

EAST RIVERFRONT

ASSETS STUDY

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS: GOLD COAST PARKS

This presentation was delivered virtually via zoom. Please see meeting recording for additional details and community conversation

Part of the
PARKS & REC
STRATEGIC PLAN



Welcome!
Please sign in



Click the link in the chat to sign in
(or add your contact info to the chat)

Why are we here tonight?

- This is a part of the ongoing engagement process. Tonight is important, it's another milestone on a long path of engagement.
- Tonight's draft recommendations were built based on earlier public feedback, now we want your feedback so we can continue to refine the recommendations.
- No final decisions have been made.

How can I participate?

Here are the guidelines for tonight's discussion:

- If you would like to ask questions by microphone, you may use the **“raise hand” button** at the bottom of your screen. The moderator will unmute participants in the order that they are raised at the end of the presentation.
- **For call-ins, press *9** to raise your hand and we'll read the last 4 digits of your phone number when it's time for you to speak.
- We want to give **as many people as possible the opportunity to be heard**. If you've already had a chance to speak, or if someone else has voiced your comment, please let people with new ideas be heard.
- If we're unable to hear from all raised hands by 7:45pm, you can **send your comments/questions directly to Maria Galarza** by phone: 313-241-4080 or by email: galarzam@detroitmi.gov.
- Each person has **two minutes** to speak.
- All comments and questions **in the chat** will become part of the meeting record and will be incorporated into future recommendations by the project team.

REC 

Note: We will be recording this meeting to share online with any interested stakeholders who were not able to attend.

What is the purpose of the study?

- To create **vibrant, sustainable destinations** by understanding and unlocking the potential of underused parklands/sites along the riverfront.
- To build upon past riverfront studies
- To develop a **holistic, connective vision** and an **actionable strategic plan** for Detroit's riverfront.
- To learn **how you use and enjoy your favorite spaces along the riverfront now** and how you wish to do so in the future.

> This is a study, it is not a detailed design for each asset.



MARINA DISTRICT

RIVERSIDE MARINA,
ST. JEAN BOAT LAUNCH

GOLD COAST

OWEN PARK, ERMA
HENDERSON MARINA & PARK

GABRIEL RICHARD PARK

MT. ELLIOT PARK

ROBERT C. VALADE PARK

THE ARETHA

MILLIKEN STATE PARK AND HARBOR

MILLIKEN STATE PARK WETLANDS

CULLEN PLAZA (+ CAROUSEL!)

RIVERWALK GARDEN ROOMS

GM PLAZA

CIVIC CENTER

HART PLAZA, SPIRIT PLAZA,
JOE LOUIS FIST

THE EAST RIVERFRONT

Our Process



2021

2022

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
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LEARNING & ANALYSIS

DRAFT APPROACH

FINAL APPROACH

DRAFT PLAN



OUR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



2 KICKOFF MTGS.

68



Round 1
5 SPRING FOCUS GROUPS

70



Round 2
SURVEYS + IN PERSON INTERVIEWS

329

52

Many of them fishermen/women



Round 3
3 FALL COMMUNITY MEETINGS



PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
(Up Next)

Number of Participants:

Owen + Erma

12

143

20

TOTAL TOUCHPOINTS (so far):

519



ground game

We also met people where they were and conducted 20 one-on-one interviews.

Photo: Owen Park Interviewees

ERMA HENDERSON PARK

COMMUNITY INSIGHT

WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL OPINION OF THE PARK?

95 responses



Key Takeaways:

- Flower gardens are a big attraction, and the basketball courts are well used.
- Address the late-night noise: People gathering in the parking lot disturb nearby residents. (Worse during the pandemic.)
- Add amenities: Food, boat and bike rentals and other concessions that both boaters and non-boaters could enjoy.
- Safety is a big concern
- Improve access between the marina and the park.
- Reopen the bathrooms.
- Trash collection is an issue here.
- There's an opportunity to display Erma Henderson's history

I hope there is a historic plaque with information about Erma Henderson who was a wonderful person and an important person in Detroit's history.

Many improvements have been made, however this park is heavily used by families for picnics and there is one picnic table and no permanent grills for people to use.

I live next door to the park, and during the summer on nice weather days it can get out of control.

Please keep it clean.

Gardens are amazing!

OWEN PARK

COMMUNITY INSIGHT

WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL OPINION OF THE PARK?

48 responses



“ Anything is probably better than what is there now

“ It's my favorite park. Please don't overdevelop it!

“ Needs lots of cleanup. Just don't commercialize this park too much. It's got a lot of character and represents "the city" very well. Don't over gentrify it.

“ Dog friendly park or fishing pier; less is more in some parks. Bench seating and shade would be great.

“ The road is dirt and there is no signage. I'm not sure if I want the signage - this is one of Detroit's best kept secrets.

