paramedic Services departments. This team approach to improving the client experience is achieved by integrating and supporting existing networks of multi-sector partners, programs, resources, treatment and support in order to identify opportunities that strengthen individual and collective efforts across the health, social services and housing sectors. These networks of partners provide upstream community engagement and inter-woven approaches, supported by aligned care from County services through the mesa team representatives.

This team's priorities are to improve the social service, mental health, addictions, housing and basic needs experience of our communities' most vulnerable populations. The team will focus on client engagement, relationship and trust building, education, prevention, harm reduction and creating connections with existing and new mental health programs, providing care and treatment services as well as housing support.

The mesa team offers a wrap-around approach to compassionate care in collaboration with existing 911 Paramedic Services, a homelessness coordinator and the addition of mobile teams of Paramedics and crisis workers to support a strong network of community partner efforts, including lived experience expertise.

The mobile mesa teams are focused on day-to-day targeted engagement with vulnerable community members coupled with an inherent surge capacity to respond to crisis needs with trauma-informed care. The mobile mesa team works closely with partner organisations, local resources and mental health services to support vulnerable community members.

*This model of care represents the combined efforts of the Paramedic Service, Community Services and Development and Property departments and their partner organisations to create an improved and innovative approach to compassionate, wrap-around care through escalation to secure housing and empowered, independent living.*

## 2.0 Background

Health research has long reinforced the importance of focusing on promotion, prevention, and early intervention for mild to moderate mental health disorders and ensuring specialised care is available for people living with severe mental health illnesses. The Mental Health Commission of Canada states that improved mental health care depends on providing access to the right combination of services, treatments and supports, when and where people need them. One of the most notable recommendations from the Mental Health Commission of Canada is the introduction of community-based rapid response teams, which have been implemented by organisations across the world and have yielded substantially positive results.

In 2018, Everyone Counts, the second nationally coordinated Point-in-Time surveyed 19,536 people across 61 communities about their experience of homelessness. This report analyses responses from those who identified addiction or substance use as a reason for their recent housing loss. Key findings from the report include:

- Addiction or substance use was the most commonly cited reason for housing loss. More than a quarter (25.1%) of survey respondents indicated that addiction or substance use was a reason for their most recent housing loss.
- The proportion of individuals who reported addiction or substance use increases with time spent homeless, from 19.0% at 0 to 2 months to 28.2% for those who reported over 6 months of homelessness in the past year.
- In communities that conducted 2016 and 2018 Point-in-Time surveys, the prevalence of people who identified addiction or substance use as a reason for housing loss increased from 20.9% to 26.0%. Increases were observed for each age group, in particular for youth and adults.

According to the most recent Public Health Agency of Canada statement, the data shows that in Canada between January and June 2023, there were 3,970 opioid-related deaths and 39,435 hospitalizations for opioid-related poisonings. These are the highest numbers reported in the first half of a year since surveillance began in 2016. This data provides a clear understanding of the scope of the overdose crisis, and we need evidence-based actions, across the full continuum of care, including prevention, harm reduction treatment, and recovery to help mitigate future deaths and substance-related harms. The statement calls for ongoing investment, coordination and an approach that addresses the factors that place some people at greater risk of substance-related harms, such as experiences of trauma, economic insecurity, homelessness, social isolation and stigma.

In 2020, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released the document National Guidelines for Behavioral Health Crisis Care – A Best Practice Toolkit. This toolkit was developed with the “no wrong door” safety net approach which is built upon the



premise that anyone should be able to access initial mental health care from any community resource in a timely manner. The document illustrates the devastating outcomes of communities that do not use this upstream, safety net approach. Outcomes include high rates of incarceration for individuals with mental health illnesses and substance abuse, overcrowding of emergency departments, and higher rates of referrals to expensive and restrictive inpatient care. Without effective intervention, people require extended lengths of stay because interventions that better align with the person's needs are not available.

Additionally, SAMHSA's published toolkit includes an analysis out of Georgia that examined over 1.2 million records from more than 10 years which informed the recommended referral pathways for crisis care. The analysis showed 14% of individuals required service at an acute hospital where 54% required referral to a crisis receiving and stabilisation facility and 32% of individuals were appropriately evaluated by a Crisis Mobile Team with referrals to care as needed. The SAMHSA Toolkit references their 2014 report titled "Crisis Services: Effectiveness, Cost-Effectiveness, and Funding Strategies", which highlights the highly effective and successful outcomes associated with mobile crisis services and is supported by empirical data.

The essential elements for a "no wrong door" integrated crisis system:

1. Regional Crisis Call Centre: 24/7 quality coordination of crisis care in real-time;
2. Crisis Mobile Team Response: available to reach any person in their home, work-place, or any community-based location in a timely manner; and
3. Crisis Receiving and Stabilisation Facilities: provide short-term observation and crisis stabilisation services to referrals in a non-hospital environment.

Housing First, an evidence informed approach to the housing and health crisis, provides a proven rights-based, client-centred approach to homelessness. According to their research, the critical components of secure, wrap-around care when addressing issues that include homelessness complicated with mental health challenges, addictions and other trauma related complex care needs include following principles of care.

1. Immediate access to permanent housing with no housing readiness requirements
2. Consumer choice and self-determination
3. Recovery orientation focused on not simply meeting basic client needs, but on supporting recovery, including a harm reduction environment
4. Individualised and client-driven supports
5. Social and community integration

### 3.0 Local data

According to data from the Office of the Chief Coroner, Renfrew County and District Health Unit reported an average of one suspect drug related death per month. In recent years, rising rates of opioid-related deaths have been seen locally in Renfrew County and District (RCD), provincially, and nationally. Between 2020 and 2022, the annual number of opioid-related deaths in RCD was 2–4 times higher compared to pre-pandemic times. Within the first 8 months of 2023 (January–August), preliminary data indicates there were 16 opioid-related deaths in RCD.<sup>1</sup> According to data from the Office of the Chief Coroner, drug related deaths are underestimated due to the number of deaths suspected to be opioid related, but where no cause was determined. The overdose and opioid crisis is a complex health and social issue requiring a comprehensive, collaborative, compassionate and evidence-informed response. It often takes time to confirm which drug(s) contributed to a death; therefore, in addition to monitoring deaths confirmed to be related to opioids, RCDHU also monitors suspect drug poisoning deaths that include all suspect drug-related deaths (e.g., opioids, stimulants, and undetermined substances). Preliminary data indicates there were 41 suspect drug poisoning deaths across RCD in 2023, which is nearly double the number from 2022 (21 deaths).<sup>5</sup>

