



2025 ANNUAL REPORT



DISTRICT OF RAINY RIVER
SERVICES BOARD

Message from the Chief Administrative Officer

I am proud to share a year defined by planning, partnerships and progress at the District of Rainy River Services Board (DRRSB).

2025 marked the first year of implementing our 2025–2030 Strategic Plan. Administration’s focus was on turning the Board’s vision into action by strengthening the foundation needed to continue to deliver essential services and respond to growing and changing pressures across the district.

Over the year through housing and homelessness prevention, children’s services, Ontario Works and our paramedicine programs, we supported individuals and families at different stages of life while helping municipalities manage complex social, health, and economic challenges. In a rural and remote district like ours, services must be practical, connected, and responsive to local realities. In 2025, we took meaningful steps to strengthen that approach.

We invested in our workforce through development and workplace well-being initiatives recognizing that strong services depend on skilled and supported employees.

By using local data, service experience, and strong partnerships, the DRRSB contributed to efforts addressing unmet housing needs, workforce pressures, rural service delivery, and health system integration.

Across programs, we worked to strengthen communities through more coordinated, person-centred services. Highlights included the opening of a six-bed transitional housing program, and ongoing stabilization of our paramedic services.

At the same time, we focused on growing sustainably. Building condition audits and asset planning resources improved our ability to make informed capital and maintenance decisions. We advanced housing and redevelopment discussions with municipalities, Indigenous partners, and sector organizations, moving from early concepts toward clearer planning and feasibility.

While much of 2025 focused on strengthening our foundations, the progress made is already shaping how we deliver services, plan for the future, and expand our collaborative work with partners across the district.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their leadership, our municipal and community partners for their collaboration, and most importantly, the dedicated DRRSB staff who serve this district every day with professionalism, compassion, and resilience.

**Charene Gillies,
Chief Administrative Officer**



Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land we work on is the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe and Métis peoples, covered by Treaty 3, and that this land is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities. We also recognize the presence and contributions of urban Indigenous communities within our district. In recognition of this, we commit to building partnerships that respect Indigenous knowledge, cultures, and ways of being, and to fostering an inclusive environment that supports shared growth, learning, and community well-being.

