



BUDGET







www.paradise.ca

Budget 2023 Speech

Good evening your Worship, fellow Councillors, staff, and those joining us in-person and online. As Chair of the Administration and Corporate Services Committee, it is my pleasure to present Budget 2023 for the Town of Paradise.

Your Worship, Budget preparations give us a time to reflect on the past year, to remind us of the projects and initiatives underway, the lessons learned, and all the exciting things that took place in the Town of Paradise over the past 12 months. Throughout 2022 we continued to navigate life with COVID-19. While we have adapted to what has become the new normal, the impacts of the global pandemic over the past couple of years are still ever-present. Rising costs, supply chain issues, and inflationary pressures are changing the way all organizations operate, and the Town of Paradise is no different.

On behalf of Council, I commend our staff for continually pivoting and adapting this past year. Our continuous improvement focus, and LEAN work culture have equipped them to find the ways and means to provide our residents with quality services and programs.

Your Worship, in 2022 our Town marked another milestone as we became the third largest municipality in the province. The latest census data from Statistics Canada released earlier this year shows that Paradise is now home to almost 23,000 people, and we remain one of the fastest growing municipalities in the province and across the country.

Supporting this growth means Council must be focused on making strategic choices and taking the time to ensure we stay on the right path for our Town and for our residents. Over the past several years, Council decision-making has been guided by our strategic plan, Your Paradise – Plan 2022. This plan has ensured that we are focused on making the decisions that best meet the needs of all stakeholders, that support our continued growth and development, and that foster a strong sense of community.

Since being formally adopted, we have achieved many of our strategic priorities in the plan, and I want to point out that much of this work was done during a global pandemic. We strengthened our Governance focus through initiatives like webcasting Council meetings, publishing the minutes of Council Committee meetings, and enhancing our public engagement activities. Under Regional Cooperation we continue to work with our neighbouring municipalities on shared services, economic development, and partnering on major events like the upcoming Canada Summer Games. With road improvement and upgrade projects, new roundabouts, crossing guards, and neighbourhood quieting, we are accomplishing our Infrastructure and Economic Growth objectives. Updating water and sewer infrastructure, installing solar lights, and developing a public information campaign on progressive waste management, all support our work in Environmental Stewardship. Our Social and Cultural Health focus brought an Accessible Transit project, enhanced recreational amenities including trails, parks and a new multi-sport turf, and initiatives to celebrate and preserve our Town's history.

With just about 23,000 residents, it is important we make balanced investments — ones that give the right mix of essential services and community programming while at the same time enabling us to properly manage all our assets and infrastructure.

It is only when we take a moment to reflect on the past three years of Your Paradise – Plan 2022, we can truly appreciate all that was accomplished, which in turn, supported our growing Town. Budget 2023 is our last budget guided by this plan, as next year we will be preparing a new strategic plan, one that builds on the achievements of Your Paradise and sets forth our direction for the

coming years. We will once again seek public input on developing the new plan and we look forward to hearing the feedback and ideas from residents and all our key stakeholders.

Your Worship, one of the key elements in our budget preparations is our annual Budget Talks consultations. This year we held a multifaceted public engagement exercise to seek input from residents and businesses about budget priorities. It involved council pop-ups around Town where residents could share their ideas directly with Council, a Twitter Town Hall with the Mayor, direct input from our local Chambers of Commerce, and an on-line survey which received over 450 responses. Budget Talks 2023 garnered the largest response we've received since we started having budget consultations. We thank all those who took the time to participate and share their ideas, suggestions, and input with us. The information gathered during Budget Talks 2023 was carefully considered in our budget deliberations.

These past couple of months we have also thoroughly reviewed all departments and spending areas – we asked the tough questions, we reviewed all the options and scenarios, and we debated fully the priorities for the coming year. The rising costs experienced by our residents are also being felt here at the Town. Like all municipalities, it is costing more to provide the programs and services that our residents need and deserve. Just as our residents face rising fuel prices, so too does the Town, just as homeowners face rising costs for materials needed to make home repairs or renovations, so too does the Town, and just as residents are faced with hard choices to make their income stretch further, so too does the Town. We understand what our residents are dealing with, and it was of utmost importance to us as we entered budget preparations. We want to continue to be a growing Town, to be the community that people choose to call home, and that means making strategic decisions - ones that support all areas and departments, and ensures we stay on a path of planned, sustained development.

