



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



James Scott Memorial Fountain

# Belle Isle Park

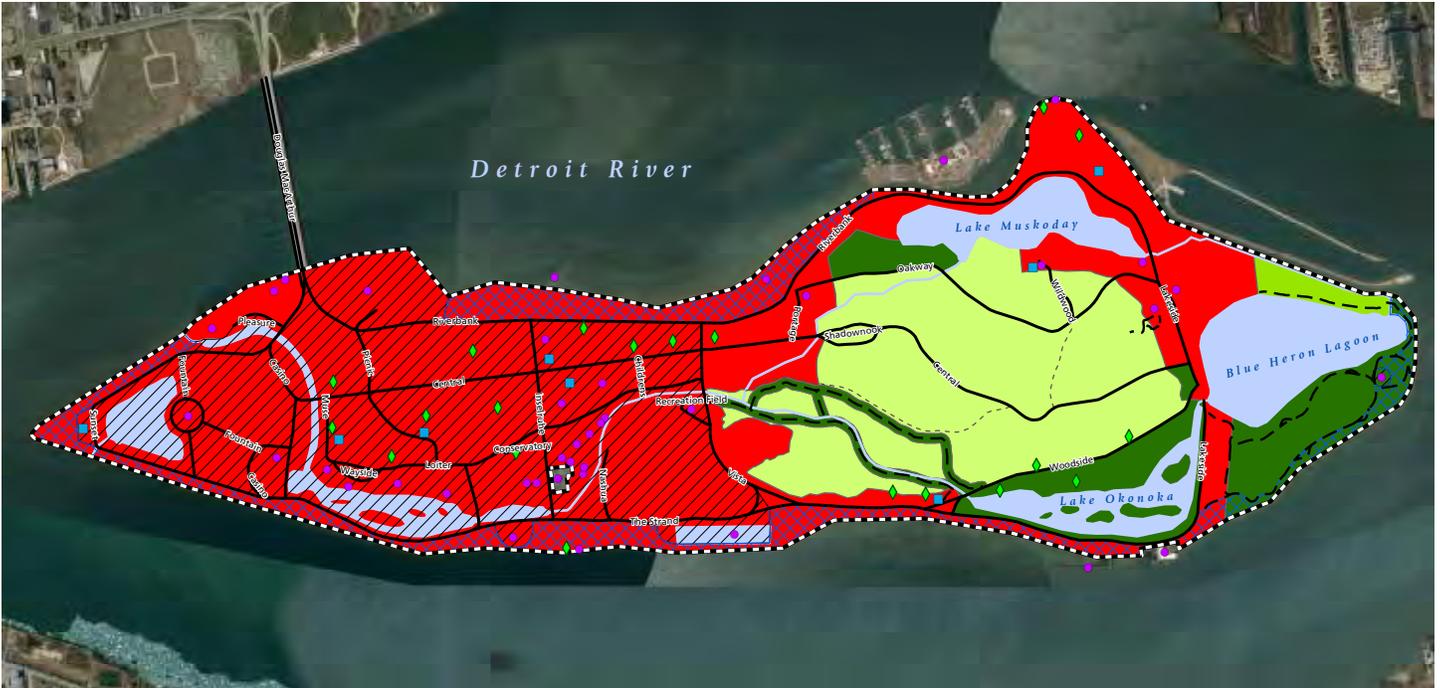
## STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PLAN

Approved July 19, 2018

Prepared with the assistance of

B R   
Beckett & Raeder

[www.bria2.com](http://www.bria2.com)



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# Belle Isle Park - Draft Management Zones

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Esri Basemap



- |                          |                     |                         |                             |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Belle Isle Park Boundary | Restroom Buildings  | <b>Management Zones</b> | Developed Recreation        |
| Roads                    | Shelters            |                         | Cultural Landscape Overlay  |
| Trails                   | Park Infrastructure |                         | Scenic Overlay              |
| Abandoned Roadbeds       |                     |                         | Natural Resource Recreation |

Beckett & Raeder

This project was directed by Deborah Jensen, Management Plan Administrator, Department of Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Division with assistance from Beckett & Raeder, Inc.

## PLAN APPROVALS

### Michigan DNR

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief, Parks and Recreation Division

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Natural Resources Deputy

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Director, Department of Natural Resources

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

### Belle Isle Conservancy

\_\_\_\_\_  
 President, Belle Isle Conservancy

7/13/2018  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

# PLAN APPROVALS

## PLAN REVIEW AND APPROVAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following dates reference when the plans were presented for recommendation. In some instances, additional time was allotted for plan review following the presentation with subsequent approval received by email.

PRD- Section Chiefs	<u>3/26/2018</u> Date
Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee	<u>5/17/2018</u> Date
DNR- Resource Management Bureau	<u>4/10/2018</u> Date
MSPAC- Stewardship Subcommittee	<u>5/30/2018</u> Date
NRC- Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee	<u>6/14/2018</u> Date

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**RESOLUTION NO. 05-2018-01**

**BELLE ISLE PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BIPAC)**

**RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE  
“BELLE ISLE PARK STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PLAN”**

**ADOPTED: May 17, 2018**

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources’ (DNR) Parks and Recreation Division, in association with the Belle Isle Conservancy (BIC), has completed the Strategic Management Plan for Belle Isle Park; and

**WHEREAS**, the planning process reflects balancing of natural resource protection values, historic and cultural resource values, recreation and education opportunities, including various DNR and BIC programs and events; and

**WHEREAS**, the planning process included multiple stakeholder, constituent, and public input; and

**WHEREAS**, the Strategic Management Plan represents sound guidance for future planning that is consistent with the missions of the DNR, the Parks and Recreation Division, the Belle Isle Conservancy, and the Belle Isle Advisory Committee; and

**WHEREAS**, the Strategic Management Plan is in alignment with the recommendations of the Michigan State Parks and Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel report submitted to Governor Rick Snyder; and

**WHEREAS**, the Strategic Management Plan has been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Parks and Recreation Division and the Belle Isle Conservancy.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee recommends to the DNR approval of the Belle Isle Park Strategic Management Plan; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee further recommends that the DNR, Parks and Recreation Chief and the Director approve the Belle Isle Park Strategic Management Plan and forward to the City of Detroit.

Submitted by: Ron Olson, DNR, PRD

**Motioned by: Bud Denker**  
**Seconded by: Rev. Lonnie Peek**

**Yeas: 6**  
**Nays: 0**  
**Abstained: 0**  
**Absent: 1**

*This Resolution was adopted by the Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee at their regular meeting on May 17, 2018 as Resolution No. 05-2018-01*

**RESOLUTION NO. 06-2018-04****MICHIGAN STATE PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MSPAC)****RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE  
“BELLE ISLE PARK STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PLAN”****ADOPTED: June 14, 2018**

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources’ (DNR) Parks and Recreation Division, in association with the Belle Isle Conservancy (BIC), has completed the Strategic Management Plan for Belle Isle Park; and

**WHEREAS**, the planning process reflects balancing of natural resource protection values, historic and cultural resource values, recreation and education opportunities, including various DNR and BIC programs and events; and

**WHEREAS**, the planning process included multiple stakeholder, constituent, and public input; and

**WHEREAS**, the Strategic Management Plan represents sound guidance for future planning that is consistent with the missions of the DNR, the Parks and Recreation Division, the Belle Isle Conservancy, and the Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee; and

**WHEREAS**, the Strategic Management Plan is in alignment with the recommendations of the Michigan State Parks and Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel report submitted to Governor Rick Snyder; and

**WHEREAS**, the Strategic Management Plan has been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Parks and Recreation Division, Belle Isle Conservancy and the Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee recommends to the DNR approval of the Belle Isle Park Strategic Management Plan; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee further recommends that the DNR, Parks and Recreation Chief and the Director approve the Belle Isle Park Strategic Management Plan and forward to the City of Detroit.

Submitted by: Ron Olson, DNR, PRD

**Motioned by:** Committee member, Chris Tracy

**Seconded by:** Committee member, Julie Clark

**Yeas:** 9

**Nays:** 0

**Abstained:** 0

**Absent:** 6

*This Resolution was adopted by the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee at their regular meeting on June 14, 2018 as Resolution No. 06-2018-04*

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MacArthur Bridge

# Belle Isle Park Strategic Management Plan

## Executive Summary

Belle Isle Park, the most visited state park in Michigan and the United States, is rich in culture, history, and natural resources. The growing demand for open spaces and recreational opportunities for city residents led to a variety of developments on the island over the years. The park's attractions, including the Belle Isle Aquarium, Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, Belle Isle Nature Center, James Scott Memorial Fountain, and Dossin Great Lakes Museum, provide rich educational value and strong cultural identity to the park, as well as the City of Detroit. Visitors also come to Belle Isle Park for the scenic landscape, beach, fishing, boating, grilling, athletic, cultural, family, and community activities.

Belle Isle Park became Michigan's 102nd state park in February 2014, and is operated by the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) under a 30-year lease agreement with the City of Detroit. The DNR is assisted by the DNR Law Enforcement Division (LED), Michigan State Police (MSP), and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). PRD has strong support from the Belle Isle Conservancy (BIC) and guidance from the Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee (BIPAC). Other DNR divisions also provide assistance.

Specific areas of the island are not included in the lease agreement with the city and are therefore not managed by the DNR. This includes the City of Detroit water intake area,

the U.S. Coast Guard Station, the city greenhouses, and the Detroit Yacht Club. Other areas are managed through lease agreements with third party entities such as the Belle Isle Nature Center (Detroit Zoological Society), the Dossin Great Lakes Museum (Detroit Historical Society), the Belle Isle Aquarium (BIC), and the Belle Isle Boat House (Friends of Detroit Rowing, Inc).

The purpose of this Strategic Management Plan is to guide the future long-term sustainability of Belle Isle Park. It encompasses many facets of planning and operations for the park from the perspective of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Belle Isle Conservancy (BIC) optimizing joint resources to best serve the mission of the park.

The management plan seeks to uphold the Parks and Recreation Division's Mission: "to acquire, protect, and preserve the natural and cultural features of Michigan's unique resources, and to provide access to land and water based public recreation and educational opportunities" and the mission of the Belle Isle Conservancy: "to protect, preserve, restore, and enhance the natural environment, historic structures, and unique character of Belle Isle Park as a public park for the enjoyment of all – now and forever."

**WHY:** The desired outcome of this plan is to ensure every visitor has an enjoyable recreational experience on Belle Isle that is memorable.

**WHAT:** To deliver the desired outcome will require:

- Continuous improvements to the park
- Excellent customer service
- Providing a clean atmosphere
- Providing a safe atmosphere
- Ensuring relevant opportunities are offered
- Consistent maintenance and operational standards
- Maintaining an appropriate balance of opportunities for self-directed recreation and being good hosts to groups seeking to hold events in the park

**HOW:** The desired outcome will be accomplished by:

- Effective maintenance, operations and security plans
- Effective communication systems
- Enforcing park rules compassionately
- Being customer oriented

- Properly informing the public
- Operating efficiently
- Maximizing and leveraging collaboration with partners to achieve desired outcomes
- Addressing the carrying capacity of Belle Isle Park due to the rapid increase in visitation in the last 3 years
- Community engagement
- Ensuring the public has a voice through the Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee
- Partnering productively with the BIC by:
  - Leveraging resources
  - Collaborating on planning and evaluating service outcomes
  - Seeking philanthropic investment in the park and its assets
  - Carefully reviewing new opportunistic plans and proposals to ensure that they fit the mission, are sustainable, and add clear value to the park.
  - Participating in annual evaluations of the park and its service



Metro Detroit Youth Day Activities

This Strategic Management Plan brings together DNR staff, BIC staff, other state agencies, stakeholders, and the public in a process that describes the following for the park:

- Core values and guiding resources on which the Strategic Management Plan is based.
- Management goals, objectives and accomplishments for the first three years of DNR management.
- Strategic direction for the next ten years, focusing on continued transformation, financial stability and partnerships.
- Purpose and significance that captures the unique identity of Belle Isle Park.
- 20-year Management Zone Plan reflecting the resource protection goals and the level of development appropriate for the different areas of the park.
- 10-year Action Plan that describes projects currently underway and future projects (including those leveraged by partners) that address the desired future condition within the park as a whole and within each of the designated management zones. These goals address the enhancement of infrastructure, management and operations that further the mission of Belle Isle Park.
- Proposal review process to ensure that new initiatives are carefully considered and analyzed based, not only on their impact and merit associated with the strategic plan, but also on their ability to be sustainable within operations and maintenance budget and resources.
- Enhancements to the current process for permits, events, and concessions activities on Belle Isle Park in collaboration with the BIC, ensuring the proposed events and concession activities are compatible with the mission of the park and any impact on use is in balance with the benefits received.
- Opportunities to engage and utilize volunteers and partners to enhance the mission of the park.

The Supporting Analysis, included as Appendix A of this plan, provides important background information on Belle Isle Park that informs this planning initiative. It includes a comprehensive review of the park setting; area demographics; history of the island; land ownership; legal mandates; and cultural, natural, and recreation resources of the island.

While the Strategic Management Plan addresses some specific natural resource goals for the park, a separate Natural Resource Stewardship Plan for Belle Isle Park has been developed. This identifies conservation targets, goals, and threats to those conservation targets, and strategies to reach the goals. The Stewardship Plan is included for reference in Appendix H.

The Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix, presented by Lear Corporation, has been held periodically at Belle Isle Park since 1992, and every year since 2012. The current agreement for the event on the island between the Detroit Grand Prix and the City of Detroit was in place and honored by the DNR when

the department assumed management of the park in February 2014. This agreement expires in 2018. The DNR has solicited input on the potential renewal of that agreement from area residents, business owners, stakeholders and others, including a public listening session in September 2017. Currently, the Detroit Grand Prix has not submitted an application for a new agreement; therefore consideration of this event was not part of this strategic management plan process. Should an agreement be drafted, it will be made available for public review and further comment.

## Significance of Belle Isle Park

Each park management plan developed by the Michigan DNR Parks and Recreation Division is derived from the park's significant features that make it distinct from other parks in the state's system. Belle Isle Park was determined significant due to the following:

### Serving the Urban Core

Belle Isle Park, Detroit's grandest park, is located in the middle of the Detroit River and is connected to the city's urban center by the MacArthur Bridge. Belle Isle Park is a natural oasis on par with New York's Central Park and Chicago's Lincoln Park, and is an important resource for outdoor education. Belle Isle Park is the most visited state park in the state and the country, currently drawing an estimated four million visitors annually.

### Rich History

Anishinaabe (Odawa, Chippewa, and Potawatomi) people knew Belle Isle as Wah-na-be-zee long before the French arrived in Detroit in 1701. As a public park at the core of Detroit life since 1880, Belle Isle Park has evolved as the idea



Historical picture of Belle Isle Casino

of recreation has changed over time. Where park-goers once strolled with parasols, viewed flowers, and rode carriages, visitors now enjoy fitness activities, team sports, eating outdoors, and more. Except during a relatively brief time from 1817 until 1879, Belle Isle has remained public land. Its many uses over the years have reflected, even if on a small scale, significant cultural and historic events of the United States including prohibition, times of civil unrest, and national defense during the Cold War.

### Historic Structures and Architectural Pedigree

The island and 59 structures, sites, and objects are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including one of the oldest continuously operating aquariums and conservatories in the country, the James Scott Memorial Fountain, and the only marble lighthouse in the country. Many notable designers add to the architectural pedigree of the island, such as Frederick Law Olmsted (developed a preliminary plan for the island), Albert Kahn (aquarium, conservatory, and lighthouse), Cass Gilbert (James Scott Memorial Fountain), George Mason (police station, horse stables, and Detroit Yacht Club), Alphaeus Chittenden (Belle Isle Boat House), Van Leyen and Schilling (Casino), and Robert Swanson (Flynn Memorial Pavilion). These significant features help to make the island a popular destination for locals and tourists in Michigan.

### Family Friendly Destination

Detroit families have enjoyed the park's friendly atmosphere for generations, and many use it as a site for family reunions, social gatherings, weddings, and other events. Attractions such as the Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse, Giant Slide,

Dossin Great Lakes Museum, Belle Isle Nature Center, and canoeing / kayaking on the inland lakes and canals make this park a place for all.

### Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Belle Isle Park's variety of land and water outdoor recreation opportunities just outside the heart of downtown Detroit make it one of the city's, and state's, most visited attractions. Visitors come to enjoy viewing the unobstructed city skyline from Sunset Point, the multi-colored light show of James Scott Memorial Fountain, and the Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse, situated in a migratory bird area perfect for taking in the landmark and the nature which surrounds it. For fitness enthusiasts, the park offers a 6.5 mile perimeter paved bike lane as well as a half-mile buoyed beach area – one of the few swimming opportunities on the Detroit River. Accessible fishing and paddling opportunities are found on the river, inland lakes, and canals. Programmed and team sports are available at the athletic complex and include facilities unique within the state park system, such as outdoor handball courts, basketball courts, tennis courts, a rugby field, and a cricket field.

### Natural Resources

Surviving as part of Frederick Law Olmsted's original vision, the park's 200-acre old growth floodplain forest is Michigan's largest remaining "wet-mesic flatwoods" forest. Only a handful of these forests remain in North America. With a climate moderated by the Detroit River, the forest supports Shumard's oak (including the state's largest) and pumpkin ash, tree species normally found much further south. The forest provides important habitat for several rare plants and many animals, especially songbirds and amphibians. The value of the forest as stopover habitat for migratory birds is noteworthy.

### Zoological History

Over the years, deer and other wildlife in four distinct zoos in different areas of the park have fascinated visitors. The Belle Isle Zoo opened in 1895, initially featuring European fallow deer. By 1909, it hosted 150 animals in 32 acres. Sheba the elephant was purchased in 1923 using pennies saved by Detroit children. After her death, she was buried on the site. The Belle Isle Children's Zoo, a petting zoo with nursery rhyme themed exhibits, was in operation from 1947 until 1979. The Belle Isle Zoo closed in 1956, with many of the animals relocated to the main Detroit Zoo in Royal Oak. The Belle Isle Safariland Zoo (1980-2002) featured elevated walkways overlooking the animal exhibits. Today, a small herd of deer descendant from the original population is housed at the Belle Isle Nature Center, which also has live reptile and amphibian displays and provides environmental education experiences for schools, families and community groups.



Introduction to camping event at Belle Isle Park

## Management Zones

A key goal in the development of the park management plan is to continue providing the opportunities and features that attract so many visitors to the park each year, while simultaneously protecting the park's natural and cultural resources. Taking this into account, the planning team, established appropriate management zones for the park. From a palette of nine standard zones, four zones and two overlay zones were applied to Belle Isle Park. The management zone Map and a thorough review of each management zone are found in Chapter 6 of this Plan. A condensed description of each of the applied management zones is as follows:

### Primitive Zone

The Primitive Zone reflects a desired condition that emphasizes the natural resources, and is managed to only allow dispersed and low frequency use in the zone for low impact recreational purposes. Attaining and maintaining a high quality natural resource condition dictates the extent to which recreational improvements or uses are allowed. The Primitive Zone covers approximately 23% of the park, encompassing the wet mesic flatwoods forest and a segment of land leading from the flatwoods to Lake Muskoday.

### Backcountry Zone

The character of the Backcountry Zone is natural, with minimal evidence of human impact. While the 'Primitive Zone' is highly restrictive for recreational use and human impact, this zone allows for increased use and modifications of the landscape (e.g. trail development) to accommodate that use. This zone comprises approximately 1% of the park and includes the grassland restoration area north of Blue Heron Lagoon.

### Natural Resource Recreation Zone

The Natural Resource Recreation Zone supports active recreation with medium to high density of use conducted in natural settings. There is still an emphasis on resource quality over recreation, but in this zone, higher levels of use are allowed. This zone makes up approximately 11% of the park and includes part of the old golf course, the prairie and grassland bird area, the area surrounding the Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse (which also has a Cultural Landscape Overlay) on the east end of the park, and the area surrounding Lake Okonoka.



Bird's eye view of Belle Isle Park and the Detroit River

**Developed Recreation Zone**

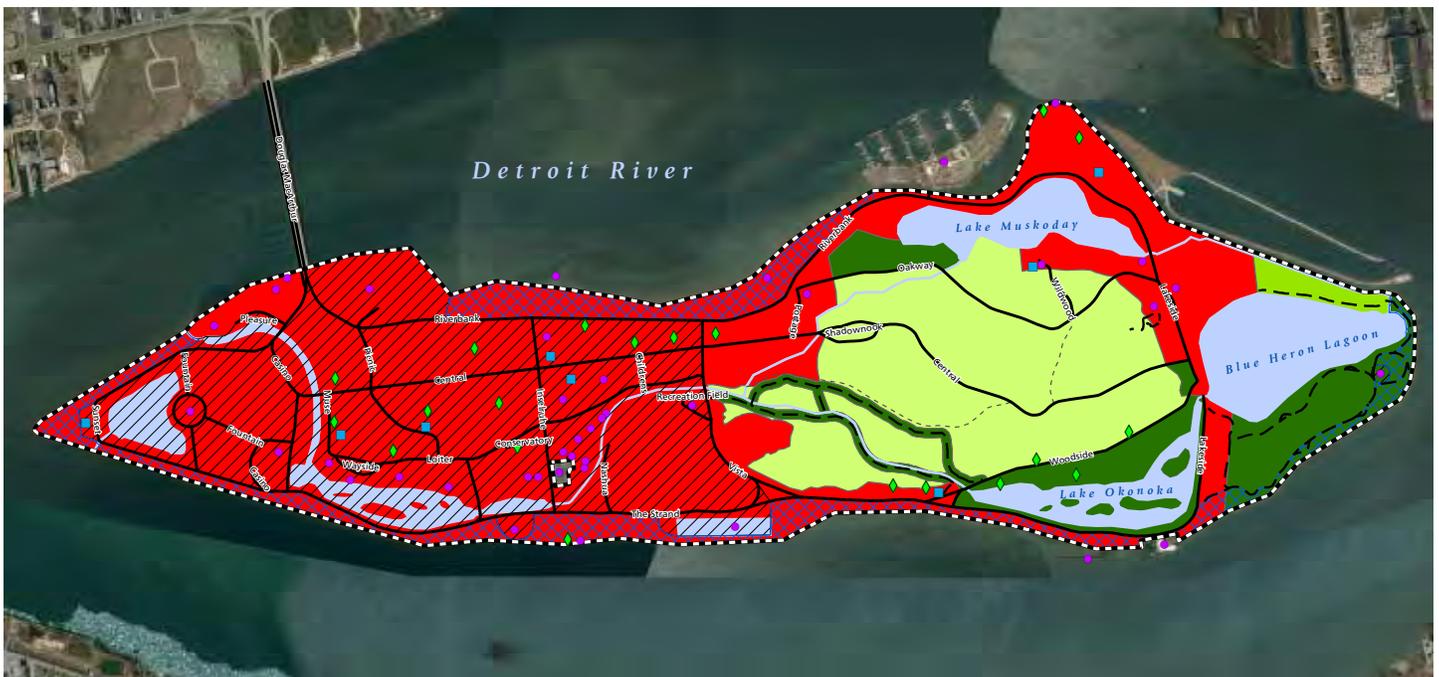
The Developed Recreation Zone supports active recreation with a high density of use conducted in areas not designated for natural resource significance. In this zone, recreation dominates, with natural resource attributes enhanced as possible. This zone covers a majority of the park, approximately 65% of the land, and includes most of the main structures on the island including the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, Belle Isle Aquarium, Flynn Memorial Pavilion, the Belle Isle Boat House, the Belle Isle Nature Center, the model yacht basin, the old zoo site, shelters, athletic fields, playgrounds, the beach, the Belle Isle Golf Center, fishing docks, restrooms, and the Giant Slide, among other features.

**Cultural Landscape Overlay**

The Cultural Landscape Overlay comprises 325 acres (approximately 38% of the park), and encompasses the Developed Recreation Zone west of Vista Drive and the area of the Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse at the east end of the island. The overlay ensures that any development, guided by the underlying zone designation, is sensitive to the cultural resources present. The public interpretation of these cultural resources should also be considered.

**Scenic Overlay**

Approximately 11% or 97 acres, of Belle Isle Park is designated as Scenic Overlay. This designation protects and preserves the scenic views over the Detroit River from the park and of the park landscape from the water. The Scenic Overlay covers nearly the entire shore of the island between the perimeter roadway or trail and the water's edge, where views are most worthy of preservation. The largest area of Scenic Overlay extends from the east end of Blue Heron Lagoon west along the southern shoreline and around to west of the MacArthur Bridge. The other area extends along the northern shoreline from east of the Belle Isle Boat House to the west end of the Detroit Yacht Club. The Scenic Overlay provides visitors with picturesque views of the river, passing freighters, and the skylines of Detroit and Windsor.



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

**Belle Isle Park - Draft Management Zones**

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Esri Basemap

- Belle Isle Park Boundary
- Roads
- Trails
- Abandoned Roadbeds

- Restroom Buildings
- Shelters
- Park Infrastructure

- Management Zones**
- Primitive
  - Backcountry
  - Natural Resource Recreation

- Developed Recreation
- Cultural Landscape Overlay
- Scenic Overlay



*Beckett & Raeder*

## 10-Year Action Goals

Once the planning team established management zones to guide Belle Isle Park for the next 20 years, a series of action goals were identified. Many infrastructure repair and upgrade projects are currently underway or committed to for Fiscal Year 2017. In addition, the planning team has developed 10-year action goals that it believes are necessary to guide management and development within the park in order to achieve the desired user experience. The goals are broken down into categories pertaining either to a single management zone or to the park as a whole. Below is a summary of the action goals. The full list of infrastructure investments, current projects, and 10-year action goals can be found in Chapter 7.

### Park-Wide Actions – Infrastructure

Goals for park-wide infrastructure improvements include vehicular and non-motorized circulation, wayfinding, universal access, critical utility infrastructure repairs, an historic assessment of the islands structures, and visitor access to the canals, lakes, and the Detroit River. Overall, these actions seek to enable quality experiences by having updated recreation and support facilities.

### Park-Wide Actions – Management / Operations

Park-wide management and operations goals include creating a sustainable business model for the park, assessing the impact of large events, addressing invasive species, developing guidelines for gifts and donations, evaluating concessions

opportunities and needs, improving public relations through a park communications plan, and increasing education and interpretation opportunities

### Primitive Zone

Restoring and maintaining the integrity of the wet-mesic flatwoods natural community and constituent plant and animal species is the focus of action goals of this zone.

### Natural Resource Recreation Zone

In the Natural Resource Recreation Zone, the goal is to improve fish, wildlife, and plant habitat within water bodies and grasslands and provide amenities for passive recreation.

### Developed Recreation Zone

Goals in the Developed Recreation Zone include improving existing recreation facilities such as the athletic complex, golf center, beach area, old zoo site, Kid's Row, Belle Isle Boat House, and shelters. Other action goals will include rehabilitating significant cultural and historic buildings such as the Casino, James Scott Memorial Fountain, Anna Scripps Whitcomb Aquarium and Belle Isle Conservatory, Flynn Memorial Pavilion, and restrooms for improved visitor experiences.



Enjoying the view from Belle Isle Park



The iconic Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory

### Chapter One:

# Core Values and Guiding Resources

Core values and guiding resources are the foundation upon which this Strategic Management Plan is based. Core values are derived from the mission statements of the DNR, Parks and Recreation Division and the Belle Isle Conservancy, as well as policy and directives that guide everyday decisions. Historically and in recent years, there have been many planning initiatives, public input sessions, studies, and surveys specific to Belle Isle Park that can be used as a resource for future management decisions. In addition, statewide planning documents help to guide the overall direction of Michigan's park and recreation system.

### 1.1 Background

Belle Isle Park, purchased by the City of Detroit in 1879, encompasses 982 acres. The island was named after Isabelle Cass, the daughter of Michigan Territorial Governor Lewis Cass.

Owned by the City of Detroit, Belle Isle Park's design and layout were inspired by Fredrick Law Olmsted in the 1880's. The park has many unique amenities including a variety of significant architectural, cultural, and environmental features. Belle Isle Park's diverse landscape includes vibrant recreational areas, preserved unique natural areas, inland lakes, and canals - all surrounded by the Detroit River.

Belle Isle Park experienced a decline in basic maintenance and general repairs over time due to The City of Detroit's lack of resources. Necessary infrastructure maintenance, as well as repairs of electrical systems, water and sewer lines, heating systems, fire suppression systems, elevators and roofing systems had been deferred. Restrooms were closed down. Park security was lacking, leading to vandalism and the perception of an unsafe environment.

In 2013, the City of Detroit was placed into bankruptcy and an emergency manager appointed. Governor Snyder tasked the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to assume the responsibility of managing and operating Belle Isle Park through a long-term lease. In November, 2013, the Detroit City Council approved a 30-year lease. The Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee (BIPAC) was formed with members of the committee appointed by Detroit City Council, Detroit Mayor Bing, and Governor Snyder. On December 10, 2013, following the approval of the lease between the State of Michigan, DNR and the City of Detroit, a kickoff event was held. Its theme was "All in for Belle Isle." The purpose was to feature over 40 partners that had committed to help with the enhancement of Belle Isle Park. A few months later, in February, 2014, the Michigan DNR Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) began operating Belle Isle Park. The Michigan DNR Law Enforcement

Division (LED), Michigan State Police (MSP), and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) assisted PRD with park operations. The Belle Isle Conservancy worked in close partnership with the DNR to bring additional partners, volunteers, and financial resources to the park.



## 1.2 Mission Statements

### Michigan Department of Natural Resources

#### DNR Mission Statement

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use, and enjoyment of the state’s natural and cultural resources of current and future generations.

#### DNR Parks and Recreation Mission Statement

The Parks and Recreation Division’s mission is to acquire, protect, and preserve the natural and cultural features of Michigan’s unique resources, and to provide access to land and water based public recreation and educational opportunities.

#### Goals:

1. Protect the natural and cultural resources
2. Ensure sustainable recreation
3. Enable strong and natural resource-based economics
4. Improve and build strong relationships and partnerships
5. Foster effective business practices and good governance

#### Management Goals:

The Michigan state park and recreation system goals for all state parks and recreation areas are:

1. Serve Michigan residents and non-resident tourists by providing affordable outdoor recreation experiences
2. Generate life-long memories
3. Preserve the 95 plus year legacy of the Michigan State Park and Recreation system

4. Preserve and enhance public access to Michigan’s land, lakes, and rivers
5. Preserve and protect the unique cultural, historical, and natural resources found in the state parks
6. Evolve the trail system to identify Michigan as the Trail State



### Belle Isle Conservancy

The Belle Isle Conservancy (BIC), a professionally-staffed 501 c3 non-profit organization with a Board of Directors, works in close partnership with the State of Michigan’s Department of Natural Resources, the City of Detroit, and community partners to bring additional resources to Belle Isle Park. In 2011, the Belle Isle Women’s Committee, Belle Isle Botanical Society, Friends of Belle Isle, and the Friends of Belle Isle Aquarium merged to form the BIC. The Conservancy serves as the voice of the community, as an advocate for the park, brings volunteer resources to the park, operates the Belle Isle Aquarium, and actively raises funds for needed improvements and projects on the island.

#### Mission Statement

“The mission of the Belle Isle Conservancy is to protect, preserve, restore, and enhance the natural environment, historic structures, and unique character of Belle Isle Park as a public park for the enjoyment of all – now and forever.”

### Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee

The Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee (BIPAC) was established according to the lease. The lease provided for the appointment of a seven member advisory committee by the State and the City. The purpose of BIPAC is to advise the DNR on implementation of improvements, master planning, and public safety for the park. The goals, vision, mission, and core values of BIPAC were established as follows:

## Goals:

1. Safe and clean parks
2. Customer oriented thinking
3. Stewardship of community spaces
4. Partnership and alliances
5. Continuous improvement

## Vision:

Belle Isle Park will become a national model for the delivery of urban parks recreation and conservation services.

## Mission:

Manage Belle Isle Park as a destination for park recreation and conservation services, by providing programs and facilities that are safe, clean, and well maintained.

## Core Values:

- We value environmental education and knowledge
- We value conservation and stewardship of open spaces
- We value quality programs and safe facilities
- We value all stakeholders, partners, and community organizations
- We value fiscal and physical responsibility

## 1.3 Guiding Resources

### Belle Isle Park Lease

The lease between the City of Detroit and the State of Michigan defines the responsibilities for operating and managing Belle Isle Park as a State Park and for MDOT to have jurisdiction of certain roads and bridges.

### Belle Isle Park Planning Initiatives and Studies

Beginning with initial design proposal by Fredrick Law Olmsted in 1883, and throughout the park history up to present day, there have been a number of master plans, studies, and reports relating to various aspects of Belle Isle Park. These have been implemented or followed to a varying degree. A complete list of the known plans and a summary of the primary recent planning initiatives are provided in Appendix E.

### Belle Isle Park Surveys

In order to be responsive to the needs of park users and to determine how to reach out to non-users, several surveys have been commissioned in recent years. In the summer and fall months of 2010, the Belle Isle Conservancy and the Project for Public Spaces conducted a survey that included park users (on-site) as well as off-site respondents and organizational supporters (remote); 2,237 surveys were collected.

Following the 2014 season, the BIPAC conducted a strategic goal setting process to help define expectations for Belle Isle Park. One action step was to obtain a statistically valid assessment of the public perception of Belle Isle Park since the DNR commenced operation in February 2014.

MORPACE Marketing, Research and Consultants designed the survey to gain an understanding, among different cohorts, of their perceptions of Belle Isle, its importance and value, and established questions that could be repeated in the future to measure progress. The survey was based upon a statistically significant random sample of residents from Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties, and from the City of Detroit.

The results of these surveys, together with the online questionnaire and public input undertaken as part of this planning effort, are being used to guide investments and to ensure that the park operation is aligned with the public expectations.



Family photos at James Scott Memorial Fountain

## 1.4 Statewide Recreation and Public Land Management References

### Michigan Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2018-2022 (SCORP)

SCORP is a five-year strategic plan that shapes investment by the state and local communities in priority outdoor recreation infrastructure and programming. The Plan's overarching goal is to "Protect and manage Michigan's diverse and abundant natural and cultural assets to provide relevant, quality experiences that meet the fun, relaxation, and health needs of Michigan's residents and visitors, and support economic prosperity" by meeting the following objectives:

- Foster stewardship and conservation
- Improve collaboration
- Raise awareness
- Improve recreational access
- Provide quality experiences
- Enhance health benefits
- Enhance prosperity

### Michigan State Parks & Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel Report (2012)

The Blue Ribbon Panel's report to Governor Snyder identifies a number of recommendations for system-wide changes to programs, management, infrastructure type, and investment strategies that set up the visionary framework for the next 30-50 years of park and outdoor recreation management in Michigan. Several of the recommendations in the report are:

- Identify and protect important natural, cultural, historic, and prehistoric resources
- Diversify funding
- Prioritize development of statewide and regional systems of connected trail networks
- Connections between communities and their recreational assets to strengthen regional identities
- Integrate tourism and economic development marketing
- Prioritize investment in parks and recreation

### Michigan Comprehensive Trail Plan (2013-2018)

The Trail Plan, developed by an 11-member committee appointed by Governor Snyder, includes eight priority recommendations with associated key actions that should be implemented to assist in achieving the vision of establishing a high quality, nationally-recognized, state-wide trail system. The eight recommendations are as follows:

- Trails are maintained to ensure a sustainable and quality trail system
- Expand trails, trail experiences, opportunities to

ensure accessibility to trail systems, outdoor recreation opportunities, and natural and cultural resources

- The Michigan Snowmobile and Trails Advisory Council leads the effort to maintain and enhance Michigan's reputation as the trail state
- Link trails, trail users, and adjoining towns to create memorable trail experiences and enhance economic prosperity
- Develop, enhance, and celebrate partnerships and collaborations
- Implement a marketing plan including an electronic portal that allows citizens and visitors to be aware of all trails and related amenities
- Develop funding sources and mechanisms for trail maintenance, acquisition, and development
- Ensure that the state's trail system complements other plans and planning efforts



## PRD Strategic Plan 2017-2022: Connections

The PRD Strategic Plan is the overarching document that guides the Parks and Recreation Division in carrying out its mission. This plan establishes long-range goals, objectives, and strategies for Michigan’s state park and recreation system for the 5-year period beginning in 2017. The plan identifies the most important issues facing the PRD and helps to define where resources should be focused for maximum benefit to carry the state park and recreation system beyond its centennial milestone in 2019. The goals identified in the plan are:

- Be exemplary stewards of Michigan’s natural and cultural resources.
- Provide users with quality outdoor recreation experiences in balance with resource protection.
- Continue to advance Michigan as the “Trail State.”
- Provide a relevant gateway to connect people to nature and Michigan’s cultural heritage, and foster understanding and support for PRD’s mission among future generations.
- Improve and maintain strong public, stakeholder, and department communication, relationships, and partnerships.
- Engage in strategies to increase community and state economic prosperity.
- Sustainably support PRD programs, operations, and facilities.
- Foster and adopt effective and safe business practices.

## Managed Public Land Strategy (2013)

The DNR-Managed Public Land Strategy provides a framework for the continued conservation, use, and management of public lands to provide an enhanced quality of life for Michigan residents, create jobs, and protect the essence of Michigan: its woods, waters, wildlife, and other natural and cultural assets. The Strategy identifies three broad goals with desired outcomes, metrics, and measurable objectives for each. These goals are to:

- Provide quality outdoor public recreation opportunities
- Foster regional economic prosperity
- Protect natural and cultural resources for future generations

## 1.5 Summary of Legal Mandates

For all park management plans, legal mandates are identified that serve to further guide the development of the general management plan, park management, and park operations. For the DNR’s planning purposes, the term “Legal Mandates” refers to not only state law, but also the administrative tools of “Policy” and “Directive” of the Natural Resource Commission, the Department, and the Parks and Recreation Division. There are several general and site specific legal mandates applicable

to Belle Isle Park listed in Appendix A: Supporting Analysis.

The legal mandates that most directly impact planning and management at Belle Isle Park focus on the following areas:

- Protection of threatened and endangered species, including eastern massasauga rattlesnake, Blanding’s turtle, purple wartyback, eastern pondmussel, eastern fox snake, Forster’s tern, and common tern
- Preservation of cultural and historic resources
- Local watercraft control
- Public health code requirements for swimming areas and swimmers’ itch
- Water resources, wetlands, and inland lakes and streams protection
- Requirement for a Recreation Passport for entry into the park
- Land use orders of the Director controlling possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages, use hours, erection of canopies, and the operation of snowmobiles



Belle Isle Boat House



Belle Isle Park entrance sign

## Chapter Two:

# Management Goals and Outcomes - The First 3 Years

### 2.1 Management Goals & Outcomes

In July 2012, the Michigan DNR developed a phased management approach for Belle Isle Park (see exhibit E of the Belle Isle Park Lease Agreement in Appendix B). The following management goals and desired outcomes were established by the PRD for managing Belle Isle Park during the first three years of the lease and were developed to coordinate with the conclusions drawn from the 2010 survey results. Each element listed defines an expected improvement to the park, addressing the overall goal of establishing Belle Isle Park as a clean, safe park for all to enjoy.

- Create a clean and safe environment
- Restore the expectation of the Belle Isle Park experience
- Unify stakeholders and supporters
- Preserve the rich history of the island
- Enhance recreational opportunities
- Protect the natural resources
- Address immediate needs
- Implement sustainable contraction of infrastructure

- Establish a sustained model of resources for long-term management of the island
- Expand youth employment opportunities in the fields of natural resources, environmental protection, and agriculture



Volunteers on Belle Isle Park Clean Up Day

# MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OUTCOMES-THE FIRST 3 YEARS

## 2.2 Accomplishments to Date

The defined management goals and desired outcomes lead to the development of planning processes with action items identified to address immediate safety concerns and operational needs. The following chart is based on the priorities that were identified by DNR Parks and Recreation staff prior to the lease with the City of Detroit being implemented. The chart indicates the current status of each initiative.

INITIAL PHASE PLANNING PROCESSES AND ACTION ITEMS	
PLANNING PROCESS	STATUS
Coordinate with law enforcement (Michigan DNR Law Enforcement Division, City of Detroit Police Department, Coast Guard, Homeland Security, US Border Patrol, and Michigan State Police) on a security plan	Completed
Meet with newly created Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee, Belle Isle Conservancy, and other vested stakeholder groups	Completed / Ongoing
Meet with other state agencies (Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Corrections, Department of Transportation etc.), and DNR divisions on current and potential projects / funding	Completed / Ongoing
Continue updating previous infrastructure assessment information to prioritize critical needs	In Progress
ACTION ITEMS	STATUS
Evaluate all contracts, leases and concessions related to Belle Isle Park	Completed / Ongoing
Extend Riverfront contracts for trash removal and mowing	Completed
Establish a visible staffing and visitor services presence	Completed
Clean up trash / debris and provide adequate receptacles	Completed
Remove debris in public spaces and organize maintenance areas	Completed
SHORT-RANGE PLANNING PROCESSES AND ACTION ITEMS	
PLANNING PROCESS	STATUS
Assess staffing levels and equipment needs for primary use season; develop annual operational budget	Ongoing
Coordinate volunteer activities with newly created Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee, Belle Isle Conservancy, and other vested stakeholder groups	Completed / Ongoing
Evaluate the locations and relationships between shelters, restroom buildings, parking and drinking fountains	Completed
Develop a comprehensive marketing and outreach plan	Ongoing
Establish a sponsor/partner "adoption" program	In Progress
Coordinate with Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) to re-establish a bus route to Belle Isle Park	Completed
Establish recreational programming such as Metro Youth Fitness and expand other interpretive programs through the Belle Isle Nature Center	Ongoing
ACTION ITEMS	STATUS
Interview and hire permanent staff	Completed
Retrofit buildings like the Casino, Athletic Shelter / Refectory and Flynn Memorial Pavilion with energy efficiency updates (windows, insulation, photo sensors, timers, etc.)	In Progress
Renovate and rehabilitate shelters such as the Newsboy, Schiller, Pony Area and Fishing Pier as well as comfort stations such as Graystone, Woodside and at the golf course	In Progress
Establish a new endowment for long-term sustainable funding	Pending

SHORT-RANGE PLANNING PROCESSES AND ACTION ITEMS, CONTINUED	
ACTION ITEMS	STATUS
Establish a restricted fund to receive event and use permit revenues	Completed
Create a gift guide for sponsors and donors	In Progress
Develop a reservation system for shelters and grounds for events during primary use season	Completed
Establish Recreation Passport as a funding source	Completed
INTERMEDIATE-RANGE PLANNING PROCESSES AND ACTION ITEMS	
PLANNING PROCESS	STATUS
Coordinate volunteer activities with Belle Isle Conservancy and other vested stakeholder groups	Completed / Ongoing
Meet with the State Building Authority on a bond option for addressing major building and park improvements to be repaid once the Recreation Passport becomes effective	Pending
Assess shoreline erosion and identify critical areas for soft shoreline stabilization	In Progress
Seek grants such as Coastal Zone Management, Great Lakes Fisheries Trust and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to conduct an hydrologic study of the lakes and canals to convert back to a naturalized system	Completed (Grant Secured)
Begin discussions with the Michigan College Foundation and Youth Connections on a natural resources institute program and youth employment	In Progress
ACTION ITEMS	STATUS
Clean catch basins and provide curb cuts for increased drainage	In Progress
Construct and improve way-finding and overall signage	In Progress
Provide a contact station or informational kiosk at primary park entrance for immediate park and program information	Completed
Meet with MDOT on the conversion of internal road segments through wooded wetlands into multi-use trails and a two-way traffic concept	In Progress (planning)
Enhance fishing opportunities at existing structures	In Progress
Coordinate invasive plant (i.e. phragmites) species volunteer days	Ongoing
Repair and expand outdoor tables for primary use season	In Progress
Implement mowing reductions and the “Grow not Mow” program to educate visitors, reduce operational costs, create habitat and combat geese	In Progress
Initiate recycling program	In Progress

Chapter 7 of this plan provides additional detail on specific infrastructure investments and projects currently underway as of July 2017.



Bicyclists excited at James Scott Memorial Fountain at Belle Isle Park

## Chapter Three:

# Strategic Direction - The Next 10 Years

As the DNR looks ahead to the next ten years, providing a clean and safe park environment to maximize quality, diverse, recreation experiences, will continue to be a priority, while also tackling the bigger issue of long-term physical and financial sustainability. With an estimated \$300 million in critical infrastructural needs island-wide (see Chapter 7), the DNR must be strategic in its investments and innovative in its approach to funding. Cultivating existing and forging new partnerships will be key to Belle Isle Park's success. Effective communication both internally and externally is critical to the effective management of Belle Isle Park and to provide positive experiences. In order for Belle Isle Park to become a world-class urban park the following must be accomplished.

### Transformation:

- Addressing basic infrastructure needs, along with continued physical renovation projects, will remain a high priority. Restoration of the historic structures on the island for stabilization and appropriate use is critical.
- Through enhanced maintenance and operations, and appropriate activities, amenities, and programs, Belle Isle Park will continue to welcome all.

- With a focus on public safety, the presence of the DNR Law Enforcement Division and the Michigan State Police has helped to assure the public that the park is safe. This emphasis on public safety will continue.

Rehabilitation and maintenance of the island's infrastructure within its historically significant context is a mammoth task and must be accomplished in a logical and strategic manner. This management plan has put in place guidelines to ensure improvements within the park will not compromise the island experience by introducing conflicting uses and ideas. Chapter 7 of this plan addresses priorities for capital investments over the upcoming 10-year period. Any new proposals that were not considered as part of this management planning process, must be carefully considered and analyzed based on the need, whether the proposal complements the unique nature of Belle Isle Park (or would it be better suited elsewhere). Refer to Chapter 8, Proposal Review Process.

### Financial Stability:

- Belle Isle Park's annual operations should be supported by a diverse portfolio of revenue streams including appropriations from the State of Michigan, grants, sponsorships, foundations, event fees, shelter rentals, merchandise and concession sales.
- Physical renovation projects on Belle Isle Park should be funded through a variety of sources including, but not limited to, capital campaigns and possible bond options.
- An endowment for operations and infrastructure will be considered as part of the long term strategy.
- BIC shall serve as a fundraising partner to help implement and support diverse revenue streams for the park.

### Partnerships:

- Belle Isle Park must be led by a strong, cooperative partnership between the DNR and the BIC. The DNR and BIC should operate as two wings of one organization, with common interests. The DNR is responsible for the overall operations and management of Belle Isle Park. The BIC will focus on leading capital campaigns and collaborate on developing revenue generating events, concessions, sponsorships, and philanthropic contributions.
- The DNR is the ultimate decision maker on operational policies and procedures, as well as providing operations and capital improvement budgets. This is dictated by the terms of the 30 year lease. The DNR will integrate BIC into their planning processes as it relates to setting operating

budgets and determining annual capital project plans.

- The DNR will work collaboratively with BIC and other community partners on program development. The BIC will lead community outreach efforts to achieve our common interests.
- The DNR will collaborate with the BIPAC and BIC to advise on planning policies and budget needs. The DNR will ensure there is alignment with the planned priorities for short- and long-term investments in Belle Isle Park with our partners and the public.
- The DNR and BIC will operate under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) entered into in December 2017, that defines their roles and responsibilities as the parties continue to work together to further the common goals of the park.
- A strong communication plan, supported by both the DNR and the BIC, is essential to a seamless operation between the two entities. The desired outcome is excellent communication to maximize visitors' experience.
- DNR's continued improvement of operational management practices and infrastructure investment on Belle Isle Park will rely on multiple partnerships between state agencies, public and private organizations, and individuals. Currently there are over 20 partnerships in place on the island.



Earth Day at Belle Isle Park



Sunrise at the Belle Isle Boat House at Belle Isle Park

## Chapter Four: Plan Process Overview

### 4.1 Planning Objectives

The DNR has developed master plans in the past for many of Michigan's state parks; however, most of these plans are now 20-40 years old and do not reflect today's realities or desires of recreational users. Furthermore, past plans put a strong emphasis on development and did not often include stewardship of natural and cultural features or opportunities for education and interpretation. Belle Isle Park has only been a state park since 2014, but master planning of the island reaches back to 1883, when Frederick Law Olmsted developed a preliminary plan for the park. The Belle Isle Master Plan was completed in 2005 by Hamilton Anderson Associates for the Detroit Recreation Department. Since that time, many plans and studies for various facets of the island have been completed, and renovations of many of the park's structures and infrastructure are underway.

The Belle Isle Park Strategic Management Plan follows an established planning process adopted by the DNR Park and Recreation Division. PRD management planning sets out a framework for protecting park resources while providing for meaningful visitor experiences. The long-range vision and management objectives for Belle Isle Park are derived from the mission of the DNR and the Parks and Recreation Division, the mission of the Belle Isle Conservancy and the Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee, applicable legal directives, the purpose of the park, and the park's significant natural and cultural resources.

The objective of the management plan is to bring together Parks and Recreation Division staff, staff from other DNR resource divisions and state agencies, the Belle Isle Conservancy, stakeholders, and the public into a planning process that defines and clarifies the unique "Purpose and Significance" of Belle Isle Park. Collectively, those attributes will be reinforced in the planning and management decisions that impact the park through the implementation of the management zone plan and action goals.

### 4.2 Planning Process

The Belle Isle Park planning team met periodically over an twelve month period to develop the management plan, beginning in March of 2017 and ending in March of 2018. Throughout the process, the team sought the input of the public and stakeholders to guide the decisions made in the plan. Two stakeholder workshops and two public input workshops were held in March of 2017 to gather insights from organizations tied to the park and the public. In addition, an on-line questionnaire was available to interested parties not able to attend the workshops for comment on the current park amenities and their priorities for the future. Following the input sessions and survey, the team developed a list of action plan priorities and developed the draft Strategic Management Plan. Two public meetings to review the draft plan were held in February of 2018. The planning team then revised the plan based on the input received.

## 4.3 Planning Team

PLANNING TEAM		
DIVISION	TITLE	NAME
PRD	Management Plan Administrator	Debbie Jensen
PRD	Planning Student Assistant	Sarah Burton
PRD	Unit Manager	Karis Floyd
PRD	Unit Supervisor	Jacob Brown
PRD	Metro District Supervisor	Mike Terrell
PRD	Southern Field Operations Chief	Scott Pratt
PRD	Urban Area Planner	Amanda Treadwell
PRD	Stewardship Unit Manager	Ray Fahlsing
Belle Isle Conservancy	President	Michele Hodges
Belle Isle Conservancy	Vice President	Katy Wyerman
Belle Isle Conservancy	Chief Operations Officer	Summer Ritner
Belle Isle Conservancy	Director of Community Engagement	Brittany Sanders
FD (Fisheries)	Fisheries Biologist	Jeff Braunscheidel
FRD (Forestry)	Urban Forester	Kevin Sayers
FRD (Forestry)	DNR- Americorps	Angel Squalls
LED (Law)	District Supervisor	Lt. Joe Molnar
MOD (Marketing)	Education Services Manager	Kevin Frailey
MOD (Marketing)	State Park Explorer Program	Karen Gourlay
MOD (Marketing)	Educator	Gary Williams
WLD (Wildlife)	SELP Field Operations Manager	Joseph Robinson
WLD (Wildlife)	Wildlife Biologist	Zach Cooley
SHPO / MSHDA	State Archaeologist	Dean Anderson
SHPO / MSHDA	Historical Architect	Robbert McKay
Michigan History Center	Director	Sandra Clark
PLANNING CONSULTANTS		
Beckett & Raeder, Inc.	Principal	Christy Summers, PLA, LEED AP
Beckett & Raeder, Inc.	Project Professional	Caitlin Jackson, PLA
Beckett & Raeder, Inc.	Project Professional	Morgan Haffey
Beckett & Raeder, Inc.	Project Professional / GIS Specialist	Marisa Laderach

## 4.4 Summary of Public Outreach

Public input is a critical part of the planning for Belle Isle Park. Below is a summary of the public and stakeholder input methods that were used to inform the development of the management plan. Several different methods were used to ensure everyone had an opportunity for input. Full reports for each of the outreach methods are included in Appendix C of this plan.

### Project Website

A public-facing website was maintained throughout the duration of the planning process at <http://mdnrmanagementplans.org/belle-isle-park/>. This website was updated with general information about the park and park maps, results of the public input survey, and the draft of the Strategic Management Plan. The website contained a contact form so that the public could contact the planning team at any time with questions, concerns, and input.

### Stakeholder and Public Input Workshops

In order to gather targeted input from governmental, non-profit, and business/tourism entities, the planning team invited a group of stakeholders to attend one of two input workshops in March of 2017. Similarly, the public was invited to attend one of two public input workshops held the day after the stakeholder meetings. All meetings followed a similar format. The attendees were given a brief overview of the planning process, recent development accomplishments on the island, and current park projects. Then, attendees were divided into groups and completed a series of group brainstorming exercises. These included rapid-fire questions about the current state of Belle Isle Park, how they hoped the park would be in the future, and what they liked the most and least about the park. They were asked to describe what they felt had changed at the park in the last three years, and then asked what improvements and changes they would like to see in the park in the future. After each group reported out, the most desired improvements from each group were recorded, and all attendees voted on their top future priorities from among all the ideas.

### Online Public Input Survey

One of the methods the planning team used to gather input from park users was an online questionnaire. This online approach provides a convenient way for those who have access to the internet to provide feedback and accurately transfers all responses for analysis. However, it is not designed to be representative of Belle Isle Park users or uses, as respondents self-select. They are not sampled on a random or systematic basis that would ensure accurate representation of users or uses. Nevertheless, the on-line survey does provide valuable information about what certain individuals or groups (those who are motivated to comment about the park, those likely

to receive DNR communication about the survey, and those who have easy access to the internet) hope to see in the park's future management. This questionnaire was intended to provide an opportunity for input to those who could not attend the workshops, and collected similar information. This questionnaire and the public meetings were advertised through a DNR press release sent to over 21,000 people signed up to receive notices from the DNR regarding Belle Isle or the southeast Michigan area and 84 media outlets. It was shared via local media outlets including TV and radio, and unofficially on social media. 1,536 responses to the online questionnaire were collected.

### Public Meetings

Two Public Input Meetings to review the Draft Strategic Management Plan for Belle Isle Park were held on February 1st, 2018, at the Department of Natural Resources Outdoor Adventure Center at 1801 Atwater Street, Detroit. The general public was notified about the meetings through a press release, internet postings, and email notifications. A total of 147 attendees were recorded on sign-in sheets.

Each meeting included an overview of the strategic management plan process and plan contents, followed by an opportunity to provide input on the statements of significance, draft management zones, and ten-year action goals. Participants had the opportunity to affix comments directly onto the presentation boards, record comments on flip charts, and complete a comment sheet, as well as converse with planning team members. In addition, participants were given ten dots to prioritize their preferred action goals from the ten-year action goals. Four copies of the complete Draft Strategic Management Plan were available to attendees during the meeting for review.

