

PEOPLE PLACE PROSPERITY

2017

20YRS.

2037

Our collective
future.

A Common Cause and New Direction For **Sault Ste. Marie.**

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SAULT STE. MARIE IS A GREAT COMMUNITY.

Our location is a defining strength:



We live at the heart of the greatest fresh water resource in the world —



Are surrounded by natural power generation —



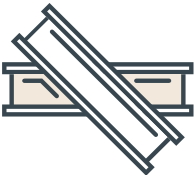
A stone's throw to Canada's largest trading partner —



With some of the best mountain biking, skiing, hiking, sailing, camping, and cottage country in North America —

We have what it takes to be a growing and vibrant city, but to become one we have to acknowledge some difficult realities and work together as a community in common cause and direction.

HERE ARE A FEW OF THOSE DIFFICULT REALITIES: To get a complete picture of the current state of our community, visit: Futuressm.com



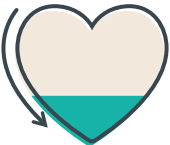
Our economy is stagnant and is largely dependent on a single industry.

Essar Algoma is in the midst of its third restructuring since 1992. ⊗



The demographics of our community are working against us, out net migration continues, and the elementary, secondary and post-secondary student population is decreasing.

We have a current median age of 45.7, compared to the provincial average of 40.4. ⊗

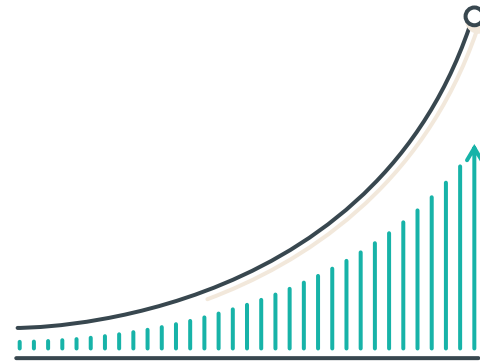


The social (health, well-being, and education) metrics of our community are falling below acceptable standards.

Too many of our children are going to school hungry and not enough are finishing high school. ⊗

A COMMON CAUSE AND NEW DIRECTION

The time to act is now and this document is being offered as the common cause and direction. It should not be read as a final prescription but as a beginning that starts like this:



“

We want Sault Ste. Marie to be a vibrant city with a population of 100,000 by 2037. We will invest in our People. We will celebrate our Place. We will create Prosperity.”

Together we will bend the curve in the “right direction,” in a sustainable way, with respect to the size of the labour force, the number of unemployed, the GDP revenue, the health, well-being and education metrics of our residents, the creative economy, and the environment. These goals may seem too ambitious to some, but we believe that we have to aim high and that our community has the collective capacity to achieve that height.

There are a lot of good people, private entities, and agencies in our community already doing great work. There is no question that it will take time and it will take effort, but if we come together, think smart, capitalize on our strengths and talents, and stay determined, we will be successful. We will be bold. We will reach the goals that we set and build the great city that we want to become.



HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET THERE?

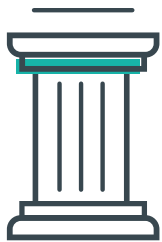
Sault Ste. Marie has a number of strengths, including its citizens who are committed to creating a vibrant and prosperous community.

As a result, The Community Adjustment Committee (the Committee) was created.

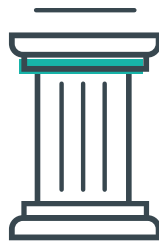
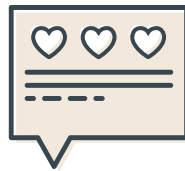


A SMARTER APPROACH

The Committee did an extensive review of best practices with respect to creating a great city and agreed to take the four pillar approach to community development, which includes proactive support for economic growth and diversity, social equity, cultural vitality, and environmental sustainability.



ECONOMIC GROWTH & DIVERSITY



SOCIAL EQUITY



CULTURAL VITALITY



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Focusing on these four pillars will build a world class community and allow us to achieve our goals.

GETTING ORGANIZED

To get organized, the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie (the City) has already taken steps to improve the infrastructure that will support future community development.

