



City Council Agenda Item Report

FROM: Ryan Cummins, City Manager

MEETING DATE: February 9, 2026

SUBJECT: Proposals for Logo and Branding Refresh Project

DESCRIPTION:

In December, City Council approved the issuance of a request for proposals (RFP) for the logo and branding refresh project and forming a Branding Advisory Committee.

We reviewed 26 proposals from agencies responding to the RFP. Firms responded from West Michigan, Greater Michigan, the Midwest, and even International. Responses ranged in cost from \$7K to nearly \$100K, all against the same scope and requirements provided by the city. The committee gathered to review submissions and arrive at a recommendation.

The Criteria

We reviewed proposals against the following criteria.

1 -- Evaluating Core Requirements

- Did the agency address the core asks from the RFP?
- Does scope of work/process outlined to deliver against the RFP feel appropriate?
- Does the cost for the work/process outlined feel responsible and appropriate?

2 -- Evaluating Design Readiness

- Does the proposal look, feel, and sound like what the agency will deliver?
- Do case studies provided provide a sense of strategy-based design?
- Does the agency's design POV feel clear, compelling, relatable, and timeless?

3 -- Evaluating Understanding of Saugatuck

- Does the agency understand our sense of place, and in particular the power of OUR place?
- Does the agency understand the relationship hierarchy between Saugatuck -> West Michigan --> Michigan --> Midwest?
- Is the choice defensible, and why?

Recommendation

After reviewing all proposals, the committee recommends hiring Concept A Creative Studio for the following reasons:

- Experience with both municipal and corporate branding
- Experience with other West Michigan local and regional municipalities
- Experience with Saugatuck-Douglas CVB, including campaigns with proven results
- With knowledge of the city and the area, onboarding will be easier and more productive
- Cost wasn't the lowest or the highest, but seemed most realistic

Because of the size of the files, all proposals can be viewed here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1nHxplgeOcdlABACnb0xijQv-1_re7q2m?usp=sharing

Next Steps

City Council should review all proposals and may either concur with the recommendation or select a different proposal. Once a firm is selected, the committee will set up a kickoff meeting and provide frequent updates to City Council.

BUDGET ACTION REQUIRED:

None at this time. Sufficient dollars were budgeted for a firm to assist with a logo and branding refresh project.

LEGAL REVIEW:

N/A at this time.

SAMPLE MOTION:

Motion to approve the proposal and creative services agreement from Concept A Creative Studio for the logo and branding refresh project in the amount of \$24,500.

CREATIVE SERVICES AGREEMENT

This Creative Services Agreement ("Agreement") is entered into between Concept A Creative Studio ("Studio"), located at 114 W. Savidge, Spring Lake, MI 49456, and the City of Saugatuck ("Client"). This Agreement is intended to outline a clear, professional, and collaborative framework for services related to the City of Saugatuck Logo and Branding Refresh project.

Scope of Services

Studio will provide branding and design services as outlined in the approved proposal titled "Concept A – Saugatuck Logo and Branding Refresh Proposal," dated January 9, 2026 (the "Proposal"). The Proposal is incorporated by reference and serves as the Scope of Work for this Agreement.

Timeline

The project is anticipated to begin in February 2026 and conclude around July 2026, assuming timely feedback and coordination by all parties. Adjustments to the schedule may be made by mutual agreement.

Fees and Payment Schedule

The total project fee is \$24,500. Payments will be made in three equal installments as follows:

- \$8,166.67 —due upon project kickoff
- \$8,166.67 —due following the first round concept presentation
- \$8,166.66 — due upon final delivery of all project assets

Invoices are payable within thirty (30) days of receipt.

Ownership and Rights

Upon receipt of full and final payment, Client will own all final creative work, deliverables, and associated files produced under this Agreement. Studio will provide all relevant file formats and brand guidelines necessary for future use. Studio retains the right to display the work in its portfolio and promotional materials.

Revisions

The Scope of Work includes up to two (2) rounds of revisions during the refinement phase, as outlined in the Proposal. Additional revisions or requests outside the Scope of Work may require a written change order and may result in additional fees.

Termination

Either party may terminate this Agreement with thirty (30) days written notice. In the event of termination, Client agrees to pay for all work completed and expenses incurred through the effective date of termination.

