



**Quality of Life Standing Committee Meeting
Agenda**

**Tuesday, March 24, 2026, 7:00 p.m.
S.H. Blake Memorial Auditorium**

	Pages
1. Quality of Life Standing Committee in the S.H. Blake Memorial Auditorium (Council Chambers) at 7:00 p.m. Chair: Councillor Kristen Oliver	
2. Land Acknowledgement A Member of Council will provide a land acknowledgement.	
3. Disclosures of Interest	
4. Confirmation of Agenda WITH RESPECT to the Tuesday, March 24, 2026 Quality of Life Standing Committee meeting, we recommend that the agenda as printed, including any additional information and new business, be confirmed.	
5. Presentations	
5.1 Poverty Reduction Strategy Marie Klassen, Executive Director and Bonnie Krysovaty, Director of Community Projects and Initiatives, will provide a presentation on behalf of the Lakehead Social Planning Council.	
6. Minutes of Previous Meetings Minutes of Quality of Life Standing Committee, held on Tuesday, February 10, 2026, for information.	3 - 8
7. Reports of Administration	
7.1 CityStudio Pilot – Project Summary Report 65-2026 - Growth- Strategy & Engagement providing a final report and key learnings from the City Studio Thunder Bay (CS Thunder Bay) pilot project. Karen Kerk, CityStudio Coordinator will provide a presentation.	9 - 52

7.2 Revised Emergency Response Plan

Report 25-2026- Infrastructure & Operations- Thunder Bay Fire Rescue.
(Distributed Separately)

8. New Business

9. Adjournment



Quality of Life Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 10, 2026, 7:00 p.m.

S.H. Blake Memorial Auditorium

Present:

Mayor Ken Boshcoff
Councillor Shelby Ch'ng
Councillor Andrew Foulds
Councillor Greg Johnsen
Councillor Kristen Oliver

Officials:

Jeff Walters, Deputy City Clerk
John Collin, City Manager
Brendan Hardick, Solicitor II
Kayla Dixon, Commissioner - Infrastructure & Operations
Keri Greaves, Commissioner - Corporate Services & City
Treasurer
Kerri Marshall, Commissioner – Growth
Kelly Robertson, Commissioner - Community Services
Cynthia Olsen, Director - Strategy & Engagement
Ian Spoljarich, Manager- Roads – Infrastructure & Operations
Rilee Willianen, Supervisor- Encampment Response- Growth
Brad Loroff, Manager, Transit Services- Community Services
Matthew Furioso, Supervisor- Operations and Standards-
Community Services
Danielle Slongo, Climate Action Specialist- Growth
Jacob Porter, Climate Adaptation Coordinator – Infrastructure &
Operations
Louisa Constanzo, Manager- Community Safety & Wellbeing-
Growth
Matthew Miedema, Director- Engineering – Infrastructure &
Operations
Gordon Stover, Committee & Meeting Management System
Coordinator

1. Quality of Life Standing Committee in the S.H. Blake Memorial Auditorium (Council Chambers) at 7:00 p.m.

Chair: Councillor Kristen Oliver

2. Land Acknowledgement

Councillor Shelby Ch'ng provided a land acknowledgement.

3. Disclosures of Interest

4. Confirmation of Agenda

MOVED BY: Councillor Shelby Ch'ng

SECONDED BY: Mayor Ken Boshcoff

WITH RESPECT to the Tuesday, February 10, 2026 Quality of Life Standing Committee meeting, we recommend that the agenda as printed, including any additional information and new business, be confirmed.

CARRIED

5. Presentations

5.1 Poverty Reduction Strategy

The Deputy City Clerk advised that the presentation has been withdrawn from the agenda and re-scheduled to the March 10, 2026 Quality of Life Standing Committee meeting.

5.2 Snowplow Status Map

Ian Spoljarich, Manager - Roads provided a PowerPoint presentation and responded to questions.

6. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Minutes of Quality of Life Standing Committee, held on Tuesday, January 27, 2026, for information.

7. Reports of Administration

7.1 Guiding Criteria for Designated Encampment Sites

Report 47-2026 - Growth-Strategy & Engagement seeking feedback from the Quality of Life Standing Committee on guiding criteria for identifying designated encampment sites, and to request support for proceeding with site identification and the next phase of consultation.

Rilee Willianen, Supervisor - Encampment Response provided a PowerPoint presentation and responded to questions.

Referral - Guiding Criteria for Designation Encampment Sites

MOVED BY: Councillor Andrew Foulds

SECONDED BY: Councillor Shelby Ch'ng

WITH RESPECT to Report 47-2026 - Growth - Strategy & Engagement, we recommend that the Report be referred back to Administration to include the feedback provided by the Quality of Life Standing Committee and to bring the Guiding Criteria for Designation Encampments directly to City Council for approval.

CARRIED

7.2 Declaring a Humanitarian Crisis on Homelessness – Quality of Life Standing Committee

Report 98-2026 - Growth- Strategy & Engagement requesting endorsement of Standing Committee to recommend that City Council declare homelessness a humanitarian crisis in the City of Thunder Bay was distributed separately on Friday, February 6, 2026.

MOVED BY: Councillor Shelby Ch'ng

SECONDED BY: Councillor Greg Johnsen

WITH RESPECT to Report 98-2026, we request endorsement of Standing Committee to forward the following recommendation to City Council:

WE RECOMMEND THAT City Council declare homelessness a humanitarian crisis in the City of Thunder Bay, recognizing the urgent risks to life, health, safety, and dignity for people experiencing homelessness; the disproportionate impacts on Indigenous peoples; and the broader implications for community safety and well-being;

AND THAT Administration be authorized to finalize and issue a joint declaration of humanitarian crisis related to homelessness with Anemki Wajiw (Fort William First Nation) and Nishnawbe Aski Nation;

AND THAT Administration report back twice yearly, to the Quality of Life Standing Committee on progress, impacts on community safety and well-being, and outcomes of intergovernmental and partner advocacy;

AND THAT any necessary by-laws be presented to City Council for ratification.

CARRIED

7.3 Transit Service Adjustments

Report 78-2026 - Community Services - Transit Services seeking endorsement from the Quality of Life Standing Committee to temporarily reduce transit service levels given staffing challenges to better manage passenger expectations, help provide a more consistent and predictable service, and achieve improved system reliability.

Correspondence received from Fred Caputo, President - ATU Local 966 Transit Workers on February 6, 2026 requesting to appear before Standing Committee was distributed separately on Friday, February 6, 2026.

Fred Caputo and Charlene Klassen, Executive Board Member – ATU Local 966 appeared before Committee and responded to questions.

MOVED BY: Councillor Shelby Ch'ng

SECONDED BY: Councillor Greg Johnsen

WITH RESPECT to Report 78-2026-Community Services-Transit Services, we request endorsement of the Quality of Life Standing Committee to forward the following recommendations to City Council:

WE RECOMMEND THAT Administration move forward with implementing temporary schedule changes across various conventional transit routes starting May 10, 2026;

AND THAT Administration monitor staffing levels and incrementally increase

conventional and specialized transit service levels over the summer and fall when and where feasible;

AND THAT any necessary by-laws be presented to City Council for ratification.

Referral - Transit Service Adjustments

MOVED BY: Councillor Greg Johnsen

SECONDED BY: Councillor Andrew Foulds

WITH RESPECT to Report 78-2026 - Community Services - Transit Services, we recommend that the Report be referred back to Administration to meet with ATU Local 966 officials to determine additional options to address route cancellations and staffing issues.

CARRIED

7.4 Net Zero Strategy Update 2023-2024

Report 32-2026- Growth- Strategy & Engagement providing an update on the third and fourth years of implementation of Climate-Forward City: Thunder Bay Net-Zero Strategy, for information only.

Danielle Slongo, Climate Action Specialist provided a PowerPoint presentation and responded to questions.

7.5 Climate Adaptation Update 2025

Report 43-2026 - Infrastructure & Operations - Engineering summarizing progress to date and identifies future focus areas to inform the renewal of the Climate Adaptation Strategy in 2026–2027, for information only was distributed Separately on Friday, February 6, 2026.

Jacob Porter, Climate Adaptation Coordinator provided a PowerPoint presentation and responded to questions.

9:30 P.M. Resolution

During discussion of the above noted item, the following resolution was passed:

MOVED BY: Councillor Shelby Ch'ng

SECONDED BY: Councillor Andrew Foulds

THAT the hour being 9:30 p.m. we continue with the business at hand.

CARRIED

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:31 P.M.

Standing Committee Report

REPORT NUMBER 065-2026-Growth-Strategy & Engagement

DATE

PREPARED February 10, 2026

FILE

STANDING

COMMITTEE March 10, 2026

MEETING DATE

SUBJECT CityStudio Pilot – Project Summary

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Standing Committee – Quality of Life with a final report and key learnings from the City Studio Thunder Bay (CS Thunder Bay) pilot project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CityStudio Thunder Bay (CS Thunder Bay) was launched in 2023 as a three-year community-campus engagement pilot delivered in partnership with the City of Thunder Bay, Lakehead University, Confederation College, and NOSM University. The pilot was supported through external funding and aligned with the City’s Community Safety and Well-Being priorities and advancing collaborative approaches to complex city and social challenges. The initial pilot funding concludes on March 31, 2026.

CS Thunder Bay connected municipal and community priorities with post-secondary teaching, learning, and applied projects through a structured model supported by shared governance and dedicated coordination. Activities included in-class projects, practicums, co-operative placements, independent studies, and applied research.

