

**2024**

# A Year in Review



*Charting the course: a year of  
milestones and plans for 2025  
in the County of Brant*

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## Introduction

As we reflect on the past year, the County of Brant (the County) has shown remarkable growth, adaptability, and innovation in responding to both opportunities and challenges. Through collaboration, forward thinking strategies, and the tireless efforts of staff and our community, we have achieved significant milestones that lay a solid foundation for continued success. This report highlights key initiatives and the progress we have made and takes stock of the work still ahead to achieve the County's strategic priorities.

The review was completed in collaboration with staff across the County. Information is grouped by department and includes data and metrics, stories of success, and future initiatives coming in 2025.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Note: This review highlights notable achievements across the County in 2024. It does not provide an in-depth analysis of each project or detailed information on all initiatives.*

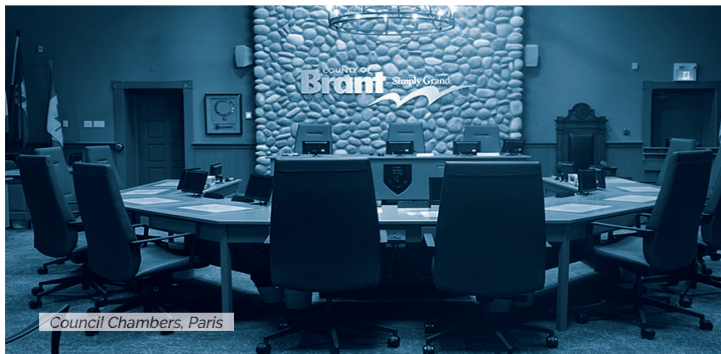


# County of Brant Council

Led by Mayor David Bailey, the County of Brant Council worked together to support a charming, prosperous, and inclusive community to live, work, and play. In 2024, Council approved the refreshed Strategic Plan, a vital strategy that outlines a vision, priorities, and objectives to guide Council as it works to achieve the desires of County residents.

*A special thank you to the members of Council for their hard work and dedication throughout the year*

To learn more about Council, committees, and find details on upcoming meetings, visit the County of Brant website at [brant.ca/Council](https://brant.ca/Council).



## Data-Driven Insights

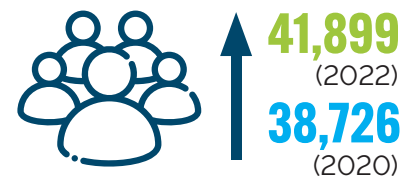
In 2024, the County received **Platinum Certification for reporting on ISO 37120** – Indicators for Sustainable Cities and Communities for five years through the World Council on City Data (WCCD) (2018-2023). Staff are working diligently to report on 2023 data and are exploring ways to further leverage this information to support smart, data-driven decisions across the corporation.

### Some takeaways from the 2022 data are highlighted below:

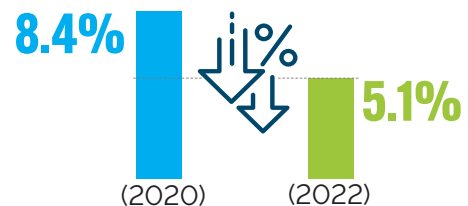
- The County's population continues to grow, increasing from 38,726 in 2020, to 41,899 in 2022.
- The unemployment rate in the County dropped from 8.4% in 2020, to 5.1% in 2022 signifying a recovering economy post-pandemic.
- The annual number of cultural events rose significantly from 18.08 per 100,000 people in 2020 to 76.29 in 2022.

**Reviewing the data illuminates how the County is growing and evolving.**

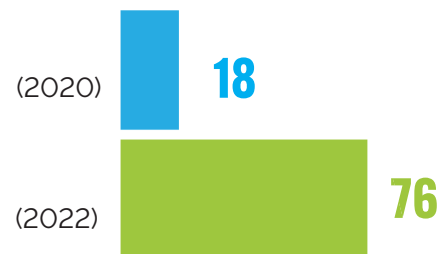
### The County's population continues to grow



### The County's unemployment dropped



### Cultural events in the County rose significantly with a 322% increase





# Department Highlight:

## Community Services

The Community Services Department plays a vital role in strengthening our community by advancing key priorities that promote safety, sustainability, inclusion, recreation, and overall wellbeing. Efforts focus on developing and maintaining parks, trails, and forests, managing cemeteries, community halls, and recreation facilities, and providing inclusive and engaging summer camps and programs. Additionally, this department oversees the operation and management of Russell Heights Affordable Housing.

In 2024, staff in the Parks and Recreation and Recreation Facilities and Special Projects Divisions collaborated to deliver new initiatives and projects that contribute to a thriving Brant. The section below provides an overview of notable achievements.

