



## Sault Ste. Marie

### *Downtown Community Improvement Plan*

February 3, 2014  
Enacted by-law number

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## 1.0 Introduction

Community improvement planning is one of the most effective sustainable community planning tools found in the Planning Act that can help municipalities address challenges. It provides a means of planning and financing development activities that effectively use, reuse and restore lands, buildings and infrastructure.

The following Downtown Community Improvement Plan (DCIP) has been prepared to allow the City of Sault Ste. Marie to use authorities legislated through section 28 (7) of the *Planning Act* and Section 365.1 of the *Municipal Act* to use grants, loans and tax increment financing to registered or assessed owners of lands and buildings within the designated area. This authority allows the City to develop innovative approaches and financial incentives to spark redevelopment, leverage private sector investment and strategically target municipal capital improvements.

## 1.1 Background

Over several years, Downtown's prominence as the main commercial centre has diminished due to growth and commercial investments elsewhere in the community. Specifically, with the introduction of large-format retail, and the relocation of the Sault Area Hospital from the Downtown to the northern part of the city, the Downtown has suffered to maintain itself as the business, administrative and cultural centre of the community.

The decline in the Downtown is economical, as seen with the falling assessment values, but also psychological, as community residents view the downtown as unsafe, and no longer the centre of attraction. Both of these phenomenon's serve to detract new investment into the Downtown area.

The current situation, however, brings forth a tremendous opportunity for the Downtown to evolve, not just into a thriving commercial centre, but into a vibrant and sustainable mixed use neighbourhood, where a variety of people live, and the commercial activity serves as a place for people to work, obtain services and socialize within close proximity of their homes. As part of this evolution, Downtown can transform itself, and regain its prominence as "the place to be" for the entire community and the region.

Like many other downtowns across North America, Downtown Sault Ste. Marie continues to struggle. Currently, there is little financial motivation to invest in the Downtown, given declining assessment values. This in turn, makes it less feasible for existing business and property owners to re-invest into established businesses and aging buildings.

And with newer forms of retail and offices throughout the community, Downtown continues to struggle with chronic vacancies, with large concentrations seen in the Gore

Street and west Queen Street area. The Downtown residential areas also struggle with a lack of varying income levels throughout the neighbourhood population.

The health of a downtown is a reflection of the overall well-being of a city. It is for this reason the Downtown core must be revitalized and restored to its full potential and serve as a community node for work, shopping and living as it was in past years.

To succeed the Downtown can no longer be thought as a “commercial centre” but more as a mixed use neighbourhood where living, working and leisure activities and uses are all intertwined in the urban fabric of the area. Uses and activities that are beyond the “9 to 5” must be encouraged to bring and keep people in the downtown during the day and evenings.

The hallmark of any successful downtown is a healthy, stable residential population that is made up a variety of household sizes and income levels. To this end, new, higher density residential must be encouraged to create a vibrant downtown. A healthy residential population animates the streets and sidewalks with activity and creates a critical market for the existing and new downtown businesses and services.

Residential development is essential for the long-term success of the Downtown. However, it is important for the Downtown business community to stay relevant and sustainable in order to serve the demands of a Downtown neighbourhood and the community as a whole. The success of the business community will serve many larger objectives. First, the commercial businesses will be a key source of goods and services for the downtown population, the City and the region. Second, expanded or new commercial establishments will generate economic activity that will sustain and create jobs in the Downtown and increase commercial assessment values for the City. Third, a thriving commercial downtown will foster the ability to support a neighbourhood where one can live and work within close proximity, reducing the need to utilize an automobile for employment purposes.

To spur both residential and commercial development, it is vital to cultivate a “sense of place” where the Downtown creates a unique feeling for those that experiencing the area. Elements that encourage the use of the public realm must be supported to ensure that the Downtown becomes a vibrant and safe environment; a place that allows people of all ages and abilities gather and socialize within the Downtown area.

The DCIP is meant to stimulate revitalization within the downtown and encourage renewal. The Plan also makes reference to a defined list of targeted revitalization areas to help investors in recognizing potential project areas that will nurture Downtown restoration.

The entirety of this plan is developed in coordination with the Sault Ste. Marie Official plan and Zoning By-Law. This plan also exercises the City’s authorities through Provincial

Planning Legislation to use grants, loans and tax increment financing made to registered or assessed owners of lands and buildings within the designated project area.

## **1.2 Legislative Authority**

Section 28 of the Planning Act and Section 365.1 of the Municipal Act allows municipalities to issue grants or loans, or provide property tax assistance to registered owners, assessed owners or tenants of lands within a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) Project Area.

Section 28(2) of the Planning Act and Part VII (Implementation) of the City's Official Plan allows City Council to designate the whole or any part of the area covered by the Official Plan as a Community Improvement Project Area. On February 6, 2006 City Council approved By-law 2006-32 to designate the entire municipality as a Community Improvement Project Area.

Powers available to municipalities for community improvement purposes, as legislated by the Planning Act and the Municipal Act include:

- Acquiring, holding, clearing, grading or otherwise preparing land for community improvement (s. 28(3)).
- Constructing, repairing, rehabilitating or improving buildings on municipal land (s. 28(6)(a)).
- Selling, leasing or otherwise disposing of municipal land (s. (28(6)(b)).
- Providing grants or loans to owners, tenants and their assignees within the community improvement area to pay the whole or any part of identified eligible costs (ss. 28(7) and (7.1)).
- Providing property tax assistance for redevelopment purposes (s. 28(7.3) by reference to s. 365.1 of the Municipal Act, 2001)

This Downtown Community Improvement Plan has been prepared as permitted by Section 28(4) of the Planning Act and includes the authority for City Council to provide grants or tax rebates, in conformity with the Community Improvement Plan, to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings within the Community Improvement Project Area for eligible costs as permitted by Section 28(7) of the Planning Act.

Public Notice of City Council's intent to adopt the Downtown CIP will be published in accordance with Section 28(5) of the Planning Act.

## **1.3 Enabling Official Plan Policies**

The City of Sault Ste. Marie Official Plan places high priority on the enhancement of the Downtown. Specific community improvement policies are provided in Section 6.9 of the City of Sault Ste. Marie Official Plan. As an objective for community improvement, the Official Plan states that "Council may by By-law designate an area or areas within the municipality as a 'Community Improvement Area'. Within areas so designated, Council may carry out such improvements to the land or structures and/or administer grants or loans in

accordance with its adopted improvement strategy for that area". As a result of the previous community improvement plans, the Downtown Area, as defined in Policy C.3 (SECTION 2.2), is designated as Community Improvement Plan Area.

The Official Plan sections: Part III - Economic Development, Marketing; Part VI - Social Development, Housing; Part VI - Physical Development - Built Environment, Urban Design and Commercial Land Use; outline the specific policies relevant to the Downtown, and are outlined as follows;

### **Downtown's Regional Significance**

MR.1: The City shall continue to develop and promote itself as an attractive, clean, culturally rich, friendly and safe community.

C.5: The Downtown area should be maintained as the primary administrative, business and cultural center of the community. Parks and other public facilities shall be permitted. Mixed use and high density residential development shall be permitted. Construction of major office buildings outside of the Downtown area shall be discouraged and new office buildings shall be encouraged to locate in the Downtown core.

### **Residential Development a key for Downtown**

C.8: The Downtown area includes an established residential area. Substantial residential structures should be preserved. Existing residential development should be maintained and improved where practical. New residential development may be permitted on lands designated Commercial within the Downtown are subject to zoning By-law approval.

C.9: Existing residential building in the Downtown may be converted to permit additional units or for limited commercial uses where the abutting properties are of a similar use and adequate off street parking can be provided subject to Zoning By-law approval without an Official Plan amendment. Front yard parking shall be discouraged and removed where practical.

C.10: New development and redevelopment proposals should consider surrounding residential uses. Priority should be given to mixed land use projects.

Where new multi-storey residential development is proposed within the Downtown area, ground floor uses such as retailing and services will be encouraged within existing commercial areas.

H0.2: Innovative and alternative residential development standards supporting affordable housing and compact urban form shall be encouraged. However, climate and other local circumstances should not be neglected.

### **Improvements in the Design and Appearance of New and Existing Development**

D.1: The physical form of the community shall be friendly and accessible to all users and development shall respect and reinforce the human scale. New development should be designed to integrate with the existing urban fabric. Development or redevelopment should replicate and/or respond to existing colour, texture, scale, and massing in order to harmonize with the existing streetscape rhythm and the relationship of uses.

D.2: Streetscape improvements and the upgrading of existing building facades, signage, sidewalk improvements, lighting, street furniture, parking areas and landscaping shall be encouraged.

D.6: A high standard of site design in strategic or prominent locations such as the downtown, along major arteries, at street intersections and at entrances to the City shall be promoted.

D.8: Site design shall consider the impact on street functions and pedestrian, cycling and vehicular access. The effects of traffic noise, vibration and odour shall be assessed.

D.15: Ground floors of buildings within the existing commercial areas of the Downtown will be used for retail or service uses wherever possible.

D.16: Built form, massing, scale, height and setbacks of new buildings or expansions will be compatible with the traditional physical character of the Downtown area. Wherever possible, uniform setbacks will be maintained.