The pilot established foundational governance and coordination structures to support cross-institutional collaboration, including a multi-institutional Steering Committee, formal partnership agreements, and a dedicated CityStudio Coordinator embedded within the City to support project development, coordination, implementation, and alignment across partners.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Project Background

The City is working to build a healthier, more connected, and more equitable community through a coordinated, corporate-wide approach. The Strategy & Engagement Division supports this work, with leadership through Indigenous Relations, Community Safety and Well-Being, the Net-Zero Strategy, the Thunder Bay Drug Strategy, and Encampment Response. This work reflects a focus on longer-term, interconnected priorities that require inclusive and collaborative ways of working.

This collaborative approach is also consistent with the Smart Growth Action Plan's emphasis on readiness, talent development, and cross sector partnerships as foundational elements for sustainable growth.

To support this approach, the City partnered in a Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) funded initiative to pilot CS Thunder Bay, a project-based community-campus engagement model designed to connect municipal priorities with post-secondary teaching, learning, and research. CS Thunder Bay brought together students, faculty, City staff, and community partners to explore community priorities through a civic engagement and learning approach.

The pilot established a multi-institutional Steering Committee to support shared oversight, strategic direction, and decision-making. A dedicated CityStudio Coordinator role was embedded within the Corporation to support coordination, alignment, and continuity across partners. The CityStudio Coordinator was also a part of the CIHR Research Team.

CS Thunder Bay focused intentionally on establishing the foundational conditions required for effective cross-institutional collaboration. Rather than operating as a single program, the pilot emphasized governance, coordination, and shared processes to support sustained engagement across the City, post-secondary institutions, and community partners.

Clear and repeatable pathways were developed within each participating post-secondary institution to support outreach, project intake, and engagement. These pathways enabled consistent mechanisms for project matching, support, and delivery, helping to align academic timelines with municipal and community priorities.

CS Thunder Bay supported visibility and shared learning by showcasing applied projects through academic, community, and municipal forums, including Research and Innovation Week, Academic Showcase, the Northern Health Research Conference, and HUBBUB. A consistent communications presence was maintained through digital platforms and local media to support awareness and transparency.

Scale and reach

Over the pilot period, CS Thunder Bay supported a significant volume of applied, community-focused work across the City and its partners. Activities included a range of

project types, from in-class group work to independent studies, practicums, and applied research placements. Collectively, the pilot engaged post-secondary institutions, City departments, City staff, and community organizations at a scale that demonstrates both interest in and capacity for this model.

Over the pilot period, CityStudio Thunder Bay facilitated a range of applied learning and engagement activities across institutions, City departments, and community organizations. The following metrics provide a factual overview of the scale and reach of the pilot:

- Projects delivered: 172
- Students participating: 1,191
- Faculty engaged (unique): 27
- City departments engaged: 20
- City staff engagement touchpoints (including repeat participation): 87
- Community organization partners engaged (unique): 24

Projects included a range of formats, such as in-class group work, independent studies, practicums, co-operative placements, and applied research activities.

A more detailed summary of participation and activity metrics is provided as Attachment B to this report.

The CS Thunder Bay pilot identified several opportunities to strengthen civic engagement, collaboration, and community-campus partnerships in support of the City's long-term priorities, including:

- Strengthening cross-sector relationships and shared understanding by creating space for students, faculty, City staff, and community partners to work together on shared priorities
- Expanding meaningful civic engagement through applied learning that connects academic work with municipal and community priorities in practical and accessible ways
- Supporting workforce development and local talent retention – a key objective under the Smart Growth Action Plan's Talent Pillar - by providing students with exposure to municipal and community-based work and the development of transferable, career-ready skills
- Advancing Community Safety and Well-Being objectives by strengthening collaborative networks, civic participation, and applied learning related to complex social issues

Operational and system-level opportunities

The pilot identified several operational and system-level opportunities to support future refinement and sustainability. These include improving coordination across institutions through better alignment of academic calendars, timelines, systems, and expectations,

supported by shared planning tools and clearer participation pathways. The pilot also reinforced the value of dedicated coordination, with the embedded CityStudio Coordinator role supporting continuity, relationship management, and knowledge sharing across partners.

At the same time, institutional partnerships have continued to deepen. Formal Memorandums of Understanding have been established with Lakehead University, with a similar agreement approved by Council – but not yet signed - with Confederation College.

CS Thunder Bay also provides practical insight into how community-campus engagement can support implementation of the Smart Growth Action Plan. As an initiative situated within the Growth Department, the pilot offers relevant observations on how applied learning, coordination, and collaboration can contribute to integrated, growth-related objectives.

Smart Growth Alignment

Smart Growth priority	CS Thunder Bay contribution	Observations from the pilot
Institutional readiness	Governance structures, memoranda of understanding, and a dedicated coordination role	Effective cross-sector collaboration benefits from formal structures and clear coordination
Talent attraction and retention	Applied learning opportunities, co-operative placements, and practicums	Early exposure to local municipal and community work supports student interest in remaining in the region
Innovation and learning	Research-informed and applied projects	Collaboration highlights the importance of shared systems and information-sharing capacity
Community resilience	Projects aligned with Community Safety and Well-Being priorities	Collaborative, cross-sector approaches support more integrated responses
Inclusive growth	Engagement of students, newcomers, and community partners	Inclusive engagement approaches support belonging and civic participation

Strengthening information and knowledge infrastructure considerations include:

- Exploring the potential for a coordinated City data and knowledge hub to support cross-departmental planning, collaboration, and learning
- Clarifying and, where appropriate, developing information-sharing agreements, including data-sharing agreements, research collaboration agreements, and privacy/confidentiality and intellectual property protocols with post-secondary institutions and community partners

- Strengthening internal data governance, access, and stewardship practices to support consistent and responsible use of information across departments
- Supporting clearer processes for accessing, sharing, and using information to inform planning, engagement, and applied learning initiatives

Community Benefit

The CS Thunder Bay pilot demonstrates how community-campus engagement can function as a strategic learning investment for the City. Over the three-year pilot period, the City explored a new way of working that strengthened relationships, clarified governance and coordination requirements, and established conditions that support cross-institutional collaboration.

Beyond individual projects, the pilot resulted in foundational capacity now in place across the City and its partners, including established partnerships, agreements, processes, and institutional relationships. These elements provide a basis for considering how community-campus engagement could be more intentionally embedded within future planning and growth-related work.

As the City advances its Smart Growth priorities, CS Thunder Bay reflects a shift from project-based engagement toward longer-term capacity-building. This experience offers context for how learning, collaboration, and applied partnerships can support a more resilient and connected community.

Next Steps

CityStudio Thunder Bay is gaining strong traction as a collaborative hub connecting the City, post-secondary partners, and community organizations. With nearly 1,200 students involved in over 170 projects, the program is building meaningful relationships and demonstrating clear value to participating institutions.

Next steps include priorities such as planning for long-term sustainability beyond the CIHR grant, strengthening integration with post-secondary partners, expanding the network of community collaborators, and supporting ongoing research to measure impact.

CityStudio Thunder Bay is evolving into a broader civic-innovation platform, and the City's leadership as a convener and connector remains essential to sustaining and growing this model beyond the pilot phase.

CONSULTATION

Consultation for the CS Thunder Bay pilot occurred through the design and delivery of the community-campus engagement model itself. Engagement was integrated

throughout the pilot period through ongoing collaboration with internal City staff, post-secondary institutions, and community partners.

Internal consultation took place through coordination with City departments that participated in or supported CS Thunder Bay projects. This work was facilitated by the CityStudio Coordinator, who served as the primary point of connection between City staff, post-secondary institutions, and community partners. City staff were engaged in project scoping, implementation, and applied learning activities aligned with departmental and corporate priorities, including Community Safety and Well-Being.

External consultation occurred through partnerships with Lakehead University, Confederation College, and NOSM University, supported by regular coordination and shared governance through a multi-institutional Steering Committee. The CityStudio Coordinator supported these partnerships by facilitating communication, coordination, and alignment among post-secondary institutions, community organizations, and the City. Community organizations also participated in applied projects, contributing local knowledge and perspectives to support student learning and community-focused work.

Engagement with partners and participants was iterative and relationship-based, allowing for shared learning, refinement of processes, and alignment over time. Feedback and insights gathered through these interactions informed the ongoing development of the pilot and are reflected in the considerations outlined in this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications associated with this report, and no new funding approvals are being requested at this time. The CS Thunder Bay pilot was delivered through external funding and existing resources.

BACKGROUND

CityStudio Thunder Bay was enabled through a Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) - funded research initiative examining the impacts of community-campus engagement (CCE) on population health, with Thunder Bay and Ottawa serving as case study sites. The research supported the City in implementing the CityStudio pilot, while the pilot generated applied, real-world insights that informed both City practice and the broader research agenda.

The Coordinator supported project development, coordination, implementation, and alignment between the Corporation, post-secondary institutions, and community partners, and served as a member of the CIHR research team.

In March 2024, Report 83-2024 (City Manager's Office – Strategic Initiatives & Engagement) was presented, providing a brief overview of CityStudio and highlights from the first year of implementation, for information only.

REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED

Attachment A: Community Campus Engagement toward community safety and well-being: reflections on a three-year pilot project (research findings).