With respect to toxicity-related emergency department (ED) visits, while month-to-month variability exists, there were approximately 70 ED visits to local hospitals in 2023.<sup>6</sup> This is 1.5–2 times higher than the annual number of visits observed pre-pandemic. It is important to note that this data only captures those who visit an ED and may not reflect the total burden in the population. Further, significant increases in local naloxone distribution<sup>7</sup> likely influence the number of individuals seeking health care services in the event of an overdose.

Over the past 5 years, the rate of opioid-related deaths has been relatively high in the Pembroke area (see Table 1).<sup>7</sup> Provincial-level data demonstrates that several populations, such as men, young adults, First Nations people, and people experiencing homelessness, have been disproportionately impacted by the intersection of the overdose crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>3,4</sup>

Table 1. Number of opioid-related deaths and rate of opioid-related deaths per 100,000 person-years by geographical areas in RCD, January 2018 to June 2023

Geographical Area	Population (Census 2021)	Number of opioid-related deaths	Rate of opioid-related deaths per 100,000 person-years
Arnprior and Area (including McNab/ Braeside)	17,220	6	6.3
Barry's Bay and Area (including Algonquin Provincial Park; Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan; Killaloe, Haggarty, Richards; Madawaska Valley; North Algona Wilberforce; South Algonquin)	12,157	4	6.0
Deep River and Area (including Laurentian Hills; Head, Clara, Maria)	7,327	5	12.4
Renfrew and Area (including Admaston/Bromley, Horton, Greater Madawaska)	17,231	8	8.4
Pembroke and Area (including Bonnechere Valley, Laurentian Valley, Whitewater Region)	34,937	34	17.7
Petawawa	18,160	5	5.0

Data source: Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario (2). Data is preliminary and subject to change.

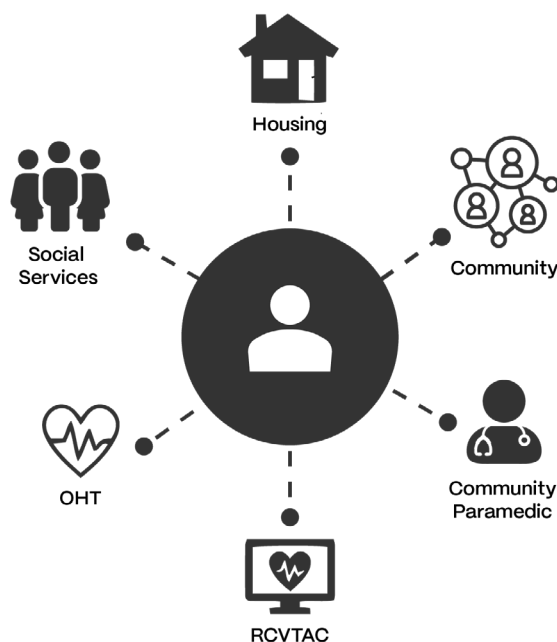
Notes:

- Opioid-related deaths include both confirmed and probable cases as defined by the Office of the Chief Coroner.
- Deaths are primarily categorised according to the location where the death occurred.
- Table does not include deaths that occurred within the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation.
- Rate of opioid-related deaths per 100,000 person-years assumes population remained constant over 5.5 year period (January 2018 to June 2023)

Each year, the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service responds to approximately 900 calls related to mental health and substance use. It is important to note that these numbers only include calls where the paramedic has documented mental health and/or substance use as the primary health issue. In response to an increase in mental health and substance use related emergencies across the County of Renfrew, including the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation community, and the need for systemic changes in how mental health and social crises are managed locally, the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service is supporting the implementation of a collaborative team approach. This evidence informed action comes from extensive research into crisis response services provincially, nationally, and internationally.

#### 4.0 Model Type

The mobile team includes a Community Paramedic, and Crisis Worker with harm reduction expertise and social services navigation skills supported by a community network of services and programs. The network includes Community Paramedics, RCVTAC, Ontario Health Teams, social services, housing, community members with lived experience and community partners.



Community Paramedic	Crisis Worker with Harm Reduction & Social Navigation Skills	
Assessment and treatment	Harm reduction	Trauma-informed support
Preventative care	Social navigation	Immediate support to meet basic social needs from food and clothing to emergency housing
Facilitate referrals	Mental health and addiction care	Support towards secure housing
Addiction medicine	Case management as needed	Competencies to engage effectively with community members presenting with mild and moderate mental health crises
Consultation with addiction medicine physicians	Counselling services	
	Harm reduction education	
	Harm reduction supplies	
	Facilitate referrals and navigate in place	



The mesa team pairs a specially trained paramedic with a crisis worker who has expertise in mental health, addictions and housing to work collaboratively with vulnerable community members to address their health needs, shelter and related issues where mental health challenges, substance use, housing and social service complexities are contributing and/or complicating factors. This team is more than a response team and is a part of a full support program and provides mobile services to clients when and where they need them, the first time. It provides a network of support and follow up for community members, offering wrap-around health and social support and care to vulnerable and underserved community members, with a focus on those who are using substances and experiencing homelessness. Team members provide as needed medical interventions, mental health and addictions counselling, health education focused on harm reduction practices, support with navigating the health and social service system, access to basic needs in the form of food, clothes, hygiene products, facilitating referrals to ongoing support, and time limited case management support.

The County of Renfrew Paramedic Service will continue to engage fully with community stakeholders throughout the rollout of the program, with the goal of developing and implementing a 24/7 crisis receiving and stabilisation base to launch clients into housing, social and/or health supports. Currently the County of Renfrew is strengthening collaborative relationships with mental health, addiction and housing partners to focus on the ongoing development of effective and secure solutions. The County of Renfrew Paramedic Service will continue to work with our Ontario Health Team partners to build consensus and offer an innovative regional approach to our health and social crisis and provide a no-wrong-door integrated system.

