



growing
with care



Plan and Budget 2025 – Setting the Course

Impactful investments through the plan and budget

In 2024:

- **\$472 million invested in homes for all**
 - ✓ Increasing affordable homes through the Building Better Futures plan, a path forward: Plan to End Chronic Homelessness.
- **\$815 million invested in climate aligned growth**
 - ✓ More people than ever are choosing transit. GRT will be adding 50,000 hours of new service in 2024 to meet the record-setting demand.
- **\$316 million invested in equitable services and opportunities**
 - ✓ Expanded paramedic services, inclusive child care opportunities, improved road safety.
- **\$125 million investment in a resilient and future-ready organization**
 - ✓ modernizing service delivery through data and technology, ensuring long-term financial sustainability and efficiency, and supporting employee wellbeing.



Strategic Plan 2023-2027

Vision

A compassionate community that cares for all people, stewards the land for future generations and where everyone has the opportunity to live a good life.

Mission

Providing essential services that support quality of life for each and every person in Waterloo Region.

Core Value

Care for people and the land we share.



Homes for all

We will invest in affordable homes and economic opportunity for all that are part of Inclusive and environmentally sustainable communities.

- Move quickly to create affordable, accessible, and equitable housing
- Eliminate chronic homelessness and reliance on traditional shelter models
- Invest in upstream solutions to reduce housing and economic precarity
- Unlock Region-owned land that supports community growth

Climate aligned growth



As we grow, we will support a healthy environment where communities can thrive. Through intentional collaboration and creativity, we will support sustainable community growth.

- Use a climate adaptation lens to re-imagine infrastructure, land and services for growth
- Foster alternative options through complete streets and extended alternative transportation networks
- Steward our natural environment and shared resources as we grow

growing
with care



Equitable services and opportunities

Through collaboration and innovative design, we will provide equitable, accessible services across Waterloo Region that support the social determinants of health, safety and complete communities as we grow.

- Ensure services are inclusive, accessible, culturally safe and appropriate
- Design equitable Regional services that meet local community needs
- Explore new models of service through community collaboration and partnerships

Resilient and future ready organization



The Region of Waterloo is a great place to work, where everyone is valued, feels they belong and where they have the supports and tools they need to do a great job. We will be prepared for the future by providing a safe space for bold ideas and experimentation, based on data and other ways of knowing.

- Foster an empowered, people-centred culture
- Reconcile past injustices to advance our future together
- Explore new service models and partnerships to achieve fiscal resilience and better service

2025 plan and budget context

- **Council's second year of Growing with Care**
 - Share vision and roadmap for navigating incredible growth
 - Focused on what matters most to community – local, national and global factors
- **Need to determine scale and pace of change**
 - Balancing the need to sustain existing essential services and recent initiatives with affordability and service growth
- **Affordability top of mind**
 - Working within limited municipal fiscal framework
 - Residents and Businesses face extraordinary cost of living/cost of doing business
- **Uncertain economic outlook**
 - Inflation and construction cost escalation is abating - higher than historical targets
 - Rising interest rates, fuel prices moderated, low unemployment

2025 Key Budget Drivers & Assumptions

Impact of base budget assumptions – to keep doing what we are doing (\$34.3M)

- Base budget adjustments including inflationary increases, compensation adjustments, contractual increases, facilities maintenance, utilities, etc.
- Funding (cost escalation and debt) for approved capital projects, Regional Development Charge exemptions, and Tax Increment Grants
- Adjustments to reflect changes to federal and provincial funding
- Non-tax revenue adjustments
- Doon Heritage Village reopening

Impact of decisions made through the 2024 approved budget (\$11.1M)

- Annualization of 2024 service expansions
- Removal of one-time Tax Stabilization Reserve Funding
- Removal of Safe Restart Funding

Impact of approvals subsequent to 2024 budget approval (\$9.1M)

- Additional grant funding for Key Cultural Institutions
- Debt servicing costs associated with acquisition of 70 Victoria
- Phase-in of Waste Management collection contract

Impact of new initiatives and service expansions (\$22.3M)

