



CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP AGENDA

September 23, 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. Guest Speaker**
- 5. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only** (*Limit 3 minutes*)
- 6. Action Items:** (*Roll Call*) Pg.2
 - A.** Approval of City Council Workshop Minutes – September 14, 2026.
- 7. Discussion Items:**
 - A.** Parking Study Presentation - Summary, Recommendations, and Action Plan. Pg.7
 - B.** Short Term Rental Licensing Ordinance Amendment and Resolution Updating Penalty Fee for Late Renewal Applications. Pg.40
 - C.** Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Create a New Definition for Enhanced Bed and Breakfast and to Regulate Enhanced Bed and Breakfasts. Pg.50
 - D.** Request for Proposals – Website Redesign and Development. Pg.60
- 8. Public Comments** (*Limit 3 minutes*)
- 9. Council Comments**
- 10. Adjourn**

NOTICE:

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**(312) 626-6799 -or-
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Then enter "Meeting ID":
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Please send questions or comments regarding meeting agenda items prior to meeting to:

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jwolters@saugatuckcity.com.



CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING September 14, 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 Anderson at 6:30 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Attendance:

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

Absent: None.

Others Present: City Manager Cummins, Attorney Witte, Zoning Director Moor, Treasurer Bredeweg and Clerk Williams.

Mayor's Comments:

Mayor Anderson offered welcoming remarks about the season, noting that she loves this time of year in Saugatuck — the community still has some tourism and "a little buzz of summer," but things are cooling down and quieting, and the weather has been spectacular. She added that it sounds like businesses had a good year and everybody's in a good mood, concluding that "Saugatuck is thriving, and it's great to be here".

City Manager Comments:

City Manager Ryan Cummins began with an update to the Park Street planning open house, which was well attended, with a group Q&A with the engineers followed by one-on-one time for residents to discuss specific properties and areas of concern; many comment cards were returned, and he and the engineers are reviewing that feedback to prepare a more detailed report with options and recommendations, similar to what was done for Elizabeth and Maple Streets.

He reported that Elizabeth St. design engineering continues, with intersection-by-intersection recommendations from Allegan St. up to Francis St. in front of the school included in his written report, and the engineers reaching out to the school to confirm it is comfortable with the design and to gather any additional feedback. On Maple St., all underground work is complete, sidewalk is largely installed and looking great, restoration is underway, and the east lane has been crushed so road prep is beginning; he expects rapid progress over the next couple of weeks and, weather permitting, possible completion in late September or October rather than the originally anticipated November.

He closed by reminding council that the downtown water valve work remains scheduled for October 19–20, with the following Monday and Tuesday as a weather backup, and that notice went out with a lot of positive

feedback. He also said that the next workshop will be a big meeting, as the Parking Improvements Task Force presents the culmination of a year's work — both the study findings and its recommendations — on a topic that has been discussed in the community for many years.

Agenda Changes:

Motion by Gardner, second by Stanton to add County Commissioner Brad Lubbers as a guest speaker. Via Voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Peterson, second by Gardner to add Dan Fox as guest speaker.

The council briefly discussed the motion and Mayor Anderson suggested Fox speak during public comment instead, and council committed not to raise a point of order if Fox ran past three minutes. Peterson said the arrangement was acceptable to her.

Peterson withdrew her motion.

Guest Speakers:

Superintendent Mark Neidlinger:

Mr. Neidlinger presented Saugatuck Public Schools' November bond proposal, joined by Board President Amanda Frank.

The school has a \$49.5 million, 25-year bond on the November 3 ballot with no tax rate increase — an existing bond drops off next year, so securing this one now avoids an additional increase. He noted Saugatuck currently has the second-lowest tax levy in Ottawa and Allegan counties, behind Grand Haven. Councilmember Gardner asked what happens if it fails, he confirmed it would mean a tax reduction for the community. They purchased a 50-acre Wiley Road property about a year ago using contingency funds set aside from the 2020 bond. A community rec center has long been part of the tri-community plan and the district's five-year steering plan. This year the district ran two surveys, both of which came back favorably, and the board passed a resolution in July to move to a November ballot.

The bond spreads funding across three sites — the Wiley Road property, Douglas Elementary, and the middle/high school:

- **Community rec center** with indoor basketball and pickleball courts, walking track, fitness center, and meeting spaces, plus outdoor baseball, softball, soccer fields and outdoor pickleball courts. A priority is getting young athletes home sooner, since limited practice fields keep teams stacked late. Membership would be available to community members. On revenue, Neidlinger confirmed they are looking at a tiered fee structure. An indoor pool is "not likely," though he'd love an outdoor pool if funds allow; No conceptual site layout exists yet.
- **Early childhood:** rehabbing the now-empty old central office next to the elementary for three-year-old programming (the district already has four-year-old preschool), which Neidlinger would like to run as a Montessori curriculum to draw young families.
- **Facilities:** middle school auditorium sound and lighting upgrades, safety and security upgrades to new facilities, additional teaching and learning technology, resurfacing the unsafe and repeatedly patched community tennis courts, and the high school parking lot (the one project left over from the 2020 bond).
- **Transportation:** a new bus and possibly a van or two for the aging, inefficient fleet, and relocating the bus lot from Blue Star to the Wiley Road property.

Saugatuck is unusual in already having a community recreation millage (0.25 mill), up again in 2028, bringing in roughly \$250,000–\$700,000 annually. The district holds about \$600,000 in reserves that would serve as startup money for staffing.

Next steps include three open houses, all at 6 p.m.: September 22 at the high school, October 13 at Douglas Elementary, and October 27 at the high school. Board President Amanda Frank asked council for their support and help spreading accurate information, directing anyone with questions or misgivings to the district website or to Neidlinger.

County Commissioner Brad Lubbers:

Mr. Lubbers covered five county topics:

- **Budget** — It's budget season, and the county is looking at a 7.3% increase in both revenues and expenditures, matching its equalization numbers, with only minor tweaks otherwise.
- **Parks shortfall** — Higher staffing, equipment replacement, and infrastructure costs continue to outpace funding. Because parks aren't one of services the county is mandated to provide and the county may need creative or alternative funding.
- **Election equipment** — The Secretary of State has floated requiring all local municipalities to replace election equipment, averaging about \$15,000 each. No official timeline yet, but the county has built in a budget buffer to potentially help municipalities that couldn't float that cost on short notice.
- **Transportation** — Declining federal and state funding leaves roughly a \$420,000 gap to maintain current service levels, even as ridership has grown 10–20% annually. Asked how this interacts with Interurban, he explained the two systems coordinate scheduling, so whichever is already running a given route takes the rider; Councilmember Muncey noted that arrangement started this year with 67 trips in his last monthly report.
- **West Side Park steps** — The north side steps will be removed and replaced in the next four to six weeks under an approved bid of about \$133,000. The current three-foot treated-lumber steps will become five-foot aluminum sections delivered pre-assembled in pods, so the bottom section can be lifted to the parking lot during high water and reinstalled later.
- **Flock cameras** — Relaying a sheriff's office report to counter misinformation: only about four or five county-run cameras exist countywide. They're used for missing people, Amber Alerts, and investigative work — not connected to the DMV and not issuing automatic traffic tickets. Pulling footage in an investigation requires probable cause and a judge's warrant, and data is kept only 30 days.

He closed by promoting Allegan County Fair week and encouraging people to attend, while noting the county doesn't own the property or run the fair.

Public Comment on Agenda Item Only:

Dan Fox commented.

Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of City Council Workshop Minutes – September 9, 2026.
- B. Kayak Launcher at Spear Street Launch.
- C. Plaque for Palette Sign Bike Rack.
- D. Special Event – Havana Club Bike Ride.

Motion by Dean, second by Clark to approve the consent agenda as presented. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Accounts Payable:

Motion by Dean, second by Clark to approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$1,401,294.62. Via roll call, motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing: None.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business:

Proposal for Deer Cull at Oval Beach:

Motion by Stanton, second by Clark to approve the deer cull service agreement with Berg's Animal & Bug Control for a deer cull at Oval Beach at a cost of \$495 per deer, in a total amount not to exceed \$30,000, and

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authorize the City Manager to coordinate implementation of the program, subject to receipt of all required permits and approvals, including approval of the final safety plan by the Allegan County Sheriff's Office. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Proposed Warming Station at Mize Rose Garden:

Motion to approve the proposed Mize Rose Garden warming station and associated site improvements in accordance with the plans approved by the Historic District Commission and to authorize the Convention and Visitors Bureau to continue managing the project and to be solely responsible for all third-party costs associated with the design, permitting, construction, and completion of the project, with no City financial contribution toward such costs; to authorize the City Manager to coordinate final City review and any necessary permits or approvals and authorize acceptance of the completed improvements as a donation to the City, subject to satisfactory completion and final inspection by City staff and/or the City Engineer. Via roll call vote, motion carried 5-2. Yes – Anderson, Clark, Dean, Muncey, Stanton. No – Gardner, Peterson.

Proposal for Conservation Services at Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area:

Motion to approve the ODC Network proposal for the Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area, including trail remediation, habitat restoration- hybrid approach, signage & wayfinding program (design & fabrication), and establishment maintenance, in an amount not to exceed \$78,300, with project costs to be reimbursed from the Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area endowment fund. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Request for AED Placement at Mt. Baldhead Park:

Motion to approve the placement of a publicly accessible AED at the base of Mount Baldhead and the restrooms in partnership with the Saugatuck Douglas Heart Safe Initiative and a partnership agreement with the Saugatuck Douglas Heart Safe Initiative. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports, Boards, Commissions & Committees:

Monthly department activity reports were provided by the City Manager, Zoning Director, City Clerk, DPW Director, Treasurer, Engineer, and police.

Public Comment:

Diana Decker provided comment.

Correspondence: None.

Council Comments:

Councilmember Stanton praised the Mount Baldhead Challenge held the previous weekend as fantastic. She thanked the volunteers who put it on, calling them incredible people who put a lot of work into making it happen, and highlighted how polite the runners were — thanking volunteers' even mid-race. Stationed at the Red Dock parking lot where runners had about a mile left and were visibly tired, she was struck that they were still so gracious. She added that the event brings a buzz to the area and a bump in business, since many participants stay the weekend and visit local bars, restaurants, and shops.

Councilmember Muncey also enjoyed the race, helping at Gary Medler's well-known station. He thanked Tony Schippa and the Heart Safe Initiative for coming out to do CPR training and raise awareness there. He echoed Commissioner Lubbers' plug for the Allegan County Fair, saying he loves an old-fashioned county fair, that it's open until 10:30 through the week, and that he planned to go get an elephant ear that evening. He then noted he and others will start downtown fall decorating. They'll decorate roughly 30–32 downtown corners — as he's done for over 20 years — plus the Palette sign. He invited volunteers to reach out to help.

Councilmember Dean echoed the compliments to staff, Rotary, volunteers, and runners for a very good Mt. Baldhead Challenge. He then called out how much council accomplished during the meeting, noting the results reflected a lot of hard work — in some cases over a year's worth — from committees, staff, and outreach to the private sector, other entities, and the fire department. He emphasized that many of the approved items came at very little or no cost to taxpayers, which he said was something to be proud of, and expressed satisfaction with the council's efficiency.

Mayor Pro Tem Clark echoed both Dean and the mayor, reflecting that it had been a great, busy summer and noting this was likely the council's last meeting before the official start of fall. He wanted to make sure the many people who helped make the summer successful for the town — especially city staff — know they're appreciated.

