



COUNTY OF RENFREW Active Transportation Strategy



1.0 RATIONALE FOR AN ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

As the largest county in Ontario, roads in Renfrew County connect our natural and built environments, thereby providing an opportunity for collaborative action that improves our health, well being and overall quality of life through the transportation, land use and planning sectors.

An increasing base of evidence links our health, community health, economic growth, social well-being and environmental benefits to regions that support active transportation. Infrastructure that promotes increased opportunities for physical activity such as bicycling and walking are clearly in the public interest.

1.1 WHAT IS AN ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY?

An Active Transportation Strategy is a documented strategy that provides a long-term vision for active transportation infrastructure and policies. It contributes to the physical, social and economic health of a community where motorists, pedestrians, cyclists and community leaders share a common vision.

An Active Transportation Strategy identifies links and extensions of existing bikeways, trails, sidewalks and roads. It also creates new walking and cycling connections throughout and between communities. It includes plans for prioritizing network projects, determining appropriate levels of operation and maintenance/capital funding levels, reviewing current standards, by-laws and identifies public promotion and education.¹

Active Transportation is defined as any human powered (i.e., non-motorized) mode of transportation for **commuter** (purposeful) and **recreational** purposes. It involves movement from one destination to another for work, childcare, school, the store, community or neighbourhood destinations and recreation. It includes walking, running, cycling, in-line skating, skateboarding, non-motorized wheel chairing, skating, skiing, and canoeing/kayaking. Walking and cycling are the most common forms and can be combined with other modes.

Active Transportation traditionally takes place in two environment settings:

Built Environment refers to all human-made surroundings—the spaces where we live, work and play. The built environment includes tangible infrastructures, such as road systems, transportation networks, streets, parks, trails, businesses, schools, buildings and other infrastructure.

Natural Environment is made up of open natural spaces/land, waterways, parks, recreation areas, green spaces.² Natural spaces connect and include built environments that are essential for human and community health.³



1.2 BENEFITS OF THE RENFREW COUNTY ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

- Contributes to a higher quality of life for Renfrew County residents.
- Increases opportunities for improved health and well being for everyone.
- Contributes to healthier and more active communities.
- Decreases pressure on our health care system.
- Improves public education and knowledge of the links between active transportation, health, community well-being and improved quality of life.
- Increases community engagement and social connections.
- Improves safety on and around roads and community spaces (decreases transport injuries and falls).
- Contributes to economic development and a stronger economy (cycle tourism, trails, local business use, enhanced commuter and recreational use by residents and style of living appealing to many prospective new residents, productivity).
- Supports the provision of accessible infrastructure.
- Contributes positively to and connects us with the natural environment.
- Integrates and links community and government initiatives such as walking and cycling routes to schools and trails investments.
- Establishes linkages with local heritage and cultural destinations.
- Improves recreational and commuter accessibility to people of all ages, abilities and income levels.
- Enhances municipal collaboration around active transportation.

1.3 INTEGRATION OF THE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY WITH COUNTY PROGRAMS

The following identifies integration opportunities of an Active Transportation Strategy with existing County initiatives across four departments.

DEVELOPMENT AND PROPERTY

Ottawa Valley Economic Development

- Business opportunities for new investment (outfitters, bike repair, accommodations, etc.).
- In-fill/downtown housing (Renfrew, Pembroke, Arnprior, and other).
- Some “backroad” assistance to our smaller areas and very rural hamlets.
- Farm gate opportunities.
- Trail construction jobs.



- Improvements in employer/employee health due to access of outdoor facilities/opportunities.
- Enhanced style of living for prospective new residents and investors on par with or beyond urban centres.
- Desirable travel and recreation pathways to attract and retain residents.
- New product for tourism operators to utilize in marketing and to increase visitor satisfaction.
- A necessary component of a modern culture and community which will enhance attraction of new and young residents and investors.
- Commitment to this Active Transportation Strategy will demonstrate that there is a forward-looking and creative culture active in the County.
- This Active Transportation Strategy represents the most significant aspect of a healthy community.
- Provides a concrete manner in which to reduce the cost and burden on the County and municipalities of maintaining roads and transportation services.

Planning and Land Development

- Policies promoting active transportation can be considered for inclusion in the following sections of the County of Renfrew Official Plan through the upcoming five-year review process:
 - » Section 2, General Development Policies;
 - » Section 13, Transportation;
 - » Section 14.5, Plans of Subdivision/Condominium; and
 - » Section 15.5, Site Plan Control.

