



Detroit Riverfront Conservancy Announces Details for the Grand Opening of Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park, including Performance by The Jacksons and Detroit Harvest Fest Celebration

Grand opening of world-class Ralph Wilson Park on October 25 & 26 will feature free weekend with Detroit Harvest Fest, 30 Food Trucks and a stellar lineup of programming

DETROIT (September 29, 2025) – The Detroit Riverfront Conservancy is excited to announce details for the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park Grand Opening and Detroit Harvest Fest celebration, including a headlining concert by The Jacksons, a diverse line up of performances featuring Detroit musicians, and more than 30 Metro Detroit food trucks scheduled to appear at the October 25 and 26 event.

To celebrate the opening of this new stunning public space and 22-acre park along the Detroit Riverfront, the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy is hosting Detroit Harvest Fest at the new Ralph Wilson Park this year.

“When Ralph Wilson Park opens next month, it will be a world-class gathering place for all,” said Ryan Sullivan, CEO of the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy. “The park’s design has been community-led since the beginning, and Detroiters of all ages have contributed ideas and inspiration that have come to life in this park. We are thrilled to welcome everyone to this public space during the weekend of October 25 & 26. There is truly something for everyone to enjoy.”

The free event will feature fall activities, trick or treating and endless fun for all ages. The opening weekend is presented by the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy and the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation. Ralph Wilson Park is located at 1801 W. Jefferson in downtown Detroit.

The weekend begins on Saturday, October 25 with a 10 a.m. press conference and ceremonial grand opening of the stunning 22-acre park along the Detroit Riverfront, which the public is encouraged to attend. The celebration runs until 8 p.m. on Saturday and from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Sunday, October 26.

There will be something for everyone to enjoy all weekend long. Guests can take a ride down the 23-foot-tall iconic Bernstein Bear Slide at the Delta Dental Play Garden, be the first to shoot hoops in the William Davidson Sport House, stroll the water’s edge along the Huron-Clinton Metroparks Water Garden, and enjoy live music on the grass of the DTE Foundation Summit.

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Ralph Wilson Park Grand Opening and Detroit Harvest Fest 2-2-2

A Legendary National Act and Musical and Dance Performances from Local Performers

Three stages and a coffee shop pop-up space will provide guests with a place to enjoy a variety of dance and musical performances all weekend long, highlighted by a headlining performance by The Jacksons on Saturday.

Saturday at 4 p.m. on the **Summit Main Stage**, The Jacksons—featuring original members Marlon and Jackie—will electrify the crowd while revisiting the biggest hits from throughout the storied career of The Jackson 5.

The **Michigan Lottery Southwest Stage** is specially curated to feature artists from throughout Southwest Detroit neighborhoods, with performances from local favorites like Ballet Folklórico Detroit (Mexican Folk Dancing), COMPAS (Student Ensemble), Gabriel Duran (Alternative R&B/Latin) and more.

The **Soaring Eagle 8th Street Stage** reflects the diverse sounds of Detroit with an eclectic line up of local artists reflecting different genres of music with performances by Larry Lee & the Back in the Day Band (R&B), Alise King (R&B/Soul), Detroit House Collective (House) and more.

In addition to the Michigan Lottery Southwest Stage and the Soaring Eagle 8th Street Stage, the **Coffee House** is a pop-up lounge featuring an eclectic mix of entertainment and interactive art presentations on Saturday and Sunday with performances from Michigan Lion Dance (Traditional Taiwanese Dance) and Sean Blackman (World Music), as well as an interactive paint event with Elton Monroy.

Popular Southwest Detroit coffee purveyor Cafecito Alvarez will have their delicious blends available all weekend in the Coffee House.

For a complete list of performances and times, visit detroitsharvestfest.com

More Than 30 Food Trucks with Something Delectable for Every Taste

One of the most popular aspects of Detroit Harvest Fest every year is the wide array of food trucks that feature a selection of fare for every taste, and this year's event will not disappoint.

More than 30 food trucks from Detroit and Metro Detroit are scheduled to participate, offering a selection of delectable fare ranging from Mexican, barbecue, Middle Eastern, vegetarian, Caribbean, seafood and more. Some of Detroit's favorite food trucks are scheduled to appear include El Rey de las Arepas, Big Bo's, Egg Roll Diva, the Lobster Food Truck and Xav's Jammin Caribbean Fusion.

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Ralph Wilson Park Grand Opening & Detroit Harvest Fest 3-3-3

Kids Activities and Programming Located Throughout the Park

Family friendly and free activities are scheduled all weekend long throughout the park. All activities run from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days unless otherwise noted.

It wouldn't be Detroit Harvest Fest without the popular **Pick-and-Take Pumpkin Patch** where kids 12 and under can choose a free pumpkin to take home. Paint markers and stickers will be available for the kids who can't wait until they get home to decorate their pumpkins. There are also games that are fun for all ages in the Pumpkin Zone.

All along the **Kids Adventure Trail** presented by Priority Health, kids can trick-or-treat, collect giveaways, and learn from the Conservancy's wonderful community partners along a fun and engaging pathway. Kids are encouraged to wear costumes.

Visitors to the Mort Harris Outdoor Classroom at the Huron-Clinton Metroparks Water Garden can experience all that nature has to offer with fun hands-on **Science Lessons** the first 15-minutes of every hour from Noon to 4 p.m.

