



City of Sault Ste. Marie Canal District Neighbourhood Plan

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Community Development Corporation
OF SAULT STE. MARIE & AREA
A Community Futures Development Corporation



Acknowledgements

This Plan was prepared through a collaborative process that involved a broad representation of individuals and organizations. Residents, business owners, government officials, landowners, and City staff contributed their time, effort, experiences, expertise and knowledge throughout the process. The involvement of the local and broader community has been invaluable and greatly appreciated.

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City of Sault Ste. Marie Canal District Neighbourhood Plan



The Canal District in context

Executive Summary

The New Soo

The Canal District Neighbourhood Plan comes at a crucial point in the City of Sault Ste. Marie's history. The Canal District was once the centre of industry that helped build Sault Ste. Marie, and has since recently experienced a period of transition.

This transition also reveals that the remnant industrial infrastructure often comes in the form of strategically located sites, often on waterfronts. Capitalizing on the heritage buildings and sites, this infrastructure offers a tremendous opportunity to introduce new uses and activities.

To this end, the City of Sault Ste. Marie has initiated the development of this Plan, which capitalizes on the lengthy list of existing assets and provides a guiding framework for immediate development in the Canal District.

As well, in embarking on this Neighbourhood Plan, the City has taken the important step of developing a tool that will help guide an improved public realm

for the Canal District. This Plan will also provide the rationale to support land use decisions, and is a tool that provides a carefully considered vision for what the Canal District can become.

The elements of this Plan have emerged from a lengthy and collaborative process involving consultation sessions with local stakeholders, including the Batchewana First Nation, Parks Canada, business owners, government agencies, post-secondary institutions, the public and City staff.

The Canal District Neighbourhood Plan is a targeted approach to support the revitalization and intensification of this important area of the community. It is supported by both the Northern Growth Plan and the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement. This Plan is a mechanism to guide this strategic core area to function as a vibrant, walkable and mixed-use district, sustained and enhanced by new employment opportunities, higher density residential development and a broad range of amenities for both local residents

and tourists. Specifically, this Plan identifies and prioritizes opportunities that support regeneration, particularly the redevelopment of brownfield sites located within this area.

This Canal District study is also meant to work in concert with the recently approved City of Sault Ste. Marie Downtown Community Improvement Plan, and the programs and strategic improvements outlined in that Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan should be interpreted as a comprehensive guiding document meant to provide a flexible framework within which to achieve the vision and key strategies set out for the Canal District. This document anticipates and addresses long-term initiatives while providing a framework and design guidance for a series of Priority Projects.

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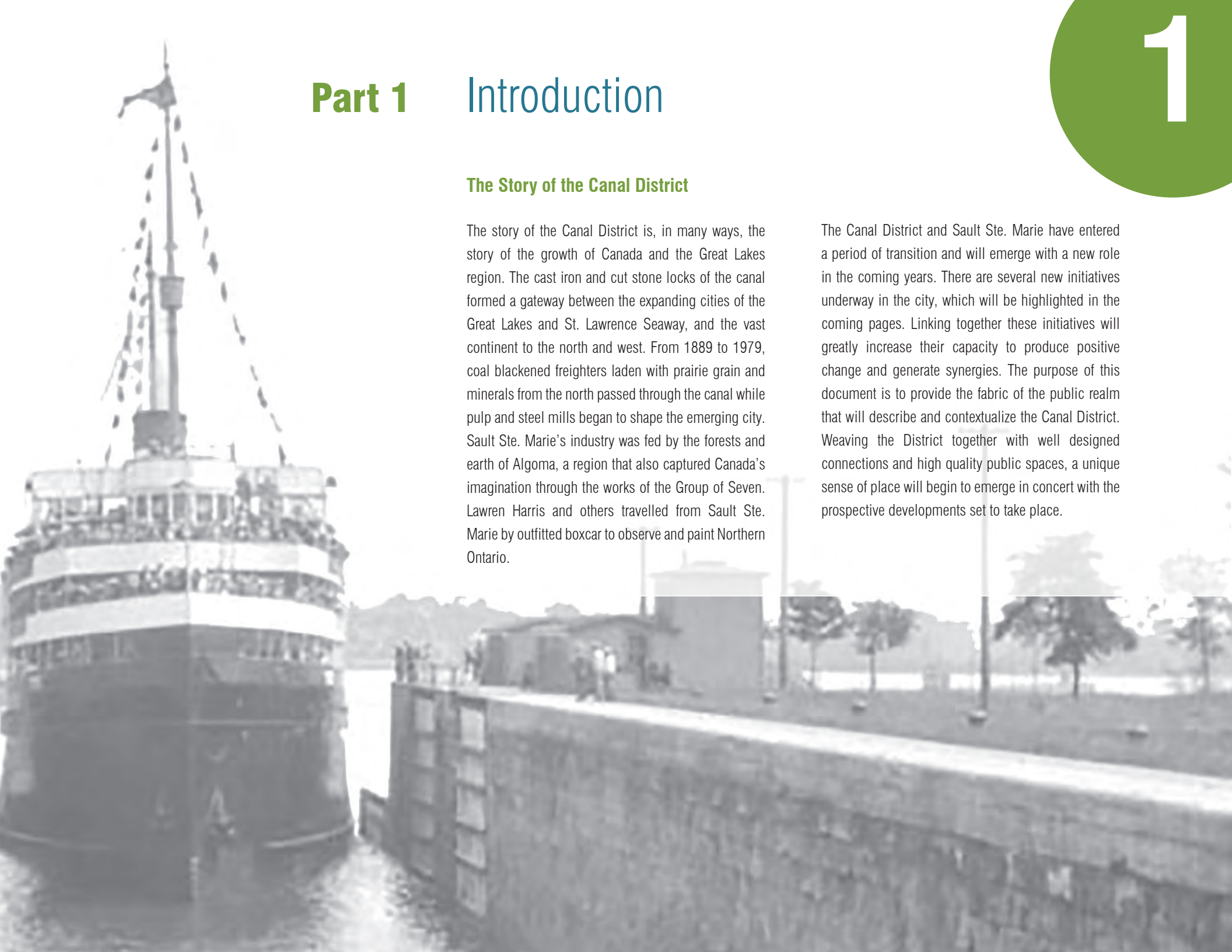
The Sault Canal 1927

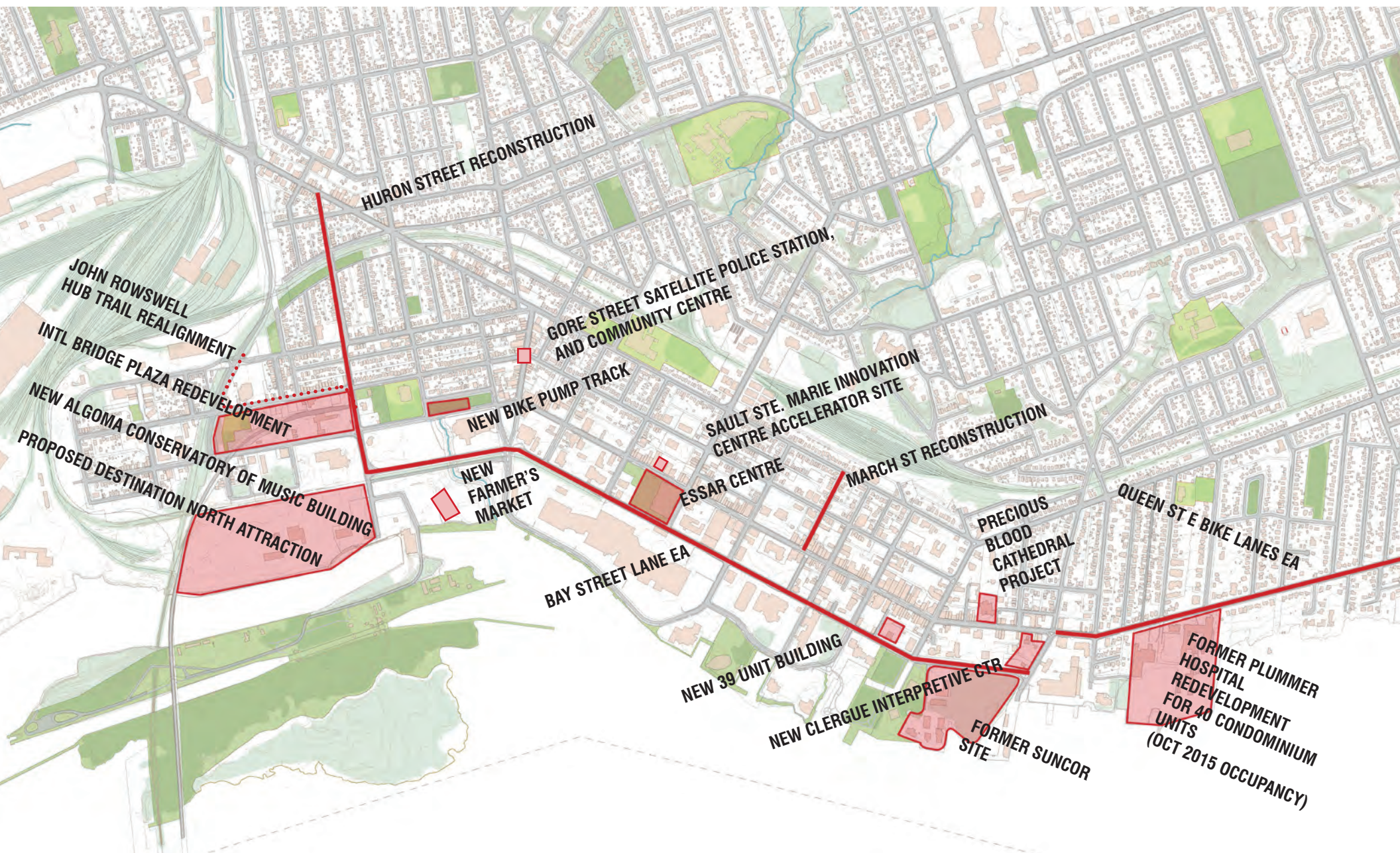
Part 1 Introduction

The Story of the Canal District

The story of the Canal District is, in many ways, the story of the growth of Canada and the Great Lakes region. The cast iron and cut stone locks of the canal formed a gateway between the expanding cities of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway, and the vast continent to the north and west. From 1889 to 1979, coal blackened freighters laden with prairie grain and minerals from the north passed through the canal while pulp and steel mills began to shape the emerging city. Sault Ste. Marie's industry was fed by the forests and earth of Algoma, a region that also captured Canada's imagination through the works of the Group of Seven. Lawren Harris and others travelled from Sault Ste. Marie by outfitted boxcar to observe and paint Northern Ontario.

The Canal District and Sault Ste. Marie have entered a period of transition and will emerge with a new role in the coming years. There are several new initiatives underway in the city, which will be highlighted in the coming pages. Linking together these initiatives will greatly increase their capacity to produce positive change and generate synergies. The purpose of this document is to provide the fabric of the public realm that will describe and contextualize the Canal District. Weaving the District together with well designed connections and high quality public spaces, a unique sense of place will begin to emerge in concert with the prospective developments set to take place.





Downtown Momentum Map

1.1 Study Background

World in Motion

The Sault Ste. Marie Downtown Development Plan (2007) identified many strategic initiatives ranging from streetscape and built form improvements to water's edge treatments and several connections to pursue. These programs are consistent with the downtown transformations occurring in cities across North America – aimed at introducing a greater mix of uses, including a residential population; reducing auto-dependency, supporting walkability; promoting lively active streetscapes; and capitalizing on existing assets and heritage resources. The adaptive re-use of obsolescent industrial sites adjacent to downtowns and along waterfronts is also an increasing trend in many cities.

Sault Ste. Marie, like other waterfront cities, can take advantage of these trends to revitalize its downtown by addressing several critical issues. These issues include a waterfront that is disconnected from its downtown, the fragmentation of neighbourhoods including the James Street and Gore Street areas, and the physical and psychological barriers to certain parts of western downtown caused by years of neglect and divestment.

Sault Ste. Marie is in the early stages of this transformation. There are several construction projects and initiatives occurring in and around the downtown (see Downtown Momentum Map). The challenge is to guide and shape the next phase of inevitable changes, accelerate desired outcomes like growing the downtown residential population and, effectively leveraging investments. From that standpoint it is essential to consider parts of the Canal District: in particular the former St. Mary's paper site and the Gateway site, first as one interconnected whole but even more significantly as a mixed-use pedestrian priority area linking the downtown neighbourhoods with the waterfront.



Essar Centre



Downtown retrofit - Skeggs Paciocco Lawyers Office



Former St. Mary's Paper Mill

1.2 Purpose & Objectives

The Canal District

The west end of downtown Sault Ste. Marie will likely see considerable development in the next few years. In addition to the improvements to the International Bridge Plaza, Blueforest Ventures Inc is moving forward with the redevelopment of the former St. Mary's Paper property, including the recent acquisition of one building by the Algoma Conservatory of Music, which recently became the new home of the relocated Algoma University Department of Music. There has been additional interest from other post-secondary institutions in locating facilities within the Canal District. Parks Canada has also prepared plans for the renewal and improvement of its adjacent Sault Ste. Marie Canal National Historic Site.

This combination of initiatives has generated a positive momentum that presents a once in a lifetime opportunity to create high quality integrated redevelopment that is both sensitive to and benefits the surrounding area. Goals of this Neighbourhood Plan are to:

- Revitalize the Queen Street West and Gore Street area;
- Encourage significant private sector investment;
- Improve the development potential of the Gateway, St. Mary's Paper and other properties;
- Improve public access and connectivity in this area;
- Integrate James Street neighborhood into the Canal District and Downtown, and;
- Improve the overall public realm.

In order to accomplish these goals, this report will address the following questions:

Background: What is the Canal District?

What are the district's strengths and weaknesses? What do its existing conditions in regards to land use, built form, and the public realm tell us about what needs to be done for the district?

Vision and Key Strategies: What should the Canal District become?

