



DETROIT RIVERFRONT CONSERVANCY

Issue 16 • Quarter 2 • 2022



A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

It's been a fun and vibrant summer along the Detroit Riverwalk, which has been named the best in America by USA Today for two years in a row.

We had a wonderful time when Al Roker brought the Today Show to Cullen Plaza to deliver six live weather reports from our "neck of the woods." An enthusiastic crowd of Detroiters turned out to welcome Al and to show their love of the Detroit Riverfront in front of a national audience of 16 million people.

This summer, our visitors have enjoyed weekly free programs including yoga, Tai Chi, herbal walk and talks, Riverwalkers, and Reading & Rhythm on the Riverfront. Special events like our Riverfront Run, Kids Fishing

Fest and our Shimmer on the River fundraiser have introduced new visitors to the riverfront.

We are nearly complete with the final connection of the East Riverfront, which will connect Mt. Elliott Park to Gabriel Richard Park and make it easy for people to get from the Riverwalk onto the Belle Isle Bridge. And we celebrated the groundbreaking for the Southwest Greenway and Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park this spring.

What's next? This fall, our programming team will be hosting some of the most fun events in the city, including Soirée on the Greenway and the Detroit Harvest Fest & Food Truck Rally.

More and more people are falling in love with the BBQ at Smoky G's

Smokehouse and Geisha Girl's Sushi, and the bars at Cullen Plaza, Robert C. Valade Park, and the Dequindre Cut Freight Yard are always full of people enjoying local refreshments.

The riverfront continues to welcome people from all walks of life every day, while our team at the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy is making tremendous progress on completing our vision.

We couldn't do what we do without your support. I hope to see you all along the Detroit Riverfront soon.

Will Smith
Chief Financial Officer





LOOKING BACK: SHIMMER 2022

On June 23, the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy officially kicked off summer with its largest annual fundraiser – Shimmer on the River. Shimmer 2022 was an unforgettable evening of celebration, with a record-breaking \$335,000 raised to support the Conservancy’s revitalization efforts on the riverfront.

Held this year for the first time ever at Robert C. Valade Park, Shimmer featured an evening of live music from Alise King, summer-inspired food and refreshments, and beach-themed activities, including a family-friendly adventure park.

Over the course of the evening, the Conservancy had the honor of presenting Shimmer Awards to the Hudson Family for their long-standing commitment to sustainability on the riverfront, and Pamela Rodgers, a founding board member and trusted financial advisor.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2022 SHIMMER SPONSORS

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DETROIT RIVERFRONT CONSERVANCY

SOIRÉE ON THE GREENWAY

SOIRÉE ON THE GREENWAY

SOIRÉE ON THE GREENWAY

CIRQUE DE FREIGHT YARD

SEPTEMBER 30TH

FRIDAY

PRESENTED BY Citizens

STARTS AT

6P

ENDS AT

10P

LOCATED AT

DEQUINDRE CUT FREIGHT YARD

ADMIT ONE

SOIRÉE PREVIEW

A FUNDRAISER TO SUPPORT THE

DETROIT RIVERFRONT CONSERVANCY

THURSDAY
JUNE 23

SHIMMER
ON THE
RIVER

ROBERT C.
VALADE PARK

A RIVERFRONT BEACH PARTY

The Conservancy would like to thank everyone who attended Shimmer 2022 and helped to celebrate the work that is being done on the riverfront. The many projects, events, and special programming that take place on the riverfront year-round would not be possible without the generous support of the Detroit community, and so the Conservancy looks forward to hosting Shimmer on the River for many years to come.



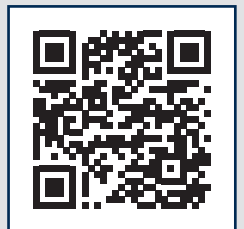
SOIRÉE ON THE GREENWAY

A masquerade fundraiser to benefit the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy

Friday, September 30, 2022 | 6-10 p.m.
Dequindre Cut Freight Yard

Soirée on the Greenway presented by Citizens, returns for a masquerade under the stars in one of Detroit's most beloved public spaces, the Dequindre Cut. For the first time, this fall fundraiser will be an exclusive preview to Detroit Harvest Fest & Food Truck Rally. Over 50,000 people attended Harvest Fest in 2021, and Soirée will be an opportunity to beat the crowds and preview this special event while enjoying a lineup of the top food trucks from the 2021 festival. The Freight Yard will be transformed into a mysterious circus and will be filled with delicious food and refreshments, surprise live performances, interactive fall experiences, carnival games, and the unveiling of a brand-new mural on the greenway. We welcome our guests to put on their masquerade masks, costumes, and dancing shoes, and enjoy an unforgettable evening on the Cut!

