

# EAST RIVERFRONT

## ASSETS STUDY

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### 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)*

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.

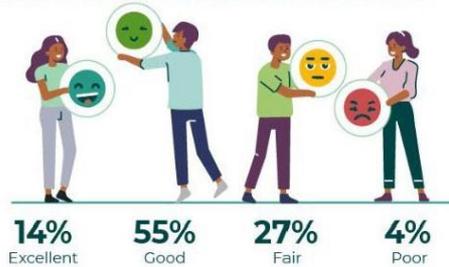
**Photo: Owen Park Interviewees**

# 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



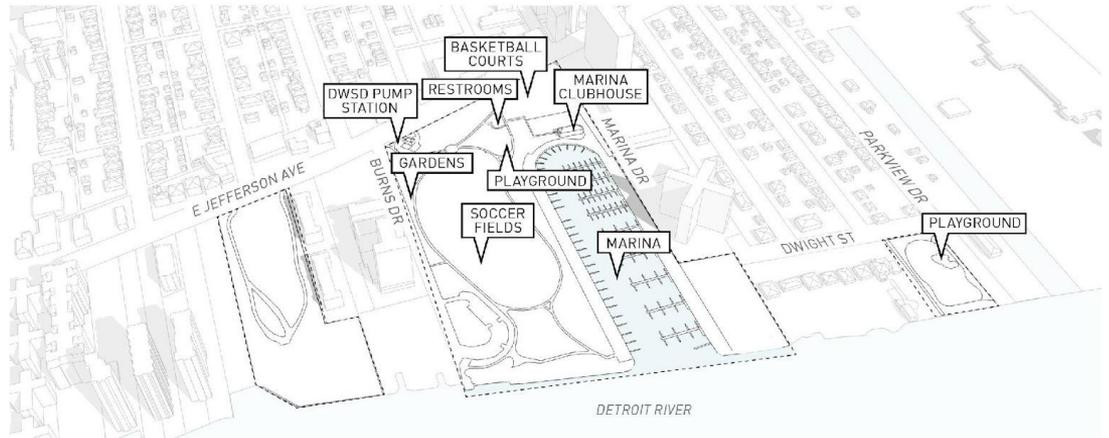
GARDENS



BASKETBALL COURTS



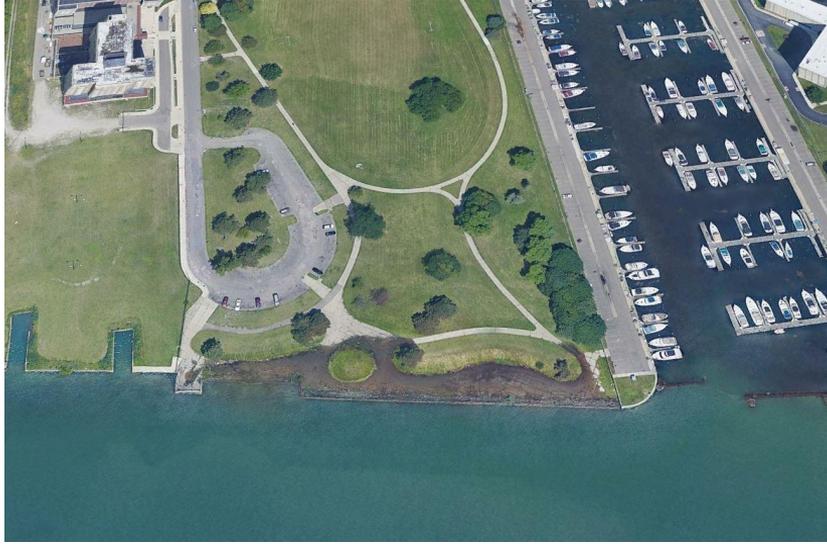
EXISTING AERIAL OF SITE & SURROUNDINGS



EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

# ERMA HENDERSON SHORELINE RESTORATION

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*before*



