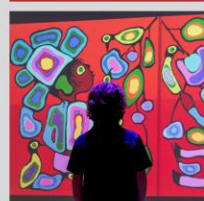
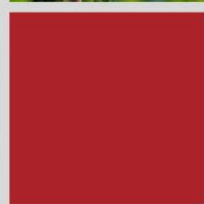




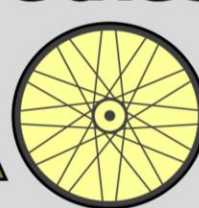
**SAULT
STE. MARIE**



City of Sault Ste. Marie Official Plan



Shape the Sault.ca



Sault Ste. Marie Official Plan Review



Land Acknowledgement

The City of Sault Ste. Marie acknowledges with respect, that we are in Robinson-Huron Treaty territory, that the land on which this Plan applies is the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe and known as Bawating. Bawating is the home of Garden River First Nation, Batchewana First Nation, the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Metis Council and today is home to many Urban Indigenous people from across Turtle Island.



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1 INTRODUCTION

Sault Ste. Marie is a thriving, sustainable mid-sized city in Northeastern Ontario, situated in the traditional territory of the Anishinabek people and the Robinson Huron Treaty Area. The Municipality abuts the Garden River and Batchewana First Nations, and is home to numerous Metis peoples.

Sault Ste. Marie's location at the southern edge of the Precambrian Shield and along the St. Mary's River in the Great Lakes Basin provides a rich physical geography and natural resources that define and add to the community's unique role in Northeast Ontario and the Algoma Region. For thousands of years, indigenous peoples from across the region would gather to harvest whitefish in the St. Mary's Rapids. Today, people still come to the area to take advantage of the community's many assets.

Sault Ste. Marie has come far since its beginnings as a seasonal gathering place. Today, our community plays many important roles. We are the hub of the Algoma Region and a regional centre for Northern Ontario. We are a relatively affordable place to live, with easy access to a variety of world-class outdoor recreational amenities. We are a place of learning and higher learning, a health care centre, and a cultural and entertainment hub. We are an industrial and service centre, and a good place to do business.

This Official Plan is about shaping the future of Sault Ste. Marie. This Official Plan builds upon our legacy of community development decisions and establishes policies that will guide future land use and infrastructure investment decisions. This Official Plan will ensure that Sault Ste. Marie remains sustainable now and in the future.

Generally, the City of Sault Ste. Marie is focused on growing the economy and population. To embrace growth is to embrace change. This Official Plan aims to accommodate growth in a manner that respects and contributes to the ongoing vibrancy and character of existing neighborhoods and developed areas, with an emphasis on development patterns that build upon existing *strategic development areas*, and filling existing land use gaps within these areas.



1.1 CONTEXT

Sault Ste. Marie is situated in the Great Lakes Basin, bounded by the Canadian Shield to the north, the St. Marys River and International border to the south. The regional and international transportation network includes the TransCanada Highway 17 Corridor, rail lines with connections to the United States and the TransCanada Rail network and an International Airport.

Sault Ste. Marie is a single tier municipality with an area of 222 square kilometers, characterized by a range and mix of waterfront, urban, rural and wilderness environments.

Sault Ste. Marie's physical geography and urban form is defined by its strategic location along the St. Mary's River and its long history of pre and post contact human settlement.

Sault Ste. Marie's climate is changing and will continue to change. It is anticipated that temperature and precipitation will continue to increase, with increasing variability in weather patterns and the possibility of more extreme weather events. Sault Ste. Marie must prepare for and adapt to projected impacts of climate change, including hotter and rainier seasons and more frequent, severe storms.

Sault Ste. Marie continues to experience sustained population growth that is expected to extend over the full 20-year planning horizon. The City's population has risen significantly since the last Census in 2021 (72,050 residents), supported by strong net migration, international student enrolment, and growing labour-force attraction.

According to the Ontario Ministry of Finance's long-range projections for the Algoma District, the region is expected to grow from 127,732 residents in 2024 to 141,864 residents by 2046. Applying Sault Ste. Marie's historic share of approximately 63 percent of the District's population equates to a projected 2046 population of approximately 89,374 residents for the city. Population projections prepared by Dillon Consulting and extended by staff using the same growth trajectory, estimates a 2046 population of approximately 89,658 residents.

This level of growth underscores the need for a coordinated planning framework that provides a diverse housing supply, supports transit-oriented and mixed-use intensification, and aligns land use with municipal infrastructure capacity. The 20-year horizon of this Plan responds to these demographic shifts by directing growth strategically, strengthening the City's economic competitiveness, and shaping complete, connected, and climate-ready neighbourhoods.

Employment growth is also expected to continue over the 20-year planning horizon. Building on the City's previous employment forecasting work prepared by Dillon Consulting and extended by staff using the same growth trajectory, total employment in Sault Ste. Marie is projected to increase from approximately 31,000 jobs in 2021 to approximately 39,850 jobs by 2046. Much of this growth is expected to occur in health care and social assistance, education, professional and technical services, construction and skilled trades, and tourism-related services. This level of employment growth reinforces the need for the City to maintain a sufficient supply of employment areas, protect strategic industrial lands, and support mixed-use intensification in key strategic development areas to accommodate expanding businesses and a growing labour force.

Based on projected land demand and designated, vacant and available land supply; there is enough land to meet residential, commercial and industrial needs for the next 20 years. The municipality is required to ensure sufficient land supply for growth by planning at two levels. First, through the Official Plan, the city must designate enough land to meet projected needs for a 20 year horizon, considering all land uses. Second, it must maintain an ongoing 15-year

supply of land specifically designated and available for residential development to support immediate and medium-term housing needs. These requirements ensure the city can respond to both long-term growth objectives and short-term development demands, aligning with provincial policies and promoting sustainable development.

Sault Ste. Marie's housing supply is relatively more adequate, suitable, and affordable than Ontario as a whole. Home ownership is more affordable, while rental affordability is generally consistent with provincial trends. While single detached homes represent the vast majority of housing types in the community, there has been a trend towards denser types of housing, such as townhomes and apartments.

There is room for improvement in Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma residents' physical health. Designing a built environment that enables and promotes healthy living and mental wellness is important, especially as the City increasingly needs to accommodate an aging population.

Sault Ste. Marie's transportation system and sustainable site design for urban developments are two key areas in which the City can have a direct impact in reducing our community's greenhouse gas emissions. The Transportation Master Plan identifies transportation needs of the community and highlights approaches to facilitate alternative modes of transportation with special regard for designing such modes to be accessible for all. In recent years, the City has actively developed its cycling infrastructure, with an emphasis on Active Transportation as a meaningful part of the City's overall transportation system. This is outlined in the City's Active Transportation Master Plan.

Sault Ste. Marie is served by an integrated system of parks and open space. Other public organizations, such as the Conservation Authority, also provide significant amounts of recreational space. Numerous local organizations and user groups play an important role in programming public space. The total amount, equitable distribution and suitable programming are critical components in determining appropriate park space service levels. Generally, residential neighbourhoods in the Sault have safe walkable access to enough park space with suitable programming. Furthermore, there exist an appropriate level of community parks and community facilities, which accommodate more organized, programmed recreational opportunities for the entire community and surrounding region. Having said this, total amount, equitable distribution and suitable programming levels will continued to be monitored to ensure that the park space system continues to serve a growing population, changing demographics and new recreational trends. This is outlined in the City's Parks and Recreational Master Plan.

Sault Ste. Marie has a vibrant arts and culture community that could benefit from stronger collaboration and support from both public and private sectors. There are currently 38 designated heritage sites in Sault Ste. Marie, of which over two-thirds are located in the Downtown.

Sault Ste. Marie has a rich natural environment that sustains the community. The community's drinking water supply is drawn from Lake Superior and from groundwater wells that are fed by precipitation that falls on the Precambrian Uplands and eventually percolates into the sand and gravel deposits just south of the Uplands. The Sault's natural environment also supports a diverse range of terrestrial and aquatic species, some of which have been identified as being endangered or having the potential to become endangered. Protecting, preserving and enhancing the habitat of these species is critical to achieving long-term biodiversity and sustainability. In some areas of the community, naturally occurring processes, such as flood, erosion and slope stability hazards present a risk to development and public health and safety. In some cases, new development



should avoid such areas. In others, the risk to public health and safety can be appropriately managed.

Sault Ste. Marie's Rural and Precambrian Uplands Areas comprise approximately 16,000 hectares (40,000 acres), around 75% of the City's total land mass. There is increasing recognition and desire to support local agriculture and local food, including production, processing and distribution. The number of active farms has varied between 25 and 35 since 2006. The Province and many municipalities permit a variety of 'agricultural related uses and on-farm diversified uses' to support farm operators. Maple syrup production is a growing sector and there is interest and potential for maple syrup harvesting in the community, especially in the Precambrian Uplands area. Rural living is an attractive option for many residents. Approximately 10% of Sault Ste. Marie's population lives outside of the city's urban area. Over the past two decades, about one quarter of all new dwellings were constructed in the Sault's Rural Area. This proportion has decreased over the past several years in favour of the urban area. Local sand and gravel deposits, critical to the aggregates industry and the overall development of the community are also located in the Rural Area, just south of the Precambrian Uplands. The Sault Ste. Marie Airport is another significant land use and activity hub in the city's Rural Area, encompassing 735 hectares of land and supporting approximately 300 jobs.

Sault Ste. Marie is supported by a vast network of water, sewage, and stormwater services as well as other utilities. The design and provision of most civic infrastructure and core services are guided by Provincial policies, regulations, and guidelines. The City has existing plans and policy documents regarding stormwater management, solid waste management, and the review of telecommunications infrastructure. The City will continue to work with its partners on the delivery of these services.

1.2 BASIS

This Official Plan includes and balances local and provincial goals and priorities for our community.

This Official Plan is informed by the Corporate Strategic Plan and other local plans, initiatives, and business practices such as the Sault Ste Marie Region Source Protection Plan, the City's Asset Management Plan, Stormwater Management Master Plan and the Transportation Master Plan, Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Active Transportation Master Plan, and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan, among others.

This Official Plan is also informed by and complies with the *Planning Act*, and other provincial legislation such as the *Aggregate Resources Act*, *Ontario Heritage Act* and *The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* to name a few. This Plan is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 and does not conflict with the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario.

To the greatest extent possible and within Ontario's policy lead planning system, this Official Plan reflects the perspectives and aspirations of residents, stakeholders, public agencies and the business community that engaged in the Shape the Sault process. This process saw 30 public open houses, more than 30 stakeholder group meetings, 45 community events and 2,800 individual discussions.



1.3 PURPOSE

This Official Plan includes 8 overarching themes that establish the long-term vision of what the future of Sault Ste. Marie will look like and includes policies to guide land use planning, infrastructure investment and other decisions.









This Official Plan establishes goals, objectives and policies to manage and direct physical change and its effects on the social, economic and natural environment. It contains policies and measures to help ensure the adequate provision of affordable housing and describes the procedures to obtain the views of the public during the land use planning approval process.

This Official Plan provides the basis for and will be implemented through other land use planning tools including the Zoning By-law. Further information on these tools and how they help implement the Official Plan, can be found in Section 10 – Implementation and Monitoring.



1.4 OVERARCHING THEMES

This Official Plan is informed by and founded upon the following themes:

 Healthy Community	Supports healthy living, active transportation, access to passive and active recreation, social interaction and the creation of spaces that are comfortable, safe and accessible for all ages and abilities (the “8 to 80 Cities” concept).
 Environmental Sustainability	Supports energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions and climate change adaptation.
 Integrated Mobility	Supports accessibility and choice of a diversity of transportation modes.
 Sense of Place	Fosters a welcoming place for all that establishes connection and provides a memorable experience to visitors.
 Sustainable Growth (Growth From Within)	Stimulates reinvigoration of neighbourhoods and areas through a strong focus on infill development and revitalization.
 Economic Resiliency	Supports the growth and diversification of the city’s economy.
 Social Equity	Contributes to creating a welcoming and inclusive community, focusing on the identification, prevention and removal of barriers so that everyone has access to an acceptable standard of living and can fully participate in all aspects of community life.
 Cultural Vitality	Celebrates the Sault’s history, diverse communities and natural and cultural heritage, with the Downtown as the Sault’s core destination for arts and culture.



1.5 STRUCTURE

This Official Plan is divided into several sections each with their own focus, as follows:

Section 2 - Growth and Settlement

Describes the City's approach to growth management and includes policies relating to the urban settlement area boundary, *strategic development areas*, intensification, and infill.

Section 3 - Urban Design and Mobility

Describes the City's approach to urban design at the community, neighbourhood and site-specific levels and how design can influence strategic outcomes like energy efficiency, safety and security, accessibility and winter livability. This section also describes the City's approach to moving people, goods and services throughout the community and region, including on foot, bike, motor vehicle, rail, boat and air.

Section 4 – Land Use

Describes the land use designations of the Plan, including permitted uses, uses that may be permitted subject to certain conditions and how land use planning compatibility will be achieved throughout the community.

Section 5 - Housing

Describes the City's approach to supporting attainable and affordable housing and includes housing targets and policies relating to rental dwelling units, affordable housing, accessory dwelling units, supportive housing, student housing, residential property standards, rental conversions and homelessness.

Section 6 - Parks, Recreation, Arts, Culture and Heritage

Describes the City's approach to the park space system, including how lands will be acquired and disposed of. It also describes the City's approach to managing cultural heritage resources, archaeological resources, and public art.

Section 7 - Natural Environment, Resources and Hazards

Outlines the various measures aimed at protecting significant natural environmental features such as wetlands and significant wildlife habitats and resources such as sourcewater protection and aggregate resources. Policies are also in place to either direct development away from natural and built hazards or ensure that risks to public health and safety are appropriately mitigated.

Section 8 –Agriculture and Food Systems

Describes the City's approach to ensuring a healthy and vibrant rural and agricultural area including on-farm diversified uses, home based industries, seasonal food outlets, and maple syrup production. This section also addresses the overall food system, with policies relating to urban agriculture, community gardens and food banks.

Section 9 - Infrastructure and Servicing

Provides policy direction for water, sewage, stormwater management, solid waste, and other services and utilities, including emergency services.

Section 10 - Implementation and Monitoring

Provides direction on how to interpret the Plan and how the Plan will be implemented and monitored during its lifetime.



The following Schedules/Maps form part of this Official Plan:

- Schedule A – Land Use
- Schedule B – Strategic Development Area
- Schedule C – Mobility and Major Infrastructure
- Schedule D – Natural Heritage Features and Areas
- Schedule E – Environmental Constraints and Hazards
- Schedule F – Groundwater Resources
- Schedule G – Archaeological and Cultural heritage Resources

For further information on how to use and interpret this Official Plan, please refer to Section 10 – Implementation and Monitoring.



2 GROWTH AND SETTLEMENT

As a regional centre in the Algoma Region and Northeastern Ontario, Sault Ste. Marie is expected to grow in the future. How we manage this growth matters, now more than ever. This growth must continue to be directed to reinforce the Sault's existing urban structure thereby capitalizing on existing investments in infrastructure and services. Directing the majority of new growth to existing urban areas, with an emphasis on *strategic development areas*, helps to maintain the existing character of the rural area, while at the same time protecting large rural parcels to accommodate future urban development and other land uses requiring large acreages, such as agricultural uses and sand and gravel pits. Growing from within also ensures the best use of existing infrastructure and facilitates complete communities where residents have easy access to a wide variety of social, commercial and recreational amenities. The Precambrian Uplands Area in the northern portion of the City will continue to be protected from development. Reinforcing the urban structure will also result in a more efficient land use pattern that is more resilient to climate change, facilitates improvements to pedestrianism and improves the overall health and wellbeing of residents.

For many years, Sault Ste. Marie has employed a two-part growth management strategy that concentrated the majority of growth and development within the urban area and permitted appropriate limited development in the rural area. This Plan builds on the success of this two-part growth management strategy by formalizing and including policies for the Urban Settlement Area, and policies to guide future growth and development in *strategic development areas* through the adaptive reuse of vacant buildings, infill development and residential intensification.

With regards to the overall growth and settlement of the Community, it is the City's Objectives to:

- a. Provide an adequate land supply to meet long-term needs.
- b. Establish and maintain an appropriately sized Urban Settlement Area (USA) that can at all times accommodate a minimum 15-year supply of designated residential lands. In addition, plan for a 20-year or longer time horizon for all land uses as part of the Official Plan, recognizing that policies encouraging infill development, residential intensification,

and adaptive reuse of existing buildings are intended to optimize land use and reduce the need to expand the USA.

- c. Direct the majority of future growth and development to the Urban Settlement Area.
- d. Permit appropriate development in the Rural Area, with special regard for locally appropriate limited rural residential development.
- e. Encourage a mix of uses within the Urban Settlement Area.
- f. Identify *strategic development areas* that will be the focus of more intensive forms of mixed-use development, with special regard for uses that fill land use gaps and developments that are designed to be active transportation and transit supportive.
- g. Encourage context sensitive intensification and infill development in the Urban Settlement Area.

2.1 URBAN SETTLEMENT AREA

The land supply within the Urban Settlement Area is designed to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of residential, industrial, commercial, institutional and park space development opportunities to accommodate short, medium and long term growth over the life of this plan. The City's existing supply within the Urban Settlement Area Boundary is adequate to meet these needs, especially when considered in light of additional policies aimed at intensification, infill development and the adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

The Sault's Urban Settlement Area includes built up areas where development is concentrated with a mix of land uses, as well as vacant lands that are appropriately designated for future development. The City's Urban Settlement Area is shown on Schedule A – Land Use.

The Urban Settlement Area includes the Downtown, which is a Strategic Core Area for the purposes of the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, and the main node, or, *strategic development area*, of the community. Policies for the Downtown are set out in the Land Use Section (Section 4) of this Plan. Policies for other *strategic development areas* are set out below.

With respect to the Urban Settlement Area, it shall be the policy of the City to:

- a. Focus the majority of future growth and development in the Urban Settlement Area through development, redevelopment, and intensification.
- b. Ensure that land use patterns will be based on densities and land uses that make the most efficient use of land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, minimize negative impacts on air quality and climate change, promote energy efficiency, prepare for the impacts of a changing climate, support active transportation and be transit and freight supportive.
- c. When identifying or expanding settlement areas, the evaluation shall consider the need for additional land to accommodate a range of land uses, the capacity of existing or planned infrastructure and public services, impacts on agriculture, compliance with minimum distance separation requirements, and the ability to accommodate growth in a coordinated, phased manner.

2.2 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) are areas within the Urban Settlement Area that will accommodate a significant portion of the City's growth through intensification. Intensification is the development of a property, site, or area at a higher density than currently exists through redevelopment, the development of vacant or underutilized lots, infill, and the expansion or conversion of existing buildings. Intensification is essential to completing our communities,



making the most efficient use of land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, minimizing negative impacts on air quality and climate change, promoting energy efficiency and supporting public transit, active transportation, and the efficient movement of people and goods. The City's SDAs comprise the first settlement area of the City (including Downtown) and areas within a safe-walkable distance to an array of services and amenities such as retail clusters, grocery stores, community centres, schools, and parks. SDAs are delineated on Strategic Development Areas Schedule "B" and include the following *strategic development areas*:

- First Neighbourhoods SDA.
- West End SDA
- East End SDA
- Great Northern Road SDA
- Steelton SDA

2.2.1 Strategic Development Areas - First Neighbourhoods

The First Neighbourhoods are the initial major settlement areas within the City, including the Downtown. This area contains a large employment concentration and is the location of the highest density of office developments. The First Neighbourhoods should be the primary focus of intensification and revitalization activities, thereby helping the area continue to become a vibrant, resilient and diverse mixed-use community that provides a range of housing options for all residents. Residential development in the First Neighbourhoods also stimulates increased investment, business activity and downtown revitalization.

2.2.2 Strategic Development Areas - Other

The other identified SDAs are those that have significant development potential to become mixed-use neighbourhoods with pedestrian-friendly access to a variety of services, amenities, and housing within a safe walkable distance. Other SDAs are typically centred around arterial roads and have good access to public transportation. They are located strategically across the Urban Settlement Area to provide a major mixed-use destination to larger residential or business catchment areas. They may also be centered around Large-Scale Activity Hubs that generate significant activity and employment.

With respect to *strategic development areas*, it shall be a policy of the City to:

- a) Encourage a complete mix of land uses with an emphasis on filling land use gaps and creating complete neighbourhoods that can meet a variety of needs, such as living, working, education, shopping, and recreational opportunities.
- b) Promote transit and pedestrian supportive development and a range of housing options through intensification, redevelopment and infill development, subject to compatibility with the existing and planned character of the area and the suitability of existing and planned infrastructure and services.
- c) Encourage additional residential growth and development through various means including, but not limited to, financial incentives and reduced development standards.
- d) Encourage the expansion of *strategic development areas* by:

- i. Improving connectivity and active transportation networks within the *strategic development areas* and adjacent neighbourhoods. (e.g., footpaths, sidewalks, bicycle networks, and pedestrian crossings).
- ii. Promoting the establishment of Neighbourhood Commercial in areas that contain medium to high density residential but few local convenience and neighbourhood commercial uses within a safe-walkable distance. These include, but are not limited to:
 - Dacey Road from Trunk Road to Hardwood Street
 - The Goulais Avenue / Second Line West Area
 - Second Line West between Farwell Terrace and Peoples Road
 - Algoma University Area

2.3 INTENSIFICATION

Intensification is the development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists through development, redevelopment, infill development and the expansion or conversion of existing buildings or uses where municipal roadways and services do not need to be extended. While intensification applies to all types of development, residential intensification is the most important and common form of local intensification.

Intensification is essential to completing our communities, making the most efficient use of land, resources, infrastructure, and public service facilities, minimizing negative impacts on air quality and climate change, promoting energy efficiency and supporting public transit, active transportation and the efficient movement of people and goods.

The rate and nature of intensification and associated change is not expected to be uniform across the city. Intensification should be context sensitive. It must be compatible with and reinforce the existing and planned character of an area. This can be accomplished through good urban design, as outlined in Section 3 of this Plan. Within this context, Residential Areas will remain stable, but not static.

With respect to intensification, it shall be the policy of the City to:

- a. Encourage all forms of intensification, in accordance with the policies of this Plan;
- b. Aim to accommodate 30 percent of future residential growth and development through intensification within the Urban Settlement Area.
- c. Encourage intensification on sites that are no longer viable for the purpose for which they were intended such as former commercial, industrial, and institutional sites, or where residential uses can be added in a complementary manner that does not negatively affect the ongoing viability of the existing non-residential uses.
- d. Evaluate applications for intensification using, amongst other matters, the following criteria:
 - i. The suitability of the site in terms of size and shape of the lot, soil conditions, topography and drainage.
 - ii. The compatibility of the proposed development on the existing and planned character of the area.

- iii. The provision of on-site landscaping, fencing, buffering, increased setbacks and other measures to lessen any impact the proposed development may have on the character of the area.
- iv. The availability and capacity of existing and planned infrastructure and public facilities to appropriately service the proposed development.
- v. The provision of adequate ingress/egress, off street parking, loading facilities, as well as safe and convenient vehicular circulation.
- vi. The impact of traffic generated by the proposed development on the road network and surrounding land uses.
- vii. The availability of existing, planned or the potential need to enhance public transit and active transportation infrastructure.
- viii. Impacts of the proposed development on surrounding natural features or areas and cultural heritage resources.
- ix. The relationship between the proposed development and any natural or built hazards.
- x. The Geographical relationship to a *strategic development area*.
- e. Ensure that residential intensification proposals are assessed in a manner that respects and to the greatest extent possible addresses concerns of the local community, while at the same time recognizing the need and community wide benefits of providing opportunities for residential intensification.



