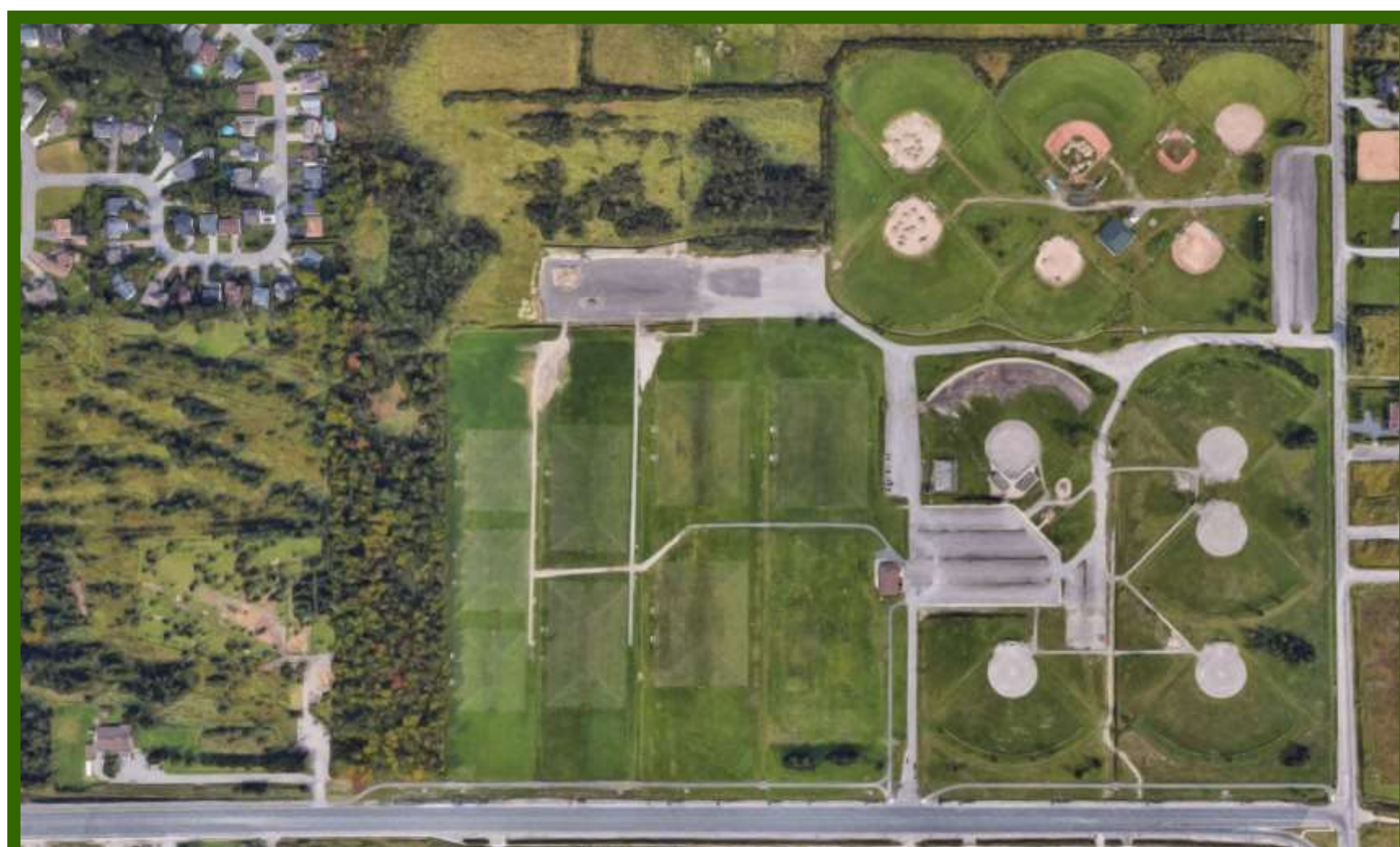


# PARKS IN SAULT STE. MARIE

## REGIONAL PARKS, NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS AND LINEAR PARKS

There are **more than 70 City-owned parks** in Sault Ste. Marie, totalling 786 acres in land area. Sault Ste. Marie's parks network is based on a **system of neighbourhood parks**, with a few **regional parks and linear parks** located across the city.

Our largest park is **Strathclair Park** (212 acres) at Second Line and Black Road. It has numerous sports fields and our only dog park. Parks like Strathclair, Bellevue and Clergue are **REGIONAL PARKS** that serve people living in all parts of the city.



Strathclair Park, a regional park. [Google Maps]

Our smallest park is **Upton Park** (0.27 acres), just south of the former Mount St. Joseph College. It is the size of two single-detached-house lots and has a small playground. Upton is an example of a **NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK**, mainly serving people who live nearby.

We also have **LINEAR PARKS** - the best example is the **John Rowswell Hub Trail**. Linear parks and trails not only provide recreational space but also function as connections between different parts of the city.

## ACTIVE USES vs. PASSIVE USES

While most parks are programmed with playground or sports equipment to allow for "active use", parks can also be enjoyed as green spaces to **walk in, play on or live beside**. In fact, some City parks are simply green spaces with grass and trees.



Bishop's Court Park in the Simpson Leo Upton McGregor is a neighbourhood park and passive use park. [Google Maps]

## URBAN PARKS vs. RURAL PARKS

The City presently doesn't build parks and recreational facilities in the Sault's rural area. Most 'parks' in the rural area are protected **conservation areas** owned by the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority.

Two notable exceptions are:

- **Kinsmen Park**, surrounded by the Hiawatha Highlands Conservation Area but owned by the Kinsmen Club.
- **Pointe des Chenes Beach**, owned and operated by the City.



Beach at Pointe des Chenes

How do you use our parks?  
Should the City focus on a **neighbourhood parks system** or a **system of linear parks**?

# CURRENT CHALLENGES

## PARK DESIGN FOR SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Some parks built in the 1960s and 1970s would now be considered poor design in terms of safety and accessibility because they are almost entirely surrounded by homes, essentially hidden from public view. Examples include:

- **Indiana Park**, near Shannon Road south of Trunk Road.
- **Clark's Court Park**, by Boundary Road and Chambers Ave.
- **Birchwood Park**, in the east end near Grand View and Parkland public schools.