Councilmember Gardner called it a good meeting with good actions, then shared that he worked at the top of Mount Baldhead, his traditional post as he has for several years. What stood out to him this year was the number of local runners he personally recognized as they passed. He clarified his "no" vote on the warming station. He supports creating welcoming year-round public spaces and thinks a warming station may be a good concept for Saugatuck but does not believe the Mize Memorial Rose Garden is the right location — particularly because the project requires removing the existing wrought iron fence and closable gate. He argued the Rose Garden is not just another open downtown space but a quiet, protected memorial garden as the Mize family intended, and that the fence frames the space, protects the plantings, and signals a place for reflection rather than general gathering or overflow seating. He raised practical concerns about protecting the roses during the busy summer season, noting the gate is closed at night and that without it the garden would be more exposed to vandalism, trampling, litter, and after-hours misuse. He also worried the proposed low masonry seating walls would create another late-night collection point directly outside a very popular bar, bringing noise, trash, and maintenance needs, and said he believed a better spot could have been found.

Councilmember Peterson said she agreed with everything Gardner said, then reflected on what a wonderful place Saugatuck has been to live in. Since Labor Day there have been events such as the Cove Party, the Mt. Baldhead run, and the gallery walk, with bands playing and perfect weather. She joked that if they ever add a crawling event to the race, she'll be there.

Mayor Holly Anderson echoed Dean's point that council got a lot done, reflecting months of work involving nearly everyone in the room. She thanked Mark and Amanda for coming to present the school district's proposal and thanked the larger-than-usual audience for attending in person, saying it's nice to see people in person rather than on Zoom.

Adjournment:

Motion by Muncey, second by Peterson to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously. Mayor Anderson adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

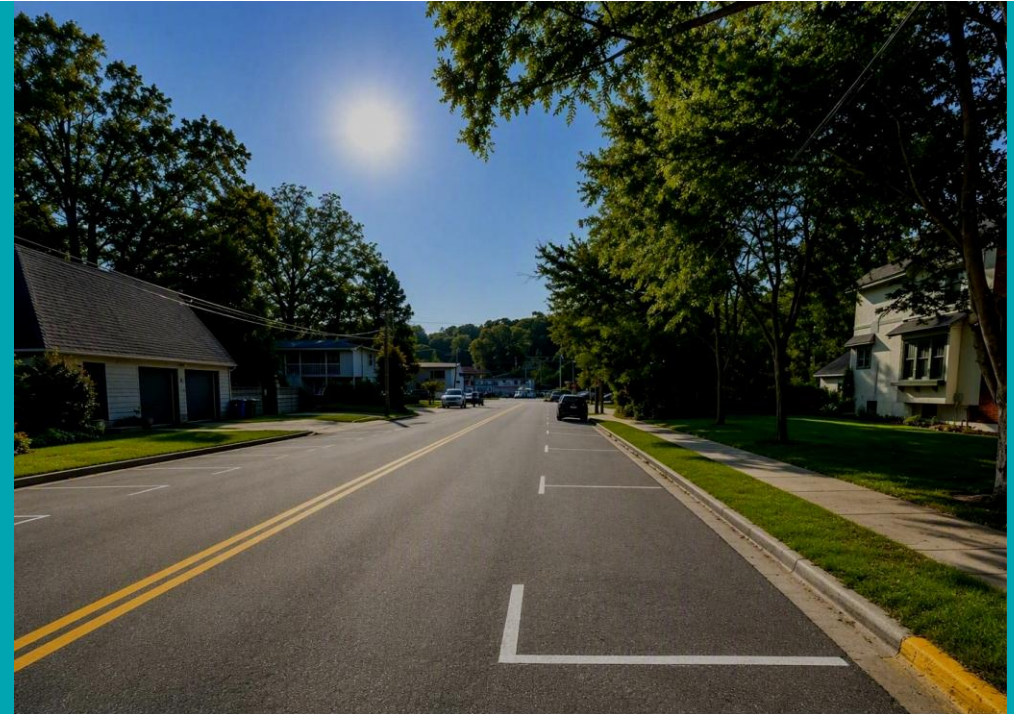
Respectfully Submitted

Jamie Wotlers, City Clerk

City of Saugatuck Parking Study

Executive Summary and Action Plan

Walker Consultants | September 2026



Prepared with the City of Saugatuck Parking Improvements Task Force

In association with:



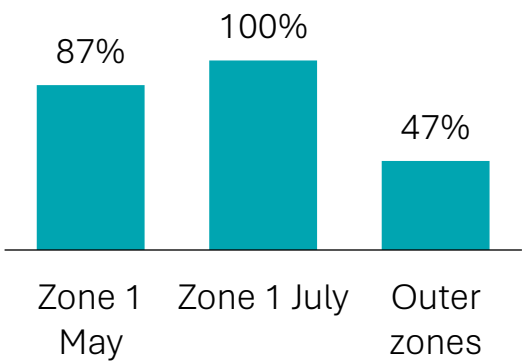
Agenda

- 1 Study Purpose, Scope, and Approach
- 2 What the Data and Input Show
- 3 Supply and Pricing Options
- 4 Management and Access Improvements
- 5 Recommended Strategic Direction
- 6 Implementation and Timeline

Executive Summary at a Glance

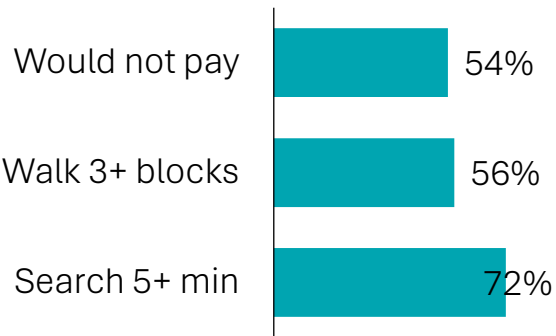
The Core Finding

A downtown management problem, not a citywide supply shortage. Of 1,868 public spaces, peak pressure sits almost entirely in Zone 1.



What We Heard

From 618 survey responses and 10 stakeholder interviews. Enforcement is widely seen as inconsistent.



Top Four Recommendations

1. Launch a seasonal parking ambassador and enforcement program.
2. Expand remote and shared parking with stronger Interurban coordination.
3. Improve signage and wayfinding to better convey public parking locations; enhance website.
4. Address employee parking through partnership, not mandate.

What We Are Not Recommending

No parking structure at roughly \$42,000 per space, and no broad paid parking as a first step. Both remain long-term options only if measured performance shows demand stays severe.



Study Purpose, Scope, and Approach

Guiding Principles Behind the Plan



Optimize First

Use existing assets harder — enforcement, turnover, remote and shared parking, signage — before expanding supply.



Prioritize the Curb

Reserve the most convenient spaces for customers, visitors, accessible users, and quick-turnover activity through managed time limits.



Partner, Don't Mandate

Work with employers on employee parking, expand accessible space count, and reserve the closest curb spaces for customers and accessible users.



Manage by Data

Align solutions with fiscal capacity, preserve Saugatuck's character, and let measured performance drive future decisions.

The through-line: manage what already exists, protect the curb for customers and accessible users, and let measured performance drive any capital decision.

Why This Study

The Challenge

Downtown parking is real, visible, and concentrated in peak visitor periods — May through September, with July and August most constrained, particularly during weekends. Outside peak season, the system generally works.

The Question

Is Saugatuck short on parking, or is it managing the parking it already has ineffectively? The answer shapes whether the City builds new supply or manages demand.

The Answer

A management problem, not a systemwide supply shortage. Walker recommends a phased strategy that uses existing assets harder before any major capital commitment.



Peak-season conditions in the downtown core, May through September.

Study Scope and Methodology

Timeframe

Began late summer 2025, concluding summer 2026. Designed to capture both off-season and peak-season conditions.

Study Area

Four zones: CBD, The Hill, North Residential, and South Residential. Inventory and occupancy covered all four.

Field Work

Inventory and mapping of publicly available parking, including publicly- and privately-owned public parking, posted restrictions, transit stops, bike facilities, loading areas, curbside conditions, and ADA spaces. Parking occupancy studies in the core during off-season and peak-season conditions.

Stakeholder Input

- Eight Parking Improvements Task Force (PITF) meetings guided by nine City of Saugatuck PITF members, each with public comment
- Online questionnaire with 618 respondents
- Ten stakeholder interviews
- Parking study table at Music in the Park, staffed by Walker Consultants and PITF members, to elicit public comments
- Presentation to City Council



- Study Area Zones**
- Zone 1: CBD
 - Zone 2: The Hill
 - Zone 3: North Residential
 - Zone 4: South Residential

Perimeter Boundaries
Kalamazoo River, Lucy, Holland, North, Maple, and Blue Star Highway

Parking inventory exhibit, Fleis & VandenBrink, March 2026.

What the Data and Input Show

Public Parking Supply: The System Is Not Small

1,868 Spaces

Total publicly available spaces citywide — 1,502 on-street and 366 off-street.

561 Time-Limited

On-street spaces in the CBD already carry time limits — a substantial management tool if consistently enforced.

13 On-Street Accessible

On-street accessible spaces, all in the CBD, out of 28 accessible spaces citywide. PROWAG guidance suggests moving toward about 30 in the CBD.

116 Remote

Advertised summer-weekend spaces at the Saugatuck High School remote lot, expanded further in summer 2026.

Public Parking Supply by Zone

Zone	Off-Street	On-Street	Total
Zone 1: CBD	145	761	906
Zone 2: The Hill	197	514	711
Zone 3: North Residential	0	128	128
Zone 4: South Residential	24	99	123
Total	366	1,502	1,868

Source: Fleis & VandenBrink, Parking Supply Summary, March 13, 2026.

The Four Study Zones

Zone 2: The Hill — street boundaries

North: Spear Street

South: Allegan Street

West: Griffith Street



Approximate walk from the CBD core (estimates): Zone 2 about 4–6 min • Zone 3 about 6–8 min • Zone 4 about 8–10 min

May 2026 Occupancy: Constrained Before Summer

Zone 1 — CBD

788 of 906 spaces occupied at the 5:00 p.m. peak, about 87 percent — above the 85 percent practical-capacity threshold. On-street 86 percent; off-street 92 percent.

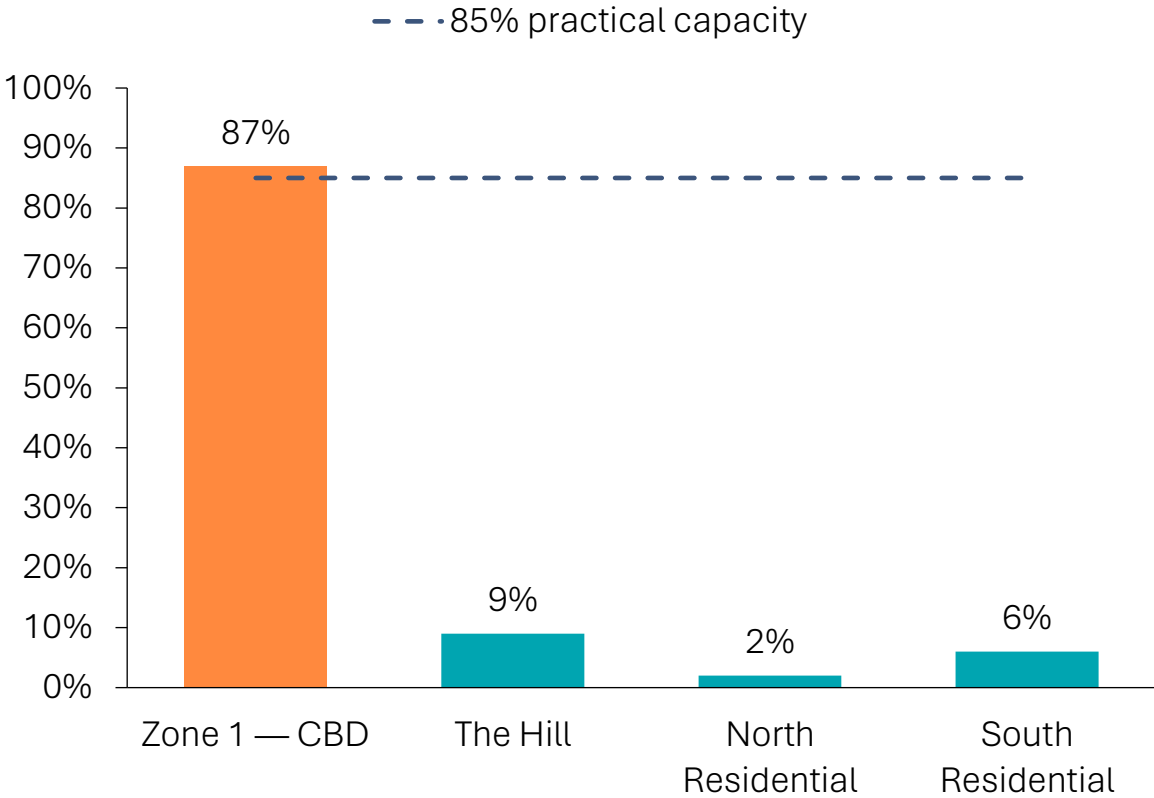
Surrounding Zones

The Hill peaked near 9 percent, North Residential 2 percent, South Residential 6 percent — substantial unused capacity within walking distance.

