



CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP AGENDA

March 4, 2026, 4:00 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.

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Agenda Changes** (*Additions/Deletions*)
- 4. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only** (*Limit 3 minutes*)
- 5. Approval of Minutes:** (*Roll Call*)
 - A.** Regular City Council Meeting Minutes – February 23, 2026. **Pg.2**
- 6. Discussion Items:**
 - A.** Mt. Baldhead Vegetation Restoration Proposal. **Pg.8**
 - B.** Village Square Courts – Selection of a Concept and Approval of Donation Agreement. **Pg.36**
 - C.** Public Speech Policy and Palette Sign Display Policy. **Pg.52**
 - D.** Proposed Housing Bills in Legislature. **Pg.60**
- 7. Public Comments** (*Limit 3 minutes*)
- 8. Council Comments**
- 9. Adjourn**

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 jwolters@saugatuckcity.com for further information.



**CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
February 23, 2026**

The City Council met to have a Regular Council Meeting at City Hall at 6:30 p.m.
102 Butler St., Saugatuck, MI 49453.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Anderson at 6:30 p.m.

Attendance:

Present: Mayor Anderson, Mayor Pro-Tem Clark and Councilmembers Dean, Gardner, Muncey, Peterson.
Absent: Stanton.

*Motion by Peterson, second by Stanton to make accommodation for Russ Gardner joining by zoom.
Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.*

Others Present: City Manager Cummins, Planning & Zoning Director Moore, Attorney Witte, and Clerk Wolters.

Mayor's Comments:

Mayor Holly Anderson, recognized City Clerk Jamie Wolters' recent professional achievement, reading a letter from the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks announcing Jamie's completion of the Level 1 Michigan Professional Municipal Clerk certification. She publicly congratulated her and remarked that Jamie is an asset to the city in many ways.

City Manager Comments:

City Manager Ryan Cummins began by thanking Mayor Anderson for recognizing Clerk Jamie Wolters' recent certification and emphasized how important continued education is for key staff. He stated that he would largely let his written report stand but highlighted a few points. Responding to a question raised at a recent workshop about how capital improvement projects are prioritized, he explained that the city's engineer had compiled the criteria used to rank and schedule those projects; that information was included in his report and would also be shared more broadly with the community. He then gave a brief project update on the Mt. Baldhead restroom, saying it was nearly complete, with doors installed and only finishing touches remaining.

Agenda Changes: None.

Guest Speakers:

Allegan County Sheriff's Office – Annual Report:

Undersheriff Larsen opened by giving historical context on the City of Saugatuck's contract with the Allegan County Sheriff's Office, which began in 2018 after the city evaluated several options and ultimately chose the sheriff's office in part because of an estimated annual savings of about \$200,000, now totaling over \$1.5 million. He stressed that these savings are tied to not having dedicated 24/7 city-only coverage; instead, Saugatuck receives targeted contracted patrol hours layered on top of the county's around-the-clock coverage. Those contracted hours are adjusted seasonally and scheduled based on call volumes, traffic patterns, and coordination with the city on festivals, parades, and holidays, shifting in summer as

the population increases. Deputies commit to the contract for at least two years, which provides fresh perspectives and new energy but also leads to perceived turnover even though only 12 deputies have served in the four contracted positions since inception. He proposed working with the council to create a more detailed “letter of understanding” or MOU—separate from the contract—with measurable objectives (such as specific numbers of business contacts, foot patrol percentages, or contact visits) so performance expectations are clear and the sheriff’s office can be held accountable. He closed by underscoring that communication with council and the community is key, acknowledged that the sheriff’s office could do more outreach, and introduced Sergeant Ben Haas to present the detailed annual report.

Sergeant Ben Haas presented the annual report for the Saugatuck contracted deputies, starting with staffing: four contract deputies currently serve the city, with Deputy Juan Garcia scheduled to replace Deputy Haskill in the spring. He reported that in 2025 the sheriff’s office handled 27,850 incidents countywide, of which 1,134 occurred within the City of Saugatuck; the four contract deputies conducted 371 traffic stops and logged 232 documented school contacts, noting they likely visit the school more often than is formally recorded. Reserved and special-event hours in the city totaled 739.25 hours, and deputies assisted with 11 specific events. Haas reported an overall average response time of about 11.5 minutes for calls in 2025, explaining that this figure is affected by how dispatch times calls (including when deputies are reassigned to a call while doing follow-up paperwork) and that he did substantial manual review to clean the data. He walked council through a set of maps showing the distribution of different call types—traffic violations and crashes, general assists, felonies, misdemeanors, and various non-criminal calls like welfare checks, alarms, animal complaints, and road hazards. Haas committed to (1) adding some form of response-time data to monthly reports (and, if possible, breaking out priority calls), (2) providing counts of mutual-aid responses between Saugatuck and neighboring areas, (3) exploring ways to separate “assist other agencies” data, and (4) ensuring that either he or the on-duty contract deputy regularly attends city council meetings when calls allow.

Historic District Commission – Annual Report:

Historic District Commission Chair Tim Straker reported that in the past year the HDC reviewed 58 total applications, with roughly half involving contributing structures and half non-contributing structures. He emphasized that both types are important, because investment in non-contributing properties also strengthens the district’s overall quality. Tim highlighted that 30 of the 58 applications were approved at the staff level, noting he works closely with Zoning Director Moore. He added that most applications, whether staff-approved or brought to a meeting, are resolved within a single meeting, which is a deliberate goal of the commission. As a “PSA” for historic preservation, Straker reminded council that homes in historic districts typically appreciate 5–20% more than comparable homes outside such districts, due to their protected and distinctive character. He closed by thanking council members, several of whom have served or are serving on the HDC, for their work and support, and reiterated the commission’s focus on being both careful with the guidelines and user-friendly for property owners.

Planning Commission – Annual Report:

Planning Commission Chair Steve Mans reviewed the commission’s 2025 activity and priorities. The Planning Commission’s direct work included 3 special land uses, 8 site plan reviews, 6 short-term rental/ADU cases, 1 POD, and 2 ordinance projects forwarded to council. He highlighted the master plan as a major 2025–2026 priority: the commission built a 12–18 month schedule that included surveys, public meetings, and bringing results back to both the commission and council, with the goal of having a draft master plan by late summer 2026 and a final plan in Q4 2026. Another priority—consolidation and re-examination of zoning districts, especially commercial districts and their boundaries. Steve also described extensive work on the sign ordinance. He gave an update on ADUs, explaining that the ordinance was tightened in January 2025 and that most ADU special land use cases now come in very “clean,” raising the question of whether ADUs that fully meet ordinance standards should eventually be approved administratively rather than by the commission; however, they have postponed that change so as not to move the goalposts on applicants already in process. Finally, Steve previewed an upcoming case where

the owners are seeking to move from a bed-and-breakfast framework (with accessory guest units) back to a more “inn”/Water Street East commercial zoning; he noted this application will force discussion about appropriate commercial intensity and boundaries in residential-adjacent areas and will directly intersect with the future-land-use and zoning questions at the heart of the new master plan.

Zoning Board of Appeals – Annual Report:

Zoning Board of Appeals Chair Bob Kubasiak reported that the ZBA had only two formal applications and meetings over the past year. One case the board granted a variance to allow replacement of an existing pool fence because the fence style otherwise required by ordinance would not comply with state building code or legal requirements; the variance allowed the owner to complete compliant fencing. The second case sought a variance to allow the façade of an accessory building to sit closer to the public street right-of-way than the front door of the principal dwelling, contrary to ordinance; the ZBA denied that request, finding the design could reasonably be changed to meet the rules. Bob emphasized that while only two cases reached the ZBA, a substantial amount of work is done upfront by staff, who often tell applicants when something clearly cannot be approved or help them adjust plans before they ever file for a variance. He suggested it might be useful, though not essential, to track how many potential variance inquiries are resolved at the staff level, to give a fuller picture of zoning administration workload.

Public Comment on Agenda Item Only: None.

Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of City Council Workshop Minutes from February 18, 2026.
- B. Approval of City Council Closed Session Minutes from February 18, 2026.
- C. Special Event - No Kings III.
- D. Special Event - Saugatuck Farmers Market - The Market at SCA.
- E. Special Event - Art in the Park.
- F. Updates to City Council Rules of Procedure – Agenda Order.
- G. Board and Commission Appointments.
 - Kathleen Quick – Board of Review – Regular – Term Ending 1/1/29.
 - David Isliamovski – Board of Review – Regular – Term Ending 1/1/29.

Motion by Peterson, second by Dean to approve the consent agenda as written. A, approval of city council workshop minutes, B, approval of city council closed session minutes, C, special event, no kings, D, special events, Saugatuck SCA farmers market, E, special event, Art in the Park, F, updates to city council rules of procedure, and G, board and commissions, appointments. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously..

Staff Reports, Boards, Commissions & Committees:

Reports provided by City Manager Cummins and the following board, commission and committee members.

Fire District Administration:

City of Saugatuck fire board representative Dan Fox reported on the most recent Saugatuck Township Fire District meeting, noting first that the district now has two new licensed EMTs. He described ongoing work with Life EMS on a new service contract and an initiative to evaluate using an outside contractor for commercial plan reviews, which could reduce costs for the district. Fox reported that the purchase agreement for 415 Wiley Road is with the district’s attorneys and expected to be finalized soon. He then gave a detailed explanation of the district’s cost-recovery program, using the recent I-196 semi crash and plastic pellet spill as an example. He stressed that cost recovery is typically pursued where there is clear responsibility or egregious violations and that the chief exercises judgment case-by-case.

Interurban Board:

Councilmember Muncey reported that January ridership hit an all-time high of 5,524 rides, nearly 2,000 more than the prior January, with growth not only from new service areas (Laketown about 350 rides, Fennville about 300 rides) but also increased use within Saugatuck, Douglas, and the township. Interurban has been working with AACOA/COA and Allegan County Transportation, providing connector rides (including to Grand Rapids). The new dispatch software and rider app are in place, with over 1,000 app downloads and about 18% of rides now booked through the app; riders have given drivers an overall rating of 94%, even as staff continue working out minor software “kinks.” The board amended its bylaws to formally include the City of Fennville so Fennville can seek grants and potentially place Interurban funding on its ballot. Muncey also reported two recent vehicle grants: a \$110,000 capital grant for a larger van and a \$111,830 low-emissions grant for another bus, which will eventually bring the fleet to about 10 buses, though delivery may be late in the year. Finally, he noted ongoing work to finish the facility expansion, with electrical and plumbing in, drywall and interior finishes still to go, and a \$12,000 budget set aside for new office and conference room furniture.

Kalamazoo Lake Sewer & Water Authority:

Mayor Pro Tem Clark reported that the Authority’s new Administrator, Bob Miller, started work that day and will initially focus on stabilizing staffing, getting into the field with operators to understand the system, and overseeing back-office functions. Because of recent turnover and system changes, they will skip one billing cycle out of caution, to avoid introducing new errors, and will re-run the next cycle only after they’re confident in the platform. Clark highlighted that Bob is a strategic thinker who is already looking at developing a formal asset management plan and system-wide capital improvement plan.

Kalamazoo Lake Harbor Authority:

Councilmember Peterson Kalamazoo Lake Harbor Authority noted that Ryan had circulated the 2016 harbor report, observing that if you read it then and now, the situation is largely the same. She said the Authority’s next meeting is March 24, where they plan to move forward with the economic impact study, which Chair Waskins has identified as a priority. City Manager Cummins added that the study is estimated at about \$7,200, and that he has shared this cost with Douglas and the township.

Zoning Board of Appeals: None.

Historic District Commission:

Councilmember Dean informed council that the next meeting is Thursday, March 5 at 6:00 p.m.

Planning Commission:

Councilmember Gardner noted the Planning Commission meeting was cancelled due to lack of quorum and the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 19 at 6:30 p.m.

Parks & Public Works Committee:

Council member Stanton reported for the Parks and Public Works Committee that the committee is scheduled to meet the next morning at 10:00 a.m. She also attended the quarterly Kalamazoo River Greenway stakeholder meeting and highlighted that it is an active coalition including Saugatuck, Douglas, the township, Fennville, the school district, and ODC. The group has “hit the ground running” on public education and engagement, organizing a series of events from February through July, such as water-smart landscaping programs, a Dark Sky Expo, and multiple guided hikes. Stanton called special attention to the Kalamazoo River Cleanup at Wade’s Bayou on May 30 (10 a.m.–1 p.m.). She noted the Greenway partners are actively tracking grant opportunities and invited council and staff to share project ideas that might fit forthcoming grants, with the next stakeholder meeting set for May 12.

Tri-Community Non-Motorized Trail Study Committee: None.

Water Systems Operations Contract Advisory Committee:

Councilmember Joe Clark reported that the Water System Operations Contract Advisory Committee met and all three municipalities clearly agreed in principle to pursue a full water/wastewater authority. They agreed to bring new KLV&SA Administrator Bob Miller into discussions once he's oriented. Andy will now take the three communities' term-sheet spreadsheets and propose "middle ground" recommendations on key differences to guide negotiations, starting with a plain-language deck rather than full legal documents. Finally, there was consensus that they must demonstrate financial due diligence to the public, so an independent rate study will be developed. The Authority (via Bob Miller and Fleis & VandenBrink) will assemble a system-wide wastewater capital improvement plan, since there is currently no unified CIP across the three systems.

Parking Improvements Task Force Committee:

Councilmember Muncey reported that the Parking Improvements Task Force met on February 17 and introduced John Dorsett of Walker Consultants as the new project manager. He said Walker and staff have updated the parking inventory map based on local input and that the online parking survey is open through February 27, already drawing over 500 responses. Walker will conduct field data collection in two phases: an "off-season" snapshot in late April/early May (around Tulip Time) and a peak-season snapshot the week of July 13, when staff will be on the street counting use and durations in selected areas. The task force will continue meeting through August 18, at which point Walker will deliver recommendations; plans include at least one public engagement event (likely during Music in the Park) to share information and gather feedback.

Approval of Accounts Payable:

Motion by Stanton, second by Peterson, to approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$1,372,478.16. Via roll call, motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing: None.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business:

Resolution No. 260223-A Temporary Polling Location Change from City Hall to the Woman's Club:

Motion by Muncey, second by Dean to approve Resolution 260223-A a temporary polling location change from City Hall to Saugatuck Woman's Club. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment:

Tim Slais

Correspondence: None.

Council Comments:

Council Member Chris Peterson thanked the various board and committee chairs for their hard work and clear annual reports. She specifically praised the Allegan County Sheriff's Office, saying the facts and data in their report provide important backing when council receives questions. Peterson also mentioned about not letting the discussion on the proposed fire pit project get too far along without council input, emphasizing she supports the idea but wants to make sure council sees options rather than a single, finalized proposal when it returns for formal consideration.

Council Member Russ Gardner echoed appreciation for all guest speakers, with special thanks to Sergeant Haas and Undersheriff Larsen, and said he is very interested in pursuing the memorandum of understanding (MOU) the sheriff's office suggested, to address expectations not spelled out in the contract. He also thanked City Manager Ryan Cummins for following up on the millage rate entry error but asked for more detail from the assessor on how the issue was discovered and what process changes will be implemented so that a high-visibility error like this does not recur.

Council Member Joe Clark thanked the law enforcement representatives and all the board and commission chairs for their detailed reports and service, saying he continues to be impressed by how many talented people support the community. He offered special thanks to the deputies for keeping the community safe. Clark also congratulated Clerk Jamie Wolters on earning her MiPMC Level 1 certification, noting the difficulty of the clerk's role and thanking her for all the support she provides to council and the city.

Council Member Scott Dean joined in thanking the Allegan County Sheriff's Office and all presenters for their reports. He called out clerks in general as having one of the hardest jobs in the country, describing Wolters work as courageous and inspiring. Scott also thanked the sheriff's representatives for staying through the entire meeting, not just their presentation segment.

Council Member Gregory Muncey reiterated appreciation for all committee members and chairs. He especially praised the Saugatuck deputies and the thoroughness of their report, including the data and response-time figures. Muncey then highlighted the passing of long-time community member Don Beery, recalling his decades of involvement within the community. He announced Don's celebration of life at Spectators on Sunday, March 1, at 1 p.m.

Council Member Lauren Stanton said she agreed with the earlier comments and then focused on the Boys and Girls Club, sharing that she had recently spoken on behalf of City Council for a video the club is producing to support fundraising and outreach. She reflected that, coming from a small town, she used to think Boys & Girls Clubs were only for big cities, and emphasized how fortunate Saugatuck is to have one locally. Lauren noted that more than 200 kids participate and that their families and the broader community benefit from the club's presence, and she thanked Rotary and other donors who support the club's work.

Mayor Holly Anderson wrapped up by again thanking everyone, and she added a specific anecdote about Deputy Marklevitz, who recently helped a friend of hers whose car was stuck in the snow: he stopped on his own initiative, checked on them, and coordinated a tow, which she described as an "awesome" example of service. Anderson said this kind of personal interaction shows that the community really does know its deputies now, addressing some of the nostalgia about the old local department, and that the personal touch means a lot.

Adjournment:

Motion by Peterson, second by Dean to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously. Mayor Anderson adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Jamie Wolters, City Clerk



City Council Agenda Item Report

FROM: Michelle Gibson – Administrative/Project Coordinator
Scott Herbert- Public Works Superintendent

MEETING DATE: March 4, 2026

SUBJECT: Mt. Baldhead Revegetation

DESCRIPTION:

At the 2025 Strategic Planning session, City Council prioritized the revegetation of the Mt. Baldhead slope that had been previously damaged due to herbicide treatment, siting concerns over dune health and erosion. This task was brought back to the Parks & Public Works Committee where a project charter was drafted to outline the scope of work to be completed.

Staff reached out to multiple organizations to solicit proposals for revegetation of Mt. Baldhead. Proposals were received from the Kalamazoo Nature Center and the Outdoor Discovery Center. Additional outreach included Davey Resource Group (a Zoom meeting was scheduled but did not occur; no further communications were received), Black River Habitats (no response following follow-up emails), and MSU Extension (voicemail left; no response to date). Interested vendors were provided with the invasive species control plan prepared by the Land Conservancy of West Michigan and the City's Project Charter. The enclosed proposals represent the complete set of responses received.

Staff and the Parks & Public Works Committee recommend proceeding with the Outdoor Discovery Center's proposal to assist the City with its revegetation goals which includes:

- Invasive species management
- Deer protection
- Revegetation of the exposed dune
- Informational signage
- Supplemental native seeding

Project costs are as follows:

Invasive Species Management: \$10,000

Dune Revegetation: \$11,860

Total Project Cost: \$21,860

BUDGET ACTION REQUIRED:

Project is included in the current budget

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REVIEW:

N/A

LEGAL REVIEW:

N/A

SAMPLE MOTION:

Move to approve the Outdoor Discovery Center proposal for revegetation of Mt. Baldhead.

PROPOSAL FOR CONSERVATION SERVICES



This proposal was created for:

City of Saugatuck – Mount Baldhead Park
Mt Baldhead Park Trail, Saugatuck, MI 49453

General Background and Scope of Work:

The purpose of this proposal is to restore ecological health at Mount Baldhead through targeted invasive species management and the replanting of native dune vegetation. Previous control efforts done by a separate contractor inadvertently caused mortality to significant canopy cover and reduced dune stabilization, creating openings now dominated by invasive plants. Following a recent survey of the site, our team recommends the following management and replanting plan for 2026:

1. Invasive Species Management (see Appendix A for map)

- Several highly invasive species are present that threaten the integrity of the dune habitat, including: garlic mustard, multiflora rose, Asian bittersweet, Japanese barberry, tree-of-heaven, phragmites, and black locust.
- Our management approach will prioritize **safe and targeted** control methods that avoid unnecessary herbicide use and prevent damage to surrounding vegetation. Hand pulling will be implemented where practical, while cut-stump and hack and squirt treatments will be used to ensure precise and minimal herbicide applications. When foliar applications are necessary, they will be applied selectively and with safeguards to prevent off-target impacts.
- Includes procurement of all necessary permitting to apply herbicides through EGLE and MDARD.
 - **Note:** Many of the invasive species listed above typically require sustained and repeated management to successfully control. Effective treatment generally requires repeated management efforts over a period of multiple years to achieve meaningful reduction or eradication. Our team will continue to monitor the population annually and will provide updated pricing and management recommendations each year. The allows for adaptive management strategies based on observed changes in site conditions and treatment efficacy year-to-year.

2. Dune Revegetation

- Large areas of exposed soil across the dune north of the stairway currently face high risks of erosion and rapid recolonization by adjacent invasive species. To stabilize these areas, prevent further invasive spread, and enhance both habitat quality and aesthetics, we propose installing a diverse mix of native trees, shrubs, grasses, and forbs in the vacant space.
- Species selection will highlight erosion control, drought tolerance, and deer resistance, recognizing the heavy browsing pressure present at this site. Plantings will be matched to each micro-site's soil and sunlight conditions to maximize survival rates and ecological value.
 - **Trees:** Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*), Tulip Poplar (*Liliodendron tulipifera*), Basswood (*Tilia americana*), White Pine (*Pinus strobus*), Oak (*Quercus spp.*), Bladdernut (*Staphylea trifolia*), Serviceberry (*Amelanchier spp.*), etc.
 - **Shrubs:** Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), Sand Cherry (*Prunus pumila*), Ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*), Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), Arrowwood Viburnum (*Viburnum dentatum*), Northern Bush Honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*), Sweet Fern (*Comptonia peregrina*), etc.
 - **Forbs/graminoids:** Canada Wild Rye (*Elymus canadensis*), Bottlebrush Grass (*Elymus hystrix*), Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), Beach Grass (*Ammophila breviligulata*), Sand Reed (*Calamovilfa longifolia*), Penn Sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*), Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), Hairy Puccoon (*Lithospermum carolinense*), Dotted Mint (*Monarda punctata*), Flowering Spurge (*Euphorbia corollata*), etc.

