

How the City Uses Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) Funds

In keeping with Provincial Regulation 435/17, the Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) is required by City of Thunder Bay By-law 74/2018 on all accommodation sold for a continuous period of less than 30 days in a temporary accommodation. This includes stays in a hotel, motel, lodge, inn, hostel, bed and breakfast, dwelling unit, and other places transient accommodation is provided operating within Thunder Bay.

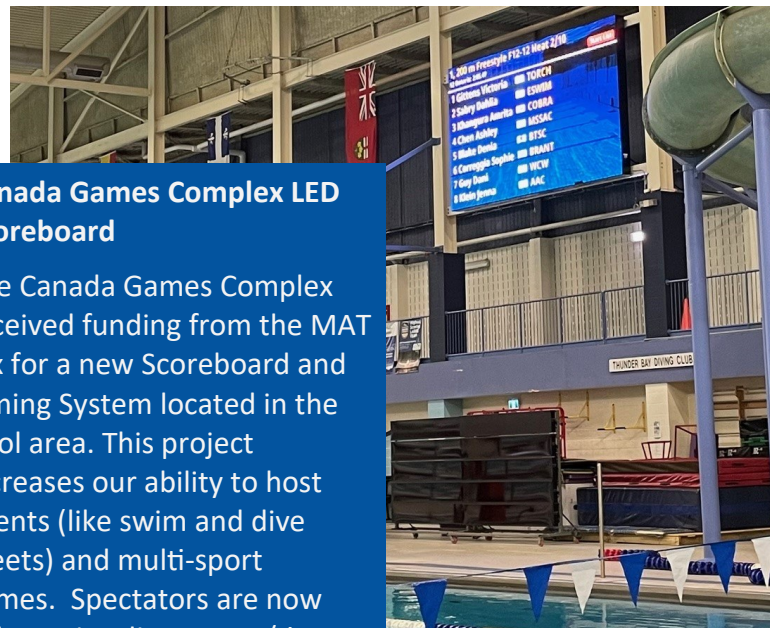
50% of the net revenue from the Municipal Accommodation Tax goes to Community Economic Development Commission (CEDC) for tourism promotion and development, administered through the Tourism Investment Committee (TIC). The other 50% of the net revenue is retained by the City, earmarked for infrastructure projects and programs that promote tourism and benefit both residents and visitors.

How The City Uses MAT Funds to Promote Tourism, and to Benefit Residents and Visitors

Projects Funded by MAT to end of 2023	Amount \$
Multi-Use Indoor Turf Facility (Committed)	4,248,729
LED Scoreboard	55,200
Event Equipment Renewal	25,000
Event, Program, & Event Services Operating	528,500
North Short Steelhead Fish Ladder	12,000
Parks Renewal Program (Festival and Conservatory parking lots and access road)	570,000
Greenhouse Renewal	130,000
Wayfinding Signs	14,216
Amusement Rides	50,000
Cruise Line Dock	100,000
Uncommitted Funds	453,700
Total MAT Funds to end of 2023	\$6,187,345

Multi-Use Indoor Turf Facility (Committed)

Council has directed administration to allocate a portion of the MAT Reserve Fund to the proposed Multi-Use Indoor Turf Facility. It is anticipated that this facility could benefit over 6,000 users who participate in a variety of turf sports in the city, like soccer, football, Ultimate frisbee, field lacrosse, cricket, and baseball.



Canada Games Complex LED Scoreboard

The Canada Games Complex received funding from the MAT tax for a new Scoreboard and Timing System located in the pool area. This project increases our ability to host events (like swim and dive meets) and multi-sport games. Spectators are now able to view live scores/times during an event, and the scoreboard is available for ongoing promotions.

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Event Equipment Renewal

The City's event equipment inventory is essential to the successful hosting of City and community events. Equipment includes items such as stage and production equipment, A/V equipment, venue equipment (ie. tents and signs), program equipment (ie. games and snowshoes), and safety equipment (ie. road and crowd control barriers and radios). MAT funds help to keep this equipment available as these items must be replaced regularly to meet the needs of event hosts. Most of these items can be borrowed by community event organizers, many free of charge.



Fort William Gardens Event Infrastructure

MAT funding will be used in 2024 to replace event-hosting infrastructure at the Fort William Gardens, specifically the event curtains. These curtains are required for the stage, tunnels, and hallways to provide backdrop, privacy, and security during events at Fort William Gardens.

City Events and Event Services

The City's signature events (like SnowDay on the Waterfront, Canada Day, and Live on the Waterfront) have an estimated economic impact of \$400K-\$2.2M per event, and are known to have up to 20% tourist attendees. MAT funding supports overall event hosting costs such as staffing and advertising, and significantly offsets the net cost of delivery. These events showcase local and touring performers, vendors, artisans, community groups, and service providers.

MAT funds also support not-for-profit groups in hosting community events. Event Services provides assistance to more than 150 events each year (pre-Covid), enhancing Thunder Bay's sport and cultural landscape with high-quality, safe events.



Northshore Steelhead Fish Ladder

The MAT tax is supporting a partner project between the City and the Northshore Steelhead Association to make improvements to the fish ladder located in the Boulevard Dam fishway on the Current River. Improvements will allow more fish to successfully migrate upstream of the fish ladder and install a fish counter to collect data on fish migration. The hope is that this work will help establish a self-sustaining steelhead run on the Current River. Steelhead fishing is a known tourism draw to the area and also is a past-time enjoyed by many residents.

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Outdoor Events & Venue Space Project (Conservatory Parking Lot)

As part of the Outdoor Events & Venue Space Project, key areas of the Centennial Botanical Conservatory redesign are funded through the MAT, including venue space and various rockery, floral, and aquatic gardens. Additionally, the new parking lot layout design will support a multi-purpose market square for local vendors and food trucks.

Wayfinding

Following the City Wayfinding Plan, MAT funds are being used to purchase Directional and Confirmation signage in the north and south cores. Some signage has been installed in the Waterfront District, and will continue to be installed along-side road construction projects.

Amusement Rides

Chippewa and Centennial Parks are destinations for residents and visitors to the city. At Chippewa, MAT funds were used to recover seats on the Tilt-a-Whirl, paint and clear coat for Carousel horses, and Dibond panels for the Carousel. At Centennial Park, funds were used to perform track maintenance for the Muskeg Express.



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Cruise Ship Docks

MAT Tax was used to fund assessments and designs required for improvements to the Pool 6 Cruise Ship Terminal. Assessments included a bathymetry study, bollard testing and structural inspection which informed design work to make the dock safe and functional. It is now used for docking the Viking Octantis starting in 2022. With this investment, the City of Thunder Bay has hosted:

2022— two cruise ships, with eight dockings

2023— four cruise ships, with 14 dockings, plus one guest vessel for a public event

Each of these visits has seen between 200 and 400 passengers visit the City. This also leads to many people visiting the city before or after their cruise. There are five cruise ships, with 17 dockings planned for 2024.

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