

Industrial mat company puts down stakes in northwestern Ontario

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(Northern Mat & Bridge photo)

Alberta-based [Northern Mat & Bridge](#) is opening an office at Fort William First Nation, next to Thunder Bay.

The company provides large mats and portable bridges used by crews in the oil and gas industry, mining, forestry, power line and general construction work to move heavy equipment into remote areas for large-scale development projects.

With now seven offices across Canada, Northern Mat bills itself as Canada's leading provider of environmentally responsible access solutions.

The company said the regional office actually opened in early November but local dignitaries were invited for a roll-out event on Nov.14.

A separate manufacturing space is also in the works but the company isn't divulging where that will be located.

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Matt Dupuis, former Red Rock Indian Band chief, will handle business development and Indigenous-stakeholder engagement.

"There is incredible growth potential for Northern Mat & Bridge in the north," Dupuis said in a statement.

"I am delighted to be joining this highly-qualified team to expand this business market but also looking forward to creating new economic development, employment and training opportunities for local people and communities."

In their news release, the company said it's been working in the region for five years and it was high time to create a physical presence to better serve its customers.

In northwestern Ontario, there are a number of [powerline transmission](#) and [mine development projects underway](#).

"Our company has grown exponentially over the last two decades, from just a few employees in one province to hundreds of professionals across Canada," said Northern Mat president Scott Henderson in the release.

"We view this expansion into Northern Ontario as the next logical stage of our growth strategy.

The company is also hooking up with Lessard Welding , a Sudbury steel fabrication shop on a strategic partnership. Northern Mat will be the [distributor of Lessard's access bridges](#) for Eastern Canada.

"Through this business alliance, we now have even greater capacity to supply temporary access bridge solutions to industries across Eastern Canada," said project manager Steve Lessard.

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