

Pump Track Grand Opening

Saturday September 10, 11:00 a.m.

[AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY]

Good morning everyone. It's terrific to be here with you as we celebrate the grand opening of Sault Ste. Marie's new pump track.

Today is the culmination of a really great project. On behalf of the Sault Ste. Marie City Council and the Office of Mayor, I'd like to congratulate everyone involved with the construction of this unique, all-wheel, pump track.

It has taken a bit of time to get to this day. I'd like to thank the donors and supporters of the project for their patience and commitment to seeing it completed. Chief among them are the private donors who stepped forward with generous financial contributions—Dale Harrison and Andre Riopel. Together, these two gentlemen provided \$75,000 towards the construction of the track, which is really quite extraordinary. Andre is here today, and we have Dale's parents Nora Ann and Ron Harrison with us on his behalf. Our City thanks you for your civic spirit and generosity.

I'd also like to acknowledge the work and oversight provided by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, and in particular the Pump Track Committee members: Deane Greenwood, Susan Milne, Robert Carricato, Councillor Rick Niro, Andre Riopel, and Nick Apostle.

I'd also like to thank staff from the City's Community Services Department Recreation and Culture division and the Parks Division of Public Works and Transportation for their work on the project.

Today is an exciting day, the latest in a string of positive developments that have taken place in this area of town over the last several years. Some of these developments are individually more noticeable than others, but when you start to consider them all together, an impressive picture begins to emerge.

For example, this morning, a couple thousand people will pass through the nearby Mill Market. This evening, it's possible that a few hundred will gather in the Machine Shop at Mill Square for a wedding reception.

During the week, just across the street at the former Etienne Brule elementary school, children will attend daycare, students will attend the Urban Aboriginal School, and community members will tend to garden boxes in the Canal District Community Garden.

Not far from us, the reconstruction of Gore Street has been underway for the last several months. When it is completed, there will be a raised intersection, attractive new streetscaping and a new parkette on the corner of Gore and Albert streets. And of course today, we are cutting the ribbon on Sault Ste. Marie's pump track—a terrific new venue where bikers, skateboarders and rollerbladers can practice and develop their skills.

All of these are recent and positive developments in this neighbourhood and this part of our downtown. I'm certain too, that there will be more to come in the times ahead.

I don't want to take too long, as we have a ribbon to cut and food and fun to get to. Thank you again for inviting me to speak today and congratulations to all involved on the opening of Sault Ste. Marie's new pump track.