

WEST RIVERFRONT COMMUNITY UPDATE

April 18, 2023

Questions & Answers



DETROIT
RIVERFRONT
CONSERVANCY

An aerial photograph of a city street featuring a greenway with trees and a sidewalk. Buildings are visible on either side of the street. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark blue rectangle containing white text.

WHAT IS THE DATE FOR THE SOUTHWEST GREENWAY GRAND OPENING?

We are so happy you asked. The Southwest Greenway will officially open in May and we hope you can join us! We will be hosting festivities throughout that day, and of course we invite you to enjoy the greenway any time after that. Stay tuned to our website and social media for the grand opening date and for updates on future programming and events.

WILL RCW PARK HAVE PICKLE BALL?

There is no current plan for pickle ball, but it could be an option as a pop-up program at the Sport House. Check out Clark Park's new pickle ball court or the pickle ball court located along the Dennis Archer Greenway across from the Coleman A. Young Recreation Center.



WHAT WILL HAPPEN WITH THE SPORT HOUSE IN WINTER?

We continue to experiment with winter programming and building on 3+ years of successful winter activities at Robert C. Valade Park. We plan to use the William Davidson Sport House, the Hill and other select areas to keep Wilson Park active throughout the winter.



IS THERE AN UPDATE ON THE WEST JEFFERSON / ROSA PARKS STREETScape?

We are currently working with Michigan Department of Transportation to complete the design for Jefferson Ave. Bidding will begin in January 2024 with construction to follow – most of which will be repaving along West Jefferson and normalizing the intersection at Rosa Parks Blvd.



WHAT IS THE COMPLETION TIMING OF THE EAST RIVERWALK AREA BETWEEN MT ELLIOTT PARK & BELLE ISLE?

This is the section we refer to as the “Uniroyal Promenade,” which is named for the former tire plant that was located there many years ago. Construction is well underway and is scheduled for completion in fall 2023.



WILL THE RECORDING OF THIS PRESENTATION BE AVAILABLE?

The slide presentation is available on the DRFC website at <https://detroitriverfront.org/riverfront/ralph-c-wilson-jr-centennial-park-development/meetings/community-meeting-7>

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WHO ARE THE CONTRACTORS FOR THE WEST RIVERFRONT PROJECTS?

Landside Construction

RALPH C. WILSON, JR.
CENTENNIAL PARK

CONSTRUCTION
Brinker-Christman JV

MARINE CONSTRUCTION
J. F. Brennan

**SOUTHWEST
GREENWAY**

CONSTRUCTION
Turner
Construction

Marine Construction

DDA/MDOT SITE

CONSTRUCTION
Warren Contractors &
Development



WILL ARTISTS BE COMMISSIONED FOR MURALS ALONG THE SW GREENWAY AS ON THE DEQUINDRE CUT? IF SO, WHEN WILL THE ARTIST CALL GO OUT?

Each year, the Conservancy works to identify and select local Detroit artists to create murals on the Dequindre Cut. We will also work to identify artists to install works on Southwest Greenway. The Conservancy connects with local artist collectives and organizations and bases its selection of artists on the walls, funding and theming for the space. We were also excited to find a remarkable collection of public art pieces along the greenway when we began clearing the site, and we will be preserving the vast majority of the original works on the greenway.



HOW DO ARTISTS AND COMMUNITY PROGRAM PROVIDERS COLLABORATE AND PARTNER WITH THE CULTURAL CROSSROADS PROJECT TO PROVIDE PROGRAMMING? IS THERE A CONTACT PERSON? WHERE DO YOU FIND THE APPLICATION INFORMATION?

There is an Application Launch Event with a Taste of the Neighborhood on Saturday June 17 from 2-5 p.m. at the Ford Resource and Engagement Center Plaza at 2826 W. Bagley. For information, please contact Shaun Nethercott from the Cultural Crossroads Initiative at netherco@hotmail.com.



**WHAT ARE THE PLANS FOR MAINTAINING
THE FREEDOM SCULPTURE IN HART PLAZA?
AND
IS THAT NOW BEING CALLED GM PLAZA?
THE BRICKS HAVE BEEN DETERIORATING
FOR SEVERAL YEARS AND REPAIRS WITH
BEIGE CONCRETE ON THE BLACK BRICK
MAKES IT LOOK WORSE.**

A point of clarification – GM Plaza is the portion of the Riverwalk that is directly south of the GM Renaissance Center. Hart Plaza and the Freedom Sculpture are managed by the City of Detroit.



A large-scale construction site under a clear blue sky. The central focus is the steel framework of a large, circular or semi-circular building. Several cranes are visible, including a prominent yellow Grove crane on the left and a JLG lift on the right. In the foreground, there are orange and white traffic barrels, a Volvo excavator, and a fenced-off area. The overall scene is one of active industrial construction.

