

EAST RIVERFRONT

ASSETS STUDY

Survey Results Summary

Round 2: June - September, 2021

Part of the

PARKS & REC
STRATEGIC PLAN



Round 2 Engagement

The second round of engagement was designed to gain more in depth individualized insights on each asset. Individuals were able to complete a community survey and/or participate in targeted stakeholder interviews.

To bridge the digital divide, the community survey was designed to be adaptive, it could be completed online, by paper, and over the phone.

The survey was launched in June 21, 2021 and remained open for about 3 months until September 15th, 2021.

Let us know
how WE can make
better for YOU!

visit surveymonkey.com/r/ERASsurvey
or call **313-241-4080**

PARKS & REC
STRATEGIC PLAN
DETROIT

Social media post advertising the survey

Let us know
how WE can make
THIS PLAZA
better for YOU!

 visit detroitmi.gov/eras or
 call **313-241-4080**

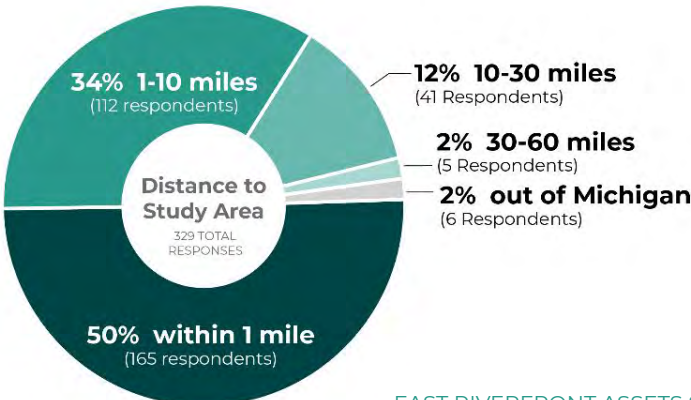
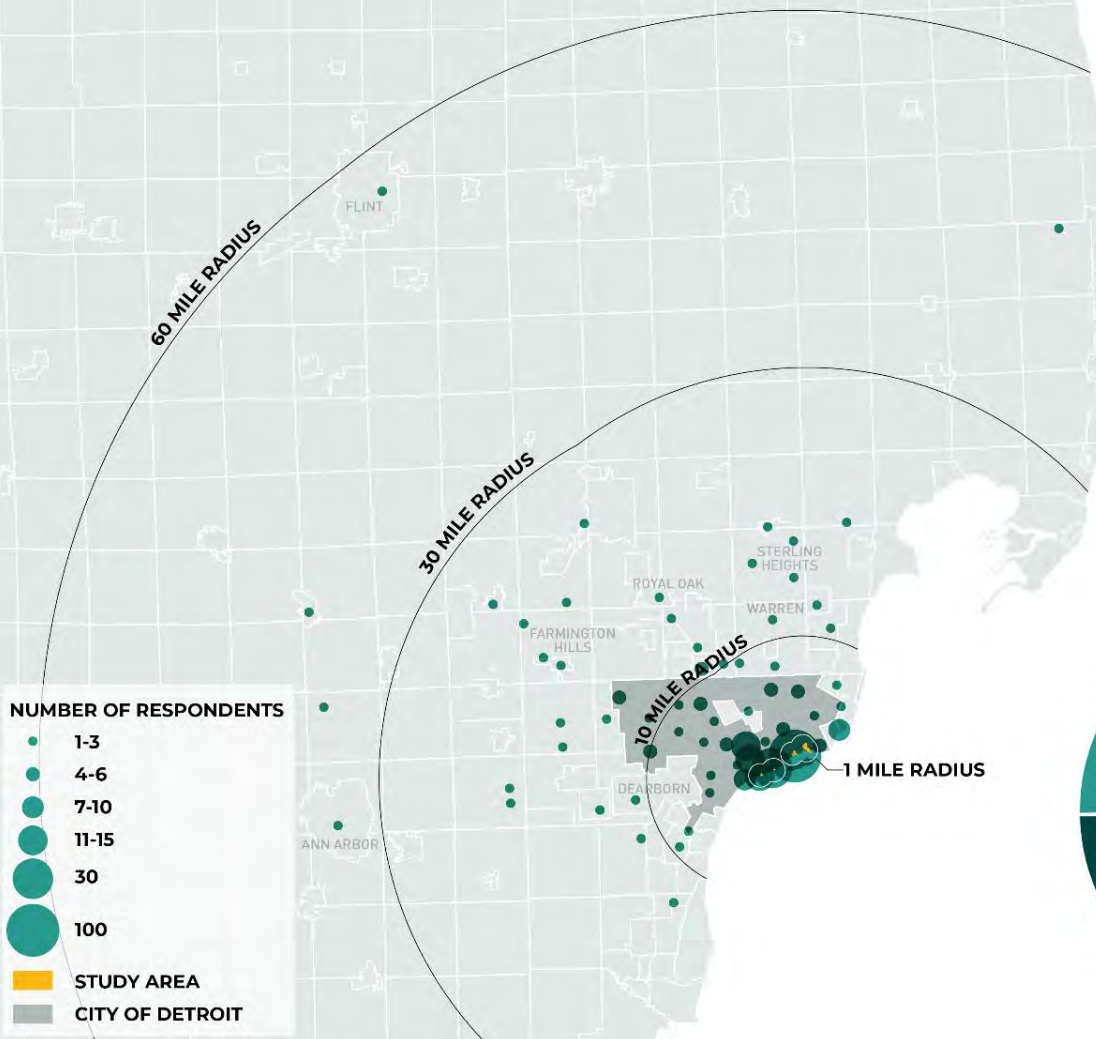


PARKS & REC
DETROIT MI 

To maximize participation and practice safety measures during Covid-19, signage about the survey was posted at each asset.

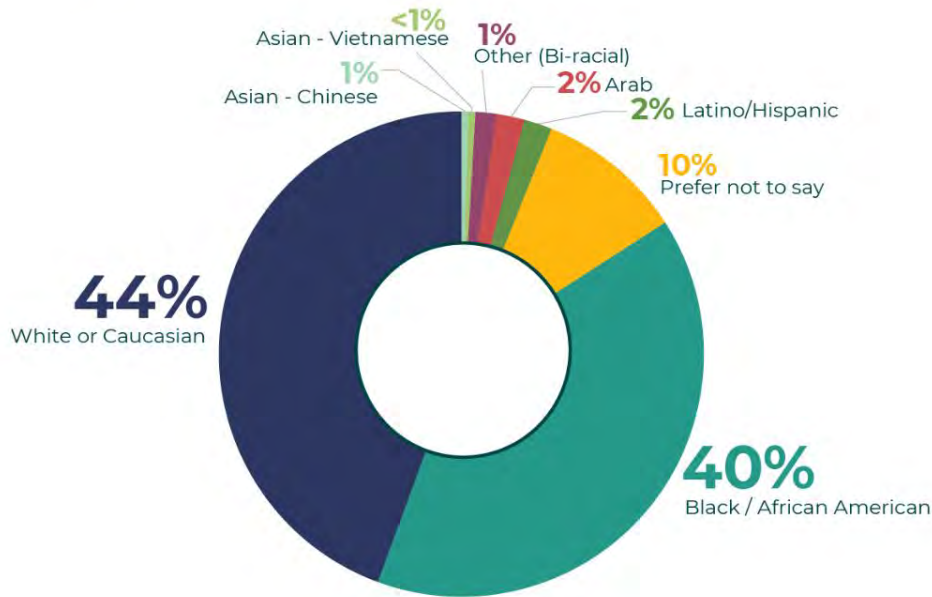
Participation

In all, **329 stakeholders** shared their input in the community survey. Residents from across the City provided their input, but the majority of respondents resided in the zip codes nearest to the assets.



