

Social Cultural, Economic, Health, and  
Indigenous Peoples Baseline Studies

Preliminary Report for Engagement

Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation-Ignace Area



InterGroup

C O N S U L T A N T S

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## GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Details
ATV	All-terrain vehicle
AAFS	Anishinaabe Abinoojii Family Services
AADT	Average Annual Daily Traffic
BCE	Before common era
BMZ	Bait Management Zone
CE	Common era
CIP	Community Improvement Plan
CLDSL	Community Living Dryden-Sioux Lookout
CPR	Canadian Pacific Railway
CSWB Plan	Community Safety and Well-Being Plan
DNFC	Dryden Native Friendship Centre
FMP	Forest Management Plan
FMZ	Fisheries Management Zones
GBA+	Gender-based Analysis Plus
GIS	Geographic Information System
Ha	Hectares
HBC	Hudson's Bay Company
IAWG	Ignace Area Working Group
IAAC	Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
Indigenous identity	'Indigenous identity' includes persons who are First Nations (North American Indian), Métis, or Inuk (Inuit) and/or those who are Registered or Treaty Indians (that is registered under the Indian Act of Canada) and/or those who have membership in a First Nation or Indian band. Aboriginal peoples of Canada are defined in the Constitution Act 1982 section 35(2) as including the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada.
Indigenous Knowledge	Indigenous Knowledge is an evolving, complex, and sophisticated system of knowledge drawing on a millennia of wisdom and experience. It is an evolving knowledge system that ranges in diversity from governance, ecology, biology, ecosystems, harvesting, science, and other aspects. It constantly grows and expands with the experience of new generations. Other definitions of Indigenous Knowledge may be presented by Indigenous communities or other organizations.
Kenora Census Division	Kenora District Census Division
kg	Kilogram
kV	Kilovolt

## GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS CONTINUED

Term	Details
km	Kilometre
L	Litre
LSB	Local Services Board
Local Study Area	<p>The Local Study Area refers to the communities/areas that are most likely to experience future direct, indirect, and induced impacts of the Project, and considers those locations where people can commute to the Revell Site and/or the Centre of Expertise within an hour drive. The selection of spatial boundaries was informed by local residents through the Ignace Area Working Group, key person interviews, and workshops. The Local Study Area for the population and demographics, community and culture, and infrastructure and services components includes the Township of Ignace, City of Dryden, Municipality of Machin, Municipality of Sioux Lookout, Local Services Board of Wabigoon, Local Services Board of Melgund (includes the unincorporated communities Dymont and Borups Corners), Upsala, Valora, and Silver Dollar.</p> <p>The Local Study Area for land and resources use and archaeological and heritage resources are distinct from the other Local Study Areas and were selected based on areas which are considerate of project activities, the potential biophysical changes, and where direct impacts to resources could occur.</p> <p>The Local Study Area includes Indigenous peoples who reside in the communities of the Local Study Area but is not representative of any specific Indigenous community or nation.</p>
m <sup>3</sup>	Cubic Metre
MBCHCH	Mary Berglund Community Health Centre Hub
ML	Megalitre. Is equivalent to 1 million litres.
MNO	Métis Nation of Ontario
MNRF	Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
NWMO	Nuclear Waste Management Organization
NWOSTA	North-West Ontario Snowmobile Trail Association
NWOMCFS	Northwest Ontario Métis Child and Family Services
OFAH	Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters



## GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS CONTINUED

Term	Details
OFSC	Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs
RFDA	Regional Food Distribution Association
Regional Study Area	<p>The Regional Study Area for population and demographics, community and culture, and infrastructure and services components is the Kenora Census Division. The Kenora District Census Division includes people living in municipalities, unincorporated communities, and Indigenous reserves and settlements. This includes Indigenous people living both on- and off-reserve.</p> <p>The Regional Study Area for land and resources use and archaeological and heritage resources are distinct from the other Regional Study Areas and is provided for context of where the project has potential to interact with the environment.</p>
SADT	Summer Average Daily Traffic
SDW	Specially Designated Waters
SLFA	Sioux Lookout Friendship Accord
SLMHC	Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre
The Project	The Adaptive Phased Management Project
TCFS	Tikinagan Child and Family Services
Unincorporated area	An unincorporated area is a geographic region in Canada that does not form part of a municipality or Indian reserve. In Ontario, unincorporated areas are found in the Northern Ontario region. Communities within unincorporated areas may have some services provided or administered by a Local Services Board.
Vulnerable populations	'Vulnerable populations' are individuals who are at greater risk of experiencing adverse effects because of "disparities in physical, economic, and social status when compared with the dominant population".
WLON	Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation
WMU	Wildlife Management Units
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
Youth	Youth are defined as residents who are between the of ages 15 to 29 years old by Statistics Canada.

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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## 2.0 SOCIAL CULTURAL

### 2.1 OVERVIEW AND APPROACH

An examination of existing and potential social conditions in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area is required to support the impact assessment for the Adaptive Phased Management Project (“the Project”). The scope of the Baseline Studies has been designed to satisfy regulatory requirements under the *Impact Assessment Act* and as described in the Tailored Guidelines template (IAAC 2020a), including Gender-based Analysis Plus (“GBA+”) and sustainability considerations, along with the requirements under the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission’s REGDOC-1.1.1. *Site Evaluation and Site Preparation for New Reactor Facilities* (CNSC 2018) where applicable. The Baseline Studies are designed to provide sufficient detail to understand current and reasonably foreseeable potential future conditions that may be affected by the Project. Approaches to GBA+ and sustainability are discussed in **Section 1.0**. The Baseline Studies document the current state and relevant historical context for each social cultural component. Potential foreseeable future conditions without the Project are also examined. Finally, the Baseline Studies incorporate relevant community knowledge, information from the Ignace Area Working Group (“IAWG”), workshops, key person interviews and perspectives from diverse groups within the communities where available and as determined by each community. Indigenous Knowledge as defined by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada’s (“IAAC”)¹ (2023) has not been included in this section as the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (“NWMO”) is working with Indigenous communities as per their Indigenous Knowledge policy (**Section 1.5.6.4**), and information of this type will be collected in collaboration with Indigenous communities in other baseline studies at an appropriate time. However, where data are available for Indigenous peoples residing in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, this information is presented.

**Table 2.1-1** summarizes the components included in the social cultural pillar of the Baseline Studies and provides the rationale for including each component, based on the Tailored Guidelines template (IAAC 2020a), the IAAC’s guidance *Analyzing Health, Social, and Economic Effects under the Impact Assessment Act* (IAAC 2020b), the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission’s REGDOC-1.1.1. *Site Evaluation and Site Preparation for New Reactor Facilities* (CNSC 2018), the *Ontario Heritage Act* (Government of Ontario 1990d), and the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act*. Where requirements differ from the Tailored Guidelines template, the Project impacts or pathways and existing reports are used, highlighting the desires and aspirations of Ignace as a potential host, as described in the Project Visioning process (InterGroup 2020).

<sup>1</sup> The IAAC (2023) defines Indigenous Knowledge as “a holistic system embedded in the various cultures of different Indigenous peoples. For the purposes of (an) assessment processes under the *Impact Assessment Act*, generally, Indigenous Knowledge is understood as a body of knowledge built up by a group of Indigenous people through generations of living in close contact with the land. Indigenous Knowledge is cumulative and dynamic. It builds upon the historic experiences of a people and adapts to social, economic, environmental, spiritual and political change.”



**Table 2.1-1: Components Considered for Social Cultural Conditions**

Component Included in Social Cultural Analysis	Rationale for Inclusion
<b>Population and demographics</b> (Section 2.2)	The Tailored Guidelines template and the IAAC's guidance <sup>1</sup> include requirements for baseline information about local populations and diverse subgroups, while REGDOC-1.1.1. requires an understanding of population density and distribution.
<b>Community and culture</b> (Section 2.3)	The Tailored Guidelines and the IAAC's guidance <sup>1</sup> , include requirements for sufficient information to assess future impacts on social conditions, including social divisions within a community and community history in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area.
<b>Infrastructure and services</b> (Section 2.4)	The Tailored Guidelines template and the IAAC's guidance <sup>1</sup> , include requirements for a description of housing and existing local and regional infrastructure and services. REGDOC-1.1.1. requires an understanding of the transportation infrastructure that will be used during site preparation.
<b>Land and resources use</b> (Section 2.5)	The Tailored Guidelines template, the IAAC's guidance <sup>1</sup> , and the CNSC's REGDOC-1.1.1. include requirements for a description of resource users and resource use in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area.
<b>Archaeological and heritage resources</b> (Section 2.6)	The Project will require an archaeological assessment in accordance with the Ontario <i>Environmental Assessment Act</i> that is conducted in accordance with the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> and the <i>Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists</i> .

**Notes:**

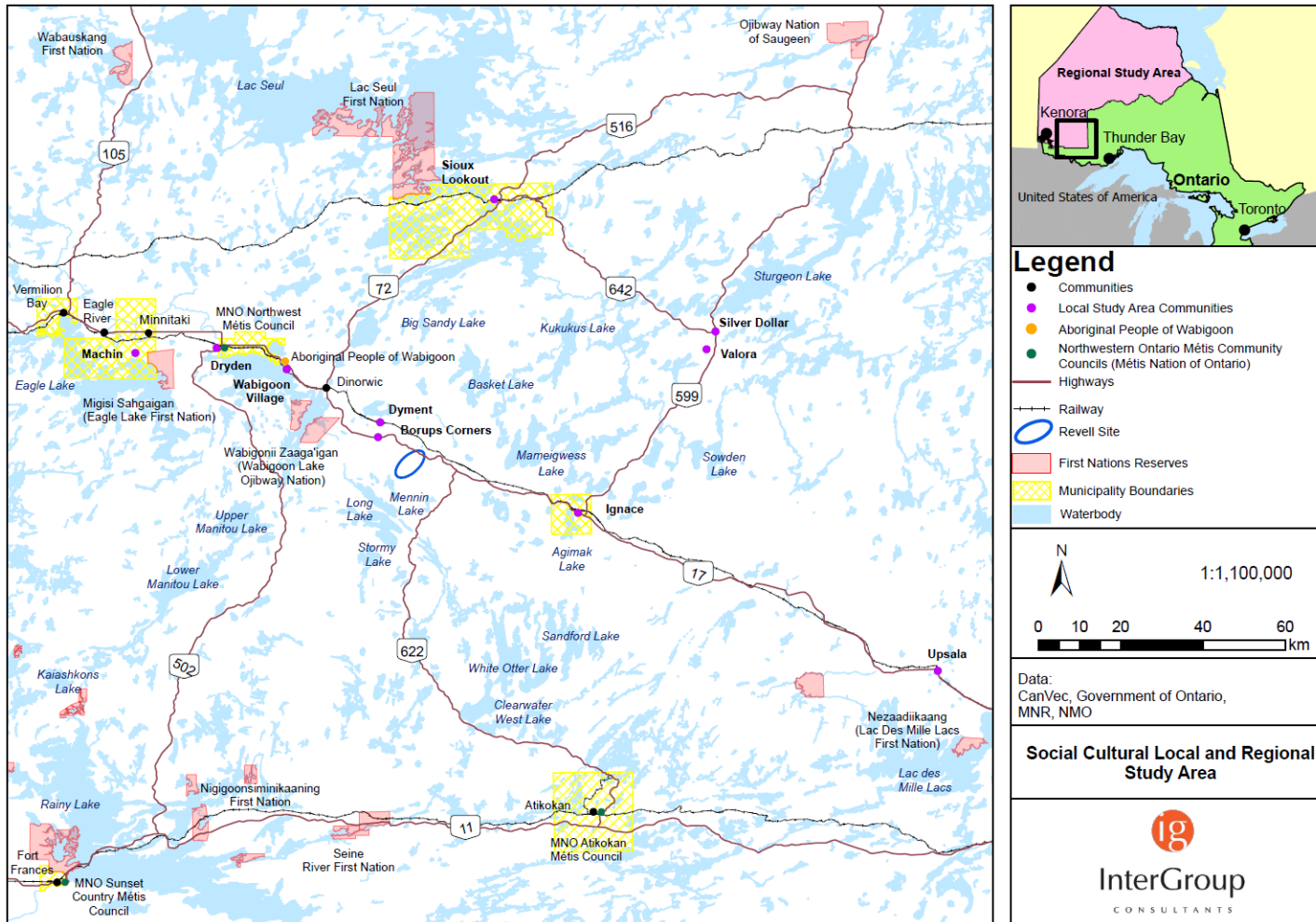
1. IAAC guidance includes *Analyzing Health, Social, and Economic Effects Under the Impact Assessment Act*.

## 2.1.1 Spatial and Temporal Boundaries

### 2.1.1.1 Spatial Boundaries

Spatial boundaries for social conditions were selected to reflect the geographic areas where social and cultural impacts from the Project are likely to be detectable and measurable. The social cultural pillar includes a Local Study Area and a Regional Study Area, and have been developed relative to each component under consideration. Social impacts extending beyond the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area are likely to be diffused and may not be detectable. **Section 1.5.2** describes the overall approach to selecting spatial boundaries.

Map 2.1-1: Social Cultural Local and Regional Study Area<sup>1,2</sup>



**Note:**

1. Local Services Board of Wabigoon is a designated place according to Statistics Canada, but residents refer to the community as Wabigoon or Wabigoon Village.
2. The unincorporated communities Dymont and Borups Corners are part of the Local Services Board of Melgund.

### 2.1.1.1.1 Local Study Area

Local Study Areas for the social cultural pillar vary by component.

The Local Study Area for population and demographics, community and culture, and infrastructure and services (**Section 2.2, Section 2.3, and Section 2.4**) includes:

- Township of Ignace (“Ignace”);
- City of Dryden (“Dryden”);
- Municipality of Machin (“Machin”);
- Municipality of Sioux Lookout (“Sioux Lookout”); and
- Local Services Boards (“LSBs”) and unincorporated communities, where available:
  - LSB of Wabigoon (“LSB of Wabigoon” or “Wabigoon Village”);<sup>2</sup>
  - LSB of Melgund (includes the unincorporated communities Dymont and Borups Corners) (“LSB of Melgund” or “Melgund”);<sup>3</sup>
  - Upsala;
  - Valora; and
  - Silver Dollar.

The Local Study Area includes Indigenous peoples who reside in the communities of the Local Study Area but is not representative of any specific Indigenous community or nation.

The Local Study Area refers to the communities/areas that are most likely to experience future direct, indirect, and induced impacts of the Project. For certain social cultural components, this considers those locations where people can commute to the Revell Site and/or the Centre of Expertise within an hour drive, as those are the communities that may experience population growth with project related in-migration. The selection of spatial boundaries was informed by local residents through the IAWG, key person interviews, and workshops.<sup>4</sup> The Local Study Area for land and resource use (**Section 2.5**) and archaeological and heritage resources (**Section 2.6**) are distinct from the Local Study Areas for the other social cultural components. The Local Study Areas for land and resource use (**Section 2.5**) and archaeological and heritage resources

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<sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada identifies the Local Services Board of Wabigoon as a designated place, but residents refer to the community as Wabigoon or Wabigoon Village. In the report, the naming convention of the Local Services Board of Wabigoon will only be used when speaking to Statistics Canada data or when referring to the Local Services Board as an organization. When not referring to the Local Services Board organization or Statistics Canada data, the report will use the name of the community used by Local Study Area residents (“Wabigoon Village”) (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

<sup>3</sup> In the report the naming convention of the Local Services Board of Melgund will only be used when referring to the Local Services Board as an organization (Local Services Board of Melgund). When not referring to the Local Services Board organization, the report will use the name of the community used by Local Study Area residents (“Melgund”) (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

<sup>4</sup> IAWG meeting #3 (IAWG August 19, 2021), The Local Economy Workshop (2021), IAWG meeting #4 (IAWG October 06, 2021), and IAWG meeting #5 (IAWG December 2, 2021) provided feedback to revise the Local Study Area spatial boundaries to include Machin, Sioux Lookout, Upsala, and unincorporated communities along Highway 599 such as Silver Dollar and Valora.

(**Section 2.6**) were selected based on areas which are considerate of project activities, the potential biophysical changes, and where direct impacts to resources could occur. More information on the Local Study Areas for land and resource use and archaeological and heritage resources are summarized in **Section 2.5.1** and **Section 2.6.1**, respectively.

Where detailed Statistics Canada data for the LSBs and unincorporated communities are not available, general characteristics are captured through broader Statistics Canada data for the Kenora District Census Division (hereafter “Kenora Census Division”) and key person interviews.

#### **2.1.1.1.2 Regional Study Area**

The Regional Study Area for the social cultural components of population and demographics (**Section 2.2**), community and culture (**Section 2.3**), and infrastructure and services (**Section 2.4**) is the Kenora Census Division, which is the area where most regional-level impacts are anticipated. The Regional Study Area for land and resource use (**Section 2.5**) and archaeological and heritage resources (**Section 2.6**) are distinct from the Regional Study Area for the other social cultural components. The Regional Study Areas for land and resource use (**Section 2.5**) and archaeological and heritage resources (**Section 2.6**) is provided for context of where the project has potential to interact with the environment. More information on the Regional Study Areas for land and resource use and archaeological and heritage resources are summarized in **Section 2.5.1** and **Section 2.6.1**, respectively.

The Regional Study Area provides context for potential regional-level impacts, provides context and comparison to the Local Study Area as a relevant reference point, and shares social cultural and demographic characteristics with the Local Study Area.

The Kenora Census Division includes people living in municipalities, unincorporated communities, Indigenous reserves and settlements, and the surrounding areas. This includes Indigenous people living both on- and off-reserve. Indigenous communities can consist of one or multiple reserve parcels. The reserve parcels or settlements do not always reflect the names of the communities used by people from the communities and only reflect the names used by the Government of Canada. The Indigenous settlements or reserves are not always inhabited on a full-time basis by members of the reserves due to various reasons but the land is used at the discretion of the community and its members. **Table 2.1-2** summarizes the census subdivisions (i.e., municipalities, Indigenous reserves, settlements, and other areas) within the Kenora Census Division.

**Table 2.1-2: Census Subdivisions within the Kenora District Census Division**

Indigenous Reserve Parcels and Settlements	Municipalities and other areas
Whitefish Bay 32A, Whitefish Bay 33A, Eagle Lake 27, Slate Falls, Fort Albany (Part) 67, Attawapiskat 91A, Marten Falls 65, Fort Hope 64, Cat Lake 63C, Osnaburgh 63B, Lac Seul 28, Wabigoon Lake 27, English River 21, Weagamow Lake 87, Northwest Angle 33B, Wabaseemoong, Sabaskong Bay 35D, Shoal Lake 34B2, Lake of the Woods 37, Kenora 38B, Poplar Hill, Shoal Lake 39A, Rat Portage 38A, Deer Lake, Sandy Lake 88, Kitchenuhmaykoosib Aaki 84, Sachigo Lake 1, Pikangikum 14, Fort Severn 89, Webequie, North Spirit Lake, Lansdowne House, Shoal Lake (Part) 40, Whitefish Bay 34A, Wabauskang 21, Wunnumin 1, Summer Beaver, Wapekeka 2, The Dalles 38C, Peawanuck, Neskantaga, Bearskin Lake, Kasabonika Lake, Muskrat Dam Lake, Kingfisher Lake 1, Wawakapewin, and Kee-Way-Win.	Ignace, Dryden, Machin, Sioux Lookout, Kenora, Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls, Ear Falls, Red Lake, and Pickle Lake.  Kenora Unorganized (i.e., unorganized settlements and communities within the Kenora Census Division). This includes communities such as the LSB of Wabigoon, LSB of Melgund, Upsala, Valora, and Silver Dollar.

**Source:** Statistics Canada 2022a.

**Notes:**

1. The LSB of Wabigoon is classified as a designated place by Statistics Canada making data available for the community.

### 2.1.1.2 Temporal Boundaries

**Section 1.0** describes the overall approach to selecting temporal boundaries. Temporal boundaries vary for each social cultural component. Thus, each component provides details on its temporal boundaries, below.

The temporal boundaries for population and demographics (**Section 2.2**) go back far enough in time to understand past population trends and how they led to the current population and go into the future far enough to understand future population trends without the Project within a reasonably foreseeable timeframe. Data collection goes back to 1991 to understand past trends. Population projections go 25 years into the future to understand future population trends without the Project, which roughly aligns with the beginning of operations (NWMO 2020a).

Temporal boundaries for community and culture (**Section 2.3**) includes a description of community history going back as far as the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, when Ignace was founded. For the other topics included in the community and culture section, changes starting in 2006 are described to the extent possible.

Temporal boundaries for infrastructure and services (**Section 2.4**) focus on the current provision of services and changes in service provision in the past 5 to 10 years to understand trends (e.g.,

changes in demand). Where available, third-party projections (e.g., from service providers and utilities), are included but the temporal scope relies on available information.

Temporal boundaries for land and resources use (**Section 2.5**) focuses on current use and use during the past 10 years to understand trends. To the extent possible, future trends are described based on demand for resources and publicly available management plans, such as forest management plans.

The temporal boundaries for archaeological and heritage resources (**Section 2.6**) focus on previous archaeological research, geographic, land use, and historical/archival information for the Project (all lands that are part of the development proposal) and the relevant surrounding area through a background study.

### 2.1.2 Data Collection

The characterization of the baseline environment relies on both primary and secondary data sources. Data collection began with a review of existing literature and databases from a variety of public sources. Primary data collection was undertaken in the form of the IAWG, workshops, and key person interviews.

#### 2.1.2.1 Desktop research

The review of literature and databases included the following sources:

- Statistical data sources, for example, Statistics Canada Census of Population, Public Health Ontario, Canadian Community Health Survey, Canadian Survey on Disability, and Housing Price Index.
- Federal, provincial, and municipal government reports and data (e.g., Government of Ontario and Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing).
- Municipal reports including community profiles, community safety and well-being reports, community capacity studies, strategic plans, and official plans.
- Ignace and Area Community Studies, including the Community and Culture Community Study (SMM and InterGroup 2022), Ignace Area Infrastructure: Community Recreation Facilities Study (WSP 2022a), Ignace Area Infrastructure: Transportation and Emergency Response Study (WSP 2022d), Ignace Area Infrastructure: Municipal Infrastructure Study (WSP 2022b), and the Ignace Area Infrastructure: Social Services Facilities Study (WSP 2020c).
- Ontario Archaeological Sites Database.
- Transportation data sources, for example, Ontario Ministry of Transportation Online Technical Publications.
- Geographic Information System (“GIS”) supporting data (e.g., relevant policy documents, emergency response data, background reports).
- Publicly available reports and profiles from other organizations.
- Online sources (e.g., community websites).



### 2.1.2.1.1 Limitations of Desktop Research

Desktop research uses information from publicly available sources to incorporate the best knowledge at the time of writing. Desktop research is limited to publicly available studies and sources. Some studies and secondary sources may be out of date and are subjective to who wrote and published the source material.

#### Statistics Canada

Statistics Canada enumerates Ignace, Dryden, Machin, Sioux Lookout, and the LSB of Wabigoon. Statistics Canada does not enumerate the LSB of Melgund (Dyment or Borups Corners), Silver Dollar, Upsala, or Valora. Statistics Canada indicators for the Local Study Area typically include Ignace, Dryden, Machin, Sioux Lookout, and the LSB of Wabigoon and do not include the LSB of Melgund Silver Dollar, Upsala, or Valora.

Statistics Canada Census of Population data contributed to developing an understanding of the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area for population and demographics, community well-being, and housing, and how they have changed over time. Data should be interpreted with caution because of issues of comparability across years, confidentiality, data quality, and response error. Limitations relative to specific indicators are provided as notes to tables and figures. In 2011, a shift occurred in how the Census was administered, with a National Household Survey replacing the long-form census. One of the key differences was a change from a mandatory to an optional response requirement. This resulted in reduced survey response rates and variability of response rates at lower geographic levels. As a result, trends over time should be interpreted with caution.

The Census of Population suppresses data for confidentiality or data quality. Data suppression for confidentiality reasons is meant to prevent the disclosure of data that could be used to identify individuals, particularly in small communities. Data suppression due to data quality is done for a variety of reasons, including incompletely enumerated communities. The Census of Population also relies on a random rounding procedure, where actual values are randomly rounded up or down to the nearest integer of five to enhance confidentiality. This can impact very small populations but is not believed to have a material impact on the Local Study Area reporting.

The 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006, 2011, and 2016 Census disaggregate information by sex and the 2021 Census disaggregates information by gender. The sex variable (male and female) in census years prior to 2021 and the two-category gender variable (men+ and women+) in the 2021 Census may be included in figures that display trends across time. Although sex and gender refer to two different concepts, the introduction of the two-category gender variable is not expected to have a significant impact on data analysis and historical comparability, given the small size of the transgender and non-binary populations. The 2021 Census reports that the transgender population (0.19% of Canada's population) and non-binary population (0.14% of Canada's population) in Canada is small (Statistics Canada 2023b). Given that the non-binary population is small, data aggregation to a two-category gender variable is sometimes necessary to protect the confidentiality of responses. In these cases, individuals in the category "non-binary persons" are distributed into the other two gender categories (men+ and women+) and are denoted by the "+" symbol (Statistics Canada 2022a). When analyzing trends across time (1996, 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021 Census) the terms sex or gender are used, along with male and female. When analyzing trends prior to the 2021 Census (1996, 2001, 2006, 2011, and/or 2016 Census) the term sex is used, along with male and female. When analyzing only 2021 Census data, the

term gender is used, along with men+ and women+ or men and women. Footnotes expand on the explanation, where relevant, within sections.

Indigenous identity refers to individuals who identify as North American Indian (First Nation), Métis, Inuit, and/or those who reported as Treaty Indian or Registered Indian and/or have membership in a First Nation or Indian Band (Statistics Canada 2022a). For the Census of the Population in Canada, Indigenous identity is self-identified. People who identify as Indigenous in the Local Study Area may or may not be affiliated with First Nations or Métis communities within the Regional Study Area, and may or may not be considered as formal rights holders to the Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation (“WLON”)-Ignace area. The information in this report discusses information for people who self-identify as Indigenous and does not reflect the perspectives of Indigenous communities throughout the Regional Study Area.

It is acknowledged that baseline conditions will continue to evolve and an artificial data cut off was implemented in order to draft this report.

### 2.1.2.2 Population Projections Modelling

A population projection is a forecast of potential future population growth, it is not an accurate predication, but rather a series of estimates that provide context for understanding how communities may change over time. The population projections document potential population change without the Project for existing settlement areas within the Local Study Area. Population projections for small populations can be difficult to prepare as seemingly small changes in numbers can represent high proportions of change.

For the Regional Study Area, Local Study Area, and Ignace<sup>5</sup>, the population projection modelling uses the component/cohort-survival method as a base scenario to be built on. This method grows each population from the latest base year estimate by forecasting births, deaths, and migration by age. These forecasts are based on past trends modified to account for possible future changes and should be viewed as only one possible scenario of future population. They also take into consideration any factors that may influence future growth, such as housing availability, the availability of land for housing developments, and connections between population and key industries and employers. High growth scenarios use an average annual growth rate.

Typical drivers of population change are fertility rates, mortality rates, and net migration. These drivers are affected by multiple factors including the age structure of the current population, government initiatives (e.g., programs to promote migration such as the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot), and economic opportunities. Economic opportunities, in particular, require consideration of multipliers as the creation of new jobs may generate additional growth. As such, two sets of multipliers were considered relative to growth driven by economic opportunities:

- **Family multiplier:** the family multiplier accounts for family members who migrate to the area with their spouses/partners/parents/children. Baseline population projections use a family multiplier that is derived by InterGroup Consultants Ltd. from the projected average household size in 2046.

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<sup>5</sup> Ignace is included in the Local Study Area but is also examined separately as it is the potential host community if the Project is sited in the WLON-Ignace area.



- **Economic multiplier:** Private (e.g., retail, accommodation) and public (e.g., health care, educational services) sector jobs are created in response to economic development and the associated increase in population. The economic multipliers are used to estimate the number of indirect and induced jobs that are created because of direct jobs, and thus potentially add to population growth. The population projections use the same economic multiplier for all scenarios except for the lower bound of the conservative projections. A more conservative economic multiplier was selected to reflect the potential for fewer economic opportunities or other potentially less favourable economic circumstances. Other scenarios capture different levels of economic growth and therefore use a higher economic multiplier.

Population projections are completed for 25 years into the future under three scenarios: conservative-growth range, potential-growth range, and optimistic-growth range to present a range of possible future population changes. The 25-year span roughly aligns with the beginning of the Project operations (NWMO 2020a). Further information on methods and approach are discussed in detail in **Appendix 2A Detailed Methods**.

#### 2.1.2.2.1 Limitations of the Population Projections

Population projections were completed by using an age cohort model or an average annual growth rate derived from historical population. The projections also included scenarios with economic assumptions for possible expansions or contractions to the economy that are subject to the use of family and economic multipliers. The population projections were reviewed at IAWG meetings to test the reasonableness of the projections (IAWG December 2, 2021; IAWG February 24, 2022; IAWG April 07, 2022).

The age cohort model projection for the Kenora Census Division was the starting point for the population projections. This model was derived from the Ontario Ministry of Finance population projections (Ministry of Finance Ontario 2020) which determined the growth rate by using the fertility rate of females ages 15-49 years old, the observed death rates by age and sex, and net migration rate by Census Divisions. Due to confidentiality and the complexity of some of the data (e.g., non-permanent residents, intraprovincial migration), only the projected number of births, deaths rates by age and sex, and net migration by Census Division were provided by the Ontario Ministry of Finance. Through back-calculated approximations for a constant fertility rate and migration rate were obtained which yielded similar results to the Ontario Ministry of Finance for the Kenora Census Division.

The projected death rates by age and sex, number of births and net migration for the Kenora Census Division were applied to the Local Study Area communities. This assumption may not reflect the true death rates, number of births, and net migration for the Local Study Area communities. The population projections include assumptions of net migration into the Regional Study Area and Local Study Area. The additional migrants are added to the age cohort model results but are not subject to the death rates, births, or net migration calculations.

Each of the projections include economic assumptions for possible drivers or contractions to the economy that are subject to a family multiplier and economic multiplier. The use of multipliers was used to account for the family members who migrate with their spouses (i.e., family multiplier) and from more jobs being created due to the increase in economic activity from the creation of new jobs (i.e., economic multiplier).

The economic multiplier is determined by the average of the industry multipliers produced by the Northern Policy Institute (2019) for the Kenora Census Division. These estimates may not reflect

the current true multipliers and do not reflect the changes to the multipliers over time. Also, the multipliers for the Kenora Census Division may not accurately reflect the multipliers in the Local Study Area communities. Different factors could influence the economic multiplier selected, for example economic multipliers are notably smaller for areas with smaller economies and might suggest a downward adjustment could be appropriate.

The family multiplier is determined by taking the average annual change in persons per household from 2011 to 2016 for Ignace, Dryden, and Sioux Lookout and forecasting the average person per household by 2046. Using the projected value by 2046 as the family multiplier is a conservative approach to account for the uncertainty of the change in person per household and number of people migrating to the Local Study Area or Regional Study Area over time.

The economic and family multipliers are assumed to have an interaction where the creation of a job and ensuing migration of the employee with their family (i.e., family multiplier) will generate an increase in demand for private and public services (i.e., economic multiplier). In other words, both the new workers and the additional family members are subject to the economic multiplier. One limitation to the assumption that the family and economic multipliers interact is it assumes that the new jobs created from the economic multiplier will be resourced exclusively by residents living outside of Ignace or the Local Study Area. This creates an upward bias for the number of residents migrating to Ignace or the Local Study Area by assuming all new jobs will be filled by residents not currently residing in the respective area. The economic multiplier is applied only to the direct employees and their families but is not applied to the new economic migrants to avoid over-estimating growth.

Other population growth rates were calculated by using historical annual growth rates for the Kenora Census Division and Ontario from 1996 to 2021. The average annual growth rate for the Kenora Census Division was 0.165%. On the other hand, the Ontario historical growth rate was very optimistic and there would be several developments required for there to reach a growth rate as robust as the 1.13% average annual growth observed from 1996 to 2021. The extrapolation of growth rates for population projections assumes past growth will continue. It does not reflect changing birth rates or net migration. Further information on limitations are discussed in detail in **Appendix 2A Detailed Methods**.

### 2.1.2.3 Primary Data Collection

Primary data are used to support the inclusion of community knowledge and local perspectives, confirm the reasonableness and relevance of secondary information, and qualitatively fill gaps in literature review, including information on GBA+ and sustainability considerations. Primary data collection was undertaken through IAWG meetings, workshops (including a Local Social Cultural and Health Workshop and GBA+ Workshop), and key person interviews. In some instances, information shared in primary data collection includes information on quantitative data (e.g., number of households in an unorganized community) and should be assumed to be an approximate estimation.

**Section 1.5.5.2** provides additional information on primary data collection in the Baseline Studies, including for the IAWG, workshops, and key person interviews.

### 2.1.2.3.1 Primary Data Collection Limitations

Limitations for the IAWG, workshops, and key person interviews include that the information reflects the lived experiences and perspectives of the participants. This information could not always be validated through triangulation of data sources but is still considered as valid. In some instances, individuals or organizations were invited to participate in these processes and declined, thus primary data could not be readily collected. An informed consent process was used with all participants, and the option to not respond to questions or redact sensitive information was offered.

### 2.1.3 Methods

The methods used to describe the components within the social cultural pillar were developed to reflect IAAC guidance (IAAC 2020a; IAAC 2020b) in consideration of future Project interactions and are intended to support future impact assessment processes. Specific methods vary by component and are described in the overview and approach for each component (**Section 2.2**, **Section 2.3**, **Section 2.4**, **Section 2.5**, and **Section 2.6**). Further details are also described in **Appendix 2A Detailed Methods**. Methods are consistent with best practice and consideration for the incorporation of GBA+ and community knowledge.

## 2.2 POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

### 2.2.1 Overview and Approach

Population and demographics are key to understanding a community's characteristics. Population can drive changes to aspects of community life, including demand for infrastructure and services (**Section 2.4**), housing (**Section 2.4.7**), education and training opportunities (**Section 2.4.5** and **Section 3.3**), outdoor recreation (**Section 2.4.6**), harvested resources (**Section 2.5.4.3** for recreational fishing and **Section 2.5.5** for hunting), and community safety and well-being plans (**Section 2.3.4**). To understand potential population changes, it is necessary to understand existing population trends.

This section describes and quantifies past and future population and demographic trends for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area. **Table 2.2-1** summarizes the list of indicators which are intended to paint a picture of the population.

**Table 2.2-1: Population and Demographic Indicators**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total population and population densities</li> <li>• Mobility status</li> <li>• Age characteristics</li> <li>• Family characteristics</li> <li>• Mother tongue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religion</li> <li>• Indigenous identity</li> <li>• Visible minority population</li> <li>• Sex assigned at birth and gender identity</li> <li>• Persons with disabilities</li> </ul>
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Population projections were completed for the Local Study Area, Regional Study Area, and Ignace.

In the context of GBA+, it is important to consider populations or groups that have been more vulnerable to changes or who have been historically excluded (IAAC 2020a). Vulnerable populations refer to groups that experience a disproportionate burden of inequities which result in differences in socio-economic outcomes. An analysis of vulnerable populations was completed for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area.

The data are disaggregated by sex (or gender for 2021 data), age, and Indigenous identity, where available and sufficiently robust. Where quantitative data are not available, qualitative research methods are used to obtain data that can be used to characterize those populations. The GBA+ and vulnerable population analyses reflect learnings from the IAWG, the community studies (**Section 1.0**), and other primary data collection processes. Additional information on GBA+ is provided in **Section 1.0**.

Qualitative analysis has been included where available for those communities that Statistics Canada does not enumerate.

The Regional Study Area for population and demographics is the Kenora Census Division. The Regional Study Area includes Indigenous communities and reserves (see **Section 2.1.1.1.2**). Comparable statistics for Ontario are summarized as available to provide context. The Local Study Area for population and demographics includes the communities closest to the Project:

Township of Ignace, which is a potential host community, the City of Dryden, Municipality of Machin, Municipality of Sioux Lookout, and the unincorporated communities and Local Services Boards near Ignace and the Revell Site (the LSB of Melgund, Upsala, Valora, Silver Dollar, and the LSB of Wabigoon).

Temporal boundaries for population and demographics will go back to 1991, as data are available, to understand past trends. Population projections will go 25 years into the future to understand future population trends without the Project. Twenty-five years roughly aligns with the beginning of operations (NWMO 2020a).

Further information on temporal boundaries for population and demographics is provided in **Section 2.1.1**.

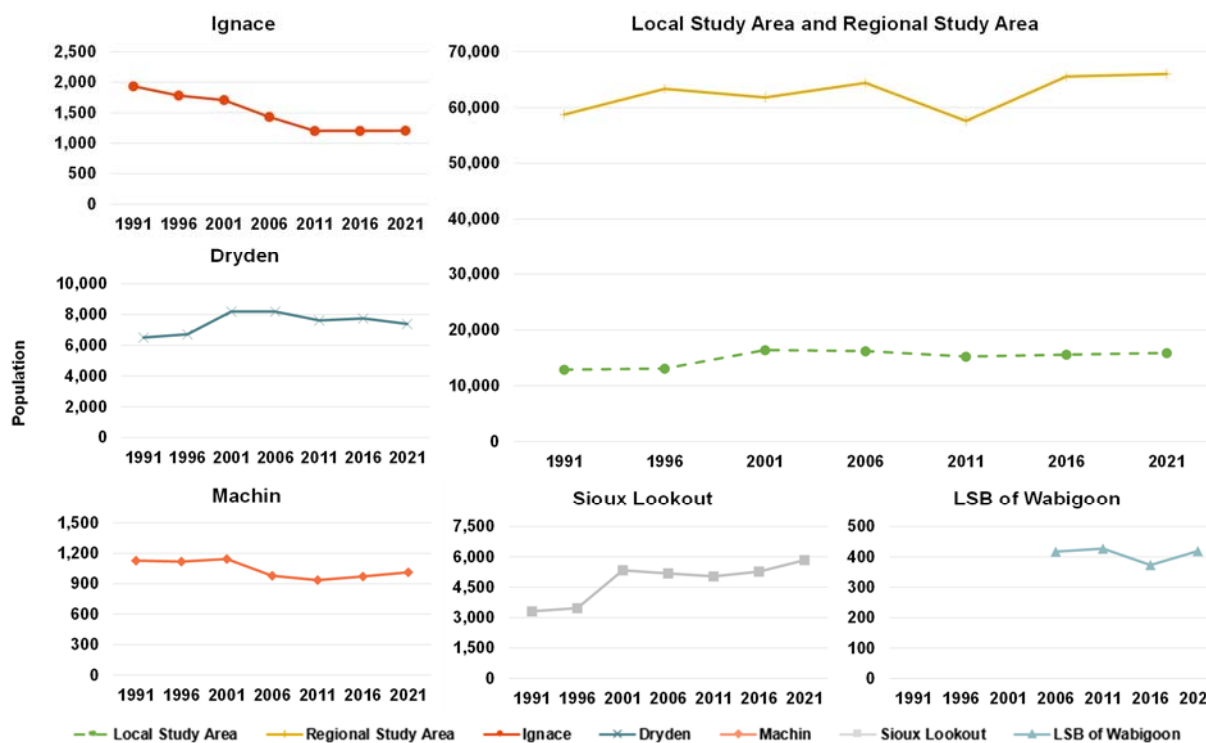
Information on data collection, including desktop research and primary data collection is provided in **Section 2.1.2**.

## 2.2.2 Historical and Current Population

This section describes the historical and current populations of the communities in the Local and Regional Study Areas based on Statistics Canada data.

**Figure 2.2-1** shows the population of the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area from 1991 to 2021. Population growth for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area has been generally flat since 1991, although this does not necessarily reflect population growth in individual communities. In 2021, the Regional Study Area population was 66,000 and the Local Study Area population was 15,864. The largest population centres in the Local Study Area are Dryden (7,388 people) and Sioux Lookout (5,839 people). Ignace has the next largest population but is notably smaller (1,206 people).

Figure 2.2-1: Total Population in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 1991 to 2021<sup>1</sup>



**Source:** Statistics Canada 1992, 1998, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017, 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

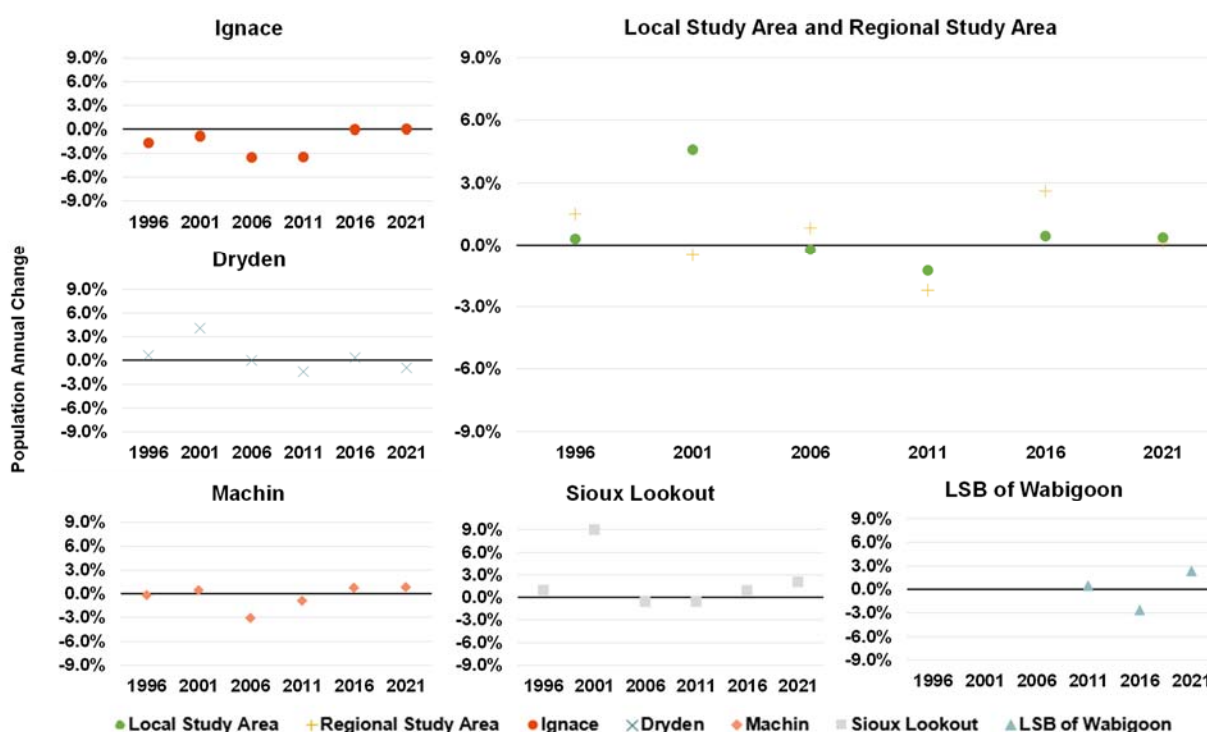
1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 1991 to 2021. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon for 1991 to 2001.

The Local Study Area population increased from 12,878 in 1991 to 15,864 in 2021. The Regional Study Area population increased from 58,748 in 1991 to 66,000 in 2021. The increase in the Local Study Area population from 12,878 in 1991 to 16,386 in 2001 was due primarily to growth in Dryden and Sioux Lookout (**Section 2.2.2.2** and **Section 2.2.2.4**). Population increases were not consistent between census periods or distributed equally among Local Study Area communities. The Local Study Area population decreased from 16,386 in 2001 to 15,218 in 2011 before increasing to 15,864 by 2021. The Local Study Area population decline from 2001 to 2011 was primarily attributed to the population decrease in Ignace (See **Section 2.2.2.1**). Notable population trends in the Local Study Area communities are:

- The population growth in each community has been flat since 2006. Notable exceptions are a decrease in population from 2006 to 2011 in Ignace, from 2016 to 2021 in Dryden, and an increase in population from 2016 to 2021 in Sioux Lookout.
- Since 1991 the population increased the most in Sioux Lookout from 3,311 in 1991 to 5,839 in 2021, followed by Dryden from 6,505 in 1991 to 7,388 in 2021.
- The largest decrease in population occurred in Ignace from 1,935 in 1991 to 1,206 in 2021.

**Figure 2.2-2** shows the average annual five-year population changes between Census periods for the Local Study Area and the Regional Study Area. The average annual five-year population change reflects the average annual population change over the previous five years. For example, the average annual population change for 2001 is the average annual population change between 1996 and 2001.

**Figure 2.2-2: Average Annual Five-Year Population Change for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 1991 to 2021<sup>1</sup>**



**Source:** Statistics Canada 1998, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017, 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 1996 to 2021. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon for 1991 to 2006.

In the Regional Study Area, the growth rate fluctuated between -2.21% (from 2006 to 2011) and 2.61% (from 2011 to 2016) and resulted in an annual growth rate of 0.39% from 1991 to 2021. In the Local Study Area, the growth rate fluctuated between -1.25% (from 2006 to 2011) and 4.61% (from 1996 to 2001). The large growth from 1996 to 2001 is from increases in population in Dryden and Sioux Lookout (**Section 2.2.2.2 and Section 2.2.2.4**). The growth rate in the Local Study Area from 1991 to 1996 was 0.31% and the growth rate of -0.16% from 2001 to 2021 indicates relatively stable population growth for the Local Study Area from 1991 to 2016 when accounting for the large increase in population from 1996 to 2001.

The Regional Study Area has a larger proportion of the population who identify as Indigenous compared to the Local Study Area. The growth in the population in the Regional Study Area since 2001 is consistent with national population trends noted by Statistics Canada (2021a), which



projects that the Indigenous identity population in Canada will increase at a faster rate than the non-Indigenous identity population through 2041 because of a younger age structure and higher birth rates.

Individual communities in the Local Study Area generally experienced average annual declines in population, excluding Sioux Lookout and Dryden. Notable trends in Local Study Area communities are as follows:

- In the Local Study Area, Ignace was the only community to generally have no period of population growth from 1991 to 2021, with annual changes in population ranging between -3.49% from 2001 to 2006 to 0.07% from 2016 to 2021.
- The population growth trend in Sioux Lookout was similar to Dryden from 1991 to 2016 with stable or flat population growth; however, there was material growth in population with an average annual increase of 2.06% from 2016 to 2021.
- The LSB of Wabigoon and Machin experienced modest average annual decreases in population; but Machin had population growth from 2011 to 2021.

**Table 2.2-2** shows population density in the Local Study Area communities, the Local Study Area, and the Regional Study Area, from 2001 to 2021. Population density is represented as the number of persons per square kilometre within a specified land area.

**Table 2.2-2: Population Density in Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 2001 to 2021**

Community <sup>1</sup>	Population Density (km <sup>2</sup> )				
	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021
Ignace	23.5	19.7	16.5	16.5	16.7
Dryden	125.5	125.7	115.7	117.1	112.7
Machin	4.0	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.5
Sioux Lookout	14.1	13.7	13.3	13.9	15.4
LSB of Wabigoon	Data not available	Data not available	8.3	7.3	8.3
Local Study Area	20.3	19.6	17.7	18.1	18.5
Regional Study Area	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2

**Source:** Statistics Canada 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017, 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2001 to 2021. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon for 2001 to 2006.

The population density in the Local Study Area decreased from 20.3 persons per square kilometre in 2001 to 18.5 in 2021. Over the same timeframe, the population density in the Regional Study Area remained constant at 0.2 persons per square kilometre. Notable observations for the population density in the Local Study Area communities include:



- In 2021, Dryden had the highest population density at 112.7 persons per square kilometre and Machin had the lowest population density at 3.5.
- Between 2001 and 2021, Sioux Lookout was the only community to experience an increase in population density from 14.1 persons per square kilometre in 2001 to 15.4 in 2021.
- From 2001 to 2021, Dryden experienced the largest decrease in the number of persons per square kilometre from 125.5 in 2001 to 112.7 in 2021. However, Ignace experienced the largest percentage decrease, dropping 29% from 23.5 persons per square kilometre in 2001 to 16.7 in 2021.

The next sections discuss the historical population trends in each Local Study Area community shown in **Figure 2.2-1**, **Figure 2.2-2**, and **Table 2.2-2** and provides context from secondary sources and participants in the Key Person Interview program. The Local Study Area communities share some demographic trends between 1996 and 2021. They include an aging population, slight decreases to the number of persons per census family and children living at home, and an increasing proportion of the population who identify as Indigenous.

Given the strong connection of the communities to the natural environment and the outdoors, there is a notable seasonal population which is not captured in the Census of Population. Information on the seasonal population and temporary population related to shift work are also described.

#### 2.2.2.1 Ignace

In 2021, the Township of Ignace had a population of 1,206 and a population density of 16.7 persons per square kilometre. Since 1991, the population has materially decreased. from 1,935 in 1991 to 1,206 in 2021 for an average annual growth rate of -1.56%. The population has generally remained unchanged since 2011 (1,202 residents). The population decline from 1991 to 2011 was a result of shifts in the local economy including:

- The closure of the Mattabi Mine in 1991 (Beak and Golder 1997);
- Downturns in the forestry industry from 2000 to 2008 with the loss of paper machines due to a change in scope of operations at Domtar<sup>6</sup> in Dryden and the closure of the Bowater Mill in Ignace (Pulp and Paper Canada 2006; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). The Bowater Mill later changed its name to Resolute Forest Products in 2011 and reopened in 2015 (Resolute Forest Products 2022); and
- From 1991 to 2011 there was a large out-migration of families (**Section 2.2.3**) that contributed to a decline in the youth population<sup>7</sup> (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). More recently, youth are leaving Ignace to pursue education and employment opportunities. The more recent out-migration also includes some families with children who leave to pursue better opportunities for their children's high school education (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

The population of Ignace fluctuates seasonally. In the summer, cottagers add to the population. Currently there are approximately 60 seasonal cottage dwellings, which is estimated to represent

<sup>6</sup> Formerly known as Domtar Inc.'s Dryden Mill, the mill was purchased by First Quality Enterprises LLC in August, 2023 (First Quality 2023).

<sup>7</sup> Youth are defined as residents who are between the ages of 15 and 29 years old.

approximately 125 seasonal residents using the average household size for Ignace (Statistics Canada 2017; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Some of the cottagers support the local economy by paying property taxes, water fees, and sewer fees.

Canadian Pacific Railway (“CPR”) and Ricci Trucking have temporary accommodations in Ignace for their workforce. The bunkhouses for Ricci Trucking employees are used year-round. They accommodated up to 24 people before the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, they accommodated up to 12 employees. Employees typically stay in the bunkhouses for four nights, arriving on Monday and departing on Friday (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

### 2.2.2.2 Dryden

In 2021, Dryden had a population of 7,388 and a population density of 112.7 persons per square kilometre. Between 2001 and 2021, the population in Dryden decreased slightly. The Town of Dryden had a population of 6,711 in 1996 and increased to 8,198 in 2001 after the amalgamation of Dryden and Barclay formed the City of Dryden. This represented a 22% increase or 1,487 people to the population of Dryden from 1996 to 2001 (Statistics Canada 2002). Since 2001, the population of Dryden decreased from 8,198 in 2001 to 7,388 in 2021 for an average annual growth rate of -0.52%.

Participants in the Key Person Interview program expressed concerns that Statistics Canada undercounted the population in Dryden in 2021 (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). It is also believed that the Indigenous identity population was undercounted, as there has been an observed increase in the Indigenous identity population related to the growth of service providers for Indigenous peoples in the community (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Although there was a decrease in the population in Dryden from 2016 to 2021, municipal service providers observed an increase in building permit values, residential units, and more density over the same timeframe. The current vacancy rate of zero in Dryden also suggests an undercount in the total population, and thus the dip in population reported by Statistics Canada is not clear (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

There are a substantial number of residents living in the unincorporated area surrounding Dryden. In 2016, the Northern Policy Institute estimated that the fringe population<sup>8</sup> was around 3,600 residents (NPI 2021). This population can be of concern to municipalities as they may use services provided by the municipality but do not pay property taxes. This can place capacity pressures on services provided by the municipality and lead to an insufficient tax base (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

The number of seasonal residents in Dryden is difficult to track. It is known that there are seasonal residents in and around Dryden including at Timberland Estates, which is an approximately 48 unit development for seniors who are primarily seasonal residents; (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview KPI Program 2022-2023), at Ghost Lake, which is located

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<sup>8</sup> The fringe population is the population which resides just outside the border of a municipality in the surrounding unincorporated region (NPI 2021).

just outside of Dryden; and through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (“MNRF”), that houses a large number of seasonal employees in Dryden during the summer fire season.

There is also the transient population who come to the community to access services (education, health, social services) but who do not stay in the community long-term (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023; GBA+ Workshop 2023).

### 2.2.2.3 Machin

In 2021, Machin had a population of 1,012 and a population density of 3.5 persons per square kilometre. Since 1991, the population in Machin has remained about the same. The population decreased from 1,127 in 1991 to 1,012 in 2021 for an average annual growth rate of -0.36%. The population was relatively stable from 1991 (population of 1,127) to 2001 (population of 1,143) but saw a large decrease by 2006 (population of 978) and remained stable thereafter.

There is a notable increase in the population during the summer months due to people visiting seasonal camps, cabins/cottages, and other lodges/accommodations. Many of the seasonal guests are Americans. Despite a large tourist population, most of the people at camps do not shop in town because many of the lodges/accommodations provide everything with their accommodations (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.2.2.4 Sioux Lookout

In 2021, Sioux Lookout had a population of 5,839 and a population density of 15.4 persons per square kilometre. Since 2001, the population in Sioux Lookout has increased slightly. The population increased from 3,311 in 1991 to 5,839 in 2021 for an average annual growth rate of 1.91%. The population increased in Sioux Lookout from 3,469 in 1996 to 5,336 in 2001 due to the amalgamation of Sioux Lookout with unorganized communities in the surrounding area including the Township of Drayton, Jordan, Vermillion, and other surrounding land in 1998 (MHBC 2019). The population in Sioux Lookout was relatively constant from 2001 to 2016 before a large jump in population between 2016 and 2021. A participant in the Key Person Interview program noted that the increase in population could be due to the availability of jobs, and some people from the First Nation communities north of Sioux Lookout choosing to settle in Sioux Lookout (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). In Sioux Lookout, one of the primary constraints to future population growth is the housing shortage. Developers have been building apartments and condominiums but not detached residential dwellings.

The seasonal population is approximately 75 residents who come to Sioux Lookout during the summer when the local camps and lodges are open. A participant in the Key Person Interview program noted that there used to be more seasonal dwellings, but many have been purchased and are used as permanent homes (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). It is also believed that there is a larger population of permanent Indigenous residents than was reported by Statistics Canada. Sioux Lookout is a service hub for northern communities with the presence of the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre, Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority, four tribal councils, and the Pelican Falls First Nation High School which offers boarding options for students from northern reserves (Keewatinook Okimakanak Board of Education 2016). Both health organizations provide services to people in Sioux Lookout and the surrounding areas (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.2.2.5 Local Services Board of Wabigoon

The population of the LSB of Wabigoon was 419 in 2021 with a population density of 8.3 persons per square kilometre. The population of the LSB of Wabigoon in 2021 was similar to the population in 2006 but has experienced changes in between. A participant in the Key Person Interview program noted that 30 years ago, multiple families with 3 to 4 children each lived in the LSB of Wabigoon. The decrease in population began around 30 years ago with a shift in the forestry industry towards more industrial harvesting operations followed by mills closing. This led to families moving away because young people had limited employment opportunities (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

There is a notable increase in the population during the summer months from seasonal residents. It is estimated that the population can increase by 50% to 60% during the summer due to the RV parks filling up, tourist camps, and seasonal cottages (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.2.2.6 Unincorporated Communities

Borups Corners and Dymont are part of the LSB of Melgund. In 2023, the LSB of Melgund is estimated to have about 50 fulltime residents between Borups Corners and Dymont (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Local residents have noted that the population has generally increased over the last 10 to 20 years (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). In addition to fulltime residents, there are about 20 seasonal residents during the summer months.

The community of Silver Dollar is estimated to have between 10 to 20 fulltime residents as of 2023 (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The population in Silver Dollar has not changed much in the last 10 years but there was a notable decrease in the population throughout the 1990s and early 2000s after the Mattabi Mine closed (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Silver Dollar used to be a trailer park with year-round residents when the mine was operating but has since shifted to be a seasonal and tourist-based community (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). During the summer months due to the influx of camp owners, seasonal residents, and guests, the population increases by an estimated 60 to 80 seasonal residents (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

The LSB of Upsala is estimated to have between 150 to 200 fulltime residents as of 2023 (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The population in Upsala has steadily decreased since the 1990s due to the closure of the Upsala Forest Products mill in the early 2000s. An aging population, limited housing, and youth leaving for postsecondary education have also contributed to the decrease in population (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

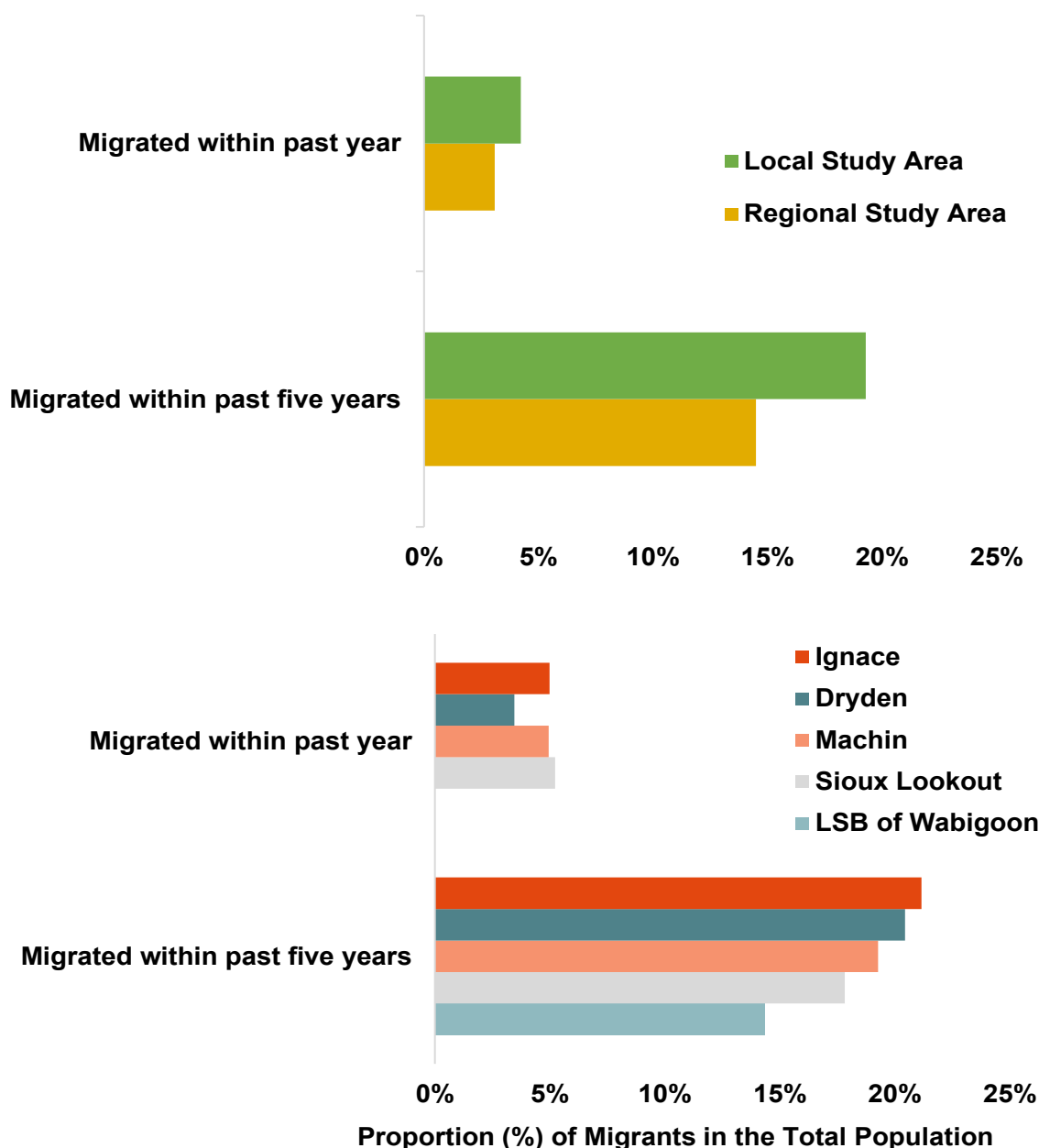
The community of Valora had five occupied dwellings and five vacant or abandoned dwellings in 2023 (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). One household resides in Valora fulltime. Local residents have noted that Valora used to be a bustling community when the Mattabi Mine was in operation north of Sturgeon Lake and there was railroad access through the town (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). It is estimated that there are an additional 75 seasonal residents who live in the community during the summer months (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.2.3 Population Mobility

Population mobility tracks the number of individuals who move into a new census division (i.e., in-migration), census subdivision, or Indian Reserve. In-migration can be a key driver of population change. People may move for a variety of reasons, including access to employment and educational opportunities or to be closer to family. Migrants are people who relocated into a new census subdivision and include both internal migrants who moved to a different city, town, township, village, or Indian Reserve within Canada, and external migrants who lived outside of Canada at an earlier date. Migrants do not include people who moved within the same census subdivision (Statistics Canada 2022a). Mobility rates should be interpreted with caution as a high in-migration rate does not necessarily correspond to an increase in population as this does not account for out-migration and changes in the population from births and deaths.

**Figure 2.2-3** shows the proportion of the population who migrated into the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area in the year prior to the 2021 Census (i.e., between 2020 and 2021) and within the last five years of the Census (i.e., between 2016 to 2021). The Local Study Area had a larger proportion of the population who migrated to the area between 2020 to 2021 (4.2% [670 people]) and between 2016 to 2021 (19.3% [3,060 people]) compared to the Regional Study Area (3.1% [2,035 people] between 2020 and 2021 and 14.5% [9,560 people] between 2016 and 2021). Proportionally, Ignace (5.0% [60 people]) and Sioux Lookout (6.2% [305 people]) had the largest proportion of in-migration into the community between 2020 and 2021.

Figure 2.2-3: Mobility Status for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 2021<sup>1</sup>



Source: Statistics Canada 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2021.

A larger proportion of the population migrated to the Local Study Area between 2020 and 2021 at 4.2% (or 670 people) compared to 3.1% (or 2,035 people) to the Regional Study Area. There

was also a larger proportion of the population who migrated to the Local Study Area between 2016 and 2021 at 19.3% (or 3,060 people) compared to 14.5% (or 9,560 people) to the Regional Study Area. Notable highlights of in-migration within the Local Study Area communities are:

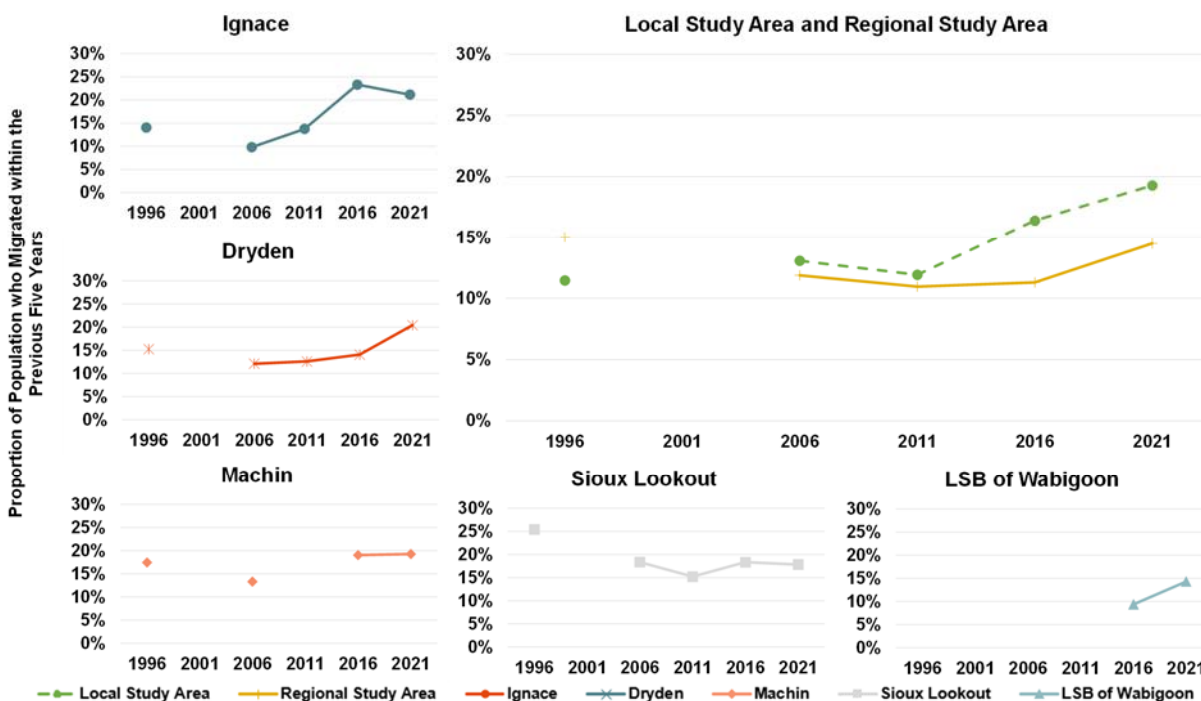
- Among the Local Study Area communities, the largest proportion of the population migrated to Ignace, between 2020 and 2021 at 5.0% (or 60 people) and between 2016 and 2021 at 21.1% (or 255 people). Sioux Lookout had the second largest proportion of the population that migrated to Sioux Lookout between 2020 and 2021 at 5.2% (or 305 people). Dryden had the second largest proportion of the population which migrated to Dryden between 2016 and 2021 at 20.4% (or 1,510 people).
- Among the Local Study Area communities, the smallest proportion of the population migrated to the LSB of Wabigoon, between 2020 and 2021 at 0% and between 2016 and 2021 at 14.3% (or 60 people). There may have been people who migrated to the LSB of Wabigoon between 2020 and 2021 but due to random rounding was reported as 0.

Despite Ignace having the largest proportion of migrants within five years of the census, the population increased by four people between 2016 and 2021. This highlights that, although mobility tracks the number of individuals entering a community, it does not report on how many people leave a community. Key person interviews noted that there has been a large out-migration of families over the past 30 years. More recently, due to the aging population who are slowly putting more homes on the market, younger families with children are moving in (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

**Figure 2.2-4** shows the proportion of the population who moved within the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area within the previous five years, from 1996 to 2021. Among the Local Study Area communities, in-migration rates have generally increased since 1996. However, a high in-migration rate does not necessarily correspond to an increase in population as this does not account for out-migration and changes in the population from births and deaths.



Figure 2.2-4: Migration within the Previous Five Years for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 1996 to 2021<sup>1</sup>



Source: Statistics Canada 1998, 2002, 2007, 2013, 2017, 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 1996 to 2021. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon for 1996 to 2011 and for Machin for 2011. Migrant mobility was not reported in the 2001 Census.

The proportion of the total population in the Local Study Area who migrated between 1991 and 1996 at 18.0% (or 2,350 people) was lower than the proportion who migrated between 2016 and 2021 at 19.3% (or 3,060 people). The proportion of the total population in the Regional Study Area who migrated between 1991 and 1996 at 15.0% (or 9,520 people) was slightly higher than the proportion who migrated between 2016 and 2021 at 14.5% (or 9,560 people). Notable trends of in-migration to the Local Study Area communities are as follows:

- The proportion of the Ignace population that are 5-year migrants has increased in each census since 2006. Mobility statistics for Ignace show a five-year in-migration rate between 2001-2006 of 9.8% (140 migrants) and 2016-2021 of 21.1% (255 migrants). This corresponds with the period when the population in Ignace has stabilized.
- In-migration has generally increased for Dryden since 1996. The five-year in-migration rate in Dryden has ranged between 12.1% (960 migrants) for 2001-2006 and 20.4% (1,510 migrants) for 2016-2021.
- The proportion of the Machin population that are five-year migrants has generally increased since 1996. The in-migration rate between 1991-1996 was 17.5% (195 migrants) but fell to 13.3% (130 migrants) for the period of 2001-2006. The fall in the proportion of migrants



coincides with a large population decline in Machin between 2001 to 2011 (See **Section 2.2.3**).

- The proportion of the Sioux Lookout population that are five-year migrants has generally decreased since 1996. The in-migration rate between 1991-1996 was 25.4% (880 migrants) and was 17.8% (1,040 migrants) between 2016-2021.
- In-migration for the LSB of Wabigoon between 2011-2016 was 9.4% (35 migrants) which is the smallest proportion among Local Study Area communities but increased to 14.3% (60 migrants) between 2016-2021.

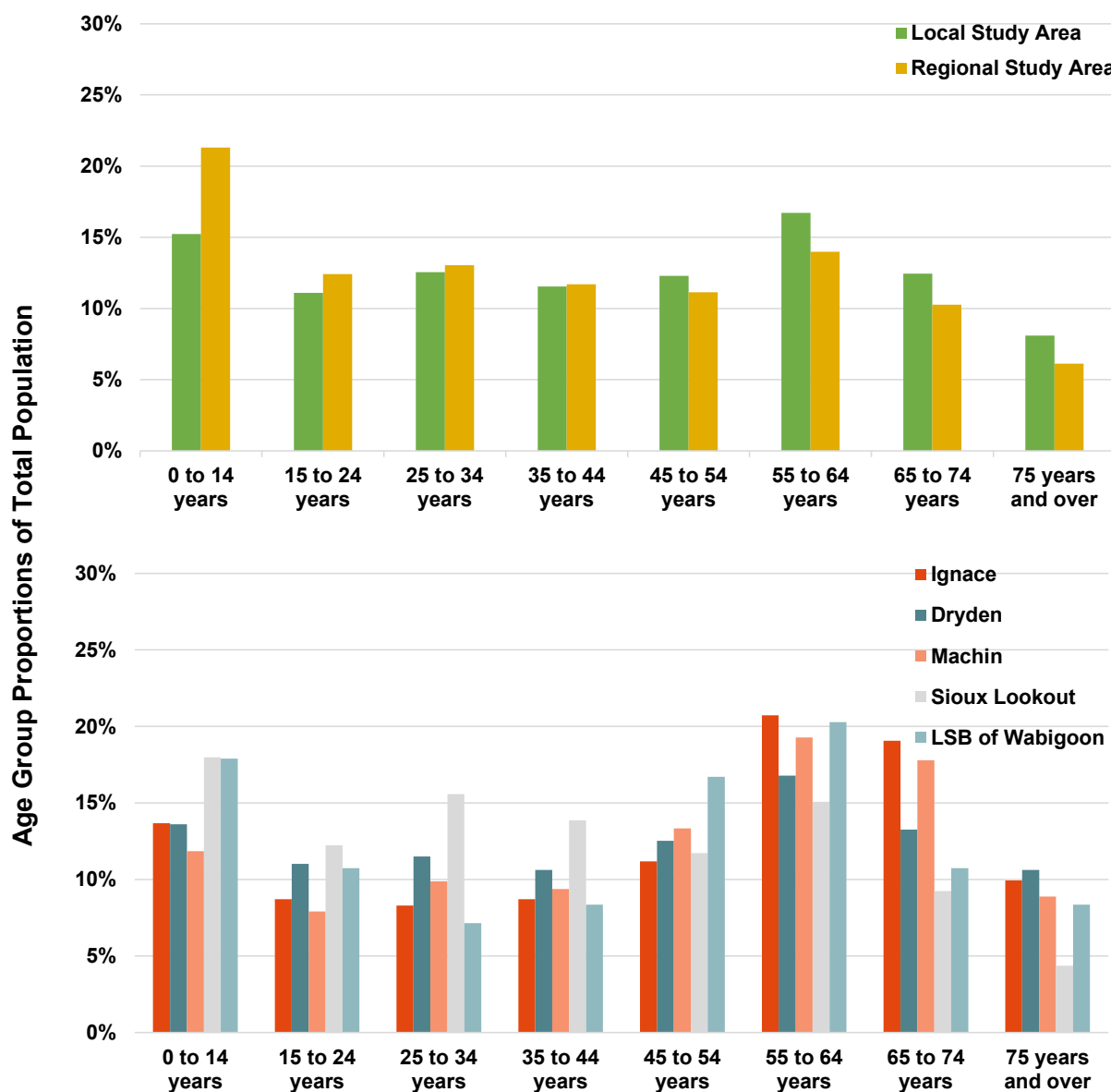
Key person interviews identified out-migration as a concern in the Kenora Census Division (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Out-migration can be attributed to multiple factors, including residents leaving the community to pursue employment, training, and education and not returning due to limited opportunities in the area (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). The Northwest Training and Adjustment Board (2023) reported a net out-migration of 396 residents leaving the Kenora Census Division from 2015 to 2019. There was a net out-migration of 398 residents aged 65 years and older, while 410 net in-migration of residents aged 25 to 44 years old to the Kenora Census Division (NTAB 2023). The positive net in-migration for individuals aged 25 to 44 years old suggests that younger families are moving into the region more recently (NTAB 2023; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

## 2.2.4 Demographics

### 2.2.4.1 Age and Gender Characteristics

**Figure 2.2-5** shows the distribution of the population by age cohorts for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area for 2021.

Figure 2.2-5: Population Age Distribution for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 2021<sup>1</sup>



Source: Statistics Canada 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

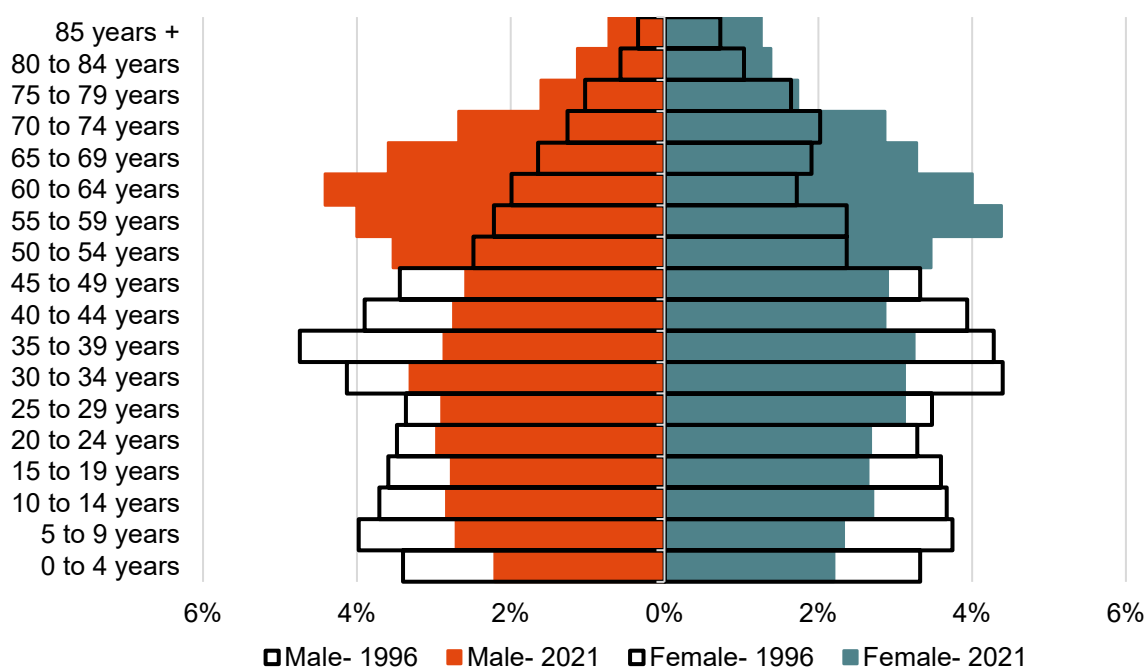
1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2021.

The population distribution by age cohort in the Regional Study Area shows a large proportion of the population under 25 years old and a smaller proportion of the population aged 55 and older when compared to the Local Study Area. Notable observations for Local Study Area communities include:

- Among the Local Study Area, Ignace and Machin have the oldest population in 2021; with 22% of the population under 25 years old and 50% of the population 55 years or older in Ignace. In Machin, 20% of the population is under 25 years old and 46% of the population is 55 years or older.
- Sioux Lookout has the youngest population in 2021 with 30% of the population under 25 years old and 29% of the population 55 years or older.

**Figure 2.2-6** compares the proportion of the population by age and sex or gender in 1996 and 2021. The age cohorts are presented along the vertical axis with each block representing the proportion of males or females for the corresponding year. See **Section 2.1.2.1.1** for limitations of comparisons between gender and sex over time. The horizontal axis presents the proportion of the total population with the female population presented on the right side and the male population on the left side.

Figure 2.2-6: Population Age and Sex or Gender Distribution for the Local Study Area, 1996 and 2021<sup>1</sup>



**Source:** Statistics Canada 1998, 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 1996 or 2021. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon for 1996.

The population in the Local Study Area has aged since 1996. In 1996, 20% of the population was 55 years and older (2,680 people) compared to 37% (5,910 people) in 2021. In 1996, 36% (4,680 people) of the population were below 25 years old compared to 26% (4,175 people) in 2021.

**Table 2.2-3** shows median ages in the Local Study Area communities, Local Study Area, and Regional Study Area, from 2001 to 2021.

**Table 2.2-3: Median Age in Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 2001 to 2021**

Community <sup>1</sup>	Median Age				
	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021
Ignace	37.0	42.5	48.1	52.5	53.6
Dryden	38.2	41.8	45.0	46.2	48.0
Machin	39.8	43.3	47.0	50.6	53.6
Sioux Lookout	33.5	35.1	36.1	35.9	38.0
LSB of Wabigoon	Data not available	Data not available	43.4	48.0	49.2
Local Study Area	36.7	38.7	42.4	43.5	45.1
Regional Study Area	33.9	34.9	38.6	36.5	37.6

**Source:** Statistics Canada 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017, 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2001 to 2021. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon for 2001 to 2006.

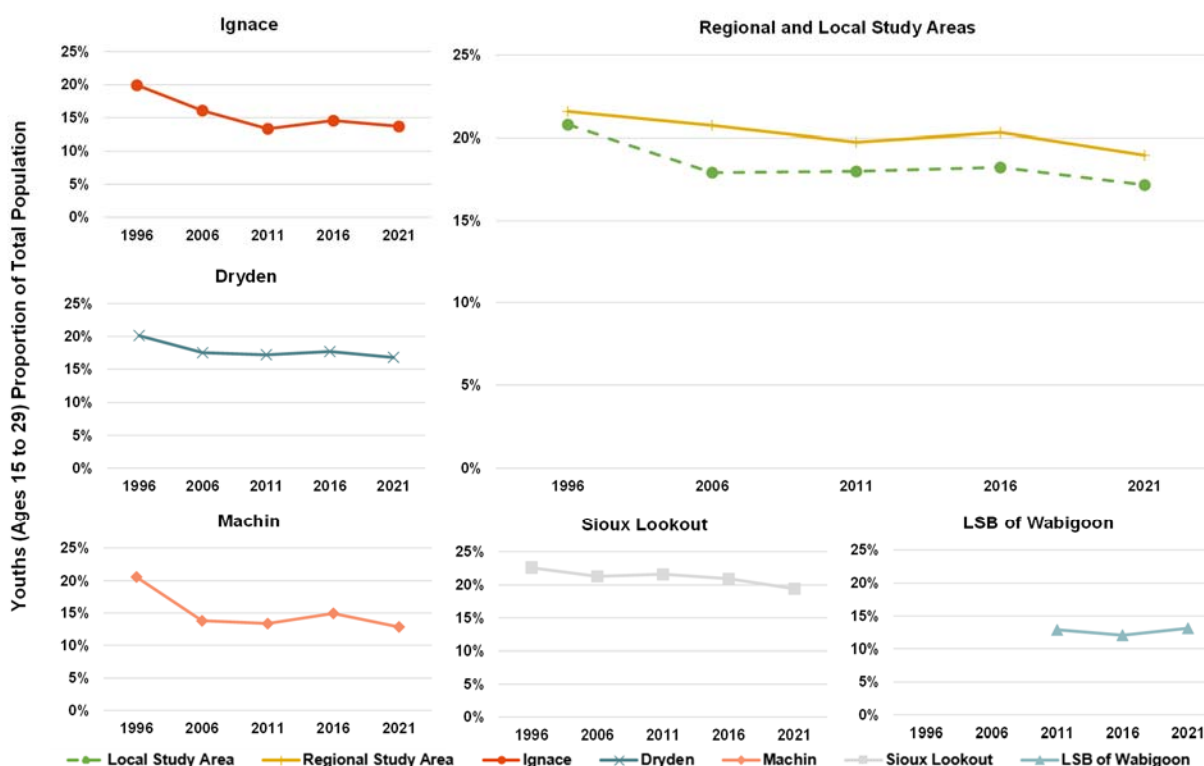
The median age in the Local Study Area increased from 36.7 years old in 2001 to 45.1 years old in 2021. The median age in the Regional Study Area increased by a smaller amount compared to the Local Study Area from 33.9 years old in 2001 to 37.6 years old in 2021. Notable trends in the median age in the Local Study Area communities include:

- In 2021, the median age ranged between 38.0 years old in Sioux Lookout to 53.6 years old in Ignace and Machin.
- A pattern of an aging population in the Local Study Area is evident for Ignace, Dryden, Machin, and the LSB of Wabigoon, and to a lesser extent for Sioux Lookout.
- From 2001 to 2016 the median age in Ignace increased materially from 37.0 years old in 2001 to 52.5 years old in 2016. Dryden and Sioux Lookout have seen gradual increases to the median age over the 15-year span. Machin and the LSB Wabigoon had increases to the median age similar to Ignace.
- As of 2021, Sioux Lookout is the only Local Study Area community with a median age below 40 years old, which is similar to the median age of 37.6 years old in the Regional Study Area. The next youngest median age is 48.0 years old for Dryden.

Youth are defined as residents who are between the of ages 15 to 29 years old by Statistics Canada (Canadian Heritage 2021). Youth represent not only an important component of the labour force within a region, but also an age group that can contribute to community vibrancy and leadership into the future.

Figure 2.2-7 shows the youth population (i.e., 15 to 29 years old) as a proportion of the total population in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area from 1996 to 2021.

Figure 2.2-7: Youth as a Proportion of the Total Population in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 1996, 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021<sup>1</sup>



Source: Statistics Canada 1998, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017, 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.  
 Notes:

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 1996 to 2021. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon for 1996 to 2006.

The youth population in the Local Study Area decreased from 21% in 1996 to 17% in 2021. The youth population in the Regional Study Area had a similar decrease from 22% in 1996 to 19% in 2021. Notable trends in the youth population for the Local Study Area communities are as follows:

- In 2021, the youth population as a proportion of the total population is largest in Sioux Lookout, and smallest in Ignace, Machin, and the LSB of Wabigoon.
- Ignace experienced a material decline in the total number of youth between 1996 to 2021 [355 youth in 1996 (17%) to 165 (14%) in 2021]. This represented a 53% decline in the total number of youth.
- The youth population in Dryden decreased from 20% in 1996 to 17% in 2021 (1,350 youth in 1996 to 1,240 in 2021).

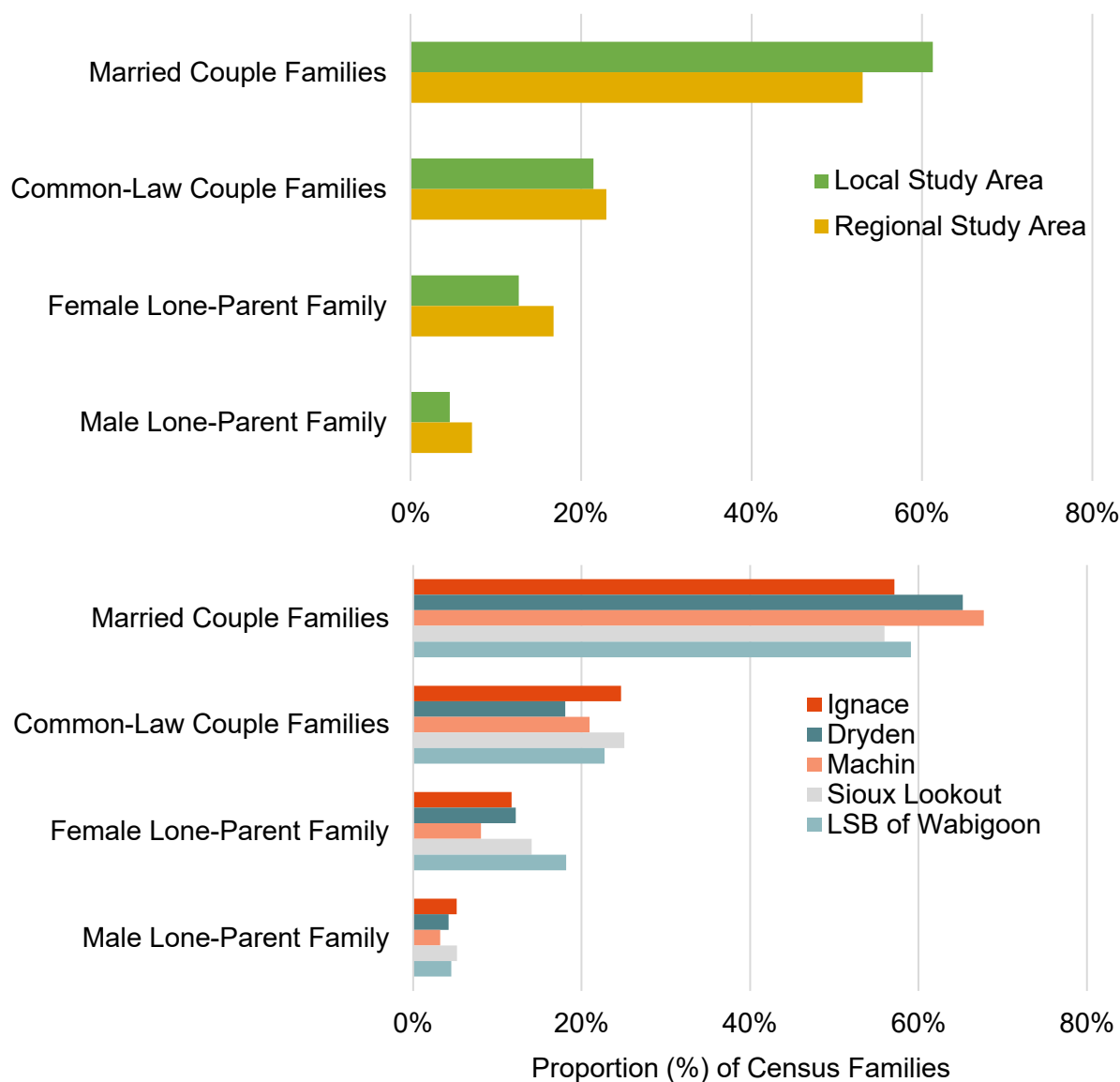
- The youth population in Machin decreased from 21% of the total population in 1996 to 13% in 2021 (230 youth in 1996 to 130 in 2021).
- The youth population in the LSB of Wabigoon has remained around 13% since 2011.
- The youth population in Sioux Lookout decreased from 23% of the total population in 1996 to 19% in 2021 (785 in 1996 to 1,135 in 2021). However, the total number of youth increased over the same period. The proportional decrease in youth population was due to a large increase in total population. (See **Section 2.2.2**).

Key person interviews noted that youth are leaving communities in the Local Study Area to pursue education and employment opportunities and often not returning (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). The general decline in the youth population and the growing population over 55 years old in the Local Study Area communities highlight the ongoing struggle to retain and attract working age individuals and families to the region.

#### 2.2.4.2 Family Characteristics

**Figure 2.2-8** shows the breakdown on census families by family types for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area in 2021. A census family is defined as a married couple, common-law couple, or a lone-parent family with at least one child living in the same dwelling. Children may be biological, adopted, or fostered regardless of their age or marital status as long as they live in the dwelling and do not live with their children, married spouse, or common-law partner (Statistics Canada 2022a). For example, if a married couple has a child who lives in the same dwelling, but their child's spouse also lives with them, they will represent two distinct census families. Grandparents living with their grandchildren but with no parents living in the dwelling are also considered a census family.

Figure 2.2-8: Types of Census Families in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 2021<sup>1</sup>



**Source:** Statistics Canada 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2021.

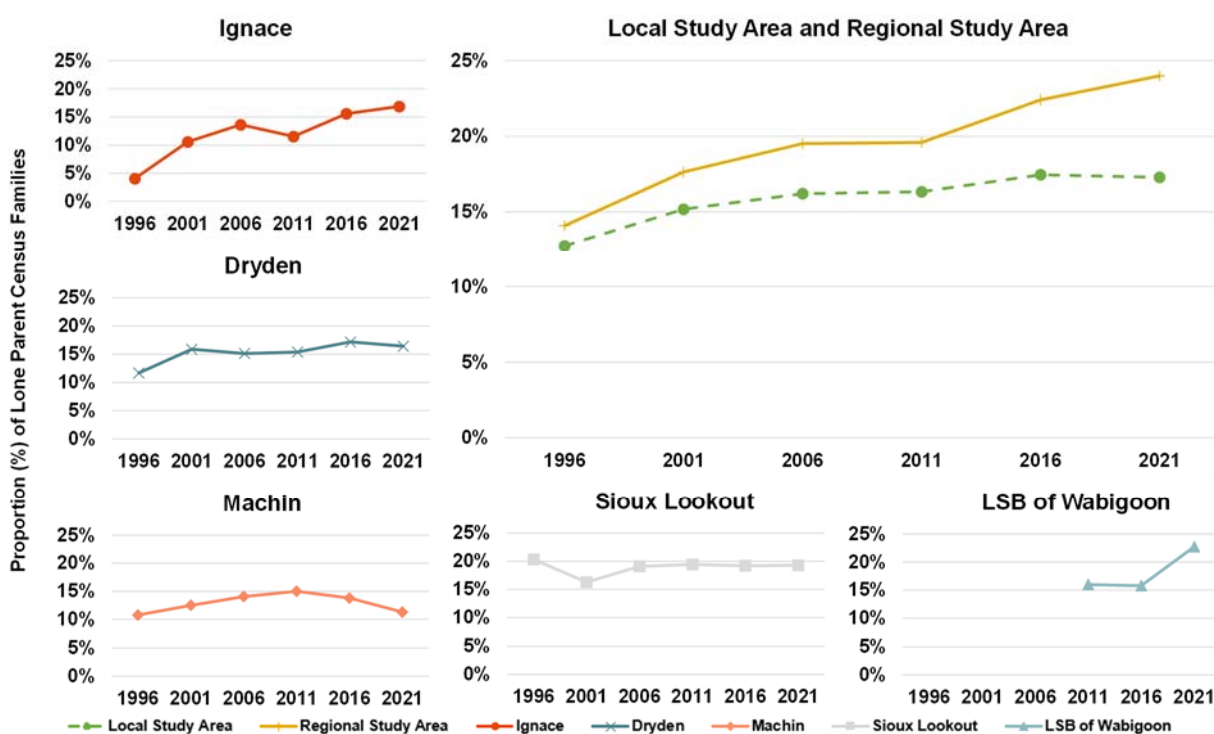
In 2021, the proportion of couple families represented 82% of census families (61% married couples and 21% common-law couples) in the Local Study Area. In the Regional Study Area, couple families represented 76% of census families (53% married couples and 23% common-law couples). The proportion of lone-parent families represented 18% of census families (13% female lone-parent families and 5% male lone-parent families) in the Local Study Area which is lower than the proportion of lone-parent families at 24% in the Regional Study Area (17%

female lone-parent families and 7% male lone-parent families). Notable observations among the Local Study Area communities are as follows:

- Machin has the largest proportion of census families which are married couples (68%), and Sioux Lookout has the smallest proportion (56%).
- Sioux Lookout has the largest proportion of census families which are common-law couples (25%), and Dryden has the smallest proportion (18%).
- The LSB of Wabigoon has the largest proportion of census families which are lone-parent families (18% women and 5% men), and Machin has the smallest proportion (8% women and 3% men).

Figure 2.2-9 shows the proportion of lone-parent census families in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area from 1996 to 2021.

Figure 2.2-9: Proportion of Lone-Parent Families in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 1996 to 2021<sup>1</sup>



Source: Statistics Canada 1998, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017, 2022a. See Appendix 2B Supplemental Data.

Notes:

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 1996 to 2021. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon for 1996 to 2006.

The proportion of lone-parent families increased slightly from 13% in 1996 to 17% in 2021 (455 families in 1996 to 790 families in 2021) in the Local Study Area. The proportion of lone-parent families increased from 14% in 1996 to 24% in 2021 (2,345 families in 1996 to 4,375 in 2021) in the Regional Study Area. The increase of lone-parent families was materially larger in the



Regional Study Area compared to the Local Study Area. Changes observed in the proportion of male and female lone-parent families in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area are:

- Female lone-parent families in the Local Study Area represented 11% (or 395 families) of census families in 1996 and 13% (or 560 families) in 2021. Male lone-parent families in the Local Study Area represented 2% (or 60 families) of census families in 1996 and 5% (or 210 families) in 2021.
- Female lone-parent families in the Regional Study Area represented 11% (or 1,845 families) of census families in 1996 and 17% (or 3,060 families) in 2021. Male lone-parent families in the Regional Study Area represented 3% (or 500 families) of census families in 1996 and 7% (or 1,315 families) in 2021.

Notable observations for the Local Study Area communities are as follows:

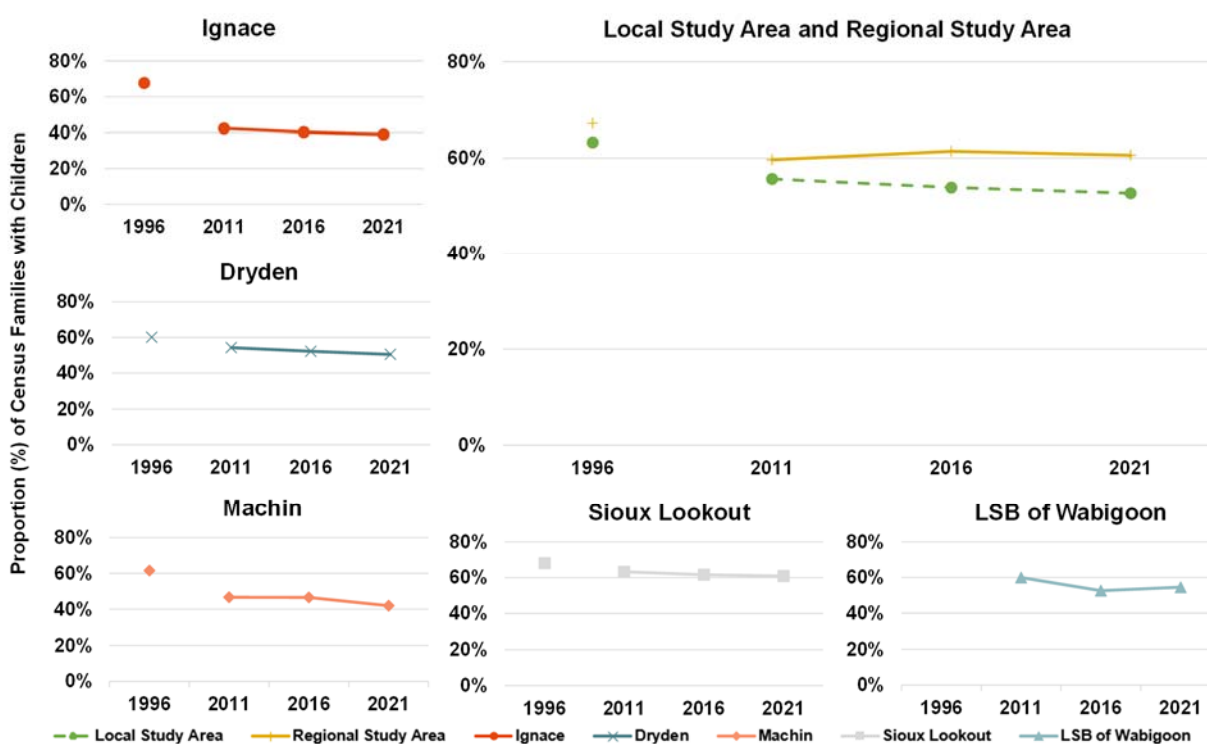
- In Ignace, the proportion of lone-parent families increased by a material amount from 4% (or 20 families) in 1996 to 17% (or 65 families) in 2021. This represented the largest increase in the proportion of census families among the Local Study Area communities. The proportion of female lone-parent families in Ignace increased from 4% (or 20 families) in 1996 to 14% (or 45 families) in 2021. The proportion of male lone-parent families increased from 0% in 1996 to 5% (or 20 families) in 2021.
- In Sioux Lookout, the proportion of lone-parent families has remained relatively constant at 19% since 1996. In 1996, Sioux Lookout had the largest proportion of lone-parent families (20%) and in 2021 had the second largest proportion. The proportion of female lone-parent families in Sioux Lookout decreased from 17% (or 155 families) in 1996 to 14% (or 230 families) in 2021. The proportion of male lone-parent families increased from 3% (or 30 families) in 1996 to 5% (or 85 families) in 2021.
- In 2021, Machin had the lowest proportion of lone-parent families (11%) among the Local Study Area communities. The proportion of census families has remaining relatively constant at 11% since 1996. The proportion of female lone-parent families in Machin remained similar around 8% (or 25 families in both 1996 and 2021) from 1996 to 2021. The proportion of male lone-parent families also remained constant around 3% (or 10 families in both 1996 and 2021) from 1996 to 2021.
- In 2021, the LSB of Wabigoon had the largest proportion of lone-parent census families at 23%. The number of female lone-parent families in the LSB of Wabigoon increased slightly from 15 families in 2011 to 20 families in 2021. The number of male lone-parent families remained constant at 5 families between 2011 and 2021.
- In Dryden, the proportion of lone-parent families increased from 12% (or 215 families) in 1996 to 16% (or 350 families) in 2021. The proportion of lone-parent families has remained relatively constant at 16% since 2001. The proportion of female lone-parent families in Dryden increased from 11% (or 195 families) in 1996 to 12% (or 260 families) in 2021. The proportion of male lone-parent families increased from 1% (or 20 families) in 1996 to 4% (or 90 families) in 2021.