Attachment B: CityStudio Pilot Thunder Bay Highlights 2023 - 2026

REPORT PREPARED BY

Karen Kerk, CityStudio Coordinator, Strategy & Engagement, Growth

REPORT SIGNED AND VERIFIED BY

Kerri Marshall, Commissioner - Growth

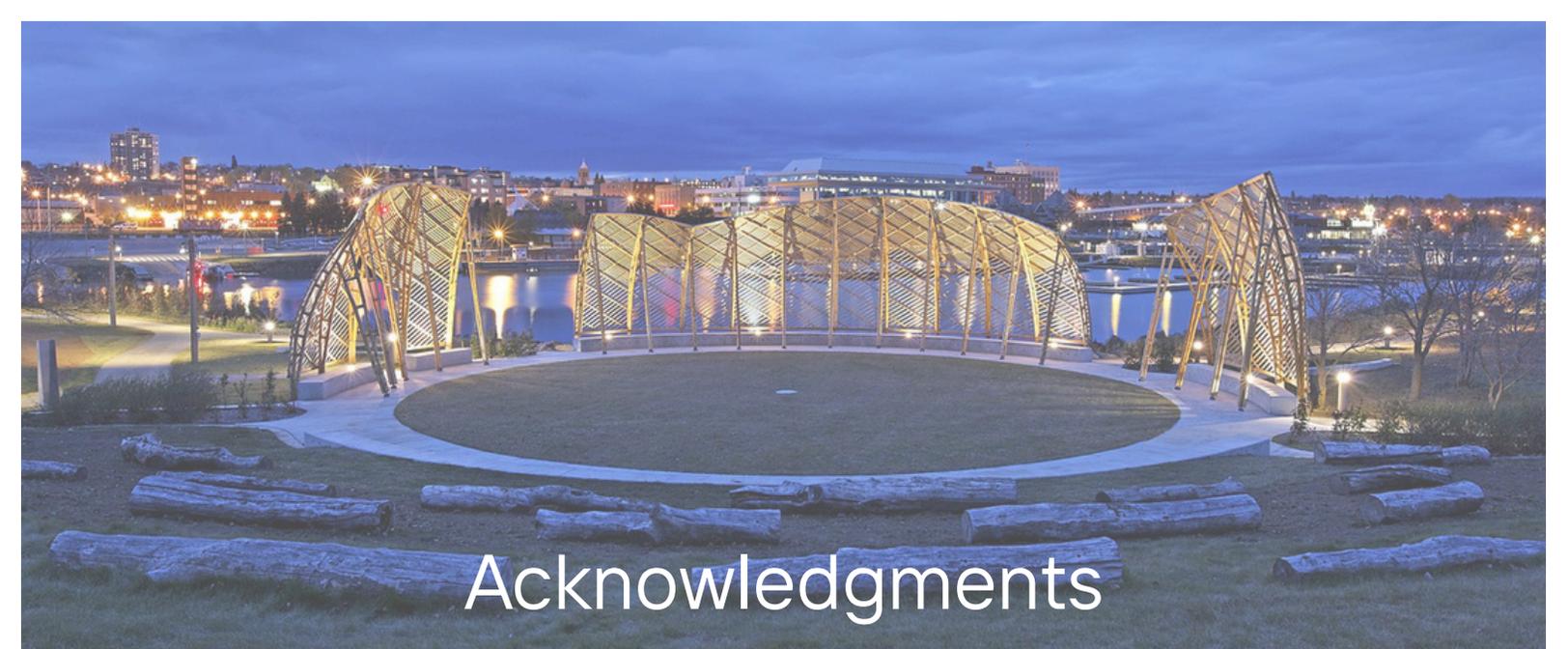
Date (03/10/2026)



Community-campus engagement toward community safety and well-being: Reflections on a three-year pilot project

A report prepared for the City of Thunder Bay
January 2026





Acknowledgments

Many of the community-oriented values and principles outlined in this report, including relationship, trust, reciprocity, collaboration, and repair, reflect Indigenous ways of knowing and being. The City of Thunder Bay, and the Thunder Bay-area campuses engaged in this research (NOSM University, Lakehead University, and Confederation College), are located on Anishinaabe land originally known as Anemki Wequedong, the traditional territory of the Fort William First Nation, Signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850. NOSM University's Greater Sudbury campus is located on the territory of Atikameksheng Anishnabek and Wahnapiuae First Nation. We recognize that Bruyère Health Research Institute and the University of Ottawa sit on the traditional, unceded territory of the Omamìwìnini Anishnàbeg (Algonquin) people. It is with the utmost respect and humility that we not only acknowledge the land on which these partnerships occur, but also the relationships between people, the Land, the Plants, the Water, and Mother Earth, and the teachings that they bestow.

This research centers, and is committed to community engagement, cross-institutional collaboration, reciprocal learning, and the creation and sharing of useful knowledge. We would like to extend a sincere thank you to the individuals and groups who have contributed to the research by providing key data and who have shaped this report through ongoing consultations and peer review, including our interview participants, city and community partners, and all the people who champion community-campus engagement such that this work is possible.

Author affiliations

Co-Principal Investigators:

Claire Kendall

Family Physician, Bruyère Health Academic
Family Medicine
Associate Dean of Social Accountability, The
University of Ottawa Faculty of Medicine

Erin Cameron

Professor, Human Sciences Division, Northern
Ontario School of Medicine University
Director, Dr. Gilles Arcand Centre for Health
Equity

Primary research team:

Chloe Chambers

MSc Candidate, The University of Ottawa
School of Epidemiology and Public Health

Katie Hemsworth

Research Associate, Dr. Gilles Arcand Centre
for Health Equity, Northern Ontario School of
Medicine University

Karen Kerk

CityStudio Coordinator,
The City of Thunder Bay

Sydney Persaud

Research Associate, Bruyère Health Research
Institute

Steering committee:

Erin Cameron

Professor, Human Sciences Division,
Northern Ontario School of Medicine
University
Director, Dr. Gilles Arcand Centre for
Health Equity

Karen Kerk

CityStudio Coordinator,
The City of Thunder Bay

Helle Møller

Associate Professor of Health Sciences,
Lakehead University

Robyn Gillespie

Manager of Applied Research and
Sustainability, Confederation College

Louisa Costanzo

Manager of Community Safety and Well-
Being, The City of Thunder Bay

Cynthia Olsen

Director of Strategy and Engagement,
The City of Thunder Bay

Report prepared by Chloe Chambers, Katie Hemsworth, and Karen Kerk



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Executive Summary

The City of Thunder Bay is committed to building a healthy, connected, and inclusive community through initiatives and strategies such as Thunder Bay Drug Strategy, Net-Zero Strategy, Indigenous Relations & Inclusion Strategy, and the Community Safety & Well-Being (CSWB) Plan, to address root causes of community issues and find long-term solutions. To support these initiatives, the City of Thunder Bay partnered on a Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)-funded initiative to pilot CityStudio Thunder Bay, a project-based model of community-campus engagement (CCE) that brings together the City, local higher education institutions, and community partner organizations to create innovative solutions to the City's priorities.

Through this CIHR-funded project, our research team conducted interviews and focus groups with 44 students, faculty, community partners, and municipal staff involved in CCE projects that addressed five shared CSWB priorities between the cities of Ottawa and Thunder Bay. We asked about their experiences participating in the projects, the engagement practices that occurred with partners and the community, and how final deliverables were shared back with the community.



This report provides an overview of key findings from these interviews, with illustrative examples of successes, challenges, and learnings, with several recommendations or “wise practices” to guide future collaborations.

Executive Summary

Here's what we learned about how participants perceived CCE's potential to address key City priorities:

1. CCE's collaborative nature facilitates the building of relationships, trust, empathy, and respect across historically siloed groups, ultimately increasing institutional and community capacity
2. CCE presents opportunities for civic engagement through integrated, transformative learning experiences
3. CCE builds career-ready skills and encourages local talent attraction and retention
4. CCE has the potential to contribute to health equity and community safety and well-being through increased capacity, civic engagement, and collaboration

Overall, we see that implementing a CCE model can support municipal and community-led initiatives to address local community and health priorities while also promoting career learning and skill development, civic engagement, and cross-organizational collaboration.

“It's all about connections, intersectoral collaboration, and overlapping circles.”
- Academic faculty

Introduction



Community-campus engagement, or CCE, is a term that describes collaborative partnerships between higher education institutions, municipalities, and communities in order to achieve or address a community-identified goal.^{1,2} CCE can take many forms, including community-based and participatory action research, community service learning, engaged scholarship, and co-education, all of which strive towards the collaborative creation of knowledge, capacity building, and action that benefits both community and campus partners, with an emphasis on addressing societal challenges.^{3,4}

CCE facilitates research- and data-informed decision-making at the local level, and engagement with community provides local context that helps tailor solutions and ensures that the knowledge is grounded in lived experience.^{2,4} Through CCE, higher education institutions can also practice social accountability by contributing to and prioritizing community-driven health research and education that addresses key social issues.^{5,6} CCE can support municipalities' health goals for cities and regions by driving community-oriented work and research by providing institutional resources and student perspectives on key health issues.^{1,2,7} For example, it has contributed to, and even exemplifies, the City of Thunder Bay's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, anchored in the principle of Maamawe ("All Together") and its goals of safety and well-being, growth, and sustainability.⁸

The CityStudio Thunder Bay Pilot



Since 2019, Ontario municipalities have been required to develop and implement CSWB Plans that identify local safety and well-being concerns and provide evidence-based solutions or initiatives that work toward addressing them.⁹

A project-based CCE model was implemented in Thunder Bay in 2023 as part of a larger CIHR-funded study that aimed to understand how CCE can help cities contribute to their local health and well-being goals and be a way through which higher education institutions can be accountable to their communities.¹⁰ The pilot brought together the City of Thunder Bay, Lakehead University, Confederation College, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) University, and other community partners to work towards five CSWB priorities that Thunder Bay shares with Ottawa: racism and discrimination, housing and homelessness, violence and gender-based violence, poverty, and mental health.^{11,12}

Our research team collected data through interviews and focus groups to answer the following questions:

1. How and to what extent could community-campus engagement contribute to improved population health outcomes in two distinct settings, Ottawa and Thunder Bay?
2. How is knowledge translated within CCE projects that address population health?