3 URBAN DESIGN AND MOBILITY

How we build our city matters. The principles of urban design influence the physical design and layout of a site, a streetscape, a neighbourhood and a community. Urban design is important to achieving a recognizable image for the city, enhancing quality-of-life, increasing environmental health and promoting greater economic vitality. The design of our built spaces and public realm is intimately tied to the way we move and interact in the community. The City, through this Plan, other *Planning Act* tools and future public projects has an important role in shaping design. The intent of this Plan is to provide broad urban design direction to improve the quality and character of future public and private projects.

How we move around our city also matters. The design of our active transportation, public transit and transportation networks influences the choices that people make to get around the city, be it to go to work, shopping or to a favourite recreational activity. Land use and mobility planning must be integrated in order to realize strategic economic, environmental, public health and quality of life outcomes. The City has an important role to ensure a sustainable and integrated transportation network. The intent of this Plan is to provide the broad framework necessary to achieve a sustainable and integrated transportation network.

With regards to urban design, the City shall:

- a. Develop an attractive, efficient, accessible and safe physical environment.
- b. Encourage high quality development and intensification.
- c. Prepare for and adapt to the potential impacts of climate change.
- d. Accommodate the needs of an ageing population in the built environment.
- e. Develop, maintain and implement the following guidelines for the overall development of the community:
 - i. Community wide Urban Design Guidelines.
 - ii. Complete Streets Manual.
 - iii. Downtown Streetscape Manual.
 - iv. Sustainable Site Plan Guidelines.



- f. Utilize the policies of this Section during the development application review and capital planning and design process to evaluate matters such as:
 - i. Patterns of movement and the physical and social connections that exist between people and places.
 - ii. The interrelationship between built and unbuilt spaces that comprise the public realm and private developments.
 - iii. The protection and integration of the natural environment and cultural heritage resources.
 - iv. Accessibility, safety, sustainability and climate resilience.

3.1 COMMUNITY DESIGN

The City will encourage a high standard of Community design that:

- a. Creates a strong sense of place.
- b. Integrates a mix of land uses such as living areas, employment areas, institutional uses, parks and open spaces.
- c. Preserves and connects environmentally sensitive areas.
- d. Incorporates natural and cultural heritage features and areas.
- e. Creates accessible, safe, sustainable and climate change resilient places.
- f. Is context appropriate, complimenting the surrounding built form and character.
- g. Applies the principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). More specifically, designing spaces that contain:
 - i. Public surveillance by creating well lit areas, community activity areas and avoiding blind spots.
 - ii. Strategic landscaping and fencing.
 - iii. Territorial reinforcement through the use of signage, landscaping, pavement designs, gateway treatments and fences.
- h. Contributes to streetscapes and pedestrian environments by:
 - i. Providing appropriate transitions between public and private realms.
 - ii. Strategic location of building entrances.
 - iii. Animating building façades and avoiding blank façades.
 - iv. Providing landscaping, lighting, paving, street furniture and public art.
 - v. Design streets to serve different modes of transportation as well as space for stormwater management, municipal servicing, landscaping and other amenities.
- i. Promotes the design, conservation, enhancement and creation of significant public open spaces that contribute to the City's image.
- j. Includes sustainable design elements, which generally follow the City's Community's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan.

3.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD AND SUBDIVISION DESIGN

The City shall support and promote the creation of urban areas that are complete, including mixed-use neighbourhoods where residents have easy access to a diversity of amenities, services and housing.

- a. In reviewing development applications (Zoning By-law Amendments, Official Plan Amendments, Subdivisions and Condominiums), the City shall support the creation of complete neighbourhoods by:
 - i. Considering whether a development contributes to a complete and diverse mix of land uses and housing types for the area where the development is proposed.



- ii. Requiring appropriately designed transitions between different land uses, densities, and interfaces between existing and new development.
 - iii. Recognizing parks and other public open spaces as an integral part of an enjoyable, attractive and complete neighbourhood, which shall be protected as much as possible.
- b. In reviewing subdivision applications, the City shall promote the creation of connected neighbourhoods by considering, as appropriate:
 - i. The provision of neighbourhood connections such as sidewalks, pathways and crossings, in accordance with City's Complete Streets Manual.
 - ii. The creation of safe and continuous pedestrian connections between residences and community amenities such as schools, parks, places of worship and retail services.
 - iii. Designing streets and street networks that facilitate public transit.
 - iv. Encouraging land uses that function as 'third places' – or locations within the neighbourhood that are intended for social gathering and interaction. These may include, but are not limited to, parks, parkettes, coffee shops, small restaurants, and places of worship.

3.3 SITE DESIGN

The quality design of sites influences the activity, comfort and safety of the public. It shall be the policy of the City:

- a. To apply Site Plan Control in the following cases:
 - i. On properties located within *strategic development areas*, including the downtown, along corridors and gateway areas.
 - ii. Where there is a sensitive use/non-sensitive use interface, or residential/non-residential interface.
 - iii. Medium and large-scale residential and non-residential intensification development.
 - iv. Any residential development consisting of 11 or more dwelling units on one lot.
 - v. Any other proposal where Council deems it appropriate to require site plan control.
- b. Where a development contains an interface between sensitive and non-sensitive uses (such as commercial development abutting a residential dwelling), the following shall be required where applicable:
 - i. Landscaping that provides visual buffering for abutting sensitive use properties.
 - ii. To the greatest extent possible, functional activities of non-sensitive uses such as outdoor storage, parking and loading should not be located in yards adjacent to or abutting sensitive uses, unless adequate buffering can be provided.
 - iii. Light and noise shall be directed away from sensitive use properties and noise attenuation measures may be considered.
- c. To consider the impact of new developments on street functions, access and multimodal circulation by:
 - i. Allowing for shared driveways and direct vehicular connections between parking lots and buildings of abutting properties where possible, to limit access points onto streets.



- ii. Incorporating facilities that support access via alternative modes of transportation, such as internal sidewalks, transit shelters, internal bike lanes, bicycle parking and traffic calming measures.
 - iii. Promoting and accommodating pedestrian travel within the development. Where feasible, new developments will provide walking facilities and ensure reasonable walking distances to the public street and abutting transit stops.
 - iv. Considering several smaller-sized parking areas defined by landscaping and pedestrian amenities rather than one large parking area.
- d. That all new and significantly reconstructed buildings and spaces, especially those intended to be open to the public, shall use barrier-free design that enables universal accessibility for all ages and abilities, in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the Ontario Building Code. More specifically:
 - i. The City will continually encourage the elimination of barriers in existing developments.
 - ii. For all new developments and redevelopments, barrier-free parking shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the Zoning By-law. Barrier-free parking spaces should be located adjacent to buildings and within close proximity to primary entrances.
 - iii. Developments shall include physical amenities that allow for safe and accessible travel by pedestrians and persons with disabilities or mobility challenges, including, unobstructed dedicated walkways, curb cuts, ramps and drop off & pick up areas.
 - iv. Municipal developments shall be designed in accordance with the Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS).
- e. To require higher quality landscaping on all developments where Site Plan Control is applied, more specifically:
 - i. Tree planting and landscaping shall be emphasized for all new developments.
 - ii. Vegetation shall be varied, with a preference for native species. Non-native species shall be non-invasive. Vegetation shall be species that thrive in urban environments.
 - iii. Access corridors (private access roads), front yards and edges/buffers shall be delineated by high quality landscaping.
 - iv. Wherever possible, developments shall maintain and reinforce existing trees, natural features and wooded areas within or adjacent to the development site.
 - v. Vegetation and sustainable landscaping measures should be used to reduce urban heat and stormwater runoff.
- f. To encourage, wherever possible, the integration of low-impact design into landscaping plans and site design by:
 - i. Incorporating sustainable and low-impact design features that address energy efficiency, energy and water conservation and other environmental goals.
 - ii. Minimizing the impact on the City's stormwater management system by incorporating on-site measures such as permeable surfaces and vegetative retention areas that limit the amount of stormwater entering the municipal service system.
 - iii. Designing parking areas in ways that are visually appealing, considering the impact on stormwater and urban heat island effects through the choice of surface materials and vegetation.



- iv. Utilizing energy-efficient lighting and development standards in creating well-lit and comfortable environments.
- g. To ensure that developments promote comfort and safety by adopting appropriate human scale design and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) considerations, in accordance with the Sustainable Site Plan Guidelines.
- h. To require functional areas such as outdoor storage, refuse areas and loading and servicing areas to be visually screened using landscaping or visually blended using proper building materials.
- i. To require large-scale public and private developments to incorporate areas and amenities for public use that are safe, comfortable, intuitive and well-designed to foster social interaction. These amenities could include parkettes, bus shelters and waiting areas, and pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks, boardwalks and trails.
- j. To consider opportunities to increase public access to shorelines.

3.4 AREA SPECIFIC DESIGN POLICIES

3.4.1 DOWNTOWN

The Downtown is the economic, social, and cultural heart of Sault Ste. Marie. A well designed Downtown is critical to attracting new residents and businesses to the City. The policies of this plan shall be applied together with the City's Downtown Streetscape Manual. The City shall:

- a. Use incentives and regulatory policies to develop The Downtown into a complete neighbourhood containing a diverse mix of places to live, work, shop and enjoy leisure time.
- b. Require human scale, street-oriented development that considers the relationship between buildings and the public realm and continues the existing traditional built form and pattern.
- c. Implement appropriate complete street approaches for Downtown streets, by ensuring streets and abutting development facilitates pedestrian, cyclist and transit modes of travel and that trees, landscaping and pedestrian amenities are incorporated into streetscapes.
- d. Develop neighbourhood infrastructure and amenities, such as public parks, which residents of all ages can enjoy.
- e. Utilize underused spaces to create places where residents can gather, socialize and enjoy leisure time, including places for temporary use.
- f. Prioritize Downtown waterfront lands along the edge of the St. Mary's River for public uses.
- g. Require any new private development along the Downtown waterfront to incorporate public access to the river.
- h. Develop a distinctive identity for the entire Downtown by promoting high quality urban design and property aesthetics through Site Plan Control.
- i. Establish a sense of place and direction, recognize Downtown's distinct heritage character, and create Downtown gateways and landmarks that are inviting and attractive.

3.4.2 GATEWAYS

Gateways are key points of entry to Sault Ste. Marie. They are the first locations visitors see when they arrive in the City, requiring a higher standard of building and site design, with special regard for high quality landscaping. The following areas are defined Gateways:

- a. The area immediately surrounding the International Bridge Plaza.
- b. Great Northern Road between Second Line and Fourth Line.



- c. Trunk Road from the east City limits to Black Road.

3.4.3 LANDMARKS AND PUBLIC VISTAS

As part of the development approvals process, the City may identify significant views between public spaces and key landmarks and natural features that are important to protect for public enjoyment.

3.4.4 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AREAS

- a. *Strategic development areas* present strong opportunities to create well-designed and highly-connected complete neighbourhoods.
- b. Within *strategic development areas*, the City shall encourage:
 - i. Higher design standards in accordance with Sustainable Site Plan Guidelines.
 - ii. Connectivity and multimodal movement for all ages and abilities,
 - iii. Street design in accordance with the Complete Streets Manual, which includes, but is not limited to: ensuring streets facilitate pedestrian, cyclist and transit modes of travel; and, incorporating trees, landscaping and pedestrian amenities into streetscapes.

3.5 OTHER IMPORTANT URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

3.5.1 ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The City will encourage urban design solutions that minimize non-renewable resource consumption and maximize the use of renewable energy. With the overall goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the City shall encourage:

- a. Compact, mixed use and infill developments that concentrate complementary land uses and support active transportation and public transit.
- b. New developments to be designed in a manner that maximizes passive solar gain opportunities.
- c. Low impact design elements.
- d. Retaining and utilizing existing trees and vegetation as natural shade canopies.
- e. Landscape solutions that maximize the use of native and climate resilient species, minimize impervious surfaces and manage stormwater as close to the source as possible.
- f. Techniques and materials that increase energy efficiency and reduce the overall carbon footprint.

3.5.2 SAFETY AND SECURITY

All development within the City shall have regard for public safety and account for it in site design by:

- a. Where necessary, separating pedestrian and motorised traffic by:
 - i. Providing medians or islands for pedestrians to use when crossing wider streets.
 - ii. Allowing greater use of on-street parking during appropriate times of the day and year to buffer pedestrians from moving vehicles.
- b. Creating well lit, safe spaces by application of *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* considerations, in accordance with the Sustainable Site Plan Guidelines.
- c. Providing barrier free access in all public and publicly accessible facilities and along pedestrian routes. Barrier free features such as ramps and curb cuts shall be integrated with the building design.



3.5.3 WINTER LIVABILITY

The City will encourage urban design solutions that enhance winter liveability by:

- a. Fostering building design and orientation to maximize passive solar heating and cooling.
- b. Wherever possible, adding new bus shelters, especially at locations with higher ridership volumes or where microclimate conditions such as increased wind are present.
- c. Encouraging landscaping treatments which act as windscreens.
- d. Encouraging the planting of evergreen tree species to increase the amount of winter greenery within the city.

3.6 MOBILITY

The following objectives are intended guide the City's overall approach to designing and maintaining the mobility system.

- a. Create complete streets that support a balanced, integrated and accessible multi-modal transportation system.
- b. Promote the development of an efficient transportation system and land use patterns that foster strong live-work-play relationships to encourage greater use of active and public transit.
- c. Where necessary, require a Transportation Impact Study as a part of the development application process.
- d. Seek input from the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee on all transportation infrastructure projects.
- e. Ensure that new and reconstructed streets and transportation infrastructure are designed in a manner that is accessible by people of all ages and abilities.
- f. Freight-intensive land uses shall generally be focused to areas well served by freight transportation facilities such as rail, highways, marine and airport.
- g. Proactively seek out opportunities to improve the transportation network, which could include the following measures:
 - i. Support road diets and temporary road closures where appropriate to provide more space for active transportation users.
 - ii. Consider traffic calming measures where appropriate, based on neighbourhood input with reference to the City's Procedures for Traffic Calming.
 - iii. Address gaps in the active transportation network.

3.6.1 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

The promotion of active transportation in the form of walking and cycling has significant individual, social, environmental and economic benefits. Active transportation offers an alternative to trips made by automobiles, particularly for short distances. Expanding the City's active transportation network is essential for a sustainable and healthy community. The City's current active transportation network consists of a mix of multi-use pathways, on-road cycling lanes, sidewalks and walkways.

The City shall:

- a. Implement the recommendations of the Active Transportation Master Plan to establish a safe, well-connected system that fosters and supports a culture of active transportation.
- b. Expand and maintain the active transportation network, including expansion of the John Rowswell Hub Trail network, and implementation of on-street cycling lane.



- c. Create safe and accessible crossings along the John Rowsell Hub Trail and other high-demand pedestrian corridors.
- d. Design municipal transportation infrastructure to be appealing for active transport users through measures including, but not limited to:
 - i. Installing safe, comfortable and intuitive pedestrian and cyclist crossings at intersections.
 - ii. Providing rest stops along multi-use trails.
 - iii. Providing appropriate lighting on roads, selected multi-use trails and connectors.
 - iv. Providing bicycle parking at public facilities.
 - v. Implementing wayfinding that enhances ease of travel and navigation for travelers using any mode of transportation.
- e. Consider adding bicycle facilities for all new road projects based on an assessment of safety, potential usage, cost and linkages to major employment, educational or recreational centres. This Plan supports a rigorous pedestrian counting program at key intersections and other locations.
- f. Provide pedestrian connections to transit locations, public parks, between neighbourhoods and to major attractions/trip generators, where feasible.
- g. Review development proposals to ensure adequate pedestrian access in new developments. The City may acquire lands to provide pedestrian facilities as a condition of approval.
- h. Ensure where appropriate, that major development proposals contain adequate cycling facilities, such as bicycle parking.
- i. Facilitate where possible, separation of pedestrians and cyclists from motorized traffic.
- j. Provide sidewalks on roads where feasible, as per the following:
 - i. On both sides of Arterial Roads and Collector Streets.
 - ii. On at least one side of Local Streets.
- k. Ensure that pedestrian facilities and sidewalks are of a barrier free design.

3.6.2 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The provision of public transit is aligned with many other objectives of this plan, including integrated mobility, healthy community, environmental sustainability and social equity. In support of public transit and transit-supportive development, the City shall:

- a. Create complete streets as per the Complete Streets Manual, which accommodate multi-modal transportation, including transit.
- b. Provide safe transit stops and connections.
- c. Examine the need for public transit services as part of new developments, as warranted by economic feasibility and service demand.
- d. Encourage residential intensification and mixed use developments within the existing built up areas to support and reinforce existing transit services.

3.6.3 ROAD NETWORK

The continued efficient functioning of the City's road system shall be supported by:

- a. Monitoring and maintaining the operational efficiency of roads and intersections by:
 - i. Protecting major goods movement corridors, such as highways and truck routes, for efficient vehicular movement while considering safe movement of pedestrians, cyclists and transit users across these corridors.



- ii. Identifying standards for consolidated driveway and access control onto Arterial Roads.
- b. Applying the Sustainable Site Plan Guideline to developments abutting Arterial Roads to:
 - i. Preserve and promote the functionality and aesthetic quality of Arterial Corridors.
 - ii. Minimize traffic conflicts, collisions and congestion.
 - iii. Enhance safe access to and from a property for all modes of transportation.
- c. Permitting new Provincial Highway corridors to be planned, designed and constructed without amendment to this Plan.
- d. Requiring all new development, including new lot creation, to front on a municipally owned road, with the exception of condominium development or any other exception noted in this Plan.

3.6.4 ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS

Municipal Streets shall be designed according to the following Street Classifications where feasible. The classification of a road as either 'urban' or 'rural' is based on its design standards, rather than its geographic location within or outside the Urban Settlement Area (USA). For example, a roadway located within the USA that is constructed without a curb and gutter, would still be considered a rural roadway.

3.6.4.1 Arterial Streets

- a. Urban and Rural Arterial Streets shall have a protected design width of up to 30m.
- b. Arterial Streets are designed to be the primary network of corridors for traffic moving through the City, capable of carrying high volumes of vehicular traffic.
- c. Commercial truck traffic should be directed onto Arterial Streets wherever appropriate.
- d. Arterial Streets within the Urban Settlement Area shall have enhanced 'complete street' designs to accommodate active transportation modes and public transit safely within the street right-of-way, where feasible. This may include, as appropriate:
 - i. Sidewalks on both sides of the street.
 - ii. Active transportation infrastructure such as cycling lanes or multi-use paths.
 - iii. Boulevards to separate vehicle lanes from sidewalks or multi-use pathways.
 - iv. Controlled pedestrian crossings.
 - v. Safe and accessible street furnishings such as transit shelters, benches, waste receptacles and bike racks.
 - vi. Lands that front onto Arterial Streets within the Urban Settlement Area may be subject to Site Plan Control, in order to regulate:
 - Access to and from Arterial Streets, with consideration for all modes of transportation.
 - Aesthetic quality of the built form.
 - High-quality front yard landscaping.
 - vii. Arterial Streets outside the Urban Settlement Area should accommodate active transportation modes using on-street designs (such as widened roadway shoulders) or off-street designs (such as multi-use paths).
 - viii. Changes in classification to the Arterial Street network shall require an Official Plan amendment.



3.6.4.2 Collector Streets

- a. Urban and Rural Collector Streets shall have a protected design width of up to 21.5m
- b. Collector Streets are designed to provide connections between Local Streets and Arterial Streets, capable of carrying medium volumes of traffic.
- c. Collector Streets within the Urban Settlement Area should use 'complete street' approaches to promote an even balance between vehicular and active transportation modes within the street right-of-way, where feasible. This may include, as appropriate:
 - i. On-street cycling lanes.
 - ii. Sidewalks on both sides of the street, with special regard for addressing missing linkages wherever possible.
 - iii. Boulevards to separate vehicle lanes from sidewalks or multi-use pathways.
 - iv. Marked pedestrian crossings.
- d. Collector Streets outside the Urban Settlement Area should have adequate marked paved shoulders that could provide space for active transportation wherever space allows.
- e. Changes in classification to the Collector Street network require an Official Plan amendment.

3.6.4.3 Local Streets

- a. Urban and Rural Local Streets shall have a protected design width of up to 20m.
- b. Local Streets are designed to provide direct access to individual properties, primarily within residential areas, but also some industrial areas, capable of accommodating low traffic volumes.
- c. Local Streets within the Urban Settlement Area located in the Downtown and residential neighbourhoods will give equal priority to active transportation and vehicular transportation, including:
 - i. Consideration to creating a well-connected active transportation network within these areas.
 - ii. Sidewalks on at least one side of the street.
- d. Local Streets within the Urban Settlement Area located in industrial areas generally give more priority to vehicular transportation than active transportation. However, sidewalks and on-street cycling lanes could still be considered where industrial Local Streets provide linkages.
- e. Changes in classification to the Local Street network do not require an Official Plan amendment.

3.6.4.4 Private Roads

- a. All new development shall generally be required to front on a municipally owned road, with the exception of condominium development or any other exception noted in this Plan. The construction of new private roads is generally discouraged, with the exception of condominium developments or any other exception noted in this Plan.
- b. Private Roads may be assumed by the City once they have been upgraded to municipal standards; however, the municipality is not obligated to assume any road even if it has been brought up to a municipal standard.
- c. The Municipality shall not be responsible for upgrading Private Roads.

3.6.4.5 Provincial Highways and Connecting Links

- a. For the purposes of this Plan, Provincial Highways and Connecting Links within City limits are considered as Arterial Roads.



- b. All developments on Trunk Road, within 400m of the intersection of Highway 17 near the east city limit shall require approval from the Ontario Ministry of Transportation.

3.6.5 PARKING

Parking is a key component of the mobility network and it shall be the policy of this Plan:

- a. To review parking requirements to ensure they reflect current standards, with special consideration for reducing parking requirements where appropriate.
- b. To ensure new developments provide adequate supply of parking to meet anticipated demands.
- c. To consider reduced parking requirements in the following cases, if appropriate:
 - i. To support downtown revitalization, intensification in *strategic development areas*, and along public transit routes.
 - ii. To support affordable housing projects throughout the Urban Settlement Area, as well as purpose built student housing in close proximity to Algoma University and Sault College.
 - iii. To support home-based business.
- d. That the Zoning By-law continue to provide barrier-free parking requirements, including minimum numbers of spaces and overall design standards. The Zoning By-law shall be updated to reflect best practices as they relate to barrier free parking design and requirements.

3.7 AIRPORT

The Sault Ste. Marie Airport is a significant land use and major activity hub in the Sault's Rural Area. The core function of the Airport is to facilitate the movement of aircraft, and it plays an important social and economic role in the community. The Airport is a “major facility” and the City shall ensure its long-term protection by managing development in nearby areas to ensure that sensitive land uses do not encroach. It shall be the policy of this Plan that:

- a. The development of the Airport lands should not interfere with the prime function of the lands related to air traffic control.
- b. Servicing of the site will be self-contained within the existing property and subject to the carrying capacity of the site.
- c. All airport-related uses and compatible commercial and light industrial uses are permitted. Ancillary and secondary uses such as car rental, accommodation, restaurants, and convenience retail are also permitted;
- d. Recreational uses such as a golf course, fairgrounds, speedways, and drag strips may be permitted subject to required zoning approvals.
- e. Development in the vicinity of the Airport shall be undertaken in a manner that protects the long term operation and economic role of the Airport. More specifically:
 - i. Sensitive land uses, including the creation of new residential lots, are prohibited to locate within the 30 Noise Exposure Forecast (NEF) unless a report, prepared by a qualified professional, demonstrates that appropriate Provincial noise guidelines can be achieved.
 - ii. Development on lands shown as ‘Approach Surface’ and ‘Transitional Surface’ on Schedule C - Mobility and Major Infrastructure, shall adhere to the following height restrictions:



- For lands within the 'Approach Surface', the maximum building height shall be calculated at no more than 1 vertical unit for every 50 horizontal units, starting at the edge of the runway.
- For lands within the 'Transitional Surface', the maximum building height shall be calculated at no more than 1 vertical unit for every 7 horizontal units, starting at the edge of the runway.

