



**Community Development Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, December 10, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.
Meeting to be held in Virtual Electronic Format and
live streamed on the County of Frontenac's Youtube
Channel**

<https://youtu.be/YvXm9uqa1sE>

AGENDA

Page

1. Call to Order

2. Adoption of the Agenda

- a) **That** the agenda for the December 10, 2020 meeting of the Community Development Advisory Committee be adopted.

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

4. Adoption of Minutes

- a) Minutes of Meeting held October 8, 2020

That the minutes of the Community Development Advisory Committee meeting held October 8, 2020 be adopted.

5. Deputations and/or Presentations

6. Reports to the Community Development Advisory

- a) **2020-106
Community Development Advisory Committee
December Update on COVID-19 Response Initiatives**

This report is for information only.

- b) **2020-107
Community Development Advisory Committee
Open Farms in Frontenac 2020**

Be It Resolved That Council direct staff to pursue formalized partnerships with the Township of South Frontenac, the City of Kingston, the National Farmers' Union Local 316, the Frontenac Federation of Agriculture, and regional Farmers Markets in order to ensure the continued execution of the annual event as a high-quality regional local food celebration.

- c) **2020-108**

3 - 7

8 - 12

13 - 21

22 - 28

**Community Development Advisory Committee
Review of motorized access to the Verona Corridor of the
Frontenac K&P Trail.**

This report is for information only. It is being provided to the committee in order to support the committee's efforts to provide advice to County Council with respect only to the issue of motorized use on the K&P Trail between Bellrock Road and Craig Road ("Verona Corridor").

7. Communications

- a) Funding Agreement with Trans Canada Trails
[Distributed to Community Development Advisory Committee November 18, 2020]

8. Other Business

9. Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Community Development Advisory Committee is scheduled for **Thursday, January 7, 2021** at 10:00 a.m.

10. Adjournment



FRONTENAC

Minutes of the Community Development Advisory Committee Meeting October 8, 2020

A regular meeting of the Community Development Advisory Committee was held in virtual electronic format, hosted at the County Administrative Office, 2069 Battersea Road, Glenburnie on Thursday, October 8, 2020 at 10:00 AM

Present:

Betty Hunter, Chair
Wilma Kenny, Vice Chair
Barrie Gilbert
Councillor Alan Revill, Council Liaison
Lisa Henderson
Mary Kloosterman
Councillor Denis Doyle
Greg Rodgers

Staff Present:

Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development
Jannette Amini, Manager of Legislative Services/Clerk
Brianna McEathron, Administrative Clerk (Recording Secretary)
Alison Vanderveelde, Community Development Officer

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Moved By: Councillor Doyle
Seconded By: Councillor Revill

That the agenda for the October 8, 2020 meeting of the Community Development Advisory Committee be adopted.

Carried

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

There were none.

4. Adoption of Minutes

a) Minutes of Meeting held August 13, 2020

Moved By: Councillor Revill
Seconded By: Mr. Gilbert

That the minutes of the Community Development Advisory Committee meeting held August 13, 2020 be adopted.

Carried

b) Minutes of Meeting held August 28, 2020

Moved By: Mr. Gilbert
Seconded By: Councillor Doyle

That the minutes of the Community Development Advisory Committee meeting held August 28, 2020 be adopted.

Carried

5. Deputations and/or Presentations

Mr. Ian Shelley and Mr. Graham Pressey, Blackline will address Community Development Advisory Committee regarding the Economic Development Service Review
[See Reports to the Committee Development Advisory Committee, clause a)]

Mr. Ian Shelley and Mr. Graham Pressey, Blackline provided an overview of the Economic Development Service Review.

Mr. Allen provided members of the committee with an opportunity to provide comments and feedback.

Greg Rodgers entered at 10:09 a.m.

Councillor Revill wanted to confirm with the consultants that they were looking to solicit information from the individual members of the committee. Mr. Shelley, indicated that the intent of this meeting is to collect responses on an individual and collective basis.

Mr. Allen noted that the County is on a very tight timeline with this project as it is being funded through the Municipal Modernization Fund which requires the County to have the report completed by the end of the year.

Councillor Doyle indicated that Frontenac County is seen as the K&P Management Group. He indicated that the Economic Development department needs to start more projects but it is limited with the focus being on the K&P trail.

Mr. Gilbert asked if the focus is going to be on augmenting current businesses or attracting new businesses. Mr. Shelley indicated that Blackline is an operational consulting firm and is reviewing the department's composition and capacity in relation to its objectives and is not tasked with making recommendations on the merit of individual initiatives.

Ms. Hunter indicated that North Frontenac and Frontenac Islands are not receiving the same level of attention or funding.

Ms. Kenny noted that she understands how it can be frustrating that most of the focus has been on Central and South Frontenac but that imbalance is due to a higher concentration of population. She agrees that there needs to be more resources and efforts in Frontenac Islands and North Frontenac, especially in regards to transportation. Mr. Allen indicated this consultation will help determine the most appropriate role for regional economic development (Frontenac County) versus the role of other levels of government.

Councillor Revill noted that at this time the committee is trying to evaluate the economic benefit of the K&P Trail and needs to prioritize some economic development objectives and evaluate the staff resources we have to implement these strategies.

