

# Approved 2025 Budget

February 25, 2025

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UPPER THAMES RIVER  
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY





**Table of Contents**

Budget Development Schedule .....	1
2025 Budget: Overview .....	2
Operating Costs and Funding Sources per Category.....	4
Operating Budget .....	5
Capital Projects .....	6
Municipal Levies .....	8
Reserves .....	12
Category 1 Programs and Services: Budget .....	13
Category 2 Programs and Services: Budget .....	21
Category 3 Programs and Services: Budget .....	23
Other Category 3 - Campground Operations: Budget.....	28
About Us.....	30

# Budget Development Schedule

## March 2024

Staff initiate workplans for 2025 to predict budget needs.

## June 2024

Board direction regarding budget concepts.

## August 2024

Board direction regarding Preliminary Draft Budget, followed by municipal input sessions with senior staff.

## October 2024

Draft Budget presented to Board.

## November - February

Municipal input sessions with senior staff and Draft Budget circulation to member municipalities.

## January 2025

Board review of municipal comments and Draft Budget reconsideration.

## February 2025

Board review of Draft Budget and approval of Budget and Apportionment.

# 2025 Budget: Overview

## Key Messages

- Mandatory Category 1 programs and services require long-term stable funding to meet our legislative responsibilities,
- There are very limited alternative funding sources for these mandatory programs and services.

The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority's (UTRCA) 2025 Approved Budget reflects expected costs to support legislative requirements, local environmental needs, and municipal and public demands for service. The budget meets the requirements of the Budget and Apportionment Regulation (O.Reg. 402/22) and continues to use the Modified Current Value Assessment to apportion costs for general levy and benefit-based distribution for water and erosion control structures.

The 2025 Approved Budget separates the UTRCA's programs and services into three categories, consistent with Section 21 of the Conservation Authorities Act (CA Act) and as required by Mandatory Programs and Services Regulation O.Reg. 686/21:

- Category 1 - Mandatory programs and services defined in regulation that may be funded with municipal levy.
- Category 2 - Programs and services delivered at the request of a municipality, with funding under agreement with the benefiting municipality.
- Category 3 - Other programs and services that the Authority determines are advisable to implement within our watershed jurisdiction. These programs and services are funded through cost apportionment agreements with participating municipalities and self-generated funding sources such as user fees, government and other agency grants, donations, etc.

## What are the Mandatory Programs and Services?

- Planning and regulations
  - Regulations and enforcement under the CA Act (Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits)
  - Planning activities

- Water management
  - Flood forecasting and warning
  - Infrastructure operations and maintenance
  - Mapping, studies, and information management
  - Climate change risk and mitigation
  - Low water response
  - Natural hazards outreach programs
- Land management
  - Land management, risk, enforcement
  - Lands strategy implementation (strategy completed in 2024)
  - Public access on UTRCA lands for passive recreation
  - Natural heritage conservation on UTRCA lands
- Provincial water monitoring
- Drinking water source protection
- Watershed strategy implementation (strategy completed in 2024)
- Essential corporate costs

UTRCA's Category 1 programs and services are broader than those of many other conservation authorities due to the size and scope of the water and erosion control structures and program.

## Budget Development

In developing the 2025 Approved Budget, staff considered the following:

- Requirements under the CA Act and regulatory amendments,
- The Board-approved Budgetary and Reserves Policies,
- Cost of living adjustments and pay grid step increases,
- Persistent inflation as read through the Consumer Price Index and experienced by purchases of goods and services, particularly trade contracting, engineering works, and other supplies,
- Multi-year contractual obligations and impact on timing of spending,
- Operating, capital, and program pressures in terms of constraints on time,
- Minister's direction for freeze of conservation authority fees associated with planning, development, and permitting,
- Focus on internal efficiencies using technologies, and cost control wherever possible,

- General economic outlook combined with UTRCA's history of deficit budgeting, and
- Impacts on service delivery.

The UTRCA has used a conservative approach to spending, as well as proactive investigations into alternative sources of funding in 2024, in an effort to minimize financial impacts on member municipalities in 2025 and beyond.

The following items have informed the development of the 2025 Approved Budget.

### **Stabilize Funding for Category 1 Mandatory Programs and Services**

The Approved Budget includes a 3% increase in wages across the organization and the UTRCA is committed to fair and competitive compensation. The federal CPP Enhancement program started in 2019 will end after 2025 during which a new limit for additional maximum pensionable earnings of 14% is implemented. These enhancements have been borne for a number of years in our forecast deficits. After 2025, it is expected that payroll burdens will become more stable than in the recent past.

The count of FTEs in 2025 is higher than in 2024. This results from 2024 having only part-year FTEs for the new staff hires and 2025 containing the entire year costs for those positions, if they have been filled.

Total operating costs in 2025 are 20% higher than in 2024 due to two significant federal grants recently approved to support Category 3 programs for reduction of nutrients on land across the watershed. The corresponding program revenue is also in the budget.

Property taxes were estimated with a broad 7% increase; liability and other insurance coverages reflect a 3% increase.

In 2024, the municipal levy supported just under 60% of the cost of providing mandatory services, resulting in a forecast deficit of \$1.2 million dollars. The previous five years of budgets also had projected deficits.

While 2025 also has a projected deficit in operations, the Category 1 deficit is reasonably balanced with a 1.5% deficit of costs.

The municipal share of Category 1 expenses is now 64%. This increase in levy provides for greater balance in these programs, helping to ensure that continued deficit budgets will not unduly impact reserves. Increases in municipal support are required to reduce reliance on other, undependable sources of funding and ensure the stability of these programs and services. Without consistent and dependable Category 1 funding, the UTRCA is at risk of inadequately delivering these mandatory programs and services and not fulfilling our provincial mandate.

### **Alternative Sources of Funding**

The UTRCA continues to investigate opportunities to attract partnerships, user fees, and alternative funding sources to support all programs and services. A contract with the federal government is providing significant support for the UTRCA's rural stewardship efforts. By obtaining funding support, Category 3 programs and services leverage the municipal investment and assist in supporting Category 1 corporate costs.

The provincial government froze planning and permitting fees in 2022, limiting the value of user fees that the UTRCA can collect. The Board-approved policy has been to recoup 50% of the cost of providing planning and development services. Currently, the UTRCA can recoup only 32% of these expenses.

### **Significant Increase in Capital Projects for Specific Municipalities**

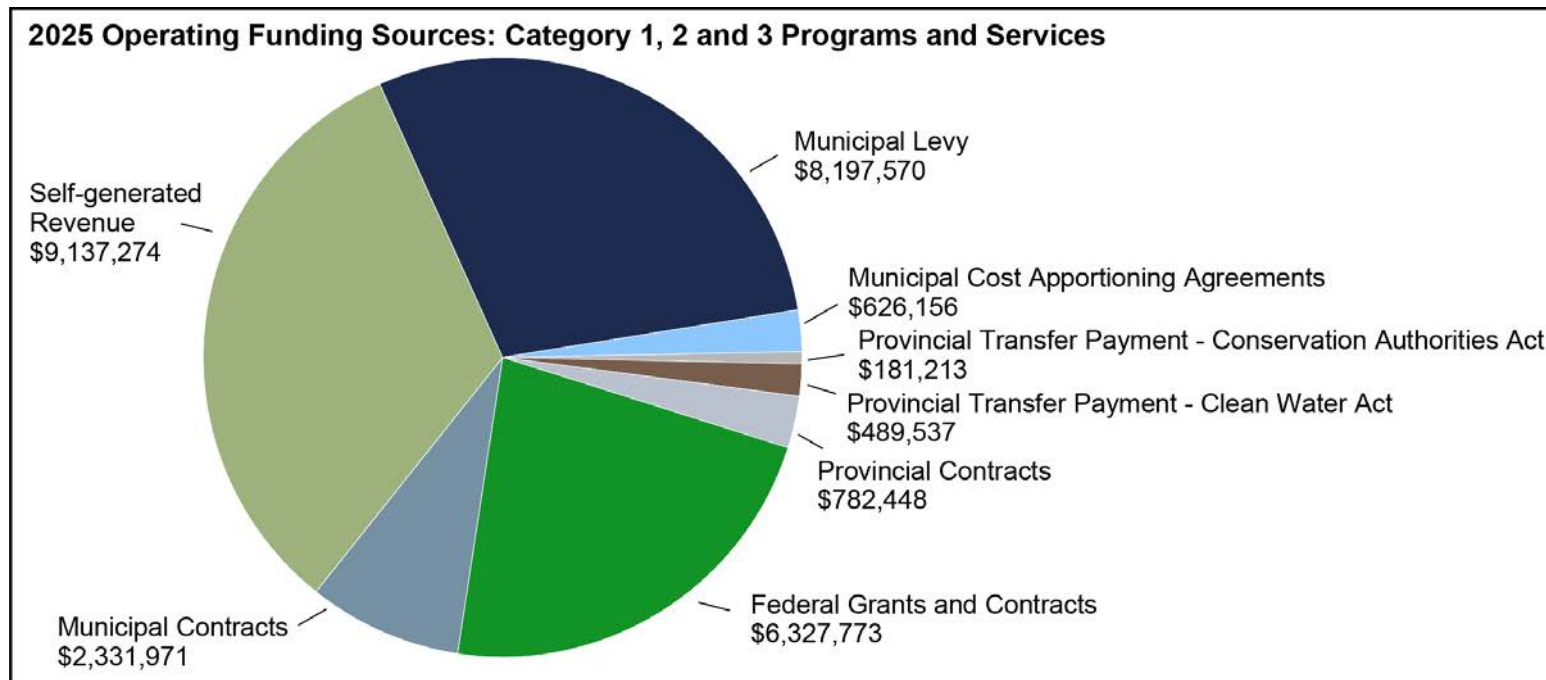
Considerable capital work has been planned for 2025 and 2026 as the UTRCA continues to maintain aging infrastructure. Inflation has meant rising costs and has made it difficult to estimate project costs for future projects with certainty. Changes to estimates since the draft budget presented last fall are reflected in the 2025 and 2026 structure and other capital project budgets.

