



Building the **Riverfront Greenway**

The State of
Greenway Investments
along the Detroit River



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The vision of a continuous greenway along the Detroit River seemed like a dream only a few years ago. But today, communities and businesses in Greater Detroit are redefining their relationship to the river and championing linked greenways along its entire length — from Lake St. Clair to Lake Erie, across to Canada, and up key tributaries like the Rouge, Ecorse, and Huron rivers.

Working in partnership with the Metropolitan Affairs Coalition and other stakeholders, the Greater Detroit American Heritage River Initiative has identified linked greenways as one of its top six priorities. This report presents 14 such projects, all of which have begun or been completed since June 1999.

When all fourteen greenways projects are completed, they will be unique destinations that link open spaces, protect natural and cultural resources, and offer many picturesque views of Detroit's great American Heritage River. Together, they will go a long way toward enhancing the region's quality of life and making it more attractive to residents, visitors, and businesses.

And these fourteen projects are just the beginning. By celebrating these recent achievements, this report aspires to be a catalyst for

future projects. In fact, many additional projects are already in the planning and design process.

There is a growing desire to increase access to the Detroit River as communities and organizations work to overcome the historical separation from the river caused by a nearly continuous wall of commercial development. Now, trails and walkways are being incorporated along the river, improving the aesthetic appearance of the shoreline and reaping the resulting recreational, ecological, and economic benefits. In its mission to create linked riverfront greenways, the Greater Detroit American Heritage River Initiative is actively partnering with the many organizations that share this vision, including the Greenways Initiative of the Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan, the Automobile National Heritage Area and the Canadian Heritage River Initiative.

The Detroit River has been rediscovered as an incredible asset and a key element for enhancing the quality of life of the metropolitan area. A transformation of the riverfront is underway, as linked greenways become a reality and establish a unique legacy for future generations.



Detroit River Greenways

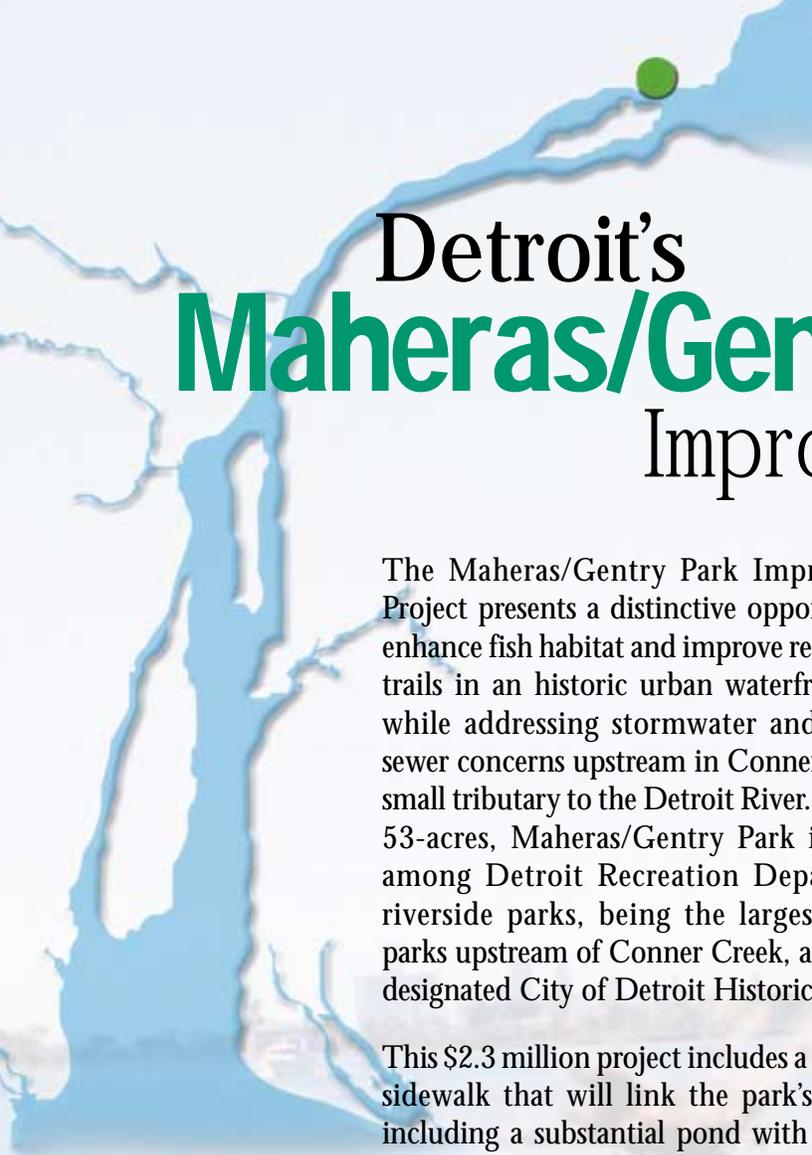
Project Locations

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- 1 Maheras/Gentry Park
- 2 UAW-GM Riverfront Joint Training Center
- 3 Saint Aubin Marina/East Riverfront Greenway
- 4 General Motors Global Headquarters
- 5 Detroit Riverfront Promenade Improvement Project
- 6 Riverside Park Promenade
- 7 Port Authority Public Dock and Passenger Terminal
- 8 Rouge River Gateway Project/Oxbow Restoration
- 9 River Rouge's Belanger Park
- 10 Lincoln Park's Council Point Park
- 11 Trenton's Linked Riverfront Parks Project
- 12 Wayne County's Elizabeth Park Riverwalk
- 13 Grosse Ile Greenways
- 14 Brownstown's Woodruff Corridor Bike Path

Table of Contents

Maheras/Gentry Park	2
UAW-GM Riverfront Joint Training Center	4
Saint Aubin Marina/East Riverfront Greenway	6
General Motors Global Headquarters	8
Detroit Riverfront Promenade Improvement Project	10
Riverside Park Promenade	12
Port Authority Public Dock and Passenger Terminal	14
Rouge River Gateway Project/Oxbow Restoration	16
River Rouge’s Belanger Park	18
Lincoln Park’s Council Point Park	20
Trenton’s Linked Riverfront Parks Project	22
Wayne County’s Elizabeth Park Riverwalk	24
Grosse Ile Greenways	26
Brownstown’s Woodruff Corridor Bike Path.....	28
Acknowledgments	30





Detroit's Maheras/Gentry Park Improvement Project

The Maheras/Gentry Park Improvement Project presents a distinctive opportunity to enhance fish habitat and improve recreational trails in an historic urban waterfront park, while addressing stormwater and sanitary sewer concerns upstream in Conner Creek, a small tributary to the Detroit River. Covering 53-acres, Maheras/Gentry Park is unique among Detroit Recreation Department's riverside parks, being the largest of four parks upstream of Conner Creek, as well as a designated City of Detroit Historic District.

This \$2.3 million project includes a perimeter sidewalk that will link the park's features, including a substantial pond with an island formed by inlets to the Detroit River, a scenic overlook, and barrier-free fishing access points. The overlook will be furnished with benches, picnic tables, and a picnic shelter. The sidewalk will lead visitors around the pond to the bridges that bring pedestrians onto the island.

On the island, benches are planned for visitors to relax and enjoy views of the park and river among natural prairie plantings. Trees will be added to the pond area of the park to provide visitors with shade. Interpretive signage at various locations will explain the intent of the pond, the ecology of the wetland plantings and fish habitat, as well as the importance of the freighters on the Detroit River.

The project area encompasses approximately 8.5 acres of the south end of the park and is designed to provide much needed fish habitat along this highly developed stretch of the Detroit River. The creation of a substantial pond with an island and inlets to the Detroit River will allow water and fish to circulate through the pond and improve fishing access and park amenities where few recreational activities exist.

*Views of present day
Maheras/Gentry Park.*





Rendering prepared for Detroit Water and Sewerage Department by Hamilton Anderson Associates, and Hazen and Sawyer, P.C.

The pond will be sculpted with a deep water hole and shallow shelves along the banks. Plantings of wetland vegetation and the addition of underwater shelters made from tree root masses will improve fish habitat and create fish spawning and nursery areas. Stone blocks, boulders, and wildflower plantings are design elements for the area surrounding the pond. Stone blocks will be placed in a stairway fashion creating flat surfaces that will allow people to access the water's edge.