Ms. Kenny noted that the Wolfe Island initiatives that would have taken place such as transportation to Big Sandy Bay and the Taste of Wolfe Island did not happen due to COVID-19.

Mr. Gilbert noted that Wolfe Island is internationally recognized for its water fowl hunting opportunities and when the new ferry is implemented there will be an increase of hunters and naturalists.

Ms. Hunter indicated that it is a priority to let visitors know about the natural beauty and artisans in Frontenac County.

Mr. Shelley asked the committee if they think that the County economic development department is reaching out to far or not far enough when it comes to economic development at the local township level.

Councillor Revill answered that the branding efforts at the County level have been very worthwhile and it is beneficial to maintain the progress of the brand to keep the attraction coming. He is not sure that watering down the brand at the local level will have the same impact as it has through the County.

Mr. Rodgers indicated that although the County has an overarching role for tourism there needs to be some work at the local level.

Ms. Kloosterman asked how the County planning department will facilitate larger development projects so that businesses experience fewer barriers in getting established or expanding. She also wondered what other counties are doing in regards to tourism. Mr. Shelley indicated that their report will answer these sort of questions.

Ms. Vandervelde asked the committee for direction on priorities.

Councillor Revill indicated that supporting existing businesses is beneficial. Ms. Henderson noted that there are many issues restricting the growth of accommodations in Frontenac.

Ms. Hunter noted that North Frontenac has updated its by-laws to allow single dwellings to have secondary units. She also indicated that the issue with attracting businesses is lack of internet in the area. Ms. Henderson agreed with lack of internet services being a deterrent to local businesses.

Mr. Allen noted that he will update the committee on the accommodation study at the December meeting.

Ms. Hunter noted that the Frontenac Ambassador program has been a success. She indicated that his has been helpful at getting businesses together to develop strategies and also indicated that Open Farms has attracted lots of people but indicated it may be beneficial to focus on the County artisans.

Mr. Allen noted the measurements included in the 2015 Economic Development Charter and asked the committee to describe what success looks like in Frontenac.

Ms. Hunter noted that success would be year-round tourism.

Councillor Doyle indicated that another success would be local councils recognizing the work that the Frontenac economic development team has accomplished. He also indicated that it would be beneficial to have an update on a monthly or quarterly basis to allow for all of the municipalities to be informed and engaged.

6. Reports to the Community Development Advisory Committee

- a) **2020-092
Community Development Advisory Committee
Economic Development Service Review**

This report is for information purposes only.

7. Communications



8. Other Business

Councillor Doyle indicated that an email from Lisa McLeod, Minister of Heritage Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries describes a new funding stream to support events in the province. Ms. Vandervelde indicated that the eligibility criteria of this new fund makes it inaccessible for events in Frontenac.

9. Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Community Development Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, December 10, 2020

10. Adjournment

Moved By: Ms. Henderson
Seconded By: Mr. Gilbert

That the meeting hereby adjourn at 11:15 a.m.

Carried



Report 2020-106

Committee Information Report

To: Chair and Members of the Community Development Advisory Committee

From: Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development

Prepared by: Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development

Date of meeting: December 10, 2020

Re: **Community Development Advisory Committee – December Update on COVID-19 Response Initiatives**

Recommendation

This report is for information only.

Background

On March 17, 2020 the Province of Ontario declared a state of emergency with respect to the COVID-19 Pandemic and on March 26, 2020 the County of Frontenac declared a state of emergency within the County of Frontenac in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. On July 24, 2020, the Provincial Emergency Declaration expired; however the County of Frontenac declared emergency continues.

The economic development team immediately responded to the pandemic and related temporary business closures through regular engagement – weekly communications, weekly business videoconferences, an online information hub and multiple one-on-one engagements. The initial response for local businesses was communicated to County Council at its Special Meeting held April 8, 2020 through [Report 2020-041](#).

As the economic shutdown connected to the pandemic continued, the economic development team revised its 2020 Business plan to respond to the immediate and long term needs of the local business community. These changes were outlined in [Report 2020-050](#) and adopted by County Council at its regular meeting on May 20, 2020.

The economic development team is updating the Community Development Advisory Committee on the progress of the initiatives in response to COVID-19.

The adapted business plan and COVID-19 recovery has four priorities and a number of campaigns within each. The four priorities are:

1. Support Local Businesses via Frontenac Ambassador Program
2. Shop Frontenac Initiatives
3. Make Tourism a Priority
4. Establish Conditions for Investment and Growth

Discussion

1. Support Local Businesses via Frontenac Ambassador Program

Business Surveys

Three separate surveys were issued to local businesses during the peak of the Pandemic, with results discussed in [Report 2020-050](#) and Report 2020-074.

The County will include COVID-19 related questions as part of the annual business survey that will launch for the month of January in 2021.

Business Communications

The economic development team communicates with local businesses through the Ambassador program two to three times per month, with updated information on support programs, marketing initiatives, workshops and training.

