

04

MARINA DISTRICT



OVERVIEW

ABOUT

The Marina District is located approximately 4 miles east of Downtown Detroit. One of Detroit's busiest blueways, the district offers a unique blend of sailing, boating, and industry. The area is complemented by affordable riverfront access, contemporary housing nearby, and long-time popular restaurants. Tens of thousands of people visit the many marinas and yacht clubs each year, helping to preserve and protect Detroit's often forgotten maritime identity. The city-owned assets in this district include Riverside Marina, St. Jean Boat Launch, and two public parks.

ASSETS

- Riverside Marina
- St. Jean Boat Launch
- Engel Memorial Park
- Reid Memorial Park

STUDY AREA STATS

Total Site Area	+/- 66 acres
Riverside Marina	+/- 32 acres (48%)
Reid Memorial Park	+/- 23 acres (35%)
Engel Memorial Park	+/- 6 acres (9%)
St. Jean Boat Launch	+/- 5 acres (8%)
Linear Feet of Shoreline	+/- 1,870 feet

Boat Slips at Riverside Marina

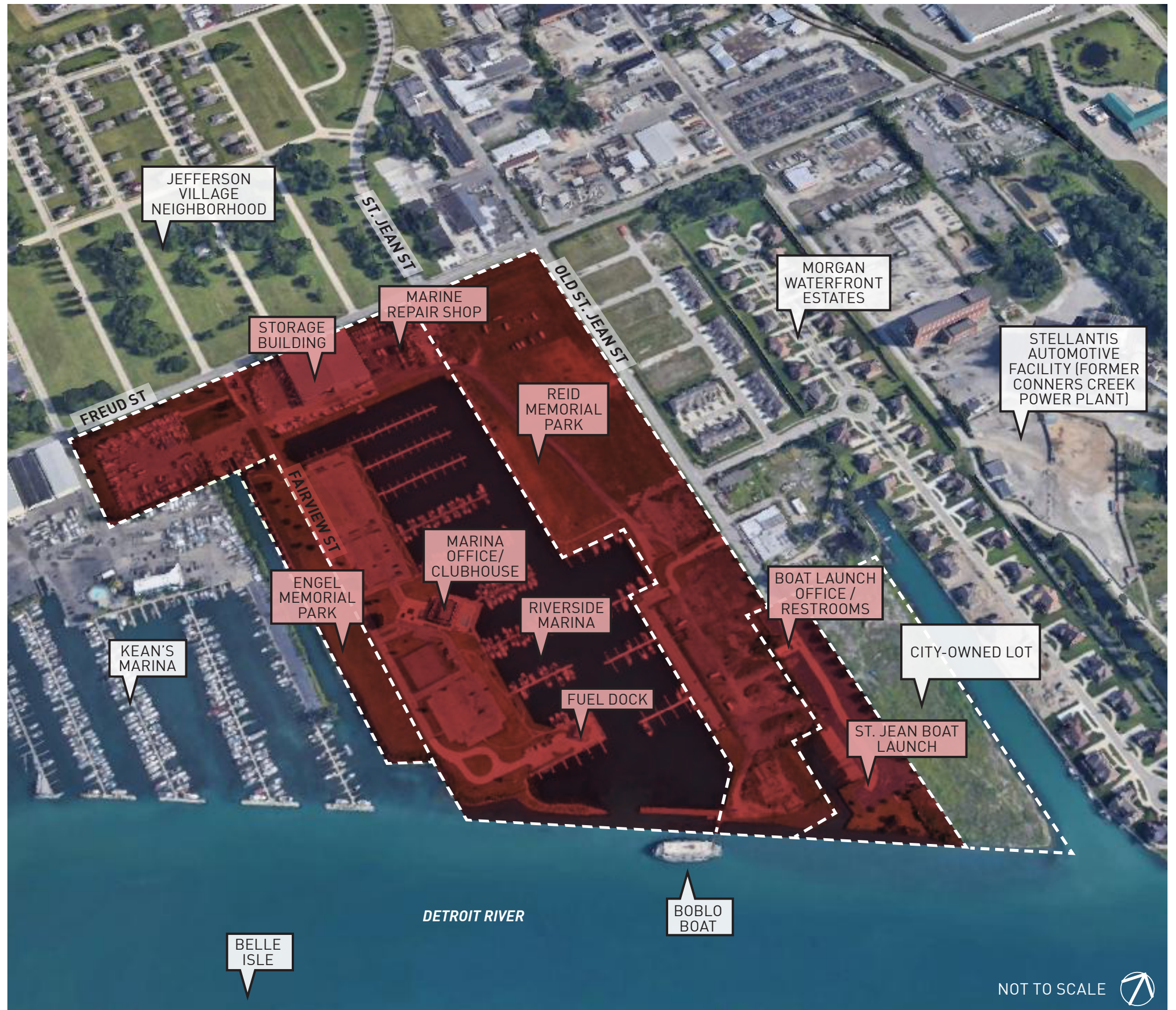
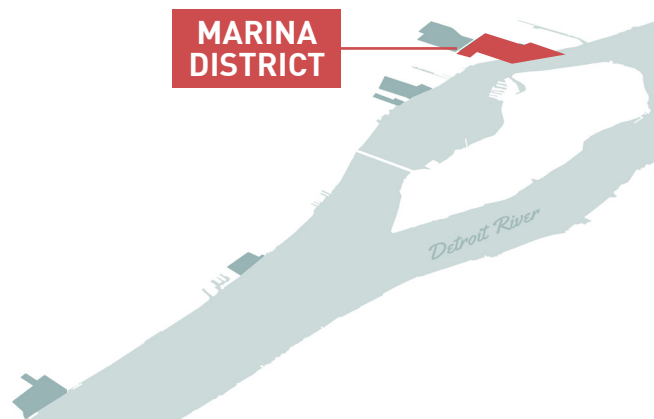
# Existing Boat Slips	389
# Operational Boat Slips	226

Zoning Designation

East of Fairview Street	Planned Development (PD)
West of Fairview Street	General Industrial (M3)

Local Historic Designation

None



EXISTING AERIAL OF SITE & SURROUNDINGS

NOT TO SCALE

HISTORY

RIVERSIDE MARINA

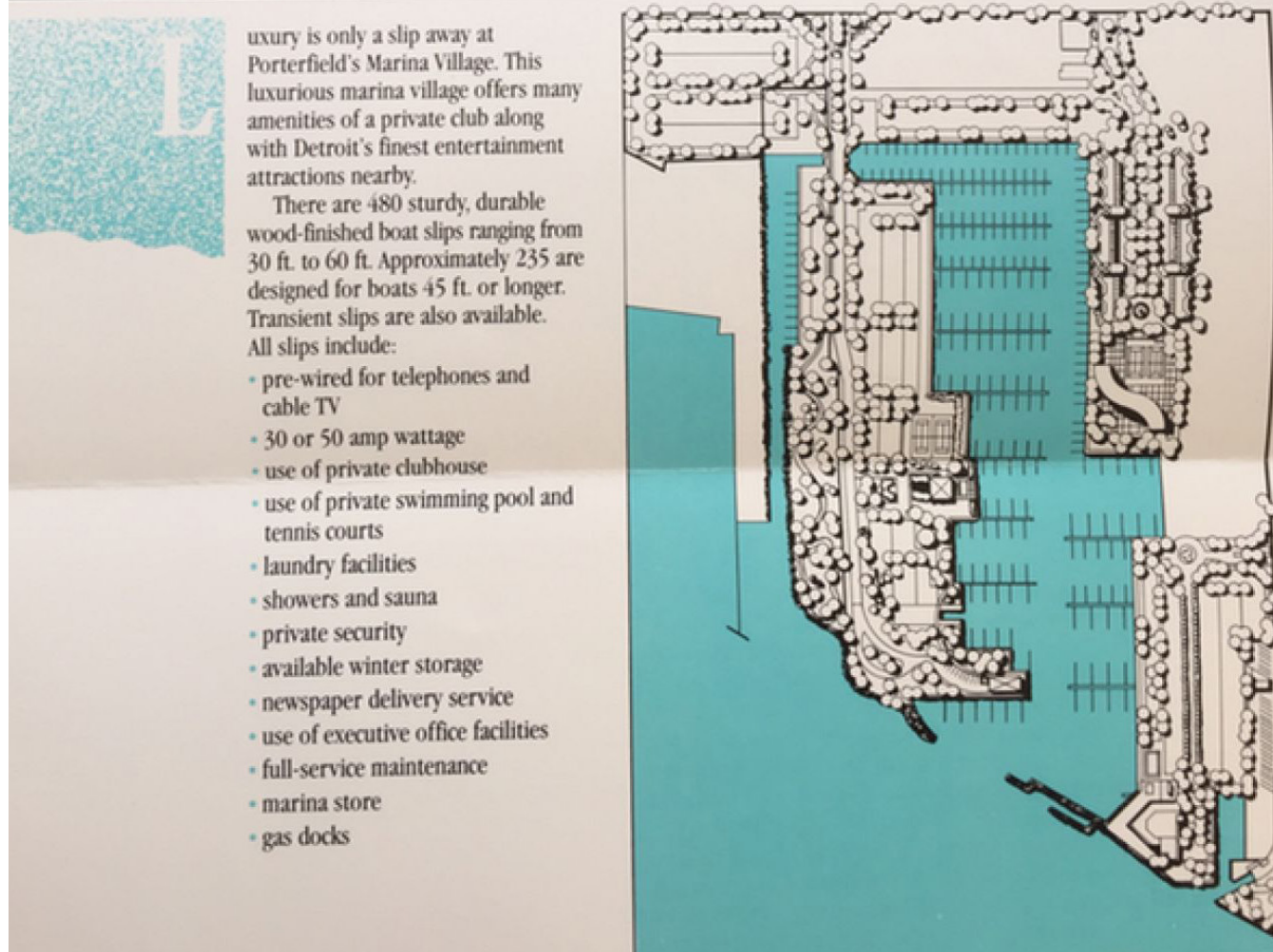
Built in the late 1980s, Riverside Marina was the vision of businessman Porterfield Wilson and former Detroit mayor Coleman A. Young. Wilson's original plan was designed with a residential tower (which was never built) overlooking a new marina on city-owned land, all marketed to affluent African Americans.