These costs can vary significantly for benefitting municipalities. The Authority is sensitive to the impact on these municipalities and has been meeting with each municipality to discuss the timing and phases of project implementation. The UTRCA has applied for alternative funding to offset capital costs to member municipalities. This budget reflects approved funding and updated projects.

# Operating Costs and Funding Sources per Category

**Table 1. Summary of Operating Costs and Funding Sources per Category**

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Other Category 3 (Campgrounds)	Total
<b>Total Operating Costs</b>	<b>\$12,747,417</b>	<b>\$1,202,163</b>	<b>\$9,095,790</b>	<b>\$4,507,697</b>	<b>\$27,553,066</b>
<b>Funding Sources</b>					
Provincial Transfer Payment - CA Act	\$181,213	-	-	-	<b>\$181,213</b>
Provincial Transfer Payment - Clean Water Act	489,537	-	-	-	<b>489,537</b>
Provincial Contracts	601,848	-	\$180,600	-	<b>782,448</b>
Federal Grants and Contracts	188,236	-	6,139,538	-	<b>6,327,773</b>
Municipal Contracts	698,179	\$1,240,207	318,584	\$75,000	<b>2,331,971</b>
Self-generated Revenue	2,192,437	-	1,646,850	5,297,987	<b>9,137,274</b>
Municipal Levy	8,197,570	-	-	-	<b>8,197,570</b>
Municipal Cost Apportionment Agreements	-	-	626,156	-	<b>626,156</b>
<b>Total Funding Sources</b>	<b>12,549,021</b>	<b>1,240,207</b>	<b>8,911,728</b>	<b>5,372,987</b>	<b>28,073,942</b>
<b>Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>(\$198,397)</b>	<b>\$38,045</b>	<b>(\$184,062)</b>	<b>\$865,290</b>	<b>\$520,876</b>



# Operating Budget

**Table 2. Operating Budget**

	2024 Approved Budget	2025 Category 1	2025 Category 2	2025 Category 3	2025 Category 3 Campgrounds	2025 Total Budget	2026 Forecast
<b>Revenues</b>							
Municipal Levy + Cost Apportionments (Cat.3)	\$7,999,589	\$8,197,570	-	\$626,156	-	\$8,823,726	\$9,630,579
Municipal Levy amortized from deferrals	269,469	282,212	-	1,584	-	283,796	221,309
Provincial Transfer Payment - CA Act	181,213	181,213	-	-	-	181,213	181,213
Provincial Transfer Payment - Clean Water Act	600,584	489,537	-	-	-	489,537	578,540
Municipal Contracts	1,899,856	415,967	\$1,240,207	317,000	\$75,000	2,048,175	2,107,158
Provincial Contracts	383,777	601,848	-	180,600	-	782,448	441,154
Federal Grants and Contracts	2,130,709	188,236	-	6,139,538	-	6,327,773	5,583,535
Land Management Agreements	1,192,377	430,913	-	717,006	104,435	1,252,353	1,272,114
User Fees	6,813,969	1,076,573	-	836,345	5,193,552	7,106,469	7,389,165
Donations and Other Revenues	26,500	46,702	-	93,500	-	140,202	110,500
Investment Revenue	505,250	638,250	-	-	-	638,250	644,250
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>22,003,293</b>	<b>12,549,021</b>	<b>1,240,207</b>	<b>8,911,728</b>	<b>5,372,987</b>	<b>28,073,942</b>	<b>28,159,517</b>
<b>Expenses</b>							
Wages and Benefits	14,955,606	10,090,378	733,141	2,323,208	2,394,935	15,541,661	16,167,817
Property-related Expenses	2,037,632	783,034	50,625	678,195	805,565	2,317,419	2,239,921
Technical and Consulting Services	1,031,367	670,410	30,420	282,354	195,800	1,178,984	953,928
Computers and Communications	571,789	496,375	16,100	24,119	22,850	559,444	523,268
Insurance and Risk Management	471,508	392,083	2,000	16,696	117,075	527,854	571,794
Materials and Supplies	1,126,646	370,750	65,850	505,995	299,325	1,241,920	1,104,943
Staff Travel, PD, PPE, Uniforms	216,851	182,960	20,250	30,240	49,723	283,173	273,229
Fleet-related Expenses	155,200	200,600	-	1,315	3,250	205,165	183,530
Other Expenses	937,700	28,320	-	3,993,780	-	4,022,100	3,692,100
Depreciation Expenses	1,419,170	1,497,266	-	21,026	157,054	1,675,346	1,545,575
Corporate Allocations	9,649	(1,964,760)	283,777	1,218,863	462,120	(0)	430,970
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>22,933,118</b>	<b>12,747,417</b>	<b>1,202,163</b>	<b>9,095,790</b>	<b>4,507,697</b>	<b>27,553,066</b>	<b>27,687,075</b>
<b>Surplus (deficit)</b>	<b>(\$929,825)</b>	<b>(\$198,397)</b>	<b>\$38,045</b>	<b>(\$184,062)</b>	<b>\$865,290</b>	<b>\$520,876</b>	<b>\$472,442</b>

# Capital Projects

**Table 3. Structure Capital Projects**

Structure	2025 Budget				2026 Forecast			
	Project Revenues		Expenses	Net Budget	Project Revenues		Expenses	Net Budget
	Levy	Other Funding			Levy	Potential Funding		
Fanshawe Dam	\$260,000	-	\$238,000	\$22,000	\$438,000	\$80,000	\$175,000	\$343,000
Wildwood Dam	597,882	\$462,500	925,000	135,382	102,500	102,500	205,000	-
Pittock Dam	5,000	-	-	5,000	518,040	502,500	1,020,540	-
London Dykes	4,601,000	5,869,500	10,322,500	148,000	1,222,000	2,697,500	3,919,500	-
St Marys Floodwall				-	25,000	25,000	50,000	-
Ingersoll Channel				-	70,000	70,000	140,000	-
Stratford Channel	20,806			20,806	30,000	30,000	60,000	-
Orr Dam	190,000	-	140,000	50,000	840,000	480,000	1,265,000	55,000
Mitchell Dam	119,564	-	64,000	55,564	223,250	221,250	444,500	-
Harrington Dam	7,000	-	7,000	-	17,500	25,000	55,000	(12,500)
Embro Dam	27,000	-	52,000	(25,000)	60,000	-	60,000	-
Fullarton Dam	105,000	-	87,000	18,000	20,000	20,000	40,000	-
Shakespeare Dam	4,000		4,000	-				-
Dorchester CA Dam	2,000		2,000	-	12,500	12,500	25,000	-
Dorchester Mill Pond Dam	14,500	12,500	27,000	-	30,000	30,000	60,000	-
Centreville Dam	34,629		2,000	32,629	180,500	137,500	318,000	-
<b>Total Structure Capital Projects</b>	<b>\$5,988,381</b>	<b>\$6,344,500</b>	<b>\$11,870,500</b>	<b>\$462,381</b>	<b>\$3,789,290</b>	<b>\$4,433,750</b>	<b>\$7,837,540</b>	<b>\$385,500</b>

**Notes:**

1. "Other funding" in 2025 includes a significant contribution from the federal government.
2. "Potential funding" in 2026 is dependent on approved Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure program applications and is not guaranteed.
3. Projects and cost estimates for 2025 and beyond are prepared on a best estimate basis. As new information is received, costs are updated and funding of projects may be updated as well.
4. Positive figures in the "net" columns imply that we are planning to levy later, or more, than originally envisioned in earlier years.