PUBLIC WORKS AND ENGINEERING

- 810 km of arterial roads currently under the county's jurisdiction. This infrastructure is designed and constructed to provide critical linkages to various communities within the County.
- In view of increasing public demand for active transportation, there is an opportunity to optimize the use of the county's road network by developing and implementing a proactive Active Transportation Strategy that integrates with the department's 10 year capital program.
- An Active Transportation Strategy will develop policies and standards for active transportation needs in the County's multi year capital works programs. This will include design standards and signage for designated active transportation infrastructure as well as policies for maintenance requirements and financial sustainability.
- The approved 10-year capital works program will serve as a foundation document to develop priority implementation strategies.



EMERGENCY SERVICES

- Recognizing the everpresent pressures within the health care system and increased demand for Emergency Services, the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service is responding through their Community Paramedic Program.
- Community and industry partnerships are having a positive impact on morbidity and mortality rates.
- Aging at Home, Wellness Clinics, Heart Wise Exercise Program, defibrillation-CPR and Paramedic and Community Care Team programs represent innovative and valuable health promotion and illness prevention work.
- Transportation contributes to placing the Paramedic Service in the position of supporting the health needs of every local community in Renfrew County by encouraging exercise, promoting health resilience and creating a safer environment.

SOCIAL SERVICES

- Active transportation provides a viable alternative to more expensive proximity transportation for improved access between social housing and community services.
- Improves access to housing, community destinations and Ontario Works sites.
- Increases opportunities for health equity by improving access to physical activity, recreation, essential services and community destinations.
- Improved active transportation infrastructure supports increased physical activity and community engagement opportunities for children ages 0 to 6 in childcare settings.

2.0 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A Renfrew County Active Transportation Strategy will:

1. Develop County policy and a co-ordinated approach to Active Transportation.

- Development of land use (to be included in the Official Plan), transportation and other relevant public policies.
- Co-ordination of policy development with existing Operational Plans.
- Support economic development as key component of an Active Transportation Strategy.
- Development of departmental policies and community programs that mirror approved active transportation objectives and implementation.
- Support willing partnerships with local level municipal leaders to enhance and build municipal capacity for active transportation planning, consultation and implementation
- Adoption and adaptation of detailed design guidelines for safe active transportation infrastructure.



- Development of design guidelines for land use planning and site planning practices that encourage active transportation in Renfrew County. Integrate guidelines into the Operational Plan.
- Promote Active Transportation Strategy components—including active transportation policies, programs and infrastructure at county events, buildings and facilities.
- Research liabilities/legal requirements associated with the implementation of active transportation infrastructure.
- Include liability and risk management education and knowledge sharing to ensure that stakeholders and elected officials share a common understanding of the real risks, the risk benefits and liability issues associated with active transportation.

2. Set measurable goals to guide the development of a safe, sustainable and co-ordinated active transportation network in Renfrew County.

- Promote and enhance an inventory of trails, infrastructure and roads suitable for active transportation based on existing reports, community input and GIS mapping.
- Commit to measurable, achievable targets and goals on the status of active transportation and infrastructure development (eg: paved shoulders, connected pathways, signs, etc.).

3. Promote and build safe and connected active transportation networks for all residents and visitors to Renfrew County.

- Review County's multi-year road program to determine feasibility/impacts of providing for active transportation infrastructure. Emphasis will be given to priority road networks.
- Support policy that requires active transportation infrastructure to be considered in all future Renfrew County projects.
- Develop benchmark costs for Active Transportation infrastructure.
- Develop an active transportation tourism policy and plan in collaboration with Economic Development and the Ottawa Valley Tourism Association.
- Explore provincial and federal funding opportunities.

4. Explore opportunities to raise awareness and support knowledge sharing and events that help County of Renfrew residents to choose safe active transportation options more often.

- Allocate resources for improvements to active transportation infrastructure.
- Actively partner and collaborate with the Physical Activity Network, Healthy Community Partnership, private businesses, school boards, Renfrew County social service organizations and schools to coordinate the Active Transportation Strategy with existing trail, cycling and walking initiatives.



- Support the existing initiative on school travel planning to include all student travel requirements and to include active modes of transportation.
- Work with local stakeholders, networks and provincial organizations to introduce and improve cycling and road sharing educational opportunities in Renfrew County.

5. Establish a framework to sustain the Active Transportation Strategy in Renfrew County.

- Support existing Physical Activity Network as the advisory group for Active Transportation.
- Build an action plan that integrates active transportation into multiple sectors, programs and levels of government.

3.0 STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

The following visual framework outlines the flow and process that will be followed for the development of the Active Transportation Strategic process. It is consistent with standard, evidence based models that are being implemented across Ontario and Canada in both rural and urban regions.

framework





4.0 WORK PLAN/TIMELINES

Appendix 3 provides an overview of the components for the Active Transportation Strategy workplan and their associated timelines.

