

Council and Committee Monthly Summary

September 2026

Below you will find highlights of the County of Renfrew Council and Committee meetings held September 16 and September 29, 2026.

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

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

The [September 16, 2026](#) and [September 29, 2026](#) meetings are on YouTube.

Warden's Address

Key highlights

At the September 16 meeting Warden Jennifer Murphy shared and acknowledged the following information:

- Attendance at the Ontario East Municipal Conference, where municipal leaders from across Eastern Ontario discussed shared priorities and challenges. The conference provided opportunities to collaborate, exchange ideas, and advocate for rural communities on key issues including housing, economic development, infrastructure renewal, and health care.

At the September 29 meeting Warden Murphy highlighted the following information:

- Appreciation to everyone who contributed to the success of Municipal Day on September 17, which helped kick off Rural Ontario Week. The event allowed staff, elected officials, candidates, community partners, and residents to learn about the important work of local government as it highlighted County departments and services.
- Recognition of Recovery Day as an important reminder that recovery from addiction and mental health challenges is possible and highlighted the vital role that support, understanding, and compassion play in helping individuals and families. She also thanked organizations, health care providers, peer supporters, and community advocates for their ongoing efforts to reduce stigma and support recovery across the region.
- Attendance at the Canadian Nuclear Laboratories Community Leaders Banquet, where municipal leaders and community partners from across the region gathered to discuss ongoing investments, innovation, and collaboration. She highlighted CNL's continued role as a key economic driver and community partner, noting the positive impact of regional partnerships on communities throughout Renfrew County and beyond.
- Attendance at the grand opening of the Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nation Water Treatment Plant, recognizing the project as a significant investment in safe, reliable infrastructure. She highlighted the milestone's importance for the community and the long-term benefits it will provide to current and future generations.
- Appreciation to the staff, residents, families, and volunteers of Miramichi Lodge and Bonnechere Manor for hosting successful Long-Term Care Community Engagement Day events. These open houses provided an excellent opportunity for residents and members of the public

to learn more about the outstanding care, programs, and services offered in our long-term homes.

Delegations

September 16:

- [Renfrew County District School Board \(RCDSB\)](#) Director of Education Kristin Niemi and Board Chair Leo Boland highlighted the school board's continued focus on student achievement, well-being, Indigenous education, and future-ready skills. The presentation showcased initiatives including new cultural spaces in schools, expanded outdoor learning opportunities, STEM and artificial intelligence programs, mental health supports, and ongoing investments in accessibility and school infrastructure. As one of Renfrew County's largest employers, the RCDSB continues to play a vital role in supporting students, families, and communities across the region.
- Council received a delegation from Carefor representatives, including Director of Communications, Marketing and Fundraising Trevor Eggleton and resident Melanie Freeman, who highlighted challenges facing local seniors such as affordability, housing, healthcare access, and food insecurity. The delegation also shared details of the [2026 Melanie Campaign](#), a community fundraising initiative supporting recreation, wellness, and essential needs programs for vulnerable seniors living in Carefor retirement homes across Renfrew County.
- Suzanne Madore, CEO of Renfrew Victoria Hospital and St. Francis Memorial Hospital, highlighted the need for greater collaboration across healthcare sectors to address hospital overcrowding and improve patient care. She provided an update on efforts to develop a non-emergency interfacility transfer model to reduce pressures on paramedic services and emphasized the importance of removing barriers between organizations to ensure residents receive seamless care across the region.

September 29:

- Members of County Council and staff gathered with representatives from the Circle of Turtle Lodge at the Noojimokamig Reconciliation Garden to recognize the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (September 30). Led by Aimee Bailey, Annie Parker, the ceremony honoured the children who never returned home, Survivors of residential schools, their families and communities. The gathering included smudging, a tobacco ceremony and drumming by Sherry Dion. During her remarks, Warden Jennifer Murphy offered an apology on behalf of the County of Renfrew and municipalities across the region, acknowledging the deep and lasting harm caused by the residential school system, the Sixties Scoop and other government actions that sought to erase Indigenous cultures and disrupt families and communities.

Announcements

- Nominations for the [Warden's Community Service Awards](#) are now open. These awards recognize outstanding individuals, not-for-profit organizations, and businesses that make a meaningful difference in our communities through their commitment to helping others and improving the quality of life across Renfrew County. The nomination deadline is October 16 and the awards will be presented at County Council on November 12.

Health Committee

Presented by: Michael Donohue, Chair

- The County's Paramedic Service is working collaboratively with Renfrew Victoria Hospital and St. Francis Memorial Hospital to develop a dedicated non-urgent patient transfer service. The initiative aims to improve patient flow, reduce pressure on emergency ambulance resources, enhance hospital capacity, and ensure lower-acuity patients are transported through a service better suited to their needs. As part of the initiative, both hospitals have purchased surplus County ambulances to support the new transfer model, which will continue to be monitored as it is implemented.

