



**The Corporation of the  
City of Sault Ste. Marie**

**C O U N C I L   R E P O R T**

May 12, 2025

TO: Mayor Matthew Shoemaker and Members of City Council  
AUTHOR: Emily Cormier, Sustainability Coordinator  
DEPARTMENT: Community Development and Enterprise Services  
RE: 2023–2024 Sustainability Report and GHG Emissions  
Inventory Update

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**Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council information about the City's 2023–2024 Sustainability Report and 2022 Community and 2023 Corporate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory, to reinforce alignment with municipal climate goals under the *Sault Ste. Marie Community GHG Reduction Plan 2020–2030*.

**Background**

December 14, 2024 marked four years since Council unanimously endorsed the Sault Ste. Marie Community Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan 2020–2030, committing the City to net-zero emissions by 2050. The Plan outlines seven pillars: Buildings and Energy (Community and Corporate), Transportation, Waste, Green Space, Economic Development, and Municipal Leadership.

As part of its commitments to monitor and evaluate progress of the plan implementation, the City has completed updated GHG emissions inventories for both community and corporate sources.

**Analysis**

The City of Sault Ste. Marie continues to monitor its climate action through regular measurement and reporting of both community and corporate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The most recent inventory updates reflect emissions data for the community in 2022 and for corporate operations in 2023, building on the initial baseline established in 2017. Both inventories were developed using Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) methodology, which provides a standardized approach to emissions tracking within Canadian municipalities.

Table 1: Sault Ste. Marie 2022 Community GHG Emissions Update

Sector	2022 Emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	% of 2022 Emissions	2017 Emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	% of 2017 Emissions	Delta	Scope of Data
Energy	1,342,979	87%	1,306,759	87%	↑ 3%	Natural gas, electricity, fuel oil, and propane
Transportation	197,313	12%	186,618	12%	↑ 6%	Railway and on-road transportation
Waste	6,796	1%	8,764	1%	↓ 22%	Landfill gas captured
<b>Total Emissions</b>	<b>1,547,088</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,502,142</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>↑ 3%</b>	

In 2022, community-wide GHG emissions were estimated at 1,547,088 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e), representing a 3% increase from 2017 levels. The energy sector continues to dominate local emissions, accounting for 87% of the total, followed by transportation at 12% and waste at 1%. Emissions from energy use and transportation increased slightly by 3% and 6%, respectively. These increasing figures highlight the importance of targeted interventions in high-emitting sectors to support the City's net-zero by 2050 emissions reduction target.

Table 2: City of Sault Ste. Marie 2023 Corporate GHG Emissions Update

Sector	2023 Emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	% of Emissions (2017)	2017 Emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	% of Emissions (2017)	Delta	Scope of Data
Buildings	3,832	35%	3,652	34%	↑ 5%	Natural gas and electricity
Vehicle Fleets and Equipment	5,658	52%	6,076	56%	↓ 7%	Gasoline and diesel
Outdoor Lighting	80	1%	48	0.4%	↑ 67%	Electricity
Water and Sewage	1,292	12%	1,080	10%	↑ 20%	Electricity and natural gas
<b>Total Emissions</b>	<b>10,862</b>		<b>10,857</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>↑ 5%</b>	

Corporate emissions, meaning those directly under the City's operational control totalled 10,862 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2023. This represents a 5% increase from 2017, with only a 0.05% overall increase. A sectoral breakdown reveals a 5% increase in building

emissions and a 67% rise in emissions from outdoor lighting<sup>1</sup>. Emissions from municipal vehicle fleets declined by 7%, and water and sewage-related emissions rose by 20%. Corporate emissions account for only 1% of the City's total emissions, reinforcing the critical role of community-wide actions in achieving broader climate goals.

To support emission reduction efforts, a variety of sustainability initiatives were undertaken in 2023 and 2024 to demonstrate support for Council's net-zero goals. In 2023, the City introduced biannual energy and sustainability meetings across departments to enhance internal coordination and integrated a climate impact statement into all Council reports. Several energy efficiency projects were completed, including LED retrofits, ice plant recommissioning, and the acquisition of electric ice resurfacers. Community engagement remained strong, with well-attended events such as World Water Day, the Northern Ontario Youth Climate Action Summit, the EV Showcase, and education programs like Yellow Fish Road. The Green Initiatives Fund disbursed \$52,144.22 to support community-led sustainability projects.