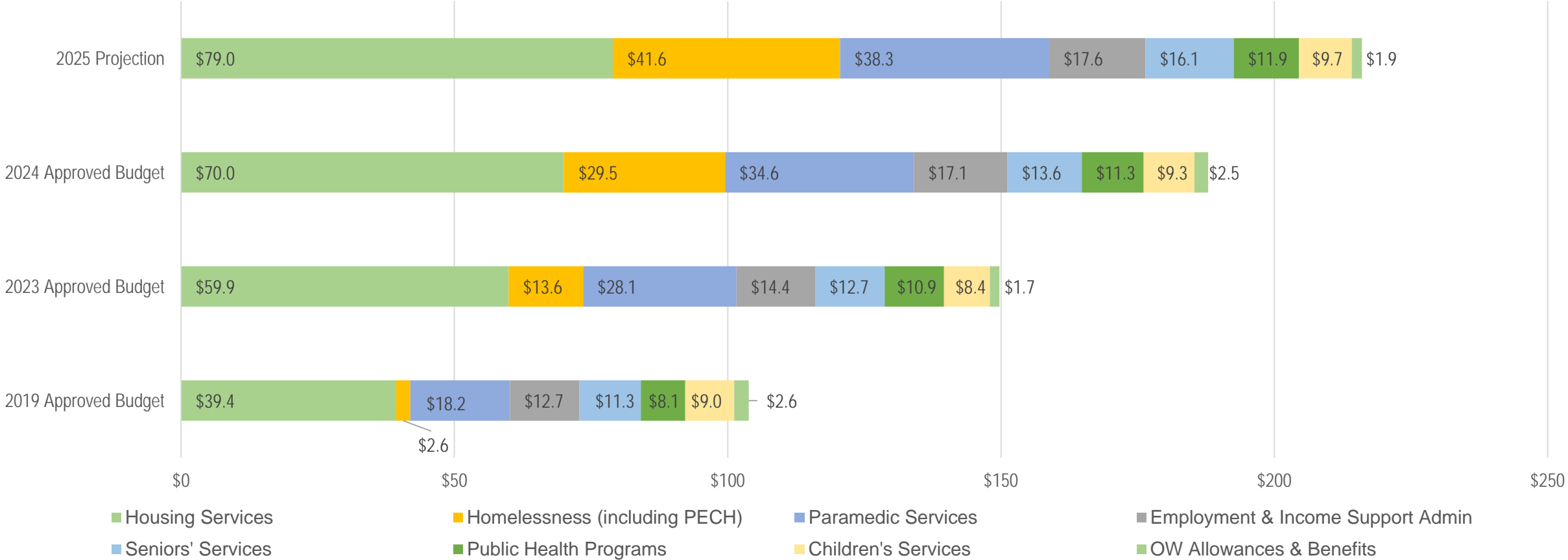
- Further implementation of the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness and other homelessness supports
- Infrastructure/servicing cost requirements for the Industrial Land Strategy
- Continued expansion of Transit in accordance with the business plan and investments in interregional transit
- Further implementations of the Paramedic Services master plan to meet community growth
- A modest provision for other service expansions



