

PERTH COUNTY KITCHENS

Source: [The Stratford Beacon Herald](#)

Community Kitchen a Priority Project

Establishing a community kitchen in Milverton and retrofitting municipal buildings with solar energy collectors are among several projects Perth East will be pursuing as priorities.

Two other priorities Perth East council approved this week are a servicing study for industrial lands south of Milverton and improved street signage.

The projects are part of a major focus on economic development, said CAO Glenn Schwendinger, and will be funded 50% through the province's Rural Economic Development (RED) program.

Perth County obtained the funding assistance over three years in late 2008. A portion was allotted to each member municipality.

Schwendinger said in an interview the Perth East Recreation Complex kitchen is already approved as a community kitchen, but the plan is to make it a centre for cooking locally grown and produced foods.

The "community kitchen" concept brings together various community groups or families that can exchange ideas and skills and produce meals using fresh, local ingredients. "We have a facility ready to go with a banquet hall," said Schwendinger, referring to the centre in Milverton.

The township is working with the county economic development office on marketing and promoting the project.

Turning to the solar energy study, Schwendinger said it will look at all municipal buildings that have the potential for installation of solar collectors.

That includes all of the larger facilities -- fire halls, recreation centres and public works facilities -- that have open roof space oriented in the right direction.

The study will be done in co-operation with Countyside Energy Co-operatives, a local business.

The lands south of Milverton that will be the subject of the servicing plan are already designated industrial, Schwendinger said. A servicing plan will enable the township to have land ready much more quickly for interested businesses.

A net-metering study, public washrooms in Shakespeare and a Sebringville servicing study are among projects already completed with RED funding.

The Sebringville servicing study, a joint project with Perth South, looked at the feasibility of installing municipal water and sanitary sewer systems.

The community can't be expanded without those services.

Milverton beautification and facade improvement programs, a medical recruitment initiative and a first impressions/business retention and expansion project are all still underway.