

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

C O U N C I L R E P O R T

April 7, 2025

TO: Mayor Matthew Shoemaker and Members of City Council
AUTHOR: Jonathan Kircal, Intermediate Planner
DEPARTMENT: Community Development and Enterprise Services
RE: 0 Chippewa Street A-02-2025-Z.OP 57T-25-501, 502, 503

PURPOSE

The applicant is seeking approval for a plan of subdivision, a standard plan of condominium, a common elements condominium, a site-specific Official Plan amendment, and a rezoning to facilitate the development of a mixed-use community located at 0 Chippewa Street. The proposal includes single-detached homes, semi-detached homes, townhouses, and apartments, along with neighbourhood retail and park space. Expanding the Urban Service Area as per the *Municipal Act* has also been requested.

PROPOSED CHANGE

The following approvals have been requested:

Draft Plan of Subdivision (57T-501):

Approve a Draft Plan of Subdivision to create 74 lots for single-detached homes and semi-detached homes (Block C), a neighbourhood commercial lot (Block D), a public park square (Block E) and open space strip (Block A). Blocks A and E are to be deeded to the city to satisfy parkland dedication requirements.

Draft Plan of Common Elements Condominium (57T-502):

Approve Draft Plan of Common Element Condominium (Block G) to create 104 freehold townhouse condominium units, an amenity building for condominium residents, and private roadways.

Draft Plan of Standard Condominium (57T-503):

Approve Draft Plan of Condominium (Block B) to create one lot for two, 5-storey apartment buildings containing 180 dwelling units in total and private roadways.

Rezone the subject property in the following manner:

Blocks A and E (public square park and public linear park)

Rezone from Rural Area Zone (RA) to Parks and Recreation Zone (PR) for park space to facilitate the development of a linear park system along the northwest

perimeter of the property, abutting Bennett Creek, and a traditional park of approximately 0.282 hectares in size.

Block B (apartment buildings)

Rezone from Rural Area Zone (RA) to Medium Density Residential Zone (R4.S) with a special exception to include the following provisions:

- Reduce the front yard setback (north facing) from 7.5 metres to 3.5 metres.
- Reduce the interior side yard setback (west facing) from 7.5 metres to 5 metres.
- Permit parking in a required front yard.
- Permit loading spaces to be located in a parking aisle.
- Waive the requirement that loading spaces be visually screened.

Blocks C and G (single, semis, and townhouses)

Rezone from Rural Area Zone (RA) to Low Density Residential Zone (R3.S) with a special exception to include the following provisions:

- Reduce the 'other side yard setback' from 3 metres to 1.8 metres for a two-storey building, and 1.2 metres for a one-storey building.
- Reduce the rear yard setback from 10 metres to 1.2 metres for one-storey residential structures.
- Increase the maximum lot coverage from 40% to 47% for one-storey residential structures.

Block D (neighbourhood commercial building)

Amend the Official Plan by way of a site-specific textual amendment to Residential Policy R.7 to increase the gross floor area of commercial space from 200 square metres to 400 square metres.

Rezone from Rural Area Zone (RA) to Commercial Transitional Zone (CT2.S) with a special exception to:

- Prohibit the following uses: residential structures, bed and breakfasts, group homes and residences, nursing and residential care facilities, rooming houses, and short-term rentals.
- Reduce the required parking from 4.5 spaces/100 square metres to 3.5 spaces/100 square metres.

Block F (private amenity building)

Rezone from Rural Area Zone (RA) to Low Density Residential Zone (R3.S) with a special exception to include the following provisions:

- Amusement and fitness facilities, arts and cultural heritage uses, day care facilities, recreational facilities, in addition to the uses permitted in an R3 zone.
- Reduce the parking requirement to 0.

Subject Property:

- Location: West of the stub ends of Chippewa, Atwater, and Amherst Streets.
- Approximate size: irregular shaped lot with no frontage and approximately 15 hectares in area.
- Present use: Vacant
- Owner: 1000571972 Ontario Inc (c/o Harjinder Kang)

BACKGROUND

In 1986, application 79-1986-Z.OP was filed to permit the development of single-detached housing on the subject property under a zoning classification that no longer exists.

ANALYSIS

Conformity with Official Plan

This application proposes a variety of housing types, supported by several community amenities such as park space, a private amenity building, and neighbourhood commercial uses, all within the city's urban area. The range of dwelling sizes and the design features, such as at-grade entrances or alternatives to steps and stairs, are intended to accommodate a broader social and demographic profile of residents.

Further, the proposal represents a gradual increase in the level of density compared to the adjacent residential neighbourhood.

Therefore, this application is supported by the following Official Plan policies:

Housing Policies

Supporting a diverse housing stock, residential infill and intensification are recognized approaches to supporting the goals of more attainable housing as it increases more housing options that can respond to different demographic and social needs.