**Table 4. Other Capital Projects**

Project	2025 Budget					2026 Forecast				
	Project Revenues		Expenses	Net Budget	Notes	Project Revenues		Expenses	Net Budget	Notes
	Capital Maintenance Levy	Other Funding				Capital Maintenance Levy	Potential Funding			
<b>Capital Asset Renewal Reserve</b>										
Watershed Conservation Centre (WCC) office furnishings	\$50,000			\$50,000	Levy for shortfall in 2024				-	
Voltage regulator	80,000		\$80,000	-	Installed in WCC for power issues				-	
IT server equipment	58,000		58,000	-	Hosts/servers and IT storage	\$58,000		\$58,000	-	Hosts/servers and IT storage
Fleet vehicle and equipment replacement	280,000	\$65,000	516,000	(171,000)	1 light-duty truck, 3 EV pickups, Bobcat with attachments, 1 zero-turn mower	385,000	\$50,000	435,000	-	5 light duty trucks, hybrid van, 4 UTVs
EV charging stations	55,000		130,000	(75,000)	Net shortage \$75K was levied in 2024 already	45,000	55,000	100,000	-	
Former Children's Safety Village rehabilitation		50,000	50,000	-	LED grant from RBC received				-	
Loggers and telemetry watershed-wide	24,500		36,500	(12,000)	Satellite link, GOES, and Wabuno site equipment	15,800		15,800	-	Pottersburg bubbler
<b>Category 1 General Distribution Reserve</b>										
Lands projects and plans			270,100	(270,100)	Plans for Fanshawe Conservation Area (CA) entrance, gatehouses			40,000	(\$40,000)	
<b>Category 3 Campgrounds Reserve</b>										
Tri-park design plans for business and gatehouse			192,500	(192,500)	Wildwood CA entrance design, business studies		250,000	500,000	(250,000)	
Fanshawe CA capital projects on roads, equipment, and buildings			1,405,000	(1,405,000)	Mainly roadworks			1,659,000	(1,659,000)	Further roadwork and electrical upgrades
Pittock CA capital projects on bridge		150,000	165,000	(15,000)	In conjunction with City of Woodstock			655,000	(655,000)	Washroom repairs, electrical and site upgrades
Wildwood CA roads, electrical work, and playground equipment			710,000	(710,000)				225,000	(225,000)	4 cabins
<b>Total Other Capital Projects</b>	<b>\$547,500</b>	<b>\$265,000</b>	<b>\$3,613,100</b>	<b>(\$2,800,600)</b>		<b>\$503,800</b>	<b>\$355,000</b>	<b>\$3,687,800</b>	<b>(\$2,829,000)</b>	



# Municipal Levies

**Table 5. Municipal Levies**

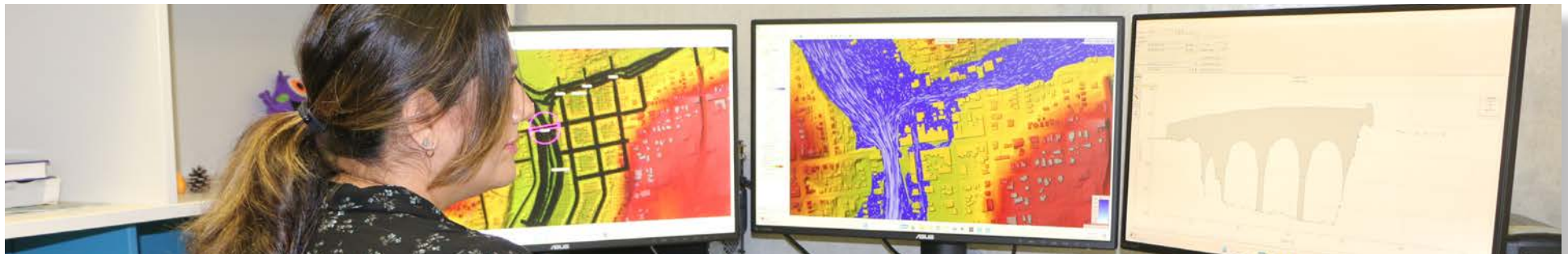
Municipality	General Distribution Rates - Operating and Capital (See Table 6. Municipal Levies Detail: MCVA General Distribution)							Benefit-based Distribution Rates** - Operating and Capital (See Table 7. Municipal Levies Detail: Benefit-based Distribution)							Category 1 Mandatory Program Levy	
	Clean Water Act		Conservation Authorities Act		Clean Water Act		Conservation Authorities Act		Structure 100% (Single Benefiting Municipality)		Wildwood Dam (London 80%, St Marys 14%, all municipalities 6% MCVA)		Pittock Dam (Oxford County 61.1%, London 32.9%, all municipalities 6% MCVA)			Category 1 Levy: Benefit-based Distribution
	2024 MCVA %	2024 MCVA %	2025 MCVA %	2025 Levy	2025 MCVA %	2025 Levy	Total	Structure	2025 Levy	%	2025 Levy	%	2025 Levy	Total		Total
Oxford County	16.9295	16.9810	16.9550	-	17.0065	\$1,248,765	\$1,248,765	Ingersoll Channel	\$28,000	1.0204	\$9,942	62.1204	\$158,407	\$196,350	\$1,445,114	
London	63.8935	64.0880	63.8549		64.0489	4,703,017	4,703,017	Fanshawe Dam	649,500	83.8429	816,951	36.7429	93,694	6,213,445	10,916,462	
								London Dykes	4,647,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	
								Springbank Dam	6,300							
Lucan Biddulph	0.3497	0.3507	0.3554		0.3565	26,179	26,179		-	0.0214	208	0.0214	55	263	26,442	
Thames Centre	3.1877	3.1974	3.2362		3.2460	238,349	238,349	Dorchester CA Dam	2,500	0.1948	1,898	0.1948	497	23,894	262,243	
								Dorchester Mill Pond Dam	19,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Strathroy-Caradoc*	0.3034	-	0.3029		-	-	-		-							
Middlesex Centre	2.4364	2.4438	2.4647		2.4722	181,530	181,530		-	0.1483	1,445	0.1483	378	1,824	183,354	
Stratford	7.1849	7.2068	7.1492		7.1709	526,548	526,548	RT Orr Dam	245,915	0.4303	4,192	0.4303	1,097	293,010	819,558	
								Stratford Channel	41,806	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Perth East	1.4139	1.4182	1.4085		1.4128	103,741	103,741	Shakespeare Dam	5,000	0.0848	826	0.0848	216	6,042	109,783	
West Perth	1.4853	1.4899	1.4573		1.4617	107,331	107,331	Fullarton Dam	164,000	0.0877	855	0.0877	224	364,642	471,973	
	-	-	-		-	-	-	Mitchell Dam	199,564	-	-	-	-	-	-	
St Marys	1.4560	1.4604	1.4585		1.4630	107,423	107,423	St Marys Floodwall	65,000	14.0878	137,269	0.0878	224	202,493	309,916	
Perth South	1.1594	1.1629	1.1556		1.1591	85,113	85,113		-	0.0696	678	0.0696	177	855	85,968	
South Huron	0.2003	0.2009	0.2018		0.2024	14,860	14,860		-	0.0121	118	0.0121	31	149	15,009	
Zorra	-	-	-		-	-	-	Embro Dam	40,000	-	-	-	-	49,000	49,000	
								Harrington Dam	9,000					-	-	
South-West Oxford	-	-	-		-	-	-	Centreville Dam	38,629					38,629	38,629	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>\$7,342,855</b>	<b>\$7,342,855</b>		<b>\$6,161,214</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>\$974,382</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>\$255,000</b>	<b>\$7,390,596</b>	<b>\$14,733,451</b>	

\* Strathroy-Caradoc is currently excluded from the UTRCA's jurisdiction by Order-in-Council.

\*\*The UTRCA uses a benefit-based method to apportion the operating expenses and capital costs for the structures it operates and maintains. The local share of the costs (after reduction by available funding from senior government or other sources) is apportioned based on the benefit to the municipalities. For Fanshawe, Wildwood, and Pittock Dams, the shared benefit was determined when the funding for construction of the structures was discussed. For all other structures, the municipality where each structure is located is the sole beneficiary and, therefore, covers all the local share of operating and maintenance costs. This approach is consistent with how these costs have been apportioned in the past and is described in the Conservation Authorities Act Regulations (Ontario Regulation 402/22 Section 7(6)).

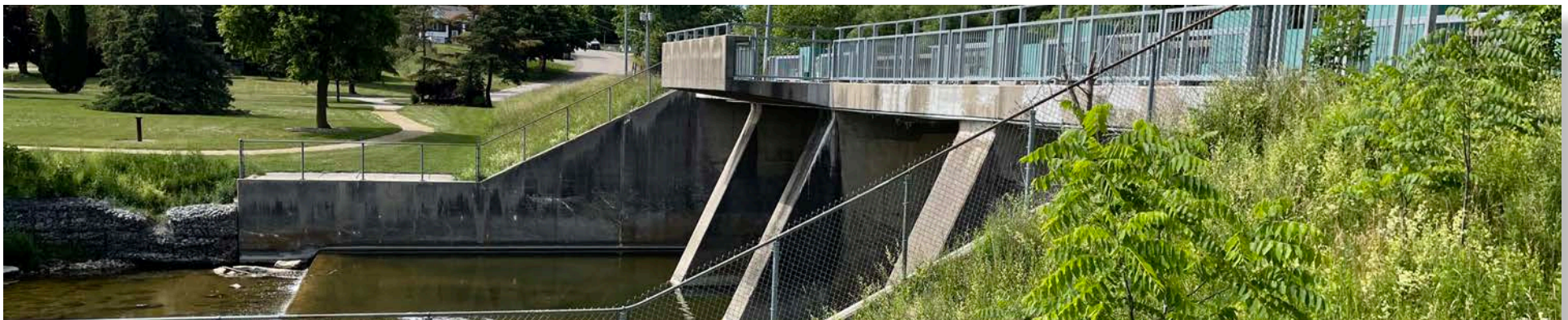
**Table 6. Municipal Levies Detail: MCVA General Distribution**

