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Budget 2020

Budget 2020 Speech

Good evening Your worship, fellow councillors, ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure tonight to present the 2020 Budget for the Town of Paradise.

The annual budget process presents us with an opportunity to look back over the past 12 months as we turn to plan for the year ahead. Without a doubt, 2019 was another eventful year for the Town.

Last Spring, we held a by-election to fill a Councillor vacancy. Kimberley Street was the successful candidate and in May she joined us on Council.

Earlier the Fall we hosted the Toronto Maple Leafs Training Camp at the Paradise Double Ice Complex. It was an amazing opportunity to welcome hockey fans to our Town and to roll out the “blue” carpet for a major NHL team. Our staff went above and beyond as they always do and it allowed us to showcase our facilities and our capabilities. We received tremendous feedback from the Leafs

and the spectators, and by all accounts it was a resounding success.

Our hockey hosting skills are getting the attention of the world this week as the Canadian Tire Para Hockey World Cup is taking place at the Complex. Our province’s own Liam Hickey, who trains at our facility, is playing for Team Canada. Liam tells us he never thought he would have the opportunity to play an international competition on his home ice, and he is really enjoying showcasing our fully-accessible facility, our Town, and our Province to the world!

When we built the Paradise Double Ice Complex several years ago, we envisioned a facility that would enhance the recreation offerings in our Town, be a cornerstone for our programs and community events, and enable us to bring high-calibre events to our residents and the region. It is wonderful to be able to say we are achieving

all that and to receive positive feedback from our residents, user groups and community organizations.

Along with the high points of 2019, this year has also brought some challenges. In August we experienced an issue no Town wants to face. Lift Station 10, located at the corner of Topsail Road and St. Thomas Line, which has the largest volume in Town, had a major equipment failure. Our staff worked tirelessly to keep everything going and we were able to maintain this essential service while the required repairs were made. As I outlined at a Public Council meeting a couple of weeks ago, the total net cost for all the work related to the lift station, paid to external contractors and vendors, was \$1.527 million with an additional \$94,500 for overtime costs for Town staff. It is important to note that over 80 percent of the costs were related to keeping the lift station operational and maintaining this essential service for our residents. While this was a significant unplanned expenditure for the Town, through prudent and careful fiscal management along with being able to defer a couple of projects to next year, we were able to accommodate these costs within our existing 2019 budget.

With respect to the property next to the lift station on St. Thomas Line, I am pleased to announce that Council has reached a purchase agreement with the property owners. In tonight's meeting, I will bring forward a motion to enable the Town to acquire the affected property for a cost of \$430,000. As with the lift station repairs, this cost can be accommodated without impacting our budget plan.

We want to make upgrades to Lift Station 10 and to do so we need funding from the provincial government. In our 2020 cost-shared funding application, this work is our top request. We anticipate hearing funding decisions from the provincial government in the new year and we are hopeful we will receive this financial contribution.

Your Worship, as a Council, we understand the importance of having the right plans and strategies in place to guide us. We appreciate the need for a comprehensive approach to navigate our decision-making, and over the past couple of years we have been updating and completing major plans for our Town.

In 2019, we embarked on a new multiyear strategic plan for the Town. Working with external

consultants, there was an extensive public engagement process, meetings with Council and senior Town staff, a survey of Town employees, and research of benchmarking and best practices in the municipal sector across the country. We are nearing the end of this project, and early in 2020 we will be unveiling the new plan. It will provide a vision and strategic directions to guide our focus and work for the next three years and provide the foundation for our future strategic plans. It is built on the needs of our residents and our business community, and it presents “Your Paradise.” On behalf of Council, I extend sincere thanks to all those who provided input, shared ideas, and helped us shape our path for the next three years.

We welcome all opportunities to engage with the people and businesses of Paradise, and that is why our annual budget planning process always includes a consultation process. For Budget 2020, we launched an online survey, met with the local Chambers of Commerce, and held an information booth at the Paradise Double Ice Complex.

