



Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: December 15, 2022

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Location: Virtual

Meeting began at 9:00 a.m.

Roll Call

Present for BIPAC

Attending remotely:

Michele Hodges; Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan

Michael Curis; Detroit, Michigan

Bud Denker; Detroit, Michigan

Brad Dick; Detroit, Michigan

Sommer Woods; Detroit, Michigan

Unexcused

Rev. Lonnie Peak

DNR Staff Present

Ron Olson, Chief

Scott Pratt

Tom Bissett

Karis Floyd

Joel Thomas

Amanda Treadwell

Jason Becker

Nicole Hill

Griselda Trevino

Ashley Jackson

Barbrea Young

Erika Compton

Marie Kaphengst

Others Present

Ayo Thomas, Belle Isle Conservancy

Nancy Vella, Belle Isle Conservancy

Amy Greene, Nature Center Director, Detroit Zoological Society

Jerry Hasspacher, Sierra Club Southeast Michigan Group

Dr. Edward Cackett, Interim Chair and Professor, Department of Physics & Astronomy, Wayne State University
Sally Oey, Coordinator, Michigan Dark Skies, Professor of Astronomy, University of Michigan

Review and Approval of Minutes

Approval of Minutes for November 17, 2022

Motioned by: Michael Curis

Seconded by: Bud Denker

All in favor, motion approved

2023 Proposed Meeting Dates

Motioned by: Bud Denker

Seconded by: Michael Curis

All in favor, motion approved

Chair Hodges started the meeting with a mission moment honoring the Detroit Yacht Club and encouraged people to visit it as it makes Belle Isle very special. She also recognized Joe Aiken and thanked him for ensuring that the mission of protecting, preserving, and restoring and enhancing everything that makes Belle Isle.

Vendor Updates

Urban Night Sky Place Proposal –

Dr. Edward Cackett, Interim Chair and Professor, Department of Physics & Astronomy, Wayne State University

Jerry Hasspacher, Co-Chair, Sierra Club Southeast Michigan Group

Sally Oey, Coordinator, Michigan Dark Skies, Professor of Astronomy, University of Michigan

Dr. Cackett presented the Urban Night Sky Place proposal for Belle Isle, including the benefits and what would need to be done to make Belle Isle a designation. Eligibility requirements for the program are: it is in a metro area, is a geographic situation mitigating outdoor lighting from neighboring properties, allows public access for some time at night, and has public education programming. Requirements of the program include a lighting management plan, lighting inventory, education program on Dark Skies, signage, and annual reports.

Committee questions included if the DNR was prepared to handle the program and if it was recommended by the DNR to support it. Ron Olson, Chief, PRD, said it is a good program. There is a state statute that allows a dark sky preserve to be designated, so it would have to fall under that statute,

as does for example, Wilderness State Park, but it would have to be worked through and vetted first as well as engaging public opinion.

General Updates

Parks and Recreation Update – Ron Olson, Chief, PRD

In person meetings will resume in January. Nothing new to report legislatively. Director Eichinger will be moving to EGLE temporarily, with Shannon Lott stepping in as Acting Director. Programming remains the same. Chair Hodges would like to extend an invitation to Ms. Lott to join a meeting.

Park Update – Tom Bissett, Karis Floyd; PRD

Karis Floyd reminded everyone that restrooms are closed for the season and will re-open in April, except for bus stop 7 and the casino restroom, which will remain open through the winter. They are working with Public Lighting, DTE, and an electrician to see what can be done with the lighting, including options for installing solar lighting and lighting for the Aquarium parking lot. He introduced Erika Compton, the new accounting assistant for Belle Isle and Milliken State Park. The traffic mobility plan is moving along with 17 scheduled meetings. The discussions have been going well and they have come up with ideas on how to address backups. He encourages anyone to join the meetings (public announcements will be made). They met with MSU students to work on solutions for future use of the paddock. Students came up with some very good ideas that Amanda Treadwell will address later.

Joel Thomas reported they are in the midst of layoff season with a small number of staff working right now. Staff are keeping up with building maintenance and spend a lot of time cleaning up trash. He encourages the public to take out what they bring into the park. They are trying to fill a ranger, an office assistant and a janitor position before next spring.