*after*







**Team Findings**



**Public Input**



**Draft Recommendations**

# GOLD COAST

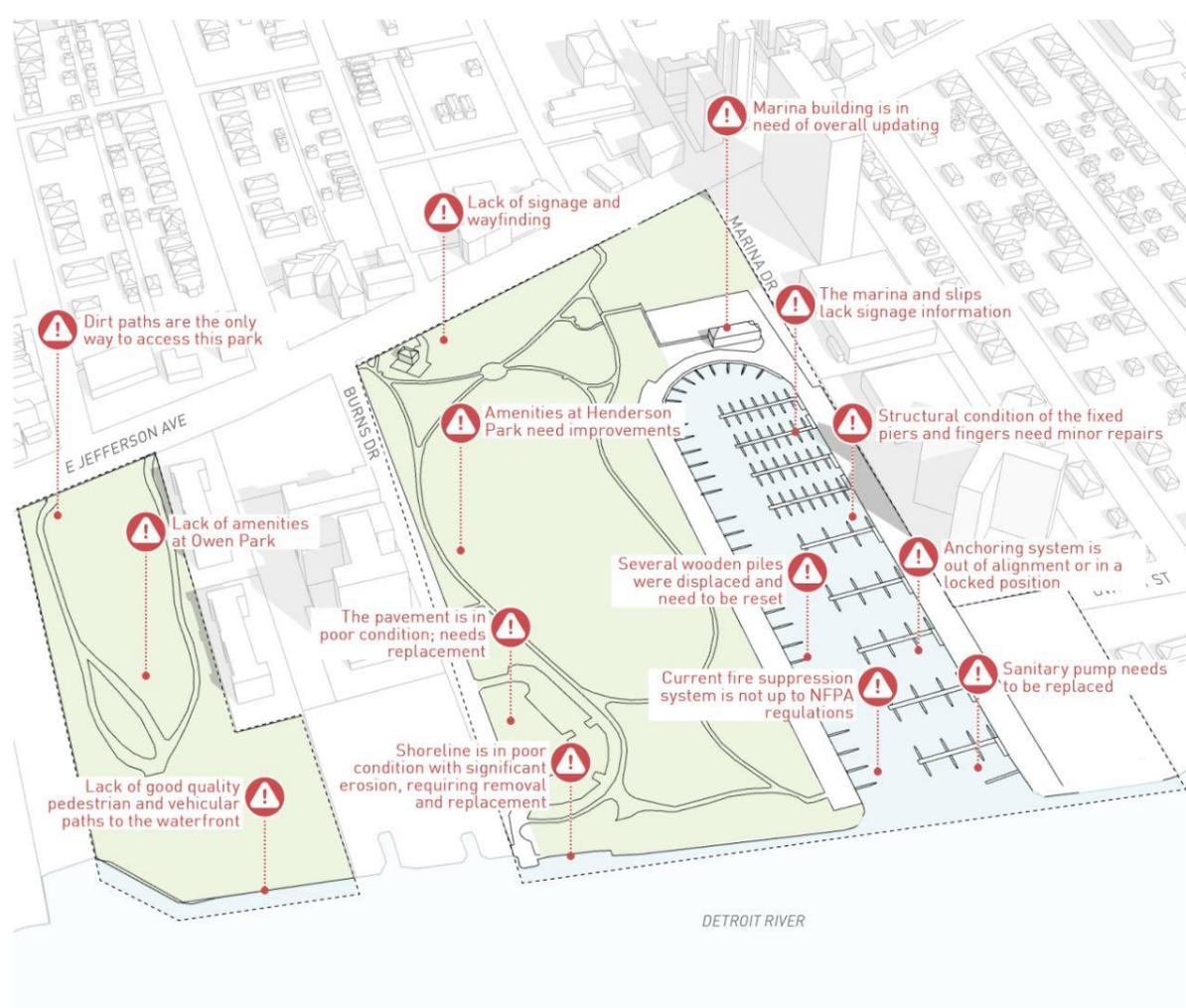
## PROJECT TEAM FINDINGS



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

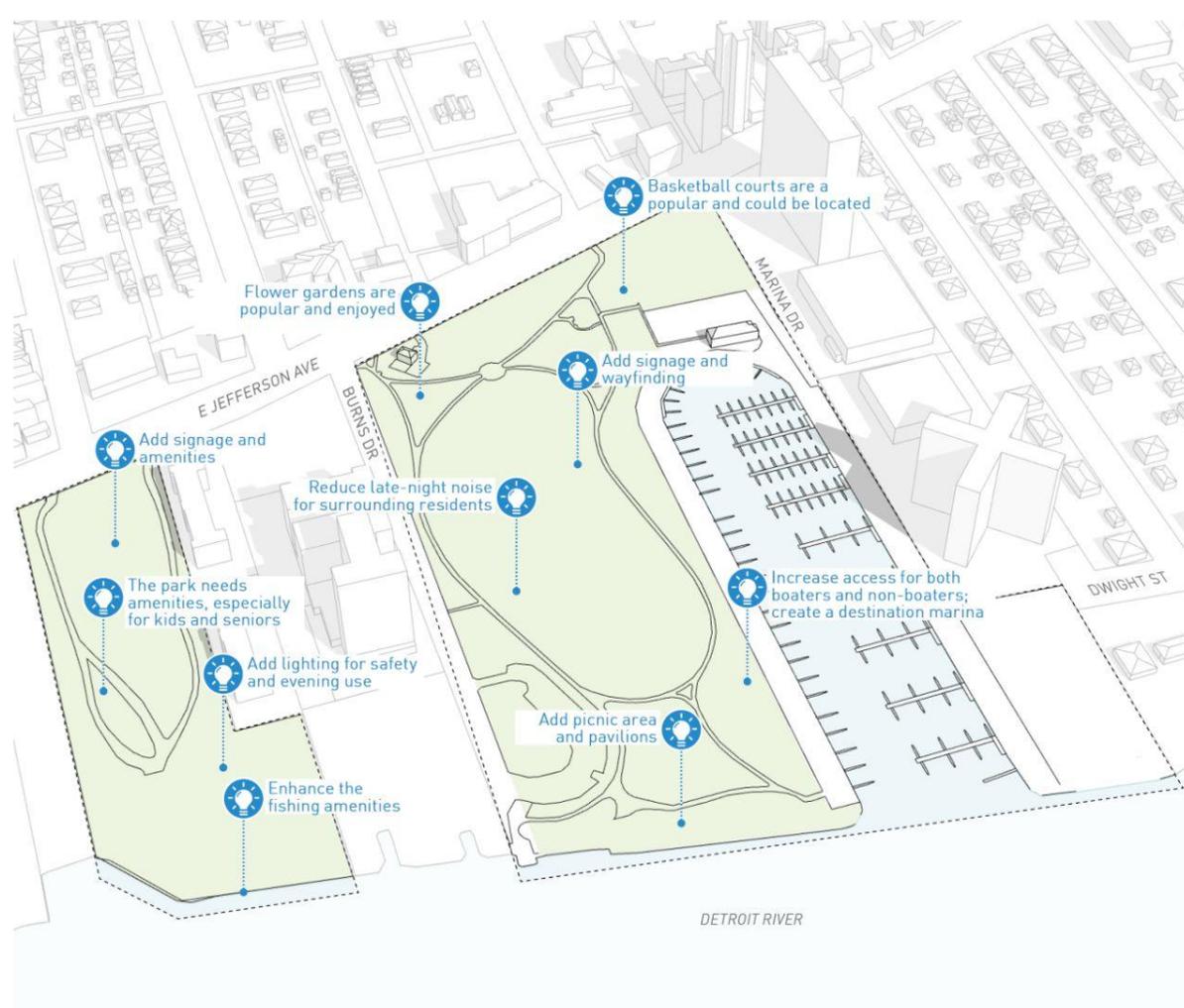
## PUBLIC INPUT: WHAT WE HEARD FROM YOU

### 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

