



Plan and Budget 2024

growing
with care



Message from Karen Redman, Regional Chair

This past year we embarked on a roadmap for our future through our next Strategic Plan. The resounding message we heard from thousands of our residents, local partners, regional staff and Regional Council was that this is a community defined not just by our growth, but by how we grow, together. The result is our new 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, “Growing with Care.”

The 2024 Plan and Budget is the first step in bringing this plan to life. It includes expansions to essential services and investments in the infrastructure that supports our region’s mobility, connectivity and economic prosperity. It addresses the growing need to build homes for all, not just houses, recognizing the supports and infrastructure needed to build liveable and vibrant communities across our region. These are the building blocks for our collective future.

Working alongside community partners and collaborating with area municipalities, we are proud to continue efficiently providing the services residents deserve.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Redman".



Message from Bruce Lauckner, CAO

The 2024 Plan and Budget has been guided by the bold vision set through our new Strategic Plan, Growing with Care 2023-2027. It includes significant investments and tangible actions to serve the community, delivered by an incredible team of dedicated public servants at the Region of Waterloo.

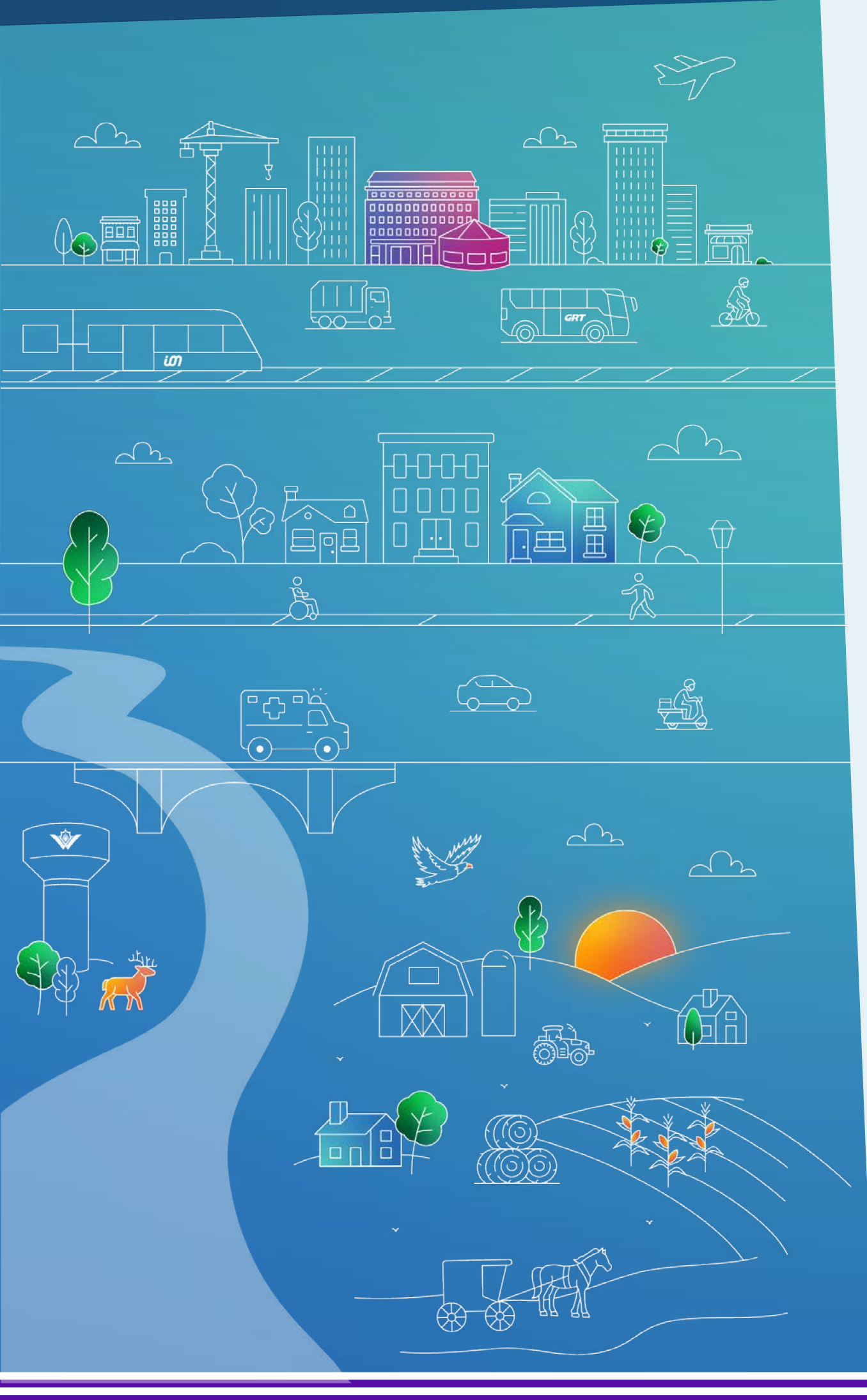
Collectively, each day, Regional staff serve residents with a passionate commitment to building a community where everyone can thrive.