Primary changes made in response to the comments are as follows:

- Additional information provided on the status of the Grand Prix in the first chapter of the plan
- Minor changes/corrections made to the statements of significance
- Minor edits made to the zoning descriptions to better explain the intent of each zone
- Goal relating to reducing the impact of the paddock area was strengthened to include assessing its current use
- Goal added regarding analysis of the shoreline
- Sub-bullet added to complete the boating access site feasibility study that is currently underway and consider the results
- Priority of trail connections around Blue Heron Lagoon increased
- Priority of improving shelters increased
- Additional information provided on educational programming in the supporting analysis



One of the many scenic bridges at Belle Isle Park

## Chapter Five: Purpose and Significance

### 5.1 Park Purpose

Park purpose statements are based on park legislation, legislative history, special designations and DNR policies. These statements reaffirm the reasons for which Belle Isle Park was identified as part of the state park system.

Belle Isle Park became part of Michigan's state park system in 2014, when the state of Michigan entered into a lease with the City of Detroit for the long-term operation, and management of the park. The purpose of the lease is to continue to enhance the management, operation and maintenance of the park for the benefit of the public, under Authority of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.70103 and 324.74103.

The purpose of the Michigan State Park system is to:

- Protect and preserve the natural and cultural features of Michigan's unique resources.
- To provide access to land and water based public recreation and educational opportunities.
- To enable the public to have diverse, quality outdoor recreation experiences

### 5.2 Statements of Significance

Each management plan developed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) is derived from the park's significant features that make it distinct from other parks in the state's system. Belle Isle Park was determined significant due to the following:

#### Serving the Urban Core

Belle Isle Park, Detroit's grandest park, is located in the middle of the Detroit River and is connected to the city's urban center by the MacArthur Bridge. Belle Isle Park is a natural oasis on par with New York's Central Park and Chicago's Lincoln Park, and is an important resource for outdoor education. Belle Isle Park is the most visited state park in the state and the country, currently drawing an estimated four million visitors annually.

#### Rich History

Anishinaabe (Odawa, Chippewa, and Potawatomi) people knew Belle Isle as Wah-na-be-zee long before the French arrived in Detroit in 1701. As a public park at the core of Detroit life since 1880, Belle Isle has evolved as the idea of recreation has changed over time. Where park-goers once strolled with parasols, viewed flowers, and rode carriages, visitors now enjoy fitness activities, team sports, eating outdoors, and more. Except during a relatively brief time from 1817 until 1879, Belle Isle has remained public land. Its many uses over the years have reflected, even if on a small scale, significant cultural and historic events of the United States including prohibition, times of civil unrest, and national defense during the Cold War.

# Belle Isle Park



- (A) SUNSET POINT
- (B) JAMES SCOTT MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN
- (C) CASINO (event center)
- (D) DETROIT BOAT CLUB
- (E) FLYNN MEMORIAL PAVILION
- (F) REMICK MUSIC SHELL
- (G) NANCY BROWN PEACE CARILLON
- (H) GIANT SLIDE
- (I) ANNA SCRIPPS WHITCOMB CONSERVATORY
- (J) DOSSIN GREAT LAKES MUSEUM
- (K) WHITE HOUSE / ADMINISTRATION
- (L) BELLE ISLE AQUARIUM
- (M) ATHLETIC SHELTER / REFECTORY
- (N) BEACH HOUSE
- (O) DETROIT YACHT CLUB (private)
- (P) BELLE ISLE NATURE CENTER
- (Q) U.S. COAST GUARD STATION
- (R) LIVINGSTONE MEMORIAL LIGHTHOUSE

- ◇ SHELTERS (numbers on map correlate to shelter numbers)
- HIKING TRAILS
- 🏊FISHING SITES
- 🏊SWIMMING BEACH
- 🏊DISC GOLF
- 🏊GOLF
- 🏊HANDBALL
- 🏊PADDLING
- 🏊SOCCER FIELDS
- 🏊TENNIS COURTS
- 🏊BASKETBALL
- 🏊PLAYGROUND
- 🏊BASEBALL FIELDS
- 🏊MODEL BOAT BASIN
- 🏊PARKING LOT
- 🏊RESTROOM
- 🏊YEAR-ROUND RESTROOM
- 🏊CONCESSIONS
- 🏊BIKE RENTALS
- 🏊WATERCRAFT RENTALS
- 🏊ICE SKATE RENTALS
- 🏊BUS STOP

### Historic Structures and Architectural Pedigree

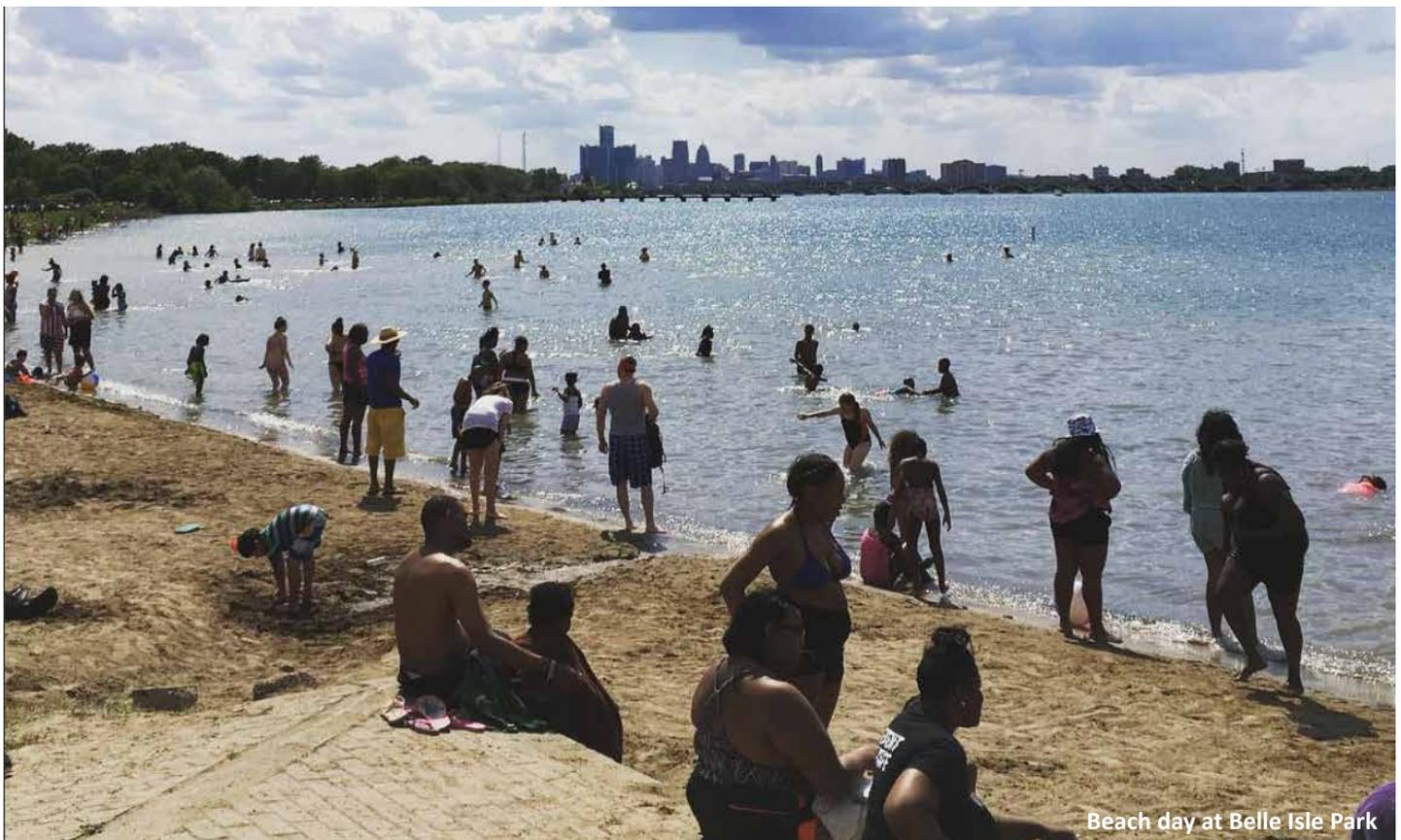
The island and 59 structures, sites, and objects are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including one of the oldest continuously operating Aquariums and conservatories in the country, the James Scott Memorial Fountain, and the only marble lighthouse in the country. Many notable designers add to the architectural pedigree of the island, such as Frederick Law Olmsted (developed a preliminary plan for the island), Albert Kahn (Aquarium, Conservatory, and lighthouse), Cass Gilbert (James Scott Memorial Fountain), George Mason (police station, horse stables, and Detroit Yacht Club), Alphaeus Chittenden (Belle Isle Boat House), Van Leyen and Schilling (Casino), and Robert Swanson (Flynn Pavilion). These significant features help to make the island a popular destination for locals and tourists in Michigan.

### Family Friendly Destination

Detroit families have enjoyed the park's friendly atmosphere for generations, and many use it as a site for family reunions, social gatherings, weddings, and other events. Attractions such as the Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse, Giant Slide, Dossin Great Lakes Museum, Belle Isle Nature Center, and canoeing / kayaking on the inland lakes and canals make this park a place for all.

### Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Belle Isle Park's variety of land and water outdoor recreation opportunities just outside the heart of downtown Detroit make it one of the city's, and state's, most visited attractions. Visitors come to enjoy viewing the unobstructed city skyline from Sunset Point, the multi-colored light show of James Scott Fountain, and the Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse, situated in a migratory bird area perfect for taking in the landmark and the nature which surrounds it. For fitness enthusiasts, the park offers a 6.5 mile perimeter paved bike lane as well as a half-mile buoyed beach area – one of the few swimming opportunities on the Detroit River. Accessible fishing and paddling opportunities are found on the river, inland lakes, and canals. Programmed and team sports are available at the athletic complex and include facilities unique within the state park system, such as outdoor handball courts, basketball courts, tennis courts, a rugby field, and a cricket field.



Beach day at Belle Isle Park

## Natural Resources

Surviving as part of Fredrick Law Olmsted’s original vision, the park’s 200-acre old growth floodplain forest is Michigan’s largest remaining “wet-mesic flatwoods” forest. Only a handful of these forests remain in North America. With a climate moderated by the Detroit River, the forest supports Shumard’s oak (including the state’s largest) and pumpkin ash, tree species normally found much further south. The forest provides important habitat for several rare plants and many animals, especially songbirds and amphibians. The value of the forest as stopover habitat for migratory birds is noteworthy.

## Zoological History

Over the years, deer and other wildlife in four distinct zoos in different areas of the park have fascinated visitors. The Belle Isle Zoo opened in 1895, initially featuring European fallow deer. By 1909, it hosted 150 animals in 32 acres. Sheba the elephant was purchased in 1923 using pennies saved by Detroit children. After death, she was buried on the site. The Belle Isle Children’s Zoo, a petting zoo with nursery rhyme themed exhibits, was in operation from 1947 until 1979. The Belle Isle Zoo closed in 1956, with many of the animals relocated to the main Detroit Zoo in Royal Oak. The Belle Isle Safariland Zoo (1980-2002) featured elevated walkways overlooking the animal exhibits. Today, a small herd of deer descendant from the original population is housed at the Belle Isle Nature Center, which also has live reptile and amphibian displays and provides environmental education experiences for schools, families and community groups.



Belle Isle Children’s Zoo, 1940s



Introduction to Camping at Belle Isle Park

## 5.3 Role in the Community

Belle Isle Park has long been “the people’s park” - an important recreation resource for the residents of Detroit. It continues to be the most significant open space near the urban core. The attractions on the island provide rich educational value and strong cultural identity to the park as well as the City of Detroit. Visitors also come to Belle Isle Park for the scenic landscape, the beach, fishing, boating, and athletic, cultural, family, and community activities. From September 2016 to August 2017, the estimated number of visitors to the park was over 4 million, which is a significant increase since 2014, and represents the highest visitor numbers amongst Michigan’s 103 state parks. The DNR and Belle Isle Conservancy host many events on the island that contribute to the park’s high visitation. The park is an integral part of the revitalization of the Detroit Riverfront, including the River Walk, William G. Milliken State Park, Outdoor Adventure Center, and Dequindre Cut Greenway.

## Partnerships

The strong connection of this park to the community is demonstrated not only by the large number of visitors, but also by the many volunteers that assist with projects and events on the island. Over 20 local community partnerships regularly assist at the Belle Isle Aquarium, Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, at special events, clean-ups, and stewardship days. Non-profit and philanthropic organizations and individuals play a key role in park improvements. A partnership between the DNR and the City of Detroit solidified Belle Isle as Michigan’s 102nd State Park in February 2014; the park is currently operated by the DNR under a 30-year lease agreement with the city and with the assistance of the Belle Isle Conservancy.

MANAGEMENT ZONE PROGRESSION

MANAGEMENT ZONE	RESOURCE CONDITION	VISITOR EXPERIENCE	DEVELOPMENT LEVEL
ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE	Pristine	Restricted	None
PRIMITIVE			
BACKCOUNTRY			
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE			
HISTORY EDUCATION			
SCENIC			
NATURAL RESOURCE RECREATION			
DEVELOPED RECREATION	Active Management	Significant Use	Extensive Development
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES			

# Chapter Six: Management Zones

The 20-Year Management Zone Plan was developed in keeping with the park’s purpose and significance. The primary goal in the development of the management zones is to protect and enhance the park’s natural and cultural resources while also supporting outdoor recreation and education opportunities at the park. From a palette of nine management zones, the planning team studied the park and applied zones that best fit each area of the park. Management zones describe a variety of activities that may be appropriate within the zone and address the desired future condition for the following categories:

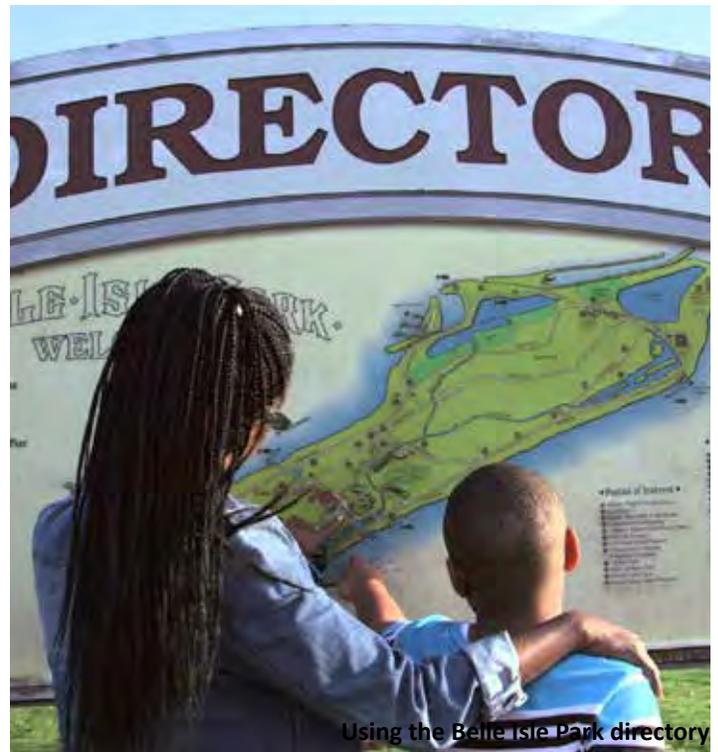
- Natural Resources
- Historic/Cultural Resources
- Recreation Opportunities
- Education/Interpretation Opportunities
- Visitor Experience
- Management Focus

The resource condition, visitor experience, and development level varies in each zone, as indicated in the figure below.

Belle Isle Park was divided into the following four zones and two overlays:

- Primitive Zone
- Backcountry Zone
- Natural Resource Recreation Zone

- Developed Recreation Zone
- Cultural Landscape Overlay
- Scenic Overlay



Using the Belle Isle Park directory



# Belle Isle Park - Draft Management Zones

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Esri Basemap

 Belle Isle Park Boundary

 Roads

 Trails

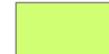
 Abandoned Roadbeds

 Restroom Buildings

 Shelters

 Park Infrastructure

## Management Zones

 Primitive

 Backcountry

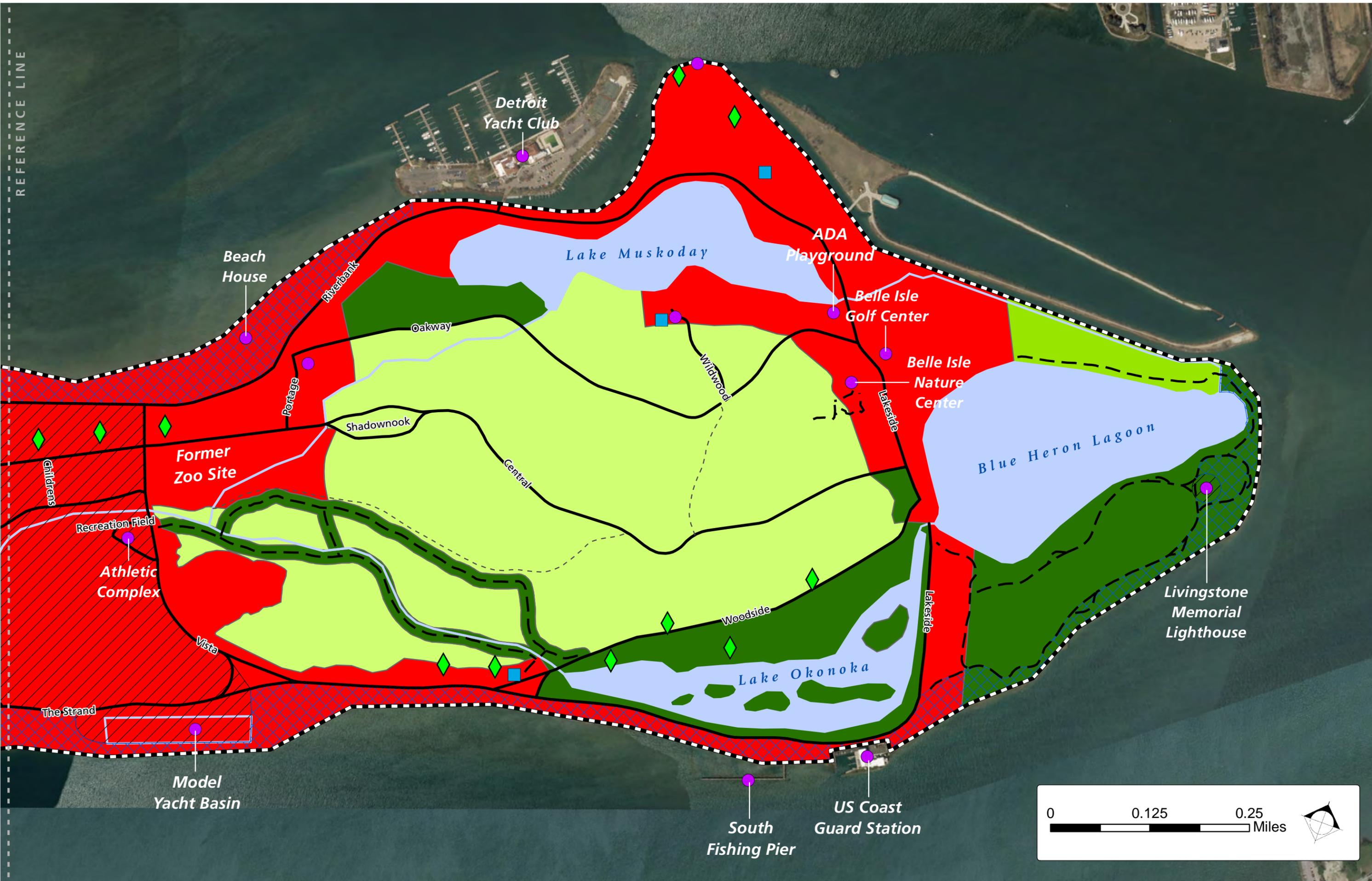
 Natural Resource Recreation

 Developed Recreation

 Cultural Landscape Overlay

 Scenic Overlay





REFERENCE LINE

Detroit Yacht Club

Beach House

Lake Muskoday

ADA Playground

Belle Isle Golf Center

Belle Isle Nature Center

Blue Heron Lagoon

Former Zoo Site

Recreation Field  
Athletic Complex

Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse

Lake Okonoka

The Strand

Model Yacht Basin

South Fishing Pier

US Coast Guard Station



### 6.1 Primitive Zone

The Primitive Zone reflects a desired condition that emphasizes the natural resources, and is managed to only allow dispersed and low frequency use in the zone for low impact recreational purposes. Attaining and maintaining a high quality natural resource condition dictates the extent to which recreational improvements or uses are allowed. The Primitive Zone covers approximately 23% of the park, encompassing the wet mesic flatwoods forest and a segment of land leading from the flatwoods to Lake Muskoday. The existing trails through the flatwoods are zoned Natural Resource Recreation reflecting the higher level of activity within the trail corridors.

#### Natural Resources

Native species and natural processes take precedence over visitor accommodation in this zone. Native Michigan natural communities / ecosystem components and processes are maintained, restored and protected, and human-caused habitat fragmentation is eliminated. The Natural Resource Stewardship Plan will determine the appropriate habitat management for the park. (See Appendix H)

#### Historic/Cultural Resources

There are two historic structures within or bordering this zone: the Nashua Bridge on Woodside Drive, and the Sylvan Creek Bridge on Oakway Road. Although no below-ground cultural resources have been documented in this zone, there is evidence of prehistoric sites and Native American activities in the area.

#### Recreation Opportunities

This zone allows dispersed, low density off-trail or trailed, self-reliant (no bicycle or equestrian use) outdoor activities (e.g. Hiking, nature observation, etc.).

#### Education Opportunities

Education opportunities in this zone are primarily off-site. Interpretive signage is allowed at trail heads and with low frequency on trails and at overlooks.

#### Visitor Experience

The visitor can expect a low frequency of encounters with other visitors. Visitors are engaged in high solitude, off-trail or trailed, self-reliant outdoor activities. This zone requires a higher time commitment, and high levels of challenge and adventure. It is considered a “discovery” area with minimal on-site interpretation. The noise tolerance in this zone is low, and visitors can expect low interaction with DNR staff.

#### Management Focus

The focus is to maintain the low-impact character of this zone, with an emphasis on natural resource quality. The abandoned roadbeds (Wildwood and Tanglewood) that are in this zone will be evaluated as part of the flatwoods restoration plan for removal/restoration or possible trail use.

#### Development

This zone maintains a very low level of development except for visitor accommodation (e.g. foot trails). Site hardening is only allowed to protect sensitive resources (e.g. boardwalk). There should be little evidence of human activity and typically low accessibility in this zone. Currently, there are undesignated trails, park roads, and abandoned road beds within the Primitive Zone of Belle Isle Park.



Group walk on one of Belle Isle Park's Nature Trails

## 6.2 Backcountry Zone

The character of the Backcountry Zone is natural, with minimal evidence of human impact. While the 'Primitive Zone' is highly restrictive for recreational use and human impact, this zone allows for increased use and modifications of the landscape (e.g. trail development) to accommodate that use. This zone comprises approximately 1% of the park and includes the grassland restoration area north of Blue Heron Lagoon.

### Natural Resources

Natural resources may be modified slightly to support visitor use, but tolerance for natural resource impacts is low. Native Michigan natural communities / ecosystem components and processes are maintained, restored, and protected. The Stewardship Plan will determine the appropriate habitat management for the park.

### Historic/Cultural Resources

No above-ground historic structures are present in this zone. Although no below-ground cultural resources have been documented in this zone, there is evidence of prehistoric sites and Native American activities in the area.

### Recreation Opportunities

Moderate levels of recreation that are compatible with natural character of the zone are allowed. At Belle Isle Park, this zone includes a restored grassland which may be viewed from nearby trails and parking areas.

### Education Opportunities

Education opportunities such as interpretive signage at trail heads, on the trail, and at overlooks are allowed.

### Visitor Experience

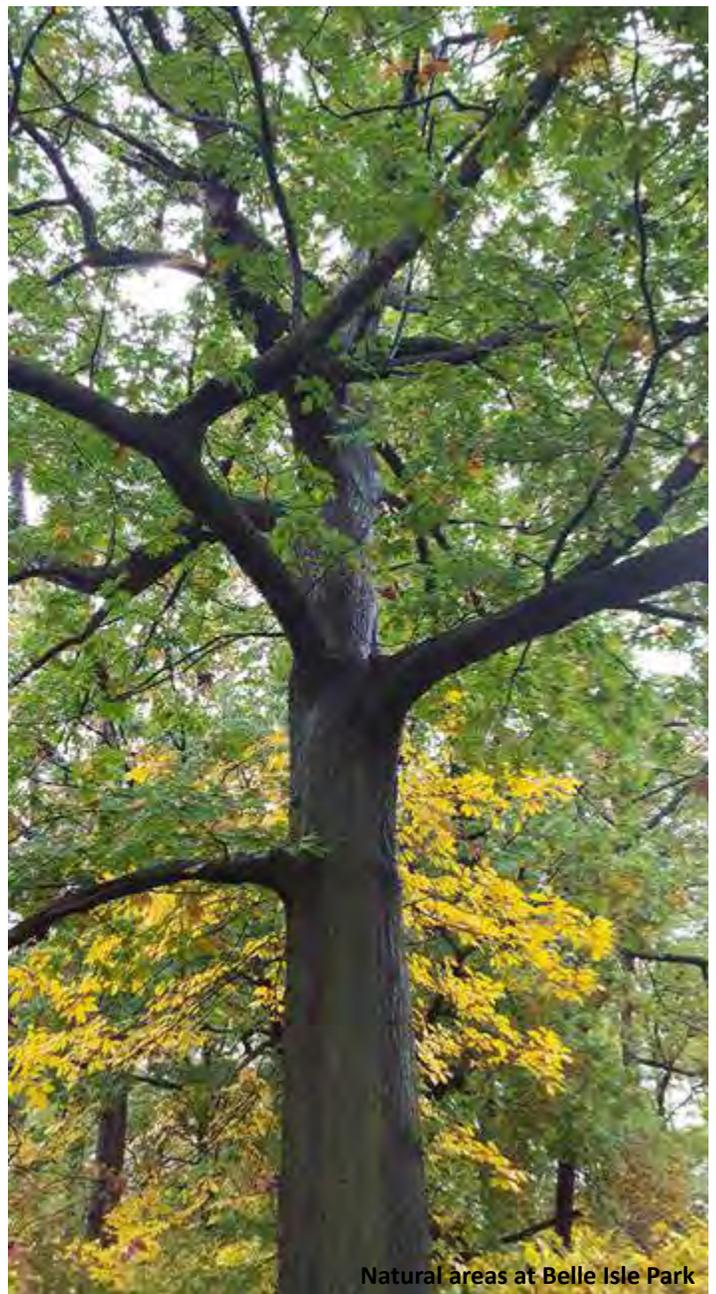
Moderate visitor encounters are accommodated in this zone. Visitors will be engaged in self-reliant, non-motorized outdoor activities. Moderate challenge and adventure should be expected, with low noise tolerance and interaction with DNR staff.

### Management Focus

The management focus is to maintain the low-impact character of this zone, with an emphasis on natural resource quality.

### Development

This zone may contain a low level of development to support visitor access to outdoor activities, such as trails, trailhead parking, marked routes, and educational opportunities. Development would be unobtrusive and would blend with natural environment. Site hardening such as boardwalks, fencing, and pedestrian paths may be necessary to protect sensitive resources.



Natural areas at Belle Isle Park

### 6.3 Natural Resource Recreation Zone

The Natural Resource Recreation Zone supports active recreation with medium to high density of use conducted in natural settings. There is still an emphasis on resource quality over recreation, but in this zone, higher levels of use are allowed. This zone makes up approximately 11% of the park and includes part of the former golf course at the end of Lake Muskoday, the prairie and grassland bird area, the area surrounding the Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse (which also has a Cultural Landscape Overlay) on the east end of the park, and the area surrounding Lake Okonoka. The existing trail corridors within the flatwoods area have also been designated as Natural Resource Recreation to reflect a moderate level of both foot and bicycle use. The width of these corridors is intended to represent only what is necessary for the trail surface and associated amenities.

#### Natural Resources

In this zone, the natural resources may be managed or modified to support visitor activities with moderate impacts, while being protected to the degree possible and maintaining a natural appearance. This zone will reflect natural processes, with vegetative management to restore and maintain natural ecological structure and processes (such as removing of invasive species), to address hazard trees, and to manage pests and disease. Vegetation may also be managed to facilitate recreational use and maintain an aesthetically appealing landscape.

#### Historic/Cultural Resources

The Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse is located within this zone, recognized by a Cultural Landscape Overlay. Although no below-ground cultural resources have been documented in this zone, there is evidence of prehistoric sites and Native American activities in the area.

#### Recreation Opportunities

Moderate to high levels of recreation compatible with natural character of the zone are permitted. Visitors may be engaged in outdoor activities in diverse land and water natural settings (e.g. hiking, bicycling, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, nature observation, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and outdoor education).

#### Education Opportunities

Interpretive signage may be provided at trail heads, on the trails, and at overlooks.

#### Visitor Experience

Visitors can expect high encounters with other visitors and moderate interaction with DNR staff. Visitors may be engaged in outdoor activities in diverse land and water natural settings for recreation and education. This zone requires a variable time commitment as well as variable challenge and adventure. There is a moderate noise tolerance in this zone.

#### Management Focus

The management focus is to maintain use of the zone appropriate to the PRD Mission, to protect public safety, protect natural resources, and provide universal access.

#### Development

A moderate level of development of facilities for support of visitor activities is acceptable, including restrooms, concrete/asphalt/gravel walkways and parking, trails, benches, tables, and shelters for recreation and educational opportunities. Site hardening, including boardwalks, fencing, and surfaced pedestrian paths, is allowed as necessary to protect sensitive resources. A moderate level of accessibility should be expected in this zone. This zone currently includes park shelters, a storage / workshop building, and restrooms.



Flying a kite at the Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse



Flynn Memorial Pavilion

## 6.4 Developed Recreation Zone

The Developed Recreation Zone supports active recreation with a high density of use conducted in areas not designated for natural resource significance. In this zone, recreation dominates, with natural resource attributes enhanced as possible. This zone covers a majority of the park, approximately 65% of the land, and includes most of the main structures on the island including the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, Belle Isle Aquarium, Flynn Memorial Pavilion, the Belle Isle Boat House, the Belle Isle Nature Center, the model yacht basin, the former zoo site, shelters, athletic fields, playgrounds, the beach, the Belle Isle Golf Center, fishing docks, restrooms, and the Giant Slide, among other features. The large percentage of developed recreation zone at Belle Isle Park reflects the existing high use levels of this urban park.

### Natural Resources

Natural resources are actively managed and modified to support visitor activities. Vegetative management in this zone will address hazard trees, invasive species, pests, and disease, and will also be allowed for purposes of facilitating development and recreational use and maintaining an aesthetically appealing landscape.

### Historic/Cultural Resources

There are many historic and cultural resources within this zone and also within a Cultural Landscape Overlay. These include the James Scott Memorial Fountain, Belle Isle Casino, Flynn Pavilion, Belle Isle Aquarium, Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, White House, historic shelters and comfort stations, the Belle Isle Boat House, the model yacht basin, and the athletic complex. Emphasis will be on rehabilitation and preservation. Although no below-ground cultural resources have been documented in this zone, there is evidence of prehistoric sites and Native American activities in the area.

### Recreation Opportunities

High levels of recreation in a highly structured environment are permitted in this zone. Visitors may be engaged in recreation in diverse and modified land and water settings. Bicycling, boating, canoeing, kayaking, beach-going, eating outdoors, family reunions, and other day-use activities are found in this zone.

### Education Opportunities

Interpretive signage may be used at day-use facilities, boating facilities, registration buildings, trail heads, on the trail, and at overlooks. Active programming is encouraged at areas where people congregate.

### Visitor Experience

Visitors should expect a high frequency of encounters with other visitors and DNR staff. Visitors may be engaged in outdoor activities in diverse land and water settings for recreation and education. Activities in this zone would require a variable time commitment, variable levels of challenge and adventure, and low to moderate exertion. This zone has a high noise tolerance.

### Management Focus

The management focus in this zone is to maintain use of the zone appropriate to PRD Mission, protect the park's resources, maintain public safety, effectively manage visitors, and provide universal access. Protecting the aesthetic and scenic qualities of the zone is also a priority: the shoreline of most of the developed recreation zone is protected by a Scenic Overlay.

### Development

A high level of development of facilities to support visitor activities is permitted and is already evident in this zone such as restrooms, walkways, parking, trails, benches, tables, shelters, and shelters for recreation and educational opportunities. Site hardening is allowed as necessary to facilitate activities, protect natural resources, and provide accessibility.



Piano lessons at Belle Isle Park

## 6.5 Cultural Landscape Overlay

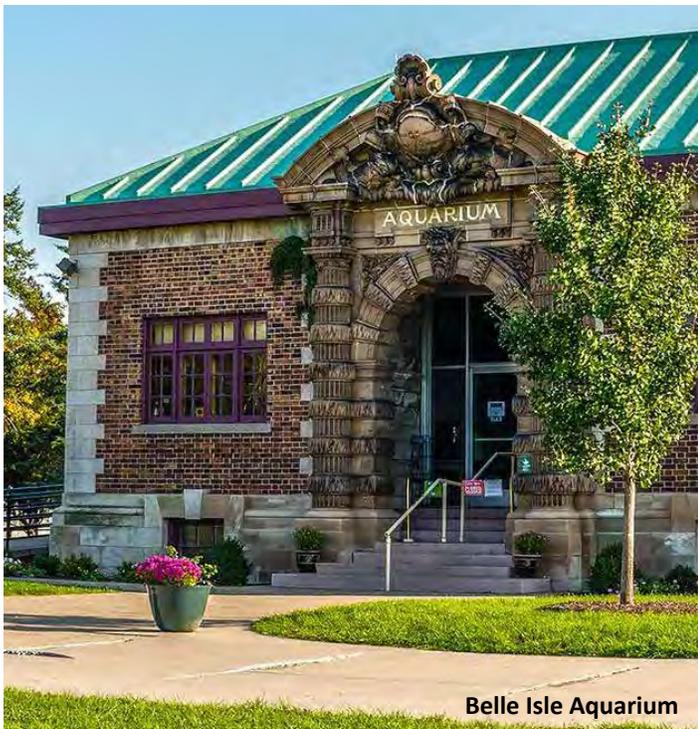
The Cultural Landscape Overlay comprises 325 acres (approximately 38% of the park), and encompasses the Developed Recreation Zone west of Vista Drive and the area of the Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse at the east end of the island. The overlay ensures that any development, guided by the underlying zone designation, is sensitive to the cultural resources present. Educational interpretation of these cultural resources should also be considered.

### Natural Resources

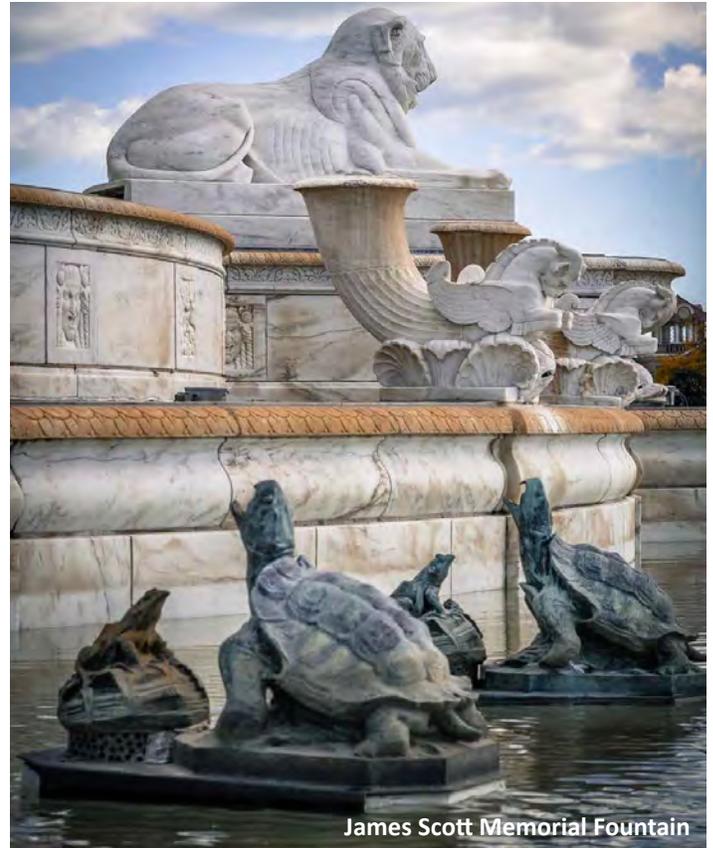
Vegetation management will be in accordance with the underlying zone (Developed Recreation). Vegetation may also be managed to enhance education/interpretation uses, which can include non-native species specific to the era and/or location, and maintaining an aesthetically appealing landscape that is sensitive to the historical resource and interpretation of the zone.

### Historic/Cultural Resources

Cultural resources are the focus of this overlay, and include the James Scott Memorial Fountain, Belle Isle Casino, Flynn Memorial Pavilion, Belle Isle Aquarium, Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, White House, historic shelters and comfort stations, athletic complex, the Belle Isle Boat House, the model yacht basin, Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse, and Dossin Great Lakes Museum, and others. Although no below-ground cultural resources have been documented in this zone, there is evidence of prehistoric sites and Native American activities in the area.



Belle Isle Aquarium



James Scott Memorial Fountain

### Recreation Opportunities

Visitors may be engaged in sightseeing, recreational, and educational activities in a cultural setting compatible with and sensitive to the setting and the underlying zone.

### Education Opportunities

The cultural resources within this overlay will continue to provide valuable education, and further interpretation of the cultural resources, both on- and off-site, is encouraged.

### Visitor Experience

The visitor experience will be consistent with the underlying zone.

### Management Focus

Management focuses on rehabilitating and preserving the cultural resources and the cultural character of the area consistent with the underlying zone.

### Development

Development will be consistent with the underlying zone and will not negatively impact the cultural resources. Non-historic development and activities that do not conflict with the cultural landscape may be allowed.

## 6.6 Scenic Overlay

Approximately 11% or 97 acres, of Belle Isle Park is designated as Scenic Overlay. This designation protects and preserves the scenic views over the Detroit River from the park and of the park landscape from the water. The Scenic Overlay covers nearly the entire shore of the island between the perimeter roadway or trail and the water's edge, where views are most worthy of preservation. The largest area of Scenic Overlay extends from the east end of Blue Heron Lagoon west along the southern shoreline and around to west of the MacArthur Bridge. The other area extends along the northern shoreline from east of the Belle Isle Boat House to the west end of the Detroit Yacht Club. The Scenic Overlay provides visitors with picturesque views of the river, passing freighters, and the skylines of Detroit and Windsor.

Refer to the underlying management zone for level of development, visitor experience etc.

### Natural Resources

Management within the overlay will focus on maintaining the quality of the views on which the zone is based. Natural resources may be modified, to the level permitted by the underlying zone, to support both visitor use and viewing. The park shoreline will generally be protected in accordance with best management practices.

### Historic/Cultural Resources

There are no known above-ground historic structures within this overlay. Cultural resource management will be in accordance with the underlying zone.

### Recreation Opportunities

The level of recreation activity will be compatible with the underlying zone and the purpose of viewing.

### Education Opportunities

Interpretive signage may be provided at key viewing locations or off site. This designation presents an educational opportunity for visitors to learn about the river, its fisheries, and its role in the history of Detroit.

### Visitor Experience

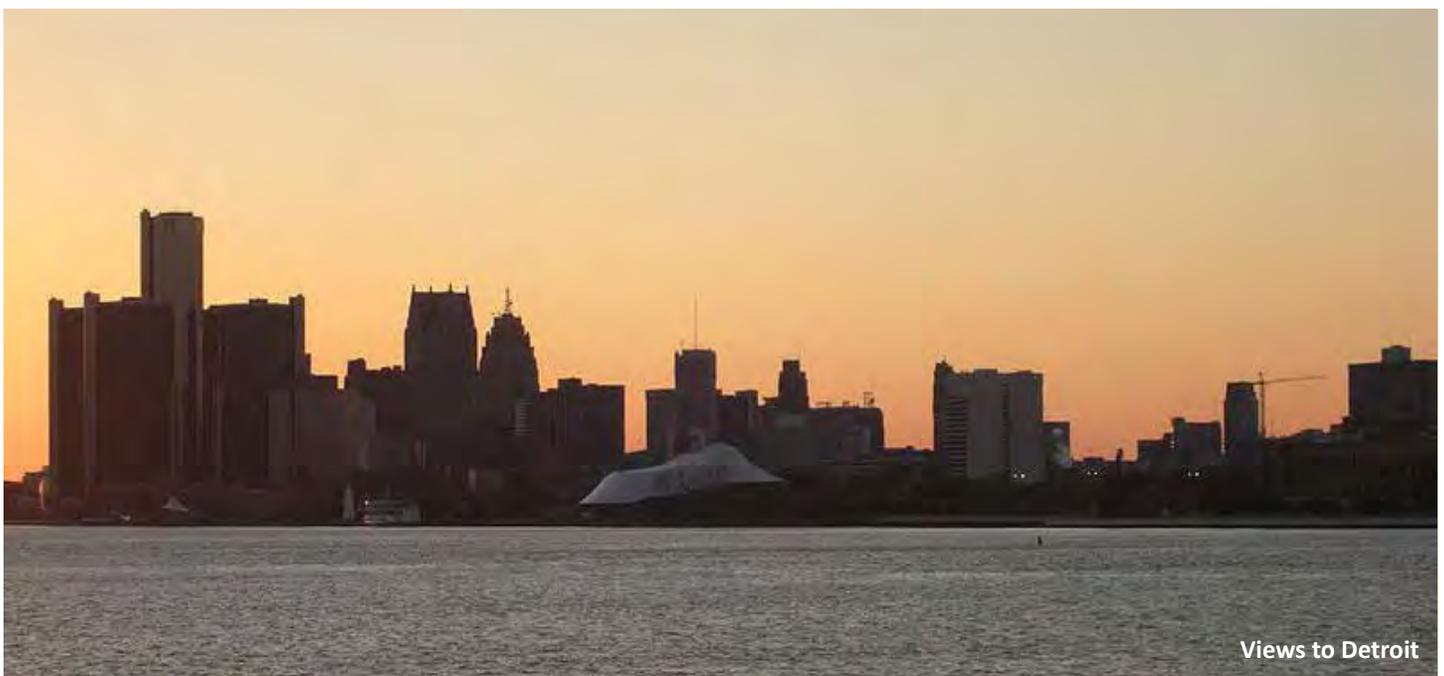
The visitors will engage in activities that allow for observation of the scenic views. The level of visitor encounters will be compatible with the underlying zone.

### Management Focus

Management will focus on protecting, preserving, and enhancing the scenic views. The shoreline area will be studied through further analysis of this zone to determine areas appropriate for habitat preservation, habitat restoration and public access to the waterfront.

### Development

Development will be compatible with the intent of the underlying zone in the Scenic Overlay while also protecting the river shoreline as appropriate. Development may support visitor access with the purpose of enjoying the scenic views, while not detracting from the scenic qualities of the area.



Views to Detroit



James Scott Memorial Fountain at night

## Chapter Seven: Action Plan

Belle Isle Park is unique within the Michigan state park system with respect to its urban park identity, operational complexity and asset management and planning needs. Infrastructure, operation, maintenance, and number of visitors eclipse those of entire state park districts. A long history of deferred repairs, driven by a perennial lack of funding, created a backlog of capital needs and deferred maintenance that surpasses \$300 million. Improved, but still less than optimal, funding for staffing, operation, and restoration/rehabilitation continue to create challenges. Innovation, efficient operation, and partnerships are critical to achieving the collective vision to make Belle Isle Park a nationally renowned park where natural resources are protected and lifetime memories are made.

Many infrastructure repair and upgrade projects are currently underway or committed to. These projects are listed on the following pages. In addition, the planning team has developed 10-year actions that it believes are necessary to guide management and development within the park in order to achieve the desired user experience. Actions are recommended that address the following categories: natural resource assets, cultural resource assets, recreation assets and opportunities, education / interpretation opportunities, and development. These actions apply either to the whole park (park-wide actions) or to specific locations within the park, as appropriate and according to the management zone. Refer to the zone descriptions in Chapter 6 for appropriate activities in each zone.

In determining actions for the park, the planning team focused on the following areas:

- Improving park-wide infrastructure, such as vehicle and non-motorized circulation, wayfinding, accessibility, critical utility repairs, and increasing the visitor access to canals, lakes, and the Detroit River
- Rehabilitating significant cultural and historic buildings such as the Casino, James Scott Memorial Fountain, Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, Flynn Memorial Pavilion, and restrooms for stabilization and improved visitor experiences
- Continue to focus on public relations
- Park-wide management and operations improvements, such as creating a sustainable business model for the park, assessing the impact of large events, addressing invasive species, developing guidelines for gifts and donations, evaluating concessions opportunities and needs, and increasing education and interpretation opportunities
- Creating a more welcoming entrance to the park and making access to park information more convenient
- Improving existing recreation facilities such as the athletic complex, golf center, beach area, Kid's Row, Belle Isle Boat House, shelters, and fishing/viewing facilities
- Repurposing abandoned facilities such as the former zoo site
- Restoration of the wet-mesic flatwoods

## Belle Isle Park Capital Outlay Needs



Management Plans do not guarantee future funding to achieve the actions identified, but are based on funding realities and sound investment policies. PRD and the BIC will seek internal funding, alternative funding sources, partnerships and other potential mechanisms for implementing the desired future conditions defined in this plan.

The following ten-year action plan is based on an investment of approximately \$2 million per year by the state for capital improvements and infrastructure needs. This assumes current funding levels stay the same and does not take into account major partner funded projects or grants that may come to fruition during the life of the plan. This leaves in excess of \$280 million in known capital needs and deferred maintenance. While meaningful progress is being made, it is clear that needs still far outweigh the means and continued, elevated investment from a wide-range of sources, including a major capital campaign, is necessary to sustain Belle Isle Park for future generations.

### 7.1 Construction and Engineering Projects Currently in Progress

Listed below is a summary of capital improvement projects that are currently managed by the DNR Parks and Recreation Division (PRD). These projects are funded by capital improvement budgets from Fiscal Year 2015 through Fiscal Year 2017. Capital Outlay Funds have been allocated to stabilize the most critical needs per the Key Structures Building Assessment completed in 2015. Priority critical needs primarily address roof replacement and structural stabilization.

Five buildings being addressed in Fiscal Year 2017 include the Internal Affairs building, the former Police Headquarters, the Casino, the Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservancy. The critical repairs needed for stabilization on these buildings were a result of water penetrating the buildings due to poor roof conditions. PRD is working to ensure that key buildings have a weather-tight roof and exterior; this will continue to be a priority to stop further deterioration.

ADA accessibility improvements throughout the park have been funded by capital outlay projects and outdoor recreation grants. Providing recreation opportunities accessible to all park visitors is a priority as recreation amenities are improved and installed throughout the island.



**Newsboy Shelter**

The following is a list of Belle Isle Park construction and engineering projects either completed or underway in 2017. The 19 projects have a total cost of \$6,156,984.00.

**PROJECTS COMPLETED OR UNDERWAY IN 2017:**

**1. SHELTER 9 SHORELINE FISHING IMPROVEMENTS, \$250,000 (GREAT LAKES FISHERY TRUST GRANT)**

Proposed improvements include providing ADA accessible parking spaces in the adjacent lot, ADA accessible access to the shoreline, replacing concrete surfaces along sheet piling and the sea wall, new ADA accessible railing along the shoreline and bench pads with clear space on one side of bench for wheelchairs.

**2. SHELTERS 5, 6 AND SHADY NOOK, CONSTRUCTION COST \$300,000 (EVENT FEES)**

Work will include roof replacement and new decking and fascia boards as required, as well as repainting the structures. Shelter 5 and 6 will have new concrete floors installed.

**3. CASINO FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM REPLACEMENT, \$700,000 (CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDS)**

A new generator, water pump, and new sprinkler line installation will be completed. The final phase of work will be to replace the lines in the attic.

**4. CRITICAL ROOF AND STRUCTURAL REPAIRS, \$1,366,000 (CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDS)**

**CASINO**

Restoration will primarily take place in the attic, and on the exterior at both of the towers on the north side of the building. The valley beam in the attic will be replaced and the roof leaks will be repaired in the northeast cupola. Weatherproofing of the attic will replace the missing fascia panels. Decorative fascia panels to match the existing panels will be fabricated. Masonry work on the northeast tower will repair areas of significant structural cracks.

**INTERNAL AFFAIRS / RADIO CONTROL BUILDING**

Repairs include roof decking replacement in building, and concrete decking replacement in the garage area, new roof membrane, and structural repairs at garage doors and window openings and masonry repairs around the exterior of the building.

**FORMER POLICE STATION HEADQUARTERS**

DNR- PRD has coordinated with the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office on the replacement of roof decking, shingles, flashing, and new gutters to ensure all new materials are historically appropriate. During the project design phase the structural engineer determined that additional shoring up of the roof would be required. Previous fire damage in the attic has affected the structural integrity of the roof supports. The shoring will be left in place once the roof replacement is complete. Additional structural assessment will be required as a part of future restoration efforts.

**5. NEWSBOY SHELTER TEMPORARY STABILIZATION, \$20,000 (CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDS AND DNR-PRD CULTURAL FUNDS)**

A temporary roof membrane and supports around the structure will help to stabilize it until funds have been raised for complete restoration of the shelter. The cost estimate for restoring this historic shelter is \$650,000.

**6. ATHLETIC COMPLEX RENOVATION, \$780,000 (CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDS AND A NATIONAL PARK SERVICE GRANT)**

Work will include improvements to handball court structure, baseball fields, and the existing soccer field.

**7. JAMES SCOTT MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN RAMP AND SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS AT BELLE ISLE AQUARIUM (BIA) AND THE ANNA SCRIPPS WHITCOMB CONSERVATORY (ASWC), \$295,000 (CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDS AND PRIVATE FUNDING FROM BIC)**

Sidewalks have been poured at the BIA and ASWC. The James Scott Memorial Fountain ADA access construction documents have been finalized. The DNR-PRD has applied for a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant to implement ADA access to the fountain and replace sidewalks around the fountain for ADA accessibility. The project team has coordinated with the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office to ensure the proposed design solution is sensitive and in keeping with the historic integrity of the James Scott Memorial Fountain.

## PROJECTS COMPLETED OR UNDERWAY IN 2017, CONTINUED

## 8. BELLE ISLE AQUARIUM AND ANNA SCRIPPS WHITCOMB CONSERVATORY STRUCTURAL ASSESSMENT, \$200,000 (CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDS)

A structural assessment of these two buildings and the ventilation in the conservatory has been completed, as well as stabilization of the lily pond. The structural and ventilation report as well as prior assessments will assist the DNR-BIC in laying groundwork for a capital campaign to address the long-term revitalization of the BIA and ASWC. This will involve critical repairs, feasibility studies, designing new systems and completion of a comprehensive revitalization plan for both buildings.

## 9. LILY POND STABILIZATION, \$75,000 (BIC GARDEN PARTY EVENTS, \$10,000 MDOT GRANT, PRD BELLE ISLE STEWARDSHIP BUDGET)

Stabilization repairs to the pond included: draining and cleaning the concrete pond, repairing all major cracks and sealing the pond, replacing piping between the pond and show house, relocating and upgrading control valves, and installation of new infiltration system for fish. Site work included resetting of the large landscape boulders around the pond, new gate and iron fence on the northeast side of the pond, replacement of all gutters on the aquarium building, and regrading garden area to ensure water was drained away from the aquarium building.

## 10. OFFICE SPACE ENGINEERING FOR RELOCATION OF BELLE ISLE STAFF, \$350,000 (CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDS)

The White House is not suitable for sustained use as office space as the current live load capacity does not meet requirements for office use. The DNR-PRD will assess costs to move offices to an alternate location on the island. This assessment will review construction costs to improve the Internal Affairs building to meet the minimal requirements for DNR-PRD staff and LED officers.

## 11. IRON BELLE TRAILHEAD DEVELOPMENT, \$600,000 (NATIONAL RECREATION TRAILS FUND GRANT AND MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND GRANT)

The parking lot area along Lakeshore Drive near the Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse has been selected as the southern terminus trailhead for the Iron Belle Trail. This will include parking lot improvements, ADA access to new amenities, restrooms and interpretive signage. The engineering and construction for trailhead development will be funded with a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant and a Recreational Trail Fund Grant. Engineering for the Iron Belle Trail and the remaining loop trail around the island will begin in early 2018. Trail engineering will be funded with a grant awarded from the National Park Service in 2017 for the Belle Isle multi-use loop trail.

## 12. LAKE OKONOKA SHELTER AREA IMPROVEMENTS, \$300,000 (MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND)

Design to improve shelter facilities on the north side of Lake Okonoka will begin late in the summer of 2017. The MNRTF grant will provide for new shelters, new play structures and ADA access to these amenities. The construction schedule will align with the Lake Okonoka Habitat Restoration construction schedule.

## 13. CASINO ELEVATOR ASSESSMENT, \$15,000 (CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDS)

An assessment of the current elevator will be completed to determine what elements need to be repaired or replaced. The elevator improvements will be funded with FY 2018 Capital Outlay.

## 14. BATHROOM IMPROVEMENTS, \$25,000 (CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDS)

Continuation of bathroom improvements will include painting and installation of new fixtures. Comfort Stations to be addressed include: the Stone Comfort Station, Shady Nook, Woodside, Oxbow Comfort Station, and the Bath House Comfort Station.

## 15. ADA ACCESSIBLE KAYAK LAUNCH AT NASHUA CANAL, \$25,000 (DNR - PRD TRAILS GRANT)

Design for ADA accessible kayak launches will be completed in coordination with the Lake Okonoka Habitat Restoration project. The two launches will be installed on either side of the new stop log structure that will be put in at the end of the Nashua Canal to maintain canal levels. The existing stop log structure between the Blue Heron Lagoon and Lake Okonoka will be removed to allow fish passage from the Blue Heron Lagoon through Lake Okonoka to the Detroit River. The launches will allow for easier passage over the stop log structure.

## PROJECTS COMPLETED OR UNDERWAY IN 2017, CONTINUED

## 16. BOATING ACCESS SITE (BAS) FEASIBILITY STUDY, \$75,000 (DNR - PRD WATERWAYS CAPITAL OUTLAY)

The assessment will provide a feasibility study of constructing a BAS at William G. Milliken Park and Harbor as well as two locations on Belle Isle for motorized boat access to the Detroit River and associated access and parking.