The mesa team hours of operation will meet demand, recognizing the need for increased access to mental health, substance use care and housing supports during periods of time when other community agencies and organisations may not be offering services. The County of Renfrew Paramedic Service will review call volumes periodically and adjust the hours of operation, as required, to reflect the needs of the community.

The County of Renfrew Paramedic Service has conducted extensive research of provincial, national, and international mental health initiative models and services as well as engaged in community and stakeholder consultations to best understand the needs of the communities we serve. An all-inclusive approach to mental health and substance use treatments and social service needs through the mesa team model will best impact our service and community, building on existing service to the community while improving Paramedic Service operational efficiency. The Paramedic Service is integrating best practice and a strong evidence base to support this upstream, wrap around model of care. Education, prevention, community engagement with our most vulnerable populations and intervention within the community offers in-the-moment assessment and appropriate referral for follow-up care while breaking down barriers to accessing care.

In accordance with evidence informed recommendations for behavioural health crisis care, this model offers the most comprehensive mental health care with options for the client to receive better care, when and where they need it. This team prevents 911 calls from happening and offers upstream support options and alternatives to our current operations of transporting clients to crowded, frenetic emergency departments, which research suggests is rarely the most appropriate place for clients experiencing a mental health crisis as many do not require the services available in the emergency department. According to the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence, people in Ontario who visited the emergency department in 2017 and 2018 for a mental illness or addiction, 9.5% (nearly 18,300 people) visited four or more times in a year, an indicator that they may not be receiving appropriate follow-up care in the community. For many individuals, their first contact with mental health and addictions services was in the emergency department.

The County of Renfrew Paramedic Service continues to support all individuals who call 9-1-1, providing the most appropriate treatment within the paramedic current scope of practice. A primary goal of the mesa team model is to provide the best care when and where people need it, the first time. Providing resource referrals and assisting individuals with navigation of the mental health care and social services system can reduce the number of repeat visits to hospital emergency departments, and reduce cost to the healthcare system.

## **5.0 Patient Cohort**

The mesa team is relevant to mental health, addictions, unhoused and housing unstable populations with health needs. Individuals with a diagnosed history of, or presentation suggesting the presence of a cognitive disorder are supported by partner organisations. Ongoing collaboration with community partners, including Community Living, ensures a seamless support network of all vulnerable populations.

## **6.0 Costs**

Funding for the associated costs of the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service model will be initially supported through the Service's operating budget. After successful implementation and with anticipated demand for growth and development, the Service will seek additional funding opportunities and the acquisition of long-term funding.

## **7.0 Education and Training**

The County of Renfrew Paramedic Service is collaborating closely with local mental health, addictions and social determinants of health and housing expertise to support education and training for mesa team members. Local and regional leaders in mental health care, addictions, housing and research. Collaboratively, the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service has identified key areas of education and training to support paramedics to deliver proficient, client-centred, trauma-informed mental health care in partnership with mental health professionals.

The comprehensive training program will include the following topics:

1. Motivational interviewing suicide safety and suicidal risk assessment
2. Limited capacity to assessment and informed consent
3. Crisis de-escalation
4. Trauma-informed care
5. Cultural Safety Training
6. Stigma
7. Power differentials
8. Concurrent disorders, mismanaged overdoses & withdrawal management
9. Collaborative care/interprofessional teams
10. The social determinants of health

The training program will also consider the following specially designed courses:

1. Addiction Care and Treatment Online Course – University of British Columbia
2. Mental Health First Aid – The Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre
3. Applied Suicide Interventions Skills Training (ASIST) – Canadian Mental Health Association
4. Motivational Interviewing – Canadian Mental Health Association

The County of Renfrew Paramedic Service acknowledges the importance of educating and training all staff, in addition to those assigned to the team. The Service plans to develop a training and education program for all staff to promote program success. Training for team staff will be incorporated into the Service's Continuing Medical Education program. Topics will include mental health and substance use, protocols, criteria, trauma-informed training, and cultural safety training.

## **8.0 Partner Support**

The County of Renfrew Paramedic Service continues to engage and collaborate with key County of Renfrew and community partners to ensure alignment with existing and emerging mental health, addiction and substance use programs, housing services, emergency and warming centre services. The Service is looking forward to building and strengthening support from many multi-sector partners committed to collaborating with the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service.

Collaboration with Public Health, the Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team, Ottawa – Four Rivers Ontario Health team and Renfrew County social services and mental health and addiction services will provide client resource referrals and absorption.

Further partner support includes a growing list of partners that include:

1. Renfrew County District Health Unit (Public Health)
2. Addictions Treatment Services / Renfrew Victoria Hospital
3. Pembroke Regional Hospital
4. The City of Pembroke
5. Algonquins of Pikwakanagan
6. The Indigenous Circle
7. Madawaska Communities Circle of Health
8. The Grind
9. Ontario Addictions Treatment Centre
10. Ontario Health Teams
11. Arnprior Regional Health
12. St. Francis Memorial Hospital
13. Deep River and District Hospital
14. Pathways Alcohol and Drug Treatment Services
15. Garrison Petawawa
16. Ontario Provincial Police Services
17. Municipal Police Services

## **9.0 Implementation**

Next Steps include the development and communication of support pathways, protocols, referrals, and documentation. This will inform the flow and implementation of the care model.

## **10.0 Evaluation**

The County of Renfrew Paramedic Service is constructing an evaluation framework built around the five pillars of the Quintuple Aim for healthcare improvement, an internationally recognized framework that promotes an effective health care system and prioritises health equity. These five pillars include promoting health equity, improving the client and caregiver experience, improving the health of populations, reducing the per capita cost of health care, and improving the work life of providers. Evaluation will include a participatory, co-created qualitative study to capture the community impact of this program. In addition to internal reporting periods, the Service is developing an external working group for the purposes of developing a feedback loop for continuous improvement, guidance, and measurable reporting.