The organizational structure at the City has been modified and a service area named **Community Development and Enterprise Services** has been created which includes Community Development, Planning, Building Services, Recreation and Culture, and Transit Services.



Organizing to support the future of community development.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

In 2016, the City also adopted a new strategic plan that will guide Council and Administration's activities up until 2020.

One of the strategic focus areas of the plan is on **Community Development and Partnerships**, with emphasis on creating social and economic activity, developing partnerships, and maximizing economic development and investment.



Strategically developing new social and economic activity through investment and partnerships.

MAXIMIZING IMPACTS

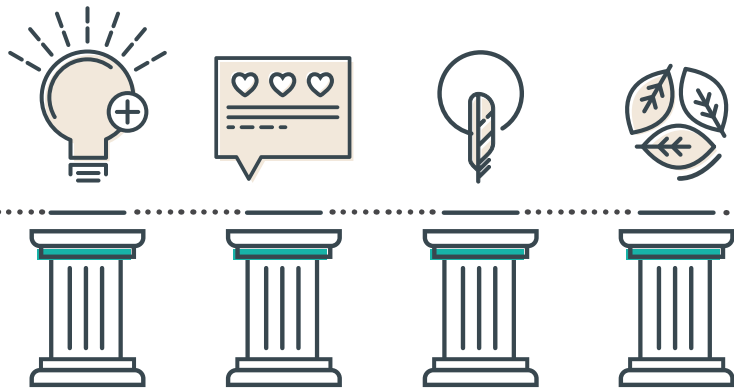
In addition, a review of economic development was requested by City Council and the City is actively engaged with the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation and Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre to maximize the impact and results of our economic development efforts.



Working to maximize the impact and results of our collective efforts.

OVERARCHING GOALS

There were a number of priority goals that came up time and again and spanned multiple pillars.



These are broad goals that will help support the development of all four pillars, and as such are a high priority. ✓

1

Promote our community

2

Refocus economic and community development

3

Build our labour force

4

Grow our post-secondary institutions

5

Invite immigration and welcome newcomers

6

Advance Indigenous relationships

7

Improve community well-being

8

Revitalize our downtown

1

Promote our community

Sault Ste. Marie possesses quality of life opportunities and affordability that is attractive for businesses and professionals. We need to develop a broad and cohesive community brand and communications strategy that celebrates our strengths, improves community spirit, and sells our community to the world at large. This strategy embraces and supports all four pillars.



What stories do we need to be letting the world know about?

2

Refocus economic and community development

A number of opportunities exist to support the growth of a diversified economy and a vibrant community. Working with community stakeholders (private and public) to align and focus our economic development efforts can play a big part in moving the community forward. Another important tool is the City's Economic Diversification Fund (EDF). Reviewing the EDF's scope and how it is administered offers the chance to increase its impact and effectiveness. Similarly, establishing a Community Foundation would provide a way to raise funds and direct charitable donations to worthwhile and desired community projects.

How might we create new potential?

3

Build our labour force

As part of our discussions a number of employers expressed concern about finding enough workers with skill sets they require. These current and projected needs can be met through coordinated educational programming, re-training opportunities, and programs to attract skilled workers to the community.



What would it take to re-tool our talent to meet the world's needs?

4

Grow our post-secondary institutions

A significant strength of our community is the presence of Sault College and Algoma University, and we must work collaboratively with these institutions to support their development, growth, and expansion.



In what ways might we collaborate and co-develop as an education community?

5

Invite immigration and welcome newcomers

To address our demographic challenges and become a more dynamic community, we must enhance our efforts in this area. We must recognize the importance of migration to our community and welcome newcomers with open arms.



How might we be the most welcoming community?

6

Advance Indigenous relationships

Community members expressed a sincere desire to become a leader in reconciliation. We must foster positive and productive relationships with First Nations, urban Indigenous residents, and Metis communities.

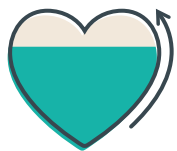


What conversations do we need to be having?

7

Improve community well-being

A portion of our citizens face significant barriers. Collectively the City, private sector, community organizations, and other stakeholders must work to eliminate these barriers and support our citizens in realizing their full potential.



What would it take for me to help others realize their potential?