ENGEL MEMORIAL PARK

Engel Park was named for George Engel, a public servant who served Detroit as a policeman, city comptroller, civil service commissioner, and City Council member. The land originally belonged to the Delorme Farm and the Walter C. Mack Subdivision. The land was acquired by the City in 1942 and became the site of the Croxon Projects, a temporary housing project in response to the housing shortage following World War II. Concurrent with the demolition of the Croxon Projects in 1956 was the construction of the first recreational facility which included a public boat launch ramp, baseball diamonds, parking lots, and a comfort station. All but 6 acres of the original 31-acre park eventually became part of Riverside Marina.

REID MEMORIAL PARK / ST. JEAN BOAT LAUNCH

Reid Park was dedicated in 1964 as "Reid Ramps" and named for Vaughan Reid, a former Parks and Recreation Commissioner. The land is located on the old St. Jean Farm, from Freud Street to the Detroit River. Similar to Engel Park, immediately after World War II, part of the park was used to house returning veterans. The site included a large docking slip, control building, restroom, office, and large parking area for vehicles and boats trailers and was a popular viewing site for the annual Freedom Festival Fireworks display. The St. Jean Boat Launch was built in conjunction with Riverside Marina in the late 1980s. The site is owned by the City of Detroit and has been third party operated since 2013.



A sales brochure from the late 1980s containing an architectural rendering (top) and site plan (bottom) of the envisioned "Porterfield's Marina Village".



Porterfield Wilson's headstone



1952 aerial image showing temporary housing occupying land on the sites of Engel and Reid Park. Source: Wayne State University



1981 aerial image showing baseball diamonds and a comfort station on the current site of the marina and a parking lot for "Reid Ramps" on the site of Reid Park and St. Jean Boat Launch. Source: Wayne State University

OBSERVATIONS

RIVERSIDE MARINA

Today the 32-acre site contains 5,400 lineal feet of marina seawall; 389 boat slips for vessels ranging from 30 to 60 feet; a clubhouse with banquet facilities, showers, and lockers; an outdoor pool and jacuzzi; a poolside store and cafe; tennis and volleyball courts; picnic area; a boat yard for storage and repair; and a fuel dock. As of August 2021, Riverside Marina’s boating community was 98% black and had a 100-person waitlist (*Detroit Free Press*).

The planning team performed an extensive analysis of the structural, civil, electrical, and mechanical components of the existing marina, and participants in community meetings and surveys provided valuable insight about the site’s existing conditions from a users’ perspective. The following list summarizes key observations made during the planning process.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
Shoreline & Seawall	The marina contains approximately 5,400 lineal feet of steel sheet pile seawall, along with riprap shoreline protection and jetties constructed for river access. The majority of the sheet pile seawall was found to be in good condition with no significant deficiencies noted; however, there are a few areas of improvements needed for drainage at the seawall interface as well as two areas of steel sheet pile with significant deflection needing repair or replacement.
Piers & Piles	The entire marina infrastructure, fixed docks, and fingers are a priority to replace or reconstruct due to poor condition and safety concerns.
Slip Mix	77% of the current slip mix comprised of 30 and 45 foot slips.
Larger Boat Pier	The dock, finger piers, wooden piles, and wooden decking are in poor condition and need replacement.
Utilities	The overall utility service throughout the marina is in urgent need of replacement. Transformers and distribution power panels are in poor condition. Wiring and conducts supplying the piers are exposed to the weather and below the water line. The majority of marina pedestals are in poor condition and need to be replaced. Communication utilities such as cable TV and phone lines also show a lack of maintenance and in need for replacement. Retrofitted exposed water lines provide tripping hazards.
Operations	Current operation is leased to a third-party
Fire Suppression System	The current system is not up to the NFPA regulations. Several fire extinguishers and fire cabinets are missing or in need of replacement.
Basin Bulkhead	There is noticeable soil erosion, affecting bulkheads, sheet piles, revetments, and sidewalks around the marina perimeter.
Office/Clubhouse Building	Technical and maintenance works are suggested, which also include the pool and hot tub. The exterior of the building would also benefit from better treatment.



Boats docked at the marina during summer time



The Office/Clubhouse building is in need of upgrades



The banquet room inside the clubhouse



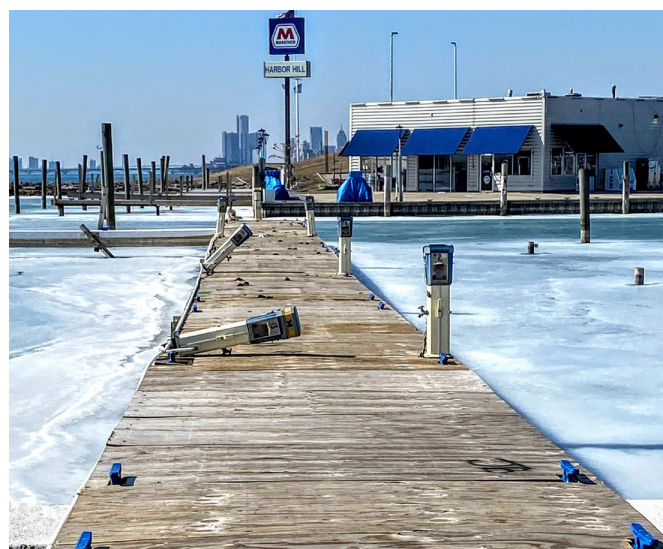
The swimming pool adjacent to the clubhouse



The convenience store



Temporary doors on the indoor storage building



The wooden main pier has uneven decking and damaged power pedestals



The large boat pier at the south entrance has wooden decking in need of replacement



View of the marina’s gatehouse from Freud St. entrance

REFERENCE

The **Riverside Marina Condition Assessment** provides a detail evaluation of the marina. See **Appendix A and E** for the full detail reports.

OBSERVATIONS

ST. JEAN BOAT LAUNCH

The city-owned site is the only publicly-held boat launch within a five mile radius of Downtown Detroit, and, based on a public survey conducted by the MDNR, it is the most used facility accessing the Detroit River. The site includes 6 launch ramps, parking for approximately 75 vehicles and boat trailers, and a small building which houses an office and restrooms.

The planning team performed an extensive analysis of the structural, civil, electrical, and mechanical components of the existing boat launch, and participants in community meetings and surveys provided valuable insight about the site’s existing conditions from a users’ perspective. The following list summarizes key observations made during the planning process.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
Shoreline & Seawall	The site contains approximately 850 lineal feet of steel sheet pile protection. The seawall and shoreline protection on the boat launch site were found to be in good condition with no deficiencies.
Ramp Concrete Revetment	The concrete slab is in critically poor condition and needs to be reconditioned immediately including filling holes and resurfacing.
Metal Platform Transition	The metal platform transition to boarding dock is in critically poor condition and needs to be adjusted to be flush with the wooding decking in order to minimize tripping hazards.
Vehicle Gate/ Arm	The vehicular gate to the property is in critically poor condition and needs to be repaired/replaced with the addition of a payment machine. Survey participants cited inconsistency in gate closure timing.
Parking	Parking is in poor condition and needs new concrete slab and striping.
Boarding Dock Decking	Wooden boards are in fair condition. Boards that are splitting or warping should be replaced as needed. Capital expenditure should be planned for 2022 to replace all boarding decking. Monthly inspections of the wooden decking is recommended.
Basin & Bulkheads	Basin and bulkheads are in fair condition. Annual inspection should be performed to ensure bulkheads are in sound condition and no structural issues.
Restrooms	Restrooms are in fair condition. Painting, cleaning, replacing fixtures, and routine maintenance should be done in order to bring the facility up to standards.
Fence	The section of fence at the entrance is in poor condition and needs to be replaced immediately.
Concrete Pavement	Large cracks through most of the drive lane are in need of maintenance and repairs.
Asphalt Pavement	Large cracks through most of the parking lot are in need of maintenance and repairs.
Drainage	Catch basins and storm sewers are in fair condition and need to be cleaned and inspected.
Upgrades & Maintenance	The site could use general upgrades and better maintenance, citing the bathrooms, dirty docks, and overgrown grass.



Signage for the boat launch near the river



Trucks using the boat launch ramp



The ramp provides three boarding docks



Uneven concrete ramp



Concrete pad at the launch showing large potholes



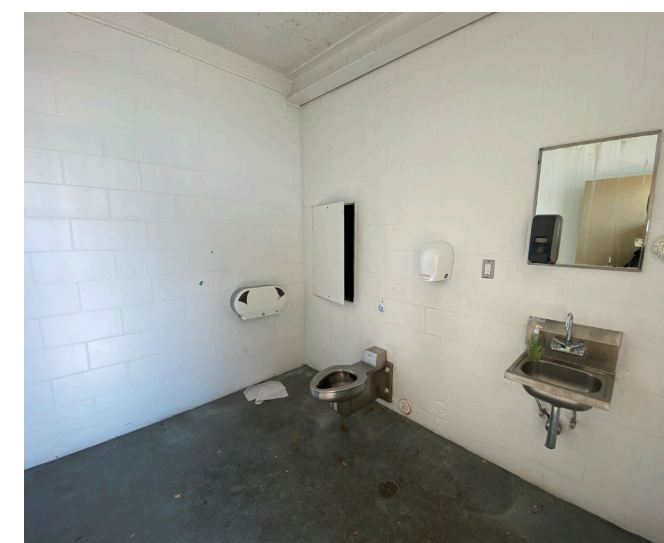
Entry channel and seawall



Parking lot and curbs are in poor condition



Office and public restrooms building



Restrooms are in need of upgrades and maintenance

REFERENCE

The **Riverside Marina Condition Assessment** provides a detail evaluation of the marina. See **Appendix A and E** for the full detail reports.