Category 1 Mandatory Programs	Expenses	Municipal Support
<b>Environmental Planning and Regulations</b>		
- Regulations under S28.1 Natural Hazards	\$1,401,186	\$839,000
- Planning Activities	1,231,587	757,000
<b>Water Management</b>		
- Flood Forecasting and Warning	623,881	585,848
- Infrastructure Operations and Maintenance (Table 7. Municipal Levies Detail: Benefit-based Distribution)	1,756,247	1,219
- Mapping, Studies, and Information Management	1,360,340	1,304,000
- Climate Change Risk and Mitigation	314,591	134,444
- Low Water Response	10,880	11,000
- Natural Hazards Outreach and Education	506,355	341,600
<b>Land Management</b>		
- Lands Management (Risk, Encroachment, Enforcement)	903,111	703,000
- Lands Strategies (including Acquisition and Disposition)	43,693	42,000
- Public Access for Passive Recreation (Table 7. Municipal Levies Detail: Benefit-based Distribution)	1,484,926	778,287
- Natural Heritage Conservation on UTRCA lands	376,186	51,250
<b>Provincial Water Monitoring</b>	188,294	170,675
<b>Drinking Water Source Protection</b>	483,168	-
<b>Watershed Management Strategy Implementation</b>	247,144	22,217
<b>Essential Corporate Costs</b>	1,815,826	1,053,815
<b>Total Operating Levy</b>	<b>12,747,417</b>	<b>6,795,355</b>
Capital Maintenance Levy (not flood control related)	3,576,600	547,500
<b>Total Costs to Levy (MCVA general distribution)</b>	<b>\$16,324,017</b>	<b>\$7,342,855</b>



**Table 7. Municipal Levies Detail: Benefit-based Distribution**

Structure	Passive Recreation	Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance		Benefit-based Total for Structures
	Dam Operation and Maintenance	Flood Control Structures - Operating, Routine and Preventative Maintenance	Capital Repairs and Environmental Assessments	
Fanshawe Dam	-	\$389,500	\$260,000	\$649,500
Wildwood Dam	-	376,500	597,882	974,382
Pittock Dam	-	250,000	5,000	255,000
London Dykes	-	46,000	4,601,000	4,647,000
St. Marys Floodwall	-	65,000	-	65,000
Ingersoll Channel	-	28,000	-	28,000
Stratford Channel	-	21,000	20,806	41,806
Springbank Dam	\$6,300	-	-	6,300
RT Orr Dam	55,915	-	190,000	245,915
Mitchell Dam	80,000	-	119,564	199,564
Harrington Dam	2,000	-	7,000	9,000
Embro Dam	13,000	-	27,000	40,000
Fullarton Dam	59,000	-	105,000	164,000
Shakespeare Dam	1,000	-	4,000	5,000
Dorchester CA Dam	500	-	2,000	2,500
Dorchester Mill Pond Dam	4,500	-	14,500	19,000
Centreville Dam	4,000	-	34,629	38,629
<b>Total Levies for Structures under Benefit-based Distribution</b>	<b>\$226,215</b>	<b>\$1,176,000</b>	<b>\$5,988,381</b>	<b>\$7,390,596</b>



**Table 8. Year over Year Comparison of Total Municipal Contributions**

Municipality	2024						2025					
	MCVA 2024 %	General MCVA Distribution (Operating and Capital)	Special Benefitting Rates (Operating and Capital)	Total Levy Category 1	General MCVA Distribution (Operating programs) Category 3 Cost Apportionment	Total Municipal Support	MCVA 2025 %	General MCVA Distribution (Operating and Capital)	Benefit-based Distribution (Operating and Capital)	Total Levy Category 1	General MCVA Distribution (Operating programs) Category 3 Cost Apportionment	Total Municipal Support
Oxford County	16.981	\$1,083,785	\$260,556	\$1,344,341	\$103,236	\$1,447,577	17.0065	\$1,248,765	\$196,350	\$1,445,115	\$106,487	\$1,551,602
London	64.088	4,090,313	1,712,282	5,802,596	389,623	6,192,219	64.0489	4,703,017	6,213,445	10,916,462	401,046	11,317,508
Lucan Biddulph	0.3507	22,383	187	22,570	2,132	24,702	0.3565	26,179	263	26,442	2,232	28,674
Thames Centre	3.1974	204,069	5,707	209,776	19,439	229,215	3.246	238,349	23,894	262,243	20,325	282,568
Strathroy Caradoc				0		0				0		0
Middlesex Centre	2.4438	155,972	1,305	157,276	14,857	172,133	2.4722	181,530	1,824	183,354	15,480	198,834
Stratford	7.2068	459,962	92,489	552,452	43,814	596,266	7.1709	526,548	293,010	819,558	44,901	864,459
Perth East	1.4182	90,514	1,757	92,271	8,622	100,893	1.4128	103,741	6,042	109,783	8,846	118,629
West Perth	1.4899	95,090	130,937	226,028	9,058	235,086	1.4617	107,331	364,642	471,973	9,153	481,126
St Marys	1.4604	93,208	134,910	228,118	8,879	236,997	1.463	107,423	202,493	309,916	9,161	319,077
Perth South	1.1629	74,220	621	74,841	7,070	81,911	1.1591	85,113	855	85,968	7,258	93,226
South Huron	0.2009	12,822	107	12,929	1,221	14,150	0.2024	14,860	149	15,009	1,267	16,276
Zorra			52,500	52,500		52,500			49,000	49,000		49,000
South-West Oxford			4,000	4,000		4,000			38,629	38,629		38,629
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>\$6,382,339</b>	<b>\$2,397,358</b>	<b>\$8,779,698</b>	<b>\$607,951</b>	<b>\$9,387,649</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>\$7,342,856</b>	<b>\$7,390,596</b>	<b>\$14,733,452</b>	<b>\$626,156</b>	<b>\$15,359,608</b>

Notes:

- General MCVA distribution is applied to watershed-wide programs and services.
- Benefit-based distribution is structure-specific to the benefitting municipality / municipalities.

## Reserves

UTRCA reserves were restructured in 2024 to conform with the provincial segregation of programs and services into categories. Opening 2024 reserve balances have been restated and unaudited 2024 actuals applied. Some variation is evident between budgets and actuals during 2024 as the organization adapted from highly integrated programs to a much more segregated approach.

UTRCA has always had Water and Erosion Control Structures Reserves due to the nature of benefit-based municipal funding, and those reserves remain. All other program reserves are grouped in their respective categories, except those related to land transactions, long-term investments, and donor-directed funds.

Note that the 2024 actual capital amounts reflect capital spending undertaken in 2024 (i.e., capitalized costs that will be depreciated over time in operating programs). The 2024 capital costs do not directly deplete those reserves in 2024 but will do so over years to come.

The 2025 budget would result in the reserve balances shown on the final line, "Expected End of 2025." Note that overall reserves are expected to fall by the close of 2025 even as individual reserves may rise. Broadly speaking, the UTRCA continues to require capital spending, which should be fully funded. Further development of the capital budgeting process and asset management planning efforts should improve this situation over time.

