



## **A Message from the Saugatuck Township Parks and Recreation Commission**

Dear Saugatuck Township Residents,

The Saugatuck Township Parks and Recreation Commission are requesting that a 0.5 **Parks and Trails** millage proposal appear on the November 8<sup>th</sup> ballot for consideration by Township voters. We are submitting this request because we recognize an urgent need to improve, expand, and preserve our park lands, trails and open spaces.

January 2020 was the beginning of the Covid-19 epidemic in the US and along with the tragedy of a new and severe illness came the realization that the outdoors is safer than the indoors. 2020 brought a multifold increase in interest and use of the Saugatuck area parks and trails and that use has continued to grow through 2021 and into 2022.

Parks, trails, the woods, natural outdoor spaces are where you recognize that the more you're outside, the more you want to be outside. When we look across the globe and see that our climate really is changing, and rather quickly, we realize that the Great Lakes region is a special place and how lucky we are to live in West Michigan.

*"The Saugatuck Township Parks commission guides, shapes, and preserves the heritage of our natural areas for the purpose of play, exploration and appreciation".* This is our mission and today these goals have become urgent.

Currently, the Saugatuck Township Parks Commission (STPC) receives its funding as a distribution from the Township's general operating funds, and thus we compete with all other Township expenses for our annual Park funds. Over the last 5 years, our average annual budget has been \$19,000. This allows us to maintain our parks but leaves little extra to preserve our natural areas for our residents. Simply stated, the STPC needs more funding to preserve natural public spaces.

Saugatuck Township residents, please consider the proposed Parks and Trails Millage on the November 8<sup>th</sup> ballot.

For more information, please visit [saugatucktownship.org/parks-trails-millage/](http://saugatucktownship.org/parks-trails-millage/)

Sincerely,

Saugatuck Township Parks and Recreation Commissioners

Jim Searing, Chair  
Dana Burd  
Ken Butler  
Jane Dickie  
Elliot Sturm