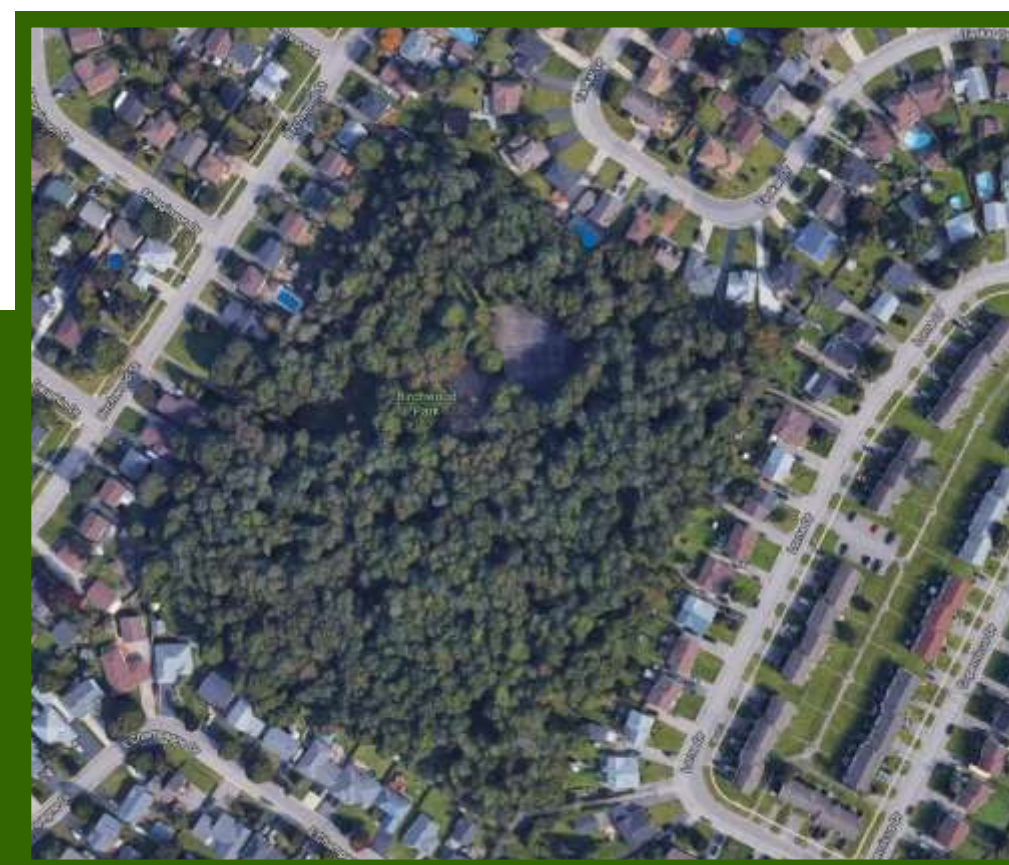
When designing for safety, we can follow **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles**, which aim to reduce crime through better physical design. This includes brightening up spaces, making them visible from the street, and making them attractive to encourage more people to use them.

The City is also required to eliminate, as best as possible, any barriers to accessing public spaces, following the requirements of the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)**.

### Policy Ideas:

- **Build, locate and design all new public parks and recreational facilities with safety and accessibility considerations.**

Birchwood Park from the air looks like a forest with a playground and tennis court hidden deep within. [Google Maps]



