





# WE ARE DPC

The Detroit Parks Coalition (DPC) is an alliance of community members and parks leaders working to support healthy, equitable, and vibrant parks in Detroit. DPC formed in 2010 to advocate for Detroit parks facing closure due to lack of city resources. Today, our coalition serves as a hub for city officials and community representatives to work together, finding innovative and efficient ways to make progress in Detroit's parks and public spaces. DPC develops and facilitates citywide parks programming, raises money for park improvements, and supports community organizations that care for Detroit's parks. Together, we are committed to ensuring that all can experience the social, economic, physical, and spiritual benefits of Detroit's parks for decades to come.

# OUR MEMBERS

- Belle Isle Conservancy
- Chandler Park Conservancy
- Clark Park Coalition
- Detroit Riverfront Conservancy
- Downtown Detroit Partnership
- Friends of Patton Park
- Friends of Rouge Park
- Midtown Detroit, Inc.
- People for Palmer Park
- Sidewalk Detroit - Eliza Howell Park



## FROM THE COALITION

We are the Detroit Parks Coalition. As community members and parks leaders, we came together with the understanding that we are stronger, smarter, and more effective collectively than individually. Since 2010, we have been meeting together, coordinating our efforts, and sharing our learnings. As we have grown more connected, our capacity has expanded.

This year, we formally transitioned from a collective of volunteers to a staffed and incorporated organization supporting programming, capital improvements, and advocacy for parks citywide. The seeds of partnership that we planted together years ago are bearing fruit in the form of increased and improved experiences in parks throughout Detroit.

We invite you to learn more in our “Summer in the Parks” report—a recap of our accomplishments this past season. The work spans recreational and cultural programming, park improvements, WiFi in the parks, and \$850,000 in regranting—and we are just getting started.

Join our mailing list to learn more about how we can work together. In the meantime, we'll see you in the parks.

**Sigal Hemy**, executive director

**Yvette Pullom-Bass**, director of programs

**Ian Solomon**, communications manager

**Rob Streit**, parks fellow

**Michele Hodges**, Belle Isle Conservancy

**Alex Allen**, Chandler Park Conservancy

**Anthony Benavides**, Clark Park Coalition

**Rachel Frierson**, Detroit Riverfront Conservancy

**David Cowan**, Downtown Detroit Partnership

**Sally Petrella**, Friends of Rouge Park

**Sue Mosey**, Midtown Detroit Inc.

**Rochelle Lento**, People for Palmer Park

**Ryan Myers-Johnson**, Sidewalk Detroit

# PROGRAMMING



Pistons Neighbors Program, Palmer Park. Credit: People for Palmer Park



## JUST PLACE

On May 20, DPC partnered with Beacon Park, the Downtown Detroit Partnership, New Detroit, and the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition, to present Just Place: Exploring the Intersectionality of Race & Accessibility in Detroit's Urban Green Spaces. The panel discussion featured organizers, thought leaders, and activists in a spirited conversation on park accessibility in Detroit. The discussion touched on persisting obstacles to accessing green spaces and nature, such as economic barriers and lack of information.

“It was an honor being part of this event to better understand how Detroiters perceive public places currently, and what we can do as stewards of such spaces to maintain and expand access. Detroiters are known for having engaging and lively conversations, and this event did not disappoint!”  
–Hannah Rickard, DTE Challenge Detroit Fellow

## PARTICIPATING PARKS

Beacon



Just Place, Beacon Park. Credit: Downtown Detroit Partnership

## YOGA IN THE PARKS

“Community yoga is community care,” said Kerrie Trahan, founder of Yoganic Flow. From June 3 – September 2, DPC partnered with Yoganic Flow to offer free, inclusive, and accessible outdoor yoga classes in parks across Detroit. Nearly 1,200 community members joined us to refresh their minds and bodies in nature.

“I love the whole yoga philosophy shared in the classes: it’s not about pushing through; instead It’s about knowing your body. It’s very affirming, especially at 68 years old.”- Pamalar Burnette, Yoga in the Parks participant

## PARTICIPATING PARKS

Belle Isle

Clark

Rouge

Chandler



Yoga in the Parks, Clark Park. Credit: Yoganic Flow



## FREEDOM ARTS FESTIVAL

The Freedom Arts Festival connects—and reconnects—Detroiters to their neighborhood parks. Featuring music, dance, storytelling and art, the festival showcases the culture and history of our parks and their communities.