3.8 RAIL

Rail is a key transportation method for goods brought to and from Sault Ste. Marie. Both of Canada's national railway corporations have an established presence in the City. There is currently no regular passenger rail serving Sault Ste. Marie, apart from the Agawa Canyon Tour Train, which primarily caters to tourists. In recent years, there have been efforts by regional organizations to push for the restoration of passenger rail serving Sault Ste. Marie and the Algoma region.

Railway facilities are "major facilities" supporting the City's economic prosperity by facilitating trade connections beyond the City's immediate area. It shall be the policy of this plan to:

- a. Protect the long-term operation and economic role of railway facilities, including rail lines and rail yards.
- b. Ensure land use compatibility between railway facilities and nearby sensitive uses (such as residential uses), including the use of buffering and Minimum Separation Distances (MDS). More specifically, the following minimum separation distances are required between sensitive uses and the major rail facilities, subject to the land use compatibility requirements outlined in Section 4.14.1 of this Plan.
- c. Generally support efforts to restore passenger rail services.

3.9 MARINE

Sault Ste. Marie is strategically located on the Canada/U.S. border at the hub of three Great Lakes. The City has a small private commercial dock located Downtown at the bottom of Pim Street and a private export dock located on the Algoma Steel property. Through the Port of Algoma project, the City has been working with Algoma Steel and other community partners to develop a full-scale, publicly accessible commercial deep-water port. It shall be the policy of this plan to:

- a. Protect the long-term operation and economic role of marine facilities.
- b. Ensure land use compatibility between these facilities and nearby sensitive uses (such as residential uses), including the use of buffering and Minimum Separation Distances.
- c. Pursue the development of a deep-water, publicly accessible commercial port. The City will plan for appropriate infrastructure to service this commercial port along with suitable land development in surrounding areas, to maximize its economic potential and prevent the encroachment of sensitive uses.



4 LAND USE DESIGNATIONS – SCHEDULE A

This section establishes the development criteria for each land use designation, and is intended to work in conjunction with the other applicable policies of this Plan.

4.1 RESIDENTIAL

The Residential Designation applies to lands within the Urban Settlement Area intended primarily for residential uses. The overarching vision for this designation is to facilitate the creation of complete neighbourhoods by allowing a variety of housing types and densities, as well as local neighbourhood-oriented commercial, institutional, and recreational uses that are integral to and supportive of a residential environment.

The following policies apply in the Residential Designation:

- a. Permitted residential uses include a variety of housing types and densities.
- b. Neighbourhood amenities such as neighbourhood parks and neighbourhood commercial businesses that serve the needs of neighbourhood residents including but not limited to small-scale retail and personal services are permitted.
- c. Neighbourhood-scale institutional uses such as elementary schools, places of worship, supportive housing, public service facilities and community hubs are permitted.
- d. Home-based businesses, including small-scale artisan manufacturing and artists' studios shall be permitted as a secondary use to the dwelling, subject to further criteria outlined in Section 4.16.1 of this Plan.
- e. Affordable housing is encouraged in accordance with the policies of Section 5.5 (Affordable Housing) of this Plan.
- f. Infill development and intensification is encouraged in accordance with policies of Section 5.2 of this Plan.
- g. Where commercially zoned lands are located upon lots designated Residential, the conversion of existing commercial space to residential uses is subject to the following:
 - Where existing buildings are proposed to be converted, ground floor residential uses are generally discouraged unless it can be demonstrated that ground floor

dwelling units are designed to provide a residential aesthetic that is sympathetic to the surrounding streetscape, with special regard for providing appropriate privacy for occupants (e.g. the removal of large storefront windows).

- Where new buildings are proposed, ground floor residential uses are permitted, however, the ground floor façade shall be designed to respond to the overall character of the area by balancing a residential aesthetic with the surrounding commercial streetscape.

4.2 DOWNTOWN

The Downtown Designation applies to the majority of lands located within the City's defined Downtown, characterised by a spectacular waterfront, a vibrant commercial corridor, administrative services and residential uses. A wide variety of commercial, institutional and residential uses are permitted in this area with the overall goal of developing the Downtown as a vibrant and mixed-use neighbourhood that serves as the Sault's centre for entertainment, culture, and retail activity. The Downtown is the City's Strategic Core Area for the purpose of the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, therefore, the ensuing policies are consistent with those found in the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario.

The following policies apply in the Downtown Designation:

- a. Permitted uses include commercial, recreational, office, institutional and residential uses.
- b. Locating major office uses in the Downtown is encouraged through incentives such as lower development standards (e.g. reduced setbacks and parking) where feasible.
- c. New private development along the Downtown waterfront shall be required to incorporate public access to the river.
- d. Mixed-use development, with commercial uses on the ground floor and residential uses above shall be encouraged.
- e. Infill development and intensification is encouraged in accordance with other policies of this plan.
- f. Construction and rehabilitation of a variety of buildings that can accommodate residents of all ages, income levels and household sizes shall be encouraged.
- g. Neighbourhood infrastructure and amenities, such as parkettes, public parks and plazas, which residents of all ages and abilities can enjoy shall be promoted. Such uses may also be located on vacant or underutilized properties on a temporary basis until such time that the property is developed on a more permanent basis.
- h. Encourage the development of arts, culture and entertainment in the Downtown through support for public art and art installations within underutilized spaces.
- i. Continue using Community Improvement Plan incentives to promote investment in the Downtown.
- j. Development within the Downtown shall establish a clear sense of place and direction, recognize the distinct heritage and character of the area and create Downtown gateways and landmarks that are inviting and attractive.
- k. Development in the Downtown may be subject to Site Plan Control.
- l. The conversion of existing commercial space to residential uses is subject to the following:
 - i. Where existing buildings are proposed to be converted, ground floor residential uses are generally discouraged unless it can be demonstrated that ground floor dwelling units are designed to provide a residential aesthetic that is sympathetic to the surrounding streetscape, with special regard for providing appropriate privacy for occupants (e.g. the removal of large storefront windows).



- ii. Where new buildings are proposed, ground floor residential uses are permitted, however, the ground floor façade shall be designed to respond to the overall character of the area by balancing a residential aesthetic with the surrounding commercial streetscape
- m. Regardless of size, commercial development in the Downtown does not require a market impact study.

4.3 COMMERCIAL

The Commercial Designation applies to lands outside of the Downtown that are intended for a wide variety of commercial and residential uses. The overall goal is to protect and enhance existing commercial areas by facilitating the continued use and reuse of existing commercial space. For new development and redevelopment, a greater emphasis will be placed upon achieving higher development standards, especially as it relates to landscaping, pedestrian amenities, off-site connectivity, and accessibility. The following policies apply in the Commercial Designation:

- a. Permitted uses include a broad range of retail, personal service and office uses, including but not limited to retail, finance and insurance, real estate, business, government, educational, health and social services, accommodation, entertainment, restaurants and mixed-use development with commercial uses on the ground floor and residential uses above, as well as ground floor residential dwellings subject to policies outlined below..
- b. Office spaces up to a maximum size of 700 square metres gross floor area are permitted. The maximum gross floor area requirement does not apply where:
 - Major administrative office space is part of or accessory to a larger use, such as large industrial or institutional uses.
 - Major office space will occupy an existing vacant building as defined in policy section 4.3e.
 - Major office space is service oriented, geared towards providing healthcare and social services.
- c. The Zoning By-law shall be reviewed to further define various types of office space to better implement policy section 4.3b.
- d. Mixed-use developments, with commercial uses on the ground floor and residential uses above are encouraged
- e. Reuse of existing vacant buildings for a variety of uses shall be encouraged. Furthermore, where appropriate, reduced development standards, such as reduced parking or setback requirements may be considered, to recognize existing site conditions. 'Existing building' shall be defined as existing on the day of adoption of this Plan.
- f. Conversion of existing vacant commercial space to accommodate non-commercial uses is permitted where appropriate.
- g. Light employment uses, excluding heavier industrial-related uses (such as manufacturing, warehousing, processing, assembly, trucking, and storage uses or any uses that require outdoor storage and frequent deliveries) may be permitted if appropriate.
- h. Applications to amend the Official Plan to permit a new commercial development in excess of 5,000 square metres gross floor area must include a Market Impact Study to assess the impact on existing commercial areas prior to approval.
- i. Commercial intensification and redevelopment to higher density commercial uses is supported, subject to servicing capacity and provision of adequate parking. A traffic impact study may be required.



- j. All uses shall have adequate parking with access points limited in number and designed in a manner that minimizes the danger to pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- k. Commercially designated lands which are a part of *strategic development areas* shall be subject to policies of Section 3.4.4 of this Plan, which relates to the overall design of developments within *strategic development areas*.
- l. Development in the Commercial Land Use Designation may be subject to Site Plan Control.
- m. The conversion of existing commercial space to residential uses is permitted without an amendment to this Plan, subject to the following:
 - Where existing buildings are proposed to be converted, ground floor residential uses are generally discouraged unless it can be demonstrated that ground floor dwelling units are designed to provide a residential aesthetic that is sympathetic to the surrounding commercial streetscape, with special regard for providing appropriate privacy for occupants (e.g. the removal of large storefront windows).
 - Where new buildings are proposed, ground floor residential uses are permitted, however, the ground floor façade shall be designed to respond to the overall character of the area by balancing a residential ethic with the surrounding commercial streetscape.

4.4 MIXED EMPLOYMENT

The Mixed Employment Designation applies to smaller industrial properties along major arterial corridors that can be utilized for a mixture of industrial and select commercial uses. For clarity, the Mixed Employment Land Use Designation is not intended to identify 'Employment Lands' as defined by the Provincial Planning Statement 2024.

The following policies apply in the Mixed Employment Designation:

- a. Permitted uses include a range of industrial uses and limited commercial uses, including but not limited to automotive sales, repair and maintenance, building supply stores, furniture stores and fitness facilities.
- b. Commercial uses such as retail stores not directly related to the function of industrial areas or which are more appropriately located in designated commercial areas are not permitted. Other commercial uses which are sensitive in nature, such as office uses not accessory to a permitted use, are not permitted.
- c. The Zoning By-law will be amended to create a mixed employment zone with appropriate permitted uses and development standards.
- d. All uses shall have adequate parking with access points limited in number and designed in a manner which shall minimize the danger to pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- e. Development in the Mixed Employment Land Use Designation may be subject to Site Plan Control.

4.5 INDUSTRIAL

The Industrial Designation is intended to recognize and permit industrial uses that are sensitive to the encroachment of sensitive uses and must be protected over the long term to ensure the economic prosperity of the City. This designation provides for a broad range of industrial uses of varying size, scale, off-site impacts and differing service and infrastructure requirements.

The following policies apply in the Industrial Designation:



- a. Permitted uses include a broad range of light to heavy industrial uses, which include but are not limited to, manufacturing, processing, repair and service, warehousing, storage and distribution.
- b. Waste management uses shall be permitted, contingent on land use compatibility policies noted in Section 4.14 of this Plan
- c. Industrial lands located in gateway areas or along major arterial roads shall give special consideration to building design, landscaping and aesthetic appeal, in accordance with the Urban Design policies contained in Section 3 of this Plan.
- d. Any potential impacts of industrial uses on abutting land uses shall be mitigated through appropriate setbacks, buffering and any other means necessary.
- e. Industrial development in close proximity to residential or other sensitive uses shall have regard for the following criteria:
 - i. Not likely to generate air pollution, odour or excessive noise.
 - ii. Will meet a high standard of building design and landscaping.
 - iii. Achieve land use compatibility as outlined in 4.14 of this Plan.
- f. Residential or other sensitive use development within close proximity to existing industrial uses or industrially designated lands is generally discouraged. At a minimum, such development shall achieve land use compatibility as outlined in 4.14 of this Plan, with additional allowances to accommodate potential industrial expansion or intensification, which may necessitate utilizing higher industrial influence areas to achieve greater setbacks.
- g. Development in the Industrial Land Use Designation may be subject to Site Plan Control where it is in close proximity to existing or planned sensitive uses or located on a major arterial road.

4.6 INSTITUTIONAL

The Institutional Land Use Designation applies to lands outside of the defined Downtown that are occupied by large public and quasi-public services, including large health care facilities, secondary and post-secondary schools, certain large elementary schools, other major government or non-profit uses, and residential uses.

The following policies apply in the Institutional Designation:

- a. Permitted uses include a broad range of public and/or private facilities, including but not limited to, health, education, cultural, religious, correctional facilities, government buildings or any other institution providing a public service, including supportive housing, transitional housing, emergency shelters, and residential uses.
- b. Institutional uses serving the entire City such as the main library, cultural facilities and public auditoria are encouraged to locate in the Downtown.
- c. All institutional development shall adhere to a high standard of site design, resulting in a 'campus-like' environment, where appropriate.
- d. All institutional development shall be designed to minimize potential conflict with adjacent land uses, particularly residential areas, through increased setbacks, buffering and landscaping measures.
- e. Institutional uses shall have adequate parking with access points limited in number and designed in a manner that minimizes the danger to pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- f. Development in the Institutional Land Use Designation may be subject to Site Plan Control.



4.7 OPEN SPACE

The Open Space Designation applies to urban and rural lands consisting of open, green or undeveloped space that is not necessarily public park space and is generally occupied by environmentally sensitive lands, hazard lands and lands that act as buffers. Existing golf courses are also designated Open Space. Where the Open Space designation is applied to natural heritage features and areas, natural hazards or buffers, the overall intent of this Plan is to conserve these lands in their natural state unless potential impacts can be appropriately mitigated. Where the Open Space Designation is applied to existing golf courses, it is the intent of this Plan to permit a variety of accessory uses to support the ongoing viability of the golf course.

The following policies apply in the Open Space Designation:

- a. Permitted uses include conservation, recreation and existing golf courses.
- b. Open spaces that are identified as natural heritage features and areas on Schedule D - Natural Heritage Features and Areas, shall be protected in accordance with the policies contained in Section 7 of this Plan.
- c. Where open spaces are identified as natural hazards, development will generally be directed away from any natural hazards, such as flood prone areas and significant slopes. Where development is permitted, mitigation measures will be required to reduce the threat of the hazards, in accordance with Section 7.5 of this Plan.
- d. Appropriate Environmental Studies may be required prior to the approval of development within the Open Space Designation, where environmentally sensitive or hazard lands may be affected.
- e. Where lands are designated Open Space and are under private ownership, this Plan does not indicate that the lands will necessarily remain as open space indefinitely, nor shall it be construed as implying that open space areas are free and open to the general public or that such lands will be purchased by the municipality.
- f. It is recognized that the Open Space Designation has been applied at a relatively gross scale. As such, the boundaries may be slightly altered as a result of more detailed on-site investigation, without an amendment to this plan and in consultation with other agencies having jurisdiction, such as the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority.
- g. The City shall generally protect and enhance open space within the municipal boundary and identify locally significant natural areas for restoration and enhancement where appropriate.

4.8 COMMUNITY PARKS

The Community Parks Designation applies to major public parks and recreational areas that warrant long-term protection for public use. Community parks typically contain amenities that attract residents from throughout the community and beyond.

The following policies apply in the Community Parks Designation:

- a. Permitted uses include active and passive recreation uses including sports and recreation facilities, community centres and conservation areas.
- b. New facilities on these lands shall be designed and maintained to be easily accessible from all parts of the city and beyond, including having easy access to public transit, adequate on-site parking and appropriate pedestrian facilities.
- c. Parks and Recreation policies contained in Section 6 shall apply in this designation, in particular policies of Section 6.1.1 pertaining to Community Parks.



4.9 RURAL AREA

The Rural Area Designation applies to rural lands outside of the Urban Settlement Area, excluding lands designated Resource Extraction, Precambrian Uplands, Waste Management and Airport Employment. The overall goal is to preserve the existing rural character, allow for limited residential development, maintain a large parcel fabric and protect the long-term viability of agricultural uses.

The following policies apply in the Rural Area Designation:

- a. Permitted uses include a wide variety of low-density uses, including but not limited to agricultural uses, rural residences and recreational uses.
- b. This Plan supports the growth and viability of new and existing agricultural operations by permitting a wider variety of agricultural related uses, on-farm diversified uses, and home based industries in association with an existing agricultural operation, as further discussed in Section 8.1 of this Plan.
- c. Rural residential uses are 'sensitive uses', which can impact the ability for agricultural and aggregate extraction uses to locate or expand. Additionally, low-density rural residential uses are relatively costlier to service. However, the City recognizes that a rural residential lifestyle is appealing to many residents and the City shall accommodate limited, locally appropriate rural residential development. The following policies apply to residential development within the Rural Area Land use Designation:
- d. Rural lot creation through Consent to Sever shall be limited to the creation of two new lots, plus the remnant or retained parcel. This limit shall be applied from July 14, 2014.
- e. The Committee of Adjustment may consider a Consent to Sever application based on the following criteria:
 - i. Lands are divided in an efficient manner, and landlocked parcels are not created;
 - ii. Future urban residential development potential is not significantly impacted.
 - iii. The proposed lot shall have frontage upon, and direct access to a public road that the City maintains on a year-round basis.
 - iv. The proposed lot and planned development will not negatively impact the area's drainage patterns.
 - v. The severed and retained parcels shall fit into the general character of the surrounding area in terms of frontage, size and parcel fabric.
 - vi. The severed and retained parcels must be large enough for the adequate provision of on-site services, including their future replacement in the event of a failure.
 - vii. Algoma Public Health approval of on-site sewage servicing is required.
 - viii. Where municipal water and sewer services exist, smaller lots may be considered, so long as the severed and retained lot frontages and sizes are within the general character of the area.
 - ix. New rural residential lots must adhere to all other aspects of the Official Plan, including but not limited to, policies related to natural heritage features, development constraints and minimum distances from livestock operations.
- f. Where development is proposed outside fully serviced areas, the proponent must prove that the soil conditions of the proposed site are suitable for a waste sewage disposal system and that there is a proven source of potable water available. A hydrogeological assessment may be required where the proposed lot size is less than 1 hectare.



4.9.1 RURAL ESTATE RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISIONS

Rural Estate Residential Subdivisions, which are characterized as residential subdivisions with individual on-site well and septic services, are permitted in the Rural Area on a limited basis.

In order to ensure that new Rural Estate Residential Subdivisions remain limited, the City shall administer a Rural Subdivision Intake Window to coordinate the review of Rural Estate Residential Subdivision applications in accordance with this Plan. Rural Estate Residential Subdivisions are not permitted unless approved through the Rural Estate Residential Subdivision Intake Window.

The intake window is intended to manage the timing, scale, and location of rural residential development in balance with the City's urban growth strategy, servicing capacity, and rural character. The intake window also enables the City to evaluate applications collectively, limit rural fragmentation, and assess cumulative servicing and environmental impacts.

4.9.2 Two-Stage Intake Window Process

4.9.2.1 Stage 1 – Concept Screening

Applicants shall submit a concept package sufficient for preliminary evaluation. Concept plans are reviewed collectively and concurrently during the intake window based on screening criteria addressing:

- a. Conformity to Provincial and Municipal policies and plans,
- b. preliminary environmental constraints,
- c. land use compatibility,
- d. servicing feasibility,
- e. appropriateness of proposed lot sizes and configuration,
- f. conflicts with agricultural operations,
- g. cumulative impacts relative to all other submissions within the Intake Window, and
- h. any other matters outlined in the evaluation criteria.

Only concepts that meet all must-pass criteria will be invited to proceed to Stage 2.

4.9.2.2 Stage 2 – Complete Application Submission

Applicants invited to proceed from Stage 1 may file a complete Planning Act application with all required technical studies and supporting documentation.

Quota and Allocation Policies

- a. In any given year, the number of lots approved shall not exceed 10% of the rolling five-year average of ground-related housing starts.
- b. No single application may contain more than 40% of the annual lot quota. Proposals in excess of the 40% cap may only be considered in a subsequent Intake Window.
 - i. Despite the provision above, an application may exceed the 40% cap if it is the only eligible application.
- c. Shared applications, adjacent proposals, or integrated designs shall be treated as one application for the purposes of the quota.
- d. For the first two years following adoption of this Plan, the annual lot quota will be doubled.



4.10 AGGREGATE EXTRACTION

The Aggregate Extraction Designation applies to lands that contain aggregate resources (sand and gravel), generally located between the Shield Line and the Rural Area. The overall goal is to protect the long-term viability of the aggregate deposits, which are considered a Provincially Significant Resource critical to supporting the overall development of the community.

For further policies related to areas within Secondary mineral and mineral aggregate areas, please refer to Section 7.4 of this Plan. The following policies apply in the Aggregate Extraction Designation:

- a. Primary permitted uses include aggregate extraction via pit and quarry operations and associated uses.
- b. Accessory industrial uses related to aggregate extraction activities may be permitted, including but are not limited to, asphalt and concrete plants, mineral aggregate processing facilities and facilities for the recycling of mineral and aggregate resources, such as asphalt, brick, glass and concrete.
- c. Non-Aggregate uses may be permitted through a Zoning By-law Amendment if:
 - i. Extraction is not feasible.
 - ii. The proposed use serves a greater long-term interest of the public.
 - iii. The use would not significantly preclude or hinder future extraction.
- d. Existing licensed aggregate operations, including those located outside of the Aggregate Extraction Designation are permitted to continue without the need for an amendment to this Plan or the implementing Zoning By-law.
- e. The preferred area for expansion of aggregate extraction operations is adjacent to existing pits and quarries.
- f. Existing residential development is recognized and rural residences may be constructed upon existing vacant lots. New residential development (e.g. residential lot creation or additional residential units, including accessory dwelling units) is not permitted.
- g. Land uses which are not compatible with aggregate extraction shall be prohibited from areas surrounding existing pits and quarries, unless accompanied by a land use compatibility evaluation to determine compatibility.
- h. New mineral aggregate operations or expansions of existing operations, including introducing new accessory uses, is subject to the removal of a holding provision, where the following information will be reviewed:
 - i. Source water protection.
 - ii. Natural heritage features and areas.
 - iii. Land use compatibility.
- i. Landscaping and buffering will be used to enhance the physical appearance of lands and structures.
- j. Wayside pits and quarries, portable asphalt plants, and portable concrete plants used on public authority contracts are permitted in all land use designations without the need for an Official Plan amendment, rezoning, or development permit approval under the Planning Act, except in areas of existing development or particular environmental sensitivity that are determined to be incompatible with such uses. The siting process should consider and address land use compatibility (impacts on nearby sensitive uses) and environmental sensitivity (impacts on nearby natural heritage features or areas).
- k. Once a pit or quarry has been restored, new land uses that are compatible with the area will be encouraged.



- I. Other policies contained in Section 7 of this Plan shall apply.

4.11 PRECAMBRIAN UPLANDS

The Precambrian Uplands Land Use Designation applies to all lands located above the Precambrian Shield Line to the north City limit. This is an area with unique environmental functions and sensitivity, as well as significant access and terrain challenges.

The following policies apply in the Precambrian Uplands Designation.

- a. It is as general goal of this Plan to preserve the Precambrian Uplands Area in it's natural state.
- b. Permitted uses include conservation uses and other recreational uses that do not require the construction or placement of buildings or structures.
- c. Existing residential dwellings are recognized and additions, alterations and new accessory buildings, structures and uses are permitted.
- d. Construction of new residential dwellings on existing vacant lots and the creation of new lots is not permitted within the Precambrian Uplands Area.
- e. Notwithstanding Policy section 4.11b, maple syrup harvesting and production is permitted where legal access to the property can be obtained, in accordance with the Policies outlined in Section 8.2 of this Plan.

4.12 WASTE MANAGEMENT

Applies to all City-owned properties that encompass the Municipal Landfill site.

The following policies apply in the Waste Management Designation:

- a. Permitted uses include landfill and associated uses, including but not limited to recycling facilities, transfer stations, processing sites and disposal sites.
- b. The development of sensitive uses, such as residential, within 500 metres of the landfill footprint is discouraged, as further discussed in Section 4.14 of this Plan.
- c. Landfill sites will be closed and monitored in accordance with applicable Provincial approvals, standards and requirements.

