

2023

ANNUAL REPORT

Dignity, Respect
& Quality of Life



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD

Message from the Chair

On behalf of The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board, I am delighted to present the 2023 Annual Report.

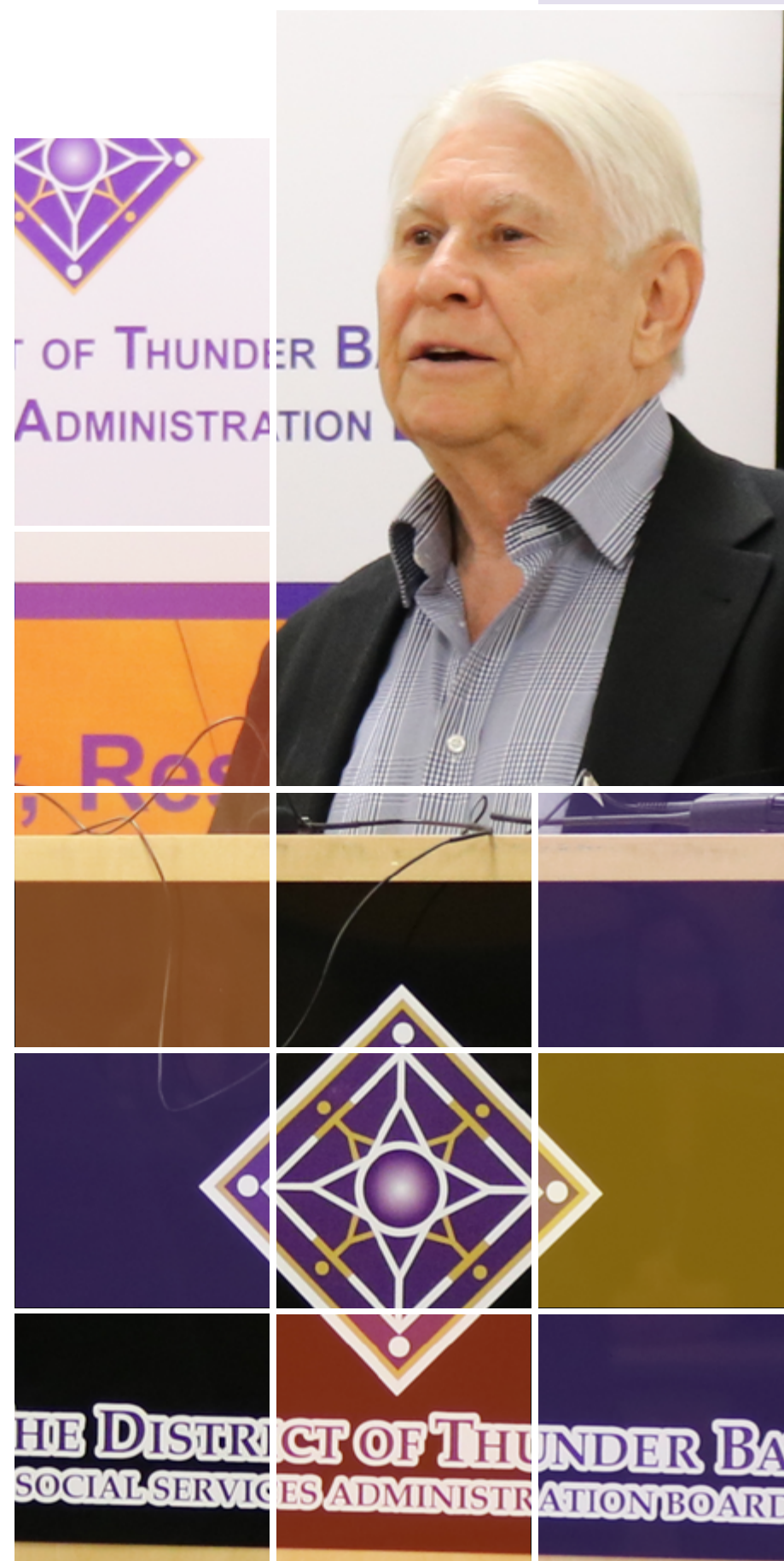
This annual report stands as a testament to the combined achievements of our Board and Administration, showcasing the impactful outcomes of our knowledge-driven efforts and unwavering advocacy for the people we serve.

- Acknowledging years of clear Board advocacy and results-driven work by Administration, TBDSSAB's Homelessness Prevention Programs funding nearly tripled in 2023.
- The TBDSSAB team was recognized with an Ontario Municipal Social Services Association Local Municipal Champion award for community resource centers and technology hubs in housing properties, exemplifying community collaboration and streamlined service integration.

My time as Chair has been an immensely enjoyable and educational experience. I extend my gratitude to my fellow Board members, our dedicated team, valued partners, and supportive community for their integral role in making 2023 a success.

