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Investing in Veterinary Capacity for Thunder Bay and Region

About the CEDC

The CEDC is responsible for business development, retention and expansion, entrepreneurial support, opportunity promotion, and collection and assessment of key business data and tourism. Incorporated in December 2006 and Tourism merging within the CEDC in 2018, the CEDC is a not-for-profit Ontario corporation with a mandate to promote economic development in Thunder Bay, led by an independent board. The CEDC receives core funding from the City of Thunder Bay and can request annual contributions to the CEDC Project Reserve Fund.

On September 28, 2022, the CEDC Board approved a proposal to provide \$500,000 in financial support for the project from the **CEDC Project Reserve Fund** to support a collaborative Doctor of Veterinary Medicine between Lakehead University and the University of Guelph, subject to Council's approval. Any project over \$100,000 funded through the CEDC Project Fund is subject to City Council approval. The CEDC Board and Administration recommend this project to City Council for approval.

About the Project

Lakehead University is collaborating with the University of Guelph, home to Ontario's only professional veterinary program and ranked among the world's top five veterinary schools, to establish a Collaborative Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) in Rural and Northern Community Practice.

The Collaborative DVM will be unique in Canada, with students completing their first two years of study at Lakehead's Thunder Bay campus before completing years three and four at the University of Guelph.

The program will use work-integrated learning placements exclusively in Northern Ontario communities (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) to provide hands-on experience and foster the retention of graduates in the North.

The size of the program is initially set at an intake of 20 new students each year, recruited from Northern Ontario, with spots reserved for Indigenous applicants. The Collaborative DVM will also feature a suite of additional practical credentials, focusing, for example, on providing skills and training required establishing a business practice in northern and rural areas. The additional credentials will be available to currently practicing veterinarians as well, to promote professional development opportunities.

Community Benefits

Workforce and Economic Development

- Grow the number of veterinarians trained in Ontario for the first time in 30 years and almost double the number of new Ontario veterinarians from 30 to 50 (20 new veterinarians per year will be trained in Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario in preparation for practicing in Thunder Bay, Northwestern communities, and the broader north).
- Create up to 20 permanent full- and part-time jobs, in addition to the jobs necessary for the design and construction of the specialized facility.

Strengthen Thunder Bay and Surrounding Communities

- Increase overall capacity for veterinary services in Thunder Bay, Northwestern Ontario, and the rest of Ontario.

Support Rural and Indigenous Communities

- Provide new and enhanced training opportunities for Indigenous youth in Northwestern Ontario.

Improve Food and Animal Agriculture Security and Sustainability

- Better access to veterinary services will result in greater food safety, and the enhancement of animal welfare and treatment. Currently, everyone from livestock farmers to citizens with domestic pets are traveling greater distances, or incurring extra costs, to seek proper veterinary care services for their animals.



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Sincerely,

Jamie Taylor, CEO, Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission

Peter Marchl, Board Chair, Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission

cc Karen Lewis, General Manager, Development & Emergency Services Department