



In British Columbia, infants receive a combination vaccine protecting against six diseases including hepatitis B, whereas Ontario provides infants with a combination vaccine against five diseases with the hepatitis B vaccine given much later. *SEAN GALLUP / GETTY IMAGES*

Algoma Public Health plugs perks of immunizing kids earlier against Hep B

Current publicly funded immunization schedule for Ontario recommends, funds immunization against hepatitis B in Grade 7

JEFFREY OUGLER

Immunizing children earlier against hepatitis B would be less of a pain – in all sorts of ways, Algoma Public Health says.

Currently, the publicly funded immunization schedule for Ontario recommends, and funds, immunization against hepatitis B in Grade 7 for 12-year-olds, delivered by public health nurses in schools over two appointments at least six months apart. Drawbacks of this approach include high delivery costs within schools, multiple injections and children are unprotected from hepatitis B for the first 12 years of life.

The current system poses no shortage of bureaucratic headaches. “I’m sure many people have found permission slips that were very overdue in a backpack at some point,” Dr. John Tuinema, associate medical officer of health, told Wednesday evening’s Board of Health meeting.

APH suggests Ontario follow the lead of other provinces, such as British Columbia, Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Quebec, New Brunswick and P.E.I., whose hepatitis B programs immunize children in infancy.

“So, that means that they wouldn’t be getting any additional pokes and the primary care providers who are delivering the vaccine don’t really have much added burden to their day,” Tuinema said.

In British Columbia, infants receive a combination vaccine protecting against six diseases, including hepatitis B, whereas Ontario provides infants with a combination vaccine against five diseases with the hepatitis B vaccine given much later.

A shift to a similar program in Ontario would protect children here earlier and provide long-term savings, Tuinema said.

The board heard the cost of providing three doses of the DTaP-HB-IPV-Hib vaccine (combination vaccine against six diseases) in infancy is comparable or lower in cost than the currently utilized schedule of administering the DTaP-IPV-Hib vaccines (combination vaccine against five diseases) in infancy and HB vaccines in Grade 7.

Regional numbers are still being crunched.

“Especially in the long run, this is going to pay for itself, and that’s just in the program delivery alone,” Tuinema said.

Hepatitis B infection acquired in infancy and early childhood carries the highest risk of chronic infection compared to other ages, with up to 95 per cent of unvaccinated infants and approximately 50 per cent of children infected before age five developing chronic HB, compared to five to 10 per cent of those infected in adolescence or adulthood, the board heard. Also, chronic HB infection can result in serious long-term health consequences, including cirrhosis, liver failure and liver cancer, leading to significant morbidity, mortality and health-system costs.

The board heard that routine infant immunization programs tend to have higher coverage than school-based programs alone, therefore a combined DTaP-HB-IPV-Hib vaccine administered routinely at the two-, four- and six-month well-baby visits would have higher uptake than the Grade 7 program, resulting in increased herd immunity.

The board asks the province to

amend its publicly funded immunization schedule to incorporate the DTaP-HB-IPV-Hib vaccine to strengthen early protection against HB, reduce preventable chronic infections and “advance health equity” for children and families.

“Less pivots ... less health-care provider time,” Tuinema said. “That health-care provider time is very important seeing we’re in a shortage in many areas of health care.”

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Man not fined for having drug; penalty would be crushing, judge decides

BRIAN KELLY

A judge declined to fine a man \$1,000 for possessing fentanyl, saying the financial penalty would be crushing given his limited income.

Tristen Vipond pleaded guilty to four offences, including assaulting his intimate partner, possessing a controlled substance and possessing a weapon on Thursday.

Vipond struck a woman in the head in a parking lot on Queen Street East, near Gore Street, on Nov. 2, 2025, said assistant Crown attorney William McPhee. He was found with about 10.5 grams of fentanyl, a pellet gun and bear spray.

“Bad decisions” and the “wrong people” led Vipond to a 10-year addiction to fentanyl and methamphetamine, said defence counsel Adrienne Hagan. The welder was receiving \$650 a month from Ontario Works. The fine was suggested in a joint position from McPhee and Hagan in addition to six months custody. Vipond agreed to pay the penalty. Hagan called the fine “significant.”

“It will be a hardship,” she told Finnestad, adding Vipond would face “an uphill battle” to pay the cash.

McPhee said Vipond had a “very large” amount of fentanyl in his possession and deterrence was needed. He called the drug “very, very dangerous.” Finnestad said the fine would be “absolutely crippling” to Vipond.