Our residents and stakeholders openly share their ideas and opinions and that is something all of us on Council appreciate and value. The feedback

received from the pre-budget consultations and from our recent major planning processes has been instrumental in guiding our decision-making. We want to hear from our residents and stakeholders and we want them to know Council is listening. We are carefully considering all that input in all our discussions, meetings, and decisions, including preparing our municipal budget.

Your Worship, I am pleased to present the \$37.9 million balanced 2020 Budget for the Town of Paradise. One which continues to provide our residents with the current level of Town services and programs while making strategic investments in areas they have told us they want and need. Furthermore, we are able to do this while maintaining the current residential and commercial mil rates of 7.2 and 11.5 respectively. We repeatedly hear that our residents do not want tax increases and we are pleased we are able to keep current rates for another year.

We are also maintaining the residential water and sewer rate of \$600 per unit. Wastewater treatment is a significant cost for municipalities throughout our province and across the country; it is a challenge that is not unique to Paradise.

The regional Riverhead Treatment Plant will need upgrades to meet the Federal Regulations as will our Treatment Plant on St. Thomas Line. We also need to complete upgrades to Lift Station 10. We must start planning for that investment today, it would be irresponsible to ignore the challenges before us.

That is why we are changing the water and sewer rate for the commercial sector. We are moving from a per unit rate to a mil rate structure. Many municipalities across the province use this approach. For 2020 the rate for Paradise will be 1.0, which is among the lowest in the region. While some businesses will see increases to their water and sewer costs, many businesses will see little to no change. Our overall goal is to make the water and sewer fee structure more equitable among all users.

Our business community is a valued and important part of our Town. Over the past number of years, we have seen steady growth in both new businesses coming to the Town of Paradise and existing businesses expanding. The development of Paradise Plaza bringing new retail offerings and the new Karwood Market area are prime examples of our commercial growth. And like our residents,

our business community provides us with input and ideas on the support they need from the Town. They have told us we need to streamline the processes and procedures for interacting with us.

We appreciate that valuable feedback and I am pleased to announce that Budget 2020 includes the creation of a new Business Concierge program. We will establish a single point of contact for our new and existing businesses. This will provide dedicated customer service to our businesses and help them navigate the application and development process. Many municipalities across the country have implemented this model of customer service with positive response from businesses and we look forward to launching this type of program for Paradise late next year.

“What’s a Business Concierge? Great question. It’s going to be a one-stop solution for all your business needs. Weather that’s helping streamline application processes; facilitating development; issue resolution; it will all be in one place for your convenience.”

Your Worship, Budget 2020 contains a \$400,000 allocation to our Infrastructure Reserve Fund. We created this fund last year and we were one of the few municipalities in the province to do so. This fund is a recommendation from our Asset Management Plan, and it is allowing us to meet the needs of today without compromising the needs of future generations. It is about making sound fiscal decisions and investments, and with the allocation from Budget 2020, the fund is now at \$1.4 million. We are committed to investing in the fund annually as our budget cycle permits.

I want to point out that we are making this investment and all the initiatives of Budget 2020 without borrowing. We believe in prudent and strategic fiscal management. And while there may be a time when we need to borrow, our current fiscal needs are met within our current revenue sources. With no new borrowing requirements, the Town's debt-servicing ratio is now just under five percent, which is one of the lowest in the province.

In addition to the Infrastructure Reserve Fund, our Asset Management Plan also recommends making annual strategic investments to upgrade and enhance existing infrastructure, such as

our transportation network. This is an area our residents continually tell us is a top priority and that is why each year we make roadwork a key focus in our budget planning. For 2020 we will be completing upgrades to Paradise Road with Phase 4 of that major road improvement project. We are also continuing with our annual street rehabilitation program, we will complete the design work for a roundabout at Kenmount Road and McNamara Drive, and we will make improvements to the intersection of St. Thomas Line and Paradise Road.