What It Means

A concentrated downtown management problem, not a citywide shortage. Direct demand rather than simply adding supply.

Peak occupancy by zone — Saturday, May 2026, 5:00 p.m.



Source: Walker Consultants field observations, May 2026.

July 2026 Occupancy: Peak-Season Reality

Wednesday, July 15

Zone 1 reached 97 percent occupancy, leaving about 27 spaces available at 6:00 p.m. across the entire Central Business District.

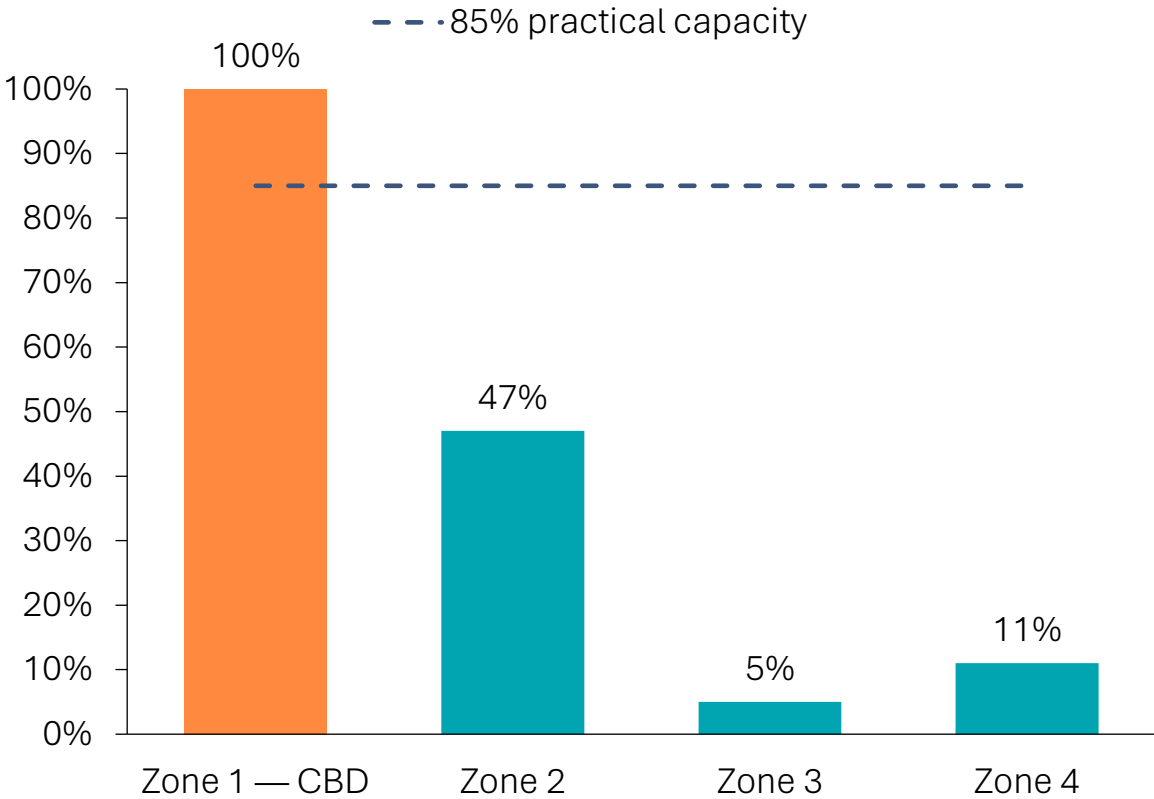
Saturday, July 18

Zone 1 reached 100 percent occupancy — no available CBD spaces at 6:00 p.m.

Still Not Systemwide

On July 18, Zone 2 peaked at 47 percent, Zone 3 at 5 percent, and Zone 4 at 11 percent. Capacity existed; it was simply not where visitors were looking.

Peak occupancy by zone — Saturday, July 18, 6:00 p.m.

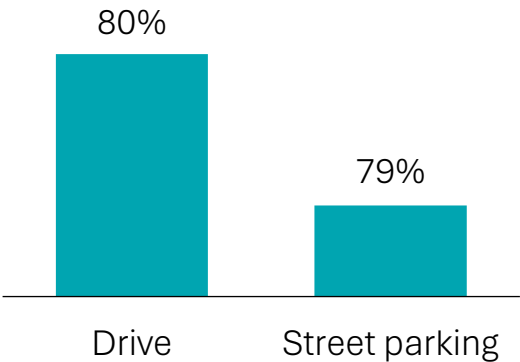


Source: Walker Consultants field observations, July 2026.

Survey Results: 618 Responses

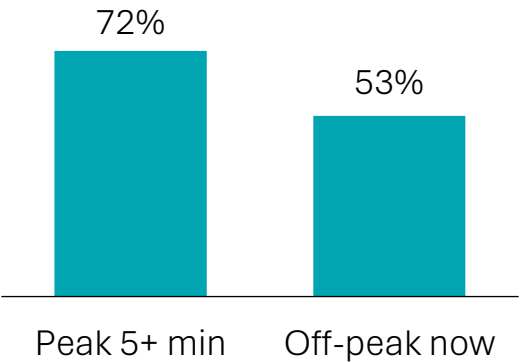
How People Arrive

More than 80 percent drive downtown in a personal vehicle and nearly 79 percent use street parking.



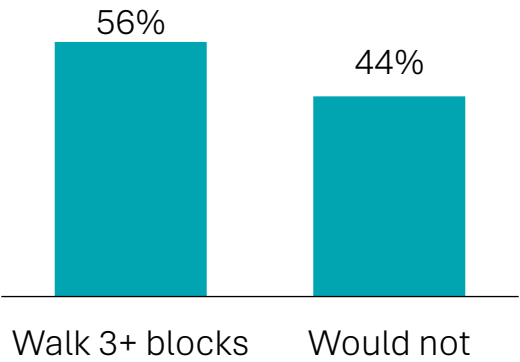
Search Time

About 72 percent spend more than five minutes finding parking in peak season; in the off-season, 53 percent find parking immediately.



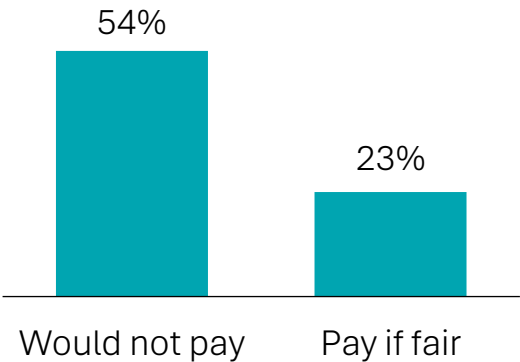
Willingness to Walk

56 percent would walk three or more blocks in peak season if remote options are clear, safe, and convenient.



Paid Parking

About 54 percent would not pay to park; roughly 23 percent would pay if the price were reasonable.



Stakeholder Feedback: 10 Interviews

Points of Agreement

Enforcement is minimal or inconsistent, posted time limits lose credibility, and signage, maps, and website information need real improvement.

Shared Assets

Remote parking and the Interurban are valued, but need clearer promotion, more predictable service, and stronger coordination with additional lots.

No Consensus on Building

Stakeholders did not coalesce around a garage, citing cost, seasonal use, aesthetics, site availability, and effects on Saugatuck's character.

Who We Heard From

The ten interviews represented lodging, marina, and visitor-serving operators, the school district, and civic and arts organizations. The Parking Improvements Task Force brought together city officials, city staff, Interurban Transit, downtown business representatives, and residents.



Supply and Pricing Options

Parking Structure: Not Recommended Now

Capital Cost and Ongoing Burden

Upfront Capital Cost: Roughly \$42,000 per space — about \$8.4 million for 200 spaces and \$12.6 million for 300.

Ongoing Burden: A 300-space facility could consume 15 to 20 percent of the City's annual operating budget.

Fit With Demand

A structure concentrates spaces in one location for a limited number of annual peak days. Keep it as a long-term option only if conditions change materially.

Other Concerns

Negative impact on downtown aesthetics and small-town feel.



Illustrative example: three-level parking deck, Rochester Hills, Michigan.

Paid Parking: A Possible Future Tool, Not Now

What It Could Do

Improve turnover, generate revenue, provide better data, and reduce reliance on punitive enforcement.

What It Raises

Political, customer-service, equity, technology, maintenance, and streetscape concerns — with 54 percent of respondents unwilling to pay.

Peer Communities: On-Street Parking in Michigan Resort Towns

Free On-Street Parking (11)

- Saugatuck
- New Buffalo
- South Haven
- Muskegon
- Holland
- Grand Haven
- Ludington
- Manistee
- Frankfort
- Elk Rapids
- Mackinaw City

Paid On-Street Parking (4)

- St. Joseph
- Charlevoix
- Petoskey
- Traverse City

Takeaway: paid on-street parking is the exception among comparable Michigan resort towns, and where it exists, it is often seasonal.

Street Changes and Future Growth

Butler Street

One-way conversion with angled parking could add roughly 63 spaces between Lucy and Culver Streets.



Water and Lucy

Water Street one-way and parallel-to-angled conversions could add about 22 spaces; Lucy Street about 6.



Elizabeth Street

About 20 remote-support spaces near the school campus, pending engineering review.



Future Demand

Long-term growth of roughly 100 to 150 spaces, with the lower end most realistic — manageable without major new supply.



Note: These figures are conceptual. They are based on concept-level studies rather than detailed field surveys or design engineering, and final results are likely to vary.

Management and Access Improvements

Wayfinding and Signage: A Coordinated System

Gateways and Direction

Updated gateway and directional signs at the Blue Star Highway and Lake Street entry, and at Holland, North, and Riverside, plus a downtown vehicular and pedestrian sign system.



Parking Identity

Standardized names for every public off-street facility, identification signs at each entrance, on-street signs consolidated to no more than two per pole, and permanent shared-parking signs at the high school.



Maps and Online

Map kiosks at every pedestrian exit point, more and better social district signs, and a dedicated City parking webpage with an interactive map of every facility.

A Coordinated Sign Family

A consistent hierarchy of vehicular, pedestrian, and kiosk signs, paired with a simple color-coded public parking map, directs visitors to the open supply outside the core.

Shared Parking and the Interurban

Private Lot Partners

Pursue agreements with owners of underused lots: Dykstra Funeral Home, Riverside Church, the DPW property, Douglas Elementary, and St. Peter’s Catholic Church.

Shared Parking Agreements

Use one standard framework covering days and hours of public use, intended users, owner priority, blackout periods, insurance, maintenance, signage, compensation, liability, and termination.

Interurban Expansion

Extend on-demand shuttle service to each new remote lot with predictable hours, published schedules, and coordinated signage.

