



**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: Salvatore Marchese, Junior Planner
DEPARTMENT: Community Development and Enterprise Services
RE: A-5-25-Z 33 Nichol Avenue

PURPOSE

The applicants, Jacob McEachern and Lana Perry, have submitted an application to rezone the subject property to permit the use of an indoor archery range within the existing building located at 33 Nichol Avenue.

PROPOSED CHANGE

Rezone the subject property from Gentle Density Residential Zone with Special Exception 378 (R2.S378) to Gentle Density Residential Zone with amended Special Exception 378 (R2.378 Amended) to permit in addition to those uses permitted in the R2.S378 Zone, an indoor archery range, subject to the following provisions:

1. Require a minimum of nine parking spaces in association with the archery range;
2. Permit one parking space to be located in a required front yard, no closer than 3 metres from the front yard lot line; and
3. Permit the use of crushed stone or other similar hard, dustless surface for the provision of required parking spaces for the archery range only.

Subject Property:

- Location: located on the west side of Nichol Avenue, approximately 103 metres (338 ft.) north of its intersection with Second Line West.
- Approximate Size: rectangular shaped lot, with approximately 32 metres (106 ft.) of frontage along Nichol Avenue and a depth of 30 metres (100 ft.), for a total area of .099 hectares (.245 acres)
- Present Use: Vacant building.
- Owner: Jacob McEachern and Lana Perry

BACKGROUND

In 1987, an application was filed to rezone the property from residential to institutional to permit the development of a place of worship building.

In 2018, the property owner at the time filed an application to rezone the property from institutional to residential to permit the conversion of the place of worship to a 5-unit apartment building.

In 2019, an application to sever the property into two additional parcels was approved by the Committee of Adjustment and assigned 21 and 25 Nichol Ave respectively.

ANALYSIS

Conformity with Official Plan

The subject property is designated as 'Residential' in the Official Plan's Land Use Schedule (Schedule C).

Residential policies in the Official Plan recognize that complete neighbourhoods benefit from a broad mix of uses that are in addition to, and compatible with housing. This includes institutional, recreational, and small-scale commercial uses such as schools, places of worship, recreational facilities, convenience stores, and alternative forms of housing.

This application proposes to expand the list of permitted uses to include a private indoor archery range, a commercial-recreation use. This use is considered compatible with the surrounding residential context and supports the Official Plan objective of encouraging diverse and complete neighbourhoods.

This proposal is therefore consistent with the Official Plan.

Conformity with Provincial Planning Statement 2024

The PPS similarly supports the creation of complete communities. Section 2.1(6), *Planning for People and Homes*, encourages municipalities to accommodate a range and mix of land uses, including recreational uses, as part of complete neighbourhoods.

This proposal is therefore consistent with the intent of the PPS.

Conformity with Growth Plan for Northern Ontario 2011

This proposal is consistent with the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario

COMMENTS

The subject property is a large lot that contains a single-storey, L-shaped building that over the years has been used for residential uses and as a place of worship.

The applicants are proposing to locate a private, indoor archery range on the subject property. This type of facility can be described as a private, commercial-recreational facility, enclosed within the existing building for individuals to practice and learn archery. Accessory retail sales, such as equipment, may also occur on

site. Land use impacts associated with indoor archery are minimal to non-existent as noise does not travel off-site. There will be no outdoor activity.

There is no specific parking requirement in the zoning by-law for archery ranges or the recreational use category; however, comparable uses typically apply a range of parking ratios. The proposed nine parking spaces on-site equate to approximately 3 spaces per 100 square metres of floor area, which falls within an acceptable range for this type of use. One of the spaces will need to be barrier-free and paved. The applicant has indicated that the business will operate strictly as private lessons for groups of up to eight individuals, with larger events being held off-site. Based on experience at their former location, parking demand rarely exceeded five spaces.

The applicant has also noted long-term plans to convert the basement into residential units. They are aware that the limited number of on-site parking spaces may restrict the total number of units that can be developed. However, the applicant is open to exploring site alterations and additional opportunities for scramble and stacked parking should parking requirements become an issue. The proposed site plan proposes 10 parking spaces, of which two would be in a stacked parking arrangement for the purposes of employee parking

One parking space is proposed to be located within the 'required front yard', defined as the first 7.5 metres from the front lot line. The Zoning By-law does not permit parking in a required front yard primarily for aesthetic and safety reasons. In this instance, a three-metre municipal boulevard exists between the property line and the roadway. Furthermore, only a small portion of the entire required front yard will be occupied by the one space. Finally, the wide boulevard provides an appropriate sightline for vehicles exiting the site. Planning staff support this zoning amendment.

The applicants propose to retain the existing gravel parking area rather than paving it. The zoning by-law permits gravel surfaces for uses in rural areas, parks and recreation zones, places of worship, and low-density residential developments. These uses are typically characterized by lower traffic volumes and vehicle turnover. Parking demands for such uses are also generally limited to specific times, such as weekends, evenings or special events, making paving the entire parking area prohibitively costly and unnecessary. Permitting gravel parking for the proposed archery range is consistent with this approach. Zoning provisions will be added so that this flexibility only applies to the archery range, rather than a future use that warrants the need for paved parking.