A full description of the research methods and additional information about the CityStudio model can be found in Appendices 1 and 2.

The CityStudio Thunder Bay Pilot



This work was undertaken not only to answer the research questions, but also to deepen collaborative relationships across institutions and sectors. To date, CityStudio Thunder Bay has completed:

172

PROJECTS WITH

1191

STUDENTS

53

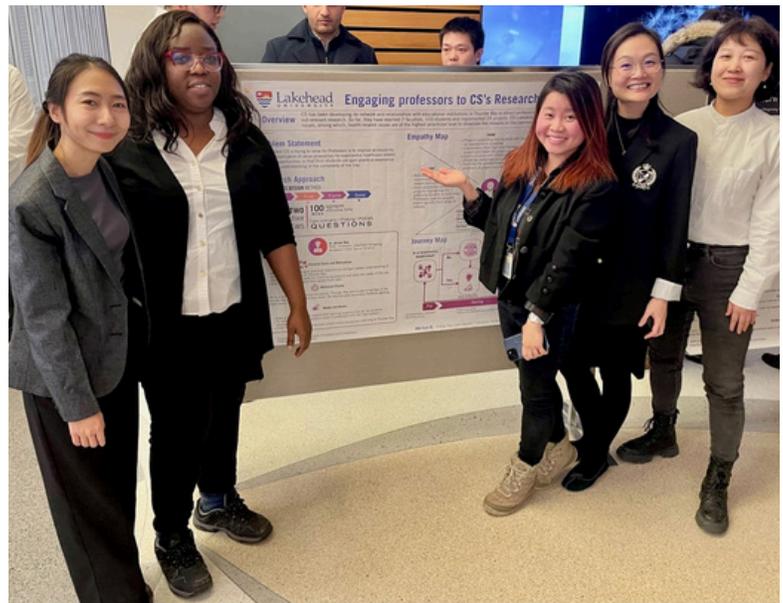
FACULTY

55

COMMUNITY
PARTNERS

87

CITY STAFF



The projects addressed a broad range of issues directly and indirectly supporting the CSWB priorities. For example, students worked to visualize the 2022 Voluntary Local Review of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, produced social media and video material for the Drug Awareness Committee's 'Data, Art, Action' event, and carried out heat-island mapping for the City's emergency management planning. A full list of the projects will be available on the City of Thunder Bay website.

In addition to the individual project impacts, larger-scale scaffolding has been put into place to support collaboration, including a multi-institutional steering committee and signed or pending Memorandums of Understanding between the City of Thunder Bay and higher education institutions.

Objectives

The goal of this report is twofold:

1. **To share back** with the City of Thunder Bay the results of our research on participants' experiences with CityStudio projects in Thunder Bay, and
2. **To support future decision-making** regarding CSWB policy and creating more sustainable and successful CCE pathways in Thunder Bay and beyond.



We present a selection of successes and standout stories, identified areas for improvement, and offered solutions guided by participants' own insights, which acknowledge the unique context of Thunder Bay and highlights the hard work that has been done by all partners and participants to make these partnerships happen. Importantly, the findings presented here are not meant to be universal; this report responds to requests from City and academic partners in relation to specific themes and therefore only captures a subset of the stories and experiences with CCE in Thunder Bay.

We strive to embody the themes of accountability and collaboration that have driven the research. This includes a commitment to maintaining good relationships with our partners through consultations, honoring contributions, and thoughtful knowledge sharing.

Findings

Participants agreed that these collaborative opportunities through CCE have benefits for students, faculty, the City, and the broader community, and that there is a desire to support continued partnerships.

Finding 1: CCE's collaborative nature facilitates the building of relationships, trust, empathy, and respect across historically siloed groups, ultimately increasing institutional and community capacity

- CCE generates spaces for deepened engagement, whether that is a physical space in a classroom or at a showcase, new relationships, or channels of communication
- Being part of CCE networks gives people the opportunity to learn about community health and well-being projects within and across institutions
- Interest in and mutual access to institutional knowledge and resources emerges – data, information, technology – which expands community-campus research capacity
- Good relationship-building practices are modelled by dedicated community connectors and put into practice in new and renewed relationships
- Student energy and ideas invigorate community partners and advance work that would otherwise not have been possible



“I always find [it] really interesting to see what other projects people are working on and presenting, and invariably I found, you know, there's crossover, ‘Oh, you know that project actually relates to what we do as well,’ and I didn't know that that was happening.”

- City partner

“I hope [the coordinator] position stays in place or evolves through time . . . it's a really important bridge and, I think, kind of understated or undervalued, how much time and effort that making those connections it requires and to keep them alive . . .”

- City partner



“. . . It was really excellent in many ways that this project was done, because it raised many of the issues that potentially otherwise would have not been addressed in terms of Indigenous connections and consultations.”

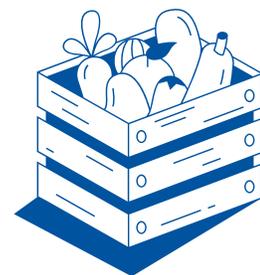
- Academic faculty



Finding 2: CCE presents opportunities for civic engagement through integrated, transformative learning experiences

- Engagement with City staff and community partners produces more civically engaged students who gain a deeper understanding of organizational processes and how to navigate them
- Higher education faculty become aware of their potential impact on community issues, which can contribute to professional development and transform their own community connections
- Students gain awareness of, and contribute to, community health and well-being priorities, how they are being addressed, and what resources are out there for others and themselves
- Projects allow for traditionally underrepresented voices (e.g., students, youth, newcomers to Canada) to be amplified in future planning of relevant policy
- All participants become better situated within their community – projects provide an opportunity for building a sense of place and belonging
- This increased civic engagement strengthens the community's long-term ability to solve issues collaboratively

“And not all students are youth, but a lot of the students we work with are youth. So it’s, again, connecting youth to government service providers, you know, people doing the work in the community.”
- City partner



“. . .as a student, I think it first really helped to uncover some of the answers on ‘what does Indigenized policy look like?’ or ‘what does anti-racism policy look like on the ground level?’ And then also being able to understand, like, what organizations can realistically say in an interview setting like this, and to a student or a research assistant coming in. And what do those conversations look like at the onset?” – Student

Finding 3: CCE builds career-ready skills and encourages talent attraction and retention

- Students build skills that they might use in future jobs and opportunities, from learning how to send a professional email to producing a research poster and presenting in front of an audience of important partners and community members
- Students get to apply learning from in the classroom to real-world scenarios, which helps them build confidence in their skills
- Newcomers to Thunder Bay are made aware of organizations, businesses, and institutions where they might be able to apply the skills and expertise they bring
- Engagement between students and City or community partners before students graduate can lead to future employment or volunteer opportunities
- Students build relationships with City and community partners and add to their professional networks within the city
- Community partners gain skills and self-efficacy through knowledge exchange with students and faculty that they bring to their workplace and future projects
- All CCE participants are better positioned to enter into or grow in community and career leadership roles

“[It was] awesome for my professional development. I got to kind of overcome some imposter syndrome that I had early in the field during my first assessment, and then by the last assessment I was rocking it solo.”

– Student

“That’s one of the things I love about working with some of the students is like they just see things are so easy . . . working with the students has been very good for my self-efficacy”

– Community partner



“. . . There’s a real growth initiative here in the city, like, ‘how do we make students stay?’ But you make students stay by showing them that there’s opportunity for the future.”

– City partner

Finding 4: CCE has the potential to contribute to health equity and community safety and well-being by strengthening research capacity, collaborative networks, and civic engagement

- New networks and improved channels of communication within and between institutions results in more opportunities for health-oriented collaboration
- Students build equity-oriented skills in language use, communication, and empathy, which they use in their future careers in health
- Individual participants and institutions alike gain insight into health systems, institutional processes and cultures, and governance
- International students learn about and contribute to the Canadian health system by bringing in global perspectives that deepen our understanding of health and community systems and view health issues in new ways
- Challenges faced within CCE projects provide insight into systemic issues to health equity and community safety and well-being that mirror larger health system issues (e.g., data collection and sharing)—this ultimately helps with future research and work to re-imagine community health spaces
- Scaffolding developed for CCE reduces the burden of preparatory work for future partnerships, which means it is quicker and easier to make real impacts in health systems and health equity

“I think it was an incredible learning opportunity, especially coming from my Master’s in Public Health. And we talk a lot about policy decisions and involving things on even an individual or community basis compared to much larger public health settings or population health settings. And I think it really set the example of what engagement within communities actually looks like . . . How do we do the background assessments? Who do we need to involve once decisions are made?” – Student



“There’s a lot of things that [my home country’s] health system can actually, I think, work well if they only tried to adapt it . . . But as of now, I’m very inclined to say that, although it’s not a perfect system, it’s also one that’s looking into the human side of things, because it’s very, very different than how people are treated in emergency rooms in [my home country].” – Student

Challenges and Opportunities for Growth



While the value of these collaborative projects is well-supported through our interview participants' feedback, this research has also highlighted some challenges to meaningful engagement and mobilization of knowledge. Identifying these challenges now, however, allows us to make recommendations on how to implement and strengthen future CCE activities and have a bigger community impact in the future.

