



RURAL
COMMUNITY
WELLBEING

MARCH

20
26

COMMUNITY WELLBEING REPORT

RENFREW COUNTY



PREPARED BY:



RURAL ONTARIO
INSTITUTE

PREPARED FOR: RENFREW COUNTY



RURAL
COMMUNITY
WELLBEING

ABOUT

ROI has developed a dashboard that displays wellbeing indicators for communities across Ontario. The dashboard was developed in collaboration with project partners, including the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, and EcoCanada.

The dashboard development and indicator selection were informed through engagement with a focus group of rural data champions whose involvement was integral to this process.

ROI's [Community Wellbeing Dashboard](#) improves access to data and evidence for local decision making. The information on the dashboard and in this report can help communities:

- establish baselines
- identify priorities for change and research
- share stories and celebrate successes
- reveal data gaps for decision making
- monitor progress over time in future reports

This report was prepared using indicators and data from ROI's Community Wellbeing Dashboard. See the [website](#) for definitions, data sources, and references.



Building
**vision, voice
& leadership**



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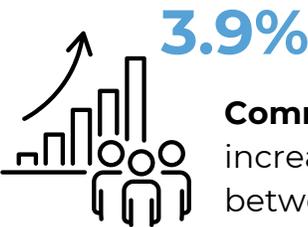
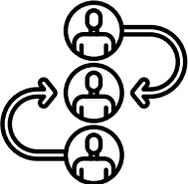
SUMMARY

In 2021, the communities of **Petawawa, Pembroke, Arnprior, Laurentian Valley, and Renfrew** accounted for **56% of Renfrew County's population** while occupying 10% of its land area.



64:100

In 2021, there were 64 **economically-dependent** people per 100 working age people.



3.9%

Community population increased by 3.9% between 2016-2021.

Renfrew County Median Age

45.2

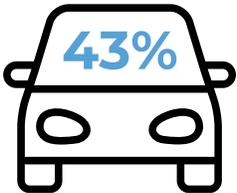


In 2021, **Head, Clara and Maria (60 years), Greater Madawaska (59 years), and Madawaska Valley (58 years)** had the oldest median age in the County.

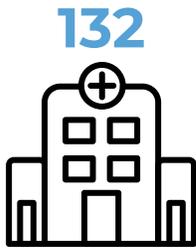
10% of households in Renfrew County earned a low income in 2021.



In 2021, **43%** of residents in Renfrew County **commuted to work locally.**



In 2023, only **66% of households** in Renfrew County had **access to broadband internet** with 50/10 Mbps and **3.45% of households** had **no internet service at all.**



Renfrew County has 132 health facilities; 41 of which are Pharmacies, 26 Mental Health and Addiction Organizations, and 4 Hospitals.



89%

In 2021, **89% of people aged 25-64 had a high school diploma** and 58% of people had achieved some post-secondary education.

Opportunities to engage in arts and culture are relatively diversified for a rural region of this size, with **30 facilities across the County**, 17 museums and 11 libraries.

30





RENFREW COUNTY COMMUNITY CONTEXT

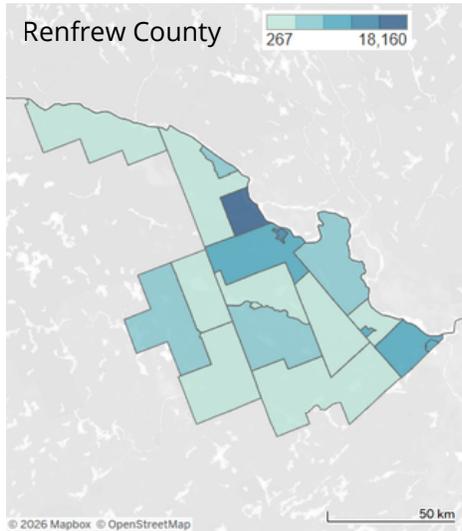
COMMUNITY LOCATION, TYPE AND CLASSIFICATION

The census subdivision of Renfrew County is located in Eastern Ontario. This community is made up of 16 lower tier municipalities, a separated city and a first nation community. Local services are delivered through the County of Renfrew and the City of Pembroke.

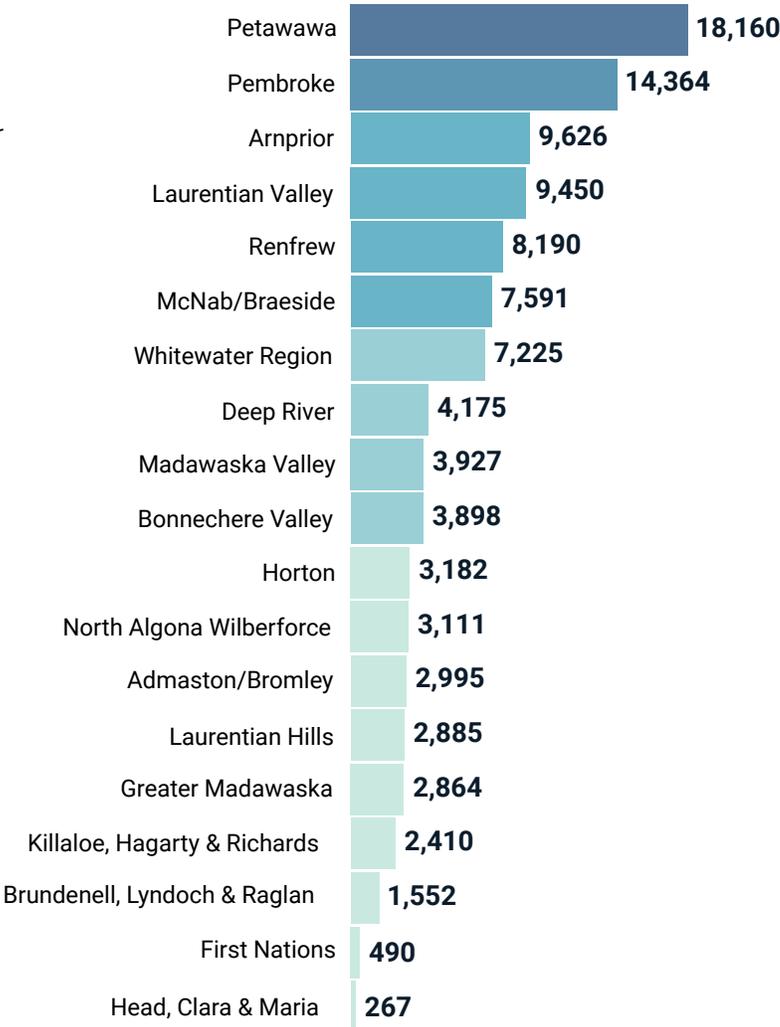
Two municipalities in Renfrew County are classified as urban, though each has a population of fewer than 10,000. The remaining 17 communities are classified as rural.

POPULATION

In 2021, Renfrew County had a population of 106,365. The five largest communities, Petawawa, Pembroke, Arnprior, Laurentian Valley and Renfrew, accounted for 56% of the County's population.



DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATOR: 2021 POPULATION

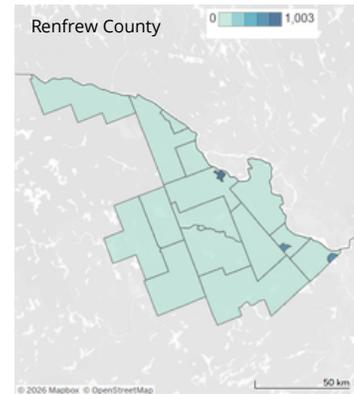




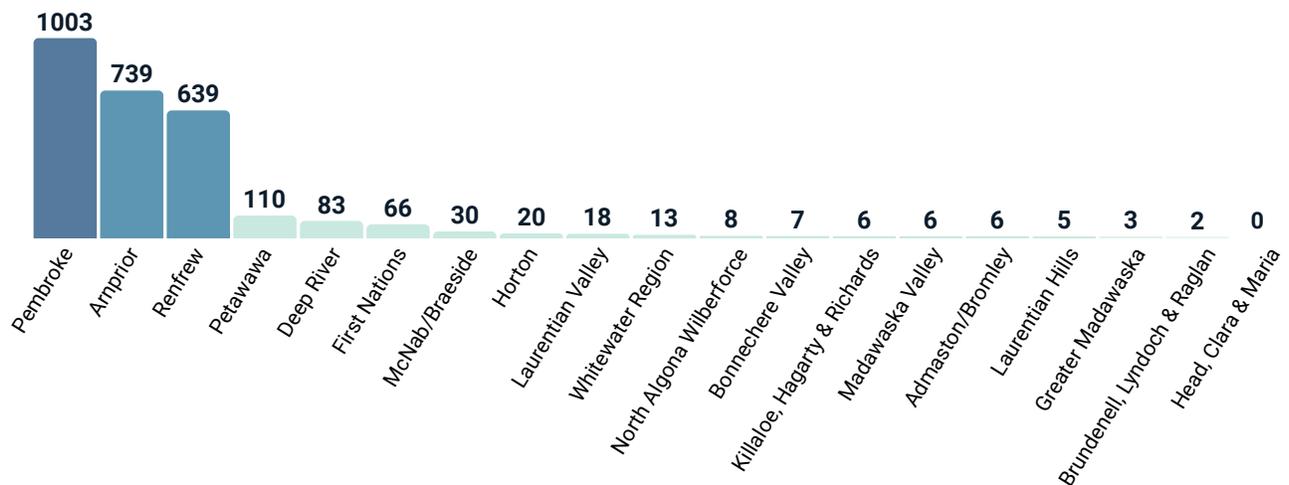
POPULATION DENSITY

In 2021, Renfrew County had a population density of 64 people per square kilometre. Pembroke, Arnprior, and Renfrew have the highest population density in the region. Despite its large land area, Renfrew County accounts for 77% of the regional land area but only 10% of its population.

64 people per km²



DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATOR: POPULATION DENSITY



POPULATION CHANGE

Between 2016 and 2021, the population of Renfrew County increased by 3.9%. In comparison, the population of rural Ontario grew by 5%.

3.9%



Greater Madawaska	14%	Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan	3%
First Nations	11%	Whitewater Region	3%
Horton	10%	Adamston/Bromley	2%
Arnprior	9%	Deep River	2%
Head, Clara and Maria	8%	Laurentian Valley	1%
North Algona Wilberforce	7%	Renfrew	0%
Bonnechere Valley	6%	Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards	0%
McNab/Braeside	6%	Laurentian Hills	-3%
Petawawa	6%	Madawaska Valley	-5%
Pembroke	3%	Rural Ontario	5%



POPULATION DEPENDENCY RATIO

In 2021, Renfrew County had 64 economically dependent people for every 100 working-age residents. Head, Clara and Maria, Madawaska Valley, Renfrew, and Bonnechere Valley recorded the highest dependency ratios in the region. For comparison, the ratio for rural Ontario was 66.

64:100



Head, Clara and Maria	87	First Nations	67
Madawaska Valley	85	Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan	67
Renfrew	79	North Algona Wilberforce	66
Bonnechere Valley	77	Adamston/Bromley	62
Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards	75	Horton	59
Arnprior	75	Laurentian Valley	59
Deep River	74	McNab/Braeside	59
Greater Madawaska	71	Laurentian Hills	57
Pembroke	68	Petawawa	45
Whitewater Region	68	Rural Ontario	66

MEDIAN AGE

In 2021, the median age in Renfrew County was 45.2. Head, Clara and Maria, Greater Madawaska, and Madawaska Valley had the oldest median ages in the region. Overall, the County’s median age is close to the rural Ontario average of 50.



Renfrew County
Median Age

45

Head, Clara and Maria	60	Arnprior	48
Greater Madawaska	59	Whitewater Region	48
Madawaska Valley	58	Deep River	48
Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan	56	Pembroke	46
Bonnechere Valley	54	Laurentian Valley	46
Renfrew	54	Adamston/Bromley	45
Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards	54	Laurentian Hills	42
North Algona Wilberforce	52	First Nations	38
Horton	49	Petawawa	32
McNab/Braeside	48	Rural Ontario	50

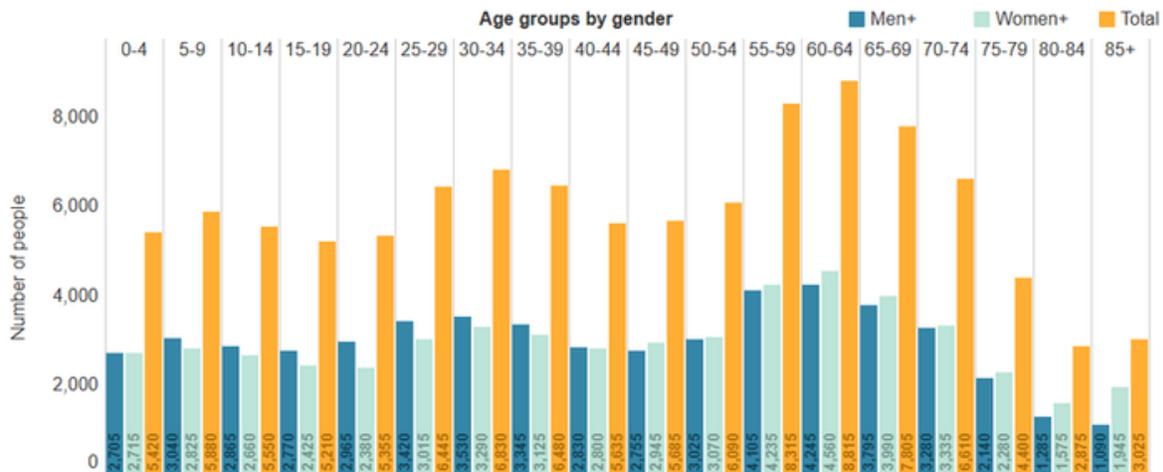
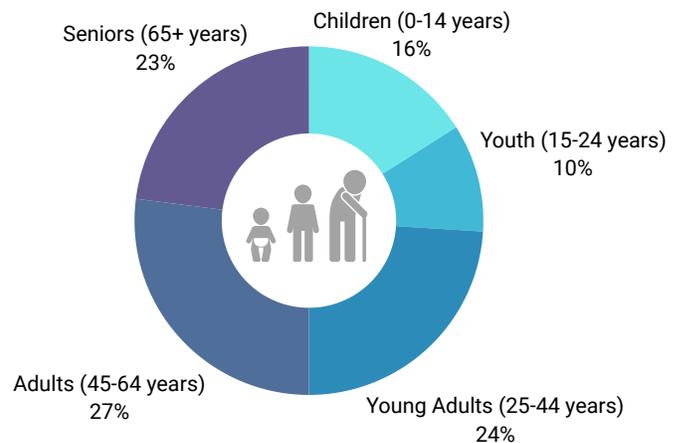




AGE DISTRIBUTION

In 2021, 27% of Renfrew County's population were adults aged 45-64. Greater Madawaska, Head, Clara and Maria, and Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan had the highest proportions in this age group. By contrast, only 24% of residents were young adults aged 25-44, with Petawawa, Laurentian Hills, and Pembroke recording the largest shares. Children, youth, and seniors together accounted for 49% of the population, a proportion similar to the regional average.

