



West Nipissing Ovest

2022-2026
Council Term Plan

Final Report on Progress and Accomplishments

October 6, 2026



Joie de vivre

westnipissingouest.ca

Message from the CAO

Building a Stronger West Nipissing: Reflecting on the 2022-2026 Term of Council



As we reflect on the accomplishments of the 2022-2026 Term of Council, I am proud to present this final report highlighting the progress achieved through strong leadership, collaboration, and a shared commitment to the residents of West Nipissing.

This Council began its term at a pivotal moment in the Municipality's history. In addition to addressing the ongoing needs of our growing community, Council inherited the findings of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's Administrative Policies, Practices and Procedures Review, which identified opportunities to strengthen governance, accountability, and organizational effectiveness. Rather than viewing these recommendations as challenges, Council embraced them as opportunities to improve and modernize municipal government.

Over the past four years, Council demonstrated exceptional leadership in implementing governance reforms that have strengthened the Municipality's foundation for the future. Through the adoption of new policies, enhanced accountability measures, improved decision-making processes, expanded training opportunities, and greater administrative transparency, Council addressed the recommendations arising from the Ministry's review and established a culture of professionalism, respect, and continuous improvement. The significance of this work extends well beyond this term and will continue to benefit future councils, staff, and residents for years to come.

At the same time, Council remained firmly focused on delivering results for the community. Guided by the 2022-2026 Term Plan, significant progress was made across all priority areas. Investments in roads, bridges, water and wastewater infrastructure, municipal facilities, parks, and recreational amenities helped ensure that essential services remain reliable and sustainable. Council advanced long-term asset management planning, strengthened financial stewardship, and positioned the Municipality to address future infrastructure needs responsibly.





Council also championed initiatives to support economic development, housing growth, community safety and well-being, physician recruitment, tourism, and enhanced municipal services. Through collaboration with community organizations, local businesses, neighbouring municipalities, and Indigenous partners, meaningful progress was achieved in building a stronger, more resilient, and more inclusive community.

Perhaps most importantly, this term demonstrated what can be accomplished when elected officials, staff, community partners, and residents work together toward common goals. The projects completed, policies implemented, and strategic investments made throughout this term reflect a collective commitment to leaving West Nipissing stronger than it was four years ago.

While infrastructure projects and community investments are often the most visible measures of success, one of this Council's most enduring accomplishments has been strengthening the governance and administrative framework of the Municipality itself. By restoring confidence in municipal governance and establishing a stronger foundation for future decision-making, Council has positioned West Nipissing for continued success in the years ahead.

On behalf of the municipal administration, I extend my sincere appreciation to this Mayor and Council for their leadership and dedication, to municipal staff for their professionalism and commitment to public service, and to the residents of West Nipissing for their continued engagement and support.

The accomplishments contained within this report are a testament to what can be achieved through vision, accountability, and a shared commitment to community. Together, we have built a stronger foundation for the future of West Nipissing.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve this community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Pilon', written in a cursive, flowing style.

M.R. (Mike) Pilon, Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of West Nipissing



Municipal Council

2022-2026



Kathleen Thorne Rochon, Mayor

When Council began its term in 2022, we knew that having a clear sense of direction would be important. The Council Term Plan gave us a framework to identify our priorities, guide our decisions and measure our progress over the four years.

As we come to the end of this term, this report looks back at what we set out to accomplish, what we completed, what remains underway and the progress we have made together. It is a reflection of the work of Council, staff, community partners and residents who helped move these priorities forward.



Kris Rivard
Ward 1 Councillor



Roch St-Louis
Ward 2 Councillor



Daniel Gagné
Ward 3 Councillor



Jamie Restoule
Ward 4 Councillor



Kaitlynn Nicol
Ward 5 Councillor



Roland Larabie
Ward 6 Councillor



Fernand Pellerin
Ward 7 Councillor



Georges Pharand
Ward 8 Councillor



The Term Plan

Provides a strategic framework to guide Council's decision-making and to focus resources on key goals and outcomes.

Serves as a shared roadmap, informing the work of the organization while allowing Council to monitor progress and remain accountable.

Provides a reference point for looking back at what was accomplished, the initiatives still underway, and the priorities that may require continued attention.