**Table 9. Reserves Forecast**

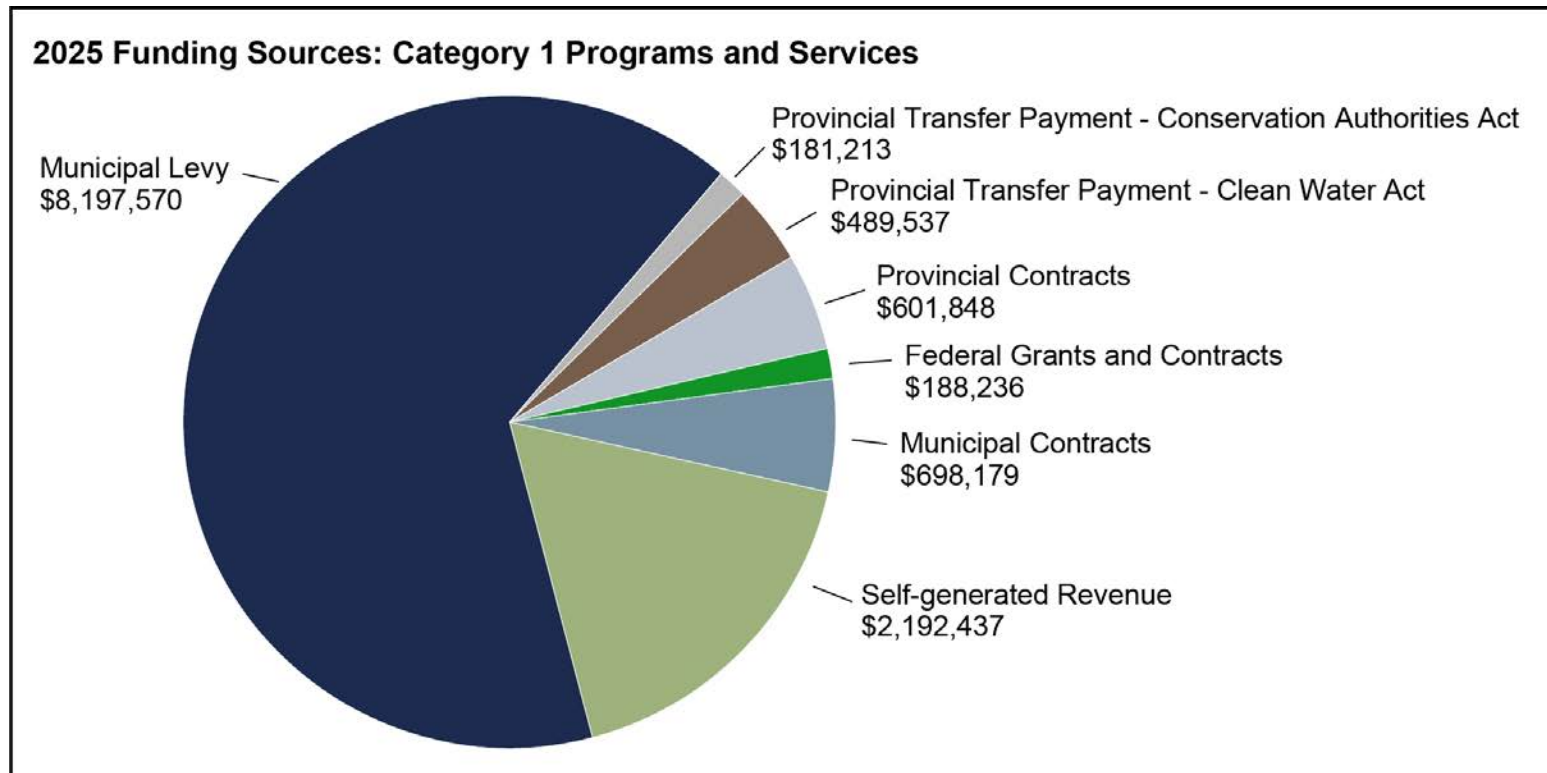
As Planned	Total Reserves	Category 1 Operating	Land Transactions	Directed Donations	Capital Asset Renewal	Water and Erosion Control Structures	Long-term Investment	Category 2 Operating	Category 3 Operating	Category 3 Campgrounds Operating
Actual Opening 2024 Restructured	\$6,817,917	\$416,231	\$30,859	\$86,081	\$1,126,455	\$1,989,116	\$146,228		(\$38,909)	\$3,061,858
Approved Budget 2024: Operating	(929,825)	(1,189,252)		341		(44,298)	25,000	3,793	(406,494)	681,085
Approved Budget 2024: Capital	(2,762,085)				(280,000)	(173,148)				(2,308,937)
<b>Approved for End of 2024</b>	<b>\$3,126,007</b>	<b>(\$773,021)</b>	<b>\$30,859</b>	<b>\$86,422</b>	<b>\$846,455</b>	<b>\$1,771,670</b>	<b>\$171,228</b>	<b>\$3,793</b>	<b>(\$445,403)</b>	<b>\$1,434,006</b>
As Expected	Total Reserves	Category 1 Operating	Land Transactions	Directed Donations	Capital Asset Renewal	Water and Erosion Control Structures	Long-term Investment	Category 2 Operating	Category 3 Operating	Category 3 Campgrounds Operating
Actual Opening 2024 Restructured	\$6,817,917	\$416,231	\$30,859	\$86,081	\$1,126,455	\$1,989,116	\$146,228		(\$38,909)	\$3,061,858
Unaudited Actuals 2024: Operating	2,028,505	(1,065,250)	1,095,012	(9,488)		204,003	450,639	56,582	(206,566)	1,503,573
Unaudited Actuals 2024: Capital	(1,998,395)		(1,095,012)		(335,365)	(337,222)				(230,796)
Forecast Budget 2025: Operating	520,876	(244,368)		1,612		(125,641)	80,000	38,045	(94,062)	865,290
Forecast Budget 2025: Capital	(2,338,219)	(270,100)			(208,000)	462,381				(2,322,500)
<b>Expected End of 2025</b>	<b>\$5,030,684</b>	<b>(\$1,163,487)</b>	<b>\$30,859</b>	<b>\$78,205</b>	<b>\$583,090</b>	<b>\$2,192,637</b>	<b>\$676,866</b>	<b>\$94,627</b>	<b>(\$339,537)</b>	<b>\$2,877,424</b>

## Category 1 Programs and Services: Budget

Category 1 includes the programs and services that the Province of Ontario has deemed mandatory for a Conservation Authority to deliver.

### Funding

- The CA is permitted to levy their member municipalities for the full cost of delivering these mandated programs and services. The UTRCA uses revenues from agricultural leases, interest earned on investments, and internal program chargeback recoveries by allocating costs, to reduce the levy impact on member municipalities.
- All corporate costs may be included as Category 1 (i.e., eligible for full levy funding) but UTRCA is allocating program-specific costs to programs and services in all three categories. Essential corporate costs that are not program-specific are included as a grouping within Category 1 below (see page 20 for details).



**Table 10. Category 1 Operating Budget**

Expenses by Type	Environmental Planning and Regulations	Water Management	Land Management	Provincial Water Monitoring	Drinking Water Source Protection	Watershed Management Strategy	Essential Corporate Costs	Total Category 1
Wages and Benefits	\$1,948,367	\$2,634,717	\$1,768,847	\$119,291	\$251,773	\$262,023	\$3,105,361	\$10,090,378
Property-related Expenses	1,000	182,690	237,244	-	-	10,500	351,600	783,034
Technical and Consulting Services	123,000	62,840	41,581	-	146,484	7,750	288,755	670,410
Computers and Communications	23,000	87,412	17,114	5,000	27,779	50	336,021	496,375
Insurance and Risk Management	3,972	49,436	37,471	1,986	-	993	298,225	392,083
Materials and Supplies	200	73,003	73,347	2,000	700	12,950	208,550	370,750
Staff Travel, PD, PPE, Uniforms	17,800	17,964	28,211	-	6,485	500	112,000	182,960
Fleet-related Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	200,600	200,600
Other Expenses	-	7,570	-	-	-	750	20,000	28,320
Depreciation Expenses	-	691,916	196,902	-	-	-	608,448	1,497,266
Corporate Allocations	515,434	658,325	407,200	60,017	49,948	58,050	(3,713,733)	(1,964,760)
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,632,773</b>	<b>\$4,465,872</b>	<b>\$2,807,918</b>	<b>\$188,294</b>	<b>\$483,168</b>	<b>\$353,566</b>	<b>\$1,815,826</b>	<b>\$12,747,417</b>

# Category 1 Programs and Services: Overview

## Environmental Planning and Regulations

The UTRCA provides planning and regulations services to protect people and property from natural hazards (e.g., flood and erosion hazards, wetlands, and the area of interference surrounding wetlands) and support safe development.

Natural hazard planning activities include:

- Planning Act delegated responsibility for natural hazards to be consistent with Provincial Policies,
- Technical information and advice to municipalities on circulated municipal land use planning applications (Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments, Subdivisions, Consents, Minor Variances) with respect to natural hazards.
- Input to municipal land-use planning documents (OP, Comprehensive ZB, Secondary plans) related to natural hazards, on behalf of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (delegated to CAs in 1983).

Regulations activities under Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act include:

- Reviewing and processing permit applications, associated technical reports, site inspections, communication with applicants, agents, and consultants. Property inquiries and compliance/enforcement activities.
- Input to the review and approval processes under the Planning Act and other applicable law, (e.g., Environmental Assessment Act, Drainage Act, Aggregate Resources Act, with comments principally related to natural hazards, wetlands, watercourses, and Section 28 permit requirements.

## Legislative Changes

- Bill 23 (More Homes Built Faster Act) and Bill 109 (More Homes for Everyone Act) - Implement service delivery standards for the administration of planning and development reviews and permitting to expedite the approvals process.
- Ontario Regulation 41/24 - Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits under Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act, effective April 1, 2024. requires new regulatory processes, administrative procedures, and policies.
- S28 Conservation Authorities Act - Consultation on and updating of natural hazard maps to inform planning and development applications.





## Water Management

The UTRCA's water management program protects people and property and supports safe development by reducing risk due to flooding. Key components include:

- Providing flood forecasting and warning services for municipalities,
- Continually monitoring stream flow, reservoirs, and watershed conditions to assess flood, low flow, and climate change impacts and mitigation,
- Operating and maintaining water control structures (3 large dams, 3 flood control channels, 8 dykes/ floodwalls), constructed in partnership with municipalities, to control flood flows and augment stream flows during dry periods,
- Mapping and modelling flood plains and other natural hazards,
- Developing, maintaining, and implementing Flood Contingency Plan for municipal and First Nation flood coordinators and other partners,
- Providing outreach and education programs and information on natural hazards,
- Operating and maintaining 12 erosion control structures,
- Operating and maintaining recreational water control structures for passive recreation, on behalf of municipalities.
- Asset management planning for water and erosion control structures will continue building on the mandatory asset management plans for flood control, flow augmentation, and erosion control structures, to incorporate other UTRCA assets including recreational water control structures. Operational plans will be developed for recreational water control structures, similar to the mandatory deliverables required for the flood control and flow augmentation structures.



## Land Management

The UTRCA provides public access for passive recreation on 3200 hectares of conservation lands at Fanshawe, Wildwood, and Pittock Conservation Areas, and at 11 day-use conservation areas/tracts and an arboretum (managed in partnership with local service clubs or municipalities). Management activities include risk management, encroachment monitoring, and enforcement.

More than 2000 ha of rural properties, including 1500 ha of wetland, provide long-term protection of natural heritage. Activities include forest management, signage, gates, stewardship, restoration, and ecological monitoring.

