

Growing Regional Connectivity: Improving Access to the Detroit River IWR Through Regional Partnership

Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge

The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge (DRIWR) authorized by an Act of Congress in 2001

- American's only international Refuge
- Over 6,000 acres across 48 miles
 - Islands
 - Coastal Wetlands
 - Marshes
 - Shoals
 - Water Lands

- One of 14 priority Urban Wildlife Refuges nationwide
- Provides outdoor recreational activities and environmental education to urban populations

- 7 million people live within 45 minute drive
- 30 unit areas managed by DRIWR
- 25 units owned by FWS
- 5 owned by partners and managed through Cooperative Agreements
- 8 open to public for hunting
- 3 of them are open for year round self exploration.

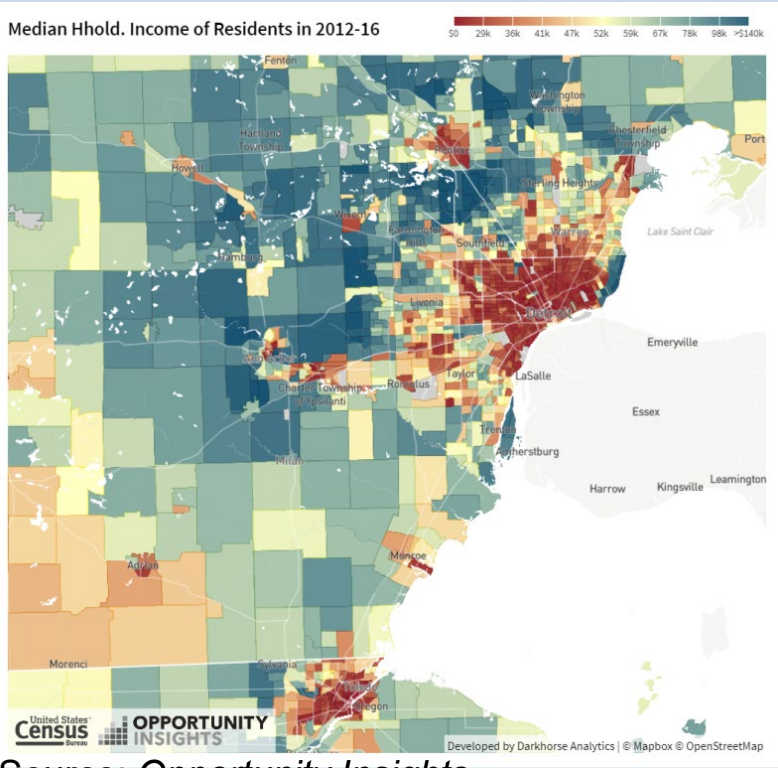
The DRIWR Visitor Center along with concurrent unit Humbug Marsh, is to open later this year



DRIWR boundary zone



US and Canadian bi-national boundary zone



Source: Opportunity Insights, opportunityinsights.org, 2018

Statewide to Local Bicycle Network

Iron Belle Trail

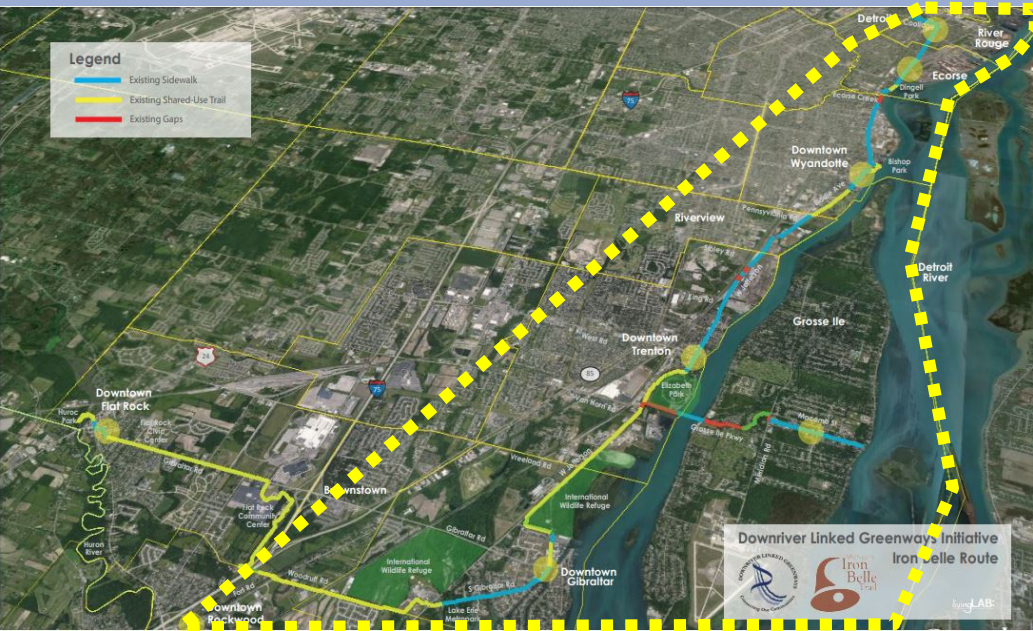
- 2,000 mile hiking and biking trail
- Tip of Upper Peninsula to Belle Isle in Detroit and south to the DRIWR
- 69% complete statewide
- Will link with interstate Trails and the Great Lake to Lake Trail

