

Request for Council Approval for CGSCDC Funding: Science North IMAX Film project in partnership with Dr. Jane Goodall

SUMMARY

On July 11, 2018, the City of Greater Sudbury Community Economic Development Corporation (CGSCDC, operating as the Greater Sudbury Development Corporation, or GSDC) approved conditional support of \$750,000 to Science North's *Big Change, Big Impact* project. The total initiative that Science North proposed was for eight projects totaling \$27 million, with \$16 million to come from the province, and an additional \$2.7 million to be secured from other sources.

In August 2018, City Council also approved a matching contribution of \$750,000 to the overall project, subject to consideration as part of municipal budget deliberations and conditional upon confirmation of other funding sources (CC2018-212). The \$1.5 million in combined City and GSDC funding comprised 6% of the total project or 3% each.

The overall *Big Change, Big Impact* initiative includes eight visitor experience renewal projects, all of which align with Science North's strategic plan. As specific uses for City and GSDC funding support, Science North outlined three projects that will draw audiences to Science North and Dynamic Earth, and to Greater Sudbury, as a tourism destination. These three projects include: a) two new object theatres at Science North and Dynamic Earth; b) *Go Deeper* experiences at Dynamic Earth showcasing Sudbury's modern mining industry; and c) the creation of a Signature IMAX film.

Science North has recently received positive indications from funders regarding funding requests for the IMAX project specifically, and separately from the other projects. This is an important signal for support from the province in particular, along with other funders at the federal level.

This updated request for GSDC funding represents a change in Science North's timing and approach, while the scope and concept of the projects remains the same as in the original proposal.

In order to take advantage of current funding conditions, Science North intends to advance each of the eight projects separately, and is continuing its work with Provincial and Federal Government funders to advance the goals of its strategic plan.

The 2018 approvals of the GSDC and City Council included approval for the IMAX film with Jane Goodall as one component of the overall project. The *Reasons for Hope* IMAX® film is being advanced now due to several factors, including pending funding approvals and Dr. Goodall's availability to be part of the project.

The IMAX project with Jane Goodall presents a singular and timely opportunity for Greater Sudbury to share its unique regreening story on an international stage and with a global ambassador renowned for her environmental message.

BACKGROUND

Science North presented to the GSDC and City Council in 2018 requesting support of \$1.5 million toward the \$27 million *Big Change, Big Impact* project. Each of the eight projects proposed in Science North's new strategic plan are all unique and independent projects that together help realize the transformative impact that the City and GSDC committed to investing in.

Of the projects, there were four that Science North put forward for support from the City and GSDC specifically:

- Two (2) new Object Theatre multimedia experiences that will immerse visitors in current science topics including the challenges and opportunities of climate change and the mysteries of the universe, highlighting dark matter research projects at the world-class SNOLAB near Sudbury.
- The Go Deeper project that will expand the underground experience at Dynamic Earth to create new drifts underground to showcase modern mining and innovation, a new underground theatre and multipurpose space, and new exhibit experiences.
- A new signature IMAX 3D film that will be produced by Science North in partnership with Dr. Jane Goodall. Remarkable success stories in animal conservation will inspire audiences around the world and instill hope for our future.

CURRENT SITUATION:

Science North has submitted applications to Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC), FedNor and IMAX film distributors. Positive indications have been received from funders, and municipal funding will ensure the presence of the Sudbury regreening story within the film. Subsequently, this project has the potential to solidify the Sudbury story in this international medium.

The quality and depth of the filming in this project will provide not only a signature IMAX film, but hours of footage that may be used by the City and the GSDC in economic development opportunities and the attraction and retention of investment to the community.

In 2018, the GSDC-approved contribution of \$750,000 was reserved within the CED funding envelope. This means the current request of \$500,000 can be covered entirely by CED funds and no further City dollars are required at this time.

Following the 2018 funding approvals by the GSDC board, City Council endorsed the GSDC investment and provided its own conditional approval for the City portion of the funding, with payment subject to consideration and approval as part of the municipal budget process (Motions CC2018-212 and CC2018-234).

Without the GSDC funding and municipal support, Science North has confirmed that it would not have the capacity to include the Sudbury Regreening story in the IMAX project. This also means that the footage would not be available for use in economic development opportunities, and Greater Sudbury would likely lose the chance to work with Jane Goodall as the face of the story.

CONCLUSION

In support of the continued success and the positive impact on the community that Science North provides, it is recommended that City Council authorizes an investment of \$500,000 in 2019 from the City's grant to the GSDC to support the Science North Signature IMAX Film project in partnership with Dr. Jane Goodall.

This project was previously approved in principle by both the Board and Council as one component of the larger initiative. The support of the GSDC Board, and of City Council, would represent an update from the conditional approval already provided in 2018 by both bodies to reflect a change in scope in order to advance the IMAX film production at this time.

Science North will need to approach the GSDC and the City separately for the remaining *Big Change, Big Impact* projects as funding and capacity become available to advance each initiative. Future GSDC and City funding would require separate consideration, and each subsequent project would be reviewed and evaluated as a distinct project by the GSDC's Community Economic Development (CED) Committee for GSDC approval as part of the regular funding process. Potential requests for City dollars would be subject to review and consideration as part of the annual budget process.

The GSDC Board motion passed on July 24, 2019, approves a contribution of \$500,000 toward the Science North IMAX project, conditional on confirmation of other provincial and federal funding sources, and with the understanding that the IMAX footage on the Sudbury regreening story will be made available to the City for use in economic development and promotional opportunities.

In line with this motion, the resulting contribution agreement with Science North will outline the need for regular project updates, reporting on economic impact, and details on the Sudbury Story script, in addition to overall progress updates of the full *Big Change Big Impact* initiative.

Previous Council Reports:

1. Science North Renewal and Expansion – Request for City Support – July 10, 2018:
<http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&id=1244&itemid=15451&lang=en>
2. GSDC Funding for Science North Big Change, Big Impact Project – August 14, 2018:
<http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&id=1245&itemid=15529&lang=en>