

Vision future with Trail gift

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To the editor,

The Blue Star Trail is not a cautionary tale. The Blue Star Trail is a visionary story.

Saugatuck city officials' concern about the future maintenance and/or re- placement of the proposed 0.4-mile section along Blue Star Highway in the city is valid.

But equally valid is realizing that the Blue Star Trail is an investment in the well-being of the city. No less an authority than Jim Hetting, one of Michigan's most respected experts in community economic development, says such nonmotorized trails are a "wildly popular and growing phenomena."

Among the reasons is they attract visitors, plus appeal to potential businesses and locals alike who look for the desired quality of "walkability" in communities.

The development and maintenance of the Trail is a gift to Saugatuck. Yes, there are hard-to-figure future costs. Previous generations faced the same concern, but it did not cripple them in developing parks, beaches, campgrounds and other recreational and infrastructure assets. They forged on knowing these assets would generate growth and promote the common good.

And now, rather than complaining about the ongoing cost of the legacy they bequeathed us over the years, we thank them and commend their foresight.

Frank Cunningham