



City Council Agenda Item Report

FROM: Ryan Cummins, City Manager

MEETING DATE: August 24, 2026

SUBJECT: Recommended Branding

DESCRIPTION:

The City's current logo was created in 2007, nearly two decades ago. Today, the City's branding is inconsistent across platforms, including the website, social media, email, and signage. The lack of cohesive and modern branding creates challenges as we look to invest in website upgrades, wayfinding improvements, and upgraded signage.

Last December, City Council approved forming a Branding Advisory Committee. In February, City Council approved a proposal and creative services agreement from Concept A Creative Studio for the logo and branding refresh project. City Council's current fiscal year priorities include rolling out a new logo and branding.

Recommend Branding Presentation

At the recent workshop meeting, Branding Advisory Committee Chair, Tim Straker, presented the committee's recommendation. The presentation can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/92NRVEf6SPw>

A copy of the recommendation is attached.

Trademark

Concept A has included the ™ symbol on the most prominent logo pages and copyright messaging in the footer. Concept A has advised the ™ symbol may be used without a pending or approved federal trademark application to indicate the City's claim of ownership while it pursues formal trademark registration.

Brand Guidelines

If Council approves the new identity, Concept A will complete Phase 4 of the Scope of Work—Brand System—by taking the following steps:

- Create and share brand guidelines outlining color, typography, usage guides, and application concepts.
- Share templates for communications, presentations, and digital use, such as: Letterhead, Press Release Template, Memo Template, Business cards, Email signature standard, PowerPoint/meeting template, and social media graphics templates.
- Prepare a formal assignment of intellectual property rights associated with the final approved identity, giving the City clear and exclusive ownership as it begins to pursue the registration trademark ® and brand-protection process.

BUDGET ACTION REQUIRED:

None at this time. 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 recommended City of Saugatuck brand direction and logo as presented by Concept A Creative Studio.

City of Saugatuck Branding

Council Workshop Review — August 2026

Goals and Objective

The goal of the City of Saugatuck rebranding project is to create a modern identity that reflects the authentic character of the community—capturing its artistic culture, natural beauty, historic charm, and sophistication in a way that feels confident, approachable, and distinctly Saugatuck.

PRIMARY TARGET AUDIENCE

Visitors / Tourists

The City brand should first and foremost communicate who Saugatuck is to those experiencing it from the outside. The goal is to create a strong, immediate impression that reflects the character and quality of the place, reinforcing Saugatuck as a destination worth exploring and returning to.

SECONDARY TARGET AUDIENCES

Residents, Business Community, and Potential Residents / Young Families

The brand will build pride among residents, strengthen alignment across the local business community, and enhance Saugatuck’s appeal as a place to live—particularly for younger demographics considering relocation.

Brand Pillars and Attributes

01. Authentic at its core

The brand should feel grounded and genuine, while also reflecting the individuality of the community, where character, nostalgia, and a touch of quirk exist side by side.

02. Artful by nature

The brand should reflect a sense of artistry that feels natural and integrated in the everyday, not applied or decorative.

03. Elevated yet approachable

Saugatuck is defined by a rare “high-low” dynamic, where small-town warmth and charm coexist with a level of refinement that never feels out of reach. The brand should feel distinctive, yet easy to engage with and understand.

Brand Attributes

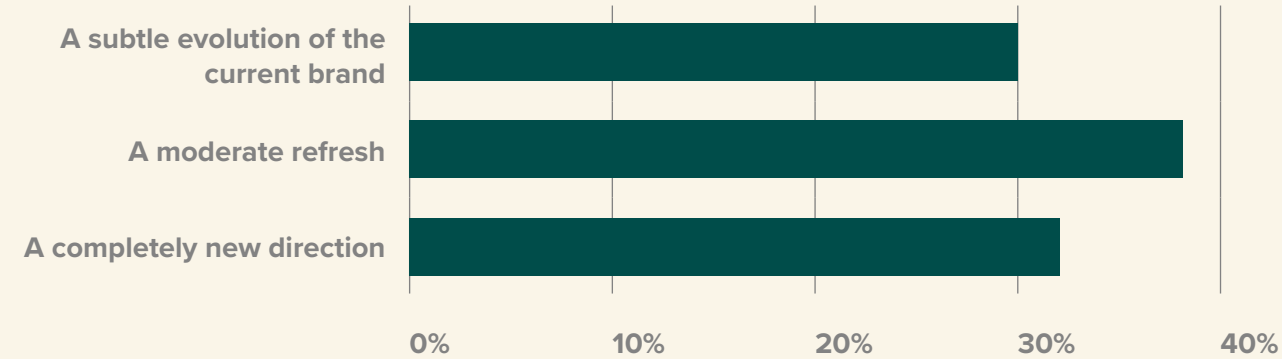
- Authentic
- Contemporary
- Creative
- Approachable
- Confident
- Fresh
- Welcoming
- Elevated
- Relevant
- Full of Character
- Quirky