Key Takeaways:

- Primarily used for **fishing**.
- The quiet, secluded and informal nature of the park is seen as a benefit.
- Improve access: Make it easier to get down to the water and **address the car-tracked terrain**.
- Add **lighting**.
- Address the **abandoned building next to the park**, it would make it seem less isolated and safer.
- Some suggested **adding amenities**, like benches for seniors, and family-friendly activities for kids, like fishing.

Riverfront Park Typology

Protect the Detroit River

- Work to protect the river shoreline
- Identify areas suitable for habitat restoration
- Introduce resilient infrastructure

Ensure public access to be enjoyed by all

- Balance of amenities between passive and active
- Increase opportunities for everyone to enjoy the river

Improve maintenance and operations

- Increase trash pick-up during peak seasons
- Improve visitor experience through **Park Ambassador*** (**pilot program*)

 **Our riverfront parks are some of the most visited parks in Detroit!**

GOLD COAST

An aerial photograph of a marina filled with numerous yellow boats docked at a long pier. The marina is situated on a riverbank, with a city skyline and green spaces visible in the background. The text "GOLD COAST" is overlaid in large white letters across the center of the image.

GOLD COAST OVERVIEW

- Located approximately 3 miles from Downtown.
- Highrise residential area with views of the Detroit river, Belle Isle and Lake St. Clair.
- Parks are disconnected from the rest of the riverfront park system.

ASSETS:

- Owen Park (8 acres)
- Erma Henderson Park (21 acres)
- Erma Henderson Marina (15 acres)
- Stockton Park (2 acres)