OBSERVATIONS

ENGEL PARK & REID PARK

ENGEL MEMORIAL PARK

All but 6 acres of the original 31-acre park eventually became part of Riverside Marina. The remaining land consists of grass lawn and trees, but lacks amenities and things to do. Many people do not know this area is a public park and it can only be accessed by marina members because access is controlled by the Riverside Marina gatehouse.

REID MEMORIAL PARK

When “Reid Ramps” was dismantled and St. Jean Boat Launch was built in the 1980s, the remaining area became forgotten as a park. Today the 23-acre park area consists of grass lawn, a drive lane used by the marina storage yard, and a deteriorating paved area occasionally used for parking and storage. Many people do not know this area is a public park.

The following list summarizes key observations made during the planning process.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
Signage	Signage does not exist and many people do not know these are public parks.
Access	Pedestrian and vehicular access to these parks is challenging or non-existent; Reid Park is fenced off in most places and the only access point to Engel Park is through the Riverside Marina gatehouse.
Amenities	The parks contain grass and trees but lack seating and things to do.



Aerial view of existing Engel Park and Reid Park along the Detroit River



The corner of Freud Street and Old St. Jean Street shows temporary signage for St. Jean Boat Launch



Engel Park contains grass and trees



Reid Park is currently used for RV storage



Riverside Marina's main drive lane has cracked pavement and lacks pedestrian infrastructure

REFERENCE

The **Riverside Marina Condition Assessment** provides a detail evaluation of the marina. See **Appendix A and E** for the full detail reports.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

RIVERSIDE MARINA

As part of the planning process for Riverside Marina, the City of Detroit and the planning team hosted a series of public engagement events that allowed residents, park users, and community leaders to review the opportunities and challenges of the sites and collectively propose ideas and recommendations to improve them in the future.

The following list summarizes key takeaways identified during the community engagements

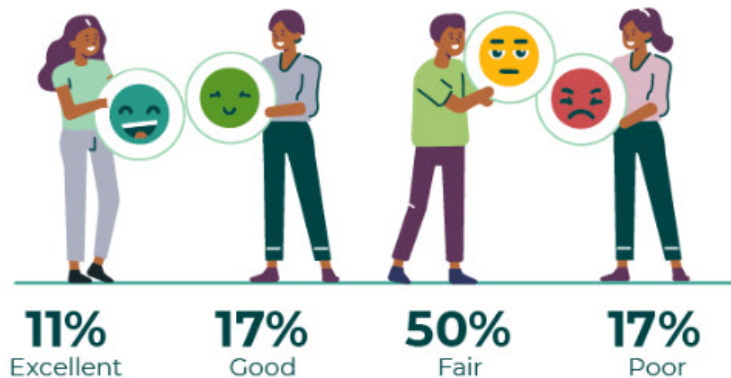
What do you love about this place?

- The location of the Marina
- It has a gas dock

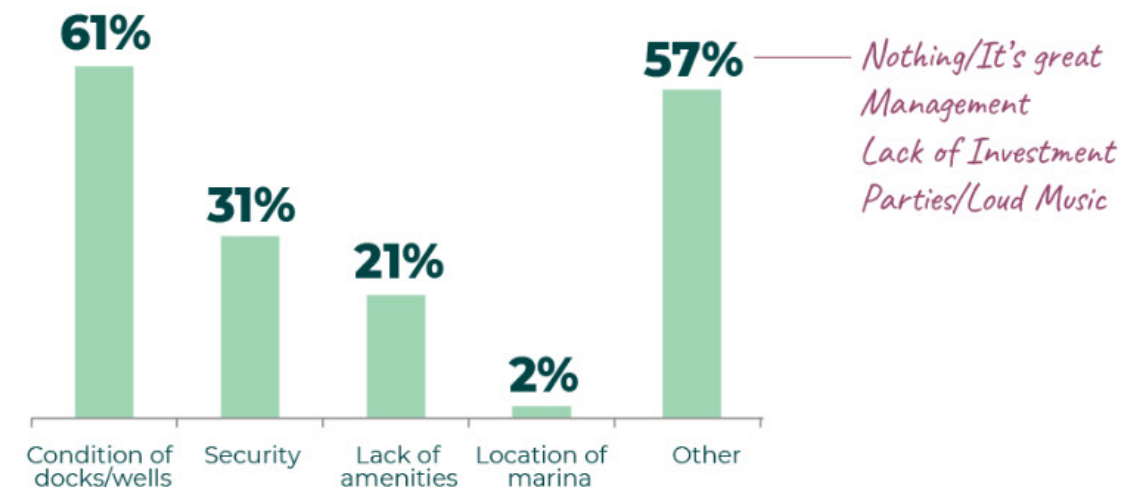
What could be better?

- General disrepair: Unsafe conditions, underwater docks and tripping hazards.
- Not ADA compliant.
- Management challenges at the facility.
- Lack of destination amenities, like food trucks/restaurants.
- Public amenities, like boat/kayak launches, and watercraft rentals (keeping in mind security for boat slips).

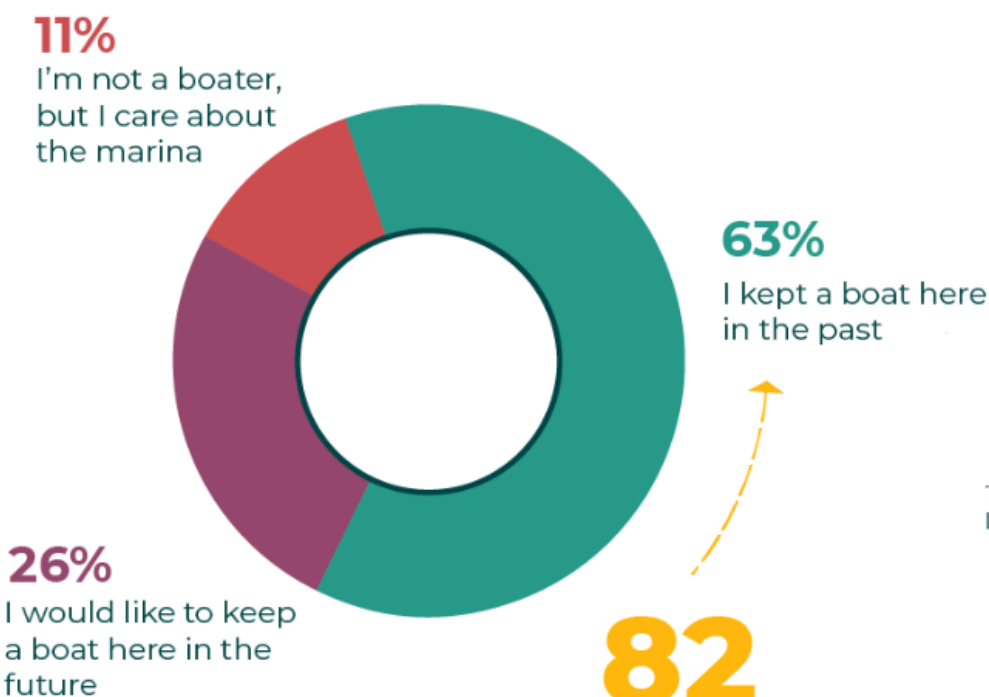
WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL OPINION?



WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE?



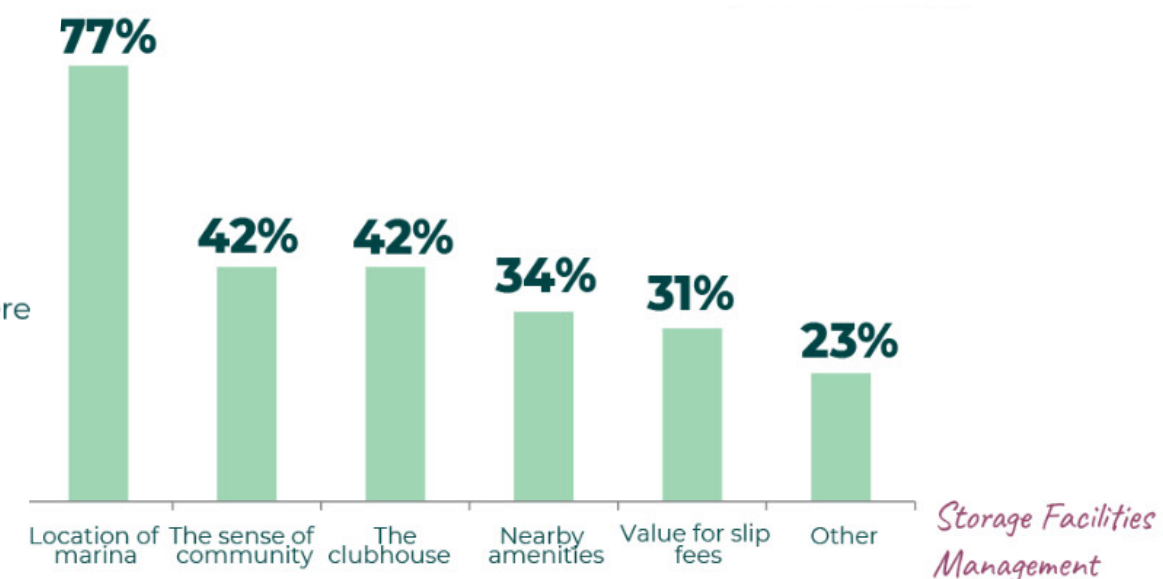
WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THIS MARINA?



