



MEMORANDUM

TO: Historic District Commission
City of Saugatuck

FROM: Grayson Moore
Director of Planning & Zoning

MEETING DATE: August 6, 2026

RE: Historic District Permit Application, CVB Artsy Bike Rack

REQUEST & BACKGROUND: In 2025, the Saugatuck Douglas Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) partnered with the Industrial Arts class at Saugatuck High School to create a custom artistic bike rack for installation in downtown Saugatuck.

The bike rack concept was created by Saugatuck High School student Tessa Knap as part of the school's Architecture and Design class. Inspired by the iconic paint palette sign that has long symbolized the area's arts community, students Nolan LaLoade and Nick Mohr fabricated the design through the Industrial Arts program, transforming the concept into a durable, functional piece of public art.

Following review by the Parks & Public Works Committee, Coghlin Park was recommended as the installation location because of its visibility, pedestrian activity, and proximity to downtown destinations. The bike rack is intended to function both as bicycle parking and as a public art feature recognizing local student craftsmanship.

On June 22, 2026, the City Council approved installation of the powder coated metal bike rack at Coghlin Park. The applicant is now requesting Historic District Commission approval for the installation within the City's Historic District. Images of the proposed bike rack and installation location are attached.



Figure 1 – Proposed Location



Figures 2-4: Palette Rack



APPLICABILITY: A permit shall be obtained before any work affecting the exterior appearance of a resource is performed within the Historic District (§ 152.03).

COMPLETENESS REVIEW: All applications to construct, alter, repair, move, or demolish any structure or install or alter any signage or fence structure in a historic district shall include the supporting plans and documents as specified by § 152.07 B. The applicant has provided a comprehensive overview of the proposed improvements.

IDENTIFYING KEY ELEMENTS OF THE RESOURCES:

4. **The Surroundings.** Identify the significant characteristics of the history and/or architecture of the surroundings and give consideration to the impact of the proposed changes on the integrity of the surrounding area.

§ 152.07 D. GUIDELINES:

1. In reviewing applications and plans submitted under this chapter, the Commission shall follow U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Structures as set forth in 36 C.F.R. part 67, as amended. Additional guidelines may be developed and followed if they are equivalent in guidance to the Secretary's standards and guidelines and are approved by the Center. Any additional guidelines must be adopted by the Commission and approved by the City Council. In reviewing applications and plans, the Commission shall also give consideration to:
 - a. *The historical or architectural significance of the resource and its relationship to the historic value of the surrounding area.*
 - b. *The compatibility of the exterior of the structure and the space around it with the visual or historical context of the surrounding area.*
 - c. *The impact of the exterior of the structure and the space around it on the village/rural character and contextual aesthetic of the city.*
 - d. *Other factors which the Commission considers to be pertinent.*
2. In exercising its authority to approve or deny an application under this chapter, the Commission shall exercise its educated judgment on a case-by-case basis in interpreting these guidelines and the following the applicable standards.

Comment:

The proposed bike rack at Coghlin Park is intended to provide functional bicycle parking while serving as a piece of public art. The installation does not involve alteration or removal of any contributing historic structure or historic architectural features.

Staff finds that the Commission's review should focus on whether the proposed installation is compatible with the surrounding historic environment. Relevant considerations include:

- Whether the bike rack is appropriately scaled for its location within Coghlin Park.
- Whether its materials and finish are compatible with the surrounding streetscape.
- Whether its placement preserves the historic character of the park and does not adversely impact significant views or the pedestrian environment.
- Whether the installation is compatible with the visual and historic context of the Historic District.

Although the bike rack incorporates a contemporary artistic design, the Historic District Guidelines recognize that new features need not replicate historic styles, provided they remain compatible with the character of the district. The proposal functions as both public art and bicycle parking while maintaining the open character of the park and introducing no alterations to existing historic resources.

SUGGESTED MOTIONS:

If the HDC determines that the proposed installation is appropriate and the applicable standards of the Historic District Guidelines are met, the following motion may be used:

*I move to **(approve/deny)** the applicant's request for a Historic District Permit for the installation of the powder coated metal CVB Artsy Bike Rack at Coghlin Park, as proposed, based on the application **(meeting/not meeting)** the applicable Historic District Guidelines set forth in §152.07.*

Approval shall be subject to the following conditions (if applicable):

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____