The Maheras/Gentry Park fish habitat mitigation is being undertaken as a Michigan Department of Environmental Quality requirement to mitigate the habitat loss resulting from constructing the Conner Creek Pilot Combined Sewer Overflow Control Facility. Detroit Water and Sewerage Department is funding the entire \$2.3 million cost of the Maheras/Gentry Park project. Creation of the fish habitat will occur during the construction of the Conner Creek Pilot Combined Sewer Overflow Control Facility, which will begin by December 31, 2000 and is to be completed by December 31, 2004.



UAW-GM

Riverfront Joint Training Center

The International Union, United Auto Workers (UAW) and General Motors Corporation (GM) are collaborating on an exciting, new riverfront development that will enhance efforts to create a system of linked riverfront greenways extending from the MacArthur Bridge at Belle Isle to the Ambassador Bridge.

In early 2001, the UAW-GM Center for Human Resources is opening a modern education and training complex with 900 feet of riverfront greenway on 16 acres of land between Atwater Street and the Detroit River. This state-of-the-art office complex will serve as the national headquarters for UAW-GM joint programs and activities focused on health and safety, training and skill development, employee educational opportunities, work and family support, and product quality.

Strikingly visible from the Detroit River, the complex will be anchored by a seven-story office tower with an adjacent three-story training tower and a 400-seat auditorium. This new riverfront complex consolidates Center for Human Resources operations

previously housed in three separate suburban locations. The UAW-GM joint programs and activities that will be run from the complex are directed toward providing work-related, family-related, and employee educational-development information and assistance to approximately 140,000 UAW-represented GM workers.

Since 1984, GM and the UAW have committed approximately \$3 billion toward education and training, making the UAW-GM Center for Human Resources the largest privately funded educational program in the world. In its new location, the UAW-GM Center for Human Resources proudly takes a place in the heart of Detroit's riverfront revitalization and makes a unique contribution to the Greater Detroit American Heritage River Initiative. In addition to expanding education and training opportunities, the new complex will provide a critical riverfront greenways link and enhance public access to the Detroit River. It will play a role in improving quality of life, promoting community pride, and furthering Detroit's economic renewal.

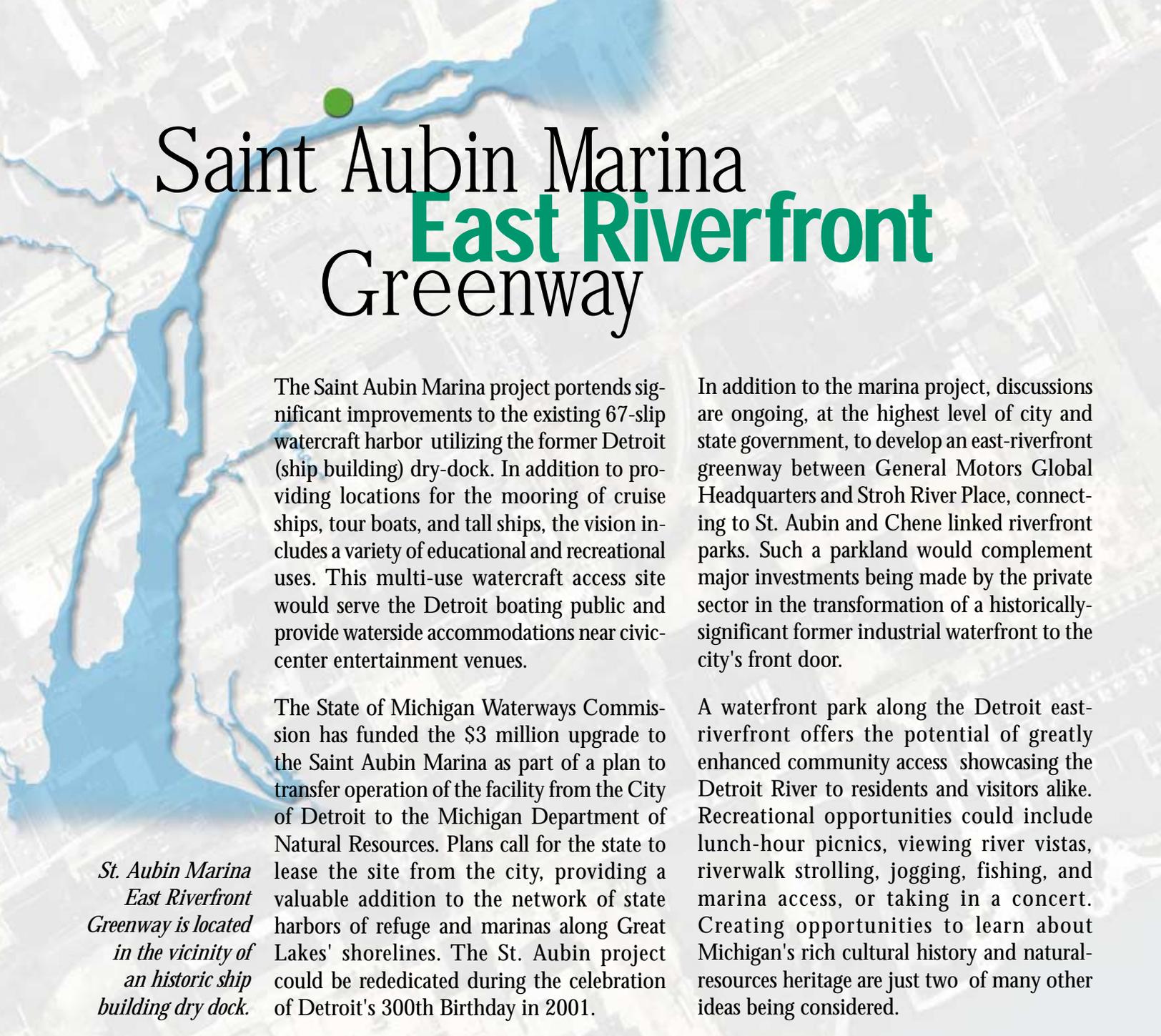
Views of the UAW-GM future training center site in the fall of 2000.





Renderings courtesy of Grissim/Metz Associates.





Saint Aubin Marina East Riverfront Greenway

The Saint Aubin Marina project portends significant improvements to the existing 67-slip watercraft harbor utilizing the former Detroit (ship building) dry-dock. In addition to providing locations for the mooring of cruise ships, tour boats, and tall ships, the vision includes a variety of educational and recreational uses. This multi-use watercraft access site would serve the Detroit boating public and provide waterside accommodations near civic-center entertainment venues.

The State of Michigan Waterways Commission has funded the \$3 million upgrade to the Saint Aubin Marina as part of a plan to transfer operation of the facility from the City of Detroit to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Plans call for the state to lease the site from the city, providing a valuable addition to the network of state harbors of refuge and marinas along Great Lakes' shorelines. The St. Aubin project could be rededicated during the celebration of Detroit's 300th Birthday in 2001.

*St. Aubin Marina
East Riverfront
Greenway is located
in the vicinity of
an historic ship
building dry dock.*

In addition to the marina project, discussions are ongoing, at the highest level of city and state government, to develop an east-riverfront greenway between General Motors Global Headquarters and Stroh River Place, connecting to St. Aubin and Chene linked riverfront parks. Such a parkland would complement major investments being made by the private sector in the transformation of a historically-significant former industrial waterfront to the city's front door.

A waterfront park along the Detroit east-riverfront offers the potential of greatly enhanced community access showcasing the Detroit River to residents and visitors alike. Recreational opportunities could include lunch-hour picnics, viewing river vistas, riverwalk strolling, jogging, fishing, and marina access, or taking in a concert. Creating opportunities to learn about Michigan's rich cultural history and natural-resources heritage are just two of many other ideas being considered.

The east-riverfront greenway would require a continued, concerted effort to overcome challenges inherent in land acquisition, environmental cleanup, relocation of viable industries, and substantial funding for new facilities. The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund has committed substantial funding to help acquire riverfront property for the east-riverfront greenway idea.