## 17. WET - MESIC FLATWOODS HABITAT RESTORATION PLAN, \$525,000 (NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FUND GRANT)

The scope of this project includes: final design, engineering, and, required permit approval for hydrological restoration of the wet-mesic flatwoods. Project design and engineering will be based on the hydrological survey completed in 2016, as well as other surveys completed that relate to the scope of this project including; topographic and bathymetric survey, tree survey, geotechnical investigations, and animal and plant monitoring. Final engineering submittals for this project will provide for improved hydrologic function with regard to the integrity of the wet-mesic flatwoods and definition of areas of opportunity for public education within the flatwoods.

## 18. ISLAND WIDE STORMWATER UTILITY ASSESSMENT AND MAINTENANCE, \$215,984 (STORMWATER, ASSET MANAGEMENT, AND WASTEWATER (SAW) GRANT, CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDS)

A SAW Grant has been awarded to fund a Stormwater Asset Management Plan on Belle Isle. The stormwater system in many locations around the island has surpassed its useful life. The scope of this project comprises an assessment of the stormwater system to determine priority areas for replacement and development of an overall improvement strategy. The project scope includes the following tasks: locate and geospatially reference all existing stormwater sewer lines, existing catch basins, and open drainage systems using GPS equipment; clean and televise all stormwater sewer lines and existing catch basins; a condition review and evaluation of the existing technical assessment report to determine deficiencies; and recommendations to correct deficiencies, including estimates of probable cost and a five year implementation plan.

## 19. STORMWATER LINE REPAIR, \$40,000 (CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDS)

This project will fund the replacement of collapsed stormwater lines in the Stables yard that prohibit use of the area for DNR-PRD staff as well as the DNR Law Enforcement Division (LED) Officers that use the garage in the area for equipment storage.

## BELLE ISLE PARTNER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

### 1. PUBLIC LIGHTING AUTHORITY (PLA), INSTALLATION OF NEW SOLAR STREET LIGHTS, \$1,500,000

PLA has installed 200 new solar lights around the perimeter streets and along Central Avenue. They are currently in the process of removing the old light poles and installing new concrete over removed pole foundations.

### 2. DETROIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY (DHS), DOSSIN GREAT LAKES MUSEUM SITE IMPROVEMENTS

The Detroit Historic Society has developed a plan to improve the outside facilities at the Dossin Great Lakes Museum. The work to improve the grounds, drop off area and parking will be broken up into three construction phases. The first phase of the plan will improve the shoreline amenities for visitors. The scope of work will begin with the west side of the building and continue around to the opposite side of the basin. The DHS and DNR- PRD will work together to coordinate new railing to be installed at the Dossin site improvement project and Shelter 9 shoreline fishing renovations.

### 3. FRIENDS OF DETROIT RIVER (FDR), LAKE OKONOKA HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT, \$5,045,520 (\$4,975,520 NOAA, \$70,000 DNR)

The FDR is working to complete construction documents for the restoration project to put out to bid. A consultant has been hired to complete geo-tech investigations and provide review of the proposed bridges on Lakeside Drive and the Strand. A bridge will be constructed over the new connection between the Blue Heron Lagoon and Lake Okonoka to allow for kayak passage. The culvert on the Strand has been appropriately sized for fish passage to the Detroit River. DNR-PRD and SHPO are reviewing the proposals to ensure the style of the bridge is appropriate and design allows for existing bike lanes and a future shared use path outlined in the Belle Isle Trail Master Plan.

### 4. MDOT, MACARTHUR BRIDGE MAINTENANCE PROJECT, \$2,340,000

MDOT will begin preventive maintenance work on the MacArthur Bridge in summer 2017. Scope of work will include replacing joints, deck patching, placing a sealer on the roadway surface, and reconstructing the approaches immediately adjacent to the bridge in kind.



Photo Credit: Ramiro Zarate

## 7.2 Future Projects

The following 10-year action goals will guide management and development within Belle Isle Park as a whole and within each of the four designated management zones. The actions are ranked in terms of priority based on health, safety, and welfare, as indicated by the column on the right hand side of the table. Priority Level 1 projects address structures or systems that are in eminent danger of failure or present a safety hazard and should be addressed within the next 2 years. Priority Level 2 projects address structures or systems that may present a health, safety, or welfare hazard in the near future and should be addressed within 2-5 years. Priority Level 3 projects are desired, but can be tackled in the next 5-10 years. The highest priority projects (top 25) are also listed on the 5-year capital improvement plan (see Appendix F), which provides related cost information. Additional projects have been added by the planning team to include those not related to capital investment (for example management, operations, education, and programming), items identified through the community input sessions, or projects that will likely extend beyond the 5-year time frame.

The numbers shown in the left hand column are for numerical reference only and are not intended to indicate priority.

**PARK-WIDE ACTIONS - INFRASTRUCTURE**

NUMBER	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-Modal Circulation &amp; Wayfinding Plan – (motorized and non-motorized, private and public transit)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work with MDOT to review vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic onto and throughout park.                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review traffic pattern for vehicles entering park and locations of contact stations.</li> <li>▪ Review traffic calming measures for vehicles entering park from bridge.</li> <li>▪ Address bike lanes crossing vehicular traffic on and off the Island.</li> <li>▪ Review parking availability in high use areas and other parking alternatives such as a park shuttle to remote parking.</li> <li>▪ Work with DDOT to review expansion of public bus service on Belle Isle Park and identify additional public bus stop locations.</li> <li>▪ Evaluate alternative transportation opportunities to Belle Isle Park</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Develop wayfinding signage for park visitors.                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Physical signage for facilities, roads, walking trails and blue trails.</li> <li>▪ Install informational kiosk near park entrance to provide visitors a convenient location to view park information, resources and events.</li> <li>▪ Digital signage (available online/by apps). Coordinate with future virtual tour app.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical utility infrastructure repairs and upgrades:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete an assessment of the water service lines and develop a strategy for replacement. Replace water mainlines within new project scopes as they are developed. Continue to address water mainline breaks.</li> <li>○ Clean out building storm drains as building repairs are made.</li> <li>○ Implement infrastructure improvements to Belle Isle Park’s storm water and sanitary system based on assessment and improvement plan (2018) to improve and separate the systems.</li> <li>○ Upgrade the electrical supply systems</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Provide permanent power to final contact station locations.</li> </ul>	1
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete a historic assessment of island structures (buildings, monuments, bridges, etc).</li> </ul>	1
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canal water management – Restore and maintain a navigable passage through the canals and lakes for small non-motorized recreational boats, while maintaining or improving the quality of aquatic habitat and protecting banks from significant erosion.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assess and upgrade canal water controls and pumps as needed.</li> <li>○ Assess canal needs for improving non-motorized water craft navigation within the canal system.</li> <li>○ Develop an aquatic weed management plan</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve visitor access to canals, lakes, and the Detroit River and island canals.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete assessment of existing kayak vendor facility with existing facilities in park to determine best location for the kayak vendor.</li> <li>○ Assess, rehabilitate, repair, or remove fishing piers and shoreline fishing areas.</li> <li>○ Complete the boating access site feasibility study that is currently underway and consider the results.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2

PARK-WIDE ACTIONS - INFRASTRUCTURE, CONTINUED		
NUMBER	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trail Plan – Improve trail system for non-motorized circulation in the park.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Design and implement the Iron Belle Trail from the trailhead to the MacArthur Bridge.</li> <li>○ Prepare design plans and cost estimates for island wide multi-use loop trail.</li> <li>○ Consider alignment, appropriate use and design of roads and trails within the wet-mesic flatwoods, following the approved management zones, as part of the restoration plan.</li> <li>○ Implement plans as funding becomes available.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central Area of the Park- Improve amenities at facilities for social gathering and ADA access to shelters.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Prepare a physical needs assessment plan for amenities in this area of the park.</li> <li>○ Consider specific improvements to improve facilities for large groups such as; larger BBQ grills, larger table clusters, enlarged, improved accessibility, and waste and recycling areas.</li> <li>○ Review options for site access and parking.</li> <li>○ Assess the need for hot coal bins and their location.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with MDOT on road, bridge and parking lot condition assessment and prioritization of infrastructure repair.</li> </ul>	3
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shoreline Quality Assessment- Complete island-wide shoreline assessment to determine where “hard” shoreline and “soft”, or more natural, shoreline areas may be implemented to ensure protection from significant erosion, while maintaining or improving the quality of the shoreline habitat.</li> </ul>	3

PARK-WIDE ACTIONS - MANAGEMENT / OPERATIONS		
NUMBER	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a sustainable financial model for the park.</li> </ul>	1
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise and resubmit the National Register of Historic Places nomination.</li> </ul>	1
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the impact of large events on the park’s visitors and infrastructure and create a plan to ensure a quality experience during periods of high visitation.</li> </ul>	1
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Streamline event planning and implement equitable pricing strategies that reflect the level of effort required for PRD staff.</li> </ul>	1
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address invasive species control in accordance with the Belle Isle Park Natural Resource Stewardship Plan.</li> </ul>	1
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop guidelines for reviewing and receiving private gifts and donations.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Create gift guide for donors based on park management priorities.</li> <li>○ Create process to determine when public input is required and guidelines to review and receive public input for proposals.</li> <li>○ Review DNR guidelines for donor recognition and applicability to Belle Isle Park. Identify gaps in current guidelines relative to Belle Isle Park and expand as necessary.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1

**PARK-WIDE ACTIONS - MANAGEMENT / OPERATIONS, CONTINUED**

NUMBER	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish an enhanced Belle Isle Park Communications Plan including internal and external communications (DNR and BIC)</li> </ul>	1
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete an operational maintenance plan for the park.</li> </ul>	1
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate concessions opportunities and needs.</li> </ul>	2
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an education and interpretation plan for Belle Isle Park                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gather personal stories relating to park history</li> <li>○ Determine the primary topics for natural and cultural interpretation</li> <li>○ Consider a variety of methods of engagement, including traditional and new media, audio and visual technologies, on- and off-site interpretation, traditional and new media, etc.</li> <li>○ Coordinate interpretation and education programming among partners</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	3



Belle Isle Park cherry blossoms

## CHAPTER SEVEN

The following describes proposed action goals in each of the following management zones designated at Belle Isle Park. (No goals were developed specifically for the Backcountry Zone; Refer to Park-wide Action Goals):

PRIMITIVE ZONE		
Goal: Restore and maintain the integrity of the wet-mesic flatwoods natural community and constituent plant and animal species.		
NUMBER	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete restoration plan of wet-mesic flatwoods.</li> </ul>	1

NATURAL RESOURCE RECREATION ZONE		
Goal: Improve wildlife habitat within water bodies and grasslands and provide amenities for passive recreation.		
NUMBER	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support native plants and wildlife by optimizing mowing strategies.</li> </ul>	1
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pursue hiking trail connections around the Blue Heron Lagoon (floating boardwalk, etc) that will facilitate outdoor education, boating, and fishing opportunities.</li> </ul>	2
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and expand shoreline fishing opportunities at the Blue Heron Lagoon and Lake Okonoka.</li> </ul>	3

DEVELOPED RECREATION ZONE		
NUMBER	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL
<p><u>Welcome Area:</u> Entrance area to Belle Isle Park, including the MacArthur Bridge approach on the park side and the surrounding area. Goal: Create an attractive and welcoming entry point to the park, with convenient access to information and services for visitors</p>		
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make construction improvements for office space for staff and customer services at the new Park Office (Former Internal Affairs Building).</li> </ul>	1
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Locate information kiosk(s) near entrance convenient for park visitors.</li> </ul>	1
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a long-term master plan for a welcome and customer service center at the former Police Headquarters building.</li> </ul>	3
<p><u>Athletic Complex:</u> Fields and courts surrounding the Athletic Shelter between Nashua Canal and the Strand. Goal: Improve the Athletic Shelter Complex and expand community and athletic programming, providing increased opportunities and services for the public, specifically youth.</p>		
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete critical Athletic Shelter roof repairs.</li> </ul>	1
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Athletic Complex Programming and Infrastructure Improvement Plan, and complete a historic assessment of the Athletic Shelter.</li> </ul>	2
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rehabilitate Athletic Shelter to maximize community programming as developed in Programming Plan.</li> </ul>	3
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve fields, resurface / replace courts as needed, expand athletic programming and improve ADA accessibility within Athletic Complex</li> </ul>	3

## DEVELOPED RECREATION ZONE, CONTINUED

NUMBER	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL
<p><u>Belle Isle Golf Center:</u> Golf facilities, consisting of a short golf course and driving range, on Lakeside Dr. Goal: Support vendor with facility improvements that will provide for more efficient operations.</p>		
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change irrigation water source to the Detroit River.</li> </ul>	3
<p><u>Beach Area:</u> Beach area and supporting facilities on north side of park. Goal: Provide a safe, fun and accessible water based recreation area.</p>		
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and execute vendor/concession partnerships to support beach use.</li> </ul>	1
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve concessions facilities, restrooms, and parking lots to support beach use.</li> </ul>	1
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beachfront revitalization that will include: removal of inoperable water slide and provision of a outdoor eating area and splash park accessible to children of all abilities (BIC).</li> </ul>	2
<p><u>Former Zoo Site:</u> Former Zoo site location between Nashua Canal and Central Way. Goal: Redevelop area to provide opportunities for park users</p>		
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a plan with public input and identify partnerships for repurposing the site.</li> </ul>	2
<p><u>Former Golf Course Site:</u> Former Golf Course site location on south side of Lake Muskoday. Goal: Redevelop area to provide opportunities for park users</p>		
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a plan for adaptive reuse or removal of infrastructure associated with the former golf course.</li> </ul>	2
<p><u>Kids Row:</u> Children’s playground area and the giant slide on Central Way, east of Inselruhe St. Goal: Provide a safe, fun and accessible play environment for children of all abilities with supporting amenities.</p>		
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess play equipment for improvements.</li> </ul>	3
<p><u>Belle Isle Boat House Area:</u> includes the clubhouse as well as associated docks and piers, outdoor program space and parking area. Goal: Oversee the restoration of the Belle Isle Boat House and associated amenities, retaining the historic integrity while providing for increased programming and revenue generation.</p>		
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with the Friends of Detroit Rowing, Inc. to complete a historic structures report and a comprehensive engineering assessment of the building and facilities.</li> </ul>	3
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with the Friends of Detroit Rowing, Inc. to prepare a master plan for the renovation of the Belle Isle Boat House building and grounds. The master plan should include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A potential water taxi, day dockage for boaters, bike rental, island shuttle, public access and use of the pier, and a potential concession café.</li> <li>The master plan will need to incorporate the Friends of Detroit Rowing, Inc. to enhance the rowing club’s operations.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	3
17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with the Friends of Detroit Rowing, Inc. to prepare a capital improvements plan for the renovation of the Belle Isle Boat House building and grounds.</li> </ul>	3
18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement pier renovations as funding becomes available.</li> </ul>	3
NUMBER	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL
<p><u>Lighthouse / Blue Heron Lagoon:</u> Lighthouse field and area surrounding the Blue Heron Lagoon.</p>		
19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement Iron Belle Trail southern terminus trailhead plan.</li> </ul>	1

## DEVELOPED RECREATION ZONE, CONTINUED

Shelters

20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with the Belle Isle Conservancy to raise funds for and rehabilitate the Newsboy Shelter.</li> </ul>	1
21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve all shelters, repair damaged roof and decking, repaint and provide for ADA access to shelter.</li> </ul>	1

Waterfront Structures

22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address structural, safety, and accessibility issues at the North and South Piers.</li> </ul>	3
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Historic Structures

Goal: Maintain and enhance the character of historic structures and provide amenities to improve programming opportunities, and ADA accessibility.

23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rehabilitate Casino building and grounds, maintaining the historical character and its use as a social gathering and event space. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace tile roof.</li> <li>Complete replacement of mechanical systems.</li> <li>Complete structural and masonry repairs as needed.</li> <li>Replace walks and patios as needed.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1
24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>James Scott Memorial Fountain Critical Repairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete a structural assessment of the fountain, weir, and deteriorating basin walls, and prioritize critical needs for improvement.</li> <li>Modernize the mechanical systems within the fountain and basin pumps.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1
25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rehabilitate Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory in association with BIC. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize rehabilitation plan.</li> <li>Review the needs and feasibility of adding restroom facilities.</li> <li>Phased implementation of the improvements as funding allows.</li> <li>Work with the City of Detroit to review Belle Isle Lease Agreement to incorporate the Greenhouses into the Conservatory Complex.</li> <li>Initiate capital campaign.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1
26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reassess optimal programming at the Flynn Memorial Pavilion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perform modest and practical renovations.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1
27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace White House foundation.</li> </ul>	1
28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess existing use of and improve appearance and functionality of the Paddock Area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine year-round functional use of the area.</li> <li>Seek ways to reduce the visual impact and effects of impervious surface on storm water runoff.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2
29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve Restrooms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve Bear Pit Restrooms to open comfort station facility to public using the adjacent large group gathering areas.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2
30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>James Scott Memorial Fountain Rehabilitation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rehabilitate reflecting pond retaining wall and sidewalks.</li> <li>Repair damaged marble sculptures.</li> <li>Recreate historic Pewabic tiles in basin.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	3

**DEVELOPED RECREATION ZONE, CONTINUED**

NUMBER	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL
<p><u>Historic Structures</u></p>		
<p>Goal: Maintain and enhance the character of historic structures and provide amenities to improve programming opportunities, and ADA accessibility.</p>		
31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitate White House and Stable complex.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete deferred maintenance, improvements, and restoration as required to stabilize the buildings.</li> <li>○ Complete Programming Plan for the Stables and White House site that will allow vendor opportunities and potential interpretive and public space.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	3

**7.3 Potential Partner Projects**

The following projects are currently in the planning stages, being led and funded by partner organizations under the direction of, or in agreement with, the DNR.

**POTENTIAL PARTNER PROJECTS**

NUMBER	ACTION
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piet Oudolf Garden Project                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Garden Club of Michigan has an MOU with the DNR to retain Piet Oudolf to design a 1.5 acre garden on Belle Isle adjacent to the Nancy Brown Peace Carillon. Construction of the garden will be contingent on the funding of construction costs and an endowment for future maintenance and operations. The fundraising need is approximately \$2.7 million. The fundraising effort is currently being facilitated by Oudolf Garden Detroit.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the feasibility and capital investment required to provide water taxi service from William G. Milliken State Park to Belle Isle Park, considering various locations. (By Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority)</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belle Isle Sawmill Improvements                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The DNR-PRD is partnering with DNR-Forestry and the Arboriculture Society of Michigan Foundation to have a physical assessment of the Sawmill completed. The assessment will assist in defining the condition of the structure and future improvement costs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



## Chapter Eight: Proposal Review Process

### 8.1 Background

Restoring and maintaining Belle Isle Park's infrastructure within its historically significant context while balancing visitor's wants and needs are key to determining priorities for funding capital improvements. Careful consideration went into the planning effort to determine the priorities for directing Belle Isle Park's limited capital outlay budget and personnel resources. Belle Isle Park's popularity attracts a steady flow of submittals for new attractions and amenities that align with current needs of the park to varying degrees. Requests for additional programming and infrastructure are a constant pressure on the limited open space within the park, as well as planning and operational resources. Proposals for development of new infrastructure must be carefully reviewed to preserve and protect Belle Isle Park's open space; its most important asset. The 2005 Belle Isle Master Plan (Hamilton Anderson) notes:

*"No one can predict the future, but the need for quality, natural open spaces is a constant. Without any set methodology for making decisions about change within the park, the island experience will continue to be compromised by conflicting uses and ideas....Nowhere else in the city can a park user find a complete and total retreat from the built environment as at Belle Isle. Belle Isle is a setting with no urban context: a balance between recreational, educational, and*

*traditional park offerings in a historic setting. With each built improvement to the island the tenuous balance between the existing varied experiences is challenged and the island's most basic, fundamental appeal as an urban retreat is jeopardized."*

A policy must be put in place to ensure that new proposals, which were not considered as part of this comprehensive planning process, are carefully considered and analyzed based on not only the project's impact and need, but also the ability to be self-sustaining and not put further strain on staff, operations and maintenance budgets. An evaluation process can be a useful management tool to:

1. Track and catalog all proposals for Belle Isle.
2. Facilitate the proposal process by clearly defining what criteria must be addressed.
3. Update and monitor the values espoused in the Strategic Management Plan.

The lease between the state and the City of Detroit requires that the state work to limit new infrastructure on the island and long term costs for maintaining additional infrastructure. In order to facilitate thoughtful and objective review of new ideas or changes on Belle Isle, a plan review to determine how the proposal aligns with the Strategic Management Plan will be completed.

## 8.2 Proposal Review

The review process will begin with an assessment of the project summary submitted by a special interest group or individual. Review of the summary will determine if the project is eligible to submit a project proposal. The initial summary review will be completed by the DNR PRD management, DNR PRD Field Planner, and District Manager. Proposals not supported by the current management plan will not be advanced for further review. If the proposed project aligns with the goals and objectives of the management plan, the project advocates will be invited to submit a detailed proposal for further review.

A team will be assembled to evaluate each proposal with members appropriate to the project. Reviewers will include DNR Park and Recreation Division Belle Isle Park management, Field Planner, Stewardship Unit and Finance Division, and DNR Division staff as appropriate (Fisheries, Forestry, Law Enforcement, and History Center). The Belle Isle Conservancy (BIC), City of Detroit (department dependent on proposal), Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) may also be consulted depending on the project scope.

The appropriate level of community input will be determined based on scope and longevity of proposal. Project scope that will require public input:

1. New infrastructure
2. Major development

The proposal evaluation procedure will determine a list of criteria on which each reviewer would grade the project. A final feasibility score for the project will be determined based on the average of all reviewers and public input collected. The following criteria will be considered for assessment:

- Is the project consistent with the overall goals for the park?
- Does the proposal add to the recreation value of Belle Isle Park?
- Does the proposal complement, philosophically, aesthetically, and educationally, existing uses and structures on the island?
- Is the project feasible at another location?
- Does the project have sufficient funding without impacting other park needs?
- Is the project sustainable; either generating or maintaining sufficient resources for ongoing maintenance?
- Does the project align with the management zones for the park?
- Does the proposal support enjoyment of the surrounding areas within the park, without conflict with established events and uses?

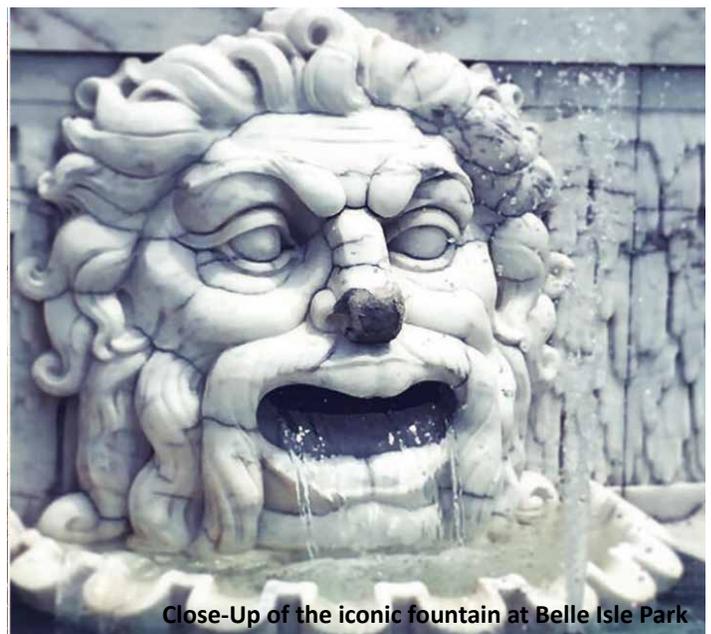
- Does the project align with current infrastructure capital improvements priorities?
- Does the proposal leverage improvements for existing infrastructure adjacent to the proposal?
- Is the proposed use or function available to all park users?
- Does the proposal meet an unmet need in the park?

Based on the established criteria, the score of the proposal would fall into 1 of 3 following categories:

1. Not a feasible project
2. Needs further clarification or revisions to be viable
3. Viable project

If the proposal is not approved it will be sent back to the party with information describing why the project is not currently viable. If there are aspects of the proposal that would benefit the park, but would have to be revised to meet all criteria, the party will have an opportunity to address deficiencies. If the proposal is determined to be a viable project as submitted then it would be forwarded to DNR PRD chiefs and Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee (BIPAC) for approval.

The PRD will work to fully develop and implement the proposal review process by the end of 2017. Clear criteria will be developed for proposal submittal requirements, with an application form and checklist. Items to be submitted with the proposal include a concept plan, site location within the park, cost estimate and funding information, sustainability plan, and a maintenance plan. By creating a clearly defined review process, including the public in major infrastructure and development projects, the State will ensure that Belle Isle Park is protected for future generations while presenting clear expectations and a fair evaluation process to the many groups that are interested in being part of Belle Isle Park's future.



Close-Up of the iconic fountain at Belle Isle Park



Knockerball at the Athletic Fields

## Chapter Nine:

# Permits, Events and Concessions

### 9.1 Background

The Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) has a long standing relationship with providing access to recreation and resources for purposes of planned events. Belle Isle Park provides a unique opportunity to host such events within the metro-Detroit area. These events should be compatible with the management and purpose of the lands and facilities, consistent with the Department's mission and policies, and any impact on the ability for the public to use the land should be in balance with the benefits received. Written approval is required to conduct these activities. PRD and Belle Isle Park staff has the authority to collect land use and other fees which take into consideration the impact on the resources and staff oversight of the event. Applications to use Belle Isle Park for events are submitted locally and reviewed by local staff.

In 2016, Belle Isle Park hosted 142 events (e.g. triathlon, walk/run events, senior power days, film shoots, yoga, and bike rides, etc.) and over 235 weddings. These events include fundraisers for the park and community events hosted by the Belle Isle Conservancy (BIC). Additionally, the BIC operates the Belle Isle Aquarium, which is one of the park's event facilities.

PRD also currently manages six concession contracts on the island, which include boat and bike rental, food concessions, and other services for park visitors. The Belle Isle Golf Course and Athletic Complex are managed under seven-year lease agreements.

Permission to use state lands for events is promulgated under rule 299.921 (n), which requires written approval for events.

Department Policy 26.04.04 establishes the protocol and base procedures for processing permits. This section of the plan expands on that policy and further clarifies the scoring, pricing, and process for handling events on PRD managed properties, including those that are leased by PRD. The goal is to have a consistent process for planning events and activities on Belle Isle. The process has and will continue to evolve to reach this goal, with the following issues to be addressed:

- **Support**- Adequate PRD staffing and software for oversight and administration of events and concession operations
- **Revenue**- Appropriate funding models related to events and concessions and the need to generate revenue for the park
- **Policy**- Recreation passport for events; continuity and best use of staff resources; shelter rental impacts
- **Scope**- Large scale events and their relationship with public use, resources

### 9.2 Support

Currently, PRD has two full time and one part time staff members who are dedicated to assist with events and permits on the island:

- Event Coordinator (full time, 40 hours per week) – event planning, follow up on events, checking on numbers, etc.
- Event Ranger (part time, 20 hours per week) – part time office, part time field
- General Office Assistant (full time, 40 hours per week)- handling correspondence, email, payments for use permit required items (i.e., alcohol, canopies, reservations)

Concession interactions are handled through the park manager and sometimes park supervisor and ranger staff.

Belle Isle Conservancy also has dedicated staff for events:

- Event Coordinator— currently 5 annual events including, but not limited to, Polish the Jewel, Sunset on the Scott, Grand Prixmiere, which is held in conjunction with the Belle Isle Grand Prix, Garden Party on Belle Isle Park, and the Deeper Dive events supporting the Belle Isle Aquarium. Also manages facility rentals for the Belle Isle Aquarium.

In the future it is proposed that the following additional PRD staff positions are established to assist with event planning, enforcement and concessions:

1. Event Ranger (full-time, 40 hours a week) specifically for event management and enforcement activities.
2. Ranger assistance for concessions (part-time/seasonal, 20 hours per week from June through September) - communicate with concessionaries, auditing and enforcement.

Factoring in staff, time, and the ability for the public to utilize park space, there may be times when a limit is reached for how many events can occur on the island. Realistic expectations regarding the duties of park staff must be communicated to event planners and the general public to ensure positive experiences.

The other item needed for the support of events and rentals is a dedicated reservation/booking system for Belle Isle Park. Currently, everything is handled through phone calls, electronic correspondence, Excel and Word documents, but there is no centralized system for both staff and the public to utilize. The proposed electronic system should include:

- Online information to the public
- Calendar of availability
- Electronic forms to apply for an event
- Electronic payment options
- Report generation, such as occupancy, work lists
- Revenue for events
- Flexibility to charge rates
- Diagram of buildings (e.g. Social Tables)
- Integration with the existing shelter program in Central Reservation System (CRS)
- Online application (electronic signatures)
- Contract printouts
- Process alcohol, canopy and other permits
- Additional needs:
  - Insurance requirements
  - Payment schedules
  - Addenda

- Hyperlink to contract, with contract dates
- Maintain old bid documents, past contracts
- Auto-populate terms of leases, contracts

PRD is currently researching options to fulfill this need and the associated costs of program implementation.

## 9.3 Revenue - Fee Structure

Having events on Belle Isle should enhance the recreational experience and provide a benefit to the participants in these activities, as well as the ability for the island to recover costs for events and provide revenue for future needs. The Parks and Recreation Division has adopted a new policy to implement simpler, and more efficient, pricing strategies. The changes in policy utilize the existing Department scoring. The new fee schedule is based on a simpler, encapsulated version of the Department fee structure (IC-1141 – State Land Fees) that are quantified within the approved Department guidelines.

When events are scored and priced using the new standards, the typical events are being charged less than when priced under the City of Detroit guidelines. Staff believes a separate fee structure is needed for Belle Isle Park to address the complexity and demand. Proposed fee changes will continue to be within the existing Department Use Permit fee schedule.

In comparison to other event locations, there are considerable differences in pricing and protocol on Belle Isle. Unlike most state parks, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has authority over roads, which are maintained under state trunk line standards. MDOT, Michigan State Police, DNR-Law Enforcement Division, and Belle Isle Park staff work closely together to review the impacts of events on the public's ability to utilize the routes. Except for specific circumstances, as



Wedding in the Conservatory Showroom

dedicated trunk lines, the roads must be open to the public. This requires more staff resources to assess routes and traffic patterns, impacting the cost.

Currently, different fees are charged based on the use of designated routes versus non-designated routes. One of the ideas incorporated into the new PRD event policy that could benefit Belle Isle Park is to assess fees differently for events that are commercial ventures, or “for profit,” compared to non-profit organizations that are striving to raise money for a benefit or cause. This idea of not charging based on the routes, but rather non-profit or profit events (especially for 5K races), may allow the park to better address fees for efforts.

#### 9.4 Revenue - Recreation Passport/ Voucher Permit

The Recreation Passport required by vehicles to access Belle Isle Park is a significant source of revenue for the park. Monitoring traffic entering the park for an event for Recreation Passport compliance and making passport sales is problematic. Currently 32.2% of the registered vehicles in the State of Michigan (and 38.3% in the city of Detroit) have a Recreation Passport (Secretary of State June 2017).

Handling Recreation Passports as it relates to events, such as weddings, is a statewide issue, but for Belle Isle Park, there are at least 200 weddings a year in addition to other events. Staff has worked with event and wedding planners to look to pre-purchase Recreation Passports. With the Recreation Passports adhering to the registration of the vehicle (match color of sticker to the color of the plate tabs), money handling, and the reconciliation for what is sold and what is not, the process can be cumbersome and not very efficient. To extend this process to all weddings and other events would require a considerable amount of staff time which may not be cost effective in terms of revenue collected and time taken from other duties.

An alternative system, such as a voucher permit that would exempt event attendees from purchasing the Recreation Passport, is currently being evaluated and considered. Any change in policy would need to be reviewed by the Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee and approved by the Parks and Recreation Division Chief.

#### 9.5 Scope - Large Scale Events

Belle Isle Park is the busiest state park in Michigan’s park and recreation system. While the size of the island and the amount of diverse activities allows for many events, large scale events may have an impact on the resources and the ability for the public to recreate in a public space.

Currently, for all event applications, the same process is used



regardless of size. The application is scored based on number of participants, duration of event, and the potential impacts to resources, facilities, and general public access. This scoring is handled at the local level and the majority of these events are approved without further review beyond the interaction of the applicant and the unit supervisor. Large scale events require more effort to consider based on greater demands on resources and use of the park. These requests are atypical for most state parks, and are usually reserved for larger recreation areas that have capacity to absorb the use. Belle Isle Park receives a number of large event requests each year due to the proximity to Detroit and the higher profile level, yet, as an island, the park has limited access but high volume of public use. Establishing policies and procedures and a review process to handle the demand and consider the limitations on Belle Isle Park is necessary to communicate the process and be transparent to the public.

Below is an outline plan to establish criteria for Belle Isle Park. To assist with this plan, definitions and standards from previous studies and other recreation entities will be reviewed for comparison.

1. Defining a large scale event
  - o Restricted access to certain areas of park or exclusive use – what is considered acceptable?
  - o Length of restriction – what is considered an appropriate amount of time allowed for impact?
  - o Location of restriction, high traffic areas and routes versus low traffic
  - o Space required to hold event

- Set up and tear down times – scope around actual event
  - Free vs paid event
  - Benefit to public
  - Impact on space being used
  - Infrastructure needed
  - Urban vs rural Park
  - Parking and transportation needs
  - Law enforcement needs
2. Fee Assessment
- Rental of acreage
  - Monies made from concessions
  - Fees for loss of income due to event/restricted access (shelter rental loss, venue rental loss, etc.)
  - Noncompliance fees. Fees assessed for breach of contract.
  - Administrative costs
  - Storage fees
  - Restoration fees

- Should ability to pay be a factor?
  - Should public benefit be a factor? How do we define public benefit?
3. Contracting for Accountability
- Ensure agreements offer mission-related or management/operational benefits
  - Utilize performance bonds and surety bonds
  - Environmental impact studies
  - Create a compliance team (could be community volunteers) to ensure that terms of the contract are not being violated.
  - Understand the environmental impact of events, short term and long term. Contract for damages resulting to the land and facilities and provide terms for restoration.
  - Enforcement of contract. Penalties for breach, revocation of contract. Develop enforcement procedure.
  - Decide what a reasonable contract timeline should be for event. Should each event have one contract per year, leaving room to negotiate and change, or should some events have multi-year contracts with the ability to opt out for noncompliance?
  - Include other items as necessary
4. Evaluation

Using feedback from the MORPACE 2015 survey which asked specific questions relating to large scale events and other community input, it is clear that there are both benefits and disadvantages to large scale events on Belle Isle.

- Benefits of Large Scale Events
  - Revenue generation for park
  - Revenue generation for city
  - Engagement with non-active park users who may come out to an event
  - New experiences for active park users
  - Community building and engagement
  - Broad exposure
- Disadvantages of Large Scale Events
  - Restricted land use
  - Public opposition
  - Negative exposure
  - Administrative costs
  - Detriment to land, resources, facilities
  - Permanent infrastructure



**Wedding at Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory**

The value/benefits of the event must be weighed against the impact/disadvantages.

## 9.6 Other Topics for Future Discussion

The previous narrative is to focus on issues for review which change how current PRD procedures and practices are followed. There is also a need to strengthen or enhance other parts of the program which will require continuous efforts. Some of the ongoing needs are listed below:

- Event and rental protocol: the requirement for written permission for events or business operations associated with events needs to be enforced.
- Better communication through Central Reservation System (CRS) on shelter rentals and Belle Isle Park requirements. For example, additional requests such as bicycle rental, tent structures, and number of persons the shelter accommodates.
- Develop a holistic list of what events and activities require an event or use permit on Belle Isle.
- Develop a plan to cover temporary construction relating to events; need for a diagram of layout etc.

- Approval process to allow for projects to be done in lieu of payments – require prior approval. Maintenance items are not subject to reimbursement for contract costs: hold concessionaires to contract requirements.
- Map documenting approved concession locations.
- Cross reference concessions with events.
- Expand food options.
- Conservatory: evaluate capacity to add more events.
- Stakeholders: pursue a central location to communicate events at Dossin Great Lakes Museum, Belle Isle Nature Center, Belle Isle Boat House Crew, Detroit Yacht Club, and Belle Isle Athletic Club.

## 9.7 Proposed Timeline

DNR-PRD, in association with BIC, has begun to evaluate and identify the needs to address events and concessions at Belle Isle Park as outlined above. PRD will continue to develop definitive policies and procedures to address the issues identified. The policies and recommendations will be drafted and reviewed for implementation in 2018.



Church service at Belle Isle Park



Volunteering at Belle Isle Park

## Chapter Ten:

# Volunteers and Partnerships

### 10.1 Background

Volunteers have provided significant support to Belle Isle Park for over 40 years, having a positive impact on the island and acting as ambassadors and advocates supporting the island's mission. The "All in for Belle Isle" event, held in December 2013 added a renewed interest in volunteerism and partnerships, which the DNR and BIC must continue to use for maximum mutual benefit.

Volunteer efforts on the island enable work to be done over and beyond what is possible with limited staff and resources. The primary benefits are:

- Fulfillment of specific needs of the park, adding additional resources to fill funding and manpower gaps.
  - Park projects
  - Beautification efforts
    - Litter collection on land and in the canals, lakes, and lagoons
- Increased visitor interaction, satisfaction, and overall experience
- Increased number of advocates and ambassadors for the park
- Better community engagement; volunteers gain a sense of ownership for Belle Isle, which cultivates additional support, including financial donors, etc.
- Fostering skilled individuals in natural resource/ park and recreation management and advocacy, with the potential to be great employees in the future

- Education on the need to manage and care for our cultural and natural resources in the wider context
- Sense of accomplishment and involvement for the individuals involved
- Company recognition for service to the community

### 10.2 Volunteer Process

#### Individual/ "Regular" Volunteers:

Regular volunteer opportunities include greeters at the Belle Isle Aquarium and the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, Conservatory Lily Pond gardeners, school program docents, and assistance with special events. Monthly stewardship volunteer activities that focus on the removal of invasive species are also scheduled throughout the year. A Volunteer Handbook has been created and a uniform process to become a Belle Isle Volunteer has been established. The process is as follows:

- Opportunities, along with the volunteer application are listed on the DNR and BIC websites
- Individuals wishing to volunteer submit an application
- Application is processed by Volunteer Coordinator
- Accepted volunteers receive an invitation to a New Volunteer Orientation, where they learn about the park and volunteer opportunities from DNR and BIC staff, as well as long-time volunteers

- After orientation, volunteers are invited to on-site training in the area they wish to volunteer.
- Once trained, volunteers receive a volunteer badge and have access to the Volgistics database in which they can schedule their shifts and report their hours.
- Volunteer coordinator, with support from various Committee Chairs & lead volunteers are responsible for recruitment, orientation, training, retention, and appreciation efforts.

Stewardship Saturday volunteers work directly with the DNR Resource Steward, who maintains a calendar of events and mailing list for interested individuals.

### Group Volunteers:

Businesses, education establishments, community and youth groups, and non-profit organizations play a big part in assisting with projects at Belle Isle. Volunteer group opportunities currently include “Keep Belle Isle Beautiful”, an anti-littering campaign, canal clean-up, weeding, daffodil planting, annual spring clean-up, and other specific “Adopt-a Project” opportunities. The following process has been established for managing group volunteers:

- Park Manager and Unit Supervisor maintain a project list of park needs
- Groups contact the Volunteer Coordinator (a joint PRD/ BIC position) with desired dates of service and area of interest. The Volunteer Coordinator may also actively recruit volunteers for specific projects
- Based on the identified needs and ability/ interests of the group, a project is assigned and scheduled in partnership between the Volunteer Coordinator, Park Manager, Supervisor, and Lead Ranger
- Volunteer groups are required to sign a volunteer waiver
- The project is supervised/facilitated by either a Park Ranger or the Volunteer Coordinator (or both) depending on the scope of the project

### 10.3 Paid Youth Groups

The DNR partners with a number of youth groups to assist with routine tasks such as litter pick-up and cleaning restrooms. These include Youth Connection (funded through the DNR via summer youth grant funds), Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), and the Michigan Rehabilitation Program. These partnerships provide much needed assistance to park staff, who help to supervise the groups, and work experience opportunities for the individuals in the programs.

### 10.4 Partnerships and Gift and Acceptance

When organizations sponsor a project by making material or monetary contributions, a more formal partnership agreement is entered into between the organization and the DNR. This agreement is called a Gift and Acceptance and is a tool used throughout the PRD system to enable the state to accept

monetary or in-kind contributions for a specific purpose. Similar to the volunteer process, the project may evolve from a known need identified by park or BIC staff, or potential partners may approach PRD or BIC with a proposal. In the latter scenario, the project would be evaluated to ensure it makes a positive contribution to the island based on a number of criteria, as identified in Chapter 8 of this plan. Once approved, the process for project partnerships is as follows:

- Approval of location, design, materials, etc. (Park staff, other DNR division staff, other state agencies, BIC, City of Detroit, as determined by the scope of the project)
- Gift and Acceptance Agreement entered into between the donor and the DNR
- Project Oversight (Park staff, Field Planner, and others as appropriate)
- Organization is entitled to donor recognition subject to applicable law and at the reasonable discretion of the DNR

Monetary donations are also solicited by the Belle Isle Conservancy. Donors may give to special projects or make an unrestricted gift to support the Conservancy. Cash donations made directly to the DNR are covered under Department Policy 01.01-14.

### 10.5 Resources Required

While the benefits of using volunteers and partnerships to assist with projects and programs on Belle Isle are clear, it is important to recognize that staff, material, and monetary resources are required to operate the program. These include:

- Materials, tools, and supplies (Park operating budget / donations)
- Orientation and training materials, supplies, and other needs related to volunteers (BIC budget)
- Staff: Volunteer Coordinator, PRD, and BIC staff

### 10.6 Measuring Success

Measuring the success of the volunteer and partnership program, and continuing to make adjustments that improve the program’s effectiveness are important. The following methods will be used to monitor the program:

- Projects completed; effective use of park staff’s time
- Shifts covered (by volunteers) at the Aquarium and Conservatory
- Visitor satisfaction with customer service experience (specific to the Aquarium & Conservatory)
- Volunteer satisfaction (method- volunteer survey)

Effective monitoring relies on accurate record keeping by park management and the BIC.

## 10.7 Recommended Improvements

The hiring of a Volunteer Coordinator, jointly funded and responsible to the DNR and BIC, has greatly benefited the volunteer program. A team of PRD and BIC staff evaluated the volunteer and partnership program in September 2016 and made the following recommendations for improvements to this program:

- Consider the substantial amount of support that volunteers are able to provide to the park during project planning processes.
- Better integrate long-term volunteers who have donated their time to Belle Isle with park staff.
- Better connect park and Conservancy staff with individual/“regular” volunteers. The volunteer program will benefit from this as volunteers will feel better connected and appreciated.
  - Know where volunteers are stationed and stop in to say, “Hello,” and “Thank you.”
  - Have park and Conservancy staff attend and speak at scheduled new Volunteer Orientations and the annual appreciation event(s).

- Combine required forms (and other volunteer related documents) to reflect the joint program, where feasible.
- Continue to develop the department with full support from both the DNR and the BIC.
- Provide the same Volunteer Orientation to youth groups that work on Belle Isle, so they are appropriately informed and equipped to represent Belle Isle Park.
- Continue to recognize volunteerism through annual awards etc.

The DNR and BIC appreciate the passion, time, and talent that volunteers and partners provide and will continue to work hard to ensure the full benefits of the program are realized, fostering the community, pioneering, and philanthropic spirit surrounding Belle Isle Park into the future.



The Lily Pond

# Appendices

PARK PROFILE	
AREA	982 Acres
COUNTY	Wayne County
TOWNSHIP	City of Detroit, Michigan
LATITUDE	42°20'25"N
LONGITUDE	82°59'12"W
ADDRESS	2 Inselruhe Drive Detroit, MI 48207
PHONE	(844) 235-5375



## Appendix A: Supporting Analysis

### A.1 Park Overview

The City of Detroit purchased Belle Isle in 1879. It opened the island as a public park in 1880 and hired Frederick Law Olmsted to develop the preliminary plan for the island in 1882. However, only Olmsted's recommendations for Central Avenue, a canal system, a combination pavilion, a ferry landing, and some landscaping were implemented.

The island is rich in culture, history, and natural resources. The growing demand for open spaces and recreational opportunities for city residents led to a variety of developments on the island over the years. The attractions on the island, including Belle Isle Aquarium, Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, Belle Isle Nature Center, James Scott Memorial Fountain, and Dossin Great Lakes Museum, provide rich educational value and strong cultural identity to the park, as well as the City of Detroit. Visitors also come to Belle Isle for the scenic landscape, the beach, fishing, boating, and athletic, cultural, family, and community activities.

Belle Isle became Michigan's 102nd State Park in February 2014 and is currently operated by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) under a 30-year lease agreement with the City of Detroit.

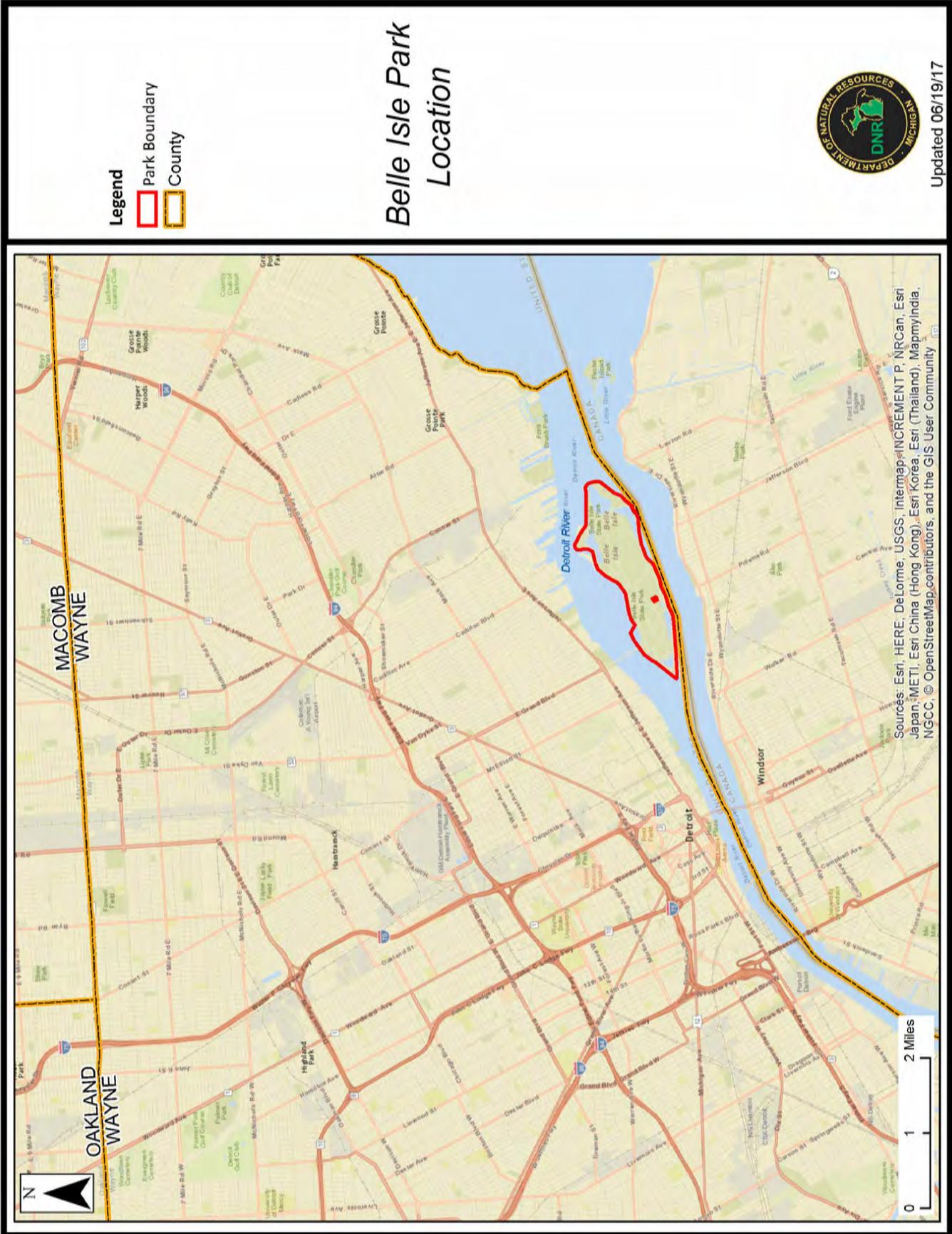
Belle Isle is operated by the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks and Recreation Division (PRD),

assisted by the DNR Law Enforcement Division (LED), other DNR divisions, Michigan State Police (MSP), and Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). PRD has strong support from the Belle Isle Conservancy (BIC) and guidance from the Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee (BIPAC).

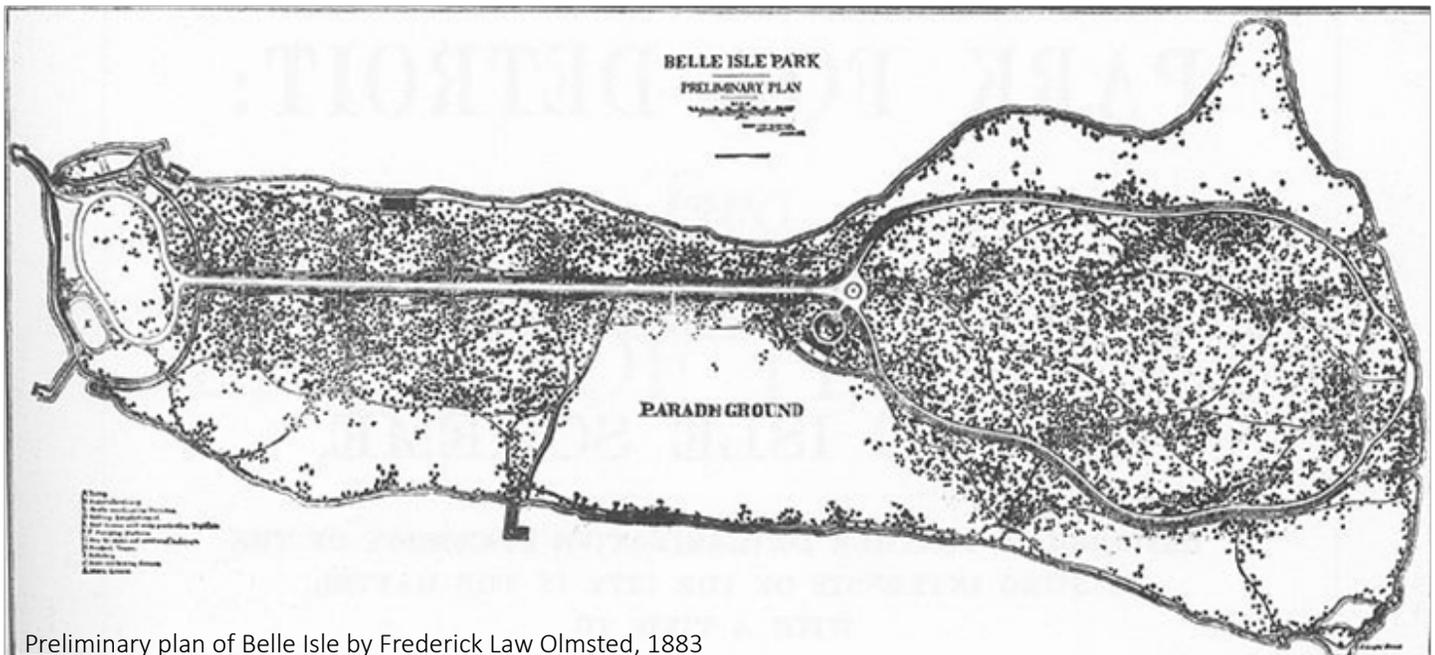
### Location & Community

This 982-acre island park is situated in the Detroit River between the United States and Canada. The island is connected by the MacArthur Bridge to mainland Detroit on Jefferson Avenue. The park is easily accessible by car from I-75, I-94, I-96, or U.S. 10 (Lodge Freeway); and all major arteries through the City. Detroit Department of Transportation offers a bus service to the island via the #12 Conant Route.

The park is integral with the revitalized riverfront area, which encompasses the Detroit Riverwalk, Gabriel Richards Park, Chene Park, William G. Milliken State Park and Harbor, the Outdoor Adventure Center, and the Renaissance Center. The city skylines of Detroit and Windsor on both sides of the river generate beautiful scenery and unique experiences that differ from those seen from the mainland. Residents and visitors of Detroit have valued this large area of open space in the urban environment for over 135 years.



Updated 06/19/17



Preliminary plan of Belle Isle by Frederick Law Olmsted, 1883

## A.2 History of Belle Isle Park

Anishinaabe (Odawa, Chippewa, and Potawatomi) people knew Belle Isle long before the French arrived in Detroit in 1701. It was once a resting place for migratory swans, and the French recorded the Anishinaabemowin name for the island as Wahnabezee (Swan Island). Detroit was part of New France until 1760, when the British took over. French settlers used the island as common pasture and called it Ile aux Cochons (Hog Island). A British family and troops who attempted to develop it and use it for garrison livestock and crops were some of the first casualties of Pontiac's Rebellion in 1763. Under the British, the island passed into private ownership, a tale that includes purchase from Native Americans and legal challenges from those who believed it should be common land. The Americans who took possession of Detroit in 1796 finally confirmed ownership in 1817. On July 4, 1845, in honor of Miss Isabella Cass, daughter of U.S. senator and former Territorial Governor Lewis Cass, the name of the island was changed to Belle Isle. The island remained in private ownership until the City of Detroit purchased it in 1879 for a public park and rail crossing to Canada using bonds authorized by the state legislature. The formal opening ceremonies for the city park were conducted on May 10, 1880, and the name Belle Isle Park was established officially by ordinance in August 1881.<sup>1</sup>

Frederick Law Olmsted, who designed New York City's Central Park, produced preliminary designs for Belle Isle. His vision was to preserve the woodland forest, which was viewed as the most unique asset of the island. Olmsted's plan included a ferry dock for boats coming to the island, a central

promenade, and a man-made canal for pleasure boating. However, Olmsted resigned before his contract expired and only some of his design elements were implemented. The Detroit News editor, Michael Dee, offered an alternative plan for the island, which was later adopted and carried out. The principles of Olmsted's design have always influenced Belle Isle. Even though the island has been constantly changing and transforming, the basic concept of a formal zone, an active zone, and a natural zone has been retained.

The current island is nearly 300 acres larger in size than its natural state. Dredging of man-made lakes, including Lake Takoma and Lake Muskoday, provided soil for expansion. Other extensions of the island used landfill and soil excavated from downtown Detroit's construction sites. The last major extension was for the lighthouse designed by Albert Kahn in 1929.

