

# SAULT STE. MARIE MASTER PLAN

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PLAN DURATION: 2018-2038 | SAULT STE. MARIE, CHIPPEWA COUNTY, MICHIGAN



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**THE CITY OF SAULT STE. MARIE'S MASTER PLAN DEFINES THE VISIONS AND THE VALUES OF ITS PEOPLE AND THEIR GOVERNMENT FOR THE NEXT 20 YEARS. THE DOCUMENT WILL HELP TO INFORM FUTURE INVESTMENTS, DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH, AND PROVIDE A BASIS FOR LAND USE REGULATIONS.**

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# DOCUMENT GUIDE

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

# ABOUT THIS PLAN

## AUTHORITY TO PLAN

Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, authorizes units of government to plan, create planning commissions, and regulate and subdivide land. The act permits and mandates the planning commission to create and adopt a master plan. The master plan is the basis for land use regulations and zoning. For units of government that have and enforce zoning, that zoning must be based on a plan. The purpose of this master plan is to guide future development towards an economic and efficient use of the land; promote public health, safety, and the general welfare; and provide for a framework for adequate transportation systems and infrastructure, public utilities, housing, and recreation opportunities.

## PAST PLANNING

The last City Master Plan was adopted in 1995. Since that time, the City has developed and adopted a detailed City Recreation Plan, a Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, and an Access Management Study. Annually, the City updates and amends its 6-year capital improvement plan. These plans and studies serve as guiding documents for the City, and provide information and content for this Master Plan.

## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Community participation is an important part of the planning process. A community survey was sent out to over 3,500 City addresses. The City hosted several public input meetings and shared media releases with area publications and radio stations, and promoted public meetings via social media. Two open houses enabled the public to review maps and data, offer ideas about needs and priorities, and share preferences for different types of building designs.

## LOCAL COORDINATION

The City Planning Commission formed a sub-committee to help guide the development of the plan. The City shared information with key stakeholders including Lake Superior State University, Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians, local civic groups, state agencies, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Planners met with representatives from the Downtown Development Authority and Lake Superior State University to discuss goals for specific streets and neighborhoods. The city will also share this plan with surround municipalities and Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, as is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of this plan involved the leadership and work of many individuals, agencies, and partners.

## CITY COMMISSION:

Mayor Anthony G. Bosbous, Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner Don Gerrie, Commissioner Greg Collins, Commissioner Jay Gage, Commissioner Abby Baker, Commissioner Tim Talentino, Commissioner Kathleen Twardy, Commissioner Shane Miller

## CITY STAFF:

Oliver Turner, City Manager; Kelly Freeman, Community Development Director; Joe Miller, GIS Technician

## PLANNING COMMISSION:

Regular Members: Rick Barck, Marla Bunker, Anthony Perry, Charles McCreedy, Ken Kavanaugh, Carol Boger, Bonita Peters, Wendy Hoffman, Clayton Shunk, Megan Kelly, Robert Shimmens, Kristina Somes, Derric Knight, Rebecca Bolen, Seth Harris, Joseph Gallagher

City Commission Liasons: Commissioner Patricia Shimmens, Commissioner Brent Osterhout, Commissioner Abby Baker, Commissioner Greg Collins

## MASTER PLAN SUB-COMMITTEE:

Rick Barck, Wendy Hoffman, Bonita Peters, Scott Nason

## PLAN DEVELOPED WITH SUPPORT FROM:

Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning & Development Commission; Parallel Solutions LLC

Photographs were taken by Gary Howe, the Sault Ste. Marie Convention & Visitor's Bureau, and the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation.

The City is grateful to members of the public who chose to participate in this process and who shared their visions and ideas for the future growth and development of the community.





# OUR CITY: THEN & NOW

Historically, planners have worked to separate land uses in order to protect public health – creating distance between industrial activities and places where people lived in order to protect people from noxious fumes, loud machinery, dust and dirt, and heavy vehicle traffic. By classifying and regulating uses in this way, planning has served some public health and safety goals well. But, in other instances, this approach has created new problems. Many people are increasingly separated from basic amenities and services - like places to buy food, go to school or work, get haircuts, see a doctor, patronize a local institution, visit a friend or a family member, or enjoy recreational spaces. Because of the separation of land uses, people must drive for even the most basic needs. In some ways, this model of designing a city ends up inadvertently going against some its most cherished values related to the way people want and need to access services, and the way they want to be connected to each other.



## A STRONG FOUNDATION TO BUILD OUR FUTURE

A close inspection of the City of Sault Ste. Marie's neighborhoods reveals an important observation and insight: The solution for some of our neighborhoods is rooted in our past, and problems of incompatible uses have more to do with the level of intensity of an activity in a neighborhood, not with the activity itself. For example, a small local market on the edge of a residential neighborhood may serve neighbors' needs by providing a place to buy bread, milk or butter. Its size and building type fit in with the surrounding buildings, and people who live in the neighborhood can walk a short while on the sidewalk or ride their bikes to run this short errand. However, a large-scale retail store with no windows on the first floor and a large parking lot located adjacent to or within a residential neighborhood would change the character of the neighborhood by creating a need for more frequent car trips and perhaps more neighborhood congestion. The building's size and type would be out of proportion with the buildings and homes around it. With fewer windows and storefronts at eye level, people in the neighborhood may not feel as safe or comfortable walking to or through this area. In short, the old land use planning model may not account for, or protect, some core community values and preferences.



This Plan offers a framework and a tool for decision-making based on some of the City of Sault Ste. Marie's historic neighborhood land use patterns as well as a new vision for some neighborhoods and districts. Rather than dictate uses, this Plan describes the character and the desired intensity of activity for and within each of these districts and places. It places high priority on developing uses that are in scale and in proportion with each neighborhood's vision and desired future.

By embracing these and other Place-Making principles, our neighborhoods and our community as a whole will display the characteristics which make them unique, as well as inspire and attract new talent.

No neighborhood is an island. We realize that neighborhoods are strong when they live in harmony with one another and when the needs of one neighborhood are balanced against the needs of all neighborhoods. This Plan looks at the needs in specific neighborhoods and districts as well as at the needs of the City as a whole. Goals and action steps for each neighborhood and district, as well as for City-wide services and infrastructure, are included in this Plan.





# MASTER PLAN VISION & VALUES

## MASTER PLAN VISION

The City of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan is a vibrant community comprised of connected and related neighborhoods and districts. This plan promotes and protects the vitality, diversity, and improvement of our neighborhoods, our City, our region, and the State of Michigan.



## MASTER PLAN VALUES

The City of Sault Ste. Marie will plan for and invest in City services and infrastructure that support the health and well-being of its residents, respects and nurtures local history and cultures, and fosters a strong economy and healthy environment.



## OUR VALUES:

1. Social, economic, and residential diversity and stability are essential to our City's future.
2. Transportation choices are important for our residents' mobility and our City's vitality and environmental health.
3. The intensity of any land use should be the focus of land use decisions.
4. Services should be conveniently located.
5. Design matters, and investments we make should support our City's values and citizens' health.
6. We will honor the heritage of neighborhoods as they evolve.
7. We will plan with our international setting in mind.
8. We will protect our natural resources.







## 2. COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS



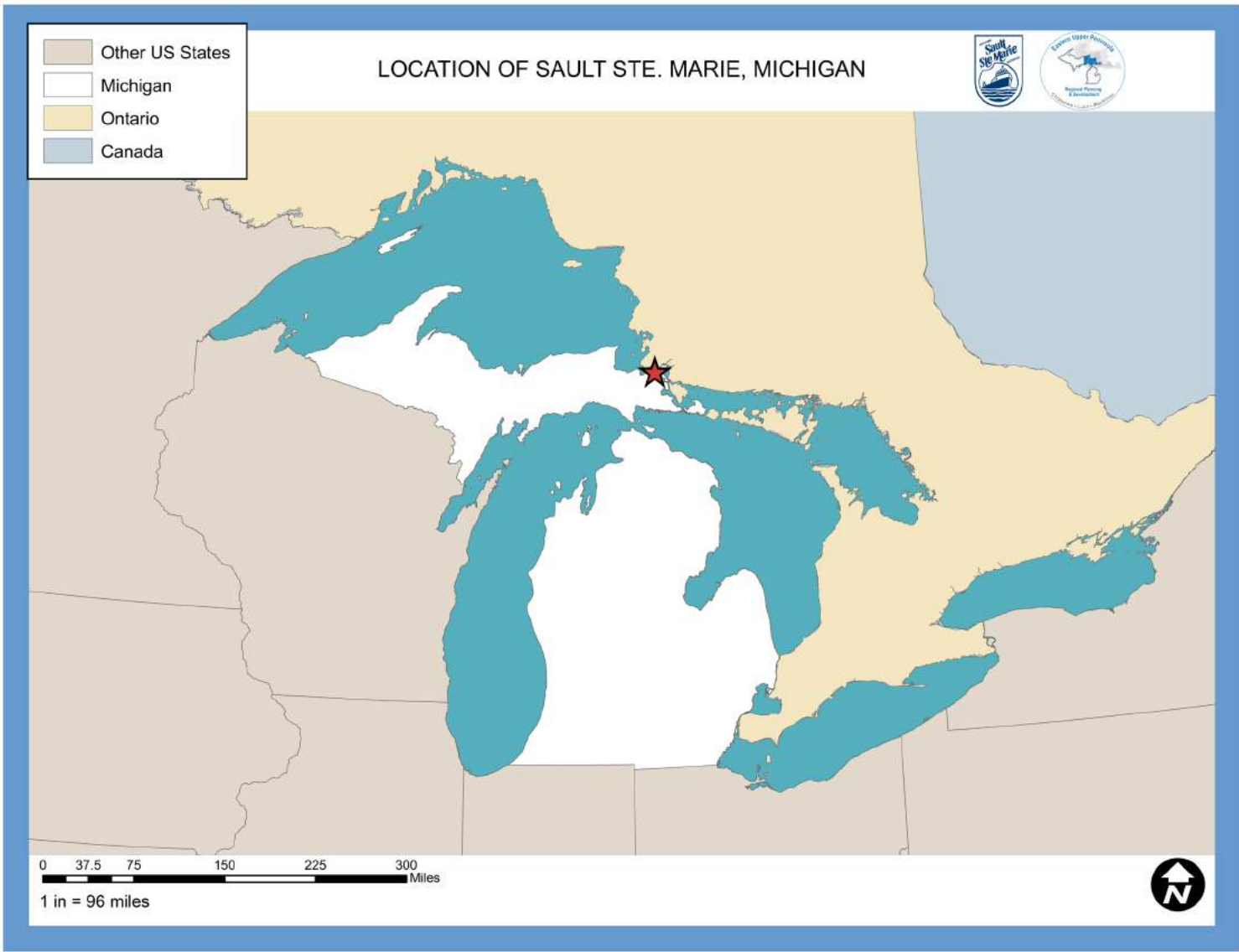
# LOCATION & GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, is located at the northern tip of the eastern edge of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The City is strategically situated on the south bank of the St. Marys River. The incorporated limits of the City encompass an area of approximately sixteen square miles, measuring approximately three miles from north to south and six miles from east to west at its widest points. The City's 2010 U.S. Census population is 14,144, with an estimated 2013 population of 14,098. The City's population has remained between 14,000 and 15,000 since 1980.

The St. Marys River is a significant international waterway, connecting Lake Superior to Lakes Huron and Michigan and serving as a hub in the Great Lakes shipping transportation system via the Soo Locks. The river and the rapids have been central to the community's heritage, culture, health, and growth.

Sault Ste. Marie has a rich and unique history. It is the oldest European settlement in Michigan and one of the very earliest continuously settled communities in the nation. The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians called this place Baaweting, which translated means "the gathering place." French settled in the area in 1668 and gave the city the name "Sault Ste. Marie," which translates to "Saint Mary's Falls." The City's long and rich history can be experienced today via the area's architecture, museums, walkways and community events and programs.

Directly to the north of the City on the opposite bank of the St. Marys River is the Sault's sister city, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, a community of 75,000 people. Its economy is fueled by one of Canada's largest steel mills. The Canadian Sault complements the Michigan Sault's facilities and services and offers a wide array of parks and recreation opportunities, shopping areas, cultural facilities, health care services and other community amenities. The two communities have entered into collaborative economic development agreements and maintain close binational ties.



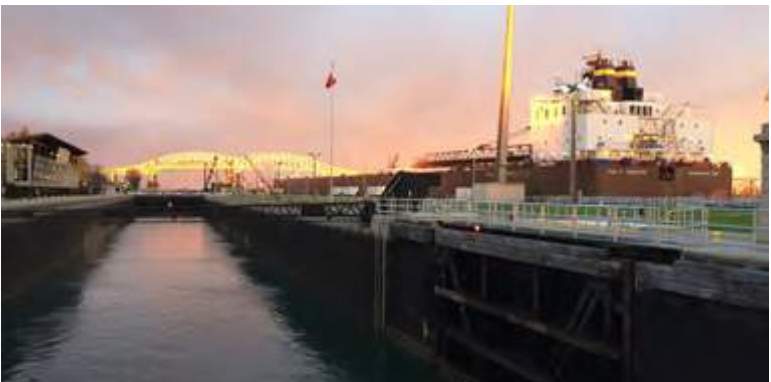
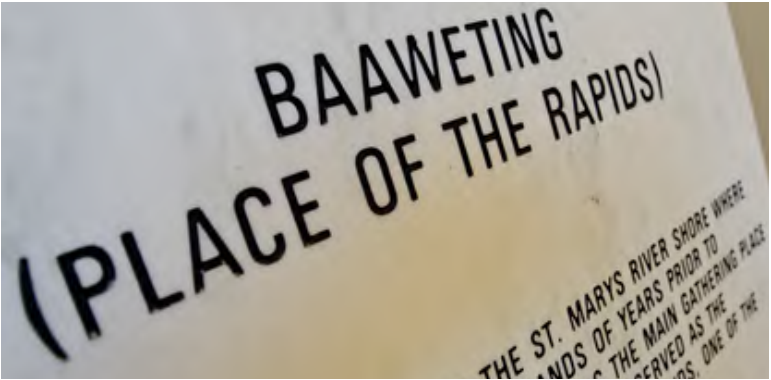
# HISTORY & CULTURAL HERITAGE

## SAULT AREA HISTORY

The Sault area is one of the oldest settled areas in the United States and has long been an important community in the Midwest, prized for its waterways and for fishing opportunities. For approximately 2,000 years prior to the arrival of Europeans, the Anishinaabeg (‘The People’ in Ojibwe/Chippewa) community lived along this waterway in the place that linked the Great Lakes of Superior and Huron. The Anishinaabeg called the area “Baaweting,” or “The Gathering Place.”

French explorer Étienne Brûlé was the first European to document the area in 1618. In 1668, a French Jesuit missionary, Father Jacques Marquette, created the first European settlement and named it “Sault Ste. Marie” in honor of his faith’s Virgin Mary. The first fort was built in the area in 1751. The British had possession in 1792 and occupied the area until after the War of 1812. The U.S. Army constructed Fort Brady in Sault Ste. Marie in 1823.

Logging, fishing and farming were primary economic activities from the mid 1880’s to the early 1900’s. Both lumber and agriculture have declined in more recent times. The area’s importance in commercial shipping has continued and expanded. Tourism plays an important role in Sault Ste. Marie’s economy.



## SOO LOCKS HISTORY

The St. Marys River is the only water connection between Lake Superior and the other Great Lakes. Before the construction of the Locks, the St. Marys Rapids presented a difference of 21 feet between Lake Superior and the lower lakes. This proved a barrier for transportation and led to the construction of a navigational locks project known as the St. Marys Falls Canal.

In 1797, the Northwest Fur Company constructed a 38-foot long navigation lock on the Canadian side of the river for small boats. This lock remained in use until it was destroyed during the War of 1812. For a time, freight and boats were again portaged around the rapids.

In 1852, the U.S. Congress passed an Act granting 750,000 acres of public land to the State of Michigan in order to build a lock to permit waterborne commerce between Lake Superior and the other Great Lakes. The Fairbanks Scale Company, which had extensive mining interests in the Upper Peninsula, began construction on the new locks project in 1853. Fairbanks completed the construction of two 350 feet locks within the two-year deadline set by the State of Michigan. On May 31, 1855, the locks were turned over to the State and designated as the State Lock.

Within a few years, commerce through the canal grew and the need for new locks became clear. The funds required exceeded the State’s capabilities. In 1881, the locks’ ownership was transferred to the United States government, and they were placed under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps has operated the Soo Locks, toll free, since that time.





# NATURAL RESOURCES

## GEOLOGY SOILS

The City of Sault Ste. Marie’s geology is typified by the same type of glacial deposits found over much of Michigan. These glacial deposits range from a few feet deep to over 300 feet near the intersection of 3 Mile Road and Riverside Drive. These deposits are mainly clay, and include silty sand loams and clay loams. These surface deposits overlay a clay sub-stratum. The glacial material sits on top of Cambrian bedrock known locally as “red rock” or “sandstone.” This formation is 1500 feet thick and overlies a foundation of Pre-Cambrian igneous rocks.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Soil Conservation Service has identified over 50 types of soils in the City. The Soil Survey for Chippewa County and City of Sault Ste. Marie includes maps and details regarding the acreage and extend of soils, soil features and classifications, prime farmland and land capacity for crops, woodland management and productivity, equipment limitations for woodlands, water features and limitations for water management, wildlife habitat, recreation development, building site development, and the physical and chemical properties of soils.

## TOPOGRAPHY

Two major glacial lake levels influenced Chippewa County and the City of Sault Ste. Marie: Lake Algonquin and Lake Nipissing. Remnant shoreline from the latter lake stage can be seen in Ashmun Hill in the City. The elevation of the City varies. The highest point is located along 3 Mile Road with an elevation of 760 feet above mean sea level. The lowest point is along Riverside Drive at 585 feet. There is a triangularly shaped upland area extending between 20th Street west and Seymour long 3 Mile Road.

The airport is located at one of the high points in the City at 722 feet. The area near Lake Superior State University’s campus is 700 feet. The south side of the City is 635 feet. The east end and islands are 600 feet. The lakeshore area and Shallows neighborhood are at 615 feet.

## SITES OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINATION

The State of Michigan has identified 12 environmental contamination sites under Act 307 within the City and Chippewa County. See Figure 1 below.



Figure 1: Sites of Environmental Contamination

Common Site Name*	Location Code	Pollutants
<b>CATEGORY 1 - Inactive, No Actions Taken</b>		
Sault Ste. Marie Big Boy	17-47N-01E-07CB	BTEX (Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene, and Xylenes) and TPH (Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons)
<b>CATEGORY 2 - Cleanup Action Take or in Progress: Evaluation/Interim Response-Fund</b>		
None within city limits		
<b>CATEGORY 3 - Cleanup Actions Taken or in Progress: Evaluation/Interim Response - PRP/Other</b>		
Amoco Terminal Sault Ste Marie	17-47N-01E-05DC	Gasoline, Diesel Fuel
Cannelton Indus. Tannery Disp.	17-47N-01W-11BB	Chromium, Mercury, Lead, Cyanide, Zinc
Fomer Cadillac Soo Lumber Plant (owned by local gov)	17-47N01W-12B	Benzene, Fluorene, Napthalene, Cresol
MICHCON - Easterday Avenue - Soo	17-47N-01E-05CC	BTEX
Sault Ste. Marie Disp. Union Carbide (owned by local gov)	17-47N-01E-08BA	Lead, Nickle, Arsenic, Cadmium
Soo Motors Tank Farm	17-47N-01E-6BC	Xylene, Napthalene
*Common Site Name is for identification only and is not necessarily a party responsible for contamination.		
SOURCE: Michigan Department of Natural Resources		

## VEGETATION

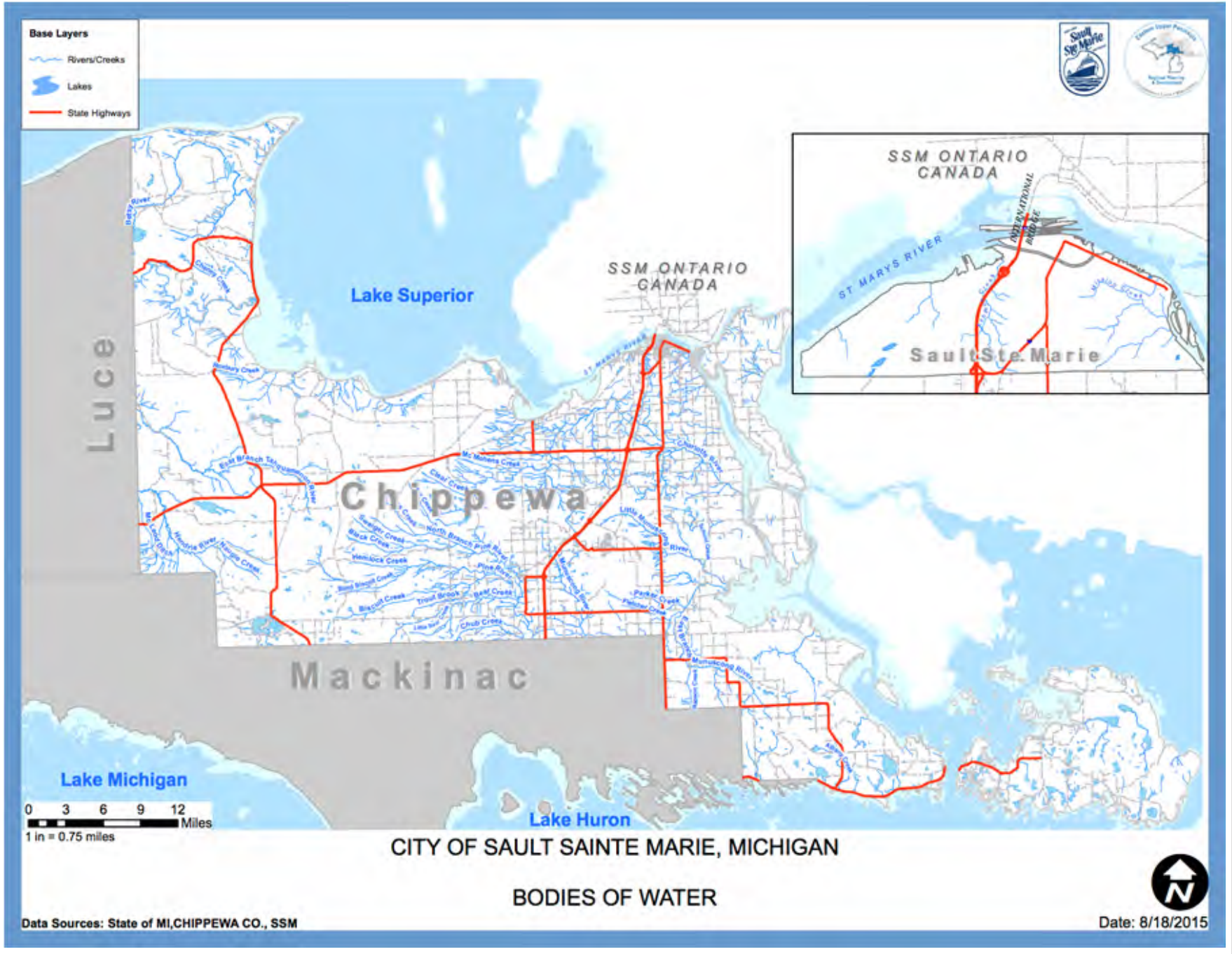
The City of Sault Ste. Marie is located in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Hardiness Zone 4b. This Zone refers to a defined geographic region that can support specific plants, flowers, and trees. The zones define a minimum range of temperatures that a plant or tree can survive safely in that zone. Native vegetation in the Sault area includes deciduous and coniferous trees. Hardwood tree species include Birch, Maple, Aspen, and Poplar. Evergreens are numerous and diverse. The Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Conservation District offers programs and services for landowners to support private land management and forestry practices.

WATER & WETLANDS

The City of Sault Ste. Marie is bounded on three sides by the St Marys River. There are several small creeks within the City that also drain to the river. Map 2 to the right shows surface water bodies.



Map 1: Bodies of Water





CLIMATE & WEATHER

Sault Ste. Marie’s relatively high latitude leads to relatively long summer days (16 hours daylight) and relatively short winter days (9 hours daylight). Temperatures rarely exceed 90 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer. Lows in the winter average 5-10 degrees Fahrenheit. Figure 2 to the right shows the average mean temperature by decade.

Winds prevail from the West/Northwest, and average wind speeds are highest in April with an average wind speed of 10.5 miles per hour. The sun shines 60% of the time in the summer and 36% of the time in the winter. The Sault typically experiences winter weather for six months or more out of the year, from November to April. January and December are typically the months with the highest levels of snowfall. Figure 3 down and to the right shows the snowfall by decade in the City since 1950, using historic recorded weather data provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. As shown, the 70’s and 80’s saw roughly 108 feet of total snowfall over the course of 10 years.

In March 2015, the Washington Post named the Sault the “Snowiest City in the Nation.” Snowfall data from the National Weather Service put the Sault ahead of cities such as Boston and New York, which also experienced record-breaking snow events for the 2014/2015 winter season. The average date of the last spring frost in Sault Ste. Marie is May 28.

Although Sault Ste. Marie tends to experience long winters, which can reach bitter cold at times, residents have learned to make the most of it. Each year, Sault Ste. Marie hosts the reknowned I-500 snowmobile race, which draws people from across the county - and border - to the City. Sault Ste. Marie is connected throughout the Eastern Upper Peninsula by snowmobiling trail systems. Residents also enjoy the abundance of non-motorized winter recreational activities in the city and surround area: snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, ice fishing, and snowboarding and skiing at Minneapolis Woods all help to turn the winter into one of the City's most enjoyable seasons.