"We're happy to say the completion of Paradise Road is on schedule. We know finishing this vital thoroughfare is as important to you as it is to us."

Our transportation system is not just our road network. It is about providing transportation services for our residents. Through Metrobus we are offering public transit to Paradise, and since its launch we have received positive feedback

from those using the service. However, it is not accessible for everyone. Our residents have also told us that our Town's transportation system must meet the needs of all residents and Council fully agrees. Improving the accessibility of our Town is a focus for us, and we are continually looking for ways to address that.

Just last week, we unveiled the Key2Access pilot project. It is a new technology that offers an accessible alternative for requesting a pedestrian crossing that does not require the user to reach a button on a pole. The Town partnered with the CNIB to bring this innovative solution to Paradise and now three major intersections along Topsail Road have the pedestrian crossing technology and three other intersections have virtual beacons. Residents have already been testing the new system and the feedback is very positive. We look forward to continuing to work with our community partners to build on this initiative.

Your Worship, I am pleased to announce that next year we will be implementing another innovative pilot project to improve accessibility in our Town. Budget 2020 contains funding for an accessible transportation pilot project. This is not meant to be

a Go Bus type service; rather we'll be looking at best practices being used by municipalities across the country and meeting with community groups to find a subsidized service model that best meets the needs of Paradise. We anticipate launching the pilot project for next summer.

“Transportation isn't always accessible for everyone. We're developing a public transit pilot program. We're a smart town. We're a progressive town. A progressive town IS an accessible one.”

We are listening to our residents and working hard to find the right solutions for Paradise. Our residents tell us that safety in school zones is a top concern and Council certainly agrees. Our Municipal Enforcement Officers are in school areas during the morning and afternoon, and we work with the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary to have increased patrol in these zones. We have also installed traffic calming measures in key areas and we'll continue to review and place these in school zones as needed. In 2020, we will be

“Keeping our kids safe in school zones is an absolute must. So, the Town is going to be providing crossing guards at our four elementary schools. Every school day someone will be here making sure your kids cross the street safely.”

going even further as we bring Crossing Guards to the four schools in Paradise. During the past few years, we have explored various options and partnership models to bring Crossing Guards to the school areas, and we have determined that a program fully funded and under the direction of Town will best meet our needs. Staff have already started to work on the program and we plan on implementing it this winter, and it will be in place for the remainder of the school year.

In 2020, we will be partnering with the RNC and our neighbouring municipalities to bring additional patrol cars to the Northeast Avalon. Together with our regional partners, we are making a six year commitment on this RNC project and will contribute \$30,000 to it. With more patrol cars, the RNC can have an increased presence throughout

our communities, working to address issues like speeding on Town roads. The RNC is a strong community partner in Paradise and we are pleased we can work together to enhance the police services to our Town, something all residents have been asking us and the RNC to do.

Your Worship, the Town of Paradise remains one of the fastest growing municipalities in the province and across the country. People are choosing to live here and they are proud to make Paradise their home. We want to do our part to foster that strong community pride, and one way we can do that is to invest in our parks, trails and overall Town beautification. Next year, we will create a lookout on the open space on Tilting Place. This will transform an unused portion of land into a recreation amenity for the enjoyment of all residents. On our newly-completed Adams Pond Trail, which is quickly becoming one of the most popular in Town, we are going to add amenities such resting areas, access points, and a public wharf. And Town Gateway Welcome Signage will also see improvements in 2020 as we want residents and visitors alike to know that in Paradise, our name says it all.

Community pride and well-being are also fostered by offering programs to meet the needs of all residents, including our young families. They tell us they want Town events, recreation programming, and a variety of amenities to enjoy as a family. With the high attendance levels at our events and consistent registration for our programming, we believe we are making the right decisions.

The one recreation amenity our residents continue to ask about is access to a pool. They want to be able to register their children in swimming lessons and enjoy family swim sessions. I am pleased to announce that Budget 2020 contains a pilot project to enable us to offer this to our residents.