Independent Contractor

Studio is an independent contractor and is not an employee of the Client. Studio is responsible for all taxes, insurance, and business expenses related to the services provided.

Confidentiality

Both parties agree to keep confidential any non-public information shared during the course of this engagement, unless disclosure is required by law.

Governing Law

This Agreement shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Michigan.

Acceptance

This Agreement may be executed electronically and in counterparts. By signing below, both parties agree to the terms outlined above.

CLIENT: City of Saugatuck

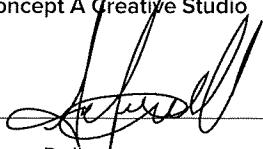
Signature: _____

Name:

Title:

Date:

STUDIO: Concept A Creative Studio

Signature:  _____

Name: Andrew Dull

Title: Owner + Principal Designer

Date: 02.02.2026



To: City of Saugatuck, City Council
From: Grayson Moore, Director of Planning & Zoning
Meeting Date: February 9, 2026
RE: Historic District Sign Proposal

City Commissioners,

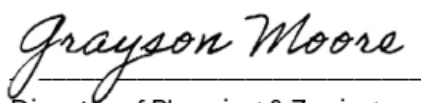
At its January 9, 2026 meeting, the Historic District Commission reviewed a second round of sign concept proposals prepared by Concept A Creative Studio.

The Commission evaluated revised concepts for the Historic District signage that incorporated feedback from the previous meeting. Two new design directions were presented: one featuring a checkered pattern inspired by the historic Butler Pantry Building, and another incorporating a subtle decorative flourish. The Commissions' preferred concept effectively balanced readability with historic character, utilizing a taller serif typeface and architectural patterns reflective of local history.

Following discussion, all Commissioners expressed strong support for the first design direction, citing its clarity, visual strength, and meaningful connection to the community. As a result, the Historic District Commission formally recommended Round 2, Direction 1 for the Historic District signage in the City of Saugatuck. A sample motion has been provided below.

Motion to approve the recommended proposal, Round 2, Direction 1, as prepared by Concept A Creative Studio, for three (3) single-faced cast aluminum signs, each measuring 24 inches by 36 inches, mounted on 8-foot posts, as detailed in the specifications sheet included in the meeting packet dated February 9, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,


Director of Planning & Zoning

Saugatuck Historic District Signage

Round 2 Concepts

Brand Essence

Should communicate the boundaries of the district and reason for celebrating it.

Fresh

Celebratory

Timeless

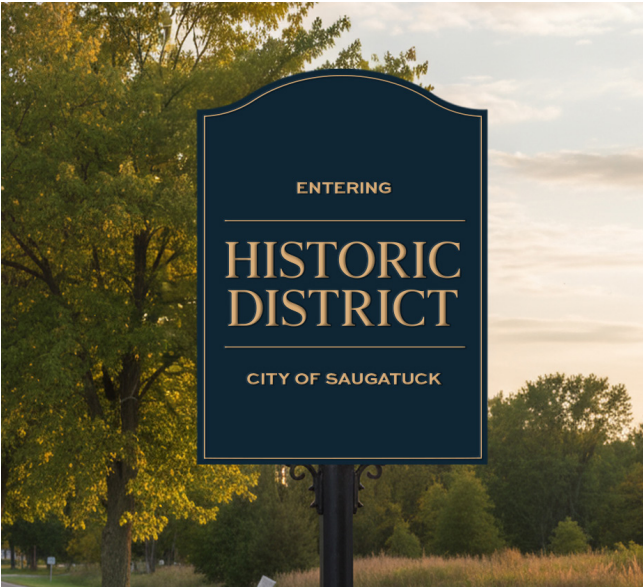
Sense of Pride

Round 1 Review

Current Sign



1 – Classic



2 – Charming



3 – Illustrative



Round 1 Feedback

01. The font in Option 1 is highly readable but feels too modern. Option 2 has a charming, historic feel, but readability suffers.

