



Dignity, Respect & Quality of Life

Annual Report | 2024



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD





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2024 Highlights

4.26

Transitional
Housing projects
announced
>> Page 16



4.18

TBDSSAB
Celebrates 25
Years:
1999 - 2024



9.27

Bill Bradica
retires as
TBDSSAB's
Chief Executive
Officer. Ken
Ranta becomes
CEO, effective
September 28.



5.02

Nominee: Thunder Bay
Chamber of Commerce Non-
Profit Excellence Award

10.23+24

Child Care
Worker & Early
Childhood
Educator
Appreciation Day
>> Page 12



12.17

Transitional
Housing projects
announced
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Message from the Chair

On behalf of the TBDSSAB Board of Directors, I am pleased to present the 2024 Annual Report.

My first year as TBDSSAB Chair has been a great learning opportunity. I am grateful to my fellow Board members, the CEO, staff, and community partners for the important work you do to support the most vulnerable in our communities.

This year's annual report represents a year of change and growth for TBDSSAB. Here are some highlights:

- This year was the start of the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan.
- In January, the Board welcomed a new Chair and Vice Chair.
- TBDSSAB celebrated 25 Years in April (1999-2024).
- The organization transitioned to a new CEO in September.

Thank you to our community for being in our corner throughout 2024. I know we will continue to do great things in the year ahead.

Brian Hamilton
Chair, TBDSSAB Board of Directors



Message from the CEO

As we look back on 2024, I want to thank the Board, Staff, and Community Partners for working together to meet the needs of people in our community.

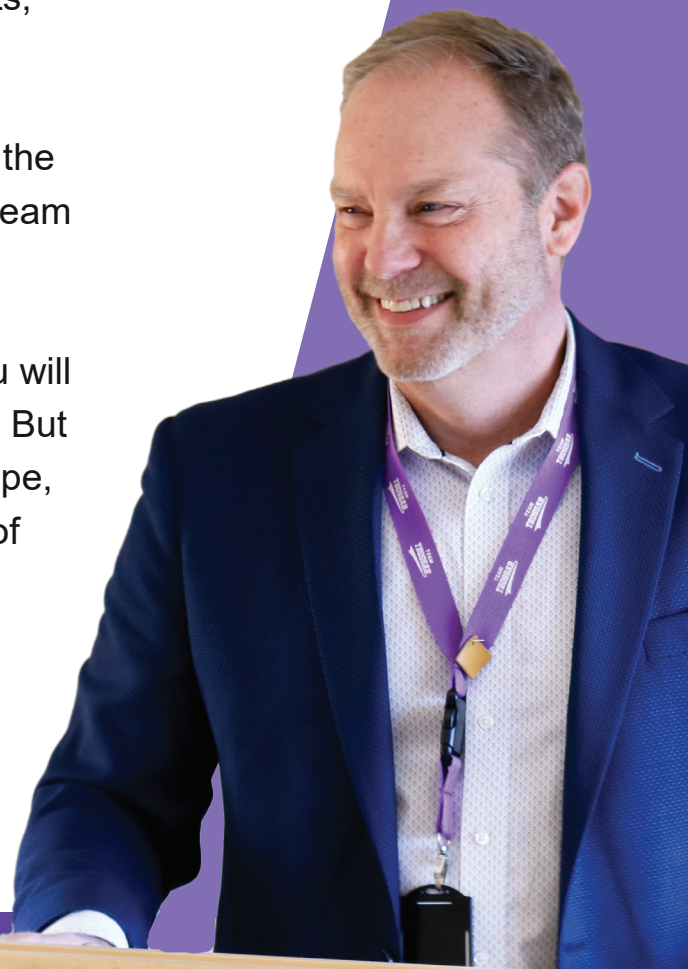
This past year was one of transformation for TBDSSAB, and the 2024 Annual Report condenses a year of significant change in a small package. As a team, we celebrated many accomplishments, community partnerships, and growth.

The accomplishments included in this report are the result of having an amazing group of people on team TBDSSAB.

As you flip through the rest of this document, you will find the usual statistics and financial information. But beyond that, you will find stories of resilience, hope, and human connection. People are at the heart of everything we do.

As we close the chapter on 2024, we look forward to even greater success in supporting those we serve in 2025.