Since July, staff have hosted business check-in videoconference calls each month. Attendance has been low for these calls, but several participants check in every month. In November, a special check-in was hosted on the topic of "[Understanding Tourism Sentiment](#)" with guest Oliver Martin of Twenty31 Consulting providing information on the desire for Canadians to travel.

2. Shop Frontenac Initiatives

Shop Local, Shop #inFrontenac Video Series

As part of the "Shop Local" initiatives, staff have been working with local businesses to show how they are welcoming customers safely and respectfully. With support from the Communications Officer, the Community Development Officer has coordinated videos with 25 Frontenac Ambassadors from across the region.

These videos can be [viewed on YouTube](#), [on Facebook](#), and on [inFrontenac.ca](#).

Shop Local Holiday Campaign

Building on the Shop Local, Shop #inFrontenac video series, staff are currently executing a Shop Local Holiday Campaign. Using footage from the original 25 film shoots, staff are creating a new [Gratitude Video Series](#). These videos are being released over the course of December, along with [Weekly Inspiration Lists](#), a [Guess That Business Owner Giveaway](#), and re-runs of select Shop Local videos.

Staff have created a new [Shop Local page](#) on inFrontenac.ca for this campaign, and will use social media posts to direct traffic to this new resource. This page also includes a link to the [business directory's "Shop Online" category](#), which is a useful resource for consumers who might avoid in-person shopping this year due to the pandemic.

Staff are also working with [HeyLocal](#) to create a hub for easily finding and purchasing local products online in Frontenac. It was originally hoped that the platform would be a valuable resource during this holiday shopping season, but the launch continues to be delayed. If it becomes available in December staff will incorporate it into the holiday campaign, otherwise a rollout will take place in 2021. There is no fee associated with using HeyLocal, which makes it an attractive option but gives staff little influence over its launch.

3. Make Tourism a Priority

Website Conversion

[Report 2020-073](#) provides details on the economic development website conversion to a tourism-focused site, as well as the launch of the [@VisitFrontenac](#) identity on social media platforms.

Phase 5 K&P Trail Construction between Sharbot Lake and Clarendon Station

Construction was substantially completed on the current phase of K&P Trail development on November 27, 2020. Ownership of this 14 kilometer section of the K&P is being transferred from the Township of Central Frontenac to the County of Frontenac. It features one of the longest stretches of trail uninterrupted by road crossings and also runs adjacent to the picturesque Bolton Creek. This section has seen a significant increase of use during the past few months as the trail infrastructure improvements were completed.

Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (RTO 11)

Ontario's Highlands has launched two programs aimed at supporting tourism businesses and organizations through

[Tourism Recovery and Innovation Program \(TRIP\)](#): An application-based program providing partnership funding of up to \$30,000 designed to encourage collaborative projects that will strengthen resiliency in our tourism sector.

[Digital Marketing Support Program](#): An application-based program providing up to \$2,500 in financial support towards the costs of activities ranging from website enhancements, digital advertising campaigns, photo and video shoots, and more.

OHTO has also provided guidance to the industry through the following blog posts:

- [Navigating a COVID World](#)
- [Build Resiliency in a World of Uncertainty](#)

- [Not Keeping Up with the Joneses](#)

In July, Frontenac County partnered with the RTO 11 to launch a “Love Letter Campaign” centered around a [video love letter to the region](#). This campaign encouraged locals to celebrate the unique aspects of our communities. Outcomes of the campaign were provided by RTO 11 and are included as Appendix B to this report.

Southeastern Ontario (RTO 9)

Southeastern Ontario hosted a [Tourism Summit](#) on September 11, 2020. As part of this summit, two Frontenac businesses were featured in their response to COVID-19 – [Frontenac Outfitters](#) and [Blue Moose B&B](#).

4. Establish Conditions for Investment and Growth

The Economic Development Service Delivery Review took place through September, October and November. Recommendations from the review will be presented to County Council at its regular meeting on December 16, 2020.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Strategic Priority Implications

Priority 1.2: Refine and invest in efforts to accelerate economic development — to grow businesses, attract more visits and expand the tax base.

Priority 3.2: Play a leadership role on communications to promote shared messaging for all regional initiatives such as economic development, tourism and lifestyle opportunities, and broadband and cell services.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

Businesses in Frontenac County
Joe Gallivan, Director of Planning and Economic Development
Information Services Department
Matt Mills, Communications Officer
Ontario Highlands Tourism Organization (RTO11)
Southeastern Ontario (RTO9)
Tourism Kingston
Anne Prichard, Frontenac Community Futures Development Corporation

