



Parks & Public Works Committee Agenda Item Report

FROM: Scott Herbert – Public Works Superintendent

MEETING DATE: March 25, 2025

SUBJECT: Naming of the Airport Property

DESCRIPTION:

City Council has asked the Parks & Public Works Committee (PPWC) for assistance developing a list of potential names for the “Old Airport Property”. The Council did note that community input was very important. A Survey Monkey link was shared on the City Facebook page as well as with Saugatuck Public Schools.

As of 1:30pm on Saturday, March 22nd, we’ve received a total of 71 responses to the survey. A list of survey responses is enclosed. Please review and be prepared to present your top choices for Council to consider.

BUDGET ACTION REQUIRED:

N/A

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REVIEW:

N/A

LEGAL REVIEW:

N/A

SAMPLE MOTION:

N/A

Airport Property Naming Framework

Background:

The Airport Property is a City of Saugatuck owned 169.1 acre parcel on 63rd and 134th that consists of a significant mosaic of greenspace within the Kalamazoo River Greenway corridor. It is a diverse range of mature forests, vernal pools with a beautiful creek (Silver Creek) threading through the ravines. The property has been owned by the City for 80+ years and will be open to the public this spring with rustic trails, signage and a parking lot.

Goal:

To engage the public to help name the City of Saugatuck's first new park this century.

Objectives

Choose a name for the new City of Saugatuck park

Participants

PPW members

City Staff to send out the open form submission

Saugatuck students

Saugatuck residents

City Council for name selection

Approach

Use the framework that the SPS Mascot renaming committee used for their project

Offer open-form submission to gather ideas for park names

Send form out to Saugatuck residents and students

Will Sara be collecting and collating the responses from the public and students for review by PPW?

Gather input from PPW Committee to narrow selection from community submission

City Council will vote on the final name

Project Risks and Mitigation:

Risk:

We don't get many responses from the public or names that the group likes

Mitigation: Do you think the CVB would have a professional source that could come up with good names? Other residents with PR expertise we could consult?

Council doesn't choose a name -

Mitigation: Receive a commitment from our mayor and City Manager to have the vote on the PPW suggestions on the 4/14 City Council meeting.

Target End Date: 3/31/2025 4/14/2025 (City Council's first meeting after our PPW meeting on 3/25 is 4/14)

Charter Date: _____

Charter Prepared by: _____

Survey Monkey Results for Naming Suggestions for the Airport Property as of 3.21.25 at 11am.

Saugatuck Wilds
3/20/2025 03:23 PM

Saugatuck wilds
3/20/2025 03:22 PM

The Winged Trail Park (playing off of the airport property) Carson Park for Environmental Stewardship (named after Rachel Carson, a marine biologist and conservationist, who is widely considered the most famous environmentalist in US history, credited with launching the modern environmental movement through her 1962 book, "Silent Spring") The Trowbridge Forrest and Park (named after a flat bottom steamboat that was constructed to try and move lumber between Saugatuck and Allegan on the Kzoo river)
3/20/2025 02:23 PM

Saugatuck Wilds
3/19/2025 09:06 PM

Saugatuck Wilds
3/19/2025 05:07 PM

Baldwin Preserve Silver creek park
3/18/2025 07:51 PM

Baldwin Park
3/18/2025 09:58 AM

Silver Creek Park
3/17/2025 09:08 AM

OLD AIRPORT PARK - preserves historical reference to the property and reflects what the locals have referred to it for many, many years and generations. BEKKEN PARK - honors the longest serving native resident on City Council (30 yrs, 2 time Mayor), Board member of KLSWA (30+ yrs, Chairman 20 yrs), long time SHS football coach, and a lifetime of other positions of service to Saugatuck.
3/16/2025 03:45 PM

The Otter Limits Park, Otter Space, Fawndemonium Forest, Plane and Simple Park, Silver Lining Forest.
3/13/2025 10:11 PM

