



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024





## OUR VISION

Dryden is recognized as a vibrant, safe, healthy and inclusive community with a diverse economy, providing an exceptional quality of life.

## OUR MISSION

To deliver sustainable municipal services and infrastructure with courtesy, integrity, transparency, and fiscal responsibility.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

We would like to acknowledge we are located in the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe and Métis people of Treaty Three. The Anishinaabe are the original caretakers of this land and called this place Paawidigong, meaning place of the rapids which is now known as Dryden.

This land is important to the people of Migisi Sahgaigan (Eagle Lake First Nation), Waabigonii Zaaga'igan (Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation), as well as the Métis people of the area and the residents of Dryden.



## A Message From The Mayor

On behalf of Council, it is my pleasure to present the 2024 Annual Municipal Report for our city, Dryden. This report is not only to share information with our residents regarding the city operations but also to celebrate our collective accomplishments from the past year, as well as highlight some of our upcoming initiatives. The information you will find in this report all ties back to our Strategic Plan and Guiding Principles, which serve as our compass.

Our Mission is “to deliver sustainable municipal services and infrastructure with courtesy, integrity, transparency and fiscal responsibility.” In reviewing our past activities, I take pride in the efforts and achievements that our employees have accomplished to work towards fulfilling our Mission in 2024. I believe the community has been well served by our dedicated employees.

Every new year brings its own set of challenges, and as we look to 2025, I am confident that as we work together in a spirit of collaboration, we have the talent, dedication and experience to thrive and move our city forward in a sustainable manner and enjoy an exceptional quality of life together.

## A Message From The CAO

As we reflect on the past year, I’m filled with a deep sense of pride in what our municipal team has accomplished together. 2024 was a year of growth, collaboration, and quiet determination — the kind that often happens behind the scenes but makes a big difference in the life of a community.

One of the most visible signs of our progress has been the transformation of our recreation centre. The majority of this major upgrade was completed in 2024, adding much needed capacity and reliability. We also made significant investments in our road network, improving the safety of major corridors across the municipality. At the same time, the community saw substantial growth in housing development — a sign that people are choosing this place as their home and future.

Throughout 2024, one constant has been the strength of our municipal workforce. It’s not just about what we do — it’s how we do it. This year, we saw a reduction in employee safety incidents, and that speaks volumes about our collective commitment to looking out for one another. We know there’s still work to do, and we’re in it together.

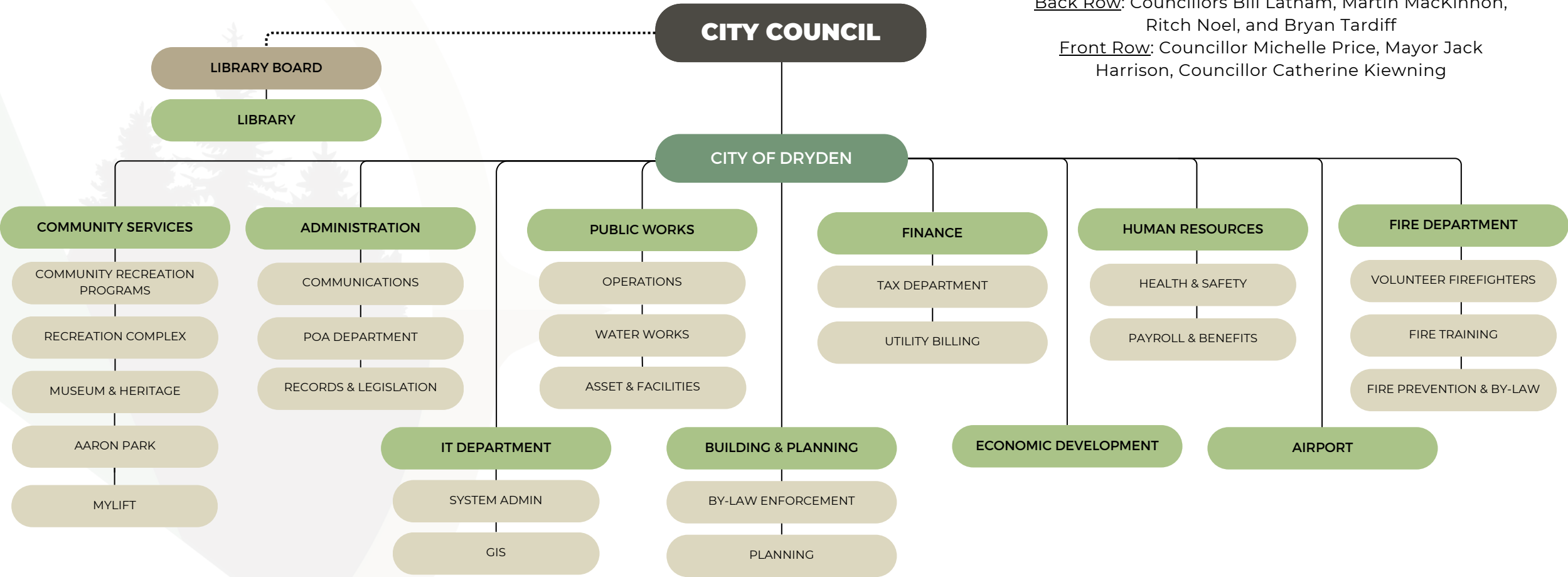
In spite of the uncertainties ahead, I remain optimistic. This community is made of resilient, forward-thinking people — and our team is no different. We’ll carry the momentum of 2024 into the new year, with a renewed focus on service, safety, and collaboration.