What should the Canal District become in the coming years and decades? What strategies should be applied to all decisions regarding change in the district?

Public Realm Plan: What projects should be initiated immediately?

What specific projects will help contribute to the district's strategies and ultimately facilitate the realization of the overall vision for the Canal District?

Site Extents

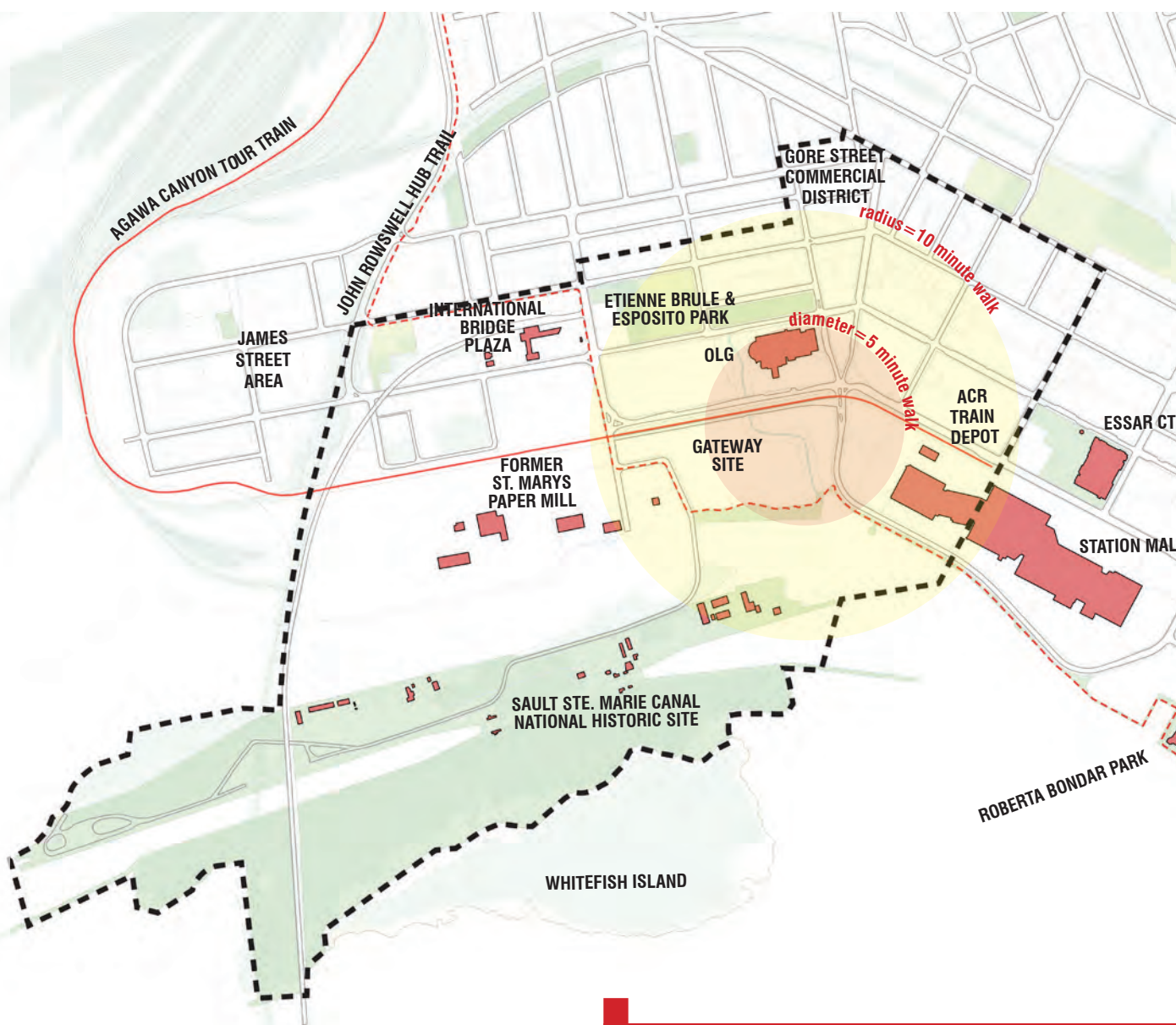
The Canal District needs to be considered through the following perspectives:

- The larger context of the downtown as a whole: The Canal District as one element in a series of urban nodes linked along the waterfront, through downtown and to adjacent areas, and;
- Specific sites within the Canal District.

Before we focus on these specific sites, it is important to understand the extent of the downtown's existing public realm components in place today. Sault Ste. Marie has a lengthy waterfront that is punctuated with several important nodes.

The downtown has recently been linked and activated by the implementation of the John Rowswell HUB Trail, which not only links these important downtown nodes together, but links them to the greater community as well.

The John Rowswell HUB Trail is an important indicator of the change in attitude towards alternative transportation networks that connect important civic elements. The adjacent map illustrates the short walking distances throughout the downtown and the proximity of the Canal District to the downtown core.





5 KILOMETRES - 1 HOUR WALK, 15 MINUTE BIKE RIDE



The Canal District - Study Area

1.3 The Study Area

Focus Area

For the purposes of this study, the Canal District refers to the contiguous area that encompasses:

- Sault Ste. Marie Canal National Historic Site (Parks Canada);
- Former St. Mary's Paper Industrial Land (Blueforest Ventures Inc.- Formerly referred to as Riversedge);
- The International Bridge Plaza and the land between the former St. Mary's Paper property (e.g. properties abutting George Street and those east to Huron Street and South of Queen Street West);
- Gateway Site (City owned);
- OLG Casino & Travel Ontario properties;
- Properties between Queen Street and Albert Street West (east of Huron Street and abutting Gore Street and including the Gore Street Revitalization Corridor, and;
- Street right-of-ways between Dennis Street and Gore Street.



The Vision Statement

The Canal District is a microcosm of the larger transformation under way in Sault Ste. Marie and presents a valuable, not to be squandered opportunity to advance the City's planning and economic development goals.

The Canal District should reflect the highest order of city building principles. It should provide a model for ecologically sensitive, adaptive, entrepreneurial, and walkable urban development.

Part 2

Vision and Key Strategies

2

Introduction

It is important to note that the full redevelopment of the Canal District, in particular the former St. Mary's Paper and Gateway sites, will occur over a considerable period of time. The investment will not happen overnight so it is fundamental to build the conditions for success.

Consequently, it is important to establish a clear Vision and a set of Key Strategies that distill the issues and opportunities identified. The Vision represents the collective view of a wide range of participants, and the Key Strategies establish clear aims and objectives for the Canal District upon which more detailed delivery strategies can be devised.

The Key Strategies encompass a range of important considerations, including but not limited to the following:

- Building toward a continuous fabric that will eventually fill in the gaps and voids;
- Considering the adjacency and proximity to downtown;
- Making the neighbourhood arteries/streets "adhesive" and lively;
- Ensuring new development is built close to the street, and not surrounded by large parking;

- Keeping all opportunities for linkages and connections open and inviting; and,
- Looking for synergistic relationships with adjoining areas.
- Partnering with key stakeholders to devise innovative revitalization strategies
- Creating a well-connected, livable, attractive and complete neighbourhood where people live, work and play.
- Work with Post-secondary institutions to create a significant and viable campus in the Downtown.

In order to understand the range of components at play, the substantive issues and opportunities are identified, consolidated and organized into the following set of Visioning Strategies:

- 1. Capitalize on Existing Assets;**
- 2. Link Disconnected City Fabric;**
- 3. Guide Appropriate Built Form; and,**
- 4. Animate and Program the Public Realm.**

This section describes how these visioning strategies are integrated into one Urban Design Framework that will direct on the ground initiatives in the near future.



Existing assets in the Canal District

2.1 Capitalize on Existing Assets

Leveraging the Distinct Sense of Place of the Canal District

The City of Sault Ste. Marie is privileged to have a wealth of assets to capitalize on in revitalization efforts. These include an active and lengthy urban waterfront that straddles several important neighbourhoods, and acts as a connective link between cultural institutions, parks, retail destinations, places of research, and several potential development sites including the Suncor site and former Plummer Hospital site. The publicly accessible waterfront system terminates at Canal District, which consists of a culturally significant First Nation's site, a Parks Canada heritage site, Gore Street, the International Bridge border crossing, and additional industrial lands that include the former St. Mary's Paper Mill.

In leveraging waterfront assets the City of Sault Ste. Marie has the opportunity to develop an integrated public realm plan for the Canal District that is both sensitive to and benefits the surrounding city.

Building on and promoting the distinct identity and sense of place that the Canal District offers is critical to the vitality of business and the livability of the surrounding neighbourhoods. One of the Canal District's greatest draws is its distinct sense of place as shaped by its history, built character, and culture.

These qualities serve as a major draw to the Canal District and subsequently the entire Algoma Region. With some of the country's most distinct architecture, including the St. Mary's Paper Mill structures, the Parks Canada Locks buildings and the Whitefish Island wigwams, the area's heritage serves as a key asset and source of identity that can be reinforced to increase both the appeal and competitiveness of the District.

Existing assets to highlight include:

- ① The Riverfront;
- ② Whitefish Island;
- ③ Former St. Mary's Paper Mill Site;
- ④ Gateway Site;
- ⑤ Sault Canal National Historic Site;
- ⑥ International Bridge Plaza;
- ⑦ Gore Street, and;
- ⑧ The John Rowswell HUB Trail.

① The Riverfront

Sault Ste. Marie is fortunate to have a lengthy waterfront that is activated by several important civic functions, including, but not limited to the Roberta Bondar Park and Pavilion, the Civic Centre, Clergue Park including the Art Gallery of Algoma and the Public Library, the Ermatinger Clergue National Historic Site, the Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre and Bellevue Park. These existing destinations provide the foundation for an even more vibrant waterfront with appropriate and complementary additions.

② Whitefish Island

Whitefish Island is an historic Ojibwa fishing station, and ancestral fishing station to the Anishenabek people of the Great Lakes for over 2,000 years. It is a designated National Historic Site, and an incredible natural asset within the city. Whitefish Island recently underwent several improvements, including renovations to the boardwalks, bridges and walking trails around the island, interpretive panels, and signage. Interpretive components have been added, including traditional wigwam structures, a smokehouse, and a long house aimed at promoting the educational and cultural value



Whitefish Island

of the Batchewana people and their heritage. This is a vitally important historical site in its original, protected spectacular natural setting.

3 Former St. Mary's Paper Mill Site

The Former St. Mary's Paper Mill property was purchased in early 2012 by Blueforest Ventures, who began the process of site decommissioning and redevelopment. As part of the decommissioning, Blueforest Ventures began an extensive outreach program to explore best-use-scenarios for several architecturally significant buildings on the property.

The outreach program identified that the best-use scenario was to develop the buildings and site as a regional cultural centre. Blueforest Ventures gained City Council support and has since been promoting 'Destination North'.

Destination North will repurpose the historical Pulp Tower and Board Mill buildings as viable regional destinations for local business, visitor and tourist markets as living centres for Ecology, Culture and Wilderness Experience. Site programming plans are designed to create opportunities for local business and private sector commercial tenants. Destination North provides the citizens of Northern Ontario an opportunity to leverage an authentically regional

narrative to increase visitor awareness, retention and marketability of existing recreational and destination opportunities while providing a platform for creating new experiences, new markets and new jobs.

The conversion of these buildings is part of a larger redevelopment to transform the former 38 acre St. Mary's Paper site into a vibrant mixed-use urban village development. The project presents a rare opportunity in "place making" in which to create a uniquely vibrant, live, work, learn, play, environment programmed with year-round activities.

4 Gateway Site

The Gateway Site is a large City owned parcel of land located in a prime location on the Sault Ste. Marie waterfront. The site sits at the terminus of the Gore Street commercial corridor. It is the outflow of Fort Creek, and is the missing link between the downtown waterfront and the Canal District waterfront.

Although there are some contamination issues, brownfield sites decontaminating and redevelopment is possible.

The development of the Gateway Site is a tremendous opportunity to create a public amenity that links the east and west downtown together.

5 Sault Ste. Marie Canal National Historic Site

The Sault Ste. Marie Canal National Historic Site is a man-made waterway that passes between the City of Sault Ste. Marie and Whitefish Island on the shipping channel joining Lake Huron and Lake Superior. Of particular note are the Canal's Powerhouse built into the slope of the hill at the downstream end of the lock, and the Emergency Swing Dam located west of the original lock near the Superintendent's Residence. The canal no longer accommodates commercial traffic, but still operates for pleasure crafts and as a tourist attraction.