WILL THE SPORT HOUSE BE SOLAR/WIND POWERED?

The Sport House does not contain any solar/wind power features.



**WILL THERE BE ANY TRAFFIC SIGNALS
MOUNTED ON TUBULAR STEEL MAST ARMS
BY THE FORMER JOE LOUIS ARENA SITE?
WILL THERE BE ANY NEW OR UPGRADED
TRAFFIC SIGNALS AND IF SO, WHERE?**

The street/traffic design are underway but not complete at this time. MDOT and the City of Detroit are leading this effort, with advisement and park coordination by the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy.



WHAT ABOUT PARKING?

There will be 180 public on-street parking spaces along Jefferson/Rosa Parks upon completion of upgrades, and there are an additional 1,400 on-street parking spaces on the adjacent blocks to the north. There will also be available parking in the Michigan Central Mobility Hub at Bagley adjacent to the Southwest Greenway.



WHAT PARKS HAVE WI-FI NOW?

We currently offer free public Wi-Fi at Robert C. Valade Park and Cullen Plaza.



HOW WILL THE PARK CELEBRATE AND SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS WITH UNIQUE NEEDS? COULD THERE BE AREAS CREATED FOR THOSE WHO NEED QUIET AND CALM EXPERIENCES OR SPECIALIZED EVENTS, FOR EXAMPLE, FOR AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH?

We are committed to creating opportunities for everyone and often include components for various audiences into our programming. For instance, when we host the Touch a Truck program, we reserve a sensory hour for kids of all ages with sensitivities. The unique design of Wilson Park accommodates all types of park users, as it will have several areas specifically designed for calm and reflection closer to the river, as well as areas dedicated to more action closer to Jefferson.



WOULD AN AQUARIUM FOCUSED ON THE GREAT LAKES BE A POSSIBILITY DOWNTOWN?

Currently, the Belle Isle Aquarium is the best option for guests who would like to visit an aquarium in Detroit.



COULD ORGANIZATIONS LIKE ECO-WORKS, THE DETROIT ZOO + NATURE CENTER AND GREAT LAKES WATER AUTHORITY PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING RELATED TO OUR ENVIRONMENT?

We are excited to be working with several amazing partners throughout Southeast Michigan. Some of these partners include Huron-Clinton Metro Parks, City of Detroit, Detroit River Story Lab, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, University of Michigan and so many more. We are in the process of developing our educational and place-based programming, and are looking for a dedicated individual to join our team. If you or someone you know is interested in joining us as an Educational Programs Manager, please visit this [link](#) and apply today!



HOW DO YOU SELECT PARTICIPANTS FOR THE GREAT MUSIC SERIES ON THE DEQUINDRE CUT? WHAT IS THE PROCESS TO APPLY TO PARTICIPATE? WOULD YOU ALSO CONSIDER PUTTING ON PLAYS?

For the last five years we have commissioned a local music collective D.Cipher to curate our music series on the Cut. To learn more about D.Cipher and how to apply to perform with them visit www.dcipher.org. Each year our programming team looks for new partners to engage, if you are interested in partnering with us to host a program on the riverfront, please connect with us in the fall of the year prior to the event at info@detroitriverfront.org.





HOW DO I VOLUNTEER?

To join our incredible team of DRFC volunteers, please visit our website to complete and submit an application. Here you will also find our monthly volunteer orientation dates, as well as information on upcoming volunteer opportunities. We'd love to have you on our Team!

<https://detroitriverfront.org/volunteers>



ARE THERE PLANS TO CREATE ICE SKATING OPPORTUNITIES?

Once the park is complete, we plan to monitor the Water Garden/Cove area to see if ice skating might be a possibility. We are committed to making the park a four-season destination, and we will provide programming all year round from winter festivals to winter wellness. If you have a great winter idea, please share it at info@detroitriverfront.org.



WHAT ARE THE DETAILS ON YOUR UPCOMING FREE BOAT CRUISES?

As part of our 20th anniversary celebrations, we'll be hosting free one-hour boat tours on the Diamond Jack, departing from Cullen Plaza at 6 p.m. June 8, July 13 and August 10. Stay tuned for details and registration. Visit our website at www.detroitriverfront.org/things-to-do as summer approaches.



WILL YOU BRING MOVIE NIGHTS BACK TO THE WEST RIVERFRONT?

We hear you. The DTE Hill at Wilson Park will provide an excellent location for movies, small concerts and more. We will continue to work on programming for that space, including potential movie nights, as we make plans for Wilson Park.



ARE THERE PLANS TO DEAL WITH THE GEESE, AND THEIR WASTE, IN THE LARGE GRASSY AREAS WHERE THEY SEEM TO GATHER?

In our experience managing the Riverwalk and other parks, the Conservancy has found that geese are less likely to occupy public space once it's open to the public. In instances where geese become a nuisance to the public, we have options to use various deterrent strategies that are safe and effective.