GOLD COAST

EXISTING CONDITIONS



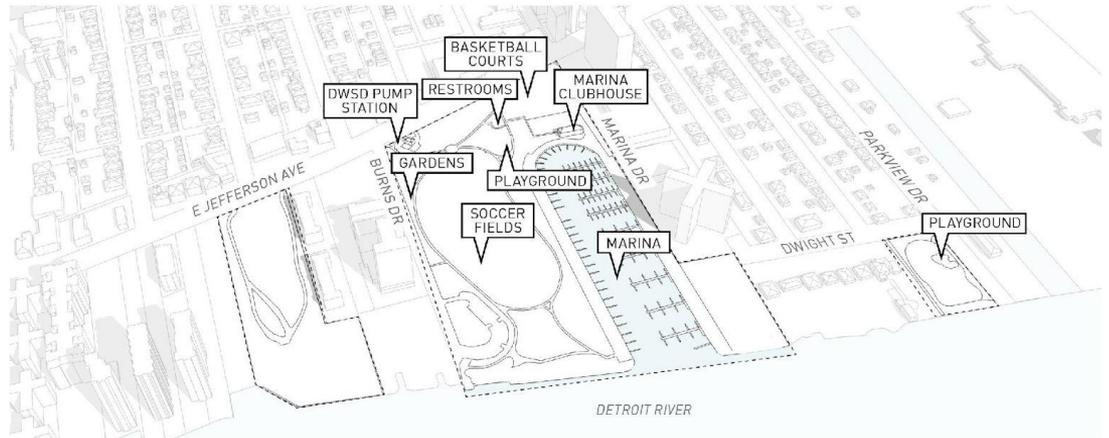
GARDENS



BASKETBALL COURTS

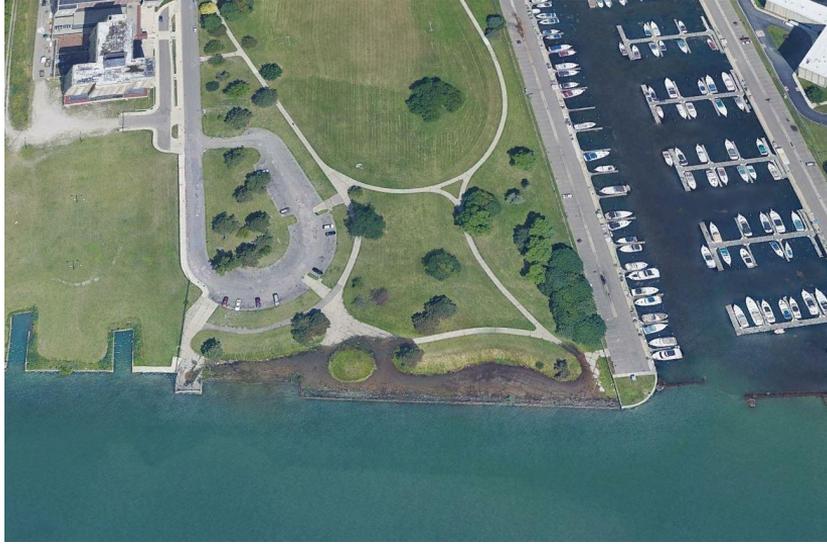


EXISTING AERIAL OF SITE & SURROUNDINGS



EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

ERMA HENDERSON SHORELINE RESTORATION



before



after







Team Findings



Public Input



Draft Recommendations

GOLD COAST

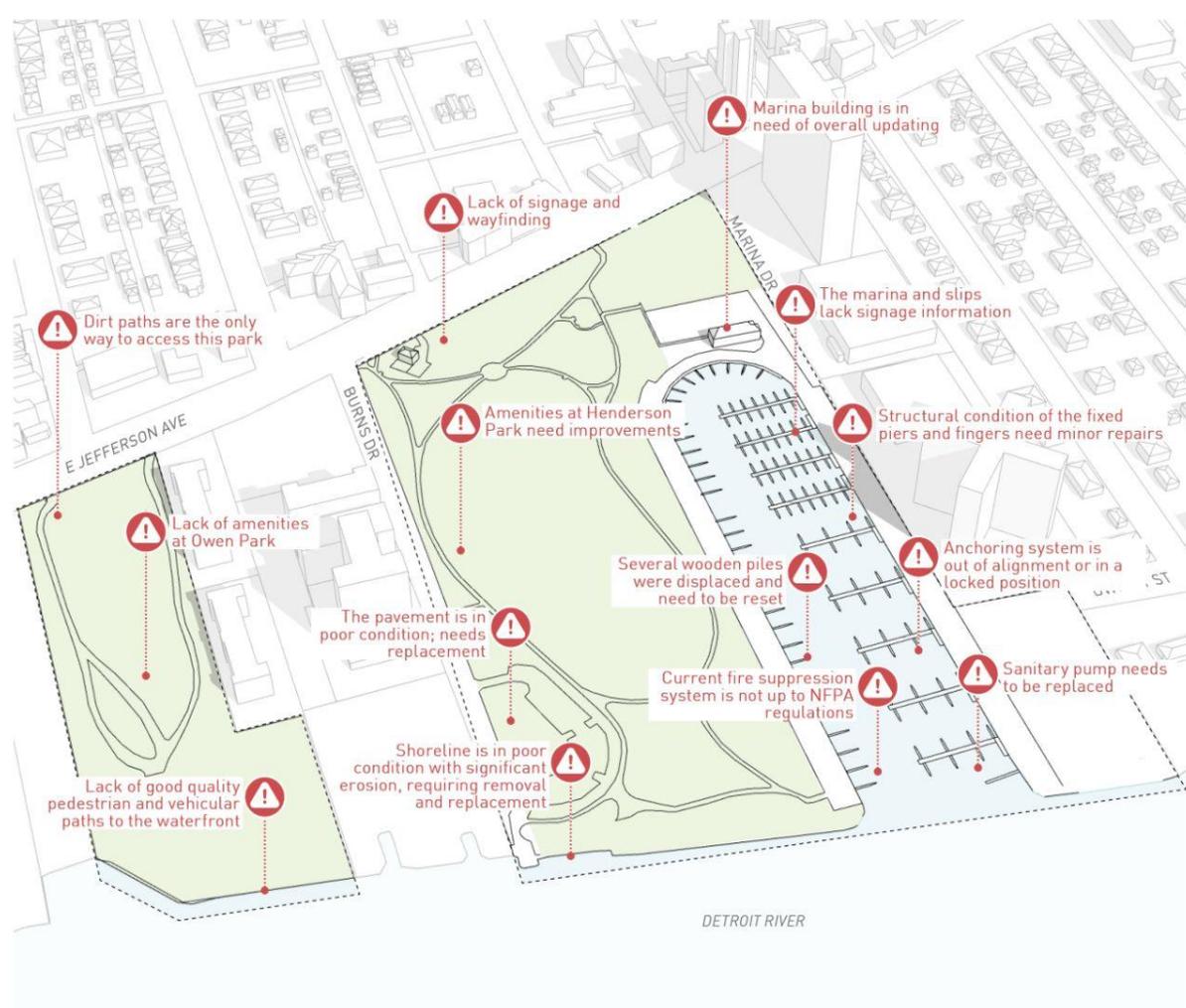
PROJECT TEAM FINDINGS



Aerial view of dirt vehicular paths and shoreline in poor condition at Owen Park



The restroom building in Erma Henderson Park is currently closed



GOLD COAST

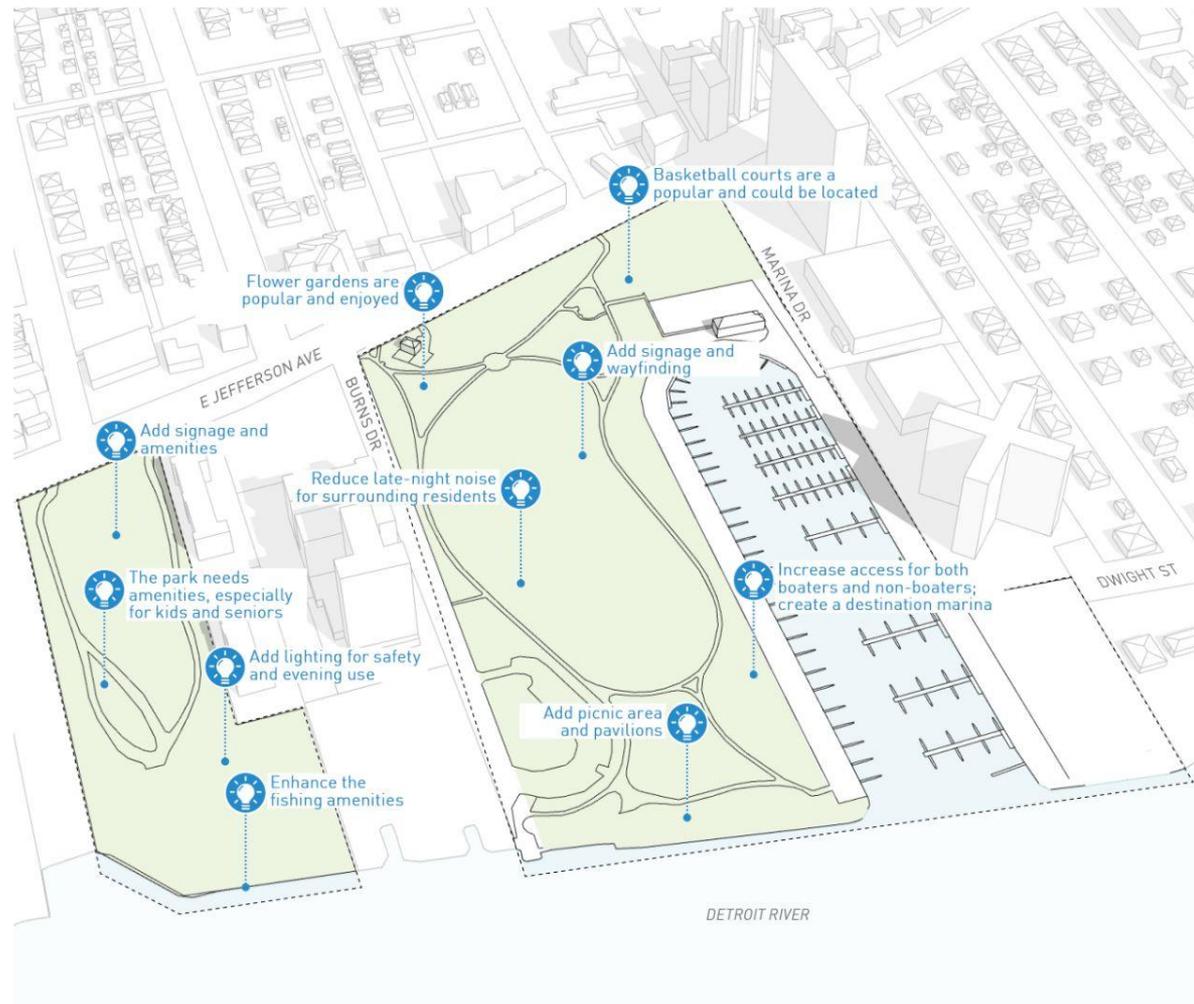
PUBLIC INPUT: WHAT WE HEARD FROM YOU

OWEN PARK

- Quiet, secluded nature of the park.
 - Great fishing spot.
- ☹️
- Improve access: make it easier to get down to the water.
 - General amenities, like restrooms, benches and lighting, and for fishing.
 - General awareness of the park.
 - Integration into the riverfront park system.

ERMA HENDERSON PARK & MARINA

- Gardens/flower beds(!)
 - Walking path
 - Location of the park
- ☹️
- Noise/rowdy park users impact the quality of life for nearby residents, some called for increased security
 - Trash collection
 - Confusing bathroom hours
 - Display Erma Henderson's history on the site
 - Park feels disconnected from the river itself and the riverwalk system
 - More family-oriented amenities, like grills and picnic tables