Law Update – Lt. Jason Becker, DNR-LED

Lt. Jason Becker said they are on reduced winter hours. Impact is lighter this time of year. Everything is going normal, no major incidences to report.

Infrastructure Updates; Amanda Treadwell, Urban Area Field Planner, DNR

Amanda Treadwell provided infrastructure updates including updates on the scaffolding and lighting in the Anna Scripts Whitcomb Conservatory, the Casino roof and elevator, handball court improvements, hazardous material

testing and abatement, headquarters site work, Driker Trail and Ralph Wilson Trail, and the multimodal mobility study. (Presentation attached).

Michael Curis recommended that Detroit City Council members join some BIPAC meetings and have a spot on the agendas. Chair Hodges and Ayo Thomas said that some council members have been in attendance at events and the Conservancy has been working on getting regular one-on-ones with each member. They will take this feedback to them and will follow-up.

Chair Hodges said the vendor process and will be addressed at the January meeting.

Belle Isle Conservancy Updates, Michele Hodges and Ayo Thomas

- Belle Isle is a 4-season park and continues to be active, including the Oudolf Garden.
- The Nature Center has re-opened to the public, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. daily. 12/16, 12/17, and 12/30 are Family Nature Hikes, 12/16 and 12/23 are Exploration Hikes, Winter Birding, 12/22 and 12/24 Nature Tots – Animal Tracks, 12/31 is Beginner Nature Journaling. Visit belleislenaturecenter.detroitzoo.org for more information.
- Dossin Great Lakes Museum is open Friday - Sunday, from 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Admission is free for children under 6, \$5 for children and adults. Free admission on Sunday, December 18. Open December 28 – 30 with special Holiday week hours, closed on Saturday, December 24, Sunday, December 25, Saturday, December 31, and Sunday, January 1. More information can be found at detroithistorical.org.
- Belle Isle Conservancy – tours and special activities can be scheduled through the website (www.belleisleconservancy.org/education-and-tours). Aquarium holiday hours are 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Closed Saturday 12/24, Sunday 12/25 and Sunday January 1, and Monday January 23.
- Text GEM to 80888 for real-time updates about Belle Isle, island closures, and more.
- Belle Isle Conservancy, in partnership with Somerset Collection, has an opportunity this holiday season to support Belle Isle through Holiday Lights & Bites. The event is December 10 – 13, 17 - 19. A \$20 donation will get a selection of poured wine and some small plates. 100% of the donation will come to Belle Isle Conservancy.
- If you are looking to end of year giving, the Giving Society is a tangible way to contribute, as well as doing holiday shopping at the aquarium.

Public Comment

Stephen Malbouef - Concerned about the lighting on the island; it is pitch black at night and not safe. He wanted to know the plan and if the next option will be more reliable.

Chair Hodges said the DNR is working on the lighting and encourages Mr. Malbouef to contact Karis Floyd at floydk@michigan.gov, or her at hodgesm@belleisleconservancy.org.

Robin Heller: Will Shiver on the River be held this winter? Ayo Thomas said it will be held February 4 from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the Dossin.

Jenna Steele – She is a Wayne State University student and wanted to express her support for the Belle Isle Urban Night Sky initiative. The students hold a lot of their studies and environmental science classes there, and that, along with the human health aspect of preserving the night sky, preserving energy, are all good things. Chair Hodges encouraged her to share her thoughts in writing as well.