2020 Business Plan Initiatives (Approved May 20, 2020)				
Response Initiative	Peak May → July	Transition August → December	Recovery 2021 and beyond	Outcomes (December 10, 2020)
1. Support Local Businesses via Frontenac Ambassador Program	1. Business Support (via Ambassador Program) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up-to-date Web Resource: infrontenac.ca/covid19 Monthly Surveys to capture data re: evolution of impact and response One to One phone calls: follow-up after survey One to One support in collaboration with the Frontenac CFDC Coordinated workshops and training opportunities to assist with new skills development Weekly email updates Weekly Videoconference Check In Calls – Thursdays at 1:00pm Expand Ambassador network to ensure as many businesses as possible are connected to above resources. 			1. Business Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Monthly Surveys Completed One-on-One Digital Support Workshops 43 Newsletter Emails 20 Videoconference calls 20 New Ambassadors
2. Shop Frontenac Initiatives	1. Frontenac Family Social Media Campaign 2. Develop “ Shop Frontenac ” Web Marketplace 3. Promote Farm-to-Table initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update “Farm Stories” series Fit to farm-gate, delivery options, online markets and stores etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cancel Open Farms as an in-person event, consider integration with Shop Frontenac Web Marketplace 	1. Expand “ Shop Frontenac ” Web Marketplace <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider addition of Farmers Markets – extension Launch social media campaign Ambassador Exposure Collaborate with regional partners to strengthen reach (Townships, RTO’s, Kingston EcDev, Etc) 	1. Review Web Marketplace for optimization and additional opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue marketing efforts and recruitment and training of new sellers 	2. Shop Frontenac <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24 Shop Local Videos Successful conversion of Open Farms to a 4-week virtual event highlighting 14 local farms 6 week Farm-to-Table digital campaign in partnership with Tourism Kingston Promotion of the HeyLocal search platform to support online businesses “Look Local First” Holiday Campaign
3. Make Tourism a Priority by elevating Destination Marketing & Development	1. Shift infrontenac.ca to be solely Tourism and migrate economic development content to frontenacounty.ca 2. Develop “ Visit Frontenac ” social channels to clarify corporate messages from regional promotion 3. Strengthen regional brand by highlighting natural assets / brand elements (as appropriate to Public Health concerns) 4. Gather and organize assets to support future promotional campaigns (see Transition) 5. Establish Trails Marketing Plan for 2020	1. Develop 2021 Destination Marketing Plan to position Frontenac as a ‘ getaway ’ destination using remodelled infrontenac.ca 2. Implement Trails Marketing Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate with 2021 Destination Marketing Plan 3. Create 2020 Recovery marketing campaigns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Themes – Road Trips, Art Studios, Fishing, Cycling, Hiking, Trails, ATVs, Backcountry Camping (Content must link to spending) 4. Complete planned K&P construction between Sharbot Lake & Clarendon Station	1. Launch 2021 Destination Marketing Plan 2. Attract regional events in 2021-22 (Goal for monthly) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gravel Cycling Race, Ompah Stomp, Open Farms, Lakes & Trails, Fishing Derby, Lumberjack Games, etc. 	3. Make Tourism a Priority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> www.infrontenac.ca converted to a tourism attraction website (August) Phase 5 K&P Construction completed to Clarendon Station Trails Marketing Campaign executed in July & August 2020 Love Letter Campaign
4. Establish conditions for investment and growth for existing and emerging businesses	1. Continue with planned review of regional Economic Development services	1. Develop a Regional Community Improvement Program to implement and attract investment in 2021	1. Promote and Implement Regional Community Improvement Plan 2. Work with CFDC to Launch a Succession Matching Service to facilitate transfer of existing businesses 3. Support Broadband Expansion	4. Establish Conditions for Investment and Growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of Economic Development Services by Blackline Consulting to be presented to County Council on December 16, 2020.



Report 2020-107

Committee Recommend Report

To: Chair and Members of the Community Development Advisory Committee

From: Alison Vandervelde, Community Development Officer

Date of meeting: December 10, 2020

Re: **Community Development Advisory Committee – Open Farms in Frontenac 2020**

Recommendation

Be It Resolved That Council direct staff to pursue formalized partnerships with the Township of South Frontenac, the City of Kingston, the National Farmers' Union Local 316, the Frontenac Federation of Agriculture, and regional Farmers Markets in order to ensure the continued execution of the annual event as a high-quality regional local food celebration.

Background

In 2019, CDAC Received [Report 2019-031](#) at its regular meeting on November 14 and passed the following motion, later endorsed by County Council:

2019-031
Community Development Advisory Committee
Open Farms in Frontenac 2019

Moved By: Councillor Revill
Seconded By: Ms. Henderson

Be It Resolved That the County of Frontenac maintain its commitment to Open Farms on an annual basis.

Carried

At its June 2020 meeting, CDAC received Report [2020-057](#), which outlined the implementation plan for Open Farms 2020 and the third annual [Open Farms in Frontenac](#) took place from September 14 through to October 9. The four-week virtual event included 14 participating partners.

A [presentation was made to County Council](#) at its regular meeting held on November 18, 2020 highlighting some of the [successes and challenges](#) outlined in this report.

Comment

Due to the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and efforts to limit the spread of the virus, Frontenac County's annual Open Farms event was presented in a virtual format in 2020.

The pandemic has sparked a renewed interest in Canada's food systems and a dramatic increase in demand for local food, making 2020 an important time to highlight the positive momentum of Open Farms and to continue working toward the original goals of the event:

1. Educate consumers about small scale agriculture
2. Increase awareness of farms in Frontenac
3. Provide the opportunity for producers to connect directly with consumers
4. Provide the opportunity for producers to gain new long-term customers
5. Grow Frontenac's reputation as a region that produces good food

Virtual Event Summary

Fourteen farm partners participated in the 2020 event, which was an increase from 10 partners in 2019 and seven in 2018. Instead of just a single day, this year's virtual event lasted for four weeks, from Monday, September 14 through to Friday, October 9.