Progress in Summer 2026

During this study the Interurban expanded remote parking to the Saugatuck Drug Store, Beery Field, and Douglas Elementary School lots, with more buses and service hours — building on the high school lot and its 116 summer-weekend spaces.

Recommendation: keep expanding the program and anchor a voluntary employee parking program with downtown employers.



Source: Walker Consultants, Saugatuck Remote Parking, The Interurban, and Shared Parking Agreements, 2026.

Parking Ambassadors: Enforcement as Hospitality

Ambassador Program

A visible, uniformed team that gives directions, explains where open parking is, and enforces posted limits. Service first, citation last.

Enforcing Three Hours

Posted limits only work if they are checked. Consistent enforcement turns 561 time-limited CBD spaces into real turnover instead of all-day storage.

Employees Need an Option First

Tighter enforcement without an alternative simply penalizes downtown workers. Remote and shared lots must be in place before ticketing tightens.

Cost and Benefit: Ambassadors Versus a Structure

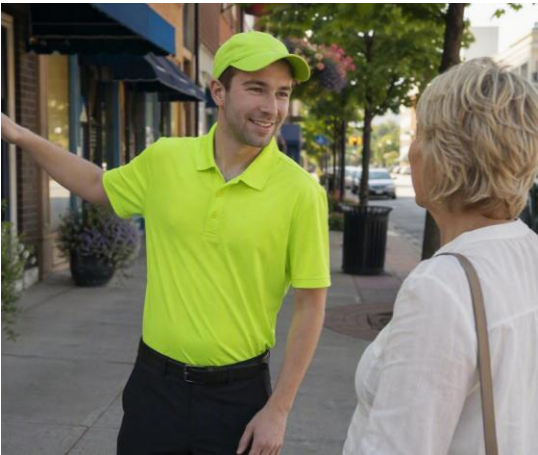
Ambassador program

Two seasonal positions run roughly \$85,000 a year fully loaded. Typical Michigan parking ambassador pay is \$35,000 to \$40,000 per position.

Parking structure

About \$42,000 per space, or \$8.4 million for 200 spaces before land, plus annual operations. The same capital would fund ambassadors for decades.

Michigan peers: Traverse City calls its enforcement staff parking ambassadors; East Lansing hires parking ambassadors; Grand Rapids runs a downtown ambassador team seven days a week; Holland pairs free customer parking with employee parking guidance.



Employee Parking: Partnership, Not Mandate

The Pattern

Many downtown businesses have no dedicated employee parking, so employees park wherever space exists — Butler, Water, the side streets, the hill, church lots, and the high school lot.

The Scale

Peak-season shifts at individual businesses range from 10 to 15 employees up to 50 during the day and 75 at night, consuming prime customer spaces for the whole shift.

Why Not a Mandate

Stakeholders repeatedly said the high school lot is unworkable or goes unused, citing shuttle hours, lighting, and late-night safety. A rule without a workable alternative just moves the problem to nearby streets.

A Voluntary Program, Piloted First

Work with downtown employers to document peak-season staffing, where employees park today, shift times, loading needs, and safety concerns. Match those needs to remote and shared lots with Interurban service that actually covers shift ends.

Launch a small pilot with willing employers, backed by real incentives — free or discounted permits, guaranteed remote spaces, extended shuttle hours, and better lighting — and measure how many prime spaces it frees before scaling.

Source: Employee parking survey of the downtown business community, stakeholder engagement, and remote parking analysis. Walker Consultants with Fleis & VandenBrink and the Parking Improvements Task Force, 2026.

Accessible Parking: Expanding On-Street Supply

Where We Stand

The City has 28 accessible spaces for public use, and only 13 of them are on-street — all within the CBD. Accessible spaces make up just 1.5 percent of the total supply, and Zones 3 and 4 have none.

What the Standard Expects

Federal accessibility guidance for public rights-of-way suggests accessible spaces on each block perimeter, scaled to the number of spaces provided, sited on an accessible route with a compliant access aisle and curb ramp.

What We Recommend

Add on-street accessible spaces on the block faces closest to downtown destinations, extend coverage beyond the CBD to The Hill and the residential zones, and reserve the most convenient locations rather than the leftover ones.

The Near-Term Opportunity

Every planned restriping, resurfacing, or street-conversion project is the lowest-cost chance to add accessible on-street spaces. Pair each new space with a compliant access aisle, a connected curb ramp, and clear signage so the space is usable, not just striped.

Track the count by zone so accessible supply grows with the system rather than staying concentrated downtown.

Source: Fleis & VandenBrink, Parking Supply Summary, March 13, 2026.



What a Public Parking Space Is Worth

The Approach

Divide the estimated annual value of downtown goods and services by the public parking supply across the four zones. This is not what users pay for parking, which is commonly subsidized; cost is a floor, not full public value.

The Illustrative Math

An illustrative \$200 million in annual downtown sales across 1,883 public spaces yields about \$106,000 in gross annual value per space. A 10 to 15 percent business margin puts the adjusted value at roughly \$10,600 to \$15,900 per space a year.

What It Implies

The current \$200 monthly fee is about \$2,400 per space a year — roughly a fifth to a quarter of that adjusted value. Across 13 spaces the gap is on the order of \$105,000 to \$175,000 a year.

Reading the Numbers

These figures are illustrative, built on an assumed downtown sales value — a way to frame the magnitude of the public interest in a curb space, not an appraisal. The \$200 million assumption and the margin range should be tested against local sales data before any fee is set.

Used as a policy input, the analysis supports pricing outdoor dining use closer to the value of the space it displaces, rather than at a flat rate set to recover the cost of providing parking.

Source: Walker Consultants, Restaurant Use of On-Street Parking — parking-space value analysis, using illustrative assumptions of \$200 million in annual downtown goods and services and 1,883 public spaces.

Recommended Strategic Direction

Recommendations 1–6

- 1 No parking structure at this time
- 2 No broad paid parking as a first step
- 3 Seasonal ambassador and enforcement
- 4 Employee parking by partnership
- 5 Expanded remote and shared parking
- 6 Stronger Interurban and shuttle coordination

Recommendations 7–11

- 7 Improved signage and wayfinding
- 8 Add accessible on-street CBD parking spaces
- 9 Deliberate management of curb space
- 10 Street conversions only after technical review
- 11 Broader mobility options in the strategy

Implementation and Timeline

Implementation Roadmap and Immediate Next Steps

Phase 1 — Late 2026 to Spring 2027

Confirm policy direction, assign responsibilities, and begin outreach.

Phase 2 — Summer to Fall 2027

Design programs, negotiate partners, and scope street conversions.

Phase 3 — Winter to Spring 2028

Finalize agreements, staffing, signage, and ADA improvements.

Phase 4 — May to September 2028

Launch the ambassador program and promote remote parking through peak season.

Phase 5 — September to November 2028

Report post-season performance against baseline and adjust.

Phase 6 — 2028 and Beyond

Refine programs, expand ADA parking, and revisit paid parking only if needed.

Immediate Next Steps

1. Confirm policy direction with Council

2. Create a peak-season implementation work plan

3. Develop the parking ambassador program
4. Prepare communications and wayfinding package

5. Begin remote and employee parking outreach

6. Establish metrics and post-season reporting

Measuring Performance

Occupancy and Turnover

Peak occupancy by zone and core block, duration of stay, overstay, and visitor search time.

Enforcement

Warnings, citations, repeat violations, collections, customer-service contacts, and complaints.

Remote and Employee

Remote lot use, spaces under shared agreement, employee participation, Interurban ridership, and shuttle wait times.

Policy Triggers

Occupancy persistently above 85 percent, continued long-duration use of prime spaces, or weak remote and shuttle use.

Reporting cadence: report to Council after each peak season. If occupancy stays above 85 percent following two full seasons of active management, revisit supply and pricing options.

Acknowledgments

This plan is the product of a year of community effort. Walker Consultants thanks:

Parking Improvements Task Force — volunteer members, eight working meetings

City of Saugatuck Staff — field support, data, and coordination

Fleis & VandenBrink — parking inventory and local field data

Downtown Business Community — employee parking survey participants

618 Survey Respondents — residents, employees, and visitors

Ten Stakeholder Interviewees — owners, institutions, and community leaders

Citizen Participants — public comments at PITF meetings and the parking study table at Music in the Park



Questions and Discussion



Restaurant Use of On-Street Spaces

What Is in Place Today

Thirteen on-street public spaces are used for restaurant outdoor dining, under special land use approval, Historic District Commission approval, and a revocable license. The City may reclaim them for parking or other public purposes.

What the City Charges

Restaurants pay \$200 per space per month — about \$2,400 per space a year, or roughly \$31,200 across all 13. That fee reflects the cost of providing parking, not the public value of high-turnover curb access in the busiest block faces of the CBD.

Where Opinion Divides

The task force and the public do not agree: end the practice, charge significantly more, or cap the number of spaces used. The pandemic rationale has passed, and the mode-shift case made in larger cities is weaker here.

Where This Lands

Outdoor dining adds seating capacity, street activity, and peak-season revenue. It also removes high-demand curb from public use, benefits some businesses more than others, and raises loading, accessibility, safety, and enforcement concerns. The question is not authority — the City already has it — but price and structure.

Recommendation: discontinue the practice unless participating restaurants reimburse the City at a level that reasonably reflects the economic value of the occupied spaces — with a district-wide cap, consistent standards, and continued revocability. At an illustrative margin-adjusted value of \$10,600 to \$15,900 per space per year, each space is worth roughly four to seven times the \$2,400 a year restaurants now pay for it.

Source: Walker Consultants, Restaurant Use of On-Street Parking; City of Saugatuck zoning § 154.092(O)(2) and Chapter 152 Historic District regulations; City fee schedule and license agreements.





City Council Agenda Item Report

FROM: Ryan Cummins, City Manager

MEETING DATE: September 23, 2026

SUBJECT: Short Term Rental Licensing Ordinance Amendment and Resolution Updating Penalty Fee for Late Renewal Applications

DESCRIPTION:

At the July 8 workshop, City Council heard a request from the property owner of 534 St. Joseph and his rental agent to consider amending the Short-Term Rental (STR) Ordinance to allow for late renewal applications past the expiration date of a STR license.

Previous Amendments

City Council has made previous amendments to the STR ordinance to allow for late applications, including an amendment in 2025 to allow for late applications up to 5 calendar days past the renewal deadline, and an amendment earlier this year to provide “amnesty” to properties that missed this deadline but applied prior to their license expiring. Recent amendments also included a provision that allowed the Zoning Administrator to process late applications if there are extraordinary circumstances, but extraordinary circumstances exclude situations where there is inaction or negligence on the part of the owner or STR agent. During the last set of STR Ordinance amendments, the Council was advised that the changes did not apply to those who submitted their STR renewal applications after the expiration of their license.

Workshop Discussion

During the Council’s workshop, the Council heard and discussed various ways to address late renewal applications. While the specific policy intent wasn’t as clear, the consensus of Council was for staff and legal Council to draft an ordinance amendment that would allow for late renewal applications up to 30 days past expiration of a license. In discussing the proposed amendment at this workshop, the Council is encouraged to consider and clarify the policy intent for this change (such as its broader objective in extending the renewal deadline grace

period, or a shortcoming of the existing ordinance language that this amendment is intended to resolve).

Draft Amendment

The City Attorney has drafted the attached amendment to the City's Short-Term Rental Ordinance. The amendment:

- Changes the existing 5-day grace period (which runs from the date the renewal application is due) to a 60-day grace period. As renewals are due 30 days before expiration, a 60-day grace period gets us to a deadline of 30 days after expiration, which is noted in the amendment for clarity.
- Adds language clarifying that this amendment will apply retroactively and enable the City to process and approve late renewal applications that were submitted within the grace period, and removes the language we added the last time to subsection 99.58(B)(a) as it is now meaningless.