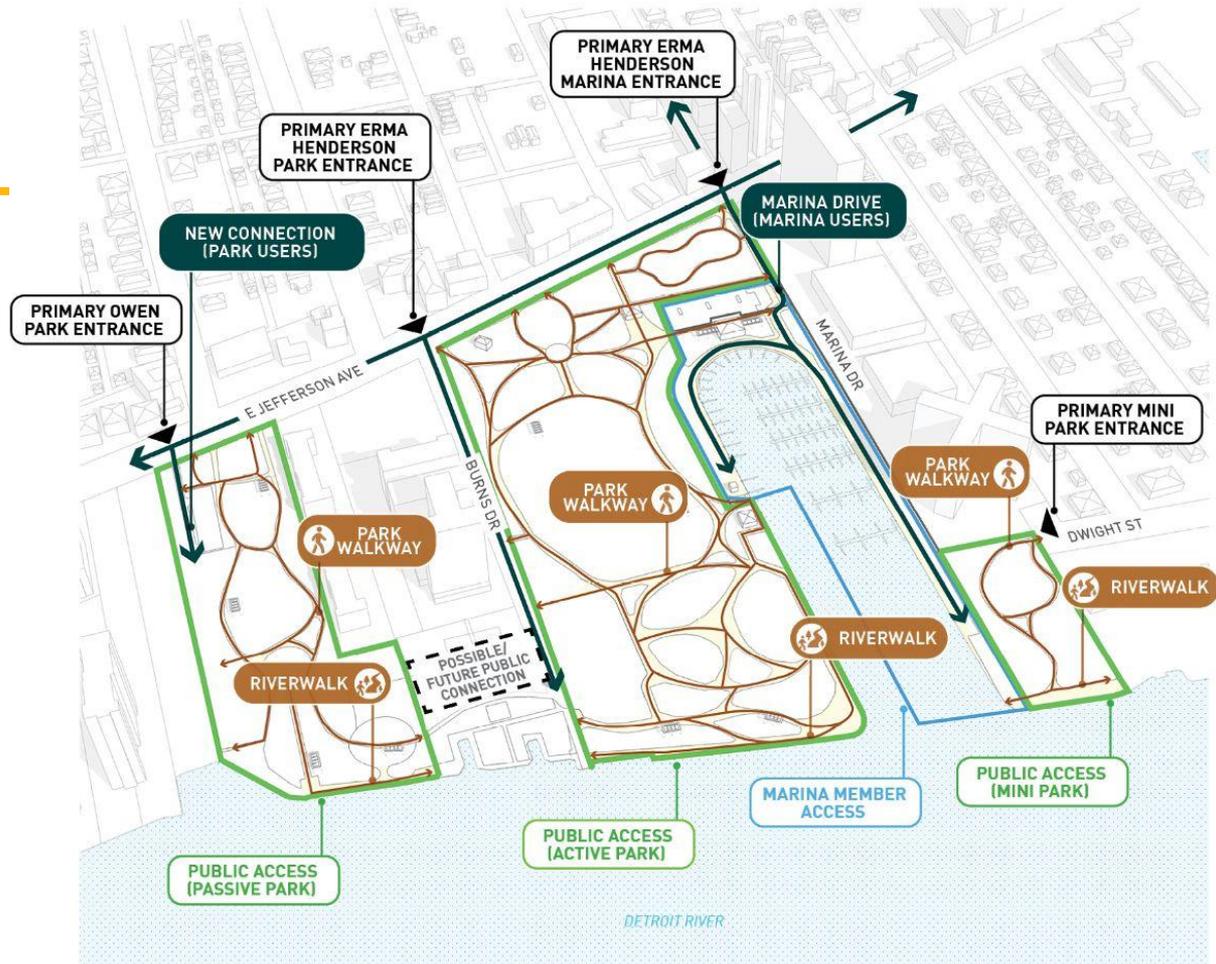
## CIRCULATION + ACCESS



RIVERWALK



WALKING PATHS WITHIN PARK SPACES



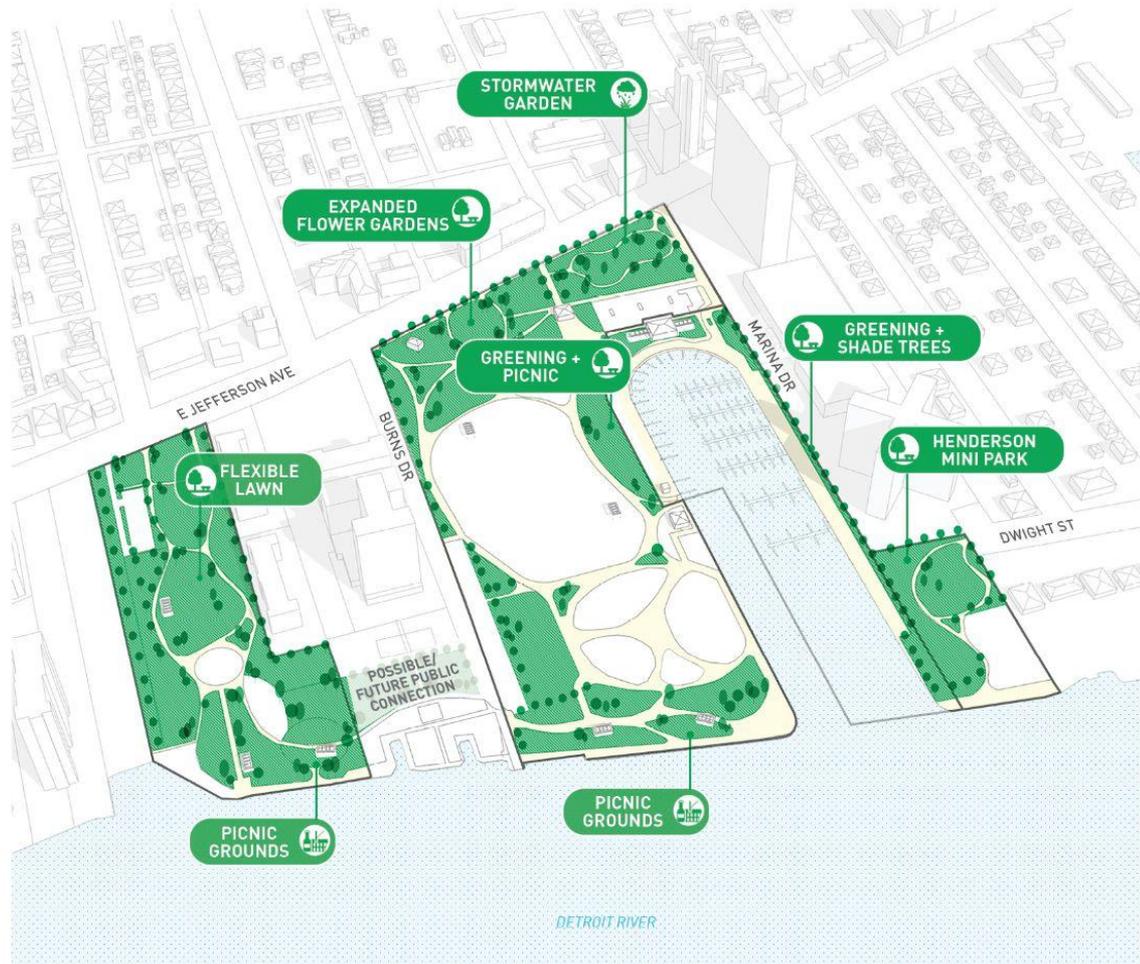
# GOLD COAST PASSIVE LANDSCAPE



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

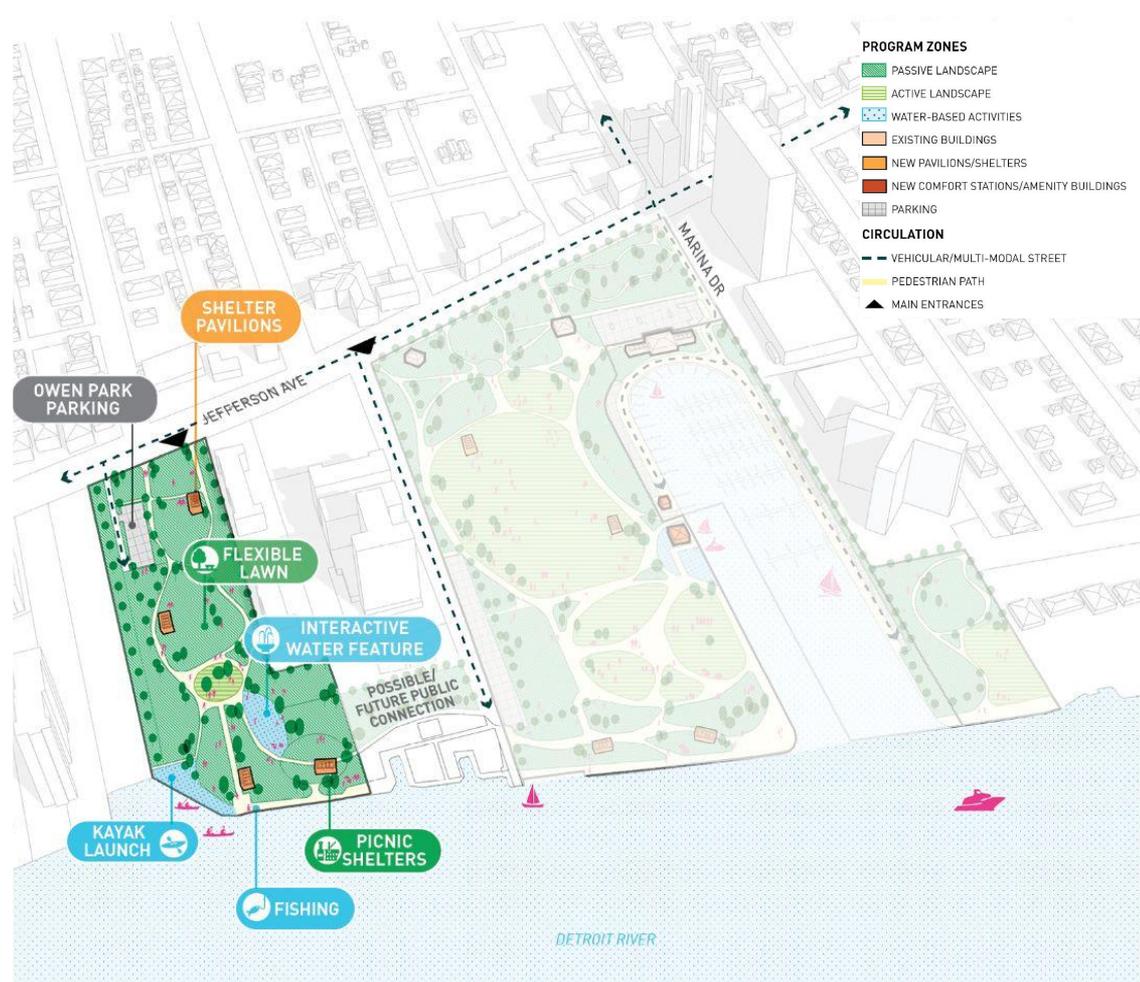
- Increase activities and destinations throughout the park
- Maintain and enhance the gardens
- Increase access to and around the marina
- Improve the perimeter of the marina by reorganizing parking and adding landscaped areas
- Continue to monitor and adjust programming based on user needs
- Add and 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