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# Appendix B

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## DEVELOPMENT AND PROPERTY

### Context

It is important to provide context to the role of the Development and Property department in the housing and health crises. There are legislative limitations and often financial constraints beyond municipal jurisdictional decision making capacity. For example, increasing the 15% target for new unit affordable housing builds requires navigation of legislative limitations and financial constraints. In the 1970s, there was substantial government investment in affordable housing. Subsequent decades saw significant reductions in funding for social housing construction. In the 2000s, the Ontario Government shifted responsibility for managing existing social housing to municipal services. Currently, the Renfrew County Housing Corporation provides funding for maintenance, not new construction. Occasional one-time grants offered for new builds have been insufficient to meet market demand. Beyond federal or provincial funding, the County and local municipalities are limited to property tax to fund new affordable or social housing units. Jurisdictional responsibility for new housing initiatives is historically within federal or provincial jurisdiction. In addition, property tax is linked to the assessed value of a property and does not reflect a property owner's ability to pay. Income tax does correlate with a person's income and actual capacity to contribute to taxes. For instance, seniors living on fixed incomes or pensions have limited means to adjust their income to afford increased housing expenses. Property tax as a solution to fund affordable housing can exacerbate housing affordability issues, creating a vicious cycle rather than alleviating the problem.

### Private Sector Development & Affordable Housing

In Ontario, the private sector bears a significant level of responsibility for housing development. The premise is that where there is a viable market, profit margins will follow, and construction will address housing needs. In Renfrew County, growth, demand and profitability need to be understood and addressed. In addition, the financialization of housing is identified as a barrier to increasing the availability of affordable housing. Developers in Renfrew County, similar to other rural areas of Ontario, face narrow profit margins, and introducing additional costs to fund or incorporate affordable units below market rate affects the viability of projects, and potentially contributes to them being viewed as unmarketable. The County is supportive of the inclusion of affordable housing in private development. There is currently no incentivizing mechanism to encourage or mandate the private sector to increase the construction of affordable units. This thinking is important to systemic change in the housing industry.

## **Inclusion in Policies and Planning**

Inclusionary policies are important pathways to increase access to affordable housing. Local action that aligns with housing affordability policies include efforts by local municipalities, in collaboration with the County of Renfrew, to review and update zoning by-laws that remove “exclusionary” provisions. Exclusionary zoning by-law provisions are practices that allow for the exclusion of groups of people, often lower-income individuals or minorities, from residing in certain areas. The County and local municipalities are also changing provisions such as eliminating minimum dwelling sizes, removing prohibition on dwelling types in areas traditionally and solely zoned for single-family homes. The elimination of this barrier allows for up to three dwelling units on each individual residential lot where servicing capacity exists.

The Provincial Planning Act contains an inclusionary zoning tool, enabling municipalities to enforce a minimum provision of affordable housing within developments. This provision is limited to specific prescribed municipalities and to major transit hub areas; thereby Renfrew County is therefore unable to use these inclusionary zoning provisions.

There is an existing requirement in the Planning Act for new developments to contribute to parkland provision. Residential projects must allocate 5% of land for parks, while commercial and industrial developments must allocate 2%. Alternatively, developers can opt to provide cash in lieu of land for parks. A similar provision could be introduced into the Planning Act, mandating developers to contribute to affordable housing, either by constructing affordable units or providing a monetary equivalent to municipal service managers for the creation of new affordable housing units.

## **Additional ideas and opportunities to jumpstart affordable housing**

1. Federal and/or Provincial funding to the private sector or pleural sector through grants or tax exemptions.
2. Federal and/or Provincial funding directly allocated to the Renfrew County Housing Corporation for the creation of new units.
3. New provincial revenue generation models for municipalities to not rely on property taxes.
4. Provincial amendments to the Planning Act to introduce a cash-in-lieu system for affordable housing contributions.

## PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT DATA

The following Property and Development tables illustrate the number of applications and extent of the waiting list for community housing, transitions or turnover of housing, and affordable home ownership programs.

### 2023 Fourth Quarter (October – December 31) Community Housing Registry Waitlist

	New Applications	Cumulative Applications	Transfer Applications	Special Priority Applications
Senior	0	63	20	1
Adult	144	900	33	10
Family	30	502	34	76
Totals	174	1465*	87	87

\*Total Number of Applications – Bedroom Size Requested

Bedroom Size Requested	Senior	Adult	Family
1	59	852	0
2	4	43	213
3	0	4	161
4	0	1	82
5	0	0	46
Totals	63	900	502

### 2023 Fourth Quarter (October – December 31) Move Ins, Move Outs, and Internal Transfers Comparison

	Move Outs	Move Ins	Internal Transfers
Pembroke & Area	15	11	4
Renfrew	3	4	0
Arnprior	5	0	1
Total	23	15	5

### 2023 Fourth Quarter (October – December 31) Landlord and Tenant Board Notices and Applications

	Arnprior	Renfrew	Pembroke & Area
N4–Notice to Terminate Tenancy Early for Non–Payment of Rent	79	95	258
N5–Notice to Terminate Tenancy Early	15	8	28
L1–Application to Evict a Tenant for Non–payment of Rent and to Collect Rent	3	3	12
L2–Application to End a Tenancy and Evict a Tenant or Collect Money	1	2	5



## Affordable Homeownership Program Summary for 2023

The Affordable Homeownership Program can provide up to \$25,000 towards the purchase of a new home for qualified households. Applications are currently open and are available on the County of Renfrew website or can be requested by contacting a Community Services office.

	Approved Applications	2023 Spending	Geographical Area
	1	\$19,900	City of Pembroke
	2	\$25,000	Town of Deep River
	3	\$25,000	Town of Renfrew
	4	\$18,500	City of Pembroke
	5	\$25,000	Town of Renfrew
Total	5	\$113,400	–

## 2023 Ontario Renovates Program Summary for 2023

The Ontario Renovates Program can provide up to \$10,000 for essential household repairs or accessibility upgrades.