The increasing trend of lone-parent census families was observed for both the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area and most of the Local Study Area communities. The increasing trend in lone parents has been observed both nationally and globally over the last few decades (Statistics

Canada 2022d). In 1970, there were 8.8 marriages per 1,000 people in Canada which decreased to 5.3 in 1996, and 3.9 by 2019 (Statistics Canada 2022d). This pattern was evident for the Regional Study Area, Local Study Area, and each of the Local Study Area communities, excluding Sioux Lookout which experienced a decrease to the proportion of married-couples and lone-parent families.

**Figure 2.2-10** shows the proportion of census families with children in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area in 1996, 2011, 2016, and 2021.

**Figure 2.2-10: Proportion of Census Families with Children in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 1996, 2011, 2016, and 2021<sup>1</sup>**



**Source:** Statistics Canada 1998, 2012, 2017, 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 1996 to 2021. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon for 1996 to 2006.

The proportion of families with children in the Local Study Area decreased from 63% in 1996 to 53% in 2021 (2,260 families in 1996 to 2,410 in 2021). Compared to a slight decrease in the proportion of families with children in the Regional Study Area from 67% in 1996 to 61% in 2021 (11,180 families in 1996 to 11,270 in 2016). Despite decreases to the proportion of families with children in both the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, there were marginal increases to the total number of families with children resulting in a modest decrease to the proportion of census families with children. This trend is evident in Sioux Lookout, which experienced decreases to the proportion of census families with children, but not to the same magnitude as

other Local Study Area communities. Other notable trends in the proportion of census families with children in the Local Study Area communities include:

- In 1996, Ignace had the second largest proportion of census families with children at 68% (or 335 families) but declined materially to 39% (or 150 families) by 2021. As of 2021, Ignace has the lowest proportion of census families with children among the Local Study Area communities.
- The proportion of census families with children in Dryden decreased slightly from 60% in 1996 to 51% in 2016 (1,105 families in 1996 to 1,075 families in 2021).
- The proportion of census families with children also decreased materially in Machin from 62% (or 200 families) in 1996 to 42% (or 130 families) in 2021. Machin had the second lowest proportion of census families with children among the Local Study Area communities.
- The proportion of census families with children in Sioux Lookout decreased from 68% in 1996 to 61% in 2021 (620 families in 1996 to 995 families in 2021). Despite a decrease in the proportion of census families with children, the number of census families with children increased by 60% (or 375 families).
- The proportion of census families with children in the LSB of Wabigoon decreased slightly from 60% in 2011 to 55% in 2021 (75 families in 2011 to 60 families in 2021).

The declining proportion of census families with children reflects an aging population (see **Section 2.2.4.1**) and captures the challenges of attracting families to the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area. An older couple or parent are less likely to have children living at home. Also, the lack of available postsecondary educational programs offered in the Local Study Area means many children must leave their home community to obtain a higher level of education (GBA+ Workshop 2023). This can lead to youth leaving the community and not coming back or families migrating out of the community to provide their children with access to a wider variety of postsecondary educational programs.

**Table 2.2-4** shows the average size of census families for the Regional Study Area and the Local Study Area communities.

**Table 2.2-4: Average Size of Census Families in the Regional Study Area and Local Study Area Communities, 1996, 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021**

Community <sup>1</sup>	Average Census Family Size				
	1996	2006	2011	2016	2021
Ignace	3.1	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.5
Dryden	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.7
Machin	3.0	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6
Sioux Lookout	3.2	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9
LSB of Wabigoon	Not Reported	Not Reported	2.9	2.6	2.5
Regional Study Area	3.2	3.1	2.9	3.0	3.0

**Source:** Statistics Canada 1998, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017, 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

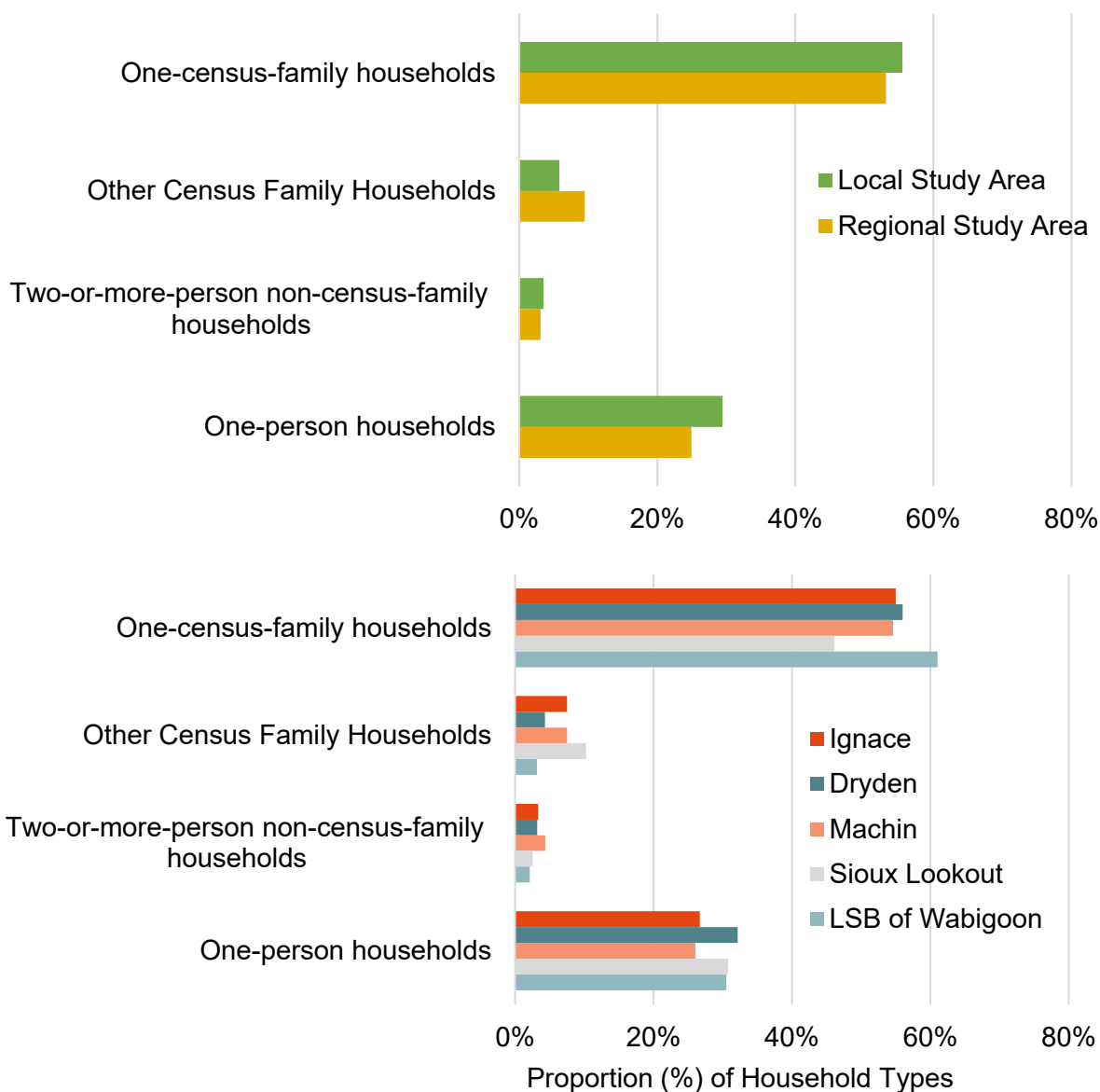
**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 1996 to 2021. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon for 1996 to 2006.

The average size of census families has decreased in the Regional Study Area and in each of the Local Study Area communities. This reflects a decrease in the average number of persons per household (**Section 2.4.7**). The larger declines in Ignace and Machin are reflective of the decrease in the number of youth and number of census families with children. The decline in the average size of census families is reflective of a trend of women and families having fewer children, which coincides with national fertility rate trends, which have been declining since 2008 and reached a record low of 1.40 children per women in 2020 (Statistics Canada 2021b).

**Figure 2.2-11** shows the proportion of household family types in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area in 2021. A one-census family is a household which contains one family and no additional people who are not a part of the census family. Other census family households include households with more than one census family living in the dwelling, or a household with a census family and other members living in the household such as a friend or sibling of the parents. A non-census family household is a household comprised of one person or multiple people with none of them having children or living with a spouse or common-law partner (Statistics Canada 2022a).

Figure 2.2-11: Proportion of Household Family Types in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 2021<sup>1</sup>



**Source:** Statistics Canada 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2021.

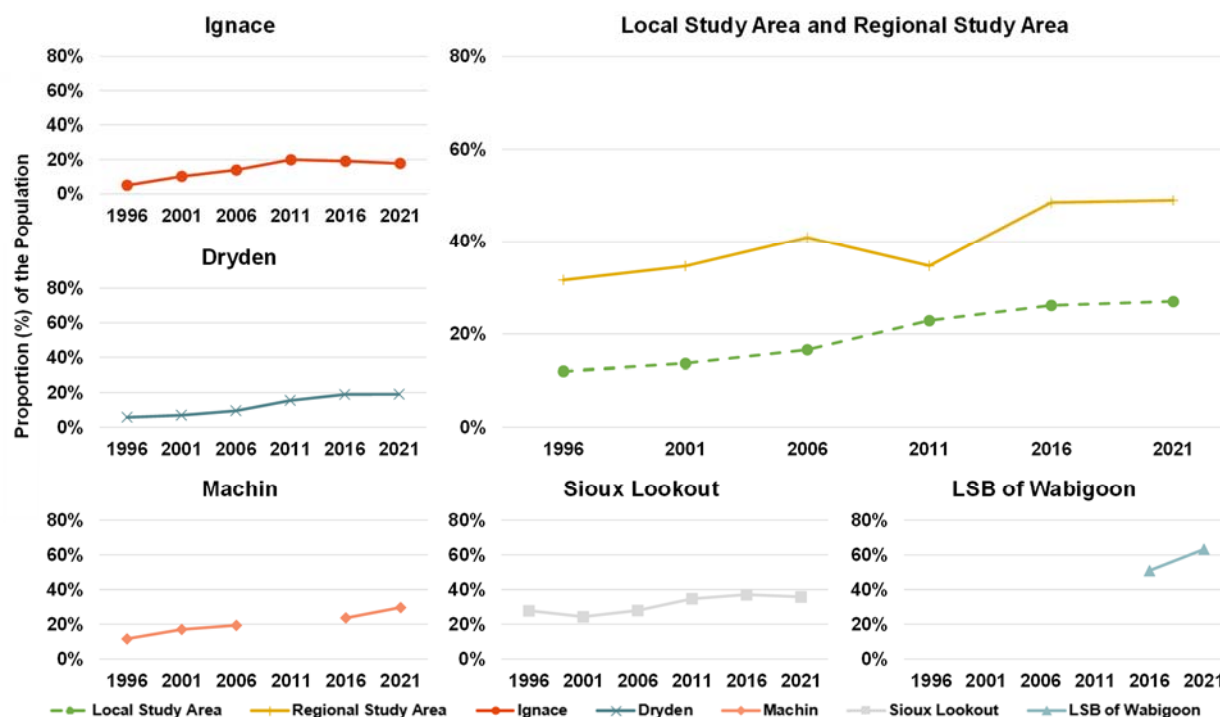
In 2021, one census family households represent 56% of households in the Local Study Area compared to 53% in the Regional Study Area. The proportion of one-person households is higher in the Local Study Area at 29% compared to 25% in the Regional Study Area. Notable observations of household types among the Local Study Area communities are as follows:

- The LSB of Wabigoon had the largest proportion of one census family households (61%). Machin and Ignace had the smallest proportion of one census family households among the Local Study Area communities (55% for both communities).
- Dryden had the largest proportion of one-person households (32%) and Sioux Lookout and the LSB of Wabigoon had the second largest proportion of one-person households (31% for both communities). Machin had the smallest proportion of one-person households (26%).
- Sioux Lookout also had the largest proportion of other census family households (10%). This can include multiple census family households and households with a census family and other people not a part of the census family.

### 2.2.4.3 Indigenous Identity

**Figure 2.2-12** shows the proportion of the population who identify as Indigenous in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area from 1996 to 2021. Indigenous identity refers to individuals who identify as a North American Indian (First Nation), Métis, Inuit, and/or those who reported as a Treaty Indian or Registered Indian and/or have membership in a First Nation or Indian Band (Statistics Canada 2022a).

Figure 2.2-12: Proportion of the Population Identifying as Indigenous in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 1996 to 2021<sup>1</sup>



**Source:** Statistics Canada 1998, 2002, 2007, 2013, 2017, 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 1996 to 2021. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon for 1996 to 2011 and Machin for 2011.

In the Regional Study Area, the proportion of the population who identify as Indigenous increased from 32% in 1996 to 49% in 2021. The Local Study Area also has a large proportion of the population who identify as Indigenous, albeit a smaller proportion compared to the Regional Study Area. The proportion of the population who identify as Indigenous in the Local Study Area increased from 12% 1996 to 27% in 2021. Notable trends in the proportion of the population who identify as Indigenous for the Local Study Area communities are as follows:

- The Indigenous identity population in Ignace increased from 5% in 1996 to 18% in 2021. The Indigenous identity population in Ignace represented the smallest proportion of the total population among the Local Study Area communities.
- The Indigenous identity population in Dryden increased from 6% in 1996 to 19% in 2021. Key person interviews in Dryden provided that the Indigenous identity population in 2021 was undercounted in the Census (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).



- The Indigenous identity population in the LSB of Wabigoon was 51% in 2016 and 63% in 2021. Among the Local Study Area communities, the LSB of Wabigoon had the largest proportion of the population who identify as Indigenous.
- The proportion of the population who identifies as Indigenous in Machin increased from 12% in 1996 to 30% in 2021.
- The proportion of the population who identifies as Indigenous in Sioux Lookout increased from 28% in 1996 to 36% in 2021. Sioux Lookout has the largest Indigenous identity population (2,090 people) among the Local Study Area communities and represents 49% of the Indigenous identity population in the Local Study Area.

The large Indigenous identity population in Sioux Lookout can be attributed to more Indigenous people moving to Sioux Lookout from communities north of Sioux Lookout. Sioux Lookout is an important service hub for northern communities with the presence of the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre, Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority, four tribal councils, and the Pelican Falls First Nation High School. Both health centres provide services to people in Sioux Lookout and the surrounding areas (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Dryden is also a service hub for Indigenous people, with a well-positioned Native Friendship Centre, and an increase in Indigenous service providers and existing service providers providing more Indigenous related services (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The large Indigenous identity populations in Dryden, Machin, and the LSB of Wabigoon have also been linked to members of nearby First Nation communities living in the community (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

The increase in the proportion and number of Indigenous peoples mirrors population trends noted by Statistics Canada (2021a), which projects the Indigenous identity population in Canada will increase at a faster rate than the non-Indigenous identity population through 2041. Reasons include a higher fertility rate, changes in self-reporting, and legislative changes. For example, legislative changes have allowed more individuals who live off-reserve to apply for Registered Indian status. The changes in self-reporting can be linked to response mobility, which is the change in one's response to a question overtime. For Indigenous identity reporting in Canada, research has found people with a certain degree of mixed ancestry was correlated to response mobility (O'Donnell and LaPointe 2019). By tracking individuals and their change in response to Indigenous identity questions between the 2006, 2011, and 2016 Censuses, it was found that people who previously identified as non-Indigenous were identifying as Indigenous in following surveys. There was also a portion who previously identified as Indigenous but identified as non-Indigenous in the following survey, but this proportion was smaller than the people who began to identify as Indigenous (O'Donnell and LaPointe 2019). The changes in responses over time may be influenced by factors such as a respondents' social environment, understanding of their family history, or growing pride in their Indigenous ancestry (IAWG October 06, 2021).

**Table 2.2-5** shows the proportion of the Indigenous identity population disaggregated by Indigenous identity for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area in 2021. Individuals who self-identify as Métis may not be a citizen or member in a Métis organization or settlement.

**Table 2.2-5: Indigenous Identity Breakdown for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 2021**

Indigenous Identity <sup>1</sup>	Ignace	Dryden	Machin	Sioux Lookout	LSB of Wabigoon	Local Study Area	Regional Study Area
First Nations	64%	52%	46%	90%	88%	73%	86%
Métis	36%	46%	54%	9%	6%	25%	13%
Inuk (Inuit)	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Multiple Indigenous Identities	0%	1%	0%	0%	6%	1%	0%
Not Included Indigenous Identities	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%

**Source:** Statistics Canada 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

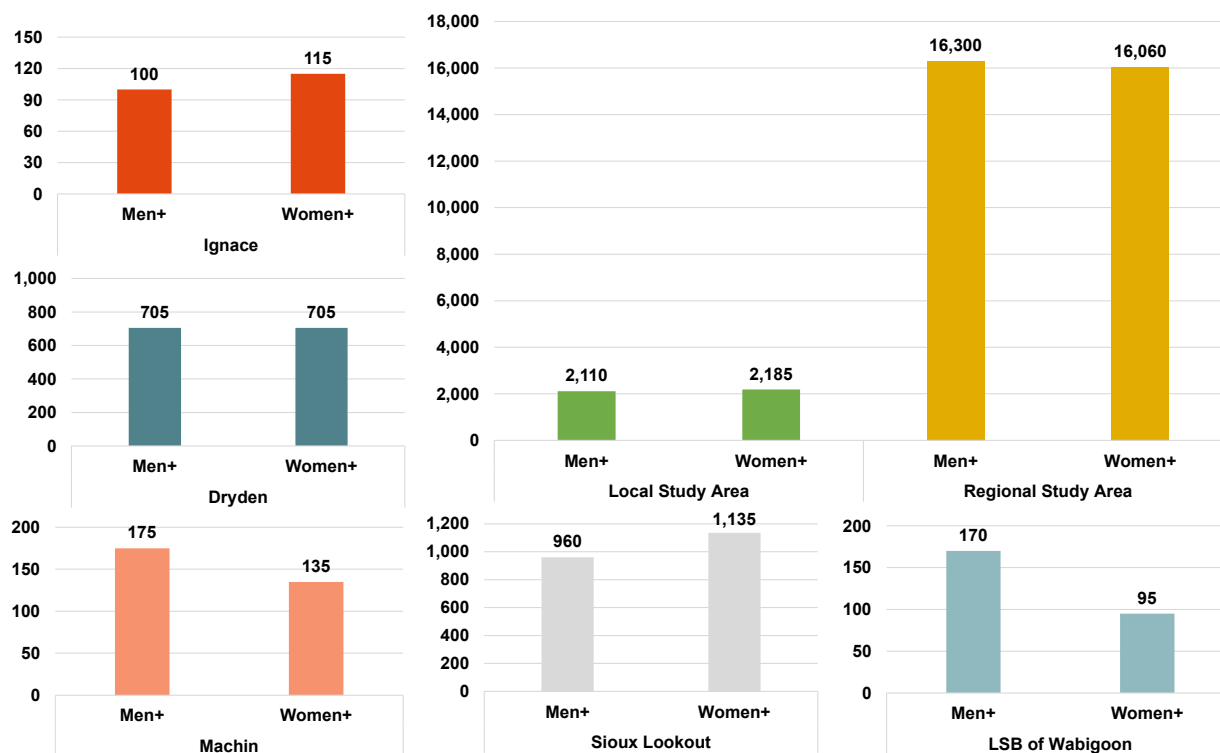
1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2021.

In 2021, Indigenous peoples primarily identified as First Nations or Métis in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area. The Local Study Area has a larger proportion of Métis relative to the Regional Study Area, with 25% of the Indigenous identity population identifying as Métis and 73% First Nations. In the Regional Study Area, of the Indigenous identity population, 86% identified as First Nations and 13% identified as Métis. Notable highlights of Indigenous people's Indigenous identity breakdown for the Local Study Area communities are as follows:

- Local Study Area communities have a larger proportion of Indigenous people who identify as First Nations compared to other Indigenous groups, excluding Machin, where there is a larger proportion of Métis people.
- Among the Local Study Area communities, Sioux Lookout and the LSB of Wabigoon have the largest proportion of their Indigenous identity population that identify as First Nations (90% in Sioux Lookout and 88% in the LSB of Wabigoon).
- Machin and Dryden have the largest proportion of their Indigenous identity population that identify as Métis (54% in Machin and 46% in Dryden).
- In Dryden, 1% of the Indigenous identity population identify as Inuk (10 people). This represents one third of the entire Inuk population across the Regional Study Area (30 people).

**Figure 2.2-13** shows the Indigenous identity breakdown by gender for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area in 2021.

Figure 2.2-13: Number of People Identifying as Indigenous by Gender in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 2021<sup>1</sup>



Source: Statistics Canada 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

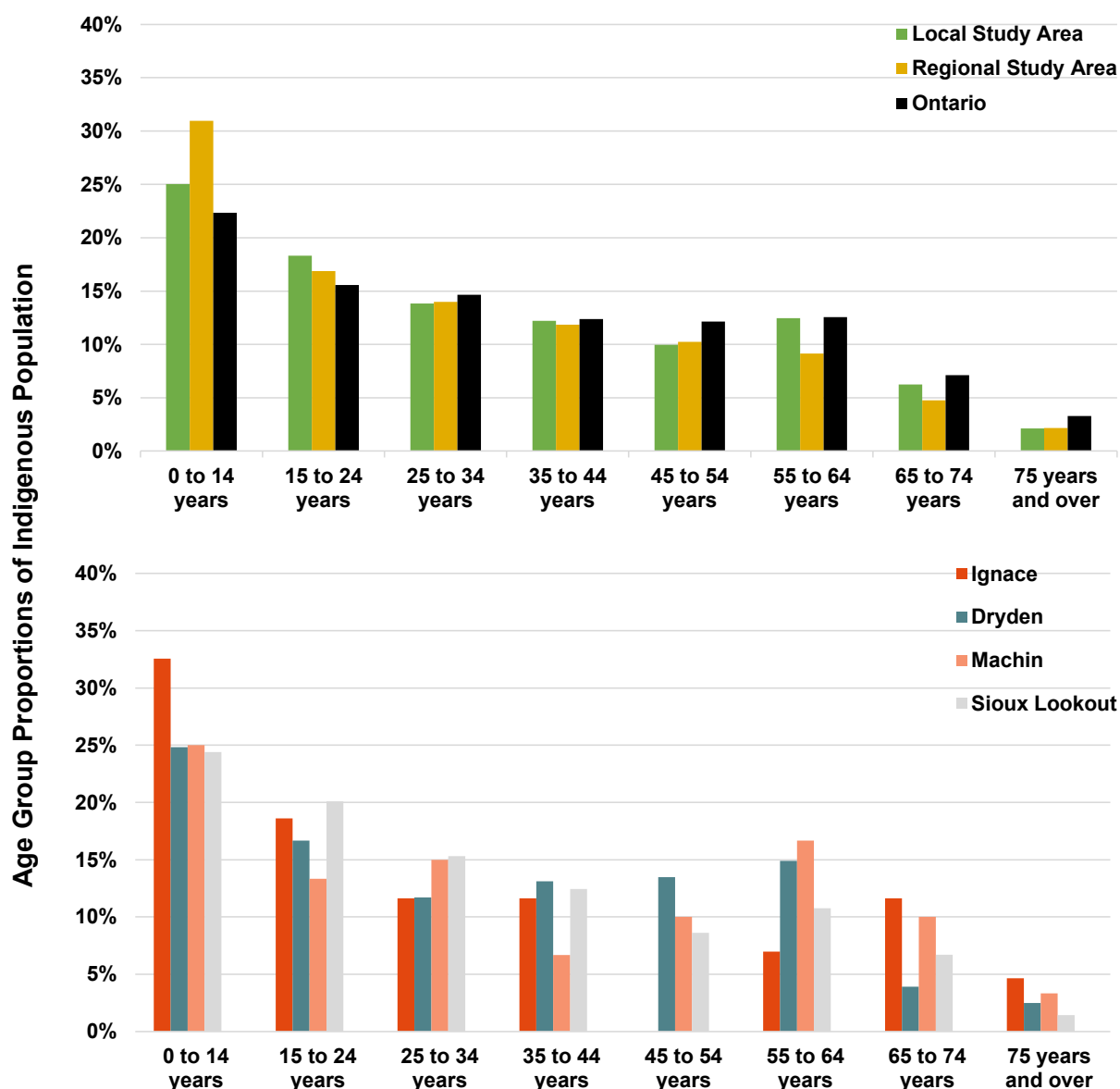
1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2021.

In the Local Study Area, there is a similar number of Indigenous men (2,110) compared to Indigenous women (2,185). In the Regional Study Area, there also is a similar number of Indigenous men (16,300) compared to Indigenous women (16,060). Notable highlights of Indigenous people’s breakdown by gender for the Local Study Area communities are as follows:

- Among the Local Study Area communities, Ignace and Dryden are the only communities which have a relatively equal number of Indigenous men and women.
- Sioux Lookout is the only community that had a larger number of Indigenous women (1,035) than Indigenous men (960) living in the community.
- Machin and the LSB of Wabigoon had a higher number of Indigenous men (175 in Machin and 170 in the LSB of Wabigoon) compared to Indigenous women (135 in Machin and 95 in the LSB of Wabigoon).

**Figure 2.2-14** shows the distribution of the Indigenous identity population by age cohorts for the Local Study Area, Regional Study Area, and Ontario for 2021.

Figure 2.2-14: Indigenous Identity Population Age Distribution for the Local Study Area, Regional Study Area, and Ontario, 2021<sup>1</sup>



Source: Statistics Canada 2023c. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon, LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2021.

The Indigenous identity population distribution by age cohort in the Regional Study Area has a larger proportion of the population under 25 years old and a smaller proportion of the population aged 55 and older when compared to the Local Study Area and Ontario. The Local Study Area has a slightly larger proportion of the population under 25 years old and slightly smaller

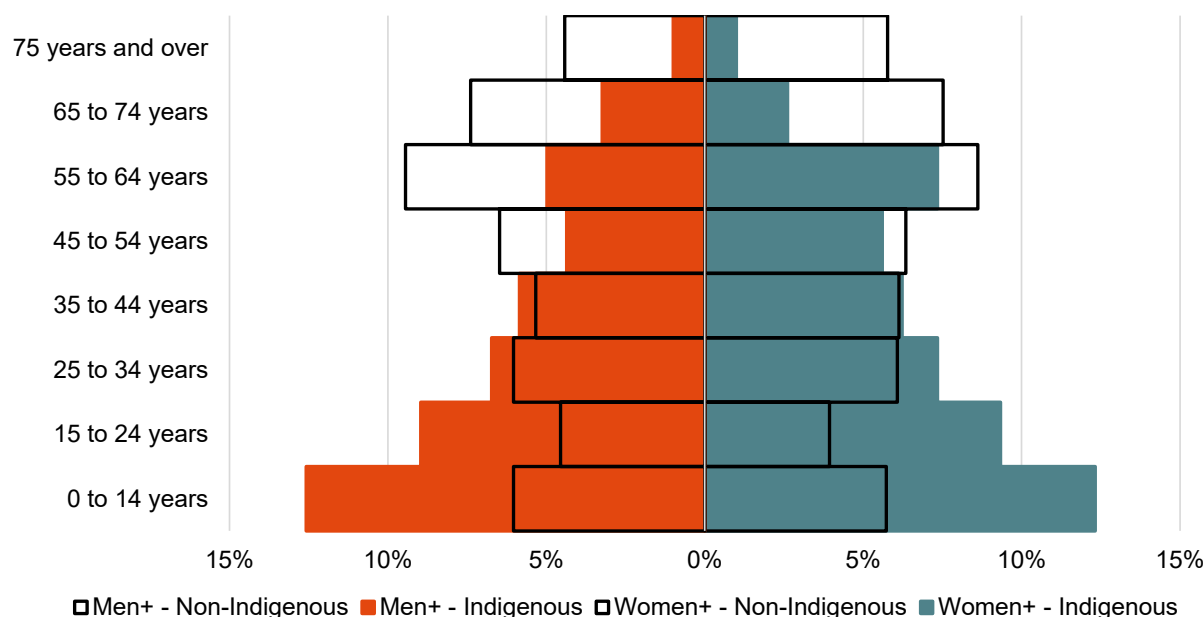
proportion of the population aged 55 and older when compared to Ontario. Notable observations for Local Study Area communities include:

- Among the Local Study Area communities, Ignace and Sioux Lookout have the largest proportion of Indigenous people who are under 25 years old; 51% in Ignace and 44% in Sioux Lookout. Machin has the smallest proportion of Indigenous people who are under 25 years old at 38%.
- Machin and Ignace have the largest proportion of Indigenous people who are 55 years and older; 30% in Machin and 23% in Ignace. Sioux Lookout has the smallest proportion of Indigenous people who are 55 years and older at 19%.

In the key person interviews it was noted that most of the smaller settlements and LSBs not reported on in detail by Statistics Canada are also home to Indigenous people and households. (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

**Figure 2.2-15** compares the proportion of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous identity populations by age and gender in 2021. The age cohorts are presented along the vertical axis with each block representing the proportion of men or women for the corresponding year. The horizontal axis presents the proportion of the total population with the population of women presented on the right side and the population of men on the left side.

**Figure 2.2-15: Population Age and Gender Distribution for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples in the Local Study Area, 2021<sup>1</sup>**



**Source:** Statistics Canada 2023c. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon, LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2021.

The Indigenous identity population in the Local Study Area was notably younger than the non-Indigenous identity population in 2021. For the Indigenous identity population, 43% (or 1,735 people) of the population were younger than 25 years old compared to 20% (or 2,315 people) for the non-Indigenous identity population. For the Indigenous identity population, 8% (or 315 people) of the population were 55 years old or older compared to 25% (or 2,870 people) for the non-Indigenous identity population.

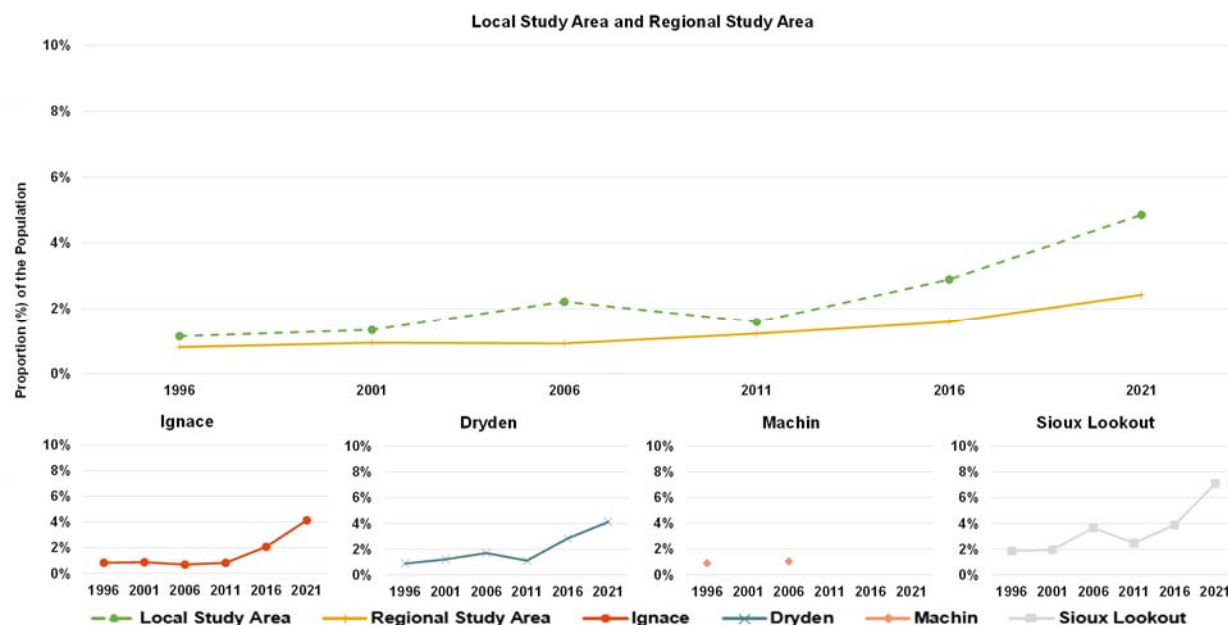
#### 2.2.4.4 Visible Minorities

**Figure 2.2-16** shows the proportion of the population who identify as visible minorities in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area from 1996 to 2021.<sup>9</sup> Visible minorities are persons other than Indigenous peoples who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour and includes: Chinese, South Asian, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Southeast Asian, Arab, West Asian, Korean, Japanese and others (Statistics Canada 2022a).

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<sup>9</sup> No visible minorities were reported to live in the LSB of Wabigoon in 2016 and 2021, and the 2011 NHS did not report on the LSB of Wabigoon.

Figure 2.2-16: Visible Minorities in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 1996 to 2021<sup>1</sup>



Source: Statistics Canada 1998, 2002, 2007, 2013, 2017, 2022a. Statistics Canada 2011 NHS. See

#### Appendix 2B Supplemental Data.

#### Notes:

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 1996 to 2021. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon for 1996 to 2011 and Machin for 2011.

The communities in the Local Study Area are largely Caucasian or Indigenous peoples; however, the visible minority population is increasing in all communities, excluding Machin. The growth of the visible minority population has been more pronounced in the Local Study Area compared to the Regional Study Area. In 1996, the visible minority population in the Local Study Area represented 1.1% (150 people) of the total population and increased to 4.9% (770 people) by 2021. The visible minority population had steadily doubled in both size and proportion in the Regional Study Area from 0.8% (515 people) of the total population in 1996 to 2.4% (1,600 people) in 2016. Notable observations among the Local Study Area communities include:

- The visible minority population in Ignace increased from 0.8% in 1996 to 4.1% in 2021. Since 2011, the visible minority population more than doubled from 0.8% of the total population (10 people) to 2.1% in 2016 (25 people) before doubling again to 4.1% in 2021 (50 people).
- The visible minority population in Dryden has increased from 0.9% (60 people) of the total population in 1996 to 4.1% (305 people) in 2021.
- The visible minority population in Sioux Lookout has increased from 1.9% (65 people) of the total population in 1996 to 7.1% (415 people) in 2021. The 415 visible minorities in Sioux Lookout represent over 25% of visible minorities in the Regional Study Area. As of 2021,



Sioux Lookout has the largest number and proportion of visible minorities among the Local Study Area communities.

- The visible minority population in Machin is small and fluctuates between 0 and 10 people, which is likely attributed to random rounding which randomly rounds population counts, excluding total population, up or down to a multiple of 5 or 10. Since 2006, there were 0 visible minorities reported in Machin.

Both Dryden and Sioux Lookout reported a material decline in the visible minority population from 2006 to 2011, followed by a material increase in the population from 2011 to 2016. Trends in the data, particularly related to the 2011 National Household Survey, should be interpreted with caution due to a shift from a mandatory to an optional response survey in that year which resulted in a higher non-response rate.

Currently, there are immigration programs in Ontario which include the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot program and the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program. The Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot Program takes place from November 2019 to February 2024, and was recently expanded to include communities in northwest Ontario for the Thunder Bay region including Ignace, Dryden, and Sioux Lookout (Thunder Bay CEDC n.d.; Government of Canada 2023). The Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot Program has resulted in over 400 candidates for permanent residence through nominations by the Thunder Bay CEDC and from 2019 to 2021 included 229 job offers, resulting in an additional 92 jobs in the local economy (Thunder Bay CEDC n.d.; Rocha 2023). The Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program is available to employers by facilitating the immigration of managerial, professional, and skilled foreign workers and international students to address resourcing needs (Government of Ontario 2023h). The Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program is available across Ontario and awards higher scores for job offers and places of study within northern Ontario (Government of Ontario 2023h). The Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program has grown annually and issued a total of 9,750 nominations to successful applicants in 2022 (Government of Ontario 2021j, 2022i).

#### 2.2.4.5 Gender Identity

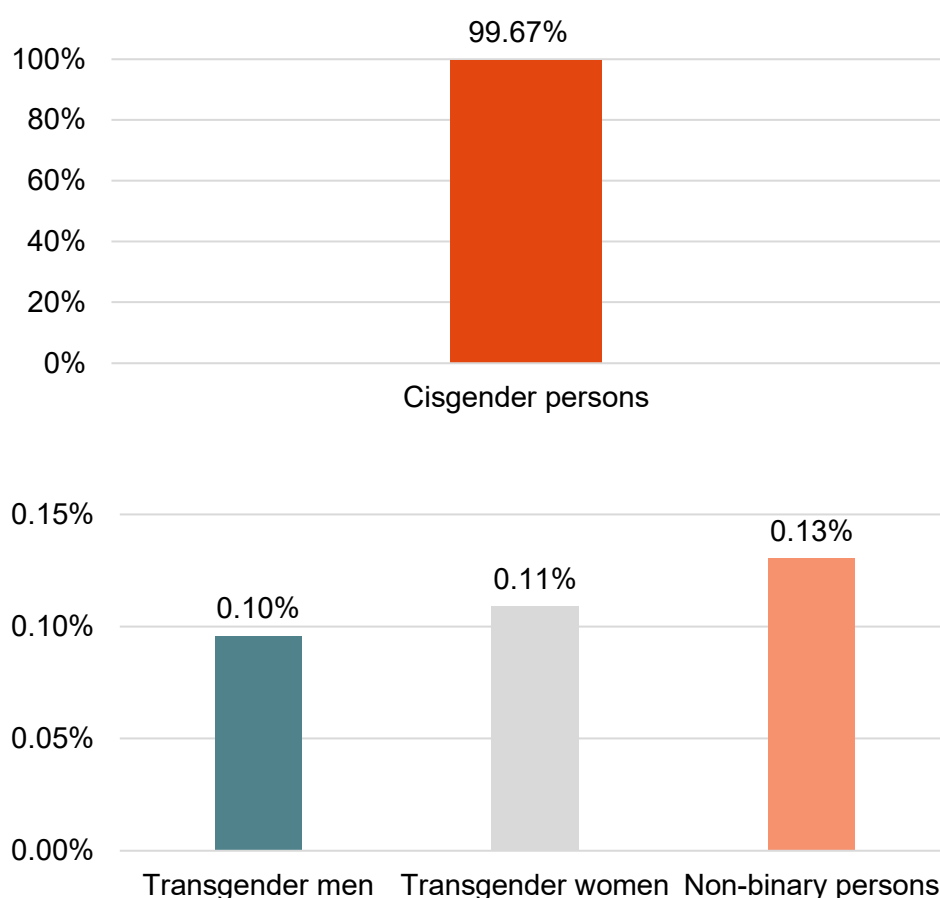
In 2021, Statistics Canada began to report on gender identity in the Census of Population, as opposed to sex assigned at birth in previous censuses. Gender identity is an individual's personal and social identity as a man, woman, or non-binary person (Statistics Canada 2022a). See **Section 2.1.2.1.1** for limitations of comparisons between gender and sex over time. Gender identity is reported as men+ (i.e., cisgender men, transgender men, and some non-binary persons) and women+ (i.e., cisgender women, transgender women, and some non-binary persons). A cisgender person is somebody whose gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth and a transgender person is somebody whose gender does not correspond to their sex assigned at birth (Statistics Canada 2022b). A non-binary person is an individual who is not exclusively a man or woman (e.g., fluid, Two-Spirit). Transpersons and non-binary persons represent a small proportion of Canadians and for confidentiality reasons data are only available at the national, provincial, and Census Metropolitan Area levels. The Thunder Bay Census Metropolitan Area is the nearest Census Metropolitan Area to the Local Study Area. Only information on Ontario is reported in this section.

The shift in reporting on gender identity and collecting information on a person's sex assigned at birth and gender identity reflect the evolving acceptance and understanding of gender identity (Statistics Canada 2022b). The reporting of gender identity is to provide information to public

decision makers, employers, providers of health care and social services, and educators to better meet the needs of all Men+ and Women+, including gender diverse people. Gender identity is typically formed early in life. People generally use gender stereotypes in their behaviours, attitudes, and dress to express their gender identity (Government of Quebec 2023). Ensuring people are free of stereotypes promotes gender diversity and the value of equality between men and women.

**Figure 2.2-17** shows the proportion of gender identity for the population aged 15 years and older in Ontario, in 2021.

### Figure 2.2-17: Gender Identity for the Population 15 Years and Older in Ontario, 2021<sup>1</sup>



**Source:** Statistics Canada 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for Local Study Area or Regional Study Area.

In 2021, over 99% of the population in Ontario are cisgender persons (i.e., gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth). In Ontario, approximately 1 in every 300 people identify as a transgender or non-binary person. These proportions are similar to trends in Canada with

approximately 1 in every 300 Canadians identified as transgender or non-binary in 2021 (Statistics Canada 2022b).

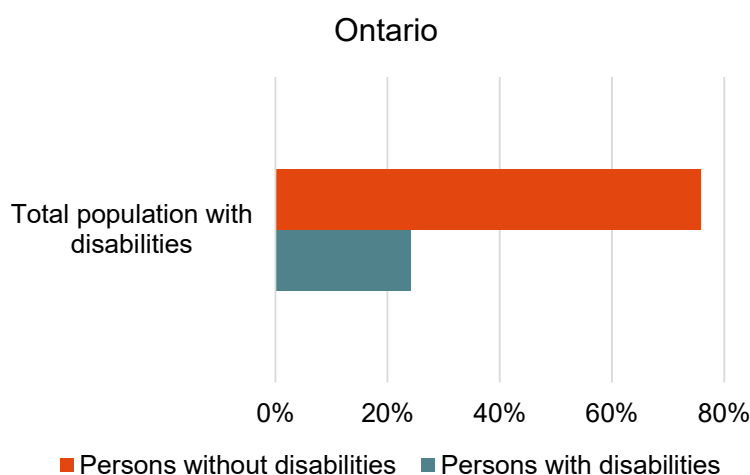
Within the Local Study Area, key person interviews noted that 2SLGBTQQIA+ (two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, and asexual) population is larger than people think and many experience small community isolation and challenges with mental health (GBA+ Workshop 2023). The Rainbow Alliance Dryden organization meets at least once a month to provide support, education, and awareness for the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community and plan for Pride month each June (Youthline n.d.). In Sioux Lookout, some parents sought out to form a 2SLGBTQQIA+ parent support group to provide help and educate residents on topics such as gender and sexual identity (Bonello 2020).

### 2.2.4.6 Persons with Disabilities

A disability may be present from birth, from an accident, or develop over time. There are a variety of disabilities, both visible and not visible, which include physical, cognitive, social, and learning disabilities and disorders, hearing, vision, mental health, environmental sensitivities, and other conditions (OHRC n.d). Mental health is the state of psychological and emotional well-being of an individual (Government of Canada 2020). A cognitive disability is identified as a disability which can impair learning, memory, developmental, or other aspects of cognitive capacity (Statistics Canada 2018). Persons with a disability represent a small proportion of Canadians and for confidentiality reasons data are only available at the national, provincial, and Census Metropolitan Area levels. Information is not available from Statistics Canada for the Local or Regional Study Areas. Only information on Ontario is reported in this section.

**Figure 2.2-18** shows the proportion of the population ages 15 years and older in Ontario with a disability in 2017. Persons with disabilities are identified through disability screen questions, and only individuals who report a limitation in their day-to-day activities are identified as having a disability (Statistics Canada 2018).

**Figure 2.2-18: Disabilities for the Population Ages 15 Years and Older in Ontario, 2017<sup>1</sup>**



**Source:** Statistics Canada (2017) Canadian Survey on Disability. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

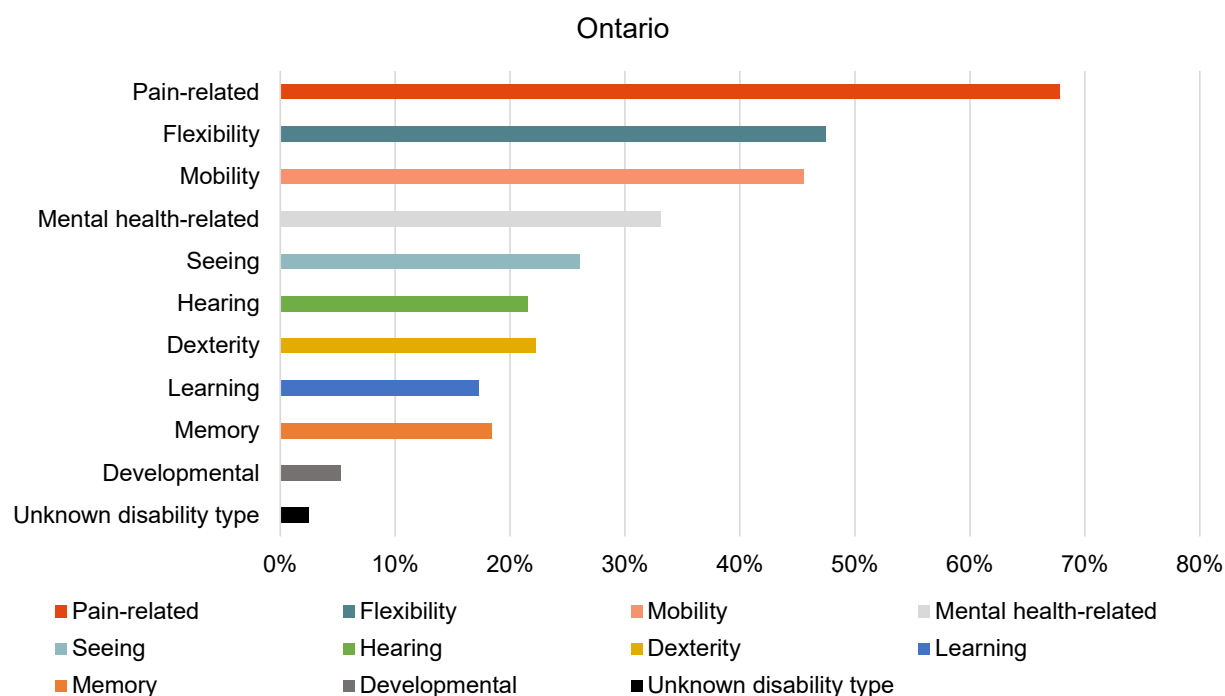
**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the Local Study Area or Regional Study Area.

In Ontario, about 24% of the population have a disability which limits their day-to-day activities and 76% of the population do not have a disability. For people 65 years and older, about 43% of people have a disability (Statistics Canada 2018).

**Figure 2.2-19** shows the breakdown of disabilities, limitations, and disorders for people 15 years and older with disabilities in Ontario in 2017. A person with a disability may have multiple conditions and limitations which results in the types of limitations totaling to over 100%.

**Figure 2.2-19: Disability Types of Limitations for the Population Ages 15 Years and Older in Ontario, 2017<sup>1</sup>**



**Source:** Statistics Canada (2017) Canadian Survey on Disability. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the Local Study Area or Regional Study Area.

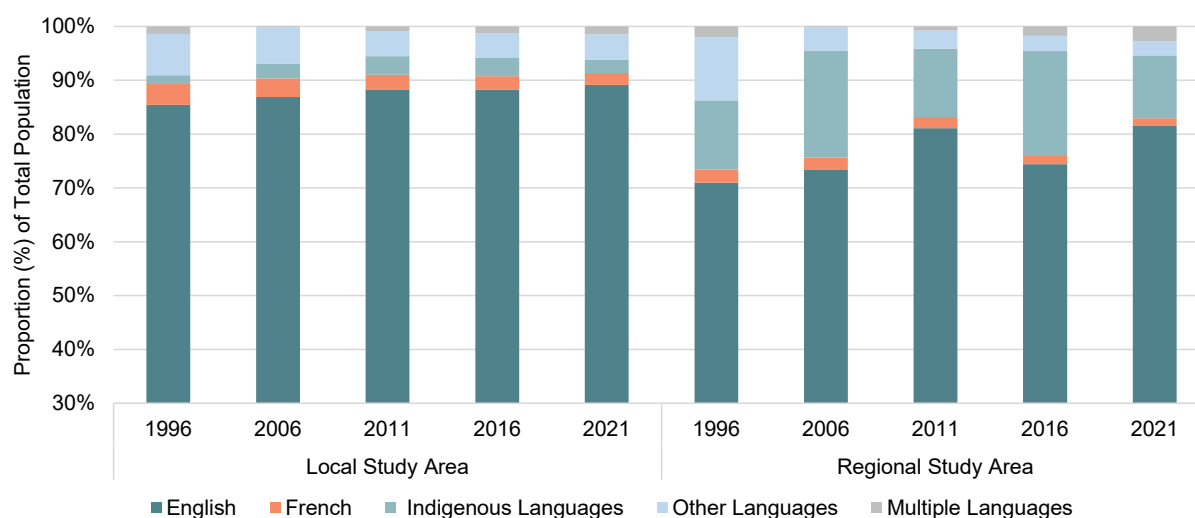
In 2017, most people with disabilities in Ontario experienced limitations in their everyday life due to challenges related to pain (68%), flexibility (48%), mobility (46%), and mental health (33%). People with disabilities related to sight (26%), hearing (22%), and dexterity (22%) account for over 20% of the population with disabilities. Cognitive (or mental) disorders can include disabilities related to learning (17%), memory (18%), and developmental (5%) are the least common disabilities in Ontario.

**2.2.4.7 Language**

**Figure 2.2-20** shows the proportional breakdown of mother tongue for the total population for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area from 1996 to 2021. Mother tongue is defined as the first language(s) learned at home in childhood and still understood by the individual at the

time of the census (Statistics Canada 2022a). The most common mother tongues are English, French, and Indigenous languages. Indigenous languages are spoken throughout the Regional Study Area, and to a lesser extent in the Local Study Area<sup>10</sup>. Multiple languages refer to individuals who learned more than one language in childhood and still understand them at the time of the census.<sup>11</sup>

**Figure 2.2-20: Mother Tongue in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 1996 to 2021<sup>1</sup>**



**Source:** Statistics Canada 1998, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017, 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 1996 to 2021. Data were not available for the LSB of Wabigoon for 1996 to 2006.

Individuals whose mother tongue is English represent the largest proportion of the population in the Regional Study Area and Local Study Area. Notable observations in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area are as follows:

- In the Local Study Area, individuals whose mother tongue is English represent 88.2% (13,990 people) of the population in 2021, which increased from 84.7% (11,080 people) in 1996. In the Regional Study Area, individuals whose mother tongue is English represent 80.5% (53,105 people) of the total population in 2021, which increased from 70.5% (44,660 people) in 1996.

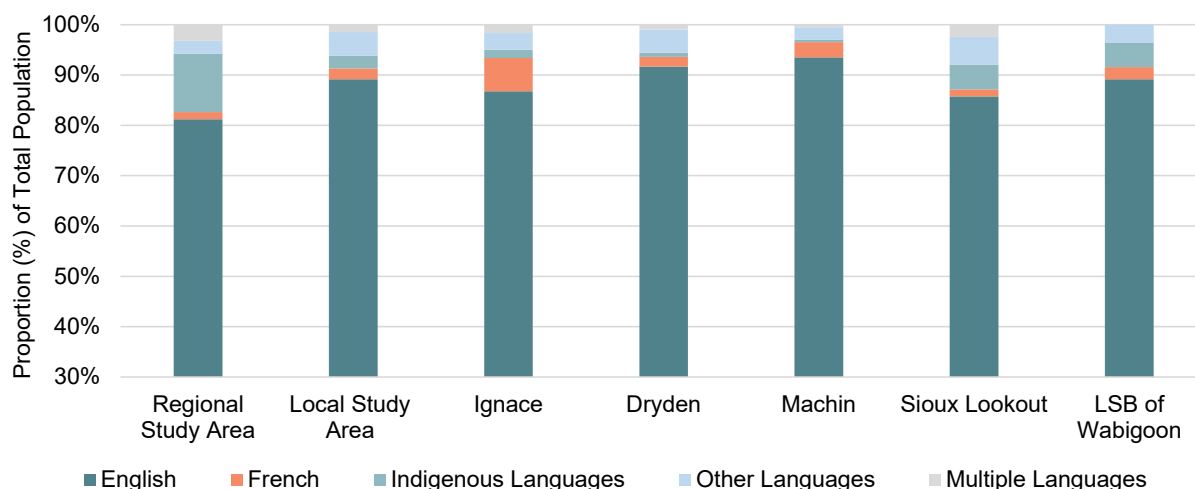
<sup>10</sup> Statistics Canada defines Indigenous language as a non-official language. Other languages are also classified as non-official languages (Statistics Canada 2022a).

<sup>11</sup> Multiple languages includes: English and French; English and non-official languages; French and non-official languages; and English, French, and non-official languages.

- In the Local Study Area, individuals whose mother tongue is an Indigenous language increased slightly from 1.6% (210 people) of the population in 1996 to 2.5% (390 people) in 2021.
- In the Local Study Area, individuals who speak another language decreased from 7.6% (1,000 people) of the population in 1996 to 4.5% (685 people) in 2021.
- The second largest proportion of mother tongue for the Regional Study Area is for Indigenous languages. The share of people whose mother tongue is an Indigenous language decreased from 12.7% (8,065 people) in 1996 to 11.5% (7,590 people) of the total population in 2021.
- There was a material decrease in the proportion of people whose mother tongue is an Indigenous language from 2016 to 2021 for both the Local Study Area (3.4% in 2016 to 2.5% in 2021) and Regional Study Area (19.2% in 2016 to 11.5% in 2021).
- In the Local Study Area, there was a decrease in the proportion of the population whose mother tongue is French from 3.8% (500 people) in 1996 to 2.1% (340 people) in 2021. There was a similar decrease in the Regional Study Area from 2.4% (1,535 people) in 1996 to 1.5% (960 people) in 2021. The decrease in the proportion of French speaking residents may be attributed to dissatisfaction of health care services, diversity and inclusion services, and transportation as found in a study completed by the Northern Policy Institute (2022).

**Figure 2.2-21** shows the proportional breakdown of the total population by mother tongue for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area in 2021.

**Figure 2.2-21: Mother Tongue in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 2021<sup>1</sup>**



**Source:** Statistics Canada 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2021.

In the Local Study Area, 88.2% (13,990 people) of the population mother tongue is English, other languages represent 4.6% (735 people) of the population and Indigenous languages represent 2.5% (390 people) of the population in 2021. In the Regional Study Area, 80.5%

(53,105 people) of the population mother tongue is English and 11.5% (7,590 people) mother tongue is an Indigenous language. In the Local Study Area, 2.1% (340 people) of the population mother tongue is French compared to 1.5% (960 people) in the Regional Study Area. Notable observations about mother tongue among the Local Study Area communities are as follows:

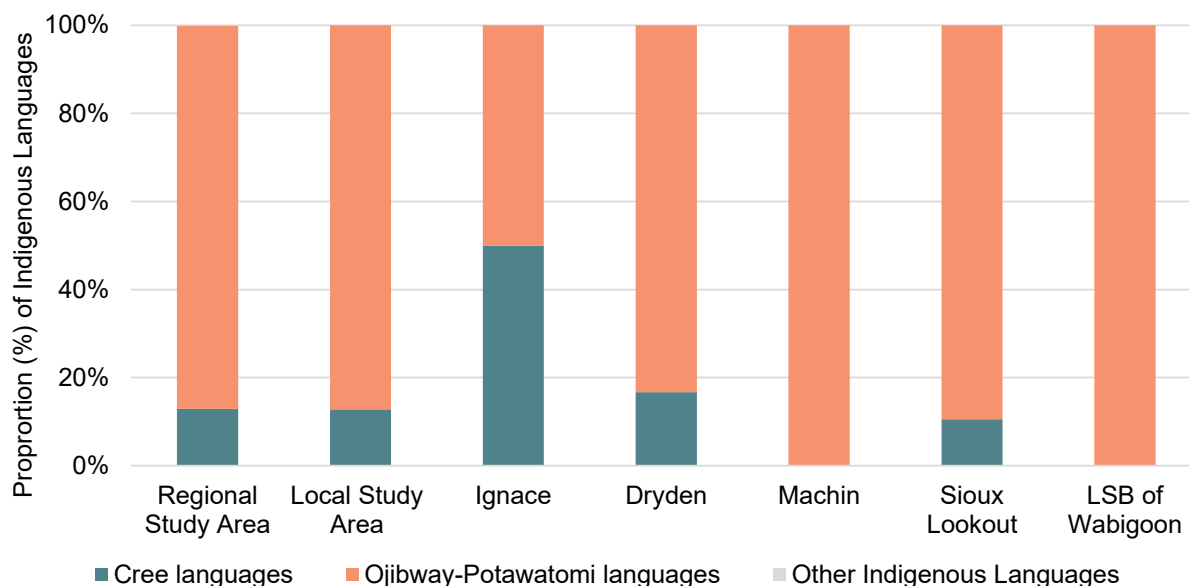
- In Ignace, 87.1% (1,050 people) of the populations mother tongue is English and 6.6% (80 people) is French. Ignace has the largest proportion of residents whose mother tongue is French among Local Study Area communities, which represents 23.5% of the population whose mother tongue is French in the Local Study Area and 8.3% in the Regional Study Area.
- In Dryden, 90.3% (6,995 people) of the populations mother tongue is English, 1.9% (140 people) is French, and 4.5% (355 people) is another language.
- In Machin, 92.9% (940 people) of the population mother tongue is English, 3.0% (30 people) is French, and 2.5% (25 people) is another language. Machin has the largest proportion of residents whose mother tongue is English among Local Study Area communities.
- In Sioux Lookout, 85.0% (4,965 people) of the population mother tongue is English, 4.9% (285 people) is an Indigenous language, and 5.5% (320 people) is another language. Sioux Lookout has the largest proportion of residents whose mother tongue is an Indigenous language or other language. Sioux Lookout also has the lowest proportion of residents whose mother tongue is English among Local Study Area communities. In Sioux Lookout, 2.4% (140 people) of the population mother tongue consists of multiple languages, which is the highest among the Local Study Area communities.
- In the LSB of Wabigoon, 88.3% (370 people) of the population mother tongue is English, 4.8% (20 people) is an Indigenous language, and 3.6% (15 people) is another language.

Ignace is one of 26 communities across Ontario which are currently designated as having a notable francophone population and included in the *French Language Services Act* (Government of Ontario 1990). The act ensures that governmental services are offered in French, excluding hospitals and nursing homes services.

**Figure 2.2-22** shows the proportional breakdown of the population whose mother tongue is an Indigenous language for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area in 2021.



Figure 2.2-22: Mother Tongue as an Indigenous Language in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 2021<sup>1</sup>



**Source:** Statistics Canada 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2021.

The proportion of the population whose mother tongue is an Indigenous language is composed of about 13% Cree languages and 87% Ojibway-Potawatomi languages for both the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area in 2021. Of the people whose mother tongue is an Indigenous language, Ojibway-Potawatomi languages are the most prominent, and range from 50% in Ignace to 100% in the LSB of Wabigoon and Machin.

**2.2.4.8 Religion**

**Table 2.2-6** shows the breakdown of religion in the Local Study Area communities, Local Study Area, and Regional Study Area for 2021. Religion refers to an individual’s self-identification as having a connection or affiliation with any religious group, body, or other religiously defined community or system of belief. For infants and children, religion refers to the specific religious group or denomination of the household they are being raised in. Persons without a religious connection or affiliation can self-identify as atheist, agnostic, or humanist, or can provide another applicable answer (Statistics Canada 2022a).

**Table 2.2-6: Religion in the Regional Study Area, Local Study Area, and Local Study Area Communities, 2021**

Religion	Region <sup>1</sup>						
	Ignace	Dryden	Machin	Sioux Lookout	LSB of Wabigoon	Local Study Area	Regional Study Area
Christian	58.4%	55.3%	56.4%	49.6%	53.8%	53.5%	47.2%
Traditional (North American Indigenous) Spirituality	1.3%	0.3%	0.0%	2.9%	0.0%	1.3%	5.9%
Other	0.0%	1.7%	0.0%	2.3%	0.0%	1.6%	1.3%
No Religious Affiliation	38.7%	42.5%	44.1%	45.2%	46.2%	43.4%	45.6%

**Source:** Statistics Canada 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2021.

In the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area most of the population identify as being a part of a Christian religious group or having no religious affiliation. For the Local Study Area 53.5% (8,385 people) belong to a Christian religious group, 43.4% (6,805 people) do not have any religious affiliation, and 1.3% (205 people) reported a traditional (Indigenous) spirituality affiliation. For the Regional Study Area 47.2% (30,705 people) belong to a Christian religious group, 45.6% (29,650 people) do not have any religious affiliation, and 5.9% (3,825 people) reported a traditional (Indigenous) spirituality affiliation. There is a similar proportion of people who do not have any religious affiliation in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area. There is a materially higher proportion having a traditional spirituality affiliation in the Regional Study Area compared to the Local Study Area. Notable observations among the Local Study Area communities are as follows:

- Ignace had the largest proportion of Christians at 58.4% (695 people) and the lowest proportion of individuals with no religious affiliation at 38.7% (460 people).
- Sioux Lookout had the largest proportion of the population who reported a traditional spirituality affiliation at 2.9% (170 people). Sioux Lookout also has the lowest proportion of the population who belong to a Christian religious group at 49.6% (2,860 people).
- The LSB of Wabigoon had the largest proportion of the population who do not have any religious affiliation at 46.2% (240 people).

**Table 2.2-7** provides a breakdown of the proportion of the population who belong to a Christian religious group in 2021.

**Table 2.2-7: Christian Religious Groups in the Regional Study Area, Local Study Area, and Local Study Area Communities, 2021**

Religion	Region <sup>1</sup>						
	Ignace	Dryden	Machin	Sioux Lookout	LSB of Wabigoon	Local Study Area	Regional Study Area
Anglican	10.1%	7.5%	7.2%	7.8%	13.5%	8.0%	9.2%
Catholic	23.5%	21.9%	18.5%	23.2%	20.2%	22.3%	17.4%
United Church	3.4%	9.2%	8.7%	4.5%	3.8%	6.8%	5.7%
Other Christian	19.3%	16.7%	21.0%	13.9%	16.3%	16.1%	14.8%

**Source:** Statistics Canada 2022a. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2021.

Anglicans and Catholics represent the two largest proportions of Christian religious groups in the Local Study Area communities, Local Study Area, and Regional Study Area. In the Local Study Area, 22% of the population are Catholic (3,490 people). This is higher than the proportion of the population who are Catholics in the Regional Study Area at 17% (11,340 people). There is a similar proportion of people who are Anglican or are a part of the United Church in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area. Notable highlights of affiliations to Christian religious groups in the Local Study Area communities are as follows:

- Ignace and Sioux Lookout had the largest proportion of the population who are Catholics at about 23% (280 people in Ignace and 1,340 people in Sioux Lookout).
- LSB of Wabigoon had the largest proportion of the population who are Anglicans at 14% (70 people) in 2021.
- Dryden had the largest proportion of the population who are a part of the United Church at 9% (665 people).
- Machin had the largest proportion of the population who are a part of the other Christian religious groups 21% (205 people).

### 2.2.5 Vulnerable Populations

Existing conditions reflect historical and current power structures that have "*shaped society and created inequalities*" (IAAC 2021). Vulnerable populations are individuals who are at greater risk of experiencing adverse effects because of "*disparities in physical, economic, and social status when compared with the dominant population*" (Patrick et al 2018; Rukmana 2014). The terms "vulnerable populations" and "priority populations" are often used interchangeably by academics and service funders/providers and refer to groups that experience a disproportionate burden of inequities, which result in differences in socio-economic outcomes. According to the National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health, "*vulnerable populations are groups and*

*communities at a higher risk for poor health as a result of the barriers they experience to social, economic, political and environmental resources, as well as limitations due to illness or disability"* (NCCDH 2022). Social inequality and social disadvantage results when resources and access to opportunities and supports required are not evenly distributed. Equity means that all people can reach their full potential and should not be at a disadvantage from reaching it due to social position or other socially determined circumstance such as ability, age, culture, ethnicity, family characteristics, gender, language, race, religion, sex, social class, or socio-economic status (NCCDH 2013).

The process for identifying vulnerable populations in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area is described in detail in **Appendix 2A Detailed Methods** and was an iterative process that included a review of secondary information, discussions with the IAWG, workshops, and reflections from key person interviews. Key person interviews determined four priority vulnerable populations key groups, which are described in **Table 2.2-8**. It is acknowledged that there may be specific populations within each of the groupings identified in **Table 2.2-8** (e.g., youth, seniors, Indigenous people). Socio-economic conditions (**Section 4.2.4**), physical and social environment (**Section 4.2.5**), and health behaviors (**Section 4.2.6**) are components of social determinants of health which are discussed in detail throughout **Section 4.2**.

Table 2.2-8: Vulnerable Populations

Vulnerable Population	Rationale for Inclusions
Low socio-economic status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals who are below the low-income threshold must manage the added stress of financial instability to their everyday life and well-being.</li> <li>• Lower income means a larger portion of income must be spent on shelter costs, food, and clothes.</li> <li>• Reduced purchasing power when prices rise (e.g., from a growing economy) can result in shelter costs becoming unaffordable. This can also influence disposable income and lead to food insecurity and lack of means to afford other essential goods.</li> <li>• People with lower socio-economic status tend to rely heavily on services. They are sensitive to changes in services which leads to them being in a precarious position as service providers adjust their services (GBA+ Workshop 2023).</li> </ul>
Individuals experiencing homelessness or are precariously housed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing availability and the rising value of homes has been identified as a concern in communities in the Local Study Area (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).</li> <li>• Increased housing costs may further exacerbate challenges in acquiring suitable, adequate, or affordable housing.</li> <li>• Certain population groups are stereotyped leading to difficulties in finding available housing or rental options (GBA+ Workshop 2023).</li> </ul>
Individuals experiencing barriers to employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of higher levels of educational attainment can be a barrier to obtaining employment and advancing to higher levels of employment (GBA+ Workshop 2023).</li> <li>• Years of experience required to enter the workforce can be a barrier for someone without formal work experience, or individuals who have been out of work for a long time, as employers are less inclined to hire those with gaps in work experience.</li> <li>• The transition to a structured work environment can be challenging for individuals who have been unemployed or underemployed as it may not be what an individual is accustomed to.</li> <li>• Life skills and self-reliance are essential and without them individuals may be unable to obtain employment or seek further education due to an inability to complete basic tasks (e.g., read, write, complete a resume).</li> </ul>
Individuals experiencing mental health and/or substance dependence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic instability can cause significant mental health problems (Government of Canada 2013).</li> <li>• Increases to disposable income can result in increased substance use (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).</li> <li>• Increases to cost of living and housing can exacerbate mental health challenges.</li> <li>• Mental health and addictions services are already facing capacity constraints (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).</li> </ul>

People may be categorized in one to all four vulnerable population groups. Specific sub-groups of the population are more likely to fall within the vulnerable population groups, and include: youth,

seniors, single parents, and Indigenous people. Some service providers have observed that Indigenous people are overrepresented in each of the categories relative to their proportion of the total population (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023; GBA+ Workshop 2023).

The vulnerable populations identified for inclusion in the Baseline Studies and the services they rely on are discussed throughout the social cultural, economic, and health pillars. **Table 2.2-9** describes where more detailed descriptions can be found.

**Table 2.2-9: Vulnerable Populations in the Baseline Studies**

Vulnerable Population Groups	Relevant Sections
Low Socio-economic Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social services are discussed in <b>Section 2.4.9</b>.</li> <li>• Health system is discussed in <b>Section 4.3</b>.</li> <li>• Household and personal incomes are discussed in <b>Section 3.6.2</b>.</li> <li>• Educational attainment is discussed in <b>Section 3.3.2</b>.</li> <li>• Community demographics are discussed in <b>Section 2.2.4</b>.</li> <li>• Socio-economic conditions of social determinants of health are discussed in <b>Section 4.2.4</b>.</li> </ul>
Individuals Experiencing Homelessness or are Precariously Housed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing and dwellings are discussed in <b>Section 2.4.7</b>.</li> <li>• Housing affordability is discussed in <b>Section 3.6.2</b>.</li> <li>• Social determinants of health for housing are discussed in <b>Section 4.2.5.3.2</b> and for homelessness are discussed in <b>Section 4.2.5.3.3</b>.</li> </ul>
Barriers to Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barriers to employment are discussed in <b>Section 3.2.3</b>.</li> <li>• Employment services are discussed in <b>Section 3.2.3</b>.</li> <li>• Labour force characteristics are discussed in <b>Section 3.2.2</b>.</li> <li>• Educational attainment is discussed in <b>Section 3.3.2</b>.</li> <li>• Socio-economic conditions of social determinants of health are discussed in <b>Section 4.2.4</b>.</li> </ul>
Mental Health and Substance Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health is discussed in <b>Section 4.4</b>.</li> <li>• Health services are discussed in <b>Section 4.3</b>.</li> <li>• Social determinants of health for alcohol and substance use are discussed in <b>Section 4.2.6.5</b>.</li> </ul>

### 2.2.5.1 Low Socio-economic Status

Low socio-economic status is a measure of an individual's combined economic and social status. Higher socio-economic status tends to be positively associated with better health (Baker 2014). Socio-economic status encompasses not only income, but educational attainment, financial security, and subjective perceptions of social status and social class (Cutter 1995). Sub-groups who have been identified as more likely to have low socio-economic status include seniors, youth, single parents, and Indigenous people (GBA+ Workshop 2023).

**Table 2.2-10** shows household income statistics including median household income and low-income measures for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, in 2021.

### Table 2.2-10: Household Income Statistics for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 2020

<p>Median household income, used as a comparison across communities and whether certain subgroups of the population should be included as priority low-socio economic vulnerable populations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Study Area<sup>1</sup> \$86,891</li> <li>• Regional Study Area \$78,500</li> <li>• Ontario \$91,000</li> <li>• Ignace \$69,000</li> <li>• Dryden \$82,000</li> <li>• Machin \$77,500</li> <li>• Sioux Lookout \$102,000</li> <li>• LSB of Wabigoon \$58,800</li> </ul>
<p>Low-income measure after-tax (LIM-AT) is a low-income approximation which accounts for economies of scale (each additional member in a family result in less need for more income [e.g., 4 to 5 dependents require \$7,000 more and 5 to 6 dependents require \$5,000 more]).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Study Area 10.4%</li> <li>• Regional Study Area 19.7%</li> <li>• Ontario 10.1%</li> <li>• Ignace 13.2%</li> <li>• Dryden 10.1%</li> <li>• Machin 10.4%</li> <li>• Sioux Lookout 8.0%</li> <li>• LSB of Wabigoon 21.2%</li> </ul>

**Source:** Statistics Canada Census 2022a

**Note:** 1. The median income for the Local Study Area is the weighted average of median incomes for the Local Study Area communities.

People with low socio-economic status are more likely to access services within the Local Study Area. See **Section 2.4.9** for information on social services, **Section 4.3** for information on the health system, **Section 2.4.7** for information on housing, **Section 3.6.2.2** for household income and low-income measures, **Section 3.3.2** for information on educational attainment, and **Section 3.2.3** for information on employment services. Some factors and their implications that can cause or exacerbate low socio-economic status include:

- Lack of transportation: people who do not have access to transportation will face challenges obtaining employment and accessing social or health services;
- Limited access to higher education: an issue linked with low socio-economic status in the Local Study Area is the need for people, in particular youth, to migrate out of the Local Study Area to obtain higher levels of education (GBA+ Workshop 2023). Although there are satellite Confederation College campuses in Dryden and Sioux Lookout, people must travel to Thunder Bay or Winnipeg to have access to a wider variety of educational programs;



- Housing availability; and
- Challenges obtaining and retaining employment: there are not many opportunities outside of the forestry sector, hospitals, and service industry which limits the variety of employment opportunities (GBA+ Workshop 2023).

### 2.2.5.2 Individuals Experiencing Homelessness or are Precariously Housed

An individual without a permanent address or residence, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means, and ability to acquire it are considered homeless (KDSB 2021). An individual or family whose current housing situation does not meet public health and safety standards are considered to be precariously housed (Gaetz et al 2012). For more information on housing and dwellings see **Section 2.4.7**. Homelessness and precariously housed are not static concepts and being unhoused or precariously housed may be temporary. In the Regional Study Area, it may be seasonal due to seasonal employment or lower levels of income in slower months.

In 2018, the Kenora District School Board completed its first homelessness enumeration and completed the second homelessness enumeration in 2021. **Table 2.2-11** shows the number of homeless people in the Local Study Area communities in 2018 and 2021.

**Table 2.2-11: Homeless People in Local Study Area Communities, 2018 and 2021**

2018	2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ignace – 5 people;</li> <li>• Dryden – 67 people;</li> <li>• Machin – 1 person; and</li> <li>• Sioux Lookout – 66 people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ignace – 4 people;</li> <li>• Dryden – 37 people;</li> <li>• Machin – 0 people; and</li> <li>• Sioux Lookout – 36 people.</li> </ul>

**Source:** KDSB 2021a, 2022.

Between 2018 and 2021, the Kenora District School Board reported a decrease in the number of homeless people, most notably in Dryden and Sioux Lookout. Despite the decrease in homelessness, key person interviews identified that the number of homeless people is understated. This could be due to the transient and cyclical nature of homelessness (GBA+ Workshop 2023). Sub-groups of the population who are more likely to be homeless or precariously housed include:

- Women experiencing domestic violence;
- People with substance dependence;
- People with criminal records and challenges with obtaining employment;
- Youth;
- Indigenous peoples (specifically young men and single mothers); and
- Seniors.

Some of the challenges related to homelessness and the precariously housed include (GBA+ Workshop 2023):

- Lack of affordable housing and rental options (Cost of living is discussed in **Section 3.6.3** and housing is discussed in **Section 2.4.7**);
- The effects of racism and stereotypes on a landlord's willingness to rent out a space to an Indigenous person or a person who may have a substance dependence;
- Youth aging out of Child and Family Services who no longer have supports, may lack life skills, and are on their own; and
- Inflation and rising housing and rental prices.

### 2.2.5.3 Barriers to Employment

People may experience barriers to employment because of a lack of educational attainment, years of experience, familiarity with a structured work environment/workplace culture, and life skills and self-reliance. Within the Local Study Area, the need for reliable transportation and leaving the community to obtain most forms of postsecondary education are common barriers to employment. People who have not obtained a high school certificate or equivalent face additional barriers to employment (GBA+ Workshop 2023). Indigenous youth who must leave their community to obtain high school and postsecondary education are more likely to feel isolated because they are separated from their family and may have a lack of community supports (GBA+ Workshop 2023). Other factors that can lead to or exacerbate barriers to employment include:

- Life circumstance (e.g., poverty, lack of family support, mental health, substance dependence);
- Quality of education received;
- Criminal record;
- Lack of culturally sensitive human resources policies;
- Challenges with understanding technology;
- Lack of cultural supports;
- Housing; and
- Affordability of postsecondary education.

Barriers to employment can affect all demographics but sub-groups which are more likely to face barriers include: youth, seniors, Indigenous people, newcomers, and people with disabilities.

**Table 2.2-12** shows employment and education statistics for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area from 2020 to 2022.

**Table 2.2-12: Employment and Education Statistics for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, 2020-2022**

No high school attainment in 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Study Area 20.9%</li> <li>• Regional Study Area 30.9%</li> <li>• Ontario 15.3%</li> <li>• Ignace 23.1%</li> <li>• Dryden 19.7%</li> <li>• Machin 22.4%</li> <li>• Sioux Lookout 20.8%</li> <li>• LSB of Wabigoon 30.8%</li> </ul>
Postsecondary educational attainment in 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Study Area 47.6%</li> <li>• Regional Study Area 40.1%</li> <li>• Ontario 57.5%</li> <li>• Ignace 39.5%</li> <li>• Dryden 47.2%</li> <li>• Machin 42.9%</li> <li>• Sioux Lookout 52.3%</li> <li>• LSB of Wabigoon 29.7%</li> </ul>
EI and/or CERB recipients in the Regional Study Area <sup>1</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 140 males</li> <li>○ 90 females</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1,140 males</li> <li>○ 860 females</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 420 males</li> <li>○ 280 females</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Source:** Statistics Canada Census 2022a, 2023.

**Notes:** 1. EI benefits statistics were suspended from March to September 2020 due to people accessing CERB (Statistics Canada 2023). Similarly, in 2021, there were a large number of workplace closures which resulted in a higher number of EI recipients. The totals presented in the table are higher for 2021 compared to 2020 and 2022 due to CERB payments.

#### 2.2.5.4 Mental Health and/or Substance Use

Mental health is the state of psychological and emotional well-being of an individual (Government of Canada 2020). Addictions is the problematic use of a substance (The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health n.d.). Individuals who experience mental health and/or substance use issues may require both social and health supports. Mental illnesses are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior and can include mood disorders, schizophrenia, eating disorders, problematic gambling, and substance dependency (Government of Canada 2022a). It is important to recognize that somebody with a mental illness could have good mental health as mental health refers to a person's state of well-being. **Table 2.2-13** shows self-reported mental

health for residents of Ontario and the Northwestern Health Unit (see **Section 4.3** for further detail).<sup>12</sup>

**Table 2.2-13: Mental Health Statistics in the Northwestern Health Unit and Ontario**

Rating of Mental Health	<p>Perceived mental health fair or poor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7.3% under the Northwestern Health Unit in 2017/18 and 8.3% in 2019/20.</li> <li>• 7.9% in Ontario in 2017/18 and 9.8% in 2019/20.</li> </ul> <p>Perceived mental health very good or excellent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 67.3% under the Northwestern Health Unit in 2017/18 and 64.7% in 2019/20.</li> <li>• 69.1% in Ontario in 2017/18 and 64.7% in 2019/20.</li> </ul> <p>Perceived life stress (most days quite a bit or extremely stressful):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20.2% under the Northwestern Health Unit in 2017/18 and 18.2% in 2019/20.</li> <li>• 21.6% in Ontario in 2017/18 and 20.9% in 2019/20.</li> </ul> <p>Population with mood disorder (reported that they have been diagnosed by a health professional as having a mood disorder, such as depression, bipolar disorder, mania, or dysthymia):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10.6% under the Northwestern Health Unit in 2017/18 and 11.9% in 2019/20.</li> <li>• 9.2% in Ontario in 2017/18 and 9.5% in 2019/20.</li> </ul>
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**Source:** Statistics Canada 2022b. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

Perceived life stress, mental health, and individuals with mood disorders have similar proportions for the Northwestern Health Unit compared to the Ontario average. There was a slight increase in the proportion of people who report fair or poor mental health in both Ontario and in the Northwestern Health unit. Within the Northwestern Health Unit there was also a slight increase in the proportion of people with a mood disorder.

**Table 2.2-14** shows drug and alcohol use statistics in the Northwestern Health Unit, the Northwest Local Health Integration Network, and Ontario.

<sup>12</sup> The Northwestern Health Unit includes communities in the Kenora and Rainy River Census Divisions and the Unorganized Kenora and Rainy River areas. The North West Local Health Integration Network catchment area includes communities in the Kenora, Rainy River, and Thunder Bay Census Divisions and the Unorganized Kenora, Thunder Bay, and Rainy River areas.

**Table 2.2-14: Drug and Alcohol Use Statistics in the North West Local Health Integration Network, Northwestern Health Unit, and Ontario**

Heavy Alcohol Use	<p>Self-reported heavy alcohol drinking in 2015-16:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25.3% of residents under the North West Local Health Integration Network</li> <li>• 26.2% of residents under the Northwestern Health Unit</li> <li>• 18.5% of residents in Ontario</li> </ul>
Heavy Opioid Use	<p>Cases of opioid-related emergency department visits reported in 2011, 2016, and 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 47.7 in 2011, 46.8 in 2016, and 224.3 per 100,000 individuals in 2021 under the North West Local Health Integration Network</li> <li>• 34.4 in 2011, 34.3 in 2016, and 173.2 per 100,000 individuals in 2021 under the Northwestern Health Unit</li> <li>• 22.1 in 2011, 31.7 in 2016, and 114.0 per 100,000 individuals in 2021, in Ontario</li> </ul> <p>Cases of opioid-related hospitalizations visits reported in 2011, 2016, and 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 33.3 in 2011, 22.5 in 2016, and 35.1 per 100,000 individuals in 2021 under the North West Local Health Integration Network</li> <li>• 25.8 in 2011, 27.0 in 2016, and 23.2 per 100,000 individuals in 2021 under the Northwestern Health Unit</li> <li>• 12.1 in 2011, 13.6 in 2016, and 16.3 per 100,000 individuals in 2021, in Ontario</li> </ul> <p>Cases of opioid-related deaths reported in 2011, 2016, and 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8.9 in 2011, 8.1 in 2016, and 63.8 per 100,000 individuals in 2021 under the North West Local Health Integration Network</li> <li>• 4.9 in 2011, 6.1 in 2016, and 37.8 per 100,000 individuals in 2021 under the Northwestern Health Unit</li> <li>• 4.2 in 2011, 6.2 in 2016, and 19.0 per 100,000 individuals in 2021, in Ontario</li> </ul>

**Source:** Public Health Ontario 2018, 2022.

Approximately 25% of residents self-reported engaging in heavy alcohol drinking in the North West Local Health Integration Network and the Northwestern Health Unit. Between 2011 and 2021 there was a material increase in the rate of opioid-related emergency department visits and deaths under the North West Local Health Integration Network, Northwest Health Unit, and in Ontario. The rate of hospitalizations has fluctuated for each region but has not increased to the same extent as the rate of emergency department visits and deaths. In 2021, under the North West Local Health Integration Network, 224.3 per every 100,000 individuals visited an emergency department for an opioid-related emergency and 173.2 per every 100,000 individuals

under the Northwestern Health Unit. The Northwestern Health unit reported a 52% greater opioid-related emergency department visits compared to Ontario. This much larger rate may seem high, but due to the small population in the Local Study Area communities and northwestern Ontario relative to the entire Ontario population, the reported hospitalizations are much smaller compared to Ontario. The rates might be higher compared to the Ontario average, but due to the small population, the number of visits is not very many in Ignace and the Northwestern Health Unit; however, due to the nature of services available locally any increase in the number of incidents would be considered noteworthy. Participants in the GBA+ workshop noted that drug use is increasing. A disproportionate number of youth and Indigenous people, in particular those who have lower socio-economic status, are using illicit substances and partaking in heavy alcohol use. Participants commented that the lack of programs to provide guidance to youth in drug awareness and coping with life transitions (e.g., a new job) might have contributed to the rise in substance use (GBA+ Workshop 2023). More information on alcohol and substance use are described in **Section 4.2.6.5**.

## 2.2.6 Population Projections

### 2.2.6.1 Population Projections Overview

Typical drivers of population change are fertility rates, mortality rates and net migration. These drivers are affected by multiple factors including the age structure of the current population, government initiatives (e.g., programs to promote migration such as the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot), and economic opportunities. Economic opportunities also require consideration of multipliers as the creation of new jobs may generate additional population growth to meet increased demand for services.

### 2.2.6.2 Baseline Projections

This section describes potential future population trends without the Project in Ignace and other Local Study Area communities, referred to here as the baseline population trend. Projections were completed to reflect three different scenarios to present the possible range of population growth in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area as follows:

- The **optimistic growth scenario** assumes major resource projects in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area moving forward and a substantial amount of in-migration, which is higher than the historical average.
- The **potential growth scenario** assumes a modest amount of growth due to major resource projects in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area moving forward.
- The **conservative growth scenario** assumes a slight downturn in the natural resource industries.

Initiatives such as Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot Program expanding to smaller communities could improve net-migration into the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, which is projected to be modest over the projection period. Similarly, if programs were established to help relocate new immigrants from nearby Rural Northern Immigration Pilot communities (e.g., Kenora and Thunder Bay) could improve net-migration and economic growth in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area.

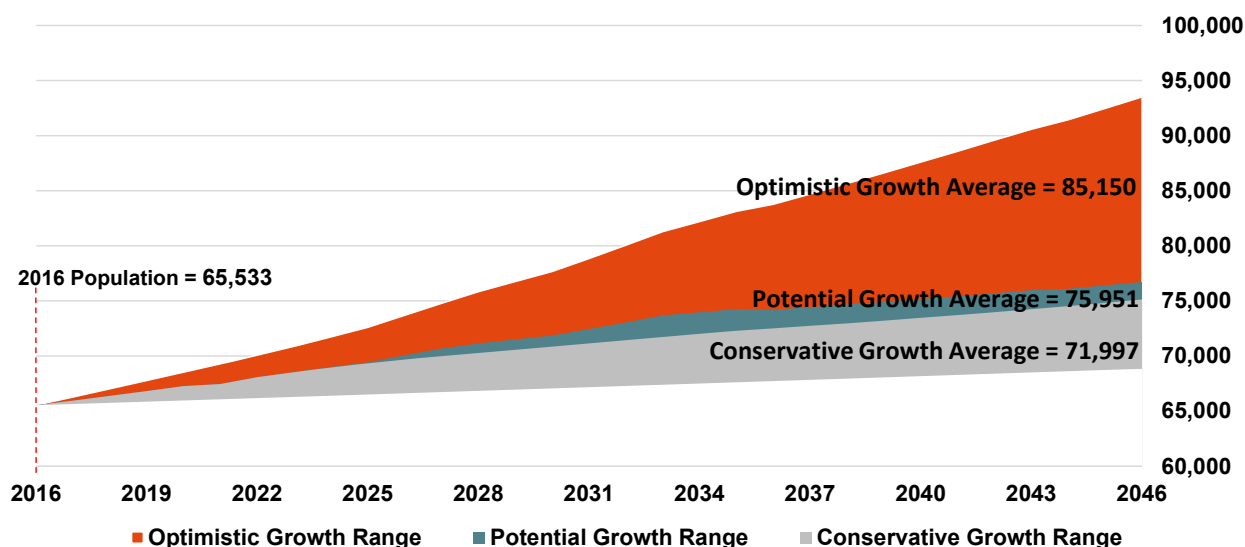
The Regional Study Area is forecast to grow at a higher rate for each scenario due to a younger age structure (see **Section 2.2.4.1**) compared to the Local Study Area communities. The

median age in the Regional Study Area was 36.5 years old in 2016 which is materially lower than the median age of 43.5 in the Local Study Area and 52.5 years old in Ignace (the highest median age among Local Study Area communities) (Statistics Canada 2017). One trend that supports the possibility of the Regional Study Area experiencing substantial growth over the projection period is the presence of a large Indigenous identity population (49%; 31,800 residents in 2016). Statistics Canada (2021a) projects the Indigenous identity population in Canada will increase at a faster rate than the non-Indigenous identity population through 2041 due to a higher fertility rate and younger age structure. Additional information on population projections prepared for the Regional Study Area, Local Study Area, and Ignace are discussed in **Appendix 2A Detailed Methods** and **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

### 2.2.6.2.1 Regional Study Area

The Regional Study Area population in 2016 was 65,533 residents (Statistics Canada 2017). **Figure 2.2-23** shows three potential population projections for the Regional Study Area for 2016 to 2046.

**Figure 2.2-23: Regional Study Area Baseline Population Projection, 2016 to 2046<sup>1</sup>**



**Source:** Statistics Canada 2017. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Projections were prepared by InterGroup Consultants Ltd.

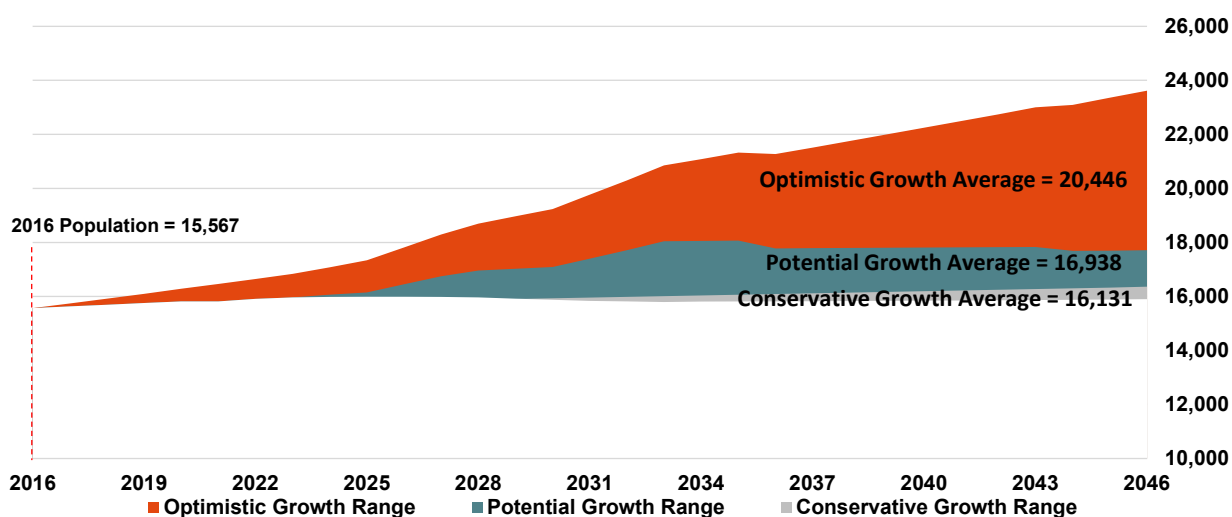
The forecasts project population growth in the Regional Study Area over the next thirty years ranging from 68,849 in 2046 for the conservative growth scenario to 93,541 in 2046 for the optimistic growth scenario. The optimistic growth range uses the Ontario historical annual average growth rate, which was 1.16%. The optimistic growth scenario serves as an upper bound to population growth and would require substantial in-migration to reach this level of population.



### 2.2.6.2.2 Local Study Area

The Local Study Area population in 2016 was 15,567 residents (Statistics Canada 2017). **Figure 2.2-24** shows the population projections for the Local Study Area for 2016 to 2046.

**Figure 2.2-24: Local Study Area Baseline Population Projection, 2016 to 2046<sup>1,2</sup>**



**Source:** Statistics Canada 2017. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

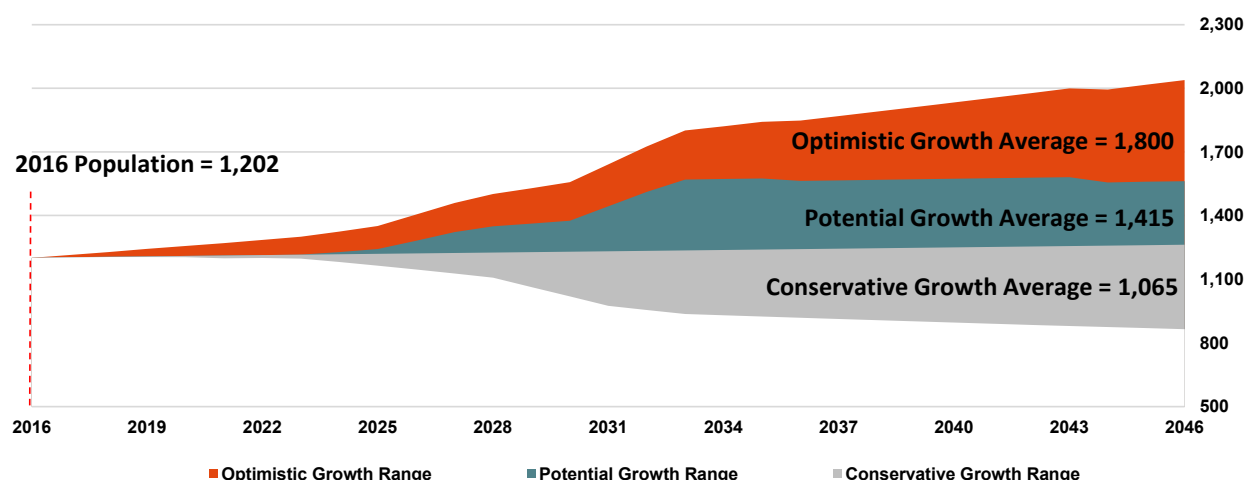
1. Projections were prepared by InterGroup Consultants Ltd.
2. Data were not available for the LSB of Melgund, Valora, Silver Dollar, and Upsala for 2016.

The forecasts project a growth in population in the Local Study Area over the next thirty years ranging from 15,905 in 2046 for the conservative growth scenario to 21,373 in 2046 for the optimistic growth scenario. The optimistic growth range serves as an upper bound to population growth and would require substantial net-migration and economic growth not captured in the potential growth range to reach this level of population.

### 2.2.6.2.3 Township of Ignace

The population in Ignace in 2016 was 1,202 residents (Statistics Canada 2017). **Figure 2.2-25** shows the population projections for Ignace for 2016 to 2046.

Figure 2.2-25: Ignace Baseline Population Projection, 2016 to 2046<sup>1</sup>



**Source:** Statistics Canada 2017. See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

**Notes:**

1. Projections were prepared by InterGroup Consultants Ltd.

The forecasts project a change in population in Ignace over the next thirty years ranging from a decrease to 866 in 2046 for the conservative growth scenario to an increase to 2,039 in 2046 for the optimistic growth scenario. The optimistic growth range serves as an upper bound to population growth and would require substantial net-migration and economic growth not captured in the potential growth range to reach this level of population.

#### 2.2.6.2.4 Other Local Study Area Communities

Other communities in the Local Study Area have had population projections calculated to help with municipal planning.

The Dryden Community Capacity Study (Explorer Solutions 2022) contains a set of population projections to help determine the future capacity and needs of municipal services and infrastructure. Dryden's population in 2021 was 7,388 and project a range of population growth models with a lower bound of 6,466 due to an economic downturn to an upper bound of 8,536 due to the Treasury Metals Goliath Gold Complex mining project coming online. The upper bound assumes a migration of 150 residents due to the Treasury Metals mining project and a family multiplier of 2.0 and an economic multiplier of 1.52, which is overlaid on the historical Kenora Census Division growth rate of 0.432%. The economic downturn reflects a contraction of economic development in the City and an aging workforce in Dryden, which would lead to a further decline in the Dryden labour pool.

The Municipality of Machin had a population of 971 in 2016. The Machin 2017-2022 Strategic Plan (Crupi Consulting 2017) included a ten-year population projection to 946 residents by 2026. This decline would represent an average annual decline of -0.26% due to an aging population

and lack of available housing (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

The Municipality of Sioux Lookout had a population of 5,272 in 2016. The 2021 Sioux Lookout Community Profile (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2021) included a population projection to 6,378 residents by 2031. This growth in population would represent an average annual growth of 1.28%, which is greater than the historical growth of 1.16% for Ontario from 1996 to 2021.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on population changes are not fully understood yet.

### **2.2.7 Summary of Population and Demographics**

The population in the Local Study Area has grown by a modest amount from 12,878 in 1991 to 15,864 in 2021. The growth in population in Dryden and Sioux Lookout contributed to the modest increase in population, which were partially offset by a decrease in population in Ignace. The growth in population in the Local Study Area has been slightly more pronounced with an average annual growth rate of 0.7% compared to the marginal growth in the Regional Study Area from 58,748 in 1991 to 66,000 in 2021 (or an average annual growth rate of 0.4%).

Population projections were completed for the Regional Study Area which projects a population of 71,997 for the conservative growth scenario average, 75,951 for the potential growth scenario average, and 85,150 for the optimistic growth scenario average by 2046. In the Local Study Area, the population is forecast to increase to 16,131 for the conservative growth scenario average, 16,938 for the potential growth scenario average, and 20,446 for the optimistic growth scenario average in 2046. In each region, to reach close to the upper bound, population growth would require substantial net-migration and economic growth.

The population in the Local Study Area communities is aging, with a declining proportion of youth. Sioux Lookout is a notable exception where the population has not aged to the same extent as other Local Study Area communities and there is a larger proportion of youth. The younger population in Sioux Lookout is similar to the age structure in the Regional Study Area.

Family structure has changed over time in the Local Study Area with a decrease in the number of married couple families and the number of families with children living at home. The decrease in the number of families with children living at home is attributed to an aging population and the challenges of attracting younger families to the region. It has also been noted that many youth leave the communities after completing high school to obtain a postsecondary education and do not always come back (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; GBA+ Workshop 2023). Most households in the Local Study Area are single census families or one-person households. The large proportion of one-person households may be attributed to the large senior population.

There has been an increase in the Indigenous identity population in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area. In the Local Study Area over 70% of the Indigenous identity population identify as First Nation, and the remainder are Métis. In the Regional Study Area over 85% of the Indigenous identity population identifies as First Nation, 13% identify Métis, and a small number (less than 1%) of people identify as Inuit. The Indigenous identity populations among the Local Study Area communities are generally younger compared to the total population.