## By the Numbers



**400** trees provided to County residents through the Tree Giveaway program and **1,075** trees planted during two volunteer planting events



**21** private Timber Harvest applications were reviewed and approved, with **641,047** board feet of timber harvested on private lands



**1,280** native pollinator plants were planted throughout the County and **500** seed packages were provided to support local planting



**20** pollinator-related events supported, including plant sales, library workshops, and presentations to support community learning



**2,845** participants in 55+ pickleball programs, with **86** on the waitlist



**222%** increase in senior (55+) programs which include fitness, pickleball, and workshops designed to improve health, wellness, and social connection



**1,754** children made new friends in our Summer Day Camp program



**5,737** people participated in swimming lessons and learned skills that could save their lives



**15,165** attendees used the Paris Community Pool



**166** students attended the After-School program



**35,000+** participants in recreational programs



**1,414** facility permits completed, with over **2,300** rental requests received through the County website



**418** Dog Park Memberships sold



**51** full burials and **136** cremations at County cemeteries



# Stories of Success

## Revitalizing St. George Parking Lot

Upgrades to the parking lot at 2 Beverly St. W, including grading, paving, lighting, furnishings, and landscaping, concluded in 2024. The landscaping creates an urban square that connects with the heritage of the streetscape and adjacent open spaces like the cenotaph. A variety of native and ornamental plant species were selected to enhance the space for pedestrian use and a Verdin clock was donated and installed. These elements came together to transform an unused brownfield site into an enjoyable and functional space for the community.

## Adding the Onondaga Cricket Field

An underutilized soccer field was expanded through re-grading and seeding to accommodate cricket in the future. The new field will be ready for use in summer 2025 and represents a creative approach to support access to diverse recreation spaces throughout the County.

## Blossoming at Communities in Bloom

The County participated in the Communities in Bloom program for the first time. Staff worked tirelessly to prepare for the judge's visit and the County was awarded a rating of 3 Blooms and a Criteria Award in Urban Forestry. The judges were thoroughly impressed by how Brant is blooming!

## Introducing the Junior Zookeeper Camp

In 2024, staff ran a pilot program with the Twin Valley Zoo, which received positive feedback, media exposure, and two weeks of sold-out camp. To meet high demand, three weeks of Zookeeper camp are being offered in 2025!

## Completing the Cobblestone Columbarium

The third columbarium was installed in July 2024 and a record level of 13 spaces were sold in the first five days.

## Opening New Outdoor Amenities

New spaces, including the Mile Hill Playground and soccer field, and new play elements at Jury Street and Forest Drive Parks, were unveiled for community use in 2024.



## Looking Ahead

As the department looks ahead to 2025, there are exciting projects and initiatives on the horizon:

- ✓ Completing important plans and designs for the future, such as:
  - Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan,
  - Technical Tree Guidelines,
  - Community Forestry Strategy,
  - Brant Sports Complex Expansion Design,
  - North of the Nith Plan, and
  - Community Services Strategic Master Plan.
- ✓ Implementing the new Community Partnership Policy and Volunteer Management Policy.
- ✓ Participating in the second annual Communities in Bloom initiative, with a focus on building on accomplishments from 2024.
- ✓ Constructing and introducing new recreation spaces, including:
  - The Wilkin Family Community Centre,
  - Arlington Community Park and Splashpad, and
  - A fully accessible playground at Sunnyhill Park.
- ✓ Installing EV chargers at Brant Sports Complex, Burford Community Centre, Gaukel Memorial Community Centre, and Syl Apps Community Centre to support the County's commitment to climate action and sustainability.

# Department Highlight:

## Corporate Services

The Corporate Services Department encompasses divisions that are essential to the organizational success of the County, including Customer Service, Finance, Records Management, Legal Services, Human Resources, Council Services, and Business and Technology Solutions. Throughout the year, staff have made significant progress in fostering an efficient, effective, and fiscally responsible organization, positioning the County for future success. Below are some key achievements from 2024.