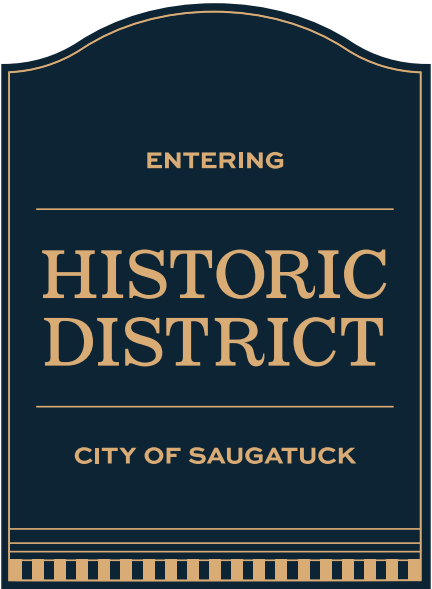
Takeaway: Explore a new font that balances clarity with a traditional aesthetic.

02. The weight of the illustrations in Option 3 at the bottom of the sign works well, but the illustrations feel overly branded and the icons too busy for this application.

Takeaway: Find an alternative way to add personality and visual interest—something subtle and ownable to the Saugatuck area—without making it feel branded.

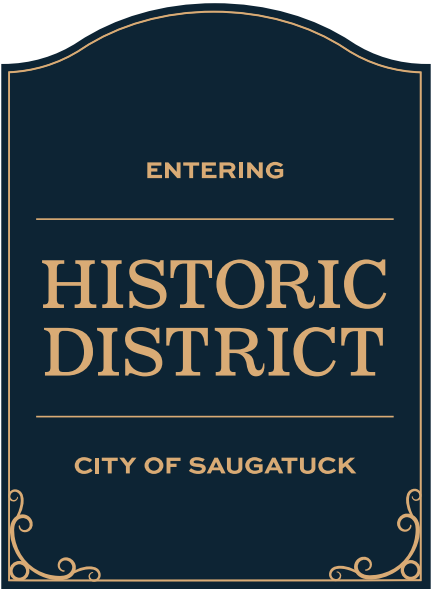
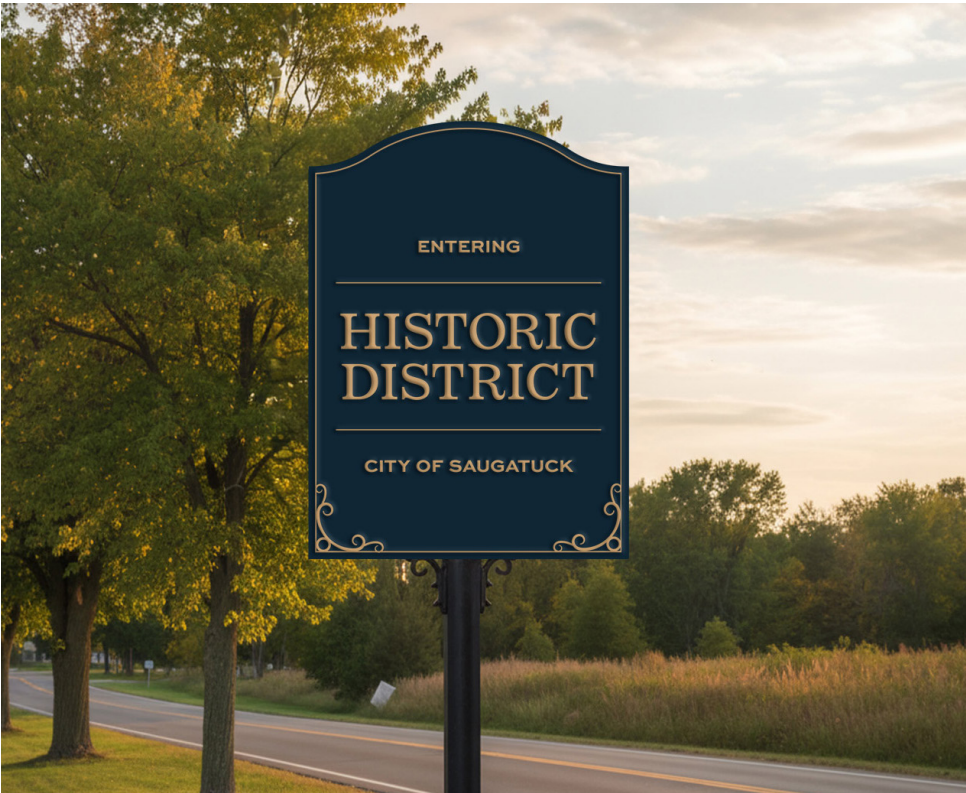
Round 2 - Direction 1

Inspired by the cornice of the Butler Pantry building—Saugatuck’s oldest existing retail building—we added a pattern along the bottom of the sign to draw the eye and create a subtle connection to the area’s historic architecture. We also updated the font to a taller serif, improving readability while maintaining a traditional look and feel.