Your Worship, tonight, I present the 2023 balanced municipal budget for the Town of Paradise. It is \$40.7 million and allows us to provide the services and programs needed to operate a municipality of our size. With just about 23,000 residents, it is important we make balanced investments – ones that give the right mix of essential

services and community programming while at the same time enabling us to properly manage all our assets and infrastructure.

Budget 2023 does bring a modest increase to the residential mil rate and the residential and commercial water and sewer rates. Next year the residential mil rate will be 7.4, a change of .2 with water and sewer moving to \$625 from \$600. Under the mil rate increase, the average household will spend an additional \$15 per month for residential taxes. The commercial water and sewer will increase to 1.5 mil from 1.0.

While it was very difficult to decide to increase the residential mil rates and water and sewer rates, it is the right decision to make for the good of our Town. We understand this is not the news our residents want to hear and we assure them there was considerable discussion on competing priorities and analysis on this matter. Without the increase, we would be faced with the difficult decision of reducing programs and services. We have carefully planned our priorities for the coming year. Each and every budget decision is thoroughly reviewed. We know our residents have given us a tremendous responsibility and that is foremost in our minds.

Your Worship, in Budget 2023 we are allocating \$8.1 million for regional services, which is 20 percent of our annual budget. Regional services enable residents to have emergency services, clean drinking water, the convenience of flushing toilets, garbage collection, and access to public transit. Often, we don't realize there is a cost to these routine activities, but these essential services, like all municipal programs and services, have operational costs. There is tremendous efficiency and cost-savings in availing of these services regionally; however, we must still pay our share.

Your Worship, as a fast-growing Town it is critical that we have, and maintain, the necessary infrastructure to support the day-to-day life of our residents – things like roads, water and sewer, snow clearing, and recreational facilities and amenities.

Paradise knows all too well the importance of properly working municipal infrastructure. Back in 2019, Lift Station 10 at the corner of Topsail Road and St. Thomas Line, had an equipment failure, something no municipality wants to go through. The station is one of the largest in the province and handles the largest volume

of waste in the Town. At the time, the necessary repairs were completed, and the station returned to full operation. When faced with such an incident, it is incumbent on Council to thoroughly review what happened and ensure all mitigating measures are taken. In 2021, Council awarded a tender to engineering consultants to explore the best option to ensure Lift Station 10 continues to operate. They reviewed alternatives for repairs, redundancy, upgrades, or a new facility. We understand we need to invest in this critical piece of Town infrastructure, and we are in the process of determining how best to move forward. Budget 2023 allocates funds to support this work. We are currently reviewing the recommendations of the consultant, and Council will determine the right option for our needs before the end of the year.

This year we started Phase I of the Evergreen Village upgrade project. This area of Town has some of the oldest infrastructure and this project is bringing important updates. In Phase I, several streets in the area are receiving water and sewer and road upgrades. Considerable progress was made this year, and Budget 2023 is making the necessary investment for Phase I to be completed next year. These upgrades will have direct positive impacts on the homeowners, who will have up-to-date water and sewer infrastructure and residential installations along with much-needed road improvements.

Your worship, Evergreen Village is not the only water and sewer project for 2023. Next year work will begin for water and sewer installation on Stephen's Road and Neary's Road, the next streets on the Town's Water and Sewer Priority List. This year, the project design was completed, and on-site work will begin at the start of the 2023 construction season. We are following our Water and Sewer Priority List and will continue to complete streets as we receive funding for these types of projects. For the past decade, the Town has invested over \$20 million to complete water and sewer projects under the Priority List. For all of this work, the Town has been fortunate to receive funding, and now more than ever in the current financial climate, it is important to exhaust all available funding programs to support these types of projects. This year water and sewer was completed on Moonlight Drive and with the completion of Stephen's Road and Neary's Road in 2023, there will be just eight streets remaining on the Water and Sewer Priority List.