5.0 PROMOTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

Building on existing initiatives and ongoing community engagement, promotion, education and awareness of the County's commitment to the benefits of Active Transportation provides a foundation for the successful implementation of the strategy. Education and promotion will be integrated with existing department initiatives and co-ordinated with community lead programs that support active and safe routes to school, active commuting, road safety and public health initiatives. Education and knowledge sharing will address benefits of liability and risk issues associated with upper and lower tier municipal involvement in active transportation initiatives and infrastructure enhancement.

6.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The Renfrew County Active Transportation Strategy has been developed in consultation with the expertise and community input of The Physical Activity Network and the Active Transportation working group. The network is comprised of more than 150 multi sector community stakeholders committed to building opportunities for more active and healthy residents and visitors in Renfrew County. The working committee of 25+ active users of our road, trail and waterway systems represent a wide and geographically balanced group of stakeholders. Collaborative efforts have also been reflected in delegations from the Renfrew County Healthy Community Partnership and the *Building Healthy Community—Renfrew County* document (see appendix #2, Environmental Scan of Activity).

7.0 MONITORING PROGRAM

An Active Transportation Strategy monitoring program will be identified and achieved in co-ordination with standardized health indicators, traffic, connectivity, road safety and injury prevention statistics. Local data will be collected and integrated into an approved evaluative method.

Connectivity is the measure of the efficiency of a transportation network. It refers to the directness of transportation links and the number of connections in the path or road network. Linkages between communities is a priority and will be a strong indicator for monitoring of the Active Transportation Strategy.



8.0 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

See appendix #3

REFERENCES

1. Bergeron, K. and Cragg, S. (2009). *Making the Case for Active Transportation: Bulletin #8—Role for Municipal Decision Makers*. Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, Ottawa, Canada.
2. Bergeron, K. (2009), *Bridging the Terminology Gap in Support of Active Communities: Land Use Planners and Public Health Professionals*.
3. Kuo, F. (2010) *Parks And Other Green Environments: Essential Components of a Healthy Human Habitat*
4. *Healthy, Equitable Transportation Policy, Recommendations and Research*. (2011) PolicyLink, Prevention Institute, Convergence Partnership
5. Bergeron, K. and Cragg, S. (2009). *Making the Case for Active Transportation: Bulletin #3—Economic Benefits*. Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, Ottawa, Ontario.
6. Evernson, Satinsky, Rodriguez and Aytur. (2011). *Exploring a Public Health Perspective on Pedestrian Planning*. Health Promotion Practice, December.
7. Transport Canada (2006). *Sustainable transportation in small and rural communities*. Issue Paper 61. Retrieved from www.tc.gc.ca/utsp
8. *Healthy, Equitable Transportation Policy, Recommendations and Research*. (2011) Policy Link, Prevention Institute, Convergence Partnership.
9. *2012 Benchmarking Report—Alliance for Biking and Walking*, retrieved March 1, 2012 from http://www.people-poweredmovement.org/site/index.php/site/memberservices/2012_benchmarking_report/#findings
10. *Active Transportation in Canada—a Resource and Planning Guide*, Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Government Services Canada. (2010) Retrieved from <http://transact-en.tc.gc.ca>
11. *Communities in Motion*, Federation of Canadian Municipalities. (2008). Retrieved from <http://www.fcm.ca/gmportation@fcm.ca>

EXISTING ONTARIO MUNICIPAL ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVES

1. York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan, completed April 2008
2. Muskoka Active Transportation Strategy (MATS), developed in 2010 by the District of Muskoka Planning and Economic Development Department.
3. Dufferin County Active Transportation and Trails (DCATT), completed April 2010
4. Countywide Active Transportation Master Plan (CATMP) completed April 2011 by The Corporation of the County of Essex
5. Active Transportation Plan for Minden, developed in 2008
6. Active Transportation and Trails Master Plan, Draft, Port Hope, draft developed 2011

APPENDICES

Active Transportation Working Group Members
Environmental Scan of Activity
Critical Path