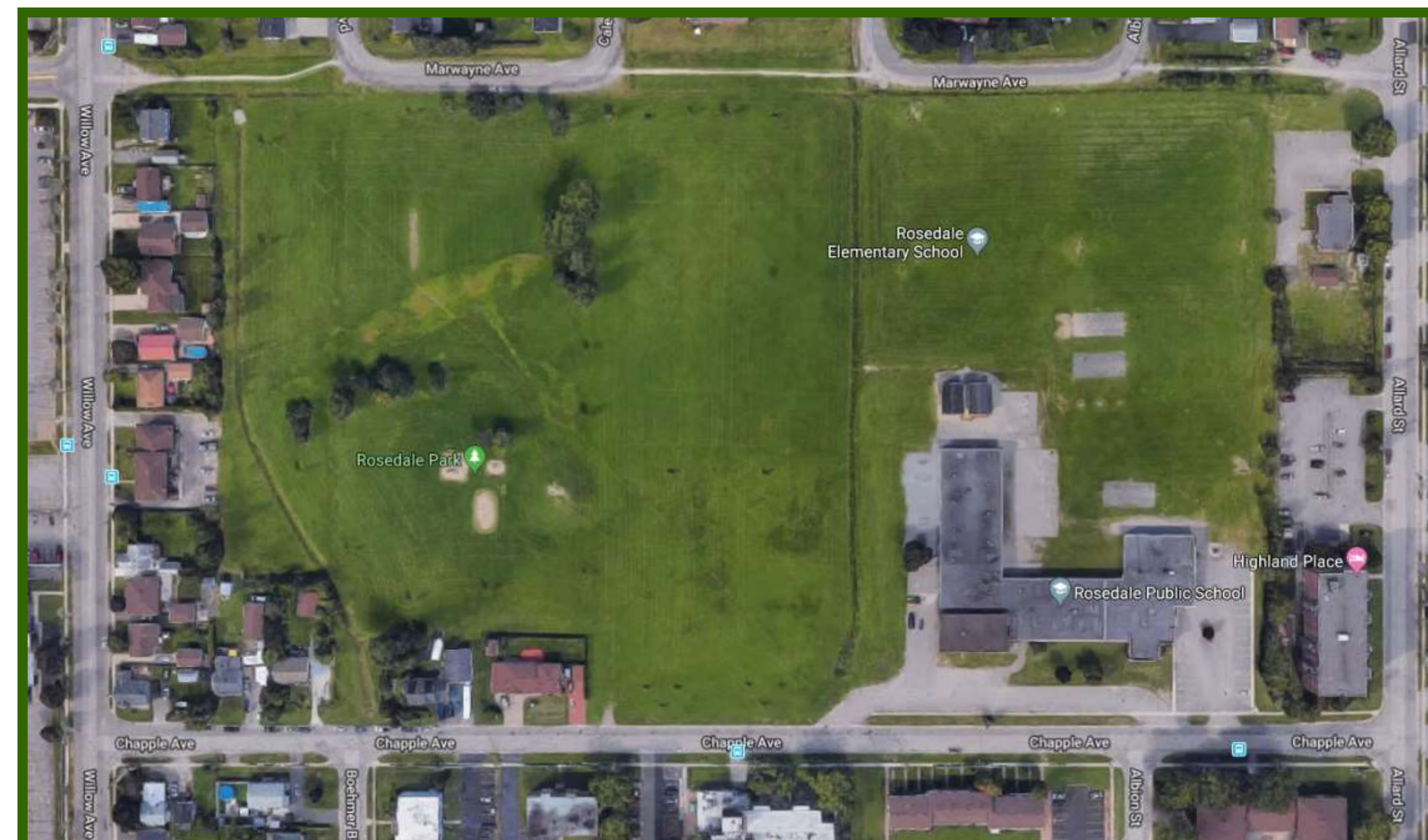
## SCHOOL CLOSURES

While school yards are technically not parks, they **often function as recreational spaces** open to the public. For example, many school yards have sports and play equipment that families and children are free to use. The City also has many parks directly connected to school yards.

In recent years, local school boards have been closing underutilized schools. As a result, we **lose access** to the recreational spaces and equipment these schools provided.

### Policy Ideas:

- **Have clearer land use designation (e.g. zoning) between parks and schools.**
- **Consider appropriate park and recreational space in school redevelopments.**



The recently closed Rosedale School by Chapple Ave and Allard St is directly connected to the City's Rosedale Park. [Google Maps]

Do we have the right ideas for addressing these challenges?

# MORE CURRENT CHALLENGES

## CONNECTIVITY AND DISTRIBUTION

Planning staff have heard that depending on where someone lives in the city and how they get around the city, it can be **difficult to get to** our parks and recreational facilities. These hard-to-get-to places include Hiawatha, Pointe des Chenes, Strathclair Park, and for some residents, even Bellevue Park.

The Province says that municipalities should “**facilitate active transportation and community connectivity**” when planning for public spaces and facilities, as well as provide a “**full range and equitable distribution**” of spaces for recreation.

In addition, we’ve heard from many people that there is a **lack of recreational amenities** in the west and north parts of the city.

### Policy Ideas:

- **Continue expanding the active transportation network (e.g. Hub Trail and bike routes) so residents can more effectively get to more places in the city by walking and cycling.**
- **Examine transit and other infrastructure improvements to connect more people to community facilities and amenities.**
- **Work with the Conservation Authority and City Engineering department to look at enabling use of the west end’s flood control channels as recreational trails.**
- **Promote co-locating of recreational amenities in ‘community hubs’.**

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES AND UNDERUTILIZATION

The current Official Plan says “under-utilized neighbourhood parks sites should be disposed of when possible.”

As neighbourhood populations change, the use of neighbourhood parks also change. Currently, the City’s Community Services department is conducting a **park space utilization study** looking at demographic data, infrastructure aging and condition of equipment to begin examining which parks should be priorities for revitalization.

Neighbourhood demographic changes are often cyclical. In addition, even if a park is not actively being used, it may still be used passively or otherwise be valued by nearby residents.

### Policy Ideas:

**Set out clear criteria for disposing of park land.**

Trails Fest at Hiawatha Highlands



**Do we have the right ideas for addressing these challenges?**

# FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

## NEW USES FOR PARKS AND FACILITIES

The ways in which we use parks and other public facilities are always changing, and they're not always anticipated either. For example, our parks now have 'new' or 'non-traditional' uses like community gardens, an RC track, disc golf and pickleball.

What might be included in a **framework for evaluating and making decisions** on changing the uses allowed or activities available in our parks and recreational facilities?

### Some ideas for factors to consider:

- **Level of demand or interest**
- **Makes a place more inclusive or more accessible**
- **Groups served and how well served those groups currently are**
- **Neighbourhood benefits and impacts**
- **Cost or ease of implementing**
- **Increases public access to the river or shoreline**
- **Others?**

## PARKLAND DEDICATION FROM DEVELOPMENT

Currently, all residential developments that create new lots are required to provide **5% of the land for park purposes, or give cash in lieu** of this 5% to a reserve fund used by the City for recreational projects. (2% for non-residential developments.)

Recent projects where this reserve fund was used include:

- **Splash Pad** at Bellevue Park
- **Pump Track** at Esposito Park
- **Dog Park** at Strathclair Park

Some stakeholders have suggested that money obtained through this process should be used on amenities within the neighbourhood where the development is occurring.

### Policy Questions:

- **Should the City continue this approach?**
- **What other public amenities should the City consider using these funds for? For example: public art, street furniture and beautification...**

What ideas for these topics do you think the City should consider?

Pump Track at Esposito Park - opened 2016



Skating Trail at Clergue Park - just opened!



# SUPPORTING THE ARTS THROUGH LAND USE

## PUBLIC ART FROM PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

In larger cities like Toronto and Vancouver, public art is commonly incorporated into private developments, either by regulation or through incentives.

The City sometimes requires landscaping plans from new developments in Sault Ste. Marie, and something that can be encouraged is including **public art as a part of landscaping**.

Also, public art on building walls or around the outside of buildings might be something that's worthy of grants, subject to design guidelines.

### Policy Ideas:

- Consider including public art as a part of landscaping plans for developments.
- Consider including public art in the City's grant and incentive programs.