8

Revitalize our downtown

A vibrant downtown is an important component of building a more attractive community for residents and businesses alike. We should ensure that we focus on and prioritize the ongoing community efforts to reestablish our downtown as the vibrant core of our community.



How might this turn out better than I could have imagined?

*

Notes

How can I work towards realizing these goals?

Future States

More detailed recommendations are included in the full version and we encourage and welcome people to read the entire report.



[Futuresm.com](https://www.futuresm.com)

In addition to these goals, there were a number of recommendations specific to each of the four pillars and they have been categorized accordingly.

The Committee set a future state for each of the four pillars and then developed, in consultation with community partners, recommendations that would assist in reaching the goals.



Economic Growth and Diversity



Sault Ste. Marie will be recognized as a smart, growing, high quality-of-life community that is the home of dynamic industrial sectors, life-enhancing research and progressive post-secondary institutions. As a result, our community will attract talent and capital, and will support a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Grow from within

EGD-01

Grow from within by supporting the expansion of existing companies and by enhancing the entrepreneurial ecosystem across the community. There is a significant opportunity to generate GDP and revenue by helping already established businesses and local start-ups expand to sell to markets outside of Sault Ste. Marie and the Algoma Region.

Post-secondary education

EGD-02

Support efforts of all educational institutions to establish new programs—including graduate and professional programs— and to attract students from outside the community.

EGD-03

Encourage and support collaboration of post-secondary institutions with industry to build a labour force for the future.

Economic Growth and Diversity



RECOMMENDATIONS:

Information technology

EGD-04

Encourage our post-secondary entities to establish programs in the emerging areas such as block chain, Artificial Intelligence, and 3D printing.

EGD-05

Continue efforts to develop the gaming cluster based on existing community strengths.

EGD-06

Develop world class Internet expertise with the best high-speed Internet connectivity in Ontario and best of breed utilization of the Internet to market and sell globally.

Global Tourism

EGD-07

Develop new place-based tourism infrastructure and products in the community and surrounding area.

EGD-08

Pursue new global markets to identify our community and region as a premier destination.

EGD-09

Support the growth of the Agawa Canyon Tour Train and Searchmont.

EGD-10

Pursue UNESCO heritage site designation for the St. Mary's River.

Research

EGD-11

Establish research clusters to focus on emerging areas within health care, energy, food/agriculture, and I.T.

Business Development

EGD-12

Foster a pro-business and entrepreneurial environment in municipal government that encourages growth and development.

FUTURE STATE:  02

Social Equity



SE

Sault Ste. Marie will be a welcoming and inclusive community where everyone is valued and respected, has access to an acceptable standard of living, can fully engage and participate in all aspects of community life, and is able to realize their full potential.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

SE-01

Reduce the number of people living in poverty to below the provincial average by 2027.

SE-02

Strengthen the relationship with Indigenous peoples and communities.

SE-03

Increase the number of community members who feel that Sault Ste. Marie is a safe, welcoming and inclusive place that supports their wellbeing.

SE-04

Exceed the provincial average on recognized domains of growth and development for children and youth.

Cultural Vitality



Sault Ste. Marie celebrates its history, natural and cultural heritage, and diverse identities, transforming the city into a global centre of cultural excellence through inclusive, broad-based, meaningful participation in the sector with continual renewal and growth of its creative economy.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

CV-01
Create a full-time City staff position to act as an advocate and catalyst for the arts and cultural sector.

CV-02
Update the City Cultural Policy and develop a Cultural Plan.

CV-03
Develop a sustainable funding model incorporating both public and private support to further develop cultural facilities, organizations, and events.

CV-04
Market our city as a preferred location for film and digital media production.

CV-05
Assist and coordinate efforts to develop and market our artists.

CV-06
Foster a culture of creativity and excellence by celebrating arts and culture, and providing diverse opportunities for creative expression and professional development.

FUTURE STATE: I 04

Environmental Sustainability



ES

Sault Ste. Marie will be recognized as a leader in Environmental Sustainability and Alternative Energy that has a superior quality-of-life based on natural environment and excellent air, soil, and water quality.

.....

RECOMMENDATIONS:

ES-01

Develop a comprehensive Community Energy Plan to discover new energy savings, technology applications, and investment opportunities.