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- Approximately **500** native plants will be installed throughout the unit, including, bare-root, 1-3 gallon, and 4" plugs.
 - Protective exclusion measures such as tree tubes and four 900 ft² sections of 6'-tall exclusion fencing will be implemented where applicable to prevent herbivory and physical damage to developing plantings (See *Appendix B* for layout).
 - Informational signage will be installed in high-traffic and erosion-prone areas to encourage public awareness, limit off-trail usage, and protect restoration efforts (See *Appendix B* for examples).
 - **"Sensitive Habitat Area – Keep Out"** signs (4"x6") will be placed at key intervals and potential access points throughout the unit as needed.
 - A total of four (4) **"Restoration in Progress"** signs (2'x3') will be placed in key locations to minimize off-trail use and reduce disturbance from hikers.
 - In addition to the live plantings, a custom native seed mix highlighting dune-adapted forbs and graminoids will be seeded following invasive species management efforts to enhance diversity and further stabilize exposed soils.

Project Timeline:

- Invasive species management ongoing during the 2026 growing season
- Live plantings and native seeding will be phased as invasive species treatments allow, from spring through early fall of 2026
- Signage and exclusion fencing will be installed immediately following planting.

Project Budget:

- **Invasive Species Management in 2026 - \$10,000** (billed in June 2026) ☐
- **Dune Revegetation (500 plants) - \$11,860** (billed in June 2026) ☐

***PLEASE CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOXES ABOVE TO INDICATE ACCEPTED SERVICES**

Note: *This proposal accounts for pricing of all labor, materials, and equipment necessary in order to perform the outlined invasive species management plan. If additional work is required beyond the scope of this proposal, we will provide written notification and pricing will be determined on a time and materials basis.*

Exclusions: This proposal does not account for:

- Installation of exclusion fencing beyond what is outlined in this proposal.
- Production and installation of signage beyond what is outlined in this proposal.
- Installation or management of irrigation features.
- Removal of standing dead plant material following invasive species control measures.
- Replacement of damaged lawn, landscape plants, trees or shrubs as a result of nearby invasive species control measures.
- Replanting of native vegetation following invasive species control measures (unless otherwise stated on the proposal).

**** We are happy to assist with any of the above items upon request through a separate proposal. For custom signage inquiries or quotes, please contact: dylana@outdoordiscovery.org.**

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Qualifications:

ODC Conservation Services staff are highly qualified conservation professionals.

- ODC Network, and its subsidiaries, is a fully insured 501c3 and carries an extensive liability policy to conduct habitat improvement services in Michigan
- State licensed herbicide applicators with certifications in Forest Pest, Right-of-Way, and Aquatic pesticide application
- Combined 25+ years experience in invasive species management
- Successfully restored over 250 acres of native prairie
- Successfully installed over 25 native gardens and landscape beds
- Manage 2,000+ acres of high quality natural area
- Experienced Michigan flora and fauna identification
- Advanced wetland delineation certification
- Experienced GIS professionals

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this proposal. We look forward to discussing the opportunity further with you. Please do not hesitate to ask questions or clarifications. If you choose to accept this proposal, please sign and return a copy.



Tanner Bricker, Conservation Services Director
ODC Network
517-398-7800

If you wish to accept this proposal, please initial each page, as well as sign and date below:

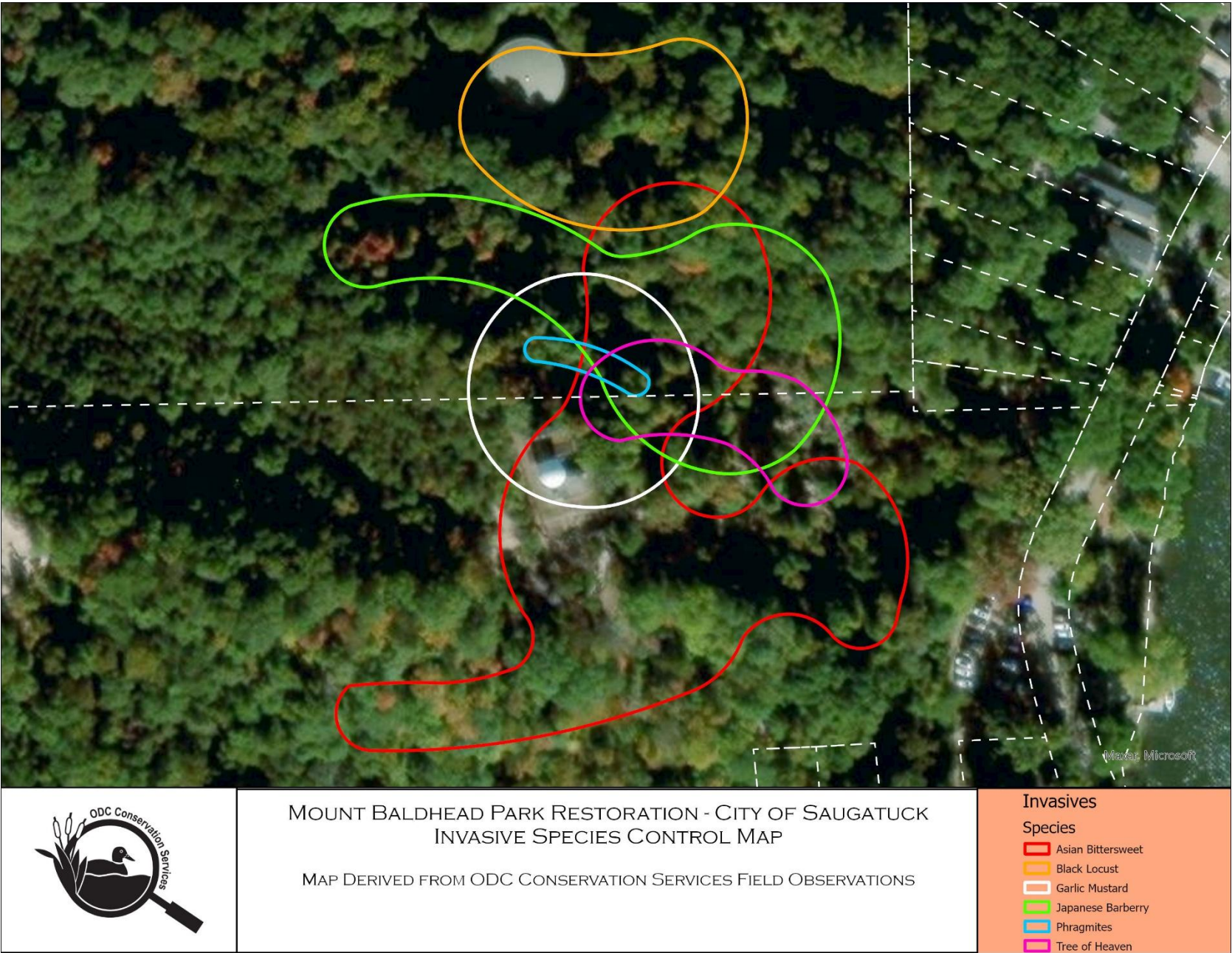
Signature of Authorized Property Owner/Manager

Date



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Appendix A: Map of Surveyed Invasive Species



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Appendix B: Replanting Zones and Tree Exclusion Areas



INDIVIDUAL TREE PROTECTIONS

TREES WILL RECEIVE A 4' TREE TUBE FOLLOWING PLANTING TO DISCOURAGE HERBIVORY OF MERISTEMS AND DESTRUCTION OF PERIDERM. TUBES ALSO INCREASE HUMIDITY AROUND YOUNG TREE TO INCREASE SURVIVABILITY.



DEER EXCLUSION ZONES



30'x30' AREAS WILL BE FENCED OFF TO PREVENT DEER AND ANTHROPOGENIC DISTURBANCE WHILE THE PLANT COMMUNITY DEVELOPS. EXCLUSION AREAS ARE STRATEGICALLY PLACED IN SPARSELY VEGETATED AREAS PRONE TO EROSION.

SIGNAGE OPTIONS



CUSTOM SIGN PRINTING AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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Mount Baldhead Revegetation Project Charter

Goal: Revegetate Mount Baldhead with native trees and forbs.

Objectives

- Remove invasive species
- Ensure minimal dune erosion
- Install replacement plants with the highest possible survival chances.

Participants

Saugatuck Staff – Scott Herbert and Michelle Gibson

Lead PPW Committee Member - Nancy Kimble

External Resources –Allegan Conservation District (ACD)

Potential Vendors – Outdoor Discovery Center and Kalamazoo Nature Center

Saugatuck City Council – All current Council members

Background

A significant population of the invasive plant, Asian bittersweet, was identified on the eastern slope of Mount Baldhead in 2012. In 2013, to eradicate bittersweet, targeted herbicide was applied. Unfortunately, the herbicide did not perform as anticipated, and nearly all plant species in the application area died. New plants were subsequently installed but the survival rate of the new plantings was low. As a result, the plants are relatively sparse in this area and many of those are invasive plants. There are also erosion concerns.

Scott Herbert contacted the Allegan Conservation District (ACD), and their staff surveyed the site to determine the presence of invasive species. A report was prepared that identified the invasive species currently inhabiting the site. The next step is to remove the invasives and replace them with appropriate natives. ACD staff are not available for invasives removal and new plantings. Instead, their report will be provided to vendors that are able to treat the invasives, recommend new plants, and perform the installation.

Scott was able to locate historical records that documented the trees that existed previously but that did not survive the herbicide application. This report will be provided to all identified vendors.

Approach

- Identify qualified vendors that can remove invasive species
- Provide vendors with historical records and ACD report on current invasive species
- Receive proposals from vendors for invasive plant removal and installation of appropriate native plants
- Evaluate proposals for cost effectiveness and risk mitigation (drought conditions, deer browse and human traffic)
- PPW Committee will select proposal with greatest success chance and recommend to City Council

Project Exclusions

Other areas of Mount Baldhead are excluded from this project.

Project Risks and Mitigation:

Risks: The most significant risk is poor survival rate of plantings

Mitigation: Carefully evaluate each proposal to ensure each known risk is minimized. Monitor conditions of plants for the first 2-3 years after installation and adjust mitigation measures as appropriate.

Target End Date: 12/31/2026

Charter Date: 12/12/2025

Charter Prepared by: Nancy Kimble

Tree Removal, Replacement, and Erosion Control Plan

Mt. Baldhead

Allegan County, Michigan

10/7/2013

Prepared For:



400 Ann St. NW, Suite 102
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Prepared by:



11181 Marwill Avenue
West Olive, Michigan 49460
616-847-1680
www.cardnojfnew.com



**WEST MICHIGAN
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A division of GRAND ARBOR GROUP, INC.

2146 Dean Lake NE
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Tree Removal, Replacement, and Erosion Control Plan TABLE OF CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

At the request of The Land Conservancy of West Michigan, Cardno JFNew and West Michigan Tree Services have been contracted to write a remediation plan for Mount Baldhead Park in Saugatuck, Michigan. The purpose of the remediation plan is to design a successful strategy to recreate the native habitat that was lost due to tree losses that occurred as a result of Oriental bittersweet control treatments..

To control a growing infestation of Oriental bittersweet on Mount Baldhead, the City of Saugatuck gave permission to the Land Conservancy of West Michigan to administer applications of herbicides for Oriental bittersweet control. These herbicide applications occurred in 2010 and 2011.

Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) is an exotic, invasive vine that can destroy native habitats. The vine overruns trees, woody-plants, and ground covers. Oriental Bittersweet can become so pervasive the vines block sunlight to the foliage of desirable trees and native plants.

This remediation plan is intended to address the removal and replacement of impacted trees, as well as any soil erosion that may have occurred as a result of said impacts.

2.0 MT. BALDHEAD IMPACTS

Tree Impacts

Tree impacts were limited to the northeast side of Mount Baldhead and the perimeter of the parking area at the base of the hill. The area inspected extends from the top of the hill to the base of the hill, and from the path on the northeast side of the hill southward to approximately thirty feet south of the stairway.

The majority of the herbicide damage was limited to deciduous trees (there are very few conifer trees on Mount Baldhead). The size of the trees did not appear to have any influence on the extent of herbicide injury. Tree species, however, did have an influence. Sugar maples, red oaks and American basswoods were acutely affected. The mulberry trees and locusts incurred less damage. There is a grove of trees, approximately fifty feet in diameter, located three quarters of the way up the slope that suffered no damage.

Of the 191 trees inspected, 148 trees are dead or suffered more than fifty percent crown loss and have little to no chance of survival (Table 1). Forty three trees were not affected or suffered less than fifty percent crown loss.

Maple, oak and basswood comprised two-thirds of the trees examined. The remaining species consisted of ash, wild cherry, American elm, American beech, sassafras, locust, mulberry, walnut, tulip poplar, and Ailanthus.

Three of the trees examined died due to being overrun by the Oriental Bittersweet vines and a few trees (not listed in the inventory) were dead prior to 2010. Most of the damage we encountered was caused by the herbicide applications. Unless otherwise noted on the tree inventory, trees listed as being dead have perished due to the bittersweet treatments.

Table 1. Dead, or >50% Crown Loss Trees

	Sugar Maple	White Oak	Red Oak	Ash	Basswood	Sassafras	Cherry	Elm	Tulip	Black Locust	Tree of Heaven	Walnut	Beech	Mulberry
By North Home														
By South Parking Lot				1	1									
By South Home			1											
North of Path			2											
3/4 Up the Center of the Hill														
Mount Baldhead	55	8	22	2	33	5	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	1
South Side of Stairs			4		3									
Totals	55	8	29	3	37	5	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	1

Site Erosion

The loss of tree canopy has had several effects on the understory of the ecosystem. These effects include an increased amount of sunlight that has allowed the establishment of an herbaceous understory not likely present prior to the tree impacts. Dominant species in the understory include garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), bedstraw (*Galium aparine*), soapwort (*Saponaria officinalis*), and Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*). These opportunistic species establish in recently disturbed areas, such as those present at the impacted portion of Mt. Baldhead. One positive side effect is the new vegetative cover is helping to stabilize the soil..

When comparing the trees south of the staircase to the trees north of the staircase, there is a noticeable absence of vegetative diversity on the north side. The more native ecosystem south of the stairs has layers of herbaceous shrubs and tree cover, while the north side vegetation is limited to primarily the afore mentioned herbaceous cover. The north side will become more stable if these vegetative layers can be re-established.

The soil on the north side has few signs of active erosion. The vegetation and detritus that are present are minimizing erosion. However, small amounts of soil movement/erosion s are evident. The erosion is primarily superficial and limited to comparatively small (10-20 square foot) areas. No new erosional rills or gullies were observed. What erosional activity has occurred is primarily where there is a lack of detritus or herbaceous vegetation, or where public use has created disturbances.

There is a walking path on the north side of Mt. Baldhead. Although not related to invasive species treatments, this path creates potential instability because vegetation is unable to become established. With the loss of tree canopy cover, this path has a greater potential to erode if public use continues to inhibit the ability for vegetation to become established.

As a critical dune, Mt. Baldhead has been historically subject to movement. This is particularly evident where a wood retaining wall was installed at the toe of the slope to impede soil movement. Soil movement/erosion has historically been minimized by the presence of vegetation and detritus throughout the dune, as is evident in pre-disturbance photos and an evaluation of the non-impacted south side of Mt. Baldhead. Long-term stability of the impacted north side of the dune will depend on the presence of vegetation and detritus in some form. Recommendations for increasing stability are provided below.

3.0 TREE REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT

Tree removal and tree replacement are required to address the 148 trees that suffered mortality. In order to maximize the unique social, cultural, and environmental benefits provided by Mt. Baldhead, tree removal and tree replacement measures must account for public safety, soil stability, and the ecology of the dune ecosystem.

Tree Removal

There are currently 148 trees (Figure 2) on Mt. Baldhead that have been identified as dead or dying as a result of invasive species treatments. For public safety and soil stability reasons, each of these 148 trees must be addressed in a manner that will protect the public safety and enhance resident ecological community.

Of the 148 dead or dying trees, 42 trees (Figure 3) have been identified as hazard trees. A hazard tree is defined as any dead and/or damaged tree caused by the application(s)

of non-selective herbicides, where limbs and/or the whole tree has the potential to fall and reach park visitors using the stairway, foot paths, private homes, and/or the parking lot or pavilion area. For public safety reasons, all hazard trees should be removed and the wood and brush scattered throughout the site, as described below.

In addition to the 42 hazard trees, an additional 45 trees should be removed to reduce potential soil erosion that could be caused by wind throw and to encourage the re-establishment of the native ecological community.

Scattering tree trunks and crowns throughout the site will re-introduce detritus to the system, provide microbial habitat and also serve to stabilize the soil. The remaining dead trees should be left standing in place for wildlife habitat.

Tree Removal Methodology

Removal of dead or dying trees shall be treated in one of two ways. They will either be left standing in place or they will be cut and scattered in appropriate locations for the reasons described above. Trees will be cut by the safest and most practical means necessary. Stumps will be cut flush to grade. Wood and brush will be spread throughout bare or open areas so as not to form “heaps” or piles. Tree crowns will be cut small enough to lay on the hill so that no portion extends more than four feet vertically from the ground surface. All cut material will be placed on the hillside in a manner that mimics natural detritus and minimizes erosion—cut material will not be placed in a manner that exacerbates erosion in any way.

Tree Replacement

To replace the 148 impacted trees, a combination of potted and bare-root trees should be installed. The 148 impacted trees should be replaced at a 1:1 ratio with potted stock, while additional bare-root stock will be installed at a 2:1 ratio. This would bring the total proposed tree replacement to a 3:1 ratio.

The unique ecology of Mt. Baldhead suggests that an emphasis be placed on selecting native tree species from local tree sources. This will best insure a re-establishment of the pre-application native conditions. However, not all of the impacted species are commercially available from local (Michigan-grown) genotypes. The recommended tree replacements have been narrowed based on commercially available local genotype species available from Michigan sources.

Oriental bittersweet continues to inhabit portions of Mt. Baldhead. As this plant will inhibit the establishment of native trees, it will need to be addressed.

Table 3. Proposed Tree Replacement

Botanical Name	Common Name	Qty (3-5 gallon potted)	Qty (bare-root)
<i>Acer saccharum</i>	Sugar Maple	55	110
<i>Juglans nigra</i>	Black Walnut	2	4
<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	Tulip	1	2
<i>Quercus alba</i>	White Oak	5	10
<i>Quercus rubra</i>	Red Oak	30	60
<i>Tilia americana</i>	Basswood	37	74
<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>	Canadian hemlock	18	36

4.0 EROSION CONTROL MEASURES

Natural dune stability primarily results from the presence of vegetation and detritus. Therefore, mitigating future erosion on Mt. Baldhead will require the re-introduction of the recommended trees as well as vegetation and detritus to the dunes slope.

Woody shrubs are a critical vegetative layer for dunes stability. The shrub layer has not yet shown signs of re-growth. Therefore, re-introducing a shrub layer will more quickly stabilize the slope and minimize future erosion. Proposed shrub species are provided in Table 4. Quantities have been determined by assuming that approximately 50% of the 1.73 acre area will be planted with shrubs spaced 10' on-center.

In addition to the shrubs, a native seed mix (Table 5) should be installed in any disturbed areas. Seed should be installed by hand-spreading and covered with straw mulch.

Table 4. Proposed Shrubs for Erosion Control

Botanical Name	Common Name	Qty (bare-root)
<i>Cornus florida</i>	Flowering Dogwood	75
<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	Witch hazel	75
<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	Spicebush	75
<i>Sassafras albidum</i>	Sassafras	75
<i>Viburnum acerifolium</i>	Maple-leaved Viburnum	75

Table 5. Proposed Seed Mix for Disturbed Areas

Botanical Name	Common Name	Oz/acre
<i>Allium cernuum</i>	Nodding wild onion	2
<i>Anemone cylindrica</i>	Thimbleweed	1
<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	Wild columbine	1
<i>Aster lateriflorus</i>	Side-flowering aster	2
<i>Aster sagittifolius</i>	Arrow-leaved aster	2
<i>Avena sativa</i>	Seed oats	640
<i>Bromus pubescens</i>	Woodland brome	2
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Canada wild rye	16
<i>Elymus hystrix</i>	Bottlebrush grass	32
<i>Geranium maculatum</i>	Wild geranium	1
<i>Helianthus divaricatus</i>	Woodland sunflower	2
<i>Lolium multiflorum</i>	Annual rye	5
<i>Monarda punctata</i>	Horse mint	2
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little bluestem grass	8
<i>Solidago caesia</i>	Blue-stemmed goldenrod	1
Total PLS Ounces		701.00
Total PLS Pounds		43.81

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

A multi-tiered approach is needed to address the impacts to Mt. Baldhead. Removing the recommended trees and scattering the cut material on the slope will provide detritus and slow erosion. Replanting the site with the recommended trees and shrubs will re-establish the native vegetation that was lost due to the herbicide applications.

