



PARKING IMPROVEMENTS TASK FORCE

Meeting Minutes

May 13, 2026, 3:00 p.m.

This is an in-person meeting at Saugatuck City Hall, 102 Butler St, Saugatuck, MI 49453.

The meeting will also be available live, virtually on Zoom

NOTICE:

Join online by visiting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2698572603>

Join by phone by dialing:

**(312) 626-6799 -or-
(646) 518-9805**

Then enter "Meeting ID":

2698572603

Please send questions or comments regarding meeting agenda items prior to meeting to:

rcummins@saugatuckcity.com

Requests for accommodations or interpretive services must be made 48 hours prior to this meeting. Please contact Saugatuck City Clerk at 269-857-2603 or jwotlers@saugatuckcity.com for further information.

Participants

Name	Company	Email Address
John Dorsett	Walker Consultants	jdorsett@walkerconsultants.com
John Moxey	Fleis & Vandenbrink	jmoxey@fveng.com
Julie Kroll	Fleis & Vandenbrink	jkroll@fveng.com
Gregory Muncey	Saugatuck City Council	gregory@saugatuckcity.com
Auston Marineau	Saugatuck Planning Commission	auston.j.marineau@gmail.com
Cathy Brockington	Saugatuck Resident	cabrocking68@gmail.com
Wendy Colsen	Saugatuck Resident	saugatuckparkingstudy@gmail.com
Alec Payleitner	Saugatuck Restaurant Owner	alec@saugataco.com
Michael Gustaitis	Saugatuck Retail Business Owner	winesellersofsaugatuck@gmail.com
Gary Kott	Saugatuck/Douglas Area Convention and Visitors Bureau	indakott@aol.com
Becky Carten-Crandell	Interurban Transit Authority	beckycc@saugatuckinterurban.org
Ryan Cummins	City of Saugatuck	rcummins@saugatuckcity.com

1. Call to Order

Chair Gregory Muncey called the meeting to order.



2. Roll Call

Roll call was conducted, and a quorum was declared present.

3. Agenda Changes

The agenda was amended to add the following items under Topics for Discussion:

- Parking concepts submitted by Alec Payleitner for Task Force consideration, including remote parking, shuttle or trolley circulation, and related downtown traffic and parking ideas.
- Supplemental field outreach information from Wendy Colsen regarding employee counts, parking locations, and related observations from contact with downtown businesses.

The agenda, as amended, was accepted.

4. Public Comment on Agenda Items

No public comments were received on agenda items.

5. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous April 7, 2026, Parking Improvements Task Force meeting, as prepared by Walker Consultants and included in the meeting packet, were presented for approval. During review, members identified corrections to the reported total number of public parking spaces and to the description of Lauren Stanton's role.

- The draft minutes indicated approximately 1,168 public parking spaces; per the field data collection, there are 1,868 spaces.
- Lauren Stanton's role should be identified as a City Council member.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes were approved as corrected by voice vote. Walker Consultants was directed to incorporate the identified revisions into the final April 7, 2026, meeting minutes.

6. Topics for Discussion

A. Parking Occupancy Field Work and Initial Mapping – Results

Julie Kroll presented the May 2 parking occupancy findings based on counts conducted at 10:00 a.m., 1:30 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. for publicly available on-street and off-street parking throughout the study area. The results indicated the highest occupancy levels within the central business district, with lower utilization in the Hill, North Residential, and South Residential areas.

Within the CBD, the occupancy summary reflected off-street utilization of approximately 92 percent by late afternoon and on-street utilization of approximately 86 percent. Members concurred that the findings were consistent with the weekend conditions observed and noted that, at those levels, parking in the core area is generally perceived as full.



Ms. Kroll further reported that, outside the CBD, demand was limited to isolated pockets and that parking remained available in the Hill and residential areas. Accessible parking utilization was also reviewed; existing accessible spaces were in use but were not fully occupied during the observation periods.

In response to a member inquiry, Ms. Kroll advised that the same occupancy analysis will be repeated during the July field work to compare off-peak and peak-season conditions. She further reported that a separate turnover analysis is underway for approximately two blocks of Butler Street and will be presented at a future meeting.

An additional observation was made, indicating strong turnover at a downtown business frontage, which supports the importance of short-term parking availability within the core area.