The visible minority population has increased materially in the Local Study Area since 2011. The increase is due in large part to changes the visible minority population in Sioux Lookout, but notable increases have also occurred in Dryden and Ignace.

The language that residents first learn and still understand is primarily English in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area. There is a small portion of the population who first learned an Indigenous language or French. The most common Indigenous languages spoken by residents are Ojibway-Potawatomi languages, followed by Cree languages.

In the Local Study Area, over half the population are a part of a Christian religious group and a large proportion do not have any religious affiliation.

Vulnerable population groups identified in the Local Study Area include people of low socio-economic status, individuals experiencing homelessness or are who are precariously housed, individuals experiencing barriers to employment, and individuals experiencing mental health or substance dependence. Within these groups, there are a disproportionate number of seniors, youth, Indigenous peoples, and single parents who fall in one of these vulnerable population groups (GBA+ Workshop 2023).

## 2.3 COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

### 2.3.1 Overview and Approach

The topics described in community and culture are history, including Indigenous history; community character and heritage; goals and plans; community well-being; food security; income inequality; and the connection people feel to their natural environment in the study areas. These topics are intended to provide an idea of each community's character and culture by providing context on their past and present, residents' perspectives on their community, as well as community successes, challenges, and opportunities. This section is not a depiction of First Nation and Métis community and culture, rather, Indigenous history is included to give credence to the influence of Indigenous peoples on the land prior to colonization.

Spatial boundaries for community and culture include a Local Study Area and Regional Study Area. Spatial boundaries are discussed in further detail in **Section 2.1.1**.

The Regional Study Area is the Kenora Census Division. The Regional Study Area is inclusive of Indigenous communities and reserves. The Local Study Area includes the Township of Ignace, City of Dryden, Municipality of Machin, Municipality of Sioux Lookout, and the unincorporated communities and Local Services Boards near Ignace and Dryden, including the Local Services Board of Melgund, Upsala, Valora, Silver Dollar, and the Local Services Board of Wabigoon.

Temporal boundaries for community and culture include that the description of community history goes back as far as the early 17<sup>th</sup> century when the first European explorers arrived in the northwestern Ontario area. The temporal boundaries for Indigenous peoples and the communities they comprise cannot be interpreted with the same temporal boundaries as non-Indigenous peoples/communities. Further information on temporal boundaries for community and culture is provided in **Section 2.1.1**.

Data collection for **Section 2.3** community and culture considered federal, provincial, and municipal government reports and data, including municipal community profiles, community safety and well-being plans, strategic plans, and official plans, the Ignace and Area Community Studies, in particular the Community and Culture Study (SMM & InterGroup 2022), as well as publicly available reports and online sources (e.g., community websites). Primary data collected through key person interviews and workshops was used to support and confirm information collected through secondary sources with community knowledge, include local perspectives, and fill gaps in information. Primary data is particularly prevalent in sub-sections **Section 2.3.3** community character and heritage, **Section 2.3.6** food security, and **Section 2.3.8** connection to the natural environment. Further information on data collection, including desktop research and primary data collection, is provided in **Section 2.1.2**. Publicly available information on Wabigoon Village and Dinorwic was limited and has been included in subsections when available. Publicly available information on Indigenous history was searched and relevant results were included. This may not be representative of the perspective of First Nations of Metis people in the Regional Study Area (see **Section 1.5.5.3.2**).

### 2.3.2 Community and Regional History

Community and regional history describe the history of the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area, from the presence of the Anishinaabe peoples to the development and settlement of northwestern Ontario that makes the area what it is today. This section is written from a western scientific perspective and includes a regional overview of northwestern Ontario history, as well as

historical information pertaining to Treaty #3 Territory, the Township of Ignace, and other Local Study Area communities when available.

### 2.3.2.1 Regional Overview

Northwestern Ontario is a vast region sculpted by the geology of the Canadian Shield, dominated by boreal forest and bodies of water. First peoples have inhabited this region since time immemorial. Petroglyphs (carved rock) and pictographs (painted rock) found on exposed rock surfaces, as well as burial grounds and other cultural sites found throughout northwestern Ontario bear witness to the presence of first peoples for thousands of years prior to European colonization and settlement in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (Guertin and Joly 2008). The Anishinaabeg view their relationship with the natural environment as fundamental; that they were created on the land and the spirit who created them gave them their lands (Mainville 2007). Acknowledging the Anishinaabeg relationship with the land is critical to understanding the history of the northwestern Ontario region, Anishinaabeg rights, and the effects of Treaty #3 (see **Section 2.3.2.2**).

#### 2.3.2.1.1 The Anishinaabeg

The Anishinaabeg have had an intimate relationship with the lands of what is now referred to as northwestern Ontario since time immemorial. The Anishinaabeg practices of kiigookewin<sup>13</sup> (fishing), Manitou Gitigaan (Great Spirit's Garden), kiiose'win (hunting), and onii'igewin (trapping) speak to this relationship. The Anishinaabeg were skilled in kiigookewin, having traditional fisheries and creating products like isinglass, a highly valued product from sturgeon bladders that was extensively traded. Caviar and sturgeon meat were also valued commercial products for trading. Kiiose'win and onii'igewin for food and fur were also important practices for the Anishinaabeg that later became commercially important due to the sale of meat and fur to settlers. The Anishinaabeg were traditionally adept at Maanchi chi' ga'win, managing game, further displaying the deep relationship with and respect for the land and its resources (Grand Council Treaty #3 2011).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Manitou Gitigaan became increasingly important to the Anishinaabeg, as traditional farming practices and the production of foods like corn, potatoes, and other crops were important to their traditional economy and a major source of food for their growing population as well as for fur traders and settlers. The Anishinaabeg traditionally had comprehensive knowledge of the forest and plants for medicinal, practical, and sacred purposes; "there was nothing they didn't use that grew" (Grand Council Treaty #3 2011). Anishinaabe management of these resources was displayed through the planting of manoomin (wild rice) in lakes and the planned burning of specific locations for blueberry production. Harvesting and preparing manoomin has always been a way of life for the Anishinaabeg and played a significant role in the Anishinaabeg economy (Yerxa 2014). Anishinaabe wild plant products became essential to the survival of early settlers, and Maanchi chi' ga'win, their management of natural resources, was responsible for the extensive pine forests that covered Treaty #3 prior to 1873 (Grand Council Treaty #3 2011).

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<sup>13</sup> Anishinaabemowin is the language spoken by the Anishinaabeg. Terms in this section are described in Anishinaabemowin, before presented in English, as provided by the source to respect and protect Anishinaabemowin, a language present on the land long before English.

Kaagigina Aatigiziwat, Anishinaabeg leadership, was based on competence, familial relationships, achievements, and service. The Anishinaabeg originated from Manitou Innakonig'ewin, the Great Spirit, and Manitou Innakonig'ewin established the leadership rules in which the Anishinaabeg followed, which led to the development of a highly organized system due to their location among the rich natural resources and arrival of settlers (Grand Council Treaty #3 2011).

### 2.3.2.1.2 Arrival of Settlers

The first European explorers arrived in what is now Ontario in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century in search of a trade route with Asia. However, explorers like France's Samuel de Champlain and England's Henry Hudson unknowingly stumbled upon a land of furs, a resource in great demand in their respective colonial empires. Champlain's first voyage to Canada in 1603 brought him to the north shore of the St. Lawrence River in present day Tadoussac, Quebec, and he later established a trading post to trade fur with First Nations in present day Quebec City (The Canadian Encyclopedia n.d.). Hudson arrived in James Bay around 1610, similarly learning of the rich fur resources, triggering further exploration and a rush of trading activities that would later establish The Hudson's Bay Company (Hunter 2008).

The fur trade arrived in northwestern Ontario, brought by settlers moving west. The fur trade not only fuelled the regional economy, but also fuelled rivalries between the European nations. The Indigenous peoples of the region would trap and trade their furs for European tools and other goods. However, it is important to note that fur trade was not the sole livelihood of the Anishinaabeg as is commonly misconstrued; Anishinaabeg would also sell several of their other harvests, such as fish and manoomin (wild rice), to traders, suggesting the Anishinaabeg economy was highly diverse (Mainville 2007).

Competition between England and France to claim these lands peaked in 1670 when England's King Charles granted a trading charter to the Hudson's Bay Company for the Hudson Bay basin. France responded with expeditions to claim the area as their own, asserting French title on the region in 1671. In 1763, England defeated France in the Seven Years' War thereby securing the lands claimed by France, including northern Ontario. From this point on, the fur trade rivalry continued through business networks instead of through nation states involving the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company, until the two merged in 1821 (Republic of Mining 2010).

European demand for furs began to decline throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The decline in demand for furs marked a long period of transition for the northern Ontario region until later developments with Canadian Pacific Railroad, mining, forestry, commercial fishing, and other industries arrived in northwestern Ontario.

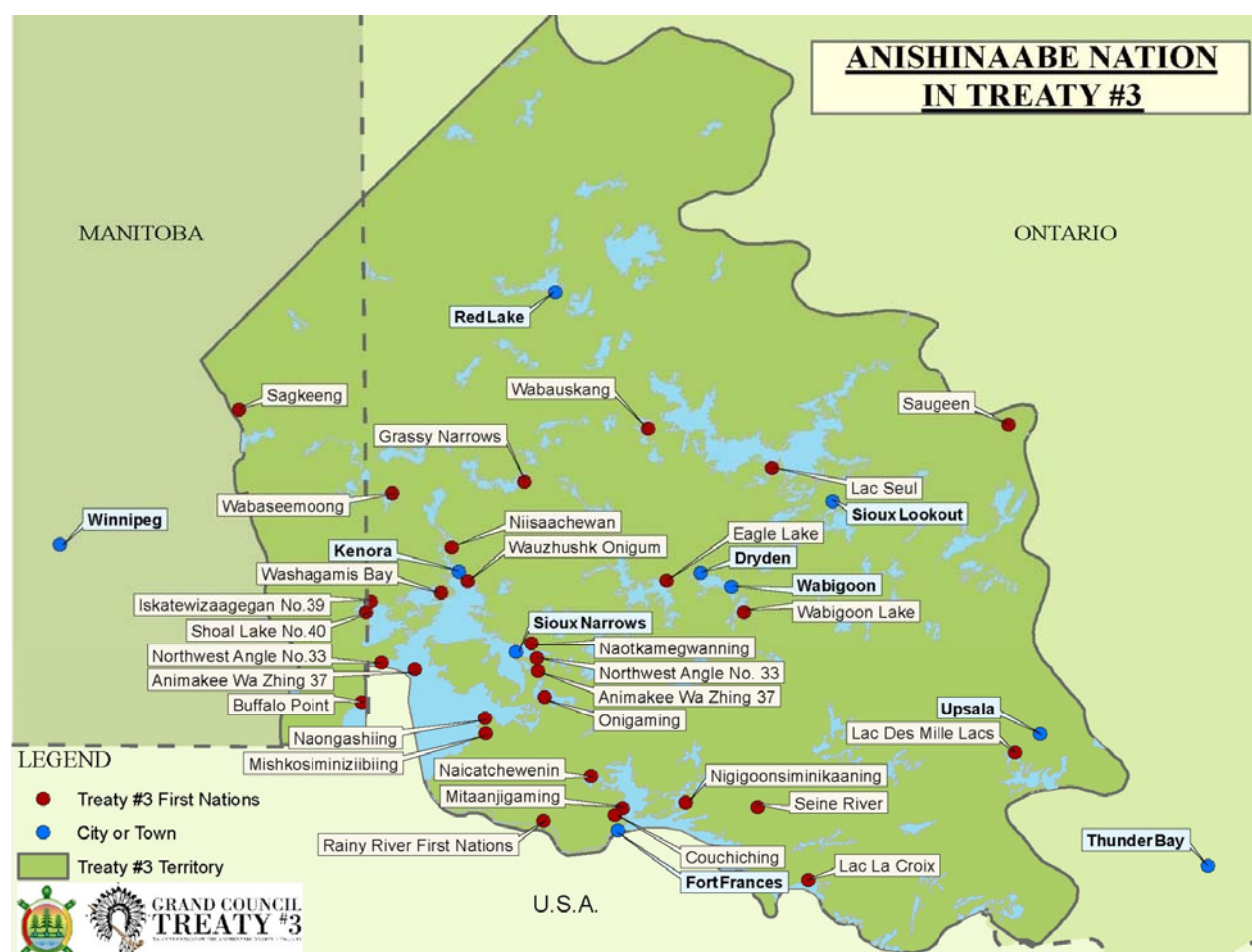
By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, urgency to expand exploration and settlement across the interior of Canada increased. The late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries saw northwestern Ontario become a key region for expansion west as a railway shipping hub and centre for mining and forestry. This period's developments in transportation and industrialization led to rapid population growth in the region, with newcomers to Canada arriving in the area for the promise of work (Republic of Mining 2010).



### 2.3.2.2 The Signing of Treaty #3

On October 3, 1873, Treaty #3 was signed and signified the beginning of the involvement of the federal government in the lands already occupied by 28 First Nations; 55,000 square miles of territory spanning from west of Thunder Bay to north of Sioux Lookout and along the U.S. border into eastern Manitoba became shared between the Anishinaabe peoples and the federal government. Treaty #3 territory is home to 28 First Nation communities with a total population of approximately 25,000 (Grand Council Treaty #3 n.d.). **Map 2.3-1** provides the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3.

#### Map 2.3-1: Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3



Source: Grand Council Treaty #3 n.d.

In 1869, the Government of Canada began planning a route between Fort Garry (now Winnipeg) and Fort William (now Thunder Bay) to provide access to the Canadian interior. Treaty #3 was planned to be the first post-Confederation treaty (Grand Council Treaty #3 n.d.). Treaty negotiations from 1869 to 1873 displayed a lack of responsiveness from the British toward Anishinaabe claims to sovereignty and ownership of themselves and their lands (Mainville 2007).

The Anishinaabe peoples insisted that they would not cede lands, nor allow farming or settlement, in their territory and wanted payments for the “right of way” through their lands.

After Treaty #3 was signed in 1873, federal “business” would be permitted in the territory in exchange for various goods and Indigenous rights to hunting, fishing, and natural resources on reserve lands (Grand Council Treaty #3 n.d.; Filice 2016). However, after the signing of the Treaty, Canada pursued control over Anishinaabe lands, displaying federal disregard for the importance of the Treaty relationship (Mainville 2007).

Under the terms of Treaty #3, the Government of Canada promised to set aside reserve lands and provide payments to individuals and families, as well as agreed to purchase farm equipment and other tools for Ojibwe peoples. The Anishinaabe agreed to share their land in exchange for these promises and mutual support; however, following its signing, Canada called the Treaty a “land surrender” and argued that it gave the government ownership over Anishinaabe territory (Garrett n.d.). Thus, in exchange for verbal promises, the Treaty claimed that the Anishinaabe peoples would “cede, release, surrender, and yield” all rights and title to their land to the federal government (Filice 2016). The verbal promises made to the Anishinaabe peoples during negotiations were not reflected in the Treaty #3 text (Garrett n.d.). Elders refer to Miinigozii'onan, the “agreement known as Treaty #3”, the spirit and intent of Treaty #3 that was not upheld by the federal government. The Anishinaabe continue to protest treaty violations to date (Garrett n.d.).

The effects of broken federal promises following Treaty #3 were large in scale. For example, two decades after the signing of the Treaty, non-Indigenous commercial fishing increased significantly in the region. Canada reallocated fisheries to non-Anishinaabe, a violation of Treaty #3 that was detrimental to Anishinaabe way of life. Similarly, the Anishinaabeg had secured rights during negotiations of the Treaty, such as hunting, mineral, forestry and plant resources; however, Canada’s version of Treaty #3 omitted mention of many Anishinaabe rights on their lands, a denial of rights to reserves that lasted many years in Ontario (Grand Council Treaty #3 2011). Colonialism and forced assimilation, such as the Sixties Scoop and residential schools<sup>14</sup> in Canada, have eroded the traditional practices and self-governance of Indigenous peoples. It was through the oppression of Indigenous peoples that settlers were able to thrive. Acknowledging this history is critical to understanding the lasting effects of colonialism and for moving forward in reconciliation.

### 2.3.2.3 Township of Ignace

The history of what is now the Township of Ignace spans back to the presence of First Nations peoples. Red ochre pictographs can be found on the flat surfaces of the Canadian Shield at waterbodies surrounding the Township. These pictographs are interpreted to be messages to the Manitous, supernatural beings (Barr 1979). The arrival of settlers introduced various industries to the area, including rail, forestry, and mining.

#### 2.3.2.3.1 Canadian Pacific Railway

The Township of Ignace was established in 1879 when the Canadian Pacific Railway (“CPR”) was being built through the area, where it became a railway division point halfway between Kenora and Fort William (Thunder Bay), which included a station, marshalling and maintenance facilities,

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<sup>14</sup> *Content warning:* the following information mentions topics which may cause trauma invoked by past abuse. The former residential schools located within the Regional Study Area and Local Study Area include Cecilia Jeffrey (Kenora, Shoal Lake) and Pelican Lake (Pelican Falls) in Sioux Lookout (Chiefs of Ontario n.d.).

employee houses, and a railroad YMCA (“Young Men’s Christian Association”). Ignace became the transfer station for Winnipeg to Thunder Bay. The Township was named by railway engineer Sir Sandford Fleming after his Iroquois guide, Ignace Mentour, who came from the Caughnawaga Reserve near Montreal (Barr 1979). In 1872, Ignace Mentour paddled and portaged Flemming and his surveying team over the Dawson Route (Barr 1979).

The federal government built the first building in Ignace around 1875, a 20-foot long log cabin for surveyors plotting the railway line. The building stood east of present-day Pine Street. The Ojibway peoples also began building tepees along the Agimak (the Ojibway word for ash tree) Creek to provide supplies and services. On July 6, 1882, Ignace saw the first official train from Winnipeg pass through (Barr 1979).

Though Ignace was known as a railway town, the town also had fur trade, commercial fishing, mining, and forestry. In 1894, a mining patent was issued to Ignace, securing the town’s mineral claims (Barr 1979).

In 1904, CPR built a red-brick railway roundhouse. Around this time, CPR also built several duplexes for employees to rent, which faced the railway. The decision to face these houses away from town reflected the conflicting priorities of industry and community (Barr 1979). CPR did not install sewer and water for their company houses in Ignace until 1932. Electricity followed, but only powered lights. Ignace’s present day Front Street was the old Main Street through town at this time.

W.H. (William Henry) Cobb arrived in the area along with the railway construction crews, later going into business as a hotel and grocery store owner. Cobb was also involved in the fur trade and became Ignace’s first reeve in 1908, at the time of incorporation. W.H. Cobb’s fieldstone hotel, built during the Sturgeon Lake gold rush, became Ignace’s first rail YMCA in 1910. The next, newer YMCA was built in 1924 by CPR and opened in 1925, featuring two bowling alleys, 21 bedrooms with showers and toilets, an apartment for Secretary Chauncey Depew, a reading room, dining room, and a kitchen that served meals around the clock for running crews. The YMCA served as Ignace’s centre for socializing and recreation into the late 1930s.

In the early 1900s, the west end of the railway yards, roughly half a mile from the station, was a boxcar neighbourhood known as “Little England”. English newcomers formed a tight community amongst the larger context of the community (Barr 1979). Other newcomers were arriving in Ignace at this time, with people settling from Italy, Norway, Sweden, and Ukraine (Barr 1979).

The Township became incorporated in 1908 and remained a railroad town until the 1950s, when changes in rail transport caused CPR to reduce operations in Ignace. The last steam engine passed through town in the late 1950’s; the end of Ignace’s era as a railway town. On October 13, 1909, the Ontario Provincial Police were brought in by order of the council, their duties including investigating serious crimes and enforcing the Game, Fisheries, and Ontario Temperance Acts. In 1923, Keewatin Lumber Company opened an Ignace branch. Keewatin Lumber cut ties, sawlogs, and pulpwood until 1933. In the late 1940s, Ignace campaigned for town hydro. In 1954, Ontario Hydro began supplying Ignace through a local, commission-owned system, which required construction of a transformer station and 12 miles of line. Ignace was largely able to say goodbye to coal oil and gas lamps. This transition for Ignace was marked by over 200 people at the War Memorial School. On November 14, 1956, Bell Telephone established both local and long-distance telephone services in the town of 450 people.

### 2.3.2.3.2 Trans-Canada Highway

Construction of the Trans-Canada Highway in the 1930s opened up the area for further development and opportunity, particularly in the service and tourist industries. Completing the highway to connect Fort William (now Thunder Bay) to Winnipeg offered up employment to many area residents and brought in hunters, fisherman, and tourist trade (Barr 1979). Further, the building of the TransCanada pipeline through the Township in the 1950's and Highway 599 in the 1960's stimulated the growth of the community. Another prospecting/mining boom hit Ignace from the 1930s to the 1950s (Barr 1979).

The end of World War II brought a surge in tourism activities in Ignace, with camps/cabins and businesses opening. Logging activity also rose after World War II until the late 1950s (Barr 1979).

### 2.3.2.3.3 Forestry and Mining

The town growth following the end of World War II carried through the 1960s as forestry and mining operations developed rapidly in the area, bringing 150 Canadian Forest Product Limited employees along with miners and their families. Highway 599 serviced the Mattabi and Falconbridge mines. Ignace became the designated townsite for Mattabi Mines around 1970, tripling, then quadrupling, the population (Barr 1979). This population increase brought considerable development to the area, resulting in the construction of over 100 residential units, sewage and water treatment facilities, public elementary and secondary schools, a private French Catholic elementary school, a recreation facility, churches, and a number of local businesses.

The rapid and staggered growth of industry in Ignace in the late 1900s resulted in the development of neighbourhoods based on ones' employer; CPR, Mattabi Mine, Falconbridge Mine, and municipal employees all resided in their own respective neighbourhoods in Ignace. Ignace's rapid growth as a dormitory community with a limited industrial tax base resulted in financial deficit for the town (Barr 1979).

The Township thrived into the 1980s, until the forestry and mining industries contracted. Forestry jobs were lost due to increased mechanization, market factors, and business considerations. The mines were ultimately closed by 1991. During this contraction of these two industries in the 1980's and 1990's, Ignace tourism began to grow. The Regional Tourist Information Centre in Ignace was designed to mirror the town's old CPR roundhouse. It's location in Ignace was also the site of the old CPR YMCA, and stones from Butler Stone Quarry were used in the Centre's construction. These features reflect Ignace's pride in and sense of the town's history. Today, the Centre is also home to the Ignace Public Library and municipal offices.

Transportation maintains a key role in Ignace's local economy, as the railway, highway, and pipeline remain. The Township also remains a tourism hub, offering visitors the opportunity for wilderness exploration including popular activities like hunting and fishing.

### 2.3.2.4 City of Dryden

Indigenous peoples have lived in the area now known as the City of Dryden since time immemorial. Of particular importance was Paawidigong, the place of the rapids, which served as the camp and meeting place of the Anishinaabe peoples on the Wabigoon River. The shores of the Wabigoon River rapids were a seasonal gathering place that Anishinaabeg would travel to

from their winter camps and trapping areas to hunt, fish, and harvest during the spring and summer months. Following the arrival of settlers to the area, Anishinaabeg would use their camp at the rapids to trade, until settlers built a dam in 1910. Following the construction of the dam, the Anishinaabe peoples move their camp inland, around the area where Dryden High School now stands today. The new camp and meeting place remained the location of Anishinaabeg until the early 1950s. Several pictographs, artifacts, and sacred places of the Anishinaabe peoples remain in the Dryden area today (City of Dryden n.d.a).

#### 2.3.2.4.1 Arrival of Settlers

Lumber operations and gold prospecting began in the Wabigoon Lake area in the 1880s with construction of the CPR; however, permanent European settlement in the area did not begin until the 1890's when the Ontario Minister of Agriculture, John Dryden, opened the area to agriculture by establishing a 320-acre provincial pioneer farm to attract settlers to northwestern Ontario (Bray 2012; City of Dryden n.d.a). In 1893, John Dryden was a train passenger travelling through Dryden, and had seen clover growing along the railway track and presumed the area would be suitable for farming (The Dryden Observer n.d.; Willard 1983). Clover seeds had been left behind by colonists travelling west. John Dryden started an experimental farm (The Dryden Observer n.d.; Willard 1983). The settlement around Dryden began around 1896-1897 (Wice 1967). Surveyors laid out the Township of Van Horne (near the Wabigoon Rapids) and the Township of Wainwright (north of the Township of Van Horne).

The first settler in the area was Andrew Ellsworth Annis, who became superintendent of the farm and the Crown lands agent in 1895. Annis was a contact for new settlers, providing advice and selling the first lots in the village south of the railway (City of Dryden n.d.a). Early settlers in Dryden largely came from Eastern Ontario (Wice 1967). In 1897, the village was officially named Dryden after Minister John Dryden, at which point the settlement had grown to more than a dozen families, 24 houses and stores, and a sawmill. The first steam whistle to blow in Dryden was also in 1897, announcing the sawmill, the village's first industry (Wice 1967). Dryden was incorporated as a town in 1910 and incorporated as a city in 1998. Pulp and paper contributed to the City's economy and pulp continues to contribute heavily (The Dryden Observer n.d.).

#### 2.3.2.4.2 Forestry

In 2018-2019, the Dryden and District Museum created an oral history project to record various community stories and perspective from senior Dryden area residents. Through the history project, residents spoke to the earlier days of the Dryden pulp and paper mill:

*"Dryden, the mill at that time, made the world's finest white paper. It was shipped all over the world. Yeah. And pulp too." (Dryden and District Museum, Interview with Stella Davies, 2019a)*

*"But Dryden was still our centre of attraction eh. We used to shop at the Bay, at the Co-op Store, but we worked, we, we were working here in Dryden, in the mill at first. I worked in the mill until sixty-four. When I was a teenager, I started working in the mill, that would have been in '61. I had worked on the railroad for a few months, in Eagle. But as that was dying down, the foreman had said you know, they are cutting back and cutting back. He said if I were you, if you get a chance to get in the mill, do so because the CPR is going downhill." (Dryden and District Museum, Interview with Alphonse Roussin Part 1, 2019b)*



Forestry maintains a key role in Dryden's local economy today, with Dryden Fibre Canada, ULC (formerly Domtar),<sup>15</sup> being the largest employer in the City (see **Section 3.4.4.2**). The City's economy has shifted based on the mills' operations over time, and overall the economy has experienced challenges with growth and stagnation as a result. Dryden also remains a service hub for surrounding communities, with many of the City's major businesses being located along Highway 17 for greater accessibility for visitors (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.3.2.5 Municipality of Machin

The Municipality of Machin is comprised of the communities of Minnitaki, Eagle River, and Vermillion Bay. The Municipality of Machin was incorporated in 1909. In 1908, meetings were held in Eagle River, Minnitaki, Oxdrift, Vermillion Bay, and Waldhof to organize the west end of the Dryden District as well as to obtain a licence for a hotel in Eagle River. Oxdrift and Waldhof withdrew, but Minnitaki, Eagle River, and Vermillion Bay proceeded. Municipal offices were first established in Eagle River, until an old school in Vermillion Bay became available where the Municipal office then moved to for a larger facility. The Municipality was named after Harold A.C. Machin, a World War I Lieutenant-Colonel who then served in the Legislature from 1908 to 1919 (Municipality of Machin n.d.a). Today, Nelson Granite in Vermillion Bay, and resource-based tourism, with outfitting lodges located across the communities, play a large role in the Municipality's economy.

#### 2.3.2.5.1 Minnitaki

In 1896, the Townships of Eton, Sanford, and Aubrey were surveyed and laid out but T.B. Speight, Ontario Land Surveyors, and marked the early stages of settlement in the area. The origin of the name "Minnitaki" is in doubt, with different interpretations of what the name means. Indigenous interpretation of the name is "muddy waters", suggesting the community's Beaver River was the inspiration for the name. Another interpretation, by a local school master on Eagle Lake Reserve, is that Minnitaki means the shadow on the water cast by clouds passing in front of the sun, and thus, shaded or shadowed waters (Municipality of Machin n.d.a).

#### 2.3.2.5.2 Eagle River

In 1881, the CPR railhead from Port Arthur (Thunder Bay) was in Eagle River, and by the late 1890's, Eagle River was a hub for settlers and supplies coming by rail. Eagle River station was an important coaling and water location for CPR. The railway docks and station were demolished in 1968-1969 and 1973, respectively.

Furs and fuel wood were shipped out of Eagle River by rail. The earliest reference to fur trading in Eagle Lake was the winter of 1869-1870. During that time, Eagle Lake was considered an outpost consisting of small log houses and only maintained during the winter. In 1882, the Eagle Lake post was moved near the railway on Wabigoon Lake to protect the Hudson's Bay territory.

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<sup>15</sup> Formerly known as Domtar Inc.'s Dryden Mill, the mill was purchased by First Quality Enterprises LLC in August, 2023 (First Quality 2023).

The first fishing and hunting lodge was built in 1935-1936 on Eagle Lake. Hydro power houses were built on the Eagle River in 1928 and 1937 to supply power to the Dryden Paper Company Mill (Municipality of Machin n.d.a).

### **2.3.2.5.3 Vermillion Bay**

Construction of the CPR in the area was slow due to the challenging terrain. At the time, Vermillion Bay was a construction camp. Two miles east, a sawmill was also operating. The railway was completed in 1882, sparking the construction of a station, houses for the maintenance workers, and a 40-foot pump tower for refilling steam engines. Construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific began in 1902, nine miles north of Vermillion Bay. The Township was surveyed in 1906. The gold and soapstone mines located on the southwest shore of Eagle Lake used Vermillion Bay as a hub for supplies and shipping the minerals in the early 1900's. When the Trans-Canada Highway was built in the late 1930s, Vermillion Bay continued to grow, and, with the developing forestry and tourism industries, Vermillion Bay began to prosper. Tourist camps were established on the east and north shores of Eagle Lake by the 1940s, using Vermillion Bay as a base for business (Municipality of Machin n.d.a).

Today, tourism remains important to Vermillion Bay. Blue Lake Provincial Park is located a short drive from the community where it is a popular place for visitors to take part in activities, such as swimming, camping, and kayaking, due to its blue water and sandy bottom (To Do Canada 2020). Nelson Granite currently operates out of Vermillion Bay. It is a family-run business that moved to northwestern Ontario in the early 1980s (Ross 2009). The company is one of Canada's largest producer of quarried dimensional stone and manufactured memorial products (e.g., mausoleums, monuments) with their granites being quarried exclusively from the northwestern Ontario region (Nelson Granite n.d.).

### **2.3.2.6 Municipality of Sioux Lookout**

The Town of Sioux Lookout was incorporated in 1912. The name "Sioux Lookout" originates from the area's use of the Sioux Mountain vantage point for guards to see visitors travelling the English River route and is rooted in the battle between the Anishinaabe and Sioux Nations. This area also served as a hub for trading goods, including fur and forestry products (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020a).

#### **2.3.2.6.1 Arrival of Settlers and Canadian National Railway**

The Sioux Lookout area's natural waterway connects the western continent, which is believed to be the reason it attracted early settlers. From Lac Seul, travellers could head north to Hudson Bay or the arctic channel, west to the Columbia River, east to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, or south to the Gulf of Mexico (Heath 2023). Sioux Lookout was connected to the railway in 1912 and became a railway terminal in the early 1900's before transitioning to a gold and iron mining town and aviation centre. Pinetree Radar Base was a large employer from the 1950s to 1987 (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020a).

The Sioux Lookout Canadian National Railway Station was successful for several decades and was directly tied to the community's development. The railway was the main source of employment, transportation, goods, and communication for Sioux Lookout before roads to and from the community were constructed in the 1960's. It continues to operate for passenger



service with Via Rail, while part of the building has been renovated for hospitality uses (Parks Canada n.d.).

### 2.3.2.6.2 Aviation

The MNRF was first established in Sioux Lookout, following forest fires in the 1920s that destroyed over 2 million acres. Part of the MNRF's initiative to fight forest fires was setting up a base in Sioux Lookout. Bearskin Airlines also had a base in Sioux Lookout, established in 1978, one year after the airline began flying regularly scheduled flights between Sioux Lookout and Big Trout Lake. Upon establishment of the base in town, regular flights to Thunder Bay were scheduled (Heath 2023).

### 2.3.2.6.3 Wilderness Tourism

Sioux Lookout was also the site of northern Ontario's first tourist fishing lodge. In 1928, Mike Ament, referred to as the "Father of Tourism" in Sioux Lookout, set up a lodge near Little Vermillion Lake. Ament's Kenneally Lodge quickly became internationally renowned for his guiding services. Guests travelling to Ament's lodge arrived on the Canadian National Railway line in Hudson, Ontario and journeyed to the grounds via horse and buggy. Another of Ament's contributions to the tourism industry was his introduction of smallmouth bass to Little Vermillion Lake; the highly sought-after game fish have been caught as far as Lac Seul and the English River and continue to be caught to this day (Heath 2023).

### 2.3.2.6.4 Hub of the North

Formerly known as a rail hub, today, Sioux Lookout remains a service "Hub of the North" for northern Ontario, connecting 31 remote northern communities and First Nations and over 30,000 Ontarians to essential services, featuring one of the busiest airports in the province (MHBC Planning 2013). See **Section 2.3.3.4** for more information on the Canadian National Railway in Sioux Lookout.

### 2.3.2.7 Local Services Board of Melgund

The Local Services Board of Melgund includes the communities of Dyment and Borups Corners. Dyment, located on Melgund Lake, was established in 1898. Dyment was once a booming mining town, hosting the Clark, Tabor Lake, and Sakoose gold mines (Dyment Community n.d.). Residents of the Local Study Area, including residents from Dyment, meet on an all-terrain vehicle ("ATV") trail near the Revell Site (see **Section 2.5.10**) and travel by ATV together to visit and explore the old Tabor Lake Mine site (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Participants of the NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023 shared that the Tabor Lake Mine has interesting sites to see, such as old settlements and mine shafts. Today, Melgund is home to residents who appreciate its small and quiet nature, many of whom are retired or semi-retired, and enjoy the communities' proximity to the outdoors and gathering with neighbours at the hall located between Dyment and Borups Corners.

### 2.3.2.8 Township of Upsala

The Town of Upsala was surveyed in 1914, but with the beginning of World War I, was not established to serve as a station for CPR until 1922. The name Upsala reflects the Swedish and Nordic backgrounds of the area's immigrants, named after the City of Uppsala in Sweden. In

1922, public lands were sold, including 62 lots at the cost of \$0.50 per acre. To qualify for a patent, each settler had to clear at least 15 acres per year, build a house and barn, dig a well, and live on the property for at least 6 months (Upsala n.d.b). H.D. Wiseman, Hugo Carlson, C. Nordstrom, S. Kenuck, O. Hakanson, G.R. Johnston, and Esther Aho were some of the pioneer settlers (Upsala n.d.a).

In the 1920s, use of the area for pulpwood was an important source of income for settlers in Upsala, with stories suggesting that families working together could cut enough pulp to pay their land taxes each year. This cooperation amongst neighbours is an example of the community spirit that remains a part of Upsala's character today (Upsala n.d.b).

The community worked together to establish the first school in Upsala in 1925. The Women's Institute was founded in 1935 by D.B. Frazer. By the 1930's, the town consisted of many homes, but no roads were in the centre of Upsala until 1937 when the Trans-Canada Highway was constructed over the town's wagon trail to connect Upsala to Fort William and Port Arthur (Upsala n.d.a). The Upsala hotel had recreational opportunities and social events for locals (Upsala n.d.b). Today, Upsala plays a role in the region's tourism, acting as a host for visitors looking to get outside and take part in activities, including fishing and hunting, particularly due to its proximity to Lac des Milles Lacs.

### 2.3.3 Community Character and Heritage

Community character and heritage describes the character of the Local Study Area communities, including what residents value about their home community, existing challenges, and community cohesion, as well as any designated heritage sites and historically important residents, when available.

#### 2.3.3.1 Township of Ignace

The Township of Ignace is situated on the shores of Agimak Lake and surrounded by the natural environment, including rivers, lakes, waterfalls, and forests, where residents and visitors take part in outdoor activities in both the summer and winter months, such as hunting, fishing, trapping, swimming, boating, snowmobiling, and much more (see **Section 2.4.6** for more information on recreational activities and **Section 2.5** for more information on land and resource use).

According to the Ignace Community Strategy (Ignace 2019b), the Township values community, unity, cooperation, integrity, resilience, and the natural environment, which are reflected in the visioning project completed a year later (InterGroup Consultants 2020) and which is described in more detail in **Section 2.3.4.2.5**). These values helped shape what Ignace is today and continue to be community goals to strive toward in the future.

##### 2.3.3.1.1 Community

Ignace values community; being a safe, peaceful, welcoming, supportive, and family-oriented community (TD Graham & Associates 2019). Residents of Ignace appreciate its small-town nature, fusion of cultures, local businesses, and northern hospitality (Township of Ignace n.d.a; Township of Ignace n.d.b). During key person interviews, residents pointed to their proximity to the natural environment, community history, White Otter Castle, excellent schools and health facility, and gathering spaces like Silver Tops, as characteristics that make Ignace unique and

cohesive (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Many residents appreciate that Ignace can be a “quiet” community, but also feel that it is important to improve the quality of life for younger residents by developing more opportunities for youth to participate in the arts and recreation. The Township’s library was noted as an important hub for cultural events in the community.

One of the Township’s visions, as reflected during project visioning, is to be a complete, livable, and vibrant ‘small-town’ community of between 2,500-3,000 people that can shape and direct its own character by enhancing its quality of place (InterGroup Consultants 2020). Community feedback on these priorities confirmed the importance of Ignace’s small-town nature to residents, but also pointed to the importance of not having a “small-town mindset” when it comes to community development. Residents shared that it can be important to welcome positive voices and creative ideas, not only from long-term residents of Ignace, but also from newcomers and “outside help”, such as learning from other communities on ways to develop the community’s character and opportunities. The presence of industries and associated ebb and flow of new residents has, however, also had an affect on the community’s cohesion. For example, key person interviews pointed to the presence of forestry operations and the lack of time spent in the community by members of the industry, suggesting that companies come to Ignace for its natural resources without spending time in the community to support its character and businesses (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Overall, residents feel that Ignace is a safe and close-knit community where residents carry a sense of pride, belonging, and connection to the natural environment (Local Social Cultural and Health Workshop 2021).

### **2.3.3.1.2 Unity and Cooperation**

Ignace values unity and cooperation, aiming to foster teamwork, the sharing of ideas, and collaborating for the betterment of the community (TD Graham & Associates 2019). These values are reflected in the “small-town feel” that Ignace provides, and residents cherish. Participants of the key person interview program shared they felt that Ignace is a place where neighbours will lend a helping hand and a great place to raise children (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Residents feel they can trust their neighbours to look out for their loved ones and the neighbourhood streets are safe to let their children play in the community with less supervision than might be necessary in larger urban centres.

### **2.3.3.1.3 Integrity and Resilience**

Ignace values being a community with integrity and resilience; being transparent, fair, honest, and authentic, remaining strong and moving forward while embracing challenges and opportunities (TD Graham & Associates 2019). The Township celebrates its heritage and small-town nature. Residents noted during project visioning that maintaining a small population may contribute to the Town’s resilience in the future (InterGroup Consultants 2020). Key person interviews suggested that Ignace also helps foster well-adjusted, independent individuals (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Long-time residents who raised their children in Ignace felt that northwestern Ontario helps foster self-sufficient adults due to its small-town nature, wealth of outdoor activities, and lack of services that are often present in larger metropolitan areas (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Ignace has a high proportion of seniors compared to other age groups, and it is important to the community to ensure that the senior population is supported and provided with the means to age in place. One of Ignace's visions is to support an enhanced quality of life at every stage of life, where the sense of community is fostered by meeting the needs of residents of all ages. This sense of caring for one another, the community, and the natural environment supports sustainable growth and strengthens the bond between residents and the places they share (InterGroup Consultants 2020). Residents have shared concerns about losing the community's senior population and the history, knowledge, and stories that they hold. Residents also desire to be more proactive in highlighting Ignace's history (i.e., gateway signage), a major source of pride in the community, as a way of attracting tourists and new residents (InterGroup Consultants 2020).

### 2.3.3.1.4 Natural Environment

Ignace values the surrounding natural environment; the importance of fresh air, clean lakes, and the natural beauty (TD Graham & Associates 2019). The interconnectedness of Ignace and its surrounding natural environment is part of what brings visitors to the area and what keeps residents in place. Key person interviews emphasized the local love for the outdoors, stating that a love of the outdoors is essential to living in the community (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). See **Section 2.3.8** for more on residents' connection to the natural environment.

Part of Ignace's vision is to foster the personal health and wellness of its residents through physical activity, social engagement, and artistic expression that supports opportunities for people to improve their health and wellness, socialize and interact with others, learn new skills, have fun, and find balance in their lives (InterGroup Consultants 2020). Ignace's level of access to the surrounding natural environment provides opportunities for a variety of activities that work towards this community vision (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### Agimak Lake

Agimak Lake is located in the Local Study Area, within the Township of Ignace. Agimak Lake is one of the Township's most treasured assets, providing Ignace residents with immense outdoor water-based activities close to home (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Agimak's shores host residential properties as well as accommodations and businesses including Agimak Lake Resort and Lone Pine Inn. The lake has two beaches, Agimak Beach, located on the east side of the lake, and West Beach, located at the north end of the lake. Popular recreational activities that occur on Agimak Lake include swimming, boating, canoeing, kayaking, stand up paddle boarding, and fishing (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

The Agimak Trail is a canoe route south from Ignace to White Otter Lake, where many locals and visitors go to see White Otter Castle (see **Section 2.3.3.1.5** for more on White Otter Castle). The route can also be accessed from Devil's Gap Lake. This canoe route became prominent for settlers in 1879 following Ignace's establishment as a railway point for Canadian Pacific Railway, but was a navigable waterway for Indigenous inhabitants for thousands of years prior (Township of Ignace n.d.e). Beyond the Agimak Trail to White Otter Castle is the Turtle River Provincial Park Route. The route can take between 3 to 12 days to complete depending on where it is started

from. Individuals paddling this route from Agimak Lake can see White Otter Castle, pictographs, and pristine lakes amongst the Canadian Shield (Canadian Canoe Routes 2021).

### 2.3.3.1.5 Heritage

Ignace has a rich history that shaped the community into what it is today, beginning from the presence of the Ojibway peoples in northwestern Ontario, to the arrival of settlers and industries including rail, mining, and forestry (see **Section 2.3.2** for information on community and regional history). This section describes key influential people through Ignace's recent history who played a role in Ignace's heritage, including James A. McQuat, Mary Berglund, and Dennis Smyk.

#### White Otter Castle

White Otter Castle is an Ontario Heritage Trust structure located southwest of Ignace on White Otter Lake, accessible by water only. White Otter Castle is a three-storey log home built with red pine logs in the early 1900s by James A. McQuat. McQuat was a woodsman who built the castle on his own, completing it at the age of 60 (Ontario Heritage Trust n.d.). Using a block and tackle method to raise the red pine logs to their place and bringing all other supplies over 15 portages to the site, McQuat finished the construction of his castle in 1914, which featured a four-storey tower and hip roof covered with tar paper. McQuat claimed that, as a child growing up in the Ottawa valley, he was scolded, "Ye'll never do no good! Ye'll die in a shack!", so he decided to build himself a castle (Township of Ignace n.d.b). McQuat travelled to Ignace by canoe for provisions (Barr 1979).

James McQuat died in the fall of 1918 and his grave remains at the site to date. The castle has since been renovated by "Friends of the White Otter Castle", who continue to maintain the property today. White Otter Castle remains a popular site to visit by canoe, float plane or snowmobile (Township of Ignace n.d.b). When asked what makes Ignace unique, residents commonly referred to White Otter Castle, noting a sense of community pride in the heritage structure (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

#### Mary Berglund

Mary Berglund was the first nurse in Ignace. Berglund pioneered the role of nurse practitioner; key person interviews shared that Berglund was trusted by doctors to carry out many aspects of healthcare independently (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Berglund moved to Ignace in 1932, when her husband began working for CPR. In 1939, Ignace's doctor moved away, leaving the town of 600 without a healthcare provider. Berglund began to respond to her community's needs and continued to practice as the only healthcare worker within 110 kilometres for the next 30 years. Berglund also travelled to provide medical assistance, often riding the railway as well as accompanying the Ontario Provincial Police (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Ignace residents and visitors treated by Berglund would pay her for her services in a variety of ways, from small amounts of cash to cabbages, carrots, and fish (Abelsohn 1996).

As word of Berglund's work spread beyond Ignace, doctors in Dryden began to support her work by arranging for her to purchase medications, including narcotics and antibiotics. Following one of the most dramatic medical cases in Berglund's career, involving a CPR employee who lost his leg from a boxcar incident, CPR connected Berglund's house to the company's water system and



assumed her water expenses until the day she moved out 40 years later. When immunization services became established by public health nurses across the country, Berglund took on the responsibility of bringing immunizations to Ignace, visiting schools and houses in the area and even snowshoeing to Indigenous settlements to vaccinate children and infants (Abelsohn 1996).

In 1972, Berglund received an honorary membership from the Ontario Medical Association, amongst several other honours throughout her career. The Mary Berglund Community Health Centre was named after her in 1975 upon its opening (Abelsohn 1996). Berglund's commitment to her community and the health profession remains a strong point of pride for Ignace and all who knew her (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### **Dennis Smyk**

Dennis Smyk, "Mr. Ignace," was publisher of the Ignace Driftwood and beloved by many Ignace residents over his lifetime of service in the community. Over the years, Smyk served Ignace as a teacher, volunteer firefighter, fire chief, councillor, and Mayor, amongst several other volunteer positions in the community (Long 2019; Walters 2018). Smyk grew up in Ignace, attended high school in Thunder Bay, Ontario and Selkirk, Manitoba, and attended teacher's college in Thunder Bay where he met his wife, Jackie Smyk, eventually returning to Ignace as a teacher (Dryden Community Funeral Home 2018).

The Ignace Driftwood was important to Smyk and his wife since publishing their first issue on a gestetner (printing) machine in 1971. Residents of Ignace also took pride in the Driftwood, one of the smallest newspapers in Canada at the time with a circulation of roughly 400 each week, appreciating the "all-in-one" source of information it provided to keep people updated on community goings-on (Long 2019). The Driftwood operated continuously from 1978 until 2018, the year Dennis passed, publishing over 2,000 editions and never missing a weekly circulation in its 40-year life span (Walters 2018).

Smyk was an avid explorer of the natural environment which surrounded him, documenting more than 600 archaeological sites and 150 pictographs (Long 2019). In 2013, Smyk received the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal for his more than 50 years of service in northwestern Ontario (Long 2019). Ignace's museum was renamed the "Dennis Smyk Heritage Centre" in honour of the local legend and his contributions to the museum.

### **2.3.3.2 City of Dryden**

Situated on the shores of the Wabigoon and Thunder Lakes in the heart of the Kenora District, Dryden is known for its abundance of outdoor opportunities. Dryden is located midway between Winnipeg, Manitoba and Thunder Bay, Ontario acting as a hub for both travellers and the numerous communities that surround the City. Dryden is regarded by its citizens as having a strong sense of community and pride, with opportunity to grow and prosper (MDB Insight 2019).

Dryden aims to be recognized as "*a vibrant, safe, healthy, and inclusive community with a diverse economy, providing an excellent quality of life*" (MDB Insight 2019), and is guided by principles of inclusion, safety, community pride, regional leadership, and quality of life.

#### **2.3.3.2.1 Inclusion and Safety**

Dryden works to honour, welcome, and accept all people while providing a platform for diverse voices in order to strengthen cultural relationships and build community cohesion and inclusivity.

It is important to Dryden to make efforts to ensure that the City's programs and services are accessible and reflect the diverse needs of the community (MDB Insight 2019). Key person interviews suggest that Dryden is a welcoming community to newcomers and essential services are easily accessible within the community (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Survey results from the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan for Dryden, Machin, and area suggest that nearly 40% of respondents have a strong sense of belonging in their community (MNP 2021).

Dryden works to place the safety of its residents at the centre of all City planning and actions. In particular, Dryden aims to develop and maintain safe community spaces for shared use in order to promote quality of life in the community (MDB Insight 2019). Participants of key person interviews recalled Dryden as a safe place when growing up in the community but shared that, in recent years, they no longer feel as comfortable in the community as they once were (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The perceived lack of safety by residents of Dryden was attributed to an increase in the presence of transient groups and individuals struggling with addictions in the community (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Participants of key person interviews shared that they feel the City's leadership is now working to address and support vulnerable populations in the community, particularly unhoused and precariously housed individuals and individuals living with addictions and/or mental health challenges, but that there is more work to be done to make Dryden an inclusive and safe community for all. Dryden also has a volunteer fire service (see **Section 2.4.4**) that plays a large role in fire protection, emergency services, and public education on safety (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.3.3.2.2 Community Pride and Regional Leadership

Dryden views having well-maintained properties, assets, and infrastructure, civic engagement to keep residents informed and in touch with community leadership, and volunteerism as ways in which the City may enhance community pride (MDB Insight 2019). Dryden is focused on being a regional hub for northwestern Ontario and is committed to innovation, knowledge sharing, and building and maintaining effective local and regional partnerships (MDB Insight 2019). Results from key person interviews suggest Dryden is proud to be the service hub of northwestern Ontario, including or retail, transportation, healthcare, and education (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

One way in which the City is working on improving its community image and sense of pride is through a new branding strategy that was introduced in 2018, known as Blaze Your Trail (City of Dryden n.d.b). Blaze Your Trail represents Dryden's community character; an active community surrounded by nature with diverse recreation and commerce, where community members are proud and work to support one another (City of Dryden n.d.b).

Participants of key person interviews expressed a sense of pride having grown up in Dryden, with one participant sharing that they would not have wanted to grow up anywhere else (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Many residents are proud to serve their community, with survey results from the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan for Dryden, Machin, and area showing that, of over 600 residents who responded, residents volunteer an average of 181 times per year (MNP 2021).



### 2.3.3.2.3 Quality of Life

Dryden aims to be a leader in environmental stewardship by protecting the natural beauty of the surrounding environment and the community's access to nature. The City would also like to maintain alignment with the community's values and priorities by ensuring that all decisions place quality of life at the front of mind (MDB Insight 2019).

Participants of key person interviews shared that a love of the outdoors is important to one's quality of life in Dryden (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). While residents shared that there is not as many opportunities for activities within the City, particularly after the partial closure of Dryden's pulp and paper mill and subsequent loss of jobs and population, its location provides a vast amount of opportunity to get outside and enjoy activities such as camping, hiking, fishing, and hunting. Dryden's recreational programming and facilities are an asset to the community (e.g., indoor pool, curling, soccer fields) (see **Section 2.4.6**). Residents noted that Dryden's close proximity to nature is a primary reason for living in the community, with one participant stating that you can fish 30 lakes within 10 minutes of town (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Residents also appreciate the small-town feel of the City while still being within a 4 hours' drive of the larger metropolitan areas, with Winnipeg to the west and Thunder Bay to the east.

### 2.3.3.3 Municipality of Machin

The Municipality of Machin is home to the communities of Vermillion Bay, Minnitaki, and Eagle River. Residents of the Municipality value their small-town lifestyle and independence, proximity to the natural environment and natural beauty, diversity, and the sense of safety and belonging that their communities provide (Crupi Consulting 2017). Key characteristics among the communities include the level of volunteerism and residents' involvement in community causes, the communities' facilities and recreational infrastructure, community groups, opportunities for outdoor activities, and educational, medical, and senior facilities (Crupi Consulting 2017). The commitment of residents to their community through volunteerism and community groups helps display the civic pride, hard work, and pursuit of growth in the Municipality (Crupi Consulting 2017).

Participants of key person interviews emphasized the importance of connection among the communities in the Municipality; community connections through recreational and other activities helps foster a sense of unity and belonging amongst community members (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Participants also emphasized the importance of looking out for one's neighbours when living in a small community where particular services are often lacking. Other characteristics of the Municipality that are valued by residents include the peace and quiet, access to outdoor activities, and the friendliness of its people.

According to Machin's Community Economic Development Strategic Plan (Crupi Consulting 2017), the Municipality aims to continue fostering its diversity and be known as an innovative, growing community that offers a safe place and good quality of life. Machin's priorities include being able to work together despite differences among communities and residents, improve recreation and entertainment for youth and seniors, build relationships with First Nations and other surrounding communities, work towards a strong local economy through promoting entrepreneurialism and supporting local businesses, attract new residents, retain youth, develop

sustainably through progressive infrastructure and municipal services, and promote community pride (Crupi Consulting 2017).

### **2.3.3.4 Municipality of Sioux Lookout**

The Municipality of Sioux Lookout is situated on the shores of the Pelican, Abram, and Lac Seul lakes, amidst boreal forest, connecting 31 remote northern communities and over 30,000 Ontarians to essential services. Located halfway between major cities including Winnipeg and Thunder Bay, Sioux Lookout is connected by air, rail, road, and water (Municipality of Sioux Lookout n.d.a; Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020b). According to the Municipality's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020a), Sioux Lookout priorities include community investment, wellness, and collaboration.

#### **2.3.3.4.1 Community Investment**

Residents of Sioux Lookout are involved in their community, with the town coming together for annual festivals and events to maintain a lively arts and culture scene. Further, the abundant natural resources that surround the community form the basis of the Sioux Lookout lifestyle, where residents embrace community, diversity, and the great outdoors (Municipality of Sioux Lookout n.d). Participants of key person interviews shared that they value the small-town nature of Sioux Lookout and the feeling that their neighbours will "have their back" when issues arise (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

The Municipality has a history as a former transportation hub and has adapted to various economic changes over the years, now focusing on the Municipality's role as a service centre for its surrounding First Nations communities. Sioux Lookout is considered by many as the "Hub of the North", featuring the second busiest airport in northwestern Ontario and the fourth busiest in Ontario (MHBC Planning 2013). According to the municipality's Strategic Plan for 2020-2025, their vision is a vibrant community where diversity, nature, and compassion drive prosperity (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020a). To achieve this vision, the Municipality aims to proactively invest in the community to encourage growth and improve quality of life by developing infrastructure and housing that meets the diverse needs of the community (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020a).

#### **2.3.3.4.2 Wellness**

Sioux Lookout strives to encourage and foster a healthy and safe community by promoting and enhancing the area's natural assets to encourage activities, develop and support programs that encourage healthy lifestyles and ensure that there are appropriate services in place for the diverse range of needs in the community (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020b). Sioux Lookout has the Meno Ya Win Health Centre, a critical service available in the community to maintain the health and wellness of its residents which integrates the history and culture of the First Nations and non-Indigenous identity populations in the area (SLMHC n.d.). Residents of Sioux Lookout are generally active individuals, enjoying a large variety of outdoor activities including water sports, hunting, fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, and more (McSweeney and Associates 2019). Participants in? key person interviews expressed their enjoyment of Sioux Lookout's surrounding natural environment and the amount of space available; there is no competition/traffic when locals want to enjoy the outdoors (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Residents also shared that they value Sioux Lookout's small-

town feel while still having access to essential services and programs (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.3.3.4.3 Collaboration

Sioux Lookout takes pride in the deep connections it maintains with places, people, and, in particular, neighbouring First Nations communities in working together to strengthen the area's economy and quality of life (Municipality of Sioux Lookout n.d.a). Sioux Lookout's diverse population can be attributed to the rich history of the Anishinaabe peoples of what is now northwestern Ontario. Inherent to this history is the recognition of the effects of colonial policies and residential schools on the large population of Indigenous peoples who reside in Sioux Lookout today (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020b).

One example of Sioux Lookout's collaboration with surrounding First Nations is the Sioux Lookout Friendship Accord ("SLFA"). The SLFA was created in 2017 and is an agreement between the Municipality of Sioux Lookout and Cat Lake First Nation, Lac Seul First Nation, Slate Falls First Nation, and Kichenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation. The SLFA allows these communities to collaborate on various aspects of community management and planning to allow all communities to *"share sustainable prosperity, inspire change and hope, and to foster healing and opportunities for future generations"* (SLFA EDC n.d.). Core values of the SLFA include (SLFA EDC n.d.):

- Fulfilling social responsibilities and building healthy, just, and competitive communities;
- Economic independence for individuals, businesses, and communities;
- Advance economic development and financial independence through cooperation and collaboration; and
- Focus on diversity, tolerance, and equity.

Sioux Lookout would like to continue fostering its growth and development through collaboration with other communities to address shared opportunities and challenges and capitalize on the community's existing strengths (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020b).

### 2.3.3.4.4 Heritage

The Sioux Lookout Canadian National Railway Station, located at 53 Front Street in downtown Sioux Lookout, is a heritage site. The Sioux Lookout Canadian National Railway Station was constructed in 1911, forming part of the Grand Trunk Provincial Railway/National Transcontinental Railway system to provide a direct link from the prairies' grain operations to the Atlantic. The station is recognized under the *Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act*. The exterior of the building and scenic character of the property are protected by the Ontario Heritage Trust. Standing at the centre of town, the two-and-a-half-storey station provides a look back at Sioux Lookout's earlier days and represents the community's history (Canada's Historic Places n.d.).

The station is a rare example of Tudor-style design, featuring cladding with half timbers and stucco which differentiates it from other rail stations in Ontario. The original massing and low level of ornamentation has remained consistent throughout the station's history. The character defining elements that contribute to the station's heritage value include (Canada's Historic Places n.d.):

- Traditional size and massing as a divisional station;
- Unusual Tudor-inspired exterior design of stucco and half-timbering;
- Elongated, simply massed, and modestly ornamented architectural presentation;
- Prominent symmetrical roofline accented with twin cross gables at the building's ends;
- Passenger canopies running along the north and south elevations of the station;
- Large operator's bay at the west end of the south façade;
- Paired windows with louvered shutters of the upper storey on the north and south elevations;
- Elongated hipped roof with centrally located eyebrow dormers on all sides;
- Tall and narrow brick chimney at the western side of the roof's southern slope;
- Location at the historic centre of the town; and
- Landmark value as the pre-eminent heritage building in the town (Canada's Historic Places n.d.).

#### **2.3.3.5 Local Services Board of Melgund**

The Local Services Board of Melgund is a not-for-profit organization supported by volunteers that holds the authority to provide its communities, Dymont and Borups Corners, with arts, culture, and recreation services.

Results from key person interviews characterized Melgund as a quiet community where individuals enjoy being in nature and can always find things to do outside (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Residents of the area feel supported by their community and feel that neighbours are always willing to lend a helping hand. Residents enjoy gathering at the local hall to socialize, where events such as playing music together, game nights, and holiday celebrations (e.g., Canada Day) occur. Challenges in Melgund include a lack of space and funding to develop, limited resources/services, and a lack of community gathering spaces (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

#### **2.3.3.6 Township of Upsala**

Results from the key person interview program (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023) characterized Upsala as a close-knit community where everyone helps one another and residents cherish the outdoors. Upsala is looking for ways in which the Town can bring more people into the community, but lack of housing and employment opportunities remain barriers. Upsala would also like to have more locations to socialize and have organized sports available for residents to take part in, but the small population remains a barrier to doing so. Residents of Upsala rely on having a personal vehicle to get around, with most residents relying on Thunder Bay for their groceries and services.

#### **2.3.3.7 Local Services Board of Wabigoon**

Results from key person interviews characterized Wabigoon Village as a community with shared pride where residents choose to live an outdoor lifestyle, such as taking part in activities like hunting and fishing and enjoy opportunities to be in nature (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person

Interview Program 2022-2023). Participants indicated that Wabigoon Village, and the northwestern Ontario region in general, can provide less enjoyment/be limiting for residents who are less enthusiastic about the natural environment and remoteness. However, despite differing lifestyle aspirations amongst residents of Wabigoon Village, the community is considered to be cohesive; residents are largely looking for the same opportunities and development in their community, and when challenges arise, community members unite (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Challenges in Wabigoon Village include youth retention and a lack of opportunities for socializing and entertainment (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.3.4 Community Goals and Plans

Community goals and plans describes public plans for the Regional Study Area and Local Study Area when available, highlighting any goals and action items outlined in each plan. The section presents each community and its goals/plans, as well as a description of community challenges. Not all communities in the Local Study Area have the same types of plans, thus, each section presents the relevant available plans for each community.

#### 2.3.4.1 Regional Goals and Plans

This section describes Ontario's Growth Plan for Northern Ontario.

##### 2.3.4.1.1 Growth Plan for Northern Ontario

The Growth Plan for Northern Ontario is a 25-year plan to guide and coordinate provincial decisions and investments to aid population and economic growth in the region. The Growth Plan focuses on four areas of growth: diversifying traditional resource-based industries, workforce education and training, infrastructure investment and planning integration, and tools for Indigenous participation in the economy. The vision of the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario is to, by 2036, have *"a skilled, educated, healthy and prosperous population that is supported by world-class resources, leading edge technology and modern infrastructure"* (Government of Ontario 2011).

The Growth Plan is guided by six principles:

1. Creating a highly productive region, with a diverse, globally competitive economy that offers a range of career opportunities for all residents;
2. Developing a highly educated and skilled workforce to support an evolving knowledge-based economy and excellence in the trades;
3. Partnering with Indigenous peoples to increase educational and employment opportunities;
4. Delivering a complete network of transportation, energy, communications, social and learning infrastructure to support strong, vibrant communities;
5. Demonstrating leadership in sustainable growth and environmental management; and
6. Establishing innovative partnerships to maximize resources and ensure this Plan achieves its ambitious vision and is fiscally sustainable.

The Plan is divided into 6 topic areas: economy, people, communities, infrastructure, environment, and Indigenous peoples. Each topic area contains an action plan with policies to

guide decision-making and investment in that area. These topics and their action plans are described further, below.

## Economy

The economic action plan focuses on strategies for development on the following priority economic sectors:

- Advanced manufacturing;
- Agriculture, aquaculture, and food processing;
- Arts, culture, and creative industries;
- Digital economy;
- Forestry and value-added forestry-related industries;
- Health sciences;
- Minerals sector and mining supply and services;
- Renewable energy and services;
- Tourism;
- Transportation, aviation, and aerospace; and
- Water technologies and services.

The strategies for these existing and emerging sectors examine opportunities to strengthen networks and collaboration across stakeholders and communities, attract investment, grow and retain existing businesses, respond to labour market needs and opportunities, support research in the northern Ontario context, improve on the clarity and efficiency of provincial regulatory and legislative frameworks, and integrate consideration of the sectors when planning labour market and infrastructure.

## People

The action plan for people in northern Ontario focuses on three key areas: educational attainment, skill and innovation, and health. The province's strategy for educational attainment prioritizes working with school boards and postsecondary institutions to increase opportunities for residents of northern Ontario to participate in secondary and postsecondary education. To create a skilled and innovative population in the north, the province intends to collaborate with partners in education to increase the ability of northern residents to participate in the workforce through programs and initiatives. Lastly, the province's strategy for a health population is to increase the number of health professionals in the northern region, increase access to health services, and encourage municipalities to promote healthy living by providing variety in land uses, employment, housing, public spaces, and easily accessible businesses/services.

## Communities

The action plan for communities looks to build vibrant and resilient northern communities through both long-range and regional economic planning. The Growth Plan recommends that all



municipalities should create long-term community strategies. The Growth Plan also identifies strategic core areas, including Thunder Bay, Greater Sudbury, North Bay, Timmins, and Sault St. Marie, which are particularly encouraged to plan to create vibrant, walkable, mixed-use communities. Part of the action plan includes identifying economic and service hubs in the northern region to provide additional support. Lastly, the Growth Plan's regional economic planning priority seeks to strengthen northern communities' capacity to plan for economic development by developing regional economic plans for each economic planning area.

## Infrastructure

The infrastructure action plan seeks to coordinate and align infrastructure investments in order to support economic development and meet the needs of current and future residents. The Growth Plan's strategy for infrastructure focuses on coordinated investments, a multimodal transportation system to enhance connectivity, education infrastructure, information and communications infrastructure, and energy. Infrastructure investments include transportation, water and wastewater, waste management, energy, information and communications, and community infrastructure. Planning for a multimodal transportation system focuses on the efficiency and safety of transportation in the region as well as enhancing connectivity between communities. Education infrastructure refers to increasing access to education and training in the northern region through improved technologies, facilities, and partnerships. Planning for information and communications infrastructure investments can help support other economic development, educational attainment, healthcare, and public safety policies. Lastly, plans for energy infrastructure improvements include identifying investment opportunities in the north's transmission and distribution systems to maintain reliability and meet demands, working with stakeholders to identify opportunities for diesel alternatives for remote communities, and seek opportunities to increase energy efficiency in the region.

## Environment

The environment action plan seeks to support the sustainable development of northern Ontario's natural resources. The action plan recognizes the need for climate change mitigation and adaptation and focuses on environmental leadership and protection. Plans for the region's management of natural resources includes integrating approaches with provincial policies and programs, as well as working within a framework which responds to changing environmental, economic, and social values, and science-based information to allow for emerging practices and technologies. Environmental protection plans are pursuant to the *Far North Act* of 2010 and encourage municipalities to contribute to the protection of surface and groundwater features, identify sustainability objectives, and incorporate climate change mitigation strategies to create a culture of conservation. The province would like to facilitate renewable energy projects in the region and work with various stakeholders to protect and preserve air and water quality, water quantity, and natural heritage from climate change impacts.

## Indigenous Peoples

The Province of Ontario recognizes the need to reconcile and work closely with Indigenous peoples. The Growth Plan seeks to address the socio-economic gaps which exist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups by supporting improvements in economic development, healthcare, and educational attainment in the north. Economic development is a key objective in



this plan as the province seeks the involvement of Indigenous communities in economic planning and improving the economic development capacity of Indigenous communities. The action plan begins with acknowledgement of Indigenous and treaty rights and the need to develop consultation frameworks, support capacity-building, and work with the federal government to settle Indigenous land claims. Economic development planning focuses on increasing employment opportunities for Indigenous peoples in the northern region, involving Indigenous communities in regional economic development planning, expanding Indigenous opportunities to participate in local labour markets through various methods including internships, increasing access to education and training, and encouraging partnerships between Indigenous communities and educational/training institutions, and support Indigenous enterprises. Actions to improve healthcare and educational attainment for Indigenous peoples include establishing and monitoring targets and indicators, facilitating support programs and summer work experiences, and delivering education and health services in a culturally appropriate manner. Lastly, the action plan for Indigenous peoples looks to collaborate with communities in their land-use planning. The province will support community-based land-use planning and include Indigenous communities in planning related to Crown land and resources to consider traditional knowledge.

### 2.3.4.2 Township of Ignace

This section presents the following plans of the Township of Ignace: Official Plan, Community Improvement Plan, Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, and Community Strategy: Exploring Our Possibilities 2019-2024. These plans are described in further detail below.

#### 2.3.4.2.1 Ignace Official Plan

Official plans describe municipal policies and zoning for how lands within the community may be used, such as where housing, industry, and roads may be located. This ensures that community growth is coordinated and meets the public's needs, as well as ensures the public is aware of the Municipality's general land use policies. Official plans also describe community improvement initiatives (Government of Ontario 2019c). The Township of Ignace's 2020 Official Plan established a vision for the community and outlines six community goals. The Official Plan is intended to guide and manage the Township's development to the year 2045 and aims to balance physical and economic growth with the protection of social, cultural, and natural resources. The Township's vision for Ignace is (WSP 2020):

*Ignace will be a complete, healthy, and active northern community which offers a full range of housing options, employment, services, and opportunities for all residents at all stages of life. Ignace will grow its tourism, resource, and service (e.g., commercial) sectors through economic diversification and investment-readiness initiatives. The Township will continue to protect its key natural heritage and recreational resources, such as Agimak Lake, and will maintain its small-town character.*

This community vision is guided by the following six goals and their sub-goals, outlined below in **Table 2.3-1**.

### Table 2.3-1: Township of Ignace Official Plan Goals

Main Goal	Sub-Goals
Grow as a complete and health community.	<p>Promote a logical, orderly, attractive, and cost-effective development and land use pattern in the Township;</p> <p>Achieve a greater range of commercial services including retail stores, hardware stores, grocery stores, and restaurants;</p> <p>Attract and maintain a full range of medical and wellness services;</p> <p>Respect and enhance the Township's sense of place by promoting well designed built form and cultural planning, and conserving features that help define character, including cultural heritage resources and landscapes;</p> <p>Develop and enhance recreational facilities, cultural amenities, and opportunities for art;</p> <p>Ensure that growth and development is balanced with the need to protect the Township's natural heritage and beauty;</p> <p>Enhance and protect areas that are significant to the Township's identity, such as Tower Hill and the beaches on Agimak Lake;</p> <p>Promote community beautification, especially along Highway 17/Main Street;</p> <p>Consider the potential impacts of climate change when considering the design of new developments; and</p> <p>Contribute to a barrier-free environment for persons with disabilities.</p>

Source: WSP 2020.

Table 2.3-1 Continued: Township of Ignace Official Plan Goals

Main Goal	Sub-Goals
Facilitate economic diversification and growth.	<p>Facilitate the expansion of existing businesses, including home occupations and home industries, and attract new business development;</p> <p>Promote industrial development in the Township, notably on available industrial lands within the settlement area north of Highway 17/Main Street;</p> <p>Encourage economic growth and development in the Township's rural area, including resource development (e.g., aggregates, forestry and mineral exploration and development);</p> <p>Maximize the economic opportunities associated with resource-based tourism and recreation (e.g., fishing and hunting);</p> <p>Provide opportunities for the remediation and re-use of brownfield sites (properties that may be contaminated) and greyfield sites (previously developed properties that are underutilized, derelict, or vacant but not contaminated);</p> <p>Promote the establishment of an agricultural sector and the economic opportunities associated with agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, and on-farm diversified uses in the rural area; and</p> <p>Position the Township to become a service hub for mineral exploration and development in the region, including the Ring of Fire.</p>
Preserve and enhance the natural environment.	<p>Protect the quality and quantity of surface water and ground water features and their hydrologic functions, specifically Michel Lake, the Township's drinking water source;</p> <p>Preserve and enhance the ecological integrity of the Township's lakes and their ability to support resource-based recreation (e.g., fishing);</p> <p>Mitigate the potential risk associated with hazardous forest types for wildland fires; and</p> <p>Minimize the impacts of land uses on the natural environment, including but not limited to fish habitat, wildlife habitat, creeks, waterways, and wildflowers such as Lady Slippers.</p>

Source: WSP 2020.

Table 2.3-1 Continued: Township of Ignace Official Plan Goals

Main Goal	Sub-Goals
Promote a full range of housing options.	<p>Permit affordable housing options such as second units, garden suites, apartments, co-operative housing, and tiny homes, as appropriate;</p> <p>Promote a diversity of housing options including townhouse dwellings, low-rise apartments, and semi-detached dwellings;</p> <p>Support the development of a range of affordable housing options for seniors; and</p> <p>Support opportunities for appropriate rural residential development while protecting the natural environment.</p>
Enhance mobility and transportation.	<p>Encourage the development of sidewalks, pathways, and trails to promote healthy and active transportation in new developments and/or in roadway modifications/upgrades;</p> <p>Design roads as complete streets, where possible, to allow pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists of all ages and abilities to move safely along roadways;</p> <p>Recognize the importance of Highway 17/Main Street to the community's mobility and promote its enhancement, including a future pedestrian crossing; and</p> <p>Promote opportunities for alternative modes of inter-community transportation including shuttle bus and taxi services.</p>
Recognize and respect cultural, heritage, and recreation resources.	<p>Identify and protect the Township's cultural heritage resources, which include archaeological resources, built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes;</p> <p>Identify and protect the Township's recreational resources such as the trails around Lily Pad Lake and snowmobile trails; and</p> <p>Identify opportunities for new recreational resources and amenities suited to all age groups, including seniors.</p>

Source: WSP 2020.

#### 2.3.4.2.2 Ignace Community Improvement Plan

In 2018, the Township of Ignace released its Community Improvement Plan ("CIP") for 2019 to 2024. The CIP is a planning tool that provides a framework to guide community development towards a set of goals and objectives. The CIP follows provincial acts such as the *Planning Act*, *Municipal Act*, *Ontario Heritage Act*, *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, *Provincial Policy Statement*, and *Growth Plan for Northern Ontario*, as well as other plans created by the Township including the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan and Community Investment Readiness and Capacity Building Master Plan.

The vision of Ignace's CIP is to "*position Ignace as an investment-ready northern community by retaining and attracting businesses and residents through incentive programs, and municipal*

*leadership strategies which contribute to revitalization and beautification"* (WSP 2018). A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis were conducted as part of Ignace's CIP and highlighted the following opportunities for community revitalization (WSP 2018):

- Reignite economic development associated with redevelopment of vacant or underutilized properties for commercial and residential purposes;
- Improve building façades, particularly along Main Street;
- Develop a more cohesive, vibrant, and accessible streetscape in the core business areas of the Township (e.g., Main Street);
- Develop gateway signage improvements;
- Use wayfinding signage with maps to increase awareness of key recreational assets, such as the Township's beaches, in order to draw-in tourists and the travelling public; and
- Promote the redevelopment of vacant and brownfield sites (e.g., former gas stations).

The opportunities identified by the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis led to the creation of the following community improvement goals, which align with the Township of Ignace 2015-2019 Strategic Plan, and Community Investment Readiness and Capacity Building Master Plan:

- Enhance the Township's physical image, buildings, and main streets to reflect the vibrant, welcoming, and friendly nature of the community and its people;
- Increase the Township's tax base by offering incentives that retain, grow, and attract businesses and residents, providing long-term payback in the form of municipal revenues;
- Entice tourists and the travelling public to come to Ignace, stay longer, and return more frequently;
- Promote and enhance the Township's natural features and community assets (beaches, community facilities, etc.);
- Make a strong, lasting, and positive first impression through gateway features that reflect the community's assets and identity; and
- Implement community improvement through the right set of direct and indirect financial incentives and municipal leadership strategies (WSP 2018).

To achieve the community vision and goals outlined above, the Township identified several public projects using the philosophy, "what is the smallest thing we can do to make the biggest impact?" The following recommended projects focus on enhancing Ignace's existing character and natural environment.

- Public lands and buildings: development should consider maintaining public access to the waterfront and sufficient area for community recreation and leisure needs. The Township may consider adding additional seating and other amenities to the beach areas to maximize their utility and draw. The Township may also consider restoration of the float plane 'node' located on the north side of Main Street.

- Gateway signage: the Township has undertaken a branding and marketing strategy, which included designing new signage. The Township may consider relocating the existing stone markers for use elsewhere in the community. The Township may consider the placement of its gateway signage to align with the town's entrances more closely to welcome the travelling public and allow them more time to consider stopping to use the town's amenities. A directory listing the town's businesses and services would also aid this.
- Property standards for Highway 17: to ensure a positive first impression on visitors, the Township may consider participation in the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines' First Impressions Community Exchange. This program helps communities learn about their strengths and weaknesses as seen through the eyes of first-time visitors. Volunteer "visitors" from two exchange communities do unannounced, incognito visits, record their observations, and then provide constructive feedback. This can help the Township in identifying priorities for improvement in appearance (e.g., property standards).
- Lookout Point/Tower Hill: the Township may wish to consider improving signage to alert drivers of the upcoming scenic lookout and provide enough time for them to safely slow down and make the required turn. The Township may also wish to consider maintaining and managing vegetation in order to minimize the vegetation that obscures views of the Township and Agimak Lake. Lighting improvements, landscaping, and seating at the top of Lookout Point could contribute to the beautification of this asset. The addition of public washrooms would also support the development of this asset as a destination for residents and the travelling public.
- Smartphone application: the Township may wish to consider developing a smartphone application for the use of residents and visitors alike. Potential functionality could include the following: local events calendar; promotions and features offered by local businesses; maps of the Township featuring points of interest, local attractions and hunting and fishing resorts; local business directory on a map illustrating the location of goods and services within the Township; and food and accommodations information.
- Highway 599: participants of the Visioning Workshops identified that signage to Highway 599 is not very clear and could be improved. Additionally, vegetation overgrowth at the northwest corner of the Highway 17 and Highway 599 intersection obscures the public facilities located there, specifically the provincial ministry offices and Mary Berglund Clinic.
- Municipal policies: it is recognized that the Township is currently making a number of key investments in the community, for example through the branding and marketing strategy, as well as the integrated land use planning project. To complement these efforts, the Township may wish to consider development of the following policy documents:
  - Urban design guidelines: to ensure that development and redevelopment supported by the CIP is compatible with existing development and appropriately reflects the community's future vision, the Township may wish to develop detailed design guidelines. Design guidelines may identify architectural elements (colours, cladding, etc.) as well as performance standards (heights, setbacks, etc.) and could assist the Township in evaluating proposals for CIP incentives.
  - Streetscape strategy: to set out a strategy for the improvement for the public realm in Ignace, particularly along Main Street and in other commercial and institutional areas,

the Township may wish to consider developing a streetscape strategy. The strategy should identify specific improvements and strategic interventions in the Township, anticipated costs, and implementation (WSP 2018).

Several incentive programs were developed and presented in the CIP to help the Township fulfill its community improvement goals by stimulating private sector investment. The CIP also presents a marketing strategy for the Township, targeted at investors and business owners across the region, which can help Ignace to realize its goals for community improvement. The marketing strategy includes developing printed materials displaying an overview of the CIP and incentive programs, updating the Township website with a webpage highlighting the CIP, annual reporting on the monitoring and evaluation of the CIP through newsletters/information sheets, hosting a launch party to celebrate and promote the completion of the CIP, arrange targeted meetings/presentations for investors and business owners, and identify, recognize, and celebrate successful projects under the CIP.

#### **2.3.4.2.3 Ignace Community Safety and Well-Being Plan**

Community safety and well-being plans are legally required in the Province of Ontario under legislative requirements of the *Police Services Act* (1990c) that went into effect in January 2019 (Government of Ontario 2021f). The Ignace Community Well-Being and Safety Plan (2021) outlines a course of action for identifying and responding to current and emerging well-being and safety challenges in the community. The goal of this plan is “everyone belongs,” and this goal is reflected in the community engagement and collaboration which occurred to identify the priority considerations of Ignace community members (see **Section 2.3.3.1** for more information on Ignace community character). The priority areas determined by the Township were support for seniors, employment, mental health, and accessibility, respectively. The strategic priorities, targeted outcomes, and key activities for each priority area is described below in **Table 2.3-2**.



Table 2.3-2: Ignace Community Well-Being and Safety Priorities

Strategic Priorities	Targeted Objectives	Key Activities
<b>Priority area: seniors</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To create, strengthen, and support the well-being and safety for our seniors;</li> <li>• To support seniors in maintaining their independence and social connections;</li> <li>• To encourage and support seniors' safe mobility, transportation, and independence; and</li> <li>• To provide diversity in housing stock that meets the unique needs of seniors enabling them to transition to new housing as their needs evolve.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants will have skills and strategies to adjust and accommodate for age-related changes in their driving abilities;</li> <li>• Potential for fewer accidents involving older drivers;</li> <li>• Extend older drivers' ability to drive safely; and</li> <li>• A diversified housing stock to allow not only "aging in place" but support transition to new housing options.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the 55 Alive Mature Driver Refresher Course developed by the Canadian Safety Council and delivered locally to increase awareness of age-related risks, highlight specific driving conditions and situations that are most hazardous to older drivers, and encourage strategies for coping with or avoiding these risky driving conditions;</li> <li>• Identify and correct bad driving habits;</li> <li>• Ensure that future development proposals include affordable, rental, and senior housing;</li> <li>• Consider granting tax exemptions for non-profit seniors and affordable housing developments for seniors housing, purpose-built rentals, and/or housing that incorporates accessible design as incentives to encourage development;</li> <li>• Develop a comprehensive housing strategy that includes housing needs assessment as well as strategies to address seniors and low-income housing;</li> <li>• Lobby public and private sectors to engage in measures to improve the housing stock in Ignace;</li> <li>• Advocate that market priced housing alone will not be sufficient to meet the needs of the community and that significant investments in subsidized housing will need to be made; and</li> <li>• Advocate to provincial and federal governments and the private sector for continued and increased investment in affordable housing.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.3-2 Continued: Ignace Community Well-Being and Safety Priorities**

Strategic Priorities	Targeted Objectives	Key Activities
<b>Priority area: employment</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide employment recruitment and retention opportunities for in demand skilled workers, youth, Indigenous, adult learners, and young professionals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articulate and measure the community's skilled human resource needs;</li> <li>Increase the opportunities available for youth and young adults to pursue further education opportunities;</li> <li>Increase the supports and resources for those individuals with mental health challenges to acquire and retain employment; and</li> <li>Support local youth and adult learners to acquire skills/education to fill sought local positions to provide the level of services to meet community needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor community skilled human resource gaps by collecting the status of stagnant job vacancies from local employers;</li> <li>Support the youth engagement strategy to help grow and develop local youth education and skills-training opportunities;</li> <li>Welcome young professionals to the community and support their network of associations that support their skills training and career development;</li> <li>Meet with local school boards, post-secondary educational institutes, and employment agencies to promote career pathways and trades for Ignace youth and adult learners;</li> <li>Lobby employers to engage in measures to provide Ignace residents access to education and job training for in demand jobs, apprenticeships, and trades; and</li> <li>Support employers on recruitment, mentoring, retainment, and incentive packages for employment opportunities.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.3-2 Continued: Ignace Community Well-Being and Safety Priorities**

Strategic Priorities	Targeted Objectives	Key Activities
<b>Priority area: mental health</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve the outcomes and experiences of people living with mental health and/or substance use issues in Ignace;</li> <li>• To promote mental wellness and positive relationships among community members and families through fostering supportive environments;</li> <li>• To improve access to mental health and wellness services and supports for “at risk” and vulnerable groups by simplifying pathways and coordinating efforts; and</li> <li>• To promote healthy living and addiction treatment options available to all residents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More youth, Indigenous, and seniors feel safe, connected and supported in the community;</li> <li>• Improved health and wellness outcomes for community members through a better “streamlined” system in navigating among mental health and addiction services and supports (i.e., barrier-free, umbrella of care, cost management approach);</li> <li>• Improved access to mental health services and supports for youth, seniors, and Indigenous groups;</li> <li>• More situations of acutely elevated risk are mitigated;</li> <li>• Increase in awareness and acceptance of mental health challenges;</li> <li>• Reduced stigma and discrimination;</li> <li>• Enhanced communication among local and regional agencies; and</li> <li>• Reduced police involvement in non-criminal calls.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational facilities and events are available to youth, Indigenous, families/parents, and seniors in the community;</li> <li>• Social supports are incorporated into the fabric of the community (inclusiveness, community gatherings, welcoming events); and</li> <li>• Mental health services are provided to youth, Indigenous, and seniors in an environment they are comfortable in.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.3-2 Continued: Ignace Community Well-Being and Safety Priorities**

Strategic Priorities	Targeted Objectives	Key Activities
<b>Priority area: accessibility</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase residents' sense of belonging and safety (resilience);</li> <li>• To increase vulnerable residents' experiences regarding ease of access to services and critical supports, as well as positive and sustainable outcomes;</li> <li>• To expand community-wide education and awareness on safety and belonging; and</li> <li>• To improve accessibility to service and supports.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased opportunities to build new relationships and strengthen social support networks reducing isolation and feelings of loneliness;</li> <li>• Increased awareness among residents of existing services available to the community;</li> <li>• Wider range of group peer support that includes sharing of experiences/information and mutual learning;</li> <li>• Improved accessibility/mobility through improvements to physical environments (i.e., outdoor spaces and buildings); and</li> <li>• Decreased incidents of falls and related injuries for seniors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a municipally supported communication strategy that increases access to economic and community supports for vulnerable populations in Ignace;</li> <li>• Develop, maintain, and distribute an inventory (paper, electronic) of local services to service agencies;</li> <li>• Enhance 211 directory for Ignace by ensuring that every agency is included, and their listings are updated regularly;</li> <li>• Undertake and implement a community safety audit;</li> <li>• Develop a peer mentor network of persons with lived experience to act as coaches in navigating the system, identifying, and accessing services, in addition to reducing the intimidation factor that may be associated with the process;</li> <li>• Recruit and train (if necessary) individuals with lived experience to act as peer mentors;</li> <li>• Develop accessible design guidelines to apply to new development in the community;</li> <li>• Ensure all public buildings are equipped with accessible design features, such as accessible washrooms, ramps, railings, and other features;</li> <li>• Ensure additions or replacements of public seating (e.g., benches and picnic tables) in public spaces have accessible design;</li> <li>• Work with the Ignace Area Business Association to help improve the accessibility of their spaces, including benches outside of stores, ramps, automatic doors, use of washrooms, and accessible parking spaces;</li> <li>• Ensure all future sidewalk development maintains widths of at least 1.5 metres to accommodate persons using mobility aids and walkers;</li> <li>• Identify key pedestrian routes to receive additional winter maintenance (e.g., snow and ice clearing) with a priority focus a senior walk/urban art proposed route;</li> <li>• Work with Township of Ignace and Ignace Public School for community exercise activities such as daily seniors' walks;</li> <li>• Identify opportunities to provide additional lighting and remove tripping hazard along main walking routes and pathways throughout town; and</li> <li>• Consider providing free sand or salt for residents to use to reduce slippery ice conditions on their driveways and sidewalks, and in front of local businesses.</li> </ul>

Source: Township of Ignace 2021.

#### 2.3.4.2.4 Ignace Community Strategy: Exploring Our Possibilities 2019-2024

The Ignace Community Strategy aims to support and grow the community and its economy by outlining priorities and directing municipal efforts. The Strategy provides goals, recommendations, and actions for the Township's four development priorities, or "pillars": community development, economic development, tourism, and marketing and communications (see **Section 3.0 Economy** for information on the economic development and tourism pillars). Actions for each pillar were determined through public consultation and research and are the responsibility of various stakeholders in the Township, including elected officials, economic development staff and other Township departments, local organizations, local businesses, and residents. The Community Strategy works to support Ignace's vision, *"to be a safe, attractive, and caring community that focuses on quality of life which is driven by a healthy, diversified economy based on principles of sustainability."*

#### Community Development

The Township of Ignace would like to continue building a strong, cohesive community with a growing population, while maintaining the small-town feeling that Ignace residents value. In seeking to foster a united community, the Ignace Community Strategy highlights the following goals for community development:

1. To be a proud, united, and vibrant community that works together and celebrates success; and
2. To build trust through relationships.

**Table 2.3-3** below outlines recommendations and the top five actions to help the Township achieve these community development goals.

**Table 2.3-3: Community Strategy 2019-2024, Community Development Recommendations and Top 5 Actions**

Recommendations	Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean up and beautify the community;</li> <li>• Build trust through relationships for positive community change;</li> <li>• Maintain relationships with current key prospects; and</li> <li>• Build on key community assets to be ready for investments in the specific sectors of forestry, mining, and commercial/retail.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use the new brand and create a themed signage program. Implement the signage program along the Trans-Canada corridor, between Thunder Bay and Dryden;</li> <li>2. Continue to remove any derelict or abandoned buildings that are located within Ignace. Turn the properties into landscaped parkettes or erect building facades/signage that demonstrate what the property would look like within the CIP guidelines;</li> <li>3. Continue to enact and enforce property standards to ensure Ignace portrays itself with an image of heightened property ownership and pride;</li> <li>4. Continue to support the existing community events (i.e., White Otter Days, Canada Day, etc.) and use the success of these annual events to make residents proud of their community and use it as an opportunity to market the community as a location of choice for potential new residents; and</li> <li>5. Continue to demonstrate to the NWMO that Ignace is the right choice for the Canada Geologic Repository and be ready for when Ignace could be the selected site.</li> </ol>

**Source:** TD Graham & Associates 2019.

### Marketing and Communications

Residents of Ignace seek a central source of information to learn of local opportunities, events, community stories, and more since the loss of their local newspaper, the Ignace Driftwood, in 2018 (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Further, residents want to share local information and spread the word about Ignace to non-residents. The Ignace Community Strategy highlights the following marketing and communications goal:

- For the Township of Ignace to effectively tell the community's story and messages to current and prospective residents, businesses, tourists, and other levels of government about the community's assets and strengths.

**Table 2.3-4** below outlines recommendations and the top five actions to help the Township achieve these marketing and communications goals.

**Table 2.3-4: Ignace Community Strategy 2019-2024, Marketing and Communications Recommendations and Top Five Actions**

Recommendations	Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidate and enhance online presence; and</li> <li>• Continue to implement remaining actions in the Ignace Marketing Plan 2018.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the Township of Ignace website and complete missing content ensuring the Ignace messaging is geared to attracting visitors;</li> <li>2. Launch e-newsletter and e-blast program to keep businesses up to date, addressing local concerns and opportunities. Use these to communicate Ignace initiatives that affect and/or support local business community;</li> <li>3. Modify existing Facebook page and update it often. As new content gets added to the site, share this news via social media. Goal is to drive traffic to the website;</li> <li>4. Apply to Destination Northern Ontario for funding to develop and implement wayfinding strategy; and</li> <li>5. Create better directional signage in and around the Township directing residents and tourists to key attractions such as Agimak Lake, the beaches, Tower Hill, trails, the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre, and others that are currently not well-signed. This will also help to improve linkages to the lake and trails.</li> </ol>

**Source:** TD Graham & Associates 2019.

#### 2.3.4.2.5 Ignace Project Visioning

The Ignace Project Visioning Community Conversations report (2020) presents community feedback on Township priorities and objectives in relation to the Project, as provided by Ignace residents through series of discussions. Community members were presented with five categories of priorities and objectives: people, economics and finance, infrastructure, community and culture, and natural environment. The priorities and community feedback are described further below.

#### People

The Township would like to grow the population to 2,500-3,000, develop strategies to retain population across all age groups, particularly youth, and attract new residents to the area by developing strategies to attract and retain workers. Community feedback on these goals included a common desire to maintain Ignace's small-town feel, with most indicating they prefer a community population under 3,000, concerns regarding a lack of employment opportunities, long-term care facilities, and general services in the area to retain youth and seniors, and a desire to ensure existing Ignace residents benefit the most from opportunities brought by the Project, including prioritizing local training and hiring.



## Economics and Finance

The Township has several economic goals and considerations, including increasing business activity and employment opportunities, enhancing strategies to sustain local businesses, growing the tax base to fund community services/facilities through managed population growth, enhancing local training programs to maximize project opportunities for residents, increase household income, and diminish needs for social assistance, and support the growth of tourism through community enhancements. Participants reaffirmed the importance of maintaining local businesses as they represent northern culture, provide youth employment opportunities, and offer an alternative to larger, chain stores, with variety and quality of local businesses being a priority for attracting and retaining residents including a need for conveniences such as a 24-hour gas station/convenience store, restaurant, and pet-friendly accommodations. Participants were concerned with the Township's financial sustainability and the costs associated with developing and maintaining infrastructure, noting that Ignace should not go into deficit to host the Project. Community members noted that new opportunities for skill development, including a large facility to host them, would benefit the community, particularly youth, as residents currently leave the community for secondary education and training and are also often unaware of the services offered by Crossroads Employment Services in town. Participants shared that they would like to see maximum economic benefit to Ignace throughout the Project and that expanding the Township's relationship with the NWMO to include an economic development team would be beneficial. Participants were interested in learning more about the Project's potential effects on tourism in the area, suggesting Ignace be promoted as a healthy community with numerous outdoor recreation opportunities and implementation of an interactive information site highlighting points of interest, and noting opportunities for developing pedestrian and cyclist networks in town.

## Infrastructure

The Township would like to prioritize coordinated and integrated infrastructure and services, expand real estate development and upgrade the existing housing stock, improve transportation infrastructure and services, improve the aesthetics and attractiveness of Ignace along the highway corridor, and improve recreational facilities and programming. Participants expressed that new infrastructure is the most cost-intensive compared to other community priorities and the need to improve existing infrastructure ahead of developing new facilities, but acknowledged that new, innovative and iconic infrastructure could attract tourists. Residents suggested service lines and fencing around commercial properties and improvements to communication infrastructure, including internet and cellphone services. Feedback on housing development was tied to employment opportunities, as residents shared that Ignace cannot have new housing without providing more employment, however, there is a shortage of affordable residential real estate and rentals and participants acknowledged a demand for new, affordable, and high-quality housing, particularly for seniors. Participants pointed to sidewalks, curbs, and potholes as being in need of improvement, noting that the highway corridor through town and the trailer park require improvements to their aesthetics. Participants also noted that, if the population increases, the Town may require public transportation. A need for greater recreation programming and infrastructure was expressed by participants, including enhancements to current facilities like the fitness facility, tennis courts, and curling rink, and new facilities such as an indoor swimming pool and a youth centre. As current recreation in Ignace relies heavily on volunteerism, community members suggested a transition to staffed positions to support

sustainable recreation. Residents felt strongly about maintaining access to the outdoors, suggesting opportunities for boat launches close to the community and protecting forested areas for recreation. With a potential growth in Ignace's population, participants expressed a need to study other municipalities in proximity to major projects to understand ways to address potential social challenges that may arise.

### **Community and Culture**

The Township would like to celebrate its heritage and small-town nature, as well as support its community members through recreation and social programming enhancements. Community feedback on these priorities confirmed the importance of Ignace's small-town nature to residents, with some participants noting that maintaining a small population may contribute to the town's resilience in the future, concerns about losing the community's senior population and the history/knowledge/stories that they hold and the desire to be more proactive in highlighting Ignace's history (i.e., gateway signage) as a way of attracting tourists and new residents. Participants also suggested that Ignace's recreational facilities be updated/modernized and expressed the desire to provide more recreational opportunities across different age groups and for youth in particular.

### **Natural Environment**

The Township would like to maintain and protect the environmental integrity of the area and support the conservation of reserves and parks. Community members responded to these priorities with the recommendation that they be expanded to better reflect the community's strong connection to the outdoors. Participants noted that the natural environment is not limited to the areas surrounding Ignace and should also reflect areas within the community, and consideration should be given on how the environment within Ignace can be preserved and enhanced, such as through community beautification initiatives, preserving natural areas when expanding the community, and measures related to waste disposal. Participants acknowledged that the integrity of the natural environment in and around Ignace is critical to many residents' livelihoods, and the importance of communication regarding Project activities to increase public understanding and support of the Project.

#### **2.3.4.3 City of Dryden**

This section presents the following plans of the City of Dryden: Official Plan, Community Improvement Plan, Community Strategic Plan, and Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (this plan is shared with the Municipality of Machin). These plans are described in further detail below.

##### **2.3.4.3.1 Dryden Official Plan**

Dryden's Official Plan (2022) focuses on sustainable development through the integration of governance, land use, transportation, and the social, cultural, economic, natural, and built environments (Quartek Group 2022). According to Dryden's previous Official Plan (2012), the City envisions that by 2031, Dryden will thrive as a service centre for the region, offering advanced educational and health care facilities surrounded by boreal forest. The City will be a welcoming, prosperous, and modern community, supporting culture, tourism, and the natural environment while ensuring an excellent quality of life for its residents and visitors.

The 2022 Official Plan establishes goals and objectives in several priority areas to guide future development in the City, including community, culture, economy, environment, housing, sustainable development, tourism, and transportation (see **Section 2.4** for a description of the community, environment, housing, sustainable development, and transportation priorities; see **Section 3.0** for a description of the economy and tourism priorities). The culture priority is described further, below.

## Culture

Culture priorities identified in the Dryden Official Plan (2022) include:

- Encourage the conservation of cultural heritage resources, which includes their identification, protection, management, and use;
- To recognize and support the diverse ethnic groups, ages and interests of the present and future residents of the City;
- To support the cultural community and support local artisans, through the installation of public art and creation of public spaces that celebrate the creativity of the community;
- To engage with Indigenous communities when considering significant land uses or public works in the City;
- To recognize and respect the cultural values and heritage of First Nations, urban Indigenous, and Métis populations;
- To build a physically attractive and accessible community that enhances the community's quality of life and sense of place;
- To ensure that planning for land use, infrastructure and other municipal or community services considers culture as a consideration in the consultation and decision-making process; and
- To recognize the contribution cultural heritage makes to the municipality's identity, economic prosperity, quality of life, and overall sense of place (Quartek Group 2022).

### 2.3.4.3.2 Dryden Community Improvement Plan

In 2019, the City of Dryden released an updated CIP, modernizing the city's previous improvement plan from 2007. The CIP is a planning tool that provides a framework to guide community development towards a set of goals and objectives. The CIP follows provincial acts such as the *Planning Act*, *Municipal Act*, *Ontario Heritage Act*, *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, Provincial Policy Statement, and Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, as well as other plans created by the City, such as Dryden's Official Plan (2022) and Economic Development Strategic Plan (2015).