Together we have faced many unique challenges that will no doubt carry through to 2024. To meet these challenges, we must ensure we are a resilient and future ready organization leading key projects to bolster a region that is equitable, caring, safe and sustainable. The 2024 budget balances the need for action and maintaining essential services with affordability.

The daily work we do at the Region of Waterloo touches the lives of 650,000 people across vastly different neighbourhoods in every corner of the region. I am incredibly proud of the world class services the Region of Waterloo team delivers and the critical work we continue to accomplish with our dedicated and focused partners.

I look forward to what lies ahead in 2024 and enacting the plans mapped out in this budget together.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce Lauckner".



Waterloo Region is growing to one million people and how we grow matters.

Residents have told us they want a compassionate community that cares for all people, stewards the land for future generations and gives everyone the opportunity to live a good life. **Growing with Care** sets the Region of Waterloo's direction and guides us as we look to the future. It was built with input from thousands of community members and gives us four key priority areas to focus on:



Homes for all



Equitable services and opportunities



Climate aligned growth



Resilient and future ready organization

Growing with Care is **our vision** and **path forward**. The Plan and Budget is how we put our vision **into action** each year.

To grow with care, the Region invests in programs, services and infrastructure in a fiscally responsible way.

The Region has identified \$40.5 million in operational savings over the past five years and continues to provide excellent services to the community, as it grows to one million residents.

The Region's 2024 Operating and Capital Budgets are \$2.1 billion, which includes the provision of services such as paramedics, police services, transit and waste management.