D.17: Building densities which create higher density development will be encouraged in the Downtown area.

E.2: Infill development to maximize the use of existing services shall be encouraged.

E.3: Rehabilitation and retrofitting of existing buildings for improved energy efficiency shall be promoted.

## **1.4 Basis of the CIP**

The 2013 Downtown Community Improvement Plan is based upon the success of the original 2007 Downtown CIP, which resulted in approximately \$20 million in private sector investment over the course of that program. Given the success of the original 2007 DCIP, Council, by way of resolution, has initiated staff to continue the revitalization efforts for the Downtown. Council has also passed a resolution regarding the on-going loss of occupied office space and has asked staff for strategies to encourage the re-use of Downtown vacant space.

The Growth Plan for Northern Ontario also provides an outline for the development of strategic core areas and states that; core areas should develop a revitalization strategy that includes targeted approaches to support the revitalization, intensification and the prioritization of opportunities for the redevelopment within the core areas.

This current DCIP builds on the successes of the original CIP, but also seeks to enhance residential development opportunities and address the overall public realm throughout the Downtown.

## **1.5 Purpose of the DCIP**

The purpose of the DCIP is to establish consistency with the downtown vision for Sault Ste. Marie. The initiatives within the Downtown Community Improvement Plan are designed to attract private and public investment as well as promote upgrades and the restoration of existing buildings within the Downtown area.

Specifically the purpose of the DCIP is to:

- a) Establish a clear vision for the Downtown area with strategic goals and objectives for community improvement in the Downtown area;
- b) Define a set of financial incentive programs available to eligible property owners to stimulate and leverage private sector investment;
- c) Work with the companion Queen Street Urban Design Guidelines to ensure a high level of quality for development and restoration improvements;
- d) Develop an implementation and monitoring program for the Sault Ste. Marie Downtown Community Improvement plan.

## 1.6 Companion Urban Design Guidelines

The Downtown area, as defined in part VI – Physical Development – Built Environment, Section 2.32, Policy C.3, is an area of the community that is unique in terms of both built form and function.

To reflect this unique area, the Queen Street Urban Design Guidelines, will be enforced as a companion document to this CIP. The Guidelines are written as a tool to guide and evaluate future development, and to ensure that this development supports the community’s vision for Queen Street and the Downtown.

The overall goal of the Queen Street Urban Design Guidelines is to support new residential and commercial development in a manner that is compatible with the physical form of Queen Street and the Downtown.

The purpose of the Urban Design Guidelines is to establish design principles and guidelines with respect to the built form, facades, streetscape, and open spaces, including, for example;

- Encourage the removal of contemporary finishes to uncover original building elements. The preservation and restoration of heritage features is the most direct way of preserving and maintaining Sault Ste. Marie’s unique architectural characteristics along Queen Street;
- Continue the scale and form of the primary character buildings along Queen Street, through creating new commercial façades that are complementary to the character of the street;
- Celebrate a distinct Sault Ste. Marie through buildings and infrastructure which is authentic and reflects the City of Sault Ste. Marie’s distinct character, recognizing the City’s historical linkage between nature and industry including nautical, rail, and industrial heritage;
- Create physical and visual connections between existing activities or nodes and incorporate linkages to new amenities and Districts including both visual and physical connections;
- Promote green buildings and incorporate green infrastructure when investing public funds; and
- Ensure the proper design and effective use of the Downtown built environment to enhance the safety and well-being for all members of the community.

## **2.0 Sault Ste. Marie Community Improvement Strategy**

### **2.1 Sault Ste. Marie's Critical Needs**

One of the issues facing the Downtown is commercial vacancies. Many buildings within the Downtown area are being underutilized and are in need of redevelopment or re-use. The Downtown Community Improvement Plan aims to encourage new development and provide incentives for property owners to restore the condition of these once vibrant buildings. The restoration of the buildings within the Downtown area will create a catalyst for new development in the heart of the city and will help address the issue of declining assessment values in the Downtown.

A goal of the DCIP is to allow the Downtown to remain commercially viable for new businesses and to serve as a competitive commercial corridor, in light of big box development elsewhere in the community. The Downtown area thrives commercially because it provides a market place shopping “experience”. It serves as an authentic place which urban design balances between natural and built heritage. It has the ability to accommodate new development and possesses a unique retail ambience that appeals as a destination for both residents and visitors of the city.

Another aim is to foster a greater mix of higher density residential development. The purpose of residential units within the Downtown is to stabilize the neighbourhood population and allow more pedestrian traffic. Additionally, residents within the Downtown will serve as a primary customer base for businesses within the area. With a more dense population within the downtown, it will boost the Downtown economy and increase the rate of investment within the area.

As part of this current Downtown Development Initiative, a number of stakeholders, including the Downtown Association and City staff assessed the relevant issues facing the Downtown today. Overall the critical issues focus on:

1. Redevelopment of underutilized, derelict sites and areas
2. Deficiency of recreational and green spaces within the Downtown
3. Lack of new higher density residential development
4. Need to establish a sense of place within the Downtown
5. Loss of Downtown status as a competitive commercial area

### **2.2 Sault Ste. Marie Community Improvement Project Area**

The City of Sault Ste. Marie Downtown Community Improvement Plan applies to the Downtown area defined under the City of Sault Ste. Marie Official plan. The downtown is defined as those properties bounded by or with frontage on;

The north by:

- Wellington St, including those properties on Bruce Street south of Huron Central Railway

The east by:

- Church St.
- Queen St. E.
- The easterly property line of the former hospital lands (969 Queen St. E)

The south by:

- St. Mary's River waterfront

The west by:

- North St.
- Cathcart St.
- Albert St. W.
- Huron St, including the former St. Mary's Paper property.

The following map is the defined Downtown Community Improvement Area:



## 2.3 Goals and Objectives for Community Improvement

The goal of the Downtown Community Improvement Plan is to establish the downtown as:

- An attractive, vibrant, multi-functional urban center
- A focal area for investment in residential, employment, retail, entertainment, recreational, arts and cultural and major infrastructure developments.

Objectives:

- a) Use municipal resources to demonstrate leadership and forward thinking in the design (or redesign) and development (or redevelopment) of public buildings, spaces, parks, streets and infrastructure within the designated Community Improvement Project Area;
- b) Establish a vibrant and safe atmosphere in the Downtown by encouraging new investment in residential development, business retention and business start-ups;
- c) Provide for building rehabilitation and improvements to enhance the Downtown, and encourage revitalization or redevelopment through private investment;
- d) Provide incentives to eligible property owners to encourage and stimulate the design or redesign, development or redevelopment, construction and rehabilitation of privately or publicly owned buildings or properties within the Community Improvement Project Area; and
- e) Monitor the performance of the Downtown Community Improvement Plan on an on-going basis to ensure that the goals of the Community Improvement Plan are being met.

## 3.0 Community Vision for Downtown Area

The Downtown Vision for the Sault Ste. Marie Community as outlined in the 2007 Downtown Improvement Study is as follows:

1. More than main street – A “true” neighbourhood:

The Downtown is more than a Main Street (Queen Street). It is more than a place to shop or work; it is a desirable place to live, a place to come from – it is a “neighbourhood” in the most traditional sense. The Downtown neighbourhood is home to many generations, young and old. It is a desirable and welcoming place for all demographics; families, young professionals and retirees.

2. An Authentic Place:

The Downtown neighbourhood is a showpiece in the community but it is an authentic place that embraces and balances its natural and built heritage/history while accommodating the changing needs and preferences of the community.

3. A “24/7” Neighbourhood:

The Downtown is a neighbourhood that lives beyond the office hours of its office towers; the streets are not “rolled up” after 5p.m. The new Downtown neighbourhood will be alive and active during the day, in the evening, on weekends and throughout all seasons.

4. The Entertainment and Cultural Centre of The City:

The Downtown neighbourhood is the place that the community and its visitors go to entertain and be entertained, The Downtown Is home to the community’s premier visitor/tourist and cultural attractions as well as a variety of complementary services, facilities and events to entertain and fulfill individuals, families or couples for an afternoon or evening.

5. A Market Place Shopping Experience:

The commercial offerings of the Downtown neighbourhood provide a reprieve from the flash and pace of the fast growing commercial strips. Shopping in the Downtown is an interesting and leisurely experience of exploration and indulgence.

6. A Well-Connected Place:

The physical and visual connections of the Downtown neighbourhood are prominent and easy to understand. There are logical and convenient means for pedestrians and vehicles to move into and within the Downtown and its various activity and land use nodes.

7. A Safe Place

The Downtown is neighbourhood in which you feel safe and are safe. The new Downtown neighbourhood is known for its low incidence of crime, accidents and injuries. It feels safe and is safe to be out at night, to cross the street and walk along side streets and alleyways.

### **3.1 Municipal Leadership Strategy**

It has been identified by the City of Sault Ste. Marie Corporate Strategic Plan, Strategic Direction 1: Developing Solid Infrastructure, Objective 1-C Property Management and Development, that phase two of the Downtown Development Initiative by prepared and implemented as an integral part of the strategic direction of Sault Ste. Marie.

