



The Corporation of the
City of Sault Ste. Marie

COUNCIL REPORT

August 11, 2025

TO: Mayor Matthew Shoemaker and Members of City Council
AUTHOR: Brent Lamming, Deputy CAO Community Development &
Enterprise Services
DEPARTMENT: Community Development and Enterprise Services
RE: Pointe des Chenes Update

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Council direction to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the future use of the former trailer park area located at Pointe des Chenes.

Background

This matter has been before Council a number of times, with reports from the CAO and City Solicitor on April 12, 2021, as well as from the Director of Public Works on November 29, 2021.

The Pointe des Chenes Campground had been operating through agreements with the Lions Club since 1985, which had a cost-sharing arrangement for operating costs and capital improvements. Past Councils expressed concerns over the operating and capital costs being provided by the City for the campground, which would be classified as a non-core, non-traditional municipal service. These concerns were summarized in the following resolution passed at the November 5, 2012 Council meeting:

Whereas Pointe Des Chenes Park has been operated by the city of Sault Ste. Marie for many years; and

Whereas the property is divided into two distinct areas, one being a day use area and the other being a trailer park operated by the Lions Club of Sault Ste. Marie; and

Whereas the city has had a unique partnership with the Lion's Club with regard to the operation of the trailer park; and

Whereas the city has historically paid for most of the capital expenditures of the trailer park; and

Whereas an estimated \$45,000 is required to be spent on park upgrades in the near future; and

Whereas during the 2012 budget deliberations, it was agreed that council, in concert with city staff, would continue to look for opportunities to minimize expenditures and improve efficiencies within city operations;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that appropriate staff prepare a preliminary report on possible long-term plans for the park, including but not limited to expansion of the trailer park or possible sale of the property to private interests who may wish to develop the area within existing zoning requirements; and

Further that the Lions Club be consulted as part of this report to determine future plans the club may have for the operation of the property.

In 1964, Transport Canada constructed a firefighting training area on the southwest portion of the airport property. Firefighting training was conducted from 1964 to 1992. In 2002, the City built a water treatment plant at the campground to be operated by the PUC. In 2003, it was detected that one of the supply wells contained benzene concentrations. For the full history on concentrations and actions to date to address the concern, please see report appendices A-D attached.

Based on the inspection reports received on June 13, 2025 from Algoma Public Health (APH), water quality levels are within an acceptable range with respect to the treatment system. If the campground or an alternative use is to open in future seasons, the directive will need to be updated to include secondary treatment as water would be distributed to campsites. Another inspection will be required prior to opening the campground or for an alternative use. According to the most recent directive, sampling will be required on a monthly basis for both benzene and PFAS and quarterly for E. coli/total coliform.

Analysis

This property is a gem in the inventory of assets for the City. It is critical that any use be made available for the general public and that it complements the day park space area.

The day park space is used regularly and has seen an increase in use, which has been enhanced over the past few years with the introduction of the Summer Beach Bus, disc golf, accessibility improvements, and shade shelter investments.

Staff recommend issuing an RFP for the previous campground area and adjacent land for an operator of a complementary service provider for park space. The tenant would be responsible for all leasehold improvements and costs to operate the proposed business. Some examples that may fit as complementary businesses adjacent to the day park are:

- Trailer park;
- Wellness retreat;
- Destination resort;
- Etc.

Appendix E includes a map identifying the area for consideration in the RFP. Staff recommend that if there are multiple submissions, more than one option could be recommended, depending on the space required to deliver effective service.

City staff will need to connect with APH when a future tenant has submitted interest to ensure the directive is amended. City staff have been reassured by APH that the timeline for this is much shorter and would not impact any proposed opening. It should be noted that the Transport Canada water treatment plant would have been designed for volumes to serve a campground, which may be a limiting factor in alternative uses. This will need confirmation, subject to proposed uses through the RFP process.

Alternatively, if the land no longer serves any municipal purpose, Staff can evaluate the option of selling it.

Financial Implications

There is no impact to the operating budget. Any RFP submission(s) having a financial impact would be reported back to an open Council meeting with respective By-law and agreement.

Strategic Plan / Policy Impact / Climate Impact

The recommendation supports the focus area of the Community Strategic Plan for 2024-2027 in a number of ways.

- Under Economic Activity, it supports the growth of a diversified economy with entrepreneurs and increases tourism visitor spending.
- It exemplifies communication and stakeholder consultation to create an environment that encourages engagement and the exploration of mutual goals to grow our community. Collaboration with community partners and stakeholders is essential to our success.
- Monitor, maintain, and redevelop existing infrastructure.

Climate Impact

Depending on the selected proponent and future land use, there may be indirect implications for greenhouse gases (GHG), land use, and infrastructure demands. Any redevelopment, particularly those involving accommodation or increased vehicle traffic, will contribute to increased GHG emissions. Future proponents will be encouraged to incorporate sustainable design principles, low-impact development strategies and operational practices such as energy efficiency that minimize environmental and climate impacts. These expectations align with key actions in the City's GHG Reduction Plan, which seeks to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

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Recommendation

It is therefore recommended that Council take the following action:

Resolved that the report of the Deputy CAO, Community Development and Enterprise Services dated August 11, 2025 concerning Pointe des Chenes Update be received and that an RFP for an operator(s) of a complementary business adjacent to the Pointe des Chenes day park space as identified in the map provided be issued.

Respectfully submitted,

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Deputy CAO

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