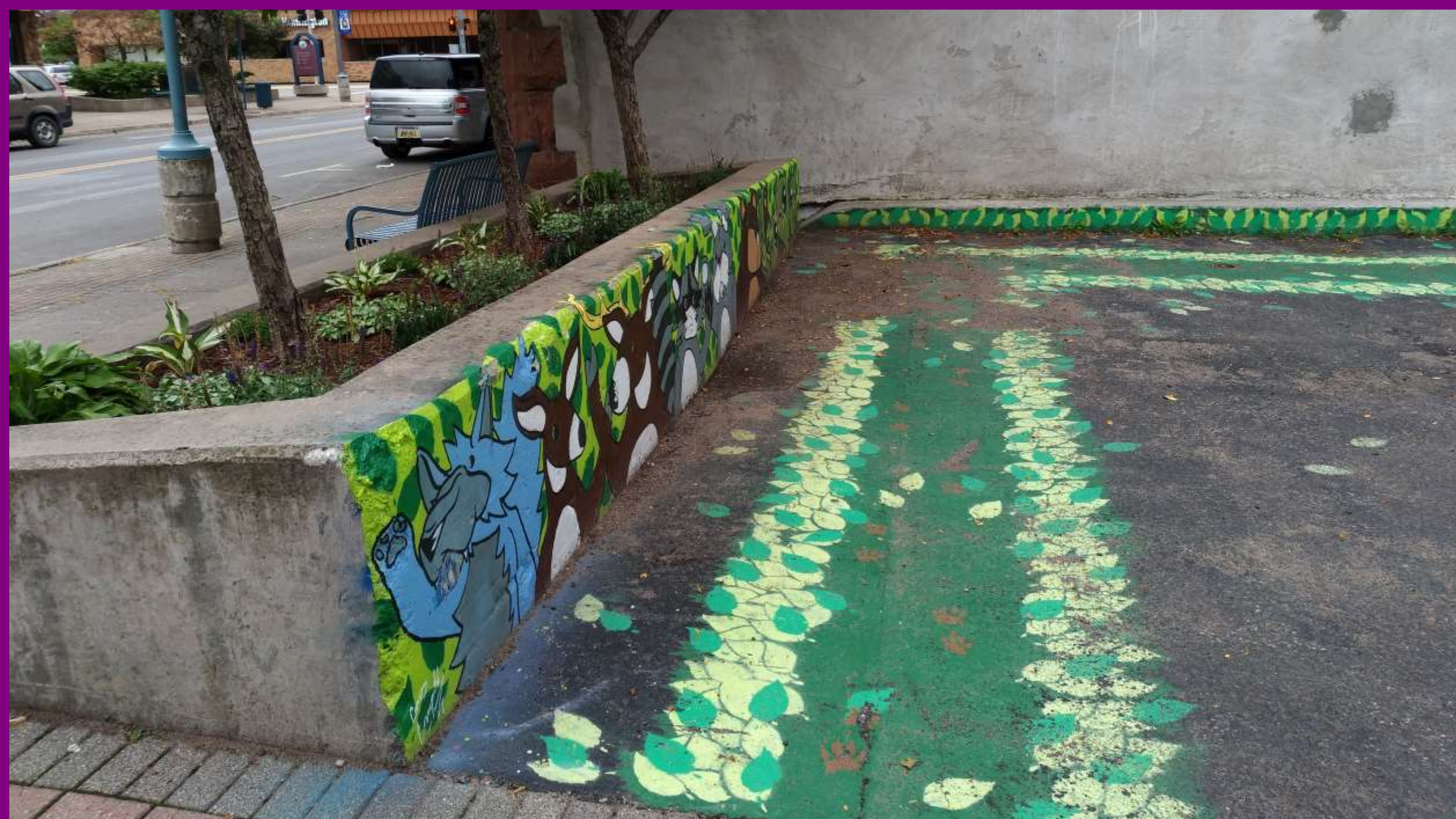
## LIVE-WORK, STUDIO AND MAKER SPACES

We have heard from arts and culture community stakeholders that artists often struggle financially. That's why we want to try to **make it easier for local artists to live and work** in Sault Ste. Marie.

### Policy Ideas:

- Create affordable shared studio space in Sault Ste. Marie.
- Clarify the City's regulations about live-work arrangements and home-based businesses as applicable to artists.

Are we on the right track with these ideas? What else could we consider?



Street art in a parking lot beside Park Place City Center on Ashmun Street in Downtown Sault Michigan.

# BUILDING COMMUNITY CULTURE THROUGH LAND USE

## CREATING COMMUNITY HUBS

**COMMUNITY HUBS** are places where multiple public service facilities providing services and amenities (like recreation, culture, health, education and social assistance) can be all found in the same location. The Province encourages **co-location** of such facilities to enable more **effective service delivery** and to allow residents **easier access** to these services.

Some places here that can be considered community hubs:

- Along **Northern Ave** with Sault College and Algoma Public Health next to each other, as well as the new Boreal school and new North Library beside each other.
- Along **Goulais Ave** by Korah high school, the W.J. McMeeken Centre and the Northern Community Centre.
- **Dacey & Trunk** with White Pines high school and the Sault Community Theatre Centre.
- And of course: **Clergue Park** with the Art Gallery, Centennial Library, Seniors Drop-in Centre and one of our regional parks.

### Policy Ideas:

- **Identify community hubs and encourage locating of public services in these hubs.**
- **Establish better connections to, from and within community hubs, including for walking, cycling and transit.**

Goulais Ave by Northern Community Centre [Google Maps]