Board of Directors

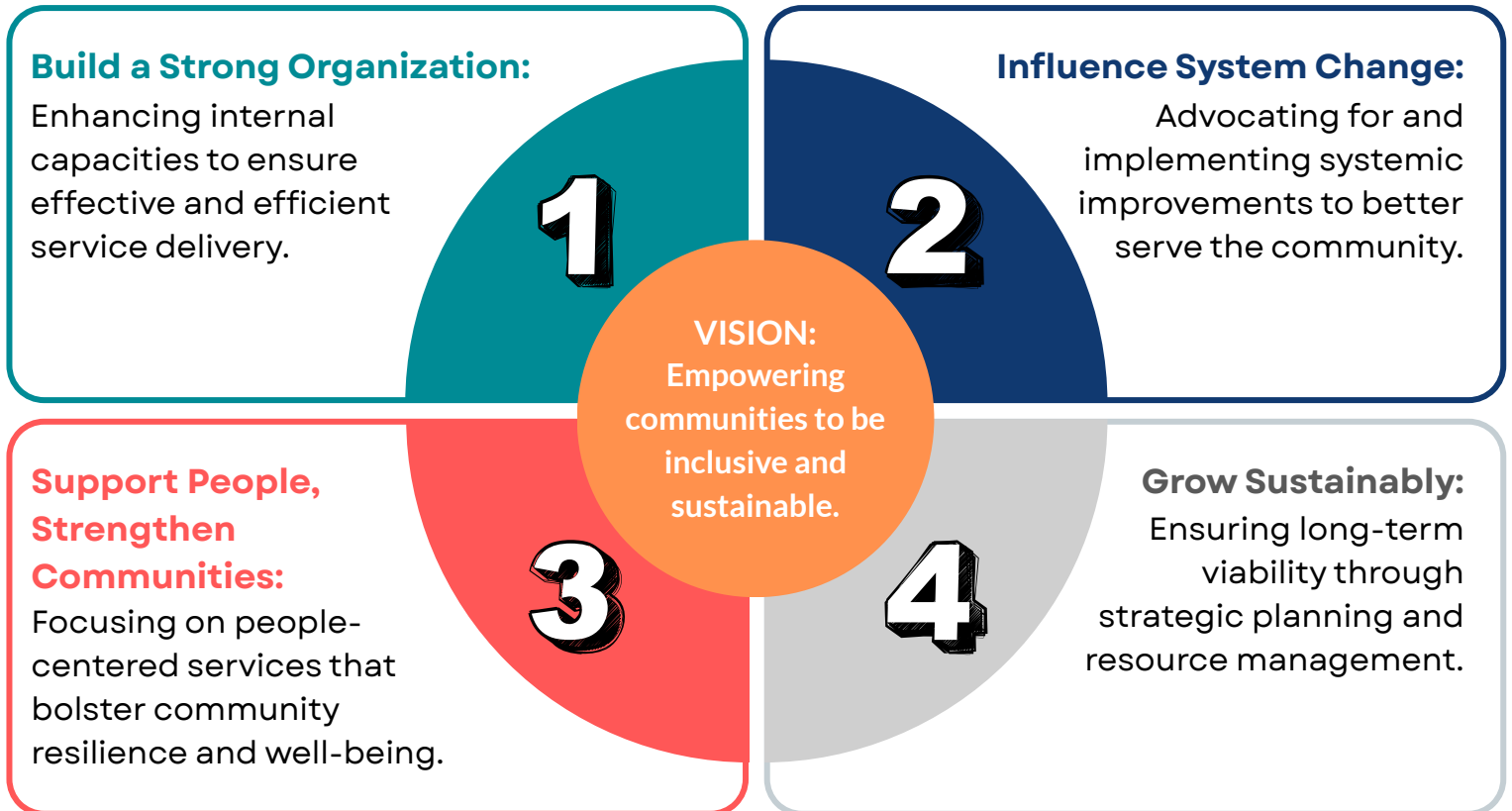


The Board is made up of 13 members including ten municipal members who must be elected members of Council and appointed by their respective Councils. Three members represent the unincorporated area (which is often referred to as "Territory Without Municipal Organization" or TWOMO).

Strategic Goals

Mission

To deliver quality services with accountability and respect to meet the needs of the district.



The District of Rainy River Services Board’s (DRRSB) Strategic Plan, titled Compassion. Collaboration. Innovation. A Vision for 2025–2030, outlines four strategic goals as noted above.

Throughout this Annual Report, each program area—Ontario Works, Children’s Services, Community Housing, Homelessness Prevention, Paramedic Services, Finance, and Human Resources—illustrates how our work aligns with DRRSB’s strategic goals. We continue to build a strong organization and resilient communities by supporting our staff, delivering person-centred services, and adapting to the changing needs of residents. At the same time, we are laying the groundwork for systemic change and sustainable growth through innovation, collaboration, and long-term planning. These efforts reflect our ongoing commitment to fostering inclusive, sustainable communities across the Rainy River District.

Paramedic Services

Chief's Message

In 2025, Rainy River District Paramedic Services continued to respond to increasing demand across the region, with call volumes rising by 10.7% over the previous year. This increase reflects broader system pressures and ongoing challenges in access to care across our communities.

Despite these pressures, our teams maintained strong performance, delivering timely, high-quality care while adapting to evolving operational demands. Whether responding to high-acuity emergencies or supporting patients through Community Paramedicine, our staff demonstrated professionalism, resilience, and a continued commitment to those we serve.

This work directly supports **Strategic Goal 1: Build a Strong Organization**, by highlighting the strength of our workforce, the adaptability of our service, and our ongoing commitment to meeting community needs effectively. I am proud of the work being done across the service. Our people remain our greatest strength, and their dedication ensures we continue to serve our communities each and every day.

Emergency Response Operations

In 2025, paramedics continued to operate within an increasingly demanding environment, responding to rising call volumes and ongoing system pressures across the region.

Despite these challenges, the service maintained strong operational performance through continuous monitoring of deployment, risk, and system demand. Adjustments to coverage and resource allocation were made in real time to ensure the best possible response capability across the district.