Results From Community Survey

The City of Saugatuck Rebranding Project Community Survey received 322 responses, providing strong participation and a meaningful sample of community perspectives. Survey results showed strong support for a brand refresh that respects Saugatuck’s existing character while evolving it in a more contemporary and cohesive direction.

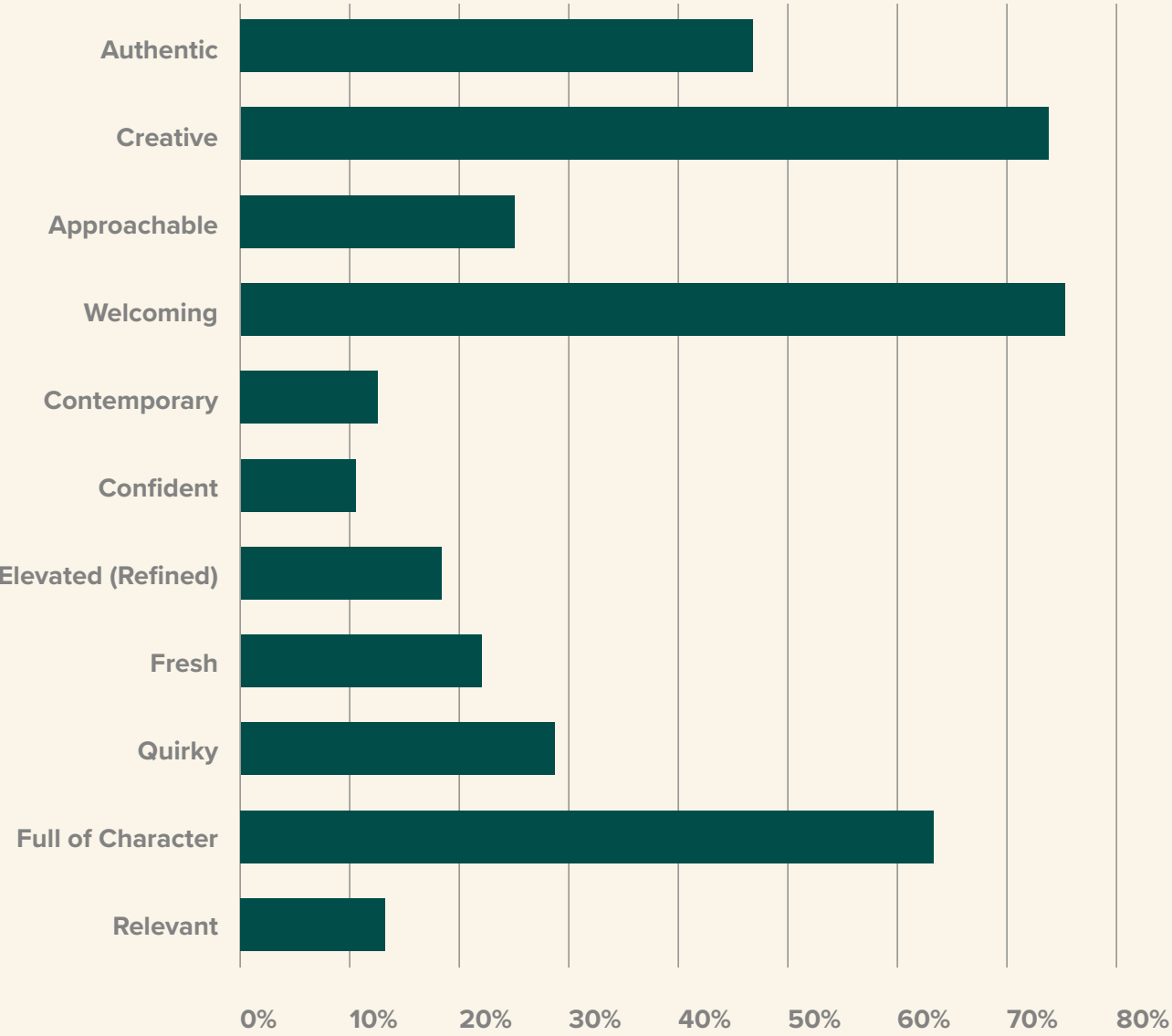
APPETITE FOR CHANGE

Which approach to updating the City’s brand feels most appropriate?