### **3.2 City Benefits**

The Downtown area has the potential to reassert itself as the economic, recreational and cultural center of the City. The concentrated size provides a more comfortable and less

overwhelming environment compared to areas dominated by auto-centric, big box retail corridors. The smaller size also makes the downtown more walkable with shorter distances between destinations. With the proper attention paid to streetscape, design amenities, and economic activities, these features can lend to the establishment of a strong sense of place. The significance of the Downtown can be illustrated as follows:

1. The central business district is a prominent employment center in Sault Ste. Marie. The downtown area employs thousands of people and is one the largest concentration of employment in the community.
2. The Downtown represents 22.43% of the community's overall commercial tax assessment and generated over \$5,310,000 in tax revenue in 2013 (See Appendix E). When compared to the remainder of the City, the Downtown's per acre assessment value and 2012 property taxes is more than 10 times that of the remainder of the City. If this district declines, property values in this area will decrease and would subsequently increase the tax burden on other parts of the community.
3. The Downtown is the historic core of Sault Ste. Marie. Many of the buildings are historically significant and help highlight the community's rich waterfront history.
4. Downtown represents a vast amount of public and private investment. The costs to recreate all the public infrastructure and buildings already existing in the central business district would be immense. There is a substantial cost to the currently underutilized downtown.
5. The Downtown is a government center. It is where City Hall, the Courthouse, and main post office are located as well as a number of other provincial and federal offices. These centralized locations for government services are a notable feature of the Downtown area.

### **3.3 Downtown Association**

The Downtown Association is a group of local business and commercial property owners within the defined Downtown who have collaborated with the City, and seek to create thriving, competitive and safe business area that will attract shoppers, diners, tourists and new businesses. By working together as a Business Improvement Area (BIA), local business have the organizational and funding capacity to be catalysts for civic improvement, enhancing the quality of life in their local neighbourhood and the City as a whole.

The Association is run by a volunteer Board of Management elected from its members at an Annual General Meeting. The Board works on behalf of its BIA and meets regularly to develop budgets, set priorities, implement capital improvements, plan festivals and promote its business area.

The Downtown Association BIA is committed to improving and promoting downtown Sault Ste. Marie through investment, advocacy and events to ensure the area is a great place to work, live, shop, dine and visit.

The BIA is funded through a special tax levy that is collected from all commercial and industrial property within the BIA's boundary by the municipality and passed on entirely to the BIA organizations. Calculation of this levy is based on the proportionate value of each property's commercial and/or industrial assessment.

### **3.4 Public Open House Results**

A public open house session was hosted by the City in October 2013 for the business and property owners on Gore Street and the section of Queen Street between Dennis Street and Gore Street. This event was very well attended with the majority of business and property owners well represented at this meeting. At this meeting, there was positive support for the programs and strategies being presented, specifically the financial incentive programs, however, there was concern about that the vandalism issues being faced in that neighbourhood. Many believed that the vandalism and crime elements in this area will be a deterrent for many business and property owners to take advantage of the incentive programs being offered.

A second public open house was hosted for the Queen Street Downtown Association merchants and property owners in November 2013. This open house also attracted a number of community residents from different parts of the City. Again, at this meeting, there was an overall positive response to the proposed financial incentive programs. As well, there was much discussion on the range of commercial uses that many felt would add to the vibrancy of the Downtown, such as more cafes, pubs and general events, such as Downtown Days (hosted by the Downtown Association). In addition, there was considerable discussion of the role of transit in bringing more people Downtown, and that currently, the infrequency of service in the evenings and weekends, and the indirect routes does not provide efficient public transit connection to the Downtown.

As a result of this meeting, the City should investigate the possibility of increasing a police presence in the Downtown, particularly in the Gore Street area. In addition, Sault Ste. Marie Transit should examine the possibility of providing more direct and frequent transit service to the Downtown during evenings and weekends.

## **4.0 Financial Incentive Programs**

### **4.1 Purpose**

The City of Sault Ste. Marie Downtown Improvement Study identified a need for financial incentive programs to stimulate and leverage private sector investments. This DCIP outlines a framework for the several incentive programs offered in this plan. These incentive programs are meant to act as a catalyst to encourage private sector investment in the Downtown. The availability of these programs and incentives will be evaluated and decided upon by City Council.

This Plan outlines the following financial incentive programs:

- Tax Increment-Equivalent Grant Program;
- Building and Façade Improvement Grant
- Professional Design Grant

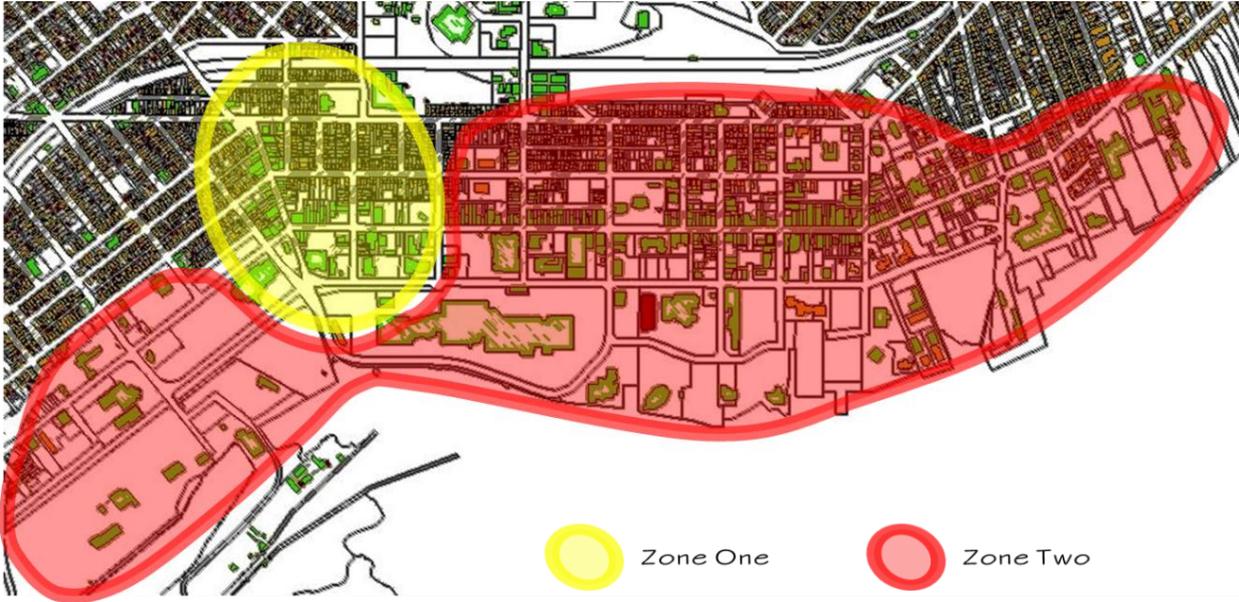
### **4.2 Tax Increment-Equivalent Grant Program**

A Tax Increment Equivalent Grant (TIEG) is generally delivered as a "pay as you go" grant - meaning the owner is responsible for the up-front remediation and redevelopment costs. Each eligible year, the owner must pay the property taxes in full. Afterward, the municipality will provide to the registered owner a grant equal to a portion of the tax increment.

A TIEG is a favourable incentive with little expense to the City. The subject sites underutilized today make a tax contribution which reflects their current depressed value. Without an incentive to invest, the situation may be unlikely to change. While the municipality forgoes the tax increases of redeveloped property in the short term, the investment will spawn economic activity, much needed housing mix and will eventually contribute to a higher level of taxation.

Grants are equal to a percentage of the municipal tax increment on a declining rate basis for a maximum 5 year period. The percentage of the municipal tax rebated is based on the increase in tax generated from an increase in assessment. When an approved project is complete, a grant will be paid annually by the City to the eligible applicant following the full payment of property taxes. In year one, the grant to the approved applicant may equal 100% percent of the incremented taxes for the subject property. Year 1 is defined as the first full calendar year in which taxes are paid after the project has been completed and reassessed.

The grant amount for Zone One (Map Below) will include additional incentives throughout the grant program in the form of a 100% rebate each program year. Zone One is addressed as a targeted improvement area within the Downtown and of this Community Improvement Plan. The additional rebate for Zone One is meant to concentrate development on Gore Street and the section of Queen Street between Dennis Street and Gore Street (see Zone One boundary on Appendix A).



The grant amount for Zone Two in this program shall not exceed 100% of the increase in the municipal portion of the taxes in year one, decreasing to 75% in year two, 50% in year three, and 25% in year four. The grant amount for Zone Two was established to encourage infill projects, new development and enhancing the overall vibrancy of the Downtown (see Zone Two boundaries on Appendix A).

The maximum payment schedule for all DCIP Tax Grants is as follows:

<b>Time</b>	<b>Zone One</b>	<b>Zone Two</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>100%</b>	75%
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>100%</b>	50%
<b>Year 4</b>	<b>100%</b>	25%
<b>Year 5</b>	<b>100%</b>	

In addition, eligible program participants may apply for cancellation of the educational portion of property taxes through the Province of Ontario’s Brownfields Financial Tax Incentives Program (BFTIP). Provision of tax assistance for the education portion of a property tax increase is subject to an application by the City to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Provision of the tax assistance for the educational portion of a property tax increase is limited to those costs associated with remediation.