Figure 2: Mean Temperature

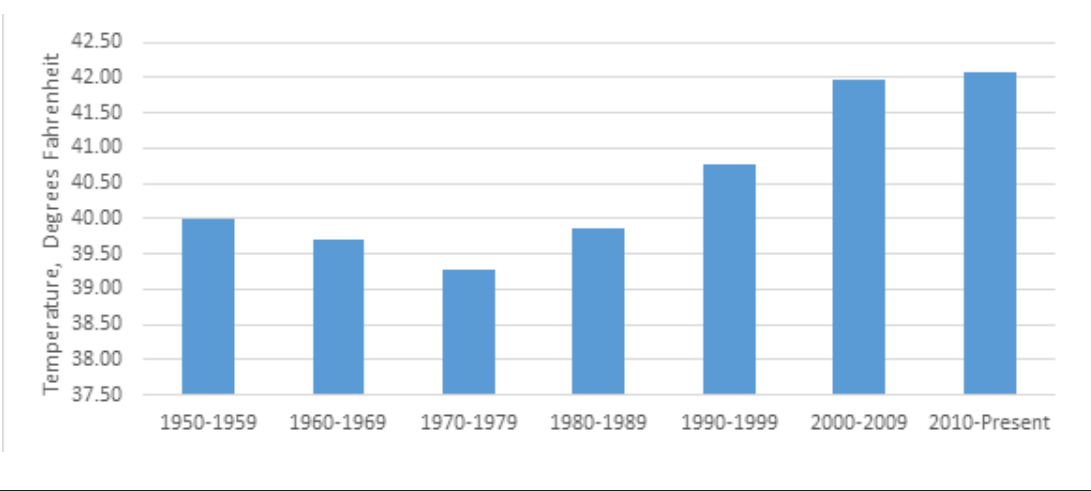
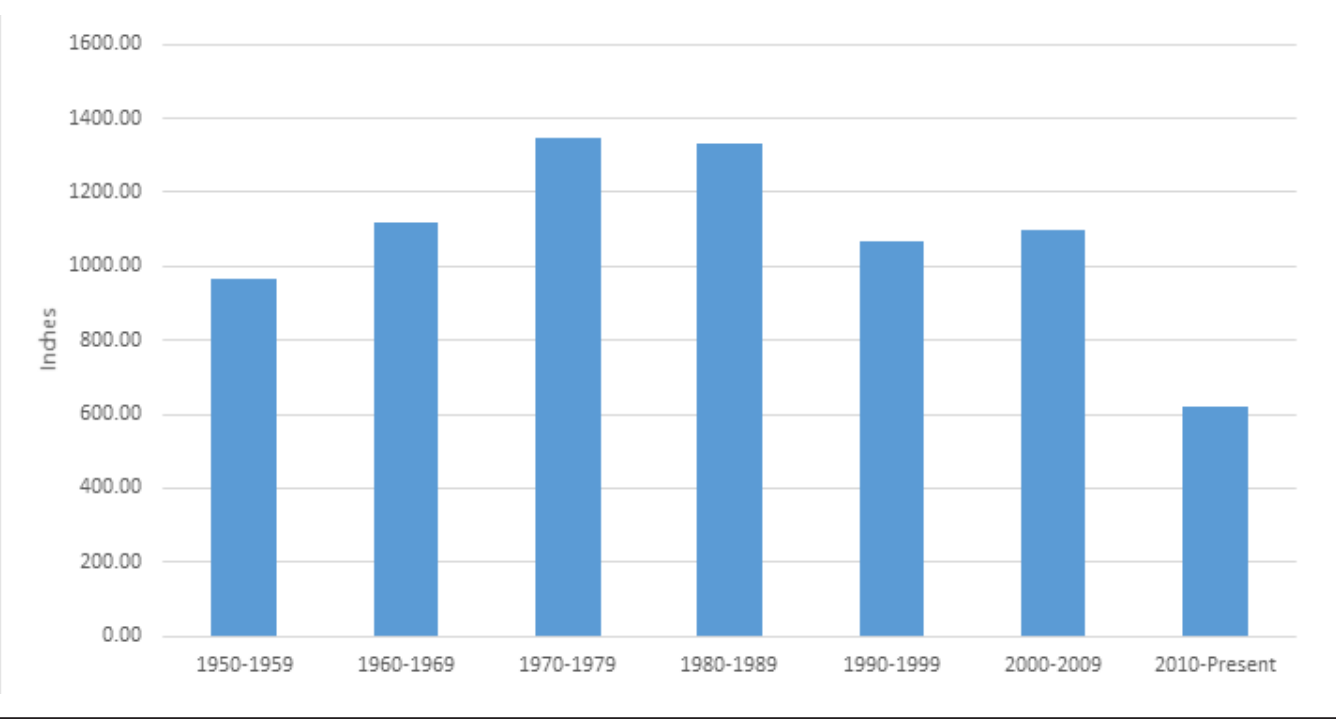


Figure 3: Total Recorded Snowfall



# POPULATION, HOUSING, & INCOME

## POPULATION TRENDS

The population of Sault Ste. Marie was 14,144 as reported in the 2010 U.S. Census. The total population decreased by 1.3% from the 2000 Census. As shown in Figure 4 below, the population of Sault Ste. Marie rose steadily until the 1970's, fell sharply, and has since plateaued with relatively minor changes in total population. The earlier relatively dramatic shift in population can be attributed to changes in employment opportunities at the Kincheloe Air Force Base located twenty (20) miles to the south of the City, including the closure of that Base in the late 1977.

Figure 5 below and Figure 8 on the next page include a 30-year trend line. This trend line was derived from a mathematical formula and does not account for all possible population factors, such as birth/death rate, migration, economics, environment, etc.

The trend line is based on historical trends and is an estimate of the future population's potential growth.

Figure 5 below compares the population trends of Sault Ste. Marie with two of Michigan's other Upper Peninsula cities – Marquette and Escanaba.



Figure 4: Total Population

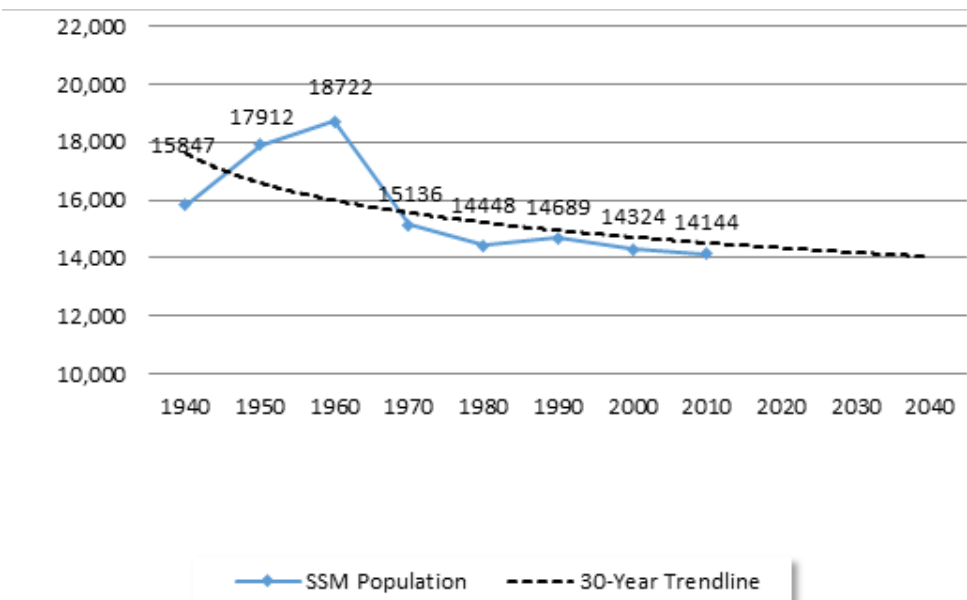
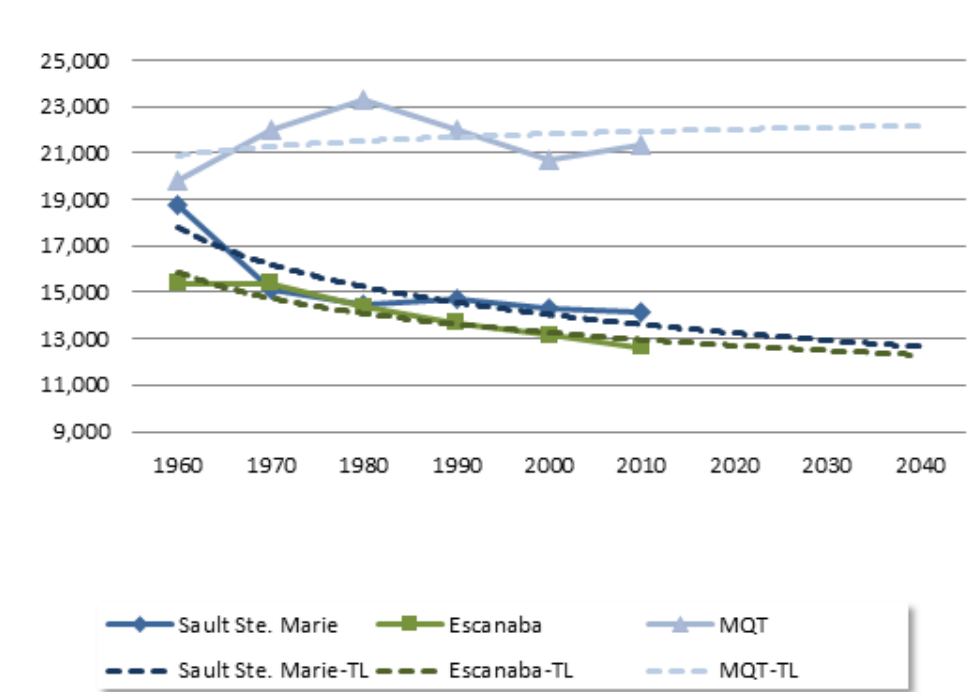


Figure 5: Population Trends & Projections

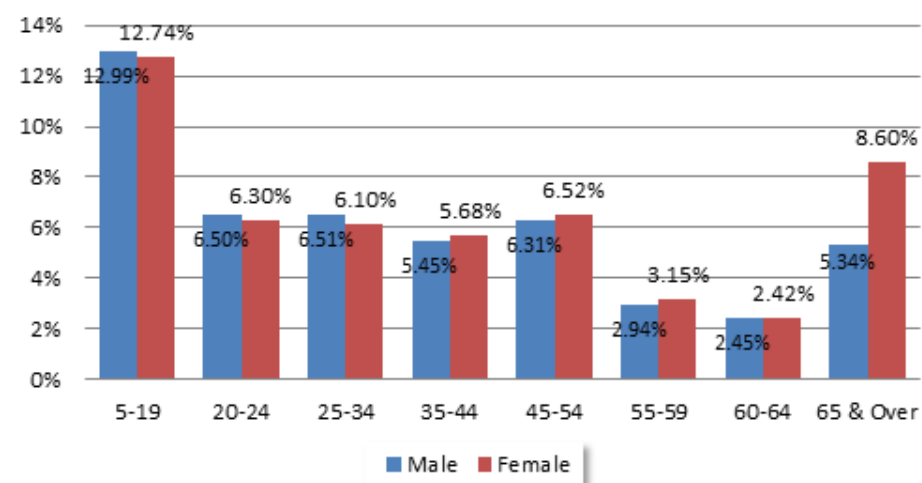




Age distribution by gender from the 2010 Census is shown in Figure 6 below. Overall, gender division is fairly split for most age groups. However, the 5 – 19 age group has a relatively higher percentage of males, while the 65 and over age group includes a relatively higher percentage of females. The 2010 median age was 34.3 years, up from 32.8 in 2000, 30.4 in 1990, and 25.5 in 1980. This reflects an expected upward trend as the “baby-boom” generation ages.

Figure 7 to the right displays a breakdown of age group sizes from 1990 to 2010. The population of those age 19 and under has decreased, the population of those in the 18 – 64 age range has increased slightly, and the number of those age 65 and over has remained fairly steady. The largest change in the age distribution of the community was within the 35 – 44 age group, which decreased in total population by almost 40%. The population of the 55 – 59 age group increased by almost 50% in the same period.

Figure 6: Age Distribution - 2010



There are relatively large concentrations of those under 18 years of age on the west side of the City. Other relatively high-concentrations of those 18 and younger include West Pier neighborhood near the International Bridge, and in Bridge Village near Lake Superior State University. The community’s apartment complexes also house a relatively high concentration of residents who are aged 62 and over.

Maps showing Under 18 and Over 62 by Census Block are on the pages 16 and 17, respectively.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

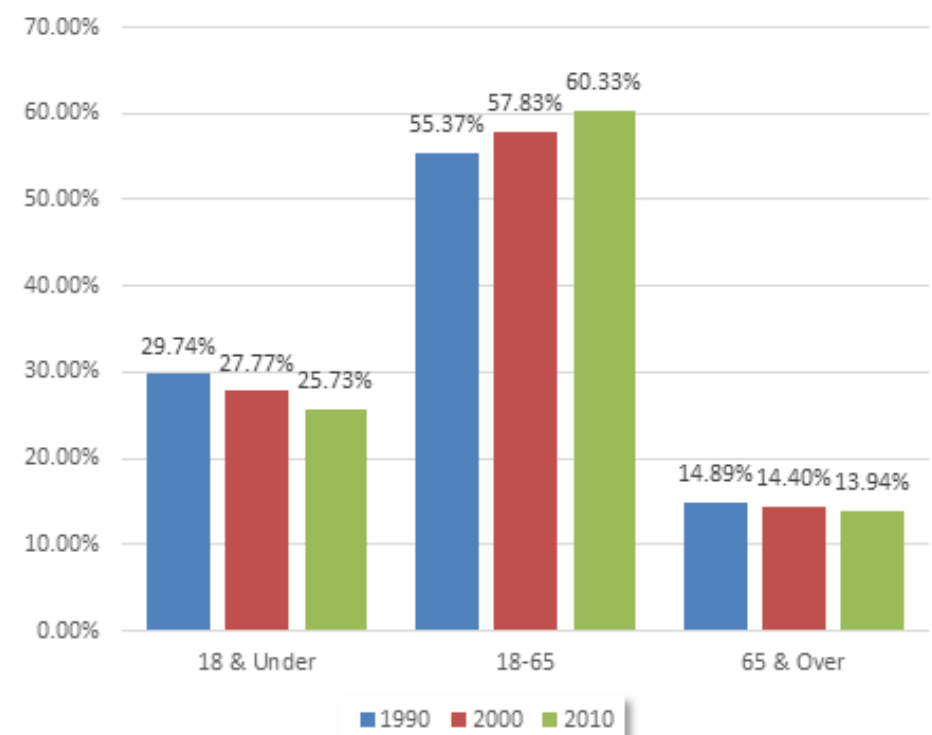
Figure 8 to the right shows 2010 U.S. Census population figures and U.S. Census Bureau population estimates for 2014 for the City of Sault Ste. Marie and Chippewa County. Projections through 2019 for Chippewa County were developed based on recent trends. The 2010-2019 projections for the City of Sault Ste. Marie were calculated using the same ratio relative to Chippewa County as the 2014 Census Bureau population projections.

Although trends would indicate future population reductions, it is the goal of the City to retain and expand its population base with appropriate development, and by supporting an expanded presence of Lake Superior State University with a targeted effort to retain graduates while strengthening the local economy.

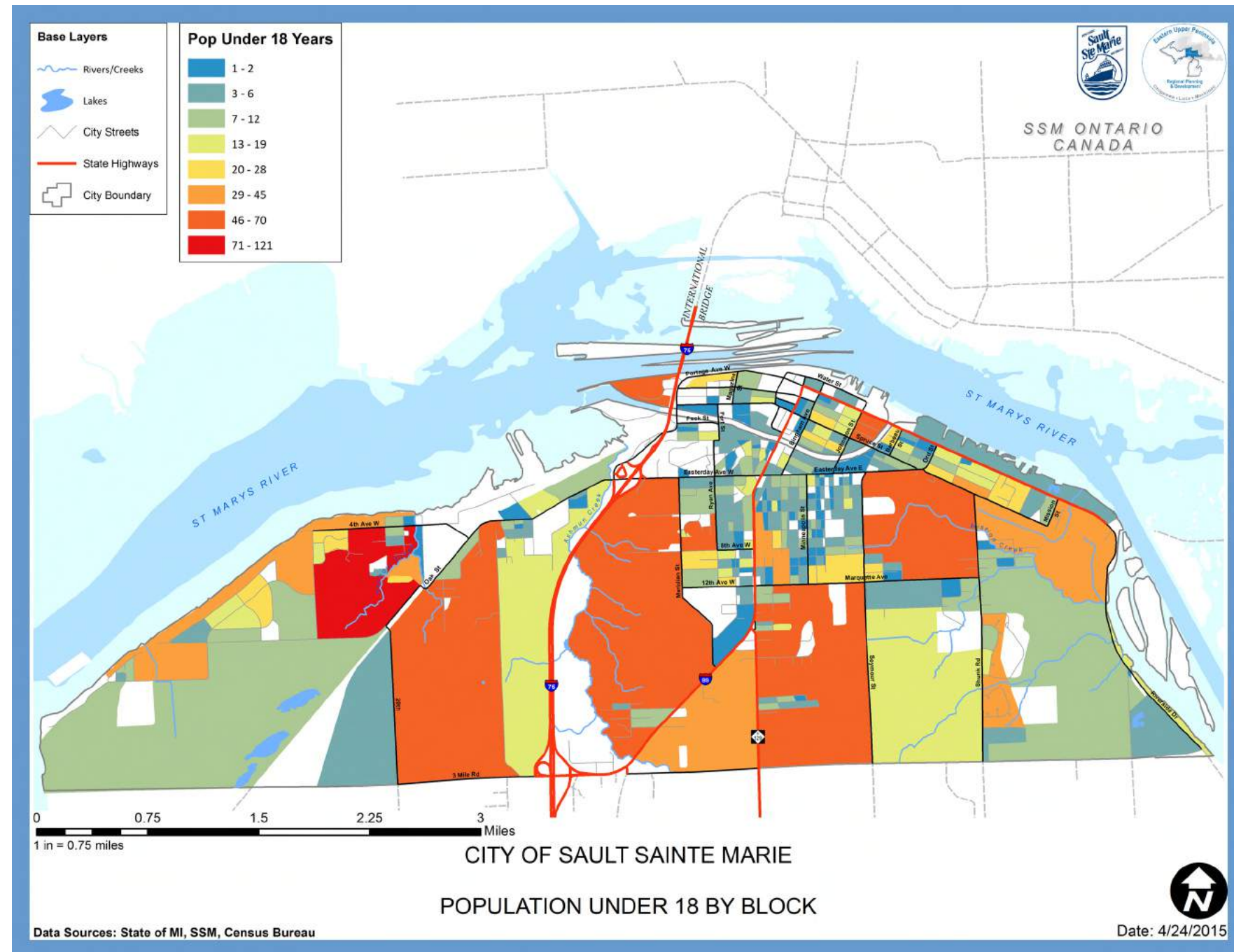
Figure 8: Population Estimates & Projections

	2010 Census	2014 Estimate	2019 Projection
Sault Ste. Marie	14,144	13,939	13,758
Chippewa County	38,520	38,321	37,976

Figure 7: Total Population by Age Group

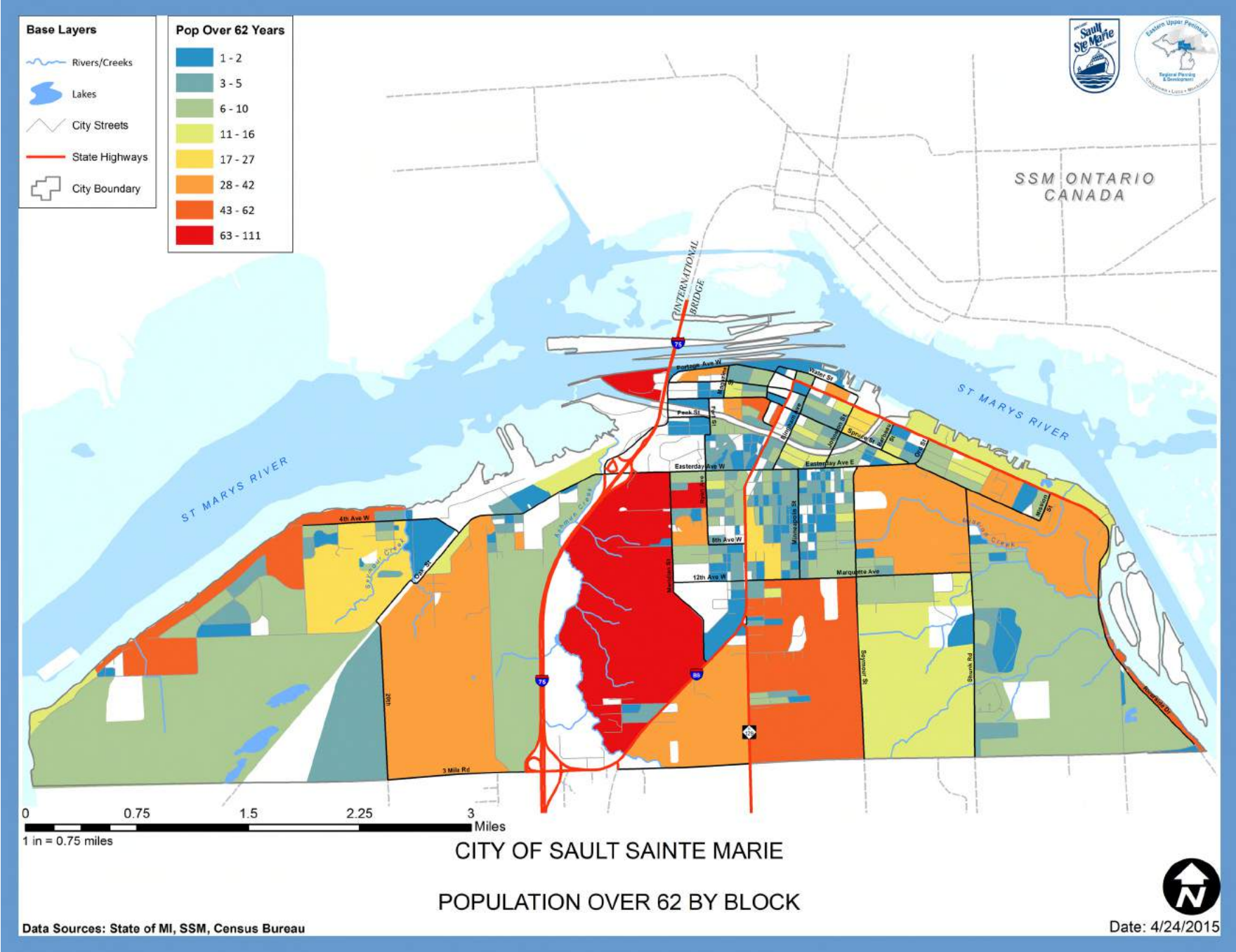


### Map 2: Population Under 18 Years Old by Census Block





Map 3: Population Over 62 Years Old by Census Block



RACIAL COMPOSITION

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Caucasian and Native American racial groups comprise 90.5% of the population of the City, not including those claiming dual races. The portion of the population identifying as Native American is 17.7%. This is a significantly higher percentage than Michigan's state average of 0.6% of the population. Many of the Native Americans in the Sault area are members of the Bay Mills Community of Indians and Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians. Excluding the Caucasian, Native American and multi-racial groups, Sault Ste. Marie's other minority population of 2.2% is significantly lower than the state's average of 21%. Figure 9 on the right highlights the racial composition of the City, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

The 2010 U.S. Census established that there are 2.2 persons per household in the City. This figure continues the local trend toward smaller household size, down from 2.58 in 1980, 2.44 in 1990, 2.28 in 2000, and 2.2 in 2010. The average of these figures indicates that 100 households will have a total population of 217 persons and will have 14 preschoolers, 32 school-age children, 38 college-age residents, 51 family-forming-age residents, 28 mature family residents, 24 pre-retirement-age residents, and 30 retirement-age residents.

INCOME CHARACTERISTICS

Historically, Sault Ste. Marie's median income has been below the State's median income level. In 1989, Sault Ste. Marie's median income was \$21,116, which was 32% less than the state average of \$31,020. The gap grew to 34% in 1999, when Sault Ste. Marie's median income was \$29,652, compared to \$44,667 median income for Michigan. The 2010 U.S. Census indicates that Sault Ste. Marie's median income increased to \$35,323, 27% below Michigan's statewide median income level per household. Figure 10 on the right illustrates the trend data for the City and for Chippewa County.

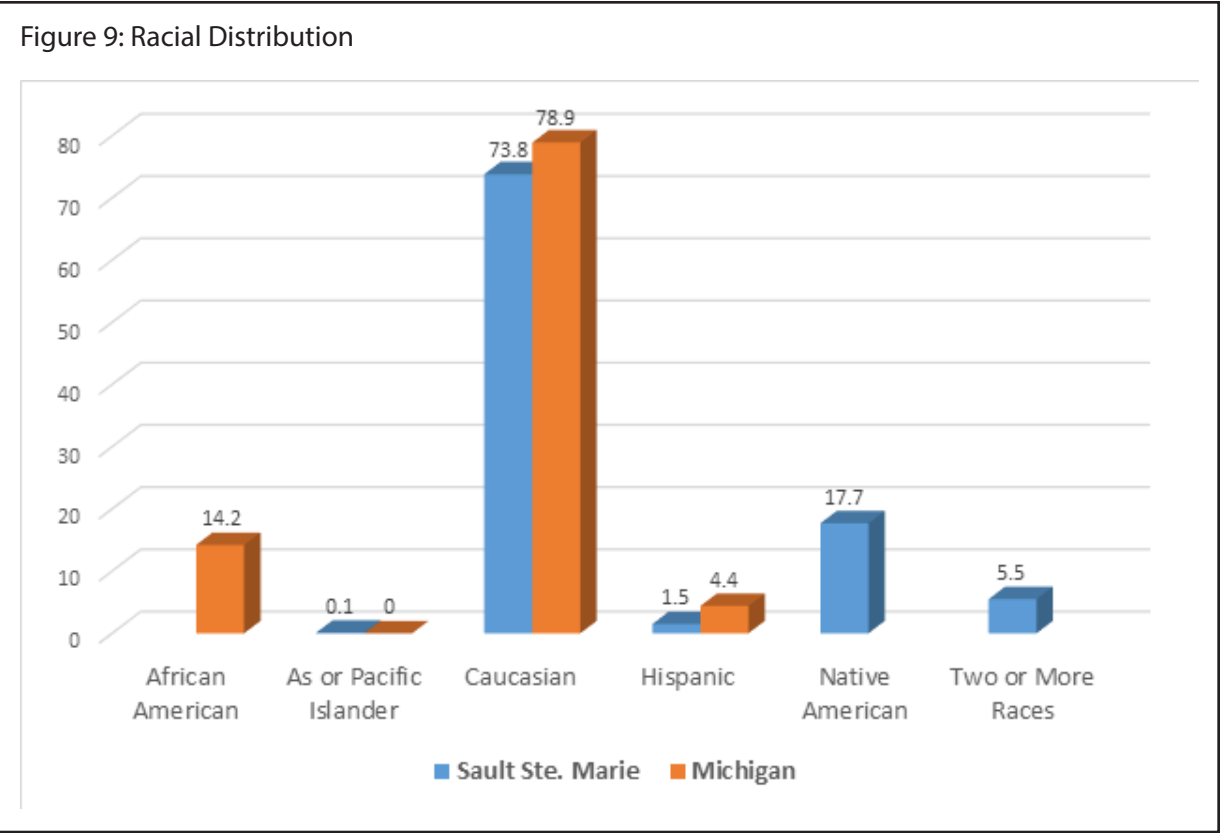


Figure 10: Median Household Income

	1989	1999	2010
Sault Ste. Marie	\$21,166	\$29,652	\$35,323
Chippewa County	\$31,020	\$44,667	\$48,432

The source of the income data in Figure 11 on the next page is the 2013 American Community Survey (ACS) sample data. The median household income, in 2013 dollars, was \$33,620 (+/- \$2,807) while the median family income, again in 2013 dollars, was \$53,125 (+/- \$4,713). The chart below provides an analysis on both the number of households in each income category and the families in each category, for both the 2000 Census and the 2013 ACS. The bars represent households and the lines represent families. A household consists of all the people who occupy a housing unit, collectively. Between the 2000 Census and the 2013 ACS estimate, there was a relatively significant change in the \$15,000 to \$24,999 category. Although the margin of error for this category in the 2013 ACS data is +/- 169, it is still a notable change. An assumption can be made from the data that households were bringing in more income, and the number of families making more than \$75,000 per year increased relatively significantly from 2000 to 2013.