Residential Policies

The subject property falls under the Residential Land Use designation shown on the land use map (Schedule C). Residential land use policies support uses that contribute to the completeness of a neighbourhood, such as schools, recreational centres, neighbourhood parks, and small-scale commercial.

R.1 – A mixture of housing types and diversity of ownership and tenure forms shall be encouraged in new development.

R.4 – Small-scale intensification may be permitted in all residential areas unless adequate supporting infrastructure is not available or significant physical constraints exist.

Policy R.7 limits commercial uses in residentially designated areas to 200 square metres. A neighbourhood commercial building of up to 400 square metres is

proposed in Block B necessitating the need for a site-specific textual amendment to the Official Plan. This amendment is supported.

Fish Habitat

Fish habitat exists just outside the perimeter of the subject property, specifically, the system of creeks that run along the north and west of the property, as well as within the municipal drainage ditch located along the southern and southeast lot lines.

The Official Plan's fish habitat policies serve to protect fish habitat from harmful disruption, alteration, or destruction as a result of development. As per Official Plan policies, given the scale of the proposed development and its proximity to fish habitat, the applicant was required to submit an environmental impact study from a qualified professional. This study identifies potential impacts on fish habitat and outlines appropriate mitigation measures. The environmental impact study is attached to the Agenda and discussed further in this report.

Some of the study's recommended mitigation measures to protect fish habitat include:

- Establishing a 15-metre vegetated buffer setback from the top of bank of the Bennett-West Davignon Diversion Channel towards the west of the property, abutting Block B.
- Consider incorporating native grasses and shrubs within this buffer.
- Design storm-water management to prevent impacts to the creeks.
- Minimize impervious areas within 50-metres of the creeks.

As per the concept site plan, a 15-metre wide buffer setback from the top of the creek bank will be provided. This land will be deeded to the City as a linear park, with plans to construct a 3-metre multi-use trail in the future. In a follow-up discussion with Planning staff, Greenstone Environmental Engineering confirmed that the trail construction would not impact fish habitat.

According to the applicant's submitted Municipal Servicing Report, stormwater management systems, mostly dry ponds, will be used to control water quantity and quality before being discharged into the creek. Water quality and quantity must meet the requirements set by the City's Engineering Division, the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority, and the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). Approval from all three agencies will also be required.

Archaeological Resources

As per the Archaeological Resources map (Schedule E of the Official Plan), the northern and western portions of the lot are identified as having potential archaeological resources; however, because the property has been completely cleared of trees and was previously used as agricultural land, likely pastureland,

an archaeological assessment is not required. The previous intensive soil disturbance exempts this requirement.

Therefore, this proposal is consistent with the OP.

Conformity with Provincial Planning Statement 2024

On August 20, 2024, the Province released the new Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) , 2024, formerly known as the Provincial Policy Statement, to take effect on October 20, 2024. The PPS 2024 has carried over existing policies and has introduced entirely new policies and definitions. The PPS 2024 has a refreshed focus on intensification to implement its updated vision of building more homes for all Ontarians to achieve its goal of getting at least 1.5 million homes built by 2031.

Its Housing policies (Section 2.2) provides direction to planning authorities to ensure an adequate and diverse range of housing options and densities to meet the needs of current and future residents. Its primary intent is to address housing affordability and inclusion by accommodating a broader spectrum of housing throughout the community. It emphasizes residential intensification, including repurposing underutilized commercial and institutional sites for housing, and promoting sustainable development that maximizes land and resource efficiency.

Land Use Compatibility policies (Section 3.5) seek to prevent land use conflicts between major facilities, such as industrial operations, and sensitive land uses, such as residential developments, schools, hospitals, etc. This protects both existing and planned industrial or manufacturing facilities from constraints imposed by sensitive land uses while ensuring that new sensitive uses are not exposed to unacceptable levels of noise, odour, or other contaminants.

It is noted that the subject property is within proximity to industrially zoned lots to its south. To confirm that the proposal is in conformity with the PPS's Land Use Compatibility policies, the applicant was required to submit a land use compatibility study from a qualified professional. This study, attached to the agenda and further discussed elsewhere in this report, confirms that the proposed residential development on the subject lands are compatible with surrounding industrial uses and transportation corridors.

Therefore, this proposal is consistent with the PPS.

Conformity with Growth Plan for Northern Ontario 2011

The Growth Plan for Northern Ontario envisions residential development that supports the creation of strong, vibrant, and sustainable communities while addressing the unique characteristics and challenges of the region. Its vision for residential development aligns with broader goals of economic growth, environmental stewardship, and quality of life.

This application proposes compact residential growth and a grid-like street network to make efficient use land, infrastructure, and resources in an effort to minimize sprawl and to support cost-effective service delivery. The Plan also encourages the provision of a range of housing types that serve to contribute to overall housing affordability initiatives to meet the needs of existing and future populations.

The redevelopment and intensification of underutilized lands to support population growth and economic activity is also envisioned.

This application is consistent with the GPNO 2011.