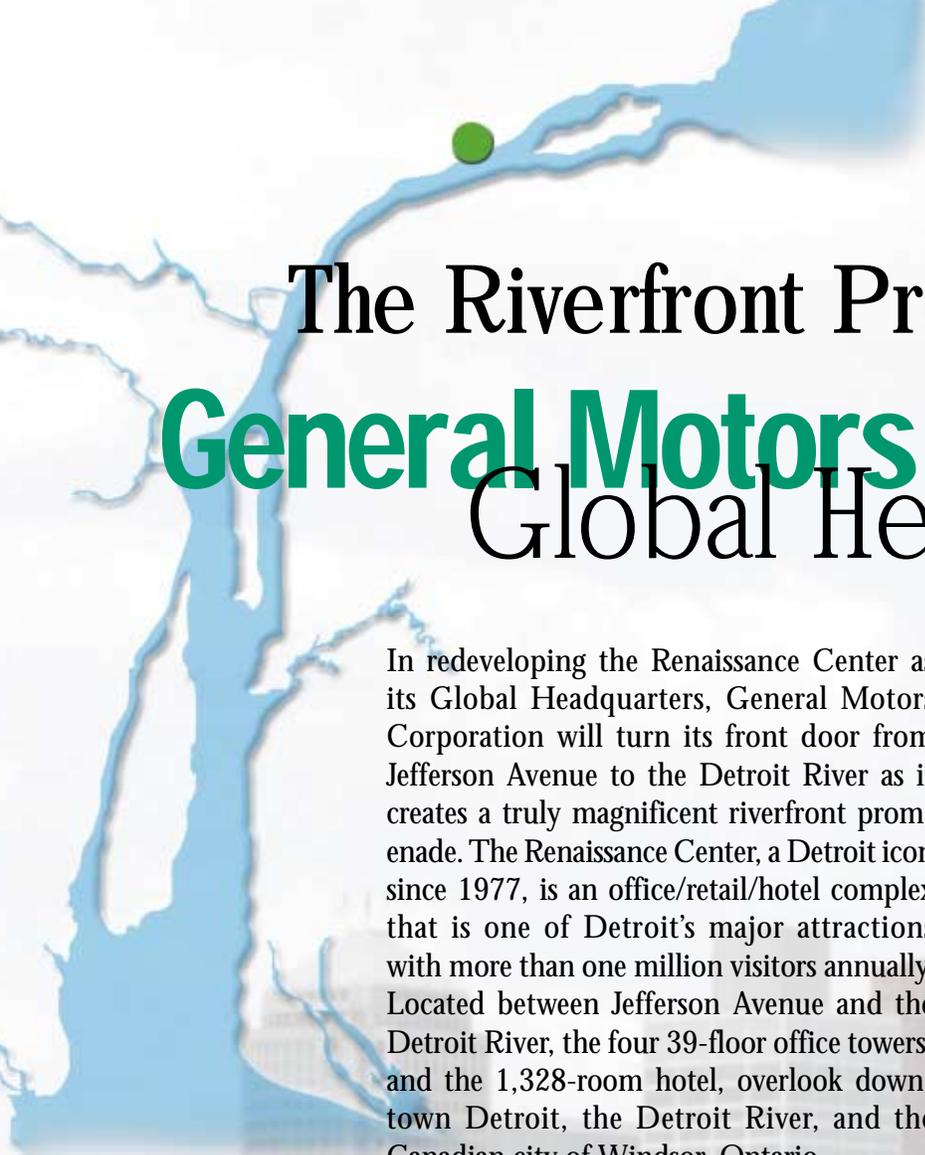


Renderings courtesy of SmithGroup JJR.



Background aerial photograph courtesy of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.





The Riverfront Promenade at General Motors Global Headquarters

In redeveloping the Renaissance Center as its Global Headquarters, General Motors Corporation will turn its front door from Jefferson Avenue to the Detroit River as it creates a truly magnificent riverfront promenade. The Renaissance Center, a Detroit icon since 1977, is an office/retail/hotel complex that is one of Detroit's major attractions with more than one million visitors annually. Located between Jefferson Avenue and the Detroit River, the four 39-floor office towers, and the 1,328-room hotel, overlook downtown Detroit, the Detroit River, and the Canadian city of Windsor, Ontario.

General Motors is building 3,000 feet of riverfront promenade which, when combined with the adjacent Riverfront Promenade Improvement Project to the west, forms roughly one-and-a-quarter miles of new and improved riverfront promenade. General Motors' promenade will also link with a promenade park planned as part of River East, a 25-acre urban waterfront district to be developed directly east of the Renaissance Center.

General Motors' riverfront promenade is being created adjacent to a five-story, glass-enclosed, public hall called the Wintergarden. General Motors is building the Wintergarden as part of its \$500 million redevelopment of the Renaissance Center. Opening in 2001, the Wintergarden will provide magnificent views of the Detroit River and Windsor. The Wintergarden will be flanked by two stories of retail space. Additional retail shops will line the riverfront promenade, and outdoor restaurant seating will create a new ambiance at the Renaissance Center.

The redevelopment of the Renaissance Center as General Motors Global Headquarters has been underway since General Motors acquired the 5.5-million-square-foot mixed-use property in 1996. The redevelopment program, under the direction of Hines, also includes a \$100 million renovation of the 73-floor Marriott Hotel, one of the largest hotel renovations in the world. The Renaissance Center's redevelopment program is scheduled for completion in 2002.

The River East urban waterfront district will be a mix of retail, office, entertainment, and residential usage with a greenway planned to provide public access to the waterfront. The entire River East project will be completed by 2009 and promises to become a central element of Detroit's riverfront revival.

GM headquarters in the summer of 2000, with construction well underway.





Renderings courtesy of Hines Development and Skidmore Owings & Merrill, LLP Master Architects.



Detroit Riverfront Promenade Improvement Project

The Detroit Civic Center Riverfront Promenade will open a key portion of the Detroit riverfront to residents and visitors. The promenade will run along the waterfront from the General Motors Global Headquarters on the east to the Riverfront Apartments on the west. It will create a distinctive and beautiful riverfront accessible to all pedestrians and linked to the waterfront enhancements and promenade being developed by General Motors Corporation on the east. The project will connect and enhance the value and marketability of major public and private facilities along the waterfront, such as Ford Auditorium, Cobo Center, and Joe Louis Arena.

The Detroit Riverfront Promenade Improvement Project will draw sightseers and tourists, and offer an aesthetically pleasing and exciting environment for office workers, retail, hotel, and restaurant patrons, as well as residents of Detroit. The promenade's

design places a high priority on reconnecting downtown with the Detroit River and will create a unique "sense of place." In addition, the promenade will also serve as an important location in celebrating Detroit's 300th anniversary. Plans are underway to display four centuries of Detroit waterfront history.

The project area encompasses approximately 3,500 feet of riverfront property. The land between the river's edge and the street right-of-way is currently comprised of a collapsing seawall, crumbling sidewalks, and a series of deteriorated paved and gravel parking lots, most of which are enclosed with chain-link fence. The project involves:

- repairing the eroded seawall and cofferdam;
- eliminating existing parking lots along the river's edge; and
- installing landscape materials and trees, a pedestrian boardwalk, railings, lighting, street furniture, signage, and irrigation.

