



Corporate Digital Strategy

Progress Update (October 2024 - November 2025)



*A collaborative approach to delivering customer-centred,
digitally-powered City services.*



Strategy Background

This update highlights initiatives related to the Corporate Digital Strategy that have been actioned through the identified reporting period. **The full digital strategy document, along with previous progress updates can be viewed on the City's website at thunderbay.ca/digitalstrategy.**

Specific projects listed in the Digital Strategy, which were recommended at the time the Strategy was developed are reviewed to determine feasibility, benefit, and priority prior to being selected for implementation. Additional projects, that were not included in the original roadmap, will also be actioned following the established guidelines and framework for intake, prioritization and selection through the IDTG (Information, Digital and Technology Governance) Committee and inline with the Digital Strategy.

The Vision

Looking to the future, the Digital Strategy sets a vision for digitally-enabled City services. The Vision for the Digital Strategy is articulated in the following statement:

A collaborative approach to delivering customer-centred, digitally-powered City services.

Major Areas of Focus

As identified in the Digital Strategy, there are five work streams for the City to focus on:

Digital Workplace – Connecting all staff; using technology to make staff working lives simpler and easier

Digitized Business Processes – Replacing paper-based, manual processes with automated, digital, real-time workflow-based processes

Digital Infrastructure – Ensuring the City has the connectivity, cloud capabilities and cybersecurity to support the City and its community

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Data – Managing data well and using it to drive City practices and decision making

Digital Services – Providing great, self-serve digital experiences to customers over visits or calls to City Hall

Governance, Change Management and Operating Model

In support of the five work streams and areas of focus, the Digital Strategy includes a number of recommendations aimed at setting the City up for success in becoming a more digital service organization. These recommendations improve the City's technology implementation operating model to help achieve the goals and objectives of the Digital Strategy.

Given the importance of technology and its role in delivering City Services, and particularly given the many competing demands of the municipal setting, Digital Governance is required to address questions that are fundamental to the City's future success, such as:

- Are we doing the right things with technology and digital?
- Are we making the right technology and digital investments?
- Is our information technology environment properly managed, maintained and secured?
- What are our future business needs?
- Is our technology environment equipped to meet current and future business needs?

Key Performance Indicators and Benefit Realization

In order to ensure that progress is being made and efficiencies are resulting from the implementation of Digital Strategy Initiatives, it was recommended that Performance Indicators be included within progress updates. In addition, the progress reports will strive to provide some examples of operational efficiencies, benefits and costs savings where applicable.

Progress Update: (October 2024 – November 2025)

The following provides an update for items related to the five major workstreams and recommendations related to governance, change management and the IT operating model.

It should be noted that this update does not represent all IT work taking place in Corporate Information Technology (CIT) or other City Divisions but rather focuses on items specific to Digital Strategy initiatives or those that align with the objectives and framework laid out in the Strategy.

Governance, Change Management and Operating Model



Completed (October 2024 – November 2025)

- Establishment of the Information Management Coordinating committee to oversee enterprise-wide Information Management processes and software solutions
- Development of a benefits target framework integrated into the project intake and evaluation process.
- Incorporate a privacy assessment process into the project intake and evaluation process
- Convene an AI working group that reports to the Information, Digital & Technology Governance (IDTG) Committee



In Progress

- Development of AI guidelines and procedure to provide a framework and direction for Generative AI use in the Corporation and integrate with the City's Computer Acceptable Use Policy (ECD – Q2/2026)
- Conduct staff checkpoint survey for input on digital changes to date, use results to inform additional digital initiatives, communications and change management activities (ECD – Q2/2026)
- Develop CIT Business Intelligence/Data Analytics service offerings (data dashboarding, reporting and application development) to aid departments with operational insights and decision making (ECD – Q4/2026)

Note: ECD - Estimated Completion Date



Planned to start (December 2025 – December 2026)