Lumberdog park
3/13/2025 04:02 PM

Jellyfish Fields
3/13/2025 03:06 PM

Saugatuck Wilds
3/13/2025 11:26 AM

Sandpiper Forest: Named after a bird that is commonly found in the area, especially near Lake Michigan. It serves as a tie to the nearby "sand" dunes and coastal aspect of our beautiful town. It's also an ode to the original "aviation" intent of the park. Sandpipers hang out near water, which is fitting with the Vernal Pools and Silver Creek running through the woods. Sandpiper Park would be a good alternate, but given the old-growth trees and completely wooded aspect of it, I think Sandpiper Forest would be more accurately descriptive. Both would be awesome options! - Jon Charron
3/13/2025 10:06 AM

Helen Baldwin Park
3/13/2025 01:33 AM

Wild Saugatuck
3/12/2025 11:29 PM

Cassey's Cove Nature Park
3/12/2025 09:46 PM

potawatomi trails
3/12/2025 09:33 PM

Silver creek trails 🧐
3/12/2025 08:10 PM

Saugatuck Hollow
3/12/2025 06:58 PM

I hope that this park could someday incorporate disc golf into the its plan. I would name the park Saugatuck Airport
3/12/2025 03:08 PM

Silver Creek Natural Area. Patricia Birkholz Recreational Park.
3/12/2025 02:55 PM

Peter's Park
3/12/2025 01:37 PM

Parky McParkerface
3/12/2025 01:37 PM

Peter Parker
3/12/2025 01:34 PM

Deerport Birdway Migration Runway Outdoor Silver Creek Aviary (OSCA)
3/12/2025 12:02 PM

Major J. Brooke Paulger Memorial Park - USMC harrier pilot, war veteran (see obituary in Commercial Record February 2021. For military record).
3/12/2025 11:13 AM

Saugatuck Nature Preserve
3/12/2025 11:02 AM

Saugatuck Greenway Trails
3/12/2025 09:56 AM

Flyway Preserve
3/12/2025 09:52 AM

Rivers Bend Park
3/12/2025 09:11 AM

Silver creek park
3/12/2025 08:53 AM

Camaraderie Park
3/12/2025 08:46 AM

The Wilds or Saugatuck Wilds!
3/12/2025 08:09 AM

The Backwoods
3/12/2025 07:41 AM

- Saugatuck Landings - Camaraderie Park - Jewel of Silver Creek - The Wilds - Saugatuck Wilds - Togetherness Trails - Flyer's Forest - The Backwoods of Saugatuck - Forest Friends or Friends of the Forest
3/12/2025 06:51 AM

Wasteland waking trail The big give away Free for all park No habitat for humanity Who greased the council park City screws the public park Another Sex in the Shitty park
3/11/2025 11:09 PM

Silver Creek Ravines
3/11/2025 10:30 PM

Green Flight Park
3/11/2025 09:41 PM

The Park That Wasted Taxpayer Money Instead of Creating Affordable Housing
3/11/2025 09:02 PM

Here are ideas from Eve McKeown: Herons Haven Aviator's Landing Aviator's Haven Osprey Ridge Silvercreek Sanctuary
3/11/2025 08:52 PM

Saugatuck Sanctuary

3/11/2025 08:27 PM

Whispering Woods
3/11/2025 07:32 PM

Saugatuck Airport Nature Preserve
3/11/2025 07:17 PM

Saugatuck Greenway Retreat
3/11/2025 07:14 PM

Saugatuck Landings Park
3/11/2025 06:49 PM

River Haven Trails
3/11/2025 06:49 PM

Silver Creek Nature Reserve
3/11/2025 06:38 PM

Wings & Waters Children's Park
3/11/2025 06:31 PM

Flight Paths
3/11/2025 06:12 PM

Boondoggle Acres
3/11/2025 06:03 PM

Silver creek park
3/11/2025 06:00 PM

Lumberdogs Park
3/11/2025 05:51 PM

Flyway Park
3/11/2025 05:27 PM

Silver Creek Park
3/11/2025 05:27 PM

Towering Oaks
3/11/2025 05:17 PM

Silver Creek Park
3/11/2025 05:11 PM

Silver Creek Landing ("landing" being a droll reference to original plan for the park to be an airport)
3/11/2025 05:09 PM