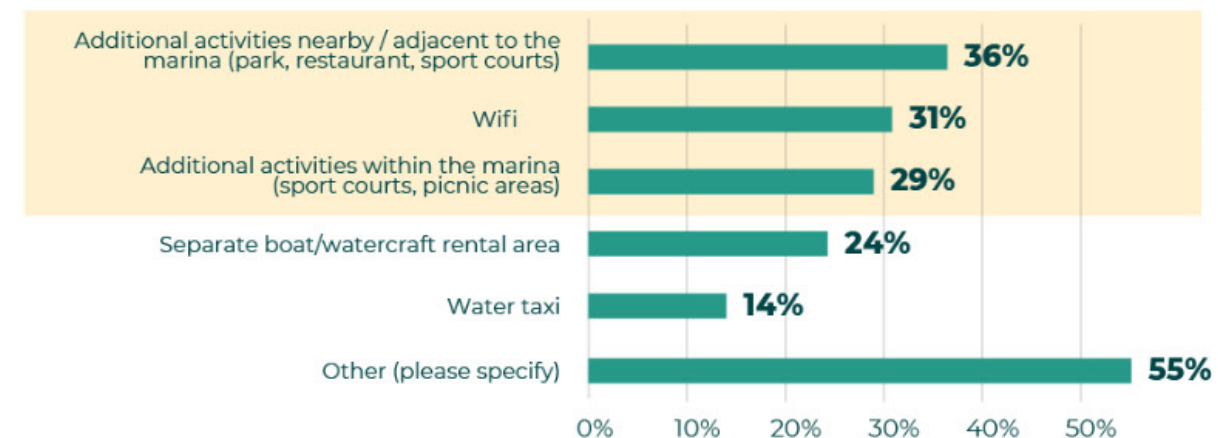
82
riverside
marina boaters

30%
have been here
more than 10 years

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FEATURE?



WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AT THIS MARINA?



REFERENCE

Participants at community meetings and in surveys provided feedback and about the plaza, parks and event facilities. See **Appendix B** for a summary of each **Community Engagement**.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ST. JEAN BOAT LAUNCH

As part of the planning process for the St. Jean Boat Launch, the City of Detroit and the planning team hosted a series of public engagement events that allowed residents, park users, and community leaders to review the opportunities and challenges of the sites and collectively propose ideas and recommendations to improve them in the future.

The following list summarizes key takeaways identified during the community engagements

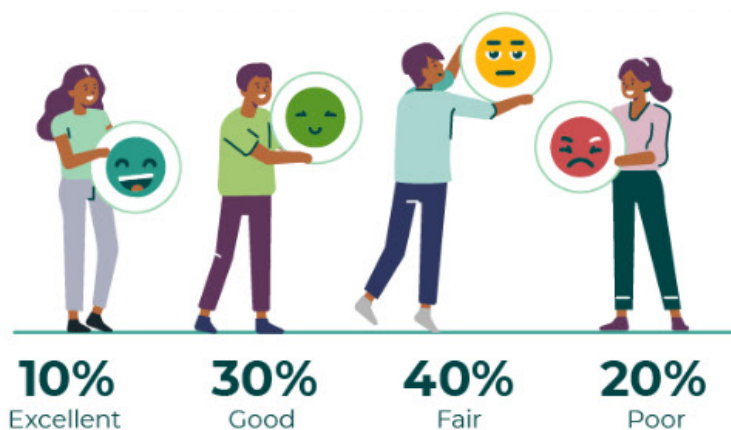
What do you love about this place?

- The location of the Boat Launch
- Affordability

What could be better?

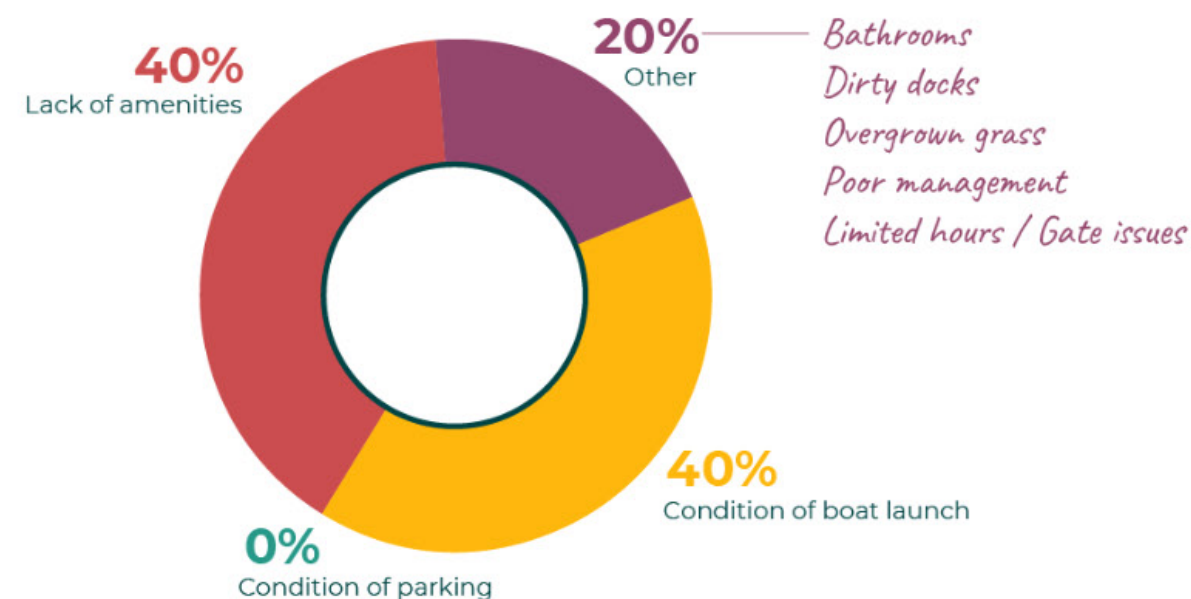
- General upgrades and better maintenance.
- Renovate paid bathrooms
- Add a kayak/paddle board launch for non-boaters
- Open to the public and better integrated within the riverfront park system.

WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL OPINION?

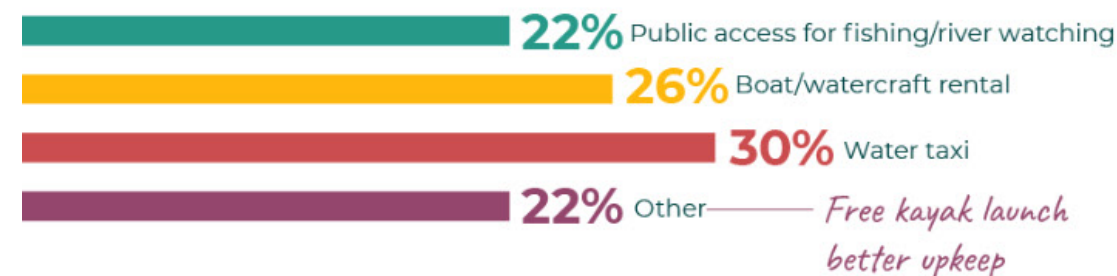


**OPEN IT UP TO PUBLIC!
DETROITERS WANT TO BE ABLE
TO GET TO THE RIVER.**

WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE?

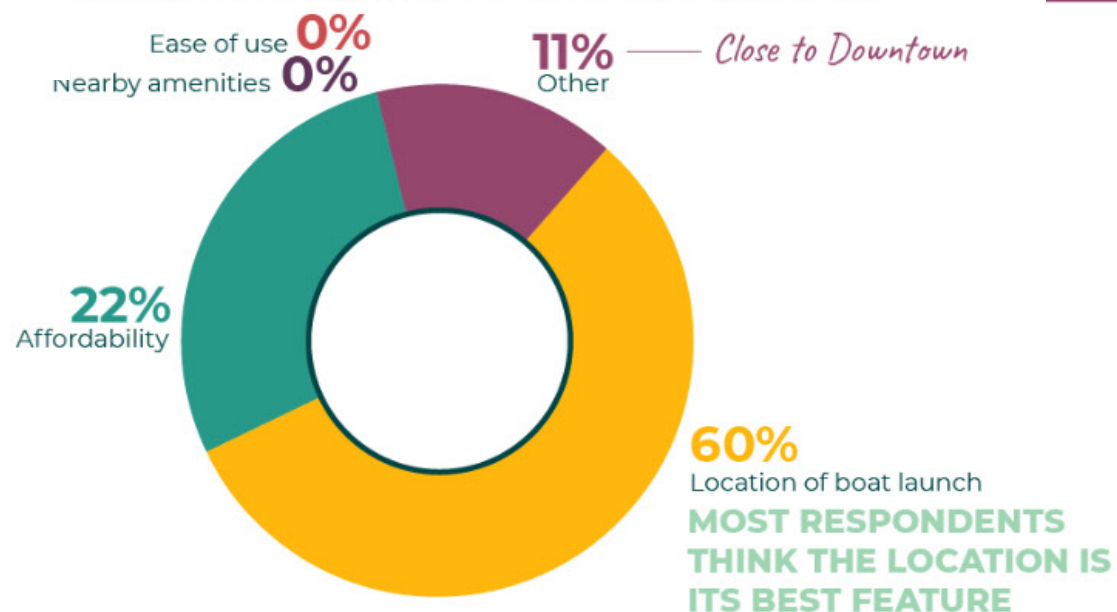


IF YOU DO NOT KEEP A BOAT HERE, WHAT WOULD LIKE TO SEE AT THIS BOAT LAUNCH?