RENFREW COUNTY AGE GROUPS



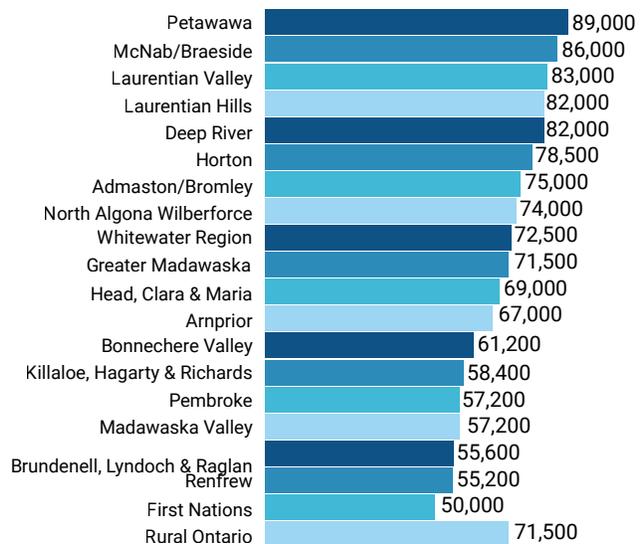
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

In 2020, the median after-tax household income in Renfrew County was \$71,500, the same as the rural Ontario average. The highest median incomes were in Petawawa, McNab/Braeside, Laurentian Valley, Laurentian Hills, and Deep River, each exceeding \$80,000.

\$71,500
Median household income
in Renfrew County



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (\$)

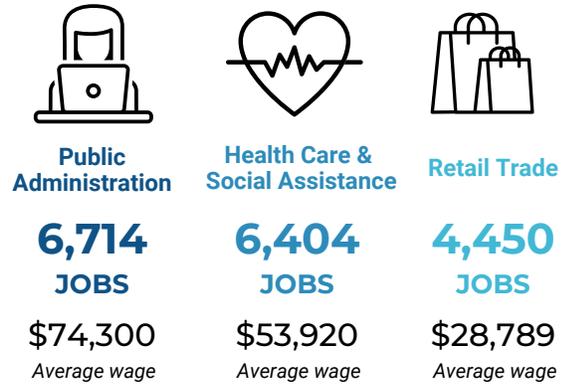




TOP EMPLOYMENT INDUSTRIES

In 2024, the leading employment sectors in Renfrew County were health care and social assistance, public administration, and retail. By comparison, health care and social assistance was also the top employer across rural Ontario.

TOP 3 EMPLOYMENT SECTORS IN THE COUNTY



TOP 3 EMPLOYMENT SECTORS IN RURAL ONTARIO



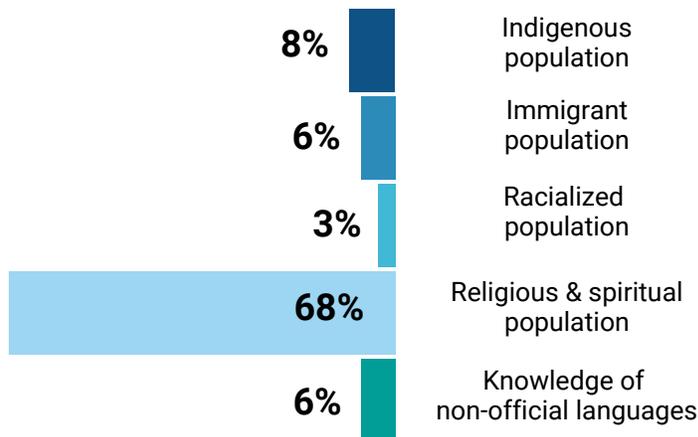
POPULATION DIVERSITY

In 2021, Renfrew County had low population diversity, which is consistent with communities in the region and with rural communities in general. In contrast, urban communities in Ontario had much higher levels of population diversity.

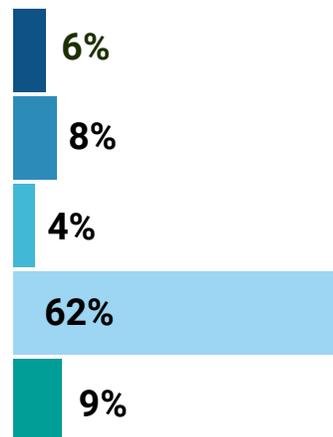
Low
Population diversity



RENFREW COUNTY



RURAL ONTARIO

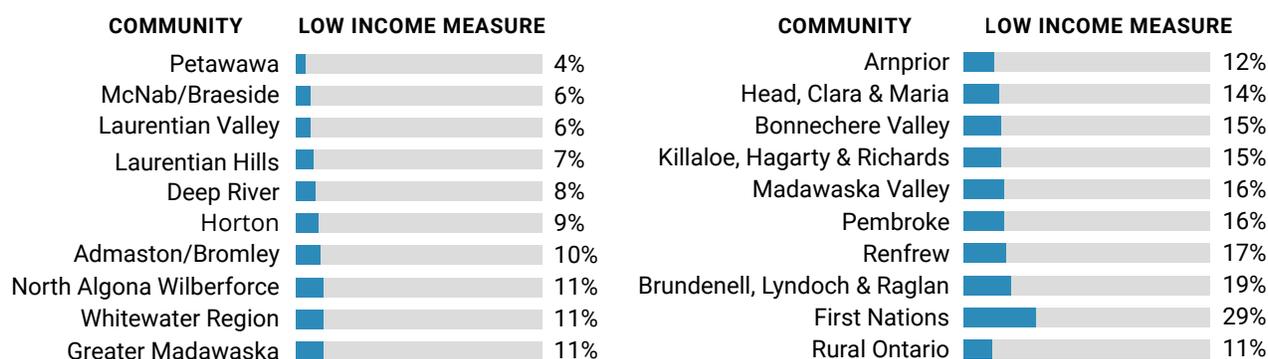




ECONOMICS

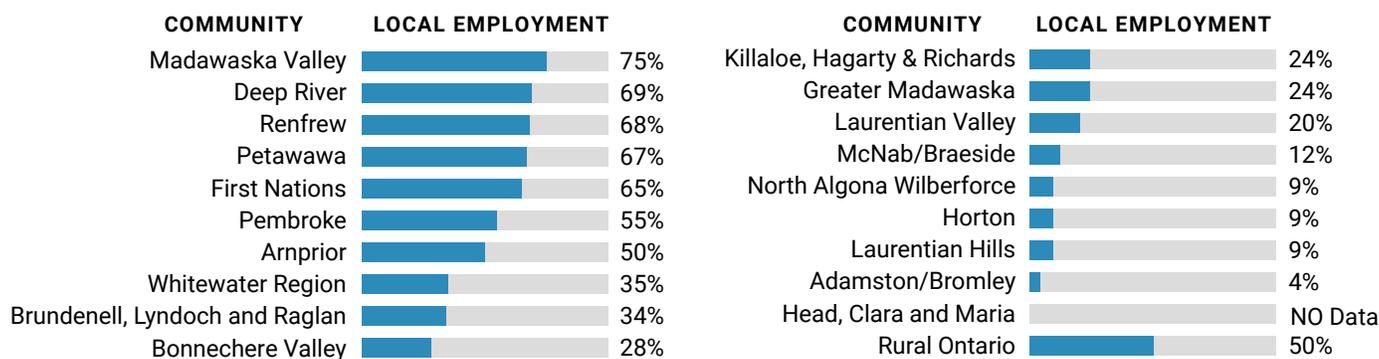
LOW-INCOME MEASURE

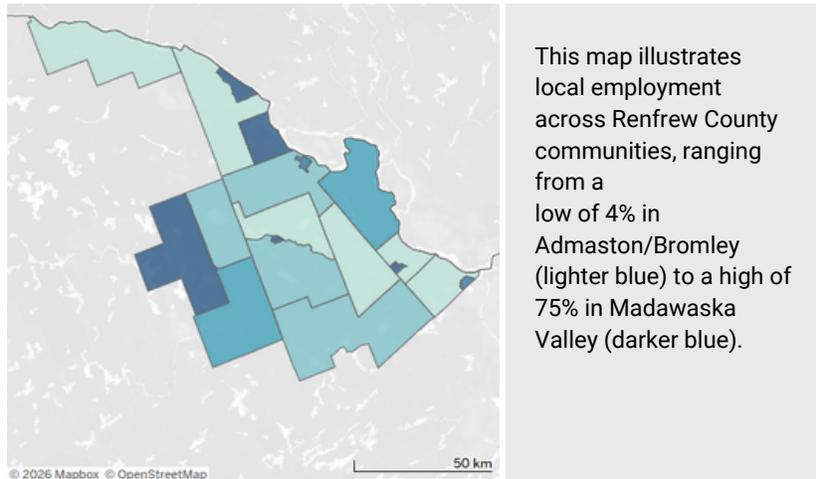
In 2020, the proportion of low-income households (Statistics Canada's after-tax Low Income Measure, LIM-AT) in Renfrew County stood at 11%, identical to the rural Ontario average.



LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

In 2021, 43% of Renfrew County residents commuted to work locally. Madawaska Valley, Deep River, Renfrew, and Petawawa had the highest proportions of local commuters. Approximately half of residents are employed in resource or health care sectors, which are likely concentrated in the more populated communities. Overall, local employment in the County is consistent with the rural Ontario average of 50%.

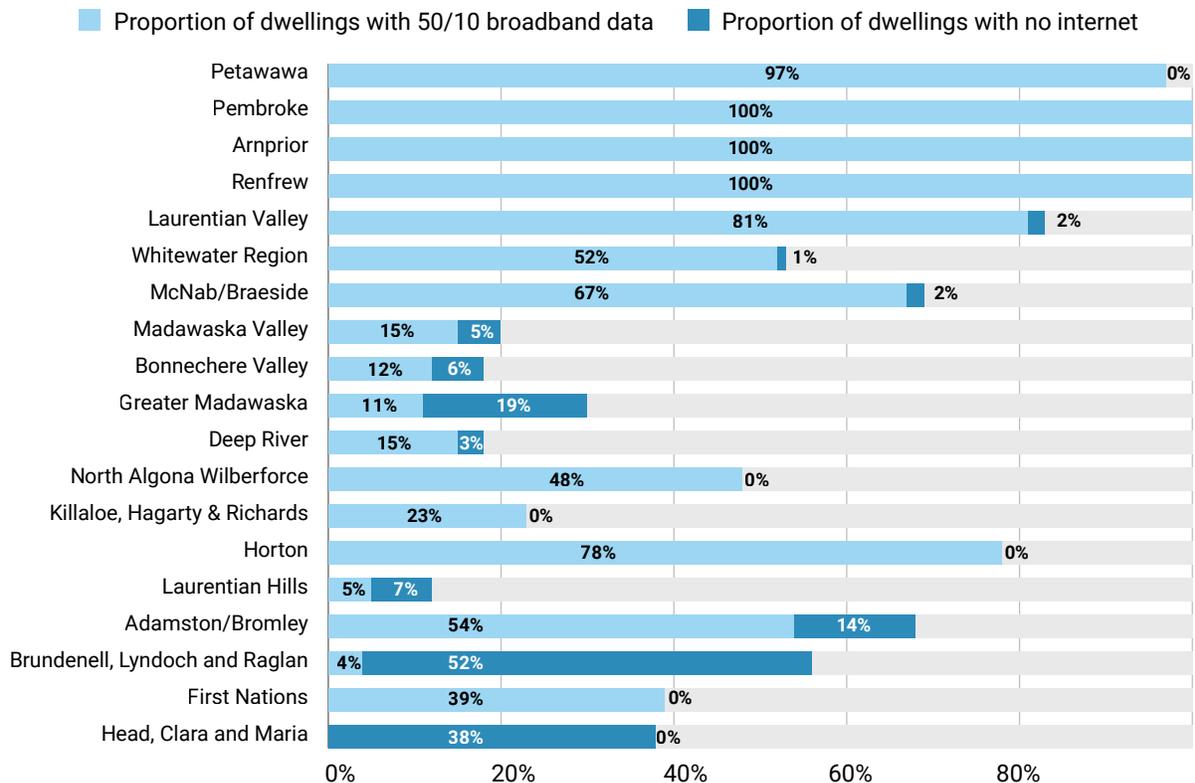




INTERNET

In 2024, 66% of dwellings Renfrew County had access to broadband internet with 50/10 Mbps. This is lower than the average of 84% in rural Ontario. 8 communities out of 19 have less than 25% of dwellings covered by broadband internet, and only 5 have more than 80% of dwellings covered by broadband.

PERCENTAGE OF DWELLINGS WITH BROADBAND DATA AND WITHOUT INTERNET



Note: Communities are ranked from the community with the highest number of dwellings to the community with the lowest amount of dwellings



HOUSING

CORE HOUSING NEED

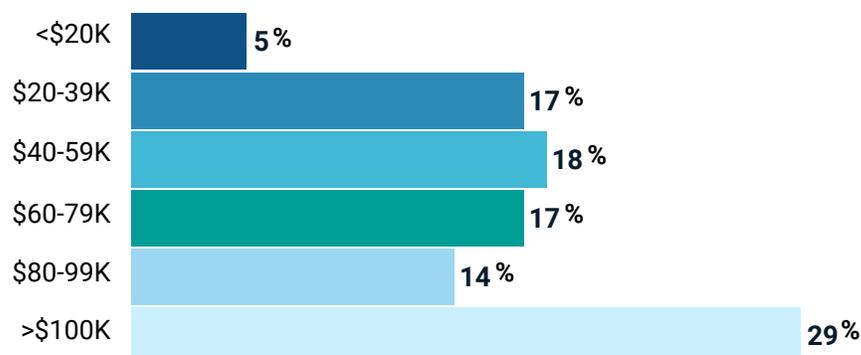
In 2021, 6% of households in Renfrew County were in core housing need, which is slightly lower than the rural Ontario average of 7%.

Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards	16%	Laurentian Hills	4%
Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan	15%	Horton	4%
Pembroke	11%	Deep River	4%
Arnprior	10%	Greater Madawaska	4%
Renfrew	7%	McNab/Braeside	4%
Bonnechere Valley	7%	Petawawa	2%
Madawaska Valley	6%	Head, Clara and Maria	No data
North Algona Wilberforce	6%	Admaston/Bromley	No data
Whitewater Region	5%	First Nations	No data
Laurentian Valley	4%	Rural Ontario	7%

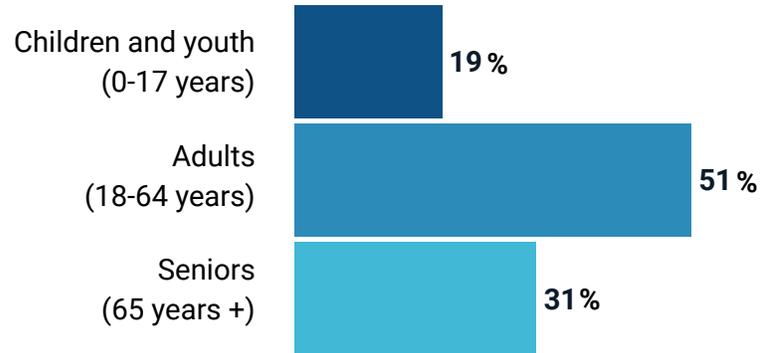
HOUSEHOLD INCOME

For Renfrew County the Income dashboard reports a median individual income of \$36,000, a median household income of \$71,500, and 10% of households in low income (source: 2021 Statistics Canada Census Profile). The two accompanying charts provide context on how income and low income are distributed locally: the after-tax household income distribution shows that 22% of households fall below \$40,000 (5% under \$20,000 and 17% at \$20,000–\$39,999), 35% are between \$40,000 and \$79,999 (18% at \$40,000–\$59,999 and 17% at \$60,000–\$79,999), 14% are in the \$80,000–\$99,999 range, and 29% are above \$100,000; meanwhile, among individuals identified as being in low income, adults aged 18–64 make up the largest share (51%), followed by seniors 65+ (31%) and children and youth 0–17 (19%).