With each challenge identified, we provide recommended "wise practices" to address them. These suggestions are based primarily on insights from our interview participants, refined with the advice of academic partners with expertise in building and sustaining community-campus partnerships. We present these recommendations with the recognition that funding at various levels is an ever-present barrier, along with a number of systemic factors, all which present challenges to implementing wise practices.



Challenge: Limited access to up-to-date data that represents Thunder Bay and Northern Ontario

- When no data were available, students turned to literature, or to data from other municipalities or even provinces, which does not always capture the unique health challenges of Thunder Bay
- Students, partners, and instructors often filled in gaps in this missing data through local knowledge

“ . . . They were looking at Public Health Ontario data, and they were comparing Thunder Bay rates to Ontario rates, and then they noticed that if they took the GTA out of the Ontario rates, it really changed things. And that’s a pretty common thing in small Northern communities, when we get sort of lumped together with Ontario, our results get really, really skewed, because we’re not Toronto. We’re nothing like Toronto, right? . . . They really had to play around with it to see what paints a more accurate picture, because comparing Thunder Bay to Ontario doesn't always paint the most accurate picture.” – Academic faculty

Wise practices:

This pilot has identified gaps in data collection and sharing in and around Thunder Bay across the municipal, post-secondary, health and community partners. While this is not a result of the pilot, it reflects broader systemic barriers to information sharing and multisector planning that are critical for shared understandings of local health and well-being trends. Before projects are underway, it is important to explore what data is available from the City of Thunder Bay, project partners, and publicly available municipal, provincial, and federal databases. A starting point for future collaboration may be the creation of Memoranda of Understanding or the commitment to expanding the existing open data portal for the City of Thunder Bay.

Beyond these projects, there is a need for greater health research capacity in Northern Ontario to collect, organize, and share data that is specific to the region. Partnerships and collaboration exist among institutions in Northern Ontario but strengthening research networks that bring together higher education institutions and local health organizations with the goal of conducting place-based research will be a critical step in ensuring there is data and data skills to respond to the unique context of the area.

Challenge: Misalignments between partners regarding logistics, timelines, software, communication, and expectations



- Academic timelines do not always align with City timelines – this means student work may not be done in time to be used towards a particular need
- Arranging in-class collaboration and presentations between multiple groups presents a barrier, and spaces of engagement are limited by transportation and geographic factors
- Instructors can find it challenging to meet the needs or requests of community and City partners while also ensuring student learning objectives are met
- Mismatched data and communication platforms (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Google, Webex, etc.) and varied institutional policies for those platforms are an ongoing challenge for collaborations

“But the university functions on a Google account, and you can't access that through the public health care's Internet network. So just issues like that, that you didn't even think was going to be a thing. . . ‘Oh, they can't even access the Google drive to upload this data that the students need to use to do this,’ so that causes just like. . . huge roadblocks when you're in like a 4 to 6 week project. That's a really quick turnaround.” – City partner

Wise practices:

Longer, multi-semester or multi-year projects allow for more flexibility with timelines, and a greater ability to collect and implement partner feedback into deliverables. Even if a project is limited to a single semester, establishing a timeline that builds in time for knowledge sharing and post-project follow-up is important. Expectations should be set collaboratively with project partners about engagement, deliverables, communication with students, and how information will be shared. Even actions that seem small can have a big impact, like providing an editable version of a final deliverable. For example, part of project collaboration scoping could include the consideration of communication and data sharing platforms to allow for more seamless collaboration and output sharing.

“I was really excited about the opportunity to do something that could have, like, a tangible outcome. . . . But, I remember really thinking during that period, like, this totally could have been a full-year course. We could have taken a few weeks to decide what the projects were, and . . . have a little bit more of an emphasis of co-creating what that means.” – Student

Challenge: A lack of capacity from project partners, faculty, and students can affect engagement and hinder knowledge sharing

- Participating in CCE projects requires additional time for planning, overseeing, and following up with project partners
- Instructors and project partners face unanticipated work synthesizing student deliverables into shareable packages of knowledge
- Understaffing or constant changing of staff can mean that deliverables handed off to City staff fall through the cracks
- There is a critical need for multiple facilitators to support these partnerships



“It was time and resource constraints, for sure, so [the community partner] essentially [has] one employee. And so there’s only so much we can ask that person beyond their regular day-to-day duties.” – Academic faculty

Wise practices:

It may be helpful to establish a clear goal of creating easily synthesizable outputs (language, formatting) from the outset and determine whose role it will be to do this work of passing deliverables along to decision-makers. Partners must allocate dedicated time to debrief, discuss, and incorporate useful knowledge and deliverables into their work or goals.

Participants reiterated that the role of a liaison is a critical piece to the functioning of these projects. There are several relational and practical tasks, such as scoping mutually beneficial projects, organizing an end-of-year showcasing, mediating challenges, and ensuring projects are wrapped up properly, responsibilities that fall outside the scope of City and community partner staff and faculty. However, this cannot be the role of one person alone, and community-campus partnerships would benefit from having both dedicated institutional resource coordinators and a dedicated City liaison if these roles do not already exist. Collaboration between these roles strengthens cross-institutional dialogue and responsiveness to challenges that arise.

“It’s beyond one person’s capacity to have a facilitator role for all the projects that are running. So there needs to be established some kind of connection that the City knows that there’s potentially a university or college person that is sort of a key person that they can turn to for connection making between faculty and organizations or the City . . . There needs to be folks in the different institutions that are part of it can take on that role or that should take on that role.” – Academic faculty



Challenge: Community voices remain underrepresented, particularly those who are most affected by the work

- Decisions on project topic, structure, and deliverables were often made by City partners and course instructors with limited direct community input
- This reflects a number of systemic challenges and barriers to meaningfully engaging community, including time and resource constraints, as well as ethical considerations

“ . . . And particularly around engaging the students in Indigenous-oriented projects as well, like a lot of them just have not had exposure or interactions with Indigenous people, and so for some of them, like, they do have some Indigenous content and exposure in their first year, but this is not something that is familiar to a lot of our students, so they may come around with very stereotypical ideas of Indigenous communities, Indigenous people, Indigenous values and needs . . . ”

– Academic faculty

Wise practices:

Engagement is an ongoing, dynamic process that takes time, and may require re-visiting engagement practices throughout or between projects. It must also be culturally appropriate and ensure that community practices and values are honored. Principles of harm reduction (careful consideration of language and respect, empowering voices of those with lived experience, acknowledgement of diverse backgrounds, etc.) are not only relevant to health but can be valuable as a guide for co-creation.

Students, including international students, are typically underrepresented groups that are being given a voice through these projects that can offer unique ways of engaging. Student-led engagement could be a good practice when properly supported by faculty and other partners, leading to enhanced professional skills and trust-building with the community. For example, students can play a role in initial scoping and project design or could take the lead on arranging engagement with community partners once an initial connection is established.

Previous recommendations that address time constraints, communication, and scoping challenges will contribute to addressing systemic- and capacity-related barriers to meaningful engagement with relevant and often under-served communities.



Conclusions and Implications

Our research findings suggest that CCE brought about positive relational and capacity-building benefits, and that participants perceived CCE to be an effective model for supporting municipal strategic goals for community health and well-being. For students, these projects impart skills, knowledge, and confidence that are applicable in future careers, but also as they become more engaged citizens. For project partners, these collaborations provide fresh ideas and perspectives, opportunities for parallel learning journeys, and new or deepened partnerships with faculty and instructors.

The networks that have been built through the CityStudio pilot and the lessons learned on how to make potential future projects more effective provide a strong foundation for continued collaboration between the City of Thunder Bay and local higher education institutions. It will be important to be responsive to the insight of our interview participants and employ recommendations when possible and relevant.

As the Community Safety and Well-Being plan is refreshed for 2026-2030, there is an opportunity for the City of Thunder Bay and its community and institutional partners to intentionally integrate CCE as a strategic tool, leveraging student learning journeys and faculty expertise to advance shared community safety and well-being priorities.

“ . . . We’ve always had a good relationship with the City, but I think in the last year I really feel a vibe, you know, a partnership, around health and well-being. . . We socialize and we work really closely in this community. So how do we focus more projects on that as an outcome, [on] health as an outcome, rather than just hopefully a collateral benefit of doing these things?”
– Academic faculty

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Detailed methods

2.1 Study design and setting

This report is one of several outputs from a larger research project that sought to understand the contributions of CCE on population health using theory-based evaluation methods.⁽¹⁰⁾ We developed a Theory of Change in consultation with CCE experts that maps how the engagement might contribute to the observed population health impacts, not to prove causal relationships, but reduce uncertainties about how collaborative projects can contribute to positive health system changes. The evidence collected through the interviews and focus groups discussed in this report provided evidence to validate the theory of change.

2.2 Data collection

Between June and September of 2025, we conducted 22 interviews and 10 focus groups with 44 individuals involved in CityStudio projects in Ottawa and Thunder Bay from 2023-2025. Participants included students and instructors from the five participating academic institutions (Algonquin College, Carleton University, Confederation College, Lakehead University, and The University of Ottawa), project partners from the City of Ottawa and Thunder Bay, and partners from various community organizations. We recruited participants purposively via email or in person, making use of existing relationships and networks from the inception and implementation of CityStudio in Ottawa and Thunder Bay. Students were recruited at Ottawa HUBBUB, the end-of-year public CityStudio showcase, or through their instructors. 2-3 members of the research team would conduct these interviews and focus groups using a semi-structured interview guide. Interviews typically lasted 60 minutes, and focus groups typically lasted 75-90 minutes. Participants were offered a \$25 gift card of their choosing as compensation for their time.