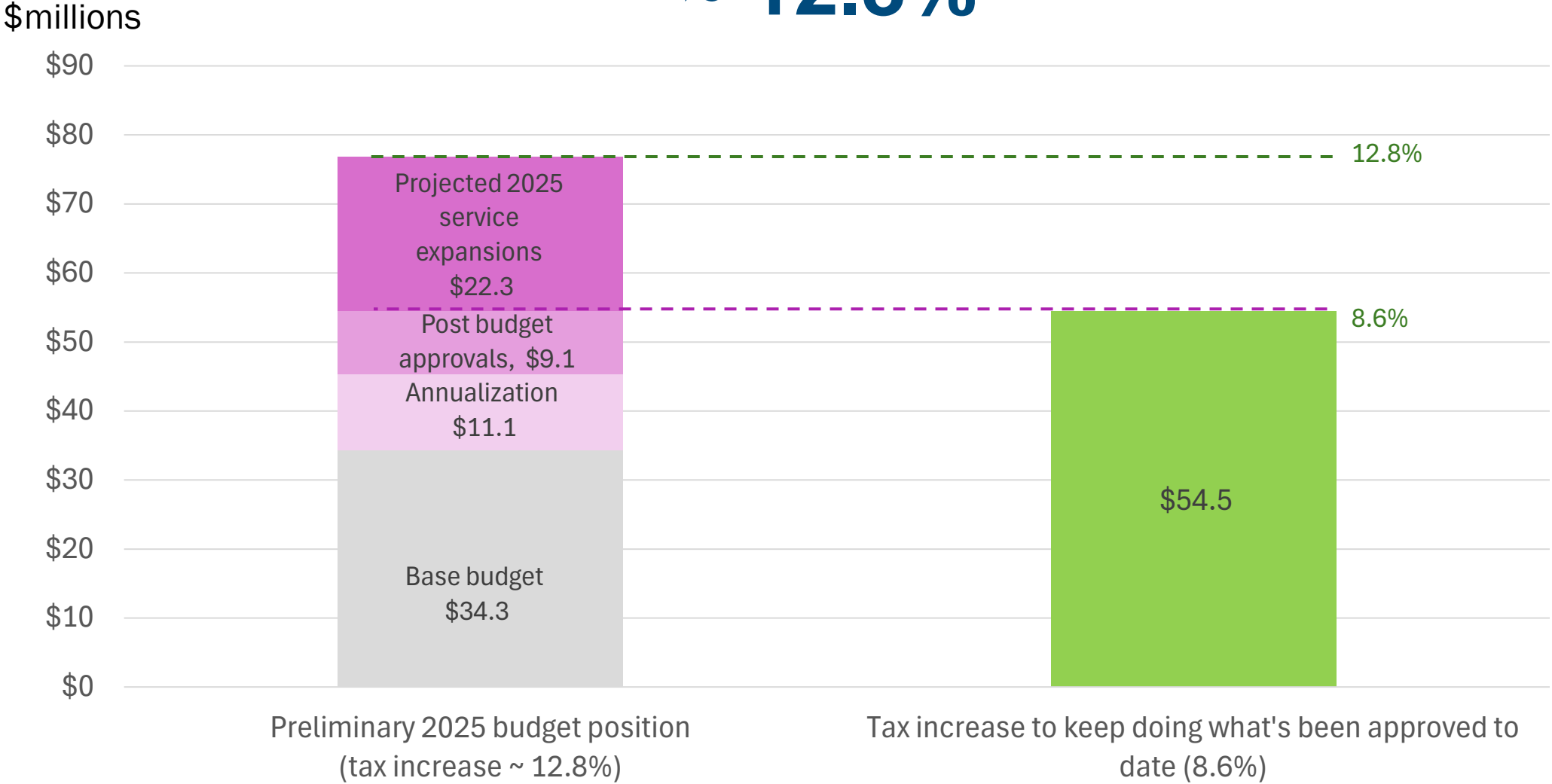
Regional Funding for Services That Should be Funded by Provincial Revenues

2025 Budget Projection Model Levy & Reserve Funding = \$216 million

2024 Approved Budget Levy & Reserve Funding = \$188 million



Preliminary 2025 budget projection ~ 12.8%



Tax Impacts

% Change in property taxes*	Incremental reductions required	Cumulative decrease
12.8% (current)	-	-
11.0%	\$9.7M	\$9.7M
9.0%	\$10.5M	\$20.2M
7.0%	\$10.5M	\$30.8M
5.0%	\$10.5M	\$41.3M

A 1% change in the regional portion of the tax bill (excluding Police) in 2025 equates to \$5.3M

* Regional portion of property tax bill; estimated assessment growth of 1.75%

Principles

1. **Makes significant measurable, impactful difference** to Growing with Care outcomes and objectives.
2. **Mitigates significant risk** that the community or the organization currently faces.
3. **Maintains the course**, investing first in existing essential service delivery and commitments that support the bold agenda Council have already set.
4. **Meets prescribed legislated** standards or requirements (accreditation, compliance, or legal).
5. **Moves forward time critical items** - service level changes, strategic initiatives, capital projects that must be done immediately, meaning they cannot wait a year or more.
6. **Makes fiscal sense**, is financially sustainable, with an approved business case or equivalent analysis that shows it is affordable for taxpayers today and over the longer term.

Next Steps

Strategic Planning and Budget Committee Meeting	2025 Plan & Budget Timeline (as per COR-CFN-24-005 as amended)
Plan and Budget Overview: Setting the Stage	Wednesday, October 16, 2024 9:00am - 5:00pm
Operating Budget and Capital Program Review: Detailed Budget Review Day	Wednesday, October 30, 2024 9:00am - 5:00pm *
Operating Budget and Capital Program Review: Detailed Budget Review Day	Wednesday, November 6, 2024 9:00am - 5:00pm *
Public Input Session	Wednesday, November 6, 2024 6:00pm
Police Service Budget Presentation	Wednesday, November 20, 2024 1:00pm - 4:00pm
Operating Budget and Capital Program Review: Responses to Councillor Requests for Information and additional follow-ups	Wednesday, November 27, 2024 9:00am - 5:00pm
Public Input Session	Wednesday, November 27, 2024 6:00pm
Deadline for submission of Councillor motions	December 2, 2024
Final Budget Day: Approval of the Operating Budget, Capital Program, and User Fees and Charges	Wednesday, December 11, 2024 9:00am - 5:00pm Council approval at 7:00pm

* Carry over if needed to the following Thursday, 9:00am - 12:00pm