Paramedics consistently demonstrated resilience, professionalism, and a strong commitment to patient care; delivering timely, high-quality service across both urban and rural communities.

While pressures related to staffing, call volume, and system flow remain, the service continues to adapt and evolve to meet the needs of the communities it serves.

TURNOUT TIME PERFORMANCE



Average Turnout Time
(Red/Purple)

Standard: 2:00 | **+44 sec faster**

RAINY RIVER DISTRICT PARAMEDIC SERVICE - 2025

SYSTEM IN MOTION



323,464 KM
TRAVELED IN 2025

EQUAL TO DRIVING AROUND THE EARTH

Paramedic Services

MEDICAL PRIORITY DISPATCH SYSTEM

CALL DISTRIBUTION – 2025

5,392

TOTAL CALLS

+10.7%

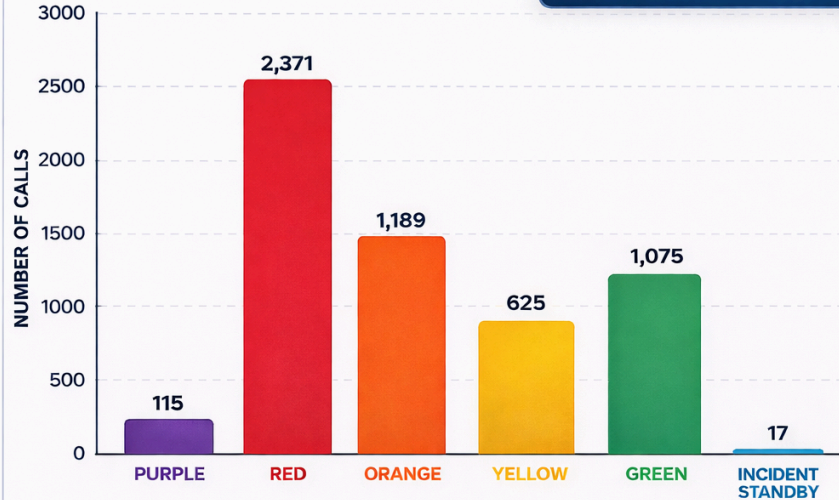
YEAR-OVER-YEAR

+519 CALLS FROM 2024

MPDS PRIORITY DEFINITIONS

- PURPLE**
Emergent and immediate life-threatening conditions
- RED**
Emergent and potentially life-threatening conditions
- ORANGE**
Urgent and potentially life-threatening
- YELLOW**
Non-urgent and potentially serious and no immediate threat to life
- GREEN**
Non-urgent, not serious and no immediate threat to life which may be deferred without detriment to patient outcome
- INCIDENT STANDBY**
Paramedics assigned on-site in support of allied agency operations where patients are not yet confirmed or accessible

CALLS BY PRIORITY LEVEL – 2025



i This distribution is based on 2025 call data. Definitions aligned with MPDS categories used in 2024 reporting.



Community Presence

Throughout 2025, paramedics remained a visible and trusted presence across the Rainy River District, supporting community events including school visits, seniors' initiatives, public safety events, and local gatherings.

Despite ongoing system pressures, staff continued to contribute beyond their core emergency response role; promoting health and safety, strengthening relationships and building trust within the communities they serve.

This ongoing presence reflects a commitment to community connection, reinforcing the role of paramedics not only as emergency responders, but as engaged and supportive members of the district.



The Teddy Bear Picnic and the Emo Fair were just some of the community events that paramedics attended.



Paramedic Services

Community Paramedicine

In 2025, Community Paramedicine continued to address critical gaps in access to care across the Rainy River District, particularly for residents without a primary care provider. With thousands of residents facing barriers to traditional healthcare access, the program delivered targeted, patient-centred services including in-home assessments, wellness clinics, wound care, remote care, and outreach to vulnerable populations.

These efforts directly support **Strategic Goal 3, Supporting People, Strengthening Communities**, by helping individuals with complex needs access appropriate care, reducing reliance on 911 services and avoidable emergency department visits, and improving overall connection to community-based supports.

At the same time, Community Paramedics strengthened partnerships across the healthcare system, improving continuity of care and helping patients navigate available services. Community Paramedicine remains a key component of sustainable healthcare delivery in the district, supporting prevention, early intervention, and improved health outcomes.