Together, we continue to shape a brighter future. Thank you for your trust and collaboration.

Ken Boshcoff
Chair, 2023



Message from the CAO

Reflecting on 2023, I'm proud to see the accomplishments of the TBDSSAB team summarized in this year's Annual Report.

My thanks go to the team for your diligence, resilience, and willingness to show up for the people we serve. The year brought us new challenges, opportunities, and different perspectives that we have navigated together.

- In Housing and Homelessness programs, we used the significant increase in Homelessness Prevention Program funding toward expanding outreach and shelter services, collaborating with community partners, and adding new transitional housing spaces.
- The Social Assistance Programs team has demonstrated their resilience in navigating the ongoing province-wide modernization process, a journey that will continue into the year ahead.
- Child Care and Early Years programs continued to steer operators through the shortage of educators and the resulting impact on access to child care spaces in our system. New partnerships and a service system plan was approved in 2023 that will set our child care system up for long term success.
- Recognizing the shortage of Early Childhood Educators in our District, we announced the Fast Track ECE program with Confederation College in June.
- Our Intake and Eligibility team saw an increase to outreach activities throughout the district, including the expansion of our Transitional Outreach and Support Workers team to better support municipalities outside the city of Thunder Bay.
- And last but not least, my thanks goes to the Corporate Services, CAO Office, and Human Resources teams for supporting the organization, our programs, and our Board and keeping us operational through thick and thin.

TBDSSAB concluded our 2020-2023 strategic plan with a 93% completion rate by year-end. Thank you to my team and the Board for your role in achieving the majority of our goals amidst significant systems-level change and the challenges posed by a global pandemic. Our organization will continue to build on the accomplishments from previous years with the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan.

Looking ahead to all that is in store for us in 2024 and beyond, TBDSSAB remains dedicated to working collaboratively with stakeholders to address community needs. Thank you all for your ongoing support.

Bill Bradica
Chief Administrative Officer

Contents:

About Us	3
Our Board	5
Our Programs	7
Our Footprint	13
Financial Position	14

About Us

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) supports people to improve their lives and become self-sufficient. We do this as the service system manager for vital, quality social services needed by individuals and families living in the District of Thunder Bay—including child care and early years, community housing, homelessness prevention programs—and through the delivery of Ontario Works.

Mission

TBDSSAB delivers provincially mandated services on behalf of the citizens of the District of Thunder Bay.

Vision

TBDSSAB provides quality services within the context of a commitment to social justice and recognition of people's potential to achieve self-sufficiency.

Values

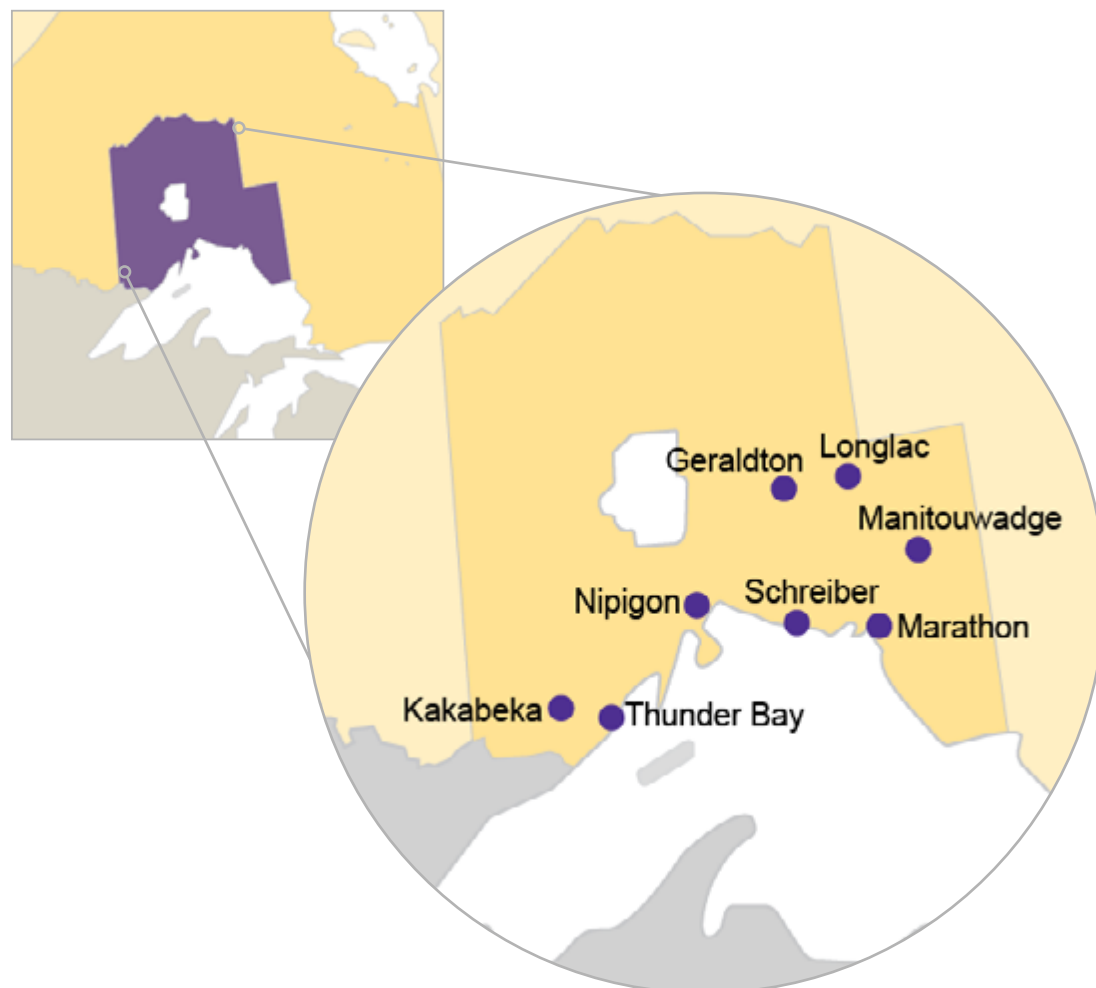
At TBDSSAB, we:

- Respect
- Accept
- Collaborate
- Understand
- Are Empathetic
- Have Integrity
- Promote Wellness

Service Area

TBDSSAB currently delivers services to people living in 15 municipalities and Territory Without Municipal Organization within the District of Thunder Bay.

There are eight TBDSSAB offices across the District.



TBDSSAB employs 170 people within our Corporate Services, Integrated Social Services, and CAO Office divisions.

Our interdisciplinary team includes staff experienced in: social assistance, child care and early years, property management, maintenance, community housing, infrastructure, research, communications, information services, finance, human resources, and administration.

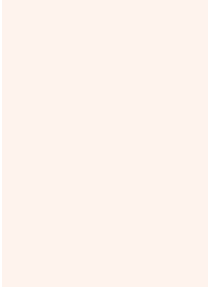
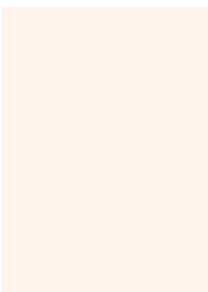
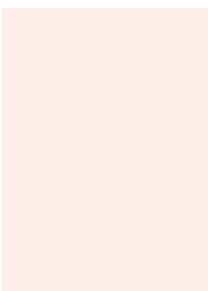
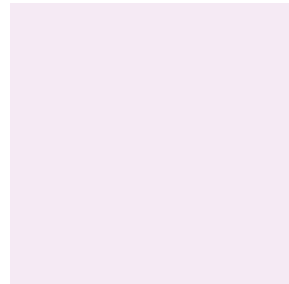
Employee Giving

Our team is dedicated to supporting our communities in the work we do every day as well as the initiatives we support through employee giving campaigns. In 2023, TBDSSAB staff donated \$11,790 to the United Way through various internal fundraisers.

Staff Training

TBDSSAB staff complete mandatory training on an annual basis, with additional training topics offered each year. In 2023, some special training topics offered to all staff included:

- Wake the Giant Inclusivity Training
- Mental Health First Aid
- Opioid Poisoning Response Training
- Change Management Through a Personality Dimension Lens
- Stigma Ends With Me: Substance Use Health Training



170

TBDSSAB Staff



29

staff celebrated years of service milestones (5-35 years!)

Our Board



Past and present Board members celebrating 2022 Board retirements.

Following the 2022 municipal election, TBDSSAB welcomed 11 new Board members in 2023. This is the highest turnover since the TBDSSAB's inception in 1999.



Ken Boshcoff
Chair, 2023
City of Thunder Bay



Meghan Chomut
Vice Chair, 2023
Township of Shuniah



Albert Aiello
City of Thunder Bay



Anne-Marie Bourgeault
Township of Schreiber



Kasey Etreni
City of Thunder Bay



Nancy Gladun
Township of Red Rock



Greg Johnsen
City of Thunder Bay



Brian Hamilton
City of Thunder Bay



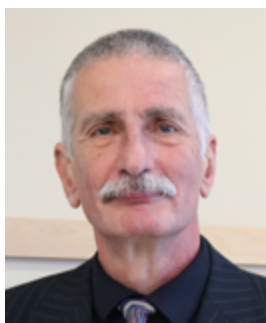
Kathleen Lynch
Territories Without Municipal Organization



Elaine Mannisto
Municipality of Greenstone



Jim Moffat
Township of Manitouwadge



Dominic Pasqualino
City of Thunder Bay



Mark Thibert
Municipality of Neebing



Jim Vezina
Township of O'Connor



Members of the Board at the AMO 2023 conference with Associate Minister Nina Tangri and MPP Kevin Holland.