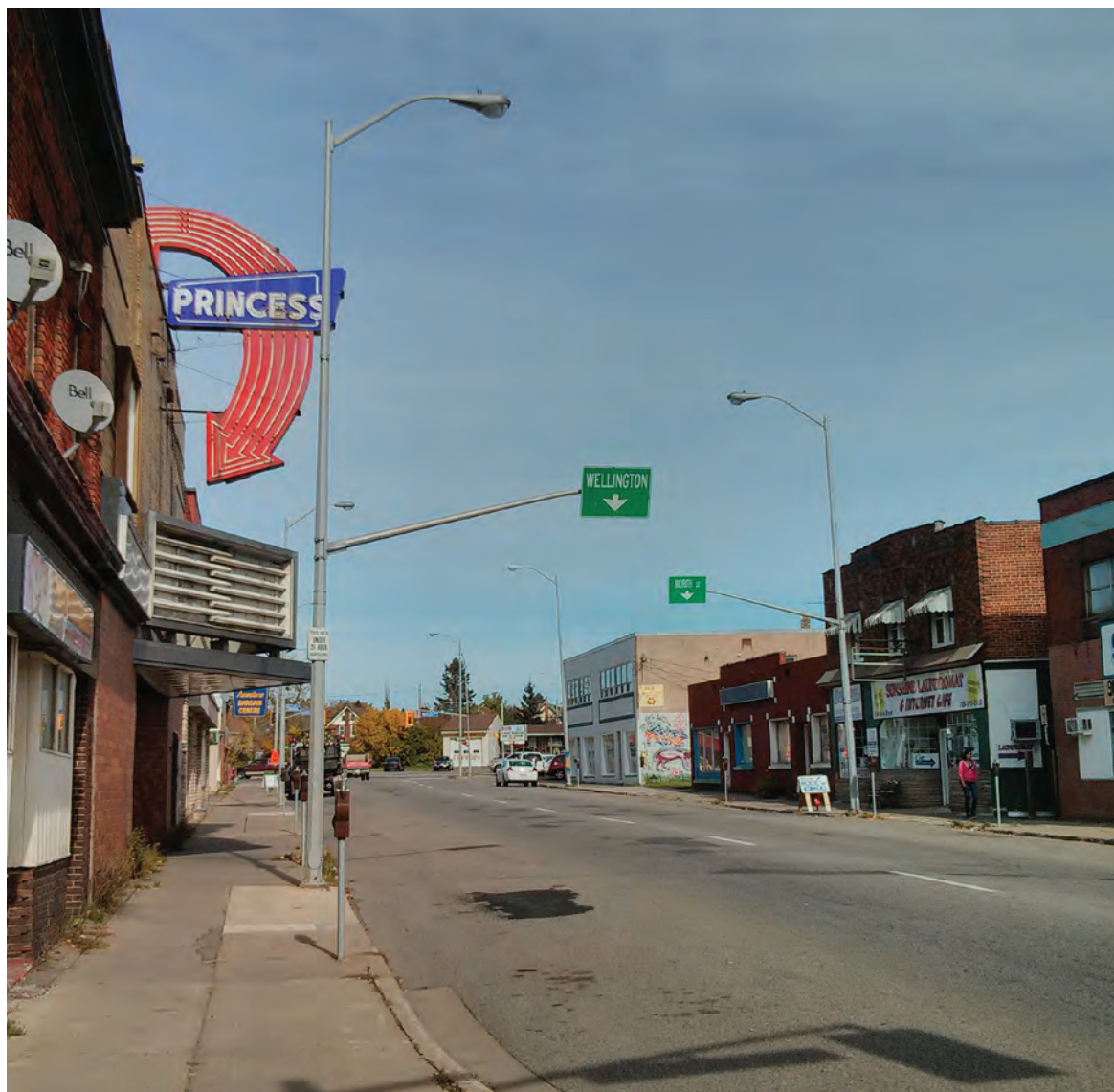
Despite the historical significance of the canal site, there have been minimal improvements and/or promotion of the site. The entrance is awkwardly situated adjacent to a power generating station, and lacks prominent signage and is poorly connected to the rest of the city. There is an opportunity to capitalize on this site as an important link between the St. Mary's site and Whitefish Island.

6 International Bridge Plaza

The International Bridge Plaza is the primary point of entry for visitors arriving in Sault Ste. Marie by



Pumphouse - Parks Canada



Gore Street

automobile. The Plaza is in the midst of undergoing a significant revitalization. The City has been working with the Federal government in order to incorporate important streetscaping improvements and cycling infrastructure into the improvement Plans.

The revitalization efforts offer an opportunity to coordinate an improved public realm along the interface with the Border Plaza, and to create streetscape and Gateway improvements along Huron Street, with the potential of developing a more prominent and significant Gateway into the City.

7 Gore Street

Gore Street is an important north-south main street that has been in steady decline for several years. The City has identified it as a primary improvement area with the potential of becoming an important shopping and entertainment destination.

The street is currently experiencing high vacancy and crime rates, and possesses many deteriorating buildings. However, the street is strategically located as an important spine between the successful Queen Street business area and the burgeoning Canal District. The revitalization of the street could facilitate increased investment and catalyze further improvements in the western end of downtown.



8

The John Rowswell HUB Trail

The John Rowswell John Rowswell HUB Trail is a 25 km multi-use non-motorized trail system that connects many significant points of interest including the waterfront walkway, Bellevue Park, Algoma University, Sault College, the Sault Area hospital and Fort Creek Conservation Area.

The trail system provides an alternative means of accessing the waterfront and key cultural, historical, and natural areas of the community.

The Trail has proven to be an incredible success with locals and visitors alike. It provides increased recreational and health opportunities in the community, and encourages more environmentally sustainable modes of transportation across the city.

The City should harness the success of the trail and its ability to link the community. The trail presents an opportunity to connect the Canal District and the James Street area with the rest of the city.



Streets for people - Downtown Street Party

2.2 Link Disconnected City Fabric

An Integrated Public Realm Plan

A high quality public realm, including the creation of a set of great streets, trails, and public gathering spaces is fundamental to urban vitality. It must encourage walkability, beautify the environment, and strengthen visual and physical connections. Streets not only serve as the primary way in which people move about, they also shape how a place is experienced and often make the greatest impression on visitors.

The new Canal District should be a well-connected downtown neighbourhood: a place to live, work, and play. The District should be easily traversable with active and porous edges. Its urban fabric should be contiguous with the character of the larger downtown. Designing through this conceptual lens will ensure residents benefit from the close proximity of amenities and services within the neighbourhood and surrounding area and enjoy the attractive and comfortable public realm.

Conventional street design has favoured the function of vehicular movement. Streets need to be viewed as vital public spaces, and should play a much larger role in the life of a community. Streets are critical arteries for the movement of people and goods, but they are also the places where we live, work, play and interact. Their design and management should reflect and accommodate these diverse and competing uses.

There is currently little functional, physical or visual connectivity between uses in the Canal District. A key objective of the Public Realm Plan is overcoming fragmentation and isolation by establishing a common language of connective arteries that link transit, with new and existing gathering spaces and unify these routes within a complementary and cohesive urban fabric.

A Connected Network of Complete Streets

The key to increasing pedestrian and cycling permeability and unlocking a significant amount of development potential is to reconceptualize several streets and intersections in and around the Canal District. This process will include reconnecting the street grid, and incorporating connections to and from neighbouring districts and the downtown.

The reallocation of space within street rights of way to provide for a balance of all modes of transportation will improve the connectivity of the area and create opportunities for a greater range of people to enjoy the public realm amenities of the downtown.

Recommendations include:

- Applying streetscape improvements to the west end of Queen Street. Improvements include boulevard parking, expanded pedestrian sidewalks and cycling in shared lanes.
- Converting Bay Street into a complete street as per proposed Plans. A complete street includes bicycle lanes, transit, narrowed traffic lanes, and wider sidewalks.
- Enhancing streetscapes connecting the Canal District to its neighbouring districts, including the James Street area and downtown.
- Developing several John Rowswell HUB Trail spokes to establish new connections and alternate routes through sites such as the St. Mary's site.
- Considering the reversion of one way streets to two way traffic. Only consider where pedestrian and cycling routes are not compromised.
- Considering a roundabout at the intersection of Huron and Bay Streets in order to reduce traffic speeds and allow for improved crossing opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists.

A Series of Waterfront Destinations

Sault Ste. Marie is fortunate to have a string of important community amenities and destinations along the St. Mary's River, forming a continuous animated interface between the city and its waterfront. Integrating new destinations, nodes, and access points on the waterfront must account for, enhance, and complement the existing destinations along the extent of the waterfront.

- Create a series of lookouts and seating areas along the existing waterfront trail;
- Ensure new connections between the city and waterfront terminate in viewpoints.

A Greening Strategy

As a temporary strategy, the City should encourage using extensive planted landscapes to stitch together derelict areas.



St. Mary's Riverfront Walk - Sault Ste. Marie ON

This approach would activate underused urban spaces with landscape as the driver to establish walkability, provide landscape programming, as well as phytoremediating presently contaminated soils.

This viable and cost effective solution is recommended quickly establishes a landscape that can be utilized for one growing season, or maintained for fifty. The primary intent is to establish an extremely fast growing canopy cover that visually and physically connects underutilized land with amenities and destinations. The following strategies can be easily implemented to achieve a green network in the City's downtown:

- Deploy an overlay of tightly spaced grids of live cutting plantings of primary successional species across the Gateway and St. Mary's site.
- Establish "green tentacles" that physically and visually connect the St. Mary's and Gateway sites to their context. These include extensive plantings and streetscape improvements.



Stormwater management - Portland OR

A Series of Connected Public Spaces

Successful open spaces can have a tremendous influence on the image, appeal and economic development of an area. They fundamentally contribute to the livability of an area, and help to attract and retain commercial investments and a residential population.

Public realm networks contribute significantly to the walkability of a downtown by creating on and off-street linkages and programmable opportunities. Networks may join up linear parks, squares, playing fields, parks, trails, natural areas, open spaces and surrounding historic and/or civic buildings.

These connections can be improved and expanded through a series of strategies:

- Improve and better utilize existing open spaces through land use decisions that provide for the needs of the people working and living near them.
- Identify new and strategic open space opportunities that can serve as catalysts for revitalization and address areas deficient in open spaces such as the Gateway Site.
- Ensure open spaces will appeal to the broadest demographic in all seasons, including active and passive, formal and informal spaces.
- Enhance visual and physical connectivity to existing and potential open spaces through streetscapes, pedestrian connections and orientating features such as public art.
- Ensure adequate private amenity spaces and encourage publicly accessible spaces within new significant developments.
- Complement and strengthen the presence of key destinations and attractions through special treatments to surrounding streets and open spaces.



Street greening, pedestrian connectivity and walkability - Rancho Cucamonga CA



March Street Parkette - Sault Ste. Marie ON

Streetscapes as an Expanded Public Realm

The downtown street grid (encompassing the Canal District) represents an integral public space network that should be approached in the same way as squares, plazas, and parks. The activation of these spaces is critical in establishing an interconnected and complete public realm.

A robust streetscape strategy can profoundly influence the quality and character of the built environment. Street design shapes the way individuals experience and connect to a city; they comprise the most significant publicly owned land holding. More than just a 'roadway', a 'streetscape' defines and considers all the elements that together create the quality and character of the 'room' that contains the street, including sidewalks, trees and landscaping, lighting and furnishing, signage, and the character and quality of the buildings that define the 'street wall'.

Given that a culture of walking is so fundamental to achieving a successful downtown, streetscapes should be designed to balance their pedestrian, transit, land use and civic functions, in addition to their vehicular function. Accordingly, Sault Ste. Marie needs to be open to a shift in thinking about road design to consider their 'character' as important as their 'capacity' for traffic in and through the Canal District and downtown.

General objectives applicable to all streetscapes include:

- Pedestrian convenience and amenities should be given paramount consideration by ensuring adequate sidewalk widths for the desired volume of use for the siting of high quality furnishings, lighting and transit stops.
- Visual clutter and unnecessary obstructions on sidewalks should be avoided and any streetscape improvements should incorporate a consistent vocabulary of design elements.
- Street trees should be placed on both sides of the street to provide visual quality,

shade, and to serve as wind breaks.

- Sidewalks should bump-out at intersections to better define permanent on-street parking locations and to lessen pedestrian crossing distances.
- On-street parking should be distinguished in its paving treatment from the roadway to visually extend the pedestrian realm and to reduce the perceived width of the roadway (where appropriate).
- Crosswalks should be clearly marked with special paving treatments.
- Bike lanes should only be considered at the expense of vehicular lanes and only after adequate sidewalk widths and street trees have been provided.
- Access and loading areas should be provided via lanes where they exist.
- Pedestrian lighting should be placed on each side of the street and evenly spaced.



Downtown Street Party - Sault Ste. Marie

Integrated Family of Civic Elements

Civic Elements identify existing and potential aspects within the Canal District that aid in creating a distinct sense of place and enhance the experience within the District. These elements reinforce entry points and access, aid in wayfinding and orientation, highlight important aspects and heritage, and enhance visual and physical connections in and around the Canal District.

Gateways

Gateways are areas or sites that signal key points of entry into the Canal District and/or the City itself, and can include major intersections or points of arrival. Clearly identifying these areas helps to enhance orientation, reinforces a sense of place and generates civic pride. These locations provide key opportunities where the coordination of the

design of landscaping, streetscaping, public art, and wayfinding can create a strong sense of entry and orientation. The following objectives help define distinct gateways:

- The International Bridge Plaza should incorporate a primary gateway feature. The International Gateway currently lacks a significant and lasting sense of arrival to the city and the country. It is recommended that the eastern frontage of Huron Street facing the Border Plaza be developed to include a significant feature consisting of feature plantings and signage providing a renewed sense of arrival and “Destination”.
- Secondary Gateways are proposed for significant intersections leading to the Canal District that includes signage and/or a marker. Markers can include a place specific paving detail on sidewalks or crosswalks.

Crosswalks

The success of a street can hinge on how well it can accommodate and enhance the pedestrian experience. Feelings of comfort and safety are heightened when the speed of traffic is reduced. Crosswalks serve two functions: to clearly demarcate a safe route for a pedestrian to cross and to calm traffic. Frequent stops will ensure slower traffic speeds and cautious driving. Accordingly, the Canal District Neighbourhood Plan encourages the following objectives for crosswalks:

- Every key four way intersection along a major pedestrian corridor should have crosswalks.
- Crosswalks should utilize distinctive feature paving or painted lines to enhance their visibility and quality.



Special paving treatment - Ottawa ON

A Public Art Strategy

Public art should be placed at visually strategic locations including the terminus of view corridors, at Gateways, on prominent corners, and in parks and open spaces. Public art provides an opportunity to celebrate and showcase local culture and can contribute to enhancing the quality of the public realm in ways conventional streetscape elements cannot. Key objectives of public art include:

- Public art should reinforce or celebrate local identity such as the area's rich history and abundance of landmarks and heritage buildings.
- Public art may include memorials, sculptures, water features, murals, illumination or individual art installations at visually prominent sites, key termini, open spaces, Gateways, major intersections, and in association with public and institutional buildings.
- The scale of public art should be determined by the visual prominence of the site.