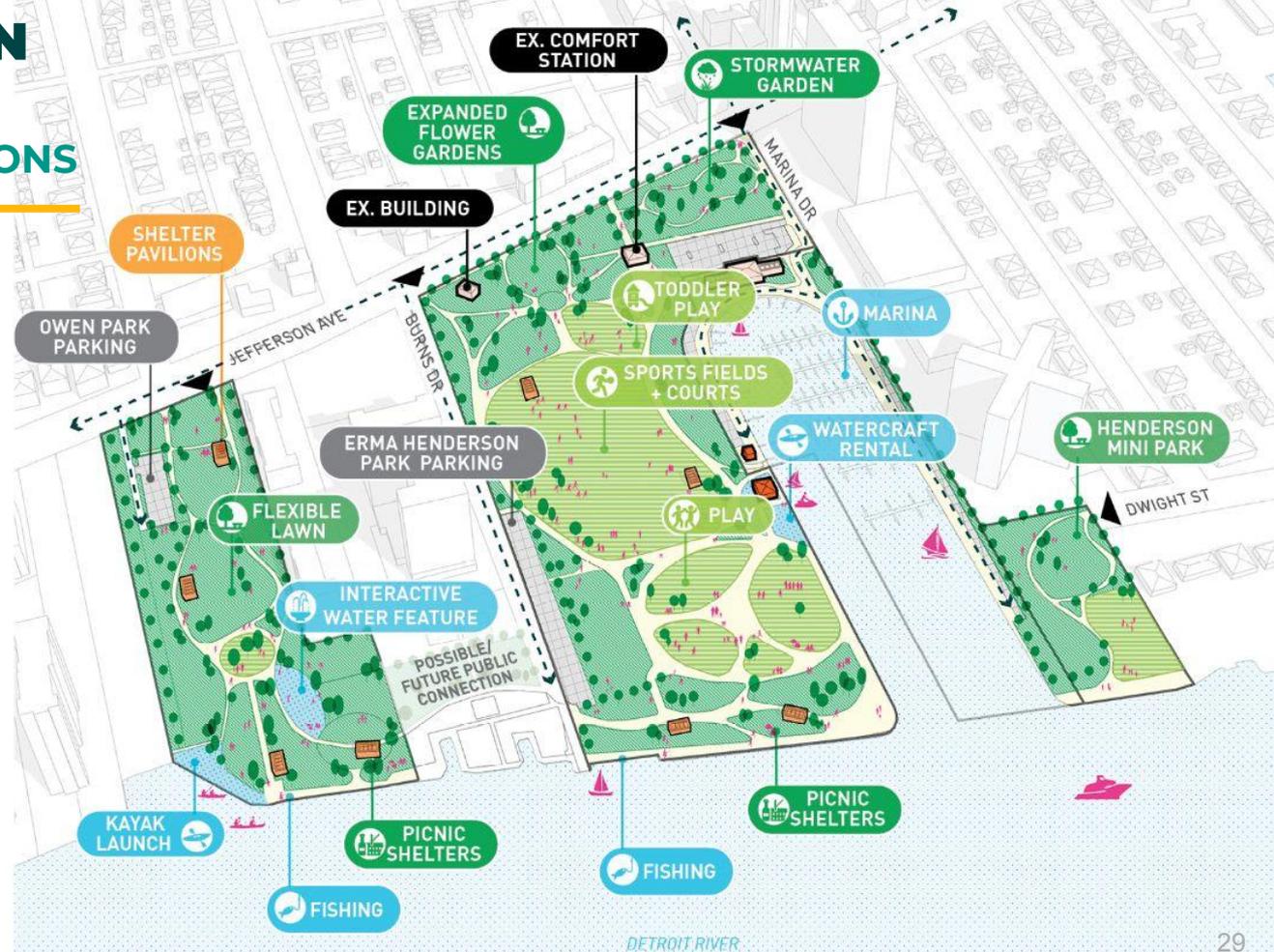
- PASSIVE LANDSCAPE
- ACTIVE LANDSCAPE
- WATER-BASED ACTIVITIES
- EXISTING BUILDINGS
- NEW PAVILIONS/SHELTERS
- NEW COMFORT STATIONS/AMENITY BUILDINGS
- PARKING