Vipond has 116 days of actual custody. That time was enhanced to 174 days. He must still serve six days. Vipond is being held at Central North Correctional Centre in Penetanguishene.

He’ll be on probation for two

Tristen Vipond pleaded guilty to four offences, including assaulting his intimate partner, possessing a controlled substance and possessing a weapon on Thursday.

years. Terms include avoiding the victim unless she gives written consent and both the female, who also suffers from drug addiction, and Vipond are getting help for their substance use at the same time. He has to get counselling for substance abuse and can’t possess weapons. Vipond must give a DNA sample. The pellet gun, bear spray and fentanyl was forfeited to the Crown.

Vipond is hopeful he won’t return to court and he can “prove myself.”

Also in court Thursday, Nicholas Matinet pleaded guilty to assault. He pointed a knife at a woman after she shoved him on Centre Street in Blind River on Jan. 8.

The Serpent River First Nation man was sentenced to time served. His three days of custody were enhanced to five days. He’ll be on probation for 12 months. Matinet must give a DNA sample and can’t be near the woman. He must attend counselling for substance abuse and can’t possess weapons.

Matinet, 33, said he had “absolutely no clue” about the woman’s identity. He told Finnestad he started drinking when he was 13 or 14. Matinet stayed sober for “quite a long time” but began consuming alcohol again when a relationship with a woman ended when he was living in Thunder Bay. Finnestad was encouraged by the 10-year gap in Matinet’s record prior to last month’s assault.

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NOTICE OF APPLICATION AND PUBLIC MEETING

Date: March 23, 2026
Time: 5:00 p.m.

Civic Centre, Council Chambers
99 Foster Drive

GATEWAY SITE – SITE SPECIFIC AMENDMENT



TAKE NOTICE that the Council of The Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie will hold a Public Meeting on Monday, March 23, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. to consider a proposed amendment to Zoning By-Law No. 2005-150 under Section 34 of The Planning Act, Chap. P.13, R.S.O.1990, as amended. Rogers TV will broadcast this meeting and may be viewed on Rogers TV Community Programming Channel, Sootoday.com and on the City’s YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/saultstemarieca>

Any person wishing to present at the public meeting may do so electronically or in person. Electronic participants must contact the City Clerk at cityclerk@cityssm.on.ca or 705-759-5388 to register as a presenter. Registered presenters will be provided with instructions as to how to join the meeting in advance. Any written submissions received in advance of the meeting will be included with Council’s Agenda.

CITY WIDE AMENDMENTS

SUBJECT PROPERTY

Address: City Wide
Application: A-4-26-Z
Applicant: City of Sault Ste. Marie (c/o Planning Division)

PURPOSE

To obtain Council approval of a city-initiated application of housekeeping amendments to Zoning By-law 2005-150 to clarify technical language and improve implementation. The proposed amendments will be citywide unless otherwise specified.

PROPOSED CHANGE

The proposed amendments to Zoning By-law 2005-150 are administrative and technical in nature and introduces new policies, including the following:

- Amend defined use ‘Contractors Yards’ to include ‘Landscaping and Snow Removal Contractors’
- Add ‘Waste Transfer Facility’ as a defined use and establish holding provision requirements
- Update Zoning By-law mapping and provisions to reflect Official Plan Strategic Development Areas (SDAs)
- Repeal frontage requirement provision for severing attached residential structures
- Relocate Site Plan Control clause for dwelling units
- Repeal ‘Downtown’ definition and consolidate references under the First Neighbourhoods SDA terminology
- Repeal ‘Downtown’ provisions to implement First Neighbourhoods SDA
- Require snow guards on steep or metal roofs near lot lines
- Amend parking requirements in Strategic Development Areas to reflect intended reduced rates
- Permit R2 building regulations for accessory structures on undersized rural lots
- Remove duplicate clause
- Permit accessory buildings and structures in interior side yards
- Increase permitted office gross floor area outside of the First Neighbourhood SDA
- Permit lot line to lot line development for select C1 frontage properties

For a full list of the city-wide amendments, you may contact the Planner listed below or visit the city’s website at www.saultstemarie.ca

STATION MALL – SITE SPECIFIC AMENDMENT



SUBJECT PROPERTY

Address: 293, 129, 0 Bay Street (Station Mall)
Application: A-4-26-Z
Applicant: City of Sault Ste. Marie (c/o Planning Division)

PURPOSE

The City of Sault Ste. Marie is initiating a site-specific Zoning By-law Amendment for the Station Mall site to remove a site-specific restriction that limits gross leasable floor area to a maximum of 9,300 m² (100,104 ft²) for the western portion of the property – as shown on the accompanying map.

