

Annual Report 2024



Kawartha Works
Community
Co-operative

2024 - Implementing Our Updated Strategic Plan

While 2023 was a constructive year of reviewing and updating the strategic plan, 2024 was an active year of implementation. For details please see the updated strategy as found outlined in the [2023 Annual Report](#).

Impact 32

The annual activities of town beautification and community events (Frost Fest (Feb), Welcome Back Summer (May), Canada Day, Midnight Madness (Aug), and Mingle & Jingle (Nov)) were successful once again.

Bobcaygeon bike rental, which had been interrupted by the swing bridge closure, continued to be delayed due to slow clarification by Trent-Severn about relocation of the bikes. Repairs were made to the bikes and locking racks with assistance from Environmental Action. This will aid in relaunch next Spring.

Youth Centre

The priority in KWCC's strategic review for the development of youth services in Fenelon Falls was also a priority for BGC Kawarthas (formerly Boys and Girls Club Lindsay). There has been eager community support to facilitate services in Fenelon. Collaborative planning with BGC through 2024, and approval of their application for CKL funding, resulted in a youth drop-in service that was ready to start in early 2025.

Fenelon Forward

In 2023 a Fenelon Forward group did a review of the local economic development experiences in Fenelon Falls, especially the Downtown Revitalization activities of 2015-2020. They concluded that a next stage—Downtown Revitalization 2.0—would be worthwhile. Approval of an



KWCC and BGC Kawarthas collaborated to launch youth services in Fenelon Falls.

OMAFRA RED grant in 2024, through the Chamber of Commerce with CKL partnering, is providing staff funding for a new analysis and planning for further town improvements.

The discussions also included other projects of importance to Fenelon Falls that need input and monitoring, including bridge repair, Baddow bypass environmental assessment, and second bridge planning.

Bikeshare

The bike rental operated by KWCC continued to be a popular activity, especially for people visiting Fenelon and wanting to get around town and/or enjoy the Victoria Rail Trail.

Vital Signs

Another priority in the updated KWCC strategic plan is community analysis of needs and opportunities, especially in the context of increasing population growth in Kawartha Lakes. This mutual interest with the Community Foundation of Kawartha Lakes (CFKL) has led to our participation in their Vital Signs project with CKL. It is a multi-year project which will quickly become a major joint undertaking in 2025.

Communications

The communications team has been developing the capacity and readiness in 2024 to support KWCC projects with effective messaging. This has already generated much more awareness and interest in our initiatives.



*Elise Muller,
Attunement One, at
Downtown Sculpture
Exhibition 2024*

Sculptures on Colborne Street in Fenelon Falls

The Fenelon Arts Committee of KWCC, which placed sculptures in the rain garden by Maryboro Lodge, initiated a new project in 2024 to have seasonal sculpture exhibits each year in the new planters on Colborne Street. A juried selection of five sculptures on display from May to October generated a lot of positive support, and a call has been issued for submissions to display in 2025.

Fenelon Seniors Play Park

Penni Holdham's initiative in obtaining a New Horizons grant through KWCC has enabled a creative effort to develop guidance materials, including teaching videos, for greater use of the exercise equipment in Lloyd Kelly park in Fenelon Falls.

CKL/Community Group Relationships

Early in 2024, Art Hornibrook and Jim Armstrong met with Councillors Mike Perry and Pat Warren about the issues of relationships between CKL and community groups. As we summarized for them:

“To put the overall picture in perspective, a great deal is being accomplished all the time through the relationships. CKL devotes significant resources to supporting community groups and events. There is a recognized mutual interest in the community benefits. Too often, however, it does not go smoothly; and possibilities are missed.”

The Councillors’ advice was to meet with the Mayor and Manager of Customer Service, and perhaps also the Economic Development department which has contacts with many of the groups. The meetings with Mayor Elmslie and Manager Steve Babcock were positive and Steve proposed initiating staff discussions towards action on some of the relationship issues. With his departure from CKL and increased activities on other projects, there has been little further activity on the relationship project. The KWCC board decided that the suggestion of a deputation to CKL Council about KWCC activities would be a good idea for some time in 2025.

Board of Directors

Here is the current Board of Directors:



Jim Armstrong, Chair - Jim Armstrong is President of Kawartha Works Community Co-operative and has dedicated his time to spearheading and improving the community infrastructure that enabled the creation of The Grove Theatre and other initiatives. Jim is retired from a career in health care management and consulting, developing and reorganizing services in hospitals and community clinics. He has been a community volunteer for many years with healthcare, recreation, cultural and social services.



Mike Barkwell (Treasurer) - Mike Barkwell is a long time volunteer in community activities and public affairs. He has extensive experience as a real estate agent in Fenelon Falls. Mike also has valuable management experience with Northern College, North Bay General Hospital, and the Workplace Safety & Insurance Board. Mike previously served three terms as the Vice-Chair of the Nipissing Board of Education.



Denise Benning, (Director) - Denise is an entrepreneur and owner of [The Subtle Shift](#), offering wellness sessions in her studio in the woods just outside of Bobcaygeon. A former manager of the Bobcaygeon Chamber of Commerce and a current member of Impact 32, Denise brings her passion for building community, her business experience, and 30 years of event management and marketing expertise to the Board. Fun fact: she competed in pairs figure skating in the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics!



Doug Hawe, (Communications) - Doug is a [local realtor](#), who has enjoyed connections with the Kawarthas his whole life. He is passionate about human sustainability and its role in supporting the well-being of communities. Doug brings valuable experience from a career focused on technology. His roles in marketing, communications, digital product development and design, and product management, forged skills in understanding people’s requirements, and translating insights into practical digital solutions.



Art Hornibrook (Director) - Since retirement from a career in aluminum manufacturing leadership in North America and Asia, Art Hornibrook served on the Ross Memorial Board, including Chair; as President of the Kawartha Cycling Club; and has participated in infrastructure discussions regarding active transportation in the City of Kawartha Lakes. Art believes in the potential for our area to leverage and enhance existing assets, enabling our community to be active and environmentally sound into the future.



Maureen Lytle (Director) - Maureen Lytle is a former General Manager of [Kawartha Settlers’ Village](#), a popular local tourist attraction in Bobcaygeon. She is a dedicated participant and supporter of community events and projects. Maureen is a long-term resident of the area and is committed to the growth of arts and culture in the region.



John McEachen, Secretary - John is a retired operations executive after a successful career in the financial services industry. He is now co-owner of [A Wee Tree Farm](#) located just outside Fenelon Falls. This family farm is being shaped with a unique blend of farm business and community activity. John brings his desire to contribute during this unique period of population growth and community change. His strong planning and operational skills are a welcome addition to the Board.



Carol Milroy (Director) - Carol has always focused on enriching experiences for people and their communities, creating safe and nurturing learning environments and opportunities that are equitable and accessible. She envisioned, created, and led the Lindsay Learning Centre initiative in the early 2000s and is currently active with the Fenelon Falls Museum, the Fenelon Falls Horticultural Society, Grannies for Grannies (Stephen Lewis Foundation), and Parents and Friends of Lesbians And Gays (PFLAG). Carol’s creativity, enthusiasm, caring, and advocacy for fair treatment of all children are a tremendous asset for KWCC.

To become a member, or receive KWCC newsletters, please send your email and contact information (optional: your particular area of interest) to info@kawarthacoop.ca



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