START OF THE TERM
Planning



DURING THE TERM
Accountability



END OF TERM
Reflection

Council's Principles



Build trust and foster positive engagement together



Use a strategic approach to put goals into action



Serve the community by listening and being transparent



Achieve goals by remaining realistic, honest, and respectful



Take chances and seize opportunities



Embrace change

2022–2026 Council focused on strengthening the foundation of West Nipissing — investing in infrastructure, facilities and services while planning responsibly for the community’s future.

Major Funding Successes 2022-2026

Champlain Bridge Replacement

2026 – \$ 30M (estimated) – Ministry of Transportation Ontario

Verner Water Infrastructure

2025 – \$ 18,158,750, Ontario Health and Safety Water Stream, Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program

Watermain Trunk Loop

2026 – \$ 347,942 – Provincial,
\$ 417,573 – Federal, ICIP
2025 – \$ 831,064 – Provincial,
\$ 997,377 – Federal, ICIP
2024 – \$ 481,826 – Provincial,
\$ 578,249 – Federal, ICIP
and Gas Tax funding

Front Street Rehabilitation

2026 – \$ 1,831,680 – Connecting Links
2024 – \$ 274,752 – Connecting Links
2023 – \$ 1,022,132 – Connecting Links

Dokis & Leclair Road Rehabilitation

\$ 1,683,272 – Northern Ontario Resource Development Support Fund

Bourgault Water Infrastructure

2025 – \$ 754,637 – Housing-Enabling Water Systems Fund

Goulard Baseball Fields

2025 – \$ 149,000 – Jays Care Foundation
2025 – \$ 500,000 – NOHFC

HWY 64 Resurfacing

2025 – \$ 549,504 – Connecting Links

Former Mill Site

2024 – \$50,000 – Fednor
2024 – \$119,055 – Green Municipal Fund,
Federation of Canadian Municipalities

* Please note that the figures above were approved by funding bodies; however, they do not always match the amounts spent.



Pillars



**Community Development for
a Vibrant Present and Future**

**Community Facilities
and Public Spaces**



**Strategic Management
and Policies**

**Functional and Dependable
Infrastructure**



**Efficient and Effective
Service Delivery**



Community Development for a Vibrant Present and Future

Highlights

The **Former Mill Site** redevelopment project continues to make meaningful progress. During this term, municipal team delivered an award-winning Land Use and Development Strategy, advanced environmental assessment and remediation planning, secured \$169,055 in funding for Phase II environmental work, and incorporated the site into the new **Official Plan** to support the new housing, recreational space, retail and commercial opportunities.

Council continues to support housing development by pursuing CMHC funding opportunities.

The Municipality has seen consistent activity in **housing and development** over the last four years. An average of **60 new housing building permits** are issued yearly, representing the creation of **70** new dwellings/apartments units in West Nipissing each year on average.



Economic Development, Prosperity, and Growth

Former mill site development	
Complete and review development study	✓ Complete
Complete next stage Environmental Assessment	→ In Progress
Address housing needs	
Complete and review Housing Development Study	✓ Complete
Develop Housing Strategy	---
Identify settlement areas with growth potential and assess surplus municipal land for housing suitability	✓ Complete
Supporting agriculture and tourism sectors	✓ Complete
Advocate for better Internet services in under-served rural areas	✓ Complete
Explore expansion of access to natural gas (private sector matter)	---
Encourage redevelopment of Field school and gas station properties	→ In Progress

Legend

— Not advanced

Projects that were reprioritized, unfeasible, or not supported once examined closely.

→ In Progress

Projects that are ongoing or without a set deadline; or that have progressed but are not yet complete.

✓ Complete

Goals that were met through the collaboration of Council, Staff and partner organizations.



The Municipality continues to **work closely with community partners**, including the Centre Alliance, Family Health Team, Community Health Centre, No More Tears, West Nipissing Dream Catchers, The Food Bank, Les Filles D'Isabelle, Elizabeth Fry Society and True Self, to support community well-being.

To strengthen emergency preparedness and response, the Fire and Emergency Services Department completed a **Fire Master Plan and Community Risk Assessment**. These plans provide a stronger foundation for informed decision-making, service planning and future investment, helping build a safer and more resilient community.

Council supports local not-for-profit organizations through its annual **Discretionary Grant Program**.