PROPOSED CHANGE

Rezone the subject lands from Shopping Centre (C5.S-89) to Shopping Centre (C5) Zone by repealing Special Exception 89 in its entirety.

SUBJECT PROPERTY

Address: 15, 29, 30 Bay Street West & 261 Queen Street West (Gateway Site)
Application: A-4-26-Z
Applicant: City of Sault Ste. Marie (c/o Planning Division)

PURPOSE

The City of Sault Ste. Marie is initiating a site-specific Zoning By-law Amendment for the Gateway Site to remove a site-specific restriction that limits retail trade to an accessory (secondary) use. If approved, retail trade would be permitted as a principal use, consistent with the Riverfront (C3) Zone’s permitted uses.

The amendment does not add new uses beyond what the Riverfront (C3) Zone permits. It only removes the site-specific limitation on retail trade so that, if the owner’s chooses in the future, retail can operate as a main use on the property.

PROPOSED CHANGE

Rezone 15, 30 Bay Street West & 261 Queen Street West from Riverfront (C3.S-153) to Riverfront (C3.S-153) with an amended site-specific special exception, by repealing Special Provision 1 (which reads as follows “Retail trade – is only permitted as an accessory use”), and further,
Rezone 29 Bay Street West from Riverfront (C3HP.S-153) to Riverfront (C3HP.S-153) with an amended site-specific exception, by repealing Special Provision 1 (“Retail trade – is only permitted as an accessory use”).

HAVE YOUR SAY

Input on the proposed applications are welcome and encouraged. You can provide input by speaking at the public meeting or by making a written submission.

MORE INFORMATION

The applications may be reviewed in the Planning Division, Level 5, Civic Centre, 99 Foster Drive. The Report of the Planning Division will be available for review on **Friday, March 20, 2026**, during regular office hours in the Planning Division. Inquiries should be directed to Nicholas Cicchini, Planning Division, at 705.759.5375 or n.cicchini@cityssm.on.ca. Please refer to the application file number.

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

To provide input in writing, or request notice if the proposed application is approved, please submit a letter to Nicholas Cicchini, Planning Division, 99 Foster Drive, Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 5X6, or e-mailed to n.cicchini@cityssm.on.ca with your name, address and application file number on or before **Monday, March 23, 2026**.

If you wish to be notified of the Council of the City of Sault Ste. Marie decision to adopt or refuse the approval of an application, you must make a written request to the Planning Division at the address noted above.

LEGAL NOTICE CONCERNING YOUR RIGHT TO APPEAL (Pursuant to Section 34 of the Planning Act, 1990)

As per the Planning Act, appeal rights are only provided to specified persons, public bodies, applicants, registered owners of any land to which the by-law and/or plan would apply to, the Minister, and the appropriate approval authority.

If a specific person, public body, registered owner of a subject property does not make oral submission at a public meeting or make written submission to the City of Sault Ste. Marie before the By-law is passed, the specified person, public body or registered owner of a subject property may not be entitled to appeal the decision of the Council of the City of Sault Ste. Marie to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

If a person or public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting, or make written submissions to the City of Sault Ste. Marie before the By-law is passed, the person or public body may not be added as a party to the hearing of an appeal before the Ontario Land Tribunal unless, in the opinion of the Tribunal, there are reasonable grounds to add the person or public body as a party.

Man threatens to slit ex’s throat, court hears

BRIAN KELLY

A man grabbed his ex-partner by the neck and threatened to slit her throat a week before Christmas, court heard Friday.

Brendon Zotter pleaded guilty to assault and threatening death in connection with the Dec. 18 incident at an Andrew Street residence.

The couple had been in a relationship for about five years and had a child together, said assistant Crown attorney Adrianna Mucciarelli. The toddler was not at the residence when the assault happened as an argument escalated.

The Crown asked Ontario Court

Justice Dana Peterson to jail Zotter for 90 days. Mucciarelli described the assault as “quite at the high end.”

Peterson sentenced Zotter to 70 days jail. His 37 days of actual pre-sentence custody were enhanced to 56 days. He must still serve two weeks in custody. Zotter will be on probation for 12 months. Conditions include getting counselling for substance abuse and domestic violence. Zotter must give a DNA sample and can’t possess weapons for 10 years. He has to avoid the victim and can’t contact her unless there’s a family court order or a third party assists with helping him see his child.

Zotter wants to attend a treatment plan. He told Peterson he is taking all the programs he can while in custody.

“I’m sorry about all this,” said Zotter.
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