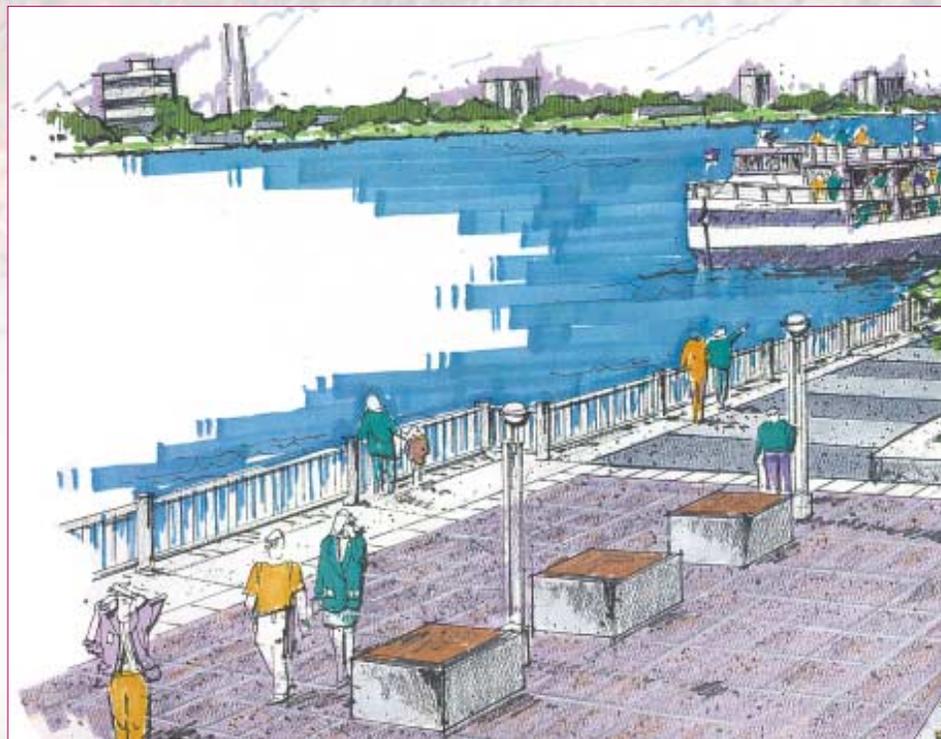
*Views of the
Civic Center
Riverfront Promenade
construction in late
summer of 2000.*





The project's estimated cost of \$6.2 million is being funded through the State of Michigan's Clean Michigan Initiative, specifically the Waterfront Reclamation Grant Program. Project matching funds, totaling over 25 percent, consist of the value of land contributed by the City of Detroit and General Motors, and funds provided by the City of Detroit's Downtown Development Authority.

Construction on this project began in August 2000 and is expected to be completed in May 2001.



Renderings courtesy of Albert Kahn Associates, Inc.



Detroit's

Riverside Park Promenade

Lying below the Ambassador Bridge, at the foot of West Grand Boulevard, Riverside Park is where southwest Detroiters have historically gone to enjoy the waterfront. With 1,500 feet of waterfront and the river at its narrowest point, the park offers one of the prime settings in the state to admire the impressive freighter and shipping traffic serving the Great Lakes.

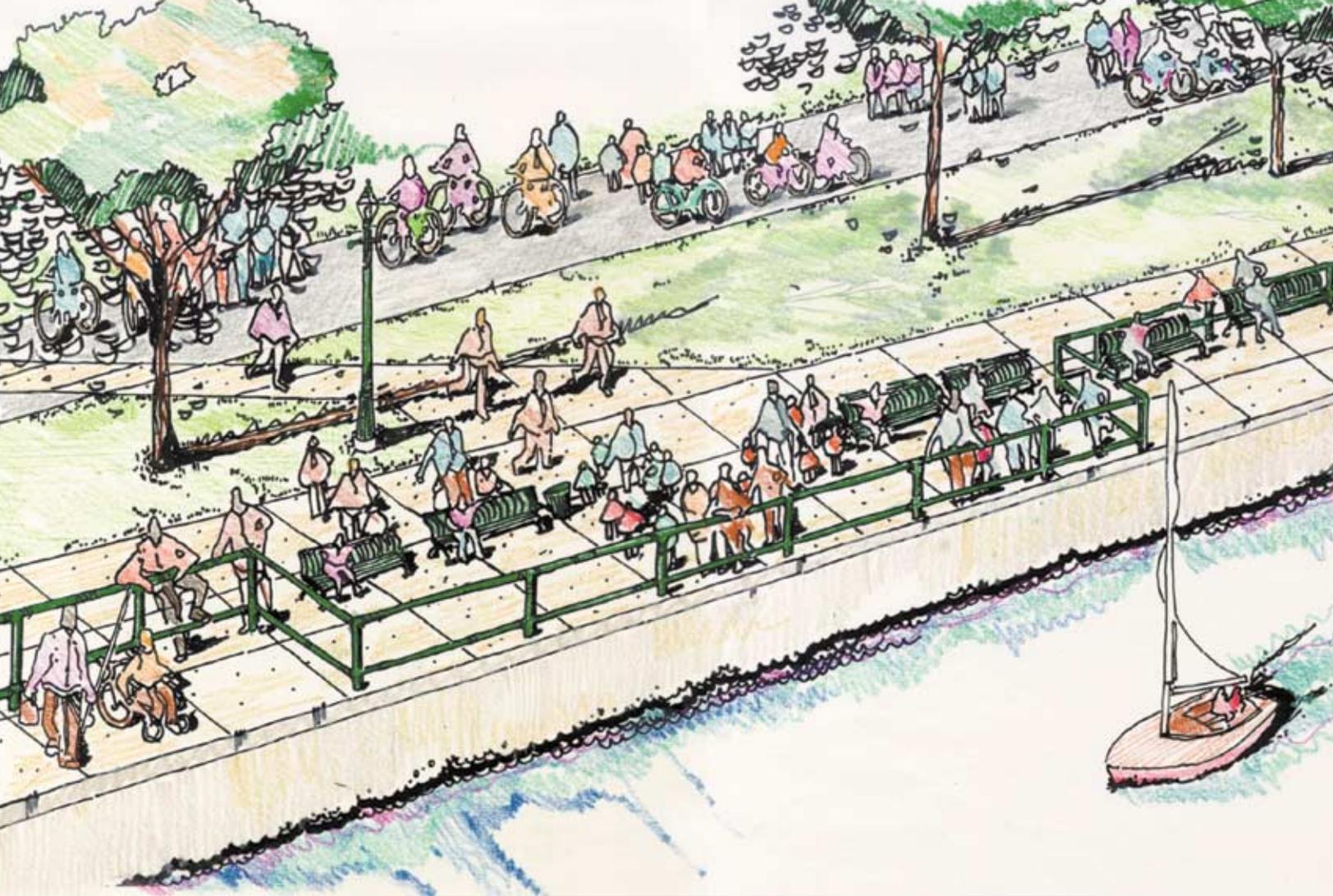
Adding to its distinct nautical theme, Riverside Park houses the Detroit Fire Department's Fire Boat, as well as one of the docks for Diamond Jack's River Tours. A large public boat launch is also located on the eastern part of the park. In addition, nestled within the park is The J.W. Westcott Company, better known as the "mail boat." The mail boat has its own zip code and serves as a mail drop for the commercial fleet on the Detroit River. As the freighters pass, the mail boat rushes out to meet the ships to deliver the mail and supplies that are hoisted up over the sides of the enormous vessels.

Picturesque views of the Detroit River and Ambassador Bridge will be enhanced by the Riverside Park Promenade project.

Plans are now underway for an extensive multi-year renovation of the park which will improve the quality of life for residents and provide a desirable tourist attraction. The renovation will also help spur revitalization of the area and enhance the image of Southwest Detroit. Initial improvements will include construction of a pedestrian promenade, restoration of the seawall, and creation of dedicated fishing areas. Collectively, these improvements will capitalize on one of the best views of downtown Detroit's skyline, fronted by the Detroit River and framed by the Ambassador Bridge.

Future phases will redevelop the western part of the park's infrastructure, including a new restroom facility, new parking lots and walkways, an extensive play structure, and a large picnic pavilion. Improvements are being planned so that the park can host special events that require the docking of large vessels. Discussions are also underway to locate a police mini-station within the park to both improve accessibility of police officers to neighborhood residents and help assure security at the park.





Rendering courtesy of Wade-Trim & Associates, Inc.