1. One virtual destination: www.OpenFarms.ca

Staff created one central online hub of information to make it as easy as possible for users to engage with the virtual event. The social media campaign directed traffic to this website so that users could engage with all the components of the event: watch virtual farm tours, register for and watch Q&A Sessions, find out how to buy from producers, learn about local food, see farms at a glance, get tips on preparing local food, read stories about local producers, and view photos from the 2019 event. This website will remain online into the foreseeable future. The following measurements demonstrate the activity on www.OpenFarms.ca between September 14 and October 26:

- Total Pageviews: 3,595
- Unique Pageviews: 2,848
- Clicks-throughs to external sites: 418
- Average time spent on page: 2:43

Unfortunately there is no standard industry comparator for average time spent on page. To provide the committee some frame of reference, the average time spent on www.frontenaccounty.ca for the same date range was 1:10. Staff are very pleased with the performance of the site through the event and interpret these metrics as a success. While it is impossible to compare this website data to previous years' in-person events, it does provide a useful benchmark for future virtual events.

2. Social Media Campaign

The four-week social media campaign was executed on all three of the main social platforms used by the County: Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The virtual farm tours were the cornerstone of the social media campaign, which drove traffic to the website to engage with all the event components. Additional content pushed out through the social media campaign included [infographics](#) and [farm profile cards](#). The following measurements demonstrate the reach of the social media campaign:

Facebook

- 35 posts
- Total reach: 155,398
- Reactions, comments, and shares: 4,529
- Post clicks: 9,264
 - The number of times a user clicked in a post to see more information.
- Link clicks: 689
 - The number of times a user clicked a link in a post to navigate to an external destination, like the Open Farms website, a farm partner's social media account, or a farm partner's website.
- Budget: \$280
 - Each of the 14 farm videos was "boosted" to target a Kingston audience.

Instagram

- 21 posts
- Total reach: 11,344
- Likes: 983
- Comments: 55
- Profile Visits: 129
 - The number of times a user clicked in a post to visit the County's Instagram profile.
- Four Instagram takeovers
 - Takeovers are a valuable tool to increase an operator's online exposure. Four farm operators had the opportunity to take over Frontenac County's Instagram account and post their own content to the County's account, which currently has 1,619 followers.

Twitter

- Total reach: 27,788
- Media views: 4,403
- Engagements: 736

3. Virtual Farm Tours

To replace the “behind-the-scenes” experience of on-farm visits, staff engaged Make Hay Media to produce virtual farm tours for each of the 14 participating farm partners. Investing in the production of high-quality videos was critical to the success of the virtual format, as they were used to create awareness for the event and provide an engaging experience for users.

All videos will remain available on the [County's YouTube channel](#), [Facebook page](#), and [OpenFarms.ca](#). The following measurements demonstrate the performance of the videos on Facebook, which is where they were most viewed during the four-week event:

- Total minutes of video viewed: 23,684 (395 hours) (each video is 90 seconds in length)
- Total 1-minute views: 5,911
- Total 10-second views: 29,210
- Total 3-second video views: 75,804

4. Live Q&A Sessions

The Community Development Officer facilitated six virtual conversations on a range of topics with participating farmers. Three morning sessions were designed for school children and three evening sessions were intended for an adult audience. Sessions have been posted on [www.OpenFarms.ca](#) for ongoing viewing.

Session topics included:

- Growing fruits and vegetables
- Raising animals
- Impacts of eating locally
- What COVID 19 has taught us about local food
- Ask me anything

- Abattoirs, what are they and what's at stake?

The following measurements demonstrate the performance of the Q&A Sessions:

- 43 Attendees
- 13 Classrooms represented
- 90 Questions submitted in advance

New Opportunities in 2020

The virtual format presented several new opportunities:

1. Geography was no longer a limitation, which was beneficial in two respects:
 - a. Without having to contend with ferry capacity issues, farms on Wolfe and Howe Island participated in this year's event, a first for Open Farms.
 - b. Though the target audience was still Kingston residents, "visitors" could participate from anywhere in the world.
2. Farm capacity was no longer a limitation. This year's event included several small farms that do not have the capacity to welcome visitors to their property, but were excited to participate in the virtual format.
3. Being spread over four weeks instead of just a few hours made it easier for people to engage in portions of the event at their convenience.
4. The high-value content created as part of the event can be re-used indefinitely by Frontenac County, by the individual operators for their own promotional purposes, and by other stakeholders that have an interest in promoting local food.

Feedback from Farm Partners

Following the event, a survey was sent to all participating farm partners. Thirteen participants responded to the survey, resulting in the following summary feedback:

1. How valuable is Open Farms to the agricultural community in Frontenac?
 - a. On a scale of 1 to 100, the average rating was 91.
2. Which of the following, if any, did you experience as a result of participating in Open Farms?

