

As we approach the end of the second year in this three year term of Council, I would like to take this opportunity to report to the public on some of the significant events of the first two years.

2004 was dominated by a series of visioning sessions held throughout the County known as “Conversations With Council”. These sessions captured a vision of the County in the year 2009 as seen by you, our constituents. This initiative significantly shaped our workload, influenced our decision making and ultimately defined this Council as accessible and receptive to our ratepayers.

The public and staff input were condensed into fourteen strategic elements, which were adopted by Council as reflecting the visions of the public and staff. We then had to decide what actions we would take to help realize the visions. It was recognized that much was already being done in some areas but many new initiatives and/or improved services were identified that could move us towards our community visions as articulated in the fourteen strategic elements.

It was also recognized that some actions would be easier to implement than others and that some needed further feasibility analysis. The actions which were identified were referred to the appropriate department for implementation or further development. Each Standing Committee reviews the status of these items at every meeting and the Chief Administrative Officer will be providing a semi-annual progress report to Council.

Many of the initiatives we undertook in 2004 and 2005 had their roots in what we heard from the public in the visioning sessions, such as:

- We improved service at the Wellington Branch Library through elevator/addition project.
- We undertook the development of the Willow Wing Expansion project at the HJ McFarland Home for the Aged for improved facilities and quality of life for Alzheimer’s patients.
- Local health services were prioritized through: 1) the creation of a Health Advisory Committee with representatives from the community, Council, doctors, nurses and Quinte Health Care (QHC) to act as a liaison with QHC; 2) lobbying the Province to address service and funding issues at QHC; and 3) supporting a community group working towards providing a full range of fitness and aquatic services for the community on a long term basis.

| COMMUNITY VISIONS FOR PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY – 2009 STRATEGIC ELEMENTS | |
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| Over-arching | |
| 1. | Our sense of community means we welcome newcomers and work to include people |
| 2. | Our municipal government process is open, inclusive, consistent and communicates |
| 3. | Environmental consciousness influences our decisions |
| 4. | The cost of living is affordable in the County and acknowledges the special needs of seniors and those on fixed incomes |
| 5. | Our natural environment is actively managed for safe water, preservation of natural beauty for all to enjoy and reduction of human impact |
| 6. | Our Architectural and Cultural Heritage is being preserved |
| Economic | |
| 7. | We have vibrant towns that reflect our rural and village character |
| 8. | Businesses/organizations enjoy a stable economy and provide solid jobs, especially for youth |
| 9. | Our agricultural industry is thriving, especially family farms |
| 10. | Tourists are an integral and value part of our economy, and are well served |
| 11. | We enjoy a strong arts & cultural community. |
| Services | |
| 12. | Local health services meet our needs, recognizing we have a significant seniors’ population |
| 13. | A good variety of social/recreational opportunities are available, especially for seniors and youth |
| 14. | Our transportation needs are well served and accessible to all |

- Furthering our focus on health and wellness and the importance of providing recreational opportunities for youth, we provided public lands for use by Prince Edward County Soccer Association.
- We established a Youth Advisory Committee to involve youth in the local government decision making process.
- Our Community Services Department was restructured and redefined under new name Recreation, Parks and Culture to better meet the needs of the community in these three important area.
- Through Picton Downtown Strategic Plan and working with property and business owners we are developing Design Guidelines to maintain architectural heritage of Main Street Picton and for future use in our other historic villages.
- We established a Municipal Cultural Plan which resulted establishment of Cultural Round Table to foster cultural growth for the community and economic development.
- We engaged extensive community involvement in the Environmental Assessment Review process to replace the water pollution control plant for the Town of Picton by: 1) establishing a Steering Committee composed of a Picton resident, Environmental Advisory Committee representation, staff and Councillors; 2) holding several public open houses and information sessions and; 3) exploring alternate approaches and concepts.

The obstacles we encountered in implementing some of the action plans were primarily lack of budget or staff resources and in some cases, such as the idea to televise Council meetings, were beyond our area of jurisdiction or control.

The full Visioning report, which includes the visions expressed and the detailed action plans can be found at any County office, public library or by clicking on the link below. Service Level Improvements for the year 2004 are also listed on the site.

We are grateful for the input of all those who have participated in the local government process through:

- Visioning Sessions
- Volunteering on our local boards and committees
- Attending Council and/or Committee meetings
- Visiting us at our Question and Answer sessions
- Writing or calling us with your questions, concerns and ideas

On behalf of Council I wish all of the citizens of the County, a safe and happy holiday season, and good health, peace and prosperity in the new year.

Leo P. Finnegan
 Mayor
 County of Prince Edward

Vision 2009
 Report
Conversations With Council