

# COUNTY COUNCIL Update

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The County of Simcoe Paramedic Services celebrated the grand opening of the new County of Simcoe Paramedic Station in Orillia. This location is key to improving 9-1-1 response times as Orillia and surrounding communities expand. This means improved emergency response for all area residents. The station is also large enough to support future growth, ensuring long-term value for residents.

## County's "AA" credit rating affirmed

S&P Global Ratings has affirmed the County of Simcoe's very strong AA long-term issuer credit rating for 2017.

This is the third year the

rating agency has affirmed a AA rating along with a stable outlook for the County of Simcoe based on its healthy liquidity, minimal debt burden, and sound

budgetary results. S&P Global Ratings also stated that a solid and stable economy and prudent financial management continue to underpin the rating with the

expectation that solid budgetary performance and minimal debt are likely to continue.

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### CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

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Gerry Marshall, Warden

Mark Aitken, Chief Administrative Officer

The County Clerk's Dept. maintains the official record for all County government proceedings. This publication is intended to identify highlights of Committee and Council meetings.



County of Simcoe Warden Gerry Marshall addresses the crowd during grand opening ceremonies of the new County of Simcoe Paramedic Station in Orillia.

# New station for Orillia

*Location is key to improving 9-1-1 response times as city and surrounding communities expand*

County of Simcoe Warden Gerry Marshall was joined by Orillia Mayor Steve Clarke and representatives from County of Simcoe Paramedic Services to celebrate the grand opening of the new County of Simcoe Paramedic Station in Orillia.

“This local investment in necessary healthcare will benefit residents of Orillia, Ramara, Oro-Medonte and other surrounding communities for decades to come,” said Warden Gerry Marshall. “The County’s investment in new Paramedic Services stations, including recent additions in Beeton and Alliston and ongoing builds in Collingwood and Barrie, demonstrates our strong commitment to ensuring that all our residents are served with the highest Paramedic Services care possible, with timely access to the health-care services.”

The County of Simcoe established a Paramedic Services long-term strategic facility plan aimed at providing efficient and responsive paramedic services now and into the future. This plan outlines the need to establish a paramedic response presence in various areas across the county to meet the needs of local residents and visitors.

This location is key to improving 9-1-1 response times as Orillia and surrounding communities expand. This means improved emergency response for all area residents. The station is also large enough to support future growth, ensuring long-term value for residents.

## Benefits and features:

- Close proximity to high call demand area, which will support response times to 9-1-1 calls
- Close proximity to Orillia Soldiers’ Memorial Hospital, which will support efficiencies in transport, offloading and vehicle preparation times
- 9,680 square foot station with eight bays, storage, locker room and paramedic work area
- Pneumatic air controlled doors provide speed efficiencies to support with lowering response times
- Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID) sensor system provides enhanced security with the flexibility of working with the entire fleet of vehicles. This is a unique system that was designed internally by maintenance staff
- Green initiatives include outdoor space for citizens to enjoy, controlled lighting system (interior and exterior) and high efficiency heating and cooling systems

# Health care injection

*County recognized for contributions to Stevenson Memorial*

Stevenson Memorial Hospital (Stevenson) recognized the County of Simcoe in January for its contributions to Stevenson through the Simcoe County Hospital Alliance. The County presented a cheque to the hospital for the final installment of a 10-year commitment.

The \$1.15 million funding over the last 10 years allowed the hospital to purchase a state-of-the-art CT Scanner in 2009. In 2016/17 alone, the scanner provided treatment to 5,900 patients. This important piece of equipment is helping the hospital meet the needs of a growing community, including South Simcoe and surrounding areas, thanks to the County’s support.

“The support that we receive from the County of Simcoe is absolutely critical to our hospital,” says Jody Levac, President and CEO, Stevenson. “We rely on funding from our County and the community to help with capital costs, such as much-needed equipment.”

Not only is the hospital meeting the increasing demands of its growing community, but Stevenson’s Emergency Department consistently ranks in the top five high performing hospitals in the province for wait times.

“County funding of our area hospitals is not a requirement, however our Council understands how important healthcare is to our residents and we therefore choose to invest in our area hospitals, their staff and ultimately the communities they serve,” said Warden Gerry Marshall. “As partners, we are very pleased to have supported important capital projects at Stevenson Memorial Hospital over the last 10 years, and we look forward to working closely with the hospital through our renewed 15-year funding commitment.”



## SKATING THROUGH HISTORY



The new skating trail at the Simcoe County Museum is a loop that travels through the Museum's heritage buildings and forest pathways. Admission includes admission to the Museum and galleries.

## Funding for well-being project

*Could help inform potential future initiatives at a County-wide level*

Council approved a funding contribution of up to \$60,000, payable to Information Orillia, through the Social Services Reserve, to help offset costs related to a Canadian Index of Well-Being Orillia/Northeast Project.

The Canadian Index of Well-Being (CIW) is a conceptual framework designed to effectively measure a community's quality of life/wellbeing. The CIW is managed by the Faculty of Applied Health Science at the University of Waterloo, and is implemented at the local level.

In the spring of 2017, based on local community planning, Information Orillia agreed to assume the lead role in guiding implementation of the CIW framework, relative to the City of Orillia and the Townships of

Rama, Ramara, Oro-Medonte, and Severn.