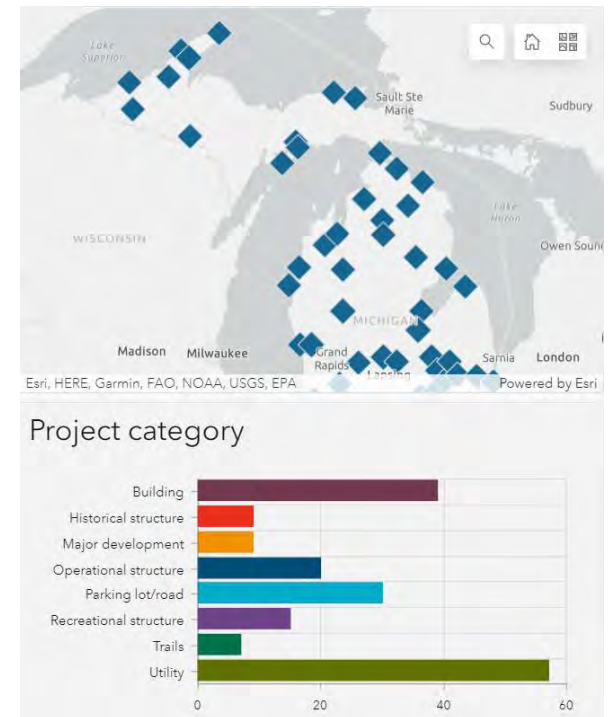
JW Mitchell – Suggest the bridge lights be put on a photocell where the lights come on automatically. He does, however, enjoy the darkness and thinks more wildlife come out then. He also suggested evening meetings. Chair Hodges said they do have an evening meeting in August to accommodate those who cannot attend a morning meeting but have found they do not typically get a large attendance at that one. She encourages the public to attend when they can.

Tom Bissett, Urban District Supervisor, added that the lighting on the bridge has been shut down often lately due to the construction. MDOT has been contacting the public lighting authority about the outages.

Committee member Michael Curis wished everyone a great, healthy happy holidays. Chair Hodges thanked everyone for another great year and looks forward to a strong 2023 and to getting back to meeting in person.

With no further business the meeting ended at 10:35 a.m.

Next regular meeting:
January 19, 2023
9:00 a.m.
Belle Isle Nature Center



Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update

December 15, 2022 Detroit, MI





ARPA – Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory

- Contractor erecting scaffolding.
- ‘Dance floor’ will be built to over lower dome.
- Lighting will be installed under ‘dance floor’.

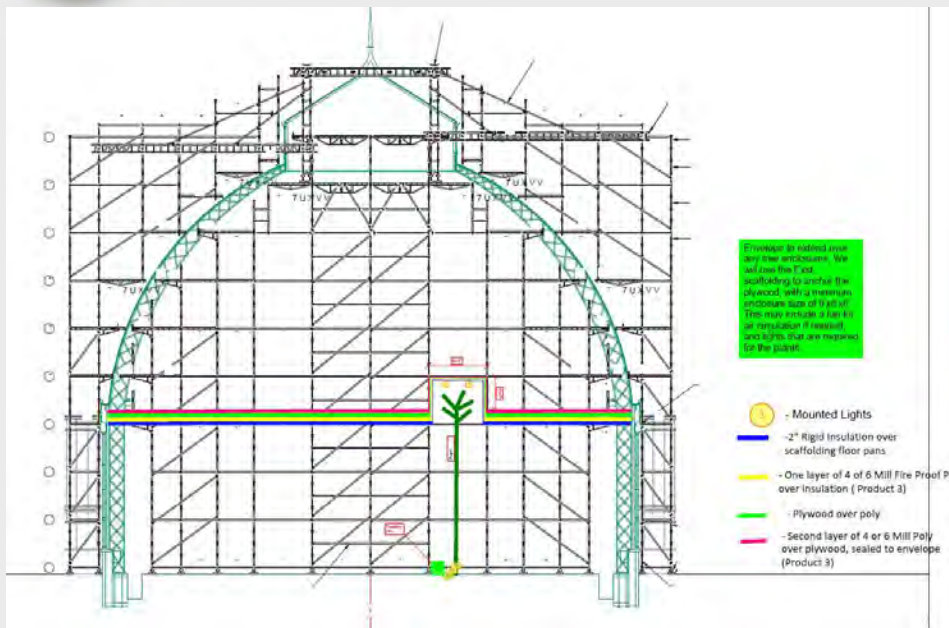


Phase 2 of the ASWC structural repairs will address steel repairs replacement as needed and replacing glazing in upper dome, asbestos in glazing compound and lead paint on upper steel trusses will be significant scope of work.

Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022



ARPA – Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory



Dance floor being constructed around existing palms.

Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022



ARPA – Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory



Exterior scaffolding being erected.



Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022



ARPA – Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory

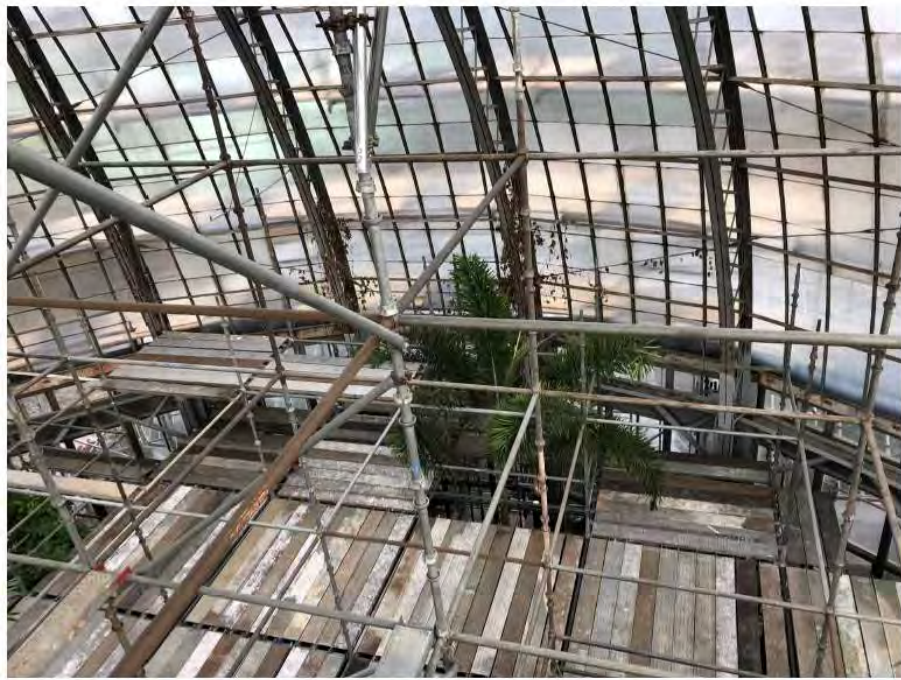


Scaffolding being erected around plants and planter walls.

Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022



ARPA – Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory



Dance floor view from above.

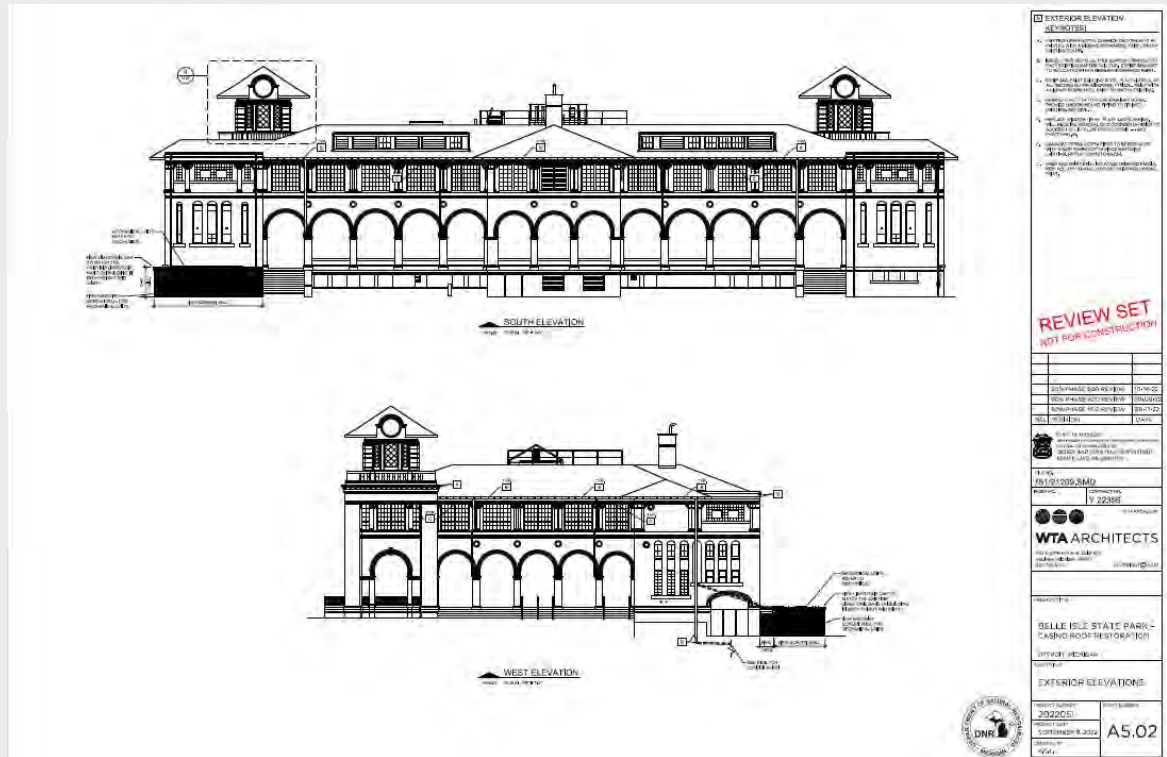
Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022



