



Community Futures Development Corporation

Renfrew County

Renfrew County Fact Sheet

Community Overview

- 17 municipalities in approximately 7645sq. km, Ontario's largest county¹
- There are a total of 18 municipalities in Renfrew County with Arnprior (population 7,158), Renfrew (population 7,846), Pembroke (population 13,930), and Petawawa (population 14,651) having the largest concentrated populations.²
- 102,268 residents; business sector of 4425 enterprises³
- Senior population is 6% greater than the national average and increasing; youngest generation is 2.5% smaller than the national average and declining⁴
- Illiteracy rate of 34%; high school drop out rate of 17%⁵
- Wages 10-20% below provincial average⁶
- 80% of businesses have nine or less employees; 2/3 of those have four or less employees⁷
- Retail, tourism, food services and accommodation make up 70% of all business activity⁸
- Primary industry makes up 20% of all economic activity, but only employs 5% of the labour force⁹
- The unemployment rate has dropped in Renfrew County from 7.1% in 2006 to 4.7% in 2007.¹⁰

¹ Not including the City of Pembroke. County of Renfrew. *About the County*. 2008.

<http://www.countyofrenfrew.on.ca/aboutcounty.htm> (Accessed October 27, 2008); County of Renfrew. *County of Renfrew Ottawa Valley Growing Together*. 2006. http://www.countyofrenfrew.on.ca/developmentproperty/CoR_OV-Brochure-Jan06.pdf (Accessed October 8, 2008).

² Renfrew County and Lanark County. *Trends, Opportunities & Priorities (TOPS), Lanark & Renfrew, Report 2008/2009*. 2008. http://www.algonquincollege.com/RenfrewLanarkWorkforce/documents/TopReport_RenfrewLanark_EN.pdf (Accessed October 27, 2008).

³ Ontario East Economic Development Commission. *Renfrew County*. 2006 http://www.onteast.com/profile/EN/_Renfrew.html (Accessed October 27, 2008); County of Renfrew. *The County of Renfrew Business Retention & Expansion Survey 2004*. 2004. [http://www.countyofrenfrew.on.ca/developmentproperty/BR&E%20Final%20Report\[1\].pdf](http://www.countyofrenfrew.on.ca/developmentproperty/BR&E%20Final%20Report[1].pdf) (Accessed October 8, 2008)

⁴ *Business Retention & Expansion*.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ County of Renfrew. *County of Renfrew Ottawa Valley Growing Together*. 2006.,

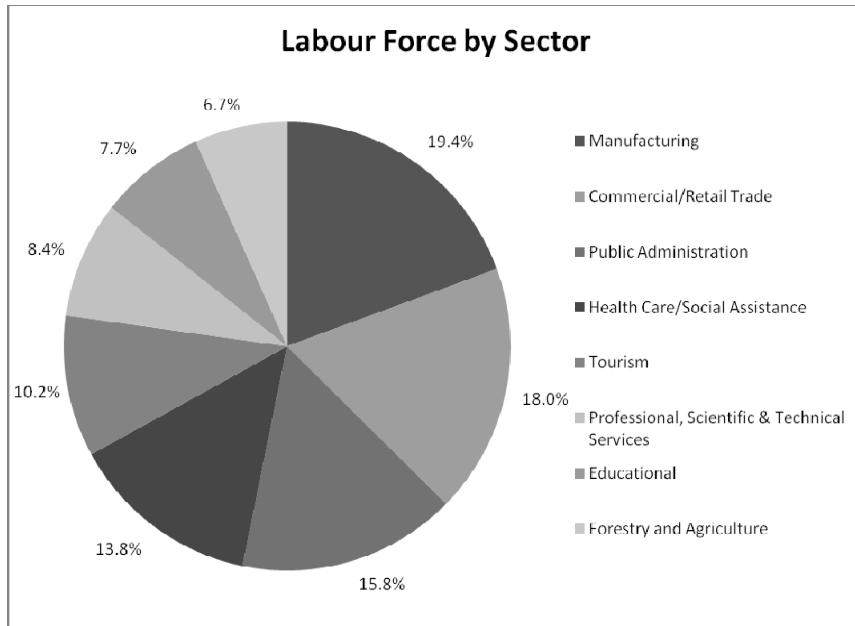
http://www.countyofrenfrew.on.ca/developmentproperty/CoR_OV-Brochure-Jan06.pdf (Accessed October 8, 2008).