**UPDATES AND BETTER UPKEEP,
ALONG WITH A WATER TAXI!**

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FEATURE?



REFERENCE

Participants at community meetings and in surveys provided feedback and about the plaza, parks and event facilities. See **Appendix B** for a summary of each **Community Engagement**.

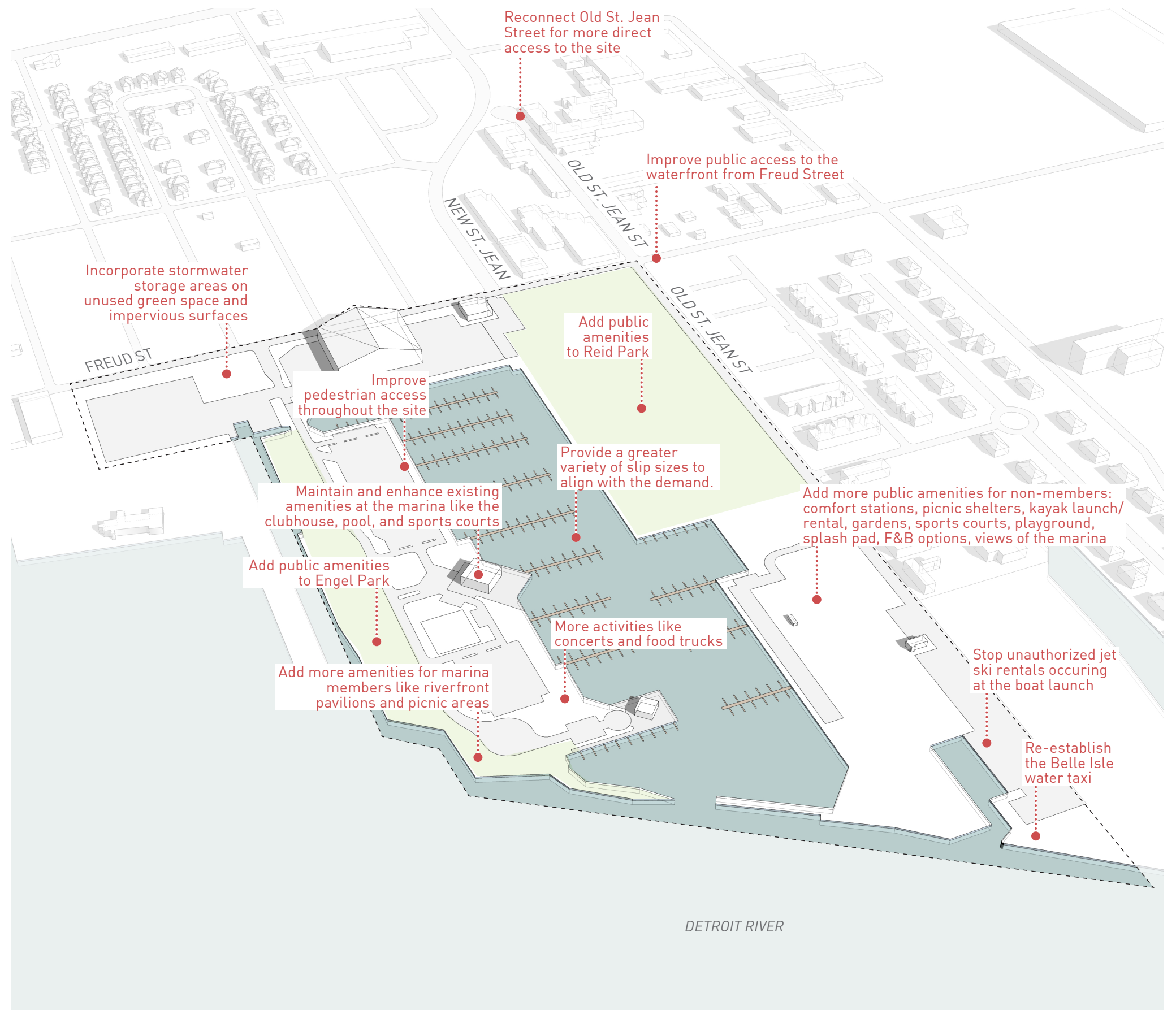
DESIGN APPROACH

MARINA DISTRICT

As part of the planning process, the planning team and participants in community meetings and surveys exchanged ideas and recommendations for the Marina District's future. The following list summarizes opportunities for improvement that were generally agreed upon by all stakeholders.

OPPORTUNITIES

- **Improve wayfinding and signage.**
- **Improve pedestrian access** throughout the site including sidewalks, crosswalks, and access to the waterfront.
- **Add public amenities** for all users and **maintain and enhance existing amenities at the marina** such as the clubhouse, pool, and sports courts.
- **Re-establish Engel Park and Reid Park as public parks** with access, amenities, and signage.
- **Rehabilitate the marina** using a phased approach and **improve marina operations** through maintenance, capital improvements, and quality customer service.
- **Improve parking areas** with pavement maintenance, pedestrian infrastructure, landscaping, and reconfigured layouts where appropriate.
- **Integrate all assets within the district** through landscaping, pathways, and signage.
- **Incorporate stormwater storage areas** where possible.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT




VISION MARINA DISTRICT

The diagram illustrates proposed program and key circulation routes for the Marina District. The conceptual vision provides a framework for future planning, design and implementation.

PROGRAM

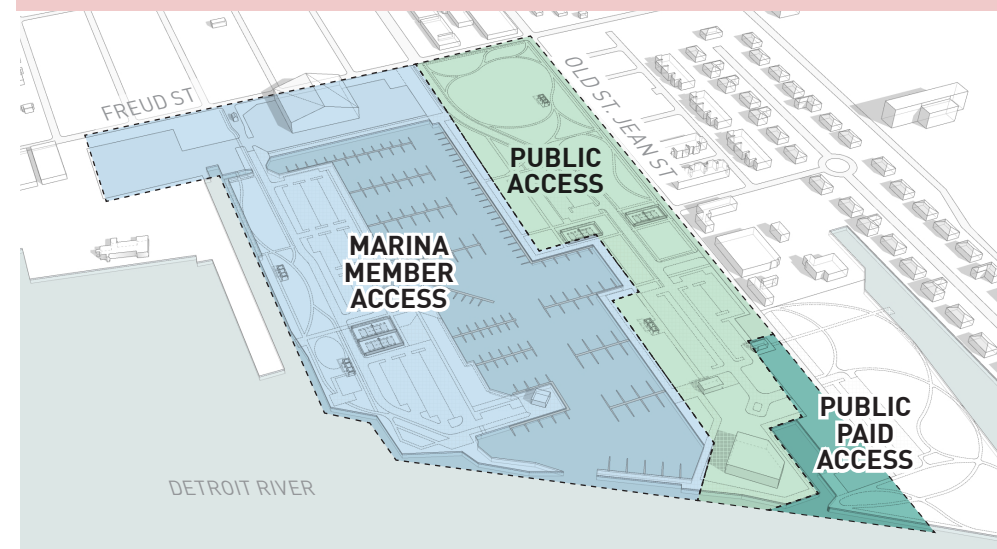
-  PASSIVE LANDSCAPE
-  ACTIVE LANDSCAPE
-  WATER-BASED ACTIVITIES
-  EXISTING BUILDINGS
-  NEW PAVILIONS/PICNIC SHELTERS
-  NEW COMFORT STATIONS/AMENITY BUILDINGS
-  PARKING
-  SECURED PERIMETER

