



DOWNTOWN
Sault Ste. Marie, MI
www.downtownsault.org



2018 ANNUAL REPORT

2018 was a busy year for Main Street Sault Ste. Marie! If the year could be summarized with one word, it would be “volunteerism.” Hundreds of volunteers worked tirelessly to complete major projects including park and garden makeovers, public art installations, event and festival support, and daily tasks as simple as keeping sidewalks and curbs clean.

Main Street Sault Ste. Marie volunteer committees made huge progress in organizing and launching new, innovative programs such as weekly weeding to improve garden spaces; a new garden sponsorship program; a real estate block party to recruit businesses; a historic banner program to decorate vacant storefronts; and snowmobile trail map installations to guide trail users Downtown.

Main Street Sault Ste. Marie also made strides to implement its five year “Entertainment Transformation Strategy” to evolve into a Downtown District that “is internationally-renowned, lively, full and active year-round with a diversity of experiences and entertainment options that invites and welcomes the active engagement of residents and visitors alike.”

Entertainment Transformation Strategy implementation included: continued technical support to rehabilitate the Soo Theatre; direct involvement in the success of nearly 30 events and festivals; and promotion of scores of private events held by various businesses, organizations and individuals focused on actively engaging residents and visitors in Downtown Sault Ste. Marie.

Main Street Sault Ste. Marie couldn't have succeeded in 2018 without the support of partners and collaborators, either by their hard work or through financial support. Major financial partners included the City of Sault Ste. Marie; Cooper Dental; the Sault Ste. Marie Convention & Visitors Bureau; the Chippewa County Community Foundation; DTE Energy; EUP Regional Planning; New Holland Brewing Company; Moloney's Alley Irish Pub; The Wicked Sister; and more than 30 other sponsors and donors.

**The Main Street Sault Ste. Marie/Downtown Development Authority
Board of Directors is an active, working Board of nine individuals:**

Board Member

Raymond Bell, Chair
Allison Youngs, Treasurer
Scott Parker, Secretary
Oliver Turner, City Manager
Leslie Townsend
Tara Kelgar
Danna Sanderson
Debbie Jones
Larry Jacques

Business/Organization

Bell Tourism Enterprises
Downtown Resident
Parker ACE Hardware
City of Sault Ste. Marie
Island Books & Crafts
Phat Boutique
Leitz Sports Center
Chippewa County Community Foundation
Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians

Main Street Sault Ste. Marie accomplished a number of significant initiatives and projects in 2018. Highlights from the year include:

Main Street Committee Accomplishments

- The Design Committee launched a garden make-over and weeding program that transformed nearly every Downtown park or garden space in 2018. The Design Committee also hosted a “Building Basics program” to educate Downtown property owners on the value of their historic buildings and how to maintain them. More than 40 Downtown building and business owners attended. The Design Committee successfully created a local façade grant program and identified two property owners to receive architectural design assistance from the Michigan Main Street office in Lansing. The Design Committee also launched a vacant storefront program to install large-scale historic photos in empty storefronts.
- The Economic Vitality Committee worked hard to recruit new businesses to fill key vacancies on Ashmun Street. The Committee created and held a Downtown Block Party showcasing five vacancies. 15 interested potential business owners attended and toured the vacancies. Four of the five locations have since been rented!
- The Promotions Committee was extremely busy, hosting or supporting nearly 30 events and festivals that took place Downtown, with thousands of residents and visitors in attendance over the course of the year. The Promotions Committee also hosted a Commutations Workshop with the help of communications firm Arnett-Muldrow. The entire Main Street board is committed to improving communication strategies to effectively promote Downtown as the center of activity in the Eastern Upper Peninsula.
- The Organization Committee worked to build a solid financial foundation to support Main Street Sault Ste. Marie; the committee is continuing to develop sponsorship strategies, pledge campaigns, and analyze fee structures for various Main Street programming.



Building Basics Workshop

Communications Plan Workshop



Design Committee garden upgrades

Successful Rental Rehabilitation Grant Application

Main Street Sault Ste. Marie staff successfully applied for a CDBG-funded rental rehabilitation grant covering approximately 50 percent of the cost of constructing six new apartments in the second floor of the historic building at 224 W. Portage Avenue. The total project cost is estimated at \$629,520.



224 W. Portage Avenue Interior prior to construction

Involvement in the launch of, as well as marketing for six new or expanding small businesses Downtown that opened in the 2018 calendar year.

DDA staff worked very hard to ensure the success of 10 businesses that opened or relocated Downtown, assisting in the following areas: identifying locations; writing press releases; creating social media posts; and linking each businesses with various support services. The following businesses opened:

Phat Boutique
After All This Time
North of Chicago Pizza
Centria Healthcare
The Little Gift Shop
K3 Clothing

Successful management of or direct involvement in more than 30 events utilizing over 300 volunteers

The DDA was involved in managing, promoting, or assisting with more than 30 events in 2018, and relied on more than 300 volunteers to make each a success. These events include:

Winter Ice Festival (lead organization: CVB)
I-500 Pub Crawl
Outhouse Races
Lockside Rail Jam
Ladies Night Out
Memorial Day Parade (lead organization: VFW/Legion)
Citywide Flower Planting
Music in the Park
Soo Locks Engineers Day (lead organization: US Army Corps of Engineers)
Sault Arts, Crafts & Family Fun Fair (lead organization: Dispute Resolution)
Sault Ste. Marie Farmers Market (lead organization: Farmers Market Committee)
Slashin' Ashmun Cruise (lead individual: Jeannie O'Connor)
July 4th Parade (lead organization: Chamber of Commerce)
Gus Macker Basketball Tournament (lead organization: Sault Events, Inc.)
Rendezvous in the Sault (lead individual: Angela Patterson)
Sault Summer Arts Festival
Re-paint the Pavement on Portage
Sidewalk Sales
Downtown Cash Mob
Moloney's Michigan Beerfest
International Festival of Races (lead organization: Sault Events, Inc.)
Oktoberfest
Soo Film Festival (lead organization: Soo Film Festival)
Sault Ste. Marie Halloween Spooktakular
Small Business Saturday
Christmas Open House
New Year's Eve Ball Drop

Completion of Huntington Bank Pocket Park

Huntington Bank green space enhancements – EUP Regional Planning: \$2,000. A grant was awarded for work to be completed in spring 2018 featuring a seating area and an art installation in the Huntington Bank green space.

Partnerships and Collaboration

Main Street Sault Ste. Marie partnered with the Intermediate School District to provide work opportunities for high schoolers with special needs. Eight high school students worked all summer to clean and beautify Downtown



Intermediate School District beautification crew and Main Street staff

Main Street Sault Ste. Marie also partnered with Lake Superior State University to provide a volunteer project to more than 40 Resident Advisors in training; resident advisors completed a day-long makeover of an overgrown alley and garden space that completely transformed the area.



Lake Superior State University Resident Advisor volunteers hard at work

Other Information:

Total Value of Grants Received/Obtained

\$329,520 to cover 50 percent of rental rehabilitation at 224 W. Portage Avenue

Total Value of Efficiencies Made

- Negotiation of parking lot leases resulting in savings of over \$2,000.
- Increased volunteerism resulting in donations amounting to more than \$5,000 for garden improvements

See The Improvement!

The Huntington Bank Pocket Park was one of the most dramatic accomplishments in 2018; a previously vacant space was transformed into a pocket park that was used on a daily basis throughout the summer.



Before

During construction



Completion

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