### By the Numbers

- **3,090** requests for tech support and HelpDesk calls resolved
- **113** software solutions supported, including **18** new solutions added
- **44** new GIS solutions developed
- **29,813** telephone calls facilitated by the customer service team through the 44Brant telephone number
- **11,150** in-person transactions at the Paris and Burford Customer Service offices
- **1,613** emails responded to (info@brant.ca) and **1,378** live chats to assist residents and provide information
- **190** contracts, bylaws, policies, and certificate of insurance clauses reviewed internally by Legal Services<sup>2</sup>
- **46** open insurance claims with **30** handled in-house
- **91** Freedom of Information Requests processed
- **101,534** digitalized images captured, and **117** boxes of records transferred into storage facility
- **1,881** accounts signed up for e-Billing (**10.7%** of accounts) and **5,555** accounts signed up for pre-authorized payment plans (**31.6%** of accounts)
- **36,431** payments processed through accounts payable, and **1,695** invoices processed through accounts receivable
- Supported over **100** individual recruitments as well as Paramedic and Volunteer Firefighter recruitment
- Facilitated **33** health and safety training sessions and online courses, including mental health first aid training, with a total attendance of **1,300+**
- **67** Council, Special Council and Standing Committee Meetings and **69** Advisory Committee/Board Meetings supported
- **136** marriage licenses and **303** burial permits issued

<sup>2</sup> 137 contracts, 14 bylaws, 13 policies and 36 certificates of insurance and insurance clauses reviewed.

## Stories of Success

### Modernizing and Safeguarding our Digital Solutions

The County developed and implemented a new Open Data Portal which makes public-facing data more transparent and accessible to County residents and businesses. This saves on the cost of individual data-sharing arrangements and encourages collaboration between community organizations and educational institutions. Staff also enhanced security through adding multi-factor authentication and end point detection response (EDR). To accommodate the increasing demand for network connectivity, staff have advanced modern approaches to provide staff and remote facility users with faster and more reliable WIFI and internet speeds.

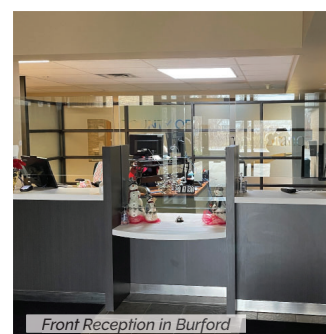
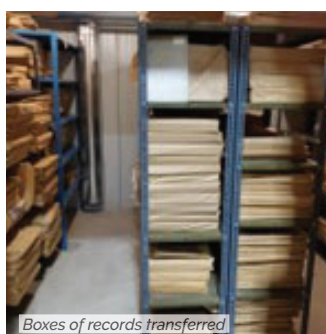
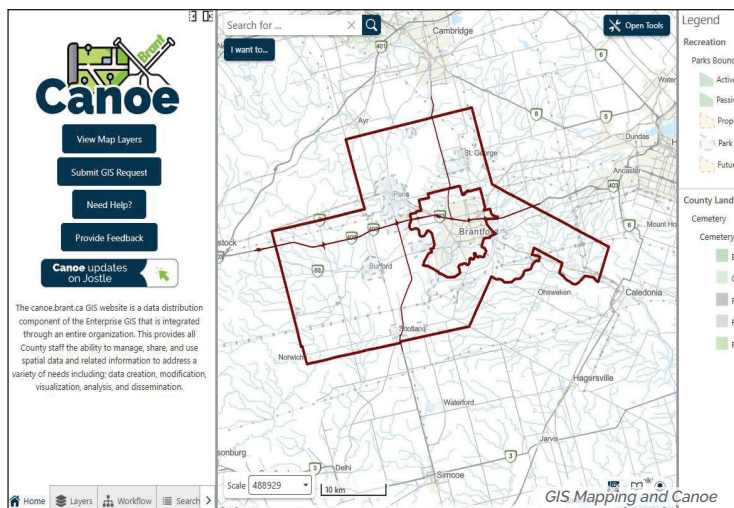
### Supporting Financial Resiliency

The Finance Division has driven key initiatives to support long-term growth and financial stability. Staff successfully completed the Development Charges Background Study and Bylaw, with updated rates designed to balance the costs of growth between current ratepayers and new developments. Additionally, to foster community resilience and financial wellbeing, a new Tax Deferral Policy was introduced, offering support to eligible residents. In addition, staff supported vital asset management work through completing the Non-Core Asset Management Plan to direct future spending to maintain and replace County infrastructure. Staff also approved and implemented the Asset Retirement Obligation Policy as required by legislation.

### Human Resource Excellence

The Human Resources Division advanced successful projects, training, and negotiations throughout 2024. Staff completed a market review for non-union compensation to ensure County staff are compensated fairly in comparison with other municipalities. The Power Workers' Union (PWU) Collective Agreement was effectively negotiated.