## 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](http://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](http://www.menti.com)

3

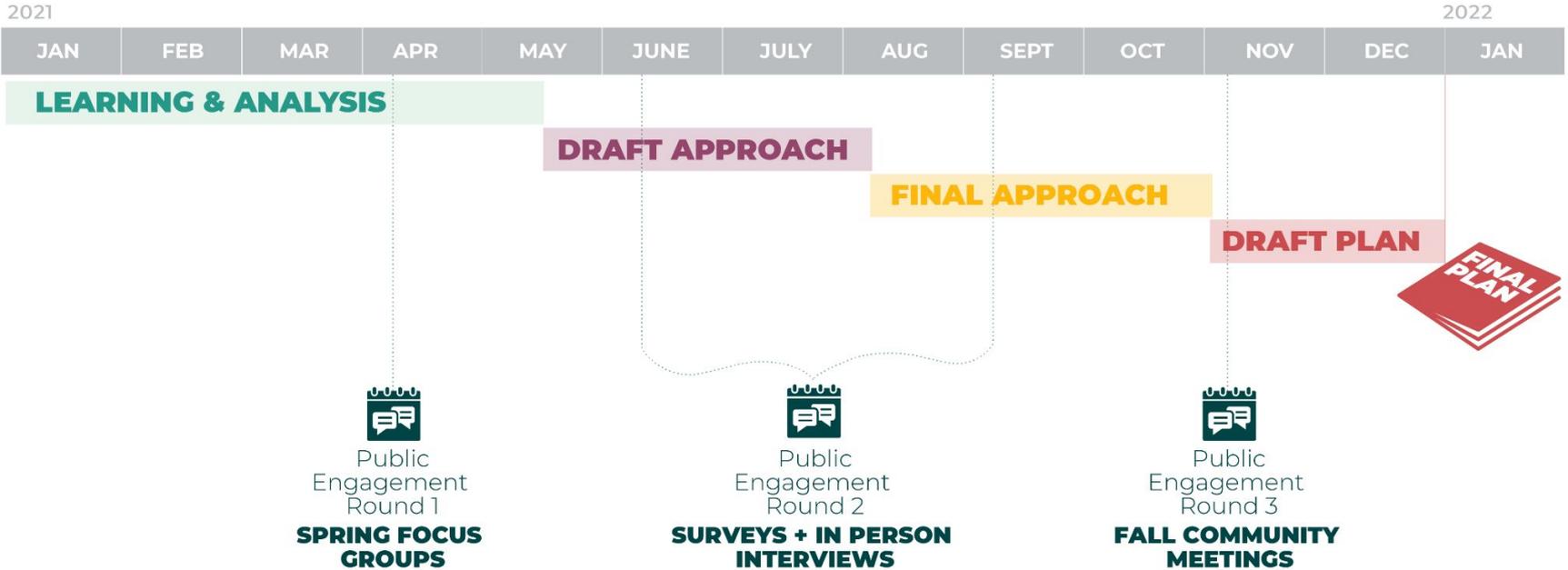
Enter the code **8066 7430**  
and hit **Submit**



