

Background:

The City of Sault Ste. Marie has undertaken a major adjustment process to manage the social and economic that faced the community after Algoma Steel's restructuring. In early 2002, the CDC, SSMEDC and three levels of government worked together to develop an economic diversification strategy for Sault Ste. Marie.

In December, 2001, FedNor announced a contribution of \$500,000 to the CDC to be used for the preparation, promotion, management and implementation of the strategy. The City has currently ear-marked \$2.5 million to be used toward identified priorities. This seed funding will enable the community to access additional Federal, Provincial and private sector contributions including the FedNor \$3 million available for Sault Ste. Marie initiatives and the Northern Ontario Heritage Economic Diversification Assistance Program.

Overview:

Destiny SSM, nearly a year in the making, is an approach at developing, facilitating, implementing and managing a specific set of targeted and growth initiatives to spur employment growth. It's Steering Committee, with membership from the CDC, SSMEDC, and the City were tasked to develop and implement the Strategy. They were assisted by resource people from the three levels of government and recently, membership from the business community. Workshops and individual interviews gathered input from the public at large and from key stakeholders which was added to the Strategy.

In November, 2002, Destiny SSM was unveiled to City Council. It short-listed

(created on the basis of readiness and significance of the opportunity) thirty-one projects to be implemented over the next two years that could create 3,000 direct or indirect employment opportunities. In March of 2003, City Council approved Destiny SSM.

Investment associated with completing 19 of the 31 projects is nearly \$102 million, with funding from all three levels of government, including \$10.8 million from the municipality, nearly \$52 million from the private sector, and the remainder from developmental organizations and post-secondary institutions.

Destiny SSM is a tool by which our progress towards long term economic diversification goals will be managed, monitored and evaluated. It is an opportunity and challenge to make a new and better community. Within a strategic framework, the goal is to identify "an approach to developing, facilitating, implementing and managing a specific set of targeted growth and diversification initiatives and projects that will create employment to support a growing population base in Sault Ste. Marie and the region."

An Implementation Team consisting of two staff will take responsibility for ensuring the Strategy is developed, implemented and reviewed on a regular basis. Staff will be administered through the CDC and will be accountable to the Steering Committee who will monitor their work and provide assistance and coordination.

The Steering Committee will provide progress reports to City Council at least three times annually. These reports will indicate the measurable success of the Strategy and any significant concerns or changes. The Committee and assigned Destiny SSM staff will maintain regular contact with the business community and other key stakeholders to ensure that their concerns and input is an

ongoing part of the Strategy.

The Framework:

Destiny SSM is meant to provide a broad framework from which Sault Ste. Marie's private sector can contribute to Sault Ste. Marie's economic health in the coming years. The goals and strategies set forth in this document were developed with one comprehensive end result in mind: to support, retain, expand and attract sustainable economic activity that makes Sault Ste. Marie a better place to live and work.

Within a strategic framework, the report identifies and addresses six key Growth Engines which form the basis for grouping and evaluating projects and initiatives.

1. Traditional and New Industry Development
2. Tourism Development
3. Knowledge-based Development
4. Health, Social and Public Sector Development
5. Small Business Development
6. Trade and Export Development

Within each Growth Engine, the report identifies specific goals, objectives, strategies and activities necessary to make the initiative happen. It provides a framework to facilitate economic growth and guide investors, non-government organizations and federal, provincial and municipal governments as we strive towards mutual benefits of economic prosperity in a diversified, growing and vibrant community.

Destiny SSM will not sit on the shelf. It will undergo continual assessment, refinement and evaluation as we move forward.

GE #1: Traditional and New Industry Development:

This Growth Engine refers to goods producing and information technology activities involving value added manufacturing, energy (natural resources), and information technology. We will strive to diversify the base of manufacturing firms engaged in value-added manufacturing and to provide the necessary infrastructure to support the growth of these firms and industries.

Rationale:

Sault Ste. Marie's traditional industries employ large numbers of our residents and pay some of our highest wages. These foundation businesses are a fundamental component of our City's economy. Strategies focused on traditional industry development in the new economy must remain a key part of the City's economic diversification efforts.

Vision:

To have Sault Ste. Marie be an attractive destination for the creation and relocation of industry as well as the expansion of existing business in order to create a diverse and sustainable industrial base producing globally competitive, value-added products and services.