**4.3 Private Sector Assistance Programs**

**4.3.1 Building Improvement Grant Program**

The Building Improvement Grant Program is a matching grant program for interior renovations to non-residential properties (commercially zoned) to promote functional improvements or changes in use as permitted under the Zoning By-law. The grant is designed to promote the re-use of buildings, use of second floors for commercial or residential uses and to create sustainable buildings capable of providing a competitive location for commercial activity. Property improvements can include partial or full conversion to residential uses subject to the provisions of the Zoning By-law.

The Building Improvement Grant is based on a matching funds basis, and provides grants up to \$17,500 or a maximum of 50% of eligible costs, whichever is the lesser. **The grant amount will be determined on the overall investment, quality, and significance of the improvement to the Downtown Area.**

	Major Improvements	Design
Grant Amount (Maximum)	\$15,000 or 50% of the eligible costs (whichever is the lesser)	\$2,500 or 50% of the eligible costs (whichever is the lesser)

Eligible projects include: Privately owned, commercial zoned property owners or tenants (with owner’s authorization) located in the Downtown Community Improvement Policy Area.

Eligible costs for the Building Improvement Grant program include costs borne by the property owner relating to materials, labour, equipment and professional fees associated with building restoration, improvement, renovation, minor building additions and barrier free improvements to the interior of the building and its major building systems (e.g. HVAC systems).

Prior to the issuance of any approved grant, all eligible costs must be paid in full by the owner/tenant. A copy of all invoices will be required prior to the issuance of the grant. In addition, all renovations/improvements must ensure that all required building permits are obtained (cost of building permits are not an eligible expense under this program) and finalized (occupancy permit) before the grant will be disbursed. If the property is sold or interest in the granted property is transferred (in part or in whole) within the first year of the building improvements, full repayment to the City is required.

### 4.3.2 Façade Improvement Grant Program

The Façade Improvement Grant Program is a matching grant program for exterior renovations to non-residential properties to promote aesthetic improvements consistent with established design guidelines prepared as part of the Community Improvement Plan. The grant is designed to promote additional improvements in façade treatment by property owners that otherwise may not occur due to cost premiums associated with these improvements.

The Façade Improvement Grant is based on a matching funds basis, and provides grants up to \$12,500 (minimum grant of \$2,000) or a maximum of 50% of eligible costs, whichever is the lesser. If the property is sold or interest in the granted property is transferred (in part or in whole) within the first year of the building improvements, full repayment to the City is required. **The grant amount will be determined on the overall investment, quality, and significance of the improvement to the Downtown Area.**

	Major Improvements	Design
Grant Amount (Maximum)	<b>\$10,000</b> (minimum grant of \$4,000) or 50% of the eligible costs (whichever is the lesser)	\$2,500 or 50% of the eligible costs (whichever is the lesser)

Eligible projects include: Privately owned, commercial zoned property owners or tenants (with owner’s authorization) located in the Downtown Community Improvement Policy Area.

Eligible costs include costs borne by the property owner relating to materials, labour, equipment and professional fees associated with façade improvements and restoration, improvement. Examples of eligible works include: Brick Cleaning façade treatments, such as power washing; Exterior painting; Replacement of doors and windows; Replacement and/or repair of cornices, parapets and other architectural features; Replacement and/or repair of awnings or canopies; Repair and/or re-pointing of façade masonry, the

maintenance of brick facades will be encouraged; Installation and improvement of signage; Installation of exterior decorative lighting and upgrading of fixtures; Redesign of storefront; Installation of wheelchair accessibility ramp.

Eligible facades include both front and side facades (for corner properties). Rear façade improvements will be considered secondary for the purposes of allocating funds.

Prior to the issuance of any approved grant, all eligible costs must be paid in full by the owner/tenant. A copy of all invoices will be required prior to the issuance of the grant. In addition, all renovations/improvements must ensure that all required building permits are obtained (cost of building permits are not an eligible expense under this program) and finalized (occupancy permit) before the grant will be disbursed. If the property is sold or interest in the granted property is transferred (in part or in whole) within the first year of the building improvements, full repayment to the City is required.

### 4.3.3 Professional Design Grant

All projects that will apply for private sector assistance programs will be reviewed against a number of design criteria outlined in the downtown urban design guidelines, and to ensure the development supports the community’s overall vision for the downtown. To assist developers with interpretation and implementation of the guidelines, the Design Grant will provide a non-matching grant to retain professional design services for the purposes of concept plan development, initial cost estimation, or preliminary construction drawings associated with façade or interior improvements. The grant will provide funding for architectural design services to a maximum of \$2,500.

Grant Amount (Maximum)	\$2,500	Design Consideration
Facade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent window lines with abutting buildings</li> <li>• Preservation or enhancement of architectural details</li> <li>• Preserving and restoration of original masonry</li> <li>• The use of siding of any kind will not be supported along Queen Street and Gore Street, or other historic buildings</li> <li>• Selection of colours that are appropriate to the area’s character                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colours: red’s, browns, oranges</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Brick painting on historic buildings will not be funded</li> <li>• Signage should be understated, and not obscure important architectural features                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple signs will be discouraged</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Innovative design is also encouraged, subject to overall consistency with building massing, scale of facades and building heights.</p>	

Interior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements designed to promote the re-use of buildings, use of second floors for commercial or residential uses and to create sustainable buildings capable of providing a competitive location for commercial activity.</li> <li>• Major structural improvements</li> <li>• Cosmetic improvements only eligible if part of a major renovation</li> </ul>
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#### 4.4 Review of Grant Programs

Proposed projects will be reviewed in accordance with the Queen Street Urban Design Guidelines. Projects that are not consistent with these guidelines will not be eligible for any financial assistance grants.

### 5.0 Major Development Sites

#### 5.1 Develop Underutilized Sites

There are five key sites identified in this plan which will benefit from the proposed incentives and targeted expenditures outlined in the DCIP. The overall goals for these sites include:

- Encourage adaptive re-use approach, reusing a site or building for a purpose other than which it was built or designed for;
- Promote post-secondary institution clusters in the Downtown (I.e. satellite campuses, residences, facilities, etc.); and
- Encouraging a high standard of urban design to ensure signature development along the City’s Waterfront and throughout the Downtown.

The five specific sites identified are:

#### **Blueforest Ventures Inc. (former St. Mary’s Property) Redevelopment**

The Blueforest Ventures Inc. property is rich in history and in an effort to create a unique sense of place, the City of Sault Ste. Marie will work with the Blueforest Ventures Inc. to facilitate the creation of a Regional Tourist attraction. In order to ensure the preservation of the unique Sault Ste. Marie waterfront and its buildings, the development should preserve and respect the numerous heritage buildings within the property. The City of Sault Ste. Marie will also encourage additional uses that would revitalize the former industrial site as well as add to the overall vibrancy of the Downtown.

#### **Gateway Site**

The Gateway Site has been established as a primary waterfront development site with immense potential. The City of Sault Ste. Marie will work with post-secondary institutions on the development of Downtown facilities. Another consideration for this primary site is

to ensure development is built in a manner that encourages pedestrian and vehicular travel to the remainder of the Downtown. Consideration should also be given to the development of a permanent casino, should that result from the ongoing modernization efforts of OLG.

### **Suncor Property**

The Suncor Property is a blight along the City's waterfront. In order to realize the full potential of this waterfront site, the Suncor Property needs to be evaluated, in conjunction with the property owner, for various development opportunities. Possible opportunities for the Suncor Property Site range from residential or commercial development or the implementation of passive-recreation green space or other environmentally sustainable alternatives. The City is seeking to work with the property owner to move forward on some form of development.

### **Former Sault Area Hospital (SAH) Site**

The Former Sault Area Hospital (SAH) Site provides a prime opportunity to enhance and restore a prime waterfront development site that has been vacant since the relocation of the hospital. The City of Sault Ste. Marie will continue to work with the new owner to facilitate the re-use and redevelopment of the site.

### **Former Northern Breweries Site**

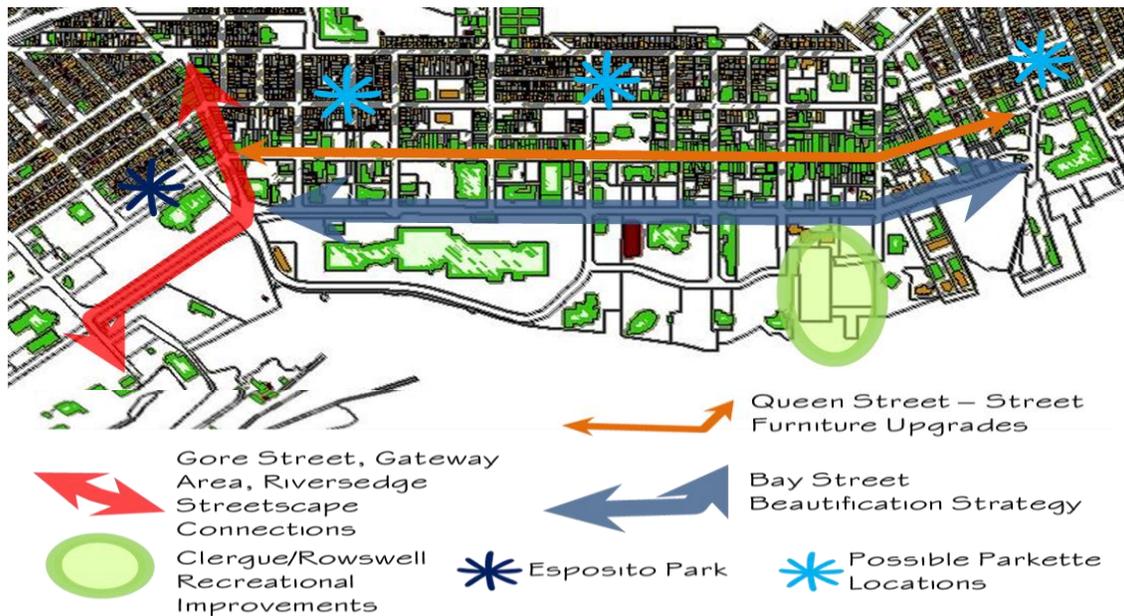
The Former Northern Breweries Site is currently in a state of disrepair and needs to be brought up to proper standards to ensure public safety. To ensure a high level of safety in the Downtown area, the City will proactively seek to ensure that the building is brought to a safe condition.