COMMENTS

Project Description

This is a large and complex application due to the number and types of approvals and amendments that are concurrently being applied for. Pending Council approval, secondary approvals from staff are required through the subdivision and condominium process, and site plan control. Additionally, approvals from outside agencies will also be required prior to staff finalizing the plans. Should any significant alterations to the proposal be made through these processes, an amendment to the draft plan will need to be submitted to Council for approval.

This application proposes to permit a variety of housing types, such as singles, townhouses, and mid-rise apartments, as well as park space, and commercial space to establish a new residential neighbourhood in the City's west end. The subject property is presently a large undeveloped parcel of land located on the western edge of the City's urban settlement area and adjacent to the Broadview Gardens residential neighbourhood.

The project is presented as meeting the diverse needs of residents with varying housing preferences. Single-storey houses and smaller units in the form of apartments are ideal for individuals with mobility challenges who wish to minimize or avoid stairs, as well as those seeking more affordable housing options. Condominium units are tailored for those who prefer the convenience of not having to manage exterior maintenance.

This application would permit urban development to extend toward Bennett Creek, rounding out the Broadview Gardens neighbourhood with compatible housing forms such as singles, semis, and townhomes. Two 5-storey apartment buildings are proposed towards the western edge of the subject property, serving as a natural westerly transition and defining the neighbourhood's boundary along Bennett Creek.

Chippewa, Atwater, and Amherst Streets, along with all other utilities, will be extended westward at the developer's expense. A grid-like street network has been proposed, providing an efficient and direct route for travel within the area. Sidewalks are planned on both sides of the proposed public rights-of-way and on

one side of the private roads within the condominium blocks. Given the anticipated lower levels of vehicular traffic and the fact that through-traffic is not expected, staff recommend placing sidewalks on only one side of the public rights-of-way.

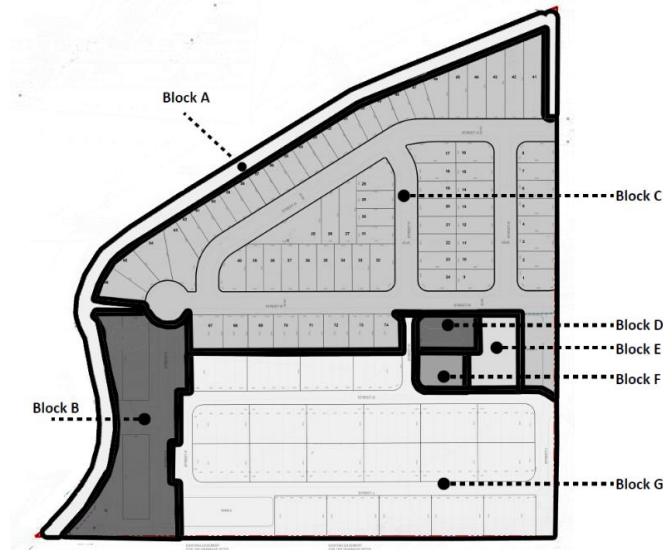
Block B will be a standard condominium plan, featuring two 5-storey apartment buildings with a total of 180 units. Parking will be provided both underground and at grade. Access to this block will be through public roads to be constructed in the subdivision (Block C). The applicant's site plan also indicates access through the adjacent common elements condominium (Block G). Therefore, the applicant will need to secure mutual easements to grant access to another lot.

Block G will be a common elements condominium plan with 104 townhouse units, designated as Parcels of Tied Land (PoTLs), associated with the condominium corporation's internal roadways and private amenity building. Access to Block G will be via Amherst Street and the public roads to be constructed in the subdivision (Block C). Due to the angle and configuration of Arden Street, it is unsuitable for access. All roads and utilities within the condominium plan will be privately owned and maintained by the condominium corporation.

The tenure of the townhouse and apartment units within the plan of condominium and common elements (Block B and G) have yet to be finalized, but it has been noted that there may be an opportunity for purpose-built rentals.

Block C will be established through a standard plan of subdivision and will include single-detached homes, a municipal stormwater management pond, a small neighbourhood commercial block, a linear park along Bennett Creek, and a public park. Its roads and utilities will be assumed by the City and become public. Conceptually, this area will contain 66 single-detached homes and 16 semi-detached homes. Access will be via Atwater Street and Chippewa Street.

The north and west edge of the property that runs along Bennett Creek and is identified as Block A will be deeded to the City and used to facilitate a multi-use trail within a linear park-like setting in the future. Long-term municipal plans would be to connect this to Goulais Avenue to the east and Second Line to the south, forming part of a 'west end loop Hub Trail' that is contemplated in the draft Active Transportation Master Plan.



A public park and small neighbourhood commercial building are proposed on Blocks E and D respectively. These features contribute to a more tightly knit community, providing convenience and leisure within walkable distance from the proposed development.