A **Volunteer Appreciation** Program was launched and warmly received by the community. Planet Youth, The Lighthouse and local sports leagues continue to receive support from Council. Arenas and rinks are busier than ever, reflecting strong community participation in recreation.

Various accessibility improvements were made at halls and facilities throughout the Municipality. The Sturgeon Falls arena entrance is now fully accessible.



Community Safety and Well-being

Work with community partners to implement key recommendations from the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan	→ In Progress
Continued participation in the recruitment of medical professionals	✓ Complete
Continue to support charitable and not-for-profit groups in the delivery of key services	✓ Complete
Work with and lobby regional partners (Health Unit and DNSSAB) to implement and augment local service delivery	✓ Complete
Update policies and plans relating to public safety (details in the Policies section)	→ In Progress
Support development and delivery of food security initiatives	✓ Complete



A Vibrant and Engaged Community

Build community and volunteer engagement / support creation of community hubs	✓ Complete
Youth Initiatives (activities, safe spaces) / create opportunities for youth	✓ Complete
Establish new Recreation and Culture Committee	✓ Complete
Establish new Youth Advisory Committee	✓ Complete
Maximize use of facilities / support recreation and culture programming in all wards	→ In Progress
Strengthen relationships with First Nations communities and residents (via consultations for official plan, business and road matters)	→ In Progress
Support beautification and community enhancement in all wards	✓ Complete
Change of community services management software to improve user experience	—



Community Facilities and Public Spaces

Highlights

The **Field Outdoor Rink**, which opened in 2024, is a good example of collaboration between community members, Council, the provincial government and the private sector. It now serves as a year-round, multi-use gathering space.

The **Goulard Park** baseball fields were revitalized in 2026, marking the first phase of a broader vision to transform the park into a multi-use recreation hub.

A new **outdoor rink** was also built in Cache Bay. Together, these three projects represent nearly \$2.9 million in recreation investments.

Additional improvements included replacing the Verner Arena chiller and renovating the Sturgeon Falls Arena entrance to improve safety and accessibility.

Significant work was completed to assess the condition, needs and long-term viability of municipal buildings, facilities and halls. The **Facilities Review and Building Conditions Report** provide Council with the information needed to make informed, sustainable and financially responsible decisions about municipal assets.



Refresh Aging Facilities

Field Covered Outdoor rink	✓ Complete
Review Goulard Park redevelopment	→ In Progress
Review Verner Municipal building rehabilitation	→ In Progress
Cache Bay outdoor rink	✓ Complete
Fire hall repairs in Crystal Falls and River Valley	✓ Complete
Muskosung boat launch ongoing maintenance	→ In Progress
River Valley rink storage	✓ Complete
Improve usability of Museum trails	---
Improvements to public beaches	✓ Complete
Scouts property in Verner	---



Maximize Use of Community Spaces

Facilities and municipal space review	✓ Complete
Building/facilities conditions report	✓ Complete
Sport fields review	---
Consolidating the management of all municipal buildings	→ In Progress
Health Centre expansion project	✓ Complete





Highlights

The **Official Plan and Zoning By-law** were reviewed and updated during this term – shaped by public consultation and current provincial legislation. The updated documents provide clearer direction for growth, housing, development and environmental protection, while creating more predictable rules for residents and property owners. This work brought the Municipality's land-use planning framework up to date with current provincial directives.

Following a 2022 Ministerial Order and subsequent [review by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing \(MMAH\)](#), Council acted on

recommendations to strengthen municipal governance, policies and procedures. During the 2022–2026 term, the Municipality introduced and updated key by-laws and policies, including a Procedure By-law, Vacant Seat By-law, Social Media Policy, Delegation of Authorities By-law, Tree Canopy By-law, Service Standards Policy and Service Requests Policy.

Council and staff also completed training in areas including Council procedures and Code of Conduct, Council-staff relations and conflict of interest, strengthening governance practices, accountability and consistency across the organization.