Ken Ranta
Chief Executive Officer



About Us

Who We Are, What We Do

Mission

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

What We Aspire To Be

Vision

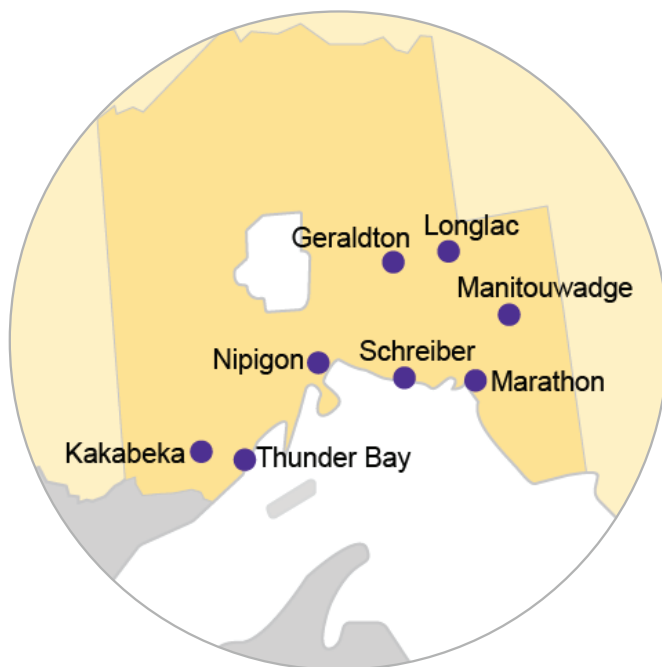
TBDSSAB provides quality services within the context of a commitment to social justice and recognition of people's potential to achieve self-sufficiency.

What We Live By

Values

At TBDSSAB, we:

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



TBDSSAB was established by the Province of Ontario on April 1, 1999 through the enactment of the District Social Services Administration Board (DSSAB) Act. It is one of 47 service managers mandated by the Province to deliver social services.

Our service District includes 15 municipalities which appoint representatives to our Board of Directors through their municipal Councils. As well, the Board of Directors includes an elected representative from the Territories without Municipal Organization.

There are eight TBDSSAB offices across the District.

Our Team

At TBDSSAB, we believe in taking care of the people who are busy taking care of others. That's why we are building a culture of inclusion, belonging, and wellbeing.



Bill Bradica & Ken Ranta,
past and present CEO.

Leadership Changes

Bill Bradica, long-time CEO of TBDSSAB, announced his retirement in early 2024. Ken Ranta took over as CEO in September 2024. Ken previously served as Director of Integrated Social Services and brings extensive experience to lead TBDSSAB forward.

Team Players

We aim to foster a sense of community, both in our day to day work and the causes we support.

- In 2024, our team raised and donated \$10,623 for United Way Thunder Bay.
- Staff participation in internal committees with a focus on Wellness and Recognition,

Inclusion, Health & Safety, and Accessibility.

Staff Training

TBDSSAB staff complete mandatory training on an annual basis, with additional training topics offered each year. In 2024, some training included:

- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging
- Crisis Prevention & Intervention
- Vicarious Trauma Care
- Handling Difficult Conversations

2024 Highlights

- **171** TBDSSAB Staff
- **18** staff celebrated years of service milestones ranging from 5-35 years at TBDSSAB

Our Board



Brian Hamilton,
Chair, 2024 (Left)
City of Thunder Bay

Jim Moffat
Vice-Chair, 2024 (Right)
Township of Manitouwadge



Albert Aiello
City of Thunder Bay



Anne-Marie Bourgeault
Township of Schreiber



Ken Boshcoff
City of Thunder Bay



Meghan Chomut
Township of Shuniah



Kasey Etreni
City of Thunder Bay



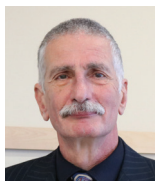
Greg Johnsen
City of Thunder Bay



Kathleen Lynch
Territory Without
Municipal Organization



Elaine Mannisto
Municipality of
Greenstone



Dominic Pasqualino
City of Thunder Bay



Mark Thibert
Municipality of Neebing



Jim Vezina
Township of O'Connor

Nancy Gladun
(Jan 1 - Jun 30)