Our Recreation and Open Space Master Plan identified that many facilities in our region have capacity to offer services to neighbouring

“Working with the Aquarena I’m happy to tell you that you will now be able to register for swimming lessons for Paradise residents only. And a free public swim one Saturday a month for Paradise residents, too!”

communities, and as such, a key recommendation was that Paradise look to partner in those areas where we cannot provide a service. In that regard, we have reached a sharing agreement with the Aquarena, and starting in January, we have secured a time on Sundays for swimming lessons to be offered only for Paradise residents. In addition, there will be a free public swim one Saturday a month, also just for our residents. Information on the cost and registration process will be on the Town website tomorrow, Wednesday, with registration opening on December 12.

Your Worship, the RNC initiative, the Key2Access project, and our partnership with the Aquarena are our latest endeavors in working with our neighbours. In the Town of Paradise, we believe in partnerships and regional cooperation for the benefit of all residents. With this approach, we are able to provide programs and services, including essential services, in a cost-effective and efficient manner. Essential services include things like fire protection, water services, wastewater treatment, and waste management facilities. Regional services account for 20 percent of our municipal budget; these are required expenditures, but we are committed to providing them in a financially responsible manner.

“You want Paradise to be green, clean, and beautiful. Stay turned for the Paradise footprint project. Learning to live greener by reducing, reusing, AND recycling every single day.”

We know in 2020 that tipping fees at the Robin Hood Bay Waste Management Facility will increase. However, we also know that with the help of our residents we can reduce those costs. In 2020, we'll be launching a public education campaign to help our residents learn more about reducing, reusing, and recycling. We want it to become part of our daily lives so that we are all living greener and reducing our footprint. Doing so not only reduces costs, but it has the bigger impact of enabling all of us to help our environment. The importance of protecting our environment is a global movement, and here in Paradise we need to step up and do our part. Our youngest residents expect us to do this, and need us to do this, so that we are leaving the world in a better place for them to enjoy.

Your Worship, we have developed the plans to guide our work, we have prepared a budget

to support those plans, and the final piece is implementing our path to achieving those plans. For the Town of Paradise, achieving our strategic goals rests with a continuous improvement process.

Last year as part of the budget, we announced we were working with external consultants, the Leading Edge Group, to guide us in this work. Municipalities across the country are using continual improvement processes and techniques. It is proven that when employees take the opportunity to look at all work processes and critically examine if those practices meet current needs, they find ways to streamline operations, increase efficiencies and offer better service to residents.

I am pleased to report that throughout 2019, 55 employees have received various levels of certification from the Leading Edge program. They are designing projects and implementing needed changes to ensure Paradise has up-to-date procedures and practices which best serve our residents and stakeholders. We are committed to supporting this work in 2020. Our employees know their fields and they know our Town, and with the continual improvement training, they are now prepared to identify areas for improvement and then

implement those changes. Staff have told us they are energized about this project and all of us on Council look forward to seeing what our staff will accomplish.

Your Worship, as elected officials, we have a duty and a responsibility to provide the services and programs our residents need and want, while ensuring strong, careful management of our Town's finances. Budget 2020 does just that – it is a budget based on strategic planning and engaging with our residents and stakeholders. It looks at the needs of today while planning for the future. It is designed for our Town – a fast-growing municipality with a vibrant population proudly choosing to make Paradise their home. To the senior Town staff who worked on Budget 2020, I thank you for your time and dedication to our annual budget process. I also thank Council for their guidance and support in developing this year's budget. We have exciting plans for 2020 and I look forward to seeing these initiatives unfold in the coming year. Thank you.

