



The Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie  
Environmental Sustainability Committee  
Agenda

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

4:30 pm - 5:00 pm

Video Conference

Meetings may be viewed live on the City's Youtube channel  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/SaultSteMarieOntario>

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<https://www.youtube.com/c/saultstemarieca>

	Pages
1. Call to Order	
2. Land Acknowledgement	
3. Adoption of Minutes	3 - 5
Mover _____	
Seconded _____	
Resolved that Minutes of Environmental Sustainability Committee meeting of July 8, 2025 be approved.	
4. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest	
5. Adoption of Agenda	
Mover _____	
Seconded _____	
Resolved that the Agenda for Environmental Sustainability Committee meeting for July 15, 2025 as presented be approved.	
6. 2023 - 2024 Sustainability Report Letter Review	6 - 8
Mover _____	
Seconded _____	

Resolved that the Environmental Sustainability Committee (ESC) approves the submission of the City of Sault Ste. Marie 2023 - 2024 Sustainability Report Outreach Letter to Mayor, Council and City Senior Management by the ESC Chair.

**7. Next Meeting**

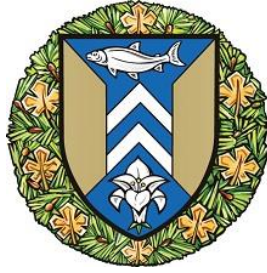
Tuesday October 7, 2025, 4:00 - 5:30 PM

**8. Adjournment**

Mover \_\_\_\_\_

Seconded \_\_\_\_\_

Resolved that this Committee now adjourn.



**The Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie  
Environmental Sustainability Committee Minutes**

Tuesday July 16, 2025  
12:00 pm  
Video Conference – Virtual

Present: D. Hilsinger, V. Prouse, A. Riopel, M. Britton, E. Emilson, C. Gardi

Absent: A. Judge, N. Roubal

Officials: E. Cormier, T. Anderson

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**1. Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 12:01 p.m

**2. Land Acknowledgement**

**3. Adoption of Minutes**

Moved by: M. Britton

Seconded by: E. Emilson

Resolved that Minutes of the Environmental Sustainability Committee meeting of May 13, 2025, be approved.

**Carried**

**4. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

**4.1 C. Gardi – Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Floating Wetland Project Funding Request**

City Councilor.

**5. Adoption of Agenda**

Moved by: V. Prouse

Seconded by: M. Britton

Resolved that the Agenda for the Environmental Sustainability Committee meeting for April 15, 2025, as presented, be approved.

**Carried**

**6. CDF Green Initiatives Fund Applications Review Q2**

6.1 Sault Ste. Marie Museum – Environmentalism Database & Consortium - \$11,800

6.2 Tourism Sault Ste. Marie – Floating Wetland Project - \$9,001.72

At the ESC meeting on Tuesday, July 16, 2025, two (2) projects received the following recommendations:

Mover: M. Britton

Seconder: A. Riopel

Resolved that the Environmental Sustainability Committee supports the request for funding from the CDF Green Initiatives Program for the Sault Ste. Marie Museum – Environmentalism Database & Consortium Project and recommends that Council approve \$11,800 in project funding.

Mover: M. Britton

Seconder: E. Emilson

Resolved that the Environmental Sustainability Committee supports the request for funding from the CDF Green Initiatives Program for Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Floating Wetland Project and recommends that Council approve \$9,001.72 in project funding.

**7. 2023 – 2024 Sustainability Report Update**

**8. ESC Membership Update**

The ESC were informed that Tobin Kern is no longer on the ESC. Tobin was thanked for his service on the ESC. A call out for membership will be sent out from the City Clerks and Communication teams.

**9. Staff Update**

**10. Next Meeting**

Tuesday July 15, 2025, 4:30 – 5:00 PM – Special Meeting to finalize the ESC 2023 – 2024  
Sustainability Report Outreach Letter – Virtual

## **11. Adjournment**

Moved by: M. Britton

Seconded by: V. Prouse

Resolved that this Committee now adjourn.

