

# YOUR GUIDE TO



**Thank you for joining us to help shape the future of Sioux Lookout!**

This package contains examples and descriptions of municipal "investment properties." Each one represents key priorities for the 2025 Municipal budget. You have also received \$1,000 in "Budgetopoly Bucks" to allocate to the areas **you** believe are the **most important**. How you do that is entirely up to you.

Before you begin, it's important to note that a portion of the budget is already allocated to uncontrollable costs, such as external agency fees (OPP, KDSB, NWHU, etc) and essential operating costs, including labour and utilities. The \$1,000 represents the remaining funds available for discretionary spending.

Your task is to carefully review the priority areas in this guide and decide how to allocate your \$1,000 among the available "properties." Consider what investments **you** believe are most important for Sioux Lookout's growth and overall well-being. Your choices will directly inform Council as they make decisions for the upcoming budget.

Thank you for participating and contributing to our community's future.

# WATER, SEWER, AND ROADS

Investing in this property tells us that you would like to see more investment in infrastructure and asset management.

Asset management is the strategic process of tracking, maintaining, and optimizing our physical assets. These include everything from the water and sewer pipes underground to our sidewalks, water meters, road surfaces, equipment, and facilities.

Proper asset management allows the Municipality to maximize the lifespan of these assets and proactively plan maintenance and replacement as required. By doing this, we can reduce unexpected repair costs, down time, and service disruptions, as well as achieving significant long-term cost savings.



## **Investment Impact:**

Maintaining existing roads and infrastructure is crucial for building a resilient future, ensuring safe, efficient transportation, and minimizing the need for costly unplanned repairs or replacements.



Regular upkeep extends the lifespan of these assets, supports economic stability, and enhances the community's ability to adapt to growth and changing environmental conditions.

# CULTURAL HERITAGE

Investing in this property tells us that you would like to see more investment in our Indigenous heritage and cultural diversity.

Until COVID closed it to the public, Sioux Lookout had a community museum that featured a number of historic artifacts and a wealth of cultural information that has now been in storage for years.

Lower investment examples may include funding and support for cultural events at Town Beach, Indigenous artwork installation in public spaces, and recreational programming that celebrates a variety of different cultures.



## **Investment Impact:**

Supporting programs and events that celebrate Indigenous heritage and cultural diversity enhances community pride and fosters a culturally enriched environment.



Investing in a community museum revives access to precious artifacts and celebrates Sioux Lookout's rich cultural history, fostering a sense of pride and connection among residents. It serves as an educational resource, attracts visitors, supports tourism, and preserves heritage for future generations.

# RESPONSIBLE SPENDING

Investing in this property tells us that you would like to see more investment in financial sustainability and service efficiency.

A number of inefficiencies and potential business continuity issues in the Municipal phone system have been identified. Moving from a combination of landlines and legacy PRI-based phone system to a modern unified communications platform will offer greater flexibility for staff, more ways for the public to connect, and significant annual cost reductions.

Our existing ERP solution has announced it's product End of Life (EOL), which means that we have no choice but to plan for a transition to a new system.

## Investment Impact:



Modernizing the legacy phone system and eliminating under-utilized lines will drastically reduce costs on an annual basis while increasing flexibility and reducing the risk of service disruptions.



ERP systems (Enterprise Resource Planning) integrate finance, human resources, asset management, and service delivery into a single platform to improve data accuracy and efficiency. ERPs lead to improved decision-making and support long-term cost savings.

# RISK READINESS

Investing in this property tells us that you would like to see more investment in preparing for the challenges facing our community now and in the future.

It is well-known that Sioux Lookout faces many challenges around affordable housing, mental health, and addictions.

The Municipality does **not** build or operate residential housing units. Our role is to work with developers to make land and infrastructure available for building and growth.

The near-historic flooding experienced in 2022 showed how important developing a Climate Adaptation Plan can be, as weather events like that are expected to become more frequent in the coming years.



## Investment Impact:

Growing partnerships and advocacy for mental health, addictions, and housing involves lower capital expenditures but can reap rewards by bringing multi-stakeholder projects to fruition.



Developing a Climate Adaptation Plan can help us prepare for the consequences of future weather trends by identifying weaknesses in our existing infrastructure and assisting with long-term plans to remedy them.

# TOURISM AND GROWTH

Investing in this property tells us that you would like to see more investment in events and facilities to boost tourism and help grow activities for residents to enjoy year-round.

Hosting low-budget sports tourism events like marathons stimulates the local economy by attracting visitors who support hotels, restaurants, and shops.

Upgrading sports fields, trails, and the Recreation Centre/ Arena will attract visitors, support local businesses, and strengthen Sioux Lookout's economy. These enhancements also support resident quality of life and support long-term resident satisfaction.



## Investment Impact:

Hosting low-budget sports tourism events require minimal investment while drawing tourist spending to the community.

An investment attraction video can showcase the community as an active, appealing destination for business, living, and tourism.



Investment in sports tourism infrastructure projects offers long-term quality of life improvements for residents as well as attracting visitors to the community.

# CONNECTED COMMUNITY

Investing in this property tells us that you would like to see more investment in creating a community where everyone belongs and has their needs met.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training will help staff engage with vulnerable and diverse populations in a supportive way, being sensitive to the way different cultures can perceive comments and actions. This can reduce feelings of exclusion and division in the community.

Housing is a major concern for both new and existing residents. Acquiring property and developing the infrastructure needed to support development can lead to new construction and increased availability.

## Investment Impact:



DEI training will improve staff cultural sensitivity in engaging with vulnerable and diverse populations. This initiative also addresses a Call to Action from Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, to build understanding and respect for Indigenous cultures and histories.



Acquiring strategic land and partnering with private developers, Indigenous organizations, and housing agencies will support affordable, mixed-use housing projects to help address the housing shortage.

# INFORMED PUBLIC

Investing in this property tells us that you would like to see more investment in increased public engagement and government transparency.

Public dashboards enhance accountability by transparently sharing progress and performance measures with the community, allowing residents to track key projects and outcomes. It also enables informed engagement in municipal decision-making.

Feedback can be given directly to staff through an easy-to-use online portal. Residents would be able submit ideas, vote on community priorities, or participate in surveys and polls from their computer, tablet, or phone.

## Investment Impact:



Allowing residents to monitor project progress and outcomes fosters trust and enables informed engagement in municipal decision-making.



Creating a platform for interactive Q&A sessions, budget simulators, and a live dashboard showing how public input is being used provide greater transparency and opportunities for public input on important strategic and budgetary issues.



# SMART MONEY STRATEGIES

Investing in this property tells us that you would like to see more investment in reducing inefficiencies, duplication, and overlap, service adjustments to reduce expenses, and identifying service fee deficiencies.

Identifying under-used or overlapping services can allow for targeted service cuts with minimal inconvenience or disruptions to the public.

Increasing or adding user fees can reduce reliance on taxation to cover service costs, ensuring they are directly supported by those who are using them.

## Investment Impact:



Recreational programs with consistently low participation could be consolidated into multi-purpose programs that attract broader audiences.

Reducing operating hours of public facilities during low-traffic times can help lower operational costs with minimal impact on community access.



User fees provide a sustainable funding source for maintaining and improving community services and infrastructure. Fees would need to be in alignment with service delivery costs to be effective.