The vision of Dryden's CIP is, "*Dryden will seek unique opportunities to build pride in our community by supporting existing and future businesses, attract new strategic investment, and facilitate an efficient building and development process.*" To realize this vision, the City identified nine community improvement goals (WSP 2019):

1. Market Dryden's geographic location as a regional hub to attract targeted, strategic investment in the community;

2. Assist and collaborate with existing businesses in achieving their economic development goals;
3. Be investment-ready to accommodate new business opportunities;
4. Encourage development that is beneficial to the community as a whole on municipally and privately-owned vacant and/or underutilized land;
5. Support the revitalization and beautification of the community, including existing development and businesses;
6. Recognize opportunities and work proactively with applicants, and provide assistance to applicants through the building and development process;
7. Utilize technology and implement a streamlined, easy-to-follow CIP application process;
8. Encourage and reward pride and investment in property ownership, including celebrating and marketing successful community improvement initiatives; and
9. Pursue the implementation of community improvements through a combination of municipal leadership and private investment in the following:
  - a. Accessibility improvements;
  - b. Provision of affordable housing and seniors housing;
  - c. Remediation, rehabilitation, and redevelopment of brownfield sites;
  - d. Conversion of vacant or under-utilized space to support new development;
  - e. Improvements to the energy efficiency of existing buildings;
  - f. Improvements to building facades, signage, landscaping, and parking areas;
  - g. Development on surplus municipally owned lands;
  - h. Provision of public art; and
  - i. Promoting community gardens, small-scale agricultural uses, and local food production as interim uses on private vacant lands prior to their development/redevelopment.

To achieve the community vision and improvement goals outlined above, the City developed a municipal strategy for complementary improvements to public policy, wayfinding and signage, lands, and infrastructure. The following is a list of City initiated projects that can help Dryden meet the goals of its improvement plan and positively represent its municipal leadership (WSP 2019):

- Municipal initiatives/documents: Dryden has opportunities to implement strategic policy initiatives that will support its Improvement Plan goals and objectives. The City may wish to consider development of the following municipal initiatives and documents:
  - Reconciliation and partnerships: Dryden will seek to partner with Indigenous organizations and communities, as well as any other organizations, to foster local and regional economic growth and identify the necessary resources to drive economic competitiveness; and

- Streetscape design plan: this plan would set out to improve public streets, sidewalks, pathways, and trails that are the City's responsibility. The plan would set out guidelines for beautification, signage, street furniture, pedestrian crossings, among other elements. This plan should identify and prioritize specific improvements in conjunction with planned public infrastructure works, anticipated costs, and a proposed implementation strategy.
- Co-working space: to encourage local entrepreneurs and small business operations, the City may consider the development of a co-working space for small businesses, such as an innovation centre or an incubator space. Co-working spaces may be located on City-owned lands or within existing facilities.
- Infrastructure: several streets throughout the City were identified by community members as being in need of road repairs, repaving, and streetscaping improvements. When local streets are being considered and prioritized for road works, including to minimize traffic conflicts and congestion, the City should consider implementing streetscape improvements in conjunction with other construction, including planting street trees, improving lighting, rehabilitating sidewalks, trails, and road surfaces, installing street furniture, and other decorative elements such as planters, banners, and hanging flower baskets. Such improvements would contribute to enabling connected, safe, and comfortable travel by pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.
- Gateway signage and wayfinding: there are opportunities to enhance key entryways into the municipality, including along Highway 17, to attract potential visitors and vehicles passing through Dryden. There is also a need to implement better signage and wayfinding to increase awareness of key recreational and tourism assets in the City, such as the Laura Howe Marsh. Wayfinding could be implemented at key entry points into the City, including business and recreational area listings, with directional signage. A downtown business directory and associated signage could be implemented at Highway 17/Duke Street in the east, and at Highway 17/King Street in the west.
- Public art: the City may incorporate public art on municipal buildings, structures (e.g., bridges, retaining walls), and in public spaces to celebrate and support a thriving arts culture in Dryden. Public art may also be utilized to improve streetscaping and the visitor experience, as well as promote tourism, as public artworks can be used to visualize and reflect local culture and history, and implement the City's branding strategy. Protective measures and lighting for public art pieces should be considered, as well as a cohesive public art theme throughout specific areas, such as the downtown core.
- Waterfront lands: improvements and redevelopment of the waterfront areas in Dryden, specifically the government dock, was a focus of community members. Other areas where programming and facilities could be improved include Sandy Beach Park and Cooper Park. Development should consider the maintenance/enhancement of public waterfront access and public boat launches and ensure that sufficient areas are provided for recreation and leisure needs of the community and visitors. Improvements to wayfinding and signage can also help raise awareness of the existing waterfront amenities and spaces in Dryden (WSP 2019).

Several incentive programs were developed and presented in Dryden's CIP to help the City fulfill its improvement goals by stimulating private sector investment. Dryden's CIP was designed for adaptation by building flexibility into the City's policies and programs to account for fluctuating resources and priorities. Thus, the CIP remains a living document and may be adjusted or amended to better respond to community needs. This Plan represents Dryden's commitment to

community improvement and to ensure Dryden flourishes as a regional hub and proud northern community.

### 2.3.4.3.3 Dryden Community Strategic Plan 2020-2025

The City of Dryden's Strategic Plan for 2020 to 2025 is a results-based plan aimed at guiding the City's decisions, planning, and budgeting, to advance Dryden's priorities and municipal operations, identify key outcomes, and allot the necessary resources for implementation. Six strategic goals were identified by the community to help Dryden realize its vision, "*as a vibrant, safe, healthy, and inclusive community with a diverse economy, providing an exceptional quality of life.*" Dryden's strategic goals and priorities are (MDB Insight 2019):

1. Community diversity and inclusion: the City of Dryden will celebrate its diversity and inclusiveness, while ensuring our doors are open and all who enter are welcomed.
  - a. Develop support systems to welcome and familiarize new and existing citizens to the City of Dryden; and
  - b. Continue to foster positive relationships with Indigenous peoples and neighbouring First Nation communities.
2. Community safety and well-being: The City of Dryden places safety and well-being at the core of our existence and all we do.
  - a. Support implementation of community safety and well-being plan, including senior and youth programs and services.
  - b. Undertake appropriate efforts to form the federal and provincial partnerships required to support community safety and well-being strategies; and
  - c. Explore opportunities to enhance public/affordable/safe transportation in Dryden.
3. Infrastructure: the City of Dryden is progressive in its efforts to maintain and strengthen our infrastructure to maximize our opportunity for growth.
  - a. Complete and maintain asset management plan as per legislated requirements to drive longer term capital and resource planning;
  - b. Develop long-term preventative maintenance and capital investment plans to extend the lifecycle of infrastructure, facilities, and fleet; and
  - c. Utilize grant opportunities to maximize project-specific funding with a focused priority on:
    - i. Recreation centre facility upgrades to replace end of life mechanical systems, rehabilitate building envelope, improve accessibility and address arena expansion for the growing user demand and supporting regional and localized special events.
    - ii. Shovel ready road and underground infrastructure projects such as Van Horne Avenue, Duke Street, Earl Avenue, Colonization Avenue, Thunder Lake Road, Government Street watermain upsizing, and other infrastructure projects directly related to the asset management plan.



4. Fiscal sustainability: the City of Dryden operates in a fiscally responsible manner through established practices that ensure a sustainable future for the community and municipality.
  - a. Seek creative, new revenue sources;
  - b. Increase City reserve funds;
  - c. Continue the City's debt repayment plan to 2021; and
  - d. Sustain existing funding sources and efforts.
5. Economic and investment diversity: the City of Dryden recognizes and responds to opportunities that diversify our economy and positions us to achieve positive return on investments.
  - a. Waterfront Development;
  - b. Utilize a portion of the Municipal Accommodation Tax to further build community capacity and local tourism activities and attractions;
  - c. Attract new businesses by promoting Dryden as a regional business and transportation hub;
  - d. Implement re-branding initiatives;
  - e. Support existing business in Dryden;
  - f. Identify and respond to economic related actions identified in the CIP;
  - g. Partner with Indigenous organizations and communities and other organizations to foster local and regional economic growth; and
  - h. Identify necessary resources to drive economic competitiveness.
6. Communications and our people: the City of Dryden respects our employees and our citizens and is committed to responsive and transparent communication.
  - a. Develop and implement formal communication plans;
  - b. Support management, mentoring and leadership training;
  - c. Develop a corporate wide customer service training strategy; and
  - d. Enhance organizational culture and communications to promote employer of choice qualities and commitment to the municipal mission.

Implementation and monitoring efforts are critical to the success of Dryden's strategic plan and require accountability, responsiveness, timeliness, and transparency from the City.

#### **2.3.4.3.4 Dryden, Machin and Area Community Safety and Well-Being Plan**

The Community Safety and Well-Being ("CSWB") Plan for Dryden, Machin, and area (MNP 2021) provides a framework for communities and their stakeholders to promote and maintain community safety. The CWSB Plan works to complement and reflect existing municipal strategies in Dryden and Machin, such as community official and strategic plans. The CSWB Plan's mission is to, *"bring people together to advance inclusion, build upon our resilience and strengthen our community connections for a safer Dryden, Machin, and Area."*



This mission is guided by four main principles: community-led collaboration, anti-racism/anti-oppression, person-centred care, and data-informed practice. These principles are reflected in the goals and objectives set out in the CWSB Plan. Three primary goals were identified in the CWSB Plan:

1. Meaningful multi-sectoral collaboration enhancing service provision to community members with high risk factors;
2. Safe and healthy community members; and
3. Meaningful community engagement and inclusion that improves community safety and well-being.

Community and stakeholder engagement further identified four focus areas for the community and CSWB Plan: supporting youth, prevention/education, treatment, and social development. These four pillars, described further below, help to break down the CWSB Plan's goals into actionable items, including targeted objectives, outputs/outcomes, and responsible parties.

### Supporting Our Youth

This pillar aims to ensure that Dryden, Machin, and area youth feel included in their community by providing safe spaces for activities, promoting a holistic, healthy lifestyle, and supporting those at risk of mental health challenges with access to services. Social inclusivity and connectivity are key to supporting the development and well-being of youth; youth that feel they are well-connected to a support system are better equipped to access help and support. With the CSWB Plan, Dryden and Machin acknowledge that a strong sense of community, providing safe spaces, promoting well-being, and healthy activities are all important elements required to support their youth. This pillar focuses on the following objectives:

- Obtain funding to open the Dryden Youth Centre and run youth-friendly programming;
- Make mental health and addictions services more readily available to youth;
- Support the City of Dryden in advancing efforts toward a youth friendly city designation; and
- Provide easy educational/civic engagement activities to prevent poor health behaviours in youth.

### Prevention/Education

Community members identified crime and harmful behaviours as two primary concerns for safety and well-being in the area. In particular, residents felt that addictions, crime prevention, and mental health were the top priorities with regard to these concerns. The prevention/education pillar focuses on the following objectives:

- Develop a risk mitigation tool to reduce harm and victimization from social disorder and crime;
- Public health organizations operating harm reduction programs (i.e., needle exchange, sexual health clinic, dating violence, elder abuse, internet abuse);
- Activities that keep the peace, ensure public safety, and reduce criminal activity with a focus on community safety;

- Educating the public about proactive ways to decrease their likelihood of being a victim of a crime as well as supportive services for victims of crimes in an effort to improve the feelings of safety by community members;
- Develop an online directory to improve communication and the promotion of services to residents; and
- Continue to develop a community directory with support agencies to ensure information is current and accessible for residents.

## Treatment

The focus of this pillar is to develop partnerships that enhance collaborative efforts to address gaps and barriers in mental health and addictions services, as well as the crisis intervention system. The treatment pillar focuses on the following objectives:

- Address gaps and barriers within mental health and addictions services through the enhancement of key partnerships;
- Address gaps and barriers within crisis response through the enhancement of key partnerships;
- Identify opportunities for new partnerships and review current funding sources for crisis intervention;
- Review current service offerings and identify gaps/barriers that need to be addressed for suicide response; and
- Develop a plan to address gaps and barriers in suicide response.

## Social Development

This pillar is focused on promoting individual and community wellness by addressing social issues. The social development pillar focuses on the following objectives:

- Work with community-based organizations and food programs to improve emergency food access;
- Working with local, provincial, and federal governments to advocate for appropriate housing including supported housing and crisis housing;
- Identify and highlight needs related to community housing;
- Coordination of support/service pathways for emergency housing clients;
- Establish effective methods to promote volunteer opportunities; and
- Identify and promote activities for older adults (arts/music/cultural/etc.) to reduce isolation.

### 2.3.4.4 Municipality of Machin

This section presents the Municipality of Machin's Municipal Modernization Program.<sup>16</sup> This plan is described in further detail below.

#### 2.3.4.4.1 Municipal Modernization Program

Machin's Municipal Modernization Program (BDO 2020) outlines recommendations to improve service delivery and summarizes potential opportunities for modernization based on historical demographic and financial data and stakeholder consultation. The report aims to provide achievable improvements for the current state of services in the Municipality while keeping the future in mind. These improvements take the form of six priority areas for Machin: operating/capital grants, municipal systems/processes, human capital, communication, short-term infrastructure, and long-term infrastructure. These priority areas are presented in the Machin Modernization Program report with short-term action plans that consider the roles of governance, administration/finance, fire services, public works, and the Woodland Arena. The six priority areas and their recommended improvements/opportunities are described further below.

#### Operating/Capital Grants

The operating/capital grants priority for Machin focuses on pursuing grants to be "shovel ready", meaning that the relevant studies have been completed and programs/applications have been pursued. The recommended improvements for service delivery on operating/capital grants include:

- Hire an economic development officer and pursue development opportunities;
- Review asset management plan to project future funding needs and development of shovel ready projects;
- Develop a five-year capital plan that is reviewed and updated quarterly; and
- Dedicate staff time and support from economic development officer to the pursuit of grants.

#### Municipal Systems/Processes

The municipal systems/processes priority focuses on improvements in planning, policy, and procurement. The recommended improvements for service delivery on municipal systems/processes include:

- Delegate financial processes and map for employee orientation;
- Share services, when possible, with neighbouring municipalities; and
- Policies/by-laws need to be kept current, trained on, and liability/risk managed.

#### Human Capital

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<sup>16</sup> The Municipality of Machin is included in the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan with the City of Dryden, described in the previous sub-section.

The human capital priority is focused on developing a leadership team and improving training processes and performance management systems. The recommended improvements for service delivery on human capital include:

- Development of leadership team terms of reference/role clarification;
- Implement cross-training plan for employees; and
- Enhance and implement performance management system.

### **Communication**

The communication priority is focused on internal and external communication improvements. The recommended improvements for service delivery on communication include:

- Enhance communication to community (re: service level e.g., tax allotment, roads, etc.);
- Develop electronic communications/scheduling program; and
- Increase communication with government to support smaller municipality needs.

### **Short-Term Infrastructure/Asset Management**

The short-term infrastructure priority focuses on updates to infrastructure to improve service delivery on roads maintenance, building updates, watershed calculations, and water services. The recommended improvements for service delivery on short-term infrastructure include:

- Road maintenance/project;
- Public works garage improvements;
- Review watershed calculations when replacing culverts and evaluate budget;
- Renovate office building to be accessible; and
- Study expansion of water services.

### **Long-Term Infrastructure/Asset Management**

The long-term infrastructure priority focuses on long-term capital planning and reserve administration. The recommended improvements for service delivery on long-term infrastructure include:

- Develop long-term plan for landfill (compacting);
- Water plant updates/improvements;
- Review of bridge needs and infrastructure updates; and
- Development of senior centre to attract new residents/support growth.

### 2.3.4.5 Municipality of Sioux Lookout

This section presents the following plans of the Municipality of Sioux Lookout: Official Plan, Community Improvement Plan, Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, and Strategic Plan 2020-2025. These plans are described in further detail below.

#### 2.3.4.5.1 Sioux Lookout Official Plan

Sioux Lookout's Official Plan (MHBC 2019) establishes a community vision and guiding principles, objectives, and policies to reach it. The Official Plan focuses on managing and directing the physical development of the Municipality and enact changes to the social, cultural, economic, and natural environments over a 20-year horizon. Sioux Lookout's vision is, "*through innovative leadership, we engage our diverse population to create a caring, prosperous place to live, invest and be a desirable destination for regional services and tourism.*" To achieve the Municipality's vision, the Official Plan sets out eight guiding principles and their objectives/goals, described further below in **Table 2.3-5**.

**Table 2.3-5: Municipality of Sioux Lookout Official Plan Guiding Principles and Objectives**

Principle	Description	Objectives
Sustainable development	The Municipality shall promote sustainable development to enhance the quality of life for present and future generations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote compact development;</li> <li>• To direct residential development to the two settlement areas of urban Sioux Lookout and Hudson;</li> <li>• To support and encourage infill and intensification in built up areas within the two settlement areas where municipal services exist;</li> <li>• To permit limited residential growth in the Drayton area and the rural designation, where lot size and configuration can support private water supply and sanitary sewage systems, and where the development would be compatible with the character of the land use in the surrounding area;</li> <li>• To permit limited dry industrial uses in the unserviced area in size and number, except where the development consists of a resource-based industry that requires a large land area and is compatible with the surrounding land uses;</li> <li>• To provide opportunities for the adaptive re-use of former industrial areas and brownfield sites where the industrial use is no longer viable; and</li> <li>• To permit mix-use areas and buildings with a variety of compatible uses.</li> </ul>
Natural environment and resources	The Municipality shall support the protection and integrity of the natural environment as valued by the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To protect natural and cultural heritage features and areas, surface water and groundwater features;</li> <li>• To minimize negative impacts to air quality and climate change through site design; and</li> <li>• To protect and preserve and enhance hazard lands, sensitive areas, and important natural resources such as fish and wildlife habitat areas, wetlands, minerals, and aggregates.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.3-5 Continued: Municipality of Sioux Lookout Official Plan Guiding Principles and Objectives**

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
Affordable housing	The Municipality shall support the location and integration of affordable housing within new or existing development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide a range and mix of affordable housing types in locations that are close to services and amenities, and that are compatible with adjacent land uses.</li> </ul>
Diversified economy	The Municipality shall maintain and seek opportunities for a strong, diversified economy that provides a wide range of employment opportunities for its residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support the airport and air transportation facilities as economic drivers for the Municipality and encourage employment uses to locate on land surrounding the airport;</li> <li>To continue fostering partnerships with Lac Seul First Nation and other Sioux Lookout Area First Nations to identify economic development and other opportunities;</li> <li>To coordinate with Indigenous communities on planning matters related to economic development and employment land uses;</li> <li>To promote the Municipality as a “hub” for health care, tourism, and government services;</li> <li>To ensure that there are sufficient municipally serviced lands for the expansion of residential, industrial, and commercial development to support industrial expansion; and</li> <li>To support the extraction of sand and gravel, minerals, and forest products by providing sufficient and designated land for commercial and industrial purpose to support these uses.</li> </ul>



**Table 2.3-5 Continued: Municipality of Sioux Lookout Official Plan Guiding Principles and Objectives**

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
Tourist destination	Over the lifetime of this Official Plan, the Municipality of Sioux Lookout shall continue to expand its role as an urban, cultural service centre and tourist destination, providing services to the traveling public and residents of the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide opportunities to enhance the downtown as a destination for visitors by providing docking facilities;</li> <li>• To support the development of the heritage sector to meet visitor expectations by preserving important buildings, landscapes, and other elements that defines or represents Sioux Lookout's history such as Centennial Park;</li> <li>• To coordinate with Indigenous communities on planning matters related to tourism;</li> <li>• To provide opportunities for eco-tourism in a manner that is balanced with the protection and conservation of the natural environment.</li> </ul>
Complete communities	The Municipality shall encourage new development (e.g., buildings, new neighbourhoods) to provide for a mix of uses in planning for complete communities that include appropriate housing, recreation facilities and jobs. The Municipality supports the co-location of public service facilities in community hubs, where appropriate, to promote cost-effectiveness and facilitate service integration and active transportation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support mixed-use opportunities where compatible;</li> <li>• To enhance the quality of life for existing and future residents by improving access to parkland, cultural and recreational facilities;</li> <li>• To provide a range of housing types so that residents can age in place or within the neighbourhood (e.g., downsize from a two-storey single-detached to a bungalow or to an apartment or a garden suite);</li> <li>• To promote green infrastructure, energy efficiency and conservation where feasible;</li> <li>• To consider impacts of climate change; and</li> <li>• To ensure that development is strategically located to support the effective and efficient delivery of emergency management services.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.3-5 Continued: Municipality of Sioux Lookout Official Plan Guiding Principles and Objectives**

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
Multi-modal transportation system	Sioux Lookout will strive to provide a range of mobile transportation modes that are accessible for persons of all ages and abilities by connecting people and places through coordinated land use, urban design, and transportation planning efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support the establishment of an efficient safe and inclusive multi-mode transportation system for all users;</li> <li>• To prioritize trails and pathways;</li> <li>• To implement a linked network of safe and active transportation trails and pathways; and</li> <li>• Minimize the loss of future opportunities for sidewalks, trails, and pathway development by land acquisition at the time of development.</li> </ul>
Community and Indigenous engagement	Sioux Lookout shall promote inclusivity of all people and backgrounds to participate and collaborate in achieving the community's vision. Inform, educate, and obtain the views of the public on matters requiring approval under the Planning Act. The Municipality will pursue the preparation of a land use planning communication strategy in consultation with Indigenous communities which outlines when and how the Municipality will engage with Indigenous communities on development applications and land use projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that all stakeholders and the public have appropriate and adequate opportunities to participate in planning processes;</li> <li>• To recognize and respect the cultural values and heritage, and to engage other Sioux Lookout Area First Nations and Lac Seul First Nation which are adjacent to the Municipal boundary; and</li> <li>• To consult with Indigenous groups or First Nations on matters that hold potential relevance to Indigenous persons.</li> </ul>

**Source:** MHBC 2019.

#### **2.3.4.5.2 Sioux Lookout Community Improvement Plan**

Sioux Lookout's Community Improvement Plan (MHBC Planning 2013) focuses on attracting and supporting the rehabilitation and revitalization of private lands and buildings in the Municipality. The CIP provides objectives for improvements to private property and establishes financial incentives for property owners to encourage revitalization. Improvement objectives for the

Municipality are separated into four areas under the CIP: main central area, gateway area, Hudson core area, and airport area. The intent of the Plan is to improve existing buildings/properties, however, an incentive for new residential developments is also included. The following objectives apply to all Improvement areas:

- To improve the success of retail business in Sioux Lookout by encouraging more attractive areas and a wider variety of goods and services;
- To encourage the development of additional residential units as infilling within the community improvement areas of Sioux Lookout and Hudson;
- To encourage the improvement of private and public properties in a manner that reflects a caring and affluent community; and
- To encourage future development within the Municipality of Sioux Lookout by reducing the costs for initial development and ensuring that there are incentives to increase the overall value of lands within the Municipality.

Area specific priorities were also identified in the CIP. Priorities in the main central area include resurfacing Front Street, and improvements to the curbs and gutters, street trees, and streetlights. The gateway area requires improvements to the curbs and gutters, street trees, and streetlights, as well as landscaping the boulevard. The Hudson area requires resurfaced roadways, boulevard landscaping, building rehabilitation, and improvements to the curbs and gutters. Lastly, the airport area requires extending municipal services to Bigwood Lake.

Several incentive programs were developed and presented in the CIP to help the Municipality fulfill its objectives by stimulating private sector investment.

### **2.3.4.5.3 Sioux Lookout Community Safety and Well-Being Plan**

Sioux Lookout's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (2020b) outlines strategies and actions at four levels of intervention: social development, prevention, risk intervention, and incident response. Through a collaborative process of research, community reports, and community input, the Plan identifies six priority areas of focus: appropriate and affordable housing, mental wellness, substance misuse and addictions, crisis services' capacity for incidence response and de-escalation, employee recruitment and retention, and community cohesiveness and vibrancy. The CSWB Plan expands these areas of focus by identifying the vulnerable/target groups under each priority area and providing supporting goals and activities, which are described further below.

#### **Appropriate and Affordable Housing**

Sioux Lookout's housing shortage impacts individuals and families of all ages, demographics, and social backgrounds. However, the impacts are especially prominent for individuals challenged by poverty, mental illness, and/or addictions. The housing goals of the CSWB Plan are:

- Outline of how severe the housing shortage is and who is most impacted; and
- Increase the availability of appropriate and affordable housing at all levels of economic attainment.

## Mental Wellness

Sioux Lookout's youth are at particularly high risk for mental illness due to added pressures such as relocation, increased poverty, discrimination, cultural barriers, and lack of extracurricular activities. Many of these issues in Sioux Lookout are interdependent, and therefore require a widespread approach to understand how impacting one area, like housing, can create stability and support for those facing these challenges. The mental wellness goals of the CSWB Plan are:

- Vulnerable populations (such as youth and adults who move from northern communities) are identified and supported while living in Sioux Lookout;
- Youth and families feel welcomed and supported living in Sioux Lookout; and
- Mental health services are available and accessible to youth.

## Substance Misuse and Addictions

This priority area focuses on supporting individuals experiencing addictions and substance abuse, including at-risk, in-crisis, and in-recovery individuals. The substance misuse and addictions goals of the CSWB Plan are:

- Increase the opportunities for Sioux Lookout residents to receive addictions services in their community, in person or virtually;
- Greater diversity of addiction services to cater to different demographics such as youth, adults, and Indigenous residents; and
- An enhanced complement of mental health and addiction services in the community to provide capacity for wrap-around crisis and recovery resources.

## Crisis Services' Capacity for Incident Response and De-Escalation

The crisis services' capacity priority is targeted to emergency first responders and focuses on individuals who experience crisis episodes, particularly individuals challenged by mental illness, addictions, or other marginalized populations, such as Indigenous peoples. The crisis services' capacity goals of the CSWB Plan are:

- Front line workers have resources to aid in mental health and addiction incidents;
- Increase the awareness/compassion and skilled policing in the area of mental health, addictions, and cultural inclusivity; and
- Emergency services have crisis worker supports and alternatives to the detention system to de-escalate incidents involving those in crisis.

## Employee Recruitment and Retention

The employee recruitment and retention priority focuses on in-demand, skilled workers, youth, and adult learners. The employee recruitment and retention goals of the CSWB Plan are:

- Articulate and measure the community's skilled human resource needs;

- Increase the opportunities available for youth and young adults to pursue further education opportunities;
- Increase the supports and resources for those with mental health challenges to acquire and retain employment; and
- Support local youth and adult learners to acquire skills/education to fill sought local positions to provide the level of services to meet community needs.

### Community Cohesiveness and Vibrancy

The community cohesiveness and vibrancy priority focuses on community members broadly, including individuals and families of all ages, Indigenous peoples, visible minorities, and low-income households. The community cohesiveness and vibrancy goals of the CSWB Plan are:

- Increase the number of opportunities for residents of Sioux Lookout to celebrate the rich cultural and natural wonders of the community;
- Increase the engagement of community and surrounding region in cultural and natural amenities of Sioux Lookout; and
- Celebrate Sioux Lookout as a place of rich cultural heritage.

#### 2.3.4.5.4 Sioux Lookout Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Sioux Lookout's Strategic Plan for 2020 to 2025 (2020a) celebrates the Municipality's cultural diversity while identifying ways to ensure the health, happiness, and prosperity of its residents. Through a series of community and stakeholder engagement, five strategic priorities were identified to guide the Strategic Plan in its mission to foster "*a vibrant community where diversity, nature, and compassion drive our prosperity.*" These strategic priorities include innovation and development, community wellness, regional collaboration, community engagement, and operational excellence, and are described further below in **Table 2.3-6** alongside goals and actions to achieve them.

**Table 2.3-6: Sioux Lookout Strategic Plan 2020-2025, Strategic Priorities, Goals, and Actions**

Strategic Priority	Goals	Actions
Community innovation and development: proactively invest in our community to encourage growth and enhance our quality of life.	Provide infrastructure and housing to meet the needs of our community, now and as it grows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that our assets are sustainable and that they will meet our long-term needs;</li> <li>• Use municipal best practices to identify innovative approaches to managing our infrastructure;</li> <li>• Ensure that our transportation infrastructure allows people to get around safely and efficiently; and</li> <li>• Encourage an increase in the housing available in Sioux Lookout to meet our current and future needs.</li> </ul>
	Collaborate with community partners to foster growth and economic development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work proactively with local and regional economic development groups to advance our community's best interests;</li> <li>• Support local efforts to improve Sioux Lookout as a place to do business;</li> <li>• Work with local partners to promote and encourage tourism; and</li> <li>• Support public transportation to make it available and useful to as many of our residents as possible.</li> </ul>
	Enable community growth through innovative, proactive planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the Municipality's planning policies and practices are appropriate to address current needs and accommodate future growth;</li> <li>• Work to secure sufficient commercial property to attract businesses to Sioux Lookout;</li> <li>• Minimize regulatory obstacles to development while ensuring appropriate processes are followed; and</li> <li>• Develop programs and policies that encourage new businesses to move "to Sioux Lookout" and existing ones to stay here.</li> </ul>
	Strengthen and enhance Sioux Lookout's status as "Hub of the North"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the Sioux Lookout airport remains the number one airport in our area;</li> <li>• Collaborate with the hospital to maintain a strong working relationship;</li> <li>• Consider the implications for Indigenous people of any Municipal policies and</li> <li>• Recognize that addressing our social issues enhances Sioux Lookout's status as "Hub of the North."</li> </ul>

**Table 2.3-6 Continued: Sioux Lookout Strategic Plan 2020-2025, Strategic Priorities, Goals, and Actions**

Strategic Priority	Goals	Actions
Community wellness: strive to make our community a healthy and safe place to live for all of our residents.	Maximize and enhance our natural assets and facilities to encourage physical activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with community partners to maintain and enhance our network of parks, trails, and active transportation options; and</li> <li>• Work with partners to create and maintain facilities that our residents can use for healthy activities.</li> </ul>
	Foster programs that create a vibrant community and encourage lifelong healthy living.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a vibrant and healthy community through recreation, events, arts, and culture;</li> <li>• Partner with community groups to promote active, healthy living;</li> <li>• Support local health services in Sioux Lookout; and</li> <li>• Collaborate with community groups to enhance their work delivering programs that improve the lives of all residents.</li> </ul>
	Work with others to ensure that appropriate services are available to residents who need help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with local agencies to monitor the wellness and safety of our residents to better understand their needs;</li> <li>• Keep the public informed of community wellness and safety issues and initiatives; and</li> <li>• Collaborate with regional agencies to address community challenges.</li> </ul>
	Work to ensure that our community is a safe place to live.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with regional and local partners to ensure the health and safety of our residents;</li> <li>• Work with local groups to engage other orders of government and make the case for additional services and resources; and</li> <li>• Encourage collaboration between the social agencies and community groups to deal with challenging social issues.</li> </ul>



**Table 2.3-6 Continued: Sioux Lookout Strategic Plan 2020-2025, Strategic Priorities, Goals, and Actions**

Strategic Priority	Goals	Actions
Regional collaboration: collaborate with other groups to address the opportunities and challenges we share.	Use the community's existing assets to enhance collaboration'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor, encourage and support local health services in Sioux Lookout; and</li> <li>• Enhance the Municipality's relationship with local and regional health agencies.</li> </ul>
	Collaborate with First Nations to advance our shared interests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with First Nations partners to expand the Friendship Accord; and</li> <li>• Identify and pursue projects where Sioux Lookout collaborates with First Nations partners to solve the challenges we share.</li> </ul>
	Work with other groups to promote municipal and regional interests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in regional groups to advance our shared interests;</li> <li>• Work with other regional partners to identify and address the challenges we share such as addiction, mental health, housing, and others; and</li> <li>• Lobby other levels of government to help with the unique challenges of our community.</li> </ul>
	Collaborate with regional partners to foster economic development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on collaborations that foster and encourage economic development, with a particular emphasis on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Creating an environment in which businesses can thrive (open, stay, grow) in Sioux Lookout;</li> <li>○ Creating affordable housing;</li> <li>○ Facilitating the transportation of goods and services; and</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Improving our road network and other infrastructure assets.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.3-6 Continued: Sioux Lookout Strategic Plan 2020-2025, Strategic Priorities, Goals, and Actions**

Strategic Priority	Goals	Actions
Community engagement: engage with our residents and local businesses and encourage their participation in Municipal affairs.	Share relevant information regularly about key issues and Municipal initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and regularly update our website to provide easy access to information about Municipal affairs;</li> <li>• Make it easy to access information about Municipal policies, decisions, and initiatives;</li> <li>• Update and implement a communication strategy to ensure frequent, informative, user-friendly communication with the public; and</li> <li>• Develop and maintain a social media policy to ensure that social media is used effectively to connect with residents.</li> </ul>
	Encourage our residents and local organizations to provide input to Municipal decision making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make stakeholder engagement a key component of the Municipality's communications strategy.</li> </ul>
	Reach out to stakeholders to better understand their needs and priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactively seek customer feedback to assess satisfaction and obtain ideas to improve services;</li> <li>• Reach out to stakeholders regularly and in a variety of ways to understand their needs; and</li> <li>• Make it as convenient as possible for stakeholders to provide their input.</li> </ul>
	Encourage members of our community to volunteer and recognize those who do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight volunteerism in Sioux Lookout's communication strategy;</li> <li>• Develop and maintain a program to recognize outstanding volunteer contributions by our citizens; and</li> <li>• Work with local organizations to encourage our citizens to volunteer their time in areas where volunteers are needed.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.3-6 Continued: Sioux Lookout Strategic Plan 2020-2025, Strategic Priorities, Goals, and Actions**

Strategic Priority	Goals	Actions
Operational excellence: strive for operational excellence through open communication, sound fiscal management and exceptional customer service.	Ensure that we are making the most of our human resources and that Municipal staff are able to do their work effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess Municipal finances on an ongoing basis, compile statistics and communicate them clearly;</li> <li>• Maintain long-term financial plans that ensure the sustainability of the Municipality's finances;</li> <li>• Promote Sioux Lookout to attract investment and increase commercial tax base; and</li> <li>• Find operational efficiencies and new revenue sources.</li> </ul>
	Strive to provide exceptional customer service to all of our stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and maintain employee individual development plans;</li> <li>• Develop and utilize succession plans for key roles;</li> <li>• Focus on employee collaboration, acknowledgement, and wellness;</li> <li>• Continue to allocate appropriate resources towards training opportunities for employees; and</li> <li>• Equip staff with technology to maximize data driven analysis.</li> </ul>
	Provide transparent governance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactively seek customer feedback to assess satisfaction and obtain ideas to improve services;</li> <li>• Ensure that the Municipality's organizational structure and staffing levels are appropriate to meet growing needs; and</li> <li>• Use technology to improve access to Municipal services.</li> </ul>
	Act as stewards of our environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include consideration of the environment in Municipal decision making;</li> <li>• Investigate green technology options when assessing capital projects; and</li> <li>• Develop plans and strategies to reduce Municipal waste.</li> </ul>

**Source:** Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020a.

#### 2.3.4.6 Local Services Board of Melgund

According to the key person interview program, Melgund has goals to continue improving the community hall by adding a deck and picnic tables to increase the usability of the hall's outdoor

spaces, maintain walking trails, and upgrade the lot and building to be more accessible (i.e., wheelchair accessible) (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Melgund's small population and subsequent tax base makes covering hall operations and improvements difficult.

#### 2.3.4.7 Local Services Board of Wabigoon

According to the key person interview program, Wabigoon Village has goals to expand street lighting in the community, have a fully-enclosed ice arena with a Zamboni, and offer more programming at the Memorial Hall (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). As an LSB, Wabigoon is restricted in its mandates as to the changes it can make in the community but sees their recreation mandate as a great opportunity to support the community. Wabigoon is currently working on the construction of an unenclosed pavilion in the community that will be able to host a variety of arts and recreation, such as markets, music, skating, and pickle ball.

#### 2.3.5 Community Well-Being

Community well-being can be defined as "the social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions identified by individuals and their communities as essential for them to flourish and fulfill their potential" (Wiseman & Brasher 2008). The community well-being index measures the socio-economic well-being of Canadian communities over time as an indication of progress made to improve the health and well-being of communities (Indigenous Services Canada 2023). The index encompasses four components: education, labour, income, and housing, which are combined to provide each community with a score out of 100. The community well-being index components are based on and limited to Census data; thus, they do not represent a complete list of dimensions of community well-being, nor do they necessarily reflect community values in the Local Study Area. **Table 2.3-7** shows the community well-being index scores for the Local Study Area in 2006, 2011, and 2016.

**Table 2.3-7: Community Well-Being Index Scores for the Local Study Area, 2006 to 2016**

Year <sup>1</sup>	Ignace			Dryden			Machin			Sioux Lookout		
	2006	2011	2016	2006	2011	2016	2006	2011	2016	2006	2011	2016
Education	44	51	49	57	58	59	48	43	53	57	60	59
Income	72	69	77	77	78	79	73	73	77	77	78	79
Housing	95	91	94	95	93	93	94	92	92	94	96	92
Labour	85	77	79	88	87	86	88	79	81	93	90	89
<b>CWB Index Score</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>80</b>

Source: ISC 2023.

**Notes:**

1. Data were not available from the LSB of Wabigoon, the LSB of Melgund, Upsala, Valora, and Silver Dollar.

Ignace, Dryden, Machin, and Sioux Lookout saw a relatively consistent community well-being score from 2006 to 2016. Among the Local Study Area communities, Ignace had the lowest community well-being score in 2006 (74) and 2016 (75) and Sioux Lookout had the highest score in 2006 (80) and 2016 (80). Observations of the individual scores for the Local Study Area communities include:

- For education, Ignace had the lowest score in 2006 (44) and 2016 (49). Dryden and Sioux Lookout had the highest score in 2006 (57) and 2016 (59). Each Local Study Area community saw an increase in the education score from 2006 to 2016 with notable increases in Ignace and Machin.
- For income, Ignace had the lowest score in 2006 (72) and Ignace and Machin had the lowest score in 2016 (77). Dryden and Sioux Lookout had the highest score in 2006 (77) and 2016 (79). Each Local Study Area community saw an increase in the income score from 2006 to 2016 with notable increases in Ignace and Machin.
- For housing, the Local Study Area communities saw a decrease in the housing score from 2006 to 2016.
- For labour, Ignace had the lowest score in 2006 (85) and in 2016 (79). Sioux Lookout had the highest score in 2006 (93) and 2016 (89). Each Local Study Area community saw a decrease in the labour score from 2006 to 2016 with notable decreases in Ignace and Machin.

### 2.3.6 Food Security

Food security is when a person has the physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food for an active, healthy lifestyle at all times (OECD n.d.). Food security is an important social determinant of health; being food secure helps maintain one's physical and mental well-being (MNP 2021). Understanding the state of food security in a

community/region is important when potential development and changes may occur in the area, as changes to goods and services due to new development/industry can negatively affect a community's food security (IAIA 2023). This section describes the current state of food security in northwestern Ontario and current efforts to support food security in the region.

Food insecurity is growing across northwestern Ontario, as challenges such as poverty, inflation, addictions, mental health, lack of education and/or employment opportunities, and other social issues continue to affect peoples' ability to obtain an affordable, healthy, and culturally appropriate diet. According to key person interviews, cultural food access is a primary issue in northwestern Ontario (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Rates of food insecurity are often highest amongst individuals of low socio-economic status, Indigenous peoples, newcomers to Canada, single parent households, and individuals living on social assistance (see **Section 2.2.5** for more information on vulnerable populations). (MNP 2021).

Over the last three years, those with employment income who access food banks have increased by 27% in Ontario (Feed Ontario, 2020). The report goes on to note that the increase in food bank usage in Ontario is attributable to an *"...inadequate safety net, precarious employment, and unaffordable housing"* (Feed Ontario 2020). Income has also been found to be a determining factor for food insecurity.

In 2016, the Northwestern Ontario Health Unit, which includes the Rainy River District and most of the Kenora District, had the most expensive food basket in the province. For a family of four, consuming healthy foods costs approximately \$1,018.20 per month, nearly \$160 more per month than the monthly cost for a family of four living in Toronto. Further, food basket costs collected in Ignace, Dryden, and Thunder Bay from 2022-2023 show that Ignace has a higher unit price across all food basket categories (e.g., dairy, eggs, fruit and vegetables, meat, etc.) compared to Dryden and Thunder Bay, suggesting smaller communities in northwestern Ontario see even higher food costs in the region and province (see **Section 3.6.3.2** for more information on food baskets). Community remoteness is positively correlated to the cost of a healthy diet, with high costs of healthy foods being a major contributor to food insecurity in northwestern Ontario (Northern Policy Institute 2018). Further, contrary to the common misconception that employment leads to food security, the Northwestern Health Unit (2017) found that 58.9% of food insecure individuals in the region were employed.

### 2.3.6.1 Northwestern Ontario

The Regional Food Distribution Association ("RFDA") of northwestern Ontario works to harvest, purchase, donate, and distribute food to 50 member agencies across the region that need food. The RFDA is a direct member of Feed Ontario and an affiliate of Second Harvest, Food Banks Canada, and over 20 other partners. The RFDA supports its members in various ways in addition to supplying food donations, such as library feeding programs, after school programs, and helping members apply for funding to subsidize their costs. The RFDA advocates on behalf of those living in poverty and supports educators to teach food nutrition and equip people with life skills to help overcome social barriers to food security (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

The COVID-19 pandemic heightened food insecurity in northwestern Ontario, with the RFDA noting a 25% increase in individuals being served. The RFDA has been further challenged by the food shortage and rising food prices which followed the COVID-19 pandemic, as grocery stores

have less food to donate and donations from residents have decreased due to the high cost of food (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

The RFDA has been working with Feed Ontario to provide access to healthy country foods in local hubs, such as Sioux Lookout's Meno Ya Win Health Centre. The RFDA is also working to increase access to alternative proteins for newcomers to northwestern Ontario, such as teaching people to cook with lentils. The RFDA's mission to help communities in northwestern Ontario become food autonomous focuses on helping communities educate residents on food nutrition, healthy lifestyles, and life skills, create their own systems of food production (e.g., community gardens, community freezers), and learn how to deal with logistics like food distribution (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.3.6.2 Township of Ignace

A primary challenge related to the higher cost of foods in Ignace is the lack of market competition. Lack of market competition means that many residents are forced to purchase their groceries from the only available store(s) in their community, regardless of the cost. For example, a participant of key person interviews shared that after Ignace lost its second-last grocery store to a fire, they felt the prices in the remaining grocery store increased by almost 30% (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Food basket cost results in **Section 3.6.3.2** show that Ignace has a higher unit price across all food basket categories when compared to Dryden and Thunder Bay. This financial barrier is particularly challenging for residents, such as the senior population, who do not have the means to travel to a larger, nearby urban centre, such as Dryden, to purchase groceries at a lower cost. Lack of transportation options within the Township and to other communities to access more affordable food sources and services is an issue identified by Ignace residents (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Support for food security in Ignace is provided through a food bank at the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre. The local food bank, known as the Carousel, provides food to those in need. The Mary Berglund Community Health Centre also supports a community garden located next to the ambulance base on Highway 17 (Lederer & West 2020). Participants of key person interviews expressed a sense of pride over the community garden and the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre's work to support community needs (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.3.6.3 City of Dryden

The Dryden Food Bank has been in operation for 28 years and distributes surplus and donated foods and essentials to residents in need in the Dryden area. The Dryden Food Bank operates three days per week and also delivers food to those who do not have the means to access their services directly. In 2022, Dryden Food Bank provided a total of 5,399 hampers in the community. Further information gathered by the food bank showed that, of the individuals accessing food bank services, 76% were renting or residing in social housing, 58% were receiving support from Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program, and 28% were children aged 0 to 14, the largest proportion of individuals receiving support by age (MNP 2021). More recent demographic information from the Dryden Food Bank shows that 63% of clients identify as Indigenous, 53% are female, 30% are under the age of 18, with the most frequent visitors being individuals between the ages of 19 and 35 (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person



Interview Program 2022-2023). Results from the GBA+ Workshop confirmed that Dryden youth are facing food insecurity, an issue often exacerbated by family and life circumstances (GBA+ Workshop 2023). For example, youth who are disconnected from their family may be unable to access food and social supports due to remaining listed as part of their family group (GBA+ Workshop 2023).

The Dryden Food Bank currently serves approximately 130 families with hampers, serving 539 households as of April 2023. The Dryden Food Bank is one of few food banks in the region that provides access to food on a weekly basis, as other food banks only operate once every two weeks to once per month (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). According to key person interviews, the number of residents using Dryden Food Bank's services has been gradually increasing, particularly following the Food Bank of Canada's decision in April 2022 to no longer require a means test in order to access food bank services (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The primary reasons for the number of residents facing food insecurity in Dryden include high food costs in the community and the community's reliance on major employers such as lumber and paper, industries that have seen partial closures and large layoffs (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated food insecurity, with food needs in Dryden increasing substantially at the pandemic's onset. For example, results from key person interviews shared that there were 62 incidents of theft from the local grocery stores in Dryden (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Dryden Native Friendship Centre was one of few service organizations operating to help address food insecurity. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Dryden Native Friendship Centre was serving approximately 14-18 lunches per day to vulnerable populations; this number increased to approximately 50 lunches per day during the COVID-19 pandemic. A large portion of the Dryden Native Friendship Centre's emergency services work to address food insecurity in the community. The Dryden Native Friendship Centre keeps food and gift cards for food onsite for emergency food needs and continues to serve daily lunches to those in need. These services help support community members who may be underemployed, have recently become unemployed, or are dealing with crises in their personal lives. The Dryden Native Friendship Centre has approximately 90 volunteers who help carry out the Centre's services (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

The Community Table program was another service working to address food insecurity in Dryden that began at First United Church in Dryden in March 2022, funded by partners. The Community Table provided supper meals on Tuesdays to any food insecure individuals (i.e., no criteria to access these food supports), as well as offered emergency food supports and invited other local service providers on-site to build relationships with patrons. From March to December 2022, the Community Table served over 2,300 meals. The Community Table hopes to continue serving the Dryden community into the future (Burry 2023).

Dryden also has Meals On Wheels, organized by Dryden District Senior Services, which delivers lunch up to three days per week on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and dinners up to seven days per week to seniors living independently in the community. The meals are delivered by volunteers (NorthWest HealthLine 2023).

#### 2.3.6.4 Municipality of Machin

The Vermillion Bay Lions Club provided emergency food services for residents of Machin during the COVID-19 pandemic, in partnership with the Dryden Food Bank and funded by the Kenora District Services Board, also offering delivery services to those who could not travel to access the food bank (Watson 2020; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The Dryden Food Bank serves residents of Machin (Watson 2020).

#### 2.3.6.5 Municipality of Sioux Lookout

Calvary Baptist Church, New Life Assembly, and Cornerstone Christian Fellowship have been operating the Sioux Lookout food bank since October 2022. Prior to churches running the community food bank, it was operated by Sioux Lookout's Out of the Cold Shelter. According to the churches operating the food bank, food insecurity in Sioux Lookout is on the rise due to inflation and rising food costs. The food bank relies on community donations and volunteers to remain operational. The food bank is working on a partnership with the Dryden Native Friendship Centre to provide hampers of fresh produce in a one-year pilot project (Brody 2023).

#### 2.3.7 Income Inequality

Income inequality refers to the uneven distribution of income amongst a population. Income inequality can negatively affect social and community cohesion and cause distrust in institutions meant to serve (Burkinshaw, Terajima, & Wilkins 2022). Understanding the state of income inequality is important where there is potential development and change, as, for example, an increase in population and number of high-paying jobs can increase the income inequality in a community/region and disproportionately affect low-income individuals and vulnerable populations.

A measure of income inequality is the Gini coefficient. The Gini coefficient indicates how evenly (or unevenly) income is distributed amongst a given population, measuring how much income distribution diverges from equality. The Gini coefficient ranges from 0 to 1; a value of zero indicates perfect income equality amongst a population, while a value of 1 indicates perfect income inequality where all income is with one unit. **Table 2.3-8** displays the Gini coefficient for the Local Study Area communities, Local Study Area, Kenora Census Division, and Ontario in 2020.

**Table 2.3-8: Gini Coefficient for the Local Study Area, Kenora Census Division, and Ontario, 2020**

	Ignace	Dryden	Machin	Sioux Lookout	LSB of Wabigoon	Local Study Area	Kenora Census Division	Ontario
Gini index on adjusted household total income	0.320	0.298	0.305	0.286	0.311	0.296	0.365	0.357

**Source:** Statistics Canada 2022a.

**Note:**

1. Gini coefficients are calculated for three types of adjusted household income, including market income, total income, and after-tax income. Adjusted income is calculated by dividing household income by a factor equal to the square root of the size of the household, in order to consider economies of scale; the needs of a household increase as the size of the household increases, but at a decreasing rate.

The Gini coefficient on adjusted household total income for the Local Study Area communities further confirms that, of the Local Study Area communities, the Township of Ignace has the largest household income disparity at 0.320, while the Municipality of Sioux Lookout has the lowest income disparity at 0.286 (see **Section 3.6.2.2** for more information on household income in the Local Study Area) (Statistics Canada 2022a). Further, the Local Study Area has less income inequality a lower Gini coefficient than the Kenora Census Division and Ontario.

Income inequality may also be measured by examining the ratio of average to median income. Personal and household income for the Local Study Area communities in 2020 is described in **Section 3.6.2.1** and **Section 3.6.2.2**, respectively. The higher the ratio of average to median income, the larger the existing income disparity (WLI 2022). **Table 3.6-1** provides the ratio of average to median personal income for the Local Study Area communities. Results from **Table 3.6-1** indicate that, of the Local Study Area communities, the Township of Ignace had the highest personal income disparity with a ratio of 1.40, while Sioux Lookout had the lowest personal income disparity with a ratio of 1.11 (Statistics Canada 2022e). The Township of Ignace's higher income disparity may, in part, be attributed to the large proportion of the senior population in the community; 50% of the population of Ignace is 55 years or older (see **Section 2.2.4**). During the 1980s and early 1990s, income inequality increased substantially in Canada and has remained relatively stable over the past 25 years, excluding global crises like the 2007-2009 financial crisis and COVID-19 pandemic. The increase in income inequality during the period from the 1980s to the 1990s was primarily felt by low-income individuals and young people, while older people benefited from higher retirement income (Burkinshaw, Terajima, & Wilkins 2022). A review of income in Canada from 1976 to 2016 suggests the median incomes of persons aged 44 years and younger have remained the same or fallen, while having had a strong increase for those aged 65 years and older (Burkinshaw, Terajima, & Wilkins 2022). This increase is largely due to private retirement income from employer or personal pension sources (Burkinshaw, Terajima, & Wilkins 2022).

While income is an indicator of socio-economic status (see **Section 2.2.5.1** for more on low-socioeconomic status), other factors such as educational attainment, employment, gender,

availability and access to childcare, family supports, social supports, mental health and addictions, ageism, and racism, may have an impact on an individual or households' income and socio-economic status (GBA+ Workshop 2023). Individuals of low socio-economic status and lower income in the Local Study Area spend a larger proportion of their income on shelter, food, and clothing costs as compared to those with a higher income (GBA+ Workshop 2023). A lower socio-economic status and lower income can also result in poorer health outcomes, a lack of means to access education and training to improve their financial situation, barriers to engage in recreational activities and access amenities which could improve their well-being and make it difficult to adjust to inflation which may lead to challenges with food security (see **Section 2.3.6**) and purchasing other essential goods.

### 2.3.7.1 Gender Income Inequality

Gender income inequality, or the gender pay gap, is the difference in average earnings of people based on their gender (Canadian Women's Foundation 2022). The gender pay gap is exacerbated for those who face multiple barriers, such as racialized women and women living with disabilities, and thus has disproportionate effects (Canadian Women's Foundation 2022). The gender pay gap persists in Canada. In 2021, female employees earned 11.1% less per hour than male employees; in other words, women earned \$0.89 for every dollar men earned (Statistics Canada 2022e). In Ontario, only approximately 30% of the gender pay gap can be explained by factors such as demographics, education, occupation, industry, job tenure, part-time versus full-time work, and public sector versus private sector work, meaning that 70% of the gender pay gap remains unexplained (Pay Equity Commission n.d.). The unexplained portion of the gender pay gap suggests additional factors influence pay, such as gender discrimination and societal constraints/expectations that exist for women as compared to men (Pay Equity Commission n.d.).

Personal income by sex and gender<sup>17</sup> is described in **Section 3.6.2.1.1**. Results from **Figure 3.6-4** show that, in 2020, males in the Local Study Area had an average personal income that was 35.9% higher than females in the Local Study Area, while males in the Regional Study Area had an average personal income that was 27.3% higher than females in the Regional Study Area (Statistics Canada 2022a). The Township of Ignace had the largest gender pay gap of the Local Study Area communities, with males having an average personal income that was 98.9% greater than females in the Township. The gender pay gap was smallest in the LSB of Wabigoon, where males and females had similar personal average incomes. Results from key person interviews confirmed findings that men tend to make more than women within the Local Study Area, consistent with the national trend (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.3.7.2 Indigenous Income Inequality

Income inequality amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada persists, regardless of place of residence<sup>18</sup> (Paul 2020). The effects of colonialism have left Indigenous

<sup>17</sup> The sex variable (male and female) is used in census years prior to 2021 and the two-category gender variable (men+ and women+) is used in the 2021 Census.

<sup>18</sup> Information on Indigenous income inequality presented in this section is representative of general statistics and does not reflect the social conditions of a specific Indigenous community.

peoples in Canada economically disadvantaged as compared to the rest of the country (Paul 2020), where a considerable gap in earnings between First Nation, Métis, and Inuit individuals and non-Indigenous individuals is observed (Wilson & Macdonald 2010). In particular, Indigenous people living on-reserve typically earned lower incomes than Indigenous people living off-reserve (Raphael et al. 2020). Overall, Indigenous peoples in Canada face significant socio-economic inequalities compared to non-Indigenous Canadians due to the long-lasting impacts of colonialism (Durand-Moreau, Lafontaine, & Ward 2022).

Personal income by Indigenous identity<sup>19</sup> is describe in **Section 3.6.2.1.3**. Results from **Figure 3.6-6** show that, in 2020,<sup>20</sup> across the Local Study Area communities, Indigenous people had a lower average personal income than non-Indigenous people (Statistics Canada 2023c). Non-Indigenous people in the Local Study Area had an income that was 18.8% higher than Indigenous people in the Local Study Area. The Regional Study Area had a large Indigenous pay gap, where non-Indigenous individuals had an income that was 38.1% higher than Indigenous people in the Regional Study Area. This was also the proportional difference (40.5%) in the Township of Ignace, the Local Study Area community with the highest proportion of Indigenous income inequality. The lowest proportion of Indigenous income inequality was in the Municipality of Machin, where non-Indigenous individuals in Machin had an income that was 11.7% higher than Indigenous peoples in Machin.

Barriers to educational and economic opportunities have perpetuated the experiences of poverty and the income gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous identity populations in Canada (Statistics Canada 2022e). Results of the GBA+ Workshop confirmed that real and perceived barriers to education and employment for Indigenous peoples persist in the Local Study Area (GBA+ Workshop 2023).

### 2.3.8 Connection to the Natural Environment

The Local Study Area and Regional Study Area are full of “blue lakes and rocky shores” (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Dominated by broadly rolling surfaces of Canadian Shield bedrock and surrounded by numerous lakes, the natural environment encompassing the Local Study Area is the pride and joy of the people who call northwestern Ontario home. This section describes the connection to the outdoors held by residents of the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area using information collected during key person interviews (see **Section 2.5** for information on land and resource use).

The connection to the outdoors held by residents of the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area is reflected throughout their community goals, plans, and strategies (see **Section 2.3.4** for community goals and plans; **Section 2.4** for community development/infrastructure goals and plans; see **Section 3.0** for economic development goals). For example, according to the Township of Ignace’s *Project Visioning: Community Conversations* report (InterGroup Consultants 2020), Ignace would like to maintain and protect the environmental integrity of the

<sup>19</sup> ‘Indigenous identity’ includes persons who are First Nations (North American Indian), Métis, or Inuk (Inuit) and/or those who are Registered or Treaty Indians (that is registered under the Indian Act of Canada) and/or those who have membership in a First Nation or Indian band. Aboriginal peoples of Canada are defined in the Constitution Act 1982 section 35(2) as including the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada.

<sup>20</sup> Data for Local Study Area communities may be suppressed for confidentiality, including the LSB of Wabigoon for 2020.



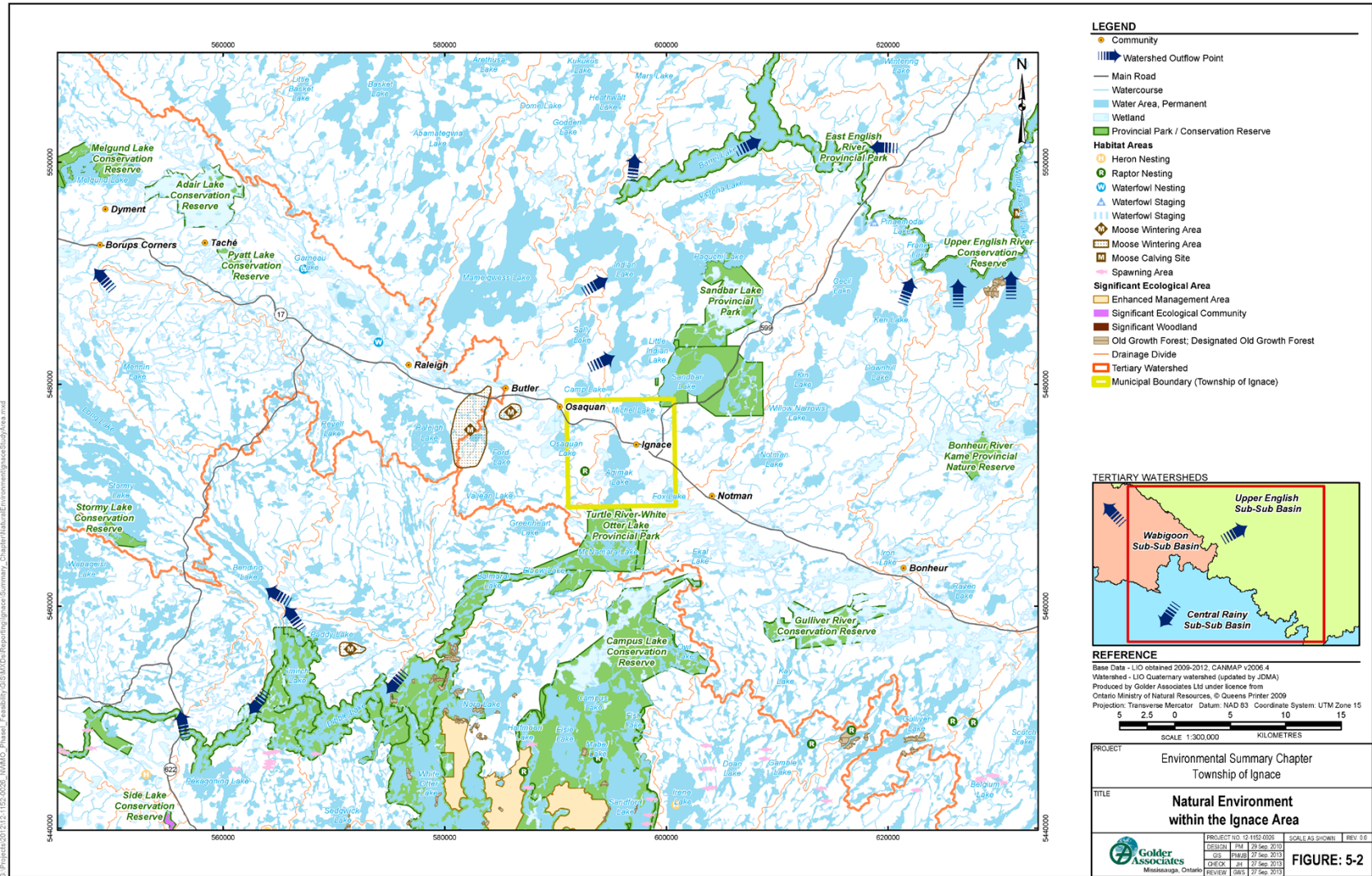
area and support the conservation of reserves and parks. Participants noted that the natural environment is not limited to the areas surrounding Ignace and should also reflect areas within the community, and consideration should be given on how the environment within Ignace can be preserved and enhanced, such as through community beautification initiatives, preserving natural areas when expanding the community, and measures related to waste disposal. Participants acknowledged that the integrity of the natural environment in and around Ignace is critical to many residents' livelihoods, and the importance of communication regarding Project activities to increase public understanding and support of the Project (InterGroup Consultants 2020).

Residents of the other Local Study Area communities have strong connections to the surrounding natural environment. It is a source of pride and adds to their sense of place and quality of life. The natural setting provides various opportunities for fishing, forestry, hunting, trapping, harvesting/foraging, ATViing, snowmachining, tourism, and more. There are a number of businesses that draw labour and visitors to the Local Study Area on the basis of these connections, which speaks to the natural environment's importance to local livelihoods. In addition to these more active pursuits, the Local Study Area also provides opportunities for more passive appreciation of the natural environment (e.g., camping, swimming, hiking, biking, wildlife viewing, boating, canoeing, berry picking) (SMM and InterGroup 2022). Key areas of importance to residents of Ignace, in particular, include the trail system through the community, surrounding lakes including Agimak, and access to activities including fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, use of ATVs, and berry picking (InterGroup 2020).

Results from key person interviews suggest that many residents in the Local Study Area came to and/or remain in northwestern Ontario because of their connection to the outdoors and ability to step into the natural environment in a matter of minutes (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Participants from key person interviews shared that the natural environment forms the basis for the way in which people live in northwestern Ontario; some rely on the outdoors for solitude, many use it to gather and explore with their neighbours, and others' livelihoods rely on it (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Several participants shared that being surrounded by the natural environment provides a safe and healthy place to raise their children and helps foster self-sufficient adults. Participants characterized the natural environment as critical to the community, providing some of the greatest natural resources in the world. Many Local Study Area residents often get out in nature every day, with participants sharing that it is a great way to spend time with their families and neighbours, and particularly enjoy getting outdoors because it is something they can do with their children (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

The natural environment of the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area supports residents' sense of belonging and adds to their quality of life. Participants from key person interviews have expressed uncertainty and fear with regard to any potential damage to or loss of the environment (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). **Map 2.3-2** depicts the natural environment within the Ignace area through ecological characteristics, such as nearby provincial parks and conservation reserves (see **Section 2.5.2**), water areas and water courses (see **Section 2.5.11** for more on key lakes), and habitat areas, providing context on some of the areas where people connect with their environment (see **Section 2.5** for more information on land and resource uses).

Map 2.3-2: Natural Environment within the Ignace Area





### 2.3.9 Summary of Community and Culture

The Local Study Area and Regional Study Area has a rich history rooted in the presence of the Anishinaabe peoples and the bountiful natural environment. Sculpted by Canadian Shield and dominated by boreal forest and water bodies, northwestern Ontario has been home to Indigenous peoples since time immemorial and has since seen the evolution of industries including rail, forestry, mining, and outdoor tourism. The natural environment is a source of pride for residents of the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area and its integrity is critical to their sense of place and quality of life.

The Local Study Area communities each have several goals and plans which present their community aspirations, strategies, and commitment to sustainability, including official plans, strategic plans, community improvement plans, and community safety and well-being plans. Local Study Area community plans hold the protection and promotion of the natural environment at their core, while recognizing opportunities to improve and expand their communities both socially and economically, from improving arts, culture, and recreation opportunities to promoting tourism and entrepreneurialism.

Common community challenges across the Local Study Area communities include youth retention, lack of transportation within and between communities, housing, access to health care, lack of local education and training opportunities, and lack of services coupled with higher costs than larger metropolitan areas, such as higher costs of groceries (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023; GBA+ Workshop 2023). Food insecurity has increased in the Regional Study Area, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent inflation and rising food costs.

Of the Local Study Area communities, income inequality is largest in the Township of Ignace, which may, in part, be attributed to the large proportion of seniors in the community. Income inequality in the Local Study Area is lower than the Kenora Census Division and Ontario. In the Local Study Area, men had an average personal income that was 35.9% higher than women, while in the Regional Study Area, men had an average personal income that was 27.3% higher than women. Non-Indigenous people in the Local Study Area had an income that was 18.8% higher than Indigenous people in the Local Study Area. The Regional Study Area had a large Indigenous pay gap, where non-Indigenous individuals had an income that was 38.1% higher than Indigenous people (Statistics Canada 2022a).

Results from key person interviews suggest residents of the Local Study Area are proud of their way of life and immensely value the natural environment that surrounds them (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Residents appreciate their communities and want their communities to prosper without losing the small-town nature that they value.

## 2.4 INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

### 2.4.1 Overview and Approach

Infrastructure and services describe the built infrastructure and municipal services available in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area. Descriptions include consideration of current capacity and the potential to expand capacity in the future, including planned expansions and any barriers for expansion. **Table 2.4-1** summarizes the infrastructure and services described in this section.

**Table 2.4-1: Infrastructure and Services**

Infrastructure	Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation modes and infrastructure, including railways, highways, airports, traffic levels and patterns, and public safety concerns;</li> <li>• Pipelines;</li> <li>• Utilities and associated infrastructure, including natural gas and electricity;</li> <li>• Water and wastewater infrastructure, including water sources;</li> <li>• Solid waste disposal and recycling infrastructure and services;</li> <li>• Telecommunications;</li> <li>• Policing and emergency services (fire and emergency medical services), including local and regional emergency response plans;</li> <li>• Educational facilities, including primary, secondary, and postsecondary facilities;</li> <li>• Recreation facilities;</li> <li>• Housing, including rental housing, apartments, owner-owned single-family housing, affordable housing, social housing, assisted living, long-term care, and housing availability; and</li> <li>• Temporary accommodations, including hotels and motels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Childcare, including available spaces and costs;</li> <li>• Services to support seniors, including assisted living and long-term care;</li> <li>• Formal recreational services, including organized sports;</li> <li>• Services to support survivors of gender-based violence;</li> <li>• Services to support Indigenous people;</li> <li>• Mental health and substance use services;</li> <li>• Child and adult protective services; and</li> <li>• Services required to serve vulnerable populations in the Local and Regional Study Areas to support their daily needs (e.g., shelter, clothing, food).</li> </ul>

Health care facilities and services are addressed in the health section (**Section 4.0**).

Spatial boundaries for infrastructure and services include a Local Study Area and a Regional Study Area. Spatial boundaries are discussed in further detail in **Section 2.1.1**.

The Regional Study Area is the Kenora Census Division. The Regional Study Area is inclusive of Indigenous communities and reserves. The Local Study Area includes the Township of Ignace, City of Dryden, Municipality of Machin, Municipality of Sioux Lookout, and the unincorporated communities and Local Services Boards near Ignace and Dryden, including the Local Services Board of Melgund, Upsala, Valora, Silver Dollar, and the Local Services Board of Wabigoon.

The temporal boundaries for infrastructure and services will focus on the current provision of services and changes in service provision in the past 5 to 10 years to understand trends (e.g., changes in demand). Understanding changes in service provision in the recent past will focus on the underlying reasons for those changes (e.g., population changes, administrative changes, legal or regulatory changes). Further information on temporal boundaries for infrastructure and services is provided in **Section 2.1.1**.

Information on data collection, including desktop research and primary data collection is provided in **Section 2.1.2**.

## 2.4.2 Transportation Infrastructure

This section describes regional and local roads, railways, and airports in the Local Study Area. The regional highway network that connects Local Study Area communities includes Highway 17 from Machin to Upsala, Highway 72 from Sioux Lookout to Highway 17, and Highway 599 from Ignace to Silver Dollar. Ministry of Transportation (MTO) classifies Ontario highways according to the posted speed limit and the Average Annual Daily Traffic (“AADT”) volume (Government of Ontario 2018e). The highway classification system is used to determine the maximum allowable time for complete snow removal and ranges between 8 hours for a freeway/urban highway to 24 hours for a minor or local highway (Government of Ontario 2022f). The classification is also used for the maximum allowable time to address other required maintenance along highways including cracks, potholes, and shoulder drop-offs. Vehicles exceeding certain dimensions require an oversize permit to operate on Ontario highways. These dimensions are: a width of 2.6 m, a height of 4.15 m, a length for a single vehicle including load of 12.5 m, a box length of 18.5 m, and a combined vehicle and load length of 23.0 m (Government of Ontario 2022e). During spring thaw (e.g., March to May) reduced loads can be imposed where the weight upon an axle cannot exceed 5,000 kg (Government of Ontario 2023i).

### 2.4.2.1 Regional Highway Network

The primary highways in Ontario are referred to as “King’s Highways” (HC & IBI 2016). These are the oldest provincial highways, numbered from 3 to 148 and 400 to 451 (Government of Ontario 2019b). These paved highways form an interconnected network spread across various regions in the province (HC & IBI 2016).

Numbered 502 to 673, secondary highways are used to link primary highways or connect communities to primary highways. They are often used to connect areas with a high rate of traffic such as airports, mines, quarries, sawmills, or resort areas and may be gravel or paved. Due to the fact that northern Ontario lacks county and regional governments, secondary highways in northern Ontario can serve a similar purpose to the county or regional roads in

southern Ontario, except with The Government of Ontario's Ministry of Transportation (MTO) who are responsible for management and oversight (Government of Ontario 2019b; HC & IBI 2016).

Tertiary highways exist exclusively in northern Ontario. Numbered in the 800's, they provide additional links to communities and resources that are not provided with secondary highways. Most are gravel surfaced with the MTO not liable for any winter maintenance services (Government of Ontario 2019b; HC & IBI 2016). Beyond tertiary highways, there are other minor highways that the MTO is responsible for.

The communities in the Local Study Area are along or just off Highway 17 (Ignace, Dryden, Machin, Wabigoon, Melgund, Dinorwic, and Upsala); Highway 72 (Sioux Lookout); and Highway 599 (Valora and Silver Dollar). The roads discussed in this section are depicted on **Map 1.5-1**.

#### 2.4.2.1.1 Highway 17

Highway 17 is a highway in Ontario's Provincial Highway Network and is part of the Trans-Canada Highway. It is classified as a King's highway (primary route), part of a network of the oldest provincial highways that connect urban centres with a population above 2,000 by the shortest possible route (Government of Ontario 2019b). Highway maintenance is overseen by the MTO; however, the City of Dryden oversees highway maintenance of Highway 17 and Highway 594 within the City limits (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Within the study areas, Highway 17 runs on an east-west alignment (WSP 2022d). It begins at the Manitoba-Ontario border west of Kenora and ends where Highway 417 begins west of Arnprior.

There are multiple plans for improvement along Highway 17 under the MTO's 5-year capital plan that include:

- Between Dinorwic and Dryden, there are rehabilitation plans for road resurfacing. This has targeted completion date between 2024 and 2025 (WSP 2022d).
- Between Dryden and Ignace, four structure improvements are planned, involving either culvert or bridge rehabilitations. This has a targeted completion date between 2023 and 2025 (WSP 2022d).

Highway 17 from Dryden to Ignace is classified as a class II highway according to MTO winter service levels and should be cleared to bare pavement within 16 hours of the end of snowfall (Government of Ontario 2023i).

MTO is currently completing bridge habilitation on the Wabigoon River Bridge, which is 2km west of Highway 665, Dryden, and the Revell River No. 3 Bridge which is 1 km east of Highway 622. These are scheduled for completion in 2023 and 2024, respectively. Road resurfacing is scheduled to occur between Ignace and Highway 599 in 2024. There is also work planned for the Thunder Creek Bridge east of Dryden, to be completed in 2025 or 2026 (Government of Ontario 2023j).

#### Traffic Volumes

In 2016, Average Annual Daily Traffic ("AADT") volumes were recorded along Highway 17. The highest volumes were measured between Dryden and Highway 72 at 5,950 vehicles/day. Seasonal Average Daily Traffic ("SADT") volumes were recorded at 7,250 between Dryden and Highway 72 (WSP 2022d). Further east, towards Ignace, measured traffic volumes were lower

with a measured AADT of 2,850 vehicles/day. In the summer months, traffic volumes were approximately 23% higher (WSP 2022d). A high-level analysis of highway capacity level of service found that Highway 17 operates at a level of service A or best operating condition, given that its highest SADT and AADT (7,250 and 5,950, respectively) are well below the maximum suggested AADT for this type of highway (13,900) (WSP 2022d).

### Public Safety Concerns

Between 2017 and 2021, there were 267 collisions, including fatalities, injuries, and property damage, on the stretch of Highway 17 located between the west limits of Dryden and the east limits of Ignace. The total number of collisions along that stretch of Highway 17 have steadily decreased by 7% between 2017 and 2021. This is in contrast to Ontario provincial highways as a whole, where the number of collisions has increased annually by 2% from 2009 to 2018 (WSP 2022d).

Using available collision data between 2017 and 2021, the most common contributing factors to collisions along the stretch of Highway 17 between Dryden and Ignace is lighting/visibility (darkness) and animal encounters. Concerns regarding transport trucks have been noted as the data shows transport truck collisions occurring more frequently than other types of vehicles due to aggressive and inexperienced drivers. Interview participants noted aggressive driving by transport truck drivers even during inclement weather conditions (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; WSP 2022d).

Operational and maintenance issues along Highway 17 between Ignace and Dryden have also been noted. This includes limited emergency access for firetrucks, heavy vehicle parking despite the presence of prohibited parking signs, excessive snow piling along the highway main corridor and sidewalks (sightline impairment), and increased highway traffic congestion (WSP 2022d).

#### 2.4.2.1.2 Highway 72

Highway 72 is a King's highway that connects to Highway 17 in Dinorwic and runs north to Sioux Lookout. Highway 72 from Dinorwic to Sioux Lookout is classified as a class III highway according to MTO winter service levels and should be cleared to bare pavement within 24 hours of the end of snowfall (Government of Ontario 2022f).

During 2023, MTO conducted bridge rehabilitation 8 km north of Highway 664 (south of Sioux Lookout) and implemented safety improvements for a pedestrian crossing at May st. West and Sturgeon River rd. in Sioux Lookout (Government of Ontario 2023j).

From 2025 to 2026, MTO has planned road resurfacing work from Highway 17 to 3 km north of Kathlyn Lake Rd., 36 km north of Highway 17 to Sioux Lookout, and 1 km east of Highway 72 at Dinorwic. Bridge Rehabilitation work is planned for Frog Rapids Bridge which is 3 km north of Highway 664 (south of Sioux Lookout). Culvert rehabilitations are planned for Melgund Creek (west of Highway 603), Osaquan River (11km west of Highway 599), and Shoshowae Creek (8 km west of Highway 665) (Government of Ontario 2023j).

### Traffic Volumes

The AADT along Highway 72 was 3,200 vehicles/day with a SADT of 3,900 vehicles/day. Between 2006 and 2016 there was no observed increase in traffic volumes (WSP 2022d). In 2019, the AADT was highest on Highway 72 between the edge of Sioux Lookout and Dinorwic at 1,100

vehicles/day, with volumes increasing within the core downtown area of Sioux Lookout to 5,650 vehicles/day (Ministry of Transportation 2019). Highway 72 is assumed to be operating at Level of Service D with a capacity of 12,500 AADT which is well above the AADT of 5,650 vehicles/day in the downtown area of Sioux Lookout (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2016).

## Public Safety Concerns

Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) have indicated that the main public concerns along Highway 72 have centred around unsafe and aggressive driving, wildlife, and inexperienced drivers during inclement weather (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Flooding has also been noted as a concern along Highway 72. On June 4, 2023, for example, reports of a beaver dam breaking caused water to cover both sides of the highway approximately 5 km north of Dinorwic, resulting in a multi-day closure until repairs could be completed between Dinorwic and Highway 644 (Thoms 2023; Forbes 2023).

### 2.4.2.1.3 Highway 599

Highway 599 is a secondary highway. It connects to Highway 17 at Ignace and goes north to its terminus at Pickle Lake. Highway 599 from Ignace to Pickle Lake is classified as a class IV and V highway according to MTO winter service levels and should be cleared to bare pavement within 24 hours of the end of snowfall (Government of Ontario 2022f).

MTO is currently conducting road resurfacing from Silver Dollar to Savant Lake that is anticipated for completion in 2023 (Government of Ontario 2023j). Resurfacing work is planned for 2024 from the English River Bridge to Highway 642 at Silver Dollar. Road reconstruction is planned for north of Highway 642 for 2025 and 2026 (Government of Ontario 2023j).

## Traffic Volumes

Highway 599 has low AADT volumes, not exceeding 300 vehicles/day (WSP 2022d). Traffic volumes are low along Highway 599, well below the assumed Level of Service D capacity of 12,500 AADT (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2016).

### 2.4.2.1.4 Forest Access and Managed Roads

There are a number of forest access and managed roads within the Wabigoon Forest, Dryden Forest, and English River Forest Areas (for more information on the forest areas see **Section 2.5.3**). Forest access and managed roads can be privately owned and maintained or, in the case of roads in Crown forests, be publicly owned and maintained. These roads are used for recreational and commercial purposes (Government of Ontario 2021k; Government of Ontario 2021l). Forest access and managed roads are classified as primary roads, branch roads and operational roads (Resolute FP Canada Inc. 2019). Primary and branch roads are managed and maintained under the designated forestry management plans. Operational roads are permitted construction within operational road boundaries and are only maintained throughout operations. After operations are complete they are regenerated into forest cover to meet forestry management plan objectives (Resolute FP Canada Inc. 2019).

### 2.4.2.1.5 Transportation Plan for Northern Ontario

In 2020, the Province of Ontario released *Connecting the North: A Draft Transportation Plan for Northern Ontario*. The purpose of the plan is to expand highways and transit services, foster



economic opportunities, and make travel more reliable to remote and First Nations communities in Northern Ontario. Among the plan's key actions that would affect Local Study Area communities are widening sections of Highway 17 and adding new bus routes between Thunder Bay and Winnipeg (Government of Ontario 2020a).

## 2.4.2.2 Municipal Transportation

### 2.4.2.2.1 Ignace

#### Municipal Roads

The Township of Ignace is located along Highway 17 at the intersection of Highway 599, a highway that runs north beyond Pickle Lake. It is maintained by the MTO via Miller Group Services (subcontractors).

Defined by the section of Highway 17 with four-lanes and two-way streets, Main Street in Ignace runs between Rand Street North and 500 metres east of Lakeshore Drive. The posted speed limit within the community is 50km/h, there is also a Community Safety Zone whereby fines are doubled. Traffic and pedestrian operations are free flowing with no signalized intersections. Sidewalks run along both sides of the street, however, there are no pedestrian crossings that connect the north and south sides of the road (WSP 2022d). Despite no parking signs, heavy vehicles occasionally park alongside Highway 17 to make short stops which leads to reduced visibility for people entering or exiting Ignace (WSP 2022d).

Approximately 70% of Ignace's roads are in "fair or better condition" based on asset age and field condition, and 60% of roads have a remaining service life of 6 to 10 years. Throughout the Township of Ignace, there are approximately 3 km of gravel roads and 20 km of paved roads (WSP 2022d). The Ignace Official Plan (2020) states that new local roads are to be constructed to municipal standards. Existing roads are to be reviewed by Council on a regular basis to determine the level of service and maintenance. Where road improvement is required, consideration for the provision of a sidewalk on at least one side of the street is to be considered (Township of Ignace 2020).

#### Airport

While the Ignace Municipal Airport (Ignace Aerodrome) does not currently have operational status, Ignace Airways offers a seaplane charter service that operates throughout northwestern Ontario. In 2021, the Township of Ignace Council formed the Ignace Aerodrome Advisory Committee to look at different opportunities in operating the airport as well as funding for tarmac/runway and facility upgrades (Township of Ignace 2021b). The Ignace runway is 3,500 feet and is compatible with the runway requirements of a Dash 8 or C-130 Hercules (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.4.2.2.2 Dryden

#### Municipal Roads

Dryden is located along Highway 17 which runs through Dryden from east to west. Highway 594 extends west of Dryden and connects to Highway 502. Highway 502 runs north/south and connects to Highway 11 and the United States border at Fort Frances/International Falls. Having



easy access from multiple directions via road has helped to make Dryden a regional hub for suppliers wishing to service the Kenora District, including northern remote communities. A future highway by-pass that would run to the north of Dryden may require the city to reserve lands for the MTO (Explorer Solutions 2022a). Due to a lack of places for trucks to stop or park within the city, transports are parking at the side of the highway (WSP 2022d). Signs and barriers placed in the previously used parking lots across from Walmart and close to Tim Horton's have resulted in more trucks parking along the road, increasing the chances of a collision occurring (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

In Dryden, the length of roads are categorized by the following functional classifications (Explorer Solutions 2022a):

- Urban Local (35,625.89 m);
- Urban Collector (12,462.65 m);
- Urban Arterial (15,221.69 m);
- Rural Local (36,891.11 m);
- Rural Collector (17,180.54 m); and
- Rural Arterial (13,878.00 m).

Roads in fair condition make up the highest percentage (Explorer Solutions 2022a). The majority of roads within the Dryden road network are maintained by the City of Dryden (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Some roads are privately owned and/or overseen by the MTO, therefore the city is not responsible for their maintenance (Explorer Solutions 2022a). Any areas in Dryden that are identified for future development which are within the MTO's permit control areas will be subject to the MTO's policies, standards, and requirements. The city has committed to prioritizing early consultation to ensure municipal planning initiatives align with provincial transportation planning (Quartek Group 2022). In the Dryden 2023 budget \$3.2 million was allocated for planned construction on Highway 17 from Cecil ave. to West limit (City of Dryden 2023b).

## Airport

Located approximately 10 km northeast of the City of Dryden, and the closest certified airport to the Township of Ignace, the Dryden Regional Airport is certified for regular commercial service (WSP 2022d). The airport employs four full-time staff and a manager, employed by the City of Dryden (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). In 1996, the City of Dryden attained ownership and operations of the airport from the Federal Government. In December 2019, Dryden contracted Loomex Group to provide an Airport Manager who is responsible for management and oversight of operations (Loomex Group 2021). The airport helps to support several services for the community and broader region including aerial firefighting, scheduled passenger service, general aviation, search and rescue operations, corporate charters, and medical evacuation flights. Between 2017 and 2022, the airport had approximately 10,000 to 12,000 aircraft movements annually with the number of annual scheduled flights decreasing from 1,929 to 753, mainly due to economic impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic (City of Dryden n.d.c). The airport is equipped with an Instrument Landing System that allows aircrafts to land in any weather condition (WSP 2022d).

Dryden Regional Airport is equipped with 10 to 15 privately-owned hangars that are occupied and has space for new development. The runway is 5,993 feet long and 148 feet wide (1,826.5 meters by 45 meters) and is long enough to accommodate a 737-800 aircraft carrying either cargo or 150 passengers.

Airport services are offered by Bearskin Airlines, which offers 7 flights, 6 days/week between Thunder Bay, Dryden, and Winnipeg; MAG Aerospace Canada; Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) Fire Management Centre; Expedition Helicopters; and Provincial Helicopters. Morgan Fuels is the primary provider of fuel services at the airport (Loomex Group 2021). Some businesses have maintained services at the airport for an extended period of time include Hydro One, Northern Youth Programs, and MNRF. Northern Youth Programs and MNRF both have hangars at the airport (Loomex Group 2021).

The airport serves an essential function in the community by transporting patients from Dryden to the appropriate facilities for urgent medical care while bringing in surgeons and other specialists to the Dryden Regional Health Centre. Northwest Emergency Medical Services (EMS) does not have the capacity to transfer patients and the Dryden Regional Health Centre does not have a helipad (WSP 2022d).

Airport services are often busiest during the summer months, due to increased activity by the MNRF caused by forest fires. The terminal has been an evacuation hub during forest fires and can accommodate up to 200 people at a given time during an evacuation. In case of an emergency, such as a forest fire, the Dryden Regional Airport has developed its own Emergency Plan, which includes the OPP, fire, and ambulance on site. In addition, the Dryden Regional Airport has additional staff from the City of Dryden and The Loomex Group available (City of Dryden 2020).

Strategic priorities identified in the Dryden Regional Airport Strategic Plan (2021) include supporting airport revenues by developing land for industrial or commercial sites on property that is not required for aeronautical use, and hangar and facility development such as rental hangars, and improved scheduled passenger air services.

#### **2.4.2.2.3 Machin**

##### **Municipal Roads**

The Municipality of Machin has 88 km of roads; most are classified as “Class 5” (BDO 2020), meaning that they are low speed limit and low traffic roads (Government of Ontario 2018d). Approximately 77% of the Municipality’s road network is considered to be in “poor to very poor condition”, whereas 5% are assessed as “very good condition” (Public Service Digest 2016).

##### **Airports**

Machin is currently investigating options to develop a plan for the use of the Vermillion Bay Airport property (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

The Vermillion Bay Water Aerodrome is located 1.5 km northwest of the community of Vermillion Bay on Kawashegamuk/Long Lake that services mainly private regional tourist outfitters.

#### 2.4.2.2.4 Sioux Lookout

##### Municipal Roads

The Municipality of Sioux Lookout's road network contains over 50 km of paved and 2.6 km gravel local and collector roads (PSD Citywide 2020). The road network is predominately within the settlement areas of Sioux Lookout and Hudson. Most roads (68%) have a remaining life of over 10 years. The Municipality completed an internal road condition assessment in 2018 and rated surface condition on a five (5) point scale that ranged from excellent to critical condition. 38% of paved roads have been given an average condition rating of "poor", with 65% being rated between "fair" and "very good" (PSD Citywide 2020). The 2023 Sioux Lookout Budget included road reconstruction on Moosehorn dr., road resurfacing on Willington st. and Sturgeon River rd., and road reconstruction on Sturgeon River rd. (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2023).

##### Airports

The Sioux Lookout Airport is a licensed airport that offers scheduled flights through Bearskin Airlines, Wasaya Airways, Perimeter Aviation, and North Star Air with charter flights from Skycare Air Ambulance, Bamaji Air, Slate Falls Airways, and Thunder Air (Sioux Lookout Airport n.d.a). In addition, the airport serves as a base for the Ornge Air medevac services, Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service (NAPS), private aircraft owners, and several other charters from across North America. The airport also acts as a hub for patients from the Meno-Ya-Win Health Centre from 29 northern communities and 17 nursing stations (Sioux Lookout Airport n.d.a).

The Sioux Lookout Airport is also a hub for many northern First Nation communities and provides service to approximately 160,000 passengers from 25,000 to 26,000 flights travelling through the airport every year (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2021; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). This airport also accommodates 24-hour NavCanada Flight Services and is open to traffic 24-hours a day, 365 days a year (Sioux Lookout Airport n.d.a). The Sioux Lookout Airport has one runway which is 5,300 feet long by 100 feet wide (Sioux Lookout Airport n.d.b). Sioux Lookout Airport is also a fuel service dealer supplying Jet A-1 fuel with FSII and AV gas, available through Morgan Fuels (Sioux Lookout Airport n.d.c).

Sioux Lookout is currently expanding water and sewer services at the airport to facilitate development of their Big Wood property to develop another hotel (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

##### Railways

The Canadian Pacific Railway has stations in Ignace and Dryden and passes through Machin (Canadian Pacific 2022). Canadian Pacific is a freight rail service provider with passenger services limited to luxury tours provided by Royal Canadian Pacific (Canadian Pacific 2023). Ignace has convenient access to the rail system in the form of a switch yard/reload terminal which is located two blocks north of Highway 17 (Township of Ignace 2018).

The Canadian National Rail Line travels through Sioux Lookout, just to the north of the other Local Study Area communities (CN 2023). The station in Sioux Lookout was built in 1911 as part of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway (GTPR)/National Transcontinental Railway (NTR) system that became Canada's second transcontinental railway (CNR in Ontario 2011). Passenger service is available on the CN rail line through VIA Rail. VIA Rail Passenger Service is available in Sioux

Lookout. While the station is closed, the train continues to stop at the Sioux Lookout location for passengers for approximately 20 to 30 minutes (VIA Rail n.d.).

No intermodal facilities exist at any of the stops in the Local Study Area communities on the Canadian Pacific Railway or Canadian National Rail Line. The nearest intermodal facility is in Winnipeg, on the Canadian National Rail Line (Explorer Solutions 2022a).

### 2.4.3 Utilities and Associated Infrastructure

The following section describes the utility infrastructure in the Local Study Area, including electricity, natural gas and propane, water, wastewater, and stormwater, solid waste and recycling, cellular and landline phone service, internet service, and television service. **Section 3.6.3.5** describes the average residential monthly electricity, natural gas, water and wastewater, cellular phone, and internet bills.

#### 2.4.3.1 Electricity

Electricity service providers in the Local Study Area include Hydro One Networks and Sioux Lookout Hydro. Hydro One Networks and Sioux Lookout Hydro are both regulated by the Ontario Energy Board (OEB 2023; Hydro One n.d.a; Sioux Lookout Hydro 2019).

- **Hydro One Networks:** the electricity provider for Ignace, Dryden, Machin, Wabigoon Village, Melgund, and Dinorwic (Hydro One n.d.a, Township of Ignace 2018; City of Dryden 2017; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Hydro One has 115 and 230 kV transmission lines throughout Northern Ontario (Hydro One n.d.b).
- **Sioux Lookout Hydro:** the electricity provider for Sioux Lookout (Sioux Lookout Hydro 2019; Sioux Lookout Hydro 2023). Sioux Lookout Hydro is an incorporated company owned by the Municipality of Sioux Lookout. Sioux Lookout Hydro also maintains streetlights on behalf of the Municipality (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2022b). Sioux Lookout Hydro is embedded within the Hydro One Network distribution system with 115 and 230 kV transmission lines (Hydro One n.d.b).

In April 2019, Hydro One Networks issued a Notice of Commencement for the Terms of Reference for the Environmental Assessment for the Waasigan Transmission Line. The transmission line is a proposed line between Thunder Bay, Atikokan, and Dryden that is expected to bring an additional 350 megawatts of electricity to northwestern Ontario (Hydro One n.d.a).

#### 2.4.3.2 Natural Gas and Propane

Union Gas (Enbridge) provides natural gas service to Ignace, Dryden, and Machin (OEB 2023; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The Township of Ignace natural gas infrastructure was installed in the early 1980s and late 1990s, connecting all properties within the Township. Primary lines run north and south (e.g., West Beach Drive, Lakeshore Drive, West Street, Pine Street, and Davey Lake Road). The City of Dryden natural gas infrastructure was predominantly installed from the late 1970s to 1990s, connecting the majority of properties within the City. The community of Vermillion Bay natural gas infrastructure was predominantly installed throughout the 1980s and 1990s (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Sioux Lookout, Wabigoon Village, Melgund, and Dinorwic do not have natural gas service (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). While there is currently no natural

gas service in Wabigoon Village, the Local Services Board has investigated the potential for Union Gas to provide service as the Union Gas natural gas line passes near the community (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The Union Gas natural gas line also passes near Melgund and Dinorwic (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). A natural gas line does not pass near Sioux Lookout.

Superior Propane and Morgan Fuels serve the communities of Dryden and Sioux Lookout (Explorer Solutions 2022b; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). A Superior Propane regional office and plant is located on the west side of Dryden (Superior Propane n.d.).

A TC Energy (formerly TransCanada Corporation) natural gas transmission pipeline runs through the Local Study Area but does not distribute natural gas to the Local Study Area communities. TC Energy owns and operates the Canadian Mainline natural gas pipeline, which roughly twins the Trans-Canada Highway (TC Energy 2017). The pipeline has rights of way that cross municipal lands for Ignace, Dryden, Machin, Village of Wabigoon, and Melgund (WSP 2022b; Quartek Group Inc 2022).

### **2.4.3.3 Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater**

Municipal water and wastewater service is provided to residents of Ignace, Dryden, and Sioux Lookout with the exception of some residential properties in Ignace that do not receive wastewater service and some rural and urban properties in Dryden that are not serviced by municipal water and sewer. For these properties service is the responsibility of the homeowner (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Residents of Machin have municipal water service, while wastewater service is the responsibility of the homeowner (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Residents of Machin typically have a septic tank and field for wastewater (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Water and wastewater service for residents of Wabigoon Village, Melgund, and Dinorwic are the responsibility of the homeowner (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Service can come in the form of cisterns and water wells for water service and septic tank and field for wastewater service (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Municipal stormwater management is provided to residents of Ignace, Dryden, Sioux Lookout, and Machin. The Township of Ignace, City of Dryden, and Municipality of Sioux Lookout each manage a system of stormwater sewer mains, culverts, ditches, catch basins, and manholes. The Municipality of Machin maintains ditches with culverts. The Ministry of Transportation maintains the ditches and culverts for Wabigoon Village, Melgund, and Dinorwic (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

The following section describes the municipal water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure for the Local Study Area communities.

#### **2.4.3.3.1 Township of Ignace**

##### **Water Treatment and Distribution**

The water distribution system network is owned by the Township of Ignace and Northern Waterworks Inc. operates, maintains, and manages the water distribution system. Northern Waterworks Inc. is also responsible for testing and tracking activities and identifies capital needs



for Township consideration (Urban Systems 2021). The water distribution system in Ignace was built in 2009 with a 50-year useful life. Ignace's water treatment plant has an operational capacity for approximately 1,870 people (or 2,000 m<sup>3</sup>/day), which exceeds its current population. Michel Lake (located north of the Township) is the community's main water source (WSP 2022b). The water treatment system uses a membrane filtration process (WSP 2022b). A water pollution control plant by Agimak River has an extended aeration plant and disinfects phosphorous and other contaminants from the water. Its capacity can carry up to 2 million litres of water in its reservoir (WSP 2022b). The plant currently operates at 30% capacity with a maximum daily demand of approximately 1,500 m<sup>3</sup>/day of water and an average daily demand of 868 m<sup>3</sup>/day (Urban Systems 2021). The water distribution system consists of approximately 24 km of various sized water mains, 140 valves, and 142 fire hydrants (WSP 2022b). Water lines and hydrants are approximately 45 years old, with an expected lifespan of 80 years. Water valves are over 45 years old and nearing the end of their lifespan after recent failures suggested 50 years is a reasonable useful life (WSP 2022b).

During the winter of 2018 to 2019 there were issues with frozen residential water lines at over 235 houses due to water lines installed in the frost zone, removal of insulating snow on streets where service lines are most shallow, and a high water table (JML Engineering 2019). In 2019, Aqua-Flo units were installed in 187 homes to help keep water circulating and avoid freezing (JML Engineering 2019).

### Sanitary Sewer and Sewage Treatment

The Township's existing wastewater treatment plant was built in the 1980s and is nearing the end of its 50-year lifespan (WSP 2022b). The wastewater system runs for approximately 15 km throughout Ignace and includes approximately 180 manholes. The plant has a capacity of 2,536 m<sup>3</sup>/day and was designed to serve a maximum population of about 2,400. Due to performance and operational limits of the plant, it would be unable to support sizeable future population growth. While the wastewater treatment plant is nominally operating at 63% capacity and at its operational limit, 297 residential properties receive municipal water but are not utilizing the Township's sanitary sewer system (i.e., they have their own septic systems). The sewers and manholes are approximately 45 years old, with an expected lifespan of 60 to 80 years. Although existing sanitary pipes do not require replacement for over 15 years, most pipes use asbestos cement (WSP 2022b).

### Stormwater Management

Stormwater infrastructure was installed in Ignace the early 1970s as new residential subdivisions for mining, forestry, and government employees were built (PSD 2020). Most culverts and storm sewers have an expected life between 50 and 80 years. In June 2022, an engineering inspection of the Pine Street culverts revealed issues with structural integrity. As a result, Pine Street was temporarily closed (Township of Ignace n.d.c). The Township applied for an emergency provincial grant in July 2022 and was awarded \$1.74 million to cover remediation and replacement costs of the Pine Street culvert and bridge, with work expected to begin in the fall of 2023 (Township of Ignace n.d.c). The total length of the stormwater network in Ignace is approximately 4 km with 11 catch basins, 153 storm units, and 4 storm culverts (WSP 2022b). Storm sewers (80 years of expected life), culverts (50 years of expected life), and catch basins (60 years of expected life) are all nearing halfway of their useful life (WSP 2022b).

### 2.4.3.3.2 City of Dryden

#### Water Treatment and Distribution

The City of Dryden has a conventional surface water treatment plant. Water is sourced from Wabigoon Lake, located approximately 2 km from the water treatment plant. Two lines, including one backup line, have been installed (Government of Ontario 2021g). The water treatment plant currently runs at 30% capacity (633 litre per capita/day) at 4,080 m<sup>3</sup>/day (Explorer Solutions 2022a)<sup>21</sup>. Although the water treatment plant is running at 30% capacity, the facility is 46 years old, and reliability could be an issue in the future. To accommodate larger future developments the water treatment plant would need to be upgraded. The water distribution system consists of approximately 60 km of various sized water mains, 840 valves, 305 fire hydrants, and 2,600 service connections (PSD 2016). The condition of most watermains in Dryden is “moderate or worse”<sup>22</sup> (Explorer Solutions 2022a). The City of Dryden Public Works Department handles water distribution system repairs and services disruptions, including hydrants (The Loomex Group 2022a).

#### Sanitary Sewer and Sewage Treatment

The City of Dryden’s wastewater treatment plant was built in 2014 and is LEED Silver certified as per the Canada Green Building Council (Stantec n.d.). The wastewater treatment plant has an expected lifespan of 60 years. The City of Dryden Public Works Department operates the wastewater treatment plant and pumping stations, as well as manages sewer line repairs and system maintenance. The wastewater system runs for approximately 57 km throughout Dryden. The wastewater system includes 701 manholes for access and servicing (PSD 2016). The condition of most sewers in Dryden is “moderate or worse”, whereas larger sewers are evaluated as “poor or very poor condition” (Explorer Solutions 2022a). The Dryden Community Capacity (Explorer Solutions 2022a) study noted the capacity of the sanitary sewer system to be approximately 10,800 m<sup>3</sup>/day. Certain sections of the sewer are currently near capacity and may require replacements of some sections to accommodate larger future developments.<sup>23</sup>

#### Stormwater Management

The total length of the stormwater network in Dryden is approximately 39 km with 653 catch basins, 648 manholes, and 4,420 m of storm culverts (PSD 2016). The condition of most storm sewers in Dryden are in moderate or worse condition<sup>24</sup> (Explorer Solutions 2022a). The City of

<sup>21</sup> The Dryden Community Capacity Study (2022) reports the water treatment plant capacity at 13.6 ML/day which is equivalent to 13,600 m<sup>3</sup>/day. Conversions were calculated by InterGroup Consultant Ltd.