4.13 AIRPORT EMPLOYMENT LANDS

The Airport Employment Lands Designation applies to all lands owned by the Sault Ste. Marie Airport Development Corporation. The overall goal is to support the long-term operation of the Airport, an essential transportation facility, by limiting the encroachment of sensitive uses and supporting the development of commercial and industrial uses that require proximity to the Airport.

The following policies shall apply in Airport Employment Lands Designation:

- a. Permitted uses include all airport-related uses required to support the core functions of the airport or where the airport supports the core function of the business. Other compatible commercial, light industrial and recreational uses are also permitted. Specific examples include but are not limited to:
 - i. Aircraft repair and maintenance
 - ii. Ancillary and secondary uses such as car rental, accommodation, restaurants and convenience retail.
 - iii. Warehousing and distribution.
 - iv. Uses that supply airport-serving goods and services.

- v. Recreational uses such as a golf course, fairgrounds, motocross speedway, drag strip and snowmobile racecourse may be permitted subject to required zoning approvals.
- b. The development of the Airport lands should not interfere with the prime function of the lands related to air traffic control.
- c. Additional policies related to development of sensitive uses and maximum heights in close proximity to the airport contained in Section 3.7e shall apply.

4.14 LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

The policies contained in this section aim to separate incompatible land uses. Sensitive land uses are those where routine or normal activities are reasonably expected to be negatively impacted by a nearby use that as part of its routine or normal activities emits noxious discharges such as noise, dust, odour and vibrations. Examples of sensitive land uses include, but are not limited to, residential uses, day care centres, parks, educational and healthcare facilities. Uses that can produce noxious discharges include industrial uses, major transportation and public infrastructure facilities, as well as agricultural uses where livestock are kept.

4.14.1 NOXIOUS USES AND SENSITIVE USES

The following land use compatibility policies apply to the development of new Noxious and Sensitive uses in close proximity to each other

- a. The Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) D-Series Minimum Distance Separation Guidelines will be utilized to review any land use applications proposing a sensitive use within the influence area of an industrial/noxious use, or vice versa.
- b. The following minimum separation distances shall apply between sensitive land uses and major facilities listed below. These distances may be adjusted where supported by technical studies or site-specific evaluations that demonstrate either limited adverse impacts or the effectiveness of mitigation measures (e.g. berms, acoustical fences):
 - i. Rail Yards: 300 metres
 - ii. Rail Lines: 70 metres
 - iii. Airport Runway Approaches: Noise Exposure Forecast 30 (NEF 30) regulations
 - iv. Landfill: 500 metres from the landfill footprint.
 - v. West and East End Wastewater Treatment Plants: 150 metres from the existing footprint of the treatment plants, including allowances for future expansions, as shown on Schedule C – Mobility and Major Infrastructure.
- c. An Impact Assessment prepared by a qualified professional must be submitted as part of a complete application to locate a non-compatible use, including new lot creation, where a lot or part thereof is within the influence area of a sensitive or noxious use.
- d. Existing topography, vegetated areas and intervening development will be considered when assessing the need for an impact assessment as part of a complete application.
- e. Reductions to established minimum distance separations may be permitted where mitigation measures such as berms, sound walls or vegetated buffers will sufficiently reduce potential impacts.
- f. Where a proposal for a sensitive land use (e.g. residential, institutional, park) is located adjacent to lands designated Industrial or within an influence area of a noxious use, the Impact Assessment required under Section 4.14.1(c) must evaluate and demonstrate how:

- i. Potential adverse effects of existing industrial or major facilities (e.g. noise, dust, odour, vibration, traffic) on the proposed sensitive use will be minimized or mitigated, and
 - ii. Potential impacts of the proposed sensitive use (e.g. restrictions on operations and future expansion, neighbour complaints) on the long-term viability and operations of the adjacent industrial use or major facility will be minimized or mitigated. All mitigation measures shall be consistent with MECP D-Series guidelines that satisfy the City's peer-review requirements.
 - iii. Any sensitive use proposed within 300 metres of lands designated Industrial may be considered for an Impact Assessment. Site-specific mitigation measures (e.g., setbacks, berms, sound walls, vegetated buffers), may reduce or waive the strict adherence to the 300 metre guideline at the discretion of City staff to facilitate compatible infill, provided that there is no net negative impact on industrial viability.
 - iv. The City may utilize Site Plan Control upon existing vacant lots within the influence area of a noxious use to implement land use compatibility. The City shall ensure through the Site Plan Agreement among other things, that new sensitive uses, and amenity areas are constructed beyond the influence area of a noxious use.
- g. Site Plan Control may be waived where existing buildings housing a sensitive use are proposed to be expanded or new accessory structures are proposed in association with an existing sensitive use.

4.14.2 MINIMUM DISTANCE SEPARATION IN RURAL AREAS

Minimum distance separations (MDS) in rural areas as discussed in this section are related to the keeping of livestock and livestock facilities and nearby rural residential uses. The major issue in this context is odour and the MDS Formulae are based upon the size of the livestock facility and the type of livestock. The following policies shall apply:

- a. Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Formulae shall be applied to new residential development in the vicinity of an existing livestock operation, as well as proposals to locate new or expand existing livestock facilities (barn or manure storage) in close proximity to sensitive uses such as rural residences.

4.15 COMMUNITY HUBS

Community hubs can generally be defined as a grouping of public service facilities, frequently operated on a non-profit basis with a focus on providing public services and supports, often to vulnerable populations. The general intent for these facilities is to make it easier for local residents to access the health, social, cultural and recreational resources they need, together in one place. Community hubs facilitate greater service integration and cost effectiveness and may include a wide variety of complementary and compatible uses. The following policies shall apply:

- a. Community hubs are generally permitted in all land use designations and shall be appropriately located and scaled to the area and site upon which they are proposed, with special regard for integrated mobility and accessibility.
- b. The City should consider amending the Zoning By-law to specifically define and regulate 'Community Hubs'.



4.16 SIZE AND SCOPE OF LAND USES

The overall size and scope of a use directly affects off site impacts, for example a micro-brewery or bakery might be more of a commercial use, whereas a larger-scale brewery or bakery could be more industrial. The goal of this section is to ensure that small-scale businesses do not negatively impact neighbouring areas, while recognizing that many start-up businesses may grow over time. The following policies shall apply:

- a. The City shall recognize the size and scope of land uses when assessing applications to permit new development. It is acknowledged that some small-scale uses, which may be traditionally viewed as industrial or commercial in nature, may be appropriately located in commercial areas or as a home-based business, without the need for an Official Plan Amendment.
- b. The Zoning By-law should be reviewed and amended as appropriate, to further define and permit certain uses based upon their size and scope of operations, with regulations to ensure that such small-scale businesses do not negatively impact neighbouring areas.

4.16.1 HOME BASED BUSINESSES

The Official Plan recognizes that a wide variety of small-scale businesses, including start-ups, can be viably operated as a home-based business. It shall be the policy of the City to:

- a. Support a wide variety of uses that can be appropriately accommodated as home-based businesses with regulations to ensure they do not negatively impact surrounding residential uses, with special regard for noise, parking, traffic and aesthetics.
- b. The Zoning By-law shall be reviewed and amended where appropriate to permit additional home-based business uses, based upon the overall size and scope of particular uses.
- c. Council may consider allowing home-based businesses that are not expressly permitted within the Zoning By-law, on a case-by-case basis through a rezoning application, subject to the following guiding principles:
 - i. The proposed use should not negatively impact surrounding residential uses, with special regard for noise, parking, traffic and aesthetics.
 - ii. The use does not involve any significant changes to the external character of the dwelling unit or property.
 - iii. Outdoor storage and display is generally not permitted or required to support the proposed home-based business.
 - iv. Micro-scale manufacturing, 'maker spaces' and 'artisan workshops' may be permitted subject to relevant Official Plan and Zoning By-law provisions. Such uses are generally characterized as producing custom, individually unique, made-to-order products.



5 HOUSING

The City recognizes the importance of housing and the need to create opportunities for a diverse range and mix of housing types, densities and tenure. The provision of housing that is adequate, affordable and meets the full range of residents' housing needs is a fundamental component of the City's 'Housing First' social service approach, which is based on the idea that adequate and affordable housing is a pre-requisite to effectively address a person's overall wellbeing. The provision of adequate affordable housing is a shared responsibility in which all levels of government have roles to play.

Consistent with the overarching theme of Sustainable Growth contained in this Plan, the City will encourage the creation of diverse housing types and tenures where there is sufficient existing or planned infrastructure to ensure the efficient use of existing resources and public services.

In general the City shall:

- a. Ensure that the residential land supply supports adequate choice and affordability in the housing market place.
- b. Promote and foster the development of a diverse mix of housing types and tenure.
- c. Encourage infill development and residential intensification within the Urban Settlement Area.
- d. Encourage mixed-use development.
- e. Support the creation of additional rental and affordable housing.
- f. Support innovation in housing design and development.
- g. Support and promote accessibility within the housing market for persons with disabilities.

5.1 HOUSING TARGETS

In accordance with the direction contained in the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), in order to ensure that an adequate supply of housing is available at all times, the City will:



- a. Ensure that there is enough land designated for residential development to meet anticipated demand over a 20-year period.
- b. Maintain at all times at least a fifteen (15) year supply of land designated and available for residential development, redevelopment and residential intensification.
- c. Endeavour to maintain a minimum three (3) year continuous supply of residential units with servicing capacity in draft approved or registered plans.

5.2 DIVERSE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOODS AND RESIDENTIAL INTENSIFICATION

Diverse Residential Neighbourhoods comprise diverse housing types and tenures available to a variety of people at different life stages. The mixing of residential dwelling types and residential intensification optimises the utilization of land, resources and infrastructure while supporting transit and active transportation.

With regards to residential intensification and mixed residential neighbourhoods, the City shall:

- a. Support diverse residential neighbourhoods, residential intensification and infill development in the Residential, Downtown and Commercial Areas within the Urban Settlement Area.
- b. Encourage mixed-use development in the form of commercial or institutional uses on the ground floor with residential uses above, especially along major corridors, and *strategic development areas*.
- c. Promote residential development in the Downtown as a stimulus to downtown revitalization and small business development.
- d. Permit development of residential dwellings within existing commercial areas where appropriate and where residents have easy access to commercial, social and recreational amenities.
- e. Support medium and high-density residential development and redevelopment in all low-density residential areas, where appropriate and subject to a rezoning and assessed based upon the following considerations:
 - i. The development maintains transition in built form through appropriate height, massing, character, architectural design, orientation, setbacks, parking and open and amenity space.
 - ii. Consistency with existing prevalent road and lotting pattern in the area.
 - iii. Sufficient capacity in the existing transportation network, municipal infrastructure, and community services to cope with the proposed development.
 - iv. Overlook on adjacent neighbours shall be minimized and privacy shall be maintained to the greatest extent possible.
 - v. Appropriate site grading and stormwater
 - vi. Provision of high-quality landscaping and buffering where necessary to integrate the development in the neighbourhood.

5.3 RENTAL HOUSING

Rental housing plays a vital role in the City's housing supply. Limited availability or a low rental vacancy rate has implications for housing affordability. A healthy vacancy rate is often considered to be between 3 to 5 percent.

With regard to rental housing, the City shall:



- a. Continue to monitor the local rental market to ensure the provision of adequate, safe and affordable rental housing.
- b. Consider creating new incentives or amending existing incentives, aimed at promoting the construction of rental units depending upon local rental market trends and conditions.

5.4 RENTAL CONVERSIONS

In order to ensure an adequate supply of affordable rental housing, the following policies shall apply to the conversion of rental units to condominium ownership:

- a. Rental units cannot be converted to condominium unless:
 - i. Units to be sold are affordable; or
 - ii. The vacancy rate for the entire city, as determined by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), is at or above 3% for the preceding three years.
- b. In all cases, tenants of the subject units shall be given the right of first refusal.
- c. That the subject property meets the requirements of the City's Zoning By-law, Property Standards By-law and the Ontario Building Code and that any deficiencies be addressed prior to final approval.
- d. That the subject property be inspected by a qualified professional and a report be submitted to the City that addresses the following matters:
 - i. A life and safety audit of the building(s).
 - ii. A structural report
 - iii. A mechanical report
 - iv. An electrical report.
 - v. A site servicing report.
- e. Written confirmation from the applicant that the tenants of the subject property have been notified of the application for conversion to condominium tenure and of their rights under the Residential Tenancies Act or any successor legislation shall be required.

5.5 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing also plays a vital role in the City's housing supply. The City encourages and supports the provision of affordable housing throughout the community.

For the purposes of this Plan, affordable housing is defined as follows:

- a. In the case of ownership housing, a unit would be considered affordable when the purchase price is at or below the lesser of:
 - i. Income-based purchase price: A purchase price that would result in annual accommodation costs equal to 30% of a household's gross annual income for a household at the 60th percentile of the income distribution for all households in the City of Sault Ste. Marie as set out in the Affordable Residential Units bulletin, as identified by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; and
 - ii. Market-based purchase price: 90% of the average purchase price of a unit of the same unit type in the City of Sault Ste. Marie as set out in the Affordable Residential Units bulletin.
- b. In the case of rental housing, a unit would be considered affordable when the rent is at or below the lesser of:
 - i. Income-based rent: Rent that is equal to 30% of gross annual household income for a household at the 60th percentile of the income distribution for renter households in



- the City of Sault Ste. Marie as set out in the Affordable Residential Units bulletin, as identified by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; and
- ii. Market-based rent: Average market rent of a unit of the same unit type in the City of Sault Ste. Marie as set out in the Affordable Residential Units bulletin.

The “Affordable Residential Units bulletin” means the bulletin entitled the “Affordable Residential Units for the Purposes of the Development Charges Act, 1997 Bulletin that is published by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on a website of the Government of Ontario and is amended from time to time.

With the overall goal of encouraging and supporting the creation of additional affordable housing units, the City shall ensure that a minimum of 30% of all dwelling units throughout the community are affordable by:

- a. Providing additional incentives for the provision of affordable housing, through a Community Improvement Plan, which may include the waiving of planning application (rezoning, site plan control) fees, grants and tax rebates.
- b. Developing a comprehensive local affordable housing strategy.
- c. Supporting a mixture of housing types, including infill development and residential intensification as-of-right.
- d. Supporting innovative housing design, such as smaller units (tiny homes) and alternative development standards such as reduced lot frontages, setbacks and parking requirements.
- e. Conducting ongoing monitoring on affordability levels.
- f. Maintaining a current, comprehensive understanding of funding opportunities for the creation of affordable housing and assisting applicants in accessing such funding.
- g. Prioritizing the review and processing of development proposals that include affordable dwelling units.
- h. Working with non-profit stakeholders that provide affordable and supportive housing units.
- i. Making Municipally owned lands available for affordable housing.
- j. Giving preference to locating major new residential developments with affordable units within walking distance of amenities such as public transit, grocery stores, parks and other public services.

5.6 SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Supportive housing is an important component of the housing spectrum. Supportive housing includes a variety of housing types where occupants generally require some level of supervision or care. On-site supports and administration are important aspects of on-site care and the overall provision of supportive housing. Supportive housing is often operated through governmental programs and non-profit organizations. Examples include group homes, nursing homes, assisted living units, transitional housing and rehabilitation facilities.

The following policies apply to supportive housing:

- a. Integrate supportive housing within all existing and new residential areas on a scale that is compatible with the surrounding area with special regard for traffic, on-site parking, outdoor amenity space, buffering and setbacks.

- b. Locate larger scale supportive housing projects in a manner that provides easy access to existing public transit and pedestrian facilities.
- c. Permit central administrative offices to be located within supportive housing units; however, such central administrative offices shall be secondary in nature to the main supportive housing use.
- d. Proactively collaborate with agencies and service providers involved in the provision of housing and other support services for residents.

5.7 STUDENT HOUSING

The provision of safe, affordable student housing is critical in supporting the continued growth of Algoma University and Sault College.

The City shall:

- a. Promote the provision of safe, affordable student housing, especially in close proximity to Algoma University and Sault College.
- b. Contemplate alternative development standards, such as reduced parking requirements for purpose built student housing.
- c. Amend the Zoning By-law to specifically define and permit purpose built student housing.

5.8 RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY STANDARDS

The City shall promote the proactive enforcement of property standards, especially in older residential areas, to ensure that all residential properties are maintained in a manner that is safe and appealing. This shall be implemented in accordance with Section 10.6 of this Plan.

5.9 UNIVERSAL DESIGN AND ACCESSIBILITY

Universal design refers to housing that incorporates, at the design and construction stage, dwelling units that can be accessed and used by people of all ages and abilities.

The City shall:

- a. Encourage the use of universal design features for new residential development, redevelopment and intensification.
- b. Work with the Accessory Advisory Committee and other accessibility organizations to educate housing providers on approaches to the provision of barrier-free housing.
- c. Monitor on an ongoing basis the availability of accessible dwelling units to determine the suitability of these units in relation to identified needs.
- d. Provide incentives through Community Improvement Plans to increase the supply of barrier-free housing.

5.10 HOMELESSNESS

In order to address homelessness, the City shall:

- a. Support the provision of shelters and other temporary housing facilities as required in cooperation with local emergency housing providers.
- b. Support the expansion of the supply of transitional and supportive housing to enable homeless individuals to move towards a more stable housing situation.
- c. Support the expansion of the supply of permanent affordable housing to ultimately provide a suitable and affordable living environment for individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

- d. Work closely with various social service and housing providers to monitor local homelessness.



6 PARKS, RECREATION, ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

Parks, recreation, arts, culture and heritage are critical quality of life components that build local pride, attract newcomers, boost local economy and improve our health and environment.

6.1 PARKS AND RECREATION

The City has a diverse range of parks and open spaces comprised of community parks, neighbourhood parks, parkettes, linear parks (trails) and other community facilities. Approximately 16% of the total park space in Sault Ste. Marie is owned and operated by the Municipality. Other organizations, such as the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority contribute to a significant amount of recreational space. Overall, the City shall:

- a. Expand and maintain the City's park space system.
- b. Ensure that wherever possible all residential areas are within the 800-metre safe walkable service radius of a neighbourhood park.
- c. Ensure equitable and appropriate distribution of park space service levels in the City.
- d. Provide facilities for diverse recreation opportunities for citizens and visitors.
- e. Work closely with other organizations that supply, utilize and program public park space, to ensure the long-term viability of park space and the optimal utilization of resources.

6.1.1 COMMUNITY PARKS

Community parks contain facilities and features that attract residents from all parts of the City and beyond.

Community Parks shall:

- a. Serve as destinations for active recreation and become focal points for the City.
- b. Provide a range of built and natural facilities for organized and unorganized recreational activities and accommodate a wide variety of social and cultural activities.
- c. Be designed and maintained to be easily accessible from all parts of the City and beyond by:



- i. Ensuring easy access to public transit and active transportation networks.
 - ii. Adequate on-site parking.
 - iii. Appropriate pedestrian facilities.
- d. Incorporate natural or cultural heritage features, as appropriate.
- e. Provide opportunities catering to the local neighbourhood and community.

6.1.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS

Neighbourhood parks contain facilities and features that serve residents living near them.

Neighbourhood parks shall:

- a. Provide a range of opportunities and experiences for youth recreational needs as well as a broader demographic, including but not limited to play structures, pathways, gathering areas, sports fields, community gardens and multi-use pads/courts.
- b. Have a safe walkable service radius of about 800 metres, without the need to cross major barriers, such as non-signalized intersections at arterial streets.
- c. Include amenities that attract residents from beyond the 800-metre safe walkable service area where appropriate.
- d. Incorporate natural or cultural heritage features as appropriate.
- e. Are generally not provided in the rural area or required as part of any rural estate subdivisions.

6.1.3 PARKETTES

Parkettes primarily exist and will be developed in the Downtown core, providing small scale recreational, cultural, and social interaction opportunities. Parkettes may also be developed as a temporary use until such time that a property is developed or redeveloped

6.1.4 LINEAR PARKS

Linear Parks are both recreational spaces and utilitarian connections between separate parts of the City. The City shall:

- a. Prepare a master plan for trails and other active transportation infrastructure, to facilitate a cohesive city-wide trail system.
- b. Develop a comprehensive trail system that connects people and places through a network that is off the road wherever possible and supported by on-road links where necessary.
- c. Expand and maintain the multi-use John Rowsell Hub Trail network on public lands.
- d. Ensure appropriate agreements between the City and landowners where trails are proposed on private lands.
- e. Facilitate accessibility and safety by providing multi-use pathways through and to residential areas.
- f. Incorporate the trail system with other recreational components such as parks.
- g. Recognize informal trails on public land and where appropriate, formalise them.

6.2 LOCATION, DESIGN AND PROGRAMMING

The City recognizes the importance of accommodating unique and growing park needs created by new development. Further, the City recognizes that the demand for park space will change as the community grows and needs change, due to changing demographics and residential intensification. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the Park Revitalization Plan shall generally guide the provision and replacement of park space amenities and programming in the City.



The City shall:

- a. Locate, design and maintain public parks to provide safe, attractive and inviting spaces for a wide variety of recreational uses and cultural activities, with consideration for safety and accessibility for all ages and abilities.
- b. Consider the location of new parks in existing neighbourhoods or new subdivisions; based on the following criteria, parks should:
 - i. Front onto public streets, rather than be hidden behind lots.
 - ii. Be centrally located in terms of the area the park serves.
 - iii. Be co-located with other community amenities where possible.
 - iv. Be accessible by all residents easily and safely.
- c. Consider food system needs, tree canopy cover increase and stormwater management in the planning, design and operation of all parkland areas.
- d. Continue to work with local service providers, non-profits and user groups to assist in programming park spaces.
- e. Assess the requests to change uses or activities in City parks and recreational spaces based on the following considerations:
 - i. Level of demand or interest.
 - ii. Whether the change will make the space more inclusive or more accessible.
 - iii. Whether the change will significantly impact the current function of the space.
 - iv. Groups served by the change and how well served those groups currently are.
 - v. Neighbourhood benefits and impacts, including a review of the anticipated traffic to be generated by the use and the availability of either on-site parking or on-street parking along abutting streets.
 - vi. Cost or ease of implementation.
 - vii. Equitable spatial distribution across the city of the specific type of recreational amenity.
- f. Where appropriate, require proponents wishing to add or change a use in a park to host a neighbourhood meeting to obtain feedback from neighbours.

6.3 PARKLAND ACQUISITION AND DISPOSITION

There may be instances where the City will consider the acquisition or disposition of lands for parks and open space purposes. Although Sault Ste. Marie is generally well served by parks and open spaces, the City will continue to exercise its full authorities under the *Planning Act*, to acquire new lands for park purposes or cash in lieu of parkland acquisition. Decisions to acquire or dispose of parkland will be guided by the policies contained in Section 10.5.1.1 of this Plan.

School sites are not owned by the City but play an important role in providing accessible park space. As local school boards continue to close underutilized schools, there is a risk of losing the recreational spaces offered as part of school properties, which include not only the outdoor amenities, but also school gyms, available to a variety of formal and informal user groups on evenings and weekends.

6.4 WATERFRONT ACCESS

Public access to Sault Ste. Marie's waterfront is an important consideration. It shall be the policy of this plan that:



- a. Generally, the City shall not dispose of any parkland or City-owned land that abuts the water unless such land does not have direct access to a publicly owned roadway or is otherwise landlocked by abutting private property.
- b. New development or redevelopment proposals may be required to provide lands or dedicated access to lands that support public access to the waterfront.

6.5 HIAWATHA MASTER PLAN

The City shall work with stakeholders to develop a master plan for uses, activities and developments in the Hiawatha area, as well as transportation to the area.