378

CLIENTS
SUPPORTED



1,400+

HOME VISITS
COMPLETED



164

WELLNESS CLINICS
DELIVERED



68%

REDUCTION IN REPEAT
911 UTILIZATION
(ENROLLED PATIENTS)

Looking Ahead

As we move forward, demand for paramedic services is expected to remain high, with continued pressures across the broader healthcare system. Rainy River District Paramedic Services will continue to adapt to this evolving environment by strengthening operational performance and enhancing integration with healthcare and community partners, including the Rainy River District Ontario Health Team partners. Our focus remains on delivering the right care, at the right time, while continuing to support both emergency response and proactive, community-based care across the region.

Rainy River District Paramedic Services remains committed to providing timely, compassionate, and high-quality care across the region. Through ongoing adaptation, strong partnerships, and a dedicated workforce, we will continue to meet the needs of our communities, today and into the future.

Children's Services

Growing Our Child Care Workforce

Access to child care depends on having qualified educators in place, and like many child care operators, DRRSB continues to face challenges with recruitment. When positions remain unfilled, child care spaces cannot open, leading to longer wait times for families.

In 2025, our team responded with a community-based recruitment effort. Staff participated in seven career fairs and community events across the district, promoting the early childhood education profession and sharing education and career pathways with potential candidates.

We also launched a Heart and Purpose Campaign to celebrate DRRSB educators, highlighting their meaningful impact on children, families, and communities while emphasizing the vital role of Early Childhood Educators in shaping strong foundations for lifelong learning.

These efforts led to positive results. By December 2025, staffing had increased by more than 16 per cent from the beginning of the year. While additional educators are still needed to fully staff all centres, this growth allowed more child care spaces to open and helped improve access for families.

This work supports **Strategic Goal 1: Build a Strong Organization** and reinforces our ongoing commitment to recruitment and retention so that more families can access the child care they need.



Staff attended seven career fairs and community events in 2025 to promote early childhood education as a profession.



An example of one of the Heart & Purpose Campaign posts highlighting DRRSB educators.

9
staff enrolled in
the Child
Development
Practitioner
apprenticeship
program

5
staff successfully
completed an Early
Childhood Education
(ECE) diploma program
and achieved
registration with the
College of ECE's

Children's Services

Planning for the Future of Child Care and Early Years

Child care and early years services play an important role in the well-being of children, families, and communities. In 2025, DRRSB finalized its *2026-2030 Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan*, setting a clear, community-driven direction for the future of these services across Rainy River District.

The Plan builds on local strengths, including quality programming, collaborative service delivery, and dedicated professionals, while responding to ongoing challenges such as workforce shortages, growing demand for child care, and the realities of serving families across a large rural and remote district.

More than 300 parents, caregivers, educators, local leaders, and employers helped shape the Plan. Their input informed five priorities that will guide this work over the next five years: improving access, investing in educators and support staff, strengthening inclusion, maintaining quality and consistency, and growing community partnerships.

This work supports **Strategic Goal 2: Influencing System Change** by providing a clear roadmap to strengthen service planning, support the workforce, and ensure the child care and early years system is well positioned to meet the needs of families across the district.



Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan 2026-2030

District of Rainy River Services Board



Find the Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan here!



583
children served in licensed child care programs in the district

597
children aged 0-6 took part in EarlyON programs



3,944
visits made by parents and caregivers to EarlyON Centres

Community Housing

In 2025, the Infrastructure Department achieved stronger staffing levels, enabling more consistent service across the housing units, administrative offices, paramedic stations, and children's services sites we serve. With a continued focus on communication, automation, and coordination, the team worked to improve efficiency and responsiveness in alignment with **Strategic Goal 3: Support People, Strengthen Communities**.

Aging facilities with increasingly complex repair needs remained a challenge in 2025. In response, the team strengthened preventive maintenance processes and continued to take a more proactive approach to asset upkeep, supporting **Strategic Goal 4: Grow Sustainably**. Annual inspections were completed at 329 housing units to identify repair needs, resulting in the creation of 149 work orders. Moving forward, the team will continue to prioritize improved communication, faster response times, and fewer repeat service calls.