Visit detroitriverfront.org/soiree for tickets and to learn more!





SUMMER PROGRAMMING ON

With so many special events and programs from which to choose, people of all ages have been enjoying the Detroit Riverfront this summer. It's been a warm, sunny and fun summer so far and the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy is looking forward to an exciting fall and winter seasons ahead.

Work from the Park

Once a month this summer, the Conservancy invited the community to work from the park at Robert C. Valade Park. The events featured free WiFi, coffee and ice cream for guests. There were also happy hour drink and lunch specials. There's still time to make one of Detroit's most beautiful public spaces your office for an hour or the day. The next Work from the Park takes place on Wednesday, September 21.

Reading & Rhythm on the Riverfront

This summer, the Conservancy hosted Reading & Rhythm on the Riverfront (R3) – the ever-popular children's literacy program supported by General Motors. R3 was held again this year at Gabriel Richard Park and featured readings by local celebrities and business and community leaders, as well as other interactive entertainment. More than 2,500 children attended, and each received a healthy snack from the YMCA and free book, courtesy of the Detroit Public Library.

Detroit RiverWalkers

More than 1,500 seniors came out to the riverfront this summer to join the Detroit RiverWalkers in partnership with AARP. To support the health of our seniors, in addition to wellness walks, free blood pressure checks were provided.





THE RIVERFRONT

There was even a celebrity sighting of Ernestine Sheppard, the world's oldest female competitive body builder!

D.Cipher Music Series

Held every Wednesday at 6 p.m. through September 14, come out to the Dequindre Cut to enjoy musical performances by some of Detroit's most talented entertainers across all genres, including jazz, soul, rock, and reggae, there is something for everyone.

Detroit Harvest Fest and Food Truck Rally

The Detroit Harvest Fest and Food Truck Rally returns this fall on October 1 & 2. Featuring over 50 delicious food truck options and five music stages for live entertainment, this is a party you won't want to miss. In addition, there will be free kids' activities, including inflatable obstacle courses, a pumpkin patch and petting zoo, and trick or treating. Entrance is \$5 for ages 3-65, free for seniors over 65, under 3 and active and retired military.



SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER AT A GLANCE

Intro to the Detroit Riverfront Walking Tours

9/3 • 2 p.m.
Cullen Plaza

Motown Roller Club Summer Meet Ups

9/6 • 6 to 9 p.m.
Valade Park

If The River Could Sing with InsideOut Literary Arts

9/8 • 6 to 8:30 p.m.
Valade Park

Campbell Terrace Performance Series with D. Cipher

9/7 and 9/14 • 6 to 9 p.m.
Dequindre Cut

Dequindre Cut Walking Tour With City Institute*

9/18 • 1 to 3 p.m.
Dequindre Cut

Work from the Park

9/21 • 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Valade Park

Soirée On The Greenway

9/30 • 6 to 10 p.m.
Dequindre Cut Freight Yard

Detroit Harvest Fest And Food Truck Rally

10/1 and 10/2 • 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Dequindre Cut

Dequindre Cut Fall Clean Up

10/22 • 10 AM to 2 p.m.
Dequindre Cut

Dia De Los Muertos

10/29
Valade Park

* Registration required at detroitriverfront.org/things-to-do

Dates and times are subject to change. For a full listing of events, dates, times and other information, please visit detroitriverfront.org/things-to-do



The Community Comes Together to Celebrate **GROUNDBREAKING OF RALPH C. WILSON, JR. CENTENNIAL PARK**

The Detroit Riverfront Conservancy and its partners were proud to break ground for Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park on Wednesday, May 10. More than 500 people from throughout the community gathered together at West Riverfront Park on a sunny, warm day to celebrate the momentous occasion.