Opportunities

- Consistent trail network
- Local economic driver through recreational tourism
- Enhance quality of life
- Improve public health through outdoor recreational activities
- Reduce automobile dependency

Downriver Linked Greenways

- 25 miles of Iron Belle Trail
- 93% complete
- Connects regional non-motorized system of land and various water trails
- Will connect the DRIWR to the 21 Downriver Detroit communities



Source: Down River Linked Greenways, DLGI



Source: Down River Linked Greenways, DLGI



Trail segments on Downriver Linked Greenways Trail

Vincent Ziols Public Lands Transportation Fellow Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge

Shuttle Service Pilot

Weekday Service: Wayne County Community College (WCCC) Student Shuttle
Weekend Service: Downriver Community Direct Service

Fellow Technical Assistance

- Program evaluation
- Marketing
- Special event coordination

Phase 1: Weekday shuttle service will transport students back and forth between the WCCC's Western Campus to their Downriver Campus.

Start Date: Winter 2019

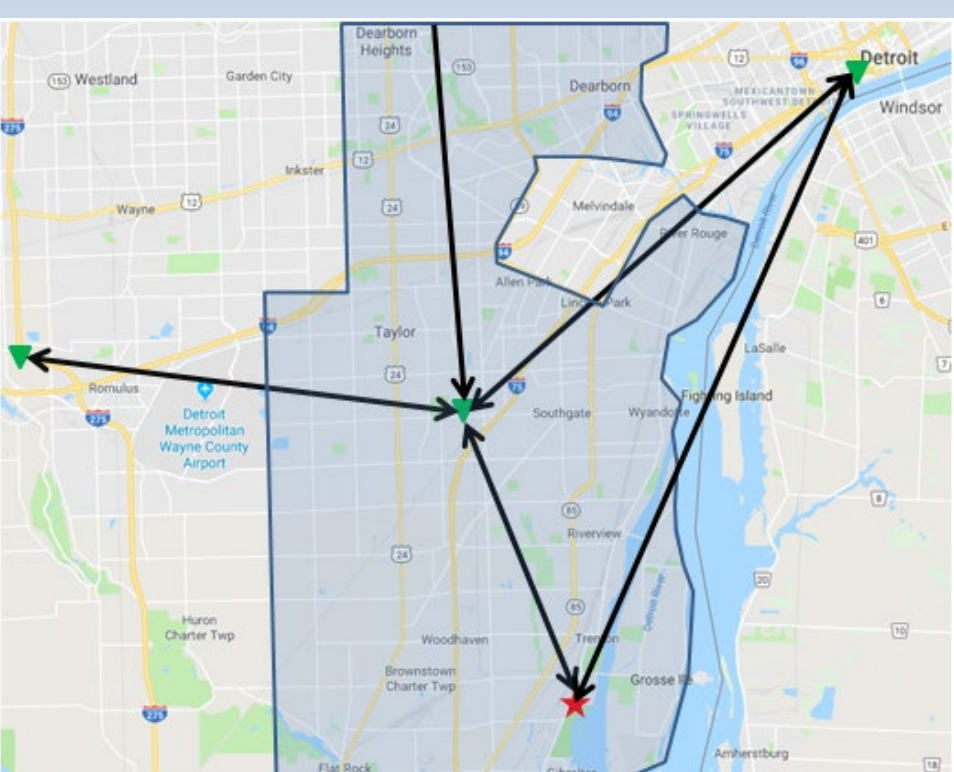
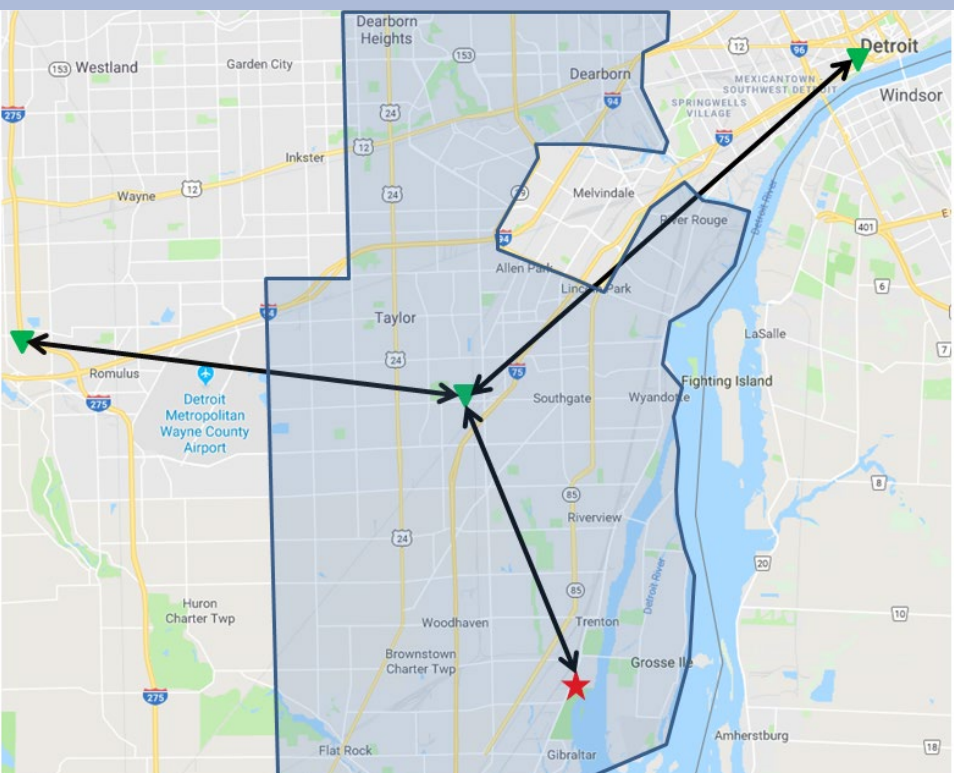
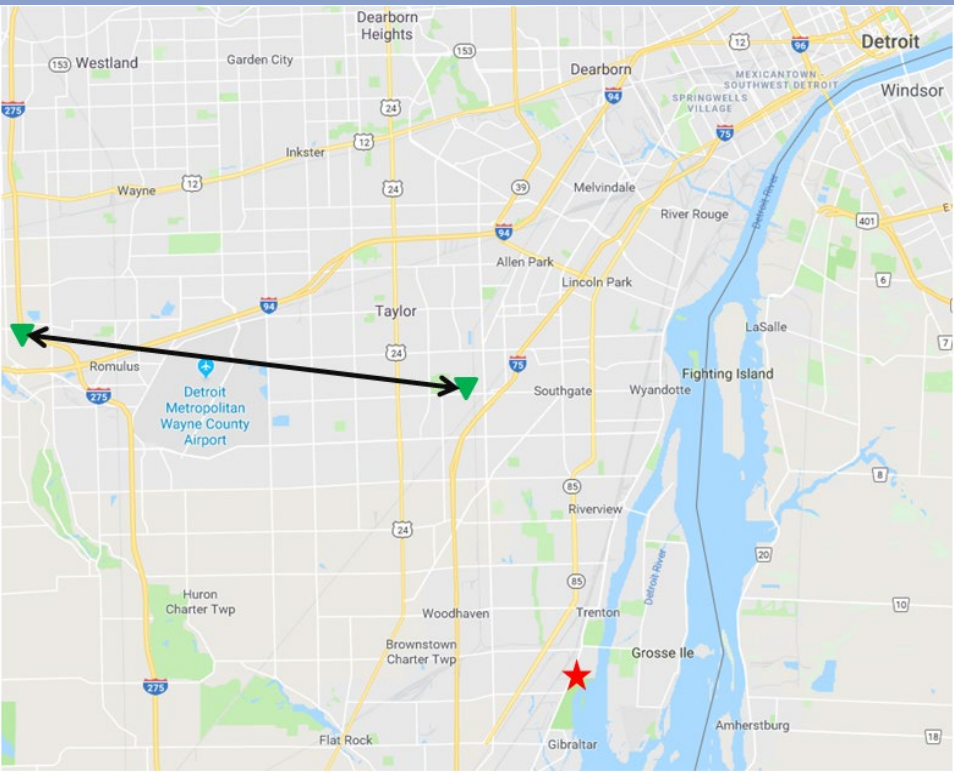
Phase 2: Weekday shuttle service will add the DRIWR and WCCC's Downtown Campus. Residents are free to park at the WCCC Campuses and use shuttle to visit the Refuge.