## **5.1.1 Underutilized Sites – Action Items**

- A set of design principles will be developed to guide future develop of the Canal District (Blueforest, Gateway/Casino Site);
- A partnership with Blueforest Ventures Inc. will be launched to coordinate a funding application to NOHFC for the establishment of a regional tourism and mixed use development;
- Work with Suncor to explore Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal funding to begin site assessment and remediation initiatives.

## **5.2 Cultivate a “Sense of Place”**

Public Realm Improvements will help to cultivate a “sense of place” by focusing capital investments to encourage increased public accessibility and address aesthetic concerns throughout the Downtown. The Improvements involve several project goals relating to the Downtown areas of focus. The following is a map of the public realm improvement areas identified in this plan.



### 5.2.1 Public Realm and Streetscape Improvements

Over the next few years, a number of Downtown area streets are proposed for reconstruction/re-surfacing. Well-designed streetscape connections will enrich the public realm and create unique pedestrian experiences for both residents and tourists. For example, Bay Street, when re-surfaced can utilize a number of beautification strategies that will foster better integration of the Blueforest and Gateway development sites into the Downtown core areas, and establish improved linkages to existing tourism developments such as the Art Gallery of Algoma, the Canadian Bushplane Heritage Center, and the Ermatinger-Clergue National Historic Site.

Street furniture upgrades along Queen Street will encourage an age-friendly form that encourages pedestrian travel, as well as opportunities for gathering or rest. In addition it will also establish a unique identity for the Downtown area by incorporating distinctive streetscape elements such as light pole accessories, benches, recycling bins, bike racks, message/map boards etc. The use of tree lighting will also enhance the Downtown ambiance and increase night-time safety, which is strongly encouraged by the current Downtown Association.

In addition, Gore Street streetscape improvements are proposed to foster a built environment that attracts private sector investment into this under-utilized area. Streetscape improvements will be identified as part of the public realm and streetscape planning proposed as part of this plan.

Public Realm planning will also allow for the opportunity to plan for areas that encourage social gathering and reclaim orphaned spaces. “Orphaned Space” is an area within the public realm that could potentially be used for gathering and interaction, but because of

their design (or lack of design) are not accessible or not utilized by the public. Orphaned Space can be reclaimed using public art to create visual interest points throughout the Downtown and generate areas that are welcoming to interaction and investment. To encourage the installation of Public Art in “Orphaned Space” a City policy should be established for selecting public art installations and locations. Other areas that could be reclaimed include pedestrian walkways, under-utilized parking stalls, sidewalk areas, boulevards, etc.

Another need identified in the Downtown is access to recreational amenities. Recreational Improvements to Clergue Park will address the lack of recreation space within the Downtown in order and create an environment inviting to families and children. In addition, the existing water fountain is nearing its functional life. The maintenance of this feature is difficult given its offshore location and many of the parts needed to maintain this fountain can no longer be obtained. It is recommended that a surface fountain be used to replace the obsolete offshore fountain.

In addition to Clergue Park improvements, parkette locations will be identified throughout the Downtown area. Parkettes are small green space areas that are open to the public and contain amenities like children's play facilities, benches and tables. Currently vacant or under-utilized properties within the Downtown neighbourhood area can potentially be converted to park space. Parkette development will encourage under-utilized properties to be used as play areas and gathering places for the Downtown residents. It will also embolden residential investment in the Downtown by creating recreational play areas.

### **5.2.2 Strenuously Enforce Property Standards**

Where derelict or abandoned buildings have outstanding work orders, are in tax arrears, and where there is no intent of the property owner to bring the property to a minimum standard, the City should proactively work to have these buildings demolished. This will serve to prevent “broken window” syndrome in the Downtown.

### **5.2.3 Sense of Place Action Items**

#### **Streetscape and Public Realm Improvements**

- Retain urban design professionals to develop streetscape plan focusing on landscape, street furniture, lighting, as well as other aesthetic improvements, focusing on Queen Street, Gore Street as well as other Downtown roads identified in the 5 year capital works plan
- Implement new streetscape elements along Queen Street, Gore Street and other Downtown streets planned for reconstruction or resurfacing in the next 5 years.
- Identify vacant or under-utilized properties within the Downtown neighbourhood area that can be converted to park space
- Acquire lands through tax arrears process for park space development
- Acquire and install park equipment

- Establish City policy for selecting public art installation and locations
- Work with local Art Council to establish a committee to screen and acquire public art for installation at various locations in the Downtown.
- Identify potential areas for public art installation and social gathering

### **Clergue Park Improvements**

- Initiate site planning design, and site servicing improvements (i.e. water, sanitary, storm water) to accommodate future recreational facilities, water fountain
- Acquire and install of water fountain feature, park equipment

### **Enforce Property Standards**

- Strenuously enforce sub-par property standards
- Prosecute on-going property standards offences and utilize tax arrears process to demolish derelict sites

## **6.0 Monitoring Program**

### **6.1 Purpose**

The City of Sault Ste. Marie will conduct periodic reviews of the Downtown Community Improvement Plan in order to determine its effectiveness. Specifically, the purpose of the Monitoring Program is to determine if:

- a) The programs are achieving the goals and objectives set out; and/or
- b) Program adjustments are required

### **6.2 Monitoring Process**

In order to successfully monitor the DCIP, the Downtown Community Improvement Committee will undertake the collection of statistical data in order to determine baseline information upon the adoption of the DCIP. The collection of baseline data will allow the City to compare results and to determine if the program is achieving the goals and objectives set out by the DCIP or if program adjustments are required.

The following are examples of values to be monitored for the evaluation of the DCIP;

- Number of successful applications;
- Project details as proposed by application;
- Municipal assessment and taxes prior to commencement of approved project;
- Square footage of habitable floor space created;
- Square footage of industrial or commercial space rehabilitated or constructed;
- Acreage of land remediated and/or redeveloped; and
- Total value of investment; public vs. private investment; capital works, facilities investment;

- Increase in assessed value of property and municipal property taxes upon completion of project; and
- Total dollar amount granted by tax increment per year;
- Number of new businesses created, maintained, expanded, modernized;
- Number of new jobs
- Types of new businesses, e.g. knowledge base, information technology, communication, service, retail, etc.

### **6.3 Reporting**

Based on the information obtained through the regular and the continuous tracking of Financial Incentive Program applications and the monitoring of variables, the DCIP Review Committee will prepare an annual report in order to provide an overview of the program to Council and the general public.

### **6.4 Program Adjustments**

City Council will review this Community Improvement Plan at regular intervals to ensure that the intent and project objectives are being met. City Council may discontinue or modify all or part of the program incentives without a formal amendment to the Community Improvement Plan, provided that the variation does not exceed the original maximum credit allowed.

## **7.0 Implementation**

### **7.1 Interpretation**

The City of Sault Ste. Marie Downtown Community Improvement Plan must be read and interpreted in entirety, and in conjunction with the Planning Act, Municipal Housing Act and all other municipal planning documents.

In addition, this Community Improvement Plan will be interpreted at the sole discretion of the City of Sault Ste. Marie in consultation with, or based on advice from the City's Planning Division.

### **7.2 Timing**

The Downtown Community Improvement Plan will remain in effect for three years but may be extended by City Council subject to appropriate review and notice.

### **7.3 Administration of the Financial Incentive Programs**

The financial incentives programs offered through the Downtown Community Improvement Plan will be administered by the Downtown Community Improvement Plan Committee with representation from the City's Planning, Building, Engineering, Public Works and Finance Departments. All grant applications for financial assistance will be reviewed by this committee, with final approval being subject to City Council authorization.

Representatives from EDC will also participate on the review of proposed public realm improvements.

