



Issue 21 / Q3 / 2023



## A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends and Supporters,

It's been an incredible summer as we continue to celebrate 20 years of transforming the Detroit Riverfront with our community.

Moving into our third decade, we haven't slowed down a bit.

I've been with the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy since the very beginning, and still, each new public space we open and each milestone we pass fills me with the same pride and excitement I felt when we poured our first ton of concrete back in 2004.

One of those moments was this spring at the grand opening of our newest public space, the Southwest Greenway. This new connection links the Ford Mobility Campus and the Corktown, Mexicantown and Southwest Detroit neighborhoods with the future Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park.

That same day we also proudly announced more than \$70 million in new funding for the Unified Greenway Campaign. The City of Detroit, Joe Louis Greenway Partnership and the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy are working to raise funds to complete the transformation of the riverfront, build the 27-mile Joe Louis Greenway and create an endowment to support the maintenance and operation of these spaces for future generations.

We'll meet another game changing milestone this fall when we complete our 3.5-mile vision for the East Riverfront and open the

Uniroyal Promenade. This section of the Riverwalk will connect Gabriel Richard Park, previously isolated from the rest of the Riverwalk, to Mt. Elliott Park and also provide a pathway to the bridge to Belle Isle. Finally, Detroiters will be able to travel from Belle Isle all the way past Hart Plaza without ever having to leave the Riverwalk.

With construction at Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park well underway and these two major connections complete this year, the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy continues to deliver on the promises we made 20 years ago to create world-class community spaces in Detroit that truly are for everybody.

As always, we hope you join in the celebration with us and take part in two of our most popular events: Soirée on the Greenway and the Detroit Harvest Fest & Food Truck Rally. Check out the details inside this newsletter about this incredible weekend of fall fun.

In my two decades at the Conservancy, I've seen the transformation of the Detroit Riverfront firsthand every step of the way. As we continue to make tremendous progress toward completing our vision, we know we couldn't do it without your support. I hope you have a wonderful fall, and I look forward to seeing you along the Detroit Riverfront soon.



Will Smith  
Chief Financial Officer



# 2023 PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS ON THE RIVERFRONT

Once again, the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy has seen a full year of fun, engaging, and family-friendly programming along the Detroit Riverfront. This past spring and summer, community members and visitors to the riverfront were able to enjoy some of the Conservancy's most popular programs, as well as some new and exciting events.

Summer kicked off with the Riverfront Run, where we hosted over 1000 runners and walkers who gave it their all and enjoyed music, giveaways and a great after-run party at Valade Park.

The same weekend, families came out for Kids' Fishing Fest at Milliken State Park and Harbor. The Michigan DNR and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services were on hand helping kids learn to fish and trophies were awarded to the kids with the biggest catch.

Reading and Rhythm on the Riverfront, sponsored by General Motors, brought thousands of kids and their families to Gabriel Richard Park to enjoy the scenery and green spaces, listen to great music and hear a story read by a local celebrity or community leader. Each child left with a free book, compliments of the Detroit Public Library.

The Detroit Riverwalkers, in partnership with AARP of Michigan, returned to the Riverwalk this year hosting older adults for wellness activities and opportunities to get outside and meet others in the community. AARP of Michigan provided fitness classes, blood pressure screenings, special giveaways and more.

Back in June, the Conservancy hosted our third annual Juneteenth celebration with D. CIPHER at Campbell Terrace on the Dequindre Cut. This celebration of black culture included live music, vendors, and information booths from local organizations. Additionally, the event marked the opening of the Black Bottom Street View Exhibit on the Dequindre Cut. This project was meant to visualize and help preserve the history of Detroit's historic Black Bottom neighborhood. Visitors to the Dequindre Cut, which sits at the eastern border of this historic neighborhood, were able to view a collection of photographs capturing life in Black Bottom.

It has been a fantastic season of activity on the riverfront, and the Conservancy is looking forward to more exciting programming throughout the fall. With the winter months right around the corner, Winter at Valade will return, so stay tuned for more family-friendly fun.