The Airport Park

3/11/2025 05:08 PM

Silver Creek Park

3/11/2025 05:00 PM

FauxPort Trail

3/11/2025 04:57 PM

Anishinaabe Park Anishinaabe culture: • Anishinaabe culture is centered around a deep connection to nature • Plants like sweetgrass, tobacco, sage, and cedar are used for medicinal purposes • Anishinaabe culture survives through songs, dances, ceremonies, and stories • The Seven Grandfather Teachings of wisdom, love, respect, bravery, honesty, humility, and truth

3/11/2025 04:54 PM

Silver Creek Park

3/11/2025 04:53 PM

Ravine Run Park Silver Ravines Towering Oaks River Run Flyaway Ravines Upwind Ravines Hope these ideas help! <3 The Art Coast Properties Team

3/11/2025 04:53 PM

Mistake

3/11/2025 04:47 PM

Baldwin Park

3/11/2025 04:42 PM

Serenity Park

3/11/2025 04:37 PM

Saugatuck Sanctuary

3/11/2025 04:33 PM

Aviation Park

3/11/2025 04:29 PM

Flyway Park (nod to the original intent of an airport and the current and future use as an avian flyway)

3/11/2025 04:26 PM

Future Public Housing Site

3/11/2025 04:26 PM

CITY OF SAUGATUCK

Vision

Saugatuck is an inclusive waterfront community that welcomes all. City residents enjoy a great quality of life living in one of the country's highest-rated tourist destinations. Saugatuck is a vibrant, inviting community with a talented and dedicated staff, great schools, an active tourist-based economy, stable property values, and sense of history as the community moves into the future. Residents and visitors enjoy a unique, small-town atmosphere, exceptional parks, and access to beautiful natural resources.

Goals and Priorities

Saugatuck City Council sets the goals and priorities that reflect our vision and guide decision-making. The priorities-setting process forms the basis of Council's consensus on the projects that impact City residents, businesses, visitors, and the community as a whole. City Administration uses Council's vision and priorities to direct work activities and allocate staff and financial resources. City Council's priorities are dynamic and will be reviewed and modified as needed to reflect citizen input and changes in the external environment.

Operations, Public Health and Safety

Goal: We will maintain a culture of fiscal responsibility and friendly, honest, and transparent government. We will partner with the Fire District and Sheriff's office to ensure we take the right measures to keep our community safe.

Priorities

- Finish new water-sewer agreement
- Update water-sewer infrastructure fees
- Manage Dune Ridge litigation (potentially multi-year)
- Evaluate and implement solutions to parking issues (multi-year)
- Evaluate and implement Wildlife Committee recommendations
- Negotiate sale or lease of old landfill
- Update Land Use/Tri-Community Master Plan (multi-year)
- Improve profits from Oval Beach concessions
- Update zoning districts and signage regulations
- Refresh website
- Review and update older policies
- Develop and implement parade safety protocols

Infrastructure

Goal: We will focus on maintaining and improving current infrastructure while planning and saving for future needs.

Priorities

- Complete Maple Street design and construction
- Finalize AT&T cellular agreement and installation
- Make repairs to seawall, sidewalks, and stairs
- Inspect culverts
- Plan for Park Street improvements
- Renovate City Hall interior (potentially multi-year)
- Develop more comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
- Evaluate long-term funding options for CIP
- Maintain and resurface roads
- Repair Chain Ferry landing and arbor
- Plan for lead service line replacement
- Begin planning for Elizabeth Street design and construction
- Update signage and wayfinding

Parks and Recreation

Goal: We understand that our natural resources are the foundation of residents' quality of life and our tourism economy and will invest to sustain and enhance them.

Priorities

- Construct Mt. Baldhead bathroom
- Complete Mt. Baldhead platform design; begin construction
- Restore Mt. Baldhead vegetation
- Treat invasive species
- Refresh Village Square Courts (donor funded)
- Continue to advance Blue Star Trail (multi-year)
- Monitor and mitigate low water level impacts
- Evaluate community foundation options to accept citizen donations
- Expand holiday lighting to Water and Griffith streets