Board Advocacy

The Board is committed to ongoing advocacy in response to local service system needs.

In 2023, six position papers were formally presented at delegation meetings with government officials at the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) and Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) conferences. In addition, joint papers and letters of endorsement were produced to advocate for administrative or budgetary changes to address unmet local needs.

2023 Highlights:

Housing & Homelessness Program Funding Increase

In April 2023, the province announced a significant increase to Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) funding, increasing the total allocation to \$16.5 million. During the media announcement, MPP Kevin Holland acknowledged the advocacy done by the TBDSSAB Board of Directors as a contributing factor for the funding increase.

Mental Health & Addictions Supports & Partnerships

The need for supports from health-funded agencies for mental health and addictions has been an ongoing topic for TBDSSAB

advocacy, including policy advocacy to increase access to substance use health supports at ROMA 2023.

Reconciliation & Inclusion

In 2023, TBDSSAB presented the Board with a proposed Implementation Plan based on the recommendations in the 2022 Situation Analysis report via Blue Sky. This led to the formation of an ad hoc Board Committee and the approval of most of the items in the implementation plan in the fall.

[Click here to view past position papers related to Board Advocacy.](#)

Strategic Plan

TBDSSAB's 2020-2023 Strategic Plan concluded on December 31, 2023. The Plan includes 9 Strategies and 47 total Objectives under 3 Strategic Directions for 2020-2023.

Administration's goal was to complete 90% of the objectives from the 2020-23 Plan by December 31, 2023. The overall progress on the Plan is 93%.

The Board extends its gratitude and respect to Administration for the impressive progress made toward strategic goals while navigating the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and delivery of related relief services.

Our Programs

Intake & Eligibility

TBDSSAB's programs are delivered through one Integrated Social Services division, with a one-stop Intake & Eligibility team. This helps us make sure that service users are connected to all available resources they may need. The team includes intake staff for all program areas, as well as Transitional Outreach and Support Workers that do outreach with individuals experiencing homelessness.

Robin's Story

The Transitional Outreach and Support Workers (TOSW) team first met Robin (name changed) during a visit to an emergency shelter in 2023. After settling into an apartment, the TOSW team followed up with Robin.

Q: How has it been living in your new apartment?

A: I've been here 6 weeks and it's been outstanding, very quiet. All the doorways and entrance points are ok for my walker, they are nice and wide. My Neighbour's are friendly and suspicious of strangers which is good, kind of like a family watch.

Q: Do you feel there has been an impact of living here vs living at a shelter?

A: Oh, [the difference] is like night and day... [At the shelter] personalities would clash

sometimes; even visitors to our room would be condescending or not pleasant. I had individuals confront me. All in all, I think everybody there wants to get help and I found the staff very helpful, and that includes [TOSWs and OW worker]. Here, its nice and quiet its mostly more elderly folks which is fine, they all seem to be super friendly. It's a very nice building.

Q: Can you tell us a bit about your experience leading up to this point?

A: I was discharged after 9 months at [hospital] and then I came into the shelter environment; you know that transition took a bit of adjusting, maybe a week, but once I got the lay of the land and you know...[I] got to meet some quality people. Every Tuesday [TOSWs] were there to handle pretty much all the paperwork [for housing].



Staff from TBDSSAB's Transitional Outreach and Support Workers team.



3370

calls received by Intake each month (on average)



44,972

visitors to TBDSSAB HQ office intake area in 2023



66

people experiencing homelessness housed on TOSW caseload in 2023

Child Care & Early Years Programs

TBDSSAB manages the child care and early years system in the District of Thunder Bay. Our Child Care & Early Years Programs help families by managing the child care wait list and offering child care fee subsidies to offset the costs of child care. We also provide operational funding and resources to Child Care operators and EarlyON programs throughout our district.

Early Years Campaign

In January 2023, TBDSSAB partnered with Ontario's Child Care and Early Years system managers to launch a province-wide marketing campaign to generate an increased understanding of, and support for, Ontario's licensed child care sector.

[Click here to view the campaign page.](#)

Professional Learning

A full day training session was held with 340 educators from across the district. Topics included: Indigenous Perspectives in Early Childhood Education, Inclusive Practices in Early Childhood Education Settings, Leadership Well-Being, and Nature-Based Learning.

Workforce Development

In 2023, TBDSSAB announced funding for the **Early Childhood Education (ECE) Fast-Track program** in partnership with Confederation College, which allows staff currently working in child care to graduate in 15 months. TBDSSAB also provided \$204,000 in bursaries for Confederation College ECE students.