The ferry dock pavilion proposed by Olmsted was completed in 1884. The first Casino building was built in 1886 at the western end of Central Avenue, north of the current Casino. It was a wooden three-story structure designed by John Donaldson and Henry Meier in the Queen Anne-style with a canopied veranda. The current Casino, constructed in 1906, was designed by architects Van Leyen and Schilling. It is a grand, two-story Beaux-Arts building with ornate towers framing the building's four corners, and encircling verandas provide visitors with shelter. The building was opened to the public in 1908 and served as a key meeting point for visitors and groups on the island in the past, as it does today.<sup>2</sup>

1 "A History of Belle Isle" compiled by the Friends of Belle Isle, January 2002

2 Lori Feret, BIC Historian, one page descriptions of Belle Isle structures

The construction of a steel swing bridge in 1889 attracted increasing numbers of visitors to the island and allowed more development to occur. In April 1915, the bridge was decimated by fire caused by ash falling from a hot coal truck, which quickly destroyed the wood traffic deck. The current bridge was designed and constructed in 1918, with a reinforced concrete deck and 35-foot roadway, including capacity for streetcar tracks and two 12-foot sidewalks. The name was changed to General MacArthur Bridge in 1953. This bridge was rehabilitated in 1986.

Belle Isle was ideally situated for commercial fisheries and housed several when it became a park. In 1884, the park was creating ponds and wanted them stocked; the state was interested in breeding operations and planted 4 million whitefish at Belle Isle that year.

At the end of the 1889 commercial fishing season, the Detroit board of park commissioners withdrew leases from all private fisheries, out of concern for the “unsightly fish pounds and fishery buildings that disfigured the island.” Then, in early 1890, it approved the Fish Commission’s request to use the Inselruhe fishery as long as it created a “tasteful and satisfactory” building and removed temporary structures at the end of the season.

The Aquarium, Conservatory, and the formal garden, built in 1904, were designed by Albert Kahn. The sports field complex was developed beginning in 1883, and today includes a baseball diamond, running track, handball courts, tennis courts, and a soccer field. The Belle Isle Zoo can trace its history to a deer park established in 1886. Cages and additional animals were added over time. By 1909, the Belle Isle Zoo, the location of the official Detroit Zoo, had 150 animals on exhibit over a 32-acre parcel of the park. The Detroit Zoo moved to Royal Oak in 1928, gradually replacing Belle Isle’s facility (which closed in 1956) as the city’s major zoological park. Efforts to create a different zoo experience on the island included the Children’s Zoo from 1947 to 1979, when it was dismantled due to “prohibitive maintenance costs.” In 1980, the Safariland Zoo, with elevated walk ways, was constructed to give visitors an aerial view of the exhibits. This closed in 2002 and now sits abandoned.<sup>3,4</sup>

Music was also an integral part of Belle Isle Park. In the early days, orchestras performed on the ferries going to and from the island. A pagoda-like structure was built on a bridge over the Loop Canal shortly after the turn of the 20th century and was used as the setting for regular music performances. The pagoda bandstand was demolished in 1942. In the 1920s, a rounded band shell was built on a small waterway between the Nancy Brown Carillon Tower and the skating pavilion. It

3 MI Fish Commission Sixth Biennial Report 1883-1884, pages 29-30

4 MI Fish Commission Ninth Biennial Report 1889-1890, part 1, pages 54-55

was replaced by the Remick Music Shell in 1950, named after Detroit music publisher Jerome H. Remick. The music shell became the summer home of the Detroit Concert Band, with concerts continuing until 1980.

Over the years, many of the structures and buildings built in the early 20th century required major renovation due to damage by natural and weather-related hazards.

As a city park, Belle Isle has reflected the city’s social and cultural changes. Weekly band concerts were first performed in 1882 by the Detroit Opera House. In 1933, as Prohibition ended and the Great Depression drove up unemployment, the Detroit City Council debated the merits of adding a beer garden near the band shell, creating “a workingman’s paradise, where his starving cultural self could be nourished by classic renditions of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra while his parched throat would be refreshed by a stimulating glass of beer.” Despite the promise of jobs and respite for the unemployed, the Allied Youth for Prohibition and concerns about cutting into Casino revenues won the day.

The workers who came to Detroit as World War II production boomed in the early 1940s found long hours, a lack of housing and racial tension. On a hot, humid Sunday in 1943, racial incidents among the 100,000 people who jammed Belle Isle became a riot that spread across the city for two more days and left 34 people dead and hundreds injured.

By 1950, Belle Isle had become a repository for numerous monuments and fountains. As annual visitation remained high, roads were widened, facilities were added and canal flow was cut off from the river to control flooding. In the 1960s and 70s budget problems began to plague the park,



Historic photo of Belle Isle Casino



Historic photo of visitors canoeing Belle Isle Park

affecting the parks facilities and activities. In 1972, the Huron Clinton Metropark Authority designed a plan to re-energize the park. The suggestion of a toll gate to raise revenue and for management by the HCMA drew opposition and was never realized.

The more recent decline of manufacturing industries and urban growth led to declining budgets for park management and maintenance. The Detroit's Recreation Department hired Hamilton Anderson Associates and Zachary Associates to develop a long-term comprehensive master plan for Belle Isle in 1995. The plan was approved by the city in 2005, but few of the recommendations in the plan have been carried out. In 2013, the city signed a 30 year lease with Michigan Department of Natural Resources to operate and manage the park, by which Belle Isle became the 102nd state park in Michigan. With the enhanced resources of the state, the park is being revitalized and visitor numbers are increasing again.

### A.3 Demographics

The U.S. Census Bureau data demonstrates comparative information for the City of Detroit, Wayne County, and the State of Michigan.

There is a significant difference in income and housing conditions in the City of Detroit compared with the county and the state. The median value of owner-occupied housing units in the City of Detroit is about \$45,100, which is only about half of the median value for Wayne County and about one third of the state value. The median household income is also considerably lower. The poverty rate of the city almost reaches 40% of the population, compared to 15.8% in the state as a whole. The education attainment for residents of the City of Detroit is low compared to the county and state level, most notably for the attainment of bachelor's degree or higher.

The population within the city is very dense, with high rise buildings and apartments providing much of the accommodation rather than single family houses.

DEMOGRAPHICS			
POPULATION	DETROIT CITY	WAYNE COUNTY	MICHIGAN
Population estimates, July 1, 2015, (V2015)	677,116	1,759,335	9,922,576
Population estimates base, April 1, 2010, (V2015)	713,862	1,820,641	9,884,129
Population, percent change- April 1, 2010 (estimates base) to July 1, 2015, (V2015)	-5.1	-3.4	0.4
Population, Census, April 1, 2010	713,777	1,820,584	9,883,640
Persons under 5 years, percent, April 1, 2010	7.0	6.5	6.0
Persons under 18 years, percent, April 1, 2010	26.7	25.4	23.7
Persons 65 years and over, percent, April 1, 2010	11.5	12.7	13.8
Female persons, percent, April 1, 2010	52.7	52.0	50.9
White alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (a)	10.6	52.3	78.9
Black or African American alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (a)	82.7	40.5	14.2
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (a)	0.4	0.4	0.6
Asian alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (a)	1.1	2.5	2.4
Two or More Races, percent, April 1, 2010	2.2	2.4	2.3
Hispanic or Latino, percent, April 1, 2010 (b)	6.8	5.2	4.4
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent, April 1, 2010	7.8	49.6	76.6
HEALTH	DETROIT CITY	WAYNE COUNTY	MICHIGAN
With a disability, under age 65 years, percent, 2010-2014	16.0	12.3	10.2
Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent	21.4	12.2	7.1
FAMILIES AND LIVING ARRANGEMENTS	DETROIT CITY	WAYNE COUNTY	MICHIGAN
Households, 2010-2014	254,197	667,553	3,827,880
Persons per household, 2010-2014	2.69	2.65	2.52
Living in same house 1 year ago, percent of persons age 1 year+, 2010-2014	83.7	85.6	85.3
Language other than English spoken at home, percent of persons age 5 years+, 2010-2014	9.8	12.8	9.1
HOUSING	DETROIT CITY	WAYNE COUNTY	MICHIGAN
Housing units, April 1, 2010	349,170	821,693	4,532,233
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2010-2014	50.7	63.9	71.5
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2010-2014	\$45,100	\$83,200	\$120,200
Median gross rent, 2010-2014	\$756	\$797	\$780
EDUCATION	DETROIT CITY	WAYNE COUNTY	MICHIGAN
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2010-2014	77.8	84.4	89.3
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2010-2014	13.1	21.6	26.4

DEMOGRAPHICS, CONTINUED			
INCOME AND POVERTY	DETROIT CITY	WAYNE COUNTY	MICHIGAN
Median household income (in 2014 dollars), 2010-2014	\$26,095	\$41,421	\$49,087
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2014 dollars), 2010-2014	\$14,984	\$22,643	\$26,143
Persons in poverty, percent	39.8	24.1	15.8
GEOGRAPHY	DETROIT CITY	WAYNE COUNTY	MICHIGAN
Population per square mile, 2010	5,144.3	2974.4	174.8
Land area in square miles, 2010	138.75	612.08	56,538.90

## A.4 Regional Recreation Resources

The following recreation resources have been identified in the region surrounding Belle Isle Park.

### Federally Owned Resources

#### Wildlife Refuges

- Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge: the only international wildlife refuge in North America, located along the 48 miles of Detroit River and Western Lake Erie shorelines. The refuge is made up of almost 6,000 acres of islands, coastal wetlands, marshes, shoals, and waterfront lands. In 2001, the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge was established as a result of binational efforts from politicians, conservation leaders, and local communities to build a sustainable future for the Detroit River and western Lake Erie ecosystems. New facilities including a visitor center are planned to open in 2017.

### State Owned Resources

#### State Parks and Recreation Areas

- William G. Milliken State Park and Harbor: the first urban state park in Michigan, located along the waterfront of downtown Detroit. The park has become a popular destination for Detroiters for walking, biking, and group gathering. Much of the site was originally a brownfield site. Milliken State Park includes a wetlands storm water demonstration that showcases nature's water filtration.
- Maybury State Park: located in Northville, which is about 35 miles west of the City of Detroit, in northwest Wayne County. The 944-acre park offers a variety of day-use recreational options including hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, equestrian riding, picnicking, and fishing.
- Wm. C. Sterling State Park: located about 40 miles south of the City of Detroit, on the shoreline of Lake Erie. The park is about 1,300 acres in size and offers over one mile of beach area for water sports including swimming, boating, and shore fishing. The site also has a modern campground. Hiking, biking, metal detecting, wildlife viewing, and swimming are popular activities in the park.

- Bald Mountain Recreation Area: located about 40 miles north of Detroit. The park consists of 4,637 rolling acres with some of the steepest hills in southeastern Michigan. The park offers rustic cabins for overnight accommodation. Hunting, hiking, swimming, and fishing are some of the recreational opportunities available at the park.

#### State Wildlife/Game Areas

- Pointe Mouillee State Game Area: consists of 3 units along and on the Detroit River, located about 40 miles south of Belle Isle. Waterfowl, ring-necked pheasant, and white-tailed deer are available species in the game area. A wildlife refuge is also located within the game area in Berlin Charter Township.

#### State Trails

- Iron Belle Trail: the longest designated state trail in the nation, starting from Belle Isle and continuing to Ironwood in the Upper Peninsula, with two routes for biking and hiking. The total length of the hiking trail will be 1,221 miles long and the biking trail will be 777 miles long, which connects many existing local and state trails.

#### Outdoor Adventure Center

- Located on Detroit's riverfront in the historic Globe Building, the Outdoor Adventure Center presents an "Up North" experience in downtown Detroit. The center opened in 2015 and provides hands-on activities, exhibits and simulators to introduce visitors to different outdoor experiences that can be found throughout Michigan.

### Huron Clinton Metro Parks

Huron-Clinton Metro Parks are a series of thirteen parks located throughout southeast Michigan. Five of them are within the proximity of Belle Isle and the City of Detroit. The rest of the metro parks are located around the outskirts of Metro Detroit.

- Lower Huron Metro Park: located about 35 miles southwest of Detroit consists of 1,258 acres of mature woodlands, and grassy meadows alongside the Huron

River. The park offers biking, camping, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, swimming, and ice skating in winter. It also includes a golf course, sports court, and an aquatic center.

- Willow Metro Park: located in close proximity to the Lower Huron Metro Park is also a natural scenic area developed along the Huron River. The park is 1,531 acres in size and offers a 24-hole disc golf course, sports courts, and swimming. Activities like ice skating, sledding, and cross-country skiing are available in winter.
- Oakwoods Metro Park: located approx. 35 miles from to Belle Isle. About 400 acres of the park have been preserved as natural study area, where a nature center is located. Horseback riding, boating, and fishing around the nature trails are activities available in the park.
- Lake Erie Metro Park: located 35 miles south of the city and north of the Pointe Mouillee State Game Area. The park is approximately 1,607 acres in size, with a natural environment that supports a variety of wildlife and waterfowl. The site features include shelters, a wave-action swimming pool, and a child-size town play area.
- Lake St. Clair Metro Park: the park is about 25 miles northeast of the City of Detroit along the shoreline of Lake St. Clair. The shoreline is over 1 mile long with a 1,600-foot boardwalk. The park has recreational facilities for boaters, swimmers, and fishermen. There is also a nature center in the park for educational purposes.

## City of Detroit

1. Dequindre Cut Greenway: a 2.6-mile long trail which was formerly an abandoned rail line and later redeveloped to an urban recreational walkway. The trail provides pedestrian and bicycle connection between the Eastern Market and the Detroit Riverfront.
2. Detroit River Walk: the walk is about 3.5 miles along the waterfront of Downtown Detroit, where residents and visitors can enjoy the spectacular view of the Hart Plaza, city skyline, and Detroit River.
3. City of Detroit Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for 308 parks and 12 recreation facilities across every neighborhood in the city. Detroit's parks range from mini parks under 2 acres of land, to sprawling parks like Rouge Park, which covers more than 1,000 acres. In close proximity to Belle Isle are:
  - Gabriel Richards Park, 23 acres, located across the MacArthur Bridge from Belle Isle
  - Chene Park, 9.6-acre riverfront park featuring an amphitheater, adjacent to William G. Milliken State Park

The larger city parks offering a range of recreational opportunities include the following:

- Chandler Park, 202.4 acres
- Palmer Park, 280.2 acres
- Rouge Park, 1181.39 acres
- Eliza Howell Park, 251.3 acres

In addition, the city features a wide range of public, non-profit, and private arts, cultural and sporting venue attractions.

## A.5 Land Ownership

The island was purchased by the City of Detroit in 1879 to be used as a public city park. The city, entered into a lease agreement with the State of Michigan, Department of Natural Resources, in September of 2013. The lease was initiated for a period of 30 years with two renewal periods that occur automatically unless either party gives notice at least one year prior to the expiration of the applicable term. Under the agreement, the Department of Natural Resources will continue to enhance the operation, maintenance, and management of Belle Isle Park for the benefit of the city and the general public. The Park will be operated as a state park, subject to the rules and regulations of the Department of Natural Resources regarding state parks. A copy of the lease agreement is located in Appendix B.

### Land on Belle Isle excluded from the Lease to the DNR

#### A. Coast Guard Station

Belle Isle Station is primarily a search and rescue unit, operating within the geographic area. The unit is located on the southern edge of the island, owned by the U.S. Coast Guard. The property (1 ¼ acres) was purchased on April 6, 1881 from the City of Detroit, but the current coast guard station was not constructed until 1942.



Dequindre Cut Greenway, Detroit. Photo: JJR Photography

**B. City water intake**

The city water intake station is a separate piece of land located on the north east corner of Belle Isle, connected to the island by bridge.

**C. Detroit Yacht Club**

The club is located on a separate piece of land leased from the City of Detroit by the Detroit Yacht Club. It is accessible from Belle Isle or through water transportation.

**D. Greenhouses**

The greenhouses adjacent to the White House on Inselruhe Avenue are owned by the City of Detroit, which supplies plant needs in the city.

**Leases and Memoranda of Agreement (MOA)**

- MOA between City of Detroit and Detroit Zoological Society of Natural Zoo, March 2006-June 30, 2020
- MOA between City of Detroit and Detroit Historical Society for Dossin Great Lakes Museum, March 2006-June 30, 2020
- Lease between DNR and Friends of Detroit Rowing, Inc., March 1, 2015-February 28, 2045
- Lease between City of Detroit and Board of Education of the School District, Belle Isle Horticulture Center

**Easements**

There are no known easements granted or acquired directly by the DNR. However, any easements in place on the property prior to the DNR entering into the lease agreement remain in effect. One such easement impacts the management of the Belle Isle Aquarium and Conservatory:

A Historic Preservation Easement between the City of Detroit Recreation Department and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority through its State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is in effect for the Belle Isle Conservatory and Aquarium Complex for a period of 50 years beginning October 24, 2012. This requires that the property is maintained in a sound state of repair and preserved in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, that SHPO is notified of any future work outside the scope of the Easement and that public access is provided to the property, in addition to other requirements.

**Facility Vendors**

Come Play Detroit (Athletic Complex) April 1, 2015-March 21, 2022

Dan Teak LLC (Golf Driving Range) March 18, 2015-November 30,2017

A number of other operating and concession agreements are in place for food vendors, rentals, service providers, catering, and events services.



## A.6 Legal Mandates

For all park Management Plans, all legal mandates are identified that serve to further guide the development of the Management Plan and subsequent Action Plans. For our planning purposes, the term “Legal Mandates” refers to not only to federal and state law, but also the administrative tools of “Policy” and “Directive” of the Natural Resource Commission, the Department, and the Parks & Recreation Division. Examples include Orders of the Director, Park and Recreation Areas State Land Rules and all other laws, commission orders, and rules or directives that apply to the park.

Specific to Belle Isle Park, the following legal mandates have been identified.

FEDERAL STATUTE	
<b>ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT, 1973</b>	
This Act authorizes the determination and listing of species as endangered and threatened, and prohibits unauthorized taking, possession, sale and transport of endangered species.	
<b>NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT, 1966 AS AMENDED</b>	
This is the primary federal law governing the preservation of cultural and historic resources in the United States. The law establishes a national preservation program and a system of procedural protections which encourage the identification and protection of cultural and historic resources of national, state, tribal and local significance.	
<b>BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT, 1940 AND AMENDMENTS</b>	
This Act prohibits anyone, without a permit issued by the Secretary of the Interior, from “taking” bald eagles, including their parts, nests, or eggs. The Act defines “take” as “pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, molest or disturb.” “Disturb” includes actions that may result in injury to the eagle, a decrease in its productivity or nest abandonment.	
STATE STATUTE	
<b>NATIONAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (NREPA) AND AMENDMENTS</b>	
PA 451 of 1994, Part 5	Gives the DNR authority to make rules to support its mission. This includes State Land Rules, Land Use Orders, Wildlife Conservation Orders, Fisheries Orders and Watercraft Control.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 31 Water Resources Protection	Provides authority to DEQ to require a permit for any occupation, construction, filling, or grade change within the 100-year floodplain of a river, stream, drain, or inland lake.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 301 Inland Lakes and Streams	Requires a permit from the state (DEQ) to undertake certain activities relating to inland lakes and streams, such as dredging, fill, marinas, structures, alteration of flow, etc.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 303 Wetlands Protection	Requires a permit from the state (DEQ) to undertake certain activities in regulated wetlands, such as, dredging, fill, construction or drainage.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 741 State Park System	The department shall create, maintain, operate, promote, and make available for public use and enjoyment a system of state parks to preserve and protect Michigan’s significant natural resources and areas of natural beauty or historic significance, to provide open space for public recreation, and to provide an opportunity to understand Michigan’s natural resources and the need to protect and manage those resources.
PA 35 of 2010, Part 741 Recreation Passport	This act amended the Michigan Motor Vehicle Code to provide for a State Park and State-operated public boating access site “Recreation Passport” that a Michigan resident may obtain by paying an additional fee when registering a motor vehicle.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 761 Aboriginal Records and Antiquities	The state reserves the exclusive right and privilege to all aboriginal records and other antiquities including those found on the bottomlands of the Great Lakes.
<b>PUBLIC HEALTH CODE</b>	
PA 368 of 1978, Part 125, Campgrounds, Swimming Areas and Swimmers’ Itch	Established to protect and promote the public health by establishing health code requirements and regulations that all public (including DNR) and private campgrounds must meet. Includes permitting, licensing, inspections and rules regarding sanitation, safety standards and public health. Also covers testing and evaluating quality of water at bathing beaches, safety and rescue equipment.

## Orders

The following Orders apply to Belle Isle Park

### Land Use Orders of the Director

#### **5.2 Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages in certain state parks and recreation areas, prohibited conduct.**

Order 5.2 A person shall not do any of the following:

(9) Possess open intoxicants, without written authorization of the department

(a) Belle Isle SP

Latest revision posted Feb. 19, 2014.

#### **5.12 Certain state parks and recreation areas, requirements for use, certain conduct prohibited.**

Order 5.12. The following conduct shall apply to use of Michigan state parks and recreation areas:

Belle Isle Park, prohibited conduct.

(24) A person shall not do any of the following at Belle Isle Park.

(a) Enter and remain or park a vehicle of any type on the premises of the Belle Isle Park, between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m., without permission of the department.

(b) Erect a canopy larger than 9 feet by 9 feet, and have more than 2 canopies per group unless with written permission of the department.

(c) Erect a canopy that is not open on two sides of the structure.

(d) Erect a canopy unless someone of 21 years of age or older is supervising.

(e) Skate, bicycle, or use any similar contrivances on buildings or structures not otherwise developed for this purpose.

(f) Feed geese, gulls, and other bird species.

(g) Possess a grill of any type in and around playscapes, giant slides or next to buildings

(h) Operate a snowmobile, or other motorized snow contrivance without written permission from an authorized representative of the department.

Latest revision posted Dec. 14, 2015.

#### **5.16a Entry, use and occupancy of certain state parks, recreation areas and scenic sites, prohibited conduct.**

Order 5.16a (1) A person shall not do any of the following:

(a) Enter any of the following state-owned lands with a motor vehicle unless a valid Michigan recreation passport has been purchased and affixed to the vehicle:

(8) Belle Isle SP, Wayne County.

### **Special Local Watercraft Controls – Wayne County DETROIT RIVER, ROUGE RIVER, AND WATERS WITHIN CITY LIMITS - WC-82-97-001.**

(A) WORDS AND PHRASES. All words and phrases used in this section shall be construed and have the same meaning as those words and phrases defined in the natural resources and environmental protection act, as amended, being MCL 324.101 et seq.: MSA 13A.101 et seq.

(B) PROHIBITIONS. On the waters of the Detroit River and the Rouge River, and those canals and channels connected thereto, located within the city limits, the following provisions apply:

(1) It shall be unlawful for the operator of a vessel to exceed a slow-no wake speed when within two hundred (200) feet of any shore, except:

(a) It shall be unlawful for the operator of a vessel to exceed a slow-no wake speed on the Detroit River when within four hundred (400) feet of any shore, from the western city of Detroit corporate limits to the St. Aubin marina.

(b) It shall be unlawful for the operator of a vessel to exceed a slow-no wake speed on that part of the Detroit River between the mainland shore and the north shore of Belle Isle, commencing from the St. Aubin marina to a line from the most eastern point of Belle Isle to Conners Creek extended.

(c) It shall be unlawful for the operator of a vessel to exceed a slow-no wake speed on that part of the Detroit River when within four hundred (400) feet of any shore, from Conners Creek extended to the eastern city of Detroit corporate limits.

It shall be unlawful, at any time, to operate a vessel at a speed in excess of forty (40) miles per hours (64 kilometers per hours).

History: Eff: January 5, 1998

### **State Land Rules**

Parks and Recreation Areas – State Land Rules are issued by authority conferred on the Michigan DNR by Section 504 of 1994 PA 451 MCL 324.504. The rules cover entry, use and occupation of state lands and unlawful acts.

### **U.S. Border Patrol Presence**

The border patrol monitors the boundaries between Canada and the United States daily. The border patrol will patrol the park 24 hours a day, seven days per week, checking the park's border along the Detroit River.

## A.7 Natural Resources

### Overview

Belle Isle Park is a 982-acre urban park with natural features of statewide or greater significance. This park contains the following exceptional natural features recognized by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI):

- 1 exemplary natural community, the 200-acre wet-mesic flatwoods forest
- 12 species (12 occurrences) of endangered, threatened, or special concern plants. Many of these have not been observed on the island since early 1900s.
- 25 species (31 occurrences) of endangered, threatened, or special concern animals. The majority of the animals are mussels and fish documented in waters of the Detroit River just offshore of the island.
- The federal threatened Eastern massasauga rattlesnake is believed to have historically occurred on the island, but is now extirpated.
- The federal endangered Eastern white prairie fringed orchid once was prolific on the island. It is now believed to be extirpated.

### Landscape Context

A regional landscape ecosystem classification has been developed for Michigan, which distinguishes major landscapes based on macroclimate, physiography, soil, and vegetation. Belle Isle is located in the Maumee Lake Plain within the Southern Lower Michigan Ecoregion (Section VI.1.1).

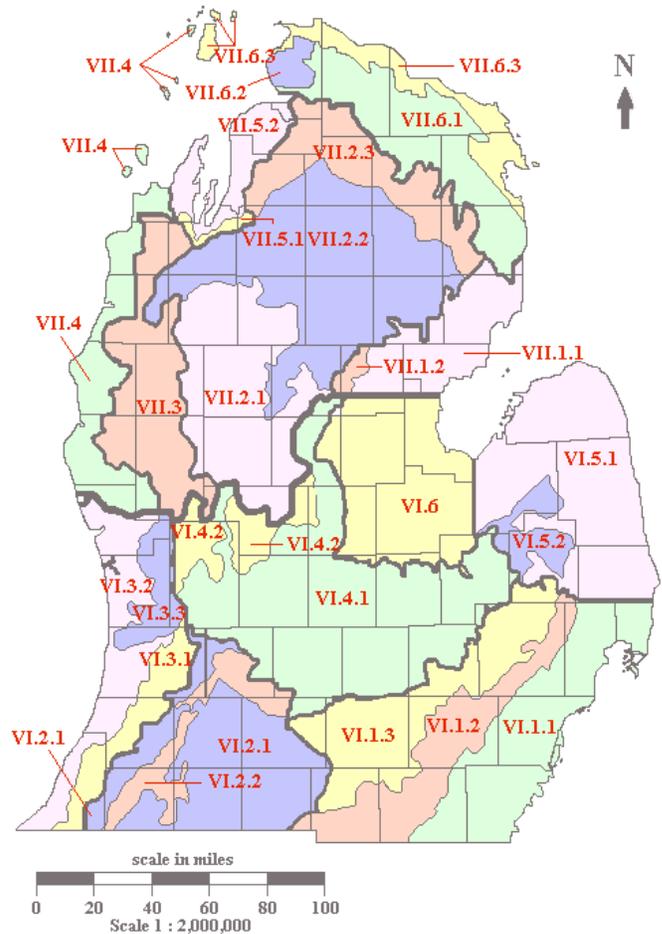
### Climate

The climate of Belle Isle is generally moderated by Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie with a longer growing season that ranges from 150 to 180 days. The temperature in winter can go as low as -26.5 F to -18.5 F. Snowfall in this ecoregion ranges between 30 inches to 50 inches and average annual precipitation ranges from 30 to 32 inches.

### Water Resources

The island is surrounded by the Detroit River water body, as part of the Great Lakes Connecting Channel (EPA). The Detroit River sources from Lake St. Clair in the north, flowing to Lake Erie in the south and forming the boundary between Detroit and Windsor, Canada for 24 nautical miles.

On Belle Isle, there are three man-made lakes, one lagoon and a complete canal system connecting all the water sources. The canals and lakes form a strangely shaped impoundment. Water levels are maintained by pumps and water control structures. The waterways used to be very popular for boating activities before the canals became unnavigable. The lakes were created by dredging the original marshes and wetlands



Source: Albert, Dennis A. 1994. Regional landscape ecosystems of Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin: a working map and classification.

that once existed. The land surrounding Blue Heron Lagoon on the east end of Belle Isle was formed by fill dirt transported from the construction of basements and foundations for buildings within downtown Detroit. This lagoon provides important fish habitat and recreational fishing opportunity. The lagoon also provides significant habitat for migrating and wintering waterfowl.

The chronological order of when the significant water bodies on Belle Isle were formed is as follows:

- 1883 – Construction of the Loop Canal at the upper end of the island began. It was 5 feet deep and 50 feet wide built at a cost of \$11,000.
- 1884 – Marsh Run Canal was built and lasted until 1930 when it was filled in.
- 1887 – Lake Takoma was formed.
- 1889 – Lake Okonoka was formed
- 1890 – Nashua Creek was completed
- 1893 – Muskoday Lake is formed
- 1930 – Blue Heron Lagoon was completed.



Wildlife at Belle Isle Park

### Detroit River Area of Concern, Environmental Protection Agency

The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement of 1987 established objectives and criteria for the protection, restoration and enhancement of water quality in the Great Lakes system. Under the agreement, 43 geographic areas where significant impairment of specific beneficial uses has occurred as a result of human activities were designated as Areas of Concern (AOC). The Detroit River Area of Concern (AOC) is a binational AOC in which 75 percent of the total land area of the watershed is in Michigan. The Detroit River runs 32-miles connecting Lake St. Clair and the upper Great Lakes to Lake Erie. Along the way, the river passes through a heavy industrialized landscape of more than 80 political jurisdictions that exist within the river's 711.97 square mile watershed, including the cities of Detroit and Windsor. The area was considered highly degraded because of urban and industrial development, combined sewer overflows, municipal and industrial discharges, storm water runoff, and tributaries.

Eleven specific Beneficial Use Impairments (BUI) were identified for the Detroit River AOC. These must be mitigated in order to restore the Detroit River Area of Concern and achieve delisting. The Public Advisory Council for the Detroit River AOC identified 14 habitat projects to necessary to delist two of the BUI's, degradation of fish and wildlife populations and loss of fish and wildlife habitat. Four of these restoration projects to be undertaken on Belle Isle are: restoration of the wet-mesic flatwoods forest, Lake Okonoka connection to the Detroit River (fish passage) and aquatic habitat enhancement, Blue Heron Lagoon connection to the Detroit River and South Fishing Pier aquatic habitat creation. The Blue Heron Lagoon and South Fishing Pier projects are complete. The Lake Okonoka project and forest restoration are in progress.

### Topography

The natural state of the island was about 300 acres less than the present area. Much of the construction and filling was done before 1930s. The island is relatively flat with a natural maximum elevation of only 2 feet, which assures a high water table.

### Soils

The soils within the wet-mesic flatwoods are "typically medium to slightly acid sandy loam to loam and overlay mildly to moderately alkaline sandy clay loam, clay loam, or clay. An underlying impermeable clay lens is often present, which allows for prolonged pooling of water. Seasonal water level fluctuations lead to mottling of the mineral soil layers." (MNFI)

Much of the island soils are natural, but where fill was placed, urban soil occurs. Some of the soil was fill dirt from Downtown Detroit and transferred to form extensions of the island.

### Geology and Mineral Resources

The surface of Belle Isle is covered by greater than 100 feet of unconsolidated sediments consisting of fine-grained, stratified silt and clay. Bedrock underlying the Quaternary sediments consists of Devonian shale and limestone.

There has been minor oil and gas exploration and some gas storage across the river near Windsor, Ontario. Oil and gas potential beneath Belle Isle is considered low. Most other mineral potential is also low. Salt deposits occur at depths greater than 800 feet below the surface here. These same deposits are currently mined beneath Detroit, several miles west of the island. Expansion of the existing mine to this area or development of a new mine seems highly unlikely. Many years ago, there was some natural brine production and solution mining in the area. Potential for future mineral development on the island is low. The State of Michigan does not own or manage the mineral rights to the island.



Landscape of Belle Isle Park

**Circa 1800’s Land Cover**

The island prior to European settlement was covered entirely by marsh, wet prairie and floodplain forest. A memoir from 1718 stated, “A league from the fort of Detroit is an island called Ile aux Cochon, which is a league in length. It has the finest timber in the world and prairies without end.”

Prior to the purchase by the City of Detroit in 1879, the island was privately farmed and grazed by the owner.

In 1896 Belle Isle’s flora was surveyed by O. A. Farwell, providing a rare in-depth understanding of the island’s early vegetation. However, it is important to note that alterations to Belle Isle’s land cover by Europeans had already been taking place since the early 1700’s.

**Current Vegetation**

The current land cover is mostly urban park land with large expanses of lawn. The east end of the island supports a 200 acre wet-mesic flatwood forest. There is also a small area of lakeplain prairie (native grasses and forbs, some conservative to lakeplain prairie) known from the north side of Blue Heron Lagoon. The origin of this small prairie is not well understood. The prairie occurs in area that was created by fill. Perhaps the fill material originated from an area of lakeplain prairie excavated elsewhere or some lakeplain prairie somehow survived the filling operation.

The exemplary natural community identified on the island is wet-mesic flatwoods. According to the Michigan Natural Features Inventory, the wet-mesic flatwoods occurs mostly on poorly drained glacial lake plain in southeastern Lower Michigan. It is dominated by a highly diverse mixture of upland and lowland hardwoods.

The Belle Isle flatwoods have been greatly degraded by altered hydrology and grazing by domestic livestock. Decades of browsing by high numbers of exotic fallow deer decreased the number of plant species and increased dominance of plants unpalatable to fallow deer, such as spice bush and trout lily. More recently invasion by the non-native emerald ash borer killed nearly all the ash trees in the forest. In response to the increased light in the canopy gaps once occupied by mature ash, dog-hair thickets of ash, silver maple and red maple have arisen. The newest threat comes from oak wilt, which is killing “red oaks” in approximately 25 percent of the forest. In the early spring of 2017, 112 northern red oak, Shumard’s oak, and southern pin oak, were removed from the forest after they were killed by oak wilt. The trees averaged over 24 inches in diameter with several over 40 inches in diameter.

Despite its degraded condition, the Belle Isle woods is one of the largest and, in relative terms, the best remaining examples of a wet-mesic flatwoods community. Many people consider

it significant at the national level. Some consider it globally noteworthy.

**Rare Flora and Fauna**

The following notable and rare plants and animals have been documented by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory and the Natural Resource Stewardship Plan for Belle Isle prepared by the DNR.

The Eastern massasauga rattlesnake is a federal threatened species. It likely once occurred on Belle Isle. It was eradicated from the island, possibly by the domestic hogs that were present prior to the land becoming a park. The Blanding’s turtle is currently under review as endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

RARE FLORA		
SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	STATE STATUS
Aristolochia serpentaria	Virginia snakeroot	Threatened
Asclepias sullivantii	Sullivant’s milkweed	Threatened
Cerastium velutinum	Field chickweed	Extirpated
Euonymus atropurpurea	Wahoo (burning bush)	Threatened
Euphorbia commutate	Tinted spurge	Threatened
Fraxinus profunda	Pumpkin ash	Threatened
Lactuca floridana	Woodland lettuce	Threatened
Lycopus virginicus	Virginia bugle weed	Threatened
Phaseolus polystachios	Wild bean	Extirpated
Quercus shumardii	Shumard’s oak	Special Concern
Sisyrinchium hostile	Blue-eyed-grass	Extirpated
Smilax herbacea	Smooth carrion-flower	Special Concern
Strophostyles helvula	Trailing wild bean	Special Concern
Zizania aquatica var. aquatic	Wild rice	Threatened

RARE FAUNA		
SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	STATE STATUS
Cincinnatia cincinnatiensis	Campeloma spire snail	Special Concern
Cyclonaias tuberculata	Purple wartyback	Threatened
Emydoidea blandingii	Blanding’s turtle	Special Concern
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bald eagle	Special Concern
Ligumia nasuta	Eastern pondmussel	Endangered
Pantherophis gloydi	Eastern fox snake	Threatened
Sistrurus catenatus	Eastern massasauga	Special Concern
Sterna forsteri	Forster’s tern	Threatened
Sterna hirundo	Common tern	Threatened
Villosa iris	Rainbow	Special Concern

Bald eagles have been observed in the park and habitat could support nesting. There are many listed and rare aquatic species, especially mussels, known to be present in the Detroit River offshore of Belle Isle, but these aquatic areas are outside the jurisdiction of the park, and are therefore not listed here.

**Fisheries**

The fishery is very diverse and fish commonly available to anglers in the Detroit River would include:

- Largemouth Bass
- White Bass
- Great Lakes Muskellunge
- Yellow Perch
- Bluegill
- Redhorse Suckers
- Spotted Sucker
- Common Carp
- Lake Sturgeon
- White Perch
- Freshwater Drum
- Smallmouth Bass
- Walleye
- Northern Pike

- Rock Bass
- Pumpkinseed
- White Sucker
- Bigmouth Buffalo
- Channel Catfish
- Bullheads
- Black and White Crappie

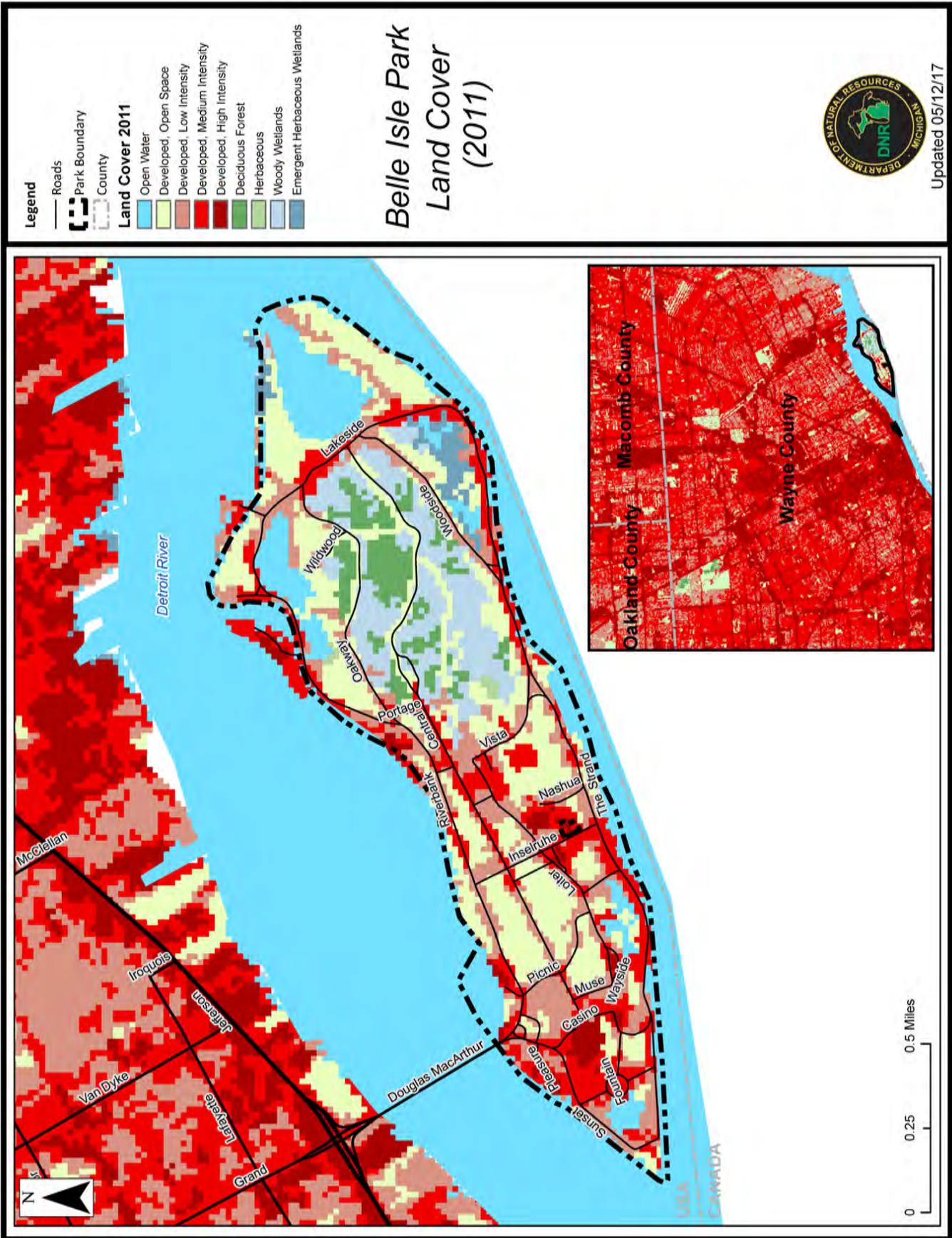
There are also many small, forage-type fish species such as minnows, shiners, darters, chubs, shad, etc. that comprise a large portion of the rest of the fish community, but are not normally caught by anglers. Fish present in the isolated inland lakes and canals include a few largemouth bass, some panfish, and various minnow species. They do not provide a significant fishing opportunity.

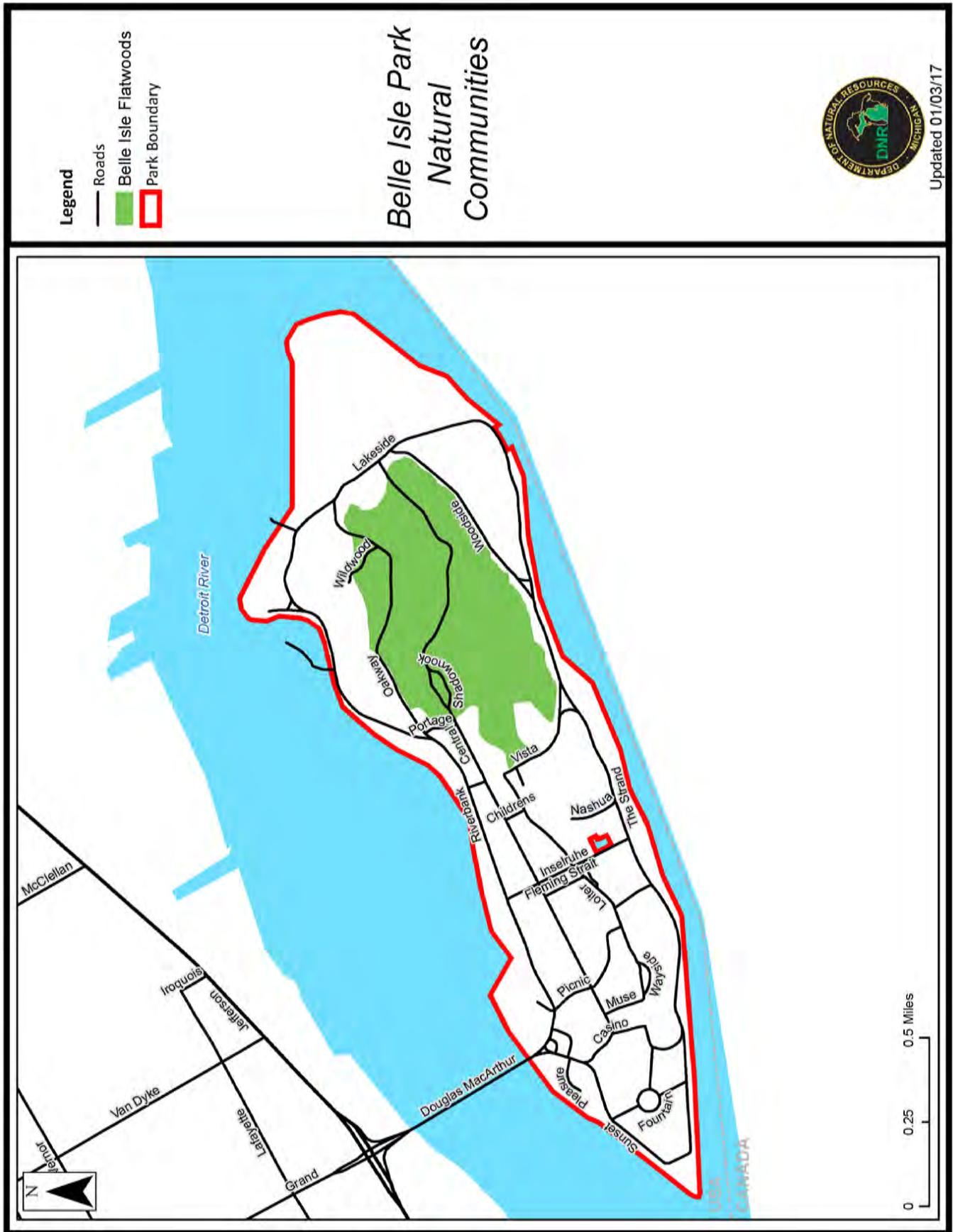
**Wildlife**

Belle Isle Park provides important stop-over habitat for migrating song birds. Blue Heron Lagoon and near shore areas of the Detroit River provide valuable feeding and loafing areas for migrating and wintering waterfowl, particularly diving ducks, including great numbers of canvasbacks.



Keeping the Shumard oak safe from oak wilt







General Motors employees utilizing the Athletic Fields

## A.8 Recreational Resources

### Attractions

Attractions on the island cover a wide range of interests.

- Dossin Great Lakes Museum
  - Open year-round Friday through Sunday.
  - Dedicated to showcasing the story of the Great Lakes, with a special emphasis on Detroit's role in regional and national maritime history. Managed by Detroit Historical Society.
- Belle Isle Nature Center
  - Open daily from April-October and November-March: Wednesday through Sunday.
  - Provides a variety of educational programs and the opportunity to meet deer face-to-face in Deer Encounter exhibit. Managed by Detroit Zoological Society with a mission to bring the wilds of Michigan to the heart of Detroit.
- Belle Isle Aquarium
  - Open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday year-round.
  - Contains 118 species and more than 1,000 fish in one of the oldest Aquariums in the United States. Designed by famed architect Albert Kahn. Managed by Belle Isle Conservancy.
- Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory
  - Open Wednesday-Sunday year-round.
  - One of the oldest continually running conservatories in the U.S., boasting 13 acres, a formal perennial garden, seasonal floral beds, a lily pond garden and five sections of flora: Palm House, Tropical House, Show House, Cactus House and Fernery.
- Golf Range
  - This nine-acre, 30-bay full-length driving range includes three putting greens, two chipping greens and four sand traps.
- Athletic Fields
  - Fields are provided for softball, cricket, baseball, football, tennis, soccer, rugby, track and handball/racquetball. Leagues are managed by Come Play Detroit.
- Giant slide
  - Open June 8-Labor Day 2016
- James Scott Memorial Fountain
  - The fountain is located on the western end of the island. The fountain was dedicated to the island in 1925 built by the fortune left from James Scott, who was a very controversial Detroit real estate speculator.
  - The fountain is operated from June through September.
- Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse
  - Located at the north end of Belle Isle, this is the only light in the nation constructed of marble. It was built in 1929 with private donations as a memorial to William Livingstone, who was the president of the Lakes Carrier's Association from 1902 to 1925. The light is currently not open to the public.
- Vendors and concessions
  - A number of concessions are available on the island including bike, watercraft, and snow sport rentals. Beach equipment, carriage rides, and food services are also available.

**Recreation Activities & Facilities**

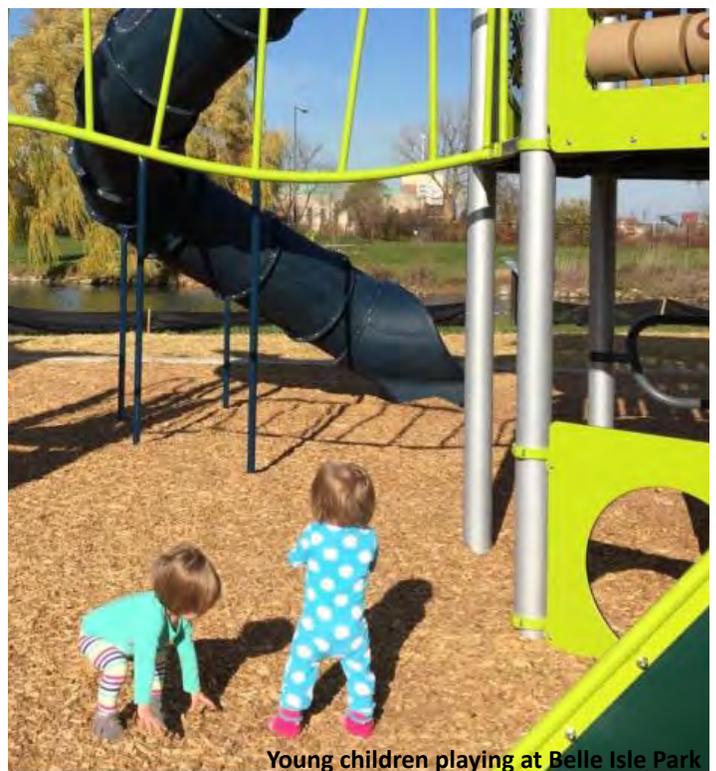
Many people access the island to enjoy the open space and scenic views or to watch the passing ships. Specific recreation activities and facilities are described below.

- Shelters
  - 20 shelters are available for use on a first come first serve basis or by reservation. Shelters occupancy ranges from 25 to 225. In addition, there are numerous grills and tables around the island for use by visitors.
- Fishing
  - There are two developed Detroit River shore fishing sites at Shelter 9 and Shelter 20 with additional sites under consideration for development. Two piers (North and South) historically used for fishing need significant renovation to serve this purpose. The inland lakes provide some minimal fishing opportunities that are being enhanced by reconnection to the Detroit River (Blue Heron Lagoon and Lake Okonoka).
- Geocaching
  - Events and activities are promoted by Geocaching organizations or individuals on the island. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location.

- Playgrounds
  - Two playgrounds are available on the island for kids and families. One is located next to the Giant Slide. Another recently constructed playground sits adjacent to the Nature Center
- Hiking
  - The existing hiking trails within the island are located along the forest and the Blue Heron Lagoon. The proposed Iron Belle trail will provide connection of hiking and biking routes from Belle Isle to Ironwood in the Upper Peninsula.
- Biking
  - Standard bike lanes are available along the roadways of the island as well as the MacArthur Bridge connecting from the mainland.
- Paddling
  - Accessible kayak launches are located at certain spots on the Detroit River and Lake Muskoday. Paddling within the canal and inland lakes is popular during warm seasons, although not all areas are currently navigable.



Recreational use at Belle Isle Park



Young children playing at Belle Isle Park

## A.9 Historic and Cultural Resources

In 1974, the island of Belle Isle was successfully enlisted on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The island was selected because of “its collective entirety, the continuity in visual imagery and its historic consistency”. The recognition by NRHP highlights the significance of Belle Isle, not only to the city, but also at a national level. There are 59 structures and buildings on the island listed. The list below provides a brief description of the significant historic and cultural resources on Belle Isle as listed on the NRHP. There are other buildings and structures on the island that are considered eligible for listing, but they are not described here.

### Casino

The first “Casino building” (not a gambling facility) on the island was built in 1887, which was a 3-story wood-framed structure. It was the first enclosed building on the island and soon became popular and overcrowded. Construction began on the current Casino building in 1906. It is a grand, two-story Beaux-Arts building designed by architect Albert Kahn with ornate towers framing the building’s four corners, and encircling verandas providing picnickers with shelter. It was designed to provide views of the Detroit River and Canada and to be an eating-place where patrons would be cooled by breezes in the era before air conditioning. The present building opened to the public in 1908. The first Casino was abandoned in 1907 and razed in later years.

### Aquarium and Conservatory

The Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory is one of the oldest continually running conservatories in the United States. It is located on the south west side of the island. The building was designed by Detroit architect Albert Kahn, and after two years of construction, the Conservatory opened to the public on August 18th, 1904. The Conservatory hosts a wide variety of plant species sourced locally and around the world. In 1936 the lily pond was added to the courtyard between the Aquarium and the Conservatory. Mrs. Anna Scripps Whitcomb bequeathed her 600-plant orchid collection to the City of Detroit.

The original wood framing of the horticultural building was replaced with a steel frame in 1955, due to its poor condition, and the building was then re-dedicated as the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory in honor of one of the project’s biggest donors. Early 20th century photographs of the building show a Beaux Arts pavilion entrance, with large arched windows separated by Corinthian pilasters. This was likely replaced by the current glass and steel entrance during the 1950s renovations. The building consists of an 85-foot high dome, two wings extending to the north and south, and a show house on the east side.

The Aquarium, also designed by Albert Kahn, was opened the same day as the Conservatory on August 18th, 1904. The Belle Isle Aquarium is the only public Aquarium in the state of Michigan and one of the oldest continuously running Aquariums in the country. At the time of its opening, it was one of the six largest Aquariums in the world. The north façade of the red brick Aquarium is entered through a hipped-roof pavilion, with a striking Beaux Arts entrance executed in terra cotta. Ornately banded pilasters frame the doorway, while a similarly decorated arch is topped with a keystone bearing a molded relief of Neptune, the Roman god of water. The interior of the building has a barrel-vaulted ceiling covered entirely in green tiles, with tanks lining the central passageway, providing a feeling of being in an underwater cavern.



### White House

The earliest building that remains on the island, and the only extant resource that pre-dates the park’s establishment in 1879, is the White House (No. 48), a c. 1860s wood-frame Gothic Revival residence located close to the island’s center. The original 1974 Belle Isle national register nomination states that the house “was originally built as a summer residence for the Campau family and its name, ‘Inselruhe,’ means Island Rest.” The exact year of construction is unknown.

Its earliest use after the park’s establishment was for the park superintendent’s residence and office. The house served as the park superintendent’s residence in 1882-90, but also served as a saloon (early 1880s) and a restaurant, the Dairy Refreshment House, from 1890 until the late 1930s. It then served for many decades as the Detroit Garden Center, followed by use by the Michigan Horticultural Society. During the 20th century, the house has served as a restaurant, garden center, and offices. The house was renovated by the Friends of Belle Isle in 1984; this work included a new post and rail fence that currently borders the north side.

### Athletic Pavilion

The Athletic building was designed by Detroit architect Edward A. Schilling and built in 1898. The Victorian structure is adorned with conical turrets, wood detail and a tile roof. The pavilion was originally designed as a bicycle pavilion when motor vehicles could not access the island. The first floor was used for bicycle storage and rental, and second floor as a place for rest, refreshment and a view of the athletic fields. At one time there was a restaurant on the first floor, but the building has been unused for several years.

### Athletic Fields

The individual dates of construction of the fields' components are unknown, but all are shown on a 1976-77 plan. The current locations of the tennis courts, baseball diamonds, and oval track are shown on a 1914 plan, although the baseball diamonds were individually placed in the fields' center, rather than grouped as they are today. The 36-acre athletic field complex has facilities for softball, baseball, basketball, football, soccer, rugby, tennis, and track. Handball/racquetball courts are located across Vista Way next to the Nashua Trail. The field was originally used as a large parade venue. Children's Day parades were held there in the early 1900s. Today, in mid-July, Metro Detroit Youth Day is held there.

### Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse

The memorial lighthouse was erected in 1927 in honor of William Livingstone, a prominent and popular Detroit resident whose accomplishments included banking, publishing, and Great Lakes transportation. It was donated to the City of



Schiller Memorial

Detroit from the Lake Carrier's Association and the citizens of Detroit. As described by the U.S. Lighthouse Service in 1930, the lighthouse has a 47-foot art deco fluted shaft of white, Georgia marble rising from an octagonal marble platform flanked by wide steps on all sides. The shaft is about 11 feet in diameter at the base, tapering to about 8 feet at the top, where it is capped by a bronze lantern of irregular octagonal shape reaching a height of 80 feet. There is a heavy bronze door at the base, and bronze inscriptions placed to indicate the purpose of the memorial. A circular interior staircase, of the usual lighthouse construction, provides access to the lantern. The structure was designed by architect Albert Kahn with ornamental reliefs designed by Hungarian architect and sculptor Giza Maroti. A bronze bas-relief portrait of Mr. Livingstone is on the lakeside of the structure and a bronze tablet inscribed with its dedication. Inside the lantern is a fourth order lens fitted with an electric light, giving a candlepower of approximately 11,500 and visible for 15 miles. The 3 foot, 40 pound, brass light was handcrafted in Paris.

### Belle Isle Police Station

The first Belle Isle Police Station was built on the island in 1889 and was a small wooden-frame structure. In 1893, architects George D. Mason and Zachariah Rice designed a building that would fit with the wooded surroundings of the island. This fieldstone structure blending earth colors and natural materials for use as a Police Station and Harbor Master was located on Inselruhe between Riverbank Road and Central Avenue. It merges the Richardsonian Romanesque style with the shingle style of the era and the look of a Norman farmhouse.

### Greenhouses

The greenhouses located adjacent to the White House have been in service since 1899. Currently there are twenty greenhouses in the complex, and nine of them were built between 1899 and 1911. The greenhouses are generally 20 feet wide by 100 feet long by 12 feet high linear glass structures. The original structure of the greenhouses was wood and glass construction with masonry foundation walls. The Greenhouses were not included in the State lease and are operated by the City of Detroit.

### Rain Shelters

There are seven remaining rain shelters on the island with distinct Victorian architectural style. Most of them are in good condition and built with attention to human scale. The existing shelters include: Newsboy rain shelter (Shelter #1), Playground rain shelter, Gray Stone rain shelter, Police field rain shelter, Pony field rain shelter, Inselruhe fishing dock and rain shelter, and Schiller rain shelter.

### Comfort Stations

There are seven historically significant comfort stations remaining on the island. Shadynook, Stone and Bear Pit comfort stations were built at roughly the same time (1895-6) with surprisingly different characters. The Bus Stop and Bath Launch comfort stations were built in 1908 and 1910 respectively, and Oakway and Woodside were built in 1922 and 1928. They reflect the particular attention that was given to architectural detailing at the turn of the century. Comfort stations, while not being in themselves historically significant, gain historical significance when considered in context to one another and to the character of the rest of the island (NRHP).

### Pump House

The 55-foot diameter rusticated stone pump house, much in character with the early 1900s utility houses found near cities on the Great Lakes, is a vital part of the unusual water system on Belle Isle. It generates a constant, invigorating change and flow of water through the island's canal system. (NRHP)

### Bridges

Due to the canal system on the island, numerous bridges were built to accommodate pedestrian and vehicle use. The early bridges were generally wooden structures, most of which deteriorated at the turn of the century. New bridges soon replaced the old ones and reconnected the circulation system. Some of the bridges still stand today, incorporating cast iron and reinforced concrete to ensure durability and to accommodate high volume use. Bridges listed on 1973 NR nomination form include:

- MacArthur Bridge
- Loop Canal Bridge (Central Ave)
- Loop Canal Bridge (Loiter Way)
- Lake Tacoma Bridge (Picnic Way)
- Nashua Bridge (Inselruhe Ave.)
- Nashua Bridge (Athletic Field)
- Nashua Bridge (Woodside Drive)
- Sylvan Creek Bridge (Oakway Road).

### General Douglas MacArthur Bridge

The present bridge was built in 1923, after fire burned down the first bridge in 1915. The bridge is nearly ½ mile long and 35 feet wide. It is a reinforced concrete cantilever arch bridge on spandrel columns, with 19 spans of maximum 30 feet height. It is the longest concrete deck arched bridge in Michigan. In 1942, the bridge to Belle Isle was renamed in honor of WWII General Douglas MacArthur. In 1984 the bridge was badly in need of repairs; the reconstruction took three years to complete.



### Loop Canal Bridge (Central Avenue)

Built in 1893, Loop Canal Bridge is one of the two oldest bridges on the island. The stone foundations of the bridge support a reinforced concrete and iron bridge with a span of approximately 50 feet. Of particular interest are the ornate cast and wrought iron railings and side ornamentation. (NRHP)

### Memorials & Monuments

Belle Isle became a common site for many memorials, fountains, and tributes to various people and groups, beginning in 1892 with the Newsboy Drinking Fountain. The fact that Belle Isle has been designated as an accepted site for monuments and memorials by the City of Detroit Planning Commission is evidence of the city's belief in the historical nature of the island. (NRHP)

The following memorials and monuments are listed on the 1973 NR nomination:

- Scott Memorial Fountain
- Newsboy Memorial Drinking Fountain
- Grand Army of the Republic Memorial
- Soldiers and Sailors Memorial
- General O.M. Poe Memorial
- Nancy Brown Carillion Memorial Tower
- Brady Memorial

- General Williams Equestrian Memorial
- Dante Memorial
- Schiller Memorial
- Samuel Francis Smith Memorial Flagpole
- Livingstone Memorial Lighthouse

### James Scott Memorial Fountain

In 1915, the western end of the island was expanded by 200 acres with fill from downtown Detroit building sites providing a location for the fountain and lagoon. Construction on the James Scott Memorial Fountain was completed in 1923 with its dedication on May 31, 1925. The basin's circumference is 510 feet with a series of Vermont White Marble bowls topped with a receptacle from which water can be projected 40 feet into the air. 109 water outlets in the shape of lions, turtles, Neptune figures and artistic horns project smaller jets from the base of the fountain, and 16 bas-relief panels depict early Detroit life.

James Scott was a Detroit real estate speculator and developer. He was known as a scoundrel of his days. The acceptance of his contribution by the city to construct the fountain and his life size statue on the island was very controversial.



Nancy Brown Peace Carillon Tower

### Nancy Brown Peace Carillon Tower

The Carillon Tower is located on Loiter Way at Picnic Way across from the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory gardens. It was built in 1939, in dedication to peace in the name of the much loved columnist writer Nancy Brown from the Detroit News. The tower is 85-foot tall and was designed to house a 49-bell carillon, but it is not clear whether one was ever installed. The tower now houses a digital bell system. It was designed by architect Clarence E. Day, in Neo Gothic style and built by Harlow A. Amsbary.

### Archaeological Resources

Belle Isle is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), but the island's archaeological significance has yet to be evaluated. The State Archaeological Site Files (Michigan State Historic Preservation Office) indicate that while archaeological sites have been identified on Belle Isle, a comprehensive archaeological survey of the island has not been conducted.

Currently, a total of eight sites have been recorded on Belle Isle. Two of them are Native American sites, while the remaining six are more recent Euroamerican sites, including site 2OWN1170, which is the site of a former Nike missile facility. The sites document early Native American presence, early European settlement, and later transformation of the island into various incarnations of an urban park. Although the island has undergone extensive physical modification, there is still substantial potential for additional as yet unidentified sites to be present. A thorough archaeological survey of the island is a necessary step in compiling an inventory of sites. That inventory will serve as a planning tool to protect and preserve archaeological resources as ground-disturbing activities are proposed.

### A.10 Programming and Events

Belle Isle Park hosts a number of events, programs, and activities that appeal to a wide range of interests. The major events held on the island are listed on the following page.

#### Events

- Detroit Chevrolet Grand Prix: The Detroit Grand Prix race moved from downtown Detroit to Belle Isle in 1992. After challenging economic times delayed the event following the 2008 season, the Grand Prix returned in 2012. The event takes place on the first weekend of June, currently under an agreement between the Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix and the City of Detroit.
- Belle Isle Koi Festival: The annual koi festival takes place every Spring to honor the former tradition of moving the Koi fish to their summer home and celebrate the islands Koi collection.



Detroit Grand Prix, Photo: Nic Redhead

- Shiver on the River: Hosted annually by the Friends of the Detroit River the first Saturday in February. The Shiver is a family oriented event designed to bring people down to the river and Belle Isle Park, and to educate people about the importance of the river and the need for effective stewardship.
- Annual Ford Firework Show: July 4th fireworks on Belle Isle.
- Metro Detroit Youth Day: The largest youth event in Michigan started in 1980 and has drawn over 700,000 youngsters over the years. The event is not only fun-filled, but also serves a meaningful and educational purpose.
- Belle Isle Art Fair: The art fair was held in August, 2016 near the Scott Fountain.
- Harvest Festival: This event offers a day of games, food, campfires, hayrides, face painting, a costume contest, and a candy giveaway. The event is free to the public and is administrated by DNR staff along with other partners. The 2016 event was the 2nd annual Harvest Festival on Belle Isle.
- Holiday Stroll: A holiday walkthrough of the Belle Isle Aquarium, Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, and Dossin Great Lakes Museum. This Belle Isle Conservancy event is free to the public and offers free donuts and cider, campfires, and s'mores to guests.

### Programs

- State Park Explorer Program: This statewide program provides resource-based educational programs, hikes, and activities to visitors at over 40 parks each summer. The Belle Isle Explorer Guide provides informal programs and activities to park visitors, works with the Stepping Stones Outreach crew on scheduled programs, and assists the park with some events and community groups.
- Come Play Detroit: Activities and events are held on the athletic fields through Come Play Detroit.
- Summer Nature Camp: Belle Isle Nature Center Summer Nature Camp is a day camp divided into two groups for students 5 to 7 years old and 8 to 12 years old. It is a free week-long camp takes place through June to August.

- Stepping Stones – Outdoor Education Program: Provides outdoor educational opportunities youth 9 years of age and older. It runs from June to August on Monday, Thursday, and Friday. Participants explore two of the four activities available per session, including camping, archery, water studies, and nature exploration.

### Music

- Charivari Detroit: An electronic dance music festival presenting an assembly of Detroit based electronic dance music artists. The event was held on Belle Isle once a year in 2015 and 2016.
- Once Around Belle Isle (OABI): A one day event involves music, party, race and paddling in the summer on Belle Isle since 2012.

### Races

- Detroit Triathlon
- Escape to Belle Isle: 5K and 10K and Kid's Fun Run on Belle Isle in July.
- American Home Fitness Detroit Women's Half Marathon
- Life Walk and Run
- Fifth Third Bank Annual Belle Isle New Year's Eve Family Fun Run/Walk

### Fundraisers

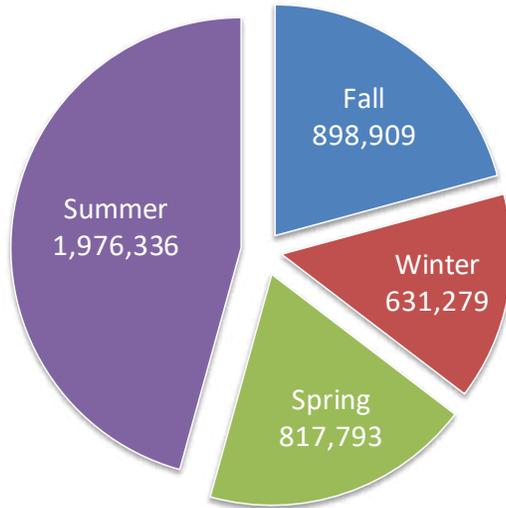
The Belle Isle Conservancy and other non-profit organizations organize many fund raising events on the island. Some of the more popular events are described below.

- Polish the Jewel, Belle Isle Legacy Luncheon: The Belle Isle Conservancy for 13 years has hosted Polish the Jewel Belle Isle Legacy Luncheon. Funds raised from this event enabled restoration of Sunset Point and historic horse stables roof. The luncheon will now focus on raising funds for a splash pad.
- Grand Prixmiere Gala: Held on the race track with the Scott Fountain as a backdrop, the Grand Prixmiere is a spectacular fundraising event.
- Sunset at the Scott: Sunset at the Scott supports the Conservancy's efforts to restore and repair damaged Pewabic Pottery tiles on the James Scott Memorial Fountain.
- Garden Party on Belle Isle: Organized by leaders of the Grosse Pointe area's garden club communities, the Garden Party raises funds for various projects that specifically benefit the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory.

**A.11 Park Use Statistics**

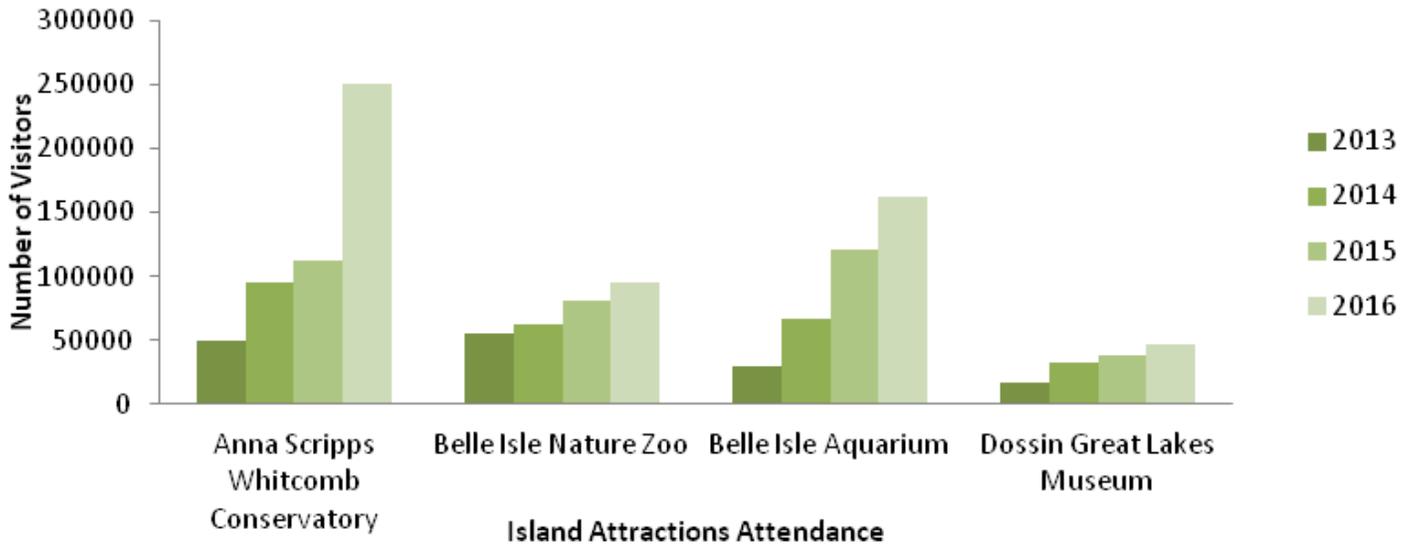
The total number of visitors to Belle Isle for Financial Year 2017 (from October 2016 to September 2017) is estimated to be 4,324,317. This is an increase of approximately 6.7% over fiscal year 2016 visitor numbers. Use numbers are generated by a counter measuring vehicles crossing the MacArthur Bridge multiplied by a factor to represent the average number of people per vehicle.

- Fall Use Season – defined by the months of September through November. About 21% of park use happens in this season.
- Winter Use Season – defined by the months of December through March. About 15% of the total park use occurs in this season due to the different weather and outdoor conditions.
- Spring Use Season – From April to May, the attendance increases to 19% when weather turns warmer.
- Summer Use Season- defined as the three-month period of June through August. Summer is the busiest season of the year, making up 45% of the total attendance.

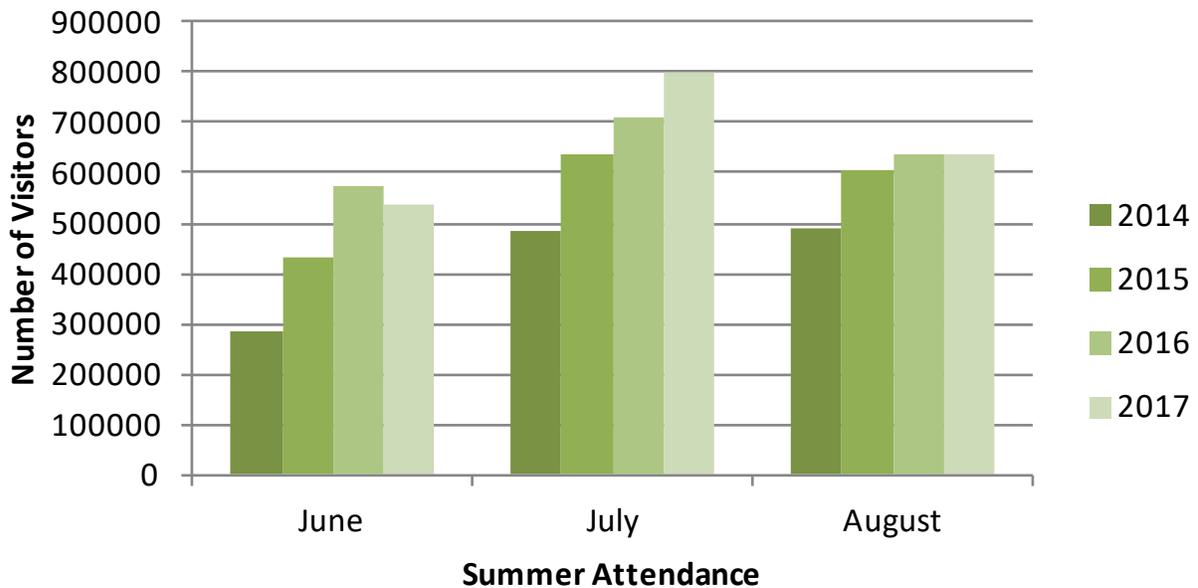


Park Attendance (October 2016- September 2017)

The attendance at island attractions has seen a significant increase from 2013 to 2016, when the Department of Natural Resources began managing Belle Isle Park. Below is a chart demonstrating the number of visitors to major island attractions from 2013 to 2016.



Park attendance overall (during the summer months) has increased by 56% from 2014 to 2017. In addition the participation in the Recreation Passport has tripled in the Detroit area since February 2014, and continues to show a steady increase since then.



- June – August 2014: 1,263,911 Visitors
- June – August 2015: 1,668,633 Visitors
- June – August 2016: 1,925,263 Visitors
- June – August 2017: 1,976,336 Visitors

## Park Revenue

Park revenue is generated through use permits for shelter and facility rentals, event fees, food and service concessions and giant slide tickets. Revenue increased dramatically from fiscal year (FY) 2014 to 2015, and continues to show a steady increase. The total revenue generated for the park in FY 2017 was \$519,929.

- Total Revenue: FY 14–FY 17: \$1,772,427
  - FY 2014 \$287,776
  - FY 2015 \$450,577
  - FY 2016 \$514,145
  - FY 2017 \$519,929

# Belle Isle Park





Photo Credit: Jim Lemay

## Appendix B: Belle Isle Park Lease



CITY OF DETROIT  
OFFICE OF THE EMERGENCY MANAGER

COLEMAN A. YOUNG MUNICIPAL CENTER  
2 WOODWARD AVE., SUITE 1126  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48226  
PHONE 313•224•3703  
FAX 313•224•4433  
WWW.DETROITMI.GOV

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Governor Richard D. Snyder  
State of Michigan

FROM: Kevyn D. Orr, Emergency Manager  
City of Detroit 

DATE: September 30, 2013

RE: PA 436 Approval of the Lease of Belle Isle Park  
Between the City of Detroit and the State of Michigan

The City of Detroit proposes to enter into the lease transaction described below.

The City of Detroit and the State of Michigan have been in discussions with respect to a Lease of Belle Isle Park, whereby the State of Michigan, by its Department of Natural Resources, would lease Belle Isle Park from the City to continue to enhance the management, operation and maintenance of the Park for the benefit of the City and the general public. The State will manage and operate Belle Isle Park as a state park, subject to the rules and regulations of the Department of Natural Resources regarding state parks.

There is no monetary rental consideration being paid by the State; *provided, however*, the provision of management, operation and maintenance services by the Department of Natural Resources during the term is the consideration being provided to the City for the Lease. These services will help improve the park and its amenities for the benefit of the public, and at the same time will save the City over \$6 million each fiscal year, and additional dollars in capital expenditures, that can be directed to other urgent needs of the City. The Department of Natural Resources will retain all revenue derived from the management of the Park in a separate sub-account, but may only use such revenue for the operation or improvement of the Park. The term of the lease is 30 years with two renewal periods that occur automatically unless either party gives notice to the other to the contrary at least one year prior to the expiration of the applicable term. A summary of the Lease is attached hereto, as well as a copy of the Lease itself.

Pursuant to Section 12(1)(r) of Public Act 436 of 2012, the Local Financial Stability and Choice Act, MCL § 141.1541, *et seq.*, the undersigned hereby approves the actions of the Emergency Manager of the City of Detroit to lease, assign or otherwise use or transfer the assets, liabilities, functions or responsibilities of the City of Detroit as described above and in the attached materials.

APPROVED:

Date

10/1/13

  
Richard D. Snyder  
Governor, State of Michigan

Attachments

KEVYN D. ORR, EMERGENCY MANAGER

LEASE

between

THE CITY OF DETROIT, as Lessor

and

THE STATE OF MICHIGAN, as Lessee

(Belle Isle Park)

This Lease (Lease) is entered into as of the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2013, by the City of Detroit (Lessor), a municipal corporation by its Recreation Department, whose address is 18100 Meyers, Detroit, MI 48235, and the State of Michigan (Lessee) by its Department of Natural Resources (DNR), whose address is Stevens T. Mason Building, P.O. Box 30257, Lansing, Michigan 48909, and its Department of Transportation (MDOT), whose address is 425 W. Ottawa St. P.O. Box 30050, Lansing, MI 48909 (together, the "Parties").

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, the Lessor is the owner of certain land and improvements located on Belle Isle in the City of Detroit that it operates as Belle Isle Park for the benefit of the public;

WHEREAS, the Lessor faces severe fiscal challenges and competing priorities that limit the resources available to support its management, operation, and maintenance of Belle Isle Park;

WHEREAS, Lessee manages, operates, and maintains a system of State parks pursuant to MCL 324.740101 *et seq.*, and is responsible for developing and maintaining a comprehensive plan for the development of outdoor recreation resources of the state pursuant to MCL 324.70301 *et seq.*;

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Transportation will acquire jurisdiction of certain roads and bridges pursuant to MCL 247.660a as set forth in this Lease; and

WHEREAS, the Parties enter this Lease effective \_\_\_\_\_, 2013, (Effective Date) pursuant to which the Lessee assumes responsibility for the management, operation, and maintenance of the Park.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants, conditions, agreements, and undertakings contained herein, the Parties agree as follows:

## 1. LEASE PURPOSE

The purpose of this Lease is to continue and enhance the management, operation, and maintenance of the Park for the benefit of the public. The City hereby makes a grant of this Lease to the State and the State accepts the grant of this Lease, to manage and operate the Park as a State park, under authority of the Natural Resources and Environmental and Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.70301 and 324.74103. The City is transferring and MDOT is accepting jurisdiction of certain roads and bridges at the Park under the authority of MCL 247.660a.

## 2. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Leased Premises. The Lessor hereby leases to the Lessee, and the Lessee leases from the Lessor, the land described in attached Exhibit A, excluding the roads and bridges identified in Exhibit B and the greenhouses identified in Exhibit D. (Leased Premises).

2.1.1 DNR. The land and waterways in the Park, excluding the roads and bridges identified in Exhibit B and the greenhouses identified in Exhibit D will be under the authority of DNR.

2.1.2 MDOT. The roads and bridges identified in attached Exhibit B (that are eligible for funding under 1951 PA 51, MCL 247.651 *et seq.* [Act 51]) are transferred from the Lessor to MDOT pursuant to MCL 247.660a in the Memorandum of Understanding attached as Exhibit C. Those roads and bridges shall be under the jurisdiction of MDOT for a period of time not to exceed the term of this Lease. Upon expiration or termination of this Lease, jurisdiction of the roads and bridges identified in attached Exhibit B shall be transferred from MDOT to Lessor.

2.1.3 Lessor. Lessor retains authority over the greenhouses identified in Exhibit D. Lessor is responsible for all operations, including utilities, maintenance and capital costs associated with the greenhouses as set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding attached as Exhibit D.

2.2 Rent Consideration. The Parties acknowledge that the value of the management, operation and maintenance services (Lessee Services) provided by the Lessee during any term of this Lease is fair and adequate consideration for this Lease. Lessee will not pay monetary consideration during the term of this Lease or any extension.

2.3 Operation as a State Park. During any term of this Lease, Lessee will operate, manage, and repair (collectively "Manage" or "Management") the Park, as a State park and incorporate traditional Belle Isle uses such as family reunions for the benefit of the public. The Lessee will manage the Park during the Lease term in a manner that is consistent with other State park operations and the Lessee's policies for State parks, including, but not limited to, the Parks and Recreation Beach Policy, which provides, among other things, for "No Beachguard" signs. Lessee, however, shall not be responsible for the maintenance and repair of any existing public utility systems in the Park. Lessee will manage the Park with its own staff, contractors, and other State agencies as Lessee determines appropriate. Further, Lessee is not obligated to assume any liability under, or to continue any of Lessor's contracts with individuals or private entities for Management of the Park. Lessee is not obligated to employ anyone employed by Lessor.

**2.3.1 Roads and Bridges.** For any period of time that this Lease and the Memorandum of Understanding are in effect, MDOT will maintain the roads and bridges identified in Exhibit B. MDOT is not obligated to assume any liability under, or to continue any of Lessor's contracts related to any of the roads or bridges. MDOT is not obligated to employ anyone employed by Lessor.

**2.3.2 Funding for Roads and Bridges.** For any period of time that the roads and bridges identified in Exhibit B are under MDOT's jurisdiction, MDOT will develop an asset management plan outlining short and long term strategies to maintain the roads and bridges in an acceptable condition. MDOT will use Michigan transportation funds and federal funds the City would have received under Act 51 for roads and bridges identified in Exhibit B as if jurisdiction had not been transferred to MDOT to maintain those roads and bridges.

**2.4 DNR Rules and Orders.** During the term and any extensions of this Lease, the use of the Leased Premises will be subject to the DNR State park laws, rules, regulations, the Director's land use orders and any other State law applicable to State park management. Additionally, Lessee may adopt the Lessor's rules and regulations that protect the natural resources and health and safety of the public.

**2.5 Recreation Passports.** The Lessee will institute the State's Recreation Passport access program requirements for vehicles as set forth in MCL 257.805; MCL 324.2001; MCL 324.74115; MCL 324.74116; MCL 324.74117; MCL 324.74120, and other applicable laws. The Recreation Passport fee requirements are waived for the Park until January 1, 2014, pursuant to MCL 324.74116(4)(c).

**2.6 Park Revenue.** During any term of this Lease, Lessee will collect, receive, and administer, subject to applicable law, all revenue generated or earned from Lessee's Management of the Park, including but not limited to revenue generated or earned from: grants; endowments; special events; private lease revenue; concessions; vendors and other contractors; revenue licenses; permit revenue; fees collected; and revenue generated or earned from sponsorships, advertising, and cooperative ventures (collectively "Park Revenue"). Park Revenue does not include Recreation Passport Revenue. Lessee may only use Park Revenue to Manage and improve the Park as set forth in this Lease, including expenditures for promotion and marketing of Park events and programs, and for any incurred legal expenses arising out of Lessee's fulfillment of its obligations under this Lease.

**2.7 Park Sub-Account.** Lessee will establish a sub-account in the Department of Natural Resources State Park Improvement account (Sub-Account) to administer Park Revenue referenced in paragraph 2.6.

**2.8 Revenue Paid to Lessor.** Lessor must remit to Lessee, for deposit in the Sub-Account, any payments paid to Lessor for events that occur at the Park after the Effective Date of the Lease, including payments Lessor has already received. Lessor must also remit to Lessee, for deposit in the Sub-Account any Park Revenue paid to Lessor after the end of the Transition Period.

2.9 **Accounting and Audits.** Lessee will provide Lessor an annual accounting of the Park Revenue. Lessor has the right to review and audit the Lessee's records related to Park Revenue annually.

2.10 **Law Enforcement, Fire Protection, and EMS Services (Public Safety).** Lessor and Lessee will cooperate, based on a security plan, to provide Public Safety services, for the benefit of visitors, volunteers, and employees in the Park, during the term of this Lease and any extensions. Lessor and Lessee agree to jointly complete a security plan consistent with the outline in Exhibit F that will designate roles for each entity and provide for enforcement of all laws, including local ordinances, within the Park.

2.11 **Reports.** Lessee representative and the chair of the Advisory Committee shall provide an annual report to the Mayor and to the City Council.

2.12 **Advisory Committee.** An advisory committee will be created to advise the Lessee on implementation of improvements, master planning and public safety for the Park. The Advisory Committee will consist of seven (7) members: three (3) appointed by the Governor, one (1) appointed by the City Council, two (2) appointed by the Mayor of the City, and one (1) jointly appointed by the Governor and the Mayor, who shall serve as the chair of the Advisory Committee. At least three (3) of the members shall be residents of the City of Detroit.

2.13 **Non-Profit Entities.** Lessee and Lessor will work cooperatively with the Belle Isle Conservancy or its successor.

2.14 **Title to Leased Premises.** Before expiration of the Transition Period, Lessor must furnish to Lessee a legible copy of the recorded instruments evidencing title in the Lessor to the Leased Premises, and copies of all other recorded and unrecorded documents limiting or restricting the use of, or affecting title, to the Leased Premises. Lessee accepts the Leased Premises subject to easements, encumbrances, and restrictions of record.

### 3. **TRANSITION RESPONSIBILITIES**

3.1 **Transition Period.** This Lease includes a ninety (90) calendar day transition period commencing on the Effective Date of this Lease (Transition Period). During the Transition Period, the Parties will work cooperatively to facilitate the transfer of the Management of the Park from the Lessor to the Lessee.

3.2 **Assignments.** Within thirty (30) Business Days of the Effective Date of this Lease, Lessor will take all actions needed to effectuate assignment to Lessee its interests in the following, subject to Lessee's acceptance:

3.2.1 **Grants and Endowments.** Within thirty (30) Business Days of the Effective Date of this Lease, Lessor must provide to Lessee copies of the grant and endowment agreements and all documents Lessor identifies as having grant or endowment imposed restrictions and

conditions. A list of those agreements will be added to this Lease as an exhibit at a later date. Lessee acknowledges that some or all portions of the Park may be subject to restrictions and conditions imposed by sources of grant funds and endowments used to acquire or make improvements to the Park, and that this Lease is subject to those restrictions and conditions. Before expiration of the Transition Period, Lessor will transfer to the Lessee all unexpended grant and endowment funds for deposit in the Park's Sub-Account.

**3.2.2 Leases, Licenses, Permits, and other Agreements between Lessor and Third Parties (Third Party Agreements).** Within thirty (30) Business Days of the Effective Date of this Lease, Lessor must provide Lessee with copies of all Third Party Agreements relating to the use or occupancy of the Park. Lessee will review the Third Party Agreements and, before expiration of the Transition Period, provide the Lessor with a list of the Third Party Agreements Lessee will assume. Lessor will promptly take all actions needed to effectuate the assignment of the Third Party Agreements to the Lessee.

**3.2.3 Vendor Contracts.** Within thirty (30) Business Days of the Effective Date of this Lease, Lessor must provide Lessee with copies of all contracts that Lessor has entered for goods or for maintenance or other operational services for the Park (Vendor Contracts). Lessee will review the Vendor Contracts and, before expiration of the Transition Period, provide the Lessor with a list of the Vendor Contracts Lessee decides to continue. Lessee is not obligated to assume any Vendor Contracts. The Lessee will solicit bids for services consistent with State's procurement practices. The Lessee will undertake outreach efforts such as pre-bid workshops designed to assist Detroit-based vendors in understanding and participating in the State's bidding process.

**3.2.4 Personal Property.** Within Ninety (90) calendar days of the Effective Date of this Lease, Lessor must provide Lessee with an inventory of personal property that will remain at the Park for its operation and maintenance to which the City may transfer title to Lessee without necessitating a vote of the people. Lessee will review the inventory and, before expiration of the Transition Period, provide the Lessor with a list of the inventory Lessee decides to keep. Lessor must facilitate transfer of title to personal property to the Lessee. Lessor must remove from the Park personal property not transferred to Lessee within ninety (90) calendar days after expiration of the Transition Period.

**3.3 Environmental Condition.** Within thirty (30) calendar days of the Effective Date of this Lease, Lessor must provide Lessee with copies of all of its records regarding the Park's environmental condition, including but not limited to: any environmental assessments or investigations, locations of any off-site fill placements, location of above and below ground tanks, any Due Care plans obligations and requirements; any information on releases of hazardous substances and any response activities taken or planned.

**3.4 Lessor's Park Staff.** Lessor will maintain and pay all expenses for its Park staff during the Transition Period and assign staff to work with Lessee in all manners necessary to facilitate Lessee's assumption of its obligations under this Lease.

**3.5 Lessee's Park Staff.** Lessee's hiring of employees to staff the Leased Premises will be consistent with the State's hiring standards and practices. The Lessee will develop and

Implement an outreach plan that will include working with local training agencies and schools to increase the potential of hiring qualified Detroit residents.

4. **TERM, OPTIONS TO TERMINATE, QUIET ENJOYMENT, AND SURRENDER OF POSSESSION**

4.1 **Term.** The initial term of this Lease is thirty (30) years from this Lease's Effective Date. The Lessor and the Lessee shall consult at least eighteen (18) months prior to the end of the initial thirty (30) year term to determine if it is mutually beneficial to extend the lease under the same terms and conditions, for a term of fifteen (15) years. The Lease shall be extended for the fifteen (15) year term unless the Lessee provides written notice to the Lessor of the Lessee's intent not to extend the term at least one (1) year before the initial term expires or the Lessor provides written notice to the Lessee of Lessor's intent not to extend the term at least one (1) year before the initial term expires. If the Lease is extended, the Lessor and the Lessee shall consult at least eighteen (18) months prior to the end of the first fifteen (15) year extension to determine if it is mutually beneficial to further extend the lease under the same terms and conditions for another fifteen (15) year term. The Lease shall be further extended, for another fifteen (15) year term unless the Lessee provides written notice to the Lessor of the Lessee's intent not to extend the term at least one (1) year before the first extension expires or the Lessor provides written notice to the Lessee of Lessor's intent not to extend the term at least one (1) year before the first extension expires.

4.2 **Grant Obligations.** From and after the expiration or termination of this Lease pursuant to paragraphs 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, or 4.5, the Lessor shall operate and maintain the Leased Premises in accordance with the same long term obligations and encumbrances imposed under the terms of any of the grants or contributions obtained by the Lessee to construct the improvements on the Leased Premises. Such obligations may extend past the expiration or termination of this Lease.

4.3 **Lessor's Option to Terminate for Cause.** In the event the Lessee materially breaches this Lease, the Lessor must provide Lessee notice of the breach and must provide a thirty (30) Business Day period to cure. If Lessee fails to timely cure, Lessor may, at its option terminate this Lease, and the Lessee will surrender possession of the Leased Premises including all improvements within ninety (90) Business Days of notice of termination.

4.4 **Lessee's Option to Terminate for Cause.** In the event the Lessor materially breaches this Lease, the Lessee must provide Lessor notice of the breach and must provide a thirty (30) Business Day period to cure. If Lessor fails to timely cure, Lessee may, at its option terminate this Lease, and the Lessor will take possession and operations of the Leased Premises including all improvements within ninety (90) Business Days of notice of termination. Upon termination of Lease, the Lessor shall be responsible for repayment of the outstanding balance of any bonds or debt incurred by the Lessee to finance improvements to the Leased Premises.

4.5 Quiet Enjoyment. The Lessee, upon performance of its obligations specified in this Lease, will peacefully and quietly have, hold, and enjoy the Leased Premises for the term of this Lease and any extensions.

4.6 Surrender of Possession and Park Revenue. Upon the termination or expiration of this Lease or any extension, the Lessee will promptly and peacefully yield, surrender, and deliver the Leased Premises to the Lessor. Lessee will also transfer any unexpended balance of Park Revenue then in the Sub-Account, to the Lessor.

4.7 Enforcement of Obligations after Lease Expiration or Termination. The Lessor and Lessee agree that the following obligations under the Lease are intended to survive and shall remain enforceable after the expiration or termination of the Lease:

a. The Lessee's obligations in paragraphs 4.3, 4.4 and 4.6 to surrender possession of the Leased Premises and the unexpended balance of Park Revenue;

b. The Lessor's obligations in paragraphs 4.2 and 6.2 to operate and maintain the Leased Premises in accordance with the obligations, encumbrances, terms and conditions imposed under grants or contributions used for improvements on the Leased Premises; and

c. The Lessor's obligations in paragraph 4.4 to repay the outstanding balance of bonds or debt incurred by the Lessee to finance improvements to the Leased Premises.

## 5. CONDITION OF THE LEASED PREMISES

5.1 No Representations. The Lessee acknowledges that the Lessor has made no representations, express or implied, as to the condition of the Leased Premises, including but not limited to the state of repair, or any other representations not contained in this Lease. The Lessee at its sole cost may but is not obligated to perform a baseline environmental assessment in accordance with Part 201 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Act 451 of 1994, as amended;

5.2 Hazardous Substances after Transition Period. The Lessee covenants that in the event a release or the threat of a release of a hazardous substance by the Lessee occurs on, in or under the Leased Premises after the Transition Period, the Lessee will report, investigate and take response activity consistent with Federal, State and local laws and regulations including, without limitation, Part 201 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Act (NREPA), MCL 324.20101, *et seq.*

5.3 Entry by Lessor. The Lessor or Lessor's agent may enter restricted areas of the Leased Premises with forty-eight (48) hours advance notice to the Lessee except for immediate access needed due to emergency situations, in which event, notice must be given as soon as possible.

## 6. PARK MANAGEMENT

6.1 Park Maintenance and Repair. Lessee will maintain and repair the Park including the MacArthur Bridge, other bridges, roads, walkways, and waterways, as provided in paragraph 2.3. Lessee is not obligated to assume any liability under, or to continue any of Lessor's contracts with individuals, or private entities for maintenance or repair of the Park.

6.2 Park Improvements and Alterations. It is Lessee's intent to make improvements and alterations, to the Park consistent with the phased management approach set forth in Exhibit B, State park operations, and existing restrictions, including restrictions in grant agreements, historic designations, donation encumbrances, or other agreements. Lessee, in consultation with the Advisory Committee, will utilize the 2005 Belle Isle Master Plan as a planning guide to facilitate infrastructure improvements in the Park. Upon the termination of this Lease, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the Parties, all improvements and alterations will remain on the Leased Premises, and will become the property of the Lessor. Lessor acknowledges that some or all Park improvements may be subject to restrictions and conditions imposed by sources of grant funds and endowments used to acquire or make the Park improvements, and that Lessor must accept Park improvements subject to those restrictions and conditions. The Lessee will use its best efforts to secure appropriated state funds, grant sources, and other funding sources that may become available to the Lessee in the future to finance the improvements made to the Leased Premises.

6.3 Leases. Lessee has exclusive authority over all aspects of current and future Park leases, including the leases Lessor assigns or transfers to Lessee pursuant to this Lease, subleases for land, and subleases for water access on or to the Park. Lessee's authority includes the authority to enter into leases, terminate, modify, assign, and administer leases. Lessor agrees to take all actions required to assign or transfer such leases to Lessee in accordance with this paragraph 6.3.

6.4 Contracts, Licenses, and Permits. Lessee has the exclusive rights to enter into contracts, and issue licenses and permits for the Park.

6.4.1 Special Events. Special events that are under existing agreements for 2013 and beyond will continue as planned; however, Lessee will collect and receive any fees or other revenue generated from any event that occurs after the Effective Date of this Lease.

6.5 Utilities. Except as provided in paragraph 6.5.1, after the Transition Period, Lessee will pay 100% of all use charges for public utilities services consumed in the Park, including but not limited to heating, cooling, illumination, power, water, sewer, and telecommunications (if any), restricted to the Lessee's Management and Improvement of the Park, that are incurred after the Transition Period. Additionally, Lessee will pay for those utility infrastructure improvements or maintenance charges that are necessitated by Lessee's improvement of the Park pursuant to this Lease that are incurred after the Transition Period.

6.5.1 Stormwater Fees. The Lessee will not pay fees associated with stormwater runoff and the Lessor shall remain responsible for payment of any such fees. The Lessee will

work collaboratively with the Lessor and other interested parties in the development an environmentally appropriate stormwater management system to prevent stormwater from entering the sanitary sewer system.

**7. ASSIGNMENT AND SUBLETTING**

7.1 Except as provided in paragraph 7.2 the Lessee must not assign this Lease or any rights hereunder, nor sublet the Leased Premises, or any part thereof, nor use, nor permit it to be used for any purposes inconsistent with this Lease without the prior written consent of the Lessor, which shall not be unreasonably withheld.

7.2 Lessee may enter into other agreements, including but not limited to subleases, licenses, permits, and contracts for any part of the Leased Premises for recreation related purposes consistent with paragraph 2.3.

**8. NOTICES**

Any notice which either Party may or is required to give under this Lease must be in writing and sent by USPS, postage prepaid, by first class mail, addressed as follows:

a) Notice to the Lessee:

Chief, Parks and Recreation Division  
Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
Stevens T. Mason Building  
P.O. Box 30257  
Lansing, MI 48909-7757

Director, Michigan Department of Transportation  
425 W. Ottawa St. P.O.  
Box 30050  
Lansing, MI 48909

b) Notice to the Lessor:

Detroit Recreation Department  
Attn: Department Director  
18100 Meyers  
Detroit, MI 48235

## 9. GENERAL PROVISIONS

9.1 Waiver. One or more waivers of the breach of any covenant or condition under this Lease, or failure by either party to give notice thereof, must not be construed as a waiver of a further breach of the same covenant or condition.

9.2 Representations. No agreement will be binding upon the Parties unless made in writing and signed by them. No representation except those written in this Lease, or any collateral agreement to the Lease will be binding upon the Parties unless they are in writing and approved by the Parties according to the amendment procedure in this Lease.

9.3 Remedies Not Exclusive. It is agreed that each of the rights, remedies and benefits provided by this Lease are cumulative, and are not exclusive of any other rights, remedies and benefits contained in this Lease, or of any other rights, remedies and benefits allowed by law.

9.4 Successors and Assigns. The covenants, conditions and agreements made and entered into by the Parties inure to the benefit of and are binding upon their respective successors, representatives and permitted assigns.

### 9.5 Statutory Requirements.

9.5.1 Both the Lessor and the Lessee will comply with the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, 1976 PA 453, as amended, MCL 37.2101 *et seq.*, the Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act, 1976 PA 220, as amended, MCL 37.1101 *et seq.*, and all other federal, state, and local fair employment practices and equal opportunity laws and covenant that they shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment, to be employed in the performance of this Lease, with respect to his or her hire, tenure, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, or any matter directly or indirectly related to employment, because of his or her race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, marital status, or physical or mental disability that is unrelated to the individual's ability to perform the duties of a particular job or position. A breach of these requirements is a material breach of the Lease.

9.5.2 Unfair Labor Practices. The State may void this Lease, if the Lessor, or any of its contractors, subcontractors, manufacturers or suppliers appear in the register compiled pursuant to 1980 PA 278, as amended, MCL 423.321 *et seq.* (Employers Engaging in Unfair Labor Practices Act).

9.6 Business Day. Business day means any day other than a Saturday, Sunday, or State-recognized legal holiday from 8:00am through 5:00pm EST.

9.7 Appropriation of Funds. DNR's and MDOT's performance of obligations under this Lease is subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

9.8 Entire Agreement, Severability, and Required Approvals. All terms and conditions of this Lease are as set forth in this Lease. This Lease, with all enclosures and

attachments, as listed below, constitutes the entire agreement of the Parties with regard to this transaction. Should any provision of this Lease or any addendum thereto be found to be illegal or otherwise unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, such provision must be severed from the remainder of the Lease and all other terms and conditions of this Lease will continue in full force and effect. This Lease is not valid or authorized until approved by the Mayor of the City of Detroit, the Detroit City Council, and the Lessee.

9.9 Amendments. No amendment or extension of this Lease shall be effective and binding on the Parties unless it expressly makes reference to this Lease, is in writing and is signed and acknowledged by the duly authorized representatives of the Lessor and the Lessee, and approved by the Mayor of the City of Detroit and the Detroit City Council.

9.10 Memorandum of Lease. Upon final execution of this Lease, Lessee will record a Memorandum of Lease with the Wayne County Register of Deeds.

9.11 Governing Law. This Lease shall be interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Michigan.

9.12 Effective Date. This Lease is effective on the date it is approved by the Detroit City Council.

9.13 Counterparts. This Lease may be executed in any number of counterparts each of which shall be deemed an original agreement, but all of which together shall constitute but one Lease. Copies (whether facsimile, photostatic or otherwise) of signatures to this Lease will be deemed to be originals and may be relied on to the same extent as the originals.

9.14 List of Exhibits. The following Exhibits are attached to and made a part of this Lease:

- Exhibit A Legal Description
- Exhibit B Identification of Roads and Bridges
- Exhibit C Memorandum of Understanding between the City and MDOT
- Exhibit D Memorandum of Understanding between the City and DNR Regarding the Belle Isle Greenhouses
- Exhibit E Phased Management Approach of Belle Isle dated July 2012
- Exhibit F Security Plan Outline

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Lessor and the Lessee, by and through their duly authorized representatives, have executed this Lease as of the dates of their respective signatures:

SIGNATURE PAGES FOLLOW

THIS LEASE WAS CO-DRAFTED BY THE PARTIES.

LESSOR:

CITY OF DETROIT  
by The Emergency Manager of the City of Detroit

Witness:

Eunice Hayes

1st Witness:

Print name of witness

Shari J. Penn

2nd Witness

Print name of witness

Kevyn D. Orr 9/30/13

Print name: Kevyn D. Orr

Title: Emergency Manager

State of Michigan, County of Wayne

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this  30th  day of  September , by

Kevyn D. Orr , the  Emergency Manager   
Typed or printed name(s) of person(s) signing this document

for the \_\_\_\_\_ of the City of Detroit, a Michigan

Municipal Corporation.  D. Johnson & Sons , Notary Public in the County  
of  Wayne , Acting in the County of  Wayne , State of Michigan.

My commission expires:  5/15/2018

THIS CONTRACT WAS APPROVED  
BY THE CITY COUNCIL ON

APPROVED BY THE LAW  
DEPARTMENT PURSUANT TO §6-406  
OF THE CHAPTER OF THE CITY OF  
DETROIT

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Purchasing Director                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Corporation Counsel                      Date

LESSEE:

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
Department of Natural Resources

Witnesses:

Lynda Kay Jones

1st Witness:  
Print name of witness

*Keith Creagh*

Print Name: Keith Creagh  
Title: Director

Michael Everett

2nd Witness:  
Print name of witness:

State of Michigan, County of Ingham

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 30<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2013, by

Lynda Kay Jones, the Notary for the State of  
Typed or printed name(s) of person(s) signing this document

Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Notary Public in the County  
of Clinton, Acting in the County of Ingham, State of Michigan.

My commission expires: 10/01/2013

LYNDA KAY JONES  
NOTARY PUBLIC - STATE OF MICHIGAN  
COUNTY OF CLINTON  
My Commission Expires Oct. 1, 2013  
Acting in the County of Ingham

LESSEE:

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
Department of Transportation

Witnesses:

[Signature]  
1st Witness: Gregory C. Johnson  
Print name of witness

[Signature]  
Print Name: KIRK T. STEUDLE  
Title: DIRECTOR

[Signature]  
2nd Witness:  
Print name of witness: Joseph A. Kratochvil, Jr.

State of Michigan, County of Ingham

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 30 day of September, 2013, by  
JANINA L. JASINSKI, the Notary for the State of  
Typed or printed name(s) of person(s) signing this document

Michigan Department of \_\_\_\_\_, Notary Public in the County  
of Oshtemo, Acting in the County of Charlevoix, State of Michigan.  
My commission expires: 2-24-15

**BANDRA L. JASINSKI**  
Notary Public, Oshtemo County, Michigan  
Acting in Charlevoix County  
My Commission Expires: 02/24/2015

EXHIBIT A

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Plat of the Southern Add'n to the Village of Beldin, Wayne County, Mich., Bell Park, Rec'd L. 1, P. 31 Plats, W.O.R.

A. Belkin - Harris & Stein Sub. of part of the SE 1/4 of Sec. 36, T. 1 S., R. 10 E., City of Detroit, Wayne Co., Mich. Rec'd L. 70, P. 52 of Plats, W.O.R.

Bell Branch Sub. of the NE 1/4 of SW 1/4 of Sec. 17, T. 1 S., R. 10 E., Redford Twp., Wayne Co., Mich. Rec'd L. 59, P. 39 Plats, W.O.R.

Bell Creek Estates, part of the NE 1/4 of Section 14, T. 1 S., R. 9 E., Livonia Township, Wayne County, Michigan. Rec'd L. 67, P. 33 Plats, W.O.R.

Birby V. Bell's Subdivision of part of Out Lot 7, Mullett Park, City of Detroit. Rec'd L. 7, P. 89 Plats, W.O.R.

Bell Realty Co's Log Cabin Park Sub. being a subdivision of part of the West 1/2 of the Northwest 1/4 of Section 4, T. 1 S., R. 10 E., Hartwood Twp., Wayne Co., Michigan. Rec'd L. 41, P. 93 Plats, W.O.R.

Bell Ridge Subdivision of part of the S 1/2 of the SW 1/4 of Section 1, T. 1 S., R. 12 E., Oratio Twp., Wayne Co., Michigan. Rec'd L. 46, P. 37 Plats, W.O.R.

Harry A. Bell Ferndale Gardens Sub. of Lot 4 and part of Lot 8 of Plat of Lot 8 of the Shipyard Tract, City of Detroit, Wayne County Michigan. Rec'd L. 41, P. 31 Plats, W.O.R.

Delaire's Subdivision of Lot H of the Sub. of the Joseph Vizer Estate of part of P. O. 825, City of River Rouge, Wayne Co., Mich. Rec'd L. 46, P. 24 Plats, W.O.R.

Joseph Delaire's Lot H of the Subdivision of the Estate of Joseph Vizer, deceased. Rec'd L. 46, P. 24 Plats, W.O.R.

Delisle's Sub. of part of the NE 1/4 of SW 1/4 of Sec. 17, T. 1 S., R. 10 E., Redford Twp., Wayne Co., Mich. Rec'd L. 59, P. 39 Plats, W.O.R.

Delle Isle Park View Sub. part of West half of P. O. 387 south of Jefferson Ave Detroit, Wayne Co., Mich. Rec'd L. 80, P. 66 Plats, W.O.R.

Belasnet's sub. of Lot I of the Sub. of the Estate of Yousaint Brouillard, Sr., on Tract. Sec. 19 and part of the East 1/2 of Tract. Sec. 18, T. 8 S., R. 11 E., Twp. of Ecorse, County of Wayne, State of Michigan. Rec'd L. 43, P. 19 16 Plats, W.O.R.

Belmont Park Subdivision of S 1/2 of SW 1/4 of SE 1/4 of Section 9, T. 2 S., R. 10 E., Dearborn Township, Wayne County Mich. Rec'd L. 60, P. 31 Plats, W.O.R.

Belmont Park Subdivision No. 1 of NE 1/4 of SW 1/4 of SE 1/4 of Section 9, T. 2 S., R. 10 E., Dearborn Township, Wayne County, Mich. Rec'd L. 61, P. 30 Plats, W.O.R.

Belmont Park Subdivision No. 2 of NE 1/4 of NE 1/4 of Front's Sec. 16, T. 2 S., R. 10 E., Dearborn Township, Wayne County, Mich. Rec'd L. 62, P. 31 Plats, W.O.R.

Belt Line Subdivision of the Northerly part of P. O. 673, known as L. Chapelet Park, & the northerly part of P. O. 673, Hautremont, Wayne Co., Michigan. Rec'd L. 12, P. 02 Plats, W.O.R.

Bendison's Sub. of the S. 6 acres of Lot 2, Mesure Est. on Tract. Sec. 1, T. 8 S., R. 11 E., and Tract. Sec. 26, T. 1 S., R. 11 E., Detroit, Wayne Co., Mich. Rec'd L. 27, P. 66 Plats, W.O.R.

Bonham Manufacturing Co's Subdivision of Lots 102-3-4 & 6 and vested alley of H. L. Baker's Sub. of Lots 16, 17, 18, 19 and West half of 20 of the Sub. of the North half Section 28 and the Northeast Fraction of Section 29, T. 1 S., R. 18 E., Hartwood, Wayne County, Michigan. Rec'd L. 20, P. 61 Plats, W.O.R.

Bontreau's Subdivision of Lot 4 of the Sub. of the St. Jean Farm, P. O. 26, Orceze Pointe, Wayne Co., Mich. Rec'd L. 7, P. 69 Plats, W.O.R.

Bontreau's Sub. of the North 693 feet of that portion of P. O. 724 lying South of Jefferson Ave., Orceze Pointe, Wayne Co., Mich. Rec'd L. 10, P. 63 Plats, W.O.R.

O. F. Bonnett's Boulevard Park Subdivision of part of the SE 1/4 of P. O. Sec. 20, T. 3 S., R. 11 E., Ecorse Twp., Wayne Co., Michigan. Rec'd L. 46, P. 27 Plats, W.O.R.

O. F. Bonnett's Boulevard Park Sub. No. 1 of part of Lots 3, 4 and 5 of Debo's Sub. and Lots 6 and 9 and part of Lots 7 and 10 of George Clark Estate Sub. All in P. O. Sec. 20, T. 3 S., R. 11 E., City of Wyandotte, Wayne Co., Mich. Rec'd L. 66, P. 67 Plats, W.O.R.

O. F. Bonnett's Detroit River View Sub. of part of the SW 1/4 of Sec. 10, T. 4 S., R. 11 E., Houghton Twp., Wayne Co., Mich. Rec'd L. 40, P. 19 Plats, W.O.R.

EXHIBIT B

June 15, 2012

ROADWAY SEGMENTS proposed for Transfer from the City of Detroit to MDOIT, to become state trunkline:

Grand Boulevard/Douglas MacArthur Bridge, from the centerline of Jefferson Avenue south to the centerline of Sunset Drive/Riverbank Road, a distance of 0.56 miles.