Goal:

To develop and diversify the community's industrial employment base.

Objectives:

We will meet our goal by working on the following six objectives:

1. Provide all necessary land and infrastructure in a "ready-to-build" state at a competitive price
2. Ensure that appropriate training and facilities are available to develop required workplace skills
3. Aggressively market SSM to both local and non-local "high potential" industries which could expand or begin operations in the community
4. Assist "high potential" industries to obtain required funding
5. Reduce regulations and "red tape" to a minimum
6. Support sustainable resource management practices to ensure continuous supply of raw material

Initiatives:

The Steering Committee identified a number of potential initiatives and from this list, highlighted the following seven as high priority for immediate action.

1. Industrial Marketing Strategy

Focusing on four sectors: value added steel, value added wood, transportation and forest biotechnology, this project is the highest ranked initiative of all projects. The Federal, Provincial and Municipal governments have committed slightly more than \$1 million to contact more than 1000 firms in these sectors over a three-year period. Sector specialists are being hired to assist with bringing new firms to the community or develop local businesses.

2. Aircraft Industrial Opportunity

The Industrial Marketing Strategy Committee and Airport Development Corporation are working with an industrial proponent to locate a joint venture company to Sault Ste. Marie that would provide aviation sales, distribution, manufacturing and assembly services of aircraft floats. This project upon completion will see the ultimate creation of 100 jobs over the first three years of company operation.

3. Industrial Land Development Program

The City has completed a comprehensive Industrial Land Development Strategy to address the immediate need for additional "ready to go" industrial properties. The first phase of a program to implement the strategy involves the acquisition and servicing of approximately 142 acres of land owned by Algoma Steel.

4. Odena Rail Spur

The Industrial Marketing Committee is working with the Odena Industrial Park proponents to complete the industrial infrastructure for their site. The Committee has made application to FedNor to support the construction of a rail spur into the industrial park. This will support the attraction and creation of three new businesses with the anticipated start-up of 25-40 direct jobs and over 100 indirect jobs. Legal agreements have been negotiated between the SSMEDC, Odena, and CN Rail for this initiative.

5. Galvanizing Steel Facility

The Steering Committee is working with a local group of entrepreneurs

(Lappin Industries) developing a galvanizing business for SSM. The proponent will complete the business plan, secure funding, and negotiate with ASI on infrastructure and supply. It is anticipated that this business would create approximately 40-60 jobs and would support further value added steel opportunities because of new capabilities to galvanize steel.

6. Air Cargo

The City recently completed a comprehensive feasibility study on the potential benefits, obstacles and risks associated with pursuing a strategy to develop Sault Ste. Marie's airport into a major international air cargo facility. At a recent meeting of the Industrial Marketing Strategy Committee, it was decided to recommend that City Council implement those portions of the study recommendations that could be undertaken by utilizing the existing airport infrastructure. Some immediate employment may be created with this approach. Responsibility is assigned for implementing the feasibility study recommendations within the existing budget allocation.

7. New Comprehensive Zoning By-law

In 1996, the City approved a new Official Plan to promote development while protecting the community's "naturally gifted" assets. A new comprehensive zoning bylaw is required to implement the policies of the Official Plan. The City's existing zoning bylaw was approved in 1968 and had been considered out of date for some time. The City has identified this as a priority in their strategic plan and the proposed funding will assist with hiring two additional staff.

GE #2: Tourism Development

This GE includes those activities attracting people from outside Sault Ste. Marie to visit the City and area. There is overwhelming community support for diversification of the local economy into tourism. It is felt that SSM's strategic location plus its natural beauty and natural resources make this an ideal location on which to base a strong tourism industry.

Rationale:

Sault Ste. Marie needs to ensure it has a strong marketing plan and adequate facilities and services to provide a positive experience for visitors. We will continue to support efforts to strengthen our economy through the promotion of the City and area as a vacation destination. We recognize that there is a strong connectivity between tourism, culture and recreation and that the whole is greater than the parts. u

Vision:

To have Sault Ste. Marie become an internationally recognized and established destination and a gateway to the entire Great Lakes region with world class tourism products designed to attract visitors throughout all four seasons.

Goal:

The goal for this GE is to increase the number, length of stay, occupancy levels and expenditures of visitors to the community.

