

A

STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

TO BUILD AN

“ EXTRAORDINARY COMMUNITY ”

IN

SAULT STE. MARIE

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I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to present a strategic planning framework to the Co-ordinating Committee designed to establish the structure and process necessary to support the “building of an extraordinary community”. The proposed framework will facilitate:

- decision - making as it relates to the broader strategic planning process;
- communications with the community;
- marketing and promotion of the strategic plan (the co-ordinating committee can be the champion); and
- the establishment of “solution councils” enabling and empowering them to tackle specific priority issues of concern in the community.

The most significant aspect of this framework is that it seeks to embrace and accommodate the all individuals and organisations who have a stake, a role and/or responsibility in the future development of the community.

One of the key objectives of the framework is to be truly community based - giving recognition to the existing organisations in the community who have something to offer in the strategic planning process, empowering them and having them serve as one means for the community to participate in the process.

This framework suggests a time frame but does not identify a budget. If the Co-ordinating Committee agrees in principle to this framework, the working group will prepare a budget for consideration by the Co-ordinating Committee.

A. Purpose of Strategic Planning Working Group

“To establish a framework and process by which the City of Sault Ste. Marie can build an extraordinary community by renewing its strategic plan in a manner that meets the needs of the community and enables the plan to be efficiently and effectively implemented”.

This framework embraced the concepts of “building an extraordinary committee” and “solution councils”.

The objectives of the Working Group’s efforts are to assist the Co-ordinating Committee in reaching consensus on the following:

1. the purpose of the strategic plan.
2. the role of the working group, round table, co-ordinating group, and city council.
3. the strategic planning process.
4. the next steps.

It must be emphasised that this document focuses on the underlying processes necessary to facilitate the identification of results, solutions and a preparation of a strategic development plan for the community. It does not focus on finding the issues, solutions, results for the final plan.

B. Purpose for a Community Based Strategic Planning Process

The purpose for a community based strategic plan is to identify and articulate the processes, priorities, direction, focus and organizational structures that will facilitate sustainable socio-economic development, employment and an improved quality of life in the community. Fundamental to such a plan are the following elements.

- a shared vision for the socio-economic development of the community;
- a community development mission statement for a set of goals, objectives and priorities;
- strategies to achieve the goals, objectives and priorities;
- a methodology to implement those strategies and,
- an accountability framework to monitor progress.

Critical to the successful implementation of a community based strategic plan is the following:

- clear identification and description of the issues to be addressed on a priority basis;

- well defined goals, objectives and strategies;
- an implementation strategy that establishes priorities, targets, milestones and time frames for each of the objectives;
- an accountability frame work that tasks an organization with the responsibility to track, monitor and appraise the progress of the plans implementation, and describes how this organisation will undertake this role;
- broad community involvement and consensus in the development of the strategic plan;
- a broad explicit endorsement and support of the strategic plan by key groups and organizations in the community;
- an explicit role for relevant community organizations, collectively and individually (both public and private) to be responsible and accountable for the implementation of the plan; and,
- to convey to the community collectively and individually that they have been empowered to facilitate change in the community.

Undertaking this process will build an “extraordinary community”. The fundamental organisational element of the implementation of this planning framework are “solution councils” who will focus on identifying and addressing specific priority issues.

C. Outline of the Proposed Strategic Planning Process

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS:

(Please note the timeframes are only proposed for consideration by the Coord. Committee)

Phase I. Establishing a Strategic Planning Process (Completed: August 31/98)

- Establishment and Endorsement of Planning Framework and Process:
KEY DECISION POINT (Approved by Council by mid March)
- Draft Vision Statement for the Community
- Environmental Scan
- Draft Strategic Plan Mission Statement
- Marketing and Communications Strategy

- Public Participation Workshop #1 *"Describing the Process to the Public and Securing Community Support"*

Phase II. Identification of Issues and Community Vision And Mission

Statement For The Strategic Plan (Sept. 1/98 - Oct. 30/98)

- Preparation of Draft Issues
- Public Participation Workshop #2;
 - a) *Identification of Issues, Community Vision and Mission Statement for the Strategic Plan.*
 - b) *Prioritising Issues*
- Endorsement of Issues, Vision and Mission Statement and Priorities: **KEY DECISION POINT**
- Preliminary Identification and Description of Priority: Issues and Preliminary List of "Solution Councils"
- Preparation of Draft Community Goals and Objectives for Priority Issues
- Development of key indicators, community progress and monitoring framework