Figure 11 to the right references households in the 2013 ACS, showing a breakdown of the types of household income – earnings, Social Security Income, and retirement – and the mean dollar amounts of those sources of income. It also provides a breakdown of Supplemental Security Income, public assistance, and food stamp assistance. It should be noted that Social Security Income is different than Supplemental Security Income. The Social Security benefit program is a program that workers, employers and the self-employed pay for via income taxes. The taxes that are collected are put into special trust funds and benefactors qualify for these benefits based on work history and age. The amount of the benefit is based on earnings. Supplemental Security Income is a need and qualification-based program for people who demonstrate limited income. This program is funded through general tax revenues, not from the Social Security funds.



Figure 11: Income by Households & Families

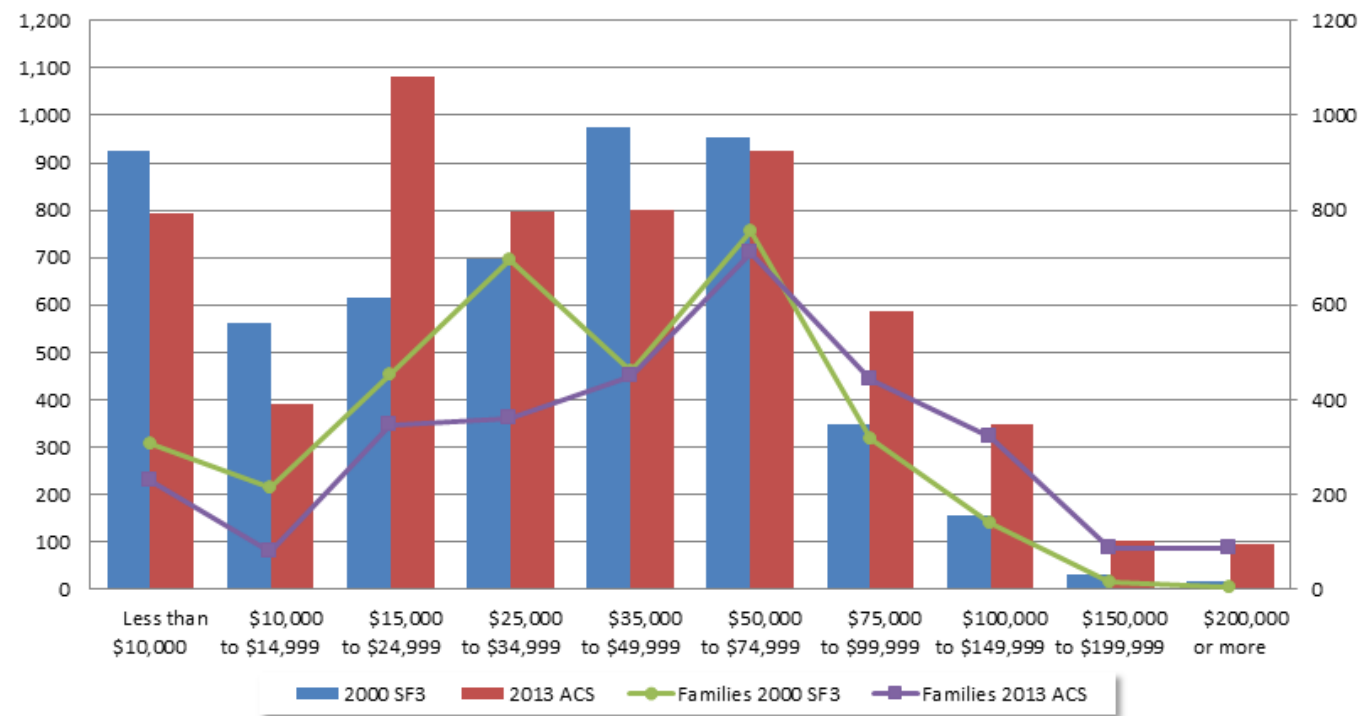


Figure 12: Household Income & Assistance

2013 ACS Households	Estimate	Margin of Error	Percent	Percent Margin of Error
With earnings	4,387	+/-219	74.00%	+/-2.8
Mean earnings (dollars)	48,169	+/-4,117	(X)	(X)
With Social Security	1,792	+/-164	30.20%	+/-2.7
Mean Social Security income (dollars)	14,597	+/-1,004	(X)	(X)
With retirement income	1,225	+/-136	20.70%	+/-2.2
Mean retirement income (dollars)	17,910	+/-2,316	(X)	(X)
With Supplemental Security Income	269	+/-83	4.50%	+/-1.4
Mean Supplemental Security Income (dollars)	10,389	+/-1,983	(X)	(X)
With cash public assistance income	150	+/-65	2.50%	+/-1.1
Mean cash public assistance income (dollars)	3,896	+/-1,141	(X)	(X)
With Food Stamp/SNAP benefits in the past 12 mon	1,222	+/-203	20.60%	+/-3.4



HOUSING

Housing availability, types, and quality are all important factors in the quality of life of the Sault’s resident population. According to the 2010 Census, the City of Sault Ste. Marie has 6,534 housing units and 91.8% are occupied and 8.2% are vacant. Figure 14 on the right shows the growth in the number of housing units over time.

ACS data show that 3,918 housing units (+/- 666 units) were built before 1970. Figure 13 on the right shows the value of housing units in the City with a mortgage. Just over 66% of the City’s housing units have a value less than \$100,000. As the value of housing units increase, the percentage drops.

The following housing tenure assessment was derived from 2010 Census data. Housing data is provided at the smallest Census unit, the Census Block. However, the City contains almost 400 Census blocks, so Tracts and Block Group were used instead. The Sault contains 4 full Census Tracts and 14 Census Block Groups. A portion of a fifth Tract exists within the City, but extends into Soo Township. Because it does not contain any significant data within the City, it was not included in the assessment. Map 5 on page 20 shows the various Census divisions within the City.

Housing tenure refers to the occupant’s ownership status of the housing unit. If a renter primarily occupies a unit, it is considered a rental unit. Similarly, if its owner primarily occupies a unit, it is considered owner-occupied. Owner-occupied units account for 55.2%, with renter-occupied at 44.8%. The vacancy status of vacant housing units (539 units) are as follows: 32.5% for rent, 2.6% for rent not occupied, 13.2% for sale, 4.5% sold not occupied, 21.7% for seasonal or occasional use, and 25.6% other vacant. Housing tenure is often used as an indicator of the character of a neighborhood. Map 5 on the next page provides an overview of the housing tenure within the City by Block Group.

The map on page 22 shows rental units within the City at the Block level. The majority of areas with a high percentage include those that have apartment complexes – for example West Pier, Bridge Village, Edge of the Woods, and Wood Creek. High concentrations of rentals are located near the Tribal housing area on the east side of the City. There are also scattered sites with rental units downtown. These are typically either rental units on upper levels of retail or commercially-used buildings or housing units that are located in areas where there are also retail or commercial uses. Figure 16 on page 23 shows gross rents, derived from the 2013 ACS. The majority of renters pay between \$300 and \$750 per month, with some paying upwards of \$1,000 or more.

Figure 14: Number of Housing Units

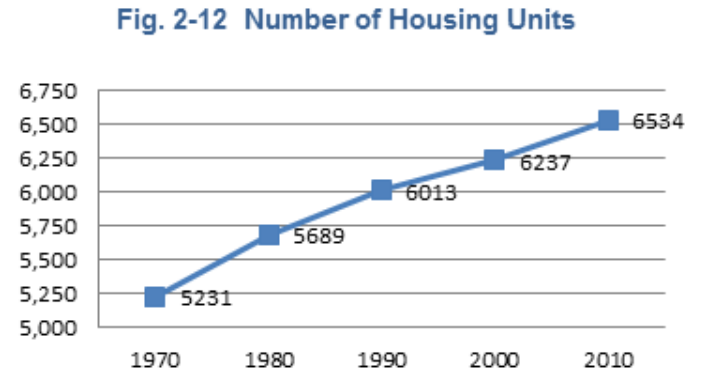
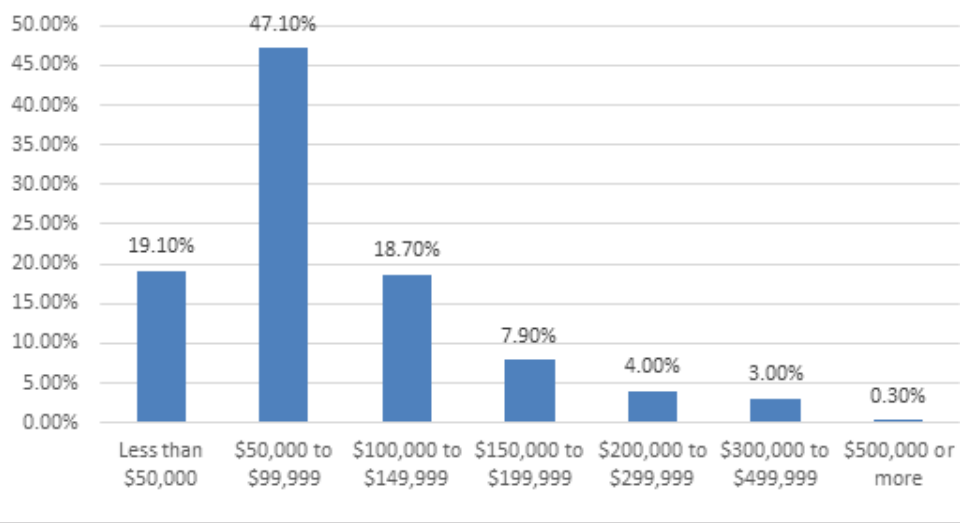
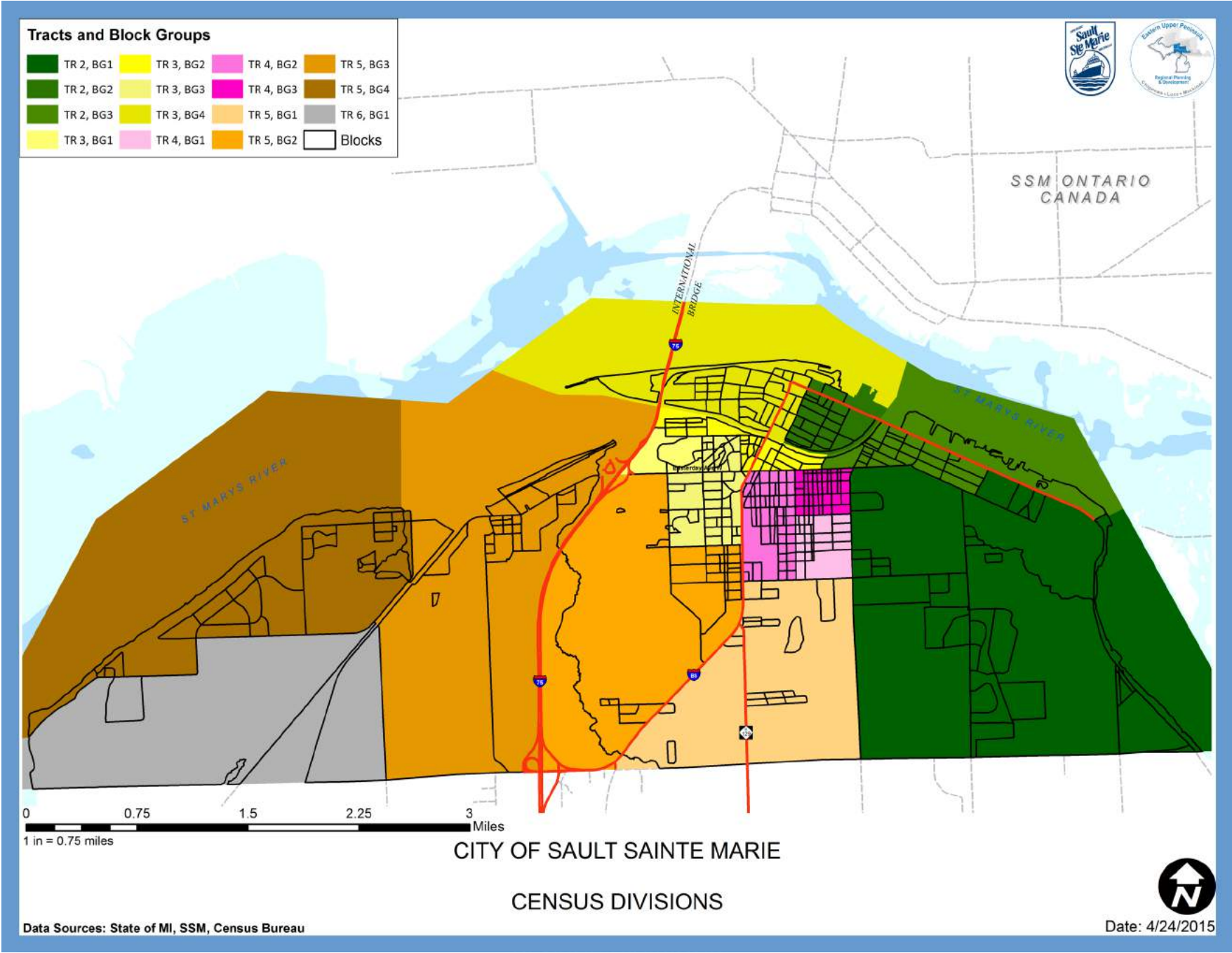


Figure 13: Values of Housing Units with a Mortgage





Map 4: Census Divisions of Sault Ste. Marie



Map 5: Percent of Rental Units by Census Block

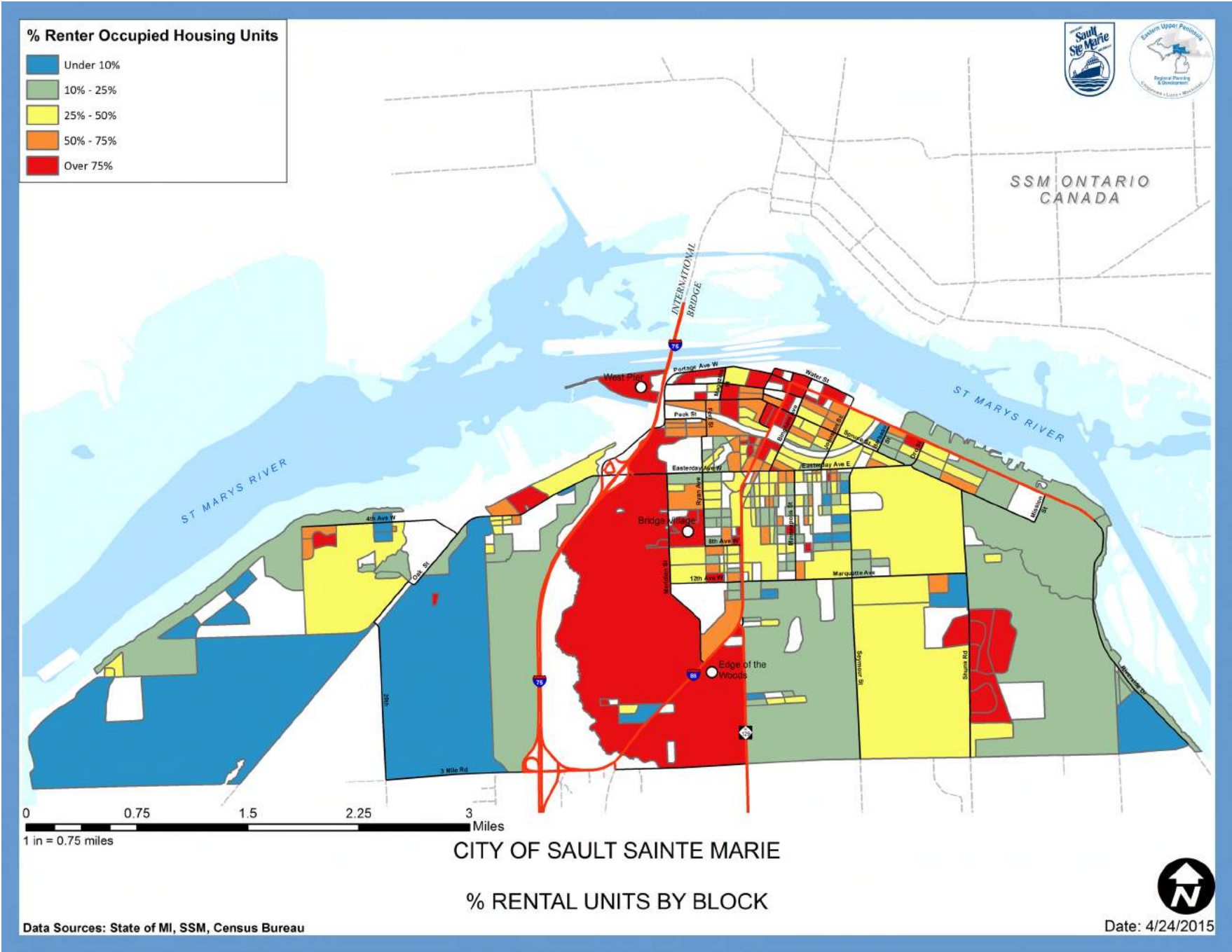




Figure 15: Housing Tenure by Census Block Group

TRACT	BLOCK GROUP	TRBG	Total Units	Total Occupied	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Vacant Units	Seasonal Units	Population in Owner Occupied Units	Population in Rental Occupied Units
9702	1	T2BG1	661	609	414	195	52	14	956	539
	2	T2BG2	598	537	231	306	61	3	620	485
	3	T2BG3	407	363	253	110	44	10	629	253
9703	1	T3BG1	30	30	0	30	0	0	0	103
	2	T3BG2	425	380	165	215	45	2	326	463
	3	T3BG3	468	440	244	196	28	11	608	410
	4	T3BG1	906	807	85	722	99	19	193	1130
9704	1	T4BG2	252	237	186	51	15	3	429	118
	2	T4BG3	650	606	405	201	44	3	975	430
	3	T4BG1	304	284	216	68	20	2	487	150
9705	1	T5BG2	392	371	246	125	21	4	544	230
	2	T5BG3	476	444	181	263	32	2	422	481
	3	T5BG1	306	289	222	67	17	6	578	162
	4	T5BG2	640	579	443	136	61	38	1089	440



Figure 16: Gross Monthly Rent Payments

GROSS RENT	Percent	Margin of Error
Occupied units paying rent	2,445	(X)
Less than \$200	4.90%	+/-3.1
\$200 to \$299	10.30%	+/-3.4
\$300 to \$499	21.70%	+/-5.5
\$500 to \$749	38.90%	+/-7.0
\$750 to \$999	18.50%	+/-5.8
\$1,000 to \$1,499	4.30%	+/-1.9
\$1,500 or more	1.40%	+/-1.8

Figure 17: Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income

GROSS RENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME	UNITS	Margin of Error
Occupied units paying rent	2,400	+/-236
Less than 15.0 percent	372	+/-118
15.0 to 19.9 percent	242	+/-95
20.0 to 24.9 percent	332	+/-117
25.0 to 29.9 percent	199	+/-86
30.0 to 34.9 percent	258	+/-107
35.0 percent or more	997	+/-179

HISTORIC HOUSING

As the Michigan's oldest city, Sault Ste. Marie recognizes the historic structures present within the City. As part of the City survey, respondents were asked about preserving the historic character of the Downtown, and whether the exteriors of downtown buildings should be architecturally consistent with historic buildings. There was a relatively high level of support for both, with 79% and 65% agreeing, respectively.

Several historic structures along Water Street provide a unique look into the lives of early settlers and other historic people and events - John Johnston House, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft House, Bishop Frederic Baraga House, and Kemp Coal Dock Office Building – each have different exhibits and stories to tell. The Chippewa County Courthouse, located downtown, was built in 1877 and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1984.



HOUSING QUALITY AND PROTECTION

City residents have expressed a desire to protect the value and aesthetics of housing and neighborhoods. Responses to the community master plan survey indicated that blight, junk, and other housing issues ranked high as an issue needing resolution. Among respondents, 58% felt the current enforcement of deteriorating buildings was not adequate. Similarly, 41% felt there was not enough enforcement on rental housing properties, and that junk cars and debris in yards were also lacking in adequate enforcement. Almost 70% of survey respondents supported a Rental Housing License Program.

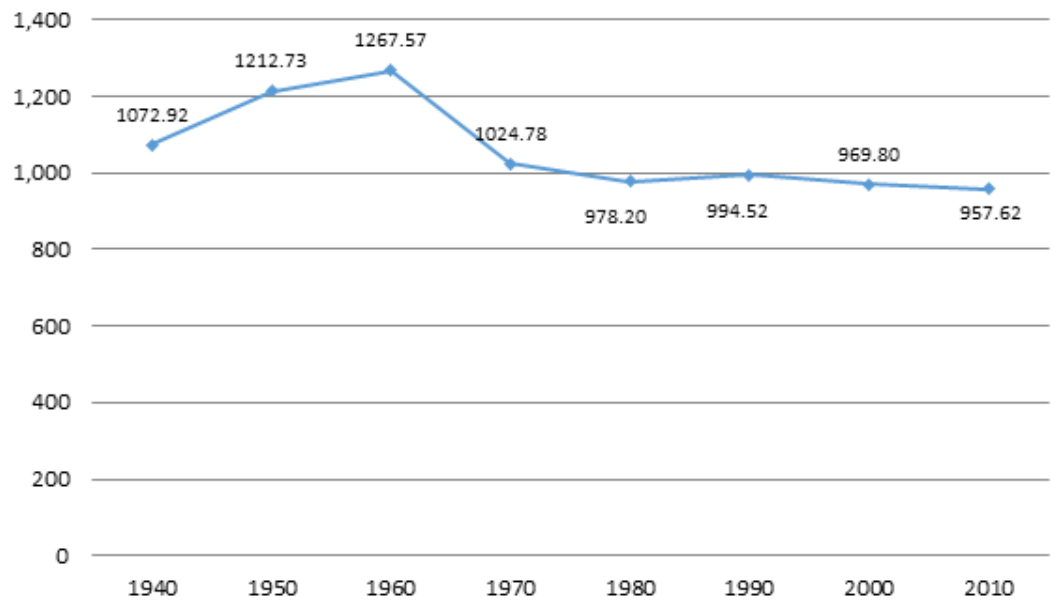
HOUSING DENSITY

The City of Sault Ste. Marie’s population density is currently at the lowest point it has been over the last sixty years at 957.62 persons per square mile, according to the U.S. Census. Figure 18 below illustrates these data by decade, and the trend.

SUMMARY OF RESIDENTIAL MARKET ANALYSIS

In February 2014, the City hired Zimmerman/Volk Associates to complete a target market analysis for housing. The goal of the analysis was to define the realistic potential for new rental and for-sale housing in Sault Ste. Marie. The analysis included an assessment of demographic data such as the age and income of residents, as well as mobility rates, life stage, lifestyle patterns, and household compatibility issues. The study determined that, from a market perspective, up to 200 new rental and for-sale market-rate dwelling units could be constructed, or created through adaptive re-use, and absorbed within the Downtown and in-town neighborhoods over the next five to seven years. More detailed information is available in the complete report prepared by Zimmerman/Volk Associates, which is available for review in the offices of the Downtown Development Authority.

Figure 18: Population Density Trend





# ECONOMY

## PRINCIPAL EMPLOYERS

Education, government, and retail provide the bulk of employment with the City. Industry and manufacturing were significant sources of employment in the City throughout the 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's; however, like many cities across Michigan and the U.S., employment patterns have shifted. The top ten employers within the City in 2013 are listed in the table to the right. An Employer Survey that is commissioned and completed by the Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning & Development Commission in odd numbered years generated these data. For comparison, the 1997 numbers are listed as well, to illustrate some of the changes over the 16-year span.

Lake Superior State University (LSSU), founded in 1946, is the largest employer in the City with nearly 1,000 employees. Precision Edge, the only manufacturing company in the top ten list, was created in 1989. The company has grown substantially since then and manufactures precision surgical products in two locations – Sault Ste. Marie and Boyne City in Michigan's northern Lower Peninsula. Precision Edge has also added almost 50 employees in less than 10 years, and continued growth is expected. The Wal-Mart Store, which relocated from Cascade Crossings, was built in 2009 on the I-75 Business Spur. When the previous Wal-Mart first opened, it had 280 employees. In 2007 it had 200 employees, increasing to 400 in 2013 due to the move and an expansion. Meijer opened in 2017, filling over 300 positions.

## EMPLOYMENT & INDUSTRY

Figure 20 on the right provides data regarding the labor force since 1980. Although the population 16 years and older has remained fairly steady since 1980, those in the labor force and those employed has steadily increased. It should be noted that the 2000 figures below are not reflective of the adjusted 2000

Figure 19: Major Employer Sample

Employer	Description	Employees 2013	Employees 1997
Lake Superior State University	Four-Year State University	961	350
War Memorial Hospital	Full Service Medical/Surgical Hospital	848	400
Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians	Tribal Enterprises and Government Operations	644	
Kewadin Casino	Casino and Hotel Operations	534	
Super Wal-Mart Stores Inc	General Retail with Photo Lab, Pharmacy, Optical Department, Tire, Lube Express, and Subway Restaurant	400	280
Sault Ste Marie Public Schools	Education, Grades K-12	286	392
Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency	Human Services Organization, Head Start	192	139
Precision Edge Surgical Products Co., LLC	Manufacturer of Surgical Cutting Tools & Instruments	183	
Hiawatha Behavioral Health	Community Mental Health serving Chippewa, Mackinac and Schoolcraft Counties	129	
Buffalo Wild Wings	Full Service Restaurant	125	

Census figures, where 2,218 persons were inadvertently added to the original counts.

Manufacturing and industry were large sources of employment in the 1960's and 1970's. As factories and companies closed, employment shifted to services and education. The 1997 Eastern Upper Peninsula Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy document describes the economy of the 1990's as service, government, and education-based. The Cascade Crossings Shopping Center opened in 1992, with Wal-Mart as the anchor store. JC Penney, Glen's, and other retail stores were also located in the complex. Several retail stores closed or moved out of the downtown during this time; JC Penney moved and Woolworths closed. The Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency developed the Avery Center at the corner

of Spruce and Ashmun, creating senior apartments and space for the County Health Department. The Sault Tribe purchased the old JC Penney building for its administrative building. Lake Superior State University also expanded during this time.