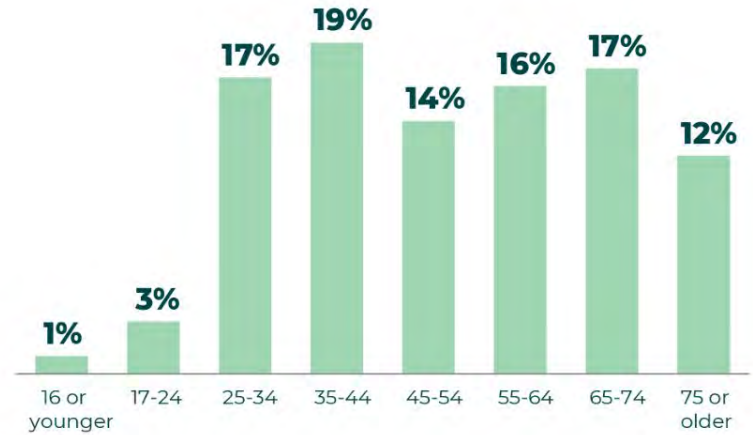
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR RACE?

214 responses



WHAT IS YOUR AGE?

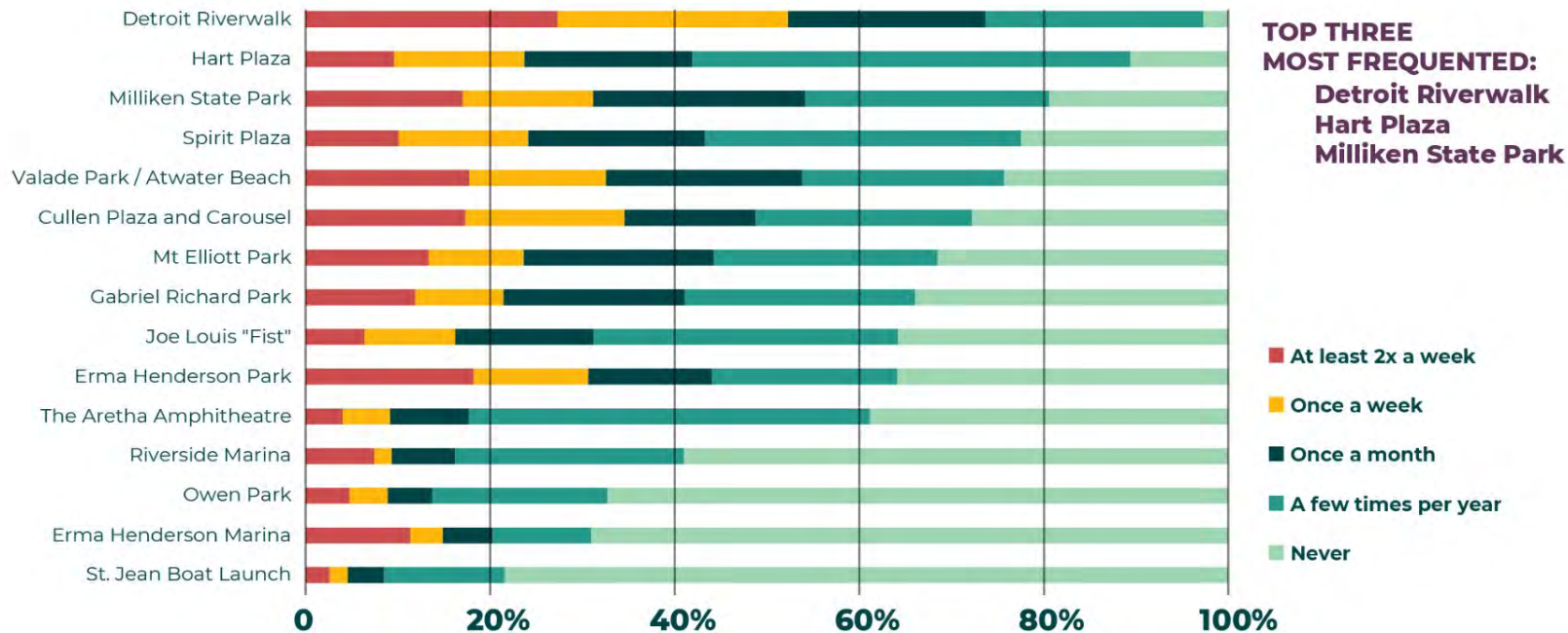
202 responses



Respondents were diverse in terms of race, ethnicity and age.

Summary of Findings

PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOUR INTERACTIONS ON THE DETROIT'S EAST RIVERFRONT: **HOW OFTEN DO YOU GO?**



HART PLAZA

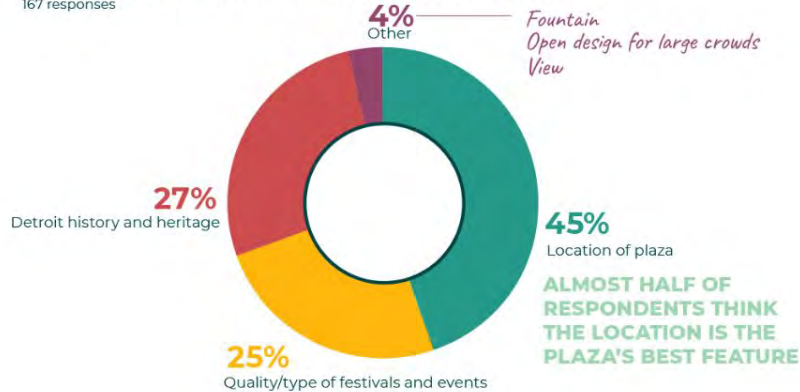
WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL OPINION OF THE PLAZA?