Our inaugural Freedom Arts Festival welcomed more than 1,500 visitors to eight of Detroit’s destination parks and showcased the talent of 29 local artists and arts organizations. This year, we partnered with CultureSource to add pop-up activations in neighborhood parks, connecting communities and culture outside, citywide.

## PARTICIPATING PARKS

- |              |                                |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Belle Isle   | Eliza Howell                   |
| Boyer        | Detroit Riverfront             |
| Brewer       | North Rosedale Community House |
| Chandler     | Palmer                         |
| Clark        | Rouge                          |
| Eden Gardens |                                |



Freedom Arts Festival, Palmer Park. Credit: Barbara Barefield

## PISTONS NEIGHBORS PROGRAM

Presented in partnership between the Detroit Parks Coalition, Detroit Pistons Foundation, and City of Detroit Parks & Recreation Division, the Pistons Neighbors Program reflects our commitment to Detroit's parks and the people who enjoy them. The 2023 Pistons Neighbors Program took place from July 5 - September 4. Eleven Detroit parks hosted free drop-in activities for all ages, including sports clinics, live music, dance classes, and visual arts. Programming, managed by Come Play Detroit, was provided by local vendors and presented in partnership with community-based park organizations.

## PARTICIPATING PARKS

Chandler	Eliza Howell
Clark	O'Hair
Cool Cities	Palmer
Curtis Jones	Rouge
Delores Bennet	Skinner



Pistons Neighbors Program, Delores Bennett Park. Credit: Ian Solomon



# PISTONS NEIGHBORS PROGRAM - TOURNAMENTS

## 3V3 IN THE D

Held on August 12th at the Detroit Riverfront, 3v3 in the D hosted more than 150 kids and their families for a basketball tournament, 3-point competition, and skills workshops, culminating a summer of basketball education in Detroit Parks. Presented in partnership with the Detroit Pistons Foundation, Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, and the William Davidson Foundation.

## DETROIT PISTONS ALL-CITY TENNIS TOURNAMENT

On August 26, Palmer Park's tennis courts hosted a tournament for kids ages 6-17. Tennis students from across the city gathered to meet, test their skills, and play together. Presented in partnership with the Detroit Pistons Foundation, USTA, Motor City Tennis Club, and Palmer Park Tennis Academy.



Pistons Neighbors Program, Delores Bennett Park. Credit: Ian Solomon



# CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS



Chandler Park Skatepark, Chandler Park. Credit: Chandler Park Conservancy



## STATE OF MICHIGAN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Funding from the State of Michigan allowed DPC members to update signage and wayfinding, refresh trails, manage invasive species, and add benches and other amenities to walking paths. Taken together, these improvements added up to a major increase in park accessibility and quality of life throughout the city.

## PARTICIPATING PARKS

Belle Isle	Clark	New Center
Cadillac Square	Dequindre Cut	Palmer Patton
Chandler	Eliza Howell	Rouge



Joe Prance Before & After, Rouge Park. Credit: Friends of Rouge Park

## FEATURED STORY: CHANDLER PARK ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

The marshland at Chandler Park is one of the biggest habitat restoration and stormwater management projects in Detroit. Adding an outdoor classroom has allowed Chandler Park Conservancy to host environmental education workshops, connecting urban youth to natural space. Whether exploring the diverse ecosystems, participating in workshops, or simply enjoying the serene surroundings, individuals from all walks of life find the area to be a place of inspiration, learning, and meaningful connections with the natural world.



Chandler Park Environmental Education Pavilion. Credit: Chandler Park Conservancy



## FEATURED STORY: ELIZA HOWELL PARK WALKING PATH

The River Trail in Eliza Howell Park is one of its most utilized walking paths, going from the park's main road through the woods to the Rouge River. After a community visioning process, Sidewalk Detroit set out to pave the path and install a railing, bringing the path into ADA compliance and increasing accessibility to the river.



Eliza Howell Park Walking Path Improvements. Credit: Sidewalk Detroit.

## PARK WIFI

In partnership with the City of Detroit and Connect 313, Detroit Parks Coalition led a pilot project to install free public Wi-Fi networks across five Detroit parks. The project, which aims to bridge the digital divide by allowing Detroiters internet access in their neighborhood gathering spaces, includes internet service and solar-powered charging stations. The pilot was funded through grants from the Detroit Pistons, Rocket Community Fund, and Knight Foundation.