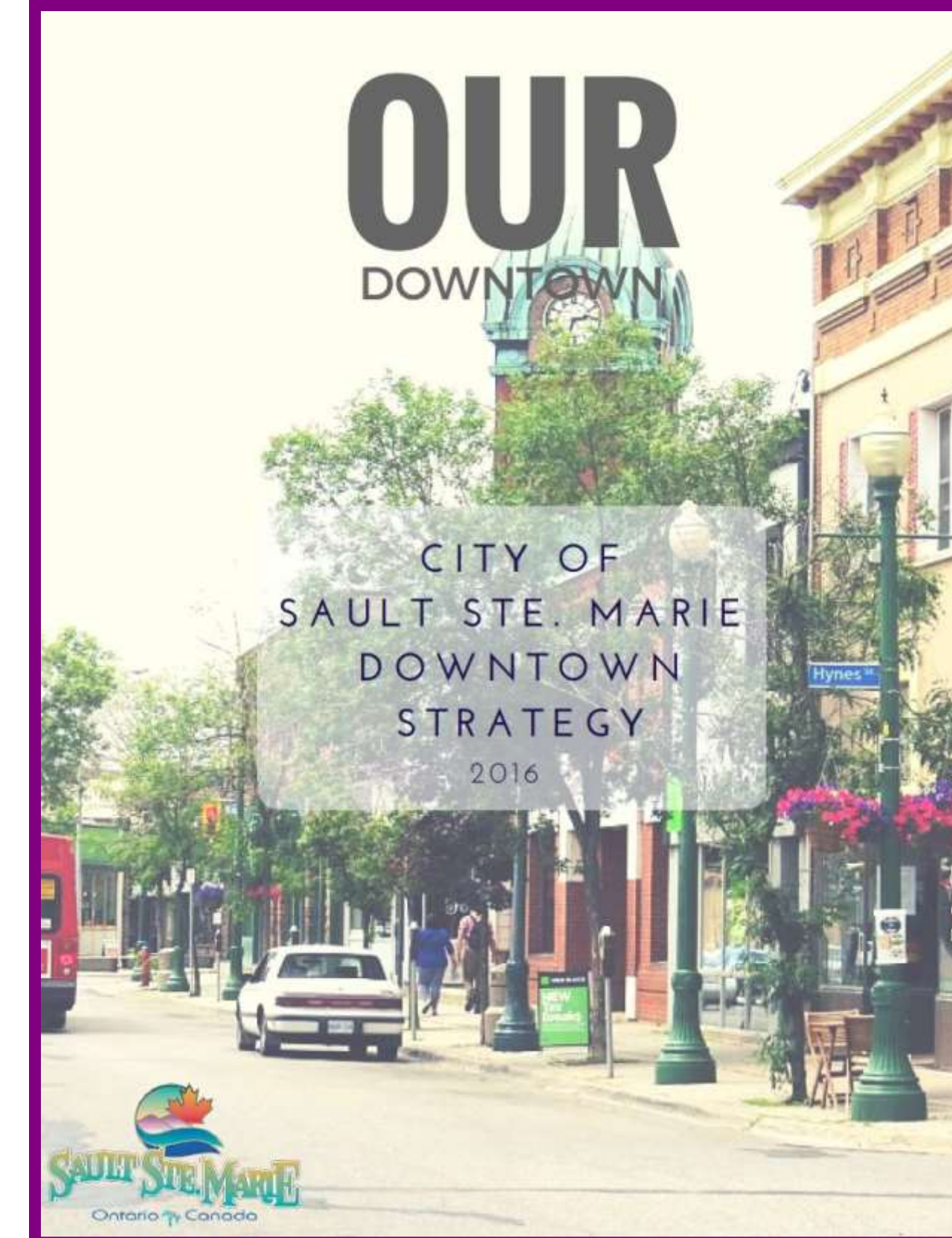
## DOWNTOWN AS THE SAULT'S CULTURAL CORE

The City's **Downtown Strategy** recommends that our Downtown be developed and maintained as Sault Ste. Marie's **centre for culture and entertainment.**

This aligns with our current Downtown revitalization efforts through **FutureSSM** and other initiatives. The idea is that if Downtown is established as a **base for culture**, we can build a "coordinated and sustainable" arts and culture community in Sault Ste. Marie.

### Policy Ideas:

- **Establish better connections within the Downtown for walking, cycling and transit.**
- **Give incentives for property owners to encourage reuse of vacant buildings and lands, including for arts & culture purposes.**
- **Create a public plaza for year-round activities.**



Are we on the right track with these ideas? What else could we consider?

# PROTECTING HERITAGE & ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Is anything missing in terms of protecting our heritage & archaeological resources?



Painting by Paul Kane of an Ojibwa village in the Sault area in the 1840s.  
[Wikimedia Commons]

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

**Baawitigong**, or the place now known as Sault Ste. Marie, has for millennia been a gathering place and home for Indigenous peoples, and more recently, for settlers and immigrants to North America. This place was considered the centre of the Ojibway world.

As stated in the City's **Master Plan of Archaeological Resources**, completed in 2011:

“36 archaeological sites have been registered within Sault Ste. Marie, which date from 10,000 years ago through to the 19th and early 20th centuries.”

The Province requires municipalities to plan for and enforce the conservation of **ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**, and consider the interests of Indigenous communities during the process.

### Policy Ideas:

- **Development and site alteration on lands identified as having the potential to contain archaeological resources is not permitted prior to an Archaeological Assessment.**
- **Work with local Indigenous groups on heritage conservation efforts.**

## CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES

The Province requires municipalities to actively protect **CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES**.

Through the **Ontario Heritage Act**, the Sault Ste. Marie Municipal Heritage Committee and City Council have, to date, designated **38 heritage properties** within the city.

A property or site needs to have **historical** importance, **architectural** significance or **contextual** significance (e.g. forms an integral part of the streetscape) to be recommended for official heritage designation. Our oldest designated property is the **Ermatinger Old Stone House**, built between 1812-1814.

Beyond official heritage designations, the Municipal Heritage Committee is currently looking into:

- Identifying specific neighbourhoods as **Locally Significant Heritage Areas**.
- Identifying significant **Properties of Interest**.

Planning staff have also heard from stakeholders that we should consider adding protection to **trees with heritage value**.

### Policy Ideas:

- **Development and site alteration on or adjacent to protected heritage property is not permitted unless the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property are not impacted.**
- **Promote continued functional use of heritage properties while preserving their heritage value.**
- **Identify and protect heritage trees.**