Penalty Fee for Late Applications

The current penalty fee for a late renewal application submitted during the existing five-day grace period is \$525. Some Council Members have expressed an interest in imposing more substantial penalties for missed renewal deadlines, particularly given the ordinance's requirement that STR properties be inspected annually to help protect the health, safety, and welfare of occupants and the public.

Because the current penalty is equivalent to approximately \$100 per day the application is late, staff recommends replacing the flat \$525 penalty with a fee of \$100 for each calendar day the application is late. This approach aligns with the proposed ordinance amendment by scaling the penalty based on the length of the delay while maintaining a comparable daily penalty rate. In addition, establishing the penalty on a per-day basis helps ensure that it remains a meaningful deterrent to noncompliance and encourages timely renewal applications in accordance with the ordinance.

Caution Against Continuous Amendments

As Council considers this amendment, staff recommends also considering the broader policy implications of making repeated amendments to the late renewal provisions of the STR Ordinance.

The STR Ordinance was developed following a task force process, public input, studies, and public hearings, and includes detailed legislative findings supporting the regulation of short-term rentals. Among other things, the ordinance recognizes that short-term rentals are commercial in nature, that the proliferation of short-term rentals can adversely affect residential neighborhoods, and that the R-1 districts are particularly susceptible to those impacts. To address these concerns, the ordinance establishes a maximum number of STR

licenses within the R-1 districts and states that these limits are intended to be achieved prospectively through attrition as licenses expire, are terminated, or become void.

The City has previously amended the ordinance to provide additional opportunities for late renewal applications, including extending filing deadlines and authorizing administrative approval of delayed filings in limited extraordinary circumstances. While Council may determine that additional flexibility is appropriate, repeated amendments that create new exceptions to renewal requirements may lessen the effectiveness of the licensing framework and the ordinance's long-term policy objectives.

Additionally, frequent amendments to the ordinance can create confusion for property owners, rental agents, and the public regarding the applicable requirements and deadlines. A regulatory framework that is amended repeatedly can make compliance more difficult, reduce the predictability of enforcement, and create expectations that future deadlines or requirements may likewise be modified. Stable and consistently applied regulations promote fairness, transparency, and public confidence in the City's administration of the ordinance.

More broadly, ordinance amendments are generally most effective when they are adopted to advance policy objectives that apply consistently across similarly situated properties, rather than to address the circumstances of a particular property or applicant. As Council evaluates this proposed amendment, it may wish to consider whether the change represents a long-term policy direction for the City or a response to an individual circumstance, and whether this change will fully resolve the underlying issues that have prompted the recent string of amendments to the ordinance's renewal requirements.

LEGAL REVIEW:

Legal prepared the ordinance amendment and will be at your meeting for any questions.

SAMPLE MOTION:

Workshop item at this time.

CITY OF SAUGATUCK
ALLEGAN COUNTY, MICHIGAN

SHORT-TERM RENTAL LICENSING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

ORDINANCE NO. _____

At a meeting of the City Council of the City of Saugatuck, Allegan County, Michigan, held at the City of Saugatuck Hall on _____, 2026 at _____ p.m., City Council Member _____ moved to adopt the following ordinance, which motion was seconded by City Council Member _____.

An ordinance to amend the City of Saugatuck's Short-Term Rental Licensing Ordinance, Ordinance No. 240229-B, as amended, to update provisions regarding the renewal of STR licenses to provide a grace period in which the renewal applications may be submitted after expiration, to provide some flexibility to license holders in the event that pertinent deadlines are missed while ensuring that STRs are still regularly inspected and approved, in order to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

CITY OF SAUGATUCK, ALLEGAN COUNTY, ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT TO ORDINANCE NO. 240299-B, SECTION 99.58: City of Saugatuck Ordinance No. 240229-B, Section 99.58, shall be amended to read as follows:

§99.58 DURATION OF LICENSE; RENEWAL.

- (A) Except as otherwise provided herein, a license issued under this chapter shall remain in effect for a period of one (1) year from the date it was issued unless it is suspended or revoked by the City.
- (B) The license holder or local agent may apply for a renewed license by submitting a renewal application to the enforcing officer no sooner than sixty (60) days prior and no later than thirty (30) days prior to the date that the license is set to expire, along with the license renewal fee established by the City's fee schedule. Renewal applications may be submitted no later than sixty (60) calendar days after this deadline (meaning up to thirty (30) calendar days after the day the license expires), subject to a late fee established by resolution of the City Council. This grace period shall apply retroactively to late renewal applications that have been submitted to the City within the allotted grace period and shall allow the processing and approval of the same. Renewal applications submitted after this sixty (60) calendar day grace period by any amount of time shall be deemed untimely and shall not be processed by the City, and the short-term rental license shall be deemed expired.

- (C) All information submitted with the prior application(s) shall be deemed submitted with the application for renewal, except that each year a new completed and signed fire safety checklist must be submitted, a new fire inspection must be conducted, and an approved fire inspection certification must be issued before a license can be renewed. In addition, short-term rentals owned by corporate entities or trusts must submit updated documentation each year showing that the interest, composition, membership, or ownership in said corporation or trust has not changed so as to constitute a transfer as defined in this chapter. Aside from the renewed fire safety checklist, fire inspection, and updated ownership documentation, the license holder or local agent shall only be required to submit new information with the application for renewal when that application information has changed since the last application was filed with the City.
- (D) A renewed license for a short-term rental shall be issued when all of the standards and regulations of this chapter are met. Once issued, a renewed license for a short-term rental shall take effect on the same day as the expiration of the prior license, such that a short-term rental license will retain the same expiration date from year-to-year.
- (E) If the short-term rental premises does not meet all the requirements of this chapter at the time of renewal, the City shall promptly notify the license holder. The license holder shall have thirty (30) calendar days from the date the notice of a deficiency was sent to cure any deficiencies. If the license holder cannot demonstrate full compliance with this chapter at the end of the cure period, the short-term rental license will not be renewed and will be deemed expired.

SECTION 2. SEVERABILITY: Should a court of competent jurisdiction find any provision, clause, or portion of this ordinance amendment to be invalid or unconstitutional, the balance or remainder of this ordinance amendment shall remain valid and in full force and effect and shall be deemed “severable” from the portion, clause, or provision deemed to be invalid or unconstitutional by the court.

SECTION 3. REPEAL: All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE: This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon the date of this Ordinance’s publication as required by law.

YEAS: _____

NAYS: _____

ABSENT/ABSTAIN: _____

ORDINANCE DECLARED ADOPTED.

Holly Anderson
City of Saugatuck, Mayor

DRAFT

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that:

1. The above is a true copy of an ordinance adopted by the City of Saugatuck at a duly scheduled and noticed meeting of the City Council held on _____, _____ 2026, pursuant to the required statutory procedures.
2. A summary of the above ordinance was duly published in the _____ newspaper, a newspaper that circulates within the City of Saugatuck, on _____, 2026.
3. Within 1 week after such publication, I recorded the above ordinance in a book of ordinances kept by me for that purpose, including the date of passage of the ordinance, the names of the members of the City Council voting, and how each member voted.
4. I filed an attested copy of the above ordinance with the Allegan County Clerk on _____, 2026.

ATTESTED:

Jamie Wolters
City of Saugatuck, Clerk

**CITY OF SAUGATUCK
ALLEGAN COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

NOTICE OF ADOPTION

SHORT-TERM RENTAL LICENSING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

ORDINANCE NO. ____

Please take notice that on _____, 2026, the City Council of City of Saugatuck adopted Ordinance No. ____, which, among other things, amends the City of Saugatuck's Short-Term Rental Licensing Ordinance, Ordinance No. 240229-B, to update provisions regarding the renewal of STR licenses to provide a grace period in which the renewal applications may be submitted after expiration. Copies of the ordinance may be obtained from Jamie Wolters, City of Saugatuck Clerk, at 102 Butler Street, P.O. Box 86, Saugatuck, Michigan 49453, during regular business hours.

The Amendment to Ordinance No. 240299-B has the following sections, which are summarized below: Section 1: Amendment Section 99.58; Section 2: Severability; Section 3: Repeal; and Section 4: Effective Date.

Jamie Wolters
City of Saugatuck, Clerk
(269) 857-2603
JWolters@saugatuckcity.com

Publication Date: _____, 2026

**CITY OF SAUGATUCK
COUNTY OF ALLEGAN
STATE OF MICHIGAN**

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION APPROVING A CHANGE IN THE CITY'S SCHEDULE OF FEES

Council Member _____, offered the following resolution and moved for its adoption, seconded by Council Member _____:

WHEREAS, the City of Saugatuck, acting through the City Council, is authorized by various ordinances and state law to set fees for the provision of permits, licenses, etc.; and

WHEREAS, the City Council adopts and establishes such fees from time to time by resolution; and

WHEREAS, based on matters of record presented to it, the City Council is of the opinion that certain City-imposed fees and charges need to be approved and incorporated into the City's Schedule of Fees.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED THAT:

1. The City Council hereby approves a change in the City's adopted Schedule of Fees as follows:

Business Licenses	Current Fee	New Fee
Short-Term Rental – Late Application Penalty Fee	\$525	\$100 for each calendar day the application is late.

2. The City Manager and City Clerk are authorized to take all actions necessary to effectuate the terms of the Resolution including, without limitation, modifying the City's adopted Schedule of Fees maintained at City Hall.

3. All resolutions and parts of resolutions that conflict with the provisions of this Resolution are rescinded.

YEAS: Council Members: _____

NAYS: Council Members: _____

ABSTAIN: Council Members: _____

ABSENT: Council Members: _____

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2026

CITY OF SAUGATUCK

BY: _____
Holly Anderson, Mayor

BY: _____
Jamie Wolters, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I, Jamie Wolters, the duly appointed clerk of the City of Saugatuck do hereby certify the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the City Council at a regular meeting held _____, 2026.

Signed: _____
Jamie Wolters, City Clerk



To: City of Saugatuck, City Council
From: Grayson Moore, Director of Planning & Zoning
Meeting Date: September 23, 2026
RE: Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment, PC Recommendation - Approval

City Commissioners,

At its September 17, 2026 meeting, the Planning Commission reviewed a text amendment proposed and presented by Chris Khorey (McKenna) on behalf of the Wickwood Inn to allow for a new use *Enhanced Bed & Breakfast* within the R-4 City Center Transitional District (CER). The following motion was made:

Motion by Marineau, supported by Bagierek to move to recommend approval of the proposed zoning text amendment to establish “Enhanced Bed and Breakfast” as a new lodging use permitted in the R-4 Residential Transitional Zoning District, together with the associated regulations for such use, as presented. Motion carried 5-0.

The Planning Commission spent several months working through the proposed text amendment to ensure that the intent of the CER District was preserved while allowing for change as expected over time. The applicant has worked closely with staff throughout the process to draft an amendment with conditions acceptable to City staff, the Planning Commission, and their own business.

The proposed text amendment would allow for a previously approved Bed & Breakfast establishment to apply for a Special Land Use permit to operate as an Enhanced Bed & Breakfast under specific regulations including the following which are in addition to the existing Bed & Breakfast regulations;

1. Provide one (1) on-site parking space per sleeping unit and one (1) space for the resident manager.

2. Enhanced Bed and Breakfasts shall be limited to no more than one guest unit per 1,500 square feet of lot area, inclusive of Accessory Guest Units.
3. A Enhanced Bed and Breakfast may contain an accessory restaurant. The seating capacity of the restaurant, including both indoor and outdoor seating, shall not exceed two times the number of guest rooms. The restaurant shall not operate after 10 PM, and shall not be open to anyone other than overnight guests at the Enhanced Bed and Breakfast before 8 AM.
4. A Enhanced Bed and Breakfast may contain an accessory event facility. For any event at the facility, the person named in the reservation for the event space must be an overnight guest, but the event itself may include non-guests. The maximum number of guests at an event shall not exceed three times the number of guest rooms. Events shall be conducted in such a manner as to maintain compliance at all times with Ordinance 94.
5. A lodging operation that was previously approved as a Bed and Breakfast may receive Special Use Approval to operated as an Enhanced Bed and Breakfast, provided the requirements of this section are met. In approving the Special Use, the Planning Commission may determine that the existing available parking onsite and in the vicinity is sufficient for the Enhanced Bed and Breakfast, even if the minimum requirement from Section 154.135 is not met on-site.