Thank you to every municipal employee for the role you play in building a stronger, safer, and more vibrant community. Let’s keep going — together.

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Back Row: Councillors Bill Latham, Martin MacKinnon, Ritch Noel, and Bryan Tardiff  
Front Row: Councillor Michelle Price, Mayor Jack Harrison, Councillor Catherine Kiewning







## COMMUNITY SAFETY & WELLBEING

### Guiding Principle: Safety

- Actions and planning place people and community safety at the centre of all decisions
- Safe, shared use of community spaces is promoted as an element of quality of life

## 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUPPORTING COMMUNITY SAFETY & WELLBEING

- Municipal workforce reduced the City's safety Recordable Incident Rate by 102.3% from the previous year.
- Household Hazardous Waste Day held by Public Works hosted 400 vehicles utilizing the opportunity to safely dispose of unwanted material.
- Dryden Water and Wastewater Treatment Plants had no major non-compliance occurrences and no sewage by-pass events in 2024, with 100% of the water treatment sampling meeting the Ontario Drinking Water Standards.
- Dryden Fire Service saw an increase in their firefighter roster across both halls, and had a total of 257 calls for service. Fire team members logged 4,304 hours of emergency response and completed 4,394 hours of training!
- City by-law enforcement addressed 486 occurrences, spanning property standards, parking infractions and animal control.
- The Public Works department completed two major highway rehabilitation projects and many smaller transportation network repairs, thereby improving our road safety.





## COMMUNITY DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

### Guiding Principle: Inclusion

- Community leadership honours, welcomes, and accepts all people, hearing their diverse voices and working to strengthen cultural relationships and building community inclusiveness
- Encompasses efforts to ensure that programs and services are accessible to all
- Engagement and communication efforts reflect diverse community needs

## 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUPPORTING COMMUNITY DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