An increase in attention for my farm through social media	8
An increase in opportunities to promote other producers in Frontenac	10
An increase in traffic to my website and/or sales channels	5
An increase in community conversations about agriculture and local food	9
An increase in product sales	3

An increased sense of belonging to the agricultural community in Frontenac	12
An increase in opportunities to talk about local food and agriculture	12
An increased sense of support from the community	10
An increase in opportunities to learn about other producers in Frontenac	13

3. Should Open Farms be offered in 2021?
 - a. 11 said yes, split between in-person and virtual. 1 said not sure.
4. Will you participate in Open Farms again?
 - a. 11 said yes, split between in-person and virtual. 1 said no.
5. Should the goals of the event remain the same?
 - a. 13 said yes.
6. Should virtual Q&A sessions be part of future events?
 - a. 8 said yes, for all event formats. 4 said yes, for a virtual event only.
7. With the success of Open Farms for the past 3 years, we're wondering - what should we do next? What would be as valuable or more valuable to the agricultural community to support farm capacity increases or the attraction of new farmers to the region?
 - a. Year-round local food marketing efforts
 - b. Public education: food sovereignty, homesteading, etc
 - c. Sector development
 - i. Young / new farmer recruitment and support
 - ii. Land pairing / mentorship program
 - iii. Attraction of new agriculture support businesses and infrastructure
 - d. Encourage large institutions to develop local procurement policies
 - e. Additions to the main Open Farms event
 - i. Additional on-farm activities
 - ii. Centralized sale of products
 - iii. Engage large scale producers
 - iv. Showcase retailers who sell local food

v. Partner with neighbouring regions

Looking Forward

The five original goals of Open Farms should be maintained and if possible, an in-person event should be planned for 2021. Staff will continue to monitor the changing conditions of the pandemic and will work with participating farms to adapt the 2021 Open Farms event as necessary. Staff recommend the following three priorities:

1. **Explore new event formats.** As discussed in the New Opportunities section, there are farms in Frontenac that cannot participate in the traditional event format because they do not have the capacity and/or their location prohibits them from welcoming large numbers of visitors. Despite those challenges, some operators want to contribute to the event and would benefit from the exposure of Open Farms. In 2021, the County will work with participating farms to explore the possibility of incorporating a series of on-farm events and activities that range in size, appeal to different audiences, and are offered at varying price-points.
2. **Elevate the event.** Based on the success of previous events, it is fair to anticipate interest in Open Farms will grow again next year. It will be critical to work with farm partners to ensure a high-quality visitor experience in order to maintain the event's reputation. It is recommended that participation criteria and a participation fee be introduced for partner farms to ensure a serious commitment to the success of the event. There are also opportunities to improve event-wide components like directional signage and visitor engagement activities, and to develop new components like the centralized online sale of Open Farms product packages and working with accommodators to offer multi-day experiential packages. Staff will also explore the possibility of contracting an agency to develop a refined marketing strategy.
3. **Formalize partnerships.** In 2020, the Frontenac Federation of Agriculture sponsored Open Farms with a financial contribution, support in spreading the message through social media platforms, and participation in multiple Q&A Sessions. That partnership enhanced the event, and even more importantly it increased the legitimacy and reach of Open Farms within the farming community. Staff suggest pursuing formalized partnerships in 2021 with several organizations that have aligned interests, in order to leverage their respective strengths:
 - a. The Township of South Frontenac – As the majority of farms that participate in the event are located in South Frontenac, the County will seek South Frontenac Township's partnership specifically as it relates to event coordination. Recreation staff at the township are experienced in planning and executing events, and the township Public Works department could provide support on signage and safety implications. Working alongside these expert staff will make for a better event. If farm partners on Wolfe and/or Howe Island participate in 2021, a similar partnership should be sought with Frontenac Islands Township.

- b. The City of Kingston – The main target audience for Open Farms is residents of the City of Kingston and municipal staff are experts at communicating with their residents. The County will seek a partnership with the City of Kingston in order to broaden our communications reach to our target audience. There are also many farms in Rural Kingston whose participation in Open Farms could contribute to the positive growth of the event.
- c. The National Farmers' Union and the Frontenac Federation of Agriculture – Most of the farms in Frontenac are registered through one of these organizations, and the County will seek a partnership with both groups in order to broaden our reach within the farming community.
- d. Farmers' Markets – Farmers Markets are uniquely positioned in that they hold valuable relationships with consumers who are highly interested in local food. The County will seek partnerships with local markets in order to reach this qualified audience and also to ensure the event includes components that align with this audience's needs. This partnership also opens up the possibility of offering Open Farms product packages for sale with Farmers Market partners.

Financial Implications

The County of Frontenac acknowledges the support of the Ontario Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries and Regional Tourism Organization 9 (RTO 9), South Eastern Ontario. The 2020 Open Farms Event was made possible in partnership with RTO 9, who provided \$4,250.00 towards the execution of the event.

The County of Frontenac acknowledges the support of the Frontenac Federation of Agriculture, which contributed \$500 to the project's success.

The 2020 Open Farms event expenses remained within the assigned budget envelope. The funds for the 2021 project are budgeted as part of the annual Economic Development budget.