HOUSEHOLD INCOME DISTRIBUTION AFTER TAXES



DISTRIBUTION OF LOW INCOME INDIVIDUALS BY AGE GROUP





HEALTH

NUMBER & TYPE OF HEALTH FACILITIES

Pembroke, Arnprior and Renfrew are the communities with the highest number of health facilities (see table). They are also the communities with the highest density.

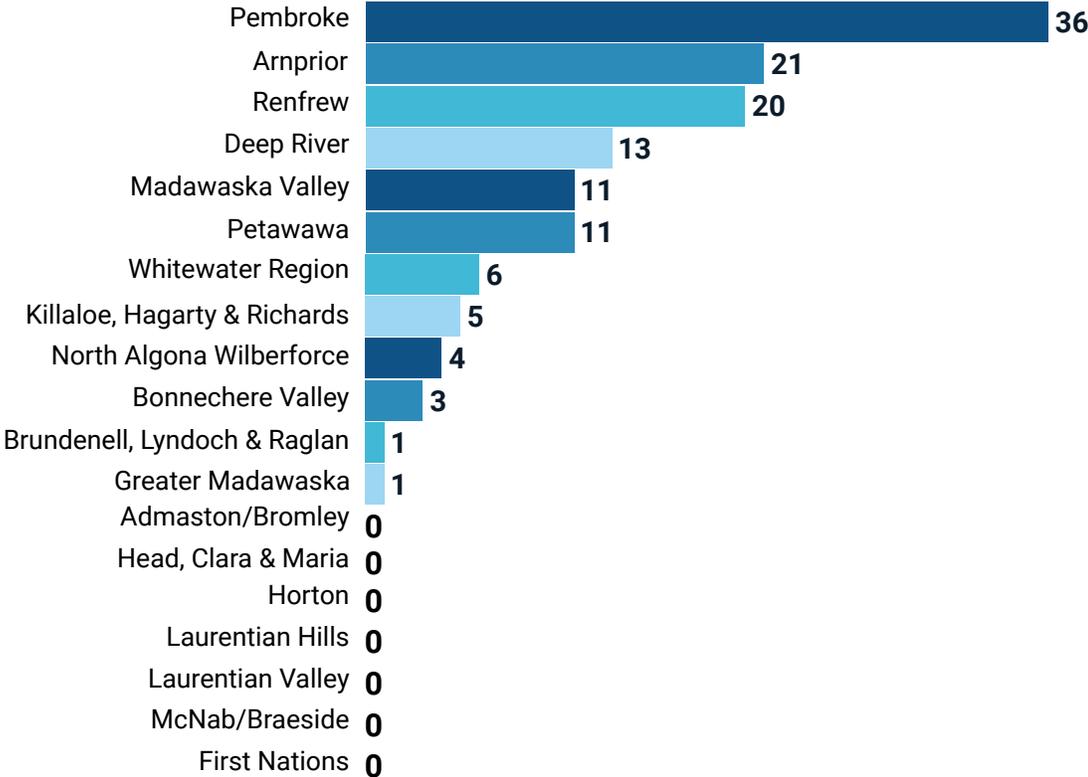
Deep River, Madawaska Valley and Petawawa also have over 10 health facilities, Petawawa being the most populated community in the county.

There are 132 health facilities across Renfrew County. Seven communities have no health facilities; however, most are located near communities with more than 10 facilities. Head, Clara and Maria are an exception, as they have no health facilities and are not adjacent to any community with a high number of facilities, including those in the neighboring Nipissing District.

Renfrew County has
132
health facilities



NUMBER OF HEALTH CARE FACILITIES (2023)



TYPES OF HEALTH FACILITIES IN RENFREW COUNTY

Below is a list of health facilities in Renfrew County. The County has four hospitals located in Arnprior, Deep River, Madawaska Valley, and Pembroke.

Health Facility	Number in Renfrew County
Pharmacy	41
Mental Health and Addiction Organization	26
Retirement Home	12
Community Support Services	10
Licensed Lab and Specimen Collection Centre Locations	10
Long-Term Care Home	9
Seniors Active Living Centre	9
Family Health Team	5
Hospital - Corporation	4
Independent Health Facility	2
Community Health Centre	1
Indigenous Primary Health Care Organization	1
Midwifery Clinic	1
Public Health Unit Office Locations	1
Hospital - Corporation	4

WAIT TIMES FOR LONG TERM CARE

Renfrew County's long-term care system consists of nine homes ranging in size from 14 to 180 licensed beds, with most operating as not-for-profit organizations. Wait lists vary widely, from 113 people at Valley Manor Nursing Home to 561 at Miramichi Lodge, reflecting significant demand pressures across the region. Smaller homes like Four Seasons Lodge and North Renfrew LTC Services also face notable wait lists relative to their limited bed capacity, while mid-sized homes such as Bonnechere Manor, Marianhill, and The Grove each support substantial resident populations with correspondingly high wait lists.

MEDIAN NUMBER OF DAYS WAITED TO MOVE INTO A LONG-TERM CARE HOME (2023/24)

LTC home / benchmark	Community / region	All (days)	Community (days)	Hospital (days)
Ontario (benchmark)	Ontario	121	200	72
Bonnechere Manor	Renfrew	139	197	60
Caressant Care Cobden	Whitewater Region	144	266	129
The Four Seasons Lodge	Deep River	NR	NR	NR
Arnprior & District Memorial Hospital – The Grove	Arnprior	82	413	39
Groves Park Lodge	Renfrew	382	569	48
Valley Manor Nursing Home	Barry's Bay	143	252	23
Marianhill Nursing Home	Pembroke	278	299	76
Miramichi Lodge	Pembroke	179	201	82
North Renfrew LTC Services Inc.	Deep River	146	LV	LV

NR = Facility not required to report **LV** = Number is too small to report

Placed from community = residents placed from assisted living residences, cluster care residences, group homes, private dwellings, retirement homes, and supportive housing.

Placed from hospital = residents placed from acute care hospitals (explicitly excludes placements from rehab, CCC, etc.).

All placements = includes residents placed from hospitals (acute, rehab, CCC, etc.) plus community-type settings.

20
23

 **38% INCREASE IN CALLS**



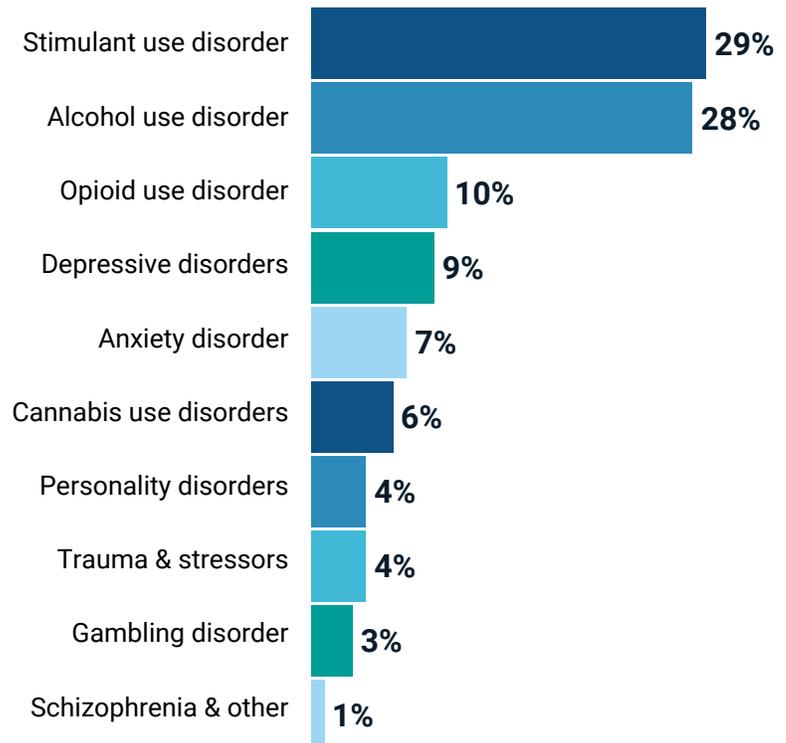
NUMBER OF CALLS FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES & REASONS FOR CALLING

ConnexOntario is a government agency that improves access to services for mental health and substance use. People may call [ConnexOntario](#) for themselves, or on behalf of someone else, such as a family member, friend, or patient.