Table 2. Tree Removal

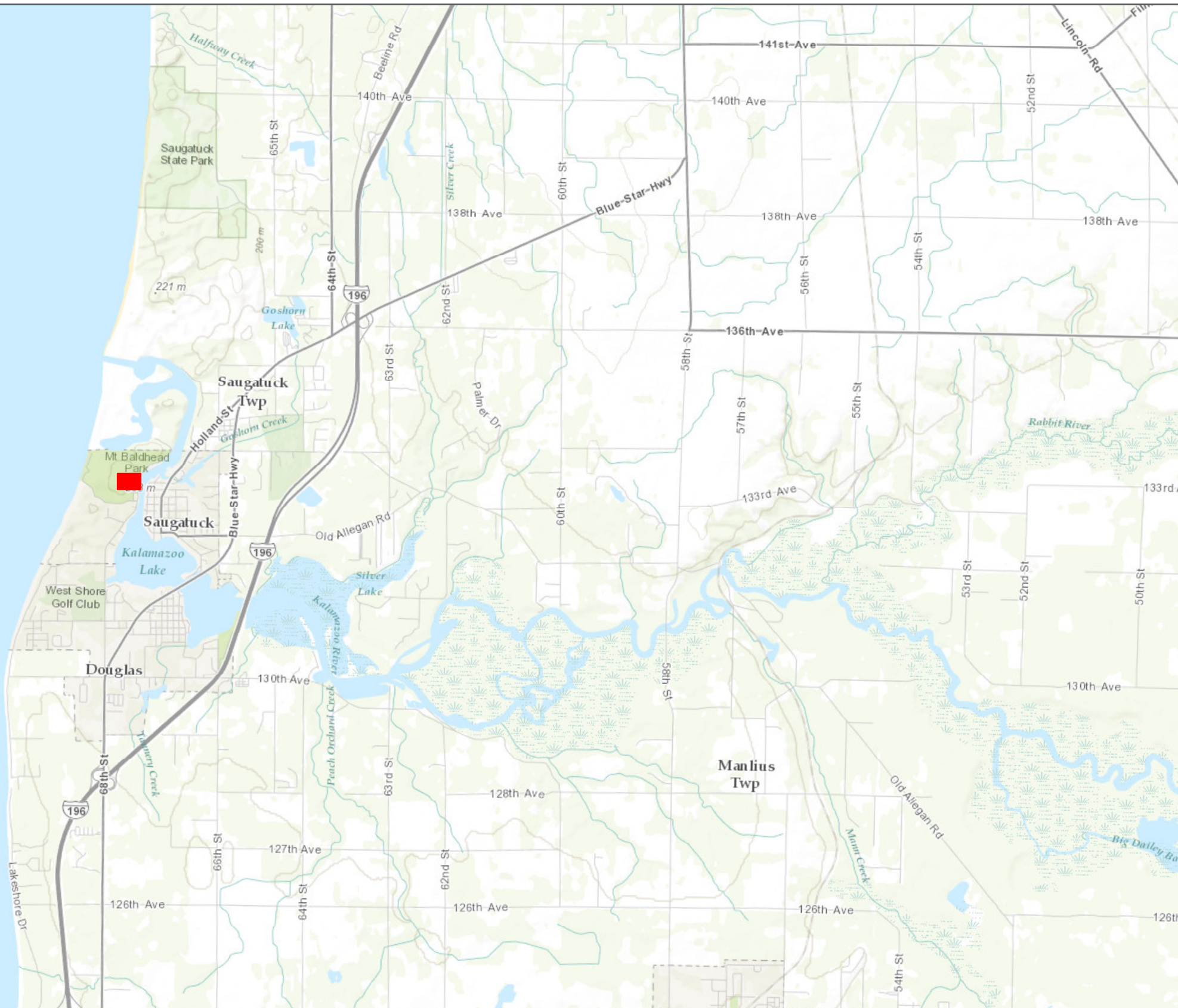
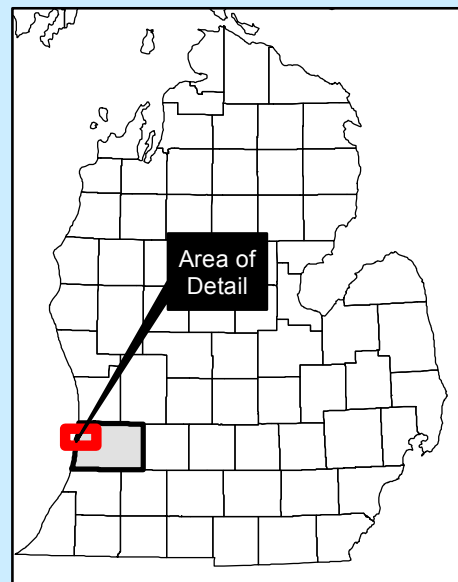
DBH	SPECIES	CONDITION	ID#
8.3	Basswood	Dead	1
10	Basswood	Dead	2
6.4	Basswood (clump)	Dead	3
7.9	Basswood (clump)	Dead	3
7.1	Basswood (clump)	Dead	4
14	Basswood (clump)	Dead	4
16.2	Maple	Dead	5
11.3	Maple	Dead	6
11.8	Maple (clump)	Dead	7
12.3	Maple (clump)	Dead	7
12.4	Maple (clump)	Dead	8
18.4	Maple (clump)	Dead	8
8.7	Maple	Dead	9
19.9	Maple	Dead	10
6.9	Maple	Dead	11
23.2	Basswood	Dead	12
14.6	Basswood	Dead	13
10.7	Basswood	Dead	14
8.5	Basswood	Dead	15
12	Maple	50% Dead	16
18.8	Basswood	Dead	17
23.8	Maple	Unaffected	18
20.1	Cherry	Dead	19
10	Basswood	Dead	20
7.9	Maple	Mainly unaffected – previously blown out top	21
7.5	Ash	Dead – No evidence of EAB	22
12.1	Maple	90% dead – Part was previously dead	23
8.2	Ironwood	Unaffected	24
7.7	Ash	Dead – No evidence of EAB	25
13.2	Elm	Dead	26
7.6	Maple	Unaffected	27
23	Beech	50% from herbicide – previously blown out top	28
17.1	Maple	90% Dead	29
19.7	Maple	75% Dead	30
13.5	Maple	Dead	31
21	Cherry	Dead	32
14.7	Maple	75% Dead	33
16	Oak	Dead	34
7.2	Maple	40% Dead	35
8.7	Maple	60% Dead	36
8.6	Maple	Dead	37
16.1	Maple	30% Dead	38
9.5	Elm	Unaffected	39
13.2	Maple	Dead	40
14.8	Maple	Dead	41
10.1	Maple	Dead	42
9.9	Oak	Dead	43
6.8	Maple	95% Dead	44
9	Maple	10% Dead	45
17.4	Oak	Dead	46
8.7	Maple	Dead	47
13.6	Maple	Dead	48
15.6	Maple	Dead	49
14.7	Maple	Dead	50
12.9	Maple	Dead – Lots of vines	51
21.7	Oak	Dead	52
6.8	Oak	Dead	53
10.4	Basswood	Dead – Lots of vines	54
6.3	Maple	10% Dead	55

	<50% Canopy or unaffected
	Hazard tree--remove and scatter on site
	Non-hazard dead tree, remove and scatter on site
	Non-hazard dead tree, leave standing in place

DBH	SPECIES	CONDITION	ID#
23.7	Maple	Dead	56
8.1	Maple	Dead	57
8.9	Maple	Dead	58
13.6	Oak	Dead	59
15.9	Maple	Dead	60
6.6	Maple	Dead	61
15.4	Oak	Dead	62
16.3	Oak	Dead	63
24.8	Maple	Dead	64
12.3	Maple	Dead	65
12.1	Maple	Dead	66
18	Basswood	Dead	67
12.7	Basswood	Dead	68
18.5	Basswood	Dead	69
8.1	Basswood	Dead	70
15	Black Locust	90% Canopy loss	70
4	Red Oak	Dead	71
9	Red Oak	Dead	71
9	Sugar Maple	Dead	72
17	Red Oak	Dead	73
16	Sugar Maple	Dead	74
18	Sugar Maple	Dead	75
12	Sugar Maple	Dead	76
9	Beech	Unaffected	77
22	Beech	Unaffected	78
12	Sugar Maple	Dead	79
8	Sugar Maple	Dead	80
24	Basswood	Dead	81
20	Sugar Maple	Dead	82
16	Sugar Maple	Unaffected	83
15	Sugar Maple	Dead	84
12	Sugar Maple	Dead	85
13	Sugar Maple	Dead	86
18	Basswood	Dead	87
16	Sugar Maple	10% Crown loss	88
18	Red Oak	Dead	89
16	Red Oak	Dead	90
15	Sugar Maple	Dead	91
19	Red Oak	Dead	92
11	Sugar Maple	Dead	93
13	Sugar Maple	Dead	94
26	Red Oak	Dead	95
11	Red Oak	Dead	96
17	Red Oak	Dead	97
6	Sugar Maple	Dead	98
11	Red Oak	Dead	99
17	Red Oak	Dead	100
16	Red Oak	Dead	101
7	Maple	Dead	102
14.3	Sugar Maple	20% Canopy Loss	111
24.8	White Oak	15% Canopy Loss	112
14.9	Ash	Dead	131
10.5	Basswood	Dead	132
10.5	Red Oak	Dead	133
8.3	Basswood	Dead	140
15.3	Basswood	Dead	141
20.9	Oak	Dead – Lots of vines	142
5.6	Basswood	Dead	143
7.6	Basswood	Dead	143

DBH	SPECIES	CONDITION	ID#
8.5	Sassafras	Dead	144
9	Sassafras	Dead	145
10.4	Sassafras	Dead	146
6.9	Maple	90% Dead	147
16.2	Basswood	Dead	148
26	Basswood	Dead	148
12.5	Maple	85% Dead	149
11.1	Basswood	Dead	150
11.9	Basswood	Dead	150
6.4	Basswood	Dead	151
8.5	Basswood	Dead	151
13.6	Basswood	Dead	151
6.2	Sassafras	Dead	152
5.2	Mulberry	Unaffected	153
5.4	Mulberry	Unaffected	153
6.9	Mulberry	Unaffected	153
28.3	Oak	Dead	154
7.2	Tree of Heaven	Dead	155
25.2	Maple	Dead	156
13	Oak	Dead	157
8.2	Maple	Dead	158
21.3	Oak	Dead	159
11.6	Tree of Heaven	10% Dead	160
6.5	Maple	Unaffected	161
14.2	Maple	Dead	162
16.3	Sassafras	Dead	163
29	Walnut	50% Dead	164
5.1	Locust	Tip die back	201
7	Locust	Tip die back	201
9.5	Locust	Tip die back	201
13.3	Scotch Pine	Unaffected	202
21.3	Tulip	Dead	203
9.9	Red Oak	Dying	204
21	Tulip	Dead	205
6.3	Locust	Slight tip die-back	206
22	Tulip	25% crown loss	207
7.3	Sugar Maple	Healthy	208
17.2	Red Oak	Dying	209
7.6	Sugar Maple	Dead	210
6	Sugar Maple	Unaffected – Healthy	211
15.3	Tulip	Dead	212
13.3	Red Oak	Dead	213
18.8	Red Oak	Dead	214
6.3	Basswood	Dead	215
16.2	Red Oak	Dying – 80% crown loss	216
15.6	Sugar Maple	Viable – 10% loss	217
13.9	Basswood	Dead	218
18.5	Beech	Dead	219
18.1	Basswood	Dead	220
15.6	Red Oak	Dead	221
16.2	Red Oak	80% crown loss	222
11.7	Red Oak	50% crown loss	223
23.9	Red Oak	80% crown loss	224
10.8	Sugar Maple	Unaffected	225
7.3	Sugar Maple	Unaffected	226
8.3	Sugar Maple	15% Canopy Loss	227
11.7	Red Oak	Dead from vines	228
16.2	Red Oak	Dead	229
9.2	Red Oak	Dead from vines	230
15.2	Mulberry	Dead from vines	231
17.5	Sugar Maple	80% crown loss	232
12.4	Basswood	Dead	233
9.2	Basswood	Dead	234
6.2	Basswood	???	235
7.6	Basswood	???	235
10.2	Basswood	20% Canopy Loss	235
19.7	Basswood	Dead	235

FIGURES



 Approximate Site Location



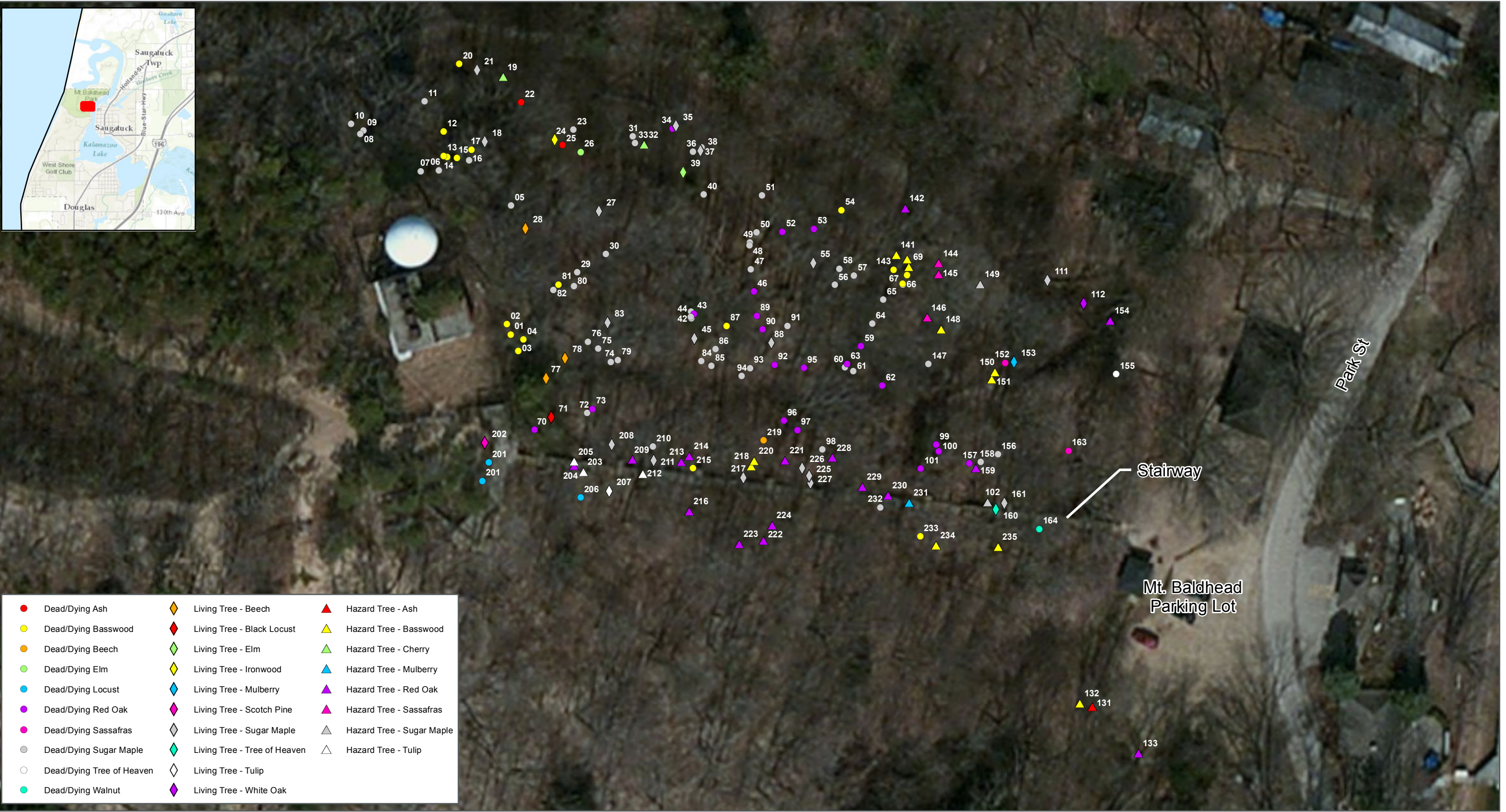
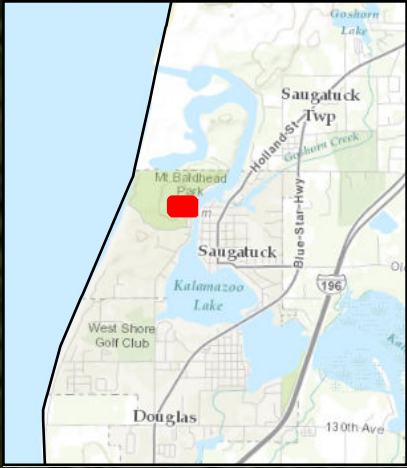
Section: 09
Township: 03 N
Range: 16 W
Project No. 1210007.01

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Figure 1 - Site Location Map
Mt. Baldhead Site
Land Conservancy of West Michigan
Allegan County, Michigan



11181 Marwill Avenue, West Olive, MI 49460 USA
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● Dead/Dying Ash	◆ Living Tree - Beech	▲ Hazard Tree - Ash
● Dead/Dying Basswood	◆ Living Tree - Black Locust	▲ Hazard Tree - Basswood
● Dead/Dying Beech	◆ Living Tree - Elm	▲ Hazard Tree - Cherry
● Dead/Dying Elm	◆ Living Tree - Ironwood	▲ Hazard Tree - Mulberry
● Dead/Dying Locust	◆ Living Tree - Mulberry	▲ Hazard Tree - Red Oak
● Dead/Dying Red Oak	◆ Living Tree - Scotch Pine	▲ Hazard Tree - Sassafras
● Dead/Dying Sassafras	◆ Living Tree - Sugar Maple	▲ Hazard Tree - Sugar Maple
● Dead/Dying Sugar Maple	◆ Living Tree - Tree of Heaven	▲ Hazard Tree - Tulip
● Dead/Dying Tree of Heaven	◆ Living Tree - Tulip	
● Dead/Dying Walnut	◆ Living Tree - White Oak	

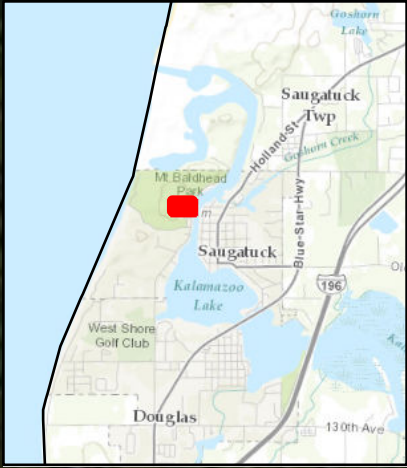
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Figure 2 - Tree Locations
Mt. Baldhead Site
Land Conservancy of West Michigan
Allegan County, Michigan



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- Dead/Dying Trees
- Living Trees
- Hazard Trees

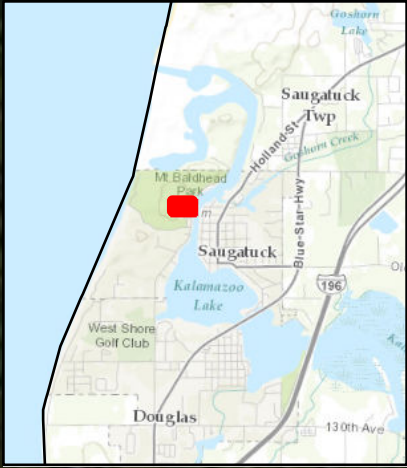
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Figure 3 - Hazard Tree Locations
Mt. Baldhead Site
Land Conservancy of West Michigan
Allegan County, Michigan



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- Trees to be Removed
- Dead/Dying
- Living Trees
- Hazard

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Figure 4 - Tree Removal Plan
Mt. Baldhead Site
Land Conservancy of West Michigan
Allegan County, Michigan