- Conduct AI Training for business area leaders (managers/directors) related to education about AI, the emerging role of AI in business, typical use cases, opportunities and risk considerations
- AI working group to identify opportunities for AI use (including any shared opportunities with other municipalities) and bring forward AI use cases for consideration by IDTG committee

Digital Workplace and Digital Infrastructure



Completed (October 2024 – November 2025)

- Traffic management software replacement and communications network setup (including phase 1 of signal controller upgrades) – additional work is within Infrastructure and Operations Department

- Shift scheduling / time and attendance system - Corporate Rollouts - Long Term Care, Fire Services, Childcare Operations, Corporate Services & Human Resources
- Business case for Automated Water Meter Readings (AMR/AMI)
- Rollout of M365 (mail, collaboration, identity management) to all City Employees
- Phase 1 - digitization of credit card reconciliation and approval processes with BMO details online application for Corporate Services.
- Implement enhanced cybersecurity incident detection and response managed services
- Provincial Offences - OPP ticket processing and input automation
- Granicus short-term rental compliance system implementation



In Progress

- Shift scheduling / time and attendance system - additional Corporate Rollouts – Community Services Department (including Transit Services), CEDC, Police Services, Bylaw Licensing & Enforcement (ECD – Q3/2026)
- Accounts Payable Digitization (invoice management & processing automation) (ECD – Q4/2026)
- Develop Corporate & Departmental IT Business Continuity Plans (ECD – Q2/2026)

Note: ECD - Estimated Completion Date



Planned to start (December 2025 – December 2026)

- Phase 2 - Digitization of credit card reconciliation and approval processes with BMO details online application – Corporate Rollout
- Shift scheduling / time and attendance system – final phase of Corporate rollout (City Manager's office, Growth, Infrastructure & Operations)
- Automated asset condition detection system (roads & transit stops)
- Development of Information Management Strategy and Technology Roadmap
- Automated meter reading system Implementation with water billing system integration and customer portal (multi-year implementation)

Digital Services and Digitized Business Processes



Completed (October 2024 – November 2025)

- City Dashboard Phase 1 - Key Performance Indicators / Strategic Plan Updates – configure new solution for internal workflow & updates
- Childcare billing system – Phase 1 – Implement new solution for back-office processes and client management
- Asset and work management software review and roadmap
- Transit electronic fare management system implementation with online payment portal
- Human Resources end-to-end digital processes roadmap
- Water e-billing for water account holders
- Boulevard Garden Registration Declaration System
- Growth Community Improvement Plan online application system



In Progress

- Tax e-billing for property owners (ECD – Q1/2026)
- Childcare billing system – Phase 2 - online customer account portal (ECD – Q1/2026)
- Property and Permitting Digitization - Development Services (ECD – Q1/2026)
 - End-to-end Digital Services - Release 3
 - Commercial Building Permits – new and modification
- City Dashboard Phase 2 - Key Performance Indicators / City Strategic Plan Updates – online citizen portal (ECD – Q1/2026)
- Water Billing System replacement with online customer account portal (ECD – Q4/2026)
- Online bookings and payments for various parks & playfields (ECD – Q4/2026)
- Specialized & on-demand transit management software with online customer portal and mobile app (ECD – Q4/2026)
- Tax Billing System modernization with online customer portal (ECD-Q4/2026)
- Asset management roadmap option selection and modernization projects (ECD – Q4 2028)
- Online vacant and dilapidated building registry with inspection workflow integrated into the Property & Permitting Portal (ECD – Q2 2026)

Note: ECD - Estimated Completion Date



Planned to start (December 2025 – December 2026)

- Property and Permitting Digitization – Bylaw Licensing & Enforcement
 - End-to-end digitization with online citizen portal – Release 4
 - business licensing, animal licensing, bylaw complaints & inspections
- Water Fill Station software upgrade (including online payment option and point of sale solution for citizens)
- Corporate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Implementation with online portal
- HR Digital Roadmap Implementation (Phase 1) central employee record, manager and employee self service, and employee change management