Objectives:

We will accomplish this goal through the following objectives:

1. Attract conventions/meetings /sporting tournaments
2. Increase total marketing for Tourism Sault Ste. Marie to \$1 million annually by 2004
3. Sault Ste. Marie and area will be attractive for private sector to invest
4. Expand tourism development to a continuous four season activity
5. Provide an internationally recognized quality tourism experience to increase sales of vacation packages by 5 percent
6. Enhancement and support of existing attractions

Initiatives:

The Steering Committee identified a number of initiatives for the Tourism Growth Engine. From the identified undertakings the following ten initiatives were identified as high priority for immediate action.

1. Gateway Project Feasibility Study and Business Plan

NOHFC has made up to \$15 million available for development of a major tourism attraction subject to major private sector participation. The Feasibility Study and Business Plan is nearly complete. This will create a major four-season destination attraction with benefits for the entire local tourism industry.

2. Expansion Studies: Searchmont

Studies and reports have been completed on the viability of

Searchmont becoming a four-season resort and were very useful tools in securing a buyer for the Resort – which was purchased by Jack McDermott in May 2002. The new owner is contemplating expansion of the resort and has indicated an interest in working with the CDC and Searchmont Ski Association Inc. in order to overcome some of the infrastructure issues. The resort employs 150 employees and has an economic impact of \$8 - \$12 million dollars annually.

3. Sault Ste Marie Canal

The Sault Ste. Marie Canal is an important part of both our national and local history, and was designated as a National Historic Site in 1987. Public Works and Government Services Canada have prepared a plan to further develop the Canal in accordance with the requirements of a National Historic Site. The plan recommends converting the old carpentry workshop into an interpretive visitor center and further developing the east end of the Canal property to create a sense of arrival with improved parking, signage, pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

4. New Arena Project

The City intends to construct a new 4,200 to 4,500-seat multi-use spectator facility to replace the existing Memorial Gardens. SuperBuild funding of \$7.4 million has been confirmed subject to municipal and private sector contributions of \$7 million each. This project will provide the City with a quality entertainment,

exhibition, trade show and sports facility to attract new conventions and tournaments.

5. Museum Ship Norgoma and Marine Heritage Centre

The St. Mary's River Marine Centre is looking to renovate the Museum Ship Norgoma and to construct a new Marine Heritage Centre in Roberta Bondar Park. This tourism project supports the Tourism Waterfront Development Strategy and would have a significant impact upon generating new cultural tourism visitations. Construction will support 49 person years of employment. Upon completion, the Centre will support a full-time staff person, along with 14 seasonal staff.

6. Tourism Sault Ste. Marie

In partnership with over 40 private sector stakeholders who have contributed almost \$300,000, Tourism Sault Ste. Marie has developed a 3-year, \$2.4 million confirmed funding Business/Marketing plan, with the focus on three main product segments: Attraction Packaging, Meetings/Conventions/Sporting Tournaments and Linkages with the region for outdoor opportunities. This incentive is geared towards positioning Sault Ste. Marie as a four-season vacation destination.

7. Animation Centre

The Art Gallery of Algoma recently received two major animation collections valued at

more than \$8 million. The Gallery is proposing to use these collections as the basis for a major Animation Centre that would combine both public and private resources to draw thousands of visitors to Sault Ste. Marie. A strong educational component is also proposed in partnership with Algoma University College and Sault College.

8. Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre

The Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre is an important component of the City's tourism infrastructure. The building was sold by the Province last year but the Centre is still located therein. The Centre has partnered with Science North to develop additional educational exhibits and programs including an expanded children's flight centre, new Beaver aircraft flight simulator and improved displays. Some building renovations are also being undertaken. These improvements are expected to increase attendance and revenues, as will the City's planned extension of the Boardwalk next summer.

9. Waterfront Boardwalk - Clergue Park Project

The City's waterfront boardwalk has proven to be very popular with both tourists and residents and the proposal will extend the boardwalk from the Civic Centre to the Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre. This work will also begin implementation of the Master Plan to redevelop Clergue Park into an active and interesting urban area.

Additional funding will allow for completing a major portion of the project.

10. Downtown Trolley

Sault Ste. Marie's Transit Division has prepared a proposal to operate a free trolley service connecting the major tourist attractions in the Downtown area. This would greatly increase attendance at some of the smaller attractions, specifically the Bushplane Heritage Centre, Clergue Ermatinger Historic site, SSM Museum and Art Gallery. The SSM Casino is also expected to benefit greatly.

