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MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CITY OF THUNDER BAY AND MATAWA FIRST NATIONS MANAGEMENT MOVE FORWARD WITH TRANSITIONING SURPLUS MUNICIPAL PROPERTY INTO A MATAWA STUDENT EDUCATION AND CARE CENTRE FOLLOWING COUNCIL DECISION

THUNDER BAY, ON: Officials from the City of Thunder Bay and Matawa First Nations Management announced today City Council's authorization of a Letter of Intent to move forward with granting Grandview Lodge, a former long-term care facility, to Matawa First Nations Management following a deputation made last night.

The City's surplus facility will be used to establish a Matawa Student Education and Care and Centre. On August 28th, City Council Committee of the Whole approved and ratified the granting of the Grandview Lodge building to Matawa.

"The signing of this letter of intent between Matawa and the City of Thunder Bay is a major step forward in improving the safety of First Nation youth that come to Thunder Bay to obtain a high school education," said Acting Mayor Linda Rydholm. "We recognize the significant importance of this project, its benefits and how Matawa intends to execute it."

"This represents an important first step which will allow Matawa to create a home for its students, where they can feel safe and secure, and feel a sense of family. Our vision is to use a holistic approach, meeting the emotional, physical and academic needs of the Matawa First Nation students," added David Paul Achneepineskum. "We look forward to working with our other community partners to develop this facility."

This fall, Matawa will be holding various events as part of its Neighbourhood Outreach program to get to know Northwood residents and businesses in the area. A neighbourhood barbeque will be held, with more details soon.

Matawa looks forward to working with its funding partners to obtain the required capital and operating funding to develop this initiative.

Matawa and the City will sign the Letter of Intent, negotiate an agreement, then transfer the property in the coming weeks after which time Matawa will be responsible for its operation moving forward. Matawa's first steps will be to complete preliminary design drawings and obtain capital funding for the renovations.

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For more information, please contact Stacey Levanen, Supervisor – City of Thunder Bay Corporate Communications, at (807) 625-3650 or by email at SLevanen@thunderbay.ca or Carol Audet, Communications Manager– Matawa First Nations at (807) 632-9663 or by email at caudet@matawa.on.ca.