



# Strategic Plan | 2024 - 2027



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD



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# Introduction

This document outlines the strategic plan for The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) for the years 2024 to 2027. The previous plan increased TBDSSAB's ability to support our local service system and the people we serve by focusing on investment, partnerships, and advocacy. This current plan takes a reflective approach to stabilizing the service system across the district, by focusing on culture, compassion, and organizational excellence.

This planning was conducted in fall 2023 and involved:

- Direction from the Board of Directors,
- Review of feedback from community partners, staff, and service recipients collected from surveys and other engagement activities,
- Multi-day participatory planning sessions with management and staff from across the organization,
- Fine tuning from the executive management team.

External facilitators from ICA Associates were engaged to guide the planning process. Following a process similar to the 2020-2023 strategic planning, the building blocks of the strategy included:

- A historical scan, focusing on 2019-2023,
- Current trend analysis,
- An organizational SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis,
- A comprehensive vision to guide the strategy,
- Identification of key challenges, issues, constraints, and barriers (obstacles and blocks),
- Strategies that define the approach to be taken over the next four (4) years,
- Roadmap of key milestone goals and deliverables.

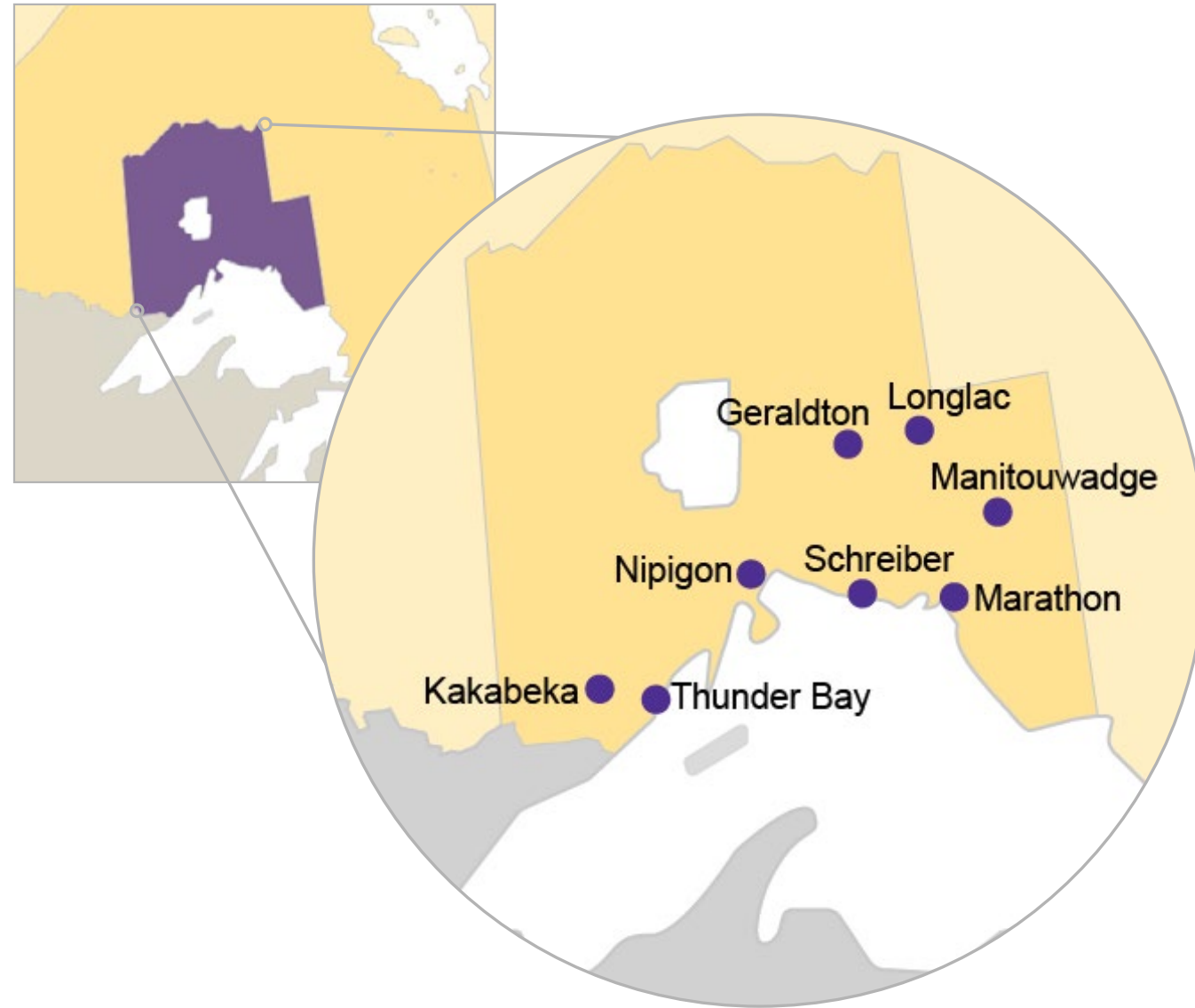
# Who We Are

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) supports people to improve their lives and become self-sufficient. We do this as the service system manager for vital, quality social services needed by individuals and families living in the District of Thunder Bay—including child care and early years, community housing, homelessness prevention programs—and through the delivery of Ontario Works.

TBDSSAB was established by the Province of Ontario on April 1, 1999 through the enactment of the District Social Services Administration Board (DSSAB) Act. It is one of 47 service managers mandated by the Province to deliver social services.

Our service District includes 15 municipalities which appoint representatives to our Board of Directors through their municipal Councils. As well, the Board of Directors includes an elected representative from the Territories without Municipal Organization.

There are eight TBDSSAB offices across the District.



## Who We Are, What We Do

### Mission

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board delivers provincially mandated services on behalf of the citizens of the District of Thunder Bay.

## What We Aspire To Be

### Vision

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board provides quality services within the context of a commitment to social justice and recognition of people's potential to achieve self-sufficiency.

## What We Live By

### Values

At The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board, we:

- Respect
- Accept
- Collaborate
- Understand
- Are Empathetic
- Have Integrity
- Promote Wellness