Sunset Drive, from the centerline of Riverbank Road/Douglas MacArthur Bridge southwest to the centerline of Strand Street, a distance of 0.63 miles.

The Strand Street, from the centerline of Sunset Drive easterly to the centerline of Lakeside Street, a distance of 2.32 miles.

Lakeside Street, from the centerline of The Strand Street north to the centerline of Riverbank Road/Oakway Drive, a distance of 0.50 miles.

Riverbank Road from the centerline of Lakeside Street/Oakway Drive westerly to the centerline of Sunset Drive/Douglas MacArthur Bridge, a distance of 2.05 miles.

Central Way, from the centerline of Casino Way east to the centerline of Lakeside Street, a distance of 1.94 miles.

Shadowbrook Street, from the centerline of Central Way east to the centerline of Central Way, a distance of 0.15 miles.

Casino Way, from the centerline of The Strand Street north to the centerline of Sunset Drive, a distance of 0.42 miles.

Insoluble Street, from the centerline of The Strand Street north to the centerline of Riverbank Road, a distance of 0.40 miles.

Vista Drive, from the centerline of Central Way north to the centerline of Riverbank Rd, a distance of 0.05 miles, and from the centerline of Loiter Way south to the centerline of The Strand Street, a distance of 0.36 miles.

Fountain Way, from the centerline of The Strand Street north to the centerline of Sunset Drive, a distance of 0.29 miles.

Fountain Way, from the centerline of Fountain Way east to the centerline of Casino Way, a

## EXHIBIT B

distance of 0.13 miles.

Pleasure Drive, from the centerline of Sunset Drive west to its terminus, a distance of 0.11 miles.

Muse Street, from the centerline of Lotter Way north to Central Way, a distance of 0.12 miles.

Lotter Way, from the centerline of Muse Street east to the centerline of Vista Drive, a distance of 0.81 miles.

Picnic Way, from the centerline of The Strand Street, north to the centerline of Lotter Way, a distance of 0.13 miles and from the centerline of Lotter Way north to the centerline of Riverbank Road, a distance of 0.35 miles.

Nashua Drive, from the centerline of The Strand Street north to its terminus, a distance of 0.14 miles.

Recreation Field Drive, from the centerline of Vista Drive west to its terminus, a distance of 0.06 miles.

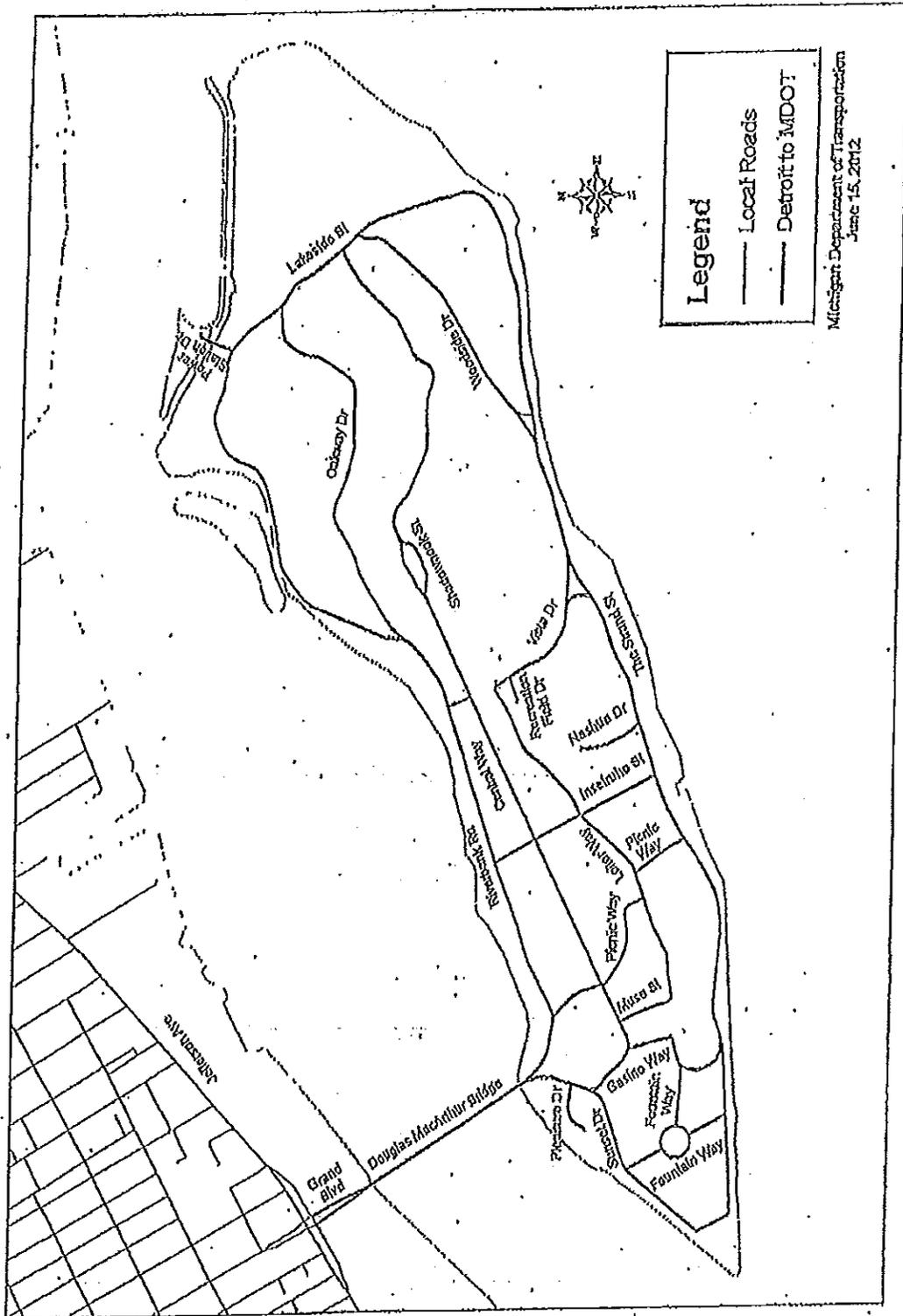
Woodside Drive, from the centerline of Lakeside Street west to the centerline of The Strand Street, a distance of 0.63 miles.

Oakway Drive, from the centerline of Riverbank Road east to the centerline of Riverbank Road, a distance of 0.86 miles.

Power Station Drive, from the centerline of Riverbank Road north to its terminus, a distance of 0.09 miles.

EXHIBIT B

Proposed Jurisdictional Transfer in Detroit



B-8

EXHIBIT C

MDOT NO. 2012-0000  
AGENDA: CAB

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
AND  
THE CITY OF DETROIT

## I. PURPOSE

This Memorandum of Understanding is entered into this date of \_\_\_\_\_ between the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the City of Detroit (CITY) for the purpose of transferring jurisdiction of the road segments described in Attachment A, said road segments hereinafter referred to as the ROAD SEGMENTS. This Memorandum of Understanding will begin upon award and will remain in effect until the expiration of the Lease between the City of Detroit and the State of Michigan regarding Belle Isle Park, dated \_\_\_\_\_.

## II. BACKGROUND

The ROAD SEGMENTS are within the CITY boundaries. The ROAD SEGMENTS will function in the capacity of a State Trunkline. The ROAD SEGMENTS will provide access to the Belle Isle Park. MDOT is willing to accept jurisdictional control of the ROAD SEGMENTS from the CITY, and the CITY is willing to transfer jurisdiction of the ROAD SEGMENTS. This transfer of jurisdictional control of the ROAD SEGMENTS will make these roadways State Trunkline.

EXHIBIT C

III. AGREEMENT

Upon award and acceptance of this Memorandum of Understanding by both parties, the parties agree to the following:

A. MDOT:

1. Agrees to assume full jurisdiction for the ROAD SEGMENTS, thereby making this roadway State Trunkline,
2. Agrees to perform maintenance of the ROAD SEGMENTS, for which jurisdictional control has been transferred to MDOT by this Memorandum of Understanding.

B. The CITY:

1. Agrees to transfer jurisdictional control of the ROAD SEGMENTS to MDOT, and MDOT agrees to accept jurisdictional control of the road segments, thereby making this roadway State Trunkline,

C. Unless otherwise addressed by this Memorandum of Understanding, both parties agree that the transfer of jurisdictional control of the ROAD SEGMENTS, from the CITY to MDOT, will include the transfer of: utility, operational, and drainage permits, whether recorded or otherwise; all bridges, overpasses, signs, signals or other structures or traffic control devices; and any and all features and appurtenances now existing for highway purposes on and along the ROAD SEGMENTS.

IV. TERM

This Memorandum of Understanding shall take effect upon award and remain in effect until the expiration of the Lease between the City of Detroit and the State of Michigan regarding Belle Isle Park, dated \_\_\_\_\_.

V. MODIFICATION

This Memorandum of Understanding may be modified, in writing, upon mutual agreement by the parties. Any modification must be signed by the authorized representative of each agency or his/her designee.

EXHIBIT C

VI. SIGNATURE

This Memorandum of Understanding is entered into upon signing by the duly authorized officials for the CITY and for MDOT.

CITY OF DETROIT

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title: Director  
Michigan Department of Transportation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

EXHIBIT D

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
FOR THE BELLE ISLE PARK GREENHOUSES  
(Per Article 2.1 of the Belle Isle Park Lease)

WHEREAS, the City of Detroit and the State of Michigan are entering into a long term lease agreement for the management of Belle Isle Park, and

WHEREAS, the City of Detroit has an existing and future need to retain the operation and maintenance of the greenhouses that exist on the Island.

NOW THEREFORE, as provided in Article 2.1 of the Belle Isle Park Lease, the greenhouses identified as area # 16, depicted on Page 28 of the Belle Isle Master Plan, entitled, "Existing Buildings, Monuments, Shelters and Comfort Stations" are excluded from the Leased Premises, and shall remain under the control, management and full responsibility of the City of Detroit.

The State of Michigan and the City agree that they will work cooperatively to mutually accommodate the City's operation and maintenance of the greenhouses and the State's operation and maintenance of Belle Isle Park.

  
STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY OF DETROIT

Date: 09/30/2013

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



• DRAFT •  
**Phased Management Approach of Belle Isle**  
 by the Department of Natural Resources  
 July 2012

**Management Goals & Desired Outcomes**

- Create a clean and safe environment
- Restore the expectation of the Belle Isle experience
- Unify stakeholders and supporters
- Preserve the rich history of the Island
- Enhance recreational opportunities
- Protect the natural resources
- Address immediate needs
- Implement sustainable contraction of infrastructure
- Establish a sustained model of resources for long-term management of the Island
- Expand youth employment opportunities in the fields of natural resources, environmental protection and agriculture

**Aligning Action Items with Survey Results**

In the summer and fall months of 2010, two separate surveys were carried out by the Belle Isle Conservancy which included park users (onsite) and remote individuals and organizational supporters (remote); 2,237 surveys were collected. The surveys identified the following:

<u>High Priority Improvement Responses</u>	<u>Onsite (# and % of respondents)</u>		<u>Remote (# and % of respondents)</u>	
Re-open the Aquarium	256	38%	1107	71%
Re-open the canals for canoeing/kayaking	184	27%	896	57%
Re-open the Boat Club for public use	185	27%	728	47%

<u>Not Enough Amenities Responses</u>	<u>Onsite</u>	<u>Remote</u>
Places to buy food	82%	66%
Drinking Fountains	74%	60%
Restrooms	59%	58%
Things to Do	52%	40%
Benches	51%	50%
Park Security	37%	61%
Waste Receptacles	50%	59%

<u>Common / Popular Park Activities Responses</u>	<u>Onsite</u>	<u>Remote</u>
Picnic	39.1%	68.1%
Exercise	31.1%	55.4%
Stroll/walk	29.0%	61.3%
Socialize	23.2%	45.3%

EXHIBIT E.

Nearly 30% of the survey respondents indicated they would like to receive information about getting involved and volunteering at Belle Isle. Aligning the Department's planning processes and action items with the survey responses is a critical aspect in order to maximize resources and unify the stakeholders and supporters of Belle Isle.

Initial Phase Planning Processes & Action Items -  
(One to two months after the agreement is signed)

Planning Processes:

- Coordinate with law enforcement (City, Coast Guard, Homeland Security, Border Patrol, State Police & Conservation Officers) on a security plan
- Meet with newly created Belle Isle Advisory Group, Belle Isle Conservancy and other vested stakeholder groups
- Meet with other state agencies (DEQ, DOC, DOT, etc) and DNR Divisions on current and potential projects / funding
- Evaluate all contracts, leases & concessions
- Continue updating previous Infrastructure assessment information to prioritize critical needs

Action Items:

- Extend Riverfront contracts for trash removal and mowing
- Establish a visible staffing and visitor services presence
- Clean up trash / debris and provide adequate receptacles
- Remove debris in public spaces and organize maintenance areas

Short Range Phase Planning Processes & Action Items -  
(Three to five months after the agreement is signed)

Planning Processes:

- Assess staffing levels and equipment needs for primary use season; develop annual operational budget
- Coordinate volunteer activities with newly created Belle Isle Advisory Group, Belle Isle Conservancy and other vested stakeholder groups
- Evaluate the locations and relationships between picnic shelters, restroom buildings, parking and drinking fountains
- Develop a comprehensive marketing and outreach plan
- Establish a sponsor / partner "adoption" program
- Coordinate with DDOT to re-establish a bus route to Belle Isle
- Establish recreational programming such as Metro Youth Fitness and expand other interpretive programs through the Nature Center

Action Items:

- Interview and hire permanent staff

## EXHIBIT E.

- Retrofit buildings like the Casino, Athletic Shelter / Refectory and Flynn Memorial Pavilion with energy efficiency updates (windows, insulation, photo sensors, timers, etc)
- Renovate and rehabilitate picnic shelters such as the Newsboy, Schiller, Pony Area and Fishing Pier as well as comfort stations such as Graystone, Woodside and at the Golf Course
- Establish a new endowment for long-term sustainable funding
- Establish a restricted fund to receive event and use permit revenues
- Create a gift guide for sponsors and donors
- Develop a reservation system for shelters and grounds for events during primary use season

Intermediate Phase Planning Processes & Action Items --  
(Six months to one year after the agreement is signed)

Planning Processes:

- Coordinate volunteer activities with Belle Isle Conservancy and other vested stakeholder groups
- Meet with the State Building Authority on a bond option for addressing major building and park improvements to be repaid once the Recreation Passport becomes effective
- Assess shoreline erosion and identify critical areas for soft shoreline stabilization
- Seek grants such as Coastal Zone Management, Great Lakes Fisheries Trust and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to conduct an hydrologic study of the lakes and canals to convert back to a naturalized system (remove pumps)
- Begin discussions with the Michigan College Foundation and Youth Connections on a natural resources institute program and youth employment

Action Items:

- Clean catch basins and provide curb cuts for increased drainage
- Construct and improve way-finding and overall signage
- Provide a contact station or informational kiosk at primary park entrance for immediate park and program information
- Meet with MDOT on the conversion of internal road segments through wooded wetlands into multi-use trails and a two-way traffic concept
- Enhance fishing opportunities at existing structures
- Coordinate invasive plant (i.e. phragmites) species volunteer days
- Repair and expand picnic tables for primary use season
- Implement mowing reductions and the "Grow not Mow" program to educate visitors, reduce operational costs, create habitat and combat Canadian geese

EXHIBIT F

**BELLE ISLE PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY PLAN OUTLINE**

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Law Enforcement Division (LED), the Michigan State Police (MSP) and the DNR's Parks and Recreation Division have collaborated with the Detroit Police Department to insure that a security plan is implemented in an effective community oriented manner to include:

- Effective Community Outreach
- Utilization of Community Oriented Policing Principles
- Utilization of Effective Environmental Design Security Measures

Lessor and Lessee will jointly develop a park safety and security plan that will incorporate the following elements:

- All parties will utilize the 90 day transition period (Section 3.1) to facilitate a smooth transfer of operational responsibilities from Lessor to Lessee
- The plan will be developed by the DNR LED and MSP with input from the Detroit Police Department
- The plan will shift the public safety and law enforcement responsibilities to the DNR LED and MSP which will allow for the eventual redeployment of up to 22 Detroit Police officers back to mainland responsibilities
- All duly authorized peace officers, regardless of entity affiliation, will retain the authority to enforce city and state laws in the park and will provide mutual aid in the event of law enforcement emergencies
- The plan will address Detroit's building and grounds needs on the Island which may include:
  - Boat storage
  - Harbormaster needs
  - Dive team needs
  - Dog and horse training
  - Motorcycle unit training
  - Other needs that are mutually agreed upon
- The Detroit Police will share operational plans previously developed for park events and consult on future events with the DNR LED and MSP
- EMS and Fire service needs will be coordinated through Lessor's 911 emergency services system



Community Engagement Session at Belle Isle Park

## Appendix C: Community Input Summary

### C.1 Project Website

On the adjacent page is a snapshot of the project website at [www.mdnrmanagementplans/belle-isle-park](http://www.mdnrmanagementplans/belle-isle-park). The website was available for public viewing throughout the duration of the planning process and was updated with maps, survey results, and the draft plan. Members of the public could contact the planning team through the website contact form.



**BELLE ISLE PARK STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**MORE ABOUT THE PARK**

Belle Isle Park (MDNR)

**MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT**

Presentations and Meetings

Maps

Documents

**MORE ABOUT MDNR MANAGEMENT PLANS**

Park Management Plans (MDNR)

Planning Process (MDNR)

Management Zones (MDNR)

**CONTACT US**

Comments and questions are always welcome!

\* indicates required field

Name:\*

Email:\*

Subject:\*

Message:\*

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reCAPTCHA  
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Submit



**About the Park**

Belle Isle is a 982-acre island park located in the Detroit River between the United States and Canada in the City of Detroit. The park is rich in culture, history and natural resources that have been enjoyed by residents and visitors to the city for generations. Purchased by the City of Detroit in 1879 and opened to the public in May 1880, Belle Isle Park became Michigan's 102<sup>nd</sup> State Park in 2014 as part of a lease agreement with the City of Detroit. The park provides a wide variety of educational and recreational opportunities, including attractions such as the Belle Isle Aquarium, Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, Belle Isle Nature Zoo, James Scott Fountain, and Dossin Great Lakes Museum.

The park is integral with the revitalized riverfront area, which encompasses the Detroit Riverwalk, William G. Milliken State Park and Harbor, the Outdoor Adventure Center, and the Renaissance Center.

**About the Plan**

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks & Recreation Division (PRD) in association with the Belle Isle Conservancy is in the process of developing a Strategic Direction and Management Plan for Belle Isle Park. The plan will be used to define a long-range planning and management strategy that protects the resources of the site while addressing recreation and education needs and opportunities. Public and stakeholder input is a critical component of the planning process.

**Presentations and Meetings**

Public meetings were held on March 29th from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm and from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Belle Isle Park's Flynn Pavilion. Thank you to those who participated!

At the beginning of the meeting, the DNR and the Belle Isle Conservancy gave a presentation about recent improvements to the island. View that presentation here: Belle Isle Park Presentation.

You can view the summaries of the input meetings below:

## Meetings March 29 on Belle Isle Park's strategic direction, management plan

Michigan Department of Natural Resources sent this bulletin at 03/15/2017 11:26 AM EDT



### Statewide DNR News

March 15, 2017

Contact [Debbie Jensen](#), 517-284-6105

#### DNR seeks input on Belle Isle Park's new strategic direction and management plan, will host public meetings March 29

##### *Online questionnaire available through April 7 for those who can't attend either meeting*

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources, in partnership with the Belle Isle Conservancy, invites the public to attend one of two public meetings to gather input on a new strategic direction and management plan for Belle Isle Park. The meetings will take place Wednesday, March 29, from 2 to 4 p.m. or 6 to 8 p.m. at Belle Isle Park's Flynn Pavilion, located near the intersection of Picnic Way and Loiter Way.



Belle Isle Park, a 982-acre island park located in the Detroit River near downtown Detroit, is rich with natural beauty and historical and cultural resources. The park is home to the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, the Belle Isle Aquarium, a golf course, the James Scott Memorial Fountain and many more attractions popular with all ages and interests. The park offers a variety of outdoor activities, including hiking, bicycling, kayaking and picnicking.

The new strategic direction and management plan will define a long-range planning and management strategy that will assist the DNR Parks and Recreation Division in meeting its responsibilities to protect and preserve Belle Isle Park's natural and cultural resources, and to provide access to land- and water-based public recreation and educational opportunities.

"Over the course of the last two years, the DNR and its partners have invested \$22.5 million in the park, which has addressed not only park improvements that the public can see themselves, but critical infrastructure as well," said Ron Olson, DNR Parks and Recreation Division chief. "We encourage the public to participate in the planning process, so that the DNR has an opportunity to gauge community opinion on the work that has been accomplished to date and to help set future priorities."

The public input meetings will begin with a short presentation on the planning process, projects completed to date and those in progress. It will be followed by individual and group exercises to gather input to inform the plan. Members of the public are invited to attend either one of the two-hour meetings.

[Those unable to attend either meeting may complete a short online questionnaire](https://goo.gl/jpDK1e), which will be available through April 7 at <https://goo.gl/jpDK1e>.

For more information about the March 29 meetings or the Belle Isle Park General Management Plan, contact DNR park management plan administrator Debbie Jensen at 517-284-6105 (TTY/TDD711 Michigan Relay Center for the hearing impaired) or via email at [JensenD1@michigan.gov](mailto:JensenD1@michigan.gov). Persons with disabilities who need accommodations for the meetings should contact Jensen at least five business days before the meetings.

Stay up to date on Belle Isle Park management plan development at <http://www.mdnrmanagementplans.org/belle-isle-park/>.

**/Editor's note:** An accompanying photo is available below for download. A suggested caption follows.

Belle Isle Park, located in the Detroit River near downtown Detroit, offers plenty of fun, outdoor recreation opportunities, including the giant slide, pictured here. To give the public an opportunity to learn about and comment on a new management plan, the Michigan DNR and the Belle Isle Conservancy will host two public input meetings March 29 /

[BIPslide.jpg](#)

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations. For more information, go to [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr).



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Stakeholder Meeting Invitation



# You're invited!

## What

Belle Isle Park  
Strategic Direction and Management Plan  
Stakeholder Input Meeting

## When

Tuesday, March 28th  
Choice of two sessions:  
10:00 am - 12:00 pm or 2:00 - 4:00 pm

Please RSVP by March 23rd to:  
Plan Administrator Debbie Jensen  
JensenD1@michigan.gov  
517-284-6105



## Where

Belle Isle Park's Flynn Pavilion  
Located near the intersection of  
Picnic Way and Loiter Way



## About the plan

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks & Recreation Division (PRD) in association with the Belle Isle Conservancy is in the process of developing a Strategic Direction and Management Plan for Belle Isle Park. The plan will be used to define a long-range planning and management strategy that protects the resources of the site while addressing recreation and education needs and opportunities. Public and stakeholder input is a critical component of the planning process.

## About the meeting

The Belle Isle Park Management Plan team cordially invites you to attend a stakeholder input meeting! The team hopes to gather valuable insights from your organization and other key players. This session will include a brief presentation on the planning process as well as projects completed to date and those in progress, followed by individual and group exercises to gather input to inform the plan.

## Other input opportunities

If you are unable to attend one of the sessions, open public meetings will be held on March 29th from 2 - 4 pm and 6 - 8 pm at the Flynn Pavilion on Belle Isle. Alternatively, you may complete a short questionnaire at <https://goo.gl/JpDK1e>.

## Project website

[www.mdnrmanagementplans.org/belle-isle-park/](http://www.mdnrmanagementplans.org/belle-isle-park/)

## For more information and to RSVP, please contact:

Plan Administrator Debbie Jensen  
JensenD1@michigan.gov  
517-284-6105



## C.2 Stakeholder Input Workshop

### Summary of Stakeholder Workshop

In order to gather targeted input from governmental, non-profit, and business/tourism entities, the planning team invited a group of stakeholders to an input workshop. The workshop was held in two sessions on March 28th, 2017, from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm and from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm. A total of 43 stakeholders participated in the two sessions. The participants were first given a status update on the park and a summary of recent improvement projects, followed by breaking into groups for a series of input exercises. As the stakeholders introduced themselves, they were invited to share an answer to the prompt “What matters most to me about Belle Isle Park is...” Those that recorded their answers and returned them to the planning team are included below.

WHAT MATTERS MOST TO ME ABOUT BELLE ISLE PARK IS.....
The memories I've created with my mom and family. Belle Isle remaining accessible to the public. Improved and better promotion of the island. Amenities (beach, Aquarium, canals). Protecting environmental quality/natural ecosystem @ park. Park remaining natural space (non residential). Stormwater management via nature-based infrastructure. Greenway/non-motorized path connections at and to the park
Island is both safe and clean for all to use.
That it is a place of unity where people from all backgrounds can join and find respite in the island's natural and architectural beauty.
The Conservatory memories
I hope it stays a family park!
That native Detroiters feel welcomed and comfortable at the park
Creating safe places to play for all members of our community, hub for active community
Public access to-and participation in-this beautiful island's many amenities
Got fishing
Improved facilities (dedicated) for people who bike and walk. Welcoming and inclusive to all.
The positive momentum on Belle Isle seen over the last few years continues into the future
Getting kids on the island, welcoming to all residents
Inviting and accessible to all
It's a special place to create multi-generational family memories...picnics, visiting the Conservatory, business...great collaborative partner
Accessibility, recreation options, green spaces, family environment
People interacting with nature
Accessibility and methods of transportation onto and around the island
Public access and enjoyment, public enjoyment of diverse outdoor spaces and experiences, historic integrity
Belle Isle has been called a gem of Detroit, I believe we need to polish that gem for all to enjoy. Better facilities, infrastructure, and opportunities for all to enjoy, now is the time to start to improve the island and make it not only a park for Michigan residents, but a tourist destination as well.
Preserving the historic buildings
Historic buildings
Accessibility to public buildings, preserving cultural landscape
Equality-that everyone has access who benefits
That it remains safe for families. Continue investment in infrastructure; upgrade hard line communications on the island.
That it remains clean and accessible to all. Activities and attractions remain open. Remain a place for youth, families, and adults to experience aspects of nature. Remain a resource for the community
Becomes a great place to walk and bike, that is welcoming to all Detroiters (of all abilities) year round
Green space in the city, place to go

## Stakeholder Input Exercises

The results of the exercises are detailed below. This summary represents the combination of results from both the morning and afternoon stakeholder input sessions.

### Exercise 1: Say one word or phrase that describes Belle Isle right now.

When thinking about the current state of Belle Isle, the stakeholders had many positive associations. The groups keyed in on several significant features of the island: its historic architecture and role in Detroit’s story, its beautiful natural areas so rarely seen in the heart of urban development, and the sense that the island is improving with new investment into its infrastructure and key buildings. The words and phrases mentioned by three or more tables were:

EXERCISE 1	
ITEMS	TIMES MENTIONED
Work in progress / Better / Improving / Upward / Evolving	5
Historic	3
Natural areas / Nature / Garden	3
Nostalgic / Sentimental / Memories	3
Opportunity	3
Resurgence / Rebirth	3

### Exercise 2: Say one word or phrase you would like to describe Belle Isle in the future.

In the second exercise, stakeholders discussed Belle Isle’s potential. Several of the most frequently mentioned items shared a similar theme: access and availability of the park for all people. It was important to the stakeholders that the island is a place that is welcoming to all, that is inclusive, and that is accessible. They also felt that the island should feel very connected to the heart of Detroit and that it should be easy for pedestrians and bicycles to travel through it safely. Additionally, several groups envisioned Belle Isle’s future to be that of a well-known destination. Below are the items that were mentioned at three or more tables.

EXERCISE 2	
ITEMS	TIMES MENTIONED
Improved access / Accessible	6
Destination	4
Connection / Seamless connection to mainland	3
Inclusive / Equal	3
Multi-modal (Bike/pedestrian friendly/trolley/kayaks)	3
Robust environment/ ecological environments	3
Welcoming to all	3



**Exercise 3: What do you like most and least about Belle Isle?**

The third exercise combined two sentiments: what the stakeholders liked most and what they liked least about Belle Isle. Occasionally, the same item would be placed in both columns, as is the case with the Grand Prix. Aspects of the island that were the most liked related to the availability of public open space and nature close to the city as well as the many unique attractions and events accessible to users. What stakeholders liked the least related to the work yet to be done to improve the island, missing elements such as food options, the Grand Prix and its associated effects, and the perception that not everyone is welcome on the island. Since many unique items were mentioned, those that were mentioned at two or more tables are listed below.

EXERCISE 3			
LIKE MOST	TIMES MENTIONED	LIKE LEAST	TIMES MENTIONED
Size/scale/ open green space	3	Grand Prix / Impact on roads / timeline	5
Views/water	3	Closed zoo	4
A place for everyone	2	Signage / Lack of wayfinding	4
Aquarium	2	Closes too early	3
Cleaner / Cleanliness	2	Food desert	3
Conservatory	2	Boat Club distressed	2
Events	2	Deferred maintenance	2
Forestry	2	Perceptions of exclusivity / Is everyone welcome? Do they feel welcome?	2
Grand Prix	2		
History/ architecture	2		
Lots of activities	2		
Safety	2		
Trails / Nature trails	2		
Unique attractions/ activities	2		

**Exercise 4: What differences have you noticed about Belle Isle in the last three years?**

The planning team wished to know what differences the stakeholders have noticed since the beginning of the DNR’s administration of the island. The most frequently mentioned items show that the groups have taken notice of the improvements, such as greater attention to maintenance, the repair and opening of previously closed restrooms, the availability of amenities such as non-motorized watercraft rental, and the availability of public transit. Interestingly, some groups thought the island has become more crowded in the last few years, and others notice fewer people and less activity. Below are items that were mentioned by two or more groups in this exercise.

EXERCISE 4	
ITEMS	TIMES MENTIONED
Cleaner, improved maintenance	6
Feels safer (perception)	4
Restrooms / Bathrooms are working / cleaner	4
Greater police presence	3
Kayak/canoe rentals	3
Accessibility by bus	2
Adequately stocked comfort station	2
Dead tree removal	2
Fewer people / less activity	2
Greater stakeholder engagement	2
More crowded / people are coming back	2
More public programming	2
Rec passport/entrance / fee for access	2

**Exercise 5: What improvements or changes would you like to see that would increase public use, enjoyment, and benefit from Belle Isle? (with voting)**

The last exercise was intended to decipher what the stakeholders envisioned for the future of the island. The stakeholders’ ideas reflect a desire to improve and restore what exists on the island, to create a safer environment for pedestrians and bicyclers, and to improve communications on the island through event advertisement and improved signage. Ideas mentioned at the most tables included increasing food options on the island, creating a water taxi, and restoring the Belle Isle Boat House (formerly known as the Detroit Boat Club). This exercise generated many unique responses from the groups; only five ideas were mentioned at two or more tables. After generating ideas, each person voted on the top three ideas from their group. Items receiving four or more votes are shown below.

EXERCISE 5		
ITEMS	TIMES MENTIONED	VOTES
More concession, food and beverage opportunities / highlight local	4	8
Water taxi between island / Detroit	3	5
Boat club restoration and use	3	4
Internal/external communication (signage/daily events)	2	4
Dedicated bike and pedestrian infrastructure throughout the park	2	2
Reopening the Aquarium full time	1	5
Address facility infrastructure	1	4
Identifiable welcome center	1	4
Safe on-road biking	1	4

**Final Exercise: Collective Priorities**

As one person from each group presented the highest-voted items from their vision of Belle Isle, the planning team transferred those ideas into a separate exercise, combining similar ideas. As the stakeholders left the input session, they voted on the top three items from the collective priorities list, which included items not mentioned at their tables. Below are all of the collective priorities from both sessions combined into one list. The top collective priority was to add more concessions and food options on the island, and one group thought that those options could highlight local businesses. Protecting the natural resources on the island was the second highest-voted priority, followed by improving the signage system throughout the park. These items, along with the other input from the stakeholders, were considered as the planning team created an action plan for the park.

FINAL EXERCISE		
COLLECTIVE PRIORITIES	TIMES MENTIONED	VOTES
More concessions / food options (highlight local)	2	19
Protect natural resources (recycling, green initiative, wildlife)	1	12
Signage improvements (internal communications)	1	11
Facility infrastructure (buildings, restrooms)	1	9
Identifiable welcome center	1	9
Park amenities (benches, picnic tables)	1	8
Non-motorized infrastructure (safe for pedestrians/cyclists)	1	7
Public relations campaign	1	7
Employment opportunities for local residents	1	6
Technological advances (phone app for park directory, history)	1	5
Water taxi for Detroit	1	5
Re-open the Aquarium full time	1	4.5
Stock model boat basin for children’s fishing	1	3
Activate closed areas: zoo + golf course	1	2.5
Increase youth programming	1	2
External communications (daily event schedule)	1	0

PARTICIPANT LIST			
FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	REPRESENTING	TITLE
Khalil	Ligon	Alliance for the Great Lakes	SE Michigan Outreach Coordinator
Brenda	Price	Alliance for the Great Lakes	Volunteer and Education Director
Katy	Wyerman	Belle Isle Conservancy	
Amy	Greene	Belle Isle Nature Center	
Dawn	Bilobran	Belle Isle Conservancy	Board Member
Janice	Ellison	Belle Isle Conservancy	Belle Isle Conservancy Board Member
Danielle	Jackson	Belle Isle Conservancy	Event Manager
Genevieve	Nowak	Belle Isle Conservancy / DNR	Director Volunteer Services
Kamilah	Henderson	Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan	
Scharron	Rambus	City of Detroit (DDOT)	
Janese	Chapman	City of Detroit Historic Designation	
Justin	Jacobs	Come Play Detroit	Owner
Mike	McGuiness	Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence	Community Outreach Coordinator
Walter	Brown		
Lisa	Nuskowski	Detroit Bike Share	Executive Director
Michael	Montri	Detroit Grand Prix	General Manager
Todd	Scott	Detroit Greenways Coalition	
Dawayne	Jones	Detroit Police Athletic League	Athletic Program
Keith	Flournoy	Detroit Parks and Recreation	
David	Miller	Detroit Parks and Recreation	Director of Dept of Parks and Rec
Michele	Marine	Detroit River Conservancy	Director of Programs
Alease	Johnson	Dossin Great Lakes Museum	
Mark	Wallace	Detroit Riverfront Conservancy	President/CEO of Detroit Riverfront
Ben	Beaman	Ducks Unlimited	
Kyle	Burleson	Detroit / Wayne County Port Authority	Deputy Director
John	Loftus	Detroit / Wayne County Port Authority	
Christina	Doby	Erb Family Foundation	Program Officer
Richard	Benson	Lake St. Clair Walleye Association	President
Bill	Shreck	Michigan Department of Transportation	
Ryan	Cunningham	Michigan Historic Preservation Network	Volunteer
Nancy	Finegood	Michigan Historic Preservation Network	
Jennifer	Reinhardt	Michigan Historic Preservation Network	Detroit Preservationist Specialist

PARTICIPANT LIST, CONTINUED

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	REPRESENTING	TITLE
Nicolette	Carlone	Public Lighting Authority	
Tiffany	VanDetley	Riverside Kayak Connection	
Jeff	Griffith	The Youth Connection	
Lisa	Perez	US Forest Service	
James	Hines	US Coast Guard STA Belle Isle	
Justin	Stanley	US Coast Guard STA Belle Isle	
Alvina	Gipson	Western Michigan University, Metro Detroit	
Diana	Jacobson	YMCA	
Lynette	Simmons	YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit	VP of Mission Resources
Wyatt	Griffith		

ATTENDEES NOT PARTICIPATING

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	REPRESENTING	TITLE
Karis	Floyd	DNR-PRD	Unit Manager
Jacob	Brown	DNR-PRD	Unit Supervisor
Debbie	Jensen	DNR-PRD	Management Plan Administrator
Amanda	Hertl	DNR-PRD	Urban Area Planner
Andrea	LaFontaine	DNR Exec.	Special Advisor to Southeast Michigan
David	Malloch	DNR Law Enforcement	Captain
Scott	Pratt	DNR-PRD	Southern Field Operations Chief
Damon	Owens	DNR-PRD; LED	Sergeant
Michele	Hodges	Belle Isle Conservancy	President
Brittany	Sanders	Belle Isle Conservancy	Director of Community Engagement
Bill	Shreck	MDOT Executive Office	Intergovernmental Liaison

### C.3 Public Input Workshop

#### Summary of Public Input Workshop

The public was invited to share their thoughts on the future of Belle Isle in two sessions on March 29th, 2017, from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm and from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm. The meeting format was nearly identical to the stakeholder meetings, with the exception of the participant introductions.

Over the two sessions, 99 attendees were recorded. Each attendee was given a blank index card and asked to record his/her name, zip code, how long they have been visiting or involved with the island, and the answer to the prompt “What matters most to me about Belle Isle Park is...” The participants shared the answer to this prompt within their tables as an introduction to their groups. The answers of those who returned their introduction cards to the planning team are listed at the end of this document.

Similarly to the stakeholder meeting, a status update on the park and a summary of recent improvement projects was presented by the DNR and the Belle Isle Conservancy, followed by a series of input exercises. The results of the exercises are detailed below. This summary represents the combination of results from both the afternoon and evening public input sessions.

#### Exercise 1: Say one word or phrase that describes Belle Isle right now.

When the public thinks about Belle Isle today, the island’s natural beauty, rich history, safe and family-friendly atmosphere, and recent improvements come to mind. The words and phrases that were mentioned at three or more tables are listed below.

EXERCISE 1	
ITEMS	TIMES MENTIONED
Natural setting / Nature	9
Clean	6
Safer	6
Beautiful	5
Evolving / Improving / Greatly Improved	5
Work in progress	5
Tranquil/Peaceful	4
Unique	4
Families / Family friendly	3
Historic	3
Provide wonderful views / scenic views	3

#### Exercise 2: Say one word or phrase you would like to describe Belle Isle in the future.

The public who attended the input sessions would like to be able to describe Belle Isle as a place that is first and foremost inclusive and accessible by all. They would like the island to be bike- and pedestrian-friendly, to have more food options and restaurants, and to host more winter events and activities. There were several groups that would like to see the Grand Prix discontinued and have motorsports prohibited on the island. Finally, the public would like the island to be a world-class facility. Below are items that were mentioned by three or more groups.

EXERCISE 2	
ITEMS	TIMES MENTIONED
Access by all / Accessible / Inclusive	8
Bike friendly / Cycling Trails	5
No Grand Prix	5
Pedestrian-friendly	5
Motorsports prohibited	4
Beautiful	3
Food/restaurants	3
Winter events	3
World class	3

#### Exercise 3: What do you like most and least about Belle Isle?

The public was asked to discuss what they liked the most and least about Belle Isle. The items that were most frequently mentioned included the unique attractions on Belle Isle such as the Conservatory, Aquarium, and James Scott Memorial Fountain; the natural beauty and scenic views; recreational amenities such as the beach, walking paths, bicycling paths, and non-motorized watercraft rentals; as well as the location of the park close to the urban center. The item that was liked the least by the public was the Grand Prix, which was mentioned at 13 tables over the two sessions. The public also dislikes the number of food options available, the hours of operation and closed facilities, and the auto-centric nature of the island’s circulation system.

EXERCISE 3

LIKE MOST	TIMES MENTIONED	LIKE LEAST	TIMES MENTIONED
Conservatory	10	Grand Prix	13
Nature	9	No food sites available	5
Aquarium	7	Hours of operation	4
Beach	6	Closed golf course	3
Walking paths / trails	6	Too auto-centric	3
Views	5		
Beauty of the island	3		
Bike ride	3		
Close by=accessible	3		
Kayak/canoe	3		
Scott Fountain	3		



Community Engagement Session at Belle Isle Park

**Exercise 4: What differences have you noticed about Belle Isle in the last three years?**

Over the last three years, the public has noticed several improvements in the park. Frequently mentioned items were the improved restrooms and overall higher level of maintenance, an increased number of visitors, a safer atmosphere, and attractions re-opening. Some have noticed that the police presence has increased, which to some is a positive aspect, while others see this as negative. Items mentioned at three or more tables are listed below.

EXERCISE 4

ITEMS	TIMES MENTIONED
Bathrooms improved / clean	7
More people / crowded / more activity	7
Much cleaner	7
Safer	7
Have removed dead and downed + tree maintenance improved	4
Improvements/restoration of facilities & buildings (bathrooms/shelters)	4
More families	4
Aquarium open and improved / better hours	3
Melting pot / more diversity	3
More police presence	3
New bridge lighting	3
No loud music!	3
Park safety/cleaner	3
Scott Fountain is running	3



Community Engagement Session at Belle Isle Park

### Exercise 5: What improvements or changes would you like to see that would increase your enjoyment of Belle Isle? (with voting)

Each group discussed what they would like to change on the island, and the results were wide-ranging. Over 130 items were mentioned by the groups that attended both sessions. The most frequently mentioned ideas included discontinuing the Grand Prix, creating a public boat launch to access the Detroit River, re-opening the golf course to the public, and renovating the Belle Isle Boat House (formerly known as the Detroit Boat Club). Items mentioned at two or more tables are listed below.

EXERCISE 5		
ITEMS	TIMES MENTIONED	VOTES
No Grand Prix	7	28
Boat launch / access	4	6
Open golf course for public use / Restore golf course	4	6
Assist Detroit Boat Club with improvements/renovations	3	9
Winter sports / activities (ice skating, cross country skiing, sledding)	3	6
Activities for kids / teens	3	4
Restore / Open Belle Isle Zoo	3	4
Food trucks (diverse) (small business) / on a permanent basis	2	8
Less time for setup/take down of Grand Prix	2	8
Remove or reduce effects of Grand Prix	2	7
Horseback riding / stables	2	4
Repair fishing pier at coast guard, make accessible	2	4
Clean/restore canals	2	3
More education opportunities / school programs	2	3
Expanded programming / more activities	2	2
Lifeguard at the beach	2	2
Restored band shell, music on the island	2	2
Public access to covered bridge / repair	2	1

### Final Exercise: Collective Priorities

As one person from each group presented the highest-voted items from their vision of Belle Isle, the planning team transferred those ideas into a separate exercise, combining similar items. As the attendees left the input session, they voted on their top three items from the collective priorities list. This afforded them the opportunity to vote on an item that was not mentioned at their table. Below are all of the collective priorities from both sessions, combined into one list. The three items that received the most votes all involve the Grand Prix, either discontinuing it or minimizing the impact of the event. Other top priorities included improving the canals, creating walking trails in the woods, and adding winter activities and events. This input will be considered by the planning team when creating a ten year action plan.

FINAL EXERCISE	
COLLECTIVE PRIORITIES	COMBINED VOTES
Remove/reduce effects of the Grand Prix	24
No Grand Prix (and eliminate association parking, etc)	20
Minimize Grand Prix impact (less time for set up and take down)	19
Clear connections between the streams and lakes (clean canals)	14
Walking trails in the woods	13
Winter sport activities (ice skating, cross country skiing, sledding)	11
Canoe/kayak rental, sail boards etc	10
Food trucks permanently and other affordable food options	10
Greater food options (general store, restaurant, bottled water, BBQ)	10
More free family programming (movies in the park, food truck rally)	8
Non-motorized trail (whole island)	8
Reduce police presence	8
Increase public relations	7
Kid activities	7
Repaved roads and bike lanes	7
Repurpose zoo and golf course	7
Better maintained gardens and canals	6
Large & small events (musical, etc.)	6
Preservation of natural resources	6
Add golf course	5

FINAL EXERCISE, CONTINUED	
COLLECTIVE PRIORITIES	COMBINED VOTES
Create unique waterfront access	5
Extended Aquarium hours	5
Restrooms open all the time	5
Boat club improvements	4
Emergency/safety station	3
Horseback riding and stables	3
More activities for kids and teens	3
Provide a free day	3
Restore the zoo	3
Improved communication regarding passes, permits, rules, etc	2
Intelligent enforcement	2
Kayak lockers	2
Repeal motorsports	2
Restaurants	2
Skate park	2
Cooling and warming centers	1
Boat launch between River Rouge and Detroit Boat Club	0
Public Wi-Fi	0
Sports leagues	0



**Introduction Card Answers**

WHAT MATTERS MOST TO ME ABOUT BELLE ISLE PARK IS.....
Love the diversity of the park, would love to start RC Boat Club and RC Car Club
Enjoying the peace and quiet on the island
Refuge, nature, water, peace & quiet
Preserving its beauty and access to the public.
Continuing improvements by DNR, enhancing the park's beauty and its benefits to our citizens
The beautiful scenery and open spaces
It's here for all of us!
Presently we park and watch the ships go by, learned to sail at the DYC, attend power squad at DYC
The history and future of this amazing gem in the middle of the Great Lake basin. The world's largest fresh water reservoir.

## WHAT MATTERS MOST TO ME ABOUT BELLE ISLE IS....., CONTINUED

Public access and place for kids

Easy access to safe bike training and running that has bathrooms and water stops.

Having a natural sanctuary to relax, read, and enjoy a peaceful experience

Work at the Aquarium for education. Family has been here off Elliot since 1927. Uncle (~93) has been ice skating here since 1930.

Keeping it for the residents of Detroit and visitors

Keeping it open for the residents of Detroit and others

Family, visits weekly, graduation party, weddings, engagement, tap and ballet recital on the fountain

Access, hiking, land sailing, kayaking

Access to everyone regardless of background. Conservatory.

Safe, clean, family-oriented all attractions

No Grand Prix. Set up and take down is way too long and is a nuisance for the public users. Would like to see ice skating in the winter.

The Conservatory

Conservatory and Aquarium

Not over commercializing it. Keep it more natural. Clean, road repairs.

Natural setting in the urban area in the Great Lakes basin.

It's natural beauty, all seasons for all people

Green space/park in the city. Reopen the golf course (not disc golf!)

A blend of country in a city setting

Knowing from personal experience how much family activity can exist and entertain. Preserving and restoring its heritage. And remove the kayak launch in the lagoon area near the NYC.

The Conservatory and garden, daffodil program, fountain

Clean, safe, attractions

Availability

Developing and maintaining Belle Isle as a world class recreation destination for families from throughout Michigan and the world.

A lot safer and cleaner

Great local venue to run/bike while experiencing the river but avoid downtown.

It is a place for families and recreation activities. It is in the middle of the two countries.

Termination of Grand Prix/non-renewal of contract with Penske group, and demolition/removal of over 10 acres of concrete paddock, slabs, lots, and reinvestment of grass, trees, parkland so that the area may once again be enjoyed by the public. The paving over of 10 acres has created massive blight on what used to be the prettiest part of the island.

Beautiful flower garden

Nature for Detroiters, kids & adults

I walk on Belle Isle weekly and often bring my family to different activities. My grandmother was the Director of the Belle Isle Zoo. I love nature and grew up in Puerto Rico so coming somewhere with water is important for me.

Preserving the flatwoods

A peaceful place to enjoy nature

WHAT MATTERS MOST TO ME ABOUT BELLE ISLE PARK IS....., CONTINUED

Public access and minimizing the impact and closures of the Grand Prix
I'd like to see an inclusive island that provides restoration to the community through unique attractions/events (restoring the canal, canoe rides, paddle boats, skate park, disability inclusive playgrounds, and preservation of natural resources).
water sports, historical moments
Great getaway, great views, golf
Belle Isle is a treasured community asset and congregation place. It should be available to the people of Detroit first and foremost, and the voices of black Detroiters should be prioritized at every step in this process. Since the DNR took over police patrols and check points have made my black neighbors feel unwelcome and criminalized. I myself have been stopped three times since the take over for such minor things as bicycle reflectors. I want to feel safe from police when using this public resource; I want my friends and neighbors to feel the same safety.
The cultural assets such as the Aquarium, Conservatory, fountain and sports facilities
The natural landscape which is rare and irreplaceable
Recreational access and investing in our current infrastructure, athletic complex, and golf course
Natural beauty
Natural landscape, sound of water, the peacefulness and swimming, picnics, recreation, skating, biking
Great lakes museum, Conservatory, nature center, Aquarium, biking
Grand Prix and the natural beauty!
An enjoyable piece of nature, so close to home-free.
My family has been hosting picnics for over 50 years here
Keeping Belle Isle safe and maintaining buildings and grounds
Keeping it in good shape, safe, people friendly and clean.
Activities and events, Aquarium and Conservatory
The peaceful nature setting with lots of activities to do
Please consider having a free day once a week. It would be psychologically symbolic and sociologically positive for Detroiters to help them understand that this is a state park but that you recognize its special history and the immense amount of financial and social support has had from its citizens/residents over many years. I also note that none of us talked about swimming and the beaches, probably because it was a very senior group!
The beauty and peace in the middle of the city.
Belle Isle to me is a respite and oasis in the city-something other cities don't have. We can be proud of it and help to keep its beauty intact.
That it "stays open to everyone." "Accommodating"
Teach entrepreneurial skills to children in sports, entertainment, science and technology. Establish a campus on the park. Stabilize community support and wellness, campus generates revenue, purpose and longevity. Secure educational, physical, and mental hope for Detroit children. Our school has been planning to start "summer training" on the park for a year.
Current member of Friends of the Detroit River, we partnered with Fish Habit and access improvements. Belle Isle is unique: natural setting, variety of activities, memories/history, February "shiver on the river" winter event
The canals and exploring the wildlife
Place to get away
What means the most to me is the longer-term black residents in the nearby neighborhoods have the same opportunity to benefit from improvements to the island. In my neighborhoods association, we hear many people feel unsafe coming here because of the police checkpoints and excessive policing since the state took over. I feel unsafe being constantly pulled over for no reason. I also strongly feel the island should stay accessible to low-income Detroiters, not just suburban white people. Finally, the Grand Prix creates noise pollution that affects all the surrounding neighborhoods, has a negative environmental impact on the island and makes it a less pleasant space to visit.

WHAT MATTERS MOST TO ME ABOUT BELLE ISLE IS..., CONTINUED

Restoring its natural beauty and eliminating racing of cars
Park near downtown-the river, canoeing, driving through the woods, the beach, golf, riding my bike around the island, wolverine200, roller skating/blading the Grand Prix track, tennis, watching the fireworks, visiting the Aquarium and Conservatory, submarine races, Dossin museum, Scott fountain, picnics after weekly golf, banquet at boat club.
Escape and open space, water, access, nature
Keeping it clean up and all facilities open to the public. Also keeping the senior power days going every year for the seniors
Nature- I love how peaceful it is!
New kayak ramp blocking flow-closing opening reducing flow to the beach, communication-Belle Isle app, One stop shop for events/info
Inclusivity and community engagement, recreational activities

C.4 Online Public Input Questionnaire

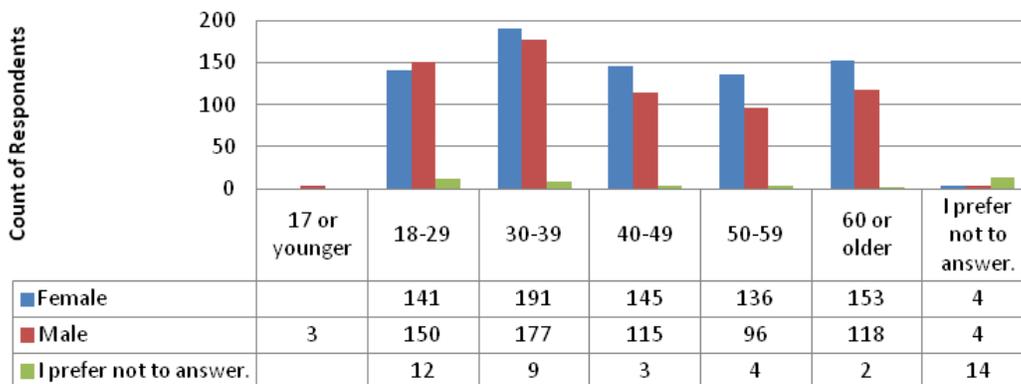
Summary of Public Input Questionnaire

The planning team created a brief online questionnaire to run concurrently with the public meetings to enable those that were not able to attend the public meetings in person to provide input. The questionnaire was designed to reflect the same types of input that was gathered at those meetings. The survey was open from March 15th until April 7th, and was advertised officially through a DNR press release, featured in newspaper articles, and shared on social media. The responses collected contained many diverse opinions, and this summary highlights the common themes.

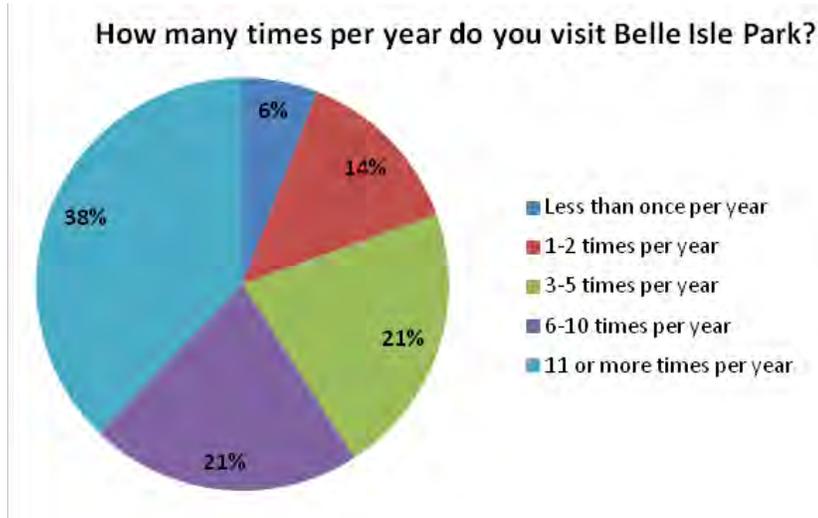
Many people were interested in engaging with the input process; the survey garnered 1,536 responses. The majority of those interested had visited the park in the last 12 months (95%). The respondents were nearly evenly distributed in terms of gender and age, except there were only three respondents under the age of 17. The majority of respondents were from Detroit and the surrounding area as can be seen on the adjacent map.



Age and Gender of Respondents



Those who responded to the survey visit Belle Isle Park on a frequent basis. As can be seen on the pie chart below, 38% of respondents visit the park 11 or more times per year, compared with only 6% of respondents that visit the park once per year.



**What three words would you use to describe Belle Isle?**

Respondents were asked what three words they would use to describe Belle Isle, and the results were diverse and revealing. The most common words used to describe the park are beautiful, historic, peaceful, fun, unique, and relaxing. Most of the words used to describe the park were positive and reflect the view of the island as a relaxing, family-friendly destination filled with wonderful memories. A word cloud of the most frequent responses can be seen below; the bigger the word the more frequently it was used.