Phase III. Solution Councils, Goals And Objectives (Oct. 30/98 - Nov. 30/98)

- Public Participation Workshop #3: *Establishing Solution Councils, Goals and Objectives and Key Indicators for Priority Issues*
- Endorsement of Priority Issues, Goals, Objectives, Solution Councils and Key Indicators (as defined by Coordinating Committee and Solution Committee): **KEY DECISION POINT**

Phase IV. Solution Councils Strategies To Address Issues, Goals, Objectives And Accountability Framework To Achieve Them (Dec. 1/98 - Feb. 15/99)

- Development of the Solution Councils Strategies
- Public Participation Workshop #4: *Solution Councils Strategies Presentations and Review*
- Development of Solution Council Accountability Framework

Phase V. Strategic Plan Document (Feb. 16/99 - Mar. 15/99)

- Draft Strategic Plan

- Presentation to Public
- Final Strategic Plan
- Endorsement of Plan: *KEY DECISION POINT*
- Securing Endorsement and Explicit Support for the Plan

Phase VI. Implementation of Strategies by Solution Councils (April 1/99)

Phase VII. Review And Update (Ongoing on a semi-annual basis)

- Review of Goals and Objectives
- Review of Indicators and Solution Council progress
- Public Presentation
- Newsletters

II. FIRST STEPS IN DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

1. Define the roles of the organizations involved;
2. Define the Strategic Planning Process;
3. Reach an agreement on the roles and the process;
4. The Mayor formally requests participation by the organizations identified in the strategic planning process as well as formally convey to the Round tables and Coordinating Committee that they:
 - understand the Strategic Planning Process;
 - understand their role in the process;
 - are prepared to represent their organisations; and,
 - are prepared to support the process and participate in it.

It is recommended that this request come in the form of a letter to the Chair of the Roundtable and Co-ordinating Committee (i.e. the Mayor).

1. Establish a communications and marketing strategy for the plan that articulates how the community will be directly involved.
2. Seek approval and authority by Council to proceed with the development of the Strategic Plan for Sault Ste. Marie which when completed will be subject for final approval by Council.
3. Secure human and financial resources for the implementation of the plan.

III. ROLES OF ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

City Council

City Council is the organization that provides the authority and therefore the legitimacy to the plan and its development. The Roundtable, Co-ordinating Committee, Solution Councils and Secretariat ultimately derive their authority to develop and implement the plan from them. City Council is elected to represent the community as a whole and therefore the Strategic Planning process and the plan must first have their support.

The Roundtable

The Roundtable consists of the Mayor and the other elected officials serving Sault Ste. Marie and area at the provincial and federal level. The role of the Roundtable is to be the political focal point in facilitating the development and implementation of the plan. The mayor serves as chair and federal and provincial members serve as the elected, political linkage to these senior levels of government.

The Co-ordinating Committee

The purpose for the Co-ordinating Committee is to serve as the focal point for the development and implementation of the City Strategic Plan. In the 1992 Strategic Plan the role of the Co-ordinating Committee was to essentially do what its name implied to co-ordinate. It is proposed that the function of the Co-ordinating be expanded to take on a greater role, in facilitating the plan's implementation, with support from the proposed Community Planning Advisory And Liaison Committee.

Role and Responsibilities:

It is proposed that the role and responsibilities of the Co-ordinating Committee, under the leadership of the Roundtable and with the delegated authority of Council (who is ultimately responsible for the development and implementation of the plan) would be the following:

- to be the community focal point for the development and implementation of the plan;
- to be responsible for the plan's development and implementation;
- to promote, market, and implement the City Strategic Implementation Plan;
- to establish a strong working relationship with the proposed Community Planning Advisory And Liaison Committee
- to keep the plan alive through annual audit, community forums, review and communication; and,
- to communicate committee activities back to their respective organizations.

The role and responsibilities of the individual members would include:

- Communication to and from their membership, clients or various committees, the purpose of the strategic plan, its relevance to them, the progress to date, the importance of it and to secure support for it;
- Communication to and from selected groups for whom the members of the Committee have delegated to keep apprised of the Co-ordinating Committee's activities
- Provide feedback to the Committee on their organizations and members view of the plan; and,

- Taking responsibility for implementing some of the strategies developed with a view to achieving the objectives identified through solution councils.