The UTRCA has prepared a Conservation Areas and Lands Strategy to meet the requirements for a strategy for conservation area owned or managed lands, as set out in the Conservation Authorities Act and Ontario Regulation 686/21 (Mandatory Programs and Services). The UTRCA has also prepared two other, related, mandatory documents, namely a Land Inventory and a Land Acquisition and Disposition Policy.

The Lands Strategy provides guiding principles, goals, and objectives for UTRCA owned or managed lands, which include conservation areas as well as other categories of lands. Staff also developed a Lands Strategy Implementation Plan that will guide implementation for the next 10 years. The plan contains management recommendations at the property type level (e.g., rural conservation areas, wetlands, large conservation areas, etc.).

The Lands Strategy involves a multi-faceted approach that integrates conservation, sustainable land management practices, and community engagement. It will be a valuable resource for the UTRCA and will provide clarity to watershed municipalities, residents, partners, and other interest holders regarding the UTRCA's vision for our lands for future generations.



## Provincial Water Monitoring

The UTRCA monitors surface water at 24 Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network sites on a monthly basis (April to November). Water quality has been monitored in the Upper Thames watershed since the 1960s through this program, which is a cooperative program of the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) and CAs. The UTRCA uses the data in the watershed report cards and to prioritize stewardship projects.

The UTRCA monitors groundwater quantity and quality in 28 wells at 22 Provincial Groundwater Monitor Network sites in cooperation with MECP. There are 23 wells sampled for water quality annually, and five wells that were changed to biennial water quality sampling in 2023 at the discretion of MECP. Groundwater quantity is monitored year-round at all wells.

No provincial funding is received for the surface water program, and limited funding is received for the groundwater program.



## Drinking Water Source Protection

The UTRCA protects municipal drinking water sources through Source Protection Plans, as part of the Thames-Sydenham Source Protection Region (Upper Thames River, Lower Thames Valley, and St. Clair Region Conservation Authorities). The UTRCA is the lead Authority for the Region, providing technical and Source Protection Committee support, organizing Source Protection Authority reports and meetings, and carrying out other activities required by the Clean Water Act and regulations.

The UTRCA assists in coordinating and implementing the Source Protection Plans (SPP). Where advisable, the UTRCA reviews and comments on any proposal made under another Act that is circulated to it, to determine whether the proposal relates to a significant drinking water threat that is governed by the SPP or the proposal's potential impact on any drinking water sources protected by the SPP.

This program is currently funded by the province.

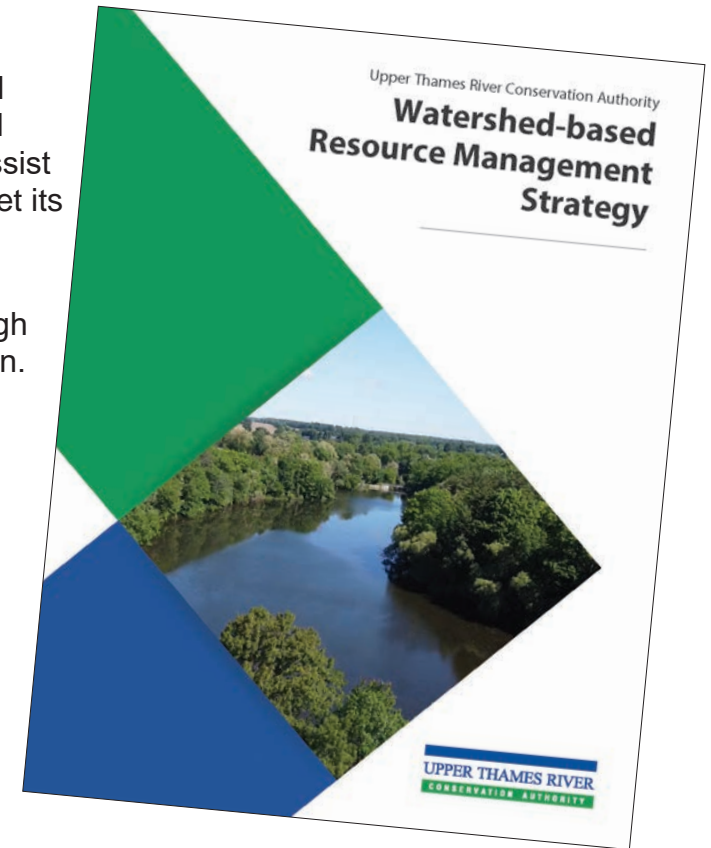
## Watershed Management Strategy Implementation

The UTRCA has prepared a Watershed Strategy to meet the requirements for a Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy as set out under Section 21.1 of the Conservation Authorities Act (CA Act) and Ontario Regulation 686/21 (Mandatory Programs and Services). The goal of the Watershed Strategy is to ensure that the UTRCA's programs and services address watershed issues and priorities and reflect the organization's mandate under the CA Act.

The strategy sets out the UTRCA's guiding principles and objectives and updates the inventory of programs and services, assessing resource conditions, trends, risks, and issues that impact the effective delivery of its mandatory and municipal programs and services. It also identifies desirable future programs, services, and actions that will assist the UTRCA in delivering its mandatory and municipal programs and services and meet its objectives and long-term goals.

The strategy was developed with input from UTRCA staff, watershed municipalities, Indigenous communities, interest holders, and the public. Information gathered through consultation efforts will be used to develop a Watershed Strategy Implementation Plan. The plan will include:

- List of challenges, issues, and risks that limit the effectiveness of the mandatory programs and services,
- Identification of gaps in programs and services needed to address the issues and mitigate the high priority risks,
- Determination of whether the programs and services comply with the regulations under 40(1)(b) of the CA Act,
- Cost estimate and high-level work plan for the implementation of those actions, if the opportunity arises and funding is available.



## Essential Corporate Costs

Corporate costs support all UTRCA program areas, the Board of Directors, member municipalities, and the public, to enable the UTRCA to operate in an accountable, efficient, and effective manner.

Under the legislation, all corporate costs are a mandatory (Category 1) service and, therefore, eligible for full levy funding.

Rather than keeping all corporate costs in Category 1, the UTRCA is allocating program-specific corporate costs to programs and services in all three Categories. These allocated costs include property insurance, IT services, costs to operate the Watershed Conservation Centre (administration building), finance and human resources unit costs, some common communications and marketing unit costs, and shared fleet and equipment costs.

The budget format illustrates that \$1,964,760 in corporate costs is allocated to the following categories of programs, which are not funded by municipal levy:

- \$283,777 to Category 2 programs,
- \$1,218,863 to Category 3 programs, and
- \$462,120 to the campground operations (other Category 3).

Essential corporate costs that are not program-specific are grouped as a Category 1 (mandatory) cost. They include board governance, administration, health and safety programs, asset management planning, shared fleet management, shared equipment, and directors' and officers' insurance and liability.



## Category 2 Programs and Services: Budget

Category 2 programs and services are delivered at cost to specific municipalities under contract.

### Funding

- Delivered at cost to specific municipalities under contract (cannot be funded through levy).

2025 Funding Sources: Category 2 Programs and Services

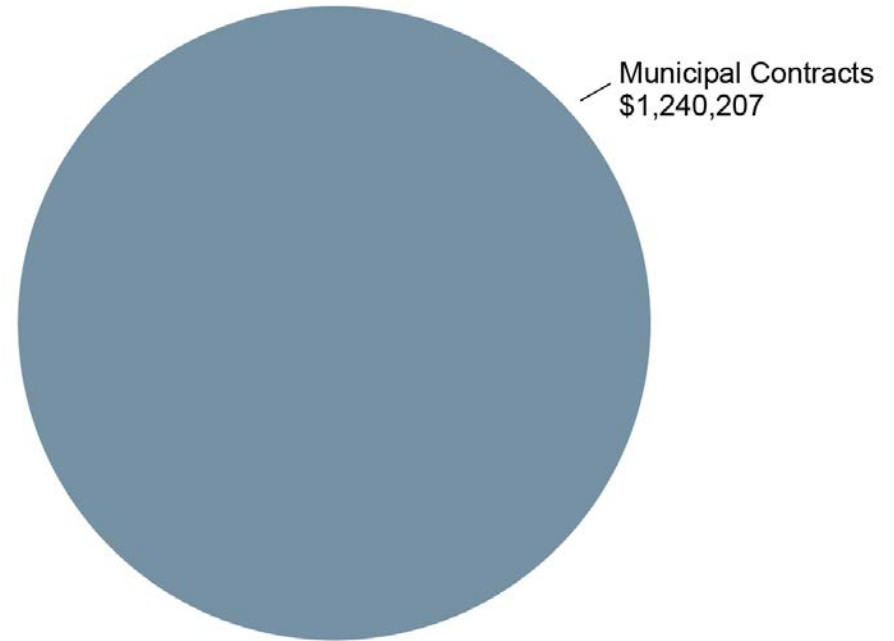


Table 11. Category 2 Operating Budget

Expenses by Type	City of London Environmentally Significant Areas / Lands Management	City of London Water Quality Monitoring	Drinking Water Source Protection Risk Management	Total Category 2
Wages and Benefits	\$553,836	\$70,598	\$108,707	\$733,141
Property-related Expenses	49,825	-	800	50,625
Technical and Consulting Services	1,500	-	28,920	30,420
Computers and Communications	3,300	-	12,800	16,100
Insurance and Risk Management	-	-	2,000	2,000
Materials and Supplies	55,850	-	10,000	65,850
Staff Travel, PD, PPE, Uniforms	13,450	-	6,800	20,250
Fleet-related Expenses	-	-	-	-
Other Expenses	-	-	-	-
Depreciation Expenses	-	-	-	-
Corporate Allocations	223,820	26,142	33,815	283,777
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$901,581</b>	<b>\$96,740</b>	<b>\$203,842</b>	<b>\$1,202,163</b>

## Category 2 Programs and Services: Overview

### City of London Contract Work

The UTRCA is contracted by the City of London to manage 12 Environmentally Significant Areas, install and maintain flow devices in City of London stormwater management infrastructure (in accordance with the City's beaver protocol), and monitor water quality and benthic invertebrates for environmental compliance.