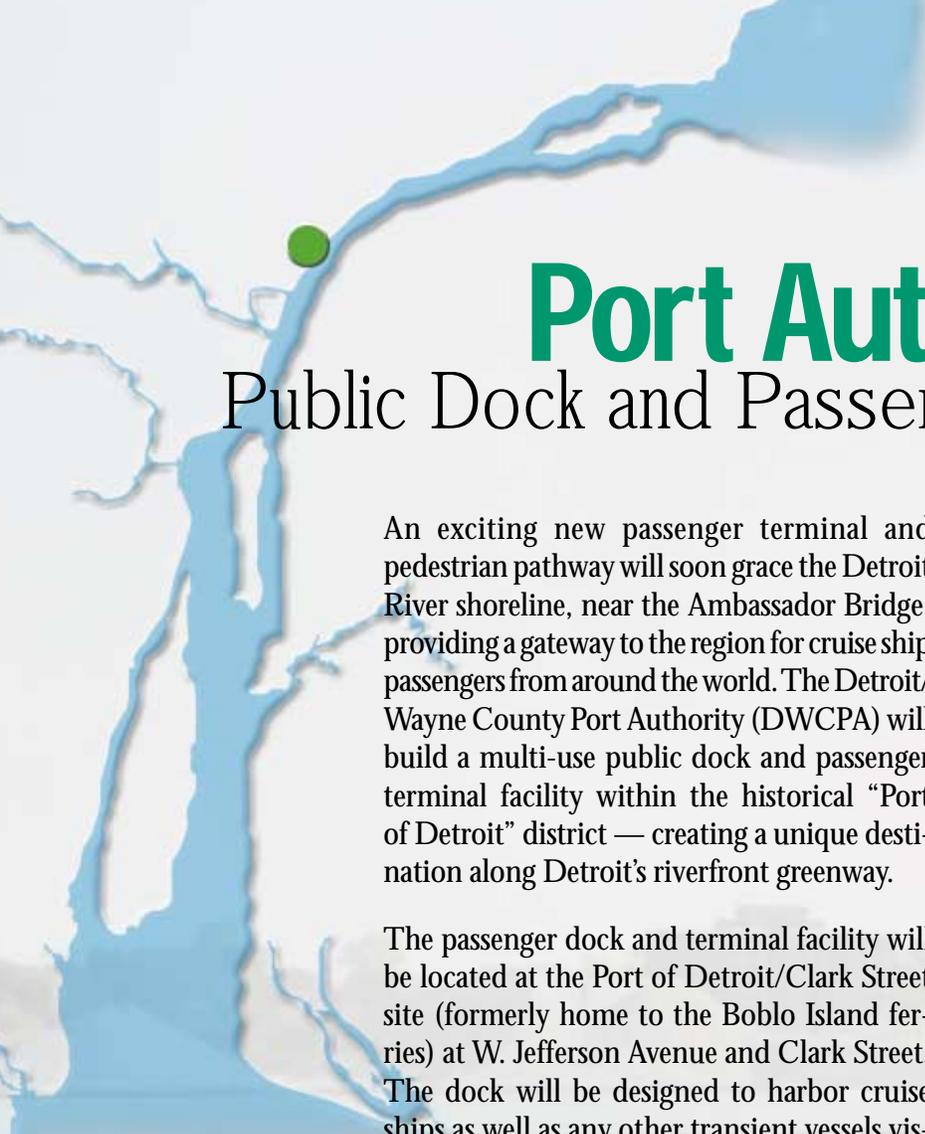
The proposed improvements to Riverside Park are part of a larger vision for an interconnected riverfront greenway eventually linking southwest Detroit to the Civic Center Riverfront Promenade to the north and to the planned greenway at the Rouge River Oxbow Restoration Project to the south.

Funds are already committed for the initial phase of construction. The spring of 2001 will kick-off the multi-phase renovation of the park with \$1.5 million in improvements — \$500,000 from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, \$500,000 from the City of Detroit, and \$500,000 from the Great Lakes Fisheries Trust Fund.



Rendering courtesy of The Greenway Collaborative, Inc.





Port Authority

Public Dock and Passenger Terminal

An exciting new passenger terminal and pedestrian pathway will soon grace the Detroit River shoreline, near the Ambassador Bridge, providing a gateway to the region for cruise ship passengers from around the world. The Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority (DWCPA) will build a multi-use public dock and passenger terminal facility within the historical “Port of Detroit” district — creating a unique destination along Detroit’s riverfront greenway.

The passenger dock and terminal facility will be located at the Port of Detroit/Clark Street site (formerly home to the Boblo Island ferries) at W. Jefferson Avenue and Clark Street. The dock will be designed to harbor cruise ships as well as any other transient vessels visiting Detroit. Vessels such as naval frigates, historical tall ships, racing yachts, tour boats, and dinner cruisers all need a place to dock. This facility will be able to attract and accommodate the visits of any of these historical, educational, and entertainment vessels.

Waterfront views of the proposed Port Authority site show its relationship to the old Boblo Boat docking area.

The DWCPA played a major role in rejuvenating the Great Lakes cruising industry, which had been dormant in Detroit since 1967. Throughout the Great Lakes, cruising has re-emerged as a viable and growing market. Similar projects have been implemented in neighboring cities such as Cleveland, Toledo, Milwaukee, Duluth, and Green Bay. To restore Detroit’s reputation as a tourist destination within the global market, the DWCPA set out to establish regular liner service to the Port of Detroit.

In October of 1998, the *C. Columbus* became the first cruise ship to dock in Detroit in over 30 years. The direct impact in Detroit for one visit by the *C. Columbus* is estimated to be in excess of \$110,000, or approximately \$152 per passenger. Of 13 ports surveyed which received a visit by the *Columbus*, Detroit ranked third in total benefit behind Chicago and Toronto.



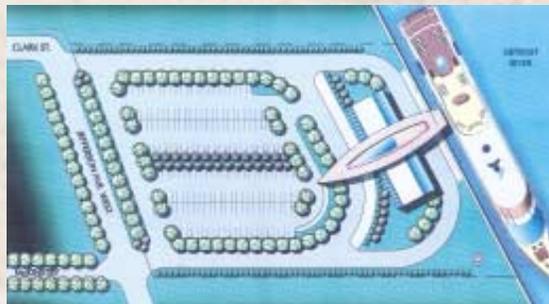


The Port of Detroit is the second largest Customs port of entry in the country, in terms of value of goods traded, and the City of Detroit is the third largest city on the entire St. Lawrence Seaway system. The Port of Detroit is also the only remaining major port that does not have a modern public dock and passenger terminal on its waterfront.

The Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority will use \$7.5 million in federal and state appropriations derived from the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) to fund the planning and construction of the dock facility, as well as pedestrian access along the Detroit riverfront.



Preliminary design conceptual renderings courtesy of Smith Group, Sterling Group.



Rouge River Gateway Project and Oxbow Restoration

In 1999, the Rouge River Gateway Partnership was established to restore the ecosystem of the lower Rouge River. This unique public-private partnership aims to provide public access to the river for recreation and education while celebrating its history and culture. One of the first projects to be implemented by the partnership will be restoring the western-most oxbow of the Rouge River, located near Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, on the west side of the Rouge River Channel.

The restoration of the historic oxbow will provide habitat for fish and wildlife, while providing educational opportunities for the hundreds-of-thousands of people who visit Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village each year. The restored oxbow will be a unique recreational and education destination along the Rouge River and its greenway trail system. The project will be implemented in three phases:

1. Restoring the oxbow,
2. Relocating a combined sewer overflow discharge pipe that impacts the oxbow; and
3. Establishing a greenway trail system all the way to the Detroit River, connecting the developed portions of Greenfield Village to the wetlands, oxbow, and channel portion of the Rouge River.

In 2000, \$2 million was received from the Clean Michigan Initiative for the first phase of oxbow restoration. The oxbow restoration work is expected to begin in late 2001 and be completed in 2002.

