

2008 HIGHLIGHTS:

- 14,000 visitors spend \$7.2 mil
- Tour Train upgrades
- Sault gets Scotties and FinnFest
- 66 small businesses start or expand
- Communication improvements
- International interest
- Alternative energy developments

ALSO INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Web portal launched 2
- AU done first semester 3
- New Board member 4

the pulse

SAULT STE. MARIE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEWS

2008: Year in Review

The beginning of a new year brings exciting new opportunities for the community. In 2009, the staff and Board of Directors at the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation will continue to provide support and guidance to aid in the growth and prosperity of the city.

January is also a good time to look back on accomplishments from the previous year. And so, here are some SSMEDC highlights from 2008:



TOURISM
Sault Ste. Marie

While drawing visitors to the city is the principal function of Tourism Sault Ste. Marie, significant effort is also spent on product development. Upgrading the Agawa Canyon Train Tour is a prime example of this.

In 2008, its staff helped secure \$10 million in funding from CN Rail, which owns the attraction, and the provincial government's Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation to purchase upgraded coach equipment. The coaches are expected to be ready for riders this summer.

Including successful bids from Tourism Sault Ste. Marie, the city hosted a number of sporting events and conferences last year. These events attracted more than 14,000 delegates, which resulted in more than \$ 7.2 million in tourist spending.

In 2008, Tourism SSM, working with local organizing committees, also helped make

successful bids on several major events, including the 2010 Scotties Tournament of Hearts and 2010 Finn Grand Fest. Each is expected to draw thousands of visitors to the city.

Last year also marked the first time Tourism Sault Ste. Marie established a corporate partnership with its Outdoor's Program. With high fuel prices a concern for many travellers, a unique package was offered, which included accommodations, a Lake Superior Provincial Park pass and \$50 Esso gas card.

Tourism Sault Ste. Marie's marketing efforts were recognized through winning the provincial government's award for Best Printed Collateral Material and having the Ontario Minister of Tourism attend its annual awards night.



ENTERPRISE
CENTRE
Sault Ste. Marie

Employing more than 50 per cent of the working population, small business is the backbone of the Canadian economy. Enterprise Centre Sault Ste. Marie works to expand this vital sector of the city and region.

In 2008, the division helped 66 businesses get off the ground or expand operations. Café Natura, Into the Wild, Reborn Rides, the Searchmont Trading Post, Precise Ecomatics and Treetop Adventures are just a few of the many success stories.

Continued on Page 2.

Continued . . .

With these efforts, Enterprise Centre Sault Ste. Marie helped create 146 full and part-time jobs last year. The division also helped 15 youths establish their own business in 2008, which included three summer company clients. These efforts created an additional 21 jobs.

Enterprise Centre Sault Ste. Marie will continue to develop the small business sector in the city and region in 2009 and beyond.



SSMEDC
CORPORATE
SERVICES

Corporate Services provides support for the other divisions of SSMEDC. Improving communications was one of its major focuses in 2008. As part of this mandate, its staff helped implement Momentum, an online marketing campaign. The site, www.momentumssm.com, features video testimonials and articles that highlight four SSMEDC success stories.

Last year, the SSMEDC Board of Directors provided support for applications for financial assistance from the Economic Development Fund for City Council's approval. Corporate Services provided administration for these funding initiatives, which included:

- \$95,000 to support downtown development initiative
- \$200,000 to support Algoma University's independence
- \$50,000 for a multi-modal transportation initiative
- \$67,000 to initiate a biomass energy production zone



DEVELOPMENT
Sault Ste. Marie

Development Sault Ste. Marie is responsible for attracting investment, creating and retaining jobs, and increasing the municipal tax base.

In 2008, the division, along with the City of Sault Ste. Marie and local MPP David Oraziotti, worked with Pollard Banknote Ltd. The end result is a 22,000 square foot lottery ticket finishing plant in Sault Ste. Marie. The economic impact of this project is estimated at more than \$154 million.

Another key project included working with the Government of Ontario in establishing a Ministry of Labour Provincial Claims Centre in the city.

Development Sault Ste. Marie continued to pursue the city's energy diversification strategy in 2008 as well. Progress was made on many alternative energy projects, including:

- Pod Generating Group's solar energy farm
- Elementa Group's municipal waste-to-energy
- St. Marys Paper cogeneration power project
- SITTM Technologies bio-fuel project

These advances, along with past energy projects, such as the Prince Wind Energy Farm, led Sault Ste. Marie to establish itself as the Alternative Energy Capital of North America in 2008.

Development Sault Ste. Marie also saw progress on its international relations front last year. It hosted delegations from Austria, the United States, and the Ontario Ministry of International Trade and Investment. It was also involved in an outbound mission to Finland.

