

Business Plan

2024-25

WATER SECURITY AGENCY



Statement from the Minister



*The Honorable David Marit
Minister Responsible for the Water Security Agency*

I am proud to present the Water Security Agency's (WSA) Business Plan for 2024-25.

WSA is a key organization in supporting Saskatchewan's Growth Plan for the Next Decade of Growth 2020-2030, the defining vision to keep Saskatchewan a strong province, and national leader for growth for years to come.

This will be a historic year not only for WSA but also the province. The Government of Saskatchewan is moving forward with the engineering, design, and construction of the first 90,000 acres of the Lake Diefenbaker Irrigation Projects.

This work will begin to complete the vision first laid out over fifty years ago. At its peak, when fully built the Lake Diefenbaker Irrigation Projects will increase the number of irrigable acres by up to 500,000 acres, strengthening food security for the province and the country, and delivering billions in economic benefits.

In addition to commencing design, engineering, and construction work on the Lake Diefenbaker Projects, WSA is also supporting the development of nine more smaller scale irrigation projects. As Saskatchewan's weather patterns continue to change, increased irrigation helps to stabilize the province's agricultural sector, improving certainty to producers.

Each day our citizens have access to a secure water supply. This is possible from the network of 72 dams and hundreds of kilometers of canals which WSA owns and operates. The importance of these structures, reservoirs and conveyance channels cannot be understated. They supply municipal drinking water, water for irrigation and industry, recreation, and habitat protection.

It is important to continue to invest in the maintenance, operation, and rehabilitation of these vital pieces of infrastructure. Since 2012, WSA has invested nearly \$255M in our province's water management infrastructure and that is why in 2024-25 we will invest \$42 million more to continue to support the people of Saskatchewan with safe water supplies that are sustainable, adaptable, and reliable.

Across the province WSA regulates 617 wastewater facilities, and 810 waterworks, water sustains our province and our people. Safe drinking water and effective wastewater treatment ensures the protection of human health and the economic growth and prosperity of Saskatchewan's citizens. While the majority (87 percent) of Saskatchewan residents agreed that their drinking water is safe to drink, we will continue to inspect and work with municipalities and other system owners to ensure proper on-going operation, maintenance and upgrades to these works.

WSA serves the people of Saskatchewan in several direct and indirect ways, so it is critical we always keep our focus on how we can best serve our clients in the best way to achieve the best outcomes. We have made changes to our regulatory compliance approach.

Previously, emphasis was placed on process instead of outcomes when seeking approval for projects. This process did not differentiate between larger, or higher-risk projects, and smaller, lower-risk projects more commonly undertaken by individual landowners. This caused significant delays for clients, and increased workloads for WSA staff. That is why we added approval options for Aquatic Habitat Protection (AHP) permits for low-risk activities. These changes will reduce the time and cost to our clients to obtain approvals for low-risk activities, while complying with regulatory requirements.

The Water Security Agency will report on progress towards the targets laid out in this plan, within the financial parameters provided, in the 2024-25 Annual Report.

Sincerely,

David Marit
Minister Responsible for the Water Security Agency

2024-25 Budget Highlights

1	\$42 million for water infrastructure rehabilitation to ensure a safe and reliable water supply to support a growing population and economy.
2	\$30 million to support irrigation development contributing to economic and food security goals of <i>Saskatchewan's Growth Plan</i> .
3	\$3 million for Grant Devine Dam to ensure continued flood management and safe operations of the dam.

Government Vision and Goals

Saskatchewan's Vision

"...to be the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life."

>> Government Goals

A Strong Economy

Strong Communities

Strong Families

Saskatchewan's vision and three goals provide the strategic direction for organizations to align their programs and services to build a strong Saskatchewan.

All organizations will report on progress in their 2024-25 annual reports.

Water Security Agency Overview

Mandate

The Water Security Agency is responsible for managing the water supply, protecting water quality, ensuring safe drinking water, managing dams and water supply channels, reducing flood and drought damage, and providing information on water. The Agency works to integrate all aspects of provincial water management to ensure water supplies support economic growth, quality of life and environmental well-being.

Mission

To manage water resources for a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people.

Vision

To be the best water management agency in North America providing safe, reliable water that drives economic growth.