In Budget 2023 we are allocating \$1 million for our annual street rehabilitation. Over the past several years we have increased this investment so that we can make the necessary road renewals, repairs and maintenance. Twice a year, over 300 lane kilometres of roads in the Town are assessed, and work priorities are determined from that. The goal is to improve our road network while at the same time making the required repairs to extend the life of these municipal assets.

In Budget 2023 we are allocating \$1 million for our annual street rehabilitation.

Your Worship, we will continue with the Elizabeth Park Refresh project in 2023. With solid public engagement input, we developed a refresh plan for one of our largest neighbourhoods and we are pleased to be making improvements in this area of our Town. This year we started Phase I of the refresh which involved upgrades to the central trail system, which runs from Canterbury Drive to Stephanie Avenue, to bring it to Grand Concourse standards, along with starting the Top Pond Trail. In Budget 2023 we are allocating funds to continue that work and the plans include beginning to install bicycle lanes in the neighbourhood and to refresh Lombardy Place Park. Bicycle lanes promote connectivity and active living, many of our residents are rediscovering the joys of cycling around Town and we are proud to foster initiatives to support active living. The bicycle lanes will also help with our neighbourhood guieting program through lane delineation and line painting support. As we upgrade the trails in Elizabeth Park and build the bicycle lane network, we are providing safer routes for those students walking and biking to school. We have heard from families in the area about the need for these initiatives and we are pleased to be able to move forward with them.

Lombardy Park in the Elizabeth Park neighbourhood has not had upgrades or improvements in many years, and we are investing funds in Budget 2023 to bring enhancements to this popular area. Next year, we plan to refurbish the tennis courts, the basketball

courts and ball hockey area along with adding horseshoe pits. When completed, Lombardy Park will be restored and be a place for community gatherings, Town pop-up events, and be an outdoor recreation area with something for everyone.

Your Worship, for the past couple of years, we have been working on neighbourhood quieting initiatives to address speeding concerns and improper ATV use and improve overall safety throughout our Town. We repeatedly hear from residents about these concerns, and Council echoes their views. Addressing these issues isn't a one size fits all solution – rather, it's about exploring options to address the issues in specific areas and neighbourhoods. We have implemented crossing guards at the four elementary schools, installed permanent and temporary traffic calming initiatives - tailored to the area, municipal enforcement bicycle patrols on our trails, chicanes on the T'Railway, and supported a Neighbourhood Watch program. Budget 2023 allocates funding to continue these initiatives and to expand them to other areas in Town, like the bicycle lanes in Elizabeth Park and pedestrian islands for permanent traffic calming on Karwood Drive and the crosswalk at Topsail Road and Glendarek Drive.

In Budget 2023 we are allocating funds to begin to install bicycle lanes in Elizabeth Park which encourages active living and supports our neighbourhood quieting.

In Budget 2023 we are making the investments to begin site preparations for our part of the Canada Summer Games. The Town is thrilled to be involved in this national sporting event as the host location for the beach volleyball competition. In just a couple of years, in 2025, we will welcome athletes and spectators from across the country to our very own Paradise Park and we can't wait. It is exciting to work with our municipal neighbours to bring the Canada Summer Games to the region and to make investments that will have a lasting legacy for Paradise Park and our Town.

Your Worship, Peter Barry Duff Memorial Park is often described as a hidden gem in our Town. Working closely with the Peter Barry Duff Memorial Park Commission, the Town is proud to operate a wonderful park for youth and families. Last year we upgraded the trail and beach area, invested in the landscaping around the memorial, installed a natural seating area for the ballfield, and we had Christmas lights beautifully twinkling along the trail, which are returning this holiday season. For 2023, we are investing to rejuvenate the Frog Pond and install a new playground for this park. It has been many years since the playground equipment was upgraded, and we look forward to bringing another enhancement to this much-loved park.

