

Request for Decision

City of Greater Sudbury Funding for Science North *Go Deeper* Project

Report date: November 2, 2020

Council meeting date: November 30, 2020

SUMMARY

The following report outlines Science North's request for funding for the *Go Deeper* project and seeks Council's direction to produce a business case for 2021 budget deliberations for the direct contribution from the City of Greater Sudbury.

Science North is seeking an investment of \$500,000, over two fiscal years (2021 and 2022), from the City of Greater Sudbury for the enhancement of the Dynamic Earth attractions: expanded underground experiences including a new multi-purpose theatre, programming space and modern mining drift; an iconic underground multimedia experience; an immersive show for the Vale Chasm; a Signature Re-greening film for the Epiroc Theatre; and the opening of a new Innovation Gallery.

This project was originally endorsed by Council in 2018 as part of the larger *Big Change, Big Impact* project to advance Science North's strategic objective for investment and renewal as part of municipal dollars intended as matching funds with those of the GSDC through its own Community Economic Development fund.

At that time, City Council 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), for a total of \$1.5 million in combined City and GSDC funding.

The support of the City for the *Go Deeper* project will help to leverage \$2,000,000 of investment from NOHFC and FedNor, along with \$1,200,000 from other private-sector sources. Canadian Heritage was previously approved \$1,100,000.

Staff are seeking Council's direction for the preparation of a business case to be included in 2021 budget deliberations.

BACKGROUND

Science North presented to City Council and the GSDC in 2018 requesting support of \$1.5 million toward the \$27 million *Big Change, Big Impact* project. Each of the 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.

The four projects earmarked for the City and GSDC Support are as follows:

1. A new signature IMAX 3D film *Reasons for Hope* in partnership with Dr. Jane Goodall

CURRENT STATUS: Approved for \$500,000 from the GSDC and endorsed by Council in August 2019. The project is in planning stages now and looking to film in 2021, with a launch anticipated in 2022.

2. Two (2) new Object Theatre multimedia experiences, one featuring climate change and the second featuring dark matter

CURRENT STATUS:

- a) *Climate Action Show* Object Theatre: Approved for \$250,000 from GSDC with authorization of Council in May 2020. In development now and anticipates release at the end of 2020.
- b) *The Dark Matter* Object Theatre: Science North anticipates a request for municipal funding will be brought forward for Council consideration in 2022.

3. The *Go Deeper* underground experience at Dynamic Earth

CURRENT STATUS: This project is being brought forward in this report with a request of \$500,000 from the City.

The *Go Deeper* Project

Science North is seeking an investment of \$500,000 (\$250,000 in 2021 and \$250,000 in 2022) from City Council for the development of some key components of the Dynamic Earth site. These include:

- Expanded underground experiences, including a new multi-purpose theatre, programming space and modern mind drift;
- An iconic underground multimedia experience;
- An immersive show for the Vale Chasm;
- A Signature Re-greening film for the Epiroc Theatre; and
- The opening of a new Innovation Gallery.

Details of the project, timelines and budget can be found in the submission from Science North attached to the report.

The support of the City will help to leverage \$2,000,000 of investment from NOHFC and FedNor, along with \$1,200,000 from other private-sector sources. Canadian Heritage was previously approved \$1,100,000.

Revenues

Funders	Funding Status	Total Funding 2020-2023
Canadian Heritage	Committed	\$ 1,100,000
FedNor	Pending	\$ 1,000,000
NOHFC	Pending	\$ 1,000,000
Private Sector	Pending	\$ 1,200,000
Applicant	Pending	\$ 200,000
City of Greater Sudbury	Current Request	\$ 500,000
		\$ 5,000,000

Expenses

Project Component	Total Costs 2020-2023
Expanded underground experiences: new multi-purpose theatre, programming space and modern mining drift	\$ 2,250,000
Big Impact Multimedia Show	\$ 1,000,000
Vale Chasm Show	\$ 500,000
Sudbury Re-greening film for the Epiroc Theatre	\$ 500,000
Innovation Gallery	\$ 750,000
	\$ 5,000,000

In alignment with the overarching goal of Science North's *Big Change, Big Impact* strategy, the *Go Deeper* project increases visitor offerings in Greater Sudbury, supporting the city's efforts to be a destination of choice in northern Ontario. Along with other attractions and events in the community, this investment will bring new and repeat visitors to the community.

The *Go Deeper* project will support the City of Greater Sudbury's strategic goals and objectives related to Business Attraction, Development and Retention, Economic Capacity and Investment Readiness, along with Strengthening Community Vibrancy. This project is an example of "facilitating partnerships with private industry, and hosting promotional activities to attract targeted sectors".

- Science North is not only a science center and top tourism destination, it is also an important partner in the mining and mining supply and services sector by providing high quality educational and inspiration content to grow the next generation of talent.
- Companies in the industry participate in research and contribute to Science North and Dynamic Earth exhibits to reach new customers/clients, but also support the community's role as a global leader in mining.
- Science North is constantly evolving its role as a promoter and communicator of Greater Sudbury as the Global Leader in Mining and Mining Supply/Service Innovation with new and engaging content available to all.
- Science North believes in building strong relationships with the City and industry to meet the needs of the future while teaching the lessons learned from the past.
- Science North is a key component of Sudbury's sense of place, as a community gathering place, celebration space, learning hub and anchor destination for visitors from around the world.

Impacts of COVID-19

Finally, it is worth noting that at this time that Science North, like many organizations, is up against significant challenges due to the impact of COVID 19 on its operations.

As with other organizations which have been forced to close facilities, the challenge comes with managing how to financially sustain this period while planning for the future and taking advantage of economic development opportunities as they present themselves.

The approval of funding from the City of Greater Sudbury would provide an important signal of the community's ongoing support and collaboration and a commitment to continued investment into local jobs and tourism, both key development areas for economic recovery. Science North has been a strong and reliable partner of the City, and investments into these projects are signs of support and confidence in the Centre and its future.

History of Funding for Science North's *Big Change, Big Impact* Projects

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, of which four projects were specially cited for City/GSDC investment by Science North.

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.

Over the year following the endorsements of the projects and the related funding, Science North approached the GSDC to proceed on a per-project basis to take advantage of funding and sales opportunities as they arose.

To date, the GSDC has made final approvals for the entire \$750,000 of their contributions to the cited projects.

- In August 2019, City Council endorsed the GSDC to release the first investment to the *Big Change, Big Impact* initiative, by contributing \$500,000 toward the Jane Goodall *Reasons for Hope* IMAX film project.
- In May 2020, City Council endorsed the GSDC to release the second investment to the *Big Change, Big Impact* initiative, by contributing \$250,000 toward the Climate Action Show Object Theatre project.

As per the conclusion of the report to Council on these projects, the recommendation was that "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."

CONCLUSION

In support of the continued success and the positive impact on the community that Science North provides, it is recommended that City Council support the development of a business case for consideration from the 2021 Budget (\$250,000 in 2021 and \$250,000 in 2022) for the Science North's *Go Deeper* Project.

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>

3. GSDC Funding for Science North IMAX Film Project – Aug 13, 2019:

<https://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&id=1327&itemid=17374&lang=en>

4. GSDC Funding for Science North Climate Action Object Theatre - May 5, 2020:

<https://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&id=1469&itemid=18855&lang=en>