- The City began the process of hiring a local artist to transform the tree trunks in Cooper Park into a public art installation, taking into consideration and implementing cultural representation to the design process.
- A star blanket was gifted to The City of Dryden on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, by Chief Clayton Wetelainen of Waabigonii Zaaga'igan Anishinaabeg (Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation) at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kaniigan Shkamowaat Shagaswayiitiwuk (Leadership Meeting where Tobacco is Exchanged).
- The late Roy Napish Sr was awarded the Ogimaapiness (Leonard Sky) "Building Bridges" Award through The Working Circle at the Dryden High School Pow Wow.
- The Dryden & District Museum hosted "Indigenous Ingenuity", an exhibit developed by Science North, and collaborated with Community Living on an exhibit which urged viewers to understand who they are and what they do for clients in our area. The exhibit displayed artwork completed by Community Living clients to encourage an understanding for the varying abilities in the region.
- Council amended the Museum By Law to expand spatial requirements for Dryden & District Museum Advisory Board Members – previously, board members had to live within city limits, which restricted community members living in the surrounding areas and Waabigonii Zaaga'igan (WLON) and Migisi Sahgaigan (ELFN) from being represented.
- City of Dryden Community Services piloted a new Summer Outdoor Program for youth. Its success has the program coming back for Summer 2025. Community Services also focused on increased drop in program opportunities such as indoor pickleball, indoor basketball, floor hockey, etc with great success. The department also hosted the National Indigenous Peoples Day Pow Wow on June 21 and held the 2024 Canada Day celebrations.
- All City permanent employees targeted to be trained in Cultural Awareness through the Dryden Native Friendship Centre's Walk A Mile Program.





## **ECONOMIC & INVESTMENT DIVERSITY**

### **Guiding Principle: Regional Leadership**

- Reflects Dryden’s focus on being the regional hub
- Commitment to innovation and knowledge-sharing
- Build and maintain effective local and regional partnerships

## **2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUPPORTING ECONOMIC & INVESTMENT DIVERSITY**

- The City assumed operations of the Municipal Golf Course with over 10,000 rounds of golf played in the 2024 season.
- The Dryden Recreation Complex hosted the 2024 Lil’ Bands Youth Indigenous Hockey Tournament (34 teams) in January and hosted the Northern Bands Adult Hockey Tournament (36 teams) in March.
- The Building Department issued 114 building permits with a construction value of \$20,992,373.00, with all issuances meeting legislated timelines.
- The Planning Department conducted three zoning amendments, six site plan control applications, 13 minor variance applications, and three consent applications with all review and approvals meeting legislated timelines.
- The City of Dryden saw 63 new residential units created, with funding applications submitted to extend services to open up more potential housing opportunities.
- The Trailblazer Tagged Fish Contest increased the amount of prize fish to \$50,000.
- With strategic support from the City’s leadership, Steenhof Mining Services Inc. announced the opening of their head office in Dryden.
- The municipal accommodation tax (MAT) funds rose by 10% and funded 21 projects in the area.



## COMMUNICATIONS & OUR PEOPLE



### Guiding Principle: Community Pride

- Civic engagement informs policy and planning through interactions with municipal leadership
- Volunteerism and community leadership is present

## 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUPPORTING COMMUNICATIONS & OUR PEOPLE

- Water Works & Wastewater Treatment facilities hosted classroom tours of the facilities, educating youth on distribution, collection, and treatment processes.
- Dryden & District Museum developed and hosted Air Ontario: Incident, Response, Impact exhibit identifying a critical piece in the history of Dryden and the nation and announced their intent to develop a dedicated memorial monument.
- The Dryden & District Museum digitized copies of the Dryden Observer (prior to the 1930s). They are available for the public to view at the Museum or Dryden Public Library.
- The City published and distributed the 4th edition of Trailblazer Magazine, a visitor guide that showcases all that Dryden and the surrounding area have to offer.
- The City's continued focus on increasing communications through online platforms saw website traffic rise 8%, and social media visits were up 139% from the previous year.
- The Mayor hosted tours of City Hall for classes of local students, and municipal leadership continued to work with the Dryden High School and Confederation College, through their co-operative programs, to create awareness of municipal career opportunities.
- A significant refresh of City banners was completed across the community.