	Payment Amount	Date Issued	Geographical Area
	\$9,150.18	February 28, 2023	Township of Madawaska Valley
	\$7,000.00	February 28, 2023	Township of Horton
	\$10,000.00	February 28, 2023	City of Pembroke
	\$2,105.26	March 31, 2023	North Algona Wilberforce
	\$10,000.00	March 31, 2023	Township of Whitewater Region
	\$8,245.50	March 31, 2023	Township of Brudenell Lyndoch & Raglan
	\$7,560.00	April 20, 2023	City of Pembroke
	\$960.00	April 30, 2023	Township of Horton
	\$4,350.00	June 30, 2023	Township of Whitewater Region
	\$5,434.00	July 15, 2023	City of Pembroke
	\$10,000.00	July 15, 2023	City of Pembroke
	\$5,400.00	July 31, 2023	City of Pembroke
	\$9,827.47	September 30, 2023	Town of Petawawa
	\$2,818.22	December 31, 2023	Township of Whitewater Region
Total	\$92,850.62	–	–





**County of**  
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Renfrew County and District Health Unit  
*"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"*

## For Immediate Release

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(Pembroke, Ontario, March 07, 2024)

### **Overdose Alert for Renfrew County and District**

Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) is alerting residents about an increase in overdoses and suspected overdose-related deaths in the Pembroke catchment area.

Although specific substance(s) related to the overdoses have not been confirmed, it is important to remember that *all* street drugs must be considered highly toxic and potentially fatal.

RCDHU would like to remind residents that street drugs may contain other substances, as areas of the province have reported the presence of potent tranquilizers for which the overdose reversal drug naloxone is not effective. It is important to call 9-1-1 immediately if you suspect that someone is experiencing an overdose.

Friends, family members and individuals who use street drugs can work together to reduce the risk of an overdose by putting the following measures in place:

- **Don't use alone** – If you overdose and are with someone, they can get urgent help.
- **Carry naloxone (Narcan®)**- Naloxone can temporarily reverse an opioid overdose and kits are available for free throughout RCD at local pharmacies and other locations. For more information on where to get a kit please visit [this link](#).
- **Don't mix drugs** – Don't mix drugs with other drugs or alcohol, as it puts you at higher risk of overdosing.
- **Go slow** – The quality of street drugs is unpredictable. If you are using street drugs, start by using in small amounts (testers or test doses) to check the strength of what you are using.
- **Know your tolerance** - Risk of overdose increases if you are a new user or have not used in 3 or more days.
- If you have no other choice than to use alone, always call the Overdose Prevention Hotline 1-888-688-6677 ([National Overdose Response Service](#)) to have someone standing by to call for help if needed. A volunteer will check in periodically and call 911 if there's no response.

Understanding the signs of an overdose can help to save a life. These signs can include, but are not limited to:

- Person can't be woken up.
- Breathing is slow or has stopped.
- Snoring or gurgling sounds.
- Fingernails and lips turn blue or purple.
- Pupils are tiny or eyes are rolled back.
- Body is limp.

It is possible an individual treated with naloxone may have a re-emergence of the opioid overdose once the naloxone 'wears off', since the duration of action of most opioids exceeds that of naloxone. All overdoses are a medical emergency and calling 9-1-1 is an important step in saving someone's life.

We ask that people who are aware of overdoses assist us by completing RCDHU's anonymous online [Overdose Reporting Form](#), which is used to support tracking overdoses within the community. The Overdose Reporting Form does not ask for any identifying information and can be completed directly on RCDHU's website.

Support is available; the [Renfrew County Addiction Treatment System](#) delivers assessment, counselling and treatment programs to individuals who use substances.

It's ok to not be ok...If you, or someone you know are experiencing feelings of stress, anxiety, grief etc. supports can be accessed [here](#).

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Renfrew County and District Health Unit  
*"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"*

## For Immediate Release

---

(Pembroke, Ontario, March 19, 2024)

### **Board of Health Decides Against Voluntary Merger**

Today, the Boards of Health for Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) and the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit announced they would not seek provincial approval and funding to voluntarily merge. On March 18<sup>th</sup>, the Board of Health for RCDHU met and turned down a resolution for a voluntary merger with North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit.

This decision follows a vote in favour of merger from the Board of Health for North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit. Proposing a potential merger to the Ministry of Health requires Board of Health agreement from both merging health units; as such, a voluntary merger proposal will not be submitted to the Ministry of Health and further exploration of voluntary mergers will end.

This decision was made in response to the Ministry of Health's 2023 initiative to support public health units that decide to pursue mergers with other health units. Both Boards of Health participated in a merger feasibility study to explore benefits, risks, and local impacts of potential mergers.

"The Board of Health is committed to prioritizing the health of Renfrew County and District residents. After careful consideration and a full assessment of the risks and benefits of a potential merger, the Board of Health for RCDHU concluded that the interests of the residents of Renfrew County and District are best served by maintaining status quo, and not pursuing a merger at this time," states Joanne King, Chair of the RCDHU Board of Health. "Even though a merger was not approved by the board, we are very appreciative of the collaboration with the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit Board of Health throughout this process."

The Board of Health for RCDHU also considered the feasibility of potential mergers with neighbouring Eastern Ontario Health Unit and Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, with involved Boards of Health deciding not to pursue this option further.

"The RCDHU Board of Health thanks the Boards of Health for the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit, Eastern Ontario Health Unit, and the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit for the goodwill and collaboration that they have shown to us throughout this process," states Joanne King, Chair of the RCDHU Board of Health.

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# AMO Watchfile



March, 07 2024

## In This Issue

- Application for the PJ Marshall Awards is open.
- Information to assist Municipalities in flood preparedness.
- Consultation on *Ontario Energy Board Act* changes
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- Disability inclusion workshop and discussion: Beyond AODA compliance.
- Managing Communications through Uncomfortable Times - Limited space.
- Anti-Semitism and Anti-Islamophobia: Spring workshops.
- Indigenous Community Awareness training.
- Land Use Planning - Foundations and Deeper Dive workshops.
- Strategies for Navigating Conflict Relationships for Strong Council Outcomes.
- Learn more about municipal investments - Upcoming Workshops.
- Blog: Mitigating Auto Theft Risk for High-Target Vehicles.
- LAS webinar: LiDAR, Imagery, and AI for a High-Tech Future.
- Upcoming webinar: Financial Analysis for Energy Projects.
- Invasive Species Action Fund.
- 2024 Farmland Forum: The Future of Ontario Farmland.
- Ontario Age-Friendly Communities 2024 Conference.
- Future of Aging Summit next May.
- Careers.