6.6 ART, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

The City has a vibrant art, culture and heritage community with a strong volunteer base. It is the City's objective to:

- a. Support growing the arts and culture community.
- b. Preserve and protect Designated Heritage Sites.
- c. Preserve the character of Locally Significant Heritage Areas.
- d. Recognize and support the many formal and informal groups, organizations and individuals who contribute to the cultural vitality of the community.
- e. Assist with local arts and culture groups during their strategic planning processes. Furthermore, where appropriate, Official Plan policies shall be updated where new strategic plans have land use planning implications.
- f. Wherever possible, assist in making city owned spaces available for festivals and events.
- g. Recognize community facilities as 'community hubs' and permit a wide range of social, cultural and recreational services, uses and programs.
- h. Recognize the potential of various community facilities, such as the library, museum and art gallery, to provide archival services, especially where such facilities are proposed to be expanded or redeveloped.

6.6.1 PUBLIC ART

The Community Culture Plan identifies various opportunities to support art, culture and heritage in the City, and has the potential to play an important role in Downtown revitalization initiatives. Generally, public art, culture, and heritage play a strong role in facilitating the creation of attractive and vibrant communities. It shall be the policy of this plan to:

- a. Support public art in the Downtown, the waterfront and throughout the city. Public art shall be an important consideration when reviewing landscaping requirements.
- b. Amend the Zoning By-law to specifically permit where appropriate, artists' studios and small-scale maker spaces as permitted home-based businesses.
- c. Maintain and develop the Downtown as Sault Ste. Marie's centre for culture and entertainment through the following measures:
 - i. Incentivize reuse of vacant Downtown buildings and lands, including for arts and culture purposes.
 - ii. Seek opportunities for adaptive reuse of City-owned spaces in the Downtown, including buildings and parking lots, laneways or other underused sites. If feasible, lands may be made available to arts and cultural groups for permanent or temporary use.
 - iii. Support and encourage programming including live music, visual art and other creative expression in the streets and public spaces throughout the Downtown.
 - iv. Continue efforts to beautify, animate and activate the Downtown waterfront.



6.7 CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES

Sault Ste. Marie is a community with a rich and diverse cultural heritage, which includes National Historic Sites, Designated Sites under the *Ontario Heritage Act* and Locally Significant Heritage Areas. The City shall make every effort to identify, conserve and protect known cultural heritage resources.

6.7.1 BUILT HERITAGE RESOURCES

Sault Ste. Marie has designated 38 Heritage Sites, dating back to early 19th to mid-20th century. There are also 3 National Historic Sites: The Sault Ste. Marie Canal National Historic Site, Ermatinger Clergue National Historic Site and the Algoma Central Engine House. It shall be the policy of the City to:

- a. Prepare, publish and periodically update a Registry of the City's cultural heritage resources. This Register will also contain non-designated properties that have been identified by the Municipal Heritage Committee as having significant cultural heritage value or interest.
- b. The City shall undertake a comprehensive review of the Heritage Register to assess the suitability of listed properties for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. Properties deemed appropriate for designation shall be recommended to Council for formal designation, while those determined not to meet the criteria for designation under Part IV shall be removed from the Heritage Register.
- c. Require, if necessary, a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment for development and intensification proposals or public works that include or are contiguous to a Designated Heritage property or National Historic Site.
- d. Promote continued functional use of heritage properties while preserving their heritage value.
- e. Retain heritage buildings and structures for their original use and in their original location wherever possible to ensure that their heritage value is not compromised. If the original use is no longer feasible, adaptive reuse of buildings and structures shall be encouraged where the heritage attributes will not be compromised. If it is not possible to maintain structures in their original location, consideration may be given to the relocation of the structure.
- f. Encourage methods of built heritage conservation including:
 - i. Repairing or conserving building materials and finishes and other components that are part of a property's heritage attributes.
 - ii. Retaining and maintaining the visual settings and other physical relationships that contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property.
 - iii. Retention of a built heritage resource as a heritage monument for viewing purposes only.
 - iv. Salvaging elements of the resource for incorporation into a new building or structure for future conservation work or displays.
- g. Documentation for the City's archives.
- h. Prevent the demolition or inappropriate alteration of any heritage resource designated under the Ontario Heritage Act by the City or Province.
- i. Prohibit development and site alteration on Designated Heritage Properties or National Historic Sites unless their heritage attributes are not impacted, subject to review by the Municipal Heritage Committee.



- j. Proactively work with local Indigenous groups on heritage conservation efforts, including increasing awareness and recognition of local Indigenous culture and places of significance.
- k. Support retrofits for achieving energy efficiency in heritage buildings only where it is demonstrated that retrofitting can be accomplished without compromising the heritage integrity of the building.
- l. Endeavour to provide accessibility solutions in heritage buildings in a manner that respects the cultural heritage value or interest of a property.
- m. Encourage local utility companies to place equipment and devices in locations that do not detract from the visual character of cultural heritage resources and do not have a negative impact on the architectural integrity of those resources.
- n. Where demolition, salvage, relocation or irrevocable damage to a cultural heritage resource is determined to be unavoidable, thorough archival documentation shall be undertaken by the proponent and made available to the City for archival purposes. This documentation must be prepared by a qualified person and include the following:
 - i. Architectural measured drawings and surveys.
 - ii. A land use history.
 - iii. Photographs, maps and other available material about the cultural heritage resource in its surrounding context.

6.7.2 LOCALLY SIGNIFICANT HERITAGE AREAS

Locally Significant Heritage Areas are those which have a unique history and character. The City has identified 5 Locally Significant Heritage Areas, which are identified in Schedule G – Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Resources.

6.7.2.1 *The following areas are identified as Locally Significant Heritage Areas:*

- a. The block bounded by the streets of Simpson, Leo, Upton, and McGregor.
- b. Monterey Gardens Area – Between MacDonald Avenue and McNabb Street, east of Pim Street to Weldon Avenue.
- c. Pim Hill Area – Both sides of Pim Street, from the Rail line north to Summit and Borron Avenues.
- d. Lower Pim Area – Between Church, Herrick, Wellington and Pilgrim Streets.
- e. Downtown Queen Street – Between Church Street and Gore Street.

6.7.2.2 *The following policies apply to Locally Significant Heritage Areas:*

- a. The Municipal Heritage Committee shall receive notice and have the opportunity to comment upon all *Planning Act* applications within a Locally Significant Heritage Area.
- b. The Municipal Heritage Committee shall receive notice and have the opportunity to comment upon all proposed capital works projects within a designated area, including road reconstruction and resurfacing projects and vegetation management within the public right of way.
- c. *Planning Act* applications and Capital Works projects within designated areas shall be consistent with the following design parameters:
 - i. Maintain the character of the Locally Significant Heritage Area in terms of building mass, façade proportions, rooflines and wherever possible, materials.
 - ii. Maintain existing block and street patterns.



- iii. To the greatest extent possible, preserve existing street trees. Any new plantings should be of the same tree species found throughout the area.
- iv. Wherever possible, the overall character of the public right of way, including roadway width, sidewalks and boulevards shall be maintained.

6.7.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Archaeological resources may include artifacts, archaeological sites or marine archaeological sites. As per the City's Master Plan of Archaeological Resources, there are 35 archaeological sites registered within the City. In addition, the City maintains an inventory of lands that have been identified to have "archaeological potential". These lands are noted in Schedule G - Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Resources

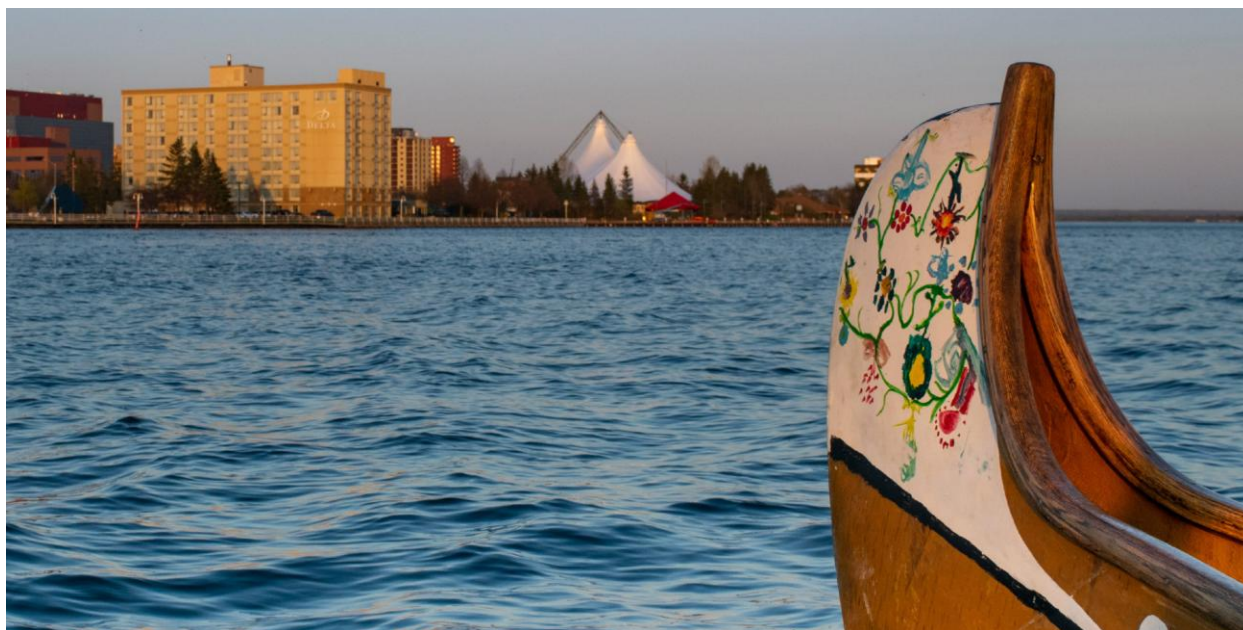
The following policies apply to the protection of archaeological resources:

- a. Where lands proposed for development include archaeological resources or where such lands are located within an area of archaeological potential, as shown on Schedule G – Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Resources, the following studies must be conducted by a licensed archaeologist, at the expense of the owner or applicant:

Development Approval	Archaeological Assessment Requirement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official Plan Amendment Zoning By-law Amendment Severance Application Subdivision Approval 	Archaeological assessment if any portion of the affected lands is within 250m of a known archaeological site, excluding those lands zoned Environmental Management and not proposed to be disturbed in any way.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official Plan Amendment Zoning By-law Amendment Severance resulting in more than 3 lots – Urban Area 	Archaeological assessment if any portion of the affected lands is within an archaeological potential area, excluding those lands zoned Environmental Management and not proposed to be disturbed in any way.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivision Approval 	Archaeological assessment if any portion of the affected lands is within an Archaeological Potential Area. This is a requirement of Ontario Regulation 544/02, Schedule 1.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severance resulting in more than 3 lots – Rural Area 	Where more than 3 new lots are proposed, an archaeological assessment is required if any portion of the proposed development area is within an Archaeological Potential Area. The Committee of Adjustment may restrict development within certain areas as a condition of approval in lieu of an archaeological assessment where appropriate.
Municipal Projects involving previously undisturbed land.	Archaeological assessment if any portion of the affected lands is within an Archaeological Potential Area.

- b. Archaeological assessments may not be required in areas that have been subject to previous intensive and extensive soil disturbances.

- c. Archaeological assessments may also be waived where a holding provision or site plan control can be applied to restrict development or site alteration upon the portion of the property having archaeological potential.
- d. Only licensed archaeologists are permitted to undertake alterations to known archaeological sites and areas of archaeological potential.
- e. Where burial sites are encountered during any excavation or other action, the provisions of the Cemeteries Act and its regulations will apply. Where there are First Nations burials, consultation with all relevant First Nations communities is required. More specifically:
 - i. Where human Remains are found, all work must immediately cease and the site must be secured. The Sault Ste. Marie Police, the Registrar of Cemeteries Regulation Section of the Ontario Ministry of Consumer Business Services, the Cultural Program Branch of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture and the City's Planning Division must be contacted immediately for further direction.
 - ii. Where deeply buried or previously undiscovered artifacts are found, all work must immediately cease and the site must be secured. The Cultural Program Branch of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture and the City's Planning Division must be contacted immediately for further direction.



7 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES AND HAZARDS

Sault Ste. Marie is blessed with a rich natural geography and environment. This includes the Sault's drinking water resources, aggregate resources and natural heritage features like wetlands, fish habitat and the habitat of endangered and threatened species. These natural assets support the community in many ways and need to be preserved and protected.

There are also naturally occurring processes such as flood, erosion and wildland fire hazards that need to be respected to ensure public health and safety is protected.

The City's approach to the Natural Environment, Resources and Hazards, shall be guided by the following objectives:

- a. To protect the City's drinking water supply from land use activities that have the potential to contaminate and threaten the City's urban and rural drinking water supply.
- b. To preserve and protect the City's natural heritage features and areas, creating a balance between the natural and built environment.
- c. To support the wise use and management of natural resources, especially the valuable mineral aggregate deposits (sand and gravel) at the base of the Precambrian Uplands.
- d. To protect individuals and investment from areas of the community where natural occurring processes and historic land use activities represent a risk to public health and safety.

7.1 SOURCEWATER PROTECTION

Sault Ste. Marie's drinking water is supplied by the Lake Superior Water Intake at Gros Cap in Prince Township and 6 municipal groundwater wells situated in 4 locations in the city. These 4 locations are shown on Schedule F – Groundwater Resources. The Sault Ste. Marie Region Source Protection Plan includes policies aimed at ensuring that significant threat activities — those which could pose a risk to the drinking water aquifer — are monitored and managed to reduce the threat of contamination.



7.1.1 WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREAS

The Source Protection Plan establishes Wellhead Protection Areas around each of the 4 groundwater well locations. While the majority of existing serviced residential development around the wellheads is not considered a significant threat to drinking water, policies are required to manage the threat of a spill and risk associated with other existing and future land uses such as gas stations, automobile repair shops and other industrial uses.

The Wellhead Protection Areas are intended to safeguard the city's water supply. Wellhead Protection Areas A, B and C are illustrated on Schedule F – Groundwater Resources.

- a. Wellhead Protection Area A includes a 100 metre radius around the wellhead.
- b. Wellhead Protection Area B includes the 2-year time of travel zone around the wellhead.
- c. Wellhead Protection Area C includes the 5-year time of travel zone around the wellhead.

Within the Wellhead Protection Areas the City shall:

- a. Collaborate with the Sault Ste. Marie Conservation Authority and PUC to implement a program to identify existing abandoned wells and work towards correcting any deficiencies that may threaten groundwater supply.
- b. Support education programs to inform the public of the need to protect the municipal water supply. These programs can include the proper handling of possible contaminants such as fuel, chemicals, fertilizers and pesticides.
- c. Implement the relevant significant threat policies of the Sault Ste. Marie Region Source Protection Plan.

7.1.2 SIGNIFICANT GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREA

Rain that falls on the Precambrian Uplands flows south across the shallow bedrock and percolates through the sand and gravel deposits below the Shield area, recharging the groundwater aquifer from which the 4 municipal drinking water wells draw from. A spill within this area could have devastating effects upon the aquifer; therefore, the following policies aim to mitigate the risk to this important water resource, while at the same time, allowing the extraction of the provincially significant sand and gravel deposits in this area.

The Significant Groundwater Recharge Area and the Precambrian Shield Line are shown on Schedule F - Groundwater Resources.

Development proposals north of the Precambrian Shield Line or within the Significant Groundwater Recharge Area shall adhere to the following policies:

7.1.2.1 FUEL STORAGE AND HANDLING

- a. In-ground fuel storage tanks are prohibited.
- b. The amount of fuel stored on-site shall not exceed 2,500 litres. The maximum amount of fuel stored for aggregate operations shall not exceed 5,000 litres.
- c. Fuel storage is limited to fuel for on-site activities only.
- d. Storage tanks must be installed on an impervious surface with sufficient containment to hold 110% of the total tank volume.
- e. Fueling areas must be designed to collect all runoff, separate fuel from water and allow for proper disposal of the contaminants before the runoff enters ground or surface water systems.
- f. Storage tanks must be situated to minimize exposure to moving equipment and vehicles, including collision protection features.
- g. On-site fueling equipment should be in a fixed location. Where portable fueling equipment is necessary to fuel fixed machinery, a means to catch and contain a spill is required. The



method of containment will be reviewed and approved by the Conservation Authority and PUC.

- h. The area where a portable fuel tank is stored must have an impervious ground surface with sufficient containment to hold 110% of the total tank volume.

7.1.2.2 CHEMICAL STORAGE AND HANDLING

- a. The bulk storage of chemicals, petroleum products, and other hazardous materials is prohibited.
- b. The storage and handling of chemicals is restricted to an indoor or covered area, equipped with adequate spill and runoff containment structures and designed to prevent any loss of chemicals into the ground.
- c. All persons handling chemicals must be trained to ensure the substances are properly stored and handled.

7.1.2.3 VEHICLE MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND STORAGE

- a. Vehicular maintenance and repair will be limited to only those vehicles owned, leased and operated in conjunction with the main use permitted on-site. The repair and maintenance of vehicles and equipment not associated with the main use is prohibited.
- b. Maintenance and repair of vehicles and equipment shall be conducted entirely within an enclosed building.
- c. The building must be equipped with suitable floor drainage, collection, and retention systems to ensure that any spills are prevented from entering the ground.
- d. The floor of the building must be structurally sound and constructed of materials capable of preventing any loss of liquids to the underlying ground.
- e. Any portion of the property used to store vehicles or motorized equipment shall be equipped with an impermeable surface to prevent the percolation of contaminated runoff into the ground.

7.1.2.4 SPILL RESPONSE ACTION PLAN

- a. A “Spill Response Action Plan” will be required for certain uses or activities. On-site staff must be trained to carry out the plan. A copy of the plan shall be provided to the Conservation Authority and PUC for their review and approval.
- b. The spill response plan must be reviewed annually to ensure it is kept up-to-date.

7.2 POTABLE AND NON-POTABLE GROUNDWATER SITE CONDITION STANDARDS

The City of Sault Ste. Marie is committed to protecting its valuable potable groundwater resources. Areas where a Potable Groundwater Standard is required and where a Non-Potable Groundwater Standard may be permitted are shown on Schedule F – Groundwater Resources.

With respect to potable and non-potable groundwater standards, it shall be a policy of the City to:

- a. Require the use of potable groundwater standards in the Potable Groundwater Standard Required Area shown on Schedule F – Groundwater Resources.
- b. Require the use of potable groundwater standards within 250 metres of a property that contains a groundwater supply well, except for wells used for monitoring or testing purposes.
- c. Encourage the remediation of sites where a spill has occurred or contaminated soils have been found to a Potable Groundwater Standard, where feasible.
- d. Require any request to use a Non-Potable Groundwater Standard to be completed in accordance with Ontario Regulation 153/04 and the City’s Non-Potable Groundwater Site Condition Standards Implementation Guideline.



7.3 NATURAL HERITAGE FEATURES AND AREAS

A healthy natural environment is critical to Sault Ste. Marie's sustainability. Our natural and built environments are part of a broader interconnected ecosystem. Forests, wetlands, waterbodies, parks and open spaces provide habitat for various aquatic and terrestrial species and contribute to clean air, water and soil. Our natural heritage features and areas and the functions they provide will be protected and preserved. The Natural Heritage Features and Areas, as shown on Schedule D of the Official Plan, identify the boundaries and extent of these features; however, it should be noted that this mapping is not exhaustive and subject to further on-site studies and verification where deemed necessary.

7.3.1 FISH HABITAT

Fish habitat includes lakes, rivers, streams, intermittent creeks and some drainage courses that are part of a valuable, connected habitat that serves a variety of fish through various stages of their life cycle. This includes the St. Mary's River Rapids, the 273 kilometres of streams and creeks that exist in the Sault and several lakes, primarily located in the Precambrian Uplands. All lakes, rivers, streams, and tributaries shown on Schedule D – Natural Heritage Features are considered Fish Habitat.

With respect to Fish Habitat, it is a policy of the City to:

- a. Encourage the restoration, enhancement and creation of fish habitat.
- b. Strongly encourage the maintenance of shoreline riparian areas in a natural state.
- c. Require where appropriate, the restoration of previously altered or developed shorelines to a natural state as a condition of development approvals.
- d. Encourage the provision and maintenance of public access to recreational fishing opportunities.
- e. Prohibit development and site alteration in fish habitat, except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements.
- f. Prohibit development and site alteration generally within 120 metres of fish habitat, unless it can be demonstrated through appropriate evaluation that there will be no negative impacts upon natural features or their ecological functions. This may require an Environmental Impact Study prepared by a qualified professional, which outlines any impacts to fish habitat, and the measures required to mitigate all negative impacts, if possible. The extent of the study will take into account the scope of proposed development, existing development, zoning, topography, species and habitat sensitivity.

An Environmental Impact Study may be waived or scoped where:

- i. A minor encroachment into the adjacent lands is proposed.
 - ii. Significant intervening development exists between the proposed development and the watercourse, such as roads or existing development, or where the shoreline is no longer natural and has been engineered by way of a cement edge, riprap or gabions.
 - iii. The topography is such that runoff will not enter into the watercourse or the development can be graded in such a way to eliminate any runoff to the watercourse.
- g. Appropriate land use controls, such as Site Plan Control or Holding Provisions may be utilized to ensure that development does not encroach into adjacent lands or appropriate vegetative buffers are protected or established between the watercourse and proposed development.



For clarity and ease of implementation, the following table summarizes the general permissions and requirements for development within and adjacent to areas of fish habitat. In all cases, the text of this Plan prevails

Feature Type	Development Within Feature	Development on Adjacent Lands
Fish Habitat	Not permitted unless authorized through applicable provincial/federal legislation	Subject to applicable provincial/federal policy

7.3.2 WETLANDS

Wetlands provide vital environmental and economic functions, including wildlife habitat, water filtration, and flood attenuation. Within Ecoregion 5E, the City of Sault Ste. Marie contains approximately 1,700 hectares of wetlands, representing about 7 percent of the City's land area. These include Significant Wetlands, coastal wetlands, evaluated wetlands, and unevaluated wetlands. Wetlands are identified on *Schedule D – Natural Heritage Features*.

Wetlands may be provincially evaluated or unevaluated. Evaluated wetlands that meet provincial thresholds are classified as Significant Wetlands, while evaluated wetlands that do not meet these thresholds, as well as unevaluated wetlands, may still provide important ecological functions. The following policies distinguish between these types and outline the City's approach to protection and development review.

7.3.2.1 Significant Wetlands:

- a) Wetlands designated by the Province as Significant Wetlands or Significant Coastal Wetlands are protected from development and site alteration under the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024
- b) Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in:
 - i. Significant Wetlands;
 - ii. Significant Coastal Wetlands.
- c) Development and site alteration shall not be permitted on adjacent lands unless an evaluation has demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions.

7.3.2.2 Non-Significant Wetlands (Evaluated, Unevaluated Wetlands, and Non-Significant Coastal Wetlands)

Wetlands that are not provincially significant, including non-significant wetlands, unevaluated wetlands, and coastal wetlands that are not deemed significant, may still provide ecological, hydrologic, or connectivity functions that contribute to the natural heritage system.

- a) These wetlands shall be considered during development review, particularly where they:
 - i. Form part of a broader natural system.
 - ii. Exhibit hydrologic connectivity.



- iii. Support habitat for species of local or regional concern.
- b) Where development is proposed within or adjacent to such wetlands, the requirement for an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) or scoped assessment, or equivalent technical review, shall be determined based on:
- i. The size and intensity of the proposed development.
 - ii. The proximity to and nature of the wetland feature.
 - iii. The potential for cumulative or downstream effects.
- c) Development and site alteration may be permitted within or adjacent to non-significant coastal wetlands only if it is demonstrated that the natural features and their ecological functions will not be negatively affected.
- d) Minor developments, such as small-scale infill, accessory structures, or single lot severances, may not require an EIS provided that:
- i. A preliminary site assessment demonstrates negligible risk to ecological or hydrological function.
 - ii. No part of the proposed development encroaches directly on the wetland boundary.