This large-scale development includes multiple draft plans, making phasing a key consideration. Certain infrastructure requirements for one phase rely on the completion of works from another phase, creating interdependencies that must be managed. The applicant's consulting engineer will need to collaborate with municipal staff to coordinate these phases and ensure a seamless implementation. It is anticipated that the plan of condominium (apartment block and townhomes) will be constructed first, with the plan of subdivision (single-detached homes) being built afterwards. Final phasing and ownership strategy have not yet been finalized and may change based on market conditions.

At present, bus service does not extend past Broadview Drive; however, the transit route network may be adjusted in conjunction with the phasing of this development to ensure ridership and coverage standards are fulfilled.

The Broadview Gardens neighbourhood, with its curvilinear streets, mix of single and semi-detached homes on relatively smaller lots, can be described as a low density suburban neighbourhood, predominantly composed of singles and semi-detached homes, whereas the proposed development represents medium density

development due to its mix of townhomes and two mid-rise apartments mixed with single-detached homes. The proposed housing forms are conducive to its surroundings.

The table below provides a breakdown of the overall proposal.

Block	Land Use	Description
A	Linear public park	Lands along the north and west perimeter along the creek to be deeded to the City to satisfy parkland dedication policies.
B	Apartment	Draft plan of condominium to facilitate the development of two, 5-storey apartment buildings for a total unit count of 180.
C	Single-detached homes	Plan of subdivision to create 74 lots for the purposes of single-detached homes.
D	Neighbourhood commercial use	Commercial-use building up to 400 square metres.
E	Public park	Park square to be deeded to the City to satisfy parkland dedication policies.
F	Private amenity building	Amenity building to be used for recreational purposes for the condominium residents.
G	Townhouses	Draft plan of common elements condominium with 104 dwelling units.

Parkland Dedication:

Under the *Planning Act*, municipalities can require developers to dedicate up to 5% of the total residential area of a property for public park purposes as part of a subdivision application. This ensures park space for residents in new and growing neighbourhoods. Alternatively, municipalities may accept cash-in-lieu of parkland, where money is collected instead of land. These funds are used to purchase parkland elsewhere or to upgrade existing parks. The municipality may request up to 5% of the appraised land value prior to development, with a lower rate of 2% for commercial uses.

The applicant proposes to dedicate 1.37 hectares of lands for park space purposes, representing 9% of the total developed area. Although this includes the linear park, staff do note that it is encumbered by an Enbridge easement.

Parkland Dedication Statistics		
Use	Property Size (ha)	Required Dedication
Residential portion	14.919	5%, which is 0.746 ha
Commercial portion	0.179	3%, which is 0.0036 ha
Total	15.10	0.75 ha
Proposed	N/A	Percentage of Subject Property
Public Square Park		1.8%, which is 0.28 ha
Public Linear Park		7.2%, which is 1.09 ha
Total		9% (min ~5% required), which is 1.37 ha (min 0.75 required)

To evaluate the need for park space, staff used the 'hectares of parkland per 1,000 residents (HPP) measure. The surrounding neighbourhood, bounded by Bennett Creek, Second Line, and Goulais Avenue, has four developed parks within an 800-metre distance, which is considered a safe walking distance. These parks include Munroe Park, Westwood Park, and Winfield Park. Arden Park was excluded as it is undeveloped.

When factoring in the existing population and the gross area of the four existing parks, there is approximately 1.9 hectares of parkland per 1,000 people. With the full build-out of this proposal, including the population increase and the addition of the public park square, the HPP would decrease from 1.9 to 1.4. For comparison, the city average in the urban area is 3.4 hectares per 1,000 people. A high-level municipal scan suggests that best practice is to aim for 1 to 2 hectares per 1,000 people.

Including the linear park would increase the HPP from 1.4 to 1.8; however, it is important to note that there are fundamental differences between a linear park and a public park. Like sidewalks, many municipalities view linear parks as transportation infrastructure, prioritizing connectivity and mobility over recreational use. Additionally, linear parks typically lack space for park amenities, such as playground equipment, due to their narrow design, and access is limited to specific points along public rights-of-way. In both cases, the City would be responsible for equipment, construction, and maintenance.

The City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan, approved in May 2024, recommends that parkland dedication in the form of trail networks in new subdivision developments be considered. The linear park that the applicant wishes to deed to the City would facilitate the future development a multi-use trail (i.e. Hub Trail) in the City's west end. High level plans envision construction of a multi-use trail along Bennett Creek that would connect Goulais Avenue to Second Line.

Given this, the linear park is subject to an Enbridge easement due to the presence of an underground gas line. According to Enbridge's 'Third-Party Requirements in the Vicinity of Natural Gas Facilities,' specific construction methods and clearances must be followed to protect the gas line. Review and/or approval will likely be required for the construction of a multi-use trail due to excavation needs. Before assuming ownership of the lands, the applicant must identify the location of the underground line and the extent of the easement, allowing City staff to better assess the development potential of the multi-use trail.