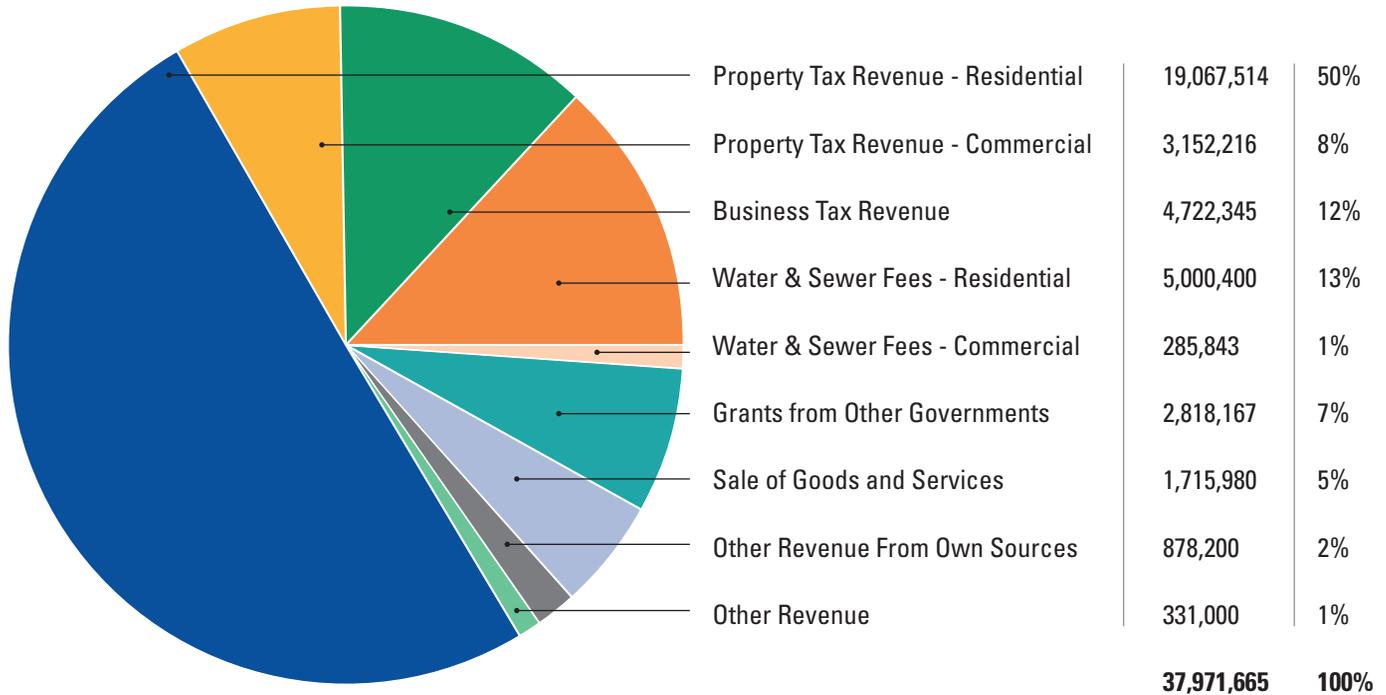
“BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Paradise, in accordance with Section 77(1) of the Municipalities Act, adopt the 2020 Budget with operating revenues and expenditures totalling \$37,971,664.”

“BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Paradise adopt

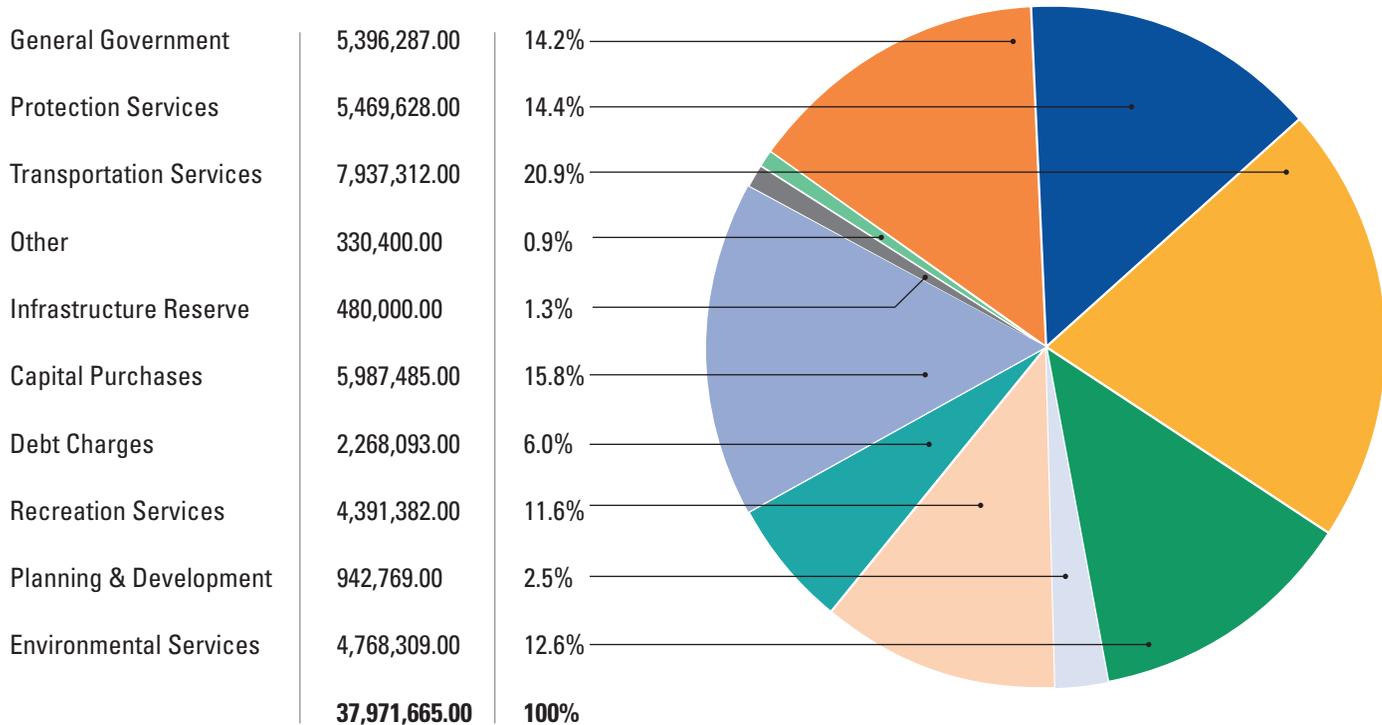
the 2020 Schedule of Tax Rates as submitted.”

“BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Paradise adopt the 2020 Fee Schedule as submitted.”

Where the money comes from



Where the money goes



2019 Operating Budget Summary

	2019 Budget	2020 Budget	% of Budget
Revenue			
Taxation	31,649,168	32,228,318	85%
Grants from Other Governments	2,288,545	2,818,167	7%
Sale of Goods and Services	1,817,595	1,715,980	5%
Other Revenue from Own Sources	1,617,800	1,209,200	3%
	37,373,108	37,971,665	100%
Expenditures (By Function)			
General Government	5,177,083	5,396,287	14%
Protective Services	5,365,477	5,469,628	14%
Transportation Services	8,083,379	7,937,312	21%
Environmental Services	4,596,068	4,768,309	13%
Planning & Development	946,616	942,769	2%
Recreation and Community Services	4,142,383	4,391,382	12%
Debt Charges	3,115,202	2,268,093	6%
Capital Upgrades	4,650,500	5,987,485	16%
Infrastructure Replacement Reserve	1,000,000	480,000	1%
Other	296,400	330,400	1%
	37,373,108	37,971,665	100%
Net Revenue (Expenditures)	-	-	