GE #3: Small Business Development

This GE includes those activities that support the growth and sustainability of businesses with less than 25 employees and have potential for wealth generation. Small business would include those businesses that were engaged in other identified growth engine sectors e.g. tourism, traditional and new business development.

Rationale:

Small business expansions and start-ups are typically driven by entrepreneurs and accounts for a significant percentage of community employment and job growth. The defining character of the new economy is the speed with which many businesses can adapt. By their very nature and size, small businesses have this ability. In many instances their survival is dependent on

clustering with and/or providing services to other enterprises.

The needs of small business, particularly in the areas of capital, management, research, and access to information and support often differ from those of larger enterprises. There is definitely a need to recognize the uniqueness of small business and their different requirements.

Vision:

To have Sault Ste. Marie identified as an internationally recognized community having an entrepreneurial culture and supportive environment for the establishment and growth of small and medium sized enterprises.

Goals:

The goals for this GE are:

- To increase the number, range and scale of innovative small businesses, focused on wealth generation
- To develop a strong entrepreneurial culture (e.g. innovative business with a level of risk) in the community

Objectives:

These goals will be attained through the following objectives:

1. Enhance access by private sector capital and financial support programs and services
2. Enhance small business success
3. Develop a business friendly environment through stream-lined and efficient delivery mechanisms
4. Increase community loyalty to local small businesses

Create and promote a solid understanding of entrepreneurship and opportunities in wealth generating business ventures

Initiatives:

The Steering Committee identified a number of initiatives for this GE. From the identified undertakings, the following two initiatives were identified as high priority for immediate action.

1. BRIDGE Business Plan Competition

BRIDGE annually hosts an international business plan competition for post secondary students. This initiative has helped create new businesses in Sault Ste. Marie. The BRIDGE competition is two-fold. The first part is called "BIG Idea" which is an idea generation phase done by post-secondary students that ultimately feeds business plans into the BIZ MAP competition, which is the second phase. The prizes, both cash and in-kind, total \$30,000 annually and are generously donated through private-sector partners and the Economic Development Corporation (City Economic Development Fund). In cooperation with Enterprise Centre Sault Ste. Marie's entrepreneurship competitions that serve the primary and secondary level educational institutions, BRIDGE's competitions support post-secondary student retention and business creation.

2. Business Website/Portal

The CDC intends on developing a website/portal that would act as a navigator for people seeking to gain a better understanding of the services and programs that all community partners offer to small and medium enterprises (SME's). This will include but is not limited

to: information regarding access to capital, advisory services, and financial support programs. It will help streamline the process for the entrepreneur, as they will be able to determine their needs and be directed to the appropriate agency. The site will provide a delivery mechanism that will permit flexibility and timeliness of information.

developed through research and development, these institutions can foster an environment of innovations. We must encourage, foster, and accelerate these efforts.

Vision:

To have Sault Ste. Marie recognized as an international hub for innovation, research and development and technology transfer supporting the knowledge based enterprises, products and services.

Goals:

The goals for this GE are:

- Identify, research, and promote knowledge-based business development opportunities
- Encourage, support and strengthen educational, health and research institutions in new areas of research, education and training programs, through infrastructure development and facilitating partnerships
- Meet the industry and community needs for present and future skilled and educated, trained workforce (human capacity) and to develop this as a competitive advantage in attracting new business investments.

Objectives:

These goals will be attained through the following objectives:

1. Develop community infrastructure and build operational support for key strategic partners to support new business development
2. Aggressively pursue private and public sector funding to support innovation, education, training, scientific research, technology, and business development
3. Create a Knowledge-based entrepreneurial spirit within our community by linking students

with business owners through mentor strategies, business plan competitions, and role modeling

4. Support and strengthen scientific research, product and technology transfer programs and partnerships that would support business growth
5. Strengthen organizations and partnerships to support knowledge-based opportunities and to interact with other diversification components
6. Promote and facilitate cooperation and sharing among knowledge-based institutions and between knowledge-based institutions and the private sector
7. Identify, create, and support innovative growth educational programs and initiatives with our educational institutions and BRIDGE

Initiatives:

The Steering Committee identified a number of initiatives for the Knowledge Based Growth Engine. From the identified undertakings the following eight initiatives were identified as high priority for immediate action.