## AMO Matters

The Peter J. Marshall Municipal Innovation Award celebrates municipal governments in Ontario that implement new and innovative ways to make public services, facilities, and infrastructure better for Ontarians. View full details [here](#).

## Provincial Matters

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The Ministry of Energy is considering [changes to the Ontario Energy Board Act](#) that would require broader consultation by the OEB (including with municipalities) and increase the leave to consult threshold. Submissions due by April 7.

MNDM is exploring changes to the [Northern Services Boards Act](#) (NSBA) to modernize provisions across various governance areas of Local Service Boards. The deadline for comments is March 19, 2024.

MSAA is [proposing a new regulation](#) that would prescribe entities that could contribute towards a Seniors Active Living Centre program's operational cost. The deadline for comments is March 22, 2024.

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highest honour for public service. [Nominate someone](#) from your municipality by April 30.

The province is conducting a [survey](#) to inform the creation of a Rural Economic Development Strategy. Share your ideas on how the province can support rural communities plan for economic success.

On February 22, the IESO hosted a webinar with MMAH and OMAFRA providing an overview of the current land use planning policies in place to guide the siting of energy projects in prime agricultural areas. A [recording of the session is available](#).

### Federal Matters

The Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario and the Canadian Urban Institute are offering [two streams of funding](#) for initiatives to support main streets in southern Ontario. Apply by March 31.

Infrastructure Canada is now accepting applications for the Planning and Design Projects Stream of the Rural Transit Solutions Fund (up to \$50,000). Visit their [website](#) for more information.

The Canadian Board for Harmonized Construction Codes is [consulting on proposed changes](#) for the 2025 national codes. Feedback collected will also serve as [consultation for Ontario's 2026/27 Building Code](#). Submissions due April 14.

### Education Opportunities

Join your small urban colleagues in Orillia May 1 - 3 in discussion, examination and advocacy on matters unique to your communities and to hear provincial leaders. [View the full program](#) and [register today](#).

Designed for elected officials, this workshop will provide insight and information to better understand the landscape and critical decisions to preventing, preparing for, and responding to cybersecurity incidents. [Register for the March 20 Cyber Security workshop](#).

As an elected municipal official we know the pressure you deal with is real and we are here to support you. AMO has developed 3 sessions focused on core elements of leadership. Register for the [March 22 Session 1 workshop](#), [May 29 Session 2 workshop](#), and the [October 2 Session 3 workshop](#).

Participants will leave this workshop with a greater depth of knowledge and understanding of building accessible and inclusive communities as an elected official. Register for the [March 25 Disability Inclusion Workshop](#).

The Managing Communications through Uncomfortable Times interactive, one-day course will teach participants how to manage all aspects of crisis communications during an emergency or large-scale event. Claim your space for the [March 27 Managing Communications through Uncomfortable Times workshop](#).

The goal of achieving your council's priorities and strategic objectives require understanding, good communication and finding ways to compromise. AMO's Navigating Conflict for Elected Officials is an invaluable resource for AMO members and your councils. This series of two workshops are open for registration: [NCR 1.0 June 26 - 27](#) and for those who have completed NCR 1.0 [April 9 - 10 NCR 2.0](#) register today.

These informative workshops provide you invaluable insight on the historical and contemporary roots of anti-semitism and anti-islamophobia, how to address these and how to build relationships and allyships. Register for the [April 24 antisemitism](#) and [May 15 anti-islamophobia](#) workshop today.

OFIFC and AMO are offering training to build indigenous cultural competency in municipal government. Through a self-paced learning module and live virtual component, this training will provide knowledge and tools to utilize in moving improved and stronger Indigenous-municipal relations forward in Ontario. [Register today for the April 2 workshop](#).

AMO's planning training supports its members in two important ways: [April 17 Foundations in Planning](#) builds foundational knowledge and insight into planning legislation and municipal requirements and roles and the [April 18 Advanced Land Use Planning - A Deeper Dive](#) training works through case studies and lessons learned to build your strategic management and decision making on local planning issues.

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ONE Investment Basics and Beyond Workshops provide an overview of requirements and eligible avenues for Municipal Investing under both the Eligible Investment regulation and Prudent Investor standards in the *Municipal Act*. We have both in-person and virtual options. Learn more and [register here](#).

## LAS

Car theft increased 72% between 2014 and 2021 and jumped an additional 14% just in the last few years. Read [our latest blog](#) about how to protect yourself.

Discover the potential of LiDAR, imagery, and AI in supercharging your asset management initiatives, regardless of community size. Join Streetscan on March 20 for a presentation on new developments in the [LAS Road & Sidewalk Assessment Service](#). [Register here](#).

Do you have a road or sidewalk survey on your 2024 to-do list? Join our webinar on March 20 for updates on the [LAS Road & Sidewalk Assessment Service](#), providing better data for better decision making. [Register here](#).

How do you know if an energy efficient project in your facility is worth pursuing? Join SaveONenergy and LAS on March 8 for a free webinar and take a deep dive into the complexities of energy projects financing and life cycle costing. Space is limited. [Register here today](#) - Part 5 of the Municipal Series.

## Municipal Wire\*

The Invasive Species Centre with support from Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry opens the [Invasive Species Action Fund](#) intake. The fund assists municipalities in combating priority species. Apply by April 11.

The Ontario Farmland Trust is [hosting a forum on March 21](#) to explore the importance of strong policy for farmland and environmental protection, succession planning for Ontario's food system, and how municipalities can support land access.

[Register](#) for the "[Building Healthy Communities: Uniting Experience, Research, and Practice for Ontario's Age-Friendly Future](#)" virtual conference. The free conference is organized into three themed morning sessions on March 20-22.