In 2023, there was a large increase of calls with 38% increase and a total of 533 calls over the year. It represents the largest increase in calls over the last 10 years. The number of calls is increasing for every community – or stable - and is largely driven by the increase of calls in Pembroke and Renfrew.

In 2023, the most common reasons for calling ConnexOntario were alcohol use disorder and stimulant use disorder. These two factors drove the overall increase in calls for the year.

MOST COMMON REASONS FOR CALLING CONNEXONTARIO IN 2023



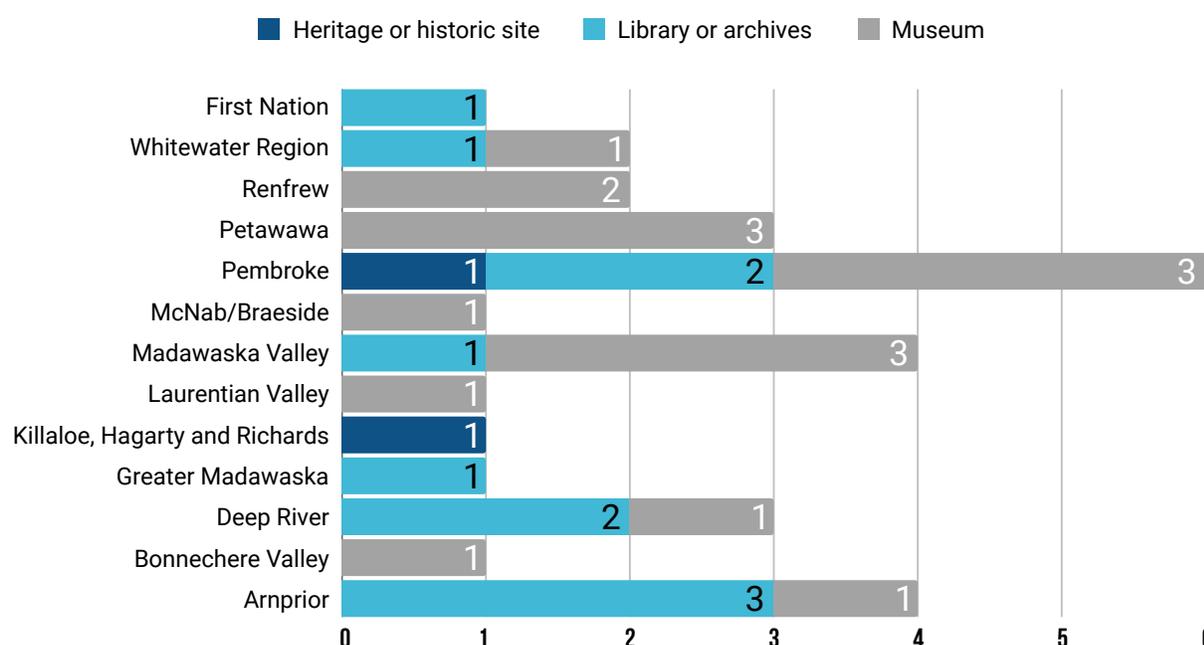


SOCIETY

NUMBER & TYPES OF ARTS & CULTURE FACILITIES

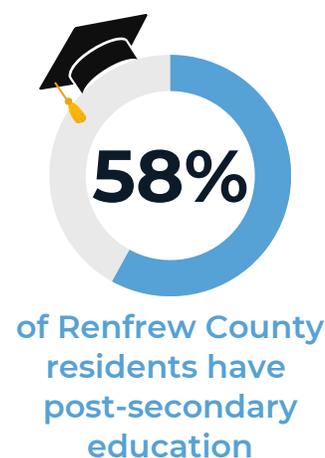
There is a total of 30 arts and cultural facilities in Renfrew County. Pembroke accounts for 6 of them, and Arnprior and Madawaska Valley each have 4.

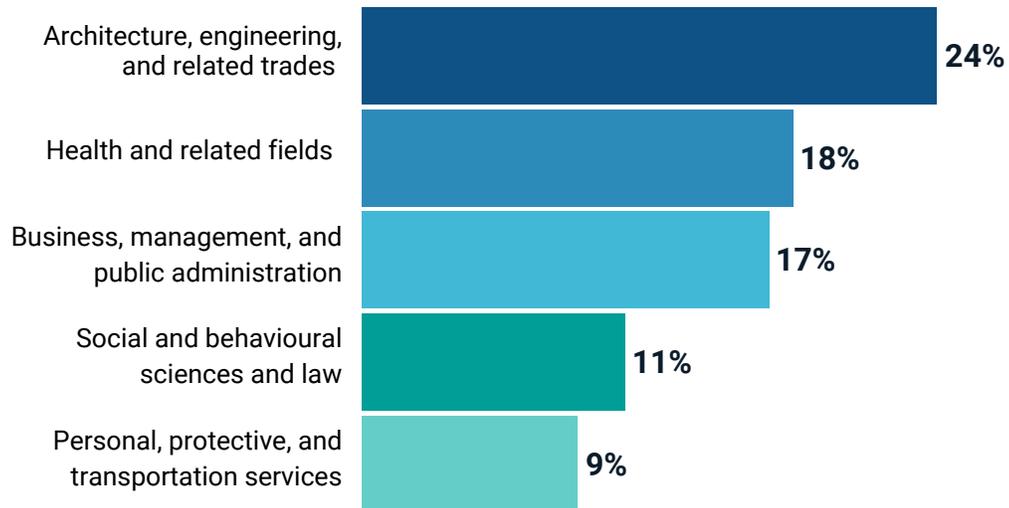
NUMBER AND TYPE OF ARTS AND CULTURE FACILITY IN EACH COMMUNITY



HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ACHIEVED

Using the 2021 Statistics Canada Census Profile for Renfrew County and focusing on adults aged 25 to 64, 58% had completed postsecondary education, and 89% had at least a high school diploma. The distribution of highest education for this age group shows that 32% held a college, CEGEP, or other non-university certificate or diploma, 32% reported high school as their highest credential, 17% had a bachelor's degree or higher, 8% held an apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma, 1% had a university certificate or diploma below the bachelor level, and 9% reported no certificate, diploma, or degree.



MAJOR FIELD OF POST-SECONDARY STUDY (RENFREW COUNTY, AGES 25-64)



ENVIRONMENT

ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

Ecological Footprint is the area needed to support the human consumption of ecosystem goods and services. It is 6.2 Gha/ capita in the Renfrew County, which is similar to the rural Ontario value of 6.3.