Revenue

	2019 Budget	2020 Budget	% of Budget
Taxation			
Property Tax Revenue - Residential	18,887,978	19,067,514	50.2%
Property Tax Revenue -Commercial	3,114,016	3,152,216	8.3%
Business Tax Revenue	4,525,774	4,722,345	12.4%
Water & Sewer Fees - Residential	4,941,900	5,000,400	13.2%
Water & Sewer Fees - Commercial	179,500	285,843	0.8%
	31,649,168	32,228,318	84.9%
Government Transfers			
Gas Tax Revenue	798,906	1,839,443	4.8%
Provincial Share of Debt	1,175,087	664,840	1.8%
Other Grants	310,164	310,164	0.8%
Grants in Lieu	4,388	3,720	0.0%
	2,288,545	2,818,167	7.4%
Municipal Revenues			
Infrastructure Improvement Fee	250,000	250,000	0.7%
Licenses, Permits & Fees	420,800	426,200	1.1%
Investment Income	202,000	202,000	0.5%
	872,800	878,200	2%
Sale of Goods and Services			
Recreation and Community Services	1,598,520	1,494,630	3.9%
Other	219,075	221,350	0.6%
	1,817,595	1,715,980	5%
Other Revenue			
Transfer from Reserves - Open Space	745,000	331,000	0.9%
	35,778,741	37,373,108	100%

Expenditures

	2019 Budget	2020 Budget	% of Budget
General Government			
General Administration	2,940,599	3,189,741	8%
Council Expenses	329,422	335,158	1%
Municipal Election	36,000	-	0.0%
Property Assessments	241,072	241,982	1%
Common Services	1,629,990	1,629,406	4%
	5,177,083	5,396,287	14%
Protective Services			
Fire Protection	4,329,745	4,455,188	12%
Municipal Enforcement	548,848	549,438	1%
Security Services	162,400	142,800	0.4%
Inspections	305,484	311,202	1%
Animal and Pest Control	19,000	11,000	0%
	5,365,477	5,469,628	14%
Transportation Services			
Vehicle Operation and Maintenance	1,201,229	1,128,602	3%
Roads and Sidewalks	2,882,567	2,804,086	7%
Snow Removal	2,907,293	2,875,282	8%
Public Transit	282,270	319,322	1%
Street Lighting & Traffic Lights	810,020	810,020	2%
	8,083,379	7,937,312	21%
Environmental Services			
Water Supply	1,968,029	1,971,989	5%
Sewage Collection and Disposal	1,275,850	1,297,268	3%
Garbage Collection and Disposal	885,261	1,040,580	3%
Water and Sewer Department	466,928	458,472	1%
	4,596,068	4,768,309	13%

Expenditures

	2019 Budget	2020 Budget	% of Budget
Planning & Development			
Planning & Development	946,616	942,769	2%
	946,616	942,769	2%
Recreation and Community Services			
Recreation Administration	620,250	646,976	2%
Facilities Maintenance	513,108	526,057	1%
Recreation and Community Centers	790,808	844,552	2%
Arena & Fitness Center	975,458	1,150,736	3%
Parks, Playgrounds, Fields & Trails	243,982	219,885	1%
Programs, Activities and Events	944,677	899,576	2%
Other Community Services	54,100	103,600	0%
	4,142,383	4,391,382	12%
Debt Services			
Town Share	1,940,115	1,603,253	4%
Provincial Share	1,175,087	664,840	2%
	3,115,202	2,268,093	6%
Capital Upgrades			
Infrastructure	2,360,000	3,786,485	10%
Vehicles and Equipment	630,000	860,000	2%
Parks and Trails	1,220,000	1,031,000	3%
Recreational Facilities	415,500	310,000	1%
Other	25,000	-	0%
	4,650,500	5,987,485	16%
Fiscal Services and Reserves			
Infrastructure Replacement Reserve	1,000,000	480,000	1%
Other	296,400	330,400	1%
	1,296,400	810,400	2%
	37,373,108	37,971,665	100%

The logo for the Town of Paradise features the words "TOWN OF Paradise" in a white serif font. The word "TOWN OF" is in a smaller, all-caps font above "Paradise". A decorative white wave-like flourish arches over the top of the text. A small sun icon with rays is positioned above the letter "i" in "Paradise".

TOWN OF
Paradise

www.paradise.ca