**Carried**

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Chair



## SAULT STE. MARIE

July 8, 2025

RE: City of Sault Ste. Marie 2023 – 2024 Sustainability Report Outreach

Dear Mayor Shoemaker and City Council,

On behalf of the City's Environmental Sustainability Committee (ESC), I am writing to you to request a meeting following the discussion of the municipality's latest 2023 – 2024 Sustainability Report at the ESC meeting on Tuesday, May 13, 2025. The report revealed concerning trends, with community emissions increasing by 3% and corporate emissions rising by 5%, highlighting the need for urgent action and a re-evaluation of how the city weighs sustainability and climate change mitigation in Council decision making. A significant point raised was the lack of comment from most of Council when the report was on the May agenda. The ESC is disappointed by the perceived lack of urgency and is eager to help raise awareness and drive action on this critical matter.

The ESC expressed significant concern regarding these rising emissions and the lack of effective progress in our sustainability goals. During our discussions, it was clear that a collaborative approach across all city departments is essential to ensure that everyone understands the seriousness of the situation and the risks involved with a "business as usual" approach. Meaningfully addressing climate change requires strategic-level support as well as a clear commitment from leadership to drive effective action. At present, the climate impact statement on council reports is voluntary, which we feel undermines its potential to influence decision-making at the council level. We strongly urge that this be made a standard part of the review process. Furthermore, there must be strong linkages between the City's strategic sustainability goals and how day-to-day municipal operations, capital investments and incremental decisions support and/or inhibit progress to these goals.

In 2023, we wrote to the Mayor, Council, and Senior Management and outlined three short-term and three long-term priorities for consideration (enclosed). While we appreciated the responses of consideration from both the former CAO in 2023 and Tom Vair in 2024 and some items have been considered, we feel that these issues have yet to be adequately addressed. We recommended in our letter that Climate Action be made a top priority in the strategic plan update. While we appreciate that the City's net-zero target was incorporated into the infrastructure pillar of the recently updated strategic plan, the ESC feels that climate change is too critical to be treated as part of a broader category like infrastructure. Climate change is a global crisis, and addressing it deserves a dedicated focus of its own.

The ESC is committed to being part of the solution and effective action for a sustainable future. However, the support of the Mayor and Council is necessary to take the actions needed to achieve our goals. We look forward to your support in addressing these critical issues.

Sincerely,

*Donna Hilsinger*

Donna Hilsinger, Chair ESC

**Where you belong.**

CITY OF SAULT STE. MARIE

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# SAULT STE. MARIE

2023 June 6

Dear Mayor Shoemaker, Council & City Senior Management,

Climate change is the defining issue of our time and we only have seven years left to reduce our emissions to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels or face irreversible economic, environmental and social impacts<sup>1</sup>. As well, the 2022 City corporate emissions inventory update shows that the City is not on track to meeting its emissions reduction goals, as corporate emissions have increased 10% since 2017<sup>2</sup>. A more united and aggressive corporate financial commitment and effort from all departments and Council is required to meet the City's target of net zero emissions by 2050.

The Environmental Sustainability Committee (ESC), a committee of Council was established in 2021 to support collaboration and advance projects as they relate to the enhancement of community environmental sustainability, which includes the implementation of the Sault Ste. Marie Community Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan: 2020 - 2030. The ESC has seven (7) responsibilities that we utilize to accomplish this goal including, developing a list of priorities which support environmental sustainability for Council consideration as part of its annual budget cycle. In advance of the 2024 budget development, the ESC developed a list of three (3) short and three (3) long term priorities for Councils consideration. They are listed below.