# INFRASTRUCTURE

## Guiding Principle: Community Pride

- Well-maintained properties, assets and infrastructure are appealing to residents and visitors

## 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE

- Two major Connecting Links Highway projects were granted \$5.1 million in funding. The completed projects consisted of asphalt pulverizing, some curb rehabilitation, drainage improvements, crossfall improvements and new pavement:
  - Highway #17 - Underpass to West Limit
  - Highway #594 – 1.5KM on Gordon Road
- A large number of road segments were repaved, including rehabilitation of curbs and sidewalks. Some notable projects were:
  - Mary Avenue - Wice Road to Second Street
  - Princess Street – Kirkpatrick Avenue to Van Horne Avenue
- Van Horne Landing Dock repairs funded by Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC).
- Trail improvements and upgrades, funded by NOHFC, included:
  - Benches installed at Van Horne Landing
  - Shade Structure at Van Horne Landing with additional benches, seating furniture, and trees along River Walkway
  - Brick repairs on Duke Street River Promenade
  - New wayfinding signage along the river walkway from Duke Street to Van Horne Landing
- Dryden Cemetery improvements including paving, a new columbarium, and the generous donation of a memorial wall.
- The Dryden Recreation Complex's new dressing rooms were opened for use with the majority of the arena expansion completed.
- Significant investment in the Water & Sanitary Sewer infrastructure totaling \$1.6 million was completed.





## ***FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY***

### **Guiding Principle: Quality of Life**

- Maintain alignment with community values and priorities
- Ensure that all decisions consider how quality of life will be impacted or enhanced
- Champion environmental stewardship, protecting our natural beauty and our access to nature

## **2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUPPORTING FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY**

- The City ended the 2024 year with an operating budget surplus while maintaining targeted service levels.
- Community Services staff significantly increased recreation programming and participation, resulting in revenue growth.
- Dryden Regional Airport implemented operational changes, resulting in a much improved fiscally sustainable operating environment.
- Public Works implemented a Roll-Off Truck and associated roll-off attachments which has led to reduced costs across the organization (solid waste pickup), reduced fleet costs, and increased efficiencies within Public Works operations.
- Grants and donations the City received in 2024:
  - CMOG – Community Museum Operating Grant \$20,201
  - Moffat Fund – Summer Youth Programming and Museum Exhibits
  - NOHFC Internship Program - Cultural Heritage Intern, \$35,000
  - NOHFC Community Enhancement Program – Rural Enhancement stream-\$239,216 for the Dryden Recreation Complex towards retrofitting old and inefficient mechanical components including: replacing main pool pump, furnace upgrades, replacing arena brine pump & header, canopy installation over the exit doors, replacing broken solar panels, and arena flooring replacement.
- Received \$212,423 for policing cost relief from the province for 2024.
- The City of Dryden executed a Significant Neighbouring Community Funding Agreement for the 2024 Learn More Program with the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) for 2023 that provided approximately \$1.2 Million in funding.
- Received \$150,000 under the Community Well-being Reserve Fund.



# YOUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK

The average household in Dryden contributed \$2,815 in property taxes to municipal services in 2024

Your tax dollars go a long way in providing the services our community relies on



## \$618 Community Services

My Lift Transit \$5  
Child Care \$15  
Public Health \$55  
Social Assistance \$18  
Social Housing \$70  
Home for the Aged \$116  
Recreation Administration \$49  
Outdoor Facilities \$8  
Museum \$14  
Library \$86  
Cemetery \$13  
Arena \$102  
Pool & Fitness Centre \$67



## \$406 Infrastructure & Engineering

Public Works \$138  
Fleet Management (-\$23)  
Roads \$297  
Storm Sewer \$44  
Waste Management (-\$80)  
Recycling (-\$19)  
Parks \$56  
Facilities Management (-\$7)



## \$20 City Council



## -\$47 Development Services

Building Inspection \$22  
Planning & Development \$5  
Community Development \$26  
Special Projects (-\$100)



## \$813 Police & Enforcement Services

Police - Uniformed \$818  
Police - Civilian \$1  
Court Security (-\$19)  
School Safety Guards \$5  
Pet Control \$0  
Parking Control \$8