GOLD COAST PARKING



SHADE TREES WITHIN PARKING LOTS



RAIN GARDEN INTEGRATED WITHIN PARKING LOT



GOLD COAST

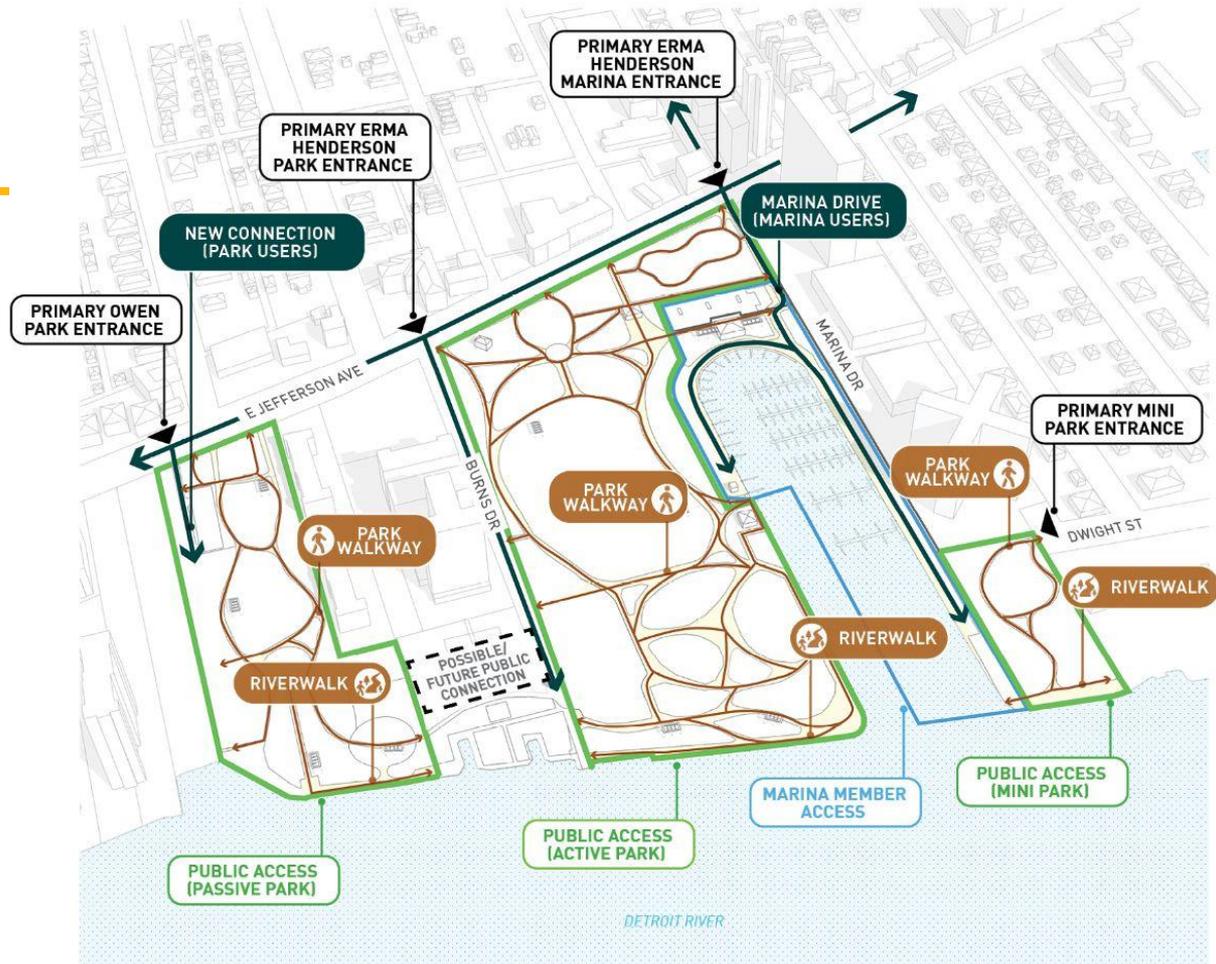
CIRCULATION + ACCESS



RIVERWALK



WALKING PATHS WITHIN PARK SPACES



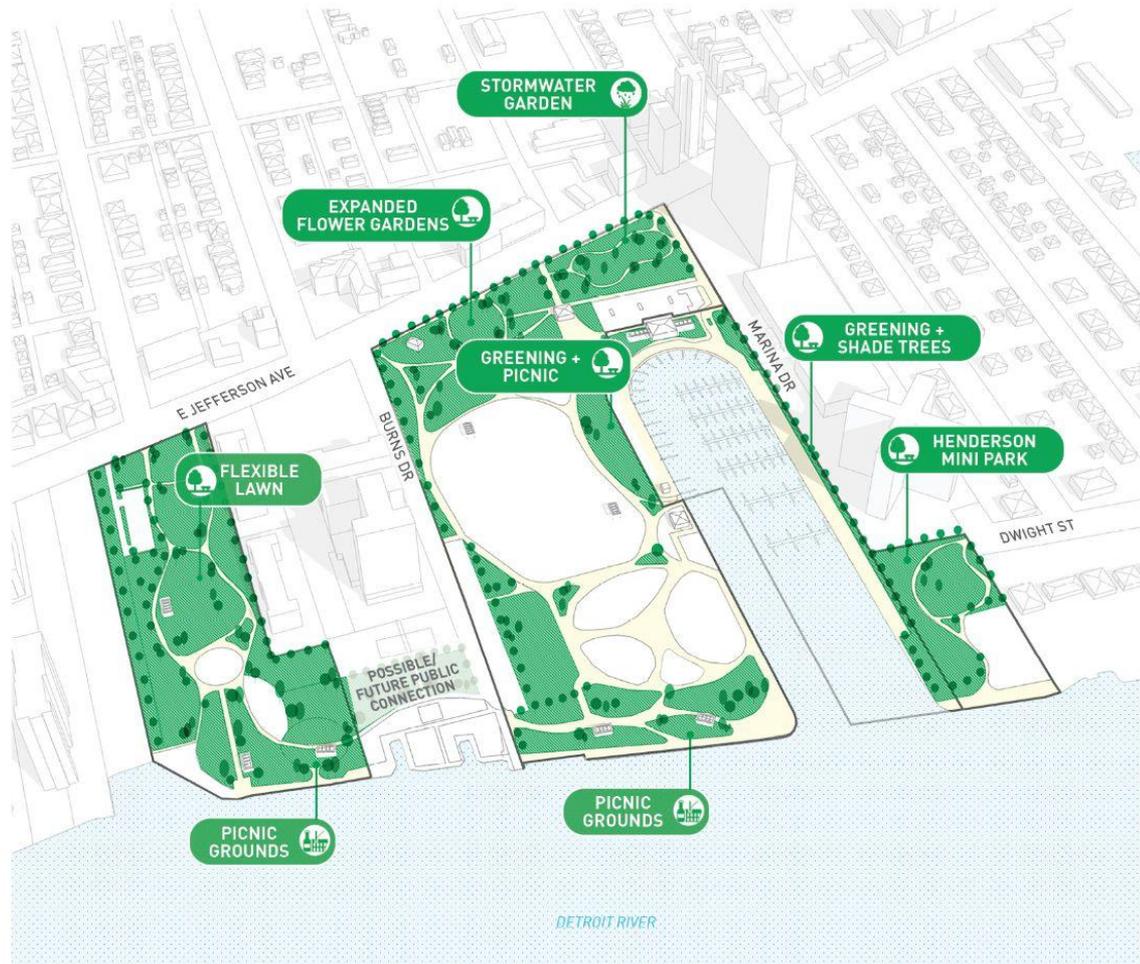
GOLD COAST PASSIVE LANDSCAPE



WALKING PATHS & SEATING IN PARK SPACES



FLEXIBLE LAWN SPACE



GOLD COAST ACTIVE LANDSCAPE



CHILDREN'S PLAYSAPES



SPORTS COURTS



GOLD COAST WATER ACTIVITY



KAYAK LAUNCH



INTERACTIVE FOUNTAIN / WATER FEATURE



GOLD COAST BUILDINGS + STRUCTURES



WATERFRONT PAVILION



SHELTER PAVILIONS WITHIN PARK SPACES



ERMA HENDERSON VISION

ERMA HENDERSON PARK & MARINA

- Increase activities and destinations throughout the park
- Maintain and enhance the gardens
- Increase access to and around the marina
- Improve the perimeter of the marina by reorganizing parking and adding landscaped areas
- Continue to monitor and adjust programming based on user needs
- Add and improve signage and wayfinding
- Increase access to the parks from Jefferson Ave.
- Maintain and enhance fishing areas
- Create connection(s) between the parks
- Add picnic pavilions



OWEN PARK VISION

OWEN PARK

- Reintroduce popular amenities from the site's history in a modern way, such as F&B along Jefferson Ave., a fountain, and/or a swimming pond or splash pad
- Improve vehicular access and parking areas
- Continue to monitor and adjust programming based on user needs
- Add and improve signage and wayfinding
- Increase access to the parks from Jefferson Ave.
- Maintain and enhance fishing areas
- Create connection(s) between the parks
- Add picnic pavilions



ERMA HENDERSON + OWEN PARK DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