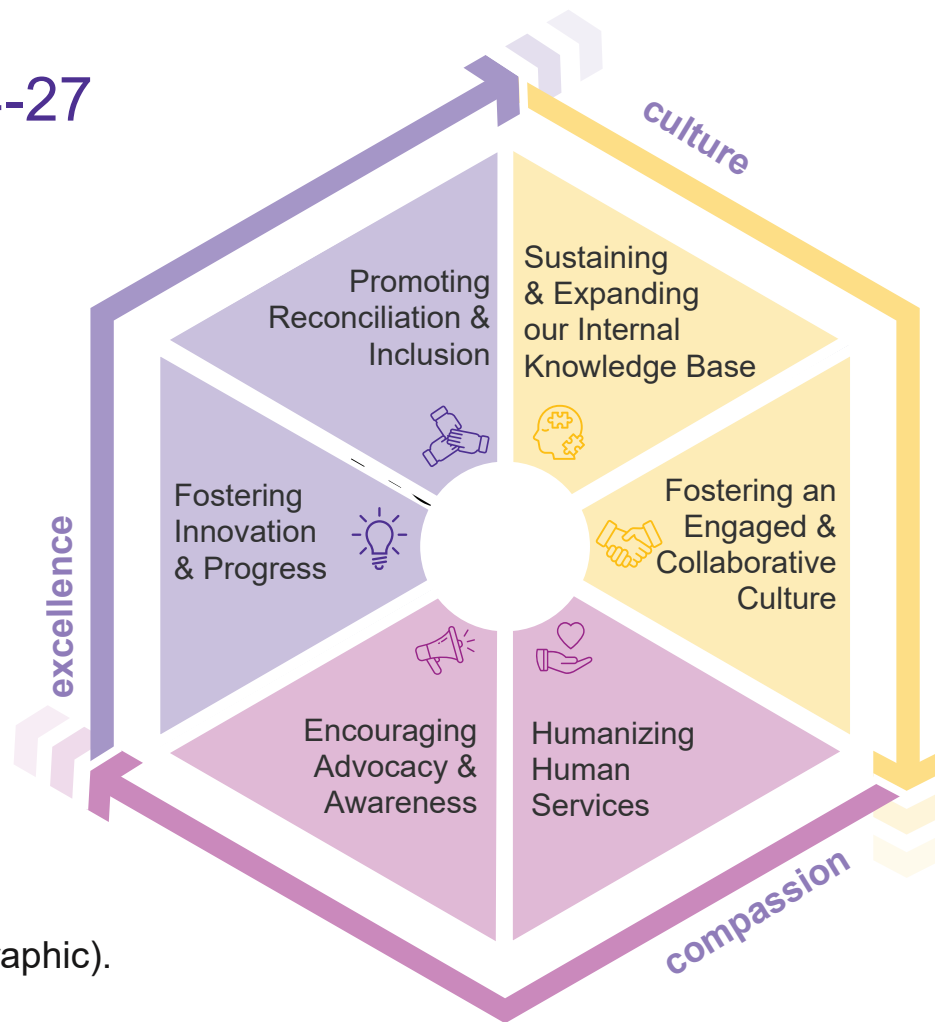
Denis Nault
(Sep 1 - Dec 16)

Township of Red Rock

Strategic Plan 2024-27

TBDSSAB unveiled its new Strategic Plan in January 2024. Our Strategic Plan will guide the organization's objectives for the years 2024 to 2027.

The 2024-2027 Strategic Plan focuses on priority areas related to stabilized support services, an enhanced people-centered approach, and organizational excellence. To achieve this, TBDSSAB has set three strategic directions and six strategies for 2024-2027 (see graphic).



Advocacy

The Board is committed to ongoing advocacy in response to local service system needs. In 2024, nine 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.

2024 Highlights:

- **Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing:** The Board advocated for changes to funding formulas and information sharing related to Housing and Homelessness funding streams, to support ongoing and sustainable growth.
- **Solicitor General:** The Board advocated for a review of LTB wait times for community housing landlords to improve access to much needed housing units.
- **Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services:** The Board advocated for increases to social assistance shelter rates.
- **Ministry of Education:** The Board advocated for funding and policy change to support current child care operators and enable expansion of spaces to address community needs.

Program Highlights

Intake & Eligibility

TBDSSAB's programs and services are accessed through our Intake & Eligibility team. We work with people to connect them with the services that best fit their needs. The Intake & Eligibility team manages wait lists and applications for TBDSSAB programs. Our team also has Outreach Workers in the community supporting homelessness.