PPW Input for City Council Consideration – 1/21/2025

	Status	Category	Comment
Park Improvements			
Mount Baldy	Active	Large	Restrooms and step repair planned/underway. What about invasives, parking lot, and radar building?
Village Square	Active	Small	Basketball Court Resurfacing: can the surface include art?
Airport Property	Active	Small	Naming project - involve students? PPW take the lead?
Cook Park	Active	Medium	Willow tree removal – what’s next?
Wicks Park	Inactive	Large	Restroom improvements
Oval Beach	Inactive	Small	Playground Spinner needs placement – Oval Beach possible?
Peterson Preserve	Inactive	Large	Need to address infrastructure and invasives
Saugatuck Natural Area	Active	Small	Ryan is finishing updates to the Management Document. PPW involvement?
Comprehensive Park Review	Inactive	Small/Medium	Inventory parks – what’s good and what could be improved
Environmental			
Invasive Species Program	Active	Small	The focus is on community education. Website development is underway. Kalamazoo River invasives and wooly adelgid have been past focus but there are many more.
Native Plants	Active	Small	Encourage “Pocket Prairie” development in parks and by homeowners; first planting at Peterson Preserve. Review mowing regulations
Kalamazoo River Greenway	Inactive	Large	Spearheaded by OTC; need to determine status. Catalog current usage in city of herbicides and pesticides; assess waterway impact
Sustainable Community	?	Large	Engage with MI Green Communities Initiative
Dark Sky Initiative	Inactive	Large	Assess streetlights. Start with Lights Out - like Douglas?
Infrastructure			
Blue Star Trail	Active	Extra Large	Reaffirm commitment
Streetscaping	Inactive	Large	Improve sidewalk, landscaping, and signage uniformity. Butler Street consideration with lead water line replacement

PPW Input for City Council Consideration – 1/21/2025

Saugatuck Sign on Holland Street	Active	Small	Artistic Involvement?
Maple Street	Active	Extra Large	Pedestrian/cyclist safety
Park Street	Active	Extra Large	PPW had this as a focus; still need us?
Bicycle Racks and Fix-It Station(s)	Inactive	Small	Friends of the Blue Star Trail involvement possible
Kayak Launches	Inactive	Medium	Identify areas for public kayak launch (canoes and paddleboards too)
Long-Term (Dream Big) Projects			
Community Rec Center	Inactive	Extra Large	Is there a desire for a community rec center?
Property Acquisitions	Inactive	Extra Large	Can we acquire the Peterson Mill Property when available?
Public Art Partnership	Inactive	Large	Encourage more art in public spaces, some could be rotating. Partner with SCA?
Tri-Community Connectivity		Large	Key Component of the Tri-Community 5-Year Parks Plan (parks, trails, waterways, schools, etc.)
Funding			
Develop Gifting Process	Active	Large	Develop donation policies; create 501c3 foundation for gifts to City? Create Friends of the Parks?
Miscellaneous			
Add Staff to Support Parks and Park Projects	Inactive		

-----Original Message-----

From: Ken Morris <446griffith@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, February 25, 2025 11:39 AM

To: Jamie Wolters <Jwolters@saugatuckcity.com>

Subject: Village square courts

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

>

> Hi Jamie,

>

> I read a recent city council report. It had an estimate for redoing the basketball and tennis courts. One of the line items on the estimate was for 530 or 540 feet of 4 foot fencing around the courts. In my humble opinion I don't think they are needed and we could possibly save some money by not installing them.

>

> Since 1978 I lived just around the corner on Griffith St. Coming down the Main Street side walk there is a nice open view. I often walk across either court when going to the post office or downtown. During the summer months I often notice people loitering around the area, enjoying the open space, maybe picnicking under the tree line watching freind's play pickle ball, or just relaxing. Art shows often use these spaces also, limiting access with fencing would just seem to crowd an already busy spot and bog down the flow of people. Parades also bring down a lot of people again fencing would just seem to chop the area up.

>

> Can't say that I have ever seen a full on basketball game, lots of pick up game 6 or 7 people, usually less, often just half court. Nobody ever really watching the game, a couple of benches wound probably surface, not sure bleachers are needed, again they might even detract from the natural beauty of the tree line as it works it way up the hill side, is there really a need for more built infrastructure (probably aluminum, not very historic) that would probably not see much use.

>

> Just my point of view from walking through there the past 46 years.

>

> If you can share this note with city council as a communication and possibly the park committee it would be appreciated.

>

> Respectful

>

> Kam

> 446 Griffith

>

>