Additionally, the applicant's Environmental Impact Study (EIS), required due to the presence of fish habitat, recommended establishing a 15-metre wide buffer along the west side of the property, behind the proposed apartments. After further consultation with their environmental engineer, it was determined that a 3-metre wide multi-use trail would have no significant impact on the fish habitat, provided that the other recommended mitigation measures outlined in the EIS are followed.

Therefore, the square park and the linear park proposal is acceptable as the resulting park space would still fall within an acceptable range in terms of hectares of park space per 1,000 people, and it also serves to benefit long-term city plans to develop active transportation trails in the west end.

Zoning and Official Plan Amendments:

The subject property is zoned Rural Area (RA) and therefore, rezonings to permit urban residential uses are required, in addition to several special exceptions to adjust the building regulations.

Block A and E (public park space)

It is requested to rezone both parks from the Rural Area Zone (RA) to the Parks and Recreation Zone (PR). While this is an appropriate amendment, Planning staff recommend zoning these lands to match the abutting lands, which are to be rezoned for residential use. As a result, the parks would be zoned as Low Density Residential (R3) and Medium Density Residential (R4). Residential zones still permit parks and playgrounds, but the advantage of this zoning is that it provides flexibility for potential residential development on these lands if there is a minor lot boundary adjustment.

Block B (apartment buildings)

Rezoning this area from Rural Area Zone (RA) to Medium Density Residential (R4), with further variances, has been requested.

The apartments are proposed to be located on the western edge of the property, adjacent to the creek, and do not have a prominent presence on the neighborhood streetscape. The apartment block has minimal frontage, as it only faces the public road where the road terminates at the cul-de-sac. It is more integrated into the adjacent plan of condominium. Additionally, a proposed entrance to the trail

system provides a slight buffer between the apartment building and the nearest single-detached home. For these reasons, amending the front and west side yard setbacks is appropriate.

Given the minimal length of frontage along the cul-de-sac, it is appropriate to permit parking within the required front yard so long as landscaping features are provided to soften the aesthetic impacts associated with parking. Landscaping will be secured through site plan control.

Based on experience, loading space provisions have proven to be impractical for development and are best handled by the owner as an operational matter. This was acknowledged in the Gentle Density: Proposed Amendments to the Zoning By-law Regarding Residential Development Regulations planning report, presented to Council at its April 2024 meeting, where loading space requirements were reduced by half. For the proposed development, the parking lot area is sufficient for loading, so it is recommended that loading space provisions in the zoning by-law be waived for this particular development.

Block C and G (single, semis, and townhouses)

Rezoning this area to Low Density Residential (R3) zone would enable the existing urban fabric of Broadview Gardens to continue to be extended to round out the neighbourhood towards the creek.

While the proposal includes a mix of single-detached, semi-detached, and townhouse dwellings, the urban residential zones, following the April 2024 'Regulatory Flexibility' City-wide amendments, no longer regulates specific housing typologies under the zoning by-law. Instead, it focuses on performance standards such as height, lot coverage, setbacks, and parking requirements for residential structures.

The purpose of a 3-meter side yard is to accommodate vehicle parking. However, the applicant plans to integrate parking through garages, making the standard 1.2-meter and 1.8-meter side yard setbacks appropriate.

The rear yard setback reduction from 10 metres to 1.2 metres for a one-storey residential structure is not necessary, as the R3 zone already permits a reduced rear yard setback for one-storey homes; however, the applicant has requested this amendment for additional assurances in later approval phases.

Increasing the lot coverage from 40% to 47% will allow for a slightly larger building footprint without the need to increase the lot size. The applicant has noted that larger homes meet housing demand for older demographics who prioritize interior space over outdoor backyard space. This variance is only being requested for single-storey residential buildings. Planning staff support this variance.

Block D (neighbourhood commercial building)

To help create a more walkable community where daily needs are within close proximity, it was recommended that the development plan include a lot designated for a small neighborhood commercial use. Block D is therefore recommended for rezoning to the Commercial Transitional Zone (CT2) to allow only commercial-related uses. Permitted commercial uses include daycare facilities, offices, food services, personal services, and retail trade.

The CT2 zone is typically used to introduce lighter, more compatible forms of commercial use in residential neighborhoods. It also excludes fast food outlets, bars, and taverns to maintain compatibility. It is anticipated that such a use would primarily serve the surrounding residents, which would reduce car dependency. As a result, parking standards have been adjusted to reflect lower parking ratios, similar to those in the downtown area. The overall lot dimensions, combined with parking requirements, prevent the possibility of large-scale retailers with high customer traffic from locating here.

The Official Plan limits commercial uses in residential zones to a maximum of 200 square metres. Planning staff recommend increasing this limit to 400 square metres, which will be reflected in site-specific Official Plan policies and the CT2 zone.

Non-commercial uses permitted in the CT2 zone, such as parking lots and residential uses, will be excluded from the site to ensure it remains a neighborhood-supportive commercial space.

Block F (private amenity building)

As part of the goal to create a walkable, mixed-use community, the applicant has indicated their intention to build a private amenity building to function as a community centre for condominium residents.