## PARTICIPATING PARKS

Bradby Chandler Clark McDuffy Palmer



Park WiFi Installation, Palmer Park. Credit: People for Palmer Park.



# REGRANTING



Pistons Neighbors Program, Delores Bennett Park. Photo: Ian Solomon

# **RALPH C. WILSON JR. REGRANTS**

The Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Fund for Detroit Parks, administered by the Detroit Parks Coalition, supports programming, park improvements, and capacity building for organizations that steward regional parks in Detroit's neighborhoods. In summer 2023, DPC awarded \$158,000 to improve park experiences and strengthen park stewardship organizations.

## **CHANDLER PARK CONSERVANCY**

\$40,000 to hire Chandler Park Conservancy's first Development Director. This new position will develop and execute a comprehensive fundraising strategy, allowing for continued operational stability and supporting the organization's master plan for programming and capital improvements. Additional funding will support CPC's Program Coordinator, who manages events and recreation in the park.

## **CLARK PARK COALITION**

\$20,000 to 1) build CPC's capacity through strategic planning and a marketing & social media consultant, and 2) hire seasonal programming staff who will activate the park's newly upgraded sports fields and exercise equipment. The funding will help Clark Park Coalition step into its next phase of organizational development and leverage Strategic Neighborhood Fund upgrades to create better experiences for park users.

## **FRIENDS OF ROUGE PARK**

\$27,500 to expand FORP's Program Manager position from part-time to full-time and create a staffing and fund development plan for the organization. These resources will allow FORP to grow its presence with park users while planning to scale the organization.

## **PEOPLE FOR PALMER PARK**

\$30,500 to 1) build PFPP's capacity by hiring a part-time bookkeeper, updating the organization's membership database, and engaging a strategic consultant to define PFPP's future staffing needs and 2) continue restoration of Palmer Park's historic log cabin, including wood restoration, lighting, and alarm system repair. This funding will allow PFPP to transition from an all-volunteer to a staffed organization while supporting membership, the organization's primary source of earned revenue, and the log cabin, a significant landmark in the park.

## **SIDEWALK DETROIT**

\$40,000 for 1) capital improvements to Eliza Howell Park, including a limestone trail loop, ADA accessible rail and stairs, and renewed interpretive signage; and 2) artistic and recreational programming in the park to connect community members to the park and new improvements. These projects will implement phase 3 of the community-informed master plan for capital improvements to Eliza Howell Park.



# **PISTONS MINIGRANTS**

In collaboration with the Detroit Pistons Foundation, DPC presents an annual Parks Summit that showcases best practices in park activation and stewardship. To allow small or emerging organizations to implement what they learned, we awarded \$40,000 in minigrants for summer 2023 community activations in Detroit parks.

## **ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**

\$4,000 to upgrade the park to meet the needs of Deaf youth and families.

## **BE CULTURALLY EXPOSED, COLTON PARK**

\$1950 to provide summer reading and art projects for neighborhood youth.

## **BURNS SENECA FISCHER JR. BLOCK CLUB, PINGREE AND LATHAM PARKS**

\$5,000 to install basketball hoops over trash cans in the parks as a pilot to reduce litter.

## **ELLA FITZGERALD CONSERVANCY, ELLA FITZGERALD PARK**

\$5,000 for a Community Health Fair with guided physical activities for families

## **GRANDMONT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, RAMSAY PARK**

\$5,150 for the third annual Reading in Ramsay Park Back to School & Backpack Giveaway event.

## **GRAND RIVER BLOCK CLUB**

\$4,000 to add a walkway and seating area to a community garden.

## **JEFFERSON CHALMERS WATER, LAKEWOOD EAST PARK**

\$5,000 to install trash cans and employ citizen scientists from area high schools to document the park's flora and fauna.

## **THE LITERACY PROJECT, O'HAIR PARK**

\$5,000 to launch "Passport to Literacy: Adventures in the Park," a new outdoor reading program.

## **NW GOLDBERG CARES, CURTIS JONES PARK**

\$5,000 to host HoopsFest, a three-day community celebration of basketball.

# STATE OF MICHIGAN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

DPC regranted \$500,000 in funding from the State of Michigan for capital improvements in our member parks.