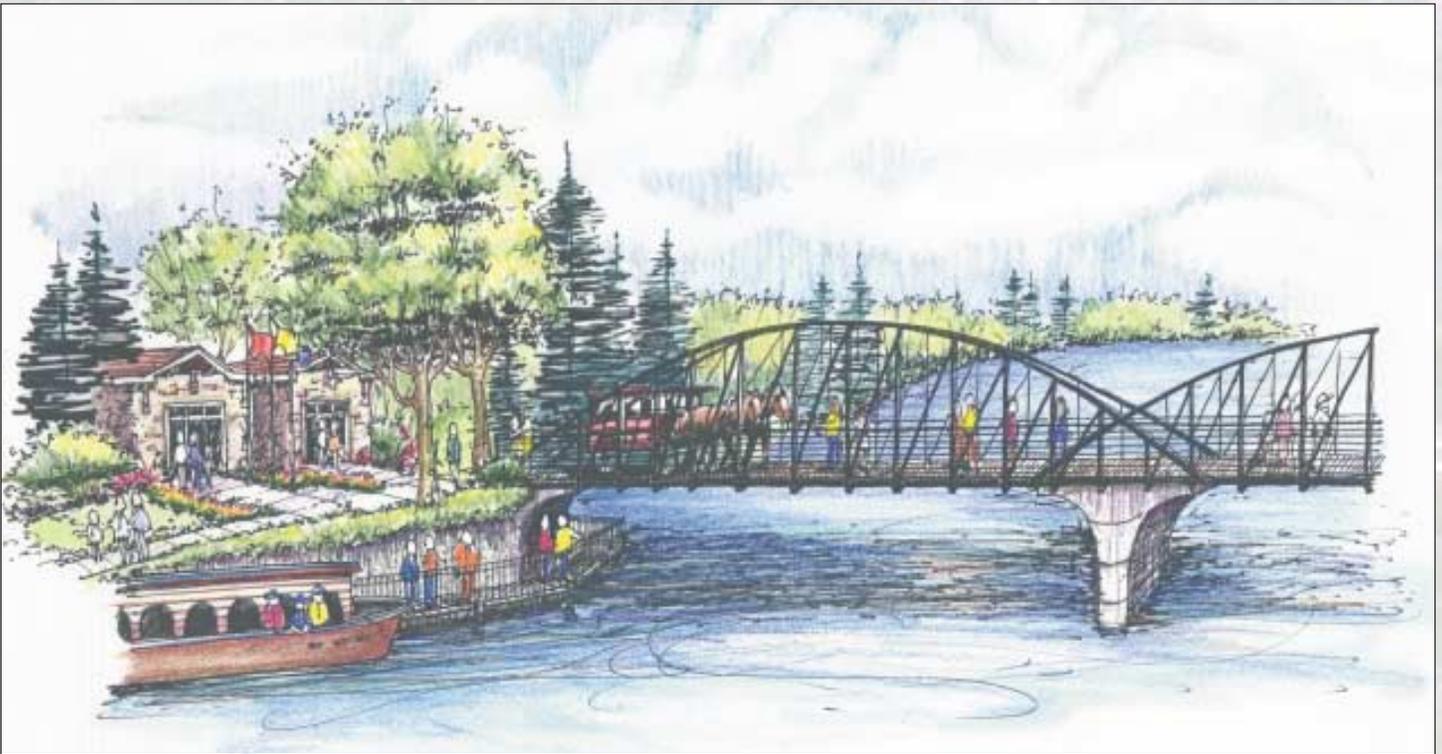
The entire Gateway Project area extends 9-miles from the confluence of the Rouge River's tributaries, near Ford Road in Dearborn, to the Detroit River. The Partnership is using a consensus-based approach to restore the vibrancy of the area's natural landscape while preserving the legacy of the automobile manufacturing industry.

The Rouge River Gateway Partnership is truly unique in its collaboration and offers a number of benefits, including:

- Celebrating the area's automobile heritage through the support and promotion of environmental and historic restoration projects;
- Encouraging best management practices to rehabilitate and preserve natural resources;
- Supporting local communities in creating unique, educationally-significant, recreational opportunities;
- Attracting new public and private investment to the area; and
- Expanding on existing programs that establish the area as a world-class center for cultural and heritage tourism.

Aerial views of the current state of the Rouge River highlight past solutions to industrial concerns.





The Rouge River Gateway Partnership will be undertaking a number of other projects over the next 10 years, including furthering greenways trails and modifying the concrete channel for habitat, recreation, and aesthetics. The partnership will also build a fish ladder at the Henry Ford Estate dam, a bridge across the Rouge River to Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, and a Rouge Heritage Visitors Center.



Renderings courtesy of Hamilton Anderson Associates.



River Rouge's Belanger Park

Belanger Park is the 9.5-acre flagship park of the City of River Rouge's recreation system and offers the city's 10,000 residents their only public access and view of the Detroit River. It is located in the heart of industry yet provides an excellent recreational facility on the river for residents of River Rouge and neighboring communities, and employees of area industries.

Recent restoration efforts have made the park an attractive, waterfront retreat offering access to the Detroit River for boating, fishing, and picnicking. The city initiated a two-phase, \$1 million restoration of the park in 1997 and completed the improvements in 1999 – all of which have enhanced community pride and improved the quality of life for residents.

The restoration of Belanger Park began with rebuilding the boat launch and expanding boat slips from two to three. The next phase involved replacing and upgrading the existing infrastructure, developing a new design accent on the waterfront, and improving amenities and traffic flow patterns. These improvements emphasized fishing, boating, and use of the park as a family recreation facility. Future plans call for establishing a Mariner's Memorial Lighthouse and a community concert series.

Today, patrons will find a waterfront gazebo, two picnic pavilions, a walking path surrounding a play area for children, and parking and restroom facilities. Belanger Park is now used extensively year-round for fishing, and on summer weekends the boardwalk is crowded with

The Belanger Park gazebo makes activities, such as this city sponsored fishing derby more comfortable.





spectators and anglers. From the boardwalk, park patrons enjoy spectacular views of the Detroit skyline and freighter traffic. The pavilion is reserved every weekend during the summer months for picnics, parties, and family reunions.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund, Great Lakes Fisheries Trust, Community Development Block Grant Program, City of River Rouge General Fund, and dedicated resident volunteers provided financing for the restoring and redeveloping Belanger Park.



Belanger Park in River Rouge offers public access to enjoy the river.



Lincoln Park's Council Point Park

Council Point Park is a 26-acre park along the northern and southern branches of Ecorse Creek in the City of Lincoln Park. The park is located at the convergence of the three branches of Ecorse Creek, a short distance before the creek enters the Detroit River at the border of the cities of Ecorse and Wyandotte.

Council Point's name is derived from its historical significance. Records note that Chief Pontiac camped at the location to plot a war, known as Pontiac's Rebellion. This uprising was part of the French and Indian Wars that occurred just before the American Revolution.

The land for Council Point Park was purchased in the late 1980s with federal and local funds. A small portion of the site had been contaminated with toxic substances, including heavy metals used in steel making. The City of Lincoln Park worked with an environmental consultant and the Michigan

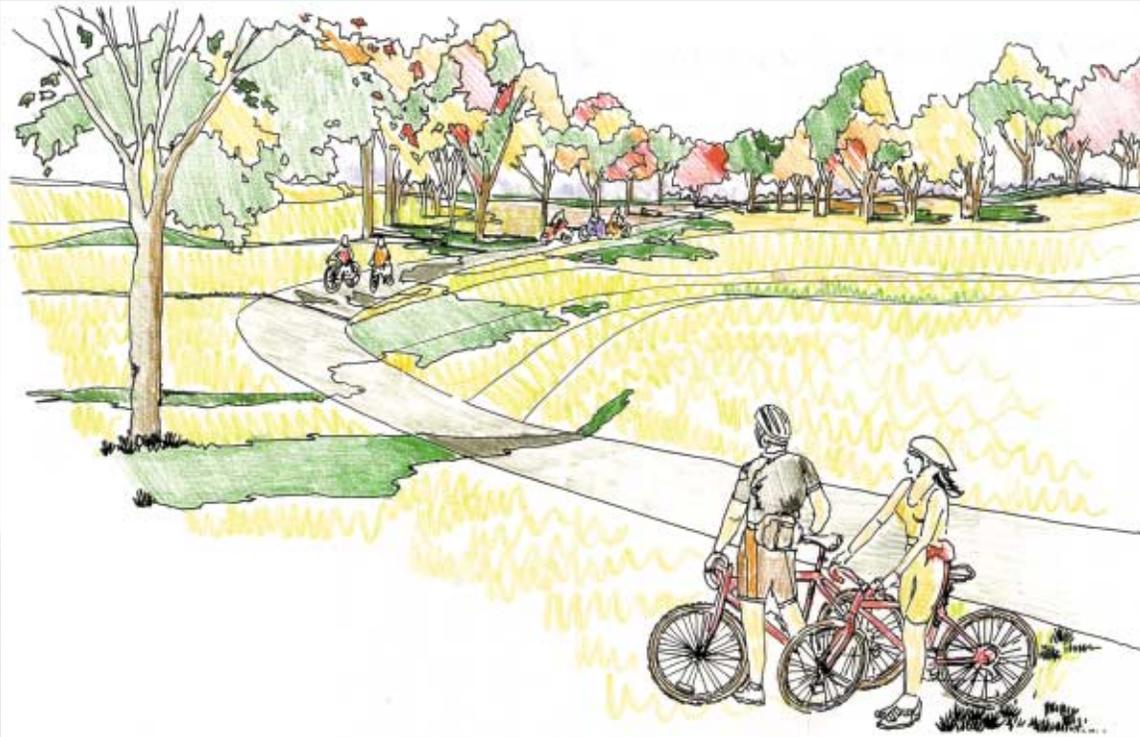
Department of Natural Resources to clean up and cap the area so it could be used as a passive park.