# Public Recreation in Sault Ste. Marie

## PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

### SCHOOLS

Status

Active

Closed

### WEST END FLOOD CHANNELS

### ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Existing

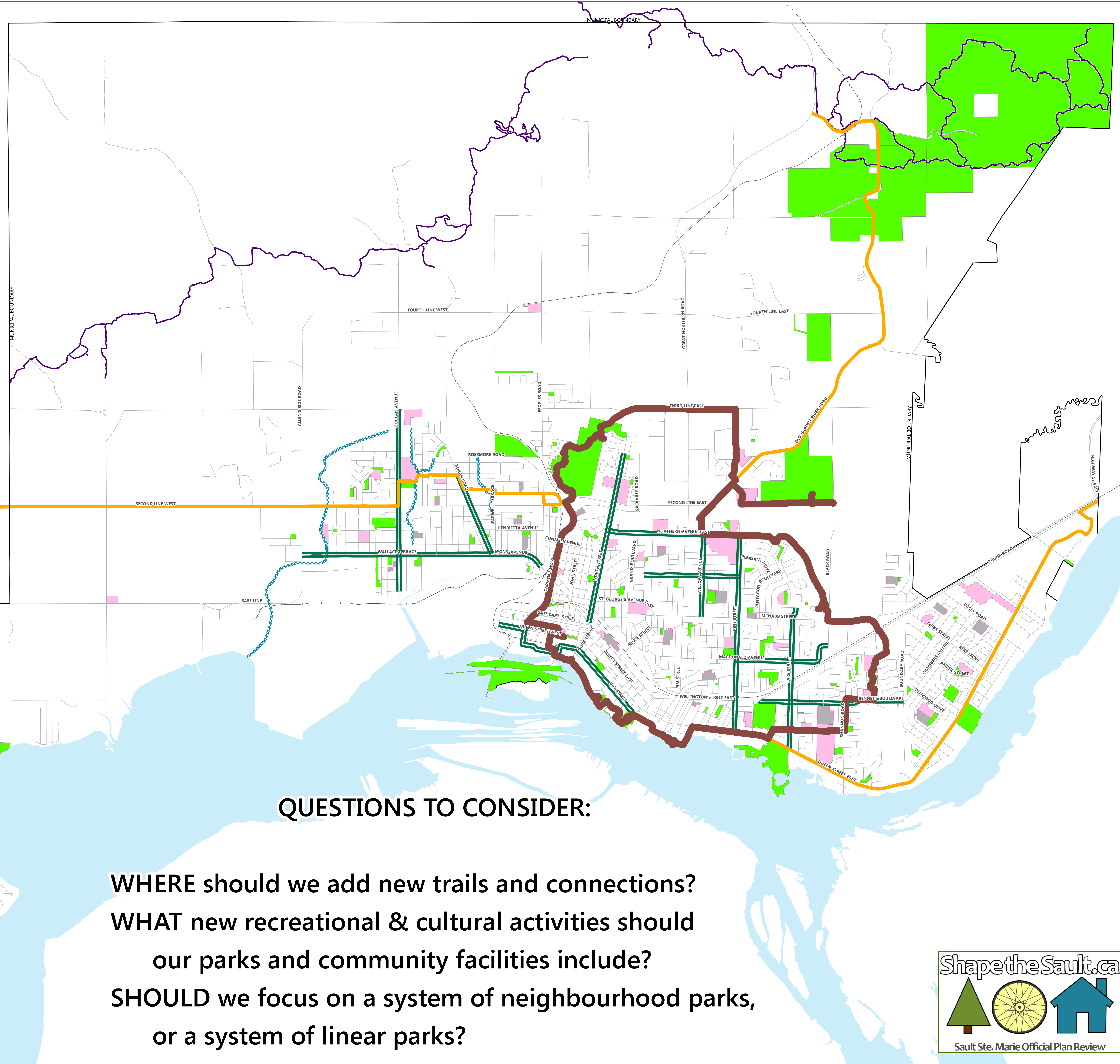
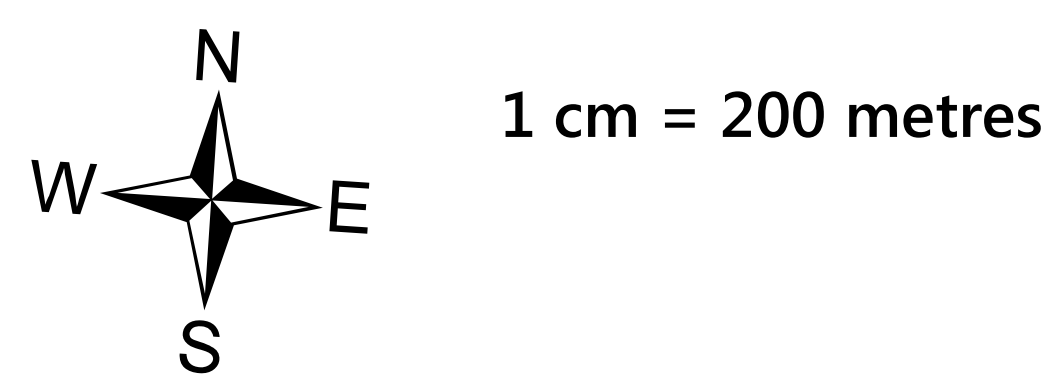
John Rowswell Hub Trail