<sup>22</sup> The condition classification is an estimate based on the date of installation and includes very good (installed less than 20 years ago), good (installed 20-40 years ago), moderate (installed 40-60 years ago), poor (installed 60-80 years ago), and very poor (installed more than 80 years ago) (Explorer Solutions 2022a).

<sup>23</sup> The Dryden Community Capacity Study (2022) reports the wastewater treatment plant capacity at 10.8 ML/day which is equivalent to 10,800 m<sup>3</sup>/day. Conversions were calculated by InterGroup Consultant Ltd.

<sup>24</sup> The condition classification is an estimate based on the date of installation and include very good (installed less than 20 years ago), good (installed 20-40 years ago), moderate (installed 40-60 years ago), poor (installed 60-80 years ago), and very poor (installed more than 80 years ago) (Explorer Solutions 2022a).



Dryden Public Works Department manages the stormwater network, including repairs and system maintenance.

#### **2.4.3.3.3 Municipality of Machin**

##### **Water Treatment and Distribution**

The Municipality of Machin owns and operates their municipal water distribution system, which includes the Vermillion Bay water treatment plant and low lift pumping station (Municipality of Machin 2019). The water is sourced from Eagle Lake. The water distribution system consists of approximately 7.5 km of various sized water mains, 65 gate valves, 50 fire hydrants, and 154 service connections (PSD 2021). In 2019, the water treatment plant operated at 14% capacity (1,360 m<sup>3</sup>/day) of the average daily demand, providing water to approximately 220 households (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; BDO 2020; Municipality of Machin 2019). In 2019, the system supplied 70,980 m<sup>3</sup> of treated water (or approximately 195 m<sup>3</sup>/day) (Municipality of Machin 2019). The maximum daily demand was 457 m<sup>3</sup>/day which represented 34% of the capacity (1,360 m<sup>3</sup>/day). Nearly 90% of the municipality's water system assets have over 10 years of useful life remaining and almost 60% are considered to be in fair condition with upgrades and improvements needed to meet demand and service delivery efficiencies (PSD 2016; BDO 2020). The water treatment plant has over 15% of assets at fair or worse condition, and although it is less than 20 years old, the expected useful life is between 10-50 years old and may need to be replaced in the next ten years (PSD 2021). The Municipality is evaluating the water plant for larger distribution (BDO 2020). The municipal water supply was noted to be an issue, but there is an inability to further increase tax revenues for funding to address this issue (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

##### **Sanitary Sewer and Sewage Treatment**

The Municipality of Machin does not provide municipal sewer service. Residents are responsible for providing their own septic fields (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

##### **Stormwater Management**

The Municipality of Machin maintains ditches with culverts as part of their stormwater management service (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Machin has 156 culverts with an average age of 50 years, despite only an estimated useful life of 30 years. Given the average age and estimated useful life of the culverts, over 70% of the culverts are in very poor condition (PSD 2021).

#### **2.4.3.3.4 Municipality of Sioux Lookout**

##### **Water Treatment and Distribution**

The Sioux Lookout water treatment plant was built in 1999. Water is sourced from Pelican Lake (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2021). The water treatment plant is owned by the Municipality of Sioux Lookout and administered by the Public Works Department in conjunction with Northern Waterworks Inc. Northern Waterworks Inc. primarily oversees the operations, testing, reporting, and treatment of the plant and lift stations and completes all required ministerial reporting for

any unplanned maintenance events. The Municipality completes unplanned maintenance tasks for the water distribution system. The Sioux Lookout water distribution system has approximately 32 km of water mains, 11 booster stations, 250 water main gate valves, 172 fire hydrants, and 2 water towers (PSD 2020). The water distribution system assets have an average age of 23.9 years with a remaining service life of 39 years (PSD 2020). Booster stations, water tower assets, and water treatment plant assets all have less than 15 years of average service life remaining (PSD 2020). A large portion of water system assets are in poor or very poor condition, with 73% of booster stations in poor or very poor condition, 37% of hydrants and valves, 98% of water tower assets, and 43% of water treatment plant assets. In 2022, average daily demand was measured at 1,892 m<sup>3</sup>/day, representing 36% of the capacity of the Water Treatment Plant (5,200 m<sup>3</sup>/day). The average daily flow was 2,700 m<sup>3</sup>/day, which represents 52% of the capacity of the treatment facility (Northern Waterworks 2022). Population growth has necessitated upgrades and replacements to water infrastructure (PSD 2020).

### Sanitary Sewer and Sewage Treatment

The Municipality of Sioux Lookout wastewater treatment plant was built in 1984. The wastewater treatment plant has a rated capacity of 2,840 cubic meters of raw sewage on average daily (Municipality of Sioux Lookout n.d.b). In 2020, about 2,170 m<sup>3</sup>/day of sewage was introduced to the facility which represents 76% of the 2,840 m<sup>3</sup>/day capacity. The maximum amount of sewage introduced on a day was about 3,600 m<sup>3</sup> which represents 39% of the peak flow rate of 9,230 m<sup>3</sup>/day (Northern Waterworks 2020). The wastewater system runs for approximately 23 km throughout Sioux Lookout. The wastewater system includes 246 manholes for access and servicing (PSD 2020). Nearly 85% of the wastewater treatment plant assets are in poor or worse condition and over 60% of manholes and pumping station assets are in poor or worse condition (PSD 2020). The average service life remaining is less than 15 years for manholes, pumping stations, and wastewater treatment plant assets. The wastewater treatment plant and associated collection system are owned by the Municipality of Sioux Lookout and operated, maintained, and managed by Northern Waterworks Inc. The Municipality also owns and operates a communal septic field for six residences (PSD 2020).

### Stormwater Management

The Municipality of Sioux Lookout owns and maintains a stormwater network that has 13.6 km of storm sewer mains, 243 catch basins, 117 manholes, and ditches and culverts. The average condition of stormwater infrastructure is good with a service life remaining of 23 years (PSD 2020). The Sioux Lookout Public Works Department maintains the stormwater system. Manholes provide access to the storm mains and catch basins. Stormwater mains distribute stormwater collected from roads and streets to the discharge area (i.e., river) (PSD 2020).

#### 2.4.3.3.5 Unincorporated Communities

Water and wastewater service for residents of Wabigoon Village, Melgund and Dinorwic are the responsibility of the homeowner (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Service can come in the form of cisterns and water wells for water service and septic tank and field for wastewater service (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

The MTO maintains ditches with culverts along the highway right of way corridor for Wabigoon Village, Melgund, and Dinorwic (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Residents are responsible for stormwater management on their own properties (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

#### **2.4.3.4 Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Services**

The following section describes the municipal solid waste disposal and recycling services for the Local Study Area communities.

##### **2.4.3.4.1 Township of Ignace**

The Township of Ignace manages its own curbside solid waste collection and disposal and operates the landfill site. There is currently no curbside recycling. The landfill is located 3 km north of the community on Highway 599. The landfill is used by several adjacent unorganized communities in the surrounding area and services approximately 5,000 residents (Pinchin 2021). The landfill site has a remaining capacity of 175,000 cubic metres (WSP 2022b). Approval of waste material for drop-off is at the discretion of the landfill attendant who can reject and advise on solid waste accordingly. The Township is currently developing a waste management strategic plan that includes recycling and other waste diversion tactics such as aggressive compaction of solid waste which could extend the life expectancy past 2056 (WSP 2022b).

##### **2.4.3.4.2 City of Dryden**

The City of Dryden operates a full range of waste disposal services including urban and rural garbage collection. As of July 1, 2023, residential recycling collection transitioned to producer responsibility. Once the new framework is complete in 2026, producers will assume full accountability, including financial responsibility for recycling products (Circular Materials n.d.) Curbside recycling collection is contracted by B&M Waste Services (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023; Circular Materials n.d.). Residential recycled products are sent to Winnipeg. The City's landfill site is 9.5 km southwest on Highway 502 and is operated by City of Dryden staff. The City also provides curbside yard waste collection services every spring and fall. Hazardous waste disposal is available through the Public Works Department and each year a household hazardous waste collection day is held during which residents can drop off their household hazardous waste at the Public Works Yard.

##### **2.4.3.4.3 Municipality of Machin**

The Municipality of Machin operates two landfill sites. The Municipality does not offer recycling pick up services, but does provide bins at the landfill sites for collecting recyclable items (NorthWest Healthline 2022). The two landfills operated by the Municipality include:

- The Eagle River Landfill site was opened in August 1972 and is located at 1690 Highway 594, approximately 4 km south of Hwy 17. The disposal site is situated on land which is overseen by the MNRF. The Eagle River landfill is projected to have capacity until 2046 (BDO 2020).
- The Vermilion Bay landfill site is located at 369 Highway 647, approximately 4 km north of Vermilion Bay. The landfill should have been closed in 2013 because it was at capacity, however, recent studies note that it has an extended useful lifespan (BDO 2020).

The Municipality of Machin no longer accepts materials from outside its Municipal Landfill Boundaries due to having to complete upgrades to extend the landfill lifespan and prevent closure for municipal residents (Machin Messenger 2022).

#### 2.4.3.4.4 Municipality of Sioux Lookout

The Municipality of Sioux Lookout owns and operates the Hidden Lake Landfill Site, located 13 km east of Sioux Lookout (PSD 2020). The landfill has an estimated lifespan of 10 to 40 years (PSD 2020). To encourage waste diversion, the Municipality has employed strategies that include limiting the number of bags collected as part of scheduled collection, introducing multiple streams (household waste, recyclable materials, and/or organics), and changing the collection schedule (KPMG 2020). Sioux Lookout currently provides pick up of residential waste on a weekly basis. The Municipality also offers residents bi-weekly recycling pick up through a contract with B&M Delivery Services (Municipality of Sioux Lookout n.d.c). The Municipality operates garbage collection under a user pay system where users purchase garbage bag tags for pick-up (Municipality of Sioux Lookout n.d.d).

#### 2.4.3.4.5 Unincorporated Communities

There is no curbside garbage or recycling pick up in Wabigoon Village, Melgund, or Dinorwic. The MNRF operates landfill sites that residents can access (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Property owners in Melgund and Dinorwic may also bring their garbage and recycling to the Dryden landfill (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The New Wabigoon Waste Disposal Site, located north of the LSB of Wabigoon on Dump Road is the nearest landfill to the LSB of Wabigoon, the LSB of Melgund, and Dinorwic. The two nearest landfills to Upsala are the Upsala Lake Waste Disposal Site, located east of Upsala on Concession Road 3, and the Cushing Lake Waste Disposal Site, located south of Upsala and east of Cushing Lake.

#### 2.4.3.5 Telecommunications

Cellular phone service for all Local Study Area communities is provided by Bell Canada, TBayTel, Telus, Rogers, Virgin Mobile, Fido, and Koodoo (WSP 2022b).

Bell Canada provides landline service in the Local Study Area (WSP 2022b). In Dryden, the Dryden Municipal Telephone System provides landline service and is owned by Bell Canada (WSP 2022b).

The television service providers for all Local Study Area communities includes Bell Canada and Shaw Direct (WSP 2022b).

**Table 2.4-2** illustrates the internet service providers for the Local Study Area communities.

Table 2.4-2: Internet Service Providers in the Local Study Area

Service Provider	Ignace	Dryden	Machin	Sioux Lookout	Wabigoon Village	Melgund	Dinorwic
Starlink	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Xplornet	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bell Canada	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Shaw	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Celerity Telecom	✓	✓					
TBayTel		✓					
DMTS		✓					
Kuhkenah Network (K-Net)				✓			
TekSavvy				✓			

Source: WSP 2022b; Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2021.

## 2.4.4 Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services

### 2.4.4.1 Ontario Provincial Police

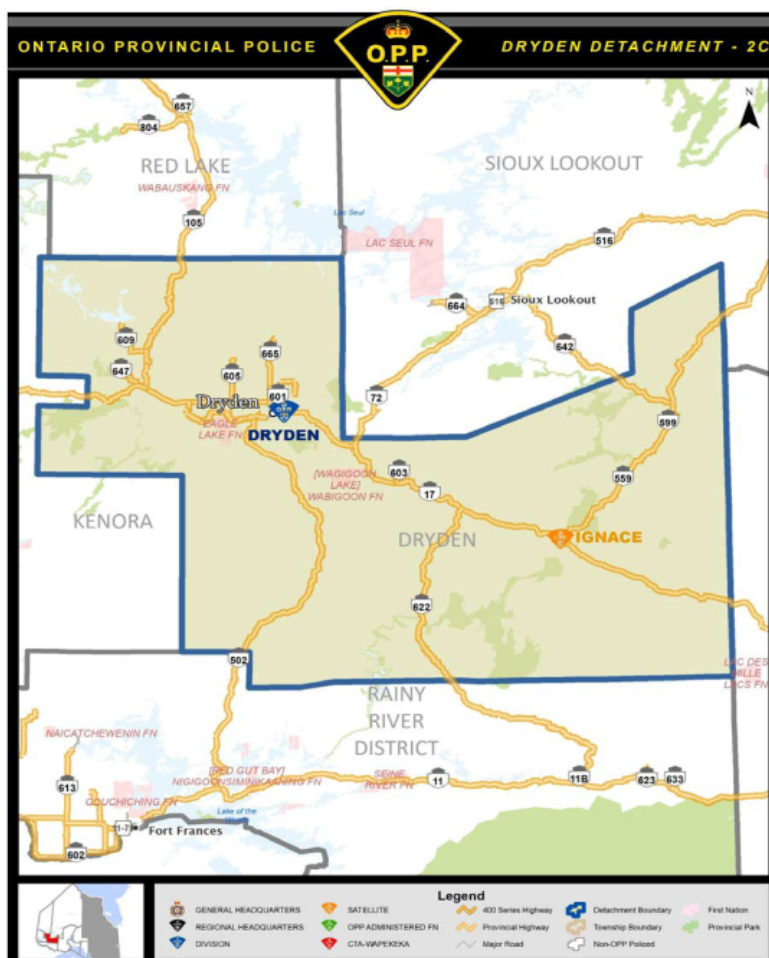
In the Local Study Area, the Ontario Provincial Police provide policing services. Across Ontario, the Ontario Provincial Police have more than 5,800 uniformed officers, 2,400 civilian employees, and 830 auxiliary officers (Ontario Provincial Police n.d.).

The Dryden detachment and Sioux Lookout detachment cover the Local Study Area. Dryden has the largest detachment of officers followed by Sioux Lookout. The Dryden detachment provides policing services to Dryden, Ignace, Machin and the unincorporated areas surrounding these municipalities. Ignace and Machin have a three-member Police Services Board and Dryden has a five-member Police Services Board that meets regularly with the detachment commander (Ontario Provincial Police 2022a).

#### 2.4.4.1.1 Dryden Detachment

The Dryden detachment's service area is 16,041 km<sup>2</sup> including 708 km of highways and 1,124 km of other roadways. Nearly half of the area is waterways, trails, and remote areas. The Dryden detachment provides police services to Dryden, Machin, Ignace, Ojibway Nation of Saugeen, and Savant Lake (**Map 2.4-1**). (Ontario Provincial Police 2022a). There is a satellite office in Vermillion Bay that is rarely used (WSP 2022d).

## Map 2.4-1: Dryden Ontario Provincial Police Detachment Area



**Source:** Ontario Provincial Police 2022.

**Table 2.4-3** shows the emergency call history in Ignace and Dryden between 2017 and 2021 (WSP 2022d). There was a consistent increase from 2017 to 2019, while call volumes have remained steady between 2019 and 2021.



**Table 2.4-3: Dryden Ontario Provincial Police Emergency Call Frequency**

Occurrence <sup>1</sup>	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Violence	309	368	370	385	381
Property related	581	656	798	738	662
Drugs	79	105	114	152	122
Mental health acts	88	154	167	279	334
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,057</b>	<b>1,283</b>	<b>1,449</b>	<b>1,554</b>	<b>1,499</b>

**Source:** NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; WSP 2022d.

**Notes:** 1. All data for the City of Dryden data were extracted from the Dryden Police Service domain prior to amalgamation with the OPP. Any historical data for the Dryden Police Service has not been reviewed by the OPP.

### Ignace Satellite Office

The Dryden Ontario Provincial Police detachment has a satellite office in Ignace located off Highway 17 (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Staffing in Ignace includes nine constables and one sergeant; all staff in Ignace report to the Dryden detachment. There is no administrative staff in Ignace, therefore all administrative work is sent to Dryden. Staffing is considered sufficient in Ignace outside of a lack of administrative staff (WSP 2022d).

### Dryden Office

In Dryden, the Ontario Provincial Police detachment has a main office and a detachment office off Highway 17 (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Daily staffing is made up of four platoons with eight constables and one sergeant on duty. Two to three constables patrol the rural area, which includes Highway 17. The platoons are typically split so that two to three constables patrol what is known as the rural area, which also covers Highway 17. The remainder of constables on duty are assigned to the City of Dryden (WSP 2022d).

The Ontario Provincial Police replaced the Dryden municipal police force (i.e., as the provider of police services within the municipality's boundary) on February 24, 2022, after the Ontario Civilian Police Commission approved the City of Dryden's application to disband the Dryden Police Service (DrydenNow 2021a). Policing costs in Dryden have routinely been amongst the highest per capita in Ontario. In 2022, Statistics Canada estimated Dryden had the second highest average policing cost at about \$1,040 per property, over triple the average cost per property in Ontario (\$311). Dryden's average policing cost at \$488 per capita was also well above Canada's average policing cost of \$410 per capita (DrydenNow 2021b). Policing costs in northwest Ontario are generally higher than provincial averages but Dryden's cost are notably higher than other communities (DrydenNow 2021b). In 2023, policing costs are estimated to have increased to close to \$1,400 per property (Fleury 2023).



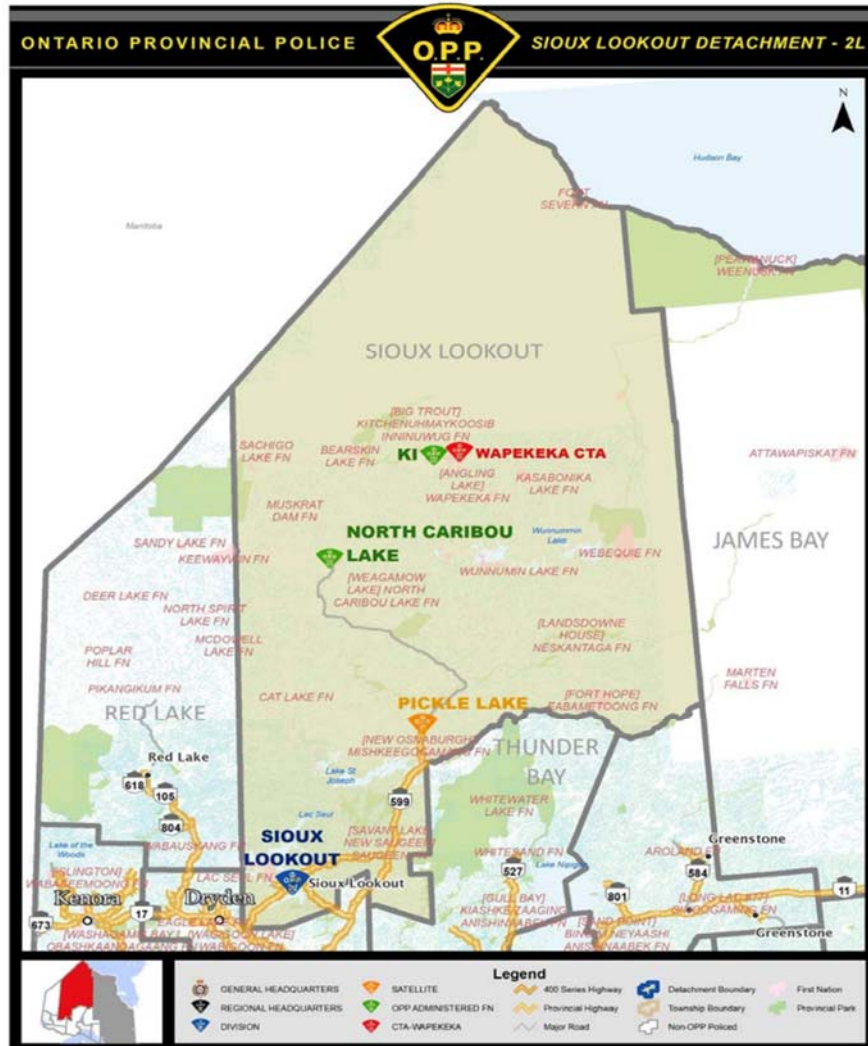
#### 2.4.4.1.2 Sioux Lookout Detachment

The Sioux Lookout detachment has a large service area (**Map 2.4-2**). In addition to providing policing services in and around Sioux Lookout, the detachment has agreements with First Nations communities to provide policing or support in First Nation communities, including (Ontario Provincial Police 2022b):

- Wapekeka First Nation, which is 400 km north of Sioux Lookout by air;
- North Caribou Lake First Nation or Weagamow First Nation, which is 320 km north of Sioux Lookout; and
- Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation or Big Trout Lake First Nation, which is 440 km north of Sioux Lookout by air.

The detachment also has agreements in place to support the Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service and the Lac Seul Police Service (Ontario Provincial Police 2022).

## Map 2.4-2: Sioux Lookout Ontario Provincial Police Detachment Area



**Source:** Ontario Provincial Police 2022b.

The Sioux Lookout detachment is responsible for 1,203 km of winter (ice) roads (Ontario Provincial Police 2022b).

The Sioux Lookout Ontario Provincial Police are a detachment with duration posting whereby assigned members must complete a fixed term of four years before they are eligible for transfer (Municipality of Sioux Lookout n.d.e). Staffing for the Sioux Lookout detachment includes 44 constables, seven First Nation constables, five special constables, six sergeants, one staff sergeant, one inspector, eight civilian employees, and 62 part-time guards and matrons. The posting to the Sioux Lookout detachment is for four years, after which staff are eligible for transfers (Municipality of Sioux Lookout n.d.e).

#### 2.4.4.2 Jails, Correctional Centres, and Detention Centres

In the Local Study Area there are no jails, correctional centres, or detention centres.<sup>25</sup> The OPP detachments in Dryden and Sioux Lookout are equipped with detention cells and civilian guards who will watch prisoners 24 hours a day (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). For example, the Dryden detachment has nine adult jail cells, and two cells for young offenders (CKDR 2012). There are no detention centres in the Regional Study Area. The Kenora Jail is the only jail in the Regional Study Area. Additional facilities outside of the Regional Study Area include (Government of Ontario 2023o):

- Thunder Bay Correctional Centre;
- Thunder Bay Jail; and
- Fort Frances Jail.

#### 2.4.4.3 Fire Services

##### 2.4.4.3.1 Ignace Volunteer Fire Station

The fire hall in Ignace was built in the 1960s. The fire hall has showers and a kitchenette, but no overnight accommodations (NWO Community Studies and Baseline Key Person Interview Program 2022). The fire department is equipped with two pumper trucks, one of which is from 1991; one rescue vehicle for highway response, including extrication; and a half-ton designated truck (WSP 2022d). In 2023, Ignace received a new pumper fire truck (Township of Ignace 2023).

The fire department is staffed by volunteers except for the fire clerk, who works part-time. There are currently 14 active members, but it has the capacity for 25 members as per the fire department's policy (WSP 2022d). Volunteers are required to live within the Township of Ignace. They have no set schedule but must operate on a 24/7 pager basis; however, they are not required to respond to calls (WSP 2022d). Volunteer firefighters do not receive compensation for being on-call/pager but there is remuneration for responding to fire calls (WSP 2022d).

When the Ignace fire department is dispatched for a call and there are not enough volunteers to attend, or if the incident is too large, additional support is requested from the Kenora District Mutual Fire Aid Association who reach out to other fire departments. Wabigoon Village has the closest fire department to Ignace and would likely be contacted first in this situation (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

**Table 2.4-4** presents emergency calls from 2017 to 2021. The lowest number of calls was in 2019 with 47 calls total, while 2021 had the highest number of calls with 68 (WSP 2022d). The most common calls were for accidents and extrications followed by fires (WSP 2022d).

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<sup>25</sup> Correctional centres typically house sentenced offenders who are serving periods of incarceration between 60 days to two years. Detention centres are larger regional facilities holding persons on remand, those serving shorter sentences (e.g., 60 days or less), and offenders awaiting to be transferred to a federal or provincial correctional centre. Jails are generally smaller facilities that were originally established by local counties, townships, or municipalities (Government of Ontario 2023o).

Table 2.4-4: Five Year Emergency Response

Call Type	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	5-Year Total
Accident/ extrication	19	17	14	20	24	<b>94</b>
Fires	16	15	16	9	17	<b>73</b>
Public hazards	11	8	3	4	15	<b>41</b>
Alarms	12	3	1	10	4	<b>30</b>
Calls cancelled	5	5	9	8	5	<b>32</b>
Assist other agencies	1	3	4	3	3	<b>14</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>284</b>

**Source:** NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; WSP 2022d.

The existing fire station does not meet current building code standards or firefighting standards. It is located adjacent to the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks within the disaster zone. This means that the fire department may not be able to respond to a call if there is a disaster on the railway close to Ignace due to volunteer firefighters being unable to reach the fire hall. The Township is considering two potential locations for a new fire station; either behind the Ignace ambulance base or beside the Public Works Department (WSP 2022d).

#### 2.4.4.3.2 Dryden Fire Service

The Dryden Fire Service is a composite fire service with four full-time staff and 37 pay-per-call firefighters. The majority of Dryden Fire Service members are trained and certified to NFPA standards. The current fire service model places a high demand on pay-per-call fire fighters, including the initial training and certification and weekly training sessions (Loomex Group 2022b; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The Dryden Fire Service is responsible for dealing with forest fires within the City boundaries; outside of City boundaries fire suppression is the MNRF's responsibility (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The City of Dryden has an agreement with the MNRF to provide fire services support at a cost and depending on the wildfire location.

The Dryden fire service has two fire halls. One fire hall is located in Dryden (fire hall #1), while the other fire hall is east of the city in a rural location (fire hall #2) (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Fire hall #1 is the larger of the two halls. In addition to the apparatus area for gear, it has a training room and basement for crews (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023; Loomex Group 2022). There is no additional space to expand (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Fire hall #2 is smaller and not as up to date. The ventilation system and wash stations to clean fire equipment are recommended to be improved (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The fire department has been working on enhancements (e.g., new roof, floor drainage, wash sink for decontaminating smaller gear, and new lockers) (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-

2023). Overall, the City's facilities are adequate for the needs of fire services (i.e., the training spaces and equipment) (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Fire hall #1 houses six vehicles: a pumper truck, an aerial truck, a rescue truck that contains auto extrication and water rescue equipment, two command vehicles, and an equipment truck that carries decontamination equipment and air tanks. Fire hall #1 also houses a fire truck from the 1920s for parades and other community events (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Fire hall #2 houses a pumper, a water tanker truck for rural fires, an equipment truck that contains water rescue equipment and air tanks, and a half-ton truck with auto extrication equipment (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

The 2022 Fire Master Plan (Loomex Group 2022) compared response times for Fire Hall #1 and Fire Hall #2 and recommended replacing the fire halls with a single centralized location. This would improve the coverage area due to slower response times at Fire Hall #2. Other recommendations from the Fire Master Plan included developing an officer promotional program, expanding public fire safety social media content on a variety of topics, improving fire personnels delivery of public fire safety education, and improving training for various firefighting courses (Loomex Group 2022).

The department services a fire response area of 65.84 km<sup>2</sup>, and a vehicle rescue/extrication response area of up to 100 km away. **Table 2.4-5** presents the number of incidents responded to by the Dryden fire service broken out by fire hall.

**Table 2.4-5: Incidents Responded to by Fire Halls**

Year	Number of Emergency Calls	Number of Non-emergency Calls	Total
<b>Hall #1</b>			
2017	169	9	178
2018	160	41	201
2019	199	13	212
2020	181	7	188
2021	228	17	245
<b>Hall #2</b>			
2017	10	5	15
2018	8	0	8
2019	11	1	12
2020	19	2	21
2021	20	3	23

**Source:** Loomex Group 2022

The standard for responding to calls is "10 and 10," or 10 people at a fire in 10 minutes (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The average response time was between 6.14 minutes in 2020 to 8.14 minutes in 2022 (City of Dryden n.d.c). The average time

for the first fire truck to arrive at an incident from the time it was dispatched (response time) for all calls was 9 minutes and 37 seconds (City of Dryden n.d.c). The average time for the first fire truck to arrive at an incident within the City of Dryden from the time it was dispatched (response time) for all calls was 8 minutes and 31 seconds (City of Dryden n.d.c).

The Dryden fire service is part of the “neighbours help neighbours” program where they provide services to other communities. For example, they help Oxdrift and Wabigoon Village with fire attack and auto extrication. While no formal agreement exists, the Province of Ontario provides financial aid when the fire service responds to these calls.

#### **2.4.4.3.3 Machin Fire and First Response Department**

Machin’s fire and first response department provides services to the Municipality and the surrounding unincorporated areas (Municipality of Machin 2021). The fire and first response department are staffed by volunteers. The fire hall currently meets demands and has a useful life of 40 years. Equipment had a useful life of between 10 and 25 years as of 2016 (BDO 2020).

#### **2.4.4.3.4 Sioux Lookout Fire Department**

The Sioux Lookout fire department has two fire halls. The fire department includes 27 firefighters, a fire chief, a district fire chief, a deputy fire chief, seven captains, and a training officer. A total of 35 members are volunteer. The fire chief is a full-time position (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2022a).

The Fire department is responsible for 536 km<sup>2</sup>. The service area is east to Alcona, south to beyond Ojibway Provincial Park, west to Hudson, and 10 km to the north of Sioux Lookout (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2022a).

The fire department has two equipment trucks, three pumper trucks, an ice/water rescue trailer, a compressed air foam truck, one tanker and one aerial ladder truck (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2022a).

#### **2.4.4.3.5 Unincorporated Areas**

Oxdrift and Wabigoon Village both have volunteer fire departments that are part of the provincial Northern Fire Protection Program and managed by the Office of the Fire Marshall (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

#### **2.4.4.3.6 MNRF Fire Bases**

The MNRF have fire management headquarters in Sioux Lookout, a primary tanker airbase (or District Fire Centre) in Dryden, and a tertiary airbase and a forward attack base in Ignace (Government of Ontario 2023o). The fire management headquarters is an administrative location which provides fire management and administrative support and a primary tanker base is an MNRF operated facility which acts as a home position for staff and aircraft to operate from and the capacity to complete large scale maintenance. A tertiary tanker base is utilized for short-term deployments of staff and aircraft during extreme levels of fire response operations, and a forward attack base is operated temporarily during periods of fire suppression activity (Government of Ontario 2023o).

In Dryden, there are approximately 225 employees at the MNRF District Fire Centre and a large number of seasonal staff during fire season (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Most of the positions at the District Fire Centre are technical positions,



with about ten staff who are technicians and supervisory staff. Seasonal staff are hired for various jobs such as fire suppression or fire support (e.g., logistics, clerical support). Employees also monitor for required suppression of fires during a fire ban, but only certain staff can enter private properties and administer fines for non-compliance or negligence (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

#### **2.4.4.4 Emergency Medical Services**

##### **2.4.4.4.1 Northwest Emergency Medical Services**

Northwest Emergency Medical Services is under the Kenora District Services Board (“KDSB”) and provides emergency medical services in the Regional Study Area. Northwest Emergency Medical Services has nine ambulance bases throughout the Regional Study Area, including a base in the Local Study Area communities of Ignace, Dryden, and Sioux Lookout (KDSB 2023f).

Within the Regional Study Area, average response times include 2.4 minutes in 2019, 1.35 minutes in 2020, and 1.41 minutes in 2021 within a target plan of two minutes. Call volumes include 22,829 in 2019, 20,893 in 2020, and 19,137 in 2021 (Ministry of Health and Long-term Care 2022).

It has been noted that attracting qualified paramedics is challenging in the region in part because there are no programs in the Local Study Area or Regional Study Area (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Staffing numbers are based on call volumes. The capacity of each crew is about 2,500 calls each year (WSP 2022d).

##### **2.4.4.4.2 Ignace Ambulance Base**

The Ignace ambulance base is owned by the KDSB and has two bays. The building is approximately 2,850 ft<sup>2</sup>. The base is in good condition. There are no near-term plans to expand the ambulance base (Urban Systems 2021). The vehicle fleet consists of two ambulances (one frontline and one backup). Staffing includes one crew that works 24/7 (on-duty during the day and on-call at night), paramedics (three full-time, one part-time, and three casuals), and one paramedic coordinator (KDSB 2023f). In a year, the Ignace ambulance base receives about 300 calls. There has not been a substantial change in calls over the past few years. (WSP 2022d). In health focus groups, participants noted that burnout among emergency medical services staff is a challenge, along with consistent staffing and coordinating response with the Dryden emergency response teams (Ignace Health and Wellness Focus Group 2023; Ignace EarlyOn Child and Family Centre Staff and Parent Focus Group 2023).

##### **2.4.4.4.3 Dryden Ambulance Base**

The Dryden ambulance base is owned by the KDSB and has eight bays. The building is approximately 9,343 ft<sup>2</sup> (KDSB n.d.). The vehicle fleet consists of four ambulances (two frontline, two backup), one multi-casualty support vehicle, two emergency response vehicles (support/command), and one emergency response unit community paramedic (KDSB 2023f).

Staffing for 911 response includes two crews daily and one crew at night, paramedics (11 full time, three part-time, four casual), one superintendent of operations who oversees the central region operations for the Dryden, Ear Falls, and Red Lake bases ((KDSB 2023f). There are also community paramedicine staff that includes community paramedics (two full-time, one part-time), one community paramedicine administrative assistant, and one superintendent of community paramedicine. There is also administrative staff (KDSB 2023f).



Call volumes in Dryden have been increasing. A reason for this includes mental health and substance use issues. Dryden has experienced an increase in call volumes, which can be attributed, but not limited to, social issues including mental health and drugs/alcohol addiction (WSP 2022d).

#### **2.4.4.4.4 Sioux Lookout Ambulance Base**

The Sioux Lookout ambulance base is owned by the KDSB and consists of three bays. The building is approximately 4,843 ft<sup>2</sup>. The fleet consists of three ambulances (two frontline, one backup), one emergency response vehicle (support/command), and one emergency response unit community paramedic (KDSB 2023f). The ambulance base is staffed with two crews (24/7), paramedics (14 full-time, six part-time, and three casuals), and one superintendent of operations who oversees 911 responses for the eastern region operations for the Sioux Lookout, Pickle Lake, and Ignace bases. Staffing also includes a full-time community paramedic who looks after community paramedicine (KDSB 2023f).

#### **2.4.4.4.5 Machin Ambulance Base**

The KDSB is looking to build an ambulance base in Vermillion Bay (WSP 2022d).

### **2.4.4.5 Emergency Response Plans**

Under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, every municipality is required to have an emergency response plan that describes necessary services during an emergency (Government of Ontario 1990e). In the Local Study Area, Ignace, Dryden, Machin, and Sioux Lookout have all prepared emergency response plans.

#### **2.4.4.5.1 Township of Ignace**

The Ignace emergency response plan identifies the officials who form the emergency operations control group. This group is responsible for directing emergency operations. In Ignace, it includes the mayor or alternate, clerk or alternate, fire chief or alternate, public works manager or alternate, and the community emergency information officer. The group may add additional members from different organizations (e.g., the Ontario Provincial Police, KDSB, Northwest Emergency Medical Services, and utilities) (Township of Ignace 2021a).

The plan is developed and implemented by a community emergency management coordinator who is required to successfully complete relevant training and be familiar with current legislation and standards. The community emergency management coordinator is also responsible for developing budgets and providing strategic advice to the emergency management program committee (Township of Ignace 2021a).

Emergencies include forest fire, severe power outages and hazardous spills (WSP 2022b). The emergency response plan describes the response to each type of emergency, including dispatching fire crews or the Ontario Provincial Police, public announcements, and evacuation plans (Township of Ignace 2021a).

#### **2.4.4.5.2 City of Dryden**

The City of Dryden's emergency response plan provides procedures to respond to emergency situations from forces of nature, disease, and accidents that result in serious harm to several persons and/or substantial damage to property (City of Dryden 2020). The plan describes how the emergency control group helps guide a coordinated response with several agencies to help

provide immediate assistance. The emergency control group includes the mayor, chief administrative officer, fire chief or community emergency management coordinator, public works manager, treasurer, and clerk. The emergency control group has adopted the incident management system by the Province of Ontario, which organizes incident response into command, operations, planning, logistics, and finance and administration (City of Dryden 2020).

The Dryden emergency response plan supports the idea that response to a large-scale emergency requires an assessment of the situation as well as the efficient deployment and management of resources. Its primary function is to provide an organizational framework that is well coordinated, flexible, and supported with adequate resources (e.g., personnel, equipment, and expertise) that allows for a well coordinated response and guide for City of Dryden leadership (City of Dryden 2020). The plan allows sections to be used, reviewed, and/or modified independently to reflect the public safety requirements of the community. City department leaders and agencies are expected to develop their own internal notification lists, procedures, and contingency plans to help fulfill their own responsibilities.

The Dryden Regional Airport adheres to their own emergency response plan which follows the Ontario Mass Evacuation Plan: for the Far North and the Provincial Emergency Response Plan which requires that adequate resources, including transportation and accommodation, are in place in case of emergency (Loomex Group 2021). The Dryden Regional Airport emergency plan works in coordination with the City of Dryden's emergency response plan (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

#### **2.4.4.5.3 Municipality of Machin**

The aim of the emergency response plan for the Municipality of Machin is to make provisions for the extraordinary arrangements and measures that may have to be taken to safeguard property and the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants exposed to an emergency in the community (Municipality of Machin 2021). Their focus is to provide a coordinated response to an emergency or disaster thereby ensuring the preservation of life and the environment and protection of property. The Municipal emergency control group includes the mayor, deputy mayor, emergency coordinator, deputy clerk, fire secretary, and public works (Municipality of Machin 2021). Additional support may be drawn upon from other organizations.

#### **2.4.4.5.4 Municipality of Sioux Lookout**

The Municipality of Sioux Lookout emergency plan describes the earliest possible coordinated response to ensure the effects of an emergency or disaster are minimized, protect and preserve health and private property, and essential services are maintained or restored quickly (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020c). The plan outlines strategic steps related to roles and responsibilities of the Municipal emergency control group, communications guide, forest fire emergency protocols, evacuation notices (stage 1 and 2), evacuation plan and procedures, emergency reception plan, and public education protocols (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020c). The emergency control group includes the head of council, chief administrative officer, manager of emergency services, manager of corporate services, treasurer, and airport manager (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020c).

### **2.4.5 Educational Facilities**

This section presents a summary of the primary and secondary education facilities in the Local Study Area communities. Details on postsecondary education are provided in **Section 3.3.2.2**.

### 2.4.5.1 Ignace

The following section describes the educational facilities in Ignace, Dryden, Machin, and Sioux Lookout, including elementary school facilities, and high school facilities. Educational programming, including college and university programs throughout northern Ontario and Winnipeg, is described in **Section 3.3.2**.

### 2.4.5.2 Ignace Educational Facilities

The Keewatin Patricia District School Board (“KPDSB”) operates the Ignace Public School and the Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique des Aurores Boreales operates the École Immaculée Conception. Ignace also has a Contact North satellite office.

#### 2.4.5.2.1 Ignace Public School

The KPDSB operates the Ignace Public School (KPDSB 2022), which opened in 1973. The Ignace Public School is a kindergarten to grade 12 facility. Since its opening, there have been two expansions, in 1976 to expand the elementary school classrooms and teaching facilities (kindergarten to grade 8) and in 1981 to accommodate high schooling (grade 9 to grade 12) needs (WSP 2022c).<sup>26</sup>

The Ignace Public School has a combined elementary and high school capacity of 679 students. The projected enrollment for 2022-2023 is 159 pupils, including 106 in elementary and 53 in high school (KPDSB 2022). The projected 2022-2023 enrollment would result in a capacity of 23% for the school (KPDSB 2022). Enrollment over the next 10 years is expected to stay consistent for elementary grades at approximately 100 students, while the high school grades are projected to decline to less than 50 students by 2025 (KPDSB 2022). The Ignace Public School has approximately 14 teaching staff (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

The Ignace Public School has small class sizes and a low student to teacher ratio. In the past, Ignace has had issues retaining a qualified science teacher but has had one since 2021 (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). The school also faced challenges with resourcing during the COVID-19 pandemic but the school is located close enough to Dryden and Thunder Bay that staff can opt to commute for the week (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). The school offers high school educational programming in Life Skills and Specialist High Skills Majors (for example, construction and mechanics), and an Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program. The Ignace Public School has two gyms and a multi-purpose room that are used by the community for recreation, arts, and cultural events (such as talent shows, dance, singing, and Indigenous events) (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Town hall meetings and special community events may also occur at the school.

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<sup>26</sup> The initial school facility housed 7 classrooms, a kindergarten room, gym and stage, art room, library, music room, science lab, industrial arts shop, home economics room, staff lounge, and administrative offices. To deal with pressures from increasing enrollment, the school expanded in 1973 with a second addition adding another 7 classrooms, metal shop, business arts classroom, science lab, gymnasium, and new administrative and guidance council offices. In 1981, a third wing was added to accommodate secondary schooling needs (i.e., high school) with 4 classrooms, a Mechanical Shop Home Economics, and a senior library.

The Ignace Public School is oversized for its enrolment and is approximately 76,200 ft<sup>2</sup> (KPDSB 2016). Based on the KPDSB's Long-Term Capital Plan for 2015 to 2025, it is recommended that the school should be sized appropriately for enrolment needs (for example, the total floor area should be reduced for enrolment needs) or additional space should be leased (KPDSB 2016).<sup>27</sup>

In partnership with the KDSB, an architectural analysis was performed at the Ignace Public School in 2021 to determine its suitability for a full-day childcare program and after-school program (WSP 2022c). Based on this analysis, the junior library space was recommended as an ideal space for children because of its location, access, and suitability for programming (WSP 2022c).

#### **2.4.5.2.2 École Immaculée Conception**

The Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique des Aurores Boréales operates the École Immaculée Conception in Ignace. École Immaculée Conception is a French-as-a-first-language school, as opposed to French immersion, and offers French language education from kindergarten to grade 8. The school was constructed in 2017 and has a gym, three classrooms, a classroom/lunchroom, a library/media room, and administrative offices (CSDCAB 2021). The school promotes its cultural identity and the enhancement of the Catholic faith (CSDCAB 2021).

The school has a capacity of 60 students and, as of the 2022-2023 school year, is operating at a capacity of approximately 25% with present enrollment of 15 students. The school board allows use of the school facilities for community use outside of school hours for non-profit community groups.

#### **2.4.5.2.3 Distance Education**

Contact North is a free bilingual service that supports rural and remote communities in Ontario in accessing online programs and courses from colleges, universities, and training providers (Contact North n.d.). Contact North has a satellite office in Ignace that is located in the basement of the Crossroads Employment facility. The Ignace satellite office has a small office and classroom space (approximately 500 ft<sup>2</sup>). Ignace is one of three satellite offices found in the Local Study Area, with satellite offices also found in Dryden and Sioux Lookout (Contact North n.d.).

Contact North offers free local support services for Ontario residents, including online courses and programs, registration support, technological support, and supervision of written exams (Contact North n.d.). The Ignace satellite office does not pay for rent in the Crossroads Employment facility, however, there have been discussions with respect to moving the Ignace Contact North operations to an entirely virtual platform.

#### **2.4.5.3 Dryden Educational Facilities**

Three school boards operate schools in Dryden.

- The Keewatin Patricia District School Board operates the New Prospect Elementary Public School, Open Roads School, and the Dryden High School;

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<sup>27</sup> The estimated cost of a major renovation and to appropriately size the school for enrolment needs would be approximately \$8.5 million.

- The Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique des Aurores Boréales operates the École Catholique de l'Enfant-Jésus; and
- The Northwest Catholic District School Board operates the St. Joseph's Catholic School.

#### **2.4.5.3.1 New Prospect Public School**

The KPDSB operates the New Prospect Public School. The school was built in 2003 (KPDSB 2022). The school has a total floor area of 42,200 ft<sup>2</sup> and sits on 10 acres of land (KPDSB 2022). The school accommodates kindergarten to grade 8. The student capacity is 493 students. The 2022-2023 school year was projected to have a student enrollment of 342 students, which is a capacity of 69% (KPDSB 2022).

The school has an outdoor play area and soccer field, and the school grounds are surrounded by City of Dryden maintained walking paths. The school curriculum includes nature walks, cross country skiing, and/or snowshoeing during recesses. The school also has a community garden that is used by the students. In 2022, the school received a playground renovation as part of capital upgrades (KPDSB 2023a).

New Prospect Public School is the only KPDSB operated school in the Dryden area that offers French immersion programming from kindergarten to Grade 8 (KPDSB 2023b). The school has three full-day kindergarten programs (two English and one French) and the classrooms are staffed with specialized kindergarten teachers and early childhood educators.

#### **2.4.5.3.2 Open Roads School**

The KPDSB operates the Open Roads School. The school was built in 2013 and has a capacity for 470 students. Enrollment for the 2022-2023 school year was projected to be 363 students, which means the school will be at 77% capacity (KPDSB 2022).

The Open Roads School has specialized rooms for drama, arts, and instrumental music, a designated special education resource area, a double gym with change rooms, and a library (KPDSB 2022). Classrooms are equipped with interactive smart boards and sound systems (KPDSB 2023c). Students can choose different programs, including the Explore Program that includes sports, outdoor activities, and arts instructions, and a Fine Arts Program to learn visual arts techniques and the performing arts. Extra-curricular activities are offered for all students. These include team sports, robotics club, the Howling Wolves rock band, an eco club, and cheerleading (KPDSB 2023c).

#### **2.4.5.3.3 École Catholique de l'Enfant-Jésus**

The École Catholique de l'Enfant-Jésus is operated by the Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique des Aurores Boréales. The school was built in 2007. As of 2022-2023 the school has 21 students enrolled from kindergarten to grade 8 (OpenGov n.d.). The school is a French as a first language school and offers French language education (OpenGov n.d.).

#### **2.4.5.3.4 St. Joseph's Catholic School**

The St. Joseph's Catholic School is operated by the Northwest Catholic District School Board and opened in 1943 (NCDSB n.d.a.). The school offers education for kindergarten through grade 8. The school offers core programs in French Immersion (NCDSB n.d.a.). In the 2020-2021 school year, the school had 390 students enrolled from kindergarten to grade 8 (Government of Ontario 2023k).

#### 2.4.5.3.5 Dryden High School

The Dryden High School is operated by the KPDSB. The school opened in 1952 and, at the time, had approximately 300 students. The Dryden High School has seen many renovations and additions, including additions in 1955, 1959, 1962, 1964, 1967, 1992, and 1998.<sup>28</sup> Between 2005 to 2017, the school received upgrades to the Gordon Wood Auditorium, installation of wireless services, updates to the HVAC and the physics and science laboratories, new windows, drainage enhancements to the Harry McMaster Athletic Field, and the installation of two student lounging areas (Dryden High School n.d.). An upgraded music room provides the ability to deliver both traditional music and digital music curriculum to students. The Student Resource Center, built in the mid-2010s, continues to support students including services for special education.

The Dryden High School currently has a capacity for 1,040 students and student enrollment for the 2022-2023 school year is projected to be 566, which is a capacity of approximately 55% (KPDSB 2022). For the 2022-2023 school year, approximately 180 students entered grade 9 from the New Prospect Public School (Dryden), Open Roads School (Dryden), Lillian Berg School (Vermillion Bay), and St. Joseph's Catholic School (Dryden) (Dryden High School n.d.). Fifty percent of students are bussed daily from within the City of Dryden, Vermillion Bay, Eagle Lake First Nation, Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation, and the surrounding unincorporated areas around Dryden (Dryden High School n.d.; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). A small percentage of students attend from northern Reserves. Enrolment is expected to decline to 513 pupils by 2025 (KPDSB 2022).

The Dryden High School focuses on educational programming in Life Skills and Specialist High Skills Majors (e.g., construction). The Specialist High Skills Majors are closely related to the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, which is also offered at Dryden High School (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). The high school also offers the Four Directions Program, which is a high school graduation coach program for Indigenous students (Lessard 2018). As of 2019, the Four Directions program has doubled its success rate of Indigenous student graduates (WSP 2022c).

See Educational Programming (**Section 3.3.2**) for information on postsecondary institutions in Dryden.

#### 2.4.5.4 Machin Educational Facilities

##### 2.4.5.4.1 Lillian Berg Public School

The Lillian Berg Public School in Vermillion Bay is operated by the KPDSB. The school offers kindergarten to grade 8. Residents of the Municipality of Machin typically go to the Dryden High

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<sup>28</sup> The original building constructed in 1952 housed administrative offices, a small gym, seven classrooms, and a staff room. The staff room was demolished and replaced in 1998. At that time, renovations also included upgrading the 1954 and 1959 wings; replacing the library, upgrading the science and business classrooms, and replacing all safety devices and replacement of the overall functional/mechanical operation for the entire building. The project cost was \$7,000,000. A roofing replacement also occurred at the cost of \$1,179,024. There was also a modernization, renovation, and equipment renewal to 10 shop classes in 1995 at a cost of \$850,000 (KPDSB, 2016).



School for grade 9 to grade 12 (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Lillian Berg Public School was built in 1975 and can accommodate 265 students. Enrollment for the 2022-2023 school year is projected to be 79 students, which is 30% of the school's capacity (KPDSB 2023d). Of these students, 36% of the students self-identified as Indigenous. The school provides a breakfast program and hot lunch program to all students (KPDSB 2023d). The school also offers a nutritional care package for the weekends for students in need (KPDSB 2023d).

Lillian Berg School has a gymnasium, library, a student kitchen, seven classrooms, a baseball diamond and is beside the Woodlands Arena for immediate access for skating and hockey. In partnership with the KDSB, a nursery school is also located within the school for preschool aged children (see **Section 2.4.9.4**).

The school host' a variety of community events such as Thanksgiving and Christmas community dinners, a Christmas concert, a community Veteran's breakfast for Remembrance Day, and a community talent show (KPDSB 2023d).

#### **2.4.5.5 Sioux Lookout Educational Facilities**

Sioux Lookout educational facilities include the Sioux Mountain Public School and the Sioux North High School, operated by the KPDSB, the Sacred Heart School operated by the Northwest Catholic District School Board, the Pelican Falls First Nation High School (a private, First Nations operated school), and the Wahsa Distance Education Centre.

##### **2.4.5.5.1 Sioux Mountain Public School**

The Sioux Mountain Public School is operated by the KPDSB. The Sioux Mountain Public School was built in 2001 and has capacity for 530 students. In 2022-2023 the student enrollment was projected to be 321, which is 61% of the school's capacity (KPDSB 2022). As an elementary school it provides teaching for students in kindergarten to grade 8 (KPDSB 2023e). The school offers its students a Hockey Canada Skills Academy program (KPDSB 2023e).

##### **2.4.5.5.2 Sacred Heart School**

The Sacred Heart School opened in 1994 and is operated by the Northwest Catholic District School Board. The school offers core programming for kindergarten to grade 8 (NCDSB n.d.b). The school also houses the KDSB daycare, the Biidaaban Children's Centre (see **Section 2.4.9.5**). In the 2020-2021 school year, the school had 330 students enrolled from kindergarten to grade 8 (Government of Ontario 2023k).

##### **2.4.5.5.3 Sioux North High School**

The Sioux North High School is operated by the KPDSB and opened in 2019. The school accommodates grades 9 to grade 12. The school replaced the Queen Elizabeth District High School (CBC 2019). The school can accommodate 500 students (Prokopchuk 2016). In 2020-2021 the student enrollment was about 340 students, which is 68% of the school's capacity (Government of Ontario 2023k). About 20% of students are from First Nations in the area, primarily Lac Seul First Nation. For the 2022-2023 school year, enrollment was projected to be 492 students, which is close to the school's capacity (KPDSB 2022).

The Sioux North High School has a multi-purpose cafeteria and auditorium with full dramatic arts capabilities including telescopic seating and new state of the art equipment and spaces for shop



classes, science labs, and nutrition programs (CBC 2019). A new library, gym, and music room help support and complement the arts and recreational curriculum. The school also includes spaces for Confederation College, FIREFLY Child & Family Services, and the Meno Ya Win Health Centre.

#### **2.4.5.5.4 Pelican Falls First Nations High School**

The Pelican Falls First Nations High School is a private, First Nations operated school for grade 9 to grade 12. In 2019, the school had about 180 students enrolled and offers unique and culturally relevant educational services to students from 24 First Nation communities within the Northern Nishnawbe Education Council and the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (Bonello 2019; School Options North 2023). Pelican Falls First Nation High School serves 23 communities and includes boarding homes for students from reserves across Ontario (Keewaytinook Okimakanak Board of Education 2016). The school offers activities for student's interests, from sports such as hockey, volleyball, and wrestling, to leadership classes, a youth forum, annual powwow, winter carnival, career fair, and school trips (Pagacz 2019).

The school offers a full curriculum approved and inspected by the Ontario Ministry of Education. The school has courses that teach Indigenous languages and also offers cultural activities and traditional Indigenous teachings as part of regular programming (Brody 2022).

See Educational Programming (**Section 3.3.2**) for information on postsecondary institutions in Sioux Lookout.

#### **2.4.5.6 Distance Education**

The Wahsa Distance Education Centre is an accredited private high school inspected by the Ministry of Education. The centre opened in 1991 and offers courses online with a curriculum tailored to students in the north. The Wahsa Distance Education Centre has 23 centres across northern Canada in remote and rural communities. Since the Centre's opening, over 500 students across the north have graduated with their grade 12 diploma (State of the Nation 2023). Distance education coordinators help monitor and maintain the learning centres, while providing support to students. Distance education coordinators also help students set up their classes and to send their course work via email or fax once per week (State of the Nation 2023). The centre offers Oji-Cree language classes.

#### **2.4.5.7 Upsala Education Facilities**

##### **2.4.5.7.1 Upsala Public School**

Upsala Public School in Upsala is operated by the KPDSB. The school offers kindergarten to grade 8. Residents of Upsala typically go to Ignace Public School for grade 9 to grade 12 (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Students from Upsala are usually bused to Ignace when attending high school (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). There were fewer than ten children attending the school in 2022-2023 (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

#### **2.4.6 Recreation Programs and Facilities**

The communities in the Local Study Area have a variety of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities and community recreation opportunities (WSP 2022a). The extent of recreation

programming is directly related to the size of the community (IAWG March 31, 2022). Communities within the Local Study Area place importance on the outdoors and have a strong connection to the surrounding natural environment (WSP 2022a; SMM and InterGroup 2022; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). It is a source of pride and adds to their sense of place and quality of life. The natural setting provides various opportunities for fishing, forestry, hunting/trapping, tourism, and a passive appreciation of the natural environment, through camping, swimming, hiking, biking, wildlife viewing, boating, canoeing, and berry picking (SMM and InterGroup 2022; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Outdoor recreation beyond municipal boundaries is described in **Section 2.5**.

A lack of transportation, costs, and lack of programming for youth, seniors, and people with disabilities were noted as barriers to accessing recreational programs from participants in key person interviews (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023; GBA+ Workshop 2023).

#### 2.4.6.1 Ignace Recreation Facilities and Programs

Ignace residents value opportunities to engage in recreational activities (InterGroup 2020). There are a variety of recreational facilities, programming, and informal activities in Ignace to support recreational activities for residents of Ignace and the surrounding communities. The Ignace Recreation Committee is composed of volunteers, one member of council, and the Recreation Programmer (Township of Ignace n.d.d). The committee's primary responsibility is planning community events and securing funding (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). The Township is responsible for maintaining municipally owned facilities, public beaches, and trails (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). There is a high quality of recreation services provided in Ignace, which residents consider an asset in terms of advancing personal community health and well-being, supporting economic development, and improving overall quality of life (SMM and InterGroup 2022; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). No recreation facility is currently considered to be over capacity (IAWG May 05, 2022). The need for recreation infrastructure and programming is a common theme among Ignace residents (InterGroup 2020). Improvements to existing facilities or the development of new facilities has been discussed (InterGroup 2020). Examples include enhancements to the fitness facility, tennis courts, curling rink, and other aging recreation facilities, along with the need for a youth centre and an indoor swimming pool (InterGroup 2020).

Residents of Ignace have commented that there are currently not enough recreational activities and services for youth and small children (Social Cultural and Health Workshop 2021). Lack of a full suite of recreational opportunities for children and youth (e.g., soccer, gymnastics, science groups) may act as a deterrent for people wishing to relocate to the community for employment opportunities (Social Cultural and Health Workshop 2021). Key person interviews indicate Ignace residents travel to Dryden to access a broader range of recreation opportunities, although some residents of Ignace may not be willing to travel for recreational opportunities particularly with winter road conditions (SMM and InterGroup 2022; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; Social Cultural and Health Workshop 2021). Travel is a requirement for various recreation programming, and it can be challenging to access recreation services in different communities (e.g., travel distance, vehicle access, seasonal weather, road conditions), which limits programming opportunities to local context and the capacity of local

communities to provide them (SMM and InterGroup 2022; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; IAWG March 31, 2022).

The Recreation Programmer (Recreation Department) and volunteer Recreation Committee support and organize recreational programming in Ignace. More recreation staff resources are needed (SMM and InterGroup 2022; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Recreation is mostly run by volunteers (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). A transition to staffed positions would support the sustainability of recreation programs in the longer term (InterGroup 2020). Recreation is mostly run by community organizations with the same volunteers. Volunteer burn-out has been an issue in program delivery, as many people are retiring and opting to slow down (SMM and InterGroup 2022; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; IAWG May 05, 2022). There is a variety of programming for the 5 to 10 years old age group, but more programming is needed for the 10 to 13 years old age group, 35+ age group, and seniors age group. Further, there is poor and limited internet, which makes virtual programming a challenge and inaccessible to many (SMM and InterGroup 2022; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

#### **2.4.6.1.1 Ignace Indoor Recreation Facilities**

Recreational facilities, programming, and informal activities in Ignace include the Ignace Recreation Complex, the Dennis Smyk Heritage Centre and Library, and the Silver Tops senior centre.

##### **Sports facilities include:**

- The Ignace Recreation Complex is managed by the Township and was constructed in 1976 (WSP 2022a). The Complex can accommodate up to 4,000 people (WSP 2022a). The Complex has an arena, a bowling hall, a fitness centre, and a curling hall (WSP 2022a). Curling is not currently offered as it needs to be refurbished and the space is currently used as a community hall (WSP 2022a). An addition to the Recreation Complex was completed in 2010, however further renovations are needed, including to the structure and roof, mechanical repairs, electrical repairs, and upgrades to the kitchen, bathroom, curling hall, and fitness room (WSP 2022a). The arena is currently being renovated (WSP 2022a).

##### **Cultural facilities include:**

The Dennis Smyk Heritage Centre (museum) and library are adjoining buildings that are managed by the Township and were built in 1992 (Township of Ignace 2018).

- The Dennis Smyk Heritage Centre (museum) is managed by the library staff (WSP 2022a). The Heritage Centre needs a larger space as it currently does not have enough space to display materials (WSP 2022a). The Heritage Centre also needs a curator (WSP 2022a). Currently there are nine themes on display at the museum illustrating the life and history of Ignace from its earliest to present days. The nine themes include early peoples, exploration, fur trade and settlement, railroad, the Town, mining, quarrying, logging, and road and air transportation (Township of Ignace 2018). These themes are represented by artifacts, photographs, dioramas, models, maps, and written descriptions.
- The public library provides public internet access and photocopy and fax services to community members (SMM and InterGroup 2022). The library operates on a limited budget

(SMM and InterGroup 2022). Renovations are needed in the library including window and ceiling tile replacement due to water stains. A new carpet was installed in 2019 (WSP 2022a).

#### **Other indoor facilities and programming include:**

- The Silver Tops senior centre was built in the 1970s and the community organization known as the Silver Tops was formed in 1994 (see **Section 2.4.9.2**) (WSP 2022a). The senior centre hosts exercise classes, quilting, social activities, and a meal program for seniors (SMM and InterGroup 2022). The senior centre needs major repairs and renovations to meet industry and accessibility standards (WSP 2022a). Major repairs and renovations needed include to the HVAC, windows, doors, and lights (WSP 2022a). There is asbestos in the drywall and lead paint on the exterior of the building (WSP 2022a). There are renovations planned to develop movable space dividers and a new commercial kitchen (WSP 2022a).
- Various tournaments occur in Ignace, including an adult billiards and dart tournament, league bowling and tournaments, and others (Township of Ignace 2018; SMM and InterGroup 2022).
- Various classes are offered in Ignace, including the Silver Sneakers exercise class, dance classes, music lessons, yoga classes, and figure skating (Township of Ignace 2018; SMM and InterGroup 2022)

#### **2.4.6.1.2 Ignace Outdoor Recreation Facilities**

Ignace provides different settings for outdoor activities in the region and a wide range of activities to enjoy, including parks, beaches, and trails, sports facilities, and other outdoor facilities and programming. Ignace has the Davey Lake Road Park, the Park at Ignace Plaza and Tourist Attraction Centre, two beaches on Agimak Lake including Agimak Beach and West Beach, two trails including the Lilypad Trail and the Urban Art Senior's Trail, nearby provincial parks, and various outdoor facilities including playgrounds, the skate park, baseball diamonds, soccer fields, tennis courts, Tower Hill, and others (IAWG March 31, 2022).

#### **Parks, beaches, and trails include:**

- The Davey Lake Road Park is an area that is not maintained, but it has been identified as greenspace (WSP 2022a). The Township of Ignace has identified plans to clean up the park and add picnic tables and garbage facilities in 2023 (WSP 2022a).
- The Park at Ignace Plaza and Tourist Attraction Centre has picnic areas and a dog walk, as well as an interpretive trail and other nature displays to present the vegetation and history of forestry and firefighting in the area (WSP 2022a).
- Nearby provincial parks used for recreational activities include the Sandbar Lake Provincial Park and the Turtle River White Otter Lake Provincial Park (Township of Ignace 2018).
  - Sandbar Lake Provincial Park, located on Sandbar Lake, is 12 kilometers north of Ignace and includes campground sites for tenting and RVs and trails for hiking. Trails include the Silhouette Trail (2 kilometers), the Red Pine Trail 0.5 kilometers), and the Rockcliff Trail (4 kilometers) (Township of Ignace n.d.c). Sandbar Lake may also be used for fishing and canoeing, among other outdoor activities.

- Turtle River White Otter Lake Provincial Park begins at the south end of Agimak Lake and is home to the White Otter Castle. The park is a popular canoe and portage route (the Agimak Lake Trail) and travel to the castle is approximately 40 kilometers by canoe with 15 portages. Several clean campsites are located along the portage route.
- There are two municipal beaches in Ignace, the Agimak Beach and the West Beach. The beaches are maintained by the Public Works Department (Township of Ignace n.d.a). West Beach, located at Agimak Lake on West Street Drive, features a public boat launch, floating dock, and enclosed swimming area for children and novice swimmers (Township of Ignace 2018). There are plans to renovate the dock and to install a pavilion on the West Beach (WSP 2022a). Agimak Beach is located at the west end of Lily Pad Lake Road. The Township of Ignace plans to upgrade the washroom facilities on both beaches and to establish a watersports park and beach rental operation (WSP 2022a and Township of Ignace 2021b).
- There are two trails in Ignace, the Lilypad Trail and the Urban Art Senior's Trail.
  - The Lily Pad Lake Trails were built in 1989 and can be accessed west of the soccer fields on Lily Pad Lake Road, across from Agimak Beach (WSP 2022a). The Lily Pad Lake Trails include the Red Fox Lake Trail large loop (1,325 meters), the Red Fox Lake Trail small loop (200 meters), the Black Bear Trail (720 meters), the Yellow Squirrel Trail (255 meters), and the Blue Rabbit Trail (240 meters).
  - The Urban Art Senior's Trail began construction in 2021-2022 (WSP 2022a). The installation of art pieces and outdoor furniture are alongside the trail to support seniors' ability to use the trail (WSP 2022a).

A map of the Ontario Trail Network within the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area is included in **Section 2.5.10.1**.

**Sports facilities include:**

- The White Otter Recreational and Lifestyle Development (WORLD) Hub and golf course was built in 2011 (WSP 2022a). The golf course is managed by the Township (WSP 2022a). Upgrades are needed to the golf course, including fairway upgrades, improvements to water sources throughout the fairways (inability to properly water and irrigate the golf course), and a need for washroom facilities on the golf course (WSP 2022a). The WORLD Hub requires upgrades and maintenance, including to the roof, deck, electrical, soundproofing, and painting and plaster work (WSP 2022a). The WORLD Hub is considered to be in fair to good condition.
- The skate park in Ignace was built in 2017 (WSP 2022a). The skate park is managed by the Township (WSP 2022a). The skate park is in fair condition, but the signage needs updating and the grass surrounding the skatepark needs care (WSP 2022a). Additional gaps have been identified to improve the skate park including lighting, general maintenance, a water source, seating, more paving to limit sand and stones in the skate park, a shelter to protect from weather, and there is a lack of security (WSP 2022a).
- There are two baseball diamonds in Ignace, one was built in 1970, which is managed by the Township, and one was built in 1973, which is managed by the school (WSP 2022a). If the baseball diamonds are to be used in the evening, there would be a need to install lighting (WSP 2022a). There are currently inadequate places to park. General maintenance is



required at both baseball diamonds, including that both need new stands and fencing (WSP 2022a).

- The soccer fields were constructed in the early 2000s (WSP 2022a). They are in fair to poor condition, there is a lack of lighting, parking, and washroom/changing facilities (WSP 2022a). The grounds also need general maintenance (WSP 2022a).
- The tennis courts in Ignace were constructed in the 1980s (WSP 2022a). Currently, the pavement is not level and needs re-surfacing (WSP 2022a; IAWG May 05, 2022). The tennis courts also need new nets (WSP 2022a).
- Tower Hill was constructed in 1994, and the sliding park was added in 2021 (WSP 2022a). Tower Hill requires regular maintenance (WSP 2022a). The facility is not accessible (WSP 2022a).
- In the winter, Ignace community members organize the Otters Snowmobile Club. The Club maintains snowmobile trails for snowmobilers in the region and hosts derbies that support the community (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Snowmobiling is described in more detail in **Section 2.5.10.2**.

#### **Other outdoor facilities and programming include:**

- Playgrounds are available for community use and are found throughout community parks, including the Best Start Hub, École Immaculée-Conception (Ignace French School), Ignace Public School, and Ignace Tourist Information Centre. All playgrounds are equipped with monkey bars, slides, swings, and see saws (Township of Ignace 2018).#
- Tournaments are held throughout the year, including the Agimak ice fishing derby, Ignace mixed broomball tournament, Ignace slo-pitch baseball tournament, and golf tournaments, among others (Township of Ignace 2018; SMM and InterGroup 2022).
- Additional outdoor activities that Ignace residents and visitors may enjoy include a dog park, Front Street Park, a splash park, roller skating, a bike rodeo, adult badminton, adult pickleball, birdwatching, bouldering, canoeing, fishing, geocaching, and many others (Township of Ignace 2018; SMM and InterGroup 2022).

#### **2.4.6.1.3 Ignace Community Events**

Residents of Ignace value community events and the opportunities it provides to bring the community together (WSP 2022a; SMM and InterGroup 2022; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). There are a variety of community events in Ignace, including:

- The Ignace Annual Kids Fest takes place in August (Township of Ignace 2023). The festival is in partnership with the Township and with the EarlyON Centre, an organization that focuses on activities for children under 4 (Township of Ignace 2018).
- The Teddy Bear Picnic occurs in September and encourages participants to bring a teddy bear and their grandparents to a picnic lunch (Township of Ignace 2018). There are games and music at the event (Ignace, 2023).

- White Otter Days takes place in July and includes various activities such as a hockey tournament, a fish derby, a slo-pitch tournament and more (Township of Ignace 2018).
- A Christmas Parade takes place in December (Township of Ignace 2018). The event offers free public skating and hot chocolate (Township of Ignace 2018).
- The Winter Carnival occurs annually in February or March. There are various events that take place including a snow derby, an ice fishing derby, sliding parties, youth pool & dart tournaments, and an adult pool tournament (Township of Ignace 2018).
- Other events occur throughout the year, including the Spring Fever Dun Day, Vacation Bible School Day Camp, and Summer Day Camps (WSP 2022a).

#### 2.4.6.2 Dryden Recreation Facilities and Programs

Residents of Dryden value the activities and infrastructure that promote a healthy community, including recreation facilities, trails and parks, and community gathering places (City of Dryden n.d.e). The residents of Dryden's quality of life are enhanced by their parklands, waterfront, beaches, cultural and recreational facilities, and linking recreation settings with active transportation networks wherever practical (City of Dryden n.d.e). Key person interviews noted that recreation typically has an outdoor focus (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Recreation in Dryden depends on volunteers, although there are approximately 40 to 50 directly hired employees across the community service department, green space maintenance, and public works employees (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Volunteer groups in Dryden include the Dryden Recreation Extension and Modification (DREAM) committee and are passionate about recreation and have helped find funding to upgrade the arena (IAWG March 31, 2022). The City of Dryden recreation facilities are maintained by City staff through the community service department, green space maintenance crews, and public works department. Upgrades of current facilities and the development of new facilities and public spaces are set out in the Facilities Master Plan (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

##### 2.4.6.2.1 Dryden Indoor Recreation Facilities

Dryden provides residents with opportunities to utilize municipal facilities to support recreational activities and programming, including the Dryden Public Library, the Dryden and District Museum, the Dryden Visitor Information Centre, the Seniors' Activity Centre, the Dryden Memorial Arena, the Dryden Recreation Complex, and other facilities.

##### **Sports facilities include:**

- The Dryden Memorial Arena and Pronger Rink (Dryden Recreation Complex) was built in 1979 and expanded in 1988 to add a second sheet of ice (Quartek Group 2022). The complex has two ice rinks, a full-service pool, a fitness centre, a pro shop, and a canteen (City of Dryden 2023a). The Arena offers hockey, figure skating and public skating. There are also events and tournaments held at the Arena throughout the year. The complex is considered to be in average to good condition with an expected life in excess of 15 years. The building is a steel frame with steel roof decking with a rubber membrane (Quartek Group 2022). The foundation is a concrete slab on grade with concrete footings (Quartek Group 2022). Upgrades are needed, including to flooring, the refrigerator condenser, and compressor (WSP 2022a). The arena is scheduled for an expansion in 2023 (WSP 2022a).



- The Dryden Recreation Complex is a multi-purpose centre that has numerous recreational activities. The complex includes an indoor 25-meter lap pool (including swimming lessons and aqua fitness programs), a therapy pool, a fitness centre (cardio and weights), squash courts, full-service change facilities, a kitchen, two meeting places, and a community room (Quartek Group 2022, City of Dryden 2023a; SMM and InterGroup 2022). Recreation and Community Services staff operate out of the Dryden Recreation Complex (City of Dryden 2022b). The Complex has a concrete foundation, subgrade concrete foundation and pool, steel framing construction, concrete roof decking, and a rubber membrane on the roof (Quartek Group 2022). The Dryden Recreation Complex has received nearly \$5 million in funding for upgrades to add new amenities including a new multi-purpose space with washrooms, an elevator, and four fully accessible change rooms (Kaufman 2021).
- The Seniors' Activity Centre is leased to the Go-Getters (WSP 2022a). An expansion to the Activity Centre occurred in 2022 and the Centre is in average to good condition with a good exterior finish and an elevator (WSP 2022a). The majority of maintenance is taken care of by the City of Dryden and smaller repairs are managed by the Go-Getters (WSP 2022a). Funding has been approved for a new 2,500 square foot addition that will include office space, a stage, meeting rooms, a kitchenette, an accessible washroom, solar panels, and renovations to the existing kitchen to include senior friendly cabinetry and appliances (Kaufman 2021).

**Cultural facilities include:**

- The Dryden Public Library was constructed in 1956 and the building is in good condition with an expected life of at least another 20 years (Explorer Solutions 2022a; WSP 2022a). There is need for approximately 2,050 to 2,500 more square feet and more internet stations (WSP 2022a). The Public Library is connected to the City Hall building by a vestibule that needs repair to become more accessible (Explorer Solutions 2022a).
- The Dryden and District Museum is considered to be a 'turn of the century' brick house (WSP 2022a). The Dryden and District Museum features exhibits highlighting the area's history with the use of Indigenous art and artifacts, pioneer tools, and rooms set to particular decades spanning from the 1900's to the 1950's, as well as rotating exhibits that change every two to three months (City of Dryden n.d.d.; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The museum has also had virtual exhibits including a Community Memories project and an online catalogue of photographs and narratives depicting stories such as the evolution of fuel, the history of the chainsaw, the mercury poisoning of the Wabigoon/English River systems, and more. An online exhibit, Let's Play Ball, is available and depicts the early history of baseball in Dryden and the Dryden Red Sox team, featuring photographs and uniforms in the museum's collection (Community Stories n.d.; City of Dryden n.d.d.; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The museum hosts many artifacts and offers activities for children (Explorer Solutions 2022a; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The travelling exhibits may include scavenger hunts, art workshops, genealogy talks, and many others (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The Dryden and District Museum is also home to the "Dryden Buck". The Dryden Buck was illegally shot in 2003, after which the police held the buck as evidence while Ontario courts convicted the hunter who killed the buck for hunting at night, trespassing, and abandoning meat. It's display in the museum is important for showing the rich natural resources of the area and serves as a

reminder to respect wildlife laws (City of Dryden n.d.d.). The Dryden and District Museum is in a converted residential house and the building is aging as it was not intended for its current use (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Some of the needed repairs include updating the entry vestibule and washroom sinks to be accessible (WSP 2022a). There is a need for more space for exhibits as some of the collections items are being stored in the airport and other facilities, in addition to a storage warehouse which is filled to capacity (Explorer Solutions 2022a; WSP 2022a; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The Museum is funded through municipal sources, the Canadian Museums Operating Grant (Federal funding) and through its membership and admissions (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The Museum keeps its membership and admission fees affordable to help alleviate barriers for entry (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

- The Dryden Regional Training and Cultural Centre hosts cultural and entertainment events including the Dryden Entertainment Series, Childrens Delight Series, and Theatre 17 Performance Series (City of Dryden n.d.f).

#### **Other indoor facilities and programming include:**

- The Dryden Visitor Information Centre is managed by the City's Economic Development/Tourism Manager (WSP 2022a). The building is aging and needs repair (WSP 2022a). The building has a concrete foundation and is a single storey with a basement (Quartek Group 2022). The building is currently rented out to Naked North Art Gallery on the main floor and no tenant in the basement (Quartek Group 2022).
- Additional facilities available to the residents of Dryden include the Agricultural Centre, Masonic Hall, and the Royal Canadian Legion Hall.

#### **2.4.6.2.2 Dryden Outdoor Recreation Facilities**

Dryden has a number of outdoor facilities that residents are able to enjoy, including municipal parks, beaches, recreation areas, an outdoor rink, soccer pitches and facilities, skateboard park, ball diamonds with lighting, a golf course, ski club, BMX Track, and a splash park.

#### **Parks include:**

- Rotary Park is one of the largest parks in Dryden. Rotary Park has three soccer fields (also called Raposo Fields), a skate park, a new splash pad, and a dog park (WSP 2022a). The skate park is available for bikers, skaters, and scooters (City of Dryden 2017). The park also has a 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup> building field house complete with a kitchen, four dressing rooms, referee room, lobby/viewing area, and accessible washrooms (Quartek Group 2022, WSP 2022a). On the property and adjacent to the skate park is a small outbuilding containing a washroom and mechanical room that feeds the soccer field irrigation system (Quartek Group 2022). The Park is in good to excellent condition (WSP 2022a). Rotary Park is also home to the community splash park and newly constructed dog park (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).
- The Milestone Park is maintained by the City of Dryden. Milestone Park hosts an outdoor rink for the winter, as well as tennis and pickleball courts for the summer. There are also two washrooms and a heated changing area (City of Dryden 2017; WSP 2022a). The park is in need of renovations (WSP 2022a). The Park, it is not considered to be in good condition and

is inappropriately sized with no barrier-free accommodations (WSP 2022a). The outdoor rink has an expected life of approximately 5 to 7 years. The City of Dryden would like to cover its outdoor ice rink if funding becomes available (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

- The Cooper Park is near downtown Dryden and has a full-service washroom that has been recently updated (WSP 2022a). Cooper Park is a popular waterfront destination for picnicking and birdwatching and the Cooper Park pathway forms part of the Dryden Signature Trail (City of Dryden 2017). Along the Wabigoon River residents can walk, jog, and bike on a brick pathway and many people use the path to walk their dogs (City of Dryden 2017). Volleyball courts and a boat launch are available for public use (City of Dryden 2017).
- Plumridge Park is considered a hidden gem by residents (City of Dryden 2017). The park is used as an outdoor public green space with a splash pad and play structure (City of Dryden 2017).
- Pronger Park is in a private location where residents can spend time under the shade of the trees in the area (City of Dryden 2017). The park is used for family gatherings, is pet friendly, has a playground, and has trails for biking, hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing (City of Dryden 2017). The park has publicly accessible washrooms.
- Johnston Park includes the Roy Wilson suspension bridge and trails, picnic areas, and washroom facilities (City of Dryden 2017; WSP 2022a). The washrooms have been recently upgraded (WSP 2022a). Mosaic artwork was installed in 2010 for the community centennial celebration.
- Kinsmen Park is close to downtown and has mature trees, a playground, splash pad and water fountains, play structures, picnic tables, private play areas, and a washroom in good condition (WSP 2022a). The facilities are expected to last an additional 20 years (WSP 2022a).
- Lions Park was developed by the Lions Club of Dryden and backs onto the Dryden Highschool (City of Dryden 2017).
- Eagle Park is a small, forested park on a hilltop in a residential area of Dryden (City of Dryden 2017).
- Sandy Beach Park is a recreation area that includes a ball diamond pavilion, soccer pitches, a flat rock fishing area, picnic shelter, and washrooms (City of Dryden 2017). There is a seasonal building at the ball diamonds; a two-storey building with concession stands, washrooms, a batting cage and playground, along with a soccer building and shed (WSP 2022a). The picnic shelter has an area for outdoor cooking including grills and barbeque pits (WSP 2022a). The facilities are in good condition, except for the soccer building and shed, which are in need of repairs (WSP 2022a).

**Beaches include:**

- Thunder Lake has two beaches including Johnson Public Beach (northeast shore of Thunder Lake) and a beach in Aaron Provincial Park (south shore of Thunder Lake (City of Dryden 2017)).

- Ghost Lake has one public beach, the Ghost Lake Public Beach, which includes a shallow, sandy beach area, a boat launch, and shade for picnics (City of Dryden 2017). The lake has areas to canoe, kayak, or paddle board (City of Dryden 2017).

#### **Trails include:**

- The Laura Howe March is a wetland habitat that has two trails near the marsh, including a short loop (approximately 400 meters) and a long loop (approximately 2 kilometers) (City of Dryden 2017).
- Ghost Lake trails include many trails for skilled bicyclists and hikers. The route is made up of bush roads, forest trails, rocky paths, wetlands, swamps, and forest with a network that spans up to 22 km in length (City of Dryden 2017).
- TransCanada trail was launched in 2017 and parts are still under development. The TransCanada trail travels through Dryden and through the Path of the Paddle water route. The route helps you experience First Nations culture by showing you early explorer paths that explorers and First Nations people may have used centuries ago (City of Dryden 2017). Path of the Paddle extends up through Wabigoon Lake and is also called the Migizi Trail (TransCanada Trail n.d.).
- The City of Dryden has an urban trail network that includes five routes. The trails provide safe, walkable access to stores, neighbourhoods, and community facilities. The trail system is 12.3 kilometers (City of Dryden 2017).
- The Dryden Signature Trail system is made up of two routes and they are designed to give the user a hands-on recreational experience with interpretive signage located throughout. The trail system is 5.4 km in length (City of Dryden 2017).
- The Nature in the City Trail is shaped like a necklace and links the natural areas around the City. The trail is used for walking, hiking, jogging, cycling, or skiing and the trail is 6.8 kilometers long (City of Dryden 2017).

A map of the Ontario Trail Network within the Local Study Area is included in **Section 2.5.10.1**.

#### **Sports facilities include:**

- Eagles Landing Golf Course is located in Sandy Beach Park. Eagles Landing Golf Course is a 9-hole course (City of Dryden 2023a).
- Anderson's Homestead Golf Course which is a 9-hole course (Explorer Solutions 2022b).
- The Dryden Ski Club hosts a ski hill. The hill was established in 1953 and has 4 lifts with 7 runs (Ski Dryden 2023). Along with downhill skiing and a terrain park, the Dryden Ski Club also hosts cross country skiing and snow shoeing (Ski Dryden 2023). The Dryden Ski Club also has a chalet which can be rented out. The chalet has a full-service kitchen and washroom.
- The Dryden BMX Track is a space for BMX riders. The track includes jumps, turns, and obstacles for riders (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

#### **Other outdoor facilities and programming include:**

- The Dryden Community Splash Park opened in 2022. The splash park is approximately 2,800 square foot (Ebbeling 2022).
- Additional outdoor activities that residents of Dryden may participate in include horseback riding, archery, sailing, kayaking, canoeing, trapping, Brownies, Scouts, and others (City of Dryden 2017; City of Dryden 2022b; SMM and InterGroup 2022; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

#### 2.4.6.2.3 Dryden Community Events

There are a variety of community events in Dryden, including (Quartek Group 2022; City of Dryden n.d.g):

- Dryden Winter Festival in February and March;
- Home and Trade Show in May;
- Tbaytel Walleye Masters Tournament in June;
- Canada's National Indigenous Peoples Day in June;
- Canada Day in June;
- Pride month celebrations in June;
- Dryden Dragon Boat Festival in June;
- Northern Lights Classic Quarter Horse Show in July;
- Max the Moose Birthday in July;
- Dryden Days of Summer in July and August;
- Annual Gun and Collectible Show in August;
- Dryden Fall Fair in August;
- We Run This City Marathon in September;
- Dryden Fall Fest in October; and
- The Santa Claus Parade in November.

#### 2.4.6.3 Machin Recreation Facilities and Programs

Residents of Machin value their community facilities and recreational infrastructure, including its natural surroundings, wilderness, lands, waterways, trails, and outdoor activities (Crupi Consulting 2017). The recreational activities that residents participate in are largely outdoor activities (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Recreation programming offered in the Municipality of Machin is mostly volunteer based (for example, minor hockey is volunteer based) (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The small population size constrains the variety of recreational programming available in the community, and results in people needing to travel to Dryden or other communities to access certain programs (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

#### 2.4.6.3.1 Machin Indoor Recreation Facilities

The Municipality of Machin maintains and provides residents two facilities where they are able to enjoy recreational activities and programming, including the Woodland Arena and the Eagle River Recreation Centre (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023; WSP 2022a).

- The Woodland Arena can be used throughout the year. From October to April, the Arena is used for various sporting activities including hockey games and public skating sessions (North West Health Line 2023 and WSP 2022a). In the spring and fall, the Arena is used for markets and community events. Recent upgrades have been completed to the arena, including a new plant chiller system, a REALice water system, and accessibility improvements. The Arena has a gym that requires upgrades (WSP 2022a). An automatic key system would help the Arena manager track usage and create an easier system for gym usage. There are no current plans for expansion. Currently, there are not enough children in the community to support a hockey team and kids generally go to Dryden to participate in hockey programs (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Hockey lessons are offered at the Woodland Arena, but there are no community teams (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).
- The Eagle River Recreation Centre is used throughout the year for meetings, parties, and other recreational events (WSP 2022a). The Centre has not had any major upgrades and the upstairs common room has outdated carpet and equipment. There are no current plans for expansion.

#### 2.4.6.3.2 Machin Outdoor Recreation Facilities

The Municipality of Machin maintains the local beaches, ski trails, Eagle River Outdoor Hockey Rink, Coopers Field Baseball Diamond, the Pine Tree Pathways, and two senior centres (Municipality of Machin n.d.b; Thunder Bay Multicultural Association 2023). Outdoor recreation amenities also include camping, fishing, hiking, mountain biking, blueberry picking, waterskiing, hunting, photography, ATVing, snowmobiling, and canoeing (Crupi Consulting 2017; Municipality of Machin 2023). Blue Lake Provincial Park is located 8 kilometers from Vermillion Bay. The Woodland Arena oversees the maintenance for four parks in Machin, including the Eagle River Hudson Post Park, Eagle River Park, Kinsmen Beach, and Vermillion Bay Pine Tree Park (Ontario North 2023). The community recently received funding for improvements to the dock at Vermillion Bay to improve community access, address drainage and erosion issues, and repave the road and parking area (Kaufman 2021).

#### 2.4.6.3.3 Machin Community Events

There are a variety of community events and additional outdoor recreation services in Machin, including (Municipality of Machin n.d):

- An annual kids camp. The 2022 kids camp had the Canadian Swim Patrol travel to Vermillion Bay to teach swimming strokes and self rescue skills and included special visitors such as the Machin Volunteer Fire Department, MNR, and a pilot who landed his float plane. The final day of the 2022 kids camp included a barbeque, inflatable bouncy castle, and inflatable waterslide.



- Disco rollerblading takes place on Thursdays at the Woodland Arena during the non-ice season. Admission is \$5 for kids under 12 and \$10 for those aged 12 and over. Roller skate rentals are \$10 and the arena has approximately 20 pairs available for rental.
- Community baseball takes place every Wednesday during the summer season at the Coopers Field in Vermillion Bay.
- Armchair Travel is a community organized event that allows the members of Machin to travel to far away places without leaving the comfort of their home. The event provides an opportunity to learn about multicultural foods and music.
- Art classes take place once a month at a senior's centre or the Eagle River Recreation Centre and are free for the community. Local artists teach different designs and crafts for participants. Classes range from a maximum of 10 to 15 participants.

#### 2.4.6.4 Sioux Lookout Recreation Facilities and Programs

Visitors and residents take advantage of a wide variety of outdoor recreational and sporting opportunities and indoor facilities (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2021; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Recreational facilities and programs are staffed by a mix of Municipal employees through the Recreation and Culture Department, volunteers, and coordinators (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). A participant from the key person interview program noted that hockey, curling, and golf are near capacity but the municipality would consider offering additional time slots if capacities were reached (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). A participant also noted that they would like to offer programming for target shooting and lacrosse for the community (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Recreation in the Municipality of Sioux Lookout is overseen by the Recreation and Culture department which has an operations department for supporting different areas of the recreational department and the programming department (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The Recreation department is responsible for organizing programs and maintaining municipal facilities.

##### 2.4.6.4.1 Sioux Lookout Indoor Recreation Facilities

Sioux Lookout has a number of facilities where residents are able to enjoy recreational activities and programming, including the Memorial Arena, the Sioux Lookout Public Library, and the Sioux Lookout Museum.

#### **Sports facilities include:**

- The Memorial Arena was originally built in the 1950s. During the 1970s, there was an addition on the east end, including new dressing rooms. In the 1980s additional dressing rooms were built, as well as a fitness centre with a gym, walking track, and weight rooms (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2022b; WSP 2022a). The facility also includes two squash courts. The arena is maintained by the Municipality of Sioux Lookout. To accommodate the use of the arena throughout the year, upgrades to the insulation are needed for shoulder season use (WSP 2022a). The arena is in fair condition. The facility is generally operating under capacity, however, is often at capacity during prime ice times (5:00 to 9:00 pm) (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The fitness facility is fairly busy throughout the year on evenings and weekends.

**Cultural facilities include:**

- The Sioux Lookout Public Library was built in 1988. The library is currently maintained by the Municipality of Sioux Lookout. The building recently underwent re-shingling and construction was completed to make the basement capable of supporting future office space use or, potentially, for the Sioux Lookout Museum to move into (WSP 2022a). The library is currently operating at capacity.
- The Sioux Lookout Museum was operated out of the Heritage Train Station, but since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic the museum has been closed (WSP 2022a). The Municipality is looking for funding to move the museum into the library basement as it will not re-open at the Heritage Train Station (WSP 2022a). The museum is maintained by the Municipality of Sioux Lookout.

**Other indoor facilities and programming include:**

- Sioux Lookout offers programming for youth through the Positive Recreation Opportunities (P.R.O) for Kids program (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2022b). The P.R.O for Kids program supports the participation of eligible children and youth 18 years of age and under in sports, arts, recreational, or cultural activities of their choice with financial assistance (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2022b).

**2.4.6.4.2 Sioux Lookout Outdoor Recreation Facilities**

Sioux Lookout has outdoor facilities that residents can enjoy including trails, beaches, a golf course and curling club, a skatepark, baseball diamonds, tennis courts, soccer fields, and football fields.

**Parks, beaches, and trails include:**

- Ojibway Provincial Park is located 25 kilometers southwest of Sioux Lookout on Little Vermillion Lake. The Park offers a beach, boat launches, a playground area, and approximately 11 kilometers of nature trails (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2022b).
- The Sioux Lookout Town Beach (or Farlinger Town Beach) is a new beach that is currently under construction. A total of \$3 million in funding was secured by Sioux Lookout for beach improvements. The beach is expected to have an administrative building, washroom facilities, a stage, a boardwalk, barrier-free access to the beach, new docks, improved lawn, concrete pads for food trucks, and kayak rentals (WSP 2022a).
- Second Sandy Beach is located 4 kilometers south of Sioux Lookout. The beach has bathrooms, garbage bins, and is available for public use (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2022).
- Sioux Lookout hosts an extensive trail system that is used by cross country skiers, bikers, and walkers (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The Umfreville Trail was built in the late 1990s. The trail is maintained by the Municipality. The Umfreville Trail has a paved path along the highway, but in some places the trail is in rough condition (WSP 2022a). The Sioux Mountain hiking trail offers the ability to overlook Sioux Lookout and Pelican Lake with parking near the decommissioned Radar Base Site (Rody 2023).

**Sports facilities include:**

- The Cedar Bay Recreation Complex offers various trails and an equestrian facility run by users and volunteers. Also offered are cabins for overnight accommodations and a lodge for special events (Sioux Lookout n.d.f). The complex offers boarding of horses and riding lessons. Funding has been approved for upgrades to the Cedar Bay Community Stable to extend electricity to the pavilion, build new accessible washrooms, and purchasing a new tractor (Kaufman 2021).
- The Sioux Lookout Golf and Curling Club includes a 9-hole golf course with power cart rentals, a pro-shop, and a bar (SLGCC 2021). The golf course hosts various tournaments throughout the year. Curling occurs in the winter and there is a recreational league that runs Monday to Friday, including doubles (Monday), men's league (Tuesday), women's league (Wednesday), open curling (Thursday), and a mixed league (Friday) (SLGCC 2021). Various bonspiels, special curling events, and fundraisers occur throughout the season (SLGCC 2021).
- The Hudson outdoor arena is available for public use during the winter months (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).
- The skatepark was built in the 2000s and is maintained by the Municipality of Sioux Lookout. The park is in good condition and the washrooms are located adjacent to the park (WSP 2022a). The skatepark is currently operating within capacity.
- There are three baseball diamonds in Sioux Lookout, built in the 1980s. One of the diamonds is maintained by the Municipality of Sioux Lookout (WSP 2022a). Approximately ten years ago, one diamond had lighting installed (WSP 2022a). Baseball diamonds and the concession stand are available for tournaments and special events (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2022b). All three diamonds are in fair condition and are operating within capacity.
- There are two tennis courts and bocce courts, both of which are maintained by the Municipality. The courts were built in the 1970s, are considered to be in reasonable condition, and are operating within capacity (WSP 2022a).
- Soccer and football fields are located on the school grounds in Sioux Lookout (WSP 2022a). The KPDSB maintains the soccer and football fields.

#### **2.4.6.4.3 Sioux Lookout Community Events**

There are a variety of community events available to residents in Sioux Lookout, including (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2022b):

- The annual Blueberry Festival occurs in August. It is a 10-day festival with over 100 events held during that time, including escape rooms, self-guided historical cemetery tours, photo contests, blueberry inspired food and drinks, the great bean hunt, the Shrine Club barbeque, Legion steak fry night, baseball tournament, golf tournament, volley ball tournament, pickle ball tournament, cribbage tournament, bocce ball tournament, tennis tournament, mini putt tournament, a largest blueberry by weight competition, blueberry bingo, art contests, a speed knitting/crochet contest, parades, float plane rides, pancake breakfast, book sales, music concerts, trivia night, beading circles, and more.
- Sioux Lookout's annual Walleye Weekend is organized by the Sioux Lookout Anglers and Hunters and is held on the second weekend of June.

- The Northwest Farmers' Market offers locally grown fruits and vegetables, hand-crafted items, and home-baked goods.

#### **2.4.6.5 Unincorporated Communities Recreation Facilities and Programs**

Recreation programs and facilities available for the local services boards and unincorporated communities are described below.

##### **2.4.6.5.1 Wabigoon Village**

Wabigoon Village has a community hall which hosts events, such as volleyball. Childrens programming and cribbage are held weekly, there are occasionally dances, and in July there is a kids race (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Wabigoon Village also has many docks and access points to Wabigoon Lake throughout the community (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Wabigoon Village would like to have a full arena (fully enclosed) with a Zamboni, but residents feel they do not have the population at this time to support a full arena (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Participants from the interview program indicated that residents feel that the natural environment and associated recreation is key to their community, including fishing, hunting, cross-country skiing, and other activities. The Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario has made an investment of \$700,000 to support the construction of an outdoor pavilion with a community space for the LSB of Wabigoon (FedNor 2022). The multipurpose, year-round facility is expected to serve as a gathering and event space for the community for both business and recreational activities (FedNor 2022). During the winter season, the space will transition into an ice rink (FedNor 2022). The LSB of Wabigoon has a recreation department for organizing programming and events but residents typically go to Dryden for any formal recreational programming (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

##### **2.4.6.5.2 Melgund**

Results of the NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023 indicated that residents of Melgund feel that the natural environment is important to everyone in Melgund, with residents participating in hunting, fishing, ATVing, gardening, cross country skiing, ice fishing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, annual sleigh rides, and other activities. Residents take advantage of Melgund Lake and other nearby lakes south of the highway and Basket Lake Road (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Melgund has a community hall where game nights and music events occur, often held in the winter (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Melgund is home to the Melgund Lake Conservation Reserve (Thunder Bay Multicultural Association 2023). The Conservation Reserve offers various traditional activities such as shore lunch, camping, and hunting and trapping (Thunder Bay Multicultural Association 2023). Residents have provided that there are not currently gaps in recreational services and facilities in Melgund, but there is always something that could be improved, including an outside enclosure or roof for outdoor events (such as a jam session), improvements to the community hall, and the potential for a pavilion with 10 to 20 picnic tables for outside use (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The LSB of Melgund Board is responsible for recreational programming in the community (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.4.6.5.3 Dinorwic

Residents of Dinorwic participate in recreational activities with a focus on the outdoors (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Dinorwic residents participate in indoor activities at the Wabigoon community hall, such as volleyball (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Most Dinorwic residents have a boat and truck to access blueberry picking, mushroom picking, fishing, hunting, canoeing, hiking and walking, and other outdoor activities. Most residents have access to the lake and, due to the small population, the lake is not crowded (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Fishing and being on the lake are important activities for families, as it can be a relatively inexpensive activity, particularly compared to larger communities where you may have other fees (e.g., docking fees) (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Programs 2022-2023). There are no organized sports in Dinorwic. Kids must go to nearby communities, such as Dryden, for organized sports. Residents have commented that if the population grows, they would like to explore the possibility of a hockey rink (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Dinorwic does not have a recreational committee or any organized recreational programming, although the Church previously organized a number of events (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.4.6.5.4 Silver Dollar

Results of the NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023 indicated that residents of Silver Dollar feel that the natural environment is important to them and is a way of life, with recreational opportunities focused on the outdoors. Residents participate in trapping, ATVing, snowmobiling, ice fishing, snowshoeing, canoeing, kayaking, hunting, gathering (blueberries, mushrooms, pinecones, and wild rice), northern lights viewing, and other outdoor activities (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Residents also camp in nearby Crown land and there is a nearby quarry that people cliff dive from (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.4.6.5.5 Upsala

Results of the NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023 indicated that residents of Upsala feel that the natural environment is important to them and is a way of life, with recreational opportunities focused on the outdoors. Residents participate in boating, camping, walking, bird watching, fishing, hunting, gathering (picking berries), and other outdoor activities (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Residents participate in organized activities, with organizations offering programs for seniors and children including a monthly seniors' group and walking club. Upsala has a recreation centre for indoor programming which is maintained by the Upsala Local Services Board (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). It was noted that they would like an outdoor gym and snow removal in the winter for a walking path (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.4.7 Housing

The current state of housing in each of the Local Study Area communities is described in the sections below. The indicators used to analyze each community include:

- Dwellings counts and conditions;
- Home ownership; and
- Household composition.