Weekend service will be provided for selected Downriver communities directly to the DRIWR.

Start Date: Spring-Summer 2019

Phase 3: Include a pilot fixed route along west Jefferson from the City of River Rouge to the DRIWR, shuttles from all WCCC's campuses, and all 21 Downriver communities.

Start Date: TBD



Shuttle implementation phases

References

1. Opportunity Insights. *The Opportunity Atlas*. Median Household Income of Residents 2012 -2016. 2018.
2. Downriver Liked Greenways Initiative. *Downriver Linked Greenways Initiative*. 2008.
3. The Detroit RiverFront Conservancy. *Transit Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan*. Freshwater Transit. January 2015.

What is the Transportation Fellow Program?

The Public Lands Transportation Fellows program provides public lands with transportation professionals for six to 12 months who assist in transportation planning and implementation to help public lands reduce traffic, congestion and pollution while improving visitor experiences. These programs are designed to place individuals with substantial knowledge and expertise in transportation planning and related areas. *See footer for a list of sponsors.*

Detroit River Water Taxis

Proven Markets

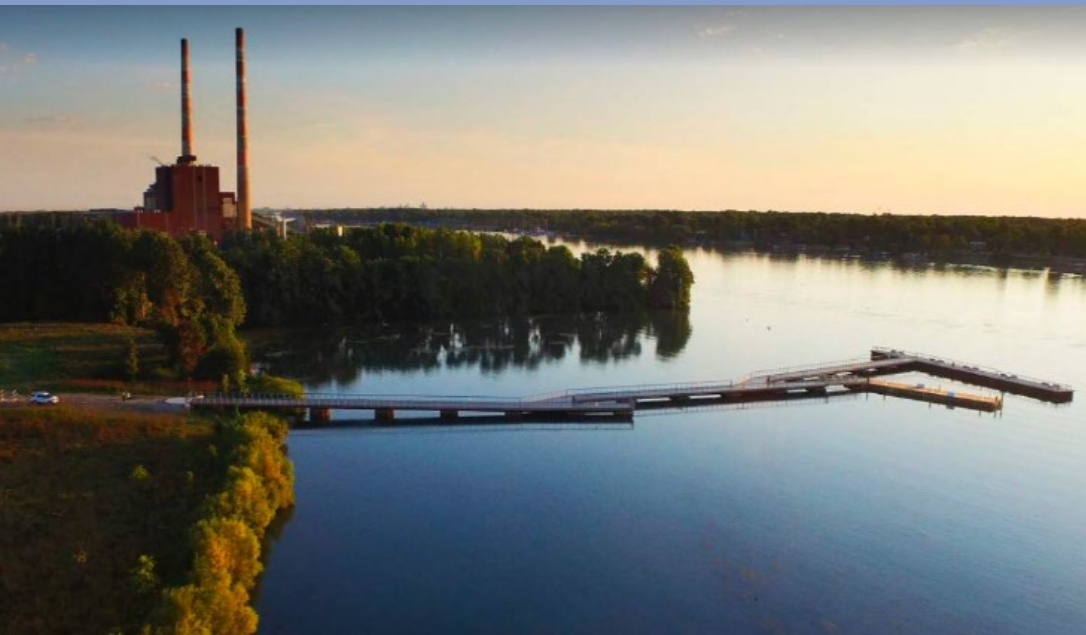
- Belle Isle Grand Prix ferry
- Private touring companies
- Great Lakes cruise lines
- Annual increases in riverfront usage

Opportunities

- Marina infrastructure development
- Local economic driver
- Riverfront development
- Summer Detroit Auto Show

Fellow Technical Assistance

- Stakeholder engagement
- Research
- Plan Development



DRIWR Fishing and Boating Pier



Source: Detroit River Front Conservancy, Transit Feasibility Study & Implementation Plan, prepared by Freshwater Transit

Collaborations and Partnerships