Core Values

Respect and Integrity

Serving Citizens

Excellence and Innovation

One Team

Goal 1: Saskatchewan’s Water Infrastructure Drive Growth

WSA plays a central role in supporting *Saskatchewan’s Growth Plan for the Next Decade of Growth (2020-2030)* through its mandate to responsibly and sustainably manage our water resources to enhance and expand economic growth, improve quality of life, and enhance environmental well-being.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Ensure infrastructure meets the desired level of service.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Implement the framework to reduce infrastructure rehabilitation and maintenance deficits.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Implement policies to promote using water as an economic driver.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Develop water allocation, priority of use, and water usage policies.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Use available water to expand irrigation capacity.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Complete the preliminary design of the Westside Rehabilitation and Expansion Project.
- Expand new irrigation opportunities through continuous planning and development.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Dam Safety Risk Index – a qualitative assessment of the overall condition of WSA dams and associated components.

Water Infrastructure Service Index – a qualitative assessment of the ability of WSA water infrastructure to perform the services desired of them (such as convey water or store water).

Number of new Irrigation acres – the number of new irrigation acres given approvals to irrigate.

Goal 2: Clean, safe, reliable water supply that is responsive to change

Regardless of where we live or what we do, water is essential to life. We need it in our homes for drinking, cooking, and bathing. We irrigate our gardens and fields. Water is essential to farmers, ranchers, and many industries. Most of us spend at least some of our leisure time on water-based recreation, often along our majestic lakes and rivers. To support our growing population, economy, and quality of life, as the central water agency in Saskatchewan, WSA must take strong action to ensure clean, safe and reliable water.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Support clients to be responsive to change.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Identify regions at risk of drought and flooding and support clients to develop drought and flood mitigation plans.
- Develop an integrated hydrologic drought plan to support drought preparedness, response, and recovery.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Facilitate responsible drainage within resilient watersheds.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Complete demonstration and research projects and engage with stakeholders to inform development of the Agriculture Water Stewardship Policy.
- Complete an independent review of third-party water management organizations to guide next steps to build capacity to support effective delivery of water management programming.
- Develop and implement Agricultural Water Management service standards.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*

Safeguard human health by ensuring clean and safe water.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Implement a results-based regulatory structure.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Per cent of communities supplying water which meets the drinking water quality guidelines on a consistent basis - Percentage of water treatment plants that meet or exceed minimum treatment standards. Minimum treatment standards help ensure clean, safe and reliable water for drinking purposes.

Per cent of wastewater facilities meeting performance standards on a consistent basis - The number of sewage effluent discharges that represent a risk to source waters is a measure and direct indication of the potential for source water contamination due to poor wastewater treatment.

Percentage of at-risk communities that have up to date flood maps - This measures the number of communities in Saskatchewan identified as being at risk of flooding that have completed or have access to modern engineered flood maps where the benefits are commensurate with the costs.

Goal 3: Service Excellence

Service excellence means we continually strive to meet or exceed client expectations. We take the time to listen and understand their needs and concerns and collaboratively work together to solve problems. We respond timely to all and any issues and have a positive attitude.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*
Implement an integrated client service model.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Implement a comprehensive marketing and communication strategy to promote programs and services.

Strategy: *The approach we will take to achieve our goal*
Develop a Business Continuity Plan.

Key Actions: *What we will do to get there*

- Develop and implement a Business Continuity Management Program.

Performance Measures: *What success looks like*

Client Satisfaction – the percentage of clients satisfied or very satisfied with the service they receive from WSA.

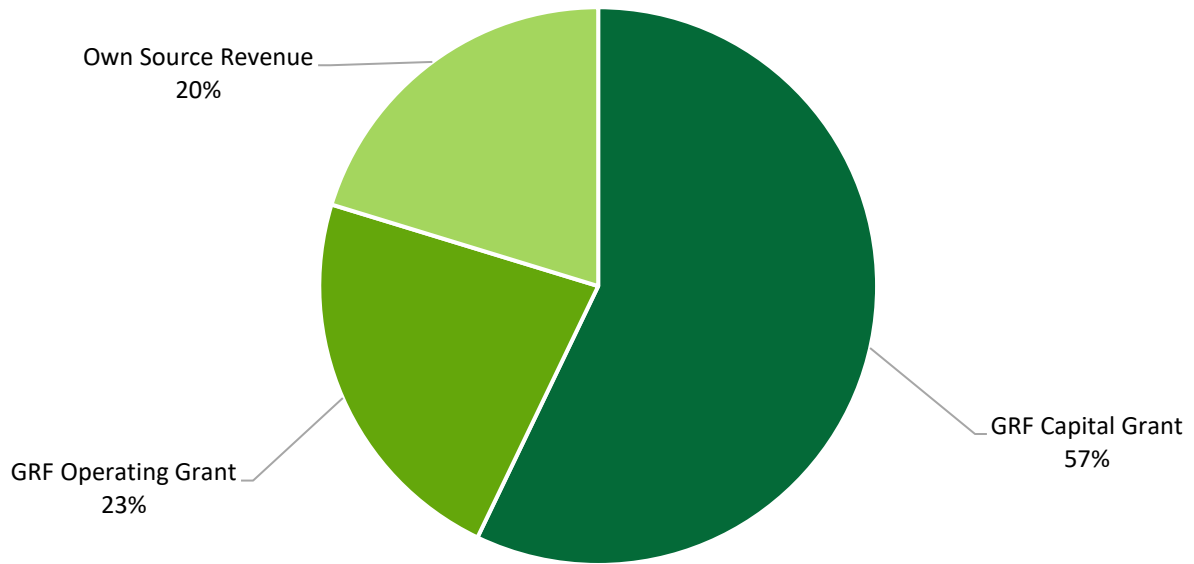
2024-25 Improvement and Innovation Highlights