While findings from this targeted CIW cannot be more broadly applied (to other geographical populations), learnings derived from this CIW Project could help inform potential future CIW initiatives at a County-wide level.

The incentive for the development of the Canadian Index of Well-Being (CIW) began in 1999, when the Toronto based Atkinson Charitable Foundation (ACF) invited social researchers to join them in considering what it would take to create an effective tool, capable of measuring well-being of Canadian residents. It was broadly agreed that this would require a strong management structure, sustained funding,

and rigorous, comprehensive research in order to ensure tool validity and credible processes for implementation. As such, in the year 2000, the ACF initiated development of what would eventually become the CIW. In 2011, with the framework developed, the CIW project transferred from the ACF to the University of Waterloo (UW) Faculty of Applied Health Sciences.

Shepherded by the UW, related research, community outreach, and knowledge transfer activities continue to be further developed.

The CIW is composed of eight domains, each of which includes eight related indicators as the basis for measurement.

Each domain is precisely defined, as are processes for measurement.

## Museum welcomes *Canada: Day 1*

The Simcoe County Museum presents *Canada: Day 1*, a bilingual exhibition that explores the diverse first experiences and first impressions of immigrants to Canada, from Confederation to present day. The exhibit will be on display through April 15, 2018.

Through oral histories, archival images, original artworks, objects and your participation, *Canada: Day 1* thoughtfully explores newcomers' unique and shared personal experiences.

*Canada: Day 1* is a travelling exhibition produced by the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 as a legacy project of our nation's 150th anniversary.

## COUNTY CREDIT RATING

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"It's important for our residents to know the County takes tremendous pride in responsibly managing their tax dollars," said Warden Gerry Marshall. "Our robust financial management policies and strong operating and budgetary performance allows us to continue to make significant strategic investments in our services and initiatives, which strengthen our communities and contribute to the well-being of our residents."

The rating affirmation, released December 4, 2017, reflects S&P Global Ratings' expectations that, throughout the two-year forecast horizon, Simcoe County will hold its tax-supported debt below 30% of operating revenues and post sound budget results.

The stable outlook reflects S&P's expectations that, in the two-year outlook forecast horizon, Simcoe County will maintain large operating surpluses, helping it fund a significant portion of its capital program internally, without debt or material erosion in reserves. As a result, S&P expects the county's tax-supported debt burden to fall from its already low level, dipping below 10% of operating revenues by 2019. S&P also expects Simcoe County's free cash levels to remain fairly steady during the forecast period, reflecting continued prudent financial management practices.

## Emergency preparedness funds

The National Disaster Mitigation Program (NDMP) assists with the preparation of enhanced flood risk emergency preparedness plans.

The County was approved for \$100,000 in funding to complete a risk assessment project for an enhanced flood forecast warning system that has regard for changing climate conditions in jurisdictions that have considerable snow melt response in early spring.

This system will specifically map drainage areas to key County of Simcoe road bridges and culverts. Rating curves will be developed for each structure and the contributing watershed flow response will be calibrated with snow melt flood events from past records using two science based tools developed by Greenland Consulting Engineers. This system will be pilot tested on key watersheds with the intent to implement it County-wide in the future.

# Marshall returns as WOWC chair

## *Warden re-elected Chair of Wardens' Caucus*

County of Simcoe Warden Gerry Marshall has been re-elected as the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC) Chair during the organization's Annual General Meeting in Midhurst.

"I am honoured to have been re-elected to the position of Chair by my peers from across Southwestern Ontario and I look forward to continue to build on our goals in service to residents across Southwestern Ontario," said Warden Marshall.

Prior to his re-election, Warden Marshall served as 2017 Chair, and 2016 Vice Chair of the WOWC, and Chair of the Board of Directors of the Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology (SWIFT) Inc.

Throughout 2015, Warden Marshall worked closely with members of the WOWC to garner support for SWIFT from the private sector and other levels of government which culminated in a \$180 million funding commitment from the federal and provincial governments in July 2016.

## County secures cycling cash

The Ministry of Transportation has committed more than \$93 million to municipalities to construct commuter cycling infrastructure through the Ontario Municipal Commuter Cycling Program (OMCCP).

The County of Simcoe applied for and obtained \$1,602,601 in funding for six commuter cycling projects. Under the terms of the program, the Province will fund up to 80% of eligible project costs. The County has until December 31, 2020 to complete the projects.

Projects include: Snow Valley Road paved shoulders; Snow Valley Road (Contra-flow paved shoulder); Barrie Collingwood Railway Multiuse Trail (Stayner to New Lowell); Barrie

Collingwood Railway Multiuse Trail (New Lowell to Angus); Alcona – Civic Campus Link (County Road 21); and Midland – Penetanguishene Link (County Road 93).

The aim of the OMCCP is to encourage commuters to cycle to work through the provision of better cycling networks. OMCCP criteria requires projects to be located in areas of high population and employment, where improved cycling infrastructure is likely to have the greatest impact.

The OMCCP funding formula is based on the population of the municipality, the number of cycling commuters within that municipality and the total number of municipalities that apply for funding.