Operations Committee

Presented by: Glenn Doncaster, Chair

- County Council approved the official name of the County of Renfrew recreational trail located on the former Canadian National (CN) Rail Line be The Iron Timber Recreational Trail. Staff was directed to proceed with development of marketing materials reflecting the new trail name.
- County Council authorized the Warden to submit a letter of support to MP Cheryl Gallant, Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, in support of renewed federal funding for the Trans Canada Trail as part of their national awareness campaign, "This is Not Just a Trail".
- County Council approved a new Recreational Trails Management Plan that will guide the management of the County's recreational trail network and replace the outdated K&P Corridor Management Plan from 2003. The new plan was developed to prepare for the addition of the former CN Rail Line, stretching from the Quebec border to Hawthorn Lane, to the County's trail system. It brings together management of the K&P Trail, the Algonquin Trail, and the newly acquired CN Rail corridor under one updated framework. The Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail (OVRT) Management Plan approved in 2018 will remain in effect and continue to guide management of the broader OVRT partnership trail between Smiths Falls and Mattawa. The new County plan complements the existing OVRT plan by addressing the trail sections located within Renfrew County.
- County Council approved a new by-law that sets the rules for using County-owned recreational trails, which are designated as linear parks. The new by-law will replace the existing trail by-law adopted in 2024 once it receives approval from the Ministry of the Attorney General. The updated by-law was reviewed by trail user groups, including cycling, ATV, trail riding, and snowmobile organizations, as well as the OPP and enforcement partners. Feedback from these groups helped inform the final version. The by-law reflects the County's growing trail network and provides clearer rules and enforcement measures to help ensure recreational trails remain safe and enjoyable for all users.
- The approved contracts/tenders were as follows:
 - For the construction of Algonquin Trail from Bissett Creek to Deux-Rivières, a distance of 9.2 km northward, as well as rough grading and build-up of the balance of the trail to Deux-Rivières, a distance of 20 km. Following an adjustment to remove limestone crusher dust from the contract, it was awarded to G.P. Splinter Forest Products Ltd., Pembroke, Ontario, at a cost of \$964,995.

- Reconstruction of the Intersection of County Road 51 (Petawawa Blvd.) with County Road 26 (Doran Rd.), Mohns Ave., and Hilda St. awarded to Bonnechere Excavating Inc., Renfrew, Ontario in the amount of 3,259,605.06 plus applicable tax.

Community Services Committee

Presented by: Anne Giardini, Chair

- The Community Services Committee directed staff to return at its October meeting with additional information on a proposed full property tax exemption program for eligible non-profit housing providers beginning in 2027. Staff noted that exempting non-profit housing providers from property taxes could reduce administrative funding transfers within the affordable housing system, generate recurring savings, and align the County with common practices across Ontario. Further details on the proposed exemption framework and its implications will be presented for Committee consideration.
- County Council endorsed the advocacy efforts initiated by the Niagara Regional Council, requesting a provincial review and modernization of Provincial Offences Act set fines and costs payable upon conviction and requested Warden Murphy send a letter of support to the Attorney General of Ontario.

Development & Property Committee

Presented by: James Brose, Chair

- Five properties have been transferred from Canadian Pacific to the County of Renfrew as part of the ongoing acquisition of lands for the Ottawa Valley Recreation Trail/Algonquin Trail. Staff continues to work with the County's legal firm and CP to complete the transfer of the remaining parcels.
- The Ottawa Valley Tourist Association will hold its AGM and [Tourism Awards](#) on November 3, 2026, at Festival Hall in Pembroke. Nominations are open in six award categories, and applications are being accepted for one vacant board position. The deadline for award nominations and board applications is October 9, 2026. Advance registration is required for the event.
- At the September 29 meeting, County Forester Lacey Rose presented the [2027-2036 Renfrew County Forest Management Plan](#), which outlines the long-term management of the Renfrew County Forest and will come into effect January 1, 2027, pending County Council approval. The plan balances economic sustainability, environmental stewardship, recreation, education, and climate change mitigation while maintaining third-party forest certification. Staff highlighted the significant ecological, recreational, educational, and economic value of the County Forest. The forest stores nearly one million tonnes of carbon, provides wildlife habitat and flood mitigation benefits, supports extensive recreational use, and generated approximately \$2.35 million in revenue between 2017 and 2026. Revenue of approximately \$2.3 million is projected during the next 10-year plan term.

Additional Information

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