Homelessness Outreach & Engagement

Transitional Outreach and Support Workers (TOSW) visit encampments weekly. From May to December 2024, TOSW made 609 engagements, which often include multiple visits to build relationships. Services include OW and ODSP information, assisting with housing applications and annual updates, referrals to health services, primary care providers, community case workers, food resources, shelters and assessing for emergency services.

2024 Highlights

- **4,512** calls received by Intake each month (average)
- **3,940** visitors to TBDSSAB HQ intake area each month (average)
- **76** TOSW engagements each month (average)



Intake & Eligibility staff,
December 2024.

Ashley's Story

Ashley has been on Ontario Works off and on since 2012. Earlier on in her journey with TBDSSAB, Ashley was housed and attending school. Over the last couple years, Ashley has struggled with substance use and homelessness. While staying in emergency shelter, Ashley has started making daily visits to the Thunder Bay office for support. Through the resources in the Intake area, she can make phone calls, use a computer, and get something to eat.

With the support of the Intake & Eligibility team and her Caseworker, Ashley is getting back



Ashley with Intake Worker, Kristy.

on track. She has successfully applied for ODSP and gotten back onto the housing wait list. She is hopeful about the future.

“My goal is to get back to school and take psychology courses,” says Ashley. “I am really looking forward to getting my own place again and hopefully starting school.”

Jeff's Story

Jeff recently moved into TBDSSAB housing. After dealing with regular basement flooding and health issues in his previous home, he finally decided it was time to find a new place to live. “Emotionally I was drained, and physically I wasn't sure I could do it all,” says Jeff. “It was then that I applied for Rent-Geared-to-Income housing.”

Within a year, Jeff was offered a unit at a seniors' building for 55+.

“I jumped at the opportunity,” says Jeff. “But moving was going to be a challenge.”

TBDSSAB staff worked with Jeff to arrange for movers. “The entire moving process went smooth as could be,” says Jeff. “I feel brand new, stress free, thanks to [TBDSSAB]. Especially to Isabel and Tiia whose help will not be forgotten. New beginnings, and a fresh start!”

Social Assistance Programs

TBDSSAB delivers Ontario Works for the District of Thunder Bay. Ontario Works is a provincial program that provides income support and case management. Our OW Caseworkers offer people the support or referrals they need to enter the workforce. We work closely with community partners to help our clients reach their personal and employment goals.

2024 Highlights

- **2,564** average monthly caseload, supporting 4,339 people
- **2,509** OW applications received (209 per month average)
- **225** emergency assistance applications
- **343** exits to employment (13% of caseload)

Employment Services Transformation (EST)

TBDSSAB is part of Phase Three implementation of the EST, beginning in April 2024. This transition is in partnership with the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services (MCCSS and the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD). Through 2024 and into 2025, information and planning will occur. A full launch of the new model takes effect March 1, 2025. With this change, the focus of TBDSSAB's work with social assistance clients no longer includes employment planning and will focus on case management and person-centered supports.

Access to Education

Confederation College continued to offer their Academic Career Entrance at headquarters. OW recipients can upgrade their secondary school upgrading through PLAR (prior learning assessment and recognition) to give credit to past schooling and life experience. Many of our recipients transfer to post-secondary courses upon achieving their General Education Diploma.

Mallorie's Story

Mallorie is best known at TBDSSAB for being part of our team in Schreiber. However, that's not where her journey with TBDSSAB began.

In 2020, Mallorie was unemployed and needed a place for her family to live. Though she had past work experience, she had spent several years as a full-time parent and decided to go back to school. Mallorie applied for Ontario Works to support her family.

"I resisted applying at first," says Mallorie. "It was a pride thing. But when I applied for OW, my kids and I needed a place to live... shelter allowance and basic needs. Basically, survival."

With support from family and her Caseworker, Lisa, Mallorie was able to put herself through school. She graduated with a Social Service Worker diploma in June 2023. Not long after, she applied for a position with TBDSSAB based in Schreiber. She was hired as 'District Transitional Outreach and Tenant Support Worker' in August 2023.



Mallorie with former Caseworker, now coworker, Lisa.

"Having that full-circle moment—my last meeting with Lisa as a client before working here—was unforgettable," says Mallorie.

"I understand where people are coming from, which helps me know what supports they might need. I want other people to have the same positive, supportive experience I had with TBDSSAB."