### Drinking Water Source Protection Risk Management Services

The UTRCA provides Drinking Water Source Protection Risk Management Inspector/ Official services for partner municipalities.



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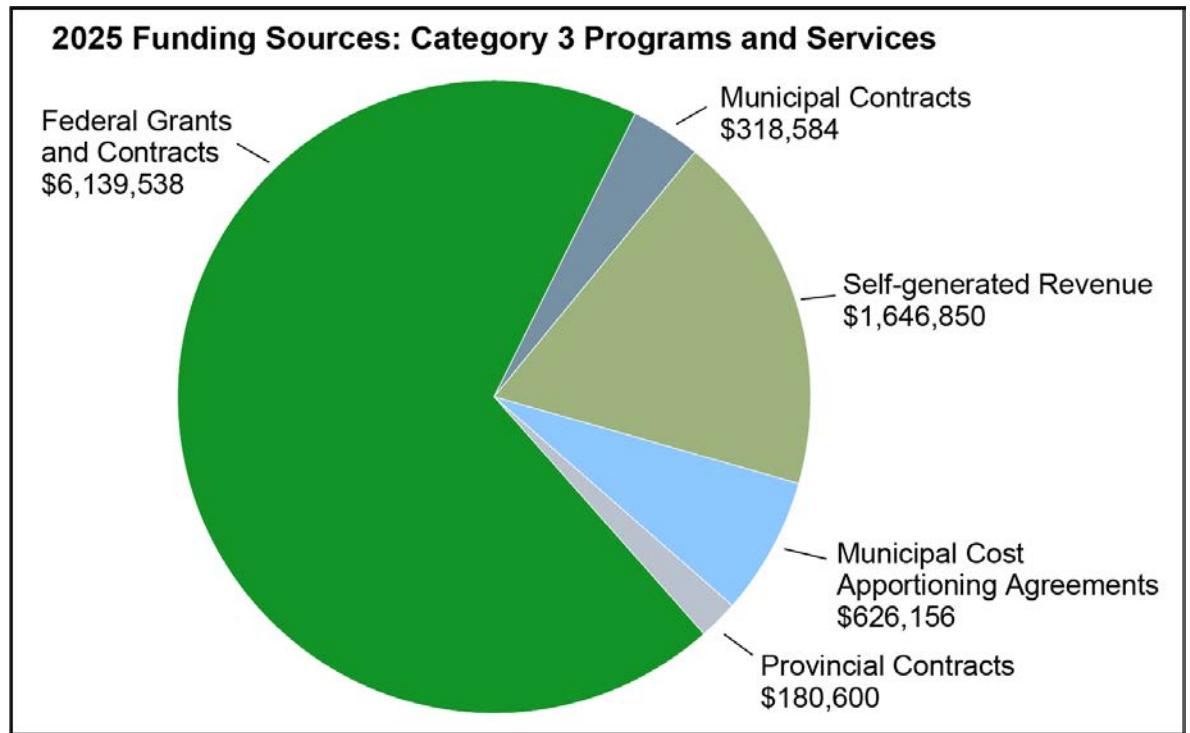
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## Category 3 Programs and Services: Budget

Category 3 programs and services are those that a Conservation Authority determines are advisable to provide to further the purpose of the Conservation Authorities Act.

### Funding

- Multiple funding sources including municipal support through cost apportioning agreements (cannot be funded through levy).
- Category 3 programs and services are funded largely through contracts and grants, most of which require some financial support from municipalities. The budget reflects significant funding from the Canada Water Agency for phosphorus reduction programs.



**Table 12. Category 3 Operating Budget**

Expenses by Type	Community Partnerships and Education	Water Quality Database Management	Ecological Monitoring	Land Stewardship Programs	Land Lease Management	Total Category 3
Wages and Benefits	\$615,519	\$37,784	\$410,771	\$1,058,131	\$201,003	\$2,323,208
Property-Related Expenses	23,810	-	-	343,100	311,285	678,195
Technical and Consulting Services	6,810	60,000	37,244	132,800	45,500	282,354
Computers and Communications	3,720	2,325	10,764	5,250	2,060	24,119
Insurance and Risk Management	1,988	-	139	2,306	12,263	16,696
Materials and Supplies	87,915	-	4,000	365,250	48,830	505,995
Staff Travel, PD, PPE, Uniforms	5,740	800	1,125	18,200	4,375	30,240
Fleet-Related Expenses	-	-	-	800	515	1,315
Other Expenses	18,780	-	22,200	3,944,800	8,000	3,993,780
Depreciation Expenses	-	4,914	1,584	-	14,528	21,026
Corporate Allocations	195,079	10,856	121,618	859,592	31,718	1,218,863
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$959,361</b>	<b>\$116,679</b>	<b>\$609,444</b>	<b>\$6,730,229</b>	<b>\$680,076</b>	<b>\$9,095,790</b>



**Table 13. Category 3 Municipal Cost Apportioning Agreements**

Municipality	2024 MCVA %	2025 MCVA %	Category 3 Cost Apportionment
Oxford County	16.981	17.0065	\$106,487
London	64.088	64.0489	401,046
Lucan Biddulph	0.351	0.3565	2,232
Thames Centre	3.197	3.2460	20,325
Strathroy Caradoc	-	-	0
Middlesex Centre	2.444	2.4722	15,480
Stratford	7.207	7.1709	44,901
Perth East	1.418	1.4128	8,846
West Perth	1.490	1.4617	9,153
St Marys	1.460	1.4630	9,161
Perth South	1.163	1.1591	7,258
<i>South Huron*</i>	<i>0.201</i>	<i>0.2024</i>	<i>1,267</i>
Zorra	-	-	0
South-West Oxford	-	-	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>\$626,156</b>

\*Municipality of South Huron is not participating in Category 3 programs.



## Category 3 Programs and Services: Overview

### Community Partnerships and Education

Community partnerships programs are designed to increase awareness of, support for, and involvement in projects that restore and enhance watershed health and resiliency to climate change.

The programs empower communities and youth, creating value for a healthy environment through opportunities to experience and learn about conservation, and build capacity in local communities by providing hands-on learning opportunities to address local environmental concerns.

The community partnerships program facilitates relationships among watershed residents, Authority staff, and member municipalities to enable the sharing of expertise and resources. The UTRCA assists community members and “friends of groups” to identify local environmental needs, access funding, and implement on-the-ground projects within their local communities.

Curriculum-based environmental education programs work closely with watershed Boards of Education to reach over 20,000 students per year with place-based information and to support the community partnerships program.

The education programs help communities and youth

understand how to protect their watershed resources and avoid risks from flooding and related hazards. Education programs are hosted at Fanshawe and Wildwood Conservation Areas, local natural areas, school yards/in class, and virtually.



## Stewardship and Restoration

The UTRCA delivers a wide range of landowner stewardship and restoration services that improve soil health, water quality and quantity, biodiversity, and climate resiliency. A healthy Thames River will also benefit Lake St Clair and Lake Erie.

Staff provide comprehensive conservation planning, technical services, and planning and design for a variety of stewardship practices. Technical plans are tailored to individual farm projects, recognizing the diverse agricultural landscape across the watershed.

Staff advise on in-stream and riparian restoration as well as wetland enhancement projects that provide flood retention, reduce peak flows, mitigate erosion hazards, and improve flow regimes. Restoration programs also include invasive species identification and control, pollinator habitat creation, and prairie seeding. The forestry program, which is one of UTRCA's longest running programs, offers the sale of native trees and shrubs, tree planting, and woodlot management services to landowners. Windbreaks and land retirement plantings reduce erosion, increase natural cover and habitat, and build climate change resilience across the watershed. Additional, in-field technical advice and planning centred around erosion control includes land management changes or structural options.

The Clean Water Program (CWP) provides a one-window service for rural landowners to access technical assistance and financial incentives to support on the ground implementation of best management practices (BMPs) that improve and protect water quality on farmland. The CWP is funded by participating municipalities, with additional funding leveraged from government, foundations, and donations.

Demonstration sites are used to test the practicality and effectiveness of BMPs to provide environmental co-benefits without sacrificing farm productivity. The UTRCA's Thorndale Demonstration Farm is an example of efforts to share information and coordinate innovation through research, demonstration projects, workshops, and field tours, in partnership with landowners, agencies, academia, and the agriculture industry.