*"The
Alternative
Energy
Capital
of North
America"*

City attracts newcomers with new website

Sault Ste. Marie is attracting newcomers to the community with a new web portal. The website, www.discoverthesault.ca, provides recent and potential immigrants with vital information on living, working, learning and getting started in the city.

Individuals can find programs and services available to them by all levels of government, local agencies and organizations, and medical

and educational institutions. Users can also research in specific areas, such as cost of living, finding a home and cultural communities represented in Sault Ste. Marie.

Simply put, the website is designed to attract newcomers to the city and make life easier for them



www.discoverthesault.ca

Continued on Page 3.

Continued . . .

once they arrive.

“Sault Ste. Marie is our home; it’s who we are,” says project Co-Chair Danny Krmpotich.

“Our web portal is not made of bricks and mortar, which can be seen by a few thousand, but rather by millions of people worldwide.”

The website was created by the City of Sault Ste. Marie with support from the SSM Economic Development Corporation and other partners.



L to R: Minister Chan, City IT Manager Frank Coccimiglio and Sault MPP David Orazietti.

“Immigrants helped build the province we live in today. Immigrants will help build Ontario tomorrow.”

These remarks were echoed by Sault MPP David Orazietti, who was also at the unveiling event. “It’s important to continue to stimulate our economy during this challenging economic period,” he says. “The province is pursuing the best and brightest to come to Ontario, specifically Sault Ste. Marie.”

The Ontario Minister of Citizenship and Immigration was at the unveiling ceremony at City Hall Jan. 19.

“This portal will help Sault Ste. Marie promote itself throughout the world as a great place to live,” says the Honourable Michael Chan.

1 semester down; many more to come at independent AU

Algoma University has reason to celebrate. The school completed its first semester as an independent university in December.

The independence is a sign that AU is in a period of growth. And as it grows, so will Sault Ste. Marie.

“A city with a progressive university has a competitive advantage to attract bright and motivated people and develop a knowledge-based economy,” says SSMEDC CEO Bruce Strapp, who also sat on the AU Independence Steering Committee. “The EDC will continue to provide leadership, support and inno-

vation in our transformation to a University City.”

Algoma University and the SSMEDC have worked together on a number of projects and initiatives, including the school’s recent independence and other growth-related projects.

“The Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation has been a solid partner for Algoma University,” says AU Vice-Chair Brady Irwin, who’s also

the SSMEDC Vice-President. “The partnership has helped us demonstrate the economic value of having an independent university.”



Taken last summer, AU graduates now working at the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation. L to R: Andrew Ross, Rachelle Benoit, Karen Madigan and Charlotte Wiseman.

**“A city with a progressive university has a competitive advantage to attract bright and motivated people.”
- SSMEDC CEO Bruce Strapp**



**Sault Ste. Marie
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION**

January 2009

99 Foster Drive - Level Three
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario
Canada P6A 5X6

Phone: 705.759.5432

Toll Free: 1.866.558.5144

Fax: 705.759.2185

E-mail: info@ssmedc.ca

www.sault-canada.com

The pulse is prepared by:
Marc Capancioni
Communications Coordinator
Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corp.
705.759.0409
m.capancioni@ssmedc.ca

The SSMEDC recognizes the financial support it receives from the City of Sault Ste. Marie. As well, it recognizes the strong backing it receives from the Mayor, Council and City staff. The SSMEDC also thanks the federal and provincial governments, and its many other partners, for their continued support.

The Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation is a non-profit organization, funded by public and private partners, whose goal is to be the community's leader in supporting and promoting an environment that generates sustainable employment in a healthy, growing and diversified economy.

Ward 2 Counc. Myers joins SSMEDC Board of Directors

The SSMEDC welcomes Ward 2 Counc. Susan Myers to the Board of Directors and recognizes her passion and community knowledge to support its progress in 2009.

Myers was elected to the position in January. As a former member of Hospitality and Tourism SSM and Manager of Marketing and Tourism for the SSMEDC, she brings extensive economic development experience with her.

"I am particularly eager to once again join the hard-working team at SSMEDC and consider it a privilege to sit on

this Board," says Myers. "The corporation leads the community's vision in all aspects of living, working and playing."

Her seat on the SSMEDC Board of Directors was previously held by Lorena Tridico.

"We look forward to working with Counc. Myers and thank Tridico for her contributions to economic development," says

SSMEDC President and Board Chairman Greg Punch. SSMEDC is the City's lead economic development agency.

It is accountable to the City of Sault Ste. Marie for funding it receives every year for its operations and projects.

Therefore, the SSMEDC Board of Directors has important representation from the Mayor and a City Councillor.



Myers in City Council Chambers