## **BELLE ISLE CONSERVANCY**

\$45,000 for signage and wayfinding for the Belle Isle Aquarium

## **CHANDLER PARK CONSERVANCY**

\$25,000 for landscaping and signage at the Chandler Park Skatepark; \$10,000 towards an outdoor education classroom at the Chandler Park marshlands; \$10,000 for equipment that will help Chandler Park Conservancy maintain the park

## **CLARK PARK COALITION**

\$39,000 to convert the lighting at the Clark Park ice rink to LED and install additional lighting as necessary; \$6,000 to upgrade the electrical boxes at the Clark Park recreation center, including the outdoor scorekeeping area

## **DETROIT RIVERFRONT CONSERVANCY**

\$22,600 to update signage and wayfinding on the Dequindre Cut; \$22,400 to repair lighting in the Dequindre Cut Freight Yard

## **DOWNTOWN DETROIT PARTNERSHIP**

\$45,000 to purchase new furniture and shade umbrellas for Cadillac Square

## **FRIENDS OF ROUGE PARK**

\$45,000 to develop trail connections, signage, and amenities for Rouge Park's Joe Prance Recreation Area

## **FRIENDS OF PATTON PARK**

\$45,000 as part of a DPC commitment to connect Patton Park to the Joe Louis Greenway

## **MIDTOWN DETROIT, INC**

\$45,000 to update the sound board, stage lighting, and stage roof for public performances in New Center Park

## **PEOPLE FOR PALMER PARK**

\$45,000 for benches, trash cans, wayfinding signs, and community kiosks in Palmer Park

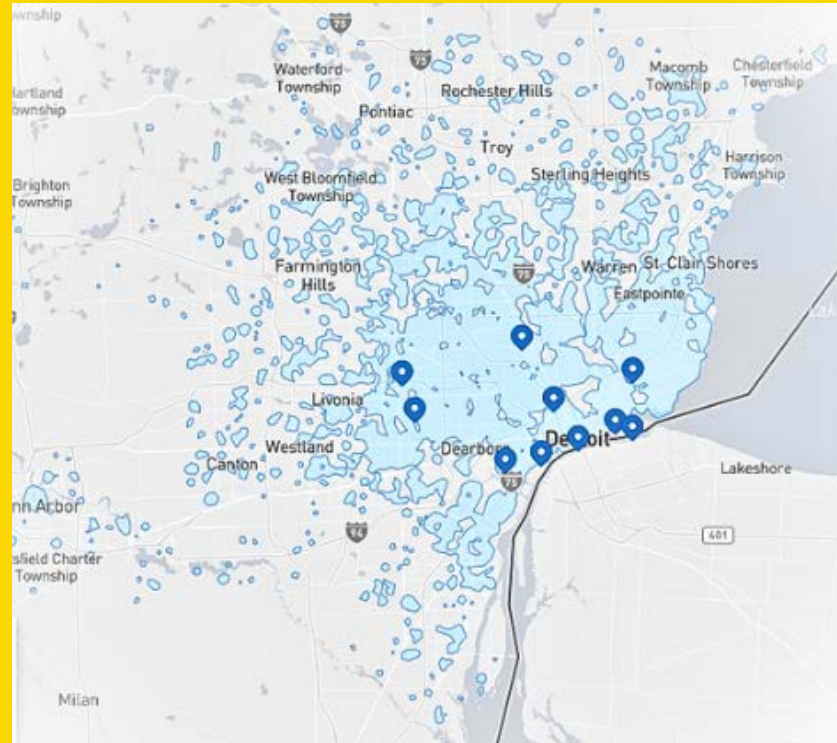
## **SIDEWALK DETROIT**

\$17,500 to improve Eliza Howell Park's River Trail and install an ADA-accessible trailhead; \$17,500 to install a welcome kiosk and refreshed interpretive signage; \$10,000 for invasive species management and native plantings



## OUR IMPACT - BY THE NUMBERS

In a calendar year, DPC member parks receive over **4 million visits** from over **2 million visitors** throughout the Southeast Michigan region. In Summer 2023, DPC's work touched **31 parks**, reaching every city council district. DPC has regranted over **\$850,000** to support park programs, capital improvements, and community organizations that care for Detroit's parks.