⁷ *Growing Together*.

⁸ *Business Retention & Expansion*.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ *TOPS Report*.



Source: Ontario East Economic Development Commission

Public Sector

- Atomic Energy Canada Ltd. (AECL) and CFB Petawawa have both undergone recent expansions¹¹
- AECL's annual economic impact in Renfrew County was approximately \$215 million and was responsible for creating 1,900 local jobs¹²
- Atomic Energy of Canada Limited in Chalk River employs approximately 3,000 people and has an ongoing recruitment search for 250 to 300 more¹³
- The Canadian Forces Base at Petawawa will be expanding by 1,000 soldiers in the near future; The base already employs 5,300 military personnel and 1,000 civilians¹⁴

Private Sector

- Key employers include:
 - OnLine Support (OLS): On-Line Support call centre employs 500 people in the Pembroke and Renfrew areas and is the largest private employer in Renfrew County¹⁵
 - Keata Pharma Inc. (formerly Pfizer Pharmaceutical)
 - Arnprior Aerospace (formerly Boeing Canada)
 - Magellan Aerospace
 - Nylene Canada (formerly Honeywell Nylon; struggling; expected closure 2008/2009)
 - Sandvik and Nutech Precision Metals
 - Med-Eng and Pacific Safety Products
 - Hypernetics
 - ATC Panels
 - Canadian General Electric

¹¹ *Growing Together.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *TOPS Report.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

- Bubble Technologies
- Amphenol (Times Fiber Canada)
- KI Pembroke
- Estate Hardwood Flooring and Madawaska Doors
- Scapa North America
- Zomax Canada
- Teletech
- Ensyn Technologies
- Recent Large Business Closures
 - Timminco
 - Playtex
 - Terray Corporation
 - Commonwealth Plywood
 - Smurfit MBI
- Majority of business closures are due to struggling American economy and outsourcing of labour to less expensive foreign countries¹⁶

Forestry

- Largest primary industry based on financial output and numbers of employees¹⁷
 - Outputs \$294 million annually
 - 2055 direct jobs in forest industry (19.3% of region's goods-producing sector employment)¹⁸
 - Produces 1069 indirect regional jobs; 1295 indirect provincial jobs¹⁹
- Primary wood manufacturing over 10x provincial average²⁰
- 277,000 cubic metres harvested annually²¹
- Ottawa Valley Forest Inc. invests \$1.5 million annually into forest renewal²²
- Concentrated in the west²³
- Many barriers to entry including dwindling inventories of quality logs, increasing intra-county bidding pressures, high cost of harvesting Crown lands, and long-term costs of 'heritage wood residual' disposal²⁴
- The forestry industry of Central and Eastern Ontario generates \$573 million per year with Algonquin Provincial Park as the most important source of wood supply²⁵
- Renfrew and Lanark Counties are strong regions in terms of the logging, wood product manufacturing, paper, and allied products manufacturing²⁶
- Lanark County produces about 3% of Ontario's hardwood and there are over 100 forest product companies in Renfrew County²⁷

¹⁶ Renfrew County Community Futures Development Corporation.

¹⁷ *Business Retention & Expansion*.