BRAND ATTRIBUTES TO CONVEY

Which of the following attributes best describes the City of Saugatuck and should be reflected in the new brand? (Select up to 5)



Recommended Brand Direction: Artistic and Creative Personality

The recommended brand direction centers on a custom script wordmark that feels expressive, artistic, and distinctly human. The bold, flowing letterforms bring movement and personality to the identity, while the handcrafted quality reflects Saugatuck’s creative spirit. The result is an approachable and welcoming brand that feels full of character and conveys the sense of ease that defines the community.

**BRAND ATTRIBUTES REFLECTED
IN THE RECOMMENDED DIRECTION**

- | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Authentic | Confident | Full of Character |
| Approachable | Fresh | Quirky |
| Creative | Welcoming | |

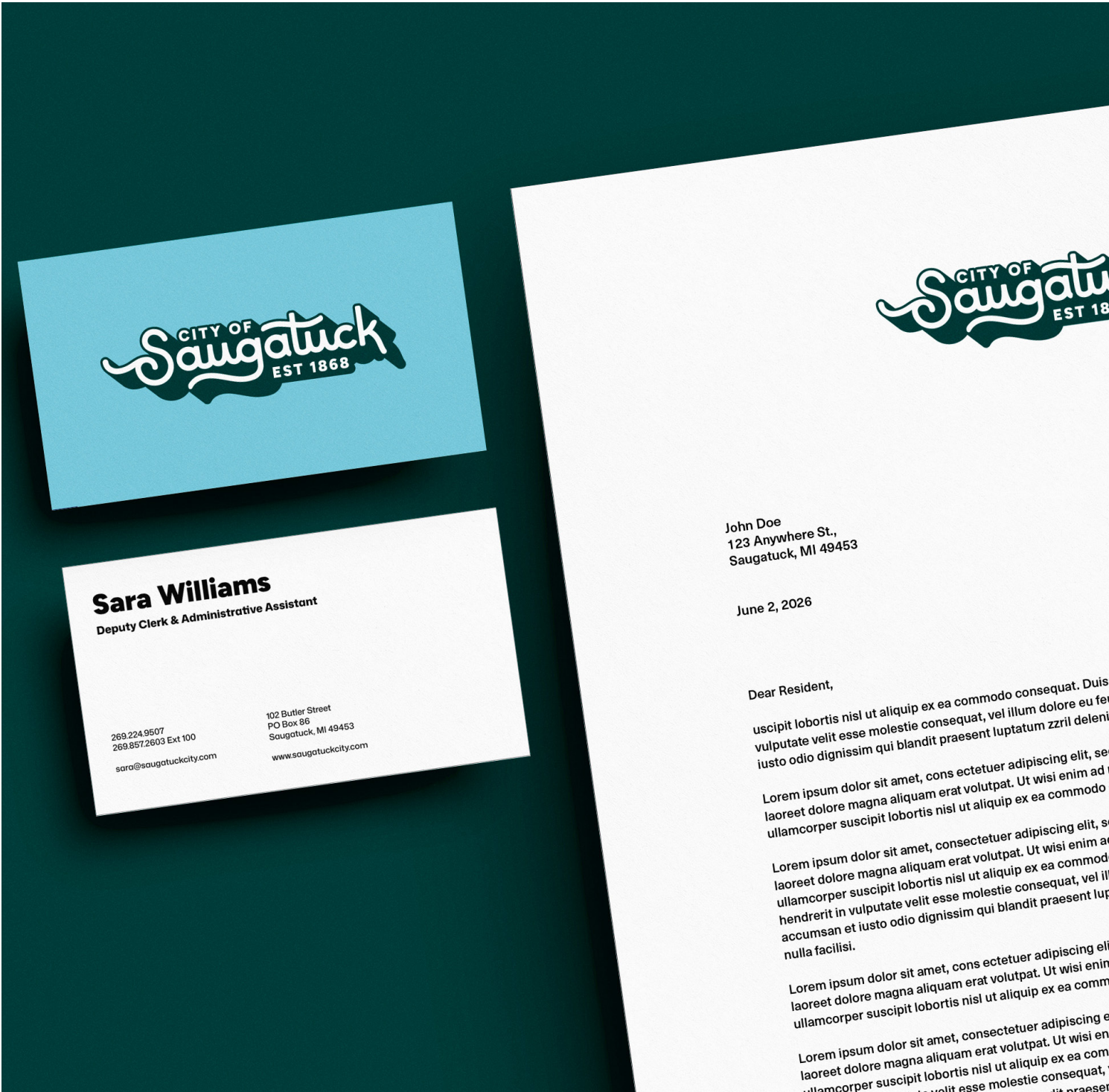


Recommended Brand Direction



Recommended Brand Direction in Application

Stationery and Document Template Concepts



Recommended Brand Direction in Application

Department of Public Works Concepts



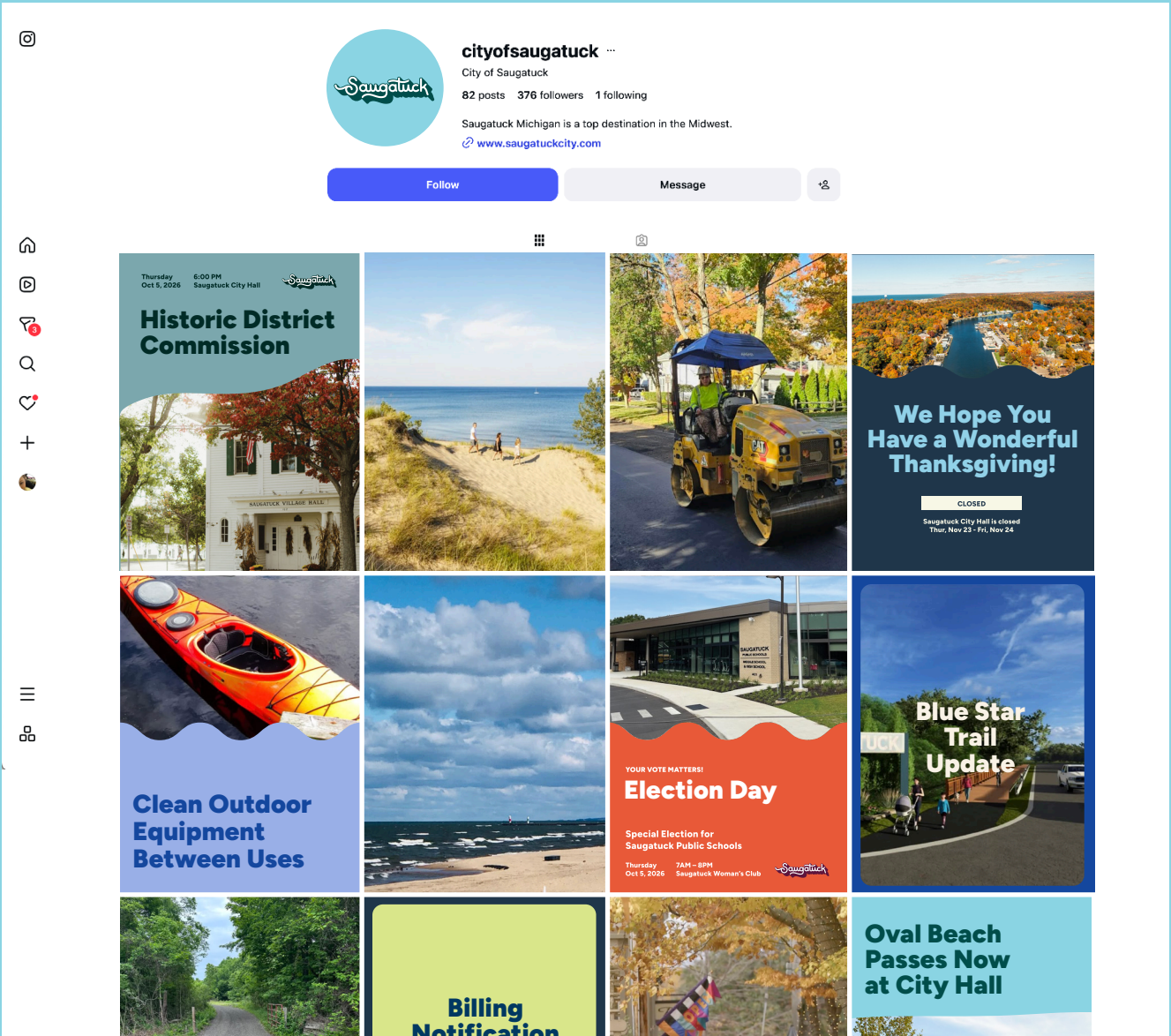
Recommended Brand Direction in Application