161 responses



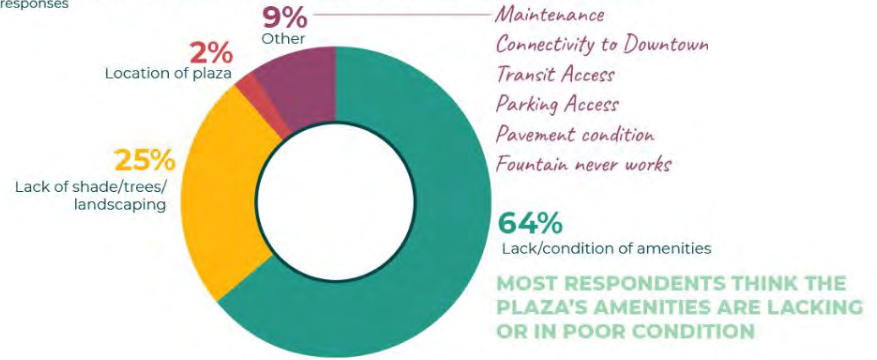
WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FEATURE OF THE PLAZA?

167 responses



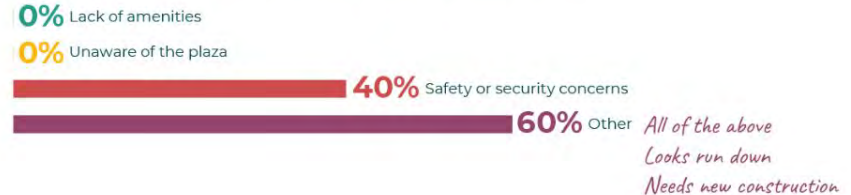
WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THE PLAZA?

167 responses



IF YOU HAVE NOT VISITED HART PLAZA, WHY NOT?

5 responses





I love the jazz festival.

Har Plaza is a recreational wasteland. It is completely paved and completely missing any recreational amenities. Even though it is empty space, it serves as a barrier between downtown and the riverfront. Redesign to serve as an inviting link between Spirit Plaza and the Riverfront.

It shouldn't be vacant space when there are no festivals. It should be available for community and family activities all year.

It's been a barren moonscape with a massive non-working fountain since it was created... Most of the pavers are broken. The lack of shade trees and landscaping makes it very unattractive.

It has a beautiful view of the river. Please don't obstruct the view.

It is really a Detroit Jewel. I wish it could look more like the Inner Harbor in Baltimore, MD.

HART PLAZA

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Many cited the **general condition as being in disrepair** and in need of an upgrade, in addition to better upkeep and maintenance.
- **Better bathroom facilities** were top of mind for respondents.
- **Participants love the fountain, but many note disappointment in its disrepair** and that it's turned off most of the time.
- There is much love for the festivals held here, but many wish for **activation and beautification on non-event days**.
- **People experiencing homelessness impacts user experiences** on the plaza.
- Many cited the **expanse of cement and lack of greening** as an issue that needs to be addressed.
- **Connectivity to Spirit Plaza, parking, and bicycle access** all need to be addressed.

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide consists of several light blue speech bubbles and arrows of varying sizes and orientations, some pointing right and some pointing up or down, creating a sense of communication and flow.

WE HEAR YOU!

How will this input be reflected in Hart Plaza's recommendations?

- Any new improvements to the site should be paired with a maintenance plan to ensure the quality and experience of the plaza remains consistent over time.
- Fix the fountain, and KEEP IT ON (as much as possible)!
- Activate and beautify the plaza to maximize its daily use (not just for festivals).
- Build better bathroom facilities that are clean and well maintained.
- Work across city departments to help those experiencing homelessness on the site.
- Work across city departments to maintain monuments and markers.
- Work across city departments to address security concerns.
- Add greening and landscaping to soften the impact of the large paved surfaces.
- Create safer connections and crossings to and from Spirit Plaza, a clear parking plan, and better bicycle infrastructure.

SPIRIT PLAZA & THE “FIST”

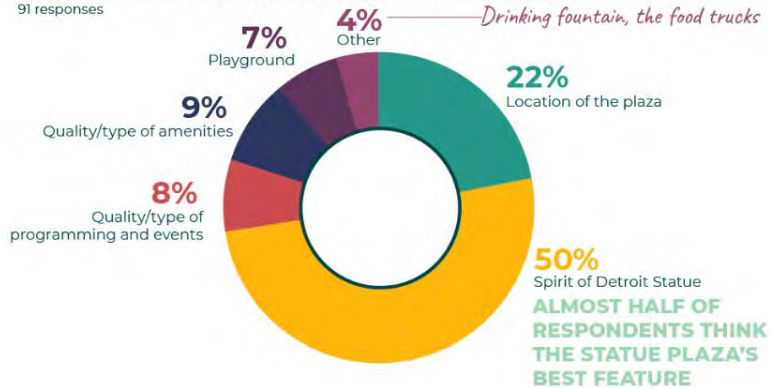
WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL OPINION OF THE PLAZA?

92 responses



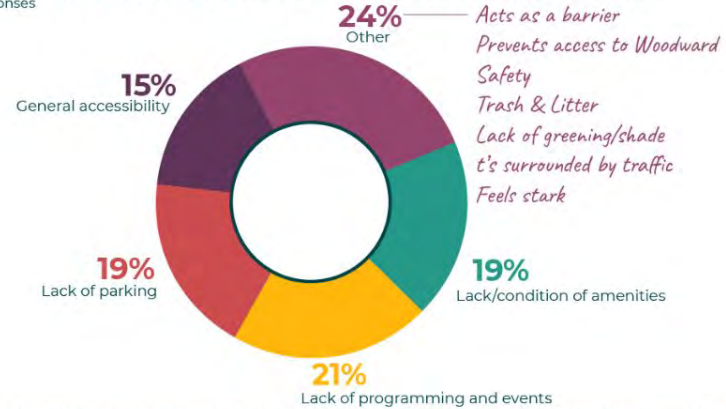
WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FEATURE OF THE PLAZA?

91 responses



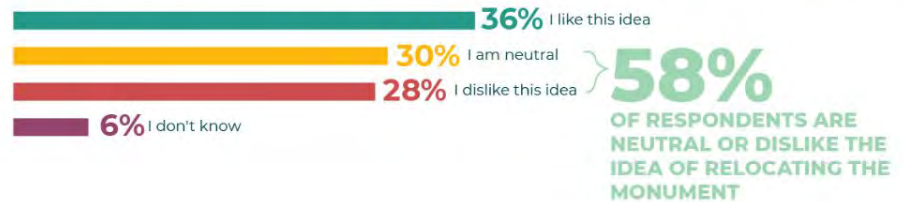
WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THE PLAZA?


91 responses



HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT RELOCATING THE JOE LOUIS (“FIST”) MONUMENT?

102 responses





I think efforts should be taken to try and work more green space into this segment of downtown. Everything in this area is so grey and paved.

