



**Fort William  
First Nation**



## Media Release

### **Thunder Bay CEDC Partners with FWFN, ABPA and NADF to Conduct Indigenous Economic Impact Analysis**

*Thunder Bay, January 31, 2024* - The Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission (CEDC), in collaboration with Fort William First Nation, Anishnawbe Business Professional Association (ABPA) and the Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund (NADF), is pleased to announce that Indigenous & Community Engagement (ICE) Inc. in partnership with Big River Analytics (BRA) has been selected as the successful vendor for the Indigenous Economic Impact Analysis of the City of Thunder Bay.

“We are thrilled about this collaboration as it symbolizes a significant step forward in shaping a sustainable future for Thunder Bay,” says Jamie Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Thunder Bay CEDC. “By conducting this Indigenous Economic Impact Analysis, we are not only recognizing the invaluable contributions of Indigenous businesses but also laying the groundwork for a more inclusive and prosperous community. Through shared insights, we are building bridges toward economic growth that respects our diverse cultural network and drives economic reconciliation. Together, we are charting a course towards a future where Thunder Bay thrives as a model of collaboration, diversity, and sustainable development.”

In this joint effort the analysis seeks to support the growth and development of Thunder Bay as a regional service hub by exploring the economic benefits derived from Indigenous spending.

“This research initiative aims to unveil the contributions of Indigenous people and communities to the Thunder Bay’s economic landscape and foster a deeper understanding of their role in shaping a more inclusive and prosperous future for all citizens,” states Brian Davey, CEO, NADF. “NADF’s involvement in the selection process emphasizes our commitment to ensuring a thorough and culturally sensitive study that aligns with Indigenous culture and values.”

The project will produce a comprehensive analysis, quantifying the impact of Indigenous businesses and services in the Thunder Bay Census Metropolitan Area. Key metrics to be evaluated include total gross output, total GDP, total labor income, indirect taxes,



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and jobs created by Indigenous businesses. Additionally, the study will assess the economic impact of spending associated with Thunder Bay's status as the regional hub for northern Indigenous communities, providing access to healthcare, education, training, emergency supports, recreation, and consumer necessities.

“We are pleased to partner on this project to understand how First Nations citizens and businesses in Northern Ontario are contributing to the local economy,” stated Jason Rasevych, President of the ABPA. “We acknowledge that for decades First Nations governments, their tribal councils and economic development corporations have been actively investing and spending in the city of Thunder Bay. This report is critical for quantifying the Indigenous spend and eliminating the myths about First Nations' involvement in our local economy. The ABPA is especially excited that the report will reduce the gaps in our knowledge and data regarding First Nations' true investments and valuation of their government and citizens' contributions to the city of Thunder Bay and Canadian economy.”

The project is supported by a steering committee with members from the Thunder Bay CEDC, ABPA, NADF, and Fort William First Nation's Economic Development Department and will underscore a commitment to fostering economic growth, supporting Indigenous businesses, and enhancing the overall well-being of the Thunder Bay community.

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**About the Anishnawbe Business Professional Association:** The ABPA serves the First Nation business community and provides a forum for the community to develop policies and programming which contribute to the socio-economic well-being and quality of life of First Nations peoples in Northern Ontario.

**About Fort William First Nation:** The Fort William Reserve, situated on the western end of Lake Superior near Thunder Bay, was established in 1850 through the Robinson-Superior Treaty. The economic development department of Fort William First Nation



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(FWFN) is dedicated to providing programs and services that enhance economic opportunities for FWFN members. This includes support for business development, advisory services, and the creation of employment and training opportunities in the region.

**About the Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund:** NADF seeks to advance the well being of Aboriginal People in Northern Ontario through business and economic development, creating Aboriginal prosperity.

**About Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission:** The Thunder Bay CEDC is the city's lead economic development agency and champion for local growth. We use our local knowledge and expertise to promote Thunder Bay as the best small city in Canada to live, work, do business and visit.



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