## 7.4 Financial Management of Downtown Community Improvement Plan

<b>Program</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Incremental Tax Rebates	<b>Forgone Revenue</b>
Private Sector Assistance Grants	<b>\$600,000</b>
Public Realm and Streetscape Planning	<b>\$50,000</b>
Downtown Public Realm & Streetscape Improvements	<b>\$1,250,000</b>
Project Management	<b>\$150,000</b>
Private Sector Matching Investment	<b>\$600,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,650,000</b>

<b>City</b>	<b>NOHFC</b>	<b>FedNor</b>	<b>Downtown Association</b>	<b>Private Sector</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>\$300,000</b>	<b>\$857,500</b>	<b>\$857,500</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>	<b>\$600,000</b>	<b>\$2,650,000</b>

## 7.5 General Eligibility Requirements of the Financial Incentive Programs

The following are General Eligibility Requirements applicable to all incentive programs, and must be met in order for an applicant to be able to participate in the DCIP initiatives.

- An application to the City must be received prior to the application for a building permit for the project to be considered under the program.
- Property taxes must not be in arrears at the time of application.
- If the property is under an assessment appeal, the application will not be accepted until the appeal is resolved.
- Applicants must agree to not file a property tax appeal while receiving a grant or rebate under this program.
- Outstanding Work Orders from the City’s Fire Services or Building Services Division and requests to comply shall be addressed prior to the submission of an application.

- Improvements made to the buildings or land shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit, and constructed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code and applicable Zoning requirements.
- Should the project fail to meet the eligibility requirements during the program, the full amount of property taxes including interest will become due and payable, or no grant will be provided, as if no incentives had been approved.
- Approved project incentives are applicable to the registered owner and the approved incentive (tax rebate, improvement grants) is assignable to any person to whom such an owner has assigned the right to receive the incentives such as a tenant or other assignee.
- This program may be used in combination with any other Community Improvement program provided that the total amount of assistance provided does not exceed the eligible costs.

**Where the program is approved for use, the following conditions apply:**

- This program would not exempt property owners from an increase in municipal taxes due to a general tax rate increase or a change in assessment for any other reason after the property has been improved.
- The property owner would be responsible for the full payment of the taxes and/or the building improvements, after which the City would provide the grant. For the time frame beyond the approval period, the owner would be required to pay the full amount of the taxes with no grant provisions.
- The tax assistance is based upon increases in property taxes as a result of development and rehabilitation, and is not based on occupancy or changes in occupancy.
- The maximum assistance will be calculated based on the difference between the assessed value of the property prior to the date of the application for building permit and the assessed value at occupancy.
- The municipal portion of the tax assistance will be calculated after tax capping calculations have been applied as required by Part 9 of the Municipal Act.
- For tax rebates, if the property is sold, conveyed, assigned or otherwise transferred in whole or in part before the program lapses no further assistance shall be given by the City. Nothing in this section prevents the City from entering into a new agreement with any subsequent owners of the property to receive the balance of the assistance under this program.
- For business improvement grants, if the property is sold, conveyed, assigned or otherwise transferred in whole or in part after 1 year of the approval, any grants issued, plus interest, will be repayable to the City.

## **7.6 Process and Submission Requirements of the Financial Incentive Programs**

In order to be eligible for any of the incentive programs, applicants must submit a completed application in accordance with the General Process and Submission Requirements outlined below;

A complete application will include:

- Completed application forms; and
- Supporting materials such as plans, cost estimates and contracts, applicable reports, and any additional information required by the City of Sault Ste. Marie or the Downtown Community Improvement Plan Committee.

General Process and Submission Requirements include:

- The City is not responsible for any cost related to the CIP application process;
- An application must be submitted to the City prior to the commencing of any community improvement works;
- All Sources of additional funding/ incentives must be declared at the time of the application submission; and
- The Committee will evaluate all applications and supporting materials. Based on the evaluation, a recommendation will be made to the City Council. Council will have approval authority for all DCIP grant applications.
- All plans, reports, etc. required as part of the application process will be prepared by a professional qualified in that field (i.e. architects, engineers, etc.)

## **7.7 Severability**

If a court of competent jurisdiction declares any section or part of a section of this DCIP by-law to be invalid, such section or part thereof, shall not be construed as having persuaded or influenced City Council to pass the remainder of the by-law, and it is hereby declared that the impugned section shall be severable and distinct from the remainder of the by-law, and the remainder of the by-law shall be valid and remain in force.

## **8.0 Conclusion**

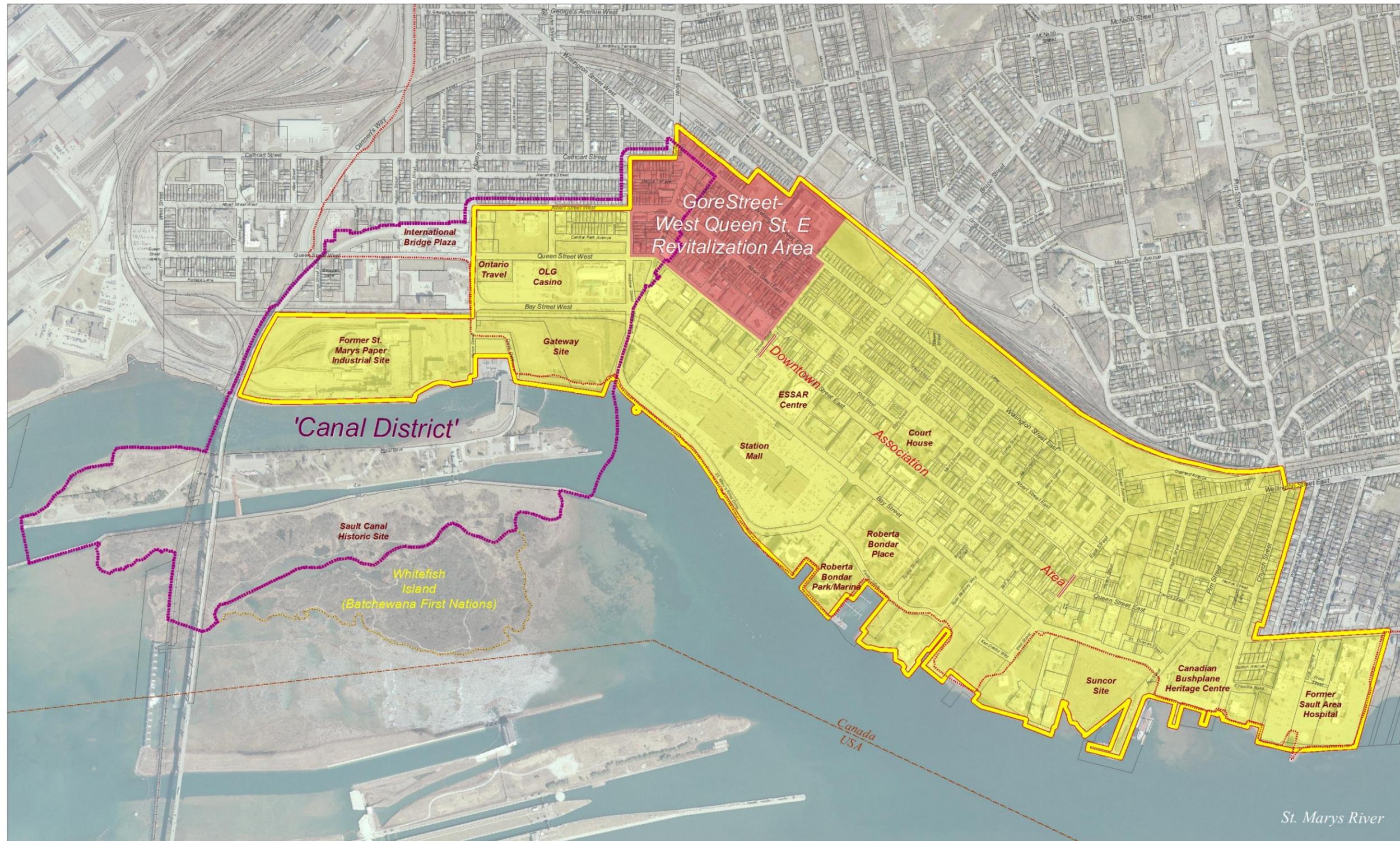
The City of Sault Ste. Marie Downtown Community Improvement Plan is designed to provide a framework that guides the Downtown area into a vibrant, thriving part of the city and re-establishes the regional significance of the Downtown.

The Downtown Community Improvement Plan outlines a set of goals and objectives, a community vision for the Downtown area and financial incentives, all designed to stimulate and leverage private sector investment in the Downtown. Implementation and monitoring

of this plan will be undertaken by the City of Sault Ste. Marie and the Downtown Community Improvement Plan Committee.

The plan will remain in effect for three years effective from the date Council approves the plan and is subject to any and all criteria outlined in this document.