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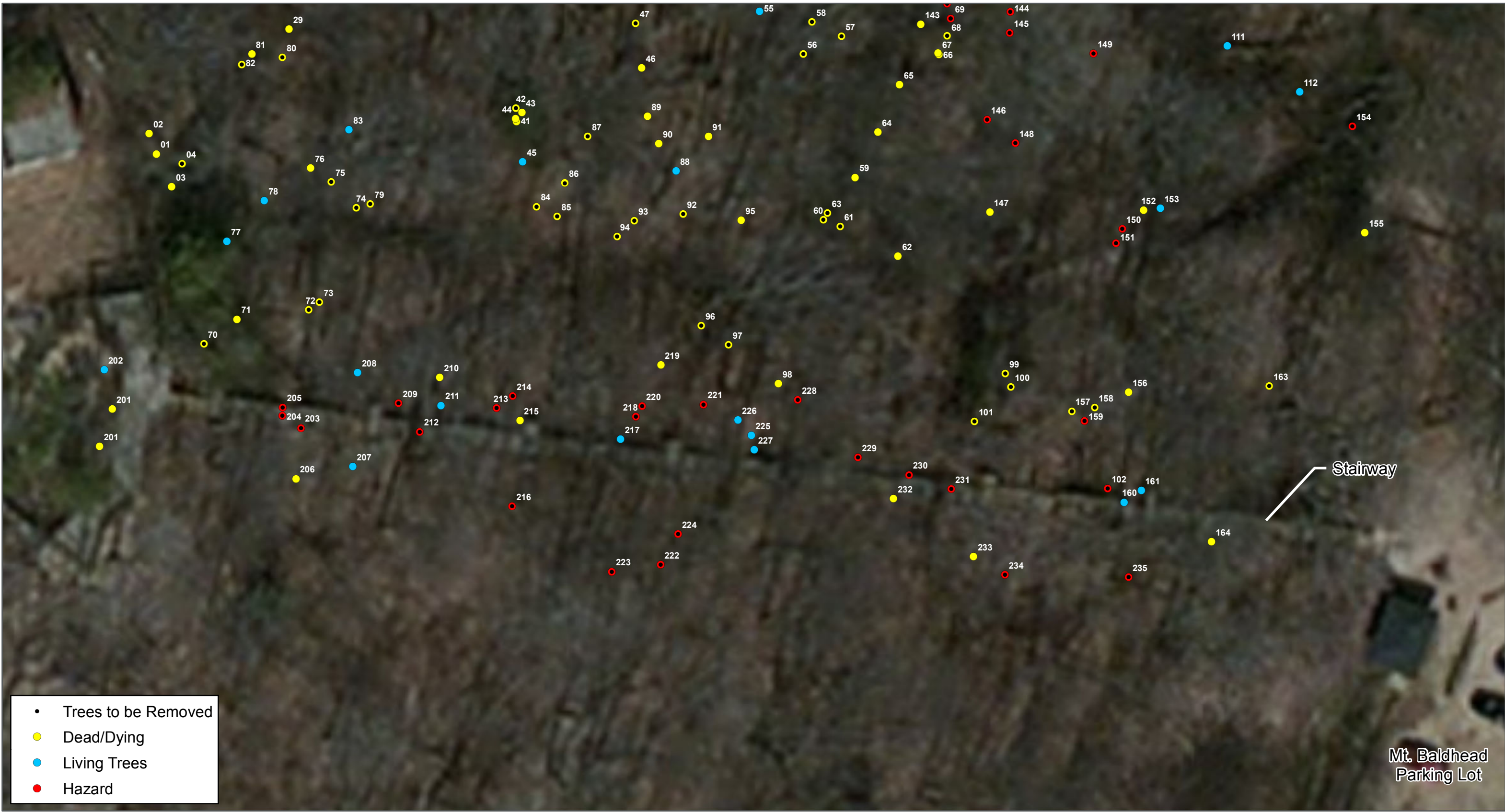
Figure 4a - Tree Removal Plan

Mt. Baldhead Site
Land Conservancy of West Michigan
Allegan County, Michigan

012.525 Feet

048 Meters

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www.cardnojfnew.com





Kalamazoo Nature Center
7000 N. Westnedge Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
Ecological Services
269-978-6872
ecoservices@naturecenter.org

PROJECT WORK PLAN AND ESTIMATE FOR

City of Saugatuck
Scott Herbert
102 Butler St. P.O. 86
Saugatuck MI, 49453
(616)886-8408
scott@saugatuckcity.com

Date: 9/2/2025

TOTAL ESTIMATE

\$10,107.00

Client Name	Project Description	Project #	Estimate good for
City of Saugatuck	Invasive Species Management at Mt. Baldhead Backdune	26001 A	90 days

Day	Description	Qty	Units	Cost	Line Total
	Herbicide and Equipment	3	days	\$ 60.00	\$ 180.00
	Labor: Project Lead	25.5	hours	\$ 75.00	\$ 1,912.50
	Labor: Supporting Crew of 4	102	hours	\$ 65.00	\$ 6,630.00
	Mileage: Truck + Trailer	306	miles	\$ 2.00	\$ 612.00
	Project Management (3hr/day)	9.00	hours	\$ 75.00	\$ 675.00
	Administrative (1.5hr/mth)	1.5	hours	\$ 65.00	\$ 97.50

Site Lead: Luke Allison/Kyle Martin
Site Address: Mt. Baldhead - 769 Park Street Saugatuck, MI 49453
Service Description: 3 days of invasive species management on the east facing back dune habitat of Mt. Baldy. KNC staff will perform foliar treatment of smaller invasive species such as Jap. Barberry. For larger species such as Tree of Heaven, Privet, and Bittersweet stem injection techniques will be utilized to minimize any off target impacts and soil drift.
Area (acres): 3.25
of Workers: 5
of Work Days: 3

Labor	\$ 9,315.00
Mileage	\$ 612.00
Equipment	\$ 180.00
Supplies	\$ -
SUBTOTAL	\$ 10,107.00

GRAND TOTAL \$ 10,107.00

*This is an estimate, actual invoices will be based on specific costs and quantities of materials purchased and actual labor time spent on the project.
View Full Terms and Conditions in the Client Agreement. The Project must be accepted by signing the Client Agreement before work can begin.*

For questions regarding this estimate or to set a work schedule, please contact

Proceeds from our client services ensure the sustainability of KNC's longstanding bird observatory, programs that engage the community in wildlife research, and the



Kalamazoo Nature Center
7000 N. Westnedge Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
Ecological Services
269-978-6872
ecoservices@naturecenter.org

PROJECT WORK PLAN AND ESTIMATE FOR

City of Saugatuck
Scott Herbert
102 Butler St. P.O. 86
Saugatuck MI, 49453
(616)886-8408

Date: 9/2/2025

TOTAL ESTIMATE

\$23,514.50

scott@saugatuckcity.com

Client Name	Project Description	Project #	Estimate good for
City of Saugatuck	Revegetation of Mt. Baldhead Backdune	26001 C	90 days

Day	Description	Qty	Units	Cost	Line Total
	Equipment: Planting tools	3	days	\$ 60.00	\$ 180.00
	Labor: Project Lead	28.5	hours	\$ 75.00	\$ 2,137.50
	Labor: Supporting Crew of 5	142.5	hours	\$ 65.00	\$ 9,262.50
	Mileage: Truck + Trailer	306	miles	\$ 2.00	\$ 612.00
	Supplies: Dune grass sprigs	20000	sprigs	\$ 0.35	\$ 7,000.00
	Supplies: Bare root trees/shrubs + tree guards	150	seedlings	\$ 8.00	\$ 1,200.00
	Supplies: Custom backdune seed - Native Connections	31	lbs	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,400.00
	Supply Pickup/handling & transport			\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
	Project Management	15.00	hours	\$ 75.00	\$ 1,125.00
	Administrative	1.5	hours	\$ 65.00	\$ 97.50

Site Lead: Luke Allison
Site Address: Mt. Baldhead - 769 Park Street, Saugatuck MI, 49453
Service Description: KNC staff to purchase, transport, and plant dunegrass, bare root seedlings, and seed to revegetate the backdune face of Mt. Baldhead.
Area (acres): 1.5
of Workers: 6
of Work Days: 3

Labor	\$ 13,122.50
Mileage	\$ 612.00
Equipment	\$ 180.00
Supplies	\$ 9,600.00
SUBTOTAL	\$ 23,514.50

GRAND TOTAL

\$ 23,514.50

This is an estimate, actual invoices will be based on specific costs and quantities of materials purchased and actual labor time spent on the project.

View Full Terms and Conditions in the Client Agreement. The Project must be accepted by signing the Client Agreement before work can begin.

For questions regarding this estimate or to set a work schedule, please contact

Proceeds from our client services ensure the sustainability of KNC's longstanding bird observatory, programs that engage the community in wildlife research, and the

KNC-Mt Baldy, Saugatuck-SMW-2025
Dune Seed Mix Summary
8/28/2025

											Hydrology						Shade Tolerance		Soil Type							
Graminoids - Scientific Name	Common Name	PLS Oz/A	Total PLS Oz	Seeds per sq. ft.	% by weight	% by native seeds	C-Value	Wetland Code	Conserv. Status		Dry	Dry-mesic	Mesic	Wet-mesic	Wet	Emergent	Full Sun	Part	Shade	Clay	Loam	Sand	Muck	Legume	Height (ft)	Color
<i>Calamovilfa longifolia</i>	Sand Reed Grass	4.00	8.000	0.83	4.35%	1.34%	10	UPL	-		X	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	S	-	-	3-6'	g
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Canada Wild Rye	32.00	64.000	3.82	34.78%	6.19%	5	FACU	-		X	X	X	-	-	-	X	X	-	C	L	S	-	-	5'	g
<i>Elymus hystrix</i>	Bottlebrush Grass	12.00	24.000	2.09	13.04%	3.39%	5	FACU	-		X	X	X	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	L	S	-	-	3'	g
<i>Koeleria cristata</i> (K. macrantha, pyramidata)	June Grass	4.00	8.000	18.37	4.35%	29.77%	9	UPL	-		X	X	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	L	S	-	-	2'	g
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	Switchgrass	4.00	8.000	1.29	4.35%	2.08%	4	FAC	-		X	X	X	X	-	-	X	-	-	C	L	S	M	-	4'	g
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little Bluestem	8.00	16.000	2.75	8.70%	4.46%	5	FACU	-		X	X	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	L	S	-	-	3-4'	g
Grasses Oz per Acre		64.00		Grasses sds/sq ft	Total	4.46%																				
Grasses Lbs per Acre		4.00		29.15	69.57%	47.24%																				

Herbaceous Forbs - Scientific Name																										
<i>Anemone cylindrica</i>	Thimbleweed	2.00	4.000	1.19	2.17%	1.93%	6	UPL	-		X	X	X	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	L	S	-	-	2'	wht
<i>Anemone virginiana</i>	Tall Thimbleweed	2.00	4.000	1.29	2.17%	2.08%	3	FACU	-		X	X	X	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	L	S	-	-	3'	wht
<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	Wild Columbine	3.00	6.000	2.62	3.26%	4.24%	5	FACU	-		X	X	X	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	L	S	-	-	2'	red
<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	Common Milkweed	4.00	8.000	0.37	4.35%	0.60%	1	UPL	-		X	X	X	X	-	-	X	X	-	C	L	S	M	-	3'	pur
<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	Lance-leaf Coreopsis	8.00	16.000	3.67	8.70%	5.95%	8	FACU	-		X	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	L	S	-	-	2'	yel
<i>Monarda punctata</i>	Horsemint	2.00	4.000	4.13	2.17%	6.70%	4	UPL	-		X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	2'	pur
<i>Oenothera biennis</i>	Common Evening Primrose	6.00	12.000	12.40	6.52%	20.09%	2	FACU	-		X	X	X	X	-	-	X	X	-	C	L	S	M	-	6'	yel
<i>Solidago nemoralis</i>	Old-field Goldenrod	1.00	2.000	6.89	1.09%	11.16%	2	UPL	-		X	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	L	S	-	-	2'	yel
Forbs Oz per Acre		28.00		Forbs sds/sq ft	Total	52.76%																				
Forbs Lbs per Acre		1.75		32.55	30.43%	52.76%																				

Woody Shrubs, Vines - Scientific Name																										
Woodies Oz per Acre		0.00		Woodies sds/sq ft	Total	0.00%																				
Woodies Lbs per Acre		0.00		0.00	0.00%	0.00%																				

Annuals, Temp Nurse Crop, etc.																										
<i>Avena sativa</i>	Seed Oats	400.00	50.000	9.18																						
Temp Oz per Acre		400.00		Temp sds/sq ft																						
Temp Lbs per Acre		25.00		9.18																						

Total PLS Lbs/Acre 'Natives'	5.75
Total Lbs/Acre 'ALL'	30.75

Total Acres	2.00
Total PLS Lbs 'Natives'	11.50
Total PLS Lbs 'ALL'	61.50

# of Native Grass Species	6
# of Native Forb Species	8
# of Native Woody Species	0
# of Temp Species	1

Mix 'Natives'	weight (lbs)	seeds/sq ft	Avg C
Total per acre	5.75	61.70	4.93
% Forbs	30.43%	52.76%	FQI
% Woodies	0.00%	0.00%	18.44
% Grasses	69.57%	47.24%	

Mix 'ALL'	weight (lbs)	seeds/sq ft
Total per acre	30.75	70.88
% Forb Spp	5.69%	45.93%
% Woodies	0.00%	0.00%
% Grass Spp	13.01%	41.12%
% Temp Spp	81.30%	12.96%

NOTE: Species availability not guaranteed. Substitutions may be required. All species to be adjusted to 100% PLS (Pure Live Seed) as noted.

NOTE:



Native Connections
3815 N Westnedge Ave
Kalamazoo, MI 49004
www.nativeconnections.net



City Council Agenda Item Report

FROM: Ryan Cummins, City Manager

MEETING DATE: March 4, 2026

SUBJECT: Village Square Park – Selection of a Concept and Approval of Donor Agreement

DESCRIPTION:

Refreshing the Village Square Courts is a priority for the current fiscal year. Resurfacing the tennis and basketball courts and development of new use areas are listed projects in the Tri-Community Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

A donor has come forward and offered to pay \$100,000 toward a court refresh project. In early 2025, City Council reviewed conceptual designs and approved applying for a \$150,000 Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Recreation Passport Grant, including a \$10,000 City match, to support the project. The DNR has since notified the City, via the attached letter, that our application was approved for the full requested funding. A formal grant agreement is forthcoming.

The donor's representative has confirmed the donor still wishes to donate 100K. A draft donor agreement is attached.

As a reminder, the project includes the following:

- Resurfacing the full basketball court, expansion to standard dimensions, and side concrete extension.
- Removal of the existing half basketball court and replacing with green space.
- Adding benches to both courts.
- New sidewalk connections to make the courts universally accessible.
- Improving the landscaping with rain gardens.
- Adding a wall mounted fountain for drinking and bottle filling.

Workshop Meeting Review and Updated Concepts

At a February workshop meeting, Council reviewed an updated concept incorporating the following based on feedback we have received:

- The existing tennis court replaced with two pickleball courts and fencing.
- The basketball court color palette reflects more subtle colors (green and a crimson accent), both with toned down hues to match the existing play structures and also avoid visual clash.
- A basketball hoop option with commercial durability.

The existing tennis/pickleball court area received a lot of discussion. Based on that, F&V prepared some additional concepts for Council review. F&V highlighted the following:

- The four-court pickleball version (option III), will be possible if we remove four existing trees, and reorient one of the courts east-west.
- We generally prefer the north-south orientation over the east-west, because of sunlight interference in late afternoons.
- Options II, III, & V required more concrete to provide sidewalk access based on different layouts than options I & IV (option I may also require more if the optional shuffleboard court is reinstated).
- Text added to all concepts (below legend) noting available tennis courts at the high school.
- The rain garden's footprint is considerably reduced to preserve room for flexible event organization on west side of the courts.
- Adjustable tennis/pickleball court net added to the product list.
- Label added noting consideration of an all-new concrete surface, if needed, and budget permitting.
- Shuffleboard court, in standard size, was reinstated as optional in all applicable options.

Regular Meeting Direction

At the regular meeting on February 9, Council:

- Approved the engineering proposal so F&V can complete their survey work and begin design of the basketball court area.
- Provided further feedback on the concepts but were advised the Parks and Public Works Committee would review in February and be asked for their recommendation.

Parks and Public Works Committee (PPW) Recommendation

The PPW committee reviewed the various concepts and recommended a new option which is labeled Concept VI. This option includes the following modifications:

- Existing tennis/pickleball court to be utilized for two new pickleball courts with north-south orientation.
 - Standard fence around and in between courts, including two paddle rack center for group games and tournament organization.
- Adding ADA-accessible chess/picnic tables under pergola structure or with add-on shade (both optional).
- New trees for additional shade (optional).

Further feedback is attached from the Chair of the PPW committee.

Nest Steps

Council is asked to work towards making a final decision on a concept and approval of the donation agreement.

BUDGET ACTION REQUIRED:

None at this time. Sufficient dollars were budgeted to begin design engineering. A budget amendment will be upcoming to reflect the grant as revenue and fuller project scope as expenses.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney prepared the donor agreement and will be at your meeting if you have any questions.

SAMPLE MOTION:

Motion to approve Concept ____ and the related Donation Agreement for Village Square Park, and to authorize the City Manager to obtain all required permits and approvals, including Historic District Commission approval.

Ryan Cummins

From: nancy.kimble@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2026 5:33 PM
To: Holly Anderson; Ryan Cummins
Subject: Village Courts - Concept #4 vs #5

Caution: This email originated from outside of the organization. DO NOT click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Holly and Ryan,

As you know, the PPW Committee was asked to review the Village Square conceptual designs prepared by our city engineer. At our meeting today, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend Concept #4, 2 pickleball courts. Our motion also included numerous suggestions for additional changes to Concept #4 which Michelle Gibson documented and will be providing to you. However, I did want to explain our overall preference for the two-pickleball courts option over Concept #5, a single pickleball and single tennis court. While #5 seems like a good compromise at first glance, when I started visualizing it, it just didn't feel right. So, we did do some internet research and reached out to residents who are avid tennis players. Here are our thoughts:

1. Pickleball is noisy due to the nature of the equipment when compared to tennis. Tennis requires concentration with tennis players preferring a relatively quiet atmosphere
2. Pickleball (PB) games turn over in 15-20 minutes; tennis games can last an hour or more. PB game turnover can be disruptive to an adjacent tennis court
3. Depending on the type of fencing separating the two, pickleballs frequently bounce onto the tennis court
4. Pickleball is popular and there are frequently other players waiting their turn – more people just “hanging around,” likely socializing, and being noisy
5. Tennis players prefer higher fencing to reduce the distance balls travel outside the court; a high fence encircling the tennis court would be unsightly. Pickleball requires shorter fencing.
6. Due to the popularity of pickleball, two pickleball courts will likely be utilized significantly more than one pickleball and one tennis court

The committee was also skeptical that a shuffleboard would be heavily utilized and favored instead adding game tables that could be used for checkers and chess. These would also provide additional seating. Our other comments were included in the motion that was passed so I'll not list them here – just wanted to share some insights for our preference for Concept #4 over #5.

We do want the community to support tennis and are hopeful that the school courts can be renovated soon. While the school does not have a tennis team, they do use the courts during PE. Also, the Boys and Girls Clubs have utilized the courts in addition to residents and visitors.

Nancy

DONATION AGREEMENT

This Donation Agreement (“Agreement”) is entered into this ____ day of _____, 2026, by and between the City of Saugatuck, a Michigan Home Rule City (“City”), and the Joyful Generosity Fund, a Michigan Nonprofit Corporation (“Donor”).

RECITALS

WHEREAS, Donor has expressed interest in contributing funds to the City to be put towards the improvement of the City’s Village Square Park;

WHEREAS, Michigan law authorizes municipalities, like the City, to receive and enjoy gifts and donations for public parks and other public purposes (MCL 123.905);

WHEREAS, the City desires to accept the charitable contribution from Donor;

WHEREAS, the City has also applied for and received approval for a Recreation Passport grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for improvements to the Village Square Park (“Grant Funds”);

WHEREAS, this Agreement is intended to govern the contribution and use of donated funds from Donor to be used along with Grant Funds to finance improvements to the City’s Village Square Park as set forth in greater detail below;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing and mutual promises contained herein, the parties agree as follows:

1. **Donation.** Within thirty (30) days following the execution of this Agreement, Donor shall make a donation to the City of Saugatuck of One Hundred Thousand Dollars and 0/100 (\$100,000.00), payable by check, cash, or wire transfer, subject to the conditions set forth herein (the “Donation”).
2. **Use of Donated Funds.**
 - a. The Donation shall be used by the City only for the improvement of the Village Square Park as set forth in the conceptual plan attached as **Exhibit A** (the “Permitted Purpose”), which shall include the following work: a) Basketball court resurfacing, expansion to standard dimensions, and side concrete extension; b) Tennis court resurfacing, expansion to standard dimensions, pickleball striping, side concrete extension, and adding a new safety fence; and c) Adding benches to both courts. The parties acknowledge and agree that the conceptual plan attached hereto is a concept only, and that non-material deviations from this plan are both acceptable and anticipated.

- b. Except for the requirement that the Donation be used only for the Permitted Purpose as set forth herein, Donor acknowledges and agrees that the City's use of the Donation is subject to no other restrictions or conditions, and that Donor does not expect and has not been promised anything else in return from the City.
 - c. Donor acknowledges that the Donation shall be applied to the Permitted Purpose in conjunction with Grant Funds and the City's own funds, and that the City makes no representation or warranty that any particular improvements encompassed by the Permitted Purpose will be paid for by any particular funds.
 - d. If the Donation is not applied to the Permitted Purpose within three (3) years of the effective date of this Agreement, Donor may, in writing, request return of the Donation, and the City shall comply with such request no later than thirty (30) days after receiving notice of the same.
3. **Notices.** All notices, requires, demands, and other communications under this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be addressed as follows:

To the City: Ryan Cummins, City Manager
 City of Saugatuck
 102 Butler St,
 Saugatuck, MI 49453

To Donor: _____

4. **Miscellaneous.**

- a. Each signatory to this Agreement represents that they have the authority to enter into this Agreement and to bind their respective party.
- b. This Agreement is written pursuant to the laws of the State of Michigan and was made in Allegan County, Michigan. This is the entire agreement between the parties regarding its subject matter. There are no contemporaneous agreements. It may not be modified or amended except in writing, signed by both parties. More than one copy of this Agreement may be signed, but all constitute but one agreement.