¹⁸ Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. *Central and Eastern Ontario: Healthy Forests, Healthy Business*. <http://www.countyofrenfrew.on.ca/developmentproperty/healthyforests.pdf> (Accessed October 8, 2008)

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ *Business Retention & Expansion*.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ *TOPS Report*.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

- The Ontario Parks Board has made recommendations to the Minister of Natural Resources to reduce the ecological footprint of logging in Algonquin Park. The recommendations include an increase of the protection zones to 54% of the park. Due to the anticipated negative impact to the region, the County of Renfrew is currently challenging the recommendations.²⁸

Agriculture

- Agriculture is the largest primary industry in the county based upon total numbers of registered business operations (approximately 1340 registered farming businesses)²⁹
- Expected to remain the largest primary industry, however, it faces many challenges including high costs of entry, successive years of mediocre returns, and increased foreign competition³⁰
- Renfrew County has been directly impacted by the 7.1% decrease in farms across Canada between 2001 and 2006³¹
- While the current trend in farm consolidation brought the number of farms in Renfrew County from 1,342 to 1,268 and resulted in higher profits, operating costs have also increased³²
- Average age of farm operators increased from 49 years of age to 54 and less people are employed in the agriculture industry³³

Service & Tourism

- 2005 McKittrick Report states, “the County of Renfrew had the most tourism potential of any county in Eastern Ontario,” complimenting the high quality of the tourism sector participants, rapidly expanding services and significant expectations of growth well into the futures³⁴
- Retail trade is the largest economic sector, with a further 25% of activity centred upon tourism, food services and accommodation³⁵

Barriers to Trade³⁶

- Transportation availability (no commercial air service)
 - Most rural communities do not have adequate public transportation to accommodate their local workforce
 - Inadequate public transportation is a barrier for many employers considering setting up new businesses or expanding existing businesses in rural communities.
 - Starlink Aviation, a passenger airline company has refused a deal to provide service between Toronto and the Pembroke and Area Airport. With services in demand, especially with the proximity of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL) and the Canadian Forces Base (CFB) at Petawawa, this is a loss that will impact future economic development.³⁷
- Transportation costs
- County-wide access to raw materials and supplies
- Tax-free incentives in northern communities and U.S.
- Broadband access availability and costs

²⁸ *TOPS Report.*

²⁹ *Business Retention & Expansion.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *TOPS Report.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Growing Together.*

³⁵ *Business Retention & Expansion.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *TOPS Report.*

- Although some areas of Renfrew County already have high speed internet, a significant amount of communities are still lacking this essential service³⁸

Identified Business Needs³⁹

- Build a countywide infrastructure for community and business communication and development, unfettered by political borders
- Host a series of partnership meetings countywide, using a town hall format to assist individuals and alliances to create new business
- Create a literacy fellowship of business, government and education sectors
- Work with local ecommerce promoting the county's retail sector
- Develop a long-term strategic vision and action plan regarding demography
- Actively encourage and foster strategic business immigration
- Proactively instruct small business on strategic long-term planning
- Conduct a dynamic skills inventory and future industry labour needs analysis
- Mediate the signage requirements of municipal bodies vs. the signage regulations of the Ministry of Transport
- Take an active role establishing improved transportation terminus facilities
- Initiate a detailed 'quality of life' study for promotional purposes