This section does not include the cost of housing, which is analyzed in **Section 3.6.3.4**.

Out of the five Local Study Area communities analyzed, three have seen an increase in their total number of occupied dwellings by usual residents between the 2016 Census and the 2021 Census, while two have seen a decrease. Out of the three communities that have seen an increase (Sioux Lookout, Machin, and the LSB of Wabigoon), Sioux Lookout has seen the largest increase in both nominal terms and percent, increasing from 2,010 units to 2,330 (15.9%). Ignace and Dryden have both seen a decrease in the total number of dwellings in their communities, from 570 to 545 in Ignace and 3,360 to 3,320 in Dryden. It should be noted that the number of single- and semi-detached houses in both of these communities maintained or increased in numbers. (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a)

Throughout the Local Study Area, the rate of home ownership is higher than the Ontario average, with the notable exception of Sioux Lookout where 33.3% of households rent their housing unit compared to the Ontario average of 31.4%. The Regional Study Area and Ontario include Indigenous reserves and therefore also have Band housing, which is a dwelling provided by the local government, First Nation, or Indian band. All communities in the Local Study Area have a higher percentage of single- and semi-detached homes than the Ontario average, which are traditionally rented at a lower rate than apartments. The percentage of movable dwellings is also higher than the Ontario average. The proportion of apartments and row houses and other single-attached houses in Local Study Area communities is lower than the Ontario average, with the highest percentage in Sioux Lookout (Statistics Canada 2022a). Many communities in the Local Study Area recognize the need to expand and diversify their housing stock in order to meet a diverse set of needs in the community. The lack of diversity in the housing stock has a greater affect on vulnerable populations, with a lack of acceptable housing and homelessness existing across Local Study Area communities (KDSB 2021b; Township of Ignace 2021a).

Ignace, Machin, and Dryden all have notably smaller household sizes than the Regional Study Area and the Ontario average. Ignace has the largest percentage of two person households at 46% compared to the Ontario average of 33%. The LSB of Wabigoon has a high percentage of one person households, sitting at 34% compared to the Ontario average of 26%. Sioux Lookout has the highest percentage of households with three or more individuals, coming close to the Ontario average of 41% at 38%. (Statistics Canada 2022a). The smaller household sizes in Ignace, Machin, Dryden, and the LSB of Wabigoon can be attributed to the large proportion of residents who are 55 years and older and may not have any children living at home and the smaller proportion of families with children at home compared to the Regional Study Area (Statistics Canada 1998, 2022). More information on age structure and family characteristics are described in **Section 2.2.4.1** and **Section 2.2.4.2**, respectively.



Throughout the Local Study Area, the proportion of homes requiring major repairs is lower than the Regional Study Area but higher than the Ontario average. The LSB of Wabigoon has the highest percentage of homes requiring major repairs at 14.3%, while Dryden is the lowest at 7.4% (Statistics Canada 2022a)

#### 2.4.7.1 Homeless in the Regional Study Area

A lack of housing options has left some individuals in the Local Study Area communities without a home. Individuals experiencing homelessness or are precariously housed are individuals without a permanent address or residence, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means, and ability to acquire it are considered homeless (KDSB 2021a). These individuals are considered a vulnerable population, individuals who are at greater risk of experiencing adverse effects because of "*disparities in physical, economic, and social status when compared with the dominant population*" (Patrick et al 2018; Rukmana 2014) and are analyzed in **Section 2.2.5.2**.

The KDSB delivers social services in the Kenora District (KDSB 2023a), including those servicing individuals experiencing homelessness in all communities in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area. Further information about the KDSB can be found in **Section 2.4.7.2**.

The KDSB has been accepted to join the "Reaching Home Designated Community" program under the Government of Canada. Reaching Home is a community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness (KDSB 2021b). As part of this program, the KDSB has a coordinated access system in place that provides set access points for services, assessments and prioritization of individuals, and matching and referral to specific services in the communities (Government of Canada 2022c).

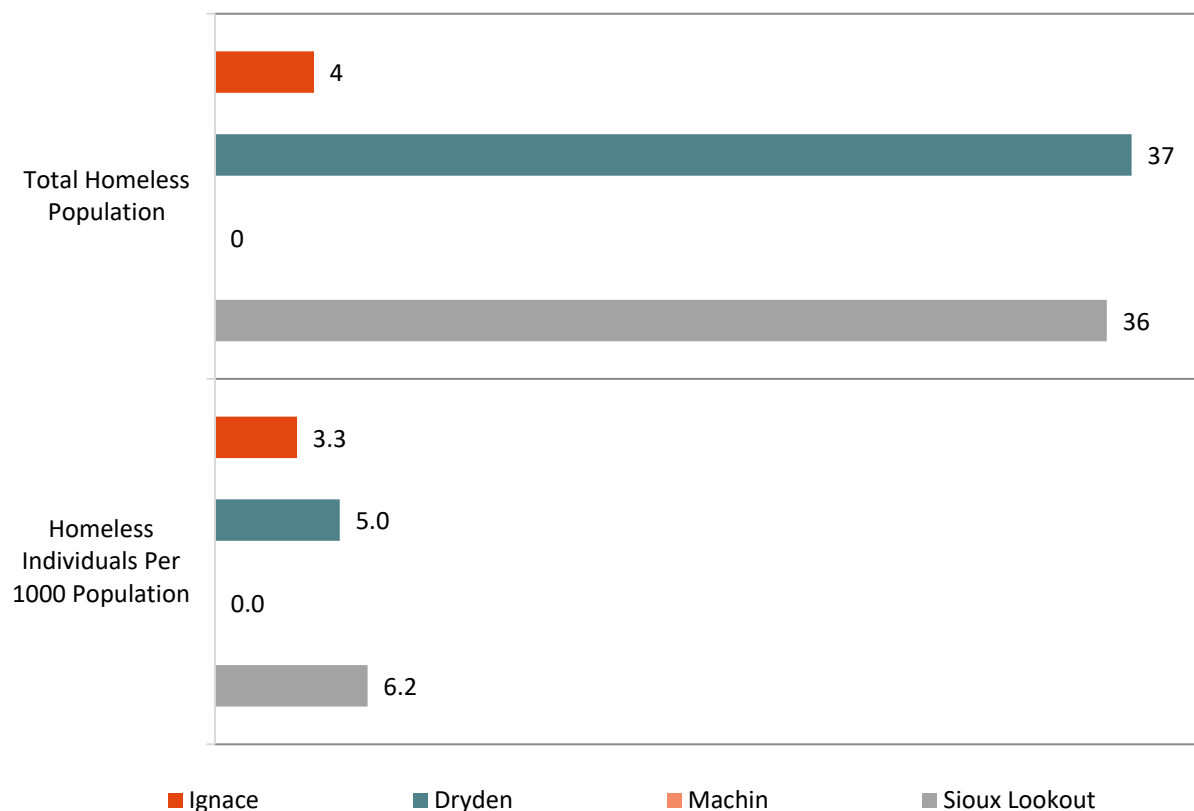
As part of the coordinated access system, the KDSB collects data on the homeless population throughout the KDSB's service area with a point-in-time count. The information describes the number of unsheltered individuals on a single night in each community. Due to the fact that the data is taken from small rural communities with low density, where some individuals may stay with relatives, friends, acquaintances, neighbours, or strangers because they do not have a permanent home, the true number of homeless individuals may be higher (KDSB 2021a, GBA Workshop 2023).

**Figure 2.4-1** details the number of homeless individuals measures in Ignace, Dryden, Machin, and Sioux Lookout.

The community with the largest homeless population per 1,000 individuals is Sioux Lookout, at 6.2, followed by Dryden at 5.0, and Ignace at 3.3 (KDSB 2021a; Statistics Canada 2022). No homeless individuals were reported in Machin during the point-in-time count. It has been reported that the homeless population is seasonal, and can increase during the summer months (GBA Workshop 2023).

The top five challenges or problems that homeless individuals reported to the KDSB that prevented them from finding suitable housing were having too low of an income, rent being too high, addiction, discrimination, and mental health issues. Indigenous individuals are overrepresented in the homeless population with 88.1% of individuals in the KDSB survey self-identifying as Indigenous. Most homeless individuals (76.0%) are between the ages of 25 to 55, while 15.4% are under the age of 25, and 8.1% are 56 years of age or older (KDSB 2021a).

Figure 2.4-1: Homeless Individuals in Ignace, Dryden, Machin, and Sioux Lookout



**Source:** KDSB 2021a and Statistics Canada 2022a.

While Indigenous individuals may move off reserves and from their home communities to seek better services, they can struggle to find housing in larger communities (GBA+ Workshop 2023). Communities across the Local Study Area are struggling with a lack of available rental units. Individuals may not be able to travel or commute to locations with more affordable housing due to a lack of transportation. Some residents have reported that discrimination can play a role in not being able to find housing. It has also been reported that some homeowners are reluctant to rent out homes due to a fear of their property being damaged. Housing developments may also receive pushback due to the added population and traffic in communities (GBA+ Workshop 2023).

New housing development has remained relatively stagnant since the 1990s from both public and private investors making it difficult for individuals to afford housing. Barriers to housing development exist in some communities due to increasing costs. The demand for subsidized housing is strong with no subsidized housing currently available in the KDSB's jurisdiction (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). As of January 2022, there were over 1,700 approved applications for housing on the KDSB's waiting list (KDSB 2021a), with currently more individuals on the wait list than there are housed (NWO Baseline Studies Key

Person Interview Program 2022-2023). This can force individuals into homelessness due to the lack of available housing. The availability of shelters is covered in social services (**Section 2.4.9**).

#### 2.4.7.2 Kenora District Services Board

The KDSB was created under Ontario law, and uses funds collected from municipalities and unincorporated territories within the Kenora District as well as the Province of Ontario to deliver social services in the Kenora District (KDSB 2023a) including all communities in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area. The KDSB housing programs are described here while other services they provide are described in **Section 2.4.9**. The KDSB housing units are described in the communities where they are located.

Community Housing Services include several different types of housing programs:

- Supportive housing programs;
- Affordable housing units;
- Market rental housing units;
- Rent-gearred-to-income programs; and
- Homelessness prevention programs.

The KDSB provides rental assistance to non-elderly and elderly residents as well as special priority placements (KDSB 2023b).

The KDSB recently undertook a regional housing strategy study to look at the existing housing situation and propose an action plan on how to support housing needs in each of the communities. Barriers to affordable housing that have been identified by the KDSB include:

- The unaffordability of housing stock;
- High costs and delays to construction and development;
- Land use incompatibilities;
- A lack of variety in the available housing stock; and
- The need for more partnerships and collaborations in the region.

The report details community-level recommendations to deal with the above barriers. These recommendations include (KDSB 2023e):

- Providing incentives and financing in order to increase affordability;
- Implementing a streamlined construction development process that encourages infill and densification, alternative construction methods, and a reduction in development delays;
- Expanding land use compatibility by updating zoning and policy documents, creating plans and strategies, increasing developable land, and spreading awareness about housing issues;
- Exploring and prioritizing new housing varieties, building capacity in home maintenance so units remain on the market, and supporting new and existing residents to live in the communities; and

- Establishing partnerships and connections with provincial, regional, and municipal governments as well as private enterprises and community members (KDSB 2023e).

One of the drivers of the housing shortage identified in the regional housing strategy for Ignace, Dryden, Machin, and Sioux Lookout include the lack of specific types of housing such as supportive housing, senior's housing (including smaller homes for seniors to be able to comfortably downsize), higher density/multi-family housing, affordable housing (social housing and rent-g geared-to-income) and entry-level housing for first time buyers (KDSB 2023e). Seniors are moving to larger municipalities to find more suitable housing options including senior-living facilities and independent living seniors' housing (KDSB 2023e). The lack of housing for seniors and senior health care support can force seniors into long-term care or hospitals (KDSB 2023e).

### 2.4.7.3 Ignace

#### 2.4.7.3.1 Dwelling Counts and Conditions

The total occupied private dwellings by usual residents in Ignace has decreased by 10 dwellings, from 560 in the 2016 Census to 550 in the 2021 Census. There was also a decrease in the total number of unoccupied, marginal, and seasonal dwellings from 147 dwellings in 2016 to 113 in 2021 (Statistics Canada 2017, 2022a)<sup>29</sup>. In Ignace, dwellings are primarily single-detached homes. The number of single and semi-detached homes was maintained between 2016 and 2021 at 520. The number of apartments decreased by 30 from 45 to 15 while the number of row houses and other single-attached houses increased from 0 to 10.

**Figure 2.4-2** shows the types of dwellings in Ignace by percent, compared to the Regional Study Area and Ontario. With over 95% of dwellings classified as single or semi-detached in Ignace, having risen from 91.2% in 2016, Ignace has a higher proportion of single and semi-detached dwellings compared to the Regional Study Area and Ontario. As of 2021, Ignace has a lower percentage of apartments than the Regional Study Area and Ontario, at 2.8% compared to 10.1% and 31.2% respectively.

There is a housing shortage in the Local Study Area communities with workers at the mill in Ignace having difficulty finding housing (HSAL et al 2022b; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Between 2016 and 2019, Ignace issued 53 building permits, the second highest number of building permits per capita out of the communities in the Local Study Area (HSAL et al 2022b; Statistics Canada 2022).

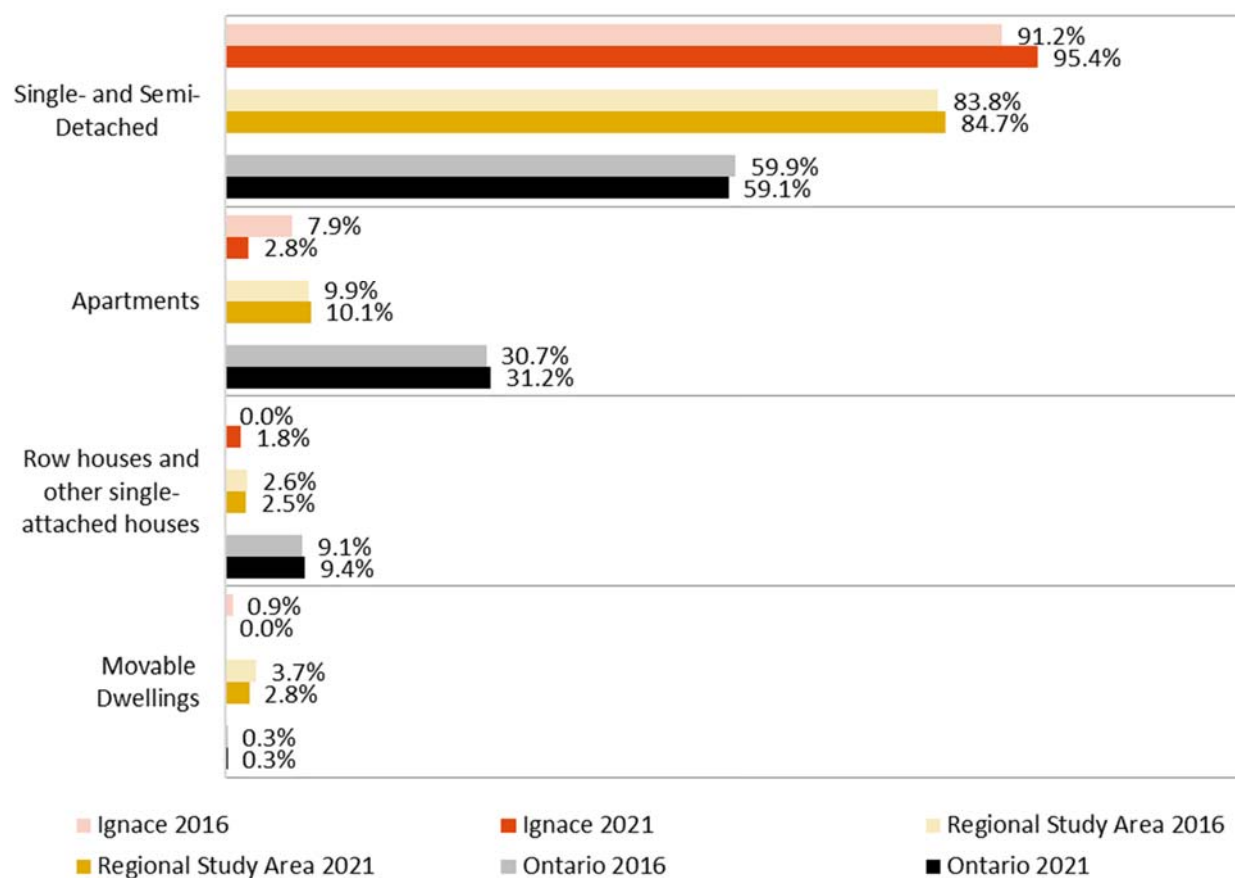
In the Township of Ignace's Official Plan and Zoning By-Law Review (2019a) the Township of Ignace conducted an analysis of currently available vacant land and the projected amount of land required to accommodate population increases to see if the current amount of vacant land will be suitable for the long term (Township of Ignace 2019a). There are currently around 160 vacant lots in Ignace planned for future development. Within the settlement area in Ignace there are

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<sup>29</sup> Total occupied private dwellings are classified as regular private dwellings and occupied marginal dwellings. Regular dwellings include: occupied dwellings by usual residents, occupied dwellings by foreign or seasonal residents, and unoccupied dwellings. Marginal dwellings are ones which do not meet the needs for year-round occupancy, which requires a source of heat, and an enclosed spaces that provides shelter from the elements (Statistics Canada 2022a).

63.9 hectares of vacant residential land that can be developed with support for a maximum of 5,000 residents in their growth plan (HSAL et al 2022b).

**Figure 2.4-2: Types of Dwellings in Ignace, Regional Study Area, and Ontario**

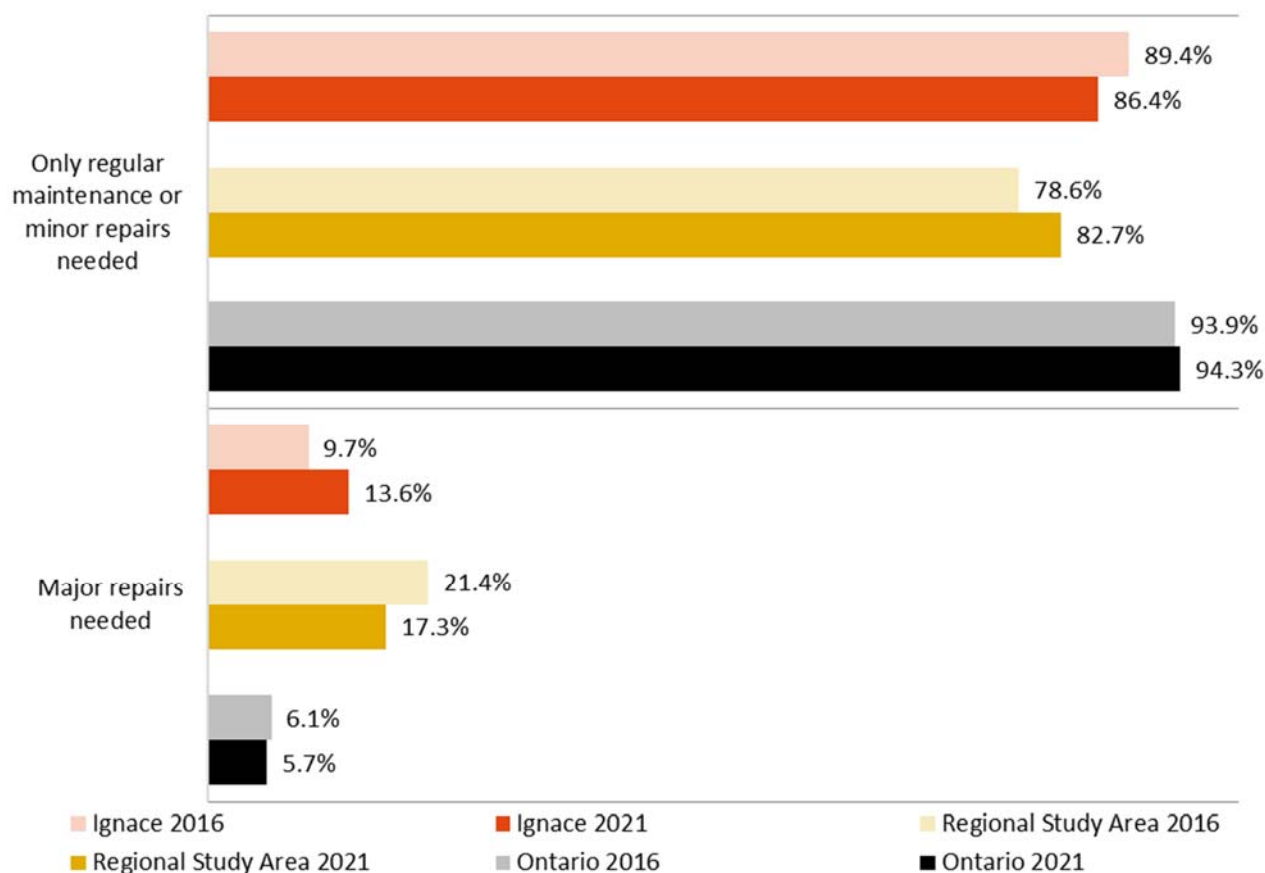


**Source:** Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

In 2021, most dwellings in Ignace was reported to be in good condition; however, 75 dwellings (13.6% of the total dwellings) required major repairs. **Figure 2.4-3** details the percent of dwellings requiring regular maintenance or minor repairs compared to those requiring major repairs. The number of dwellings requiring major repairs has increased by 20 since 2016, when 55 dwellings were reported to require major repairs. It has been noted that homes built previously to serve the Mattabi Mine (now closed) employees are now aging and requiring renovations (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). While the proportion of houses requiring major repairs has increased in Ignace since 2016, it has been decreasing in the Regional Study Area, which, as of 2021, currently has 17.3% of dwellings requiring major repairs. The proportion of dwellings requiring major repairs in Ignace is more than double the Ontario average, which, as of 2021, currently sits at 5.7%. In addition to dwellings in poor condition, 20 households have been reported to be living in housing that is “not suitable,” meaning too small for the size of the household. The lack of a local hardware store is

believed to contribute to people’s ability to effectively maintain their homes. (Local Social Cultural and Health Workshop 2021).

**Figure 2.4-3: Dwelling Conditions in Ignace, Regional Study Area, and Ontario**



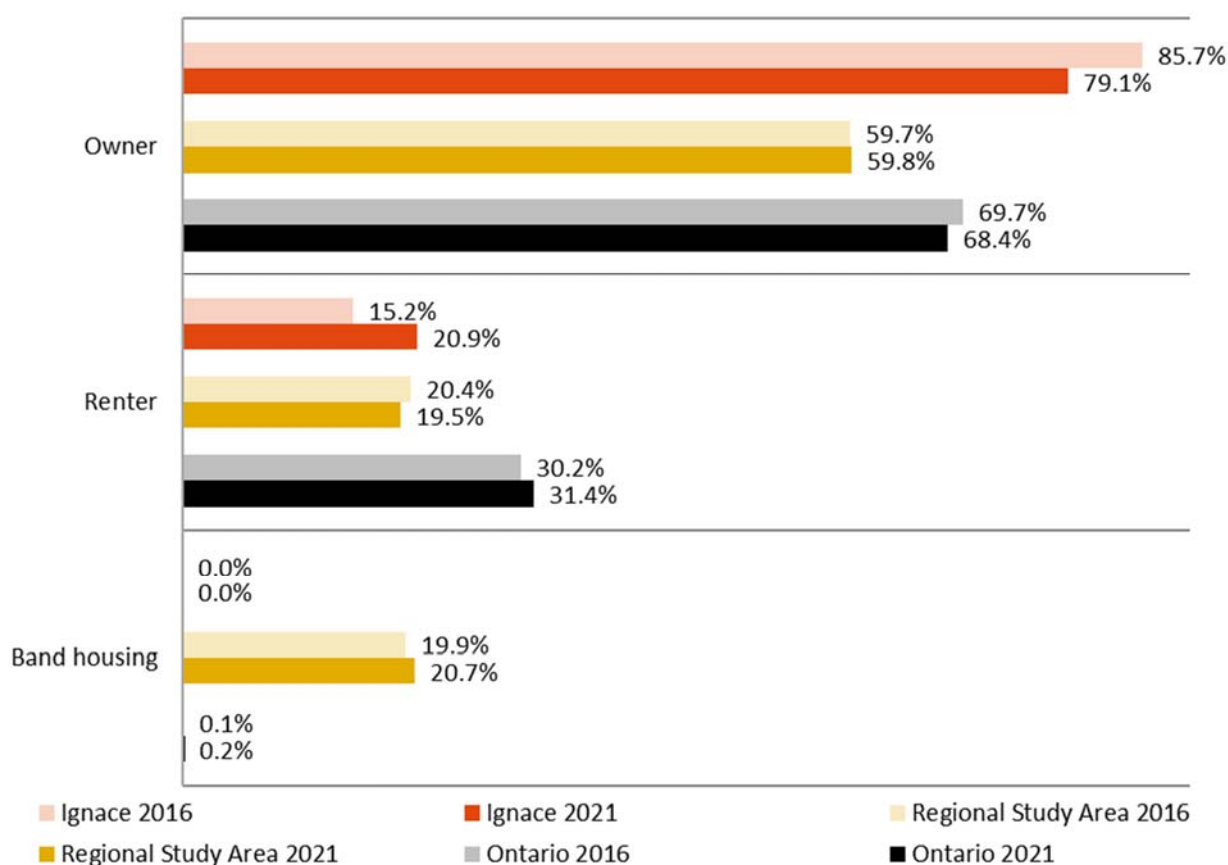
Source: Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

### 2.4.7.3.2 Home Ownership

There has been a slight shift in household tenure in Ignace since 2016. The number of households that reported living in rental units has increased by 30, and the number of dwellings owned by the household has decreased by 45. In 2016, Ignace had a lower proportion of rental units (15.2%), than the Regional Study Area (20.4%). As shown in **Figure 2.4-4**, the recent shift towards rental units in Ignace and away from rental units in the Regional Study Area has resulted in the proportion of rental units in Ignace being 1.4% higher than the Regional Study Area, at 20.9% compared to 19.5%. The proportion of households that rent is still lower than in Ontario (31.4%). Although there has been an increase in the proportion of households that are renting, a lack of rental units is increasing prices and causing some individuals to live with parents or roommates (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).



Figure 2.4-4: Home Ownership in Ignace, Regional Study Area, and Ontario<sup>1</sup>



Source: Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

Notes: 1. Band housing is used to define dwellings on reserves. Band housing is a classification used for historical and statutory reasons because shelter occupancy on reserves does not follow usual classification by standard tenure categories (Statistics Canada 2022a).

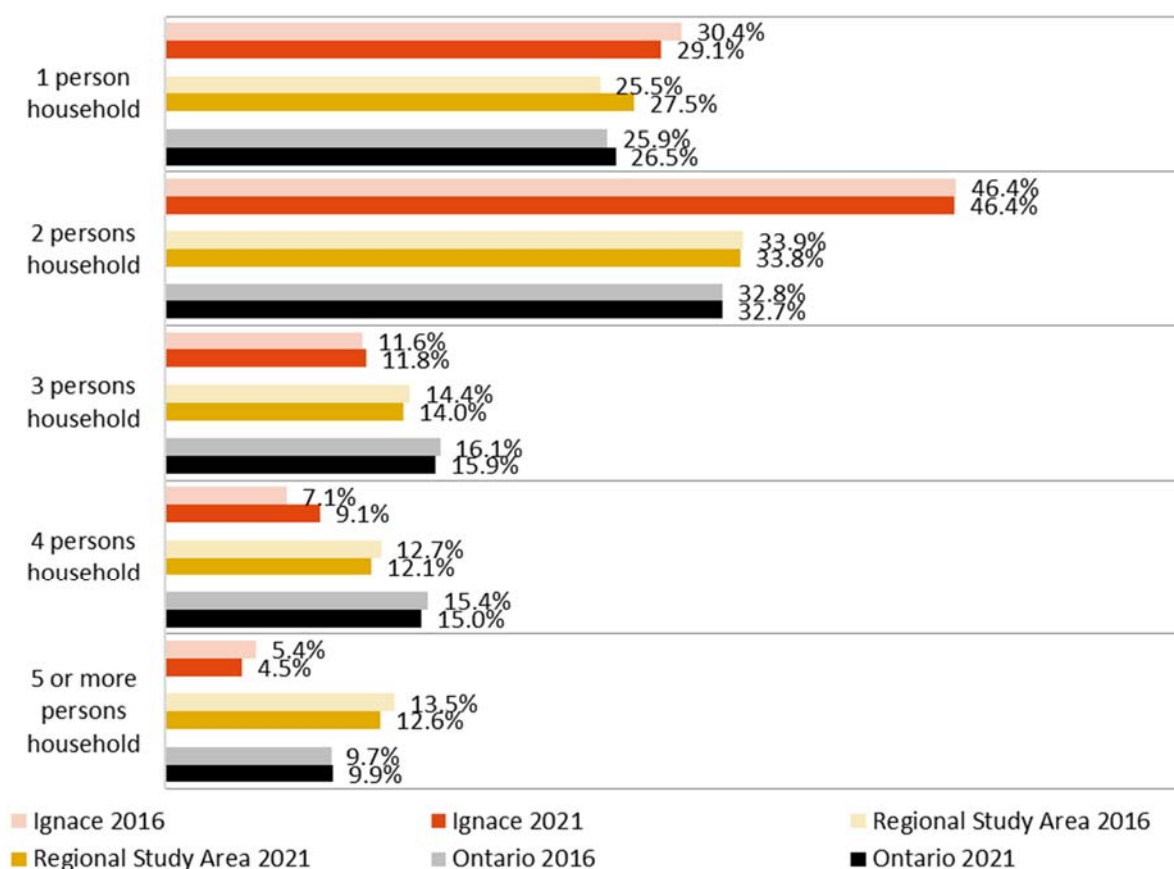
### 2.4.7.3.3 Household Size

Most dwellings in Ignace house one or two individuals, with these two household sizes making up 160 and 255 of the total 550 dwellings. Both categories have seen decreases since 2016. The number of three person households has been maintained since 2016, at 65 dwellings, while the number of four person households has seen an increase from 40 to 50.

As of 2021, proportionally Ignace has a higher percentage of two person households than the Regional Study Area and Ontario, at 46% compared to 34% and 33%, respectively, as shown in **Figure 2.4-5**. The number of one-person households is similar across all three areas in 2021, ranging from 26% to 29%. Ignace has a higher percentage of households with one or two people and a lower percentage with three or more person households than the Regional Study Area and Ontario. The proportion of four person households, at 9%, is 3% lower than the Regional Study

Area and 6% lower than the Ontario average. The proportion of five or more person households, at 5%, is half as much as the Ontario average and 8% lower than the Regional Study Area.

**Figure 2.4-5: Household Sizes in Ignace, Regional Study Area, and Ontario**



Source: Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022.

#### 2.4.7.3.4 Affordable and Social Housing

The Ignace community survey results collected as part of the *Ignace Community Safety and Well-Being Plan* (Township of Ignace 2021a) indicated that 92% of respondents feel that their housing needs are being met. The remaining community members brought up issues surrounding limited housing choice and low building standards.

To offer more affordable housing options than currently exists in the community the Township of Ignace is looking to promote a full range of housing options at different levels of density (Township of Ignace 2020). To achieve this goal the Township has stated several objectives including:

- Permitting different forms of housing such as second units, garden suites, apartments, cooperative housing, and tiny homes (as appropriate);

- Promoting housing options including townhouses, low-rise apartments, and semi-detached houses;
- Supporting the development of a range of affordable housing options for seniors; and
- Supporting opportunities for appropriate rural residential development while protecting the natural environment.

Members of the Ignace community have expressed support for alternative housing options that are geared towards seniors and provide more affordable housing options (Township of Ignace 2019a; KPMG 2018). One way in which the Township of Ignace is promoting affordable housing is through its support of the KDSB's Ten Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. Currently, the KDSB has no affordable housing units in Ignace but will work with private landlords on a case-by-case basis to subsidize rent (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). This plan aims to provide adequate and suitable housing for everyone in the region which The Township of Ignace aims to achieve by allowing and encouraging alternative housing options to be built (Township of Ignace 2020). To address senior's concerns with a lack of affordable housing in the region the Ignace Silver Tops are seeking community partners and the provincial and federal governments to help them develop a 20-unit seniors housing complex (Forbes 2023). The development of seniors housing may also provide benefits to non-seniors by alleviating market pressure on other alternative multi-family housing options (IAWG February 24, 2022).

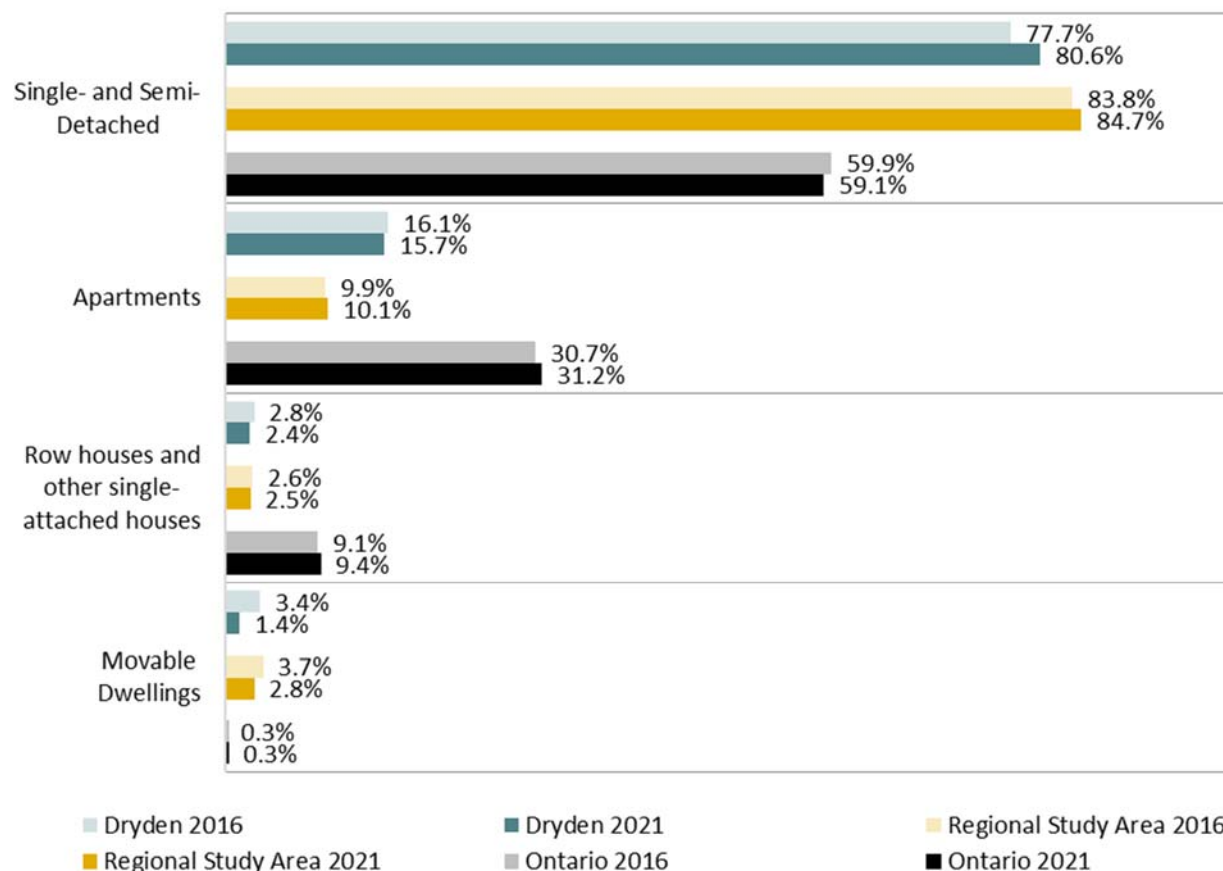
#### 2.4.7.4 Dryden

##### 2.4.7.4.1 Dwelling Counts and Housing Conditions

According to the 2021 Census, the City of Dryden has 3,310 occupied dwellings by usual residents, a decrease of 50 from the 2016 Census. Although there was a decrease in the number of occupied dwellings by usual residents in Dryden, there was an increase in the total number of unoccupied, marginal, and seasonal dwellings from 180 dwellings in 2016 to 260 in 2021 (Statistics Canada 2017, 2022a). Consistent with the Regional Study Area and the Province of Ontario, single-detached houses are the most common type of housing in Dryden. While the number of single-detached houses has increased by 65 between 2016 and 2021 for a total of 2,540. All other types of dwellings have either remained constant or decreased from 2016 to 2021. The number of apartments has decreased by 20 units since 2016, from 540 to 520; row houses and other single-attached houses have decreased from 95 to 80; and movable dwellings have decreased from 115 to 45.

**Figure 2.4-6** details the percentage of dwellings by type in the City. Despite the decrease in the number of apartments in Dryden, the proportion of dwellings that are apartments remains higher than the Regional Study Area average at 15.7% compared to 10.1%. However, it is lower than the Ontario average of 31.2%. Dryden has a higher proportion of rental unit dwellings compared to the Regional Study Area, at 26.9% compared to 19.5%. Prior to the number of rental units dropping, the proportion of rental units matched the Ontario average. Currently, the Ontario average is higher, at 31.4%. The proportion of detached homes in Dryden is increasing, from 77.7% to 80.6% but still below the levels seen in the Regional Study Area, which is currently at 59.1%.

Figure 2.4-6: Types of Dwellings in Dryden, Regional Study Area, and Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

The City of Dryden has a lack of available rental units. Difficulty in finding rental accommodation is seen as a deterrence for “visitors, youth, young professionals and newcomers” in Dryden (Explorer Solutions 2022a). Rental units are expensive, and individuals without adequate jobs are often not able to make it through the application process (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Additionally, the lack of rental options can affect vulnerable populations in Dryden. Teenagers and young adults, aged 18 to 22, as well as Indigenous people are some of the demographics that have been especially affected by the lack of affordable rental options. Senior Indigenous women have also been noted to be a demographic that have been negatively affected by the housing shortage (GBA+ Workshop 2023).

A lack of seniors housing and long-term care facilities is suggested to be a factor in the observed high demand and low vacancy rates in the housing market in Dryden, and a factor in preventing younger buyers from entering the market (Quartek Group 2022). The City of Dryden and KDSB are currently addressing this issue by increasing the amount of housing available for seniors. A 41-unit subsidized seniors housing complex in Dryden is opening in the summer of 2023 (KDSB 2022a) as well as two other buildings with a total of 48 units of seniors housing (NWO

Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). While seniors-oriented units being developed are helping to increase the supply of housing in the community, it tends to be prioritized over other forms of housing due to it being seen as a safe investment. General and affordable housing units are still required in the community (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

A concern for Dryden's development is the fringe population (see **Section 2.2.2.2**). Many people reside in the unincorporated area surrounding the city. Development in these areas rather than within the municipality poses a challenge, as these residents use Dryden's services but do not pay property taxes, limiting Dryden's tax base and placing pressures on municipal services (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

One of the goals of the City of Dryden is to increase the amount of housing options by increasing the residential density in the city, especially in the downtown area (City of Dryden 2019; Quartek Group 2022). Affordable and high-density housing is needed so that the required workers are able to move to the community (Law 2023) and new entrants are able to join the housing market (Quartek Group 2022). In order to address the lack of diverse housing options, zoning is being modified for more flexibility in order to allow for more mid and high-density residential development (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). A 48-unit apartment complex is currently under development which will increase the supply of flexible housing options in the community (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Several ideas and initiatives have been put forward including redeveloping and building out underutilized properties; converting vacant second-floor commercial properties to residential units; promoting the development of multiplex housing, specifically in areas where previous industrial activities have relocated; the conversion of existing mobile/trailer parks in for the potential redevelopment for tiny homes subdivision; and the designation of large residential land parcels to higher density housing (Explorer Solutions 2022a; Quartek Group 2022). In order to achieve these goals, the City of Dryden would like to attract more developers to the community (Law 2023).

While the housing market is tight (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023), the demand for new residential development remains mild (Explorer Solutions 2022a). The amount of residential construction is lower than the levels seen historically (Explorer Solutions 2022a). The City of Dryden issued 217 building permits between 2016 and 2020, the lowest amount per capita out of the Local Study Area communities (HSAL et al 2022b; Statistics Canada 2022a).

Infrastructure costs pose a burden on the City of Dryden for new residential development. Competition with surrounding areas means that charging residential development fees are not a viable option for the City of Dryden as developers will target other communities instead (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Without development charges, the City must explore other funding opportunities and policy tools to support infrastructure development (Explorer Solutions 2022a). Despite infrastructure costs posing a burden, Dryden has 47 vacant lots in a subdivision ready for development and another 200 to 300 units that could be developed over 30 acres (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

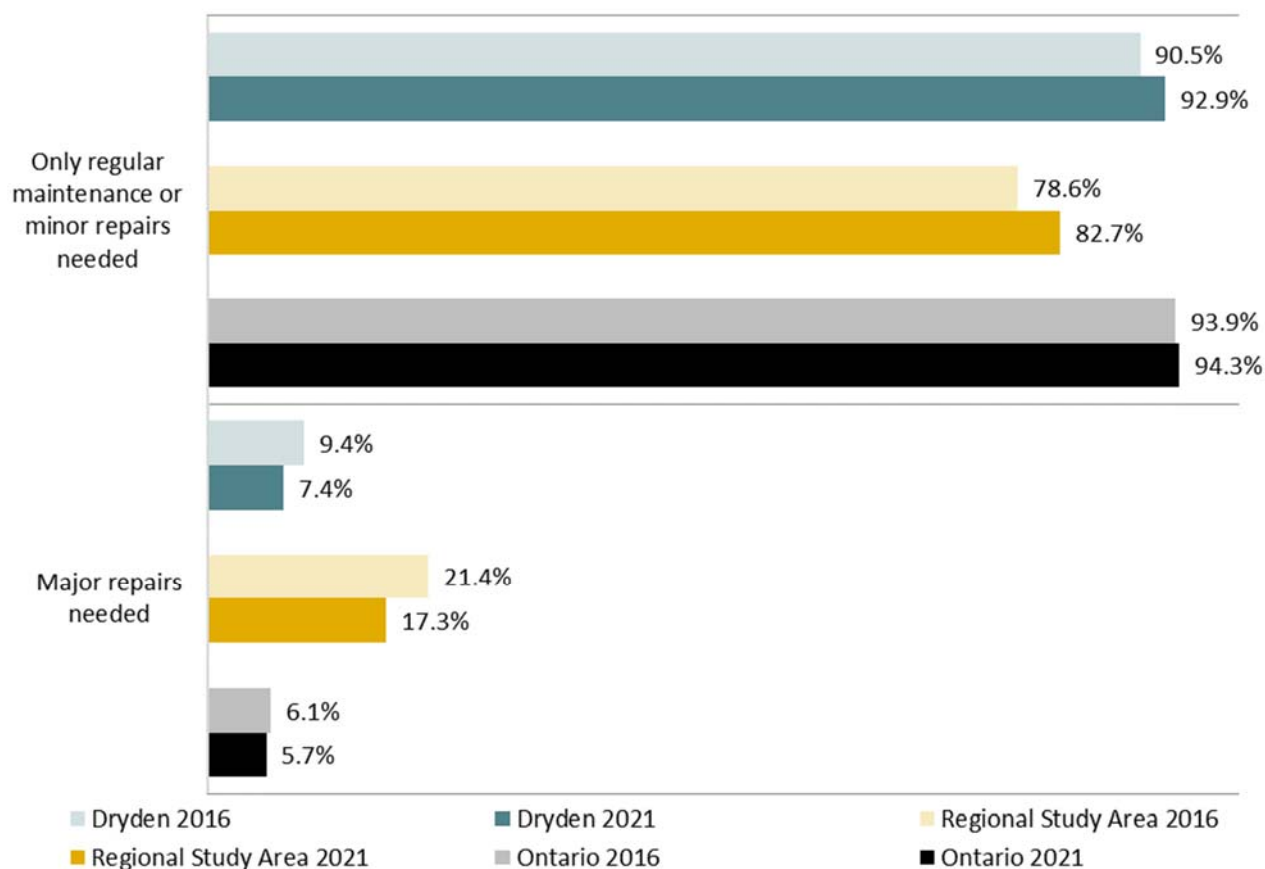
Dryden is preparing for its population to reach 11,762 by 2047 by using a variety of techniques such as (Quartek Group 2022):

- Efficient use of its vacant and occupied lands;
- Higher density development; and
- Redeveloping and building out underutilized properties.

From 2016 to 2021, Dryden saw a decrease in the number of dwellings that need major repairs. **Figure 2.4-7** details the percentage of dwellings requiring only regular maintenance and repairs compared to those that require major repairs. The 2016 Census reported that 315 dwellings in Dryden require major repairs, which has decreased to 245 in the 2021 Census. This has brought Dryden closer to the Canadian average of 5.7%, currently at 7.4% in Dryden, and well below that of the Regional Study Area at 17.3%. (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a).

In addition to the dwellings requiring major repairs, 50 dwellings in Dryden have been reported to be “not suitable” or too small for the number of persons in the household.

**Figure 2.4-7: Dwelling Conditions in Dryden, Regional Study Area, and Ontario**



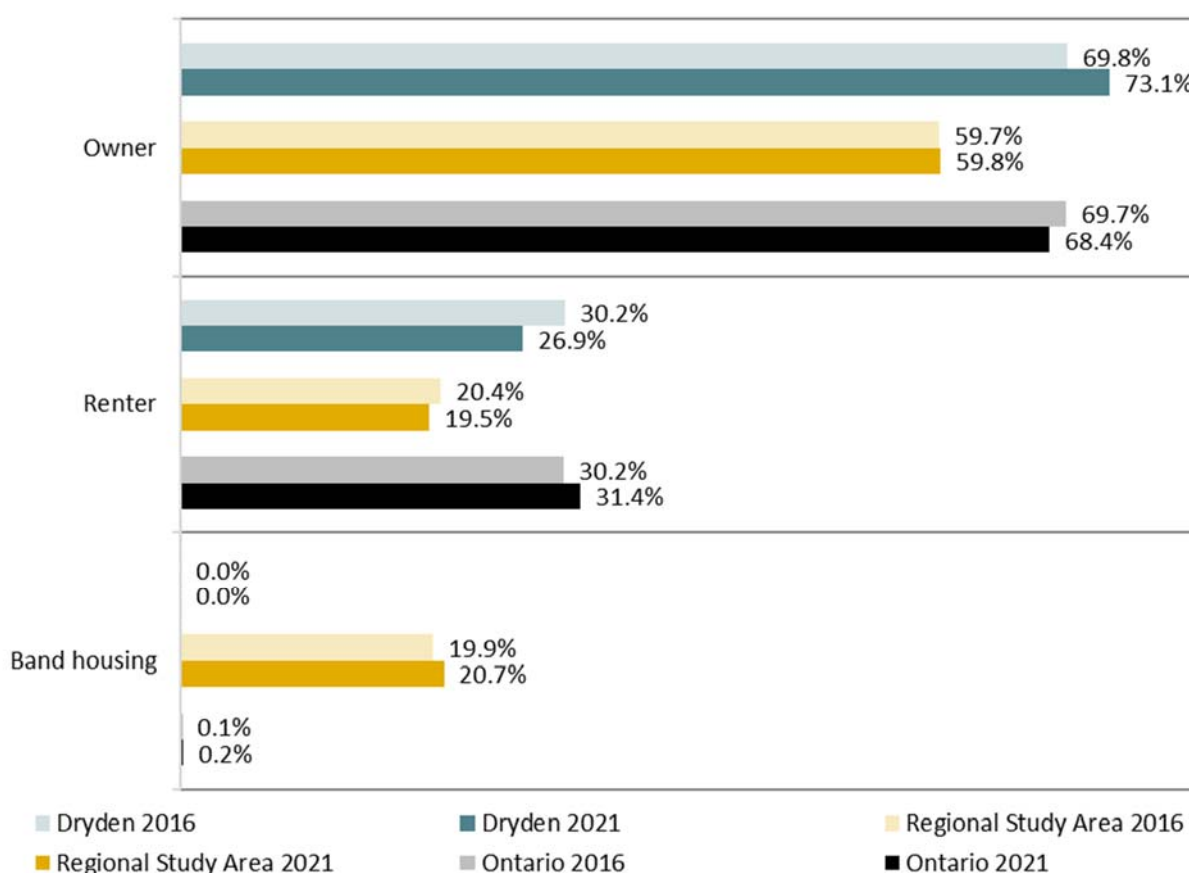
Source: Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.



### 2.4.7.4.2 Home Ownership

**Figure 2.4-8** provides a breakdown of the proportion of dwellings that are being rented in the community compared to those that are owned. The number of households that live in units they own has increased by 75, from 2,345 to 2,420. This differs from the number of rental units, which has decreased from 1,015 to 890, a drop of 125. The percentage of households that own their own housing units is higher than the Regional Study Area and Ontario averages, at 73.1% in 2021 increasing from 69.8% in 2016 (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a).

**Figure 2.4-8: Homes Rented vs. Owned in Dryden, Regional Study Area, and Ontario<sup>1</sup>**



**Source:** Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

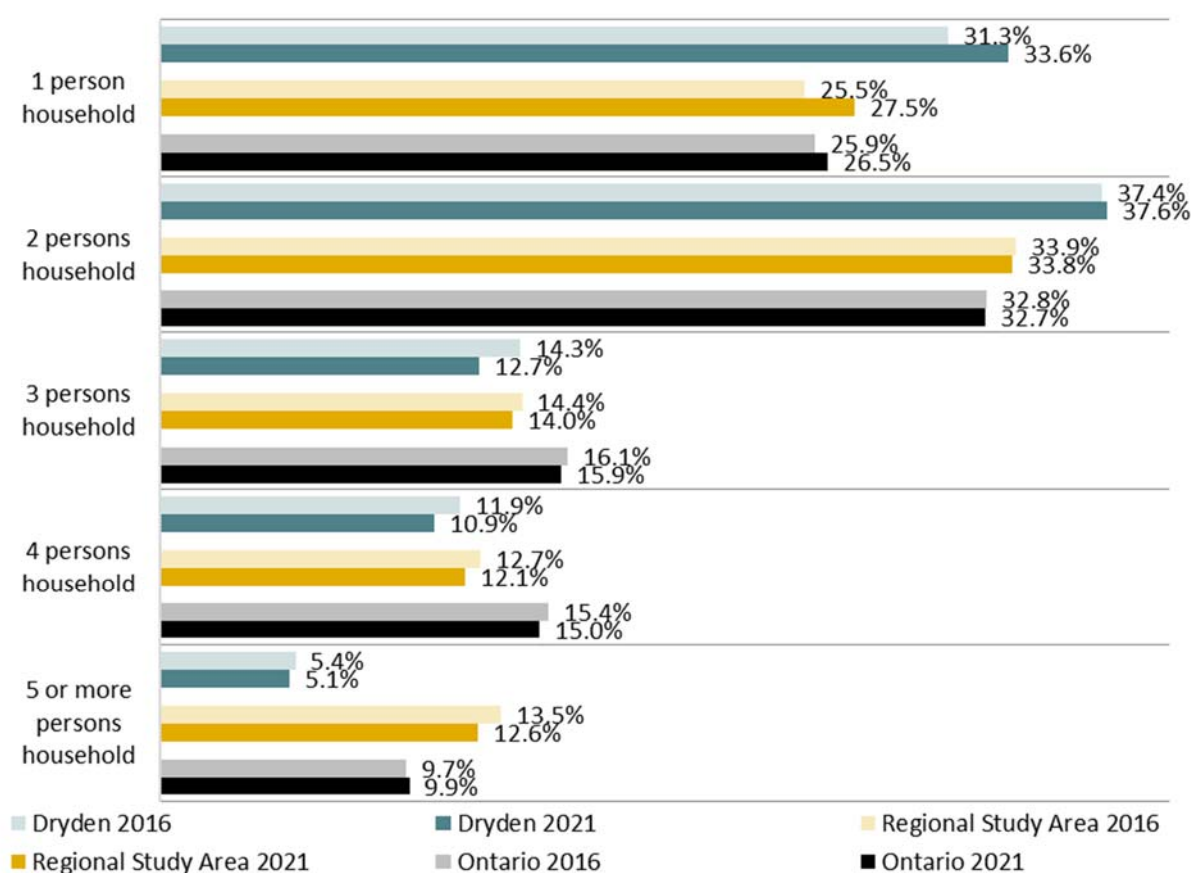
**Notes:** 1. Band housing is used to define dwellings on reserves. Band housing is a classification used for historical and statutory reasons because shelter occupancy on reserves does not follow usual classification by standard tenure categories (Statistics Canada 2022a).

### 2.4.7.4.3 Household Size

While the number of one person households has seen an increase from 2016 to 2021, up by 65 from 1,050 to 1,115, all other categories of households have decreased. **Figure 2.4-9** shows the

percentage of households by size ranging from one person to five or more persons. Dryden has a higher proportion of one and two person households compared to both the Regional Study Area and Ontario, making up a combined 72% of total households, compared to 62% in the Regional Study Area and 59% in Ontario. The percentage of other households, with three or more persons, is lower than that of the Regional Study Area and Ontario. The percentage of households with five or more persons is substantially lower, sitting at 5% in Dryden, half of the Ontario average of 10% and less than half of the Regional Study Area of 13% (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a).

**Figure 2.4-9: Household Sizes in Dryden, Regional Study Area, and Ontario**



**Source:** Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

#### 2.4.7.4.4 Affordable and Social Housing

Social housing in Dryden is administered by the KDSB, which manages six buildings in Dryden for non-seniors and four buildings for seniors, and Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services, which provides affordable housing for First Nation, Inuit, and Métis people living off-reserve (Explorer Solutions 2022a; KDSB 2023c; OAHS 2023). There has been ongoing effort by the KDSB to secure funding through the Green Municipal Fund and other federal programs to begin

developing new affordable housing units and upgrade existing affordable housing (Explorer Solutions 2022a; NWO Baseline Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). KDSB is also currently developing a 41-unit seniors housing complex in Dryden that will be opened in summer of 2023 (KDSB 2022a).

The City of Dryden's Official Plan highlights the need to encourage and incentivize affordable housing, assisted seniors' housing, and housing for special needs groups. Policies to encourage affordable housing are listed in the City of Dryden's Official Plan and include density bonusing; deferral or waiving of fees and charges; and more flexible zoning (Quartek Group 2022; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

#### 2.4.7.5 Machin

##### 2.4.7.5.1 Dwelling Counts and Conditions

The Municipality of Machin saw an increase of 20 occupied dwellings by usual residents between 2016 and 2021, for a total of 460 dwellings in 2021. Although there was a decrease in the number of occupied dwellings by usual residents in Machin, there was a slight increase in the total number of unoccupied, marginal, and seasonal dwellings from 158 dwellings in 2016 to 175 in 2021 (Statistics Canada 2017, 2022a). The type of dwellings that exists in Machin is mainly single- and semi- detached houses, increasing from 385 in 2016 to 415 in 2021. The number of apartments and row houses and other single-attached houses has remained constant. The amount of row houses has decreased by 20, from 25 in 2016 to 5 in 2021. (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a).

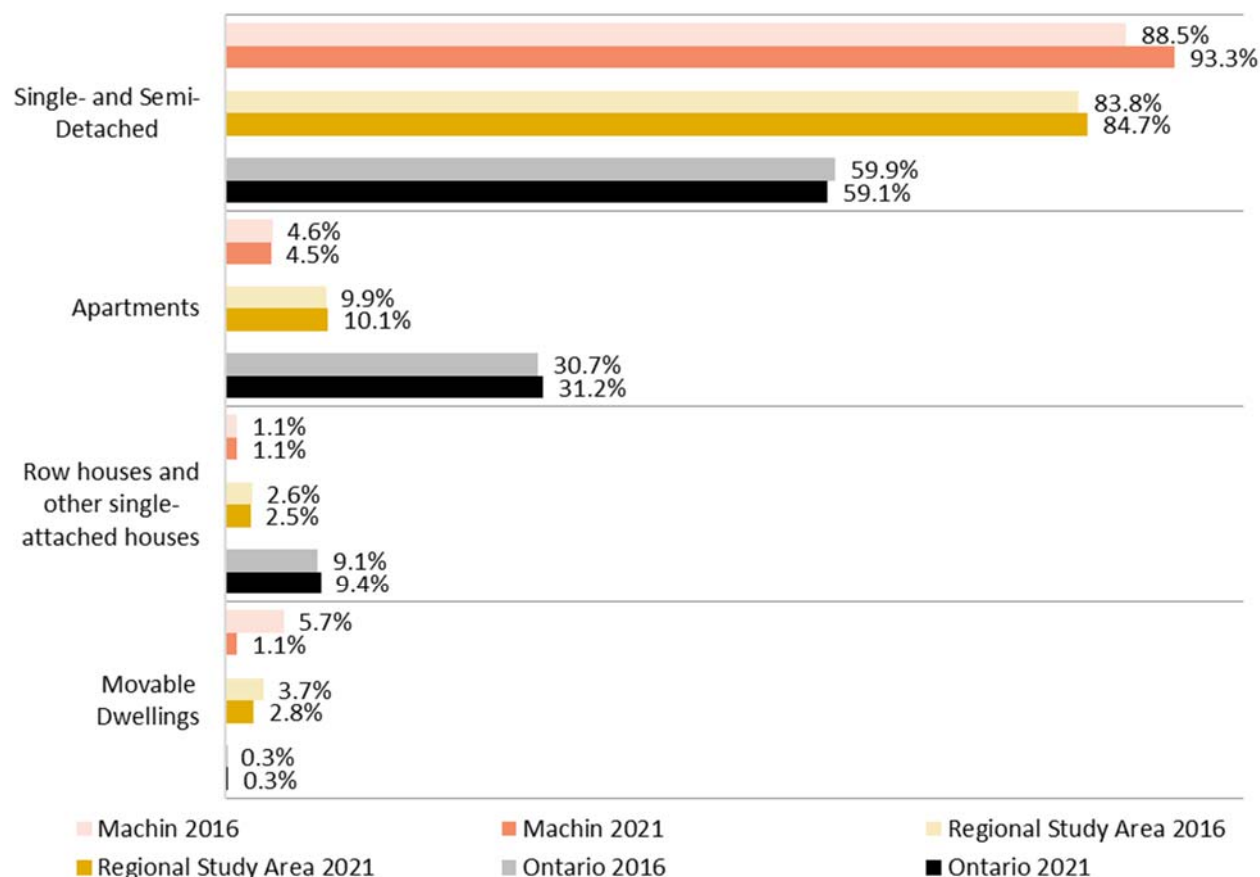
**Figure 2.4-10** details the percentage of dwellings by type. As of 2021, Machin has an above average proportion of single-attached houses at 93.3% compared to 84.7% in the Regional Study Area and 59.1% in Ontario. The remaining categories are lower than that of the Regional Study Area, with around half of the percentage of dwellings being apartments, at 4.5% compared to 10.1%; the percentage of row houses and other single-attached houses at 1.1% compared to 2.5%; and movable dwellings also at 1.1% compared to 2.8%. As the percentage of single- and semi-detached houses is much higher in Machin than the Ontario average, the proportion of apartments and row houses and other single-attached houses is much lower (Statistics Canada 2022a).

A lack of housing is one of the major issues Machin faces (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). During the period from 2016 to 2019, the Municipality issued 67 building permits (HSAL et al 2022b), the highest amount per capita compared to any other municipality in the Local Study Area. Machin has available land and has the capacity to handle an increase in population but is held back due to a number of issues. Much of the land that would be suitable for new housing is Crown land which is subject to regulations and permits in order to make it usable for future housing (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; HSAL et al 2022b). Other land is private land or farmland where there is limited interest in having property subdivided (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Machin would also require hard infrastructure, including a sewage plant, and roads, as well as social infrastructure such as health, education, and services (HSAL et al 2022b; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

With most housing in Machin being that of single- or semi-detached, concerns exist surrounding the availability of housing types suitable for elderly individuals and seniors. Previous reports

outlined the need for a second seniors complex as well as support for elderly residents to be able to remain living in their homes (Crupi Consulting 2017). The development of seniors housing has been stated as a way to possibly attract new residents and support growth (BDO 2020).

**Figure 2.4-10: Types of Dwellings in Machin, Regional Study Area, and Ontario**

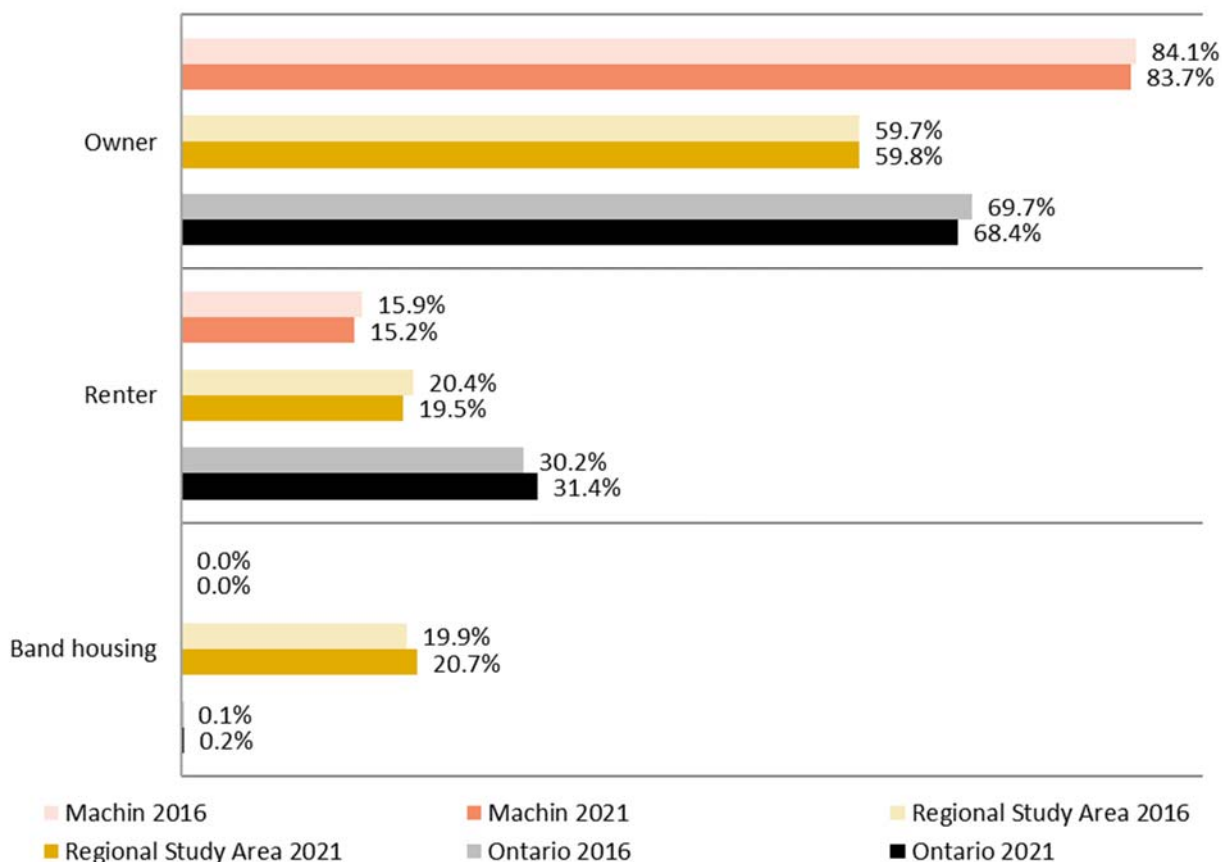


Source: Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

### 2.4.7.5.2 Home Ownership

The number of owned dwellings in Machin increased from 370 in 2016 to 385 in 2021 while the number of rental units remained flat at 70. **Figure 2.4-11** details the percentage of homes rented compared to those owned in Machin. Most households in Machin live in units that they own, with a lower percentage of rental units compared to the Regional Study Area and the Ontario average at 15.2% compared to 19.5% and 31.4% respectively (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a). The low number of available rental units has been noted as an impediment for those who would like to move to Machin (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Figure 2.4-11: Homes Rented vs. Owned in Machin, Regional Study Area, and Ontario<sup>1</sup>



Source: Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

Notes: 1. Band housing is used to define dwellings on reserves. Band housing is a classification used for historical and statutory reasons because shelter occupancy on reserves does not follow usual classification by standard tenure categories (Statistics Canada 2022a).

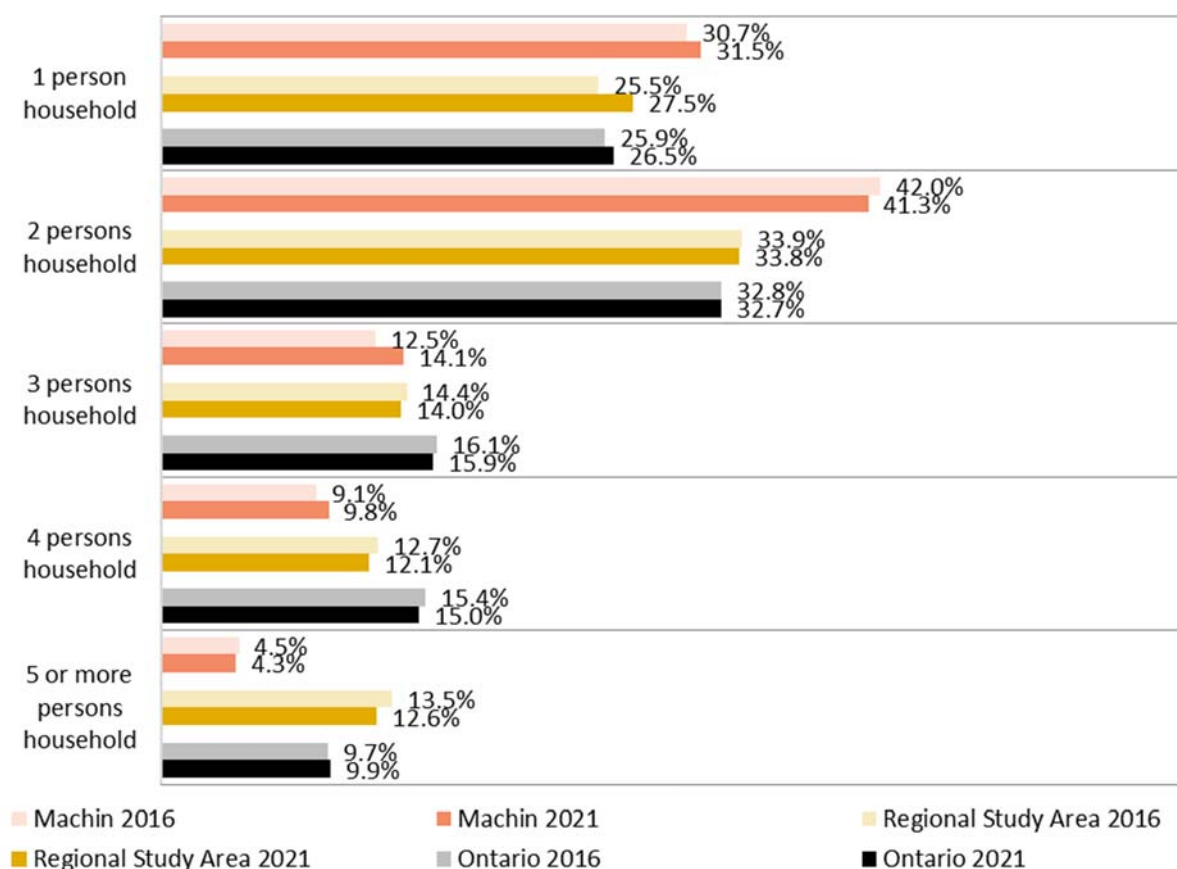
### 2.4.7.5.3 Household Size

The increase in households in Machin since 2016 has been spread across households of various sizes, ranging from one to four person households, while the number of households with five or more individuals has been maintained. The largest increases were seen in one person households and three person households, both of which saw an increase of ten households. Households with two persons and four persons saw an increase of five. Two person households are the largest category, making up 190 of the total 460 households (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a).

Figure 2.4-12 presents the distribution of households by number of individuals. The largest differences seen when comparing Machin to the Regional Study Area and Ontario are in the households with two and five or more individuals. As of 2021, Machin has a higher proportion of

households with two individuals at 41%, 7% higher than the Regional Study Area (34%) and 8% higher than the Ontario average (33%). Machin has a lower proportion of households with five or more individuals (4%), which is 9% lower than the Regional Study Area (13%) and 5% lower than the Ontario average (10%). The overall trend shows that when compared to the Regional Study Area and Ontario, Machin has a higher percentage of one or two person households and a lower percentage of households with three or more individuals (Statistics Canada 2022a).

**Figure 2.4-12: Household Sizes in Machin, Regional Study Area, and Ontario**

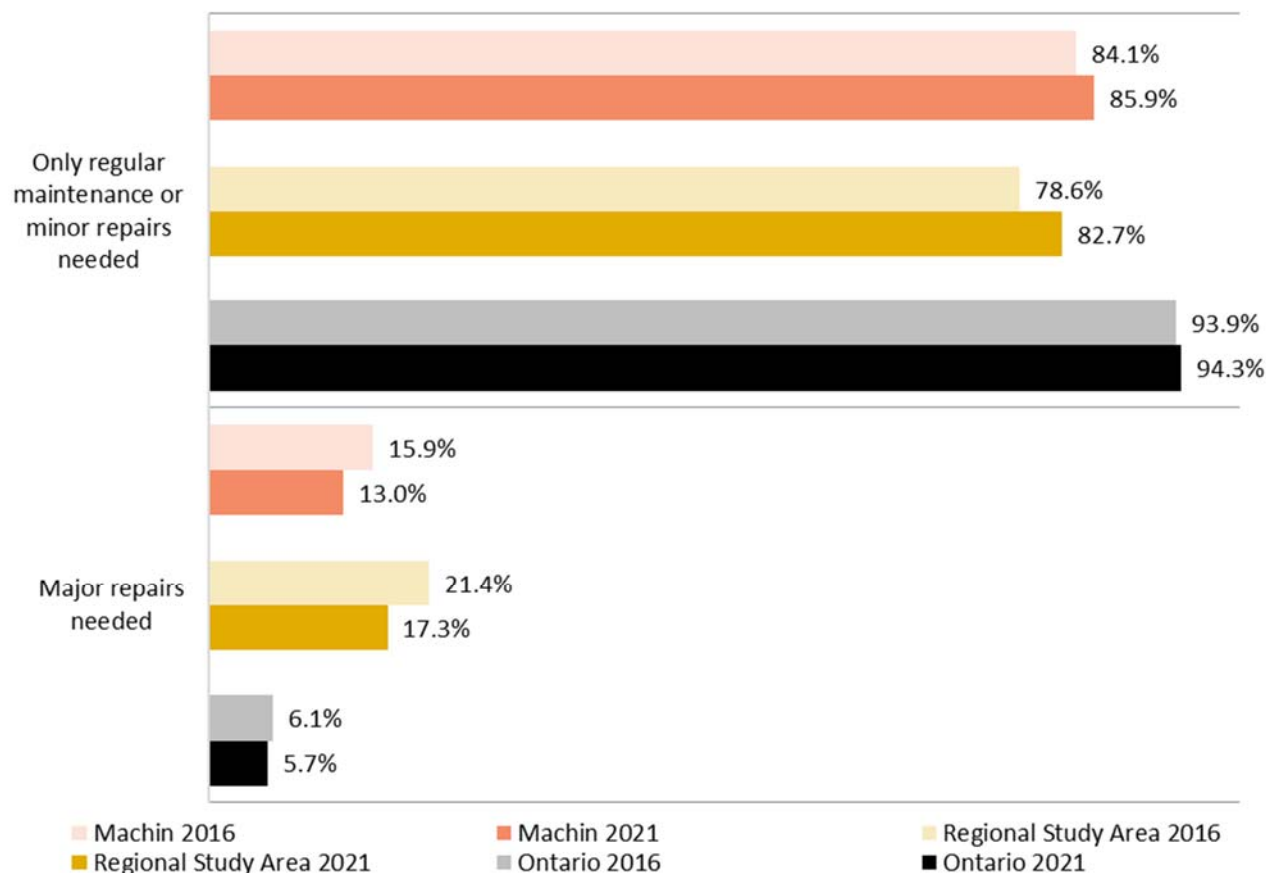


**Source:** Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

Most dwellings in Machin were reported to be in good condition in the 2021 Census; however, 60 dwellings, equalling 13.0% of total dwellings, require major repairs. This is a decrease of 10 since 2016. **Figure 2.4-13** details the condition of existing dwellings in Machin compared to that of the Regional Study Area and Ontario. The proportion of dwellings requiring major repairs in Machin is lower than that of the Regional Study Area, where 17.3% of dwellings require major repairs, but higher than that of the Ontario average which is currently sitting at 5.7%. As of 2021, all dwellings in Machin were acceptable, meaning that they are of an adequate size for the number of individuals living in them. (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a).



Figure 2.4-13: Housing Conditions in Machin, Regional Study Area, and Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

#### 2.4.7.5.4 Affordable and Social Housing

The Municipality of Machin Strategic Plan (2017) listed a lack of affordable housing and rental units as an issue the community faces (Crupi Consulting 2017). The KDSB operates both family and seniors housing in Machin with rent subsidized housing existing in Vermillion Bay and Eagle River (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

#### 2.4.7.6 Sioux Lookout

##### 2.4.7.6.1 Dwelling Counts and Conditions

As of 2021, the Municipality of Sioux Lookout has 2,340 occupied dwellings by usual residents, an increase of 320 dwellings from 2016. There was also an increase in the total number of unoccupied, marginal, and seasonal dwellings from 238 dwellings in 2016 to 307 in 2021 (Statistics Canada 2017, 2022a). Single- and semi-detached housing is the largest category of dwellings in Sioux Lookout and that which has seen the most growth. The number of single- and

semi-detached houses in Sioux Lookout has increased by 265 units from 1,455 in 2016 to 1,720 in 2021. The second largest category, apartments, has increased from 350 to 430. Out of the two other categories, the amount of row houses and other single-attached houses has decreased to 75 from 110, while the number of movable dwellings has increased from 95 to 105 (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a).

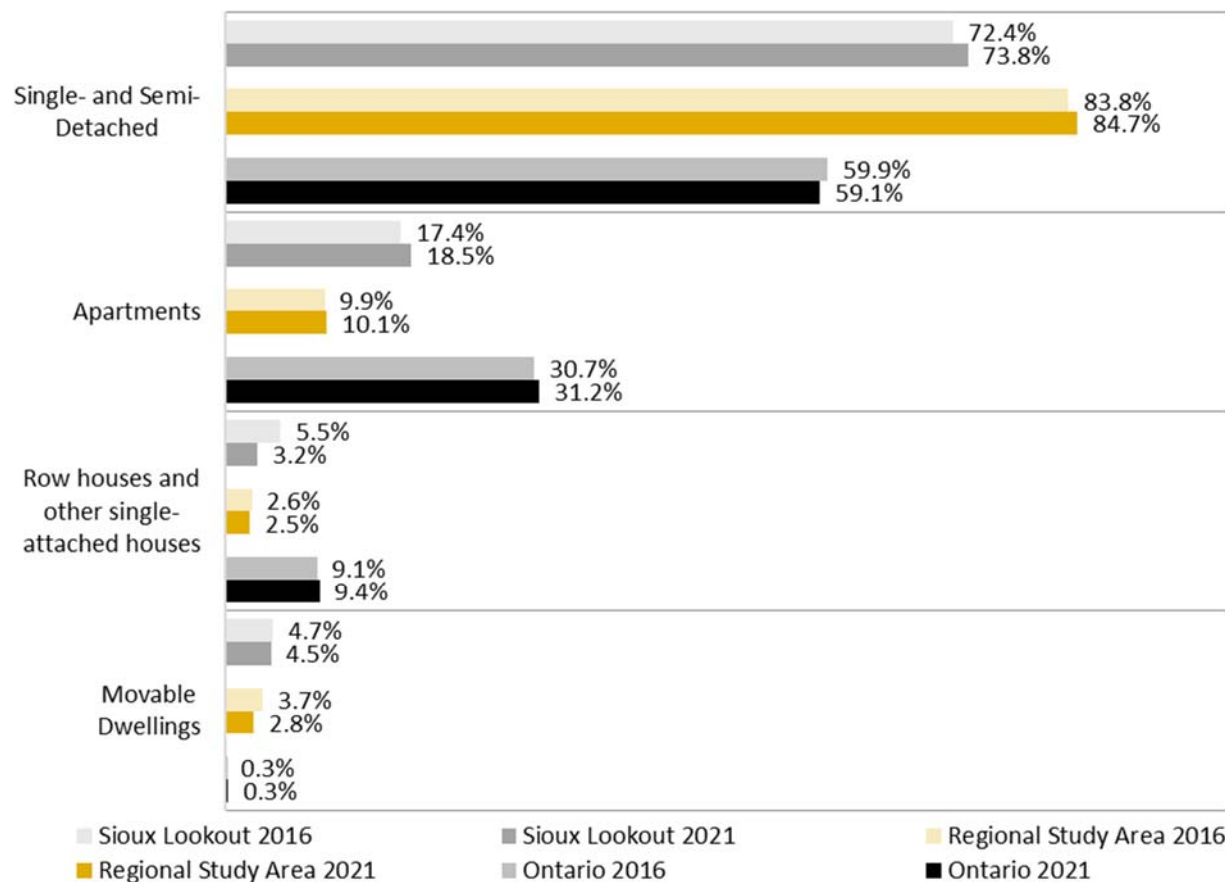
**Figure 2.4-14** presents the proportion of different types of dwellings in Sioux Lookout compared to those in the Regional Study Area and the Ontario average. As of 2021, Sioux Lookout has a lower percentage of single- and semi- detached homes compared to the Regional Study Area, at 73.8% compared to 84.7% but a higher percentage than the Ontario average, which sits at 59.1%. The proportion of dwellings in Sioux Lookout that are apartments are higher than that of the Regional Study Area, at 18.5% compared to 10.1%, while below that of the Ontario average of 31.2% (Statistics Canada 2022a).

Sioux Lookout has a larger portion of dwellings that are single- or semi-detached compared to the Local Study Area average. The Official Plan for Sioux Lookout highlights the need to provide a range of dwelling types that can allow residents of the Municipality to age in place or within their neighbourhood (Sioux Lookout 2018). The Municipality has established a target for the amount of low density, medium density, and high density housing in their settlement area (Sioux Lookout 2018).

Between 2016 and 2019, the Municipality issued 156 building permits, which may account for some of the increase in dwellings (HSAL et al 2022b). From 2020 to 2022 between 60 and 80 building permits were issues by the city, primarily for garages, decks, and some residential, commercial, or retail properties (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The majority of Sioux Lookout's housing growth has come from dwellings owned by individuals, which make up 310 of the 320 dwelling increase for a total of 1,560 owned dwellings. The remaining growth of 10 units comes from rentals, for a total of 780 units (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a).

Most houses that come up for sale are sold quickly. Approximately 10-12 houses are built each year including a few fourplexes and a couple duplexes (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Prices going up over the last few years have made development more challenging, with many homes being rented or sold before they go on the market (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Figure 2.4-14: Types of Dwellings in Sioux Lookout, Regional Study Area, and Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

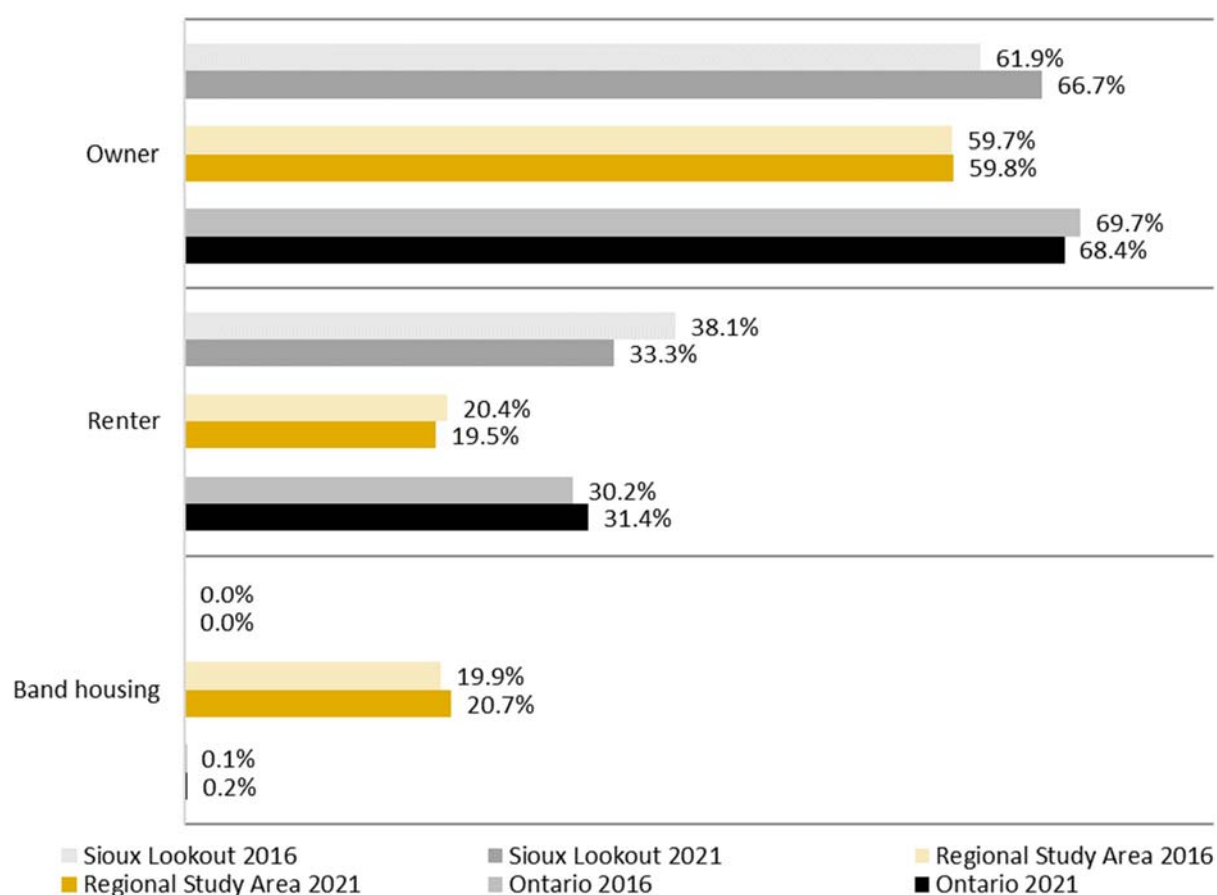
Sioux Lookout is currently experiencing a housing shortage, with some residents citing it as the largest problem the community faces (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). As a result, the community is experiencing high housing prices. There are a higher-than-average number of apartment buildings but a limited number of other residential units. Houses that do come to market sell quickly. A planned condominium development may incentivize some individuals currently living in houses to move, freeing up single family dwellings. While employment is available, a lack of housing is seen as an impediment to those who have found employment in the community and would like to move there. The community administration is actively trying to encourage housing and other development (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

### 2.4.7.6.2 Home Ownership

**Figure 2.4-15** details homeownership in Sioux Lookout. Sioux Lookout is unique compared to the Regional Study Area and Ontario in that it has a higher percentage of rental units. As of 2021, 33.3% of units in Sioux Lookout are rentals compared to 19.5% in the Regional Study Area and 31.4% in Ontario.

Despite having a higher-than-average proportion of homes being rented in the community, rental demand remains strong with units being rented out before they go to market. A lack of rental units is cited as being an issue in the community (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

**Figure 2.4-15: Homes Rented vs. Owned in Sioux Lookout, Regional Study Area, and Ontario<sup>1</sup>**



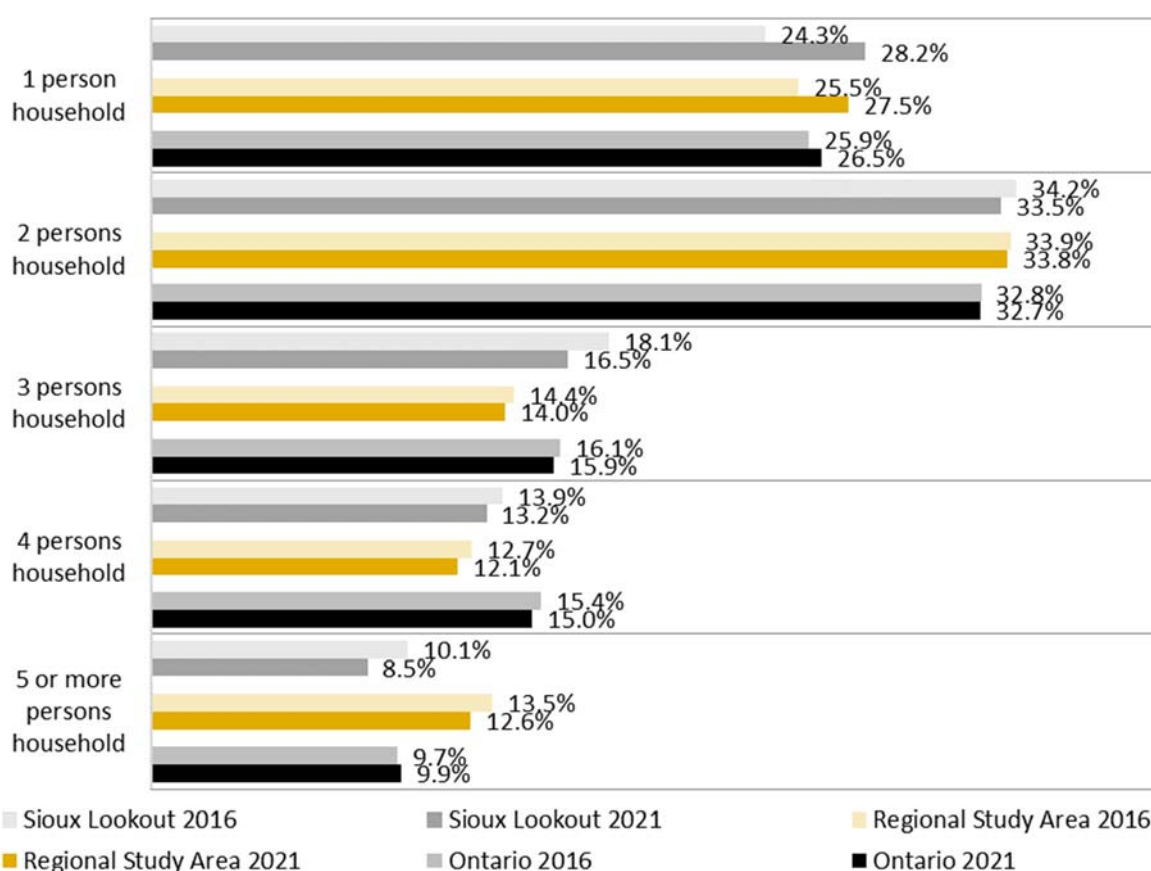
**Source:** Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

**Notes:** 1. Band housing is used to define dwellings on reserves. Band housing is a classification used for historical and statutory reasons because shelter occupancy on reserves does not follow usual classification by standard tenure categories (Statistics Canada 2022a).

### 2.4.7.6.3 Household Size

There has been an increase in households of all sizes in Sioux Lookout except for those with five or more persons, which has seen a decrease. One person households have seen the largest increase, growing from 490 households in the 2016 Census to 660 Households in the 2021 Census. The number of two person households has increased from 690 to 785. The distribution of household sizes in Sioux Lookout closely resembles that of the Regional Study Area and the Ontario average (**Figure 2.4-16**) (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a).

**Figure 2.4-16: Household Sizes in Sioux Lookout, Regional Study Area, and Ontario**

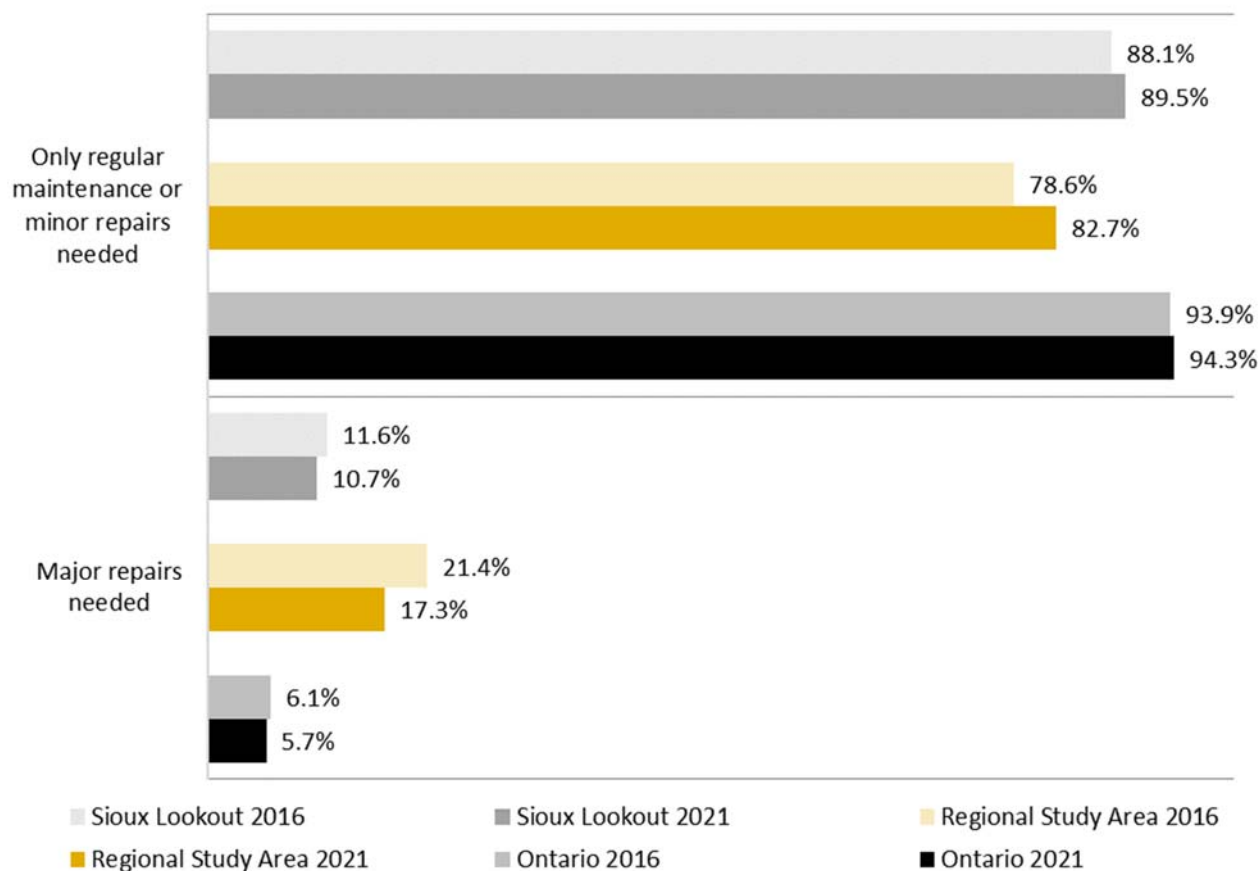


**Source:** Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

**Figure 2.4-17** provides the percentage of dwellings that require regular maintenance and repairs compared to those that require major repairs. While Sioux Lookout has seen an increase in housing, there has also been an increase in the absolute number of dwellings requiring major repairs. As of 2021, 250 dwellings, 10.7% of the total dwellings in Sioux Lookout, require major repairs, an increase of 15 from 2016. This is higher than the proportion of dwellings in Ontario needing major repairs, at 5.7%, but lower than the proportion of dwellings in the Regional Study Area requiring major repairs, at 17.3%. In addition to dwellings requiring major repairs, 105

households have reported living in “not suitable” houses, those that are too small for the number of persons in the household (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a).

**Figure 2.4-17: Dwellings Condition in Sioux Lookout, Regional Study Area, and Ontario**



**Source:** Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

#### 2.4.7.6.4 Affordable and Social Housing

A lack of affordable housing is cited as an issue in the community (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). According to Sioux Lookout’s community safety and well-being plan, housing is currently the top concern amongst Sioux Lookout residents. Strong population growth has led to a shortage of available housing, including seniors housing, in the Municipality. In the plan, 93% of respondents agreed that access to affordable housing is a challenge. The Municipality of Sioux Lookout has designated housing as an area of priority to increase housing in the community broadly as well as for those which are a part of “hard to house” populations (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2021). The Municipality of Sioux Lookout has also stated that it supports the location and integration of affordable housing within new or existing development (Sioux Lookout 2018).



KDSB operates family units, seniors housing, and supportive housing programs in Sioux Lookout (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Their infrastructure includes 11 buildings in Sioux Lookout geared towards singles, couples, or families, and four buildings geared towards seniors (KDSB 2023c). The KDSB is currently working on a 10 unit second-stage housing complex with the First Step Women's Shelter in Sioux Lookout (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

## 2.4.7.7 The LSB of Wabigoon

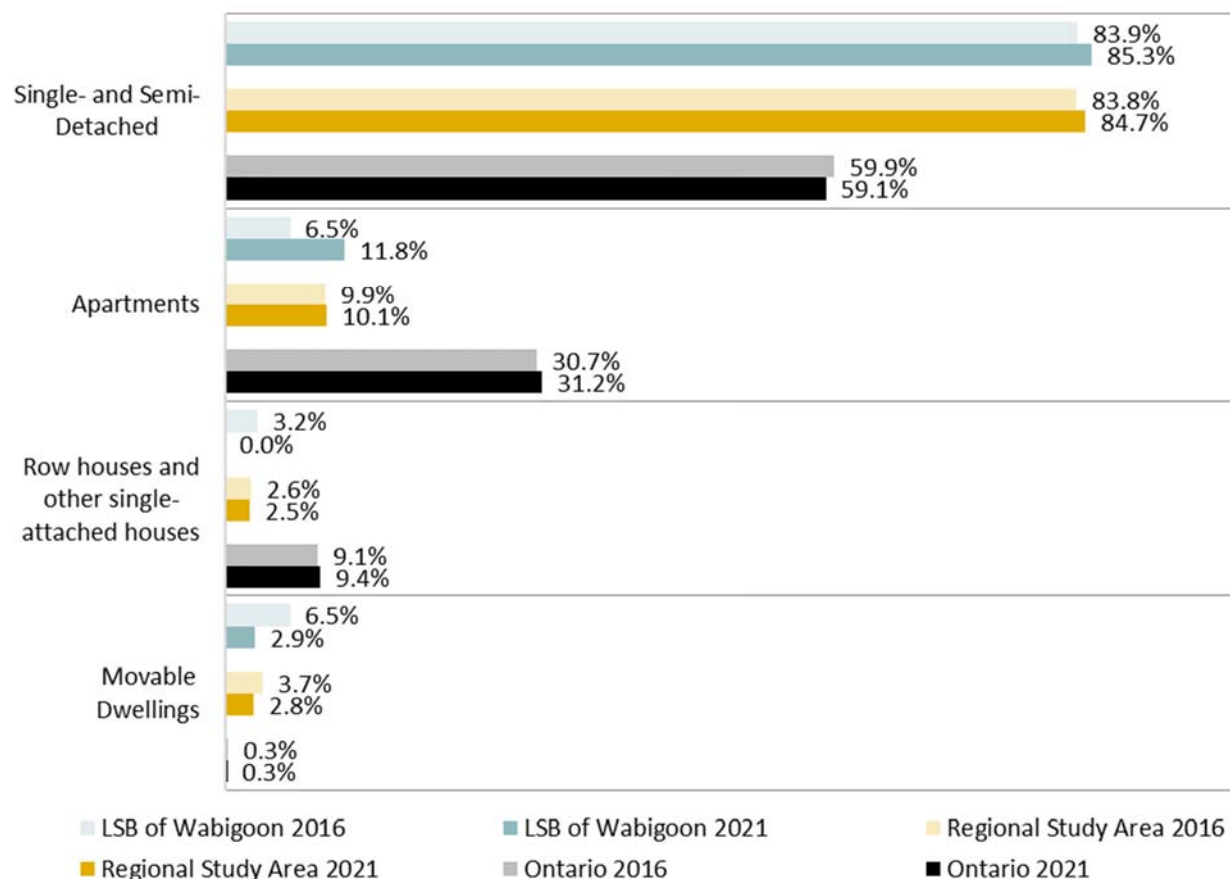
### 2.4.7.7.1 Dwellings Counts and Conditions

From 2016 to 2021 the number of occupied dwellings by usual residents in the LSB of Wabigoon increased from 150 to 245.<sup>30</sup> There was also a decrease in the total number of unoccupied, marginal dwellings, and seasonal dwellings from 42 dwellings in 2016 to 21 in 2021 (Statistics Canada 2017, 2022a). Given the small number of unoccupied, seasonal, and marginal dwellings that could potentially be occupied by seasonal residents or are not suitable for year-round occupancy. The vacancy rate in the LSB of Wabigoon is low. As shown in **Figure 2.4-18** the percentage of dwellings that are single- and semi-detached and apartments are similar to that of the Regional Study Area. As of 2021 in the LSB of Wabigoon, 85.3% of dwellings are single- and semi-detached compared to 84.7% in the Regional Study Area. This is much higher than the Ontario average of 59.1%. The number of apartments in the LSB of Wabigoon currently sits at 11.8%, compared to the Regional Study Area at 10.1%. This is lower than the Ontario average of 31.2%. The proportion of dwellings that are movable is also similar between the LSB of Wabigoon and the Regional Study Area, at 2.9% and 2.8% respectively, and higher than the Ontario average of 0.3%. No row houses or other single-attached houses were counted in the LSB of Wabigoon, while in the Regional Study Area they make up 2.5% of the occupied dwellings and in Ontario as a whole they make up 9.4%. (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a). A lack of available housing has been noted to be a problem in the community with a low amount of new building occurring (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

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<sup>30</sup> Note: 2021 Statistics Canada data for the LSB of Wabigoon shows substantial differences between the long form census data (25% sample data) and 100% sample data. Statistics Canada states that this discrepancy is likely due to the weighted estimates from the long form questionnaire (25% sample data) differing from the census counts (100% sample data). Census counts (100% sample) data are considered by Statistics Canada to be better quality, therefore the number of dwellings in the LSB of Wabigoon will be considered to be 245 for this report. For those statistics that are based off of the 25% sample data only percentages are reported, not actual values.

