


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## BUSINESS

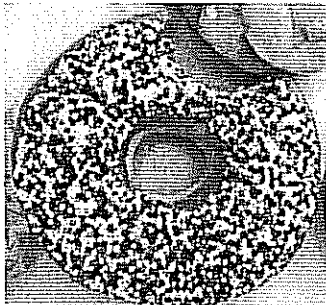
Winnipeg Free Press - PRINT EDITION

### Fly-in reserve a first for Tim's

But expanded store a bigger deal up north

By: Murray McNeill  
 Posted: 10/27/2012 1:00 AM | Comments: 6 | Last Modified: 10/27/2012 8:41 AM | Updates

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(SETH WENIG / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS ARCHIVES)

TIM HORTONS and cheaper food are coming to Oxford House.

On Monday, the first Tim Hortons kiosk in a fly-in First Nations community in Canada opens in the new Northern Store in Oxford House.

The new 12,000-square-foot store was added on to the old 14,000-square-foot store in the northern Manitoba community, and the old space was then converted into warehouse space.

The addition enabled the owner, the Winnipeg-based North West Company, to expand the store's retail space by 3,000 square feet and add a self-serve Tim Hortons kiosk that sells mainly coffee, donuts and muffins.

And by converting the old store to warehouse space, the company increased the store's storage capacity more than fourfold, which will enable North West to haul in a lot more non-perishable goods during the winter road season because

there's now a place to keep them. That, in turn, will mean flying in fewer goods during the rest of the year, which means lower prices for community residents.

North West executive vice-president Michael McMullen and Keewatin Tribal Council Chief Irvin Sinclair said getting a larger store -- the old one only had about 9,000 square feet of retail space -- and a bigger warehouse are the biggest benefits for the community and its residents. The Tim Hortons kiosk is icing on the cake.

McMullen said it costs roughly 30 to 50 per cent more to fly goods into Oxford House than to haul them in by winter road. Those added costs are passed on to the store's customers, although there are federal freight subsidies to help lower the price of nutritional items such as meats, dairy foods and fresh produce.

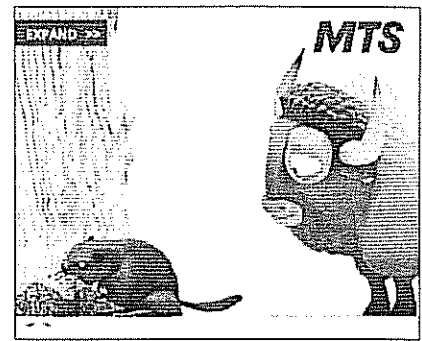
"It (the difference in shipping costs) is huge, so we invested in it (the existing store) to make it better, and so we could have lower prices all year round in the community."

Sinclair, who was chief of Bunibonabee Cree Nation (Oxford House) until last April when he was elected chief of the Keewatin Tribal Council, said Oxford House desperately needed a bigger grocery store.

"We have a growing population and we are one of the biggest reserves in northern Manitoba," he said. Before, "the shelves were next to bare all of the time."

With more space, the store can not only stockpile more non-perishable goods, he said, but also carry more nutritional items such as fresh meats, fruits and vegetables.

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