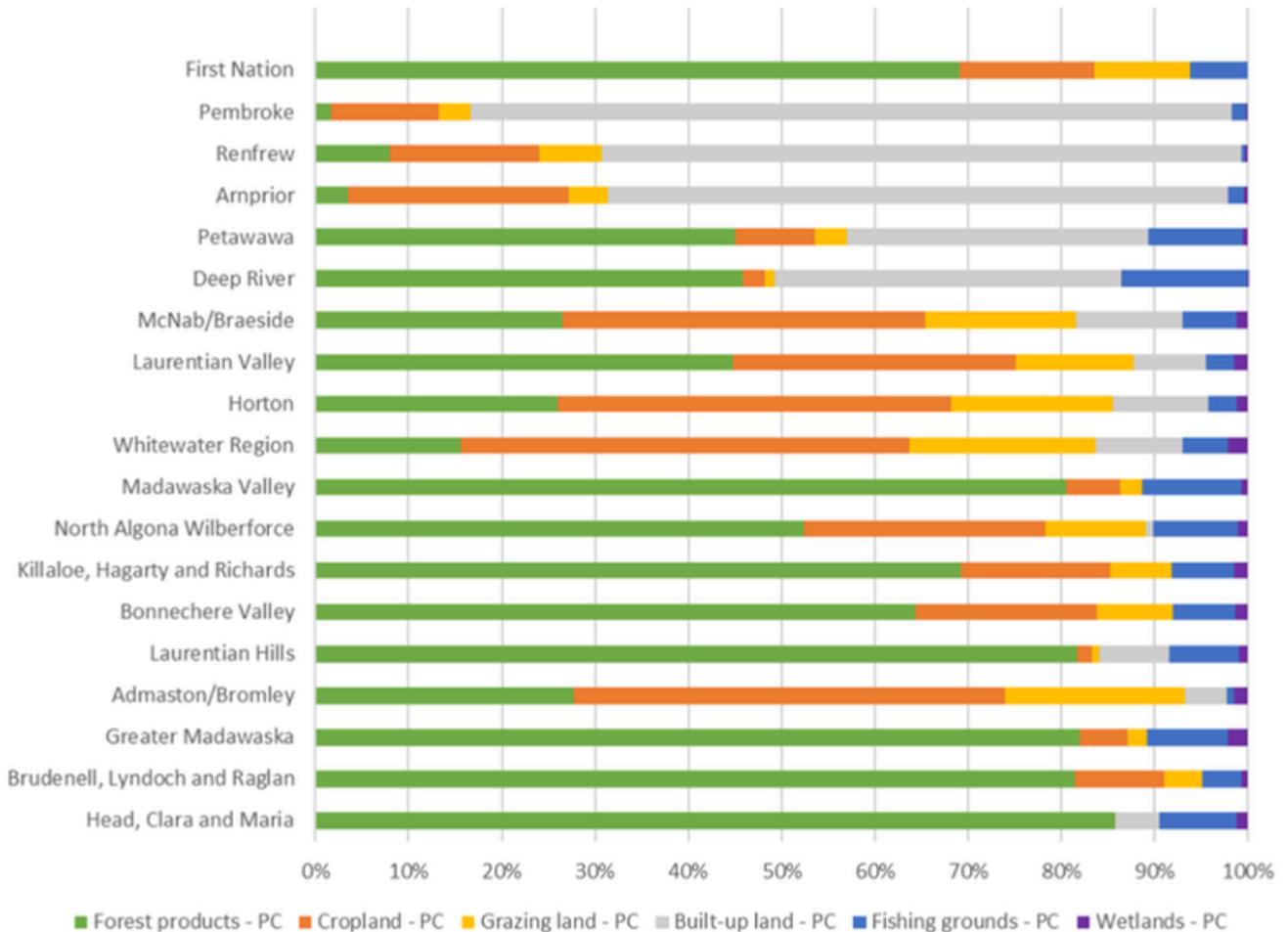
The components of the ecological footprint are distributed similarly across communities in Renfrew County and in rural Ontario. Ecological footprint is influenced by factors such as population size and growth, dwelling types and sizes, income, and commuting patterns. The carbon component accounts for about 65% of the ecological footprint, meaning it is largely driven by the consumption of carbon-intensive goods and services by public administrations, private organizations, and households. A more detailed analysis of consumption patterns would be needed to identify what contributes most to increasing the ecological footprint.

Community	Ecological footprint (global hectares per capita)
Horton	8.0
Greater Madawaska	7.5
McNab/Braeside	7.4
Arnprior	6.9
Petawawa	6.8
Laurentian Hills	6.6
North Algona Wilberforce	6.4
Whitewater Region	6.2
Bonnechere Valley	6.0
Deep River	5.9
Head, Clara and Maria	5.8
Admaston/Bromley	5.8
First Nation	5.6
Laurentian Valley	5.6
Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards	5.5
Pembroke	5.5
Renfrew	5.4
Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan	5.1
Madawaska Valley	5.0
Renfrew County	6.2
Rural Ontario	6.3

BIOCAPACITY

Biocapacity is the ecosystem supply of goods and services in the community. Intuitively, the most densely populated areas are the ones with the lowest biocapacity per capita.

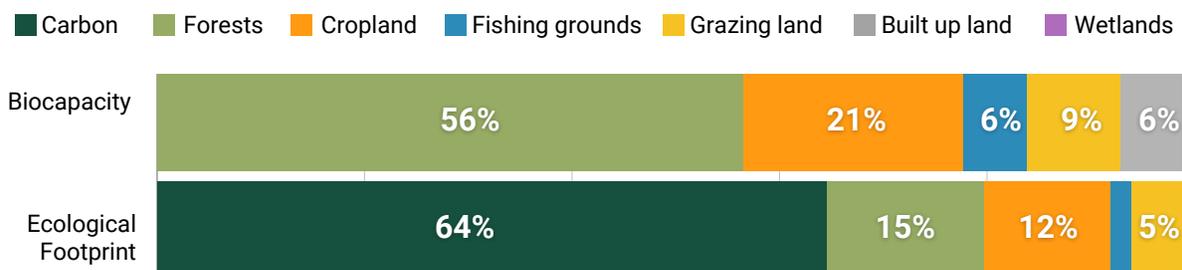
COMPONENTS OF BIOCAPACITY FOR RENFREW COUNTY'S COMMUNITIES



In more densely populated areas, which are typically communities with smaller land areas, built-up land occupies a larger share of biocapacity. Conversely, in less densely populated areas, built-up land represents only a small portion, while grazing land, cropland (where agriculture is practiced), or forest make up a much greater proportion.

Community	Biocapacity (Gha/capita)	Population density
Head, Clara and Maria	271.5	0
Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan	45.5	2
Greater Madawaska	35.2	3
Admaston/Bromley	27.5	6
Laurentian Hills	21.7	5
Bonnechere Valley	17.0	7
Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards	16.4	6
North Algona Wilberforce	15.7	8
Madawaska Valley	15.3	6
Whitewater Region	14.4	13
Horton	8.7	20
Laurentian Valley	8.0	18
McNab/Braeside	5.9	30
Deep River	1.9	
First Nation	1.7	
Petawawa	1.4	110
Arnprior	0.5	739
Renfrew	0.5	639
Pembroke	0.5	1003
Renfrew county	8.5	14.5
Rural Ontario	31.4	3

COMPONENTS OF ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT & BIOCAPACITY

