Thunder Bay: Growth Strategies and Institutions

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Economic Growth Challenges

• Global growth is slowing

• Priorities shifting
  • Reduce inflation
  While ....
  • Contain COVID
  • Financial stability
  • Debt sustainability
  • Help vulnerable

Latest World Economic Outlook Growth Projections

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Source: IMF, World Economic Outlook Update, January 2023

Note: Forecasts are presented on a fiscal-year basis, with FY 2022/23 (ending in April 2023) shown in the 2023 column. Growth projections are 3.4 percent in 2023 and 4.8 percent in 2024 based on calendar year.
Economic Growth Challenges

- Canadian growth is slowing

- Priorities shifting, as well
  - Reduce inflation
  - Facilitate soft landing
  While, address long term....
  - Growth/ competitiveness
  - Sustainability/energy transition
  - Inclusion (health care)
  - Resilience

- Expect policy focus to shift to growth
Economic Growth Challenges

Thunder Bay is losing economic ground relative to Ontario average

… with respect to GDP

‘How Ontario’s Mid Sized Cities Can Thrive’, Munk School, University of Toronto 2021
Economic Growth Challenges

Thunder Bay is losing economic ground relative to Ontario average … with respect to GDP per capita

‘How Ontario’s Mid Sized Cities Can Thrive’, Munk School, University of Toronto 2021
Economic Growth Challenges

Two key challenges to be managed:

One: economic diversification

‘How Ontario’s Mid Sized Cities Can Thrive’, Munk School, University of Toronto 2021
Economic Growth Challenges

Two key challenges to be managed:

Two: slowing labour force growth & aging demographics

‘How Ontario’s Mid Sized Cities Can Thrive’, Munk School, University of Toronto 2021
Evaluate, Integrate and Better Resource the Strategies and Plans for Growth

Four well-developed and complementary strategies in play

**NORTH ONTARIO PLANS**

Federal Government
*Prosperity and Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, FedNor, 2017*

Provincial Government
*Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, 2011*

**THUNDER BAY PLANS**

Community Economic Development Commission (CEDC)
*Shaping A Sustainable Future, 2023-25*

Thunder Bay Corporate Strategic Plan
*One City, Growing Together, 2019-22*
Strategies and Plans for Growth

**FEDNOR**
- Diversify & Grow Companies
- Increase Productivity (training)

**ONTARIO**
- Revitalize Infrastructure

**CEDC**
- Mining and forest products
- Workforce / immigration
- Tourism
- Community well being
- Business support

**THUNDER BAY (City)**
- Citizen engagement
- Service Improvement
- Community well being
- Improve infrastructure

**PRIORITIES**

**COMPLEMENTARY AREAS OF FOCUS**
Federal – Ontario spending not directly linked to strategy for growth
Challenges – Information, Monitoring, Oversight

Thunder Bay performance reporting on corporate plan highlights best practice

- Performance orientated
- Accessible
- Integrates financial and non-financial resources
- Periodic updates
Can Canada Learn From UK Experience on Growth?

UK has struggled with growth and productivity

2015 National Infrastructure Commission
2017 (LSE) Growth Commission
2019 Leveling Up Policy
Federal Government Moving Slowly to a Growth Agenda

Liberal 2021 Platform commitment to launch permanent council of economic advisors to focus on long term growth

Budget 2021 commitment for a national needs assessment

Budget 2022 commitment to finance mineral strategies
**Possible Opportunities**

1. Consider evaluation of Thunder Bay region growth strategies against best practices

2. Consider the development of a re-freshed integrated growth strategy – public-private partnership involving all levels of government, CEDC, business and civil society groups

3. Consider the development of a Sustainable (Leveling Up) Growth Institute at Lakehead University to model the economy, analyze and support decision making, monitor flows of resources, report on progress with plans and outcomes

4. Consider using Thunder Bay as a pilot for an infrastructure needs assessment and push for the development of a smart city digital model

5. Consider using an independent municipal think tank (e.g. CitySHAPES) to assess fiscal transparency and sustainability of Thunder Bay city budget
Evaluation and Integration of Growth Strategies

Assess Against

Thunder Bay / Ontario North Strategies
- CEDC, *Shaping A Sustainable Future*, 2023-25
- Thunder Bay Corporate Strategic Plan, *One City, Growing Together*, 2019-22

Literature on Small and Medium Sized Cities
- *How Ontario’s Mid-Sized Cities Can Thrive*, Ontario 360, Munk School, University of Toronto, 2021
- *The Land of In Between, Revitalization of America’s Small and Medium Sized Cities*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C., 2020
Build a Sustainable (Levelling Up) Growth Institute at LU

The LSE Growth Commission was set up to provide authoritative and evidence-based policy recommendations that target sustainable and inclusive long-term growth in the UK.

At Lakehead University

With a Focus on Levelling up Opportunity and Growth

Economic Model

Analysis

Follow Money and Results

@IFSD_IFPD
# Thunder Bay Infrastructure Needs Assessment

- **Process Models Data/Analytics Consultations**
  - Condition assessments
  - GHG emissions assessments
  - Visual inspections
  - Security and resilience assessments
  - Demand models
  - Capacity models
  - Climate models
  - GHG emissions models
  - Agent-based models
  - Risk analytics
  - Resilience analytics
  - Lifecycle cost analytics
  - Service levels analytics
  - Benefits realization analytics
  - Satisfaction surveys
  - Citizen engagement
  - Subject matter and domain experts
  - Logic models
  - Economic growth models
  - Inclusion models
  - Resilience models
  - Sustainability models
  - Inclusion related mobility
  - Inclusion infrastructure performance
  - Sustainability infrastructure performance
  - Geo-located user satisfaction surveys
  - Citizen engagement
  - Policy experts
  - Performance experts
  - Demographic models
  - Economic models
  - Labor force models
  - Mobility models
  - Urban planning models
  - Rural planning model
  - Net zero 2050 models
  - Inter-generational analytics
  - Interoperability analytics
  - Long-term sustainability analytics
  - Long-term inclusion analytics
  - Long-term resilience analytics
  - Futurists
  - Urban planners
  - Emerging technology experts
  - Behavioral economists

Work with FEDNOR & Infrastructure Canada & Infrastructure Ontario to use Thunder Bay as a pilot for an infrastructure needs assessment.
A Digital Twin of Thunder Bay Infrastructure Systems

National and regional-scale digital twins are currently under development/consideration in the UK, Australia and New Zealand. This requires a rich and standardized data framework and can provide a suite of efficiency and process integration benefits.

Work with FEDNOR & Infrastructure Canada & Infrastructure Ontario to use Thunder Bay as a pilot for a digital twin.

https://www.cdbb.cam.ac.uk/files/flourishing-systems_revised_200908.pdf
Open Budget Survey for Thunder Bay

The International Budget Partnership, Washington DC has developed a survey for assessing the openness of budgets at the national and sub-national level.

IFSD has prepared this assessment for the federal government.

The survey could be conducted for the City of Thunder Bay by an organization that focuses on municipalities (e.g. CitySHAPES).

IFSD has developed an electronic citizen budget tool. This tool could be adapted for Thunder Bay to help councilors and citizens better understand the city budget and the financial consequences of spending and revenue trade-offs.
Get in touch

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