Industrial past gestured through streetscaping elements - Vancouver BC



Industrial artifacts as public art - Kitchener ON

2.3 Guide Appropriate Built Form

General Built Form Guidelines

Although not addressed in detail in this Plan, built form should always be considered as it has a direct relationship and impact on the adjacent public realm.

The design objectives for new developments is generally to maintain and reinforce the existing successful 'small city' and 'human-scaled' character of downtown Sault Ste. Marie, as defined by the low-rise buildings at the street edge and continuous rhythm of narrow storefronts.

While these guidelines are meant to provide design standards and benchmarks for development, they are also intended to provide flexibility within certain parameters to encourage distinction, variety, and creative architectural and design responses.

Some general guidelines to follow with respect to built form include:

- New building additions should complement any existing distinctive architectural features.
- Provide a range of new complementary building types.
- Use a number of different architects to provide variety.
- Create a continuous street wall – filling in gaps and voids.
- Create pavilion style buildings on the waterfront.
- Introduce mid-rise and composite buildings with emphasis at street level.
- Break down overly large super-blocks with a finer grain of streets for walking.
- Frame and animate public spaces.
- Enliven the street level by making it transparent and interesting.

Consistent Building Edge

The Consistent Building Edge identifies key frontages where new buildings should reinforce a consistent and strong interface with streets and open spaces so as to positively frame and activate these spaces. In most instances this occurs where multi-storey, street-oriented buildings with grade-level commercial uses currently exist or are desired. Along these frontages, new infill development should be placed close to the property line and/or consistent with adjacent buildings to provide for active grade level conditions such as shops that animate the street or open space.

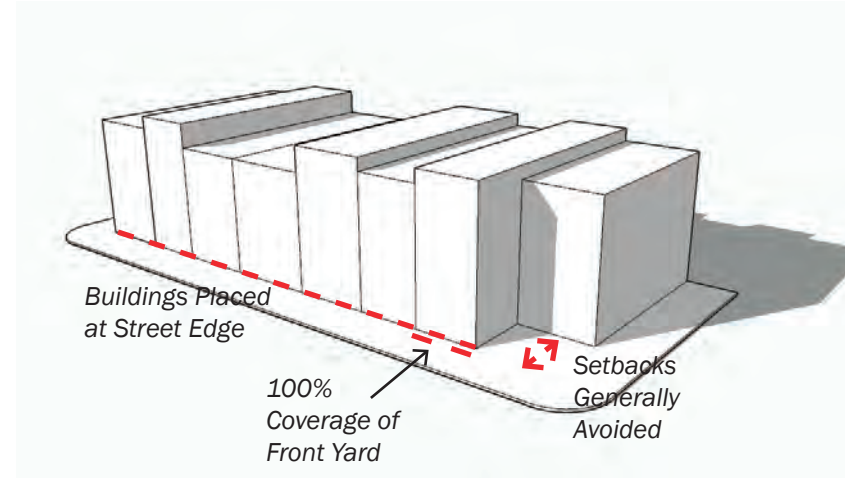


Consistent Building Edge - Fredericton NB

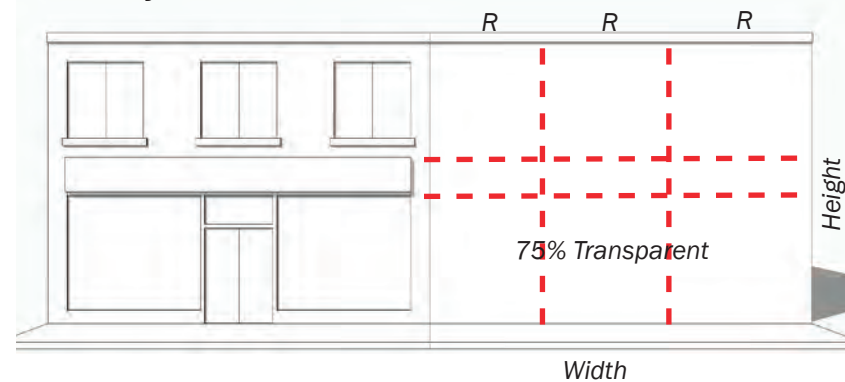
Siting and Orientation

Proper building placement and orientation along a street helps to reinforce the public realm by enhancing the pedestrian environment by creating a sense of enclosure. This is achieved by framing the street with parallel aligned facades.

- For major developments on the Gateway, OLG or Blueforest sites, or for infill developments throughout the area, buildings should be situated as close to the property line as possible, or frame the site, to encourage the development or enhancement of a building street wall that will interact with and animate the public realm.
- Buildings should be oriented such that they address the street with clearly defined entry points with easy access to the sidewalk.
- Buildings should be placed at or close to the street edge, consistent with adjacent buildings.
- Development of an entire block or at corner sites may provide greater setbacks to widen sidewalks within compromising the visual continuity of the streetscape.
- 100% building coverage of the front-yard is required for buildings to discourage fragmentation of the street wall.
- The facade of infill development should be articulated to reflect the rhythm of adjacent buildings.
- The facade of the ground floor should be 75% transparent.



Infill Rhythm



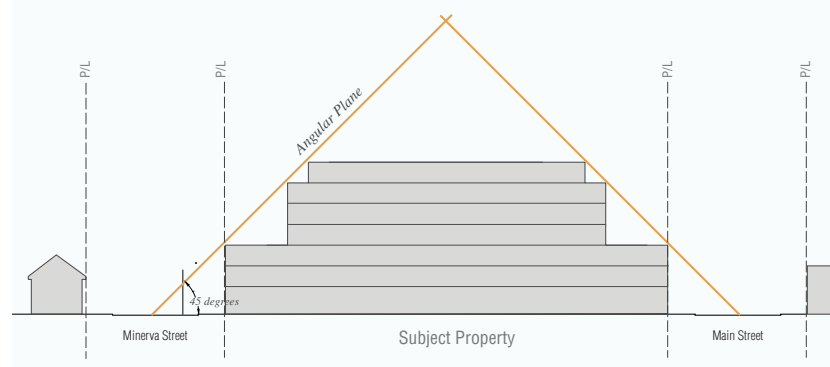
Height and Massing

The height and massing of buildings is an important design element for downtown Main Streets, Mixed-Use, and Downtown Core areas. New construction should maintain the scale of the surrounding built form. The use of angular planes is recommended in conjunction with height and massing controls to define appropriate transitions to adjacent areas. Specifically, the angular plane is intended to define the extents of the development envelope to guide above-grade building step backs. New developments that are subject to the angular plane guidelines should be massed with good form within these envelopes.

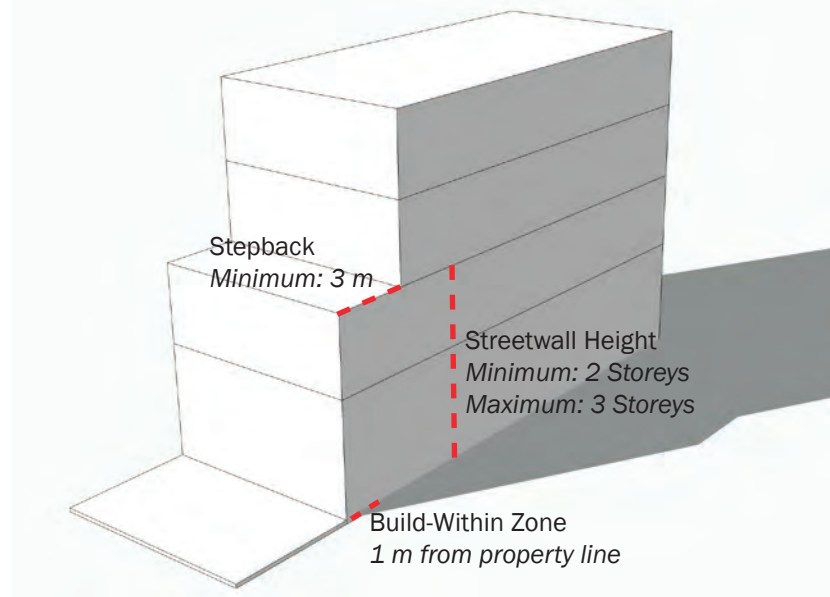
- Street wall heights should be no less than 2-storeys and no taller than 4 storeys at which point a minimum 1.5 metre stepback free of encroachments should be provided.
- Building heights and street walls should be consistent with the existing heights of heritage and character buildings.
- Where abutting a heritage or character defining building, the building edge should provide an appropriate transition in height to these buildings.
- The massing of the building will be subject to 45-degree angular plane originating from the centre line of the street right-of-way as diagrammed on the right.
- For the purposes of calculating height, the following floor to ceiling heights should be used:
 - ground floor 4.0 – 4.5 m,
 - upper floors of office 3.0 – 3.3 m
 - upper floors of residential 2.7 m – 3 m

Infill Massing

45° Angular Plane



Streetwall



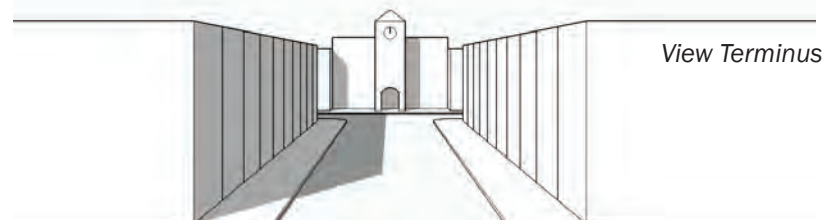
Corner and Terminus Sites

Corner buildings have a greater visual prominence given that they front onto two streets and frame intersections. Corner buildings also potentially provide more than one entrance to different parts of a building and therefore provide special opportunities for the design and uses they contain. Similar to corner sites, buildings sited at the ends of streets that terminate a view are visually prominent. Buildings that terminate the views down a street are significant in the role they play orienting visitors to a place. Historically, landmark and key buildings such as churches were placed at these prominent locations.

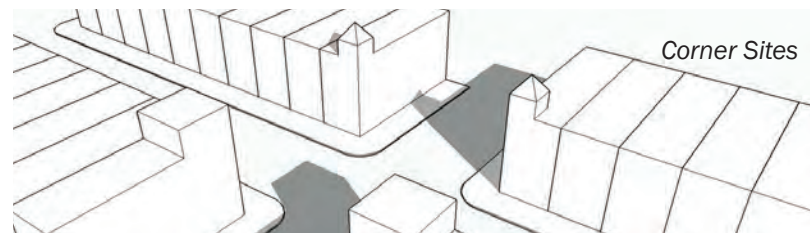
- Modest exceptions to step backs and height restrictions could be permitted to encourage massing and design that accentuate the visual prominence of the site – architectural elements can include tall slender elements such as spires and turrets. This technique enhances the distinction and landmark quality of new buildings on corner or visual terminus sites.
- Modest exceptions in setbacks could also be permitted to enhance views along side streets.
- Uses should address both street frontages through entries or glazing.
- Special attention should be made to the quality of the design and materials used to recognize the importance of new buildings on corner sites.
- New development on terminus sites should align design features to the view axis which, in addition to tall architectural elements, can include aligned entries or portico openings.
- New development on corner sites should orient on both street frontages.
- The highest possible standards in design and material quality should be encouraged. The visibility of new development on corner sites and terminus sites can shape the image and character of the area.



Key corner sites should have distinctive architectural treatments - Crocker Park OH



View Terminus

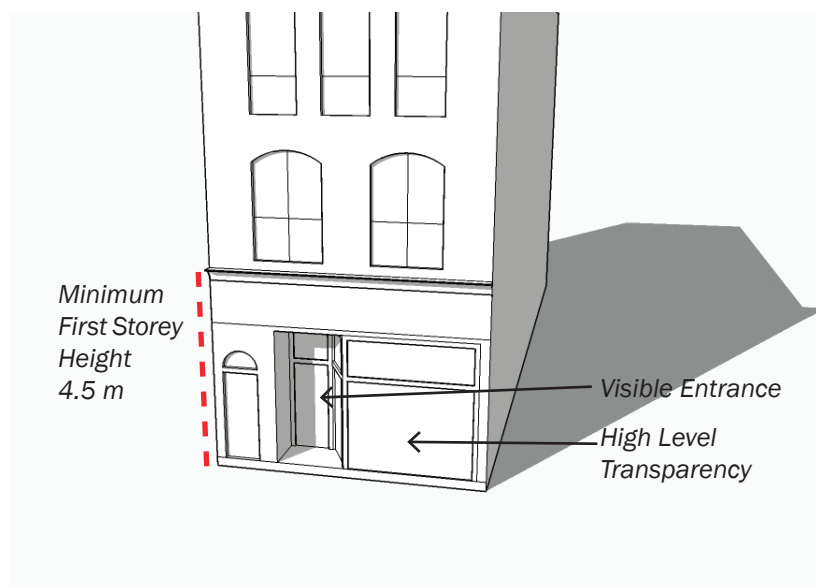


Corner Sites

6.5 Grade Level Design

Implementing adequate grade level heights on the first floor will ensure the appropriate level of transparency, resulting in a heightened level of animation along the street. For commercial uses, in addition to animating the street through an adequate level of transparency, providing adequate grade level heights is also important for ensuring commercial uses have a visible presence on the street.

- Grade level heights of no less than 4.5 metres for commercial and 4.0 metres for residential uses. Ensuring a minimum grade level height of 4.5 metres builds in adaptability by ensuring the commercial spaces can remain flexible as the area matures and evolves and business needs change.



Sidewalk Cafés

Sidewalk cafés add vitality to the street. By providing for sidewalk cafés, they become neighbourhood amenities, providing another form of interaction in urban areas.

- Sidewalk cafés should be encouraged throughout the downtown without encumbering pedestrian movement. Small sidewalk cafés generally require 1.4 metres for a single row of tables and chairs.
- A minimum sidewalk clearance of 1.8 metres should be provided.
- Sidewalk cafés should be designed to contribute and integrate into the streetscape. Tall fencing or landscaping should be avoided. Material and landscaping choices should be of the highest possible quality.



