



## Press Release

### **Mayor and Council of the Township of Ignace Endorse Monumental Willingness Decision for the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) Deep Geological Repository Project (DGR)**

#### **The First of its Kind in Canada**

***Unanimous approval by Council on becoming a willing hosting community for the DGR with NWMO first of its kind in Canada!***

**Ignace ON July 10, 2024** – At a Special Meeting of Ignace Council on the afternoon of Wednesday, July 10, 2024, Council unanimously accepted and endorsed a set of recommendations from the Willingness Ad Hoc Committee as presented by Mr. Roger Dufault, the Committee’s Co-chair, and then Council immediately passed a resolution (#2024-07.10.177) addressed to the Nuclear Waste Management Organization that indicates that the Township of Ignace is **indeed a willing host community** for their potential siting of a deep geological repository in Northwestern Ontario. This is the first community in Canada that has officially completed its willingness process and indicated that it will continue in the process to becoming a host to storing Canada’s used nuclear fuel.

**The endorsement by Township Council of this recommendation from the Willingness Ad Hoc Committee in no way, either guarantees that the Township will host a deep geological repository for used nuclear fuel, or that a final decision by the NWMO has been made on the actual siting of this multi-billion-dollar project. It simply indicates, through an official resolution to NWMO, that the community of Ignace has undertaken a willingness process and has now agreed to continue to be a potential willing host towards the decision from NWMO slated for later this year.**

The endorsement of these recommendations brought forward by the Willingness Ad Hoc Committee, comprised of nine (9) community residents, is considered the next logical step in the ongoing continuum towards a final decision by the NWMO on the siting of a DGR to store used nuclear fuel at the Revell site, approximately 30 km west of Ignace. That NWMO decision is expected by the end of December 2024.

The set of recommendations brought forward by the Co-chair of the Willingness Ad Hoc Committee also contained information with respect to the integrity, transparency and accountability of their report and also outlined the percentage of those who voted for and against the project as well as the percentage of the resident participation rate in the community of Ignace. All very important information that confidently allowed the Ad Hoc Committee to put together their recommendations for Council endorsement.

“We are proudly the first community in Canada to be indicating our support and our willingness to continue in the selection process by the NWMO in the potential siting of the DGR project in this area. The residents of the Township of Ignace have spoken loud and clear and we fully respect their direction as a Council, and we clearly have now indicated our support through an official resolution to the NWMO based on the recommendations from our Willingness Ad Hoc Committee members. We certainly understand that the endorsement of these recommendations does not mean that we are guaranteed and are going to host a DGR, but it does allow Ignace to continue to move another step closer, now as a willing host community in the selection process by NWMO. What it also means is that we now have an accurate, clear, concise, and signed resolution to the NWMO on the community’s willingness to move forward in the process”, stated Mayor Kim Baigrie. “As of today, we are just one of the potential willing hosts in Northwestern Ontario and we also respect and appreciate the willingness and upcoming decision of the Wabigoon Lake Ojibway First Nation in this process.”

“Through a constructive process, with integrity, accountability and transparency as our guiding principles, the Willingness Ad Hoc Committee members have proudly reviewed, analyzed, and developed our final recommendations and decision to Township Council. We appreciate the hard work and municipal engagement at a grass roots level that was undertaken by With Chela Inc. to bring this study and summary to our Willingness Ad Hoc Committee,” stated Roger Dufault, the Committee’s Co-chair.

“We are extremely confident in our recommendations to the Township of Ignace Council on the democratic process that was undertaken to bring the voice of our residents to the forefront of this important project for the community. We want to thank all of our resident participants who were engaged, became educated and registered to finally cast their vote. I also want to thank the dedicated and committed work of our nine community members on the Willingness Ad Hoc Committee, who really spent weeks of their personal time to assess the study and develop these recommendations to Council. Your dedication to the future of this community does not go un-noticed and we appreciate your commitment to this process.

We know this project reflects the democratic wishes and aspirations of the community - including revitalizing local investments that would create a prosperous path forward,” said Roger Dufault, Co-chair of Willingness Ad Hoc Committee.

The recommendations to Council outlined 77.3% (495 votes) voted in favour of becoming a willing host community as opposed to 20.8% (133 votes) of those who voted against becoming a host community and 1.9% (12 votes) abstained. With Chela estimated there were 1,035 eligible participants and 660 opted into the process, with 640 logging ballots that demonstrated a fulsome participation in the study conducted. “Based on those percentages, the Willingness Ad Hoc Committee was obligated to bring forward with democratic confidence, the recommendations outlined to Council to endorse the continuance and willingness of the Township of Ignace in this important NWMO project” further stated Mr. Dufault.

“Following more than a decade of engagement and significant community participation, we are pleased that the Township of Ignace has confirmed their willingness to host a deep geological repository for used nuclear fuel,” said Lise Morton, Vice-President of Site Selection at the NWMO. “We congratulate the Township and residents for reaching this important step and admire the leadership, thought and care that has gone into the process and to shaping what the project could look like in their community.”

There are of course many benefits to potentially hosting the DGR in the area and these included the direct benefits of the March 18, 2024, Agreement between the Township and NWMO and indirectly those that will exceed the community’s economic expectations. If finally selected by the NWMO to host the DGR in this area, the March 18, 2024, agreement will be initiated and will provide more benefits to the community of Ignace for generations through the complete life cycle of the DGR project. That agreement is similar to and will replace the current Multi-Year Funding Agreement that is in now in place between the Township and NWMO and will not have to be negotiated each year as well as provides a sustainable and balanced approach to planning for the Township.

In the northwest region, Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation (WLON) will also have its own willingness process and the Township of Ignace respects that their decision will also be required to proceed if Northwestern Ontario is selected to host the DGR.

There will be a summary of the recommendations from the Willingness Ad Hoc Committee, the resolution endorsed by Council, as well as access to the full With Chela Inc. report available on the Township website over the next couple of hours.

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Mayor Kim Baigrie from the Township of Ignace hands over historic resolution to The Nuclear Waste Management Organization's President and CEO Laurie Swami after a Special Meeting of Council on July 10, 2024.