Figure 20: Labor Statistics of Sault Ste. Marie

Labor Force	1980	1990	2000*	2013 ACS
Population 16 years and over	11,332	11,477	13,719	11,585
Civilian labor force	6,041	6,904	7,423	7,323
Employed	5,239	6,264	6,610	6,269
Unemployed	802	640	813	1,054
Armed Forces	128	130	76	95
Not in labor force	5,163	4,443	6,220	4,167
*Does not reflect adjusted 2000 figures				



LAKE SUPERIOR STATE UNIVERSITY – STUDENT  
POPULATION

Lake Superior State University is a significant anchor institution within the City. Each year it brings over 2,000 students to campus and the City. Over 85% of these students are from Michigan. Figure 21 below illustrates Fall 2013 enrollment.

The University offers \_\_\_\_ degree programs, with a student-to-faculty ratio of sixteen-to-one. Residents of Sault Ste. Marie and the surrounding area also have the opportunity to attend the sporting events, art shows and performances that the University hosts.

The City has recently been improving the linkage with LSSU, but more could be and will be done to provide more services and interests for the student and faculty populations, particularly related to housing choices within the downtown. This plan explores some of these opportunities and identifies growth and development goals that are shared by the City and LSSU.

The data on this page were provided by various reports from LSSU’s Institutional Research.

Figure 21: Lake Superior State University Enrollment Data

Fall 2013	FTIC,1st-year	All Undergraduates
Percent who are from out of state (exclude international students & non-resident aliens)	5%	5%
Percent who live in college-owned-operated housing	71%	35%
Percent who live off-campus or commute	29%	65%
Percent of students age 25 and older	2%	17%
Average age of full-time students	18	21
Average age of all students (full- and part-time)	19	23

TOURISM

A significant portion of the Sault’s economic base is built on tourism. Traditionally, the Soo Locks have been the main draw, attracting upwards of 1 million people to the community in some of the peak years in the 1970’s. A variety of support facilities has developed around this focus, including locks boat tours and historic walking trails.

The Locks, however, are not the only attraction in the area. The draw of the Great Lakes, the nearby State and Federal forests, the hunting, fishing, boating, swimming, camping and snowmobiling resources have also been a major draw. In recent years, Great Lakes Cruise ships have made Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan a highlight stop on thier tours.

The City is also strategically located with respect to major tourism attractions within an hour’s drive, such as Tahquamenon Falls, Brimley State Park, Mackinac Island, the Les Cheneaux Area, the Algoma Snow Train, and the ski slopes in Canada.

Additionally, since the mid-1980’s, a growing number of Tribal-operated casinos, some with associated hotels, restaurants, and entertainment venues, have been developed in Sault Ste. Marie and Chippewa County, creating year-round tourist destinations that bring

additional visitors to the area, reportedly in excess of two million per year.

While most of the annual tourists generally come from downstate in Michigan, significant numbers also come from Ontario (Canada), Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Minnesota and Iowa. Nearly every state is represented in a typical tourism season.

A principal challenge of Sault Area Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Chamber of Commerce has been to encourage and stimulate facilities and activities that will “hold” a visitor for a few extra days, and to enhance the winter and spring seasons (“shoulder seasons”) with activities that will help to increase the attraction of the community during these traditionally slower months for tourism. The rich history and cultural heritage, waterfront access, wildlife, and outdoor recreation assets within the City of Sault Ste. Marie and in the surrounding region lend to its strengths as a tourism destination. These same assets ensure that those who choose to live in the City can experience a “vacation” just minutes after leaving work or school.







## 3. INFRASTRUCTURE, SERVICES, & ASSETS

# GOVERNMENT FACILITIES & OFFICES

A key factor in the quality of life of community residents are the facilities and services provided. Community facilities and/or public facilities typically include those owned, operated, and/or maintained by the City, Tribe, other governments, or quasi-public entities that serve or benefit City residents.

## FEDERAL POST OFFICE

The United States Post Office is located on the corner of Ridge Street and Osborn Blvd.

## CITY HALL

Sault Ste. Marie’s City Government is currently located in the old Federal Building located on Portage Avenue/Water Street. The City relocated offices in 2011, moving from the County/City Building next to the County Courthouse to the newly renovated City Hall. The building was constructed in 1910 to house the US Post Office and various federal offices. In 1989, Tendercare Inc. purchased the building to house its corporate headquarters, and in 2007 the building was offered as a gift by the property owner, Dr. Lukenda, to the City of Sault Ste. Marie. Renovations began in the spring of 2010, and the building opened to the public on June 7, 2011.



## CITY FIRE SERVICES

The Sault Ste. Marie Fire Department originated in 1884, with three stations – Station #1 on Ridge Street, Station #2 in Algonquin, and Station #3 at Ashmun & Tenth Street. The existing Fire Hall was built in 1907 and is still in use today. In addition to providing fire and EMS services, the Fire Department also handles and manages burn permits for the City.

## CITY POLICE

The Sault Ste. Marie Police Department moved from the County/City Building in 2011 to its current location on Hursley Street, in a former Edison Sault building (currently owned by Cleveland Electric). A lease was signed in 2011 and runs through 2027.

## SAULT TRIBE OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS

The Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians maintains several facilities within the City. The Sault Tribe operates its own government, with a chairperson and Tribal council. The largest complex is the Kewadin Casino and Hotel, located on Shunk Road, just south of Marquette Avenue. The Casino complex provides over 500 jobs to both Tribal and non-Tribal members, and the Tribal Government employs over 600 people, making the Sault Tribe a consistent top employer within the City. The Sault Tribe operates five casinos in the U.P., provides health care centers at several locations within the service area, operates its own police department and tribal court, and operates the Chi Mukwa (Big Bear) Recreation Complex. The Tribe also operates two Midjim convenience and gas stores in Sault Ste. Marie and St. Ignace.

In addition to many business ventures, the Sault Tribe Law Enforcement Department has a main office within the city limits, which serves this community along with many others within their seven-county service area.

## CHIPPEWA COUNTY FACILITIES

Several important county facilities are located within the city limits. The county courthouse, administration building, and jail are all located on the block encircled by Court Street, E. Spruce Street, Bingham Avenue, and Maple Street. This concentration of county facilities sits but one block away from Sault Ste. Marie’s City Hall. On the block separating the two, U.S. Customs and Border Patrol has its offices located. Also adding to the strong institutional presence in the area are the Bayliss Public Library, the Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District Facility, and Michigan State University Extension’s office located in the County Courthouse building.

## STATE AGENCIES

Many state agencies have offices within the Sault Ste. Marie city limits. The State Police, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and the Secretary of State are all accessible to our residents and serve the surrounding communities. The Sault Ste. Marie Management Unit of the Michigan DNR is responsible for the management of approximately 125,000 acres, and maintains all the recreational assets housed within that acreage.





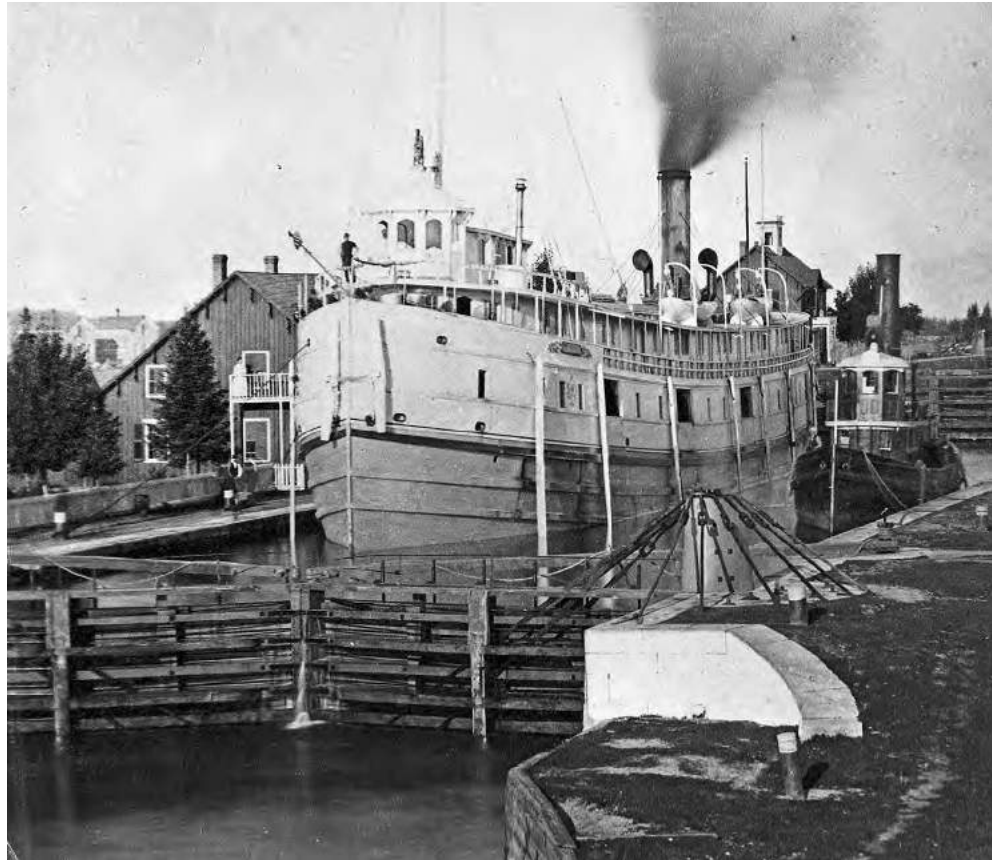


#### SOO LOCKS FEDERAL FACILITY

Along the waterfront in Sault Ste. Marie, U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Coast Guard all own and operate large swaths of land--nearly all from the beginning to the end of the power canal. This poses placemaking challenges due the lack of available land and access, but it is essential for the maritime trade, international crossing, and tourism that help define the area.

#### INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE ADMINISTRATION

The International Bridge Administration works to ensure the safe and efficient passage millions of people and billions of dollars in goods between Ontario and Michigan. The International Bridge is the only place for vehicle passage between the U.S. and Canada within 300-miles in either direction, and connects major trucking arteries, including I-75, M-28, and the Trans-Canada Highway.



#### BOARDER AGENCIES

The International Bridge combines with water traffic to make this section of the U.S.-Canadian boarder particularly active, and many related boarder agencies have located thier offices within the city limits. U.S. Customs and Border Protection contains three sister agencies: the Office of Field Operations (OFO), the Office of Border Patrol (OBP), and Air and Marine Operations (AMO). Each of these agencies contrubtes to the safety and security of our boarder through thier area of focus.



# MEDICAL FACILITIES

## WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

War Memorial Hospital and its auxiliary facilities make up the core of the medical district in the downtown of Sault Ste. Marie. Pine Street, Nolte Street/Memorial Drive, Peck Street, Oaka Street, and Spruce Street all encircle the area under examination.

Along with War Memorial Hospital's campus, private practice facilities, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Chippewa County Health Department, and emergency care facilities provide a nice density and cluster of related industry.

The health industry is a major economic drive in the region, attracting professionals and practitioners from outside the area and, in some cases, outside of the country. War Memorial Hospital alone employed 813 full-time equivalent persons in 2016. This number is up 54% from 2004. Furthermore, the money that flows into the City and region via War Memorial Hospital is quite substantial: In 2016, the hospital paid \$47.5 million in wages, which was up 144% from 2004.

War Memorial Hospital is also making strides to create partnerships with Lake Superior State University. In the next couple of years the hospital and university intend to partner together on a nurse-training facility that will provide a myriad of benefits. Most notably the hospital will be able to train current and potential staff, and the university will increase opportunities for students.

In terms of the land use, the buildings vary in height and mass, some reaching 4 stories. The hospital and Community Action have recently introduced new construction to this

part of the City, which provides a contemporary appearance amongst older structures. This part of the City is heavily paved and within the bounds described above, green space is minimal if not nonexistent. The City's only parking structure is also located in this district and provides mass parking for those working and using the services available there.



## SAULT TRIBE HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Sault Tribe's health and human services facility is located on the northwest corner of Ashmun and 3 Mile Road--just inside city limits. Unlike War Memorial Hospital, this is the only medical facility in the area.

However the facility was recently constructed and is located in a commercial corridor. Many smaller businesses line the opposite side of Ashmun in this part of the City, along with a variety of housing types. Behind the facility is a large wood lot that runs to the back of Wal-Mart.





# EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

## LAKE SUPERIOR STATE UNIVERSITY

Lake Superior State University is located on Easterday Avenue, near the I-75 freeway. The campus is roughly 115 acres in size, on the site of former US Army’s Fort Brady. In addition to providing the City and area residents with higher education, LSSU has historically been one of the City’s largest employers. More information about LSSU’s students is discussed on page 18.

## BAYLISS PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Bayliss Public Library is located on Library Drive, off Court Street. The library was built in 1975 after the existing library outgrew its building on Armory Place near the County Courthouse, which was an original Carnegie Library. In 2013, the Superior District Library was formed, combining eight separate libraries into one district. The newly formed district is governed by a six-member board, appointed by the participating governmental units.

## SAULT STE. MARIE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

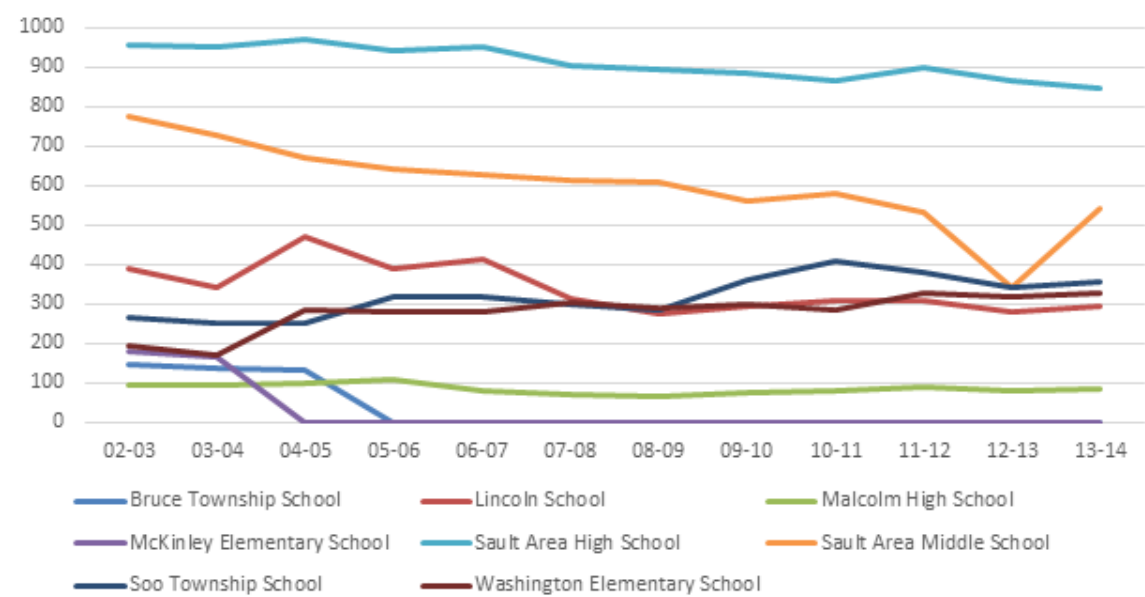
The Sault Ste. Marie Public School System serves residents in the City, Soo Township, Sugar Island, Neebish Island, and parts of Dafer and Bruce Townships. Six schools make up the school system – Malcolm High School, Soo Township School, Washington Elementary, Sault Area Middle School, Sault Area High School, and Lincoln School. The student count trend is shown in the following chart, from years 2002 – 2014. Note: McKinley Elementary School was closed after 2003-04, hence the drop in enrollment to 0. In 2008, the site was demolished and an assisted living facility was constructed on the site.

## BAHWETING ANISHNABE ACADEMY

The Joseph K. Lumsden Bahweting Anishnabe Academy opened in 1994 as a tribal school sponsored by the Sault Ste. Marie band of Chippewa Indians. In 1995, the school was chartered by Northern Michigan University to become a public school academy. The school is currently funded a Public School Academy, chartered through Northern Michigan University and grants from the Bureau of Indian Education. The school has typically seen enrollment between 450 and 500 students.



Figure 22: Sault Area Schools’ Enrollment



# TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

## MASTER TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The City adopted a Master Transportation Plan in January 2015. The Plan includes a comprehensive overview of existing and future auto, transit, cycling and pedestrian traffic needs within the City. A copy of the complete plan can be found on the City’s website.

## CITY STREETS

Like so many other cities in Michigan, the condition of streets ranks high on residents’ list of improvements, as was the case with the City’s Citizen Survey. The map on the following page shows the hierarchical classification of the street network, using the National Function Classification, as well as sidewalks and bike trails. NFC is a MDOT term for the Highway Functional Classification values. FHWA developed the Highway Functional Classification method for all public roads. The higher functions emphasize mobility, the lower functions have more property access. The values from the highest mobility function down to the lowest include: Interstate, Other Freeways, Other Principal Arterials, Minor Arterials, Major Collectors, Minor Collectors and Local.

The following table shows a breakdown of the City’s NFC road structure – the NFC category, examples, NFC explanation, and miles of that NFC category within the City.

The condition of City streets is collected by a visual survey called PASER – Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating. Typically, federal-aid roads are rated annually, with local streets rated every three years. The latest PASER condition for the City follows the NFC map – 2014 federal-aid and 2013 local. The PASER scale ranges from 10 to 1, with 10 being brand new and 1 being failed. The chart at the right shows the historical ratings for the City’s federal-aid system since 2006.

Because of the mileage of State highway within the City, the trend tends to jump when a MDOT project is completed within the City. By comparison, the trend shows a different scenario when State highways within the City are removed from the analysis. In 2007, a sharp rise in poor roads may have resulted from relatively stricter subjective ratings by the rating team.

The years 2008-2011 saw an increase in the number of roads with relatively higher ratings. Overall, the majority of streets within the City are in relatively good condition.

## MAJOR ROADS

The City is bisected by Interstate I-75 which has two exits located within city limits at 3 Mile Road and Easterday Ave. The northern terminus of I-75 is located at the entrance to the International Bridge, which continues into Sault Ste. Marie, ON. The bridge is maintained and operated by the International Bridge Authority, a partnership of the governments of Michigan and Ontario.

The I-71 Business Spur begins at the I-75/3 Mile Road exit and continues into the downtown before turning east towards its terminus at the Sugar Island ferry dock. The Business Spur is the primary north/south non-interstate artery within the City.

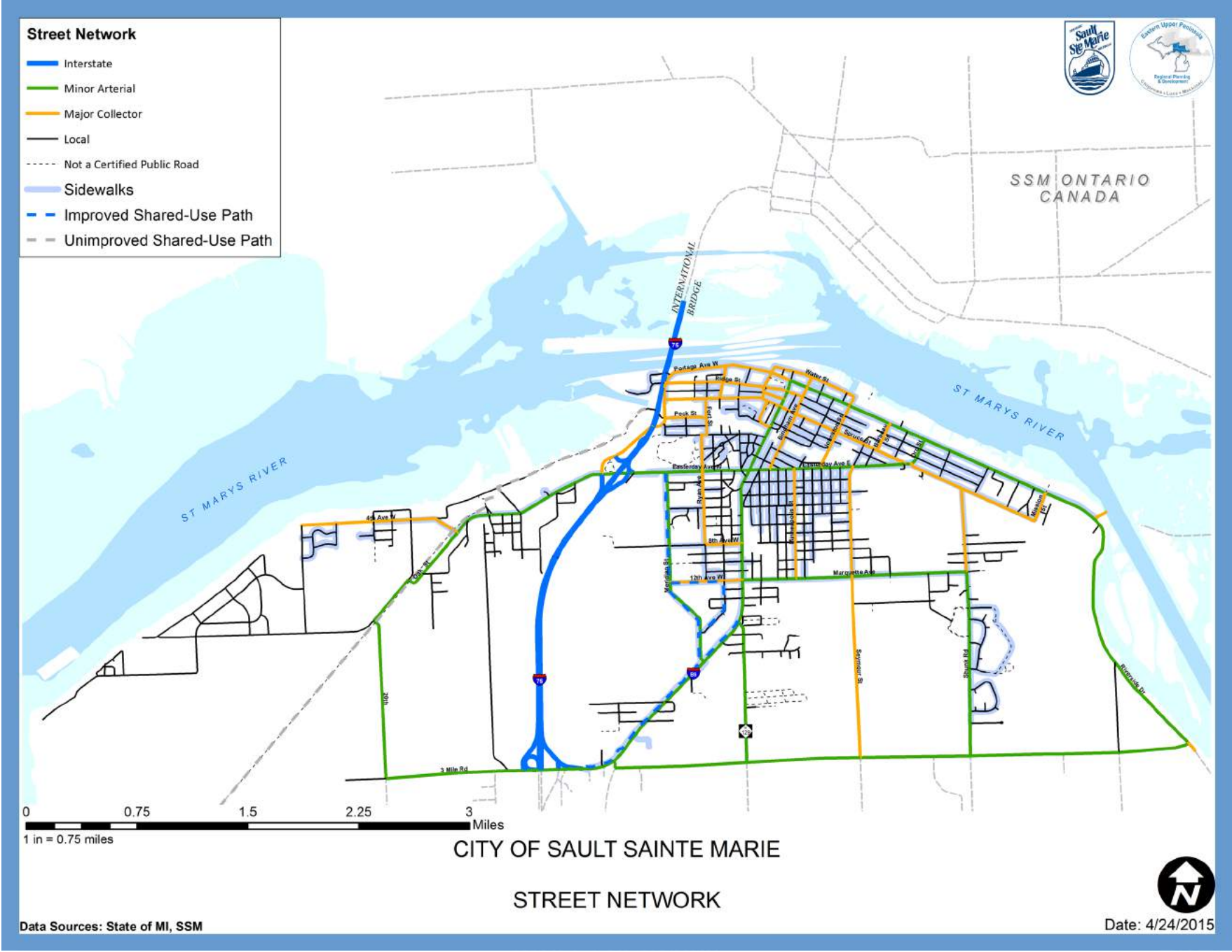
Figure 23: Major Road Classifications

NFC CATEGORY	EXAMPLES	NFC CHARACTERISTICS	SYSTEM LENGTH (Miles)
Interstate	I-75 (International Bridge included)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Expressway, through-travel at high speed</li></ul>	8.86
Minor Arterial	3 Mile; Easterday Ave.; Portage Ave.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Through-travel movements</li><li>Mobility rather than access</li><li>Higher traffic speeds</li></ul>	22.95
Major Collector	Seymour; Minneapolis; Spruce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Funnel traffic from local streets to arterial streets</li><li>Slower traffic speeds</li></ul>	14.95
Local	5 <sup>th</sup> ; Johnston; Maple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Direct access</li><li>Slow traffic speeds</li><li>Through-travel more difficult</li></ul>	59.5
Other	Maloney’s Ally; Tribal & Private Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Property access &amp; Ally’s</li><li>Other roads not federal-aid eligible</li></ul>	10.32

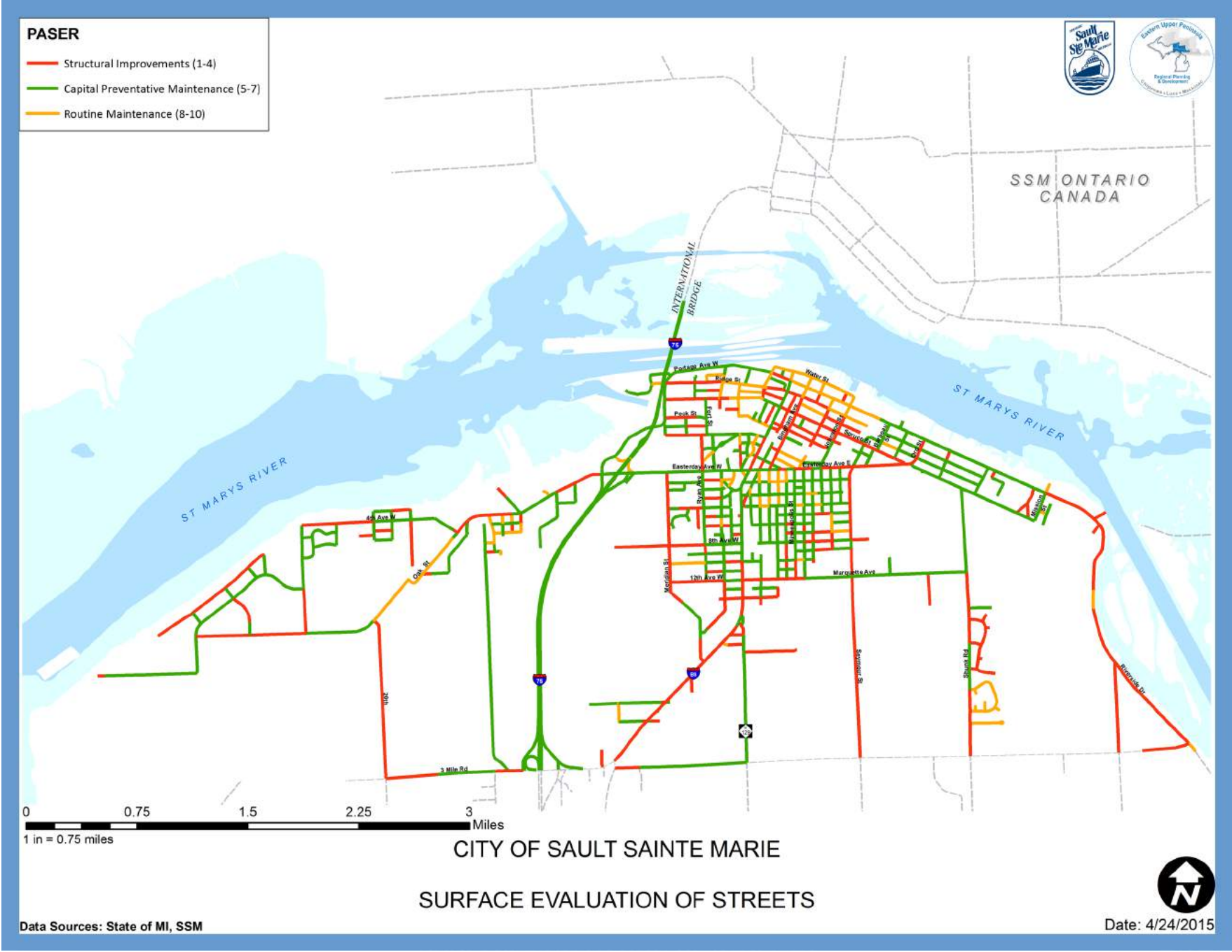




Map 6: Vehicular Transportation Network



Map 7: PASER-Rated Roads





TRANSIT

The City of Sault Ste. Marie is currently served by two mass transit providers. The Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority (EUPTA) operates a bussing system which serves to connect the City to the outlying communities of Kincheloe, Rudyard, Pickford, and DeTour. EUPTA also operates three ferries, including the Sugar Island which docks at the east end of Portage Avenue and is the only link between Sugar Island and the mainland. The EUPTA terminal is a drop-off and pickup point for Indian Trails, a long-distance passanger bus line with destinations throughout Michigan, Wisconsin, and points beyond. Indian Trails stops include Amtrak stations as well as Greyhound stations, allowing connections to the national ransportation network.