# Appendix A – Community Improvement Policy Area





## DOWNTOWN SAULT STE. MARIE

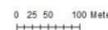
- Downtown (OPA 121)
- Canal District
- TIEG Zone One
- TIEG Zone Two

- Parcel Fabric
- Hub Trail - Waterfront Walkway

The Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie  
 Engineering & Planning Department  
 Planning Division  
 January 29, 2013  
 Revised: September 12, 2013

This map is for general reference only.  
 For official mapping, see the  
 Engineering and Planning Department.  
 Orthophoto: Spring 2012 25cm

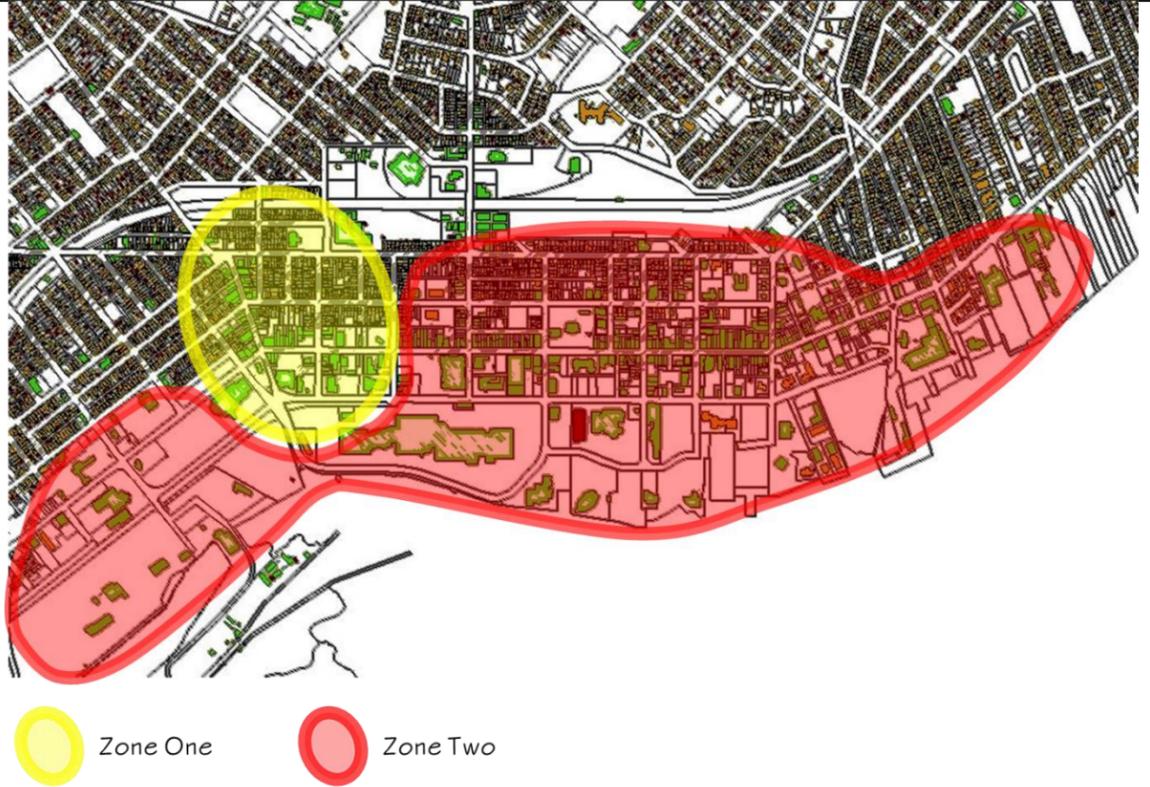
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 GCS North American 1983

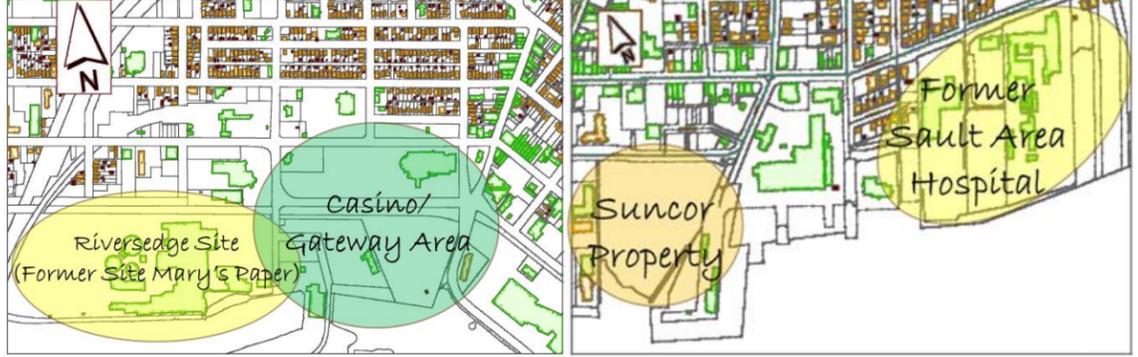
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## Appendix B – Downtown “Big Picture” Action Items

### City of Sault Ste. Marie Downtown Development Initiative – 2.0

Big Picture Action	Downtown Area(s) of Focus	Project Types			
<p style="color: green;"><b>Promote Catalyst Development</b></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"> <span style="color: yellow;">●</span> Zone One     <span style="color: red;">●</span> Zone Two         </p>	<p style="color: blue;"><b>Mixed Use Development</b></p> 	<p style="color: blue;"><b>At grade commercial, above grade residential</b></p> 		
		<p style="color: blue;"><b>High Density Residential: Condo/Apartments</b></p> 	<p style="color: blue;"><b>Long-term care facilities</b></p> 		
	<p style="color: green;"><b>Project Goals</b></p> <p><b>Catalyst Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage infill development that promotes positive economic spin-offs through-out the Downtown</li> <li>• Foster development that supports existing business and services by creating a market of new residents within the Downtown</li> <li>• Accommodate demand for apartment units</li> <li>• Accommodate the need for affordable housing units</li> <li>• Focus on high-quality urban design that integrates higher density development within the historic built form of the Downtown</li> <li>• Create vibrancy in under-utilized or stagnant areas of the Downtown</li> </ul>	<p><b>Actions/Tools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish task force made up of downtown property owners from the Gore Street and west Queen Street area to discuss the issue of chronic vacancies</li> <li>• Implement Tax Rebate programs as incentive to re-invest in the Downtown</li> <li>• Set up staff review committee to assess rebate applications</li> </ul> <p><b>Incremental Tax Rebates:</b></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Zone One:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100%/Year 1;</li> <li>• 100%/Year2;</li> <li>• 100%/Year 3;</li> <li>• 100%/Year 4;</li> <li>• 100%/Year 5</li> </ul> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Zone Two</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100%/Year 1;</li> <li>• 75%/Year2;</li> <li>• 50%/Year 3;</li> <li>• 25%/Year 4</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table> <p>Applicants would pay the full increase in municipal assessment and will be rebated at the rates outlined above</p> <p><b>Funding</b> City of Sault Ste. Marie: Forgone Tax Revenue</p> <p><b>Time Period for Implementation</b> 2014: Establish review committee, formulate program eligibility requirements 2014-2017: Initiate rebate applications for eligible projects</p>		<p><b>Zone One:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100%/Year 1;</li> <li>• 100%/Year2;</li> <li>• 100%/Year 3;</li> <li>• 100%/Year 4;</li> <li>• 100%/Year 5</li> </ul>	<p><b>Zone Two</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100%/Year 1;</li> <li>• 75%/Year2;</li> <li>• 50%/Year 3;</li> <li>• 25%/Year 4</li> </ul>
<p><b>Zone One:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100%/Year 1;</li> <li>• 100%/Year2;</li> <li>• 100%/Year 3;</li> <li>• 100%/Year 4;</li> <li>• 100%/Year 5</li> </ul>	<p><b>Zone Two</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100%/Year 1;</li> <li>• 75%/Year2;</li> <li>• 50%/Year 3;</li> <li>• 25%/Year 4</li> </ul>				

Big Picture Action	Downtown Area(s) of Focus	Project Types	
<p><b>Develop Under-Utilized Sites</b></p>		<p>Conversion of former industrial space to office uses</p> 	<p>Ensure future casino compliments surrounding Downtown area</p> 
	<p><b>Project Goals</b></p> <p><b>Under Utilized Sites:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage adaptive re-use approach, reusing a site or building for a purpose other than which it was built or designed for.</li> <li>• Promote post-secondary institution clusters in the Downtown (i.e. satellite campuses, residences, facilities, etc.).</li> <li>• Encourage a high standard of urban design to ensure signature development along the City's waterfront.</li> <li>• Ensure future casino development integrates within surrounding Downtown area</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific Project Areas:</b></p> <p><b>Blueforest Ventures Inc. (former St. Mary's Property) Redevelopment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with new property owners to facilitate the creation of a Regional Tourist attraction</li> <li>• Facilitate a development that preserves and respects the numerous heritage buildings</li> <li>• Encourage other uses that would both revitalize the former industrial site as well as add to the overall vibrancy of the Downtown</li> </ul> <p><b>Gateway Site</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with post-secondary institutions on the development of Downtown facilities</li> <li>• Ensure development is built in a manner that encourages pedestrian and vehicular travel to the remainder of the Downtown.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suncor Property</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate, in conjunction with property owner, options for environmental remediation</li> <li>• Assess possibility for the development of a passive-recreation green space</li> </ul> <p><b>Former Sault Area Hospital (SAH) Site</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue cooperation with the new owner of the former SAH to facilitate the re-use and redevelopment of the site.</li> </ul> <p><b>Former Northern Breweries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demolish derelict aspects of building</li> <li>• Ensure remainder of building is brought up to a safe condition</li> </ul>	<p>Re-purpose vacant industrial lands for recreational uses</p> 	<p>Utilize former institutional buildings for residential infill</p> 
		<p><b>Actions/Tools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish design principles to guide future development of Canal District (Blueforest, Gateway, Casino Site)</li> <li>• Assess financial viability of a regional tourism attraction with Blueforest Ventures Inc.</li> <li>• Partner with Blueforest to coordinate a funding application to NOHFC for the establishment of a regional tourism and mixed use development</li> <li>• Work with Suncor to begin site assessment and remediation initiatives</li> </ul>	
		<p><b>Funding</b></p> <p>Design Principles: City: \$40,000 (Already Committed)</p> <p>Financial Assessment - Regional Tourism Attraction: City: \$25,000 (Already Committed)</p> <p>Blueforest Mixed Use/Tourism Development: \$10,000,000, Private/Public Partnership</p>	
		<p><b>Time Period for Implementation</b></p> <p>2014: Design Principles</p> <p>2013 - 2017: Blueforest re-development plan</p> <p>2015: Suncor Site Assessment</p>	

