

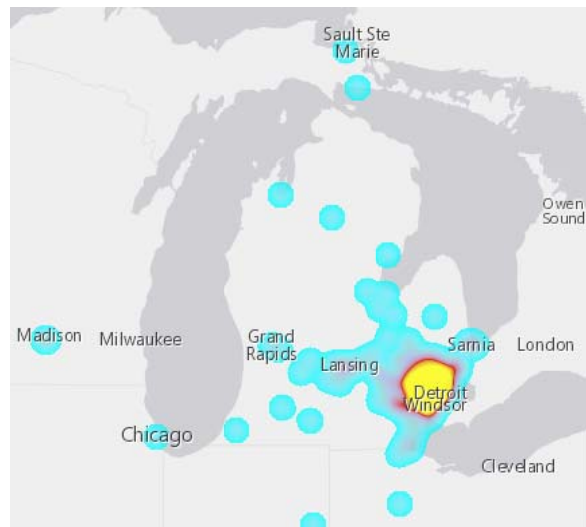
Belle Isle Park Strategic Direction and Management Plan



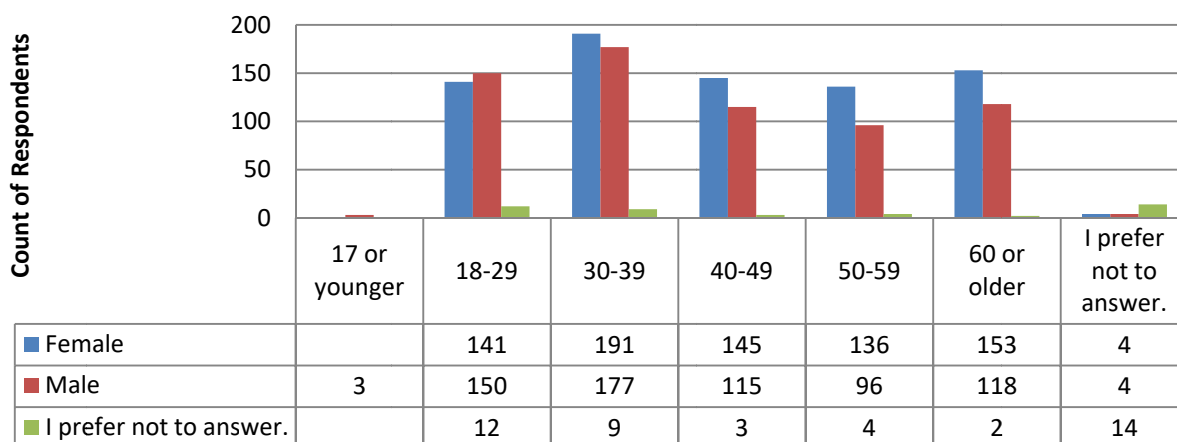
Summary of Public Input Questionnaire

Out of awareness that many people may be interested in giving input about the park that were not able to attend the public meetings, the planning team created a brief online questionnaire to run concurrently with the public meetings. The questionnaire was designed to reflect the same types of input that gathered at those meetings. The survey was open from March 15th until April 7th, and was advertized 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.

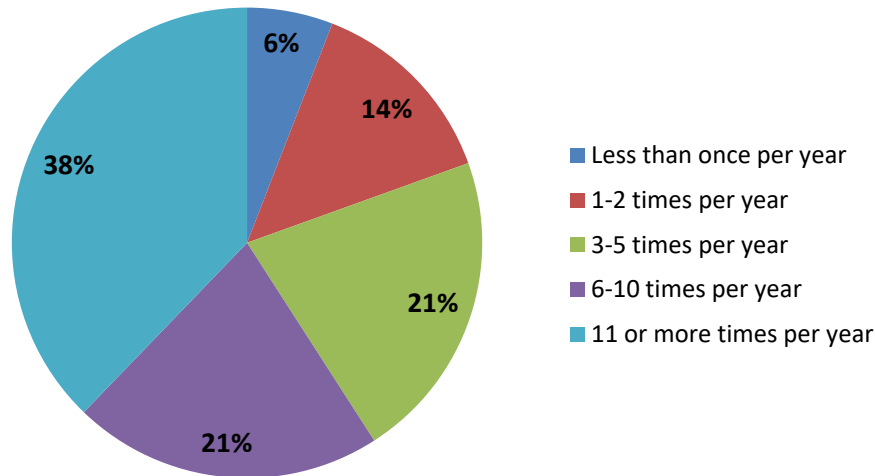


Age and Gender of Respondents



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, contrasted with only 6% of respondents that visit the park once per year.

How many times per year do you visit Belle Isle Park?



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.



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 the Grand Prix, preserving and restoring existing facilities, 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.

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.