Service to destinations within the city limits is provided by an on-demand Dial-A-Ride service which is operated by Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency (Community Action). Community Action also operates a Bridge Bus which connects two Sault Ste. Marie, MI desintations with two Sault Ste. Marie, ON destinations, including the Canadian Sault's local bus terminal.

EXISTING TRAFFIC PATTERNS

The Michigan Department of Transportation collects data on traffic volumes for roads they maintain. Below are numbers taken from MDOT's Traffic Volumes Map concerning average annual daily traffic in 2015 (this counts two-way traffic unless the road is a one-way):

- Ashmun St. between I-75 Business Loop and Marquette Ave.: 21,100 AADT
- I-75 Business Loop between Mackinac Trail and Ashmun St.: 15,500 AADT
- Ashmun St. between Marquette Ave. and Easterday Ave.: 14,800 AADT
- Ashmun St. between Easterday Ave. and the power canal: 11,900 AADT
- I-75 between 3 Mile Rd. and Easterday Ave. (north-south): 6,000 AADT
- Ashmun St. between I-75 Business Loop and 3 Mile Rd.: 5,700 AADT
- I-75 between Easterday Ave. and halfway accross the International Bridge: 4,500 AADT
- Portage Ave. between Ashmun St. and the power canal: 4,300 AADT
- Portage Ave. between the power canal and Elm St.: 4,000 AADT
- Ashmun St. between the power canal and Portage Ave.: 3,900 AADT
- Portage Ave. between Elm St. and the Sugar Island ferry dock: 3,400 AADT
- I-75 Business Loop between I-75 and Mackinac Trail: 1,500 AADT



Figure 24: Rating Comparison with State Trunklines

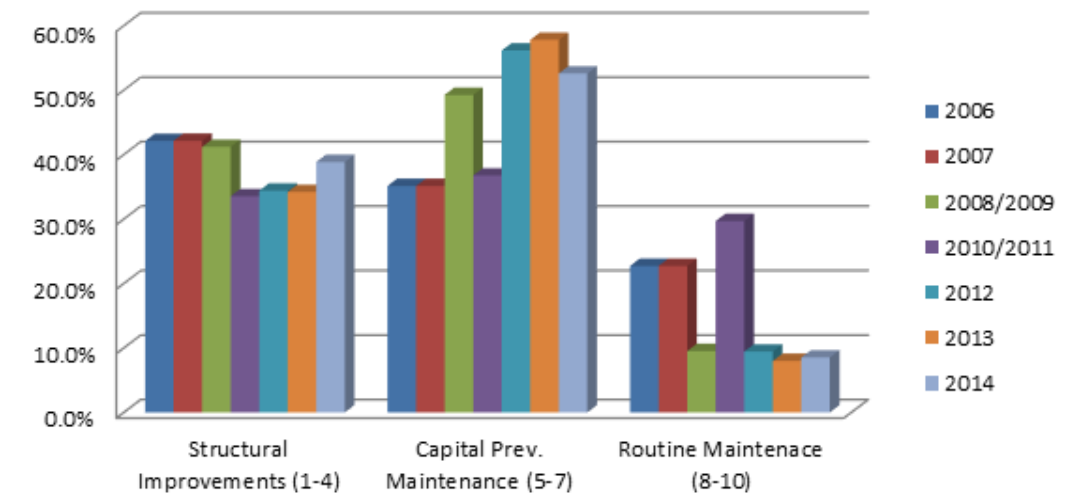
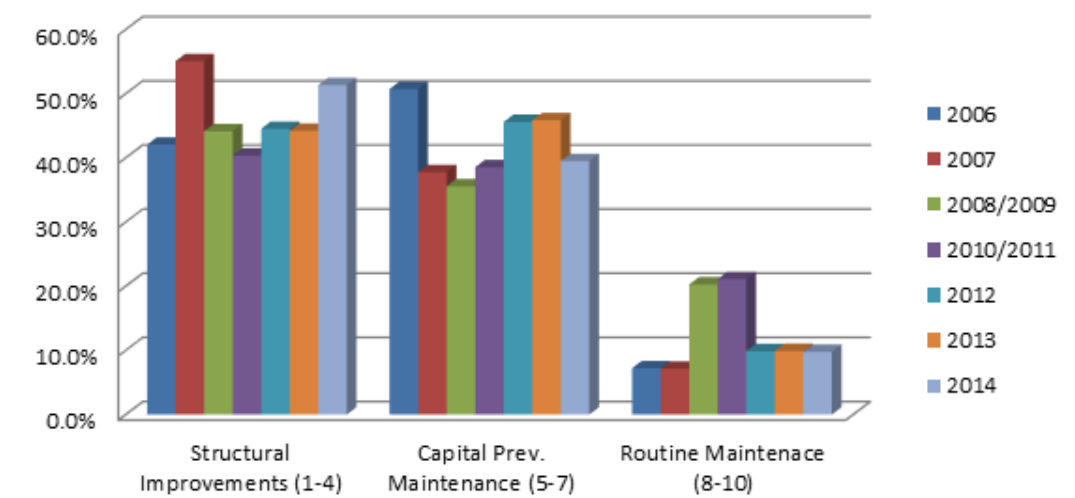


Figure 25: Rating Comparison without State Trunklines



NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

In recent years, cities across the U.S. have started to integrate a stronger focus on non-motorized transportation connections in their planning and development practices. The City of Sault Ste. Marie is focusing on creating a community that is a sustainable small urban environment that promotes the well-being of the people, provides a place that is environmentally friendly, which also showcases its historical and recreational opportunities. Encouraging a healthy and more active lifestyle by providing more connectivity of trails, sidewalks and bike routes, safer crosswalks and bike parking is just one of the goals the City of Sault Ste. Marie has set to create that environment.

The City completed and adopted a Non-motorized Transportation Plan in 2012. The plan includes recommendations for network connectivity, surface improvements, and other investments. The table below provides a summary of the improvements recommended in the plan. The City also completed a Walkability Audit in 2014.

Map 8: Sidewalk Location

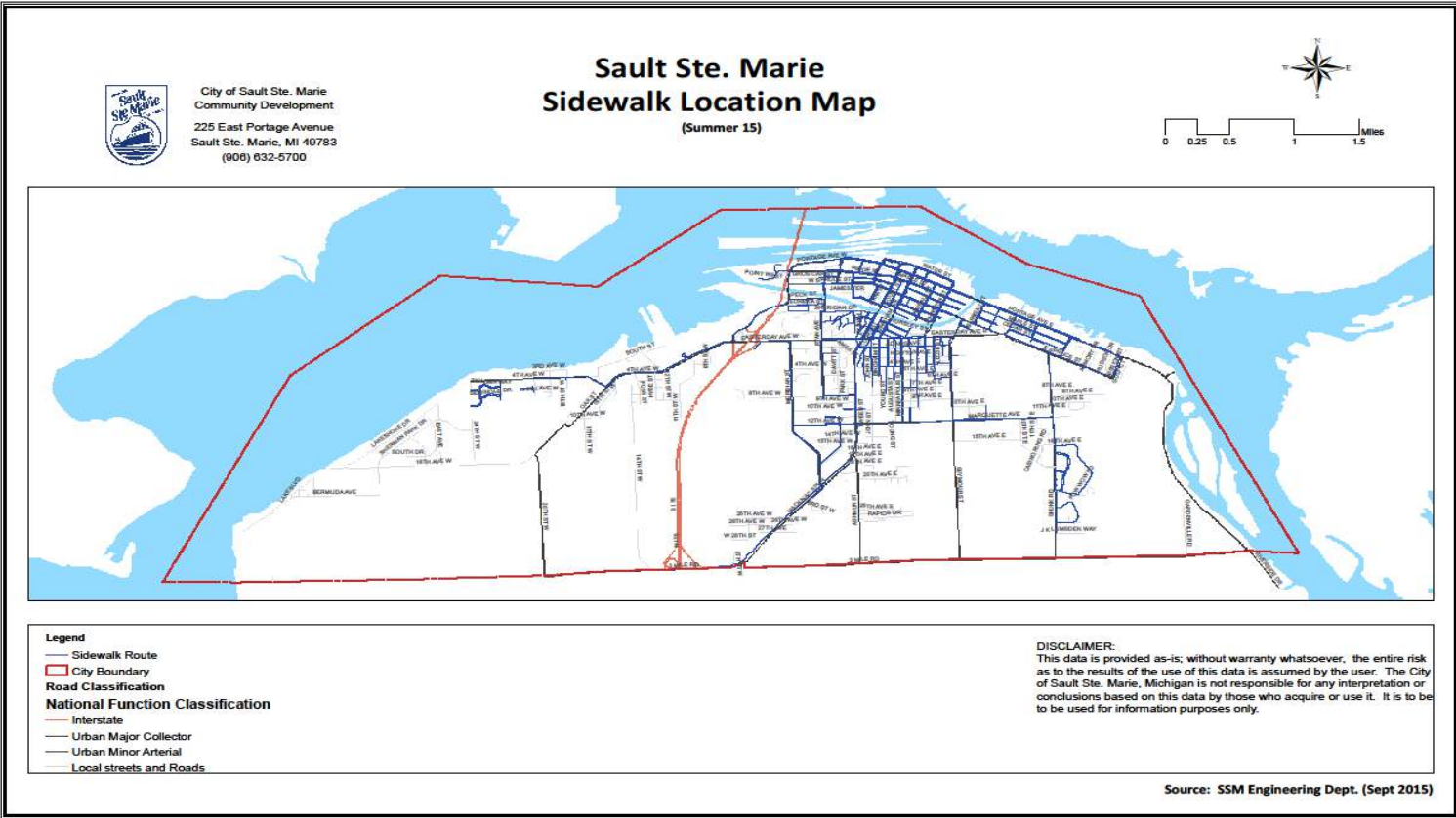


Figure 26: Proposed Non-Motorized Improvements

Facility Type	Near Term	Mid Term	Long Term	Total
New Sidewalk Construction	1.63 miles	1.55 miles	1.82 miles	5 miles
New Multi-Use Path Construction	1.04 miles	2.28 miles	9.9 miles	13.22 miles
Multi-Use Path Surface Improvement	1.15	0.51	4.78	6.44 miles
Paved Road Shoulders		1.22	2.03	3.25 miles
Bike Routes	19.33			19.33 miles
Trails		2.48	1.58	4.06 miles
Crosswalk Improvements	16	6		22
Trailhead Improvements	3	4	1	8





AIR

Sault Ste. Marie has an airport within city limits. Sanderson Field is located along Meridian between the I-75 Business Spur and I-75.

Primarily, the airport hosts small single-prop planes, but has the capacity to handle smaller charter jets as well as larger propeller driven airplanes. Helicopters will also make use of the airfield. There are hanger facilities at the airfield which are accompanied by a terminal facility.

Larger commercial flights—including cargo—operate out of Chippewa County International Airport, which is located approximately 22 miles south of the City in Kincheloe.



RAIL

Canadian National Railway operates the lone rail line that remains in operation within city limits. The US section of the rail line continues across the St. Marys River over a pair of single-rail lift bridges originally constructed in the late 1880s. A swing bridge on the Ontario side completes the connection between the US and Canada.

The infrastructure of the freight-rail bridge is old, but continues to operate every day. Once rails cross the river heading south, the rail line turns westward almost immediately and heads outside city limits. The line then turns south towards Dafer Township.



WATER

Water transportation is a large part of the reason for Sault Ste. Marie's existence. Both commercial and residential water transportation operate daily—though commercial water transportation ceases during the winter months. Along with the aforementioned, Sault Ste. Marie is home to motorized and non-motorized water recreation water transportation.

Commercial shipping passes through the lock system owned and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This lock system has been vital to Sault Ste. Marie for generations and continues to be instrumental in facilitating world trade. Commodities like coal, iron ore, and wheat pass through the locks. In 2016, a total of 83.3 million tons of cargo moved through the locks. On the west end of the city, a no-longer-used dock, the Reiss Coal Dock, is located in an industrial zone. The City EDC is looking into options for reuse of the site. On the east side of the power canal, the Carbide Dock is located and operating although recently discovered structural deficiencies have potentially complicated the future of that facility.

Sugar Island Township is located just across the St. Marys River from the northeast part of the city. Here one must take a ferry to the island, which operates multiple trips daily throughout the year.

Recreation users paddle the St. Marys in calmer and less-busy parts of the river while those in motor boats will take advantage of boating and fishing opportunities in the St. Marys River, Whitefish Bay, and even the Great Lakes--3 of which are reachable from Sault Ste. Marie in a day's time. Common access points for recreational use are found on either side of town at either Rotary Park or Ashmun Bay.



# WATER & SANITARY SERVICES

Located on the St. Marys River, the City has an abundant supply of water. The City Water Treatment Plant services the City and portions of Soo Township, which is located on the south side of 3 Mile Road, the city's limits.

The water treatment facility is located on the western part of the City just south of Sherman Park. The facility is rated at 6,000,000 gallons per day. This facility possesses underground storage of finished water for up to 1,500,000 gallons.

The wastewater treatment plant located on E. Portage Avenue across from the Armory has primary treatment capacity of 15 million gallons per day; secondary treatment capacity is 12 million gallons per day.

The city also has 3 primary water towers. The W. 4th Avenue water tower has a capacity of 750,000 gallons; the W. 25th Avenue water tower has a capacity of 250,000 gallons; and the Radar Road water tower has a capacity of 200,000 gallons.

The city owns a substantial amount of land which are ready for development because of their connection to public utilities, such as water and sanitary lines.





# ARTS & CULTURAL RESOURCES

## NATIONAL HISTORIC REGISTER SITES

1. St. Marys Falls Canal- Soo Locks (Listed 11/13/1966): The site of the original canal system that was transformed into a succeeding series of locks to bridge the 19-foot difference in water levels between Lake Superior and the lower lakes. The property is owned by the federal government.

2. Johnston House (Listed 07/08/1970): Erected in 1822, this is the second oldest building in the old Northwest Territory. Henry Rowe Schoolcraft wed Jane Johnston here. The City owns the building.

3. Old Fort Brady (Listed 03/11/1971): Erected in 1822 and in use for 71 years until the Fort was moved to a new location on the hill. Many buildings and a stockade existed during its use, none of which remain. The Fort was the site of many historical events, including the lowering of the last British flag to fly over American soil. The site includes the Federal Building Property, now owned by the City.

4. New Fort Brady (Listed 01/13/1972): Constructed in 1892, the new Fort was in active operation until 1946, when the Fort was converted into the Sault Branch of Michigan Technical University. The school became independent as Lake Superior State College in 1969, and is now known as Lake Superior State University.

5. SS Valley Camp (Listed 02/01/1972): The berthed lake carrier has been transformed into a museum ship. The ship is managed and owned by the Le Sault de Sainte Marie Historic Sites.

6. Henry Rowe Schoolcraft House (02/25/1974): Schoolcraft moved into this 15 room federal style residence in 1827. The Indian Agency office was in one of the two building dependencies. The building has been under active restoration and reconstruction to its original design over the last few years. The City, Chippewa County Historical Society and “Sault Historic Sites” have been cooperatively working on this building.

7. Old Federal Building (Listed 09/09/77): Standing on the ground of the Old Fort Brady, the building was constructed during 1908 and 1910, and occupied in 1910. The building was in private hands, until it was turned over to the City of Sault Ste. Marie. The building now serves as the City Hall.

8. Chippewa County Courthouse (Listed 09/13/84): The oldest continuously used courthouse in the state. This imposing structure has been completely renovated and restored and is in excellent condition.

9. Central Methodist Church (Listed 12/17/84): This is one of several striking sandstone churches in the downtown constructed around the turn of the century. This church was completed in 1894.



10. St Mary’s Pro-Cathedral (Listed 12/27/84): Built from local bricks in 1881. This is the third structure on the site, and the fifth in the immediate area dating back to 1668 when the first church was constructed, marking the founding of the settlement. It has recently been renovated.

11. Cloverland Electric Powerhouse: Placed into operation in 1902. This hydropower facility was constructed at the same time as the power canal that channels the water. It is the longest building in the world (1360 feet) devoted to power production. The building is still in active use as a powerhouse. Cloverland purchased this peice of infrastructure around 2010 from Sault Edison Electric Company. Part of the building includes a Atlantic Salmon hatchery, which is managed by LSSU





MUSEUMS & ARTS CENTERS

Six museums and art interpretive centers are located in the downtown. The “SS Valley Camp” is an actual lake carrier open for viewing and serving as a site for various marine related displays and interpretations. The John Johnston House is operated by the Chippewa County Historical Society, and is open during the summer and fall. The Soo Locks Information Center displays the history of the locks development as well as displaying a working model of a lock. The Alberta House is an art and craft gallery located in a unique historical structure near the locks. The “River of History Museum”, which opened in 1992, originally located in the old Federal Building, is now located on Ashmun Street. The Steere Room at the Bayliss Public Library is the prime source for early documents and historical records of the area. The Chippewa County Historical Society has various displays and presentations at the location they own facility on Ashmun Street.



ADDITIONAL HERITAGE & HISTORICAL SITES

Another 16 sites in the downtown area are of historical significance. Many of these are of equal quality and significance as national Register sites, and are likely to be on the national Register in the future. Among these are: St. James Episcopal Church, which is currently in the process of being placed on the national Register, the City Fire Hall, the Bishop Baraga residence, the Elijah Allen house, the Merchant Marine Library at the Locks Parks, the old City Water Tower (still in use), the Michigan Meridian (the point of departure for all surveys in the state) and the site of the old French Fort de Repentigny.





# PARKS & RECREATION RESOURCES

Sault Sainte Marie has numerous recreational opportunities, both within the City and within the surrounding region, including in Canada. These resources include beaches, marinas, boat launches, playgrounds, and places to picnic, bike, paddle, hike, camp, fish, hunt, and snowmobile. Other recreational facilities provide spaces to play hockey, ice skate, and play team sports and games.

City employees have conducted a comprehensive parks and recreation facility inventory. The inventory includes all recreational opportunities available within the City's limits. The organization of this inventory follows the requirements set by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Parks and facilities have been identified and inspected for handicap accessibility, barrier-free access, and classified by facility type.

While the inventory includes all parks and recreational facilities within City limits; the focus of this plan only extends to parks and recreational facilities under the City's jurisdiction. There are approximately 1,672 acres of total recreational land within the City. Of this, 623 acres (38%) are City-owned, and the remaining 62% are properties owned by the local school district, Lake Superior State University, the State and Federal governments, the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, and private owners who may lease property to the City.

The City owns operates and or leases 26 parks and recreation facilities. This includes 7 Mini-Parks, 2 Neighborhood Parks, 5 Community Parks, and 2 Large Urban Park. Facilities offered by this parks system include 2 ice rinks, 5 boats launches, 2 Marinas, a seasonal ice race track, and two Campground Facilities; among a great deal of amenities.

The Land Use table (Table 3-A) below shows the ownership/ acreage of the various recreational facilities within the City of Sault Ste. Marie. The listed acreage totals are derived from assessor's records and count the total parcel size of the facility and/or recreation area in some cases.

The cooperation among the different agencies noted above has been instrumental in providing the Sault with a variety of park facilities that would be difficult for the City to finance on its own.

## WATER TRAIL PLANNING

The City is working to promote water-based recreation opportunities, including Lake Superior and St Marys River water trails. More information about the water trails can be found at [www.michiganwatertrails.org/uptrails.asp](http://www.michiganwatertrails.org/uptrails.asp).

## BIRDING FOR RECREATION

Birding is also a popular recreational activity. The Whitefish Point Birding Observatory, operated by Michigan Audubon, is a concentration zone for migrating birds. Over 340 species of birds have been seen at the Point including White-winged Scoter, Red-throated Loon, Spruce Grouse, Rough-legged Hawk, Jaegers, Great Gray Owl, Boreal Owl, Black-backed Woodpecker, Boreal Chickadee, over 30 species of warblers and northern finches like Pine and Evening Grosbeaks, Redpolls and Crossbills.





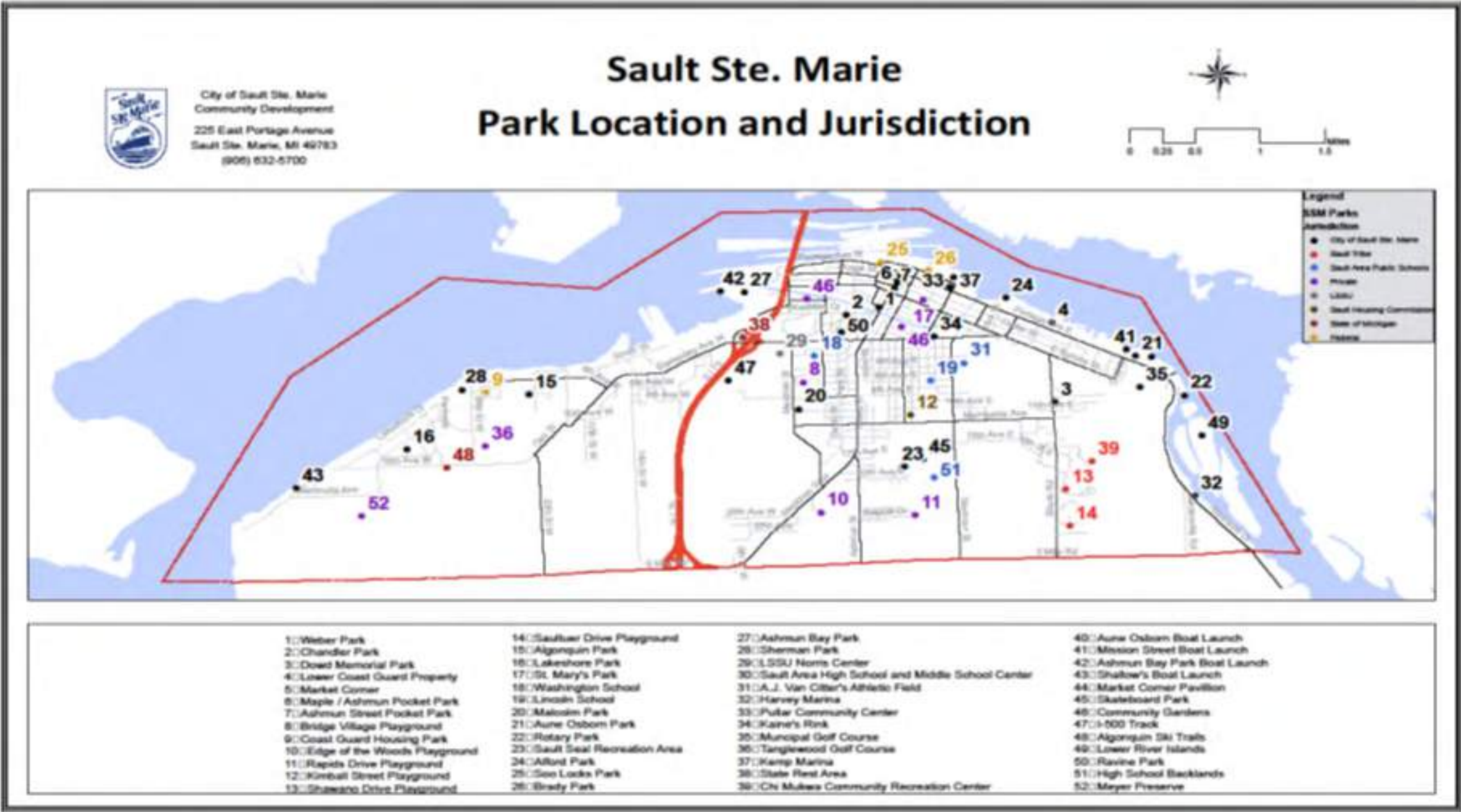
Figure 27: Community Recreational Facilities (in Acres)

	Mini Parks	Neighborhood Parks	Community Parks	Large Urban Parks	Special Use Parks	Sports Complexes	Natural Resource Areas	TOTAL
City of Sault Ste. Marie	4.2	12.54	100.78	248.23	195.74	----	66.82	628.31 -38%
School Area School District	----	14.75	----	----	----	34.84	120	169.59 -10%
Lake Superior State University	----	----	----	----	----	40.64	----	40.65 -2%
Federal and State Governments	2.26	----	26.5	----	5.25	----	411.76	445.77 -26%
Sault Ste. Marie Tribe Of Chippewa Indians	0.24	----	----	----	28.38	----	----	28.62 -3%
Private Owners	0.76	----	----	----	134	----	214.7	349.46 -21%
TOTAL	7.46	27.29	127.28	248.23	358.38	75.49	813.28	1,672.40 -100%





Map 9: Park Location & Jurisdiction



Map 10: Park Location, Walkability

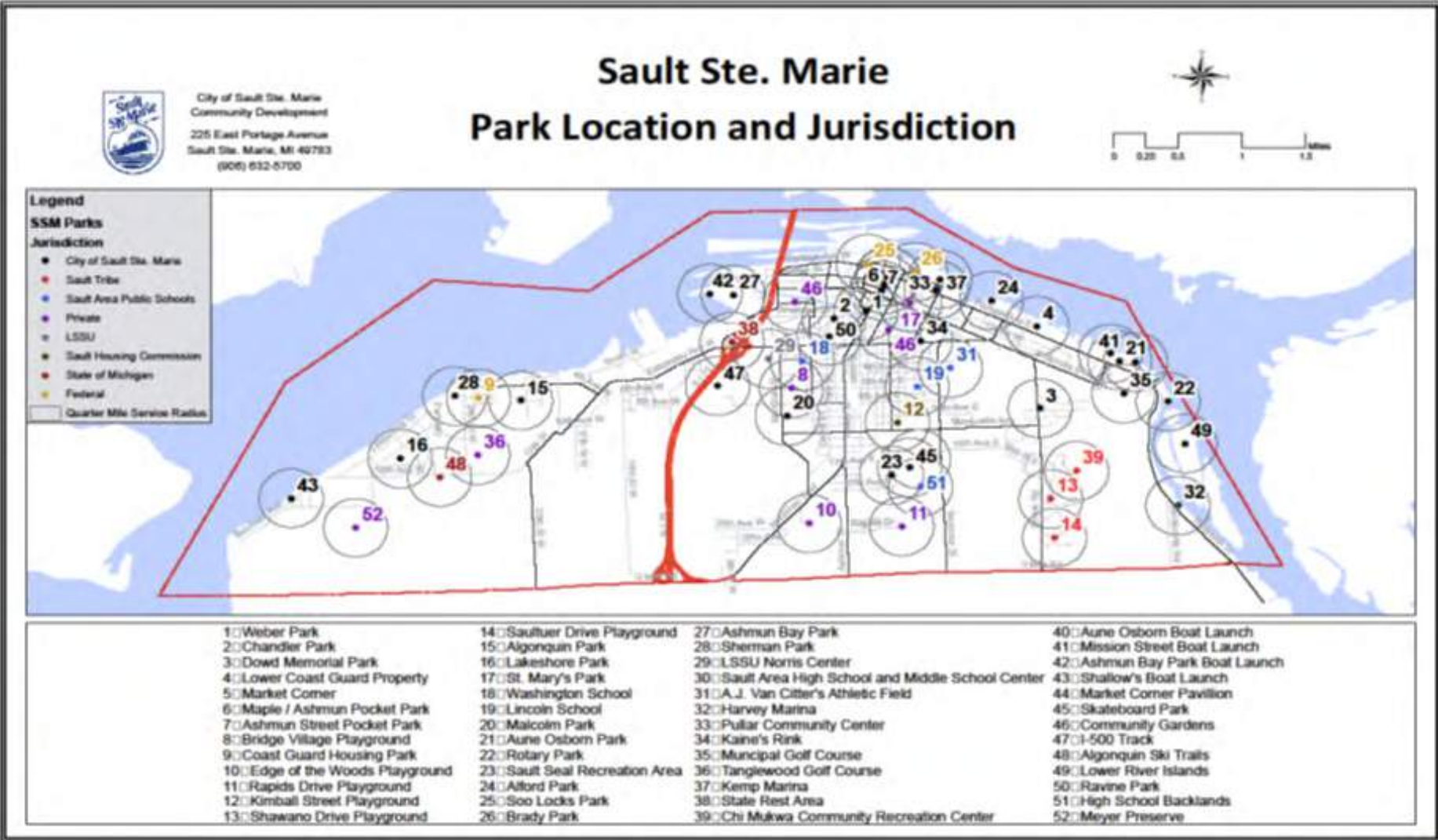




Figure 28: City-Owned or Leased Mini-Parks & Neighborhood Parks

	Ashmun/ Maple Pocket Park	Ashmun Street Pocket Park	Algonquin  Park	Chandler' s Park	Farmer's Market Pavilion	Lower Coast Guard Property	Memorial Park	St. Marys  Park	Weber Park
Acreage	0.6	0.11	9.83	0.62	0.4	0.8	0.4	2.71	0.27
Accessibility Rating	4	4	1	1	4	1	1	1	4
Number of Facilities	1	1	4	2	2	4	2	5	1
Ball Diamond			X					X	
Basketball Court			X				X	X	
Benches	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pavilion					X				
Picnic Tables						X			
Playground			X	X			X	X	
Sledding				X					
Tennis Court								X	
Water Viewing						X			X

Note: Facilities present at other parks/facilities that are not present at City-owned/Leased Mini-Parks and Neighborhoods are not shown above.