To allow for this use, it is proposed to rezone the block to the Low Density Residential Zone (R3) with a special exception to permit additional uses, including amusement and fitness facilities, arts and cultural heritage uses, daycare facilities, and recreational facilities, alongside the typical uses permitted in an R3 zone. Since there is no requirement to dedicate land for a private amenity building, establishing a residential parent zone will offer flexibility, should a developer choose to include residential uses instead.

The applicant has requested a reduction of the parking requirement to 0 spaces. Similar to the approach taken for the neighbourhood commercial block, Planning staff prefer applying the lower, downtown-equivalent requirement rather than a complete reduction. Further flexibility may be considered through a minor variance if/when more details about the lot's utilization become available.

Environmental Management Zone

An Environmental Management Zone (EM) exists along the southern and eastern edges of the property and gets wider as it continues eastward. The purpose of this zone is to protect the structural stability of the creek's slope by limiting development.

The extent to which this zone affects the development potential of the area depends on the assessment by the Conservation Authority. The applicant may be required to shift the proposed buildings in this area further to the north and potentially reduce its size to avoid encroaching on the EM zoned lands. The EM lands and the surrounding area fall under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Authority, and permits from their office are required before a building permit can be issued.

Urban Service Area Extension:

The Urban Service Area, not to be confused with the Urban Settlement Area, refers to the area where city services (water and sewer) are currently available. It is primarily used as a taxation tool. Properties within the urban service area are taxed at the urban rate, while properties outside of it are taxed at a slightly lower rural rate. This is governed by the *Municipal Act*, not the *Planning Act*.

The northern portion of the subject property, approximately 145 metres in depth with an area of approximately 4.5 hectares (11 acres), falls just outside the urban service area. Since this proposal is for urban residential development that requires municipal services, the service area boundaries need to be extended to include these lands.

As per the *Municipal Act*, expanding the urban service area requires that the City submit a request to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT). This will be a process managed by both the Planning and the Legal Divisions.

Technical Studies

Given the scale, complexity, and location of the proposed development, the applicant was required to submit several supporting studies as part of this application. These studies are discussed below and are also attached to this report.

Planning Justification Report (Robert Russell Planning Consultants):

Given the scale and complexity of the proposal, the applicant was required to retain a land use planner to guide the creation of the development proposal and evaluate it against land use planning principles and policies.

The planning justification report addresses the neighbourhood context, development concept, and planning policies from both provincial and municipal perspectives.

The report concludes that the proposed development and its amendments represent sound planning and are appropriate for the subject property.

Land Use Compatibility (RWDI Engineering):

This application proposes introducing sensitive uses, specifically residential uses, near existing industrial uses to the south, between the subject property and Second Line West.

The Provincial Planning Statement (2024) emphasizes that major facilities and sensitive land uses must be planned to avoid, or if necessary, minimize and mitigate adverse effects such as odour, noise, and contaminants, to ensure public health, safety, and the long-term viability of major facilities. Additionally, new development near transportation corridors must be compatible with and supportive of their long-term function while minimizing potential negative impacts.

This policy is further supported by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks' (MECP) D-series guidelines, which recommend separation distances based on the characteristics of major facilities and industrial uses.

Therefore, the applicant was required to conduct a land use compatibility study in accordance with these policies and guidelines to assess any potential compatibility concerns between future residential uses and the surrounding industrial uses, and to determine whether any design or buffering measures should be incorporated.

The study reviewed land use regulations for the surrounding area, analyzed environmental registries and permits for industries within 1,000 metres of the property, assessed wind travel, and conducted other related tasks.

The study concluded that the proposed residential development is compatible with the surrounding industrial uses and transportation corridors, and no design interventions are necessary.

Environmental Impact Statement (Greenstone Environmental Engineering):

The presence of fish habitat has been identified in the creeks that run along nearly all of the subject property's perimeter to the north and west. In accordance with the Provincial Planning Statement and the Official Plan, the applicant submitted an environmental impact study to assess any potential impacts on fish habitat and outline necessary mitigation measures.

The study recommended several mitigation and monitoring measures to protect the fish habitat, including establishing a vegetation buffer along sections of the property that abut the creek, limiting the use of herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers, developing a stormwater management plan to prevent direct impacts on the creeks, minimizing impervious surfaces, particularly within 50 metres of the creeks, and more.

To address some of the larger recommendations, a 15-meter buffer will be established along the creek as part of the development, with much of it to be left in its natural vegetated state, especially along the section adjacent to the proposed apartments. This area that is adjacent to the proposed apartments has the characteristics of a natural creek, while the rest of the creek system functions more like a drainage ditch and appears to have been minimally maintained given wetland vegetation growing in parts of the channel and on its banks. This buffer is proposed to be deeded to the City, which would support the development of the trail system. A multi-use trail is not expected to significantly impact fish habitat.