ES-02

Investigate the expansion of the current City recycling program.

ES-03

Establish a working group with companies and groups currently engaged in alternative energy to explore both expansion and new energy technology opportunities.

ES-04

Consider expanding the Environmental Initiatives Committee's mandate to a broad-based community approach.

ES-05

Protect and encourage growth in farm-scale production and support Rural Agri-Innovation Network (RAIN) developing into a Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Northern Agriculture.

3,2,1

It's go time.



It is clear that we need to act with urgency to undertake the significant work required to build a brighter future for Sault Ste. Marie. These goals and the related recommendations outlined in the full report are offered as a suggested approach and path forward. They will take significant time, effort, and most importantly, buy-in from stakeholders and the community at large. Great things can happen if people come together and work for a common cause for the broader community benefit.

While the reality and scale of the challenges facing Sault Ste. Marie need to be acknowledged, it also has to be emphasized that it is possible for our community to have a prosperous and resilient future. The visions and goals described in this document are within reach and we should feel optimistic about attaining them.

In that spirit, we suggest that the appropriate next steps are as follows:



1 City Council will be asked to endorse the plan as a key stakeholder and direct carriage of the plan on the City's behalf to the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer of Community Development & Enterprise Services.

2 The plan will be presented to community partners to request their buy-in and endorsement.

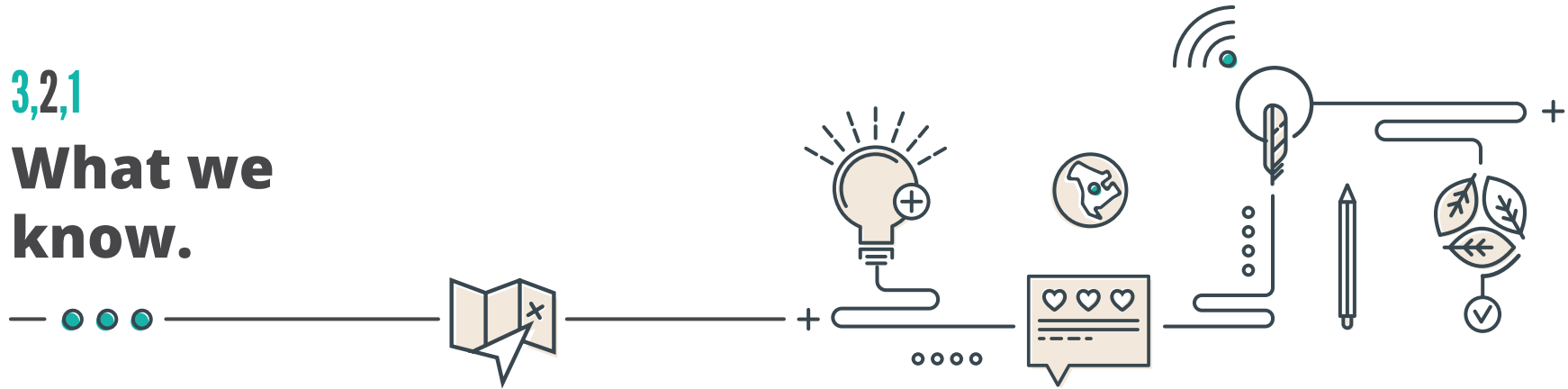
3 A Community Round Table (CRT) should be established to encourage ongoing collaboration and to coordinate action across sectors. Smaller working and study groups can be formed with members of the CRT and subject matter experts from the community.

4 An annual report will be prepared and issued to monitor and communicate progress to date.



3,2,1

What we know.



1

*We know that our community is endowed with resourceful and hard-working **people**, ones who are ready to collaborate and contribute in positive ways.*

2

*We know that we are fortunate to live in an area with a tremendous sense of **place**, a sense that is transmitted by our geography, history, and surrounding environment.*

3

*By creating alignment, coordinating actions, and making decisions in accordance with the four pillars approach, we know that Sault Ste. Marie can achieve sustainable and dependable **prosperity**.*

3,2,1

Get Involved.



Grab a coffee, some friends, a pack of post-its and a notebook, and see how many ways you can help to make a better future for Sault Ste. Marie (and yourself).

*We look forward to hearing from **you** at Futuresm.com*

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