B. Updates on Land Use, Commercial Vacancy, and Future Developments – Briefing provided by Walker for review and comment.

John Dorsett reviewed Walker’s future conditions analysis and stated that it was intended to evaluate parking demand by considering baseline conditions together with likely growth factors. He noted that, while the City’s resident population appears relatively stable, parking demand is also influenced by tourism, seasonal visitation, and other nonresident activity.

Mr. Dorsett reported that Walker reviewed known and proposed development projects using information provided by the City, Saugatuck Township, Douglas, and prior planning materials. He stated that the broader future conditions review informed Walker’s conclusion that parking demand is expected to increase by approximately 100 to 150 spaces.

Mr. Dorsett also noted that many of the identified projects are expected to accommodate a substantial share of their on-site parking demand. Members nevertheless questioned whether the analysis fully captured the effect of day visitors, seasonal activity, short-term rentals, nearby development, and lodging-related traffic, and noted that such factors may be more representative of parking conditions during peak periods.

City staff clarified that development information from neighboring jurisdictions had been provided to Walker, including campground, residential, mixed-use, condominium, and workforce housing projects. Members requested that future analysis more explicitly reflect the cumulative effect of these projects and tourism-related growth.

Potential indicators of tourism growth were also discussed, including CVB lodging data, beach attendance, visitation history, and third-party mobility data. Members agreed that additional quantitative information, if available, would strengthen the future demand analysis and better reflect seasonal conditions.

Members also discussed the effects of short-term rentals on neighborhood parking and whether parking requirements should better align with occupancy and vehicle demand. Staff noted that most uses remain subject to parking requirements, while downtown commercial districts are exempt from off-street parking minimums. Potential future recommendations discussed included revisiting parking minimums, reviewing zoning treatment for short-term rental conversions, and considering seasonal overnight parking controls.

C. Parking Enforcement – Attachment provided by Walker for review and comment.



John Dorsett reviewed Walker’s parking enforcement memorandum and observed that a substantial share of public parking in Saugatuck is on-street parking under City control. He stated that the posted three-hour limits are intended to promote turnover, but that limited or inconsistent enforcement reduces their effectiveness and diminishes the value of the existing parking regulations.

Walker recommended consideration of a seasonal enforcement program during peak summer months, paired with a customer-service-oriented ambassador model to provide education, warnings, and visitor assistance. The discussion reflected general interest in an approach that would improve compliance while avoiding an unnecessarily punitive tone.

Members discussed the desirability of pairing enforcement with practical employee parking alternatives, noting that enforcement would be more workable if accompanied by convenient and reasonably proximate off-site employee parking. Potential locations discussed included the lot near the Saugatuck Center for the Arts and school-related parking areas.

Members also discussed accommodation for downtown residents if enforcement is expanded. Concepts discussed included resident stickers, employee permits, warning-based implementation, and advanced public communication.

Funding options were discussed, including whether certain parking-related revenues could be dedicated to enforcement or ambassador staffing. Staff noted that such revenues presently accrue to the general fund. Members also observed that signage would represent a significant implementation cost.

Members requested preparation of a future map identifying accessible spaces, 15-minute spaces, loading zones, and no-parking areas to assist in evaluating possible modifications.

D. Interurban, Shuttle Operations, Remote Parking, and Shared Parking Agreements – Attachment provided by Walker for review and comment.

John Dorsett reviewed Walker’s memorandum regarding Interurban service, remote parking opportunities, and shared parking agreements. He stated that these strategies appear to be among the most practical and cost-effective means of expanding usable parking capacity without construction of a parking structure and could form a meaningful part of a broader parking management approach.

Becky Carten-Crandell reported that Interurban service is expanding hours and improving routes for the current season. She also reported progress on remote parking discussions, including school parking and ongoing conversations with Riverside Church and Dykstra Funeral Home regarding shared parking opportunities, and indicated that additional coordination is underway.

Ms. Carten-Crandell further reported that Interurban has vehicle capacity to support expanded service, but that funding remains the principal constraint. Members discussed current operating costs, the CVB contribution, and the remaining funding gap, and generally agreed that expanded shuttle service would remain significantly less costly than structured parking while offering a more immediate implementation path.