For clarity and ease of implementation, the following table summarizes the general permissions and requirements for development within and adjacent to wetland features. In all cases, the text of this Plan prevails

Feature Type	Development Within Feature	Development on Adjacent Lands
Significant Wetlands	Not permitted	Not permitted unless evaluation demonstrate no negative impacts
Significant Coastal Wetlands	Not permitted	Not permitted unless evaluation demonstrate no negative impacts
Non-Significant Coastal Wetlands	Permitted only if there are no negative impacts on natural features or ecological functions	May require EIS based on ecological function
Evaluated Non-Significant Wetlands	May require EIS based on scale, proximity, and impact	May require EIS; not automatically protected
Unevaluated Wetlands	May require EIS based on scale, proximity, and impact	May require EIS; not automatically protected

7.3.3 HABITAT OF ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES

Endangered species are those facing imminent threat of extinction or extirpation. Threatened species are likely to become endangered if steps are not taken to address the factors threatening the species. Special concern species may become threatened or endangered due to a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats.

Habitat loss is a significant contributing factor threatening species populations. Preserving habitat is crucial to the survival of threatened or endangered species, as well as biodiversity and



sustainability. According to the Province of Ontario, there are 47 species at risk in the Sault Ste. Marie area, including bird, reptile, mammal, invertebrate, plant, fish and mussel species. These include species of special concern, threatened and endangered. The location of some of the Habitat of Endangered and Threatened Species is shown on Schedule D – Natural Heritage Features and Areas. In other cases, such habitat is not shown due to the sensitivity of the species.

With respect to the Habitat of Endangered and Threatened Species, the City shall:

- a. Prohibit development and site alteration within the habitat of endangered and threatened species, except where authorized in accordance with provincial and federal legislation, including the Endangered Species Act, 2007 (ESA), and the Fisheries Act, where applicable.
- b. Advise proponents that if an endangered or threatened species is encountered during development or site alteration, activities must cease immediately and the Province must be contacted, as required under the ESA.
- c. The City shall require all development and site alteration proposals to be screened for impacts on species at risk and their habitat, in accordance with Provincial standards. Proponents must provide necessary assessments and secure approvals or implement mitigation measures as required before approvals are granted.
- d. Screening, evaluation, and study requirements may be scoped or waived where the City determines that the risk to endangered or threatened species or their habitat is negligible, including situations such as:
 - i. The area proposed for development is not vegetated
 - ii. The proposed development is small scale or infill in nature and will result in very minimal vegetation loss, such as the creation of a rural residential lot.
 - iii. Where the use of Site Plan Control, Holding Provisions or other tools can be utilized to ensure that vegetated areas on a lot are protected.
- e. Adjacent lands to habitat of endangered and threatened species shall also be screened for potential impacts, with evaluations required where development could affect habitat functions, even if habitat is not mapped.

For clarity and ease of implementation, the following table summarizes the general permissions and requirements for development within and adjacent to habitat of endangered and threatened species. In all cases, the text of this Plan prevails

Feature Type	Development Within Feature	Development on Adjacent Lands
Habitat of Endangered and Threatened Species	Not permitted unless authorized through applicable provincial/federal legislation	Subject to provincial/federal requirements and may require evaluation depending on potential impacts

7.3.4 SIGNIFICANT WILDLIFE HABITAT (SWH)

Wildlife habitat includes areas where plants, animals and other organisms live and find adequate amounts of food, water, shelter, and space needed to sustain their populations. In the city, SWH includes Peregrine Falcon nesting sites on the International Bridge and a Deer Wintering Area in and around the Airport. These features are shown on Schedule D – Natural Heritage Features and Areas. Sault Ste. Marie is located in Ecoregion 5E.

With respect to Significant Wildlife Habitat, the City shall:



- a. Unmapped or newly discovered Significant Wildlife Habitat shall be protected when identified, consistent with provincial policy and technical guidance.
- b. Development and site alteration within SWH shall not be permitted unless an evaluation by a qualified professional demonstrates no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions
- c. Development and site alteration on adjacent lands (generally within 120 metres) of SWH shall not be permitted unless an evaluation by a qualified professional demonstrates no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions.
- d. Allow City staff to scope or waive the requirement for an environmental evaluation (such as an Environmental Impact Study) where desktop review or site inspection confirms:
 - i. The site is already highly disturbed;
 - ii. There is no significant natural cover or mapped natural heritage triggers; or
 - iii. The proposed development is minor in scale or footprint.

Deer Wintering Area (Strata I)

- e. Development and site alteration within the Core Deer Wintering Area (Strata I) is prohibited where it will result in significant vegetation loss, unless it can be demonstrated through an appropriate evaluation prepared by a qualified professional that the development or site alteration will not significantly impact the Core Deer Wintering Area. The need for an evaluation may be scoped or waived where:
 - i. The area proposed for development is not heavily vegetated or part of a contiguous forested area.
 - ii. The proposed development is small scale or infill in nature and will result in very minimal vegetation loss, such as the creation of a rural residential lot.
 - iii. Where the use of Site Plan Control or other tools can be utilized to maximize vegetation retention.
- f. Development and site alteration adjacent to (within 120m) the Core Deer Wintering Area is permitted, subject to the use of Holding Provisions or other tools aimed at maximizing vegetation retention.

For clarity and ease of implementation, the following table summarizes the general permissions and requirements for development within and adjacent to areas of significant wildlife habitat. In all cases, the text of this Plan prevails

Feature Type	Development Within Feature	Development on Adjacent Lands
Significant Wildlife Habitat	Not permitted unless an evaluation demonstrates no negative impacts on natural features or ecological functions.	Not permitted unless ecological function is evaluated and no negative impacts are demonstrated

7.3.5 SIGNIFICANT AREAS OF NATURAL AND SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (ANSIs)

Significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs) are areas of land and water identified by the Province as having important natural values related to geology, biology, or landform features. They represent examples of Ontario's natural heritage and may include provincially significant life science or earth science features.



Some ANSIs may be shown on Schedule D – Natural Heritage Features and Areas. Other ANSIs may not be mapped due to data limitations or updates to provincial inventories. Newly identified ANSIs shall be protected when confirmed in accordance with provincial guidance.

It is the policy of the City to:

- a. Prohibit development and site alteration within an ANSI unless an evaluation prepared by a qualified professional demonstrates no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions.
- b. Prohibit development and site alteration on adjacent lands to ANSIs unless an evaluation prepared by a qualified professional demonstrates no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions. Adjacent lands are generally considered to be within 120 metres, but may be refined through feature-specific analysis.
- c. Allow City staff to scope or waive the requirement for an environmental evaluation where a desktop review or site inspection confirms that there is no natural feature on or adjacent to the subject property, or where the proposed development is minor in scale.

For clarity and ease of implementation, the following table summarizes the general permissions and requirements for development within and adjacent to ANSIs. In all cases, the text of this Plan prevails.

Feature Type	Development Within Feature	Development on Adjacent Lands
Significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs)	Permitted only if no negative impacts on natural features or ecological functions	Not permitted unless ecological function is evaluated and no negative impacts are demonstrated

7.3.6 FORESTS AND TREES

Given the mix of urban, rural and wilderness environments, Sault Ste. Marie has an abundance of forests and trees. These natural assets and natural climate solutions provide a range of environmental, economic, social and health services to residents and visitors.

With respect to forests and trees, it is a policy of the City to:

- a. Support the creation of a Tree By-law that protects heritage trees and trees in sensitive natural areas including wetlands, shoreline riparian areas, significant slopes and known significant wildlife habitat.
- b. Support the assessment of the urban tree canopy with the goal of establishing long-term urban tree canopy cover targets.
- c. Where feasible, require the maintenance and reinforcement of natural features such as wooded areas in or adjacent to new developments.
- d. Require that new developments strive to maintain existing trees, including the potential need for a Tree Retention Plan, as part of a complete application for large-scale developments.
- e. Strongly encourage tree planting as part of all new developments.
- f. Encourage tree planting in existing developments.
- g. Encourage tree planting on all public projects, including the reconstruction of arterial roads in commercial corridors.
- h. Support partnerships and efforts to plant trees on public lands.

- i. Give preference to the planting of native species for any public or private development project that is subject to Site Plan Control. Where non-native species are proposed, they shall be non-invasive species. Planted vegetation should be resilient to climate change and site-specific consideration, such as salt tolerance.
- j. Preference will be given to the planting of a diversity of species rather than a single type.
- k. Develop a comprehensive planting list of appropriate species.

7.3.7 THE PRECAMBRIAN UPLANDS

The Precambrian Uplands area contains numerous natural heritage features and areas, including large, connected forested areas, many watercourses and wetlands. The geology of the area is characterized by bedrock with very little topsoil and numerous significant slopes. Surface water flows south and into the groundwater recharge area, which supplies approximately 50 percent of the City's drinking water supply. Due to these characteristics, the area is very sensitive to development. Therefore, development within the Precambrian Uplands is generally prohibited. Further policies relating to the Precambrian Uplands are found in Section 4 – Land Use.

7.3.8 IN-WATER DEVELOPMENT

All in-water works are subject to the applicable approvals and regulations of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). In addition to municipal approvals required under local planning and development processes, proponents must secure the necessary permits and authorizations from these ministries to ensure compliance with provincial and federal legislation. These dual approval processes are intended to address both local and broader environmental, ecological, and safety considerations associated with in-water works.

7.4 MINERALS AND MINERAL AGGREGATE RESOURCES

Under the Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), 2024, minerals and mineral aggregates are distinct resource categories with different uses and policy considerations. The PPS emphasizes the protection and sustainable use of both resources but tailors' policies to their unique characteristics.

Minerals refer to naturally occurring metallic and non-metallic substances, such as gold, copper, and salt, which are typically mined for their economic value and play a key role in industries like manufacturing and energy. Policies focus on safeguarding deposits for long-term economic benefit and ensuring land-use compatibility around mining operations.

Mineral aggregates include construction materials such as sand, gravel, and crushed stone, which are essential for infrastructure development and other construction activities. Policies focus on maintaining an accessible supply for infrastructure projects, allowing extraction under specific conditions, and ensuring site rehabilitation.

While both are vital to Ontario's economy, their differing roles require distinct planning and management approaches.

With respect to Mineral Aggregate Resources, it shall be a policy of the City to:

- a. Identify and protect primary and secondary mineral aggregate resources for long-term use from the encroachment of sensitive uses.
- b. The creation of new lots to accommodate a sensitive use, such as a residential use, is prohibited from locating in primary aggregate areas.

- c. The creation of new rural residential subdivisions are prohibited in the Secondary Mineral Aggregate Resource Policy Area. Consent applications for the development of new lots in the Secondary Mineral Aggregate Resource Area shall demonstrate, through a study prepared by a Qualified Professional, that mineral or mineral aggregate extraction is not feasible due to various limitations, including but not limited to:
 - i. The depth, quality or quantity of the resource makes extraction not viable.
 - ii. Existing surrounding development, including sensitive uses negates resource extraction.
 - iii. The proposed new lots are in association with an existing recreational use, such as a golf course.
- d. Development proposals in areas surrounding mineral resources, including those with potential access to these resources, must demonstrate compatibility and ensure that they do not adversely impact current or future resource extraction activities.
- e. Ensure the orderly extraction and optimal use of mineral aggregate resources in order to provide for local, regional and provincial needs, while minimizing negative environmental, financial and social impacts on the municipality and residents.
- f. Require progressive and final rehabilitation on all mineral aggregate operations.
- g. Encourage the rehabilitation of abandoned pits and quarries.
- h. Unless located in an area of existing development or particular environmental sensitivity that has been determined to be incompatible with extraction and associated activities, wayside pits and quarries, portable asphalt plants, and portable concrete plants used on public authority contracts are permitted in all areas without the need for an Official Plan amendment, rezoning or development permit approval under the *Planning Act*.
- i. Continually monitor and assess the rural transportation network with the purpose of ensuring that major routes which service pits and quarries are capable of supporting heavy truck traffic, with special regard for the potential to ship aggregates via the future Port of Algoma.
- j. Additional policies contained in Section 4.10 - Aggregate Extraction Land Use Designation.

7.5 NATURAL HAZARDS

Various naturally occurring conditions can result in hazards to human health and safety, as well as damage or loss of property. In Sault Ste. Marie natural hazards include lands that are subject to flooding, wildland fire and erosion. The intent of this Plan is not to further aggravate any existing hazard and to direct new development away from lands that are impacted by such hazards where there is an unacceptable risk to public health, safety or of property damage. In other cases, various mitigation measures can reduce the risk to acceptable levels. The lands subject to natural hazards are shown on Schedule E – Environmental Constraints and Hazards.

7.5.1 FLOOD HAZARDS

Three types of flood hazards impact Sault Ste. Marie: the Great Lakes Flood Line, the Tributary Flood Line and Specific Flood Areas. The Sault most recently had severe flooding during the storms in the fall of 2013 and again in the fall of 2019. Because of the effects of climate change, it is generally anticipated that flooding may occur more frequently and with more severity.

Natural hazards are largely regulated by the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority and in most cases Conservation Authority approvals are required prior to any development or site alteration in a flood prone area.



7.5.1.1 GREAT LAKES FLOOD LINE

The Provincial Great Lakes/St. Lawrence River Shoreline Policy and the Shoreline Management Plan of the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority are implemented through the policies below. The purpose of these policies is to reduce the potential loss of life and property damage as a result of flooding, erosion and dynamic beach action.

The Great Lakes Flood Line is divided into two regulated areas as shown on Schedule E – Environment Constraints and Hazards:

- The Lake Superior Regulated Shoreline - Above the compensating gates.
- The St. Mary's River Regulated Shoreline - Below the compensating gates.

The Regulated Shorelines are defined as the total landward extent of the “regulatory flood line”, the “regulatory erosion line”, the “regulatory dynamic beach area”, and wave up-rush limits.

With respect to the Great Lakes Flood Line, it shall be a policy of the City to:

- a. Strongly encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of shoreline areas to a natural state. The maintenance and rehabilitation of shoreline areas may be imposed as a condition of development approval.
- b. Require all development or site alteration, including the removal of vegetation in or abutting a Regulated Shoreline, to obtain approval from the Conservation Authority and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.
- c. Require that erosion control works comply with provincial and Conservation Authority Standards.
- d. Permit further development of existing developed areas within the Lake Superior and St. Mary's River Regulated Shorelines subject to Conservation Authority approval and provided that:
 - i. Buildings and structures, including additions to existing buildings and structures, are flood-proofed.
 - ii. Erosion setbacks are used in combination with specific engineering works or studies to ensure proper protection.
 - iii. The development is not within the Dynamic Beach Area, as defined by the Conservation Authority.

7.5.1.2 TRIBUTARY FLOOD LINE

The Tributary Flood Line includes streams, intermittent watercourses and inland lakes that are not on the Lake Superior-St. Mary's River shoreline. The Tributary Flood Line or flood plain areas are identified by the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority (based on the Flood Plain Mapping Report, Dillon 1977) using the “Regional Storm” with allowances for erosion, meandering and the 1 in 100 year flood event. Defined by the Province of Ontario, the Regional Storm for this area is the “Timmins Storm”, which is based on an actual rainfall event that occurred over Timmins in 1961. The lands included within the Tributary Flood Line are shown on Schedule E – Environment Constraints and Hazards.

With respect to the Tributary Flood Line, it shall be a policy of the City to:

- a. Require a permit from the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority prior to any development or site alteration within the flood plain area.

- b. Prohibit the development of new buildings or structures within the designated Tributary Flood Line, except flood and erosion control structures and facilities which by their nature must locate near water.
- c. Require a permit from the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority prior to any development or site alteration within 30m of the high-water mark or within 15m of the top of the stable slope, both of which may include increased setbacks or flood proofing measures related to a meander belt, where necessary.
- d. Strongly encourage the maintenance of lands and vegetation within the Tributary Flood Line in a natural state.
- e. Strongly recommend the rehabilitation and revegetation of shore areas back to their natural state, subject to approvals from the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority.

7.5.1.3 SPECIFIC FLOOD AREAS

Bayview, Gateway and Steelton are urban areas that are prone to flooding. Development and redevelopment within the Specific Flood Areas shown on Schedule E - Environment Constraints and Hazards must conform to the following policies:

- a. Bayview — No building openings shall be permitted below 184.4m Canadian Geodetic Datum.
- b. Gateway — No building openings shall be permitted below 178.6 Canadian Geodetic Datum. Improvements which resolve the flooding hazard are identified by the City with the technical advice of the Conservation Authority and are required as a condition of redevelopment.
- c. Steelton — No building openings shall be permitted below the elevations established in the Conservation Authority's Fort Creek Watershed Appraisal, 1984. Improvements which resolve the flooding hazard are identified by the City, with the technical advice of the Conservation Authority and are proposed as a public project and provided when possible.

7.5.2 SIGNIFICANT SLOPES

Significant slope lands in Sault Ste. Marie include river and stream valleys (ravines) as well as the Sault's lower escarpment, commonly referred to as "the hill". For the purposes of this Plan, Significant Slopes are those that are greater than 15 percent. Development or site alteration on or near Significant Slopes is regulated to prevent potential human risks and property damage primarily related to erosion. Many of the Significant Slopes also act as vegetated corridors providing natural habitat and connecting forested areas throughout the community. The lands subject to Significant Slopes are shown on Schedule E - Environment Constraints and Hazards. The Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority regulates development within slope hazard lands.

With respect to Significant Slopes, it is the policy of the City to:

- a. Prohibit development and site alteration upon slopes that are unstable or subject to active erosion or historic slope failure.
- b. Maintain significant slopes and ravines in a natural state. The maintenance and enhancement of the natural vegetation upon a slope is strongly encouraged and may be imposed as a condition of development.
- c. Ensure that development is setback 15m from the top or bottom of the stable slope. Specific setback distances for slopes having grades steeper than 3 horizontals to 1



vertical, or 5 horizontals to 1 vertical in sandy soils, shall be determined in consultation with the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority.

- d. Require development proposals on or near significant slopes to be accompanied by a slope stability analysis prepared by a qualified professional, to the satisfaction of the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority. A permit from the Conservation Authority must also be obtained for development on these slopes or within 15m of the top or bottom of a defined stable slope.
- e. Prohibit development on lands having slopes greater than 15 percent. The City may consider but is under no obligation to accept the dedication of such lands for stormwater management purposes or to facilitate the continuation of a recreational or wildlife corridor. Such lands dedicated may not be included in any required parkland dedication.
- f. Protect areas where topographic changes might result in significant erosion or other environmental damage. These areas may include sensitive vegetation or vegetation in combination with topographic features.
- g. Recognize that the primary agency in the designation and review of fill areas is the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority. Changes to the boundaries or permits to place fill require Conservation Authority approval. Fill materials must meet applicable Provincial requirements.

7.5.3 WILDLAND FIRE

Behind flooding, wildfires are the second largest factor for natural disasters. On average, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry responds to over 1,200 wildfires each year. The anticipated impacts of climate change (increased frequency and severity of drought periods) coupled with communities expanding into forested areas have increased the risk of wildfires.

Vegetation types which present high to extreme risk for wildland fire include natural conifer forests and unmanaged conifer plantations that can include black or white spruce, jack pine and balsam fir, along with immature red and white pine. Mixed wood forests with a composition that is greater than 50% conifer, as well as damaged or diseased forests also pose a potential risk.

Lands subject to Wildland Fire Hazard (high to extreme risk) are shown on Schedule E - Environment Constraints and Hazards.

With respect to Wildland Fire Hazards, it shall be a policy of the City to:

- a. Generally direct development away from areas where hazardous forest types have been identified as high to extreme risk for wildland fire.
- b. Permit development upon lands with high to extreme risk forest types, where the risk is mitigated in accordance with a wildland fire assessment, completed by a qualified professional, in accordance with wildland fire assessment and mitigation standards identified by the Province of Ontario.
- c. Use its legislative authorities under the *Planning Act* to implement mitigation requirements or clearly identify areas with high to extreme wildland fire risks.
- d. Ensure that any mitigation efforts, such as clearing vegetation, consider all other policies contained within this Plan, especially those related to natural heritage features and areas.
- e. Encourage landowners in areas where high to extreme wildland fire risks have been identified to 'Be FireSmart'.



7.6 HUMAN MADE HAZARDS

There are three known mine hazards located in Sault Ste. Marie and numerous known contaminated sites and brownfields, which are former industrial or commercial sites that may be contaminated.

7.6.1 MINE HAZARDS

There are 2 known mine hazards, shown on Schedule E - Environment Constraints and Hazards. One is a former sandstone quarry north of the Great Northern Road/Fourth Line intersection. The other is located beyond the city limits. However, a small portion of the 1-kilometre buffer around the hazard is within the northeastern portion of the City.

As per Provincial requirements, applications for development within 1 kilometre of a mine hazard shall include consultation with the appropriate Provincial Ministry as part of a complete application. This Ministry will work with proponents to refine development setbacks and assess the need for additional studies, if any, as the case may be.

7.6.2 CONTAMINATED SITES

Known contaminated sites and potentially contaminated sites, known as brownfields include lands where contaminants may be present due to previous uses such as industrial, transportation or utility. Sources of site contamination can include disposal of waste materials, raw material storage, residues left in containers, maintenance activities and spills. Some commercial uses such as gasoline stations and vehicle repair garages have a similar potential. Where a site is or has the potential to be contaminated, appropriate remediation may be required prior to development. Site remediation may include a site remediation plan prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Protection Act and/or a Record of Site Condition issued by the Province of Ontario. Where a Record of Site Condition is required, remediation standard requirements shall be guided by Policy 7.2 of this Plan.



8 AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

The food system is a complex system of production, processing, distribution, and consumption of food. The local food system consists of the same elements but at the local level. Supporting the creation of a robust local food system leads to a secure food system, which has numerous economic, social, health and recreational benefits. It is also recognized that the City plays an important role in the regional food system, as the largest market in the region and a centre for support, value added processing and distribution.

More specifically, the City:

- a. Recognizes the role that local produced foods plays in the physical and economic health of the City.
- b. Supports existing and potential future agricultural operations by permitting where appropriate, agricultural related uses and on-farm diversified uses.
- c. Supports urban agriculture uses aimed at providing people with an opportunity to produce their own foods, including community gardens.
- d. Supports food accessibility for vulnerable sections of the population and specifically recognizes food banks and community kitchens as a valuable part of integrated social services.
- e. Ensures that rural residential development is limited in nature relative to the local context, and does not negatively impact existing and future agricultural operations.

8.1 RURAL AGRICULTURE

The City of Sault Ste. Marie has a vibrant and growing agriculture sector. The number of active farms in Sault Ste. Marie has varied between approximately 25 and 35 farms since 2006. Based on Statistics Canada data, agriculture activity in Sault Ste. Marie accounts for 7% to 10% of the agriculture activity in the entire Algoma District. While it is recognized that the majority of local rural agricultural operations are small scale, they play an important role in the local food system. Furthermore, Sault Ste. Marie represents a significant market for foods grown in the region, as well as a potential hub for processing, storage and distribution to larger markets.