Figure 29: City-Owned Natural Resources Areas

	Lakeshore Park	Lower River Islands	Ravine Park
Acreage	3.26	62.5	1.06
Accessibility Rating	1	1	1
Number of Facilities	N/A	N/A	N/A
Trail		X	X
Water Viewing		X	



Figure 30: City-Owned Community Parks & Large Urban Parks

	Alford Park	Ashmun Bay Park	Aune Osborn Park	Malcolm Park	Rotary Island Park	Sault Seal Rec. Area	Sherman Park
Acreage	2.9	175.71	16.1	44.64	4.16	32.98	72.52
Accessibility Rating	2	2	3	2	2	1	3
Number of Facilities	4	4	6	22	4	7	15
Ball Diamond				X			
Basketball Court							X
Beach							X
Benches	X	X	X	X	X		X
Boat Launch		X	X				
Campground			X				X
Concessions				X		X	
Cross-Country Skiing						X	
Downhill Skiing						X	
Fishing	X	X	X		X		
Grills	X		X	X	X		
Hiking Trails		X				X	X
Horseshoes							X
Marina/Dock			X				X
Pavilion				X			X
Picnic Tables	X		X	X	X		
Picnic Shelter			X				
Playground			X	X	X		X
Restrooms			X	X	X	X	X
Showers			X				
Sledding						X	
Volleyball Court							X
Water Viewing	X	X	X	X	X		X
Water Fountain	X		X	X			X





Figure 31: City-Owned or Leased Special-Use Facilities

	Community Gardens	Harvey Marina	I-500 Track	Kaine's Rink	Kemp Marina	Mission St. Boat Launch	Municipal Golf Course	Pullar	Shallows Boat Launch
Acreage	2.26	3.68	51.97	0.9	5.34	11.26	134	1.76	0.75
Accessibility Rating	1	1	1	1	5	1	2	2	1
Number of Facilities	1	6	4	4	5	2	4	10	2
Benches		X	X	X	X			X	
Boat Launch		X				X			X
Concessions			X				X	X	
Fishing		X			X	X			
Gardening	X								
Golfing							X		
Gymnasium									
Ice Hockey				X				X	
Marina/Dock		X			X				
Picnic Tables		X							
Pool							X		
Restroom		X		X	X		X	X	
Showers		X			X		X	X	
Skating				X				X	
Water Viewing		X			X	X			X



Figure 32: School-Owned Recreation Facilities

	AJ Van Citter's Athletic Field	High School Backlands	Lincoln School Park	Sault High Sports Complex	Washington School Park
Acreage	19.14	120	7.39	15.7	7.36
Accessibility Rating	2	1	2	2	2
Number of Facilities	12	1	5	13	6
Facility Type	Sports Complex	Natural Resources Area	School Park	Sports Complex	School Park
Ball Diamond			X	X	X
Basketball Court			X	X	X
Benches	X		X	X	X
Concessions	X			X	
Football Field	X				
Gymnasium			X	X	X
Ice Hockey					
Pavilion		X			
Picnic Table					X
Playground			X		X
Pool				X	
Racquetball				X	
Restroom	X		X	X	
Showers	X			X	
Snowmobile Trails		X			
Soccer Field	X			X	X
Tennis Court				X	

Figure 33: Privately-Owned Recreation Facilities

	Bridge Village Park	Edge of the Woods Park	Meyer Preserve	Rapids Drive Playground	Tanglewood Golf Course
Acreage	0.537	0.8	214.17	0.2	134
Accessibility Rating	1	1	1	1	2
Number of Facilities	1	2	1	2	4
Facility Type	Mini Park	Mini Park	Natural Resources Area	Mini Park	Special Use
Basketball Court		X		X	
Golf Course					
Playground	X	X		X	X





Figure 34: Tribal-, Federal-, and State-Owned/Operated Recreation Facilities

	Algonquin Ski Trail  (MDNR)	Brady  Park  (Federal)	Chi Mukwa  Community Rec. Center  (Tribe)	Coast Guard Park  (Federal)	Kimball Street Park  (SHC)	Norris  Center  (LSSU)	Saultuer  Playground  (Tribe)	Shawano  Drive Playground  (Tribe)	Soo  Locks  Park  (Federal)	State  Rest  Area  (MDOT)
Acreage	411.76	13.71	19.26	2.26	1.6	40.65	0.1	0.136	13.25	5.25
Accessibility Rating	1	1	4	1	1	5	1	1	3	4
Number of Facilities	3	6	7	4	2	11	1	1	9	4
Facility Type	Natural Resource Area	Community Park	Sports Complex	Mini Park	Mini Park	Sports Complex	Mini Park	Mini Park	Community Park	Special Use
Basketball Court			X	X	X	X				
Benches		X	X			X			X	X
Buildings (Visitors)			X						X	X
Concessions			X			X				
Grills		X							X	X
Gymnasium			X			X				
Ice Hockey			X	X		X				
Picnic Tables		X	X						X	X
Playground			X	X	X		X	X		
Pool						X				
Restrooms	X		X			X				X
Shower			X			X				
Skating			X	X		X				
Soccer Field						X				
Tennis Court			X	X		X				
Track			X			X				
Volleyball Court			X			X				
Water Viewing		X							X	





## 4. EXISTING LAND USE & ZONING

IN ORDER TO DETERMINE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND ZONING, IT IS IMPORTANT TO LOOK AT EXISTING CONDITIONS. THE DISTRIBUTION OF LAND USES THROUGHOUT SAULT STE. MARIE HAS BEEN A RESULT OF MANY FACTORS, INCLUDING CHANGES IN INDUSTRY AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT, AND AN AGING ORDINANCE.



# LAND USES IN THE CITY

The City’s incorporated area is almost sixteen square miles, however the bulk of the City’s development is concentrated. The “island” portion of the City, separated from the remainder by the Power Canal, is the heart of the community. The northern edge of the island is almost completely dominated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with the Soo Locks and its attendant parks and maintenance facilities. Directly adjacent to the Locks is the City’s Central Business District, including a somewhat distinct two-block area of seasonal shops. The “west end” of the island, once dominated by warehousing, is in a transition phase, with housing, office, and retail development on the rise. A major apartment complex is located on the west end of the island in the area known as the West Pier, directly across the power canal from Ashmun Bay Park. The east side of the island is composed of grand old Victorian-era houses, many now converted into apartments.

Two of the Sault’s principal roads extend out from the core of the island. Portage Avenue extends east and west, curving south from the west end of the island to intersect with Easterday Avenue and to the east paralleling the river and turning into Riverside Drive as it extends east and then south. The “east end” residential area extends along this section of Portage, encompassing a two block depth to the south off this corridor. The waterfront land use along this stretch varies from ship repair and provisioning to boat tours to park and recreation uses, with some obsolescent buildings and unsightly storage areas intermixed. The land side of Portage is sprinkled with motels, restaurants, homes, and an 18-hole golf course. The far reaches of Riverside Drive dissipate into a long stretch of riverfront homes. The other major roadway extending out from the island is Ashmun Street, also known as M-129 as it extends further south. The I-75 Business Spur branches off from Ashmun Street,

forming the Sault’s principal north-south corridor to the City’s Three Mile Road boundary. It is along these roadways that the majority of the City’s commercial development will be found, including older development to the north and newer shopping center development along the Business Spur to the south.

Directly to the east of Ashmun is the City’s major housing area, the “south side”. A somewhat small adjunct lies to the west of Ashmun in this same area, blending into somewhat larger homes at the ridge crest and near the university. Lake Superior State University, with its 115-acre campus at the site of the relocated Fort Brady, dominates both sides of Easterday Avenue directly to the east of Interstate 75. West of I-75, there is an immediate cluster of modest homes, mixed commerce and warehousing, and the City’s 64-acre Industrial Park. Further to the west are four somewhat distinct settlement areas:

- 1. The Foss/Hyde and Oak/Chestnut sub-divisions south of 4th Avenue.
- 2. The settlement around 4th Avenue and 20th and 24th Streets, including the Coast Guard housing by Sherman Park.
- 3. Lakeshore Subdivision, a modern ranch style community along the shores of the river, some five miles from the city center.

4. The “Shallows” area, a converted cottage settlement directly to the west of Lakeshore. In addition to Easterday Avenue, the other two major east/west streets in the City are Marquette/12th Avenue and Three Mile Road, the City’s southern boundary. To the west along Three Mile Road at I-75 is a major shopping center, commercial area and newer apartment complex development. There is also a municipal airport to the West of the Business Spur within this general vicinity. On the eastern side of the City between Marquette Avenue and Three Mile lies a large area of Sault Tribe reservation land containing a mix of uses including casino/hotel development, ice arena, and housing. Figure 35 on the next page summarizes the existing land use within the City of Sault Ste. Marie.



# EXISTING ZONING

Zoning is intended to guide development in a community, and sets limitations and uses for properties through sound planning management practices. However, it does not necessarily represent the actual uses and structures that exist in particular areas. Zoning variances or unsound rezonings often create odd uses or developments. For this reason, it is important to assess the existing zoning and existing land use to help guide proper future land use planning and zoning ordinance updates.

Sault Ste. Marie is currently zoned into sixteen (16) zoning districts – these can be seen on the map on the following page. In a spatial sense, the City’s zoning pattern is that of commercial along the I-75 business spur and downtown, industrial along the waterfront from downtown heading east, and residential in the middle of the City as well as the west and east waterfronts. A breakdown of zoning districts is in the chart to the right, along with an estimate of acreage and percentage of the total City area.

It should be noted that any maps or analysis done with current City zoning was done with a Geographic Information System (GIS) parcel data set with parcel-level zoning, and some districts span multiple parcels or some parcels have incomplete data, both of which are currently being fixed within the GIS data as of the writing of this plan.

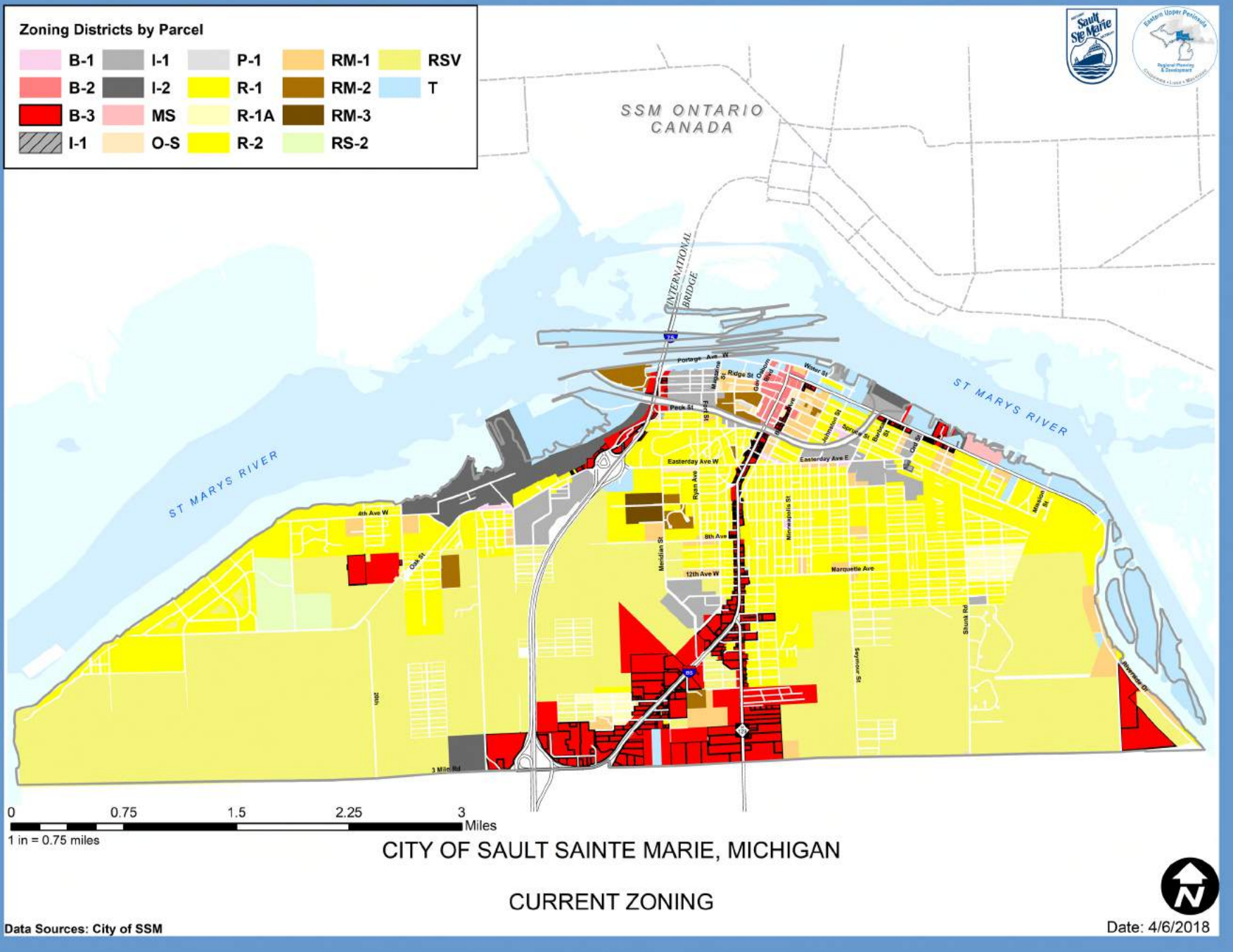
Using the parcel-level analysis, the Residential R-1 district and Reserve RSV districts hold the largest acreage of the City by a far margin compared to other districts. However, when looking at pure parcel count, R-1, R-2, and RM-1 have the most parcels within the City.

Figure 35: Land Use by Zoning Designation

District	Parcel Count	Acres	% Total Acres	% Total Parcel Count
B-1	75	14.75	0.16%	1.09%
B-2	120	33.65	0.36%	1.74%
B-3	413	591.89	6.32%	5.98%
I-1	164	106.43	1.14%	2.37%
I-2	77	288.61	3.08%	1.11%
O-S	23	12.01	0.13%	0.33%
P-1	23	3.1	0.03%	0.33%
R-1	3216	1626.26	17.37%	46.56%
R-1A	176	62.36	0.67%	2.55%
R-2	988	143.23	1.53%	14.30%
RM-1	515	167.72	1.79%	7.46%
RM-2	45	85.41	0.91%	0.65%
RM-3	2	10.37	0.11%	0.03%
RS-2	6	37.33	0.40%	0.09%
RSV	495	3692.86	39.45%	7.17%
T	148	592.76	6.33%	2.14%
Split-Zoned	401	1892.89	20.22%	5.81%
MS	6	20	0.21%	0.09%
Total	6907	9361.63	100.00%	100.00%







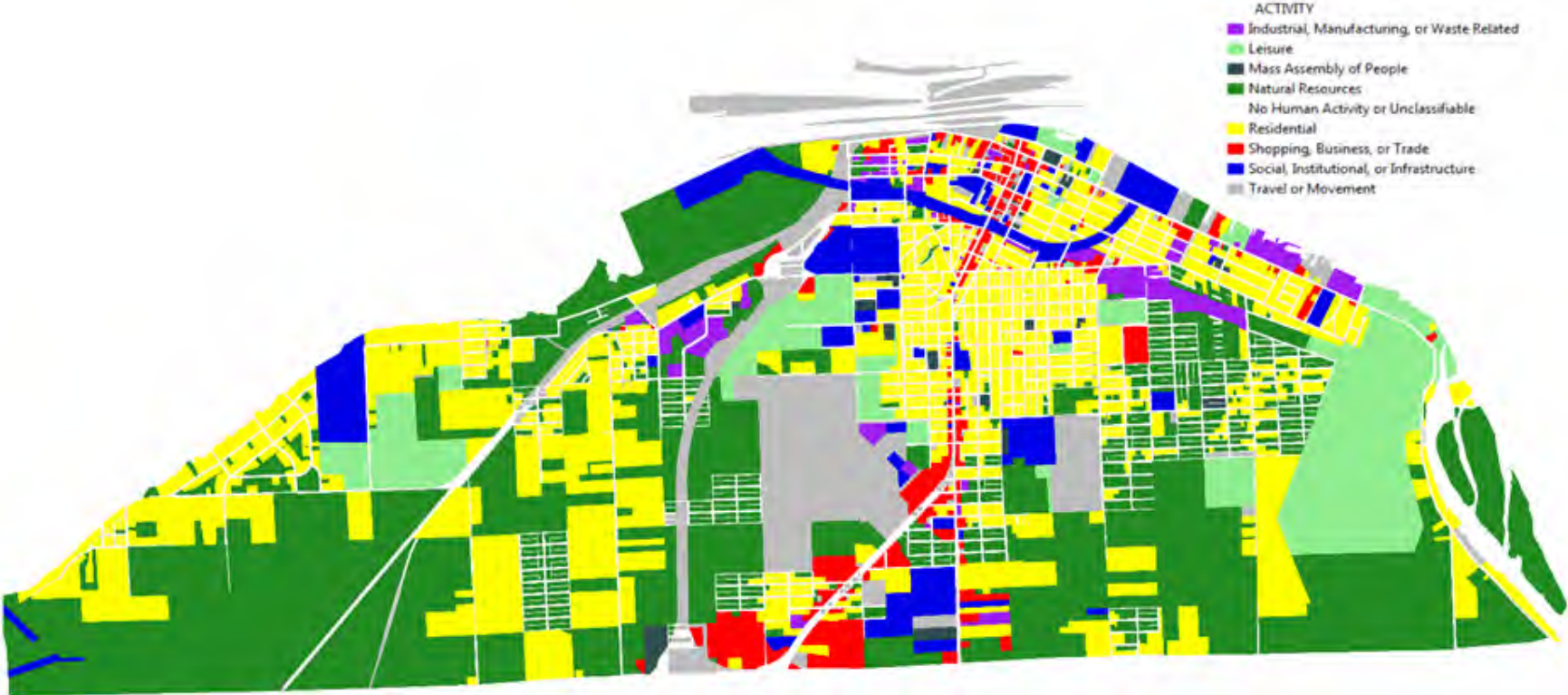


# EXISTING LAND USE

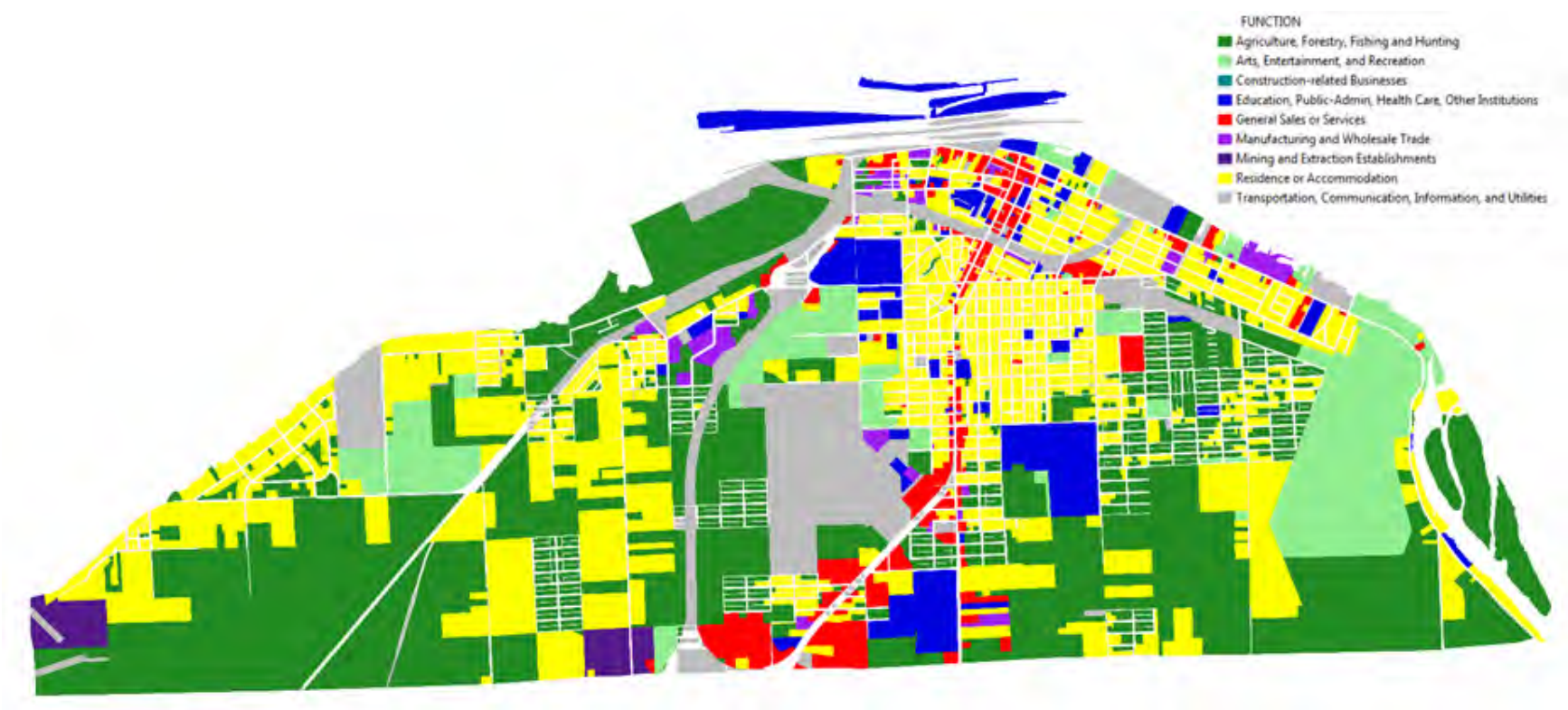
An analysis of existing City land uses and land cover provides decision makers with a better understanding of the current status. Land use differs from zoning in that land use is the actual activity or structure on the property, while zoning is the designated district in which certain uses and requirements exist. To determine existing land use, a GIS analysis was done, by parcel, using the American Planning Association’s (APA) Land-Based Classification System (LBCS).

As defined by APA, the LBCS “..model extends the notion of classifying land uses by refining traditional categories into multiple dimensions, such as activities, functions, building types, site development character, and ownership constraints. These multiple dimensions allow users to have precise control over land-use classifications.” The LBCS contains five categories: Activity, Function, Structure, Site, and Ownership. For this plan analysis, only Activity, Function, and Structure were used. Each category is broken down on pages 53, 54, and 55, respectively.

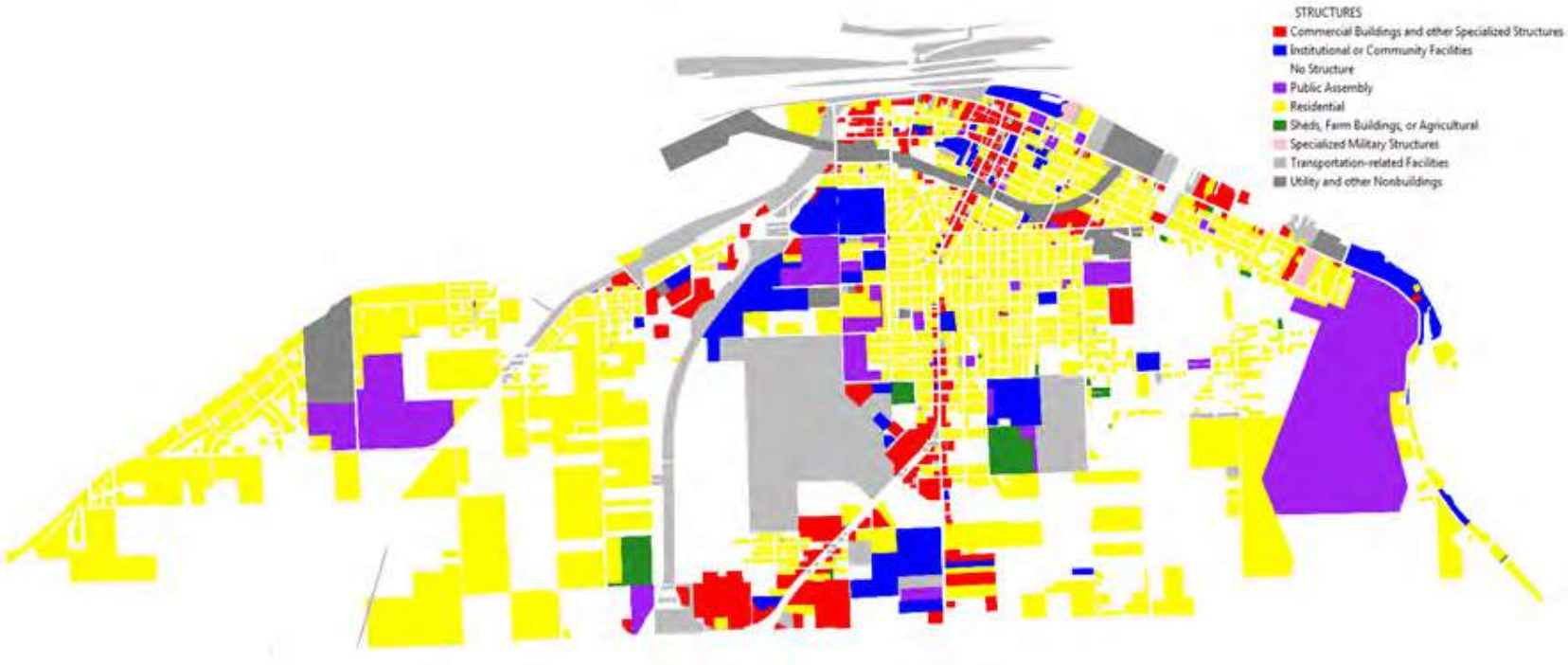
Map 11: Existing Land Use - Activity



Map 12: Existing Land Use - Function



Map 13: Existing Land Use - Structures







## 5. ELEMENTS & GOALS

THIS SECTION OF THE MASTER PLAN SUMMARIZES GOALS FOR THE COMMUNITY'S GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT WHICH TRANSCEND INDIVIDUAL GEOGRAPHIC AREAS AND DISTRICTS. THESE PLANNING ELEMENT GOALS ARE INTENDED TO GUIDE AND INFORM THE WAY THAT FUTURE CITY POLICIES, REGULATIONS, PROJECTS, PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES ARE PURSUED, EVALUATED, ADOPTED, AND IMPLEMENTED.