Child Care & Early Years Programs

TBDSSAB manages the child care and early years service system for the District of Thunder Bay. We fund and support licensed child care and EarlyON programs. TBDSSAB manages the child care waitlist for all licensed programs. Families can pay less for child care through fee subsidies and the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care program (CWELCC).

2024 Highlights

- **2,393** children served in child care programs
- **458** children receiving fee subsidies
- **9,960** children served in EarlyON programs
- **25,670** EarlyON child visits

Celebrating Educators

Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day fell on October 23, 2024. TBDSSAB provided free downloadable resources for families to thank the educators in their lives. Educators were gifted custom sweaters representing their pride in the profession.

As part of the recognition of CCW & ECE Appreciation Day, TBDSSAB hosted a full day professional learning session on October 24. The theme was “Inspiring Superior Connections in Early Childhood Education” and had over 370 attendees from across the district.



Top: Educators received sweaters with the four foundations (Belonging, Engagement, Expression, Wellbeing) in the shape of Lake Superior.

Bottom: Child Care Worker & ECE Appreciation Day 2024

Partners in Education

For several years, TBDSSAB has been working with Confederation College to invest in the next generation of early childhood educators (ECEs).

With a focus on recruitment and retention, the initiatives created through this partnership include:

- **Bursary Fund** for first- and second-year domestic students in the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program. In 2024, we awarded \$114,000 in bursaries.
- **Fast Track ECE Program** offered as a 15-month flexible-format to make it easier for those working in child care to get their ECE diploma. In 2024, 12 students graduated and another 13 registered for the 2024/25 school year.
- **ECE Mentorship** opportunities for students through TBDSSAB, where students are offered support, guidance, learning opportunities, and treated as the peers of educators already working in the field.

“Working in collaboration with the Child Care and Early Years



Professional Learning
day, October 2024

team at TBDSSAB has been a transformative experience for the professors in the ECE program at Confederation College,” says Carly Rich, ECE Program Coordinator.

“Our collaboration has allowed us to pool our resources, share best practices, and support each other in ways that make our work more impactful. It is a reminder that when we come together, we can achieve so much more than we could alone.

“We look forward to future projects and partnership opportunities that support the field of ECE and our community!”

Housing Operations

TBDSSAB is service system manager for community housing in the District of Thunder Bay. We provide rent-geared-to-income housing and manage a centralized housing wait list. Our Housing Operations team takes care of our tenants and properties. Our tenants have access to Tenant Support Workers (TSWs) if they need extra help staying healthy and housed.

2024 Tenant Survey

TBDSSAB tenants complete a Tenant Satisfaction Survey every two years. The 2024 survey results tell us that overall, tenants are happy with the helpfulness of TBDSSAB staff and the number of activities available. There was also a more positive response to seasonal maintenance questions compared to 2022.

Findings also showed that the three main areas that tenants reported needing more support included help with daily living (cleaning, laundry, organization), low-cost mental health and addictions supports, and food supports (budgeting, affordable options, preparing food).

2024 Highlights

- **497** new tenants housed
- **3,282** total community housing units supported
- **2,471** community housing units owned
- **7,735** TSW visits



TBDSSAB received \$2.96M in federal funding toward capital repairs on its housing portfolio. Story on page 18.

Katie's Story

Katie has been a TBDSSAB tenant since 2016. Born and raised in Thunder Bay, Katie started using substances at a very young age.

“For 15 years, I rode a rollercoaster of trying to get clean and falling back into addiction,” says Katie.

“I lost custody of my children multiple times, and by 2020, I had completely given up, signing over my rights to them. I was broken, lost, and exhausted from the cycle of addiction.”

Katie's turning point came in 2021. While in jail, she started her journey toward healing and recovery. Over the past four years, she has been rebuilding her life. Working with a recovery-focused organization, she completed an in-residence program as well as an 18-month leadership program. In 2024, that organization hired Katie full-time as a Community Support Worker.

Now celebrating nearly four years of continuous sobriety, Katie is passionate about helping others rebuild their lives.



“Today, I have my own home, a restored relationship with both of my children, and meaningful work where I can use my past to help others,” says Katie.

“To anyone struggling with addiction: Don't give up. Don't lose hope. You are not too far gone. There is a different path, and I am living proof of that. The road to recovery isn't easy, but it is absolutely worth it.”