Community Economic Development Priorities⁴⁰

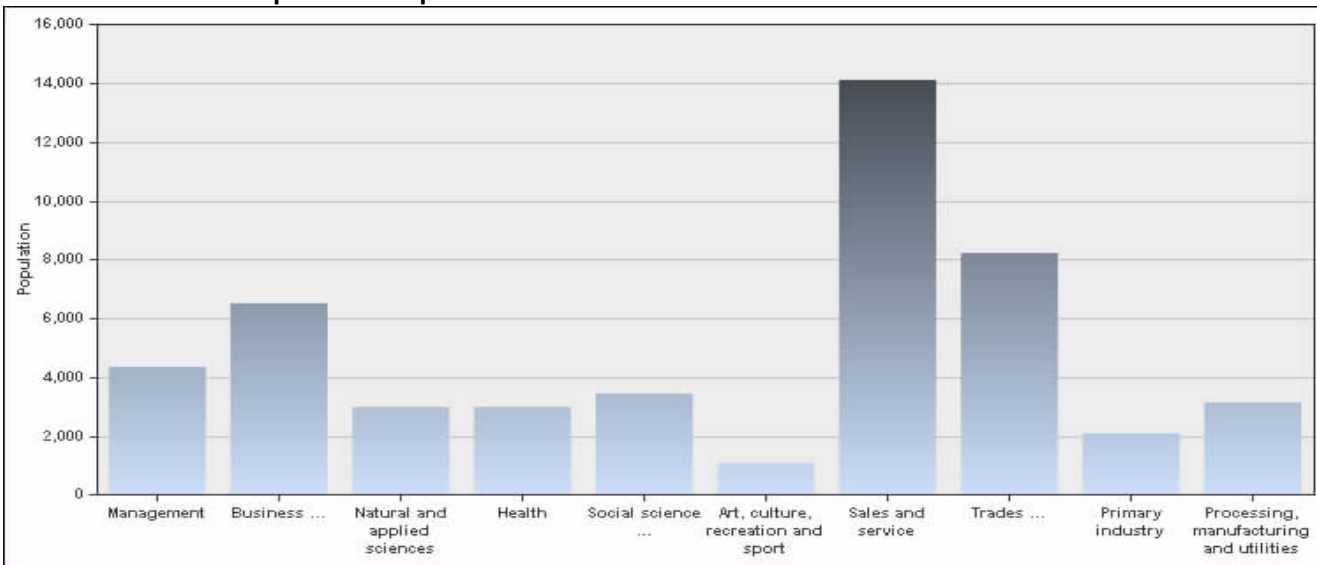
1. Further support for Forestry, Tourism, Agriculture and Manufacturing
2. Diversify job opportunities and value jobs
3. Improving the communications capabilities within the county
4. Skilled trades and apprenticeship opportunities and education
5. Addressing declining population and employment opportunities
6. Buy Local campaign
7. High-tech hub

³⁸ *TOPS Report.*

³⁹ *Business Retention & Expansion.*

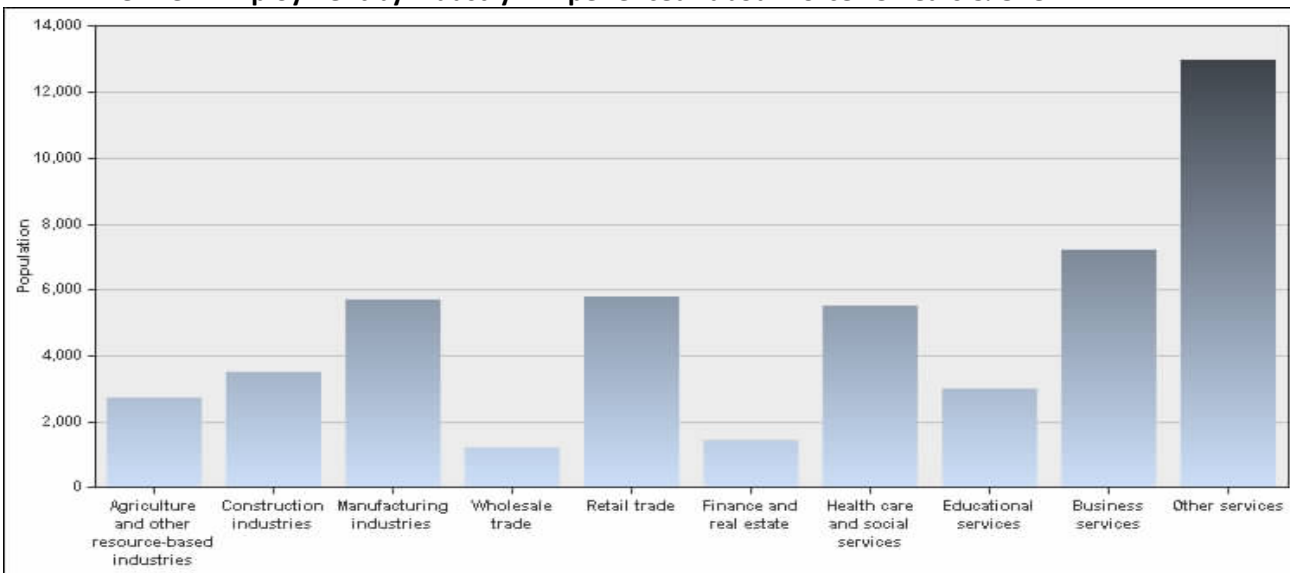
⁴⁰ Erik Lockhart. *Renfrew County CFDC Strategy Session Highlights.* Kingston: Queen's University Executive Decision Centre, 2006.