PROGRAM ZONES

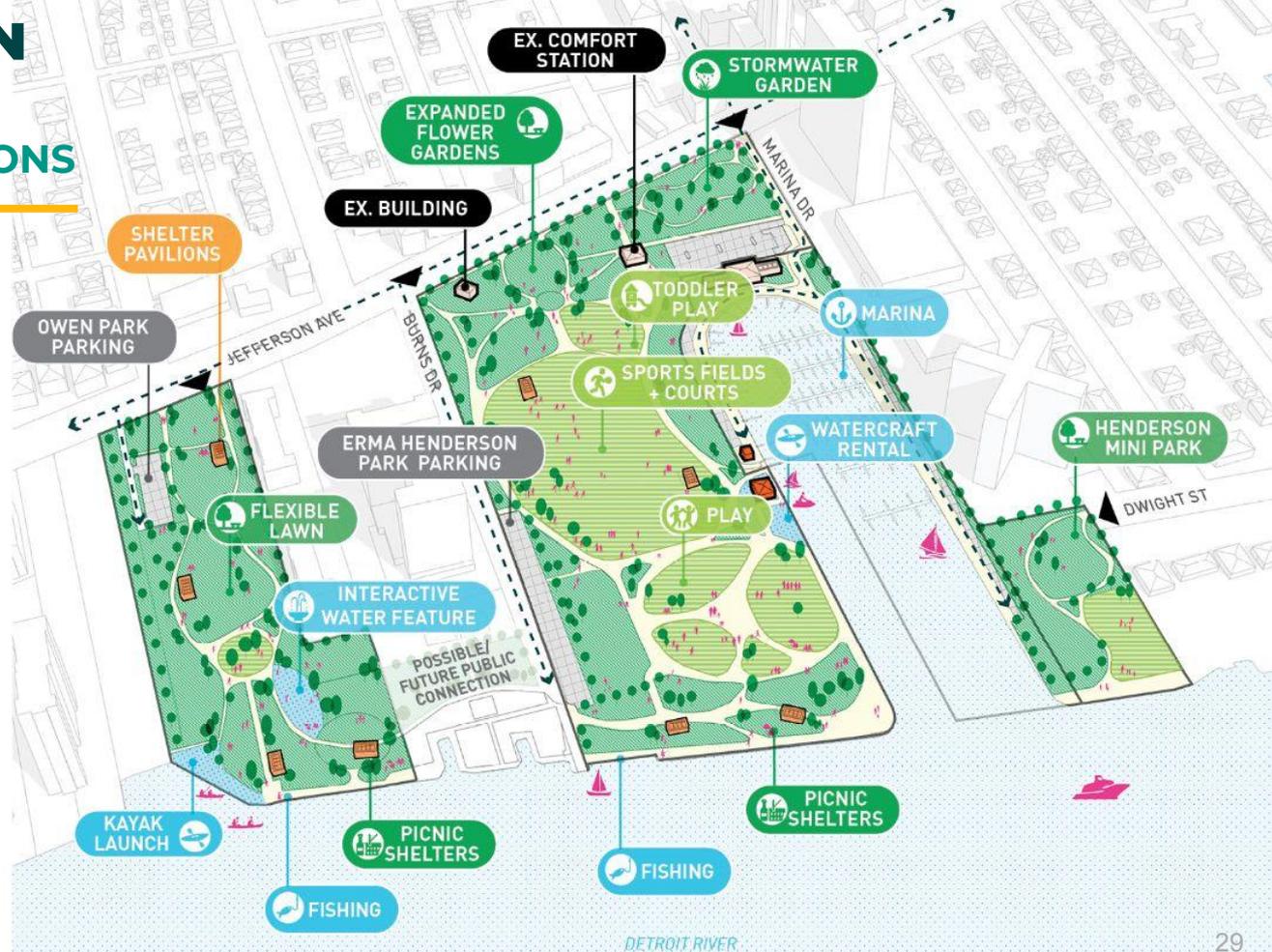
- PASSIVE LANDSCAPE
- ACTIVE LANDSCAPE
- WATER-BASED ACTIVITIES
- EXISTING BUILDINGS
- NEW PAVILIONS/SHELTERS
- NEW COMFORT STATIONS/AMENITY BUILDINGS
- PARKING

CIRCULATION

- VEHICULAR/MULTI-MODAL STREET
- PEDESTRIAN PATH
- MAIN ENTRANCES



ACCESS ZONES



DETROIT RIVER

Your feedback is important

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POLL 1

Please prioritize these ideas for Erma Henderson Park

1. Removing the south parking lot and replacing with a linear parking area
2. Relocating the basketball court
3. Creating a riverwalk walking path
4. Including picnic pavilions
5. Creating a water activity rental area
6. Formalize the Erma Henderson “Mini Park”

[RESULTS](#)

Click the link in the chat, or

1

Grab Your Phone



2

Go to www.menti.com

3

Enter the code **9990 7432** and hit **Submit**

POLL 2

Please prioritize these ideas for Owen Park

1. Creating a riverwalk walking path
2. Creating fishing amenities (*such as benches, rod holders, etc.*)
3. Creating a kayak launch
4. Building an interactive water feature (*such as a splash pad, fountain or swimming pond*)

[RESULTS](#)