Child Care Worker & Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day 2023

In honour of CCW & ECE Appreciation Day on October 17, 2023, TBDSSAB provided bilingual Hero-themed sweaters to educators across the District of Thunder Bay. Free downloads were also available on our website for families to thank the educators in their lives. Educators are truly heroes to children and families, and our economy could not function without the essential work they perform.

Service Plan

In 2023, the Board approved a five-year Child Care and Early Years Service Plan. This plan provides a vision which ensures families have access to services that are: Accessible, Affordable, Accountable, High Quality, and Inclusive. These priorities are responsive to community needs and align with Ontario's vision for the child care and early years sector.



TBDSSAB staff celebrating Child Care Worker & Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day 2023.



3,196

children served in child care programs in 2023



436

children receiving fee subsidies in 2023



2,726

children served in EarlyON programs in 2023



2,109

EarlyON child visits in 2023

Housing & Homelessness Prevention Programs

TBDSSAB manages the community housing and homelessness prevention system in the District of Thunder Bay. Our Housing Programs assist individuals and families by offering affordable housing and rent supports. We also work with community organizations and the emergency shelter system to support initiatives that aim to address homelessness throughout our district.

Community Gardens

The Housing Operations team delivered 48 flats of flowers to our properties this 2023 season. The tenant communities then work to plant and maintain the gardens throughout the summer and into the fall. Initiatives such as this help support a sense of community and bring pride to the areas we serve.

Thanks to all the tenants and staff that helped this season with the flowers, community gardens and fall harvest that support our community kitchens.

Geraldton Bench Donation

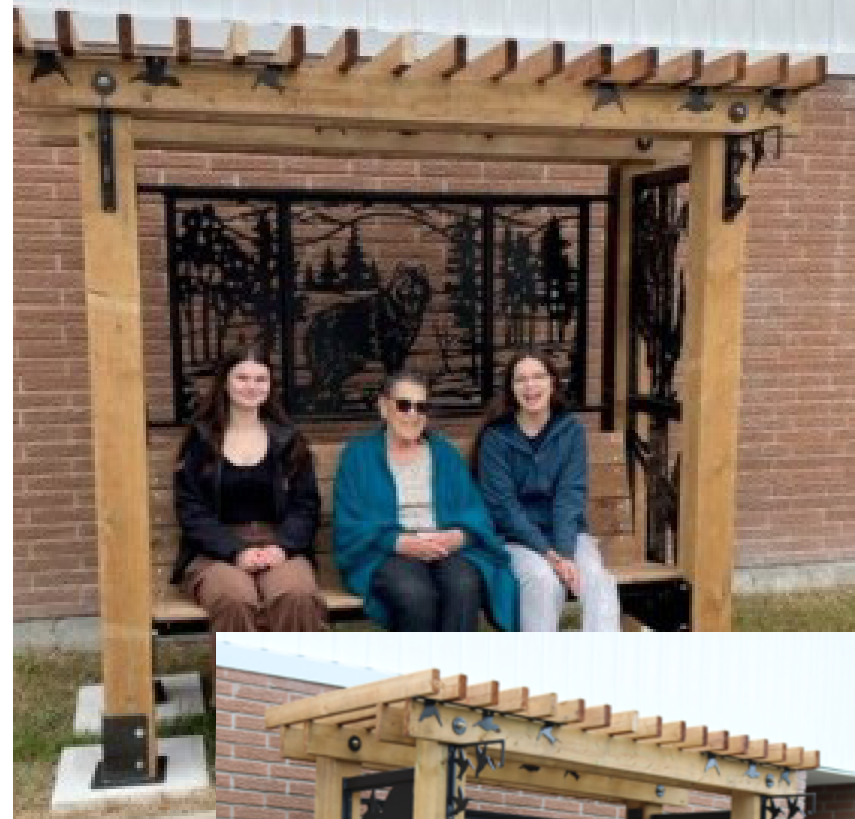
On June 5th, 2023 the Geraldton Composite High School's all female shop class donated Fisher and Neil Court seniors complexes in

Geraldton this lovely outdoor bench (pictured, above). Students and teachers who made the bench attended the building for a party, to install the bench and give the tenants the ability to thank them.

Thank you to Geraldton Composite High School students and staff for thinking of our tenants! TBDSSAB staff and tenants were thrilled to receive this generous donation.

Wardrope Court Anniversary

TBDSSAB celebrated the 50th anniversary of Wardrope Court in October 2023. To mark the occasion, staff, Board Chair and tenants gathered for a celebration that included an opening song and smudging, lunch, bannock, cupcakes, prizes, and bingo.



256

new tenants housed in 2023



2,473

direct-owned housing units



7,170

maintenance calls received and dispatched



7,925

tenant visits by Tenant Support Workers



Pictures, left to right:

1. Bench made and donated by Geraldton high school students.
2. Ribbon cutting ceremony at Elizabeth Fry transitional housing announcement.
3. Groundbreaking ceremony at Northern Linkage transitional housing announcement.
4. Northern Linkage project under construction.