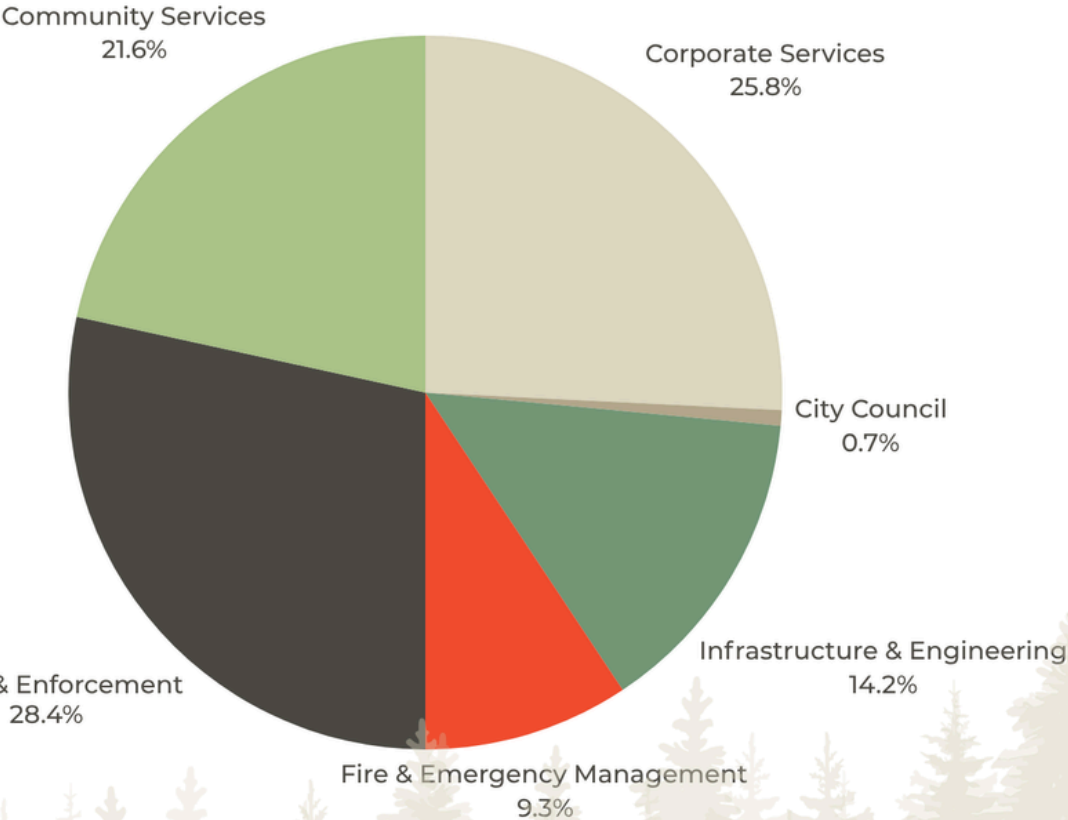
## \$267 Fire & Emergency Management

Fire Services \$149  
Emergency Management \$3  
Health & Safety \$16  
Land Ambulance \$99