There have been times I felt like I couldn't enjoy the park, in particular in winter, without making a purchase.

It's a great start! But it needs to be better connected to Hart Plaza. Should serve as a gateway to the plaza. Also needs to be pedestrianized more.

I love having this plaza and am so grateful the city chose to remove cars from this beautiful spot!

Looks temporary. If it keeps being used, rip up the pavement and make it a true park. If it not used enough, remove it. I miss being able to take Woodward all the way to Jefferson.

It's great and a really unique space - keep it shut down to traffic so the kids can play freely and safely...

SPIRIT PLAZA & THE “THE FIST”

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Still **feels like a temporary space** rather than a welcoming public plaza.
- Respondents would like to see **more consistent programming** and family-friendly infrastructure.
- Many cited the **lack of greening** as an issue that needs to be addressed.
- Many comments responded to the creation of the plaza itself, and **wondered if returning road access to Woodward could be considered.**
- While some appreciated the food trucks and local vendors, others cited a **perception that you needed to buy something** to use the plaza.
- The plaza is **difficult to bike and drive to.**



WE HEAR YOU!

How will this input be reflected in Spirit Plaza's recommendations?

- **Formalize the space with curbs and pavers so it feels less temporary.**
- **Provide programming that is welcoming, and can appeal to different demographics of all income levels.**
- **Incorporate family-friendly activities and infrastructure.**
- **Create a space that is more lush and shady by incorporating trees and other plantings.**
- **Consider ways to better accommodate cars driving toward Woodward Ave.**
- **Alleviate the need to drive and park by providing clear bicycle access and amenities, transit amenities, and safer pedestrian access.**
- **Work across city departments to help those experiencing homelessness on the site.**
- **Leave the "Fist" in its current location, but make it safer and more welcoming to get to.**

THE ARETHA

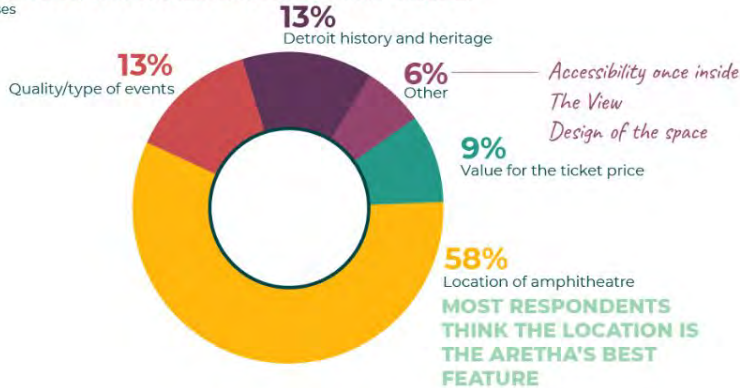
WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL OPINION OF THE AMPHITHEATRE?

95 responses



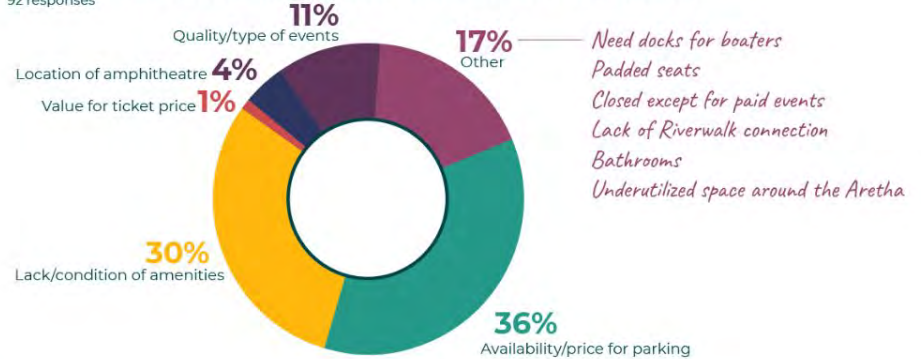
WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FEATURE OF THE VENUE?

96 responses



WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THE VENUE?


92 responses



IF YOU HAVE NOT VISITED THE AMPHITHEATRE, WHY NOT?

19 responses





The grounds should be improved to be more accessible to visitors and every day users when there is not an event going on.

Traffic to/from on event nights and parking is a big issue. Clutters up the entire area.

The Aretha is one of my favorite summertime venues in Detroit!

Would like to see more varied music offerings.

PLEASE connect the Riverwalk behind the theater on the river. I walk the river all the time and it would be lovely to be able to stay on the Riverwalk and connect to Valade Park. There are 365 days a year. There are not that many concerts in the big picture of things. Also, open up the parking lots there when there are no concerts. Let the public park there!

It's a beautiful venue. Make sure you keep up with updates and maintenance of the property.

THE ARETHA

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Many respondents expressed the desire for free **access to the site and riverwalk when events weren't going on.**
- Generally, respondents find the venue and location beautiful, but find the **need for general updates and maintenance of the property.** The maintenance of the **ponds** needs to be addressed.
- **Parking is an issue, as is access via transit.** One noted they were unsure about how to get there via transit.
- The venue **lacks a marquee** or outside signage to advertise events.
- Respondents would like to see **Aretha Franklin celebrated at the site.**
- Of those who say they do not visit the Aretha, almost all cited the **types of offerings.**
- Boaters would like to **dock at the site.**
- Many expressed interest in **updated bathrooms, better food options, and a digitized ticketing system.**



WE HEAR YOU!

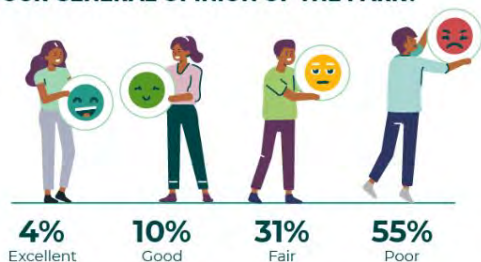
How will this input be reflected in The Aretha's recommendations?