Strategic Priorities

At its meeting on June 19, 2019, County Council approved [Frontenac County Strategic Plan 2019-2022](#). This project is aligned with the intent of the priorities listed below.

Priority 1.2: Refine and invest in efforts to accelerate economic development — to grow businesses, attract more visits and expand the tax base.

Priority 3: Champion and coordinate collaborative efforts

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

Community Development Advisory Committee
Frontenac County Council & Staff
South Frontenac Township Councillors and staff
City of Kingston
Frontenac County Plowmen's Association
KFLA Public Health
Frontenac County residents
Kingston residents
Local farms and businesses



Report 2020-108

Committee Information Report

To: Community Development Advisory Committee
From: Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development
Prepared by: Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development
Date of meeting: December 10, 2020
Re: **Review of motorized access to the Verona Corridor of the Frontenac K&P Trail.**

Recommendation

This report is for information only. It is being provided to the committee in order to support the committee's efforts to provide advice to County Council with respect only to the issue of motorized use on the K&P Trail between Bellrock Road and Craig Road ("Verona Corridor").

Background

The Verona Trailhead was developed in 2016 following direction from Frontenac County Council to purchase and remediate the property at 6503 Road 38 (corner of Bellrock Road) for the purpose of developing a public trail access point. This property is located near the southern end of the village of Verona. The remediation is now complete and this site is available for trail users to access the K&P Trail from Verona.

The section of K&P Trail that is adjacent to the Verona Trailhead was constructed in 2013 with support from a grant from the Trans Canada Trail organization. This grant contributed to the development of the trail from Boyce Road in Hartington to Craig Road in Verona. The trails concept plan for the K&P Trail supplied to Trans Canada Trail outlined the vision for this section of trail as a "greenway". Trans Canada Trail defines greenways as trails developed exclusively for non-motorized use, with the exception of snowmobiles in the winter. The concept describes that the trail north of Craig Road will welcome motorized use, and is defined as a "Yellow Trail" by Trans Canada Trail.

Frontenac County Council provided direction at their regular meeting on September 20, 2017 for staff to consult with the community about the possibility of allowing access for motorized vehicles to the K&P Trail from the Verona Trailhead location.

On November 20, 2017 staff conducted an open house event in partnership with the Verona Community Association to solicit design suggestions for the Verona Trailhead as well as input with regard to the use of ATV's on the K&P Trail from Bellrock Road to Craig Road. In addition to the open house event, staff received input through a survey that was open from November 1 to December 3, 2017.

In response to the question "Should ATV's be allowed on the K&P Trail from Bellrock Road to Craig Road" a significant portion of respondents were in favour (63%) with a smaller number opposed (30%) or neutral (7%). However, the Verona Community Association strongly opposed this change, and continues to advocate against it.

At that time staff recommended that no change be made as it was unclear if a change would impact the County's relationship with the Trans Canada Trail organization and the Verona community. As such, [Report 2018-073](#) was presented to the Community Development Advisory Committee on May 10, 2018 and the following recommendation from the committee was adopted by County Council at the regular meeting held on May 16, 2018:

**2018-073
Community Development Advisory Committee
Motorized Vehicles on K&P Trail**

Be It Resolved That motorized off-road vehicles not be permitted access to the K&P Trail from Bellrock Road to Craig Road as per current policy;

And Further That ATV detour signage be established from the Trailhead location through the village of Verona along Road 38 to the K&P Trail intersection at Craig Road;

And Further That the County of Frontenac remain open to options for future access from the Verona Street portion of the K&P Trail to Road 38.

Carried

In 2019, the Verona District ATV Club was formed and entered into a partnership with the County of Frontenac, which resulted in additional funding and support for the management and maintenance of the Frontenac K&P Trail. [Report 2020-104](#) describes these benefits in detail and at their regular meeting on November 18, 2020 County Council approved the renewal of this partnership for the 2021 season.

In March of 2020 the Verona District ATV Club presented County Council with a petition signed by approximately 500 individuals, requesting that ATV access to the K&P Trail be extended from Craig Road south to the Verona Trailhead at Bellrock Road (The Verona Corridor).

Comment

Upon the passing of the above resolution in support of the pilot program, the trail was immediately opened to ATV use to Bellrock Road. Staff proceeded to coordinate signage with the Verona District ATV Club and the Verona Community Association, and Community Safety Corridor signs were commissioned in July and installed in September, 2020. Small 20 km/h speed signs were also installed in late June and early July through the corridor by the L&A Ridgerunners Snowmobile Club and the Verona District ATV Club.



In the early days of the pilot project, staff heard from several neighbours who live adjacent to the K&P Trail in the Verona Corridor. Concerns were raised primarily with respect to speed, noise, and dust. These neighbours also communicated disappointment that they had neither the chance to provide input prior to the pilot project nor were they directly informed as adjacent landowners when the matter was decided by County Council.

The Verona ATV Club engaged in several initiatives to reduce the impacts of speed, noise and dust in the Verona Corridor during this time. The club treated the trail surface to dampen the effects of dust, installed speed calming measures, and patrolled the corridor to educate motorized and non-motorized users on the change of policy.

