

2024 Budget Highlights

Budget Summary

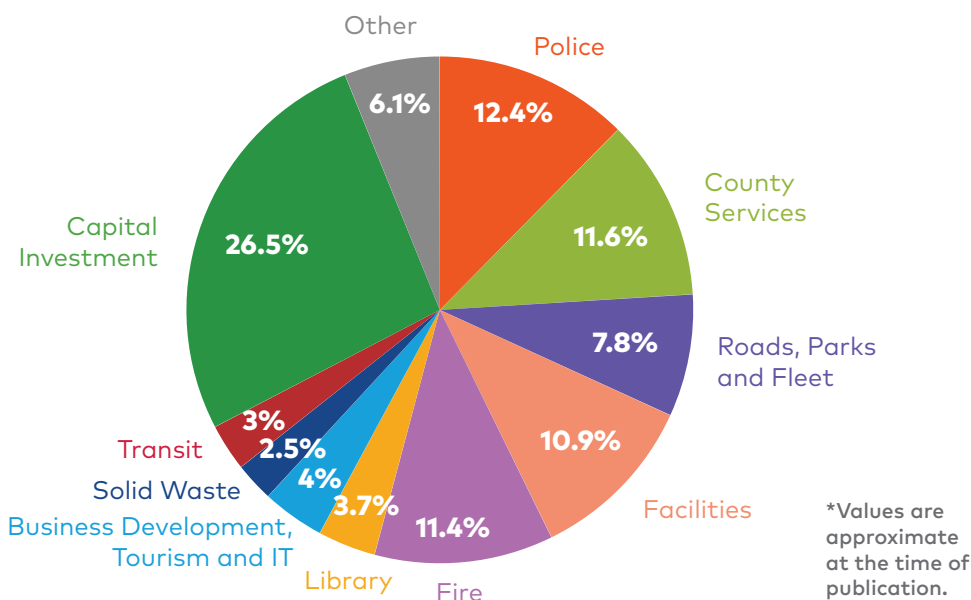
The City of Orillia's approved 2024 Budget levy consists of \$72.5 million in net operating expenditures and \$68.6 million in capital expenditures to provide a wide variety of quality services that reflects the priorities and the diverse needs of our community.

Despite economic pressures such as high inflation rates and escalating service contract values beyond the municipality's control, the overall increase to the tax levy is 1.73%, which is well below the current rate of inflation experienced across the province and one of the lowest Orillia levy increases of the past several years.

The budget focuses on fiscal responsibility by maintaining crucial core services, managing growth, and supporting key community initiatives. The 2024 Budget includes significant investments into infrastructure, increased affordable housing resources, climate change action, and service contracts for policing and social services.

The largest increase within the 2024 Budget is related to external service providers, in particular Simcoe County services and Ontario Provincial Police services. The budget impact is \$1.38 million and results in a 1.6% tax levy increase.

Where Orillia's Taxes Go*



Council approved a financially sound budget for 2024 that maintains or enhances municipal service levels while holding the line on costs despite today's economic climate. This is a testament to Council's dedication to enhancing the quality of life and wellbeing of all Orillia residents while being fiscally responsible to our taxpayers."

- MAYOR DON MCISAAC

What does this mean for property owners? A 1.73% increase equates to approximately \$23 for every \$100,000 in assessed property value.

Net Operating Budget Highlights

The City of Orillia's approved 2024 Budget levy consists of \$72.5 million in net operating expenditures in order to support quality services for our community.

Municipal taxes provide significant value to residents as the budget supports various services that impact residents' daily lives including 24/7 emergency services (police, fire, paramedics), long-term care and social housing, transit, waste collection, safe water, snow plowing, recreation and culture opportunities, parks, trails and beaches, library services, and a host of others.

A significant portion of the 2024 Budget is allocated to contracted services including policing (\$9.3 million) and social services provided by the County of Simcoe such as affordable housing, paramedic services etc. (\$9.7 million).

Encouraging Active Transportation

As recommended by the Transit Advisory Committee and approved by Council through the 2024 Budget process, new initiatives to support residents and encourage active transportation in Orillia will be implemented in 2024 including a transit pass pilot program offering free transit use for teens aged 13 to 19 and a seniors flat transit rate of \$2.

Balancing User Fees with the Overall Tax Levy

Through the budget process, Council focused on user fees and rate-supported services to ensure rates were appropriately aligned and to reduce the pressures on the overall tax levy including recreation, parking and water/wastewater. Council approved changes to water/wastewater and stormwater rates to address the City's ongoing administrative, capital and operating costs to provide water, wastewater and stormwater services. These changes have an approximate impact of an additional \$80 per year for the average residential household.



Council Priorities

As part of the 2022 to 2026 Council term, Orillia Council identified the following priorities:

- Helping the community with things that matter such as physician recruitment, housing, roads infrastructure and services, protecting the City's natural beauty and implementing the Climate Change Action Plan.
- Business retention and expansion and arts and culture.
- Looking at ways to help our most vulnerable, such as those facing homelessness, mental health and the opioid crisis.
- Strengthening community participation/engagement through equity, diversity, inclusion and truth and reconciliation.