- **Provide a design solution to allow access around the venue and continuous Riverwalk connectivity to Valade Park.**
- **Give the venue a facelift with general updates and better maintain exterior of the property, especially the ponds.**
- **Access by all modes of transportation needs to be clear. Increase wayfinding signage, and lessen the parking demand by making it easier to walk, bike and take transit to the site.**
- **Provide a marquee or outside signage to advertise upcoming events.**
- **Celebrate Aretha Franklin's legacy on the site.**
- **Evaluate programming to explore opportunities for more varied offerings.**
- **Provide docks along the Riverfront so boaters can take advantage of the site.**
- **Update bathrooms and better food options. Upgrade technology to provide smartphone entry.**

OWEN PARK

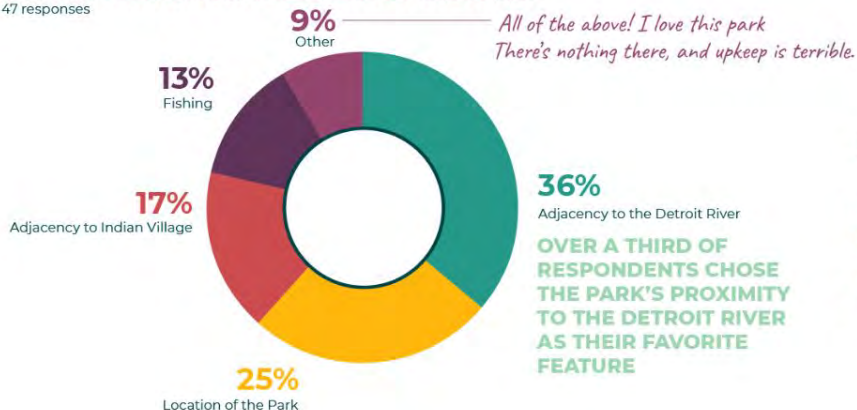
WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL OPINION OF THE PARK?

48 responses



WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FEATURE OF THE PARK?

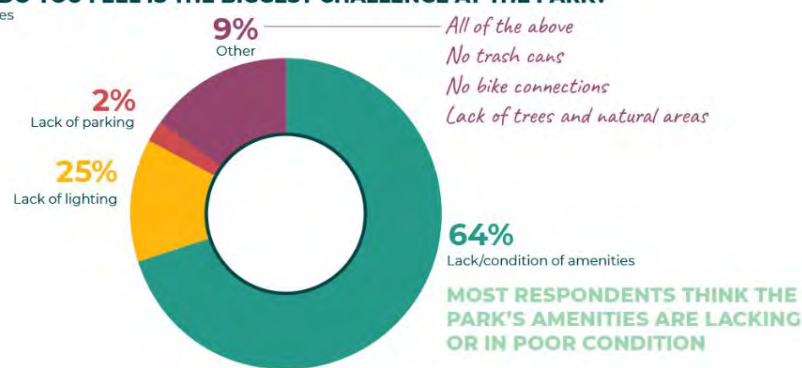
47 responses



OVER A THIRD OF RESPONDENTS CHOSE THE PARK'S PROXIMITY TO THE DETROIT RIVER AS THEIR FAVORITE FEATURE

WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THE PARK?

47 responses




MOST RESPONDENTS THINK THE PARK'S AMENITIES ARE LACKING OR IN POOR CONDITION

IF YOU HAVE NOT VISITED OWEN PARK, WHY NOT?

18 responses





Anything is probably better than what is there now

The road is dirt and there is no signage. I'm not sure if I want the signage - this is one of Detroit's best kept secrets.

It's my favorite park. Please don't overdevelop it!

Needs lots of cleanup. Just don't commercialize this park too much. It's got a lot of character and represents "the city" very well. Don't over gentrify it.

Dog friendly park or fishing pier; less is more in some parks. Bench seating and shade would be great.

OWEN PARK

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- The quiet, secluded and **informal nature of the park is seen as a benefit.**
- **Fishing** is the recreational activity that happens here the most, and should be celebrated and amenitized.
- Some called for a **family-friendly environment** that is connected to the rest of the Riverwalk system.
- Most who haven't visited the park conveyed that they hadn't been there because they were **unaware of it.**

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WE HEAR YOU!

How will this input be reflected in Owen Park's recommendations?

- **Formalize fishing amenities at the site while maintaining the park's quiet, scenic and secluded feeling.**
- **Incorporate restrooms and picnic tables into the future design.**
- **Consider ways to integrate this site within the riverfront park system.**

ERMA HENDERSON MARINA

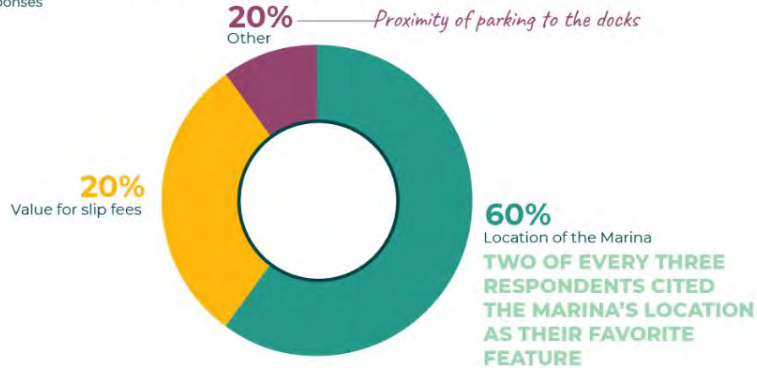
WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL OPINION OF THE MARINA?

10 responses



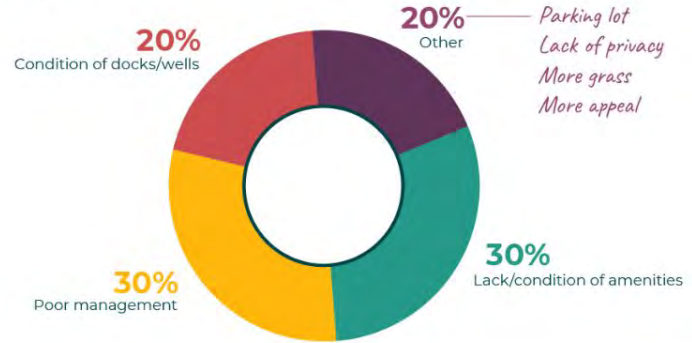
WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FEATURE OF THE MARINA?

10 responses



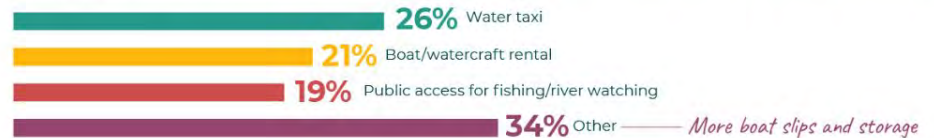
WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THIS MARINA?