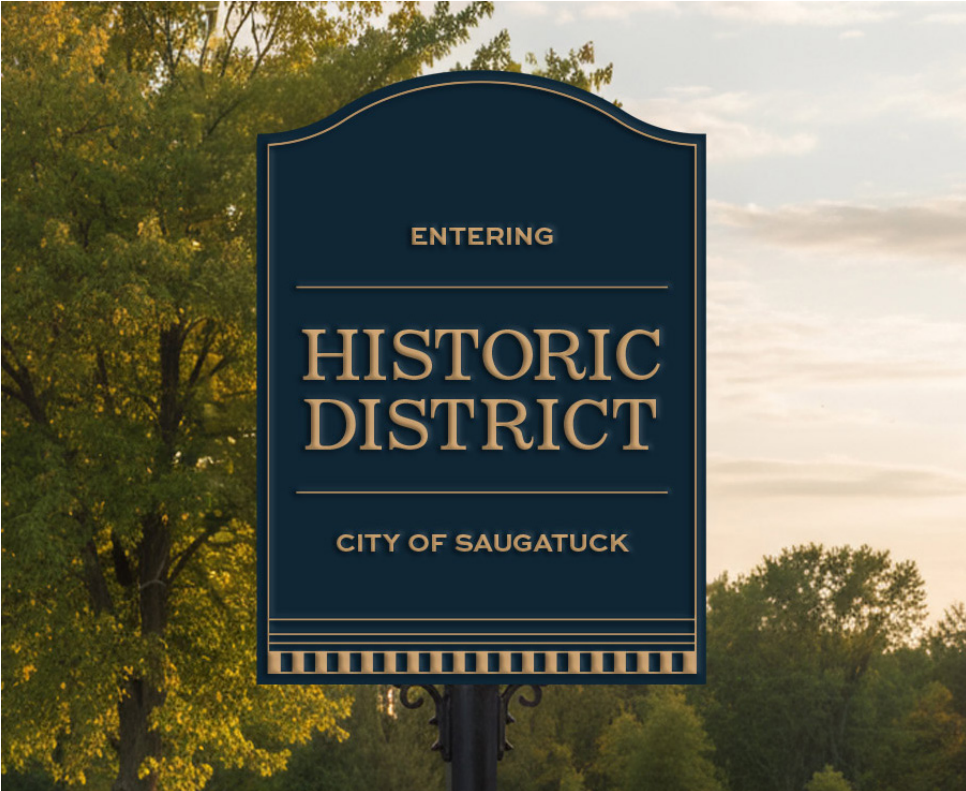
Round 2 - Direction 2

Inspired by the flourishes found on local signs and architecture, this direction reflects the details that define the town’s character and charm. Subtle corner detailing adds a refined decorative touch without overwhelming the sign.