1. Algoma University College - Information and Communication Technology Centre

Algoma University College is proposing to construct a two-story 24,000 square foot building that would include a new computer lab, graduate student and research lab and a 200 seat lecture hall on the first floor. PUC's Telecom Division is contributing over \$400,000 toward the cost of telecommunication and videoconferencing technology equipment and will occupy just over half of the second floor. The remainder of the second floor will

GE #4: Knowledge- based Development

This GE includes those activities that support the knowledge-based economy, building on education, research and/or training that will support innovation.

Rationale:

It is imperative that we facilitate a higher level of coordination and collaboration between the business community, the education community, the health sector and related scientific communities such as Ontario Forest Research Institute (OFRI) and the Natural Resources Canada's Great Lakes Forest Service (GLFS). Sault Ste. Marie's ability in attracting and growing knowledge-based, high technology or entrepreneurial businesses depends on its workforce. In today's changing workforce marketplace, worker skills must evolve quickly to meet changes in technology, business needs, and the economy as a whole. This demands continuous and quick adaptation of public education and workforce training programs.

Public and private research institutions are major engines of economic growth. By commercializing the technology

be used as a business incubator operated by the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre. This project is essential to AUC's new Masters program in Computer Game Technology.

2. E-Commerce Contact Centre

The SSMEDC has secured government financing to construct and build a 30,000 square foot facility at the former MTO site (purchased by the City). Architectural and engineering drawings for this project are completed and this opportunity will be aggressively marketed.

3. Innovation Centre – Construction

The Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre (SSMIC) has secured funding to support the location of EDS/GM Roadside (275 jobs, \$16 million investment) to Sault Ste. Marie. Part of the NOHFC investment is to support leasehold and capital equipment to this project and the balance of \$1.4 million is to support a new facility for the SSMIC and their Call Centre initiative. The SSMIC has completed a feasibility study with the support of the Bell Economic Development Fund and are working to secure a client for this facility. Bell Canada is working with the SSMIC on the business plan. The new facility will house the existing SSMIC activities and provide space for new business that will generate revenues for SSMIC operations.

4. Science Works!

The Science Works! partnership has been formed to develop commercial, educational and research opportunities in the natural resource sector. More than 30 local opportunities have been identified to commercialize research products and provide scientific support services. However, there is a need to assist with bringing together the necessary expertise, resources, partners and infrastructure. A detailed study is required to further develop the concept, to determine the potential feasibility of the project, to identify the anticipated benefits and to recommend the best organizational structure.

5. ULERN

The Upper Lakes Environmental Research Network (ULERN) is a not-for-profit charitable corporation comprised of over 250 researchers, resource managers and educators from 13 organizations. Their mission is to facilitate collaborative natural resource and environmental research and development in the Upper Great Lakes Basin. ULERN's goal is to broaden their expertise to focus on potential development opportunities associated with ongoing projects. ULERN, in partnership with the private sector will prepare a proposal for expanded services.

6. Innovation Centre Operations

The Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre is in the process of securing

funding to cover the anticipated third year project costs. These dollars will ensure the ongoing operation of the organization and will provide the Board and staff with the opportunity to continue to work towards achieving the organization's mandate of enhancing the knowledge based economy in the District.

7. ADNet Bandwidth Project

ADNet is a community-driven telecommunications initiative (\$10 million) in the Algoma District of Northern Ontario. The objective is to develop high-speed bandwidth at low per unit cost and make the bandwidth accessible for the entire Algoma District. Phase I was the development of a business plan to install high-speed bandwidth telecommunication infrastructure. Phase II was the selection of a vendor. This vendor is a consortium of Northern Ontario based telecommunications providers headed by O.N. Telecom and Sault Ste. Marie PUC Telecom.

8. Sault College Railroad Training Institute

Sault College is working with several private sector rail companies to develop the concept for a Railroad Industry Training Institute in Sault Ste. Marie. The rail industry is faced with a skilled labour shortage with its aging workforce and at the same time, technological development has resulted in the need for higher levels of knowledge and skills for its workers. Education and training

are envisioned for engineering, mechanical, electrical, technical and service positions. Sault College will finalize the evaluation for a proposed Railway Training Institute in Sault Ste. Marie.

GE #5: Health, Social and Public Sector Development¹

This GE includes those activities involving public sector employment, a comprehensive integrated health care system and a coordinated social services system in the community.