10 responses

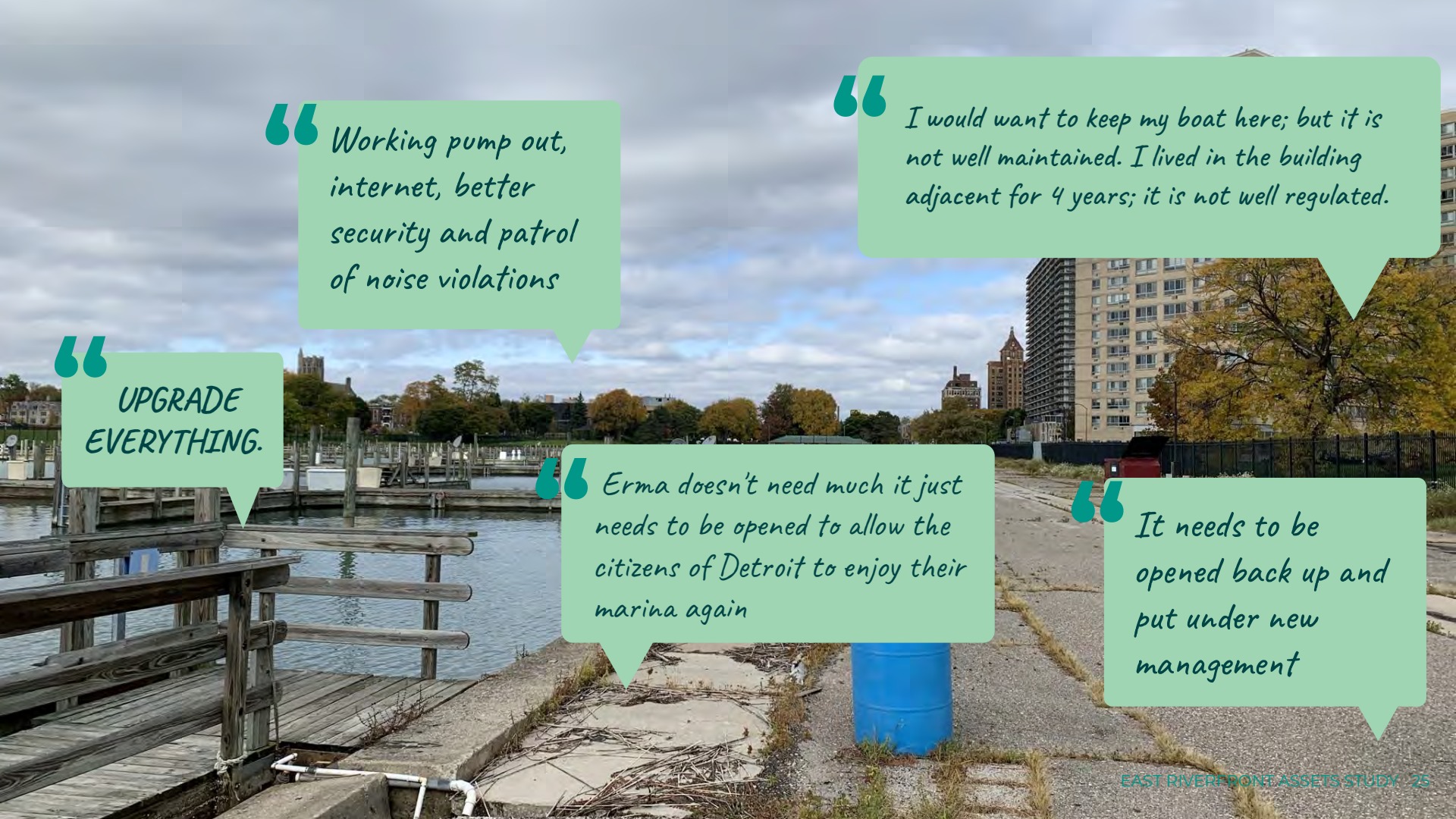


IF YOU DO NOT KEEP A BOAT HERE, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AT THIS MARINA?

57 responses



84% OF RESPONDENTS DO NOT KEEP A BOAT AT THIS MARINA



*Working pump out,
internet, better
security and patrol
of noise violations*

*I would want to keep my boat here; but it is
not well maintained. I lived in the building
adjacent for 4 years; it is not well regulated.*

*UPGRADE
EVERYTHING.*

*Erma doesn't need much it just
needs to be opened to allow the
citizens of Detroit to enjoy their
marina again*

*It needs to be
opened back up and
put under new
management*

ERMA HENDERSON MARINA

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- There is **confusion as to why the marina is closed** and when/if it will reopen.
- Generally, the **facility is outdated and in need of an upgrade** and additional landscaping treatments.
- Respondents cited **management challenges at the facility.**
- The marina can **feel exclusive**, not like a public asset.
- For those who do not keep boats here, respondents would like to see a kayak launch, more exterior landscaping and buffering from the surrounding community, and a **destination restaurant.**



WE HEAR YOU!

How will this input be reflected in the Marina's recommendations?

- **Clearly keep the public up to date, for example by displaying onsite signage, as to the status of the of the marina, and when it will be available for use by the public.**
- **Update the facility, including additional landscaping treatments.**
- **Work with management to address concerns of boaters and repair relationships.**
- **Assess the opportunity for increased dining options, including restaurants and food trucks.**
- **Explore public access, kayak/boat launches at this location.**

ERMA HENDERSON PARK

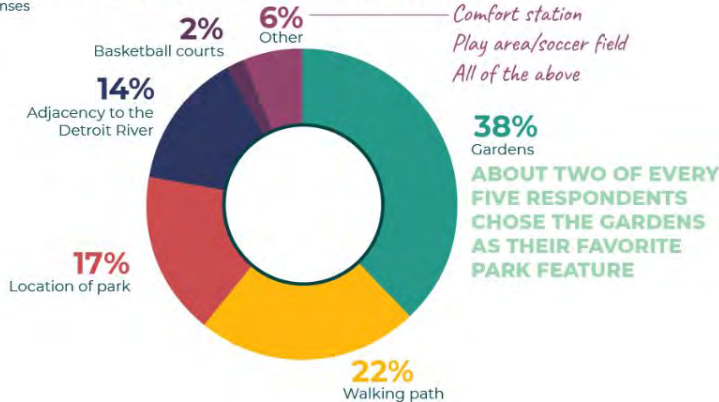
WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL OPINION OF THE PARK?

95 responses



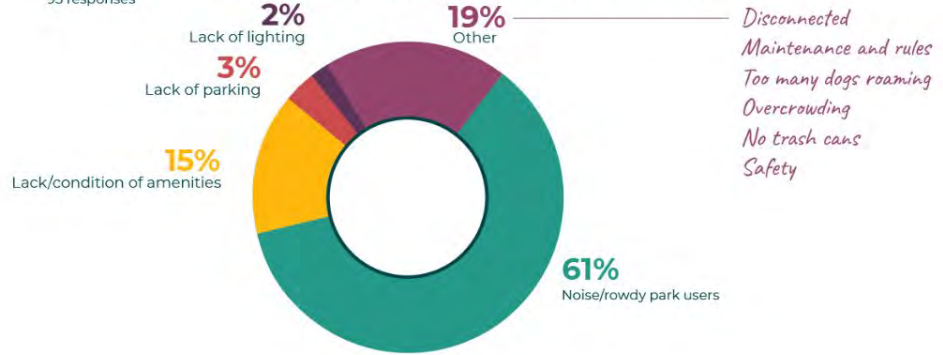
WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FEATURE OF THE PARK?