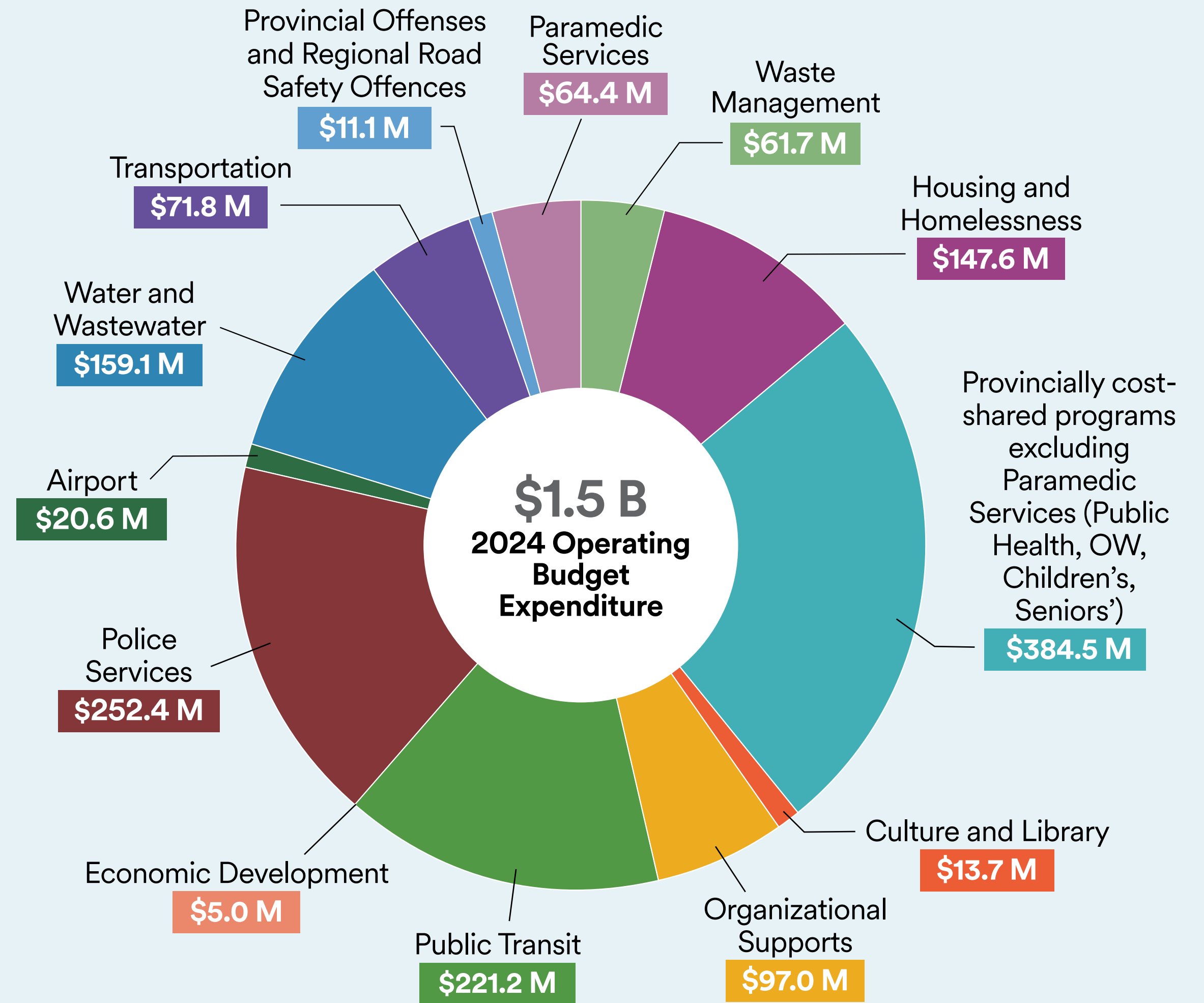
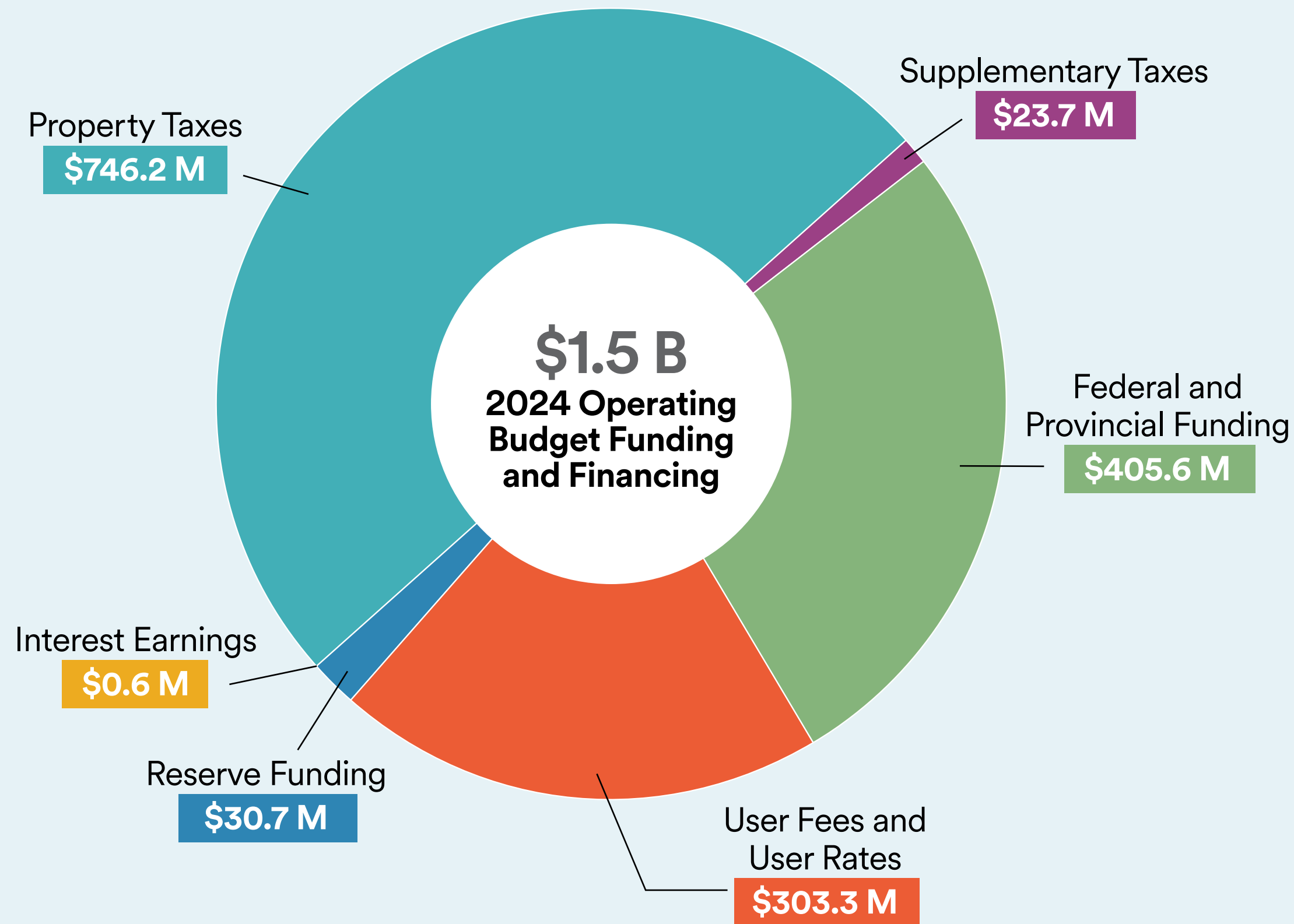
The 2024 budget represents an annual increase of 6.9%. This amounts to \$165 for an average property, or \$13.76 per month.



