

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 10, 2009

## **Conservation Authority Unveils Plans for New Office**

The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) says it's time for a new home.

The Authority has operated out of its current location, a former elementary school, since 1974.

A recent assessment of the LRCA's 65-hundred square foot office, which was built in 1953, discovered deficiencies in exterior walls, windows, the roof membrane, brickwork as well as the electrical and heating system. Renovations, which would cost about \$2-million, still would not resolve the lack of functional office space.

"The current office has been renovated and reconfigured to the point where there just isn't room to meet our needs," says Chairman Bill Bartley.

The LRCA will be seeking the support of its eight member municipalities to help fund the new 12,653 square-foot, \$4-million dollar building which will be built on Authority property along Fort William Road at the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway (across from the CLE Grounds). The municipalities will be asked for \$2-million dollars with the Authority providing the balance of the funding through the sale of its Conservation Road property, which is adjacent to the Regional Hospital, as well as from government infrastructure funding and fundraising.

"At twice our existing size, the proposed new office will be more energy efficient, handicap accessible and will feature space to hold our Children's Water Festival and other special events," says Bartley. "The design of the building will allow us to generate revenue by renting the Board Room or Multi-Purpose Room to community groups."

The Authority is hoping to have funding in place so that construction can begin in the spring of 2010.

## **BACKGROUND:**

### *Old Building - 130 Conservation Road*

- Built in 1953 as a school
- 6,565 square feet plus attached garage and metal out building
- Staff at time of purchase in 1974: Five plus seasonal staff
- Insufficient space for current staff
- On well water and septic system
- Renovations to resolve deficiencies: \$2-million but do not resolve space issues
- Municipal share of renovations \$2-million

### *New Building - 1111 Fort William Road*

- aesthetically pleasing, energy efficiencies
- 12,653 square feet over 1 1/2 floors, handicap accessible and room for expansion
- Current Staff: 15 plus seasonal field staff
- Open concept will accommodate future staff expansion
- Will be on City water & sewer system
- new building \$4-million will re-establish lost multi-purpose space for Authority meetings and events and provide potential for future revenue generation
- Municipal share of new building \$2-million

Lakehead Region Conservation Authority is a local resource management agency working on a watershed basis. Conservation Authorities protect people and their property from natural hazards of flooding and erosion; protect natural areas and open space, restore and protect aquatic and natural habitats; and provide recreational and educational opportunities to local residents.

The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority receives funding from the Province of Ontario and its eight member municipalities:

City of Thunder Bay,  
Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge  
Municipality of Neebing  
Municipality of Shuniah  
Township of Gillies  
Township of Dorion  
Township of O'Connor  
Township of Conmee



Lakehead Region Conservation Authority office  
130 Conservation Road  
6,565 sq.ft. built in 1953



Proposed new Lakehead Region Conservation Authority office  
1111 Fort William Road  
12,653 sq. ft.