ARPA – Casino Roof

Project Status

- DNR review of bid documents, January 6, 2023.
- Construction to begin spring 2023.
- Construction in 2023 to align with elevator modernization.



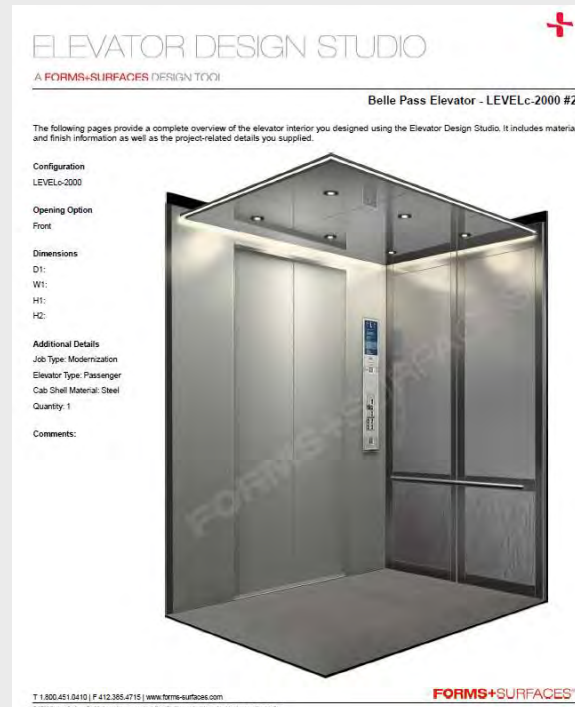
Significant deterioration to roof and related structural and architectural elements will be address in roof replacement project

Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022

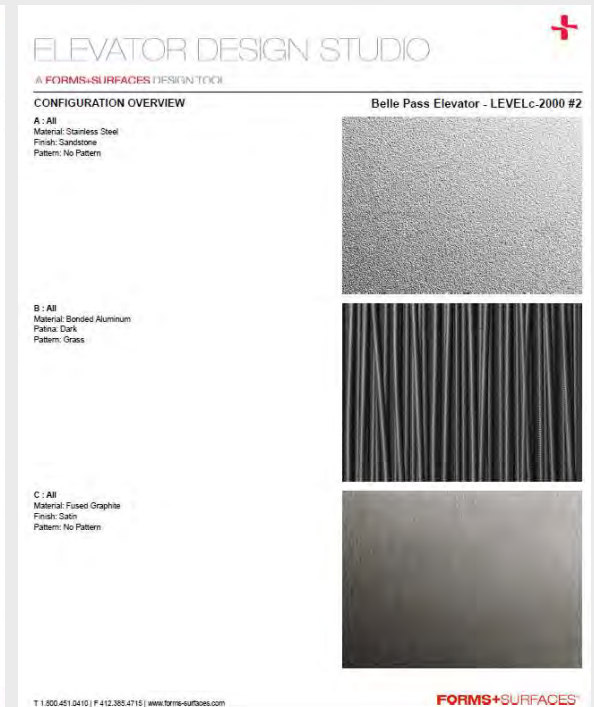


Casino Elevator Modernization

- **Bid schedule:**
 - Bidding – walk through 1/23/2022
 - Bids due 2/8/22
 - Contract Approval 3/14/22
- **Construction Schedule:**
April 2023-April 2024 Construction
- **Construction in 2023 to align with roof repairs.**
- **Estimated Administration and Construction Cost:**
\$ 1,125,000



Elevator improvements will provide for modernized equipment and bring unit up to current code



Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022



Handball Court Stabilization



New cap flashing has been installed and tuckpointing and block replacement complete. Remaining work includes cable installation and painting.

Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022



Park Hazardous Material Testing & Abatement

- RFPs for parkwide scope due January 5, 2023.
- Parkwide RFP for hazardous material testing and structural condition assessment out.
- 42 structures to have hazardous material testing, 22 structures need structural engineering assessment.
- Casino abatement project is complete.
- Boathouse was retested and the final report will be submitted to DNR by December 23, 2022.



Consultants were required to tour all limited access structures to submit a proposal

Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022



Belle Isle Park Headquarter Site Work

- Parking lot asphalt and restoration complete
- Final items to be installed this month include; entrance gate, service area gate and fencing.



Park Headquarters will welcome the public to front door again this month

Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022



Driker Trail & Ralph Wilson Trail Phase 2

- Driker Trail bid documents are complete.
- Pre-Bid walkthrough rescheduled for 1/3/2022.
- Construction expected for early 2023.
- Wilson Trail Phase alignment reviewed this week.





Belle Isle Multimodal Mobility Study (BIMMS)

- Data Processing & Analysis Phase Underway.
- Stakeholder meetings (18) underway through December.
- Project Team preparing public survey for region wide distribution on January 9, 2023.
- Project webpage will be put up on DNR Belle Isle Webpage for FAQ's and project schedule.

The graphic has a dark blue background. At the top, the text 'BELLE ISLE MULTIMODAL MOBILITY STUDY' is written in white, all-caps, sans-serif font. Below this is a black and white photograph of a magnifying glass resting on a surface. The lens of the magnifying glass is focused on the word 'WHY?' which is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif letters. To the right of the magnifying glass, there are two paragraphs of white text.

BELLE ISLE
MULTIMODAL
MOBILITY STUDY

WHY?

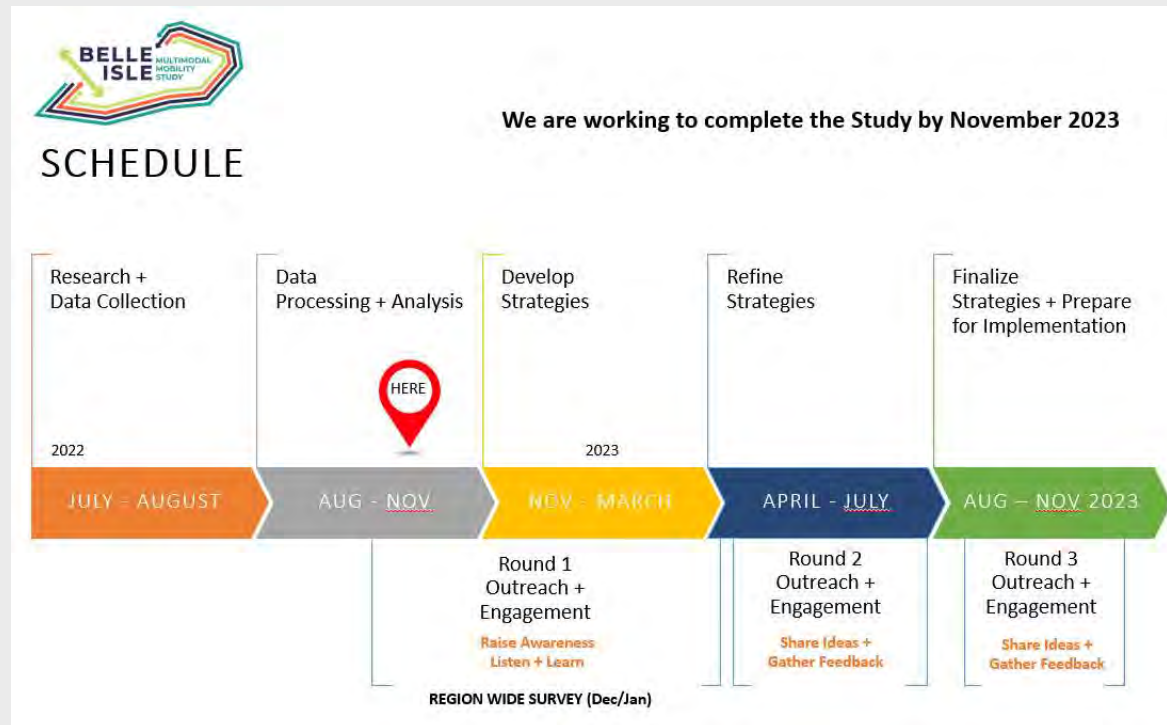
The purpose is to increase safety and enjoyment, improve wayfinding, and ease travel for all users and modes.