Sidewalk cafes are an important part of street life and vitality - Philadelphia PA

Parking Areas

Generally all parking that is located on the same property should be located at the rear of the building and accessed from the street or a lane where they exist. Should surface parking be necessary, the primary objective for the design and location of surface parking areas is to minimize their visibility and reduce potential conflicts with pedestrians.

- For major development sites, on-site parking should be accommodated via parking structures that blend into the built form, or should be accommodated in the interior of the site, buffered from the public realm by buildings.
- Parking located in the front setback and or beyond the front of the primary building is prohibited.
- Large expanses of surface parking should be broken up with buildings and landscaping to reduce their visual prominence. At least one tree for every 2 stalls is encouraged.
- Directions to access these surface parking areas should be adequately signed, making them easily accessible for patrons.
- At least one active frontage containing a high proportion of clear glazing to building edges should be incorporated along the side or rear of the surface parking areas.
- Parking areas should be adequately lit at night. Avoid light spill from these areas to adjacent residential areas.
- Parking areas should be shared between adjoining facilities.
- Multiple entry and exit points from streets to off-street surface parking help to reduce congestion.
- Layout, vegetation and signage can be used to make large areas of vehicular parking legible to drivers.

Signage



Landscaped parking facilities - Nanticoke ON



Buffered and pleasant pedestrian access routes through parking - Orlando FL

Signage plays an important role in the overall image of any area. Signs should contribute to the quality of individual building and the overall streetscape. They should reflect the unique characteristics of their context, and complement heritage buildings. High-quality, imaginative and innovative signs are encouraged.

- Commercial signage should not overwhelm the building and/or storefront.
- Back lit illuminated rectangular sign boxes should be discouraged.
- Signage should be integrated into the design of building facades wherever possible though placement within architectural bays and friezes to minimize visual clutter.
- Signage should not obscure windows, cornices or other architectural elements
- Large free standing signs (such as pylons), roof signs, and large-scale advertising should be discouraged.
- Signage on heritage building should be consistent with traditional sign placement and character.
- Signs should be well maintained and constructed using high quality materials.



Place sensitive signage - Portland OR



Place sensitive signage - Collingwood ON

2.4 Animate and Program the Public Realm

Enriching the District

As public realm improvements proceed, there will be increased demand for living and working opportunities in the downtown and Canal District. These changes present opportunities to grow and intensify, to repair, and to enrich the built fabric and deliver needed infrastructure and amenities. Striving for design excellence and best practices in sustainable development is key to shaping and guiding new development. High quality design reinforces and complements the existing character. New programming, upstarts, community associations, and businesses will positively contribute to the quality and expansion of the public realm.



The Machine Shop - Destination North, Sault Ste. Marie



Event at the Machine Shop - Destination North, Sault Ste. Marie

Entrepreneurial and Supportive

By leveraging the distinct character of the Canal District, existing resources, institutions, and the several start-up and entrepreneurial initiatives happening in and around downtown, the area will become a more attractive and sustainable place to invest. The downtown and Canal District should have a vibrant and diversified economic base, and should promote, facilitate, and enable small, local entrepreneurial and creative businesses. Partnering with key community stakeholders to activate the Canal District will allow the City to capitalize on existing assets and maximize neighbourhood visibility.

The following are brief summaries of the several initiatives currently underway in and around the downtown and the Canal District:

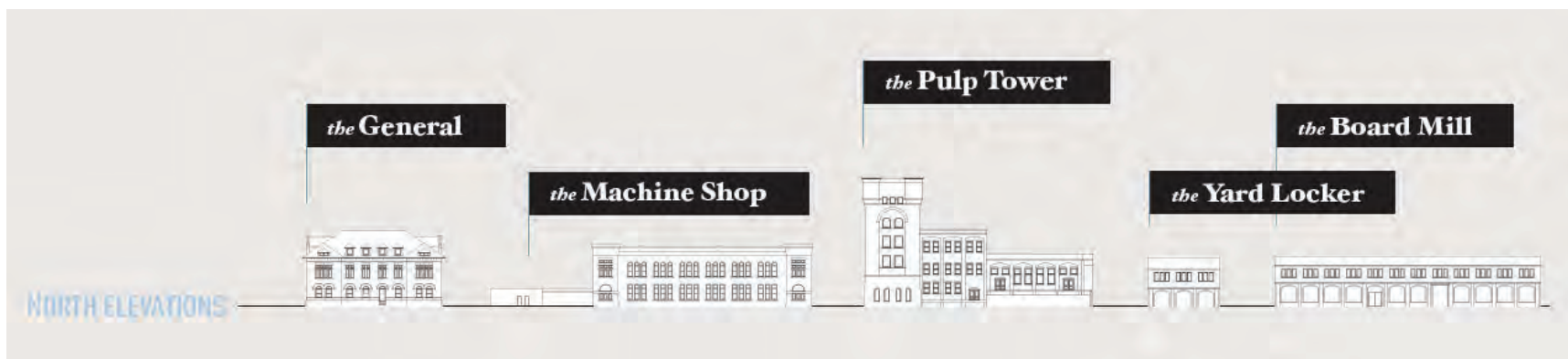
Blueforest Ventures / Destination North

Blueforest Ventures owns the former St. Mary's Paper Mill site, where there are several initiatives underway to create a multi-faceted regional destination for local business, visitor and tourist markets as living centres for Ecology, Culture and Wilderness Experience.

Visitors will engage with live interactive exhibits, immersive multimedia and animatronic elements designed to introduce and engage people in the Northern Ontario experience.

Proposed components of the distinct ecological, cultural and wilderness experience include:

- **Destination North Discovery Centre** - Aimed at telling the story of Boreal forest ecology, Lake Superior and the diversity of its aquatic and terrestrial wildlife through a four season narrative.
- **Entomica** - An insectarium, a Butterfly house and Noctarium with live interactive exhibits, immersive multimedia and animatronic elements.
- **Aazhogan Anishinabek** - Place for understanding the Anishinabek cultures through the voice of Canada's First Nations.
- **Group of Seven Algoma** - Group of Seven Algoma is both an immersive media experience and a physical journey that begins at Destination North and tracks along the passenger trains of Algoma Central Rail and into the wilderness of Northern, Ontario.
- **Flexible Exhibit Spaces** - Weaved throughout the Destination North experience will be spaces allocated for flexible, seasonal exhibition space.
- **Board Mill Food Hub** - The Regional Food hub and Public Market will bring local food, drink and artisanal products to market while serving as a venue for social interaction and gathering.
- **Fish Hatchery & Market** - In order to promote the development of a District Food hub, Blueforest Ventures has come to an agreement with the City of Sault Ste. Marie to decommission and repurpose the old Fish Hatchery building on the Gateway Site as a temporary food hub that will aim to promote the concept and generate interest, investment, and momentum for the hub.



The several buildings to be repurposed as part of the Destination North development

Business Incubator Project

The Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is establishing a small-business incubator in its downtown core that would provide the needed support to help businesses get up and running. The incubator would provide operating space for new entrepreneurs, with services to help them succeed, including coaching, mentoring and marketing assistance. The facility would provide support to help entrepreneurs reach the next step in their business journey, which will ultimately help create jobs in the community.

Post-secondary Institutions

The City is keen to partner with Algoma University and Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology to facilitate a permanent, significant downtown institutional presence. Mutual benefits exist for municipalities – small and mid-size cities in particular – and post-secondary institutions in establishing downtown campuses. They act as stabilizing anchors, cultivating confidence in investors and attracting visitors to the area.



Waterloo Architecture Campus - Downtown Cambridge ON

Public Schools

Depending on the repurposing of several buildings within the Canal District, there exists the opportunity for school groups to utilize the proposed resources for educational purposes through group tours, site visits, outdoor laboratory projects etc.

Forestry Research Centres

There exists the opportunity to partner with the Ontario Forestry Research Institute and the Great Lakes Forestry Centre to utilize derelict or underused lands in the Canal District for research purposes including urban forest ecosystem research, decontamination and how to remedy it, and bio-remediation practices.



Forest ecology education

Arts Incubator Project

Building on the success of the multipurpose arts and exhibit space at 180 Projects on Gore Street, there exists the opportunity to engage the Gore Street area with an arts initiative where vacant storefronts could host pop-up shops or galleries during this transition period. Pop-up shops are temporary retail venues, that could host a sample sale one day and host a private cocktail party the next evening. The idea is to build up interest in the products, while also building interest in the host street and community.

Neighbourhood Resource Centre

A new social services hub is located at 138 Gore Street. The hub includes several social services agencies and resources committed to joining a new satellite police office in the collaborative efforts to address local social disorder.

The space provides social services beyond emergency and crime prevention support, including employment, and health services.



180 Projects Gallery and community social space on Gore Street - Sault Ste. Marie ON

Animate the HUB Project

Sault Ste. Marie's Planning Department is working in collaboration with the NORDIK Institute and over sixteen diverse organizations and content providers. This collaboration seeks to gather and share socioecological data about the culture and lands bordering the trail. The information, including healthy active living, will be widely available through mobile devices, a Trail Guide and an Audio Tour. The Trail Guide and Audio Tour will be trilingual, English, French and Anishinaabemowin, the traditional language of this region.

The project aims to increase frequency, duration, and use of different sections of the Trail, as well as expand the demographic range of users. The interactive resources will increase and diversify opportunities for artists, residents, newcomers and tourists to engage, explore and connect with the City through the Trail.



Gore Street Neighbourhood Resource Centre - Sault Ste. Marie ON



The Canal District - Public Realm Plan Context

Part 3 Projects

The Vision and Key Strategies outlined the issues and opportunities within the Canal District, and highlighted the fact that there is a cluster of complementary components. However, there is a real lack of a formal and coherent public realm relationship.

This fragmentation can be remedied through the development of an integrated public realm Plan that complements the City's land use and economic development initiatives, and capitalizes on strategic sites by stitching components back into a coordinated urban fabric.

The following section details a series of recommended projects organized into two sections: those being **priority projects**, for immediate initiation, and **long term projects**.

The following priority projects have been selected as they collectively contribute to the overall vision for the Canal District and embody the strategies set out in this Plan while setting the wheels in motion for long term projects.

Priority Projects are:

- 1 **Gore Street Streetscape Improvements** (Design & Construction);
- 2 **Huron Street Welcome Parkette and Streetscape** (Design & Construction);
- 3 **Queen Street Furnishings Update** (Design & Install);
- 4 **Signature Park** (Design & Construction);
- 5 **Bay Street Streetscape** (Design & Construction);
- 6 **John Rowswell HUB Trail Spokes** (Conceptual Design).

Long Term Projects are:

- 1 **John Rowswell HUB Trail spokes** (Construction);
- 2 **Huron Street Roundabout** (Design & Construction);
- 3 **Bay Street West** (Design & construction).

3.1 Public Realm Plan

This is a conceptual build out Plan for the Canal District. It does not embody all identified initiatives but demonstrates the aforementioned Priority and Long term Projects and how they align with the overall strategy for the Canal District.

The development of the former St. Mary's Paper Mill site is a private undertaking, and the illustrated build-out plan is strictly conceptual, as is development indicated on the western portion of the Gateway site.

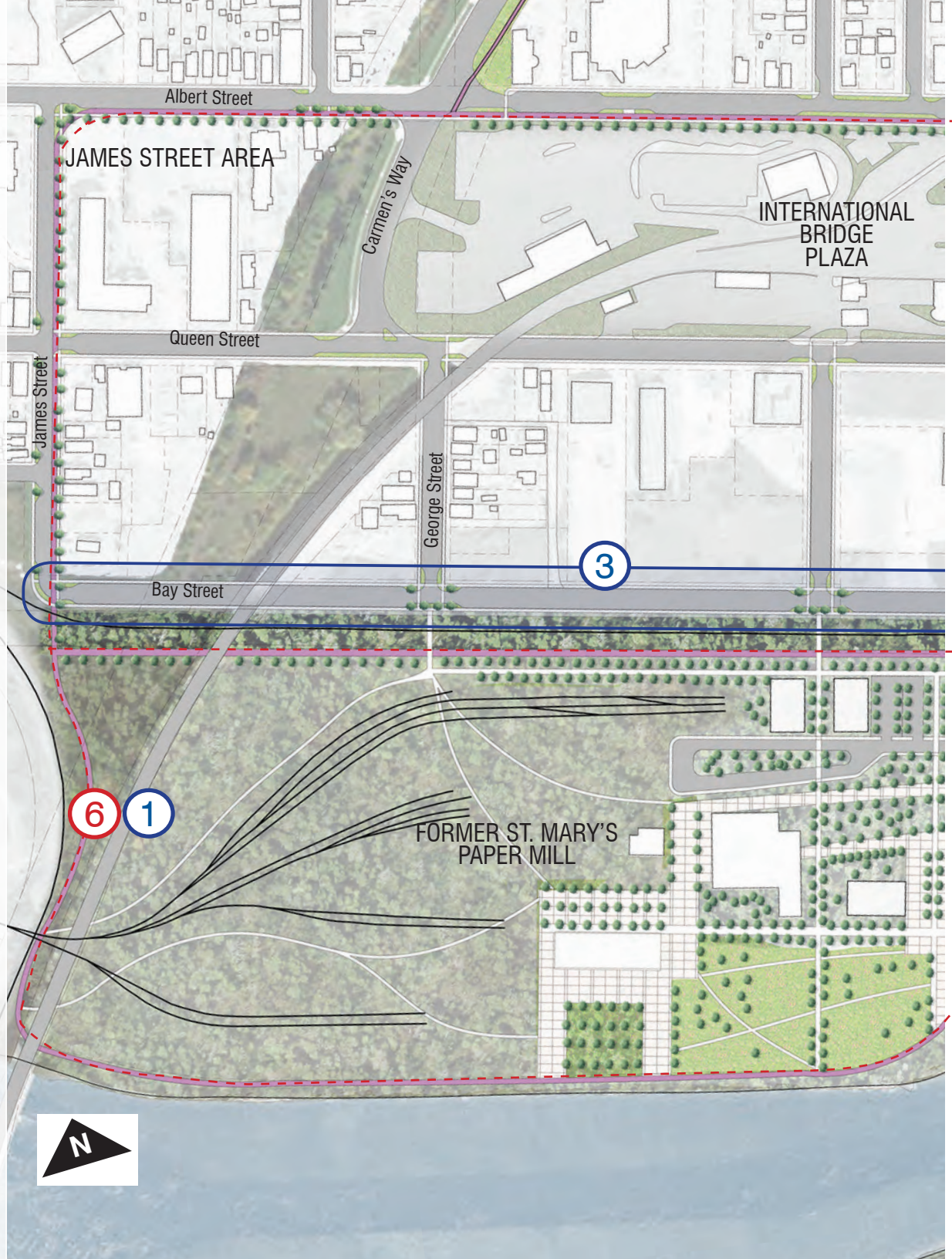
The Priority and Long Term projects are conceptually illustrated on the Plan:

Priority Projects are:

- ① **Gore Street Streetscape Improvements** (Design & Construction);
- ② **Huron Street Welcome Parkette and Streetscape** (Design & Construction);
- ③ **Queen Street Furnishings Update** (Design & Install);
- ④ **Signature Park** (Design & Construction);
- ⑤ **Bay Street Streetscape** (Design & Construction);
- ⑥ **John Rowswell HUB Trail Spokes** (Conceptual Design).