New Housing Units

In 2023, TBDSSAB announced funding partnerships with community partners to increase housing availability across our service system.

- **Elizabeth Fry** received \$219,500 via Social Services Relief Funding to create 7 new transitional housing spaces for women and gender-diverse people.

[Click here](#) for the full Elizabeth Fry project announcement.

- **Northern Linkage** received \$1,652,000 in Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) funding to create 14 affordable housing units, including 7 fully accessible units.

[Click here](#) for the full Northern Linkage announcement.

HPP Funding Increase

The Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) is a provincially funded program that aims to prevent, reduce, and address homelessness.

In 2023, TBDSSAB's HPP allocation was increased to \$16.5M, nearly triple the 2022 allocation. TBDSSAB has allocated \$9M of this amount under capital funding for the creation of 50 transitional housing spaces throughout the district. These projects will be announced in 2024. Additionally, TBDSSAB funded seven organizations a combined total of \$2M toward homelessness outreach initiatives.

[Click here](#) to read the HPP Investment Plan media release.



58

people housed off High Needs Homeless waitlist in 2023



\$1.8M

in capital funding announced in 2023, resulting in 21 new community housing spaces



31,584

stays at emergency shelters in 2023 (includes Salvation Army, Shelter House, Urban Abbey)



Social Assistance Programs

TBDSSAB delivers social assistance programs, including Ontario Works, throughout the District of Thunder Bay. Our Social Assistance Programs empower people in need to achieve self-sufficiency through financial aid and employment assistance. We also partner with community services to connect our clients with education, training, and community or employment placements.

ID Clinics

Building on the success of TBDSSAB partnership with Kinna awaya Legal Clinic, caseworkers were trained, and a process was set up so that we can assist our participants to apply for birth verification. Due to the complexity and method of required payment, clients who are unable to apply on their own can work with their caseworker in obtaining both Ontario and other provinces birth verification.

Employment Supports

The Going to Work pilot project assisted 40 recipients (22% of those sent to employers) in gaining employment through partnerships with 29 district employers.

The program saw just under \$19,000 paid to employers as incentive. Thank you to all employers who partnered in this pilot.



2,618

average monthly caseload



208

clients employed and had an average earnings of \$734 each



824

exits to employment, equivalent to 32% of caseload for the whole year



294

ODSP grants issued with assistance from caseworkers



OMSSA Local Municipal Champion Award

TBDSSAB was awarded a Local Municipal Champion Award from the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) at the OMSSA Exchange Conference held in Ottawa on May 8-10, 2023.

TBDSSAB received this award in recognition of three community resource centres and five technology hubs established in five neighbourhoods. These were recognized as an example of community collaboration and streamlined integration of services. Over the past five years, TBDSSAB has worked to create community resource centres for tenant and clients, creating centralized access for neighbourhood enhancement. The resource centre is a dedicated unit within the neighbourhood that provides a variety of services and supports to the households in the area. On a scheduled basis, staff from the Integrated Social Services team—including Social Assistance, Housing, and Child Care—attend at the resource centres and meet with clients/tenants with the goal of delivering integrated supports to tenants close to home.

Additional services include life skills sessions, community kitchens, community gardens, access to computers, printers and the internet, and provision of space for community partner organizations to offer services. Other services offered through community partners include medical access via a nurse practitioner, local health unit support, healthy kids sites, harm reduction supplies and support referrals for mental health and addictions programming, cultural programming opportunities and employment supports.



Pictures, from top:

1. TBDSSAB staff involved with the resource centres pose with the award in Thunder Bay.
2. Bill Bradica, CAO, and Jennifer Lible, Manager Social Assistance Programs, at the OMSSA Award ceremony.

Our Footprint

The priority for green, environmentally sustainable practices is to reduce TBDSSAB's environmental footprint, with a secondary impact of reducing the operating costs in our housing portfolio. In 2023, TBDSSAB completed various projects to enhance the environmental stewardship lens of its housing portfolio through capital projects.

2023 Highlights:

Elizabeth Court

A full roof replacement was completed at Elizabeth Court. Removing the end of life roofing materials and replacing with new insulation and Ethylene Propylene Diene Terpolymer (EPDM) roof membrane was completed to reduce heat loss and create a watertight building envelope. The Make-up Air unit was also replaced to a new more energy efficient unit.

Glenwood Court

All unit windows, which were original to the building, were replaced at Glenwood Court. The new windows will achieve greater energy efficiency and comfort for the tenants.

Manion Court

At Manion Court, outside garden boxes were added to support tenants' working with the earth and protecting the environment while supporting food security efforts.

[Click here to view past reports related to Environmental Stewardship.](#)



New windows at Glenwood Court increase energy efficiency and comfort for tenants.