<p>1</p>	<p>Enhancing Drought Resilience through Irrigation Water Supply Management in Saskatchewan Saskatchewan’s agriculture industry has been impacted by drought in many regions of the province. This initiative aims to enhance drought resilience through increasing irrigation by improving our understanding of the province’s water supply and enhancing monitoring and compliance for water allocation. By increasing irrigated acres and implementing a modern system for accurate water usage monitoring in Saskatchewan, WSA intends to increase agricultural resilience and growth while ensuring sustainable management of water resources. This approach effectively balances economic development with environmental stewardship.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Managing Aquatic Habitat Protection (AHP) through a result-based regulatory framework This initiative will reduce the time and cost of the aquatic habitat approval process for clients by introducing new approval options for low-risk activities. This project is expected to reduce turnaround times for an AHP license from greater than 50 days to less than 30 days.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Drainage Approval Process Improvement To address the backlog in the drainage approval process and improve producers’ compliance with Agriculture Water Management regulations, a streamlining initiative will be completed. Through this initiative, policy changes will be implemented to address program barriers, improved processes developed to create efficiencies, and a new dashboard to enhance project management and program reporting. New program metrics will be developed, and service standards implemented so that the impact of changes can be measured, and further refinement can occur. As a result of this initiative, we expect to see improved client satisfaction as well as an increase in drainage approvals.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Client Experience Improvement Project This initiative will reduce the time it takes for clients to receive a response to their inquiries. Through this initiative WSA will explore the implementation of a CRM system. A CRM allows WSA to respond to inquiries more efficiently and provide more accurate timeframes for client callbacks for technical inquiries.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>The Water Infrastructure Service Index (WISI) WSA manages a vast network of water control infrastructure that varies greatly in terms of age and rehabilitation needs. These assets play a significant role in providing valuable services to stakeholders including municipal and industrial water supply, reservoirs for recreation, and irrigation support systems. To understand and mitigate the potential for service disruptions (such as conveying or storing water), WSA will develop and implement the WISI. The WISI is an assessment tool used to measure and communicate the risks within the WSA’s asset portfolio focused on the services those assets provide. It will allow WSA to focus capital and maintenance work on the highest value projects to benefit the people of Saskatchewan.</p>