CIRCULATION

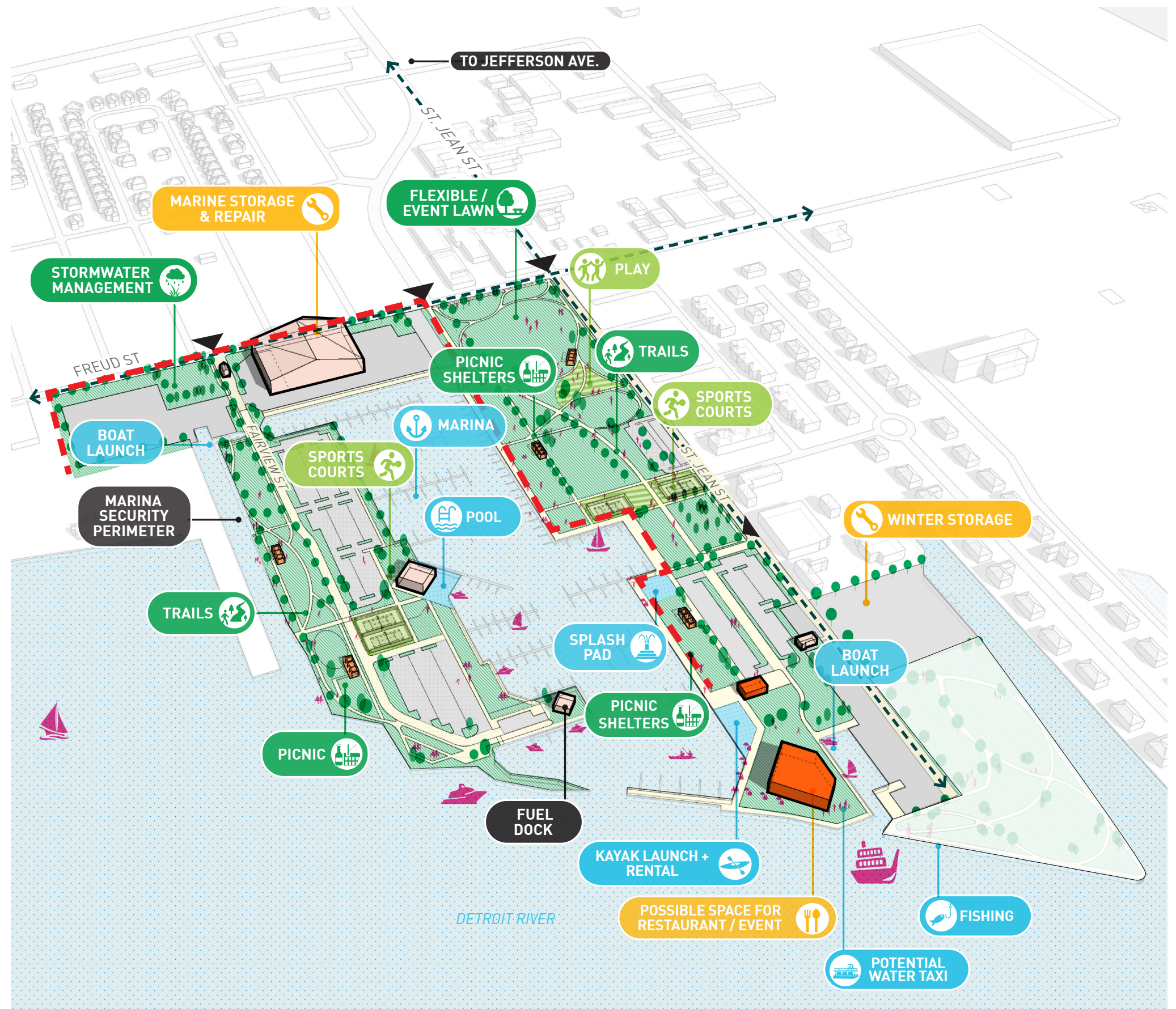
-  VEHICULAR/MULTI-MODAL STREET
-  PEDESTRIAN PATH
-  MAIN ENTRANCES

REFERENCE

For detailed site diagrams that informed the urban design approach - see **Appendix C for Site Analysis Diagrams** for full information.



ACCESS ZONES



PROPOSED PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION & CIRCULATION

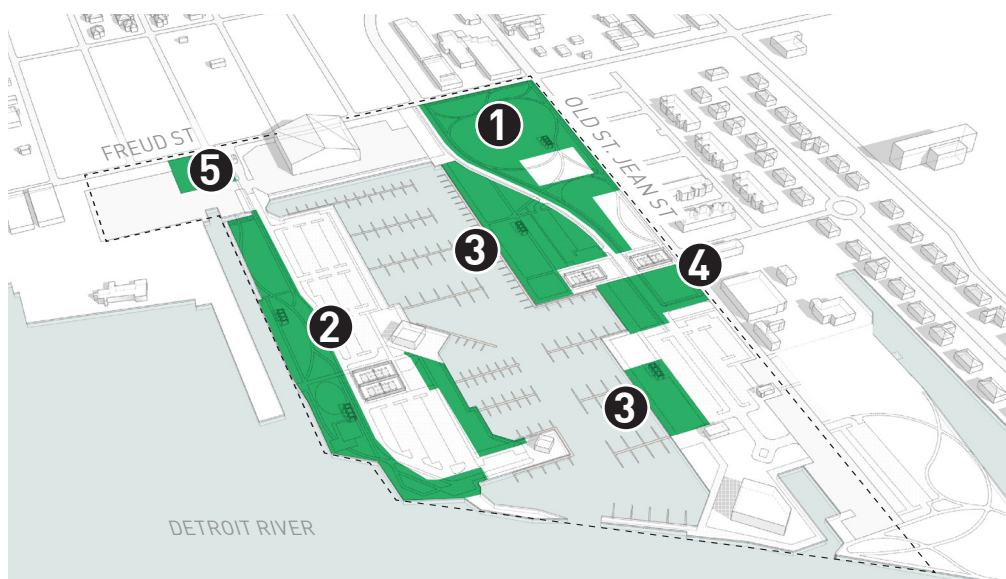
RECOMMENDATIONS

PASSIVE LANDSCAPES

Passive landscape areas are envisioned to be places for walking paths, flower gardens, flexible grass lawn, community gathering for small and large groups, nature and habitat, stormwater management, and picnic areas with views of the marina and the river.

The images illustrate the following passive landscape environments:

1. Flexible lawn, walking paths, and seating
2. Flexible lawn, walking paths, and native plant landscaping (Marina access only)
3. Picnic area near the Marina and riverfront
4. Flower garden
5. Stormwater garden (Marina access only)



PASSIVE LANDSCAPE ZONES

PRECEDENT IMAGERY

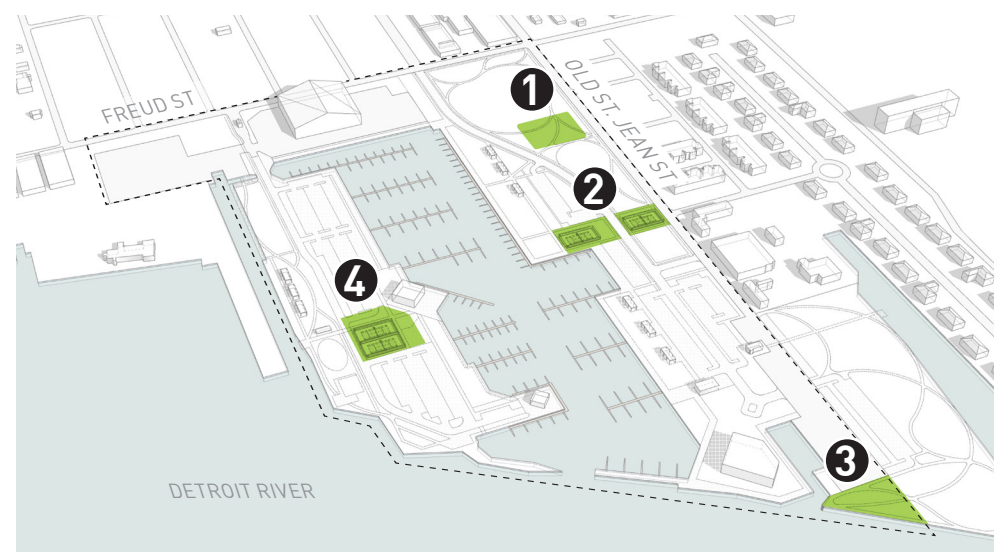
RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTIVE LANDSCAPES

Active landscape areas provide opportunities for sports and activity such as basketball and tennis courts, childrens' playscapes, and fishing areas.

The images illustrate the following active landscape environments:

1. Children's playscapes
2. Community basketball courts
3. Fishing pier
4. Marina member tennis courts



ACTIVE LANDSCAPE ZONES

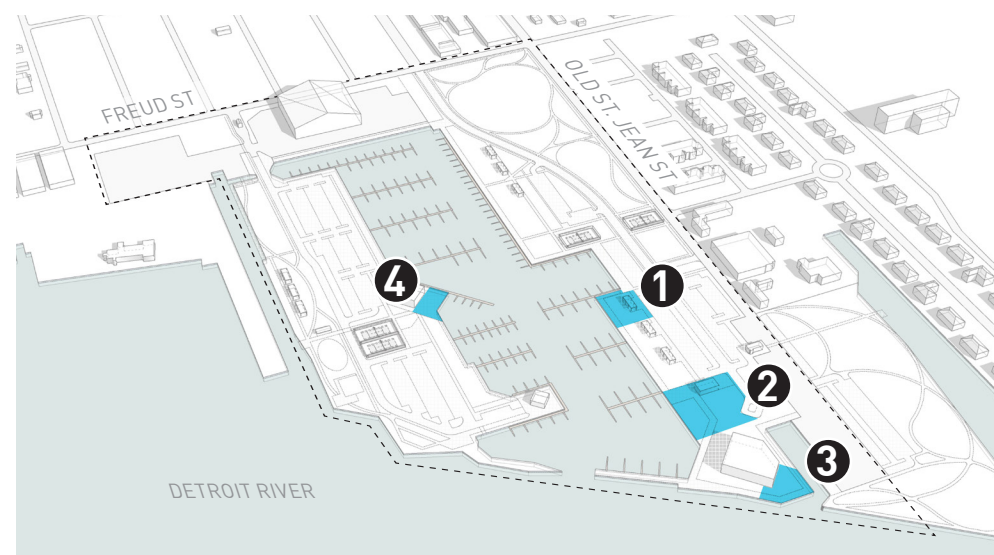
PRECEDENT IMAGERY

RECOMMENDATIONS WATER-BASED ACTIVITIES

Areas for water activities could include enhancing the existing pool and hot tub at the marina, a public launch and rental for kayaks and other non-motorized watercraft, a splash pad, and a water taxi platform at the river's edge.