### What do you like most about Belle Isle?

When asked what one thing they liked the most about Belle Isle, some of the most frequent responses mentioned the natural areas within the park. Respondents enjoyed having a large, public open space in close proximity to downtown Detroit. They mentioned the beautiful scenic views, especially of the Detroit River, and the peaceful and quiet feeling of the park. Respondents also frequently mentioned the variety of activities available in the park. This ranged from main attractions such as the Conservatory and Aquarium, the Scott Fountain, and events such as the Grand Prix to recreational amenities such as trails and the beach. Below is a word cloud of the most commonly mentioned words.



### What is the one thing you would most like to change about Belle Isle Park?

Although the desired changes to Belle Isle varied widely, there were many items that were mentioned frequently. One frequently mentioned item was the Grand Prix; many respondents would like to see the event discontinued entirely, while others would like to lessen the impact of the event on the island. Many did not like the large concrete parking area utilized for the race and would like to see it returned to a natural area. Other comments related to restoration of the park, whether of underutilized areas such as the closed zoo and golf course, historic buildings such as the Casino, or recreational amenities such as the canals. Others would like to see increased maintenance of the island, including the restrooms. Many respondents would like to see an increased number of open restrooms. Additional amenities that were requested include a public boat launch, additional benches and seating areas, and well-maintained nature trails. Others would like to see administrative changes such as consistent hours between main attractions.

### What improvements have you noticed in the last two years that contribute to your experience at Belle Isle Park?

In the last two years, the respondents to the survey have noticed many positive changes to the island. Respondents most frequently noticed that the island is cleaner, including the restrooms, and that it feels safer. They have noticed improvements to main attractions such as the Aquarium, Conservatory, and Scott Fountain, as well as the new playground. An overall increased level of maintenance and care has been noticed.

**What are your top three priorities for the future of Belle Isle Park?**

Many of the items mentioned as top priorities for the future of Belle Isle echo the answers given for desired changes to the island. These include discontinuing or reducing the impact of the Grand Prix, preserving and restoring existing facilities, restoring or redeveloping the old zoo site, and improving pedestrian and non-motorized infrastructure. Many respondents are most concerned with maintaining the park’s natural beauty and open space, which they see as its most important attribute. Cleanliness of facilities and overall safety were other frequently mentioned priorities. Some respondents would like to see more community events hosted on the island to bring in additional visitors, while others would like to limit the number of events in the park. A random sample of 30 of the 1,437 responses to this question follows, demonstrating the wide variety of people’s priorities for Belle Isle Park.

BELLE ISLE PARK - STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE				
WHAT ARE YOUR TOP THREE PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE OF BELLE ISLE PARK?				
NUMBER	RESPONSE DATE	FIRST PRIORITY	SECOND PRIORITY	THIRD PRIORITY
122	March 29, 2017 6:51 PM	End the car races; these disrupt Detroiters’ peaceful usage of the park for approximately 3 months of the year with set up and take down.	Keep the forest paths and the canal clear for passage of bikes, pedestrians, and small water craft	Keep bathrooms available and clean.
898	March 17, 2017 12:45 PM	Public boat ramp!	Rebuilt fishing pier	24 hour access
895	March 17, 2017 1:14 PM	Safety	Keep the east end raw	Cleanliness
1130	March 16, 2017 6:51 PM	Sort out political issues	Continue and grow funding	Prioritize communities’ needs/ ideas
320	March 25, 2017 1:29 PM	The grand prix should go somewhere else or occupy less time on the island	Reopen the zoo area even if not as a zoo	More high quality food trucks?
393	March 24, 2017 2:50 PM	More family-fun activities (water slides)	Cleanliness	Food and beverage services
1310	March 15, 2017 7:36 PM	Nature	Accessibility to and around by non car means	Cleanliness
1121	March 16, 2017 9:43 AM	Bike trails	Activity building	Year round facilities
824	March 18, 2017 11:47 PM	Develop water ways		
1320	March 15, 2017 7:17 PM	Showing more people how amazing the island is.	Taking more friends and family back to visit the Aquarium.	Just enjoying it like I did when I was a kid.
370	March 24, 2017 5:02 PM	Remain under Detroit ownership.	Continued Park Admission fee for Automotive entry for park maintenance.	Park Security, either local or state provided.
37	April 3, 2017 7:14 PM	Conservatory	Bike trails	Places to lock bicycle
384	March 24, 2017 4:18 PM	Clean	More landscaping and natural areas	Less traffic circling
1113	March 16, 2017 10:44 AM	Abandoned zoo demolition / refurbishment	I love the grand Prix, it would be great to have a few more races on the island.	I’d love to see less trash, and more forested areas.
619	March 21, 2017 1:33 PM	More community events	Hiking trails/bike paths	Recreation/classes

BELLE ISLE PARK - STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE, CONTINUED				
NUMBER	RESPONSE DATE	FIRST PRIORITY	SECOND PRIORITY	THIRD PRIORITY
853	March 18, 2017 12:05 PM	Less grass, more native plants!	no more grand prix on the island	continuing to expand education opportunities for youth and adults
1276	March 15, 2017 8:53 PM	Keep fixing up the bathrooms	More signs for the kayak launch at the beach! (Thank you, we really appreciate the cross walk to the beach for the kayak launch)	More paved parking areas.
36	April 3, 2017 7:53 PM	Park is no place for disruptive race, end GrandPrix. In meantime shorten 3 month set-up/ take-down. Also, don't allow private events in natural areas.	Improve and upgrade the natural trails. The ones that exist are in poor condition (too often flooded or the trails is in disrepair).	Expand the number of publicly accessible natural areas and wildlife restoration areas and add interpretative / environmental education elements
1202	March 16, 2017 1:14 AM	update Casino	update yacht club	would love tennis area/club
711	March 20, 2017 4:26 PM	Safety	Maintenance of buildings and outdoor areas, bathrooms	Family friendly events
174	March 28, 2017 3:07 PM	Restrooms. How can they be closed for the season in a year-round park?	Drainage	Don't mess it up with junk. I go to bird watch, boat watch, just relax and walk the dog
764	March 20, 2017 12:00 AM	Rejuvenate the former zoo area- Redevelop....e.g expanded 18 hole golf course.....	Continue renovations of buildings abd structures on the Island	Provide ferry service from downtown (hart plaza) to the Island! Would have great demand on weekends and raise more revenue for the island
987	March 16, 2017 6:24 PM	Get rid of the Grand Prix	Get rid of the Grand Prix race tracks	Get rid of the Grand Prix
633	March 21, 2017 4:11 AM	Maintain all historic buildings and structure	Safety	Cleanliness
1150	March 16, 2017 3:45 AM	Preserve the Natural Landscape	Protect the habitat	Grow the park programming (Big Green Gym)
32	April 4, 2017 1:33 AM	Maintaining availability	Upgrading the Aquarium	More family events on the island
848	March 18, 2017 2:08 AM	Improving opportunities for nature observation	Conservation of native plants and animals	Preservation of historic buildings
1268	March 15, 2017 9:14 PM	Amenities!!!! Restaurants, shops, things to do (rent ice skates, rent boats, etc.)	Amenities!!!! Restaurants, shops, things to do (rent ice skates, rent boats, etc.)	Amenities!!!! Restaurants, shops, things to do (rent ice skates, rent boats, etc.)
163	March 28, 2017 4:31 PM	Develop sidewalk/running path around the entire exterior of the park.	Restoring existing facilities	Decrease spacing of streetlights

Overall, the results of the public input questionnaire were similar to the results of the public input sessions hosted by the planning team. These results, along with those of the public and stakeholder input sessions, will be considered when creating the action plan for Belle Isle Park.



**Belle Isle Park - Strategic Direction and Management Plan Questionnaire**

The Present and Future of Belle Isle

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks & Recreation Division (PRD) in association with the Belle Isle Conservancy is in the process of developing a Strategic Direction and Management Plan for Belle Isle Park. This plan will be used to define a long-range planning and management strategy that protects the resources of the site while addressing recreation and education needs and opportunities. Public and stakeholder input is a critical component of the planning process. We invite you to complete this short questionnaire to give your thoughts on the present and future of Belle Isle Park.

Please note there is a 150 character limit on written answers.

**\* 1. Have you visited Belle Isle Park in the last 12 months?**

- Yes
- No

**\* 2. How many times per year do you visit Belle Isle Park?**

- Less than once per year
- 1-2 times per year
- 3-5 times per year
- 6-10 times per year
- 11 or more times per year

**3. What three words would you use to describe Belle Isle Park?**

1

2

3

**4. What is the one thing you like most about Belle Isle Park?**

**5. What is the one thing you would most like to change about Belle Isle Park?**

**6. What improvements have you noticed in the last two years that contribute to your experience at Belle Isle Park?**

**7. What are your top three priorities for the future of Belle Isle Park?**

First Priority

Second Priority

Third Priority

**8. Do you have any other comments about the park or the strategic direction and management plan?**



**Belle Isle Park - Strategic Direction and Management Plan Questionnaire**

Tell Us About Yourself

This section will help the planning team understand who uses the park.

**9. What is the ZIP code of your primary residence?**

**10. What is your age?**

- 17 or younger
- 18-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60 or older
- I prefer not to answer.

**11. What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female
- I prefer not to answer.

**12. Optional: If you would like to be kept informed about the Management Plan process, please leave your contact information below:**

Name

Email Address



**Belle Isle Park - Strategic Direction and Management Plan Questionnaire**

Thank you!

Thank you for participating in the Belle Isle Park Management Plan survey! Your input is appreciated. Visit <http://www.mdnrmanagementplans.org/belle-isle-park/> for more information!

## C.5 Public Input Meetings

### Summary of Public Input Meetings

The Public Input Meetings for Belle Isle Park were held in the afternoon and evening of February 1st, 2018, at the Department of Natural Resources Outdoor Adventure Center, 1801 Atwater Street, Detroit. The general public was notified about the meetings through a press release, internet postings, and email notifications. A total of 147 attendees were recorded on sign-in sheets at the two meetings.

Each meeting began with a brief introduction of planning team members. Introductions were followed by a short overview of the strategic management plan process for Belle Isle Park and the plan contents. After the presentation, attendees were asked to review the presentation boards that included excerpts of the draft Strategic Management Plan including the statements of significance, draft management zones, and summarized ten-year action goals.

Participants were presented with several optional methods to express their comments. These methods included “sticky notes” for affixing comments directly onto the presentation boards, flip charts for recording other comments, and a comment sheet with six questions pertaining to the draft Strategic Management Plan contents that could be filled in and left behind for the planning team. Four copies of the complete draft Strategic Management Plan were available to attendees during the meeting for review.

In addition, participants were given ten dots to prioritize their preferred action goals from the ten-year action goals. The action goals that received the most dots included:

- The creation of a trail plan to improve the trail system for non-motorized circulation in the park (45 dots)
- Rehabilitating the Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory (39 dots)
- Canal water management (33 dots)
- Assessing the impact of large events on the park’s visitors and infrastructure (33 dots)
- Pursue hiking trail connections around the Blue Heron lagoon (33 dots)
- Creating a multi-modal circulation and wayfinding plan (30 dots)
- Developing a plan to repurpose the former zoo site (27 dots)
- Improving all picnic shelters (26 dots)

Participants also placed dots on sticky note comments that were affixed to the action goals board. This communicated to the planning team that their top priority was not already listed in the action goals. Some comments received many dots; for example, comments relating to the removal of the concrete “paddock” area received 34 dots.

The press release also informed the general public of the project website, <http://mdnrmanagementplans.org/belle-isle-park>, where they could access the draft plan at their leisure and submit comments. This website was also highlighted



during the public presentation. Online commenting was available until February 12th, during which time fifty-four comments were received. The majority of the comments related to a desire to minimize the impact of the Grand Prix or remove it from the island. The following is a representative comment:

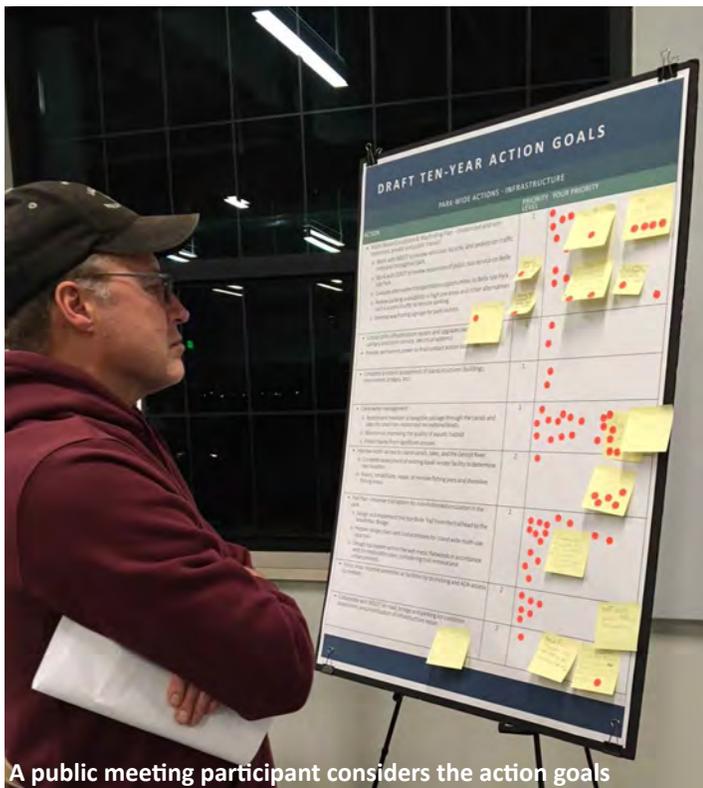
*I am writing to express my support to not renew the Grand Prix on Belle Isle. Belle Isle is a public park for the residences of the City. This is not a public use as it is not free and open to the public. It is only accessible for a select group of people, predominately not Detroit residents.*

*Use of the park is already limited by weather. The time of year means that a significant portion of Belle Isle is not accessible during the beautiful Spring months for several weeks.*

*Finally, the noise and improvements from Grand Prix go against the use of Belle Isle as an outdoor recreational haven in an urban environment. MDNR is making great strides to bring nature to the City on the East Riverfront. I urge you to replicate this effort on Belle Isle.*

Other comments included suggestions to preserve the natural areas of the island, a desire for improved walking and bicycle paths, expanded education opportunities, and ideas for improvements in various areas of the park. A packet containing 1,000 signatures in support of a boat launch on Belle Isle was handed to DNR staff at the meeting. This idea also received some opposition from meeting attendees concerned over additional paving.

These items, along with other input from the public, were considered as the planning team finalized the Strategic Management Plan.



A public meeting participant considers the action goals

Public meeting participants



Family friendly gathering at Belle Isle Park

## Appendix D: Past Survey Results

### D.1 2010 Survey Results

In the summer and fall months of 2010, the Belle Isle Conservancy and the Project for Public Spaces, conducted a survey that included park users (on-site) as well as off-site respondents and organizational supporters (remote); 2,237 surveys were collected. The surveys identified the following:

HIGH PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT RESPONSES	ON-SITE (# AND % OF RESPONDENTS)		REMOTE (# AND % OF RESPONDENTS)	
Re-open the Aquarium	256	38%	1107	71%
Re-open the canals for canoeing/kayaking	184	27%	896	57%
Re-open the Boat Club for public use	185	27%	728	47%

NOT ENOUGH AMENITIES RESPONSES	ON-SITE	REMOTE
Places to buy food	82%	66%
Drinking Fountains	74%	60%
Restrooms	59%	58%
Things To Do	52%	40%
Benches	51%	50%
Park Security	37%	61%
Waste Receptacles	50%	59%

COMMON/POPULAR PARK ACTIVITIES RESPONSES	ON-SITE	REMOTE
Picnic	39.1%	68.1%
Exercise	31.1%	55.4%
Stroll/walk	29.0%	61.3%
Socialize	23.2%	45.3%

Nearly 30% of the survey respondents indicated they would like to receive information about getting involved and volunteering at Belle Isle Park. Using the survey results, the DNR coordinated its planning processes and action items to maximize resources and unify the stakeholders and supporters of Belle Isle Park.

### D.2 2016 Survey Results

Following the 2014 season, the BIPAC conducted a strategic goal setting process to help define their expectations for Belle Isle Park. One action step was to obtain a statistically valid assessment of the public's perception of Belle Isle Park since the DNR commenced operation in February, 2014.

The survey was designed to gain an understanding, among different cohorts, of their perceptions of Belle Isle, its importance and value. Questions were established that could be repeated in the future to measure progress regarding the level of awareness surrounding the park's features and

potential improvements. MORPACE Marketing, Research and Consultants was commissioned to complete the survey. The survey was based upon a statistically significant random sample of residents from Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties and from the City of Detroit. A multiple-pronged methodology was used that included interviews with stakeholders associated with Belle Isle Conservancy, surveys from the general population of the three counties, and in-person intercept interviews conducted on the island itself.

The results of the survey are being used to guide investments and to ensure that the park operation is aligned with the public expectations. The following is the summary of the results:

- There was a higher level of awareness of Belle Isle, and a tendency to go to the park more often, among Detroiters versus people who live outside the city.
- Overwhelmingly, respondents thought of Belle Isle as a place to bring food/picnic rather than a location to purchase food.
- The park has more of a perception of being dirty and noisy among people who have not visited it within the past year.
- People who visited the park in the last year, and individuals who had not, had very similar views on the appropriate uses for Belle Isle. Especially popular items included family outings/celebrations, viewing scenery, walking and biking.
- Detroiters who have visited the park within the past year were significantly more inclined to feel that the \$11 state park passport was a good value compared to residents who have not visited in the past 12 months.
- Fresh air/open spaces and scenic drive/cruise were favorite reasons to actually come to Belle Isle among people who had been there in the past year, but visiting a museum and gardens were very high on the list among non-recent visitors.
- Visiting Belle Isle seems to be considered a social activity, with an overwhelming percentage of the respondents indicating that they go or will go with at least one other person.
- Scott Fountain/Statue and the Belle Isle Aquarium were easily the most visited sites and they were the favorites as well. In general, visitors were aware of the park's less viewed attractions like the Casino area and the Dossin Great Lakes Museum.
- Whether a visitor within the past year or not, the vast majority of individuals spent at least one hour in the park with more than 50%, of each group, being on the island for three or more hours.
- People who have been to the park within the past year clearly felt welcome (Top 2 Box score of 81%) and were satisfied with their experience/visit (Top 2 Box result of 89%).
- Among all respondents, helpfulness of the park's staff, improving its cleanliness and the restrooms were unmet

needs and would be the clearest paths to improving overall satisfaction and expanding the visitor base.

- Among Detroiters who have visited Belle Isle in the past year, two unmet needs stood out: The quality of the park's signage and the quality of the restrooms.
- Within the group of respondents who have not been to the park in the past year, improved restrooms, cleanliness, safety and security and the helpfulness of the park's staff were their chief unmet needs. Improvements in these areas could motivate some of them to visit and then, when they do, increase their potential satisfaction with the park.
- Among Conservancy list respondents, the unmet needs that, if improved, could lead to higher satisfaction at Belle Isle were the helpfulness of the park's staff and better restrooms.
- Among respondents who were metro residents, one area stood out as an unmet need: The restrooms.
- Among participants who had not visited the park in the last year, there was no extravagant reason why this was the case. They simply noted that they did not have the opportunity/were too busy, that it was too far to drive, etc.
- When asked about park improvement ideas via an open-end question, no single concept obtained more than 17% of the responses. Being cleaner/trash pickup, bathroom improvements, more security (all issues that showed up on the unmet needs charts) and more activities/concerts were mentioned the most.
- Individual Detroit residents who have not visited Belle Isle in the past year were more enthusiastic about music events, organized activities and boating activities than were Detroiters who have been to the park within the past year.
- People would like to obtain information about Belle Isle through many different means with none being dominant. The most common were the Internet, newspapers/magazines, social media, the Belle Isle Conservancy website and emails/on a listserv.



Lily Pond at the Conservatory



Entrance to the Belle Isle Aquarium

## Appendix E: Past Plan Summary

Three comprehensive planning studies were completed in 2016 and were used to inform this planning effort. Extracts from the Executive Summaries of the Biederman Redevelopment Ventures Plan for Belle Isle, Albert Kahn Belle Isle Aquarium and Conservatory Recommendations, and James Scott Memorial Water Fountain & Rehabilitation Master Plan are provided below for information. These plans were referenced as appropriate to formulate the actions proposed for implementation in this Strategic Management Plan. In addition, a list of all of the known major planning documents relating to Belle Isle Park, dating back to its inception, are included at the end of this section.

### E.1 Biederman Redevelopment Ventures

#### (BRV) Executive Summary (2016)

Belle Isle is the City of Detroit's most important park, and it has started to rebound after many challenging years with limited resources, thanks to the stewardship of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), with support from the Belle Isle Conservancy (BIC).

The DNR and the BIC have begun the process of stabilizing the island's infrastructure, fortifying the island's operations, and addressing some festering problems on the island. To raise Belle Isle to new heights, the DNR and the BIC must continue to aim high in their collective ambitions. Belle Isle has the potential to be the best urban park of its size in the world.

Together, the DNR and the BIC should strive for nothing less in their efforts to improve and maintain Belle Isle.

#### Vision for Belle Isle

The first section of this strategic plan will lay out a vision for a world-class Belle Isle, zone-by-zone, based on community listening sessions, interviews with stakeholders, careful observation, research, and professional experience. This vision is not a traditional master plan. Instead, it is a guide for individual capital renovation and operational improvement projects that should be planned in detail, designed, and executed by the DNR, BIC, and stakeholders from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. Additionally, programming and amenities should be planned and executed in partnership with community organizations from throughout metropolitan Detroit and Michigan. All of these groups must collaborate to ensure that Belle Isle continues to uphold and improve its strong appeal to local and worldwide visitors, through regular and engaging programs. The capital improvements made to Belle Isle's buildings and landscape will drastically improve the future of Belle Isle's appearance, feel, and number of visitors.

#### Financial Analysis of Belle Isle Improvements

The second section of this strategic plan will explore how Belle Isle can be financially strong. First, this section will lay out a possible expense budget for an improved park. Then, it will explore how this expense budget could be paid for by a

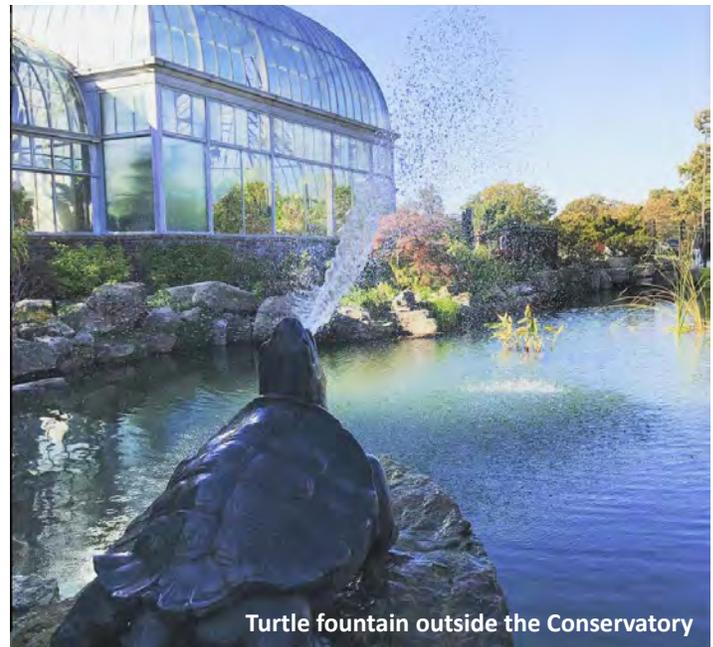
combination of appropriations from the State of Michigan and earned revenue from events, sponsorships, food and beverage operations, and philanthropic contributions. This expense budget is approximate and we understand that it might not be executed on the island in exactly the way that we describe. However, we feel that the approximate level of required expense is correct and serves as a useful target for creating goals for annual operating revenues.

After exploring the operating expense and revenue picture on Belle Isle, the second section will explore the approximate costs of making major capital improvements throughout the island. The first part of this sub-section will lay out zone-by-zone early estimates of the cost to make the capital improvements described in section one. These estimates are a combination of information gleaned from previous studies, projections made using ratios for comparable project costs, and the results of a capital cost-estimate study being pursued in parallel by the DNR. These estimates are preliminary and should be sharpened as the capital projects unfold. While they are preliminary, we believe these estimates are approximately correct and can be used as a starting point for developing a capital campaign for the island. Estimates are provided only for project zones where we believe the DNR and BIC should lead fundraising and project development. In other zones, shown without capital improvement cost estimates, a vendor or other type of partner should lead the fundraising and project development.

Following the estimate of capital cost improvements by zone, the second part of this sub-section will lay out the order with which we feel that capital improvements on the island should be pursued. This section includes the factors we based this list on and a description of our rationale for each prioritization. While we feel this prioritized list reflects the results of community listening sessions, interviews with stakeholders, careful observation, research, and professional experience, we understand that members of the BIC and DNR teams might prioritize differently and we expect this list to change. Regardless of the order, we think it is important that the two parties negotiate and agree upon a list of capital improvement project priorities.

### **Organizational & Governance Model for Belle Isle**

The third section of this document will explore the model for a strong, cooperative partnership between the DNR and the BIC to lead Belle Isle. This section will lay out possible organizational options that could guide the relationship between the DNR and the BIC, before describing what we believe to be the optimal solution. After summarizing the optimal solution, this section will provide greater detail on the roles and responsibilities of the DNR and the BIC in the



Turtle fountain outside the Conservatory

partnership and will provide rationale for how we arrived at this conclusion.

### **Putting the Partnership in Motion**

The fourth section of this document will describe the next steps for the DNR and BIC as they seek to form a strong, functional partnership and improve the island to world-class standards. This section will lay out in detail the terms of an MOU that could define the relationship between the DNR and BIC and outlines next steps for each organization. Finally, this section answers questions that have come up from various parties during the course of this project.

## **E.2 A Vision for Restoration**

### **Belle Isle Aquarium & Conservatory Strategic Recommendations (Albert Kahn Associates 2016)**

#### **Introduction**

The design team was charged by the Belle Isle Conservancy (BIC) to develop strategic recommendations for the rehabilitation and revitalization of the Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory. These two historic buildings, designed by famed Detroit architect Albert Kahn, are opposites in their display content, but combined they provide some of the greatest visual experiences found on Belle Isle. The Aquarium with its fish displays show constant movement of life, color and underwater culture while the majestic plants of the Conservatory draw the eye upwards or downwards with palm trees that soar high above and ferns and wild orchids that line the curving walkways. The grandeur of these buildings is accentuated by the robust formality of the

Conservatory Gardens which connects interior to exterior. The vision is to develop spaces that lead people on an exploration of aquatic and plant life.

## Project Site Context

The project site is located within Belle Isle’s Cultural Campus and is bound by Inselruhe Avenue to the east, The Strand to the south, Picnic Way on the west and Loiter Way to the north. This area contains the Belle Isle Aquarium, Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory and Gardens, a covered picnic pavilion/bus stop, surface parking lot and small lagoon for an overall size of 13.5 acres. Adjacent buildings are the Dossin Great Lakes Museum, City of Detroit Greenhouses, the White House, Nancy Brown Peace Carillon as well as open green spaces. Located nearby are other island attractions like the Flynn Pavilion, Belle Isle Casino and James Scott Memorial Fountain.

## Vision

Create a campus which reinforces the connection of the Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory while reintroducing visitors to these historic buildings and the educational benefits they contain.



Education at Belle Isle Aquarium

## Vision for Belle Isle Aquarium

The Aquarium opened in 1904 and has been providing generations of visitors with a glimpse into the aquatic ecosystem of the Great Lakes. Over the years it has gone through several renovations leaving each generation with a specific “snap shot in time” of the building and its content. Although the intention is to maintain the historic architectural character, significant updates to the fish displays and use of existing spaces, will be required to make the Aquarium an attraction that will draw visitors. A simple restoration and general maintenance will not generate enough interest to increase visits and will only create a historical curiosity for a select group of people.

The design team envisions a new state of the art aquatic display highlighting the fish of the Michigan Great Lakes Region as well as great lake regions around the world. The small existing individual tanks will be upgraded and potentially combined to create larger habitats that will each have a unique theme. The central pagoda and linear walls that divide the space will be removed, allowing a free flow of circulation between exhibits. The lower level will focus on office support, education and will contain classroom, lab space and offices. A large 4D theatre will provide memorable and educational interactive experiences for young and old alike.

## Vision for Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory and Gardens

Opening on the same day as the Aquarium, The Conservatory is one of the most striking buildings on Belle Isle, drawing visitors in with its neo-classical glass façade, then impressing them with the robust plant collection within. In 1955, the Conservatory was named after Anna Scripps Whitcomb, who donated her prized orchid collection. Staff and volunteers work tirelessly to maintain the remaining orchid collection as well as other collections: the palm tree, fern, tropical plant, flower and cacti collections.

The structure covers approximately 13,375 square feet with an eighty-five foot high central glass dome. Although still structurally sound, the steel frame and glass panels are in need of repair. The strategic plan calls for the repair and replacement of the steel frame, and installation of new energy efficient double glazed panels for all vertical windows. The display rooms will be updated with new environmental controls for heating and ventilation. The planting beds will benefit from irrigation, water temperature controls, and hydronic soil heating. Extensive landscape renovations to the formal gardens and along the lagoon’s edge will revamp the Conservatory’s “front yard”, and create an enhanced visitor experience connecting the interior with the exterior.

**Goals**

- Rehabilitate the Conservatory, Aquarium and garden grounds.
- Establish the highest professional standards for aquatic life, husbandry practices, and plant care to achieve AZA certification.
- Enhance day to day operations to support the facilities.
- Maintain zero cost admission for the public.
- Enhance user experience.
- Connect the Aquarium, Conservatory, and museum at a pedestrian scale.
- Develop revenue sources to support operations.
- Support educational programming (research and tour visits).
- Create an to sustain the vision.
- Right size staffing to support operations.
- Maintain the highest standards in meeting the wellbeing, biological, and physiological needs of the live collections.
- Set the stage for a capital campaign.
- Utilize and repurpose existing buildings adjacent to the campus for support and revenue services.

**Purpose of the Planning Exercise**

The body of this report:

- Inventories the existing building conditions.
- Identifies immediate recommendations to stabilize assets.
- Proposes new program to enhance the user experience
- Establishes an operational model to right size staff and expenses based on market analysis and organizational structure.

The Strategic Recommendations are prioritized to provide a framework for successful marketing and fundraising campaigns.



## Using Strategic Recommendations for Planning Purposes

This report is a tool to assist the BIC in selecting the appropriate recommendation based on available funding and timing to achieve the desired project goals. A hierarchy has been established in the listing of the recommendations to support and guide the development.

This framework provides for flexible implementation of various projects over time.

It should be noted that Early Required recommendations should take priority with regards next steps.

The Strategic Recommendation Matrix is a tool to assist the BIC in developing fundraising targets and phasing opportunities. This matrix includes Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) opinion of costs for each recommendation.

The operational model is also a flexible tool that is currently based on the following:

- Stabilized attendance at 268,000 people per year
- 12.25 FTE for the BIC staff and 10.5 FTE for DNR staff

Revenue streams and operation expenses will change over time. For example, until the staffing number of 22.75 FTE are realized, the total operational expense will be less than the established baseline number.



Volunteering at Belle Isle Park

## E.3 James Scott Memorial Water Fountain & Rehabilitation Master Plan

**Executive Summary (Hamilton Anderson Associates, 2016)**

### Scott Fountain & The Great Lawn

The Scott Fountain, Belle Isle's most recognizable landmark, is located at the west end of the island. Construction of Scott Fountain began in 1914 and was finished in 1925. Additional construction of lagoon seawalls extended through 1934 as part of the part of a Federal Emergency Relief Administration. The fountain has since enhanced Belle Isle's attractiveness and stature, and the fountain continues to be a popular gathering spot on the island.

The fountain plaza is enhanced with site amenities and landscaping, uniting the fountain and cascade spaces, making it a more welcoming site for the public and special occasions. To acknowledge the importance and value of the fountain and cascades, the plan adjusts automobile access directly adjacent to the fountain. Cars can park in adjacent parking lots. Accessible pathways connect the fountain and basin areas to the promenade and picnic areas. Landscaping includes seasonal flowers and shrubbery complementing the elegance of the white marble landmark. Elements inconsistent with the formal activity such as the wide pavement, chain link fencing and barricades are removed or relocated.

### Proposed Site Plan

A graphic site plan is included which illustrates the recommendations described below.

### Architectural and Site Recommendations

#### One to Three Years

1. Install ADA accessible route to fountain.
2. Grind and tuck point all fountain mortar joints.
3. Repair rhytons, fish, relief panels and cherub.
4. Clean and seal all marble surfaces on main fountain, upper and lower cascades and marble stairs.
5. Modify existing rail at top and bottom of lower cascade to prevent falls.
6. Repair and repaint the existing steel railings and guardrails in short term.
7. Repair lead flashing throughout the fountain.
8. Repair expansion joints at outer basin, and upper and lower cascades.

#### Three to Five Years

9. Consider making control room available for tours.
10. Install controls to support internet.

11. Install cabling to support new control devices.
12. Clean Scott Statue.
13. Replace railings and guardrails with more appropriately designed fixtures.
14. Enhance pedestrian connections to central promenade.
15. Remove parking on lagoon side of fountain circle. Replace with pedestrian scaled amenities.
16. Reconfigure remaining parking.
17. Reduce drive width leading to fountain circle.
18. Enhance landscaping around fountain and basin and unify space.
19. Add amenities such as benches, bike racks and lighting.

### Five to Ten Years

20. Replace paving around fountain.

### Mechanical and Electrical Recommendations

#### One to Three Years

1. Replace the piping, valves, and components serving the fountain. The pipe material shall be stainless steel or PVC.
2. Replace the existing 24" isolation valve and control lever.
3. Remove the basket strainer from the transfer pipe.
4. Replace three existing vertical split case pumps.
5. Upgrade the control system to allow the fountain to operate automatically in lieu of manually.
6. Replace the existing heating and ventilating system for the pump room.
7. Upgrade the incoming electrical service equipment (to be completed by DTE). This is a low priority item, as the equipment appears to be in working condition. This will be completed by DTE as a part of the take-over of the PLD equipment and is expected to be a no cost item to the project. Anticipated schedule for this recommendation is near-term (1-3 years).
8. Upgrade electrical distribution equipment. New equipment should be NEMA 4X rated due to the humidity in the space. Our recommendation would be equipment in Polycarbonate housings, but stainless steel is also an option. Anticipated schedule for this recommendation near-term (1-3 years). We assume this would happen at the same time as recommendation #1.
9. Upgrade branch circuit wiring and conduits. Replace outdated wiring and corroded conduit infrastructure. Our recommendation would be to use PVC conduit throughout due to the humidity and chemicals used in the space. Anticipated schedule for this recommendation is near-term (1-3 years). We assume this would happen at the same time as recommendation #1.



James Scott Memorial Fountain

#### Three to Five Years

10. Upgrade lighting in the pump room. Replace existing systems with NEMA 4x rated LED fixtures. Anticipated schedule for this recommendation is mid-term (3-5 years).
11. Upgrade in-fountain lighting. LED in either static white or color changing could be utilized in a similar or re-imagined configuration, offering greater flexibility for shows or special events. Commercial grade, submersible fixtures would be utilized in a configuration recommended by a lighting designer. Anticipated schedule for this recommendation is mid-term (3-5 years), but should be considered to be done to coincide with other fountain repairs.

#### Five to Ten Years

12. Option – Add lighting in Cascades. Lighting was not an original feature of the fountain, but was added in the 1980's. Similar lighting could be added to the cascades during renovation if desired, to make these features a part of the lighting show. Anticipated schedule for this recommendation is long-term (5+ years), but should be considered as a part of the in-fountain lighting upgrades, or done to coincide with other fountain repairs.
13. Re-create and re-install perimeter lighting. Utilizing the original plans, commissioning the reproduction of the (16) "Bronze Candelabra" fixtures would restore some missing original details to the perimeter. Utilizing an LED source with modern controls in the globe, would allow the lighting to be controlled and dimmed by a new fountain lighting control system for integration in any evening shows.

#### Costs

To realize the vision of a fully restored Scott Fountain, up to \$5.5 million in long-term investment will be needed to revitalize the Fountain's engineering, architecture and site.

BELLE ISLE PARK PAST PLANS				
TITLE	DATE	PREPARED BY	PREPARED FOR	SUMMARY
Frederick Law Olmsted initial site plans	1883	Frederick Law Olmsted	City of Detroit	Original site plan drawings done by Frederick Law Olmsted.
A Catalogue on the Flora of Detroit	1902	O.A. Farwell	Commissioners of Parks and Boulevards	Catalogue of plant species collected from Belle Isle along with some areas surrounding the Park.
1972 HCMA Proposed Master Plan	1972	Huron Clinton Metroparks Association		New master plan to re-energize and the park, which included a tollgate and management by HCMA
1976 Proposed Master Plan	1976	Kiley, Tyndall, Walker	Friends of Belle Isle	Comprehensive revitalization plan that included a proposal to remove automobiles from the island
Belle Isle Canal Rehabilitation	1993	JJR Inc	City of Detroit	The investigation includes scientific analyses of water quality, aquatic and terrestrial resources, hydrology, land use, visual aesthetics, and concepts for management recommendations.
Restoration Study for Belle Isle Aquarium and Belle Isle Conservatory	1995	Albert Kahn Associates	Detroit Recreation Department	Inspection and record of the condition of the Belle Isle Conservatory and Aquarium buildings, including recommendations for repair or replacement.
Canal Renovations Project Belle Isle Park	1996	JJR Inc, Tucker Young Jackson Tull Inc	City of Detroit	Plans depicting the necessary canal renovations.
Detroit Boat Club Proposed Site Plan	1997	Hamilton Anderson Associates	Detroit Recreation Department	Plans for the proposed Detroit Boat Club.
Belle Isle Lake and Canal Long-Term Management Program	1999	JJR Inc	City of Detroit	This document reviews the water levels necessary to maintain the canal and what procedures are in place to do this.
Belle Isle Lakes and Canals Aquatic Weed Control Program	2000	Smith Group JJR	City of Detroit	Record of applications of aquatic herbicide (SONAR) to Belle Isle surface waters and post-treatment observations and recommendations for aquatic weed control.
Tree Survey and Plant Lists for the Woods of Belle Isle Park	2002	King MacGregor Environmental Inc		Baseline information about the flora of the woodland in the northeastern part of Belle Isle.
Draft Aquatic Restoration Report and Environmental Assessment	2002	City of Detroit	USACE	Comprehensive, long-term management strategy to improve water quality, recreational activities, and restore the aesthetic character of the island's internal aquatic resource.
Belle Isle Master Plan	2005	Hamilton Anderson Associates	Detroit Recreation Department	Comprehensive master plan for renovating Belle Isle proposing site-specific improvements including environmental enhancement, historic preservation, circulation and programming are addressed.
Belle Isle Physical Needs Assessment	2005	Community Development Solutions LLC	Detroit Recreation Department	Assessment of 54 facilities on Belle Isle, including data on the structures , defective conditions, specific repair needs, and a detailed cost estimate for each item.

BELLE ISLE PARK PAST PLANS, CONTINUED				
TITLE	DATE	PREPARED BY	PREPARED FOR	SUMMARY
Belle Isle Bird Surveys	2005	Allen T. Chartier	DTE Energy	A record of 2005 bird surveys summarized by season, and an annotated species list for the island summarizing all bird sightings from 2005 as well as historical records.
Final Facility Review for Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory	2010	BEI Associates	Detroit Building Authority	Evaluation of the condition and operations of lighting, heating and ventilation systems that serve the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory complex.
Floristic Quality Assessment	2013	Gerould Wilhelm & Conservation Design Forum	BIC	Floristic inventory and quality assessment of the Belle Isle Forest site.
Ecological Management Plan	2013	Cardno JFNew & Conservation Design Forum	BIC	Guiding document for the management of the forest from 2014 through 2018.
Nancy Brown Carillon Rehabilitation Master Plan (RMP)	2014	Quinn Evans Associates	BIC, City of Detroit's Historic Designation Board, Detroit Recreation Department	Guidance in restoring the Nancy Brown Peace Carillon and ensuring its continued integrity and function for the future, including written construction documents to address critical repairs.
Tree Inventory Summary Report	2014	Davey Resource Group	DNR	Inventory and assessment of the trees located in Belle Isle Park, including species composition, tree condition and maintenance recommendations.
Belle Isle Aquarium and Conservatory Strategic Recommendations	2016	Albert Kahn Associates	BIC	Strategic recommendations for the rehabilitation and revitalization of the Belle Isle Aquarium and the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory.
Belle Isle Trail Master Plan	2016	Smith Group JJR	DNR	Master plan for future trail development on Belle Isle, including a 6-mile paved multi-use trail, a trailhead for the Iron Belle Trail and a trail system through the 200-acre woodland.
Draft Belle Isle Comprehensive Hydrologic Assessment	2016	Smith Group JJR	Friends of the Detroit River, DNR, NOAA	Report on the current hydrology on Belle Isle specific to the +/- 200 acre wet-mesic flatwoods forest (flatwoods). This project builds upon the Phase 1 work in 2013.
Lake Okonoka Habitat Restoration Project	2016	WadeTrim, SOMAT Engineering	Friends of the Detroit River, DNR, MDOT	Bridge and culvert engineering study to improve aquatic habitat.
Natural Resource Stewardship Plan	2016	Glenn Palmgren, PRD	DNR- PRD	Identifies a set of natural resource conservation targets for the park and a series of strategies and specific tasks to address threats to these conservation targets.
James Scott Memorial Water Fountain & Rehabilitation Plan	2016	Hamilton Anderson Associates	BIC	Analysis of the history, current conditions, and systems and recommendations for rehabilitation.
Strategic Plan for Belle Isle	2016	Biederman Redevelopment Ventures	DNR & BIC	This plan presents a vision for Belle Isle Park.



## Appendix F: 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan

The 5-year Capital Improvement Plan budget is based on the improvement needs as outlined in Chapter 7 of the Belle Isle Management Plan. Park improvements are prioritized to address the Health, Safety and Welfare of park users and park staff working on Belle Isle. The priority projects throughout the park address the stabilization of buildings and utility infrastructure currently used by the public first and then stabilization of non-utilized buildings secondly. The 30 most important projects determined at this time have been put at the top of Belle Isle's total project list amounting to \$300 million worth of deferred maintenance. The proposed budget for the next five years is based on the current general funding provided by the state legislature, \$1,250,000 per fiscal year. It is possible that future funding or the condition of infrastructure might warrant revisions to the proposed 5 year capital plan. The capital priorities for park infrastructure improvements will be reviewed annually before the start of each fiscal year to ensure funding is used to best address island needs.



Kids Row playscape at Belle Isle Park

5-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN				
FY 2018 PROPOSED PROJECTS				
IMPROVEMENT CATEGORY	PARK LOCATION	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	FUNDING REQUEST	PROGRAM REVIEW NOTES
Historical Structures	Internal Affairs/ Radio Station Building	Engineering & Construction-Improvements to building as required to address structural, mechanical, site needs and ADA accessibility	\$700,000	Structural stabilization needs were addressed and a new roof was installed with FY 2017 Funds. Improvements to this building will allow DNR and LED staff offices and the customer service center to relocate here. The structural engineering report has identified that the current offices in the White House is detrimental to that structure. Propose to also fund with \$75,000 in Operations Funds and \$200,000 from BI revenue. Health, Safety, Welfare -Near future/coming (2), Overall Park Priority: 2
Historical Structures	Casino	Engineering & Construction-building Critical Stabilization, Roof repairs, Drainage clean out around building (QE)	\$100,000	Quinn Evan's 2015 building assessment noted that several critical repairs must be made to stop deterioration of these buildings. Additional repairs to the roof and exterior masonry have been discovered during current construction. Health, Safety, Welfare-Near future/coming (2), Overall Park Priority: 2
Historical Structures	*BIA & ASWC	Engineering & Construction-HVAC system upgrade, Ventilation and Control System improvements, glass replacement and structural repairs for the BIA and ASWC (GHF)	\$200,000	Engineering has been completed with FY2017 funds to address structural repairs in both of the Conservatory and Aquarium. This project would repair structural deficiencies and required ventilation for in the ASWC. Health, Safety, Welfare-eminant failure now (1), Overall Park Priority: 4
Recreational Structures	Shoreline Fishing Improvements	Engineering & Construction-Improvements to the Northside Shoreline Fishing Area will include replacement of the railing system and improving ADA accessibility to the site	\$250,000	Currently the Shoreline Fishing Area is not ADA accessible, nor are the rails safe or provide ADA access for fishing. A MNRTF Grant has been applied for Engineering and Construction, if Grant is not awarded, Capital Outlay must fund project. Health, Safety, Welfare-Near future/coming (2), require per MOU with GLFT
<b>FY 2018 Capital Outlay Total \$1,250,000</b>				

# 5-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

FY 2019 PROPOSED PROJECTS				
IMPROVEMENT CATEGORY	PARK LOCATION	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	FUNDING REQUEST	PROGRAM REVIEW NOTES
Historical Structures	Casino	Construction- Upgrades, repairs and/ or replacement of elevator controls and parts as needed will be completed based on the assessment completed in 2017	\$100,000	The Casino Building is regularly used by the public and the existing elevator does not provide consistent service for ADA accessibility to the second floor as needed. Repairs and/or replacement will be funded by FY 2018 budget. Health, Safety, Welfare-near future failure/coming (2), Overall Park Priority: 2
Historical Structures	*BIA & ASWC	Engineering & Construction-HVAC system Upgrade, Ventilation and Control System, Glass Replacement and Structural Engineering for the BIA and ASWC (GHF)	\$200,000	Engineering has been completed with FY 2017 funds to address structural repairs in both of the Conservatory and Aquarium. This project would repair structural deficiencies and required ventilation for new HVAC system in the ASWC and continue with engineering for proposed HVAC system. Health, Safety, Welfare-Eminent failure now (1), Overall Park Priority: 4
Historical Structures	Athletic Shelter	Engineering & Construction-Renovate Athletic Shelter Roof; replace shingles, repair decking, and weather proof building as required	\$525,000	The integrity of the roof has not been addressed in some time and the current roof is past it's useful life. Health, Safety, Welfare-Eminent failure now (1), Overall Park Priority: 5
Historical Structures	White House	Construction- Complete Foundation Replacement and Structural Repairs to the White House	\$425,000	Engineering for improvements were completed by Quinn Evans with FY 2017 funds. Health, Safety, Welfare-near future (2), Overall Park Priority: 6
<b>FY 2019 Capital Outlay TOTAL</b>				
<b>\$1,250,000</b>				

FY 2020 PROPOSED PROJECTS				
IMPROVEMENT CATEGORY	PARK LOCATION	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	FUNDING REQUEST	PROGRAM REVIEW NOTES
Historical Structures	Flynn Pavilion	Engineering & Construction- Roof and building stabilization repairs	\$100,000	Complete additional repairs to windows, roof and masonry as outlined in the needs report completed by Quinn Evans in 2015 . Health, Safety, Welfare- Eminent failure now (2), Overall Park Priority: 3
Historical Structures	Scott Fountain	Engineering- Structural assessment of fountain, weir wall and basin walls and adjacent sidewalks	\$50,000	Structural reports for the fountain and the basin need to be completed for a comprehensive list of needed repairs to both areas of the Scott Fountain. Repairs to be funded through capital campaign. Health, Safety, Welfare- near future (2), Overall Park Priority: 7
Historical Structures	Oakway Pavilion	Engineering & Construction- Improvements to Concession and restroom building and adjacent parking lot and pedestrian connection to beach.	\$600,000	Repairs to be will provide additional restrooms for the public and a vendor location in the building. Parking improvements schedule planned to align with future beach area deck and splash park improvements plans proposed by BIC. Health, Safety, Welfare- Important (3), Building- Overall Park Priority: 14
Historical Structures	Beach House, Bath House Shelter, Oxbow Restrooms, Bear Pit, Stone Shelter, Woodside Shelter, Kids Row Building and comfort station and Shelter #12.	Engineering & Construction - Physical assessments of comfort buildings and shelters to be completed and critical repairs prioritized.	\$100,000	Health, Safety, Welfare- near future (2), Overall Park Priority:. Health, Safety, Welfare Important (3), Overall Park Priority:17 (Bear Pit) & 19 (Shelter #19)
Roads/Sidewalks	Park Wide	Engineering - Wayfinding Signage Design and Implementation	\$75,000	Improved signage to assist wayfinding is high on the list of visitor requested improvements to the park. Improved signage to be a comprehensive system that enhances the aesthetic of the park while providing clear direction for visitors to facilities throughout the park and replaces street, facility and location maps in poor condition. Health, Safety, Welfare- Important (3), Overall Park Priority: 9
Utilities	Park Wide	Engineering & Construction- Water Main Line Repairs	\$175,000	Health, Safety, Welfare- Important (3), Overall Park Priority: 11
Utilities	Park Wide	Engineering & Construction- Stormwater	\$150,000	Health, Safety, Welfare- Important (3), Overall Park Priority: 12
<b>FY 2020 Capital Outlay TOTAL \$1,250,000</b>				

# 5-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

FY 2021 PROPOSED PROJECTS				
IMPROVEMENT CATEGORY	PARK LOCATION	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	FUNDING REQUEST	PROGRAM REVIEW NOTES
Historical Building	Casino	Engineering & Construction- A/C Replacement	\$325,000	The current A/C unit is past its useful life and needs to be replaced. Health, Safety, Welfare- Near future (2), Overall Park Priority: 2
Recreational Structures	Outdoor Gathering Area/Beach	Engineering & Construction- Beach House, Oxbow Restrooms, Bear Pit, Stone Shelter and Shelter #12. Priorities to be determined by 2020 Assessment	\$350,000	Overall Park Priority:. Health, Safety, Welfare Important (3), Overall Park Priority:17 ( Bear Pit) & 19 (Shelter #19)
Recreational Structures	South Fishing Pier	Engineering - Physical Assessment of pier structure and surface decking replacement and ADA access improvements are required.	\$75,000	An engineering assessment of the fishing pier was completed in 2015. The height of the pier and the depth of surrounding waters do not provide optimal fishing opportunities, however the pier is a popular attraction. Currently the pier is closed due to the poor condition of the decking and needs to be replaced. Health, Safety, Welfare- Important (3), Overall Park Priority: 20
Recreational Structures	Athletic Complex	Engineering-Develop Athletic Complex Programming and Infrastructure Improvement plan to address building Improvements, field and court Improvements and additional facilities within complex.	\$100,000	Develop Complex Programming and Infrastructure Improvement plan to address field and court Improvements and additional facilities within complex to increase community programming. Design- Develop Athletic Complex Programming and infrastructure improvement Plan. Complex wide plan to address building stabilization and improvements that will provide for additional programming and revenue generation. Physical building improvements will need - HVAC replacement, fire suppression, roof improvements, drain maintenance and repair, ADA access improvements and field and court improvements and replacements. Health, Safety, Welfare- Near future (3), Overall Park Priority: 22
Roads/Sidewalks	Park Wide	Engineering- Trail Design	\$100,000	The Southern Terminus of the Iron Belle Trail is scheduled to be constructed in FY 2018. Following construction of the trailhead will be engineering and construction of the Iron Belle Trail from the trailhead on the East end of the park to the MacArthur Bridge. Health, Safety, Welfare- Desired (4), Overall Park Priority: 21
Recreational Structures	Park Wide	Engineering & Construction- Canal System Improvements, Repairing canal pumps, modifying outlet structure, dredging canals (JJR).	\$200,000	Improvements to park canals will compliment ADA accessible launches installed in 2016 and the proposed launches in Nashua Canal in FY 2018. Health, Safety, Welfare- Important (3), Overall Park Priority: 18
Utilities	Park Wide	Engineering & Construction- Water Main Line Repairs	\$100,000	Health, Safety, Welfare- Important (3), Overall Park Priority: 11
<b>FY 2021 Capital Outlay TOTAL</b>				
<b>\$1,250,000</b>				

FY 2022 PROPOSED PROJECTS				
IMPROVEMENT CATEGORY	PARK LOCATION	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	FUNDING REQUEST	PROGRAM REVIEW NOTES
Historical Structures	Shelter #8 Repairs	Engineering & Construction - Maintenance improvements to the roof, fascia, repainting surfaces and restroom improvements are to be completed.	\$325,000	Continuing to improve the condition of shelter and restroom facilities in the park is a priority for park visitors. Health, Safety, Welfare- Important (3)
Recreational Structures	Shelters 19 & 20	Engineering & Construction- Replacement of two shelters	\$400,000	Shelters 19 & 20 are in poor condition and will be replaced with two 100-person shelters. Health, Safety, Welfare- Desired (4)
Utilities	Park Wide	Engineering & Construction- Water Main Line Repairs	\$300,000	Health, Safety, Welfare- Important (3), Overall Park Priority: 11
Utilities	Park Wide	Engineering & Maintenance/ Construction- Stormwater repairs to existing system and improvements to system to separate stormwater apart from the existing system that treats stormwater in the Belle Isle sewage treatment facility.	\$225,000	Continue to address the deficiencies and system-wide improvements determined to be priorities in the technical assessment report, completed in FY 2017, as outlined in the five year implementation plan. Health, Safety, Welfare- Important (3), Overall Park Priority: 12
<b>FY 2022 Capital Outlay TOTAL</b>				
<b>\$1,250,000</b>				
<b>Total FY 2018-FY 2022</b>				
<b>\$6,250,000</b>				

# 5-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

PRIORITY PROJECTS IDENTIFIED FOR BELLE ISLE CONSERVANCY AND PARTNER FUNDED INVESTMENT				
IMPROVEMENT CATEGORY	PARK LOCATION	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	REVENUE GENERATING	PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Major Development	1) BIA_ASCW Facility Improvements	Engineering & Construction-	Yes	Estimated project costs- \$50, 000, 000
Recreational Structure	4) Splash Park	Engineering & Construction- Removal of Water slide and construction of new Splash Park at the Beach House		*BIC Fundraising goal in 2020 is \$2, 000, 000
Historic Structure	2) James Scott Fountain	Engineering & Construction- Improvements to fountain structure as outlined in the Hamilton Anderson Assessment that acknowledge the historic significance of the existing landscape and meet SHPO's approval.		Architectural, mechanical, and electrical improvements to the fountain as well as a comprehensive structural assessment of the fountain and basin infrastructure complete.
Historic Structure	3) Newsboy Shelter	Engineering & Construction- Restoration of Shelter Iconic Historic Shelter	Yes	Restoration of the Newsboy Shelter to meet Secretary of Interior Standards for Historic Restoration. *BIC Fundraising goal is \$650,000

TIER 2 PROJECTS IDENTIFIED FOR BELLE ISLE CONSERVANCY AND PARTNER FUNDED INVESTMENT				
Major Development	5) White House and Stables Master Plan & Development	Engineering & Construction-	Yes	
Major Development	6) Athletic Complex	Engineering & Construction-	Yes	
Major Development	7) Remick Band shell and Nancy Brown Peace Carillon Master Plan and Development			
Roads/Sidewalks	8) Island wide Park Trail development			

TIER 3 PROJECTS IDENTIFIED FOR BELLE ISLE CONSERVANCY AND PARTNER FUNDED INVESTMENT				
Historic Structure	9) Police Station Headquarters; Welcome Center	Engineering & Construction-	Yes	
Major Development	10) Zoo Redevelopment	Engineering & Construction-	Yes	
Historic Structure	11) Kids Row	Engineering & Construction-		

\*BIA- Belle Isle Aquarium

\*ASCW- Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory



Bus Stop Pavilion at Belle Isle Park

## Appendix G: 10 - Year Operational Budget

Belle Isle day to day operational staff consists of a Park Manager, Park Supervisor, Lead Ranger, seven seasonal ranger staff, two seasonal janitorial staff, an accounting assistant, a general office assistant, an events promoter and 38 seasonal state workers.