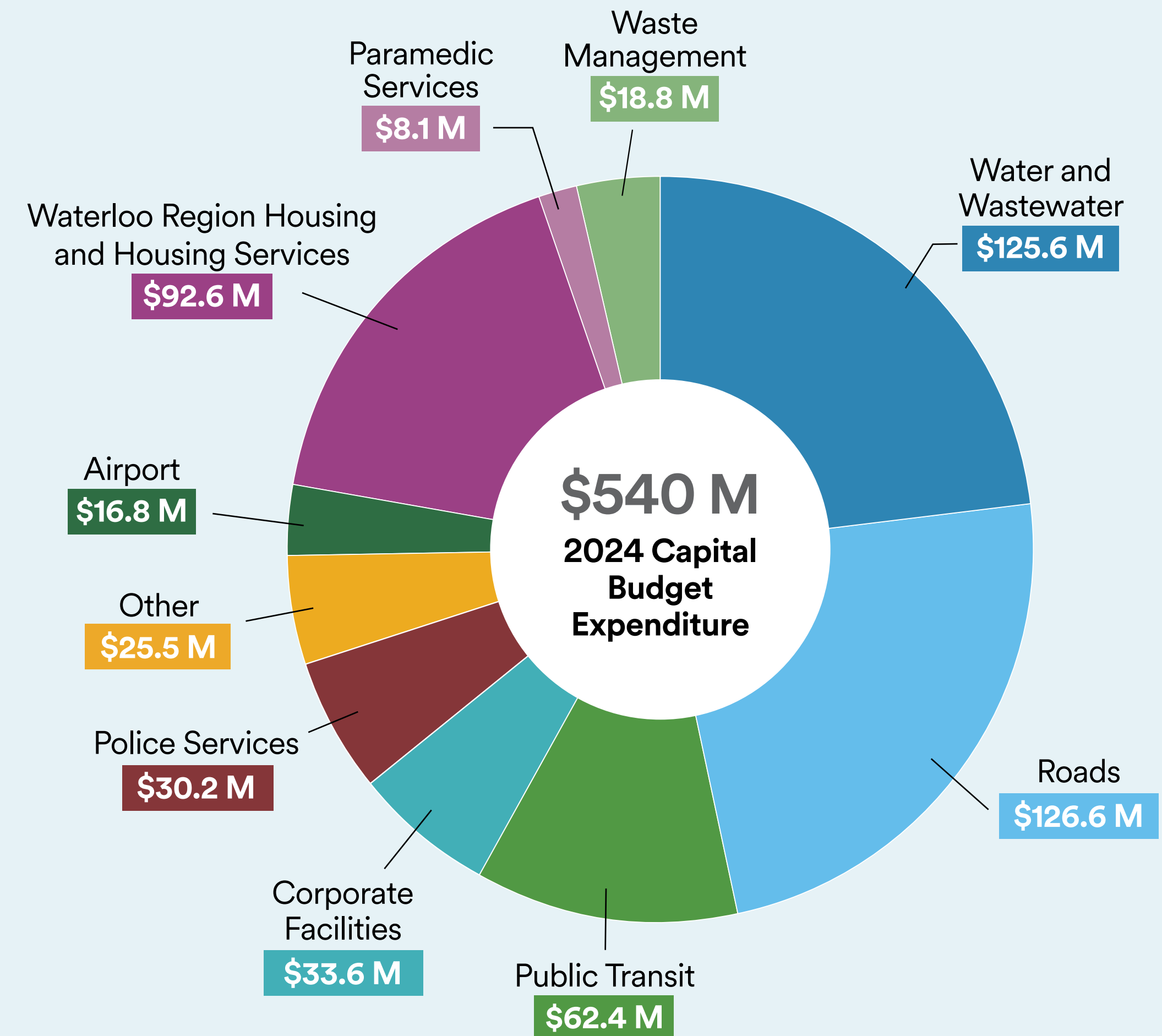
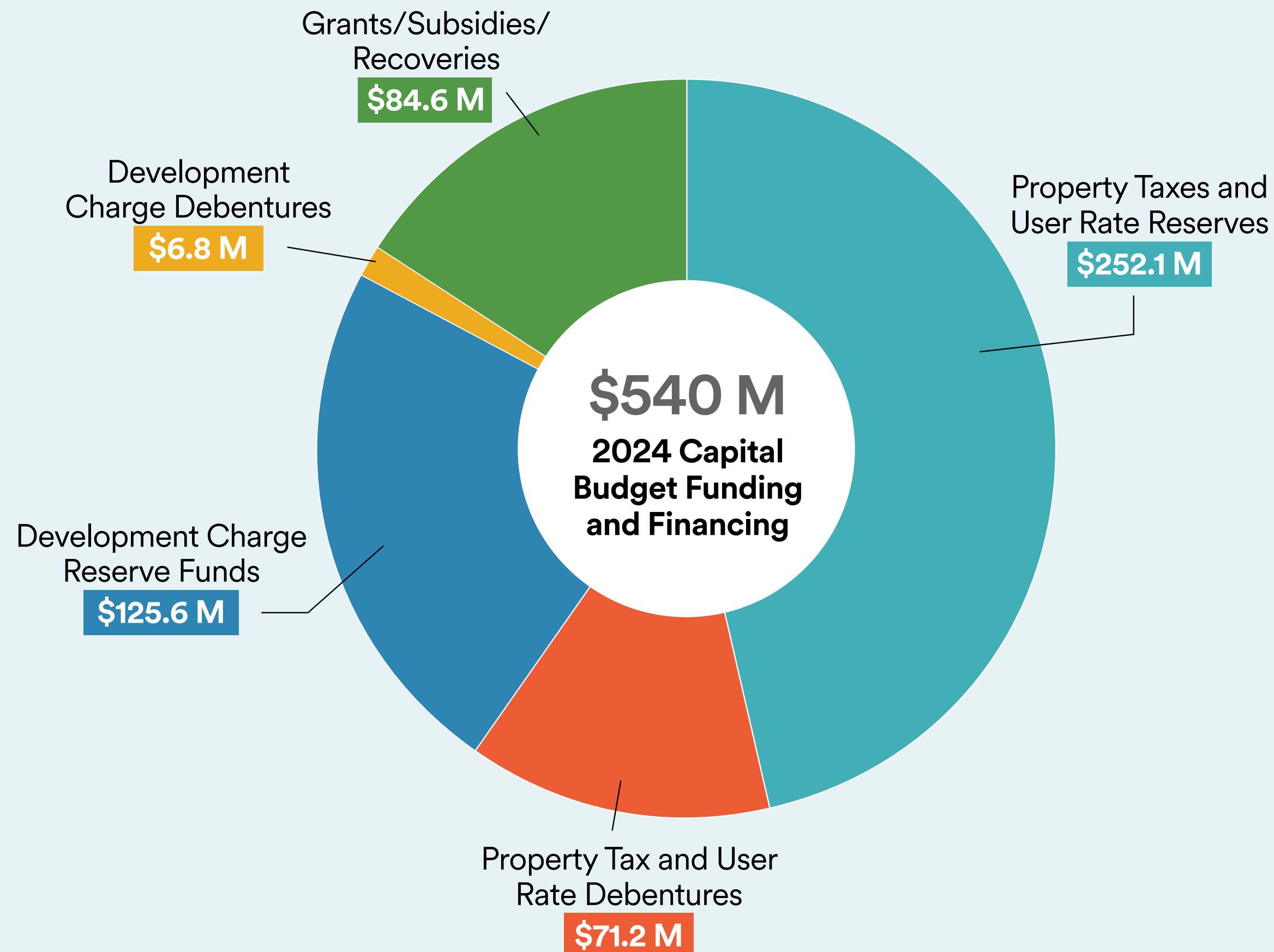
Here are some of the key investments the Region is making in the community in 2024:

- \$240 million to make housing more affordable and to address homelessness
- \$43 million to attract economic investment
- \$54 million investment in seniors' services
- \$198 million to make safe and connected communities
- \$73 million to add paramedics and support paramedic services
- \$48 million to support healthy communities
- \$285 million to protect and provide safe water
- \$284 million to grow and maintain our transit network
- \$81 million for innovative and responsible waste management
- \$14 million to advance service to residents through data and technology
- \$19 million to support employees in making a difference
- \$7 million to deliver fiscal responsibility and financial excellence

The Operating Budget funds programs and services that residents rely on every day, such as paramedics, transit and waste management.



The Capital Budget is money invested in long-term assets like roads, equipment and facilities that are essential to providing services.





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

Highlights for 2024:

- Build 2,500 new affordable homes by 2026 through our Building Better Futures Plan
- Launch our ambitious Plan to End Chronic Homelessness
- Support families through rent assistance, along with other innovative homelessness prevention strategies
- Provide 2,814 Community Housing units across 65 sites
- Work to expand ION and explore a passenger rail connection between Cambridge and Guelph
- Invest in YKF, Canada's fastest growing airport, for economic growth and sustainability
- Improve care for seniors and create a Master Plan for Sunnyside Home

“Let’s quickly create affordable, accessible, and equitable housing by unlocking Region-owned land. We need small to medium sized family homes.”

“Maintain and grow the economy and ensure all residents have a sense of belonging.”



Through collaboration and innovative design, we will provide equitable, safe, accessible services across Waterloo Region.

Highlights for 2024:

- Launch township traffic calming initiative
- Pilot new road safety designs at roundabouts
- Reduce speeding in school zones
- Fund mobile and peer-based programs that bring Public Health services into neighbourhoods
- Investing in grassroots organizations through the Upstream Fund
- Advance Truth and Reconciliation through partnerships and education
- Continue to implement the Canada Wide Early Learning and Childcare Plan to improve affordability, access, equity and quality of licensed child care

“ Building fairness and trust in our political processes.”

“ I hope for a multicultural region that accepts everyone, is clean and safe, and a region that is affordable for all people.”

“ Reconcile past injustices to advance our future together. We need to move faster with meaningful action toward truth and reconciliation.”





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

Highlights for 2024:

- Expand public transit with more flexible, accessible options
- Support a new Conestoga College U-Pass
- Develop a Carbon Budget and Climate Action Plan
- Supply 250 billion cups of clean water to residents each year
- Update the Water Supply Strategy to ensure sustainable water sources for our future
- Continue improving on the highest landfill diversion rates in Ontario
- Power 4,000 homes with captured landfill gas

“ I am hopeful that we have balanced growth as well as green space protection.”

“ Make transit better for those who don't live on the King Street spine.”

“ Green initiatives are extremely important.”



The Region of Waterloo has the tools and supports we need to deliver great service for you. The Region will be prepared for the future with bold ideas and experimentation to deliver affordable services.

Highlights for 2024:

- Support employees through the Employee Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy
- Attract and retain a talented workforce
- Support diverse talent by advancing diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging
- Embrace digital transformation to provide excellent customer services and access to programs
- Invest in modern systems, data analytics and new performance measurements
- Deliver long-term financial accountability and stability

“ Invest in building the workplace of the future, encouraging modernization and forward-looking employee services and supports.”

“ Use available data to make smart decisions.”





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