A stormwater management plan will be developed to direct runoff to a proposed dry pond, which will control water quality and quantity before being discharged into the West Davignon Creek channel. This plan must receive approval from the City, the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority, and the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP), all of which will assess its impact on watercourses and fish habitat.

Impervious surfaces within 50 metres of the creeks will be minimized as much as possible. No large-scale surface parking will be located within this buffer, and where municipal roadways exist within this 50-meter area, they will include stormwater management systems to direct runoff to the dry pond, rather than directly into the creek.

Geotechnical Study (Down to Earth Geotechnical Investigation Report):

A geotechnical study was required to evaluate soil, rock, and groundwater conditions to assess the suitability of the site for development and identify any engineering challenges.

Based on the geotechnical investigation, soil laboratory testing, and engineering analysis, it was determined that the proposed residential structures can be supported by the existing ground conditions, provided that certain building design methods are incorporated. These methods would address concerns such as ground susceptibility to frost heave, variability in soil strength across the site, and other geotechnical characteristics.

The geotechnical analysis did not include the lands intended for the two apartment buildings, so it has not been confirmed whether the ground can support these structures.

Therefore, it is recommended that the development of the apartment parcel be conditional on a geotechnical study for the apartment block to the satisfaction of the City. This can be secured through conditions of draft approval and site plan control.

Traffic Impact Study (CIMA+):

A traffic impact study was conducted in support of this proposal. The purpose of the study was to determine whether the road infrastructure can handle the increased traffic, if any road improvements are necessary, and to provide a basis for decision making for the proposed development applications.

As part of the study, five intersections within the surrounding road network were analyzed under existing, pre-development conditions and post-development conditions for the weekday AM and PM peak hour.

Five Intersections:

- Chippewa Street and Goulais Avenue (unsignalized).
- Atwater Street and Broadview Drive (unsignalized).
- Rushmere Drive and Goulais Avenue (unsignalized).
- Arden Street and Second Line West (unsignalized).
- Goulais Avenue and Second Line West (signalized).

The three main parameters that were used in the study included:

- Operational flow of traffic of 'at capacity' or 'worst' case levels of service (LOS).
- Ratio between traffic volume and roadway capacity.
- Consideration of whether a turn lane, through lane, or roadway has enough space to accommodate queued vehicles.

The study found that the road network can accommodate current, pre-development conditions; however, by 2032, when factoring in full site build-out and general traffic growth, the intersection of Goulais Avenue and Second Line West is expected to exceed capacity. This may cause turning lane queues to extend beyond available storage space, leading to backups in through lanes. Based on the engineering consultant's modelling, adjusting signal timing at this intersection can mitigate congestion and improve traffic flow to more acceptable levels.

Municipal Servicing Report (Kresin Engineering Corporation):

The municipal service report includes studies and concept designs for grading, site access and egress, sanitary sewer, water servicing, stormwater management, and electrical and roadway lighting.

Overall, the consultant determined that the proposed development is functionally feasible; however, it was noted that the estimated sanitary sewer usage would exceed capacity by 110%. The Engineering Department has raised this as a concern and will require their consulting engineer to explore methods to reduce sanitary sewer usage to fit within the capacity limits. This may involve adjustments to the proposal, such as reducing the number of dwelling units in the apartment block and townhouse units.

As a condition of draft approval, the applicant will be required to revise the number of dwelling units within the plan of condos to align with the available sanitary sewer capacity. This will allow the rezoning process to move forward. However, depending on the extent of changes to the overall plan, the applicant may need to return to council to amend the draft approval.

CONSULTATION

Public notice was advertised in the following manner:

- SaultStar – Saturday, March 15, 2025.
- City website – Tuesday, March 11, 2025.
- Mail-out – Friday, March 14, 2025. The mail out radius was expanded beyond the legislated 120-metres from subject property line to include all properties up to Broadview Drive, as well as the industrial properties to the south.

At the time of writing this report on March 21, 2025, three members of the public contacted Planning staff. Any additional comments from the public after this date will be added to the Council Agenda.

Summary of Public Comments from Neighbourhood Meeting and Public Notice:

The applicant hosted a neighbourhood meeting in December, 2023 at the Northern Community Centre. Given the scale of the proposal, the public notice radius was extended beyond legislated requirements to encompass a broader portion of the neighbourhood to include the homes up to Broadview Avenue, as well as the industrial properties to the south.

The applicant and planning consultant provided a presentation, followed by a question-and-answer period. Approximately 30 people attended, along with ward councillors and planning staff.

The general sentiment of the meeting was that attendees were interested in learning more about the proposed development. Overall, some of the topics raised by the public included traffic, drainage, transit, protection of the creek and wildlife. The studies submitted by the applicant address all of these concerns and confirm that no significant neighborhood impacts are anticipated as a result of the development.

Application Circulation

As part of the application review, this proposal was circulated to City divisions and external agencies for technical review and comment. The section below provides a brief summary of comments received. The complete comment package is included in this report as an attachment.

