

Request for Decision: Science North Renewal and Expansion Project

BACKGROUND:

On April 25, 2018, the Ontario Government announced a historic level of investment into Science North of \$16 Million; provided through the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, the funding is in support of seven projects which are key elements of Science North's recently launched five-year Strategic Plan (attached).

The Plan proposed by Science North outlines a budget totaling \$27 million. With \$16 million now secured, Science North is now requesting the City's help in securing the remaining, which includes a request for \$1.5 million to come from the City of Greater Sudbury, (\$750,000 from the GSDC and \$750,000 from Council directly. The City's contribution will help leverage the federal request for \$3.3 million and the NOHFC request for \$1.5 million.

It is proposed that the City's contribution could be used to advance three of the seven projects specifically: The New Signature IMAX 3D Film that could feature the Sudbury Regreening Story, The *Go Deeper: Modern Mining* Project at Dynamic Earth, and the new Object Theatre multimedia experiences.

This funding and the proposed plan represents an opportunity for Science North to undertake a generational renewal; setting the stage for success well into the future. The Science North proposal to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport is attached for more information.

PREVIOUS SUPPORT FOR SCIENCE NORTH:

- First opened in 1984, Science North originally started as a sub-committee of the then-Sudbury Regional Development Corporation (SRDC)
- The former City of Sudbury and Regional Municipality have contributed to the expansion/re-development of Science North and Dynamic Earth over the years
- The City of Greater Sudbury has continued this support with funding for Science North and Dynamic Earth

YEAR	PROJECT	CONTRIBUTION
November 2015	IMAX Theatre Digital Upgrades	\$50,000 of a \$1.32M project
September 2014	Halloween Tunnel of Terror and Pumpkinferno	\$25,000 of a \$255,000 project
August 2013	Dynamic Earth-expansion and exhibit additions	\$250,000 of a \$3M project
September 2008	Digital Dome Theatre and IMAX Theatre Conversion	\$75,000 of a \$791,000 project and \$150,000 of a \$1.9M project
June 2003	Bushplane Object Theatre	\$25,000
April 2003	Dynamic Earth capital	\$2,000,000 of a \$12M project
May 2002	Pre-Opening Marketing Plan for Dynamic Earth	\$25,000 which leveraged Provincial and Federal Contributions

- Science North is the largest attraction in the North and anchors the tourism industry for Greater

Sudbury

- Science North attracts almost 300,000 admissions annually, of which approximately 110,000 are visitors to the community who help to generate \$41.5 million in economic impact.
- Science North's contributions to the economy are well documented and significant
 - A study by TCI Management Consultants commissioned by Science North in 2015, reported the impact of tourist spending and the operations of Science North generates and sustains more than 650 jobs in the province annually. The Centre's annual operating budget of approximately \$18 million per year translates into 340 jobs and \$43.8 million in benefits for the local and provincial economy per year.

PROJECT SUMMARY:

The following projects are part of the overall renewal and expansion:

- The iconic new **Vale Chasm Show** will transport visitors on a seasonal journey to experience Northern Ontario's dramatic natural landscapes, people, iconic creatures and signature sites. A customized version of the experience will be installed in other attractions in Northern Ontario, helping build tourism capacity in the North. (Project Cost Estimate: \$3.5 million)
- The **THINK Project** is a major renewal of 50% of the science centre's 4th level. Visitors and Bluecoats will come together to tinker, hack, innovate, network and know. Under the same branding, separate THINK Hubs in six communities across Northern Ontario will attract new audiences, drive repeat visitation and increase memberships at those attractions, also enhancing awareness of the Science North attractions in Sudbury. (Project Cost Estimate: \$3.3 million)
- Two new **Object Theatre multimedia experiences** 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. (Project Cost Estimate: \$2.5 million)
- The **Go Deeper** project will expand the underground experience at Dynamic Earth to create new drifts underground that showcase modern mining and innovation, a new underground theatre and multipurpose space, and new exhibit experiences. (Project Cost Estimate: \$5 million)
- Capital Upgrades, including a new outdoor pavilion on the grounds of Science North. **Impressive Surroundings** will enhance the visitor experience in the lobby, improve the grounds at Science North and Dynamic Earth, and provide additional space for project development and storage of exhibit components. The new outdoor pavilion will provide a venue for increased programming and community events. (Project Cost Estimate: \$6 million)
- A new **signature IMAX 3D film** 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. The film's production will build on the capacity of Northern Ontario's film industry, sustaining the industry for long term prosperity. The film could also be a

platform to communicate the Sudbury re-greening story in a format that would be shared globally. (Project Cost Estimate: \$4 million)

- Science North will **expand its reach across the North** through increased delivery and impact of science experiences across Northwestern Ontario. The expansion of the Thunder Bay office will benefit 200,000 people living in Northern Ontario and thousands of people who come to the region as tourists. (Project Cost Estimate: \$2.5 million)

Science North is proposing that the City's contribution could potentially focus in on three of the seven projects above. The New Signature IMAX 3D Film, The Go Deeper: Modern Mining Project at Dynamic Earth, and the new Object Theatre multimedia experiences.

The Science North proposal is attached for more information.

ECONOMIC IMPACT:

Economic benefits of the investments during project implementation: (millions of dollars)		
Project	Project Costs	Direct and Value-added Benefits*
New Object Theatres	\$2.5	\$2.52
Go Deeper: Modern Mining at Dynamic Earth	\$5.0	\$5.05
Signature IMAX® Film	\$4.0	\$4.04
THINK Project: Major Renewal of Level 4	\$3.5	\$3.53
New Vale Cavern Show	\$3.5	\$3.53
Impressive Surroundings	\$6.0	\$6.00
Increasing Engagement with Indigenous Audiences in First Nation Communities	\$2.5	\$2.54
Totals	\$27.0	\$27.21

*According to Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport's TDCIM

The number of jobs (full-time equivalent) that will be created during the implementation of each project: (millions of dollars)	
Project	Number of Jobs (FTE)*
New Object Theatres	13
Go Deeper: Modern Mining at Dynamic Earth	26
Signature IMAX® Film	21
THINK Project: Major Renewal of Level 4	19
New Vale Cavern Show	18
Impressive Surroundings	32
Increasing Engagement with Indigenous Audiences in First Nation Communities	14
Totals	143

*According to Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport's TDCIM

RECOMMENDATION:

This project will build on the successful track record Science North has achieved around other projects and initiatives, and it will assist in the advancement of the City's strategic goals related to growth and development as well as tourism and profile. The City of Greater Sudbury's contribution to the renewal and expansion project is critical in order for Science North to meet its proposed timelines and funding targets, and will also continue to help leverage federal and private funding contributions.

Based on these points, it is recommended that the City support the project with a total contribution of \$1.5 million, jointly and in partnership with the Greater Sudbury Development Corporation.