Housekeeping Amendment

At the time of the property's previous rezoning in 2018, which introduced Special Exception 378, the property had not yet been severed to create the current lots at 21 and 25 Nichol Avenue. As a result, the special exception still applies to all three

properties (21, 25, and 33 Nichol Avenue), even though certain provisions are not relevant to all three lots.

This application proposes housekeeping amendments to realign the special provisions with the appropriate civic addresses, which did not exist at the time the original exception was created. Despite being initiated through a rezoning process, these amendments are neutral in nature and will not alter the development potential of any of the affected lots.

Provisions 1 and 2 of Special Exception 378 speak to the adaptive reuse of the existing building (i.e. the former church), and therefore, will be scoped just to 33 Nichol Avenue and removed from the vacant lots of 21 and 25 Nichol.

Provision 3 is applicable to just 21 and 25 Nichol Avenue. Therefore, it is proposed that each lot be given its own special exception to read “*to reduce the required R2 lot area from 550 to 517 square meters*”.

CONSULTATION

A neighbourhood meeting was held by the applicants on March 25, 2025 at the Northern Community Centre. All property owners within 150 metres of the subject property, in addition to all property owners on Nichol Avenue, received notice. Two neighbouring residents attended the event and were supportive of the proposal. They identified excessive street parking as an issue when the building functioned as a place of worship and wanted to ensure this would not be an issue for the new use. While the new use envisions that most users of the facility will be dropped off, a sufficient supply of on-site parking will be required to address this concern.

Public notices were mailed to all neighbouring properties within 150m (591’) of the subject property, in addition to all property owners on Nichol Avenue, on Thursday, April 17, 2025. The notice mailed to property owners is attached to this report. The notice was also advertised on the City website and in the Sault Star on Saturday, April 18, 2025.

Public Comments

At the time of drafting this report, no public comments have been brought to the attention of Planning staff.

Application Circulation

As part of the application review, this proposal was circulated to City divisions and external agencies for detailed technical review and comment. The following departments/agencies commented on this application:

- No objections/comments – Accessibility Advisory Committee, Community Development and Enterprise Services, Economic Development, Municipal Heritage Committee, Legal Division, PUC, Public Works, and the Conservation Authority.

- Building Department would like to remind the applicant that upon approval of this application, they will need to obtain a change of use permit from the Building Department as per the *Ontario Building Code*.

Further, Building staff have confirmed that the change of use to an archery range would not trigger the need for a record of site condition should the building be converted back to residential in the future.

- The Engineering Division notes that previous drainage issues on the lot were resolved through the construction of a swale and catch basin. Should any exterior alterations occur, such as paving the parking area, a stormwater management assessment may be required. This requirement would be secured through Site Plan Control at the property owner's expense.
- Fire Services noted that a Fire Safety Plan is required for the indoor archery range. The applicants are aware of this requirement and are currently working on developing one.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Approval of this application will not result in any incremental changes to municipal finances.

STRATEGIC PLAN / POLICY IMPACT

Approval of this application supports the Quality of Life focus area of the Corporate Strategic Plan by creating additional recreational infrastructure that provides for year-round use.

There are no significant climate impacts anticipated from the approval of this application

SUMMARY

An application has been submitted to rezone the subject property from 'Gentle Density Residential Zone with a Special Exception 378' to 'Gentle Density Residential Zone with amended Special Exception 378' to permit in addition to those uses permitted in the R2.S378 Zone, an indoor archery range. The special exceptions are meant to facilitate the use of the indoor archery range in an existing vacant building.

This application represents the adaptive reuse of a vacant building by permitting a private, indoor recreational use that is compatible with the surrounding residential neighbourhood. The underlying residential zoning is maintained, ensuring that the long-term potential for residential redevelopment is preserved. The Building Department has confirmed that a record of site condition will not be required should residential uses be added or the entire building be converted to residential at some

point in the future. Therefore, the addition of the archery range does not preclude residential development potential.

RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended that Council take the following action:

Resolved that the report of the Junior Planner dated May 12, 2025 concerning Application A-5-25-Z 33 Nichol Avenue be received and that Council approve this application in the following manner:

Rezone the subject property from Gentle Density Residential Zone with Special Exception 378 (R2.S378) to Gentle Density Residential Zone with amended Special Exception 378 (R2.378 Amended) to permit, in addition to those uses permitted in the R2.S378 Zone, an indoor archery range, subject to the following provisions:

1. Require a minimum of nine parking spaces in association with the archery range only;
2. Permit one parking space to be located within a required front yard setback; and
3. Permit the use of crushed stone or other similar hard dustless surface for the provision of required parking spaces for the archery range only.

Be it further resolved that provision #3 of existing Special Exception 378, which reads "*to reduce the required R2 lot area upon the southern 32 metres of the subject property from 550 to 517 square metres*", be repealed.

Rezone 21 Nichol Avenue from Gentle Density Residential Zone with Special Exception 378 (R2.S378) to Gentle Density Residential Zone with a new Special Exception (R2.S) to reduce the lot area from 550 to 517 square meters.

Rezone 25 Nichol Avenue from Gentle Density Residential Zone with Special Exception 378 (R2.S378) to Gentle Density Residential Zone with a new Special Exception (R2.S) to reduce the lot area from 550 to 517 square meters.

And that the Legal Department be requested to prepare the necessary by-law(s) to effect the same.

Respectfully submitted,

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