97 responses



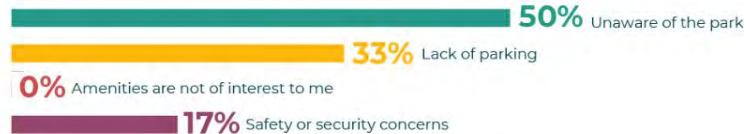
WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THE PARK?

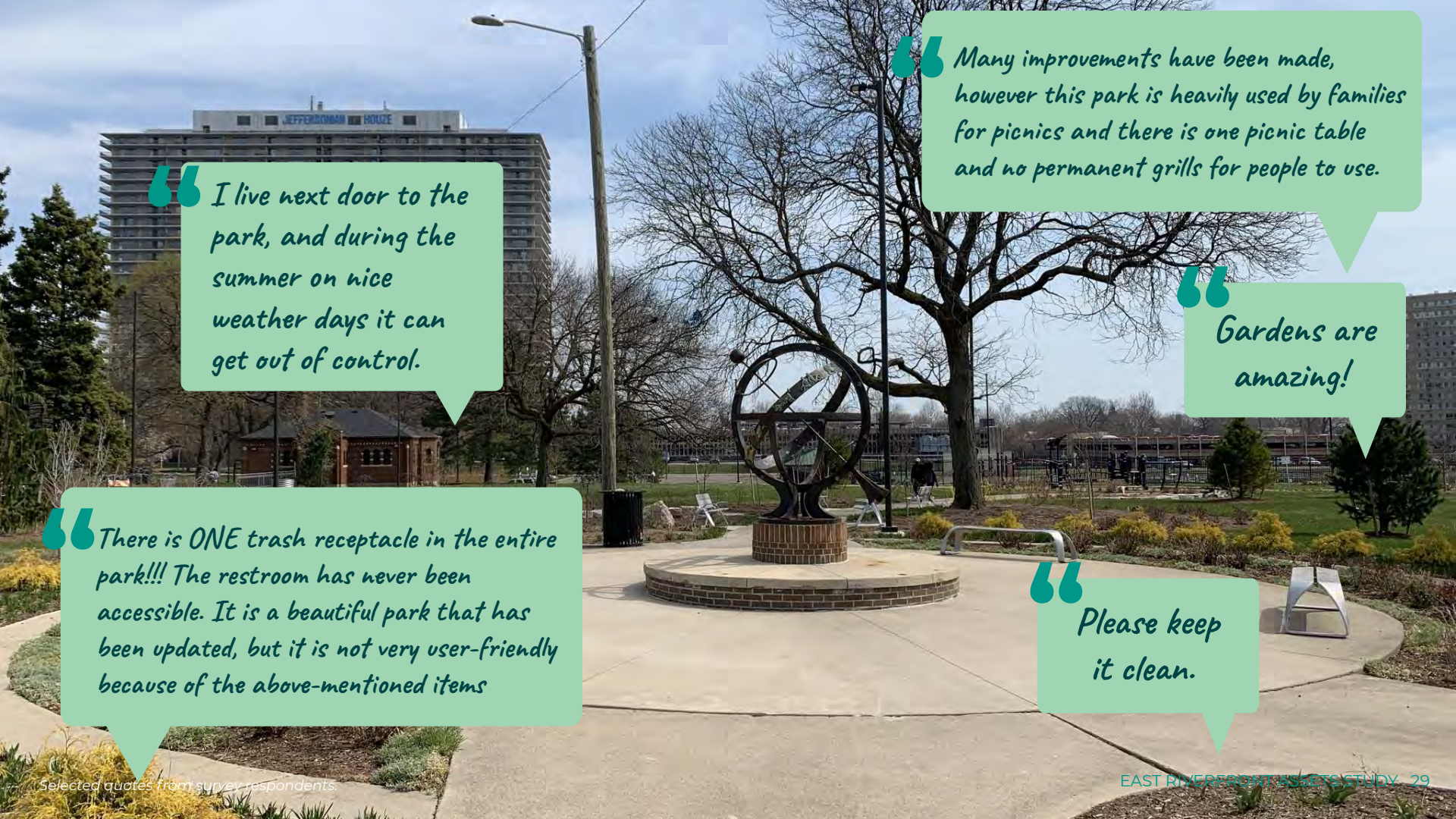
95 responses



IF YOU HAVE NOT VISITED ERMA HENDERSON PARK, WHY NOT?

6 responses





“ I live next door to the park, and during the summer on nice weather days it can get out of control.

“ Many improvements have been made, however this park is heavily used by families for picnics and there is one picnic table and no permanent grills for people to use.

“ Gardens are amazing!

“ There is ONE trash receptacle in the entire park!!! The restroom has never been accessible. It is a beautiful park that has been updated, but it is not very user-friendly because of the above-mentioned items

“ Please keep it clean.

ERMA HENDERSON PARK

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Respondents are **appreciative of the landscaping/flower beds**, and would like to see more.
- Park users can stay late into the evening and produce noise and other issues that impact the quality of life with nearby residents. There were **many calls for increased security at this location**.
- **Trash collection** is an issue here.
- The park feels **disconnected from the river itself** and the riverwalk system.
- Some feel the park **doesn't feel welcoming to the public**.
- The **bathroom hours are confusing**, and they are often closed.
- There's an opportunity to **display Erma Henderson's history** on the site.



WE HEAR YOU!

How will this input be reflected in the Park's recommendations?

- **Incorporate clear signage with park rules, and posted hours that restrooms will be open.**
- **Increase the number of family-friendly amenities, such as picnic tables in shady spots.**
- **Maintain the flower beds and expand their footprint.**
- **Work across city departments to allow park users to maximize the use of this park without becoming a nuisance to neighbors by more strictly enforcing park rules.**
- **Increase the number of trash receptacles and how often they are emptied.**
- **Consider ways of better connecting the site to the river and riverwalk system.**
- **Host more programmed events to bring in new visitors and advertise that the park is open to the public.**
- **Celebrate Erma Henderson's history on the site.**

RIVERSIDE MARINA

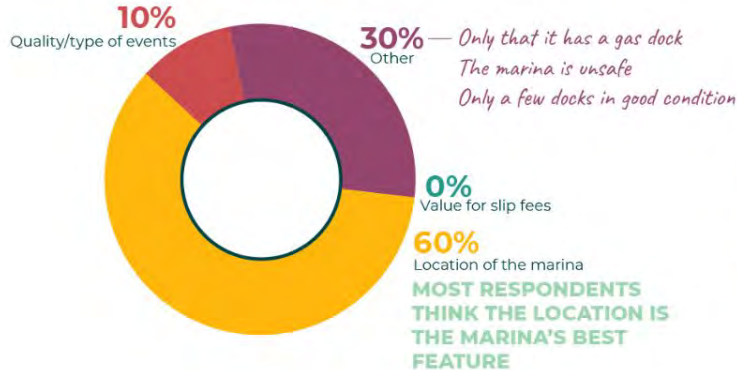
WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL OPINION OF THE MARINA?