In 2024, the City advanced major infrastructure projects such as the Deep Energy Retrofit (DER) initiative, which targets six high-emitting municipal buildings. Additional investments included the installation of five corporate EV chargers, energy efficiency upgrades at the John Rhodes Community Centre, and the kickoff of a solar project at the Transit Administration Building. The Green Initiatives Fund continued to grow in impact, distributing \$57,479.39 across 14 projects that included tree planting, e-bikes, invasive species removal, and LED retrofits. Regional partnerships were also strengthened through the Ecological Corridor Project with Garden River First Nation and the Algoma Highlands Conservancy, and the Building to Net Zero project, which will support the City in developing a green development standard.

Looking ahead to 2025, the City plans to further embed sustainability into its operations and practices to improve the likelihood of meeting its greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets of 10% reduction for corporate emissions and 5% for community emissions by 2030, with an overarching goal of achieving net-zero by 2050. Reducing emissions and exploring fuel-switching technologies are now essential not only to meet these targets but also to help mitigate the most severe impacts of climate change.

In 2025, several important sustainability projects are either completed or currently underway. Completed initiatives include the Corporate EV Charger Project and World Water Day 2025 activities. Ongoing efforts encompass the Corporate EV Charging Study, the Transit Depot Solar Project, and major infrastructure upgrades

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<sup>1</sup> Note that this is due to an increase in the use of natural gas in the Ontario electricity generation mix, which is beyond the control of the municipality, and it also must be noted that this only accounts for 1% of corporate emissions.

at the John Rhodes Community Centre facility, including roof replacement which will accommodate solar panels in the future as well as LED lighting and HVAC improvements. Other active projects include Phase 2 Program Design of the Community Efficiency Financing (CEF) project, which focuses on designing a locally driven community retrofit strategy. The City is also finalizing the 2024 Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan, alongside bringing the results of the Deep Energy Retrofit Audit Project to Council in June 2025. Work is already in progress to integrate energy efficiency key performance indicators (KPIs) into the City's asset management system and to collaborate with the Finance Department on establishing funding mechanisms to support these audit-driven retrofit projects.

Additional strategic initiatives underway in 2025 include the Active Transportation Master Plan, the Transit Battery Electric Bus Study, and several community and environmental engagement efforts, such as the City Nature Challenge 2025 and Bike to Work Week 2025. The City is also progressing with the Buildings to Net Zero Project and the Ecological Corridor Project, reinforcing its broader commitment to sustainability and long-term emissions reduction.

Together, these achievements demonstrate the City's growing commitment to environmental leadership and climate resilience. While progress toward the 10% corporate emissions reduction target by 2030 has been slower than anticipated, it highlights the importance of continued cross-departmental collaboration and sustained investment to support the goals outlined in the Community GHG Reduction Plan.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no immediate financial requests associated with this report. Sustainability initiatives outlined were funded through existing operating budgets, grants, in-kind efforts of partners and the Green Initiatives Fund. Additional capital projects that support emission reductions and energy management will be brought forward for Council consideration as part of the regular budgeting process.

### **Strategic Plan / Policy Impact / Climate Impact**

This report directly supports the following objectives from the 2024–2027 Corporate Strategic Plan:

- Environmental Stewardship by promoting climate resilience, sustainable infrastructure, and emission reductions;
- Progresses actions under the Sault Ste. Marie Community GHG Reduction Plan: 2020–2030, multiple pillars, including Corporate and Community Buildings, Transportation, and Waste; and
- Reinforces the City's participation in the PCP program and their net zero by 2050 target.

### **Recommendation**

It is therefore recommended that Council take the following action:

2023–2024 Sustainability Report and GHG Emissions Inventory Update

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Resolved that the report of the Sustainability Coordinator dated May 12, 2025 concerning 2023–2024 Sustainability Report and GHG Emissions Inventory Updates be received as information.

Respectfully submitted,

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