Development and Modernization

Transportation and Roads	
Taxi/Vehicle for Hire by-law	✓ Complete
5-year No-cut Policy review	✓ Complete
Municipal Road Load Restriction policy update	→ In Progress
Building, Planning and Development	
Official Plan 10-year review	✓ Complete
Comprehensive Zoning by-law update	✓ Complete
Development/Subdivision policy	--
User fees review (building and planning, community services, etc.)	→ In Progress
Street Work Permit policy development	→ In Progress
Safety and Emergency Measures	
Pandemic Plan and emergency measures	→ In Progress
Emergency Preparedness Review	→ In Progress
Fire Master Plan and Risk Management Plan	✓ Complete
Hire full-time bylaw officer	✓ Complete
Governance	
Procedural bylaw review	✓ Complete
Comprehensive review of other bylaws	✓ Complete
Financial Control policies and formal Tax Collection policy	✓ Complete
Research shared services with neighbouring towns (mutual aid agreements)	→ In Progress



Strategic Management and Policies

Highlights

Using a land-disposition strategy as well as budget reallocation, **Council strengthened municipal reserves to prepare for future infrastructure and capital needs.** This proactive approach is important to maintaining the Municipality's financial stability and ability to invest in essential infrastructure without placing undue pressure on taxpayers. Building reserves also reduces reliance on borrowing and helps manage future capital costs.

In regard to environmental stewardship, the updated **Zoning By-law** introduced clearer requirements for camping trailers and development near waterways, helping protect natural areas and shoreline environments.



Future Planning

Operational review	✓ Complete
Roads Study	✓ Complete
List of road repairs in priority	✓ Complete
Asset Management Plan completion	✓ Complete
Plan for Capital projects for the next 4 years	✓ Complete
Build sustainable capital reserve fund	✓ Complete
Building/facilities conditions report	✓ Complete



Environmental Stewardship

Camping Trailer by-law (addressed in Zoning by-law)	---
Short-term Rental Accommodation by-law	✓ Complete
Source water protection plan	---
Review building requirements near waterways (addressed in the Zoning by-law)	✓ Complete
Lavigne Bridge waterway speed limit	✓ Complete



Other Policies Undertaken by Council

Volunteer Recognition Policy	✓ Complete
Discretionary Grants Policy	✓ Complete
Capital Expenditure and Control Policy	✓ Complete
Budget and Financial Controls Policy	✓ Complete
CAO Evaluation Policy	✓ Complete
Flag Protocol Policy	✓ Complete
Surplus Equipment Disposal Policy	✓ Complete



Functional and Dependable Infrastructure



Highlights

Through advocacy and direct delegations to the provincial government, West Nipissing Council advanced the Municipality's case for **critical water infrastructure investment**.

This work contributed to the Municipality securing up to \$18 million in provincial funding through Ontario's Health and Safety Water Stream under the Municipal Housing Infrastructure Program, supporting expanded water infrastructure and an alternative source of **drinking water for households in Verner**.

The **Watermain Trunk Loop Project** in Sturgeon Falls represents a significant long-term investment in essential municipal infrastructure. The multi-year project included the installation of a second watermain trunk, stormwater management and drainage improvements, curb upgrades and road reconstruction. The watermain component received \$1,660,833 in provincial funding and \$1,993,200 in federal funding.

The project has improved the reliability of the drinking water system and reduced the risk of service disruptions. It increases system capacity to support future growth and strengthened emergency preparedness by providing additional system redundancy.



Water and Wastewater

Water supply to Verner from Sturgeon Falls (funding acquired)	→ In Progress
Sanitary dumping and water filling stations	✓ Complete
Verner lagoons continuing studies	→ In Progress
Watermain trunk loop (secondary distribution trunk) 95% complete	✓ Complete
Ongoing maintenance and upgrades Sturgeon Falls Water Plant; Sturgeon Falls Wastewater Plant; Sturgeon Falls Pumping and Lift Stations; Sanitary and storm water system maintenance; Sludge handling at Sturgeon Falls wastewater treatment plant; Sanitary force main for Bay Street Pumping Station; Verner water tower maintenance and upgrades; Verner Water plant maintenance	→ In Progress
Extending water services within Sturgeon Falls (not supported)	---
Sturgeon Falls Pumping and Lift Stations maintenance and upgrades	→ In Progress



Functional and Dependable Infrastructure

Highlights

Through delegations and discussions with provincial government, Council succeeded in securing provincial funding for the **Champlain bridge replacement** – a project estimated at \$ 30 million.

Street reconstruction and engineering designs were completed, allowing the Municipality to proceed efficiently with funding applications and early tendering process. **Being shovel-ready helps with cost savings** while also providing greater certainty around project expenses and scheduling.