The goal is to develop a phased strategy for implementing sustainable improvements to better manage all modes of travel, circulation, and parking on Belle Isle.

Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022



Belle Isle Multimodal Mobility Study (BIMMS)



Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022



- **Wade Trim has completed developing the traffic models for existing conditions**
- **Updating parking occupancy map**
- **valuating DNR data, including events, rental logs, and passport purchases.**
- **Working on conflict data and attendance analysis, and additionally developing crash analysis and heat maps.**
- **Developing volume diagrams for vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles.**

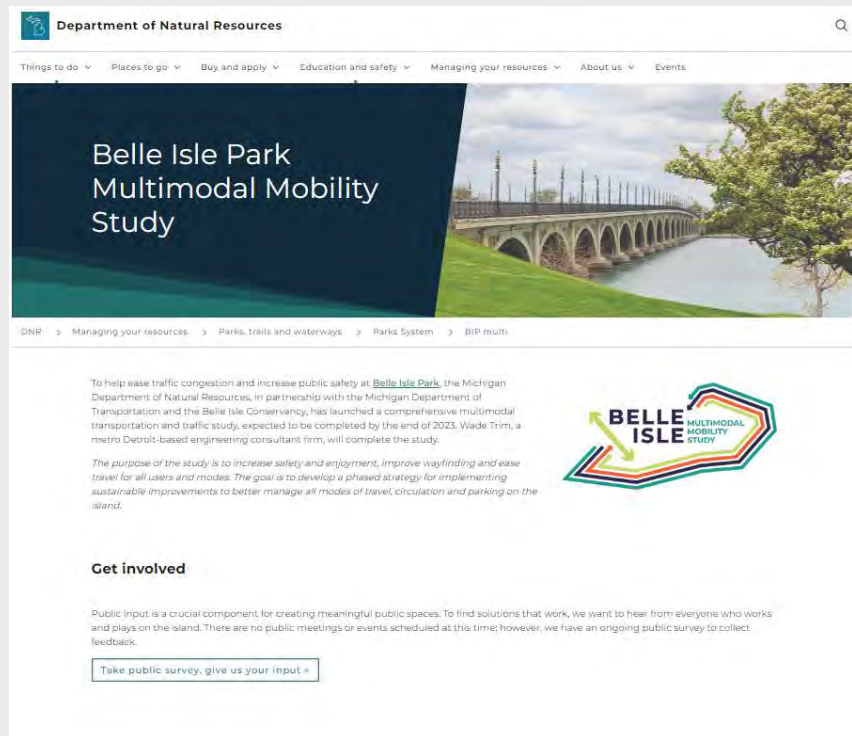




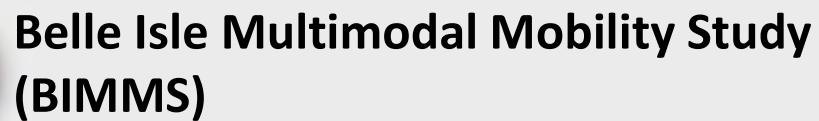
Belle Isle Multimodal Mobility Study (BIMMS)

Stakeholder meetings underway through December – 18 meetings.

- Meeting with City of Detroit agencies and committees, SEMCOG, DRFC, MDOT personnel, BIC, DNR & MDOT staff, as well as tenants and vendors to present project and coordinate distribution of survey to community.
- Full survey and webpage development will be online January 9th, 2022.



Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022



- **Average Daily Count figures are being created for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycle traffic.**
- **Evaluate alternatives for transportation network including roadways and nonmotorized routes.**





MSU LA 4th year Studio Designs – Team 1



Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022



MSU LA 4th year Studio Designs – Team 2



Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022



MSU LA 4th year Studio Designs – Team 3



Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, December 2022