Members discussed whether visitor or non-resident fares should be considered, while emphasizing the importance of preserving affordability for year-round riders who rely on the service.



The importance of clear signage, rider communication, and ease of access to shuttle service was also discussed. Mr. Dorsett advised that Walker's current scope includes general wayfinding concepts, but not a detailed community-wide signage plan, which may require additional future direction if pursued by the City.

Ms. Carten-Crandell agreed to continue pursuing shared parking agreements and to discuss employee parking options with the school district. Members reiterated that any remote employee parking strategy would likely need to be paired with downtown enforcement measures.

E. Conversion of Butler Street to One-Way Traffic – Attachment provided by Walker for review and comment.

John Dorsett summarized Walker's review of a possible one-way conversion for Butler Street. He reported that, although the street is not wide enough to support angled parking on both sides, a one-way configuration with angled parking on one side and parallel parking on the other could be feasible and could yield approximately 60 additional spaces over roughly seven blocks.

Members discussed both the potential benefits and the potential drawbacks of the concept. Comments in support focused on the possible increase in parking supply at relatively low cost. Concerns raised included traffic circulation, driver confusion, deliveries, pedestrian safety, backing maneuvers, and possible effects on downtown business operations, particularly during the peak season.

Members also discussed whether a paired one-way system involving Butler and Water Streets would be more effective than a single one-way street, as well as possible traffic-control and design measures to manage speeds and enhance pedestrian safety.

By consensus, this item was continued to a future meeting for further discussion.

F. Discussion of Remaining Field Data Collection Details – Peak-Season Field Data Collection Dates – Week of July 13 (after July 4 and before Venetian Festival)

Julie Kroll confirmed that peak-season field data collection is scheduled for Wednesday, July 15, and Saturday, July 18, using the same time periods applied during the May observations. The Chair also noted that Wendy Colsen's supplemental field outreach and employee count information had been distributed on the day of the meeting and remained in progress; accordingly, that material was deferred to a future agenda for more complete review and presentation.

G. Remaining Task Force meeting dates – June 30, July 28, August 18

The remaining Task Force meeting dates were confirmed as June 30, July 28, and August 18.

H. Other Items

Chair Muncey noted that Wendy Colsen had submitted additional field outreach information regarding employee counts, parking locations, and observations from contact with downtown businesses. Because the material was distributed on the day of the meeting and additional data was still being gathered, her discussion was deferred to



a future agenda for fuller review and presentation. Members agreed that her employee data and outreach findings should be scheduled for a subsequent meeting.

Alec Payleitner then summarized the parking concepts he proposed for the Task Force's consideration. He described a broader remote parking strategy centered on an outlying lot, using the Community Church of Douglas as an example, paired with a hop-on, hop-off trolley or shuttle to move visitors and enhance the visitor experience. He also described a route from the remote lot into downtown, including circulation along Butler Street and Water Street, potentially using one-way traffic patterns.

Mr. Payleitner detailed a phased approach that included one-way configurations for Butler Street, with angled parking on one side and parallel parking on the other, while maintaining sufficient width for a seasonal trolley lane between July 4 and Labor Day, as well as a similar configuration on Water Street. He also described a future trolley trial supported by wayfinding, timed arrivals, and possible private sponsorship or advertising to offset costs. The concept was presented as an integrated system rather than a series of isolated parts.

Members discussed the concept for future consideration as part of the Task Force's broader review of parking management options.

I. Next Steps

Items identified for continued review at future meetings included Butler Street one-way conversion, accessible and short-term parking locations, restricted parking areas, employee parking options, enforcement concepts, and tourism- or growth-related data sources to support the future demand analysis. Members indicated that these matters should inform the development of the Task Force's eventual recommendations to the City.

7. Correspondence

Chair Muncey referenced a letter from Brian Elmore received after the distribution of the meeting packet and requested that it be included in a future packet. Members also encouraged submission of community correspondence before final recommendations are developed so that public input may be considered as part of the Task Force's deliberations.

8. Public Comments

No public comments were received.

9. Task Force Member Comments

Members offered brief closing comments and generally indicated that the meeting generated useful discussion and ideas for continued review.

10. Adjournment

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:00 p.m. ET, there being no further business to come before the Task Force.