Figure 2.4-18: Types of Dwellings in the LSB of Wabigoon, Regional Study Area, and Ontario



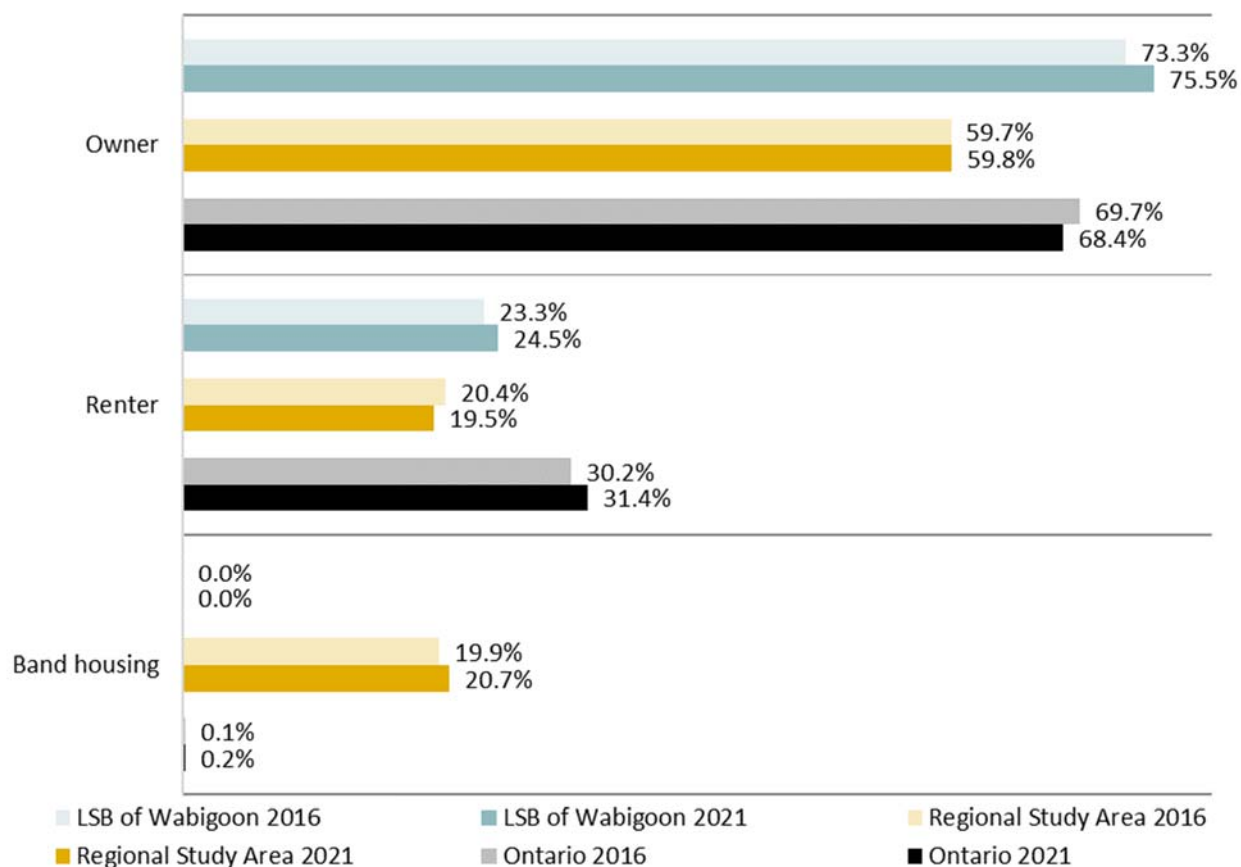
Source: Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

### 2.4.7.7.2 Home Ownership

The LSB of Wabigoon has seen increases in both rented and owned units, with the number of owned units increasing from 110 to 185 and rented units increasing from 35 to 60 (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a).

Figure 2.4-19 presents the proportion of homes being rented and owned in the LSB of Wabigoon. As of 2021, the LSB of Wabigoon has a higher percentage of rentals (24.5%) compared to the Regional Study Area average (19.5%). This is lower than the proportion of homes in Ontario that are being rented, which currently sits at 31.4%.

Figure 2.4-19: Homes Rented vs. Owned in the LSB of Wabigoon, Regional Study Area, and Ontario<sup>1</sup>



Source: Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

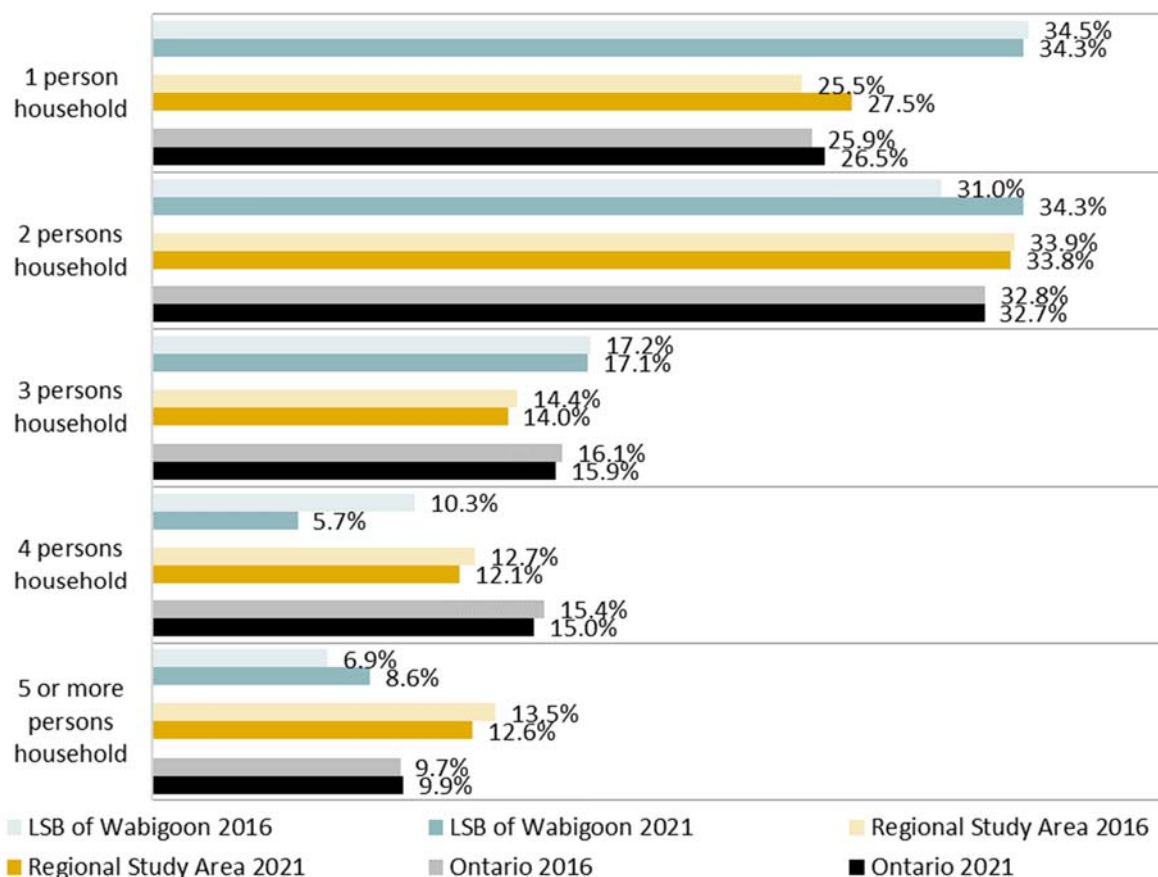
Notes: 1. Band housing is used to define dwellings on reserves. Band housing is a classification used for historical and statutory reasons because shelter occupancy on reserves does not follow usual classification by standard tenure categories (Statistics Canada 2022a).

### 2.4.7.7.3 Household Size

Figure 2.4-20 details the proportion of dwellings in the LSB of Wabigoon by household size. As of 2021, the percentage of one person and two person households in the LSB of Wabigoon is the same, at 34% in both. This puts the percentage of one person households in the LSB of Wabigoon higher than that of the Regional Study Area and Ontario, which are at 28% and 26%, respectively. The percentage of two person households in the LSB of Wabigoon is identical that that of the Regional Study Area and one percentage point higher than the Ontario average. The proportion of three person households is also higher than that of the Regional Study Area and the Ontario average, at 17% in the LSB of Wabigoon compared to 14% and 16% in the Regional Study Area and Ontario. The number of four and five or more person households, however, is lower in the LSB of Wabigoon as those categories make up 6% and 9% of the total number of

dwellings compared to 12% and 13% in the Regional Study Area and 15% and 10% as the Ontario average (Statistics Canada 2022a).

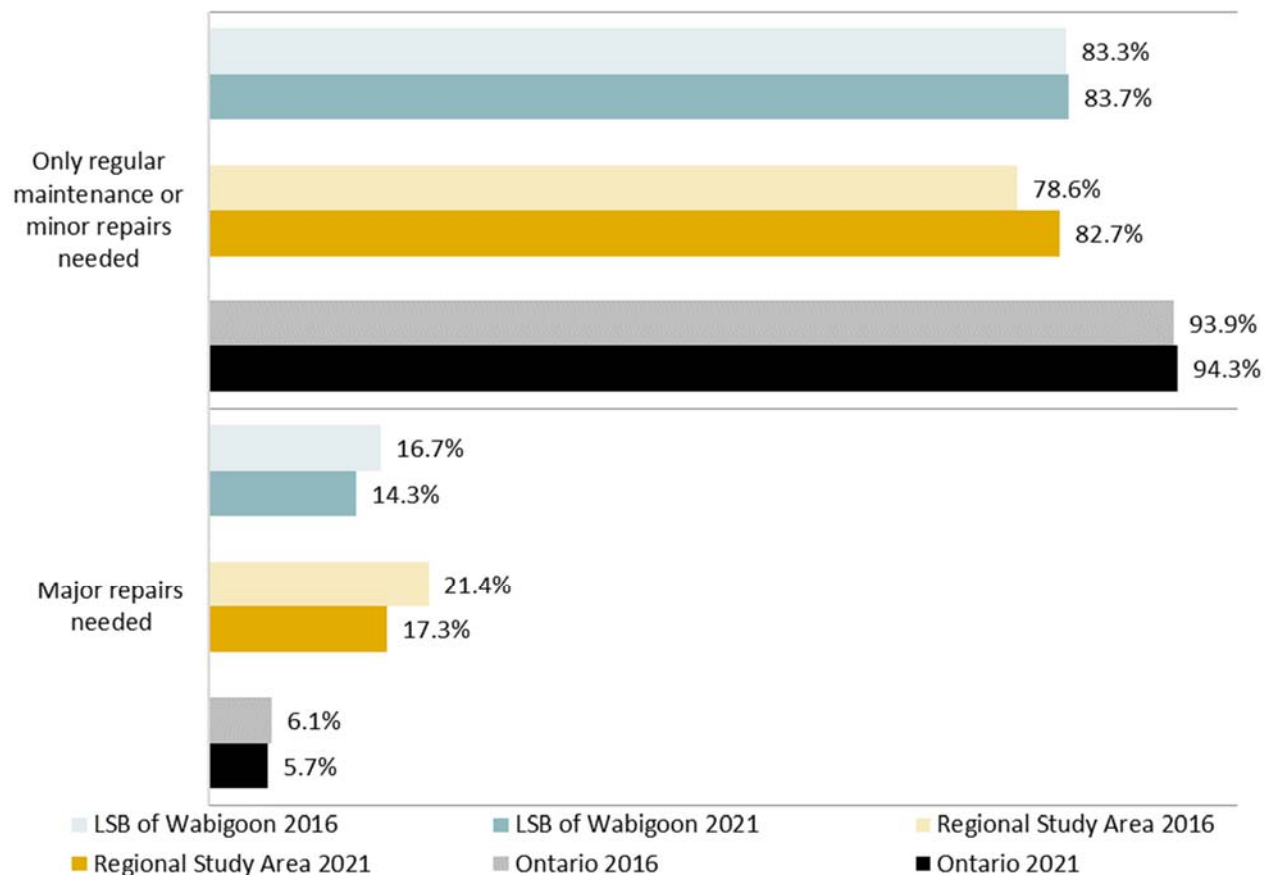
**Figure 2.4-20: Household Sizes in the LSB of Wabigoon, Regional Study Area, and Ontario**



**Source:** Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

Between 2016 and 2021 the LSB of Wabigoon saw an increase in dwellings requiring major repairs, up by 10 from 25 to 35. While the number of dwellings requiring major repairs increased, they make up a smaller percentage of total dwellings, down from approximately 16.7% to 14.3%. This can be seen in **Figure 2.4-21** which details the number of dwellings requiring only regular maintenance and repairs compared to those that require major repairs. As of 2021, the proportion of dwellings requiring major repairs makes up a small proportion of the total occupied dwellings compared to the Regional Study Area, where 17.3% of dwellings require major repairs, but is larger than the Ontario average, which is currently 5.7%. As of 2021, no households in the LSB of Wabigoon reported to be living in dwellings that are too small, or “not suitable” for their households (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2022a).

Figure 2.4-21: Dwelling Conditions in the LSB of Wabigoon, Regional Study Area, and Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada 2017 and 2022a.

#### 2.4.7.8 LSB of Melgund, Dinorwic, and Upsala

Dinorwic has approximately 125 to 130 houses in its community, with most of the housing being single family homes. The number of homes in the community has increased in the past 20 years. All of the houses that are in usable condition are currently occupied with no recent sales of any units. Approximately 8 to 10 rental properties exist in the community with some low-income housing that has been purchased from the KDSB (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Melgund has approximately 25 full time homes. In 2023 there were no homes available to be purchased in the community but there was land available for development (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Homes in Upsala are generally affordable and in suitable conditions but there is a lack of available housing for new residents (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). One challenge noted by interview participants was that if residents vacate their property and keep ownership of the land but fail to pay taxes, the land reverts to the Crown. Any homes

that are available for rent are currently being rented out (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

## 2.4.8 Temporary Accommodations

There are a range of temporary accommodations in the Local Study Area communities, including hotels and motels, RV parks, and campgrounds. Outfitting lodges are described in **Section 2.5.7**. Temporary housing and accommodations (e.g., shelters and transitional housing) are described in **Section 2.4.9**.

### 2.4.8.1 Ignace

Ignace is reported to have over 90 rooms available throughout its hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts. **Table 2.4-6** lists the temporary accommodations in Ignace and the number of rooms available in each.

**Table 2.4-6: Temporary Accommodations in and near Ignace**

Accommodation	Number of Rooms
North Woods Motor Inn	31 rooms
White Otter Inn	20 rooms
Westwood Motel	25 rooms
Lone Pine Inn <sup>1</sup>	15 rooms

**Source:** Amec Foster Wheeler 2017; Appraisal Group 2018; Ontario Parks 2023a.

**Notes:** 1. Lone Pine Inn has reduced capacity in the winter.

Ignace also has temporary accommodations at the Sandbar Provincial Park Campground which has 75 campsites (Ontario Parks 2023a).

### 2.4.8.2 Dryden

Dryden is reported to have over 400 rooms available throughout its hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts. The Dryden Capacity Study (Explorer Solutions 2022a) also notes that there is a lack of variety in accommodation options for temporary workers and visitors during certain periods throughout the year (i.e., hotels and motels). Currently, there are not enough locations to accommodate temporary worker and transient communities (KDSB 2023e). **Table 2.4-7** lists the temporary accommodations and number of rooms.



**Table 2.4-7: Temporary Accommodations in and near Dryden**

Accommodation	Number of Rooms
Best Western Dryden Hotel and Conference Centre	89 rooms
Comfort Inn Dryden	61 rooms
Holiday Inn Express	60 rooms
Kowality Motor Inn	30 rooms
Riverview Lodge	12 rooms
Chalet Inn Motel	16 rooms
Dryden Motel and Suites	5 rooms
Evening Star Motel	8 rooms
Hide Away Motel	14 rooms
Timberland Motel	24 rooms
Town and Country Motel	37 rooms
Bonny Bay Camp	8 cabins

**Source:** Appraisal Group 2018; Bonny Bay Camp n.d.a.; Explorer Solutions 2022a; and Ontario Parks 2023b.

Dryden also has temporary accommodations at the Aaron Provincial Park Campground (100 campsites), Birchland Trailer Park (30 RV sites and 28 campsites), Nature's Inn Tent and RV Park (25 RV sites and 6 campsites), and the Northwestern Tent and RV Park (40 RV sites and campsites). (CAA Club Group n.d.; CAA Club Group 2022; Explorer Solutions 2022a; Nature's Inn 2018; and Ontario Parks 2023b).

### 2.4.8.3 Municipality of Machin

Machin is reported to have over 25 rooms available throughout its hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts. **Table 2.4-8** lists the temporary accommodations in Machin and the number of rooms available in each.

### Table 2.4-8: Temporary Accommodations in Machin

Accommodation	Number of Rooms
Northside Motel	17 rooms
Andy Myers Lodge	15 cabins
Blue Lake Resource	5 cabins
Pine Grove Motel and Camp	11 rooms
Vermillion Bay Lodge	Rooms in main lodge and 8 cabins

**Source:** Amec Foster Wheeler 2017; Andy Myers Lodge 2023; Blue Lake Resort 2021; Canadian Real Estate Association (The) 2023; Vermillion Bay Lodge 2023.

Machin also has temporary accommodations at the Blue Bird Trailer and Campgrounds with 50 campsites (Campendium 2023). Temporary residents have been filling up seasonal residences which is reducing housing availability (KDSB 2023e).

#### 2.4.8.4 Municipality of Sioux Lookout

Sioux Lookout is reported to have over 185 rooms available throughout its hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts. **Table 2.4-9** lists the temporary accommodations in Sioux Lookout and the number of rooms available in each.

### Table 2.4-9: Temporary Accommodations in Sioux Lookout

Accommodation	Number of Rooms
Sioux Lookout Inn and Suites	59 rooms
Forest Inn and Conference Centres	42 rooms
Sunset Inn and Suites	61 rooms
Lamplighter Motel	25 rooms
Nutt's Country Cabin	4 cabins
Northumbrian Resort	7 cabins and 6 RV sites

**Source:** Forest Inn & Conference Centre 2018; Lamplighter Motel 2023; Northumbrian Resort. n.d.; Nutt's Country Cabins 2019; Ontario Parks 2023c; Sioux Lookout Inn and Suites 2023; Sunset Inn & Suites n.d.

Sioux Lookout also has temporary accommodations at the Abram Lake Resort and RV Park (8 cabins, 37 RV sites, and 40 campsites) and Ojibway Provincial Park (59 campsites) (Abram Lake 2022a; Abram Lake 2022b; Ontario Parks 2023c).

#### 2.4.8.5 Wabigoon Village

Wabigoon Village is reported to have at least five rooms available throughout its hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts. **Table 2.4-10** lists the temporary accommodations in Wabigoon Village and the number of rooms available in each.

**Table 2.4-10: Table Temporary Accommodations in Wabigoon Village**

Accommodation	Number of Rooms
Lang's Motel	5 rooms
Wabigoon Lake RV Park (campsite)	8 RV sites and 9 tent sites
Bear Paw Landing	5 cabins
Polar Star Lodge	16 cabins

**Source:** Bear Paw Landing 2023; Lang H., personal communication, June 27, 2023; Polar Star Lodge n.d.;

Wabigoon Village also has temporary accommodations at the Wabigoon Lake RV Park with 8 RV sites and 9 campsites (Wabigoon Lake RV Park n.d.b.).

#### 2.4.8.6 Dinorwic

The Pine Sunset Lodge is near Dinorwic and has 9 cabins and a bunkhouse that can sleep 14 people (Pine Sunset Lodge n.d).

#### 2.4.9 Social Services

This section describes social services in the Local Study Area communities along with a description of key regional service providers. Social services in the Local Study Area include childcare,<sup>31</sup> services for seniors, mental health and substance use services, Indigenous service providers, services to support gender-based violence (e.g., shelters and transitional housing), and child and adult protective services. Social services are key to supporting vulnerable populations, as these populations are often more reliant on the services provided (GBA+ Workshop 2023). Many key service providers, such as the KDSB, Tikinagan Child and Family Services, and FIREFLY operate across the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area.

Providing and accessing social services in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area is challenging. Service providers noted that they are operating at capacity and that the services offered are insufficient to meet demand. Their ability to provide adequate services is often hampered by difficulties recruiting staff, which is exacerbated by the lack of available housing in Local Study Area communities. Funding, and the broad catchment areas they must serve, are further barriers for social service providers in the region. Funding is not only insufficient, but also it is often inconsistent and earmarked for certain programs or concerns by funders that do not reflect the local situation. Many service providers operate throughout the region, which increases logistical challenges for service providers (GBA+ Workshop 2023; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

<sup>31</sup> Childcare encompasses various types of programs including nursery, daycare, and before and after school programs. Childcare operators and programs vary across Northwest Ontario and are often unique to community needs.

Clients also face challenges accessing services, including not knowing about service availability; changes in service provision; and a lack of transportation meaning access to some services is limited. These challenges disproportionately affect the more vulnerable populations in the community (GBA+ Workshop 2023; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Specific challenges in social services for the Local Study Area communities are described below.

### 2.4.9.1 Regional and Local Services Providers

Not all communities in the Local Study Area are home to the same suite of social services; however, many of the service providers serve multiple communities within the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area. A summary of the key service providers, the areas they serve, and the locations of relevant facilities are provided.

#### 2.4.9.1.1 Kenora District Services Board

The KDSB is a key provider of social services in the Regional Study Area. Formed in 1999 under the *District Social Services Administration Boards Act, 1990*, it is a service system manager for the Local Study Area communities and the Regional Study Area (Government of Ontario 1990f). The delivery model for KDSB focuses on an integrated approach for clients. Social services are often developed independently to address a targeted need. The integrated approach seeks to support the social and economic well-being of clients through coordination with multiple supports and services (KDSB 2022a). Integrated social services include community housing, early years services, employment and financial services, and emergency medical services. Community housing is described for each Local Study Area community in **Section 2.4.7**, employment is described in **Section 3.2**, and emergency medical services are described in police and emergency services in **Section 2.4.4**.

Childcare<sup>32</sup> and early years programs are legislated by Ontario's *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (Government of Ontario 2014d). The KDSB is the primary provider of childcare in the Regional Study Area, with early learning and care programs in Ignace, Dryden, Machin, and Sioux Lookout. However, the KDSB does not directly provide childcare. Service agreements are put in place with licensed childcare operators throughout the district (KDSB n.d.a). The KDSB has also partnered with the provincial EarlyON child and family programs. The EarlyON child and family program offers free support services and programs to parents, caregivers, and children under six years of age. EarlyON programs vary across the region, as they are tailored to the needs of the community they are located in. Qualified early childhood professionals help families and caregivers make personal connections and access a network of resources (City of Toronto n.d.). Families and caregivers may attend any EarlyON program across the Kenora District.

The KDSB office headquarters is in Dryden and the full suite of services are provided in the City. Residents from surrounding communities, such as the Municipality of Machin, also travel to Dryden to access KDSB services (NWO Baseline Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The KDSB has a case manager in the Ignace office to help clients (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The KDSB also has an integrated social services office in Sioux Lookout, operating childcare centres and a sexual assault and counselling centre in the

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<sup>32</sup> "Childcare" encompasses various types of programs (i.e., nursery, before school program, after school program, etc.)

community, as well as supporting (i.e., funding) other organizations in Sioux Lookout for Indigenous childcare and the two EarlyON centres located in the Municipality (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). KDSB does not currently offer full-time childcare in Ignace or Machin but has plans for expanding services there. A primary challenge in expanding childcare services in the region is having access to qualified staff (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

According to the KDSB 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, mental health and addictions are a growing issue through the region. Existing supports and services are insufficient to address the need, particularly for youth. The demand for mental health and addictions services further strains other services such as EMS and policing.

#### **2.4.9.1.2 Kenora-Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services**

Kenora-Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services is a non-profit community organization mandated under the *Child and Family Services Act, 1990* and funded by the Government of Ontario to protect children and youth in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts from abuse and neglect (KRRCFs n.d.; Government of Ontario 1990f). The Kenora-Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services main office is located in Kenora, with local offices in Dryden and Sioux Lookout (of the Local Study Area).

The Kenora-Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services provides counselling, teaching, and support programs to children and youth aged 18 years and younger and also work with families to provide guidance and parenting techniques. The Kenora-Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services also works with community partners to ensure the families they work with have access to other programs and services in the community to meet their needs (KRRCFs n.d.).

The agency is involved in several in-home and extended support, care, counselling, and training. They also work and train foster parents, support/counsel adoptive parents, assist adolescents with emancipation/independence, and assist with child placement and investigations.

#### **2.4.9.1.3 FIREFLY**

FIREFLY provides children's services in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts, delivering a variety of programs and services to support children's well-being in northwestern Ontario, including child development programs, youth justice services, youth mental health services, autism support, and foster care treatment (WSP 2022c). With services in both Dryden and Sioux Lookout, FIREFLY works to provide services that meet the diverse needs of communities in northwestern Ontario (Firefly n.d.a).

FIREFLY offers counselling and therapy to children and youth and also coordinates treatment plans. In 2022, FIREFLY had 139 full-time staff, 22 part-time staff, 19 casual staff, and 13 temporary staff. As of March 2022, 62 staff worked in FIREFLY's developmental services department, 39 in the mental health department, 36 in the child care department, 16 in the coordinated services department, 12 in the early years department, and 30 in the administration department. In 2022, 1,399 referrals were made for Child and Youth Developmental Services and 1,038 referrals were made for Children and Youth Mental Health Services (Firefly 2022). FIREFLY's peak referral month saw 264 referrals; approximately 66 referrals per week and nearly 13 referrals per day (Firefly 2022). FIREFLY's Dryden and Sioux Lookout locations provided

mental health services to 173 and 114 clients over the 2021-2022 period, respectively (Firefly 2022).

FIREFLY programs offered in Dryden and Sioux Lookout include (Firefly n.d.b):

- Child development services for families, children, and youth diagnosed with a developmental delay, disability, or are at risk of development disability;
- Stop Now and Plan (“SNAP”) program, for children ages 6 to 11 and their families to help with impulse control, emotion regulation, and problem solving;
- Treatment foster care to support families whose home is designated as a treatment foster home; and
- Youth justice committee provides an alternative to formal court with a focus on restorative justice approaches.

#### **2.4.9.1.4 Tikinagan Child and Family Services**

Incorporated in 1984, Tikinagan Child and Family Services (“TCFS”) is one of the first Indigenous-controlled agencies in Canada, as well as Canada’s first agency to have jurisdiction over both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children. TCFS is also Ontario’s first Indigenous agency to be recognized as a child protection organization, along with Payukotayno Family Services (TCFS n.d.a). TCFS provides child and family services to 30 First Nation communities and has an agreement with Kenora-Rainy River District Child and Family Services to provide child protection services to families in Dryden, Ignace, and Sioux Lookout, along with other municipalities in the Regional Study Area. TCFS’ service model is led by a belief in community responsibility to protect children and families (TCFS n.d.c). TCFS services are focused on child protection, prevention, foster parenting, and adoption, working to help children and their families stay together when possible (TCFS n.d.b).

TCFS employs over 500 staff across 35 locations in northwestern Ontario, many of which are based in First Nations communities. According to TCFS’ 2021-2022 Annual Report, TCFS supported 116 youth over the age 18 years old, 1,061 families, and 347 children to go home to their families (TCFS 2022).

#### **2.4.9.1.5 Community Living Dryden-Sioux Lookout**

Since the 1950s, Community Living Dryden-Sioux Lookout (“CLDSL”) has been partnering with families and individuals living with intellectual disabilities to support their independent living in the Dryden and Sioux Lookout areas. Ignace is also part of CLDSL’s catchment area, however CLDSL does not currently support any individuals living in the Township (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Through advocacy, mentorship, and collaboration, CLDSL works to foster a sense of community belonging for those living with intellectual disabilities (CLDSL n.d.; GBA+ Workshop 2023). CLDSL provides several programs ranging from clinical services to community inclusion programs, to employment and residential services in order to support independent living (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). In the 2021-2022 fiscal year, CLDSL supported 31 people with their shared living services, 43 people in supported independent living, 94 people with community participation supports, 11 people with the family home program, 19 people with



employment supports, and 18 caregivers and 12 children with the healthy generations program (CLDSL 2022).

#### **2.4.9.1.6 Canadian Mental Health Branch of Fort Frances**

The Canadian Mental Health Branch of Fort Frances employs approximately 70 people across the following services: administration, geriatric mental health, community support, psychogeriatric resource consultants, peer support, and safe bed programs (CMHA n.d.). The Canadian Mental Health Branch of Fort Frances mission is to advocate and educate, while providing residents of the Kenora-Rainy River Districts with client-centered, recovery-based services (CMHA n.d.). Within the Local Study Area, service offices are located in Dryden and Sioux Lookout. A mobile crisis line is available from 7 a.m. to 2 a.m.

The Canadian Mental Health Branch of Fort Frances district mental health for older adults program offers community-based services to seniors 60 years of age and older who are living in both community and facility-based environments (i.e. personal residence, supported housing, chronic/acute care, and long-term care) with dementia or other serious mental illness, such as clinical depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, Alzheimer's Disease, and/or mood disorders. Clients can access a number of programs that provide cognitive screening, therapy, counselling, care/treatment, referral/advocacy, education, and community outreach (CMHA n.d.).

#### **2.4.9.1.7 Anishinaabe Abinoojii Family Service**

Anishinaabe Abinoojii Family Service ("AAFS") administers child protection and prevention services to 14 First Nations and five communities in the northern region of Treaty #3 Territory, including the communities of Dryden, Wabigoon Village, and Sioux Lookout (AAFS n.d.a). AAFS has an Elder's council consisting of 28 Elders from the communities served (AAFS 2021). The first prevention services program began in 1986 (Anishinaabe Abinoojii Family Services n.d.b). The Anishinaabe Abinoojii Family Service's mission is to protect and support the well-being of children through services including cultural programming, caregiving, and customary care, while also supporting their families with preservation and prevention services. As of March 31, 2021, AAFS supported 210 children in care through 75 alternative care homes. In the month of March 2021, AAFS served 46 families through their family preservation monthly service and 29 youth through their monthly youth supports (AAFS 2021).

#### **2.4.9.1.8 Paawidigong First Nations Forum**

Paawidigong First Nations Forum is a not-for-profit organization established in 1996 that provides culturally-appropriate health programs and social services to First Nations communities in the Dryden Area, including Eagle Lake First Nation, Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation, Wabauskang First Nation, Lac Seul First Nation, and Lac Des Milles Lacs First Nation (PFNF n.d.). Programs and services through Paawidigong First Nations Forum focus on Indigenous healing and wellness, Indigenous Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, community health, home and community care nurse, diabetes nurse and diabetes education program, mental wellness, and mental health and addictions (PFNF n.d.).

#### **2.4.9.1.9 Métis Nation of Ontario – Healing and Wellness Branch**

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) consists of approximately 400 staff members and has offices located across northwestern Ontario, with an office in Kenora in the Regional Study Area and an

office in Dryden in the Local Study Area (MNO 2022). There are over 29,000 citizens of the MNO. The MNO's Healing and Wellness Branch works with Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners to provide community-based and culturally appropriate programs and services to support the mental, physical, and emotional needs of Métis individuals living in the Dryden area, including home care supports, case management services, friendly visits, and transportation for appointments within Dryden (NorthWest Healthline 2022; MNO n.d.). Healing and wellness programs/services offered include mental health and addictions, victim services, justice services, community support, infant well-being, family well-being, cancer care, diabetes, and more (MNO n.d.). Over 2021-2022, MNO served over 1,200 clients with their mental health and addictions services, with an average of 65 referrals per month and a wait time of 3 months for non-urgent service. MNO supported over 674 clients with their restorative justice programming (MNO 2022).

#### **2.4.9.1.10 Northwest Ontario Métis Child and Family Services**

Northwest Ontario Métis Child and Family Services ("NWOMCFS") has several locations in northwestern Ontario, with their head office located in Kenora in the Regional Study Area and a branch office located in Dryden in the Local Study Area. NWOMCFS provides prevention services, family preservation, youth services, cultural services, and repatriation services. NWOMCFS' mission is to advocate and facilitate healing and reconciliation for Métis citizens, offer individual and family programming and child safety services that are rooted in and delivered with care and respect, and work collaboratively with other social service agencies and government partners at various levels to ensure positive outcomes for Métis children, youth, and families in northwestern Ontario (NWOMCFS n.d.).

### **2.4.9.2 Ignace**

#### **2.4.9.2.1 Childcare Services**

There is currently one licensed childcare provider in Ignace. There is an unmet need for licensed full-time childcare in Ignace, as well as after school care and services that accommodate shift work (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; Ignace EarlyON Child and Family Centre Parent Focus Group 2023). Further, it is likely that demand for full-time childcare will increase as a result of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) agreement, which reduces the cost of childcare to an average of \$10 per day for children under the age of six (SMM and InterGroup 2022; Government of Ontario 2022g). In addition to lowering fees for licensed childcare operators enrolled in the system, the new CWELCC system aims to increase access to childcare options by creating approximately 86,000 new licensed spaces by 2026 and support the expansion of childcare spaces in the regions and communities that need it most (Government of Ontario 2022g).

During the Ignace EarlyON Child and Family Centre Parent Focus Group 2023, several challenges were identified as a result of the unmet childcare needs in Ignace. Parents noted that lack of access to childcare affects both the children and parents. Parents would like their children to be able to spend the day outside of the home and to socialize with other children, which could also help relieve the stress and isolation that comes with being a stay-at-home parent. Stay-at-home parents have found it difficult to go back to work without full-time childcare support and often find unlicensed childcare (i.e., babysitters) unaffordable, as costs range from \$10-\$15 per hour. Parents further noted frustration with a new childcare facility that was supposed to open in 2020 and the lack of communication around that project. Lack of childcare has a disproportionate impact on mothers, who are often the primary caregivers of children (Sharma, Chakrabarti, &

Grover 2016). Limited childcare options inhibit mothers who need or want to work from being able to do so (Havens 2023).

Capacity constraints in childcare is an issue across the region and province; according to Ontario's Early Years and Child Care Annual Report 2022, it was estimated that there are enough spaces in licensed child care centres for 24% of children in Ontario<sup>33</sup> (Government of Ontario 2023m).

### **Ignace Nursery School**

Currently, the Ignace Nursery School is the only licensed childcare provider in the community but does not offer full-time care.

The Ignace Nursery School is located within the Crossroads Facility. Ignace Nursery School's physical space is in good condition, and the school also has an outdoor play area that is open to the public. The Ignace Nursery School operates from September to June for four half days per week (Monday and Wednesday 1:00 PM to 3:30 PM and Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM) (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Through partnership with the KDSB, the Ignace Nursery School is licensed under the Ontario Ministry of Education Childcare Licensing System for 14 children, ages 2 to 4 years, per session. The school employs two part-time staff and a part-time supervisor. The cost for one child per session/day is \$12, however the Nursery School has signed on for the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care system to provide their service at \$10 per session/day (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Each program is staffed with either registered early childhood educators and/or individuals in the process of attaining their early childhood education diploma. Hiring staff is noted as a servicing gap (WSP 2022c). The Ignace Nursery School is operating under capacity; however, this is due to its limited hours of operation (half days).

The Ignace Nursey School Parent Cooperative also oversees the EarlyON drop-in program (WSP 2022c). EarlyON employs one-part time staff and a part-time supervisor (KDSB n.d.c).

### **Childcare at Ignace Public School**

There are currently no licensed full-time childcare services in Ignace. The lack of full-time childcare is one of the primary gaps in the community's social services. However, under the auspices of the KDSB and in partnership with the Keewatin Patricia District School Board, the Ignace Public School underwent an architectural analysis in fall 2022 for the potential of a full-day childcare program and after-school program (WSP 2022c). Results of the analysis determined that the previous high school library would be ideal for a new childcare facility. A full-day program at the school would be for a range of ages ("family age grouping"), as the Township is not large enough to support programs for individual age groups. The proposed full day childcare program would be licensed as a family mixed grouping for 13 children under 12 years of age.

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<sup>33</sup> The estimation does not account for children cared for in homes contracted with licensed home child care agencies. All the "Percentage of children aged 0–12 for whom there are licensed child care spaces" are updated with the 2022 Summer child population projection data, Ontario Ministry of Finance (Government of Ontario 2023m).

#### 2.4.9.2.2 Services for Seniors

Services for seniors are a gap in Ignace and the surrounding area. In particular, the lack of seniors housing and a long-term care facility, as well as the distance to Mary Berglund Community Health Centre Hub (“MBCHCH”) for health care services, are barriers in the ability for Ignace seniors to age in place (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023; WSP 2022c). The Silver Tops Seniors Centre is a key resource for seniors in the community to access social support and activities (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

#### Silver Tops

Founded in 1994, the Ignace Silver Tops organization owns and operates their facility for its 60 to 80 members. The facility is located in a former highway motel and tavern constructed in the 1970’s that was purchased by Mattabi Mines to house its employees from the early 1980s until 1992.

Today, Silver Tops provides several weekly programs for its members such as lunches, book clubs, exercise/music in motion, paramedicine, crafts, and cooking demonstrations. In addition, Silver Tops hosts community events ranging from anniversary/birthday celebrations and funerals to town hall meetings and workshops/presentations. Silver Tops also reconvened the senior housing committee in May 2023 to help coordinate (with various partners) the development of a 20-unit housing complex to be built in Ignace (Lederer 2009).

In 2022, Silver Tops replaced and updated the flooring, repainted the interior, and upgraded cleaning equipment (i.e., industrial floor scrubber). They are also in the process of replacing the front doors with electric doors and upgrading the HVAC and exterior windows to help meet industry safety, energy, and accessibility standards.

#### 2.4.9.2.3 Mary Berglund Community Health Centre Hub

The MBCHCH provides space to the clinical psychologist and community mental health and Indigenous support worker provided by Dryden Regional Mental Health. Patients can access therapy in-person or virtually. Dryden Regional Mental Health also provides case management services through the MBCHCH (see **Section 4.3** for more information on health facilities) (InterGroup 2022b; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Mental health supports in the community are limited and noted as a gap (SMM and InterGroup 2022).

A primary challenge in Ignace is the distance from the Township’s residential neighbourhoods to MBCHCH. Individuals who do not have a vehicle to transport themselves to the MBCHCH face a challenge in accessing MBCHCH’s services, as the MBCHCH is a long walk down Highway 17 with no sidewalks, leaving residents reliant on other community members or walking down the highway to access those services (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

#### 2.4.9.2.4 Services to Support Survivors of Gender-Based Violence

There are no shelters for victims of gender-based violence located within the Township. The closest shelter for victims of gender-based violence to Ignace is Hoshizaki House in Dryden.

### 2.4.9.3 Dryden

#### 2.4.9.3.1 Childcare Services

Childcare programs are operating at capacity in Dryden (WSP 2022c). In Dryden, the KDSB is the primary childcare provider, operating four locations, and partnered with the Dryden Nursery School Cooperative and Homeward Bound program at Dryden Native Friendship Centre (“DNFC”). Childcare facilities in Dryden are currently operating at capacity in all locations with a minimal waitlist. Childcare providers have noted that it is likely they will need to double (or triple) their workforce if the universal childcare agreements entered into between Ontario and the federal government results in \$10/day childcare as the demand for spaces is likely to increase (Government of Canada 2022b). A primary barrier in expanding childcare services is a lack of qualified staff available in the region (WSP 2022c). Participants of the NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022 noted that local and nearby post-secondary institutions are not producing enough early childhood educators each year to support the region’s needs, and more planning is required to better attract and prepare individuals for that work.

#### Early Learning Centres and EarlyON through the KDSB

In Dryden, there are six childcare centres, including Albert Street Early Learning Centre, New Prospect Early Learning Centre – New Prospect School, Open Roads Early Learning Centre – Open Roads School, St. Joseph’s Early Learning Centre, Dryden Nursery School Cooperative - New Prospect School, and Homeward Bound (**Table 2.4-11**) (KDSB n.d.c). The costs for care range from half-day care rates (toddler care to after school at \$12/day) to full day care rates (e.g., infant care (\$33.08/day), toddler (\$22.44/day), and preschool (\$21.26/day) (KPDSB n.d.).

As neighbourhood centres, these facilities provide parents, children, and caregivers a place to connect through organized programming. Through the EarlyON child and family centres, programs and community services are provided to assist and support the entire family (KDSB n.d.b). EarlyON child and family centres also offer free, drop-in programs for children and their parents/caregivers, available at the Albert Street Early Learning Centre, the KDSB Head Office (King Street), and Homeward Bound locations.

Table 2.4-11: Childcare Services in Dryden

Name	Space Available (Preschool)	Space Available (Afterschool)	Hours of Operation	Duration
Albert Street Early Learning Centre	Infants: 10 Toddlers: 15	Family Age Grouping: 15	7:30 AM-5:30 PM (Monday-Friday)	September-May
New Prospect Early Learning Centre – New Prospect School	Toddlers: 15 Preschool: 20	Kindergarten: 26 Primary/Junior School Age: 30	7:30 AM-5:30 PM (Monday-Friday)	September-May
Open Roads Early Learning Centre – Open Roads School	Preschool: 16	Kindergarten: 26 Primary/Junior School Age: 30	7:30 AM–5:30 PM (Monday–Friday)	September-May
St. Joseph’s Early Learning Centre	Preschool: 20	Kindergarten: 26 Primary/Junior School Age: 30	7:30 AM–5:30 PM (Monday–Friday)	Not specified
Dryden Nursery School Cooperative - New Prospect School	Preschool: 16	-	9:00 AM – 11:30 AM & 1:00 PM-3:30 PM (Monday–Friday)	September-May
Homeward Bound (DNFC)	-	2 Family Age Groupings of 15 each	8:00 AM-5:30 PM (Monday–Friday)	Not specified

Source: KDSB n.d.d.

The majority of childcare options in Dryden are not year-round (see **Table 2.4-11**), which can impact the ability of parents to work fulltime. This barrier particularly impacts women, who are often the primary caregivers of children, who may need or want to work year-round but may be unable to do so due to limited childcare options in their community (Havens 2023).

#### 2.4.9.3.2 Services for Seniors

Services for seniors are limited in Dryden. Gaps and barriers to senior services identified include hours of operation (i.e., facilities are limited on evenings and weekends), limited translation services for Indigenous and new comer seniors, lack of transportation options (with those that are available for seniors being limited on evenings and weekends and only operate within city limits), limited places for seniors to obtain affordable food, unaffordable recreational activities, no centralized location to see available volunteer opportunities, and limited in-home supports (MNP 2021).

#### Dryden Go Getters Senior Centre

The Dryden Go Getters Senior Centre is open to residents 55 years and older at the cost of \$20/year. The centre offers several recreational, educational, and social activities such as line and square dancing, bingo, board games, darts, carpentry, Swedish embroidery, and walk aerobics. The centre also organizes a potluck dinner and entertainment at the monthly general membership meeting (NorthWest Healthline 2022).



## Patricia Region Senior Services

Patricia Regional Senior Services provides various services and programs to help Dryden seniors live an independent lifestyle that maintains their health and safety. Services provided include at-home aids, friendly visits, and transportation (City of Dryden n.d.c).

### 2.4.9.3.3 Services to Support Survivors of Gender-Based Violence

#### Hoshizaki House Dryden District Crisis Shelter: Emergency Women's Shelter

The Hoshizaki House Dryden District Crisis Shelter serves communities in and around Dryden, Ignace, and Vermillion Bay. Hoshizaki House has 10 beds to provide a safe and secure emergency shelter for women and children who are victims of domestic violence (Hoshizaki House n.d.). Hoshizaki House is open to any women who are 16 years of age and older who are victims of physical, sexual, financial, and/or emotional abuse, as well as their children (males are accepted up to 16 years of age) (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; Hoshizaki House n.d.).

Emergency shelter stays are usually short-term (approximately two weeks). Single women are often asked to share a room with other single women, while families can share one room. Victims can stay at the emergency shelter for 6 to 8 weeks, but the length of stay is flexible if women are actively seeking housing or employment (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

In 2022, Hoshizaki House Dryden District Crisis Shelter had 13 staff. The physical space is adequate, as the building is new. The Hoshizaki House Dryden District Crisis Shelter faces challenges with staff retention due to the high-stress work environment and competition with other agencies that can provide higher wages (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

#### Dryden Regional Health Centre: Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Care and Treatment Program

The Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Care and Treatment Program provides emergency and follow-up care to women, men, and children who have been sexually assaulted and/or are survivors of intimate partner abuse in the communities. In addition to serving residents of Dryden, it also provides services to people from Vermilion Bay, Wabigoon Village, Dryden, Ignace, Eagle Lake First Nation, and Kenora. Care and treatment for sexual assault and domestic violence provided by the Dryden Regional Health Centre includes testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, testing and emergency contraception for pregnancy, and supportive crisis counselling (DRHC n.d.b).

### 2.4.9.3.4 Mental Health and Substance Use Services

Facilities and spaces to support individuals living with mental health and substance use challenges are limited in Dryden, particularly for children and youth (MNP 2021). Psychiatric services, a healing lodge, emergency shelters which serve individuals beyond women and children, residential addictions treatment, and a 24/7 warming or homelessness centre were identified as significant gaps in the Dryden area (WSP 2022c; MNP 2021). Challenges with existing mental health and substance use services in the City include transportation within the

community, wait times/limited spaces, limited hours of operation, and siloed/uncoordinated service delivery (MNP 2021).

### **Dryden Regional Health Centre: Mental Health and Addictions**

Dryden Regional Mental Health and Addiction Services is a community-based agency sponsored by and located in the Dryden Regional Health Centre, with an office also located in the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre Hub in Ignace. Dryden Regional Mental Health and Addiction Services are available to individuals aged 16 years and older and include assessment and treatment, individual and group counselling, anger management, psychiatry, cancer support and counselling, case management (e.g., housing support, medication management, budgeting, etc.), housing support, referrals, as well as child and youth outreach support for individuals aged 25 years and younger. Alcohol, substance use, and problem gambling services are also available for individuals aged 12 years and older (DRHC n.d.a). There is also a full-time Indigenous worker who provides culturally appropriate support (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

The Rapid Access Addiction Medicine Clinic provides services to individuals living with addictions who require medical services as well as mental health support (Connex Ontario n.d.). The Rapid Access Addiction Medicine Clinic is provided by the Dryden Regional Health Centre and located in the Dryden Area Family Health Team on Goodall Street in Dryden (DRHC 2022). The services do not include detox beds or residential treatment, offering only diabetes outreach and screening, needle exchange, and naloxone overdose response (InterGroup 2022b). People living with addictions who would like residential treatment must travel to larger urban centres to receive care, such as Thunder Bay and Winnipeg (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

Challenges for DRHC include trouble recruiting staff and difficulty connecting individuals with care in a timely manner (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). In addition, DRHC saw a substantial increase in demand for services following the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Ontario Addiction Treatment Centres**

As part of the Ontario Addiction Treatment Centre network, the Dryden location provides walk-in treatment to individuals living with addictions, including methadone, suboxone, sublocade, Kadian, Hepatitis C, and naloxone treatment, as well as doctor and pharmacy services and referrals (CATC n.d.a).

#### **2.4.9.3.5 Indigenous Service Providers**

Dryden is a hub for service providers for the surrounding Indigenous communities, including Eagle Lake First Nation and Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation. The number of Indigenous service providers in Dryden has been growing in recent years (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The absence or lack of healing lodges and lack of culturally appropriate services was noted as a gap in Indigenous services in the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (MNP 2021).

## Dryden Native Friendship Centre

Founded in 1984, the DNFC provides a gathering place to serve the needs of Indigenous peoples in Dryden and surrounding area (DNFC n.d.a). The DNFC's focus is on off-reserve at-risk Indigenous individuals. The DNFC provides programs relating to children, employment and training, community connections, diabetes education, homelessness, healing and wellness, and EarlyOn child and family centre (DNFC n.d.b). The centre also offers transportation services for individuals to and from the centre and emergency transportation services for individuals who are travelling from other regions (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Currently, the transportation program and mental health program are at capacity (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

The DNFC has a main hall and gathering space that can accommodate 35 and 100 people, respectively (DNFC n.d.b). The DNFC also has a youth lounge, employment and communications office, on-site kitchens, and a cultural room (DNFC n.d.b). The DNFC membership ranges from 120 to 150 people. The facility is in excellent condition, with recent renovations to its commercial kitchen and gathering space. Since 2019, the DNFC has grown from 21 to 41 staff members and would like to expand further but are limited by their current facility (WSP 2022c). There are also approximately 90 volunteers to help with events, such as holiday dinners, driving for events, and community lunches (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Future goals for the DNFC are to provide supportive housing and a shelter (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

In particular, DNFC's Wasa Nabin program provides a culturally appropriate program to support Indigenous youth between the ages of 13 and 18 years old. The program provides youth with support circles, counselling, activities, skills to make nutritious meals, education (e.g., schoolwork, health education, etc.), and health awareness. The Wasa Nabin program also has an outreach component geared toward youth living in care to enable access to culturally appropriate services, working with non-Indigenous guardians of Indigenous youth to educate and remove barriers (DNFC n.d.b).

The DNFC's transportation, lifelong care home maintenance, and mental health programs are currently operating at capacity with high demand (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

### 2.4.9.4 Machin

Social services in the Municipality are limited and residents of the Municipality rely on Dryden for many social services. Primary challenges include lack of licensed full-time childcare, mental health and substance use supports, and transportation (MNP 2021).

#### 2.4.9.4.1 Childcare Services

### Vermillion Bay Area Nursery School Cooperative

In the Municipality of Machin, the Vermillion Bay Area Nursery School Cooperative, in partnership with the KDSB, provides childcare for infants and toddlers. Located in the Lillian Berg School, the Nursery School has 15 preschool spaces and 13 afterschool spaces (KDSB n.d.d). The Nursery School offers afterschool care from September to June, as well as extended morning programs two days/week from October to May. The costs of care range from half-day rates (toddler care to

afterschool care at \$12/day), to full-day care rates (infant care (\$33.08), toddler (\$22.44), and preschool (\$21.26) (KPDSB n.d.). The Machin Early Learning Centre is also located in the school, has 26 kindergarten spaces, and operates from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday to Friday (KDSB n.d.d).

#### 2.4.9.4.2 Services for Seniors

##### Happy Go Lucky Seniors Club

The Happy Go Lucky Seniors Club is open to Machin residents who are 55 years and older, through paid membership. The Happy Go Lucky Seniors Club offers recreational and educational programs and services, coordinating weekly games (cribbage and cards), potluck suppers, luncheons, coffee breaks, and bus trips to attend events and shopping in Winnipeg, Manitoba (Northwest Behavioural Supports Ontario 2023). In 2015, the Club received \$25,000 for facility and service improvements, including a new roof, furnace, and fridge, and the ability to offer new programs and resources (CKDR 2015). In 2022, the Club further received \$28,600 through the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility funds to support senior active living (Greg Rickford MPP n.d.).

#### 2.4.9.4.3 Services to Support Survivors of Gender-Based Violence

There are no shelters for victims of gender-based violence located within the Municipality of Machin. The closest shelter for victims of gender-based violence to Machin is Hoshizaki House in Dryden.

#### 2.4.9.5 Sioux Lookout

##### 2.4.9.5.1 Childcare Services

##### Kenora District Services Board

Four licenced early learning and care facilities operate in Sioux Lookout (**Table 2.4-12**). The KDSB operates the (Biidaaban) Sacred Heart Early Learning Centre – Sacred Heart School and Sioux Mountain Early Learning Centre, and is partnered with Waninawakang Aboriginal Head Start and Waninawakang Childcare Centre, both of which are operated by the Waninawakang Aboriginal Head Start Resource Centre (KDSB n.d.a). The KDSB partnerships with the provincial EarlyON child and family programs provide free support services and programs to parents, caregivers, and their children aged six and under (KDSB n.d.c). The Waninawakang childcare services focus their programming in six areas, including culture and language, education and school readiness, health promotion, nutrition, social support, and parental and family involvement (Waninawakang Aboriginal Head Start n.d.).

The costs for care range from half-day rates (toddler care to afterschool care at \$12/day) to full-day care rates (infant care (\$33.08), toddler (\$22.44), and preschool (\$21.26) (KPDSB n.d.).

Table 2.4-12: Childcare Services in Sioux Lookout

Name	Space Available (Preschool)	Space Available (Afterschool)	Hours of Operation
(Biidaaban) Sacred Heart Early Learning Centre – Sacred Heart School	Toddlers: 25 Preschool: 24	Kindergarten: 26 Primary/Junior School Age: 30	7:30 AM-5:30 PM (Monday-Friday)
Sioux Mountain Early Learning Centre	Toddlers: 15 Preschool: 24	Kindergarten: 26 Primary/Junior School Age: 30	7:30 AM-5:30 PM (Monday-Friday)
Waninawakang Aboriginal Head Start	Toddlers: 16		8:30 AM-3:30 PM (Monday-Thursday)
Waninawakang Childcare Centre	Infants: 9 Toddlers: 30		8:00 AM-5:00 PM (Monday-Friday)

Source: KDSB n.d.d.

#### 2.4.9.5.2 Services for Seniors

##### Sioux Area Seniors Activity Centre

The Sioux Area Seniors Activity offers recreation and educational programs and services including: weekly card games; exercise classes; craft, knitting, and sewing sessions; a monthly potluck; group bus trips for shopping and events; and sessions with guest speakers (Municipality of Sioux Lookout n.d.g).

##### Lost Lake Seniors Drop in Centre

The Lost Lake Seniors Drop in Centre is located in Hudson and offers programs and community events including: family dinners, weekly luncheons, bake sales, socials, potlucks, and many other community events (Municipality of Sioux Lookout n.d.g).

#### 2.4.9.5.3 Services to Support Survivors of Gender-Based Violence

##### First Step Women's Shelter

First Step Women's Shelter is a 14-bed facility located in Sioux Lookout that provides support, assistance, and emergency shelter for women and children who have been physically, sexually, and/or emotionally abused (FSWS n.d.a). Individuals may live at the shelter for up to six weeks (FSWS n.d.a). The shelter is staffed with front line counsellors, a community-based general counsellor, traditional housing and support worker, and a childcare worker, delivering services including safety, counselling, referrals, information, emergency resources (e.g., clothing), advocacy, and transportation (FSWS n.d.a; FSWS n.d.b).

#### 2.4.9.5.4 Mental Health and Substance Use Services

Services to support individuals living with mental health and substance use challenges are limited in Sioux Lookout. Youth are considered to be especially at risk of mental health

challenges in the community (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020b). In particular, demand for emergency shelters continues to exceed the capacity of services available and lack of residential addictions treatment and detox beds continues to be a challenge in the community (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020b).

### Ontario Addiction Treatment Centres

As part of the Ontario Addiction Treatment Centre network, the Sioux Lookout location provides walk-in treatment to individuals living with addictions, including Hepatitis C education and prevention, need exchange, and naloxone overdose response (CATC n.d.).

#### 2.4.9.5.5 Indigenous Service Providers

##### Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre

Operational since 2011, the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre (“SLMHC”) is a fully accredited, 60-bed hospital that also offers free and confidential mental health and addictions services (SLMHC n.d.). The SLMHC’s mental health and addictions program includes assault care and treatment, long-term counselling, and crisis counselling (SLMHC n.d.). The SLMHC serves all population ages for assault care and treatment, crisis services, and psychiatric consultations, while mental health counselling and addictions services are restricted to 16 years of age and older and 12 years and older, respectively (SLMHC n.d.). See **Section 4.3** for more on SLMHC.

##### Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre

The Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre, incorporated in 1971, is a non-profit organization serving the needs of Indigenous community members living in Sioux Lookout (of the Local Study Area) (NGFC n.d.b). The Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre’s mission is to provide a centre for recreational and educational activities and programs to support the well-being of Indigenous community members, as well as foster Indigenous language and culture amongst residents. The Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre offers a wide range of services and programs geared for all ages, from infancy to elders, including lifelong care, Indigenous health and wellness, mental health and addictions, employment, and youth programming (NGFC n.d.a).

#### 2.4.9.5.6 Child and Adult Protective Services

##### William W. Creighton Youth Services

William W. Creighton Youth Services (“Creighton Youth Services”) is mandated to provide youth justice services under the Child and Family Services Act, 1990 and the Youth Criminal Justice Act, 2002 (Creighton Youth n.d.; Government of Ontario 1990g; Government of Canada 2002). Creighton Youth Services works with youth who have committed an offence between the ages of 12 and 18 years old, offering residential programming that features restorative justice and rehabilitation, such as alternatives to custody, community integration, anger management, youth and family counselling, and Indigenous healing with community Elders. The services provided by Creighton Youth Services are designed to support and challenge youth to take responsibility for their behaviour and actions and change their thinking patterns (Creighton Youth n.d.).



### 2.4.10 Summary of Infrastructure and Services

A variety of infrastructure and services support the communities in the Local Study Area, although not all communities are home to the same suite of facilities and services. In many instances, people living in smaller communities are required to travel long distances to access appropriate services. The size of the area served by many organizations also presents a challenge to service providers.

#### Transportation Infrastructure

The Local Study Area communities are located along or just off Highway 17 (Ignace, Dryden, Machin, Wabigoon Village, Melgund, Dinorwic, and Upsala); Highway 72 (Sioux Lookout); and Highway 599 (Valora and Silver Dollar). The average annual daily traffic along Highway 17 was 5,950 vehicles/day, 3,200 vehicles/day for Highway 72, and not exceeding 300 vehicles per day along Highway 599. The average annual daily traffic and summer average daily traffic are currently below capacity for Highway 17. Residents of Local Study Area communities are concerned about road safety. Accidents along the regional highway network within the Local Study Area are primarily due to inclement weather, animal encounters, reduced visibility due to poor lighting, and aggressive driving (WSP 2022d). For Ignace and Dryden, transport trucks will sometimes park or stop alongside the highway, which can lead to reduced visibility for people entering or leaving the communities. (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

Within the Local Study Area, there are airports in Ignace, Dryden, Sioux Lookout, and Machin; however, the Ignace and Machin airports do not currently have operational status. The Dryden Regional Airport and Sioux Lookout Airport both accommodate airlines which are used for both charter and scheduled flights which operate seven days a week. The Dryden Regional Airport services are busiest during the summer months due to increased activity by MNRF caused by forest fires.

The Canadian Pacific Railway has stations in Ignace, Dryden, and passes through Machin. Canadian Pacific is a freight rail service provider with passenger services limited to luxury tours provided by Royal Canadian Pacific (Canadian Pacific 2023). The Canadian National Rail Line travels through Sioux Lookout with passenger services available through VIA Rail.

#### Utilities and Associated Infrastructure

The gas pipeline, which roughly twins the Trans-Canada Highway (TC Energy 2017) has rights of way that cross municipal lands for Ignace, Dryden, Machin, Wabigoon Village, and Melgund (WSP 2021; Quartek Group Inc 2022). Ignace, Dryden, and Machin receive natural gas from Union Gas (Enbridge Inc.). All other Local Study Area communities use propane or other alternatives. Hydro One Networks provides electricity to all the Local Study Area communities, except for Sioux Lookout, with electricity. Sioux Lookout Hydro Inc. is owned by the Municipality of Sioux Lookout that delivers electricity to households and businesses within the Municipality. Residents in unincorporated communities (Wabigoon Village, Dinorwic, Melgund) are responsible for their water and sewage. Hydro One Networks provides electricity to the unincorporated communities but residents are required to pay for the connection to their property. Each Local Study Area community has access to multiple internet providers.

Ignace, Dryden, and Sioux Lookout have water distribution and sewage treatment systems. Machin has a water distribution system, but its residents are responsible for providing their own septic fields and/or tanks.

The water distribution systems in Ignace, Dryden, Machin, and Sioux Lookout are running below capacity; however, to accommodate future growth in Dryden and Sioux Lookout, upgrades or replacement of the water treatment plant assets may be required. Water distribution system assets in Ignace are generally in good condition but water valves are over 45 years old and nearing the end of their lifespan after recent failures suggested 50 years is a reasonable useful life (WSP 2022b). Most watermains in Dryden are in moderate or worse condition (Explorer Solutions 2022a). The water treatment plant in Machin is less than 20 years old but the expected useful life of the facility is between 10 to 50 years, indicating that it may need to be replaced in the next ten years. In Sioux Lookout, a large portion of water system assets are in poor or worse condition, including 73% of booster stations, 37% of hydrants and valves, 98% of water tower assets, and 43% of water treatment plant assets.

The operating capacity of the Ignace wastewater treatment plant is at 63% but due to the performance and operational limits of the plant, it would be unable to support a sizeable change growth in population. Although existing sanitary pipes do not require replacement for over 15 years, most pipes use asbestos cement (WSP 2022b). The wastewater treatment plant in Dryden was built in 2014 and is operating below capacity, but certain sections of the sewer are currently near capacity and may require replacements to accommodate larger future developments. The condition of most sewers in Dryden is moderate or worse, whereas larger sewers were evaluated to be in poor or very poor condition (Explorer Solutions 2022a). The Sioux Lookout wastewater treatment plant was operating at 76% of the daily capacity in 2020. Nearly 85% of the wastewater treatment plant assets are in poor or worse condition and over 60% of manholes and pumping station assets are in poor or worse condition (PSD 2020).

The stormwater assets in Ignace are nearing the halfway point of their useful life. In June 2022, an engineering inspection of the Pine Street culverts revealed issues with structural integrity. As a result, Pine Street was temporarily closed (Township of Ignace n.d.c). In Dryden, most storm sewers in Dryden are in moderate or worse condition (Explorer Solutions 2022a). In Machin, a majority of culverts have exceeded their estimated useful life and over 70% are in very poor condition (PSD 2021). The average condition of stormwater infrastructure in Sioux Lookout is in good condition with a remaining service life of 23 years (PSD 2020).

Solid waste and recycling services varies between community with Ignace only having solid waste collection and disposal services, Dryden offers solid waste and recycling collection and disposal services, Machin offers solid waste collection and recycling can be dropped off at bins at their landfill sites, and Sioux Lookout offers solid waste and recycling collection and disposal services. There is no curbside pickup for residents of Wabigoon Village, Melgund, or Dinorwic but there are landfills where garbage can be dropped off at.

### **Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services**

The Ontario Provincial Police are responsible for providing police services in the Local Study Area. The Ontario Provincial Police have detachments in Dryden and Sioux Lookout that provide services to all the Local Study Area communities. The Dryden detachment has satellite offices in Ignace and Vermillion Bay. Staffing is considered sufficient at the Dryden office, Ignace satellite office, and the Sioux Lookout office but there is no administrative staff at the Ignace office,

resulting in all administrative work to be sent to Dryden (WSP 2022d). Policing costs in Dryden have routinely been amongst the highest per capita in Ontario. In 2022, Statistics Canada estimated Dryden had the second highest average policing cost at about \$1,040 per property, over triple the average cost per property in Ontario (\$311). Policing costs in northwest Ontario are generally higher than provincial averages but Dryden's cost are notably higher than other communities (DrydenNow 2021b). In 2023, policing costs are estimated to have increased to close to \$1,400 per property (Fleury 2023).

Ignace, Dryden, Machin, and Sioux Lookout, have fire services which cover a vast area beyond the municipal boundaries that can affect the ability to respond to calls in a timely manner due to road closures during the winter and low volunteer or paid-for-call staffing numbers. Machin and Ignace have volunteer fire stations which nearly all firefighters are volunteers and are only paid when responding to calls. Dryden and Sioux Lookout both have two fire halls with a mix of volunteer and paid staff. The existing fire hall in Ignace and Fire Hall #2 in Dryden both require upgrades (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Oxdrift and Wabigoon Village both have fire departments which respond to calls in the community and surrounding areas. In the Local Study Area, MNRF has fire bases in Ignace, Dryden, and Sioux Lookout for responding to forest fires. MNRF also operates out of the Dryden Regional Airport for dealing with forest fires.

Northwest Emergency Medical Services is under the KDSB and provides emergency medical services in the Regional Study Area. Within the Regional Study Area, average response times include 2.4 minutes in 2019, 1.35 minutes in 2020, and 1.41 minutes in 2021 within a target plan of two minutes. Call volumes include 22,829 in 2019, 20,893 in 2020, and 19,137 in 2021 (Ministry of Health and Long-term Care 2022). Northwest Emergency Medical Services has nine ambulance bases throughout the Regional Study Area, including a base in the Local Study Area communities of Ignace, Dryden, and Sioux Lookout (KDSB 2023). The KDSB is currently looking to build an ambulance base in Vermillion Bay (WSP 2022d).

### **Primary and Secondary Educational Facilities**

In the Local Study Area there are elementary schools in Ignace, Dryden, Machin, Sioux Lookout, and Upsala. Ignace, Dryden, and Sioux Lookout have at least one high school which have the capacity for more students, and residents of the unincorporated areas or smaller communities often travel to a different community for high school. The schools in the Local Study Area are under the Keewatin Patricia District School Board (Ignace Public School, New Prospect Elementary Public School, Open Roads School, Dryden High School, Lillian Berg Public School, Sioux Mountain Public School, Sioux North High School, and Upsala Public School), Northwest Catholic District School Board (St. Joseph's Catholic School and Sacred Heart School), Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique des Aurores Boréales (École Immaculée Conception and École Catholique de l'Enfant-Jésus), and the Pelican Falls First Nation High School (a private, First Nations operated school).

### **Recreation Programs and Facilities**

In the Local Study Area, residents have access to a variety of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities and community recreation opportunities. Organized programming for youth and seniors were noted as insufficient or not available in Ignace, Machin, Wabigoon Village, Melgund, and Upsala due to small population. Many residents from these communities travel to Dryden to

access various programming (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Barriers noted by interview participants regarding accessing recreational programming is the need for transportation and the costs (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023; GBA+ Workshop 2023).

The natural setting provides various opportunities for fishing, forestry, hunting/trapping, tourism, and a passive appreciation of the natural environment, through camping, swimming, hiking, biking, wildlife viewing, boating, canoeing, and berry picking (SMM and InterGroup 2022; NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Ignace, Dryden, Machin, Sioux Lookout, Wabigoon Village and Melgund also have access to indoor recreational facilities such as community halls, recreation centres, and museums.

### **Housing and Temporary Accommodations**

In the Local Study Area homes are most often single- and semi-detached dwellings and only need minor repairs or maintenance. Most households are two-person households and are owned, with about 15% to 25% being rented. Given the lack of available and affordable housing options in the Local Study Area communities, some people face challenges with homelessness. The number of homeless people is largest around Dryden given its function as a regional hub and proximity along Highway 17 (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Interview participants noted that housing availability was an issue for each of the Local Study Area communities. Challenges noted by interview participants and in the KDSB regional housing strategy are largely related to development (e.g., costs and delays to develop, land use designations) and availability (e.g., unaffordability, limited variety of homes, homes are only on the market for a short period of time, insufficient options for seniors). (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023; KDSB 2023e). Senior housing options were also identified as insufficient across the Local Study Area with few available options for downsizing and senior-living facilities (KDSB 2023e).

There are many temporary accommodations among the Local Study Area communities in the form of hotels, motels, campgrounds, cabins, and RV parks, but many operate at or near capacity on a frequent basis. Local Study Area communities face challenges with temporary accommodations at capacity due to the large number of transient workers (KDSB 2023e).

### **Social Services**

Social services available in the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area include childcare, senior services, services for victims of gender-based violence (e.g., shelters and transitional housing), mental health and substance use services, Indigenous services, and child protective services. The Regional Study Area has social service providers who operate in multiple Local Study Area communities, including KDSB childcare and early learning services, Kenora Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services, FIREFLY, Tikinagan Child and Family Services, Community Living Dryden-Sioux Lookout, Canadian Mental Health Branch of Fort Frances, Anishinaabe Abinooji Family Services, Paawidigong First Nations Forum, Métis Nation of Ontario, and Northwest Ontario Métis Child and Family Services. Social services are key to supporting vulnerable populations, as these populations are often more reliant on the services provided (GBA+ Workshop 2023).

Childcare providers have noted that it is likely they will need to double (or triple) their workforce if the universal childcare agreements entered into between Ontario and the federal government results in a \$10/day Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care system, as the demand for spaces is likely to increase (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; Government of Canada 2022b). Currently, there is an unmet need for licensed full-time childcare in Ignace, as well as after school care and services which accommodate shift work (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). Dryden childcare services are currently operating at capacity (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022).

Social supports for seniors are available in Ignace, Dryden, Machin, and Sioux Lookout, but there is a lack of seniors housing and long-term care to address the high proportion of seniors in the Local Study Area. The lack of public transportation and the need to travel outside of their community for various services has been identified as a barrier (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

There are currently no shelters for victims of gender-based violence in Ignace or Machin, with the closest shelter being Hoshizaki House in Dryden. The facility space at the Hoshizaki House in Dryden is adequate but there are challenges with staff retention due to the high-stress work (NWO Community and Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022). The Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Care and Treatment Program at the Dryden Regional Health Centre provides emergency and follow-up care to women, men, and children who have been sexually assaulted and/or are survivors of intimate partner abuse in Ignace, Dryden, Machin, and Wabigoon Village. In Sioux Lookout, the First Step Women's Shelter provides support, assistance, and emergency shelter for women and children who have been physically, sexually, and/or emotionally abused.

Facilities and spaces to support individuals living with mental health and substance use challenges are a gap in both the Regional Study Area and Local Study Area. In the Local Study Area, these services are limited to Dryden and Sioux Lookout. In particular, psychiatric services, a healing lodge, emergency shelters which serve individuals beyond women and children, residential addictions treatment, and a 24/7 warming or homelessness centre were identified as significant gaps in the Dryden area (WSP 2022c). Demand for emergency shelters continues to exceed the capacity of services available and lack of residential addictions treatment and detox beds continues to be a challenge in the community (Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2022b). Individuals from other communities must travel to Dryden or Sioux Lookout to receive support.

Indigenous service providers located in the Regional Study Area that serve communities in the Local Study Area include Tikinagan Child and Family Services, who provide services in Ignace, Dryden, and Sioux Lookout; Anishinaabe Abinoojii Family Service, who provides services in Dryden, Wabigoon Village, and Sioux Lookout; Paawidigong First Nations Forum, who provide services to Eagle Lake First Nation, Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation, and Lac Seul First Nation; and Métis Nation of Ontario and Northwest Ontario Métis Child and Family Services, who both have branches in Kenora and Dryden. Indigenous service providers located in the Local Study Area include the Dryden Native Friendship Centre in Dryden, Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre in Sioux Lookout, and Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre in Sioux Lookout. According to the Dryden, Machin and Area Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, lack of culturally appropriate services remains a gap in Dryden (MNP 2021).



## 2.5 LAND AND RESOURCE USE

### 2.5.1 Overview and Approach

Land and resource use describes the land use designations, permitted land uses, and management frameworks for the natural environment, as well as how land and resources in the Local Study Area are used, who uses them, regulations guiding these uses, and the organizations, agencies, and groups involved in these uses. The natural environment is important to residents and visitors of the Local Study Area for recreational and commercial purposes (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Residents and visitors have strong connections to the surrounding natural environment and is fundamental to their sense of place and quality of life. Topics included in land and resource use are:

- Land management frameworks, policies, and plans;
- Crown land designations, including provincial parks and conservation reserves;
- Commercial and recreational fishing, including subsistence activities;
- Hunting, including subsistence activities;
- Commercial trapping;
- Outfitting and guiding;
- Forestry;
- Current and historical mining activities;
- Cottages and cabins;
- Hiking;
- ATVing;
- Winter recreation; and
- Lakes.

Descriptions of local agencies and user groups in the region are included in the discussion of each activity where relevant. Structures, sites, and locations of historical and cultural significance are described where information is available and are described further in **Section 2.6**.

Commercial land and resource use is important to the economy in the communities closest to the Revell Site and northwestern Ontario (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Information on commercial land and resource use, such as forestry, outfitting, and mining, and their contributions to the local economy are also considered in the economic base (**Section 3.4**), employment (**Section 3.2**), and income and cost of living (**Section 3.6**).

Spatial boundaries for land and resource use are distinct from the spatial boundaries of other social cultural components. Spatial boundaries are discussed in further detail in **Section 2.1.1**. The spatial boundaries for land and resource use are:

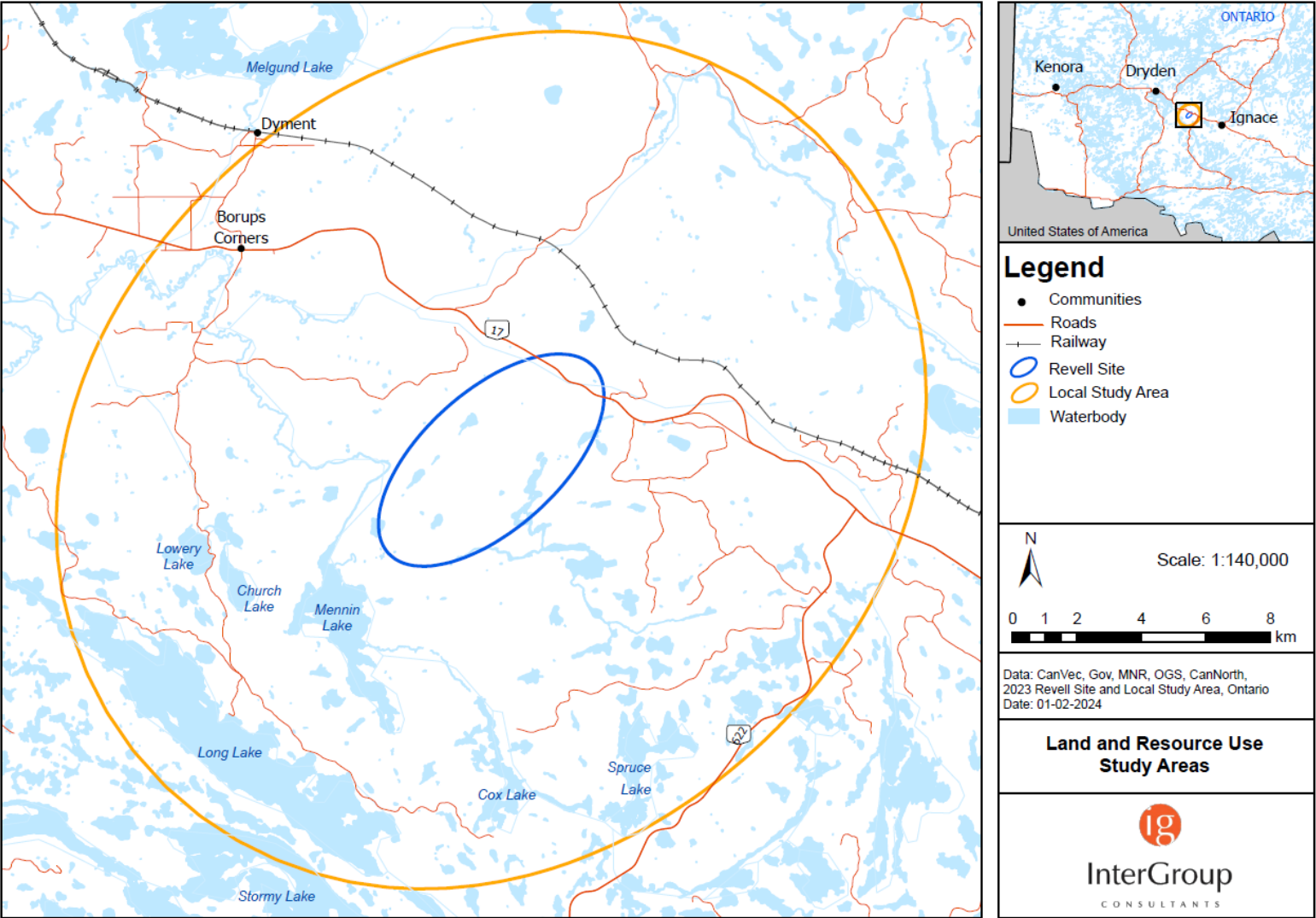


- The Local Study Area includes the Revell Site (i.e., the potentially geologically suitable area where borehole drilling has occurred and the Project may be located) with a 10 km buffer to provide additional context. The Local Study Area was also informed with consideration of the local study areas identified for terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems studies (Zoetica 2020), along with the local study areas for sampling for environmental media studies (CanNorth 2020), all of which are captured within the 10km buffer.
- The Regional Study Area will be revisited after site selection and is expected to evolve relative to the results of primary and secondary studies for terrestrial, aquatic, and environmental media studies that are currently underway. Consideration will also be given to studies undertaken by or with Indigenous communities relative to the expression of Indigenous and Treaty Rights.

For the purposes of this report, the Local Study Area is described in detail, while an even broader geographic scope is included on maps to provide context to the topics being described. For example, boundaries for topics such as Forest Management Units or Bear Management Areas are broader in scope than the Local Study Area, so areas of overlap within the region are provided for context. The land and resource use study area is included in **Map 2.5-1**.

Indigenous land and resource use, including access to culturally important resources and country foods, is acknowledged as present in the region, and will be documented in the Indigenous Peoples baseline. **Section 1.5.4** describes that the NWMO's non-prescriptive approach to Indigenous participation in the Baseline Studies supports Indigenous communities in sharing knowledge and information in a fashion and at a time that is appropriate to the community and in accordance with their protocols. The NWMO's approach to Indigenous engagement is being conducted in accordance with the NWMO's Reconciliation Policy (2019) and Indigenous Knowledge Policy (2020b).

Map 2.5-1: Land and Resource Use Study Areas



Temporal boundaries for land and resource use focus on current use and use during the past 10 years to understand trends. To the extent possible, future trends are described based on demand for resources and available management plans, such as forest management plans.

Information on data collection, including desktop research and primary data collection, is provided in **Section 2.1.2**.

## 2.5.2 Land Use Designations

This section describes land use designations, legislation, policies, and plans for the Local Study Area. The description of land use designations includes permitted uses and a description of the amendment process.

Municipal land use is governed through official community plans, which outline where different types of land use may be located within a municipality. Official plans are intended to be living documents that are reviewed in accordance with the *Planning Act* (Government of Ontario 1990i) and may be amended to reflect changing circumstances and evolving priorities of the municipality (WSP 2020). Amendments of official plans must be initiated by the town council, a public meeting is held, and the amendment is sent to the approval authority, who is often the upper-tier municipality or the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Government of Ontario 2019c).

See **Section 2.3.4** for more information on official plans and municipal land policies.

The Local Study Area, an area of 55,092 hectares, is comprised of provincial Crown land and private land, as displayed in **Table 2.5-1**. The Local Study Area consists primarily of provincial Crown land. See **Section 2.5.2.1** for more information on land use designations in the Local Study Area.

**Table 2.5-1: Lands Comprising the Local Study Area**

Land	Area (ha) in Local Study Area	Percentage of Local Study Area
Private	3,479.0	6.3%
Provincial	51,612.6	93.7%
<i>Conservation Reserve</i>	<i>3,139.8</i>	<i>5.7%</i>
<i>General Use</i>	<i>48,472.9</i>	<i>88.0%</i>

**Source:** Government of Ontario n.d.a

**Notes:** Calculations were completed by InterGroup Consultants.

The Revell Site, an area of 2,935 hectares, is comprised of provincial Crown land, with all 2,935 hectares designated as General Use Areas.

### 2.5.2.1 Crown Land Management

Provincial Crown land, which includes shoreline, riverbeds, and lake beds, makes up 87% of Ontario. According to the *Strategic Direction for Management of Ontario Crown Land Policy*, the MNRF has stewardship responsibility over its management, which includes planning and amendments through the *Public Lands Act* (Government of Ontario 1993).

#### 2.5.2.1.1 Crown Land Management Goals

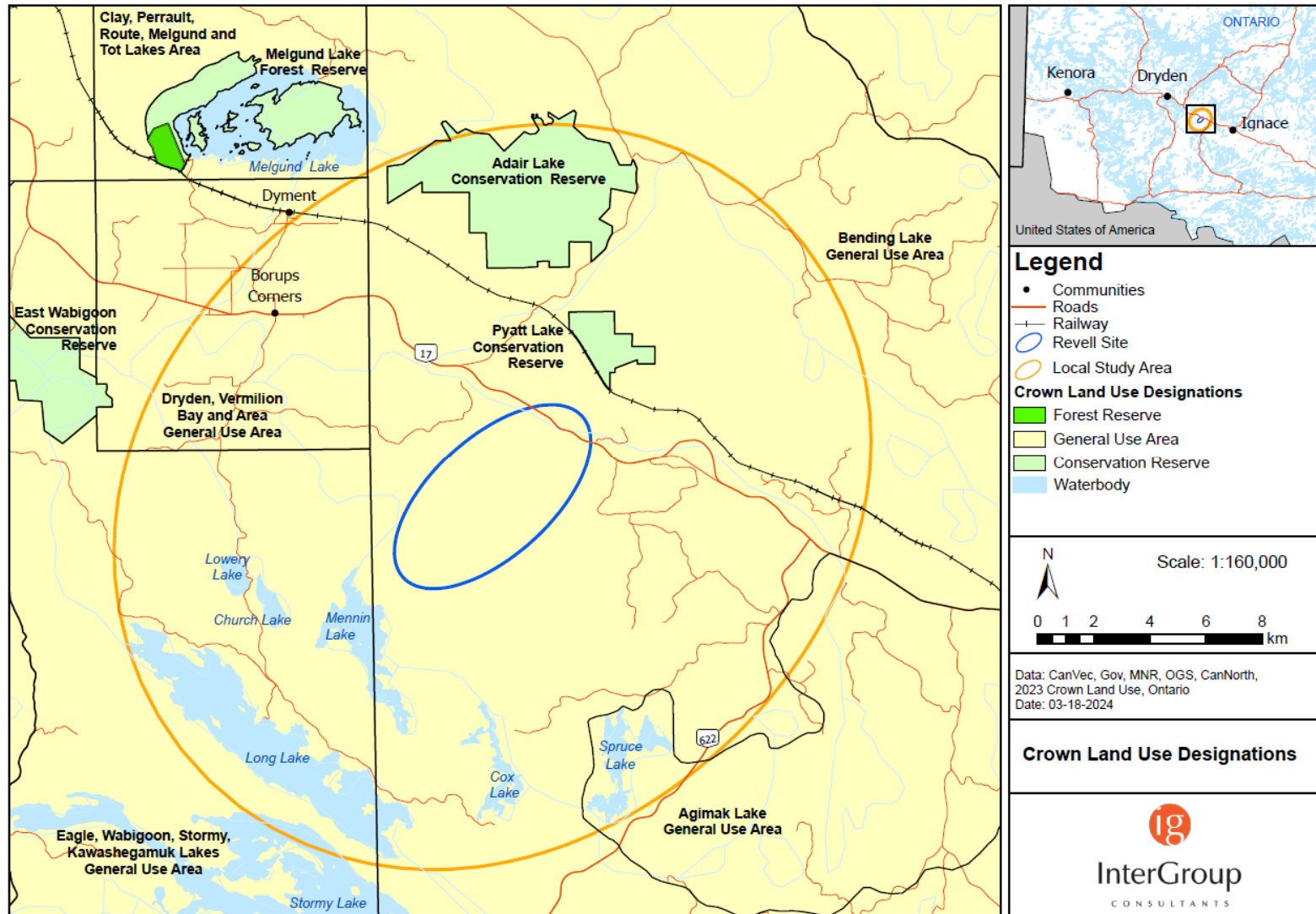
The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources has articulated the goals of Crown land management as: *"to contribute to the environmental, social and economic well-being of the province by providing for orderly use and sustainable development of Ontario Crown Land."* Guiding principles behind Crown land management policy include maintaining ecosystem integrity and healthy natural environments while simultaneously promoting social and economic development. The Government of Ontario's land management policies state that thorough planning, concern for future generations, as well as stakeholder consultation are essential aspects of Crown land management activities. Self-government of Indigenous communities and natural resources co-management arrangements are also regarded as an important element of Crown land management (Government of Ontario 1993).

#### 2.5.2.1.2 Land Use Designation Amendments

Land use amendments are required by the Province of Ontario to formally change area-specific land use policy. The approval process required for land use amendments in Ontario varies depending on a variety of factors including the planning processes and the land use designations. Land use amendments generally take place in circumstances where a new land use policy is implemented, boundary changes are being considered, or a more detailed land use policy is being developed. Land use amendments are evaluated by the MNRF based on the amendment's consistency with government policy, with official Crown land use planning, the similarity to other related projects, as well as several other factors including priority, urgency, and degree of public interest (Government of Ontario 2021a).

Land use amendments are classified into three categories in Ontario: administrative, minor, or major. Administrative land use amendments are intended for administrative purposes and generally include name changes and updates to existing land use designations. Differences between major and minor land use amendments are measured by their effects on general public interest, on local Indigenous communities, and their environmental impact. Major land use amendments require consultation with provincial level stakeholders, while minor amendments require consultation with regional or local stakeholders. The review of proposed land use amendment also considers any obligations to consult with Indigenous communities (Government of Ontario 2021a). Crown land uses in the Local Study Area are presented on **Map 2.5-2**.

Map 2.5-2: Crown Land Use Designations in the Local Study Area



The Local Study Area contains six individual land use areas designated by the MNRF. Four of these areas are general use Crown land and two are conservation areas.

Most Crown lands in Ontario are designated as general use areas. Permitted recreational uses of Crown land include camping, fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, accessing cottages or cabins, and other assorted recreational activities such as hiking, canoeing, and swimming (Government of Ontario n.d.a). In general, Indigenous peoples exercising their Aboriginal and Treaty Rights on Crown land are free to do so (Ministry of Natural Resources 2005). General use areas permit the largest range of resource and recreational uses of the Crown land designations; however, a general use area designation does not mean that all uses must be permitted. The policies for each general use area are established through local land use planning and are defined in the area's policy report (Government of Ontario 2021h).

The four general use areas are only partially represented in the Local Study Area, while the conservation reserves are both located fully in the Local Study Area. **Table 2.5-2** provides a summary of the Crown land areas in the Local Study Area. For official plans of Local Study Area communities, see **Section 2.3.4**.

**Table 2.5-2: Crown Land Use Designations in the Local Study Area**

Area ID	Area name	Land use designation	Percentage of Local Study Area	Total area in Area ID (ha)
G2511	Clay, Perrault, Route, Melgund, and Tot Lakes	General use Crown land	0.01%	3.6
G2531	Dryden, Vermillion Bay, and area	General use Crown land	9.7%	5,365.5
G2533	Eagle, Wabigoon, Stormy, and Kawashegamuk/ Long Lakes	General use Crown land	20.1%	11,085.3
G2544	Bending Lake	General use Crown land	61.4%	33,796.0
G2545	Agimak Lake	General use Crown land	3.1%	1,701.5
C2307	Pyatt Lake Conservation Reserve	Conservation Reserve	0.7%	401.3
C2308	Adair Lake Conservation Reserve	Conservation Reserve	5.0%	2,738.5

**Source:** Government of Ontario n.d.a.

### 2.5.2.1.3 General Use Crown Land Areas in the Local Study Area

The Dryden, Vermillion Bay, and area (G2531) covers 10% of the most northwestern part of the Local Study Area. The majority of this Crown land use area lies outside of the Local Study Area.



The Dryden District Land Use Guidelines (Ministry of Natural Resources 1983a) apply to land use development in this Crown land use area.

The Eagle, Wabigoon, Stormy, and Kawashegamuk Lakes area (G2533) covers 20% of the southwestern part of the Local Study Area and contains two tourism lakes. The Wabigoon Forest is also located in this area. The land use policy for this area is focused on maintaining a balance between resource extraction, development and managing recreational activities within the area. The Dryden District Land Use Guidelines of 1983 apply to land use development in this Crown land designation area.

The Bending Lake area (G2544) covers most (61%) of the Local Study Area, including the Revell site. This area contains several trout lakes as well as some agricultural land. Land use policy for this area focuses on the development of the timber industry as well as the management of recreational services. Cottage expansion is not permitted in this area. Road access is limited through the restrictions set according to the Ignace Fisheries Management Plan. Guidelines regulating land use include the Ignace District Land Use Guidelines of 1983, while trout lake management is governed by Inland Ontario Lakes Designated for Lake Trout Management (MNRF 2015).

The Agimak Lake area (G2545) covers 3% of the Local Study Area in southeastern corner and the Clay, Perrault, Route, Melgund, and Tot Lakes area (G2511) covers approximately 0.01% of the Study Area in the northwestern corner. No tourism expansion is permitted in this Crown land area. Guidelines regulating land use include the Ignace District Land Use Guidelines (Ministry of Natural Resources 1983b).

See **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data** for a detailed list of permitted Crown land uses of the general use areas in the Local Study Area.

#### 2.5.2.1.4 Conservation Reserve Areas in the Local Study Area

Two conservation reserves exist in the Local Study Area: Pyatt Lake Conservation Reserve (C2307) and Adair Lake Conservation Reserve (C2308) (**Map 2.5-2**). Both conservation reserves share identical vegetation types, management policy guidelines, and permitted land uses. Vegetation types include various kinds of open and treed bogs, fens, and swamps. Guidelines governing the management policies of the Conservation Reserves are found in the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act (Government of Ontario 2006) and Approved Management Direction for Conservation Reserves (Government of Ontario 2014a), as well as both the Adair Lake Conservation Reserve Statement (Government of Ontario 2003a) and the Pyatt Lake Conservation Reserve Management Statement (Government of Ontario 2003b).

#### 2.5.2.1.5 Permitted Land Uses in the Conservation Reserve Areas

Commercial activities are heavily restricted in the conservation reserves, with only existing activity including fishing operations, bear hunting, and wild rice harvesting permitted (Government of Ontario 2006). Permitted land and resource management activities include only fire suppression and inventory/monitoring. Recreational activities permitted include all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiling on trails only, food gathering, mountain biking, sport fishing, and

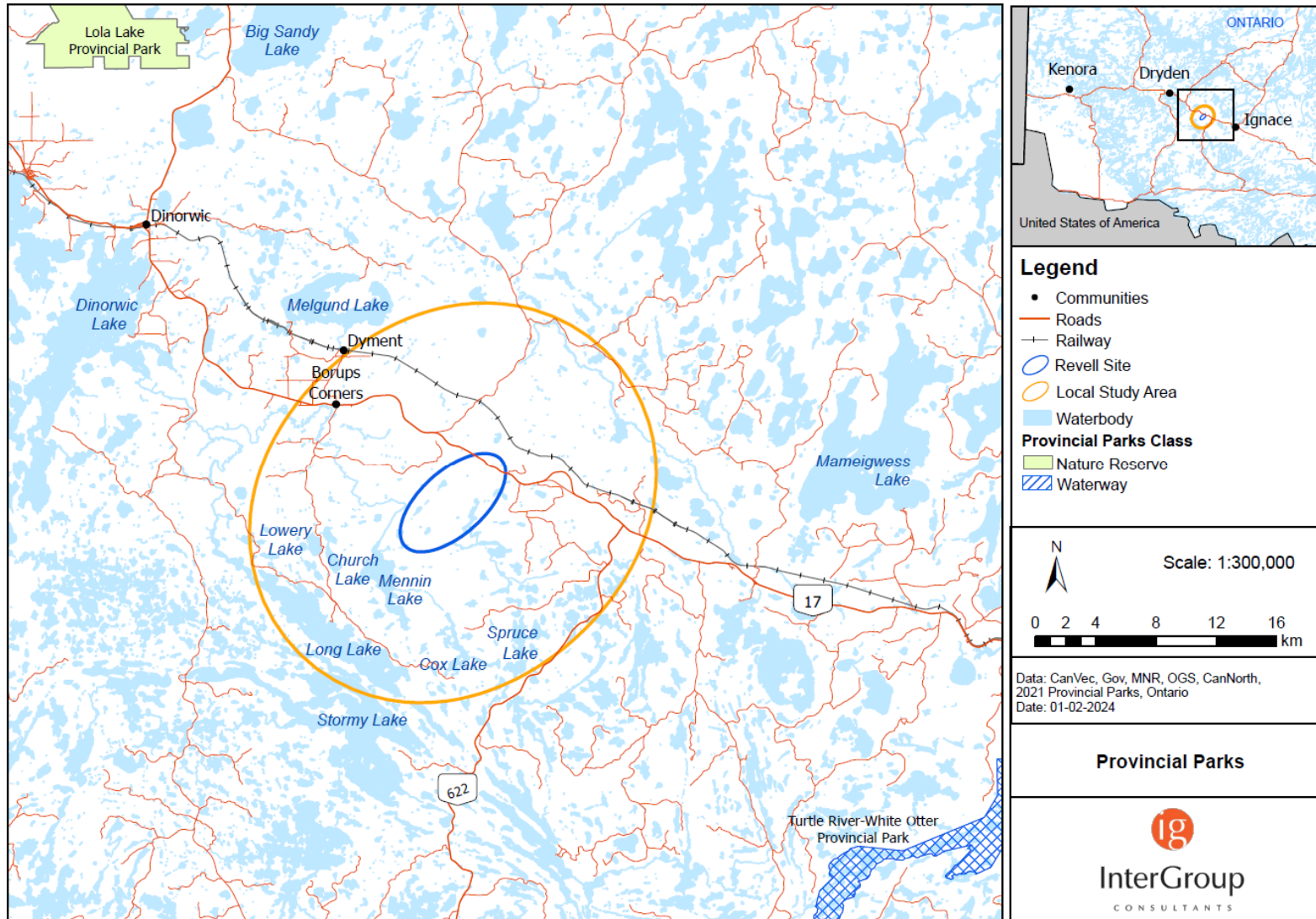
hunting. The detailed list of permitted uses for the conservation areas are summarized in **Appendix 2B Supplemental Data**.

### 2.5.2.2 Parks and Protected Areas

There are no provincial parks and two conservation reserves (see **Section 2.5.2.1.2**) located within the Local Study Area.

The closest provincial parks to the Local Study Area are Lola Provincial Park and Turtle-River White Otter Provincial Park (see **Map 2.5-3**). Lola Provincial Park is in the nature reserve class. Turtle-River White Otter Provincial Park is in the waterway class.

Map 2.5-3: Provincial Parks near the Local Study Area



The management of conservation reserves differs from the management of provincial parks only in that conservation reserves do not aim to attract visitors and rather focus on environmental maintenance. As noted in **Section 2.5.2.1.2**, there are two conservation reserves located in the Local Study Area, Adair Lake Conservation Reserve and Pyatt Lake Conservation Reserve (see **Map 2.5-2**). The *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act* lists the following as objectives for the conservation reserves in Ontario (Government of Ontario 2006):

- To permanently protect representative ecosystems, biodiversity, and provincially significant elements of Ontario's natural and cultural heritage and to manage these areas to ensure that ecological integrity is maintained.
- To provide opportunities for ecologically sustainable land uses, including traditional outdoor heritage activities and associated economic benefits.
- To facilitate scientific research and to provide points of reference to support monitoring of ecological change on the broader landscape.