The **Art Alley** near the Delta Dental Play Garden lets guests of all ages explore their creative side with activity partners that include Arts & Scraps, Signal Return, the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum, and the Arab American National Museum. There's also free face painting and temporary tattoos.

A glowing good time! The Delta Dental Play Garden will also be the site for a special **Park After Dark Glow Party** from 6 to 8 p.m. both Saturday and Sunday with free glow materials while supplies last.

Additionally, Autism in the D will provide a **Sensory-Friendly Tent** designed for neurodiverse individuals and those with sensory sensitivities near the Play Garden from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Detroit Pistons, Yoga, Hustle, Lawn Games and More

The William Davidson Sport House will house the **Detroit Pistons Academy Basketball Zone** on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. for drop-in NBA-style competitions and contests. At 6:30 p.m., Urban Solace will host a **glow yoga** session on the floor of the Sport House.

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Ralph Wilson Park Grand Opening & Detroit Harvest 4-4-4

On Sunday, an 11:30 a.m. **Zumba** class with Vamonos! kicks off the day in the Sport House, followed by a 1 p.m. **hustle class** with Two Left Feet. From 3 to 5 p.m., the Boys and Girls Club of Southeastern Michigan 3C Sports program is hosting a 3v3 tournament.

The celebration will also feature a **Games Grove** with cornhole, ax throwing, other lawn games, and activities from the DNR Outdoor Adventure Center.

The **Wellness Zone** near the Water Garden features drop-in wellness activities, such as sound bowls and meditations from 1 to 3 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

The **Merchandise Tent** in the Coffee House will have exclusive Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park items to purchase, including pieces created by youth in the Fashion Industry Program at the Boys and Girls Club of Southeastern Michigan.

There's also **Photo Opportunities** at the top of the DTE Foundation Summit where guests can get a 360-degree video of themselves on Saturday or snap a picture in giant frames located along the riverfront both Saturday and Sunday.

About Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park

Conservancy leaders expect that the dramatically changed landscape along the downtown riverfront will provide significant economic benefits in the area as well. Construction began on the project in the summer of 2022.

The park honors the legacy of the late entrepreneur, veteran and philanthropist Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. It was designed by New York-based Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, which won an international design competition that the Conservancy hosted in 2018.

The world-class park will be home to four major attractions, including the William Davidson Sport House, which features two regulation basketball courts; the five-acre Delta Dental Play Garden, which features an array of animal structures for kids to climb in and around; the 2.5-acre Huron-Clinton Metroparks Water Garden, and the DTE Foundation Summit, with its lush, green lawn that will be used for special events and programming.

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park is one of the most significant projects in the Conservancy's 22-year history and is another major step forward in completing the non-profit's goal of developing 5.5 miles of revitalized waterfront along the Detroit Riverfront.

The Conservancy celebrated the completion of the 3.5-mile East Riverfront in late 2023.

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Ralph Wilson Park Grand Opening & Detroit Harvest Fest 5-5-5

Additional Public Space Opening Along the West Riverfront That Weekend

In addition to the grand opening of Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park, Saturday, October 25 will also mark the opening of the boardwalk in front of Riverfront Towers and a new stretch of Riverwalk just west of the boardwalk.

Once opened, this new stretch will allow Detroiters to move seamlessly between Belle Isle, Eastern Market, Michigan Central and downtown Detroit, all along the beautiful Riverwalk and associated greenways.

Free parking for the Ralph Wilson Park Grand Opening and Detroit Harvest Fest is available at the Bagley Mobility Hub (1501 Wabash) and the Assembly Parking Garage (1701 W. Lafayette). Shuttles at each location will take guests from the parking structures to the park and back.

Grand Opening Weekend is presented by Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation and made possible by the following sponsors: Youth Activity Partner: Delta Dental; Southwest Greenway Partner: Bedrock; Kids Adventure Trail Partner: Priority Health; Sustainability Partner: Ally Financial; Transportation Sponsor: Ford Philanthropy; Wellness Partner: Henry Ford Health; Founding Partners: Matt & Karen Cullen, and Steven Hamp & Sheila Ford Hamp; Champion of the Conservancy: Hudson-Webber Foundation. Partners in Play: The Arts, Beats & Eats Foundation, Brinker Christman, a Joint Venture, Clark Hill PLC, JLL, Liberty Security Group, Inc., Sarah & Chip McClure, Jim Kelly & Mariam Noland, Sarah L. Page, Tom & Sandy Pierce and Visit Detroit. In-Kind Sponsor: EXP Photo.

For more information about the Ralph Wilson Park Grand Opening and Detroit Harvest Fest, visit detroitriverfront.org.

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About the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy

The **Detroit Riverfront Conservancy** is a non-profit organization founded in 2003 with the mission to develop public access to Detroit's riverfront and serve as an anchor for economic development. As the permanent stewards of the Riverwalk and three associated greenways, the Conservancy is responsible for raising the funds needed for construction, operation, maintenance, security and programming of the public spaces located along the riverfront. The ultimate vision is for the Conservancy to develop five-and-a-half miles of riverfront from the Ambassador Bridge on the west to Gabriel Richard Park, just east of the MacArthur Bridge to Belle Isle. Visit www.detroitriverfront.org for more information.

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