2.3 Data analysis

Transcripts were analyzed using a mix of inductive thematic analysis and deductive content analysis, with different aims; inductive analysis was used to pull themes relating to our broader research questions and deductive coding was used to supplement this exploration, identifying specific evidence of how CityStudio projects contributed to Thunder Bay's strategic goals for the city. Three members of the research team met regularly throughout the analysis process to discuss coding and memos, address any discrepancies, and to develop themes as they emerged. Interviews and focus groups were transcribed using Zoom (version 6.6.0) transcription software and cleaned by members of the research team, and qualitative coding was done using ATLAS.ti (version 25.0.1).

2.4 Ethics

This study was approved by the research ethics boards of the Bruyère Health Research Institute (Study # M16-23-009), and all participating higher education institutions.

Appendix 2: The CityStudio Model

[CityStudio](#) is a transferable, non-profit model of project-oriented community-campus engagement that builds trust-based relationships between students, city staff, faculty, community and partners. It aims to innovate with the ways in which cities are co-created to become healthier communities and to assist community stakeholders to improve their neighborhoods.

The process starts with consultations to identify municipal priorities and needs, then CityStudio matches city and community partners with faculty and students to harness institutional resources and student energy to innovate solutions. CityStudio projects typically span an academic semester, where students gain hands-on experience with projects that are relevant to them or their communities and have the opportunity to present their work to broader public audiences through end-of-year showcase.

CityStudio Thunder Bay: Highlights & Impact Report (2023 – 2026)

Introduction

CityStudio Thunder Bay is a collaborative initiative that brings together students, faculty, and community partners to co-create solutions to real-world civic challenges. Through applied learning projects, students gain hands-on experience while contributing tangible value to the City of Thunder Bay and its constituents.

This report documents the implementation, progress, and outcomes of the three-year CityStudio Thunder Bay pilot (Summer 2023–Winter 2026), with a particular focus on the contributions and successes of each participating post-secondary institution. It is intended to provide an overview of how the CityStudio model was operationalized in Thunder Bay and the impacts generated through teaching, learning, and community collaboration.

The CityStudio Thunder Bay pilot was supported by a Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) grant examining the impacts of community-campus engagement on population health. Findings from that research are presented separately in the companion report, *Community-campus engagement toward community safety and well-being: Reflections on a three-year pilot project*. This report focuses specifically on the pilot’s delivery and outcomes rather than the research findings.

About the CityStudio Thunder Bay Pilot

Launched in 2023, CityStudio Thunder Bay is a three-year pilot initiative (2023–2026) delivered in partnership with the City of Thunder Bay (COTB), Lakehead University (LU), Confederation College (CC), and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine University (NOSMU). The initiative supports the City of Thunder Bay’s Community Safety and Well-Being Plan through collaboration with post-secondary institutions and community partners.

While the pilot contributed to a broader research agenda, it also enabled local partners to develop and refine a locally adapted CityStudio model. Governance was provided through a multi-institutional Steering Committee, with day-to-day coordination led by a dedicated CityStudio Coordinator who supported collaboration, project implementation, and alignment across partners.

Key Achievements (2023–2026)

- Established formal collaboration among all partner institutions
- Created a multi-institutional Steering Committee to guide governance and strategy
- Formalized a Memorandum of Understanding with Lakehead University, with a similar agreement underway with Confederation College.
- Developed clear outreach and engagement pathways within each institution
- Successfully matched, supported, and showcased projects at key events, including Research & Innovation Week (LU), Academic Showcase (CC), the Northern Health Research Conference (NOSMU) and HUBBUB (City of Ottawa)
- Built a consistent marketing and communications presence across LinkedIn, the City’s website, and local media

Impact Metrics

THUNDER BAY



Value & Benefits

CityStudio Thunder Bay delivers wide-ranging benefits to students, faculty, and the broader community:

Transformative Learning Experiences

- Students tackle real-world civic challenges through hands-on, experiential learning and applied projects.
- Learning goes beyond the classroom—building confidence, creativity, communication and problem-solving skills.

Talent Attraction & Retention

- Projects showcase the diverse opportunities available in Thunder Bay, helping to retain student talent.
- Helps students connect with the community, fostering a sense of belonging and encouraging them to stay and grow in Thunder Bay.
- Students build meaningful networks with local employers, faculty, and community leaders—opening doors to future careers.
- Provides newcomer students with opportunities to engage with the community, encouraging them to stay and grow in Thunder Bay.

Career-Ready Skills & Opportunities

- Expands access to co-ops, internships, and placements within the COTB and community organizations.
- Enhances employability by giving students practical experience and a competitive edge in the job market.

Collaborative Research & Innovation

- Emphasizes the need for comprehensive Memorandums of Understanding, including data sharing agreements for cross-institutional partnerships.
- Strengthens local research partnerships with the COTB and community partners.
- Fosters cross-institutional research and project collaborations.
- Supports evidence-based solutions to community challenges.

Civic Engagement & Awareness

- Students engage directly with civic issues, gaining insight into local governance and community needs.
- Builds a generation of informed, engaged citizens.

Community Capacity Building

- Provides local organizations with fresh ideas, research, and student energy to tackle pressing issues.
- Encourages cross-sector collaboration, leading to stronger, more resilient community initiatives.

Confederation College's Engagement

Confederation's involvement with CityStudio Thunder Bay is led by Robyn Gillespie (Manager, Applied Research & Sustainability) and supported by the Office of Applied Research & Innovation (Dr. Tim Larocque). CityStudio has built strong connections across multiple faculties, including:

- Business and International Business
- Health Informatics
- Health Administration & Leadership
- Digital Marketing and Media Arts
- Natural Resources
- Social Service Worker

Confederation College-Specific Metrics:

- **Projects:** 63 unique projects and 60 solutions provided*
- **Students Engaged:** 656
- **Faculty Involved:** 13
- **City Departments Engaged:** 14
- **City Staff Project Leads:** 29
- **Community Partners:** 11

Highlighted Projects

1. Marketing and Communications Strategies

- **Lead:** Kristina Baraskewic, Business Marketing Program Coordinator
- **Partners:** City of Thunder Bay
- **Focus:** Create communication strategies and marketing materials to support COTB initiatives such as Youth Engagement in the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, Quest Tech and Gaming Event, Anti-Idling Campaign, Youth Voting, 72-Hour Emergency Kits, Boulevard Gardens, The Key and the Thunder Bay Drug Strategy

2. Heat Island Mapping

- **Lead:** Sandra Stiles, Environmental Technician Program Coordinator
- **Partners:** City of Thunder Bay Climate Adaptation and Emergency Management
- **Focus:** Mapping 200+ locations across the City to identify 'heat islands' and use this information for civic and emergency planning

3. Community Indicator Framework (CIF)

- **Lead:** Gustavo Petterle, Health Informatics Instructor/PhD Candidate, Health Sciences, Lakehead University. Supported by Christina Foresto, Health Informatics.
- **Partners:** Confederation College, City of Thunder Bay, Thunder Bay District Health Unit, Lakehead University
- **Focus:** Data-informed decision-making to address community social, health and well-being challenges

*see summary of projects attached

Lakehead University Engagement

Lakehead's involvement with CityStudio Thunder Bay is led by Dr. Helle Moller (Department of Health Sciences) and supported by the Office of Research Services. CityStudio has built strong connections across multiple faculties, including:

- Business
- Health Sciences
- Geography
- Outdoor Recreation
- Natural Resources Management
- Social Work
- Kinesiology
- Engineering

Lakehead University-Specific Metrics:

- **Projects:** 101*
- **Students Engaged:** 524
- **Faculty Involved:** 12
- **City Departments Engaged:** 15
- **City Staff Project Leads:** 55
- **Community Partners:** 11+

Highlighted Projects

1. National Urban Park Pre-Feasibility Study

- **Lead:** President Gillian Siddall & Chief Michele Solomon
- **Support:** MP Marcus Powlowski, MPP Kevin Holland
- **Faculties Involved:** Business, Outdoor Recreation, Geography, Natural Resources Management, Law (+ external partners)
- **Focus:** National Urban Park Site Pre-Feasibility Exploration, ongoing since May 2024

2. Community Safety & Well-Being – Equitable Engagement & Data Synthesis

- **Leads:** Dr. Tim Hardie, Faculty of Business and Dr. Helle Moller, Department of Health Sciences
- **Partners:** COTB Community Safety & Well-Being, Growth Department
- **Focus:** Strategies to encourage equitable community engagement and synthesize engagement data contributing to a stronger CSWB Plan

3. Ergonomics/Safe Lifting City of Thunder Bay

- **Lead:** Dr. Kathryn Sinden, Kinesiology
- **Partners:** COTB Human Resources
- **Focus:** Assessment of COTB employee injury data and the creation of department-specific ergonomics exercises to reduce future injuries.

*see summary of projects attached

NOSMU Involvement

Dr. Erin Cameron serves as the Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) on the CIHR grant and is the Steering Committee Representative from the Northern Ontario School of Medicine University (NOSMU). Given the demanding curriculum and timetable of medical school, CityStudio's involvement with NOSMU has primarily focused on the research aspects of the CIHR grant. Towards the end of the pilot, a few CityStudio project/training opportunities were identified for incorporation into future learning/professional development opportunities.