The images illustrate the following water activity environments:

1. Splash pad
2. Kayak/canoe launch and rental
3. Water taxi
4. Marina pool (Marina member access only)



WATER-BASED ACTIVITY ZONES

PRECEDENT IMAGERY



RECOMMENDATIONS BUILDINGS AND PAVILIONS

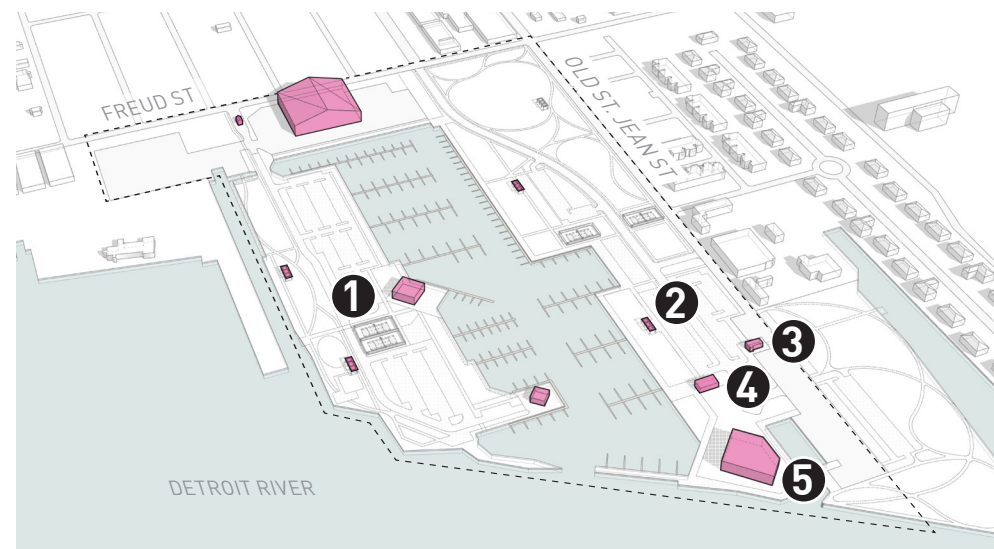
Buildings and comfort stations are needed throughout the site to support users of the marina, boat launch, and parks as well as employees with restrooms, shade and shelter, and food and beverage options.

This plan envisions upgrades to existing buildings including the marina gatehouse, marina clubhouse/office, fuel dock building, marine storage and repair, and the office/restrooms building at the boat launch.

Potential new structures might include a restaurant/leasable event space on the water's edge with views of marina and river activity and small picnic shelters throughout.

The images illustrate the following buildings and structures:

1. Marina clubhouse restaurant
2. Shade structures / picnic shelters
3. Restrooms building
4. Kayak livery
5. Waterfront restaurant/event space



BUILDINGS & COMFORT STATION ZONES



PRECEDENT IMAGERY



RECOMMENDATIONS

PARKING AREAS

Well-located parking areas provide important infrastructure for allowing pedestrian, bicyclists, and vehicles to get to and from their destinations safely and efficiently. Bicycle and vehicle parking should be provided for each of the major park users: Riverside Marina members, Engel Park users, Reid Park users, and St. Jean Boat Launch users.

Staging areas provide space for drop-off/pick-up near key destinations as well as holding and staging for marine repair. All parking and staging areas should be designed with vegetation and landscaping at their perimeter and in formed islands within to minimize the visual and environmental impact of paved areas. Provide trees, plants, and stormwater species to simultaneously improve attractiveness, reduce heat islands, and manage stormwater.

The images illustrate the following vehicle parking and staging environments:

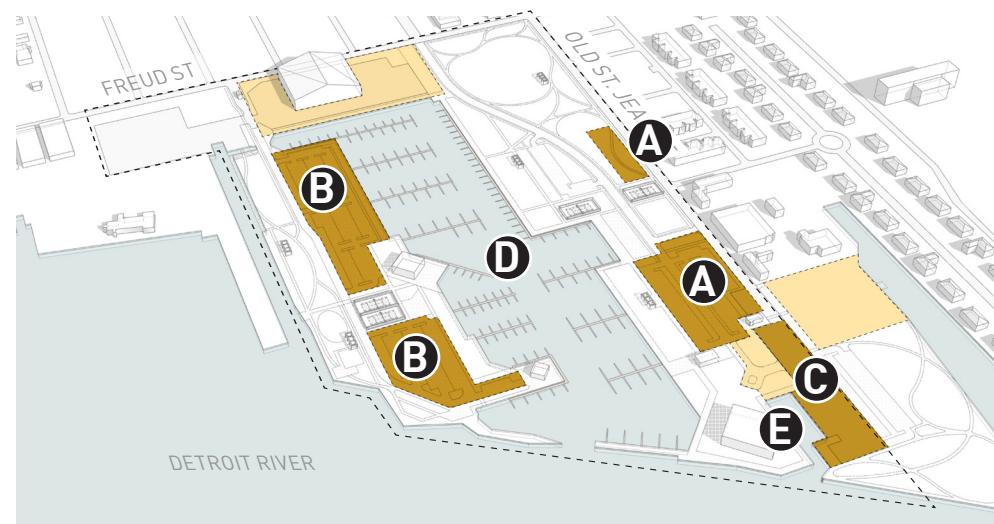
1. Vegetative buffer between parking and drive lanes
2. Rain garden integrated within parking lot
3. Trees and vegetation within parking islands
4. Shade trees within parking lots

OF RECOMMENDED PARKING SPACES

A. Reid Memorial Park	20 spaces
B. Riverside Marina	400 spaces
C. St. Jean Boat Launch	75 spaces

OF PROPOSED BOAT SLIPS

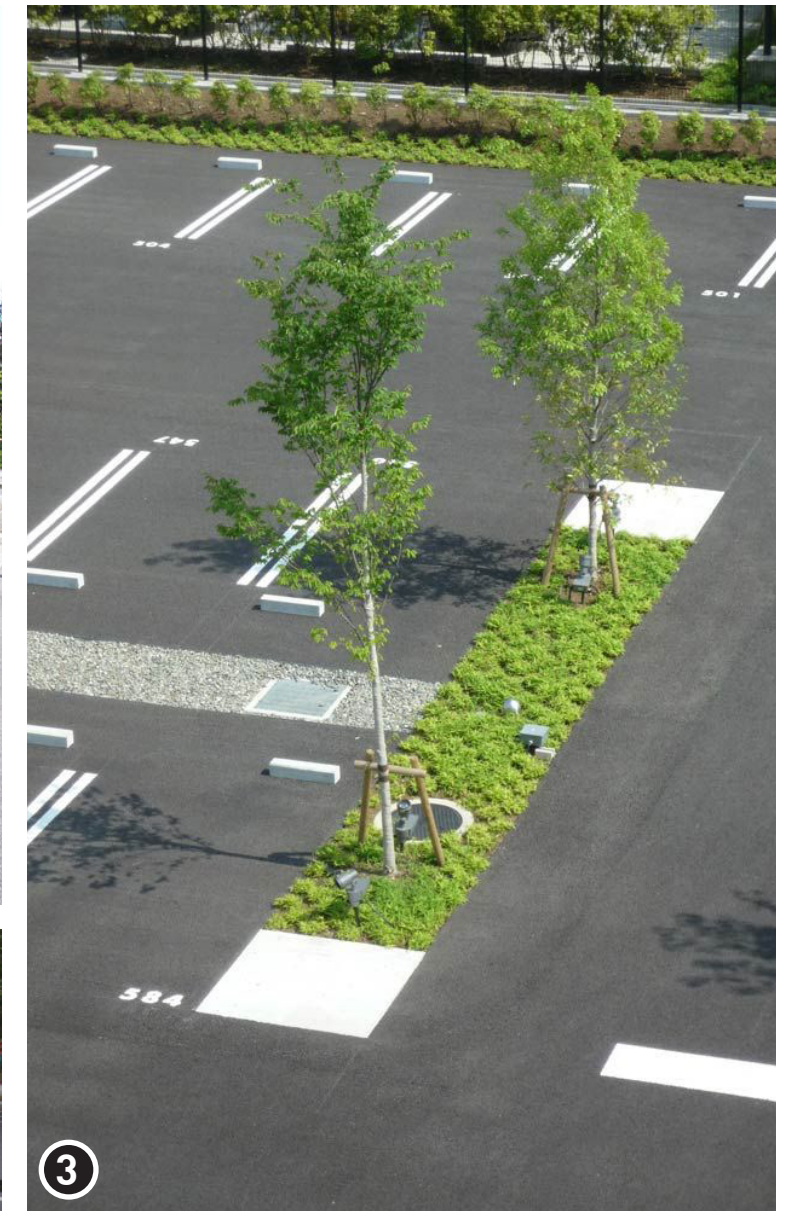
D. Riverside Marina	+/-350 slips
E. St. Jean Boat Launch	6 launch ramps



PARKING & STAGING ZONES



PRECEDENT IMAGERY



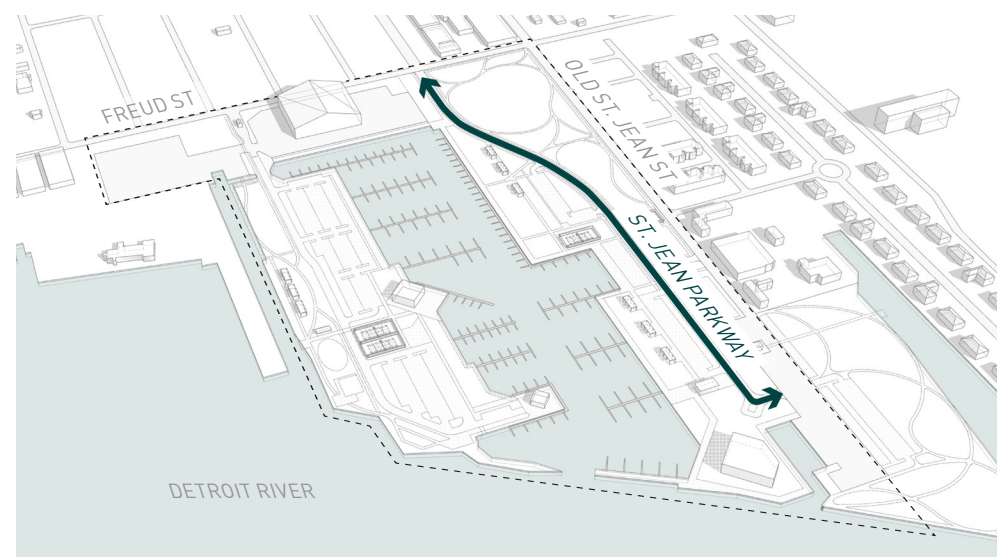
RECOMMENDATIONS

ST. JEAN PARKWAY

The new St. Jean Parkway is envisioned to be a landscaped multi-modal path that acts as an attractive gateway to the site and brings bicyclists, and pedestrians from New St. Jean Street. The parkway connects users to different amenities and parking areas along the way, including Reid Park, picnic shelters, splash pad, kayak launch/rental, restaurant/event space, and roadway with parkway.