- c. No person shall be deemed to be a third-party beneficiary of this Agreement.
- d. The terms of this Agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the parties and their successors and assigns.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Agreement to be executed on the date first set forth above.

CITY OF SAUGATUCK

By _____
Holly Anderson
Mayor

And by _____
Jamie Wolters
City Clerk

JOYFUL GENEROSITY FUND

By _____
Its _____

Ryan Cummins

From: noreply-migrants@michigan.gov
Sent: Tuesday, December 9, 2025 1:50 PM
To: Ryan Cummins
Subject: Application Outcome for RP25-0073 - Village Square Park Improvements

Caution: This email originated from outside of the organization. DO NOT click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

City of Saugatuck,
RP25-0073
Village Square Park Improvements

Congratulations! On behalf of Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Director Scott Bowen, this letter is to inform you that the application noted above was among those approved to receive a Recreation Passport (RP) local development grant in the amount of \$150,000.00.

A formal grant offer will be made in the form of a project agreement (PA). Until then, the following steps can be done before you enter into a PA with the DNR Grants Management Section. **If for any reason your PA is not approved or fully executed, your community will be liable for any expenses incurred.**

1. Begin preparing your legal description and boundary map
2. Finalize any easements or other land rights if all or a portion of the project area is not owned by your community
3. Retain the services (internal staff or consultant) of a prime professional
4. Make sure local matching funds are in place
5. Beginning in January, you may incur costs associated with the preparation of plans, specification, and bid documents for your project

Please refer to the project procedures booklet throughout the grant administration process. Even if you have received a RP grant in recent years, you should read this booklet carefully since it provides updated information on project procedures. Review the "Develop Project Procedures" booklet available on our website: www.Michigan.gov/DNR-Grants. Under "Recreation" click on "Recreation Passport Grant Program". Under "Forms and Information for Grantees" click on the development project procedures booklet.

If you have any questions regarding your project or the RP program, please contact your grant coordinator.

Sincerely,
Grants Management

WALL-MOUNT DRINKING FOUNTAIN OPTIONS



ELKAY OUTDOOR WALL MOUNT BOTTLE FILLER AND FOUNTAIN
Heavy-duty construction
Vandal-resistant
Adjustable height
Smooth operating right angle crank
Easy to read line height indicator
Optional backboard padding
Optional crank lock (BALDWIN)

PLANTING PALETTE



MICHIGAN HOLLY HEDGE (NATIVE)



HAMELN GRASS

CONEFLOWER

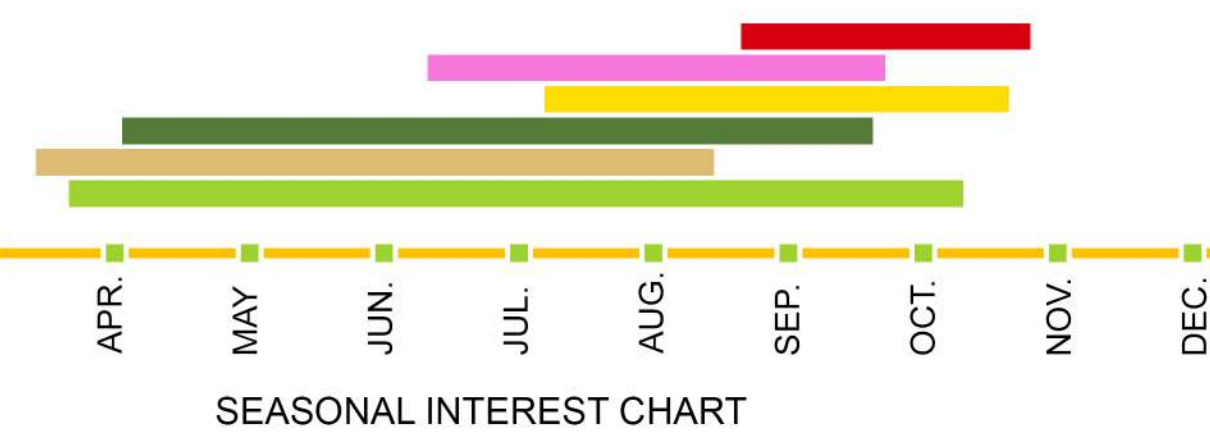
RUDBECKIA



VERSACOURT TILES
(ALTERNATIVE FOR BASKETBALL COURT)



Adjustable Net System
(Anthem Sports, for Tennis & Pickleball Court)



BASEKTBALL HOOP OPTION

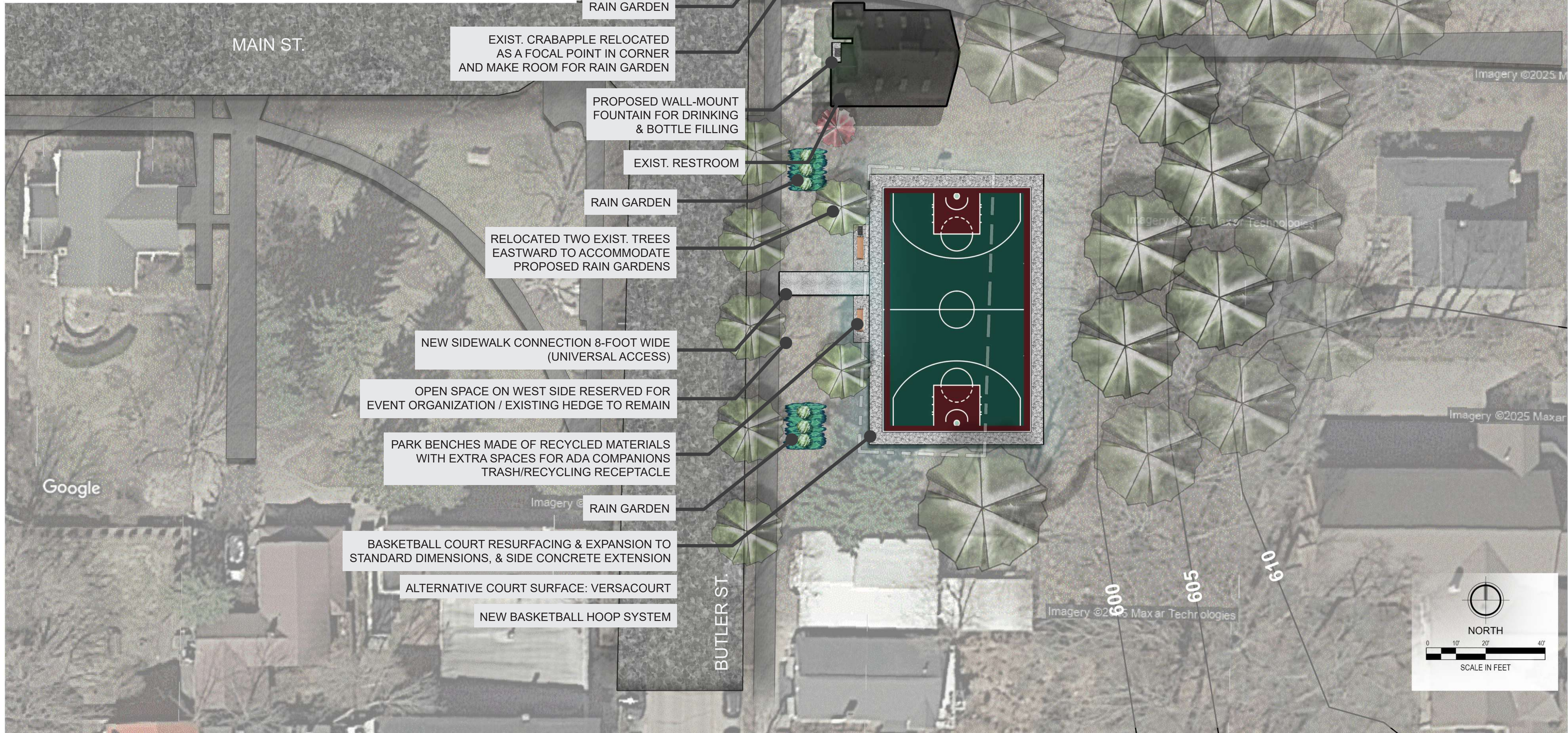
COMMERCIAL DURABILITY
ADJUSTABLE HEIGHT + RIM HEIGHT GAUGE
UNBREAKABLE POLYCARBON BACKBOARD
72-INCH BACKBOARD + 56-INCH SAFETY AREA
DIRECT GOAL MOUNT & HANGING TOLERANCE
6"x6" MAIN POLE SYSTEM + OPTIONAL PAD



LEGEND

- PROPOSED SPORT COURT RESURFACING & EXPANSION TO STANDARD SIZE
- PROPOSED SPORT COURT STANDARD FENCE
- PROPOSED SPORT COURT PERIPHERAL EXTENSION
- PROPOSED SIDEWALK CONCRETE
- PROPOSED BENCH & RECEPTACLE, TYP.
- PROPOSED RAIN GARDEN W/ MICHIGAN HOLLY HEDGE
- PROPOSED WALL-MOUNT DRINKING FOUNTAIN
- PROPOSED PARKING LOT STRIPING + ADA SPOTS & SIGNS
- EXISTING SIDEWALK CONCRETE
- EXISTING HMA
- EXISTING RESTROOM
- EXISTING CANOPY TREE
- EXISTING ORNAMENTAL TREE
- EXISTING COURTS FOOTPRINT

ADDITIONAL TENNIS COURTS
AVAILABLE AT THE LOCAL
HIGH SCHOOL



EXIST. TREE IN POOR CONDITION TO BE REMOVED
OPEN AREAS WEST OF COURTS TO BE UTILIZED FOR EVENTS
PARK BENCHES MADE OF RECYCLED MATERIALS
WITH EXTRA SPACES FOR ADA COMPANIONS
TRASH/RECYCLING RECEPTACLE

NEW SIDEWALK CONNECTION & SAFETY FENCE WITH ADA GATE

EXISTING TENNIS COURT FOOT PRINT
TO BE UTILIZED FOR A DOUBLE COURT
TENNIS & PICKLEBALL COMBINED W/ ADJUSTABLE NET
REMOVAL & ALL NEW CONCRETE TO BE STUDIED

REMOVE EXIST. BASKETBALL NET AND
GOAL AND HMA AREA AND UTILIZE FOR
STANDARD SIZE SHUFFLEBOARD COURT

RE-GRADE AND RESTORE THE LAWN
ON SOUTH & EAST CORNERS OF
TENNIS COURT TO ACHIEVE
A MORE GENTLE SLOPE

NEW SIDEWALK CONNECTION 8-FOOT WIDE (UNIVERSAL ACCESS)

RAIN GARDEN

EXIST. CRABAPPLE RELOCATED
AS A FOCAL POINT IN CORNER
AND MAKE ROOM FOR RAIN GARDEN

PROPOSED WALL-MOUNT
FOUNTAIN FOR DRINKING
& BOTTLE FILLING

EXIST. RESTROOM

RAIN GARDEN

RELOCATED TWO EXIST. TREES
EASTWARD TO ACCOMMODATE
PROPOSED RAIN GARDENS

NEW SIDEWALK CONNECTION 8-FOOT WIDE
(UNIVERSAL ACCESS)

OPEN SPACE ON WEST SIDE RESERVED FOR
EVENT ORGANIZATION / EXISTING HEDGE TO REMAIN

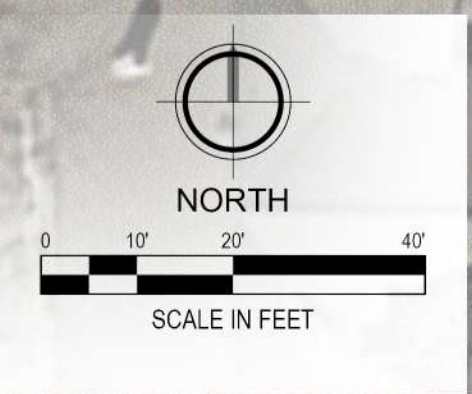
PARK BENCHES MADE OF RECYCLED MATERIALS
WITH EXTRA SPACES FOR ADA COMPANIONS
TRASH/RECYCLING RECEPTACLE

RAIN GARDEN

BASKETBALL COURT RESURFACING & EXPANSION TO
STANDARD DIMENSIONS, & SIDE CONCRETE EXTENSION

ALTERNATIVE COURT SURFACE: VERSACOURT

NEW BASKETBALL HOOP SYSTEM



WALL-MOUNT DRINKING FOUNTAIN OPTIONS



ELKAY OUTDOOR WALL MOUNT BOTTLE FILLER AND FOUNTAIN
Heavy-Duty Construction
Vandal-Resistant
Adjustable Height + Rim Height Gauge
Unbreakable Polycarbonate Backboard
72-Inch Backboard + 56-Inch Safety Area
Direct Goal Mount & Hanging Tolerance
6"x6" Main Pole System + Optional Pad

PLANTING PALETTE



MICHIGAN HOLLY HEDGE (NATIVE)



HAMELN GRASS

CONEFLOWER

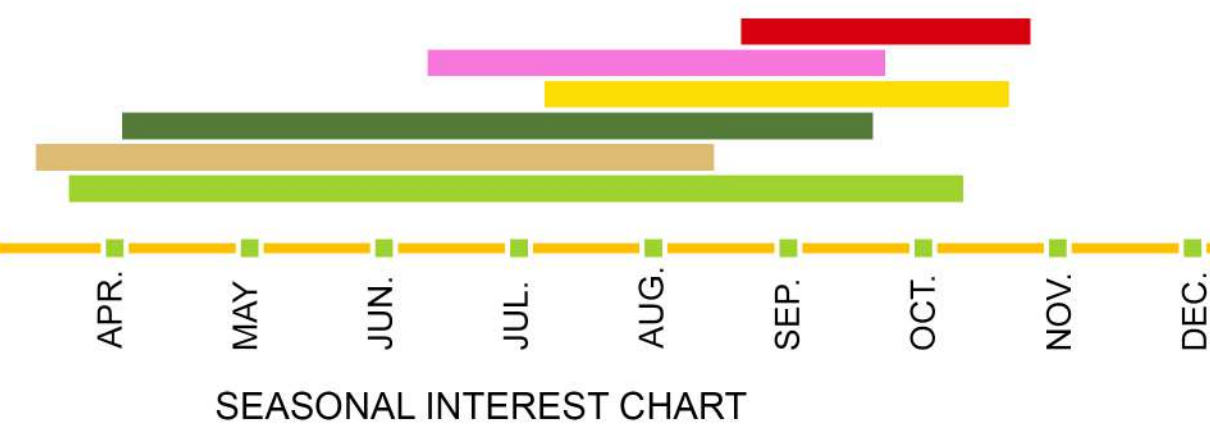
RUDBECKIA



VERSACOURT TILES
(ALTERNATIVE FOR BASKETBALL COURT)



Adjustable Net System
(Anthem Sports, for Tennis & Pickleball Court)



SEASONAL INTEREST CHART

BASEKTBALL HOOP OPTION

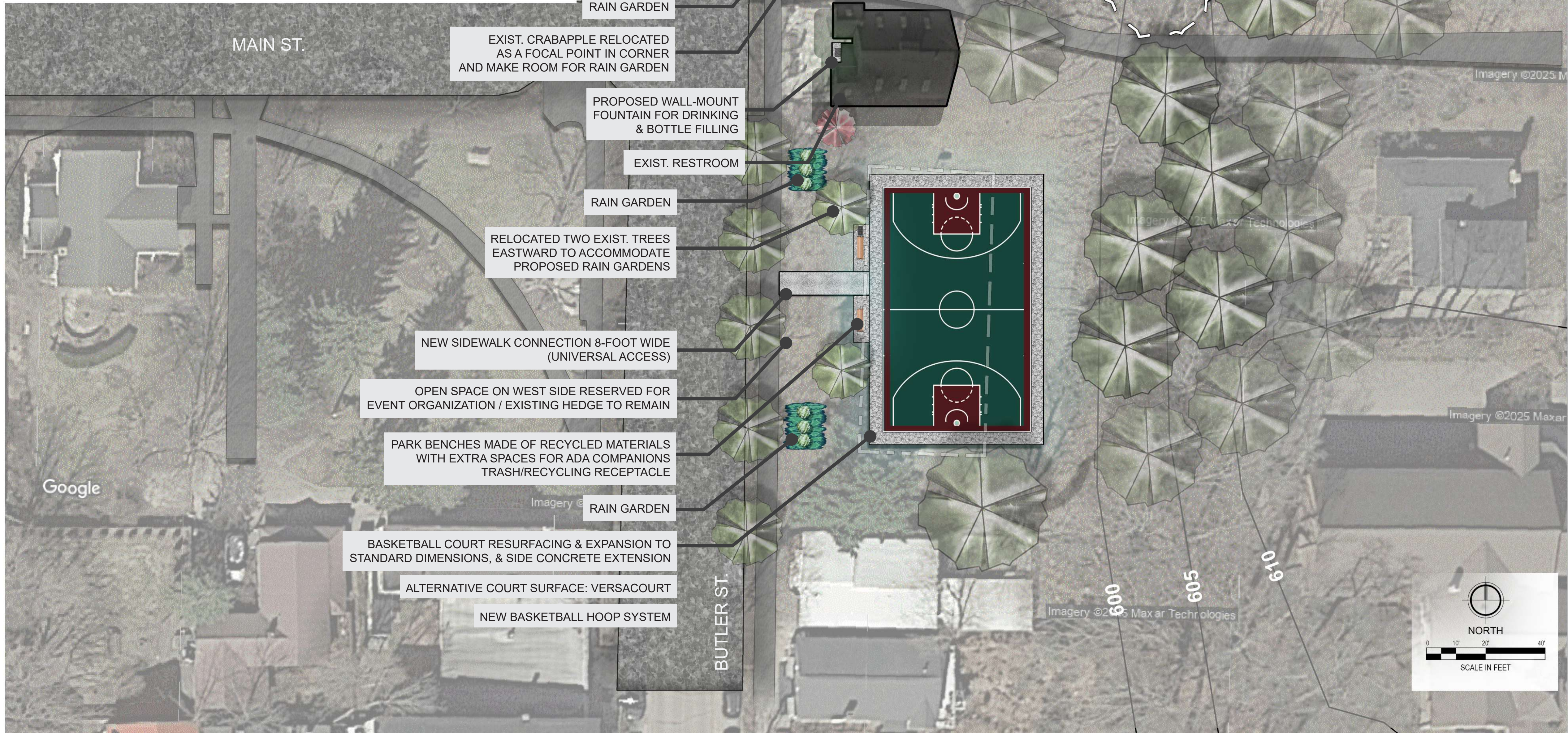
COMMERCIAL DURABILITY
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- EXISTING CANOPY TREE
- EXISTING ORNAMENTAL TREE
- EXISTING COURTS FOOTPRINT

ADDITIONAL TENNIS COURTS AVAILABLE AT THE LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL



NEW SIDEWALK CONNECTION & SAFETY FENCE WITH ADA GATE

EXIST. TREE IN POOR CONDITION TO BE REMOVED

OPEN AREAS WEST OF COURTS TO BE UTILIZED FOR EVENTS

PARKING RESTRIPIING WITH TWO ADA SPOTS & ADA SIGNS

PARK BENCHES MADE OF RECYCLED MATERIALS WITH EXTRA SPACES FOR ADA COMPANIONS TRASH/RECYCLING RECEPTACLE

FOUR NEW PICKLEBALL COURTS
ONE COURT W/ EAS-WEST ORIENTATION

EXISTING TENNIS COURT FOOT PRINT
TO BE UTILIZED FOR NEW PICKLEBALL COURTS
REMOVAL & ALL NEW CONCRETE TO BE STUDIED

REMOVE EXIST. BASKETBALL NET AND GOAL AND HMA AREA TO MAKE ROOM FOR ADDITIONAL PICKLEBALL COURTS

REMOVE FOUR TREES AND RE-GRADE AND RESTORE THE LAWN ON SOUTH & EAST CORNERS OF TENNIS COURT TO PROVIDE THE BASE FOR NEW COURTS AND ALSO ACHIEVE A MORE GENTLE SLOPE

NEW SIDEWALK CONNECTION 8-FOOT WIDE (UNIVERSAL ACCESS)

RAIN GARDEN

EXIST. CRABAPPLE RELOCATED AS A FOCAL POINT IN CORNER AND MAKE ROOM FOR RAIN GARDEN

PROPOSED WALL-MOUNT FOUNTAIN FOR DRINKING & BOTTLE FILLING

EXIST. RESTROOM

RAIN GARDEN

RELOCATED TWO EXIST. TREES EASTWARD TO ACCOMMODATE PROPOSED RAIN GARDENS

NEW SIDEWALK CONNECTION 8-FOOT WIDE (UNIVERSAL ACCESS)

OPEN SPACE ON WEST SIDE RESERVED FOR EVENT ORGANIZATION / EXISTING HEDGE TO REMAIN

PARK BENCHES MADE OF RECYCLED MATERIALS WITH EXTRA SPACES FOR ADA COMPANIONS TRASH/RECYCLING RECEPTACLE

RAIN GARDEN

BASKETBALL COURT RESURFACING & EXPANSION TO STANDARD DIMENSIONS, & SIDE CONCRETE EXTENSION

ALTERNATIVE COURT SURFACE: VERSACOURT

NEW BASKETBALL HOOP SYSTEM

WALL-MOUNT DRINKING FOUNTAIN OPTIONS



PLANTING PALETTE



MICHIGAN HOLLY HEDGE (NATIVE)