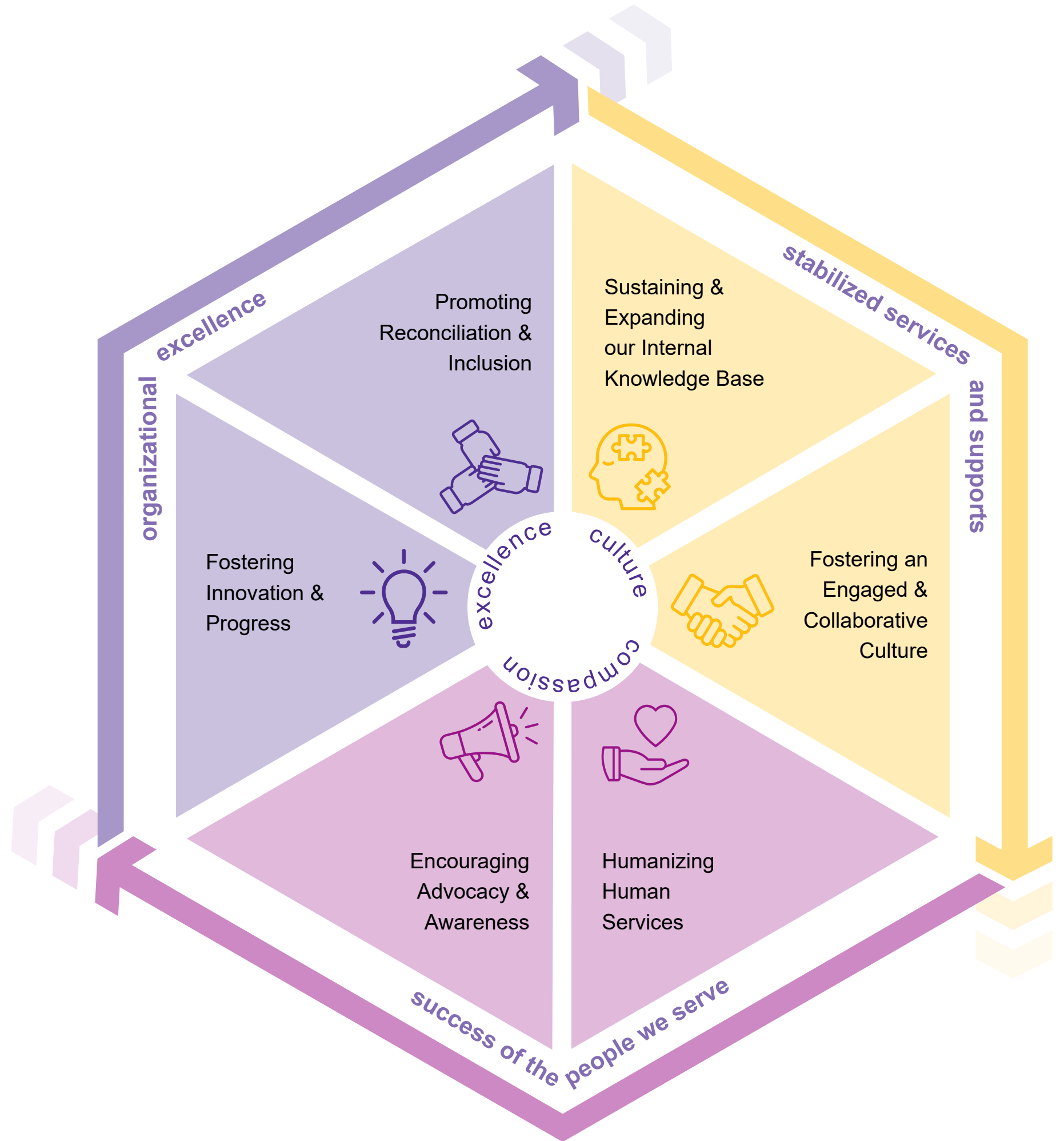


# Practical Vision for 2024 - 2027

Over the next four (4) years, we aspire to see realized:

- **Stabilized support services** that include dignified housing, social assistance programs, and a child care and early years system.
- **The success of the people we serve** including a people-centered approach, reconciliation and inclusion, and responsive community partnerships.
- **Organizational excellence** demonstrated through leadership in advocacy, compassion and understanding, financial stewardship, and a dynamic workforce.

The tenacity, adaptability, and resilience of our team, positive relationships with service recipients, solid information technology (IT) infrastructure, and good partnerships with community agencies will contribute to the modernization of social assistance in the District, create more accessible child care, and expand the affordable housing system.



## Stabilized Services and Supports

### Dignified Housing

Our vision is to provide safe, affordable, agency-supported housing that everyone deserves, with:

- Cleanliness, safety, and community policing
- Harm reduction services via mental health and addictions partnerships
- Increased affordable housing system capacity, life skills programs, and 24-hour supports available to tenants

### Social Assistance Programs

Our vision is social assistance that keeps up with cost of living, leads to better quality of life and may include:

- Board advocacy for increased social assistance rates to match cost of living
- Being able to offer flexible appointment times, service hours, and communication options for the people we serve

### Child Care & Early Years System

Our vision is improved quality in CCEY Programs through TBDSSAB Capacity Building Processes, creating better long-term outcomes for children and families. This will look like:

- Board advocacy for child care and early years system needs, including Early Childhood Educator (ECE) wages, retention, and skills development
- Increased access to quality programs
- Support operators with attraction, retention, and growth of ECEs throughout the District

## Success of the People We Serve

### People-centered approach

Our vision is for staff to feel self-assured in the knowledge and supports they can offer to the people we serve and other staff, while taking the time to ensure people feel heard. This will look like:

- Meeting service recipients where they are (both physical location and mentally)
- Further integration of service
- Welcoming, inclusive culture

### Reconciliation & Inclusion

Our vision is for TBDSSAB to be recognized as a leader in reconciliation and inclusion, which leads to a deeper understanding of the people we serve and their needs. This will look like:

- Representation within the workforce
- Creation of culturally safe places
- Cultural support system for staff and the people we serve
- Defined resources to support Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives and ongoing education

### Responsive Community Partnerships

Our vision is to increase community understanding of what TBDSSAB is and does within the community to foster and grow relevant partnerships. This will look like:

- Increased communication and collaboration among system partners
- Seamless support to people we serve across partnerships within the community
- Multi-year agreements in place to support programs
- Partnerships and consent processes in place to streamline pathways to care/referrals to third party services

## Organizational Excellence

### Leaders in Advocacy

Our vision is to cultivate an accurate understanding of TBDSSAB and the realities of the people we serve in order to effectively advocate for local service system needs. This will look like:

- Data-driven and evidence-based advocacy initiatives
- Ability for staff and the people we serve to inform advocacy initiatives
- Funders having a more accurate picture of resources throughout the District of Thunder Bay
- Collaborating with community partners in advocacy initiatives where appropriate

### Compassion & Understanding

Our vision is to increase capacity for understanding and compassion within our workforce and community, ultimately promoting self-sufficiency and pride for our service recipients. This will look like:

- A research-informed anti-stigma campaign
- Simplified language on forms and applications
- Review of processes to reduce service barriers that are within our control
- A more welcoming experience for the people we serve

### Financial Stewardship

Our vision is to foster a broader understanding of decision-making and resource allocation processes, including:

- Enhanced performance-based budgeting process
- Engaged staff and community partners to maximize data integrity across service systems
- Translation of data and financial information for different audiences

### Dynamic Workforce

Our vision is to promote a cohesive, fulfilled, and engaged workforce with improved capacity to support the people we serve in meaningful ways. This will include:

- Values-based hiring
- Systems in place to facilitate skill and knowledge sharing
- Flexible work arrangements and wellness program

# Implementation Schedule

Strategies	2024	2025	2026	2027
<b>Sustaining &amp; Expanding our Internal Knowledge Base</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an organization-wide knowledge sharing and transfer plan</li> <li>Plan and implement a schedule for annual cross-departmental staff team building and information sharing opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement knowledge sharing and transfer plan</li> <li>Implement values-based hiring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each department hosts an information sharing session</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information about 50% of unique job classifications is spotlighted and shared with appropriate audiences</li> </ul>
<b>Fostering an Engaged &amp; Collaborative Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a staff engagement survey</li> <li>Engage with staff to determine preferred communication for organizational/system change</li> <li>Develop a transition plan with staff input related to social assistance modernization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a plan for staff engagement based on survey results</li> <li>Implement a process for staff to submit solutions-based ideas and feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the efficacy of the ideas and feedback sharing process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a follow up staff engagement survey</li> </ul>
<b>Humanizing Human Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review current engagement strategies and develop a plan to increase feedback from staff and people with lived and living experience (PWLLE) to inform advocacy and anti-stigma initiatives</li> <li>Establish baseline data related to how many service recipients require mental health and addictions services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a research plan for an anti-stigma research initiative and awareness campaign in consultation with staff and PWLLE</li> <li>Four (4) culturally safe spaces available across TBDSSAB properties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct research and create an anti-stigma campaign with diverse perspectives</li> <li>25% of unique service recipients who require mental health and addictions services have received support through formalized community partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the anti-stigma campaign</li> <li>200 affordable housing units added to service system across the District of Thunder Bay</li> </ul>



Strategies	2024	2025	2026	2027
<b>Encouraging Advocacy &amp; Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review service recipient surveys for plain language</li> <li>Plan public education and awareness campaign related to child care and early years service (CCEY) system</li> <li>Board advocates for more community policing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a strategy for information sharing tactics to complement position papers and increase awareness</li> <li>Implement a public education and awareness campaign related to CCEY system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement two (2) new tactics to support advocacy initiatives</li> <li>Hold four (4) information sharing events for targeted stakeholder audiences to increase awareness of TBDSSAB's role in the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review survey response results after 2027 annual survey cycle to evaluate impact of plain language</li> <li>Hold four (4) information sharing events for targeted stakeholder audiences to increase awareness of TBDSSAB's role in the community</li> </ul>
<b>Fostering Innovation &amp; Progress</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess organizational knowledge of Performance Based Budgeting and outcomes, and develop continuous improvement plan</li> <li>Assess current data collection to align data practices with our strategic goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct an evaluation of tech hubs to inform an expansion plan</li> <li>Implement and evaluate continuous improvement plan for Performance Based Budgeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Source System Management &amp; Data Integrity project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate Source System Management &amp; Data Integrity project</li> </ul>
<b>Promoting Reconciliation &amp; Inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff training in unconscious bias and microaggressions</li> <li>Board education about reconciliation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) survey to gauge organizational DEI priorities, including long-term staff education needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a plan for organizational improvement and education in DEI based on survey results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a follow up DEI survey</li> </ul>

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