The Co-ordinating Committee and Roundtable, under the authority delegated by Council who is ultimately responsible for the Strategic Plan, shall be responsible for the development and implementation of the plan.

Committee Membership:

It is proposed that the senior officer of each organization will be formally invited by City Council and the Mayor to participate on the Co-ordinating Committee. The purpose of taking this approach is to ensure the individuals on the committee are there with support and authority of their organizations. It will also re-affirm their roles and demonstrate their leadership role in the process. The mayor would serve as chair of the Roundtable and Co-ordinating Committee.

Federal Government:

- Director General of FedNor or their designee;
- Assistant Deputy Minister of Human Resources Development Canada - Ontario Region or their designee.
- Director General of Natural Resource Canada - Canadian Forestry Services (Ontario Region) or their designee.

Provincial Government:

- Deputy Minister of Northern Development and Mines or their designee;
- Deputy Minister of Community and Social Services or their designee;
- Deputy Minister of Natural Resources or their designee.
- Deputy Minister of Education and Training or their designee.
- Deputy Minister of Health or their designee.

City Agencies:

- CAO or their designee;
- President of the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation or their designee;

Community Organizations:

- President of the Chamber of Commerce or their designee;

- Chair of the Community Development Corporation of Sault Ste. Marie & Area or their designee;
- President of the United Way or their designee;
- Chair of Social Planning Council or their designee;
- President of the Sault Ste. Marie and District Labour Council or their designee;
- Chair of the Police Services Board or their designee

Community Strategic Planning Advisory and Liaison Committee

The purpose for this committee would be to embrace the wide range of other organizations and groups, who might not otherwise be directly represented on the Co-ordinating committee, and would have a significant role to play in the plan's implementation. This committee would serve as a key linkage to the community and vehicle for the implementation of the plan as most of these organizations would be involved in some type of *solution council*. This would be a large committee and would include but not limited to the following:

- Educational Institutions
- Major Employers in the Community
- Key Industry and Business Leaders
- Health and Social Service Agencies
- Aboriginal Organisations (inc. both local First Nations)
- Key City Departments
- Other Provincial Ministries
- The communities surrounding SSM
- Service Clubs
- BRIDGE
- Other Business, Recreational, Sport, Tourist, Cultural Organizations

Secretariat

Once the Strategic Planning Process is agreed to, there will be a need for a secretariat to manage the project. Their role would be to:

- Do the legwork
- Facilitate the development of the Strategic Plan - to make sure that the work gets done;
- Manage the activities of the various groups and organizations who may be undertaking work in support of the development of the strategic plan; and,
- Serve as a means for the Co-ordinating Committee to guide the Plan's development.

It is recommended that the secretariat consist of two elements.

A) **A Technical Implementation Working Group**, who would include the following:

- Executive Director of the CDC or designee, Chair;
- Director of Planning, City of Sault Ste. Marie;
- Executive Director of the EDC or designee;
- Chair of the Social Planning Council or designee;
- General Manager of the Chamber of Commerce or designee;
- Executive Director of the United Way or designee; and
- President of the Sault Ste. Marie & District Labour Council or designee.

B) Staff for the Working Group:

- Secretariat staff to implement the Strategic Planning process including coordinator, secretary, and planner.

The Technical Implementation Working Group would be the individuals who would see to the implementation of the planning process. In their respective roles as managers of community organizations, their job would be to guide the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The Secretariat Staff would be responsible for the logistics and activities necessary to implement the plan.

Solution Councils

The preceding organizational elements and the following process are designed to enable Solution Councils to their work efficiently and effectively. Solution Councils are the critical organizational element in this planning process whose purpose is to identify and define an issue, assess it develop a strategy to address it and implement the strategy. The Solution Council will consist of those individuals and organizations who have the mandate and interest in addressing it. The Working Group proposes that the total number of Councils be limited to a maximum of five to seven with secretariat providing administrative support.

IV. THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The process has three key operational elements:

- Activities and tasks to be undertaken by the Secretariat and Co-ordinating Committee;
- Review and approval by the two committees, Roundtable, and Council at Key Decisions; and
- Establishment of Solution Councils.
- Public Consultation

The organizational chart, which follows Section II. describes the organizational structure to administer “the process”. The role of the “solution councils” in this process is to:

- assess the issues;
- develop the strategies to address the issues;
- identify the goals and objectives; and,
- oversee the implementation of the strategy.