HAMELN GRASS

CONEFLOWER

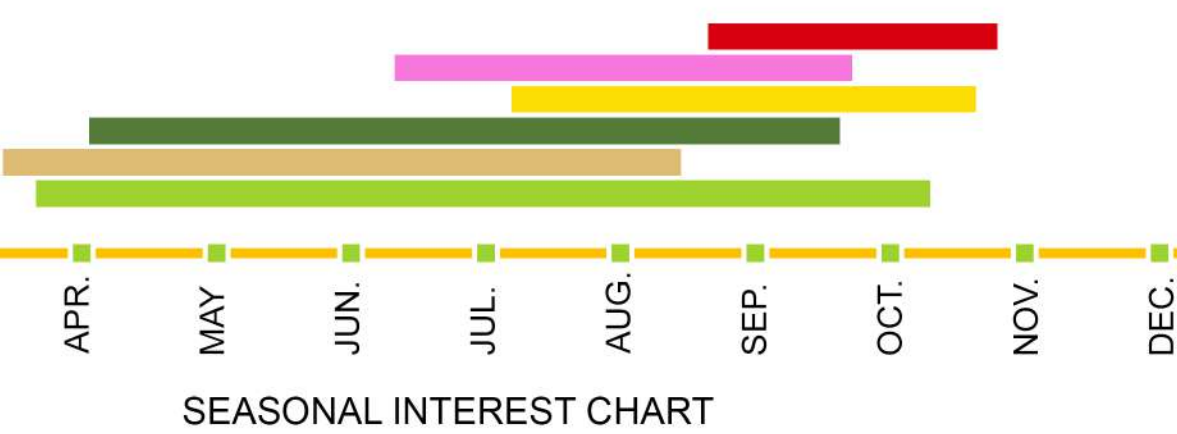
RUDBECKIA



VERSACOURT TILES
(ALTERNATIVE FOR BASKETBALL COURT)



Adjustable Net System
(Anthem Sports, for Tennis & Pickleball Court)



SEASONAL INTEREST CHART

BASEKTBALL HOOP OPTION

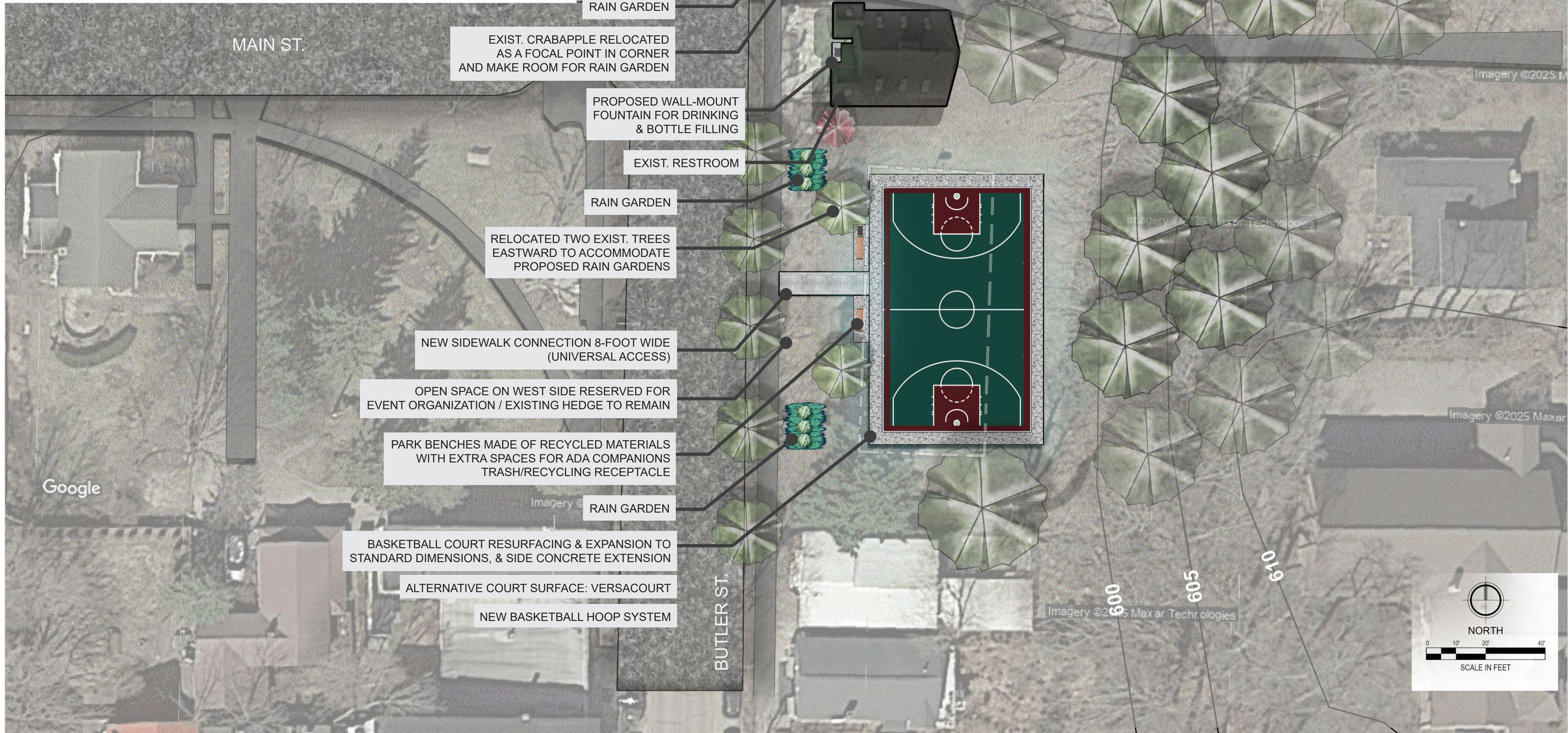
COMMERCIAL DURABILITY
ADJUSTABLE HEIGHT + RIM HEIGHT GAUGE
UNBREAKABLE POLYCARBON BACKBOARD
72-INCH BACKBOARD + 56-INCH SAFETY AREA
DIRECT GOAL MOUNT & HANGING TOLERANCE
6"x6" MAIN POLE SYSTEM + OPTIONAL PAD



LEGEND

- PROPOSED SPORT COURT RESURFACING & EXPANSION TO STANDARD SIZE
- PROPOSED SPORT COURT STANDARD FENCE
- PROPOSED SPORT COURT PERIPHERAL EXTENSION
- PROPOSED SIDEWALK CONCRETE
- PROPOSED BENCH & RECEPTACLE, TYP.
- PROPOSED RAIN GARDEN W/ MICHIGAN HOLLY HEDGE
- PROPOSED WALL-MOUNT DRINKING FOUNTAIN
- PROPOSED PARKING LOT STRIPING + ADA SPOTS & SIGNS
- EXISTING SIDEWALK CONCRETE
- EXISTING HMA
- EXISTING RESTROOM
- EXISTING CANOPY TREE
- EXISTING ORNAMENTAL TREE
- EXISTING COURTS FOOTPRINT

ADDITIONAL TENNIS COURTS
AVAILABLE AT THE LOCAL
HIGH SCHOOL



NEW SIDEWALK CONNECTION & SAFETY FENCE WITH ADA GATE

EXIST. TREE IN POOR CONDITION TO BE REMOVED

OPEN AREAS WEST OF COURTS TO BE UTILIZED FOR EVENTS

PARKING RESTRIPIING WITH TWO ADA SPOTS & ADA SIGNS

PARK BENCHES MADE OF RECYCLED MATERIALS
WITH EXTRA SPACES FOR ADA COMPANIONS
TRASH/RECYCLING RECEPTACLE

(OPTIONAL) NEW SHUFFLEBOARD COURT

EXISTING TENNIS COURT FOOT PRINT
TO BE UTILIZED FOR NEW PICKLEBALL COURTS
EAST-WEST ORIENTATION FOR PICKLEBALL COURTS
REMOVAL & ALL NEW CONCRETE TO BE STUDIED

REMOVE EXIST. BASKETBALL NET AND
GOAL AND HMA AREA

RE-GRADE AND RESTORE THE LAWN
ON SOUTH & EAST CORNERS OF
TENNIS COURT TO ACHIEVE
A MORE GENTLE SLOPE

NEW SIDEWALK CONNECTION 8-FOOT WIDE (UNIVERSAL ACCESS)

RAIN GARDEN

EXIST. CRABAPPLE RELOCATED
AS A FOCAL POINT IN CORNER
AND MAKE ROOM FOR RAIN GARDEN

PROPOSED WALL-MOUNT
FOUNTAIN FOR DRINKING
& BOTTLE FILLING

EXIST. RESTROOM

RAIN GARDEN

RELOCATED TWO EXIST. TREES
EASTWARD TO ACCOMMODATE
PROPOSED RAIN GARDENS

NEW SIDEWALK CONNECTION 8-FOOT WIDE
(UNIVERSAL ACCESS)

OPEN SPACE ON WEST SIDE RESERVED FOR
EVENT ORGANIZATION / EXISTING HEDGE TO REMAIN

PARK BENCHES MADE OF RECYCLED MATERIALS
WITH EXTRA SPACES FOR ADA COMPANIONS
TRASH/RECYCLING RECEPTACLE

RAIN GARDEN

BASKETBALL COURT RESURFACING & EXPANSION TO
STANDARD DIMENSIONS, & SIDE CONCRETE EXTENSION

ALTERNATIVE COURT SURFACE: VERSACOURT

NEW BASKETBALL HOOP SYSTEM

WALL-MOUNT DRINKING FOUNTAIN OPTIONS



PLANTING PALETTE



MICHIGAN HOLLY HEDGE (NATIVE)



HAMELN GRASS

CONEFLOWER

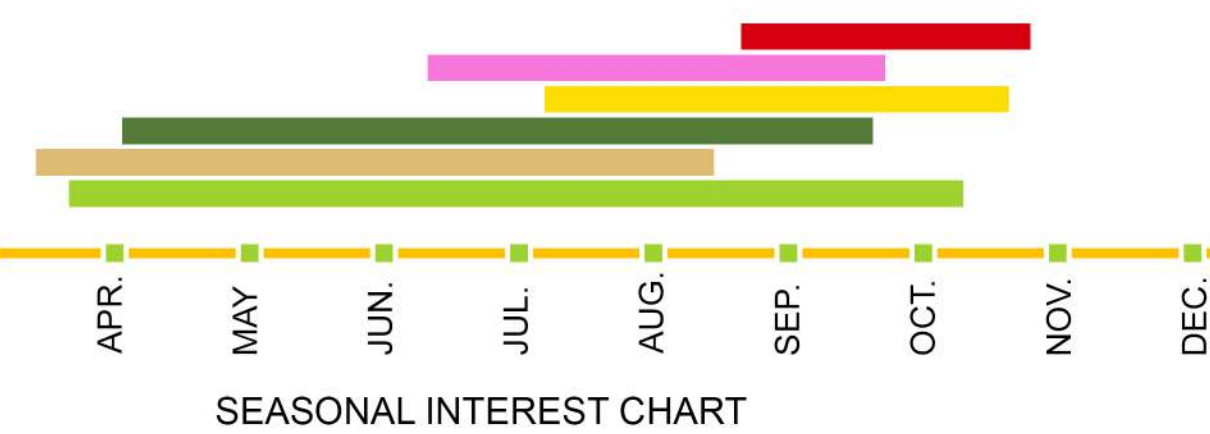
RUDBECKIA



VERSACOURT TILES
(ALTERNATIVE FOR BASKETBALL COURT)



Adjustable Net System
(Anthem Sports, for Tennis & Pickleball Court)



SEASONAL INTEREST CHART

BASEKTBALL HOOP OPTION

COMMERCIAL DURABILITY
ADJUSTABLE HEIGHT + RIM HEIGHT GAUGE
UNBREAKABLE POLYCARBON BACKBOARD
72-INCH BACKBOARD + 56-INCH SAFETY AREA
DIRECT GOAL MOUNT & HANGING TOLERANCE
6"x6" MAIN POLE SYSTEM + OPTIONAL PAD

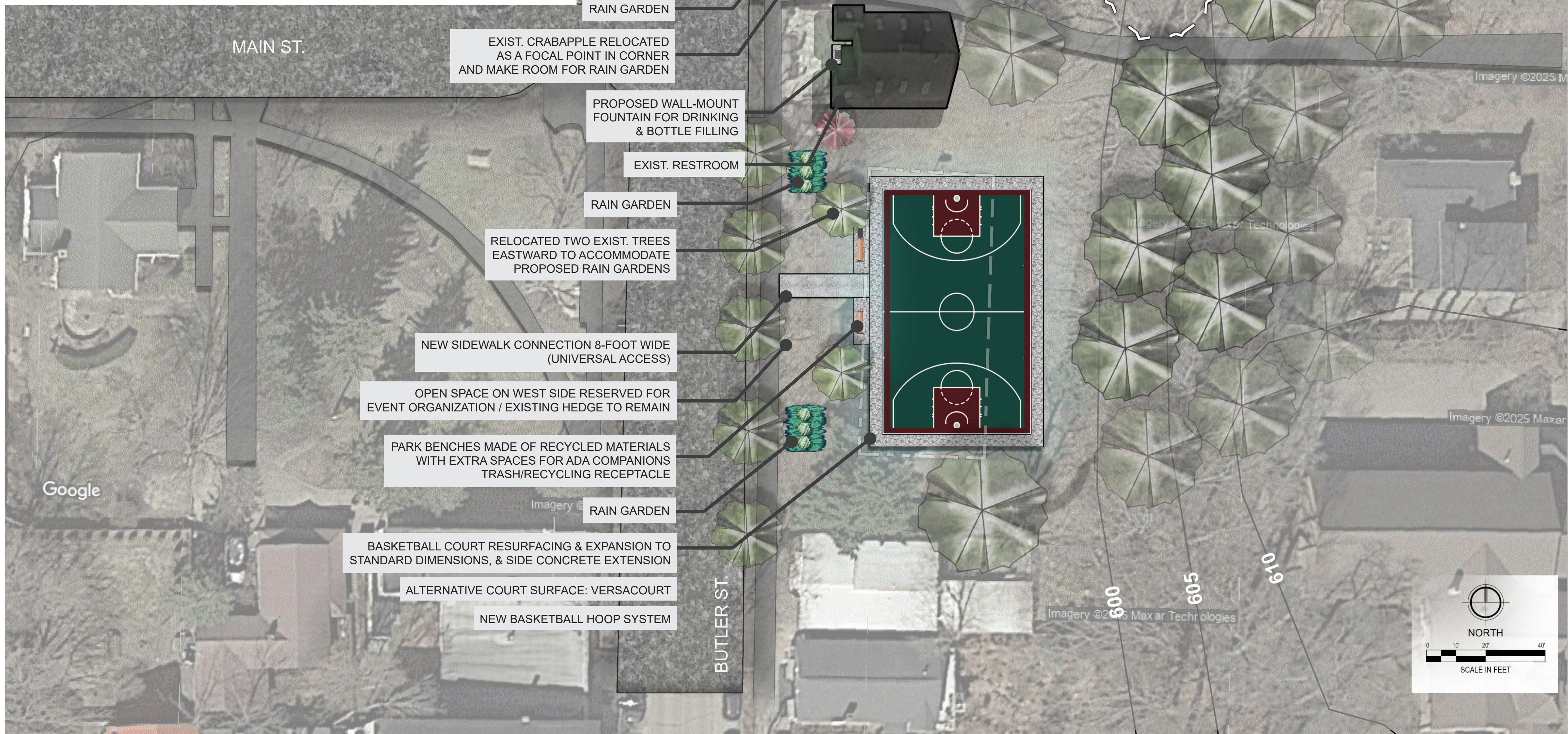


OPTIONAL CRANK LOCK (BALDWIN)

LEGEND

- PROPOSED SPORT COURT RESURFACING & EXPANSION TO STANDARD SIZE
- PROPOSED SPORT COURT STANDARD FENCE
- PROPOSED SPORT COURT PERIPHERAL EXTENSION
- PROPOSED SIDEWALK CONCRETE
- PROPOSED BENCH & RECEPTACLE, TYP.
- PROPOSED RAIN GARDEN W/ MICHIGAN HOLLY HEDGE
- PROPOSED WALL-MOUNT DRINKING FOUNTAIN
- PROPOSED PARKING LOT STRIPING + ADA SPOTS & SIGNS
- EXISTING SIDEWALK CONCRETE
- EXISTING HMA
- EXISTING RESTROOM
- EXISTING CANOPY TREE
- EXISTING ORNAMENTAL TREE
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ADDITIONAL TENNIS COURTS
AVAILABLE AT THE LOCAL
HIGH SCHOOL



- EXIST. TREE IN POOR CONDITION TO BE REMOVED
- OPEN AREAS WEST OF COURTS TO BE UTILIZED FOR EVENTS
- PARKING RESTRIPIING WITH TWO ADA SPOTS & ADA SIGNS
- PARK BENCHES MADE OF RECYCLED MATERIALS WITH EXTRA SPACES FOR ADA COMPANIONS TRASH/RECYCLING RECEPTACLE
- NEW SIDEWALK CONNECTION & SAFETY FENCE WITH ADA GATE

EXISTING TENNIS COURT FOOT PRINT
TO BE UTILIZED FOR UPGRADED TENNIS COURT
REMOVAL & ALL NEW CONCRETE TO BE STUDIED

NEW PICKLEBALL AND SHUFFLEBOARD COURTS

REMOVE EXIST. BASKETBALL NET AND
GOAL AND HMA AREA, UTILIZE FOR
PICKLEBALL & SHUFFLEBOARD COURTS

REMOVE FOUR TREES AND RE-GRADE
AND RESTORE THE LAWN
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EXIST. CRABAPPLE RELOCATED
AS A FOCAL POINT IN CORNER
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BASKETBALL COURT RESURFACING & EXPANSION TO
STANDARD DIMENSIONS, & SIDE CONCRETE EXTENSION

ALTERNATIVE COURT SURFACE: VERSACOURT

NEW BASKETBALL HOOP SYSTEM

WALL-MOUNT DRINKING FOUNTAIN OPTIONS



PLANTING PALETTE



MICHIGAN HOLLY HEDGE (NATIVE)

HAMELN GRASS



CONEFLOWER

RUDBECKIA

CANOPY STRUCTURES (OPTIONAL)



PREFAB ARCADIA GAZEBO, 24'x12'
(Cedar wood, 29-gauge steel roof, built-in electrical & USB outlets)

CHESS TABLE OPTIONS



DEPORTES URBANOS (SPAIN)
(GALVANIZED STEEL & THERMOPLASTIC)



KENNETH LYNCH (US-BASED)
(GALVANIZED STEEL + CONCRETE)



MOBIPARK (SPAIN)
(WOOD/PLASTIC COMPOSIT MATERIAL)



PREFAB LOUVERED PERGOLA, 20'x10'
(Galvanized steel, adjustable roof, built-in electric & USB outlets)



ADD-ON SHADE ATTACHMENT OPTIONS
(Cost effective, polyethylene canopy, steel frame, city logo/donor recognition option)



SPORT COURTS ACCESSORIES



ADJUSTABLE NET
(Anthem Sports, for Pickleball Courts)



PADDLE CENTER
(By OnCourt/OffCourt, for Pickleball Courts)

BASKETBALL HOOP OPTION
COMMERCIAL DURABILITY
ADJUSTABLE HEIGHT + RIM HEIGHT GAUGE
UNBREAKABLE POLYCARBON BACKBOARD
72-INCH BACKBOARD + 56-INCH SAFETY AREA
DIRECT GOAL MOUNT & HANGING TOLERANCE
6"x6" MAIN POLE SYSTEM + OPTIONAL PAD



LEGEND

- PROPOSED SPORT COURT RESURFACING & EXPANSION TO STANDARD SIZE
- PROPOSED SPORT COURT STANDARD FENCE
- PROPOSED SPORT COURT PERIPHERAL EXTENSION
- PROPOSED SIDEWALK CONCRETE
- PROPOSED SITE FURNITURE & OPTIONAL CANOPY STRUCTURE
- PROPOSED RAIN GARDEN W/ MICHIGAN HOLLY HEDGE
- PROPOSED WALL-MOUNT DRINKING FOUNTAIN
- PROPOSED PARKING LOT STRIPING + ADA SPOTS & SIGNS
- EXISTING SIDEWALK CONCRETE
- EXISTING HMA
- EXISTING RESTROOM
- EXISTING CANOPY TREE
- EXISTING ORNAMENTAL TREE
- EXISTING COURTS FOOTPRINT



City Council Agenda Item Report

FROM: Ryan Cummins, City Manager

MEETING DATE: March 4, 2026

SUBJECT: Public Speech Policy and Palette Sign Display Policy

DESCRIPTION:

Updating signage regulations is a Council priority for FY 25/26. As part of that work, two new policies are recommended.

Public Speech Policy

The proposed Public Speech Policy establishes a clear, constitutionally grounded framework for expressive activity on property owned, leased, or operated by the City. The policy is designed to ensure First Amendment compliance while preserving the City's ability to control and define its own governmental messaging.