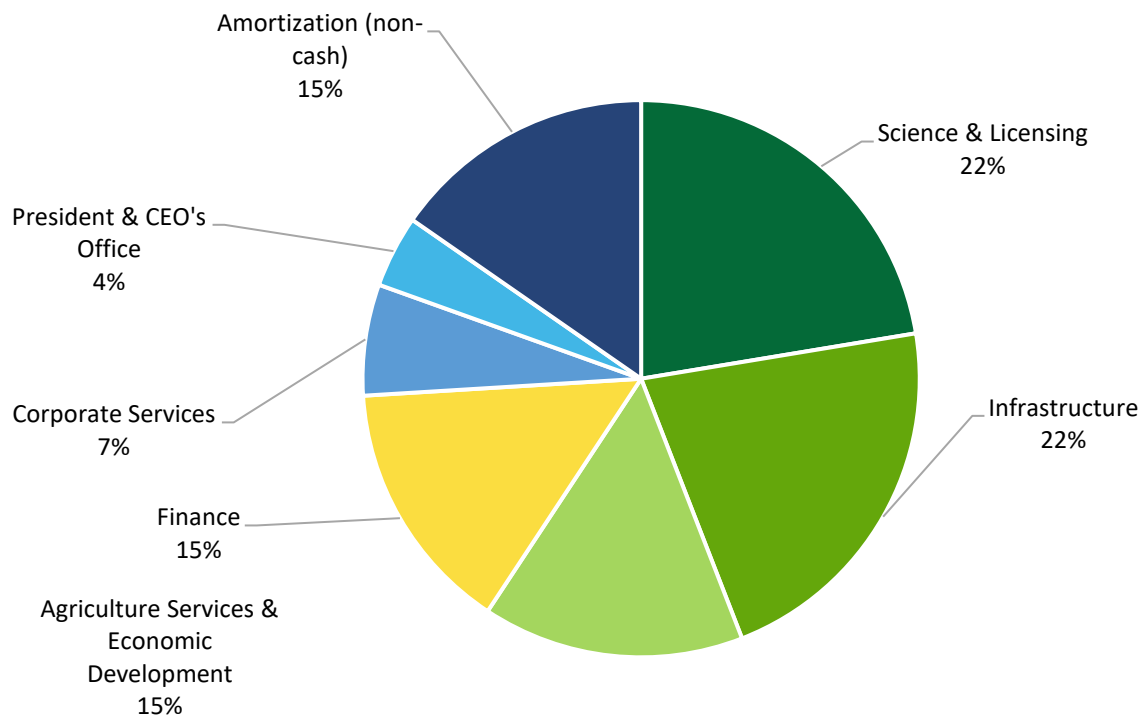
Financial Summary

Water Security Agency 2024-25 Budget	(in thousands of dollars)
Revenue Budget	
Own Source Revenue	\$25,964
GRF Operating Grant	\$28,638
GRF Capital Grant	\$75,000
Total Revenue Budget	\$129,602
Expense Budget	
Science & Licensing	\$14,441
Infrastructure	\$14,001
Agriculture Servies & Economic Development	\$9,795
Finance	\$9,507
Corporate Services	\$4,161
President & CEO’s Office	\$2,697
Amortization (non-cash)	\$9,892
Total Expense Budget	\$64,494
Capital Budget	
Capital Rehabilitation of Water Management Infrastructure	\$42,000
Irrigation Rehabilitation	\$30,000
Grant Devine Dam Flood Passage Project	\$3,000
Total Capital Budget	\$75,000

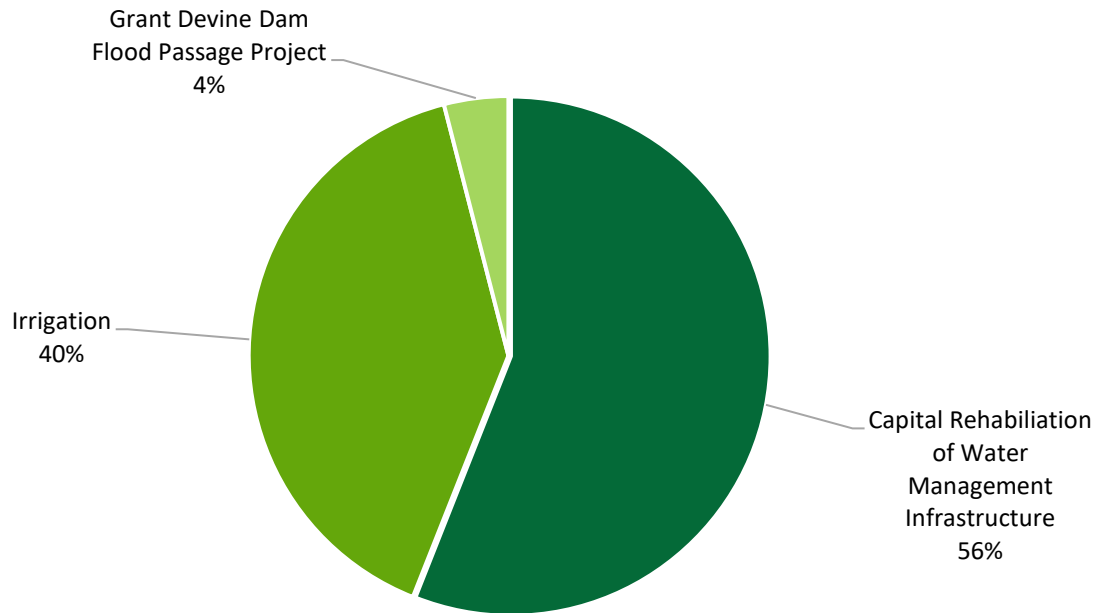
2024-25 Revenue Budget



2024-25 Expense Budget



2024-25 Capital Budget



Links to More Information

- [Government of Saskatchewan Budget, Planning and Reporting](#)