Day to day operations include providing safe, clean facilities for visitors, repairs, maintenance and upkeep of building and grounds, providing customer service to over 4 million visitors annually, working with partners and community volunteers to accomplish goals and providing programming and events.

The current budget for Belle Isle is roughly \$3.4 million. In 2019 the park plans to add an events promoter and two rangers. The following year, 2020, another ranger will be added to the staff. Also included in the plan a need to add funding for projects outside the normal scope of the annual operations dollars.

The following is a summary of planned expenditures for Belle Isle Park:



Bicycling at Belle Isle Park

10 YEAR OPERATIONAL BUDGET											
NUMBER OF YEARS	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
EXPENSE TYPE	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027
Salary & Benefits	\$1,441,066	\$1,594,698	\$1,746,592	\$1,846,524	\$1,883,454	\$1,921,123	\$1,959,546	\$1,998,737	\$2,038,711	\$2,079,485	\$2,121,075
Vehicle Transportation	\$40,000	\$40,800	\$41,616	\$42,448	\$43,297	\$44,163	\$45,046	\$45,947	\$46,866	\$47,804	\$48,760
Travel	\$3,900	\$3,978	\$4,058	\$4,139	\$4,221	\$4,306	\$4,392	\$4,480	\$4,569	\$4,661	\$4,754
Contracted Services, Supplies & Materials	\$1,866,950	\$1,904,289	\$2,058,375	\$2,120,542	\$2,120,953	\$2,203,372	\$2,207,440	\$2,251,588	\$2,296,620	\$2,342,553	\$2,389,404
Total Budget	\$3,351,916	\$3,543,765	\$3,850,640	\$4,013,653	\$4,051,926	\$4,172,964	\$4,216,424	\$4,300,752	\$4,386,767	\$4,474,503	\$4,563,993
Salary Increase (Percentage %)		1.03	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02
Other Expenses (Percentage %)		1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02
Additional Employees											
Events-2019			\$120,000								
2 FTE - Ranger- 2019			\$0								
Ranger- 2020				\$65,000							
8 part time staff (STW) related to contracts			\$0								
Projects											
Garage Doors, windows, drywall		\$25,000*									
Sidewalk repairs		\$21,000*	\$21,000	\$21,000							
Bandstand electrical			\$19,000*								
Sunset Point Roof		\$12,000*									
Old Boys Station painting, drywall				\$11,000*							
Central Drive roadwork- 2 roads						\$40,000					
Fishing pier improvements- north & south			\$30,000								
Flynn building windows			\$25,000								
Fence repair			\$40,000								

\* denotes already included in budget



Appendix H:

# Natural Resource Stewardship Plan

# Natural Resource Stewardship Plan

## Belle Isle Park



November 27, 2017

Prepared by Glenn R. Palmgren, Ecologist

Reviewed and approved by  
Jacob Brown, Unit Supervisor  
Karis Floyd, Unit Manager

Ray Fahlsing, Stewardship Unit Manager  
Mike Terrell, District Supervisor  
Scott Pratt, Southern Field Operations Chief  
Amanda Hertl, Urban Area Planner

Additional review

Debbie Jensen, Park Management Plan Administrator

Parks & Recreation Division  
Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
PO Box 30257  
Lansing MI 48909-7757



**From:** Brown, Jacob (DNR)  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 13, 2017 10:13 AM  
**To:** Palmgren, Glenn (DNR)  
**Subject:** RE: Belle Isle Stewardship Plan for approval

Hey Glenn,

I approve it...

**From:** Floyd, Karis (DNR)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 3, 2017 3:07 PM  
**To:** Palmgren, Glenn (DNR); Fahlsing, Ray (DNR); Terrell, Mike (DNR); Pratt, Scott (DNR); amhertl@gmail.com  
**Subject:** RE: Belle Isle Stewardship Plan for approval

I approve

**From:** Fahlsing, Ray (DNR)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 10, 2017 3:56 PM  
**To:** Palmgren, Glenn (DNR)  
**Subject:** RE: Belle Isle Stewardship Plan for approval

I approve the Belle Isle Park, Stewardship Plan.

Ray

**From:** Terrell, Mike (DNR)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 3, 2017 4:17 PM  
**To:** Palmgren, Glenn (DNR); Floyd, Karis (DNR); Fahlsing, Ray (DNR); Pratt, Scott (DNR); amhertl@gmail.com  
**Subject:** RE: Belle Isle Stewardship Plan for approval

Approved

*Michael A. Terrell*  
 Metro District Supervisor  
 Department of Natural Resources  
 Parks and Recreation Division  
 1801 Atwater St.  
 Detroit, Mi 48207

Office: 313-396-6865  
 Fax: 313-567-0160  
 Cell: 248-521-0562  
[terrellm1@michigan.gov](mailto:terrellm1@michigan.gov)

**From:** Pratt, Scott (DNR)  
**Sent:** Monday, October 9, 2017 9:23 AM  
**To:** Palmgren, Glenn (DNR)  
**Subject:** Re: Belle Isle Stewardship Plan for approval

I approve

Scott A. Pratt, CPRP  
Chief of Southern Field Operations  
DNR - Parks & Recreation Division

**From:** Hertl, Amanda (DNR)  
**Sent:** Monday, November 27, 2017 3:25 PM  
**To:** Palmgren, Glenn (DNR)  
**Subject:** RE: Belle Isle Stewardship Plan for approval

Approved.

Thank you Glenn!

*Be part of the engine that drives Pure Michigan- check yes! Learn more about the Recreation Passport at: [www.michigan.gov/recreationpassport](http://www.michigan.gov/recreationpassport)*

Amanda T. Hertl, Landscape Architect  
Urban Field Planner Southern Michigan  
DNR Parks & Recreation Division  
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## Scope

The scope of this plan is stewardship of natural resources within Belle Isle Park. This plan does not cover the important work of cultural resource stewardship at Belle Isle, or management of the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, formal gardens, and island-wide landscape grounds and landscape trees. This plan also does not address natural resources within the Detroit River offshore of the island because that is outside the jurisdiction of the park. The Scott Fountain lagoon (basin) is not included. Nuisance animal control for primarily recreation, aesthetic or human health reasons is also out of scope. The timeframe for this plan is for the five-year period 2017–2022.

## Overview

Belle Isle Park is a 985-acre urban park with natural features of statewide or greater significance. While many people understand and focus on the exceptional recreational, historical, and ethnological values of this park, the natural features are often overlooked or undervalued. This park contains the following exceptional natural features recognized by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI):

- 1 exemplary natural community, the 200-acre wet-mesic flatwoods forest
- 12 species (12 occurrences) of endangered, threatened, or special concern plants. Many of these have not been observed on the island since the early 1900s.
- 25 species (31 occurrences) of endangered, threatened, or special concern animals. The majority of the animals are mussels or fish documented in waters of the Detroit River just offshore of the island.

Belle Isle, known as Hog Island prior to 1845, was privately owned until the City of Detroit purchased it in 1879. The prior owners farmed and grazed the land, and later operated a summer resort. After the city purchased the island, they hired famous landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted to design the park in 1881, but he resigned a few years later and his design was never fully implemented. Additional historical background on the island park can be found in Pearson's Belle Isle Park Forest Stewardship Plan (Appendix F).

DNR, Parks & Recreation Division has used the MNFI information along with other plans, project documents, previous plant and animal surveys, and information from many natural resource stakeholders to develop a set of conservation targets for the park. These are the natural features that will be the focus of stewardship (protection, management, or restoration) for the duration of this plan:

- Wet-mesic flatwoods forest
- Canals and Lakes Okonoka, Muskoday, and Takoma
- Blue Heron Lagoon
- Prairie and other open upland habitats near Blue Heron Lagoon
- Detroit River shoreline

Each of these conservation targets contains individual species or other elements that will receive special consideration when developing management and protection actions.

Four broad threats have been identified to the integrity of the above conservation targets. These include invasive species; altered disturbance regimes: hydrology, fire, herbivory (mowing); lack of knowledge; and fragmentation.

The focus of natural resource stewardship is to reduce or eliminate threats to the resources we are trying to protect. To this end, a series of strategies and specific tasks have been identified for 2017–2022 to address each of the threats. These tasks range from invasive species control to forming and maintaining partnerships, to researching and documenting specific topics.

Implementation of these tasks will require many people, including DNR Parks & Recreation Division staff in park operations, stewardship, and planning, and collaboration with the Belle Isle Conservancy's Island Stewardship Environmental Conservation Committee (ISECC), plus many other stakeholders and volunteers. A lead person has been identified in the plan to be responsible for each task, but there are few tasks in this plan that can be completed by one person alone; they will need to call upon others both inside and outside DNR to assist.

In 2014–2016, significant progress was made on natural resource stewardship at Belle Isle Park. DNR's partnerships with the Belle Isle Conservancy, Friends of the Detroit River, and many other groups have formed and strengthened. A comprehensive invasive plant inventory was completed for the island. Data from that survey were incorporated into PRD's geographic information system (GIS) and provided a baseline for creation of invasive plant maps (attached to this plan). Control of many of those invasive plants such as phragmites, Japanese knotweed, honeysuckle, buckthorn, and garlic mustard has been intense and produced significant results, through the efforts of volunteers and contracted work funded by both federal grants and DNR. The focus for 2017–2022 is to continue these effective strategies and build upon them by gaining more knowledge, making more progress, and continually refining our methods to effectively protect, maintain, and restore the natural resources of Belle Isle.

## Background and Relationship to Other Plans

The Belle Isle Conservancy, Ms. Melvadean Pearson, and many other individuals have laid the groundwork for natural resource stewardship at Belle Isle Park. Ms. Pearson's March 2012 Belle Isle Park Forest Stewardship Plan (Appendix F) provides a very good starting point and a wealth of background information including land use history. In addition, the Belle Isle Conservancy contracted Cardno JFNew to complete an Ecological Management Plan for the Belle Isle Forest, dated November 13, 2013 (Appendix G). This plan provides further insight into the composition and quality of the forest and provides many sound recommendations for management action. However, DNR does not accept these plans in their entirety or directly as our plan for management of the Belle Isle forest. This DNR plan incorporates many of the

management actions that both plans recommend, including all of the activities Cardno JFNew identified in their implementation schedule Table 1 to occur in 2014 and 2015.

The purpose of this Stewardship Plan is to define the 2017–2022 management approach and priorities DNR is establishing for natural resource stewardship of Belle Isle Park. As more information and input are gathered, management will be adapted.

A series of “focus areas” have been established for the Belle Isle flatwoods forest. Focus areas are specific locations (about 3 to 35 acres each) where stewardship work is ongoing at the park, and are used as a point of reference on maps. The abbreviation “FA” throughout this plan refers to focus areas shown on Map 2. The focus areas in the forest closely mimic the management units identified by Cardno JFNew in their plan.

## Conservation Targets & Goals

What are we trying to conserve at this park?

The following natural resources are designated as targets for conservation and protection at Belle Isle Park.

- **Wet-mesic flatwoods<sup>1</sup>**

The 200-acre forest at Belle Isle is the largest and one of the last remaining examples of a wet-mesic flatwoods forest in Michigan. For a description of this forest type, see the MNFI natural community description and abstract for wet-mesic flatwoods:

<http://mnfi.anr.msu.edu/communities/community.cfm?id=19009> and Appendix E.

Also see Section 1.2 of the Cardno JFNew Ecological Management Plan and descriptions embedded throughout Pearson's Forest Stewardship Plan for descriptions of the vegetation and context of the Belle Isle forest. The forest provides important habitat for many animals, especially migratory and resident songbirds and amphibians, although no endangered, threatened, or special concern animal species are currently known to reside in this forest. The value of the forest as stopover habitat for migratory birds is noteworthy.

Associated wet-mesic flatwoods species to receive special management attention:

- **Shumard's oak<sup>1</sup>** (*Quercus shumardii*, a state special concern tree) – found throughout the forest
- **Pumpkin ash<sup>1</sup>** (*Fraxinus profunda*, a state threatened tree) – found throughout the forest, population impacted heavily by emerald ash borer
- **Virginia bugle weed** (*Lycopus virginicus*, a state threatened plant) – found in 2013 by the Cardno JFNew/Conservation Design Forum floristic quality assessment surveys in FAs C, D, and J. Not yet in MNFI's database.
- **Wahoo (burning bush)** (*Euonymus atropurpurea*, a state special concern shrub) – found in 2015 or earlier by Suzanne Campbell in the flatwoods. Not yet in MNFI's database.
- **Other rare plants<sup>1</sup>** – several other species of rare plants were documented as occurring on Belle Isle around 1880–1910 according to MNFI's database, but have not been documented since that time. They may or may not be present in the forest or edges, but should be protected and documented if found. These plants include woodland lettuce (*Lactuca floridana*), Virginia snakeroot (*Aristolochia serpentaria*), field chickweed (*Cerastium velutinum*), tinted spurge (*Euphorbia commutata*), wild bean (*Phaseolus polystachios*), trailing wild bean (*Strophostyles helvula*), blue-eyed-grass (*Sisyrinchium hastile*), and smooth carrion-flower (*Smilax herbacea*).
- **White trout-lily** (*Erythronium albidum*) – uncommon and local wildflower in southern Michigan, but abundant in this forest and provides a notable display in early spring.
- **STEWARDSHIP GOAL:** Restore and maintain the integrity of the wet-mesic flatwoods natural community and constituent plant and animal species.

- **Canals and Lakes Okonoka, Muskoday, and Takoma**

The canals and lakes on Belle Isle have significant historical/cultural and recreational value, as well as providing habitat for fish and other aquatic organisms. These canals and lakes were artificially created between about 1893 and 1910, and function as one oddly-shaped reservoir perched (usually) above the level of the Detroit River, separated from it at three

points. There is a pump system at the east end of Lake Muskoday, a stoplog structure at the east end of Lake Okonoka, and a stoplog/gate structure where the Loop Canal discharges into the Detroit River near the service area north of Scott Fountain. Water levels can be regulated in the canals and all three lakes by adjusting the stoplogs as needed and running the pumps to add or remove water.

DNR Fisheries Division has surveyed fish populations in the lakes and canals, and has stocked catfish in these waterways to add to the fish community. Fisheries Division and Parks & Recreation Division will continue to work together to improve recreational fishing at the park.

Associated species known from the canals and lakes on Belle Isle:

- **Wild rice**<sup>1</sup> (*Zizania aquatica* var. *aquatica*, a state threatened plant) – 1892 record from somewhere on Belle Isle, possibly associated with lakes or waterways that existed at that time
- **Campeloma spire snail**<sup>1</sup> (*Cincinnatia cincinnatiensis*, a state special concern snail) – undated historic record in MNFI database, mapped by MNFI in Lake Okonoka
- **STEWARDSHIP GOAL:** Restore and maintain a navigable passage through the canals and lakes for small recreational boats, while maintaining or improving the quality of the aquatic habitat, herpetofauna habitat, and protecting banks from significant erosion. Bring Lake Okonoka back online with the Detroit River and Blue Heron Lagoon, while maintaining functioning water controls for the remaining lakes and canals. Work in partnership with Fisheries Division to maintain and improve recreational fishing opportunities.

▪ **Blue Heron Lagoon**

The land around Blue Heron Lagoon did not exist at the time the island was acquired by the city. This area was built up out of the Detroit River with fill dirt, most of which is assumed to have come from the construction of basements and foundations for buildings within the city. Blue Heron Lagoon was until recently part of the perched inland canal and lake system on the island, but was reconnected to the Detroit River in 2013. This project, lead by the Friends of the Detroit River, helped address beneficial use impairments to the fish and wildlife associated with the Detroit River Area of Concern. During that project, targeted aquatic and shoreline habitat was also created. This lagoon provides important fish habitat and recreational fishing opportunity. The lagoon provides significant habitat for migrating and wintering waterfowl, especially diving ducks.

Associated rare species known from Blue Heron Lagoon:

- **Purple wartyback**<sup>1</sup> (*Cyclonaias tuberculata*, a state threatened mussel) – known from Blue Heron Lagoon and along the Detroit River shoreline in many locations
- **Rainbow**<sup>1</sup> (*Villosa iris*, a state special concern mussel) – known from Blue Heron Lagoon and along the Detroit River shoreline in many locations
- **Eastern pondmussel**<sup>1</sup> (*Ligumia nasuta*, a state endangered mussel) – undated historical record in MNFI database, mapped by MNFI in Blue Heron Lagoon
- **Campeloma spire snail**<sup>1</sup> (*Cincinnatia cincinnatiensis*, a state special concern snail) – undated historic record in MNFI database, mapped by MNFI in Blue Heron Lagoon
- **STEWARDSHIP GOAL:** Maintain existing aquatic and shoreline habitat.

- **Prairie and other open upland habitats near Blue Heron Lagoon**

A small area of prairie (native grasses and forbs) is known from the north side of Blue Heron Lagoon (portions of FA L). The prevailing speculation is that many of these plants grew from the seedbank of the fill that was imported to this part of the park, as this site is located entirely on fill. Planting of native species also occurred in this area. This is not a true remnant native prairie but still may harbor local Detroit genotype plants worthy of protection.

In addition, reptile nesting habitat was created on a peninsula near the inlet of the Blue Heron Lagoon and a small planting of native prairie species was installed near the new foot bridge during the 2013 restoration/reconnection project.

The large open grassy area south of Blue Heron Lagoon (FA K) has been known to support nesting grassland-dependent birds such as savanna sparrow and bobolink in recent years. Originally created from fill, the area supported a Nike missile site during the cold war. More recently fill from the Grand Prix "paddock" was spoiled here.

Associated rare species known from the upland habitats near Blue Heron Lagoon:

- ◊ **Eastern fox snake**<sup>1</sup> (*Pantherophis gloydi*, a state threatened snake) – documented from the parking lot area south of Blue Heron Lagoon, but presumed to occur elsewhere on the island as well
- ◊ **Sullivant's milkweed**<sup>1</sup> (*Asclepias sullivantii*, a state threatened plant) – documented from the prairie north of Blue Heron Lagoon
- ◊ **Blanding's turtle** (*Emydoidea blandingii*, a state special concern turtle) – found in recent surveys on the island. Not yet in MNFI's database.
- ◊ **Common tern**<sup>1</sup> (*Sterna hirundo*, a state threatened bird) – has nested on the dike at the Detroit Water & Sewerage Department water intake recently in response to a Detroit Zoo and USFWS project to enhance the habitat and protect nests from predators. This is not part of the Belle Isle Park leased area.
- ◊ **Forster's tern**<sup>1</sup> (*Sterna forsteri*, a state threatened bird) – has nested in the same area as common terns (see above). This is not part of the Belle Isle Park leased area.
- ◊ **Eastern massasauga** (*Sistrurus catenatus*, a federal candidate and state special concern snake) – this rattlesnake likely once occurred on Belle Isle but was eradicated from the island, possibly by the hogs that were historically present prior to the land becoming a park. When the snake occurred here one of its primary habitats would have been wet prairies and other grassy openings.
- ◊ **STEWARDSHIP GOAL:** Maintain the existing area of open prairie north of the lagoon (in FA L) and expand the boundaries of that opening by reducing woody plants around the perimeter and out to the limestone path. Maintain the existing reptile nesting habitat on the peninsula and the native prairie plantings near the foot bridge. Maintain as much unmowed grass south of Blue Heron Lagoon as possible (FA K, or modified as necessary to meet operational needs) from early spring through mid-July for nesting grassland birds.

- **Detroit River shoreline**

The river shoreline around the entire island is currently a mix of rip-rap or other "hard" shoreline and some "soft" or more natural shoreline areas. Recent debris removal and shoreline naturalization work was completed by the Alliance for the Great Lakes near the north fishing pier. Both hard and soft shorelines provide important habitat for various wetland, upland, and aquatic plants and animals. Note that many listed and rare aquatic species, especially mussels, are known from the Detroit River offshore of Belle Isle, but

these aquatic areas are outside the jurisdiction of the park, and are therefore not addressed by this plan.

Associated species known from the Detroit River shoreline (note that both species are also listed under other conservation targets above):

- **Eastern fox snake**<sup>1</sup> (*Pantherophis gloydi*, a state threatened snake) – documented from the parking lot area south of Blue Heron Lagoon, but presumed to occur elsewhere on the island as well. This species is known to utilize rip-rap shorelines at other locations and likely does so at Belle Isle too. Removal of rip-rap for shoreline naturalization or other reasons should be weighed against the benefit of rip-rap to Eastern fox snake.
- **Wild rice**<sup>1</sup> (*Zizania aquatica* var. *aquatica*, a state threatened plant) – 1892 record from somewhere on Belle Isle, possibly associated with the river shoreline
- **STEWARDSHIP GOAL:** Protect the river shoreline from significant erosion, while maintaining or improving the quality of the shoreline and adjacent aquatic habitat.

See the MNFI Inventory report for the Belle Isle flatwoods for a more detailed description of the wet-mesic flatwoods conservation target.

Additional information about the rare plant and animal conservation targets is available from the MNFI community and special plant and animal abstracts. These can be found on MNFI's website at <http://mnfi.anr.msu.edu/>.

<sup>1</sup> Element Occurrence tracked by Michigan Natural Features Inventory

## Threats

What problems are threatening the Conservation Targets and need to be addressed?

### 1. Non-native invasive species

Non-native invasive species threaten the ecological integrity of all conservation targets at the park. Invasive species reduce biological diversity and alter ecological systems. Glossy and common buckthorn, honeysuckle, multiflora rose, garlic mustard, privet, phragmites, purple loosestrife, Japanese knotweed, and several other invasive plants are known to occur in the forest and elsewhere on the island. Any new construction (including trail construction) would have the potential to increase this threat by providing a disturbed pathway for these species to establish. Emerald ash borer, an invasive insect species, has already had a major impact on the forest by eliminating most of the mature ash, formerly a large component of the forest canopy. Oak wilt was also confirmed in the forest in 2016 and has been aggressively treated. Gypsy moth also has potential to impact the forest. Invasive earthworms have been found in the forest, impacting the leaf litter decomposition process and organic matter in the soil. Invasive species should never be deliberately planted at the park, and efforts will be made to remove these species throughout the park, especially in targeted areas.

### 2. Alteration of hydrology

The existing and abandoned road and trail systems are impacting the surface hydrology of the forest. The Sylvan and Nashua canals and their associated berms likely alter the hydrology of the forest as well. Human-created shallow surface drains are also visible in the forest, and have altered the natural hydrology. A detailed hydrologic study is required to determine the physical and ecological extent of these impacts. However, it is known that seasonal surface water ponding and flow patterns are very important to the maintenance of ecological function of the wet-mesic flatwoods natural community.

Elsewhere on the island, surface and storm drainage systems are not functioning well in many areas, leading to frequent flooding. Discharge of storm water currently goes to both the combined sewer system and directly to the canals, lakes, and the Detroit River. This has the potential to transmit pollutants and debris unfiltered into the aquatic systems (in the case of separate stormwater drains), or to overwhelm the combined sewer system.

### 3. Lack of knowledge about the natural resources

Many park visitors are unaware of the significance of the Belle Isle forest and its associated unique flora and fauna inhabitants. By understanding the significance of the resource, visitors would be more likely to support the protection and restoration of these natural features. Park staff must also be made aware of the resources island-wide in order to protect them. All state parks, including Belle Isle, require a balance of protecting natural resources while providing appropriate recreational use.

### 4. Fragmentation of the forest

The forest on Belle Isle is clearly fragmented by roads (Central and Oakway), trails, and the Nashua and Sylvan canals. The degree to which this fragmentation impacts the forest hydrology will be assessed during the hydrology study that is currently underway. In general, forested landscapes with significant breaks in canopy cover or excessive human disturbance in the interior will be less likely to support "forest-interior" species, or species

known to be sensitive to human disturbance. Currently the farthest any wildlife can get from human disturbance is about 450 feet from the nearest trail or road in the middle of FAs A, C, and E. The vast majority of the forest is currently within 200 feet of a road or trail.

#### **5. Lack of fire**

The historic importance of fire in the wet-mesic flatwoods community is poorly understood. Additional investigation and monitoring of the response of the forest to management will be required to determine whether lack of fire is truly a significant threat to this forest. However, fire can be used to help maintain the planted prairie habitats as resources allow.

#### **6. Mowing, or lack of mowing**

While mowing turfgrass is essential to maintain recreational use and aesthetics of much of the developed portion of the park, excessive mowing where it is unnecessary can reduce wildlife nesting habitat or stimulate shoreline erosion. On the other hand, in areas being maintained as open grassland, lack of mowing for an extended period can result in growth of shrubs and trees and eventual loss of grassland habitat. Mowing can have both positive and negative impacts to native plants and animals.

#### **7. Grazing**

Belle Isle has a long history of grazing. Livestock grazed on the island at the time it was first settled by Europeans. The island's previous name "Hog Island" indicates the prevalence of pigs at that time. This legacy of livestock grazing likely had a significant impact on the island's vegetation. More recently, a high density of fallow deer on the island suppressed palatable vegetation and encouraged non-palatable species to increase. The fallow deer were removed several years ago and vegetation has since rebounded, with significant understory shrub growth in the forest (also likely stimulated by loss of overstory ash trees to emerald ash borer). White-tailed deer occur on the island now, but in very low numbers. Grazing by native animals is a natural process in every ecosystem, but the amount of grazing over the past 200 years and the animals present on the island have likely had a significant influence on how the natural environment looks and functions today.

#### **8. Legacy loss of species and loss of genetic diversity**

Many species of plants and animals that were documented to occur on Belle Isle over the past 200 years have been lost, for many reasons. Most of the other 7 threats above have historically contributed to this loss and continue to do so. Besides species, the conservation of biological diversity also requires that conservation occur at the ecosystem and genetic levels. Protection of species alone does not conserve biological diversity. The introduction of non-local genetic varieties (genotypes) of native species threatens the genetic diversity of native species because the new genotypes can cross-breed with the native, local genotype individuals and begin to "swamp out" (overwhelm) the local population. In the long term this causes a loss of genetic diversity within that species. Conservation of biological diversity requires the conservation of local genotypes of plants and animals.

## Strategies

What are the general stewardship strategies or approaches that we can use at this park to reach our goals?

### 1. Restore and maintain native wet-mesic flatwoods forest cover

Until the final hydrological assessment and flatwoods design plan is complete, the short-term strategy is to maintain forest cover where it exists now as much as possible. Planting of additional trees may be recommended as part of the flatwoods design plan to restore forest cover where it has been lost through recent die-off of ash or oak (especially in FAs D, F, and I). (Addresses threat #1).

### 2. Control invasive species

Control oak wilt in all detected locations. Control such plant species as glossy and common buckthorn, oriental bittersweet, honeysuckle, multiflora rose, garlic mustard, Japanese knotweed, phragmites, purple loosestrife, reed canary grass, and others in specific areas where they pose the most significant threat to the conservation targets through a combination of mechanical, chemical, and possibly biological treatments. Newly detected invasive species with small populations will be the highest priority; species with the greatest potential to harm the conservation targets will be the highest priority among those. Next priority will be species that are already more widespread and established at the park, but have the greatest potential to damage or destroy the integrity of the forest or another conservation target. Within each species, small outlier populations and those with the greatest potential to spread into uninvaded areas are most important, followed by working inward towards the larger populations. Control species in high use and high visibility areas wherever possible. (Addresses threat #1).

Given the above strategy, the most critical "early detection" invasive species currently known to occur on the island are Japanese knotweed, garlic mustard, swallow-wort, and flowering rush. The most critical "established" invasive species known to occur on the island are oak wilt, glossy buckthorn, Asian bittersweet, and phragmites.

### 3. Complete a hydrologic study

Complete a hydrologic study to assess existing impacts to forest hydrology and potential strategies to abate those threats. (Addresses threat #2).

### 4. Educate staff and park visitors

Ensure staff is aware of the significance of all conservation targets (especially the forest) and associated rare species. Make sure staff is aware of the potential for introduction of invasive insects through transport of firewood. Work through the Belle Isle Conservancy, DNR's Marketing and Outreach Division and Wildlife Division, and Belle Isle Nature Zoo to educate park visitors about the significant natural features on the island and the associated threats that impact them. (Addresses threats #1 and #3).

### 5. Create and implement a trail plan

Determine an appropriate trail network for the island, considering the positive and negative stewardship implications of all trails. On the positive side, trails and trailheads can be designed and used to help inspire park visitors to appreciate the natural features on the island. At the same time, trails have the potential to damage the resource and must be

designed in a manner that limits their impact to forest hydrology, fragmentation, and invasive species spread. (Addresses threats #3 and #4).

**6. Use prescribed burning to maintain grasslands**

Plan and conduct prescribed burns to maintain the prairie north of Blue Heron Lagoon, and possibly other grassland areas as appropriate, following established DNR policies and procedures. (Addresses threat #5).

**7. Optimize mowing regimes in areas that support native plants and wildlife**

Stewardship and park operations staff need to work together to optimize mowing patterns and schedules in areas that support native vegetation (such as shorelines and native grassland plantings) and in areas of non-native vegetation that support native wildlife. Mowing can also be used to reduce the spread of invasive plants. (Addresses threat #6).

**8. Use local-genotype native plants wherever possible for planting projects**

For tree, shrub, and herb (grass and flower) planting, use local-genotype varieties of native species whenever possible to maintain the genetic diversity of the species at the park. Very rare or listed plant species (Federal or state endangered, threatened, or special concern species) should NOT be planted unless the seed source is from the island or very nearby. For other native species, local seed sources should be used wherever feasible. The more uncommon or local the species, the more important local seed source consideration should be. (Addresses threat #8).

## Objectives and Task List

What are the specific measurable objectives and associated tasks to be completed at Belle Isle Park in 2017–2022?

The lead responsibility for each task is indicated after the task number:

PS=Park Supervisor (Brown)	UM=Unit Manager (Floyd)
RS=Ecological Restoration Specialist (Clancy)	DS=District Supervisor (Terrell)
E=Ecologist (Palmgren)	UP=Urban Planner (Hertl)
VS=Volunteer Steward (Malvitz-Draper)	SA=Stewardship Analyst (Ihnken)
F=Forest Resources Division staff	FH=PRD Forest Health Analyst (Frei)

The tasks are not listed in any particular order except where specifically noted. All are considered important and should be implemented as fully as possible as time and resources allow.

The Ecological Restoration Specialist will be responsible for coordinating this overall task list to ensure all tasks are completed. Other individuals will take the lead on specific tasks as indicated below. Stewardship Unit staff will be available to provide technical guidance on all tasks as needed.

- OBJECTIVE A.** Work cooperatively with the Belle Isle Conservancy and other partners to accomplish the specific objectives and tasks in this plan. Maintain and enhance the strong volunteer stewardship ethic that has taken hold at Belle Isle.
- TASK A.1. VS Maintain open, regular communication with Belle Isle Conservancy (BIC) and other partners.
  - TASK A.2. UP Serve as the DNR's primary project manager for the Lake Okonoka project construction and the Flatwoods Hydrology Restoration project.
  - TASK A.3. E Serve as the DNR's natural resource lead for the Lake Okonoka project construction and the Flatwoods Hydrology Restoration project.
  - TASK A.4. VS Serve as the primary DNR contact for volunteer natural resource stewardship at Belle Isle.
  - TASK A.5. VS Coordinate all volunteer stewardship efforts to ensure they are focused on accomplishing the tasks outlined in this plan and comply with all DNR & PRD policies.
  - TASK A.6. VS Publicly advertise and recognize volunteer stewardship efforts.
  - TASK A.7. VS Lead regular volunteer stewardship workdays to accomplish the objectives in this plan.
- OBJECTIVE B.** Update the inventory of invasive species on the island.
- TASK B.1. SA Produce/update invasive species maps based on available mapping data as needed/requested.

- TASK B.2. VS Continue to train new volunteers on mapping techniques as appropriate.
- TASK B.3. VS Encourage volunteers to map new invasive species locations and check existing mapped points. Prioritize searching for any new locations of the early-detection species listed under Objective C below, or any species not mentioned in this plan (new to the island).
- TASK B.4. E Ensure all invasive species control contracts include inventory/mapping updates.
- OBJECTIVE C. Control "early-detection" invasive plants with only a few known occurrences on the island, with an objective of complete eradication of these species as soon as possible. Species are prioritized below, but all species listed under this objective are high priority for 2017–2022.
- TASK C.1. RS Provide detailed direction on invasive plant control/treatment technique and herbicide use to ensure effective control and adherence to relevant state (DNR, DEQ, MDARD) policies and procedures and Aquatic Nuisance Control and NPDES permit requirements.
- TASK C.2. SA Create a list of invasive plants known to occur on each of the leased or non-DNR-administered areas of the island for the Restoration Specialist to use when contacting them.
- TASK C.3. RS Treat all known Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) populations on the island. All were treated in 2015 and 2016.
- TASK C.4. RS Treat all known flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) populations on the island. All were treated in 2015 and 2016.
- TASK C.5. VS Treat all known garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) populations on the island. All were treated in 2015 and 2016.
- TASK C.6. RS Treat all known jetbead (*Rhodotypos scandens*) populations on the island. One in FA H was treated in 2015 and 2016.
- TASK C.7. RS Treat all known wild parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*) populations on the island. As of 2017 one small population is known and has not yet been treated.
- TASK C.8. RS Treat all known Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) on the island. One patch in FA H was searched for and not found in 2015.
- TASK C.9. RS Treat any new autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) that may be discovered in the park. (One former patch near the Casino was found to be dead in 2016).
- TASK C.10. RS Treat the two known populations of Chinese silvergrass (*Miscanthus sinensis*) at the driving range.
- TASK C.11. VS Treat the three known dame's rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*) populations.
- TASK C.12. RS Treat the one known crown vetch (*Coronilla varia*) patch along Central east of Picnic.
- TASK C.13. RS Treat all known Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*) on the island. All were either treated or not found in 2015 and 2016.

- TASK C.14. RS Check the two known false indigo (*Amorpha fruticosa*) populations on the NE end of the island and treat if still existing. Both were treated in 2015 and 2016. Survey for additional populations.
- OBJECTIVE D. Control well-established invasive plants, prioritizing isolated occurrences first, then working towards larger populations in high quality areas, then larger populations in lower quality areas. Species are prioritized below, and work areas within each species are further prioritized.
- TASK D.1. RS Provide detailed direction on invasive plant control/treatment technique and herbicide use to ensure effective control and adherence to relevant state (DNR, DEQ, MDARD) policies and procedures and Aquatic Nuisance and NPDES permit requirements.
- TASK D.2. VS/RS Treat both glossy and common buckthorn (*Rhamnus frangula* and *R. cathartica*) in the following priority order.
- D.2.1. FAs B and C
  - D.2.2. FAs I and E
  - D.2.3. FA A
  - D.2.4. FAs H, J, and G
  - D.2.5. Remainder of woods – populations <1,000 square feet (size 1 and 2)
  - D.2.6. BIPW0566 – old zoo
  - D.2.7. Remainder of woods – larger populations
  - D.2.8. All other populations <1,000 square feet (size 1 and 2) in the park, except on the islands in Lakes Takoma and Okonoka
  - D.2.9. All other larger populations in the park, except on the islands in Lakes Takoma and Okonoka
  - D.2.10. Last priority is the islands in Lakes Okonoka and Takoma
- TASK D.3. RS Treat all known populations of phragmites (*Phragmites australis*) on the island.
- D.3.1. Dead stands/stems may be cut or mowed as needed for aesthetics, but cutting is not needed for effective control. Phragmites should not be mowed anywhere in the park between May 15 and October 30, to ensure that chemical treatments in late summer/early fall can be effective.
  - D.3.2. Contact the Detroit Water & Sewer Department, Great Lakes Water Authority, and DEQ to determine whether the phragmites can be treated at the water intake in 2017 and beyond. Treat it if permission can be obtained.
- TASK D.4. VS/RS Treat isolated and high priority populations of Asian bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculata*) in the following priority order:
- D.4.1. FAs B and C. Treated in 2015 and 2016.
  - D.4.2. FA H and Nature Center area (3 small mapped points). Treated in 2015 and 2016.

- D.4.3. FA G east side, 3 small points along disc golf maintenance road. Treated in 2015 and 2016.
- D.4.4. Isolated points on the west end of the island: BIPW0790, BIPW0981, and BIPW1132. Treated in 2015 and 2016.
- D.4.5. 4 points in the old zoo – treat while still small after 2015 clearing
- D.4.6. FA J
- D.4.7. Western parts of FAs E and G
- D.4.8. Other populations as resources allow, including any stems that occur in proximity to honeysuckle or buckthorn in conjunction with those treatments.
- TASK D.5. VS Treat Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) in the following priority order:
  - D.5.1. Any new populations found in the forest or other focus areas
  - D.5.2. BIPW1039 (in SE corner of zoo)
  - D.5.3. BIPW1125 (at driving range/golf course)
  - D.5.4. BIPW0962 (at conservatory)
  - D.5.5. BIPW0965 (at music shell)
  - D.5.6. All remaining populations are on the islands in Lake Takoma, which should be treated beginning in 2019 unless additional resources become available sooner
- TASK D.6. VS Treat non-native honeysuckle (*Lonicera* spp.) in priority areas. Treat all stems, including seedlings, within each area. The following is the ecological priority order for control in 2017–2022, with the understanding that some volunteer/youth groups (based on size, age, and timeframe) may be better suited to areas lower on the list.
  - D.6.1. FA B: the narrow strip of area south of Nashua Canal
  - D.6.2. FA A: along and within 100 feet of Nashua Trail
  - D.6.3. FA B: along and within 100 feet of Nashua Canal (north side of canal)
  - D.6.4. FA C (few points)
  - D.6.5. FA H (few points)
  - D.6.6. FAs E and G: east half of each (sparse)
  - D.6.7. FA I (few points)
  - D.6.8. BIPW0566 – old zoo
  - D.6.9. FA B: interior area, within Nashua Trail loop (north of canal)
  - D.6.10. FA A: remainder of area
  - D.6.11. FA B: between Nashua Trail and old Tanglewood roadbed
  - D.6.12. FA E: along Sylvan Canal (follow-up and finish previous work)
  - D.6.13. FA J: work from west to east across area
  - D.6.14. FAs E and G: west half of each area
  - D.6.15. FA D: follow-up and finish
  - D.6.16. FA F
  - D.6.17. Any other populations throughout the island if opportunities and resources arise, but only if all of the above are either complete or not feasible for the type of resource available. (Tanglewood

- roadbed should not be a priority unless it is determined that the options for fill and roadbed removal fell through).
- TASK D.7. VS Treat populations of privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*) in the following priority order:
- D.7.1. All populations <1,000 square feet (size 1 and 2) within the woods
  - D.7.2. BIPW0759 – old zoo
  - D.7.3. Other populations island-wide as resources allow, including any stems that occur in proximity to honeysuckle or buckthorn in conjunction with those treatments.
- TASK D.8. VS/RS Treat known isolated populations of tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) in the following priority order:
- D.8.1. BIPW0685 (at the corner of FAs C, B, and J)
  - D.8.2. BIPW0575 (in FA A)
  - D.8.3. BIPW0642 and BIPW0616 (west of FA D)
  - D.8.4. BIPW0651 (in FA E)
  - D.8.5. BIPW0599 (fence along old golf course and Riverbank Rd)
  - D.8.6. Populations in the old zoo
  - D.8.7. Other populations as resources allow, including any stems that occur in proximity to honeysuckle or buckthorn in conjunction with those treatments.
- TASK D.9. RS Treat all known populations of purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) that are not being clearly impacted by Galerucella beetles.
- TASK D.10. RS Treat populations of narrow-leaf and hybrid cat-tail (*Typha angustifolia* and *T. xglauca*) in the following priority order:
- D.10.1. 4 mapped points on the west half of the island
  - D.10.2. 4 mapped points on Lake Muskoday
  - D.10.3. 6 mapped points around Blue Heron Lagoon and near lighthouse parking lot
  - D.10.4. All points in FA H and FA I (wetland near Nature Zoo)
  - D.10.5. Other populations in FA E, FA G, and elsewhere as resources allow.
- TASK D.11. VS Treat populations of multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*) in the following priority order:
- D.11.1. FAs B, C, E, G (isolated), H, and J
  - D.11.2. FAs A and G (larger patches)
  - D.11.3. Other populations as resources allow, including any stems that occur in proximity to honeysuckle or buckthorn in conjunction with those treatments.
- TASK D.12. RS/VS Treat known periwinkle (*Vinca minor*) populations in the following priority order:
- D.12.1. FA I – 1 point
  - D.12.2. FA J – 5 points along Central
  - D.12.3. FA B – 2 points in NE corner near old Tanglewood roadbed
  - D.12.4. FA G – 2 points along Oakway

- D.12.5. Other sites throughout the park as resources allow.
- TASK D.13. RS Treat reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) populations as resources allow. Focus efforts on small, isolated populations where control might be more likely to be effective, then work towards larger populations in/near the woods if funding is available and a suitable treatment technique can be found that minimizes non-target damage. Tree plantings should be considered in future years where appropriate as a long-term strategy for minimizing reed canary grass spread, as this species does not survive well in shaded conditions.
- TASK D.14. VS Treat Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*) within the forest (3 mapped points). Other seedlings or non-landscape Norway maples may be treated if resources allow, but are not a priority in 2017–2022. Do not treat live landscape Norway maples in developed areas of the park.
- TASK D.15. RS Treat Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) populations within the woods and roads/trails that cross the woods, and at the NE end of Blue Heron Lagoon and the prairie. Canada thistle is abundant throughout Belle Isle, but at this time we will necessarily focus available resources on these three areas.
- TASK D.16. VS Treat spotted knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa*) at the NE end of Blue Heron Lagoon in the area created and planted in 2013. Knapweed is abundant throughout Belle Isle, but at this time we will necessarily focus resources on a very limited area.
- TASK D.17. VS Treat sweet-clover (*Melilotus* spp.) at the NE end of Blue Heron Lagoon in the area created and planted in 2013. Sweet-clover is abundant throughout Belle Isle, but at this time we will necessarily focus resources on a very limited area.
- OBJECTIVE E. Treat, detect, and monitor oak wilt.
- TASK E.1. FH Follow-up and monitor the effectiveness of all prior oak wilt treatments
- TASK E.2. VS Train volunteers to recognize oak wilt and report it
- TASK E.3. FH Ensure new detection/mapping is done annually when the disease is detectable
- OBJECTIVE F. Refine the mowing strategy at the park to promote stewardship of important grassland areas and shorelines.
- TASK F.1. UM/PS Delay mowing until mid-July in FA K (the open area south of Blue Heron Lagoon) to allow for grassland bird nesting.
- TASK F.2. E Through consultation with partner groups, determine specific locations of past shoreline habitat projects at Belle Isle that need to be protected from disturbance (stabilization, “soft-shoreline” installations, plantings, etc.).
- TASK F.3. PS/E Locate and mark on the ground important shoreline areas that should be left un-mowed, while balancing the need for recreational shoreline access (bank fishing, etc.).

- TASK F.4. PS/RS Mow selected grassland areas to control invasive plants, such as the small planted area NE of Blue Heron Lagoon. Determine specific areas and timing in discussion with the Restoration Specialist.
- OBJECTIVE G. Ensure park staff and visitors are educated about stewardship issues at the park annually.
- TASK G.1. PS/UM Include Belle Isle stewardship information (conservation targets, identification info for invasive plants, etc.) in seasonal orientation. Also continue the hot coal campaign to protect landscape trees.
- TASK G.2. E/VS Work with the Belle Isle Conservancy, the Belle Isle Nature Zoo, and Friends of the Detroit River to educate the public about invasive species on the island and control efforts.
- OBJECTIVE H. Clean up all litter within the forest.
- TASK H.1. VS Include litter pick-up in forest as part of the annual spring clean-up event
- TASK H.2. VS Pick up and haul out all litter visible from Nashua Trail and within/along Nashua Canal.
- TASK H.3. VS Pick up and haul out all litter visible from Central and Oakway, and within/along Sylvan Canal.
- TASK H.4. VS Pick up and haul out all litter around the perimeter of the forest (Woodside, Strand, and golf course edge).
- TASK H.5. VS Pick up and haul out all litter in the interior of the woods (away from the roads/perimeter).
- TASK H.6. PS Pick up and haul out all litter within the forest that volunteers cannot handle (too large, hard to retrieve in canals, etc.)
- OBJECTIVE I. Ensure hazard trees are properly identified and appropriately limbed or removed in the vicinity of conservation targets (especially the forest).
- TASK I.1. PS **To prevent the spread of oak wilt, do not cut or prune oak trees during the growing season** (March 1 through November 1). If oak trees must be pruned or are wounded, spray the wound with clear shellac to create a barrier. Watch for tree wounding in high-use areas and seal wounds as soon as possible.
- TASK I.2. PS/FH Ensure individuals conducting hazard tree identification and removal are appropriately trained. Hazard trees need to have targets to be considered hazards.
- TASK I.3. PS Identify and remove all hazard trees from along Nashua Trail.
- TASK I.4. PS Identify and remove all hazard trees from along Central, Oakway, and near picnic/parking areas near the woods.
- OBJECTIVE J. Remove excessive dead brush, limbs, and fallen logs as described below. Haul any material to the designated woody material chipping area.

- TASK J.1. VS/RS Refrain from creating any new piles of brush and limbs during woody invasive plant removal efforts. Haul all material to the designated area during or immediately following all invasive tree/shrub removal efforts.
- TASK J.2. RS Cut and remove fallen trees from Nashua and Sylvan Canals to a sufficient width to allow passage of canoes and kayaks. Leave some fallen trees along banks as appropriate for aquatic habitat and bank stabilization.
- TASK J.3. VS Pick up and haul away any human-created piles of brush/limbs or aesthetically unappealing natural concentrations of brush/limbs within 50 feet of the Nashua Trail.
- TASK J.4. VS Pick up and haul away any human-created piles of brush/limbs within 50 feet of Central and Oakway
- TASK J.5. VS Pick up and haul away any human-created piles of brush/limbs within 50 feet of the remaining woods edge (Woodside, Strand, and golf course border)
- TASK J.6. RS If significant brush piles are found or created, GPS map all piles using the Stewardship Unit protocol and determine whether they should be hauled away, burned, or left in place.
- OBJECTIVE K. Investigate the need for prescribed burning, and prepare for and conduct burns as needed.
  - TASK K.1. E Determine where prescribed burns may be ecologically beneficial. Research burn histories of wet-mesic flatwoods forests and gather additional expert opinion. Evaluate the grassland areas annually.
  - TASK K.2. E Prepare and submit Forest Treatment Proposal (FTP) in August if burning will be needed in the following Fiscal Year.
  - TASK K.3. E/F Write burn plans
  - TASK K.4. F Conduct prescribed burn(s)
- OBJECTIVE L. Research and restore the surface hydrology of the island, with a special emphasis on the forest.
  - TASK L.1. UP/E Lead the flatwoods restoration/design project.
  - TASK L.2. UP/E Begin implementation of the flatwoods restoration project once design is complete and funding is secured.
  - TASK L.3. UP Lead the stormwater asset management planning project.
  - TASK L.4. UP/UM Repair stormwater infrastructure as resources allow.
- OBJECTIVE M. Monitor the effectiveness of emerald ash borer biological controls, and treat a limited number of ash trees to reduce mortality as resources allow.
  - TASK M.1. FH Work with US Forest Service and/or other partners to monitor the effectiveness of past bio-control releases.
  - TASK M.2. FH Treat a limited number of high-priority landscape ash trees with insecticide to prevent or slow their infestation.

- OBJECTIVE N. Compile existing flora and fauna data for Belle Isle and continue to gather new data on presence/absence and locations.
- TASK N.1. E Locate and compile as much existing data as possible on plants, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and other species. Include presence/absence (species lists) and locational information as available.
- TASK N.2. VS Encourage volunteer birders to collect bird survey data in all seasons by reporting checklists and counts to eBird using the "Belle Isle" hotspot. Encourage reporting of rare species locations to the Ecologist (Glenn Palmgren) for transmittal to MNFI and for use in monitoring the impacts of management activities on those species in the future.
- TASK N.3. VS Encourage volunteer botanists to survey for the previously-documented rare plants at Belle Isle and report both presence and absence (looked and didn't find) data. Document all rare plant populations with GPS waypoints and/or tracks, and complete and submit MNFI rare plant forms for species that have not been recently updated in MNFI's database.
- TASK N.4. VS Encourage the continuation of annual frog and toad survey by volunteers at established points throughout the island.
- TASK N.5. SA If resources are available, initiate a study of eastern fox snake occupancy and use of Belle Isle to determine specific use areas and patterns/timing of movement around the island.
- OBJECTIVE O. Continue to evaluate the current and former park road system, in cooperation with MDOT, for opportunities to reduce fragmentation of the forest and disruption of hydrology throughout the island.
- TASK O.1. UP Investigate the feasibility of road closure/abandonment in the woods to reduce fragmentation.
- TASK O.2. RS/UP/E Work with the Greater Detroit Resource Recovery Authority or other entities to remove the old fill material from the Tanglewood roadbed. Determine how much of this roadbed (if any) should be converted to trail or completely obliterated and removed.
- OBJECTIVE P. Maintain the existing prairie north of Blue Heron Lagoon (FA L) and reduce encroachment of woody plants within and surrounding it.
- TASK P.1. E Compile historical documents related to past inventory, management, and planting at this site, including perimeter bounds of the site.
- TASK P.2. VS/RS Control invasive plants at this site as opportunity arises, focusing on known small or manageable populations first, and with the understanding that this site is lower priority than the forest. Buckthorn and white poplar are likely the most important tree/shrub threats to this site at this time.
- OBJECTIVE Q. Maintain the habitat created by the 2013 Blue Heron Lagoon project.

- TASK Q.1. VS Control invasive plants along the Blue Heron Lagoon shoreline, especially within the created reptile nesting area on the peninsula and the small planted area north of the foot bridge.
- OBJECTIVE R. Complete a trail plan for the park, to include a stewardship emphasis on protection of extant natural features and minimizing fragmentation of the forest, while providing appropriate trail-based recreation and access.
  - TASK R.1. UP Complete a trail plan designating the approved locations, uses, and appropriate construction/surface for trails throughout the park.
  - TASK R.2. PS Ensure all new trail development and maintenance of existing trails conforms with the trail plan.
- OBJECTIVE S. Reduce pollution of aquatic ecosystems at the park and Detroit River by reducing direct stormwater outflows into the combined sewer system and river.
  - TASK S.1. UP Complete a stormwater system assessment and asset management plan.
  - TASK S.2. UP Investigate options for reducing stormwater inputs to the combined sewer system.
  - TASK S.3. UP Investigate options for bio-swales, retention areas, or other mechanisms for improving the quality of stormwater (reducing sediment and contaminant load) before it is discharged into the lakes, canals, and Detroit River.
- OBJECTIVE T. Complete the Lake Okonoka restoration project to reconnect the lake to the Detroit River and Blue Heron Lagoon.
  - TASK T.1. E/UP Participate on the project team with Friends of the Detroit River to complete construction of this project in 2017 and 2018.
- OBJECTIVE U. Submit a Work Item Proposal for all infrastructure development projects and all projects that involve earth disturbance. Work Item Proposals allow the natural resource impacts of a proposed project to be assessed and rejected, modified or mitigated as appropriate.
  - TASK U.1. PS Submit WIPs for all development projects and those that involve earth disturbance.

## Monitoring and Follow-Up

How will we monitor progress and adapt our actions?

### 1. Document stewardship activities that occur in the field

A Stewardship Treatment Record (R3142) must be completed for every stewardship action that occurs in the field. A Pesticide Treatment Record (R3148) must be attached whenever pesticide of any kind is used. Always attach a map to the Stewardship Treatment Record with sufficient detail to document exactly where the work was completed. Contact Alicia Ihnken in the Stewardship Unit to have a custom map created for a project if it would be helpful to complete or document the work. (Volunteers should work through the volunteer steward to request maps).

Stewardship Treatment Records (and associated pesticide records if applicable) must be submitted to Alicia Ihnken in the Stewardship Unit within 2 weeks of completing the work. Volunteers and partner groups will submit records to the volunteer steward (Malvitz-Draper), who will compile and forward to Ihnken.

Invasive mapping GIS data (points and polygons) shall be updated every time an invasive plant treatment occurs, and every time a new invasive plant location is discovered that is not already included in the GIS.

### 2. Document the completion of each task in this plan annually

The Ecological Restoration Specialist should keep an annual log (electronic or paper) to record the date of completion of each task listed in this plan.

### 3. Check stewardship and park records and data in January 2023 to determine whether tasks were completed

Revisit this plan and review all objectives to determine whether they were met. Unless further specified below, information contained in Stewardship Treatment Records and park files should be sufficient to determine whether an objective was met.

### 4. Revise this plan in winter 2022-2023 based on progress and new data

The Ecologist, Ecological Restoration Specialist, Volunteer Steward, Stewardship Unit Manager, Belle Isle Park Supervisor, Belle Isle Unit Manager, District Supervisor, Urban Planner, and other DNR staff (as appropriate) should meet or communicate via email to revise this plan. Input should be gathered from the Belle Isle Conservancy, Friends of the Detroit River, and other groups as appropriate. Review the Conservation Targets, Threats, Strategies, and specific Objectives and Tasks and revise as needed.

### 5. Collect follow-up photographic monitoring data and establish new points as needed

New photo-monitoring points were established in 2015, primarily to monitor the Friends of the Detroit River grant-funded invasive plant control work. The Ecologist or Ecological Restoration Specialist will establish new locations for photo-monitoring points as needed, based on the objectives outlined in this plan. Volunteers will be trained on the DNR photo-monitoring protocol by the volunteer steward as needed and will be the primary means of collecting follow-up photographs.

### 6. Compile plant and animal lists to fill out Appendix C