Physical Activity Network Active Transportation Working Group

Mike Asselin	Town of Renfrew	
Shawna Babcock	Physical Activity Network / Healthy Community Partnership / KidActive	Co-chair
Betty Biesenthal	Friends of Bonnechere Park	
Brian Brohart	Renfrew County and District Health Unit, Health Promoter	
Harold Camblin	MAFIA	
Patricia Careau	Velocity Bike Club / LEAP High Performance	
Colin Coyle	Town of Petawawa, Parks & Recreation	
Cameron Dubé	Algonquin College / Beachburg Cycling Association	
Jordan Durocher	City of Pembroke	
Jen Dykxhoorn	Renfrew County and District Health Unit, Health Promoter	
Terry Ann Grosklag	Algonquins of Pikwakanagan	
Chris Hinsperger	Owner, Bonnechere Caves / Board President, OVTA	
George Hodgkinson	Community member, Township of Laurentian Valley	
Jeff Jackson	Local AT Champion / Algonquin College	
Dana Jennings	Community Development Officer, Township of Bonnechere Valley	
Erika Jensen Beaudoin	Canadian Forces Base Petawawa, Community Recreation	
Mark Kulas	Local AT champion	
Jason Mask	A/Park Superintendent Bonnechere Provincial Park Cluster, Ontario Parks	
Barclay Mayhew	Town of Renfrew	
Maria Mayville	Killaloe Hagarty Richards	
Damien McCarthy	Gearheads	Co-chair
John McKay	Four Seasons Conservancy / Scouts	
Kayla Menkhorst	Town of Arnprior	
Ray Metcalfe	Chair, Four Seasons Conservancy	
Ron Moss	Local AT Champion, JP2g consultants	
Karen Roosen	Pembroke Regional Hospital, Diabetes Education Program	
Doug Sitland	City of Pembroke	
David Weiser	Ottawa Valley Bike Valet	
Alyson Wendorf	Velocity Bike Club / LEAP High Performance	
Ron Wensel	Four Season's Conservancy, Deep River	
Kelly Williams	Town of Petawawa	
Karen Woods	Parent Resource Centre, Early Years / Best Start	



Environmental Scan of Activity

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES TO DATE

The following provides the history of the **Physical Activity Network** and **Healthy Community Partnership** as well as a timeline detailing community commitment and engagement around **Active Transportation in Renfrew County**

FEBRUARY 2007	Report completed and accepted by County Council— <i>Development of a Draft Trails Strategy</i> .
OCTOBER 2008	Physical Activity Network launched at a conference in Calabogie. Keynote speaker: Dr. Andrew Pipe, University of Ottawa Heart Institute. Opening remarks: Warden Janice Visneskie. Active Transportation was identified as an area of interest and focus.
JAN to DEC 2009	Active Transportation was identified in six community engagement sessions as a priority for communities across Renfrew County
AUG 2009 to MAR 2010	Active Transportation was one focus of a Built and Natural Environment project lead by the Physical Activity Network. www.physicalactivitynetwork.ca Supportive built environments (such as roads, trails, paths, parks, public spaces) and healthy policies provide opportunities (such as multi-modal transportation, land use, planning, development and revitalization, etc.) for greater health equity, physical activity, social cohesion, economic development, community engagement and overall improvements in quality of life.
APRIL 2010	Event in Calabogie—Building Active Communities, Knowledge Exchange. Keynote speaker: internationally recognized, Gil Penalosa
SEPTEMBER 2010	Event in the City of Pembroke—Train the Trainers Walkability Workshop
DECEMBER 2010	Event in the town of Petawawa—Walkability Workshop
MAY 2011 to MAR 2012	School Travel Planning
OCTOBER 2011	Event in the City of Pembroke—Walkability Workshop
FEBRUARY 2011	Event in Calabogie—Building Healthy Community Engagement Session, Setting Priorities
MARCH 2011	Presentation, Health Committee
APRIL 27, 2011	Delegation, County Council
JUNE 2011	Event in Petawawa—Share the Road Eleanor McMahon, keynote speaker
JUNE 2011	Contribution to the development of a county-wide Active Transportation Strategy was identified in the <i>Building Healthy Community</i> document (see hard copy or online at: http://bit.ly/rTeix6)
NOVEMBER 2011	Development of the PAN Active Transportation Working Committee
DEC 2011 to PRESENT	Priority route identification and engagement with the PAN Active Transportation Advisory Committee

Active Transportation Strategy Critical Path for Strategic Direction



	2012												2013							
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	
Community Consultation																				
Draft goals, objectives and initial strategy																				
Environmental Scan of Activity																				
Integrate a multi sector and interdepartmental approach, ensuring process is co-ordinated and collaborative between the County, lower tier municipalities, the City of Pembroke, Algouquins of Pikwakaganan, community stakeholders and sectors.																				
Develop integrated 10 year plan																				
Align common goals—eg: health, transportation, land use planning, emergency services, social services and other upper and lower tier responsibilities																				
Delegation—County Council																				
Committee and Council reports and approval																				
Development of Design Standards																				
Investigate federal and provincial funding opportunities																				
Develop guiding principles and criteria for prioritization																				
Draft input for inclusion to the County Official Plan																				
Develop Policy Statements																				
Implementation																				
Investment plan in healthier, economically stronger communities																				
Review of liability and legal ramifications and municipal precedents																				
Evaluation and Monitoring																				