The park's improvement has come in two phases. Phase one included a two-foot clay cap, the construction of two baseball diamonds, two soccer fields, a picnic pavilion, a children's playscape area, and about one mile of asphalt walking trail along the banks of Ecorse Creek. Council Point Park's greenway trail will eventually be linked to greenways along the Detroit River. Costs for phase one of the project were approximately \$1.5 million; funds came from federal, state, and local sources.

The second phase of the project was undertaken in 2000. This included the addition of another mile of walking trail along the banks of Ecorse Creek, an inline-skating hockey arena, and a permanent restroom/storage

*Images of
Council Point Park
in Summer 2000.*





Rendering courtesy of Wade-Trim & Associates, Inc., taken from the conceptual drawings for the Downriver Linked Greenways Initiative.

building between River Drive and the park's parking lot. Community Development Block Grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development were used to pay for this phase, which cost approximately \$500,000.

Lincoln Park has also planted 150 trees, of a variety of types, in Council Point Park and will plant more in the future. The plan is to make the portion of the park along the

asphalt walking trails a science tour/nature walk that school children could use in years to come.

The development of Council Point Park has provided many benefits to the area. It increases public access to Ecorse Creek; expands recreational opportunities; furthers environmental education; celebrates history and culture; and improves quality of life for all Lincoln Park residents.



Trenton's Linked Riverfront Parks Project

The City of Trenton is developing a linked riverfront greenway that will extend from Meyer-Ellias Park (located on Helen Street) south to Elizabeth Park. The primary focus will be to link existing parks, including Meyer-Ellias, Rotary, and Elizabeth Parks, with new “pocket parks” created on city property at street ends along the Detroit River. Connections will be established among the existing parks, the new parks, and downtown in an effort to further economic development and enhance community pride.

Following the river wherever possible, the linked greenway will pass Riverside Osteopathic Hospital, Trenton Towers (a senior apartment building), and numerous private homes. The street-end parks will be a focal point from West Jefferson Avenue, bringing more people to the waterfront.

Community benefits of this project include:

- enhancing public access to Trenton's waterfront by developing passive public “pocket parks”;
- improving conditions along the Trenton Channel of the Detroit River, in places where shoreline erosion is causing unsafe pedestrian conditions and degrading water quality;
- restoring aquatic and terrestrial habitat for fish and wildlife along the Detroit River;
- strengthening community pride and identity among the people of Trenton; and
- promoting a higher quality of life as well as revitalizing economic growth in Downtown Trenton.

This project helps implement the City of Trenton's Master Plan which calls for a park system that promotes greater use of the river

*Current street-ends
along the waterfront
in Trenton.*





Rendering courtesy of SmithGroup JJR.

by increasing public access. In addition, the Master Plan addresses shoreline stabilization and habitat rehabilitation along the Detroit River, which this project will also help achieve.

This project is part of a larger effort to establish linked greenways throughout Southeast Michigan. The Downriver Linked Greenways Initiative, a consortium of 21 communities, Wayne and Monroe Counties, and the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, retained a professional team to design a linked system of greenways, paths, and bikeways throughout the Downriver area. It eventually will connect to greenways in

Detroit, along the Rouge River, and down to the City of Monroe.

During 2000, the City of Trenton secured \$815,700 in funding to construct three pocket parks consistent with their Master Plan. The Clean Michigan Initiative provided \$174,000 (Trenton match: \$58,000), the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund provided \$332,800 (Trenton match: \$110,900), the Coastal Zone Management Program provided \$35,000 (Trenton match: \$35,000), and Community Development Block Grants provided \$70,000. Construction will begin in 2001.



Wayne County's Elizabeth Park Riverwalk

Elizabeth Park is a 162-acre park located on the lower Detroit River in Trenton, Michigan. It is the oldest county park in Michigan and was bequeathed to Wayne County Park Trustees in 1919 by the children of Elizabeth Slocum. Elizabeth Park is in an island-like setting along the Detroit River with more than 3,500 feet of shoreline.

Wayne County is now restoring and upgrading the riverwalk at Elizabeth Park as another important link in the Detroit River greenway vision. This project will restore the park's south-shore boardwalk to its former glory (illustrated in the historic photos) and will:

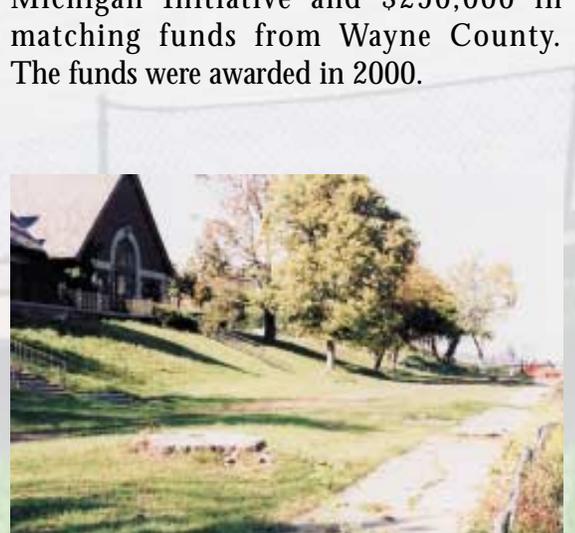
- stabilize 600 feet of shoreline;
- recreate a unique riverwalk with seating, lighting, handicap access, and fishing sites; and
- enhance fish habitat.

The present day Elizabeth park Riverwalk starkly contrasts with the facility enjoyed in the 1920s.

Together these improvements will expand recreational opportunities, improve public access and natural habitat, and restore an important part of the community's heritage.

This project was stimulated by a Wayne County survey of community attitudes regarding economic development in the Downriver area. It revealed that the Detroit River was recognized as one of Downriver's most treasured and attractive assets. One specific finding was that 74 percent of the survey respondents thought riverfront development should focus on recreational areas for residents, including parks, marinas, and opportunities for boating and fishing.

The Elizabeth Park Riverwalk project is being funded with \$750,000 from the Recreation Bond Program of the Clean Michigan Initiative and \$250,000 in matching funds from Wayne County. The funds were awarded in 2000.





Images from the 1920s showcase the popularity of Elizabeth Park.



Elizabeth Park Riverwalk to be restored to original condition.

Historical photographs courtesy of Wayne County Parks.



Grosse Ile Greenways

The Township of Grosse Ile, Michigan, is a large island community located in the lower reaches of the Detroit River. It is a distinctive island of exceptional natural beauty with native forests, unparalleled riverfront views, and over 300 acres of preserved open space.

Grosse Ile's extraordinary quality of life and community pride has been enhanced through a dedicated program of preserving the island's natural charm and, in particular, expanding greenways. Since 1974, the voters of Grosse Ile have continued to authorize purchase of large tracts of land for open space as well as the construction of greenways.

A system of greenways has been built and is being expanded that links open spaces and commercial areas via trailways, bike routes, and bridle paths. This system is an enormous source of community pride and has been heavily used by residents and visitors alike. All ages take advantage of the pathways for recreation, socializing, and overall enjoyment of Grosse Ile's natural character and the surrounding Detroit River.