## Looking Ahead

The Corporate Services Department is looking forward to progressing a variety of projects and initiatives throughout 2025:

- ✓ Staff are refreshing the County's Cybersecurity Incident Response Plan (CIRP) to minimize the impact of attempted cyberattacks on the organization.
- ✓ Introducing prioritized, secure, and trustworthy artificial intelligence (AI) tools for staff use within our controlled governed environment. Leveraging these tools effectively presents an opportunity to assist staff in work related concepts, reduce repetitive tasks, and support efficiency.
- ✓ Supporting unified communications by replacing the internal phone system with a modern communications platform to integrate our traditional telephone/reception service with cell phones and other mobile technology.
- ✓ Continued updates to record management processes through broadening the implementation and use of the Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) and digitizing and destroying paper records.
- ✓ Providing legal expertise to effectively update bylaws, agreements, and policies, and help advance complex projects across the County.
- ✓ Supporting financial resiliency through presenting the Long-Term Financial Plan Model and Implementation Plan, updating the Procurement Bylaw, and completing a water/wastewater rates study.
- ✓ Initiating the job evaluation review and implementing the results of the market review for non-union compensation.
- ✓ Implementing Electronic Recorded Voting Software and System at Council and Standing Committee Meetings to enhance efficiency.
- ✓ Preparing for the 2026 municipal and school board elections.



# Department Highlight: Development Services

The Development Services Department includes the Building, Planning, and Development Engineering divisions. From issuing building permits, to developing long-term planning policies, staff in this department ensure our community is designed and built to grow, while preserving wellbeing, natural heritage, and the unique charms of Brant.

## By the Numbers

- **220** lot grading certificates reviewed
- **11** site alteration permits issued
- Reduced legacy subdivisions from **8 to 5**
- **716** building permits issued
- **7,467** building inspections completed
- **4** subdivision applications processed
- **19** zoning bylaw amendments processed
- Entered into **29** site plan control agreements
- **28** severance applications processed
- **19** minor variances processed



Rest Acres Subdivision in Paris



# Stories of Success

## Approval of the Official Plan

The County's Official Plan, *A Simply Grand Plan*, received Ministerial approval on October 17, 2024. This ended a process that began in 2019 and will provide land use direction in the County for the next 10 years to support sustainable and managed growth.



Building Healthy  
and Complete  
Communities



Protecting What  
We Value



Planning for  
Infrastructure



How We  
Green



Transportation  
and Mobility



Economic  
Development  
and Prosperity



## Reorganizing Divisions

The Development Planning and Policy Planning divisions underwent a re-organization and merged under the new work unit "Planning" which report to the Director of Planning. These updates support stable and responsive governance.

## Updating Building Permit Process

The Building Division began work on moving internal processes into Cityview for all units in the department. The project will conclude with a front-facing portal where members of the public can obtain up-to-date information on their application status.



## Looking Ahead

As the Department looks ahead to 2025, initiatives will help foster focused growth:

- ✓ Beginning work to develop a Community Planning Permit System (CPPS) and the Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw.
- ✓ Preparing a Housing Needs Assessment to better understand the demand for housing throughout the County.
- ✓ Completing the Cainsville Secondary Planning exercise in advance of servicing.
- ✓ Finalizing the Growth Tracking Model which will tie planning, building, and infrastructure projects together to tell the story of the County's population and job growth.
- ✓ Conducting a full review of all building, planning, and development engineering fees.
- ✓ Finalizing the updated Development and Engineering Design Standards.

# Department Highlight: Emergency and Protective Services

The Emergency and Protective Services Department is focused on preserving community safety and wellbeing across the County. Divisions include Brant-Brantford Paramedic Services, Enforcement and Regulatory Services, Fire Services, and Emergency Management. Throughout 2024, this department implemented projects, programs, and initiatives to protect our community for years to come.

## By the Numbers

- **2,307** calls for enforcement service and inquiries in 2024. Higher volume calls included:
  - bylaw inquiries (**344** complaints),
  - yard maintenance (**212** complaints),
  - property standards (**124** complaints),
  - noise (**106** complaints), and
  - homelessness (**13** complaints)
- **141** orders and **234** warnings (verbal and written combined) were issued in cases such as, property standards, yard maintenance, zoning, and snow clearing
- Firefighters responded to **978** emergency incidents and fire prevention staff completed **704** property inspections
- **19** recruit volunteer firefighters were trained to NFPA 1001 Firefighter Level I and II
- **20** girls aged 14-18 attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Camp Phoenix to learn about a career in firefighting
- Paramedic Services responded to **34,406** calls in 2024, up from 32,114 in 2023
- **3** new vehicles added to Paramedic Services fleet (including 2 ambulances and 1 new emergency response vehicle)
- **85%** decrease in hours lost in the emergency department, from over 1,200 to fewer than 230 hours per month
- **73%** reduction in code zeros, from 220 to under 80 per month
- **25%** reduction in external EMS responses in Brant, reflecting increased capacity to handle local call volumes





## Stories of Success

### Foundational Work in Enforcement and Regulatory Services

The Enforcement and Regulatory Services Division completed annual training to help uniformed officers build on de-escalation and communication skills. New frameworks were also finalized to support the roll out of the Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) program and the Administrative Penalty System (APS) in 2025. In addition, the County's Enforcement Policy was updated to guide the divisions' work.