\$1.49 M

spent on capital projects related to **Housing Portfolio Energy Management**, financed from the Housing Portfolio Capital Reserve Fund, as well as opportunities through 100% funded capital programs.



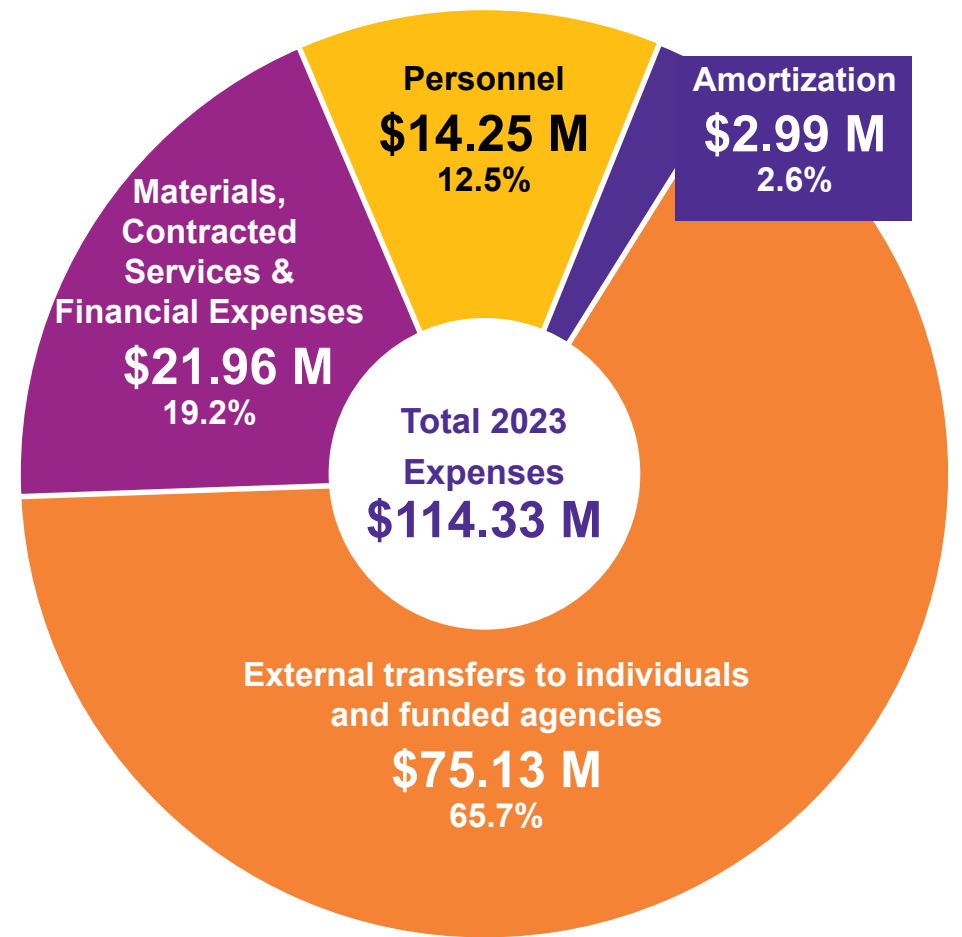
\$75,634

reduction in utility costs across housing portfolio in 2023 compared to 2022. Utility costs remain one of the largest operating expenses TBDSSAB incurs within its housing portfolio. Natural gas and electricity amounted to \$2,397,200 in 2023 (2022: \$2,472,834), which accounts for approximately 13% of the operating costs of the housing portfolio.