The following policies apply to rural agriculture:

- a. Ensure rural lot sizes are large enough to support agricultural uses, with recognition that crop production can occur on smaller lots and livestock operations or more intensive farming operations require larger lots.
- b. Ensure that proposals for new sensitive uses and new or expanded livestock facilities (barns and manure storage) adhere to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) Minimum Distance Separation Formulae, to ensure land use compatibility.
- c. Generally support, where feasible:
 - i. Agriculture-related uses that are directly related to farm operations on-site or in the area, support agriculture and benefit from being in close proximity to farm operations. Examples include, but are not limited to processing, handling and storage facilities, the production and sale of agricultural products and value added agricultural products, educational farms and pick-your-own operations.
 - ii. On-farm diversified uses including agri-tourism, banquets and small-scale food services.
 - iii. Home-based Industries such as small-scale trades shops, contractor's yards, and indoor and outdoor storage.
- d. Agricultural related uses, on-farm diversified uses and home based industries in association with an agricultural operation are subject to the following criteria:
 - i. The property must be part of the Farm Property Class Tax Rate Program.
 - ii. The use does not impair the primary agricultural operation.
 - iii. The use does not negatively impact nearby sensitive uses.
 - iv. The use can be supported with adequate on-site services (well and septic) and parking.
- e. Small-scale, non-permanent, seasonal food outlets are permitted on any lands designated Commercial, Mixed Employment or Rural Area, subject to the following criteria:
 - i. They are located upon private property with frontage on an arterial road, excluding seasonal food outlets that are located on the same property as an existing agricultural operation.
 - ii. Seasonal food outlets are to be small-scale, non-permanent and the construction of any buildings or structures is discouraged. Installations, such as tables, tents and signage shall be non-permanent and temporary in nature. Outlets that are located on the same property as an existing agricultural operation are exempt from these requirements.
 - iii. Adequate on-site parking shall be accommodated.
 - iv. The seasonal food outlet shall be located in a manner that all required setbacks can be achieved.

8.1.1 LOCALLY SIGNIFICANT AGRICULTURAL AREAS

Locally Significant Agricultural Areas are congruent areas that exhibit characteristics of long-term agricultural viability and contribute meaningfully to the local food system. These areas are shown on Schedule A – Land Use.

For the purposes of this Plan, a Locally Significant Agricultural Area is identified where all the following criteria are met:

- a. The area is predominantly comprised of Soil Classes 1 to 3, as determined by the Canada Land Inventory (CLI) classification system;
- b. A significant portion of the area is actively used for agricultural purposes at the time of designation, including crop production, livestock operations, or other primary agricultural activities. The area should contain a concentration of properties enrolled in the Farm Property Class Tax Rate Program;
- c. The area shows a low degree of farmland fragmentation, indicated by large continuous farm parcels;
- d. The area must be a contiguous cluster of land that is at least 250 hectares in size, forming a coherent and functional area; and
- e. All properties within the area are designated as Rural Area in Schedule A – Land Use.

8.1.1.1 *The following area has been identified as a Locally Significant Agricultural Area:*

Generally, the properties that are between Carpin Beach Road and Leigh's Bay Road, south of Third Line and north of Base Line. This area is shown on Schedule A – Land Use.

Other areas may be identified as Locally Significant Agricultural Areas through future planning reviews, supported by Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR) studies or other relevant assessment tools.

8.1.1.2 *The following policies apply to Locally Significant Agricultural Areas:*

- a. Permit a maximum of two severances plus the remnant or retained parcel, as of July 14, 2014, as per the Rural Area Severances Policy, subject to the following:
 - i. Severed parcels not intended for active agricultural use shall be limited to a maximum size of 1.0 hectares to minimize farmland fragmentation. The remnant parcel that is intended to continue the agricultural use shall be a minimum of 4 hectares in size.
 - ii. Where both severed and retained parcels are intended for active agricultural use, no maximum lot size is imposed on the severed parcels.
- b. Encourage the retention or consolidation of farm parcels so that farms are of sufficient size to promote efficient operations and responsible environmental management, and to maintain long-term agricultural viability and flexibility.
- c. Subdivision for rural estate purposes is not supported to prevent land fragmentation and protect the agricultural land base.

8.2 MAPLE SYRUP PRODUCTION

The strong demand for maple syrup and related products is evidenced by federal and provincial programs aimed at supporting maple syrup production. At the regional level, RAIN (Rural Agri-Innovation Network) aims to expand the maple sector by enabling producers to increase production, grow markets, adopt new technology and create innovative maple products. The global demand-supply gap in maple syrup coupled with the numerous mature sugar maple tree stands (sugar bushes) in Sault Ste. Marie, provide an opportunity to grow this sector. From an environmental standpoint, maple syrup harvesting is a low impact use, as mature trees can be tapped for a number of years without impacting the overall health of the tree. The mature maple trees in the City are primarily located in the Precambrian Uplands area, however, many properties located in this area do not have frontages on publicly owned roads.



It shall be the policy of the City to:

- a. Support agriculture uses associated with maple syrup production, which includes maple sap tapping and syrup production on lands designated Rural Area.
- b. Support where feasible, accessory uses associated with maple syrup production such as bottling, retail sales, food services and public tours in the Rural Area, subject to the following criteria:
 - i. The use does not impair the primary maple syrup operation.
 - ii. The use does not negatively impact nearby sensitive uses.
 - iii. The use can be supported with adequate on-site well and septic services and parking.
- c. Support, where feasible, maple syrup production on lands designated Precambrian Uplands, subject to the following:
 - i. Where the property has frontage and direct access to a publicly owned and maintained road, accessory buildings and uses open to the public, such as food services, retail sales, and public tours, are permitted.
 - ii. Where a property does not have frontage or direct access to a publicly owned and maintained roadway, maple syrup production may occur, however accessory buildings requiring a permit and the accessory uses described above (Section 8.2c(i)) are not permitted.
 - iii. Accessory buildings requiring a permit may only be erected where legal access agreements can be obtained across all lands from which access is required. Such agreements shall be for a period exceeding 21 years, which may require Consent approvals.

8.3 URBAN AGRICULTURE

Urban agriculture uses, including community gardens, backyard gardens, and rooftop gardens contribute to local food access, sustainability, and community well-being.

It shall be the policy of the City to:

- a. Support the exploration of small-scale urban agriculture initiatives, including the potential for backyard hens, subject to further study and regulation through the Zoning By-law and other applicable municipal by-laws.
- b. Encourage public consultation and pilot projects to assess community interest, animal welfare, and operational feasibility prior to implementation.
- c. Encourage private gardens and orchards in all land use designations.
- d. Permit community gardens in all land use designations, excluding Industrial designated lands.
- e. Require a Record of Site Condition, where there is the potential for soil contamination based on historical use of the property. Alternatively, raised garden beds with an impermeable barrier between the garden bed and any contaminated soils may be permitted, subject to review of a qualified professional where necessary.
- f. Support locating community gardens on City-owned property, including City-owned parks, subject to policies pertaining to new uses in parks, contained in Section 6.2e) of this Plan.



8.4 FOOD BANKS

Food banks are an important element of food security and they provide food for the most vulnerable. Food banks either function on the '*front line*' model, directly providing food to those who need it, or the '*warehouse model*', supplying front line organizations such as food banks and soup kitchens. The City recognizes that food banks offer more than just food and may include accessory food related programs such as a community kitchen, prepared meals, food literacy courses, greenhouses and community gardens. It shall be the policy of the City to:

- a. Encourage location of food banks within public service facilities and community hubs.
- b. Support where feasible, accessory food-related uses such as food services, community kitchens, educational courses, greenhouses and community gardens.



9 INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICING

Providing and maintaining civic infrastructure and services is an important responsibility of the municipality. The design and provision of most civic infrastructure and core services is guided by provincial policies, regulations and guidelines.

Specific policies related to transportation infrastructure are discussed in Section 3 – *Urban Design and Mobility*. In addition, ‘soft’ infrastructure that adds to the city’s quality of life, including things like parks, recreational and cultural facilities are addressed in Section 6 – *Parks, Recreation, Arts, Culture and Heritage*.

9.1 INFRASTRUCTURE OBJECTIVES

The city shall:

- a. Provide residents with a reliable supply of clean and safe drinking water and the safe disposal of wastewater.
- b. Ensure that the City’s water and sewage capacities are adequate to service existing and proposed development.
- c. Ensure that the City’s stormwater management system adequately manages water quantity and improves water quality, with special regard for the potential impacts of climate change.
- d. Promote green, sustainable infrastructure and utility development.
- e. Promote water and energy conservation and water and energy use efficiency across all sectors.
- f. Ensure efficient and economic local waste management that safeguards the physical, environmental and social health of the community.
- g. Minimize the impact of solid waste disposal on the environment by optimizing resource recovery and recycling of solid waste.
- h. Support the development of energy and communications infrastructure in coordination with the responsible private and publicly regulated agencies.



9.2 MUNICIPAL WATER AND SEWAGE SERVICING

The PUC is responsible for water services and the City is responsible for sewage services. Areas outside of the Urban Settlement Area primarily rely on individual wells and septic systems; however, there are exceptions where public water and sewer services are available to properties outside of the Urban Settlement Area. There is enough reserve capacity in the public water and sewer systems, including hauled sewage capacity, to accommodate projected growth over the next 20 years.

In an effort to provide infrastructure and services in an efficient manner to accommodate current and projected needs, the following policies shall apply:

- a. All development within the Urban Settlement Area shall be serviced by public water and sewage services unless it is determined not to be feasible over the life of this Plan.
- b. All development outside of the Urban Settlement Area shall be served by private on-site water and sewage services except where there is direct access to existing services; then, development shall connect to public services.
- c. For on-site sewage systems designed to treat more than 10,000 litres of effluent per day, approvals are required from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). For on-site sewage systems designed to treat less than 10,000 litres of effluent per day, approvals are required from Algoma Public Health (APH).
- d. Where development is proposed outside fully serviced areas, the proponent must prove that the soil conditions of the proposed site are suitable for a waste sewage disposal system and that there is a proven source of potable water available. A hydrogeological assessment may be required where the minimum lot size is less than 1 hectare.
- e. The extension of municipal water and/or sewage services to development outside the Urban Settlement Area may be considered on a case-by-case basis, where such extensions are necessary to address failed on-site septic and water service. The following criteria shall also be considered:
 - i. Alternative sources of water supply are not available or inadequate.
 - ii. A health hazard exists.
 - iii. Environmental degradation is occurring.
- f. Development of new sensitive uses within 150m of the East and West Sewage Treatment Plants is discouraged, as further discussed in Section 4.14 of this Plan.

9.3 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Stormwater management systems are critical in protecting public health and safety, property and the environment. These systems receive, control and convey stormwater runoff in response to precipitation and snow melt. The City's stormwater management system consists of an integrated network of swales, ditches, culverts, storm sewers, flood control channels, pump stations, oil and grit separators, stormwater management ponds and underground reservoirs. Local stormwater management systems are owned, operated and maintained by the City of Sault Ste. Marie, the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority, private developments or a combination thereof.

With an increase in impervious surface cover, such as roads, driveways and rooftops, management of stormwater quantity and quality is an essential factor in development. It shall be the policy of the City to:

- a. Emphasize stormwater management practices in the design of the major and minor drainage systems, with a goal of preserving the hydrologic cycle, and a focus on source controls.
- b. Encourage maximizing the extent and function of vegetative and permeable surfaces.
- c. Promote stormwater attenuation and reuse, as well as water conservation and efficiency.
- d. Implement a city-wide stormwater management approach as noted in the 2015 Stormwater Management Master Plan and Guidelines, which include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Improving snow disposal sites.
 - ii. Education about stormwater management.
 - iii. Implementing a point source monitoring plan to monitor specific sources of pollution.
 - iv. Installing additional oil and grit separators to remove oil and sediment from storm runoff.

9.4 INFRASTRUCTURE IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Municipal sewer and water services are the preferred form of servicing for all new developments within the Urban Settlement Area. It shall be the policy of the City to:

- a. Permit new development only if existing and planned public sewage and water services have confirmed capacity to accommodate the demands of the proposed development.
- b. Where there is insufficient capacity, proponents may choose to upgrade, at their own expense, the existing sewage and water systems to ensure adequate servicing consistent with Provincial and Local standards.
- c. Generally discourage communal or shared potable water and wastewater systems, unless the system is part of an approved condominium development.
- d. Minimize impact on the City's stormwater management system by incorporating on-site measures, such as permeable surfaces and vegetative retention areas that limit the amount of stormwater entering the municipal service system.
- e. Wherever possible, low impact design (LID) and green infrastructure will be encouraged as a means to managing stormwater. Low-impact design utilizes natural processes to manage stormwater runoff and green infrastructure includes built features such as bioswales and constructed wetlands that perform environmental functions such as filtering stormwater.
- f. The need for and design of stormwater management systems in association with private development will be assessed and reviewed according to the City's Stormwater Management Master Plan and Guidelines. More specifically:
 - i. All industrial, commercial and institutional developments, as well as residential developments of 4 or more dwelling units must have quantity and where necessary, quality controls.
 - ii. Where quantity controls are required, peak post-development flows should not exceed pre-development flows for all storms up to the major drainage system design storm.
 - iii. In consultation with the Sault Ste. Marie Conservation Authority, quality control measures aimed at removing total suspended solids shall be implemented, as necessary.



9.5 SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Solid waste management refers to sites and facilities that accommodate solid waste, including recycling facilities, transfer stations, processing sites and disposal sites (such as landfills and incinerators). Waste management facilities can generate odour and cause other adverse effects on nearby residents. Therefore, land use compatibility considerations contained in Section 4.14 of this Plan shall apply.

Upon completion of the Solid Waste Management Environmental Assessment and subsequent expansion of the landfill footprint, it is anticipated that the landfill's capacity, will be adequate to accommodate anticipated growth over the next 20 years. Additionally, it shall be the policy of the City to:

- a. Strive to facilitate waste diversion from the landfill through the development, support and where feasible, expansion of waste diversion initiatives such as additional plastics recycling and organics composting.
- b. Encourage 'landfill mining', which is a process of excavating disposed waste and cover material, recovering recyclable materials and cover material, and returning the residual waste to the disposal footprint.
- c. Consider the implications of development and land use patterns on waste generation, management and diversion.
- d. Protect the ongoing viability of municipal solid waste management facilities, such as the landfill, by discouraging the encroachment of new sensitive uses within the defined influence areas of these facilities.

9.6 TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

Telecommunications infrastructure is regulated by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED), which is a Federal agency that holds the final approval authority over the location and design of telecommunications towers. Telecommunications towers are exempt from municipal zoning by-laws. However, there is a public consultation protocol and proponents are required to obtain a "letter of concurrence" from the City, which is then submitted to ISED to indicate the City's support of the installation of the new telecommunications tower.

The City shall:

- a. Proactively work with outside agencies and stakeholders to appropriately plan for and support telecommunications infrastructure development.
- b. Review applications for the construction of new telecommunications towers according to the City's Telecommunications Tower Policy, which provides direction on locational and design criteria for new towers, as well as application, public notice and consultation requirements.

9.7 ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

Various public and privately owned and operated energy infrastructure exists within Sault Ste. Marie, including PUC's electrical distribution system, TransCanada's natural gas pipeline, Enbridge underground gas distribution system and high-voltage electricity transmission lines owned by Hydro One.

The City Shall:

- a. Proactively work with outside agencies and stakeholders to appropriately plan for and support energy infrastructure development.
- b. Protect existing and planned utility corridors through appropriate land use and development controls.
- c. Promote energy conservation and efficiency across all sectors.
- d. Support renewal energy projects including wind and solar.

9.8 FIRE PROTECTION AND POLICE SERVICES

The safety and security of residents and properties is key to maintaining social cohesion and citizen involvement in civic affairs.

The City Shall ensure that:

- a. New development is generally directed away from unsafe lands due to natural and human made hazards, as further discussed in Sections 7.5 and 7.6 of this Plan.
- b. New development has sufficient water pressure to ensure adequate flows for fire protection. The City may restrict certain types of land uses in certain areas due to inadequate water pressure.
- c. The development of fire stations and police stations generally considers the following:
 - i. Convenient access to arterial roads.
 - ii. Relationship to intended service area.
 - iii. Design and site plan integration with the host neighbourhood, including the use of appropriate landscaping.



10 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The Official Plan is a key, long-term, strategic document that will guide growth and change in the City of Sault Ste. Marie over the next 20 years. It is anticipated that the Official Plan will be used to inform other strategic plans, master plans and other planning or programs developed by the City and its partners during the life of the Official Plan. It is also anticipated that the Official Plan will inform other initiatives like asset management planning, infrastructure capital planning, financial planning and the annual budget process.

This section establishes policies pertaining to the administration and implementation of this Official Plan in the land use planning context, using the appropriate legal and financial tools. Generally, the Official Plan will be implemented by the City through the use of specific powers of the *Planning Act*, general powers pursuant to the *Municipal Act* and any other relevant provincial or municipal legislation.

The policies of this Plan balance local and provincial goals and objectives in land use planning. The Plan has regard to matters of provincial interest, is consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement 2024 and conforms with the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario. In addition to the policies of this Plan, there are other plans, policies, programs, legislation, regulations, and guidelines established by various Provincial Ministries that must be considered when applications for new development are proposed. All applications will be reviewed against the policies of this Plan, with necessary regard to this broader legislative framework. This chapter discusses the planning tools available to the Municipality, the role of public participation, the importance of ongoing monitoring and how to interpret the Plan.

10.1 OFFICIAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The policies contained in this Plan shall be implemented by:

- a. Regulating private development through tools such as subdivision control, zoning, building regulations, and other by-laws.
- b. Preparing more detailed plans where warranted.

- c. Using all legislative powers vested in the City of Sault Ste. Marie through provincial statutes having effect in the City in implementing this Plan.
- d. Not undertaking any public project or passing any by-law that does not conform with this Plan.
- e. Encouraging public works undertaken by Provincial and Federal Ministries and other public agencies to conform to the policies of this Plan.
- f. Continually investigating new or improved techniques of implementation.

10.1.1 OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENTS

This Plan shall be reviewed and amended from time to time as required by Council to meet the changing needs of the Community and respond to new issues, information and projects. Amendments may be initiated by City Council or the public. Amendments must follow the procedures outlined in this Plan and the *Planning Act* and its regulations.

It shall be the policy of the Official Plan:

- a. That any provision of this Plan may be amended pursuant to the requirements of the *Planning Act*.
- b. That except as provided for in Section 10.9.2 (b), changes to the text, tables and schedules contained in this Plan will require an amendment to the Plan.
- c. That when considering an application to amend the Official Plan, the City shall consider the following matters:
 - i. The conformity of the proposal to the principles, strategic direction, objectives, and appropriate policies of the City of Sault Ste. Marie Official Plan.
 - ii. Matters of provincial interest in the *Planning Act*.
 - iii. Consistency with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024.
 - iv. Conformity with the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario.
 - v. Other relevant legal, policy or regulatory requirements.
 - vi. The views of the public, public bodies and other stakeholders.
 - vii. Whether the proposed amendment is in the public interest.
 - viii. Other matters as deemed appropriate.
- d. That the City shall provide information regarding a proposed amendment to the Official Plan to such boards, commissions or agencies that may have an interest, to afford such agencies an opportunity to comment.
- e. That prior to adopting an amendment to the Plan, the City shall provide information and hold a public meeting for the purposes of obtaining public input concerning the proposal, subject to the provisions of the *Planning Act*, and Section 10.7.3 of this Plan.
- f. That prior to the City considering an application to amend the Official Plan, the applicant shall meet the requirements of Section 10.7.2 of this Plan.

10.2 COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT

Pursuant to Section 44 of the *Planning Act*, Council has delegated to the Committee of Adjustment the ability to grant consents, minor variances and extension to legal non-conforming uses. The Committee shall be guided by the provisions of the *Planning Act* and by the policies of this Plan when deliberating on applications.

- a. Consents to Sever



The Committee of Adjustment can grant consents to sever the land for ownership, rights in use of land (easements) by sale, purchase or mortgage, lease or other forms of agreement for a period of twenty-one years or more.

b. Minor Variances

When considering a Minor Variance to the Zoning By-law, the Committee of Adjustment shall assess if the requested variance(s) satisfies the four tests of a Minor Variance:

- i. Is it minor?
- ii. Is it desirable for appropriate use and development of the land?
- iii. Does it maintain the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law?
- iv. Does it maintain the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan?

c. Non-Conforming Uses

An existing use which is not permitted by the provisions and policies of the applicable Zoning By-law is “legal non-conforming”. Applications for the extension or enlargement of a legal non-conforming use will be considered by the Committee of Adjustment. The Committee of Adjustment in considering an application for enlargement or extension of a legal non-conforming use shall consider the following:

- i. The proposed extension or enlargement will improve or not unduly aggravate the situation created by the existence of the use.
- ii. The proposed extension or enlargement represents a reasonable increase in the size of the non-conforming use.
- iii. The characteristics of the existing non-conforming use and the proposed extension or enlargement will be examined with regard to impacts from noise, vibration, fumes, smoke, dust, odour, lighting, and traffic generation.
- iv. The host neighbourhood and adjacent uses will be afforded reasonable protection by the provision of landscaping, buffering or screening, appropriate setbacks for buildings and structures and any other measures for reducing nuisances.
- v. Adequate provisions will be made for off-street parking and loading facilities.
- vi. All municipal services such as water, sewage and roads are and will continue to be adequate.
- vii. The enlargement or extension of a legal non-conforming use that would allow the legal non-conforming use to extend beyond the boundaries of the property on which the legal non-conforming use first existed. For the purposes of clarity, any legal non-conforming use that extends beyond the boundaries of the property on which the legal non-conforming use first existed will be considered as an illegal land use.

10.3 LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT DESIGN CONTROLS

10.3.1 ZONING BY-LAW

It is the policy of this Official Plan to:

- a. Update the Zoning By-law within 3 years of the New Official Plan coming into effect and after completing each comprehensive Official Plan review so that it conforms to the most current version of the Official Plan.
- b. Ensure that the Zoning By-law and amendments thereto conform to the policies of this Plan.
- c. Evaluate each rezoning application according to all applicable policies of this Plan.



- d. Consider applications for Minor Variances to the Zoning By-law pursuant to the policies of Section 10.2b of this Plan.

10.3.2 HOLDING PROVISION

A Zoning By-law may contain Holding provisions when the use of land has been determined, but Council has identified conditions that need to be satisfied prior to development proceeding. Lands subject to these provisions shall be identified by the holding symbol “H” following the zone symbol on the zoning maps.

- a. The holding symbol (H) is generally used in the following instances:
 - i. When certain details of development have not yet been determined or where certain conditions of development have not yet been met, such as, but not limited to, development or servicing agreements with the City.
 - ii. When the level of community services and/or infrastructure is not yet adequate to support the proposed use.
 - iii. Where environmental conditions or constraints temporarily preclude development or redevelopment.
 - iv. Where soil remediation is required prior to development.
 - v. Where required studies have not yet been approved by the City
- b. The zoning by-law containing the holding provision may specify the interim land uses to be permitted, the conditions for removal of the holding provision, and any regulations or restrictions applying to the lands during the time the holding provision is in place.
- c. The holding provision may be removed when all the conditions set out in the holding provision by-law have been satisfied.

10.3.3 INTERIM CONTROL BY-LAWS

Council may enact an Interim Control By-law for a period not exceeding a total of two years from the date of the initial passing of the Interim Control By-law, to prohibit certain land uses or development patterns until such time that Council has had time to conduct a full review or study and develop policies and regulations for such uses or development patterns. Once an Interim Control By-law ceases to be in effect, Council may not pass another Interim Control By-law that applies to the same lands as the original Interim Control By-law for three years.

10.3.4 TEMPORARY USE BY-LAWS

Council may authorize, by by-law, a temporary use of land for a purpose that is otherwise prohibited by this Official Plan and the Zoning By-law, for a period not exceeding three years. Prior to the passing of a Temporary Use By-law, Council shall be satisfied that the proposed temporary use meets the following criteria:

- a. That it is in the public interest.
- b. That it is compatible with neighbouring land use activities.
- c. That adequate parking can be provided.
- d. Adverse impact on traffic will not be created.
- e. The construction of a permanent building or structure is not encouraged.
- f. The use cannot become permanent and difficult to terminate.
- g. Adverse environmental impacts will be avoided, minimized or mitigated.



10.3.5 SITE PLAN CONTROL

The intent of site plan control is to ensure a high-quality development in terms of building location and orientation, access for pedestrians and vehicles, parking, exterior accessibility features, site servicing, landscaping, drainage, and buffering. Where a property or use is subject to Site Plan Control, the developer must enter into a Site Plan Agreement with the City, which must be registered on title, before the issuance of any building permits, development or site alteration.