### Preparing Fire Services for the Future

In 2024, the architect for the North Paris Fire Station (Station 9) was awarded, and the concept design was approved. Through collaboration and leadership, the County also entered into a 10-year service agreement with the City of Brantford to provide dispatch services and cooperatively purchased self-contained breathing apparatuses with two neighboring fire departments.

### Introducing New Paramedic Programs

Two new paramedicine programs were launched to better support vulnerable community members: the Community Paramedicine Functional Improvement Program for Seniors and the Community Paramedicine Motel Program to support people experiencing homelessness.

### Exceptional Staff

David Kelly, Municipal Law Enforcement Officer, was awarded the Ontario Municipal Law Enforcement Long Service Medal for 15 years of Service at the Annual MLEOA Conference. All 15 years of service have been spent with the County.

Five Senior Paramedic Services staff members received Exemplary Service Medals in recognition of 30-40 years of outstanding service. Russell King, Michael Polgar, Vito Tuori, and Neil Vanderpost for 30 years of dedicated service, and David Dungey was honoured for 40 years.



## Looking Ahead

In 2025, the Emergency and Protective Services Team is looking forward to advancing programs and projects to serve the community:

- ✓ Expanding the ASE program to boost road safety and implementing new parking permit software for Downtown Paris.
- ✓ Transitioning our Parking Bylaw from the Provincial Offences Court to APS.
- ✓ Continuing to support the mental and physical health of fire personnel. This will include advancing a Decontamination and Hygiene Program.
- ✓ Supporting our growing and changing community, through:
  - constructing the North Paris Fire Station,
  - completing a location study for Paris Headquarters and Airport Fire Stations,
  - completing an Optimum Response Model Study for Paramedic Services, and
  - moving into the new Paramedic Station when Phase 1 is complete.
- ✓ Developing and implementing new paramedic services systems and programs to maximize care. Including the Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDR) and a Community Paramedicine Emergency Room program. These new solutions will enhance call triaging and resource allocation and ensure patients are receiving the right care at the right time.

# Department Highlight:

## Office of the CAO - Corporate Strategy

The Corporate Strategy Division within the Office of the CAO plays an integral role in advancing County-wide strategic planning and visioning. Through collaboration with staff across the organization, this division provides corporate focus and oversight to major issues and special project areas that are not assigned to a specific division, including Brant Safe Streets, ASE, Physician Recruitment, Corporate Data Program, and Climate Action. As a new division, 2024 was a foundational year with notable successes.

### By the Numbers

- **2** major plans developed to guide the County forward, the Climate Action Plan and the Strategic Plan 2024-2027
- **2** grant applications submitted to advance climate action and environmental sustainability program (requests totaling \$80,000)
- **1** physician recruited and assisted by the County's Physician Recruitment Program
- **1** ASE device installed in Paris and plans for program expansion underway
- **91** indicators reported on through the World Council of City Data (WCCD) program
- Continued support of **650+** acres of commercial and industrial development in the Highway 403/Highway 24 (Rest Acres Road) corridor, with an estimated total land and building value of \$2.25 billion





## Stories of Success

### Developing the Strategic Plan and Climate Action Plan

This division led the development of the refreshed Strategic Plan to guide the County over the 2024-2027 horizon. This updated plan aligns with community engagement completed in 2023 and outlines five priorities.

The Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a long-term roadmap to support a more sustainable and resilient County. The CAP was developed through thoughtful collaboration with staff and the community, and a comprehensive analysis of available data and research. The Plan outlines realistic and cost-effective actions to help the County mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. With clear support from the community, this plan was approved by Council in November 2024.

### Supporting the Downtown Paris Master Plan Implementation

The Corporate Strategy team worked diligently with staff across the organization to unify efforts to revitalize Downtown Paris. Through collaboration, supporting community inquiries, attending engagement events, and presenting to local businesses and organizations, staff helped support a smooth construction process as work on Grand River Street North begins.

### Enhancing Transparency and Accountability

The Major Project Dashboard was developed and introduced to help inform Council on the status of strategic projects happening across the County. This online tool enhances transparency and improves communication between staff and Council. In addition, staff prepared the first annual "Year in Review" to share important data and successes from 2024.