Click the link in the chat, or

1

Grab Your Phone



2

Go to www.menti.com

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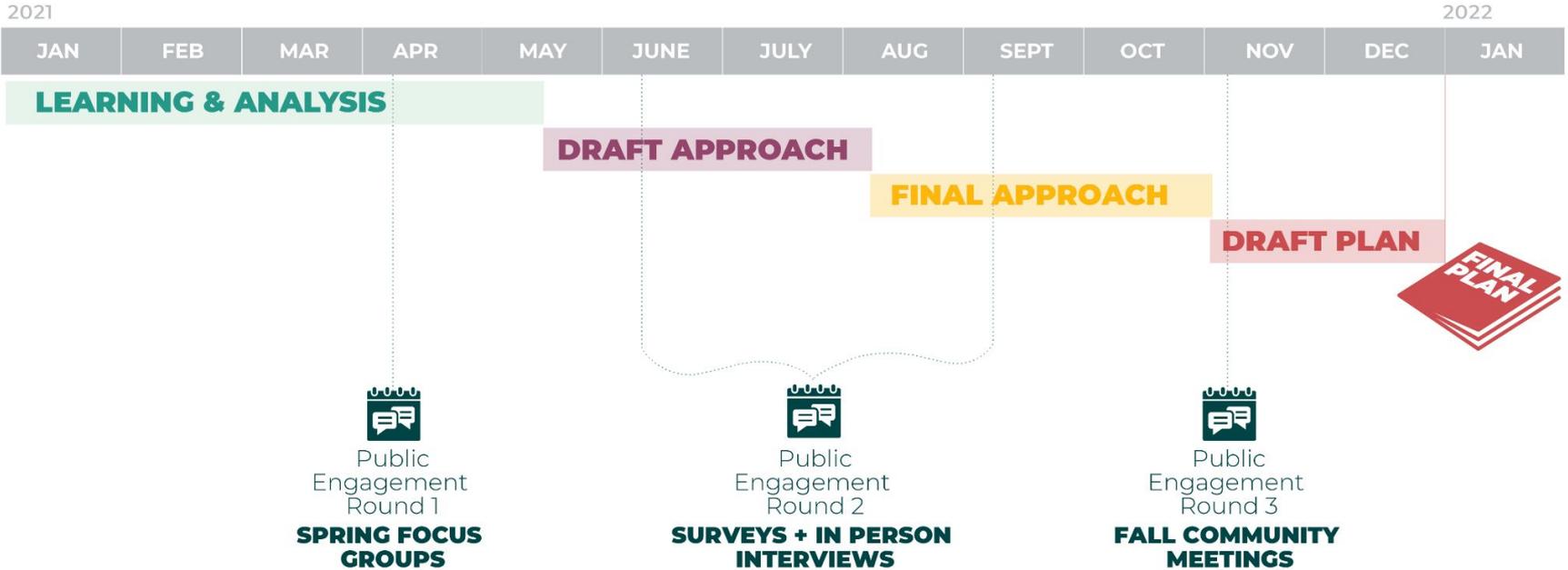
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and hit **Submit**



Next Steps

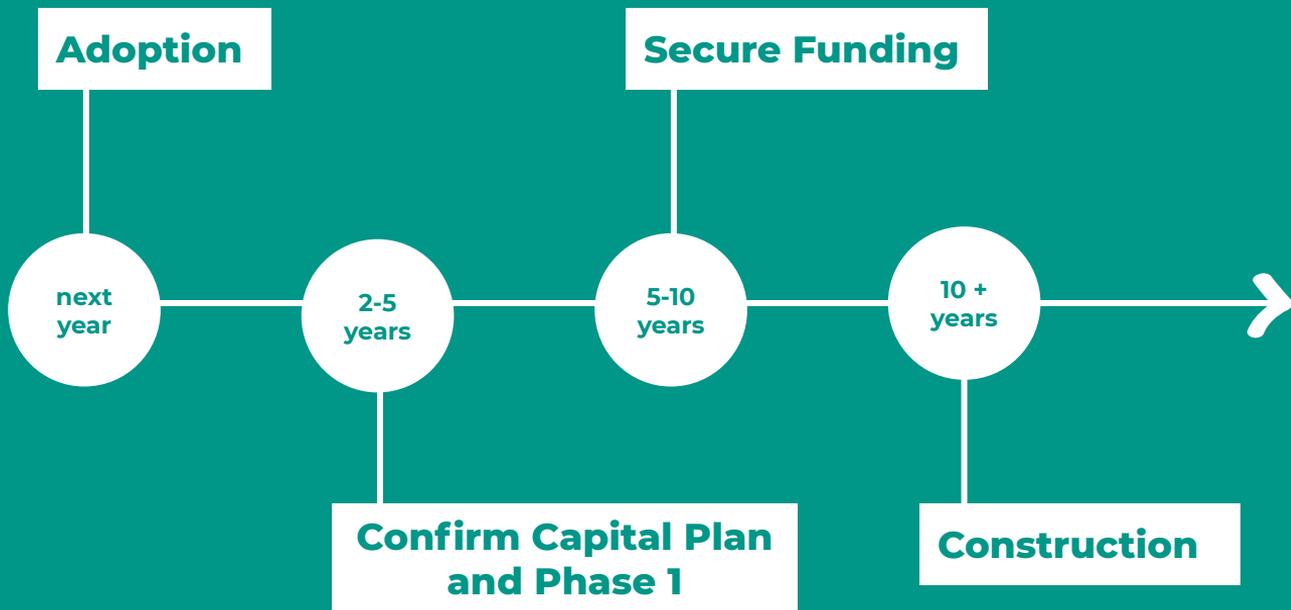


Review the
draft plan
early 2022



Once the plan is done,

what happens next?





Want to get involved in early action projects?

Contact Maria to volunteer!

How to Contact Us

By phone: 313-241-4080

By email: Maria Galarza- galarzam@detroitmi.gov

Where to find more information

www.detroitmi.gov/eras

Thank you!