Round 2 Directions

Round 2 –Direction 1



Round 2 – Direction 2

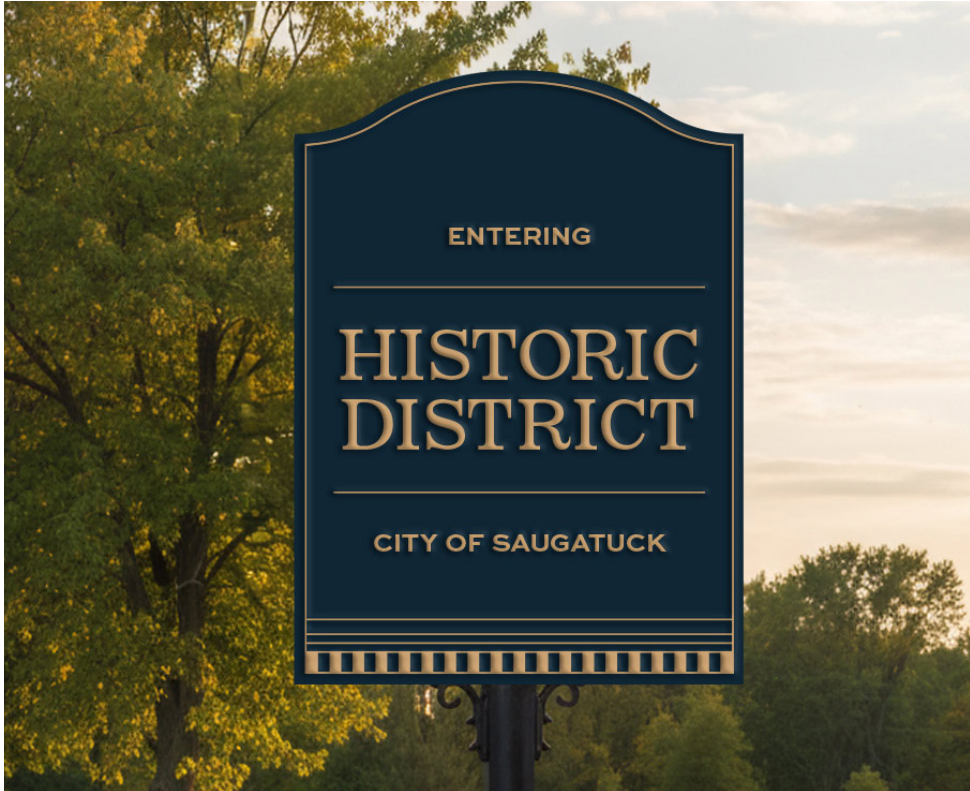


Comparing Fonts

Round 1 Font



Round 2 Font



Saugatuck Historic District Signage Spec Sheet

SIZE

24" x 36" sign with 8' x 2.5" diameter round post

QUANTITY

2-3

FABRICATION

Single face cast aluminum sign with raised lettering/border and 2.5" mounting hub.

8' x 2.5" diameter painted round post provided

COLOR

Ability to match paint colors, our suggestions:

Navy = Sherwin Williams 9178 (In the Navy)

Gold = Sherwin Williams 2813 (Downing Straw)

Black painted post

PRODUCTION / QUOTE

Lake Shore Industries

Erie, Pennsylvania

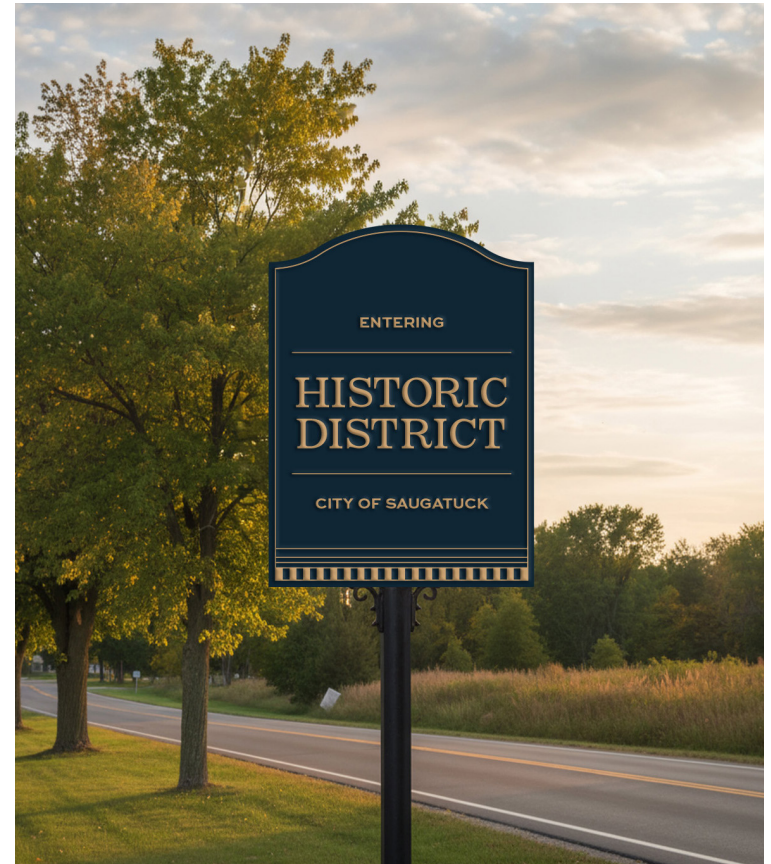
bjackson@lsisigns.com

\$2,030.40 / sign

\$319.20 / post

(Not including shipping)

Turnaround: 8 weeks from final approval



Mockup



Example provided by Lake Shore Industries