Trans Canada Trail

Staff have yet to receive formal comment from Trans Canada Trail with respect to the proposed change of use. However, after a detailed review of the original funding agreement and concept plan, staff are confident that there is no provisions in the

agreement requiring the County to ensure that this portion of trail remain a “greenway” for any period of time after the project was completed, and therefore future use of the trail should consider the intent of the agreement, but Council is not bound by it.

Staff want to clearly state that Trans Canada Trail continues to be a valuable partner and advisory body in regard to the development of the K&P Trail. In 2019 this organization provided \$63,750 in funding to support the trail gap project on a shared use “Yellow Trail” section between Crow Lake Road and Shibley Road.

Survey Question

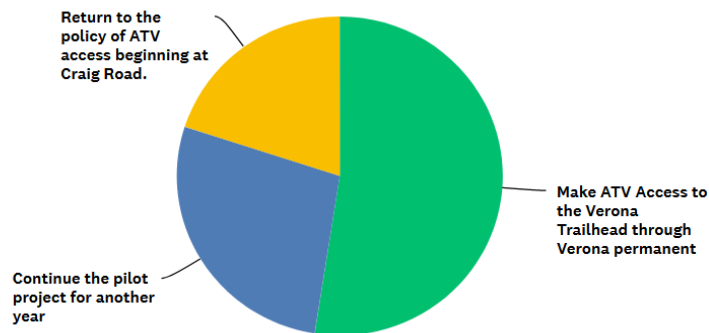
From September 8 to November 30, 2020 the County conducted a survey on use of the Frontenac K&P Trail. The survey had a total of 419 complete responses with a significant portion reporting from Kingston (32%) as well as substantial representation from local postal codes such as K0H 2W0 (12%), K0H 1V0 (9%), and K0H 2P0 (6%). This survey included a question concerning the pilot project in the Verona Corridor which received 345 responses.

The question asked respondents to pick one of three options for the County to pursue.

“As part of a pilot project in 2020, the County provided 4 km of additional motorized access between Craig Road and the Verona Trailhead at Bellrock Road to improve ATV access to local businesses and safe loading and unloading at the Trailhead location. In 2021, the County should:

- A1. Make ATV access to the Verona Trailhead through Verona permanent
- A2. Continue the pilot project for another year
- A3. Return to the policy of ATV access beginning at Craig Road.

In line with the previous survey conducted in 2017, the responses were largely in favour of making the extension of motorized use permanent (52%), with the remaining responses split between extending the pilot for an additional year (28%) and returning to the previous policy of ATV use starting north of Craig Road (20%). Complete results and comments can be viewed in Appendix C.



Committee Next Steps

At its meeting held on August 28, 2020 the Community Development Advisory Committee passed the following motion to establish a working group to review this issue:

Moved By: Councillor Denis Doyle
Seconded By: Mr. Barrie Gilbert

Be It Resolved That staff, after consultation with the CDAC, report the results of the K&P Trail Stakeholder Survey, **as amended through report 2020-076**, to Council in Q1 of 2021 as part of the review of the pilot initiative to extend ATV use on the Frontenac K&P Trail from Craig Road south to the Verona Trailhead at Bellrock Road until November 30, 2020.

And Further That the working group established at the August 13, 2020 CDAC meeting only focus on the K&P Trail from Craig Road to Bellrock Road as per the Council resolution passed May 20, 2020.

And Further That Councillor Alan Revill, Mary Kloosterman, Barrie Gilbert, and Greg Rodgers be appointed to the working group

And Further That the working group report back to CDAC no later than Q1 2021.

Staff suggest the working group review this report and relevant resources and present relevant findings to the Community Development Advisory Committee at its next scheduled meeting. If supported by the committee, these findings will be communicated to Council as part of the decision making process for the Verona Corridor.

County Council will be presented with future options for the Verona Corridor prior to the end of Q1 2020.

Resources (available upon request)

- Trans Canada Trail Funding Agreement (2013)
- Trans Canada Trail Concept Plan for Trail Gap Construction (2013)
- 2020 Trail Survey Results (Q22)
- Frontenac K&P Trail Implementation Plan (2009)
- [Frontenac Trails Master Plan \(2009\)](#)
- [Report 2018-073 Community Development Advisory Committee–Motorized Vehicles on K&P Trail at Verona Trailhead](#)
- [Report 2020-051 Options to provide motorized access to the K&P Trail from Bellrock Road to Craig Road](#)

Financial Implications

All actions outlined in this report were achieved using the 2020 K&P Trail Maintenance budget or through in kind support from the local snowmobile and ATV clubs.

Strategic Priority Implications

Priority 2.1: To meet the needs of future capital projects, explore new sources of funding support (current and future programs), cost-sharing options and other potential economies.

Priority 3.1: Work with the townships, other municipalities and levels of government on broad infrastructure issues — ranging from environmental concerns to regional transportation strategies for residential, social and economic purposes, and access to funding.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

Jannette Amini, Clerk / Manager of Legislative Services
South Frontenac Township
Trans Canada Trail Ontario (The Great Trail)
Verona District ATV Club
Verona Community Association
L&A Ridgerunners Snowmobile Club
The Frontenac K&P Trail User Community (via Survey)