# 1. COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## GOAL 1.1: THE CITY WILL ENHANCE ITS ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE REGIONAL ECONOMY.

1.1.1 City staff will continue to build and maintain relationships with other groups and with business leaders who are working to enhance the community’s economic health and prosperity, including but not limited to employers, job training and economic development organizations, downtown development organizations, regional planning and development organizations, educational institutions, state and federal agencies, tribal governments, and other public and private stakeholders--e.g., the City's participation in Redevelopment Ready Communities.

1.1.2. The City will establish a priority list, annually or as needed, of economic development projects that City staff will focus on. These priorities will be established with a short-term, mid-term and long-term focus and will be coordinated with stakeholders as listed above. Appropriate resources (human and financial capital) will be identified for these priorities so potential funding and incentive programs can be identified at the local, state, and federal levels.

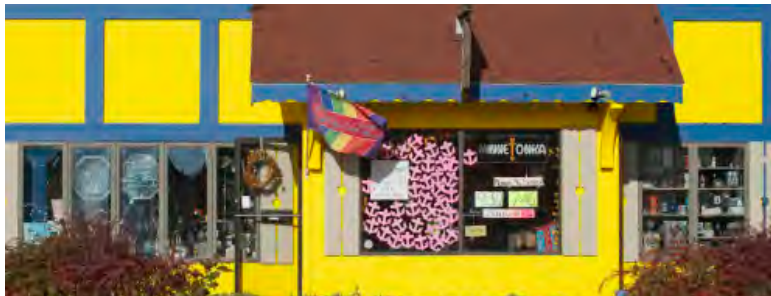
1.1.3. The City will work with the federal government and will meet annually, or more frequently, with the leaders and managers of the Soo Locks facility to ensure that plans for the future of the Locks support, and are supported by, the City’s Master Plan goals, community economic needs and the health and well-being of City residents.

1.1.4. City staff and elected officials will meet annually, or more frequently, with leaders from Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario to discuss goals, needs, and opportunities for alignment or mutually beneficial community and economic development investment. This may include joint meetings of the full governing bodies.

1.1.5. City staff and elected officials will meet annually, or more frequently, with leaders from the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians to discuss goals, needs, and opportunities for alignment or mutually beneficial community and economic development investment.

1.1.6 The City will meet annually, or more frequently, with agencies and entities responsible for multi-modal transportation infrastructure (Soo Locks, I-75 highway, railroad, airport, International Bridge) to discuss goals, needs, and opportunities for alignment or mutually beneficial community and economic development investment.

1.1.7. The City will meet annually, or more frequently, with downtown development, the chamber of commerce, the convention and visitors bureau, the economic development corporation, LSSU, the SmartZone, EUPISD, and Sault Area Schools to discuss goals, needs, and opportunities for alignment or mutually beneficial community and economic development investment.





GOAL 1.2: THE CITY WILL FACILITATE A DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK THAT ENSURES PROCESSES THAT SAFEGUARD COMMUNITY ECONOMIC STABILITY & SUCCESS.

- 1.2.1. The City will prioritize investments related to the goals of the Plan and through the Capital Improvement Planning process.
- 1.2.2. The City will design and implement an efficient, effective and fair permit review and approval process. The City shall explore “one stop” models in collaboration with other permit and approval entities and government agencies in order to streamline administrative processes and improve economic competitiveness.

GOAL 1.3: THE CITY WILL ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT THAT PROMOTES AND PROTECTS NEIGHBORHOOD AND DISTRICT CHARACTER.

- 1.3.1. The City will prioritize investments in “arrival points” and “gateways” to neighborhoods in order to provide visual cues and functional design features between neighborhoods and districts with different types of hours of operation, mobility and vehicle uses, building types, and emissions.
- 1.3.2. The City will support and partner with neighborhood and volunteer-based efforts that are focused on neighborhood and district beautification and improvement projects.
- 1.3.3. The City will support and integrate small businesses that provide convenient services in and near neighborhoods and districts and in a way that fits with the character of the neighborhood.





GOAL 1.4: THE CITY WILL INVEST IN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS THAT SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY’S ECONOMIC HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.

After financial and economic analysis, the City will prioritize capital improvements and private development projects that require public funding. The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) will encompass those projects that meet specific criteria regarding their priority in meeting the City’s financial and economic needs. When considering the projects within the Capital Improvement Plan for approval and recommendation for funding, the Planning Commission will make its judgment as to the project’s conformance with the Master Plan in keeping with the immediate and long-term interests of the entire community.

1.4.1. To aid in this, projects will be the result of analysis by staff, or consultants directed by staff. Analysis may include but not be limited to:

- a. Costs and financial impacts of projects.
- b. Forecasts covering the useful life of the project detailing economic considerations such as revenue forecasts, jobs added, investments, etc.
- c. Forecasts covering the useful life of the project detailing operational and maintenance considerations such as anticipated new operating savings/costs, changes in staffing levels, changes in depreciation funding, etc., along with resulting forecasts for changes in operating budgets.

1.4.2. Projects recommended by staff for inclusion in the Capital Improvement Plan shall be focused in three primary areas for consideration, noted below. Each of the primary areas shall have identified or dedicated funding sources with all current year funding allocated. These primary areas will be shared:

- a. Projects required to maintain a current standard of infrastructure service, such as annual street maintenance, utility maintenance projects, etc.
- b. Projects that are operational in nature, such as vehicles and equipment, computer systems, telephone systems, etc. For projects in this area, only a listing will be provided.
- c. New projects and/or upgrades in current service.

1.4.3. All projects submitted as new/upgrade projects will be categorized by type and evaluated as to their priority within their respective type. This will require the development of categories of projects and a weighted system for prioritizing projects within type. Type categories are:

- a. Projects stemming from unforeseen emergencies or opportunities usually requiring an amendment to the existing Capital Improvement Plan;
- b. Projects that contain some element of a public/private partnership that aids in the accomplishment of the City’s financial plans;
- c. Specific Improvements that leverage needed investment in the City or region; and
- d. Service upgrades to City infrastructure.



# 2. TRANSPORTATION

GOAL 2.1: THE CITY WILL ENSURE THAT TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS ARE ALIGNED AND INTEGRATED.

2.1.1 The City will include an analysis of current and future land uses when making decisions about transportation needs and improvements and design options.

GOAL 2.2: THE CITY WILL MAINTAIN A SAFE AND EFFECTIVE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK THAT SERVES MULTI-MODAL NEEDS AND USES.

2.2.1. The City will consider the needs of all types of users and transportation modes when developing or improving a street or road.

2.2.2 The City will continue to use the PASER rating system, or a similar system, to evaluate the pavement condition and will use the data to inform street and road improvement projects.

2.2.3. The City will identify specific transportation projects and improvements in the Capital Improvement Plan.

2.2.4 The City will support efforts to provide public transportation for community members and will consider the ways its land use policies and regulations support increased transportation choices for community members.

2.2.5. The City will support efforts to continue rail and air service to the community.

2.2.6. The City will coordinate and communicate with the International Bridge Authority regarding future land use or transportation efforts that may impact the use of functionality of the bridge.

2.2.7. The City will implement the projects and programs identified as priorities within the City’s Non-motorized Transportation Plan. Priority projects requiring dedicated funding will be included in the Capital Improvement Plan.

2.2.8. The City will support water transportation needs and infrastructure maintenance and improvements. This includes plans and efforts to improve docks, marinas, launch sites, and locks facilities.

GOAL 2.3: THE CITY WILL WORK WITH PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND NON-PROFIT PARTNERS TO FULFILL ITS TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND IMPLEMENT PROJECTS AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS.

Partners may include the State of Michigan, including the Michigan Department of Transportation and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation; Federal agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; International Bridge Authority; Downtown Development Authority; Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians; Lake Superior State University; local civic groups and non-profit organizations; Eastern UP Transit Authority; and other community groups and stakeholders.



# 3. HOUSING

GOAL 3.1: ENSURE THAT HOUSING PLANS AND PROJECTS, TRANSPORTATION PLANS AND PROJECTS, AND PARKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS ARE ALIGNED AND INTEGRATED.

3.1.1. City staff will meet monthly to discuss the status of active and planned projects and plans to ensure efforts are integrated and improvements are timed and staged in cost-effective ways to create places where people live and want to live.

3.1.2. Representatives from the Planning Commission and Community Services Board will meet annually to review and discuss the alignment of policies, programs, projects and priorities with a goal of evaluating how efforts are creating places where people live and want to live.

3.1.3. The City will use the Capital Improvement Planning process as an opportunity to explore ways to leverage projects within specific districts and along certain corridors. This may include exploring the pacing and timing projects in order to maximize state or federal sources of funding that can be matched or leveraged for work in a certain area, or by planning and timing improvements to ensure efficiency in the allocation of equipment, resources, energy, funding, or people.

GOAL 3.2: THE CITY WILL WORK WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERS TO FULFILL LOCAL HOUSING NEEDS.

3.2.1. The City will use its existing studies as a guide and will pro-actively seek and develop relationships with public, private, and non-profit housing developers to create and maintain housing to meet local needs.

3.2.2. The City will apply for state and federal grants, as needed and appropriate, to advance the development of housing that meets community needs.

3.2.3. The City will partner with state and federal agencies, regional organizations, educational institutions, private businesses, land banks, and others who share and support the development of housing that meets community needs.

GOAL 3.3: THE CITY WILL SUPPORT COMMUNITY PRIDE AND A SENSE OF BELONGING.

3.3.1. City staff and officials will support and encourage efforts led by the Sault Housing Commission, neighborhoods, civic groups, associations, and authorities who work with others to inspire land and property owners to improve and maintain their properties as well as provide shelter for the homeless.

3.3.2. The City will support festivals, programs, and events to help connect residents to each other and celebrate the City’s unique culture, history, parks, and civic spaces.





# 4. NATURE & ENVIRONMENT

**GOAL 4.1:** THE CITY, IN COORDINATION WITH THE APPROPRIATE PARTNERS, WILL SUPPORT THE PROTECTION OF CLEAN AIR AND WATER.

- 4.1.1. City staff will explore the creation and adoption of additional development and building code construction policies and programs that encourage or incentivize “green building” and construction practices.
- 4.1.2. The City will explore the use of methods and materials that ensure the protection of clean air and water when it develops, redevelops, or upgrades its facilities.
- 4.1.3. The City will focus on opportunities to improve energy efficiency when it develops, redevelops, or upgrades its facilities.
- 4.1.4. The City will continue to address needs related to stormwater management and will prioritize infrastructure improvements through its Capital Improvement Plan process.
- 4.1.5. The City will work with local, state, regional, tribal, and international (Ontario) stakeholders on issues related to the protection of the community’s clean air and water.

**GOAL 4.2:** THE CITY WILL PROVIDE ACCESS TO PARKS, TRAILS, OR GREEN SPACE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION.

- 4.2.1. The City’s Parks and Recreation Plan is the tool that guides the City’s action and investments in parks. The City will use this plan to evaluate priorities for park development, improvements, and outdoor recreation programming.
- 4.2.2. The City will work to ensure that every person who lives in the City limits will have access to a park, trail, or green space for outdoor recreation within ½ mile of their residence.
- 4.2.3. The City will work in collaboration with economic development organizations and stakeholders to promote the City’s natural environment and outdoor recreation opportunities.
- 4.2.4. The City will work with local, state, regional, tribal, and international (Ontario) stakeholders to enhance access to the economic and social benefits of these opportunities for residents.





# 5. FOOD

GOAL 5.1: THE CITY WILL SUPPORT ACCESS TO FRESH, NUTRITIOUS FOOD FOR RESIDENTS.

5.1.1 The City will maintain and continue to develop infrastructure and services at the Farmer's Market.

5.1.2. The City will partner with public and private entities at the Farmer's Market who wish to connect residents-in-need to resources that may support their purchase of fresh foods at the Farmer's Market.

5.2.3 The City will evaluate its policies and regulations related to determine the way residents gain access to local fresh and value-added foods.







## 6. FUTURE LAND USE



# FUTURE LAND USE DISTRICTS

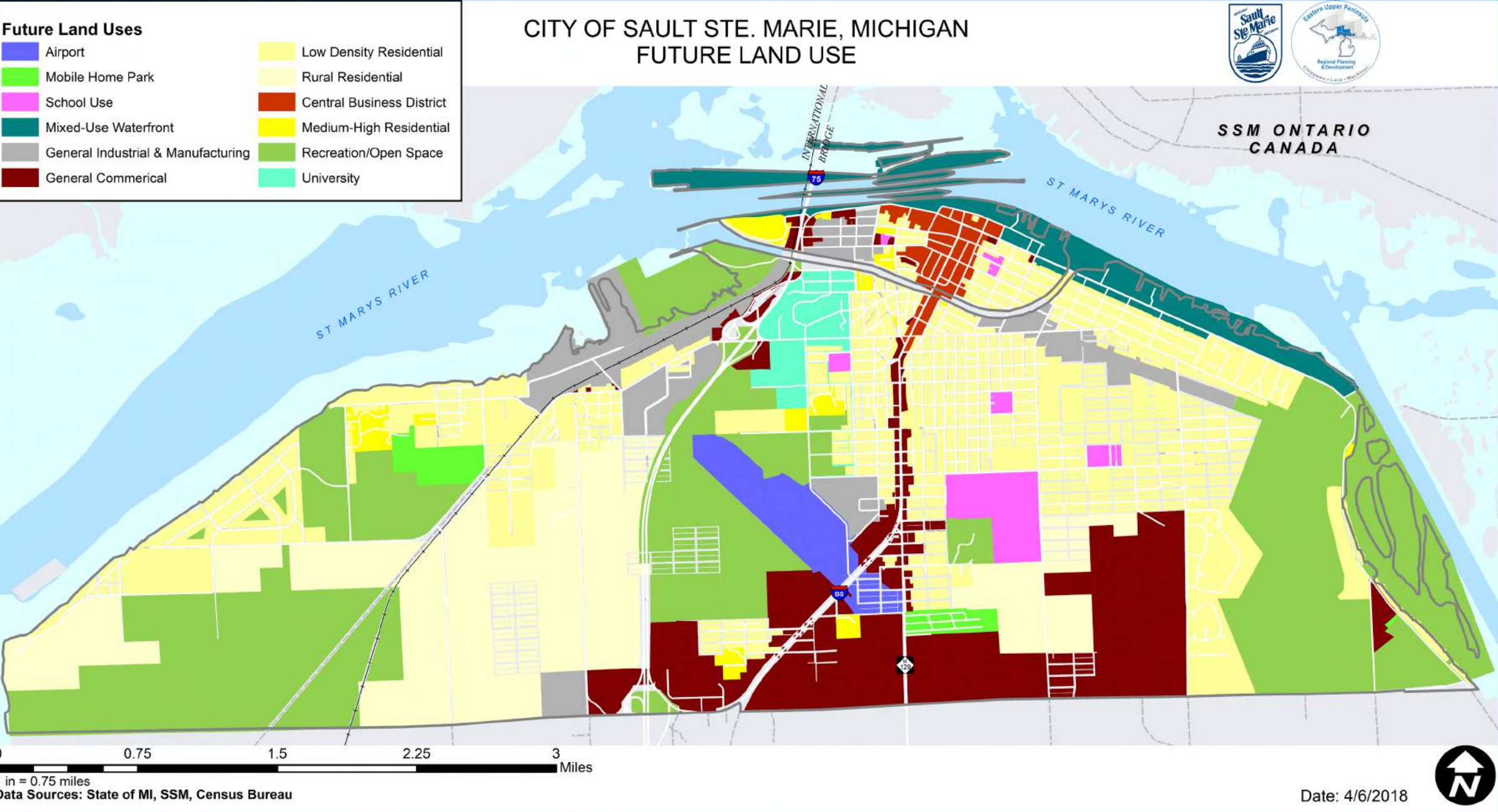
The future land use districts in this plan describe the character, uses, activities, and impacts of activities in different areas of the City. Through this master planning process, the City identified the following future land use districts:

- Airport
- Central Business District
- General Business
- General Industrial & Manufacturing
- Low Density Residential
- Medium-High Residential
- Mixed-Use Waterfront
- Mobile Home Park
- Recreation/Open Space
- Rural Residential
- School Use
- University

The corresponding Map 16 on the next page illustrates the future land use district boundaries. The City's goals and intentions related to future land uses and activities in each of these districts are described below. For reference, the City's current zoning map is also included as Map 12 on page 52 . This map shows the boundaries of the existing zoning districts, which each have corresponding regulations. The future land use map in this plan will help to inform future changes to the zoning map, districts, and ordinance



Map 14: Future Land Use





AIRPORT DISTRICT

This district aligns with the uses projected to take place on and in the vicinity of the airport grounds. It is envisioned that the balance of the undeveloped airport land adjacent to the present Meridian St alignment will be developed with uses which will benefit from direct runway access. The adjacent commercial and industrial zoning districts (including the Air Industrial Park) will continue to be developed with uses consistent with those permitted in the zoning ordinance.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

This District includes a mixture of commercial, residential, civic, and recreation uses. This mixed-use district has been the focus of development and redevelopment projects, including the renovation of buildings with historic facades and architectural elements. The district includes property that falls within the boundaries of the Tax Increment Financing Districts established by the Downtown Development Authority.

Design improvements in this district have been derived from the strong industrial and functional images of the historic Sault Ste. Marie downtown area, as well as its Great Lakes shipping legacy. Materials that are native to the historic buildings in this district include strong and sturdy brick, stone, and cast iron.

The results of a visual preference exercise conducted at the public open house gatherings for the creation of the Master Plan showed that a majority of participants preferred a more traditional two or three-story mixed use building made out of traditional materials such as brick, rather than either a more modern-looking building with a lot of glass or chrome, or a more generic “commercial strip center” style building for the downtown area. Building forms which directly abutted the sidewalk were strongly preferred by attendees over those forms which placed a parking lot between the building and the sidewalk.

The look and feel of the downtown is important. An attractive environment will increase quality of life and enhance economic development opportunities and tourism. This district would

benefit from the creation of specific zoning and design standards for bulk dimensions, building materials, parking, signage, yards, setbacks, lighting style and placement, and landscaping in order to facilitate investment in the downtown, including the expansion of housing choices, transportation and mobility, and a strong tax base.

Encouraging and incentivizing downtown private businesses and property owners to improve their properties will be important to improve and retain the type of visual character that will attract and retain residents and visitors. Several property owners have recently participated in a state-sponsored façade improvement program to great success. Current city administration is optimistic that upon seeing the results of the properties which have been completed, other property owners will participate.

This district includes Moloney’s Alley, an area which has its own redevelopment sub-plan. The Downtown Development Authority has identified specific additional parcels for infill development and for park use within the Downtown District. There are several parcels where buildings were lost to fire which are vacant and are opportunities for infill development. There are several lots owned by the City near Ridge Street and Ashmun Street that could also be sold and developed. The City participated in the first round of the Place Plans project and this area was the subject of the work which resulted. The final conceptual plan called for a mix of public and private spaces and included a mix of residential and commercial uses. The final plan has been a great tool to get developers interested in exploring the opportunities which exist in downtown Sault Ste. Marie.

The Arlington Street area was identified by community members at public meetings as a potential area for future commercial and mixed-use development, investments, and improvements.

The renovation of the Soo Theater was also brought up by public participants in the open house as a potential project to help support downtown and community development. Communities such as the City of Traverse City and the City of

Manistee have undertaken theater renovation efforts. These projects have involved collaborations between government and non-profits. Each of these projects has had a positive impact on downtown development and economic growth. ing ordinance.





GENERAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

There are appropriate places for a wide variety of commercial uses in the City of Sault Ste Marie. This district includes commercial uses that have been developed in a linear pattern located along a major transportation corridor, which is often called a “strip” style of commercial development. The term General in this context refers to commercial enterprises that serve a broad market, and businesses that are not specific to a type of location and could include auto dealerships, hotels, chain restaurants, gas stations, and malls.

These types of property uses are usually reliant on automobile traffic, and often in a corridor that is designed in a way that promotes the tendency for customers to drive from one store to another, rather than parking in a central location and walking to adjacent stores. This pattern of development occurs in the City of Sault Ste Marie on several of its major arterials, including the Ashmun Street/I-75 Business Spur north of Easterday Avenue, along M-129 east and south of the I-75 Business Spur, and along Easterday Avenue east of Ashmun Street.

Every property with a B-3 designation in the current City Zoning Plan and that is not located within a new future land use district is included in this district. The current zoning in this district also allows for mobile home parks and apartments with four or more units.

GENERAL INDUSTRIAL & MANUFACTURING DISTRICT

The uses and activities planned for in this district are those with an existing I-1 or I-2 designation in the current zoning map. Land uses in this district include activities that occur at all hours of the day and/or night, and/or that have relatively high levels of activity.

- SAULT INDUSTRIAL PARK AND VICINITY: This 64-acre park is a State-certified, covenant-restricted industrial park. Of the 21 lots in the park, only 2 are undeveloped. This area will continue to be the dominant industrial area of the City. It is located adjacent to the airport, ¼ mile east of the I-75 freeway, and is also relatively close to rail transportation.

The potential for deep-water port development will also make this an attractive future industrial development area.

- AIRPORT AREA AND AIR INDUSTRIAL PARK: The community's Airport Area Plan supports the ongoing maintenance and improvement of this facility and airstrip. There are no dramatic changes proposed to the current airfield assets in the near-term. As interest in development of industrial businesses continues to grow, the adjacent Airport Industrial Park will play a significant role in accommodating those uses. The Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation is currently strategizing how best to market the considerable amount of vacant land remaining within the Park.
- LIME PILE VICINITY: Much of the land in this area is vacant. Problems and challenges related to environmental contamination and cleanup are still unresolved. Resolving these issues is a priority for determining future land uses; however, it is highly likely that the lime piles will remain a long-term fixture in the City.
- WEST END WAREHOUSE AREA: This is the land area by Magazine Street, the Power Canal, Meridian Street, and Portage Avenue. The area's future land uses are uncertain at this time, however, it is likely that this district's uses will continue to move away from industrial uses toward something different. The area's geographic position in relation to the University and to Downtown lend to both commercial, multi-family, and single-family land use opportunities. However, much depends on the outcomes and activities that occur in those adjacent districts. Another important factor that may influence the future of this area is the potential future development and upgrades to the Soo Locks. Rough estimates about the impacts of the Locks project vary, however it is likely that this project will occur over a 10-year period and may involve 2,000 – 2,500 people. Given the location and the relatively large amount of vacant and underutilized land in this area, future changes are likely

but the timing and specific uses are unknown. At such time as this area's situation is more completely understood, it would be advantageous to explore creating a subarea plan to ensure that development receives proper guidance.



LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

This district includes properties located in existing RSV, R-1, RS-1, RS-2 and R-1A (R-1A is the only zoning district that allows single-wide mobile homes outside of a state-licensed mobile home park) districts of the current City zoning ordinance.

The district includes the neighborhoods located west of the downtown area, between Minneapolis Street and Seymour Street, between Ryan Avenue and Ashumun Street, and between I-75 and the eastern area of the City (east of Seymour Street). Both of these areas cover a relatively extensive amount of land, and development has already occurred along the existing roadways. The pre-existing pattern of development will influence and impact future development in these areas.

Utility service is a factor due to density and coverage. Additional limiting factors for development in this district include slopes, soils, wetland areas, and the presence of other natural features.

It is important to note that the designation of an area as a low density land use refers primarily to the number of dwelling units located on the lot. It does not necessarily outline the number of occupants allowed in each dwelling, nor does it include "conditional uses" other than residences, as there are several conditional or special uses which may be permitted should certain additional criteria be met.



MEDIUM-HIGH RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

The properties in this district include single and multi-family homes including those located in the R-2, RM-1, 2, or 3 districts in the current zoning ordinance.

This designation is also applied to areas where there are already 12 or more dwelling units per acre or where this type of relatively higher density housing is appropriate. Single-family, duplexes, four-plexes, townhomes, condominiums, and apartments are all included in this designation. This district includes existing single-family homes, and group living arrangements allowed by current ordinances in the single-family districts.

The area north and south of the University area and close to the canal is included in this district. This area has been targeted as a potential area for investment and development that will benefit the housing and growth needs and goals of both Lake Superior State University and the City of Sault Ste. Marie. This district will also allow for development and redevelopment of mixed single- and multi-family housing for residents, university faculty, and students.

Areas within this district that are close to the downtown and waterfront areas are prime locations for additional residential development. As investment in the downtown and waterfront continues, these areas will become more desirable places to live in close proximity to community assets, amenities, and services.





MIXED-USE WATERFRONT DISTRICT

The City has several existing plans and reports that highlight waterfront development and future land use opportunities. Here is a summary of the recommendations from those reports:

- Capitalize on the location of the City Hall.
- Host waterfront festivals.
- Highlight and invest in recreational opportunities for the Lower River Islands.
- Increase visual access and connectivity to downtown and neighborhoods.
- Redevelop/reuse the tannery property adjacent to the Reiss Coal dock once the site is delisted.
- Invest in planned improvements at Rotary Park.
- Integrate City and Soo Lock plans and permitted uses and coordinate waterfront investments.

The Mixed-Use Waterfront District is informed by these existing plans and best practices and includes suggestions for integrated planning and compatible land uses.

This district includes the Soo Locks, public parks, a marked walking path, historic markers and buildings, residences, and commercial and industrial (lock) uses.