### 2.5.3 Forestry

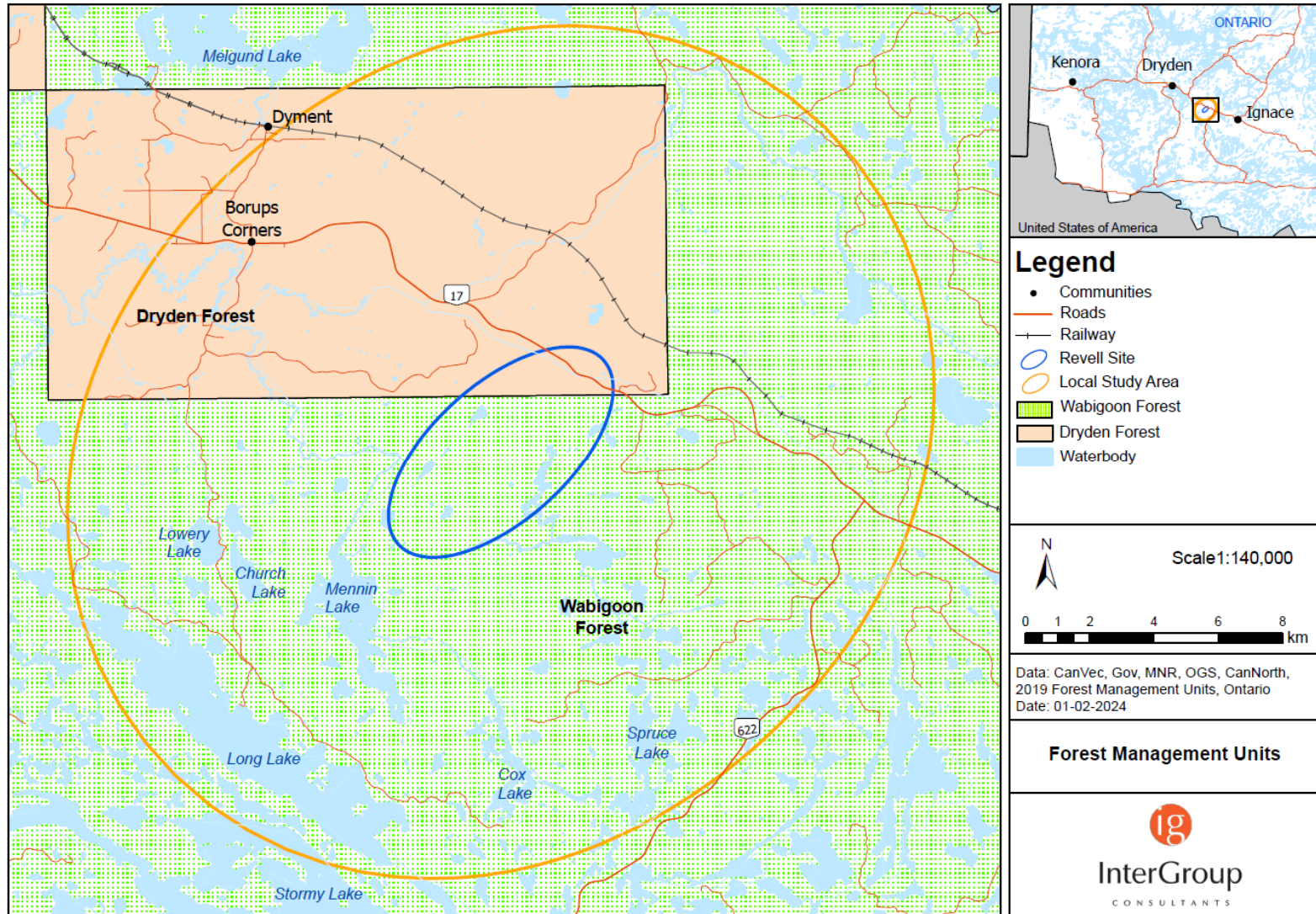
Forests cover about 66% of Ontario (70.4 million hectares); over half of these forests (56.3 million hectares) are commercially viable (Government of Ontario 2021d). Ontario's Crown forests are divided into three large Administrative Zones: Northern Boreal, Managed Forest Zone, and Great Lakes/Southern Ontario (Watkins 2021). The Local Study Area is in the Managed Forest Zone, which is currently divided into 39 Forest Management Units (Government of Ontario 2022d). Nearly 75% of the Managed Forest Zone is covered by Crown forests (34.3 million hectares), of which, over 80% are commercially viable (27.8 million hectares) (Government of Ontario 2021d). See **Section 3.4.2.3** for more information on forestry's role in the economy of the Local Study Area.

The Province's Crown Forest Administrative Zones are further divided into geographic planning areas known as management units. Management units are subject to the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act* of 1994 (Government of Ontario 1994) to meet the social, economic, and environmental needs of present and future generations, and outline guidance on access (e.g., roads and bridges), commercial uses (e.g., forestry), recreational uses, maintenance, and more (Government of Ontario 1994). Forestry Management Plans are approved for 10-year periods and are prepared by a Registered Professional Forester with input from Indigenous communities, municipalities, local stakeholders, and the general public to ensure all interested parties' values are recognized (ItTakesaForest n.d.).

Each forest has a Forest Management Plan ("FMP"), which outlines management of its corresponding forest including conditions on operations. Conditions on planned operations include regular harvest, bridging harvest, salvage harvest, operational prescriptions, harvest volumes and wood utilization by mill, contingency harvest areas and contingency harvest volumes, renewal and tending, renewal supporting, forest access and road use management, estimated renewal expenditures, and monitoring and assessment activities. **Map 2.5-4** provides the Forest Management Units in the Local Study Area.



# Map 2.5-4: Forest Management Units in the Local Study Area



The Local Study Area is covered by the Wabigoon Forest and Dryden Forest. The Wabigoon Forest stretches from Silvery Lake in the west to Osaquan Lake in the east, and from the southern shore of Lac Seul in the north to Dibble Lake and Nora Lake in the south. The Wabigoon Forest is bordered by the English River Forest in the east, the Boundary Waters Forest in the south, the Kenora and Whiskey Jack Forests in the west, and the Lac Seul Forest in the north and east, with the Dryden Forest located in between the three portions of the Wabigoon Forest. The current outer boundary of the Wabigoon Forest encompasses 732,296 hectares. The Wabigoon Forest is comprised of white pine, red pine, upland cedar, spruce, jack pine, poplar, white birch, and balsam fir trees (Domtar Inc. 2019). Domtar Inc. is the Sustainable Forest Licence holder for the Wabigoon Forest. Domtar was acquired by the Paper Excellence Group in 2021 but operates as a stand-alone business (Paper Excellence 2021). The current FMP period for the Wabigoon Forest is 2019 to 2029. The Sustainable Forest Licence for the Wabigoon Forest permits Domtar to harvest all tree species within the licence area (Government of Ontario 2022d; 2018c).

**Table 2.5-3** presents the Wabigoon Forest Harvest Volumes from 2010 to 2017. For the current Wabigoon Forest FMP period, the estimated available net merchantable conifer harvest volume is approximately 4.53 million cubic metres and an additional 1.14 million cubic metres of undersized and defect conifer volume is estimated, while the planned conifer harvest volume is approximately 4.02 million cubic metres. The estimated available net merchantable hardwood harvest volume is approximately 1.84 million cubic metres and an additional 0.7 million cubic metres of undersized and defect hardwood volume is estimated, while the planned hardwood harvest volume is approximately 2.04 million cubic metres (Domtar Inc. 2019).

**Table 2.5-3: Harvest Volumes, Wabigoon Forest 2010-2017**

Year	Harvest Type	Actual Harvest Volume (m <sup>3</sup> )	Undersized Volume (m <sup>3</sup> )
2010/2011	Regular	618,852	61,037
2011/2012	Regular	556,001	57,150
2012/2013	Regular	377,436	42,747
2013/2014	Regular	495,526	51,552
	Salvage	1672	162
2014/2015	Regular	789,776	82,907
	Salvage	63,082	0
2015/2016	Regular	633,275	65,452
	Salvage	13,028	0
2016/2017	Regular	612,953	48,498
	Salvage	16,533	0

**Source:** Domtar Inc. 2019.

According to the Wabigoon Forest 2023-2024 Annual Work Schedule, harvest operations in the Local Study Area will occur in the following areas (**Map 2.5-5**) (Domtar Inc. 2022):



- BLK: BL70 east of Melgund Lake, west of Adair Lake Conservation Reserve;
- BLK: BO168 southeast of Adair Lake Conservation Reserve, northeast of Pyatt Lake Conservation Reserve, south of Hyndman Lake;
- BLK: BO182 north of Bulrush Lake;
- BLK: BO189 on the east side of Garneau Lake;
- BLK: BO189 surrounding the west end of Countess Lake;
- BLK: BO190 west of Bulrush Lake, north side of Highway 17 and south of the railway.
- BLK: BO191 southwest of Garneau Lake, southeast of Pyatt Lake Reserve, north of Highway 17;
- BLK: RA269 south and southeast sides of Spruce Lake, north and northeast of West Hawk Lake;
- BLK: RA270 on the northeast side of Spruce Lake, south of Spruce Road;
- BLK: SB239 northeast of Lowery Lake and Church Lake, north of Mennin Lake, and south of Dymment Road;
- BLK: SB240 north of Lowery Lake and Church Lake; and
- BLK: SB241 east of Tabor Lake, northwest of Lowery Lake.

The Dryden Forest is located along Highway 17, stretching from the western boundary of the Dryden District to 50 km outside of the Township of Ignace in the east. The Dryden Forest is primarily bordered by the Wabigoon Forest to the north, south, and east, and Whisky Jack Forest to the north and west. The current outer boundary of the Dryden Forest encompasses 307,113 hectares. The Dryden Forest is comprised of balsam fir, birch, upland cedar, jack pine, white pine, red pine, poplar, and black spruce trees (Dryden Forest Management Company 2021). Dryden Forest Management Company Limited is the Sustainable Forest Licence holder for licenced harvest in the Dryden Forest. The current FMP period for the Dryden Forest is 2021 to 2031. The Sustainable Forest Licence permits Dryden Forest Management Company Limited to harvest all tree species within the licence area (Government of Ontario 2022d; 2018c). See **Table 2.5-4** for Dryden Forest harvest volumes from 2010 to 2017.

For the current 10-year Dryden Forest FMP period (2007 to 2017), the estimated available conifer harvest volume is approximately 1.2 million cubic metres and an additional 0.38 million cubic metres of undersized and defect conifer volume is estimated, while the planned conifer harvest volume is approximately 1.13 million cubic metres. The estimated available hardwood harvest volume is approximately 0.48 million cubic metres and an additional 0.25 million cubic metres of undersized and defect hardwood volume, while the planned hardwood harvest volume is approximately 0.42 million cubic metres (Dryden Forest Management Company 2021).

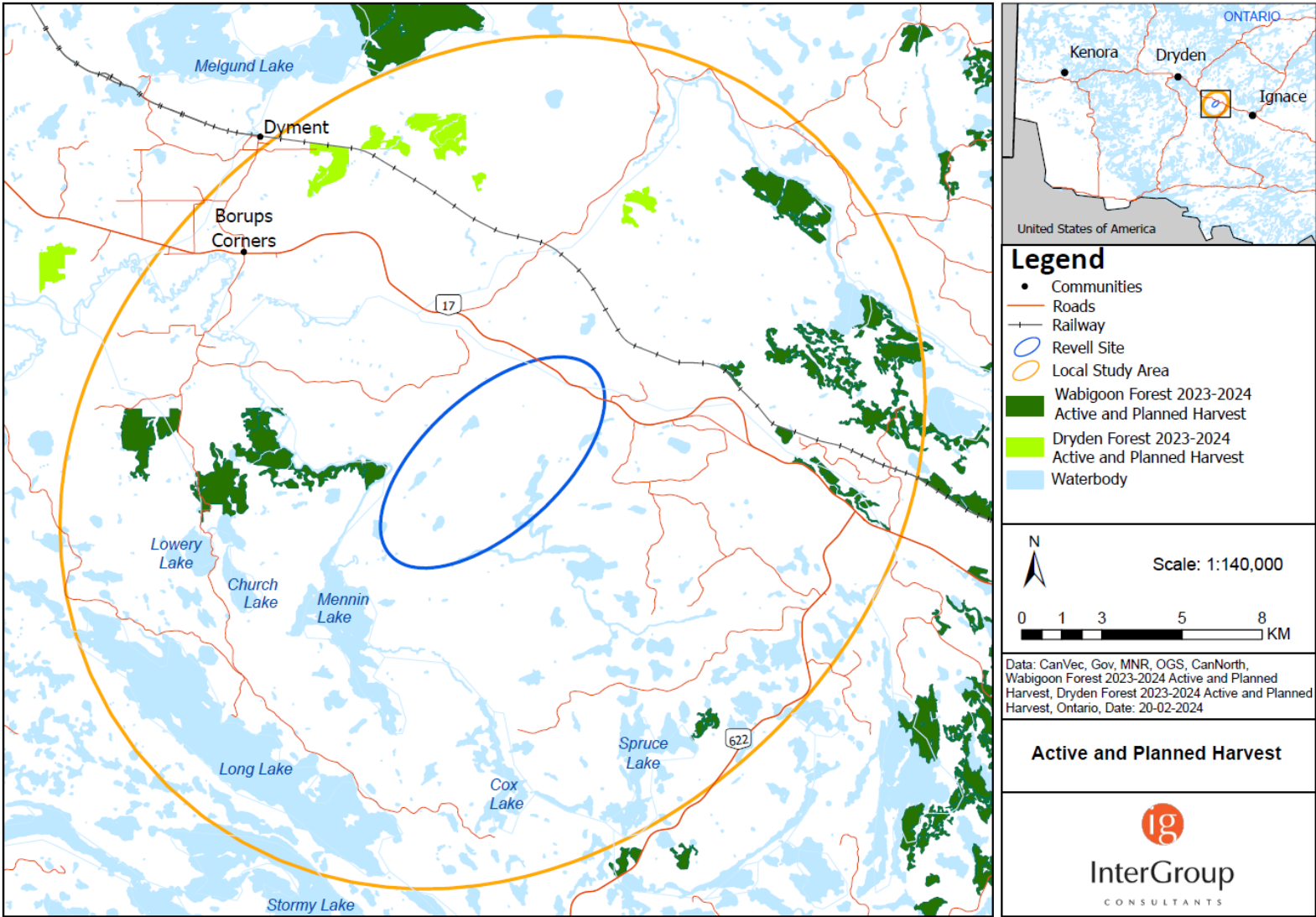
**Table 2.5-4: Harvest Volumes, Dryden Forest 2010-2017**

Year	Actual Harvest Volume (m <sup>3</sup> )		
	Merchantable	Undersize	Defect
2010/2011	164,378	25,290	9,042
2011/2012	129,484	12,592	7,851
2012/2013	81,264	7,483	6,585
2013/2014	103,718	7,111	5,378
2014/2015	54,809	3,121	2,276
2015/2016	103,392	10,484	8,304
2016/2017	141,926	11,627	16,665

**Source:** Dryden Forest Management Company 2021.

According to the Dryden Forest 2023-2024 Annual Work Schedule, harvest operations in the Local Study Area will occur in OBM 55549 and OBM 56549 (see **Map 2.5-5**) (Dryden Forest Management Company 2022).

Map 2.5-5: Active and Planned Harvest in the Local Study Area, 2023-2024



## 2.5.4 Fishing

This section describes fishing in the Local Study Area, including fisheries management zones, commercial fishing, and recreational fishing.

### 2.5.4.1 Fisheries Management Zones

Ontario has 20 Fisheries Management Zones (“FMZ”) that set catch limits and seasons based on the needs and nature of each FMZ. The Local Study Area is located along the boundaries of FMZs 4 and 5.

FMZ 4 covers 60,440 square kilometres in northwestern Ontario, 25% of which is privately owned. Fishing in FMZ 4 is an important recreational, commercial, and tourism activity, with species including northern pike, walleye, lake trout, lake whitefish, smallmouth bass, and muskellunge. FMZ 4 also has lakes stocked with brook trout, rainbow trout, and splake. FMZ 4 is part of the Northwest Bait Management Zone, where baitfish and leeches, alive or dead, may not be transported out of the Bait Management Zone. The following lakes are waterbody exceptions, which have different regulations than the rest of FMZ 4: Big Vermillion Lake, Cedar Lake, Cloudlet Lake, Hooch Lake, Lac Seul, Maskinonge Lake, Minnitaki Lake (including Abram Lake, Duck Lake, Pelican Lake, Hidden Lake, Botsford Lake, English River and Rice River), Red Lake and Gullrock System (including Chukuni River, Keg Lake, Ranger Lake, and Two Island Lake), and Sydney Lake Area (Government of Ontario 2023e). None of the FMZ 4 waterbody exceptions are located within the Local Study Area. See **Section 2.5.4.3** for zone-wide seasons and limits. Participants of stakeholder engagement for previous NWMO studies shared that there is a known walleye spawning area between Arethusa Lake and Mit Lake along the Basket River in FMZ 4 (NWMO 2021).

FMZ 5 covers 44,360 square kilometres in northwestern Ontario, 90% of which is Crown land. FMZ 5 is home to 5,000 lakes and thousands of kilometres of rivers and streams. Fishing in FMZ 5 is an important recreation, commercial, and tourism activity, with species including walleye, lake trout, northern pike, smallmouth bass, black crappie, lake whitefish, and muskellunge. FMZ 5 is part of the Northwest Bait Management Zone, where baitfish and leeches, alive or dead, may not be transported out of the Bait Management Zone.

The following are waterbody exceptions, which have different regulations than the rest of FMZ 5: Dinorwic Lake (including Minnehaha Lake, Rock Lake and Turtlepond Lake), Dryberry Lake, Eagle Lake, Experimental Lakes Area, Kakagi Lake, Lake of the Woods, Quetico Provincial Park, Rainy Lake, Rainy River, Seine River System, Shoal Lake, Wabigoon River (including Butler Lake, Larson Lake, Mile Lake, Olsen Lake, Paulson Lake and Trap Lake) and Winnipeg River System (Government of Ontario 2023e). None of the FMZ 5 waterbody exceptions are located within the Local Study Area. See **Section 2.5.4.3** for zone-wide seasons and limits.

According to results from key person interviews, fish populations in FMZs 4 and 5 are among the healthiest in Ontario; however, a challenge in managing these zones is balancing the health of fisheries while being mindful of the economic importance of fishing to the local economy (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). See **Sections 2.5.4.2** and **2.5.4.3** for more information on commercial and recreational fishing in the Local Study Area.

### 2.5.4.2 Commercial Fishing

Currently, there are no active commercial fishing licences in the Local Study Area. The closest active commercial fishing licence to the Local Study Area is for Sturgeon Lake to harvest lake whitefish, with incidental quotas for walleye, pike, and lake trout (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Prior to 1984, commercial fishing activities in Ontario did not have established quotas for commercial fishing licence holders. Commonly known as the modernization of the commercial fishery, quotas were established in 1984 after consultation with the Ontario Fish Producers Association (Kerr 2010). In 2021, Ontario harvested over 25.5 million pounds of fish, valued at roughly \$39.9 million. A 10-year trend, from 2011 to 2021, suggests commercial fishing harvests in Ontario have remained consistent at around 25-30 million pounds of fish per year, with the exception of the years 2018 to 2020, when harvests were under 25 million pounds (OCFA 2021).

FMZ 4 is situated north of FMZ 5, and encompasses the larger communities of Red Lake, Ear Falls, Sioux Lookout, and Ignace. There are 27 commercial licences in FMZ 4, but only 19 are active. Of the active licences, seven are issued for Specially Designated Waters ("SDW") lakes and the remaining 12 are on non-SDW lakes. Lake Whitefish account for 88% of the available quota in FMZ 4. There are 306 commercial baitfish harvest blocks, all of which are allocated.

Lakes in FMZ 5 generally have lower nutrient levels than other zones in the region and therefore have lower production. Within FMZ 5 there are 21 commercial licences/allocations on non-SDW lakes and an additional 25 licences on SDW lakes. There are 311 commercial baitfish blocks; however, because one person may fish multiple blocks, the number of harvesters is less than this. Most fishing in FMZ 5 is done by First Nation individuals or communities and individuals who identify as Métis (Government of Ontario 2021c). As with FMZ 4, the most important commercial species in FMZ 5 is Lake Whitefish, which account for 88% of the allocated quota of 185,700 lbs from non-SDW lakes. There are smaller quota allocations for northern pike, walleye, and black crappie. Quotas also exist for lake sturgeon, although no harvesting occurs due to self-imposed moratoriums by the First Nation communities holding the licences (Government of Ontario 2021c). The estimated value of baitfish and leeches harvested from FMZ 5 was \$5.4 million dollars in 2009 (Government of Ontario 2021c). **Table 2.5-5** provides information on the inactive commercial fishing licences in the Local Study Area and their last date of activity.

**Table 2.5-5: Last Active Commercial Fishing Licences in the Local Study Area**

Lake	Year of last active license
Kawashagamuk/Long Lake	2005
Stormy Lake	2005

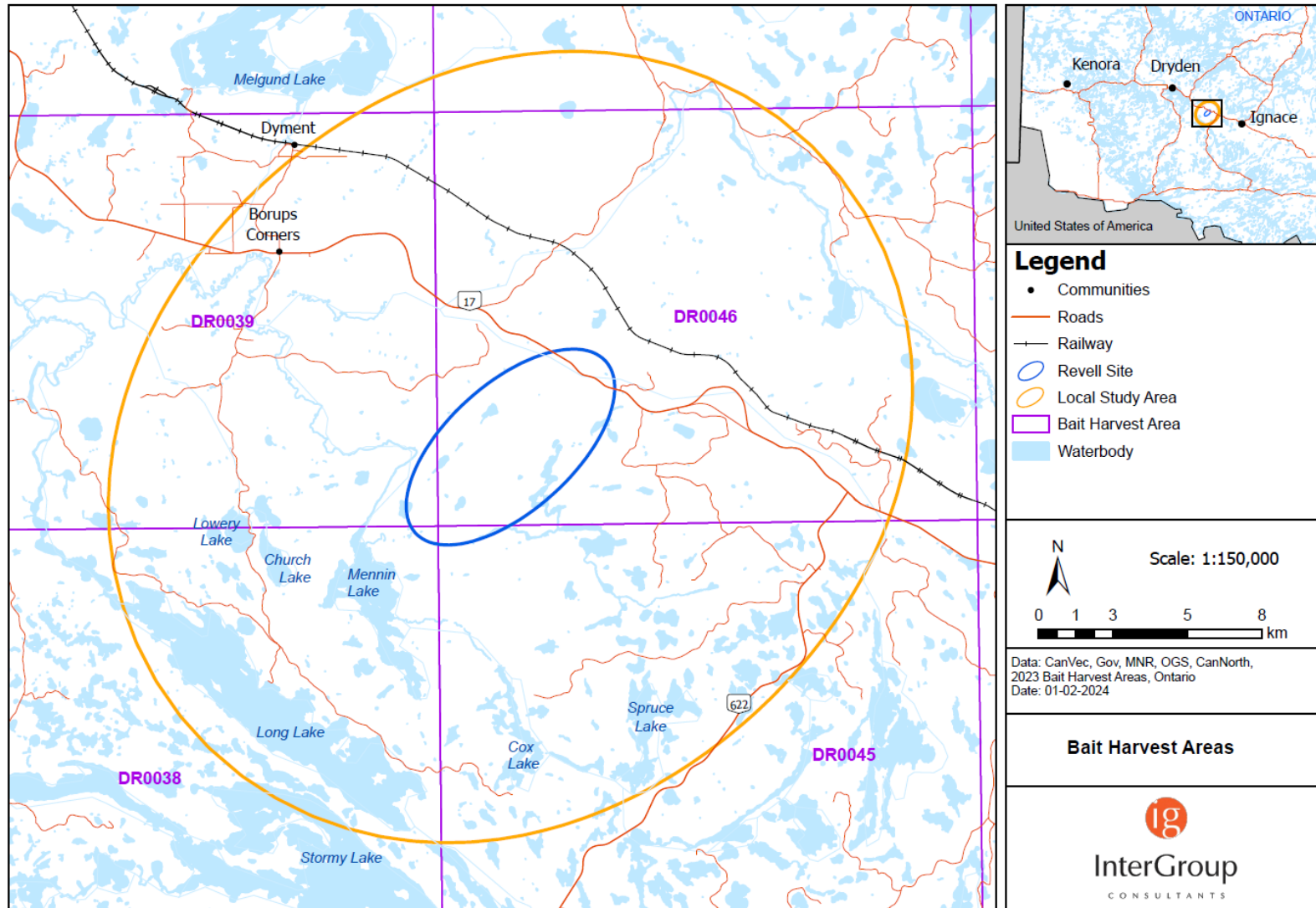
**Source:** NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023; MNRF personal communication, July 21, 2023.

Sustainable harvesting of bait is an important aspect of fishing in Ontario. Ontario has Bait Management Zones (BMZs) to minimize the spread of invasive species and fish diseases amongst waterbodies in the province. The Local Study Area is located in the Northwestern BMZ. Anglers must purchase their baitfish and leeches from a commercial license holder in the BMZ in which they are fishing and use or dispose of baitfish and leeches within two weeks of their purchase while retaining a legible receipt for their bait. A receipt is not required when an angler is using bait in the BMZ where their primary residence is located (Government of Ontario 2021i).

A commercial bait license is required to both harvest and deal (buy or sell) bait. There are 48 species of bait which may be harvested and dealt with for a commercial bait license in Ontario (Government of Ontario 2021i). Bait resources are assigned to harvesters using a bait harvest block system. Across most of the province, there is one harvester assigned per bait block, however, there are some exceptions (e.g., Lake Erie) (Ontario GeoHub 2023). **Map 2.5-6** displays the bait harvest blocks located in the Local Study Area. Six bait harvest areas cross into the Local Study Area.



### Map 2.5-6: Bait Harvest Areas in the Local Study Area



### 2.5.4.3 Recreational Fishing

Recreational fishing is a key activity in the Local Study Area, both for residents and tourists. The most popular species for recreational fishing are walleye, northern pike, lake trout, brook trout, smallmouth bass, lake whitefish, sauger, and yellow perch (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Participants from key person interviews shared that residents and visitors to the Local Study Area enjoy fishing in the region because of the healthy fish populations, the easy access to remoteness/isolation when out on a lake, and the natural beauty of the area (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Residents and visitors may participate in fishing derbies, information on fishing derbies and other community events are described in **Section 2.4.6**.

In 2005, a new Ecological Framework for Recreational Fisheries Management in Ontario was approved to ensure resource sustainability while optimizing recreational angling opportunities (Government of Ontario 2020b). The Ecological Framework for Recreational Fisheries Management has evolved since it was initially launched to include specific emphasis on the development of Fisheries Management Plans. The Fisheries Management Plans are a regulatory framework that supports resource sustainability within established zones for the management of major species and fisheries, along with actions and strategies to achieve the objectives (Government of Ontario 2020b; Government of Ontario 2021b; OCFA n.d.).

A fishing licence is required to fish in Ontario, however, fishing licences are not required for individuals under the age of 18 or over the age of 65. Fishing licences can be valid for one or three years and for either conservation (reduced catch limits) or sport (normal catch limits) (Government of Ontario 2023a).

**Table 2.5-6** and **Table 2.5-7** describe the species, seasons, and catch limits in FMZs 4 and 5, respectively. There are no species exceptions, waterbody exceptions, or fish sanctuaries for angling in the Local Study Area for FMZs 4 and 5.

Table 2.5-6: FMZ 4 Zone-Wide Season and Catch Limits

Species	Season	Sport Fishing Licence Catch Limit	Conservation Licence Catch Limit
Brook trout	January 1 to Labour Day	5; not more than 1 greater than 30 cm	2; not more than 1 greater than 30 cm
Crappie	Open all year	15	10
Lake sturgeon	Closed all year	Not available	Not available
Lake trout	January 1 to September 30	2; not more than 1 greater than 56 cm	1; no size limit
Lake whitefish	Open all year	12	6
Large and smallmouth bass combined	Open all year	2; must be less than 35 cm from January 1 to June 30 and December 1 to December 31 4; no size limit from July 1 to November 30	1; must be less than 35 cm from January 1 to June 30 and December 1 to December 31 2; no size limit from July 1 to November 30
Muskellunge	Third Saturday in June to December 15	1; must be greater than 102 cm	0
Northern pike	Open all year	4; none between 70-90 cm, not more than 1 greater than 90 cm	2; none between 70-90 cm, not more than 1 greater than 90 cm
Rainbow trout	Open all year	5	2
Splake	Open all year	5	2
Sunfish	Open all year	50	25
Walleye and sauger combined	January 1 to April 14 and third Saturday in May to December 31	4; not more than 1 greater than 46 cm	2; not more than 1 greater than 46 cm
Yellow perch	Open all year	50	25

**Source:** Government of Ontario 2023e.

**Note:** cm is centimetres.

Table 2.5-7: FMZ 5 Zone-Wide Seasons and Catch Limits

Species	Season	Sport Fishing Licence Catch Limit	Conservation Licence Catch Limit
Brook trout	Open all year	5	2
Brown trout	Open all year	5	2
Crappie	Open all year	10	5
Lake sturgeon	Closed all year	Not available	Not available
Lake trout	January 1 to September 30	2; not more than 1 greater than 56 cm from September 1 to September 30	1; no size limit
Lake whitefish	Open all year	12	6
Large and smallmouth bass combined	Open all year	4; must be less than 35 cm from January 1 to June 30	2; must be less than 35 cm from January 1 to June 30
Muskellunge	Third Saturday in June to December 15	1; must be greater than 102 cm	0
Northern pike	Open all year	4; none greater than 75 cm	2; none greater than 75 cm
Rainbow trout	Open all year	5	2
Splake	Open all year	5	2
Sunfish	Open all year	50	25
Walleye and sauger combined	January 1 to April 14 and third Saturday in May to December 31	4; not more than 1 greater than 46 cm	2; not more than 1 greater than 46 cm
Yellow perch	Open all year	50	25

**Source:** Government of Ontario 2023e.

**Note:** cm is centimetres.

Fish can contain harmful contaminants from human activity or natural sources that make them unsuitable for consumption (Government of Ontario 2023p). The suitability of a fish for consumption can be determined through their type, size, and location. The Province of Ontario analyzes fish for contaminants and provides guidance for specific fish species and/or size ranges. In the Local Study Area, Kawashegamuk/Long Lake and Stormy Lake have fish consumption advisories for fish species including Burbot Ling, Lake Trout, Lake Whitefish, Northern Pike, Walleye, and White Sucker (Government of Ontario 2021m; 2021n).

## 2.5.5 Hunting

Hunting in the Local Study Area is both a recreational activity and source of food for many residents. Hunting is also an important source of income for local tourist outfitting and guiding businesses.

According to key person interviews (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023) hunting in the Local Study Area around the Revell Site occurs for waterfowl.<sup>34</sup> Other game hunted in the area include moose, bear, small game, and grouse.

A hunting licence and Outdoors Card is required to hunt in Ontario. Licences are specific to the game an individual wishes to hunt and this information is listed on the licence summary. In Ontario, firearms for hunting include rifles, shotguns, muzzle-loading guns, air or pellet guns, and bows (including longbows, crossbows, compound bows, and recurve bows). Air and pellet guns are not permitted for hunting big game but may be used to hunt small game (Government of Ontario 2023c). If a person is hunting with a gun, they require proof of firearms accreditation as per the *Firearms Act* (Government of Canada 1995).

Outdoors Cards are identification cards that allow individuals to hunt and fish in Ontario (Government of Ontario 2022b). Tags are required for hunting moose, deer, wolf/coyote (only in certain Wildlife Management Units), wild turkey, black bear, and elk in Ontario. Not all tags are acquired the same way. For example, bear tags can be purchased in Ontario, while moose tags are allocated to Ontario resident applicants through a points-based process with primary and secondary allocation stages (Government of Ontario 2024; 2023b).

Non-residents of Ontario must use the services of a licenced tourist outfitter to hunt in Ontario (Government of Ontario 2022c). To hunt moose and bear with a tourist outfitter, visitors must have an Outdoors Card, and purchase a moose/bear licence prior to arriving at the outfitter (Government of Ontario 2023b; 2023c).

### 2.5.5.1 Wildlife Management Units

Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) are designated areas in the province used for several wildlife management purposes such as indicating hunting areas, hunting seasons, and harvest quotas (Government of Ontario 2015). Wildlife Management Units are regulated under the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (Government of Ontario 1997). The Local Study Area includes WMUs 5 and 9A (Government of Ontario 2023c). Residents and visitors in the Local Study Area also hunt in other WMUs (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

The WMUs are assigned to MNR districts. The Dryden District includes WMU 5. The Dryden District has MNR offices in both Ignace and Dryden. The Fort Frances District includes WMU 9. The Fort Frances District has MNR offices in both Fort Frances and Atikokan (Government of Ontario 2023c).

**Table 2.5-8** displays hunting seasons by game type and WMU for rifles, shotguns, muzzle-loading guns, and bows.

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<sup>34</sup> Other hunting in the Local Study Area may occur which was not captured through the NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023.

Table 2.5-8: Hunting Seasons by Species

Game	WMUs	Season
White-tailed deer	5, 9A	October 7 – December 15
Moose	5, 9A	October 14 – December 15
Black bear	5, 9A	May 1 – June 15
Ducks	5, 9A	September 10 – December 25
Canada, Cackling, Snow, and Ross's geese	5, 9A	September 1 – December 16
Ruffed, spruce, and sharp-tailed grouse, ring-necked pheasant, double-crested cormorant, gray and fox squirrel	5, 9A	September 15 – December 31
Snowshoe hare	5, 9A	September 15 – March 31
Raccoon and opossum	5, 9A	October 5 – January 31
Weasel	5, 9A	October 25 – last day of February

**Sources:** Government of Ontario 2023c; Government of Canada 2022a.

### 2.5.5.2 Hunting Organizations

The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (“OFAH”) is a non-profit, membership-based organization representing over 100,000 members and 725 member clubs. It works to promote fishing and hunting while advocating for management and conservation of species. The OFAH is divided into nine zones. The Local Study Area is located in OFAH Zone A (OFAH n.d.).

### 2.5.6 Commercial Trapping

Trapping is the use of a device to capture a fur-bearing mammal remotely, most often to use or sell the pelts and occasionally for food and other products and for nuisance trapping. Trapping plays an important role in the management of wildlife populations. It is important to note that traplines and trapping regulations are a result of colonialism and do not necessarily reflect traditional Indigenous values when it comes to land and wildlife management (Finch 2020). Species typically trapped in the Local Study Area include beaver, pine marten, fisher, red fox, weasel, mink, lynx, and squirrels (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

#### 2.5.6.1 Trapping Regulations

All trappers must maintain a trapping licence and adhere to its regulations, which outline where a trapper may trap, the harvest quotas for certain species, and the traps that a trapper may use. Trappers must also report their harvest each year by submitting a mandatory Season End Harvest Report that identifies the number of animals they trapped, sold, and kept. Ontario



trapping requirements are set out in the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (Government of Ontario 1997; Government of Ontario 2021e).

The Ontario Fur Managers Federation was established in 1995 and is the provincial body that represents and advocates for trappers in Ontario. The Ontario Fur Managers Federation issues over 8,000 trapping licences annually (OFMF n.d.a). The Ontario Fur Managers Federation's mission is to promote the conservation and sustainability of furbearers through the promotion of humane harvesting, continued education, and public awareness (OFMF n.d.b).

### 2.5.6.2 Registered Traplines

A registered trapline is a pre-determined area for trapping on Crown land. Rights to these traplines are managed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and are often passed down through generations within a family. In addition to traplines, trappers may trap on private land with permission from the landowner(s). Every trapline is assigned a head trapper who has the right to commercially harvest fur-bearing mammals in their trapline area. Head trappers may also choose to have helper trappers to assist them, but helper trappers are not assigned a quota, rather, they help the head trapper with their quota (Hunters and Fishers of Ontario 2020).

There are 6 traplines in the Local Study Area as listed in **Table 2.5-9**. **Map 2.5-7** shows the traplines located in the Local Study Area.

**Table 2.5-9: Traplines in the Local Study Area**

Trapline Area Number	Calculated Area (ha)	Area of Trapline in Local Study Area (ha)	Area of Trapline in Revell Site (ha)
IG033	18,598.8	10,136.7	131.7
IG034	10,793.2	4,236.1	N/A
IG054	24,035.2	12,260.3	N/A
DR010	21,786.7	8,337.6	N/A
DR023	6,599.8	1,390.0	N/A
DR024	32,290.4	18,731.0	2,788.3

**Source:** Government of Ontario 2023f.

**Note:** Measurements converted from square meters to hectares by InterGroup Consultants.

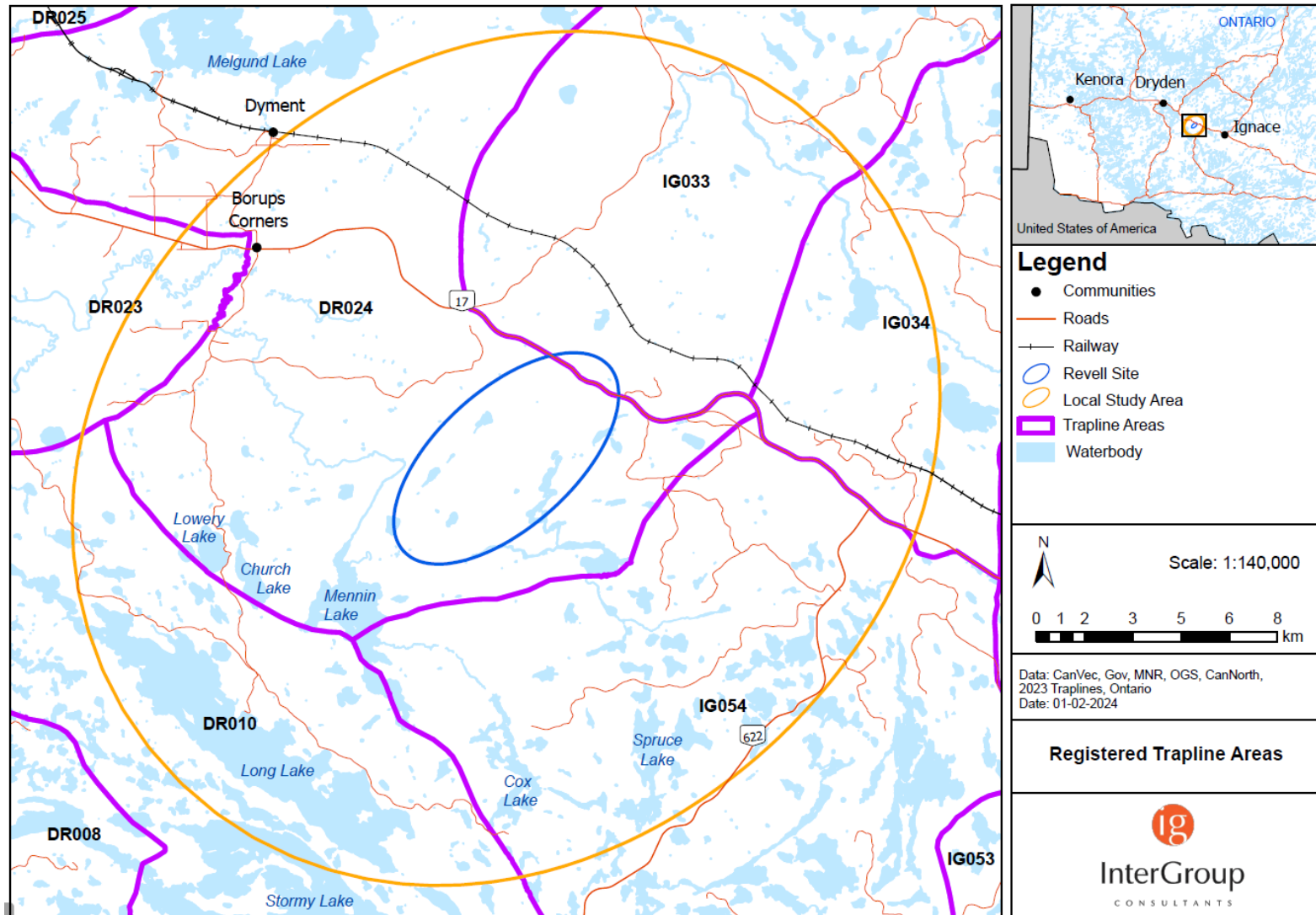
Both the Township of Ignace and the City of Dryden have trappers councils. Trappers councils maintain relations with forestry companies in the area to maintain access to traplines, such as getting access to bridge crossings, and also hold regular meetings with the MNRF. Trappers councils also hold trapping classes for new trappers. According to results from key person interviews, uptake of trapping is decreasing amongst youth in the area (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Trappers councils may also hold trapping workshops for existing trappers.

According to the NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023, the Ignace Trappers Council used to have regular meetings with MNRF, but engagement at the local level with the MNRF has been less frequent. The Council holds trapping courses for ages 13 to 60. The Council also used to hold trapping workshops, but due to a loss of funds and members the workshops have ceased. The Ignace Trappers Council is currently in the process of working to bring more trappers to the Council, encourage new trappers to get involved in the practice, and host more regular meetings to update trappers on trends (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The Ignace Trappers Council also runs the nuisance beaver<sup>35</sup> program for the area (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

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<sup>35</sup> Beavers may be deemed a 'nuisance' if their dams cause the flooding of roads, harvesting areas, etc.

Map 2.5-7: Registered Trapline Areas in the Local Study Area



### 2.5.7 Outfitting and Guiding

This section describes the types of services offered by outfitters who are located in the Local Study Area or may use the lands and resources in and around it, including information on Bear Management Areas (**Section 2.5.7.1**). Outfitting and guiding is a critical part of tourism in the Local Study Area and region. Outfitters and guides offer a variety of hunting and fishing experiences by providing direction, assistance, or expertise in hunting and angling. They often organize the services, equipment, and accommodations clients require during their visits. Fishing is the most popular tourism activity, followed by hunting. Key person interviews emphasized the importance of tourism to the local economy, stating that tourism and fishing are the same thing in northwestern Ontario (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Tourism is characterized as the “lifeblood” of the small communities in northwestern Ontario, being an economic constant compared to other industries in the area, like forestry and mining. Tourists from the United States make up 90-100% of outfitting and guiding clients in northwestern Ontario. The COVID-19 pandemic had large, negative effects on tourist outfitters in northwestern Ontario, with most operators losing three full tourist seasons as the COVID-19 pandemic regulations at the U.S.A./Canada border were still in place until the fall of 2022 (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Key person interviews indicate that tourist outfitters rely on the perception of northwestern Ontario’s pristine natural environment to attract clients (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). The wilderness plays an important role in the reason tourists visit the region to take part in outdoor recreational activities, particularly fishing and hunting. Participants shared that any perceived alteration to the natural environment in the region could affect outfitting and guiding businesses, making participation in outdoor activities less desirable.

**Table 2.5-10** identifies resorts and lodges that provide outfitting and/or guiding services north of Ignace along the Highway 599 corridor, along the 325 Road, west to Wabigoon and Dinorwic Lakes, and along Highway 622 and their relative distance to the Local Study Area.<sup>36</sup> The table includes outfitting and/or guiding services within 100 km of the Local Study Area. Tourist outfitters located outside of the Local Study Area may use locations within the Local Study Area to carry out their operations/services based on the needs and interests of their clients; however, their main locations are elsewhere (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Outfitting operators/lodges offer a variety of services and activities, including cabins, campsites, RV sites, outposts, floatplane services, fishing, bear hunting, moose hunting, white-tailed deer hunting, gamebird hunting, timber wolf hunting, hiking, bird watching, and gathering (e.g., berries, mushrooms), and boat/motor rentals, with some also offering winter activities including ice fishing and snowmobiling.

Sandy Point Camp is in the Local Study Area on Kawashegamuk/Long Lake and offers cabin rentals, boat rentals, bear hunting, moose hunting, grouse hunting, and fishing, as well as guiding services for hunting and fishing (Sandy Point Camp n.d.a; n.d.b; n.d.c). Sandy Point Camp’s biggest attraction is hunting and fishing as well as the feeling of ‘remoteness’ provided at the Camp. The Camp’s location provides access to several ATV and hiking trails (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

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<sup>36</sup> This list does not include tourist outfitters east of Upsala or on the Lac Des Mille Lacs chain of lakes.

Table 2.5-10: Outfitting and Guiding Operators

Operator <sup>1</sup>	Location	Distance from Local Study Area (km) <sup>2,3</sup>	Camping	Cabins	Boat, Motor, and/or Trailer Rental	Float plane <sup>4</sup>	Hunting						Fishing
							Moose	Bear	White-Tailed Deer	Grouse	Timber Wolf	Waterfowl	
<b>Outfitting and Guiding Operators in the Local Study Area</b>													
Sandy Point Camp	Long Lake	0 km		X	X		X	X		X			X
<b>Outfitting and Guiding Operators Located within 100 km of the Local Study Area</b>													
Agimac Lake Resort	Agimac Lake	27.7	X	X	X		X						X
Agimac River Outfitters	Indian Lake	29.3	X	X	X		X						X
Andy's Graystone Camp	Graystone Lake	83.4		X	X								X
Bear Paw Landing	Wabigoon Lake	18.2		X				X	X				X
Bonny Bay Camp	Wabigoon Lake	29.0		X				X	X	X			X
Breezy Point Camp	Willow Narrows Lake	41.2											X
Brown's Clearwater West Lodge	Clearwater West Lake	51.4	X	X			X	X		X	X		X
Cobb Bay Lodge	Sturgeon Lake	85.4		X			X	X		X			X
Cobblestone Lodge	Raleigh Lake	7.4		X				X					X
Cozy Camp	English River	48.1		X			X	X		X			X
Davy Lake Campground and Resort	Davy Lake/Ignace	29.9	X	X									X
Gummeson's Camp	Mameigwess Lake	16.4	X	X	X								X

Table 2.5-10 Continued: Outfitting and Guiding Operators

Operator <sup>1</sup>	Location	Distance from Local Study Area (km) <sup>2,3</sup>	Camping	Cabins	Boat, Motor, and/or Trailer Rental	Float plane <sup>4</sup>	Hunting						Fishing
							Moose	Bear	White-Tailed Deer	Grouse	Timber Wolf	Waterfowl	
<b>Outfitting and Guiding Operators Located within 100 km of the Local Study Area</b>													
Harris Bay Resort	Sturgeon Lake	73.6		X			X	X		X			X
Huber's Lone Pine Lodge	Wabigoon Lake/ Dinorwic Lake	18.2		X				X					X
Ignace Airways and Outposts	Agimak Lake	28.2		X		X	X						X
Indian Point Camp	Wabigoon Lake	39.1	X	X				X	X	X	X		X
Lumberjack Lodge	Sturgeon Lake	68.5	X	X	X		X	X		X			X
Merkel's Camp	Wabigoon Lake	22.8	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Moose Creek Bait and Camp	Elva Lake	33.4	X	X				X	X				
Polar Star Lodge	Wabigoon Lake	24.4		X			X		X	X		X	X
Press Lake Camp	Press Lake	46.8	X	X			X			X		X	X
Raleigh Lake Resort and Outposts	Raleigh Lake	7.4		X	X		X	X			X	X	X
Raven Lake Lodge	Raven Lake	29.3		X									X
Rousseau's Landing	Sandbar Lake	33.0	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X
Selwyn Lake Outfitter	Selwyn Lake	80.3		X									X



Table 2.5-10 Continued: Outfitting and Guiding Operators<sup>1,2</sup>

Operator <sup>1</sup>	Location	Distance from Local Study Area (km) <sup>2,3</sup>	Camping	Cabins	Boat, Motor, and/or Trailer Rental	Float plane <sup>4</sup>	Hunting						Fishing
							Moose	Bear	White-Tailed Deer	Grouse	Timber Wolf	Waterfowl	
<b>Outfitting and Guiding Operators Located within 100 km of the Local Study Area</b>													
Silver Dollar Inn and Campground	Silver Dollar	66.8	X	X			X	X					X
Sowden Lake Resort	Sowden Lake	60.0		X			X			X			X
Sturgeon Lake Lodge	Sturgeon Lake	68.1	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X
Ten Mile Lake Camp	Ten Mile Lake	84.9		X									X
Wabigoon Lake RV Park	Wabigoon Lake	22.6	X										X
White Feather Resort	Dinorwic Lake	-		X									X
Young Lake Lodge	Young Lake	67.6	X	X	X		X	X					X

**Source:** Agimak Lake Resort n.d.a; Agimak Lake Resort n.d.b; Agimac River Outfitters n.d.; Bear Paw Landing n.d.; Bonny Bay Camp n.d.a; Bonny Bay Camp n.d.b; Cobblestone Lodge n.d.a; Cobblestone Lodge n.d.b; Cobblestone Lodge n.d.c; Cozy Camp n.d.; Davy Lake Campground and Resort n.d.a; Davy Lake Campground and Resort n.d.b; Gummesson’s Camp n.d.; Huber’s Lone Pine Lodge n.d.; Ignace Outposts n.d.a; Ignace Outposts n.d.b; Indian Point Camp n.d.; Merkel’s Camp n.d.a; Merkel’s Camp n.d.b; Polar Star Lodge n.d.; Press Lake Camp n.d.a; Press Lake Camp n.d.b; Raleigh Lake Resort and Outposts n.d.a; Raleigh Lake Resort and Outposts n.d.b; Raleigh Lake Resort and Outposts n.d.c; Rousseau’s Landing n.d.a; Rousseau’s Landing n.d.b; Wabigoon Lake RV Park n.d.; Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation n.d.; Andy’s Graystone Camp n.d.a; Andy’s Graystone Camp n.d.b; Brown’s Clearwater Lodge n.d.; Cobb Bay Lodge n.d.; Harris Bay Resort n.d.; Lumberjack Lodge n.d.a; Lumberjack Lodge n.d.b; Moose Creek Bait and Camp n.d.; Silver Dollar Inn n.d.a; Silver Dollar Inn n.d.b; Silver Dollar Inn n.d.c; Sturgeon Lake Lodge n.d.a; Sturgeon Lake Lodge n.d.b; Ten Mile Lake Camp n.d.; Young Lake Lodge n.d.

**Note:**

1. Services listed are not exhaustive. Operators may offer services beyond those noted in the table.
2. “-” denotes where distance calculation was not available.
3. Distance from the Local Study Area is calculated as the most direct route (i.e., not via roads).
4. Offers fly-in access.

### 2.5.7.1 Bear Management Areas

Regulations for outfitters and guides depend on the type of hunting/angling they provide to clients. For example, moose and black bear hunting operators have specific requirements and licences to provide clients with moose and bear tags (Government of Ontario 2014b). Bear Management Areas are Crown land areas used by outfitting operators who have been licenced by the MNRF to provide black bear hunting services. Bear Management Areas IG-05-088 and IG-09A-040 overlap with the Revell Site (Government of Ontario n.d.b). For information on hunting licences and bear tags see **Section 2.5.5**. **Table 2.5-11** lists the Bear Management Areas located within the Local Study Area and their total area. **Map 2.5-8** depicts the Bear Management Areas in the Local Study Area.

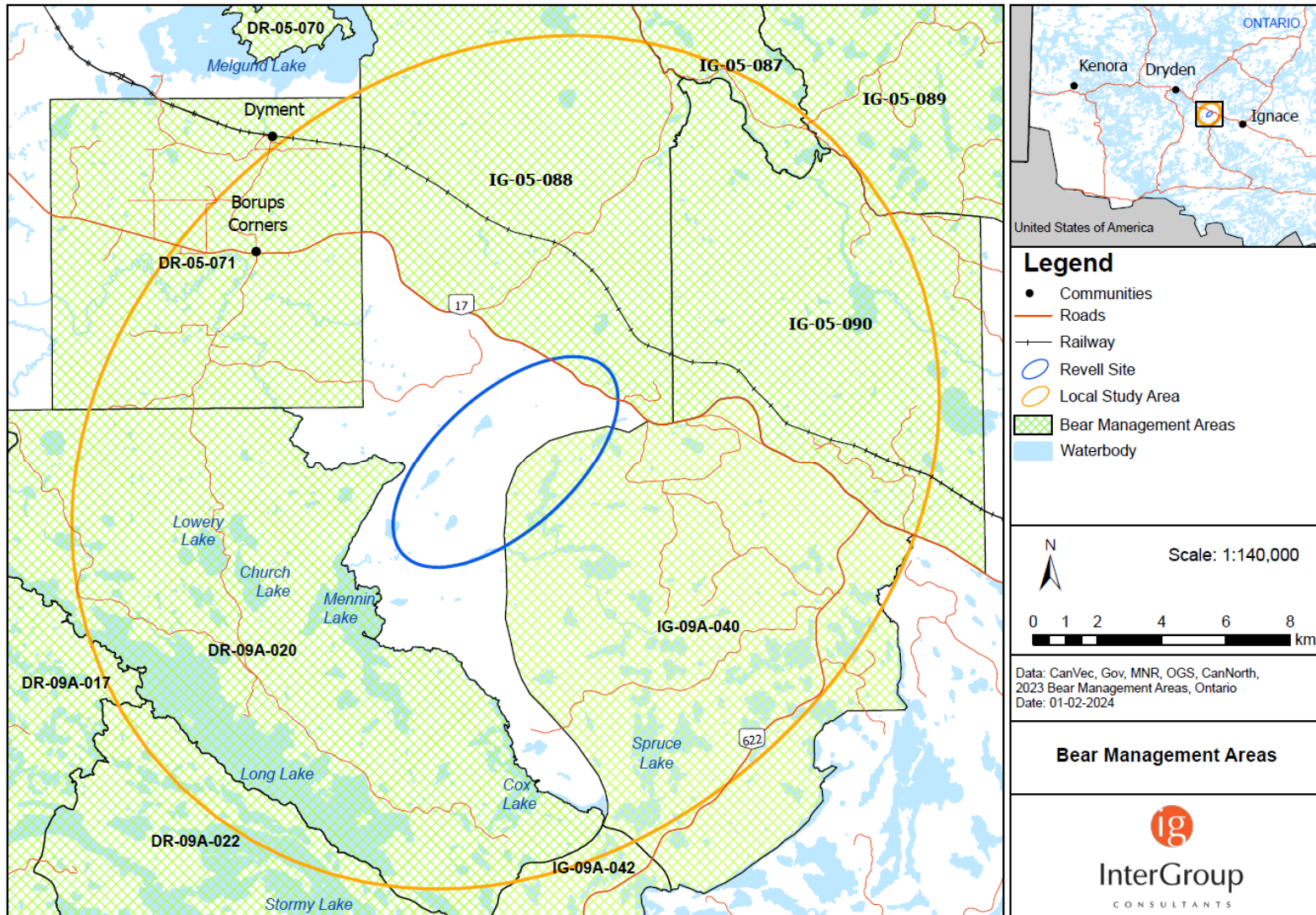
**Table 2.5-11: Bear Management Areas in the Local Study Area**

Bear Management Area	Total Area (ha)	Area of BMA in Local Study Area (ha)	Area of BMA in Revell Site (ha)
IG-05-088	17,625.2	8,813.4	131.3
IG-05-090	9,455.2	7,597.5	N/A
IG-09A-040	13,195.6	11,193.8	648.3
DR-09A-020	14,975.3	13,068.5	N/A
DR-09A-022	13,175.7	1,079.7	N/A
DR-05-071	9,319.6	5,298.5	N/A
DR-09A-017	20,301.6	158.6	N/A
IG-05-087	20,067.7	634.1	N/A
IG-09A-042	7,842.7	179.9	N/A
IG-05-089	11,613.4	91.6	N/A

**Source:** Government of Ontario n.d.b.

**Note:** Measurements converted from square meters to hectares by InterGroup Consultants.

Map 2.5-8: Bear Management Areas in the Local Study Area



### 2.5.8 Mining

There are no active mines in the Local Study Area. There are mining claims in the Local Study Area however there are no claims in the Revell Site (**Map 2.5-9**). Lac des Iles Mine is the closest active mine to the Local Study Area, located north of Thunder Bay, roughly 150 km direct from Ignace and 200 km by road. Lac des Iles Mine is a palladium operation owned by Impala Canada Ltd. and employs over 700 employees (Impala Canada n.d.).

Mining leases, mining claims, and abandoned mines and quarries are depicted in **Map 2.5-9**. Mining claim holders can explore for minerals on, in, or under the claim cell and can obtain a lease of the claim once the requirements and regulations of the Mining Act (Government of Ontario 1990h) have been met. Mining claim holders do not have the right to develop, take, or dispose of any minerals found on, in, or under the land, unless extraction is below a certain threshold or the government has granted permission to test (Government of Ontario 2022h). A mining lease gives an individual the right, subject to the terms of the lease, to extract and sell minerals from the leased area. A mining lease does not grant ownership of or title to the land, nor is it a permit to mine (Government of Ontario 2022h). There are several claim holders in the Local Study Area, such as (Government of Ontario n.d.):

- International Lithium Canada Ltd.;
- Ashley Gold Corp.;
- Gravel Ridge Resources Ltd.;
- Last Resort Resources Ltd.; and
- Coleman Roberston.

Current exploration activities<sup>37</sup> in the Local Study Area include the Howie Lake Project, gold exploration by Ashley Gold Corp in the Kawashegamuk/Long Lake area (Government of Ontario 2023g). See **Section 2.3.2.3.3** for the history of mining in the Local Study Area.

The Local Study Area includes a history of mining and exploratory activity. Abandoned mines are displayed in **Table 2.5-12**. A total of 15 abandoned mine sites were recorded in the Local Study Area. A site may include more than one mine feature type (for example, vertical shafts and trenches). The primary commodity for all sites was gold. All sites include active hazards based on an assessment completed in 1993 (Government of Ontario 2022j). There are no abandoned mines in the Revell Site.

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<sup>37</sup> Mineral exploration activities between January and May 2023, as of June 2023. Smaller operations may be active in the study areas that are not included here.



**Table 2.5-12: Abandoned Mines in the Local Study Area**

<b>Name of Abandoned Mine or Quarry</b>	<b>Primary Commodity</b>	<b>Mine Feature Type</b>	<b>Hazard Status</b>	<b>Assessment (Completed in 1993)</b>
Glatz	Gold	Vertical exploration shaft	Active	Shaft is 3 meters deep.
Long Lake-McCracken	Gold	Vertical exploration shaft #1	Active	Shaft is 8 meters deep.
		Vertical exploration shaft #2	Active	Shaft is 3 meters deep.
Matson	Gold	Open cut	Active	Open cut is up to 5 meters.
Mclean	Gold	Vertical exploration shaft	Active	Reported to include a shaft up to 24 meters deep. Shaft has not been found.
Black Fox	Gold	Vertical compartment shaft	Active	Depth of the shaft is unknown.
V33	Gold	Vertical exploration shaft	Active	Shaft is 18 meters deep.
Lady Marion	Gold	Vertical exploration shaft	Active	Shaft is 6 meters deep.
		Vertical compartment shaft	Active	Shaft is 2.5 meters deep.
99e/93e	Gold	Vertical exploration shaft	Active	Shaft is 3 meters deep.
Hw 673	Gold	Vertical compartment shaft	Active	Shaft is 5 to 10 meters deep.
Copeland	Gold	Open cut	Not a hazard	Open cut is up to 3 meters.
		Vertical compartment shaft	Active	Shaft is 6 meters deep.
		Trench	Not a hazard	Trench is 2.5 meters deep.
Hw 479	Gold	Vertical exploration shaft	Active	Shaft is 12 meters deep.
Mastodon	Gold	Vertical exploration shaft	Active	Shaft is 6 meters deep.

**Source:** Government of Ontario 2022j.

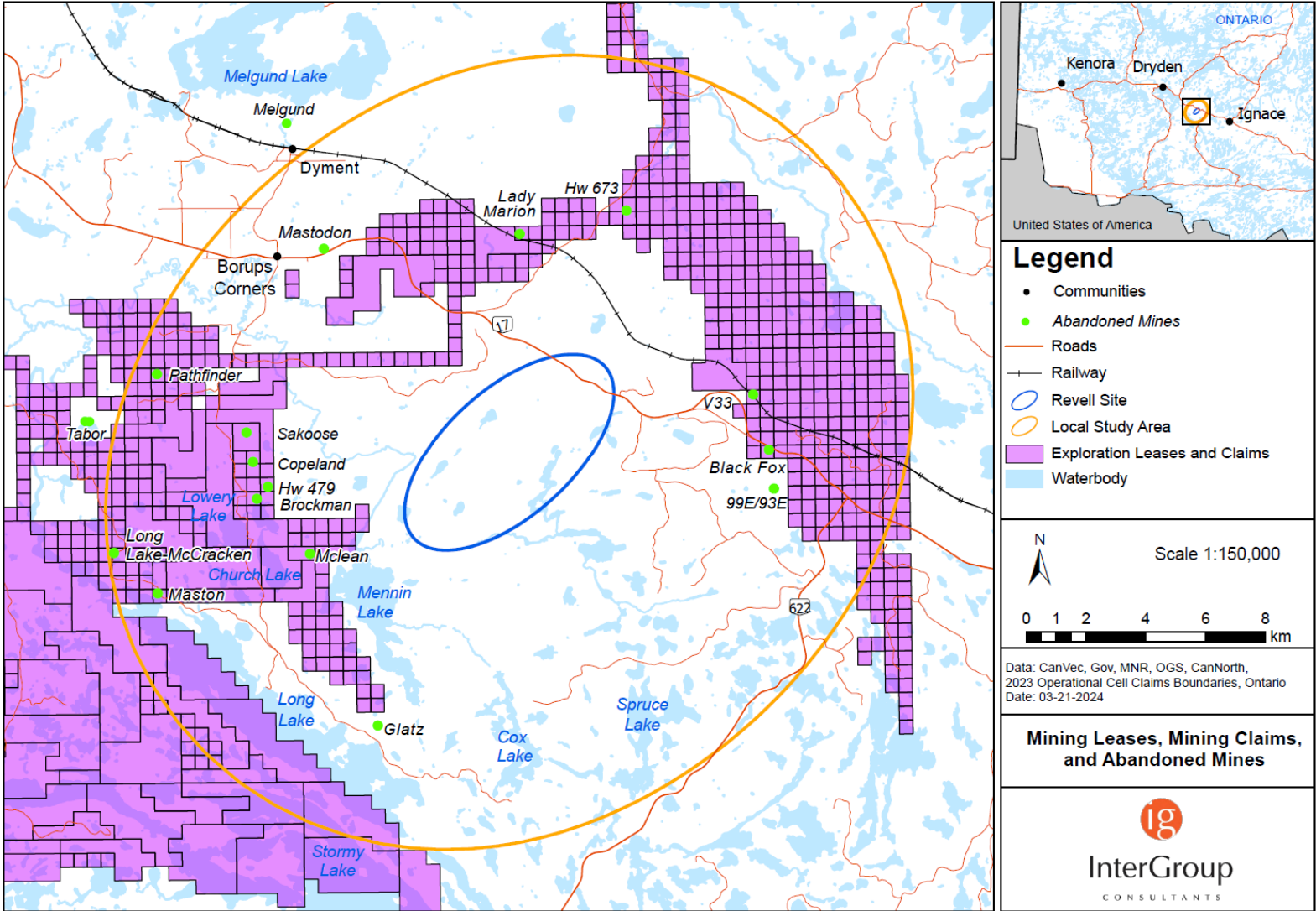
Table 2.5-12 Continued: Abandoned Mines in the Local Study Area

Name of Abandoned Mine or Quarry	Primary Commodity	Mine Feature Type	Hazard Status	Assessment (Completed in 1993)
Brockman	Gold	Adit	Active	Adit is 15 meters deep.
		Open cut	Active	Open cut is 5 meters deep.
		Vertical compartment shaft	Active	Shaft has been infilled.
Pathfinder	Gold	Vertical compartment shaft #1	Active	Shaft is at least 10 meters deep.
		Vertical compartment shaft #2	Active	Shaft is at least 10 meters deep.
		Trench	Not a hazard	Trenches no deeper than 2 meters.
Sakoose	Gold	Vertical exploration shaft	Active	Depth unknown.
		Heap leach area	Active	10 meter by 10 meter pad with 1 meter high piles.
		Mill	Active	Concrete mill foundations, partially collapsed.
		Open cut	Active	Partially infilled.
		Vertical compartment shaft #1	Active	Depth of the shaft is unknown.
		Vertical compartment shaft #2	Active	Depth of the shaft is unknown.
		Vertical compartment shaft #3	Active	Shaft is up to 76 meters deep.
		Tramway	Active	Tram foundations partially collapsed.

Source: Government of Ontario 2022j.



# Map 2.5-9: Mining Leases, Mining Claims, and Abandoned Mines in the Local Study Area



## 2.5.9 Camps/Cottages

“Camp” is the term used in northwestern Ontario for what may otherwise be referred to as a “cottage” or a small house in the countryside (Allemang 2012). There are no camps/cottages located in the Revell Site, however there are camps/cottages and year-round residences in the Local Study Area. Year-round residences are primarily concentrated near Dymont and Borups Corners, which are also home to numerous seasonal camps and cottages (see **Section 2.2.2.6**). Other camps/cottages are located on Kawashegamuk/Long Lake and northeast of the Revell Site at Highway 17 (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Camp and cottage owners who use the Local Study Area point to the natural environment of northwestern Ontario for why they choose the area. Key person interviewees shared that the natural beauty of the area, the level of remoteness that can be achieved, and the easy access to land and resource use activities are some of the biggest draws to the area (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Some interview participants shared that they acquired their camp/cottage in the Local Study Area for these reasons, while others acquired them through family members, or had previously worked in the region and settled there. Camp and cottage owners in the Local Study Area spend varying amounts of time at their properties; some reside there year-round, while others visit on holidays and weekends throughout the year.

Camp and cottage owners participate in land and resource use activities in the Local Study Area, including fishing, hunting, trapping, hiking, bird watching, ATVing, snowmobiling, gathering berries and mushrooms, wood harvesting, cycling/mountain biking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, canoeing, kayaking, and boating. Key person interviewees shared that they enjoy these activities for various reasons, including getting outside and being active, being alone with nature/in the peace and quiet, being able to participate in these activities with friends and family members, and the affordability and accessibility of being outside in comparison to other activities (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Participants shared that any perceived alteration to the natural environment in the region could affect camp and cottage owners, making participation in outdoor activities less desirable.

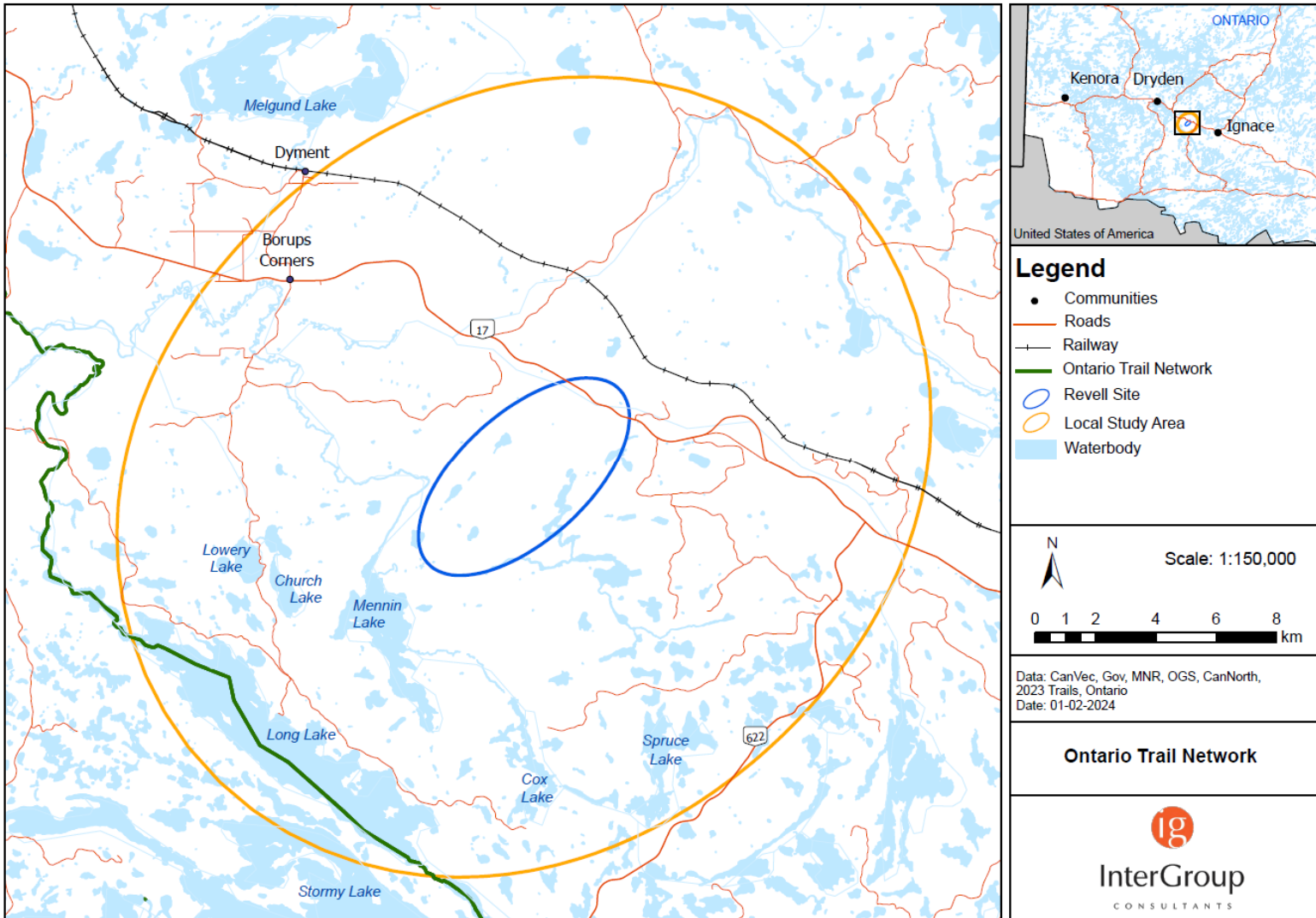
Several participants shared that if changes to the natural environment and the level of remoteness and noise (i.e., increased population and traffic) in the Local Study Area were to occur in the future, the enjoyment of their camps and cottages would decrease, and they feared their property values would decrease.

## 2.5.10 Other Outdoor Recreation

### 2.5.10.1 Hiking

Hiking is a free and permitted recreational activity on Crown land in Ontario. **Map 2.5-10** depicts the segment of the Ontario Trail Network in the Local Study Area. The creation of new trails requires approval by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. According to key person interviews, many residents hike in the Local Study Area and often partake in recreational activities such as bird watching, gathering blueberries, collecting “moose sheds” (i.e. antlers), and harvesting wood. Gathering berries while hiking and wood harvesting occurs in the Local Study Area (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). See **Section 2.4.6** for more on recreation in the Local Study Area.

Map 2.5-10: Ontario Trail Network Segments in the Local Study Area



### 2.5.10.2 All Terrain Vehicles and Snowmobiling

Participants of key person interviews shared that they use ATVs through the Revell Site and in the Local Study Area using an unofficial trail system (i.e., forestry roads) (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Snowmobiling is a widely enjoyed winter activity by many residents and visitors in northwestern Ontario and is generally permitted on Crown land unless it is a restricted area. Snowmobilers in Ontario are subject to the *Motorized Snow Vehicles Act* (Government of Ontario 1990b). Many snowmobilers enjoy the activity as a way to get outside with their friends, family, and neighbours, and take part in other activities while using snowmobile trails in the Local Study Area, such as ice fishing (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Snowmobiling in Ontario is administered by the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs ("OFSC"). The Local Study Area is located in the OFSC's District 17, its most western district, which spans from Kenora to Red Lake to Thunder Bay. The OFSC District 17 representative is the North-West Ontario Snowmobile Trail Association (NWOSTA). NWOSTA is responsible for maintaining snowmobile trails and selling permits for snowmobilers. Snowmobile trails in this district connect several communities including Fort Frances, Atikokan, Ignace, Sioux Lookout, Red Lake, Dryden, and Kenora. NWOSTA also organizes events for its members (NWOSTA n.d.).

### 2.5.10.3 Winter Outdoor Recreation

Winter outdoor recreation in the Local Study Area include activities such as snowshoeing and ice fishing. Participants in key person interviews noted they ice fish in the same lakes where they open-water fish, sharing the following lakes in the Local Study Area in particular: Kawashegamuk/Long Lake, Lowery Lake, and Mennin Lake (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). See **Section 2.5.4.3** for more on recreational fishing.

## 2.5.11 Lakes and Navigable Waters

### 2.5.11.1 Navigable Waters

Navigable waters are waters on which the public has the right to travel and are environmentally protected under the Canadian Navigable Waters Act (Government of Canada 2021; 1985). There are no navigable waters located within the Local Study Area (Government of Canada n.d.).

### 2.5.11.2 Lakes

This section describes lakes and their key characteristics and/or uses in the Local Study Area<sup>38</sup>. For example, lakes were identified if they were known fish spawning areas, lakes popular for fishing, or lakes that serve as a water source for communities. See **Section 2.5.4** for more information on fishing on these lakes, **Section 2.5.7** for information on outfitting and guiding on these lakes, and **Section 2.5.9** for information on camp and cottage.

There are several boat caches in the Local Study Area. Boat caches are used for commercial, resource harvesting, and recreational/private purposes. Commercial boat caches are used to

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<sup>38</sup> The list of lakes and their key uses and characteristics in the Local Study Area is not exhaustive. Rather, the list reflects the lakes and uses of importance as identified by participants of the NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023 and stakeholder engagement conducted for previous NWO studies.

support commercial tourism activities such as fishing and hunting. Resource harvester boat caches are used to support commercial bait fishing and/or fur harvesting activities. Recreation boat caches are used to support personal recreational activities such as fishing and hunting (Government of Ontario 2018a). Commercial boat caches are the most common type of boat cache in the Local Study Area.

**Table 2.5-13** provides the lakes in the Local Study Area. Uses and characteristics provided in the table are included as identified by engagement participants. **Map 2.5-1** includes the lakes in the Local Study Area.

**Table 2.5-13: Lakes in the Local Study Area**

Lakes	Camps/ Cottages	Outfitting	Recreational Fishing	Commercial Boat Cache	Recreational/ Private Boat Cache	Resource Harvester Boat Cache
Church Lake			✓	✓		
Cox Lake			✓	✓		
Kawashegamuk / Long Lake	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lowery Lake			✓	✓		
Mennin Lake			✓	✓		
Spruce Lake			✓	✓		
Stormy Lake			✓	✓		

**Source:** NWMO 2018b, 2021; NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023.

## 2.5.12 Summary of Land and Resource Use

The natural environment is important to residents and visitors of the Local Study Area. Primary data on land and resource use was collected through key person interviews (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Secondary data on land and resource use was collected through Government of Ontario sources, such as the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, local organizations and user groups' guides, plans, and webpages, municipal/city/township web sources, and more. This section provides a brief overview of each topic covered in **Section 2.5** Land and Resource Use including land designations, commercial uses, and recreational uses in the Local Study Area.

### Land Use Designations

The Local Study Area contains six individual land use areas designated by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Four of these areas are designated as general use Crown land and two are designated as conservation areas. Permitted recreational uses of Crown land include camping, fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, accessing camps/cottages, and other recreational activities such as hiking, canoeing, swimming. (Government of Ontario n.d.a).



## Commercial Land and Resource Use

The Local Study Area is in the Wabigoon Forest and Dryden Forest. According to the Wabigoon Forest 2023-2024 Annual Work Schedule, there are 12 regular harvest areas operated by Domtar for 2023-2024 in the Local Study Area (Domtar Inc. 2022).

The Local Study Area is located along the boundaries of Fisheries Management Zones 4 and 5. Fishing in Fisheries Management Zones 4 and 5 is an important recreational, commercial, and tourism activity, with species including northern pike, walleye, lake trout, lake whitefish, smallmouth bass, muskellunge, and black crappie. Currently, there are no active commercial fishing licences in the Local Study Area. The closest active commercial fishing licence to the Local Study Area is for Sturgeon Lake to harvest lake whitefish, with incidental quotas for walleye, pike, and lake trout (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Six bait harvest areas cross into the Local Study Area.

There are 11 traplines in the Local Study Area. Species typically trapped in the Local Study Area include beaver, pine marten, fisher, red fox, weasel, mink, lynx, and squirrels. The practice of trapping is declining in the region, as there is a loss of interest amongst younger generations (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Outfitting and guiding is a critical part of tourism in the Local Study Area. Fishing is the most popular tourism activity, followed by hunting (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Outfitting operators/lodges who use the Local Study Area to carry out their operations offer a variety of services and activities, including cabins, campsites, RV sites, outposts, seaplane services, fishing, bear hunting, moose hunting, white-tailed deer hunting, gamebird hunting, timber wolf hunting, hiking trails for hiking, bird watching, and gathering (e.g., berries, mushrooms), and boat/motor rentals, with some also offering winter activities including ice fishing and snowmobiling. Sandy Point Camp is the only outfitter located within the Local Study Area, however many operators located in the surrounding area use the lands and resources in the Local Study Area to carry out their operations. Tourists from the United States make up 90-100% of outfitting and guiding clients in northwestern Ontario (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

There are no active mines in the Local Study Area. Current exploration activities in the Local Study Area include the Howie Lake Project, and gold exploration by Ashley Gold Corporation in the Kawashegamuk/Long Lake area (Government of Ontario 2023g).

## Recreational Land and Resource Use

Recreational fishing is a key activity in the Local Study Area. The most popular species for recreational fishing in the region are walleye, northern pike, lake trout, brook trout, smallmouth bass, lake whitefish, sauger, and yellow perch (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Key person interviews shared that residents and visitors of the Local Study Area enjoy fishing in the region because of the healthy fish populations, the easy access to remoteness/isolation when out on a lake, and the natural beauty of the area. Participants noted fears that an increase in local population may increase lake traffic and competition for access to resources such as fishing (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).



Participants of key person interviews shared that the biggest draws to the area and the reason they remain at their camps/cottages include the natural beauty of the area, the level of remoteness that can be achieved, and the easy access to land and resource use activities (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Camp and cottage owners participate in several types of land and resource use activities in the Local Study Area, including fishing, hunting, trapping, hiking, bird watching, ATViing, snowmobiling, gathering berries and mushrooms, wood harvesting, cycling/mountain biking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, canoeing, kayaking, and boating.

According to the key person interviews, many residents hike in the Local Study Area and often partake in recreational activities such as bird watching, gathering blueberries, collecting moose sheds, and harvesting wood (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Gathering berries while hiking and wood harvesting also occurs around the Revell Site. Participants of key person interviews shared that they ATV through the Revell Site and in the Local Study Area using an unofficial trail system (i.e., roads) (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Snowmobiling is a widely enjoyed winter activity by many residents and visitors in northwestern Ontario and is generally permitted on Crown land unless it is a restricted area. The Local Study Area is located in the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs District 17 and is represented by the North-West Ontario Snowmobile Trail Association. Snowmobilers take part in other activities while using snowmobile trails in the Local Study Area, such as ice fishing (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023).

Hunting in the Local Study Area is both a lifestyle and source of food for many residents. The Local Study Area includes Wildlife Management Units 5 and 9a. According to key person interviews, hunting in the Local Study Area around the Revell Site occurs for waterfowl (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Other game hunted in the area include moose, bear, small game, and grouse.

Through engagement participants noted some lakes in the Local Study Area that they wanted to highlight. These lakes include locations where people take part in recreational activities, such as fishing, and may also be the locations of outfitting camps and/or personal camps. Key lakes noted in the Local Study Area include Mennin Lake and Kawashegamuk/Long Lake. Mennin Lake is popular for fishing, particularly for walleye and northern pike (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Kawashegamuk/Long Lake is popular for fishing, particularly lake trout and perch, and viewing several wildlife species (NWO Baseline Studies Key Person Interview Program 2022-2023). Sandy Point Camp and camp/cottage owners on Kawashegamuk/Long Lake are the closest tourist outfitter and residents to the Revell Site.

## 2.6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HERITAGE RESOURCES

### Overview and Approach

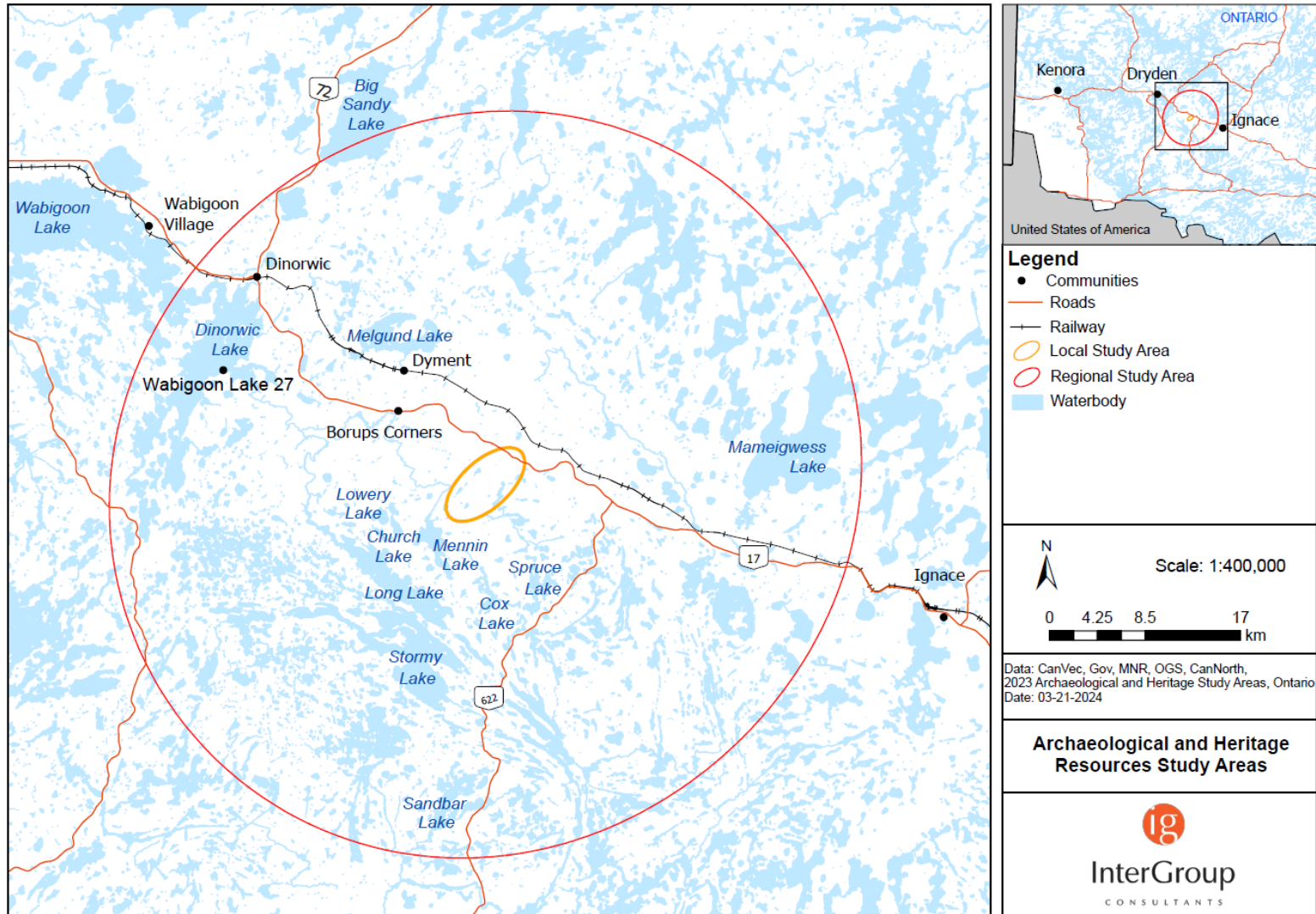
Archaeological and heritage resources are under provincial jurisdiction. In Ontario, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport enforces Part VI of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. This section of the *Ontario Heritage Act* defines priorities, policies, and programs for the preservation of archaeological resources determined to have cultural heritage value. The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport provides guidance on how to comply with the terms and conditions of licence and other ministry requirements, such as the Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists.

To date, the Project footprint has not been defined. Once it is determined, a Stage 1 archaeological investigation including a property assessment will be conducted, involving the appropriate Indigenous communities to the extent they want to be involved to ensure that the property assessment is completed in a respectful and collaborative manner. The NWMO's approach to Indigenous community involvement will be conducted in accordance with the NWMO's Reconciliation Policy (2019) and Indigenous Knowledge Policy (2020b). The archaeological and heritage resources study areas are depicted in **Map 2.6-1**.

This section characterizes the cultural setting, previous screenings of the Revell Site, and the archaeological record for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area. Land use, which can be an important indication of heritage potential, is described in **Section 2.5**. The Regional Study Area is a 30 km buffer around the Revell Site to provide context for archaeological potential. The Local Study Area is the Revell Site. Heritage resources were characterized for the Local Study Area and Regional Study Area by reviewing locations of previously recorded archaeological sites. In Ontario, archaeological sites include Indigenous hunting camps and villages; battlefields; pioneer homes, burial grounds and cemeteries, shipwrecks; and other evidence of past human activity.

The temporal boundaries for archaeological and heritage resources (**Section 2.6**) focus on previous archaeological research, geographic, land use, and historical/archival information for the Project (all lands that are part of the development proposal) and the relevant surrounding area through a background study. The temporal boundaries include two major time periods: Indigenous and Indigenous-European. The Indigenous Period dates from ca. 300-10,000 years ago, while the Indigenous-European Period dates from ca. 1700 to the present (ca. 300 years ago to present), when Europeans and fur traders entered the area.

Map 2.6-1: Archaeological and Heritage Resources Study Areas



### 2.6.1 The Revell Site

The NWMO has completed borehole drilling at six locations in the Revell Site. These locations were chosen based on the technical needs of the Project combined with Indigenous and non-Indigenous community and stakeholder inputs. Potential borehole locations were also screened for cultural sites. A cultural screening examined known archaeological and historic sites in the Ignace area using the Ontario Archaeological Sites Database (NWMO 2018c). The cultural screening noted that there were no known archaeological or historical sites in or near the borehole sites. Provincially regulated land and resource use in the Revell Site is described in **Section 2.5**.

#### 2.6.1.1 Geography of the Revell Site

The current and historic geography of an area is an important aspect to understanding the potential historical uses of the landscape. The landscape and climate of an area affect the mobility, economy, access to resources, and many other aspects of historic people's lives. The study area is in the Boreal Shield ecozone. The Boreal Shield is Canada's largest ecozone stretching from Alberta to Newfoundland. Sweeping glaciers defined the region through a series of depressions and deposits resulting in the creation of millions of lakes and wetlands. The Precambrian granite bedrock of the Canadian Shield is commonly exposed in this region (McGill, n.d.).

The ecozone is subdivided into smaller areas known as ecoregions which are unique areas defined by a characteristic range and pattern in climate variables (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry 2022). The study area is in the 4S ecoregion (Lake Wabigoon Ecoregion).

Gneissic, Granitic, and metavolcanic Precambrian bedrock composes the Lake Wabigoon Ecoregion. The western portion contains exposed bedrock with unconsolidated matter while the eastern portion contains ground moraine and lacustrine deposits from the post-glacial Lake Agassiz. The low-lying sections of the ecoregion contain scattered pockets of clay and silt. (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry 2022).

Forests are the primary ground cover for the region. Mixed forest, sparse forest, coniferous forest, and deciduous forest cover 25.2%, 23.8%, 14.3%, and 2.0% respectively. Balsam fir, balsam poplar, black ash, black spruce, jack pine, tamarack, trembling aspen, white birch, and white spruce compose the forests in the northern portion of this ecoregion. American basswood, American elm, aspen, bur oak, ironwood, red maple, red pine, sugar maple, and white pine comprise the forests in the southern portions of this ecoregion (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry 2022).

The fauna of the region is diverse and varied. Terrestrial and avian species found within the Lake Wabigoon Ecoregion include the gray wolf, fisher, American mink, moose, bald eagle, and common raven. There are diverse types of aquatic species found within this ecoregion including lake trout, northern pike, and northern redbelly dace (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry 2022).

#### 2.6.2 Cultural Setting

The cultural chronology for what is currently Ontario is based on technological innovations and historical events. It includes two major time periods: Indigenous and Indigenous-European. The Indigenous Period dates from ca. 400-11,000 years ago, while the Indigenous-European Period

dates from after ca. 1600 (ca. 400 years ago to present), when Europeans and fur traders entered the area (Ontario Archaeological Society 2024).

### 2.6.2.1 Indigenous Period

Glacial ice began to retreat in the southern portions of northern Ontario around 10,000 years before common era ("BCE") (Dawson 1984). A large ice dammed lake formed during this period of deglaciation called Lake Agassiz (Thorleifson 1996). It is in the latter stages of this period known as the Paleo-Indian that the first humans arrived on the northern shores of the Lake Huron and Superior. One site approximately 100 km north of current-day Ignace dates their arrival at about 8,100 years before present day (Pilon 2004). These Plano people developed a unique culture known as the Agate Basin. Agate Basin archaeological sites are dated between 7,500 BCE to 6,500 BCE through Agate Basin projectile points and campsites found in northern Ontario (Wright 1982).

The climate changed and rapid forestation occurred as the glacial ice continued to retreat. After 5,000 BCE, a transition occurred with generalized woodworking tools appearing (Dawson 1984). This period became known as the Shield Archaic and the transition was completed by 4,000 BCE. The change in the lithic tool assemblage can be seen in the transition in projectile point morphologies from lanceolate forms to those of side and corner notched varieties with more triangular body shapes of the Shield Archaic (Wright 1982).

Based on his review of the archaeological assemblages, Wright (1972) reasoned that the Shield Archaic likely originated in the far north and spread south and east throughout the Canadian Shield.

These populations occupied this region from the earliest of times until 1,500 BCE to 1,000 BCE when the climate began to cool (Wright 1982). In the south, Shield Archaic peoples practiced metallurgy as they cold forged copper into spear points, adzes, fishhooks, and gorges (Wright 1981). This is attested in the archaeological record as sites in northwestern Ontario have produced copper originating from Lake Superior (Vandervliet 2008).

The introduction of pottery brought the onset of a new period referred to as the Woodland Period around 500 BCE (Dawson 1984). The Laurel culture developed in northern Ontario which can be identified through their ceramic complex. A distinct change occurred in the southern Laurel people who began using burial mounds for inhumation. Furthermore, a Laurel archaeological site known as the Heron Bay site produced bone tools. The site also contained obsidian from Wyoming and shells from Manitoba indicating an extensive trade network in the area (Wright 1982). This area was an important hub for transcontinental trade because all travel was done by canoe and required people to travel through this area (Vandervliet 2008). The Laurel people continued working native copper into tools such as knives, beads, awls, and projectile points (Wright 1982).

Regional differentiations in pottery brought the onset of the Terminal Woodland Period dated from 600 common era ("CE") to European contact (Wright 1982). Blackduck sites are radiocarbon dated from 620 CE to 1560 CE. The Blackduck culture developed from the previous Laurel culture in the area. Burial mounds are found in the southwestern portion of northern Ontario linked to the Blackduck complex, which indicate a continuation of the Laurel culture (Wright 1982).



Pictographs painted by Indigenous groups are scattered throughout the area on rocks and cliffs. These sites are considered sacred by Indigenous peoples. Pictures were not only painted but carved into the rocks. These are known as petroglyphs and several of these sites are located within the Kenora area. The rocks could be gathered and placed into various shapes to form an image known as petroforms (Vandervliet 2008). These sites indicate the long history of Indigenous groups in the area.

### 2.6.2.2 Indigenous-European Period

The first Europeans to arrive on the northwestern shore of Lake Superior were the French. The first record of the geography and population of the area is attributed to Jesuit Father Allouez who traveled to Lake Nipigon in 1667 (Reimer 1999). However, there is a reference in Champlain's 1610 journal to "Indian diggings" for copper on Lake Superior's shores. Similar French reports exist until the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century (Dawson 1999).

The French initially had a monopoly on the trade in the area until the establishment of Hudson's Bay Company ("HBC") forts in the Hudson's Bay and James Bay in 1670 (Reimer 1999). The French established Fort Camanistigoyan by present day Thunder Bay in 1678 and a fort at Lake Nipigon to intercept furs from arriving at the English forts (Reimer 1999). The French attempted to push further west by establishing forts at Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods in 1717 but failed due to ongoing warfare in the area (Reimer 1999). The French managed to establish Fort St. Charles on the western shore of Lake of the Woods in 1732 (Reimer 1999). The French abandoned the area in the 1750's to consolidate their defence against English attacks (Reimer 1999).

The North West Company began establishing trading posts at Lac La Pluie around 1780, Portage de l'Isle near Rat Portage (now Kenora) in 1789, Escabitchewan in 1796, Eagle Lake near Dryden in 1809, Red Lake in 1790, and Lac Seul in 1803. The HBC responded by building Rainy Lake Fort near the fort at Lac La Pluie in 1790. Competition between the HBC and the North West Company lasted until 1816 when the North West Company gave its forts to the HBC. HBC built a fort in 1820 which was renamed Fort Francis in 1830 and another post on Shoal Lake in 1831 (Reimer 1999). The Rainy Lake area had abundant canoe birch and the posts in this area became a centre of canoe manufacture (Reimer 1999).

The HBC established a small trade post at Rat Portage in 1836 and it became the main post north of Lake of the Woods. Several outposts were established at Keewatin, Eagle Lake, Dinorwic, North West Angle, Shoal Lake, and White Dog. Rat Portage became a necessary stop on the journey between Lake Superior and Winnipeg River (Reimer 1999). Colonel Wolseley passed through Rat Portage following the Riel Rebellion in Manitoba (Reimer 1999). Rat Portage remained an active trading post until 1890 (Reimer 1999).

The outposts for Rat Portage were established in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The post at Shoal Lake was dismantled in 1870 and moved to the North West Angle. The North West Angle was closed in 1878 with the cessation of the Dawson route for travel. The outpost at Eagle Lake has records covering the years 1881 to 1884 only. It operated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and Dinorwic was established as its outpost. When the Canadian Pacific Railway was built in the area near Wabigoon Village, Eagle Lake's role diminished, and it became an outpost to Wabigoon. The Dinorwic post was moved in 1899 one mile to the west and continued operations until 1940 (Reimer 1999).



Rat Portage began to benefit from tourism following its closure in 1890. The settlement began to depend further on tourism according to the HBC in 1916. The construction of highways between Kenora and other settlements like Fort Francis, Winnipeg, and Thunder Bay between 1912 and the 1960's resulted in a boom for tourism in northwestern Ontario. A minor gold rush occurred in the area between 1890 and 1901 until other sources of gold were discovered in Alaska and the Yukon. This resulted in a temporary economic boom for the village of Wabigoon (Reimer 1999).

Following the gold rush, the village of Wabigoon established itself in the renewable forest industry by supplying the paper mill in Dryden, two sawmills in Kenora, and other sawmills in the area. The Koochiching Falls dam built in 1910 around Fort Frances supplied power to the lumber mills in the area (Reimer 1999).

### 2.6.3 Heritage Sites

Ancient land use practices can be observed within the archaeological record. In relation to cultural ecology, archaeologists examine how past cultures lived on particular landscapes or in a particular environment at a particular past time (Cromley 1994). Within this landscape, certain features and areas contain tangible evidence of past people. Heritage resources were characterized for the Local Study Area based on the locations of previously recorded archaeological sites.

The archaeological record provides physical and documented evidence of different cultural occupations that have occurred over millennia. In Ontario, information concerning archaeological sites is stored in the Ontario Archaeological Sites Database maintained by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

The archaeological sites identified in the Regional Study Area total 34 registered sites (**Table 2.6-1**).

**Table 2.6-1: Registered Archaeological Sites within 30 km of Revell Site**

<b>Borden Number</b>	<b>Cultural Period</b>
DhKa-2	Indigenous Period
DhKa-3	Indigenous Period
DhKa-9	Indigenous Period
DhKa10	Indigenous Period
DiJx-2	Indigenous Period
DiKa-1	Indigenous Period
DiKa-2	Indigenous Period
DiKa-3	Indigenous Period
DiKa-4	Indigenous Period
DiKa-5	Indigenous Period
DiKa-6	Indigenous Period
DiKb-1	Unknown
DiKd-1	Unknown
DjJw-2	Unknown
DjJw-9	Indigenous Period
DjJw-10	Indigenous Period
DjJw-12	Indigenous Period
DjJw-14	Indigenous Period
DjJx-1	Indigenous Period
DjJx-2	Indigenous Period
DjJx-3	Indigenous Period
DjJx-4	Indigenous Period
DjJx-6	Unknown
DjJx-7	Indigenous Period
DjJx-8	Unknown
DjKd-1	Indigenous Period
DjKd-2	Indigenous Period
DkJx-2	Indigenous Period
DkJx-3	Indigenous Period
DkJx-4	Indigenous Period
DkKc-1	Indigenous Period
DkKd-2	Indigenous Period
DkKd-3	Indigenous Period
Lead-0002	Unknown

Source: Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport

#### 2.6.4 Summary of Archaeological and Heritage Resources

In accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Consulting Archaeologists (2011), areas of archaeological potential are identified by proximity to previously identified archaeological sites, proximity to water sources, distinctive land formations that might have been special or spiritual places, areas of early Euro-Canadian settlement, and early historical transportation routes. The Regional Study Area is interspersed with 34 recorded archaeological sites as well as other areas which are considered sacred by Indigenous peoples, as they serve as a connection to ancestors and traditional knowledge. In the 19th century there were HBC posts built near the study area, in Eagle Lake by modern day Dryden, and at Wabigoon/Dinorwic. The latter of these two posts operated until 1940. The area was an important historic transportation route with traffic travelling through Rat Portage.

Based on the above-mentioned factors, the area has a rich history of use in both the Indigenous and Indigenous-European Periods. As part of the initial borehole siting in the Revell Site, it was confirmed that there were no known archaeological or historic sites near the boreholes.

Any future archaeological work, such as a Stage 1 or Stage 2 investigation, would require engagement with Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation, other Grand Council of Treaty #3 nations with interest in the area, and the Metis Nation of Ontario, including potential Indigenous knowledge investigations completed by each nation.

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# 3.0 ECONOMIC

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# 4.0 HEALTH

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# 5.0 INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

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