The township established a nine-phase program to implement various greenway projects. To date, approximately 8.6 miles of paved pathways, connecting to the river, open



spaces, and commercial areas, have been built. An additional 2.5 miles of greenway are to be constructed in the near future. The island's extensive greenways and location directly east of Trenton's Elizabeth Park, make it a natural link in the Detroit River's greenway system.

Through dedicated tax levees, the residents of Grosse Ile have been able to systematically create a superb open space and greenways system. The island community has spent over \$40,000 per year on furthering its greenways since 1994 and over \$450,000 per year on preserving open space since 1997.



Present day greenways in Grosse Ile Township.



Brownstown's Woodruff Corridor Bike Path

Brownstown Township, Michigan, in conjunction with neighboring communities in Southeast Michigan's downriver area, is a strong proponent for a regional greenway network that would:

- link communities to existing parks, trails, open spaces, and the Detroit River;
- protect natural and cultural resources; and
- improve quality of life throughout the region.

The greenways would also encourage use of non-motorized transportation for routine shopping at local business, as well as offer opportunities for enhancing community amenities and attractiveness.

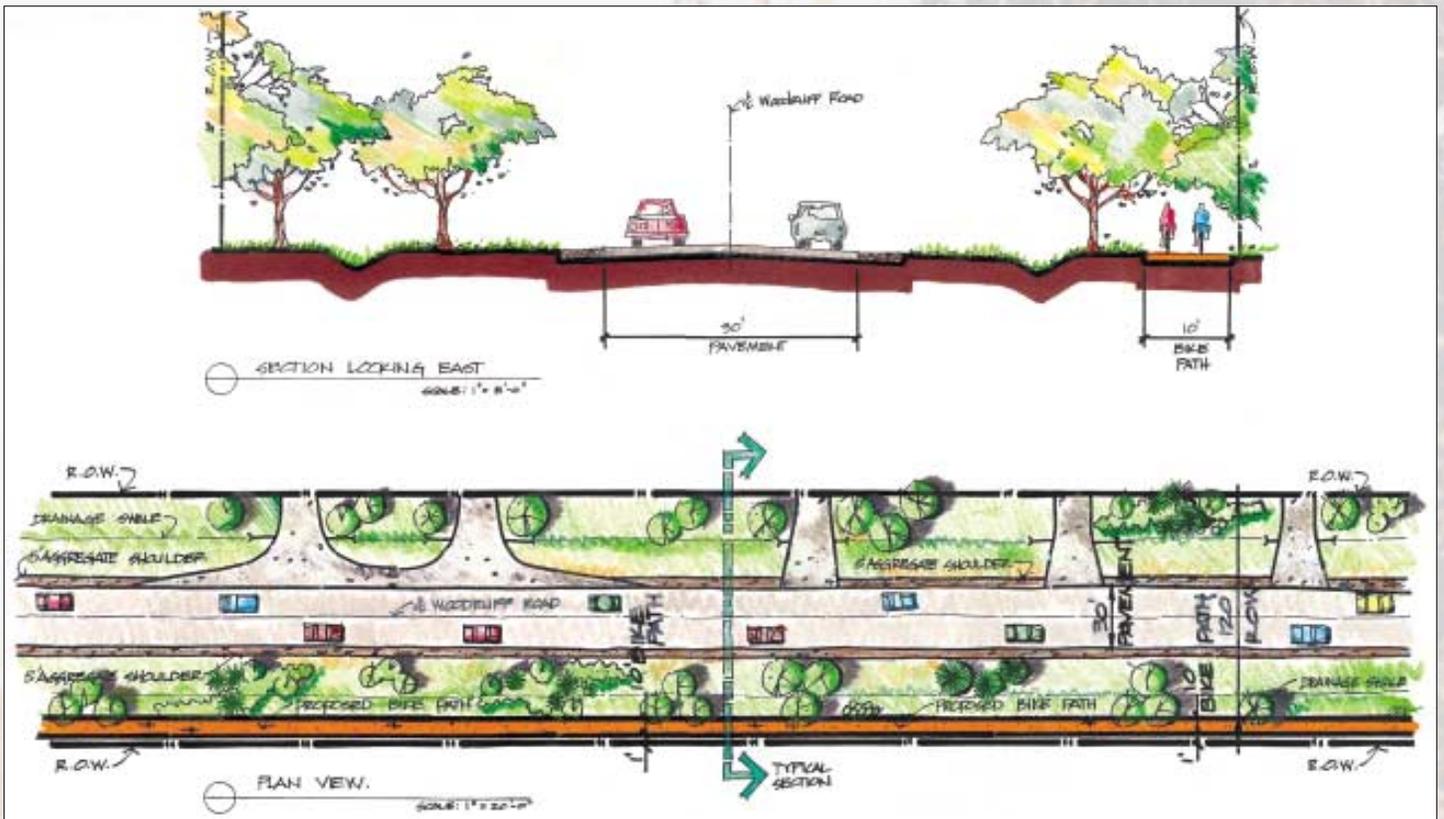
A recent example of Brownstown Township's commitment to a linked greenway system is the Woodruff Corridor Bike Path Project. The township has secured funding for a multi-use trail running along Woodruff Road, from West Jefferson Avenue in the east to Fort Street

in the west, a distance of approximately 1.5 miles. This greenway trail will link Brownstown Township with the City of Gibraltar and Lake Erie Metropark.

When completed, the Woodruff Corridor Bike Path will be an important connection for the planned Downriver Linked Greenway. This regional greenway will eventually provide opportunities for over 35,000 residents of Brownstown, Gibraltar, Rockwood, Flat Rock, and Huron Township to access the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Park Authority facilities at Lake Erie, Oakwoods, Willow, and Lower Huron, and well as the Detroit River. It will provide over 30 miles of greenways connecting approximately 4,800 acres of parkland, as well as link commercial facilities in Rockwood, Flat Rock, and Gibraltar. The construction of Brownstown's Woodruff Corridor Bike Path is an important first step in this truly significant regional project.

*Pre-enhancement
images of
Woodruff Corridor.*





Renderings courtesy of Wade Trim & Associates, Inc.

Construction of the bike path will begin after the paving of Woodruff Road by Wayne County, which is expected to be completed in the summer of 2001.

The Woodruff Corridor Bike Path received 75 percent of its funding through the Transportation Enhancement Fund program of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, which is administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation. The remaining 25 percent was provided by Brownstown Township. The total project cost is estimated at \$339,625.



Left and bottom: These renderings are typical bike path designs, created for the Downriver Linked Greenways Initiative.





Our tie to history. Our tie to prosperity. Our tie to each other.

Greater Detroit American Heritage River Initiative

The Detroit River has the distinction of being one of only fourteen rivers nationwide honored with a presidential designation as an American Heritage River. This designation led to the formation of the Greater Detroit American Heritage River (AHR) Initiative — a multi-stakeholder, results-oriented project dedicated to improving environmental quality, enhancing economic development, and celebrating the history and culture of the Detroit River.

The initiative is guided by an Executive Committee composed of:

- Mr. Peter W. Stroh, Chair, Director of The Stroh Companies, Inc.;
- Detroit Mayor Dennis W. Archer, represented by Chief of Staff, Ms. Nettie Seabrooks;
- Wayne County Executive Edward H. McNamara, represented by Assistant County Executive, Mr. Dewitt Henry; and
- Supervisor W. Curt Boller, Supervisor of Brownstown Township and Downriver Community Conference member.

A steering committee, chaired by Mr. Mark Breederland of Michigan Sea Grant and composed of governmental, business, community, environmental, and recreation representatives, advises the Executive Committee on project activities. The Greater Detroit AHR Initiative also works closely with Canadian partners since the Detroit River is an international border.

The initiative's River Navigator, Dr. John Hartig, is a federal employee who helps communities plan and identify resources for high-priority projects. Support for the River Navigator position comes from U.S. Department of Transportation in partnership with the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, Federal Highway Administration, and U.S. Coast Guard.

Metropolitan Affairs Coalition (MAC) serves as project manager and facilitator for the initiative. MAC Vice President David Sanders and Associate Director Susan Phillips provide staff support. Formed in 1958, MAC is a public-private partnership of business, labor, and governmental leaders that facilitates solutions to regional issues affecting the economic vitality and quality of life in Southeast Michigan.

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