Additionally, CityStudio supports the Compass North Student-Led Health Promotion Clinic, which partners with the City and a range of community organizations to deliver workshops and clinics on vital health topics such as diabetes, blood pressure management, relationship and sexual health, and more. Through these collaborations, Compass North has engaged with partners including the 55+ Centre, the Canada Games Complex, Faye Peterson House, and Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School, among others, to promote community well-being and accessible health education.

Next Steps

CityStudio Thunder Bay has demonstrated strong early success in fostering meaningful collaboration between post-secondary institutions, the COTB, and community partners. With over 172 projects and nearly 1200 students engaged, the initiative is building a foundation for long-term impact in Thunder Bay.

Our efforts are now focused on:

- **Sustainability Planning:** Exploring options to embed the CityStudio model in Thunder Bay beyond the CIHR grant period (post-March 2026)
- **Institutional Integration:** Deepening connections with each post-secondary institution and expanding faculty engagement
- **Strategic Growth:** Identifying new civic challenges and community partners for future collaboration
- **Impact Evaluation:** Continue supporting CIHR and other institutional research to assess long-term outcomes on population health and community well-being

CityStudio Thunder Bay is more than a pilot—it's a growing movement for civic innovation and student success. The City of Thunder Bay remains a key partner in this initiative, and its continued leadership and collaboration will be instrumental in sustaining and expanding the community-campus engagement model beyond the pilot phase.

Contact:

Karen Kerk, CityStudio Coordinator, Growth, City of Thunder Bay
Karen.Kerk@thunderbay.ca 807.631.4997

Cynthia Olsen, Director, Strategy & Engagement, Growth, City of Thunder Bay
Cynthia.Olsen@thunderbay.ca 807.625.3859

CityStudio Thunder Bay Confederation College Projects

Year	Term	Department	Faculty	Project Title	Community Partner	Student Experience
2023	Summer	Advanced Manufacturing	Greg Gagnon	Reverse Engineer of SeaBin Impeller	COTB - Climate Specialist	Applied Research
2023	Fall	Forestry	Keith Hautala	Mapping Tree Canopy Cover within the City of Thunder Bay	COTB - Forestry	Experiential Learning
2023	Fall	Forestry	Keith Hautala	GIS Mapping the CTB Waterfront Trail Accessibility	COTB - Parks	Experiential Learning
2023	Fall	Forestry	Keith Hautala	GIS Mapping of the Fire Response Time in the Greater Thunder Bay Region.	COTB - Emergency Management	Experiential Learning
2023	Fall	Business	Harold Wilson	Team Advertising & Promotion Campaign Plan for the Thunder Bay Country Market, Thunder Bay + Area Food Strategy, and Diversity Thunder Bay	Thunder Bay Food Strategy Thunder Bay Country Market Diversity Thunder Bay	Experiential Learning
2023	Fall	Health Informatics	Christina Foresto	Prototype Conceptualization for the Development of a Diabetic Foot Care Screening Tool	St. Joseph's Care Group	Experiential Learning
2023	Fall	Health Informatics	Christina Foresto	Wound Triage Algorithm Optimization Prototype Conceptualization	St. Joseph's Care Group	Experiential Learning
2024	Winter	Applied Research	Raquel Glavish	Applied Research Pedestrian Crossover Project with the City of Thunder Bay's Engineering Department	COTB - Engineering	Applied Research
2024	Winter	Social Service Worker	Shawn Untinen	Community Safety & Well-Being Priority Area Community Solutions	COTB - Community Safety and Well-Being	Experiential Learning
2024	Winter	Digital Marketing	Erin Oner	Marketing Capstone: Lakehead Social Planning Council's Free Low-Income Tax Clinics	Lakehead Social Planning Council	Experiential Learning
2024	Winter	Digital Marketing	Erin Oner	Marketing & Communications Strategy: Community Food System Report Card	Thunder Bay Food Strategy	Experiential Learning
2024	Winter	Digital Marketing	Erin Oner	Psychographics for the Thunder Bay Country Market	Thunder Bay Country Market	Experiential Learning

2024	Winter	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewich	Marketing & Communications Strategy for the City of Thunder Bay's Quest Tech & Gaming Event	COTB - Recreation	Experiential Learning
2024	Winter	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewich	Marketing & Communications Strategy for the City of Thunder Bay's Anti-Idling Campaign	COTB - Climate Specialist	Experiential Learning
2024	Winter	Health Informatics	Christina Foresto	Voluntary Local Review Situational Analysis, Data Update & Visualizations	COTB - Recreation	Experiential Learning
2024	Winter	Health Informatics	Christina Foresto	Healthcare for Newcomers	COTB and Confederation College	Experiential Learning
2024	Summer	Applied Research	Sandra Stiles	Heat Island Mapping for the City of Thunder Bay's Emergency Management Planning	COTB - Climate Adaptation	Applied Research
2024	Fall	Environmental Technician	Sandra Stiles	Williams Bog Environmental Mapping	COTB - Climate Adaptation and Emergency Management	Experiential Learning
2024	Fall	Forestry	Keith Hautala	Mapping the City of Thunder Bay's Tree Replanting Priority Areas	COTB - Forestry	Experiential Learning
2024	Fall	Forestry	Keith Hautala	Neighbourhood Assessment Mapping	COTB - Recreation	Experiential Learning
2024	Fall	Health Informatics	Christina Foresto	Visualizing the 2022 Voluntary Local Review of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals	COTB - Community Safety and Well-Being	Experiential Learning
2024	Fall	Health Admin & Leadership	Amy Gosselin	Situational Analyses and Proposed Solutions for Recent Substance Use Societal Trends	Thunder Bay Drug Strategy	Experiential Learning
2024	Winter	Advanced Manufacturing	Greg Gagnon	Lockout Device for Transit Buses	COTB - Transit	Applied Research
2025	Winter	Health Admin & leadership	Amy Gosselin	Recent Substance Use Policy Changes & Community Impacts	Thunder Bay Drug Strategy	Experiential Learning
2025	Winter	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewich	Youth Voting - Marketing & Communications Strategy	COTB - Clerks	Experiential Learning
2025	Winter	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewich	72 Hour Emergency Kits - Marketing & Communications Strategy	COTB - Emergency Management	Experiential Learning

2025	Winter	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewich	Lakehead Social Planning Council Living Wage Campaign - Marketing & Communications Strategy	Lakehead Social Planning Council	Experiential Learning
2025	Winter	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewich	New Boulevard Gardens By-Law - Marketing & Communications Strategy	COTB - Climate Specialist	Experiential Learning
2025	Winter	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewich	CityStudio Testimonials & Promotional Material - Marketing & Communications Strategy	CityStudio	Experiential Learning
2025	Winter	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewich	Anti-Idling - City of Thunder Bay Fleet - Marketing & Communications Strategy	COTB - Climate Specialist	Experiential Learning
2025	Winter	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewich	Thunder Bay Drug Strategy Re-Brand - Marketing & Communications Strategy	Thunder Bay Drug Strategy	Experiential Learning
2025	Winter	International Business Management	Brett Sharman	Temporary Housing Village: Stakeholder Map	COTB - Community Safety and Wellbeing, Encampments	Experiential Learning
2025	Winter	Digital Marketing	Kevin Element	Temporary Housing Village: Capstone Marketing & Communications Strategy	COTB - Community Safety and Wellbeing, Encampments	Experiential Learning
2025	Winter	Health Informatics	Gustavo Petterle	Community Indicator Framework - Data Updates, Report Linking to Community Safety & Well-Being Plan and Future Voluntary Local Review	Thunder Bay District Health Unit Lakehead University COTB - Community Safety and Well-Being	Experiential Learning
2025	Winter	Health Informatics	Christina Foresto	Health Care Access & Mental Health Impacts for International Students	COTB and Confederation College	Experiential Learning
2025	Summer	Digital Marketing	Paul Sarkissian	Marketing Capstone: Thunder Bay District Health Unit Childhood Vaccination Records	Thunder Bay District Health Unit	Experiential Learning
2025	Summer	Digital Marketing	Paul Sarkissian	Marketing Capstone: Thunderbird Wildlife Rescue	Thunderbird Wildlife Rescue	Experiential Learning
2025	Summer	Digital Marketing	Student	Overdose Awareness Day Aug 27th: Drug Awareness Committee 'Data, Art, Action' event planning, social media and video	Thunder Bay Drug Strategy: Drug Awareness Committee	Experiential Learning
2025	Summer	Advanced Manufacturing	Greg Gagnon	Cover Device for Transit Buses	COTB - Transit	Applied Research

2025	Fall	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewic	Social Media Marketing Campaign Strategy and Content for “The Key” Recreation Guide	COTB - Recreation	Experiential Learning
2025	Fall	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewic	CSWB Plan Confederation College Student Market Research	COTB – CSWB	Experiential Learning
2025	Fall	Health Informatics	Christina Foresto	CSWB Data Indicators	COTB – CSWB	Experiential Learning
2026	Winter	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewic	Field Placement – CSWB Student Engagement	COTB - CSWB	Experiential Learning
2026	Winter	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewic	Field Placement – COTB Transit Safety	COTB – Transit	Experiential Learning
2026	Winter	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewic	IMC Campaign – Age Friendly Thunder Bay	Age Friendly Thunder Bay	Experiential Learning
2026	Winter	Digital Marketing	Kristina Baraskewic	For the Love of Pizza Fundraising Event	Our Kids Count	Experiential Learning
2026	Winter	Health Informatics	Christina Foresto	CSWB Data Visualization	COTB – CSWB	Experiential Learning
2026	Winter	Business	Erin Oner	Psychographics Reports for the Thunder Bay Museum and COTB Recreation and Culture	COTB – Recreation and Thunder Bay Museum	Experiential Learning