WHAT ARE THE SECURITY PLANS FOR IN THE PARK, ON THE SURROUNDING ROADS, AND IN THE ADJACENT RIVERFRONT COMPLEX AREAS?

Safety and security is something the DRFC takes very seriously. There will be a Command Center on the Wilson Park site which will be manned 24/7/365. The surrounding roads and other complexes would be the responsibility of the Detroit Police Department.



WHAT WILL THE PARK HOURS BE, AND WILL THEY BE ENFORCED?

Wilson Park hours are the same operating hours of all DRFC managed riverfront parks: 6:00 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.



**CAN YOU TALK ABOUT THE SECURITY PLANS
BOTH IN THE PARK AND ON THE SURROUNDING
ROADS AND THE ADJACENT RIVERFRONT
COMPLEX PROPERTY?**

**The Detroit Police Department will continue to manage public safety issues
along Jefferson Avenue.**



**COULD POLICE BE STATIONED ON JEFFERSON
TO ADDRESS ISSUES, LIKE LARGE PARTIES AND
RACING CARS THAT MAY BE AMPLIFIED WITH
MORE PEOPLE USING THE AREA?**

**The Detroit Police Department will continue to manage public safety issues
along Jefferson Avenue.**



ARE YOU CONSIDERING LIFEGUARDS FOR CERTAIN SECTIONS?

Safety is of the utmost importance to the Conservancy and we recognize we have a role to play in increasing water safety skills in our community. The Conservancy is currently partnering with the City of Detroit and Huron-Clinton Metro Parks on building up swimming access, equity and safety in Detroit. While we will not have traditional lifeguards, DRFC Security, play leaders and staff will be trained in CPR and surveying visitors around the water in both the water garden, river and water wonderland playscape.



COULD THERE BE ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND FUNDING FOR MORE ORGANIZATIONS TO PROVIDE HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAMMING?

We are actively fundraising for all types of programming, including health and wellness. We will continue to share the immense benefits of these program offerings to potential funders.



WILL THERE BE MORE PUBLIC RESTROOMS AT THE PARK (NOT PORT-A-POTTIES)?

Yes, the new park will contain indoor public restrooms in three locations throughout the park.



WILL THERE BE RIVERWALKERS THIS YEAR?

Yes, we will be holding Detroit Riverwalkers again this year every Tuesday & Thursday, June 13 - August 24 at Cullen Plaza. For all the details visit: <https://detroitriverfront.org/2023DetroitRiverwalkers>



ANY INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT TO EXPECT TO CONNECT THE WEST RIVERFRONT PARK (WILSON) TO THE RIVERSIDE PARK? WHAT'S THE VISION FOR THE RIVERSIDE PARK - LIKE GABRIEL RICHARD PARK? WHAT ABOUT A TIMELINE OR A VISION FOR THIS FINAL PIECE CONNECTING FROM BRIDGE TO BRIDGE? CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THIS BRIDGE TO BRIDGE VISION COME TO FRUITION.

DRFC's vision is for a 5.5 mile connected Riverwalk from bridge to bridge. Riverside Park is managed by the City of Detroit.



ANY DISCUSSION WITH WINDSOR? ANY CHANCE OF RETURNING TO A JOINT FREEDOM FESTIVAL OR OTHER SUCH ACTIVITIES? REALLY OUT THERE BUT ANY CHANCE OF A CONNECTION LIKE OVER/UNDER THE AMBASSADOR BRIDGE AND A FERRY OFF BELLE ISLE, LIKE CREATING AN INTERNATIONAL PARKWAY LOOK?

Both cities host special events along the riverfront, please check their respective websites for all planned activities.



ANY DISCUSSION OF TRANSIT? AT THE PLATFORM (SHOWN IN THE SLIDES) THERE COULD BE A PROMINENT PEOPLE MOVER STATION WITH STEPS (AND ELEVATORS) UP TO A PLATFORM WITH COMMANDING VIEWS. THERE COULD BE A FERRY RUNNING THE LENGTH FROM BRIDGE TO BRIDGE. TRANSIT SHOULD BE PART OF EVERYTHING THE CITY DOES AS WE'RE THE ONLY CITY OF SIGNIFICANCE IN THIS COUNTRY WITHOUT REAL MASS TRANSIT.

The city is planning on keeping the people mover station. The Conservancy, Michigan DNR and the Port Authority have all looked at options for a water taxi however funding to support this activity needs to be identified.



ANY DISCUSSION OF MOUNTED POLICE RUNNING THE LENGTH OF THE RIVER WALK?

Detroit Riverfront Conservancy security and several law enforcement departments continually patrol the riverfront district. There are walking, biking and vehicle patrols.



THANK YOU!



DETROIT RIVERFRONT CONSERVANCY

FOR EVERYONE. FOR 20 YEARS.