Visit [detroitriverfront.org/things-to-do](https://detroitriverfront.org/things-to-do) for a full list of programs and events.





# CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

**Three significant construction projects along the Detroit Riverfront continue to show significant progress after a busy summer.**

## Uniroyal Promenade

During September, crews will put the final touches on the Uniroyal Promenade in preparation for a fall grand opening. During the summer, work on the retaining wall at the far eastern end of the property was completed and the last stretch of Riverwalk was poured. The final sections of marine railing are installed and the irrigation system is in place and ready for landscaping to begin in the coming weeks. Final site furnishing installation is set to be complete next month.

The Uniroyal Promenade completes the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy's vision for the East Riverfront and also provides a link between Mt. Elliott Park and Gabriel Richard Park, in addition to providing a pathway from the Riverwalk to the MacArthur Bridge to Belle Isle.

The Conservancy looks forward to celebrating the grand opening of the Uniroyal Promenade later this fall.

## DDA Parcel

Seawall repairs have been completed by the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) along this West Riverfront property and crews are currently working on preparing for the installation of the Riverwalk.

This section of the riverfront is located along West Jefferson between Riverfront Towers and Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park.

In June, trees and brush were removed from the property, the site was cleared and leveled and the seawall cap poured. Currently, crews are working on underground utilities.

Over the next couple months, crews will begin installing the Riverwalk.

Once complete, this space will feature a spacious concrete plaza with tiered seating, three rain gardens, the iconic marine railing, lighting, security cameras, and beautiful landscaping.

The Conservancy anticipates completion of this project in 2024.

## Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park

With more than a full year of construction complete, the incredible transformation of the former West Riverfront Park into Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park continues to show tremendous progress.

This summer, work crews finished the installation of the structural steel and roof trusses on the William Davidson Sport House and are currently working on pouring the roof deck and the parapet along the roofline. This very visual work can be clearly seen from Jefferson Avenue.

Grading for the east and west comfort stations is complete in preparation to begin aggregate pier foundations. Over the next couple of weeks, concrete foundations and underground utilities will follow.

Along the water's edge, the seawall has been removed to accommodate the new design soft shoreline. All sediment remediation in the river is complete. The materials needed for the lining of the Water Garden have been delivered as well. The excavation of the Water Garden has begun and work in this area will continue for another two months.



Uniroyal Promenade



DDA Parcel



William Davidson Sport House, Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park

Elsewhere throughout the 22-acre property, significant site grading occurred over the summer months. The different levels and topographies of the various sections of the property can be viewed from the road. Underground utilities and storm water piping were completed during the summer as well.

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park will feature two competition sized basketball courts at the William Davidson Sport House, the Huron-Clinton Metroparks Water Garden, the Delta Dental Children's Play Garden, and the expansive DTE Foundation Hill. The park will be complete in the Fall of 2024.



Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park



Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park

ADMIT ONE



# SOIRÉE ON THE GREENWAY

CIRQUE DE FREIGHT YARD

OCTOBER  
6TH

STARTS AT  
6PM → ENDS AT  
10PM

FRIDAY

LOCATED AT  
DEQUINDRE CUT  
FREIGHT YARD

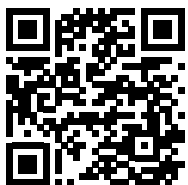
ADMIT ONE

## SOIRÉE ON THE GREENWAY

Once again, one of the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy's favorite annual fundraisers – Soirée on the Greenway – will return as an exclusive preview to the Detroit Harvest Fest & Food Truck Rally.

On October 6, the Dequindre Cut Freight Yard will be transformed into a festive, nighttime circus, with exceptional food, refreshments, live performances, carnival games, and fall-themed activities. There will also be an unveiling of a brand-new mural on the cut painted by a Detroit artist.