# Next Steps

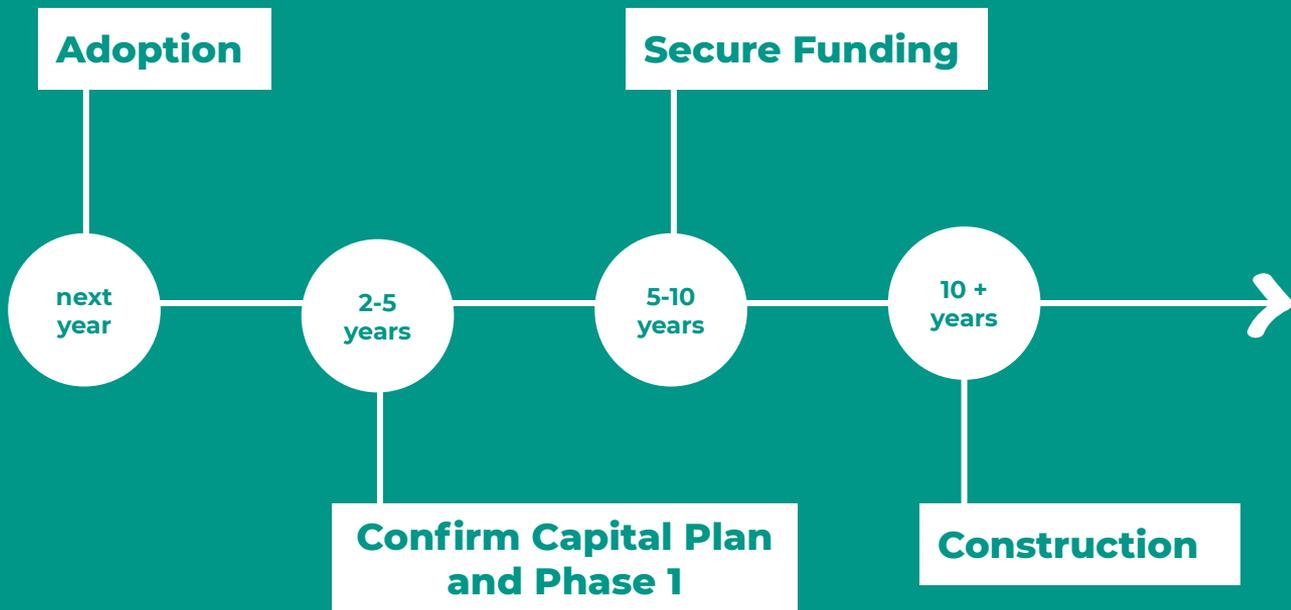


Review the draft plan early 2022



# 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](mailto:galarzam@detroitmi.gov)

## Where to find more information

[www.detroitmi.gov/eras](http://www.detroitmi.gov/eras)

*Thank you!*