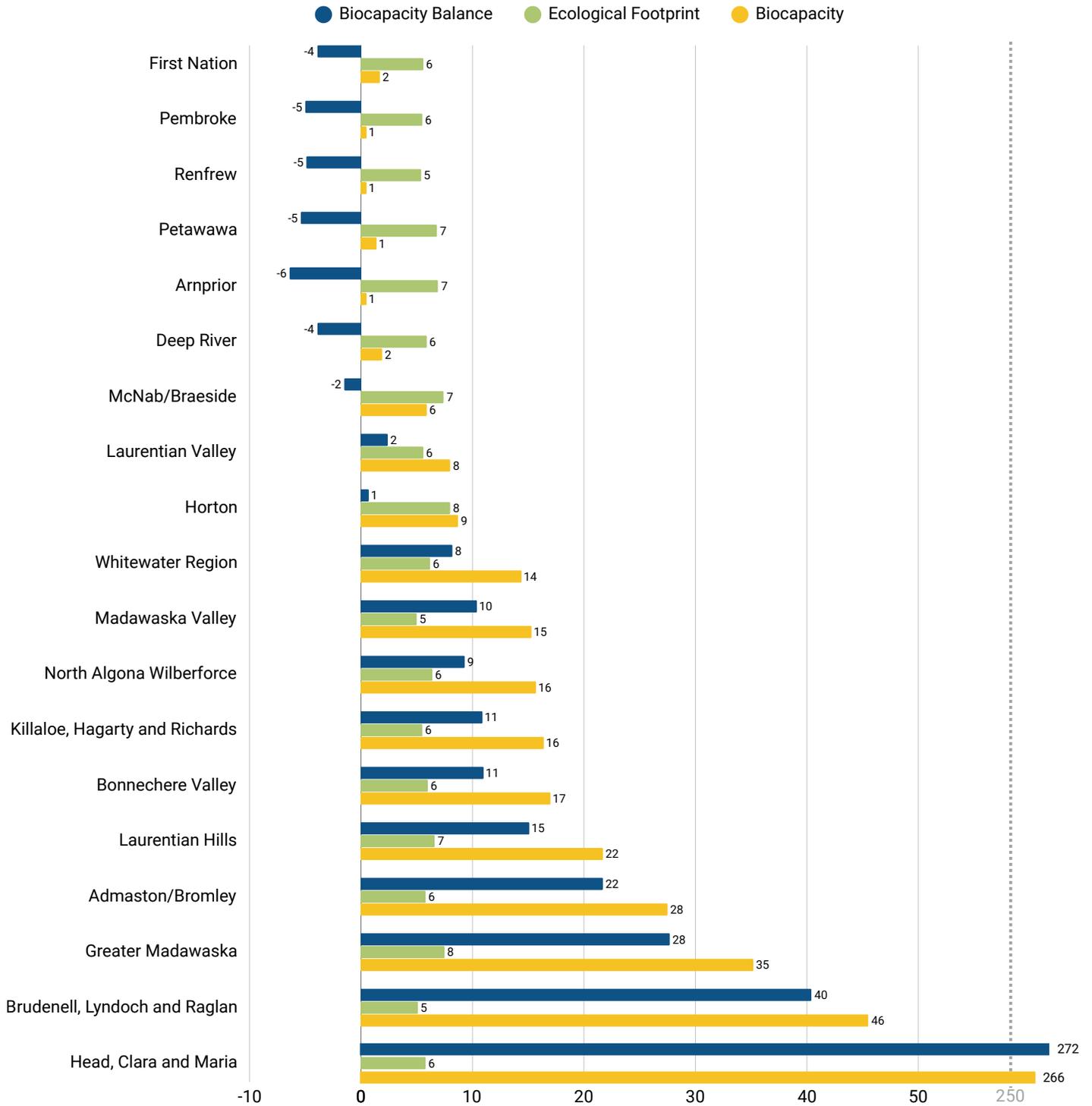


BIOCAPACITY BALANCE

Biocapacity balance is calculated as the difference between a community's biocapacity and its Ecological Footprint.

The biocapacity balance in Renfrew County is 2.3 Gha per capita, compared to 25.2 Gha per capita in rural Ontario. When considering only the communities classified as rural and excluding Arnprior, which is urban, the biocapacity balance increases to 3.6 Gha per capita.

Communities	Biocapacity balance (Gha/capita)	
Head, Clara and Maria	266	265.6
Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan	40	40.4
Greater Madawaska	28	27.7
Admaston/Bromley	22	21.7
Laurentian Hills	15	15.1
Bonnechere Valley	11	11.0
Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards	11	10.9
Madawaska Valley	10	10.4
North Algona Wilberforce	9	9.3
Whitewater Region	8	8.2
Laurentian Valley	2	2.4
Horton	1	0.7
McNab/Braeside	-2	-1.5
First Nation	-4	-3.9
Deep River	-4	-3.9
Renfrew	-5	-4.9
Pembroke	-5	-5.0
Petawawa	-5	-5.4
Arnprior	-6	-6.4



Please note the scale has been adjusted to account for biocapacity and biocapacity balance of the Head, Clara and Maria community.





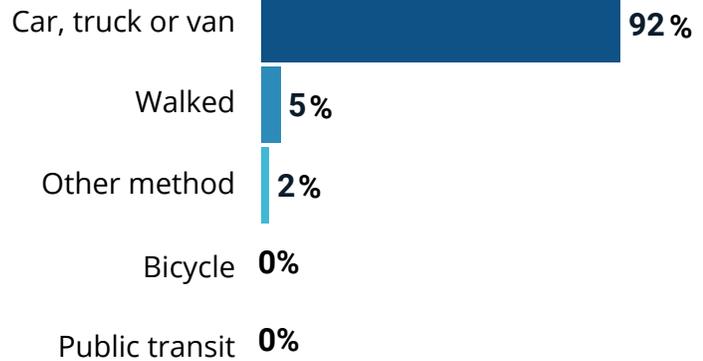
DURATION OF COMMUTE

In Renfrew County, 92% of residents commute by car, truck, or van, and all the communities of Renfrew more than 75% commute by vehicle. This is consistent with the overall value for rural Ontario.

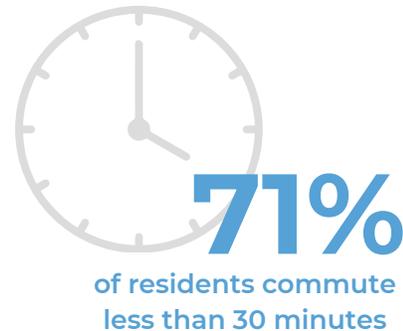
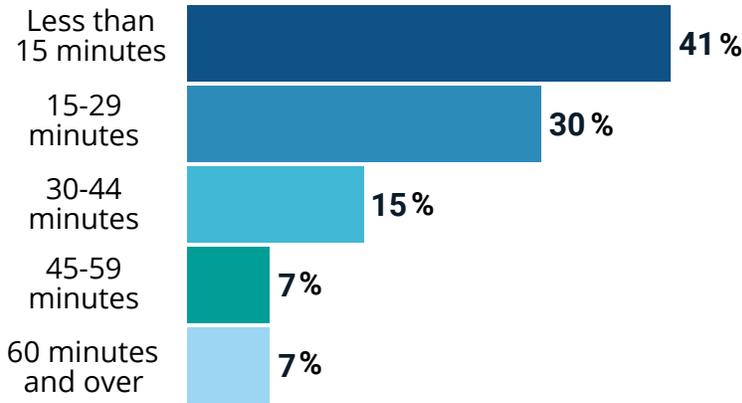
RENFREW COUNTY



MODE OF COMMUTING



DURATION OF COMMUTE



Most residents in Renfrew County commute less than 30 minutes to work. County-wide, 14% of residents have a long commute of over 45 minutes, which is similar to the rural Ontario average.

However, there are notable differences between communities. In less populated areas, more than 20% of residents have long commutes, including North Algona Wilberforce, Bonnechere Valley, Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan, Head, Clara and Maria, Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards, McNab/Braeside, and Greater Madawaska.

Arnprior also falls into this category, with 23% of residents commuting over 45 minutes. This is partly because only 50% of Arnprior residents commute locally, compared to 61% in urban Ontario.



CONTACT US

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Questions and Comments?

Contact the Rural Ontario Institute for more information.

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