With over 50,000 people attending Harvest Fest every year, Soirée is a special opportunity to beat the crowds, enjoy delicious eats from an outstanding lineup of Detroit food trucks, and celebrate the fall season, all while supporting the work of the Conservancy.



Visit [detroitriverfront.org/soirée](http://detroitriverfront.org/soirée) for tickets and to learn more!





# SOIRÉE ON THE GREENWAY

## SPONSORSHIPS & TICKETS

### ALLIES OF THE GREENWAY \$5,000

Acknowledgement as an Ally of the Greenway  
Signage throughout event  
10 VIP tickets

### DEQUINDRE CUT PARTNERS

\$2,500 | 8 VIP TICKETS

### SOIRÉE PARTNERS PARTNERS

\$1,000 | 6 VIP TICKETS

### ALL SPONSORS RECEIVE

Recognition on DRFC website, in event press release, and on promotional materials  
Inclusion in eblasts (16k+ subscribers)  
Social media recognition (135k+ followers)  
Listing on Sponsor Board at Soirée  
VIP tickets, which include exclusive VIP benefits

### VIP PACKAGE \$500

Includes 4 VIP tickets, access to the private VIP lounge, souvenir masquerade masks, and unlimited food & refreshments.

### MAIN EVENT TICKET \$75

Includes entry for one guest, items from three food trucks, three beverages, live musical entertainment, fall activities, and more!

## THANK YOU TO OUR SOIRÉE SPONSORS

as of 8/10/2023

### CARNIVAL ARCADE SPONSOR



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MGM Grand Detroit, Matt & Mona Simoncini

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Diamond Jack's River Tours, Gail and Lois Warden Fund, Goyert-Treadwell Family, Operating Engineers Local 324, Parade Company, Visit Detroit

### SOIRÉE PARTNERS

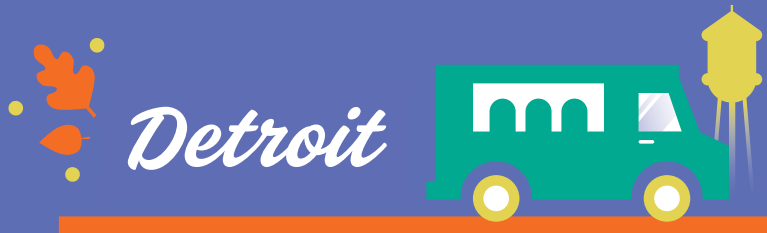
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### IN-KIND PARTNER

Wheelhouse Detroit



DETROIT  
RIVERFRONT  
CONSERVANCY



# DETROIT HARVESTFEST &

## FOOD TRUCK RALLY

OCTOBER 7 & 8 | 11AM-8PM | DEQUINDRE CUT



### EMBRACING FALL: DETROIT HARVEST FEST & FOOD TRUCK RALLY

The Detroit Harvest Fest & Food Truck rally will be returning to the Dequindre Cut on October 7 and 8. Featuring a full mile of entertainment, activity, and fall-themed libations, Harvest Fest 2023 will be the perfect opportunity to enjoy the fall season on the riverfront.

Featuring five music stages, guests will enjoy a full line-up of local Detroit performers, while kids can enjoy many free activities, including inflatable games and obstacle courses, a petting zoo, a pumpkin patch, trick-or-treat stations, and more.

Lined up along the Cut from Jefferson Avenue to Wilkins Street, the Food Truck Rally will feature more than 50 of Detroit's favorite food trucks. With all different types of cuisine, there will be something delicious for everyone to enjoy.

As always, Harvest Fest is a celebration of all things fall. Cirque de Freight Yard will once again be a highlight of the event, with more live entertainment, buskers, tarot card readers, and even a pet costume parade. Guests are encouraged to don their most festive masquerade costumes and masks, head on down to the scenic Dequindre Cut, and embrace the changing of the seasons.