Key components include:

- Classification of City property into four legally recognized categories:
 - Traditional Public Forums
 - Designated Public Forums
 - Nonpublic Forums
 - Government-Speech Spaces
- Clarification that all City property not expressly opened for public expression is reserved for government speech.
- Authority for Council to prospectively change the status of a forum by resolution.
- Administration and enforcement responsibility assigned to the City Manager, with delegation authority as needed.
- Requirement that any expressive activity comply with established City procedures, permits, and application processes.

Palette Sign Display Policy

The proposed Palette Sign Display Policy specifically addresses the Saugatuck Palette Sign located at Lake Street and Blue Star Memorial Highway.

Key provisions include:

- Government Speech Designation:
 - Displays on the Palette Sign are considered speech of the City and are not a public forum for private expression.
- City Priority & Council Approval:
 - The City maintains priority for governmental messages.
 - All banner displays require City Council approval.
- Permitted Events:
 - The policy lists specific longstanding civic, cultural, and community events eligible for banner consideration, with flexibility for Council to approve additional events consistent with the City's character and values.
- Complete applications must be submitted:
 - No earlier than 270 days before the event
 - No later than 60 days before the event
- Display Limits:
 - One banner per event (14' x 4')
 - Maximum of two banners on the property at any one time
 - After governmental messages, first come, first serve based on complete application deadlines.
 - One banner may be on the Palette Sign; one may be ground-mounted
 - Display limited to 15 days prior to event; removed within 24 hours after
- Administrative Discretion:
 - The City Manager (or designee) retains sole discretion over banner placement, relocation, modification, or cancellation to serve governmental messaging priorities or public interests.

LEGAL REVIEW:

Legal reviewed and their opinion was shared with the City Council.

SAMPLE MOTION:

Motion to approve the Public Speech Policy and Palette Sign Display Policy as presented.

CITY OF SAUGATUCK PUBLIC SPEECH POLICY

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear, constitutionally compliant standards for expressive activity on all property owned, leased, or operated by the City of Saugatuck, including both physical spaces and City-managed digital platforms. These standards ensure that the City maintains appropriate control over its governmental messaging while providing transparent, objective, and legally sound rules for private expression in the limited locations intentionally opened for that purpose. This policy applies to all City property and communication assets—such as buildings, parks, signage, flagpoles, websites, social media accounts, digital notification systems, printed newsletters, and any other physical or digital platform or resource the City owns or manages.

2. ADMINISTRATION

The City Manager is responsible for administering and enforcing this policy. The City Manager may delegate specific duties to City staff as needed, provided all actions are carried out under the City Manager's direction and oversight.

3. DESIGNATION OF CITY PROPERTY

To ensure the orderly and consistent management of City property, all areas where expressive activity may occur are classified into one of four categories: traditional public forums, designated public forums, nonpublic forums, or government-speech spaces.

3.1. Traditional Public Forums

A traditional public forum is a public space, such as a street, sidewalk, or park, that has historically been open to expressive activity by members of the public. These areas are recognized as places where individuals may engage in protected speech. The City may regulate speech in these areas only through neutral rules addressing the time, place, or manner of expression, such as regulations necessary to protect public safety, prevent obstruction, limit excessive noise, or ensure the orderly use of public spaces. These regulations must be applied without regard to the content or viewpoint of the expression. This policy does not impose additional regulation on expressive activity within traditional public forums.

3.2. Designated Public Forums

A designated public forum is a location that the City intentionally opens for general expressive activity by members of the public. These spaces exist only when the City makes a deliberate decision to allow private expression in a specific area. The City may, by resolution, establish designated public forums and regulate those areas through neutral rules governing the time, place, or manner of expression, including operational considerations such as scheduling, safety, maintenance, installation requirements, and the

physical limitations of the space. These regulations must be applied without regard to the content or viewpoint of the expression.

3.3. *Nonpublic Forums*

A nonpublic forum is a space owned or controlled by the City that is not open for general expressive activity but may be used for limited types of private expression consistent with the specific purpose of that space. The City may, by resolution, establish nonpublic forums and regulate those areas through criteria and procedures that reflect the intended use of the space, including limitations on who may use the forum, what types of messages may be displayed, and how long messages may remain in place, provided that no regulation is based on the viewpoint of the expression.

3.4. *Government Speech*

All City property not expressly designated as a traditional public forum, designated public forum, or nonpublic forum is reserved exclusively for government speech. Government speech may also occur within traditional public forums, designated public forums, and nonpublic forums without altering the forum's status or opening it to private expression. In all government-speech uses, the City conveys its own messages—including for example but not limited to artwork, installations, exhibits, performances, and other forms of City expression—and maintains meaningful editorial control over content, selection, and presentation. Private expression is not permitted in government-speech spaces, and any display, flag, signage, artwork, installation, exhibit, performance, digital content, or communication presented as government speech is understood as the City's message.

4. FORUM STATUS CHANGE

The City may, by resolution, prospectively close any designated public forum and reclassify it as a nonpublic forum or as government-speech space, effective on a date certain, for neutral reasons related to the property's intended function and operational needs.

5. USE OF CITY PROPERTY

Any person seeking to engage in expressive activity on City property must do so in accordance with all application procedures, forms, permits, and submission requirements established by the City, whether currently in effect or adopted in the future. Individuals and organizations are responsible for complying with all relevant processes governing the use of City spaces, including any procedural, operational, or administrative requirements the City has determined necessary for the safe, orderly, and consistent use of its property. Approval to use City property is contingent upon full adherence to these procedures, and no private expression may occur in areas requiring such approval unless all applicable requirements have been satisfied.

Policy/Procedure: Saugatuck Palette Sign Display Policy

Date Adopted or Implemented:

Revision Date:

Resolution Number (if applicable):

CITY OF SAUGATUCK

Purpose: The Saugatuck Palette Sign ("Palette Sign") is located at the northeast corner of the Lake Street and Blue Star Memorial Highway intersection in the City of Saugatuck. This policy establishes the scope, guidelines and procedures of displays on the Palette Sign in the City of Saugatuck consistent with the status of displays on Palette Sign being government speech.

A. Authority:

The Saugatuck City Manager shall be responsible for the implementation of this policy.

B. Displays on the Palette Sign are Government Speech:

1. Palette Sign displays are considered speech by the City, i.e., government speech.
2. Palette Sign displays are reserved for and are used exclusively as expressions by the City of the government's own speech. Specifically, the City intends for the Palette Sign displays to be a transmission of its own messages, primarily messages that are designed to inform the public of public events of a civic nature that are consistent with the City's character and values.
3. The Palette Sign is not intended to serve as a forum for free expression by the public. Except as expressly set forth in this Policy or other applicable City regulations, displays on the Palette Sign or the City property on which the Palette Sign is located are prohibited.

C. Display Consideration and Limitations:

1. All Palette Sign displays shall be approved by the City Council.
2. The City will maintain first priority to use the Palette Sign for its own governmental messages. Organizers or sponsors of the events listed in section D may request to display a banner on the Palette Sign by submitting a Special Event & Parade Application to the City Clerk's Office.

3. Following the City in priority, applications for Palette Sign displays will be considered based on a first-come, first-served basis, based on the date the City receives a complete application. Applications shall be submitted no earlier than two hundred seventy (270) days prior to the scheduled event date and no later than sixty (60) days prior to the scheduled event date to be considered.
4. Palette Sign displays are limited to one (1) banner per event that must not exceed a measurement of fourteen feet wide by four feet tall (14' x 4'). No more than two (2) banners may be displayed at any time on the Palette Sign property, regardless of event type or sponsor. Only one (1) banner may be displayed on the Palette Sign, and only one (1) banner may be placed at a ground-level location nearby.
5. The City Manager or their designee shall retain sole discretion over the placement and location of all approved banners, including whether a banner is displayed on the Palette Sign or placed at a ground-level location. Approval of a banner does not guarantee placement on the Palette Sign, and no applicant shall have any right to a specific location. In addition, the City Manager or their designee reserves the right to modify, shorten, relocate, or cancel any approved banner display if necessary to serve governmental messaging priorities, public safety, or other public interests.
6. A Palette Sign display may be displayed no more than fifteen (15) days before the corresponding event. The banner must be removed within twenty-four (24) hours after said event.

D. Permitted Displays:

The City may use the Palette Sign to display governmental messages that are consistent with and reflect the City's character and values, as determined by the City Council. In recognition of the value of providing notice to the public of upcoming and ongoing events, the Palette Sign may be used by organizers or sponsors of events to display 14' x 4' banners in connection with the following special events following approval by the City Council:

1. Art in the Park Saugatuck
2. Cow Hill Yacht Club Chili Cook-Off
3. Saugatuck Whootville Christmas Parade
4. Care-A-Van Car Parade, Saugatuck and Douglas

5. 4th of July Parade in Saugatuck
6. PRIDE Jazz for Justice Concert
7. Saugatuck Memorial Day Parade
8. Movie in the Park
9. Mt. Baldhead Challenge
10. Music in the Park
11. Erin Go Bark People and Pet Parade
12. Saugatuck Film Fest
13. The Market at Saugatuck Center for the Arts
14. Saugatuck Douglas Art Club Art Fair
15. Saugatuck High School Homecoming Parade
16. Saugatuck Sidewalk Sales
17. Spear Street Block Party
18. Town Crier Races
19. Saugatuck Tree Lighting Ceremony
20. Turkey Trot Fun Run
21. Annual Ugly Sweater Pub Crawl
22. Saugatuck Venetian Festival
23. Saugatuck-Douglas Veterans Day Celebration

24. Other public events deemed by the City Council to be reflective of the City's character and values, to have traditional, historic, civic, cultural, or charitable importance to the City and/or its residents, and to otherwise be consistent with the public health, safety, and welfare.

E. Amendments:

The City Council may authorize changes and/or adjustments to this Policy from time to time by majority vote.



City Council Agenda Item Report

FROM: Ryan Cummins, City Manager

MEETING DATE: March 4, 2026

SUBJECT: Proposed Housing Bills in Legislature

DESCRIPTION:

Housing affordability is a significant concern across the country. Several bills have been introduced in the Michigan legislature that according to the Michigan Municipal League (MML) would “significantly restrict local authority by preempting local decision-making on key zoning issues, including duplexes, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), minimum setbacks, lot sizes, and dwelling unit sizes.” The MML has provided further details in the attached communication, including a call to action to oppose to the legislation.

The Michigan Association of Planning has also released a letter on behalf of its members which is supportive of some of the proposed legislation. A copy is attached.

The City of the Village of Douglas recently shared the attached letter in opposition to the proposed bills.

Recommendation

I recommend that City Council consider a resolution or letter opposing the bills. While I appreciate the goals of the legislation, preempting local zoning decisions with a one size fits all framework is not the best approach, especially when considering infrastructure availability and condition and community character. In Saugatuck, we have been ahead of the curve in that our zoning already contains similar elements that are proposed including:

- Permitting accessory dwelling units on a lot where the principal use is an existing single-family detached dwelling.
- Smaller dwelling unit sizes.
- Exempting our downtown commercial zoning districts, where denser housing can be built, from minimum parking requirements.

While we have opportunities to do more, that is best evaluated through our current master planning efforts and subsequent updates to our zoning ordinance, both of which involve extensive community engagement.

BUDGET ACTION REQUIRED:

None

LEGAL REVIEW:

Legal will be at your meeting if you have any questions.

SAMPLE MOTION:

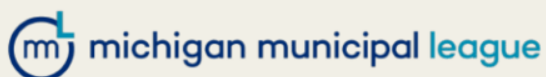
TBD

Ryan Cummins

From: Michigan Municipal League <jrigterink@email.mml.org>
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2026 12:30 PM
To: Ryan Cummins
Subject: Urgent: Local Decision-Making at Risk

You don't often get email from jrigterink@email.mml.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email originated from outside of the organization. DO NOT click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.



We love where you live

We Need Your Signature to Protect Local Decision-Making and Community-Led Housing Solutions

As local leaders, we have a chance to stand united in opposition to zoning
preemption legislation that has been introduced in the Michigan House of

Representatives and is currently before the Regulatory Reform Committee. **House Bills 5529 through 5532**, along with related proposed legislation, if enacted, **would strip locally elected officials of their decision-making authority**, dismiss years of community planning work, and amount to a clear override from Lansing on local voices and voter-backed decisions.

We are asking for your immediate help in opposing this proposal.

[Click here](#) to read our letter of opposition, add your signature, and join our effort to protect local decision-making. **Local government leaders, both elected and nonelected**, within every Michigan community **are encouraged to submit**.

We need as many signatures as possible in advance of a Tuesday press conference. All local government elected officials and staff are encouraged to [join us at this event](#).

The bill package, championed by Representative Kristian Grant (D-Grand Rapids) and Representative Joe Aragona (R-Clinton Township), would significantly restrict local authority by preempting local decision-making on key zoning issues, including duplexes, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), minimum setbacks, lot sizes, and dwelling unit sizes.

See below for a summary of the bills.

Join us in opposition!

The state legislature must not preempt local decision-making. Citizens and their elected local leaders engaging in vigorous debate on matters that impact them every day is a transparent and participatory process. State preemption lacks that same accountability.

Sign Letter of Opposition

Legislative Bill Package

Introduced:

- **HB 5529 (Grant) Land Division Act Lot Size:** Prohibits local ordinances from requiring a minimum parcel or lot size greater than 1,500 square feet for detached single-family residence where the subdivision is accessible and will be served by public water and sewer
- **HB 5530 (Wortz) Lot Size:** Prohibits a minimum parcel size greater than 1,500 square feet for detached single-family residence where the parcel is accessible and will be served by public water and sewer.
- **HB 5531 (Neeley) Study Requirements:** Allows local units of government to require reasonably necessary studies in reviewing a site plan application. Limits circumstances of when additional information can be required for the same application after initial approval. Creates a 60-day decision shot clock after receipt of a site plan for a local unit of government.
- **HB 5532 (Aragona) Protest Petitions:** Expands the qualifying petition area to 300 ft and sets a 60% signature threshold.

To Be Introduced:

- **Duplex by Right:** Creates a statewide definition of “duplex.” Mandates duplexes are a permitted use in any district where single family residences are allowed and not subject to any procedures different from a single-family residence.
- **Parking Requirements:** Mandates parking requirements at no more than one space per dwelling unit for multifamily residential use of property. Allows mobile homes in any residential zone.
 - *“**Mobile home**” means a structure that is transportable in 1 or more sections, built on a chassis, and designed to be used as a dwelling, with or without a permanent foundation, when connected to the required utilities, and includes the plumbing, heating, air-conditioning, and electrical systems contained in the structure.*
- **Accessory Dwelling Units:** Creates a statewide definition of “accessory dwelling unit” (ADU). Mandates ADUs are permitted by right in residential zoning districts and not subject to a public hearing. ADUs are prohibited from density calculations, additional parking requirements, and owner occupancy requirements. Allows mobile homes in any residential zone.
- **Setback Requirements:** Mandates setback requirements at 15 feet or less from the front property line and five feet from the side or rear for dwellings or outbuildings if the local unit of government is located in whole or part within a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) or is located adjacent to a MSA area.
- **Dwelling Size:** Prohibits a minimum area requirement greater than 500 square feet for a dwelling.

Supporters of preemption often point to declining permits, rising home prices, and regulatory costs as justification for statewide mandates. While these pressures are real, they are driven by broader economic forces including the housing crash, rising labor and material costs, high interest rates, and complex market dynamics that go far beyond local zoning. **Sweeping mandates oversimplify the problem and ignore the unique needs and circumstances of Michigan's diverse communities.**

Thank you for taking the time to advocate for your community by voicing your opposition. **Your engagement will lead to our success.** If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Jen Rigterink at jrigterink@mml.org or John LaMacchia at jlamacchia@mml.org.

Join us on social!



Michigan Municipal League, 1675 Green Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48105, USA, 734-662-3246

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February 24, 2026

Re: Proposed Bills on Housing Supply and Affordability

To Members of the Michigan Association of Planning:

The Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) is pleased to offer comments on several draft bills currently under consideration to ease housing construction throughout Michigan. We strongly support efforts to facilitate housing production across our state. Thank you for your leadership on these efforts.

About MAP

As a 501(c)(3) membership-based nonprofit professional association and chapter of the American Planning Association (APA), MAP is dedicated to improving planning and zoning practices in Michigan. Our 4,000-plus members include professional planners in the public and private sectors, elected leaders, appointed officials such as, planning commissioners and zoning board of appeals members, and zoning administrators and building officials. We are the “Go-To” source for planning- and zoning-related resources and solutions, and the only organization in Michigan solely focused on these issues. Our Government Relations and Law committees actively work on policy and legislative initiatives, conducting research, drafting bills, and collaborating with legislators to advance policies that foster vital, economically prosperous, equitable, and sustainable communities, which are critical to Michigan's goal of attracting and maintaining a diverse and successful resident and business base.

Our Support for Expanding Housing Supply

These proposed bills address critical aspects of land use and development, directly affecting housing availability and affordability throughout Michigan. Our comments are informed by MAP's board-adopted housing platform, which emphasizes the need for thoughtful regulatory reforms to address Michigan's housing challenges.

Our housing platform advocates for several key strategies to encourage housing construction. One of our strategies—planning for realistic housing needs—was the subject of HB 5557, passed during the 2024 session. We also support allowing more accessory dwelling units (ADUs), encouraging medium-density housing types, from duplexes to

townhomes, promoting mixed-use development of housing in commercial areas, and using incentives to encourage the production of income-restricted affordable housing.

MAP continues to advocate at the local and state levels for zoning reforms to allow more housing and increase transparency and predictability in development. This includes providing technical assistance to local governments and supporting state legislation that encourages housing planning. Two years ago, we launched the MSHDA-funded *Zoning Reform for Housing Supply and Choice Toolkit*. The zoning reforms in our guidebook are helping local governments make changes to expand housing supply. Nevertheless, legislative reforms are needed to facilitate adequate construction of new housing. To date, local zoning reforms have been neither broad nor deep enough to meaningfully address Michigan's housing needs.

The Need for State Legislation – And Flexibility

In addition to supporting local reforms, we support state-level legislation to address Michigan's housing challenges. The widespread and severe undersupply of both market-rate and affordable housing units, as well as a limited variety of housing types (such as attached and multi-family dwellings), stems in part from existing zoning and building laws in some communities that prohibit, limit, or delay the construction of such units. MAP's research, including through the [Michigan Zoning Atlas](#), our development of the *Zoning Reform Toolkit*, and the stories and testimony of our members, suggests that, although some local units in Michigan are proactively reforming their zoning laws to accommodate more housing, many are not, and some are actively opposed to doing so.

Therefore, while we firmly believe in the importance of local control, the breadth and severity of the current housing shortage make it unlikely to be resolved effectively through a patchwork of disparate local regulations that are slowly and inconsistently adopted. Consistent with APA's priorities, MAP supports state legislation that advances housing construction and builds upon planners' expertise in facilitating it. MAP members have deep experience preparing housing plans and drafting, administering, and enforcing zoning regulations. We also support clear and consistent application and enforcement of zoning laws, aligning with planners' ethical obligations to provide accurate information and treat all participants fairly. Furthermore, we support legislation that establishes consistent requirements for communities to allow a broader range of affordable housing types. This approach enables statewide progress while providing opportunities for innovative planning solutions at the local level. The proposed bill package represents a *targeted* incursion on local control, not a complete displacement.

We additionally recognize that streamlining onerous and outdated zoning regulations is but one important element in increasing housing supply and improving affordability. These measures must be buttressed by statewide efforts to address high materials and labor costs, moderate and equalize property tax burdens, and provide incentives to

builders and local governments to aid housing construction. We support any and all efforts, from the MI Home Program proposed by the Michigan Municipal League (MML) to stemming the negative effects of Proposal A, to address our state’s housing needs. While each of these measures is necessary, none is independently sufficient to solve our crisis—an “all of the above” approach is needed.

Although we support many of the proposed bills as outlined below, as an overarching matter, ***we suggest offering local governments flexibility to exempt themselves from the duplex, minimum lot size, and setback bills discussed below if they zone sufficient land for by-right construction of medium-density housing, including multi-family residential units at certain dwelling unit density standards.*** Alternatively, we recommend broader changes that would require local governments with water and sewer infrastructure to prepare housing needs plans based on local conditions and zone in accordance with those plans, with state-level oversight. We would be happy to further discuss these ideas at your convenience.

Specific Comments

We have reviewed the following draft bills and offer our comments below.

1. ADUs

This bill would amend Section 102 and add Section 516 to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (MZEA), defining ADUs, permitting them by right on properties where residential uses are allowed and single-family dwellings have been established, and establishing regulations for their treatment, including excluding them from dwelling unit density calculations, setback and dimensional requirements relative to the principal dwelling, and exempting them from parking requirements. It also allows for retroactive approval of previously constructed ADUs.