Long Term Projects are:

- ① **John Rowswell HUB Trail spokes** (Construction);
- ② **Huron Street Roundabout** (Design & Construction);
- ③ **Bay Street West** (Design & construction).





Albert Street

ETIENNE
BRULE
SCHOOL

ESPOSITO PARK

Queen Street

OLG CASINO & TRAVEL
ONTARIO

Bay Street

GATEWAY SITE

SAULT STE. MARIE
CANAL NATIONAL
HISTORIC SITE

STATION MALL

GORE STREET
REVITALIZATION AREA

Queen Street

Tancred Street

1

2

2

5

4

3

Priority Project 1

3.2 Gore Street Streetscape Improvements (Design and Construction)

Description

Gore Street is an important north south commercial spine connecting the Canal District with the rest of downtown. It has been in steady decline for several years. However, it has a collection of buildings lining the street with a strong spatial frame for a renewed pedestrian shopping district. The Street is located on an important seam between the eastern and western parts of the downtown, and if redeveloped could be an important connection between the Canal District and the downtown.

Character

Gore Street has the potential to be a healthy retail street and important north south linkage for pedestrians and vehicles. Ideally it will possess animated building faces on both sides of the street, broad sidewalks, and street tree plantings suitable for high pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The existing storefronts provide the armature to accommodate an active interface, where patios and spill out zones are encouraged to support the restaurants and retail. The use of complementary streetscape features such as paving, furnishings, landscaping and lighting can further emphasize the street's unique nature.



New Defining Design Characteristics

- Narrow one-way vehicular cross section with permanent on-street parking on both sides of the street adjacent to retail/restaurants.
- Wide pedestrian clearways.
- Street trees lining both sides of the street.
- Special paving treatments on the pedestrian and parking areas to reduce the perceived width of the street.
- Special paving treatments demarcating crosswalks.
- At-grade retail/commercial uses are highly encouraged where possible with patios and spill out zones.
- Pedestrian lighting to line both sides of the street.
- Bench and trash receptacles at periodic intervals on both sides of the street.
- Traffic calming measures to be used in conjunction with signal control to further improve the pedestrian/cycling experience at the intersections. For example, pedestrian bulb-outs narrow the intersection and reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians.
- Infilling of the gaps in the street wall with complementary buildings that incorporate at-grade retail with offices or residential uses above.
- Introduction of a rear lane to access loading and parking areas internal to the block.



Special paving treatment at intersections - Rancho Cucamongo CA



Flexible parallel parking/widened sidewalk - King Street, Kitchener ON

Gore Street cont'd

Pocket parks

There are several opportunities along the length of the Gore Street to accommodate small neighbourhood pocket parks. Pocket parks are small, pedestrian friendly spaces that provide for socializing, and include primarily hard surface elements, but can also accommodate softer elements. Wherever possible, pocket parks should be established adjacent to active building frontages. Transparent and accessible at-grade uses adjacent to the park will help to animate the space, improve safety and encourage use.

The City could potentially implement this project using a phased and experimental approach, whereby they use temporary materials to allow for residents and visitors to experience the new amenity space without the commitment of major funding. This will allow the City to measure the success of the new space, and then conceive a more permanent design. There are examples of this type of public space planning in New York City, Philadelphia and Toronto.

New Defining Design Characteristics

- Require that adjacent built form have primary and active frontages facing the Pocket Park, where appropriate;
- Be primarily hard surfaced, with limited soft surface elements; and,
- Incorporate seating, lighting, outdoor cafes and restaurants, facilities that promote a passive park-like atmosphere, such as water features and public art.



Public plaza pilot project, Philadelphia PA



Spill out patios - Charlottetown PEI



Small moments for passive relaxation in the public realm - Toronto ON



Pocket park, Montreal PQ

Adjacent building interfaces offer opportunities for active frontages, including retail or patios, or alternatively, opportunities for murals and public art

Mix of hard and softscapes

Increased canopy cover for an improved user experience



Concept Plan



Corner parkette animated with furnishing and public art - Toronto ON

Priority Project 2

3.3 Huron Street Welcome Parkette and Streetscape Design and Construction

Despite being the primary access point between the United States and northern Ontario, the Gateway and sense of arrival into Canada is under-distinguished. The International Bridge Plaza is currently undergoing a complete makeover, which offers the opportunity to redevelop a new feature and/or road layout for residents and visitors to access the city - and Canada..

The International Bridge Plaza fronts Huron Street. The street should undergo a transformation that incorporates an entry feature, improved pedestrian realm (including widened sidewalks, improved lighting, safe crossing points and street plantings) and development of a new “Welcome parkette” at the northeast corner of Huron and Queen Streets.



Minnesota Port of Entry architectural feature - Warroad MN





Illustrative entry feature concept



Prominent sculptural component - Seattle WA



Prominent Entry Feature - Los Angeles CA

Entry Feature

The Port of Entry into Canada and the City of Sault Ste. Marie should be amplified through the development of a prominent Gateway feature. Sault Ste. Marie can utilize the entire eastern side of Huron Street between Albert Street and Queen Street to develop a memorable and unique Gateway feature and public space to act as a welcoming gesture and provide new public gathering space for the community and visitors to enjoy for years to come.

New Defining Design Characteristics

- The Gateway feature should be selected through a national design competition, providing the City with a wealth of ideas and options, so to ensure that the selected piece truly represents the City and the Region.
- The Feature should be prominent during all seasons and at all times of day and night incorporating elements such as colour, lighting, and materials.
- The Feature should incorporate a landmark planting scheme along the eastern road edge of Huron Street that embodies the essence of rugged Northern Ontario.
- Sidewalk widths should be increased to accommodate a furnishing and/or planting zone

along the road edge, as well as provide a minimum of 2m clearance for complete accessibility.

- Continuous street trees planted between Bay and Queen on both sides of the street, and on the east side of the street between Queen and Albert where tree planting should be integrated into the Gateway feature landscape.
- Pedestrian scale lighting will increase users' sense of safety and improve pedestrian experience.
- All signalized intersections should include clearly demarcated crossings, signage and warning signals for all modes of travel.
- Decorative and pedestrian lighting should be integrated with street light poles and coordinated with street trees in respect to placement and spacing.
- Placement of above ground utilities should be sensitive to the visual appeal and pedestrian function of the public realm.
- Sidewalks and crossings should be accessible to all users.

Huron Street Reconstruction cont'd

Welcome Parkette

The northeast corner of Queen Street and Huron Street offers the opportunity to develop a new public park space that will compliment the Gateway feature while also providing a new neighbourhood and community amenity.

New Defining Design Characteristics

- The parkette should be designed to ensure that it is an active public place. The park design should reflect the importance of arrival to the city and region, but must balance these priorities with those of an amenity space.
- The parkette should be linked physically and visibly with the Etienne Brule school property, and the proposed John Rowsell HUB Trail link immediately east of the site
- The parkette design should be part of the larger entry feature design theme established along Huron Street, where feature planting, lighting, and sculptural elements are shared, and draw people towards the corner and new public space.



Bailey Plaza - Ithaca NY



Yorkville Park - Toronto ON



Mary Bartelme Park - Chicago IL



Square Victoria - Montreal PQ



Parc des Freres-Charon - Montreal PQ



Priority Project 3

3.4 Queen Street Furnishings Update (Design and Installation)

Queen Street is Sault Ste. Marie's main downtown avenue. It has been the location for festivals, parades, markets, and dance parties throughout the city's history. Despite legible streetscape elements, the street furnishings are in need of an upgrade. The street lacks a cohesive identity, which can be achieved through the implementation of a uniform palette of street elements including from Pim Street to Gore Street.

New Defining Design Characteristics

- Uniform furnishings palette, including materiality and colour;
- Litter/recycling receptacles should be located at all intersections at opposite corners;
- Benches, litter/recycling receptacles and newspaper corrals should be clustered around transit stops and located at pedestrian access points into commercial centres;
- Larger planters should be incorporated to provide increased soil volume;
- Pedestrian lighting should accommodate banners and flower baskets; and;
- Black bike rings that can clamp onto posts should be installed on all pedestrian lighting to maximize sidewalk space and provide adequate bike parking;
- All street poles should be able to accommodate banners;
- Pedestrian light standards should be installed between existing street light poles; and;
- New Gateway elements should be introduced at primary Gateways.



Chicago IL



Common furnishing language & streetscaping treatment - Greenville SC



Kitchener ON



Kitchener ON



Portland OR

Priority Project 4

3.5 Signature Park Design and Construction

Description

The east side of the Gateway offers a tremendous opportunity for establishing a signature greenspace that will provide a new attraction and destination on the Sault Ste. Marie waterfront and act as an important piece that links several areas to the downtown. Furthermore, the site offers important interfaces with the primary road, the St. Mary's River, Fort Creek Conservation Area, and the John Rowsell HUB Trail.

Character

This new important park space should be developed as a flexible space, accommodating a range of uses, user groups and seasonal activities. The design should incorporate several landscape types, including but not limited to open meadow and/or lawn for recreation, areas of dense canopy cover, a series of trails and interconnected paths, hardscape or plaza areas able to accommodate seasonal markets, events, demonstrations, etc.

New Defining Design Characteristics

- Ensure points of access are at grade, have appropriate and clear signage, and emphasize the character and prominence of this park space as a signature park space within the downtown;
- Account for the sensitivity of the Fort Creek tributary, and include measures to guide and control access points to control erosion and other detrimental effects;
- Ensure interface with Bay Street and St. Mary's River Drive is properly buffered while still being inviting and fully accessible;
- Require that adjacent built form have primary and active frontages facing the Park, where appropriate;
- Provide sculptural elements and/or feature plantings at important view termini;
- Provide promontory points along Fort Creek for observing the creek as well as add distinct architectural elements and shade structures that can be multifunctional;
- Incorporate soft surfaced design with limited hard surface elements;
- Include seating and a full furniture program, including lighting, opportunities for outdoor cafes and restaurants, facilities that promote a passive, relaxing atmosphere, water features and public art;
- Resolve contamination issues as part of the design process.



Signature Park cont'd



Rugged natural terrain incorporated into the urban environment, New York City, NY



Montreal PQ



A mix of rough and manicured public space, Grant Park, Chicago IL



View promontory/sculptural park element - Houtan China



Improved access to the water with integrated seating, lighting, paths - New York City NY



Integration of public art - Seattle WA



A mix of hard and soft spaces for a range of uses - New York City NY



Flexible plaza spaces for festivals, markets, and events - Don Mills ON

Priority Project 5

3.6 Bay Street Streetscape Design and Construction

Description

Bay Street acts as a physical barrier between the primary shopping destinations along Queen Street and the amenities and destinations along the waterfront. The barrier attributes to the rate of speed at which vehicles travel, and the number of lanes.

The City has already initiated an environmental assessment in preparation for a potential reduction in lanes to coincide with a scheduled resurfacing occurring in 2015. This offers the opportunity to incorporate bicycle lanes, that will continue the on-street bicycle network currently being expanded eastward along Queen Street. Such an extension would link eastern Sault Ste. Marie directly to the Canal District, and offer the opportunity to connect to John Rowswell HUB Trail at several points along its length.