Signage Concepts



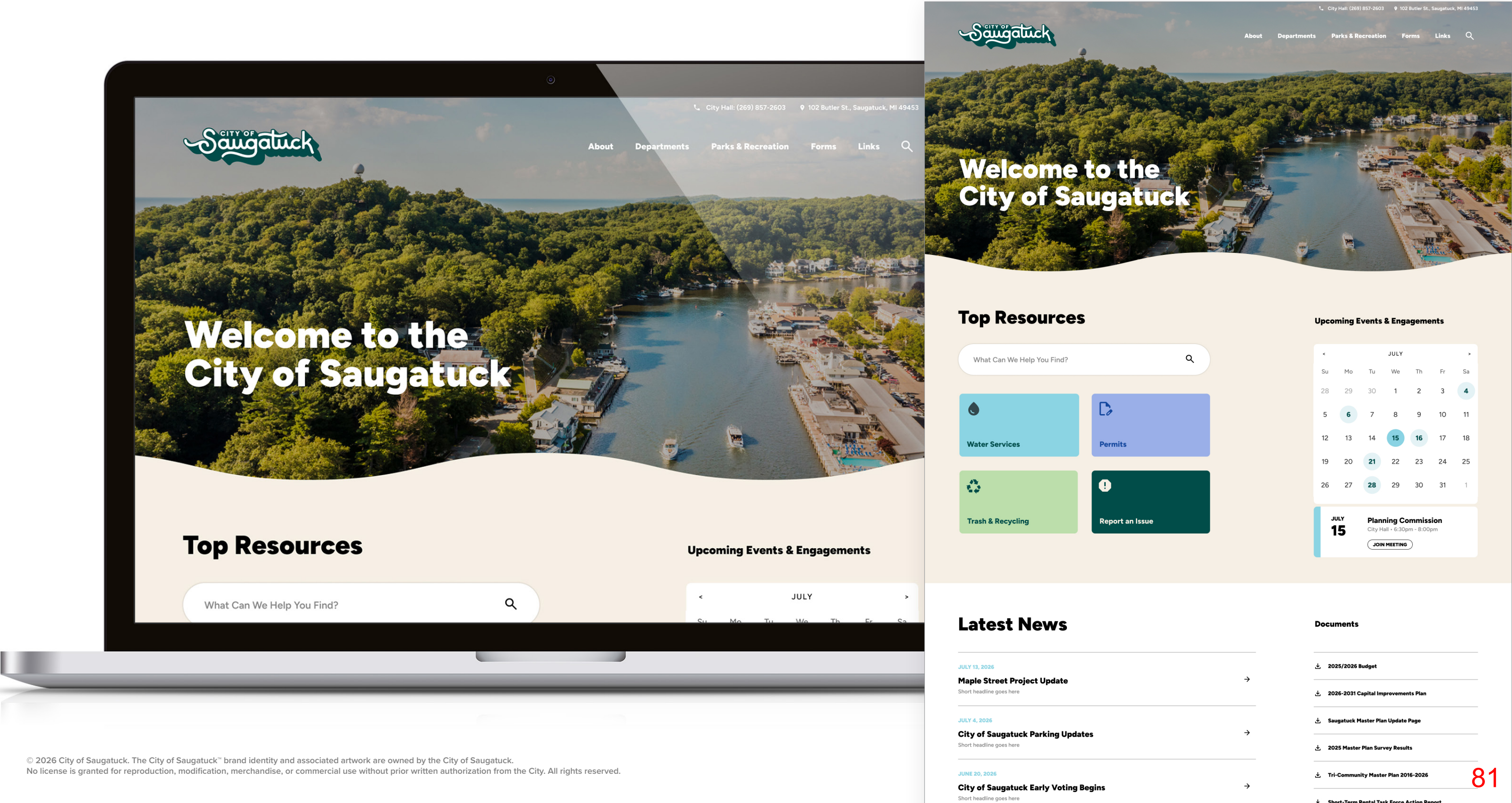
Recommended Brand Direction in Application

Social Media Concepts



Recommended Brand Direction in Application

Website Concept



Recommended Brand Direction

Logo Variations

Primary



Secondary



Secondary



Recommended Brand Direction With Area Logos