Financial Position

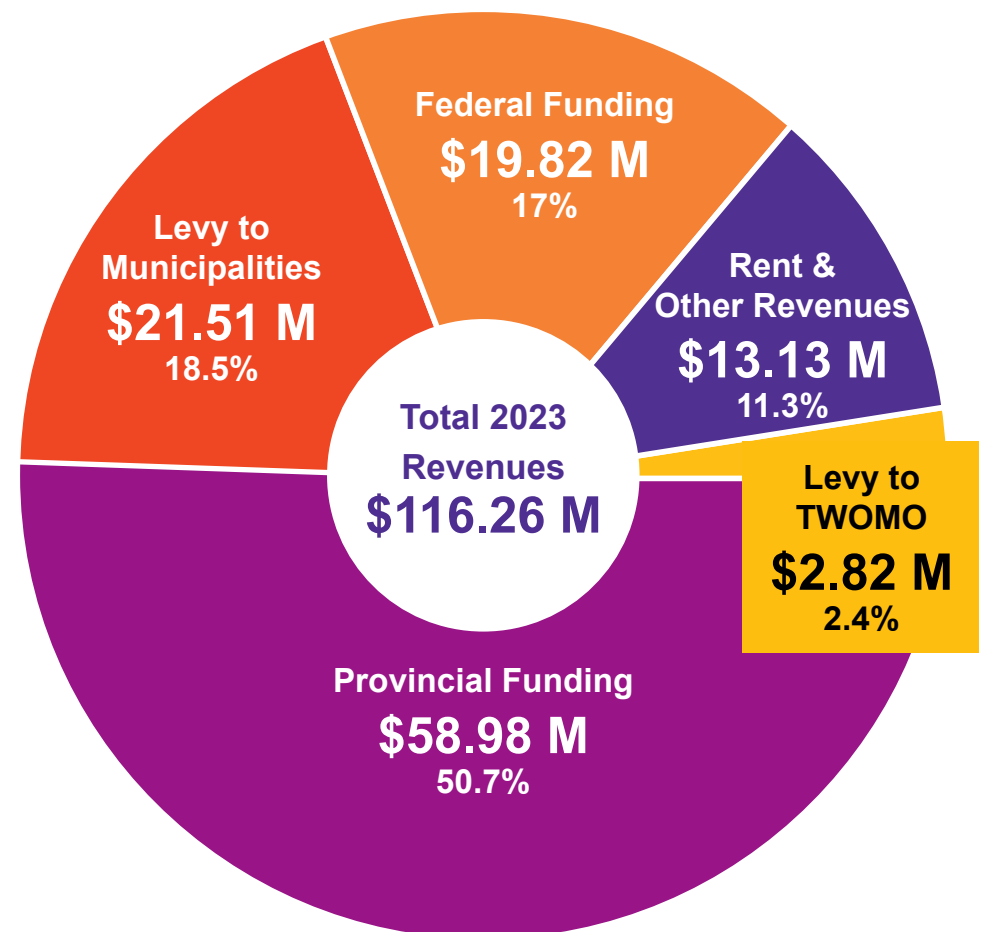
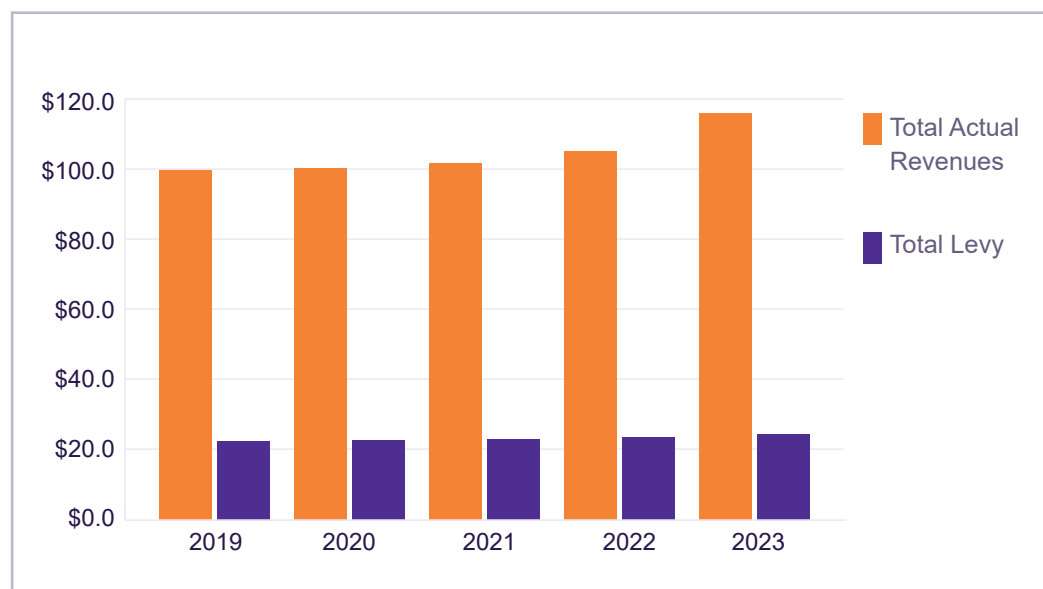
Balance Sheet

	2023	2022
Cash and Cash Equivalents	25,388,993	22,753,596
Marketable Securities	26,135,193	25,667,769
Client Benefit Advances	1,692,454	1,698,035
Accounts Receivable	2,504,540	2,486,115
Total Financial Assets	55,721,180	52,605,515
Accounts Payable	15,313,820	13,397,599
Deferred Revenue	2,024,172	4,482,442
Long-term Debt	8,254,238	10,722,732
Employee Benefit Obligations	2,927,475	2,974,366
Asset Retirement Obligations	13,690,597	12,985,485
Total Liabilities	42,210,302	44,562,624
Net Financial Assets (Debt)	13,510,878	8,042,891
Non-Financial Assets	39,543,874	41,820,340
Accumulated Surplus	53,054,752	49,863,231



Municipal and TWOMO Levy vs Total Revenues by Year

in millions



*TWOMO = Territories Without Municipal Organization



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