Voyageur Trail

Proposed

Commuter Cycling Routes

Trans Canada Trail / Great Lakes Waterfront Trail



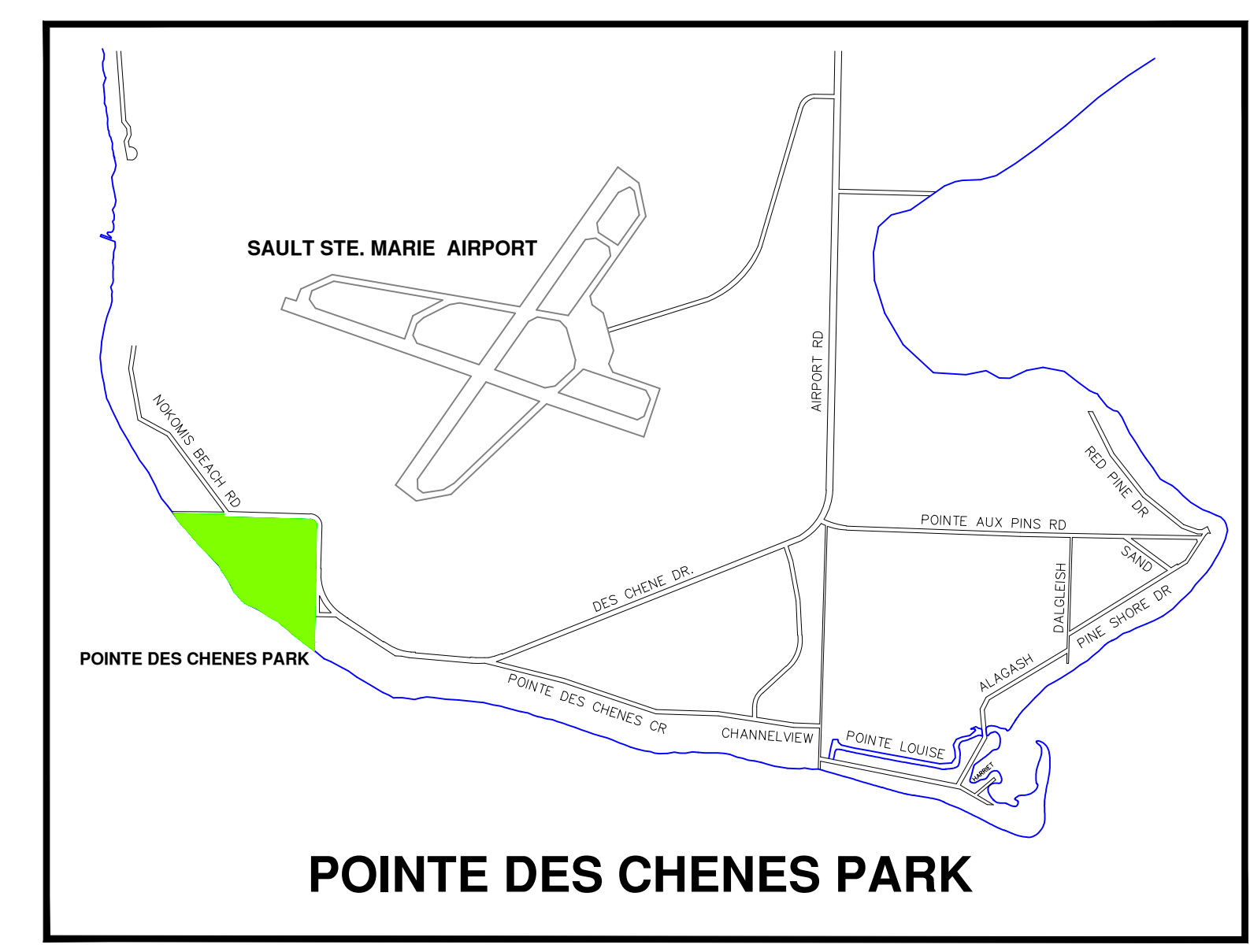
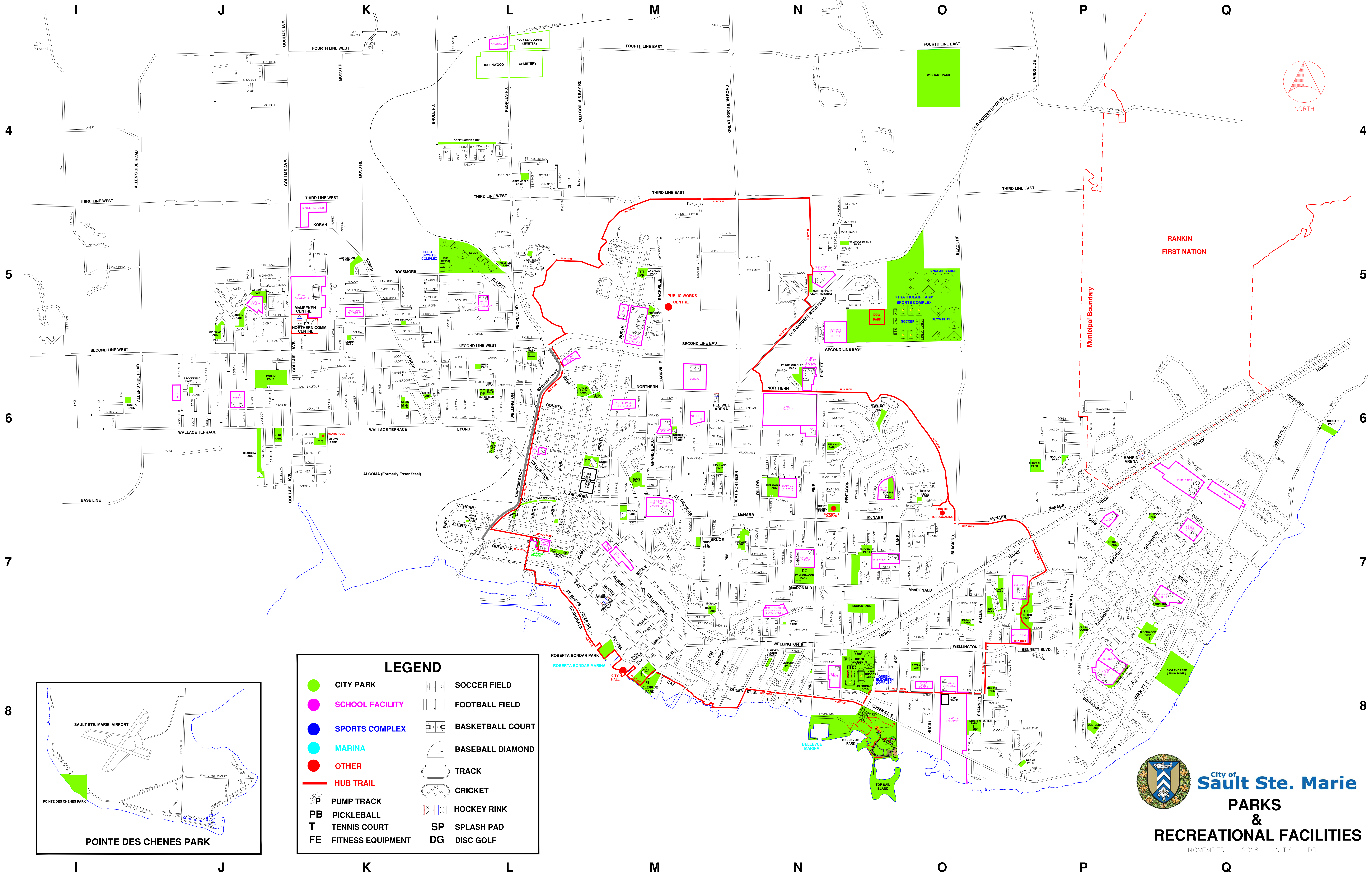
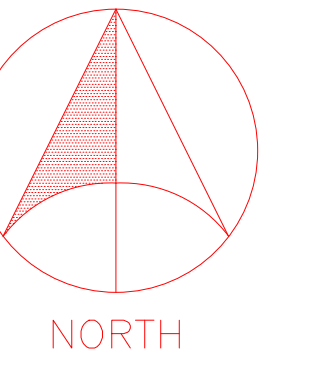
## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