The Future of Aging Summit in Toronto from May 15-17 will bring together policymakers and others focused on building age-friendly societies. See the speaker lineup and register at [agingsummit.ca](#).

## Careers

[Director Financial Management & Planning/Deputy Treasurer - Niagara Region](#). Closing date: March 21.

[General Manager, Long Term Care Division - County of Lambton](#). Closing date: March 10.

[Planner - Rideau Valley Conservation Authority](#). Closing date: April 5.

[Chief Administrative Officer - Township of Stone Mills](#). Closing date: March 29.

[Client Representative Assistant - Ministry of the Attorney General](#). Closing date: March 19.

[Operations Policy and Research Analyst - City of Oshawa](#). Closing date: March 13.

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AMO is a non-profit organization representing almost all of Ontario's 444 municipal governments. AMO supports strong and effective municipal government in Ontario and promotes the value of municipal government as a vital and essential component of Ontario's and Canada's political system. Follow [@AMOPolicy](#) on Twitter!

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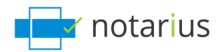
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- LAS consulting service for municipal energy reporting.
- City of Elliot Lake named finalist in Top 4 Community Kraft Hockeyville!
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- Careers: City of Vaughan and Peel Regional Police.

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As an elected municipal official we know the pressure you deal with is real and we are here to support you. AMO has developed Advanced Councillor Training in 3 sessions focused on core elements of leadership. Register for the [March 22 Session 1 workshop](#), [May 29 Session 2 workshop](#), and the [October 2 Session 3 workshop](#).

The Managing Communications through Uncomfortable Times interactive, one-day course will teach participants how to manage all aspects of crisis communications during an emergency or large-scale event. Claim your space for the [March 27 workshop](#).

The goal of achieving your council's priorities and strategic objectives require understanding, good communication and finding ways to compromise. AMO's Navigating Conflict for Elected Officials is an invaluable resource for AMO members and your councils. This series of two workshops are open for registration: [NCR 1.0 June 26 - 27](#) and for those who have completed NCR 1.0 [April 9 - 10 NCR 2.0](#) register today.

These informative workshops provide you invaluable insight on the historical and contemporary roots of anti-semitism and anti-islamophobia, how to address these and how to build relationships and allyships. Register for the [April 24 antisemitism](#) and [May 15 anti-islamophobia](#) workshop today.

OFIFC and AMO are offering training to build indigenous cultural competency in municipal government. Through a self-paced learning module and live virtual component, this training will provide knowledge and tools to utilize in moving improved and stronger Indigenous-municipal relations forward in Ontario. [Register today for the April 2](#) workshop.

AMO's planning training supports its members in two important ways: [April 17 Foundations in Planning](#) builds foundational knowledge and insight into planning legislation and municipal requirements and roles and the [April 18 Advanced Land Use Planning - A Deeper Dive](#) training works through case studies and lessons learned to build your strategic management and decision making on local planning issues.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

## LAS

Discover the potential of LiDAR, imagery, and AI in supercharging your asset management initiatives, regardless of community size. Join Streetscan on March 20 at 10am to learn new developments in the [LAS Road & Sidewalk Assessment Service](#). [Register here](#).

With the [July 1, 2024 energy reporting](#) deadline less than 5 months away, it's time to update your 5-year Conservation Plan. LAS is here to help with a limited time energy consulting service. Get started today - [contact us](#) for more information.

## Municipal Wire\*

Elliot Lake was named as a Top 4 Finalist for Kraft Hockeyville, the only Ontario community to be in this year's contest and they are looking for all of Ontario's support for votes! On March 29 and 30, please visit [Kraft Hockeyville](#) and vote for Elliot Lake. There is no limit to how many votes you can cast so don't miss your chance to vote!

The Invasive Species Centre with support from Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry opens the [Invasive Species Action Fund](#) intake. The fund assists municipalities in combating priority species. Apply by April 11.

[Register](#) for the "[Building Healthy Communities: Uniting Experience, Research, and Practice for Ontario's Age-Friendly Future](#)" virtual conference. The free conference is organized into three themed morning sessions on March 20-22.

The Future of Aging Summit in Toronto from May 15-17 will bring together policymakers and others focused on building age-friendly societies. See the speaker lineup and register at [agingsummit.ca](#).

## Careers

[Specialist, Enterprise Data and Information Governance - City of Vaughan](#). Closing date: March 22.

[Executive Assistant - Peel Regional Police](#). Closing date: March 24.

## About AMO

AMO is a non-profit organization representing almost all of Ontario's 444 municipal governments. AMO supports strong and effective municipal government in Ontario and promotes the value of municipal government as a vital and essential component of Ontario's and Canada's political system. Follow [@AMOPolicy](#) on Twitter!

## AMO Contacts

[AMO Watchfile](#) Tel: 416.971.9856

[Conferences/Events](#)

[Policy and Funding Programs](#)

[LAS Local Authority Services](#)

[MEPCO Municipal Employer Pension Centre of Ontario](#)

[ONE Investment](#)

[Media Inquiries](#)

[Municipal Wire, Career/Employment and Council Resolution Distributions](#)



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Association of Municipalities of Ontario

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**Legal Services / Clerk's Department**

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Wyoming, ON N0N 1T0

Telephone: 519-845-0801

Toll-free: 1-866-324-6912

Fax: 519-845-0818

February 23, 2024

The Honourable Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford:

**Re: Lambton County Council Motion**

Please be advised that at its regular meeting of February 07, 2024, Lambton County Council Passed the following resolution:

#25: Ferguson/Bradley:

**WHEREAS** the Province of Ontario has agreed to assume responsibility for the Gardiner Expressway and the Don Valley Parkway from the City of Toronto, which will be uploaded to the Province of Ontario;

**WHEREAS** like the City of Toronto, The Corporation of the County of Lambton and all municipalities in the Province of Ontario are experiencing significant financial and budgetary pressures including those related to infrastructure development, maintenance and repairs, and are seeking reasonable solutions to address the same while balancing their financial books;

**WHEREAS** the uploading of municipal highway infrastructure to the Province of Ontario or, alternatively, appropriately increasing the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund to Ontario municipalities will assist municipalities in addressing such financial challenges;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**


- a) That the Province of Ontario: (i) upload from local municipalities the responsibility of and costs associated with the continued construction, operation, and maintenance of major municipally-owned highways throughout the Province of Ontario to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation; or (ii) alternatively, if uploading is not the preferred option of the Province and/or local municipality, to appropriately increase the

Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund to municipalities so as to fairly and equitably allocate resources to Ontario municipalities.