The public participation workshops would be the opportunity for members of the Community to participate in the discussion of a Strategic Plan. It would also be forum where the Community Strategic Planning Advisory and Liason Committee would provide their input. The key difference in the role of the Committee members and community members is their would be an expectation that the Committee members would present their organization's perspective and be more actively involved in the process, ie more committed.

Phase I. Establishing a Strategic Planning Process

The deliverables for Phase I are:

- fully endorsed strategic planning framework;
- draft vision statement for the community;
- environmental scan document(s) assessing the current situation of the community from a socio-economic standpoint;
- draft strategic plan mission statement; and
- public participation workshops.

A. Establishment and Endorsement of Planning Framework and Process: Key

Decision Point:

Once the planning framework described in this document is finalised it will be necessary for the:

- Co-ordinating committee;
- Roundtable; and
- Council

to review and approve the planning framework contained herein.

B. Draft Vision Statement for the Community

The Soo is fortunate in having had a number of organizations identify a vision or mission statement for the community. These include:

- The original R.A.P.I.D.S Plan
- The Focus 2020 process that lead to the City's Official Plan
- The Vision established through the St. Marys by the RAPIDS process involving the USWA and ASI which articulated a broad vision of the community
- Social Planning Council
- The United Way's extraordinary community vision; and
- Community Living Algoma

In addition, we understand the Mayor has identified a group of individuals to develop a "vision" for the community. While not aware of what this entails, we would hope they have the benefit of knowing or some understanding of the "vision" for the Sault that was developed previously.

A Sault Ste. Marie Quality Council has also established a group tasked with developing a "vision" for the community. Perhaps these "visioning" efforts could be combined in some form, so as to achieve community consensus. It is recommended that the secretariat undertake to collect the various community "vision statements" in order to table a Draft Vision for public view.

C. Environmental Scan

The purpose for the environmental scan is to provide the background and basis necessary to identify and describe the critical strategic planning issues that this initiative seeks to address. There are currently a number of studies being undertaken in the community that could provide

significant information for an environmental scanning document. An example of an environmental scan is provided in the addendum to this report. It is not expected that this element of the planning process would require much, if any, primary research.

D. Draft Strategic Plan Mission Statement

Please refer to comments in Phase I - A.

E. Public Presentation Workshop #1: Describing the Process to the Public and Securing Community Support

Phase II. Identification of Issues, Community Vision And Mission Statement for the Strategic Plan

A. Public Participation Workshop #2:

- i). identification of issues, community vision and mission statements for the strategic plan;
- ii) prioritising issues.

B. Endorsement of issues, Vision and Mission statement and priorities: Key Decision Point

C. Preliminary identification and description of priority: issues and preliminary list of "Solution Councils".

D. Preparation of draft community goals and objectives.

Phase III. Solution Councils, Goals and Objectives

A. Public presentation Workshop #3: Establishing solution councils, goals and objectives.

B. Endorsement of goals, objectives and solution councils: Key decision point

Phase IV. Solution Councils Strategies to Address Issues, Goals, Objectives and Accountability Framework to Achieve Them

A. Development of the solution councils strategies

B. Public presentation workshop #4: solution councils strategies presentations and review

Phase V. Strategic Plan

- A. Draft Strategic Plan
- B. Presentation to Public
- C. Final Strategic Plan
- D. Endorsement of Plan: Key Decision Point
- E. Securing Endorsement and Explicit Support for the plan.

Phase VI. Implementation

Phase VII. Review and Update

V. PROPOSED NEXT STEPS FOR THE CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

- A. Approve Strategic Planning Framework
 - 1. Reach consensus and approve general strategic planning process, as well as roles, responsibilities of Council, Roundtable, Co-ordinating Committee and Working Group.
 - 2. Establish time-frames.
 - 3. Secure financial resources.
- B. Forward Strategic Plan to Roundtable under cover letter from the Mayor for endorsement.
- C. Secure Approval and Authority by Council, the Roundtable and Co-ordinating Committee to proceed by a formal resolution.
- D. Mayor writes to each organization represented on the Co-ordinating Committee formally

requesting them to participate in the development and implementation of a Strategic Plan for Sault Ste. Marie.

- E. Designate a lead City Department for the Strategic Planning Process (eg. Plan Department)
- F. Secure human and financial resources through Secretariat with the assistance of the Technical Implementation Working Group.
- G. Co-ordinating Committee Implements the Strategic Plan Process.

ADDENDUM

Example Of An Environmental Scan From The United Way