10 responses



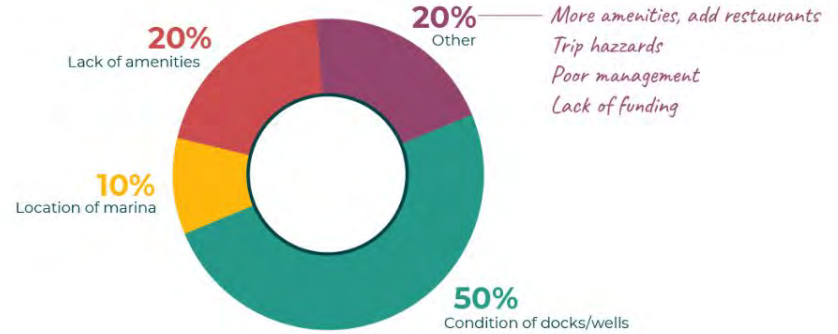
WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FEATURE OF THE MARINA?

10 responses



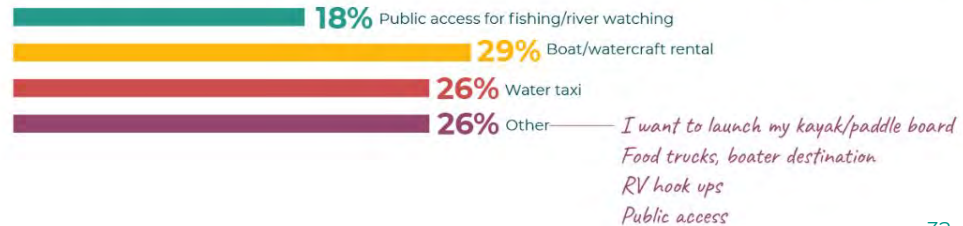
WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THIS MARINA?


10 responses



IF YOU DO NOT KEEP A BOAT HERE, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AT THIS MARINA?

19 responses





The management is not handling the marina well. There needs to be new management.

Public access and kayak launch.

There are only a few docks in good condition, rates keep going up with few upgrades, the management company doesn't have the money to keep things up to par and they charge people more and more every year.

This marina needs a total overhaul. Can't put bandages on dilapidated and severely damaged wells and docks.

Selected quotes from survey respondents.

RIVERSIDE MARINA

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Of those who keep boats here, respondents feel the **marina is in poor condition**, citing unsafe conditions, docks that are underwater and tripping hazards.
- Some noted that the facility is **not ADA compliant**.
- Respondents cited **management challenges at the facility**.
- Many expressed the desire for **more destination amenities**, including additional food offerings (food trucks and restaurants).
- For those who don't keep a boat here, public access, including **boat and kayak launches were desired**, along with the ability to rent watercrafts.



WE HEAR YOU!

How will this input be reflected in Riverside Marina's recommendations?

- **Make capital improvements to ensure a safe and ADA accessible boating environment.**
- **Work with management to address concerns of boaters and repair relationships.**
- **Assess the opportunity for increased dining options, including restaurants and food trucks.**
- **Explore public access, kayak/boat launches at this location.**

ST. JEAN BOAT LAUNCH

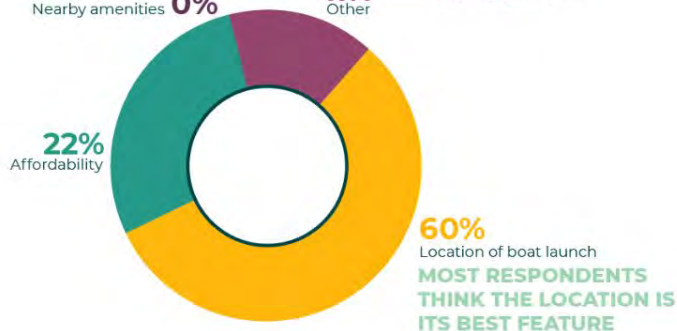
WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL OPINION OF THE BOAT LAUNCH?

10 responses



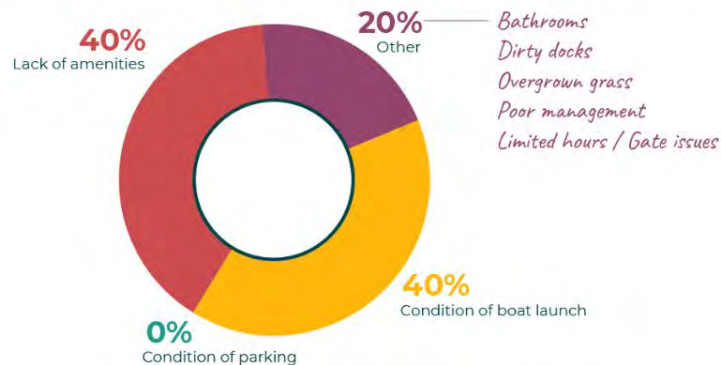
WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FEATURE OF THE BOAT LAUNCH?

10 responses



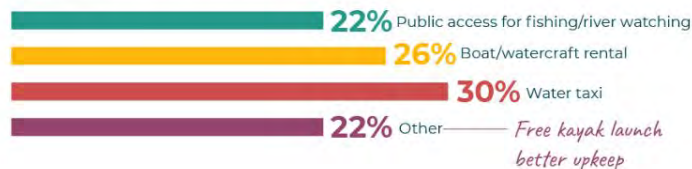
WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THIS BOAT LAUNCH?

10 responses



IF YOU DO NOT KEEP A BOAT HERE, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AT THIS LOCATION?

23 responses





“ Updates and better upkeep, along with a water taxi!

“ Public access & kayak launch.

“ Please invest in this boat launch.

“ Open it up to public! Detroiters want to be able to get to the river.

Selected quotes from survey respondents

ST. JEAN BOAT LAUNCH

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Respondents find that the boat launch could use some **general upgrades and better maintenance.**
- The **paid bathrooms are complicated** and in poor condition.
- Some cited **difficulty accessing the site after hours** and inconsistency in gate closure timing.
- For those that don't keep boats here, a **kayak/paddle board launch** was the most requested amenity.
- Respondents would like to see this site open to the public and **better integrated within the riverfront park system.**



WE HEAR YOU!

How will this input be reflected in the boat launch's recommendations?

- **Make capital improvements to ensure a safe and ADA accessible boating environment.**
- **Update the bathrooms and evaluate the paid access system. If payment is to remain, consider upgrading the payment technology with smartphone integration.**
- **Work with management to address concerns of boaters and repair relationships.**
- **Assess the opportunity for increased dining options, including restaurants and food trucks.**
- **Explore public access, kayak/boat launches at this location.**
- **Consider ways to integrate this site within the riverfront park system.**