Housing & Homelessness Programs

TBDSSAB is service system manager for homelessness prevention programs in the District of Thunder Bay. We work with community partners to fund programs that prevent or address homelessness. This includes the emergency shelter system. Our team also helps people afford their rent through rent supports and funding for the community housing system.

Transitional Housing

In 2024, TBDSSAB continued its strategy of investing in the development of transitional and long-term supportive housing options.

Through community partnerships, a combined total of 118 new transitional and long-term supportive spaces were funded in 2024 for those experiencing homelessness in the District of Thunder Bay. In April, we announced 52 spaces with Shelter House, Norwest Community Health Centres, Northern Linkage, St. Joseph's Care Group, Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services, and the Elizabeth Fry Society of Northwestern Ontario (EFSNWO). In December, we announced another 66 spaces with EFSNWO, Urban Abbey, and Alpha Court.

2024 Highlights

- **74** people housed from the High Needs Homeless waitlist
- **118** transitional and long term supportive housing spaces announced
- **39,990** stays at emergency shelters



Recipients of HPP Capital funding for transitional housing projects announced in 2024; April (top) and December.(bottom).

Chantelle's Story

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Northwestern Ontario (EFSNWO) is dedicated to providing safe, inclusive, and supportive housing and services to individuals facing housing instability, with a particular focus on women and gender-diverse people.

In partnership with EFSNWO, TBDSSAB has been able to ensure there are transitional housing options ready to support the needs of women and gender-diverse individuals after they are released from custody. People like Chantelle, a proud mother of three who struggled to keep her family together while living with addiction.

“By 2022, I found myself in [jail], overwhelmed with emotions and unsure of my next steps,” says Chantelle. “I met a woman from the Elizabeth Fry Society who gave me something I hadn’t felt in a long time—hope. She reassured me that change was still possible, and that I could rebuild the life I desperately wanted with my children.”

Chantelle moved into EFSNWO



One of the Elizabeth Fry Society NWO's 3 transitional housing properties funded by TBDSSAB.

transitional housing as part of a bail program. Since then, she has completed residential treatment, attends day treatment, and participates in NA meetings—proudly making her six-month milestone.

“I am deeply grateful to the Elizabeth Fry Society for their unwavering support and for helping me become the person I always had the potential to be.”

Capital Projects

TBDSSAB is dedicated to environmentally sustainable practices. The 2013-2016 Strategic Plan included Environmentally Friendly Housing within the Optimized Housing strategy. After achieving the goals on the previous strategic plan, TBDSSAB continues to work toward a minimized environmental footprint while reducing the operating costs in our housing portfolio. In 2024, TBDSSAB completed various projects to enhance the environmental stewardship lens of its housing portfolio through capital projects.

Affordable Housing Fund

Through the Affordable Housing Fund, TBDSSAB will receive a total of **\$2,961,266** for capital repairs to be completed over three years. This funding will be used to make capital improvements to current affordable housing properties across the District of Thunder Bay, affecting over **2,000 units across 30 properties**. Highlights of the planned upgrades for this year include new mechanical systems, replacement of interior and exterior doors, and window replacements to improve energy efficiency, safety, and accessibility across various properties.

2024 Highlights

- **145** fridges replaced through the Save on Energy Affordability Program
- **3 buildings (191 units)** received central hot water tank replacements to increase energy efficiency
- **55** doors replaced to increase insulation value and reduce heat loss