In addition to speakers from the Conservancy, other speakers included State of Michigan Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist; City of Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan; President & CEO Dave Egner and Board Chair and Life Trustee Mary Wilson of the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation; President & CEO Darin McKeever of the William Davidson Foundation; Director of the Great Lakes National Program Office Chris Korleski from the EPA; Director Amy McMillan of Huron-Clinton Metroparks; Vice President of Strategic Partnerships Margaret Trimer from Delta Dental of Michigan; President & Chair Lynette Dowler of DTE Energy Foundation; and the Conservancy's Community Activation Team member Denise Kennedy.

Ralph Wilson Park will dramatically transform the Detroit Riverfront into one of the most beautiful public spaces in the country and is a \$75 million investment for the community. The park's name honors the legacy of the late entrepreneur, veteran and philanthropist Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. and will be completed in 2024.







SUMMER CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS

Crews have been making tremendous progress along the riverfront this spring and summer. This progress brings the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy closer every day to realizing its vision of 5.5 miles of revitalized riverfront from bridge to bridge.

Uniroyal Promenade

Progress continues on the Uniroyal Promenade, the scenic stretch that will connect Gabriel Richard Park with Mt. Elliott Park and provide safe passage for pedestrians to Belle Isle. Currently crews are on site pouring concrete for two different levels of Riverwalk, as well as installing benches, lighting, and security cameras. When construction is complete in 2023, the Uniroyal Promenade will include an extra-wide pathway with separate lanes for walkers and bicyclists, and a stone barrier of rip rap along the water's edge.

DDA Property

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has completed repairs along the seawall along this property, which is located between Riverfront Towers and Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park on the West Riverfront.

In early 2023, the project will go out for bid and a contractor will be selected. Work will begin next spring and will be complete by late 2023. This section of Riverwalk will include a spacious concrete plaza with tiered seating, three peaceful rain gardens, the familiar riverfront marine railing, lighting, security cameras, and beautiful landscaping.

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park

After closing West Riverfront Park to the public in June, crews immediately began preparing the site for its transformation into Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park. Construction trailers have been delivered and the site has been secured with gates and fencing. Crews have started electrical demolition and site clearing to prepare for earthwork. Currently, the Conservancy is working with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Army Corps of Engineers on soil remediation along the shoreline. In the coming weeks, crews will begin installing underground

“Construction crews have been busy all summer long. We are making tremendous progress toward our goal of revitalizing 5.5 miles along the Detroit Riverfront.”

– Mark Wallace, President & CEO
Detroit Riverfront Conservancy



ALONG THE RIVERFRONT

utilities. By the end of the year, the foundation for the William Davidson Sport House will be poured. When complete in 2024, this 22-acre park will be a go-to destination for all riverfront visitors and unlike any other destination anywhere in the world. In addition to the basketball courts at the William Davidson Sport House, other amenities at the park include a large water garden, the Delta Dental Children's Play Garden, and the expansive DTE Foundation Hill.

Southwest Greenway

Crews are making significant progress on the Southwest

Greenway, which will provide residents of Southwest Detroit and Corktown with safe and convenient access to the riverfront. The .75-mile greenway runs from the shadow of the Ford Mobility Center at Michigan Central on Bagley all the way to Jefferson. Underground utilities have been installed, light pole bases set and retention ponds installed. In the coming weeks, the concrete pathway will be poured and fencing installed. Later this summer, crews will begin installing benches. The Conservancy is looking forward to welcoming visitors to the greenway later this fall.





VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: NADINE MILLER

Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Nadine Miller settled with her family in Northwest Detroit when her kids were young. When she was diagnosed with a rare condition in 2009 at the age of 44, Nadine underwent two brain surgeries that affected her eyesight. Ultimately, she had to leave her job as an information specialist at the Karmanos Cancer Center.

Now, many years later, Nadine stays active and engaged in different volunteer capacities. As someone living with a disability, Nadine is a strong advocate for making public spaces more accessible in various ways. She is also a member of Detroit Disability Power, a disability advocacy group through which she started a book club named You Can't Put Us Down. In the future, Nadine hopes to pass a law that will expand benefits for disabled people.

And yet, one of her favorite volunteer roles is with the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy. Having started volunteering with the Conservancy in 2018, Nadine is approaching almost 100 hours of service. Over the years, she has helped out as a greeter at

Reading & Rhythm on the Riverfront, as well as Riverwalkers. Additionally, she enjoys working as a riverfront ambassador, distributing information and telling visitors about all the great things that are happening along the riverfront.