Vegetated buffer to screen/transition between road and strip commercial - Toronto ON

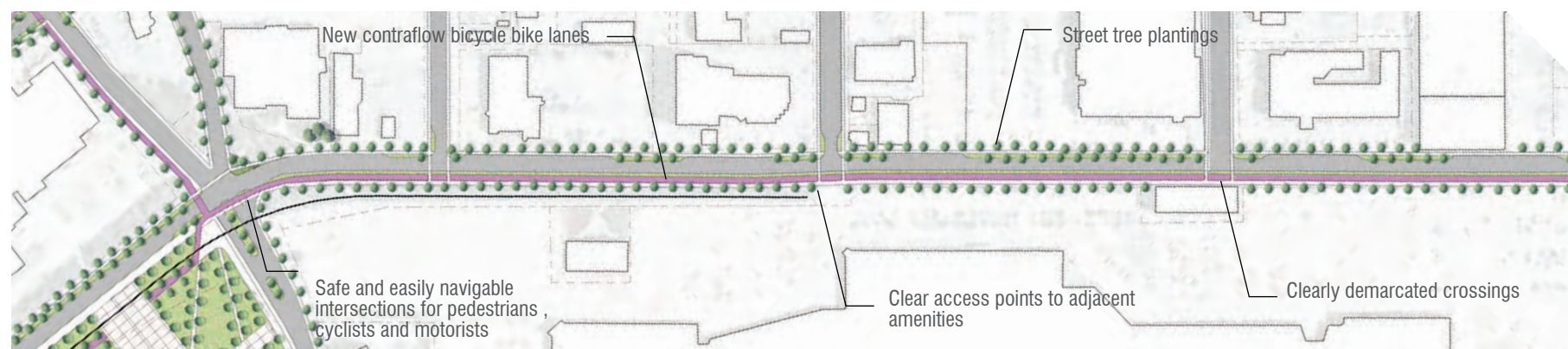


A multi-modal street - Queens NY

New Defining Design Characteristics

It is important to note that the following design characteristics are to be considered as part of the Environmental Assessment and subsequent detailed design:

- Reduce travel lanes from three and a turning lane to two.
- Introduce a separated contra-flow bike lane on the south side allowing for ease of access for cyclists to dismount and access waterfront amenities including parklands and the Station Mall, and connect to existing bicycle infrastructure.
- Increase widths of sidewalks to accommodate a furnishing and/or planting zone along the road edge, and provide a minimum of 2m clearance for complete accessibility;
- Provide a buffer zone with significant tree planting along the interface with Station Mall, between the parking lot and sidewalk for an improved pedestrian experience.
- Create a park-like setting with large canopy trees on the wider side of the boulevard.
- Locate benches and trash receptacles at intervals along the park side of the street.
- Provide pedestrian scale lighting for safety and an improved pedestrian experience.
- Incorporate signalized intersections and access points to and from the Mall that provide clearly demarcated crossings, signage and warning signals for all modes of travel.
- Integrate decorative and pedestrian lighting with street light poles and coordinate with street trees placement and spacing.
- Place above ground utilities taking into consideration the visual appeal and pedestrian function of the public realm.
- Plant a continuous row of street trees.



Priority Project 6

3.7 John Rowswell HUB Trail Spokes Conceptual Design

Description

The success of the John Rowswell HUB Trail is evident by its growing popularity year after year. A multiuse trail of its type not only promotes active living, but also has significant city building impacts, that can often go unrecognized.

The provision of a new trail or street improves general accessibility, which in turn leads to increased awareness.

It is recommended that the John Rowswell HUB Trail be extended to provide a number of new links, improving access to some otherwise disconnected and little known parts of the Canal District and the western end of downtown. These are to include:

1. Western Waterfront Link – an extension that extends from the existing trail at the entrance to the Parks Canada Locks site along the waterfront traversing the southern portion of the former St. Mary's Paper Mill site and reconnecting to Carmen's Way via James Street.

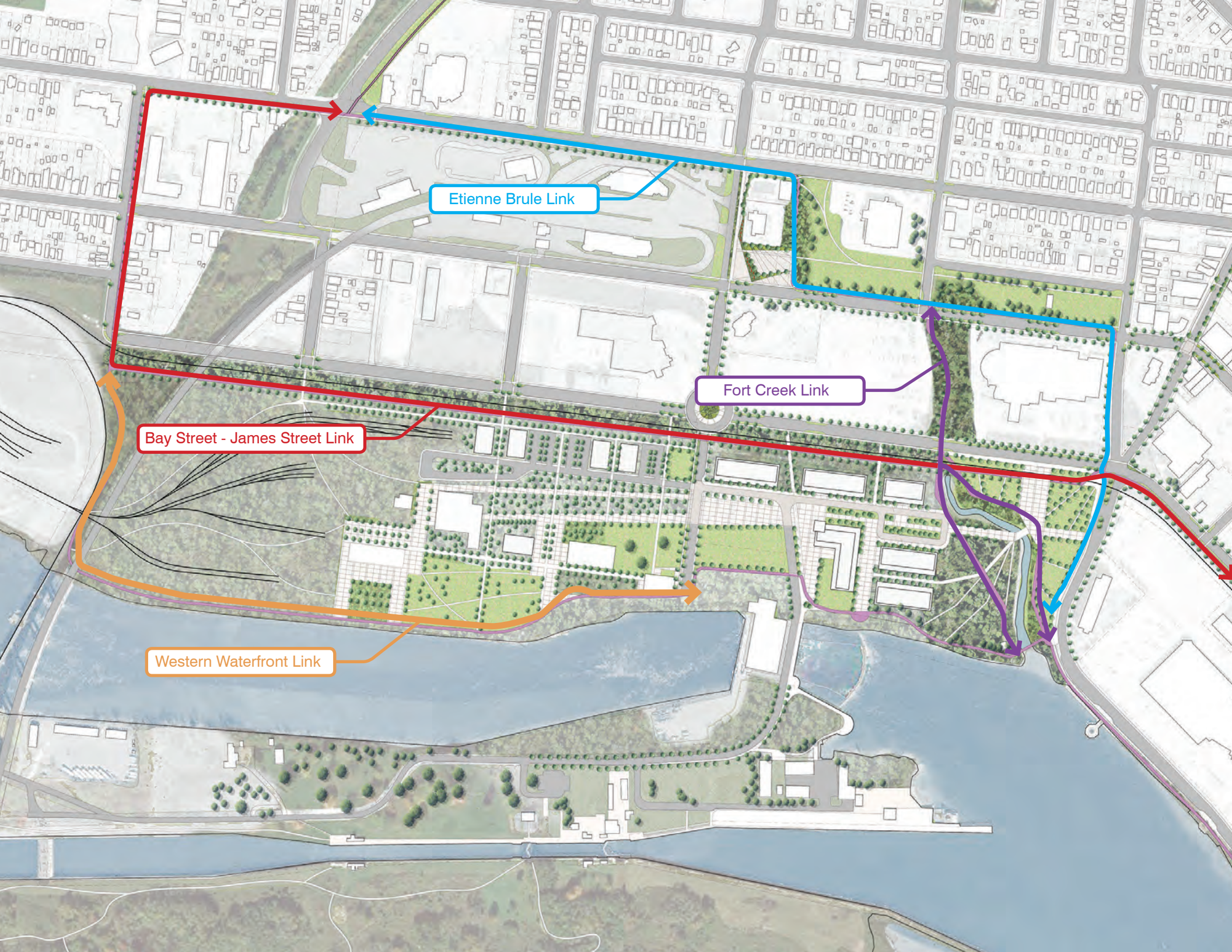
- 2. Bay Street -James Street Link**– Taking advantage of the existing right of way below the rail line south of Bay Street, it is recommended that a new multi-use trail connect from the intersection of the John Rowswell HUB Trail and St. Mary's River Drive up the edge of the Fort Creek corridor and from there it would extend on the right of way and along the northern edge of the former St. Mary's paper Mill site and relink to the Western Waterfront Trail at the foot of James Street.
- 3. Etienne Brule Link** – The third new route would follow separated bike lanes on the wide right-of-way along the periphery of the OLG property, the southern edge of Esposito Park and directly through the Etienne Brule school property, reconnecting with the John Rowswell HUB Trail at Carmen's Way.
- 4. Fort Creek Link** – The fourth new route would consist of two trails running on either side of Fort Creek where they join, cross Bay Street and carry on northward as a single trail where they reconnect with the Etienne Brule Link at Queen Street.



Clearly demarcated road crossings - Boston MA



Legible and consistent signage - Miami FL



Etienne Brule Link

Fort Creek Link

Bay Street - James Street Link

Western Waterfront Link

Long Term Project 1

3.8 John Rowswell HUB Trail Spokes Construction

Description

As the Priority Projects are implemented, the popularity and attraction to the Canal District will grow. This growth will fuel the need for further linkages and an improved pedestrian and bicycle network. These linkages will take shape in concert with development initiatives along their proposed routes.

New Defining Design Characteristics

- Ensure points of access are at grade, have appropriate and clear signage, and special paving and crosswalks;
- Incorporate interpretive signage where possible;
- Integrate new links into greater John Rowswell HUB Trail Plan and language;
- Ensure that new links are designed as feasible commuting routes, while not permitting speeds that would deter recreational cycling and pedestrian use;
- Adopt a Canal District specific furnishing, lighting, and signage system. However, should be required to follow the same general language as the existing family of furnishings along the John Rowswell HUB Trail network;
- Provide adequate bicycle parking facilities and rest areas along the extent of the new trail links, especially at key destinations, including offices, mobility hubs, key open spaces, as well as shopping, entertainment and dining areas.



Safe bicycle crossing - Toronto ON



Landscape buffered bike lanes - San Jose CA

Long Term Project 2

3.9 Huron Street Roundabout Design and Construction

Description

Currently, the intersection of Huron Street and Bay Street is designed to allow for cars to navigate the corner at high speeds. In order to accommodate the several conflicting user groups, including the Agawa Canyon Railroad, vehicle traffic, pedestrians and cyclists, it is proposed that this corner be replaced with a roundabout.

Additionally, this roundabout will provide a more legible, prominent and formal entrance into the revitalized St. Mary's site, the Gateway Site, Parks Canada site and Whitefish Island.

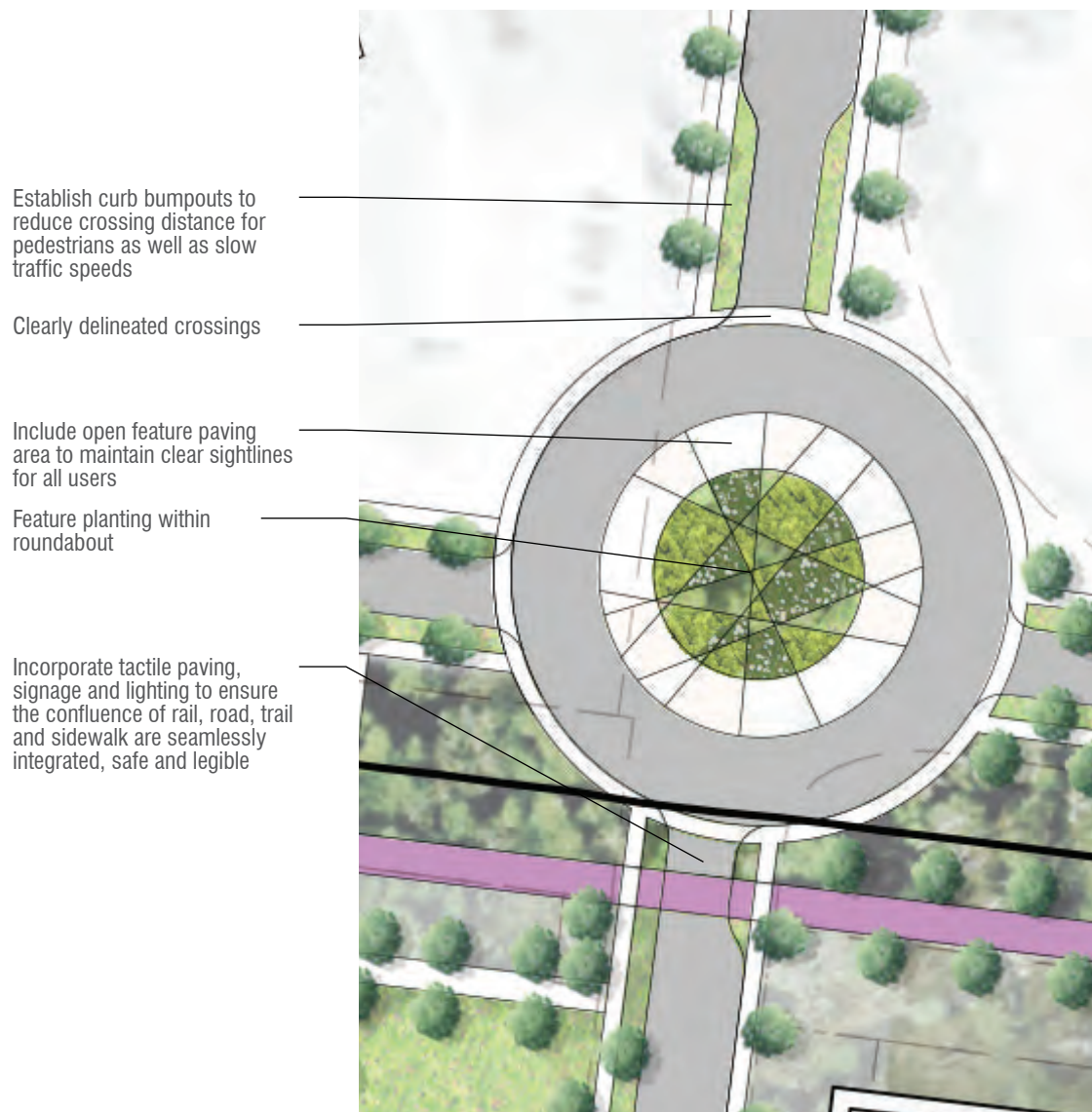
Roundabouts achieve a happy medium for several modes of traffic. They reduce wait times for vehicles, as traffic is able to flow constantly, only being required to stop when cyclists or pedestrians are crossing the street. Pedestrians are also benefitted by the slower traffic, as well as narrowed crossing points.

Generally, roundabouts increase awareness and alertness in all users, therefore achieving a safer environment for all user groups.

Pedestrian crossings at roundabouts are generally safer than traditional intersections as pedestrians have only one direction of traffic to watch for when crossing and vehicle speeds are slower than at traditional intersections. Pedestrian crosswalks are set back from the circular roadway allowing motorists time to see and react to pedestrians before merging into or out of the roundabout.

New Defining Design Characteristics

- Clearly demarcated pavement markings at crossings for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Balance the location of the crosswalk among pedestrian convenience, safety, and roundabout operation.
- Do not locate pedestrian crossing at the yield line of the roundabout as drivers are concentrating more to their left in order to check for an appropriate gap to enter the roundabout, therefore locate the crossing in such a place that the driver sees the pedestrian before commencing to navigate the roundabout.
- Shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians.
- Use landscaping to mark the pathway, leading pedestrians naturally toward the crossings.
- Locate signs and vegetation so that they do not obscure pedestrians and discourage pedestrians from crossing to the central island.