The City has no regulatory authority over federal property. Therefore, coordinating planning and infrastructure investments with the US Army Corps of Engineers will be critical to the City’s success in achieving community goals for this district, which

include designing places and spaces that encourage public use and enjoyment of the waterfront, and strengthening the connection between the waterfront and the downtown.

Right now, this district’s identity is not clear. Currently, commercial and industrial uses are adjacent to campgrounds and parks. Public access to parkland and the waterway is a priority for residents. The Soo Locks support global waterway transportation and were constructed in Sault Ste. Marie to enable expansion of commerce and trade opportunities beginning in 1852. Today, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Soo Area Office operates and maintains two navigational locks (the Poe and MacArthur Locks), channels and structures and some of the community’s waterfront property. There are two additional locks within the complex (the Davis and Sabin Locks) however, no longer in use.

Much of the waterfront is devoted to uses related to water transportation including recreational craft and larger vessels.

- The Carbide Dock can accommodate a 1,000-foot vessel and is important for commercial and industrial uses.
- Sault Ste. Marie’s west dock, informally known as the Reiss Dock, has an 800-foot slip and 780 feet of St Marys River frontage. The dock is located at the convergence of deep water, a major rail yard and an interstate freeway. The port has been inactive since the late 1970s/early 1980s and the city is exploring options to off-load materials at the Reiss

Dock instead of the downtown Carbide Dock should it become necessary in the future.

- Sault Ste. Marie has two ports that are also Harbors of Refuge, the Charles T. Harvey Marina and the George Kemp Marina. The Charles T. Harvey Marina is a 5.4-acre marina located on the lower St. Marys River. It has 31 seasonal slips and no transient dockage. The George Kemp Marina is located downtown. It was constructed in 1998, has over 50 slips, and can accommodate vessels up to 100 feet in length. The Kemp Marina offers fuel sales and other services for boaters.

Best practices for maintaining access to the waterfront for the public and water-dependent uses in Sault Ste. Marie include improving public waterfront space and capitalizing on tourism with ample amenities and a well-connected downtown waterfront.

Land use within a 1,000-foot buffer of the river consists of 45 percent residential, 34 percent other uses, including areas with active tourism uses, 15 percent industrial and 6 percent commercial uses. The existing City zoning ordinance Tourist District permits water-related uses, among other uses.

Waterfront parks, including Aune-Osborn Campground and Park, Ashmun Bay Park and Rotary Island Park, have boat launches that provide additional access to the upper and lower river.

At Alford Park, a lighted waterfront walkway is utilized by anglers and sightseers. The Soo Locks are a significant tourist attraction. The federal facility has a visitor’s center and park and handles 500,000 visitors annually. Both fishing and sightseeing charters, including boat tours of the Soo Locks, are popular tourist activities in Sault Ste. Marie.



The Water Street Historic Walkway provides interpretive information about the many historic features along the waterfront. Among these historic features include the Locks Overlook Station, the Plank Alley Station where the original business district and railroad were located, the Fort Brady Station and the Johnston Homestead Station with historic homes and the Museum Ship Valley Camp.

The U.S. Coast Guard Sector Sault Ste. Marie facility is located to the east of the Soo Locks.

MOBILE HOME PARK DISTRICT

This future land use district includes areas that are currently mobile home parks. There are two existing mobile home park areas not included in this district. One is located near the Harvey Marina that may transition to other residential uses in the future. The other is an area near the intersection of M-129 and the Business Spur that may transition to retail uses.

The General Business (B-3) District in the current zoning ordinance is the only zoning district which allows for mobile home parks.

RECREATION/OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

This district includes largely undeveloped land includes



areas that have a relatively high concentration of wetlands. Furthermore, large tracts of land in this district are city- and state-owned, which are predominantly used for parks and recreation. There may come a time in the future where development may occur on some of these properties. Development here may require considerations for wetland mitigation.

RURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

This district’s uses will be characterized by relatively low-density residential uses. On the current zoning map, Rural Residential is represented with the acronym “RSV.” Parcel sizes in this district will be comparatively larger than the Low Density and Medium-High Residential Districts. Areas in this district are located relatively farther away from the downtown area generally on the south side of the City.

Limiting factors for development in this district include slopes, soils, wetland areas, and the presence of other natural features. Utility service is a factor due to density and coverage.

Rural residential districts are generally adjacent to Low Density Residential districts, School Use districts, Recreation/Open Space districts, or General Commercial districts, including along a relatively large area along the I-75 corridor.

SCHOOL USE DISTRICT

Included in this district are all lands owned by school districts. Per Michigan law, these units of government are exempt from local zoning authority. From a practical planning and community development standpoint, what happens on these properties impacts the entire community. Coordination and collaboration with these units of government regarding the future use and development of these properties is a priority for the City. Integrated planning and action steps will be particularly important related to any changes to the use of these properties. The City and Sault Area Schools have a long-standing positive partnership in this regard. This future land use district includes the buildings and facilities of Lake Superior State University.

UNIVERSITY DISTRICT

Lake Superior State University recently completed a master plan for its campus area, including properties adjacent to the campus area. During the planning process, University and City leaders met to discuss shared visions and goals. Leaders identified the following shared City and LSSU goals for this district and community needs include creating:

Complete Street transportation solutions, and a safer street and safer crossings and connections for people who are walking and biking along Easterday Avenue.

- A visual “gateway” to the City and the campus along Easterday Avenue.
- More visual and physical connections between the campus and the downtown including signed or marked walking and biking paths.
- More housing choices for students, faculty, and City residents close to the campus.

The City and LSSU intend to develop an aligned project-prioritization for this district, and for surrounding areas, including related to housing and transportation choices. This collaborative implementation approach will enable the respective entities to leverage capital investments, including related to streets and other infrastructure. It will also help support coordinated communication with state and federal agencies and funders who may be likely implementation partners for specific projects.







## 7. APPENDICES

# PUBLIC INPUT: OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS

Below are comments given by community members who attended master plan workshops in August of 2015.

## WRITTEN COMMENTS RELATED TO LAND USE AND ZONING:

- Clean up Easterday.
- Eliminate meters to attract people to downtown - otherwise why not shop at Walmart?
- Former Senior Citizen's Bldg on West 4th Ave leased by LSSU for CJ program - future plans?
- Return parking garage to the tax rolls - Gov Osborn and Peck (2).
- Increase development in rea bordered by Gov Osborn, Ridge, Water, and Ashmun.
- The Magazine St., Gros Cup, W. Spruce area is pretty depressing. Some effort should be made here, especially if Fort St. Bridge is a corridor to downtown.
- Vision for area along Water St., near Ashmun: Take down fence and/or improve signage about small gauge railroad, improve visibility/replace signage.
- Comments left near Gov Osborn, Ridge, Arlington: The Sault talks about how old it is but despite the historic homes and a couple of buildings we have very little to really see.
- Would like to see a downtown historic district.
- Would like to see other historic district in City and neighborhood.
- Historic preservation all over town would help. Look at neighborhoods in Traverse City near Munson Hospital and downtown.
- Is the undeveloped property bordered by Easterday, Seymour, Marquette, Shunk polluted or usable?
- Older neighborhoods especially adjacent to downtown need protection from the building of new homes/bldgs or renovated with modern features. Any new building should blend with adjacent housing.
- Area by Median Street - "Shanty town!"
- Future development in area bordered by W Easterday, Meridian St, Riverview Way (3) Review LSSU and City properties in this area and determine best use (1) Add park to this area (1).
- Dog park near N Campus Ct and College Dr.
- Purchase property near peck St, Fort St, Sheridan. Turn into student housing.
- New Considine Hall (South Hall) - use for edu and community - IDEAS?
- Sherman Park - stone pump house building is vacant - City owned?
- Rezone Sheridan, Peck, and Eukeka to multi-family
- Commercial area should be held to a higher standard i.e. improve facades, maintain greenery, and invest into their businesses.
- Marine services zoning district.
- Three-story mansion along waterfront- used to be a halfway house - yard slopes to the water like a good boat launch site.
- Rezone Peck to multi-family.
- Peck/Eureka St - potential for redevelopment of this area of aging homes - could convert to duplexes and nice apartments - highly visible from I-75 - create a good first impression.
- Maintain well kept community parks next to the biggest dumps in town - inspire pride of ownership.

[sic]





WRITTEN COMMENTS AND NOTES RELATED TO  
TRANSPORTATION NETWORK:

- Create define student walkways along Easterday, Prospect, and Sheridan - stamp and paint sidewalks.
- Would like to see bicycle/pedestrian path along canal.
- Boardwalk along south canal.
- Need a clean “corridor” between university and downtown.
- Put a walkway along the canal.
- Travelers along highway near Bridge plaza are a “captive audience” - great place to tell story of Sault and advertise.
- West Easterday feels like a five-lane, but speed limit of residential. Turn into 3-lane with parking and/or bike lane?
- There used to be snow shoe print on the sidewalk. What happened to those?
- Rail? (note left along waterfront area to the west of International Bridge).
- How about a bike, walk, jog trail along the canal on the old Union Carbide rail line and property.
- Improve access to tunnel under I-75.
- 8th Ave by ballfields (Ryan-Meridian) needs to be redone with bike paths or walks if possible.
- Is idea of connecting road from Marquette to Riverside dead?
- Will wide shoulders be implemented on Seymour?
- Need to reference City Non-motorized Plan.
- Incorporate water trails work being done by EUP for Lake Superior and St. Marys River.

[sic]

WRITTEN COMMENTS ABOUT DOWNTOWN  
AREA:

- It is frustrating having nice buildings next to derelict bldgs. in town.
- Restore as many buildings as possible along Ashmun - especially Soo Theatre.
- make Moloney’s Alley happen!!
- More LSSU visibility on Prtage and downtown.
- Cool vacant stone building on Portage that needs renovation...
- Focus more business development downtown.
- Further development of commercial area along Portage.
- Commercial development and things to think about - unpaved alleys, not good drainage in alleys.

[sic]

COMMENTS ABOUT WATERFRONT AREAS:

- We have great waterfront opportunities but slow to move on them.
- Waterfront TIF that mimcks DDAs? (comment written on note near Water and Ashmun).
- Ashman Bay? (2)
- Clean up waterfront development.
- Plase clean up unused equipment along waterfront.
- Shouldn’t have industrial park on our waterfront.
- Obsolete buildings and land east and west of power plant could be developed for commercial uses.
- Parcel near international bridge is a good development parcel for market rate housing (Petoskey developer?).

[sic]



# PUBLIC INPUT: VISUAL PREFERENCES

Each bullet point directly quotes stakeholder responses. Corresponding photos are located underneath the comments.

PHOTO 1:

- No, junky looking.
- Strip mall = suburb = no
- Business spur only
- Looks cheap
- Need to park in back. Not nice for downtown.
- Neat and clean but better for business spur and not downtown
- Not a look I want downtown
- Not for downtown, ok for business spur

[sic]



PHOTO 2:

- No
- Too modern for our downtown
- Does not enhance the uniqueness of Sault Ste Marie
- Better for obsolescent commercial areas east of city or on business spur
- Doesn't fit city's style
- Yes - love it
- Too modern
- Too modern
- Better than a neglected building, but more appropriate for business spur
- Is modern & attractive but maybe okay for adjoining a historic business area. However not main street unless there was a way to mix new & old.

[sic]



PHOTO 3:

- No
- Plain
- No
- Possibly
- A building façade only a mother could love
- Don't like the pushed back second story
- Looks cheap!
- Fix it. No vinyl
- Interesting signage and a couple of window boxes could make this fairly attractive
- If an older building was configured this way or even without the lower bumped out front, this kind of treatment with appropriate architecture features appropriate for the age of the building
- No to vinyl

[sic]





PHOTO 4:

- No
- No - We want to capitalize on the fact that the Sault is quaint and historic...too modern and boring
- Pretty, but yuck!
- Ok, but not to be over done
- Too modern
- Better than some
- Also, better than some. Attractive, but lacks the historic aspect that we should capitalize on
- If this is a renovated older building it might work downtown. It is more modern than I prefer.

[sic]



PHOTO 5:

- Ok, but not preferable
- I like it but it does not have the historic feel needed
- I love it! Modern multi-use! Yes!
- Nice
- Interesting, but may not fit the City's style
- Okay - a little too modern for Sault Ste Marie
- Ok with me
- This has a pretty affluent look to it. It could be blend with some historic facades, and would be better than many buildings we currently have.
- While having more traditional architectural elements it is more modern than I would prefer. It is attractive but very modern feeling.
- Too modern for downtown.

[sic]



PHOTO 6:

- Yes. Good.
- Yes! Love it!
- Yes
- I like uniformity and classic look. It emphasizes multi-use buildings.
- Beautiful old building. SSM has buildings that could look like this.
- This is nice!
- I like what they have done here. I would be curious enough to stop and shop if I was driving through town.
- While not a total restoration of the building it is attractive & almost there. Would be good addition to the downtown area & feel attractive to shoppers.
- Yes please

[sic]



PHOTO 7:

- No
- Plain - doesn't enhance Sault
- No
- CRAP
- This is a barn, not downtown
- Okay outside city limits
- Please not downtown
- Nothing remarkable about this building
- Not attractive for downtown area
- Nope

[sic]



PHOTO 8:

- Horrible
- Yikes!
- This girl needs some TLC!
- Rehab yes
- Nope
- Yes! Fix it up and it will look awesome
- Fixed up it could be nice
- Can be fixed
- Has potential, but screams neglect and apathy for community image
- Fixed up and restored it would be great. Yes.

[sic]



PHOTO 9:

- No.
- Barf! Yuck!
- No. Soo Two only.
- Nope
- Utilitarian - not for the main street downtown
- No
- Maybe for the business spur. Even then, it could be made more attractive.
- No - not on main street façade
- Never

[sic]





PHOTO 10:

- Good.
- Desirable.
- Has appeal to it and uniqueness.
- It's ok.
- Yes
- Lovely! I am for it!
- Ok, but non-uniform construction is tacky
- Love it! This is what old downtowns should look like
- Really nice
- I like the variety of styles
- Lively, interesting. Expresses the kind of image most people would like.
- Like the restored historic buildings - yes.
- Inviting

[sic]



PHOTO 11:

- No
- Well, no
- NEVER!!
- Business spur
- Outdated, no
- Shopping mall - not in a historic area
- No
- Nope
- Definitely would not be a “downtown” asset
- No - not main street façade look
- Nope - no way

[sic]



PHOTO 12:

- Yes. Great
- love this...
- Gorgeous! I love it!
- yes!
- Yes.
- What SSM would look like if people took pride in ownership
- I love to see old buildings restored - every one that can possibly be made to look like it did originally!
- Great
- This has charm and interest. It would attract shoppers who avoid big box stores.
- Lots of charm and attractive. Would love to see something like this in, but do not want a fake look.

[sic]



# PUBLIC INPUT: SURVEY

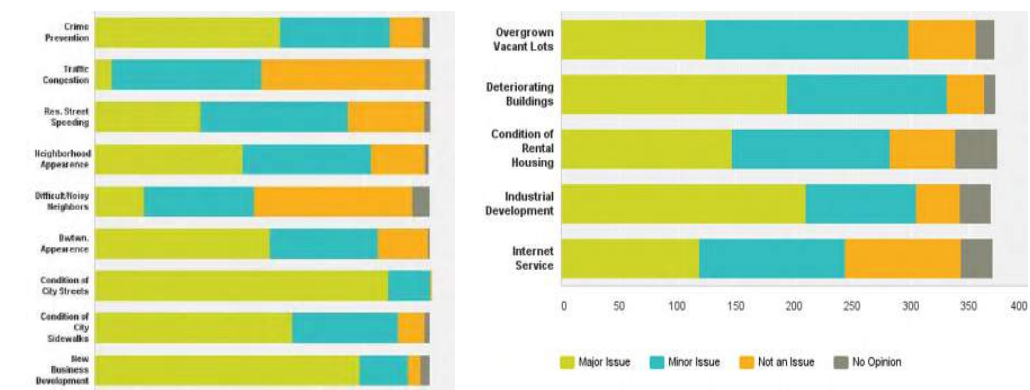
The survey used to gather public input at the onset of this project was prepared and conducted by the Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning & Development Commission. 377 responses were collected. To obtain a full copy of the survey and/or the responses, please contact the commission in any of the following ways:

- Call: 906.635.1581
- Email: [agency@eup-planning.org](mailto:agency@eup-planning.org)
- Stop in: 1118 E. Easterday Ave., Sault Ste. Marie, MI, 49783
- Check the commission’s website: [www.eup-planning.org](http://www.eup-planning.org)
- Check the city’s website: [www.saultcity.com](http://www.saultcity.com)

The figures displayed below and to the right are examples of the data collected during this process. In total, 58 questions were asked. The results were used to guide plan formation conversations with the Planning Commission, Downtown Development Authority, and community stakeholders.

**Q7: Please indicate to what degree you feel the importance is with the following issues. Please check ONE response for each item**

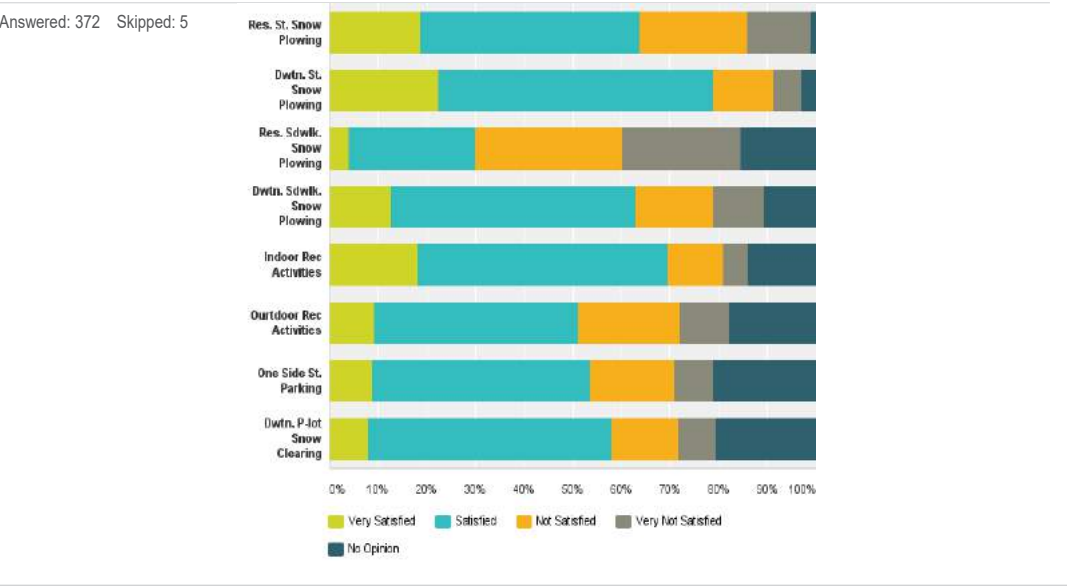
Answered: 375 Skipped: 2



Powered by SurveyMonkey

**Q5: Please rate your satisfaction with the following winter programs or activities. Please place a checkmark under the appropriate response**

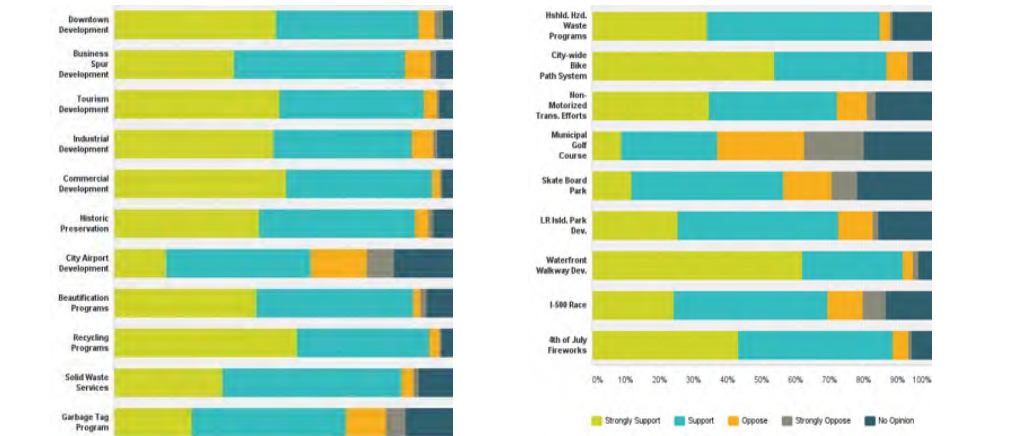
Answered: 372 Skipped: 5



Powered by SurveyMonkey

**Q8: How do you feel about the City devoting resources (funding, support staff, etc.) to the following issues, programs or projects? Place check ONE response for each item.**

Answered: 373 Skipped: 4

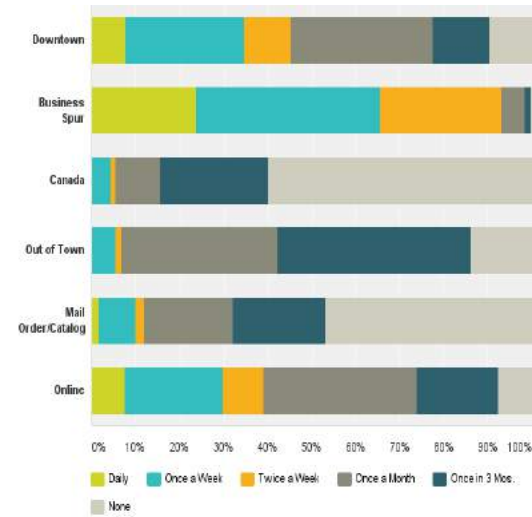


Powered by SurveyMonkey



Q18: In the last three months, how often have you shopped at the following locations? Please select ONE response for each item.

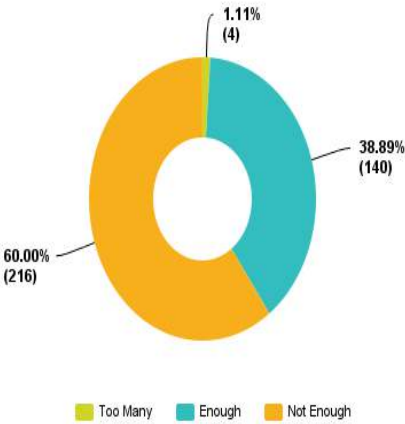
Answered: 373 Skipped: 4



Powered by SurveyMonkey

Q22: With respect to Parks and Recreational facilities, does the City have:

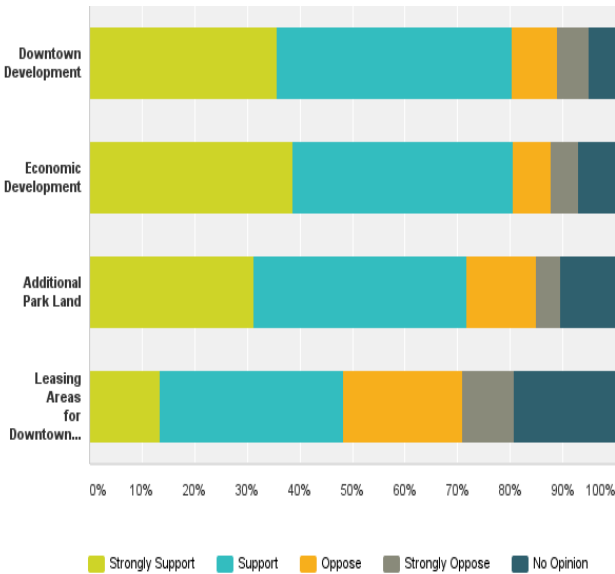
Answered: 360 Skipped: 17



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Q31: Do you support the City's acquisition of property for the following purposes? Please select ONE response for each item listed.

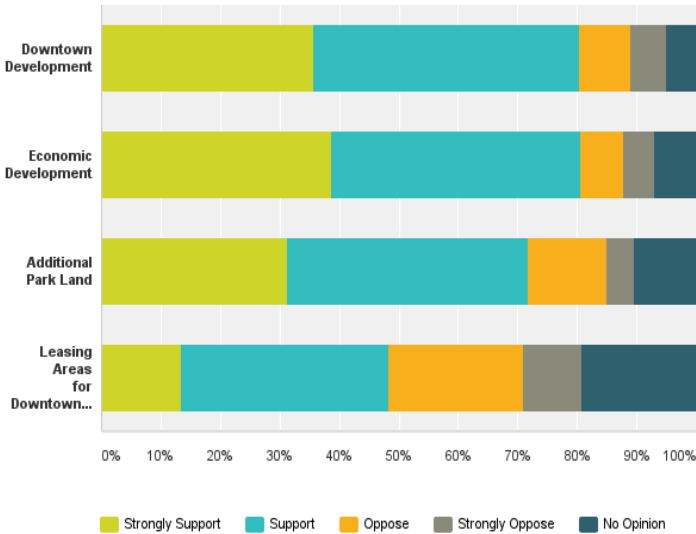
Answered: 355 Skipped: 22



Powered by SurveyMonkey

Q31: Do you support the City's acquisition of property for the following purposes? Please select ONE response for each item listed.

Answered: 355 Skipped: 22



Powered by SurveyMonkey



# PUBLIC INPUT: OUTREACH

In addition to the public input gathered while this plan was in development, the City continued outreach after the draft was completed.

Copies of the plan were available online, in the Community Development Department, and at the Bayliss Library. Comments could be submitted by phone, email, or in writing.

Two open houses with copies of the plan, comment cards, and City staff available to answer questions. The open house events were held from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm on Thursday, January 11, 2018 and Tuesday, January 16, 2018 in the City Commission Chambers.

The open houses were promoted on Facebook, as seen to the right, and through the local press.

>> **PRESS RELEASE** <<

Prior to beginning the adoption process for the City’s Master Plan, the City of Sault Ste. Marie is requesting public feedback on the draft version of the document. The City’s Master Plan is a document used to guide the future physical development of the City and, as a result, citizen input is a critical component of the effort to update the plan. Extensive public engagement work was performed at the outset of the project and the City is once again seeking the public’s assistance to ensure that the recommendations contained within the Master Plan represent the vision of the community.

Two open house events are planned from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm on Thursday, January 11, 2018 and Tuesday, January 16th, 2018, in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall, located at 225 E. Portage Avenue. Copies of the draft plan will be made available for public review and staff will be in attendance to answer feedback and answer questions.

In addition to their availability at the open houses, copies of the plan are available for review by visiting the City’s website ([www.saultcity.com](http://www.saultcity.com)), visiting the Community Development Department on the 2nd Floor of City Hall during regular business hours (9:00 am – 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday), or the Bayliss Public Library circulation desk.

Comments on the plan should be directed to Kelly Freeman, Community Development Director. He may be reached by phone at 906-632-5703, by e-mail at [kfreeman@saultcity.com](mailto:kfreeman@saultcity.com), or at the Community Development Department offices at the location and times noted above.

The City’s Planning Commission will be holding a meeting at 5:30 pm on Thursday, January 25, 2018, to consider all submitted comments. If you have comments on the Master Plan, ensure they’re submitted prior to noon on January 25, 2018.