"The beauty of the riverfront itself attracted me, and the activities that take place," said

Nadine, "It's a great way for me, as a person who is disabled, to just stay engaged."

Nadine said that one of her favorite parts of volunteering with the Conservancy is the people. The friendships she's made with other volunteers mean so much, and on days

when her husband is unable to drive her to events, she is thankful for fellow volunteers who may offer her a ride.

To those who are considering volunteering with the Conservancy, Nadine's advice is simple: "Sign up, come on board. You'll love it. There is so much to do."

"The beauty of the riverfront itself attracted me, and the activities that take place. It's a great way for me, as a person who is disabled, to just stay engaged."
- Nadine Miller

To learn more and apply, visit
www.detroitriverfront.org/volunteers
or call (313) 566-8207.



SUPPORT YOUR #1 RIVERWALK ALL YEAR LONG!

This has been a summer to remember so far along the Detroit Riverfront. From the “Best in the USA” swag being worn throughout our city to the incredible turn out at Shimmer on the River—we are truly feeling the love of our community.

Our team at the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy is proud to serve as the perpetual stewards of the Riverwalk as well as the public spaces and greenways along it. We know that the riverfront is not just a destination for visitors but a place where our community gathers for connection, wellness, and reflection.

This year, we welcomed over 400,000 visitors to participate in unique programs developed to enrich and engage our community. As we grow our impact and develop programs for all seasons, our need for support also grows. There are so many ways you can support the work we do and all of them make an impact. From annual support to tickets to Soiree on the Greenway to a swag purchase, every gift makes a difference.

As always, please know that we appreciate all your support. We couldn't do what we do without the support of each and every one of you. Thank you for the support of your Detroit Riverfront.

All The Ways to Make a Difference

Join us for Soiree on the Greenway on September 30 for

a magical evening under the stars on the Dequindre Cut Greenway! Visit detroitriverfront.org/Soiree

Consider a year-end donation early! Make a gift that celebrates the power of public spaces and helps us reach our annual fund goal that supports the stewardship, maintenance, and transformation of the riverfront by visiting detroitriverfront.org/Give

Show off your love for the riverfront while supporting our work! Take a look at our unique lineup of riverfront merch, artwork, and gifts created with local partners at detroitriverfront.org/RiverfrontMerch

And visit All Things Marketplace where you can purchase limited-run Detroit Riverwalk swag, including “Best Riverwalk” baseball caps, sweatshirts, canvas totes and embroidered patches, as well as “I Love the Detroit Riverfront” T-shirts and stickers. The All Things Marketplace storefront is available IRL in Corktown at 1620 Michigan Ave. Suite 123, or visit the online store at AllThingsMarketplace.com.

If you're looking to display your love of the Detroit Riverfront inside your home, be sure to visit Signal Return in Eastern Market! We've partnered with local artists to create one-of-a-kind Detroit Riverfront prints, including Robert C. Valade Park, the Dequindre Cut, a Best in the USA Detroit Riverwalk print, and a limited edition freighter piece by Detroit artist Pat Perry.

We know these are difficult times, and we appreciate your consideration of support for the work we do. If you planned to make a gift this year, please consider giving at detroitriverfront.org/give/2022_NL2

About the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy

The Detroit Riverfront Conservancy is a non-profit organization founded in 2003 with the mission to develop public access to Detroit's riverfront and to serve as an anchor for economic development. As the permanent stewards of the Riverwalk and the Dequindre Cut, the Conservancy is responsible for raising the funds needed for construction, operation, maintenance, security and programming of the public spaces located along the riverfront. The Conservancy's ultimate vision is to develop five-and-a-half miles of riverfront from the Ambassador Bridge on the west to Gabriel Richard Park, just east of the MacArthur Bridge to Belle Isle. Visit www.detroitriverfront.org for more information.





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IN THIS ISSUE...

STORY	PAGE
A Message from Leadership	1
Looking Back: Shimmer 2022	2
Soirée Preview	3
Summer Programming on the Riverfront	4
Groundbreaking of Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park	6
Summer Construction Progress Along the Riverfront	8
Volunteer Spotlight: Nadine Miller	10
Support Your #1 Riverwalk All Year Long!	11