49
unit turnovers
in 2025



5,808
hours of unit
turnover time



2,291
work orders
completed

Throughout the year, the Infrastructure Department also coordinated a number of repair and maintenance projects with contractors and consultants across the district, including:

- Cabinet replacement in the Riverview Manor common room
- Garden fence installation at Green Manor
- Concrete pad replacement at Green Manor
- Shingle and eavestrough replacement at Queen Street Manor
- Common room air conditioner replacement at Queen Street Manor
- Retaining wall and garage slab replacement at Queen Street Manor
- Driveway resurfacing at four Atikokan family units
- Exterior siding replacement at four Atikokan family units
- HRV replacement at Lady Frances Place
- HRV replacement at three FFMNP units
- Landscaping work at Faith NP Housing
- Shingle replacement and metal roof repairs at 450 Scott Street
- Landscaping work at 450 Scott Street
- Ambulance bay floor repairs at the Fort Frances Paramedic Station
- Parking lot paving and drainage improvements at the Rainy River Paramedic Station

Community Housing

Tenant Feedback Informing Housing Services Across the District

In 2025, the District of Rainy River Services Board conducted a district-wide tenant survey to understand how housing services are being experienced across Fort Frances, Atikokan, Emo, and Rainy River. Feedback focused on key areas including safety, maintenance, and communication.

Across the district, results show strong satisfaction with housing services. Average ratings in these areas scored above 4 out of 5, and most tenants reported feeling safe and supported in their homes. This consistency across communities points to stable housing environments and reliable service delivery throughout the district.

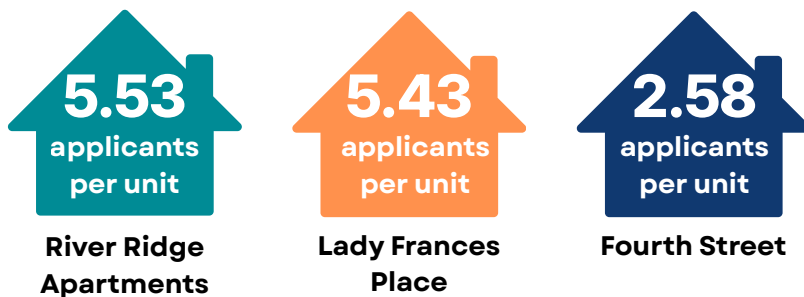


Tenants described their buildings as quiet, affordable, and comfortable. Feedback highlighted respectful communication and positive interactions with staff, along with maintenance teams that are approachable and responsive. These are the day-to-day elements that shape how housing is experienced and maintained across all communities.

Tenants also identified opportunities to strengthen services further, including clearer updates and continued responsiveness to maintenance requests. This feedback provides clear, practical direction for ongoing improvements across the district.

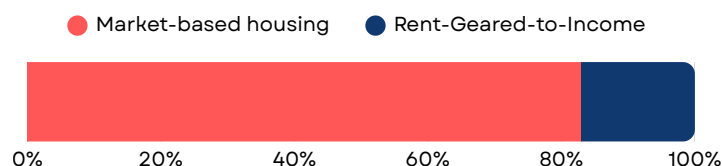
This work aligns with **Strategic Goal 3: Supporting People, Strengthening Communities**. By listening to tenants across all communities and using that input to guide decisions, housing services continue to evolve in a way that is consistent, responsive, and grounded in real experience.

Waitlist Pressure



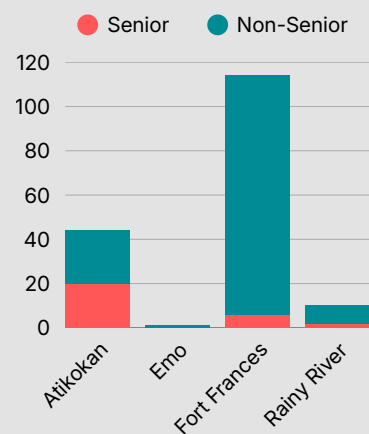
For Fourth Street, the waitlist indicates strong demand for family-sized units.