Public administration and defence is a major sector in the Ontario economy. It is larger than construction, tourism, utilities, other primary and agriculture sectors. In 1996, government employment in Sault Ste. Marie accounted for 2,385 jobs. If one adds education (3,105) and Health and Social Services (4,460) to government employment, this accounts for a total of 9,951, roughly one third of the City's workforce.

Rationale:

1. Government work force provides stable, high paying and high skilled

¹ This GE originally consisted of only Public Sector Development. Health and Social Services were added as a result of input received during the public/stakeholder review process.

jobs and broadens the traditional basic industrial base of the Community. Maintaining and growing this sector will result in direct economic benefits as well as contributing significantly to other Growth Engines through clustering and by direct and indirect involvement in their activities.

Jobs in public administration in Northern Ontario have declined 26% while jobs in this sector have declined by only 11% in the rest of the Province. It is estimated that Sault Ste. Marie has lost 1,000 government jobs in the last five years. This is one of the significant reasons we've had such an exodus of families from Sault Ste. Marie. Many public sector employees will retire in the next five years. There is a need to ensure that these positions are replaced. In some instances this will involve significant marketing and promoting e.g. GLFS could loose up to fifty percent of its scientists in the next few years and replacing them may involve national and international competition.

The establishment of Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLGC) in SSM has resulted in significant numbers of high tech jobs and synergies. If, as originally envisioned, OLGC's central headquarters was in SSM, we would have a workforce of 1,500 instead of 1,000.

It is essential that the Province has an attitude to increase the employment opportunities proportional to that in other parts of Ontario. Likewise, we would like to see the Federal Government take the approach that decentralization of government jobs could be used as a tool to support community diversification strategies.

2. The current and growing population will place pressures on the health care and social service

resources of Sault Ste. Marie. A new hospital and long-term care facility have been identified as top priorities. The new hospital is estimated to cost \$175 million and over the five year construction period, the facility developments will generate between \$202 million and \$321 million within the local economy. Approximately 26 to 34 permanent jobs will be created and annual additional economic benefits will be in the \$2.7 - \$3.6 million range. Indirect benefits include aiding in the recruitment of health professionals, reducing operating costs and improving patient services.

Building on social services includes such elements as establishing a coordinated social service program that addresses social economic balance, support services for seniors, healthy families, increased accessibility for persons with limitations, enhanced youth services, and safe, affordable housing for all, especially the disadvantaged in our community.

Vision:

- That SSM become internationally recognized as a government centre of excellence for natural resources, the OLGC and other public sector initiatives and
- That SSM become a northern Ontario leader and a regional centre for the promotion and provision of a premier quality health care and social services

Goal:

To increase the number of government and not for profit sector employees in the community in an environment that provides quality community services.

Specific Objectives:

1. To create high paying permanent

jobs involved in the commercialization of forestry related natural resources research by capitalizing on the existing cluster of research facilities and services

2. To attract and locally grow scientists to occupy the future knowledge worker jobs in forestry related natural resources science and development
3. To promote the comparative advantages to the Province and Federal Government of locating or expanding in SSM
4. To maintain and promote SSM as a regional centre for health and social services
5. Promote and pursue the necessary health and social services infrastructure and skilled work force required to meet our needs

Initiatives:

The Steering Committee identified a number of initiatives for this Growth Engine. From the identified undertakings the following initiative was identified as high priority for immediate action.

1. Public Sector Employment Retention and Expansion

Total public sector employment has declined in Sault Ste. Marie by more than 1,000 jobs between 1991 and 2001. Most of these jobs have been in the Federal and Provincial civil service. The Provincial Government's previous Northern Ontario Relocation program created good quality, higher paying jobs throughout the north and should be repeated.

The City proposes to develop a strategy for a direct marketing campaign to promote to both the Federal and Provincial governments the many

benefits of maintaining and increasing employment in Sault Ste. Marie. This initiative has an estimated cost of \$200,000.00 over three years.

GE #6: Trade and Export Development

This GE includes those activities that involve trade to support business growth. We will strive to capitalize on our geographic location and transportation links to the export markets. We must create an international awareness of our community's goods and services and the reliability of our small and medium sized enterprises.

Rationale:

A positive climate and specific initiatives promoting trade and export must be created to encourage organizations to develop new markets. An export mindset and culture is required to increase the export of goods and services.