Engineering Department:

A number of technical details and design adjustments will be required in the detailed design review process.

As discussed elsewhere in this report, the existing sanitary system between Ascot Avenue and Winfield Drive is over capacity and therefore, the number of dwelling units within both of the Plan of Condominiums (Block B and G) may need to be reduced pending further modelling systems that can be conducted at a later stage of the approvals process. This will be secured through conditions of draft approval and site plan control.

Building Division:

The Building Division outlined various building setback requirements and noted that for the apartments, firefighting provisions as outlined in Subsection 3.2.5. of the *Ontario Building Code* must be adhered to. Details relating to driveway location, hydrants, fire access routes, and fire department connections will be reviewed in detail during the site plan control process.

Public Works:

Public Works commented that for the areas under plan of condominium and common elements, maintenance operations, such as snow removal and refuse collection will be the responsibility of the condominium corporation.

PUC:

The Public Utilities Commission (water utility) has noted that the municipal water system may not be able to provide the required fire flow for the proposed apartment buildings and townhomes within the plan of condominium and common elements condominium. Multi-unit residential structures typically have higher fire flow demands.

To assess capacity, PUC will conduct a water capacity and hydraulic analysis at the developer's expense. Based on the results, the developer will need to ensure that the buildings meet acceptable fire flow standards. Potential solutions may include implementing sprinkler systems, incorporating greater fire separation walls, or reducing unit sizes, as this would lower the required fire flow.

This matter will be addressed through site plan control. The concern does not apply to the proposed single-detached homes within the plan of subdivision.

PUC Distribution Inc. (electric utility) has no concerns with the proposal, and has outlined a number of technical site servicing requirements for the applicant.

Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority:

The Conservation Authority does not have any objections to the proposed rezoning, plan of subdivision, or plan of condominium applications, but notes

that development on the property will require review and permit approvals from their office.

Enbridge:

An Enbridge high-pressure gas line runs along the northern and western perimeter of the property, adjacent to the creek. These lands are under an Enbridge easement and are also proposed to be deeded to the City for a linear park.

Planning staff have been in discussions with Enbridge to address their concerns regarding utility operations, safety, and ensuring that the proposed development does not encroach on the easement. Enbridge has indicated that their concerns can be addressed through conditions of draft approval and site plan control.

At the time of writing this report, Enbridge provided preliminary comments stating that any construction activity within the easement must be reviewed and approved by Enbridge Gas. A second set of comments is expected, outlining recommended conditions for draft approval of the plan of subdivision and the plan of standard condominium. To ensure compliance, Planning staff have included conditions requiring Enbridge's overall approval with the plans before the City provides final approval.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

STRATEGIC PLAN / POLICY IMPACT

Promoting growth from within the urban settlement area with mixed use, denser development is a more efficient way of growing and also promotes the concept of walkable communities where opportunities to reduce vehicular dependence exist.

This supports the strategic plan's second and third focus area of quality of life and infrastructure. The goals of these focus areas speak to environmental sustainability and climate action, exceed provincial housing targets, and to expand the active transportation network.

SUMMARY

A number of applications are being submitted concurrently to permit a variety of housing types, including singles, townhouses, and low-rise apartments, as well as park and commercial space, to establish a new residential neighborhood in the city's west end. Significant park space would be transferred to the City for use as a public park and trail system.

The subject property is currently a large, undeveloped parcel of land located on the western edge of the City's urban settlement area, adjacent to the Broadview Gardens residential neighborhood.

Several technical studies have been submitted in support of this application, with additional matters to be addressed at later approval stages, such as the final approval of the subdivision, condominium, and site plan control, including any necessary external approvals from outside agencies.

This proposal represents an appropriate extension of the existing Broadview Gardens neighborhood, incorporating compatible housing types and neighbourhood-supportive uses. Planning staff recommend approval of this application.

RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended that Council take the following action:

Resolved that the report of the Planner dated April 7, 2025 concerning application A-2-25-Z.Z.OP 57T-25-501/502/503 be received and that Council approve this application in the following manner:

- Amend the Official Plan by way of a textual amendment as outlined in OPA 258 T-170.
- Amend Zoning By-law 2005-150 as outlined in Schedule A.
- Approve Draft Plan of Subdivision 57T-25-501 subject to the conditions of draft approval outlined in Schedule B.
- Approve Draft Plan of Common Elements Condominium 57T-25-502 subject to the conditions of draft approval outlined in Schedule C.
- Approve Draft Plan of Condominium 57T-25-503 subject to the conditions of draft approval outlined in Schedule D.
- That Block B, D, F, and G be deemed subject to Site Plan Control.
- That the Legal Department be directed to apply to the Ontario Land Tribunal to extend the Urban Service Area 156 metres north on the subject property to encompass the lands between the edge of the service area and the creek.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Kircal, RPP

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Intermediate Planner
705.759.6227
j.kircal@cityssm.on.ca