Budget 2023 also contains investments to continue with our trail improvements. The trail system in Paradise is well-used by all our residents, from our youngest to the young at heart, our trails are used year—round. It is one of the many amenities which make Paradise a community of choice, enhances our placemaking, improves connectivity throughout the Town, and helps our residents lead an active lifestyle. This year we completed upgrades to a section of T'Railway and installed two new trails — Copper Canyon Trail and Top Pond Trail. In 2023, our trail work includes the annual maintenance program along with another two new trails. One will be installed in the Trenton Drive area in Fairview Estates which when completed will provide students with an accessible walking trail to school. We are also doing Phase I of the Seascape Drive Trail which will connect Howard Avenue and Little John Avenue to Noah's Place Park.

Your Worship, for the past couple of years, we have been working to bring a Community Boathouse to our Town, in conjunction with the Avalon Dragons. We have secured a location at 1717 Topsail Road, we have completed public engagement getting input from our residents, and we have had meaningful discussions with the Avalon Dragons. The next step is to award the request for proposals for the design of the facility and our goal is to finalize the design next year. As a Council, we appreciate working with our community partners towards the common goal of enhancing our Town and ensuing we have the right programs and services in place for residents and our community groups.

Budget 2023 allocated funds for improvements to the Milton Road Clubhouse and Ballfield, something our softball and baseball organizations will be happy to hear. Those groups have shared with us the need to upgrade that recreational facility, and we are pleased to be able to move forward with this work.

In Budget 2023 we make further allocations for more equipment and additional snow clearing staff. Each winter, hundreds of kilometres of roads, sidewalks, and trails are maintained and it's all about ensuring we have equipment and staff to give the right service level for our growing Town.

In talking about our recreation investments for 2023, I want to take a moment to speak about the need for a swimming pool. All of us on Council have heard from residents about adding a pool to our recreation amenities. We appreciate the feedback and as part of Budget Talks 2023 we decided to ask our residents about a pool. We gave the full context, explaining that a pool could not be built without funding from provincial and federal governments, and that once built, operating a facility would mean a 6 per cent tax increase. The responses were split, 47 percent of respondents did not support a tax increase for a pool while 40 percent supported a tax increase for the pool and the remaining 13 percent responded as neutral. There was no clear support for such an investment. Given current fiscal pressures, it is not prudent at this time, to explore a pool for our Town. Our partnership with The Works enables swimming lessons strictly for Paradise residents at the Aguarena, and we will continue to explore opportunities throughout the region to meet the needs of our residents while ensuring strong fiscal management.

Your Worship, a top priority for residents is snow clearing, and Council certainly agrees. Last year we committed to a three-year investment to improve snow clearing operations with the addition of equipment and staff. Global supply chain issues and other

market factors delayed some of the equipment acquisitions, but it is expected to be ready for the upcoming winter season. In Budget 2023 we make further allocations for more equipment and additional snow clearing staff. When everything is acquired and in place, our operations will change from seven to eight snow clearing routes which will improve the efficiency and timeliness for our crews. Each winter, hundreds of kilometres of roads, sidewalks, and trails are maintained and it's all about ensuring we have equipment and staff to give the right service level for our growing Town.

Your Worship, over the past several years, we have made investments to offer our services online or virtually where it makes sense to do so. In 2023 we are continuing with this investment, adding areas our stakeholders have been asking about. We plan to launch a citizen notification system where residents can decide how and what they want to be notified about. Updates on things like road work, garbage schedule changes, storm closures, and Town events can be issued through email, text messaging, or phone calls. We also plan to implement a virtual City Hall as part of the financial re-engineering project. When implemented, residents and businesses will be able to access their tax accounts online, opt to receive invoices electronically, and submit payments online. Budget 2023 also contains funding to implement a new permitting system, one that is online. This is something our residents and developers have been asking for, and we are pleased to be able to move forward with this update. When implemented, it will be a great service improvement to our growing Town, and directly meet many residents' needs.

Strategic budget planning should include planning for the future, not just for next year, but for years to come. Several years ago, we started an Infrastructure Reserve Fund. The purpose of the fund is to allow the Town to start planning today for the needs of tomorrow, so that when the time comes, we have the money to repair and replace our assets. In creating the fund, we committed to make financial contributions as our budget planning permitted. I'm pleased to note, that since its creation in 2019, through prudent, strong fiscal management, we have been able to contribute to the fund each year. Budget 2023 allocates \$575,000 to the Infrastructure Reserve Fund and brings the total to \$2.755 million.