Housing Demand



Waitlist Numbers by Municipality

28 total seniors on waitlist | **141** total non-seniors on waitlist



Homelessness Prevention

HOPE Centre: Responding to Homelessness Across the District

The HOPE Centre offers two key programs that respond to homelessness across the Rainy River District: the Warming Centre and Transitional Housing. Together, these programs provide immediate support and a pathway toward longer-term housing stability.

In 2025, the Warming Centre provided a safe, warm place for individuals during the coldest nights of the year, supporting 106 individuals over 1,825 visits and operating for 181 nights, including 30 nights below -20°C. As one warming centre guest shared, *“It gave me somewhere safe to go when I had nowhere else.”*

“

It gave me somewhere safe to go when I had nowhere else.

”

Transitional Housing remained at capacity throughout the year, supporting 20 individuals, all of whom entered from homelessness. With an average stay of 72 days and an active waitlist, the program continues to support individuals as they work toward stability. During this period, two individuals successfully transitioned from Transitional Housing into permanent housing, showing how the program supports movement into housing. As one resident shared, *“It gave me a chance to work on myself, get some support, and start making changes.”*

As district programs, these services reduce pressure on emergency services, improve system flow, and support a coordinated, community-based response to homelessness. This work aligns with **Strategic Goal 3: Supporting People, Strengthening Communities** by providing responsive, person-centred pathways from homelessness to housing stability.

By-Name List Supporting Housing Outcomes Across the District

The By-Name List provides a real-time, district-wide view of homelessness and helps coordinate support across agencies. As of December 2025, 40 individuals have been successfully housed through this approach, reflecting measurable progress in connecting people to stable housing.

This work supports **Strategic Goal 3: Supporting People, Strengthening Communities**. By using shared data to guide decisions and coordinate services, efforts are more targeted, responsive, and focused on achieving housing outcomes across the district. This approach also strengthens collaboration between partners, helping ensure individuals receive the right support at the right time.

Homelessness Prevention

Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP)

The Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) provides direct financial support to individuals and families at risk of losing their housing or needing assistance to secure it. Funded through provincial dollars, this program allows for flexible and timely responses to housing instability across the Rainy River District.

In 2025/2026, 39 households have accessed HPP supports through the District of Rainy River Services Board, reflecting those who applied directly to DRRSB. The majority received start-up funding (29 households), with additional supports provided for rent and utility arrears (8 households) and emergency shelter (2 households).

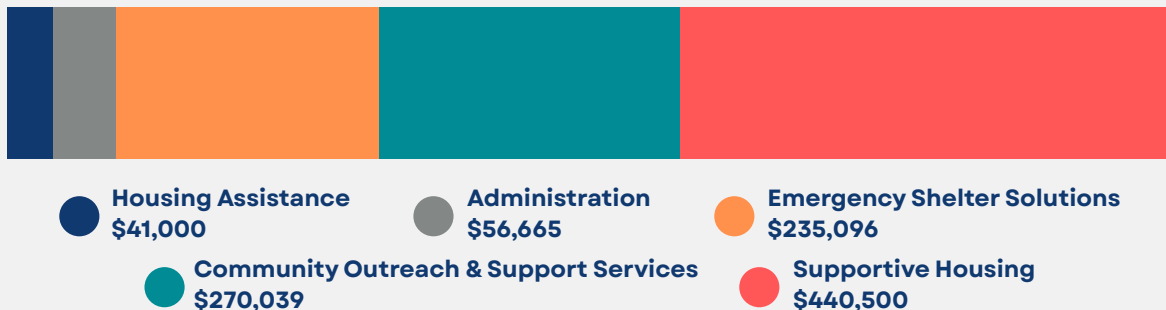
HPP supports individuals and families navigating financial pressures, housing transitions, and risk of eviction. As one individual shared, *“Without this support, I wouldn’t have been able to keep the power on in my house.”*

This work aligns with **Strategic Goal 3: Supporting People, Strengthening Communities** by providing responsive, person-centred assistance that helps individuals remain housed within their communities.

HPP is one component of a broader investment in housing and homelessness supports across the district. Provincial and federal funding allows the District of Rainy River Services Board to respond to a range of needs, from prevention to emergency response and longer-term housing solutions.