CityStudio Thunder Bay Lakehead University

Year	Term	Department	Faculty	Project Title	Level
2023	Summer	Health Sciences	Dr. Helle Moeller	Anti-Racism & Inclusion Accord (ARIA) State of the Accord: Initial Review & Best Practices	MPH
2023	Summer	Health Sciences	Dr. Helle Moeller	Health Equity Impact Assessment of a Proposed Healing Path	MPH
2023	Fall	Ingenuity/ Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	"Hack It" Lakehead : How can the City of Thunder Bay communicate and engage with young adults in Thunder Bay?	3 rd Year
2023	Fall	Health Sciences	Dr. Helle Moeller	Upstream Interventions to Prevent Tobacco Use in Northwestern Ontario Youth	MPH
2023	Fall	Health Sciences	Dr. Helle Moeller	What upstream approaches can reduce anti-Indigenous systemic discrimination and racism in Thunder Bay, Ontario?	MPH
2023	Fall	Health Sciences	Dr. Helle Moeller	What are upstream approaches to reduce suicide ideation, attempts and death among LGBTQ+ youth between the ages of sixteen and 24?	MPH
2023	Fall	Health Sciences	Dr. Helle Moeller	What are upstream approaches addressing systemic racism toward Indigenous peoples accessing health care services in Canada?	MPH
2023	Fall	Health Sciences	Dr. Helle Moeller	What are successful upstream approaches to ensuring equity in access for culturally safe perinatal care for remote Indigenous people living in Canada?	MPH
2023	Fall	Health Sciences	Dr. Helle Moeller	What upstream approaches can improve equity in access to quality palliative care in place of choice for rural Canadians?	MPH
2023	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Exploring the Future of the Remedial Action Plan (RAP)	4 th Year
2023	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	The Five-Year Strategy for the Native Plant Propagation with LRCA and City Conservatory Partnership	4 th Year
2023	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	City + Soil Quality Management-City of Thunder Bay	4 th Year
2023	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	The Conservatory as an Education Hub	4 th Year
2023	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Partnership Development Strategy: CTB & LRCA	4 th Year
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	David Thompson Astronomical Observatory - Future Directions	4 th Year
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Waterfront Trail - Economic and Other Opportunities	4 th Year
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Prince Arthur's Landing	4 th Year
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Winter Experiences - Thunder Bay	4 th Year
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Mission and McKellar Islands	4 th Year
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Kam River Corridor	4 th Year
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Strong Mayors / Bill 3 – Implications for the Future	4 th Year

2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Innovative Ideas for Revenue Generation	4 th Year
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	EMS Community Paramedicine	4 th Year
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Older Adult Opportunities	4 th Year
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Masters Thesis: SmartCities Master's Project	MSc
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Professor engagement with CityStudio @ LU - digital pathway	MBA
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Can we help patients with lymphedema via a self management program?	MBA
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Open Data Platform for Ontario Health - user research report	MBA
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Air Ambulance Tracker- User Research Report	MBA
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Personalized Education Management for Physicians - User Research Report	MBA
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Mental Health Remote Monitoring - User Research Report	MBA
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Privacy Accelerator for Digital Health - User Research Report	MBA
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Evacuations - User Research Report	MBA
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Surgery Dashboard - user research report	MBA
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Artificial Intelligence Education for Community Medical Education/Physicians - User Research Report	MBA
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Assisting Change Management Champions during EMR Changes - User Research Report	MBA
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Public Health Open Data Dashboard - User Research Report	MBA
2024	Winter	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Strategic Planning for Healthcare Organizations - User Research Report	MBA
2024	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Tree Canopy – Benefits + Business Case for Increasing the Tree Canopy in Thunder Bay as part of a National Urban Park application	MBA
2024	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Cultural Heritage + NUP – Unlocking the Heritage Value of a Thunder Bay National Urban Park	MBA
2024	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	“Process for National Urban Park Designation: Activities, Outcomes, and Deliverables” Parks Canada model applied to Thunder Bay + Lessons from Rouge National Urban Park	MBA
2024	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Indigenous Partnership + Stewardship Approaches Applied to Thunder Bay’s National Urban Park Application	MBA
2024	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Applying the Benefits of a National Urban Park to the World Health Organization (WHO) Social Determinants of Health	MBA
2024	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Economic Benefits (linked to Poverty Reduction) [part of the of a National Urban Park World Health Organization (WHO) Social Determinants of Health]	MBA

2024	Spring	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Health Equity Dashboard - User Research Report	MBA
2024	Spring	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Opioid Surveillance Dashboard - User Research Report	MBA
2024	Spring	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Staff connectivity with various working arrangements, etc. - user research report	MBA
2024	Spring	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Strategic Plan Implementation in Health Care - User Research Report	MBA
2024	Spring	Education	Dr. Tram-Anh Bui	Navigating Career Paths: Exploring International MEd Students' Experience in Northwestern Ontario	research
2024	Spring	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Dashboard - Waitlist Management - User Research Report	MBA
2024	Fall	Outdoor Recreation	Dr. Julie Rosenthal	To offer examples for consideration for the design and development of a potential National Urban Park in Thunder Bay.	3 rd Year
2024	Fall	Outdoor Recreation	Dr. Julie Rosenthal	Youth Outdoor Recreation Programming, Trialing and Evaluation (after school care program)	3 rd Year
2024	Fall	Health Sciences	Dr. Samuel Essien	Community Indicator Framework	PhD
2024	Fall	Kinesiology	Dr. Kathryn Sinden	Ergonomics/Safe Lifting for COTB	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business	Dr. Joel Mohr	Local Food Branding Strategy	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business	Dr. Joel Mohr	Marketing Communications Vaccination Campaign	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Benchmarking CSWB Plan Development & Community Consultation	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Campgrounds - Increasing the Value Proposition	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Community Paramedicine & Primary Care Providers	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Waterfront BIA & Prince Arthur's Landing Development	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Science/Educational Hub: Conservatory & Observatory	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Older Adult Issues	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Tourism Shoulder Seasons	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Newcomer Retention: LU & CC International	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	NUP & Mission & McKellar Islands	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Population Funding Models	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Thunder Bay Police Service & HR recruitment	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Outdoor Rec Project - Governance models for a NUP	4 th Year
2024	Fall	Business & Education	Dr. Tim Hardie, Mike Filipetti	Education Student Placement - The Conservatory as an Educational Hub - Curriculum Development	4 th Year
2025	Winter	Geography	Dr. Rob Stewart	COTB Neighbourhood Assessment - Environmental Considerations StoryMap	4 th Year
2025	Winter	Geography	Dr. Rob Stewart	Supporting the New COTB Boulevard Gardens ByLaw - StoryMap	4 th Year
2025	Winter	Outdoor Rec	Dr. Harvey Lemelin	Recreational Opportunities at Trowbridge Falls	3 rd Year

2025	Winter	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Benchmarking how other cities use AI to optimize performance and to help inform the development of COTB's AI Strategy	3 rd Year
2025	Winter	Social Work	Placement	BSW student on placement with the Youth Family Support Program	4 th Year
2025	Spring	Business	Dr. Mike Dohan	Project Management Proposals: Baggage Arts, Event Funding, Icelandic Prevention Model	MBA
2025	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Green Development Standards and Building Codes	MBA
2025	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	COTB Recreational Costing for Non-Residents	MBA
2025	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Stakeholder Engagement Strategy Community Safety & Well-Being	MBA
2025	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Fort William Historical Park Tourism Regional Economic Impact Model	MBA
2025	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Community Improvement Plan	MBA
2025	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	National Urban Park Model for Thunder Bay	MBA
2025	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Centennial Conservatory Return on Investments	MBA
2025	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Downtown Fort William Revitalization & Engagement Strategy	MBA
2025	Spring	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	COTB Parks Master Plan	MBA
2025	Fall	Engineering	Dr. Juan Pernia	Household Travel Survey	PhD
2025	Fall	Health Sciences	Dr. Helle Hoeller	CSWB Action Tables Reimagined	MPH
2025	Fall	Marketing	Dr. Joel Mohr	Brand Marketing and the Thunder Bay Public Library	4 th Year
2025	Fall	Marketing	Dr. Joel Mohr	Marketing Communications & PRO Kids	4 th Year
2025	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Conservatory as Science / Education Hub	4 th Year
2025	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Conservatory + Educational Technology	4 th Year
2025	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Connectivity in the Thunder Bay Area	4 th Year
2025	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Increasing the Senior-Friendliness of Thunder Bay	4 th Year
2025	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	AI + City Operations	4 th Year
2025	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Green Development Standards for the City of Thunder Bay	4 th Year
2025	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	Sustainable Building Network	4 th Year
2025	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	National Urban Park	4 th Year
2025	Fall	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	2026 – 2030 CSWB Plan: Lakehead Student Market Research	4 th Year
2026	Winter	Health Sciences	Dr. Peter Brink	CSWB Data Engagement Report	MSc
2026	Winter	Business	Dr. Tim Hardie	4 th Year Capstone Projects – Continue	4 th Year