The images illustrate the following environments for the new St. Jean Parkway:

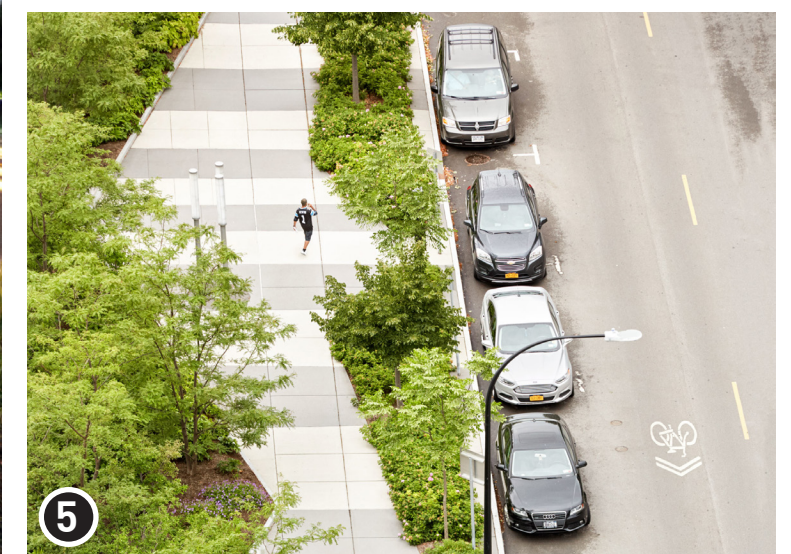
1. Bike lanes and sidewalks with vegetative buffer from roadway
2. Gateway signage, art, and wayfinding at parkway entrance
3. Signage for bike parking
4. Clearly marked and delineated bike and pedestrian paths running alongside the roadway
5. Wide sidewalks with special paving, on-street parallel parking, and shared bike/vehicle lanes (sharrows) within the roadway and vegetative buffering between the roadway, sidewalks, and adjacent park space



ST. JEAN PARKWAY



PRECEDENT IMAGERY



IMPLEMENTATION

MARINA DISTRICT

Recommended implementable projects include capital projects and maintenance, operations and management considerations for the Marina District. The following summarizes the overall implementation strategy, which is meant to guide future planning, engagement and design.

Riverside Marina, Reid Memorial Park and St. Jean boat launch are all part of a large site and is recommended to be master planned. During future planning and engagement, these sites should be carefully coordinated and designed to ensure that they complement each other and that the right balance exists between paid access and public access.

Key considerations:

- Consider available amenities for boaters and aim to fill the gap in recreational opportunities.
- Properly plan and design areas within the marina to ensure that storage, parking and general maneuvering take place safely and efficiently.
- Work closely with the marina operator to rehabilitate the marina and adjacent recreational opportunities.
- Consider the marina, park and boat launch as unique destinations and work to maintain the cultural richness that already exists.

Phasing and Project Priority:

Projects identified in the study range from critical improvements, repairs, maintenance and major capital projects. Project phasing will be sequenced and prioritized based on:

1. Health and Safety Improvements
2. Stabilization and Critical Repairs
3. Replacement / Re-design (based on component life cycle)
4. Transformational Impact

Project Cost Estimates and Funding:

Estimated costs for improvements and capital projects reflected in this implementation strategy are rough orders of magnitude, developed from current unit costs and early concepts. Funding sources for each project will depend on the project type, priority and funding availability.

SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TO LONG TERM	
<p>IMMEDIATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS</p>	<p>MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS</p>	<p>OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT</p>
<p>Riverside Marina</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair critical condition infrastructure • Repair docks that are currently out of service • Renovate and improve landscaping and walking paths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renovate marina • Renovate hardscape and docks • Re-establish a public park - Reid Memorial Park • Partner to develop a food and beverage amenity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a maintenance and capital improvement schedule as part of the marina operation. • Carefully evaluate water recreation amenities and where possible, provide opportunities for water access to non-boat owners. • Consider appropriate synergies for overall maintenance of the district

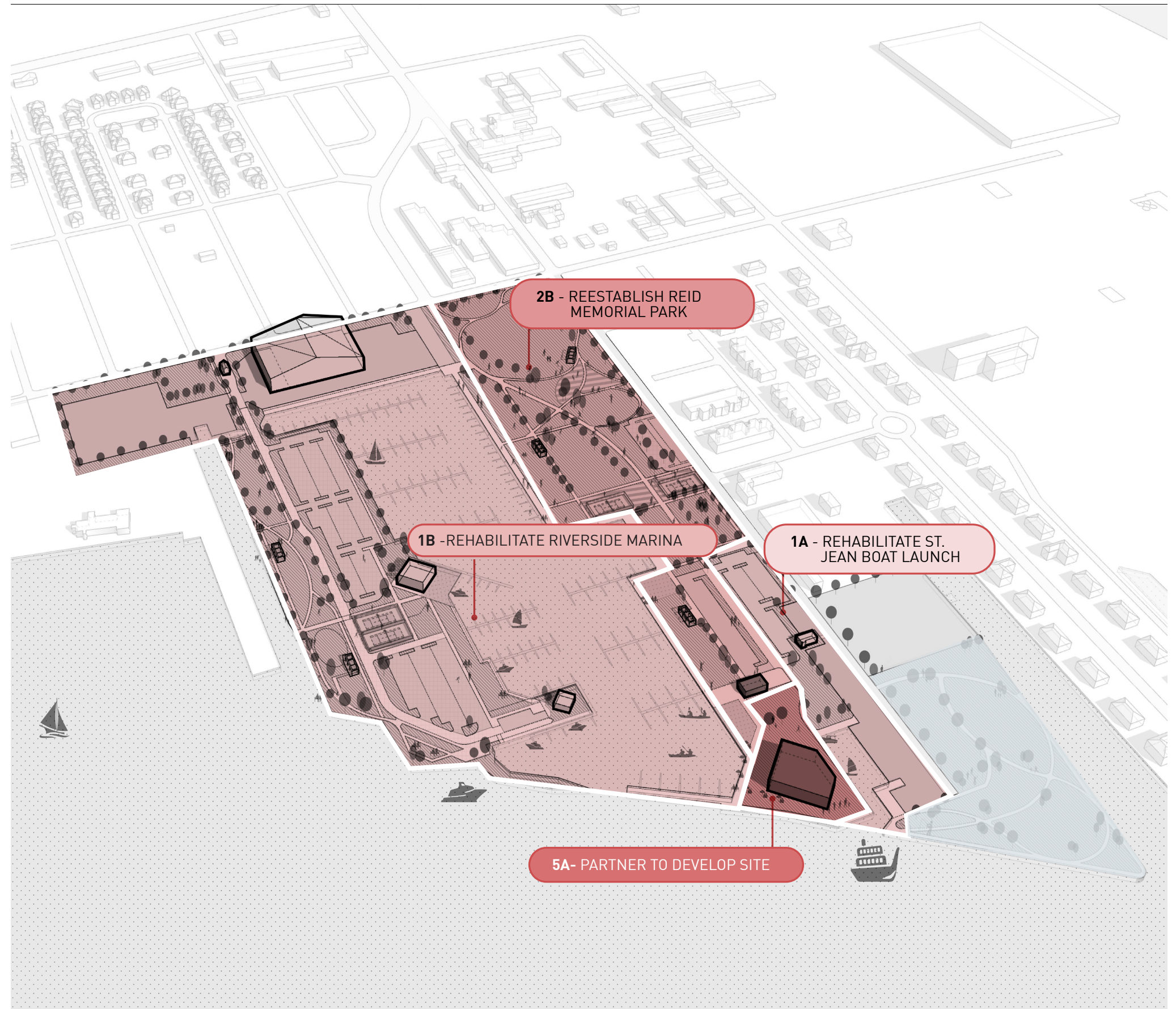
IMPLEMENTATION

MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

Concepts developed for Riverside Marina will require further engagement, planning and design. Implementation projects will be prioritized and planned in partnership between the City and Operator.

Riverside Marina will require a consistent maintenance and repair schedule. An operations and maintenance plan is recommended to accompany the major projects capital plan.

MARINA DISTRICT			
PHASE		MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS ¹	COSTS ⁴
PHASE 1	1A	Rehabilitate St. Jean Boat Launch	\$\$\$\$
PHASE 1-4	1B	Rehabilitate Entire Riverside Marina ²	\$\$\$\$
PHASE 2	2A	Re-Establish Reid Memorial Park Open to the Public	\$\$\$\$
PHASE 5	5A	Partner to develop site	-



IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS

NOTES:

1. Plan and coordinate capital projects across City departments and agencies.
2. See Marina District Condition Assessment and Recommendation Report for detailed phasing and capital implementation plan.
3. See Condition Assessment And Seawall Report for the full list of repairs by priorities. Costs are estimates are rough orders of magnitude (ROM).

- Costs Key:
- \$: under \$10K
 - \$\$: \$10K - \$100K
 - \$\$\$: \$100K - \$1M
 - \$\$\$\$: \$1M-\$10M
 - \$\$\$\$: above \$10M