Vision:

To have Sault Ste. Marie be an international centre for trade and a community with reliable small and medium sized enterprises producing quality goods and services to access all markets.

Goal:

The goal for this GE is to develop, support and expand the number of businesses that are focused on trade and exporting.

Objectives:

We will attain this goal through the following objectives:

1. Expand markets for existing local products and services
2. Develop new export products and services
3. Create an International Trade culture in the Community

Initiatives:

The Steering Committee identified a number of initiatives for the Export Growth Engine. From the identified undertakings, the following initiative was identified as high priority for immediate action.

1. Export Development Initiative

The recently announced Export Development initiative was submitted by RAPIDSUCCESS Business Growth Inc. (formerly RAPIDS Community Investment Inc.) on behalf of partnership of Steering Committee, CDC, East Algoma Community Futures Development Corp., Superior East CDC and SSMEDC to service Algoma District. This initiative is intended to complement and intensify on-going trade development programs and work being done by all economic and business development partners. This will primarily be achieved by building export capacity of existing business, educating and promoting exporting as a growth tool and the development of an export network to mentor and exchange information and knowledge. The Export Development Advisor will work regionally from the RAPIDSUCCESS office in Sault Ste. Marie and make regular visits to District communities.

Building an Extraordinary

Community & Naturally Gifted

These unique undertakings embrace all Growth Engines and contribute significantly to the overall Destiny SSM Strategy.

The following initiatives warrant immediate attention in Destiny SSM.

BEC Quality Council

The BEC Quality Leadership Team has developed a pilot process to both improve quality within individual organizations and to focus the communities resources more effectively. Currently, BEC has approximately 20 organizations that make up the membership with the target being 50 organizations by March 2003. They will be creating an inventory of best practices to share within the community and looking to experts outside the community to bring new ideas and approaches to SSM and area. The second element was the development of a Community Performance Framework, a matrix of indicators gauging our overall quality of life, which points everyone to our common vision and measures what progress has been made. This matrix could later be used to focus resources or act as a promotional document to entice new businesses and professionals to Sault Ste. Marie and area

Naturally Gifted Campaign (All)

The Economic Development Committee in cooperation with the private sector, media, other community development agencies, and the community would carry out a marketing campaign and

community ambassador program to strengthen local entrepreneurial spirit and pride in the community. The campaign would celebrate the success of private and community champions who have successfully grown and expanded their business or have made a significant contribution to the local economy. The ambassador program will partner with private sector leaders to take an active role in speaking out on new opportunities, good news, and initiatives. This initiative supports the Building and Extraordinary Community and Industrial Marketing Strategy.

People and Lifestyle

During the development and stakeholder review of the Strategy, we were regularly reminded that SSM is a great place to live and work and that these assets should be promoted.

Quality of life is essential for a competitive economy. Successful development in the new economy requires an understanding of the mobility of resources, both financial and human. Businesses, employees and entrepreneurs can choose to relocate if they are dissatisfied with the quality of life in any particular area.

Sault Ste. Marie has an unparalleled quality of life. Public input involvement in the Strategy indicated quality of life was rated very high in reasons for locating in the City. Land, location, labour and lifestyle are the elements that make Sault Ste. Marie a great place to live, work and play. In addition, scenic beauty and open space, a safe place to raise their families, a good place for children to learn values, close-knit neighbourly City areas and outdoor recreation opportunities are top reasons they live here. Sault Ste. Marie must maintain and enhance the quality

of life it provides.

We recognize that without a vibrant, competitive economy, we cannot support education, arts, basic infrastructure and the health and human services that are an integral component of a high quality of life. Our intent is to create economic growth while embracing our family-oriented community.

Conclusion:

Destiny SSM is a framework that will help guide Sault Ste. Marie's economic diversification efforts to create a stronger, more diversified economy. Its content is the result of analyzing past economic efforts, listening to businesses and citizens' experiences and consultation with federal and provincial government staff. It is intended to provide a framework from which Sault Ste. Marie's private sector can contribute to the City's economic vitality in the coming years.

As this strategy gains additional input and community support in the next few months, we must all realize that our task has only begun. Constant performance review must occur to ensure we are aligned with our goals and opportunities. Only with continual assessment, refinement, and evaluation can this framework benefit all Saultites in the long term.