## **ESC 2024 Top 3 Short Term Priorities**

### **1. Make Climate Change Action a top priority in the City's Strategic Plan update**

*This will ensure that the City starts allocating adequate resources and all departments work together towards meeting the City's greenhouse gas (GHG) Reduction targets.*

### **2. Conduct an annual 'Sustainability Audit' of the City's Budget**

*The sustainability audit would determine what is currently being spent to address City GHG Reduction targets and analyze on an annual basis to measure improvements and increase accountability towards emissions reduction efforts.*

### **3. Require City staff to have their climate impact statement on Council Reports reviewed by the Sustainability Coordinator**

*Currently, departmental leads, City Finance, Legal and the CAO review all corporate Reports to Council and must sign off on the report before it is approved for the Council Meeting agenda. The new Climate Impact section on Council Reports is currently voluntary. A mandatory review by the Sustainability Coordinator would encourage corporate wide use of the section and increase awareness, consideration and adoption of measures/projects that both mitigate and/or adapt to climate change.*

<sup>1</sup> Intergovernmental on Climate Change (IPCC). (2018). Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty. Retrieved from: <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

<sup>2</sup> Sault Ste. Marie Corporate Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory Update: 2022. Retrieved from: <https://saultstemarie.ca/Cityweb/media/Community-Services/FutureSSM/2022-Corporate-Inventory-Methodology-Report-Final.pdf>

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## ESC 2024 Top 3 Long Term Priorities

### 1. Establish a Corporate Environmental Social Governance (ESG) policy

*The policy would embed GHG emissions reduction targets into City operations, and require that all staff sign off to ensure adoption and normalize GHG reduction into everyday operational, business and investment thinking. The policy could address many different climate action initiatives such as linking sustainability to planning and engineering departments by using by-laws and zoning powers to reduce built environment emissions (e.g. build zero carbon standards into building new construction for municipal facilities), requiring electric-vehicle charging stations in all new or retrofitted buildings, mandating zero-emissions heating systems, etc.)*

### 2. Develop a green development standard (GDS)

*This would create incentives or reduce barriers to new developments and/or built environment retrofits that deliver environmental, social and economic benefits and prepare the local market for higher levels of building energy performance beyond the minimum standards adopted from the provincial building code. GDS can catalyze the local building sector to voluntarily meet net zero levels of energy / emissions from new buildings before provincial building codes are available and are a low cost means to influence the community's built environment through input in the design / permitting and post construction stages of new development.*

### 3. Develop a corporate sustainable roads approach and/or strategy

*The road sector produces the highest level of greenhouse gas, directly, through fossil energy used in mining, transportation, paving works and also through the emissions coming from vehicles who use the roads. This would look at ways for the City to reduce lifecycle, as well as embodied carbon emissions from road construction, maintenance and design. Road construction and maintenance emission reduction opportunities include, but are not limited to looking for ways to reduce emissions associated to building materials such as asphalt and cement, including excavating materials (e.g. require a certain amount of recycled and renewable materials for building new roads, using low or zero emission equipment for construction). For road design, considerations to connect neighborhoods, encourage active transportation (e.g. every road reconstruction include an active transportation audit) and utilize naturalization landscape elements (e.g. bioswales) and low impact development should be considered, following the complete streets approach.*

Thank you for your attention and taking the time to read this letter. We expect that you will respect the priorities that this integral committee of Council have recommended, and that they will form a foundation for 2024 budget discussions and climate action strategies in your administration and management of the City of Sault Ste. Marie. The ESC jointly feels that these priorities will assist in supporting the City's environmental sustainability policies, plans and practices and continuous improvement towards the City's goal of net zero emissions by 2050. We look forward to hearing from you with a response in advance of the 2024 budget approval.

Sincerely,

**Donna Hilsinger, Chair, ESC Citizen Representative**

c:

Mark Britton, ESC Vice Chair & Citizen Representative & Business Development, PUC

Andre Riopel, ESC Citizen Representative

Andrew Judge, ESC Citizen Representative & Assistant Professor, Anishinaabe Studies, Algoma University

Councillor Corey Gardi, ESC Councillor Representative

Erik Emilson, ESC Citizen Representative & Research Scientist, Natural Resources Canada

Ngaire Roubal, ESC Citizen Representative & Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Tobin Kern, ESC Citizen Representative

Victoria Prouse, ESC Citizen Representative & Senior Policy Advisor, Ontario Ministry of Transportation