Highway and road upgrades included Leclair Road, Dokis Road, and Levac Road. Council was also successful in getting MTO assistance with highway 539/539A upgrades.

During this term, Council adopted a resolution to implement **community safety zones** in Field, Lavigne, Verner, River Valley and Sturgeon Falls.



Roads, Sidewalks and Drainage

Capital projects	
Bridge replacements (Champlain, Eugene)	✓ Complete
Hwy 539 reconstruction	✓ Complete
Street reconstructions/engineering designs for shovel-ready projects (parts of John, King, Ethel and Nipissing Streets)	✓ Complete
Road, sidewalk and street lighting improvements	
Sidewalk Hwy 64 in Lavigne (not our jurisdiction, looking at other solutions)	→ In Progress
Roads and ditching and manholes in Cache Bay (included in the 5-year plan)	→ In Progress
Improve pedestrian safety - corner of King St and Hwy 17	✓ Complete
SF improvements to roads, sidewalks, streetlights	✓ Complete
Policies	
Work with OPP to identify and target high-speed hot spots	✓ Complete
Explore options to address Dokis Rd winter road maintenance issues	✓ Complete



Solid Waste – Garbage and Recycling

Field recycling program/re-use centre	✓ Complete
Change management structure for smaller landfills	✓ Complete
Sturgeon Falls Landfill expansion and transfer station preparation	→ In Progress
Landfills operation and improvements	✓ Complete
Landfills initiatives (signage revitalizations and launch of free store pilot project)	→ In Progress



Efficient and Effective Service Delivery



Highlights

The **By-law Enforcement** team was expanded to respond to community concerns, investigate violations and educate the public about municipal rules. This supports safer, cleaner and more orderly neighbourhoods.

In 2026, Council agreed to moving forward with a new ticketing and licensing **software** as part of its commitment to customer service and better documentation.

Staff has spent several months researching and evaluating **better customer service solutions**. The aim is to have a new system implemented in 2027.

Council recently approved a new **Employee Training and Professional Development** Policy, which plays a critical role in effective succession planning and ensures continuous improvement across the organization.



Actively Engaged with Residents and Stakeholders

Administrative services for areas outside Sturgeon Falls (satellite office options)	---
Self-service improvements to website, tax, building, community services	→ In Progress
Measure performance of service requests responses	→ In Progress
Improve resident communication strategy	→ In Progress
Hold Council meetings at various locations	✓ Complete
Develop Level of Service policy	✓ Complete
Taxation model for seniors on fixed income	---
Hire full-time bylaw officer	✓ Complete



Organizational Excellence

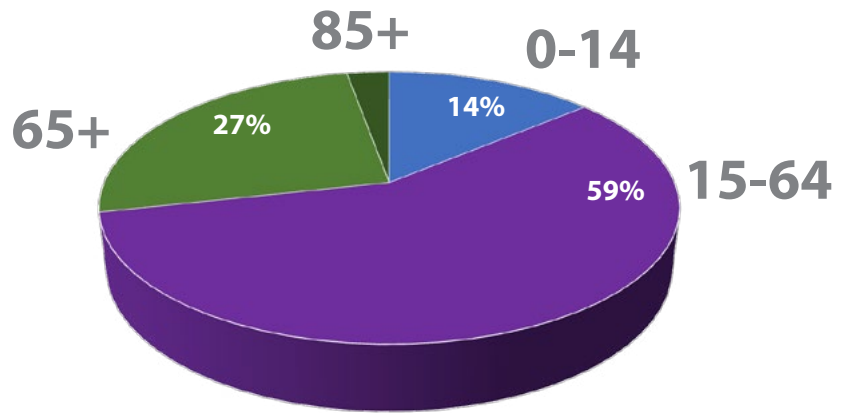
Improvements to HR hiring, training and corporate purchasing procedures	→ In Progress
Firefighter recruitment and retention plan	→ In Progress
Consolidation/standardization of Health and Safety policies	→ In Progress

About Our Community

Statistics Canada Census 2021

Population
14,583

up 1.5%
since 2016



Average household
income before taxes

\$84,300

(2020)