# SHIMMER ON THE RIVER 2023 RECAP

On June 22, the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with its largest annual fundraiser, Shimmer on the River. A record-breaking \$410,000 was raised to fund the Conservancy's efforts to develop and maintain beautiful green spaces along the Detroit Riverfront. The memorable evening at Robert C. Valade Park began with a Shimmer Award ceremony honoring James B. and Ann V. Nicholson, leading supporters of the Conservancy since 2008, and Mariam C. Noland and James A. Kelly who have been champions of the Conservancy since its inception. As the night went on, guests ventured down to the Riverfront Boardwalk to get custom airbrushed apparel, make their own commemorative buttons, and enjoy a 360 photo op with the beautiful riverfront as a backdrop. Detroit-based food trucks lined the park, offering a delicious strolling dinner. Guests kicked off their shoes in the beach zone to play inflatable skee ball and scale the rock climbing wall for unmatched river views, and the younger attendees danced the night away at the Kids Dance Party. It was a beautiful evening full of fun with families, especially for guests from local non-profit A Kid Again. The headline performance from The Purple XPeRleNCE closed out the evening, as guests took to the dance floor during "Little Red Corvette" and sang along to "Purple Rain."

The Conservancy would like to thank those who attended and supported Shimmer 2023, as well as those who have supported the organization through its first 20 years. The generosity of the Detroit community makes year-round programming, projects, and special events on the riverfront possible for all to enjoy. The Conservancy looks forward to continuing to celebrate the riverfront at Shimmer on the River for years to come.



THANK YOU TO OUR  
**SHIMMER SPONSORS**

PRESENTED BY  
THE **KRESGE** FOUNDATION | **FRIENDS OF ROBERT C. VALADE PARK**

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**IN-KIND SPONSORS**  
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Interested in wearing  
your support of our  
efforts on your sleeve  
for all to see?

Check out [detroitriverfront.org/RiverfrontMerch](https://detroitriverfront.org/RiverfrontMerch) to purchase a wide variety of Detroit Riverfront gear, from Dequindre Cut hoodies, to Best Riverwalk T shirts and baby onesies.

## 20 YEARS AND BEYOND

This landmark year celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy has been filled with forward momentum and progress moving into our third decade of transformation along the Detroit Riverfront.

Our team hasn't slowed down a bit as we continue to work hard to create spaces and provide experiences where the community can come together and be a part of something that is unique to Detroit. Our Riverwalk and public spaces create connections throughout Detroit and the entire region that have become a part of people's everyday lives. We are extremely proud of this work, and we couldn't do any of it without your support.

Members of our team are on site 365 days a year ensuring that we keep our promise that the Detroit Riverfront will always be a safe, clean, beautiful, accessible, world-class gathering place for all. But what does that mean in real terms?

- 50 acres of lawns mowed and kept free of litter
- Over 10,000 annual flowers planted a year with spring, summer, fall and winter displays
- 160+ security cameras monitored 24 hours a day
- 7.5 miles of riverwalk and greenways cleared of snow to welcome our most dedicated walkers and runners all winter
- Coordination of over 650 volunteers contributing more than 4500 hours
- Over 200 days with free programming hosted by the Conservancy

As you consider your support for the Conservancy this year—and next time you're admiring the landscaping at Cullen Plaza—remember none of it is possible without the steadfast donors who share our belief in the promises we made 20 years ago and have kept every day since.

It's been an incredible 20 years of transformation along the Detroit Riverfront and generous community support from each and every one of you has been the key to our success. We thank you for your past support and invite you to consider an increased gift as we move into our next decade and beyond. [detroitriverfront.org/give/2023\\_NL3](https://detroitriverfront.org/give/2023_NL3)



## ADDITIONAL WAYS TO GIVE

In addition to visiting our online store, here are some ways you can help out:

- Make a one-time donation or become a Monthly Sustainer
- Learn about your employer's matching gift program
- Underwrite a commemorative bench or make an honorary gift for a loved one
- Support the Conservancy at its fundraising events

Visit [detroitriverfront.org/waystohelp](https://detroitriverfront.org/waystohelp)

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