**WHERE** should we add new trails and connections?

**WHAT** new recreational & cultural activities should our parks and community facilities include?

**SHOULD** we focus on a system of neighbourhood parks, or a system of linear parks?

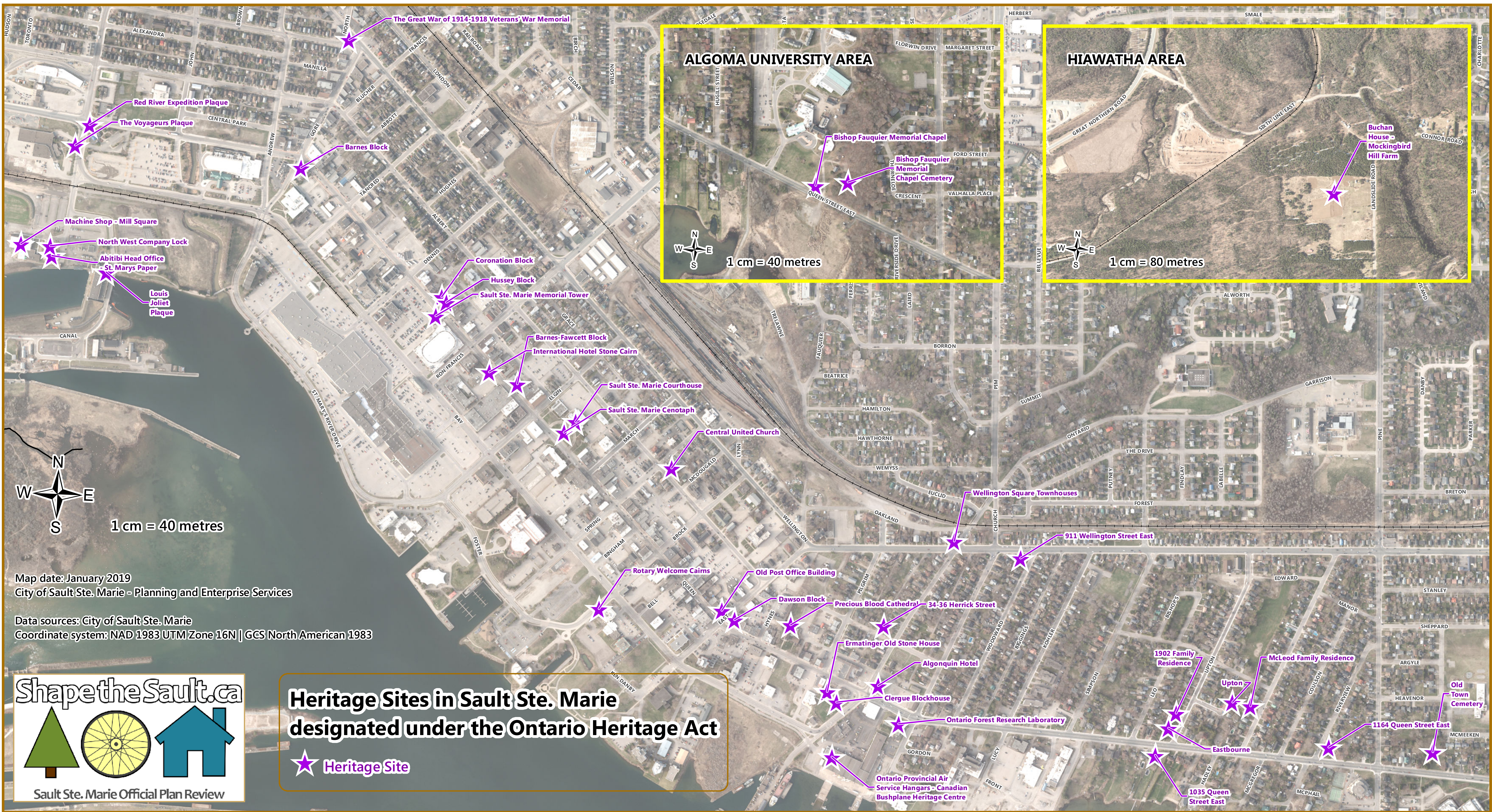




LEGEND			
	CITY PARK		SOCCER FIELD
	SCHOOL FACILITY		FOOTBALL FIELD
	SPORTS COMPLEX		BASKETBALL COURT
	MARINA		BASEBALL DIAMOND
	OTHER		TRACK
	HUB TRAIL		CRICKET
	PUMP TRACK		HOCKEY RINK
	PICKLEBALL		SPLASH PAD
	TENNIS COURT		DISC GOLF
	FITNESS EQUIPMENT		

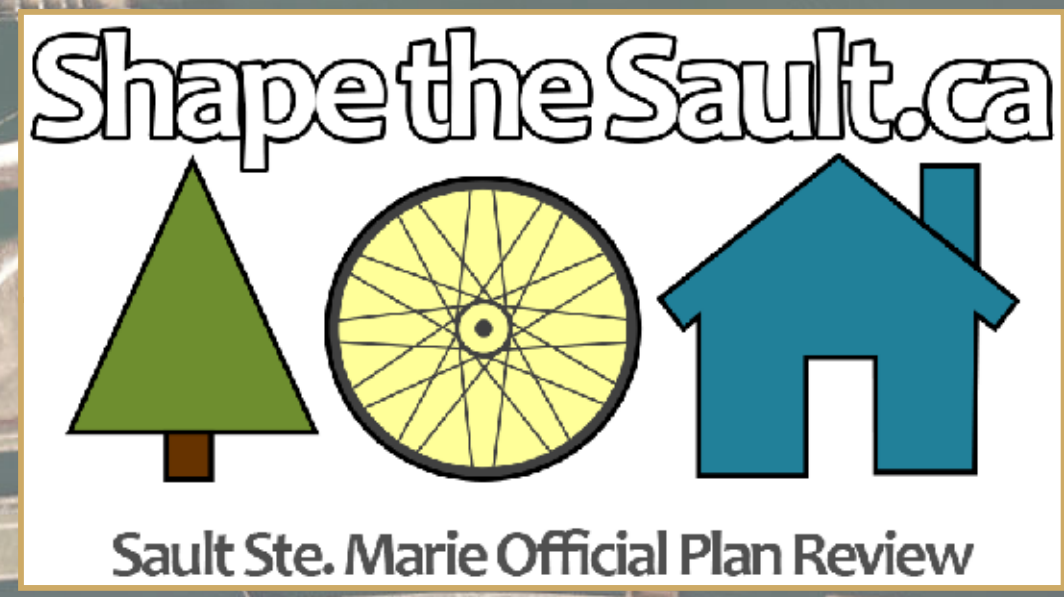


**City of Sault Ste. Marie**  
**PARKS & RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**  
 NOVEMBER 2018 N.T.S. DD



Map date: January 2019  
 City of Sault Ste. Marie - Planning and Enterprise Services

Data sources: City of Sault Ste. Marie  
 Coordinate system: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 16N | GCS North American 1983



**Heritage Sites in Sault Ste. Marie  
 designated under the Ontario Heritage Act**

★ Heritage Site