Your Worship, Budget 2023 presents a solid fiscal plan for the Town of Paradise, one that touches all services and programs, yet maintains careful and planned spending. And we are able to do this by maintaining one of the lowest debt-servicing ratios among municipalities in the province at 3.5 percent and managing a payroll which is only 31 percent of our operating costs, well below comparable municipalities in the province.

In 2023 we are continuing with this investment, adding areas our stakeholders have been asking about. We plan to launch a citizen notification system where residents can decide how and what they want to be notified about.

For the past several weeks, Council has been faced with difficult decision-making as we planned our budget priorities for 2023. As Chair of the Administration and Corporate Services Committee, I extend sincere thanks to all of Council for their thoughtful deliberation, debate, and dedication to finalizing Budget 2023. I also thank senior staff for their work and advice in the budget preparation process – your information, input, and expertise helped guide Council's discussions and it was invaluable to the process.

Budget 2023 presents a sound fiscal plan for the Town of Paradise, ensuring our residents have the services and programs they need and deserve, maintaining our strong financial position, and keeping us on the path of sustained and strategic growth. It is a budget that is right for Paradise, and I look with optimism to the year ahead and all that will be achieved in our Town. Thank you.

For those of you watching on Facebook Live, the video will now conclude. The Public Council Meeting is available via webcast on our website at www.paradise.ca/CouncilMeetings.

Thank you.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Paradise, in accordance with Section 77(1) of the Municipalities Act, adopt the 2023 Budget with operating revenues and expenditures totalling \$40,719,859, adopt the 2023 Schedule of Tax Rates as submitted, and adopt the 2023 Fee Schedule as submitted.

Budget Breakdown

2023 Operating Budget Summary

	2022 Budget	2023 Budget	% of Budget	% Change
Revenue				
Taxation	31,777,619	34,108,718	84%	7.3%
Grants from Other Governments	2,276,664	1,142,640	3%	-49.8%
Sale of Goods and Services	1,016,490	997,800	2%	-1.8%
Revenue from Own Sources	1,401,550	1,519,125	4%	8.4%
Transfers/Assessments	2,969,031	2,951,576	7%	-0.6%
	39,441,354	40,719,859	100%	3.2%
Expenditures				
General Government	6,454,442	6,910,018	17%	7.1%
Protective Services	5,857,202	5,544,642	14%	-5.3%
Transportation Services	8,074,064	8,381,899	21%	3.8%
Environmental Services	5,018,428	5,087,591	12%	1.4%
Planning & Development	932,114	962,301	2%	3.2%
Recreation and Community Services	3,916,161	4,345,804	11%	11.0%
Debt Charges	1,815,461	1,283,028	3%	-29.3%
Capital Upgrades	6,476,082	7,304,576	18%	12.8%
Infrastucture Replacement Reserve	500,000	575,000	1%	15.0%
Other	397,400	325,000	1%	-18.2%
	39,441,354	40,719,859	100%	3.2%
Net Revenue (Expenditures)	-	-		

Revenue	2022 Budget	2023 Budget	% of Budget	% Change
Taxation				
Property Tax Revenue - Residential	18,136,281	19,792,440	48.6%	9.1%
Property Tax Revenue -Commercial	3,340,953	3,405,050	8.4%	1.9%
Business Tax Revenue	4,824,457	5,041,322	12.4%	4.5%
Water & Sewer Fees - Residential	5,169,485	5,452,775	13.4%	5.5%
Water & Sewer Fees - Commercial	306,443	417,131	1.0%	36.1%
	31,777,619	34,108,718	83.8%	7.3%
Government Transfers				
Gas Tax Revenue	1,832,174	988,140	2.4%	-46.1%
Provincial Share of Debt	289,990	-	0.0%	-100.0%
Other Grants	149,164	149,164	0.4%	0.0%
Grants in Lieu	5,336	5,336	0.0%	0.0%
	2,276,664	1,142,640	2.8%	-49.8%
Revenue from Own Sources				
Infrastructure Improvement Fee	200,000	200,000	0.5%	0.0%
Licenses, Permits & Fees	801,550	844,125	2.1%	5.3%
Investment Income	400,000	475,000	1.2%	18.8%
	1,401,550	1,519,125	3.7%	8.4%
Sale of Goods and Services				
Recreation and Community Services	1,016,490	997,800	2.5%	-1.8%
	1,016,490	997,800	2.5%	-1.8%
Transfers/Assessments				
Open Space Reserve ¹	630,250	656,625	1.6%	4.2%
Equipment Reserve ²	1,203,663	850,000	2.1%	100.0%
Carry Forward Reserve ³		770,000	1.9%	
Gas Tax Reserve ⁴	1,135,118	674,951	1.7%	-40.5%
	2,969,031	2,951,576	7.2%	-1%
	39,441,354	40,719,859	100%	3.2%