### Expanding Affordable Housing

The Corporate Strategy Team played a fundamental role in advancing the expansion of Russell Heights. This unique collaboration between the County and the Central Ontario Co-operative Housing Federation (COCHF) seeks to add 35 affordable apartments for seniors.



## Looking Ahead

In 2025, new strategic priorities are emerging that require dedicated research, exploration, and vision. The Corporate Strategy team is looking forward to:

- ✓ Continuing to explore affordable housing opportunities that will be feasible and impactful within the County. The team will focus on evaluating approaches that align with the County's unique role in this sector to enhance the stock of affordable housing for low-moderate income households through private market, co-operative, and non-profit offerings.
- ✓ Implementing the CAP with the expertise and leadership of the new Climate Action Specialist. Work to be advanced in 2025 includes building climate action websites, exploring ways to bolster biodiversity, developing efficient and resilient building standards, and enhancing climate data tracking to better understand our work and required progress.
- ✓ Continuing to foster transparency, accountability, and responsiveness. This will involve introducing new digital tools, like a centralized Council Portal, where members of Council can access valuable project information and resources.
- ✓ Evaluating parking in downtown Paris and exploring opportunities to effectively meet demand for spaces.



# Department Highlight:

## Operations

The Operations Department encompasses divisions that drive operational success: Environmental Services, Engineering and Infrastructure Planning, Infrastructure and Asset Management, and Roads. This team manages essential functions such as road maintenance, waste collection, stormwater management, municipal infrastructure design and construction, and delivers exceptional customer service.

## By the Numbers

- **1** new facility nearing completion (Wilkin Family Community Centre)
- **3** major facility upgrades completed (Burford Administration Office, Mt. Pleasant Fire Station, St. George Lawn Bowling)
- **6** minor facility upgrades finalized (including three fire stations and three community centre roof replacements)
- **3** bridges and culverts rehabilitated (McBlain Bridge, Darnley Bridge, Cornell Culvert)
- **6.8** km of asphalt, **4.8** km of surface treated, and **25.1** km of gravel to hardtop roads resurfaced
- **1** new road constructed (Iarocci Blvd) and **4** road reconstruction projects commenced (West River Street, Burtch Road, Church Street West, Intersection of Grand River Street North and Silver Street)
- **2,495,505** m<sup>3</sup> of water and **2,074,604** m<sup>3</sup> of wastewater treated
- **11** emergency watermain repairs and **2.2** km of watermain commissioned
- **1,585** tonnes of sewage biosolids generated for land application
- **14** km of sanitary sewer maintained through flushing and inspections and **10** km of storm sewer inspected
- **10,800** tonnes of solid waste landfilled, and **5,420** tonnes of solid waste diverted (achieving a **33%** diversion rate)
- **126** Brant Safe Streets submissions received, and **4** solar powered pedestrian crossings installed
- **2,100+** km of road maintained for safe use by Brant residents
- **270** sidewalk trip hazards removed
- Approximately **6,500** calls with inquiries, complaints, and requests effectively managed by the operations administration team





# Stories of Success

## New, Improved, and Reliable Infrastructure

Provincial grant applications for two key County projects were successful, securing \$35M for the St. George Water Pollution Control Plant upgrade and \$9.3M for the Grand River Street North Road improvements. These projects support community growth and provincial housing targets.

The Cainsville Master Servicing Plan was also completed, providing direction for the expansion of water, wastewater, and stormwater servicing to meet the needs of this community to the 2051 planning horizon.

The Infrastructure and Asset Management team also effectively reviewed and updated the Strategic Asset Management Policy to meet provincial requirements and support financial resilience for years to come.

## Safe and Walkable Communities

Staff collected speed and traffic data at 122 locations throughout the County and shared valuable information with residents, OPP, and internal staff to guide future work and decision-making. Data collected through these reviews helped staff make recommendations to improve road safety, such as building a roundabout at Burtch Road and Cockshutt Road.

Several road reconstruction projects were also completed throughout 2024 that enhance the walkability of neighbourhoods, including Hillside Avenue, Race Street, and Church Street.

## Innovative Cost Savings

The Roads Division issued a tender for a new brine building at 60 Consolidated Road. Upon reviewing contractor submissions, staff realized the \$200,000 project could exceed \$500,000 with outside resources. With support from the Building and Facilities Divisions, roads staff acted as the general contractor to deliver the project on budget. This approach saved nearly \$300,000 compared to proceeding with the outsourced tender.

Staff also introduced a Municipal Consent Fee in 2024. This fee is collected to issue permits to allow companies to work in the road allowance (for things like installing fibre, underground utilities, etc.). While this service was previously offered at no cost, through internal discussions and reviewing costs and time allocated, staff determined that it was no longer affordable for the County to absorb. In 2024, the County issued 165 Municipal Consent/Municipal Access Agreement Permits generating approximately \$167,000 in fees to offset staffing costs.