THE HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM (HPP)

DRRSB RECEIVED A TOTAL OF \$1,133,300 FOR 2025/26



Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI)

\$76,400

Two (2) Private Homes were repaired within the Rainy River District



Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI)

\$346,500

COCHI was used to provide supplement and capital funding to some non-profit and DRRSB owned buildings



Canadian Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)

\$47,000

COHB is a federal/provincial housing allowance program. DRRSB was able to help 10 households in our District in 2025

Ontario Works

A New Approach to Employment Support

In 2025, Ontario completed the final phase of its transition to Integrated Employment Services, bringing social assistance employment support and Employment Ontario services together in a more streamlined system.

Locally, this new approach began in March 2025. Employment services for Ontario Works clients are now delivered through Northern Community Development Services (NCDS) and the Atikokan Employment Centre, where clients can access individualized action plans, training support, and help with job searching. This change has helped connect clients with more specialized and coordinated employment support.

With employment support now delivered through dedicated service providers, our team has been able to focus more time on helping individuals with complex barriers and those who are not yet ready for employment, while continuing to provide responsive, person-centred service.

This work supports DRRSB **Strategic Goal 2: Influencing System Change**, by helping ensure people receive the right support at the right time.

AVERAGE
MONTHLY
ONTARIO WORKS
CASELOAD

252

Human Resources

In 2025, building a strong organization required both intention and adaptability from Human Resources. Amid sustained labour market pressures, HR partnered with leadership to take a proactive approach to organizational alignment, using natural transitions to strengthen structure rather than maintain the status quo. Realignments within Management and Finance clarified roles, strengthened accountability, and enhanced internal controls, positioning the organization not only for stability, but for the future.

Continued investments in learning and development, including Indigenous Cultural Safety, and compliance reinforced a workplace culture grounded in respect, inclusion, and professionalism.

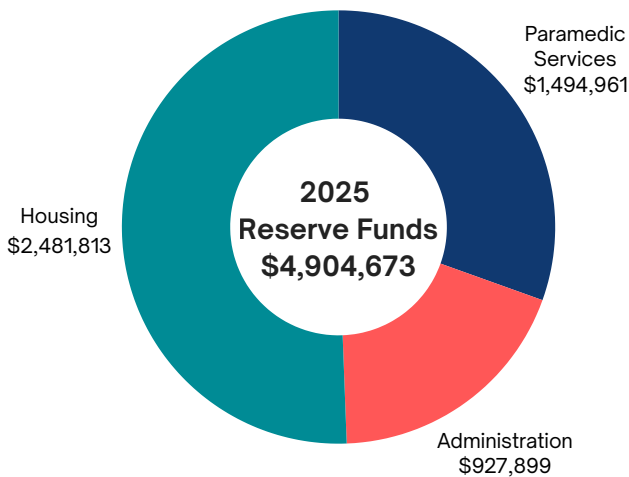
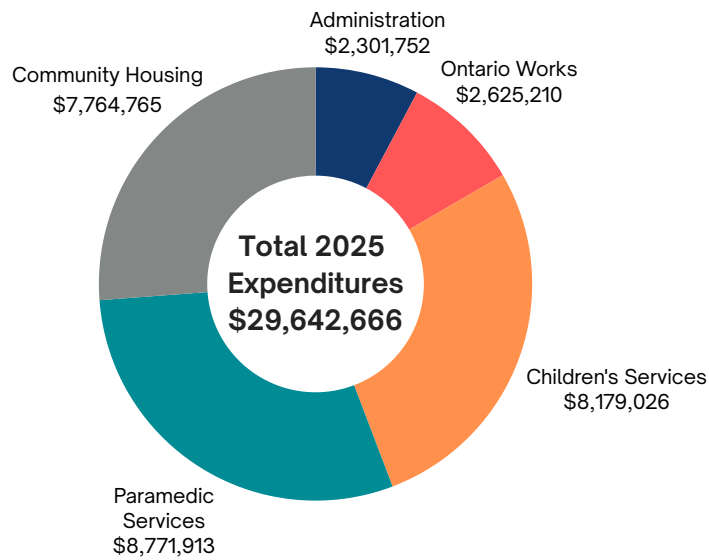
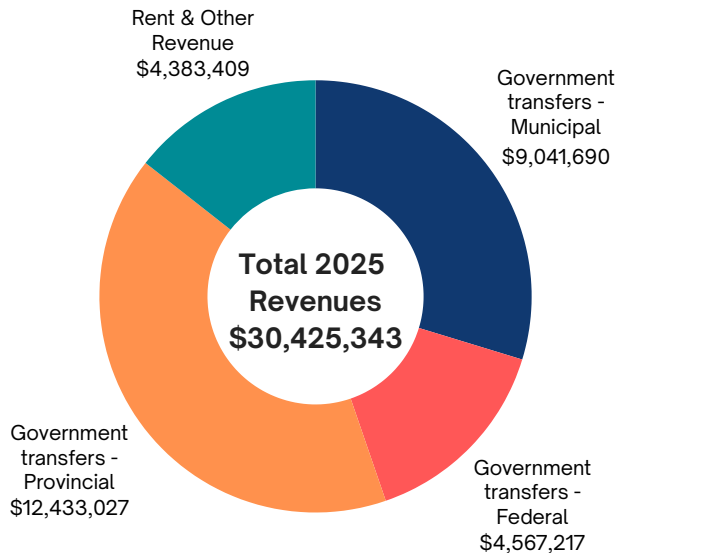
This work unfolded alongside ongoing recruitment and retention challenges in critical service areas. Targeted incentives, modernized recruitment approaches, and expanded workforce development efforts helped attract and retain talent. Supported by policy improvements, advocacy, and a focus on employee engagement, these actions reflect a commitment to immediate operational needs and long-term sustainability. Working collaboratively, HR continues to support the organization through change while shaping a stronger, more resilient workforce capable of delivering high-quality services.