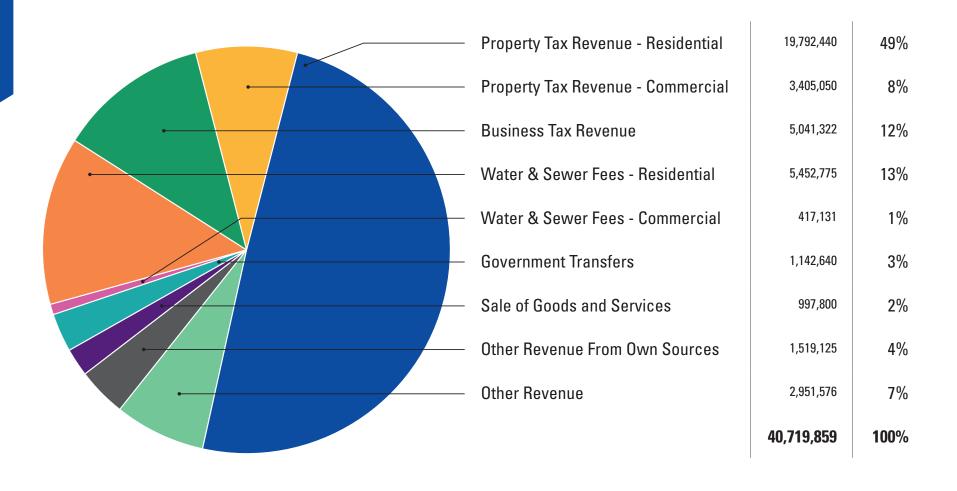
Notes: 1. Park outfitting fees and cash in lieu of open space received through development agreements | 2. Equipment approved and ordered in 2022 budget, to be delivered in 2023 | 3. Funds for 2022 projects to be completed in 2023 | 4. Federal Gas Tax Funds received in 2022 for projects to be completed in 2023

Expenditures	2022 Budget	2023 Budget	% of Budget	% Change
General Government				
General Administration	3,592,035	3,735,889	9.2%	4.0%
Council Expenses	340,659	341,773	0.8%	0.3%
Property Assessments	243,152	247,702	0.6%	1.9%
Engineering & Infrastructure	1,194,171	1,462,617	3.6%	22.5%
Common Services	1,084,425	1,122,037	2.8%	3.5%
	6,454,442	6,910,018	17.0%	7.1%
Protective Services				
Regional Fire Services	4,842,216	4,645,241	11.4%	-4.1%
Municipal Enforcement	494,526	418,663	1.0%	-15.3%
Emergency Planning	7,000	8,000	0.02%	14.3%
Crossing Guards	104,000	100,000	0.2%	-3.8%
Security Services	77,400	75,500	0.2%	-2.5%
Inspections	324,160	288,338	0.7%	-11.1%
Animal and Pest Control	7,900	8,900	0.02%	12.7%
	5,857,202	5,544,642	13.6%	-5.6%
Transportation Services				
Vehicle Operation and Maintenance	1,232,763	1,358,952	3.3%	10.2%
Roads and Sidewalks	2,550,440	2,786,488	6.8%	9.3%
Snow Removal	3,172,152	3,041,839	7.5%	-4.1%
Public Transit	310,089	344,000	0.8%	10.9%
Street Lighting & Traffic Lights	808,620	850,620	2.1%	5.2%
	8,074,064	8,381,899	20.6%	3.8%
Environmental Services				
Water Supply	2,323,461	2,304,726	5.7%	-0.8%
Sewage Collection and Disposal	902,120	1,033,110	2.5%	14.5%
Garbage Collection and Disposal	1,338,401	1,272,737	3.1%	-4.9%
Water and Sewer Division	454,446	477,018	1.2%	5.0%
	5,018,428	5,087,591	12.5%	1.4%