## Maintaining Road Infrastructure

The Roads Division relined two major culverts: one located on St. George Road and the second on Governors Road. This work is anticipated to extend the culverts life by 25+ years. To reduce inconvenience to nearby residents and support cost efficiency, updates were completed by County staff over a two-day period, without road excavation, detours, or significant traffic delays. High level cost estimates show that this process saved the County approximately \$20,000, versus using traditional excavation and a third-party contractor.

During routine maintenance staff also identified a large slope failure on Powerline Road that presented challenges due to the location, size, and being the only access point for homes located beyond the failure. Roads staff worked with local residents, other internal departments, external contractors, the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), and a developer to repair the bank in a timely manner with little impact to residents.

## Safe and Consistent Drinking Water

The Environmental Services Division successfully updated and renewed all Municipal Drinking Water Licenses and Drinking Water Works Permits through the Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) for the County's five municipal drinking water systems. Staff also supported the replacement of 5 out of 15 small municipal, non-residential, drinking water treatment systems and negotiated the 2025-2028 contract with GrandBridge Energy Inc. for water and wastewater billing services.



Paris Land Transfer Station and Landfill





## Looking Ahead

As we look ahead to 2025, the Operations Department is progressing projects and initiatives to support growth and preserve our infrastructure:

- ✓ Planning and constructing new water, wastewater, and sewer infrastructure to support the growing community. This includes:
  - design and tendering for the St. George Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion,
  - trunk sewer replacements in St. George,
  - watermain loop replacement design and construction on Burtch Road,
  - expansion and upgrade Class Environmental Assessment for the Paris Wastewater Treatment Plant, and
  - Cainsville Lagoon pumping station and force main design.
- ✓ Meeting the July 1, 2025 provincial deadline requiring municipalities to have an asset management plan in place for all municipal infrastructure assets, including activities to meet approved levels of service for all core and non-core assets owned by the County.
- ✓ Planning and implementing new road construction and reconstruction projects including:
  - the Downtown Dig,
  - completing West River Street,
  - commencing two of three roundabout construction projects on Grand River Street North/Pinehurst Road, and
  - beginning Dundas Street East and Paris Road reconstruction.
- ✓ Smart road maintenance including culvert relining projects and safety barrier upgrades to flex beam and cable guardrails.
- ✓ Water operations safety and redundancy upgrades and creating a Small Municipal Non-Residential Drinking Water System at Oakland Community Centre.
- ✓ Ongoing development and implementation of the Stormwater Management System Operations and Maintenance Program, as well as further consultation and decision on the appropriate funding strategy for this program.
- ✓ Completion of the Solid Waste Management Master Plan (SWMMP) to provide a 25-year roadmap for solid waste programming, including strategies for improving waste diversion rates. Opening of the new cell and associated operations at the Biggars Lane Landfill.
- ✓ Administration support to facilitate continued customer service excellence and interdepartmental collaboration and communication.



# Department Highlight: Strategic Initiatives

The Strategic Initiatives Department includes the Economic Development and Tourism, Communications and Public Relations, and Community Partnerships divisions. Together, this department fosters an informed, inclusive, accessible, diverse, and economically resilient community. From planning special events, to increasing mobility through public transportation, staff play a key role in achieving a range of strategic priorities across the County of Brant.

## By the Numbers

The Communications and Public Relations team kept our community informed through issuing **70** media releases, **125** advertisement campaigns, **120** videos and reels, **30** Engage Brant projects, and updating and maintaining **1,115** pages on the County website



Assisted over **100** existing and prospective businesses through the enhanced Business Retention and Expansion (BR and E) program



**5** Community Improvement Plan (CIP) applications were approved with a total funding approval of **\$50,326**. Businesses leveraged this funding to make \$440,000 in downtown investments



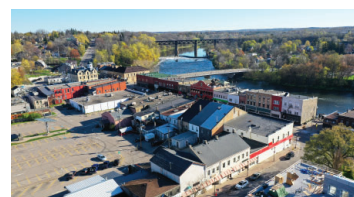
The County's Culture Days was ranked 7th among Towns and Rural Areas with **48** events organized and an estimated attendance of **2,500**



Staff facilitated the Grand Opening of **15** new and expanding businesses



**39** special events went through the County's Special Event Advisory Team (SEAT) process, with the estimated total event attendance of over **137,000**



Staff successfully received **\$112,500** in provincial Rural Economic Development (RED) funding to support businesses in downtown Paris during the Downtown Dig