Provincial Average
\$116,000

Unemployment rate

West Nipissing

9.9%

Ontario

5.6%



19% of residents
identify as
Indigenous

900 First Nations

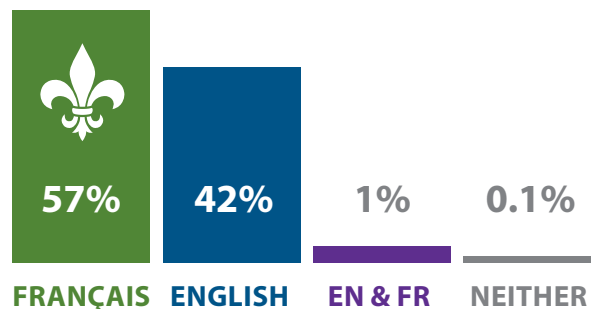
1835 Métis

25 Inuit

Culture

310 Immigrants

First official language



Households



68%

Multi-person & family



2%

Multi-generational

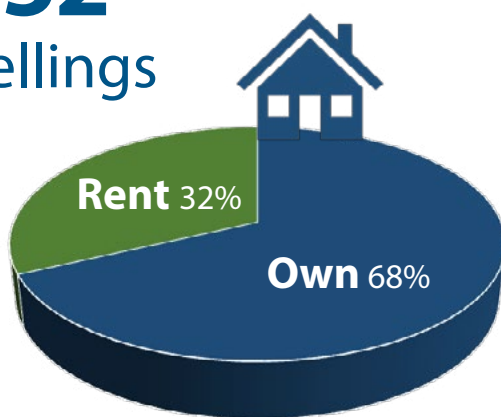


30%

One-person

Housing

7252
Dwellings



Average property
\$364,700
as per realtor.ca

Types of dwellings

74% Single-detached house

3% Semi-detached house

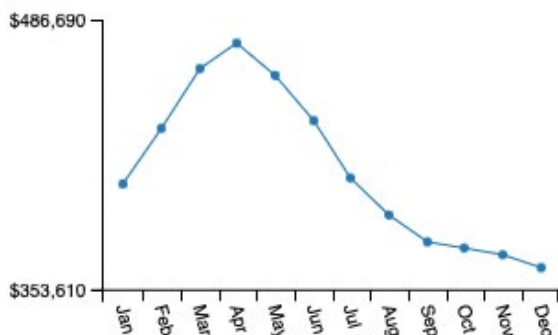
2% Row house

6% Apartment or flat in a duplex

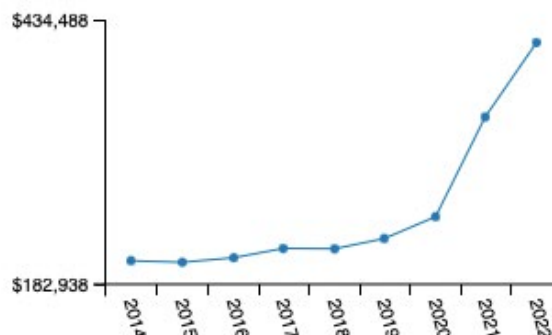
14% Apartment in building

1% Other

Past 12 months



Past 9 years



About the Corporation

48+ facilities to maintain

1 Administrative building
2 Arenas
6 Community Centres/Halls
2 Fitness Centres
Pool
Museum
Ambulance Bay Building
Verner First Response Building
West Nipissing Health Centre
1 Scout Buildings
Field Senior's Building
OPP Building
5 Cemeteries

Team of
266 includes Council,
employees, firefighters,
and management

Almost
2,000 km²
Land area

Waste & Recycling

Approximately
 **85%** of households have
curbside pickup

Parks and Recreation



6 Outdoor Rinks
4 Soccer Fields
6 Baseball Fields
10 Parks and Playgrounds
3 Splash Parks
Beach Volleyball Court
Tennis Court
8 Boat Launches/Docks
Minnehaha Bay and Marina
3 Public Beaches

managing

535 km 
of roads

7.5 population
density per km²



8 Fire Stations

7 Landfills
5 Recycling Depots



Municipal Services



Water and
Wastewater



Roads, Sidewalks
and Drainage



Waste and
Recycling



Fire and
Emergency



Building and
Planning



By-law
Enforcement



Economic
Development



Maintenance of Facilities
and Green Spaces



Licensing and
Permits



Taxation
Services



Cemetery
Management



Parks and
Leisure



Arts, Culture, and
Community Development



Health and Wellness
Programming



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