

Ontario Supporting Business Growth and Tourism in Kenora*Province strengthening economic development in the Northwest***NEWS**

October 10, 2023

KENORA – The Ontario government is providing more than \$321,000 through the [Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation](#) (NOHFC) for two economic development projects. This investment will expand business operations and boost recreational and tourism offerings in the Northwest.

"By making targeted investments through the NOHFC, our government is supporting local upgrades and enhancements that make a real difference in the lives of those who live, work, play and do business in the North," said Greg Rickford, Minister of Northern Development and Member of Provincial Parliament for Kenora-Rainy River. "The projects we are recognizing today support local business expansions, benefit the northern economy and contribute to a healthier, more inclusive community."

Projects funded through the NOHFC include:

- \$209,045 for Sierra Construction to build a 2,000-square-foot wood manufacturing facility to expand operations and purchase new dust control equipment for improved air quality control and employee health and safety
- \$112,500 for Kenora Hospitality Alliance Corp. to repair and replace existing infrastructure at the Vernon Nature Area in partnership with the Friends of Vernon Nature Area, improving visitor safety and enhancing inclusivity with signage in both English and Ojibway

The NOHFC promotes economic prosperity across Northern Ontario by providing financial assistance to projects—big and small, rural and urban—that stimulate growth, job creation and skills development. Since June 2018, the NOHFC has invested more than \$717 million in 5,875 projects in Northern Ontario, leveraging more than \$2.3 billion in investment and creating or sustaining over 9,264 jobs.

Quick Fact

- The Ontario government launched [new and improved NOHFC programs](#) that support more projects in rural northern communities and make it easier for more people and businesses to apply. The programs target existing and emerging markets, provide more work opportunities for Indigenous people and address the skilled labour shortage in the North.

Additional Resources

- The [NOHFC](#), [Northern Development Offices](#) and [Small Business Enterprise Centres](#) are available to support northern communities, businesses and other stakeholders in identifying economic development opportunities and assist in accessing government funding programs.
- The NOHFC's [Community Enhancement Program](#) builds strong and resilient northern communities through targeted investments in critical infrastructure.
- The NOHFC's [Invest North Program](#) boosts economic growth and attracts more investment by supporting business development, expansion and innovation.

Quotes

“Sierra Construction has seen consistent growth over the past 20 years. With the assistance of NOHFC, Sierra will be creating new jobs, as we have broken ground on our state-of-the-art woodworking facility here in Kenora. Our 2,000-square-foot shop will allow us to take raw wood materials harvested in the Northwest and transform them into various wood components for homes, cottages, and businesses across the region.” – Jamie Minor, President, Sierra Construction

“This grant could not have come at a more opportune time. It allows the Friends of Vernon in partnership with the Kenora Hospitality Alliance to replace and repair Vernon Nature Area infrastructures that have deteriorated over time or damaged by last year's high water, including the Vernon dock, boardwalk, lookouts and trails. The Vernon Nature Area is one of the most popular and well-used Kenora outdoor recreational and educational destinations, providing not only increased enjoyment of the outdoors and mental well-being, but significant economic benefits to the area.” – Barry Corbett, Friends of Vernon

“The Kenora Hospitality Alliance is happy to provide the necessary support for this magical trail system to receive this well-deserved funding. We see the benefits of enhancing this highly used trail system in the smiles of our guests when they come back from explorations at Vernon Nature Area.” – Stefan Robinson, Executive Director, Kenora Hospitality Alliance Board of Directors

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