Renfrew Occupations – Experienced Labour Force 15 Years & Over⁴¹



Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population.

Renfrew Employment by Industry – Experienced Labour Force 15 Years & Over⁴²



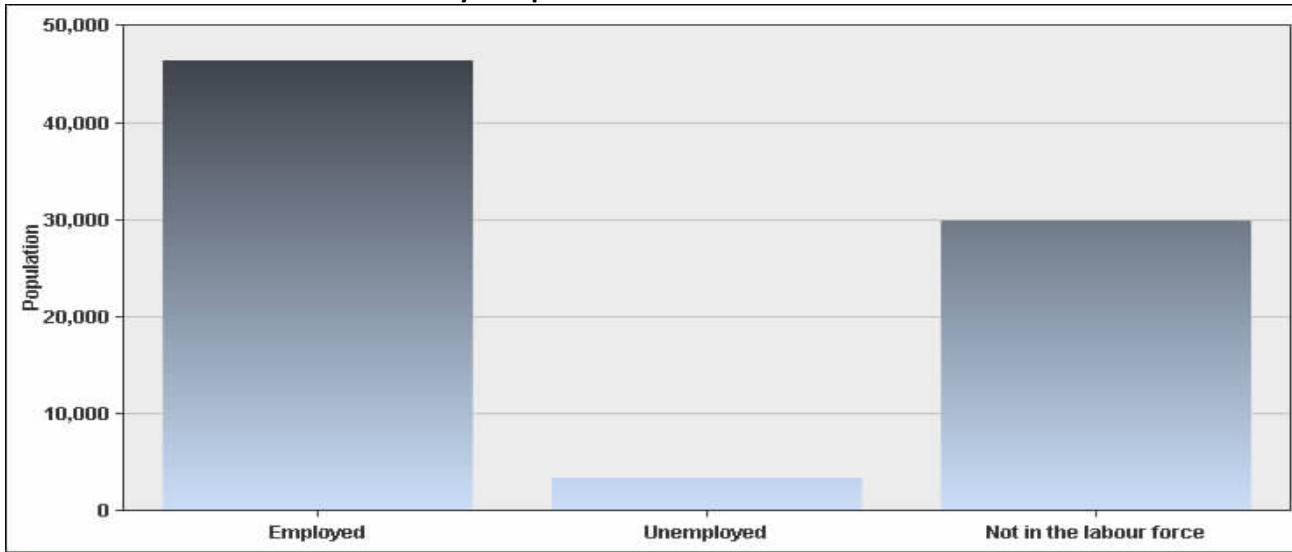
Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population.

⁴¹ Statistics Canada. 2007. *Renfrew, Ontario (table). 2006 Community Profiles. 2006 Census.* Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa. Released March 13, 2007.

<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/profiles/community/Index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed October 27, 2008).

⁴² Ibid.

Renfrew Labour Force Activity – Population 15 Years & Over⁴³



Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population.

⁴³ 2006 Community Profiles.