Through the 2024 budget process funding was approved to take action on these priorities including:

- Funding to community agencies such as Information Orillia, Orillia and Area Physician Recruitment, Orillia Museum of Art and History, Sustainable Orillia, and more.
- Funding for new equity and diversity initiatives, which could include diversity sidewalks or banners, a Sacred Fire Circle, and wayfinding in various languages. Guidance from the EDI Roundtable will help inform these priorities.
- Increase of \$225,000 to the Affordable Housing Reserve annual contribution.
- Funding for a Poverty Reduction Strategy.
- Funding for the Orillia Overnight Warming Centre.
- Increase of \$15,000 for traffic calming measures.
- Annual Sidewalk and Roads Program capital investment in the amount of \$3.2 million.
- Additional \$100,000 for road spot repairs.
- Corporate Website refresh in the amount of \$50,000.

Investing in Orillia's Future

The City of Orillia is focusing on creating a resilient, sustainable organization through the investment in human resources for areas of growth and focus including:

- Aquatic Supervisor
- Fitness Centre Operations
- Youth Services Safer Community (grant funded)
- Sr. Financial Planning Analyst
- Seasonal Enforcement Officer
- Manager of By-law Enforcement
- EIS Technologist
- Downtown Streetscape Project Manager (contract)
- Traffic Technician (contract)
- Corporate Training Specialist (contract)
- Project and Contract Services Coordinator
- Parking Maintenance Staffing





Capital Budget Highlights

Orillia Council approved a capital budget of \$68.6 million, prioritizing projects against long-term funding considerations and the community's infrastructure needs. Overall, the 2024 Capital Budget includes 118 project investments funded from a variety of sources.

FOCUSED INVESTMENTS

Lacie Street Reconstruction Project Phase 2 (\$9.9 million)

This project involves the reconstruction of Lacie Street from approximately 50m north of Borland Street East to Parkhurst Crescent. It includes replacement of existing watermains, storm and sanitary sewers, replacement/installation of sidewalks on both sides of the street and the addition of bike lanes from North Street East to Parkhurst Crescent.

Brian Orser Arena Reconstruction (\$12.4 million)

The reconstruction of Brian Orser Arena will extend the life of the facility by approximately 25 years and includes common areas, parking lot, ice surface, HVAC and refrigeration systems.

Infrastructure Needs

As part of the 2024 Budget process, Orillia Council put a high priority on investing in infrastructure needs, including improving roads and sidewalks, maintaining recreation and culture facilities, and investing in the City's fleet and equipment.

- Downtown streetscape reconstruction design (\$1,600,000).
- Annual sidewalk program (\$1,246,000).
- Road reconstruction - Borland Street from Lawrence Avenue to Peter Street (\$7,952,250).
- Harvie Hill standpipe construction (\$11,000,000).
- Transit bus replacement (\$1,750,000).
- Lightfoot Trail resurfacing and repair (\$150,000).
- City fleet replacements (\$1,650,000).
- City fleet additions (\$600,000).
- Barnfield Point Recreation Centre maintenance and equipment upgrades (\$1,110,000).
- Parks, Recreation, Culture and Trails Master Plan update (\$185,000).
- Playground apparatus replacement (\$457,000).
- McKinnell Square Park washroom building refurbishment (\$320,000).
- Stormwater Management System improvements (\$1,200,000).

Addressing Climate Change



\$1.9 MILLION+ IN 2024 FUNDING

To support the implementation of the City's recently adopted Climate Change Action Plan and Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, through the 2024 Budget process Orillia Council approved the following:

- Water bottle filling stations.
- LED lighting upgrades in parks, facilities and parking lots.
- Fleet optimization and net-zero strategy.
- Supporting Sustainable Orillia.
- Retrofits at various City facilities.
- Climate Change Action Plan supporting studies and update.

For more information about the City's Climate Change Action Plan and Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, visit orillia.ca/climatefuture.

Preparing for the Future

10-Year Capital Plan

The City of Orillia owns and maintains more than \$1 billion worth of assets (at current market value) including land, buildings, roads, water and sewer systems, and equipment. Planning for infrastructure maintenance is critical for the future and should include a focus on maintaining and improving the infrastructure that supports the community.

The 10-Year Capital Plan is an important guiding document that assists in determining future requirements and cash flows. An equally important part of the capital program is a focus on strengthening reserves, which aid in funding capital investments while playing a dual role in long-term financial stability and flexibility to manage unexpected events or opportunities.

The 10-Year Capital Plan is valued at over \$465 million, consisting of more than 300 capital projects. Of the total value, approximately 5% relates to growth and 80% asset replacement projects.

Over \$165 million is planned to be invested in roads and sidewalks over the next 10 years, which is just over a third of the total program.

FUNDING RESERVES

Reserves are one of the most important tools available to municipalities for achieving financial sustainability and flexibility.

Reserves not only assist municipalities in managing risks, but they also play an important role in the financing of capital costs.

The City's overall reserve position has consistently improved since 2018 through increased investment by Council. Since 2021, Orillia has implemented a reserve and debt policy, realigned reserve balances, instituted debt financing and further refined the 10-Year Capital Plan.

As a result, the City's overall reserve balance has improved and is forecasted to grow from \$50 million to \$75 million over a 10-year period (excluding legacy reserves).



Contact Us

Get full details on the 2024 City of Orillia Budget online at orillia.ca/budget.

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