- b) That a copy of this resolution be circulated to all municipalities in Ontario; the Association of Municipalities of Ontario; Sarnia-Lambton MPP, Bob Bailey; the Ontario Minister of Transportation, the Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria; and the Premier of Ontario, the Hon. Doug Ford.

Carried.

Kind Regards,

DocuSigned by:  
  
5897867E2272445...

**Olivia Leger**  
Clerk/County Solicitor

Encl #CC 04-10-24

cc: Association of Municipalities of Ontario  
All Ontario Municipalities  
Bob Bailey, M.P.P. Sarnia-Lambton Riding  
Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sakaria, Ontario Minister of Transportation



374028 6TH LINE • AMARANTH ON • L9W 0M6

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February 23, 2024

Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario  
Hon. Prabmeet Sarkaria, Minister of Transportation

Sent by email to: [Premier@ontario.ca](mailto:Premier@ontario.ca); [Minister.mto@ontario.ca](mailto:Minister.mto@ontario.ca)

**Re: Resolution on Highway 413**

At its regular meeting of Council held on February 21, 2024, the Township of Amaranth Council passed the following resolution:

**Resolution #: 3**

**Moved by:** G Little

**Seconded by:** A. Stirk

Whereas the Township of Amaranth recognizes the importance for efficient and effective transportation networks in the Province and;

Whereas, the Province has committed to getting 1.5 millions home built within the next 10 years or less.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Township of Amaranth request that the Province of Ontario pause advancement on proposed highway 413 and redirect the approximate \$8 billion cost for highway 413 to support municipal infrastructure costs and housing construction initiatives and;

Further be it resolved that at least 50% of those funds be allocated for small urban and rural Ontario with populations less than 50,000. **CARRIED**

Please do not hesitate to contact the office if you require any further information on this matter.

Yours truly,

Nicole Martin, Dipl. M.A.  
CAO/Clerk

Copy: Hon. Sylvia Jones, MPP Dufferin-Caledon [sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org](mailto:sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org)  
Hon. Kinga Surma, MPP Etobicoke Centre [kinga.surmaco@pc.ola.org](mailto:kinga.surmaco@pc.ola.org)  
Dufferin County Municipalities





# The Corporation of the Town of Cobourg

## Resolution

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All Ontario Municipalities

Sent via email

Town of Cobourg  
55 King Street West,  
Cobourg, ON, K9A 2M2  
[clerk@cobourg.ca](mailto:clerk@cobourg.ca)  
Town of Cobourg

March 8, 2024

RE: Correspondence from the Architectural Conservancy Ontario regarding Proposed Amendment to Subsection 27(16) of the Ontario Heritage Act with respect to the removal of listed (non-designated) properties from municipal heritage registers

Please be advised that the Town of Cobourg Council, at its meeting held on February 28, 2024, passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS subsection 27(16) of the Ontario Heritage Act stipulates that any non-designated heritage property listed on the municipal register of properties as of December 31, 2022 shall be removed from the municipal register on or before January 1, 2025, if the council of the municipality does not give a notice of intention to designate the property under subsection 29(1) of the Ontario Heritage Act on or before January 1, 2025; and

WHEREAS since January 1, 2023, municipal staff and members of the municipal heritage committee in the Town of Cobourg have been diligently working to: review the municipal heritage register; research the heritage value and interest of listed (non-designated) properties; review and research the heritage value and interest of non-designated properties; contact owners of such properties; determine which properties should potentially be designated in accordance with the provisions of Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act; and take all required steps to designate such properties; and

WHEREAS the above-noted work involving 213 listed properties in the Town of Cobourg is extremely time-consuming and cannot be completed by December 31, 2024 with the limited municipal resources available.



# The Corporation of the Town of Cobourg

## Resolution

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NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Town of Cobourg authorize the Mayor to promptly send a letter to Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, and Michael Ford, Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism, requesting that Subsection 27(16) of the Ontario Heritage Act be amended to extend the above-noted deadline for five years from January 1, 2025 to January 1, 2030; and

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to forward this resolution to all 443 municipalities in Ontario seeking support of the ACO correspondence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristina Lepik".

Kristina Lepik  
Deputy Clerk/Manager, Legislative Services



374028 6TH LINE • AMARANTH ON • L9W 0M6

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March 12, 2024

Hon. Paul Calandra  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Sent by email to: [Paul.Calandra@pc.ola.org](mailto:Paul.Calandra@pc.ola.org)

**Re: Operational Budget Funding**

At its regular meeting of Council held on March 6, 2024, the Township of Amaranth Council passed the following resolution.

**Resolution #: 4**

**Moved by:** G Little

**Seconded by:** A. Stirk

Whereas all Ontario municipalities are prohibited from running budget deficits for operating purposes, and;

Whereas all Ontario municipalities have similar pressures with respect to aging infrastructure and operating costs for policing, and;

Whereas the City of Toronto has recently received Provincial funding to cover a \$1.2 billion dollar operating shortfall and approximately \$12 million in Federal and Provincial funding for their Police operating budget, and;

Whereas the City of Toronto has the lowest tax rates in the Province, approximately 40% less than the average Dufferin rural municipal tax rate.

**Be it Resolved That** the Township of Amaranth call on the Province of Ontario to treat all municipalities fairly and provide equivalent representative operational budget funding amounts to all Ontario municipalities.

**CARRIED**

Please do not hesitate to contact the office if you require any further information on this matter.

Yours truly,

Nicole Martin, Dipl. M.A.

CAO/Clerk

C: Premier of Ontario; AMO; Ontario Municipalities