Park User Home Geography. Source: Placer.ai



## STAFF & BOARD

### STAFF

**Sigal Hemy**, executive director

**Yvette Pullom-Bass**, director of programs

**Ian Solomon**, communications manager

**Rob Streit**, parks fellow

### BOARD

Alex J. Allen III, president

Rochelle Lento, vice president

Michele Hodges, secretary

Rachel Frierson, treasurer

Anthony Benavides

Bob Gregory\*

Sue Mosey

Ryan Myers-Johnson

Sally Petrella

Laura Trudeau

\*Deceased





# FUNDERS & PARTNERS

## FUNDERS

Community Foundation for  
Southeast Michigan  
Detroit Pistons  
Hudson-Webber Foundation  
The Knight Foundation  
The Kresge Foundation  
Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation  
Rocket Community Fund  
William Davidson Foundation

## PROGRAM PARTNERS

City of Detroit  
Come Play Detroit  
Connect313  
CultureSource  
Detroit Pistons Foundation  
Detroit Tigers  
New Detroit  
US Tennis Association  
Yoganic Flow

# FREEDOM ARTS FESTIVAL

## FEATURED ARTISTS & CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

A. Spencer Barefield  
Alvin Waddles  
Arts & Scraps  
Ballet Folklorico Moyocoyani Izel  
Big Pete & Friends  
Buffalo Soldiers Heritage Association of Michigan  
Cranbrook Art Museum  
Detroit Puppet Company  
Detroit Symphony Orchestra  
Enflyte

Johdi  
Living Arts  
King Mellowman and Mellow Runnings  
Marion Hayden and Freedom Sounds  
Matrix Theatre Company  
Motor City Street Dance Academy  
Motown Museum  
TeMaTé Institute for Black Dance and Culture  
Testimony Sings  
Trey Priest  
University of Michigan Percussion Ensemble  
Depeia Singer

# PISTONS NEIGHBORS PROGRAM

## NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERS

Chandler Park Conservancy  
Clark Park Coalition  
Denby Neighborhood Alliance  
Franklin Park Association  
Friends of Rouge Park  
Hope Village Revitalization CDC  
O'Hair Park Community Association  
North End Youth Improvement Council  
NW Goldberg Cares  
People for Palmer Park  
Sidewalk Detroit

## PROGRAMMING PARTNERS

Amari Drums  
Bennett Park Basketball Clinics  
Bennett Park Summer Craft Workshop  
Black and Brown Theater  
Christoria Collins  
D.R. Castelow-Hustle  
Dawn French  
Detroit Coach's Volleyball Association  
Detroit Pistons Clinic  
Detroit Puppet Company  
Detroit Soccer District  
Detroit Youth Lacrosse  
Eastern Market  
Flat Out Tennis

Garry Cabbill  
Golden Wolfe Fitness  
Hardcourt Hitters  
Healthy Hustle- Danjanay Stewart  
jk3productions  
Live Coal  
Math Hoops  
Mejishi Martial Arts  
Mint Artist Guild  
Motor City Street Dance Academy  
Penny Love Fitness  
Smallville Farms  
Swish House  
YMCA Basketball Clinic



# OUR VALUES

## CIRCLE OF ADVOCACY

Our coalition brings together parks organizations of varying sizes, geographies, and operating models. Including a diverse mix of voices and perspectives brings success to our collaborative efforts.

## PARTNERSHIP & COLLABORATION

We are parks advocates who came together to collaboratively grow resources. We approach each other and our partners with openness and an intention to share knowledge for the greater good. Our work is interconnected, and we embrace that.

## ADVANCING COMMUNITY VOICE

Neighbors and regular users know Detroit's parks best. We are committed to helping their visions come to life by supporting grassroots projects in Detroit's parks.

## BLACK LANDSCAPES MATTER: PLACE-BASED EQUITY

Systemic disinvestment in Detroit and its residents has contributed to racial inequities in park access and quality. We are focused on increasing funding to Detroit's parks and ensuring a more equitable distribution of resources.

## PRESERVATION & RESPECT FOR THE EARTH

Out of respect for and love of the land, its history, creatures, plant life, rivers and streams, we work to restore and preserve nature within the city.

## PARKS ARE A COMMON GROUND FOR ALL

Parks benefit people of all backgrounds, socio-economic status, race, identity, culture, and ability. They are our common ground—places where we can recognize our similarities over our differences, experience nature, and celebrate life together. Our work ensures that all Detroiters have access to parks' social, physical, spiritual, and economic benefits.

## FOCUS ON LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

We envision a city of welcoming and beautiful parks and public spaces in support of a vibrant, inclusive, and thriving Detroit. Our parks provide quality amenities, preserved natural areas, rigorous maintenance, and creative programming in service of that goal.



Rouge Park Appreciation Day. Photo: Friends of Rouge Park.



**THANK YOU**