



City of Thunder Bay, Tourism Division

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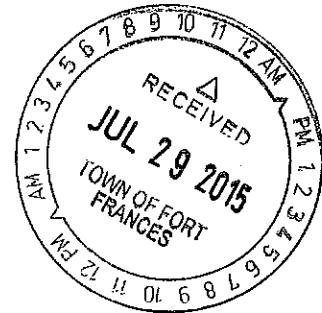
www.visitthunderbay.com



July 27, 2015

Mayor Roy Avis
Town of Fort Frances
320 Portage Avenue
Fort Frances, ON
P9A 3P9

Mayor Avis and Council,



Tourism Thunder Bay is soliciting financial support from our Northwest Ontario regional partners involved in the Heart of the Continent – National Geographic website and app – www.traveltheheart.org.

Tourism Thunder Bay applied and has been approved for Tourism Northern Ontario partnership funding to provide marketing for the newly launch online travel planning tool that has nominations for the Northwest Ontario border region connected along the Highway 11 corridor.

The province of Ontario will match up to \$10,000 of the funds contributed to the project by municipal and community partners. At the end of the day, the Canadian contribution to this bi-national project with Northeast Minnesota partners could be \$20,000 if we all contribute a share.

The promotion of the TravelTheHeart website and its mobile app fits with Tourism Northern Ontario's strategy to engage the Internet as a travel planning tool, using social media platforms to drive visitor interest and provide a mobile friendly app that can play a role in travel planning and easy wayfinding when in the region.

The promotion of the new website will target Northwest Ontario's best bet markets of the near border states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa and North Dakota along with Canadian markets in Manitoba and southern Ontario.

The City of Thunder Bay Tourism Division will allocate \$5,000 of the \$10,000 to the project and is asking you, our regional partners - Fort Frances, Atikokan, Oliver Paipoonge, Neebing, Rainy River First Nation and Couchiching First Nation - to contribute a combined upset limit of \$5000.

The ask of the Town of Fort Frances is \$1500. I realize budgets are constricted but this is an opportunity to double your contribution for what is expected to be a \$60,000 - \$80,000 tourism marketing campaign using social and digital media that will promote tourism businesses and

experiences in your communities. As the project completion date is March 31, 2016, you have the opportunity to contribute in your 2016 fiscal budgets with payment due by March 31, 2016.

Please contact John Cameron, Tourism Development Officer at Tourism Thunder Bay who is acting as the Canadian lead for this project and indicate an amount that your community or organization may be able to contribute. It should be noted that we will also be asking our Ontario provincial partners at Ontario Parks and Fort William Historical Park for contributions, but since they are provincial government entities, their monies are not eligible for the matching funds from the province.

You can contact John Cameron at jcameron@thunderbay.ca or call 807-625-3231.

I look forward to hearing from you soon with your commitment, so we can sign the Partnership Memorandum of Understanding with Tourism Northern Ontario. Again, thanks for your consideration in this matter and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. A. Pepe', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Anthony Pepe
Manager, Tourism Thunder Bay
Marketing Lead for RTO13C – Visit Northwest Ontario



July 27, 2015

Dear Regional Tourism Partner:

The Heart of the Continent Partnership (HOCP) and the National Geographic Society Maps Division (NGS) launched www.traveltheheart.org on March 19 and 20, 2015. This milestone included media conferences and public celebrations in Duluth, Grand Portage and Thunder Bay.

From January 1 to May 28, 2015 there have been 7789 sessions on the website by 6316 users, viewing 19,824 pages. This is significant traffic on the website, for which there has been no marketing or promotion. We are now ready to begin creating awareness of the website through social and electronic media and we invite you to join us in supporting these efforts.

The target audience is travelers all over the world; with the NGS brand we believe this is the right target. This initiative is meant to complement the marketing work that is done by individual communities and businesses in the region, expand the advertising reach, and create awareness of travel opportunities in the region to new audiences around the world.

Based on the outcome of our fundraising efforts we plan to implement some or all of the following marketing plans, as soon as possible. We have engaged WA Fisher Advertising and Printing in Virginia, MN and Aim Clear in Duluth, MN to provide these services. Our goal is to raise \$50,000 - \$75,000 for year one of this campaign.

Marketing strategies will include some or all of the following, based on availability of funds:

- HOC channels on Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter and Instagram: #TravelTheHeart
- Pay-per-click advertising on Facebook and Pinterest
- Electronic advertorials in Minneapolis/St. Paul, Chicago, Milwaukee, Madison, Des Moines, Indianapolis, Omaha, Sioux Falls, St. Louis, Toronto and Winnipeg
- Behaviorally targeted display ads and email
- Electronic ads on (for example) Lake Superior Magazine, Boundary Waters Journal, National Parks Magazine websites

The HOCP is reaching out to the following organizations, with hope that you will join us in promoting the unique and authentic things in the region.

Visit Duluth
Two Harbors Chamber of Commerce
Heart of the North Shore
Visit Cook County
Ely Chamber of Commerce
Lake Vermilion Resort Association
Iron Range Tourism Bureau
Destination Voyageurs National Park
City of Thunder Bay
Town of Fort Frances
Municipality of Neebing
Ontario Parks

IRRRB
City of Duluth
Duluth-Superior Community Foundation
Grand Portage Band of Chippewa
Bois Forte Band of Chippewa
First Nations of Canada
Tourism Northern Ontario
FedNor
Town of Atikokan
Rainy River First Nations
Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge
Fort William Historical Park

Please expect a call from one of our members, in follow-up of this message. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Frank Jewell
HOCP Steering Committee Chair