Big Picture Action	Downtown Area(s) of Focus	Project Types	
<p><b>Advance Downtown as a viable commercial node</b></p>	 <p> <span style="color: yellow;">●</span> Gore Street Commercial District    <span style="color: green;">●</span> Historic Queen Street District  <span style="color: red;">●</span> Queen Street Commercial District         </p>	<p><b>Transition “incubated” businesses to vacant commercial space</b></p> 	<p><b>Utilize vacant commercial space for start-up business</b></p> 
		<p><b>Provide catalyst funding for Façade improvements</b></p> 	<p><b>Support retrofitting of existing commercial spaces to update established businesses</b></p> 
<p><b>Project Goals</b>  <b>Create a viable commercial node</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote re-investment into established Downtown businesses to ensure area remains commercially viable in-light of the newer, large format retail elsewhere in the community</li> <li>Maintain the Downtown commercial areas as a major source of tax revenue for the City</li> <li>Utilize entrepreneurial start-ups (retail, food services, arts, etc.) to stimulate previously vacant spaces, transforming them into vibrant destinations.</li> <li>Foster collaboration between vacant property owners and individuals looking at starting new businesses.</li> <li>Encourage transition of EDC and Innovation Centre incubation start-ups to vacant Downtown commercial spaces.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific Project Areas:</b>  Gore Street, Queen Street Commercial Areas</p>	<p><b>Actions/Tools</b>  <b>Property re-investment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stimulate private sector investment by providing matching grants for façade and interior renovation projects</li> <li>Formulate grant review committee made up of City staff and Downtown Association members</li> <li>Establish grant eligibility design criteria for grant recipients</li> <li>Establish inventory of vacant commercial space in the Downtown core</li> <li>Collaborate with EDC and SSM Innovation Centre to support the transition of incubated businesses into vacant Downtown commercial spaces</li> </ul> <p><b>Funding</b>  \$600,000</p> <p><b>Time Period for Implementation</b>  2014: Establish inventory of vacant commercial space in the Downtown core  2014: Establish program criteria and steering committee for façade and interior improvement projects  2014-2017: Initiate grant applications for improvement projects</p>		

Big Picture Action	Downtown Area(s) of Focus	Project Types	
Cultivate a "Sense of Place"	 <p>Queen Street – Street Furniture Upgrades</p> <p>Gore Street, Gateway Area, Riversedge Streetscape Connections</p> <p>Bay Street Beautification Strategy</p> <p>Clergue/Rowswell Recreational Improvements</p> <p>Esposito Park</p> <p>Possible Parkette Locations</p>	<p><b>Children's Play Area</b></p> 	<p><b>Outdoor Fitness Equipment</b></p> 
		<p><b>Water Fountain</b></p> 	<p><b>Streetscape Improvements</b></p> 
	<p><b>Project Goals</b></p> <p><b>Public Realm and Streetscape Street Improvements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enrich the public realm by creating unique pedestrian experiences for both residents and tourists.</li> <li>Foster better integration of Blueforest and Gateway development sites into the Downtown core areas.</li> </ul> <p><b>Queen Street, Gore Street and Downtown Streetscape Improvements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage age-friendly built form that encourages pedestrian travel, as well as opportunities for gathering or rest.</li> <li>Establish unique identity for the Downtown area by incorporating distinctive streetscape elements such as lighting, benches, recycling bins, bike racks, message/map boards, etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Clergue Park Recreational Improvements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address the lack of recreational space within the Downtown, in order to create an environment inviting to families and children.</li> <li>Replace existing, obsolete water fountain with easier to maintain surface fountain</li> <li>Create signature waterfront attraction inviting residents and tourists to the Downtown</li> </ul> <p><b>Parkettes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repurpose under-utilized property to create play areas/gathering places for the Downtown residents</li> <li>Encourage residential investment in the Downtown by creating recreational play area.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Actions/Tools</b></p> <p><b>Public Realm and Streetscape Improvements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain urban design professionals to develop streetscape plan focusing on landscape, coordinated street furniture, lighting, as well as other aesthetic improvements</li> <li>Upgrade streetscape amenities along Queen Street, Gore Street and other Downtown Roads planned for capital improvements</li> </ul> <p><b>Clergue Park Improvements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate site planning design, and site servicing improvements (i.e. water, sanitary, storm sewer) to accommodate future recreational facilities, water fountain</li> <li>Acquire and install of water fountain feature, park equipment</li> </ul> <p><b>Parkette Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify vacant or under-utilized properties within the Downtown neighbourhood area that can be converted to park space</li> <li>Acquire lands for park space development</li> <li>Acquire and install park equipment</li> </ul> <p><b>Funding</b></p> <p>Streetscape Planning: \$50,000  Queen Street, Gore Street and Streetscape and Public Realm Improvements: \$1,250,000</p> <p><b>Time Period for Implementation</b></p> <p>2014: Streetscape Planning, identify properties for Parkette development  2015-2017: Streetscape and Public Realm Improvements</p>	

Big Picture Action	Downtown Area(s) of Focus	Project Types	
<p><b>“Sense of Place” cont.</b></p>	<p><b>Project Goals</b>  <b>Strenuously enforce Property Standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to demolish derelict or abandoned buildings that do not meet minimum property standards</li> <li>• Prevent “broken window” syndrome in the Downtown</li> </ul> <p><b>Use Public Art and Create Gathering areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create visual interest points throughout Downtown in an effort to generate areas that are welcoming to interaction and investment.</li> <li>• Attract people to gather and socialize throughout the Downtown in order to create activity and vibrancy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Tree Lighting Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance Downtown ambiance and night time safety with the use of tree lighting</li> </ul> <p><b>Project Types</b></p>	<p><b>Address Derelict Properties</b></p> 	<p><b>Use Public Art to create points of interest</b></p> 
	<p><b>Encourage Public Art that embraces local heritage</b></p>  <p><b>Street Tree Lighting</b></p> 	<p><b>Reclaim spaces to encourage social gathering areas</b></p> 	<p><b>Create areas inviting to pedestrians</b></p> 
	<p><b>Actions/Tools</b></p> <p><b>Enforce Property Standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing an operating fund to enforce sub-par property standards</li> <li>• Acquire lands/properties with on-going property standards work orders or tax arrears</li> <li>• Partnerships with Private Sector Developers to redevelop derelict sites</li> </ul> <p><b>Public Art/Public Space Reclamation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish City policy for selecting public art installations and locations</li> <li>• Work with local Art Council to establish a committee to screen and acquire public art for installation at various locations in the Downtown.</li> <li>• Identify potential areas for public art installations and social gathering</li> </ul>		
	<p><b>Funding</b></p> <p>Enforce Property Standards: City: Operational Budget</p>		
	<p><b>Time Period for Implementation</b></p> <p>2014: Identify derelict sites with outstanding work orders and/or tax arrears</p> <p>2014: Develop Public Art policy, establish selection and review committee</p> <p>2014-2017: Heightened enforcement of Downtown properties, acquire derelict sites, initiate public art, public area improvements</p>		

## Appendix C – Downtown Funding Strategy

Downtown Development Initiative - 2.0 Proposed Funding Partnership							
Program		City	NOHFC	FedNor	Downtown Association	Private Sector	TOTAL
Incremental Tax Rebates		Forgone Revenue					
Private Sector Assistance Grants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Improvement Grant</li> <li>• Façade Improvement Grant</li> </ul>			\$600,000				\$600,000
Public Realm and Streetscape Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban and public realm design elements</li> <li>• Street furniture identification</li> <li>• Streetscape Planning for Bay Street, Queen Street, March Street, etc.</li> </ul>			\$50,000				\$50,000
Downtown Public Realm & Streetscape Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gore Street Streetscape Improvements</li> <li>• Queen Street Furniture and Tree Lighting Upgrades</li> <li>• Parkette Development</li> <li>• Public Art Installation</li> </ul>		\$265,000	\$150,000	\$800,000	\$35,000		\$1,250,000
Project Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant application coordination</li> <li>• Program monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>• Report writing, presentation to stakeholders</li> </ul>		\$35,000	\$57,500	\$57,500			\$150,000
Private Sector Matching Investment						\$600,000	\$600,000
	TOTAL	\$300,000	\$857,500	\$857,500	\$35,000	\$600,000	\$2,650,000

## Appendix D – Commercial Vacancy Analysis