Suggested Motions:

Option 1 – Recommended Motion – Text Amendment Approval

Motion to approve Ordinance NO._____ to establish “Enhanced Bed and Breakfast” as a new lodging use permitted in the R-4 Residential Transitional Zoning District, together with the associated regulations for such use, as presented.

Option 2 – Table Text Amendment

Motion to table the proposed zoning text amendment to establish “Enhanced Bed and Breakfast” as a new lodging use permitted in the R-4 Residential Transitional Zoning District, together with the associated regulations for such use, as presented to allow the applicant time to address the following:

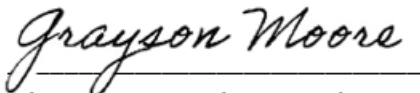
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Option 3 – Deny Text Amendment

Motion to deny the proposed zoning text amendment to establish “Enhanced Bed and Breakfast” as a new lodging use permitted in the R-4 Residential Transitional Zoning District, together with the associated regulations for such use, as presented for the following reasons:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Respectfully submitted,



Director of Planning & Zoning

**CITY OF SAUGATUCK
ALLEGAN COUNTY, MICHIGAN
ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT
ORDINANCE NO. _____**

At a meeting of the City Council of the City of Saugatuck, Allegan County, Michigan, held at the City of Saugatuck Hall on _____, 2026, at _____ p.m., City Council Member _____ moved to adopt the following ordinance, which motion was seconded by City Council Member _____.

An ordinance to amend the City of Saugatuck's Zoning Ordinance to create a new definition for Enhanced Bed and Breakfast and to regulate Enhanced Bed and Breakfasts to promote the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents and visitors of the City of Saugatuck.

CITY OF SAUGATUCK, ALLEGAN COUNTY, ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT TO ZONING ORDINANCE, SECTION 154.005: The City of Saugatuck Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.005 is amended to add the definition of “Bed and Breakfast, Enhanced,” which shall read as follows. The remainder of section 154.005 shall remain the same unless expressly amended herein:

Bed and Breakfast, Enhanced: A lodging use, consisting of one or more buildings on the same lot, which has sleeping rooms available for rent by transient people on a short-term basis. An Enhanced Bed and Breakfast shall include a residential dwelling unit, to be occupied on a long-term residential basis by the property owner or an on-site resident manager and their household. An Enhanced Bed and Breakfast may contain amenities, including, but not limited to swimming pool, game room, exercise facilities, or similar amenities, which are for the exclusive use of guests. An Enhanced Bed and Breakfast may also contain restaurant and/or event facilities, which shall be operated primarily, though not necessarily exclusively, for the benefit of the overnight guests. An Enhanced Bed and Breakfast shall not be considered or construed to be a Hotel (Inn), motel, multiple-family dwelling, or similar facility. An Enhanced Bed and Breakfast shall also be considered distinct from a Bed and Breakfast, subject to separate approval and regulations.

SECTION 2. AMENDMENT TO ZONING ORDINANCE, SECTION 154.025(B): The City of Saugatuck Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.025(C) is amended to add Section 154.025(B)(7), which shall read as follows. The remainder of section 154.025(C) shall remain the same unless expressly amended herein:

(7) Enhanced Bed and Breakfasts on lots abutting a C-1 or C-2 Zoning District.

SECTION 3. AMENDMENT TO ZONING ORDINANCE, SECTION 154.135: The City of Saugatuck Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.135 is amended to add the following row pertaining to “Enhanced Bed and Breakfasts” to the table of off-street parking requirements. The remainder of section 154.135, including the remainder of the table, shall remain the same unless expressly amended herein.

Enhanced Bed and Breakfasts	1.0	Persleeping unit
	1.0	For the resident ranager

SECTION 4. AMENDMENT TO ZONING ORDINANCE, SECTION 154.022: The City of Saugatuck Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.022 is amended to add Section 154.022(S), which shall read as follows. The remainder of section 154.022 shall remain the same unless expressly amended herein:

(S) *Enhanced Bed and Breakfasts*. All Enhanced Bed and Breakfasts shall meet the following criteria:

- (1) Rooms utilized for guest sleeping shall not exceed two occupants per room not including children under the age of 12. Each room for guest sleeping shall contain at least 100 net square feet of room size.
- (2) The Enhanced Bed and Breakfast facility and operation shall meet all applicable building, health and related safety codes. All sleeping rooms shall contain a separate smoke detector in proper working order. Each floor of the dwelling shall contain a fire extinguisher in proper working order in conformance with all applicable fire codes.
- (3) No separate or individual cooking facilities shall be provided for the use of guests, including existing cooking facilities.
- (4) Enhanced Bed and Breakfasts shall be subject to the applicable sign regulations in Section 154.140.
- (5) No guest shall reside on the premises for more than 14 consecutive days, and not more than 30 days in any one year.

- (6) Enhanced Bed and Breakfasts shall be subject to all applicable regulations of Ordinance 94, regarding nuisance. The use of outdoor yard areas, open decks, pools and the like shall not result in the production of excessive off-site noise, odor and other external disturbances. Approval of the Enhanced Bed and Breakfast operation may be conditioned upon the installation of screening, fencing, plantings and/or other such installations and conditions to help ensure compatibility of the Enhanced Bed and Breakfast operation with the surrounding area and compliance with Ordinance 94.
- (7) Enhanced Bed and Breakfasts that are adjacent to residential uses shall be subject to the screening requirements of Section 154.142.D.
- (8) An existing residential structure may be converted to a Enhanced Bed and Breakfast and exterior additions to an existing residential structure for the purpose of providing additional rental rooms shall only be allowed if the parcel of property meets all of the provisions of this chapter for the particular zone in which the proposed Enhanced Bed and Breakfast is located.
- (9) An accessory building or buildings on the same lot as a principal building used as a Enhanced Bed and Breakfast may be used as accessory guest buildings, provided the following requirements are met:
- a. Special land use approval shall be required, as described in Sections [154.080](#) through [154.092](#). The Planning Commission shall also consider the following supplemental special land use standards related to accessory guest buildings:
 1. The overall site plan shall not detract from the cohesive appearance and layout of the subject block and surrounding neighborhood.
 2. Accessory guest buildings shall be designed to be compatible with the existing built character of the block in which they are located, as well as nearby blocks that are similar in character, including consistency with prevailing building density, mass, bulk, scale, and design.
 - b. All requirements of Section 154.022.S.1-8 must be met.
 - c. There shall be no more than two accessory guest buildings per principal Enhanced Bed and Breakfast building.

- d. An individual accessory guest building shall include no more than three guest rooms.
- e. The total number of guest rooms within accessory guest buildings shall not exceed 50% of the total number of guest rooms within the principal building or six, whichever number is less.
- f. Any newly constructed accessory guest building must meet all requirements of Section [154.022](#)(H).

(10) Enhanced Bed and Breakfasts shall be limited to no more than one guest unit per 1,500 square feet of lot area, inclusive of Accessory Guest Units.

(11) A Enhanced Bed and Breakfast may contain an accessory restaurant. The seating capacity of the restaurant, including both indoor and outdoor seating, shall not exceed two times the number of guest rooms. The restaurant shall not operate after 10 PM, and shall not be open to anyone other than overnight guests at the Enhanced Bed and Breakfast before 8 AM.

(12) A Enhanced Bed and Breakfast may contain an accessory event facility. For any event at the facility, the person named in the reservation for the event space must be an overnight guest, but the event itself may include non-guests. The maximum number of guests at an event shall not exceed three times the number of guest rooms. Events shall be conducted in such a manner as to maintain compliance at all times with Ordinance 94.

(13) A lodging operation that was previously approved as a Bed and Breakfast may receive Special Use Approval to operated as an Enhanced Bed and Breakfast, provided the requirements of this section are met. In approving the Special Use, the Planning Commission may determine that the existing available parking on-site and in the vicinity is sufficient for the Enhanced Bed and Breakfast, even if the minimum requirement from Section 154.135 is not met on-site.

SECTION 5. REPEAL. All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

SECTION 6. SEVERABILITY. The provisions of this Ordinance are declared severable. If any part of this Ordinance is declared invalid for any reason by a court of competent jurisdiction, that declaration does not affect or impair the validity of all other provisions that are not subject to that declaration.

SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Ordinance shall take effect seven (7) days after publication of a notice of adoption of this Ordinance, unless referendum procedures are initiated under MCL 125.3402. If referendum procedures are initiated, this Ordinance will take effect in accordance with MCL 125.3402.

YEAS: _____

NAYS: _____

ABSENT: _____

ORDINANCE DECLARED ADOPTED.

Holly Anderson
City of Saugatuck, Mayor

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that:

1. The above is a true copy of an ordinance adopted by the City of Saugatuck at a duly scheduled and noticed meeting of the City Council held on _____, _____ 2026, pursuant to the required statutory procedures.
2. A summary of the above ordinance was duly published in the _____ newspaper, a newspaper that circulates within the City of Saugatuck, on _____, 2026.
3. Within 1 week after such publication, I recorded the above ordinance in a book of ordinances kept by me for that purpose, including the date of passage of the ordinance, the names of the members of the City Council voting, and how each member voted.
4. I filed an attested copy of the above ordinance with the Allegan County Clerk on _____, 2026.

ATTESTED:

Jamie Wolters
City of Saugatuck, Clerk

**CITY OF SAUGATUCK
ALLEGAN COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

NOTICE OF ADOPTION

ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

ORDINANCE NO. ____

Please take notice that on _____, 2026, the City Council of the City of Saugatuck adopted Ordinance No. ____, which amends the City of Saugatuck's Zoning Ordinance to create a new land use for Enhanced Bed and Breakfasts, to regulate Enhanced Bed and Breakfasts, and to promote the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents and visitors of the City of Saugatuck. Copies of the ordinance may be obtained from Jamie Wolters, City of Saugatuck Clerk, at 102 Butler Street, P.O. Box 86, Saugatuck, Michigan 49453, during regular business hours.

The Zoning Ordinance Amendment has the following sections and catch lines: Section 1: Amendment to Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.005; Section 2: Amendment to Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.024(B); Section 3: Amendment to Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.039(B); Section 4: Amendment to Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.040(B); Section 5: Amendment to Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.041(B); Section 6: Amendment to Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.037(C); Section 7: Amendment to Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.042(C); Section 8: Amendment to Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.025(B); Section 9: Amendment to Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.025(C); Section 10: Amendment to Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.032(C); Section 11: Amendment to Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.135; Section 12: Amendment to Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.022; Section 13: Repeal; Section 14: Severability; and Section 15: Effective Date, which is seven days after publication of this notice of adoption unless referendum procedures are initiated under MCL 125.3402.

Jamie Wolters
City of Saugatuck, Clerk
(269) 558-9495
JWolters@saugatuckcity.com

Publication Date: _____, 2026



City Council Agenda Item Report

FROM: City Clerk, Jamie Wolters

MEETING DATE: September 23, 2026

SUBJECT: Request for Proposal – Website Redesign & Development

DESCRIPTION:

The City Clerk's Office has prepared a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the redesign and development of the City of Saugatuck's municipal website, saugatuckcity.com. The RFP will publish on September 29, 2026, with proposals due by 5:00 p.m. on October 29, 2026.