**25,000+** rides completed with Brant Transit (with an average 4.8 satisfaction rating) and entered a three-year contract to support a stable and reliable service for years to come



Over **2,800+** food/toiletry items collected for local food banks during the staff food drive



Over **\$385,000+** raised towards the \$400,000 fundraising goal for the Wilkin Family Community Centre



# Stories of Success

## Supporting Tourism and Economic Resilience

Through collaboration, the Communications and Marketing, and Economic Development and Tourism teams launched, *Locale*, a new tourism magazine dedicated to showcasing the unique attractions, events, and hidden gems that make the County a premier destination. This publication promotes tourism and economic success throughout Brant. To support resilience during construction in Downtown Paris, staff also created the Paris Downtown Dig Economic Development Support Plan, which provides business check-ins and resources. A Business Forum was also hosted to help businesses connect and learn more about the project and available resources.

## Fostering Community Safety and Inclusion

Staff made strides to support a safer, more inclusive community throughout 2024. The County's application to join the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Coalition of Inclusive Communities was approved, along with Council's adoption of the County's first Inclusion Charter, solidifying its commitment to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion at both local and global levels. In addition, the Gender Based Violence and Intimate Partner Violence Action Plan was implemented to offer a new level of support to community organizations and increased public education. Staff also developed the Days of Proclamation, Flag Raising and Lighting of the Dam Policy to encourage equity, consistency, and transparency in the County's approach to requests.

## Investing in Accessibility

Over \$50,000 in accessibility upgrades were completed across the organization. This includes the installation of a hearing loop in Council Chambers and mobile units for Paris, Burford, and Brant Sports Complex Customer Service desks, to ensure clear communication for individuals experiencing hearing loss.<sup>3</sup>

In 2024, the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and Accessible Design Standards were also approved by Council to guide the County's accessibility priorities and goals until 2029. Staff also secured a provincial grant of \$75,000 to help local businesses invest in improving accessibility.

## Introducing New Guiding Plans and Policies

The Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan was approved and will invigorate downtown cores, diversify the local economy, and champion diversity and sustainability to support prosperity and resiliency for years to come. Similarly, the approved Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy serves as an actionable guide, helping the County build a culturally enriched future. The Public Art Policy and Film Policy were also developed and approved in 2024. These two new policies will build transparency and consistency in the County's approach to public art and filming.



# Looking Ahead

Strategic Initiatives is advancing exciting projects and priorities for 2025:

- ✓ Supporting an informed and engaged community through implementing the new Public Engagement Framework and Policy and enhancing internal staff training to support improved communications (such as media training and plain language workshops).
- ✓ Seeking Council approval and implementing two important plans to support community wellbeing: the five-year Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy and the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan. The DEI Strategy will recognize and value differences among people, ensure fair opportunities for everyone, and foster an environment where all feel welcomed and respected. The new Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan will enhance the sense of safety and belonging, ensuring access to services and needs are met regarding education, health care, food, housing, income, and social and cultural expression.
- ✓ Launching the Ramp It Up Program to help local businesses improve accessibility.
- ✓ Bringing forward opportunities to enhance public transportation for Council consideration, including fixed routes and specialized transit solutions.
- ✓ Implementing a robust Investment Attraction Strategy to market the Rest Acres/Highway 403 employment area and drive economic growth.
- ✓ Researching and adopting museum sustainability initiatives to support local volunteers to preserve and display collections.
- ✓ Developing a Rural Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to support rural businesses and revitalization.
- ✓ Creating a Special Events Policy to promote consistency, transparency, and better support these events within the County.

<sup>3</sup> A hearing loop is an assistive listening system that transmits sound directly to hearing aids or cochlear implants.

# Moving Forward

As the County looks ahead to 2025 and beyond, the refreshed Strategic Plan 2024-2027 will help achieve the shared vision for the County:

*A charming, prosperous and  
inclusive community.  
A place to live, work, and play.*

This updated plan presents five priorities and associated objectives to guide staff and Council over the coming years. For more information, check out the updated [Strategic Plan](#).

Overall, this Year in Review highlights notable achievements across the County. Through collaboration and innovation, the County continues to grow and evolve to meet the changing needs of our community. As we embark on a new year, it is important to build on this momentum to advance our new strategic priorities.

A special thank you to County staff, Mayor and Council, community partners, and residents, for your dedication and contributions throughout 2024. We are excited for a productive and successful 2025!

- 1 Economic and Financial Resilience
- 2 Focused Growth and Infrastructure
- 3 Healthy, Safe, and Engaged Communities
- 4 Stable and Responsive Governance
- 5 Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action





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