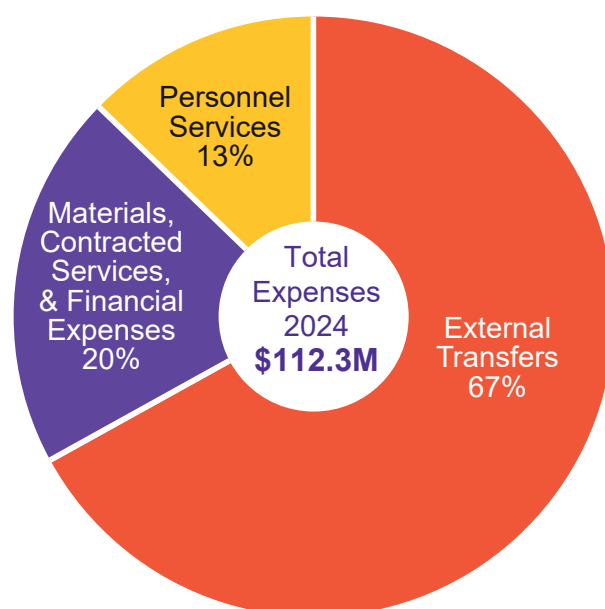
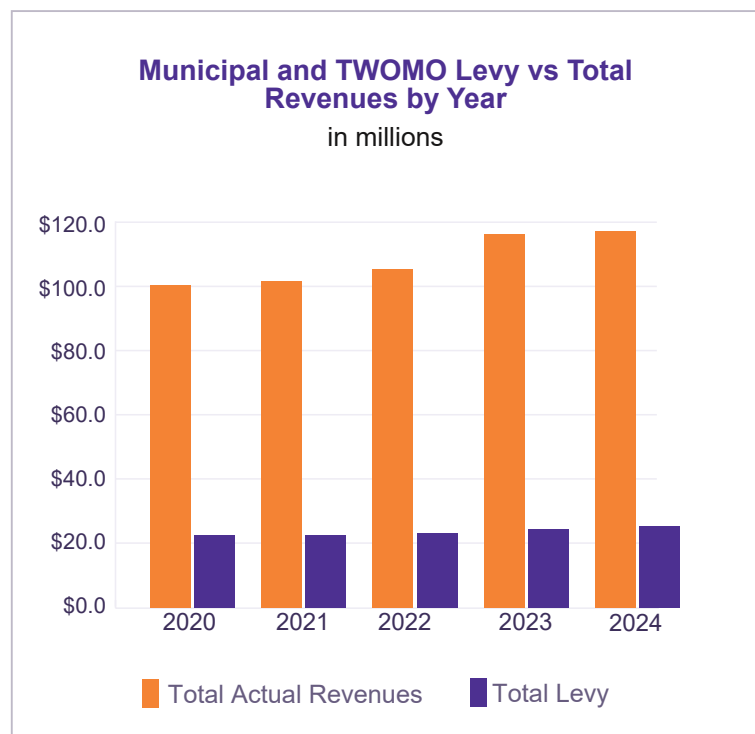
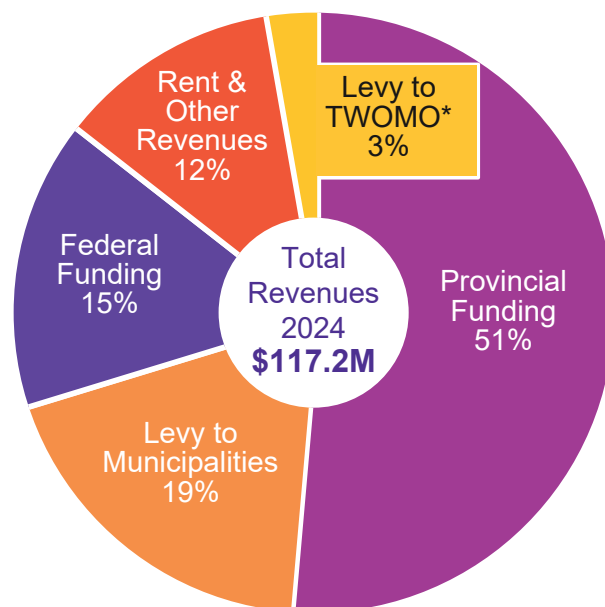


Manion Court in Thunder Bay is one of many buildings receiving capital upgrades through the Affordable Housing Fund.

Financial Position

Balance Sheet

	2024	2023
Cash and Cash Equivalents	35,359,061	25,388,993
Marketable Securities	28,888,966	26,135,193
Client Benefit Advances	1,780,399	1,692,454
Accounts Receivable	3,847,161	2,504,540
Total Financial Assets	69,875,587	55,721,180
Accounts Payable	21,648,182	15,313,820
Deferred Revenue	5,409,719	2,024,172
Long-term Debt	6,131,472	8,254,238
Employee Benefit Obligations	2,791,989	2,927,475
Asset Retirement Obligations	11,989,360	13,690,597
Total Liabilities	47,970,722	42,210,302
Net Financial Assets (Debt)	21,904,865	13,510,878
Non-Financial Assets	37,742,896	39,543,874
Accumulated Surplus	59,647,761	53,054,752



*TWOMO = Territories Without Municipal Organization



**THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD**

tbdssab.ca