The City's current website was redesigned in 2021 using a general-purpose website platform. While the existing platform has allowed City staff to independently maintain and publish a substantial amount of information, the City's digital needs have grown significantly. The website now contains a large volume of meeting records, documents, forms, public notices, seasonal information, and online services, resulting in increasingly complex navigation and a significant amount of manual staff maintenance.

ADA and Digital Accessibility Requirements:

Another important consideration in moving forward with this project is the U.S. Department of Justice's updated requirements concerning accessibility of web content and mobile applications provided by state and local governments under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Department of Justice's Title II rule establishes specific technical accessibility requirements for websites and mobile applications of state and local governments. The rule adopts Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level A and Level AA as the technical standard for compliance. The requirements are intended to ensure that people with disabilities can access and use public entities' services, programs, and activities provided through digital platforms.

The rule applies not only to newly created content but also addresses existing electronic documents and other web content that remain available to the public, particularly materials currently used to apply for, gain access to, or participate in a public entity's services, programs, or activities.

The original DOJ compliance schedule established April 26, 2027, deadline for public entities with populations under 50,000. However, in April 2026, the Department of Justice issued an interim final rule extending that deadline to April 26, 2028, for public entities with populations under 50,000 and for special district governments. The City of Saugatuck falls within the under-50,000 population category.

The website RFP therefore specifically requires the new website to conform to WCAG 2.1 Level AA—a standard that goes beyond the minimum WCAG 2.1 Level AA standard identified in the federal Title II rule. The RFP requires accessibility testing throughout development and prior to launch, correction of identified accessibility issues, documentation and guidance for City staff, and recommendations for improving the accessibility of existing documents being migrated to the new website.

Project Goals:

The proposed project is intended to be more than a visual redesign. The City is seeking an experienced municipal website partner to evaluate the current website, improve its information architecture and navigation, migrate and reorganize existing content, and develop a modern, accessible, secure, and user-friendly digital platform. The new website should make it easier for residents, property owners, businesses, visitors, applicants, voters, boards and committees, and other users to find information and access City services.

Scope and Vendor Responsibilities:

The selected firm would be responsible for the project from discovery and planning through design, development, content migration, testing, accessibility review, staff training, launch, hosting, and ongoing support. The RFP requires vendors to identify implementation costs, annual hosting and support costs, optional services, third-party costs, and other recurring expenses so the City can evaluate the overall cost of ownership.

The project will also provide an opportunity to review the City's existing content and determine what should be retained, revised, consolidated, archived, or removed rather than simply transferring the existing website structure to a new platform. This is particularly important given the City's growing collection of agendas, packets, minutes, ordinances, forms, notices, applications, reports, and other public records.

Anticipated Timeline

The RFP establishes the following anticipated project schedule:

<u>Milestone:</u>	<u>Date:</u>
RFP Published	September 29, 2026
Proposals Due	October 29, 2026
Vendor Interviews, if needed	November 2-13, 2026
Council Authorization / Contract	November 23, 2026
Discovery, Content Audit, Design & Development	December 2026 – May 2027
Migration, QA, Accessibility Testing & Staff Training	May 2027 – June 2027
Anticipated Website Launch	July 2027

Proposals will be evaluated based on factors including compliance with the RFP, municipal website experience, qualifications of the proposed project team, understanding and approach to the project, accessibility and cybersecurity capabilities, implementation schedule, references and demonstrated quality of prior work, total cost of ownership, and interview/presentation performance if interviews are conducted.

Following the proposal deadline, staff will review the submissions and, if necessary, conduct vendor interviews before bringing a recommendation forward for Council consideration. The current RFP anticipates Council authorization of a contract on November 23, 2026.

The goal of this project is to create a long-term digital platform that improves public access to City information and services, incorporates current accessibility requirements, strengthens transparency, reduces repetitive administrative work, and provides a secure and sustainable foundation for the City's future digital needs.

BUDGET ACTION REQUIRED:

2026/2027 approved budget item of \$40,000.

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REVIEW:

City Council Discussion on September 23, 2026, and action on September 28, 2026.

LEGAL REVIEW:

N/A

SAMPLE MOTION:

Discussion Only.



Request for Proposal:

Website Redesign & Development

City Clerk's Office:

102 Butler Street, PO Box 86, Saugatuck, MI 49453

Proposals Due:

October 29, 2026, 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

INTRODUCTION

The City of Saugatuck is a small but highly active waterfront community whose digital audience extends well beyond its year-round population of approximately 865 residents. Covering approximately 1.47 square miles with 11.5 miles of roads, the City serves a diverse audience of residents, property owners, businesses, seasonal residents, voters, applicants, and visitors. Saugatuck maintains approximately 500 acres of parks, natural areas, and recreational spaces, including nationally recognized Oval Beach, Mt. Baldhead Park, the 173-acre Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area, the approximately 169-acre Saugatuck Wilds Nature Preserve, and numerous community parks and public spaces such as Coghlin Park, Wicks Park, Jones Park, Cook Park, Willow Park, Peterson Preserve, and Village Square Park. These facilities, along with the City's active calendar of events and seasonal activities, make the City website an essential resource for communicating municipal services, recreational opportunities, community information, and timely seasonal updates.

Saugatuck is a nationally recognized and award-winning community known for its natural beauty, arts, culture, waterfront, distinctive character, and celebration of human diversity. The City's website must effectively serve both its local community and its significant seasonal and visitor audiences through mobile-friendly design, intuitive and task-based navigation, accessible online services, effective search capabilities, and timely information. Through this project, the City seeks more than a functional municipal website—it seeks an innovative, engaging, accessible, and memorable digital experience that reflects the unique character of Saugatuck and provides an exceptional level of service to everyone who interacts with the City. Simply stated, the City wants a website as exceptional as Saugatuck itself.

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

The City of Saugatuck's current website was redesigned in 2021 using a general-purpose website-building platform that has allowed City staff to independently create, publish, and maintain a substantial amount of municipal information. As the City's digital presence has grown, so have the volume and complexity of documents, meeting records, forms, public notices, seasonal information, and online services that must be organized and maintained.

The City seeks an experienced municipal website partner to plan, design, develop, migrate, implement, host, secure, and provide ongoing support and maintenance for saugatuckcity.com. The selected firm will work collaboratively with City staff to evaluate existing content and develop an improved information architecture, modern design, and enhanced functionality. The new website must be responsive, accessible, secure, intuitive, visually engaging, and easy for City staff to manage.

The website should effectively serve the City's diverse audiences, including residents and seasonal residents; property owners; visitors; businesses; elected and appointed officials; boards and committees; community organizations; media; contractors; permit and license applicants; and others seeking City services and information. The website should emphasize user-centered and task-based navigation, allowing users to quickly find services, forms, public

records, meetings, alerts, and other information without needing to understand the City's organizational structure.

The selected firm will be expected to improve upon—not simply replicate—the existing website. The City welcomes professional recommendations that reduce repetitive staff maintenance, improve search and document management, enhance accessibility and mobile usability, support online services and future integrations, and incorporate best practices for modern municipal websites. The City seeks a long-term digital partner capable of delivering a flexible and scalable website that can evolve with the City's future needs.

CURRENT WEBSITE CHALLENGES

Over time, the City's website has grown to include a significant amount of information, resulting in a complex navigation structure with multiple levels of menus, submenus, departments, boards, committees, and year-specific pages. Much of the current navigation is organized around the City's organizational structure rather than the tasks users are trying to accomplish. This can require users to know which department, board, or commission is responsible for a service before locating the information they need. Long, information-heavy pages and a homepage containing numerous competing priorities can also make frequently requested information more difficult to identify quickly.

The growing volume of City records presents additional challenges. Years of agendas, packets, minutes, videos, forms, plans, reports, ordinances, budgets, and other documents are maintained across individual webpages, links, and annual archives. Forms and applications are also available through a combination of PDFs, City-hosted forms, external forms, and third-party resources. As this content continues to grow, improved site-wide search, centralized document management, and a more organized approach to forms and public records are increasingly important.

The current structure also requires considerable manual maintenance by City staff. Meeting records, seasonal information, schedules, election information, annual documents, and other time-sensitive content require frequent updates. Information appearing in multiple locations may need to be updated separately rather than entered once and automatically displayed wherever appropriate. The redesign provides an opportunity to inventory, consolidate, archive, and reorganize existing content while reducing repetitive administrative tasks.

Finally, the City's digital needs have evolved beyond those of a general-purpose website platform. The website must effectively serve year-round and seasonal residents, property owners, businesses, visitors, applicants, voters, meeting participants, and other users with varying needs and devices. The new website presents an opportunity to improve mobile usability, accessibility, search functionality, content management, automation, integrations, and online services while providing a more flexible municipal platform capable of supporting the City's future needs.

NEW WEBSITE OBJECTIVES AND REQUIRED CAPABILITIES

- **Intuitive, User-Centered Navigation:** Create a simplified information architecture based on what users are trying to accomplish rather than requiring users to understand the City's organizational structure. Provide task-based navigation and clear pathways to frequently requested information, services, forms, and documents.
- **Responsive Design, Performance, and Mobile Accessibility:** Provide a fully responsive website optimized for current major browsers and common desktop, tablet, and mobile devices. Optimize photographs, graphics, video, and other media to maintain visual quality while providing fast page loading and strong website performance.
- **Distinctive Saugatuck Design:** Create a modern, visually engaging digital presence that reflects Saugatuck's unique character, natural resources, waterfront, arts, culture, and community identity. The City seeks a website that is not only functional but as exceptional as the community it represents.
- **Accessibility:** Conform to WCAG 2.1 Level AA and applicable ADA requirements. Conduct accessibility testing, address identified issues, provide remediation documentation, and provide guidance and training to help City staff maintain accessibility after launch.
- **Content Management System (CMS) and Efficient Administration:** Provide a secure, intuitive CMS that allows authorized City staff to create, edit, schedule, publish, archive, and manage content without HTML or specialized technical knowledge. The CMS should support role-based permissions, workflows, audit logs, version history, rollback capabilities, and multiple editors. Content should be structured so information can be entered once and displayed automatically in appropriate areas of the website, reducing repetitive staff maintenance.
- **Centralized Meeting and Calendar Management:** Provide a unified calendar filterable by department, board, commission, committee, event type, or other category. Meeting functionality should support agendas, packets, minutes, notices, video links, recurring meetings, and automated organization and archiving of meeting records.
- **Advanced Site and Document Search:** Provide fast, accurate, intuitive site-wide search capable of indexing webpages, PDFs, forms, meeting records, and other approved content. Search functionality should appropriately manage archived, expired, or removed content in accordance with City requirements.
- **Centralized Document and Media Management:** Provide centralized libraries for documents, photographs, graphics, video, and other media with logical organization, metadata, accessibility support, bulk-management capabilities, and tools for identifying broken links.
- **Forms and Online Services:** Provide a centralized Forms & Applications Center supporting downloadable and fillable forms, secure online forms and surveys, file uploads, confirmation notifications, exportable data, and department-specific workflows where approved by the City. The vendor should identify how sensitive information submitted through online forms will be protected.