Safe and clearly marked crossings - Haarlem Netherlands



Boston MA



Indianapolis IN

Long Term Project 3

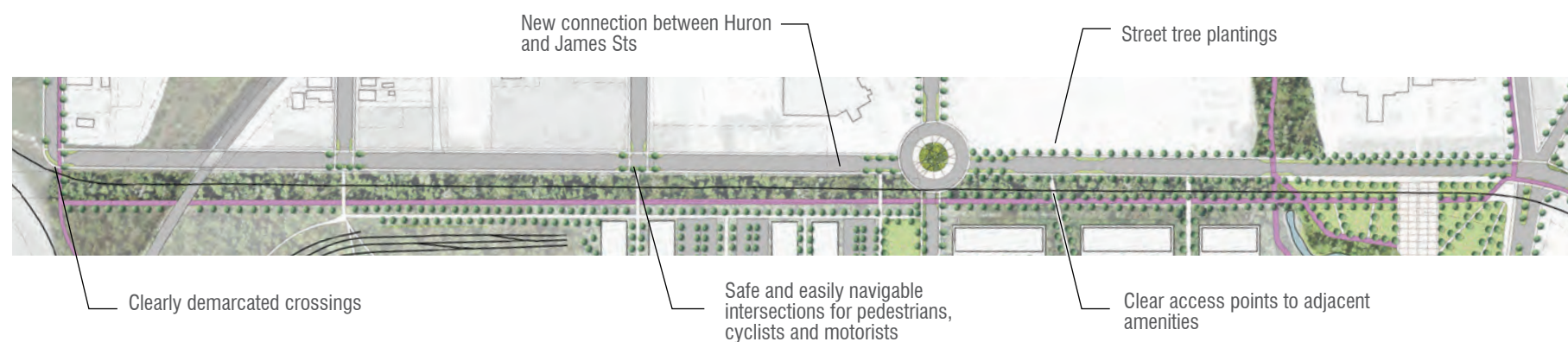
3.10 Bay Street West Design and Construction

Description

Bay Street acts as a physical barrier between the primary shopping destinations along Queen Street and the amenities and destinations along the waterfront. The barrier attributes to the rate of speed at which vehicles travel, and the number of lanes.

New Defining Design Characteristics

- Provide parallel parking on both sides of the street to provide ample parking for visitors to the Canal District, Gateway Park and the Casino, as well as to reduce traffic speeds.
- Increase widths of sidewalks to accommodate a furnishing and/or planting zone along the road edge, as well as provide a minimum of 2m clearance for complete accessibility.
- Plant large canopy trees on the wider side of the boulevard to create a park-like setting and planted with large canopy trees.
- Locate benches and trash receptacles at intervals along the park side of the street.
- Provide pedestrian scale lighting for safety and an improved pedestrian experience.
- Include curb bumpouts and clearly demarcated crossings for pedestrians at the intersections at George Street South and Hudson Street.
- Provide bike lanes in separate right-of-way south of adjacent rail line
- Incorporate decorative and pedestrian lighting with street light poles and coordinate with street trees in respect to placement and spacing.
- Place above ground utilities sensitive to the visual appeal and pedestrian function of the public realm.
- Ensure sidewalks and crossings are accessible to all users.





Enhanced streetscape including street trees, narrow vehicular lanes and parallel parking - Montreal PQ



Enhanced streetscape including street trees, narrow vehicular lanes, parallel parking and clear pedestrian crossings - Toronto ON

Part 4 Conclusion

4.1 Implementation Summary

A comprehensive revitalization strategy requires an integrated and coordinated plan of attack. Achieving all of the objectives of this Neighbourhood Plan will take both time and financial resources. Furthermore, an array of activities will need to be carefully considered over time and as the area evolves. It may not be necessary to achieve all of the objectives and recommendations identified in this Plan in the short-term in order to realize a successful transformation of the Canal District.

Downtown Sault Ste. Marie has already begun to experience a momentum shift. Renewed interest includes new tenants in Canal District buildings such as the Algoma Conservatory of Music, several road reconstruction projects, the Bay Street Corridor Improvements Environmental Assessment, and the establishment of the Gore Street Neighbourhood Resource Centre. These actions build momentum and confidence with private sector investors. The public sector has clearly established the environment for change. The City must continue to be the champion for change: as an investor, facilitator, enforcer and administrator.

Key Vision & Strategies

Parts 1 and 2 of this Plan distill the issues and opportunities existing in the Canal District through the development of a Vision and set of Key Strategies.

The Key Strategies establish clear aims and objectives upon which the Priority and Long term Projects in Part 3 of this Plan were determined.

To recap, those projects are as follows:

Priority Projects

1. Gore Street Streetscape Improvements (Design & Construction);
2. Huron Street Welcome Parkette and Streetscape (Design & Construction);
3. Queen Street Furnishings Update (Design & Install);
4. Signature Park (Design & Construction);
5. Bay Street Streetscape (Design & Construction);
6. John Rowswell HUB Trail Spokes (Conceptual Design).

Long Term Projects

1. John Rowswell HUB Trail spokes (Construction);
2. Huron Street Roundabout (Design & Construction);
3. Bay Street West (Design & Construction).

Adopt The Plan (2014)

Gain formal Council adoption of the Plan to allocate the necessary resources and staff for implementation. The motion for adopting the Plan should include securing a commitment for Sault Ste. Marie to demonstrate leadership by pursuing brownfield redevelopment in the Canal District.

Detailed Design 2014

Initiate a request for proposals process for the detailed design of the top four Priority Projects identified:

1. Gore Street Streetscape Improvements (Design & Construction);
2. Huron Street Welcome Parkette and Streetscape (Design & Construction);
3. Queen Street Furnishings Update (Design & Install);
4. Signature Park (Design & Construction);

Award the detailed landscape architectural and engineering services design.

Implement Coordinating & Financing Mechanisms 2015

Initiate the application process for funding opportunities, including the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario (FedNor), and Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC).

One or a combination of the following may also be considered and will depend on municipal statutory limitations, willingness for landowners to participate and/or collaborate, the anticipated financial returns (such as value of sales/leases, uplift in land value, or increases in property tax), and/or the political will to pass the necessary policies and/or investments.

Landowner Agreement

Most effective if all landowners participate, a legal contract can be struck between landowners that establishes the terms for development and the sharing of costs related to the delivery of the common elements, which can be proportional to the area of land and/or development potential of each property.

Land Acquisition/Consolidation

The purchasing or expropriation of property to align more closely with the Plan and/or take control over contiguous areas, blocks or phases.

Public-Private Partnership

The partnering with one or more property owners to share in the costs/risks associated with the delivery of one or more aspects of the Plan, and may include the exchange or conveying of land.

Area-Specific Development Charges

Sault Ste. Marie may undertake the necessary infrastructure and public realm improvements in the area with the private sector contributing to these costs through Development Charges levied upon issuance of a building permit.

Construction 2015

Upon completion of detailed design in 2014, initiate the tender process for each Priority Project for a scheduled construction commencement in early 2015.

Long Term Project timing will be determined upon the completion of Priority Projects and their ultimate success.

Philosophy of Change

This Plan represents the ongoing process of redefining the Canal District, and specifically with the intention of highlighting the several key tourism attractions within the District. In particular, tourism, is a crucial element of economic development activity at the local and regional level. The study area is tied directly to the Downtown, and there are economic synergies that will develop between them.

Success will take time and come from a series of activities

This Plan has identified an array of private sector redevelopment opportunities, within the context of an overall vision for the future of the Canal District.

The success of this Plan is not related to one specific action, or necessarily the development of one large project. Success will depend upon a motivated land owner and the ability of the private sector to respond to market demands for redevelopment. Success will also be achieved through a series of activities that can be completed by a number of developers, over a long period of time. Incremental success will be achieved in direct relation to the ability of the City and

its partners to acquire the lands necessary to achieve the public realm objectives, including having the funds available to invest in public infrastructure and supportive programs.

Sustaining strategic partnerships will be crucial

In addition to the Priority Projects, this Plan is intended to identify the greater planning rationale and vision for the whole District that will assist the City in achieving the Long Term Projects as well. The promotion of the Neighbourhood Plan will require a high degree of cooperation and leadership in order to achieve success.

As key proponents of change and funding partners, the activities of the City will dramatically influence the long-term evolution of the Canal District into the successful destination that it has been envisioned to be. Other government agencies will also play a role in the evolution, either as funding partners for key initiatives, or as promoters in other complementary infrastructure components.

4.2 Order of Magnitude Costing Summary

This order of magnitude costing exercise has been developed to provide an estimate of costs associated with the identified priority and long term projects.

Item	Unit	Quantity	Rate	Total
Gore Street Streetscape Improvements				
Parkette				
Concrete Sidewalk (Including base)	m2	267	\$100.00	\$26,700.00
Trees (80 cal.)	ea	15	\$800.00	\$12,000.00
Grass seed / plantings	m2	330	\$40.00	\$13,200.00
Planting Soil	m3	418.5	\$45.00	\$18,832.50
Benches	ea	5	\$2,500.00	\$12,500.00
Garbage and Recycling Receptacles	ea	4	\$1,200.00	\$4,800.00
Lighting	ea	7	\$7,000.00	\$49,000.00
		TOTAL		\$137,032.50
Streetscape				
Concrete Sidewalk (Including base)	m2	1570	\$100.00	\$157,000.00
Crosswalks & Planting/Furnishing Zones (unit pavers)	m2	965	\$185.00	\$178,525.00
Concrete planter curbs	lm	625	\$95.00	\$59,375.00
Trees (80 cal.)	ea	42	\$800.00	\$33,600.00
Planting Soil	m3	756	\$45.00	\$34,020.00
Benches	ea	11	\$2,500.00	\$27,500.00
Garbage and Recycling Receptacles	ea	21	\$1,200.00	\$25,200.00
Information Board/Map	ea	1	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
Bicycle Rings	ea	9	\$500.00	\$4,500.00
Lighting (10m O.C.)	ea	78	\$7,000.00	\$546,000.00
		TOTAL		\$1,069,720.00

Huron Street Welcome Parkette and Streetscape

Welcome Parkette

Concrete Sidewalk (Including base)	m2	2480	\$120.00	\$297,600.00
Gateway Feature	lump sum	1	\$500,000.00	\$500,000.00
Trees (80 cal.)	ea	19	\$800.00	\$15,200.00
Grass seed / plantings	m2	840	\$40.00	\$33,600.00
Planting Soil	m3	840	\$45.00	\$37,800.00
Benches	ea	20	\$2,500.00	\$50,000.00
Garbage and Recycling Receptacles	ea	5	\$1,200.00	\$6,000.00
Information Board/Map	ea	1	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
Bicycle Rings	ea	5	\$500.00	\$2,500.00
Lighting	ea	16	\$7,000.00	\$112,000.00
TOTAL				\$1,058,700.00

Streetscape

Concrete Sidewalk (Including base)	m2	1145	\$120.00	\$137,400.00
Crosswalks (unit pavers)	m2	82	\$185.00	\$15,170.00
Grass seed / plantings	m2	719	\$5.00	\$3,595.00
Trees (80 cal. Spaced at 8m on centre)	ea	45	\$800.00	\$36,000.00
Planting Soil	m3	810	\$45.00	\$36,450.00
Garbage and Recycling Receptacles	ea	6	\$1,200.00	\$7,200.00
Lighting (10m O.C.)	ea	46	\$7,000.00	\$322,000.00
TOTAL				\$557,815.00

Queen Street Furnishings Update

Benches	ea	22	\$2,500.00	\$55,000.00
Garbage and Recycling Receptacles	ea	14	\$1,200.00	\$16,800.00
Trees (80 cal. Spaced at 8m on centre from Gore to Dennis)	ea	37	\$800.00	\$29,600.00
Planting Soil	m3	666	\$45.00	\$29,970.00
Information Board/Map	ea	4	\$4,000.00	\$16,000.00
Bicycle Rings	ea	15	\$500.00	\$7,500.00
SUBTOTAL				\$154,870.00
Additional Item: Lighting (10m O.C.)	ea	240	\$7,000.00	\$1,680,000.00
TOTAL				\$1,834,870.00

Signature Park

Gravel Paths	lm	224	\$30.00	\$6,720.00
Multi-use paths	lm	352	\$60.00	\$21,120.00
Plaza Hardscape (unit pavers)	m2	2725	\$185.00	\$504,125.00
Grass seed (hydrovac)	m2	7862	\$10.00	\$78,620.00
Trees (80 cal.)	ea	65	\$800.00	\$52,000.00
Planting Soil	m3	7862	\$45.00	\$353,790.00
Bicycle Rings	ea	20	\$500.00	\$10,000.00
Information Board/Map	ea	3	\$4,000.00	\$12,000.00
Benches	ea	30	\$2,500.00	\$75,000.00
Lighting (10m O.C.)	ea	49	\$7,000.00	\$343,000.00
Garbage and Recycling Receptacles	ea	15	\$1,200.00	\$18,000.00
Concrete Sidewalk (Including base)	m2	1805	\$120.00	\$216,600.00
			TOTAL	\$1,690,975.00

Bay Street Streetscape

Concrete Sidewalk (Including base)	m2	3879	\$120.00	\$465,480.00
Crosswalks - painted	ea	2.5	\$5,500.00	\$13,750.00
Trees (80 cal. Spaced at 8m on centre)	ea	300	\$800.00	\$240,000.00
Planting Soil	m3	5400	\$45.00	\$243,000.00
Benches	ea	17	\$2,500.00	\$42,500.00
Garbage and Recycling Receptacles	ea	17	\$1,200.00	\$20,400.00
Information Board/Map	ea	2	\$4,000.00	\$8,000.00
Bicycle Rings	ea	17	\$500.00	\$8,500.00
Contraflow Bike Lane Separator Curb - Gore to Elgin	lm	800	\$95.00	\$76,000.00
			SUBTOTAL	\$1,117,630.00
Additional Item: Lighting (10m O.C.)	ea	232	\$7,000.00	\$1,624,000.00
			TOTAL	\$2,741,630.00



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