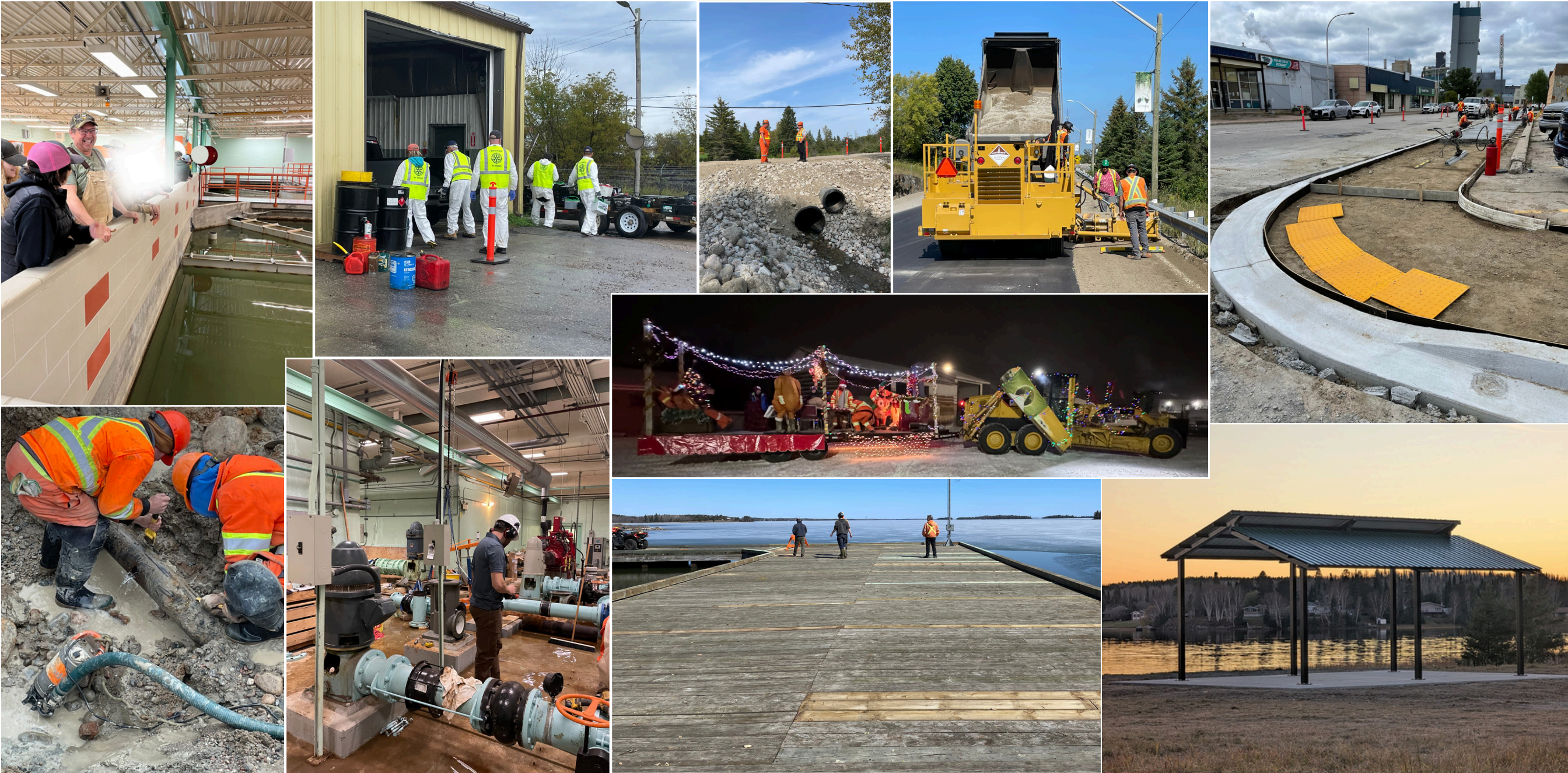
## \$738 Corporate Services

Administration \$85  
Human Resources \$59  
Finance \$467  
IT \$154  
Provincial Offences (-\$27)





# 2024 ENHANCEMENTS AT A GLANCE





# LOOKING FORWARD 2025 >>>

- Four fully accessible dressing rooms and a second level community multiuse space (funding from the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program) were completed for public use in early 2025.
- The Comprehensive Zoning By-law review was completed and adopted in early 2025.
- Significant financial relief for policing costs received from the province for 2025 in the amount of \$1.26 million.
- The City has received funding to schedule work this summer to extend City services down Van Horne Avenue from Wabigoon Drive to Van Horne Landing. This will be the beginning of the South Van Horne Housing Enabling Project.
- Budgeted capital investment for City infrastructure totaling \$8.14 million.
- Dryden Signature Trail improvements to be continued, with the installation of new wayfinding signage from Duke Street Dock along the river and all the way to Van Horne Landing.
- Trailblazer Tagged Fish Contest on Wabigoon Lake will rise to \$100,000 of tagged fish to be caught.
- Continued improvements to the Sandy Beach Golf Course and Clubhouse are in the works.
- An investment attraction campaign is being developed and will be launched in 2025.
- Significant development will begin in Dryden in both the residential and commercial sectors.
- Development will begin on a new City website which is scheduled to be launched in Fall 2025.



# BLAZE YOUR

# TRAIL

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**DRYDEN**

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