It is a general policy of this plan to require site plan control to be utilized in the following situations:

- a. On properties located within *strategic development areas*, including the downtown, along corridors and gateway areas.
- b. Where there is a sensitive use/non-sensitive use interface or residential/non-residential interface.
- c. Medium and large-scale residential and non-residential intensification development.
- d. Any other proposal where Council deems it appropriate to require site plan control.
- e. Residential development consisting of 11 or more dwelling units, where appropriate. Residential development with 10 or fewer dwelling units are not subject to site plan control, unless the project falls within the following areas as prescribed by O.Reg 254/23 and identified below:
 - a. Within 300 metres of a railway line other than abandoned or discontinued railway lines.
 - b. Within 120 metres of either a wetland, the shoreline of the Great Lakes, or the St. Mary's River, or a river or stream valley that has depressional features associated with a river or stream, whether or not it contains a watercourse.

10.3.6 COMMUNITY PLANNING PERMIT SYSTEM

The Community Planning Permit System consolidates the Rezoning, Minor Variance, and Site Plan Control processes into one streamlined development permit application process. Council may pass a by-law to deem all or part of the community as within a Community Planning Permit System (CPPS), subject to an Official Plan Amendment to:

- a. Identify the areas in the municipality that would be subject to a CPPS.
- b. Outline the goals and objectives of the CPPS for the identified areas.
- c. Set out the criteria and conditions that may be considered in the decision process for development applications.

10.3.7 LEGAL NON-CONFORMING USES, LOTS, BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Many existing land uses may not conform with the designations and/or policies of this Plan. These uses are generally viewed as undesirable, and the intent is the use should eventually cease and the property developed with a new use that is compatible with this Plan. With respect to these non-conforming uses, the following policies will apply:

- a. Nothing in this Plan will affect the continuance of uses legally existing on the date this Plan was adopted.
- b. The implementing Zoning By-law may recognize existing land uses that do not conform with the land use designation of this Plan.
- c. Non-Conforming Uses
Any legally existing use that does not conform to the relevant policies contained in this Plan will be deemed a legal non-conforming in terms of this Plan. The following shall apply:



- i. Where an existing non-conforming use is discontinued, any rezoning may only take place in conformity with this Plan.
 - ii. If the use is similar or compatible with the uses permitted in the Zoning By-law, it may be permitted to expand or redevelop, subject to any conditions the Committee of Adjustment deems appropriate as per the provisions of Section 10.2c of this Plan.
 - iii. An existing building or structure that is zoned as a non-conforming use may be reconstructed or strengthened to a safe condition, provided the external dimensions and use of the building or structure do not change.
- d. Non-Conforming Lots, Buildings and Structures.
Where a legally existing use of land is permitted within the applicable zone in the Zoning By-law, but the lot, buildings or structures located on the property no longer meet one or more of the provisions or regulations of the applicable zone, the lot, building or structure shall be considered to be legal non-conforming.
 - i. Applications to expand or alter a legal non conforming building or structure will be considered by way of a Zoning By-law amendment or minor variance, depending on the nature of the proposal.
 - ii. Legal non-conforming lots may be developed upon in accordance with the policies of this Plan and the implementing Zoning By-law.

10.4 LAND DIVISION TOOLS

10.4.1 SEVERANCES

Where the extension of a public road, water or sewer main is not required, land may be divided through the Consent to Sever process provided that a Plan of Subdivision is not necessary for the proper and orderly development of the area.

The following policies shall apply to severances:

- a. Residential lot creation in rural areas is limited to the creation of two new lots, plus the remnant or retained parcel, as of July, 14 2014.
- b. Rural residential severances in the Precambrian Uplands and Aggregate Extraction Areas are prohibited.
- c. When assessing an application to create a new lot by Consent to Sever, the Committee of Adjustment shall be satisfied that:
 - i. The land is divided in an efficient manner and that landlocked parcels are not created.
 - ii. The proposed lot will not affect the future development or use of the remaining lands.
 - iii. The proposed lot has frontage upon and direct access to a public road that is owned and maintained by the City on a year-round basis.
 - iv. The proposed lot can be accessed safely, without causing a traffic hazard as a result of its location near an intersection or on a curve or hill.
 - v. The planned development of the proposed lot shall not have a negative impact on the drainage patterns of the area.
 - vi. The proposed lot and planned development will not negatively impact any significant natural heritage features, areas or hazards.



- vii. The proposed lot is of a size appropriate for the intended use and is in conformity with the policies of the Official Plan and the Zoning By-law.
- viii. Severances for residential purposes which result in the creation of two-tiered parcels (flag shaped lots) shall be discouraged, especially where the rear parcel cannot meet the minimum frontage requirements of the zone in which it is situated.
- d. Despite the policies noted above, the following technical severances may be granted:
 - i. To correct lot boundaries.
 - ii. To convey additional land to an adjacent lot provided the conveyance does not lead to the creation of an undersized lot for the purpose for which it is being or will be used.
 - iii. To correct title to the land.
 - iv. Where the effect of the consent does not create an additional lot.
 - v. To permit an easement.
 - vi. To permit a consent for municipal or other public purposes.

10.4.2 DRAFT PLAN OF SUBDIVISION – General Policies

Where the extension of public infrastructure such as roads, water or sewer mains is required, land shall generally be divided through a Plan of Subdivision.

The following policies shall apply to Draft Plans of Subdivision:

- a. When assessing a Plan of Subdivision application, the City shall be satisfied that:
 - i. The proposed development is not premature and is located within the Urban Settlement Area, except where otherwise permitted by this Plan.
 - ii. Draft Plans of Subdivision outside of the Urban Settlement Area are subject to Section 4.9.1 (Rural Estate Residential Subdivisions).
 - iii. The land is divided in an efficient manner, and landlocked parcels are not created.
 - iv. The proposed subdivision is integrated with the surrounding area.
 - v. The proposed infrastructure is designed to meet or exceed City standards.
 - vi. The subdivision shall not have a negative impact on the drainage patterns of the area.
 - vii. The subdivision will not impact the groundwater quality and quantity of the area.
 - viii. The proposed development will not have a negative impact upon significant natural heritage features and areas or hazards.
 - ix. The proposed lots are of a size appropriate for their intended use and are in conformity with the policies of the Official Plan and the Zoning By-law.
 - x. The proposed subdivision can be accommodated by adequate services and infrastructure.
- b. The City shall use subdivision agreements to ensure that appropriate conditions and requirements are satisfied as part of the development. The City may adopt standards for the development, design, servicing, roads, financing, and other conditions under the subdivision agreement.
- c. Expiry of Draft Approval:

- i. Every Draft Plan of Subdivision, or portion thereof, shall be deemed to have expired if after 6 years from the date of Draft Approval, it has not been registered.
- ii. Requests to extend Draft Approval must be received before the expiry date. The maximum extension period shall be 3 years. All extension requests are subject to review and may be approved, modified, or denied at the discretion of the Planning Director. Extensions may be granted where the applicant demonstrates:
 - a. Substantial progress on fulfilling conditions (e.g. engineering design, subdivision agreement, early servicing);
 - b. Continued conformity with the Provincial Planning Statement, the Official Plan, the Zoning By-law, and current municipal engineering standards, and
 - c. Alignment with approved infrastructure phasing and available capacity in the City's capital forecast.
- iii. No combination of original approval and extension shall result in a total approval period exceeding 10 years without an official plan amendment.
- iv. Where Draft Approval has lapsed, Council may consider a request to deem it not to have lapsed, subject to the statutory tests under s.51(33.1) of the Planning Act.

10.4.3 RURAL ESTATE RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISIONS – Additional Rural Area Policies

The following policy establishes the implementation framework for administering Rural Estate Residential Subdivision approvals.

- a. Administrative procedures, including timing of intake windows, submission requirements, Stage 1 Evaluation Criteria, and the validity period of Stage 1 invitations, shall be established through a staff-maintained guideline, consistent with Section 4.9.1.

10.4.4 CONDOMINIUM APPROVALS

Condominium developments shall proceed in accordance with the provisions of the *Condominium Act*.

- b. The City shall review and approve the overall design of common elements, such as roadways and underground services associated with the condominium development.
- c. In the case of vacant land condominiums, where plans can be registered and lots sold prior to the installation of the common elements, the City will require financial guarantees, equal to the costs associated with installing all common elements of the phase to be registered, as determined by a qualified professional to the satisfaction of the City.
- d. The City shall use development agreements and/or site plan control to ensure that appropriate conditions and requirements are satisfied as part of the development. The City may adopt standards for the development, design, servicing, roads, financing and other conditions under the development agreement and/or site plan agreement.
- e. Where existing condominiums have been approved, but not yet registered, the City may enter into a development agreement which may include a financial guarantee and any other matters the City deems relevant.
- f. Where a condominium receives Draft Plan approvals, the draft plan or portions thereof, must be registered within 6 years of Draft Approval, after which the draft approval may



lapse. The City will not extend or recommend the extension of a draft plan approval unless the subdivider has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the City that they are making a reasonable effort to proceed in meeting the conditions of the draft approval. At the time of extension, the City will review draft plan conditions and may make appropriate modifications.

10.4.5 PART LOT CONTROL

Council may pass by-laws to exempt all or parts of registered Plans of Subdivision from Part Lot Control.

- a. Part Lot Control shall not be used to circumvent the Subdivision or Consent processes.
- b. An exemption from Part Lot Control may be appropriate for situations where a thorough review process has been completed or where buildings exist, and part lot control is utilized to sever lots along the common wall between units.

10.5 TOOLS FOR OBTAINING BENEFITS FROM DEVELOPMENT

10.5.1 PARKLAND DEDICATION

In accordance with the *Planning Act*, the City is entitled to a dedication of land for park purposes as a condition on any development or redevelopment, including new lot creation.

- a. Commercial and industrial development and redevelopment, including new lot creation shall provide 2% of land or cash in lieu of land.
- b. Institutional and residential development and redevelopment, including new lot creation shall provide 5% of land or cash in lieu of land.
- c. The following alternative rates for higher density residential developments may also be applied where they are determined to result in greater dedication than 5%:
 - i. 1ha/300 dwelling units; or
 - ii. Cash in lieu of 1ha/500 dwelling units.
- d. The City shall develop a Parkland Dedication By-law for the purposes of collecting parkland or cash in lieu of parkland for redevelopment projects.
- e. The City shall develop a Parkland Dedication Guideline that outlines the City's expectations related to parkland dedication and communicates flexible arrangements aimed at maximizing community benefit.
- f. The preference for dedicating parkland or cash in lieu of parkland is generally guided by the following:
 - i. For commercial and industrial development, cash in lieu of parkland is generally preferred. However, where circumstances warrant, such as mixed-use developments with a significant residential component or large-scale commercial or industrial development, parkland dedication may be contemplated.
 - ii. For small-scale residential developments, including infill development, residential intensification and rural residential development, cash in lieu of parkland is generally preferred. However, where circumstances warrant, such as a lack of parkland within the 800-metre service standard, parkland dedication may be contemplated.
 - iii. For large-scale residential developments, including Draft Plans of Subdivision or Condominium, higher density residential development or mixed-use developments with a significant residential component, dedication of parkland is

generally preferred. However, where circumstances warrant, such as sufficient nearby parkland, cash in lieu of parkland may be contemplated.

- g. Where parkland is dedicated, the lands shall be acceptable to the City, suitable for recreational purposes and free of encumbrances. A Record of Site Condition under the Environmental Protection Act may also be required prior to dedication.
- h. The City may accept a smaller parkland dedication in consideration of improvements made by the developer upon lands to be dedicated. Improvements may include site work such as servicing, clearing, grading or landscaping or the installation of amenities such as playground equipment, playing fields or park furniture.
- i. Where cash in lieu of parkland is provided, these monies may be utilized in the immediate vicinity of the development or in other areas or to fund city-wide recreational projects and other public amenities.
- j. The City may waive or accept a smaller cash in lieu of parkland payment in consideration of improvements made by the developer to a park within close proximity to the proposed development.

10.5.1.1 SELLING CITY OWNED PARKLAND

Selling City-owned lands identified as named municipal parks is generally discouraged. Additionally, there are many existing City-owned parcels that may be zoned for parks and recreation but are not necessarily identified as named municipal parks.

When contemplating the sale of city owned parkland, the following matters shall be considered:

- a. Opportunities to repurpose park space to increase usage should be proactively and thoroughly investigated before it is deemed surplus.
- b. The surrounding area shall be assessed to ensure that future development does not increase the demand for park space. This should include an assessment of the potential for a demographic shift, especially where the predominant land use in the area is residential.
- c. An assessment of whether the existing parks are capable of supporting park space needs of the surrounding neighbourhood shall be undertaken.
- d. If a safety risk is posed by these lands, means to mitigate these concerns shall be thoroughly explored.
- e. If the park significantly impacts the development feasibility of the surrounding area, relocation of the park as part of a future development may be considered.
- f. Disposing of parks that contain natural heritage features such as fish habitat or wetlands, or development constraints such as flood prone areas or significant slopes is discouraged.
- g. Prior to the sale of City-owned park space, the City shall provide public notice and host a neighbourhood meeting to obtain feedback from neighbours, prior to Council making a decision on selling the park.

10.5.1.2 SCHOOL SITES

School yards are not City owned parks, but often function as public recreational or green spaces that play an important role in providing park space.

- a. Where school sites are offered for sale, the City shall review and determine if the property or a portion of the property is required for a neighbourhood park, based upon the 800-metre service standard.



- b. Redevelopment proposals for former school sites shall have special regard for open space provisions and proponents may be required to provide parkland in accordance with the parkland dedication policies of this Plan.

10.5.2 COMMUNITY BENEFITS CHARGES AND DEVELOPMENT CHARGES

Council may enact a Community Benefits Charge By-law that imposes Community Benefits Charges, or a Development Charge By-law that imposes Development Charges on developments and redevelopments to pay for the capital costs of facilities, services and matters required as a result of development or redevelopment.

10.5.3 COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP)

Council may initiate a Community Improvement Plan if they consider it desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason. Community Improvement Plans must outline the overall intent of improvements for the area.

- a. The entire area of the City of Sault Ste. Marie is designated as a Community Improvement Project Area.
- b. By way of Community Improvement Plans, the City can encourage improvements to private and public lands, through incentives such as grants, loans, waiving of fees and municipal property tax rebates.
- c. The City will consider providing new incentives for the following:
 - i. Projects that enhance conservation and efficient use of energy and water, including the use of low-impact design and sustainability features.
 - ii. The provision of additional housing units, with special regard for affordable, barrier free and rental housing units.
 - iii. The provision of additional rental units, especially in *strategic development areas*, as well as areas in close proximity to Sault College and Algoma University.
 - iv. The development and redevelopment of properties in older areas of the community where assessment growth is low or where building stock is deemed beyond its useful life.
 - v. Development and redevelopment projects in The Downtown.
 - vi. Development and redevelopment projects that support primarily export related business sectors.
- k. In reviewing new development incentives and Community Improvement Plans, Council shall ensure that incentives are aimed at strategic development that addresses a community need and achieves significant public good and community benefit. It should be demonstrated that proposed incentives relate to at least one of the Overarching Themes of the Official Plan.

10.6 PROPERTY STANDARDS

The enforcement of minimum standards for the maintenance and occupancy of individual properties is important to the health, safety and welfare of City residents. It also assists in preserving the character of residential areas.

- a. The City shall retain and revise its Property Standards By-law, as needed, which prescribes standards for the maintenance and occupancy of properties within the City.

- b. The City may require that properties which do not conform to the Property Standards By-law be repaired and maintained to standard or shall prohibit occupancy of such property or order the site to be cleared of all structures and debris and left in a graded and levelled condition.
- c. Council shall ensure the application of the Property Standards By-law is not detrimental to the conservation of heritage resources.
- d. Council may amend the Property Standards Bylaw to prescribe minimum standards for the maintenance of heritage attributes for designated properties under the Ontario Heritage Act.

10.7 PLANNING ACT APPLICATIONS

10.7.1 PRE-CONSULTATION

The City encourages pre-consultation on all *Planning Act* applications. The City has a Development Application Review Team (DART) consisting of staff members from Planning and other departments and agencies for the purposes of pre-consultation.

10.7.2 COMPLETE APPLICATION

The *Planning Act* gives municipalities the ability to request, in addition to the minimum prescribed requirements, information and material for certain types of land use planning applications to make an informed decision, provided that the municipal Official Plan contains provisions relating to the additional information and material.

- a. The additional information that may be requested as part of a Complete *Planning Act* Application may include, but is not limited to:
 - i. Agricultural Impact Assessment
 - ii. Arborist Report.
 - iii. Archaeological Assessment
 - iv. Boundary Certification
 - v. Concept Plan, Site Plan, Façade and Elevation Drawings
 - vi. Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment
 - vii. Environmental Impact Study
 - viii. Environmental Site Assessment (Phase I, II, RSC)
 - ix. Geotechnical Study (Site Servicing, Stormwater Management, Hydrogeological, Slope Stability)
 - x. Grading Plans
 - xi. Hazard Impact Analysis
 - xii. Heritage Impact Assessment and Conservation Strategy
 - xiii. Hydrogeological Study
 - xiv. Landscape Plan
 - xv. Market Impact Study
 - xvi. Noise, Vibration, Dust, Air, and Odour studies
 - xvii. Phasing Plans
 - xviii. Planning Justification Report
 - xix. Public Consultation Strategy
 - xx. Record of Site Condition
 - xxi. Sensitive Land Use Report (Land Use Compatibility)
 - xxii. Site Servicing Report
 - xxiii. Species at Risk Screening

- xxiv. Stormwater Management Report
- xxv. Sun/Shade Study
- xxvi. Traffic Impact Study
- xxvii. Tree Inventory Preservation Plan
- xxviii. Urban Design Rationale
- xxix. Water, Sanitary Sewer and Electrical Servicing Capacity Studies
- xxx. Wind Study

- b. The additional information and material that may be required depends on the nature and character of the site, the surrounding area, the proposal and the type of approval sought.
- c. The additional information and material required as part of a complete application, including any exceptions to the above list of studies, will be determined and confirmed by the City during the pre-consultation process.
- d. The City may refuse to accept an application that is not complete.
- e. The City reserves the right to have any study provided as part of a complete application, peer reviewed. Furthermore, at the City's discretion, such costs associated with the peer review may be imposed upon the applicant.

10.7.3 PUBLIC NOTICE AND PUBLIC INPUT

The City will provide the community with adequate notice of development applications and statutory public meetings as required by the *Planning Act*. The City shall meet the public notice requirements outlined in the *Planning Act* in terms of specified timeframes and required information. In addition, the following preferences and alternative procedures are required:

- a. For site-specific *Planning Act* applications brought to Council public notice and input opportunities shall be provided by way of the following:
 - i. For larger scale applications, including, but not limited to Official Plan Amendments and Draft Plan of Subdivisions or Condominiums, an applicant-hosted neighbourhood meeting may be required.
 - ii. In the event that a neighbourhood meeting is not possible or feasible, alternative measures such as a virtual meeting or mailed information to neighbouring property owners may be contemplated, subject to staff approval.
 - iii. A mailed notice to neighbours.
 - iv. The posting of a sign, provided by Planning staff, which shall be clearly posted on the subject property.
 - v. Publishing the notice on the City's website.
 - vi. A Public Hearing of City Council where the public may make written or oral comments.
- b. For *Planning Act* applications brought to Council that apply to larger portions of the community:
 - i. Staff will provide Council with an informational report outlining the proposed changes.
 - ii. Staff will host an information meeting, with notice provided in a daily newspaper and online news outlet.
 - iii. Upon completion of the neighbourhood meeting, Council will hold a Public Hearing where the public can attend and make oral or written submissions. Notice of Council's Public Hearing will be provided by:
 - Mailed and emailed notices to those stakeholders that have requested it through previous consultations; and,



- Ads placed in the newspaper and online news outlets.
- c. For *Planning Act* applications brought to the Committee of Adjustment, public notice and input opportunities shall be provided by way of the following:
 - i. A mailed notice to neighbours.
 - ii. The posting of a sign, provided by Planning staff, which shall be clearly posted on the subject property.
 - iii. Publishing the notice on the City's website.
 - iv. A Public Hearing of the Committee of Adjustment where the public may make written or oral comments.

10.8 ONGOING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The City will strive to provide ongoing, meaningful and diverse opportunities and venues for the public to engage and provide input upon a variety of municipal matters, in addition to the minimum statutory requirements prescribed in the *Planning Act* or other applicable legislation.

- a. The City will actively foster and develop relationships with Indigenous communities in the Sault Ste. Marie region and strive to include engagement with Indigenous communities as part of large projects and the development of community-wide policies.
- b. The City should consider developing a Corporate Public Consultation Policy, including matters where there may not be statutory requirements.
- c. Where a development or project requires an Environmental Assessment and a *Planning Act* application, the City will encourage the proponent to utilize the 'integrated approach' under the *Environmental Assessment Act* and the *Planning Act*, while ensuring the intent and requirements of both acts are met.

10.9 MONITORING & AMENDMENTS

Development within the City will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure that the policies of this Plan are being achieved.

10.9.1 Official Plan Reviews

The City shall at minimum, conduct a comprehensive review of the Official Plan 10 years after the date this Plan comes into effect, and every 5 years thereafter. A comprehensive review will include revisions as necessary to ensure:

- a. Conformity with Provincial Plans and the Provincial Planning Statement.
- b. Regard for matters of Provincial interest.
- c. Consideration of updated population and land needs projections, to ensure adequate supply of developable land.
- d. Consideration of new data relevant to the City's development.
- e. Consistency with other City master plans and policy documents.
- f. The Official Plan shall be reviewed and amended as required by Council or the Province, to meet the changing needs of the community and to respond to new issues and information.

10.9.2 Amendments

- a. Official Plan Amendments may be initiated by Council or the public.
- b. In the case of technical amendments to the Official Plan or Zoning By-law, public notification and consultation with the public is not required. This approach will be restricted to the following:
 - i. Altering punctuation or language for consistency.

- ii. Correcting grammatical, dimensional, boundary, mathematical or typographical errors.
 - iii. Inserting historical footnotes or similar annotations.
 - iv. Changing the number and arrangement of the text, tables, schedules and maps.
 - v. Where new information is obtained through detailed on-site investigation and review, minor boundary adjustments to maps or schedules may be permitted. Such minor alterations will generally apply to Natural Heritage Features, Hazards and the Open Space Designation.
- c. All other amendments must follow public notice and public input procedures as established in the *Planning Act* and in Section 10.7.3 of this Official Plan.

10.9.3 Monitoring

- a. The City shall continuously monitor key trends and indicators to ensure the Official Plan remains relevant and effective.
- b. Indicators and data to be monitored include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Population and demographic changes.
 - ii. Land supply and land demand.
 - iii. Various housing indicators, such as affordability rates, vacancy rates and new housing starts.
 - iv. Indicators of progress regarding this Official Plan's overarching themes: healthy community, environmental sustainability, integrated mobility, sense of place, sustainable growth, economic resiliency, social equity and cultural vitality.

10.10 PLAN INTERPRETATION

The City Planning Office shall be responsible for interpreting all aspects of the Plan. The following policies shall guide the interpretation of this Plan:

- a. The Official Plan is a holistic document. All relevant schedules and policies should be reviewed and applied in each situation. While some policies are cross referenced with each other, this cross-referencing does not take away from the need to read the Official Plan as a whole. The ordering of the policies or length of an individual policy section does not imply any priority or importance.
- b. All Schedules should be viewed at the appropriate scale.
- c. Consider boundary designations on the maps as general guidelines only, except where such areas or boundaries coincide with existing roads, railways, rivers, waterbodies and other defined features.
- d. Where the general intent of the Plan is maintained, minor land use boundary adjustments will not require an amendment to this Plan.