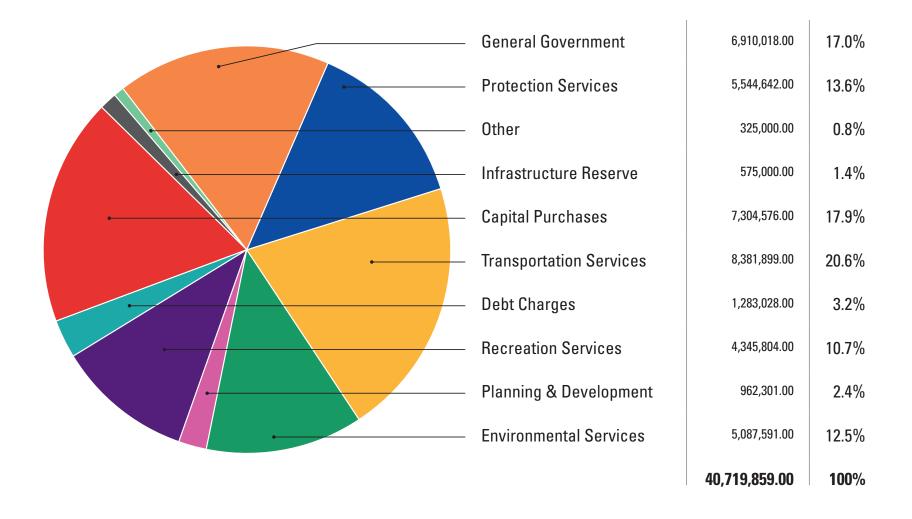
Expenditures	2022 Budget	2023 Budget	% of Budget	% Change
Planning & Development				
Planning and Economic Development	932,114	962,301	2.4%	3.2%
	932,114	962,301	2.4%	3.2%
Recreation and Community Services				
Recreation Administration	550,453	568,194	1.4%	3.2%
Facilities Maintenance	185,843	175,435	0.4%	-5.6%
Recreation and Community Centers	954,137	954,117	2.3%	0.0%
Arena & Fitness Center	1,214,746	1,476,226	3.6%	21.5%
Parks, Playgrounds, Fields & Trails	277,625	347,300	0.9%	25.1%
Programs, Activities and Events	656,957	752,199	1.8%	14.5%
Other Community Initiatives	76,400	72,333	0.2%	-5.3%
	3,916,161	4,345,804	10.7%	11.0%
Debt Services				
Town Share	1,525,471	1,283,028	3.2%	-15.9%
Provincial Share	289,990		0.0%	-100.0%
	1,815,461	1,283,028	3.2%	-29.3%
Capital Upgrades				
Road Improvements	2,041,181	1,800,000	4.4%	-11.8%
Water & Sewer Upgrades	1,268,988	899,951	2.2%	-29.1%
Vehicles and Equipment	1,488,663	2,850,000	7.0%	91.4%
Parks and Trails	904,250	674,625	1.7%	-25.4%
Recreational Facilities	80,000	713,000	1.8%	791.3%
Facility Upgrades	293,000	290,000	0.7%	100.0%
General	400,000	77,000	0.2%	-80.8%
	6,476,082	7,304,576	17.9%	12.8%

Expenditures	2022 Budget	2023 Budget	% of Budget	% Change
Fiscal Services and Reserves				
Infrastructure Replacement Reserve	500,000	575,000	1.4%	15%
Other	397,400	325,000	0.8%	-18%
	897,400	900,000	2.2%	0%
	39,441,354	40,719,859	100%	3.2%

Where the money comes from



Where the money goes







www.paradise.ca