Total
DRRSB Staff

199

as of December 31, 2025

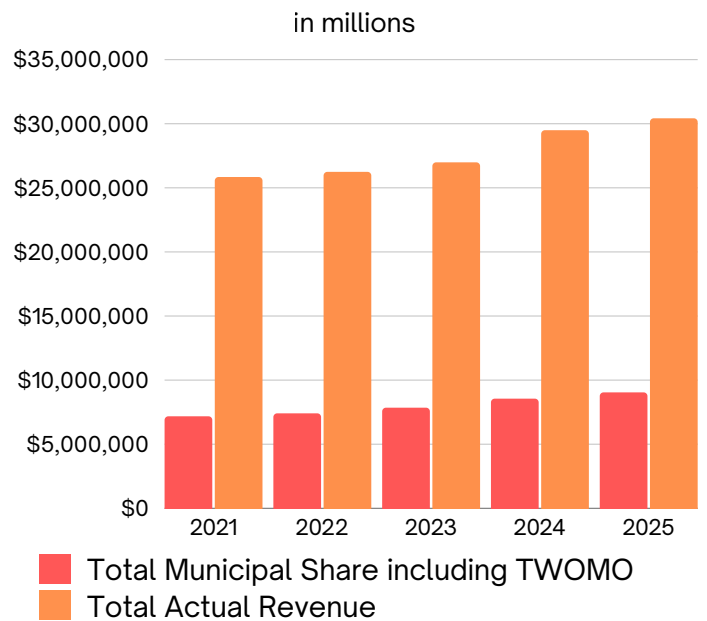
Finance



Balance Sheet

	2025	2024
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$22,420,584	\$14,095,516
Portfolio Investments	\$ -	\$ -
Accounts Receivable	\$5,008,587	\$4,263,158
Total Financial Assets	\$27,429,171	\$18,358,674
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$17,504,788	\$10,834,788
Deferred Revenue	\$2,931,510	\$900,287
Post-Retirement Benefits Liability	\$1,248,700	\$1,225,700
Asset Retirement Obligations	\$2,638,350	\$2,527,155
Total Liabilities	\$24,323,348	\$15,487,930
Net Financial Assets	\$3,105,823	\$2,870,744
Non-Financial Assets	\$23,098,437	\$22,550,839
Accumulated Surplus	\$26,204,260	\$25,421,583

MUNICIPAL AND TWOMO LEVY VS TOTAL REVENUES BY YEAR



Thanks to the DRRSB team for their contributions to this report.

Connect with us!



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