

**Etienne Brulé Development Press Conference**

**Friday June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015 10:45 A.M.**

**[AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY]**

Good morning everyone. It is my great pleasure to be here to speak about this exciting new initiative. Today's announcement is a tribute to the vision and commitment of many partners.

Last fall, the former Etienne Brulé public school reopened as the Urban Aboriginal Alternative School, a partnership between the Algoma District School Board and the Indian Friendship Center.

The building has since become home to the StitchCo Project, a joint venture of Ontario Works and Superior Skills. This project has established a new standard in providing training and employment opportunities for social assistance recipients.

Today in conjunction with the Algoma District School Board, we are happy to announce a new community partnership between ADSB and the City that will result in additional redevelopment of the Etienne Brulé site.

While this is a joint venture, it would not have happened without the enthusiastic cooperation and strong support of the Algoma District School Board. I commend the board and its administration for their vision and commitment to working collaboratively.

ADSB rightly deserves the lion's share of the credit for bringing this project to pass, and this is a point that I plan to make time and again when discussing this initiative.

As previously mentioned, the Algoma District School Board will continue to own the property and operate the facility for the existing uses, and for the anticipated new uses that Lucia and Jennifer have described.

The City will assume responsibilities for the Captain Nicola Goddard playground and the basketball courts.

This will ensure that these important facilities are maintained for the benefit of the neighbourhood in future years.

I am also pleased to announce that at our next meeting, City Council will be asked to approve the construction of a Hub Trail spoke through the school property.

This spoke will connect Huron Street to the bike pump track that will be constructed next year at Esposito Park.

The Mill Market community garden has been relocated to the site and the City will work with Mill Market, Ontario Works and ADSB to establish an urban orchard and maple sugar bush on the property. Both of these new initiatives will be part of a cooperative educational program for Ontario Works recipients.

On that note, I would like to acknowledge the enthusiastic cooperation and strong support of both Superior Skills and Mill Market for their ongoing initiatives to create new employment opportunities and an improved quality of life for social assistance recipients.

I also want to recognize the many City staff from the Engineering and Planning, Public Works and Transportation, and Social Services Departments who have worked, and will continue to work, to make this announcement a reality.

In Sault Ste. Marie we can be proud to hold this project out as an example of how vision and cooperation can create educational, economic, social, and recreational benefits for the community. This project will add to the quality of life in the immediate area. It will also complement other developments that are currently underway in the Canal District and across the City.

For many years, Etienne Brulé school was a fixture in this neighbourhood. And though it has reached the end of its time as an elementary school, it is finding new life as a community hub that supports multiple uses. Inside its walls, education and learning will continue to take place, and outside, the laughter of children will continue to ring. It is my hope that area residents, former students and teachers, and everyone who has a personal connection to Etienne Brulé, will know this and feel happy. Thank you again to everyone for joining us today.