- **Online Payment Services:** Provide a secure, mobile-friendly payment portal or integration allowing users to conveniently make online payments for applicable City services, permits, fees, taxes, recreation, and other charges. The solution should integrate with existing or future City payment providers, provide payment confirmations, and clearly identify transaction fees, third-party fees, and recurring costs.
- **News, Public Notices, Alerts, and Subscriptions:** Provide a structured system for publishing City news, public notices, emergency or priority alerts, and other time-sensitive information. Support scheduling and expiration of content and provide or integrate opt-in email and SMS notifications, newsletter distribution, list management, reusable templates, consent controls, and unsubscribe/opt-out management. All associated third-party and recurring costs should be clearly identified.
- **Department and Staff Information:** Provide standardized department profiles containing services, staff contacts, telephone numbers, frequently asked questions, forms, and related resources. Staff and contact information should be centrally managed whenever possible so updates automatically appear throughout the website.
- **Third-Party Integrations:** Support current and future integration or embedding of City systems and services, including GIS and mapping, social media, ordinances, parcel and tax records, recreation software, shared calendars, video, and other approved third-party applications. The solution should be flexible enough to accommodate additional integrations as City needs evolve.
- **Secure Managed Hosting:** Provide secure managed hosting and appropriate protection against spam, bots, harvesting, and common website abuse. Services should include SSL/TLS, monitoring, backups, disaster recovery, incident response, software patching, vulnerability management, uptime commitments, and clearly defined service levels and responsibilities.
- **Website Analytics and Reporting:** Provide privacy-conscious website analytics, traffic reporting, configurable dashboards, and appropriate staff access to reporting so the City can understand how users find and interact with information and use that data to guide future improvements.
- **Content Review, Migration, and Quality Assurance:** Conduct a comprehensive inventory, review, and migration of approved existing website content, documents, images, and other materials. The process should identify outdated, duplicate, unnecessary, or poorly organized content rather than simply replicating the structure of the existing website. Comprehensive quality assurance should be completed prior to launch.
- **Training, Documentation, and Ongoing Support:** Provide administrator and editor training, written documentation, accessibility guidance, launch assistance, and ongoing technical support. Post-launch services should include clearly defined response expectations, escalation procedures, troubleshooting, software updates, and identification of services included in the contract versus those subject to additional fees.
- **City Ownership, Portability, and Vendor Independence:** The City shall retain ownership and control of its website content, files, data, analytics, configuration, and domain-related assets. The solution should use an industry-standard, nonproprietary CMS or comparable

technology that minimizes vendor lock-in and allows City information to be exported in usable formats. The vendor shall provide a documented exit and transition process should the City transition to another provider.

- **Future .gov Domain Readiness:** Assess and provide recommendations for a potential future transition to a .gov domain, including eligibility and registration, DNS requirements, redirects, email implications, preservation of search engine rankings and existing links, security considerations, and public transition communications.
- **Scalability and Future Growth:** Provide a flexible platform capable of accommodating future technologies, integrations, accessibility requirements, online services, increased content, and changing public expectations without requiring a complete website replacement. Ultimately, the City seeks more than a visual redesign. The project should transform saugatuckcity.com into a modern digital service platform that makes City government easier to navigate, improves public access to information and services, reduces repetitive administrative work, strengthens accessibility and transparency, and provides a secure and sustainable foundation for the City's future digital needs.

SCOPE OF WORK

The selected firm shall provide all professional services necessary to successfully plan, design, develop, migrate, test, launch, host, and support the City of Saugatuck's new municipal website. The scope of work shall include, at minimum, the following:

1. Discovery and Project Planning

- Conduct a project kickoff meeting with City staff.
- Review the City's goals, audiences, current website, existing technology, and desired functionality.
- Identify project responsibilities, deliverables, milestones, and required City participation.
- Develop and maintain a detailed project schedule.
- Conduct regular project meetings and progress check-ins.

2. Current Website and Content Assessment

- Review the existing saugatuckcity.com website, including webpages, documents, forms, images, links, meeting records, calendars, and other content.
- Conduct a comprehensive content inventory.
- Identify outdated, duplicate, unnecessary, or poorly organized content.
- Recommend content to retain, revise, consolidate, archive, or remove.
- Review available website analytics and user behavior data, if available.

3. Information Architecture and Navigation

- Develop a new sitemap and information architecture based on user needs and common tasks.
- Simplify navigation and reduce unnecessary menu levels.
- Provide multiple intuitive pathways to frequently requested City information and services.

- Present the proposed sitemap and navigation structure to the City for review and approval before development.

4. Website Design and User Experience

- Develop a modern, professional, and visually engaging website reflecting Saugatuck's distinctive community character.
- Provide design concepts and page templates for City review and approval.
- Incorporate City branding, photography, graphics, and other approved visual elements.
- Design for desktop, tablet, and mobile devices.
- Prioritize frequently requested services and information on the homepage.
- Incorporate accessibility and usability throughout the design.

5. Content Management System

- Implement a secure, user-friendly content management system (CMS) that does not require HTML or programming knowledge.
- Configure appropriate staff roles, permissions, workflows, versioning, and administrative controls.
- Structure content to minimize repetitive staff maintenance and allow information to be reused throughout the website where appropriate.

6. Website Functionality and Online Services

Develop, configure, or integrate the functionality identified in this RFP, including, as applicable:

- Site-wide webpage and document search.
- Meetings, agendas, packets, minutes, and video management.
- Unified City calendar.
- Document and media libraries.
- Forms and applications.
- Online payment portal or payment integrations.
- News and public notices.
- Emergency and priority alerts.
- Email, newsletter, and SMS subscriptions.
- Department and staff directories.
- Maps and GIS.
- Social media.
- Parcel, tax, ordinance, recreation, and other third-party systems.
- Website analytics and reporting.
- The selected firm shall identify any functionality requiring third-party products, licenses, subscriptions, or additional recurring costs.

7. Accessibility

- Develop the website to conform to WCAG 2.1 Level AA and applicable accessibility requirements.
- Perform accessibility testing throughout development and prior to launch.

- Correct identified accessibility issues.
- Provide documentation and guidance to assist City staff with maintaining accessible website content.
- Identify recommendations for improving the accessibility of existing documents being migrated to the new website.

8. Content Migration

- Migrate all City-approved webpages, documents, forms, photographs, meeting records, and other content to the new website.
- Reorganize migrated content according to the approved information architecture rather than simply reproducing the existing website structure.
- Preserve important historical public records and archives.
- Establish appropriate redirects from existing URLs where necessary.
- Verify migrated content, documents, links, and formatting before launch.

9. Third-Party Integrations

- Evaluate and integrate existing City systems and services as approved by the City.
- Coordinate with third-party providers when necessary.
- Clearly identify integration limitations, dependencies, licensing requirements, and recurring costs.
- Provide a platform capable of supporting additional integrations as City needs evolve.

10. Hosting, Security, and Technical Services

- Provide secure managed website hosting.
- Provide SSL/TLS, backups, monitoring, software updates, patching, vulnerability management, and disaster recovery.
- Protect public-facing forms and staff information against spam, bots, and common website abuse.
- Establish appropriate uptime, support, backup, recovery, and incident-response procedures.
- Maintain appropriate City ownership and access to website content, data, and digital assets.

11. Testing and Quality Assurance

- Prior to launch, conduct comprehensive testing of:
- Website functionality.
- Desktop and mobile responsiveness.
- Major browsers and devices.
- Accessibility.
- Search functionality.
- Forms and online services.
- Third-party integrations.
- Links and redirects.

- Website performance.
- Content accuracy and formatting.
- The City shall be provided an opportunity to review and approve the website prior to public launch.

12. Staff Training and Documentation

- Provide training for website administrators and content editors.
- Provide written and/or electronic CMS documentation.
- Include training on content publishing, document management, accessibility, meetings, calendars, forms, alerts, and other applicable functionality.
- Provide additional or refresher training options and associated costs.

13. Website Launch

- Develop and coordinate a detailed launch plan.
- Complete final content migration and quality assurance.
- Coordinate domain, DNS, redirects, analytics, and other technical requirements.
- Minimize disruption to the existing website during transition.
- Provide enhanced technical support immediately before, during, and following launch.

14. Post-Launch Support and Maintenance

- Provide ongoing hosting, maintenance, security, software updates, and technical support.
- Establish clearly defined support procedures and response times.
- Identify services included in annual costs and services subject to additional charges.
- Provide options and pricing for future enhancements and additional services.

15. Ownership and Future Transition

- Ensure the City retains ownership and control of its website content, files, data, analytics, and domain-related assets.
- Provide the ability to export City content and data in usable formats.
- Document procedures for transitioning the website to another provider if necessary.
- Minimize proprietary restrictions or vendor lock-in.

16. Future .gov Domain Assessment

- Evaluate the feasibility of a future transition to a .gov domain.
- Provide recommendations regarding registration, DNS, redirects, email impacts, search preservation, security, and public communications.
- Ensure the proposed website can accommodate a future domain transition without requiring redevelopment.

ANTICIPATED PROJECT TIMELINE

RFP published	September 29, 2026
Proposals due	October 29, 2026
Interviews if needed	November 2-13, 2026
Council authorization / contract	November 23, 2026
Discovery, content audit, design and development	December 2026 – May 2027
Migration, QA, accessibility testing & Staff training	May 2027 – June 2027
Launch	July 2027

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted in person or via email and must be clearly labeled: RFP - WEBSITE REDESIGN & DEVELOPMENT by October 29, 2026, 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

- Proposals received after the stated deadline will be rejected.

Introduction and general information:

- Firm identity, primary contact, organization, subcontractors, and understanding of the project.

Project Team:

- Roles, locations, resumes, relevant qualifications, and anticipated level of effort.

Relevant Experience:

- Comparable municipal or public-sector websites, including live URLs and project scope.

Project Approach/Scope:

- Discovery, research, information architecture, design, development, migration, integrations, accessibility, security, QA, training, launch, support, and City responsibilities.

References:

- Three recent comparable projects with owner contact information and service dates.

Project/Hourly Billing Rate Schedule:

- One-time implementation, optional services, first-year total, annual years 2-5, hosting, support, maintenance, integrations, travel, taxes, and all assumptions.

Testing and Quality:

- Describe usability, browser/device, functional, content, accessibility, performance, security, and acceptance testing methods.

Insurance:

- Commercial General Liability Insurance
- Cyber Liability and Data Breach Insurance

SELECTION CRITERIA

The City may evaluate proposals based on factors including:

- Compliance with RFP requirements
- Municipal website experience
- Qualifications and experience of the proposed project team
- Understanding of the project and proposed approach
- Accessibility and cybersecurity capabilities
- Implementation plan and project schedule
- References and demonstrated quality of prior work
- Total cost of ownership
- Interview and presentation performance, if applicable

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Questions regarding this RFP should be directed via email to:

Jamie Wolters

City Clerk and FOIA Coordinator

jwolters@saugatuckcity.com

BID FORM

WEBSITE REDESIGN & DEVELOPMENT | DUE October 29, 2026, 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

NAME OF COMPANY: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE / CELL PHONE: _____

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:

TOTAL BID AMOUNT: _____

ANTICIPATED START DATE: _____

WEEKS TO BETA LAUNCH: _____

WEEKS TO FINAL LAUNCH: _____

The undersigned, having reviewed the RFP and related documents, proposes to furnish all labor, services, tools, deliverables, hosting, training, and support required to complete the City website project for the prices stated below. The City reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals, to waive any informalities or irregularities in the proposals received, or to award the contract in any manner deemed to be in the best interest of the City. The City may also negotiate with the most qualified firm(s) prior to award.

COST SCHEDULE

ITEM	ONE-TIME / ANNUAL	AMOUNT
Discovery / content audit / information architecture	[IDENTIFY]	\$
Concept and visual design	[IDENTIFY]	\$
Development and CMS configuration	[IDENTIFY]	\$
Content conversion and implementation	[IDENTIFY]	\$
Integrations and forms	[IDENTIFY]	\$
Accessibility and security testing	[IDENTIFY]	\$
Training and user manual	[IDENTIFY]	\$
Hosting and security - year 1	[IDENTIFY]	\$
Support and maintenance - year 1	[IDENTIFY]	\$
TOTAL FIRST-YEAR COST	[IDENTIFY]	\$
Annual hosting - years 2-5	[IDENTIFY]	\$
Annual support / maintenance - years 2-5	[IDENTIFY]	\$
Optional services / alternates	[IDENTIFY]	\$

REFERENCES AND AUTHORIZATION

REFERENCE 1: Name _____

Organization _____

Phone/Email _____

REFERENCE 2: Name _____

Organization _____

Phone/Email _____

REFERENCE 3: Name _____

Organization _____

Phone/Email _____

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____