In late 2024, the UTRCA entered into an agreement with the Canada Water Agency to deliver a four-year program. This initiative will identify areas of the watershed with the potential to produce and deliver higher amounts of phosphorus to the Thames River, and create and deliver a BMP implementation program to address the priority areas. The UTRCA will also develop a second demonstration farm highlighting on-farm drainage water recycling, in the Township of Perth South near Wildwood Conservation Area. The initiative will establish comprehensive water quality sampling across UTRCA subwatersheds to track seasonal variations and trends in phosphorus concentrations across the watershed. There will be extensive communications and outreach efforts to promote uptake and long-term maintenance of BMPs, and to share project results with interest holders, farmers, certified crop advisors, and other extension staff.



## Ecological Monitoring

The UTRCA supports science-based decisions through environmental monitoring programs that include collecting, analyzing, and reporting on fishes, reptiles, benthic macro-invertebrates, Species at Risk, and air photos. The information collected gives an indication of stream health, water quality, habitat change, and impacts of stressors.

Environmental information is compiled and maintained in a comprehensive monitoring database that is integrated, available to watershed partners, and commonly accessed by development proponents in watershed municipalities when undertaking technical studies or assessments associated with land development activities.

The UTRCA reports on local watershed conditions every five years, in partnership with Conservation Ontario. The Upper Thames River Watershed Report Cards provide information on surface water, groundwater, forest, and wetland conditions within 28 subwatersheds to promote an understanding of local (subwatershed) health and emerging trends as a basis for setting environmental management priorities and inspiring local environmental action.

The UTRCA is also engaging with local First Nations communities and individuals, to support the development of a more holistic approach in watershed planning that incorporates aspects of Indigenous Traditional Knowledge and an awareness of the river's spirit, in addition to western science and management objectives.



## Property Lease Management

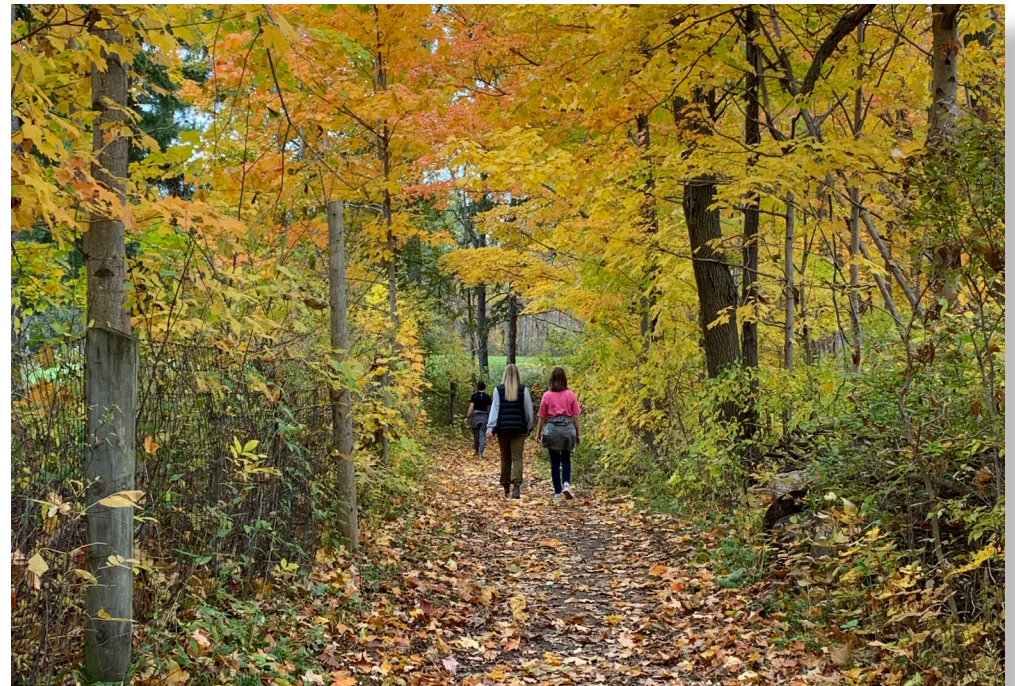
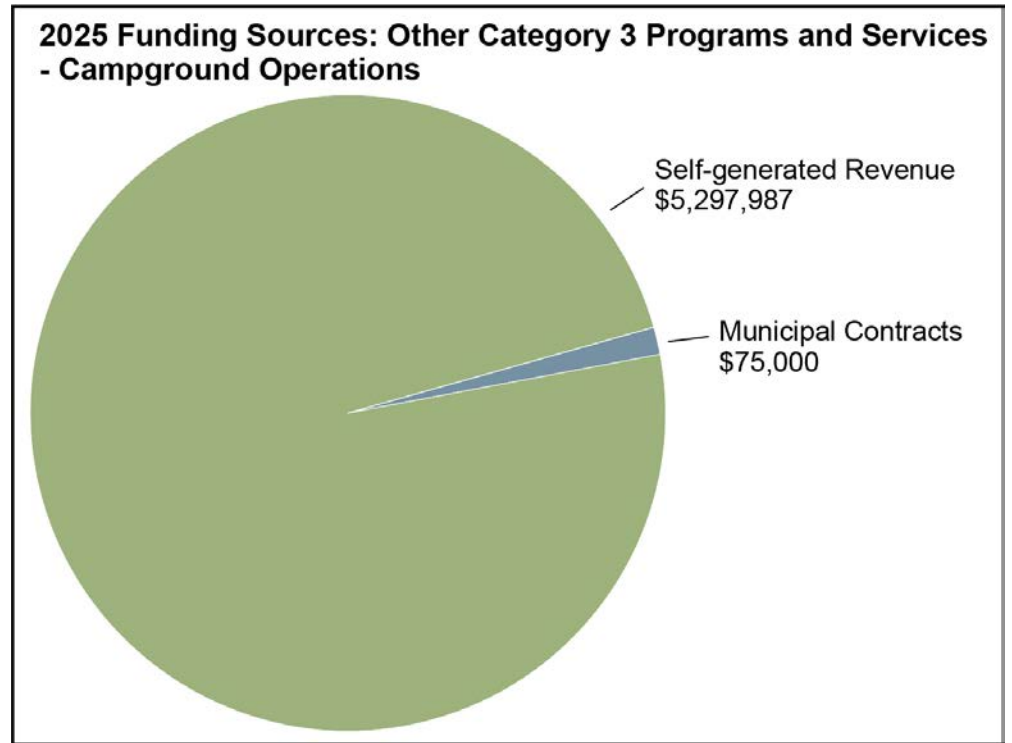
Management of the UTRCA land lease program, rental properties, and three golf course leases are additional Category 3 activities. The revenue from these programs has often been a means to support Category 3 programs and supplement general land management needs, as well as to provide some capital funding for facility repairs.

## Other Category 3 - Campground Operations: Budget

Campground operations are also Category 3 programs and services but are not included in municipal cost apportioning agreements as their funding is self-generated.

**Table 14. Other Category 3 (Campground Operations) Operating Budget**

Expenses by Type	Cost
Wages and Benefits	\$2,394,935
Property-related Expenses	805,565
Technical and Consulting Services	195,800
Computers and Communications	22,850
Insurance and Risk Management	117,075
Materials and Supplies	299,325
Staff Travel, PD, PPE, Uniforms	49,723
Fleet-related Expenses	3,250
Other Expenses	-
Depreciation Expenses	157,054
Corporate Allocations	462,120
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$4,507,697</b>



## Other Category 3 Programs and Services - Campground Operations: Overview

The three large, multi-use Conservation Areas (Fanshawe, Pittock, and Wildwood) offer camping and a wide range of other day use facilities and activities. Outdoor recreation at the three active Conservation Areas offers opportunities to educate the public and promote conservation messaging about the watershed's natural environment.

UTRCA campground operations offer nearly 1000 seasonal and 500 overnight campsites, more than 55 km of managed trails, and three large day use areas that host many major community events.

Throughout the pandemic, increased operational and management pressures were realized due to the increase in use and visitation. The interest in the campground and day-use operations has since remained high. As a result of this increased interest and use, the operating dates for day-use were extended in 2024 to cover the period from April 1 through to November 30.

The state of the conservation areas and the infrastructure within them has remained unchanged over the past 50 years. Many of the assets are beyond their life expectancy and it should be anticipated that significant capital improvements will need to be funded over the next while. Through internal and stakeholder consultations, conservation area business plans and asset management plans are planned and are underway.



# About Us

The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) is a local watershed management agency that delivers programs and services to protect and manage impacts on water and other natural resources, in partnership with all levels of government, landowners, and many other organizations. The UTRCA promotes an integrated watershed management approach that balances human, environmental, and economic needs.

The UTRCA works in partnership with the 17 municipalities in the Upper Thames River watershed. These municipalities appoint 15 members to the Board of Directors, which sets the UTRCA's overall policy direction and is responsive to local issues and concerns.

The UTRCA is dedicated to achieving a healthy environment on behalf of the member municipalities, by:

- Leading through expertise, diversity, and accountability,
- Supporting sustainable organizational practices and policies,
- Protecting people and property from flood and erosion hazards and supporting safe development,
- Protecting and enhancing water quality and a sustainable water supply,
- Making science-based decisions and delivering landowner stewardship,
- Providing natural spaces and recreational opportunities, and
- Empowering communities and youth.

The UTRCA undertakes watershed-based programs to protect people and property from flooding and other natural hazards, and to conserve natural resources for economic, social, and environment benefits. Positive actions in one part of the watershed have positive impacts downstream. All municipalities benefit when these programs are undertaken on a watershed basis.