GIS and Data



Completed (October 2024 – November 2025)

- Neighborhood Services Interactive App - Citizen facing solution to find the nearest city services, facilities or events (e.g. where is the nearest rink, recreation facility, recycling depot, neighborhood events)
- Interactive roads and capital facility construction map – real-time updates as status changes to allow citizens to see most current information



In Progress

- Where is my Snowplow Interactive App – Citizen facing solution that allows citizens to see where snowplows are currently working, and which roads have been cleared in real-time (ECD – Q4/2025)
- Development of GIS data collection and maintenance standards and guidelines for GIS tools (e.g. asset condition inspections) (ECD – Q2/2026)
- Real-time GIS Data Sharing between local utilities and the City (ECD – Q2/2026)
- Review and addition of new datasets to the Open Data Portal (ECD – Q2/2026)

Note: ECD - Estimated Completion Date



Planned to start (December 2025 – December 2026)

- Creating departmental GIS sites to allow for self-service and access to GIS data for staff
- Neighborhood Services Interactive App – Incorporate additional points of interest based on work with the CEDC and the BIAs

Performance Indicators, Statistics and Benefit Targets

Below, we have included benefits, statistics and Indicators for this reporting period which can be used to help measure if we are moving in the right direction. As Digital Strategy Progress Updates are being prepared, projects may be at different stages of benefits and target identification. The following are some example indicators and example benefits either realized to date or targeted for items underway and/or planned to start.

of New Citizen Facing Digital Services

6 new digital services (including 2 interactive map applications) launched during this reporting period with work in progress related to an additional 10 citizen facing digital services

A total of 18 new digital services launched since the Digital Strategy work started in 2022

Digital Services Benefits & Statistics (actual and proposed for items in this reporting period)

Online Boulevard Garden Registration Declaration System

60 online registration and declarations completed in the first six months

Online Growth Community Improvement Plan applications

12 online applications during the first 30 days

Water e-billing

17% account holder uptake since launching (October 2025) resulting in a go forward operating savings of \$30,000. It is anticipated that account holder uptake will reach at least 30% which will result in savings reaching \$50,000 per year

Tax e-billing

Expected to launch in early 2026, this digital service is expected to have an uptake of at least 20% which would result an operating savings of \$30,000

Online Interactive Roads and Capital Facility Construction Map

2500 Map visits since it launched in September 2025

Online Interactive Neighbourhood services Map

1000 Map visits since it launched in October 2025

Digital Infrastructure/Digital Workplace Benefits

Corporate shift scheduling, time and attendance software system

Increased employee self-serve, consistency and streamlined time recording across the corporation with less time required for batch time entry functions

With the continued rollout of the UKG system, targeted time-savings are conservatively estimated to be about 4,550 hours per year across all areas once the project is completed and the new processes are in place

OPP ticket processing and input automation

This in-house developed software includes automation to extract, transform, and integrate OPP eTicket data into the Court Administration and Management system with minimal manual intervention. This automation has resulted in time savings of 900 hours per year for Court Services Staff

Microsoft M365 rollout to all front-line staff

The extension of Microsoft M365 to all staff provides a more modern, more connected workforce with access to email, Microsoft Teams and other corporate resources for all staff which leads to increased employee satisfaction and improved communication

Short-term rental compliance software solution

Identification of additional short term rental properties since June 2025 has resulted in increased MAT revenue of \$16,000 per year with the potential to increase MAT revenue by a total of \$43,000 to \$121,000

Accounts Payable Digitization (invoice management & processing automation)

This Digitization project (underway) will streamline invoice receipt, processing and storage and will result in operational efficiencies and increased employee satisfaction. In addition to improved A/P invoice processing functions across all departments, the project identifies and estimates time savings related to this digitization to be 1820 hours per year within Financial Services once the project is completed and the new processes are in place