We support this legislation, subject to the following conditions:

- Add a definition of the term “dwelling unit” to avoid any possible confusion about this term. One suggested definition is: “One or more rooms constituting a unit for permanent occupancy, having no more than one primary kitchen together with facilities for sleeping, bathing, and which unit occupies a structure or a portion of a structure used as a single-family dwelling.”
- Limit this proposal to cities, villages, and charter townships wholly or partly located within a metropolitan statistical area (MSA), which have public sewer and water systems, and exempt areas in charter townships not served by public water and sewer systems. MAP supports housing construction in a fiscally responsible manner in places where infrastructure and services—including, for example, public water and sanitary sewer service and sufficient transportation infrastructure—are already available to serve such housing. While some Michigan communities have experienced population growth, the state has experienced a decline in population density per housing unit, meaning that existing infrastructure is, in many places, underutilized. Furthermore, we are concerned that allowing ADUs throughout the state will inadvertently lead to “density sprawl,” where new housing is constructed in places without adequate infrastructure or services. Importantly, this suggestion would not prevent local governments outside of MSAs or general law townships in MSAs from choosing to permit ADUs.
- In section 516(1)(a), we recommend changing the word “less” to “more,” such that small ADUs, rather than larger ones, are permitted by right.

2. Duplexes By Right

We support state legislation allowing middle housing in more areas of the state, but recommend the following changes to this bill:

- Limit this proposal to cities, villages, and charter townships which have public sewer and water systems, wholly or partly located within an MSA, and exempt areas in charter townships not served by public water and sewer systems. MAP supports housing construction in a fiscally responsible manner in places where infrastructure and services—including, for example, water and sanitary sewer service and sufficient transportation infrastructure—are already available to serve such housing. While some Michigan communities have experienced population growth, the state has experienced a decline in population density per housing unit, meaning that existing infrastructure is, in many places, underutilized. Furthermore, we are concerned that allowing multi-unit development throughout the state will inadvertently lead to “density sprawl,” where new housing is constructed in places without adequate infrastructure or services.
- Broaden the proposal to allow, or at least strongly encourage, other types of middle housing—including, for example, triplexes, fourplexes, townhouses, and cottage clusters—in single-family districts and elsewhere. Where they have been permitted in other states and cities, duplexes have been slow to materialize, limiting their effectiveness in easing the housing crisis. Builders face significant structural hurdles in producing duplexes due to high transaction costs, low scalability, and insufficient financing options. MAP supports facilitating the construction of financially feasible housing types that are easy to construct, including allowing medium- and higher-density multi-family housing in zoning districts served by public sewer and water, that allow commercial uses and at least four units per residential lot.
- Change the term “single-family residence” as used throughout this bill to “single-family dwelling unit” or “dwelling unit” as used throughout the remainder of the MZEA.

3. Dwelling Size Requirements

This bill proposes to amend Section 205d of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act to prohibit a zoning ordinance from imposing a minimum floor area requirement of greater than 500 square feet for a dwelling. Minimum dwelling size requirements can be a significant barrier to the development of smaller, more affordable housing units, such as studios or one-bedroom apartments, which are critical for diverse housing needs. Limiting these minimums to no more than 500 square feet allows for a wider range of housing types and price points, contributing to housing attainability and addressing the needs of single individuals, young professionals, and seniors. This aligns directly with our platform's focus on increasing housing options.

We support this legislation, subject to the following conditions:

- Limit this proposal to cities, villages, and charter townships wholly or partly located within an MSA, which have public water and sewer systems, and exempt areas in charter townships not served by public water and sewer systems. MAP supports housing construction in a fiscally responsible manner in places where infrastructure and services—including, for example, water and sanitary sewer service and sufficient transportation infrastructure—are already available to serve such housing. While some Michigan communities have experienced population growth, the state has experienced a decline in population density per housing unit, meaning that existing infrastructure is, in many places, underutilized. Furthermore, we are concerned that encouraging small-unit development throughout the state will inadvertently lead to “density sprawl,” where new housing is constructed in places without adequate infrastructure or services.
- Change the term “single-family residence” as used throughout this bill to “single-family dwelling unit” or “dwelling unit” as used throughout the remainder of the MZEA.

4. Lot Size Requirements

HB 5530 proposes to amend Section 205d of the MZEA to prohibit a zoning ordinance from imposing a minimum lot or parcel size of more than 1,500 square feet on land zoned for a detached single-family residence if public water and sewer services are available or planned for the subject parcel. A related bill, HB 5529, proposes a corresponding Land Division Act amendment.

Large minimum lot sizes contribute to urban sprawl, increase infrastructure costs, and make housing less affordable by requiring larger land purchases.

We support HB 5530, subject to the following conditions:

- Make this proposal applicable to cities, villages, and charter townships wholly or partly located within a metropolitan statistical area, which have public water and sewer systems, and exempt areas in charter townships not served by public water and sewer systems. MAP supports housing construction in a fiscally responsible manner in places where infrastructure and services—including, for example, water and sanitary sewer service and sufficient transportation infrastructure—are already available to serve such housing. Although we appreciate that the proposal provides for a cap on minimum lot sizes in areas served or proposed to be served by water and sewer—an important infrastructure consideration—we recommend that the proposal apply only in the jurisdictions discussed above. While some Michigan communities have experienced population growth, the state has experienced a decline in population density per housing unit, meaning that existing infrastructure is, in many places, underutilized. Furthermore, we are concerned that allowing dense development throughout the state will inadvertently lead to “density sprawl,” where new housing is constructed in places without adequate infrastructure or services.
- Clarify in the bill that the minimum lot size established in the bill will not supersede rules concerning environmental protection.
- Clarify the relationship between the rules proposed in these bills and Section 506 of the MZEA, which requires local units to maintain certain rules regarding open space preservation.

We do not support HB 5529 in its present form. It should be clarified to ensure that subdivided lots may be larger than 1,500 square feet where appropriate, particularly where they are encumbered by environmental conditions.

5. Setback Requirements

This bill proposes to amend Section 205d of the MZEA to preempt setback requirements greater than 25 feet on a dwelling or outbuilding if the local unit of government is located in whole or part within, or adjacent to, an MSA. Based on the proposed language, it appears to apply to all dwellings, not just single-family detached residences.

We are neutral on this proposal. We support state legislation allowing more housing types, smaller lot sizes, reduced parking requirements, and other rules that facilitate housing development. Although we are not aware of any widespread use of onerous setback rules by communities interested in preventing housing construction, the proposed maximum 25-foot setback rule affords communities flexibility in establishing setbacks. Setback rules are an important planning tool used to provide space for public utilities and landscaping, ensure building access and safety, and establish the aesthetic character of neighborhoods. In particular, larger setbacks may be appropriate along major arterial roadways or highways. We note that, even if onerous setback rules are adopted, landowners have recourse through the variance process and judicial review.

6. Parking Minimums

This bill proposes to amend Section 205d of the MZEA to prohibit a zoning ordinance from requiring the provision of more than 1 parking space per dwelling unit for a residential use of property.

We support this legislation. However, we would prefer that it eliminate all vehicle parking requirements for new housing. MAP notes that this bill will not prevent builders from providing vehicle parking as market conditions merit. It is MAP's position that builders and owners of housing are best positioned to determine how much parking to provide.

7. Revise Study Requirements (HB 5531)

This bill proposes to amend Section 501 of the MZEA by limiting when a local unit of government may require additional or revised studies or documents from an applicant for a site plan approval, and clarifying site plan approval criteria.

Increasing certainty for all participants in the planning and development process and avoiding procedural abuses concerning development applications, while ensuring full review and evaluation of relevant information concerning a development proposal and its prospective impact, is consistent with good planning practice.

We support this legislation, subject to the following conditions:

- Not all local governments use a multi-step site plan review process, and the language “initial site plan approval” is thus confusing. We recommend changing the defined term in section 501(6) from “initial site plan approval” to “initial site plan review,” with corresponding edits to the definition.
- We suggest including a provision in section 501(5) allowing applicants to extend the 60-day deadline, particularly in the case of large or otherwise complex projects.

8. Petition Process Changes (HB 5532)

This bill proposes to amend Section 403 of the MZEA, modifying protest petition requirements for zoning ordinance amendments, including increased signature thresholds for amendments that increase the authorized number of dwelling units.

We support this legislation; however, we recommend completely eliminating protest petition rights in Michigan. If protest petition rights are not fully eliminated, we recommend increasing the petitioning threshold for all amendments to local zoning ordinances, rather than just those that increase the authorized number of dwelling units.

Conclusion and Future Work

In conclusion, MAP is encouraged by most of these proposed bills, as they are consistent with MAP’s platform and APA’s policy positions on housing. Nevertheless, we believe these bills are just a starting point for important policy discussions—involving ***all stakeholders***, from local governments to housing builders and other advocacy organizations—to determine how Michigan can best add needed housing supply and encourage strategic economic growth while respecting individual communities’ needs. This type of dialogue and exchange is critically important to the successful passage of any housing-related legislation and its durability in the future. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues, as well as diverse stakeholders, as we continue these efforts.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments and stand ready to assist the Legislature with our expertise as these important bills move forward. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further discussion or clarification.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andrea Brown". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

Michigan Association of Planning
Andrea Brown, AICP, Executive Director



February 24, 2026

Honorable Joey Andrews
Michigan State Representative
Michigan House of Representatives
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Dear Representative/Senator,

On behalf of the City of the Village of Douglas, we are writing to express strong opposition to House Bills 5529–5532 and the anticipated companion legislation that would significantly preempt local zoning authority across the State of Michigan.

While we recognize and share concerns regarding housing availability and affordability, these bills would undermine the ability of locally elected officials to responsibly plan for growth in a manner that reflects the infrastructure capacity, environmental conditions, and community character of our individual municipalities.

Zoning is one of the most direct tools available to local governments to manage the relationship between housing, infrastructure, transportation networks, public safety services, environmental protections, and economic development. Statewide mandates that establish uniform requirements for lot sizes, setbacks, accessory dwelling units, parking standards, and dwelling configurations remove the flexibility needed to ensure that development is aligned with a community's actual service capacity — including water, sewer, stormwater systems, emergency response, and roadway networks.

In communities such as Douglas, which continue to invest heavily in infrastructure improvements and coordinated regional planning efforts, the imposition of one-size-fits-all zoning standards risks creating development patterns that outpace or conflict with local capital planning and long-term land use goals. This disconnect ultimately places additional financial burdens on local taxpayers who must absorb the costs associated with infrastructure expansion or system strain.

Equally concerning is the proposed limitation on site plan review timelines and the restriction on additional information requests during project review. Local governments must retain the ability to ensure that proposed developments meet safety, environmental, and compatibility standards before approvals are granted.

Local decision-making is foundational to accountable governance. Residents rely on their local elected officials to thoughtfully consider development proposals through public processes that allow for meaningful participation and dialogue. Preempting this authority reduces transparency, limits public engagement, and shifts decision-making away from those most directly impacted.

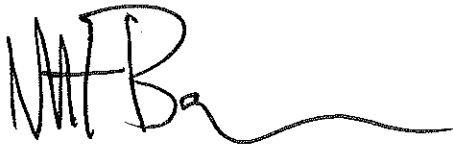
Housing challenges are complex and deserve collaborative solutions developed in partnership with local governments — not mandates that constrain responsible planning efforts already underway at the community level.

We respectfully urge you to oppose this legislation.

Sincerely,



Cathy North
Mayor



Matt Balmer
Councilmember
Douglas Planning Commission, Chair

Cc: Douglas City Council
Lisa Nocerini, City Manager
Sean Homyen, Planning & Zoning Administrator

New Housing Laws: Through the Lense of Zoning / State Law Preemption

Housing affordability and availability continues to be a major issue for Michigan and the United States. One of the core powers of Michigan municipalities is to provide for land use and zoning regulations that intend to regulate the use of land and structures to meet the needs of Michigan citizens including for “places of residence.” MCL 125.3201.

Like other states, the Michigan legislature has recently introduced multiple bills that, if adopted, would preempt certain aspects of local control particularly related to housing. Presumably, these bills try to address problems with housing identified within this E-Letter. This E-Letter summarizes the current state of recently-introduced proposed legislation and gives perspective on existing state preemption of land use related issues. Information shared in this E-Letter may also help generate interest for municipalities to take a broader look at their zoning regulations on housing and to potentially develop local solutions to Michigan’s housing problem.

I. The Housing Problem

Overwhelming public polling and sources show that housing is an issue of concern throughout Michigan and the United States. For example, nationally, a *Pew Research Center* survey found that 69% of Americans said they were “very concerned” about the cost of housing. DeSilver, *A look at the state of affordable housing in the U.S.*, Pew Research Center (October 25, 2024), <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/10/25/a-look-at-the-state-of-affordable-housing-in-the-us/>. The 69% polling figure was an 8% increase from 2023.

Moving to Michigan, the Michigan Housing Data Portal (created by the Michigan Municipal League (MML), Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), and Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), reports the following findings:

1. 50% of Michigan renters and 25% of homeowners pay too much for housing.
2. Michigan permitted 208,000 new homes from 2015 through 2024, but added 397,000 more workers over that period. That calculates to 525 new homes per 1,000 jobs added (national average is 948).
3. 8% of all homes in Michigan were vacant and available to rent or for sale in 2024. The Housing Data Portal reports a “healthy availability rate” being around 5%.

Source: State of Michigan Housing Data Portal (Accessed March 1, 2026), <https://mihousingdata.org/?tab=supply>.

The *Pew Research Center* source above also made some other interesting findings. First, for what it identified as entry level new homes (under 1,400 square feet), 186,000 such homes were built in 2004. Yet, that number was reduced to 87,000 in 2023. Second, of the top ten areas **in the United States** where median housing prices have increased the most (from 2019-2024); one of the areas was Big Rapids, Michigan.

There have been a number of reactions to the housing issue. First, local units of government have made changes to their own regulations. See <https://fsbrlaw.com/2025/03/27/allowing-accessory-dwelling-units-the-pros-the-cons-and-the-current-trends/> addressing allowing accessory dwelling units to provide additional housing opportunities in a municipality. Second, the legislature has helped incentivize Housing Tax Increment Financing to assist with the economics of locating housing. <https://fsbrlaw.com/2025/07/31/brownfield-redevelopment-financing-acts-newest-tool-the-housing-tif/>.

Next, various states have enacted legislation overhauling housing regulations, which in some instances has eroded local control. These include states from California to Texas to Montana and have included concepts such as requirements to allow apartment buildings in certain areas as well as duplexes and tiny homes. See M. Nolan Gray, *Red State YIMBYs Lead the Way* (August 25, 2025), <https://www.city-journal.org/article/home-prices-texas-montana-republican-yimby#:~:text=Republicans%20in%20Texas%2C%20though%2C%20weren,pro%2Dhousing%20legislation%20this%20year> and Christopher, *Gavin Newsom signs law overhauling local zoning to build more housing* (October 10, 2025), <https://calmatters.org/housing/2025/10/newsom-signs-massive-california-housing-overhaul/>.

In fact, in the first half of 2025 alone over 400 bills were introduced in state legislatures that were identified as impacting housing policy. Lydia Lo, Annie Rosenow, Yonah Freemark, *Advancing Pro-Housing Land-Use Policy at the State Level* (July 25, 2025), <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/advancing-pro-housing-land-use-policy-state-level>.

II. The Proposed New Laws and What Do They Do?

Following the trends above, there have been four bills introduced in the Michigan legislature that, if adopted, would erode local control of certain aspects of housing regulation. There are more bills expected to be introduced. Below is a summary of the bills and what they would do.

A. HB 5529 (Land Division Act Residential Minimum Parcel Size)

1. Introduced: Feb 18, 2026
2. What it does? Amends Section 109(1)(d) of the Land Division Act to not allow a local ordinance to impose a minimum parcel size of more than 1,500 square feet (.03 acres) for a detached single-family residence if the parcel will be served by public water and sewer.
3. Potential Concerns (Other Than Erosion of Local Control).
Lot size very small for any detached single family development.
 - Unclear when applicants for land split would be able to determine purpose for split.
 - What if a split is granted, but never developed?
 - Other housing types (e.g., multi-family) may be more appropriate for what could be such small housing.

B. HB 5530 (Michigan Zoning Enabling Act Minimum Parcel Size)

1. Introduced: Feb 18, 2026

2. What it does? Adds a Section 205f to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act to not allow a zoning ordinance to impose a minimum parcel size of more than 1,500 square feet (.03 acres) for land zoned for a detached single-family residence if the parcel will be served by public water and sewer.
3. Potential Concerns (Other Than Erosion of Local Control)
 - Lot size very small for any detached single family development.
 - The language as drafted may not just impose the prohibition on minimum lot size to single family residential land uses but may impact an entire zoning district that provides for the land use.
 - Other housing types (e.g., multi-family) may be more appropriate for what could be such small housing.

C. HB 5531 (Michigan Zoning Enabling Act Site Plan)

1. Introduced: Feb 18, 2026
2. What it does? Amends Section 501 of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act to allow studies to review site plan applications, but require making a decision on a site plan within 60 days after receipt of such a plan.
3. Potential Concerns (Other Than Erosion of Local Control)
 - 60 days may not be enough time to review an application. Further, submitted site plans can be incomplete.
 - Many zoning ordinances do not provide for formal site plan review for single family housing.
 - May unintentionally cause needing to decide on special land uses (which are submitted with a site plan) to also be decided within 60 days.
 - Planning Commissions only have to meet four times a year. See MCL 125.3821(1). 60 days to consider a site plan may not be enough time for smaller local units of government to meet on a site plan and consider any public comment at public meetings.

D. HB 5532 (Village and City Protest Petitions)

1. Introduced: Feb 18, 2026
2. What it does? Amends Section 403 of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act to make protest petitions on zoning ordinance amendments in cities or villages to have a higher signature requirement if related to increasing the authorized number of dwelling units.
3. Potential Concerns (Other Than Erosion of Local Control)
 - May be challenging to determine whether a zoning ordinance amendment increases dwelling units or not.
 - Adds criminal penalties related to petition conduct, which could possibly happen by mistake (e.g., signing a petition twice).

The concept of state law preemption on development issues is not new. The general rule is that municipalities may control and regulate matters of local concern when such powers are conferred by the state. *Deruiter v Twp of Byron*, 505 Mich 130, 140; 949 NW2d 91 (2020). As identified above, the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act allows for the regulation of land use matters.

Nevertheless, the state legislature can remove the ability for locally controlled issues through preemption. One form of this is direct preemption where a local regulation would directly conflict with state regulation (e.g., a zoning ordinance banning accessory dwellings units, but state law providing that they must be able to be sited). *Id.*

Various forms of preemption already exist for certain developments. Below are some examples.

A. Natural Resource Extraction: Municipalities cannot prohibit the mining or valuable natural resources from properties by zoning regulations unless “very serious consequences” would occur. See MCL 125.3205(3).

B. Renewable Energy Land Uses (PA 233 of 2023): State legislation allowing certain utility-scale renewable energy projects to bypass any local zoning review. See <https://fsbrlaw.com/2024/01/05/renewable-energy-projects-how-should-your-township-adjust-its-zoning-approach/>.

C. Oil and Gas: Counties and townships cannot regulate or control the drilling, completion, or operation of oil or gas wells. See MCL 125.3205(2).

D. Commemorative Signs: Zoning Ordinance cannot regulate or prohibit signs on a building commemorating firefighters, police officers, corrections officers, armed forces members, among others. See MCL 125.3205d.

E. Adult Foster Care Facility Licensing Act / Qualified Residential Treatment Programs: Section 206 of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act mandates that certain land uses must be treated as residential and permitted in all residential zones (as well as cannot be subject to needing special land use permits). These include, but are not limited to, state licensed residential facilities, certain facilities in the adult foster care licensing act, and certain qualified residential treatment programs land uses.

III. Considerations for Your Municipality and Conclusions

Although not unheard of and perhaps necessary in some instances, state laws eroding how local governments can regulate land use and development is something your municipality should pay close attention to. Your municipality may want to contact its legislators to offer feedback and thoughts on the proposed legislation above and to offer potential thoughts on alternative solutions to the housing problem. One thing to consider is how state mandates may be inappropriately “one size fits all” and not appropriate in every community. They also inhibit local governments serving as “laboratories of democracy” developing innovative solutions on their own.

On a more practical level, municipalities should think about their zoning ordinances / other laws and what may be helpful reforms to help address these issues. Some ideas, if applicable, could include:

1. Reviewing minimum lot sizes, setbacks, lot coverage requirements, and other items that may be dissuading housing development.
2. Potentially removing special land use review for certain land uses like duplexes or multi-family in appropriate land use districts.
3. Consider authorizing accessory dwelling units in appropriate areas.
4. Taking a comprehensive look at the boundaries of a municipality and determining where denser housing options may be appropriate. Then creating potentially new zoning districts to accomplish providing spaces for such land uses.
5. Setting up frameworks to provide Housing TIFs to encourage development.
6. Working with state stakeholders to consider alternative legislative ideas that would not blanket erode local control, but instead provide tools municipalities could use to identify local housing needs and local solutions (e.g., providing a means for land use studies and goals-based master planning).

In conclusion, housing is an opportunity for Michigan municipalities to address in a manner best suited for their constituents. The housing problems are complex and affected by many variables— not just local zoning. However, local zoning reforms may be something to consider. Do not hesitate to contact our firm for any input on current zoning and housing regulations.

Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC, Your Township Attorneys, is a Michigan law firm specializing in the representation of Michigan townships. Our lawyers have more than 150 years of experience in township law and have represented more than 150 townships across the state of Michigan. This publication is intended for our clients and friends. This communication highlights specific areas of law and is not legal advice. The reader should consult an attorney to determine how the information applies to any specific situation.

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